Local government election campaign 2017

Edinburgh University Students’ Association calls on City of Edinburgh Council candidates to commit to taking forward the following asks.

Housing

Ensure that the Council makes use of new powers to make housing more affordable for students by imposing rent pressure zones in areas that have high rents.

Across Lothian rents have been rising faster than the consumer price index.¹ In Edinburgh, rents have continued to increase over the last few years. In some cases, students are spending up to 82% of their monthly income on rent.² As part of the Private Housing (Tenancies) Act 2016, local authorities now have the power to designate an area as a ‘rent pressure zone’, which allows them to limit the rent increases in an area.

Students need safe, reliable and affordable housing. Unaffordable housing can have an impact on a student’s ability to remain in education. The Council should also crack down on rogue landlords and ensure an adequate supply of HMO properties for students to rent.

Sexual harassment training in city venues

Work with police and local pubs, clubs and bars to promote training for all staff on how to combat sexual harassment, and to allocate the necessary financial and human resources to make this happen.

A Students’ Association survey conducted in 2011 found that “nearly 1-in-3 survey respondents reported experiencing sexual harassment” and that 36.3% of these incidents took place in bars and clubs around Edinburgh.³

Sexual harassment within pubs, clubs and bars is detrimental to the lives of students both on and off campus. Staff training, such as that provided by the Good Night Out Campaign⁴, would help to reduce the incidence of sexual harassment and enable students to feel more comfortable in city venues.

² Our Community Too, NUS Scotland’s local government 2017 election campaign, National Union of Students (NUS) Scotland 2017
³ Students’ Experiences of Sexual Harassment in Edinburgh; a Report, Edinburgh University Students’ Association 2011
⁴ http://www.goodnightoutcampaign.org/
Student facing services for victims of sexual abuse and violence

Secure funding for organisations that provide support for survivors of sexual abuse and violence.

Services that provide vital support to people who have experienced rape, sexual assault or domestic violence often face funding shortages and are heavily reliant on volunteer fundraising.

Government research has identified full-time women students as one of the most at risk groups for experiencing sexual violence, and while we should continue to work towards eliminating sexual and domestic abuse, we also need to ensure that those who do experience them have access to adequate and well-resourced local services.

Further information

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