

# Green candidate wants everyone to have a decent home

✘ *Mary Campbell is Green candidate for Portobello-Craigmillar. She believes that everyone deserves a decent home. She writes:*

“In the Portobello and Craigmillar ward, housing is a big issue. Throughout our area people are struggling to make ends meet and keep a roof over their heads. One of the reasons I am running for council is that I believe that good quality housing is a right, not a privilege, and that we must do more to make sure everyone has access to a good, affordable place to live.

“There are many problems we face. To this city’s great shame, vast stretches of Craigmillar have been left an undeveloped wasteland after the demolition of housing there over a decade ago. The brownfield land sitting unused in Craigmillar should be a focus for development, building a mix of social housing, affordable homes, apartments, green space, retail and the new school which is much needed. Work in this area has been halting or non-existent, while the Council has been pushing to build on greenbelt land.

“In Portobello meanwhile, house prices continue to rocket, becoming unaffordable to many. These two stark contrasts highlight that this ward has some of the more deprived areas in Scotland as well as some of the more wealthy. If we want to close the gap between the wealthiest and poorest, making housing affordable is a crucial place to start.

“Fixing these problems isn’t insurmountable, and the Greens are committed to working towards solutions. While our MSPs continue to pressure for more social housing, taxation on

derelict land, and affordable housing, our Green councillors will be working to help make rents fair.

“If elected I would work alongside other Green councillors to seek for Edinburgh City Council to apply to the Scottish Government to make Edinburgh a ‘rent pressure zone’, which would limit rent increases for sitting tenants. With almost 30% of Edinburgh’s residents living in private rented accommodation, the highest in Scotland, a measure like this would have a really positive impact.

“However, more needs done to protect tenants from dodgy landlords and make sure that renting is affordable for all. With more Greens in Council, we would have more influence power to work towards this goal: pushing for firmer enforcement of renting standards, tackling empty properties and giving private tenants a voice. As a councillor, I am determined to listen to the concerns of tenants and help them with housing crises whenever they arise.

“No one deserves to be made homeless, and Edinburgh needs to make sure that housing is treated as a right, not a privilege. With more Green #1 votes, we can make Edinburgh a better, fairer place to live.”