

Edinburgh South West MP resigns



There might have been little interest outside the capital in the fact that an Edinburgh MP had resigned. But Shadow Chancellor Alistair Darling just finished leading the Better Together campaign for the last two years, hailed by Labour and the Conservatives as a success in view of the No vote which resulted. In addition the Scottish Labour Leader and Deputy Leader have just resigned leading to a race to appoint a new leadership from the MSPs or MPs who have put themselves forward.

Labour Leader Ed Milliband said: "Alistair Darling is a man of values, decency and kindness. He will be much missed from the House of Commons.

"Alistair Darling has distinguished himself as an extraordinary public servant. A servant of the Labour Party, a servant of Scotland and a servant of the United Kingdom.

"He played a crucial role in helping Labour into government in 1997. And then throughout Labour's years in government he was a member of the Cabinet, playing a leading role in building a stronger, fairer country.

"From helping to get people back to work and tackling poverty, to building industrial prosperity, Alistair was a minister who showed both conviction and competence.

"He can also take pride that as Chancellor he helped steer our country through the worst financial crisis to hit the world in living memory. His was a calm head when calm heads were needed.□

"When he could have left frontline politics, he took on the role as Chair of Better Together in the Scottish referendum

campaign.

“He will always be remembered for leading and winning that campaign, and keeping Scotland in our United Kingdom.

“Alistair Darling is a man of values, decency and kindness. He will be much missed from the House of Commons.”

Previously Mr Darling was Chancellor of the Exchequer while Gordon Brown was Prime Minister, after portfolios in Trade and Industry, Transport, Work and Pensions, Social Security and Secretary of State for Scotland between 2003 and 2006. He won the 2010 General Election with a substantial margin of 19,473 to 11,026 over the Conservative candidate Jason Rust who is a City of Edinburgh councillor and fellow solicitor.

Darling had been called to the bar as a member of the Faculty of Advocates, but resigned his membership in 2010. The Daily Telegraph at the time suggested that he was fleeing from their relentless inquisition into his expenses and those of other MPs. The newspaper claimed that Mr Darling had claimed for expenses for his flat in London while living in Downing Street, and the Faculty were about to instigate disciplinary procedures against him.

Leading the Better Together campaign he clearly returned to some prominence in the media, but has been largely absent from the political scene since late September, except to [join forces with Gordon Brown](#) to lodge a motion in Westminster demanding that a basic agreement is published on additional powers for Scotland by the end of November.

His resignation will lead to a new Labour candidate being nominated for the seat, but whether Labour can hold the constituency is perhaps another matter. STV and YouGov have both published polls in recent days suggesting that Labour are set for huge losses in the General Election in May 2015.

Other Edinburgh constituencies are currently held by Ian

Murray MP (Labour) Edinburgh South, Sheila Gilmore (Labour) Edinburgh East, Mark Lazarowicz MP (Labour) Edinburgh North and Leith and Mike Crockart MP (LibDem) Edinburgh West.

For a list of Edinburgh MSPs please visit our information page [here](#).

