

GREEN NEWS

SPRING
2019



**Craigentenny
& Duddingston**

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Climate emergency: time for change in city

THE UNITED NATIONS has warned us and our children have taken it to heart. Climate-changing pollution must be halved by 2030, to avoid catastrophic world-wide impacts, say Edinburgh's Green politicians.

Green MSPs and Green councillors have pressed the Scottish Parliament and the council to make the climate emergency a top priority. Green MSP Alison Johnstone said, 'Scotland has a real opportunity to continue to lead the world on climate change, but only if the Government agrees to set an early "zero-carbon" target and then act on it.'

Within Edinburgh, Green councillors have highlighted the opportunities for the capital to take the lead in tackling climate change. Transforming city travel, making buildings retain heat and protecting the city's tree cover are good for the planet but also make for a better, more liveable city. So too, local food growing, reducing plastic waste and re-directing pension funds from oil, gas and coal investment.



Edinburgh Green councillor Mary Campbell has won Council support for children attending climate strikes

According to Green councillor Cllr Steve Burgess: 'All round it is a win-win which is why the Greens put forward a "Climate Emergency Fund" earlier in 2019. This is the defining issue facing Edinburgh and every other city'.

Write to your councillors and MSPs and ask them to sign up to the pledge to divest council

pension funds from climate-damaging fossil fuels. To receive a letter template, email seeg@scottishgreens.org.uk.

Petition

Back the Scottish Greens' call for a Climate Emergency Bill at greens.scot/climate-emergency

Fairer Benefits



Green MSP
Alison
Johnstone has
helped end
unnecessary
face to face
benefit
assessments.

“One of my proudest moments as an MSP!” said Alison Johnstone about her role in establishing the new, fairer Scottish social security system that gives support for everyone to play a full role in their communities.

Alison’s concerns include the half million Scots who claim one of the disability or carer’s benefits. Face-to-face assessments for payments are often distressing and stressful. Thousands of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) claimants have had lower awards, or lost their entitlement.

Green proposals to outlaw face-to-face assessments, where the evidence is already available, were unanimously adopted by the Scottish Parliament last year. We should now have high hopes for a more humane way of assessing eligibility for Scottish social security.

Carer support must recognise the contribution of those who care for more than one person. The Young Carer Grant - a Green manifesto proposal - should also be payable to all young people providing care.

Our city: raising the funds we need

Greens have secured promises from the Scottish Government which allow local Councils to raise more money themselves.

The promised changes will mean councils can invest in their services. These include the powers, if councils choose, to introduce new levies to make significant improvements in their areas. The Government will also act on throw-away plastic bags and drinks cups.

There will also be cross-party talks to agree and legislate on fixing the broken Council Tax. Cllr Steve Burgess said; “All these changes restore an element of local democracy and accountability.”

Backing for Green calls for tourist levy

Green councillors have hailed new support for a tourist levy which they first proposed back in 2011. 90% of residents now support a tourist levy, the norm in many other European cities. The council suggests that at around £2 per room per night, it will raise just short of £15m a year. In turn that money could be used to fund a mixture of visitor services and services such as street-cleaning, public safety and parks.

Green MSPs secured Scottish Government support for councils to have the power to introduce a tourist levy, with Edinburgh first in line to use those powers.

Contact your local Greens



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