

LET'S DEMAND BETTER

**Scottish Greens Manifesto
2026**

It's been a difficult few years for people across Scotland. Our bills are through the roof, and the climate is in crisis. Politicians in the establishment parties line up to defend their super rich friends whilst life gets harder for the rest of us.

But it doesn't have to be this way. Scotland is a wealthy country, but too much of that wealth is in the hands of a handful of super-rich individuals and greedy corporations.

At this election we have the chance to demand better. The Scottish Greens have a plan to tax the wealthy and companies that pollute our environment, and use that money to reinvest in the public services we all rely on.

More doctors and nurses in our hospitals. More teachers in our classrooms. And more funded nursery and childminder places for every family in Scotland, from age six months up.

We know the solutions to the climate crisis and the cost of living are one and the same. That's why we will deliver free bus travel for everyone and provide cash support to help families insulate their homes, making them cheaper to heat.

Investing in our future means creating more jobs in clean, green industries like renewable energy, whilst weaning our economy off of expensive and volatile oil and gas. And it means creating a future we all want to live in, by protecting Scotland's forests, cleaning up our rivers and seas, and restoring our iconic wild places.

We believe that Scotland's best future is as an independent nation back in the European Union. To realise our country's full potential, we must have the full powers of a normal, sovereign

nation. But we can't wait until independence to start making a difference.

The current devolution settlement places some serious constraints on what Scotland can do - not least in how we raise money to pay for the urgent transformation across our society and the economy. But we can still prioritise tackling the climate crisis and saving families money using all of the powers we currently have.

Scotland is a welcoming country. We look after and stand up for each other, regardless of race, gender, sexuality, religion, or disability. We will always welcome people who choose to make Scotland their home, whether that's for the long term or in times of crisis, and we will challenge the far-right lies that it's somehow migrants rather than the super-rich who have caused the problems we now face.

Scottish Green MSPs have spent the last five years making people's lives better. From free bus travel for young people, to scrapping peak rail fares, and freezing people's rents, bringing in rent controls, we've delivered real change whilst punching well above our weight compared to bigger parties in Holyrood.

But this is just the start.

Our manifesto lays out our vision for Scotland over the next five years. Every Scottish Green MSP you elect will work tirelessly to put money back in your pocket, tackle the climate crisis, and challenge those spreading hate and fear in our country.

Gillian Mackay & Ross Greer

*Let's do things differently. Let's demand better. On May 7th,
vote Scottish Greens.*

OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS, SCOTTISH GREEN MSPs HAVE DELIVERED:

- Free bus travel for all under-22s, with over 275 million journeys taken so far.
- An end to peak rail fares, making train travel cheaper for tens of thousands of commuters.
- An emergency rent freeze and eviction ban during the peak of the cost of living crisis, and a new system of permanent rent controls which will come into place soon.
- Record spending to tackle the climate and nature emergencies, totalling nearly £5bn a year, including launching the Nature Restoration Fund.
- Expanded free school meals to all children in primaries 4 & 5, and to thousands of older children in receipt of the Scottish Child Payment.
- Wiped out nearly £3m of school meal debt held by families in financial crisis.
- Abolished the SQA and replaced it with a body which puts the voices of teachers and pupils at its heart.
- Doubled the Scottish Child Payment, making Scotland the only part of the UK where child poverty is falling.
- Taxed the rich to pay for public services through a more progressive income tax system, higher taxes on second and empty homes, and securing new taxes on private jets and mansions.
- Protected patients and staff from harassment outside abortion clinics, so everyone can safely access the healthcare they are entitled to.
- Banned greyhound racing in Scotland, bringing to an end an out of date, gambling led sport that led to abuse, misery and death for thousands of dogs.

- Saved Loch Lomond from repeated attempts to build a destructive Flamingo Land mega-resort.

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01 CLIMATE ACTION

A GREENER FUTURE FOR PEOPLE AND PLANET

THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY IS UNFOLDING ALL AROUND US. Though Scotland has made great progress on renewables, it is falling behind on most other aspects. Scottish Greens worked hard to put ambition back into the Scottish Government's programme in recent years, but the SNP have reversed course.

For too long, politicians have allowed fossil fuel companies to profit while our communities pay the price. Now a new wave of anti-environment propaganda is being produced by fossil fuel interests, trying to prevent the transition to a cleaner and more affordable future, misleading people about the costs and the benefits. At the same time, the corporate giants who have extracted vast profits from Scotland are leaving their workforce on the economic scrapheap.

Scotland is already missing out on immense benefits for every community and household - but it doesn't have to be that way. Bold climate policies will deliver real shared benefits to all our lives. Scotland deserves the cheap, reliable and affordable transport that many other European countries take for granted. Modern clean heating will give people warm homes without being tied to fossil fuel prices. A flourishing natural environment is one that we can all benefit from, boosting the health and prosperity of communities.

The Scottish Government's Climate Change Plan is deeply flawed, based on techno-fixes that cannot be relied on, and lacks ambition in almost every area. If we stick with this

approach, Scotland's net zero target will slip out of reach, and the transition we need will be both slow and unjust.

The climate emergency requires action across every sector of the economy and society, so you'll find commitments to tackle the climate emergency throughout the chapters of this manifesto. Here we lay out our top priorities to ensure communities can transition from fossil fuel dependence to well-paid jobs, and to make sure that polluters pay for the damage they've done.

- Get Scotland back on track to deliver net zero by 2045, launching a coordinated climate action delivery programme to drive down emissions from transport, energy, farming and housing. Our targets will be meaningless without this real and immediate action in every sector.
- Ensure the government is held to account over climate failures by empowering citizens and organisations to sue future governments if they continue to fail to meet our legally binding climate targets. We will do this by creating a fair, affordable legal system which is obliged to take the welfare of future generations into account.
- Establish a Scottish Environmental Court, accessible to individuals and communities, to hear cases on pollution, biodiversity loss and corporate environmental crime, with strong enforcement powers. This could include challenging projects such as major new road building and public subsidies for polluting companies.
- Bring forward a Scottish Corporate Accountability and Ecocide Bill criminalising severe environmental harm and widening liability for corporate executives.

- Set fully-funded worker-led transition plans to support every community and economic sector moving away from fossil fuel dependence, to be developed collaboratively with trade unions and local communities. These will be supported by Scotland's Just Transition Commission, which will be made permanent, and ongoing and properly funded Just Transition funding.
- Protect communities from floods, storms, heatwaves and coastal erosion by taking preventative actions now, and establish a Climate Adaptation Fund with sufficient financial resources to deliver the measures identified in the latest Scottish National Adaptation Plan.
- Drive down emissions from Scotland's land use by introducing a well-designed Carbon Emissions Land Tax, providing incentives for large landowners to manage land in ways which maximise the carbon locked into the land and minimise the emissions from that land.
- Challenge climate misinformation through a sustained public information campaign to deepen people's understanding of climate change and counter climate denialism. We will maintain funding for existing climate and environmental education programmes to support educators and young people.
- Advocate for an international Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty to stop the global expansion of coal, oil and gas production and phase out existing fossil fuel use in a fair and managed way that supports workers and the most climate vulnerable countries. Scottish Greens will continue to call for Scotland to join the international Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance.
- Continue to oppose new fossil fuel developments in Scotland, including new oil and gas exploration in fields

like Rosebank, and the new gas-fired power plant at Peterhead.

- Keep climate justice at the heart of Scotland's international commitments, supporting those across the world who have contributed the least to climate change but are suffering its worst impacts, including by providing direct funding to support locally-led projects.
- Continue to maximise Scotland's role at international climate summits and advocate for climate equity for those in the Global South, in particular through support for a global Loss and Damage fund, with Scotland paying its fair share.

02 RESTORING NATURE A WILD AND THRIVING SCOTLAND

IMAGINE A SCOTLAND WHERE... the flash of a kingfisher or the splash of an otter is common, a Scotland with red squirrels in our woodlands and beavers in our rivers. Imagine living amongst birdsong so thick we notice when it stops. A thriving environment doesn't need to be something we have to travel far to find: it can be a part of our everyday life.

Scotland's nature is our life support system: growing our food, filtering our freshwater, and underpinning our economy. Yet Scotland ranks in the bottom-quarter of countries worldwide for the health of our natural environment, with 1 in 9 species at risk of national extinction.

The nature crisis and the climate emergency aren't separate problems – those profiting from the reckless fossil fuel economy are also profiting from plundering our natural world for short-term gain. We cannot solve one crisis without tackling the other and both require politicians to respond with urgent, ambitious action.

Scottish Greens have led the way on the initial steps: in government, Greens secured a £65 million Nature Restoration Fund, supporting over 800 community- and charity-led projects, from restoring oyster beds under the sea to creating paths through revitalised native woodlands. We developed and passed the Natural Environment Act which will see the next government set legally-binding targets to protect and restore nature in line with UN agreements to restore 30% of habitats on land and at sea.

But we must deliver more to ensure a viable future for Scotland's iconic nature.

The Scottish Greens will invest in our natural world, both for our wellbeing and that of future generations. We will rewild our hills and glens with native woodland and rainforest, and iconic species like beavers and red squirrels. We will restore our degraded moors and peatlands, and ramp up funding for nature restoration in every community across Scotland. And we will let nature recover, by putting biodiversity first in our planning system, and ensuring those who damage our natural environment pay.

REWILDING

- Reforest Scotland's hills and glens, with 9,000 hectares of new native woodland each year, and a plan to restore Scotland's unique west coast rainforest and ancient woodlands, accompanied by dedicated funding. We will ensure the majority of public forestry grants are ring-fenced for native woodland planting, and prioritise planting on public and community owned land.
- Create 'wildways' to link up Scotland's designated nature protection sites, so that plants, animals, pollinators and fungi are more resilient and can naturally spread into more areas.
- Speed up the process for beaver reintroductions to restore healthy rivers and wetlands, while ending the avoidable killing of beavers already thriving in our waterways.
- Strengthen protections for red squirrels, seabirds, the remnants of Scotland's west coast rainforest and our most at-risk native species, alongside an ambitious programme of action for managing invasive non-native species.

- Reintroduce keystone species – such as lynx – through a managed process where there is community support

RESTORING

- Increase the Nature Restoration Fund to £200 million, with more cash grants available for community-led and landscape-scale nature restoration projects across the country so that everyone can benefit from nature closer to home.
- Set a national mission to restore Scotland's peatlands by restoring at least 45,000 hectares annually, including a programme of work to remove commercial conifer trees that have spread onto peat bogs, as well as working with governments across the UK's four nations to ban the extraction and sale of peat compost.
- Introduce a licensing system to control the release of the millions of intensively-farmed gamebirds – such as pheasant and red-legged partridge – introduced into the countryside every year, to reduce the spread of avian flu to wild birds.
- Implement strategic management of Scotland's out-of-control deer population so that the environmental damage of overgrazing is minimised, with new incentives to support land managers who reduce deer numbers on their land.

RECOVERING

- Implement an ambitious set of nature recovery targets under the Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2026, aligned with the global goal of protecting 30% of land, freshwater and seas for nature by 2030. These will be

accompanied by clear guidance for delivery partners and robust monitoring of actions to meet the targets.

- Ensure the changes to the National Planning Framework secured by the Scottish Greens are fully enacted, requiring developments to have a positive effect on biodiversity and take the nature crisis into account in planning decisions.
- Introduce tree planting requirements into the planning system, requiring developers to provide every community with access to nearby trees and greenspaces.
- Increase the fines that can be brought against individuals and companies who damage the environment, with imprisonment for those responsible for the worst offences, as part of wider measures included in a Corporate Accountability and Ecocide Bill.
- Provide direct funding for Scotland's two UNESCO biosphere reserves in Wester Ross and Galloway/South Ayrshire, to support more nature restoration, job creation and tourism management in the areas.
- Increase funding for Scotland's public environment agencies so that they can undertake their full range of duties, from enforcing penalties on polluters to monitoring the condition of nature reserves and protected features and species.

03 ENERGY

A WARMER, GREENER SCOTLAND

SCOTLAND IS BLESSED WITH ABUNDANT RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES, with enough wind, wave and solar power to meet our needs many times over. Yet energy bills keep rising, homes stay cold, and profits flow to distant shareholders while communities see little benefit.

This isn't an accident: the system is designed to extract wealth, not deliver warmth. For decades, fossil fuel companies have banked record profits, while the energy price shock that began in 2022 has pushed many more people into fuel poverty. It's a broken system and impossible to ignore. Despite broad public support for renewables, those with vested interests are funding campaigns that sow doubt, using the same playbook as climate change deniers.

The Scottish Greens believe energy should be an affordable public good, not a private commodity. With the huge strides in renewables technology, energy should be cheap in Scotland, but Westminster holds the power to de-link cheaper electricity prices from extortionate international gas prices.

Scotland needs full control over our energy generation, licensing and transmission, to make sure everyone here benefits from clean, cheap, abundant renewable energy. Meanwhile though, we can still make progress by rolling out a comprehensive household retrofitting programme so that people have warm homes they can afford to heat without paying the earth.

The Scottish Greens don't believe in the false solution of new nuclear projects owned by overseas mega-corporations – it's incredibly slow to deploy and extortionately expensive. Instead, communities must be empowered to own more renewable energy assets, receiving a share of the profits to invest in local infrastructure. We want to put more of Scotland's energy system into genuine community ownership, not token gestures.

- Support an immediate end to new oil and gas extraction. While Westminster retains the power to issue new oil and gas exploration and extraction licenses, the next Scottish government must leverage all the powers available under devolution to halt any further climate-wrecking fossil fuel projects.
- Lead a renewables revolution with a £600 million investment programme in onshore and offshore wind, tidal and solar, including redeploying the millions of public funding that's been pledged to unproven, greenwashing carbon capture and storage (CCS) technologies.
- Consolidate Scotland as the world leader in marine energy innovation by providing stability to the wave and tidal sectors, and establishing a world leading offshore wind test site.
- Bring back the Heat in Buildings (Scotland) Bill to set a clear routemap for decarbonising Scotland's homes and buildings by 2045; to include a Clean Heat Standard and target dates for compliance, set in consultation with individuals, local councils, social housing providers and industry experts.
- Help homeowners cut their energy bills by making their properties the most energy efficient they can be, expanding current support schemes and rolling out bespoke support for those in older properties.

- Ensure Scotland benefits from the jobs and investment in energy efficiency, by working with industry to source a minimum percentage of their materials and components from Scotland.
- Pay for people to install heat pumps, solar panels with linked battery storage and other green heating technologies on their homes, with help available for homeowners to remove fossil fuel boilers, to meet a 2035 phaseout target for most households.
- Support the expansion of locally-owned district heat networks by increasing the Scottish Heat Network Fund, supporting the wider rollout of low-carbon, affordable heat to around 1-in-6 homes in Scotland's densely-populated urban areas, alongside expanding legislative and technical support for the development of low-carbon heat networks.
- Deliver at least 1GW of new, truly community-owned energy projects by 2030, with a nation-wide review to maximise opportunities for community projects on publicly-owned land and exploring legislative options to enable councils and public agencies to enter into energy supply contracts with community-owned projects.
- Increase the current government funding through the Community and Renewable Energy Scheme covering feasibility studies, capital costs and project staff, and develop a standardised approach for industry to engage with community groups on developing projects and partnerships.
- Establish a Scottish Community Wealth Fund to deliver equitable distribution of a proportion of the wealth being generated by Scotland's renewable energy resources. Large renewables developers would be required to contribute a percentage of their profits to this fund – in addition to any existing local benefit schemes – which

would then be disbursed to communities across the country as determined by an independent board of community representatives.

- Invest in Scotland's planning system to be fully capable of accelerating the rollout of grid infrastructure so that affordable renewable energy can reach all parts of the country. We will invest in recruitment, training and professional development so that infrastructure proposals can be assessed in a timely fashion while incorporating community feedback.
- Remain firmly opposed to the expensive, false solution of new nuclear generation in Scotland, including opposition to small nuclear reactors.

04 PUBLIC TRANSPORT CUTTING FARES AND EMISSIONS

SCOTLAND DESERVES WORLD-CLASS, AFFORDABLE PUBLIC TRANSPORT THAT EVERYONE CAN ENJOY.

Investing in public transport is a win-win: putting money back in people's pockets, whilst driving down climate change emissions.

The Scottish Greens are proud to have delivered free bus travel for all young people in Scotland, saving families money and opening up new opportunities. We abolished peak fares, slashing commuter costs and getting people back onto publicly owned railways. And we ensured that young people growing up on our islands can travel by ferry between islands for free.

But there is so much more to do. Every community should be able to choose public transport over private cars. Our services should be run in the public interest, not for private profit. And because we're serious about tackling our climate emissions, they have to be more affordable.

We will slash the cost of public transport in Scotland, expanding free bus travel to everyone resident in Scotland and abolishing first class rail tickets on ScotRail. We will introduce Scotland's first integrated ticketing system, making it easier to join up journeys across ferries, trains, buses and trams, and we'll make sure island residents get priority on their lifeline ferry routes.

And we will run more services for people, not for private profit: too many private companies have had it easy for too long, hiking fares and slashing routes. We will bring more of

Scotland's buses back under public control, and ramp up support for community run services.

Delivering accessible, affordable public transport for all is central to tackling both the climate emergency and the cost of living crisis – and it will be a top priority for Scottish Greens in Holyrood.

- Expand free bus travel to everyone resident in Scotland. In the transition period to free fares for all, we would:
 - Immediately expand free bus travel to all residents under 30;
 - Introduce a £2 bus fare cap across all services in the transition to free fares for all;
 - Ensure current national concessionary travel schemes apply to both Glasgow Subway and Edinburgh Trams.
- Bring more of Scotland's buses back under local control, simplifying the rules for local councils, empowering communities to be better involved in route planning, and providing proper financial help. We will support this by giving the public the chance to invest in their local bus services through the issuing of Scottish Bus Bonds.
- Increase financial support for community-designed and community-owned bus services, ensuring all of Scotland can redesign local transport services in the public interest.
- Abolish first class rail on all ScotRail services. Too many commuters are forced into crowded trains whilst 98% of seats in luxury carriages sit empty. Carriages should be converted into standard class seats, with additional provision made for bikes, wheelchairs and buggies.
- Introduce Scotland's first integrated ticketing system – ScotCard – setting zonal pricing with daily caps for all

public transport journeys instead of disjointed, expensive multimodal journeys.

- Introduce a national Scottish Rail Card, providing discounts for everyone who is ineligible for the existing railcard schemes, modelled on the current Network Rail card in the South East of England.
- Expand rail and sail tickets across Scotland, providing cheaper, combined tickets for rail, bus and ferry journeys to our islands.
- Introduce a price cap on tickets for the publicly owned Caledonian Sleeper, expanding this to other cross-border providers where possible.
- Develop a scheme to provide a designated allocation of tickets for island residents on each ferry route, ensuring islanders can travel at short notice especially during the peak summer months.
- Improve passenger and worker safety on our public transport network, through deploying transport safety officers on key routes, resisting cuts to staffing on our trains and in our stations, and reviewing existing legislation to ensure all workers are adequately protected from assault.

05 TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE A BETTER CONNECTED, GREENER SCOTLAND

OUR RAILWAYS, BUS LINES AND FERRY ROUTES ARE THE BACKBONE OF SCOTLAND. But for too long, too many communities across Scotland have been left isolated and disconnected due to poor transport planning and a lack of investment in reliable, sustainable services. Our rail network still bears the scars of Thatcher's cuts, with abandoned stations and rail lines sitting unused across the country.

Privatisation has left rural communities vulnerable to bus operators hiking fares and withdrawing services, leaving communities without lifeline routes.

And for too long, our transport planning has centered around private cars – leaving greener, sustainable transport options underfunded and without proper investment.

We want to build a better connected Scotland – where all communities have access to affordable, accessible and reliable public transport; where we build cities and towns for people and planet; and where people can get where they need to go quickly and affordably.

The Scottish Greens will redirect funding from carbon-heavy transport industries into transformative green transport investment, making sure our ferries, trains, buses and roads are fit for the future.

EXPANDING SCOTLAND'S RAILWAYS

- Invest in new stations, new rail routes and better accessibility for all, on an expanded and publicly owned rail network.
- Explore options to open new railway stations on the existing network, including in Newburgh, Tomatin, Halbeath and Hawick.
- Make the case to reopen new rail routes between:
 - Dumfries to Stranrar
 - Alloa to Dunfermline
 - Tweedbank to Carlisle via Hawick
 - Aberdeen to Peterhead and Fraserburgh
- Upgrade carriages and increase capacity on overcrowded lines, including:
 - Cathcart Circle
 - Fife Circle
 - West Highland Line
 - Milngavie Line
- Begin the process to deliver the Clyde Metro scheme in full.
- Bring more of Scotland's railways into public ownership by establishing a nationalised Scottish Rail Freight Operator, and exploring opportunities for the Scottish Government to purchase its own trains, rather than relying on leasing from expensive private operators.
- Demand the full devolution of rail to Scotland from Westminster – including Network Rail.

BETTER BUSES FOR ALL

- Support the manufacturing of Scottish-built zero-emission buses with long-term funding that is targeted to publicly-run and community fleets.

- Create a minimum service guarantee for bus routes in rural areas to ensure no community is cut off from public transport.
- Reduce congestion in our towns and cities through removing barriers to local councils installing bus priority lanes, investing in bus priority infrastructure, and press for the devolution of roads taxation to Scotland.

OUR FERRIES AND ISLANDS

- We will explore the feasibility of bridges, tunnels and causeways across the sounds of Harris and Barra, and in the Northern Isles to improve connectivity for islanders.
- Bring all ferry ports running lifeline services into public ownership, building on the recent successful campaign to nationalise Ardrossan port.
- Reinstate the ferry route from Ardrossan to Campbeltown.
- Develop a funded long-term green fleet replacement strategy to ensure all ferry services throughout Scotland are reliable, efficient and zero carbon. We will ensure that trade unions are consulted at the design stage of new vessels for Scotland's ferries.
- Reopen the Rosyth to Europe ferry route, and explore more sustainable transport links to Europe, including ferry links to the Nordics, and an integrated ticket between the Caledonian Sleeper and Eurostar.

FUTURE-PROOFING OUR TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

- Complete the full electrification of Scotland's rail network to make trains greener and faster, including the Highland

Main Line and routes connecting Inverness, Aberdeen and Dundee.

- Shift more freight from road to rail, reducing the number of HGVs on key routes such as the A9.
- Upgrade and future-proof trunk roads and rail infrastructure vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, such as the A83.
- Make EV charging cheaper and easier by changing planning regulations to make home EV charging easier kerbside and investing in municipal EV charging hubs with embedded solar generation.
- Press for the devolution of roads taxation to Scotland, raising funds to reinvest in a transport system fit for the future.
- Improve access across our public transport network by ensuring that all newly procured trains, buses, trams and other transport infrastructure are fully accessible, and allow for bike transport as well as wheelchair and buggy spaces.

06 WALKING, WHEELING AND CYCLING A BETTER SCOTLAND FOR WALKERS, WHEELERS AND CYCLISTS

OUR GREEN VISION FOR TRANSPORT DOESN'T STOP AT BUSES, TRAINS AND FERRIES. It's also about making where we live, work and play better for everyone.

It's about creating spaces for people and communities where it's easy to walk, wheel or cycle. Where private cars don't dominate our streets, and where every child can travel to school safely. And where everyone can enjoy the right to roam Scotland's hills, lochs and countryside.

Thanks to the Scottish Greens, we've invested record amounts in active and sustainable travel over the past five years – and we're seeing these incredible changes in our communities. This investment will pay off for generations to come, both in reducing our impact on the climate, and creating healthier communities where active travel is the first choice. But there's much more to do.

That means committing even more of our transport budget to build more cycle paths and ensure our core path network is accessible to everyone. That means reducing speed limits on popular walking and cycling routes to keep everyone safe. And that means designing safe routes to school, with better lighting, crossing points and segregated paths.

- Allocate at least 10% of the national transport budget to active travel, and provide multi-year funding grants to delivery organisations.

- Ensure that every child leaving primary school has had the opportunity to learn to cycle and swim, up to bikeability level 2 standard.
- Support reduction of national speed limits on single carriageway roads, including extending 40mph speed limits on roads popular with walkers and cyclists around villages and towns.
- Support the full rollout of 20mph as the default speed limit in urban and built up areas and ensure this is fully enforced.
- Introduce a safe school run package, ensuring travel to schools is safe for children and parents, investing in better segregated active travel routes, crossing points, lighting, and enforcement of bans on pavement parking and idling.
- Deliver a national blueprint of walking, cycle and wheeling networks, including better connections for active travel infrastructure with public transport to link longer journeys together.
- Expand and improve the National Cycle Network and support councils to deliver active travel infrastructure quickly and efficiently.
- Establish a Scottish Paths Fund to extend Scotland's core path network and protect our right to roam.
- Create an Outdoor Access for All initiative to help the most disadvantaged groups enjoy Scotland's iconic landscapes and greenspaces.
- Introduce new regulations on the use of e-bikes and e-scooters in Scotland, so that local councils can establish e-mobility schemes appropriate for their communities.

07 SCOTLAND'S FINANCES TAXING WEALTH NOT WORK

SCOTLAND IS A WEALTHY COUNTRY, BUT IT DOESN'T FEEL THAT WAY FOR MOST PEOPLE. For decades, wealth has been allowed to accrue in the hands of a small number of people. Scotland has tried to forge a different path, by defending our public services and providing free access to many of life's essentials. But our public finances are starting to show the strain.

As a result of changes driven by Green MSPs over the last decade, Scotland has a more progressive tax system, where those who can afford it pay more, and those on lower incomes the least. That's helped raise £1.8 billion more every year for public services like our NHS.

But our focus must now shift onto taxing wealth rather than work, to build the most progressive tax system we can under devolution.

With the powers of independence, Scotland could introduce a real Wealth Tax, and use Corporation Tax and other tools to tax big businesses effectively, raising billions of pounds for our public services.

But we can still use the devolved tax system to shape the kind of country we want to be. That means supporting small, Scotland-based businesses and local high streets by shifting a greater share of the tax bill onto the likes of online retailer warehouses, out-of-town shopping centres and arms dealers.

We will introduce surcharges to those whose activities cause environmental, economic or social harms, and we will continue to ensure Scottish income tax remains fair and progressive.

And we will transform the way we fund local services by finally scrapping the Council Tax and replacing it with a fairer, more effective system that fully reflects the wealth tied up in our housing market.

REPLACE THE COUNCIL TAX

- Scrap the unfair and broken Council Tax, replacing it with a Residential Property Tax (RPT) based on the value of the property. This will include an appropriate system of reliefs, including for households on low and precarious incomes as well as options to defer payment in cases of hardship.
- The responsibility to ensure payment for rented properties will rest with the property owner and there will be a robust five year transition period as well as a redistribution system to avoid regional inequalities growing further.
- Undertake an immediate revaluation of property values and legislate for regular mandatory revaluations no more than five years apart as a first step towards replacement of the Council Tax. This will end the scandal of most people paying the wrong rate.
- Implement the mansion tax on properties valued at £1m and more, by implementing two new Council Tax bands.
- Introduce a surcharge for overseas owners of second and empty homes to crack down on property speculators based in offshore tax havens.

INCOME TAX

- Retain a progressive and redistributive Income Tax system.
- Set a higher rate for landlords' income from rental properties. This will be introduced following the rollout of rent controls to avoid cost being passed onto tenants.
- Challenge the UK Government to accept that the power to tax income from shares and dividends is devolved. We will then set suitably high rates for this unearned income.

LAND AND BUILDINGS TRANSACTION TAX (LBTT)

- Reform the core rates and exemptions for LBTT to raise more income for our public services and drive positive changes in the housing system.
- Create a new 'mansion tax' rate of 15% on properties worth over £1 million.
- Introduce a 100% relief for housing cooperatives buying properties.
- Introduce a surcharge on the purchase of large land-holdings (500ha +), forcing the breakup of more big estates at the point of sale.
- Close the loopholes which allow the monarchy, foreign militaries and property speculators to pay nothing in LBTT.
- Set a higher rate for businesses buying residential property, as is already the case in England, with an additional 'super-surcharge' rate for overseas companies trying to buy up housing in Scotland.
- Increase the Additional Dwelling Supplement (ADS) to 10%, raising tens of millions for public services and reducing the number of homes sold as second homes and investment properties.

- Set an overseas buyers rate, starting at 20%, to crack down on the global super-rich buying up Scottish properties as holiday homes during a housing crisis.
- Create a ‘Multiplying multiplier’ where the ADS rate paid increases for every additional property bought, discouraging a small number of landlords from buying up more and more properties.
- Set higher ADS rates for areas of acute housing pressure caused by holiday homes and short term lets, including in rent control areas, National Parks, and Areas of Linguistic Significance.

NON-DOMESTIC RATES

As a local tax, Non-domestic rates (NDR) should be set locally. In effect though, all key decisions over NDR are taken nationally. We would devolve rate-setting and surcharge powers to local councils, allowing them to design a system which suits their local economic, social and environmental needs. Short of that devolution however, we would deliver the following critical changes to the current system:

- Create a new band for £1 million+ properties such as the Barclays and JP Morgan facilities in Glasgow.
- End the exemptions enjoyed by big businesses, including those for salmon farms, ‘Enterprise Areas’ and the agricultural land exemption which allows certain industrial sites to masquerade as farms for tax purposes.
- Phase out NDR relief for biomass burners, to align with the position of the Committee on Climate Change.
- Disqualify companies from receiving tax reliefs if they are found to be in breach of minimum wage laws, or fined for environmental offences.

- Extend the day nursery relief to in-work settings, such as nurseries in colleges.
- Reform the Small Business Bonus Scheme (SBBS) to better support genuine small businesses while reducing the overall cost of the scheme. This would include changing the criteria from rateable value to other, more accurate, metric of business size.
- Disqualify socially harmful businesses from SBBS, such as Short Term Lets.

TAXING ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL HARMS

- Use the Non-domestic rates system to add surcharges to businesses which cause harm to our environment and communities, and raise funds to reinvest in public health measures and thriving local economies. These surcharges will include:
 - Public health - This will ensure that supermarkets and other large retailers selling alcohol and tobacco make a greater contribution towards the NHS and other services which deal with the harm caused by their products.
 - Gambling - Casinos, bookies and other gambling venues which exploit some of the most vulnerable people in our communities will likewise be made to pay toward the cost of addiction prevention, recovery and support services.
 - The 'Amazon tax' - A surcharge on the predominantly online businesses, e.g. distribution centres, which are forcing so many small businesses to close.
 - Out of town retail - A surcharge on out-of-town retail to support high street businesses.

- Vacant and derelict land - End the scandal of absentee owners and landbankers blighting towns & cities and holding back economic development by simply making it too expensive for them to hold onto land and property they are not using.
- Explore further NDR surcharges on other businesses which do not have a positive social impact, including arms companies, licensed fireworks retailers, short term lets, fee paying private schools, and fossil fuel terminals, plants and pipelines.

AIR DEPARTURE TAX

- Overhaul the taxation of air travel in Scotland, by replacing the incoming Air Departure Tax with a frequent flyer levy. This will discourage high-income business travellers from taking so many polluting flights whilst avoiding families having to face a higher bill for their annual holiday.
- Ban private jets from using publicly owned airports. To discourage their use of commercial airports, work is already underway to introduce the private jet tax secured by Green MSPs earlier this year.
- Introduce a domestic flight surcharge, with the proceeds used to make long-distance rail travel cheaper.
- Support communities across the Highlands and Islands by exempting lifeline services to these communities from reforms such as the frequent flyer levy and domestic flights surcharge.

AGGREGATES TAX AND LANDFILL TAX

- Increase both the standard and higher rates of Landfill Tax as an incentive for businesses to reduce the waste they

send to landfill. If revenues from these rises are sufficient, we will reopen the Scottish Landfill Communities Fund.

- Implement the recommendations of the climate change review into Scottish Landfill Tax.
- Ensure that Aggregates and Landfill Taxes are well aligned, rapidly reducing construction waste and meeting Scotland's circular economy objectives.

INTRODUCE NEW TAXES

- Develop proposals across the economy to introduce new taxes which raise funds for communities, including plans for a Carbon Emission Land Tax, Stadium Levy, Cruise Ship and a 'point of entry' levy for tourism, featured in other sections of this manifesto.
- Introduce an infrastructure levy on large property developers to fund vital community infrastructure; we will do this by annulling the Planning Act's sunset clause in May 2026.
- Introduce a Demolition Levy to compensate for loopholes in UK-set VAT rates, to encourage retrofit and renovation of buildings rather than environmentally harmful demolition, building on the proposals from the Chartered Institute of Building. Alongside this, we will continue to advocate for the reforms needed to VAT rates to prioritise renovation over demolition.
- Implement the Building Safety Levy to invest more in necessary cladding remediation work.
- Develop proposals for a Scottish Wealth Tax.

PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM

- Implement a worker-led reform programme for the public sector, which improves performance and makes savings, whilst rejecting the policy of austerity disguised as ‘efficiencies’ which has devastated public services since 2010.
- Explore options for delivering savings through measures such as shared backroom services, but only if these do not undermine frontline services or compromise the hardwon policy of no compulsory redundancies.

08 JOBS IN A GREEN ECONOMY WORKING FOR PEOPLE, PLANET AND PLACE

SCOTLAND'S TRANSITION TO A GREEN ECONOMY MUST BE A JOBS STRATEGY AS MUCH AS A CLIMATE

STRATEGY. And it cannot mean public money going to big companies to fix what they broke. With the right public investment and rules, the transition can deliver more than enough jobs to allow everyone currently working in oil and gas to move into secure, well paid and long term work.

Green jobs are not limited to turbines and heat pumps. They include care, childcare, planning, construction, manufacturing, reuse and repair – the everyday work that sustains communities while cutting emissions and waste. Yet too often, these sectors are fragmented, undervalued or dominated by insecure work. A green economy that reproduces low pay and weak rights is not a fair transition.

The Scottish Greens will deliver a Green Industrial Mission grounded in fair work, domestic supply chains and democratic business models. Every pound of public money spent must support good employers: paying the real Living Wage, recognising unions, investing in skills and anchoring jobs locally.

Investment must also ensure that more of Scotland's economy is headquartered in Scotland, ensuring our communities benefit from the wealth generated by a Just Transition. And we will also prioritise circular enterprise – reuse, repair and remanufacturing – where Scotland can cut carbon fast while creating work that cannot or should not be offshored.

Co-operatives and employee-owned businesses are central to this vision. They retain wealth locally, give workers a stake and have a proven track record in renewables, care and community enterprise. By backing skills, co-ops and circular industries together, Scotland can build a green economy that is resilient, fair and rooted in place.

DELIVER A GREEN INDUSTRIAL MISSION

- Invest in offshore renewables, green supply chains, renewable manufacturing and circular industries anchored in Scotland, with direct pathways for oil and gas workers to transition from the industry, delivering a net increase of 40,000 green energy jobs in Scotland by the end of the Parliament.
- Create a new publicly funded retraining programme for oil and gas workers, open to all employment types and fast-tracked for those at risk of redundancy, ensuring there is no repeat of the failed transition plans at Grangemouth and Mossmorran.
- Plan the workforce transition into Green Jobs by improving data gathering and publishing an annual Green Jobs and Skills Outlook, linking infrastructure investment to workforce planning and inclusion.
- Establish regional Green Skills Hubs linking colleges, employers and unions to guaranteed routes into low-carbon work.
- Double Just Transition funding to £1bn, using it to support new jobs and reskilling, and directly invest in infrastructure which creates and supports new Green Jobs.
- Support publicly owned ports as key economic drivers of the energy transition to develop local supply chains, bring oil and gas workers into new opportunities, and diversify

our marine economy. We will support the public buyout of privately owned port facilities as an alternative to tax-haven 'Freeports'.

A NEW DEAL FOR APPRENTICESHIPS

- Launch a New Deal for Apprenticeships with fair pay, adult entry routes and recognition of prior learning.
- Establish minimum standards for apprenticeships to ensure quality control and fair treatment for apprentices.
- Provide funded childcare hours equal to course requirements for modern apprentices, to support parents returning to work and drive up women's participation in often maledominated green trades and professions.
- Make a guaranteed living wage a condition of public funding for all apprentices, and provide funding to support the purchase of essential tools, clothing and equipment.
- Ensure employers do not place age caps on apprenticeships, to support inclusivity and address Scotland's skills gap, especially for older workers seeking retraining in green technologies.
- Streamline Scotland's apprenticeship system by working with colleges and universities as lead partners to deliver modern and graduate apprenticeships in key sectors.

A CIRCULAR ECONOMY

- Scale up reuse, repair and remanufacturing through national reuse targets, repair vouchers and dedicated funding for community repair hubs, and provide transition funding to enable successful reuse organisations to scale without being crowded out by the private sector.

- Require some product manufacturers to take back used products, such as mattresses and textiles, at the end of their life, and extend the scope of Extended Producer Responsibility Schemes so that items can be repurposed or fully recycled.
- Pilot a Scot Repair Voucher scheme which would allow a discount on repair of household goods by participating manufacturers and retailers.
- Implement regulations to ban the destruction of unsold consumer goods in Scotland.

SUPPORTING WORKER-LED AND ETHICAL BUSINESS

- Expand support for worker, consumer and community co-operatives, including expert advice, funding and finance from Scotland's Enterprise Agencies and Business Gateway, with an initial target of 1% of enterprise grant funding to go to co-operatives.
- Implement the Inclusive and Democratic Business Models recommendations to grow cooperative and employee-owned enterprises at scale.
- Change the law to allow councils and public bodies to prioritise procurement and commissioning from local content, worker-owned firms and organisations with high labour and environmental standards.
- Place conditions on public procurements and grants to end slave labour in the supply chain.

09 WORKERS' RIGHTS FAIR WORK NEEDS REAL RIGHTS

WORK SHOULD PROVIDE DIGNITY, SECURITY AND A REAL VOICE - NOT INSECURITY, SURVEILLANCE AND ONE-SIDED POWER. Yet too many workers in Scotland face precarious hours, weakened rights and workplaces where decisions are made about them, not with them. This is especially true for women, migrant workers and those in undervalued sectors such as care, childcare, hospitality and the gig economy, where insecurity and low pay are structural features rather than exceptions.

While employment law remains largely reserved, Scotland is not powerless. Through public spending, procurement, economic development and industrial strategy, we can set higher standards, reward fair employers and exclude exploitative practices and unsafe employers from our economy. We can also press relentlessly for the devolution of employment law so that fair work is not optional or symbolic, but enforceable.

The Scottish Greens will set out a clear direction for the future of work: ending insecure work, strengthening unions, and embedding democracy at work – from the shop floor to the boardroom. Shifting to a low-carbon economy must put workers first, guaranteeing job security, retraining and mental wellbeing for those affected by industrial change. And we must recognise that care work and platform-based work are real work, deserving of rights, voice and respect.

Fair work is not 'nice to have'. It is essential to reducing inequality, closing gender pay gaps, building community wealth and an economy that works for all of us

- Make Fair Work First conditions mandatory for public procurement, grants and economic development funding, ensuring that no company in receipt of public money uses exploitative practices like fire-and-rehire and zero-hours contracts.
- Strengthen and expand Fair Work First criteria, including ensuring that trade unions – not substitute staff forums – are recognised as the legitimate voice of workers, and banning the use of unpaid trial shifts.
- Update licensing laws and grant additional powers to councils to protect food delivery gig workers through licensing conditions on the restaurants and food outlets.
- Deliver targeted support for seasonal workers, particularly in agriculture, hospitality and tourism, to expand unionisation and deliver better pay, guaranteed hours, working conditions and suitable accommodation.
- Support sectoral collective bargaining, starting with care, childcare and hospitality, to raise pay and conditions in undervalued, feminised work.
- Mandate worker and union representation on the boards of companies receiving significant public funding.
- Set a government objective to increase trade union membership across the Scottish workforce.
- Continue the rollout of four-day week pilots in the public sector, and support greater take up of four-day week in the private sector.
- Expand employee and co-operative ownership support to help workers take over viable businesses and protect jobs.

- Guarantee worker-led green transition plans, with retraining, income protection and wellbeing support for those affected by industrial change.
- Seek full devolution of employment law, and work with UK allies to repeal anti-union legislation and strengthen the right to organise.
- Roll out trained and accredited Roving Safety Representatives in Scotland to provide an effective health and safety voice in non-unionised workplaces.
- Ensure workers have the correct support, facilities and equipment to work safely, including supporting the implementation of the Fire Brigade Union's DECON campaign to tackle the carcinogenic nature of firefighting.
- Establish a national occupational health body for Scotland and provide ongoing and secure funding for the Scottish Hazards Centre, to develop advice and support services for non-unionised workers and bereaved families.
- Reform culpable homicide laws to ensure homicides against workers are treated in the same way as involuntary killings in our communities.

10 ENDING POVERTY A DECENT STANDARD OF LIFE FOR ALL

SCOTLAND IS A WEALTHY COUNTRY, BUT THE TOP 2% OF HOUSEHOLDS HOLD AS MUCH WEALTH AS THE BOTTOM 50% COMBINED. While a tiny minority controls enormous wealth, almost a quarter of Scottish children live in poverty.

Everyone has the right to an adequate income to live on, regardless of individual circumstance. Since our foundation more than thirty years ago, the Scottish Greens have been consistent advocates of a Universal Basic Income. Yet the UK government continues to block our attempts to carry out a full trial of this transformative policy, leaving us with a patchy social security system that splits benefits between Scotland and Westminster, and forces us to spend huge sums mitigating disastrous policies like the two-child benefit cap.

The Scottish Greens are proud to have been part of a government which introduced, then more than doubled, the Scottish Child Payment, putting money in the pockets of the families who need it the most.

We will continue to use this and other payments to work towards eradicating poverty, ensuring everyone is able to claim the support they are entitled to, and making Scottish social security easier to access. And we will tackle the spectre of debt which pushes more families into poverty, using all the powers we have to cancel public sector debt.

A DIGNIFIED INCOME FOR ALL

- Negotiate with the UK Government to secure the powers to introduce a comprehensive Universal Basic Income pilot. Short of this full pilot, we will roll out a basic income for care leavers, ensuring young people leaving the care system are given secure and regular financial support.
- Implement the recommendations of the Minimum Income Guarantee Expert Group, which will take us a significant way towards a UBI.
- Establish a legally-backed Pensioner Poverty strategy, following the model that is beginning to work for child poverty. This will require the Scottish Government to have targets for the reduction of poverty faced by older people, and set plans to reach these targets.
- Call for the UK Government to devolve Jobcentre Plus, so we can more effectively use employability services to help people gain well-paying jobs, and help people already in work to move into work with better pay and conditions.

TACKLING CHILD POVERTY

- Amend the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act to require the Scottish Government to meet targets for the reduction of the deepest forms of poverty.
- Increase the Scottish Child Payment to £40, with the aim of at least £55 by 2030, and offer SCP supplements to the poorest families.
- Increase Scottish Child Payment for young parents, to compensate for the UK Government's unfair Young Parent Penalty, where parents under the age of 25 receive less support than older parents.
- Increase all Best Start Grants and Best Start Foods, and expand the range of items that can be purchased using

the pre-payment card, supporting families who need it the most during the first year of a child's life.

- Ensure all devolved social security payments increase annually, at least in-line with rising costs. Similar to the State Pension, payments aimed at children will be double-locked to rise annually with the higher inflation or increases in average incomes.

ENSURING EVERYONE GETS THE SUPPORT THEY DESERVE

- Deploy income maximisation advisers in schools, GP practices and other community hubs, to ensure every community has access to a money advice service, and that everyone is accessing the benefits they are entitled to.
- Introduce legally-binding targets for the take-up of social security benefits.
- Launch an independent review of the Scottish Welfare Fund and Discretionary Housing Payments to establish an adequate level of funding that can also respond to increased demand, and consistency of decision-making.
- Introduce automatic payments where possible, with social security payments made without the need for an application, using information already held by public authorities to determine eligibility.
- Increase fairness and accurate decision making in our social security system by providing compensation payments to applicants who have their payments wrongly cut or applications denied, where Social Security Scotland or councils were in error.
- Put pressure on the UK Government to make the changes to its systems that are needed for Scottish Universal

Credit claimants to split their payments among different household members, to tackle the issue of single household payments being used as financial domestic abuse.

- Continue to call on the UK Government to pay what is owed to the WASPI women impacted by unfair state pension changes.

COMPASSION IN THE COLLECTION OF PUBLIC DEBT

- Wipe out crippling Council Tax debt that pushes families further into poverty and reduce the amount of time that councils and other public bodies can chase public debts such as unpaid Council Tax, from the current 20 years to at maximum 6 years, as happens in England and Wales.
- End the role of private sector debt collectors, who cause misery and stress to vulnerable people, in collecting money owed to public bodies.
- Require all public bodies, including local councils, to abide by stricter rules focused on caring for vulnerable people who are in debt to them; and recognising that there may be no public interest in chasing vulnerable people for funds they cannot pay.
- Make it illegal for domestic abuse survivors to be chased for public debt arising from the period when they lived with their abuser.

11 CHILDCARE

FUNDED AND FLEXIBLE CHILDCARE FOR ALL

INVESTING IN CHILDCARE IS AN INVESTMENT IN OUR COMMON FUTURE. And one of the best ways to tackle rising inequality. The delivery of funded childcare to all children over the age of three in Scotland has been transformative, allowing more families – and women in particular – to return to the workforce.

However, at present there is a significant gap between statutory maternity pay ending at 9 months, and funded childcare beginning for most families at 3 years old. This is compounded by the loophole in the current system, which can leave families waiting for months after their child's third birthday to access funded childcare.

Families in Scotland are spending up to a third of their income on childcare, or having to reduce their working hours, both of which contribute significantly to the cost of living crisis. This has to change.

The Scottish Greens will establish a simple, universal free childcare guarantee, where all children in Scotland have access to funded childcare hours from 6 months until they start school. This will be accompanied by a significant investment in the childcare workforce, which makes early learning and childcare a viable, well paid, long term career option.

With the powers of independence, Scotland could significantly reform both maternity and parental leave, allowing more parents to choose to stay at home for longer if they wish. Until then, we will introduce flexibility in the early years funding,

allowing parents of children aged 6 months to 2 to choose between funded childcare hours, or supplementing their income while they stay at home.

- Extend the 1140 hours of funded childcare to all two-year-olds in Scotland as soon as possible, starting from the Monday after their second birthday.
- Expand funded childcare for all children aged 6 months to 2 years, aiming to provide a universal 570 hours of funded childcare for this group by the end of 2031.
- Allow the funding for under-2s to be used to either pay for childcare in an early learning setting, or subsidise the income of a parent who chooses to stay at home or reduce their work hours.
- Ensure the increase in funded hours enables greater flexibility in childcare provision, so that parents can access the childcare they are entitled to. This includes delivering more wraparound care to suit existing work and school patterns; increasing flexibility in council run nurseries, particularly to accommodate shift workers; and reviewing and expanding childminder models.
- Reform the way childcare funding is distributed to local councils, with the allocation following the child regardless of their home address, and ending the practice of councils denying places to children who live in neighbouring areas.
- Provide base funding for childcare provision in remote and rural areas, to ensure nurseries and childminders are viable in areas with low populations.
- Significantly invest in the early learning and childcare workforce, ensuring government funding requires and enables the payment of the real living wage to all staff, and introducing collective bargaining in the early learning

and childcare workforce, to deliver better terms and conditions.

- Work with professional bodies, local councils and education providers to increase recruitment and retention of childminders, providing more flexible and wraparound care which is also eligible for funded hours.
- Create a structured pathway for early learning and childcare practitioners to gain skills and expertise, leading to better pay over time.
- Ensure on-site childcare is provided in all colleges, and work with large employers to encourage on-site childcare for employees, which would allow greater flexibility for working parents.
- Support families when siblings arrive by offering additional childcare vouchers through the baby box scheme, to help with the cost of extra childcare in the early weeks and months of their growing family.
- Provide targeted funding and support for out-of-hours and holiday clubs that are inclusive of children with additional support needs.

12 SCHOOLS AND YOUNG PEOPLE DEMANDING BETTER FOR OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

THE SCOTTISH GREENS HAVE ALREADY STARTED THE PROCESS OF TRANSFORMING OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM FROM THE GROUND UP. In the last five years we've scrapped the SQA, replacing it with a body which puts the voices of teachers and pupils at its heart. We've delivered free school meals for all children in P1 - P5, and for older children who need it the most. We've expanded mental health counselling, secured funding to teach children about the roles of Trade Unions, and delivered new guidance for Relations, Sexual Health and Parenthood guidance which is based around the principle of consent.

This is how we ensure our education system creates a generation of young people who are well equipped to learn, who know their rights, and who treat everyone with respect and dignity.

There is so much more we need to do though. The cumulative effects of the pandemic, the cost of living crisis, and our ever changing world mean teachers are under pressure like never before. We need to ensure we have a well supported, well paid workforce who are given the time to invest in our young people.

We will make reducing teacher workload a mission across the education sector, ensuring teachers have the time needed to plan properly, and insisting that any reforms which add to workload are accompanied by those which remove at least as much.

Young people too need the space to learn, without the pressure of having their performance judged at every turn. We will scrap high stakes exams as much as possible, end homework for primary aged children, and raise the starting age for school, with play based education easing young children into formal schooling.

And our education system needs to work for all pupils, regardless of their educational and support needs. We will deliver more teachers specialising in additional support needs, and ensure special schools have the capacity they require, are properly supported and receive the resources they need.

- Raise the school starting age to seven and introduce a play-based kindergarten stage for three- to six-year-olds, led by qualified kindergarten teachers, ensuring young children are not pushed into a formal learning environment before they are ready.
- End the routine use of homework in primary schools, accepting the wealth of evidence indicating that homework does not lead to greater academic achievement and instead that many children simply develop a negative association with school as a result of its use.
- Continue the rollout of climate justice education through the Learning for Sustainability Action Plan, co-developed by Green MSPs, and ensure Scotland's past is taught honestly and accurately, including tackling our role in the British Empire and slavery.
- Scrap P1-S3 Scottish National Standardised Assessments, and instead bring back the Scottish Survey of Literacy and Numeracy to monitor national performance.

- Replace Scotland’s Victorian-era system of high-stakes exams by implementing the findings of the Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment (Hayward Review) in full, including reducing the role of high stakes exams, and increasing the role of continuous assessment throughout the year.
- Restructure National 5s to address the imbalance of courses’ hour requirements with subject and remove end of term exams entirely for National 5 courses. We will review and reform the structure of National 5 courses and qualifications to address the imbalance of both a 160 hour course requirement and the availability of up to nine concurrent National 5 courses.
- Introduce a National Qualification on Natural History, drawing on the recently developed Natural History GCSE course.
- Support the upskilling, retraining, and retention of Gaelic speaking teachers and early years workers so every pupil across Scotland has access to some form of Gaelic medium education.

SUPPORTING PUPILS

- Continue the rollout of free school meals, starting with universal provision in P6-7 and S1-6 pupils who receive the Scottish Child Payment, with the ultimate goal of free school meals for all school pupils.
- Deliver high quality Personal and Social Education, guaranteeing a curriculum which covers topics such as consent based sex education, LGBT+ inclusivity, mental health, and personal finances, co-designed by young people.

- Ensure young people learn about their rights at work, by rolling out the STUC's Unions in Schools programme to every secondary and ASN school in Scotland.
- Require and support schools in the creation of independent Pupil Unions, so that young people can have their voices heard directly in their school community.
- Ensure delivery of free breakfast clubs in every primary and ASN school, as secured by Green MSPs during 2026 budget negotiations.
- Make the existing guidance to cap the cost of school uniforms statutory, to reduce costs for families and provide more flexibility for pupils in what they wear to school.
- Remove barriers to participation in education by making targeted interventions to give all pupils access to a broad range of national qualifications, including by investing in remote learning services like e-Sgoil and in support for those not regularly attending such as i-Sgoil.
- Continue the expansion of access to in-school mental health counselling, ensuring all pupils have access to these services, with further targeted efforts to increase their use by boys and young men in particular.

SUPPORTING TEACHERS

- Reduce teacher workload by requiring all working groups looking at curriculum and qualifications reforms to identify options for reducing teacher workload in their areas of focus, and reducing unnecessary bureaucracy associated with Curriculum for Excellence monitoring.
- Deliver the outstanding recommendations contained in the Scottish Government's 2015 Curriculum for Excellence Tackling Bureaucracy report.

- End the use of arbitrary targets for school and pupil performance, ending the situation whereby pupils who are more likely to hit targets are prioritised over others.
- End the endemic use of temporary contracts for teachers by providing ringfenced funding for councils to transfer teachers on temporary contracts onto permanent fulltime contracts.
- Develop a national register of supply teachers to ensure that all supply teachers only need to apply to one list. We will also ensure that all supply work via this system counts towards a teacher's continuous service.
- Reduce class sizes to a maximum of 20 pupils, prioritising primary classes in this session of Parliament. Excessive class sizes mean less time spent supporting each pupil, undermining the quality of education they receive.
- Lower teachers' class contact time to 20 hours per week to ensure that they have the time to prepare high quality learning and teaching.
- End the routine use of national inspections and develop a new model of peer review and self-evaluation for teachers. National inspections will be restricted to cases of complaints or areas of concern.
- Provide GTCS registration for school-based instrumental music teachers – creating a professionally-recognised national music teaching force.

SUPPORTING PUPILS WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS

- Make Additional Support Needs teaching a promoted post to attract more teachers into this vital specialism.
- Ensure additional support needs are covered in Initial Teacher Education and in Continuous Professional

Learning opportunities, equipping all teachers with the core skills required to support all of their ASN pupils.

- Ensure more young people with additional support needs are provided with the support they require by revising overly restrictive criteria for Coordinated Support Plans in legislation, therefore opening up access to more young people who need them.
- Establish formal recognition of further education qualifications for additional needs assistants and establish an accreditation and registration system through the General Teaching Council Scotland.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- Complete the delivery of The Promise to care-experienced young people by 2030.
- Support access to youth work by ensuring that it supports and empowers young people and improves their wellbeing and life chances.
- Deliver an updated National Youth Work Strategy, which recognises the value of youth work.
- Integrate funded youth work opportunities within secondary education giving pupils enhanced opportunities to fulfil project based learning as part the new Scottish Diploma of Achievement.
- Integrate youth work with local and national mental health support and referral systems.
- Deliver an updated national action plan on internet safety developed in cooperation with children and young people which ensures they have access to robust training, support, and information to stay safe online.
- Press the Scottish Government to make good on its commitment to consult on and then introduce an

independent right for a child to withdraw from Religious Observance in schools.

13 FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION LIFELONG LEARNING IN OUR UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES

COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES CAN HELP BUILD A FAIRER AND GREENER SCOTLAND. Driving forward progress on our key missions to hit net zero and tackle child poverty.

High quality education is a social and individual good which should be free and accessible to all, regardless of income and background. Education at all levels can be a genuinely transformational ingredient to a successful society.

For too long, the Scottish Government has failed to provide a clear direction for universities and colleges, leaving them at the mercy of the financial marketplace. The Scottish Greens will set out a clear vision which values the role further and higher education will play in building a fairer, greener Scotland.

The ability of colleges in particular to play their role in that delivery has been significantly held back by a decade of chronic problems in industrial relations. That is why Scottish Greens have already delivered a wide ranging expansion of fair work criteria conditioned on Government funding to improve working conditions for all across universities and colleges.

- Oppose any attempt to introduce tuition fees for Scottish students. Everyone should be able to access high quality education at every level, regardless of their ability to pay.
- Improve college governance, including an increase in the number of reserved board places for staff and student representatives. We will also reserve places for local

councillors, strengthening the links between colleges and the communities they serve.

- Support colleges to maximise their income from the private sector without undermining their core mission to meet the needs of individual students and wider communities.
- Maximise opportunities for adults to stay in or rejoin the workforce through upskilling and retraining opportunities.
- Oppose the marketisation of higher education and artificially competitive funding mechanisms such as the Research Excellence Framework and Teaching Excellence Framework, and actively participate in cross-party discussions led by the higher education sector to find a sustainable funding model for universities.
- Enforce new fair work conditions for colleges and universities secured by Scottish Green MSPs earlier this year. These include opposing the use of fire and rehire, addressing workplace inequalities, and banning the inappropriate use of zero-hour contracts.
- Suspend interest payments on student loans during maternity and parental leave to tackle the additional costs which overwhelmingly fall on women.
- Support students during the summer through a national hardship fund and the opportunity to rebalance bursaries and extend loan payments to stretch over the summer months.
- Support international students by continuing to place pressure on the UK government to enhance and expand the post-study work visa programme.
- Build on the work that universities in Scotland have done in welcoming Palestinian and Ukrainian students by providing government support for scholarships.

14 HUMAN RIGHTS

DEFENDING HUMAN RIGHTS FOR ALL

HUMAN RIGHTS ARE THE BASIS OF AN EQUAL AND JUST SOCIETY. Clearly written into law, properly enforced and with rights holders supported to speak out when they believe their rights are not being upheld, Human Rights can prove transformative for ensuring that all Scots are treated with dignity and respect.

Human Rights legislation empowers people to speak up for and defend their rights, and has been used by refugees, disabled people and others to overturn cruel policies and win fair treatment. But more than 10 years after the idea was first raised, we still do not have a Scottish Human Rights Act that underpins the rights of all Scots to a good education, a healthy diet, clean air and water, and other issues within the responsibilities of the Scottish Parliament.

Almost every chapter in this manifesto includes policies designed to uphold and strengthen our rights. But these rights will be underpinned by the Scottish Human Rights Bill, likely to prove one of the most important pieces of legislation passed in the history of the Scottish Parliament. From cultural rights to social security, and from the right to clean air to the rights of disabled people, women, migrants and other groups, the Bill will ensure that every single decision made by a devolved public body – and by any organisation acting on its behalf – is made in a way which advances the human rights of all of us.

Those who hold particular religious beliefs, such as members of the Jewish and Islamic faiths, are amongst the most likely to face discrimination, racism and denial of their rights. We will put

special emphasis on tackling Islamophobia, anti-semitism and other forms of racism, ensuring members of all faith groups are supported to realise their rights to religious freedom, safety and respect.

- Introduce a Human Rights Bill that transforms lives in Scotland, recognising economic, social and cultural rights, such as the right to housing, healthcare, creative opportunities, social security, freedom of religion, education and food.
- Ensure the bill will recognise the right to a healthy environment, incorporating rights to access clean water, air, greenspace and nature, with these rights enforceable in a new Scottish Environmental court.
- Public bodies and Scottish Government Ministers will have clear duties to act in ways that advance these rights, and there will be a clear mechanism for resolving clashes between human rights and other statutory responsibilities, with human rights taking precedence.
- Properly-funded legal aid and other mechanisms will ensure that people without access to legal advice can hold public bodies to account where they feel their rights have not been upheld.
- Ensure the Scottish Human Rights Bill extends beyond the Rights of Children and Young People, already incorporated into Scots law. The new Bill will embed the rights of disabled people, older people, women, members of faith groups, migrants, gypsy, roma and traveller communities, and LGBT+ people under international treaties.
- Introduce Human Rights Budgeting, and give the Scottish Human Rights Commission a role to assess every Scottish

Budget Bill for rights compliance; and ensure all budgets set by public bodies go through similar processes.

- Place legal duties on public bodies and any organisation acting on their behalf to not only uphold human rights here in Scotland, but consider how their work impacts on the human and environmental rights in other countries.
- Require environmental rights and justice checks on all planning and infrastructure decisions.
- Improve the collection of equalities data, in particular ensuring public bodies collect reliable intersectional equalities data, so that we know when our rights, especially those of the most discriminated groups, are not being respected.
- Tackle current and historical discrimination of Gypsy / Travellers, by reviewing existing legislation and improving equalities assessments of bills going forward, to remove systemic discrimination of Gypsy / Travellers in Scots law.
- Further to the “Tinker Experiment” apology, we will accept the recommendations of the Scottish Human Rights Commission to provide compensation for the victims and families of forced assimilation, forced migration and other historic wrongs perpetrated by the State.
- Implement the Scotland-focused recommendations of the UN report on the UK’s compliance with the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD). As part of this, we will carry out a Structural Racism Review to investigate the way public policies directly and indirectly discriminate against people on the basis of ethnicity.
- Respond to unacceptable increases in anti-Semitic and other hate crimes by reviewing the effectiveness of the Hate Crime (Scotland) Act, and the policies that support it,

such as anti-racism education in schools, and police and justice practices.

- Complete the implementation of the recommendations of the Cross-Party Group on Tackling Islamophobia's Islamophobia in Scotland report, including improving the reporting of Islamophobia and other forms of religious hatred in schools.

15 DISABLED PEOPLE

FAIRNESS AND DIGNITY FOR DISABLED PEOPLE

ONE IN FIVE PEOPLE ARE DISABLED. Disabled people face higher rates of poverty, lower chances of securing a wellpaid job, barriers to essential services, and even barriers to an accessible home and transport – things which other people take for granted. This is unacceptable.

We commit to incorporate the UN Convention of the Rights of Disabled People into Scots Law. We will take steps to reduce the disability employment gap, with the public sector leading by example, and ensure private and public spaces are designed to be accessible as standard.

We can use the social security system to support disabled Scots better, with around 1 in 10 Scots claiming one of the disability and carer payments for which the Scottish Government is now responsible. However, we are still failing to properly support disabled people in Scotland, who are now less likely to be able to claim successfully for disability payments than in England.

As payments for carers are linked to disability payments, hard-working carers also lose their support, even though they will never stop caring for their loved ones. The Scottish Greens will instead work to ensure these payments are accessible to all those who need them, and support disabled people and their carers to participate equally in society.

- Close the disability employment gap by improving access to specialist employability services run by experienced third and public sector organisations, not by private sector

profiteers; and take action to ensure funding is more sustainable, so long-term support can be provided. We will also require all large publicly-funded organisations to take part in the Disability Guaranteed Interview Scheme.

- Call on the UK Government to devolve responsibility for the Access to Work scheme and for the employability functions of Jobcentre Plus, so that Scotland can provide a high quality, integrated employment support for disabled people and other groups at risk of long-term unemployment.
- Incorporate the UN Convention on Rights of Disabled People into Scots law, underpinning crucial rights such as the right to independent living, personal assistance and independent advocacy.
- Require the involvement of Disabled People's Organisations in planning new public and private infrastructure, such as housing, public buildings, transport and public spaces, so that they meet inclusive design standards.
- Launch an urgent investigation into why the proportion of successful applications to Adult Disability Payment has fallen since its introduction, and is now below the equivalent figure in England and Wales, and implement recommendations to address this.
- Implement the recommendations of the Independent Review of Adult Disability Payment, including reviewing the adequacy of payments, scrapping the inhumane 20m rule, and ensuring assessments are inclusive of neurodivergent people.
- Ensure older disabled people are able to access the same mobility payments that younger disabled people receive, and make Scottish Blue Badges, currently the most expensive in the UK, free and simpler to access.

- Institute a review of the Carer Support Payment to examine the feasibility of improvement, such as providing an extra payment to those caring for more than one person; recognising carers who perform significant caring responsibilities below the current eligibility of 35 hours a week; and offering support to carers who claim the State Pension, who are currently excluded.
- Triple the Young Carer Grant to over £1,000 a year and expand eligibility, by, for example, ensuring that sibling carers and other young people who care together can both receive the payment.
- Mainstream disability inclusive communication approaches across public bodies and services exploring communication options, including email, phone, face-to-face and video calls.

16 LGBT+

A PROUD AND INCLUSIVE SCOTLAND FOR ALL

FROM EQUAL MARRIAGE TO MAKING THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM MORE INCLUSIVE, the Scottish Greens have led the way in advancing the rights and treatment of LGBT+ people during the devolution era.

But despite significant improvements, the community are still more likely to experience poor mental health and delays in access to essential healthcare, and ongoing discrimination in day to day life.

Trans people are amongst the most discriminated against people in our society. With the hate campaign against them a major cause, there has been a shocking rise in hate crimes against trans people, whilst some are effectively denied access to healthcare with waiting lists of over 200 years for essential gender-affirming care.

In the next Parliament the Scottish Greens will continue to be the champions of LGBT+ people as we always have, delivering the much-delayed ban on so-called conversion therapy, ensuring access to gender-affirming healthcare, and taking action on transphobic, homophobic and biphobic hate crime and bullying.

- Introduce a comprehensive ban on conversion therapy covering all settings, such as religious, informal, community, family-based and therapeutic, with clear protections for affirming healthcare, and inclusive of trans, non-binary, and asexual identities. This ban will be backed

by appropriate criminal and civil penalties, and a statutory right of survivors to support and advocacy.

- Ensure and expand inclusive education and anti-bullying programmes in Scotland's schools and youth programmes; provide targeted support to promote LGBTQ+ young people staying in education and roll out a national programme to address transphobic, homophobic and biphobic hate crime across society.
- Introduce statutory homelessness strategies for all groups facing particular barriers to housing, including LGBT+ people.
- Address inequalities in LGBT+ healthcare, such as improving access to specialist mental healthcare; care for intersex people, and speeding-up the rollout of injectable anti-HIV medication.
- Publish a gender-affirming care action plan within 6 months, to turbo-charge efforts to bring down shocking waiting times. Action we will consider includes funding more training places; providing funding to health boards that do not currently provide gender identity healthcare to start doing so urgently; supporting people to seek NHS-funded care in other countries, and bringing it into line with the 18 week guarantee that applies to many other areas of healthcare, including youth pathways aligned with international standards.
- Work with NHS boards – including Public Health Scotland – and social care providers to address LGBTQ+ health and care inequalities. This will include providing training for frontline health and social care staff to understand the needs of LGBTQ+ people, and increasing the collection of data relating to sexual orientation, gender identity and health outcomes to inform better evidence-based policies.

- Recognise the rights of LGBT+ families to access IVF and IUI on the NHS, and develop national guidance and a standard treatment pathway specifically for LGBT+ families accessing assisted conception.
- Revisit all NHS policy changes made as a result of the Cass Review to ensure they are aligned with international evidence-based best practice. Where there are evidence gaps about treatment options, introduce robust, accessible research trials to ensure that these are filled. We will involve trans children and young people directly in decisions about their healthcare in age-appropriate ways in-line with their evolving capacity, and immediately ensure young trans people have access to mental health and other support.
- Ensure trans people have the same access to Hormone Replacement Therapy as cisgender people.
- Continue to call on the UK Government to remove its block on much-needed Gender Recognition legislation and update it with international best practice.

17 NEW SCOTS

A SCOTLAND WHERE EVERYONE IS WELCOME

SCOTLAND WOULD NOT BE WHAT IT IS TODAY WITHOUT PEOPLE COMING TO OUR COUNTRY FROM AROUND THE WORLD, contributing incalculable benefits to our economy, society and culture. Despite hostile migration policy that is made for us by Westminster, we are rightly proud of the welcoming home that generations of migrants have found in our country.

But we should not shy away from the fact that the far right is gaining ground in our communities. It has never been more important to stand up for all those who have made Scotland their home. We must resist the poisonous rhetoric of the far-right groups, and build diverse, strong and united communities.

With the powers of Independence, the Scottish Greens would abolish the Home Office and build an immigration and asylum system based on humanity, dignity and respect. Until then, we will continue to advocate for powers over immigration to be fully devolved to Scotland, allowing us to establish a fair system which ensures Scotland can recruit the new workers we desperately need in sectors like healthcare, agriculture, and hospitality, whilst providing refuge for those who need our support.

We must also use devolved powers to ensure we support people seeking to build new lives in Scotland, avoiding destitution by design. Instead we must ensure everyone has access to the basic essentials: a safe warm home, food,

education, healthcare and access to legal aid and public services.

- Call on the UK Government to fully devolve the responsibility for housing and support of people seeking asylum to Scotland, ensuring that new arrivals are properly supported to rebuild their lives here, and providing full funding for local councils to deliver this new responsibility.
- Stop private companies profiteering from a broken system using these new powers. We will fund councils and registered social landlords to become the preferred suppliers of housing in communities, and end the routine use of hotels and barracks as housing for people seeking asylum.
- Empower local communities to apply for protest buffer zones around spaces providing asylum accommodation and services for as long as people are forced into hotels and barracks by the Home Office.
- Back the proposed pilot scheme granting people seeking asylum the right to work, allowing them to support themselves and their families; and reduce barriers to employment by using all powers available in Scotland to ensure that overseas qualifications are recognised as soon as possible after arrival.
- Establish a Community Cohesion fund to provide sustained funding for Local Authorities to invest in core services and grassroots community engagement programmes in communities which host New Scots.
- Support more New Scots to stand for public office by establishing an equivalent of the Barriers to Elected Office fund for disabled people, and create pathways for New

Scots to serve on community boards, such as Parent and Community Councils.

- Help New Scots into secure employment by supporting employability schemes, and fund advocacy schemes to ensure all migrant workers know and are able to realise their rights in the workplace.
- Call on the UK Government to end the cruel No Recourse to Public Funds policy, and, in advance of it ending, support the Fair Way Scotland initiative. We will encourage councils to use existing powers, such as child protection powers, to provide welfare services that mitigate the impact of NRPF whilst not putting staff at legal risk.
- Use all powers available to the Scottish Government to end unnecessary data sharing with the Home Office. Everyone resident in Scotland will have equal access to housing, healthcare and education, regardless of immigration status.
- Introduce Scotland-wide anti-racist education across schools, policing, and public institutions, and deliver accessible public information campaigns highlighting New Scots' contributions to the economy, culture and civic life.

18 HEALTH FUND AND PROTECT OUR NHS

THE SCOTTISH GREENS BELIEVE IN A HEALTH SERVICE THAT IS FREE AT THE POINT OF NEED AND FUNDED BY PROGRESSIVE TAXATION. We will protect our NHS from private interests.

The Scottish Greens want to tackle Scotland's poor public health by investing in prevention and early intervention. And we want to support people to live well. However, we also recognise the importance of protecting funding to secondary and acute care so that when people do become ill, the NHS is there for them.

We will ensure our NHS remains financially sustainable for generations to come by fundamentally reforming how it works. Our vision is for a health system where the focus is on prevention, community services and reducing health inequalities.

The backlog of care which built up during the pandemic, alongside historic understaffing of services, has meant that healthcare staff are under more pressure than ever. We want to grow the workforce by making it as attractive and easy as possible for people to join the NHS. We will ensure services have sufficient staff so we can cut waiting lists and people can get appointments when they need them.

It is vital that we also support people to die well and we need to have honest conversations about what a good death looks like. Palliative care has been neglected for too long and we will

invest in services so that people can access help and support in their community, 24/7.

PRIMARY AND COMMUNITY CARE

- Increase investment to general practice to reflect the fact that GPs deliver over 90% of patient contact within the NHS.
- Invest in the recruitment of GPs with the aim that there will be one GP for every 1,000 patients and, once those GPs are in place, offer 15 minute appointments.
- Expand the multidisciplinary team in GP practices to include, for example, mental health practitioners and welfare rights officers.
- Embed community links workers who can help patients with issues such as poverty, housing and isolation by, for example, referring to support in their community, in every GP practice across Scotland, starting rollout in practices in deprived areas.
- Ensure GPs have protected learning time so they can keep up to date on recent medical developments and continue to provide excellent care.
- Improve digital and IT systems and introduce a single electronic patient record between primary care, hospital and social care teams.
- Reform funding and structure of Integration Joint Boards, to allow local health boards to invest better in preventative and community healthcare.
- End all charges for dental treatment and gradually bring dental practices fully into NHS ownership by supporting health boards to expand the Public Dental Service in areas of highest need.

- Expand the role of Dental Therapists to allow direct access and treatment, ensuring more people can receive dental treatment with shorter waiting times, and be referred to a dentist when required.

STAFFING

- Introduce nurse-to-patient ratios for all health and care settings so that no nurse will have a caseload over a pre-defined number of patients.
- Act to attract more people into the nursing profession, including a nationwide recruitment campaign and an expansion of the routes into nursing. In addition, introduce a cost-of-living increase to the student nurse bursary and extend the bursary to all student allied health professionals.
- Increase specialty training places and implement pay restoration for resident doctors, and publish a rolling workforce plan.
- Push the UK Government to provide Automatic Leave to Remain for all medical students studying in Scottish universities.

PALLIATIVE CARE

- Deliver a long-term, sustainable funding model for hospice care, including fully implementing pay parity between NHS and hospice care staff.
- Establish an independent review of palliative care to drive urgent system reform and identify investment needed to meet rising population needs, expand community-based care and reduce avoidable hospital use for those at the end of life.

- Ensure all patients, carers and health and care staff have access to a 24/7 palliative care helpline to get support and specialist advice.
- Make training in palliative care a mandatory requirement for all workforces supporting a terminally ill person, including care home staff and social care staff, with provision for unpaid carers.

PUBLIC HEALTH

- Restrict the advertising of food and drink high in fat, sugar and/or salt in Scotland, including outdoor advertising such as billboards, public transport and sponsorship of professional sports and events and ban energy drinks for under-16s.
- Roll out emergency department opt-out HIV and blood-borne virus testing programmes in areas with a high HIV prevalence and to other health settings.
- Deliver a national Online HIV Prevention Service that's a one-stop-shop for at-home HIV testing and online PrEP access.
- Increase funding and staffing to improve access for all, particularly in rural and remote communities and launch a multilingual, accessible public health campaign to build vaccine confidence.

CANCER

- Provide funding to address workforce shortfalls and geographic inequalities in Scotland.
- Invest in rolling out new tests to detect less survivable cancers earlier, such as the breath test for pancreatic cancer.

- Increase institutional research and innovation funding to support cancer research to identify new treatments.
- Increase the promotion of and access to screening programmes.
- Reduce socio-economic and geographical disparities in care and ensure all patients, regardless of location, have access to high quality diagnostics and treatments.

SPECIALIST SERVICES

- Introduce a “Right to Rehabilitation” whereby everyone is assessed for rehabilitation needs on diagnosis or discharge from hospital.
- Create and implement a national multi-disciplinary long covid pathway.
- Reduce inequalities through targeted condition-specific support for deprived and high-risk communities.
- Invest in scaling up the detection and management of risk factors for heart attack and stroke.
- Support the development and piloting of a cardiology community service to move closer to communities.
- Create a network of NHS, third sector and community services to detect cardiovascular risk factors.
- Deliver a 24/7 thrombectomy service.

19 ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS SUPPORTING RECOVERY AND ENDING STIGMA

SUCCESSIVE GOVERNMENTS HAVE FAILED TO STAND UP TO CORPORATE INTERESTS. Corporate interests push products that harm our health, placing pressure on our NHS.

The Scottish Greens will stand up to corporations and tackle unhealthy environments by placing restrictions on marketing of harmful products, making industries pay for the damage that they cause to individuals, communities and society.

We want to protect children and young people from exposure to alcohol marketing. And we believe everyone should be made aware of the risks before they consume alcohol. We will hold the alcohol industry to account for the harm it causes and implement a public health levy, the proceeds of which will be invested into treatment and support services.

Smoking is still one of the leading causes of ill health and death in Scotland, despite recent improvements in smoking rates, and smoking prevalence remains highest in areas of deprivation. We will protect young people from the effects of smoking, ensure people can access support to stop smoking wherever they live and ensure that nicotine cannot be advertised in the form of vapes and nicotine pouches.

People who use illegal drugs are amongst the most marginalised in Scotland. The Westminster government's drugs laws drive vulnerable people away from the help they need. We commit to providing people with individualised medical, psychological and social care. Following the best evidence, we will expand harm reduction policies, end the criminalisation of

drug use and work towards a legal, regulated system of drug supply, removing control of the drugs market from violent, organised criminals.

- Roll out and fully fund safe consumption facilities to wherever there is an issue with public drug use, with Edinburgh and Dundee the next priority following the existing project in Glasgow.
- Roll out confidential drug checking services, heroin assisted treatment and alcohol and drug stabilisation services across Scotland.
- Increase funding for integrated support and treatment services for people with problematic alcohol and other drug use.
- Ensure Naloxone is available to the general public in pharmacies, health centres and all public buildings as well as defibrillator stations.
- Work with the Lord Advocate, Police Scotland and procurators fiscal to reduce the criminalisation of people who use drugs, diverting people away from the criminal justice system and, where necessary towards treatment and social support services.
- Call on the UK Government to devolve powers over drugs legislation to Scotland, so we can work towards decriminalisation, legal regulation, and a full public health approach to drugs.
- Introduce automatic uprating of Minimum Unit Pricing in line with inflation.
- Ban outdoor alcohol advertising and advertising in public spaces, and review the licensing system to ensure over-provision and online sales are taken into account when granting new alcohol licenses.

- Introduce mandatory unit, calorie and ingredient labelling and prominent health warnings on all alcohol products.
- Ban smoking and vaping outside schools and in playparks, and support legislation at a UK wide level to ban advertising and promotions, flavours, colours and branding on all vapes and nicotine pouches.
- Introduce a licensing system for premises selling vaping products, similar to that which covers premises selling alcohol
- Invest in the delivery of smoking prevention and cessation services, and target smoking cessation services in deprived communities which are disproportionately affected by tobacco related health problems.
- Introduce a public health levy to hold tobacco and alcohol companies and supply chain corporations accountable for the damage done by health harming products, with restrictions on price controls so that the financial payment comes from producer and wholesale profits, and not from consumers or retailers.

20 WOMEN'S AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH PROTECTING WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND BODILY AUTONOMY

TOO OFTEN WOMEN'S HEALTH ISSUES ARE EITHER DISMISSED OR DOWNPLAYED. We want to create an environment where women are believed when they say something is wrong.

Access to specialist treatments for women and those assigned female at birth is too often patchy, with long waiting times for gynaecology, inconsistent outcomes for cervical cancer, and increased risks for cardiovascular disease in women going missed. We need to invest in specialist services and programmes, so all women can access treatment when they need it.

High quality, accessible health care during and after pregnancy is central to achieving good outcomes for mothers and babies, and it starts with investing in the workforce. We want to see more people training as midwives, guarantee them safe working conditions, and ensure there are enough community midwives and health visitors to help new families in their homes in the first weeks and months of a child's life.

No one should be penalised in their workplace for experiencing menopause symptoms. Yet this is still a daily occurrence for many women. We think that menopause should be added as a protected characteristic to the Equality Act 2010. Without the power to do this, however, we will work hard to improve menopause education and require all public sector employers to treat people experiencing menopause fairly.

The Scottish Greens believe access to abortion is a fundamental right. Abortion care is healthcare and should be treated like any other health procedure. That is why we want to end the antiquated “two doctor rule” and ensure that people do not have to give a reason for why they are seeking abortion care. Nobody should have to justify why they are seeking abortion care, and we believe this will help to remove the stigma around abortion.

- Bring down gynecological waiting lists by investing in services and producing a fully costed workforce plan for gynecology.
- Eliminate cervical cancer by 2040 by promoting uptake of the HPV vaccine and cervical screening, particularly in deprived areas and prisons.
- Fund research into women’s health inequalities, including inequalities in maternal health outcomes for minority ethnic pregnant people.
- Expand the midwife workforce by creating ‘earn-as-you-learn’ routes into midwifery and introduce minimum safe staffing levels on all maternity and labour wards.
- Support Community Midwife Services, including guaranteeing minimum 30 minute appointments with new and expectant parents.
- Invest in the Health Visitor programme, ensuring there is sufficient workforce so that all parents receive their regular check-ups on time.
- Commit to reviewing the safety of maternity services in Scotland, including an urgent review of safe staffing levels and practices on maternity wards.

- Introduce mandatory menopause education for public sector employers, and require that menopause symptoms qualify for leave from work.
- Ensure menopause treatment and support is well-funded and access to medicines such as HRT is secured.
- Develop enhanced support pathways for women with cardiovascular risk factors such as PCOS and pre-eclampsia, including through third-sector support.
- Decriminalise abortion and remove the 'two doctor rule' by bringing forward legislation that ensures there are no offences for anyone ending their own pregnancy.
- Expand abortion services in Scotland so patients are not required to travel to England, and retain the 12-week limit on telemedical abortion care, reducing the need for women to have to travel long distances in Scotland.

21 MENTAL HEALTH AND NEURODIVERGENCE CREATING A NEURO-AFFIRMING, STIGMA FREE SOCIETY

SCOTLAND IS EXPERIENCING A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS.

The ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the cost of living crisis and difficulties accessing support and treatment are all contributing to people's worsening mental health. The strain being put on services means that help is often only available when people are at a point of crisis.

The Scottish Greens will create a society where mental wellbeing is promoted and people who experience mental illness can access treatment when they need it. We will create an environment which supports people to be mentally well by ensuring they have access to warm and secure housing, enough money to live on, and fulfilling employment; and by ensuring people with mental illness can access treatment and support.

We will bring down waiting lists by investing in our existing mental health services, recruiting sufficient staff, while also expanding support in the community.

The Scottish Greens want to see parity between mental and physical health and to tackle the persistent stigma around mental illness, suicide and neurodivergence.

We will promote a society where neurodivergence is understood and valued, and where people can access the support they need, where self-diagnosis is accepted, by educating those working in our public services about the needs of neurodivergent people. However, we will also work to reduce

waiting lists so those who want a diagnosis can access it: we will establish a national pathway for diagnosis and assessment.

- Introduce legislation to underpin rights and support for people with learning disabilities, autism and neurodivergence.
- Year-on-year real-term increases, over the next Parliament, to mental health expenditure.
- Provide adequate and sustainable funding to Integration Joint Boards (IJBs) to ensure community mental health provision can be prioritised and expanded over the next parliamentary term.
- Introduce a network of free walk-in mental health support hubs across Scotland, building on the success of existing projects such as The Nook in Glasgow and Thrive in Edinburgh.
- Roll out dedicated Community Link Work Service to all CAMHS teams in Scotland.
- Increase funding for home-based treatment and inpatient care so no young person is sent far from home or placed in an adult ward due to lack of appropriate local services.
- Establish a national neurodevelopmental pathway which would deliver consistent assessment, diagnostic and postdiagnostic processes across Scotland.
- Adopt a multi-agency approach so the list of professionals able to work as clinical interviewers is expanded.
- Drive down waiting times for ADHD and autism assessments by rolling out a network of community hubs for assessment, diagnosis and post-diagnostic support.
- Introduce mandatory autism and ADHD training for health and social care staff, teachers and other relevant education staff, and police and justice services.

- Ensure that support in education, work and access to social security benefits are not dependent on diagnosis of conditions.

22 SOCIAL CARE A LIFETIME OF CARE

FOR TOO LONG, SOCIAL CARE HAS BEEN THE NEGLECTED PARTNER TO THE NHS. The contribution of carers is not properly recognised and too many are struggling to make ends meet. People are forced to sell their homes to pay for their or their relatives' care. The system is broken.

The National Care Service failed due to a lack of ambition – structural adjustments will not deliver the radical change Scotland needs.

The Scottish Greens' vision for social care is a system which is free at the point of need, where no one is forced into poverty due to their care needs. As a first step, we will end non-residential care charges. We will gradually end the outsourcing of social care to private companies by seeking opportunities to bring private care homes into public or community ownership, for example by supporting local councils to purchase failing care homes.

We acknowledge the need for people to have choice over their care however, and we will recognise the third sector as an equal partner in the delivery of social care and ensure they receive fair funding.

We want to see parity between health and social care and a truly integrated, joined up system which recognises the incredible contribution of paid and unpaid carers. We will invest in our workforce and raise the wage of social care workers as a priority.

- Work with councils and health boards to identify the immediate funding boost required to meet their most pressing demands, providing the breathing space needed to collectively identify a sustainable model for funding and delivering social care in an era of constantly increasing demand.
- End non-residential care charges as an immediate priority.
- Transfer failing care homes into public or community ownership so that the Scottish care home estate is transferred out of private ownership over time.
- Introduce a £15 per hour minimum wage for social care, and ensure this increases annually with inflation at minimum.
- Introduce collective sectoral bargaining across social care, starting with trade union recognition, to ensure workers are represented.
- Guarantee improved terms and conditions for workers, and an end to zero-hour and precarious contracts to provide wage and job security.
- Introduce ethical commissioning and end competitive tendering to ensure that care services are being provided on the basis of their quality, rather than 'value for money'.
- Guarantee all unpaid carers can fully benefit from their right to a break by establishing a national task force to oversee a national short breaks improvement plan, and by ensuring there is sufficient investment to deliver this right.
- Introduce health checks and access to flexible healthcare appointments for unpaid carers.
- Deliver pay parity between NHS and social care nurses.
- Deliver fair funding for the third sector, including sufficient, multi-year funding from the Scottish Government, and ensure this approach is embedded across all public sector funders.

- Call on the UK Government to reimburse Scottish third sector organisations for the cost of increased employer NICs, which are currently estimated at £75 million per year.

23 HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS A WARM, SAFE HOME FOR EVERYONE

EVERYONE DESERVES A PLACE TO CALL HOME. But millions of people in Scotland are now impacted by the housing emergency, stuck in unsuitable accommodation, unable to afford their own home. Decades of volume house building by private developers has failed to relieve the pressure on our housing system.

Rapidly building good quality social housing must be a top priority of the next Scottish Government. The homes we build have to be truly affordable, and in the places people want to live.

By building homes we are building communities. That's why we will introduce new standards to ensure that all developments must provide access to facilities such as local public services, play and green spaces and public transport, so that new communities thrive.

At the same time as we have unacceptable levels of homelessness, absentee property owners allow homes to lie empty, and developers sit on land that could be used to build more homes. That's why we will use the tax system to encourage second homes, holiday homes and vacant land owners to sell up, and empower local communities to force the sale or rent of long-term empty properties and land.

Along with a new human right to housing and targeted support for those most at risk of homelessness, these measures will ensure that we achieve our ambition of ending homelessness by 2040.

MORE HOMES, IN THE RIGHT PLACES

- Build at least 15,700 more social homes each year between now and 2031, and provide multi-year funding, which will give social housebuilders certainty.
- Give local Registered Social Landlords, including local councils, first right of refusal on purchase of properties sold under the disastrous right-to-buy policy, when they come on to the market.
- Give councils the power to force owners of derelict land and property to sell or rent it for housing.
- Continue to financially support the 'off the shelf' purchase of properties by local councils, so that these properties can be quickly brought into use as social homes.
- Support the development of alternative housing models, such as self-build, co-housing and housing co-operatives.
- Make it easier for local councils to block the use of land for purpose-built student accommodation that could be better used to provide long-term homes.
- Support councils to build more homes, and more of the right types of homes for their areas, by reviewing the way housing supply programmes are planned and funded.

BETTER QUALITY HOMES

- Require that all new homes meet net zero standards, be connected to zero-carbon public transport, not be built in flood risk areas, and provide green and growing space for residents and the local community.
- Ensure that where affordable housing is provided as part of a development, they are built to the same standard as

the rest of the development, such as having the same access to garden and play spaces.

- Drive higher standards in housebuilding by strengthening Building Standards powers and empowering local councils to refuse planning permission for developers with a track record of building sub-standard homes.
- Introduce a new universal Scottish Accessible Home standard which will require all new homes to meet high minimum disability accessibility standards. We will also require a minimum number of homes in new developments to have special facilities such as accessible wet rooms and hoists, and make it easier for people to get help to adapt their homes to make them accessible.
- Make it easier for people who live in tenements and other housing blocks to handle repairs, maintenance and energy efficiency improvements by reviewing tenement housing laws; making owners' associations a legal requirement; and establishing a loan fund for owners' associations to carry out essential works.
- Remove licences from poor-performing property factors.
- Work with campaigners, residents and local authorities to deliver fully funded repairs or rehousing for those affected by RAAC, ensuring that no resident faces costs or housing insecurity as a result.

ENDING HOMELESSNESS

- Underpin all our work to prevent homelessness with a statutory target to end homelessness by 2040 and a Housing First approach.
- Provide guidance and funding to ensure the new duties for public bodies to prevent homelessness is a reality, so that

public bodies can pro-actively support people to avoid becoming homeless.

- Provide secure, long-term funding for Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans and for proven measures like Housing First, which provides people with complex and multiple barriers a secure tenancy alongside voluntary, high quality support services.
- Urgently prioritise funding more and better temporary accommodation. The right to temporary accommodation and the right to not stay in unsuitable temporary accommodation for more than 7 days are not currently upheld in all cases.
- Develop statutory action plans for groups that are most at risk of homelessness, encompassing actions such as making the domestic abuse Fund to Leave permanent, so that financial hardship will never be the reason for people to stay in an abusive home.
- Consult on requiring social landlords to rent a specific percentage of their homes to homeless households.
- Press the UK Government to reverse its cruel cuts to Housing Benefits, including to its method of working out how much Housing Benefit should be paid, which is driving homelessness.

24 RENTERS' RIGHTS LOWERING RENTS & RAIDING RIGHTS

OVER THE LAST FIVE YEARS, THE SCOTTISH GREENS HAVE DELIVERED MORE FOR RENTERS THAN ANY OTHER PARTY IN THE HISTORY OF THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT:

- reintroducing rent controls for the first time in 40 years;
- delivering a rent freeze and evictions ban during the peak of the cost of living crisis;
- and introducing new rights for renters to decorate their homes and keep pets.

Greens will never stop working to ensure renters have high quality, safe and affordable homes.

But other parties have clubbed together to create exemptions from rent controls, allowing predatory landlords to charge ripoff rents. We need to go further to ensure councils are able to bring in meaningful rent controls, and that these can be used to drive down the cost of renting.

Not only are renters still paying too much, they are paying too much for too little. Greens will support councils to drive up the quality of rental homes in their areas by giving them new powers to penalise landlords for poor quality homes, and make it easier for renters to complain and get compensation when something isn't right.

And despite improvements, renters can still be removed from their home too easily. We will give those who rent more security such as protecting them against their home being sold from

beneath them, and restoring the scrapped ban on cruel winter evictions originally delivered by the Scottish Greens.

STRENGTHENING RENT CONTROLS

- Support councils to implement the rent controls won by the Scottish Greens as soon as possible.
- Restore the interim rent controls recklessly abolished by the SNP Government, and provide financial support for local councils to undertake the work necessary to introduce new rent controls.
- Abolish the Scottish Government's inflation-busting rent increases by capping rents in Rent Control Areas at the lowest of inflation or average earnings, up to a maximum of 6%. Where there is exceptional pressure on renters, empower councils to specify a lower cap, freeze rents or require a decrease.
- Allow local councils to remove from the landlord register any landlords who have issued illegal rent increases, and give councils the power to take action to prevent homelessness when a landlord is removed from the register.
- Introduce rent controls on student accommodation.

BETTER RIGHTS FOR RENTERS

- Empower renters to withhold rent or pay reduced rent when basic property safety, quality and energy standards are not met.
- Require landlords to put on public record past rent data, required safety checks and certificates, energy efficiency information, and their history of complaints and fines, so

renters can choose a reliable landlord of a safe and high quality property.

- Reform affordable renting options such as Mid-Market Rent, which is currently unfit for purpose, and scrap the forthcoming exemption of Mid-Market and Build-to-Rent properties from rent controls, introduced solely as a result of lobbying by profiteering landlords.
- Strengthen the role of tenants and local councils in the governance of Registered Social Landlords.
- Support tenant unions and national tenant-led campaigns, such as Living Rent, that seek to improve the quality and standard of housing and the treatment of tenants.
- Introduce powers for councils to protect tenants from homelessness when a landlord is removed from the landlord register.

SECURE, RELIABLE TENANCIES

- Increase the notice period for eviction to 4 months.
- Ban evictions based on the landlord selling or moving themselves or their family into the property for the first 12 months of the tenancy.
- Restore the ban on most evictions between November and March, which Scottish Green MSPs previously secured.
- Ensure landlords pay compensation equivalent to 2 months' rent where the tenant is being evicted for the property to be sold, re-rented or occupied by the landlord or their family.
- Offer greater rights and protections for renters when the landlord wishes to access the property for repairs or other works.

- Devolve the setting of landlord registration fees to councils, to allow them to reinvest in secure and reliable homes.

25 THRIVING COMMUNITIES

PUTTING POWER IN THE HANDS OF COMMUNITIES

THRIVING COMMUNITIES ARE THE FOUNDATION OF A FAIR, RESILIENT & DEMOCRATIC SCOTLAND. When people have real power over the places they live, communities are healthier, more prosperous and better able to respond to social, economic and climate challenges. But too often decisions are taken far from the communities they affect, civic space is shrinking, and communities are left navigating complex systems without the support or resources they need.

The Scottish Greens will rebalance power towards communities by embedding participation, transparency and local decision-making at every level of government. We will strengthen democratic infrastructure so that communities are not simply consulted, but actively shape planning, investment and public services. This means supporting deliberative democracy, honouring Local Place Plans, and ensuring planning serves public need rather than private profit.

Thriving communities also require healthy places: clean air, safe streets, accessible green space and vibrant town centres. We will give councils the tools to revive high streets, repurpose empty buildings, and ensure development contributes to wellbeing, climate resilience and nature recovery.

By investing in democratic capacity, civic space and place-based power, we will build communities that are confident, connected and equipped to thrive.

- Provide sustained, long-term funding for community organisations and intermediaries delivering essential local

services, such as local housing projects and operating community shops, pubs and meeting spaces.

- Defend civic spaces such as community centres and halls, ensuring communities have space to come together and organise.
- Strengthen compulsory purchase and compulsory sale powers so councils and communities can bring vacant and derelict land and buildings back into use, supporting local economies, employment and cultural spaces, and developing Community Wealth Building capacity.
- Support councils to revive town centres by repurposing empty commercial property into workspace, cultural and community uses.
- Deliver cleaner air in communities by supporting expanded Low Emission Zones, stronger monitoring, and action on engine idling and harmful emissions.
- Support local living and 20-minute neighbourhood approaches so people in urban, rural and island communities can access everyday services, green space and employment locally, reducing car dependency while reflecting different place-based realities.
- Require Local Place Plans to be honoured by local planning authorities, ensuring that they are given due weight by Scottish Government reporters, and support communities to develop plans where none exist.
- Deliver the new commitments in the National Planning Framework to create a nature-positive planning system that enhances biodiversity, supports climate adaptation and serves community wellbeing.
- Introduce a community right of appeal in planning where decisions depart from agreed plans or officer recommendations.

- Create a decentralised Design Academy for Communities, providing skills in facilitation, planning and democratic process design, as well as legal and other advice needed for communities to play a full role in public life.
- Embed the use of citizens' assemblies in public decision making, including by establishing a standing national Climate Assembly and supporting local and regional assemblies, building on the success of the Dunfermline City Assembly model.
- Pilot a Community Wealth Fund to support locally-owned green enterprise, including wealth generated from renewables.

26 LOCAL DEMOCRACY

REBUILDING DEMOCRACY FROM THE GROUND UP

OUR COUNCILS NEED REAL POWERS TO BUILD LOCAL COMMUNITIES WHERE EVERYONE CAN THRIVE.

Rebuilding local services can be the front line in restoring public trust and bringing hope back to our communities.

Scotland has one of the most centralised democracies in Europe. The Scottish Greens will support reform of local government so that decisions are made as close as possible to the people they serve.

Green MSPs have led progress on empowering councils to raise more money locally, creating visitor levy powers and raising council tax on homes that are left empty during a housing crisis. But we can and must go further.

We believe that councils should be able to raise at least half of their total funding needs locally without increasing regional inequalities. The best way to do this is to increase their general revenue-raising powers, because what works in one area will not necessarily work in another.

We believe councils shouldn't just deliver services: they should also direct how local economies work. The Scottish Greens will champion a major expansion in municipal ownership, in areas such as green energy, housing and transport, giving local communities a direct stake in a just transition.

And councils must be led by councillors who people can relate to and trust. We will continue to break down barriers to elected

office, and properly support councillors to represent their local areas through better pay and conditions.

- Empower councils to raise at least half of their total funding needs locally where that is possible, primarily through replacing the Council Tax and rolling out the proposals laid out in the Scotland's Finances chapter.
- Continue to develop a fiscal framework between local and national government so there is multi-year funding certainty. This will include rules around the share of total national funding which is provided to local government and its interaction with local revenue raising.
- Reaffirm the Verity House Agreement and its core principle of 'local by default, national by agreement'. We will begin a wide-ranging policy review to give real meaning to that, including looking at reducing directed spend, updating statutory duties, devolving additional powers to local councils, reviewing the role of the Scottish Reporter and relevant NDPBs, and ending unnecessary Ministerial vetoes over local decisions.
- Support the emergence of new local governance models, including island authorities and city region structures. Any new structures must have local consent and be democratically accountable.
- Reduce barriers to elected office, implementing all recommendations from the Scottish Local Authority Remuneration Committee in full and working towards remuneration that allows all councillors to do the role full-time.
- Reform the way vacancies in local council elections are filled, to protect representative multi-party nature of wards and reduce the cost of the increasing number of by elections in councils.

- Update licensing legislation so that broader issues can be considered when making local decisions, including public health, workers' rights and environmental standards.
- Reform the legal basis for councils to implement ethical procurement, boycott and divestment measures.
- Reform traffic management law to give councils the power to enforce local traffic contraventions, such as car-free streets around schools and speeding in 20mph zones, and allow councils to reinvest revenue in local priorities.
- Strengthen grassroots democracy, supporting new forms of citizen participation and decision making, including giving the power for communities to decide how money is spent in their area through more participatory budgeting.
- Produce new standards for community engagement across public bodies so that more people have their voices heard.
- Complete the Local Governance Review and Democracy Matters process, culminating in primary legislation to embed local democracy by default.

27 INDEPENDENCE AND DEMOCRACY FOR A FAIRER, GREENER SCOTLAND

SCOTLAND SHOULD BE AN INDEPENDENT COUNTRY.

The Scottish Greens have long supported independence, not as a destination in itself, but because of the opportunity it brings to create a fairer, greener, kinder Scotland. Decades of Tory austerity, and now Labour's shift to the right, has reinforced the fact that Scotland must be allowed to choose a different path.

The Scottish Greens have effectively and constructively played our role in devolved politics since the Parliament was reconvened over 25 years ago, achieving more than any other opposition party in that time. But our best efforts are still not enough to protect Scotland from the power-grab of Westminster and the spectre of a far-right government.

Only with independence can Scotland avoid being dragged into the UK's proxy wars, and rid our waters of nuclear weapons. Only with independence can we rejoin the EU, and replace the outdated and disgraced hereditary monarchy.

Only with independence can we fully redistribute the vast wealth hoarded by a tiny few and use it to end the scandalous levels of poverty in this wealthy country.

In the meantime, we must make full use of every power we have in Scotland to improve people's lives. Holyrood needs to show courage and be more ambitious for itself and for the people of Scotland. And we must take every opportunity to reform how our Parliament works so that it can truly represent the people of Scotland in a fair, equitable and inclusive way.

- Ensure the Scottish Parliament uses all its devolved powers to the full, maximising our ability to create better lives, stronger communities, and a cleaner environment for everyone in Scotland.
- Initiate the Section 30 process in the Scotland Act to call for the devolution of the remaining powers reserved to Westminster, including power over taxation, workers' rights, energy regulation, migration, and foreign affairs.
- Press for the Scottish Parliament to be ambitious and legislate in areas where the Scotland Act is ambiguous on devolved and reserved powers, including driving up pay and conditions for workers, and taxing wealth.
- Call on the UK Government to scrap the Internal Markets Act, which limits the Scottish Parliament's ability to make full use of its decision-making powers.
- Work with the devolved governments in Wales and Northern Ireland to establish a forum for real collaboration across the nations, and ensure that the UK Government is forced to come to the table and co-operate on cross-border matters.
- Develop a national Trust and Transparency Strategy to address corporate lobbying, influence and conflicts of interest.
- Devolve powers to regulate AI technologies to Holyrood, and in the meantime, increase transparency around the use of AI systems in public decision making by establishing a register of use.
- Update Scotland's Freedom of Information legislation, including allowing Parliament to extend the system to new bodies, working with other parties to ensure that a parliamentary committee leads this on a cross-party basis.
- Improve accountability of MSPs by introducing a power of recall for local voters.

- End the use of cash deposits for election candidates, instead requiring candidates to collect signatures to qualify for nomination.
- Automate voter registration to reduce barriers to voting, starting in schools, colleges and universities.

28 EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

FIGHTING FOR A FAIRER, GREENER WORLD

SCOTLAND HAS BEEN AN OUTWARD LOOKING NATION, and a force for peace, human rights and climate action at home and across the world. At a time when authoritarianism is on the rise and international law is increasingly disregarded, our responsibility to put these ideals into practice has never been more important.

The world needs a strong framework of international law and cooperation to address global challenges like the climate and nature emergency, the prevention of genocide and occupation, regulation of new and dangerous technologies, ending poverty and protecting human rights for everyone.

The Scottish Greens were instrumental in ensuring that Scotland was the first country in the world to pass a package of Boycotts, Divestment and Sanctions against Israel and companies complicit in its occupation of Palestine, but this has yet to be acted upon by the Scottish Government.

We have also successfully put pressure on the Scottish Government to stop providing public money to arms dealers that are profiting from occupation and genocide in Israel. This is a major step, hard won by the Scottish Greens, but still needs more action to put the decision into practice and to expand to withdraw all support for arms companies.

The climate emergency, widening global inequality, displacement of peoples and the persistence of armed conflict are not distant concerns — they shape lives and communities here in Scotland as well as globally every single day. Our

international policy must be coherent with domestic action, recognising that global justice and local wellbeing are inseparable, whilst addressing Scotland's historic legacy of colonialism and the slave trade.

Small nations can play an outsized role in advancing progressive change. By acting ethically, Scotland can help build alliances for peace, and contribute meaningfully to the reform of global institutions so they better serve people and planet.

NO GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR WAR CRIMES

- Ban the United States Military, and other governments involved in and facilitating war crimes and genocide, from using Scottish Government owned infrastructure, including Prestwick Airport and HIAL airports.
- End Scottish Government contracts with companies linked to the Russian war economy, including the £1.2bn TotalEnergies gas contract.
- End all Scottish Government support for the arms industry, including enterprise grants, free business advice, and global marketing deals.
- Address the over-reliance on US information technology, including in government contracts and digital platforms, which is a national security vulnerability. We will begin the long term task of addressing this vulnerability, and seek co-operation with the other governments of the UK and EU to build consensus.
- Ensure that Scotland's authorities take every opportunity to uphold international law, UN resolutions, warrants and rulings of the International Criminal Court, in holding accountable any individuals who are suspected of committing war crimes or crimes against humanity.

IN SOLIDARITY WITH PALESTINE

- Ensure that any Scottish resident complicit in war crimes through their service with the Israeli occupation forces is prosecuted under the International Criminal Court (Scotland) Act.
- Implement the Scottish Parliament's decision to endorse the global Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions campaign against Israel through measures including a total ban on public funding, grants and other government support for companies identified as complicit in Israel's crimes against Palestine and Palestinians.
- Push all public sector pension funds, including the Scottish Parliament Scheme, to divest from those same complicit companies.
- Impose financial sanctions on complicit companies through the Scottish Government's regulation-making power to impose surcharges on non-domestic rates.
- Issue guidance to businesses in Scotland which urges them to immediately cease trading with Israel, exactly as the Scottish Government did in relation to Russia in March 2022.
- Allow councils to join the BDS campaign by repealing the Thatcher-era law banning procurement decisions on the basis of geographical origin and other non-commercial considerations, such as complicity in human rights violations.

GLOBAL COLLABORATION

- Continue to develop Scotland's relationship with our European partners, preparing for the day when an

independent Scotland can gain full membership. We will seek the greatest possible participation for Scotland in appropriate forums for international cooperation, such as the World Health Organisation, the Nordic Council, the Arctic Council.

- Ensure Scotland's voice is heard globally through expanded diplomatic engagement and representation, including expanding Scotland's external representation networks to key global cities and regions, strengthening advocacy on climate, human rights and sustainable development.
- Ensure Scotland works towards a world free of nuclear weapons, including by committing to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, and amending the Marine Scotland Act to ban the movement of nuclear weapons through Scottish waters.
- Establish a Scottish Reparative Justice Fund to support racialised communities in Scotland, global climate justice initiatives and partnerships with Caribbean and African nations affected by Scotland's historic role in the slave trade.
- Support international calls for reparations for slavery and colonialism, including backing CARICOM's reparations framework.
- Provide direct support to the Tibetan Government-in-exile, such as financial support and digital record keeping, recognising their role as the legitimate democratic representatives of the Tibetan people.

TRADE AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Safeguard and expand Scotland's international development programme, including the International

Development Fund, the Climate Justice Fund and the Humanitarian Emergency Fund. We will use Scotland's voice to support a feminist and anti-colonial approach to international relations, and to work for global debt, finance and tax justice.

- Take an approach to international trade and investment which combines economic opportunities and respect for human rights, for example by supporting Scottish whisky producers to shift exports from the United States into more stable markets such as Canada.
- Ensure coherence across all Scottish Government activities to ensure we are not contributing to the same global crises we are trying to solve, for example by contributing to humanitarian support in warzones where the damage has been caused by arms dealers in receipt of Scottish Government funding.
- Use Scotland's trade links, including the Government's office in Beijing, to hold China to account over the persecution of Uyghurs, Tibetans, pro-democracy activists in Hong Kong, and others.

29 JUSTICE

BUILDING A SCOTLAND WHERE SAFETY, DIGNITY AND COMMUNITY THRIVE

SCOTLAND CAN BUILD A JUSTICE SYSTEM ROOTED IN CARE, HEALING & PREVENTION. We envision a Scotland where communities are safe because inequality has been dismantled, where harms are addressed at their roots, and where the climate and nature crises are treated as justice emergencies.

The Scottish Greens will place prevention, de-escalation, youth work, and trauma-informed practice at the heart of our approach to justice. We will reduce the prison population by investing in community justice, addressing trauma, tackling inequality, and ensuring every sentence has a clear purpose.

Ending gender based violence is a mission for all of society, but it starts with our criminal justice system. Recognising misogyny in Scots law, and funding violence prevention services in local councils, schools and community organisations, will help us end violence against women and girls for good.

Our justice system must be accessible to everyone. Too many people are denied access to legal assistance because there are no solicitors available willing to take on legal aid or pro bono work. Tackling this requires sustained investment, collaboration across the system including training and support for legal aid providers, and a reversal of the erosion to legal aid that has happened over the last decade.

A Scotland built on care and prevention is safer, happier Scotland for all. Reversing the chronic underfunding of services

that actually prevent crime - housing, youth work, mental health, addiction services, education and community support - will help us transform the justice system from the ground up, and improve life for all.

- Introduce a Misogyny and Criminal Justice Bill, to tackle misogynistic harassment, incitement and abuse, including online.
- Decriminalise sex work to ensure sex workers are legally protected from exploitation, trafficking and violence and have improved access to support and healthcare.
- Enable groups and third sector organisations to raise public interest and human rights cases.
- Ensure that consumers are protected from exploitation by Third Party Litigation Funding providers.
- Defend the right to protest by developing a new National Protest Rights Code, which ensures peaceful climate activists, trade unionists and community protestors are not criminalised, but empowers action to be taken quickly against those inciting hate or violence against protected groups.
- Undertake a citizens' assembly to develop proposals to reform our justice system, including the transformation of our police and prison services in line with our principles of rights-based and prevention-focused public services.

REFORMING LEGAL AID

- Restore and expand access to justice with the introduction of a Legal Aid Reform Bill that promotes a mixed model, supports early intervention and prevention, reverses legal aid erosion and secures legal aid provision across the country, simplifies tribunal and judicial processes, and

provides person-centred support and support for community legal advice services in line with the Just Law/JustRight model.

- Increase the financial eligibility thresholds for Legal Aid Advice and Assistance, uprating all thresholds in line with inflation, and remove means testing for Legal Aid for people experiencing domestic violence and those at risk of street homelessness.
- Expand access to legal aid and advice, independent advocacy and legal representation for survivors of rape, domestic abuse, trafficking, child abuse, and violent crimes.
- Overhaul the legal aid payment structure to ensure the profession remains viable and accessible.
- Ensure long-term, inflation-proof funding for rape crisis centres, women's refuges, BME-led services, LGBT+ survivor support and disabled women's organisations, ensuring that independent legal advice, advocacy and representation are available to those who need them.

PRISONS

- Expand the presumption against short prison sentences, for non-violent offenders in particular, instead increasing funding for rehabilitative alternatives to custody, and fully implement Housing First for people leaving prison to prevent homelessness and reoffending.
- Reduce the remand population by strengthening alternatives to remand, investing in bail supervision services and supported accommodation, and introducing a legal presumption against remand.
- Withdraw Crown immunity from prisons to ensure accountability.

- Introduce special provision for offenders who are mentally ill and for women who are pregnant or have young children, so that imprisonment is a last resort and specialist support is in place.

POLICE AND FIRE SERVICES

- Reduce police call-outs and implement a trauma informed approach by transferring mental health crisis responses from Police Scotland to properly funded community crisis services.
- Ensure police resources are effective at tackling both serious organised crime & cybercrime.
- Support the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to expand into frontline climate emergency response, ensuring all fire stations are actively equipped for flooding, wildfire and extreme-weather response, and that fire fighters are protected from toxic contamination and other health risks at work.

30 LAND REFORM

THIS LAND BELONGS TO ALL OF US

LAND IS POWER, AND FOR TOO LONG, THAT POWER HAS BEEN CONCENTRATED IN TOO FEW HANDS.

Scotland has a population of 5.5 million, yet half our country is owned by around 400 people: a tiny minority of aristocrats, absentee billionaires, and international corporations – some so secretive that their own neighbours don't even know who they are.

The Scottish Greens believe this isn't inevitable. It's a political choice. And political choices can be changed.

Everyone should benefit from the land around them and have a meaningful say in how it is used. Fragile rural communities can be revitalised by new inhabitants and fairer land use, but only when monopoly landowners no longer hold unchecked power over housing, livelihoods, and local economies.

Urban communities, too, deserve far greater support to own and shape spaces in towns and cities. Where communities have taken ownership – from the Isle of Eigg to Glasgow's Kinning Park Complex – we see what's possible: affordable houses, thriving communities and renewed hope.

Our vision is clear: land must be a shared asset for the common good, not a commodity for a privileged few. At a time of climate and nature emergency, how our land is owned and managed matters more than ever. The Scottish Greens will fight for transformative land reform – for bold legislation that diversifies land ownership, strengthens community right to buy, and finally addresses urban land reform.

- Deliver a radical Land Reform Bill to limit how much land can be owned by any individual or company to a maximum of 500 hectares, unless it can be proved that ownership will make a significant contribution to the common good.
- Introduce Compulsory Sale Order powers to force the sale of sites that have been consistently left vacant and derelict in cities, towns and rural areas.
- Apply a Public Interest Test on those who want to purchase large areas of land, which would exclude overseas owners and overturn the concentration of land ownership in the hands of a few.
- Empower communities to take over ownership of more land by updating Community Right to Buy legislation to make it easier.
- Expand the opportunities for communities to manage more sites that are critical for tackling the climate and nature emergencies, including woodlands and rewilding sites, local energy projects, and opportunities for hutting and nature connection.
- Protect the public's right to roam, which has opened up Scotland's great outdoors to all for more than two decades.
- Ensure that spending time in Scotland's outdoors is accessible and affordable for disabled people and minority ethnic groups, investing in transport infrastructure to support this.
- Improve transparency about who owns and receives public subsidies for managing Scotland's land, through completion of Scotland's Land Registry and creating a comprehensive and publicly-accessible online map.

- Carry out a review of succession law to ensure the inheritance of landholdings does not contribute further to Scotland's monopoly of landownership.

31 OUR WATERS, SEAS AND COASTS HEALTHY WATERS FOR THRIVING COMMUNITIES

HEALTHY, THRIVING WATERS ARE A CRUCIAL PART OF SCOTLAND'S FUTURE. By protecting and restoring large portions of our seas, whilst simultaneously supporting sustainable, community-focused fishing methods, we can ensure our coastlines will be home to vibrant communities for generations to come.

For too long, our waters have suffered as a result of poor governance. The Scottish Greens will put the long-term health of ecosystems and communities at the heart of every marine decision, so both people and the planet can have a future. Central to this system will be community-led decision making, so that each of our unique marine regions will be managed in a way that chimes with local factors.

Our ambition is to have a marine environment that is free of pollution, from source to sea. Rivers, lochs and wetlands are vitally important habitats that can deliver benefits for people, climate and nature. We will protect them with a Clean Water Act that will include full monitoring of sewage overflows and measures to prevent chemicals from entering our waters.

We recognise that both flooding and droughts are expected to become more frequent over the coming decade and managing freshwater resources will become an increasingly important part of our adaptation to climate change. We will facilitate better freshwater management by protecting and restoring areas around rivers and lochs, which will lead to better water availability, natural flood defences and benefits for nature.

The Scottish Greens are not afraid to stand up to the huge international corporations that threaten our waters with industrial-scale fish farming. We will pause new salmon farms and the expansion of existing ones until strict fish welfare and mortality rules are met.

- Protecting and recovering our fish stocks by designating 30% of Scotland's inshore waters as low impact fishing zones, where destructive practices including bottom trawling and scallop dredging are banned.
- Urgently consult on implementing the protective measures for the marine environment and key marine features that have already been designated in law but yet to be enacted.
- Put coastal communities at the heart of marine management, and give them greater say over fisheries management and marine spatial planning, including planning applications for new fish farms and offshore energy installations.
- Redistribute fishing quotas so that wealth generated by fishing businesses is more equally distributed, sustainable practices are rewarded and coastal communities see the benefit.
- Commission an independent review of the Marine Directorate with the aim of ensuring it is transparent, efficient and properly resourced.
- Support sea rewilding initiatives, such as the creation of native oyster reefs and seagrass plantations, to restore marine ecosystems and create jobs.
- Introduce a Clean Water Bill that will ensure all of Scotland's rivers and lochs are clean and safe for nature, swimming and recreation. We will require 100% monitoring of sewage overflows, accompanied by statutory

action requirements, and tighter controls on use of chemicals in and around our waterways.

- Provide funding and support for the restoration of river catchments at a regional scale working collaboratively with land managers and other stakeholders, taking forward actions to restore nature to reduce flood and drought risks, tackle pollution from agricultural run-offs and other contaminants that threaten the health of our rivers.
- Develop freshwater 'wildlife corridors' that support nature restoration, as well as deliver positive flood and drought management outcomes.
- Review government funding to local councils to manage flooding, ensuring they can deliver the best outcomes as well as directing more funding to nature-based flood protection measures to manage high rainfall in built-up areas – such as installing green roofs on public and community-owned buildings.
- Pause new salmon farms or the expansion of existing sites until the industry demonstrably improves fish welfare, reduces mortality rates and escapes, and tackles chemical and plastic pollution.
- Give regulators greater powers to shut down fish farms that fail to meet welfare and environmental requirements.

32 FOOD AND FARMING LOCAL, HEALTHY FOOD FOR ALL

SCOTLAND CAN BE A PLACE WHERE EVERYONE CAN AFFORD A NUTRITIOUS DIET, WHERE FOOD DOES NOT HAVE TO TRAVEL FAR FROM FIELD TO PLATE. Scotland's agriculture can also work in closer alignment with the natural world so that more of what we eat is produced in a way that works in partnership with our planet, with farms and crofts making important contributions to nature restoration.

The Scottish Greens will tackle food poverty, ensure supply chains are fair, and support food producers to perform their critical role. We will do this by building community food infrastructure, loosening supermarkets' grip on food policy, and ensuring support schemes pay farmers for the food and other public goods they produce.

Crofters and farmers must be equipped with the skills and tools they need to grow our food sustainably. We will implement a farmer-led education and knowledge transfer system for existing farmers and the growers of the future.

The food we eat is crucial to our future climate, wellbeing and economy. By encouraging plant-based diets and supporting locally-based market gardens to supply a greater proportion of our fruit and vegetables, we can improve people's health while reducing our climate impact and creating more opportunities for people to enter food production.

- Put nature-friendly farming at the heart of Scotland's agriculture sector by creating a 'Transition Insurance Fund' for farmers so that they have the confidence to shift

to sustainable, regenerative food production. This will replace the bulk of the current farming subsidies and shift the payments system so that farmers who produce food in nature-friendly ways receive a greater share of subsidy support.

- Restore funding to Scotland's internationally renowned agricultural research institutes, so that food producers can adapt in the face of a changing climate.
- Ensure the continued rollout of a national pipeline of farmer-led skills development to support the transition to regenerative and sustainable farming and food production, for existing farmers and new entrants.
- Pilot a scheme for providing direct support to market gardens through the rural payments scheme.
- Make Scotland a friendlier place to work for seasonal agricultural workers by addressing housing and employment issues.
- Call for the UK Government to devolve the Groceries Code Adjudicator, in order to introduce tougher regulation of supermarkets and their supply chains to tackle high food prices and ensure a fair treatment of food producers.
- Ensure the public sector leads the way in driving ethical consumption and encouraging plant-based diets by promoting local, organic and plant-rich requirements into procurement contracts.
- Support public and community-led diners and cafes so that anyone can get a healthy meal at an affordable price.
- Support councils to deliver local Good Food Nation plans which are meaningful, actionable, and ensure all areas of society play their role in making Scottish food more affordable, local and healthier.

- Reduce food miles by creating local food hubs and promoting co-operatives and other collaborative models for small producers such as local veg box schemes.
- Deliver a farm-to-fork plan for ending avoidable food waste including ending perverse incentives that make it cheaper to send edible food for energy or animal feed than to use it to feed families.
- Support the development of a sustainable Scottish wool and textiles sector, through the development of a national Wool Strategy and investment in local producers, designers and processors.
- End the need for food banks by ensuring people can access and afford good food locally, boosting incomes and embedding preventative 'cash first' approaches where everyone has the money they need to eat a healthy diet.

33 ANIMAL WELFARE

A SCOTLAND WHERE EVERY ANIMAL IS TREATED WITH RESPECT

SCOTLAND CAN BECOME A WORLD LEADER IN ANIMAL WELFARE. Together, we can create a cruelty-free space where wildlife is respected, animals can lead a dignified existence, and where all life is treated as precious.

Pets are central to many people's lives. But all too often the bonds between domesticated animals and humans are exploited for profit. We will encourage breeding practices that put pet health front and centre, and ensure better prevention and education measures to further enhance pet wellbeing, reduce the number of dog attacks and stop abusive trends.

We are committed to working with farmers to ensure all animals in their care can lead the best lives possible. Industrial-scale systems that treat animals as numbers instead of sentient beings will be outlawed. All farming methods will be governed by species-specific welfare regulations and sentience legislation that reflect the latest science.

Scotland is a nation of animal lovers. By placing our compassion, empathy and kindness at the heart of our laws, our nation can take great pride in leading by example on the international stage.

- Review and update Scotland's animal welfare laws to take account of the latest scientific understanding of animals' sentience, agency and welfare needs, as well as expanding the range of species protected under law.

- Make the laws protecting wildlife easier to enforce by reviewing, modernising and consolidating wildlife legislation into a single, consistent Act with ethical principles at its heart.
- Ban electric shock collars for cats and dogs to reduce needless suffering during training.
- Clamp down on the trade in exotic pets so that animals are left to thrive in their ideal habitats, with better regulation of the sale of exotic animals online and in pet shops as well as new legislation to clarify the species that can be kept safely and fairly in a home environment.
- Roll out a new public education campaign so that people are better informed about the welfare needs of exotic species and the level of care they require.
- Bring in tougher rules around fireworks to minimise stress for all animals.
- Phase out harmful agricultural practices, including the abuse of antibiotics to stimulate unnatural growth, the use of farrowing crates for pigs and cages for chickens, as well as the killing of day-old male chicks.
- Accelerate a transition to high-welfare nature-friendly animal farming, with new regulation supporting livestock with plant-rich diets, cage-free rearing, and calf-at-hoof dairying, as part of broader regenerative farming practices.
- Make Scotland a world-leader in farm animal welfare and fight moves by the UK Government to sign us up to trade deals that undermine our high standards.

34 RURAL AND ISLAND SCOTLAND BUILDING A FUTURE WHERE RURAL AND ISLAND SCOTLAND FLOURISHES

SCOTLAND'S RURAL COMMUNITIES ARE THE BACKBONE OF OUR NATION. Scotland's rural communities face mounting pressures: depopulation, inadequate public transport, the closure of essential services, isolation, and the cost of living crisis hitting harder where incomes are lower and costs are higher.

But rural and island Scotland holds the keys to our future prosperity. From renewable energy to sustainable and regenerative food production, from marine stewardship and nature restoration to rural innovation, these communities can lead Scotland's transition to a greener, fairer economy.

The Scottish Greens believe rural and island communities deserve more than managed decline. We will invest in the infrastructure, services, and opportunities that allow people to build good lives wherever they live.

We will support farmers, crofters and land managers, alongside fishers and others who work at sea, to work with nature, not against it, ensuring our land and seas can sustain both people and planet for generations to come. We will ensure everyone can access affordable housing, reliable and fast connectivity, and quality public services regardless of their postcode.

Over the last five years, the Scottish Greens have secured much-needed investment in affordable rural and island housing, nature restoration and expanded community ownership. Now we need to go further. Our plan will revitalise rural and island

economies, restore nature, reconnect communities through better transport, and ensure rural and island voices are heard in every decision affecting their future.

- Embed a Rural First approach to infrastructure investment, prioritising harder-to-reach communities including island communities, and ensuring policy and funding decisions are island-proofed from the outset.
- Introduce a Rural and Island Services Guarantee ensuring every community has access to essential banking, public transport and childcare within a reasonable distance.
- Guarantee high-quality healthcare through free and direct NHS delivery of dentistry in rural and island communities, starting with a pilot to address the current dentistry shortage in Shetland.
- Provide baseline funding for childcare provision in small communities and review rural childcare provision to ensure wraparound care is available to all.
- Support rural communities' access to maternity services, by ensuring safe staffing levels on midwife-led maternity units and better funding for community-led maternity care to deliver routine appointments and support home births in rural areas.
- Fully utilise nurses and allied health professionals to ensure primary and routine healthcare is delivered locally in rural and island settings as far as is possible.
- Introduce a national £2 fare cap for bus services and invest in rural railways and ferry links, including opening new routes while working towards free bus travel for all.
- Deliver a Rural Housing Revolution with 2,700 new social homes in rural and island communities and tackling long-term empty properties to prioritise local housing needs over second homes and holiday lets. We will also

support wider rural and island specific housing solutions, including community-led housing, local housing needs and demands assessments, flexible building standards, and funding models that reflect small scale, higher build costs and supply chain constraints.

- Fully embed the 'Polluter Pays' principle, with financial penalties for pollution and habitat damage, ringfenced for environmental restoration and the creation of a National Marine Litter Clean-up programme, recognising the disproportionate burden faced by island communities.
- Support farmer-owned, sustainable food supply chains through better support across rural and island communities, like the creation of local food hubs, regional processing sites and small abattoirs.
- Create rural jobs and ensure skills and training opportunities for our young people through expanding the Nature Restoration Fund and delivering sustainable multi-year funding to our two UNESCO biospheres.
- Increase the resilience and diversity of our forests and forestry sector, supporting local businesses, job creation, and training opportunities through more active management of forests.
- Develop Areas of Linguistic Significance in consultation with local communities so that areas with Gaelic speaking populations effectively receive the support required to keep the language growing.

35 ARTS AND CULTURE A THRIVING AND RESILIENT CULTURAL SECTOR

SCOTLAND'S ARTS AND CULTURAL OFFERING IS TRULY WORLD CLASS. But if we don't take action fast, access to the creative arts risks being the luxury of the wealthiest few.

Much-loved grassroots music venues are closing. Libraries are disappearing. Community projects can't keep the lights on. Our creative thinkers, makers, artists and practitioners are struggling to make ends meet.

Our cultural sector and creative industry could be the backbone of a fairer society. Through arts and culture we can transform our communities, economy and climate, and build a better Scotland that everyone can enjoy.

We want to see transformative investment in our arts and culture, to support the next generation of future artists, makers and creative thinkers, and to make sure everyone has access to affordable arts and culture in Scotland.

We want to fix deep inequalities in the industry – improving access for underrepresented groups, whilst protecting our cultural institutions from the fake outrage of anti-equality forces in politics and the media.

We want to improve the rights of cultural workers – ensuring better pay, conditions and job security across the board, as well as protecting the creative rights of our artists from the hands of big tech and unregulated AI.

And we want to make sure that Scotland's arts and cultural output reflects the true diversity of our country – platforming all the languages of Scotland and celebrating the work of New Scots.

- Bring forward a Culture Bill to make the legislative changes needed to deliver our ambitious programme to rebuild our cultural sector, including provision of ongoing and long term multi-year funding.
- Invest in our grassroots venues and community spaces by introducing a stadium tax – a £1 levy on tickets for all arts, cultural and music events over 2,500 capacity. We will legislate for local councils to have the powers to administer the levy and collect funds, and will consult on a redistribution mechanism to ensure smaller and rural councils do not lose out on crucial funds.
- Protect free access to Scotland's museums and cultural assets, and review national funding to ensure a fair distribution across the country. We will establish an emergency fund to protect local sites from cuts, closures and reduced hours.
- Support greater community involvement in the management of Scotland's historic and cultural sites, through the creation of community oversight boards, particularly in rural and island communities.
- Introduce new conditionality of public funding to Scotland's museums and cultural assets so that, where appropriate, all recipients should commit to research, interpret, and share the histories of Scotland's links to empire, colonialism, and historic slavery.
- Give every primary pupil the opportunity to learn and develop through expressive arts such as music, drama, visual art and dance.

- Recognise that libraries are considered an essential community service, and ensure that every community has access to a library – public, school, or mobile. We will ensure that local councils have consistent financial support to keep these community hubs open.
- Support the development and sustainability of festivals in Scotland’s rural and island communities, who face additional pressures from transport, accommodation and staffing needs, with a pilot Small Festivals Fund.
- Continue to support the development of both the Gaelic and Scots languages by completing the delivery of the Scottish Languages Act 2025 and ensure that Scots has equal status in law to Gaelic.
- Support the development of Sabhal Mòr Ostaig as the national centre for Gaelic language, education, and culture including by taking relevant action to ensure Sabhal Mòr Ostaig can be issued degree awarding powers.
- Deliver a national Gaelic and Scots youth development strategy, ensuring that any child or young person who wants to can access Scotland’s national languages.
- Improve pay and conditions for arts and cultural workers, including freelancers, by adding greater conditionality on public funding to ensure all workers receive the Real Living Wage.
- Demand urgent regulation of the use of generative artificial intelligence and copyright laws. We will use all available devolved powers to protect creators’ work from big tech’s plans for expanded data scraping.
- Support greater representation of people from minority ethnic backgrounds working in the arts, including by guaranteeing interviews and directly funding internship and apprenticeship schemes.

- Review items in the Scottish public collections with the aim to support the restitution and repatriation of looted or unethically acquired items.
- Support Scottish Broadcasting to deliver a more decentralised BBC in the current charter renewal process, and work with Ofcom to end the erosion of Scottish and local news.
- Ensure that new media platforms, such as social and online media, are held to minimum standards to tackle extremist and conspiracy content, and force more effective moderation by classifying them as publishers for the purposes of defamation law.
- Support our growing film and TV sector by establishing Screen Scotland as a standalone agency sharing backroom functions with Creative Scotland, and by redirecting all public spending on the screen sector currently delivered via other bodies such as Scottish Enterprise through this single agency.

36 SPORT

BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS TO SPORT

THE BENEFITS OF SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY ARE WELL-DOCUMENTED. Being active is good for our physical and mental health and can help us to form communities and reduce isolation and loneliness.

However, taking part in sport and physical activity is not always easy. Too many barriers remain, such as a lack of facilities and greenspace, prohibitive costs and poor public transport. The Scottish Greens believe access to space where people can walk, run, play, wheel and cycle is a right, not a privilege. We will deliver this by protecting our greenspace and investing in community facilities.

We see sport not as an afterthought but as a worthwhile investment, the return on which will be happier, healthier people who are able to take pride in Scotland's sporting achievements, either at the local or national level.

We believe sport should be about the joy in taking part in physical activity, not about huge profits or industries which harm our health and extract wealth from sporting achievements. That's why we want to see sport take place in an environment which promotes health, free from alcohol and gambling sponsorship.

We believe in the power of grassroots sports and fan ownership of clubs and we want to reduce the cost of attending sporting events. Everyone should benefit from watching their local or national team play.

- Provide real terms increase and multi-year funding for sports and active living organisations, to give greater stability to the sector.
- Introduce the Children’s Sports Card to provide affordable access to recreational or sporting activities for all school-age children, regardless of their economic and social circumstances.
- Work with Scottish Premier League football clubs to introduce a price cap of £25 for travelling away fans, ensuring no one is priced out of Scotland’s national game.
- Introduce free public transport for ticket holders at major sporting and cultural events.
- Ensure that all major sporting events are broadcast on free-to-air channels to encourage participation and unity.
- Widen access to exercise options in local communities for disabled people and embed disabled sport knowledge in public health and leisure settings.
- Empower fans to have an ownership stake in their football or sports clubs, through enacting the clause in the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act that gives fans the right to buy.
- Ensure provision of accessible, affordable and fit for purpose sports facilities, pitches, parks and greenspace is a mandatory consideration for any new major planning request, such as the building of a housing estate and protect existing provision from downgrading or closure.
- A new taxation on betting in sport to ensure that a proportion of all sports betting is re-invested into grassroots sport.
- Ban health harming industries, such as alcohol and gambling, from sponsoring sport.

VOTE SCOTTISH GREENS!

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