



# Midlothian Green Party Newsletter

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October/November 2020

**Important news!** Our next **branch meeting** will be on **Tuesday, November 10 at 7.00pm**. At the top of our agenda is our campaigning strategy for the **Holyrood election 2021** and we will be welcoming **John Hardy** and **Zeyn Mohammed** from the **Scottish Green Party's national campaign team**. Your attendance would be really appreciated!

## Charging charge choker

With the recent announcement from Midlothian Council that they will start to charge users of their electric vehicle charge points is achieving our net zero carbon emissions by 2030 under threat?

*Has the excuse of saving cash been costed against the health costs for the NHS in diseases and deaths related to car pollution in Midlothian?*

*Are councillors greenwashing for kudos while reeling in on commitments?*

**EV manufacturers have now begun seeking ways to ethically source their minerals for their batteries.**  
Source: <https://thedriven.io/2019/11/22/ev-manufacturers-begin-work-to-stop-child-and-environmental-exploitation/>

**A recent study in the UK in 2019 found that the lifetime emissions per kilometre of driving an EV were about three times lower than for the average conventional car.**  
Source: <https://www.carbonbrief.org/factcheck-how-electric-vehicles-help-to-tackle-climate-change>

*Should Midlothian Council remove green incentives while declaring a climate emergency?*

While we should always be looking at limiting the use of private vehicles in favour of public transport we also need to promote transitioning to a greener society for those who rely on private transport.

greener. Finding new creative solutions to keep our commitment to being carbon neutral by 2030 is something sadly I don't think the present Midlothian Council is capable. The same councillor who pushed for Midlothian Council to declare a climate emergency is now removing green incentives for a quick fix, a fast buck, with no thought for alternative money saving initiatives or the long-term consequences of withdrawing the charging scheme. **Midlothian**

With the guarantee of free charge points being withdrawn many small businesses can no longer consider the extra expense of purchasing an EV for deliveries.

**deserves better.** Let us know your thoughts on the subject, on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram or to [www.midlothiangreens.org.uk](http://www.midlothiangreens.org.uk). *Jillian Simon*

Withdrawing this incentive will have a direct impact on the affordability of purchasing an EV for many. If, after the pandemic, we are to build back better we need to build back

## Council calamity 2.0

**At the end of October Midlothian Council asked for responses to its proposals to close three rural roads, Crawlees Road, Mayfield, Oatslie Road, Roslin and Roslin Glen Road for 18 months.**

Laudable though such a scheme is shouldn't the council have asked for suggestions from the people of Midlothian **before** presenting us with its choices? Surely town centre roads would have been the most obvious choices when trying to encourage people to walk or cycle from their homes to shops and local services?

Funded by the Scottish Government, the Spaces for People Project encourages active and socially distanced travel. However the proposed closure of Roslin Glen Road, notorious for its winding, hilly nature and its current state of disrepair, has proved to be a road too far for local, and not so, local residents. It's a direct route for those people in Rosewell who need to get to their nearest (!) Post Office, a fact acknowledged by Rosewell and District Community Council when they encouraged local people to oppose the closure.

Rural communities in Midlothian suffer already from a lack of buses; as Greens we don't encourage car usage sometimes there is no alternative for those living in the countryside. **These are the wrong roads to close.**

# Ignoring the wood for the trees?

The Scottish Tree Festival, organised by Discover Scottish Gardens, is currently running and it has branches everywhere including, amongst others, National Trust for Scotland and Historic Environment Scotland properties, and the Royal Botanic Garden in Edinburgh.

We all appreciate the beauty of trees and know the importance of woodland within the ecosystem. Or do we?

The recent flooding in Lasswade was the result of the illegal felling of trees at School Green, behind The Laird and Dog pub, in preparation for house building on land sold by the council. This work was started in late January this year, **before** permission had been given by the council to remove what angry residents claimed were trees with preservation orders! Council planners told Dimension Homes that they hadn't yet been given permission to fell the trees but they continued with the

destruction with impunity. And when the rain came in early October the inevitable happened – what one resident of the village described as a 'waterfall'!

Globally 15 billion trees are chopped down every year, that's 476 every single second – our rainforests, jungles and woodlands across the planet are being destroyed to make space for more cattle, palm oil, and soybeans.

**Go to: [avaaz.org/campaign/en/eu\\_stop\\_deforestation](https://avaaz.org/campaign/en/eu_stop_deforestation) to support the EU law to ban products linked to deforestation and nature destruction.**



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Are Chopped Down Every Year**



## Holyrood Elections 2021

**The campaign to retain our two Green MSPs and to get more into Holyrood nationally will start in earnest this autumn. Campaigning costs money.**

**For example, if every member of Midlothian Green Party gave a monthly donation of just £1 we'd have £100 towards our campaigning fund every month – three people so far have pledged something!**

A Direct Debit or a standing order with your bank would mean that Midlothian Green Party would be able to rely on an income to enable it to campaign more extensively, for Holyrood and then in 2022 to put up candidates in every ward for the council elections.

Can you help?

Whatever you can afford would be more than welcome.

Our bank details for you to arrange a Direct Debit or a standing order are:

Co-operative Bank

Sort Code: 08 92 99

Account No: 65391518

Midlothian Green Party



## Co-convenor's Cogitations

*Looking at the auctions today, I see stacks of HP printers: incredibly unreliable and sold cheap – my HP inkjet only printed 84 pages before it failed. As these are all 'returns' who should be paying for their disposal? At the moment the big retailers (Amazon, John Lewis, Argos, PC World, Costco etc) dispose of their tech returns at these public auctions, thereby passing the buck for testing, scrapping and recycling. Shouldn't they be paying for this? Policy now is to not even test returns because that costs money, and a returned item cannot be resold as 'new'. So wholesale containers are shipped to the big auction houses, where unsuspecting consumers might actually believe they are buying working or 'as new' products, and with no recourse as they are buying at auction and therefore have no warranty - 'buyer beware'. Since lockdown, auction prices are five times what they were, presumably to feed the furloughed workers 'ebay businesses', but the waste pile keeps growing. None of these ebay retailers will be registered businesses, or offer commercial waste services. How should we be handling all this waste?*

## Did you know..?

... that not all bees sting once and then die. This is true for honeybees, but not for others. Honeybees have large stingers with backward facing barbs that get lodged in skin and can't be pulled out. When a honeybee tries to fly off after going in for a sting, its entire apparatus stays behind, leaving it mortally wounded with a ruptured abdomen. Other bees, and wasps, have smoother stingers that pull out intact – meaning they live to sting another day.

Source: Treehugger

## (Increasingly sustainable) power to the people!

**Have you ever wondered just how much of the UK's electricity is being provided to the National Grid by wind and solar day-by-day?**

Or how much is being supplied to the National Grid from nuclear and gas or even coal? And how much CO<sup>2</sup> is being emitted per kilowatt hour of electricity consumed?

Then you need the National Grid's ESO free phone app which you can download from wherever you usually get your phone apps.

There's a map which shows the mix which is being used across the UK and this consistently shows that Scotland's carbon intensity is significantly less than other parts of the country. Unfortunately nuclear is too often the principal means of energy production but wind is frequently a close second.

On the app you can also check when to run high-



consuming domestic electrical appliances so as to ensure you're using electricity when the cleanest mix is available.

This September gas remained the predominant energy source, with wind still contributing over a fifth of our power. The National Grid claims that 11.00am on September 13 was the greenest time of the month.

0.95% percent of the UK's electricity in September was produced by coal, compared to five years ago at this time of year when it was 3.55%.

Interestingly, 'Imports' accounted for 4.61% for September. If that's energy imported from France then is that also accounted for in the nuclear percentage?

Mmm, I somehow doubt it...



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