



Edinburgh Green Councillors' Report, October 2015

The major issue at Edinburgh Council at the moment is the Transformation Programme which includes around 2000 job losses and the budget cuts of £141million over the next 4 years. This financial crunch can be laid at the door of Tory cuts and the SNP Council tax freeze. There's an [online consultation](#) at which citizens can leave their views!

Improving Public Participation - Opening up Edinburgh



Gavin Corbett has been pushing Participatory Budgeting in South West Edinburgh through the recently launched '[Grant a Grand](#)' initiative that gives young people the chance to suggest and vote for 10 community projects.

Chas Booth has been appointed to the Convenorship of the Council's Petitions Committee following the departure of Maggie Chapman for more northerly climes. Chas is keen to open-up further the way petitions are discussed by the committee to allow petitioners more say.

Greener jobs

This month Gavin Corbett [blogged](#) on a Council proposal to transfer the running of Council buildings including schools, libraries and community centres to the private sector which Greens opposed and which thankfully didn't go ahead.



Supporting Communities & Neighbourhoods

Greens' Planning spokesperson Nigel Bagshaw has argued in a [recent blog](#) that a key document designed to oversee growth of the Edinburgh city region, the South East Scotland Development Plan, needs to be sent back to the drawing board as it fails to focus on specific shortfalls

including affordable housing and on the business needs of a low carbon economy.

A report from Council housing officers highlighted the crisis of affordability in the City, a theme which was picked up by Steve Burgess in an article for the [Evening News](#).

Steve also won agreement of the Corporate Policy committee that council officers should seek to use data the council has on record to better direct resources to help people struggling with Tory cuts to welfare.

Sustainable Transport

Thanks to Cllr Melanie Main hundreds of unwanted bikes are to be recycled under a new crackdown aimed at cleaning up tenement stairwells across the Capital as reported [here](#).

Promoting Renewable & Efficient Energy

Chas Booth has been actively championing solar power at the Council and was pleased to support the [launch of the Edinburgh Community Solar Co-operative](#), a new venture which aims to put solar panels on the roofs of 25 council buildings around the city, to both cut carbon and to create a community benefit fund. You can invest in shares [here](#).



At the Council's overarching Policy Committee, Steve Burgess raised concerns over an apparent increase in climate-changing pollution from the Council's own activities over the last year and called for a further report on projects that will reduce emissions. At the same meeting Steve won agreement that the Council's new energy company should prioritise development of district heating.

Highlights from Green Councillors' Wards



In Fountainbridge-Craiglockhart Gavin Corbett opened the new canalside garden at Polwarth Parish Church – a project which he has supported for 3 years and which was attended by 200 people.

In Leith Walk ward Chas Booth has been [supporting local people](#) over the threatened Duncan Place Resource Centre and has been instrumental in getting a working group set up to investigate a way forward.

In adjoining Meadows-Morningside & Southside-Newington wards, Cllrs Melanie Main and Steve Burgess representing hundreds of local people, 3 Community Councils and other local councillors, welcomed agreement by Edinburgh's Local Access Forum to

confirm the existence of Rights of Way through the Astley Ainslie hospital site which is due to be sold by the NHS. Mel and Steve are now hoping the Council will agree to defend these Rights of Way if they were ever contested.