

Corstorphine/Murrayfield by election – Fiona Bennett Liberal Democrat candidate

Fiona Bennett is the Liberal Democrat candidate in the 2023 Corstorphine/Murrayfield by election.

She is a first time candidate, and when introducing herself at the recent Murrayfield hustings said that she was not used to public speaking.

She said: “As a former nurse and charity worker, I don’t pretend to be a professional politician. I don’t pretend to be any good at public speaking. But my life and my career up to this point has taught me the importance of public service, the difference that just one person can make. I’m standing for election for the first time in my life because I care passionately about people.”

A former mental health nurse, she has recently been working for Wendy Chamberlain MP in Fife. She explained she has travelled to Iraq twice “where I had conversations that I will never forget with women trying to survive and recover”.

She continued: “I realised how important local democracy is.

For me this is where democracy starts.”

She said: “When I gave up nursing, I felt like something was missing from me, I found it very difficult. Then the work that I’ve done with refugees and internally displaced people showed me that one person really, really can make a difference. I wanted to work for an MP because I knew that they could make a difference. And I feel like that bit that was missing is back again, I’m supporting people and helping people and becoming a councillor as an opportunity to just develop that.”

She suggested that as a third LibDem councillor in the ward “we can give you the best possible service”. Assisted by her LibDem team she said she has spoken to more than 1,000 residents and the rest of the team nearly 6,000.

Asked about the traders in Roseburn and any potential compensation for them Ms Bennett responded: “I feel very disappointed for the traders here. I am proud that the Liberal Democrats were the party that pushing for compensation. I think that the Lib Dems have been let down, the traders have been let down, I would still like the trader has to be compensated, unfortunately, we’re gonna have to wait another six months before that can be looked at again, think it’s devastating what’s happened to the area and what’s happened to local businesses.”

We suggested that there were a couple of new businesses on the street which might be an indication of faith in the area as a good place to trade. Bennett responded: “It is fantastic. The work is going to come to an end. We’re not entirely sure when it’s supposed to be very soon, but let’s keep an eye on that. And I’m delighted that people are moving into the area.”



Fiona Bennett is the LibDem candidate in the Corstorphine/Murrayfield by election PHOTO ©2023 The Edinburgh Reporter

Her campaign leaflet says “There’s only one way to send the SNP a message...Only the LibDems can beat the SNP here.”

The council election uses the Single Transferable Vote system and you can find out more about the way that works here.

The party says that the local Lib Dem team – made up of two councillors, Alan Beal and Euan Davidson, both elected for the first time in 2022 – “have a track record of beating the SNP in our area”.

Frank Ross whose resignation has sparked this by election was elected at stage six last May along with the two Liberal Democrat councillors.

All three polled quite far ahead of other candidates when the turnout was 58.8%. The number of people in the electorate in the ward was 19,533.

The number of first preference votes cast in May 2022 was:

Name	First Preference votes
Alan Beal (LD)	3,897
Norman Colville Scottish Family Party	88
Euan Davidson (LD)	1,772
Hugh Findlay (Cons)	1,818
Connal Hughes (Greens)	784
Richard Parker (Labour)	893
Frank Ross	2,132

But the wider team in the area comprises both an MSP and an MP. The party says that “the Conservatives and Labour are out of the race locally. They finished a distant third and fourth here last time. A vote for them will just help the SNP”.