

# **Murrayfield community councillor delivers message to Prime Minister**

**Chair of One Democratic Palestine (ODP), Pete Gregson, went to Downing Street on Thursday to hand in a letter to the Prime Minister signed by 1,410 supporters calling for the removal of Hamas from the UK's Proscribed List of Terrorist Bodies.**

The open letter was created by means of a petition set up by ODP, an organisation with around 85 members. Mr Gregson had tried to deliver the letter in December but was told he had to "go away and fill in some more forms". On Thursday accompanied by two fellow supporters he was permitted access to the famous black door to make the delivery.



The letter points out that whilst the Hamas military wing, the Qassam Brigades, were proscribed in 2001, the political wing was only added in 2021, following Priti Patel's "secret meetings" whilst on an Israeli holiday. The Terrorism Act 2000

provides that any person affected by proscription may call upon the government to remove the proscribed body from the list.

Originally Mr Gregson tried to lodge the petition through the Parliamentary Petitions website, only for it to be rejected because “It calls for an action relating to a particular individual, or organisation outside of the UK Government or Parliament”.

Gregson then approached GoPetition in the USA, who agreed to carry it.

He said: “In light of the fact that Israel has been using their massacre of the 7<sup>th</sup> Oct as a reason to “wipe out Hamas” for deaths that Israel itself mostly caused, we feel it essential that the UK Government reconsider this listing.

“Hamas were elected by a big majority of Palestinians in 2006 – but excluded from their right to govern Palestine. All their requests to the Palestine Authority for fresh elections have been denied. Their “Document of General Principles and Policies” published in May 2017, makes clear that Hamas are committed to democracy, that their enemy is not Jews, but Zionism – and they would call a truce if Israel withdrew to their 1967 borders. However, their ultimate objective would be the end of Israel and its replacement with one democratic Palestine, with equal rights for all.

“The UN refuses to proscribe Hamas, as they recognise that Palestinians have a right to use armed struggle to end their 75-years of occupation against a colonising power that denies their rights. We will continue with this petition, which can be found at [www.tiny.cc/hamas](http://www.tiny.cc/hamas) , until we have succeeded in convincing UK Parliamentarians that we must do as we did with Northern Ireland, when we kept speaking to Sinn Fein, even whilst the IRA were bombing Britain. Because we have proscribed Hamas, we leave the Palestinians – and most

particularly the Gazans- without a voice.”

**Until December Mr Gregson was an active member of Murrayfield Community Council (MCC) but he was asked to resign over social media comments relating to Palestine which the Chair felt breached the code of conduct for Community Councils. He has refused to comply with the request.**

Mr Gregson told The Edinburgh Reporter: “Why should I resign? I have done nothing illegal; I have done nothing that would draw the MCC into disrepute. My right to freedom of expression is enshrined by law in Section 10 of the [1997 Human Rights act](#). The MCC is breaching that right, for I have never said a word about Palestine, speaking as a representative of MCC. If I had, there may be some reason to censor me. The MCC is simply over-reacting to a complaint. Why are they listening to a nutcase?”

The community council minutes reflect the view of the Chair and other members. The minutes state: **“The Chair reported that P Gregson had recently attracted attention on social media by actively promoting his views on a particularly sensitive issue, namely the situation in Gaza. It was felt that this activity was potentially in breach of Paragraph 3.4 of the Scheme for Community Councils which obliges a Community Councillor to desist from conduct likely to bring the Community Councillor and/or the Community Council into disrepute. The office bearers had taken the decision to ask P**

Gregson to resign. He had refused and on the advice of the Governance Team at the City Council the office bearers had lodged a complaint, which would be determined by an independent panel and a decision given within 40 working days.”

Mr Gregson was instrumental in ensuring that the former public toilets in Roseburn Park were converted into café premises which opened in 2023, and has led on the move to erect a plaque honouring John Lennon and commemorating his association with Murrayfield.

He also stood as an independent candidate in the by election held in Corstorphine and Murrayfield last year.



Pete Gregson. Photo © 2023 Martin P. McAdam  
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