

# **Election 2024: Who's standing in Edinburgh and what the polls say**

**With just five weeks to go until a snap general election, Edinburgh's candidates have stepped up their efforts on the campaign trail as they fight for every vote.**

Polls have indicated it could be a tight race in the Labour target seats of Edinburgh North and Leith and Edinburgh East and Musselburgh, both currently held by the SNP.

Meanwhile Westminster incumbents Ian Murray (Labour, Edinburgh South), Joanna Cherry (SNP, Edinburgh South-West) and Christine Jardine (Lib Dem, Edinburgh West), are expected to hold onto their seats, according to current polling.

Six city councillors have announced their candidacy, including Labour transport convener Scott Arthur and new SNP group leader Simita Kumar.

Voters in Edinburgh's five constituencies – and all across the UK – will go to the polls on Thursday, July 4.

## **Edinburgh North and Leith**

**Held by:** Scottish National Party

**Majority:** 12,808

Edinburgh North and Leith has been held by the SNP since 2015

when Diedre Brock was elected. Labour will need a swing of at least 10.8% to win the seat back, with the latest YouGov polling putting Labour on 40% and the SNP on 36%.

Challenging Ms Brock is Labour's Tracy Gilbert, a regional secretary for trade union USDAW, while Forth ward councillor Kayleigh O'Neill is standing for the Scottish Greens.

This constituency includes: Leith, Newhaven, Pilton, Inverleith, Stockbridge, Broughton, Cannonmills, Comely Bank, the New Town and Bonnington.

**All candidates announced so far:**

- Deidre Brock – Scottish National Party
- Tracy Gilbert – Scottish Labour
- Mike Andersen – Liberal Democrats
- Kayleigh O'Neill – Scottish Greens
- Alan Melville – Reform UK
- Neil Deepnaran – Scottish Family Party
- Richard Shilcock – Community Party of Britain

**Edinburgh East and Musselburgh**

**Held by:** Scottish National Party

**Majority:** 10,417

Edinburgh East and Musselburgh – known as Edinburgh East at the last election before recent boundary changes – was gained by the SNP from Labour in 2015. It is a key target for Labour at this election, requiring a swing of at least 10.85%.

Polling has indicated this could be achieved, although it's likely to be close with YouGov forecasting Labour on 38% and SNP on 36%.

Incumbent SNP MP Tommy Shepherd is hoping for a fourth term in parliament and is being challenged in the seat by Labour

candidate Chris Murray, son of Margaret Curran who was MP for Glasgow East from 2010 to 2015 and Shadow Scottish Secretary under Ed Miliband from 2011 to 2015.

This constituency includes: Portobello, Craigentinny, Meadowbank, Duddingston, Restalrig, Jock's Lodge Piershill and Musselburgh.

**All candidates announced so far:**

- Tommy Shepherd – Scottish National Party
- Chris Murray – Scottish Labour
- Charles Dundas – Liberal Democrats
- Amanda Grimm – Scottish Greens
- Derek Winton – Reform UK

**Edinburgh South**

**Held by:** Scottish Labour

**Majority:** 11,095

The only Scottish constituency held by Labour from 2015-2017 and again from 2019 until last year's Rutherglen and Hamilton West by-election, Edinburgh South has been a safe seat for the party since the 1980s.

Ian Murray has been the MP since the 2010 election is likely to keep his job, and would also be Secretary of State for Scotland if Keir Starmer becomes prime minister.

An SNP win here for the first time ever would need a swing of 11.15% or more– a very tall order given polling has put Labour on 69% and SNP on 18% here.

Two Edinburgh councillors are standing in Edinburgh South, leader of the SNP group Simita Kumar and the Conservative's Christopher Cowdy, who represents Fountainbridge and Craiglockhart in the City Chambers.

This constituency includes: Morningside, Bruntsfield, Newington, Grange, Marchmont, Blackford, Liberton, Greenbank, Fairmilehead and Southside.

**All candidates announced so far:**

- Ian Murray – Scottish Labour
- Simita Kumar- Scottish National Party
- Christopher Cowdy – Conservatives
- Andy Williamson – Liberal Democrats
- Jo Phillips – Scottish Greens
- Cameron Smith – Reform UK

**Edinburgh South-West**

**Held by:** Scottish National Party

**Majority:** 11,982

Edinburgh South-West was another seat which switched to SNP in 2015 as part of its landslide victory in Scotland, with incumbent Joanna Cherry increasing her majority significantly at the last general election.

Although Conservatives came second place here in 2019, YouGov predictions suggest it could be neck and neck between the SNP (polling on 37%) and Labour (polling on 35%) this time around. Labour needs at least a 16.65% swing to win.

Scott Arthur, Labour's candidate, is one of the city's highest-profile councillors, having been Edinburgh's transport and environment convener since 2022 when his party took control of the local authority.

Also standing in this seat is Conservative MSP for the Lothian region and former Edinburgh councillor Sue Webber and current Green councillor for Sighthill and Gorgie Dan Heap.

This constituency includes: Balerno, Currie, Juniper

Green, Oxfgangs, Colinton, Craiglockhart, Kingsknowe, Longstone, Ratho and Wester Hailes.

**All candidates announced so far:**

- Joanna Cherry – Scottish National Party
- Scott Arthur – Scottish Labour
- Sue Webber – Conservatives
- Bruce Wilson – Liberal Democrats
- Dan Heap – Scottish Greens
- Richard Lucas – Scottish Family Party

**Edinburgh West**

**Held by:** Scottish Liberal Democrats

**Majority:** 3,769

Edinburgh West was held by the Liberal Democrats from 1997 until 2015 when it was gained by the SNP, however in 2017 it switched back and Christine Jardine has increased her majority at the last election.

Polling indicates the Lib Dems will hold onto the seat, with YouGov putting the incumbent on 39% and challengers the SNP on 31%, who need a swing of 3.45% to win here.

The SNP candidate, Euan Hyslop, is currently the councillor for Drumbrae and Gyle at the City Chambers.

This constituency includes: Corstorphine, South Queensferry, Cramond, Dalmeny, Kirkliston, Ratho, Newbridge, Gogar, Stenhouse and Sighthill.

**All candidates announced so far:**

- Christine Jardine – Scottish Liberal Democrats
- Euan Hyslop – Scottish National Party
- Michael Davidson – Scottish Labour

- James Puchowski – Scottish Greens
- Michael Banks – Reform UK
- Tam Laird – Scottish Libertarian Party

By Donald Turvill Local Democracy Reporter