

MIDLOTHIAN **GREENS** BRANCH NEWS



Scottish Green Party

DECEMBER 2018

**FREE
ADMISSION!**

You are invited to a film screening followed by a discussion led by Mathieu Munsch, Young Friends of the Earth and writer on climate action

Merchants of Doubt

A film by Robert Kenner
(2014, 1 hr 36 mins)

Merchants of Doubt tells the story of how a group of high-level scientists and advisers ran effective campaigns to mislead the public and deny well-established scientific knowledge over four decades, particularly on the science of climate change. 'Doubt is our product', wrote one.

Saturday 1 December
Penicuik Town Hall
3.00 — 5.30pm



What we're doing

Midlothian Green Party currently has 97 members. The numbers in each local Council Ward are:

Penicuik	15
Bonnyrigg	11
Dalkeith	11
Midlothian West	27
Midlothian East	18
Midlothian South	15
Total	97



Any member is very welcome to join our dedicated band of committee members. This is especially so if you live in the Bonnyrigg or Dalkeith wards since these wards are not currently represented on the committee which comprises:

Gari Donn *Co-convenor and newsletter editor*

Midlothian South

Malcolm Spaven

Co-convenor

Midlothian South

Prospective Council candidate

Helen Blackburn *Treasurer*

Midlothian West

Prospective Council candidate

Marion Black

Membership Co-Secretary

Midlothian South

Helen Armstrong

Membership Co-Secretary

Penicuik

Prospective Council candidate

Paul Mephram *Publications designer* Midlothian West

Campaigns task group report

In the campaigns task group we will be getting ourselves ready for any up-coming elections: Westminster, Holyrood or Local Council. So we'll be making sure that we have candidates in place, draft leaflets produced, leafleting maps done and a canvassing and publicity strategy worked out. As well as that we want to make sure that we are all up to speed with Green Party policy as it applies to Midlothian, as well as to Scotland, so that we feel confident to go out canvassing. We know that canvassing is the best way to convince people to vote for you so we'd really like to have canvassing teams ready for action as soon as an election of any type is called. If you have a bit of spare time, and would like to join this task group contact Helen (helen.mstrong@sunadal.co.uk).

Mark Turner

Events Convenor

Midlothian West

Daya Feldwick *Committee*

Member Midlothian West

Mike Harrison *Website*

manager Midlothian West

Ben Miller *Social media*

manager Midlothian East

Jillian Simon *Committee*

Member Midlothian West

Prospective Council candidate

Ulla Hipkin (*Committee Member*) Penicuik

Let's get active!

We still need more help to get things moving — there's the real prospect of a General Election as a result of the Westminster government's Brexit debacle so we need to be prepared! Please contact one of people below to offer your help.

Campaign task group

Organisation of maps, leaflets, volunteers, liaison etc

Contact Helen Armstrong:

helen@sunadal.co.uk

Climate/environment task group

Acting on local climate and environmental issues

Contact Malcolm Spaven:

malcolmgspaven@gmail.com

Newsletter and leaflets task group

Internal and external communications

Contact Paul Mephram or

Gari Donn: paulmephram60@outlook.com

gari_donn@msn.com

Website/social media task group

Contact Mike Harrison:

mike@mahprojects.co.uk

Housing task group

Contact Jill Simon:

jilliansimon74@gmail.com

So who are Extinction Rebellion?

On a damp Saturday afternoon in November Extinction Rebellion arrived in Scotland. The recently formed organisation is initiating UK-wide protests to draw attention to the breakdown of humanity's life support system, the Earth.

Supporters occupied five London bridges on 18 November, resulting in numerous arrests — they'd hoped for hundreds! — and it's now active in Scotland where it plans similar actions to those in London.

Over three hundred people gathered outside parliament on 24 November to listen to speakers, sing and pledge support for this fledgling group committed to NVDA. Along with Caroline Rance from FoE Scotland, Emma from Extinction Rebellion England and an anti-fracking campaigner from Lancashire, amongst others, was SGP's Patrick Harvie who pledged his and the party's support for the campaign. He was emphatic about the need for immediate action to halt

planet-damaging practices and was characteristically honest, admitting that he and the Greens at Holyrood had not put enough pressure on the government in Scotland to do more to eliminate the carbon economy; Scotland's record of being 'not bad' was not even adequate, he said, and the current draft Climate Change Bill will be a focus of attention over the next weeks.

Find out more at www.rebellion.earth



Extinction Rebellion demands:

- *The Government must tell the truth about the climate and wider ecological emergency, reverse inconsistent policies and work alongside the media to communicate with citizens.*
- *The Government must enact legally binding policy measures to reduce carbon emissions to net zero by 2025 and to reduce consumption levels.*
- *A national Citizen's Assembly to oversee the changes, as part of creating a democracy fit for purpose.*



Imagine a Midlothian...

- where communities create their own economic opportunities, most businesses are locally-owned and run, economic benefits are re-invested in the community, and there is a fairer distribution of wealth.
- where we all feel part of the communities where we live; where shops, workplaces, schools and local amenities are easily reached by walking, cycling or public transport; and where we can be involved in the decisions that affect us.
- where people of all ages and abilities can achieve their full potential.
- where we can all have a high quality, energy efficient home that meets our needs.
- where we don't take from the environment more than it can sustain because we know we are looking after the planet for future generations.
- where everyone can eat healthy, affordable food, breathe clean air, and enjoy unspoiled spaces for exercise and relaxation.

Go to www.midlothiangreens and click on **Vision for Midlothian** to read more.

Please keep on sharing your green issue Tweets and Facebook posts and send in your short pieces for inclusion in this, **your** branch newsletter.



Did you know...?

...Norwegian cruise line operator Hurtigruten plans to be running at least six of its ships on dead fish by 2021! Well, actually the company is planning to run the ships on a mixture of biogas (produced fish-processing scraps), liquified natural gas and battery electric power, which is perhaps sensible considering global overfishing.

Source: *Treehugger website*

Happy ending!

Farmer wins in court against film studio developers

There has been some extremely good news on one of the campaigns we have been supporting: Midlothian farmer Jim Telfer won the decision in the Scottish Land Court on 1st October which was not appealed by the developer and the family can continue living and working on the farm.

We would like to congratulate the Telfer family on their bravery and resilience going through the stressful legal process and sticking to their conviction against the big business and speculative developers. Also huge thanks to our Green MSPs Alison Johnstone and Andy Wightman who were amazing and actively supported this campaign and the family throughout their ordeal.

Initially the Scottish Government Reporter granted the permission on developer's appeal and there was no other way to challenge that decision but going to court. It is a shame that people have to endure such a long and costly process to protect their rights, with planning system heavily loaded in favour of the developers with no equal rights for communities. No wonder many feel disenfranchised.

As for the future of film studios — there were 28 other sites identified across Scotland with some of them more suitable in terms of infrastructure and not taking up productive agricultural land. In words of Andy Wightman: 'It is now incumbent on industry and the Scottish Government to deliver the much needed national film studio on a site where development would be lawful.'



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