



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba



Scottish Parliament Annual Report 2008 to 2009



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Cover photos:

Top row: (left) Commonwealth Law
Ministers Meeting; (right) pupils
examine a tactile model of the
Debating Chamber at Holyrood.

Middle row: (left) a Futures Forum
workshop; (centre) a meeting
taking place in Committee Room
2 at Holyrood; (right) Presiding
Officer Alex Fergusson MSP
addresses event guests in the
Garden Lobby at Holyrood.

Bottom row: (left) a delegate
speaking at the Europe Day
Conference in the Debating
Chamber at Holyrood; (centre)
Members of the Scottish
Parliament (MSPs) in the Debating
Chamber; (right) British Sign
Language users at Donaldson's
School during an Equal
Opportunities Committee visit.

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Foreword

by the Presiding Officer, Alex Fergusson MSP

The aim of this annual report is to provide information on how the Scottish Parliament has fulfilled its role during the period 9 May 2008 to 8 May 2009. The report covers all areas of the Parliament's operations during what has been a particularly busy and interesting time.

This year, the Scottish Parliament will mark its 10th anniversary – a decade of devolution – and we have given a lot of thought to how that anniversary might appropriately be marked. Public engagement has always been a key priority for the Parliament and so we decided to use our anniversary as a springboard to improve and develop further this important aspect of our work. We have therefore embarked on a number of new public engagement initiatives over the last year, including launching a ground-breaking Community Partnerships Project. We have also refreshed our inward and outreach education programmes for schools and are aiming to increase the number of young people who visit Holyrood by 50% and our visits to local schools by 25% during this academic year.

In addition, we have continued to support the core work of MSPs in Chamber business and the committees. Our committees have completed inquiries into a range of subjects, including tourism, child poverty in Scotland, fuel poverty, and flooding and flood management. These inquiries are in addition to the committees' role of scrutinising the work of the Scottish Government and parliamentary legislation. Committee meetings have taken place in venues around Scotland, including Fraserburgh, Ayr and Aberdeen.

The Scottish Parliament continues to play host to a large number of delegations from other parliaments and assemblies from around the world. These visits provide an excellent opportunity to share in our experiences and good practice. In the last year, we have hosted 120 visiting delegations. We have been busy on the events front too, with the Parliament having hosted 463 events, attended by over 34,000 guests. Highlights of the year's events have included a Public Petitions Committee-sponsored debate on knife crime, the Festival of Politics and the July 2008 Commonwealth Law Ministers Meeting.

I hope you find this report of our activities both interesting and useful and I hope the public will continue to engage with their Parliament in our 10th anniversary year and beyond.



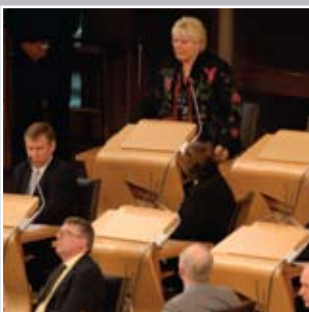
Alex Fergusson

20

days allocated to debate
non-Government
business



Alasdair Morgan MSP



Margo MacDonald MSP

Parliament at work

The Chamber

The Chamber is at the centre of parliamentary business, hosting meaningful and topical debates on a wide range of political issues, policy proposals and legislation. Weekly Question Time sessions, where MSPs hold the First Minister and other Scottish Ministers to account on high-profile current issues, tend to generate particularly lively debate.

Agendas for meetings of the Parliament are proposed by the Parliamentary Bureau on a business motion. Once approved, they form a rolling programme of business for the coming fortnight. The Parliamentary Bureau is chaired by the Presiding Officer; the other members are individual representatives nominated by each party or group with five or more MSPs.

Debates

Debating time in the Chamber is allocated by the Bureau. Once allocated, it is each party's responsibility to propose subjects for their debating time. In the past year, the Scottish National Party Government, with the largest proportion of debating time, led debates on a wide range of social, political and economic issues, including:

- Free personal care
- Climate change
- Youth justice
- Getting it Right for Every Child
- Local government finance
- Drug and alcohol services
- The Scottish economy
- ID cards
- Science in Scotland.

Twenty days were allocated to debate non-Government business in the Chamber during this parliamentary year. Once this allocation is divided among the non-Government parties by the Bureau, it is for those parties to propose the topics and motions for debate. Debates on a range of topics have taken place, including:

- Energy efficiency (Scottish Labour Party)
- Education (Scottish Liberal Democrats)
- The ScotRail franchise (Scottish Labour Party)
- Borrowing powers for the Scottish Parliament (Scottish Liberal Democrats)
- Housing (Scottish Labour Party)
- Police numbers (Scottish Labour Party)
- The NHS and the independent sector (Scottish Conservative & Unionist Party)
- Age limits on purchases of alcohol (Scottish Conservative & Unionist Party).



Iain Gray MSP

Committee debates

Committees can request debating time in the Chamber in order to bring issues raised in reports they have published to the attention of a wider audience. The Public Petitions Committee, for example, debated its report on the availability on the National Health Service (NHS) of cancer treatment drugs.

Ministerial statements

Ministerial statements are used to inform the Parliament of urgent matters or announcements on policy. These statements are usually between 10 and 15 minutes long, and are followed by 20 or 30 minutes for questions from MSPs. Statements are made by the First Minister and his ministerial colleagues. In the last year, the First Minister made statements on the following topics:

- Moving Scotland forward
- Ministerial code
- Scottish Government's programme
- Implications for Scotland of the Lloyds TSB takeover of HBOS
- Scottish Broadcasting Commission.

Ministerial statements have also been made on various topics, including:

- Health strategy
- Fuel poverty
- Scottish Ambulance Service
- Strategic Transport Projects Review
- Strengthening Scotland's secure accommodation.

Members' business

A session devoted to members' business is held at the end of each meeting of the Parliament. This allows individual MSPs from any party or group to highlight issues that would not necessarily be given prominence during the main proceedings. Members' business is often used to raise a particular constituency or regional matter, or to highlight a commemorative or awareness-raising event. Examples of such debates held during the past year include:

- Aberdeen Forensic Science Laboratory
- Eco-Congregation Scotland Programme
- Gaelic language development (during which a number of MSPs spoke in Gaelic)
- International Women's Day
- Pressurised area status in North Lanarkshire
- Rosyth to Zeebrugge ferry service
- 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.



Nicola Sturgeon MSP



Alasdair Allan MSP speaking in the Gaelic language development debate

New MSP

Following the death of Bashir Ahmad MSP, Anne McLaughlin was returned as a regional MSP for Glasgow and took the oath of allegiance on 12 February 2009.

Time for Reflection

Business in the Chamber each week begins with Time for Reflection, giving people of different faiths and beliefs the chance to share their thoughts with the Parliament. Representatives from a wide range of religious groups, and individuals of faith and of no faith have taken part in Time for Reflection this year, including:

- Pete Chirnside, Tearfund Scotland
- Professor John Haldane, Director of the Centre for Ethics, Philosophy and Public Affairs, University of St Andrews
- Ibrahim Issa, Director of the Hope Flowers School, Bethlehem
- The Very Reverend Patrick Keegans, Former Parish Priest of Holy Trinity Church, Lockerbie
- Reverend Dr W Graham Monteith, Secretary, Scottish Churches' Disability Agenda Group
- Rabbi Nancy Morris, Glasgow Reform Synagogue
- Reverend Dave Richards, St Paul's and St George's Church, Edinburgh
- Munuza Sheikh, Scottish Interfaith Council
- Professor Leonard Swidler, Global Dialogue Institute, Temple University, Philadelphia.

Time for Reflection was also led by the Rt Reverend David Lunan, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, and, for the last time as Scottish Churches Parliamentary Officer, by the Reverend Dr Graham Blount. Additionally this year, two representatives of other legislatures led Time for Reflection: the Rt Hon the Lord Elis-Thomas AM, Presiding Officer of the National Assembly for Wales, and the Hon Steve Peters, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.



Anne McLaughlin MSP being sworn in



Rt Reverend David Lunan, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, at Time for Reflection



Reverend Dr W Graham Monteith, Secretary of the Scottish Churches' Disability Agenda Group, at Time for Reflection

A view of the Debating Chamber from the Presiding Officer's chair at the Scottish Parliament



Parliamentary questions

Parliamentary questions can be oral or written. MSPs have the opportunity, on a weekly basis, to ask oral questions directly to the First Minister and his ministerial colleagues. Written questions may be lodged at any time and receive a written answer.

Six topical questions, put forward by party leaders and backbench MSPs, are selected by the Presiding Officer and are asked during First Minister's Question Time on a Thursday. MSPs can also enter their names for a ballot to ask general and themed questions to the Scottish Ministers. Thirty MSPs, randomly selected in the ballot, submit their questions in advance for publication in the *Business Bulletin*. At General and Themed Question Time the relevant minister provides an answer to the published question and also to a related supplementary question about which no notice is given.

Any question not reached by the end of the time allocated for oral questions receives a written answer, which appears in the weekly *Written Answers Report*. The report also contains the answers to written parliamentary questions and can be accessed through the Parliament's website.

Parliamentary questions answered from 9 May 2008 to 8 May 2009

	Answered in Chamber	Received Written Answer
First Minister's Question Time	210	0
General and Themed Question Time	747	258

10,844 questions were also lodged for written answer in the same period and 925 for First Minister's Question Time. First Minister's questions not selected by the Presiding Officer are not published and do not receive an answer.



Annabel Goldie MSP



Tavish Scott MSP

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topical questions are put forward by party leaders and backbench MSPs during First Minister's Question Time on a Thursday.

Motions

MSPs use parliamentary motions for a number of purposes: to highlight an issue or event, to generate support for a cause, or to stimulate debate on a subject. Motions lodged by MSPs appear in the following day's *Business Bulletin* along with the names of other MSPs who support their terms. Motions for debate in the Chamber are lodged on the basis of the business programme agreed by the Parliament. Amendments to these motions can also be lodged and the Presiding Officer is responsible for selecting which amendments will be debated. The vast majority of motions are not intended for debate, however.

2,548 motions and amendments were lodged this year on a range of topics. Those lodged but not debated dealt with a wide variety of issues, including:

- Robert Burns (in the Year of Homecoming Scotland 2009)
- BBC Sports Personality of the Year 2008 (Chris Hoy)
- Scottish Social Enterprise Coalition
- New Lanark World Heritage Site
- The emergency appeal for Gaza.

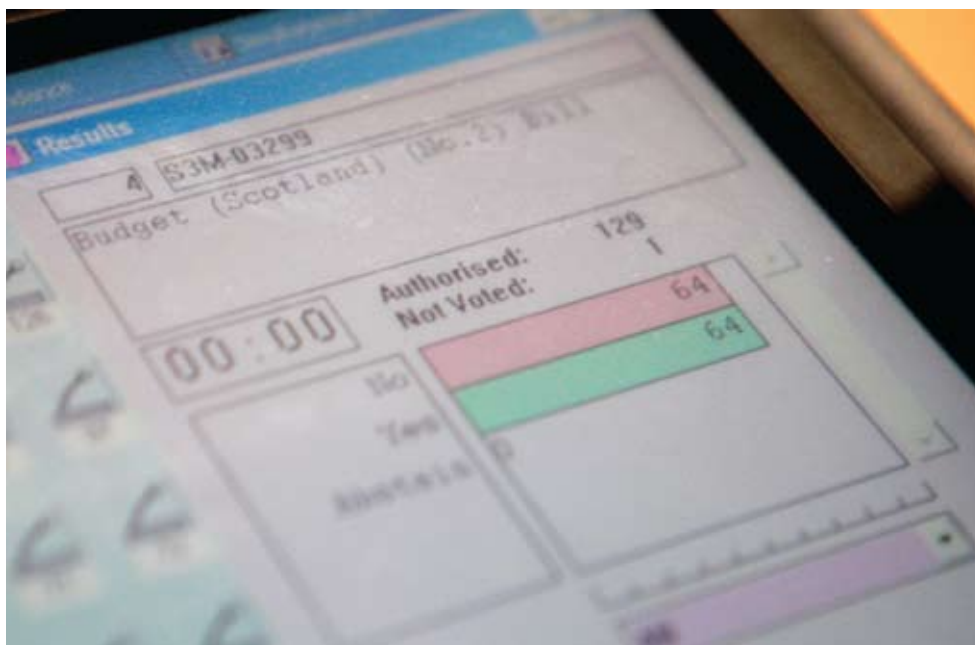
Legislation

Draft laws (known as bills while they are being considered by the Parliament) can take several months to complete their passage through the Parliament. Once a bill has been passed it takes about one month before it receives royal assent and becomes an Act of the Scottish Parliament.

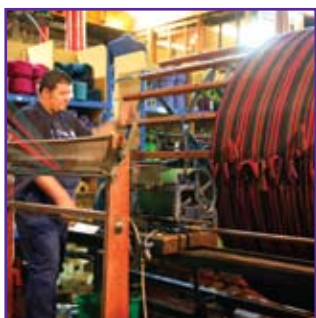
The majority of bills were introduced this parliamentary year by Scottish Ministers to further the Scottish Government's policy aims on matters such as criminal justice, education and flood risk management. Additionally, committees and backbench MSPs also have the right to introduce legislation. One bill introduced this year – on a pension scheme for MSPs – was a committee bill, and two bills were introduced by individual MSPs who are not ministers. These two members' bills concerned parking places for disabled persons and the aggravation of offences by prejudice.

2,548

motions and
amendments were
lodged this year.



A computer screen displays the results of the vote on the Budget (Scotland) (No. 2) Bill.



Members' bills

Members' bills occupy an important place in the legislative process, enabling backbenchers to initiate proposals to change the law. All MSPs who are not members of the Scottish Government are entitled to introduce two bills per session and – unlike at Westminster – there is no ballot to determine a priority order. Bills are considered on a first-come, first-served basis.

Possibly uniquely in modern parliaments, MSPs can enlist the assistance of a specialist unit, the Non-Executive Bills Unit (NEBU), to help them in developing policy including the drawing-up of consultation documents. NEBU can have legislation professionally drafted, prepare accompanying documents and provide direct support to MSPs throughout the parliamentary process.

During the year a member's bill – the Disabled Persons' Parking Places (Scotland) Bill – was introduced by Jackie Baillie MSP, supported by NEBU. The bill provided the means to make disabled parking places enforceable and completed its passage in February, receiving royal assent on 1 April 2009.

Another member's bill, the Scottish Register of Tartans Bill, was also passed during the year. While not directly supported by NEBU, the bill had its origins in one developed and introduced with NEBU support by Jamie McGrigor MSP in the previous parliamentary session.

Not all proposals lead to MSPs introducing their own bills. MSPs' aims can sometimes be achieved by other means: for example by inclusion in Government bills. An idea first mooted as a member's bill proposal to require sunbed parlours to be licensed was successfully inserted into a Government bill. Similarly, a member's bill proposal to introduce licensing of tobacco sales has been included in a Government health bill currently before the Parliament.

Backbench MSPs in the Chamber



4

weeks after a bill is passed, it receives royal assent and becomes an Act of the Scottish Parliament.

Bills introduced (17)

The 17 bills introduced to the Parliament between 9 May 2008 and 8 May 2009 are listed below in order of the date of introduction:

- Offences (Aggravation by Prejudice) (Scotland) Bill [Member's] 19 May 2008
- Disabled Persons' Parking Places (Scotland) Bill [Member's] 2 June 2008
- Sexual Offences (Scotland) Bill [Government] 17 June 2008
- Damages (Asbestos-related Conditions) (Scotland) Bill [Government] 23 June 2008
- Health Boards (Membership and Elections) (Scotland) Bill [Government] 25 June 2008
- Scottish Parliamentary Pensions Bill [Committee] 22 September 2008
- Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Bill [Government] 29 September 2008
- Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Bill [Government] 6 October 2008
- Climate Change (Scotland) Bill [Government] 4 December 2008
- Budget (Scotland) (No. 2) Bill [Government] 8 January 2009
- Arbitration (Scotland) Bill [Government] 29 January 2009
- Budget (Scotland) (No. 3) Bill [Government] 29 January 2009
- Scottish Local Government (Elections) Bill [Government] 3 February 2009
- Tobacco and Primary Medical Services (Scotland) Bill [Government] 25 February 2009
- Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Bill [Government] 2 March 2009
- Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Bill [Government] 5 March 2009
- Marine (Scotland) Bill [Government] 29 April 2009.

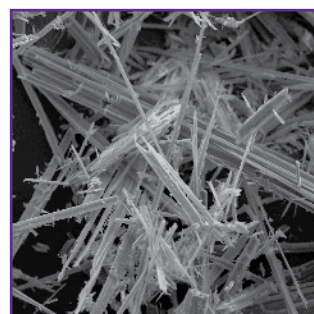
Acts (9)

Four weeks after a bill is passed, it receives royal assent and becomes an Act of the Scottish Parliament. There have been nine bills which have received royal assent and become Acts of the Scottish Parliament this parliamentary year. Of these, two were promoted by backbench MSPs, one was a committee bill and the remaining six were Government bills:

- Glasgow Commonwealth Games Act 2008 [Government]
- Public Health etc. (Scotland) Act 2008 [Government]
- Judiciary and Courts (Scotland) Act 2008 [Government]
- Scottish Register of Tartans Act 2008 [Member's]
- Scottish Parliamentary Pensions Act 2009 [Committee]
- Budget (Scotland) (No. 3) Act 2009 [Government]
- Disabled Persons' Parking Places (Scotland) Act 2009 [Member's]
- Damages (Asbestos-related Conditions) (Scotland) Act 2009 [Government]
- Health Boards (Membership and Elections) (Scotland) Act 2009 [Government].

17

bills were introduced
between 9 May 2008
and 8 May 2009.





Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee

Convener Iain Smith

(member from 03.09.08
and convener from
10.09.08)

Members

Brian Adam

(until 26.06.08)

Wendy Alexander

(from 02.10.08)

Gavin Brown

Rob Gibson

(from 26.06.08)

Christopher Harvie

Marilyn Livingstone

Lewis Macdonald

Stuart McMillan

(from 26.02.09)

Tavish Scott

(member and convener
until 02.09.08)

Dave Thompson

(until 26.02.09)

David Whitton

(until 01.10.08)

Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee

The second year of this new session has been a busy one with committee members completing the inquiry into Scottish tourism with regard to the industry's target of increasing tourism revenue by 50% by 2015. The report was well received by the industry and 22 of the 26 detailed recommendations were accepted by the Scottish Government. The report was debated in the Chamber on 18 September 2008.

The committee has now launched its next comprehensive inquiry, into determining Scotland's future energy requirements and delivering them. This inquiry will be completed by June 2009. Members have covered a great number of issues and visited energy projects in Fife, East Lothian, Stirlingshire, Aberdeen, Orkney and Caithness, as well as overseas.

Members have also been engaging with key stakeholders such as the business community, trade unions and academic experts. In February 2009, the committee jointly hosted a seminar with the Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC) looking at economic and social models in Ireland, Sweden and Norway. Throughout the year, members have held briefing meetings with the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), the Periodical Publishers Association, the Scottish Engineering Advisory Committee on Lifelong Learning in Engineering, the Chemical Industries Association, the Office of Fair Trading, the Scottish Tourist Guides Association and others.

Finally, the committee kept abreast of developments during the economic downturn through a series of 'hearings'. These aimed to assess whether the Scottish Government and its agencies were doing all that was possible to protect the nation's economic interests, and to ensure that Scotland is well prepared to realise every opportunity as the economy begins to grow again.

Members of the Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee visiting the Braes O'Doune windfarm; members of the committee visiting Aberdeen to see a combined heat and power plant providing low cost heat to local residents; members of the committee outside Our Dynamic Earth after their launch of the Tourism Inquiry: Growing Pains - can we achieve a 50% growth in tourist revenue by 2015?



Education, Lifelong Learning and Culture Committee

Over the course of the past year, the main focus of the committee has been dealing with the wide range of legislation that falls within its remit. This has included scrutiny of the Creative Scotland Bill at stage 1 and of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Bill at stages 1 and 2.

The committee also scrutinised a number of items of subordinate legislation including measures to enable free school lunches to be provided to primary 1, 2 and 3 pupils in local authority schools.

A legislative consent memorandum on the UK Parliament's Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Bill was also considered.

The committee continued to hold focused evidence-taking sessions to aid its scrutiny of the Scottish Government. These have included sessions on offender learning, the employment of probationary teachers, social work, the Scottish Broadcasting Commission and the future of higher education. Scrutiny of the Scottish Government's budget 2009–10 also took place.

A higher education conference organised by Universities Scotland in the Parliament was sponsored by the committee and opened by the convener. A number of petitions, on language learning, class sizes and autistic spectrum disorder, were also considered.

In addition, the committee undertook a number of visits to gain further insights into a variety of areas. These included a visit to Donaldson's School for the Deaf, the Scottish National Portrait Gallery and the Rail Union Learning Centre at Stow College. The committee also received a number of visitors including delegations from the Victorian State Parliament in Australia and the Northern Ireland Assembly.



Education, Lifelong Learning and Culture Committee

Convener
Karen Whitefield

Members

Claire Baker
(from 02.10.08)

Aileen Campbell

Kenneth Gibson
(from 26.06.08)

Rob Gibson
(until 26.06.08)

Ken Macintosh

Christina McKelvie

Mary Mulligan
(until 01.10.08)

Jeremy Purvis
(until 02.09.08)

Elizabeth Smith

Margaret Smith
(from 03.09.08)

Committee members and stakeholders taking part in a round-table event to help the committee's scrutiny of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Bill; members of the committee visiting Donaldson's School to view new facilities.





Equal Opportunities Committee

Convener
Margaret Mitchell

Members

Richard Baker
(until 01.10.08)

Malcolm Chisholm
(from 02.10.08)

Willie Coffey
(from 26.02.09)

Marlyn Glen

Bill Kidd

Hugh O'Donnell

Elaine Smith

Sandra White
(until 26.02.09)

Bill Wilson

Equal Opportunities Committee

The Equal Opportunities Committee has enjoyed a varied, productive and innovative year.

An inquiry into female offenders in the criminal justice system, focusing particularly on women in prison, has been launched, and a visit to Cornton Vale prison has already been made.

Following two round-table evidence sessions on unpaid carers, the committee secured a parliamentary debate on this compelling issue in February 2009. The debate helped to raise awareness of the enormous contribution that carers of all ages make to Scottish society.

In scrutinising the Scottish Government's budget, the committee prioritised the vexed issue of equal pay in local government. Gratifyingly – as a result of evidence highlighting the complexity and enormous expense involved – the Local Government and Communities Committee is currently pursuing the issue in greater depth.

To mark International Holocaust Remembrance Day the committee sponsored the showing of the play *And Then They Came For Me*, after which representatives of all faiths and of none took part in an insightful discussion.

A follow-up report on the barriers facing disabled people was published by the committee. This report has influenced the Scottish Government's work in this area. Research on sexualised imagery in goods aimed at children has been commissioned by the committee and will be published later this year.

New simplified guidance on how equal opportunities considerations can be included in all parliamentary committees' work was issued by the committee.

The committee has also been proactive in building links and sharing information on topics of mutual interest with its counterpart committees in Wales and Northern Ireland.

Donaldson's School in Linlithgow, providing education and care to deaf children, hosted the launch of the Equal Opportunities Committee's disability report; the Equal Opportunities Committee visits Glasgow's 218 Centre for female offenders; Eva Schloss, holocaust survivor, speaking after the showing of a play to mark International Holocaust Remembrance Day.



European and External Relations Committee

The committee continued its scrutiny of both international and European issues. On the European Union (EU) side of its remit, the committee conducted Phase 1 of its inquiry into the EU Budget Review and refocused its approach to the scrutiny of European issues. In particular, the committee agreed to focus on early engagement with EU issues, pursued initially by individual MSPs as reporters to the committee.

The committee also hosted a seminar for regional parliaments and assemblies from Germany, Belgium, Spain, Northern Ireland and Wales to discuss the scrutiny of European issues. In connection with external relations, the committee published the report of its inquiry on international development, which included evidence from a conference for secondary school pupils. The committee continued its scrutiny of the Scottish Government's international framework and focused on the China Plan, taking evidence from key stakeholders in the business and educational sectors.

The committee continued to work closely with external partners such as the European Parliament and Commission, and initiated a pilot project whereby members of the committee meet with representatives of the incoming EU Presidency. The first of such visits took place in Prague. The committee also welcomed a number of visiting delegations to the Parliament including the Ambassadors to the UK from the Czech Republic and the Republic of Moldova.

During the year, the committee developed the *Brussels Bulletin*. This publication provides regular updates from the European Officer on the Parliament's EU priorities, and incorporates regular contributions from Scottish Members of the European Parliament (MEPs). It also introduced quarterly 'special edition' *Brussels Bulletins* to focus on specific themes.

Young people and delegates during the Europe Day Conference involving young people from across Scotland, the consular corps, MEPs and MSPs; a delegate speaks during the Europe Day Conference in the Chamber.



European and External Relations Committee

Convener
Irene Oldfather
(convener from 07.10.08)

Members

Ted Brocklebank

Keith Brown
(13.11.08-16.02.09)

Malcolm Chisholm
(member and convener until 01.10.08)

Patricia Ferguson

Charlie Gordon
(from 02.10.08)

Jamie Hepburn
(from 26.06.08)

Jim Hume
(from 03.09.08)

Michael Matheson
(from 26.02.09)

Alasdair Morgan
(until 26.06.08)

Alex Neil
(until 12.02.09)

Gil Paterson
(until 12.11.08)

Iain Smith
(until 02.09.08)

Sandra White
(from 26.02.09)



Finance Committee

Convener
Andrew Welsh

Members

Jackie Baillie
(from 02.10.08)

Derek Brownlee

Linda Fabiani
(from 12.02.09)

Joe FitzPatrick

James Kelly

Liam McArthur
(until 02.09.08)

Tom McCabe
(until 01.10.08)

Elaine Murray
(until 01.10.08)

Alex Neil
(until 12.02.09)

Jeremy Purvis
(from 03.09.08)

David Whitton
(from 02.10.08)

Finance Committee

The committee had a busy year scrutinising proposed public spending. In addition to considering the 2009–10 budget and the financial implications of 13 bills, the committee completed a major inquiry into the funding of capital investment projects and launched a wide-ranging strategic review of Scottish Government spending.

The committee's main role is to lead the Parliament's response to the Scottish Government's spending proposals through the annual budget process. In order to gauge local views on the budget, the committee held an external meeting in Ayr in November 2008. As well as taking evidence from the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Sustainable Growth, the committee held a series of workshops with local organisations and local schools. Following the conclusion of the 2009–10 budget process, and in light of the recession and the anticipated squeeze on public sector budgets, the committee embarked upon a strategic review of Scottish Government spending.

Much of the committee's time this year was taken up by its major inquiry into the funding of capital investment projects. A series of seven evidence sessions heard from a wide range of public bodies, expert advisers, funding organisations and academics during April and May 2008. The committee published its report in December 2008, which, as well as examining the current funding options available, contained a series of recommendations for the future of capital investment. The report was debated by the Parliament in April 2009.

The Finance Committee, in Ayr, as part of its work to scrutinise the Scottish Government's draft budget for 2009-10. Committee members held workshops with local organisations to discuss the draft budget and explain the role of the committee.



Health and Sport Committee

The Health and Sport Committee completed parliamentary consideration of two bills during the last year: the Public Health etc. (Scotland) Bill and the Health Boards (Membership and Elections) (Scotland) Bill. The committee's stage 1 report on the Health Boards Bill received a lot of attention and many of its recommendations resulted in changes to the bill.

The committee also issued a call for evidence on the Tobacco and Primary Medical Services (Scotland) Bill and scrutinised the Scottish Government's draft health and wellbeing budget for 2009–10, taking evidence from interested parties and the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing. The committee completed an inquiry into health inequalities, which saw it contributing to the Scottish Government's implementation strategy for its Equally Well report.

The committee also concluded its ambitious inquiry into Pathways into Sport. In spring 2008 the committee took evidence from world-renowned athletes – including rugby player Gregor Townsend – about their personal pathways into sport. It then heard from a wide range of organisations from sport and education, undertook a number of external visits and meetings and organised a large-scale forum-style meeting with representatives of sport's governing bodies and public petitioners.

Towards the end of 2008, the committee embarked on its inquiry into child and adolescent mental health services. Visits were made to service providers and users around Scotland and evidence was taken both from professionals who work with children and from specialists in the field. MSPs also took evidence following a petition on specialist mental health services for deaf and deafblind people.



Health and Sport Committee

Convener
Christine Grahame

Members

Jackie Baillie
(02.10.08-29.04.09)

Helen Eadie

Ross Finnie

Rhoda Grant
(until 01.10.08; member
again from 30.04.09)

Michael Matheson

Ian McKee

Mary Scanlon

Richard Simpson

Members of the committee on a visit to the new sports village at Stirling; members of the committee at Murrayfield, with current international Jim Hamilton holding the Calcutta Cup; witnesses giving evidence to the committee on the Pathways into Sport inquiry at Stirling University





Justice Committee

Convener
Bill Aitken

Members

Robert Brown
(from 03.09.08)

Bill Butler

Angela Constance
(from 26.06.08)

Cathie Craigie

Nigel Don

Paul Martin

Stewart Maxwell
(from 26.02.09)

Stuart McMillan
(until 26.02.09)

Margaret Smith
(until 02.09.08)

John Wilson
(until 26.06.08)

Justice Committee

The Justice Committee spent much of the year scrutinising five pieces of primary legislation.

The Judiciary and Courts (Scotland) Bill, which sought to unify the judiciary under the Lord President and to strengthen judicial independence, was passed by the Parliament in September 2008.

The Damages (Asbestos-related Conditions) (Scotland) Bill ensured that people with pleural plaques caused by negligent exposure to asbestos could continue to claim compensation. Although welcoming the bill at stage 1, the committee expressed concern about the potential financial implications. The bill was finally passed in March 2009.

The Sexual Offences (Scotland) Bill provides for a statutory framework for sexual offences in Scots law. The committee supported the general principles at stage 1 but made a number of recommendations for change. Many of the committee's recommendations were addressed by the Scottish Government at stage 2 and the bill is awaiting stage 3 proceedings.

Introduced by Patrick Harvie MSP, the Offences (Aggravation by Prejudice) (Scotland) Bill sought to tackle hate crime. The bill creates new statutory aggravations to protect victims who are targeted due to hatred of their actual or presumed sexual orientation, transgender identity or disability. Stage 3 consideration of the bill took place on 3 June 2009.

The Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Bill was introduced by the Scottish Government in March 2009 and the committee has begun taking oral evidence at stage 1.

The Justice Committee took evidence on the Damages (Asbestos-related Conditions) (Scotland) Bill and looked at the case for compensation for people who suffer from pleural plaques following exposure to asbestos; Phyllis Craig, Senior Welfare Rights Officer, Clydeside Action on Asbestos gives evidence to the Justice Committee at Holyrood.



Local Government and Communities Committee

During the year, the committee undertook a wide-ranging programme of work mainly through inquiries and stand-alone evidence sessions.

The committee continued its inquiry into child poverty in Scotland, taking evidence from a range of interested parties including charities, support groups, providers of benefits advice, local authorities and the Scottish Government. It also commissioned research which allowed it to hear the views of those directly affected by child poverty through their participation in focus groups and interviews held in Dundee, Glasgow, Stornoway and Stranraer.

The committee began an inquiry into equal pay and single status in Scottish local government; and reported on the second National Planning Framework which sets out the Scottish Government's strategic development priorities and guides Scotland's development to 2030.

In terms of legislation, the committee examined the Disabled Persons' Parking Places (Scotland) Bill which will make all permanent disabled street parking places enforceable. It also examined the Scottish Local Government (Elections) Bill which seeks to decouple the local government elections from the Scottish Parliament elections.

The committee examined the Scottish Government's draft budget and made recommendations in a number of areas, including the effective operation of single outcome agreements at all levels. It also undertook to give further scrutiny to their operation.

Stand-alone evidence sessions were held on several other issues including housing, homelessness, fuel poverty and the digital television switchover.

The committee noted with interest that the volume of subordinate legislation it examined had more than doubled since the previous year, with over 50 Scottish statutory instruments being allocated to it for consideration.



Local Government and Communities Committee

Convener
Duncan McNeil

Members

Alasdair Allan

Bob Doris

Patricia Ferguson

Kenneth Gibson
(until 26.06.08)

Johann Lamont
(until 01.10.08)

David McLetchie

Mary Mulligan
(from 02.10.08)

Jim Tolson

John Wilson
(from 26.06.08)

Members of the Local Government and Communities Committee listen to evidence at a regular committee meeting.





Public Audit Committee

Convener
Hugh Henry

Members

Willie Coffey

Cathie Craigie
(from 02.10.08)

George Foulkes

Murdo Fraser

Charlie Gordon
(until 01.10.08)

Jim Hume
(until 02.09.08)

Anne McLaughlin
(from 26.02.09)

Stuart McMillan
(until 26.02.09)

Nicol Stephen
(from 03.09.08)

Andrew Welsh
(from 11.12.08)

Public Audit Committee

The Public Audit Committee succeeded the Audit Committee (as agreed by resolution of the Parliament on 10 December 2008, with effect from 11 December 2008).

The Public Audit Committee scrutinises public expenditure. It holds to account those who are charged with spending taxpayers' money and helps to ensure that public funds are spent wisely.

This year the committee's title was changed and its remit altered to allow it to consider matters of wider public audit policy. The primary focus of the committee's work, however, remains the examination of reports produced by the Auditor General for Scotland (AGS).

The committee considered more than 20 reports from the AGS on a range of subjects including health, education, the economy and transport. Where an inquiry was not carried out, issues and concerns were followed up with the relevant Accountable Officer.

In May 2008 the committee issued a report on the 2006–07 audit of the Western Isles Health Board which identified serious failures in the running of NHS Western Isles. During the year the committee held inquiries and reported on the following AGS reports:

- Free personal and nursing care
- Review of palliative care services in Scotland
- Police call management
- Major capital projects.

In each case the committee took evidence from the Accountable Officers responsible for ensuring that financial resources were used appropriately. The committee is currently undertaking an inquiry into the AGS report *The First ScotRail passenger rail franchise*. It has taken substantial evidence from the Accountable Officer of Transport Scotland, the Permanent Secretary and the Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change. The committee will report on its findings later in the year.

Committee members take evidence at a regular committee meeting; Robert Black, Auditor General for Scotland, addresses the committee.



Public Petitions Committee

The public petitions system provides members of the public with direct access to the policy development and scrutiny process. The existence of the Public Petitions Committee, dedicated to the consideration of petitions, meant that petitioners could raise issues of concern directly with their Parliament.

During this period, 112 new petitions were lodged, the committee heard oral evidence on 35 new petitions and considered over 200 current petitions. It welcomed the continued effectiveness and positive impact of many petitions and the work done by petitioners in raising many important issues which it took forward with the Scottish Government and other public bodies. For example, it took forward an inquiry into the availability of cancer treatment drugs on the NHS (PE1108) and hosted a debate in the Chamber of the Parliament where community groups, victims, police, medical staff and many others met to discuss knife crime (PE1171). It also considered petitions on school bus safety, on reviewing planning and environmental regulations in relation to off-road motorcycle facilities and many other topics.

The committee launched its year-long inquiry investigating ways to increase awareness of, and participation in, the petitions process and the scrutiny of petitions themselves.

The e-petitions system, which allows petitions to be raised online, continued to be influential, with around two-thirds of petitions being lodged in this form. There is continuing worldwide interest in the petitions process and in the work of the committee in embracing the principles of engagement and participation and sharing of power. The committee met with several other legislatures and held a videoconference with the Australian House of Representatives' Petitions Committee.



Public Petitions Committee

Convener
Frank McAveety

Members

Bashir Ahmad
(until 06.02.09)

Claire Baker
(until 01.10.08)

Bill Butler
(from 02.10.08)

Angela Constance
(until 26.06.08)

Nigel Don

Marlyn Glen
(from 02.10.08)

Rhoda Grant
(until 01.10.08)

Robin Harper

Anne McLaughlin
(from 26.02.09)

Nanette Milne

John Farquhar Munro

John Wilson
(from 26.06.08)

Petitioner John Muir speaks at the start of the knife crime debate; the Public Petitions Committee meeting in Duns; convener Frank McAveety hands over the first copy of the committee's report on knife crime to John Muir.





Rural Affairs and Environment Committee

Convener

Maureen Watt

(member from 12.02.09
and convener from
25.02.09)

Members

Roseanna

Cunningham

(member and convener
until 11.02.09)

Karen Gillon

Jamie Hepburn

(until 26.06.08)

Liam McArthur

(from 03.09.08)

Des McNulty

(until 01.10.08)

Alasdair Morgan

(from 26.06.08)

Elaine Murray

(from 02.10.08)

Peter Peacock

Mike Rumbles

(until 02.09.08)

John Scott

Bill Wilson

Rural Affairs and Environment Committee

The committee published its flooding and flood management inquiry report in May 2008. The evidence heard underpinned much of the committee's scrutiny of the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Bill. The committee's stage 1 report on the bill was published in January 2009. Stage 2 scrutiny was completed in March 2009. Stage 3 was completed on 13 May 2009.

The committee's other major piece of work was its rural housing inquiry. Committee members made fact-finding visits to Arran, Perthshire and East Lothian, and visited Melrose in September 2008 to hear evidence on housing issues affecting the Borders. The committee's comprehensive report on the issue was published on 7 May 2009.

In June 2008 the committee held an 'away-day' in Stirling to discuss future priorities, hearing from guest speakers on food security and waste management.

Other work undertaken this year included:

- scrutiny of the forestry, waste and muirburn provisions in the Climate Change (Scotland) Bill. The committee produced its report on the bill to the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee in March 2009;
- a round-table meeting on food policy in September 2008. The committee heard evidence from stakeholders including Michelin-starred chef Andrew Fairlie;
- a short inquiry into the challenges facing the pig industry in Scotland, currently being completed; and
- scrutiny of a legislative consent memorandum on the UK Parliament's Marine and Coastal Access Bill.

The committee also travelled to Brussels in April 2009 to discuss the impact of European fisheries and agriculture policies on Scotland with key players such as the Agriculture Commissioner.

Committee members get a bird's-eye view of the housing situation in East Lothian from the top of the Hopetoun monument during their inquiry into rural housing; members talk to Scottish producers exhibiting at the world's largest seafood expo in Brussels.



Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee

The committee's standards work has focused on the Code of Conduct for MSPs, reviewing section 6 (Cross-Party Groups) and section 8 (Relationships between MSPs) of volume 2 of the Code. The committee is also reviewing aspects of section 2 (Categories of registrable interest).

The committee responded to the Review of the SPCB Supported Bodies Committee with its views on future organisational arrangements for the Scottish Parliamentary Standards Commissioner and the Public Appointments Commissioner. The committee also published guidance for MSPs entitled *Unacceptable actions – guidance for members and their offices*.

In the course of the year, the committee considered four reports and one direction request from the Scottish Parliamentary Standards Commissioner and approved seven Cross-Party Groups.

With regard to its remit concerning procedures, the committee completed inquiries into the cut-off date for the introduction of members' bills at the end of a parliamentary session, and into points of order. The committee recommended Standing Order rule changes to support the provisions of the Scottish Parliamentary Pensions Act 2009. Its recommended rule changes to the title and remit of the Audit Committee were approved by the Parliament and have been implemented.

The committee has also begun consideration of a letter from the Presiding Officer about the accuracy of contributions in parliamentary proceedings and has started work on Standing Order rules to assist scrutiny of public bills which affect private interests (hybrid bills).

The Standing Orders; a regular committee meeting



Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee

Convener

Gil Paterson

(member from 13.11.08
and convener from
18.11.08)

Members

Keith Brown

(member and convener
until 12.11.08)

Robert Brown

(from 03.09.08)

Aileen Campbell

(from 13.11.08)

Cathie Craigie

(until 01.10.08)

Marlyn Glen

(until 01.10.08)

Marilyn Livingstone

(from 02.10.08)

Jamie McGrigor

(until 12.11.08)

Christina McKelvie

(until 12.11.08)

Nanette Milne

(from 13.11.08)

Hugh O'Donnell

(until 02.09.08)

Peter Peacock

(from 02.10.08)

Dave Thompson



Subordinate Legislation Committee

Convener
Jamie Stone

Members

Jackie Baillie
(until 01.10.08)

Jackson Carlaw

Malcolm Chisholm
(from 02.10.08)

Bob Doris
(from 13.11.08)

Helen Eadie

Tom McCabe
(from 02.10.08)

Ian McKee

John Park
(until 01.10.08)

Gil Paterson
(until 12.11.08)

Subordinate Legislation Committee

Throughout the year the committee has continued to conduct effective and meaningful scrutiny of Scottish statutory instruments, improving the quality of rules and regulations that directly affect the lives of people across Scotland.

The Scottish Government re-laid or revoked a number of instruments in order to address the committee's findings, and other parliamentary committees often took up issues about which the committee had expressed concern.

The committee has continued to scrutinise powers to make secondary legislation in bills: these have included the Public Health etc. (Scotland) Bill, the Judiciary and Courts (Scotland) Bill and the Health Boards (Membership and Elections) (Scotland) Bill. Over the past 12 months, the committee has considered a record number of legislative consent memorandums relating to Westminster bills which seek to change the law or alter Scottish Ministers' or the Scottish Parliament's powers in relation to a devolved matter. The committee therefore continued to play a vital role in ensuring that the proper level of parliamentary accountability and control is maintained in relation to legislative proposals.

Following its report into the regulatory framework in Scotland in March 2008, the committee has been in constructive dialogue with the Scottish Government on its recommendations to improve the scrutiny of secondary legislation. The recommendations will be implemented in large part by the forthcoming Interpretation and Legislative Reform (Scotland) Bill, which will form a major element of the committee's workload during 2009–10.

Members of the Subordinate Legislation Committee listen to evidence at a regular committee meeting.



Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee

In June 2008, the committee published a report on its inquiry into ferry services in Scotland, which made a number of short- and long-term recommendations on how ferry services might be developed and improved. The report was debated by the Parliament in September 2008. The committee expects to revisit this issue once the Scottish Government has concluded its own review of ferry services in Scotland.

The committee completed its inquiry into the potential benefits of high-speed rail services and reported in February 2009, concluding that their introduction could bring important economic, social and environmental benefits to Scotland. The report was debated by the Parliament in May 2009. The committee intends to monitor proposals for a UK high-speed rail network.

The committee took evidence on the National Planning Framework 2, making several recommendations to the Local Government and Communities Committee when it reported in December 2008. It also took evidence on the Scottish Government's Strategic Transport Projects Review.

Other work included scrutiny of the Scottish Government's budget for 2009–10, which focused on climate change and examined the development of a carbon assessment tool for the Scottish budget.

The committee took evidence at stage 1 of the Climate Change (Scotland) Bill and reported on the general principles of the bill in April 2009. It also arranged a major climate change conference in the Chamber of the Parliament in March 2009. The *Scotland and Climate Change – Getting it Right* event addressed key global climate change issues and considered the potential for the Climate Change (Scotland) Bill to put Scotland at the forefront of global climate change efforts.



Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee

Convener
Patrick Harvie

Members

Rob Gibson

Charlie Gordon

Alex Johnstone

Alison McInnes

Des McNulty
(from 02.10.08)

Cathy Peattie

Shirley-Anne Somerville

David Stewart
(until 01.10.08)

Ahmed Moosa, Maldives Presidential Envoy for Science and Technology, speaking at the Climate Change conference; members of the committee listen to evidence; Dr David Guggenheim, President of 1planet1ocean, speaking at the Climate Change conference.



Review of SPCB Supported Bodies Committee

Convener
Trish Godman

Members

Jackson Carlaw

Ross Finnie

Joe FitzPatrick

Jamie Hepburn

Johann Lamont

Scottish Parliamentary Pension Scheme Committee

(until 22.01.09)

Convener
Alasdair Morgan

Members

David McLetchie

Hugh O'Donnell

Peter Peacock

Scottish Parliamentary Pensions Bill Committee

(until 22.01.09)

Convener
Keith Brown

Members

Bill Aitken

Nicol Stephen

David Stewart

Other committees

Review of SPCB Supported Bodies Committee

The Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB) supports six bodies, including the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, the Scottish Information Commissioner and the Commissioner for Children and Young People in Scotland.

Consistent with the recommendations of an inquiry by the Finance Committee and the Scottish Government's Crerar review of public services in Scotland, as well as the wider reform agenda, the Parliament established the Review of SPCB Supported Bodies Committee in November 2008. Its remit includes considering and reporting on whether alterations should be made to the terms and conditions of the office-holders and the structure of the bodies supported by the SPCB, and considering how any proposals for future arrangements (including the addition of any new functions) should be taken forward.

Having issued a general call for evidence and consulted with key stakeholders, the committee published its report on 21 May. Its recommendations for legislative changes will form the basis of a committee bill.

Scottish Parliamentary Pension Scheme Committee and Scottish Parliamentary Pensions Bill Committee

The UK Government set up the Scottish Parliamentary Pension Scheme in 1999. MSPs are members of the scheme and make payments from their salaries towards a pension.

Subsequent changes to pensions and equality laws meant that the scheme rules needed to be reviewed. The Parliament therefore established the Scottish Parliamentary Pension Scheme Committee in 2007 to consider and take evidence on the scheme. The committee's report was approved by the Parliament in June 2008 and a bill to replace the scheme rules was introduced in September 2008.

Changes contained in the bill included the establishment of a Board of Trustees to manage the scheme, recognition of civil partners and unmarried partners, and revised ill-health retirement and early retirement arrangements. The Scottish Government actuary reported that the proposed changes to the scheme were 'cost neutral', and there would be additional savings from the ending of special pensions paid to the First Minister and the Presiding Officer.

A separate committee – the Scottish Parliamentary Pensions Bill Committee – was set up in November 2008 to scrutinise and decide on amendments to the bill at stage 2 before it was debated and passed by the Parliament in January 2009. The new provisions will come into effect mainly from September 2009.



120

parliamentary delegation visits from the UK and 35 other countries around the world were welcomed to the Scottish Parliament.



Engaging with other legislatures

For 2008–09 the External Liaison Unit facilitated more than 120 parliamentary delegation visits to the Scottish Parliament from the UK and 35 other countries around the world. These visits allowed for an exchange of knowledge and experiences between parliamentarians. They also enhanced the reputation of the Scottish Parliament internationally, as well as providing an opportunity to promote the 10th anniversary of devolution in Scotland and the Year of Homecoming in 2009.



Helen Goodman MP, Deputy Leader of the House of Commons, paid a courtesy call on Trish Godman MSP, Deputy Presiding Officer.



Presiding Officer Alex Fergusson MSP meets with H.E. Georg Boomgaarden, German Ambassador to the UK.

A group of Namibian students living in Scotland attended Commonwealth Day events at Holyrood.



Presiding Officer Alex Fergusson MSP with Japanese Consul General, Kenichi Suganuma



Presiding Officer Alex Fergusson MSP is pictured with Derek Leask, New Zealand High Commissioner.

Welsh Assembly delegation in the Scottish Parliament Chamber (left to right): Frank McAveety, Convener of the Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee, Bethan Jenkins, Val Lloyd (Chair of the Welsh Assembly's Petitions Committee), Mike German and Andrew Davies

High-profile international visitors included the Speakers of the Parliaments of Uruguay (Alberto Perdomo) and Macedonia (Trajko Veljanoski). Speaker Perdomo led a delegation looking at energy and climate change issues, while Speaker Veljanoski visited Scotland as part of a programme to help Macedonia strengthen its parliamentary procedures as part of its application process to join the EU. The Parliament also welcomed delegations from various parts of Europe and countries as far afield as Iran, Burma and Botswana.

As part of Scotland's Year of Homecoming, the Parliament hosted a special Burns Supper in January 2009. International guests attending included the President of the Norwegian Lagting and the Speakers of the Canadian House of Commons, the Irish Dáil, the Isle of Man House of Keys, the Northern Ireland Assembly, the Ontario Provincial Parliament and the Tasmanian House of Assembly.

The Scottish Parliament was proud to host the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) Scotland Branch 2009 Commonwealth Day event on the theme of *The Commonwealth @ 60 – Serving a New Generation*. This raised important issues including governance, democracy, human rights, and development. MSPs held a debate on the Commonwealth and members of the Executive Committee of the CPA Scotland Branch



participated in a round-table discussion with students from Scottish universities. The Parliament also hosted a reception with representatives from a range of communities, including Scottish universities, the diplomatic corps, civil society, government agencies and business, as well as people from Commonwealth countries who are living in Scotland. This event promoted the virtues of the Commonwealth and parliamentary democracy to young people, and provided new opportunities for those with an interest in the Commonwealth and the Scottish Parliament to discuss areas of mutual interest.

The Scottish Parliament continued to develop relationships with other legislatures that are members of the newly renamed British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly (formerly the British-Irish Interparliamentary Body). For example, the Assembly recently adopted a revised set of Standing Orders, which the Scottish Parliament delegation played a leading role in implementing.

As well as playing host to many visiting delegations, the Parliament sent several delegations of MSPs to other legislatures, seminars and conferences.

In August 2008 Tricia Marwick MSP and David Whitton MSP attended the 54th CPA annual conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

In November 2008 a delegation from the CPA Scotland Branch visited Ontario, Nova Scotia and Québec in Canada. The aims of the visit were to strengthen CPA links between Scotland and Canada, to share knowledge about minority governments and language policies and to promote the Year of Homecoming in those parts of Canada with the strongest links to Scotland.

In April 2009 the Presiding Officer led a Scottish Parliament cross-party delegation to North America for Scotland Week. The delegation was welcomed to the Assemblies of Québec and North Carolina. The Presiding Officer addressed members in both legislatures, and delegates were briefed on the approaches in Québec and the US to key policy issues such as renewable energy. As part of promoting the Year of Homecoming in the US the delegation took part in the 11th Annual Tartan Day Parade in New York.



Members of the Iranian Parliament on a visit to Holyrood in January 2009.



The Presiding Officer, Murdo Fraser MSP and Tricia Marwick MSP at the North Carolina General Assembly in April 2009



The Speaker of the Québec National Assembly, Yvon Vallières, greets the Presiding Officer and Sarah Boyack MSP at the Assembly during Scotland Week 2009.

2

week programme of visits by the Presiding Officer around Scotland in summer 2008.



The Presiding Officer, Alex Fergusson MSP meeting with Professor Norman Gillies (Director) Sabhal Mòr Ostaig (the national Gaelic college) and John Farquhar Munro MSP at Sleat on Skye as part of a summer tour of Scotland



Participants from MeAL visit Holyrood, 24 January 2009.

Engaging with the public

In May 2008, the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB) reaffirmed its commitment to extending and enhancing public engagement with the Parliament. A programme of activities to mark the first 10 years of devolution was agreed, which would have Scottish citizens as its focus. Preparation and planning for the 10th anniversary of the Scottish Parliament began at the outset of this reporting year; a wide range of other engagement activity took place across this year.

Presiding Officer's summer programme

For the first time in the history of the Scottish Parliament, the Presiding Officer undertook a two-week programme of visits around Scotland during the Parliament's summer recess in 2008. The main aim of the programme was to listen and learn from local people and groups about how best the Parliament can communicate and engage with them.

The programme included a visit to the Erskine Home in Bishopston, Renfrewshire, where the Presiding Officer presented former servicemen and women with veteran badges for service to their country. In Glasgow, the Presiding Officer visited Addaction, the UK's largest supplier of drug and alcohol support services, where he met with staff and a number of clients.

Other elements of the programme sought to reach people who do not live within easy travelling distance of the Parliament. Visits were made to the Raploch Community Regeneration Project in Stirling, the Middlefield Community Project in Aberdeen, the Al-Maktoum Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies in Dundee and Columba 1400 on Skye.

The summer programme also sought to strengthen the Parliament's ties with members of the consular corps based outside Edinburgh, and with ethnic community groups in Scotland. For example, in Inverness the Presiding Officer held a civic reception for more than 100 members of the Polish Highlands community. In Aberdeen he met with staff from Multi Ethnic Aberdeen Ltd, a charity committed to promoting diversity and raising awareness of the value of individuals, business owners and organisations of ethnic origin to Aberdeen and north east Scotland. The Glasgow-based consular corps were also briefed by the Presiding Officer on the work of the Scottish Parliament and its strategies for engagement and international relations.

Education and Community Partnerships

Following a review, a new team – Education and Community Partnerships – was set up to refresh the Parliament's approach to formal and informal education services. The team is building on the successes of the past but with a new strategic focus, developing services to ensure that young people and communities can enjoy a role in decision-making processes.



The Presiding Officer with members of the Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team



The Presiding Officer, Alex Fergusson MSP meeting with Sustainable Community Enterprise Training Centre staff and local people in Stirling



More than 100 members of the Polish Highlands community attended a civic reception in Inverness.



3

external organisations are taking part in the ground-breaking Community Partnerships Project.



Pupils from Hermitage Park Primary use a laptop to look at the new Parliament and Poetry resource.



Members of Haggeye, the forum for blind and partially sighted young people in Scotland, at the Scottish Parliament, 7 February 2009

15,083

young people have taken part in new education programmes.



The inward and outreach education programmes were expanded from September 2008, offering more choice and flexibility to schools. Up to 21 inward visit slots per week can now be offered, with the same number of outreach slots also available. Since September 15,083 young people have taken part in the new programmes. The team is encouraging young people to focus on issues that matter to them during these sessions, as well as teaching them about MSPs and how the Parliament works.

Additional interactive online education resources have been developed to complement the hard-copy publications. With the aim of supporting Curriculum for Excellence and Glow (the national schools' intranet for Scotland), the Education and Community Partnerships team has expanded its cross-curriculum materials as well as updating its Social Studies curriculum resources. An example of such an initiative is the Parliament and Poetry resource launched in March 2009 with the Scottish Poetry Library.

The team has also set up a Professional Advisory Panel to ensure compliance with current and future educational policy developments. Membership of the panel includes Learning and Teaching Scotland, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education, the Scottish Government, the Hansard Society, the Association of Headteachers and Deputies, the Association of Directors of Education, School Leaders Scotland, Aberdeen University School of Education, Bòrd na Gàidhlig and the Modern Studies Association.

The Parliament's Community Partnerships Project is a ground-breaking initiative for people typically under-represented in political life. In what is believed to be the first parliamentary initiative of its kind, the Scottish Parliament is working with blind and partially sighted people, difficult-to-reach young people, and people from black and minority ethnic backgrounds to help them to get involved with its activities.

Significantly, the project is being driven by the partner organisations: Haggeye, Multi Ethnic Aberdeen Ltd (MeAL) and Action for Children Scotland. They are bringing their energy, vision and commitment to the project, in order to explore ways in which their specific campaign and awareness needs can be considered.

In January and February 2009, residential weekends and evening sessions were delivered to members of the partner organisations for the understanding/awareness phase of the project. The initiative was formally launched in April as part of the 10th anniversary programme, when the groups outlined the issues that they would like to see addressed. They will now go on to work with MSPs and staff to determine how to bring these to the Parliament.

Visiting the Parliament

A total of 336,629 people visited the Scottish Parliament during the year. Parliamentary business days remained the busiest times of the week throughout the period, with tickets for First Minister's Question Time, in particular, remaining in very high demand.

Free tours of the Parliament building were offered to mark Saint Andrew's Day, and free tours in Gaelic were offered as part of the Gaelic Language Day; tours on both days were fully booked. Visitor Services also launched a new tour focusing on the Parliament art collection. In November it was announced that tours of the Scottish Parliament would be entirely free of charge from September 2009, completing the full range of free public engagement activities marking the 10th anniversary.

Accessibility for visitors at Holyrood has been further enhanced in the last year. New signage in the public areas has improved the display of information to visitors, whilst a range of tactile objects for the Education Centre and tour routes are being finalised for introduction.

A competition was launched in January 2009 to create an official tartan for the Scottish Parliament, with students from colleges and universities across Scotland – from Dumfriesshire to Shetland – entering the competition. The winning tartan will be unveiled as part of the events marking the first 10 years of a devolved parliament. Products incorporating the new tartan and others featuring a commemorative 'Devolution 10 years' strap-line are on general sale in the Scottish Parliament shop, as is the first official Scottish Parliament guidebook.

336,629

people visited the
Scottish Parliament
during the year.



HND Fashion and Textile students from Cardonald College met with Presiding Officer Alex Fergusson MSP to launch a competition to design an official Scottish Parliament tartan.



Young people explore their Parliament during an education visit.

90,000

people attended
exhibitions and events
at Holyrood.



Commonwealth Law Ministers
Meeting, 7 July 2008.



Pupils from Edinburgh Academy
celebrate winning the Euroquiz
2008.



Actor Simon Callow speaks to
Trish Godman MSP during the
Festival of Politics event 'Gladder
to be Gay'.

Events and exhibitions

Exhibitions and events provide valuable opportunities for organisations and individuals from every part of Scotland to engage directly with MSPs and parliamentary committees on a wide range of issues relevant to the Parliament and to Scotland. These remained popular forms of engagement during this reporting year, with more than 90,000 people either attending exhibitions or participating in one of nearly 500 events, conferences, briefings, displays and debates.

Among the events hosted by the Parliament this year was the final of Euroquiz 2008 on Monday 12 May 2008, an event run by the Scottish European Educational Trust with the aim of promoting and encouraging education about Europe amongst primary school children. Twenty-five teams of primary 6 pupils from across Scotland took part in the final in the Chamber chaired by the Deputy Presiding Officer, Alasdair Morgan MSP. The Euroquiz event was broadcast live and attracted one of the Scottish Parliament website's biggest audiences.

Another major event in the Chamber was the opening ceremony of the 2008 Commonwealth Law Ministers Meeting on 7 July. This event was chaired by the Presiding Officer and attended by more than 200 guests from across the Commonwealth.

2008 also saw the Parliament host the fourth Festival of Politics, which again welcomed thousands of visitors to Holyrood to enjoy politically-themed debates, lectures and cultural events. With the main theme of the 2008 Festival being *Global Issues – National Perspectives*, the programme featured an examination of the global economic crisis, with a panel including BBC journalist Evan Davis. Another event featured young Scots' views on the issue of climate change and the impact it would have on their future lives.

As in previous years, the Festival worked productively with a number of stakeholder organisations to present engaging events, such as *Law Unto Itself?* – an examination of the importance of our legal system, produced in association with the Law Society of Scotland. *The New Politics of Giving*, which considered the increasing global role of philanthropy, was produced in association with the Carnegie Festival.

Alongside the Festival, the Parliament hosted the World Press Photo exhibition for a third year. This year the exhibition was complemented by educational activities: a public tour of the exhibition by World Press Photo and a lecture by a 2008 winning photojournalist, which was delivered as part of the Festival.

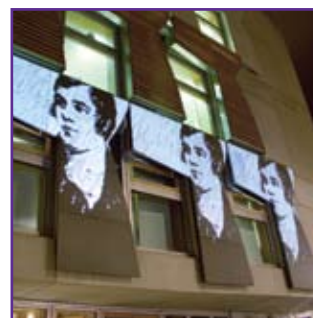


Among the other exhibitions held at the Parliament this year, one of the most popular was that organised in partnership with the Scottish Qualifications Authority. The exhibition showcased work from the 2008 Higher Art and Design examinations and included paintings, sculpture, design, ceramics, fashion and jewellery from 180 of Scotland's talented and creative art students. While it was on display at Holyrood, nearly 100 schools and over 3,000 students participated in a special education programme of the exhibition.

A photographic exhibition, *as others see us*, celebrating the legacy of Robert Burns was exhibited at Holyrood in early 2009. The launch of the exhibition coincided with the Presiding Officer's Burns Supper, when more than 200 guests, representing 38 countries, gathered in the Parliament and enjoyed a programme of cultural entertainment that was provided by the Scottish Youth Theatre, the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, the National Centre of Excellence in Traditional Music and the College of Piping.

On Saturday 7 March, 300 women from across Scotland gathered at the Scottish Parliament to mark International Women's Day 2009. The event was chaired by the Deputy Presiding Officer, Trish Godman MSP. The theme of the event was *Violence against Women* and speakers included the Rt Hon Thabitha Khumalo MP from Zimbabwe; the Rt Hon Harriet Harman QC MP; Lily Greenan, Manager, Scottish Women's Aid; Agnes Tolmie, Chair, Scottish Women's Convention; Fiona Hyslop MSP; Annabel Goldie MSP and Cathy Peattie MSP.

To start the 10th anniversary programme, on Wednesday 11 March the Presiding Officer launched a project to add a new quotation to the Canongate Wall. This was followed on Monday 27 April at Scotland Street Museum, Glasgow, by the launch of a travelling exhibition showcasing the stories of 10 Scots and their experiences of devolution. This exhibition was developed to inform community audiences about ways to get involved with the Scottish Parliament during the 10th anniversary year and will visit venues across Scotland between April and December 2009.



Images of Robert Burns projected on to the Scottish Parliament building



International Women's Day 2009



Launch of the travelling exhibition at Scotland Street Museum, Glasgow

38

countries were represented at the Burns Supper.



Futures Forum workshop,
July 2008



Futures Forum workshop,
July 2008

Futures Forum

Scotland's Futures Forum was established in 2006 to bring MSPs and policy-makers together with organisations and individuals to consider some of the longer-term challenges and opportunities facing Scotland. The Forum undertook another full year of futures projects, participation events, lectures, workshops, community research, reports and briefings.

The Forum's main project considered how Scotland could reduce the damage caused by alcohol and drugs by half by 2025. Taking more than 1,000 service providers, service users, health care professionals, academics, MSPs and policy-makers through the year-long project, the Forum was effective in stimulating public policy debate at Holyrood and its findings have been received with real interest around the world. The Forum was able to present a fresh perspective on this issue and to draw expertise and lessons from our own communities as well as from Australia, Canada, the United States of America and Europe.

The Forum continues to look to the horizon and to develop new tools to explore people's aspirations for the future, including a project to examine what sustainable community might mean in Scotland in the future. The findings will be published in November 2009. The Forum operates on an open-source basis and is open to anyone who is interested in getting involved. Information about events and details of the Forum's reports, podcasts, and events are available at www.scotlandfutureforum.org

Languages

The SPCB's statutory Gaelic Language Plan was approved by Bòrd na Gàidhlig in May 2008. This outlines the services that the Parliament provides in Gaelic, and how these will be developed between 2008 and 2013. The Plan was launched at a Gaelic Language Day event in November, which included a Language Planning Forum attended by over 50 delegates. A number of initiatives from the Plan have been actioned, including the

The Presiding Officer was joined by Rosemary Ward of Bòrd na Gàidhlig, and Rody Gorman, author, to launch our Gaelic Language Plan on 20 November 2009.

50

delegates attended a Gaelic Language Planning Forum.





introduction of a bi-lingual corporate identity. Funding has been provided by Bòrd na Gàidhlig to assist in implementing the Plan, including for the Gaelic Language Day event, for staff training and for new awareness-raising and educational leaflets.

The SPCB is committed to ensuring that all people in Scotland have an equal opportunity to participate in and engage with the parliamentary process. Research and consultation were carried out with stakeholders and a revised language policy was agreed in October 2008 to better reflect linguistic diversity in Scotland. Improvements include clearer guidance for the public and more flexibility to allow translation and interpreting in any language. The recognition of British Sign Language (BSL) as a language in its own right was particularly well received by the Deaf community and more video resources in BSL are now available on the website as a result.

Technology

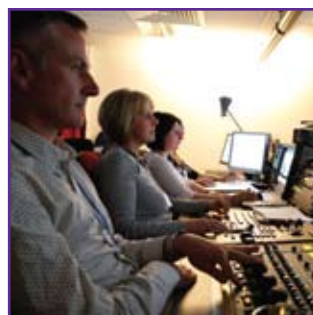
The Scottish Parliament has continued to look at ways of using technology to open up communication with the people of Scotland and beyond. Following a successful pilot scheme, an SMS text messaging service was launched in August 2008, extending the range of ways in which the public can get in touch with the Parliament for information. It allows people to find out the names of their MSPs simply by texting in their postcode, or to ask a question about how the Parliament works.

The website www.holyrood.tv continues to attract viewers both in the UK and abroad, in particular in the USA, Canada and Europe. This multi-channel internet broadcasting service allows access to all video of parliamentary proceedings for a month after they take place. Most Chamber events are also webcast live. The weekly *Highlights* programme, which goes out every Thursday at 12.30 pm, can be viewed at www.holyrood.tv and is also now available as a video podcast.

In addition to carrying out its core duty of filming all parliamentary proceedings, the broadcasting office has further extended its library of educational and promotional films, including a video on the Festival of Politics 2008, a series of video postcards showing the various buildings and areas within the Parliament complex and a video about the Canongate Wall.



Rohini Sharma Joshi from Equality Scotland with a Punjabi leaflet at the Language Policy launch, March 2009



The broadcast gallery in the upper basement where the Chamber TV feeds are controlled by the broadcast team

Responding to public feedback

The SPCB has always welcomed feedback from the public and has taken any complaints received seriously, using them, where possible, to help improve the services it provides. This process was enhanced by the launch of the complaints policy in April 2008. All complaints were acknowledged and responded to and the SPCB was able to act on and make various improvements as a result. For example, more accessible seating was added in the Main Hall at Holyrood to complement the low-level seating already installed and new protocols were introduced to improve testing of the fire alarm message in public areas of the building. In addition, some offices were asked to re-evaluate staff training and procedures, and better testing was introduced for future website developments.



Environmental management

The SPCB recognises that its activities may have both positive and negative environmental impacts in Scotland and further afield.

In 2008–09 the SPCB continued to implement its environmental policy and to work towards its environmental targets. The targets to reduce waste sent to landfill and paper use were achieved. However – predominantly due to a cold winter – gas use increased and the energy targets were not achieved, although total energy use was reduced.

Environmental targets

Waste Target	Reduce landfill waste by 55% of the 2005–06 total by March 2009
60% reduction achieved	
Paper Target	Reduce paper use by 15% of the 2005–06 total by March 2009
23% reduction achieved	
Energy	Reduce total energy (gas and electricity) use by 9% by March 2009
2.7% reduction achieved in total energy use	

For more information on environmental management, please refer to the first annual environmental report: www.scottish.parliament.uk/corporate/anrep-accts/index.htm

60%

reduction achieved in total
waste use since 2005–06

How to contact us

The public information service provides information about the business, membership and procedures of the Scottish Parliament.

	Address	Public Information Service The Scottish Parliament Edinburgh EH99 1SP
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	Fax	0131 348 5601
	Text	07786 209 888
	Email	sp.info@scottish.parliament.uk
	Website	www.scottish.parliament.uk

For information in languages other than English or in alternative formats (for example in Braille, large print or audio), please send your enquiry to the public information service. We welcome written correspondence in any language.

Further information about the Scottish Parliament is available on our website:
www.scottish.parliament.uk

Tha a' bhileag seo cuideachd ri faighinn ann an Gàidhlig. Cuiridh sinn fàilte air litrichean ann an cànan sam bith.

للحصول على نسخة عن هذه الوثيقة باللغة العربية يرجى الاتصال بنا. إننا نرحب بالرسائل الخطية بأي لغة آانت.

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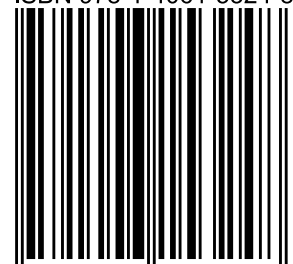
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