



Manifesto for the City



Local
Authority
Elections
2022

The Cockburn's City Manifesto 2022

The City Council has ambitious targets to reach net zero carbon by 2030. The climate emergency demands action now. What the administration of Edinburgh does over the next political cycle, between 2022-2027, will be critically important.

The Cockburn recognises many positive programmes and initiatives over the past 5 years. The new Local Development Plan - City Plan 2030 – is one we have supported, as with the City Mobility Plan 2030. Projects such as City Centre Transformation and the George Street/First New Town proposals have much merit. The Million Trees Initiative is excellent but why not more, together with greater protections for the existing treescape?

Tourism is a crucial sector for the city's economy, and we have always valued the Festivals for their cultural enhancement of Edinburgh life. But there is a growing recognition that a return to 'business as usual' is not the way to build recovery from the coronavirus pandemic, or to face the risk of other external shocks. Covid, climate change and cost of living increases all demand new ways of thinking. A focus on well-being, community and care of our cherished city is needed. Underpinning these should be a strategy based on the principles of reduce, re-use and repair.



Our Cockburn Asks

The Cockburn calls for all Councillors and candidates to commit to the following asks, and urges residents to do the same, whether they are canvassed at the door, attend a hustings or make their approach through social media, emailing or letter writing.

New thinking and attitudes could rebuild trust between the citizens and their representatives. Cherish our streets, do not let them become potholed, litter-strewn eyesores. Divert money from subsidising the degradation of our public spaces to community councils for local amenity projects. Strengthen local centres. Collaborate with community councils and neighbourhood groups to enhance the whole city for all its residents



Commit to manage our parks and green spaces as assets that all citizens have the right to access throughout the year and restrict the commodification of our precious public spaces for commercial activities



Commit to real transparency and responsiveness to residents and resident groups, ensuring that public money supports local public benefit.



Commit to conserving Edinburgh's Green Belt and enhance the landscape setting of the city and its neighbourhoods.

Commit to higher standards of design for housing, while ensuring that 35% of any housing development (as articulated in City Plan 2030) will be truly affordable.



Commit to a conservation-led approach to planning and development in the city with adequately resourced planning functions.

Commit to reducing the scale and impact of short-term lets by increasing enforcement action against unauthorised development.





Maintenance & Repair

Our key priorities for City Management 2022-27

The Cockburn believes that there need to be a “reset” in the focus for the management of our great city. We set out below our view of the key priorities for governance and management of Edinburgh over the next 5 years.

Maintenance and repair as a strategic objective for city management

The most sustainable building is an existing building. Both the RIBA and Chartered Institute of Engineers advocate that demolition of existing structures should be an action of last resort. This goes beyond buildings too. Maintaining parks, footpaths, streets and neighbourhoods should be the starting point for resource allocation.

Streetscape First

There is a fundamental need to improve our management of the city's streetscape. From unsuitable, temporary security barriers to poor quality travel interventions to new waste hub collection proposes, these interventions are lacking in design integrity and are insensitive to the areas within which many are placed. Greater attention of aesthetics and heritage considerations must be given to all programmes and projects in public spaces. A Streetscape Taskforce could be established which might also assist in the delivery of meaningful 20-minute neighbourhoods.

Streetscape First





Climate impact resilience and preparedness

Our key priorities for City Management 2022-27

Climate impact resilience and preparedness

We congratulate the current administration on the delivery of the net-zero carbon Climate Strategy 2030. However, it is essential that the city focuses on the “how”, not the “what”. Preparedness projects are essential to deal with increased cloudburst events, etc. Helping individuals and communities make their neighbourhood resilient is key. A refocus on the value of civic spaces as city well-being areas rather than commodities to sell is critical in this.

Focus on Residents

We need to place residents at the heart of place-making and decision-taking rather than at the periphery. A recent Audit report for the City Council highlighted poor engagement and consultative processes. Improving these is a starting point. Existing networks such as the Edinburgh Civic Forum and Association of Community Councils could be enhanced. Improved consultative processes for licensing applications and Traffic Regulation Order procedures would also be valuable. We need to look beyond minimum standards of engagement.

Focus on Residents





Our key priorities for City Management 2022-27

Our Common Good Land

We need to improve our understanding and management of common goods assets. Many of Edinburgh's streets, civic spaces and public parks are held on the Common Good Fund. They must be managed for public benefit first and foremost. The completion and publication of the Common Goods Register and the establishment of transparent and accountable processes for managing Common Goods assets needs to be put in place. Financial benefits from using Common Good Assets should have clear and auditable public benefits.



The Cockburn Association

Founded in 1875, the Cockburn Association is Scotland's oldest conservation body.

For almost 150 years we have worked to enhance the amenity of Edinburgh and its immediate neighbourhood and protected the city's rich architectural and natural landscape.

We are a member-led organisation, please do consider joining today. Visit our website to find out more:

www.cockburnassociation.org.uk/join

Or search and follow us on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram at **@TheCockburn**

The Cockburn Association (Edinburgh Civic Trust) is a registered Scottish charity (SC011544)

