



***INDEPENDENCE
FOR PEOPLE. FOR PLANET.***

Green Papers

We will be publishing a series of papers and policy proposals between now and the referendum, setting out our party's vision for a fairer, greener and independent Scotland.

These papers will detail how the Scottish Greens would use the powers of independence to build a country which works for people and for planet, across a range of areas, including the environment, finance, public life, social justice, democracy and communities.

In accordance with the Bute House Agreement, the Green Group in Parliament and the Scottish Government are working together to make the case that Scotland should be an independent country within the European Union. The Scottish Government is publishing a series of papers, *Building a New Scotland*, which will set out the Scottish Government's prospectus for independence.

The Bute House Agreement also recognises each party's right and duty to set out its own arguments for, and visions of, independence. **Independence: For People, For Planet** and the papers which follow are the Scottish Green Party's contribution to the wider discussion ahead of the upcoming referendum.

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THE GREEN CASE FOR INDEPENDENCE

The Scottish Green Party believes in independence for Scotland because we believe that the people of Scotland should be able to decide how our country is run.

We support independence because it offers us the opportunity to build a fairer and greener country, where our society and our economy work in the interests of people and the planet.

All member parties of the Global Greens, including the Scottish Green Party, share six key principles:

- ***Participatory democracy***
- ***Sustainability***
- ***Nonviolence***
- ***Respect for diversity***
- ***Social justice***
- ***Ecological wisdom***

These principles form the basis of our vision for a fairer, greener and independent Scotland, playing its full role on the international stage.

For far too long, we have been subjected to Westminster governments that Scotland did not vote for; governments more concerned with making themselves and their friends richer no matter the cost to our communities, our public services or our environment.



We support independence because it offers us the opportunity to build a fairer and greener country, where our society and our economy work in the interests of people and the planet.



Devolution has offered Scotland the chance to do things differently, and we have taken that opportunity. From the earliest days of the reconvened Scottish Parliament, Scotland's elected representatives began undoing the damage of Westminster governments, with the abolition of warrant sales and the repeal of the anti-LGBTQ+ Section 28.

Greens have always been represented in the Scottish Parliament, and we have always worked to build a fairer, greener country, from giving children equal protection from assault to fairer taxation, from the fracking ban to free bus travel for young people.

Now, with Greens in Government, we are going further and faster than ever in that work.

We are tackling the climate crisis, with an active travel revolution, an unprecedented £500m Just Transition Fund and record investment to make homes warmer, greener and easier to heat.

We are tackling the cost of living crisis, with the rapid rollout of free school meals, the massive expansion of the Scottish Child Payment and unprecedented action to protect tenants with the rent freeze and the eviction ban.

But devolution isn't enough.

We are doing what we can to build a better country but we can only do so much as long as we are tied to Westminster governments who are trashing our environment, crashing our economy, cutting our budgets and failing to meet the needs of Scotland.

Imagine how much fairer Scotland could be with the powers to raise wages and benefits, tax the wealthy and control our energy prices.

Imagine how much greener Scotland could be with the powers to stop oil and gas expansion, deliver a Green New Deal and remove nuclear weapons from our waters.

Imagine the kind of nation we could build if we had all the powers of a normal, independent country.

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OUR VOTE

In 2014, the people of Scotland decided to stay part of the United Kingdom.

We were promised strength and stability. We were given a vow that Scotland would finally be respected, with the promise of 'faster, safer and better change' within the union.

Instead, we got chaos and contempt. Time and time again, Westminster has made it clear that it doesn't care what the people of Scotland think. From being dragged out of the EU against our will to calls for Scotland's elected representatives to be suppressed, too often Scotland is either ignored or overruled. We have been forced to face crisis after crisis without the powers required to tackle them properly for ourselves.

The promise of a more equal union that the people of Scotland were given in 2014 turned out to be a lie.

In 2021, the people of Scotland voted again. They chose to elect a Scottish Parliament where the majority of Members committed to giving the people of Scotland another say over the independence of their country.

That is why the people of Scotland now have the opportunity to choose again - because we voted for it.

THE DEBATE

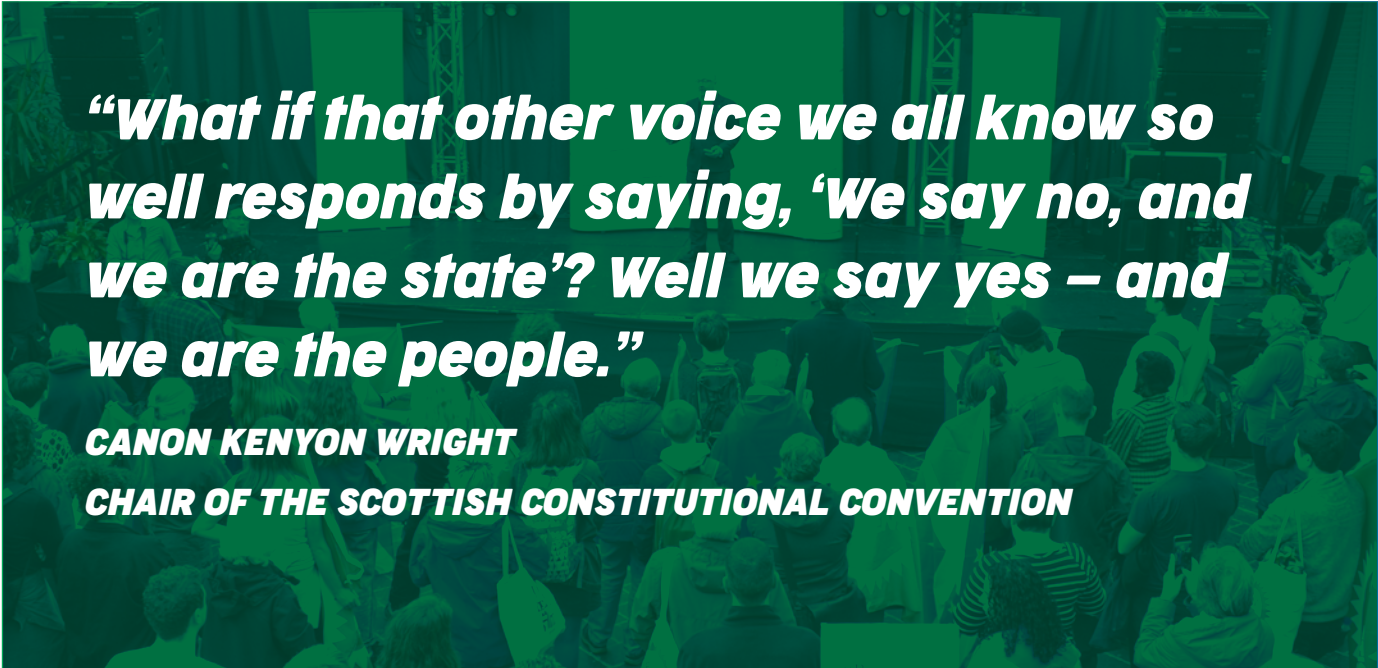
The opportunity to decide what kind of country we want to be is an exciting one.

We hope that we will see a positive and constructive debate about the future of our country in the coming months. We want to recapture the energy and enthusiasm for politics which we saw in 2014.

Between now and the referendum, people are going to debate and they're going to disagree. We hope that those disagreements will always be respectful and constructive, based on the belief that everyone wants what is best for our communities and our country. There should be no place in this debate for bigotry or abuse, and no point of view should be used as a mask for racism, prejudice or discrimination of any form.

Regardless of how we answer the question of independence, we are still neighbours, colleagues and friends. We will need to come together as a country after the vote to ensure that the result is respected and delivered.

In the event of a vote for independence, there will need to be negotiations between both the Scottish and UK Governments to ensure the delivery of that result. We hope and expect that all sides will engage in those discussions in good faith, in the spirit of democracy and cooperation.



“What if that other voice we all know so well responds by saying, ‘We say no, and we are the state’? Well we say yes – and we are the people.”

CANON KENYON WRIGHT

CHAIR OF THE SCOTTISH CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

GREEN VALUES FOR AN INDEPENDENT SCOTLAND



A Greener Scotland

Only with the powers of an independent country can Scotland deliver the radical climate action we need. Currently, power over the oil and gas under Scottish waters sits at Westminster. Holyrood doesn't have the financial powers we need to properly invest in the transformative green infrastructure we need to tackle the climate crisis.

With independence, Scotland can **ban new oil and gas fields** and **deliver a Just Transition away from fossil fuels**. Scotland can supercharge this shift with a Green New Deal which invests in our communities, our workers and our future.



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A Sustainable Scotland

We are facing an ecological crisis, with our natural environment under constant threat. While Westminster governments wage a war on nature, Greens in Government are delivering record investment in wildlife through our Nature Restoration Fund.

With independence, Scotland can undo the damage done by Brexit deregulation and make sure Scotland is **a world leader in environmental standards and protection**. With a written constitution, Scotland can **enshrine rights for nature in law**, recognising our responsibility to look after our natural world.





Scotland can ensure that everyone has enough to get by, with proper social security, strong public services and a Universal Basic Income

A Fairer Scotland

Scotland spends millions every year undoing the damage of austerity, mitigating the bedroom tax and the benefits cap. While Tory governments attack trade unions, the Scottish Government is ensuring that it only supports companies who pay their workers a Real Living Wage.

With independence, Scotland can ensure that everyone has enough to get by, with proper social security, strong public services and **a Universal Basic Income**. Scotland can shift the balance of power in our economy by taxing wealth fairly, protecting trade unions and paying workers what they deserve with **a Real Living Wage for all**.

A Diverse Scotland

Scotland is a more diverse country than ever before, and we are stronger for it. Greens have always fought for the rights of the marginalised and in government we are working to protect people from discrimination, from banning conversion therapy to enshrining human rights in Scots law. But our rights are under near-constant attacks from Westminster.

With independence, Scotland can build a more equal country which respects diversity and **commits to the European Convention on Human Rights**. While recognising Scotland's role in slavery and colonialism, Scotland can **become an anti-racist nation** which works with communities of colour to address historical and ongoing racism to build a fairer future.



A Feminist Scotland

From the climate crisis to the cost of living crisis, women are often the hardest hit by inequality and inaction. Too often, women are not in the room when decisions are made, across all parts of our society. When we create a world that works for women, we create a world which works for all.

With independence, Scotland can put women at the heart of our finances and economy with **gender budgeting and the end of the gender pay gap**. Scotland can deliver a social security system that provides real support for women who are hit hardest by austerity, by **ending the rape clause and the two child limit** on child benefit and Universal Credit.

A Happier Scotland

People are overworked and under pressure like never before. While many face the choice between eating and heating this winter, the super rich are getting even richer. Our economy isn't working for people, it's working for profit.

With independence, Scotland can put **wellbeing at the heart of our economy**, making sure that everyone has what they need to live a happier, healthier life. Scotland can ensure that we all have the right to rest and recreation by introducing **a four day working week with no loss of pay**.



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II
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A Democratic Scotland

For too long, Scotland has been getting governments that we didn't vote for. There is a democratic deficit at the heart of the union, where some votes matter more than others, and where some people matter more than others.

With independence, Scotland can develop a new written constitution for Scotland through **a citizens' constitutional convention**. Scotland can become **an independent republic** based on participatory, local democracy, where politicians are always elected through proportional representation.

A European Scotland

Scotland has always been a European nation. In 2016, we voted overwhelmingly to remain in the European Union - yet despite this, we were dragged out of the EU. With Brexit, we lost our rights to free movement and the ability to live, work and study across Europe. We lost the chance to cooperate across a continent to solve the biggest challenges we face.

With independence, Scotland can **rejoin the European Union** and retake our place in the European family of nations. Scotland can work with allies across the continent to deliver radical climate action, social justice for all, and **a fairer, greener Europe**.



A Welcoming Scotland

For decades, from the Glasgow Girls to the Kenmure Street protests, people have resisted the racist tactics of successive UK Governments who sought to divide our communities and turn neighbours against one another.

With independence, Scotland can **end the hostile environment** and build a country which is welcoming to all. Scotland can treat refugees and asylum seekers with the respect that they deserve, and we could **uphold the Refugee Convention**, playing our part in the global community.



A Global Scotland

In an age of constant crisis, it has never been clearer that we need to work with others around the world to build a fairer, greener future. While the UK has turned its back on the world in recent years, Scotland has been playing its part as a global citizen and building bridges with countries around the world.

With independence, Scotland can deliver **fair funding for international aid** by recommitting to the 0.7% target dropped by Westminster. Scotland can play our part in building a safer, more peaceful world and **get nuclear weapons out of Scotland**. We can use the billions currently wasted on Trident to promote peace around the world instead.



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SCOTLAND'S CHOICE

Scotland could continue with more of the same. We could continue to leave so many of our big decisions in the hands of Westminster governments. We could continue to have our views and our votes ignored in an unequal union. We could hope that one day we might get a new government that doesn't crash our economy and trash our environment.

Or Scotland can decide to do things differently. We can tackle all of the crises and challenges we face with the powers of a normal country. We can answer the big questions for ourselves and finally make sure that we get the governments and the policies that we vote for. We can build a fairer and greener Scotland which works for people and for planet.

It is up to the people of Scotland to make that choice.

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