

# New Amicus MSP Group

## Ready for Action...

The 13 strong Unite/Amicus group of MSPs held its first meeting in the Scottish Parliament on 30th May. Despite Labour losing seats in May's election the group increased by 4 following the election of John Park, Claire Baker, Richard Simpson and James Kelly.

Also newly elected was Iain Gray who replaces retiring Unite/Amicus member John Home-Robertson in East Lothian.

"Unite/Amicus worked hard at every level to ensure the maximum amount of Labour MSPs were returned" said Regional Secretary John Quigley. "We obviously are disappointed with the overall result but I'm confident our group will rise to the challenge of opposition quickly and effectively."

Falkirk East MSP Cathy Peattie continues as the group chair, while longstanding Unite/Amicus member Paul Martin MSP for Glasgow Springburn and Cathie Cragie MSP, who had an outstanding result in Cumbernauld & Kilsyth, will fill the vice chair positions. Former Rosyth Dockyard convenor and Unite/Amicus Official John Park – now MSP for Mid Scotland and Fife – was elected group secretary.



Unite/Amicus group members seen here pictured along with Allan Cameron Political Co-Ordinator

  
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If you would like to find out more about the work of the Unite/Amicus Group in the Scottish Parliament please contact Political Co-ordinator **Allan Cameron** on **0141 248 7131** or by e-mail at [allan.cameron@amicustheunion.org](mailto:allan.cameron@amicustheunion.org)

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Unite/Amicus Political Co-ordinator Allan Cameron believes the group can really make a mark on behalf of Unite/Amicus members over the next four years. "The political make up of the parliament is not what we would have liked; however, there will be ample opportunity for Unite/Amicus to highlight the concerns and aspirations of our members through campaigning with our MSPs."

The group are keen to help Unite/Amicus members engage in and around the parliament and this will be a joint priority for the union and the MSPs. Another important element of improving the union's political influence is through increased Labour Party membership and activity. The political unit will be working with MSPs at constituency level to revitalise local parties and strengthen the trade union link.

MSP Group Secretary John Park also recognises the importance of joint campaigns. "With Labour no longer in government our campaigning focus will need to become even sharper. Combining the resources of the union and the expertise of shop stewards with the activity of MSPs will move workplace issues up the political agenda."

Hugh Scullion Regional Political Officer said. 'For Trade Unionists in Labour, it is now more important than ever to get out and engage with people, to make the case for political progress. On their own working people have no platform and thereby no influence.

It is only by acting collectively, in the political arena, as in the workplace, that their views will be heard. It is through the development of the Trade Union link that we will convince more trade union members to become individual members of the party.

Working with the Scottish Parliament is just one important aspect of the union's political strategy which National Political Officer Mike Griffiths believes is vital to move workplace issues up the political agenda. 'We are currently undertaking a project to grow Party membership and activity by union members in the Party's structures and are aiming to double the number of Unite/Amicus members in the Labour Party over the next year.



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