

# GREEN

Westminster  
Election Special  
Spring 2015



# NEWS

## Midlothian West

\* Loanhead \* Damhead \* Bilston \*

\* Glencorse \* Auchendinny \* Roslin \* Rosewell \*

## Green councillor Ian Baxter in race to be Midlothian's next MP



Green councillor Ian Baxter

Midlothian Green Party has selected Ian Baxter, Midlothian's first Green councillor, to be the party's candidate for Midlothian in May's Westminster General Election.

Ian has lived in Bonnyrigg for 35 years with his wife Karen, bringing up three sons who went to local schools. Elected to Midlothian Council in 2012, he was formerly chair of Bonnyrigg & Lasswade Community Council and currently chairs the town's Fair Trade Town group.

Accepting the nomination, Cllr Baxter said, "This is a very exciting time for the Greens. In the last six months our membership has quadrupled across the UK and it is clear that people are looking beyond traditional parties which have failed to work for the common good. It is a real privilege to represent a party that has a positive message for both people and planet".

### Ian's top priorities if elected ...

**Equality, not poverty** - Immediately raise the minimum wage to the level of the Living Wage, and rising to £10 per hour by 2020

**Public services in public hands** - Return the railways and Royal Mail to public ownership, serving the public, not shareholders

**End the programme of austerity** - Cuts to Welfare are driven by ideology, not economics. We need robust systems in place to stop tax avoidance

**Sort out the Banks** - We didn't cause the banks to crash, and changes are still not in place to stop it happening again. Encourage smaller, community banks, which will support local businesses

**Green industrialisation** - Start a transition to a jobs-rich economy which respects the environment. Re-skill the oil industry to move away from fossil fuel extraction to renewables

**Small is beautiful** - Promote small, local businesses and co-operatives, reducing reliance on big supermarket monopolies

**Put energy in community hands** - Midlothian has massive scope for renewable energy owned by local communities and the council, providing income, reducing emissions and putting people in charge

**Protect our green spaces** - No more out-of-town retail parks or speculative property developments in the green belt. We need to safeguard our farming land and promote local food production

## Greens oppose 'unsustainable' plan for new road at Straiton



Local Green activist Daya Feldwick

Midlothian Green Party is campaigning to stop the proposed expansion of Straiton on the back of a new 'relief' road, describing it as a 1960s solution to 21st century problems.

Loanhead resident and local Green Party activist, Daya Feldwick, said, "These proposals will completely go against the Scottish Government's carbon reduction plans and runs contrary to its Climate Change Declaration, which Midlothian has also signed up to. No alternative transport options were considered, despite the last transport study indicating that the new road was the worst transport solution for the A701 corridor".

Daya has been working with the local Friends of the Earth group and residents in Damhead, who are concerned at the loss of Green Belt and valuable agricultural land.

On its impact locally she said, "The overwhelming response to the consultation was to oppose the new road. The plans are also incompatible with the Damhead and District Neighbourhood Plan which the local community worked hard to develop. Improvements of the existing road coupled

with additional public transport and off-road cycling provision would be cheaper and more beneficial to both the commuters and the environment".

Midlothian Green councillor, Ian Baxter, was the only councillor to oppose the draft Midlothian Local Development Plan when it was voted on by councillors, arguing that the proposals for Straiton were unsustainable, given the additional cross-county traffic they would attract.

Cllr Baxter said, "Studies worldwide show that building more roads attracts more traffic. so what makes the council believe the A701 Relief Road would be any different? We need attractive alternatives to using the private car, not encouragement".

### Your chance to have a last say ...

The Midlothian Local Development Plan, approved by Midlothian Council, despite objections from the Greens that it offers nothing in the way of sustainability, goes out to final consultation on 14th May for a period of six weeks.

If you object to any of it, please make sure you respond by 26th June.



Damhead residents protest against the new road

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