

Council elections 2022 – Leith Walk candidate makes tackling Edinburgh’s drug deaths a priority

**by Richard Shillcock Leith Walk
candidate, Communist Party.**

With a drug death every three days, Edinburgh City is second only to Greater Glasgow in Scotland’s national disgrace.

Tackling the drugs deaths is a campaign priority for Edinburgh Council candidate Dr. Richard Shillcock.

Supervised Safe Consumption Facilities (SCFs) save lives. They prevent overdoses. They stop blood-borne infection. They improve public safety. They reduce welfare spending. All this has been clear for many years, internationally.

There is now cross-party backing in Scotland. There is support within the health, legal and law-enforcement structures.

Glasgow authorities have responded. By 2018, Glasgow had a potential site and a costed plan for a SCF. Glasgow’s plans have been stalled because of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

But from late 2021, as the drug deaths climb, we’ve seen the resignation and replacement of the chair and deputy chair of the Scottish government’s drugs task force. We’ve seen statements from the new Lord Advocate. We’ve seen the task force reporting deadline brought forward to the summer.

Despite Priti Patel’s opposition, this year–2022–can be the crucial year. The legal profession is surprisingly flexible

when the political pressure is on. A green light can happen this year.

But where is Edinburgh Council in all this? It has no plans ready to go.

Richard Shillcock standing for Leith Walk ward for the Communist Party said: *“Just last year an Edinburgh engineer shared photos online of discarded needles in Laurie St Leith.*

“Edinburgh councillors need to catch up with Glasgow—pick a site and cost a SCF. We need to be ready for the green light.

“The council elections are the perfect opportunity for us all to make a noise to press the case for SCFs.”



Peter Shillcock Communist Party candidate Leith Walk