

# Council elections 2017 – Leith Walk Ward



Our photo is deliberately from 2012 before the improvement works had been carried out to Leith Walk. In addition there have been road improvements on Constitution Street too.

The final part of Leith Walk near Picardy Place will be the final part to be completed as part of the £9million [Leith Programme](#).

*The councillors for the the ward elected in 2012 were*

*Angela Blacklock – Scottish Labour Party*

*Deidre Leanne Brock – Scottish National Party (SNP)*

*Maggie Chapman – Scottish Green Party*

*Nick Gardner – Scottish Labour Party*

Councillor Brock was elected as MP for Edinburgh Northern and Leith and is standing again in the 2017 General Election.

Maggie Chapman stood as a Green candidate for Holyrood and resigned her seat thus causing a [by-election](#).

Labour Councillor [Marion Donaldson](#) and SNP Councillor [Lewis Ritchie](#) were elected at the by-election to represent this ward. The turnout was poor at 25.1%

The 2017 candidates are :

**DONALDSON**, Marion (Scottish Labour Party)

**GARDNER**, Nick (Scottish Labour Party)

**JACOBSEN**, David Don (Socialist Labour Party)

**MARGA**, Cristina (Scottish Conservative and Unionist)

**MCNEESE-MECHAN**, Amy (Scottish National Party (SNP))

**MELVILLE**, Alan Gordon (Independent)

**RAE**, Susan (Scottish Green Party)

**RITCHIE**, Lewis (Scottish National Party (SNP))

**TOBERMANN**, Harald (Independent)

**ZAPOROZCENKO**, Vita (Scottish Liberal Democrats)

So all current councillors are standing again in this year's election along with candidates from across the political spectrum.

The ward remains a four member ward.



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## **Marion Donaldson Labour Party**



Marion Donaldson entered politics as a foodbank team leader driven to improve life chances for all. As a former pharmacist, health is a priority for her. “If elected I will continue working to improve access to local GPs and support our public services.”

## **Nick Gardner Labour Party**



Nick Gardner has worked and lived in Leith Walk ward for 30 years. He has been a youth and children’s worker, and worked in mental health day services. As a local Labour Councillor, he has taken up schools, parks, planning, housing, and antisocial behaviour issues. Nick has joined many campaigns, from Climate Change, to anti privatisation, to support for refugees.

## **David Don Jacobsen Socialist Labour Party**

## **Cristina Marga Conservative**



Cristina Marga has been selected as the Scottish Conservative and Unionist candidate for the Leith Walk ward for the council election to be held on Thursday 4th May.

Cristina is a finance professional, and graduated with an MSc Degree in Accounting and Finance from the University of Edinburgh, after having previously gained extensive international experience in the academic, private and

voluntary sectors.

Following her selection, Cristina said, “I am delighted to stand for the local community that has been my home for so many years.

“I have always put great effort in delivering improvements for various causes – from children and youth, to housing, health, environment, social and economic development.”

“As your local candidate, I am committed to working together with individuals, businesses and Leith Walk residents to ensure that their interests are indeed reflected in the Council’s policies and actions.”

“Edinburgh can and must provide better services – we need better road and pavement surfaces, cleaner streets and more reliable and efficient waste collections.”

“Over the coming months, I look forward to speaking to as many residents as possible to hear what your priorities are for our area.”

“To help me know the issues that concern you, I would be grateful if you could fill in the survey overleaf and return to me either in the post or by email. Please do get in touch with me and let me know your thoughts and concerns.”

## **Amy McNeese-Mechan SNP**



Amy holds a PhD. & MSc [Distinction] University of Edinburgh School of Political & Social Sciences; B.A. East Asian Languages University of Oregon. Worked for Japanese Foreign Ministry in Chicago and Ministry of Education in Osaka, Japan. Worked for Scottish Natural Heritage, National Library of Scotland, PCS Vice Convenor & Unison International Relations

Officer.

## **Alan Melville Independent**

Alan stood on previous occasions as a UKIP candidate both at council and Holyrood elections.

## **Susan Rae Green Party**



Leith Walk: Susan Rae

Susan has set out her priorities for us :

- Work to ensure everyone has a warm,dry, affordable home by taking action on rents, housing quality and availability.
- Seek real ways to make our streets cleaner and safer: tackle fly-tipping and litter; get bin collections sorted.
- Support and develop Leith's innovative and creative communities and boost social enterprise, especially in the circular economy.

## **Lewis Ritchie SNP**



Lewis has a diverse background having lived across Europe and worked in the Scottish Parliament, with the Citizens Advice Bureau and with Children in Scotland prior to his election in 2015 .

He is a law graduate, holds a post graduate degree in education and currently completing a doctorate at Stirling.

*This month, 425 of the poorest households in Edinburgh were hit by the Tory benefit cap. My comments in Full Council*

[#EdinburghAgainstTheCap](https://twitter.com/nU8DpDWI15) [pic.twitter.com/nU8DpDWI15](https://pic.twitter.com/nU8DpDWI15)

– Cllr Lewis Ritchie (@lewisritchieSNP) [January 27, 2017](#)

## Harald Tobermann Independent

Harald is well known to locals in Leith Walk. He has run a structured campaign and this is his latest press release:

Harald Tobermann, independent candidate in Edinburgh's Leith Ward ward, says his call to 'Keep it simple, get the basics right, and get it right first time' is going down well with voters who want an effective new approach to local politics. And they also like his 'battle-bus'.

Key services – In such a densely populated area,<sup>1</sup> he says, key services – bin collection, street cleaning and maintenance, buses, parks and cycle paths – have to work efficiently. If they don't, small problems rapidly become big ones. That's why we need uncomplicated systems that are reliably applied and properly enforced.

Education and health – This ward's highly educated and busy residents demand well-resourced local schools and modern libraries.<sup>2</sup> They expect easy access to GPs when needed. The Council can't conjure up extra money for these out of nowhere, but it can allocate existing resources wisely with minimal waste.

Challenging problems – From long experience with Leith Central Community Council, Tobermann is well aware that full-time AirBnBs and free commuter 'park & ride' streets need intelligent regulation, as do planning and licensing.

But the area's biggest problems involve the tiresome on/off Leith Walk repairs, now in their 10th [sic] year. This attractive boulevard is not just a key connector, but also the public space that sustains densely populated hinterlands on

either side. Congestion, pollution and delays here affect not only residents on the Walk itself, but right across Broughton, Abbeyhill, Easter Road and Bonnington. We must fight to keep Leith Walk repairs on schedule, on budget, and up to standard.

A fresh approach – Leith Walk ward is among the most heavily contested in Edinburgh with 10 candidates. It's a daunting prospect for a first-time politician, but as a long-time local resident and activist Tobermann has been able to call on a wide network of supporters to get his message across.

'I offer a non-partisan, no-nonsense approach to local issues and that plays well on the doorsteps.


'People tell me they want less jargon and better information. They want realistic, practical policies and a politician who will deliver more than promises.

'I am that politician. And I have the battle-bus to deliver results!'



Photo Harald Tobermann

## **Vita Zaporozcenko Liberal Democrats**

** Vita Zaporozcenko wants to work for and with local communities to make their services better and to bring together the different cultures living in the Leith Walk ward.**

Vita believes that too many council services are chasing problems, leading to delays in delivery, rather than leading with long-term solutions. More funds should be devolved to local communities, who knows where the money can be best spent.

She is an active campaigner and is part of Edinburgh MSP Alex Cole-Hamilton's team where she encounters the real issues facing people in Edinburgh on a daily basis – be it lack of

school places, affordable housing or appropriate social work support.

Originally from Latvia, Vita first moved to Scotland in 2009 and has fallen in love with its openness, diversity and acceptance of everyone.

**Vita's priorities for the area are:**

- Easing congestion and air pollution on Leith Walk by improving public transport links.
- Focusing on getting basic services, such as bin collections and road repair right and on time.
- Protecting historic buildings and green spaces in the area.