

# CARING FOR SCOTLAND

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MANIFESTO FOR SCOTLAND'S PARLIAMENT



THE SCOTTISH GREEN PARTY

# Scottish Green Party: Caring for Scotland

The election of the new Scottish Parliament on 6th May is a first for two reasons. It is our first Parliament for 300 years. And it is the first real opportunity you have had to elect Green representatives, under the new voting system.

Greens worldwide have brought a new dynamism to politics. People are capable of astounding invention and creativity. But we are also able to destroy and inflict misery on an unprecedented scale. Can we have the former without the latter? That is the Green challenge. It is a challenge that is being taken up by Green MPs in more than a dozen countries in Europe and, in places like Germany, it is being taken into government.

The Scottish Green Party is part of that international movement. We are Scotland's Green Party. We care for Scotland's environment and Scotland's people.

We ask for your support to do that in the Scottish Parliament. Green Members will be there to work for you and with you on the issues which bring the environment and people's interests together.

Greens have taken the lead in arguing for safer, more natural food, produced in Scotland for people in Scotland. We have demanded a ban on genetically modified food. We have called for an independent Scottish Food Department.

Greens campaign for better public transport, in the country as well as in cities, which is accessible to you. Greens work for a better environment for everyone in Scotland. We call for more powers to protect and regenerate the

environment, in town and country.

Greens seek a caring society: which looks after its older people and its children; which emphasises education and health; which stresses Scotland's tradition of community values, rather than letting people suffer as part of distant economic decisions.

Greens work for you. The new Parliament, for which we have long campaigned, can bring decisions back home to Scotland. It is a way of giving more power to the whole community in Scotland over the decisions which affect all of us.

The new Parliament needs a Green voice. You can elect that Green voice by voting Green with your second vote on the peach coloured ballot paper.

There is a list of Scottish Green Party candidates in every region at this election. Whoever you support in the first, constituency ballot, please vote Green in the second, list ballot. Just 6% of the votes in the list election in your region will elect a Green Member of the Scottish Parliament.

The Scottish Green Party can give the people of Scotland a voice that cares for you and your environment. We all need to take care of our homes, our country and our world. We all need a future that is less wasteful, more secure and enriches the relationship we

have with each other and with the world on which we depend. Those are the Green messages. Without them, our own future, and the lives of our children and grandchildren will become increasingly difficult and impoverished.



**Use your second vote on May 6th: VOTE GREEN TOO**

# Greens in the Scottish Parliament

There are particular reasons for electing Green Members to the new Scottish Parliament. We have set some of those out on the previous page. This section looks more widely at the range of Green policies for Scotland. It offers our vision of a Green Scotland and what Green MSPs could do in the new Parliament to work towards that. In one or two areas there is an overlap with some areas of policy retained by Westminster; in those we argue that the Scottish Parliament should have more of a say. The following is an overview of our priorities for the Scottish Parliament. You can find out more about our policies by contacting us.

## People and Society

### An economy as if people mattered

In the local, national and global economy the Green vision is fair shares for all. In local communities we advocate a fair deal for local enterprise and initiative. Economic development agencies will be required to concentrate far more of their effort on local enterprise rather than trying to lure multinational companies with no loyalty to local communities. We will support community business, local purchasing by public bodies, credit unions, local exchange trading schemes (LETS) and community trusts. We will argue for a **Scottish Community Development Bank** to fund these bodies.

In the Scottish Parliament Green Members will press for:

- new powers to set up a **Basic Income Scheme**, to end the poverty trap and the complexity of social security and free up people for flexible patterns of working;
- a **Land Value Tax**, to make land available for appropriate local development;
- **alternative economic indicators**, so that only things that are good for Scotland are counted as a measure of progress.

Scotland is part of the international economy. Deprivation in poor countries breeds unrest and war. We do not believe multinational companies should be free to exploit poor countries and impose low standards on them. We support controls on the movement of money and international social and environmental standards. Green MSPs will show a lead by:

- supporting Jubilee 2000 in a re-evaluation of **third world debt**;
- **opposing international agreements** which allow multi-national companies to put pressure on countries to compete against each other to offer the lowest standards and wages;
- promoting **pollution and energy taxes** that force producers to pay the true cost of their international operations.

### Homes for the Future

Greens believe that an investment in housing is an investment in the future: with better housing comes better health, job-creation, and reduced pollution.

In the Scottish Parliament, Green Members will press for:

- a new higher standard of home energy efficiency backed up by an **eight year programme of housing investment** to end fuel poverty and low interest loans to bring property up to the standard;
- **new planning or land tenure measures** to prevent houses remaining empty or being used as second or holiday homes where there is local need.

## Education for Life

Green education is education for life throughout life. Given the link between poverty and poor educational achievement, education should be available to all and free of charge. Schools should be able to develop their roles as resources for local communities.

There should a **seamless spectrum of options** from training for work to education for its own sake. Assessment of education should value and support students and staff in a way that prepares people for a role as responsible citizens.

Green Members of the Scottish Parliament will demand:

- **abolition of student tuition fees** and restoration of grants for less well-off students;
- **reductions in class sizes** in primary schools and greater diversity in the settings in which people can learn;
- an annual increase in the number of **“full-community” schools** and in the range of community activities with which they are engaged.

## Transport for All

Scottish Green Party policy puts **walking, cycling and public transport** at the heart of transport policy. Public transport will be affordable and available. We will set up a Scottish Transport Department to replace the current narrowly-focused Scottish Roads Directorate. The Department will set targets for national and local **road traffic reduction**.

Green planning policy will reduce the need to travel. Mixed developments with local services will result in more self-sufficient cities and towns. The construction of **out of town shopping centres**, which undermine local services, will be halted. The reduction in car traffic (and pollution) will improve health and will make walking and cycling a better experience. We will **reclaim our streets** for the people and those who really need a car, such as disabled people.

Green MSPs will work for:

- new powers for the Scottish Parliament over **rail transport**, recognising it as the centre-piece of a national transport policy. We would have a specific aim of restoring adequate services to areas poorly served at present, such as the **Borders and the Highlands**;
- development of new methods of improving traffic management in towns and cities: for example, electronic traffic flow management; road pricing



and parking charges; far more bus lanes and cycleways. **All revenue raised in this way will be spent on public transport;**

- **regional transport executives** to be set up to draw together transport planning in all regions.

## Health at the Heart of Policy

The Scottish Green Party wants to see a new National Health Service to replace the current National Sicknes Service. We recognise that the **root causes of ill-health** are often poor diet, damp housing or pollution and we have already set out how we would dramatically reduce those problems.

Green health policies are also about much more than medical science. Our key policy on Basic Income would provide proper support for the many people in Scotland who act as carers for their families at home. Our vision is of a far greater range of choices for people and communities to draw on to promote good health.

In the Scottish Parliament, Green Members will:

- double the budget for **health advice and education**;
- oppose **private finance in the NHS** and defend a NHS that is free at point of use, including dental and optical services;
- give **local authorities the powers and duties** currently held by Health Boards;
- set up one centre for **complementary medicine and therapy** in each locality.

## Equality and Diversity

Green MSPs will hold all citizens in equal regard by striving for:

- A **"fair deal" for all people**, including: new rights for disabled people in accessing public transport; fair status in employment and relationship law for gay men and lesbians; and an annual statement of "accessibility" from the Scottish Parliament;
- A national **communication plan** including policies on: Gaelic, Scots and the "new Scots languages" used by minority ethnic groups; and for people with hearing or sight difficulties.

## Enriching Democracy

Greens have worked tirelessly to secure the Parliament and we intend to take part in that spirit. We will do our best to extend its powers. But our vision of self-government goes beyond the new Parliament to the community.

- We support **new enhanced powers for community councils**;
- We advocate **fair voting for local authority elections** and new ways in which citizens can hold both local councillors and MSPs to account: for example, rights to recall elected representatives through petition;
- We support a referendum on **greater independence for Scotland** and would campaign for a continuing process of decentralisation of power.

# Scotland's Environment

## Caring for Scotland's environment

Our vision is a Scotland with a healthy and flourishing environment. We all depend on our environment and caring for the environment is at the heart of all Scottish Green Party policy.

We do not mean just the picture postcard view of Scotland's countryside, beautiful though it is. We mean the cities too, where many Scots live.

We mean dealing with pollution of Scottish waters and beaches by oil and chemicals from agriculture and fish farming. We mean dealing with air pollution in cities by excessive traffic, which threatens the health of us all.

Green MSPs will seek to introduce a Scottish Environment Protection Bill in the first year of the Scottish Parliament to:

- set **tougher pollution controls** for air, land and water and to give the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency new powers to prosecute polluters directly;
- ban the production of a wide range of **harmful chemicals** that are present in the home and the wider environment;
- end burning of sewage and require operators to **clean up oil installations**;
- set out a plan for **renewal of the natural environment** of Scotland, restoring the great forests of Scotland for the benefit of people and animals;
- assess every policy of the Scottish Parliament against its **environmental impact**.

## Energy and Resources

Scotland has potentially huge sources of renewable energy and opportunities for energy conservation. Harnessing those would allow us to conserve fossil fuels and dispense with nuclear power. Combined with re-use and recycling of materials this would dramatically reduce pollution.

In the Scottish Parliament Green Members will argue for:

- a Scottish Renewable Energy Commission to **develop renewable energy** technologies;
- improved **energy efficiency** measures, in particular, in heating and insulation of homes and in design of electrical appliances;
- an action plan to meet the target of **recycling** 25% of all waste by 2005;
- the **closure of nuclear power** stations as soon as they can be dispensed with.

## Food, Farming, Fishing

Green MSPs will promote a revolution in organic farming. Scottish farm products will stock our shops and supermarkets. Our commitment to high standards will secure a market for Scottish produce and create jobs and security.

Agricultural support will move away from propping up artificially high prices and be targeted at rural areas to encourage "value-added" production and small-scale rurally based industries, using local materials.

In the Scottish Parliament Green Members will press for:

- a **ban on growing genetically modified crops** and use of “hormonal growth promoters”;
- a new national target of **30% organic farming** by 2010 achievable by: doubling the subsidy which farms can get for converting to organic production; setting up an organic advisory service; and funding a research programme on all aspects of organic production;
- new **standards for farm animal welfare** and husbandry so they are the highest in Europe;
- a major **shift in farm subsidy** payments, supporting jobs rather than production, with additional subsidies to be dependent on improvements to the environment.

Everyone wants good food – safe, cheap, tasty and nutritious - produced locally for local consumption. Green policies will benefit consumers, farmers, growers and local retailers. Local marketing, local shops and food co-operatives will be encouraged.

Green MSPs will seek a **ban on all genetically modified food** and demand that:

- an independent Scottish Food Department be set up, responsible for: research on food production; testing for dangerous additives; setting legal limits on pesticide contamination in all foods; and setting nutritional standards for school meals.

The farming revolution will extend to the sea. Working with our fellow Green MPs in other northern European countries we will oversee the recovery of the North Sea from decades of pollution. As fish stocks rise as a result, Green MSPs will argue against current rigid and wasteful fishing quotas and for a diverse fishing industry, linked to communities whose livelihoods depend on the sea.

## A Fairer System of Land Ownership

The Scottish Green Party's “Highland Manifesto” in 1989 set the agenda for land reform which other parties have weakly imitated. We are determined that land shall be held in a fair, open and democratic manner, in the interests of the community in both urban and rural areas. We will press for a guaranteed **right to roam** over uncultivated land.

Green MSPs will give priority to:

- a **Land Value Tax** to replace Council Tax. It will be graded to reflect long term use of land and benefits to the community from the way it is used. City sites will be taxed at the rate for their potential use, thus encouraging development, discouraging speculation, and driving down the price of land to acceptable levels;
- a system of direct subsidy to farmers and crofters based on **high quality land management** across all of the activities carried out on a farm or estate.
- legislation to promote more **smallholdings**, breaking up the huge estates.
- **residency requirements** for land ownership above a certain scale.



# Now is the time to vote GREEN

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**Scotland's Parliament needs a Green voice. The Scottish Green Party is committed to caring for Scotland's environment and people.**

This election of the new Scottish Parliament is the best ever opportunity to vote Green. For the first time ever in a national election everyone in Scotland will be able to vote Green. With just 6% of the votes on the second, peach-coloured, ballot paper in any region a Green Member of Parliament will be elected.

Green MSPs will press for the kinds of issues other parties will often neglect. But, under the new voting system, you can still vote for other parties whose policies you like: give them your first vote for the constituency member and then vote Green too, for the list.

Greens are committed to:

- **Supporting the local economy, with incentives given to local business, co-operatives and communities, rather than squandered on multinational companies with loyalty to no-one.**
- **Education that is second to none, building on our country's tradition of excellence to provide education for life, throughout life.**
- **Better public transport, accessible and available to all, reduced traffic and less pollution.**
- **Public health policy focused on causes of illness like poverty, bad housing and pollution and a NHS free at the point of use, including dental and optical services.**
- **Respecting all citizens as equal partners in the renewal of Scotland.**
- **Making the best of devolution to bring decisions not just to the Scottish Parliament but to the communities represented, while working for greater Scottish independence.**
- **A Scottish Environment Protection Act, cutting pollution and promoting renewal.**
- **A ban on genetically modified food and crops; a target of 30% organic production by 2010; and an independent Scottish Food Department.**
- **A fairer system of land ownership, in rural areas, towns and cities.**
- **Harnessing Scotland's precious resources by promoting recycling, energy conservation and renewable energy like wind and wave power rather than nuclear power.**

**If you support some of those ideas, why not vote Green too on May 6th?**

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