

GREENPRINT



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

Summer (An Samhradh) 2012 | www.scottishgreens.org.uk | greenprint@scottishgreens.org.uk

Greens shoot to poll success

In May's local elections, the Scottish Green Party gained six seats across Scotland's 32 councils, bringing our total number of councillors up to 14.

Richard Doherty

While the Scottish National Party (SNP) and Labour also gained councillors, and the Scottish Socialist Party (SSP) retained their seat in West Dumbartonshire, the Conservatives lost 16 councillors, the Liberal Democrats haemorrhaged 80, and all other groups were down a total of 22.

As Patrick Harvie MSP said: "These results are incredibly positive and demonstrate that Greens have a significant role to play in local government. It's particularly pleasing to increase our influence in Scotland's capital and get Greens onto Stirling and Midlothian for the first time."

The 2012 local elections mark a significant moment in the development of Scotland's most progressive force.

Although it is disappointing that of the Green councillors, only 28.6% are women (compared with 50% in 2007), it should be remembered that the Greens far outperformed all other parties in terms of putting up a gender-balanced ballot paper. 40.7% of Green candidates were women, compared with the Lib Dems who, with 27.9%, were second most gender-balanced.

It is also worth bearing in mind that of those Greens who missed out on council seats on this occasion, many were relatively young.

"The 2012 local elections mark a significant moment in the development of Scotland's most progressive force."



Edinburgh councillors Maggie Chapman and Chas Booth celebrating.

As well as having new councillors and new areas of representation, we also now have more political activists with invaluable campaign experience.

Perhaps even more significant than the benefits of the Scottish Green Party having a greater position to engage with the public and speak out on local and national issues in the short-term, is that this election has given a greater platform on which to develop the Party for the future.

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Editor's Letter

After a couple of months of fevered political activity since our Spring edition, Greenprint is back to welcome in a bright, Green Summer.

As a Scottish Green, it is a delight to be writing for the membership of a Party that now has 75% more council seats than at the time of our last edition.

Our sister Party in England and Wales also won 34 seats - a net increase of 11 - while in London, mayoral candidate Jenny Jones beat Lib Dem Brian Paddick to come in an excellent third.

Yet it is clear that such outlets as Greenprint, in affording space to comment on green political subjects, have a great deal of responsibility – at this moment more than ever.

As has become abundantly clear, even in coverage of Scottish local elections there remains a pervasive and noxious Westminster narrative, and a troubling tendency to assume a natural duopoly of power.

If the Scottish Green Party message is to be adequately disseminated, it is down to us and down to you to spread it far and wide.

Many thanks to all who took the time to contribute to this edition. I hope that future editions will be written amid such an atmosphere of progress.

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

If you would like to contribute to our next edition, or if you would like to discuss the possibility of making a regular contribution, we are always keen to hear your ideas. 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

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Edinburgh: the election and aftermath

Five years of hard work resulted in Edinburgh Green Party doubling its number of Councillors from three to six, increasing its vote across the city and scoring a series of firsts.

Peter McColl and Gavin Corbett

In holding the three wards won in 2007, Maggie Chapman became the first Green Councillor to be elected on first preferences by meeting the quota at stage one in Leith Walk; Steve Burgess topped the poll in Southside/Newington and Melanie Main came second, unseating the Liberal Democrat Council leader in Meadows/Morningside.

Nigel Bagshaw was the first Green Councillor elected on the day in Inverleith ward. The three new Councillors won stunning victories. Gavin Corbett topped the poll in Fountainbridge / Craiglockhart, finishing ahead of the Labour group leader and reflecting his hard work in the local area. Chas Booth was elected second and beat the Deputy Provost. Gavin and Chas were the first Greens elected in three member wards in Edinburgh.

We were delighted to hear news of Ian Baxter's success in breaking through onto neighbouring Midlothian Council. This is testament to his years of hard work in Bonnyrigg.

Our other target candidate Julita Mazurek came fourth in a three member ward, and Peter McColl got to the final round in Portobello/Craigmillar, narrowly missing election and also finishing fourth in a three member ward after transfers. Across the rest of the city, Green candidates performed strongly. This was even in wards where we were unable to devote significant resources. It is clear that we are enjoying a rise in underlying support, up from 8% in 2007 to 11.4% in 2012.

We will be focusing on building support for our new Councillors to deliver on our ambitious manifesto, planning to win the seats where we came close, and working to develop the capacity to target further wards. With two years until our next election we

will be working to develop the branch for the run of European, Westminster, Holyrood and local elections in the years 2014-17. With good long-term planning we should be able to build on our successes.

“We will continue to push bold and innovative ideas as the main voice of progressive opposition.”

And after the election?

There was no pause for breath as we entered a frantic period of cross-party negotiation over the weekend and into the following week. In Edinburgh, 30 seats are required for a majority; and the make-up of the Council is Labour 20, SNP 18, Conservatives 11, Greens 6, Liberal Democrats 3.

We looked very carefully and seriously at entering into an agreement with Labour as the biggest party. But Labour plus Greens would still have needed another source of support. With the Liberal Democrats putting themselves out of the frame, that meant either the Tories or SNP. In neither situation would Green votes be needed for a majority. We would be in a three-party arrangement where the other two parties would have a veto but we did not. We regarded that as too weak to work. However, our engagement with the process meant that it became unpalatable for Labour to do a deal with the Tories – with their commitment to privatisation and a climate-change-denying frontbencher – so a Labour SNP deal was the only logical option left.

Meanwhile, we produced our own statement – a Green commitment to Edinburgh – where we articulated our view of how the culture of government in the capital could be transformed. The new Council Leader has confirmed that he wants to work with the Greens to develop forward-looking policies. At the same time we will continue to push bold and innovative ideas as the main voice of progressive opposition.

For more detail see www.edinburghgreens.org.uk

KEY INGREDIENTS TO OUR PROGRESS

1. Rigorous planning makes for successful elections.
2. Early selection of candidates and strong local campaigns with locally identifiable candidates mean Greens can win across Edinburgh (and elsewhere).
3. Campaigning on broad based popular issues increases Green appeal.
4. Focusing campaign activity on local teams at a ward level increases local capacity.
5. Allocating specific capacity and tasks to communications gives us reach where our ward-based work might not have penetrated.

The Party working in tandem for a healthy future

Much has happened since I last wrote for Greenprint. For example, I now live in a ward represented for the first time by a Green councillor, and no, I haven't moved house!

Alison Johnstone, Green MSP for Lothian

Huge congratulations from me to all the local teams who worked so hard. Patrick and I are really looking forward to being part of a much enlarged group of elected Greens and we will work hard to ensure that the Green message is amplified and our impact multiplied by our work at different levels.

My own recent experience has demonstrated the benefits of working together in Parliament and City Chambers. In my previous councillor role I secured the backing of other parties to get the Council to write to the Scottish Government about the impact of their Long Leases Bill on Waverley Market, a site many of you will know as the 1980s' architectural monstrosity 'Princes Mall'. Aesthetics aside, this is a multi-million pound asset which belongs to the people of Edinburgh and one of the unintended consequences of this legislation would have given full ownership of this valuable site to the current leaseholder.



Photo by James Glossop

In Parliament I was able to follow this up, speaking in the debate on the Bill and calling for an exemption for Waverley Market. As a result, I was invited to meet with the Minister responsible to discuss the issue and I'm pleased to report that he subsequently tabled amendments that ensure Waverley Market will remain in public ownership. This success was well-documented and is a testament to joint working across the Party. I'd like to put on record that without the persistence and expert guidance of party activist and author Andy Wightman, our case could not have been made as strongly and effectively.

Another milestone in my MSP life came when we

were offered our first Green debate time at the end of March, when the Parliament makes time available for opposition parties to lead debates on topics of our choice. After much discussion, we decided to use our slot to host debates on Cycling and on the idea of local, publicly-owned Energy Companies.

I led the debate on cycling, and worked consensually to put forward a motion that was bold, but could be supported by all parties as part of building clear support for the momentum behind the boom in cycling and cycle campaigning that we've seen in 2012. It is very sad that it was fatal accidents that brought cycling to the fore but they have also brought a diverse range of campaigners together with renewed determination to achieve change.

Back at the start of March we called for a Cycle Safety Summit and I was invited by the Transport Minister to address the Government's Road Safety Partnership. Our debate came a few weeks later, and then the super 'Pedal on Parliament' on April 29th, which saw three thousand cyclists converge on Holyrood.

I am now setting up a Cross Party Group on Cycling as another tool to keep up the pressure and bring people together, especially as we look towards the budget process in the autumn when we need to see promises matched with investment. Government funding is crucial and we can't just rely on progressive local authorities to deliver. Too many local authorities spend NONE of their own money on active travel, and here is one obvious area where I hope to work in tandem with councillors.

I will be speaking in a debate on obesity soon after writing this article. The Association of Public Health Directors recommends that 10% of all transport budgets go to active travel as part of public health preventative spend. This view is endorsed by more than 110 specialist and professional bodies, from the Institute of Highway Engineers to the British Heart Foundation. It is heartening to learn that there is such wide-ranging support for this common sense Green policy and it's getting harder for the Scottish Government to trivialise. Active travel has multiple benefits. 22% of those on incomes of less than £10,000 cite walking as their main form of transport. It's time to fund it.

Land tenure and Deeside Gaelic

Pictured below is Rob Bain of Ardoch, Deeside, Aberdeenshire, who died in July 2010. Rob was the son of Jean Bain, the last native speaker of Deeside Gaelic, who died in 1984.

Andy Wightman

In an interview with Sheena Blackhall, Rob said of his mother's Gaelic:

"Feasgar math..I canna mynd a lot o't. I niver pickit up a lot o't, like... Funny thing wis, the last puckle years fin she wis dottlit, she widna spik onything bit Gaelic. She wis five year auld afore she could spik English, an she wis born in London. Her folk wis doon there wirkin wi toffs...they war frae Mar Lodge. She wis born til't. She could write it an spikk it an aathing.

"Bit I canna...(..) Ciamar a tha sibh..fit wye wid ye spell that noo! There's a lot o't back tae front, tee. Ardach, here, that's high place. Delnabo's the haugh o the cow. Fin ma mither wis doon at Abyne in the last two year o her life, there wis a nurse there that spoke it. That's the only wye they could makk heid nor tail o her, Campbell, the banker's wife, she come frae the islands like."

Jean Bain was "discovered" by Adam Watson during research for his magisterial work, *The Place Names of Upper Deeside* (Aberdeen University Press, 1984).

"Had things been different, highland Aberdeenshire might today be home to a thriving Gaelic culture."

Rob and his parents before them lived in the croft of Ardoch above Crathie. Unlike most of the rest of the Highlands, Aberdeenshire was never included within the scope of the Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act 1886, because the powerful lowland landowners refused to countenance such a move.

As a consequence, vast swathes of the Highlands in the non-crofting counties have lost their people, their language and their culture as the tenants of the land were never more than one year away from



eviction. This includes the "other" Ardoch which features on the cover of my book, *The Poor Had No Lawyers*, more images of which can be seen at James Dyas Davidson's portfolio at www.jamesdyasdavidson.com.

Had things been different, highland Aberdeenshire might today be home to a thriving Gaelic culture. Places like Ardoch would be occupied by crofting tenants with secure, heritable tenancies.

As a result of this failure to provide legal protection to tenants, Deeside Gaelic is now extinct, and Ardoch was put on the international property market by Savills on behalf of Invercauld Estate last year. It was sold earlier this year for £212,500.

There is no other country in Europe that would allow this sort of thing to happen.

Originally posted on 30 March 2012 at www.andywightman.com/wordpress/



Road safety fears

The terrible state of roads across the Highlands raises safety fears, but the last Highland Council still wanted more...

Anne Thomas

The last Highland Council cut back on the road repair budget and diverted funds elsewhere, raising safety concerns particularly for cyclists. Even the £2m now earmarked for road repairs across the Highlands is a tiny fraction of what is needed. Severe weather has wreaked havoc on roads and the predictions are for more of the same.

Unpredictable weather is likely to be the norm as climate change kicks in. Events such as the Jet Stream going a lot further South than normal, causing the 'big freeze' of the previous two winters, or much heavier rain in a shorter space of time will become more common. Farmers, gardeners and others working with nature are already aware of the changing climate.

Why is spending on public transport seen as a subsidy whereas spending on new roads is seen as an investment? A third of people in the Highlands don't even have access to a car.

Despite not being able to afford to maintain roads, the previous Highland Council voted for a £27m Option 6 West Link Road, taking a road alongside the canal, with a roundabout at the junction of the river and canal – a very popular spot to sit on the bench with the majestic reach of river and canal on either side. It will also spoil popular open spaces which are used for recreation by local people of Inverness, in keeping with the original purchase of the land for the common good. People did not have a chance to vote on destroying this area and fundamentally changing the city in this way.

More roads were planned by the previous council to 'alleviate congestion', whereas a small fraction of this money spent on low carbon options would sort out congestion, save people money and help to keep them fitter. The public should consider

whether they want more roads which the Council will not be able to afford maintenance of, or proper maintenance of existing ones as well as improved rail and bus services.

The Scottish Government this year cut back on low carbon transport and increased spending on roads despite their 'Green' rhetoric. We need to spend serious money improving the safety of low carbon options such as cycling and walking, subsidise buses and trains rather than allow them to be cut, and encourage people to car share. Car use is set to decline with increased costs, so investment in low carbon alternatives is an investment in the future rather than a return to the 1980s car-centred culture.

We have seen fuel prices rise inexorably in recent years due to peak oil. There is a limit to production, but demand keeps going up. This will only get worse. Future traffic projections suggested by planners are therefore unaffordable. The Highlands needs to wean itself off its heavy oil dependency or it will be in deep trouble. All investment needs to encourage people out of cars, or at least to share them.

Instead, the UK government told us to keep our tanks topped up, causing a crisis of their own making. In fact the advice should have been to only fill tanks half full, as this reduces the weight of the vehicle, improving its efficiency. Did you see any calls for people to consider walking or cycling for short journeys, catch the bus or train or car share? This could have reduced the fuel demand and improved people's health, but it might have had a negative effect on revenue and GDP.

After all, cycling or walking to work, or growing your own vegetables doesn't show in GDP. If people spend money on fuel or are unfit and so need medical treatment it does.



Unsustainability: Drilling the message home

Are we mature enough as a society to protect our last remaining wildernesses and ecosystems or do we lack the foresight to see the true implications of our actions beyond our primitive desires?

John Fraser

A recently released report by the Gaia Foundation (www.gaiafoundation.org.uk) on the extractive industries and all that goes with them brings into clear perspective the scale of destruction and almost frenzied rate of extraction with total disregard for populations and the environment.

I would like to give just an outline of this report and a feel for what is happening worldwide, and what this means for all of us and how we are all connected in one way or another, whether it happens in the North Sea, the Amazon or Africa, and what we could do about it.

The sheer scale and rate of extraction continuing to increase year on year with these industries is far bigger than most people realise. We are now entering a new phase where old deposits are being reworked due to new technologies, plus there is a new scale of demand. For example in the last ten years extraction of iron ore is up 180%, Cobalt 165%, Lithium 125% and Coal 44%.

Prospecting is also increasing which means a massive increase in years to come. Enormous industrial wastelands are created with the accompanying inevitable factors being pollution of habitats, water and land, plus displacement of population. Human rights are being ignored, mainly of indigenous peoples but not exclusively, while environmental laws are ignored or circumvented.

Along with this insatiable hunger for the Earth's resources comes a great need for water, a resource that in some countries is not plentiful. Even south-east England is increasingly suffering drought.

In Scotland we are in the early stages of fracking which requires 1-8 million gallons of water. The accompanying pollution of each locality and the world is a major problem, with waste polluting the air with particulates and water courses with metal improving chemicals such as cyanide and mercury.

With all land extraction we find deforestation, destruction of natural water courses, top soil removal and even in the USA mountain top removal (MTR), which has been linked to 60,000 cases of cancer, as stated in a report in the Financial Times. The US Environmental Protection Agency contends that 3.93 billion lbs of toxic chemicals were released into the US environment in 2010, up 16% from 2009, and the mining sector was responsible for 41%.

The amount of minerals that can be recovered from rocks has decreased from the early 1900s, Copper from 3% to 0.3%. This leads to more expensive mining and a huge increase in waste materials. To produce 1 ton of copper = 300 tons of waste. In the 2011 "The Game Has Changed" report by PricewaterhouseCoopers, the remaining reserves of most of the minerals are said to have a life span of between 12 years for Zinc and 53 years for thermal coal. No doubt new reserves will be found but with more contentious implications such as offshore mining. In Greenland and the Arctic, a huge amount could be recovered by recycling, but this does not fully solve the problem.

Just because most of the extraction happens elsewhere, we cannot ignore the fact that indigenous peoples are being displaced from traditional lands through lies and brutality as the earth is laid bare. These minerals are in the products that we use. The bridges and roads we build use huge amounts of these resources. All electronic goods are a cocktail of metals and plastic. People in South America, Africa, India and many other parts of the world are asking us for our support to save their lands.

The world is now faced with a huge increase in demand for resources as China, South America and India all want a western kind of lifestyle which is just not possible – a recent report from the Scottish Government acknowledges that we would need three Planet Earths to achieve it. Yet in the north-east of Scotland we apparently want to build 28 miles of dual carriageway and a new "garden" to be created with huge amounts of the world's resources being used up in the process.

What do we really need? And what do we desire to have? Increasingly we need to ask these questions and find the answers as a world community, as they will soon be forced upon us. A good start would be for people to know the story behind everything we think we need to have. Where do the minerals in our laptops come from? How much concrete and aluminium is it going to take to build that road or create a new 'garden'?

We might be surprised and maybe, just maybe, we'll realise that we don't need a new ipod, or more roads. With a positive change of outlook, we can manage to live into the future, begin to respect the earth and its peoples and be grateful to do with less.

The place of an independent Scotland within the UN Security Council

Reform of the United Nations Security Council has been discussed for over 17 years, and the main issues under consideration are the category of membership, the question of veto, regional representation, the size of an enlarged Council, and the Council's working methods and relationship with the UN General Assembly.

Martha Wardrop

Currently, there is a 15-member Council comprised of five permanent members with veto power – China, France, Russia, United Kingdom and United States – and 10 non-permanent members with no veto, who are elected for two-year terms.

and work with other member states to develop the legitimacy of the UN and its General Assembly.

With its system of 'one country, one vote', the UN ensures that even the voice of the weakest can be heard. Scotland would support the calls for respect of the core values that the UN stands for, including democracy, accountability, subsidiarity, transparency and inclusiveness in a review of global governance.

Scotland will face new political challenges in the task to restructure the UN Security Council. Through international negotiations, it is possible to support cooperation, sharing of expertise and consensus on global issues from sustainable development to social and cultural activity, such as education, peace building and human rights.

"With its system of 'one country, one vote', the UN ensures that even the voice of the weakest can be heard."

The Scottish Green Party's view is that the UN Security Council is dominated by the planet's biggest arms dealers, including the UK and US Governments, and must be reformed to ensure fair representation of all the world's people. The UN itself must have the funding and the authority to mediate in conflicts, which will increasingly occur over access to basic resources as a result of climate change.

It could be anticipated that a vote for Scotland to become independent would help create momentum to advance this reform. The break-up of the UK would give a healthy wake-up call to the United Nations to rally the broadest possible support for debate on the future of the Security Council. As an independent nation, Scotland would join

By reaching agreement on the removal of nuclear weapons and stopping

Trident replacement, Scotland's Independence could help promote the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and further the goal of achieving nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament.

An independent Scotland will be able to provide leadership amongst smaller nations to secure a more sustainable, peaceful world.



The anti-nuclear voice

Twenty years ago, Labour was anti-nuclear. Ray Newton was on its sub-committee for peace matters and shares his perspective on nuclear below.

I went to a Nuclear-free Zone conference in Japan where I met Commander Robert Green, who once flew nuclear bombers towards Leningrad, and later was Intelligence Assistant to the top brass at Whitehall before his retirement. Because he was then greatly harassed he moved to nuclear-free New Zealand.

I think that the issue of NATO and the nuclear issue should be used to show how Labour has moved to support Conservative policies in local as well as national politics.

With regard to the referendum on Independence, there are those who think that 'devo plus' gives us what we need to decide our future with a much better chance of a majority. I was therefore pleased to have my letter below headlined in both the Scotsman (10 April 2012) and Scotland on Sunday.

"You refer to Professor Chalmers (Report 9 April) who thinks that the existing SNP policy to withdraw from NATO with its ready-to-use nuclear weapons would be faced with hostile US opinion, as though that should decide the issue. Chalmers also says that neighbouring NATO countries would not like an independent Scotland to 'free-ride' on their security protection.

"However, there is mounting evidence that the possession of nuclear weapons has resulted in more global insecurity, not less, since the end of the Cold War.

"As a small nation we would be much more secure OUTSIDE a nuclear-armed NATO that is trying to police the rest of the world. It is now counterproductive, as shown in Afghanistan, as the recruiting sergeant of terrorists rather than defeating them.

"All this has been successfully argued in the recent book *Security Without Nuclear Deterrence* by Commander Green (RN Retired) and General Sir Hugh Beach (Ret).

"Vice-Admiral Sir Jeremy Blackburn KCB says: 'Green's important book will doubtless cause perturbation amongst his former colleagues and in the UK Government and in defence circles more widely, but they should read it carefully as they approach the decision point for the future of the UK's nuclear deterrent.'

"Of course, only those retired from active service can speak out, but there is great unease in the higher ranks that the politicians are under the

delusion that we are a world power and must waste untold billions to renew Trident.

"Careful study shows that an independent Scotland would have the opportunity to join the vast majority of nations who are more secure without nuclear weapons."

"Green Party members should take the lead in campaigning on this issue."

Green Party members should take the lead in campaigning on this issue against the vicious opposition of the Tories, LibDems and to their shame, Labour.



Security without Nuclear Deterrence by Robert Green (2010) is available from Edinburgh's Word Power, an independent bookshop, at www.word-power.co.uk or 0131 662 9112.

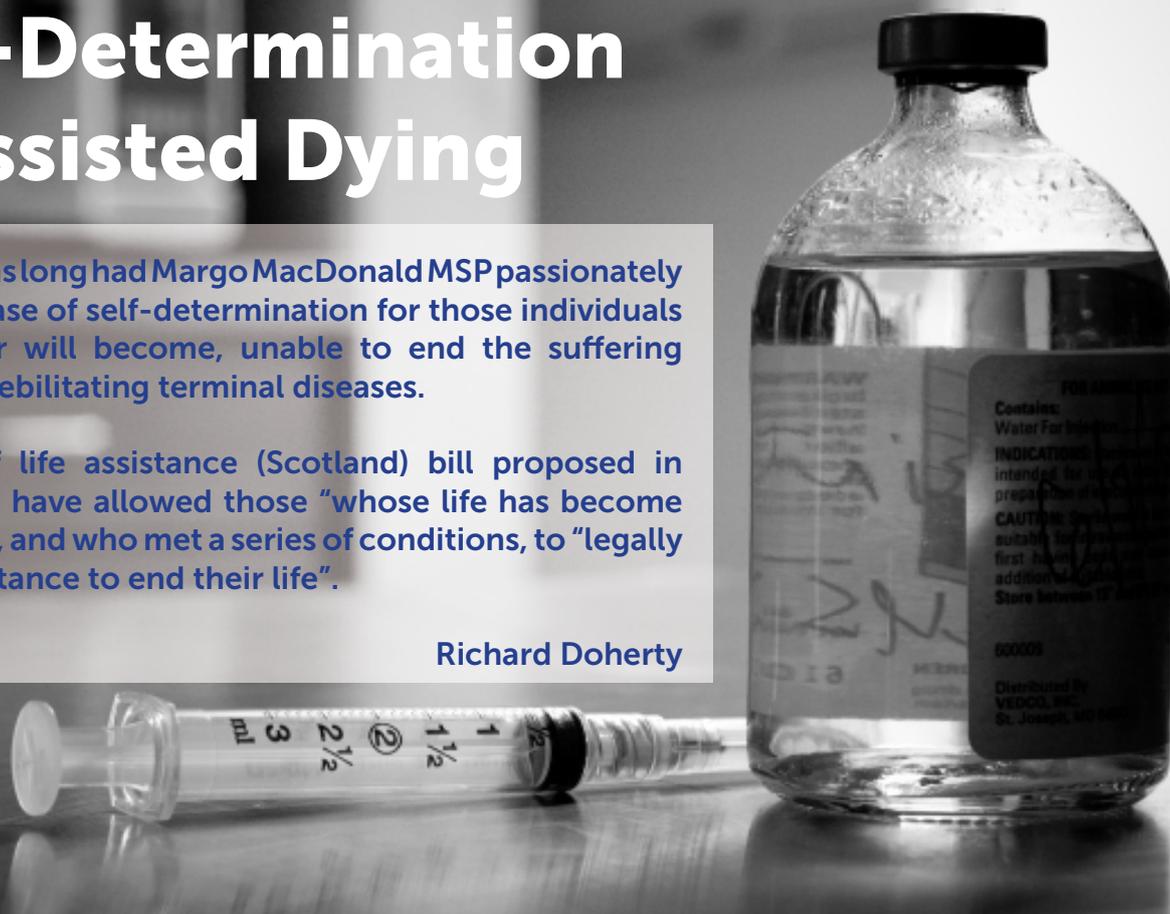
Self-Determination in Assisted Dying

Holyrood has long had Margo MacDonald MSP passionately argue the case of self-determination for those individuals who are, or will become, unable to end the suffering caused by debilitating terminal diseases.

The end of life assistance (Scotland) bill proposed in 2010 would have allowed those “whose life has become intolerable”, and who met a series of conditions, to “legally access assistance to end their life”.

Richard Doherty

Photo by: Kreg Steppe



Patrick Harvie MSP, who voted in favour of the bill, said: “For any person to take control at the end of their own life, on their own terms, may be regretted and grieved over and may be distressing and traumatic for other people, but I cannot see why it should be criminal, even if that person needs to ask for help from someone who is willing to give it in a context of care.”

The issue was recently brought into focus in Westminster by the Commission on Assisted Dying, chaired by Lord Falconer, and funded in part by well-known pro-euthanasia and assisted dying campaigner, Terry Pratchett.

The commission’s conclusion, that helping terminally ill people to commit suicide should be made legal under strict new safeguards, was dismissed by campaigners opposed to such changes, largely on the grounds that the commission was always destined to be biased.

That claim was obviously true, but added nothing new to the argument against legal change that could honour the wishes of individuals concerned in such cases.

George Paxton of the Glasgow and West of Scotland Greens’ branch summarises the perceived need for a change in legislation:

“With medical advances life can often be extended, but this may be accompanied by prolonged suffering. In recent years, surveys in Britain and Scotland have consistently revealed majority support for end-of-life choice, so for the individual to decide when their life has ceased to be worth having, and to have access to the

means of bringing their life to an end should be treated as a basic human right.

“For people incapable of attempting suicide due to physical incapacity, others are required to assist, hence the law is involved. Those who are opposed to external involvement in the end-of-life process need not avail themselves of it, but neither should they prevent those who wish to have more control over their last days and weeks.”

“I am not aware of any attempts to prosecute someone for assisting suicide.”

David Mumford, Scottish Green Party activist from Brechin, outlines the arguments of those who are unconvinced a change to the law is necessary, telling Greenprint:

“The present situation, given the guidelines issued by the Director of Public Prosecutions, seems to be working OK. Since their promulgation, I am not aware of any attempts to prosecute someone for assisting suicide. These guidelines are, for example, well aware of the problems that could be caused by potential beneficiaries of a death encouraging that death.

“Anyone contemplating assisting a suicide can read the guidelines and come to a decision of conscience - in the recognition that a prosecution for assisting suicide may be a possible outcome if the guidelines are broken.”

Yet sadly this is exactly why campaigners suggest that humane legislation should remove this most horrific of burdens from the individuals themselves. Because of the ‘decision of conscience’ there are very many stories

of those who desperately wish to end their suffering, but feel forced by law to prolong their own agony and the turmoil for their loved ones, out of fear of the consequences for the people they would leave behind.

In other cases, people travel to clinics like Dignitas in Switzerland, where assisted dying or euthanasia is legal for foreign nationals, but this is far from satisfactory for many reasons. As well as the patient being forced to leave their familiar environment behind, denying a measure of comfort, these facilities are a costly alternative to NHS care.

Aside from this, and however unlikely prosecution under Scots or English and Welsh law for helping a loved-one may be, the threat remains until long after the patient dies, meaning their pursuit of the 'good death' is further interfered with by the denial of basic peace of mind at the end of their life.

Perhaps worse than for those forced to travel abroad under such dreadful circumstances, is the situation for those whose fear of the consequences of being assisted ultimately leads them to take even more desperate measures.

In March, Labour MP for Sheffield Central, Paul Blomfield, gave an emotionally-charged call for a change in the law on assisted suicide, discussing the situation of his own terminally ill father who gassed himself alone in his car rather than die a "lingering, degrading death" from cancer. With no goodbyes, knowing that his family would likely be the ones to find him, the law of the land made that the least worst option available.

As for the fear that vulnerable people would be pushed into asking for death by those who stand to benefit, I can't see how the provision of such care allowing the choice of the end of suffering could suddenly create this issue.

It seems illogical to imagine this type of suicide would be easier to manipulate with legislation requiring psychological evaluation, supervision and, naturally, professional scrutiny to ensure a patient is acting of their own accord. I fail to see how potential beneficiaries would become more likely to manipulate a person into, say, drinking a lethal cocktail, with safeguards in place, than they currently are with no safeguards at all; particularly if the Director of Public Prosecutions appears unlikely to prosecute a person assisting suicide as things stand.

Other recurrent arguments against legislative change are outlined by Mr Mumford as follows:

"People's moods and wishes can change - even from day to day. The medical professions are committed to saving life, not ending it. Changes in the law could undermine respect for life and for those who are terminally ill. High quality palliative care should be available throughout Scotland. Sometimes a choice for suicide can be a consequence of ignorance about what is available in palliative care."

While people's choices can change often, a safeguard for assisted dying would be that individuals themselves make the necessary decision at the final moment. And certainly palliative care is vital, but palliative care and end of life provision are far from incompatible. For the benefit of the individual within society, surely the two go hand in hand.

It can be agreed that as a bystander the morally correct thing to do is to attempt to offer the autonomous individual every known reason why life is in fact worth living. However, the final decision must rest with the individual in question. With regard to suicide, only the individuals themselves can know the full extent of their justifications for a final decision.

When it comes to the medical profession, it would likewise be favourable that a doctor encourage the patient to go on living, while at the same time, law be designed to protect all parties concerned from punishment, after following the patient's final choice.

Patients too disabled to carry out an act themselves, should not automatically be debarred from the consequences of that act, solely on the grounds that they themselves need assistance to carry it out.

The call for humane end of life legislation to be available to those who want it for themselves is a call to recognise the

pursuit of the 'good death' as something that every individual hopes for at the point where palliative care reaches its limit, and which professionals who are willing to provide such a service aiming for that should be free to provide, in accordance with the wishes of the patient.

A primary requirement for end of life provision is that every option is made absolutely clear to the patient. Therefore, with legislation allowing for assisted dying would necessarily be an increased responsibility to avoid any 'ignorance' about palliative care. The fear of ignorance about palliative care leading to the choice of suicide is perhaps even an argument in favour of the introduction of end of life provision.

Without such legislation, and with those people determined to end their life before the suffering becomes too great forced to go abroad, or take more drastic measures at home, there is often no professional available at the outset to discuss the decision and any alternatives with a patient.

Even with people qualified to promote further palliative care as an alternative to suicide, the fear of prosecution is currently more likely to prevent a patient from discussing the issue for fear of potentially incriminating their loved ones.

Mr Blomfield MP said of his father's situation:

"I am sure that what drove him to end his life when he did was the fear that if he didn't end his life when he could, he would lose the opportunity to act at all. If the law had made it possible he could, and I am sure he would, have shared his plans and he would have been able to say goodbye. He would have been able to die with his family around him and not alone in a carbon monoxide-filled garage. He, and many more like him, deserve better."

"Palliative care and end of life provision are far from incompatible."

Minimum alcohol pricing

Alcohol is a poison and, in the wrong hands, the damage and impact is often irreversible.

Elaine Hamilton

One could argue that businesses, those manufacturing alcohol, those selling alcohol and the service industry – bars, clubs, restaurants and hotels, may suffer from minimum pricing on alcohol, as any rising cost may reduce overall spending by consumers who are already struggling with less money in their pockets in the ongoing doom of recession, unemployment, job insecurity and rising living costs.

However, this must be considered in terms of the benefits to individuals, and to society as a whole. The £3.56 billion cost of alcohol misuse to the nation every year is one that must stop. Alcohol is a national disgrace when the costs – social, health, crime – are considered.

That 90% of Scotland's adults drink alcohol confirms how entwined alcohol is within our culture. It does not seem to be part of our identity that is diminishing, certainly in the ageing adult population. Those of us who choose not to drink can be pressurised by friends to have a glass of wine or a pint. Shouldn't it be socially acceptable for people not to drink, rather than the current state of affairs?

While a study carried out by the University of Edinburgh found that, since 2002, there has been a one third reduction in under-15-year-olds consuming alcohol weekly, the

fact that alcohol remains a feature of this age group at all remains a cause for concern – they are the future of Scotland.

Alcohol is endemic in our society, but minimum pricing cannot tackle the problem on its own. The minimum age to purchase alcohol should also be raised.

Taxes raised from alcohol sales should be used to educate our children, and go towards the fallout of alcohol abuse – families affected by alcohol and domestic abuse; victims of crime fuelled by alcohol; drunk driving; hate crimes; rape – harsh custodial sentences for those who commit these crimes and effective care packages for those who are affected.

Alcohol tax-funded care for victims of alcohol abuse in society should include those who are victims by extension, including babies born with foetal alcohol syndrome, and should also go towards the effective treatment of alcohol abusers themselves.

For all the damage that alcohol causes and costs society, it is only right that the taxes collected by the government are used for the benefits of the nation as a whole. It will, unfortunately, always be the case that some do not drink responsibly and this cannot be swept under the carpet.

“Alcohol is entwined within our culture.”

In the last parliament, Scottish Green MSPs were the only opposition party to support the government and vote for minimum pricing.

In March this year our Green MSPs again backed Scottish Government proposals for minimum pricing on alcohol, but also questioned the dominance that a handful of rich corporations have in controlling the drinks industry.

Greens have always recognised it is not a magic solution but rather one of practical action that can benefit public health.

Patrick Harvie said:

“We were happy to support minimum pricing again today but urge all parties to consider how else we can improve our often unhealthy relationship with alcohol.

“Labour's proposals such as limiting caffeinated alcoholic drinks are worth exploring. We also need to challenge the dominance of the drinks industry by big firms whose focus will always be profit.

“Scotland should instead champion the growth of small, independent brewers who benefit their local economies and use local ingredients to create quality rather than quantity.”



Photo by Corey Balazowich.

The role of female co-convenor

Being the female co-convenor is providing an opportunity to promote women in politics and support gender equality.

Martha Wardrop

At a time of financial crisis, when austerity measures and welfare reform are likely to jeopardise progress that has been made, representation of women in public life is more important than ever.

In my campaigning as part of the local government elections, I have highlighted women's significant contributions to local communities and their use of local government services and benefits, particularly during pregnancy, as carers, and due to their relative economic inequality and poverty.

My route in to politics began when I got involved in student community action and took up volunteering with vulnerable groups in Glasgow, including homeless people, single parent families, and older people who were housebound. On completing my studies, I gained employment in the voluntary sector working in a disadvantaged housing estate, affected by long term unemployment, poor health and rundown housing.

This experience of working with community groups and individuals to increase their skills for employment, set up health projects, and support new house building has had a strong influence on my motivations.

I joined the Scottish Green Party because of my knowledge of poverty, my frustrations with existing regeneration initiatives and the need for a different economic policy to help transform people lives.

The funding of wars in the Middle East, the bombing of innocent civilians in Iraq and the Arms Trade also lead to my involvement in the peace movement and working against violence in society. I was

convinced that joining the Scottish Green Party was the right thing to do upon hearing Robin Harper speak, and receiving an information pack from Kay Allan of the Glasgow Green Party.



I hope that through working with local branches and various campaigners in the Scottish Green Party, I will help build up our resources to be able to increase our representation at all levels of government in the years ahead.

Green Councillors 2012

Aberdeenshire

Martin Ford (East Garioch)

Edinburgh

Nigel Bagshaw (Inverleith)
Gavin Corbett (Craiglockhart)
Melanie Main (Morningside/Meadows)
Steve Burgess (Southside/Newington)
Maggie Chapman (Leith Walk)
Chas Booth (Leith)

Glasgow

Liam Hailey (Langside)
Martha Wardrop (Hillhead)
Nina Baker (Anderston)
Martin Bartos (Partick West)
Kieran Wild (Canal)

Midlothian

Ian Baxter (Bonnyrigg)

Stirling

Mark Ruskell (Dunblane and Bridge of Allan)

Behind the scenes

The two Green MSPs are supported by a team of seven full and part-time staff based at Holyrood and in Patrick's Glasgow office.

Ben Miller

We are paid for by the Scottish Parliament, and so cannot carry out explicitly Party activities. However, our media, campaigns and research work is political by nature and can complement local branch activity.

Jason Rose is our relatively new Head of Media, joining us from a previous role at Scottish Water and as a journalist. Ben Miller is also employed to work on Media and Campaigns and Iain Thom works on Research and Policy.

Moira Dunworth and Will George support Alison with Lothian regional work and Gillian Little and Kat Jones support Patrick in Glasgow.

We feel that it is very important that party members have a good idea of what your MSPs are up to and we are currently reviewing the ways that we communicate. At the moment, anyone (member or not) who signs up to SGP News at the bottom of the party website will receive national press releases from the MSPs. These give some indication of the issues that we are engaging with, but our press work is very varied and we are quoted in all sorts of places. Keen members wishing to receive a more comprehensive media briefing can contact us to sign up for a weekly email with an overview of coverage and articles.

Of course, MSPs do far more each week than ever gets reported upon, and so we are going to be increasing our use of blogs and social media to let you know when Alison or Patrick have spoken in the Parliament or have attended an interesting event. At the moment you can find a basic site at greenmsps.org and tweets from @greenmsps, as well as Patrick's website at patrickharviemsp.com



Photo by Alan Stannan.

So far this describes a one way flow of information, but we'd really like your input! If you live in Lothian or Glasgow, then lobby your MSP on what issues you think Greens should be shouting about, and wherever you are in Scotland, do keep us up to date with local issues that link to national themes. Alison and Patrick have limited time and won't be able to do everything but it is important to get regular feedback and ideas from the party. We have several years ahead of us to build some strong, outward-looking national campaigns and build on our record as an effective parliamentary team.

In the first instance, contact Ben Miller on: ben.miller@scottish.parliament.uk



Spring Mini Conference, Perth

The venue for Spring Conference was a beautiful old Georgian house overlooking a wonderful park in Perth.

Hilary Charles

Not that we had much time to look out of the window however, as the day was pretty packed – physically with over booked spaces as well as mentally with three busy sessions in the day.

The morning started with a split group of Energy Policy review, while the Council Election review was taking place in the larger room upstairs.

Energy Policy was discussed with a view to updated our Policy Document and Maggie steered the group through the current policy, looking at how we want to amend and update it. There are five volunteers who will take forward particular aspects of the energy discussion from which will come Policy Motions to go to conference in the autumn.

The Council election review was packed with delighted participants in the election and many were congratulated on their fantastic hard work – some with success and others narrowly missing out.

Discussions on our performance across Scotland, and advice from those who have been working to get elected was varied and lively. Inspirational stuff from which we can really work on and develop for future campaigns. It was discussed that we should be starting our selection for European Candidates very soon.

The afternoon session was a workshop allowing us to take the first step in developing our Independence Policies. The group heard from Patrick and then split into groups covering a wide range of headings. We then “speed dated” around the headings in order to have our say on each topic.

A few of the topics discussed in smaller groups dotted throughout the house asked, ‘how do you feel about currency, head of state, defence policy, macro economics?’ Moving from one topic to another made the debate almost educational as we listened to other views – some quite challenging to our own beliefs.

After a hectic time organising the workshop, by the end of the day I my cry changed from “never again” to “lets do it again”. Perhaps different areas of policy – certainly a smaller group or a larger venue!

With the wonderful work of our election teams, we have all been inspired to re-engage in politics and I do hope that we can keep this momentum going with another day like this – how does Autumn sound to you?

October Party Conference, Glasgow

The Scottish Green Party Autumn Conference will be held in the Maryhill Burgh Halls in Glasgow on Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 October 2012.

The conference theme will be Power Structures and there will be speakers on local communities, local authorities, the EU and a global view in order to consider how Scotland sits in relation to these power structures.

For booking forms, please contact office@scottishgreens.org.uk



Un-green Olympics?

Like it or loathe it, there's no doubt that the upcoming 2012 Games are going to be a memorable event for London. Millions of people will visit the city as part of the country's biggest peacetime security operation ever.

Jenny Jones



Thousands of events from barbeques to festivals will take place and of course the world's biggest sports stars will be competing for gold medals.

Although we Greens know how to enjoy a party, we are also concerned about the impact of the Games on the environment and local people. Staging such a lavish event could well be seen as fundamentally un-green, with spectators flying in from around the world, huge stadiums being built from scratch and floodlights blazing away half the night.

However, millions of people will watch the Games so they are a perfect opportunity to demonstrate how to live and have fun in a greener, more environmentally friendly way.

London 2012 certainly surpasses the achievements of the Sydney, Athens and Beijing Games with regard to green commitments; though many of London's most green features are not obvious. We do not have a giant wind turbine powering our Olympic Park for example, but organisers achieved much more to reduce the climate change impact of the Games by building clever, lightweight stadia with reused and recycled materials.

The organisers worked measuring their carbon footprint and sustainability into every decision, which allowed them to create a new international standard – ISO 20121 – that all major events should follow.

However, much as when people travelled to Beijing in 2008 and were confronted by the city's filthy

air pollution; the London Games this summer might not be all that different. Air pollution in London causes 4,000 premature deaths a year and is particularly bad during large scale events such as last year's royal wedding. Furthermore, the London Assembly found that the Olympic Route Network, designed to speed sponsors and athletes around the capital, is predicted to make the problem worse, and could land us with a hefty fine.

There has also been a failure to build new waste and renewable energy facilities in East London to power the Games and deal with the waste generated at the site. Most of the waste will go to Bedfordshire instead, and in place of a renewable energy revolution we have 9% of the electricity from renewables.

“We must ensure the Olympics legacy is not squandered but benefits London in the long term.”

after the Games have finished. We want the Olympic Park to be zero carbon and zero waste by 2025, and to convert Olympic Route Network “zil lanes” to dedicated cycle lanes and/or wider pavements where possible.

Whatever you think of the Olympics, it is going to happen! It is our job as Greens to ensure that it is as fair and green as possible and has a positive impact on the people it most affects.

Jenny Jones stood as Green Party candidate in the 2012 London Mayoral elections.

The choice of corporate sponsors for the 2012 Games suggests double standards from the organisers.

Worldwide Olympic partner for the 2012 Games, Dow Chemical, merged with Union Carbide in 1999. Union Carbide gave the world one of its worst man-made environmental disasters in history with the 1984 gas disaster in Bhopal, India.

Even less in need of explanation as to the Orwellian nature of London 2012's corporate partnerships is that the Sustainability Partner of the Games is BP, and sponsorship of the Paralympics comes from none other than ATOS, the firm currently telling disabled and gravely ill benefits claimants that they are perfectly fit to work.

Allowing companies who cause such suffering and death to be associated with the Olympics and Paralympics is an outrage.

North of the border, it will be interesting to see if the promised increase in tourism will materialise as a result of the Olympics, or whether the event will prove a waste of public money while we are in the grips of economic depression.

Richard Doherty

A Green Woman President for an ideal future France

It was going to be a fortnight without politics – my annual stay with my brother who has been living in France for some 40 years. Mistake!

Marij van Helmond

Just like five years earlier, I hit French presidential election time and there was no escape from it. Like five years earlier, I got very excited about it myself.

My brother, a member of the far left fringe, hates Nicolas Sarkozy and followed the results of the daily 'sondages' – the polls – avidly, rejoicing with every loss of percentage of intended voters. In the evening we watched the party political broadcasts of all ten (!) candidates, we watched panels of analysts of every description, we watched interviews with all candidates and we watched news flashes of them on their respective campaign trails.

This election was an important one, not just for France, but possibly for Europe and the EU, as the incumbent Sarkozy's strongest contender was François Hollande, *Partie Socialiste*. The thought of a socialist president for France was certainly a gladdening thought, even if he is not as confirmed a socialist as some might want him to be.

What excited me was the performance of the candidate fielded by the French Greens, the combined *Europe Écologie Les Verts*, madame Eva Joly. I was also interested in the fact that two other women threw their hats in the ring – Nathalie Arthaud of the *Lutte Ouvriers* (far left) and Marine Le Pen (far, far right) and watched them putting their messages across. I can't think of anything remotely resembling such female participation in politics in Britain, not even when Mrs Thatcher stood for PM.

I saw Eva Joly for the first time when she 'dropped in' on the annual conference of the European Greens in Paris in 2011. Besieged by media folk, she didn't seem fazed by their attention and addressed conference in a relaxed, friendly and at the same time very confident manner. The avalanche of info available in the media and election material provided the following, remarkable facts about her:

Mme Joly, née Gro Farseth, was born in a poor quarter of Oslo some 50 years ago. As a teenager she left Norway to study in France, intending to pay her way as an au pair. The son of the host family fell in love with her and against the wishes of his family, they married. Gro Farseth became Mme Eva Joly. She had children but continued to study law and became a magistrate when she was nearly

forty. Her breakthrough to 'fame' came through her involvement as trial judge in France's biggest post-war corruption scandal – the 'affaire ELF'.

This has coloured her subsequent politics; total commitment to protection of the environment; a decent standard of living for all; and an ongoing struggle against all institutions blocking these aims. In the 2012 presidential campaign, she was the only candidate who dared to remark on the urgent need to investigate the allegations of corruption connected with Sarkozy himself. Careful not to accuse him outright, she said that there are too many questions that need answering to make him eligible to lead France. As a lawyer with her experience, she knows what she is talking about.

Rising through the ranks, in work and in politics, has been very difficult for Eva Joly, especially because of her 'foreign' background (she has been naturalised French for the larger part of her life) and her lingering foreign accent. The French tolerate a huge number of local accents but are fussy about the way in which non-natives speak their language. Although undoubtedly very aware of this prejudice, she doesn't seem intimidated by it. In her public appearances she is friendly, confident but low-key and without any ego problems.

The French Green Party leadership is dominated by women, with the strong and vocal Cécile Duflot as national secretary. They knew that Joly's chances to get through to the second round of the presidential elections was nil, but they used every opportunity to place the Green program, for France and for Europe, before the French electorate, and Joly's competent performance will benefit the their party immensely.

With socialist François Hollande coming out victorious, a number of Green policy issues stand a better chance of being addressed than ever before – no small thanks to the performance of Madame Eva Joly. Here's hoping.

See also www.aveceva.fr and www.evajoly2012.fr

Photo by Philippe Rouget.



A communicative, encouraging and sociable Green Party

Emma Stewart attended the Green European Foundation's workshop in Vienna on how to attract and maintain an active and happy Green Party membership: a key challenge not just for the Scottish Green Party.

How do we communicate ourselves to potential members? And how can we make the best of all those people who want to contribute to our Party? How can we make Green Party membership a positive and proactive thing for people?

Unfortunately, due to storms, my travel to Vienna was cut short and I was only able to participate in the second day's workshop regarding encouraging and maintaining member's involvement. It may only have been 24 hours, but it was certainly enough time to share inspiring and creative ideas with our European colleagues about how to make joining a Green party not just about elections, but also about it being a rich, sociable and positive part of people's lives.

The key theme that I took away from these workshops was that communicating, encouraging and socialising with your membership and beyond was crucial to success.

Most importantly however, the main argument was about making the Green Party a sociable and supportive community of friendship and shared experience for its membership. Trying to change the world is hard work, so we need to find fun

and community wherever we can, for example by having regular cocktail evenings open to anyone, or organising parties where everyone has to bring some friends who are sympathetic to Green values, or merging and sharing branch meetings sometimes in order to meet new people and get new energy, having movie nights, book clubs, excursions, or making the Green Party HQ a hub of social activity and events.

Most inspiring and new to me was the idea of a Green Party owning a shop or a cafe in order to create a social space for members and the public to shop, drink, eat and chat in a non-imposing, non-overtly political space. For example, the Austrian Greens have a shop with quirky, tongue in cheek Green t-shirts, bags and stationery. The Turkish Greens have an open-til-late cafe where people can chat and socialise until the early hours.

Overall it was a great weekend with lots to inspire and energise the Scottish Greens to share, not just the workload of running and maintaining a Party, but also friendship and community along the way.

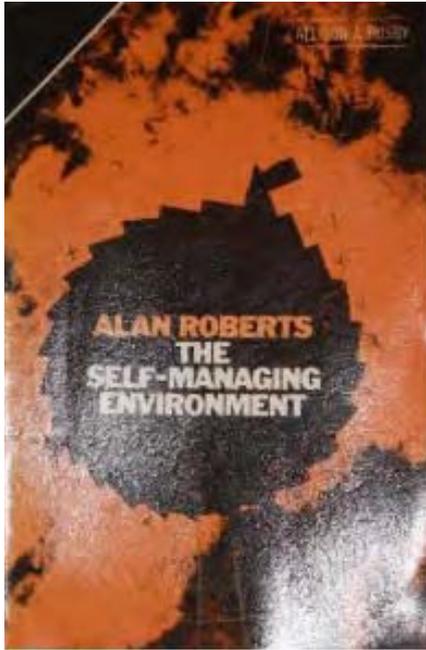
For more information, contact Emma at greenemma@gmail.com

IDEAS FOR COMMUNICATION

- Contact and introduce the Party to new members straight away
- Send weekly news updates with local and national membership events, training, excursions, campaign successes etc
- Keep a substantial membership database with everyone's interests and their event attendance in order to suggest interesting contacts or events for them, or call them directly if they have not attended anything for a while
- The Party website having a profile and photo of its members, as well as a facebook-inspired Green Party social media network such as the German Wurzelwerk which members use to contact each other, create groups, send private documents and share key Green resources.

IDEAS FOR ENCOURAGING MEMEBRS

- Quickly invite new members to a welcome meeting where the Party's structure, ideology, values and social life can be introduced fully and any questions answered
- Connect members with special interests to each other (economy, health, education etc.) as well as to external organisations so that people can develop and share their expertise, ideas and networks with the Party
- Organise skills training workshops on canvassing or debating for example, or invite elected representatives or experts to branch meetings in order to brainstorm ideas
- Always have ongoing consultation with the membership about key central decisions.



Growth is unsustainable

Book Review: the Self-Managing Environment

Alan Roberts' *The Self-Managing Environment* is Derek Wall's favourite book on green politics.

There are other classics; Jonathon Porritt's *Seeing Green* is still an essential read; the late great Mike Woodin, a former Principal Speaker of the Green Party of England and

Wales who died young from cancer, wrote *Green Alternative to Globalization* with Caroline Lucas, which is a must read. We can all think of other favourites however I think Alan Roberts' title is simply the best. Roberts, an Australian scientist, is an engaging writer who deals with complex strategic debates with clarity. In short it's a page turner.

It is a political book dedicated to a quite remarkable member of the Australian Greens – Nick Origlass – who combined electoral success with non-violent direct action, even past the age of 80! It is optimistic, arguing that pessimism disempowers people, and doomsday predictions make it impossible to mobilise people for change. Environmental change to create a sustainable world will only be possible by providing a positive vision and putting people in charge.

The core argument of the book is simple. Growth, argues Roberts, is unsustainable. However, like Tim Jackson in his recent book, *Prosperity without Growth*, he suggests that we can develop and meet needs without ever increasing GNP. Goods can be made to last longer and/or repaired. Mindless consumerism is, for Roberts, unsustainable, but is driven by alienation. In a society where we lack control over our lives, where we feel powerless, we are likely to react by shopping for comfort.

The Self-Managing society, by restoring local grassroots control, will have the potential to remove the dissatisfaction caused by centralised power structures. A Marxist analysis of growth is combined with a libertarian emphasis on local democratic control and the rejection of bureaucratic structures.

Roberts debates 'the tragedy of the commons', showing that far from being tragic, local control of

common land and fisheries was very successful in maintaining environmental sustainability. Radical conclusions confirmed when Elinor Ostrom won a Nobel Prize, the first woman to do so for economics, for her work on common pool property in 2009.

There is also a brilliant section on the green ban movement. This covers Australian trade unions that went on green strikes refusing to support development that destroyed the environment, led by Jack Mundy the Building Workers leader. It also covers alternative plans with the example of Lucas Aerospace, where workers came up with socially useful alternatives to the weapons they were paid to produce.

The book has a good discussion of Marx and ecology. Marx was fascinated by soil erosion and combating deforestation and pollution, but for much of the 20th century, as Roberts points out, the left forgot this heritage.

"Mindless consumerism is unsustainable, driven by alienation."

Roberts also opposes nuclear power, not just because of the environmental implication,

but his concern that it is linked to nuclear weapons production and a loss of civil liberties.

Finally, it's worth reading the dedication to Nick Origlass. A life-long socialist and trade union activist, Nick was expelled from the Australia Labour Party for opposing a chemical waste dump in his local community. He set up his own independent Labour Party, won the local elections in Balmain and became Mayor. At the age of over 80, nearly blind and very ill, he climbed over a fence leading protestors against a low level nuclear waste dump. He was also an early Australian Green Party member. Nick to me is a great example of combining radical politics with successful social change. The whole book is in his spirit, about protecting the environment through the promotion of a self managed society. Oh and if you want to know about Nick, get hold of his biography, *Red Hot*, by Hall Greenland, another Australian Green.

Derek Wall is a Green Party councillor in Berkshire and former Principal Speaker of the Green Party of England and Wales.

Published by Alison and Busby (1979)

OBITUARY: JOHN NORRIS

It is with deep sadness that we learned of John Norris passing away from a heart attack in March.

John Street (Green Party of England and Wales international co-ordinator) said:

"In his heyday John was a giant in the party with a powerful intellect. In fact, I often joked that he was 'the Green Party equivalent of the weather - without him there would be nothing to talk about'. He served on nearly every post in the Green Party Executive as well as the Green Party Regional Council. Even after his stroke, several years ago, he served at national, local and regional level - originally a local member in Barnet, then Westminster and Kingston before moving to York."

In addition to his service to GPEW, John became an SGP member also, making valuable contributions to our organisational development in the 1990s and early 2000s.

John will be badly missed by the Party and all who knew him.

Contact Details

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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

**Please return to FREEPOST
 Scottish Green Party, 20 Graham
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