

Council elections 2022 – Jack Caldwell – Leith Walk ward

Name – Jack Caldwell

Political Party – Scottish Liberal Democrats

Ward – Leith Walk

What is your story?

I've lived in a council flat in Leith since I was four years old. For the last decade I've worked just off of Leith Walk, where I'm an IT technician for an independent arts charity. I also currently sit on the local community council and lead a nearby Cub Scout troop.

What are the main issues you will campaign on – both as a party and personally?

Tackling financial inequality, getting better recycling facilities and improving the local pavements are the biggest issues for me personally.

Leith Walk ward already has a 21% material poverty rate, despite its recent reputation of gentrification, so with rising rents and the Cost of Living Crisis, we really need to urgently stop people getting priced out of the area by supporting new social rent homes and affordable home ownership.

Waste and recycling bins are overflowing constantly. We need to get on top of the issue especially since we're only just emerging from a major public health crisis. The overflow is currently one of the big causes of the amount of litter strewn about the streets.

I want to greatly improve Edinburgh's pedestrian and cycling

facilities like pavements, paths and roads by putting extra cash into maintenance. The most basic service a local authority should provide is accessibility and freedom of movement in the city. Permanently reducing the pavements on Leith Walk to single file was and is not appropriate.

The Lib Dems and myself will also work hard to reverse last year's cuts to headteacher's budgets in Drummond Community High School, Trinity Academy and Leith Academy – as well as in our primary schools.

Youth services across Leith, Broughton, Bonnington, Pilrig, Abbeyhill, Canonmills and Hillside also need proper funding.

More widely across the city, the Scottish Lib Dems are fighting to get the basics right and have the Council actually listen to residents.

Lastly, I'll work towards much better communication from the council on utility works, like the tramline installation. This would include improved support for the small, independent businesses along Leith Walk that make the area special – too many have closed already!

We really can have something fresh and new instead of the tired old ways of doing things.

What do you consider to be your or your party's achievements or legacy during the last council session?

As the smallest party sitting on Edinburgh Council, I think our six councillors have done well in fighting for better conditions for highrise tenants, particularly in North Edinburgh. I think other positive motions from our councillors, like better HMO regulation, more zebra crossings and better lighting in parks and paths to improve safety, shows there's massive value in grounded politicians who can get cross-party consensus on community issues, even if consensus isn't "cool" anymore.

What is the thing that few people would know about you?

I can play most Judas Priest songs poorly on electric guitar.
Usually accompanied by regrettable vocals.



Jack Caldwell