

MSP warns government on failure to invest in sport



TENNIS INVESTMENT SHOULD SERVE AS LESSON

Alison Johnstone, Scottish Green MSP for Lothian and former competitive athlete, is welcoming today's announcement of government funding for tennis facilities, but says it must also serve as a lesson. She is photographed before her election as an MSP 'taking over the baton' from outgoing Green MSP, Robin Harper.

The £5.8million is aimed at increasing participation, developing closer links between schools and places to play tennis, and rejuvenating park courts.

Alison, a member of Holyrood's cross-party group on sport, said:-"Andy Murray's victory has inspired a nation and we'll see a welcome increase in interest in tennis in Scotland as a result. It's a shame the investment we're now being promised has taken so long to materialise.

"Tennis used to be something anyone could do by simply walking on to their local court but over the years these facilities have been neglected or sold off for development. Governments at national and local level have allowed sports such as tennis to become costly and convoluted when they should be affordable and accessible."

Alison added:-"Many Scots will remember walk-on courts in their local parks and playing fields that are now grassed or concreted over, deemed costly and unnecessary. Promising to revive the public tennis courts in our town and city parks is a welcome step and they must be maintained for future generations.

“This sudden splashing of cash by government must serve as a lesson to those in authority that failure to invest in sport and leisure is a false economy.”