

## Your Green Team

*Your Voice in the  
Scottish  
Parliament*



**Robin Harper,**  
Green MSP  
for Lothians

*Your Voice on  
the Council*



**Steve Burgess,**  
Green Councillor  
for Southside &  
Newington

www.  
edinburghgreens.  
org.uk

# Greens back parents against School Closures

**Edinburgh's Green Councillors have thrown their weight behind parents campaigning to keep primary schools open.**

The City Council wants to close schools in Drumbrae, Fort, Royston and Burdiehouse. It has also refused to say that the closures will stop there.

Council leaders claim that there are thousands of surplus places in primary schools. However, this claim is blown wide open by Green City Councillor, Alison Johnstone, in a briefing sent to all Parent Councils in Edinburgh. The briefing challenges the council's plans to leave some schools with severe overcrowding, while others face closure.



Councillor Johnstone, the Greens' Education Spokesperson, has attended many of the school closures meetings.

She said: "The continuing school closures programme is like the Beeching cuts to the railways in the 1960s: done in haste and regretted for decades. We need smaller class sizes, not shut schools. Closures attack communities already facing loss of vital services like post offices and shops, and will force children to travel for long distances to school. These closures will cost us all in the long term, as we are forced to reverse the decisions in the future."

The consultation on closures closed on 16 October, with a decision expected by 17 December.

## **Robin Harper: Scotland must rise to climate target**

**Local Green MSP, Robin Harper, has hailed Scotland's ground-breaking Climate Change Act, but has argued that it will be judged by what it achieves, not by warm words.**

Earlier in 2009, the Scottish Parliament passed the Act, which commits Scotland to reduce greenhouse gases by 80% by 2050. Green MSPs were successful in getting aviation included in the Act and in ensuring that annual

Scottish Budgets have to take account of their impact on greenhouse gases.

Lothians MSP Harper said: "People across Edinburgh lobbied hard to make this Act meaningful. But this is only the first step. There is no point in having good laws if governments continue down the path of airport expansion, massive road-building and letting the country's housing stock leak heat into the damp air."

# Contact Edinburgh Greens

Edinburgh Green Party has members throughout the city and has 3 councillors elected to the City Chambers: Alison Johnstone, Maggie Chapman and Steve Burgess

You can contact them on:

Edinburgh@scottishgreens.org.uk

Or write to them at Thorn House, 5 Rose Street, Edinburgh, EH2 2PR

You can also contact your Green MSP, Robin Harper on robin.harper.msp@scottish.parliament.uk or 0131 348 6421

This newsletter is also available in large print

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## Southside/Newington report from Cllr Steve Burgess

### ***Odeon Latest***

It's been a busy summer across Southside/Newington Ward. A demolition ball still hangs over the former Odeon cinema on Clerk Street. Last month I visited the site with the public local inquiry Reporter, who is deciding its fate. If you think that the inside of the old cinema should not be demolished but kept as a venue write to DPEA, Callendar Business Park, Falkirk FK1 1XR.

### ***New traffic lights***

After accidents at the junction of Mayfield Road and West Savile Terrace and a campaign by parents from Sciennes primary, I'm pleased to say the Council is proposing traffic lights to improve safety. If you have any views please contact me at steve.burgess@edinburgh.gov.uk or 0131 529 3274.

### ***All-day cycleway***

Further good news is the Transport committee supported my suggestion that the Council investigate creating Edinburgh's first continuous, all-day, street cycleway, between George Square and King's Buildings. Transport officers

will now draw up plans and consult residents.

### ***Smart meters***

I'm also pleased to say that, thanks to Green Councillors, you can now borrow a 'Smart' meter from Newington Library and check in real time how much your electricity is costing in pounds and climate changing pollution!

### ***Climate Challenge Fund***

And finally the Climate Challenge Fund, set up by Green MSPs, has awarded grants to local community groups who are reducing climate changing pollution. Contact Caroline.stjohnston@sdc-scotland.org.uk or 0131 625 1890 for details of forthcoming workshops about the fund.

As I've only had space here to highlight just a few recent issues, if there's something concerning you, as ever please get in touch.

Best wishes,

*Steve*

### ***Edinburgh Greens need your help!***

Is there an issue that affects where you live? Can you help with our next Election campaign? Contact us at Edinburgh@scottishgreens.org.uk or at Edinburgh Green Party, Thorn House, 5 Rose Street, Edinburgh, EH2 2PR.

- I can help deliver **Green Action** in my street
- I'd like more information about the **Scottish Green Party**
- I'd like to make a donation to **Edinburgh Green Party**

*(cheques payable to Edinburgh Green Party)*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Tel. \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Information on this form will be kept private and used only for Green Party contact