

GREEN NEWS

SPRING
2019

Edinburgh
City Centre

TOLLCROSS



Councillor Claire Miller: Your local Green voice

Thank you voting for Claire Miller to represent you and City Centre residents on the current Edinburgh Council!

Claire is one of our eight Green councillors who are all working constructively with the SNP and Labour council in Edinburgh to get green policies implemented.

She sits on council committees for Housing and Economy, and Finance and Resources. She has also been working hard in City Centre ward on a range of issues.

In Lochrin Basin Lane, she was successful in getting bollards installed, to prevent through traffic, in response to a plea from residents when they realised the lane was to become a rat run.

At Thornybank, Claire has been persevering in clearing a council-owned gap site of fly tipped waste and incorrectly sited trade waste bins, and is working with a group of local residents to bring the site into use as a community garden – get in touch with Claire if you would like to get involved.

Organisations and residents of Lower Gilmore Place were very pleased to have Claire's support when a planning application



Councillor Claire Miller, Scottish Greens councillor for Edinburgh City Centre, at Tollcross Community Centre

came forward to demolish the block facing the canal and replace it with taller buildings, potentially pricing out charities such as the Pregnancy & Parents Centre, and the Kung Fu School. She has recently been out on a walkabout in Gilmore Place with members of the local residents association, community council, and Living Streets Edinburgh, who all want to take action on vehicles which overhang the

pavements, forcing pedestrians out into the usually busy road.

And she has also visited Glengyle Terrace, where she facilitated a meeting for residents with the council's cycling infrastructure experts and Sustrans to find a safer solution for cyclists who are traveling eastbound against the one-way flow of busy traffic.

If you have any issues which you think she could help with, email: c.miller@edinburgh.gov.uk

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Plastic free shopping

The urgent need to tackle the problem of plastic pollution has been hitting the headlines lately.

Shocking images of beaches and oceans swamped by plastic can make the problem seem far too large to deal with. However, the 'think global, act local' approach can help to make a difference.

Here are a few ideas for reducing plastic consumption at the shops.

- 1** With the recent opening of The Eco Larder on Morrison Street, there is now a plastic free shop where you can take containers to fill with dry foods, spices, oils and various cleaning products.
- 2** Longstanding city centre retailer Real Foods uses cellulose bags for pre-weighed goods. They're also happy to refill containers with store cupboard essentials and cleaning products at their local shop at Brougham Street.
- 3** If you want to avoid fruit and vegetables wrapped in plastic, consider the farmers markets on Castle Terrace and Grassmarket where bakery treats are also available without plastic bags.
- 4** Many small independent grocers and bakers also sell fruit and veg straight from the box, and fresh bread straight from the shelf.
- 5** Local supermarkets are a tough place to avoid plastic; remember to take your own bags, look out for loose fruit and veg, and avoid pre-packaged items if possible.
- 6** Consumer pressure does work so tell staff about your choices.

Scottish Greens want to see a phasing out of all unnecessary single use plastic, a ban on the distribution of plastic bags, and a programme to encourage the provision of free drinking water in public places and workplaces.

Ban on 'A' board clutter

After well informed and determined campaigning, including street audits led by Living Streets Edinburgh and supported by Tollcross Community Council, Edinburgh Council has a new strategic approach to controlling advertising boards.

During May 2018, the Transport and Environment Committee approved a citywide ban on temporary on street advertising structures, also known as 'A' boards. It also applies to other types of temporary advertising such as flags and adverts fixed to stationary bicycles or other structures. The proposal had cross-party support, including from Green councillors Chas Booth and Steve Burgess, both of whom sit on the committee.

Temporary adverts on pavements can create hazards even if they don't cover the whole width of a pavement. They are a problem for all pedestrians, but particularly for wheelchair users, those with visual impairments, people with pushchairs and those with mobility problems. In windy weather, they can be blown onto the streets and create a danger for road users.

The citywide ban came into force on Monday 5th November 2018 and aims to set out a clear policy, avoid confusion and make the situation fair to all businesses across Edinburgh. It is a way of tidying up streets and creating a safer environment for everyone. The ban shows what grass roots organisations, such as Living Streets, can do to change policy and improve the city.

If you would like to report a breach, please email Edinburgh Council with photos if possible: boards@edinburgh.gov.uk



On street bike parking

Secure bicycle storage to be rolled out following trial phase

After a successful trial of a number of different styles of secure on street parking for bicycles around the Meadows and West End, the council will be rolling out another 180 racks similar to the 'bread bin' style as trialled on Lonsdale Terrace in Tollcross.

On street storage of bicycles helps to free up space in stairwells while still providing secure storage, encouraging more people to consider active travel options. Several bikes can be stored in the same space that would be taken up by a single private vehicle.

Greens are fully supportive of this decision. If you are interested in having on street bike parking installed on your street, please contact the council by email: activetravel@edinburgh.gov.uk

Greens secure budget wins to help Edinburgh

The Scottish Greens welcomed plans for a tourist levy to help cover the cost of tourism in the city, following the Green MSPs' recent budget settlement

One of the important wins from the negotiations with the government was to allow local councils to raise a so-called 'tourist tax'. This would include a £2-per-night charge to be added to the price of any room for the first week of a stay. This would apply to all accommodation, including short-term lets.

Cllr Claire Miller, who sits on the Finance & Resources Committee, said "Up to 4 million tourists visit

Edinburgh each year and bring a lot of benefits to the city.

"However, they also cost ratepayers a lot of money through increased waste collection costs, for example. This levy is intended as a way to help the city cover the cost of welcoming people to our city.

"In Edinburgh, the Greens first proposed this eight years ago and have made the case for why it would benefit residents, local businesses, and also visitors. Greens are glad that others have caught up with our thinking and that the Council and government have backed our plans".



Greens urge council to tackle short term holiday lets crisis in Edinburgh



The Scottish Greens on Edinburgh Council have been leading the way on tackling the problems associated with short term holiday lets.

The massive growth in holiday lets in the city is a sign of the strength of tourism for the area, but it has also led to a loss of housing for residents in the city centre and created a wave of problems for those still living there. This includes noise, antisocial behaviour, issues with refuse, or a lack of planning consent.

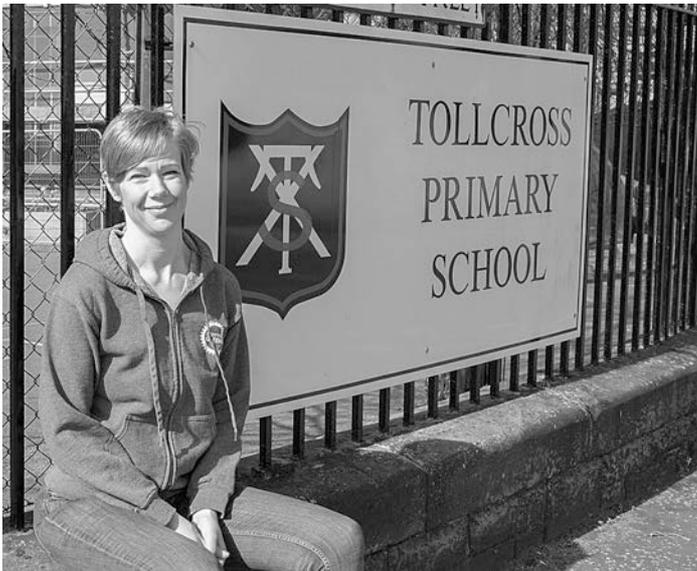
However, thanks to pressure from the Greens, the council now has a team who handle cases where a holiday let is causing problems. Cllr Claire

Miller said "my Green colleagues and I on Edinburgh council are pleased to have this new team in place to deal with the negative aspects of holiday lets.

"For example, last year there were several cases of holiday lets which were shut down in the city centre because they didn't have the relevant permissions, and the council took action. I hope this continues in the future to ensure that both visitors and owners are sticking to the law".

If there is a short term let in your tenement, you can ask Planning Enforcement to check if it has received planning permission.

Information can be provided at: edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20066/enforcement



Councillor Claire Miller outside Tollcross Primary school, where she is helping to improve road safety for local residents

Greens help to improve road safety at Tollcross Primary School

Scottish Greens' Cllr Claire Miller has been helping with plans to improve road safety around Tollcross Primary School and the community centre.

Claire has been to meet parents, young people, and teachers at Tollcross Primary School and see for herself what happens during the school run. She said "The main entrance for the campus of the nursery, school and community centre is on a very busy road with no crossings or lolly pop patrols, no cycle infrastructure, narrow pavements and poor accessibility. It is shocking to see people, especially children, exposed to these levels of risk".

The parent council also recently carried out a travel survey and identified some serious road safety problems. Since then, Cllr Miller got agreement at the Edinburgh council committee for her proposal that a safety assessment would be carried out and that pupils would help make decisions about the changes needed.

"I'm delighted that the Council has agreed to help improve road safety in this area, and that young people will be included in making decisions about an issue that impacts them directly. It'll be a great opportunity for the whole campus to get involved in redesigning their street to make it safer for everyone" she said.

Councillor's surgery for local residents

Green councillor Claire Miller holds a regular surgery at Tollcross Community Centre, 117 Fountainbridge, EH3 9QG, on the third Monday each month (during council term time) at 6 pm.

Local residents are encouraged to turn up and chat to Claire about issues that concern them. No appointment is needed. More details online: edinburgh.gov.uk/councillors/97/claire_miller

Contact your local Greens



Your Green councillor: Claire Miller | @CllrCMiller | c.miller@edinburgh.gov.uk | 0131 529 4396 | The City of Edinburgh Council, City Chambers, High Street, EH1 1YJ

Your Green MSPs: Alison Johnstone and Andy Wightman | @AlisonJohnstone | alison.johnstone.msp@scottish.parliament.uk | @andywightman | andy.wightman.msp@scottish.parliament.uk | 0131 348 5000 | The Scottish Parliament, The Royal Mile, EH99 1SP



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