

# Council elections 2022 – parties pledge to clean up the city

Edinburgh's political parties have promised cleaner streets, improved waste collection services and a crackdown on fly-tipping and dog fouling if voted in at the council elections.

With under a month to go until polling day, plans for a cleaner capital have been put forward across all the party manifestos.

And while the range of new policies and initiatives suggested vary from party to party, some groups are aligned on certain issues, with Labour, the Liberal Democrats and the Conservatives all pledging to scrap bulky uplift fees to reduce fly-tipping rates in the city.

The Tories and Lib Dems have also made a promise to do-away with charges for brown garden waste bins which currently cost residents £35 a year.

As part of their re-election bid, the SNP says it will increase funding for bin collections and street cleaning by £10 million over the next five-year term.

The group's 2022 manifesto commits to extra cash for the council to tackle 'unwanted graffiti' in Edinburgh and the creation of new spaces for street art and murals.

If elected to help run the next administration, they also plan to introduce more wardens on the beat to stop businesses from using residential bins and issue fines for dog fouling.



SNP Council Group Leader Adam McVey said: “Our proposals will make it easier for them to do more for our residents. Helping

expand key teams, work in partnership and, where needed, use enforcement powers to tackle the issues which are causing residents so many issues.

“While our plans will help keep Edinburgh cleaner, they will also help deliver our vision of the net-zero Capital by 2030.”

The Conservatives have put street cleaning and waste services at the heart of their manifesto, promising a “spring clean” of the city right after the election and a new ‘graffiti taskforce’.

And they want to carry out a “full review” of the roll-out of new bin hubs, retain gull proof-sacks “where they are wanted” and redirect funds for the project to put communal bins underground “where possible”.



Iain Whyte candidate for Craightinny/Duddingston

Conservative Group Leader Cllr Iain Whyte said: “Ten years of SNP and Labour in charge of our Council has led to an appalling situation where we now have the dirtiest streets of

any City in Scotland. We are plagued by litter, overflowing bins, dumping and graffiti and every Spring the streets are covered in a weed jungle.

“This election is a chance to restore some civic pride in our capital. We need to clean things up then enforce the rules to keep it clean – only the Scottish Conservatives have a programme to do that. We are also the only party strong enough in the City Chambers to be able to make the change the public want.”

Edinburgh's Labour Group have pledged to increase the frequency of street cleaning and bin collections, enforce the “toughest penalties” for fly tipping and dog fouling and extend food waste collections to all homes across the capital.

In addition, the party plans to reduce the amount of waste plastic going to landfill by promoting the use of re-usable nappies and sanitary products, whilst investigating ways of recycling plastic film.

Scott Arthur, the Labour candidate standing for re-election in Colinton/Fairmilehead, said: “I am always proud that Edinburgh attracts visitors from around the world, but I am often ashamed of what they see when they come here. Too often our litter bins are overflowing, and the streets are covered in weeds in the summer. Fly-tipping has almost doubled since 2017.

“Labour will clean up Edinburgh. We will do this by making it easier for people to recycle their waste, and we will reintroduce the free uplift of unwanted bulky household items. We will also show zero tolerance to those responsible for littering, dog fouling and fly-tipping.”

Meanwhile, the Greens have vowed to improve bin collections and recycling with a “recycling action programme” and more street cleaning carts in each neighbourhood.



A fly-tipping action plan and more environmental wardens would be put in place under the Greens' manifesto in a bid to tackle illegal roadside dumping and dog fouling.

The party has also pledged to press the Scottish Government – which it helps run as part of a power sharing agreement with the SNP – for greater powers to combat local environmental issues.



Alys Mumford

Green Party candidate for Portobello, Alys Mumford said: "People in Edinburgh want to do the right things and the council needs to do far more to make it easier for them to reduce, reuse and recycle.

"Our manifesto has specific pledges to help cut down on waste and promote a circular economy – like helping people save money by repairing goods or buying second hand, reducing carbon emissions by cutting down on landfill, and making Edinburgh a nicer place to be by getting rid of overflowing bins and flytipping."

The Liberal Democrats say they will make recycling in Edinburgh 'easier and more ambitious' by opening new council-run recycling centres and increasing the number of public waste bins around littering hotspots.

Like the Tories, they have pledged to review bin hubs and the decision to remove gull-proof sacks in historic parts of the city.

And if elected, the Lib Dems say they would invest in staffing needed to tackle littering and dog fouling and push for increased fining powers.



Cllr Kevin Lang

Lib Dem Group councillor, Kevin Lang, said: "Liberal Democrats believe people deserve much better than this. We want Edinburgh to be a cleaner and greener city that everyone can be proud of.

"It is why we would invest more in street cleaning, provide more public bins in key locations and scrap the charges for bulky uplifts. If we want a cleaner Edinburgh then we simply can't afford another five years of more-of-the same from Labour and the SNP."

## **by Donald Turvill Local Democracy Reporter**

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