

Scotland can achieve gender equality



#GREENHOLYROOD VOTE GREEN 2016



Scottish Green Party Women's Network Manifesto



There are many ways in which women still experience considerable gender-based inequality in Scotland. Women have less access to resources, security, safety and influence, and sexism and discrimination are still commonplace in our society. Scotland can be proud of progress that has been made to enhance equality and protect diversity. However, we do not yet live in a country where everyone has equal access to security and opportunities.

Equality is a core Green value and we work to embed the aim of equality in everything that we do. Reducing inequality in society, in terms of income and wealth, race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation and religion, benefits all of us. More equal societies are more successful, both economically and socially. With more Green MSPs we can fight harder to tackle discrimination, to create safer communities and to promote equality and diversity.

The Scottish Green Party has an active history of campaigning for women's rights and access to opportunities, and our manifesto for the Holyrood 2016 election includes a range of commitments to push for gender equality in Scotland over the next parliamentary term. These include equal access to green jobs, investment in the care economy, targeted social security for women and legislation for gender equality. This Scottish Greens Women's manifesto expands on these plans to strengthen women's rights. We focus on the commitments we have made that impact most directly on equality for women and girls.



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The Scottish Green Party is committed to ensuring equality for all in society. Tackling inequality affecting women in Scotland must be undertaken from an intersectional perspective. The greater extent of inequality which affects those who are marginalised in multiple ways must be recognised, including for disabled women, minority ethnic women, refugees and asylum seeking women, LGBTI+ people, women living in rural areas and younger or older women.

"Gender inequality is one of the main barriers to economic equality in Scotland. And gender inequality enables gender based violence such as the economic violence experienced by women who bear the brunt of austerity, welfare cuts and unequal pay. Greens are committed to introducing a Gender Equality Bill and Equality Budgeting, to ensure that across Scotland, gender equality is prioritised in everything the public sector does."

MAGGIE CHAPMAN

SGP Co-convenor, spokesperson for Social Justice and MSP candidate for North East Scotland





EQUAL ACCESS TO GREEN JOBS

Scottish Greens are committed to a green economy that offers security, jobs and decent livelihoods for all, and does not pursue growth for growth's sake. An economy that breaks from austerity and prioritises fair pay will be vital if we are to improve gender equality in Scotland. We will push for the creation of 200,000 jobs in sustainable industries in Scotland, through wide-scale transition into renewable energy generation, design and research. A crucial element of this will be to ensure equal access to these opportunities, including for diverse groups of women.

Commission on gender and racial occupational segregation

We will back a commission on gender and racial occupational segregation. This would tackle issues that see women and people from minority ethnic communities in low-paid, insecure work that underpins the gender pay gap and relative poverty for certain minority ethnic communities. It would report on ways to ensure that job creation in green sectors does not entrench gender inequality in science, technology and engineering and to address the high level of gender and racial segregation in the current Modern Apprenticeships scheme.

Fair pay

We believe that no-one should be paid poverty wages, and that the gender pay gap must finally be eliminated. Women working part-time in Scotland, often because of caring roles, currently earn 33.5% less per hour than men in full-time employment. We will campaign to make government business support available only to those companies who pay the Living Wage, avoid zero-hours contracts, recognise unions, have fair wage ratios, pay people of all genders equally and are environmentally responsible.

Gender equality in Business scheme

Too many people are marginalised in the labour market, including unpaid carers, disabled people, women, LGBTI+ people and those from minority ethnic groups. For disabled women, minority ethnic women and others this disadvantage is often multiplied. Green MSPs will support calls for an accredited Gender Equality in Business scheme to incentivise gender-sensitive employment practices, such as flexible working, and to tackle sexism, transphobia and other inequalities in the workplace.

Abolish employment tribunal fees

Women routinely experience discrimination in the workplace. 54,000 women may be forced out of their jobs in Britain each year due to pregnancy and maternity discrimination. We also have less access to the resources needed to challenge this discrimination, as demonstrated by the 87% drop in sex discrimination cases in Scotland since fees for Employment Tribunals were introduced in 2013. Green MSPs will push for Employment Tribunal fees to be abolished. This will help to tackle workplace discrimination related to maternity leave and help women to exercise their maternity rights at work.

THE CARE ECONOMY

There are over three-quarters of a million unpaid carers in Scotland, as well as those employed in the social care sector, providing daily invaluable support across all generations. Care work is essential for our society and economy, but it is undervalued and under-paid. It is also primarily undertaken by women, and this drives economic and social gender inequality in Scotland. Around 70% of unpaid care work is provided by women in the UK and women account for over 80% of the workforce in caring occupations. Greens MSPs will fight for greater recognition of Scotland's carers, and for increased financial and practical support.

Investing in care workers

We want caring professions to be valued and considered an attractive career by people of all genders. Green MSPs will campaign for all care and support workers to be paid significantly above the Living Wage. In 2016, Green councillors in Edinburgh proposed a funded plan to pay a 'Living Wage Plus' of £9 an hour to social care staff. Better conditions for staff are a vital foundation for a better social care service. Green MSPs will demand improved working conditions for social care workers, such as paid travel time, sick leave, skills training and guaranteed hours.

Carers' rights

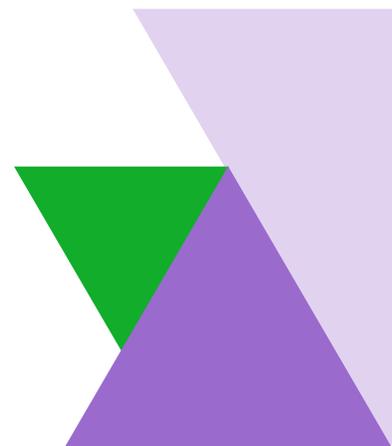
Green MSPs will fight for a better deal for unpaid carers. Women are twice as likely to give up paid work in order to care for disabled or older relatives and four times as likely to do so in order to provide 'sandwich care' for children and older people. This has an enormous impact on women's health, wellbeing and security, as well as access to education, fulfilling employment and other opportunities. We will campaign for adequate resources to fully implement the Carers Act and to ensure that needs are met with quality support such as replacement care, short breaks, health checks and concessionary travel for carers on income support. We will also back the creation of an independent social care tribunal system to help carers and those they care for to realise their existing rights.

Early years education

Early years education plays a vital role in tackling women's underemployment and access to education. Green MSPs will help tackle educational inequality at the earliest stage by working with local authorities to deliver meaningful access to a GTCS-qualified teacher in every nursery and 20 hours of early-years education per week. Greens will focus on delivering early years education that is of high quality, child-centred and adequately flexible for parents who work or study part-time.

Social care funding

Social care supports many thousands of people to lead a more independent life but funding is stretched to breaking point. Older people, disabled people and their carers – predominantly women – are at greater risk of poverty as a result. We recognise that providing universal social care will require significant public investment. However, the social and human cost of failing to invest in care services would be much larger. Green MSPs will advocate for a strategy that works towards universal social care free at the point of use.



SOCIAL SECURITY

Universal Credit

At present, joint awards of Universal Credit will be paid to one member of the household. This will discriminate against women who have less access to independent resources than men and are much more likely to experience financial abuse. Green MSPs will fight for individual payments of Universal Credit in Scotland, which will support women's access to income and safety. We will also support the option for more frequent instalments of Universal Credit, the preferred choice for many women who manage household budgets.

Maternity support

Green MSPs will push for a weekly 'top-up' to Child Benefit, which would have a positive impact on lifting women and children out of poverty. We will push to expand the Sure Start Maternity Grant scheme with increased payments, awards for second and further children, and extended eligibility to help support pregnant women. We will also campaign for funding for health visitors and midwives to work with women to claim financial entitlements, which would bring benefits to lone mothers in particular.

Carers' benefits

Three quarters of carers in receipt of Carers' Allowance (CA) are women. Greens will campaign for a 50% increase in CA to £93.15 per week. We will explore the creation of a Young Carers' Grant and will support a redesign of CA to include a lower threshold for hours of care provided and a premium for people who care for more than one person or provide high-intensity care. Any increase in payments will require a fair settlement with the UK Government and local authorities to guarantee that such an increase does not reduce other benefits payments or increase care charges.

Employment support

The UK's largest employment support scheme, the Work Programme, has failed to deliver for the people who need it. This includes different groups of women. Green MSPs will push for a new scheme that is delivered on a non-profit basis, contracted locally to the public and third sector, and which recognises the value of voluntary work. Such a scheme would address barriers to accessing work on account of age, disability, race, ethnicity, gender and sexuality. Existing employability programmes also replicate patterns of gender stereotyping and segregation in the labour market. We would work to address this within a service that supports diverse groups of women, including lone mothers, unpaid carers, disabled women, minority ethnic women, refugee women and women experiencing domestic abuse.



"Early years education and quality childcare are the foundation of learning. Scottish Greens recognise that childcare provision also plays a hugely important role in tackling women's underemployment and access to education. This is why we emphasise the quality and flexibility of childcare, as well as the number of hours."

ISLA O'REILLY

SGP spokesperson for Education and Lifelong Learning and MSP candidate for Highlands & Islands

UNLOCKING POWER AND PROTECTING RIGHTS

Scottish Green MSPs will fight for radical land reform, community empowerment and redistribution of power in Scotland. Ensuring that redistribution of power addresses different forms of inequality is a key priority for Scottish Greens. Green MSPs will work to empower women and other marginalised groups, and to ensure that everyone in Scotland is able to realise their rights. Men own more land, property and assets than women or those of other genders, and also have more access to decision-making in local development – we want to level the playing field. We will ensure that our efforts to democratise land laws, unlock community enterprise, develop a fair property tax system and empower citizens also promote gender equality.

Working with communities

The vast majority of Scotland’s population has poor access to resources, opportunities and security compared with those who are privileged and powerful. Green MSPs will prioritise the goal of equality across all of our parliamentary work. We will work together with those whose chances in life are reduced because of class, race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief to develop our plans for an equal Scotland.

Human rights law

Fundamental rights for all must be safeguarded. Green MSPs will strongly oppose any repeal of the Human Rights Act, advocate for a Bill of Rights to strengthen our civil liberties, and support the incorporation of international treaties into Scots law. This will entail the incorporation and full

implementation of the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (‘the Istanbul Convention’).

Reproductive rights

Green MSPs support women’s legal right to choose abortion and will work to ensure that reproductive rights are protected in Scotland. In 2016, women can still be prosecuted for having an abortion without permission from two doctors. We will push for abortion to be removed from the criminal justice system and treated as all other healthcare issues. In the meantime, we will campaign to improve services, access and information regarding abortion for women in all areas of Scotland, and to address inequalities for low-income women and younger women.



MAINSTREAMING EQUALITY



Social justice issues are not prioritised at the highest level of Scottish politics. This is despite widespread recognition of the moral imperatives to reduce inequality and the benefits that this would bring to our economy and our society. We need to integrate gender and other forms of equality as key objectives in all policymaking, and create accountability for doing so. With more Green MSPs we can have a bigger impact on tackling discrimination, and promoting equality and diversity.

Gender Equality Bill

Gender inequality is deeply entrenched in Scotland's economy, politics and culture. Despite some progress, the rate of change is incredibly slow. As a result, diverse groups of women, including disabled women, refugee women, unpaid carers, older women and single parents experience discrimination, poverty and insecurity. LGBTI+ people – including trans people and those of minority gender identities – are also significantly affected by gender inequality. Green MSPs will support development of a Gender Equality Bill to drive progress against all gender inequality. This would enshrine existing commitments in law and increase accountability. It could include legal targets for the provision of public services on which many women depend and which are crucial for equality.

Equality budgeting

Public spending must reflect Scotland's policy commitments to tackle inequality. We will push to improve equality impact assessment and budget analysis, which take stock of how public policy affects

those protected under equality law. Equality issues must be embedded in all resource allocation and policy development, and links between policy and budgeting must be clear. Scottish Greens support comprehensive gender budget analysis to show the impact of department budgets and tax-raising on gender equality, and to guide subsequent decision-making. For instance, there is considerable inequality in wages in Scotland and a large majority of the highest earners are men. Our redistributive taxation proposals will seek to level the playing field – tackling inequality, including that which is gender-based.

Public sector equality outcomes

Scotland has the power to lead by example across the public sector. We will push for better compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty, stronger Scottish-specific duties and investment in the Equalities and Human Rights Commission in Scotland to improve equality outcomes across Scotland's public bodies. Green MSPs will also continue to push for the devolution of equalities law.

FAIR REPRESENTATION



Fair and diverse representation in public life is a matter of democracy and leads to better outcomes for everyone. But men are over-represented across all areas of public life in Scotland. At the time of writing, men make up 76% of local councillors, 63% of MSPs and 79% of public board chairs in Scotland. Representation for diverse groups of women and trans and non-binary people is vital to ensure that different perspectives and experiences are brought to decision-making tables that impact on all of our lives. We will encourage measures to increase the participation of all groups that are underrepresented in politics and public life.

Political representation

Green MSPs will lend full support to the One in Five campaign, which works to encourage, empower and increase political representation amongst disabled people in Scotland, and the Women 50:50 campaign, which is calling for legislative gender quotas for the Scottish Parliament, local government and public boards. We believe that an intersectional approach to achieving diverse political representation is vital – we need disabled women, minority ethnic women, people of all gender minorities, younger and older women around our decision-making tables. We will back measures that support this goal.

"I've had the privilege to work with many passionate, articulate and able women on a variety of campaigns. From campaigning to keep local schools and nurseries open, to ensuring the future of important assets and services like crèches, libraries, playing fields and sports facilities, women make a valuable contribution to their communities. Yet women remain under-represented in the decision making process in our town halls and our Parliament. This has to change and I look forward to continuing to work towards a truly representative and fully inclusive democracy."

ALISON JOHNSTONE

SGP spokesperson for Health, Wellbeing and Sport and MSP constituency candidate for Edinburgh Central and Lothian list

Gender quotas on public boards

The power to introduce gender quotas for public sector boards will be devolved to the Scottish Parliament over the next parliamentary term. At present only 36% of public board places are held by women and evidence from abroad shows that women's representation tends to stagnate at around this level without binding, mandated intervention. Green MSPs will support the introduction of 50% quotas for women on public boards.



JUSTICE

The Scottish Green Party stands for zero tolerance against all forms of discrimination. In order to reduce crime and violence we must increase social justice in Scotland – inequality and poverty are amongst the leading causes of offending. Green MSPs will focus on addressing these root causes of crime, tackling barriers to services, employment and participation in society, and defending access to justice for all as a fundamental human right.

Tackling gender-based violence

Violence due to gender inequality is endemic in Scotland. Domestic abuse and sexual violence are enabled by the barriers that prevent women and gender-nonconforming people from accessing resources, power and autonomy, and from realising their rights. In addition to our work to tackle the causes of gender inequality, Green MSPs will push for increased support for the work undertaken by the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit and for a sustainable, long-term funding plan to resource support services, including women’s aid groups and rape crisis centres.

Rights-based approach

We will call for more rights-based training for police and staff within the justice system on equality issues including hate crime, violence against women, trauma, and learning disabilities. As with all of our democratic institutions, diversity in the police force is crucial. We will encourage schemes to increase diversity in personnel across all levels of the police force and criminal justice system.

Access to justice

Access to justice for survivors of gender based violence is undermined by a number of key issues. We will work to establish a right to independent legal representation for women who have experienced domestic abuse, rape or sexual assault; remove means testing for Protective Orders; abolish the not proven verdict in Scottish law for all crimes; and implement medical examination guidelines. Our Green MSPs will work to ensure that geography and means are not barriers to accessing justice, and to enhance Legal Aid.

Sex work

People in the sex industry deserve equal rights and protection concurrent with all other Scottish citizens. We will advocate for the decriminalisation of sex work so sex workers can enjoy full legal protection from exploitation, trafficking and violence and access to better support and healthcare.





CULTURE AND SPORT

We believe that arts, culture and sport are not optional luxuries, but a profound part of the human experience. Green MSPs will work to remove the barriers – financial, physical, cultural and psychological – to accessing culture and sport. This includes overcoming gender inequalities that currently affect participation.

Funding to increase participation and diversity

Green MSPs will call for increased funding to Creative Scotland, Scotland's National Performing Companies and National Collections, enabling them to provide more opportunities for participation and outreach, and to target diverse audiences. This would include support for different groups of women to participate in creative industries.

Physical education

Greens MSPs will work with local authorities to provide quality sport and physical activity throughout the curriculum. Evidence indicates that fewer young women continue sport after school. Schools should offer a variety of sports to suit the needs of their pupils and there should also be the option of gender-segregated classes and a range of sports kit.

Community sport

As well as fun and enjoyment, sports clubs bring great benefits to people and society. Green MSPs will support the expansion of Scotland's sports clubs through support for volunteering, accessible facilities and funding to enable more women, LGBTI+ people, minority ethnic communities and disabled people to participate.

Gender equality in the media

Portrayal of women and gender minorities in the media has a profoundly negative impact on gender equality. Women are widely stereotyped in the print and broadcast media, and there is a lack of gender diversity on screen. Our MSPs will push for the creation of a Scottish watchdog to monitor and challenge the under-representation of women and gender minorities, gender stereotyping and the sexualisation of women and girls in the media.

"Scotland has a rich cultural heritage, from music and poetry to dancing and architecture; but it is not only our past creativity that is important to preserve. We can continue to create new cultural output to inform and represent our society today, and present a vibrant, welcoming face to the world."

ZARA KITSON
SGP spokesperson for Culture
and MSP candidate for Glasgow



Scotland can play an active, powerful and compassionate role in the world, promoting sustainable solutions, human rights, peace and democracy. This goes hand in hand with efforts to increase gender equality. Advocates of gender budget analysis argue that reduced spending on defence and war is crucial to balanced public spending that promotes sustainability and allows investment in social infrastructure, such as social care and childcare. In terms of Europe, the Scottish Greens Women's Network is campaigning for the UK to remain in the European Union.

Peace

The Scottish Green Party has long championed the causes of oppressed and dispossessed peoples. Green MSPs would support measures to curtail the global arms trade by cutting support to enterprises involved in arms sales to human rights abusers. We will encourage pension funds to divest from these enterprises and pursue every possible avenue to pressure Westminster into getting rid of Trident. We will actively campaign for the establishment of nuclear weapon free zones in Europe and the Middle East.

Scottish Green WomIN for EU membership

Women benefit from a range of EU protections and initiatives, including in terms of equal pay,

women's rights, pregnancy and maternity discrimination in the workplace, and action and funding to tackle violence against women. The Scottish Green Party and our Women's Network strongly believe that continued membership of the EU is in the best interests of everyone in Scotland. We will campaign for a 'Green In' at the upcoming referendum.

Solidarity against austerity

Unfortunately, Scotland's experience of ideologically driven cuts to public services, and the devastating impact this is having on women and children, is not unique in Europe. Green MSPs will join hands with peoples across the continent to oppose ideologically-driven economic austerity.

"Bolder progress on gender equality will mean progress for all in our society. With more Green MSPs, particularly Green women, we will push further and faster on issues like quality child care and better employment support to overcome the barriers women face."

KIRSTEN ROBB

SGP spokesperson for Youth and Women's Employment and MSP candidate for Central Scotland



EQUALITY FOR ALL



Disabled women

Disabled people still experience exclusion across social, economic and political life in Scotland, to the detriment of our society as a whole. Many disabled women face added disadvantages, such as poor access to childcare, an even wider gender pay gap and high rates of domestic abuse. We must work to break down the barriers that prevent disabled women from realising their rights. Scottish Greens will take a lead from disabled people's organisations to promote a co-produced Strategy for Inclusion which works towards equal access to resources, fulfilling employment, public services, and participation in politics and public life for all disabled people.

Minority ethnic women

Racial discrimination remains a crucial issue in Scotland, for UK-born individuals as well as for refugees and first generation migrants. People from Scotland's minority ethnic communities are significantly more likely to live in poverty, and employment and political representation rates are unacceptably low compared with white ethnic groups. For minority ethnic women this lack of access to employment and representation is amplified, and underemployment in low-paid sectors affects many women from certain communities. Our MSPs will support full implementation of the Racial Equality Framework for Scotland 2016-2030 and work to ensure these efforts are also aligned with gender equality policy.

Equality for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex (LGBTI+) people

There must be equality before the law, regardless of gender, gender identity or sexual orientation. We will back the campaign to reform gender recognition law in line with international best practice. We will call for a government-led review of legislation and services to identify inequalities for LGBTI+ couples and people of non-binary gender identities, and for legislation to make Civil Partnerships open to all couples. We will support the Time for Inclusive Education campaign, which promotes LGBTI+ inclusion in schools and will fight for resources and training to meet the mental health needs of LGBTI+ people.

Refugee and asylum-seeking women

Scotland can welcome refugees with open arms. We will continue to campaign for the UK Government to accept more refugees and asylum seekers, and for a system that accounts for women's gendered experiences of fleeing persecution and violence. Greens will push for resources to support community, civil society and charity action to aid integration and a bolder Scottish strategy for 'new Scots' based on dignity and respect. We will also campaign to close Dungavel Immigration Removal Centre. Detention should never be imposed on those who might suffer additional harm as a result, due to age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, health, or experience of rape or torture.

Older women

The majority of older people and those in pension poverty in Scotland are women. Our MSPs will propose a commission to explore how Scotland can develop an inclusive culture that allows older people to live healthy and independent lives. Green MSPs will campaign for a state pension that enables everyone to live with dignity, and for a Scottish supplement to be paid to all those not receiving the full State Pension. Meanwhile, many older women and their carers depend on social care to lead independent lives, but funding is at breaking point. We will push to empower local government to raise taxes, as an alternative to social care charging for those who can least afford it.

Rural women

Women in rural areas face particular challenges – a lack of transport links, problems with communications connectivity and fewer local services can lead to isolation, particularly for those with care duties. Green MSPs will push for broadband and mobile connectivity across all areas of Scotland, which will facilitate women to work from home. We will push for regulated buses,

publicly owned railways and free bus passes for unpaid carers. This will benefit women, who are more reliant on public transport than men and provide the majority of unpaid care. Our localisation agenda will also see local authorities better able to respond to local needs, reducing the postcode lottery that afflicts access to public services.

Young women

Young women face particular challenges and forms of sexism. We will support young women to have their voices heard. We will push for increased efforts to tackle gendered subject choices in schools, which will ultimately help to boost gender equality in the workplace. Young women also stand to benefit from our proposals to reduce house prices, which are currently locking a generation of young people out of a place to live; to guarantee high quality teaching, tackle the attainment gap and address equality and diversity issues in schools; to create opportunities in further education and vocational training; to provide mental health services for young people; to introduce a Young Carer's Grant; and to create a compassionate care system based on young people's needs.

"I welcome the Scottish Greens Women's Manifesto and am confident that a strong group of Green MSPs in the Scottish Parliament will work to ensure that gender equality remains at the top of the political agenda."

SARAH BEATTIE-SMITH

**SGP spokesperson for Transport, Infrastructure and Investment
and MSP candidate for South of Scotland**



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