

MEP Alyn awarded top honour by Vets' group

Leading Scottish MEP, Alyn Smith, had his deep commitment to animal welfare honoured by one of one of Europe's most respected and influential professional bodies this weekend.

Alyn, who represents the SNP in the European Parliament, has been made an Honorary Associate of the British Veterinary Association (BVA). The award is in recognition of his long-standing interest in the treatment of animals and the veterinary profession.

Alyn is a member of the parliament's Agriculture Committee where he is a strong and consistent fighter for Scotland's interests. He is passionate about animal welfare and has campaigned on a wide range of issues from commercial animal transport to protection of domestic rabbits.

He received his Honorary Associate membership today in a presentation at the world-famous Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies at Easter Bush, on the outskirts of Edinburgh. The school has a global reputation for the quality of its animal healthcare.

The award was presented by Robert Anderson, the Kelso-based President of the BVA's Scottish Branch and Ronnie Soutar, the organisation's Scottish Branch Junior Vice President.

Afterwards Alyn was given a short tour of the school's Small Animals Hospital and discussed some current issues in veterinary science.

Afterwards, Alyn – who is already Honorary Vice President of the Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SSPCA) – said: "I am both delighted and humbled to be offered this Honorary Associate membership of the BVA.

“It means a huge amount to me to have this relationship with an organisation which upholds the very highest standards of animal welfare practice and which is recognised internationally for its knowledge, integrity and professionalism.”

He continued: “Hopefully I’ll be able to help the BVA to explain its agenda to politicians and officials in Brussels in a useful way. I’ll also be able to give them feedback about what is going on along with guidance and advice.

“Animal welfare and veterinary issues are hugely important right across Europe. A lot has been done, but there is more work to do and I know that the BVA and myself share common ground in making sure that they continue to sit at the heart of the EU’s thinking.”

BVA President Robert Anderson commented: “Alyn was nominated as an Honorary Associate member of the British Veterinary Association by our Scottish Branch because of his keen political interest in agriculture and animal welfare and his ongoing commitment to these issues.

“With the EU Animal Health Law, the new animal welfare strategy, and proposals to combat antibiotic resistance all high on the European political agenda at the moment, we are absolutely delighted that Alyn has accepted our invitation. We look forward to working with him to ensure he is fully briefed on the Scottish and UK veterinary profession’s views.”