

# GREENPRINT



## News from the Scottish Green Party Naidheachdan o Phàrtaidh Uaine na h-Alba

Spring (An t-Earrach) 2012 | [www.scottishgreens.org.uk](http://www.scottishgreens.org.uk) | [greenprint@scottishgreens.org.uk](mailto:greenprint@scottishgreens.org.uk)

### My first months as a Green MSP

Having worked for Robin Harper, I'm not new to the Parliament and its processes and I'm sure this has made the learning curve that all new MSPs face less daunting.

I made my 'maiden' speech (yes, even in our new, modern Parliament!) on a debate about the contribution sport makes to life in Scotland. If we invested properly in affordable leisure facilities, our health budget would decrease and our sense of wellbeing would increase. If we invested far more in joined up cycle routes and attractive, safe, walkways then more people would leave the car at home.

So why is the Scottish Government slashing these budgets and choosing to increase the budget for major road building? There are many other, better ways to provide the employment we desperately need. I look forward to raising these and many issues close to our hearts in the years ahead. Preventative spending needs to become a reality, not just a sound bite.

We've an important part to play in the Independence Referendum. We must raise awareness of the need for strengthened and resilient local authorities and local communities, as well as more powers at the national level. I have visited many groups and organisations since May and am forging relationships that will enable us to campaign more effectively, on matters from energy efficiency to our children's education and right to play.

A largely new staff team has been learning the ropes and making sure that Patrick and I are in the right place, at the right time and with the right

information! I look forward to expanding our group effort here at Holyrood, building better links with local party branches and with the many NGOs and others that make up civic Scotland with whom we share common goals.



Photo by James Glassop

**"It is a privilege to be representing the only party with the solutions required for a truly meaningful future for all."**

The Scotland Bill Committee, of which I'm a member, produced its report at the end of December. In our sessions, I've had the opportunity to question John Swinney on his plans for corporation tax, one of Scotland's most wealthy businessmen on

his offshore income tax arrangements, and the Secretary of State for Scotland on whether he thought Scotland's people have been adequately consulted on the Bill. The current status of the Scotland Bill is pretty unclear, but whatever happens, it's certainly been an educational jump into the constitutional deep end for a new MSP.

In short, the past few months have been challenging and diverse. I've had great support from party colleagues, family and friends. It is a privilege to be in Parliament, representing the only party with the solutions required for a truly meaningful future for all.

**Alison Johnstone MSP**

#### AROUND THE NATION

We reflect on some of the most pressing campaign issues in our own back yard.

#### THE FORUM

Discussing the place of the Scottish Green Party within the independence debate.

#### VIEWPOINT

Exploring the effects of UK government budget cuts on women in particular.

#### GREENS ABROAD

A look at the European Green movement and the European Greens Congress in Paris.

## Leveson may have stopped us hacking phones, but there is no shortage of stories in this bumper edition of Greenprint.

After a winter break, we are back to offer our services for Green MSPs and councillors to communicate with the membership, and to provide a medium for members to opine on the matters closest to your heart.

2012 has already seen more than a few cans of worms open up – adding to those lingering from 2011 – but there is one issue ever so slightly dominating Scottish politics. This edition of Greenprint will look at the question of Scottish independence, and what it means to Greens in Scotland.

It must be said that the movement in Scotland has lost some shining lights in the time since our last edition was published – Caroline Hoffman, Donald McKinney and Ed Conway are no longer with us. As such, it was only right that we set aside a page to commemorate these wonderful role models.

Finally, a heartfelt thank you to everyone who helped make this issue happen – Juliette Daigre for design, Charles Coventry for Gaelic translation, and all those who took the time to submit their work. Greenprint has been spoiled for contributions to this edition, making it impossible to include every item this time around. Everything was certainly gratefully received, and clearly there is great optimism among the membership right now. I intend to see Greenprint continue to communicate that feeling far and wide.

### Richard Doherty, Editor

PS. We are moving towards electronic-only distribution of Greenprint to help reduce our environmental impact. If you received this in the post, **please get in touch with your email address** so in the future we can send it to you by email instead. Thanks!

### CONTRIBUTIONS, IDEAS & FEEDBACK

Like the party itself, we at Greenprint are always keen to listen to new, progressive ideas. As you would expect from a party magazine, this is not a commercial venture. If you want to help out, by letting us know what activities you are engaged in that need to be communicated to the party at large, by submitting your high-resolution photos to decorate the pages, or by assisting the production of the magazine, do get in touch. Please send all contributions, ideas or feedback to: [greenprint@scottishgreens.org.uk](mailto:greenprint@scottishgreens.org.uk)

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## Ed Conway

Highlands and Islands Green Party lost another member in December. Ed Conway passed away after a long battle with cancer, which he fought bravely over a number of years. Ed was a committed ecologist and was an inspiration to the pupils he worked with in his Inverness school. He is survived by his soul-mate and partner Varihi and his son Dominic. He was a great friend to many and much-loved and respected by those who knew him.

Myra Carus

## Dr Caroline Hoffmann

Caroline Hoffmann was a very active member of the Scottish Green Party from 1998 to 2002. She died in Berlin on 4 December 2011 after a long battle with leukaemia.

In 1998, when much of the Scottish Green Party had become disillusioned and burnt out after a succession of electoral false dawns, it did have the steely determination of a German PhD student that the party could and must do better. Together with her then partner, Philine Gaffron, she helped give the party the hard shove that was required to get it ready to fight an election campaign in 1999. The result of that campaign was the election of Robin, and the creation of a new green space in British politics. Caroline played a massive part in this success. Caroline threw herself into getting the party ship-shape and ready for the election. As Convenor of the National Executive and as Euro Election Campaign co-ordinator she gained a fearsome reputation for cutting through the waffle common in green circles.

Caroline was also an ecologist, a sailor, a passionate feminist and an LGBT rights campaigner. The campaign in 1999 to support the repeal of Clause 28, the homophobic regulations that forbade teachers and other local authority staff from treating gay and lesbian relationships as equally valid, was a bitter one, but Caroline maintained her principles and humour, as well as her passionate commitment to equality, throughout. After a stint working for the Centre for Human Ecology, she returned to Germany, and after working for the Green Group in the Bundestag and as Senior Advisor to the Council of Baltic Sea States she became the Head of the Environment and Transport Unit at the German Federal Environment Agency.

It was in Berlin that Caroline married Katarzyna Nowak last year – in her own words "never give up hope – true love exists after all". However shortly after their wedding Caroline was diagnosed with leukaemia, the latest of several bouts of cancer. Despite two separate bone marrow transfusions,

associated radio and chemotherapy, and a huge amount of struggle and bravery, Caroline died in hospital on December 4th.

In love, in joy, in memory. Mark Ballard

This is an abridged version of Caroline Hoffmann: A Tribute, which can be read in full at [www.brightgreenscotland.org](http://www.brightgreenscotland.org)

## Donald McKinney

Thurso writer and Green Party activist Donald McKinney died peacefully at home on October 31, aged 51, after a short illness.

Donald was born in Thurso and lived there during his early years before moving to Glasgow. Only after many years away, studying and working in Glasgow and Edinburgh did he finally return home 'like the salmon' to Thurso in 2009.

Donald studied political science at Stirling and Strathclyde universities and travelled in Europe studying small independence parties and working for the EC in Luxembourg. He also worked as a freelance journalist, cafe manager and tutorial service director before buying Body & Soul Bookshop in Edinburgh, with his life partner, the 'other' Donald, in 1993. This evolved into Doon Hill Books, selling books online.

While living in Dunbar, Donald had started writing again and deepening his study of Celtic history and Gnostic spirituality. He published Walking the Mist, and Celtic Angels – these now published in America, Europe and Mexico! He also published a collection of Caithness short stories, Why We Howl at the Moon and had recently finished an unpublished novel.

Donald's love of nature and open spaces is fully expressed in his writing and his constant explorations of the countryside around Dunbar and Thurso. This was also expressed in his care and kindness to all creatures and his long standing vegetarianism and more recent veganism.

Donald was very active in East Lothian and Caithness, and was particularly interested in animal welfare, sustainable community, transport and local democracy. Donald was never short of ideas and suggestions and enjoyed nothing better than sitting in a small group chewing the fat over a dram.

Donald's gift was being able to bring inspiration and awareness of what Celtic spirituality and green issues have to offer to everyone he met. Donald's warm and generous nature will be remembered by many friends. He will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

Donald Busby

# Wildlife Concerns

An Camas Mòr has recently been in the news as the subject of a High Court action brought by a trio of voluntary conservation organisations. Their aim is to protect this area, at the heart of Scotland's largest national park, from destruction by developers.

An Camas Mòr is:

- The proposed site for a new town of 1500 houses;
- Owned by an estate which trades on its environmental credentials;
- In a National Scenic Area and including an Ancient Woodland Inventory site;
- just over 10km from the summit of Cairn Gorm and the iconic northern corries;
- Home to red squirrel, badgers, otters, possibly wild cat (which are known to have used the area in the recent past) and a variety of other protected species;
- A prime site supporting naturally regenerating Caledonian Scots pine forest.

An Camas Mòr is Rothiemurchus Estate's attempt to create a 'conservation solution' for this beautiful part of the Cairngorms National Park... by building all over it.

Rothiemurchus has used a great deal of greenwash to justify its environmental profiteering. It claims that this will be a 'sustainable community' providing local affordable housing and jobs. Similar claims were made for Coylum Road, Rothiemurchus Estate's last

major housing project but, in the event, not one affordable house was included in that development.

According to Zoopla.com the average estimated house price there is now £342,000 with the highest being over £500,000. As for sustainable, encouraging this scale of development in this location is a recipe for a resort of holiday and commuter homes which will quickly be snapped up by people from outside the Park, and do little to provide local affordable housing.

The job of Scottish national parks should surely be to protect what is best in the Scottish landscape for people from all over Britain and beyond, and for future generations. Landowners and developers should not be allowed to use them to market unnecessary and damaging housing developments, no matter how they dress them up.

If you love the Cairngorms, or just agree that Scottish national parks should be about protection rather than profit, let the Cairngorms National Park Authority know before it's too late.

More information can be found on the Badenoch and Strathspey Conservation Group's facebook page, or at [www.bscg.org.uk](http://www.bscg.org.uk).

**Jeremy Money**

## The Tweedgreen Challenge

**Tweedgreen, a community environmental organisation in Tweeddale funded by the Climate Challenge Fund and based in Peebles, is challenging local people to reduce their energy and carbon consumption in home energy, food and travel.**

The Tweedgreen Challenge – Live More, Use Less – shows how, with a few simple changes, we can eat more healthily, shop locally, reduce household fuel bills and save on travel and carbon costs.

The programme, which lasts six weeks, is designed to be fun, informative and interactive, and is supported by attractive, colourful materials. It aims to encourage people to use our resources wisely, to support our local economy to make it more resilient to future changes, and to enhance our sense of community.

The Challenge was launched in November and has already had a good response from the public and local councillors, several of whom have embraced it and acknowledged that it could be a model for communities throughout Scotland.

The Food Challenge provides shopping, growing and cooking tips and recipes geared towards minimising waste and making use of local products. The Travel Challenge encourages the use of a travel planner, liftshare and, where possible, biking. The Energy Challenge provides a wide range of ideas to reduce home energy consumption.

All three components offer a variety of incentives and prizes depending on the number of changes made and "points" scored. Joining the Challenge is free and groups get together for mutual support and to share ideas.

More information: [www.tweedgreen.org](http://www.tweedgreen.org) | [tweedgreenpeebles@gmail.com](mailto:tweedgreenpeebles@gmail.com) | 0172 172 9258.

**Lesley Morrison**

# Pipistrelle Community Housing

**Matt Bridgestock** guides us around a house in rural Moray that for many years has been the summer home of over 2,000 adult pipistrelle bats - one of the largest roosts in the UK.

For the last 12 years the house has also been home to a growing family. The increasing number of bats and need for more space by the family meant the living arrangements were becoming difficult for both parties.

Due to the conservation importance of the roost, a unique partnership between the family, the Bat Conservation Trust and John Gilbert Architects (JBA) was set up in the summer of 2011. The aim was to find a solution that meant neither group of residents had to leave. To look at the options for a more comfortable living arrangement for both parties, JBA worked in close collaboration with Dress for the Weather and Towler & Hyslop to examine the design implications and costs associated with a number of options.

The existing roof space provides the roost for the bats, with smell and noise permeating through to the house below, so JBA looked at the options for relocating the bats to a new roof space, specifically designed to avoid these issues. It has been necessary for design to take account of access into the roof for bats, while providing an attractive living space, keeping a suitable temperature throughout, and preventing the bats from crawling into areas they shouldn't be in.

The extension reconfigured the living accommodation, allowing space for an extra bedroom in the existing house and a better configuration of the space over all. While the design makes reference to the existing house and the materials in the surrounding buildings, the materials are natural and timber used is predominantly Scottish spruce (for structural timbers) and larch (for cladding). By wrapping the existing house in a well insulated extension and harnessing the south light, the energy bills of the family should consequently be reduced.

The project is still at an early stage and may need to adopt to changing financial situations, but it serves to show that people and wildlife can happily coexist in very close proximity.

For further information, visit [www.bats.org.uk](http://www.bats.org.uk)



## Mull and Iona voting on Hydro

**At the time of writing, the population of Mull and Iona are voting on whether to go ahead with the installation of a community-owned mini hydro scheme with a projected output enough to satisfy the electricity needs of 230 houses.**

If approved, power will be fed into the National Grid and the money earned will be made available to all sorts of community groups and projects.

The amounts the communities would benefit from are staggering: a projected £30,000 in the first year rising to £150,000 in subsequent years. Just as important will be the reduction of the carbon footprint of the islands. The scheme has a designed life of 50 years.

For the project to go ahead under the Forestry Commission's National Forestry Land Scheme, however, the turnout of voters registered on the electoral roll must reach a total no less than 50% and a majority of those who vote must vote yes. Considering that turnout in local government elections in most areas hovers around 35%, this is a big ask.

Sustainable Mull and Iona, supported by Mull and Iona Community Trust (MICT), has swung into publicity overdrive to ensure the necessary number of voters fill in and return their postal votes between the 15 February and the 5 March. This is only one of the sustainable projects initiated or supported by MICT since Eleanor Scott opened its first wholly owned premises nine years ago.

As well as building a highly energy efficient headquarters and Community Business Resource Centre, MICT has been involved in waste reduction, re-use and recycling schemes, opened two charity shops to emphasise that there is no such thing as "rubbish" only resource material, organised insulation and energy reduction schemes for houses across the islands, given practical support to those initiating wind and biomass schemes, and run its own vehicle on recycled cooking oil.

For more information on the work of the Mull and Iona Community Trust visit: [www.mict.co.uk](http://www.mict.co.uk)

**Derek Crook**

## The End of Union Terrace Gardens?

The result has been announced of the referendum on proposals from Sir Ian Wood to cover over the Denburn Valley in Aberdeen city centre.

Despite strong opposition, the proposal was approved by 45,301 votes to 41,175.

The most controversial aspect of the scheme - renamed the City Garden Project - is that it plans to destroy Union Terrace Gardens, Aberdeen's only city centre park.

Rhonda Reekie of the Aberdeenshire Green Party said:

"There's still a lot that has not been decided around the planning, and I think it's far from clear that the City Garden Project will go ahead. This is far from the decisive victory that the City Garden people wanted."

While supporters say that Wood's plans would 'gift' Aberdeen £50 million, in fact, he is asking for £90 million from others to build his pet project.

With such money, Aberdeen would be far better served by improving access to the existing gardens, and using the vast sum left over to fund projects that do not destroy Aberdonian heritage.

**Richard Doherty**

## Viewpoint

**The subject of Union Terrace Gardens has been almost as notorious in Aberdeen as Trump's golf courses, albeit with a lot less venom in the debate.**

This is because everyone recognised the need to do something to resuscitate the City's ailing centre. Neglect and bad decisions have squandered a remarkable legacy of architecture, in the main assembled by Victorians with an eye to the greater whole.

Whilst Union Street becomes progressively more tatty and congested, and the rise and rise of the peripheral 'Mall' has soaked the life from the centre, like somebody spreading the embers of a fire to hasten its demise, plans to develop UTG in the current context felt like a displacement activity: "let's do...something!"

I was personally impressed that at least one modern Aberdeen magnate decided to put a lot of real

money of his own up front, like a proper Victorian no less. What you make of his motivations, tactics and plans is another thing of course.

In the near two decades I've lived in the city I think I have been to UTG no more than twice. It is an odd spot - sunken and not really on the way to anywhere. But it is green, and if the city lacks one thing, it's green spaces.

Until something better comes up I'd be pleased to see this little corner left as it is, with its huge mature trees, unique within the city centre, and its quiet overlooked calm.

But quiet, subtle attractions don't cut commercial mustard in the world of town planning, especially when One is looking to secure One's Legacy.

Having seen the proposed design in the local rag I can confidently say that something better has certainly not yet arrived.

**Adrian Crofton**



Photo by Gus MacLeod

## The Princess Royal Trust for Carers



The Princess Royal Trust  
for Carers

One in 8 people in Scotland is an unpaid carer or young carer, and our ageing population means this figure can only get higher over the next 20 years.

The Princess Royal Trust for Carers is Scotland's largest provider of comprehensive support services for carers through the unique network of independently-managed Carers' Centres and interactive websites at [www.carers.org](http://www.carers.org) and [www.youngcarers.net](http://www.youngcarers.net).

The Scottish Green Party has been supportive of the issues affecting unpaid carers, demonstrated in the manifesto for the May elections in 2011, and Co-Convenor Patrick Harvie will soon be meeting with Lynn Williams, Policy Officer for The Trust. The aim of the meeting will be to work with the party in the run up to the Scottish local council elections in May 2012 and to find areas of common interest.

Along with colleagues from other carers' organisations, Lynn promotes the work of local and national carer organisations and the issues affecting carers and young carers, and the services which provide direct support to them.

The Trust sees carers and young carers as an integral part of Scotland's health and social care infrastructure – policy, legislation, service planning and delivery needs to recognise the vital contribution they make to our society (estimated at £10.3 billion a year and roughly equivalent to the NHS budget in Scotland).

Support for carers has sound moral and economic arguments. In our capital city, for example, replacing the care that carers and young carers provide would cost some £771 million a year. In addition, an estimated 1/3 of Scotland's caring population is in employment, and support for them through Carers' Centres and flexible working practices means they can keep working.

Campaigning on behalf of carers and carer support is a vital part of The Trust's work. The Trust believes that MSPs need to support carers, both at a local level in their constituencies and through ensuring

carer awareness and support is central to the party's ethos.

The local elections this year provide an opportunity for Scotland's unpaid carers and young carers to have a real voice about the services which they receive and about how local support is changing.

Lynn said: "The support of the Scottish Greens during the local election campaign will be important. Local elections will focus on local services and, by working with the Scottish Greens and others parties, our hope is that the needs and issues of unpaid carers will be a key priority for the local election campaigns.

**"Carers are an integral part of Scotland's health and social care infrastructure."**

"We are keen to meet any Green council candidates to talk about the kinds of issues they might encounter, such as fuel poverty, better investment in public



Photo by the Princess Royal Trust for Carers

transport, transport in rural areas, and reform of the benefits system. We will encourage carers to engage directly with the party, for example, through social networking and our campaign Facebook page, Carers Votes Count."

**Emma Baird**

# Independent and Green

While the independence debate thus far has largely focussed on the language being used to discuss it, it is clearly important that we also address such points as who is actually allowed to vote in any referendum.

Along with the question of voting age, the issue of residence has also proven controversial. As things stand, those who find themselves living outside Scotland will be denied the opportunity to cast a vote. Those below the age of 30 – too young to have voted for devolution, are sadly a victim of Labour, then SNP failure to create job opportunities in Scotland, and could miss the most significant vote of their lives.

Photo by Chris Jones

These issues will eventually be resolved one way or another, and when they are, what will matter most is the unique voice of the Scottish Green Party within the campaign for Scottish self-determination. What follows is a small selection of voices from within the membership at large.

Gav Humphries views the Green position to have on the matter as representing 'the clean voice for independence':

"Campaign for a Scottish state and the Green Party will reap the rewards of independence. If our right to equal exposure, and coverage, with the other three minority parties is not confidently asserted, we will be placed somewhere on the fringes of Scottish politics for a long time to come.

"The status of the Green Party in an independent Scotland will, with good management, be greatly strengthened. With the independence question set aside there will be room for our representation in the Scottish Parliament to grow. Following the referendum, it is highly possible to picture the Scottish Greens in an influential position, able to represent our country in the EU and internationally.

**"The Scottish Greens can speak with a clean voice, grasping the thistle, and leading the country forward."**

"The goal must be to take the positive case to the Scottish people – so often the argument against independence is simply that of anti-SNP sentiment, which deflects focus from the real issues. The Scottish Greens can speak with a clean voice, grasping the thistle, and leading the country forward. It is our time: "YES" for a green Scotland finding its voice in the world."

Ray Newton however, defines independence as essentially a distraction from the issues of self-governance:

"Independence is a misnomer. We now live in a very interdependent world, demanding, at the same time, self-government with shared sovereignty. This is what I believe the overwhelming majority of the Scottish people want.

"I have lived in England for 40 years and in Scotland for 45 and found that almost all in England think that Englishness equates with Britishness, and this leads them astray. Their imperial past still blinds them to the yearning of others for real democracy.

"That is why the Conservative Party has only one MP in Scotland and the Labour Party in London imposes policies focussed on the Tory marginals in the South-East

on a quite different political culture in Scotland. So, after 60 years supporting Labour, I have very recently changed my allegiance to the Green Party.

"The SNP is now left of Labour and no longer follows a chauvinistic nationalism, while the English have rejected federalism, so the only course of action is to demand negotiations on the many complex issues of self-governance, for each to be put to the people in a referendum in 2014."

Tony Bonacina-Pugh suggests that Greens should never let slip their position as a party that can also represent the environmentally-minded unionists within Scotland:

"It seems to me that Green interest in the independence question has always been more around the potential of what an independent Scotland could become – a more sustainable and more socially just country.

"My expectation and my fear is that in order to have a chance of winning the referendum, the SNP are going to campaign to win the economic argument (that an independent Scotland would be better off), and the easiest way for them to do that will be through a greater, not lesser, dependence on fossil fuels, and placing a higher priority on the interests of big business over the interests of local community. Their actions in government confirm where they stand on that.

"Rather than tying ourselves to a campaign which could end in arguing the opposite of what we seek, the Greens should actually be unaligned, arguing for our vision of what Scotland could be, whether that be under the current system, with more devolved powers or as an independent nation."

John B Dick views independence as the most natural way in which Scotland can take control of the relevant powers to determine its own destiny:

"An independent Scotland presents original opportunities for Green direction of the economy by carrot and stick use of the tax system.

"The means is similar to that used by controlling directors to enhance their remuneration by taking payment in shares. This dilutes the shareholder interest by cheeseparating the balance sheet, without damaging profit or liquidity.

"The rate for taxation could be at a discount or a premium which would vary between 'good' and 'bad' industries, and from year to year. Future years' rates could be known in advance. Shares would be retained, sold or added to. Dividends would be collected and re-invested.

**"Green interest in the independence question has always been more around the potential of what an independent Scotland could become."**

"Companies would be influenced by, and have directors appointed by, the Scottish Investment Fund shareholder. "Good" companies could have access to investment funding, "bad" companies subjected to financial pressures.

"Tax take would vary by net discounts or premiums. Retained funds cause spending to be withheld and deferred, but the fund itself could generate profits. From the company's point of view, tax liability can be extinguished with no loss of liquidity, and funds used for growth or distribution.

"A mature company making small profits might prefer to maintain dividends and issue shares cheaply, while one making large profits and planning to raise capital might be keen to boost its share price by exchanging shares at a premium.

"The pitfalls in a system like this however would be that it all depends on matching offer and acceptance. The fund would need skilled negotiators and valuers, and these people expect absurd salaries. The scope for fraud by officials is immense."

And in that final point lies the rub of the independence question as far as I can see it – just as it always has been. No matter the system in place within which companies (read also nationalised services) operate, and no matter the green credentials of any given company, industry or government, what matters most in political terms is the accountability of the authoritative bodies of Scotland to the people of Scotland. Within the current union that is patently impossible to achieve given the imbalance of populations. The tyranny of the majority is in full effect within the UK.

**"What matters most in political terms is the accountability of the authoritative bodies of Scotland to the people of Scotland."**

As happens frequently, the Westminster government's actions are deemed reprehensible to the people of Scotland, yet we must currently live with the consequences of a Conservative-led Westminster.

We cannot vote out a government that we haven't voted for in the first place, so the only option to redress the utter denial of

Scottish citizens' democratic right of representation, both nationally and on the global stage, is full independence. I can see nothing short of that as acceptable to anyone looking for a progressive political climate within Scotland.

Bring full power to the people of Scotland, and let the Scottish Green Party truly be given a platform to represent the better nature within us all.

If you agree or disagree with anything said above, or have a view not represented, please contact [greenprint@scottishgreens.org.uk](mailto:greenprint@scottishgreens.org.uk) and help to shape the discussion as the independence juggernaut rumbles on.

Richard Doherty

# We're all in this together...

## ...but who is more in it than some?

At the time of writing, disabled campaigners are chaining themselves to benches in Regent Street in protest at the UK Coalition Government's attacks on disability benefits. Such scenes hark back to the battles of the disability movement in the early 1980s around anti-discrimination legislation and independent living.

Photo by Paula Szklarz

The Bishops in the House of Lords have just led the defeat of Government plans to cap the amount of money people can claim on benefits, and a coalition of children's charities has managed to secure a commitment from the UK Government to ensure that claimants with dependent children do not face sanctions if they are unable to access work or work related activity, or to sustain work, due to a lack of appropriate childcare.

The most bizarre moment of recent weeks saw David Cameron address a welcoming crowd of ASDA employees in Leeds:

"No household should get more than £26,000 a year in benefits," Cameron opined. "That is equivalent to a salary of £35,000 and there are many in this audience here who are not earning £35,000." Nods in agreement...

"Are you happy that your taxes are going towards families when no one is working and they are earning over £26,000 worth in benefits? No they weren't.

"Is it fair?" he asked. They clearly thought that this was not at all fair. "No – I don't think it's fair either!" said the Prime Minister.

Notably absent was any attempt to question the fairness of giving six-figure bonuses to those earning seven figure sums.

As Christine Patterson remarked in the Independent (25th Jan) "He can't spend more money, so he can only cheer people up by giving other people less," – and the mood is catching... As I write, a caller to Radio's 4s 'Any Answers' suggests that people on benefits should have fewer children – and that "those on benefits should lose the right to vote." We are truly in very strange times.

The Coalition Government's Welfare Reforms will hit vulnerable groups in society very hard indeed, and the battleground is being fought in an increasingly divisive and angry climate.

Recently, a small network of disabled campaigners raised the stakes considerably. Their 'Spartacus Report' highlighted major flaws in the Government's arguments for replacing DLA with the Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and led to key proposals being overturned in the Lords. Stephen Fry's twitter endorsement no doubt helped, but people are certainly taking note.

Whilst the Government pledges to overturn the amendments in the Commons, it may be harder this time around. If not, the gains achieved in the 90s and beyond will not just be lost, but the rights of disabled people will be set back decades.

I have been observing the welfare reform discussions from a number of perspectives – as the parent of

a young disabled adult who will have his DLA cut dramatically if or when the proposed changes go through, as a campaigner on children's rights and as a woman.

Women's movements have been active in the fight against the cuts from the start. In 2010, the Fawcett Society sought a Judicial Review of the Coalition Government's emergency budget, claiming that it did not pay due regard to gender equality legislation and arguing that women were disproportionately affected by the cuts: more women than men relied on welfare benefits and changes to the tax system favoured more men than women.

The application was dismissed but the presiding judge ruled that measures in national budgets were subject to equality law and called for improved data collection and analysis so that the impact of budget measures on equality between women and men could be adequately assessed.

Decisions made by Mr Osborne don't just impact on the economy – they affect how society works as a whole. They can progress equality, maintain the status quo or lead to further inequality. The Government's approach has left women facing what the Fawcett Society call a 'triple jeopardy'.

### 1. Job cuts in the public sector hit women hardest

The Government has announced that it will axe 71,000 jobs in the public sector in the next few years. Given that 65% of this workforce is women, they will be hit hardest. Moreover, the promised recovery in the private sector has not materialised. Even if it did, the private sector is not known for adapting to women's maternity or care needs with flexible and part time work opportunities in the way the public sector does.

The Fawcett Society points to the comparable (full time) pay gap figures which stand at 13.2% in the public sector against 20.4% in the private sector. Rather than the pay gap continuing to close as it has done in recent times, they fear we may see a widening of the pay gap in the future.

### 2. Benefits and service cuts hit women hardest

Women use statutory services and benefits more than men for many reasons – during pregnancy, as carers, and due to their relative economic inequality and poverty. They are more likely to be subjected to domestic abuse, are on average poorer than men and more likely to be single parents. They also tend to live longer and often spend the final years of their lives alone. It is evident therefore, that when services are cut, women will be affected more than men.

Withdrawing state support risks will further the already unequal distribution of labour, as women take on more unpaid and informal care work – picking up the can when their jobs are cut and services and benefits are withdrawn. Such a scenario will in turn limit women's opportunities to undertake paid work, to participate meaningfully in public and political life and ultimately to hold positions of power and influence.

### 3. The impact of welfare reform

The impact of welfare reform will also limit women's ability to undertake paid work. During the Lords debate on the Welfare Reform Bill, the Women's Budget Group (WBG) – a think tank of economists and policy experts who assess the gender impact of government policies – was behind amendments to universal credit, a single means tested benefit that will replace all existing benefits.

Universal credit will impact greatly on women's financial independence. It will discourage mothers in couples from seeking paid employment when their partner is in work, reducing their financial independence and their ability to support themselves in the future. And by reducing the scope of individual non-means-tested support, it will make those previously entitled to benefits in their own right dependent on their partners.

The WBG highlighted the effects that government plans will have on couples' management of their internal financial affairs. Under universal credit, couples will receive a single payment once a month to just one person in the couple. This may result in some people without any income – relying totally on their partners, and others ending up with less than they do now. Under the current system, different bits of income come in at different times, and not to the same person. The strength of child benefit is that it is given to the main carer (usually the mother), helping to reach children more effectively and providing a source of independent income.

In The Guardian (23 January), Susan Himmelweit, professor of economics at the Open University, said: "Requiring one partner to be dependent on the other will increase the risks involved in embarking on committed couple relationships. For a lone [female] parent moving in with a new partner, the new rules could mean losing direct access to most of her income for herself and her children. Similarly, for existing couples, unequal financial pay may lead to tensions and possibly relationship breakdown."

The Government insists that universal credit is paid to one person. The WBG refers to this as reflecting "outdated prejudices" giving the impression "that the goal is a world of breadwinning men and home-making wives, when in reality we have already moved on to a more equal world. Turning back the clock will not work, but proposals for universal credit can still produce plenty of misery in trying to do so."

Whilst changes to welfare are reserved, they will impact greatly on devolved services in Scotland. Moreover, as the Scottish Government's Welfare Reform Scrutiny Group note, Scotland has a disproportionate share of key benefit claimants. This group provides a useful vehicle for raising awareness of the impact of these reforms, but further work is needed to assess how demographic, economic and social differences may impact in Scotland.

For further information, please see:  
Cutting Women Out - [www.fawcettsociety.org.uk](http://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk)  
Impact on Women of 2011 Budget - [www.wbg.org.uk](http://www.wbg.org.uk)  
The Spartacus Report - [www.ekklesia.co.uk](http://www.ekklesia.co.uk)

Máire McCormack

# Scottish Local Elections 2012

First, a little history. Under the Scotland Act 1998, responsibility for local elections was devolved. This provided the Liberal Democrats with a bargaining chip in 2003 when discussions took place for a repeat coalition between Labour and the LibDems, whose price was proportional representation for local elections.

As we all know, the single transferable vote (STV) system is one of the better forms of PR, provided the number of places per constituency or ward is about six. What we actually got was three or four member wards but this was enough for our first SGP Councillors to be elected in May 2007 (three in Edinburgh; five in Glasgow).

This was a bonus following our poorer performance in the Holyrood election and an important reminder that voters do sometimes make different choices in local government. Amid the problems, particularly at the parliamentary election count, and subsequent controversy surrounding that combined election it is worth remembering that electors seemed to take to STV reasonably well. Nevertheless, the crucial decision was taken to de-couple the local elections.

As a result, this year's poll will be the first freestanding local election for over a decade and a half. We must make the most of this opportunity.

There are important messages to get across to the electorate. First, how can people actually vote Green? We have to get a "first vote Green" message across this time. To get elected, a good nucleus of first preference votes is essential: there's no point in being everyone's second choice because you won't then survive the first transfer stage.

Generally, people like the idea of the Greens being part of the political landscape, so to speak. But it has to be explained to them that they can't rely on someone else voting Green. So the message should be: vote Green first to win.

The minority who want a bit more detail on the STV system can be reassured that the transfer stage will mean their vote is not wasted if they rank their Green candidate no. 1. This is particularly important because unlike other parties, we will only be standing a single Green candidate in a ward. At the time of writing (with a number of selections still in train) we have a realistic aim of fielding candidates in all wards in Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow with varying levels of coverage in a further 18 local authorities.

While local government powers are limited (and funding tightly controlled by central government) Green councillors can and do hold councils to

account, and are the main line of defence for good governance. Even with one party in overall control, the Green councillors in Glasgow have been able to ensure a vast improvement in accountability, particularly of common good property. In Aberdeen, Glasgow and Edinburgh, Greens have been at the forefront of the fight to protect public assets.

When I stood for the post of Convenor of our Elections and Campaigns Committee I made it clear that we need to tighten up in two areas.

While we have a generally good record in terms of election administration and legal compliance, there were one or two glitches in the Holyrood campaign.

**"We have to get a First Vote Green message across this time."**

By the time you read this article we will have had a special training day for candidates and agents, with speakers from the Electoral Commission. Candidates and agents will also have been issued with information packs explaining election procedure.

The other issue is advance planning, and soon after the local election we will start preparation on the 2014 European election, for which we will select our list later this year.

We are already discussing with the English Greens shared printing arrangements for a national European election leaflet (many of us regret that the SGP didn't bother with one last time). And beyond that there are the referendum, and Westminster 2015.

It's just as well I took early retirement!

**Alastair Whitelaw**

# Standing for the Greens, Standing for the Future

Daniel Juett, Dominic Hinde, Zara Kitson, Liam Hainey and Stuart Leckie are all standing as candidates in the Scottish local elections this May.

Some of us have a serious chance of being elected, while others view this as an important opportunity to provide a Green voice in areas where we are running as a dark horse candidate.

Wherever we are standing and whatever our chances, we believe that young people are capable of making an impact on the way our local government is run.

Standing for election is often a step taken by older party members who have the financial means and career security to commit to the demands of being a councillor. People under thirty who are still finding their way in life and

Local government can make a big difference to the lives of young people. Many of the community facilities which our councils are responsible for are used by young people at the bottom of the economic ladder, whether it be the subsidised football pitches we play on or the bus services we use because we can't afford to - or choose not to - own a car. Housing shortages force people into long term rents, many of which are overpriced and ill maintained. Affordable housing is well on the way to becoming a very serious issue for an entire generation.

**"We bring with us an ambition and vision for the future which stems from the problems we have experienced first hand."**

There are also areas where young and old alike have a mutual interest. Whilst climate change acts can be passed in parliament, local councils have the power to radically reduce emissions, waste and pollution by taking simple measures. Green jobs create a future for today's youth, integrated transport and serious cycling provision can change the way we travel for the better, and measures can be taken to diversify local business and prevent young people becoming nothing more than cogs in a Tesco economy.

More than anything else, when we stand as candidates we bring with us an ambition and vision

for the future which stems from the problems we have experienced first hand. With some hard campaigning and a bit of luck we hope to get Young Greens into the heart of local politics, looking after our cities, towns and villages for today, as well as building them for the benefit of tomorrow.



Photo by Gary Thompson

taking tough decisions about jobs, relationships and education can easily become marginalised in the political process. However, they are the people who can be helped most by the fair, democratic and sustainable politics which Greens believe in, both today and tomorrow.

# The European Green Party

The European Green Party (EGP) was founded on 22 February 2004 at the Congress of the European Federation of Green Parties (EFGP). 34 Green parties from all over Europe have joined this pan-European party and were the first to form a political party at European level.

Parties can also become observers, and since 2004 individual membership of the European Green Party is also possible. The Scottish Green Party has been a member since 1994.

Greens had first contested the European Parliament elections in 1979, achieving representation there in 1984 as part of wider and diverse grouping, referred to as the Rainbow Alliance.

Following the 1989 elections the Greens formed a separate parliamentary group, the Green Group in the European Parliament (GGEP). Reduced in numbers in the 1994 elections, the Greens formed part of the European Radical Alliance, but a successful outcome in 1999 allowed them to form a combined group with the European Free Alliance having regionalist parties as members (GGEP/EFA) which is the current parliamentary group.

The EGP attitude towards the EU has changed over the years as they have changed the EU through their participation in its institutions.

While they remain critical of various policies fundamental to the EU, they have been drivers of change, punching far above their weight for such a relatively small political group in the EU, and brought about change in the daily lives of Europeans everywhere, as well as a change in the positions taken by the EU on an international level.

The EGP has a youth wing and several networks. The Green Islands Network is one of them, a network for Green Parties in Britain, Ireland and associated islands, affiliated with the European Green Party, including ourselves in the SGP. Their website is found at: <http://www.greenislands.eu/>

The EGP's Manifesto has the Green New Deal as its prime policy. The Green New Deal sets out a new direction for Europe:

"As economic, social and environmental crises converge, it is time to shift our course from destructive short-term profiteering towards sustainable, long-term prosperity."

**"Our sister party the GPEW has 2 MEPs. Let's see if we can't gain our first ever SGP MEP in 2014."**



Steen with Caroline Lucas MP

The Greens/European Free Alliance is a European parliamentary group made up of Greens and representatives of stateless nations and disadvantaged minorities.

They are currently the fourth group in the European Parliament, and counts 58 MEPs – 31 women and 27 men – from 15 countries and 5 regions. It is the only group with a gender-balanced Co-Presidency and with a higher female representation.

Our sister party the GPEW has 2 MEPs, let's see if we can't gain our first ever SGP MEP in 2014. Localisation in Europe should appeal to voters by then, as the Independence referendum draws closer.

**Steen Parish**

# A View from Rhineland

Myra Carus of the Highlands and Islands Green Party speaks to Scot Daniel Morris, who now lives in Germany as a Hausmann, or 'house husband', and whose partner is a member of the Parliament of Rhineland-Palatinate. Below are Daniel's impressions of that system.

As a Hausmann, Germany is very supportive. I receive Elterngeld (Parent Money) each month to compensate for my lack of income while I look after our daughter, and it amounts to around 75% of my normal annual income. Furthermore, in Rhineland Pfalz they guarantee a free kindergarten place from the age of two, so returning to work should not be a problem, and in 2014 this will be changed to age one.

None of that is to say Germany is a parent's utopia. Birth Rate here is around 1.3 compared to the 1.8 in the UK, and there remain strong cultural objections to working mothers. This has been compensated for by the government, who, on finding that between 80-90% of Elterngeld claims are made by women, altered the system so that while the total period of the claim is 14 months, no more than 12 can be claimed by any one parent.

**"In Germany, the long term benefits of supporting parents show in the child's development."**

What I find interesting is that in the UK one often hears the argument that social provision cannot easily be afforded without bankrupting the economy, whereas in Germany it seems all the stronger for it. Naturally the long term benefits of supporting parents show in the child's development, and it does a great deal to prevent child poverty.

I must say that not all Germans share this view. One reason parent support is so strong in this region is that the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) has not been in power in the Landtag of Rhineland-Palatinate for well over a decade, and on the national level many in the current CDU/CSU-FDP coalition want to turn back the clock and feel that children should stay home with their mothers and not attend kindergarten.

They propose an 'educationgeld' where parents (for this read mothers) will be paid to stay at home and raise children. The Green Party is naturally very opposed to this and call it an 'ovengeld' - roughly translating as 'Kitchen Sink Money' to ensure women stay at home and raise babies.

Anne's party is currently in a governing coalition with the Social Democrats. She's the spokesperson for gender, migration, integration, refugees, and is in the committee for the improvement of direct democracy and participation. She is also one of four members on the board of the Green Party in parliament (which is 18 strong) and the deputy spokesperson of the Green party in Rhineland Pfalz, though overall the Green Party has a relatively flat hierarchy and generally favours equality of members.

Her positive impressions of the congress were chiefly based upon the opportunity to meet and interact with people from other countries; parties with differing goals and operating in different political systems. She said this perspective is not only useful when shaping structure, but also policy.

On the negative side she feels there could be a greater deal of transparency, and had the impression that some of the decisions had largely been made prior to conference within a closed circle. Also she feels it sends the wrong signal that the congress only meets every five years, given that she fully expects (and hopes) that the role of the EU will only increase in the coming years. With that in mind, she feels that meeting every 2 years is more a reasonable solution.



## European Greens Congress

The Scottish Green Party was well-represented at the European Greens Congress in Paris from 11 to 13 November 2011, with a good spread of our regions in attendance.

Co-convenor Patrick Harvie was present, as was our stalwart member Moira Dunworth from the Edinburgh Greens, myself representing the Highland and Islands Greens, and Stirling and Clackmannanshire represented in the form of Mark Ruskell.

Argyll and Bute Greens had a presence, with Marij van Helmond, who also spent time with the Dutch Greens exchanging ideas.

Tom Redford, who is the Convenor of the International Committee, was there as an organiser and represented the Young Greens. Tom did a great job and pointed us in the right direction, giving us ideas about which other national groups we should be talking to. Tom is a great ambassador for the Scottish Greens in Europe.

So, first of all, we were gender-balanced. Phew!

I think the most positive thing about these congresses and conferences is the opportunity to network. We met and discussed the political situation within Europe with many different nationalities, from Finns and Icelanders to Germans and Austrians, and finally enjoyed a lunch with the Norwegian group. There were certain parallels and similarities between ourselves and the Norwegians and that proved very interesting.

Events like this are a great opportunity to share information and access new ideas of how to proceed.

One thought which I came away with was that, regardless of country and size of representation within the regional and national parliaments – being Green is a long-term commitment.

Information about the many and varied workshops and plenaries are on the site below and you can access information about the subjects which interest you there.

<http://europeangreens.eu/>

Myra Carus



Patrick, Mark & Tom in Discussion



Eva Joly addressing the conference



Working lunch with the Norwegian Delegation



Marij checking out the stalls

## Go Green - Go Paris!

Marij van Helmond attended the fourth European Green Party Congress in Paris in November as a volunteer minute taker, recruited by the office in Brussels.

I'm a member of the Highlands and Islands branch (Argyll & Bute sub branch), but also very interested in what is happening in the European continent, because of the current Eurozone crisis more interested now than ever.

Arriving at the Congress venue on Friday morning immediately gave a feeling of internationality, delegates arriving all morning long, from 27 European countries, with all languages being spoken. I had the time to attend one of the parallel sessions organised for the afternoon and selected one introducing us to the concept and content of a "Green New Deal" – the European Green Party's proposal for long term regeneration of the European Union. I have to admit that I wasn't even aware of such a plan being developed and was impressed by the amount of preparative work already having gone into the document.

This was intended to be the main topic for Congress, but because of the recent developments in Europe and the spiralling Eurozone crisis, the document was taken off the Agenda to be replaced by discussion and amendment of what is now called the "Paris Declaration" – the Euro Greens' paper on how to tackle the crisis.

This paper was discussed by the national party delegations, with the opportunity of tabling resolutions or negotiating amendments with the drafting working party. These resolutions were voted for in the plenary session on the last day of Congress, and it was impressive how so many different countries, with different economic

problems to contend with, were able to vote almost unanimously for the amended Declaration.

What also impressed and delighted me was the presence of a significant number of women on the platform of the plenary as well as parallel sessions – as representatives of national Green Parties or as guest speakers. They were in leading positions – co-convenors of national parties, MPs, (ex-) ministers and, for Italy, vice-chair of the Senate.

**"The presence of a significant number of women on the platform of the plenary impressed and delighted me."**

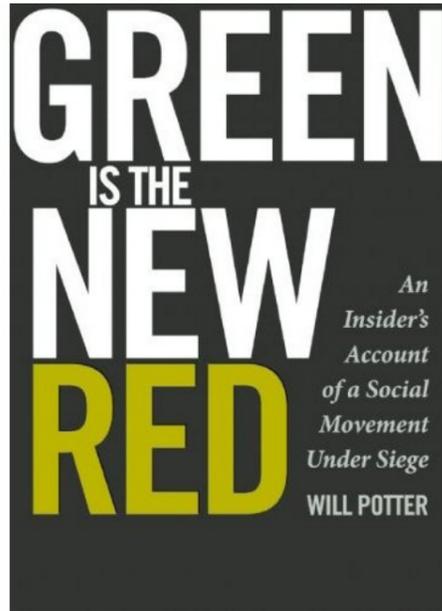
The highlight of the second day was the appearance Mme Eva Joly, leader of the Green Party (EELV) in France. She is currently running for presidency, which is even more remarkable because she is Norwegian by birth.

Her arrival was accompanied by a veritable media scrum, but this didn't prevent her from giving a combative speech, re-stating, amongst other things, her conviction that France should give up its nuclear dependency. Although she is an outsider for the election, her campaign will certainly ensure a high medial profile for the Greens in France during its run.

All in all, it was fantastic to get so much first hand information about what is really going on at this very moment in Europe (and the non-European Mediterranean rim, with speakers from Morocco and Syria), and not have information filtered through the Euro-sceptic screen of most UK politicians and media. It was great to have a Scottish delegation there, and I felt that perhaps at next year's SGP Conference we should pay more attention to European developments, particularly in light of the debate on Scottish Independence.

Patrick & the Euro Green Bear

Greens Meet!



## Pause for Thought Book Review: Green is the New Red

I bought Will Potter's book for its title, expecting a journalistic, even scholarly, discussion of whether the green parties are in any sense replacing the centre-left in politics. It's nothing like that.

As befits a journalist with a background in environmental campaigns, Potter deals with the McCarthy-style demonising of animal rights and environmental

activists in the USA from the mid-1990s onwards.

It's well written and informed and extensively referenced if, ultimately, depressing. Early in the book, Potter recounts a chilling incident in which FBI agents turned up at his flat as he left for work one morning, and tried to "persuade" him to turn informer on friends (including his own girlfriend) and colleagues in the environmental movement. He declined.

This however is one of the milder incidents disclosed as he intersperses background on the US animal rights and environment movements of the past 20 years with the story of one activist's trial, sentencing as a terrorist (i.e. on a par with the 9/11 conspirators) and imprisonment in a secret "Communications Management Unit" (CMU) with very limited visiting rights.

Occasionally I found it difficult to follow the thread, as Potter moves back and forth between recent events and background. The message nevertheless comes over loud and clear: the US government and commercial interests are determined to stick the label "terrorist" to environmental and animal rights activists of all stripes.

It is disclosed that Congressmen who sponsored the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act (in spite of evidence that existing laws were completely adequate) receive large donations from agribusiness and pharmaceutical firms. Ironically, many of those upholding animal experimentation are anti-science in other contexts, notably denying climate change or supporting creationism (they often go hand in hand).

Equally, what comes out of the accounts of various trials is the desperation of former activists who despaired at achieving change through peaceful demonstrations, let alone the ballot box. Potter makes the point that underground activists who actually commit arson or other property directed crime often get away: it's others who take the rap.

He is also careful to make it clear that extreme rightwing movements, or local militias who sabotage state water conservation measures (to give just a couple of examples), are not targeted to anything like the same extent. The Oklahoma bombers and their ilk, let alone the Ku Klux Klan or violent antiabortionists, were well off the radar. Even a 2003 Justice Department audit told the FBI to focus more on "domestic terrorist activities aimed at creating mass casualties or destroying critical

infrastructure, rather than information on social protests and domestic radicals' criminal activities".

To UK readers regaled with the knowledge that undercover police agents deliberately cultivated personal relationships with environment activists, to the extent of having families with them, this will all

**"The atmosphere of the anticommunist witch hunts of early 1950s USA is being recreated to undermine the green movement."**

come as little surprise, except perhaps its extent. Equally, the force of commercial interest always needs reinforcing.

Potter makes it clear that the atmosphere of the anticommunist witch hunts of early 1950s USA is being recreated to undermine the green movement in its broadest sense. Even being a vegetarian or vegan is portrayed as an ideological attack on society.

This book will inform, but it won't cheer you up. Whatever one's views of some of the direct action, even those of us who have chosen a purely political route will have pause for thought.

**Alastair Whitelaw**

Published by City Lights (2011)

## Running out of time Book Review: Requiem for a Species

I would like to draw people's attention to Clive Hamilton's fascinating book on the 'running out of time' issue of climate change, which the Scottish Greens seem to have let slip from their agenda.

I have read books on the subject by Fred Pearce and Mark Lynas which look at what's in store for the human race when we pass the tipping points of climate change. However, this book by Clive Hamilton, which also examines these issues, covers the crucial issue of why we resist the truth about Climate Change.

Although in the first chapter he outlines the scientific facts, he goes on to cover the topics of why we resist these facts: Growth Fetishism; The Consumer Self; Many Forms of Denial; Disconnection from Nature, etc.

I believe that we, the Green Party, need to understand these reasons for why we are so inert, before we can try and convince the other members of the human race who are ignorant of the scientific facts, and those of us who are in denial about it all.

To quote the blurb on the inside cover: "This book sets out once more to raise the alarm to encourage us to take radical measures to head off climate chaos. There have been any number of books in recent years explaining just how dire the future looks and how little time we have to act.

"This book is about why we have ignored those warnings, and why it is now too late. It is about our strange obsessions, our hubris, and our penchant for avoiding the facts.

"It is the story of a battle within us between the forces that should have caused us to protect the Earth – our capacity to reason and our connection to Nature – and those that, in the end, have won out- our greed, materialism and alienation from Nature."

The author, Clive Hamilton, is a professor of public ethics at the Centre for Applied Philosophy and Public Ethics at the Australian National University. For 14 years he was the executive director of Australia's foremost progressive think tank, The Australia Institute. He has held visiting academic positions at the University of Cambridge and Yale University, and his other works include the bestselling Affluenza, Growth Fetish, Scorchers and most recently The Freedom Paradox.

**Jack Cockin**

Published by Earthscan Ltd. (2010)

## Consuming collaboratively Book Review: What's Mine is Yours

Rachel Botsman and Roo Rogers's new book details how collaborative consumption is changing the way we live.

When I first mention my membership of the Green Party, people tend to start talking about recycling and what happens to the council recycling. But recycling and the Green Party are all much more than this.

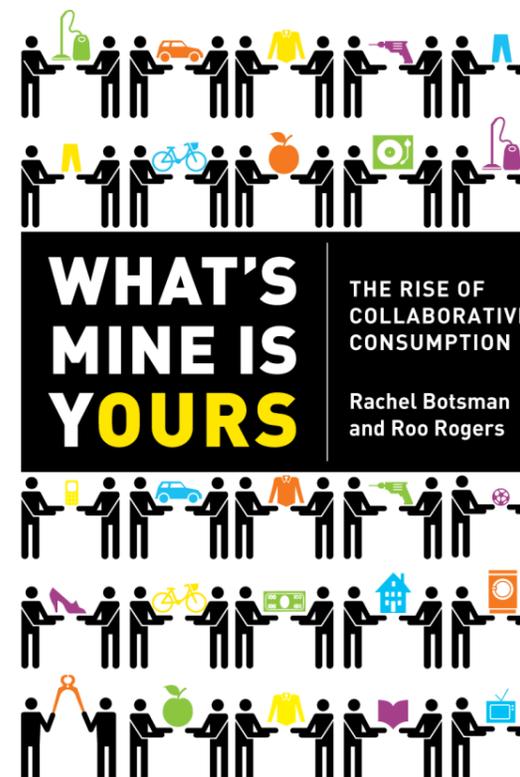
The book begins with the well known problems of overconsumption and unchartered oceans being full of rubbish. But we do not own the earth and all its resources. "The earth is the Lord's and all that therein is". Recycling and sharing includes free recycle groups, offering one's spare room to common interest travellers, or renting shared accommodation when attending expensive conferences.

The book is full of obvious ideas like shopping locally and visiting farmers' markets, but puts it all together so we can realise how to consume collaboratively, and pass the book and the concepts on.

**John Blair-Fish**

Published by Harper Collins (2011)

**"It is the story of a battle within us between our capacity to reason and our greed and materialism."**



**SPRING MINI-CONFERENCE...**

...will take place on Sunday 13 May, Subud, 5 St Leonards Bank, Perth. £10 per Member. Crèche available. Booking forms available from the Party office or by emailing: [policy@scottishgreens.org.uk](mailto:policy@scottishgreens.org.uk)

**AUTUMN CONFERENCE**

This year our conference will be in Maryhill Burgh Halls, Glasgow on 6 and 7 October. Put the date in your diary and stay tuned for further details coming soon!

**CALLING ALL LAWYERS**

The Party's Operations Committee would like to draw up a list of party members who have legal training, and who might be available to give advice from time to time, at least on an informal basis. If you are a lawyer of any kind please contact: [ops@scottishgreens.org.uk](mailto:ops@scottishgreens.org.uk)

**GREENS NEED IT TOO!**

If terms like Ruby, Java, bash, SSL, LDAP, development, Apache, SQL, documentation, GPL, or network security aren't a complete mystery to you (or if they're an interesting mystery), and you have time to help build and support robust, elegant Information & Communications systems with which Greens can outsmart and outperform other parties, we need your assistance now. Any time you can commit can be put to use and you can be assured of valuable experience. Please contact Martin Bartos, Niall Shaw and Ian Ruffell at [itsmg@scottishgreens.org.uk](mailto:itsmg@scottishgreens.org.uk)

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I would like to be put in touch with the following SGP representative groups:

- Women's Network  Young Greens

**Declaration**

I accept and will further the aims of the Scottish Green Party, and am not a member of any other political party except a Green Party abroad.

Signed 

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