

## Edinburgh Green Councillors Group, Report for Branch meeting April 2018

Steve Burgess used [Council Leader's question time](#) to raise the council's capacity to progress environmental sustainability for example **on single-use plastics** and got agreement from Cllr McVey to meet him and the Council CEO to discuss.

On the transport brief, Chas Booth has been pushing the council to ensure that **cycling and walking projects** are delivered on time, following a number of high-profile improvements being delayed.

Mary Campbell pushed for a report at Education, Children and Families committee that will investigate bringing Edinburgh **school uniform grants** in line with the Child Poverty Action Group estimate of the true cost of school uniform.

At Finance Committee Gavin Corbett and Claire Miller backed a proposal for the council HQ to offer office space for **an ethical finance hub** to get and up and running, but were outvoted by other parties. More positively, a Green amendment was accepted at Housing and Economy Committee which aimed to maximise **affordable housing**, small business workspace and district heating at Fountainbridge's former brewery sites.

On behalf of the city council Gavin Corbett attended the first meeting, in Paisley, of the councillors' sounding board for a trial of **citizens basic income** in Scotland. Edinburgh is one of four councils involved in the trial, along with Glasgow, North Ayrshire and Fife.

Melanie Main convened the first meeting of the **Primary Care** Strategy Oversight Board for integrated services, leading the planning for the next five years of GPs and community services. Spent much time meeting with interested parties and groups including the Deprivation Interest group, Chief Nurse, GPs and Public Health consultants.

At Audit committee, Mel requested further investigation into the management of alcohol and drug services provided in the city.

Claire Miller put forward a detailed amendment to the coalition's **Economic Strategy** which would have transformed the strategy into a greener vision for a carbon neutral economy and increased focus on closing the gap between rich and poor within the local economy. The convenor agreed to work with the Greens to incorporate some of these proposals and redraft the economy strategy.

At Culture & Communities committee Alex Staniforth asked a question in full council pressing for a plan on substantially increasing **participatory budgeting**.

Alex also worked with Claire on the **Princes Street Gardens** Bandstand, making sure we see a full report on proposals for running it and reassuring the public that common land will NOT be handed over to a private company.

## **In Green Wards –**

In City Centre ward, Claire Miller has been investigating new ways to provide flexible community transport for people in the Dumbiedykes area who lack accessible public transport to local services such as their GP, community centre and local shops. She is working with community transport council officers and possible partners to design a service around the needs of the community.

In Craightinny/Duddingston, Alex Staniforth has been working on the proposals for Meadowbank, trying to make sure that the new stadium development is the best deal possible for local people and the environment.

In Fountainbridge-Craiglockhart Gavin Corbett organised the first community clean up as part of the Clean Green Hutchison campaign and was well supported by local residents, school and businesses, with two lorry-loads of debris collected. As canal champion he also visited social enterprise Bridge8 hub to talk about their development plans alongside the canal.

In Leith, Chas has been supporting volunteers to deliver a successful Leith Chooses event and voting process, which allows Leithers to vote on how nearly £120,000 is delivered to local charities and voluntary projects.

In Morningside ward, Melanie Main set up formal residents group for Newbattle Terrace to liaise with Council on improvements to streetscape and fundraising. And after much campaigning saw the removal of buildings on and restoration of the Green belt at the former Braid Hills Golf course.

In Portobello/Craigmillar ward Mary set up and ran a public meeting on the future of the Portobello Promenade, to get an agreed set of improvement priorities for the Friends of Porty Prom to work on with key stakeholders.

For Southside-Newington ward, the South East Greens team produced a Spring Newsletter packed full of interesting articles including a survey about high rents in the area and Greens' campaign for a city-wide Rent Pressure Zone to cap rent increases. Steve Burgess also attended the opening of Bridge End Farmhouse – a fantastic renovation and new community resource that Green councillors actively supported when the Bridgend Inspiring Growth came to Finance committee requesting a lease.