

## **MACHRIHANISH SPACEPORT BID TOUCHES DOWN AT WESTMINSTER**

I had the pleasure of hosting a very well attended reception on behalf of DiscoverSpace UK and Argyll & Bute Council to hear about the exciting proposals for the UK's first spaceport to be based in Kintyre. Of course, for us the question of where to house the spaceport is a 'no-brainer' but we had the opportunity to speak to leading players from the aerospace industry to tell them exactly that. With the



UK's longest runway, a first class safety record at Machrihanish air base and excellent links with Glasgow, we think that puts us in a very strong position. I will continue to do whatever I can to support the bid as this will be nothing short of transformational for Argyll and Bute and the sky will definitely *not* be the limit!!

## **SNP HIGHLIGHT BREXIT THREAT TO RURAL SCOTLAND'S COMMUNITIES**

Earlier this month, during an SNP debate on the effect of Brexit and the Rural Economy, once again I highlighted the consequences that leaving the EU will have on our local economy as well as the impact the loss of European funding will have. Our agriculture, fishing and tourism industries will all need support during what will be a turbulent and uncertain time for many. I also praised the contribution made to Argyll and Bute of those EU nationals who have made this constituency their home and reiterated my call on the government to guarantee that their status will not be affected by Brexit.



## **UK TURN BLIND EYE TO YEMEN CLUSTER-BOMBS**

Just before Christmas, the UK government finally admitted that UK made illegal cluster bombs had been used by Saudi Arabia in their war against Yemen. I asked, given that this was a clear breach of international humanitarian law, what sanctions the UK would impose on the Saudi regime. Their answer? None. Shocking!

## **"DANGEROUSLY UNPREDICATABLE" TRIDENT QUESTIONS ASKED**

Along with militarily-useless and eye watering expensive, we can now add dangerously unpredictable when describing Trident now it has been revealed that a Trident missile, launched during a training exercise last year, veered wildly off course towards the USA. It was a misfiring the

government were so desperate to hide that they indulged in a shameful cover-up to keep parliament from knowing about



it. Last week I asked the Secretary of State for an explanation of what went wrong and who was involved in the subsequent cover-up. I did not get an acceptable answer and so I have now submitted a dozen detailed, written questions to the MOD seeking to get to the truth. I am determined not let this issue go and I will pursue the government until they come clean on this incident.

## SYRIAN COMMUNITY OPEN NEW COMMUNITY HUB ON BUTE

I was honoured to spend a lovely afternoon with a many of our Syrian community who are making a life for



themselves and their families on Bute. With their English language skills improving by the day, I heard first hand all about

their plans and their ambitions for the future. I'm absolutely convinced that they will be a huge benefit to the island and I'm very grateful to the community for making me so welcome.

## BACK TO SCHOOL AT ROTHESAY ACADEMY

I am trying to visit as many of the schools in the constituency as possible and this time it was to Rothesay Academy.

Along with Head Teacher Julie Fisher and two P6



pupils, I was given a guided tour of the school including a visit to their impressive hospitality and technical departments. It was a great visit and I hope to meet up with them again soon.

**HELENSBURGH OAP LUNCH CLUB** My first visit of the new year was to have lunch with our older



residents at the Helensburgh lunch club. I also met with a great team of volunteers who cook and serve a 2 course lunch four days a week with what seems an unlimited supply of tea, coffee and biscuits. If it wasn't for them, this valuable service would not exist, so thank you.

## BIG THANK YOU TO OBAN LIFEBOAT CREW

I took the opportunity to visit some of the crew at the Oban Lifeboat station to express my thanks on behalf of the community



for the work they do year round especially at this time when the weather presents all sorts of challenges and dangers.

## SNP BURNS SUPPERS

And January wouldn't be complete without speaking at a round of Burns Suppers.



Thank you to Bute branch for

inviting me to give the Immortal Memory – a great night had by all and thanks to Dunoon branch for inviting me to give a Toast to the Lassies. A fabulous dinner followed by a very entertaining auction – well done everyone!

## HANG THE BLESSED DJ!

Finally .... That's another one off my "bucket list" after I fulfilled a lifetime ambition by co-hosting my



own show, with my very own playlist on **Bute Island Radio's** last weekend, playing tracks from Johnny Cash, The Smiths, Ella Fitzgerald, Janis Joplin, Charles Asnavore and The Beatles among others. Huge thanks to DJ Mike Blair for keeping me right – I had a great time doing it and I'd love to do it again.

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