

#SP16 Jack Caldwell Independent candidate for Edinburgh Northern and Leith



The Edinburgh Reporter met Jack Caldwell by chance on a bridge. He was attending the launch of the new artwork now decorating the Crawford Bridge, which links Albion Terrace to Bothwell Street.

[Caldwell](#) is both sincere and passionate, and as you will see in our video interview with him he is well-informed and articulate.

He explained why he wanted to stand in this election, and why he is an Independent candidate : “There is nothing wrong with the other political parties but I believe the changes I want to make are best achieved as an Independent.

“As an MSP I feel this area needs a local voice and one of my major policies is to get councils to raise their own funding by means of council tax alternatives which I am exploring.

“Secondly, one that is closer to home for me is the matter of mental health services. Currently the Scottish Government funds mental health services through primary care which is a good initiative, but I don’t feel it is the most transparent. Mental health services are absolutely essential, mostly run by local authorities and they are being cut left right and centre.

“I don’t think they should be victims of this austerity. I think that the City of Edinburgh Council do a very good job with initiatives like the Child and Adolescent mental health services. I think that their budgets should be siloed and

protected against local authority cuts.

“I currently don’t have any political background. I have been quite an active member of the community, but have recently gone to many community council meetings and finding out a lot about the area. This area has a very strong cultural identity and problems that would face other parts of Edinburgh won’t necessarily be problems that face this area.

“The main issue for me was local authorities getting their budgets cut. Leith is the most densely populated area in Scotland, even more densely populated than some areas of Glasgow. I feel that cuts to council funding for things like litter pickups and environmental safety will hit areas like Leith the hardest.

“My campaign is entirely self-funded. I have been saving money since I was 18.

“I have lived in this area for nearly 19 years now and I live in a council flat That is another great service that should be protected as well! I work as an IT administrator at a local arts complex and I love my job there. Outside of work I am a Scout leader and I used to be a member of the 112th Leith Boys Brigade.

“But just because I’m a Leither doesn’t mean I don’t want to represent other areas too. I want to help the people of Granton, Pilton and all of those areas where they also have a unique cultural identity.”

You can read more about Jack’s campaign [here on his website.](#)