

Southside Newington Green News



Southside - Marchmont - Sciennes - Grange - Newington - Prestonfield - Blackford

Spring 2012

20MPH PILOT SCHEME SUCCESS

Results of life-saving speed restriction trial.

>> page 3

GREEN SPACES UNDER THREAT



FIGHTING CUTS IN EDUCATION

Greens put pupil interest first in council decisions.

>> page 4

SUSTAINABLE ENERGY OPTIONS



Working to Make Edinburgh a Better Place

Edinburgh is a fantastic capital city – but it has been let down badly by poor leadership. The Greens in Edinburgh have a fresh and exciting agenda for the city and look set to build on the support they have maintained during 2011. They are asking you to look at their record and back them in the May 2012 local government elections.

In the Holyrood elections, Greens were the only opposition party to hold their ground, and not lose any seats. Green MSPs Patrick Harvie and Edinburgh's Alison Johnstone (pictured) continue to represent Green values of fairness, caring and sustainability in the Scottish Parliament. They have fought to protect Scotland from Westminster

welfare cuts and ensure that Scotland's energy economy is built on renewable resources.

Since 2007, when Greens first sat on Edinburgh's Council, its three Green Councillors have campaigned to keep Council services publicly run. They have worked to protect the hearts of our communities by saving schools, community centres and green spaces. They have won measures that keep our streets safer and less polluting and our neighbourhoods thriving places we're proud to live in.

Greens now pledge to:

GIVE Edinburgh back to its citizens, involving our communities more in decisions that affect them;

developing proposals to allow big businesses to profit running everyday public services.

The first set of proposals, for emptying your bins and cleaning the streets, were rejected by the Council in November. Green Councillors were among the few who opposed privatisation from the start.

Greens reject such plans because we want citizens to have their say in how their services are delivered.



Edinburgh Green MSP Alison Johnstone represents Lothians in the Scottish Parliament, and is a leading figure in Green campaigns in the city.

CREATE more green jobs and support Edinburgh's local businesses and high streets;

PRIORITISE SPENDING to prevent problems before they require more costly solutions; for example by continuing to support campaigns like Splashback! to save Leith Waterworld

and retain a local facility that helps children and families stay active and healthy.

It's time for a fresh, new Council in Edinburgh - voting Green next May will help ensure the Council puts giving power back to its citizens, sustainable jobs, well-being and fairness first.

Greens Say No To Privatisation

The Liberal Democrat-SNP led Council in Edinburgh has pushed forward plans to privatise a wide range of local services. The scheme is called "Alternative Business Model" and it is being vehemently opposed by the Edinburgh Greens.

Everything from waste collection to providing school meals has been targeted. The Liberal Democrats and the SNP have spent around £3million of council tax payers' money on

Privatisation would mean services being run to suit the contractors, not residents. We are clear that public services must be protected. They should be run for the public good - not private profit.

Green Councillor Maggie Chapman said: "This proposal to allow big business into the Council was always deeply flawed. With huge pressure on Council budgets it is unforgivable that the Liberal Democrat-SNP

administration wasted £3m on a process that was always going to fail.

"We will continue to oppose the Liberal Democrat-SNP plans to hand services over to profit-motivated big business. The Council needs to focus on how to support residents in dealing with the cuts being forced on it by the Westminster and Holyrood governments. It should not be wasting time and money on exotic PFI-style schemes."

PROTECTING OUR GREEN SPACES

Edinburgh Greens believe we must be the custodians of our green spaces and protect them from unwarranted encroachment.

Councillor Alison Johnstone is delighted that the Save Inverleith Park campaign succeeded in its fight to stop the proposed sell-off of an integral part of the park. Members of the Green Party were active in the campaign and a petition of over 8,000 signatures was presented to the Lord Provost. Campaigners now want it designated as 'open space' to protect against future development.

Despite this particular success, Cllr Johnstone warned that green spaces in Edinburgh continue to be under threat. Alison said: "We cannot afford to be complacent. The new development at Craighouse Campus continues to concern local residents who value this historic beauty spot as a place to meet, walk and play."

The developers propose building new houses on the site and converting the existing historic buildings into homes. Alison Johnstone said: "I share local residents' concerns that this development will restrict access to this well-used landscape and increase traffic across the site. Preserving precious green spaces in our city is essential for the health of our environment and the health of everyone."



Green Councillor Steve Burgess outside one of the affected hospitals

What Are Your Views on City Hospitals?

Your views count, so please make yourself heard - that's the message from Edinburgh Greens. They are backing calls that the NHS must consult local communities on their major plans for local hospitals. Community Councils in Southside/Newington and Meadows/Morningside wards have asked to meet regularly with NHS Lothian to discuss the future of the Royal Edinburgh and Astley Ainslie hospitals.

NHS Lothian intends to redevelop the Royal Edinburgh Hospital on a phased basis, to make it a "modern, fit-for purpose facility". Many of the services currently at the Astley Ainslie should move there by 2016. Edinburgh residents should remember how the sale of the old Royal Infirmary site was handled without proper consultation and with very poor benefit to the public.

Green MSP Alison Johnstone declared: "We welcome NHS Lothian's plans to provide up-to-date, safe and dignified care for some of the most vulnerable members of

our community. Both hospitals are significant parts of our area. Local communities need to have their voices heard about how the Royal Edinburgh will meet residents' needs; what will happen to the Astley Ainslie site; how all this will be paid for; and what community benefit will result."

Councillor Steve Burgess (pictured) added: "Both sites contain some wonderful green spaces of real value for patients and residents alike, which we would not like to see disappear. The NHS has recently restricted access through the Astley Ainslie, without consultation with the community, and we don't want this to be a foretaste of things to come."

Elsewhere, NHS Lothian's plans are well advanced to build a new Hospital for Sick Children on the Royal Infirmary site at Little France. Cllr Burgess said: "We want NHS Lothian to keep the community in Southside Newington well informed of their plans to dispose of the current Sciennes site."

A Wheel Discovery!

Have you discovered one of Edinburgh's hidden gems? Tucked away off Ratcliffe Terrace, just above the BP petrol station, the Bike Station promotes cycling through recycling old bikes and selling them cheap; training; maintenance; and campaigning.

One of the biggest bicycle recycling organisations in the UK, it has taken in over 30,000 discarded bikes in seven years. Around 40% have been repaired, providing affordable, yet high-quality bikes. Adult bikes are sold on Saturdays from 10.30-16.30, from £50 upwards, and children's bikes on Fridays from £20 upwards. All come with a three month warranty. Alternatively, if you have an old bike taking up room in your stair or shed, the Bike Station can put it to good use again.

The Bike Station provides cycle training for beginners, those getting back on their bikes, or disabled people with special needs. Training can be tailored to a family's needs and can include

trying out child-trailers, child-seats, and 'tag-alongs', as well as cycling skills and building confidence.

The Bike Station also runs bike maintenance courses and hands-on workshops, run by friendly volunteers. There are Fix Your Own Bike sessions on Wednesdays from 16:00-20:00 and Saturdays 12:00-16:00 at their premises, and popular Dr Bike events around Edinburgh in workplaces, schools, parks and at local events. Also, if you don't want to do it yourself, they offer servicing options from a check-up to a full service.

The Bike Station also promotes cycling as a healthy and sustainable means of transport, for instance designing the stylish Edinburgh Innertube cycle route map, or working with Edinburgh employers to become 'Cycle Friendly', qualifying them for grants from Cycling Scotland. Well done and thank you, the Bike Station.

For more information go to www.thebikestation.org.uk or www.innertubemap.com



The Bike Station

Image courtesy of CityCyclingEdinburgh.info

EDINBURGH MUST ADOPT FIVE-POINT WELL-BEING PLAN FOR A FULLER LIFE

Many in Edinburgh enjoy a very high quality of life – but we need to make this possible for everyone. Green Councillors have called for Edinburgh to “go beyond money” in improving lives, in a city where well-being is within everyone’s reach.

Drawing on independent research from the New Economics Foundation, Greens want the Council to help people achieve “Five Ways to Well-being”. The concepts have been adopted in NHS Lothian’s strategy for mental health and well-being, but Greens want Edinburgh Council to go much further in promoting them.

Green Councillor Steve Burgess (pictured) said: “Feeling secure economically is crucial for your well-being, for instance having a secure job and a pension. Or a decent place to stay. That requires a stable economy, not one based on growth at all costs and then slump.

Steve emphasised the most important factor for well-being is the quality and support of personal relationships. “It is encouraging to learn that, once basic needs are met, we can lead happier, more fulfilling lives without spending more money.”



FIVE WAYS TO WELL-BEING

1. Connect with the people around you, with family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. Invest time in developing these relationships as the corner stones of your life.

2. Be active. Exercise makes you feel good, particularly if you find an activity you enjoy that’s right for your level of mobility, whether walking, dancing, playing games, cycling, or even singing.

3. Take notice: be aware of the world around you. Spot the beautiful, notice the unusual. Reflecting on your experiences helps you appreciate what matters to you.

4. Keep learning: try something new, or rediscover an old interest. Set a challenge you will enjoy achieving. Learning new things makes you more confident.

5. Give. Do something nice for a friend, or a stranger. Join a community group, volunteer your time. Look out as well as in. Linking to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding.

www.neweconomics.org/programmes/well-being



Alison Johnstone with supporters of the Moving Planet March



Measuring Success of 20mph Pilot

Greens have criticised the Council’s Transport Committee for not keeping main roads in its 20mph pilot. Greater weight should have been given to the views of the community compared to the arguments from Road Traffic Police and Lothian Buses. Now they are pleased to see the Council is planning to measure the effects of the scheme; it has already performed speed and volume surveys in much of the pilot area.

An attitude survey is collecting views from local residents on the local environment; the speed of vehicles; and walking and cycling.

Councillor Steve Burgess welcomed this initiative: “It is pleasing to hear the Scottish Government is taking an interest in this pilot. Greens are clear we prefer our streets not to be rat-runs or race-tracks; that walking and cycling is made safer and a more pleasant experience for all; and that motorists, cyclists and pedestrians all behave with consideration for each other. We hope the survey will be repeated once the scheme has been working for a year, so we can get a clear picture of the benefits.”

Why Leith Biomass is a Wasted Energy Option

While Greens have been campaigning globally – they are also energetic in acting locally too. Councillor Alison Johnstone joined protesters at the Moving Planet march in September to the Scottish Parliament. The event called for a sustainable energy future and highlighted a national problem which has global implications – the four proposed unsustainable Forth Energy biomass plants at the ports of Dundee, Grangemouth, Rosyth and Leith.

Speaking at the rally, Alison said: “The proposed Leith Biomass plant would be a large-scale power station

burning imported wood from other parts of the world. The campaigners have accurately shown the widespread effects of this development. This is not just a local issue of unnecessary disruption and pollution, but part of a growing problem linked to global issues such as destruction of forests and human rights abuses of other communities. This is not the sustainable energy of the future we are looking for.

“I look forward to working alongside other campaigners and activists that want to work towards a more realistic and genuinely sustainable energy future for Edinburgh.”



CAN YOU VOTE THIS MAY?

Students can vote twice in local government elections. Students can be registered to vote at their home AND university addresses, provided these are not in the same local government area. They can get a postal vote for one address and vote in person at the other address.

British, Irish and qualifying citizens of Commonwealth countries (including Cyprus and Malta) can register and vote at all elections.

To qualify, Commonwealth citizens must be resident in the UK and either have leave to remain in the UK or not require such leave. Citizens of EU member states resident in the UK can vote in local government elections but, apart from the Republic of Ireland, cannot vote in UK Parliamentary elections.

For more information see www.aboutmyvote.co.uk

Greens Will Give Edinburgh Back to the People

Edinburgh Greens have pledged to give citizens back their city. Over the past four years Edinburgh has suffered from gross mismanagement and massive damage to its standing and reputation. Too many decisions have been taken behind closed doors by people unaccountable to the voters. The Council has ceased to serve its people and local communities and instead is serving the interests of a tiny elite. The Greens will stop this, and will give power back to the people of Edinburgh.

The trams disaster and the grotesque waste of £3 million on proposals for the failed 'Alternative Business Model' privatisation scheme are a wake-up call to all of us. Greens have called for an investigation into companies such as tie Ltd, which was responsible for the tram project failure.

Greens have opposed removing the local power to fund local projects with the decision-making being handed to unaccountable officials. Greens have also piloted the popular Feith Decides project to allow people in local neighbourhoods to decide who benefits from Council grants.

Greens want to create an open and transparent administration that doesn't hide what it is doing from citizens. Greens want a Council that involves the people of Edinburgh. For too long the Council has discounted the people of Edinburgh, and placed its trust in vested interests.

Only when we make the Council answer to the people of Edinburgh, not national and multi-national corporate interests or personal agendas, will we be able to avoid another tram crisis or privatisation fiasco. The Council can then concentrate on what matters to ordinary people: creating jobs, caring for our neighbourhoods, educating our children and looking after the vulnerable.

RESTORING THE SOUTHSIDE - TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

The Council is applying to the Lottery to renovate buildings and parks in the Southside. Which do you think needs restoring most? Please e-mail your answer to Cllr Steve Burgess at steve.burgess@scottishgreens.org.uk

- A. Odeon Cinema
- B. St Patrick's Square
- C. Buccleuch Parish Church (west side opposite The Causey)
- D. The Causey
- E. Southside Community Centre
- F. Old Mosque Kitchen

SINGING FOR A GREEN FUTURE

Award-winning singer-songwriter KARINE POLWART is to host a special event for the Green party at the end of March.

Karine said: "I'm delighted to be hosting this evening to help the Greens gain even more councillors. The party is not beholden to millionaire backers or big companies yet its message needs to be heard even more urgently than ever." Karine Polwart appears on 28 March at Greyfriars Kirk. Tickets £12 (£8 conc) from www.thebooth.co.uk or 0796 702 1708. See also www.karinepolwart.com

Can you help?

Can you help Steve Burgess and the Edinburgh Greens win in the Edinburgh Southside/Newington Council Elections, and help to tackle the issues raised in this newspaper? You can make the difference! Remember that the elections use a transferrable vote system, and your ward has several councillors. Even if you don't vote Green first, you can still help by voting Green with your second or third vote.

Yes, I will help by:

- Voting Green to elect Steve Burgess as the Green councillor for Edinburgh Southside/Newington on 3 May
- Putting up an election poster in my window
- Delivering some leaflets in my area
- Doing some paperwork, such as stuffing envelopes
- Making a donation
- Joining the Scottish Greens

Name

Address

Postcode

Telephone

Email

Please return this form to:
 Edinburgh Greens
 20 Graham Street
 Edinburgh
 EH6 5QR
 or email:
edinburgh@scottishgreens.org.uk

Fair processing: We never share your information with any third party unless required to do so by law or you ask us to do so. We keep it on record purely so we can contact you about the work of the Greens. If you wish to have all our information about you deleted, our contact information is to the left.

www.edinburghgreens.org.uk

Follow us on twitter:
[@EdinburghGreens](https://twitter.com/EdinburghGreens)

Or find us on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/EdinburghGreens

The Scottish Green Party (Edinburgh Branch)
20 Graham Street,
Edinburgh EH6 5QR
t. 08700 772207
e. edinburgh@scottishgreens.org.uk
w. www.edinburghgreens.org.uk

Promoted by Nigel Bagshaw on behalf of the Scottish Green Party, both at 20 Graham St, Edinburgh, EH6 5QR, and printed on recycled paper by Trinity Mirror, Stanley Boulevard, Blantyre, G72 0BN.