

GREEN NEWS

AUTUMN
2018



Southside
& Newington

ST LEONARDS – SCIENNES – THE GRANGE
PRESTONFIELD – BLACKFORD – NETHER LIBERTON

Green Councillor
Alex Staniforth
urges you to sign
the tourist tax
petition at:
[greens.scot/
tourist-tax](http://greens.scot/tourist-tax)



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Support for 'stay n pay'?

Edinburgh Greens have launched a public petition calling on the Scottish Government to allow councils to bring in a transient-visitor levy or 'tourist tax'.

Currently only residents pay for services like waste collection and city museums, but it's estimated that a 'stay n pay' scheme could raise £10-20million from visitors every year.

Green Councillor Alex Staniforth said: "When Greens first proposed a visitor levy eight years ago it was rejected by the Council. Now nearly everyone is in favour. The Council is having talks with tourism chiefs and working on a case to put to Scottish Ministers, so I'm hopeful." To help put pressure on the Scottish Government, please sign our petition at greens.scot/tourist-tax

Green vision for city centre

A vision to transform the city is on offer from Edinburgh Council. Using many Green ideas, the Council is consulting on plans for the city centre, agreeing priority improvements for years ahead.

Ideas to consider are restricting through traffic and widening pavements; making some streets pedestrian only; and segregated cycle routes. Parks, squares and gardens could be improved, to linger in and enjoy the city. Signposts and marked walks could help people find their way and explore. Bus and freight hubs are suggested, with people and goods arriving in the city centre in electric vehicles, with smart and integrated ticketing added.

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Pressure on holiday lets

Green MSP Andy Wightman has proposed that Parliament amends forthcoming planning laws to require properties used for short-term lets to obtain planning permission for change-of-use. Councils would then be able to refuse or approve applications for short-term letting in domestic properties.

Andy Wightman said: "It's estimated there are now more than 10,000 short-term lets in Edinburgh. Where these are not the main residence of the landlord, they reduce the availability of housing

for people who actually need to live in the city. This is pushing up rents as well as inflating house prices. I hope the Parliament will support my proposal to get to grips with this issue."



Green MSP Andy Wightman seeks planning legislation for holiday lets

Edinburgh Council has also recently called on the Scottish Government to allow it to introduce a licensing scheme for short-term lets which would ensure the quality and safety of

accommodation for visitors.

If short-term letting concerns you, please visit Andy's 'Homes First' campaign at greens.scot/homesfirst



Forcing buses to overtake other traffic delays everyone

U-turn on 7-7-7 bus lanes

Edinburgh Council has bowed to pressure from Green councillors and transport organisations. Bus lanes will go back to being used only by buses, taxis and cycles from 7am to 7pm, 7 days a week.

This reverses the previous decision to allow cars and other vehicles into bus lanes during peak times. For instance, Lothian Buses were finding journey times had suffered. Green transport spokesperson, Councillor Chas Booth said:

"We voted the first time against the weakening of bus lane protection. I'm relieved the Transport Committee has thought again. Public transport has to be fast and efficient to meet residents' needs; encourage people out of cars; and reduce congestion and pollution in the city."

Meadows to George Street

Under the heading, 'Streets for People' Edinburgh Council has been consulting on ideas to improve the route from Southside & Newington through the Meadows over the Mound and down Hanover Street.

Cllr Steve Burgess said:

"Anyone who uses these streets, especially in August, knows that pedestrians spill over the pavements onto the roads, particularly on George IV Bridge and down the Mound. This is a prime route on which to reduce traffic, widen the pavements and make key junctions shared use space, like Rose Street."

South East Edinburgh Greens suggest easing pressure on the busiest routes with more signs to help people find and explore places like George Square, Bristo Place, the News Steps, and the closes and vennels off the High Street.



LOCAL PLACES

SOUTHSIDE & NEWINGTON has always thrived because local people have been prepared to fight to keep places for community use. Over the years there have been successes and some losses, but never apathy.

Communities take the initiative

The upcoming sale of the Astley Ainslie Hospital site has grabbed the imagination of local people.

THE OASIS PROJECT

aims to conserve the beautiful, irreplaceable Astley Ainsley Park. An oasis of calm, it shelters the hospital and children's nursery, and its grounds and many protected trees provide a peaceful retreat.

THE FOUR BORDERING COMMUNITY COUNCILS

have lodged a draft planning brief for site redevelopment. It includes all the aspects they would like to see conserved and kept in the public domain. They took the initiative to present their ideas first to

the NHS, rather than waiting to respond to their ideas when shared with us.

ASTLEY AINSLIE COMMUNITY TRUST

is investigating the possibility of a community buy-out or an asset transfer. The process reinforces all other strategies to honour the spirit of the original will and bequest that founded the hospital. They have a weekly meeting in Project Coffee, Bruntsfield, on Tuesdays 9-10 am. Further details on website: aact.scot



Pleasance home for Serenity

Just weeks before the Festival started, a frenzy of DIY activity was spotted at 188-192 Pleasance. A team of Serenity volunteers and staff, and members of the public, were working round the clock to get Scotland's first recovery café relocated to its new home.

Serenity started out just off Holyrood Road nine years ago, set up by the charity Comas, to provide a safe, supportive place for people recovering from alcohol and drug addiction. The café is part of the wider Serenity project that offers life-changing activities for adults in recovery and young people who've experienced trauma.

The café is welcoming to the whole community and

already has a great buzz about the place. You can get a tasty full breakfast, lunch or tea 8am-6pm.

The café is just part of Serenity's relocation project. They still have the former rugby club to renovate for meeting, office and activity space. This is a challenge, given how long that building has been empty - if you'd like to help, please donate: uk.gofundme.com/saveourserenity

Morgan's CAT falls

A novel Community Asset Transfer (CAT) request to lease Morgan's Playing Field off Peffermill Road from the Council has not gone ahead. Bidders Street Soccer and Edinburgh South Community Football Club (ESC FC) did not qualify as a community body under the rules.

The proposal was to develop a football training centre for homeless people to practice coaching skills - including three all-weather pitches, supported accommodation, and a cafe and changing block. ESC FC whose youngsters currently play at Morgan's would have been able to play through the winter. Some local residents had raised concerns, particularly over increased traffic and loss of open space whilst others supported the venture. It is understood Street Soccer and ESC FC are now considering approaching the Council directly for a lease rather than through a CAT request.



Well done to the Southside Association, artist Kate George and volunteers for fantastic murals in Gibb's Entry Pend and Haddon's Court Pend

Green Vision for City Centre continued from front page

Green's City Centre Councillor, Claire Miller enthusiastically supported the consultation:

"These proposals show the influence of Green ideas on Edinburgh becoming a more liveable and healthier city. We want a city that is easy for all to get about in and enjoy, and we're sure there are lots more ideas to come."

Have your say online or at a public meetings near you.



Green Councillor Steve Burgess and young Green, Katri Hastings celebrate the Council's new task force, set up to tackle plastic pollution in Edinburgh.

Diary Dates

GRANGE & PRESTONFIELD COMMUNITY COUNCIL

meets at Cameron House
Community Centre on the
3rd Wednesday, 7pm.

SOUTHSIDE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

meets at Nelson
Hall on the 2nd Monday,
6:45pm.

MARCHMONT & SCIENNES COMMUNITY COUNCIL

meets at St Catherine's Argyle
Church Halls on the 4th
Wednesday, 7:30pm.

SOUTH EAST EDINBURGH GREENS

meet at Nelson Hall
on the 2nd Thursday, 7pm.
Open to all Green supporters

Plastic pollution – NO THANKS!

David Attenborough's 'Blue Planet II' recently raised awareness of the impact of so called disposable plastics, especially on sea-life.

Green Councillor Steve Burgess has won agreement from Edinburgh Council to set up a task force to tackle the City's plastic pollution. Pressure from Green Councillors has already replaced plastic water bottles in school packed lunches and secured backing for a city-wide water-bottle refill scheme.

Young Green, Katri Hastings, has been working with Steve on ideas for plastic-reduction such as a reusable coffee-cup scheme for cafes. Katri says: "For ideas on how you can help reduce plastic pollution, you can read my blog on 'Single-use plastics' at www.edinburgh.greens.org.uk"

Contact your local Greens



Your Green councillor: Steve Burgess is the Green councillor for Southside & Newington. Contact Steve steve.burgess@edinburgh.gov.uk or 0131 529 3274 to arrange a convenient time to meet at a local venue, your home or the City Chambers.

Your Green MSPs: Alison Johnstone and Andy Wightman on 0131 348 5000
Email Alison: alison.johnstone.msp@scottish.parliament.uk
Email Andy: andy.wightman.msp@scottish.parliament.uk



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