

# Council Elections 2012 – Meet the candidates – Mike Professor Pongoo Ferrigan



Mike Ferrigan is an Independent candidate for Pentland Hills Ward.

Mike Coordinated the Vigil for a Scottish Parliament which lasted 24/7 for 5 years at the foot of Calton Hill and created the sister organisation Democracy for Scotland. He has also been a voluntary democracy and environmental campaigner for over 25 years and won the inaugural Best Green Campaigner in Scotland award in 2009. He lives in the centre of Pentland Hills ward and has been working with six local schools, churches and other organisations there on a sustainability project called PIPER for the past few years as a Consultant.

Mike has been an active campaigner the Pentland Hills Ward for 15 years and is well known and respected for his work in the community.

From his Facebook page this is what he says about his candidacy:-

*“I’m standing as a candidate because I’m confused. You see, I’m a penguin called Professor Pongoo.*

*On the planet that I come from humans do things differently and us penguins, polar bears and all living things have the food we need and the humans leave us alone by respecting our rights to co-exist alongside them in harmony.*

*When the humans want to sort out problems they don’t choose people from ‘parties’ who go off somewhere else and pretend to debate and then decide according to what the party says.*

*They talk to each other and work out what makes everybody happy or content with their lot because that way less people feel excluded and annoyed.*

*They try to listen to what people living in the middle of the problem think and try and accommodate their needs rather than parties or lobbyists. By listening and discussing things they find they can better represent local people rather than have arguments elsewhere which are competitive and confrontational.*

*That way they don't get distracted by grand schemes that cost money, damage the environment and fail to provide the services that people need. Need and not greed is their philosophy and they have an economic system which is based on respect for each other and their planet which recognises equality and the limited resources available. And, funnily enough, by working from the ground up rather than from the top down, that gets people involved because they know their opinions will be heard. Everybody gets what they need. On this planet people and some organisations are selfish and self-interested and in the current set-up they tend to have the loudest voices. By making the councillors down here talk to the people they are supposed to represent it can ensure they get a better idea of what they need and make that a priority for setting agenda and that helps to work against the cynicism about politicians that discourages the people here from getting involved. When I talk to people about politics at a local or national level people grumble and shrug their shoulders, saying, 'It's never going to change.' They always blame "Them". That's understandable but not very helpful.*

*By helping people to realise that they can make a difference by choosing councillors who keep listening between elections and want to represent the social needs of the electorate and the environmental needs of the planet that can achieve two things. It takes councillors' attention away from big expensive things and novelty toys that entertain for a little*

*while but add little to the real prosperity, well being and happiness of people and it can lessen the frustration of powerlessness that discourages people from improving their community. At the same time, it means that councillors never forget what they are supposed to be doing and know that they will have to explain the decisions made at Council meetings to the people who they are representing. Now, although I'm a penguin, I'm not daft. I don't come from a totally perfect world so I'm not suggesting that everyone will be completely happy but greater participation in local politics tends to improve the way councillors work. It takes their interest away from party politics and grandstanding within the closed club of councillors and turn to the more important issue of local services and amenities, of the everyday lives of the people who choose them and the environment they live in. "*

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