

**Scottish Green Party**

**Council Elections Rainbow Manifesto 2017**

**POWER IN  
YOUR HANDS**



# POWER IN YOUR HANDS

It has never been more important to put power in your hands. This election brings huge opportunities and challenges. The Councillors elected in 2017 will be faced with the challenge of meeting the demands of a hugely energised democracy in Scotland. Greens are committed to rising to that challenge by placing power in your hands, by providing the money that Councils need to run their services, and by making sure that you – as a citizen and as a community – have the opportunity to play a greater role in the decisions that matter to your life.

We will do this in three ways:

## By protecting services

- We'll give you much more say over how council money is spent, by making sure every council has a participatory budget target and plan.
- We'll keep schools in council control but give pupils, parents and teachers a real voice in how schools are run and how money is spent. We believe every council should have a parent, pupil and teacher on its education committee.
- We'll champion those who care for the youngest and oldest in society, by introducing a Living Wage Plus for care workers.

## By connecting communities

- We'll campaign for cheaper and more frequent bus services; and we'll introduce new, participatory tools for making decisions at local level.
- We'll introduce a broadband action plan for every council within a year of being elected.

## By creating homes

- We'll shift the balance between communities and big developers in planning decisions; and protect precious green and open space.
- We'll help community groups own, run or have more say over their area: community buildings, parks, sports facilities, energy and much more. Scotland has already made great progress with community buy-outs in rural areas and with crofting estates, and we will begin to see transformation in urban areas with the urban community right to buy.
- We'll tackle rip-off housing costs – by making rents cheaper and dealing with fuel poverty.

The LGBTI+ (Rainbow) movement has seen huge advances in recent years. However, we still face many challenges and Scottish Greens aim to combat these in several ways. This "mini-manifesto" complements the full manifesto by outlining in more detail policies which aim to support the LGBTI+ community.

By electing Green councillors to council chambers across Scotland you can change how your council works. For Greens, giving power to people and communities is a core belief. We want to put power in your hands, to protect services, to connect and to build communities. Every Green councillor elected will work tirelessly to make this a reality.

# Protecting services

Councils educate young people, provide care and support services to people, and make our neighbourhoods better places to live. Green councillors will continue to fight to protect and improve these services.



## Schools and childcare

Scottish Greens believe in education that offers children and young people much more than qualifications – one that supports their development as adaptable individuals equipped to explore the opportunities and face the challenges that our fast-changing world brings. We will also challenge any teaching that is not fully inclusive and ensure proper education regardless of sexual orientation or gender.

### Green councillors will:

- Support creativity and critical thinking in the school curriculum, alongside confidence, resilience, global citizenship, practical life skills and outdoor learning.
- Emphasise learning over standardised testing including social learning and discussions to ensure an end to bullying over sexual orientation and gender.
- Campaign for more staff and better support for children with additional support needs – including making this a promoted post – and greater support in schools for any children from marginalised groups, including refugees and asylum seekers and LGBTI+ young people. We support the Time for Inclusive Education (TIE) campaign.
- Campaign for education committees to include parents, teachers, trades unions, and young people while ensuring total inclusion at every stage.
- Ensure that every child is able to attend fully inclusive schools, including breakrooms and bathrooms.

## Crisis and anti-poverty services

Scottish Greens believe councils have a key role to play in tackling child poverty and helping people avoid crisis. Local councils can help tackle inequality, and we will prioritise progressing equalities, working closely with those whose opportunities are reduced owing to class, race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief.

### Green councillors will:

- Campaign to secure funding for support services for those who have experienced domestic abuse or sexual violence.
- Work to prevent homelessness with measures to empower tenants at risk of homelessness through better advice and access to legal aid, and improve the standard of temporary accommodation available.



- Help people to claim the social security benefits they are entitled to by supporting “income maximisation” projects through the NHS and advice services.
- Support social workers to manage workloads and focus on prevention, and support the delivery of community sentences for offenders.
- Welcome refugees and asylum seekers into our communities and push to ensure relevant support services are available to meet their specific needs.

## Connecting communities

Councils can help build our communities. Green councillors will help to connect people with a thriving local economy, strengthen neighbourhoods with good services and celebrations of local identity, and connect places with better public transport.



## Leisure and recreation

People and communities connect through council services such as libraries, swimming pools and sport facilities. Events like festivals and gala days help us celebrate our local area and identity – many are supported by public funds.

### Green councillors will:

- Work to protect libraries. Libraries are more than books, they can be community hubs connecting people to the internet, providing space for community meeting and events and adult education for lifelong learning.
- Improve sport facilities where they are too hard to access or expensive to use and support grassroots sporting activities such as running clubs and ensuring provision of low-cost “community-use” sports facilities for hire at affordable rates.
- Support festivals and community events especially those which encourage inclusion and participation.
- Ensure all public buildings are safe spaces regardless of race, religion, background, sexual orientation, gender or any other demographic.