

moving  
**Edinburgh**  
forward  
**together**



# EDINBURGH

is known the world over - a historic city and capital of the nation. Over recent decades it's become successful and prosperous and a great place to live and work.

**Yet, Edinburgh's Council is on the wrong track. It thinks it knows best - but it doesn't.** Labour is determined that the Council will sit alongside Edinburgh's people to decide what we really want for our city. And work together with Edinburgh's people to get things done.

**For the past five years our city has gone backwards.** The SNP joined the Liberal Democrats to run our city and they have both failed us. They lack the leadership and competence to move our city forward.

**Their mis-management of the tram project is embarrassing.** But for the whole last five years, because they didn't listen, they've made many wrong choices for Edinburgh. They spent millions of pounds on private contractors to collect waste while waiting 5 years to settle the bin-men's dispute. They decided they knew best and closed

good schools and nurseries without talking properly to parents. They didn't listen and so tried to make profits out of basic care for old and disabled people. They accumulated Council debt of over £1.5 billion. Even our streets are now the dirtiest in Scotland.

**It's time for a fresh start, with a co-operative council listening to local people and working together with local communities.** A council where fairness, accountability and responsibility really matter.

**Labour's new manifesto is a start. And the people of**  
**EDINBURGH**  
**helped write it.**

Dear Fellow Resident

Like you, I live here and I love Edinburgh. This is my city.

My young son has grown up in this city and there was a time when we expected that the city would grow with him - that the services and reputation of the city would improve, that jobs would grow, that the city would be safe for him at night, that his education would be assured.



**But in the last 5 years I've seen that dream crumble.**

Every year, I've watched SNP and Liberal Democrat councillors flounder in the leadership of the city, not willing to share or listen. I've watched them bicker and argue. I've watched them let Edinburgh down.

**I believe it can be better. With better leadership Edinburgh can move forward again.**

When I was young my parents instilled in me the value of public service and how much better the world would be if people worked together for the common good. And that's what I'll bring to the leadership of this city if you give Labour the chance once more. I'll work together with other party leaders for the good of the city. I can't promise to spend more; money will be tight and we'll need to economise. But I can promise to be better. I'll set out to change the way the Council works - I want it to listen to the people of Edinburgh and, instead of 'knowing best', work together with them to get things done. I want a co-operative council.

Edinburgh needs to move forward again - but we'll only do it if we do it together.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andrew Burns." The signature is written in a cursive style.

Andrew Burns, Leader of the Labour Group  
City of Edinburgh Council

# a summary of our promises

## **Labour's 'Co-operative Council'**

**A big idea for difficult times. It's more than simply listening. It's joining forces with the people who use what the Council provides - the local park or home care for disabled people - to do things better and make the money go further. Sharing real decisions with the people who know best in Scotland's first 'co-operative council'.**

### **For children and their education that means**

- we'll work to set up a city-wide 'childcare co-op' to provide affordable child care for working parents in all communities, starting where the need is greatest
- and we will give Parent Councils the right to share in city-wide decision-making on schools by nominating a member of the Council's Education Committee.

### **For transport in our City that means**

- we will set up a city-wide Transport Forum of experts and citizens to think through our modern transport needs
- but meanwhile, we'll pay proper attention to the everyday things - bringing roads and pavements to a good standard especially in busy areas and controlling the work standards of the utilities who dig up our roads

### **For health and social care of our elderly and vulnerable that means**

- we'll bring the Council, care staff and the users together into co-operatives to

decide on and provide the means to make life better for both the care users and the care providers

- and, of course, we'll never seek to privatise or sell off these services to the lowest bidder.

### **For jobs in Edinburgh's economy that means**

- we'll work with local firms to encourage them to offer real apprenticeships to young people
- and we will strive to support local business by tipping the balance against unfair competition from big outsiders.

### **For people in need of a home of their own that means**

- we'll set up a city task force to find fair ways to bring empty homes into use and to build useful developments on derelict land
- and we'll press the Scottish Government to release money for Edinburgh to build new high-quality and affordable homes for rent and work with land owners to free up the urgently needed land.

### **And for our environment that means**

- we'll protect our green spaces from development, establish more when the right opportunities arise and place decisions about their care into the hands of local people
- and because, through co-operation, residents could save energy and up to 20% of their bills, we'll consult all our tenants about 'bulk buying' gas and electricity for their homes through an energy co-op.

# Labour wants our city to be **prosperous**

More and more people are out of work in our city – at well over 12,000 it's the highest since the Tories were last in power. We want to help create work in the city for everyone who can work, especially our young people.



We'll work with local firms to encourage them to offer real apprenticeships to young people. In return we'll seek to reduce the business rates to small and medium size firms who join the scheme, especially in areas where unemployment is high. We'll collaborate with charities which support both firms and apprentices. We'll do our bit by making sure the

Council itself takes on apprentices and we've already proposed putting more money into the 'Edinburgh Guarantee' to do just that. We'll also put a requirement for similar schemes into contracts with firms who supply the Council. And to help head teachers step up efforts to prepare young people for work, we'll talk with parents about using schools as a base for social 'not-for-profit' businesses.

We will strive to support local business by tipping the balance against unfair competition from big outsiders. We'll find ways to get new funding to small businesses to help them grow and as part of that we'll start discussions with banks with a sound ethical foundation to see if it is possible to establish a mutual fund to help Edinburgh businesses. We'll help set up an independent forum to promote locally-owned retail businesses. We'll help local people find premises in which to start their own business by offering currently unused Council premises on short low-cost lets.

Where it's legal,  
we'll make ...!

## ... / Labour wants our city to be prosperous

... / sure the Council buys from local suppliers, especially those with a strong ethical and environmental commitment, and we'll use the law to offer Council contracts to those local companies supported through 'article 19' to employ disabled people. We'll assist employers who offer supported work

placements and apprenticeships by working with other agencies to make the bureaucracy more accessible.

We'll set up a city task force to find fair ways to bring empty homes into use and to build useful developments on derelict land.

# Labour wants our city to be safe

We all have the right to peace of mind in our homes and security on our streets.

So, working closely with the police, we'll set up a special anti-social behaviour unit to target persistent offenders across the city and we'll work to expand drug and alcohol programmes seeking to change people's destructive behaviours. We'll support voluntary groups who offer safety to women at risk and other vulnerable people.

Where tenants are persistently anti-social, we'll restore the balance in favour of responsible residents by faster enforcement of Council tenancy agreements over disruptive neighbours and encourage housing associations to do the same. We'll use to the full the Council's powers to make private landlords tackle problems in their own properties.

Where the law allows, and to protect the neighbours, we'll place restrictions on the use of 'party flats'.

The SNP government have 'nationalised' the police and fire services, removing local control and moving it to government ministers in single Scottish police and fire forces. The previous Police and Fire Boards always worked very closely with the Council and with local communities, because that's the best way to keep people safe, and we will do our best to see that these immensely valuable local links are strengthened rather than lost.

# Labour wants our city to be well cared for

Edinburgh is a green and beautiful city and we want it to stay that way.

We'll protect our green spaces from development and establish more when the right opportunities arise. We'll place decisions about their care into the hands of local people, advised by Council professionals, and ensure local groups share in both the decision-making and benefits from major park events. To encourage local sport we'll transfer decisions about the care of pitches and pavilions into co-operative groupings of those local clubs which use them.

We'll use planning rules to see that all new buildings comply with top design and green standards. We'll confront all that's tacky in the city centre, from pavements to shops, so the city gets its heart back and then extend that approach across the city. We'll seek agreement for the West End to be included in the next election for a Business Improvement District and work with other

communities who want to investigate a BID for their area.

We'll play our part in protecting the world's climate, and at the same time drive down fuel bills and boost Edinburgh's economy, by using Council property to generate green electricity. We'll help households and businesses to do the same and encourage the development of co-operatives, like the Edinburgh Community Energy Co-operative and Energy4All, to do this. And we'll build on the lead Labour created for Edinburgh when we were in power to develop and implement environmentally sustainable planning policies.

We will start a programme of consultation to follow Birmingham's lead and set up an Edinburgh fund from which householders can borrow at lower rates to insulate and improve the energy efficiency of their homes, the money to be repaid from savings on fuel bills.

## Case Study: Edinburgh Community Energy Co-operative Ltd

**Edinburgh Community Energy Co-operative was formed at the end of 2007 to give Edinburgh residents a vehicle to promote and develop renewable and low-carbon energy in the city.** It encourages people from all walks of life to be part of the 'renewable revolution', to get involved in the race against the inevitable reality of climate change and help prevent the consequences of flooding and drought - penalties that derive from rising sea levels and

increased global temperatures. As one member said: "We need to develop sustainable businesses, sustainable communities, and a sustainable Scotland. Co-operatives are the way to ensure that more people can have more say in that development and that more people can share in the benefits that flow from that sustainable development. Co-operatives have been on the go in Scotland since 1761 and still retain their relevance today".

# Labour wants our city to be a good place to live

Edinburgh is already one of the top world cities for 'quality of life'. So we'll make sure we sustain our heritage, our arts and our Festivals. We'll start talks to see if the Scottish Parliament will make a law to allow us to raise funds to support our heritage and our Festivals by a 'tourist tax' on hotels, as many cities throughout Europe do.

Our libraries make life better for everyone who uses them. We will start talks at community level to find ways in which the Council and the community together can keep our libraries open and active. We'll continue to support Edinburgh's status as an international City of Literature, first established under Labour.

But above all, we will tackle the big issues of housing shortage and transport.

We want to assist family and first-time buyers. So, starting with Edinburgh's plentiful supply of brownfield sites, we will work with house-builders to provide land to build on in return for guaranteed high quality and fast delivery to market. We will seek to revoke planning permissions where builders just hoard the land and don't build the homes they promised.

We also want to assist people looking for a home to rent. We'll press the Scottish

Government to release money for Edinburgh to build new high-quality and affordable homes for rent - as Council homes, housing association or housing co-operative homes. We can't rely on the Scottish Government, so we will also seek our own funds and look at the Council Tax from second homes and a linking of Council borrowing powers to the resources of banks with an ethical foundation as possible sources. We will work with land owners to free up urgently needed land for affordable housing of all kinds.

We will set up a city-wide Transport Forum of experts and citizens to think through our modern transport needs. It's a complex challenge. If Edinburgh is to be prosperous with enough jobs to go round, we must meet our transport needs, especially within the city boundary. Different people have different views on how to do that - motorists want more parking, cyclists more cycle paths and bus passengers more frequent buses and more bus lanes. And all of us as pedestrians want pleasant and safe streets. We also want to protect and care for the city's environment and help people without a car or with mobility problems to get around. And we need to find a source of funding for the investment that people want. All that involves difficult choices



and striking a fair balance, and that's why we want everyone to have a voice.

We'll try to get the tram back on track, because we believe like every other top European city, we need the best in public transport. We will support a public enquiry into the tram project to identify why it went so badly wrong and what lessons can be learned for the future. We will, if necessary, petition the Scottish Government to conduct this enquiry as soon as possible because the citizens of Edinburgh have a right to know the mistakes that were made in its management.

In the meantime we'll pay attention to the everyday things – bringing roads and pavements to a good standard especially in busy areas, controlling the work standards of the utilities who dig up our roads, improving times and routes on our buses, extending 20mph limits to all residential and shopping areas and, because they're green and healthy, encouraging more walking and more cycling by spending a minimum of 5% of our transport budget on them and increasing that share year by year. Most important, we'll put some common sense back into the transport department.

And – of course – Lothian Buses, which belongs to all of us, will never be sold off.



# Labour wants our city to be fair

That means that everyone must have their voice heard where it matters most, even those with the quietest voices or the smallest pockets.

We'll talk with schools about ways to give staff, students, parents and the wider community a greater say in how the school moves forward. And we will give Parent Councils the right to share in city-wide decision-making on schools by nominating a member of the Council's Education Committee. We'll start talks aimed at setting up a city-wide 'childcare co-op' to provide affordable child care for working parents in all communities, starting where the need is greatest.

For those who are old or sick or in some other way unable to cope, we'll support current improvements which bring separate services together around their personal needs. What we won't do is seek to privatise or sell off these services to the lowest bidder. To improve them still further we hold to the idea that the people who use care services know what's best. So we will start the discussions to bring the Council, care staff and the users together into co-operatives to decide on and provide the means to make life better for both the care users and the care providers.

We'll back the re-introduction of community newspapers to strengthen the community

voice. We will support charities and communities, those with solid plans and wide support, by transferring local Council assets into their ownership or management and agreeing a five-year funding package. We'll support all the many minorities that share our city, by working with them to create a multi-cultural community centre, open to all. We'll always seek to create a city that welcomes diversity, accepts difference and protects everyone who is less able than most.



We'll make sure tenants and residents who 'play by the rules' don't get sidelined. For tenants, we'll do that by expanding housing co-operatives, giving all tenants a bigger say in the management of their homes and communities.

Where that's not possible

we'll look at other routes to strengthen the voice of tenants in decisions about their homes. Through co-operation residents in Edinburgh could save up to 20% of their energy bills. So we'll investigate this solution to high energy bills and consult all our tenants about 'bulk buying' gas and electricity for their homes through an energy co-op. The more people involved, the greater the buying power, the bigger the potential savings. We'll encourage and support the city's many housing associations to do the same and investigate opening up the benefit of this co-operative approach to all Edinburgh residents.

If we find the new legal provisions to strengthen the community voice in the planning of developments are not working as they should, we'll consult on and then introduce a strong code of practice for developers, communities and the Council to work to.

We'll continue to support Edinburgh's status as a



Fairtrade City and our Fairtrade City Initiative, first established under Labour.

We'll raise the standard for the lowest paid, most of whom are women, by insisting that firms who do business with the Council go one better than the minimum wage and pay 'Living Wage' rates, and do the same ourselves for low paid Council staff. We will implement policies that move us towards greater equality within the Council's own wage bill, setting a 1:1.2 ratio between the lowest and highest paid as our target.

To monitor our progress, and to look at how we can make Edinburgh a fairer City by better use of the Council's powers and influence, we will follow Islington's successful lead and establish a 'Fairness Commission'. It will have an independent chair and draw on expertise from all walks of City life.

And, because no one believes the Council Tax is fair any more, we'll lobby the Scottish Parliament to start a national debate on the best and fairest way to fund local services and support local democracy. But we will continue to resist the SNP's new plan for a Local Income Tax, which will put an even greater squeeze on working families.

## Caring Support Croydon

Caring Support in Croydon has been adopted as a future model for service provision as part of Croydon Labour Group's co-operative manifesto. Caring Support provides homecare support for adult disabled and older people in south London. It was set up as a multi-stakeholder co-operative and includes users, care support workers, families and volunteers. Service users are the largest group on its board and it has around 30 members.

It uses a cluster-based care model – where small groups

of up to 15 service users are matched with personal care assistants. It serves both self-funders and individual budget holders, who pre-dated the pilot. Through funding and support it is now registered with the Care Quality Commission and is setting about its work. It ensures staff work with a regular group of clients who direct their own care, because this helps to build mutually beneficial relationships in the community.

## Case Study: Highland Home Carers

Highland Home Carers is an employee owned company providing a flexible, quality home care and support service in the Highlands since 1994. The business has grown based on the principle of providing clients with the best service by having well trained, flexible and reliable staff. Recognizing how important care workers are to success in delivering care, the staff became even more central to the company in July 2004 when Highland Home Carers became employee owned.

Highland Home Carers specialises in providing home care for any person who may need their support due to a physical or mental disability, learning disabilities, injury or simply growing frail. The commitment is to allow individuals to remain in their own homes, with assistance, so that they can maintain their lifestyles and retain their independence, as long as they choose to do so.



# Labour wants a co-operative council

Making all those changes in our City's life will be a tall order. To do it we'll need a different kind of Council. Labour will fight to transform the ways the Council does business and makes key decisions.

We don't think it is right anymore just to talk about 'consultation', although that still has to happen. We think it's time for the next big step. We think it is time that the Council and the people of this city made decisions together and implemented them together. We think it is time to work together to get things done.

We'll do straightforward things like setting up a Council 'Petitions Committee' where Edinburgh's citizens can ask for things to be done. And a Budget Committee open to representations from staff as well as citizens.

But then we want to take it further. Local groups working with advice from Council professionals deciding for themselves on how to manage their local park. Community assets like community centres transferred to the ownership of local groups working together. Disabled people making

the decisions themselves on how best to use Council resources to improve their lives. Groups of households and businesses co-operating to cut their fuel bills and provide green energy in their neighbourhood. Even working with banks with ethical foundations to establish new routes to finance new business and new housing in the city.

To achieve this will require the dedication of our entire staff. Although we may use it to develop pilot projects, we won't allow any special 'Co-operative Unit' in the Council to become permanent – that's the best way to sideline the idea. Rather we will expect, over time, a new way of working to come from all our staff, top to bottom.

Of course, it will take time, more than the time between council elections. But we know from experience around the world that this is the best way to make the city what we want it to be, to provide the services that make a real difference and to squeeze every last penny of value from the money we have.

## Case study: West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative

In the 1980s West Whitlawburn in South Lanarkshire was experiencing a number of problems including poor quality housing and a high crime rate. In 1989 the tenants took control and formed the West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative.

According to the first chair of the co-operative: "One day we were tenants, the next we were the Landlord". "We really had no choice, either continuing to live in unacceptable and deteriorating conditions or take control, seek housing grants from Scottish Homes and set about regenerating West Whitlawburn as an attractive, peaceful and high quality place to live".

With the help of professional staff and over £50 million in grants from Scottish Homes/ Communities Scotland the turnaround has been nothing short of spectacular.

The co-operative has not just focused on housing. In 1996 WWHC established a thriving Community Centre with the help of funding from the Lottery, South Lanarkshire Council and Communities Scotland. The Centre runs a variety of social, recreational and educational activities and events, and is in the hub of the community. The Centre also employs a number of local people bringing much needed employment to the area.

# Labour wants our council to be **competent**

Sometimes even the basic competence of the Council to do straightforward work is called into question. Winter weather, rubbish collection and roads and pavement repairs are all subjects of complaint. And from one of the best we've slipped back to having the dirtiest streets in Scotland over the past five years.

Many council staff are itching to do a better job but are held back by 'the system'. So we'll insist on breaking down departmental barriers and will fight against the 'me first' attitudes in some Council staff. By letting staff work and decide alongside the people they are there to serve, we'll encourage change and enterprise in our staff. It means putting an end to the tick-box target culture and fixing a new focus onto what the people of Edinburgh really need.

We'll enable front line staff and others who work for us to have a direct say in budget decisions, squeezing value from every penny. We'll make Council budget decisions open to the public and give people a chance to be heard by setting up a Budget Committee.

But of everyone in our city, it's the children in our schools who most deserve a strong commitment from the Council to doing things better.

We want the Curriculum for Excellence to be introduced into schools as smoothly as possible. We'll ensure our teachers are given the training and support to do so. And we'll see that the management structures within our schools

support the new curriculum.

We'll seek to enhance leadership in our schools, looking at approaches from across the country to improve recruitment, development and mentoring so that that our young teachers progress into senior management roles. We'll investigate how to get our best and most experienced teachers into the most challenging posts, helping raise standards and tackling inequality.

Our schools should be assets for the whole community, so we'll seek to widen access and minimise charges for non-profit making groups. Labour delivered over 30 new and refurbished schools when last in power, and we want to continue that progress. We'll prioritise already overcrowded schools for action and we'll ask the cross-party education committee to consult with schools and parents to draw up a long-term strategic plan to tackle over-crowding and under-use in our schools.

We recognise that many of our most vulnerable and challenging pupils are failing to receive the support they need and deserve. So we'll try to increase our support for them and seek sufficient resources to meet the growing demands placed on educational psychologists.

Most of all we'll fight to make sure education becomes a priority once again and gets its fair share of funding, allowing our schools and our children to flourish.

# Labour wants the council to put **Edinburgh first**

If Labour is the largest party, and to get the city moving forward again, we'll seek to form an administration from the best available talents. Our priority will be serving the city, not party politics.

We want a better deal for Edinburgh. So we'll press the Scottish Government not to take away from Edinburgh so much of the rates paid by its hard-

working local businesses. They are needed in our city.

We'll make officials accountable to the city's needs, not to rules made to suit them or the Scottish Government. We'll spend our time doing what the city needs, not chasing Government targets.



# > MOVING EDINBURGH FORWARD TOGETHER



**TAKE PART** in this debate. Tell us what you think of the ideas in our manifesto. The whole document can be accessed and downloaded from [www.edinburghlabour.com](http://www.edinburghlabour.com)

**Edinburgh Labour's earlier manifesto consultation process received well over 100 detailed submissions from across Edinburgh. Many thanks to all who contributed including:**

- submissions from individual members of the public: 67
- on-line survey submissions: 18
- submissions from organisations: 22
- submissions from Members of the Scottish Parliament: 4
- submissions from Members of the UK Parliament: 4

In addition, we've received well over 1000 residents survey forms from all over the city, telling us what they think needs doing.

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