



# John Barrett

MP for Edinburgh West

## REPORT 2007

*I hope you find this report informative and the list of telephone contacts useful.*

*John Barrett*

[www.johnbarrettmp.com](http://www.johnbarrettmp.com)



John Barrett MP

Dear Resident,

When I was re-elected as the Member of Parliament for Edinburgh West I promised to report back to every household in the constituency about the work I have been doing at Westminster and locally. I hope this, my sixth annual report, gives you a flavour of what I have been working on in the last twelve months.

It is equally important that I hear your views and if there is any issue you feel strongly about, or any issue of concern you feel I should be taking action on, please do not hesitate to get in contact with me. It is only by listening to local people that I can

do my job of representing Edinburgh West in Parliament properly.

I also keep in regular contact with a large number of community groups and if you are involved in a group or organisation I have not yet contacted, please write to me with their details.

Should you require further information on any aspect of my work, or more information on any issue in this report, please contact me. I am always happy to deal with any issue related to Westminster and if I can be of service to you, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

With best wishes

*John Barrett*

John Barrett MP

### John Barrett MP – Factfile

- Re-elected as Member of Parliament in 2005
- Majority 13,600
- Elected Member of Parliament for Edinburgh West, 2001
- Edinburgh City Councillor 1995 -2001
- Community councillor for 10 years
- Married to Carol with one grown up daughter
- Shadow Minister for International Development
- Honorary Vice President of Scottish SPCA
- Lives locally in Edinburgh West.

Full profile:

[www.johnbarrettmp.com/profile](http://www.johnbarrettmp.com/profile)



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### Keeping in Touch Website

In order to keep constituents as up to date as possible with my work on your behalf I have a website containing a wide range of news, information and contact details.



### Surgeries

I hold regular surgeries by appointment (to avoid a long wait) in my constituency office and in a number of other locations, to help local people with their problems. Appointments can be made by phoning 0131 339 0339. I can arrange home visits for those with mobility difficulties.

### Contact Details

Write: John Barrett MP  
Constituency Office  
1A Drum Brae Avenue  
Edinburgh EH12 8TE

Tel: 0131 339 0339

Email: [johnbarrettmp@parliament.uk](mailto:johnbarrettmp@parliament.uk)

Website:

[www.johnbarrettmp.com/](http://www.johnbarrettmp.com/)

### Helping Constituents – Working For You

My main priority is always helping constituents whenever possible. If you would like any assistance please contact my office, which is open 5 days a week. (See contact details under Keeping in Touch.) Many constituents now contact me by email and I produce regular email updates for those who wish to receive them. If you would like a regular update please contact me at [johnbarrettmp@parliament.uk](mailto:johnbarrettmp@parliament.uk)

As your MP I can help with any issue reserved to Westminster, these include:

- The Economy and Taxation
- Benefits, Pensions, Social Security
- European and Foreign Affairs
- Defence
- Immigration and Asylum
- Energy Policy
- Air and Rail Safety
- Employment Legislation
- Constitutional Matters

The Scottish Parliament is responsible for issues such as health, education, crime and housing. These are best dealt with by Margaret Smith MSP with whom I work closely. You can contact Margaret on 0131 348 5786 or write to her at the Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP



[www.johnbarrettmp.com/advice](http://www.johnbarrettmp.com/advice)

## Working in Parliament

This parliamentary term has proven to be another busy one. In the past year I have succeeded in securing parliamentary debates on reform of the Child Support Agency, Tax Credits and the prospects for an environmentally friendly high speed rail link between Edinburgh and London.

This coming year will be very important with a new Prime Minister in post and key bills on Pensions, Climate Change, and compulsory ID cards, all coming before parliament. One of my most important jobs is raising local issues and concerns with Government Ministers. Please let me know if there is a particular issue you would like me to raise at Westminster.



### Visits to the House of Commons

Over the last year I have welcomed many school visits and individual constituents to Westminster. If you are planning a visit to London and would like to visit Parliament, please contact my office and I would be happy to arrange a tour.

## Benefits and Pensions

Our benefits system is hugely overcomplicated with around 50 separate benefits, 250 different rates and countless long and complicated forms. Almost every week this year I have met constituents who have had their benefits miscalculated – much of this is down to the needless complexity at the heart of the system. Tax credit Overpayments now total £8.6 million across Edinburgh throwing many budgets into disarray.

The take-up rate of pension credit is also shockingly low with more than 40% of pensioners across Edinburgh not receiving the help to which they are entitled. I have been calling on the Government



to radically simplify the system so that people receive benefits based on need, not on how good they are at filling out complicated forms.

If you have a benefits problem or if you are not yet receiving pension credit but think you may be eligible, then please contact my office for advice.

[www.johnbarrettmp.com/benefits](http://www.johnbarrettmp.com/benefits)

## Out and About in the Community

I am always looking to hear the views of local community groups and organisations on the big issues in your local area. As a long-time community activist, I am well aware of the importance of local community involvement.

It has been a great pleasure to support a number of community events and fundraisers over the last year. Throughout the last 12 months I have visited many

schools, churches, and local groups and organisations to speak both about the work of an MP and to answer questions about my 5 years on the International Development committee.

If you are part of a group and would like me to speak to you on a particular issue please, do not hesitate to contact my office. I look forward to meeting many more constituents in the coming year.

Recent events and visits include: Ratho Gala Day, Kirkliston Gala Day, Edinburgh Airport (security), Murrayfield Stadium (flood protection), BAA Youth Games, St Serfs School, Drumbrae Community Council, Carrick Knowe Parish Church fundraiser, St Anne's Church, Kirkliston Myasthenia Garavis Association fundraiser, Murrayfield Parish Church JUST US Group, Drylaw Parish Church,

“Good Neighbour Award” presentation, Roseburn Primary School, St Serfs School, Cargilfield School, “Bin the Bomb” Rally, Stenhouse Primary School, Balgreen Primary School, Queensferry Lifeboat Branch Jazz fundraiser, Corstorphine Trust, Friends of Corstorphine Hospital, St George's School for Girls, SSPCA, Highland Show, Edinburgh Zoo Masterplan meeting.

## Veterans' Badges

Over the last 12 months the Government has twice extended the eligibility for veterans' badges. The badges are now available to all men and women who served in the armed forces up until 31 December 1994, however many veterans now eligible have either yet to apply, or are unaware of the extension.

There are also veterans' badges for Merchant Navy seafarers and fishermen who served in vessels assisting military operations by UK Armed Forces at any time prior to 31 December 1969.



I have been working hard to make sure that as many veterans as possible across Edinburgh West are able to claim the award and have so far helped almost 400 veterans claim their badges. If you think you might be eligible and would like an application form please contact my office and I will send you a form.

[www.johnbarrettmp.com/veterans](http://www.johnbarrettmp.com/veterans)

## What local people have said about John Barrett:

“I was positively over the moon when I checked your voting history!”  
S H, Cramond

“The Voice of Reason”  
Talk Radio

“Thank you for all your help and time during our struggles, we would not have managed without your support.”  
J H

“Thanks for restoring some of my faith in parliamentary representation!”  
Mr A C, Gogarloch

**John Barrett**  
MP for Edinburgh West

**HANDY NUMBERS**

Please feel free to cut out this handy guide and keep it in a safe place where you can use it for reference.

### MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

John Barrett MP  
(taxation, pensions, benefits, foreign affairs, child support, immigration etc.)

1A Drum Brae Avenue  
EDINBURGH EH12 8TE  
Tel: 339 0339  
Email: [johnbarrettmp@parliament.uk](mailto:johnbarrettmp@parliament.uk)  
Web: [www.johnbarrettmp.com](http://www.johnbarrettmp.com)

### MEMBER OF THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

Margaret Smith MSP  
(health, education, crime, housing)  
Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh EH99 1SP  
Tel: 0131 348 5786  
Email: [Margaret.Smith.msp@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:Margaret.Smith.msp@scottish.parliament.uk)  
Web: [www.margaretsmithmsp.com](http://www.margaretsmithmsp.com)

### THE COUNCIL

City of Edinburgh Council  
Tel: 200 2000  
Web: [www.edinburgh.gov.uk](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk)

CLARENCE (Mon-Fri 8am-8pm)  
Freephone 0800 23 23 23  
(roads, blocked drains, street lights)

CLEANSING Tel: 529 3030  
(recycling, special uplifts, wheelie bins)

HOUSING DEPT (General)  
Tel: 527 3800

PLANNING DEPT. Tel: 529 3596

### PENSIONS AND BENEFITS

Pensions Service (Scotland Office):  
0845 6060265

Job Centres:  
High Riggs, Tollcross 456 4000  
Wester Hailes 456 4300

Child Support Agency:  
0845 609 0042

### TRANSPORT

Travel Line Scotland (for bus, coach & train information): 08706 082608

Lothian Buses: 555 6363  
First Bus 01324 602 200

National Rail Enquiries 08457 484950

Airport Noise: 0800 731 3397

### POLICE

For Emergencies, dial 999

Police Stations:  
Corstorphine 334 4900  
Drylaw Mains 343 3171  
South Queensferry 331 1798  
West End 229 2323  
Wester Hailes 442 2626

### HEALTH

For health emergencies, dial 999

For urgent treatment:  
Royal Infirmary (Little France)  
536 1000

Royal Hospital for Sick Children (for children under 13) 536 0000  
St. John's Hospital (Howden):  
01506 419 666

Western General Hospital  
(Craigleith) 537 1000

For general queries, health information and advice, phone  
NHS 24: 08454 24 24 24

### WATER AND GAS

Council Emergency Number (24 hour): 200 2000

Scottish Water: 0845 601 8855  
Gas Leaks: 0800 111 999

### FURTHER HELP AND ADVICE

Citizens Advice Bureau  
Pilton Office: 332 9434