

Report

Proposer: South Edinburgh Greens (decided on: 06/13/2023)

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Report

1 Introduction

2 SEG is a sub-branch formed of two wards in the south of Edinburgh stretching
3 from Bruntsfield Links to the Pentlands. Morningside has c.200 members and
4 Colinton/Fairmilehead c.50.

5 Morningside has had a Green councillor since 2007 (Alison Johnstone 2007-12,
6 Melanie Main 2012-22, Ben Parker 2022-).

7 <https://democracy.edinburgh.gov.uk/mgUserInfo.aspx?UID=2657>

8 Morningside has four councillors in total (currently Green, Labour, Lib Dem,
9 Conservative). Colinton/Fairmilehead has three (currently Labour, SNP,
10 Conservative).

11 Colinton/Fairmilehead has never been a target ward, although we do stand
12 candidates there (Helen McCabe in 2022).

13 SEG Activity 2022- 23

14 Maintaining SEG after the 2022 election campaign

15 The first SEG AGM was held on Thursday 9th June 2022 at the Eric Liddell Centre.
16 This was a hybrid meeting. Helen McCabe and Ellie Levontine were elected as Co-
17 convenors. Emma Willson was elected Vice-convenor.

In addition to the three 'office bearers' (as required by the standing orders), we planned to have a small group of members who were prepared to be additional 'Organisers'. Together they would form an active team who could support each other to run SEG, and support our councillor.

Emma and Helen swapped roles in September 2022. Aideen McNestry joined us as an Organiser, and Susan Logie continued to coordinate Green News in large parts of Morningside as in previous years.

Green News in Morningside

In conjunction with Ben we produced and delivered two editions of Green News.

Autumn/Winter 2022: 6000

Spring 2023: 6000

We decided to establish a target area which we would deliver to consistently this year and in the future. The Greenest polling districts were chosen - ie those where we came first or second in the 2022 elections. (If we were to increase our delivery capacity then we might be able to extend this area in the future).

We had a limited number of delivery volunteers with a few people doing a large amount.

We held four Green News Action Days in conjunction with East Lothian Greens. The students helped us deliver to the tenements of Marchmont which was a great help. We hope this will become a regular thing.

Communication with SEG members

Aideen checked the Forest database for new members and emailed them a welcome letter designed by Steve West.

Emma monitored the SEG Inbox and replied to emails.

Emma sent out updates to members (via Forest) and provided SEG content to the branch newsletter where possible.

We continued with the WhatsApp group. We have around 20 members signed up at any one time.

SEG Monthly Meetings

All our SEG meetings were in person this year. Due to an ongoing problem of finding a suitable venue in Morningside - that is accessible, interesting and affordable - we initially held monthly get togethers at the Cameo Bar in Tollcross. From December it was decided to hold four meetings a year at the Eric Liddell Community Hub instead. Cllr Ben Parker attended all these meetings.

Liaison with the Branch 2021-22

Aideen, Ellie and Emma all acted as SEG reps on the branch committee during the year, attending branch meetings and following activity on Slack. Emma was also a Policy Officer on the branch committee. Aideen attended Local Teams and Membership working group meetings - and volunteered to send welcome letters for local teams without the capacity to do so.

We held one Green Walk for the branch (March 2023) and some of our members helped organise and/or attended those run around the rest of the city.

Cross team activity

- SEG and SEEG ran a stall on the Meadows in Summer 2022 and held a joint meeting in March 2023.
- SEG invited the Fountainbridge/Craiglockhart team to their December social.
- We helped initiate a get together of local team organisers at The Crannie in Spring 2023.

Community activity

One or two members attended some community council meetings and engaged with other groups such as Living Streets and Marchmont Neighbours.

Membership

Diversity: it seemed that a slightly wider cross section of society was represented at meetings than in previous years, although there is still a lot of work to do.

Membership numbers remained roughly the same.

- June 2021: 242 (198/44)
- June 2022: 257 (207/50)
- June 2023: 252 (203/49)

Finances

SEG did not have a budget (or a Treasurer) for 2022-23. We decided to keep things simple and either ask the branch for reimbursement, or ask suppliers to invoice the branch directly. Members contributed to refreshments at meetings. We received funds from the branch for:

- Eric Liddell Centre meeting room

(3 sessions @ £52.00, 1 session @£72.50)

- Refreshments for Young Greens Action Day £34.00
- Elastic bands for Green News £10.00

Total = £272.50

2023-24

New team

The second SEG AGM was held on Thursday 8th June 2023 at the Eric Liddell

Centre. There were 5 people in attendance and Aideen McNestry was elected as co-ordinator for 2023-24. Cllr Ben Parker gave an update of his year as a Councillor and the group discussed future campaigning, including thoughts about the upcoming General Election.

Future plans

There was a smaller than average turnout at our AGM and members at the meeting considered what more could be done next year to encourage people to get involved whilst also being realistic about what could be achieved. It was agreed that we would try to resource monthly meetings - budget / venue dependent - and also review our approach to Green News delivery as 6000 has been a difficult number to get out this past year. We also discussed how greater integration with the wider branch might help us to galvanise more members, and we discussed a need to receive support from the branch to upskill new coordinators on how to send mail outs using Forest, as well as other tips / tricks of how to be an effective local organising team.