



# EDINBURGH GREEN COUNCILLORS' REPORT, SEPTEMBER 2016

Exciting news as this report goes to press that after Edinburgh Greens was the first party to select its top [candidates](#) for next year's council election, the Boundary Commission proposals for Edinburgh have been accepted. This means all six Green target seats are now four-member wards, rather than three-member, making the election next year of more Green councillors even more of a prospect!

## Improving Public Participation - Opening up Edinburgh



Following the largest participatory budgeting event in the City so far, instigated by Melanie Main, the South Central Neighbourhood Partnership has agreed to seek Scottish Government funding to support a second 'South Central Decides' event in 2017 (see also ward highlights below)

their jobs. Previously what information councillors could have access to was unclear.

This summer Melanie also pushed the Council hard to agree a 'Member-Officer Protocol' for the Council that officially confirms the right of councillors to see any departmental information that will help them do

Gavin Corbett won backing at a meeting of the full Council to give Craightinny resident Tracy Rendall, the William Y Darling award for citizenship for 2015-16.

## Greener Jobs

At the start of the summer Gavin Corbett hosted a round table with NGOs and academics on a ["Green City Region Deal"](#) for a sustainable city economy. Greens are keen that Edinburgh's City Deal is much more than business-as-usual infrastructure for the existing economic model.

Gavin also met with senior officials in the UK and Scottish Governments to showcase [Remade in Edinburgh's](#) role in developing a repair economy for Edinburgh. Greens believe that diversion of used goods away from landfill through repair and reuse has largely untapped and massive potential.



Gavin also successfully backed small businesses in their campaign to stay at the [Tron Kirk's Royal Mile market](#): a decision which the council first rejected but subsequently accepted.

## Supporting Communities & Neighbourhoods

The issue hitting the headlines this month was the well-publicised failure of the waste collection service. Green councillor Steve Burgess led on highlighting the scale of [missed collections](#), complaints being up over 30% in the last year to over 50,000, as well as calling for greater [transparency](#) over the way forward.

Steve also welcomed the end of [right to buy](#) for council homes in his newspaper column.

On Planning, Nigel Bagshaw reiterated Green opposition to the latest [Local Development Plan](#) (LDP), as it will not meet the needs of city and will do substantial harm to the environment. Nigel also highlighted the

unfairness of the LDP process in which communities have no real say. Greens want to see the provision of more affordable housing but in compact, sustainable neighbourhoods built around active travel and public transport, and with good local amenities. Sadly, the new LDP will fail to deliver that.

Chas Booth sought to tackle the tension between city centre living and a vibrant live music sector with proposals on [new licensing rules](#).

After a five year campaign, Steve Burgess and Melanie Main, with the support of local people and organisations, have secured three new public Rights of Way through the Astley Ainslie hospital site. The routes have been registered on Scotways, the rights of way association, website. Any future owner of the site will have to allow passage through the site between homes, schools and shops or face court action by the Council.



## Sustainable Transport



Following some fears that passing control of Lothian Buses to Transport for Edinburgh was paving the way for privatisation, Nigel Bagshaw led Green councillors in calling for an absolute commitment to [Lothian buses](#) remaining in public hands.

Green councillors Nigel Bagshaw and Chas Booth also led on [backing cyclists in supporting a direct route](#) from the west of the city through Roseburn. Sadly the Council Labour/SNP coalition bottled the decision and instead kicked it to a working group to try to sort out.

Nigel and Chas also supported making the 'School Streets' pilot project permanent, limiting vehicle access around schools at the start and end of the school day.

## Cleaner, Greener Energy



With the Directors of 'Energy for Edinburgh' recruited over the Summer, Chas Booth is set to join the first full board meeting of this council energy services company to bring forward energy efficiency and renewable generation in the City.

Solar panels have now been installed on 19 council buildings across the City by Edinburgh Community Solar, the company championed and supported by Chas.

## Highlights from Green Councillors' Wards

In Fountainbridge-Craiglockhart Gavin Corbett supported residents in a [successful campaign](#) to head off excessive development at B-listed Redhall House and joined over a hundred residents at an Allan Park street party to celebrate another successful campaign against a house being demolished to build a new road. Gavin has also set up a meeting to revive Friends of Harrison Park.

In Leith, Chas Booth secured agreement from the Leith Neighbourhood Partnership to double the size of the award fund in 'Leith Decides'. This innovative scheme, now in its sixth year, gives ordinary Leithers a vote on how community grants are distributed. This year's event on 8 October, will also be the first in Scotland to use electronic voting.

In Meadows-Morningside, Melanie Main is supporting Edinburgh Students housing co-operative in a venture to buy their next building. Mel has also been supporting residents of Greenbank Lane with road realignment and pavement widening to improve safety.

In Southside-Newington, Steve has actively supported the establishment of Dumbiedykes Residents Association and community efforts to deter commuter parking on the estate. Steve is also volunteering with preparations for the build out of Skelf bike skills park at Braidwood.

