

Council elections 2022 – Danny Aston – Craigentinny/Duddingston

- Name Danny Aston
- Political Party – Scottish National Party
- Ward – Craigentinny/Duddingston

I live in Northfield in Craigentinny-Duddingston ward and I grew up around here too. I have worked for Tommy Sheppard, the local MP for Edinburgh East, since shortly after his election in 2015. I have been involved in assisting him campaign successfully on big issues in Edinburgh like a Tourist Tax and tackling short-term lets, as well as helping constituents with a variety of issues so, if elected, I hope I would be coming to the Council with a useful grounding in policy and casework and with some good experience in dealing with the issues facing the city.

Craigentinny/Duddingston includes some of the poorest neighbourhoods in the city and in the country, as well as some of the most affluent. I'd be honoured to be elected by my fellow residents and I am totally committed to making my community a better place to live and to reducing the gap between the areas which are doing well out of Edinburgh's phenomenal success and those struggling despite it.

The main issues I will campaign on will include tackling poverty and inequality which will be at heart of an SNP-led administration. Working for an MP enables me to see every day the impact of heartless, ideologically-driven and unnecessary cuts to public spending, especially on the most vulnerable, which are being imposed on our city by a Tory government at Westminster we did not vote for.

Only certain powers are available to councils to deal with and mitigate these impacts. But my SNP colleagues and I will be making maximum use of these, such as ensuring that advice and support is in place so that increasing as far as possible the number of eligible people who are successfully claiming Pension Credit and other entitlements, and ensuring there is targeted relief for those households struggling most.

Housing is an enormous challenge in Edinburgh, with our city becoming unaffordable for too many vital frontline workers like police and nurses, and too many households pushed into homelessness by rocketing rents. We will continue to have the most ambitious council house building programme in the country, we'll fully use the new powers councils are getting to tackle problems short-term lets, returning many flats to use as family homes, and we will implement rent controls when The Scottish Government introduces them.

I'm also keen to find new ways of tackling antisocial behaviour, which blights too many of our communities. I will be looking identify what works well in other places, as well as introducing fresh approaches specific to Edinburgh.

Seafield Road East, currently home to many car showrooms, is going to change a lot over the coming years, with a whole new seafront neighbourhood residential area on the way. I will fight to make sure that the community is in the driving seat in shaping that change so it benefits existing residents, not just developers' profit margins.

I must mention the biggest challenge facing us as a planet and as a species – climate change. My colleagues and I are serious about our city leading the way and reaching net zero emissions by 2030. It is one of the most ambitious targets in the world but the stakes could not be higher.

Finally, the city I have grown up in and which I love is a European capital – it is heartbreakingly beautiful and was one

of the cradles of the continent-wide Enlightenment. It deserves mention in the same breath as Berlin, Vienna, Dublin and Rome. It deserves to be back in its rightful place in the European mainstream – and that means as the capital city of an EU member state.

The SNP have achieved much over the last five years:

As well as an incredibly ambitious and successful social and affordable house building programme, already thousands of brand new, energy efficient homes across the city, under an SNP-led administration, Edinburgh has become a Living Wage City, with more and more employers signing up to ensure that all their workers are paid decently. I will be pushing to ensure that the Council and other big anchor institutions in the city make full use of their economic weight to keep increasing this.

The current SNP-led administration was also instrumental in securing the £1.3 billion investment of the Edinburgh City Deal, which will bring 21,000 quality jobs and will keep Edinburgh at the cutting edge of the tech economy.

And we are already leading the way on tackling the climate crisis. Over the last five years, SNP councillors have implemented policies which have cut the council's carbon footprint by roughly 60% and have boosted Edinburgh's status as the greenest major city in the UK by planting 50,000 trees.

What not many people know

...is that my partner is Kate Campbell, councillor for Portobello/Craigmillar ward who was the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Convener in the last council administration.



Danny Aston