

# **Scottish Government urged to tackle the backlog of criminal trials**

**Lothians MSP Gordon Lindhurst is urging The Scottish Government to do more to tackle the backlog of trials at Edinburgh Sheriff Court.**

Mr Lindhurst says the latest figures show that over 2,500 trials are still waiting to be heard in the capital's court.

While he accepts the unavoidable backlog that will have occurred as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, he says more innovative and urgent action needs to be taken by the Justice Secretary in order to ensure trials are heard as soon as possible.

At the start of 2019, there were 1,542 trials waiting to be scheduled, which had risen to 1,980 before the pandemic shutdown, and has now risen to 2,595 trials.

Mr Lindhurst says it is completely unacceptable that so many victims, accused and witnesses are waiting for their day in court and says the waits must be tackled as a top priority.

He said: "Of course it was unavoidable that there would be a backlog of trials due to the courts being closed during the Covid-19 pandemic.

"However, we are still not seeing enough urgency and innovation to clear this backlog from the SNP's Justice Secretary.

“We now see over 2,500 trials waiting to be heard in Edinburgh’s Sheriff Court- that’s far too many victims, accused and witnesses waiting for their day in court.

“Even before the pandemic, we could see that backlog problems were on the rise in Edinburgh – the pandemic is not the root cause of these unacceptable delays.

“The issue of trial backlogs is a common theme in our courts and it is now up to the SNP to ensure the resources are provided in order we don’t see these continuing unacceptable delays in delivery of justice.”

