



**Alex Neil  
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## ALEX POURS HEAT ON ENERGY COMPANIES

### Neil thrilled with Airdrie InBev investment

Alex has expressed his delight at the news that at least £15 million and 20 new jobs will be arriving at Airdrie's Inver House Distillers plant.

International Beverage Holdings, Inver House Distillers' owners, plan to make Airdrie their new global marketing headquarters overseeing the strategic direction of all of its brands.

"This announcement from InBev is a very welcome boost to Airdrie given the current economic climate. I am delighted InBev are investing so much money and bringing 20 new jobs to Airdrie", Alex said.

"This will only be the first domino in a chain of knock on effects which will see substantial benefits to the Airdrie economy. The increased advertising, PR, sponsorship and other investments will see significantly more than the original £15million pour into Airdrie. One of their products sponsors a Premiership football club - hopefully we will see similar investment in sport here in Airdrie.

"This investment duly recognises the hard work that has been put in by the staff at Inver House and the potential they have demonstrated – they have to be congratulated."

Alex has demanded answers from Scottish Hydro Electric, E.ON and Scottish Power as to why their prices have failed to fall in line with the 32% drop in crude oil since August.

The MSP for Central Scotland has written to the energy suppliers' Chief Executives, Ian Marchant, Dr. Paul Golby and Nick Horler respectively, asking for an explanation to the lack of price cuts from their companies despite a barrel crude oil falling from \$145 to \$85 in the past two months, with prices falling to near \$60 since.

"When such a large proportion of people in Scotland are suffering from fuel poverty, I want to know why the likes of these companies are not passing on crude oil savings on to their customers" Alex said.

"I have written to their CEOs looking for answers – people have been approaching me worried about how they are going to keep warm this winter. These are very real concerns for pensioners and those in low income households, yet these energy companies are delaying price cuts.

"People in Lanarkshire and across Scotland understand that at times energy prices have to go up, but there has to be a trade off, there have to be cuts when oil prices come down. That simply has not been happening these last two months as crude oil has dropped below \$60 a barrel."



Alex and other public figures remembering the fallen on Armistice Day

# HBOS TAKEOVER BAD NEWS FOR LANARKSHIRE

Since his last newsletter Alex has been campaigning long and hard against the takeover of Halifax Bank of Scotland by Lloyds TSB.

Lloyds TSB have announced that they want to make savings of £1.5 billion after the proposed takeover is complete. This will directly result in 40,000 people losing their jobs and many more jobs lost indirectly. Many of these jobs will be lost in Lanarkshire. With Lloyds TSB and HBOS branches near each other in Coatbridge, Cumbernauld, Hamilton, Larkhall, Motherwell, Rutherglen, Uddingston and Wishaw hundreds of jobs will be lost.

But there are Lloyds TSB and HBOS branches dotted all over Lanarkshire so losses could be even greater.



**MSPs Don't Bank on it:** Margo Macdonald, Alex and Tavish Scott at a press conference campaigning against the takeover

What is of equal worry to Alex is the effect this merger will have on competition for current accounts, mortgages, loans and other services. As this super bank on a Tesco-size scale dominates the market with a near 30% share of the mortgage market, ordinary people are going to suffer.

The Office of Fair Trading released a report which said that the takeover should be referred to the Competition Commission; instead the UK Government has suspended competition law to push the takeover through.

Lloyds TSB shareholders voted for the takeover to go ahead, despite strong objections from private shareholders. HBOS will be holding its AGM on the 12<sup>th</sup> of December, the board needs 75% to vote in favour for the deal to go ahead. Alex is hoping HBOS shareholders will realise the takeover is bad for them, employees, customers and Scotland.

## Contact Alex

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**Above:** Proudly lifting the Homecoming Scottish Cup

## Surgery Dates

**Friday 5<sup>th</sup> December:**

**Bellshill Cultural Centre at  
1pm**

**Uddingston Community  
Centre at 3pm**

**Friday 12<sup>th</sup> December:**

**Airdrie Arts Centre  
at 11am**

***Alex wishes all his constituents a very merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year!***