

Council elections 2022 – Megan McHaney – Fountainbridge/Craiglockhart Ward

Name Megan McHaney

Ward Fountainbridge/Craiglockhart

Party Scottish Green Party

What is your story?

I've always cared about the environment and about other people. Fundamentally I want everyone to have a good quality of life. Since university I've been campaigning and working towards a more equal society – one that creates belonging and safety for communities and doesn't damage our environment.

My career has taken me to different places, from inequalities and access to education in Scotland, to managing projects in different European countries, to setting up my own business, to currently working for an environmental charity.

Some career highlights include establishing a National Society of Apprentices branch in Scotland, to speaking at the UN Headquarters in New York about the importance of education for women, to working with teams and organisations to design ways of working that helps them achieve their mission. I really enjoy working with groups of people to figure out a way to make the best use of an opportunity or situation and I'm looking forward to applying my many skills and experiences as a city councillor.

What are the main issues you will campaign on?

I think one of the biggest things that the Council should work on is securing our public finances. The costs of living are rising, worrying all types of people and communities. It's

critical that the Council has sustainable finances so that it can continue to provide the vital services that we all rely on – and that does mean raising revenue sustainably and fairly. So I'll be looking to build on the Workplace Parking Levy and the tourist levy – ensuring these are delivered fairly and effectively, and looking for further opportunities, so that we improve the vital services that everyone in the city benefits from.

To protect people from increases to the cost of living it's also critical that we invest in the success of the local economy. Edinburgh's economy needs to be fit for the 21st century challenges we face and environmentally and socially just – to me that means fair wages, secure workplaces, and less wastage of our precious resources. There are clear investments we can make that both deliver that fairer economy and tackle the climate emergency – that's why I'll be working on building a Green Recovery for Edinburgh, as we continue to emerge from the pandemic.

I also want every child in Edinburgh to have a good experience at school. To me, this means supporting what's going on in the classroom and outside it – I've seen first hand as a local GirlGuiding leader, the benefits that young people get from having access to after school activities. I want to build on Edinburgh Council's work to make sure that school meals are locally sourced and nutritious; that each child has a safe and accessible route to travel to school; and that our school buildings are fit for purpose for our low carbon future. I'll be working to expand access to outdoor learning for all ages and all communities. I want to continue working with the national government to ensure that schools have enough well qualified teachers and support workers to guide children and young people during their school journey.

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

The Fountainbridge and Craiglockhart ward has been really lucky to have been served for the past 10 years by Gavin

Corbett, as a Scottish Green Party councillor. There's a lot that he's achieved for the area in that time – secure on-street cycle parking for the many tenement residents in the area, something I know has been incredibly popular and I'll be looking to extend. We were all reminded of the value the city's green spaces during the pandemic, and I'm looking forward to continuing Gavin's work on improving some of those green spaces in the ward. There's the canal path and the canal's own ecosystem, which Gavin was a champion for. I'll also be looking to continue Gavin's support for the Clean Green Hutchison project – and hopefully we'll see more initiatives like that, where residents and businesses can come together to enjoy green spaces.

On a city-wide basis, the Scottish Green Party have made significant headway on housing issues – for example regulating holiday lets, releasing some of the pressure that AirBnBs and the like have been putting on the availability and affordability of housing in the city.

As someone who suffers from asthma, I'm particularly proud of the campaigning work that the Green councillors did on the Low Emission Zone that is being introduced in the city centre. This is something that will help encourage more electric vehicles, helping our climate change targets and helping residents breathe easier.

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

I once worked in a library, and I have a wish to work in a library again.



Megan McHaney