

# Report

**Proposer:** North Edinburgh and Leith Greens (decided on: 06/26/2023)

**Title:** North Edinburgh and Leith Greens

## Report

1 We are pleased to publish below report which showcases what we have done during  
2 the last twelve months.

3 After a very busy period during Edinburgh local elections the branch members  
4 were happy to catch their breaths but afterwards got quickly back to work  
5 organizing in its local area. Below is a list of our accomplishments.

## 6 **Elections**

7 At our AGM 12<sup>th</sup> June 2023 the following party members were elected to the Sub-  
8 Branch committee:

- 9 • Co-Convenors: Tara Coldwell Brock and Mariusz Cebulski. Proposer: Fraser  
10 May, Seconder Ian McCormick.
- 11 • Membership Secretary: Ian McCormick. Proposer: Katy McCormick, Seconder:  
12 Tara Coldwell Brock.
- 13 • Ordinary Member: Lennie Sefton. Proposer: Susan Rae, Seconder: Mariusz  
14 Cebulski.
- 15 • Ordinary Member: Nick Gardner. Proposer: Susan Rae, Seconder: Caro  
16 Wilkinson.

- 17 • Social Media Secretary: Michael Tucker. Proposer: Tara Coldwell Brock,  
18 Second: Ben Moverley Smith.
  
- 19 • Secretary: Ben Moverley Smith. Proposer: Lennie Sefton, Second: Max  
20 Wagner.

## 21 **Expansion and renaming of the branch**

22 The Leith and Leith Walk sub-branch started working closely with the  
23 neighbouring Fort ward during the local elections, helping the party gain its  
24 first councillor there. Even after the successful election it was realised that  
25 the local Forth team still needed help in keeping Green presence and momentum in  
26 the area. Because of this the two parties continued to cooperate sharing  
27 resources and volunteers. At some point the idea of an official merger started  
28 to be discussed. After discussing the matter with our members, councillors and  
29 Edinburgh Branch a decision was made that the existing Leith and Leith Walk sub-  
30 branch should merge with Forth ward. This has been completed March 2023 with the  
31 sub-branch changing its name to North Edinburgh and Leith Green Party.

## 32 **Meetings**

33 The branch continued to run monthly meetings every second Thursday of the month  
34 until this year, when after surveying our members, a decision was made to move  
35 meetings to second Monday of the month, as that was the preferred day to meet.  
36 With COVID restrictions being gradually lifted throughout 2022, the branch  
37 started organizing hybrid meetings and continued to do so. In some cases, the  
38 monthly meetings were replaced with social events like litter-picks or pub  
39 outings.

## 40 **Events**

41 The branch organized a stall at Edinburgh Climate Festival and Leith Gala in  
42 2022 and 2023. The most recent Gala was very successful with a lot of visitors  
43 asking about our party and taking part in a survey about short term lets.

44 The branch also started regular litter picks in the area as a way to engage our  
45 members, promote the party and help local environment.

46 Finally, the branch might have taken its first step in direct action when we  
47 stopped drivers doing an illegal turn on Leith Walk, alongside other community  
48 organizers.

49 **Membership**

50 The membership of Leith and Leith Walk seems to have flatlined at 393, almost  
51 the same as it was at the start of this committee's term (390). This is not the  
52 full story as the national party went through all membership data in 2023 and  
53 removed people not paying their dues and thus no longer members of the party.  
54 This means that our last year's membership number was overinflated, which  
55 obscures the fact that 56 members have joined since June 2022. Forth ward has 81  
56 members and has grown by 9 members in the last twelve months. The total  
57 membership of Norh Edinburgh and Leith Green party currently stands at 474.

58 The co-membership secretaries Ian and Tara continued to engage new members by  
59 sending welcome emails, calling them and organizing new members meetings. They  
60 have provided a warm welcome to all members which helped engage them with the  
61 party.

62 Achievements of the membership committee are:

- 63 • The committee agreed a job description for the post of membership  
64 secretary.
- 65 • The membership secretary wrote a new member welcome procedure to ensure a  
66 structured approach to contacting new members.
- 67 • The membership secretary created a new member tracking form on Greenbox.  
68 It is being used to improve new member communications.
- 69 • All 57 new members were contacted with at least an email welcome and where  
70 appropriate, a phone call.
- 71 • A new member social event was organised in May with two new members  
72 attending. All new members from January were invited including a hand  
73 delivered invitation.
- 74 • A Leith and Lieth Walk member survey was undertaken to engage members and  
75 find out the type of activities they were interested in and any barriers  
76 they faced. The survey received 42 responses (about 11% of membership).
- 77 • A report was produced summarising the results of the member survey.  
78 Actions taken as a result included re-introducing Green walks, running  
79 litter picks, and changing the day of meetings.

- 80           • At the start of the year Leith and Lieth Walk sub-branch had 401 members.  
81           There are currently 467 members in the combined North Edinburgh and Leith  
82           sub-branch.
- 83           • The membership secretary gave a membership report at every sub-branch  
84           meeting to keep members aware of issues and successes.

85   Membership goals for this year are:

- 86           • Review job description taking regard to other committee positions filled  
87           following the AGM.
- 88           • Review member welcome procedure in order to improve process and increase  
89           the number of new members we speak to.
- 90           • Continue to use tracking form in order to ensure that all new members  
91           receive an appropriate welcome.
- 92           • Consider hand delivering a welcome letter to new members as a matter of  
93           course.
- 94           • To organise a new member social event every three months.
- 95           • Carry out 2023 membership survey in July/August for Leith, Leith Walk and  
96           Forth. Review and refine questions in questionnaire. Aim for better  
97           response rate.
- 98           • Better analysis of the survey in order to encourage greater member  
99           engagement.
- 100          • Develop actions to increase membership. In particular to organise an  
101          invite a friend to join campaign in January.
- 102          • Aim for all reports to be written and stored on Greenbox.

103   **Finances**

104   The branch expenses were driven by room hire in Leith Community Center and Out  
105   of the Blue Drill Hall (200 pounds) and sending bulk text messages to our  
106   members to encourage them to volunteer (83 pounds). We've also paid 50 pounds to

107 reserve our spot at Leith Gala but those were covered by donations taken at the  
108 event.

### 109 **Green News**

110 Our party newsletter "Green News" continues to be one of the best ways of  
111 spreading our message to voters. We've organized deliveries both in Autumn and  
112 Spring delivering about 15 thousand leaflets in our sub-branch area.

### 113 **Councillors and MSP work**

114 The North Edinburgh and Leith Sub-branch is proud to have 3 elected councillors  
115 as well as be home to MSP and Scottish Government minister. All four were happy  
116 to share their work and achievements from the last 12 months.

### 117 **Lorna Slater**

118       ◦ We have now had Greens in government for two years, and there has  
119 been some difficult times recently with the DRS and the obfuscation  
120 by the UK Government. There is expected to be more tough times ahead  
121 with the introduction of new Green policy and the anticipated  
122 reaction of the Press. However, to get real change, we just have to  
123 keep pushing as a party.

### 124 **Kayleigh O'Neill**

125       • Portfolio: focus this year on access and mobility. Work has been put into  
126 income maximization for the people of Edinburgh, making sure people due  
127 income support have the info required. Funding has also been approved for  
128 a dropped kerb programme in Edinburgh. This is needed as of 17,000 kerbs  
129 which need to be dropped only 50 have been done so far. A policy motion  
130 has also been approved that the new city plan will have a gendered lens  
131 that puts women at the forefront of policy.

132       • Ward: this year has mainly been dealing with requests and information on  
133 bins, parks, green spaces. Kayleigh also took on the task of doing a  
134 dropped kerb audit of her ward.

### 135 **Susan Rae**

136       • Policy: Susan has been working with councillor Ben Parker on housing

137 policy where they have split the portfolio. Susan has taken on social  
138 housing where due to her work £5.5 million has been awarded to fix all the  
139 lifts in the high-rise buildings around Edinburgh. Susan has also been in  
140 contact with Edinburgh University to try and get a response regarding the  
141 university's housing policy over the summer months.

- 142 • Licensing board: Susan has mainly spent her time dealing with licences for  
143 short term lets, and dealing with adult entertainment venues, where she  
144 will be organising sessions on how to organise unions in precarious  
145 working environments.

#### 146 Chas Booth

- 147 • Ward: There has been a great response to the save Pride Bridge campaign,  
148 where the council has agreed to find a community solution. The paid  
149 parking extension has been underway, and although there have been a few  
150 bumps, Chas and the council officers have been working through the issues.  
151 The LTN has received a positive response, people are very happy about the  
152 reduction in traffic and newfound tranquillity at the shore.

- 153 • Planning Committee: There has recently been guidance received on Short  
154 Term Lets (STL) planning applications, and it is still difficult to get an  
155 STL in mixed areas where it would lower the amenity of the area.

#### 156 Plans ahead

157 The new committee will meet soon to discuss the sub-branches committee for the  
158 next twelve months. This will include figuring ways of improving membership,  
159 getting members involved in our work, planning or campaigns and events.