
Put Recovery First

We must put recovery first.

The pandemic has torn through our lives. Thousands of people died or suffered serious illness. Young people lost out on education and career opportunities. People waited longer for hospital treatment. Individuals suffered isolation. Businesses struggled to pay their bills.

We owe it to them to put recovery first.

Other parties will prioritise an independence referendum.

Instead, Liberal Democrats will have a needle-sharp focus on jobs, mental health, our NHS, schools and the climate crisis.

Our offer is a liberal one. At our heart we want every individual to achieve their potential.

We will repair the damage to our economy, communities and public services.

We will value the experience of frontline workers. We will listen to them and help them lead us to recovery.

We will help education bounce back. That will mean: more in-class support for children who need it to reach their full potential; a guaranteed job for every teacher to cut class sizes; new work with teachers to raise literacy and numeracy standards.

We will tackle the health crisis. We will recruit more mental health professionals to work in communities, hospitals and schools. We will set up new diagnosis and treatment centres to catch up with the backlog.



We will give urgent support to high streets and hospitality businesses in their hour of need. We will build up new, green industries of the future. We will give new training grants to help people change career if they need to. We will provide graduates with paid internships in small businesses.

We won't risk destroying trade with the rest of the UK through an independence referendum, and we will keep close ties with our European neighbours for the benefit of business.

We will take new steps to tackle the climate emergency and have a greener, healthier future. We are trustees of our world and must pass on a sustainable legacy which will benefit future generations. We will create a million warm homes with zero emissions in the next ten years. We will switch transport to electric power. We will restore nature.

We will make sure Scotland is an attractive place to live and work for people who come from the rest of the UK, the EU and elsewhere.

While Liberal Democrats will put recovery first, the SNP will put independence first.

No matter what your view on independence, most people will surely think that the wake of a terrible pandemic is not the moment for that. Now is not the moment to carry on the poisonous and bitter battle between the SNP and the Conservatives and between the various factions of the nationalist movement, which is dragging Scotland down. We all need to come together to recover from the worst health and economic crisis in 100 years. We can't afford to return to the arguments of the past.

People desperate for work, patients in our NHS and pupils in our schools can't be left to wait as politicians return to arguments over independence. People are desperate for a parliament that puts our differences on independence to one side and puts recovery first.

The newly elected parliament should press on with the vaccination roll-out, opening up our lives when it is safe to do so. We should use our testing capacity to keep people safe while the roll-out continues.

The Scottish Government missed the opportunity last summer to prepare for the second wave of the virus. Testing was neglected and quarantine checks were slack. We must do better as we approach this summer.

We will establish the public inquiry that will look at the handling of the pandemic and consider the decisions taken by the two governments.

The priority is to get the job done not distract ourselves with talk of pointless and expensive vaccine passports which will divide people, limit the opportunities of young people and take up time that could be spent on recovery.

Put recovery first.



Willie Rennie

Leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats

In every chapter we set out how we will put recovery first. We show how the pandemic has affected our lives and what needs to be done for recovery.

There is a green thread running through this manifesto. Every chapter includes marked proposals that will tackle the climate emergency.

We want every individual to achieve their potential **P5**

- An urgent programme to help children bounce back in education.
- Play based education until age 7 to give our children a flying start, based on the Nordic model.
- More childcare from the age of 2.
- More in-class support to help every child reach their potential.
- Every qualified teacher guaranteed a job, to cut class sizes.
- Serving teachers put at the heart of the SQA and Education Scotland.
- Review of workloads and career opportunities for teachers, and a minimum starting salary of £30,000.
- Build Scotland's reputation as the home of science.

Good health, with restored health services **P11**

- An urgent plan to put recovery first for the NHS.
- A bigger range of specialists, diagnosis and treatment in local communities.
- Train more mental health specialists for community centres, hospitals, workplaces and schools.
- Reduce the misery of drug abuse with compassion and health treatment rather than prosecution.
- Promote preventative health to take the pressure off the NHS.
- National standards and fair pay for all social care staff.

- A national effort to improve wellbeing based on people's lived experiences to tackle the barriers to good health.

Business and employment **P18**

- A job guarantee for 16-24 year olds.
- 2,000 paid graduate internships with small businesses.
- New £5,000 Scottish Training Bonds to help people change careers.
- Scotland to be the most diverse business culture in Europe.
- Scottish workers given the best chance to manufacture offshore wind turbines.
- Increase the range of jobs and careers available to people in rural areas.
- New support for arts performances in more communities than ever before.

Transport **P26**

- Reopen railway lines and move away from fossil fuels on the network.
- Give the public confidence in electric vehicles by progress towards a network of well-maintained rapid chargers.
- Support active travel, making it easier to make safe journeys by bike or on foot.
- Create single through-tickets and swipe cards that work for buses, trains and ferries across Scotland.
- New local powers to integrate all forms of transport and to control local bus services.

Justice

P29

- Better support for police officers and civilian staff in their difficult jobs especially where they plug the gaps in other public services.
- Cut crime and improve rehabilitation services for people leaving prison so they are less likely to re-offend and cause more damage.
- Get more mental health support workers alongside the police.
- Give greater confidence to victims of crime.
- Increase the influence of communities over the way they are policed.
- Reform Fatal Accident Inquiries to stop delays and learn the lessons more quickly.

The climate emergency

P33

- Move one million homes to zero emission heating by 2030.
- Invest in low carbon heat networks.
- Double the programmes to end fuel poverty.
- Invest in new skills for a just transition from fossil fuel industry.
- Make it easier to re-purpose town centres and transport systems to fit post-pandemic life.
- New national parks, and new woodlands close to where people live.

Social justice, housing and communities

P39

- Double the Scottish Child Payment to £20 per week to tackle child poverty.

- Build 60,000 affordable homes to help address homelessness.
- Help to Renovate loans to bring derelict homes back into use.
- Develop a system of Universal Basic Income to provide everyone with a safety net.
- Guarantee respite for unpaid carers.

Democracy

P42

- Work at a UK level to reform the UK to a federal future.
- A new fiscal framework to ensure local councils get a fair share of the budget.
- A new Contempt of Parliament rule, so a minority government can't ignore Holyrood.

Liberty, liberalism and our place in the world

P47

- Establish a cross-party commission to recommend urgent steps to prevent violence against women and girls in all its forms.
- End the harmful practice of sexual orientation and gender identity conversion therapy.
- New pay audits to ensure fair opportunities for people from ethnic minorities and disabled people.
- Incorporate four United Nations human rights treaties into Scots law.
- Support a close relationship with our European neighbours.

Managing the public finances to meet our ambitions

P45

We want every individual to achieve their potential

Education is the essential investment that allows everyone to achieve their potential.

We need to invest in the recovery and we need to invest for the future.

We have proposals for every stage and every age: to get a good start in life; to excel at school; and to help people retrain if they need to later in life.

The next Scottish Government must act urgently to give people the opportunities and skills to build and rebuild from the pandemic.

Education suffered even when it was the top priority of the SNP Government. We can only imagine how neglected it would get if they make it play second fiddle to a referendum.

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- **Build Scotland's reputation as the home of science.**

A bounce back plan for education

We know how hard the past year has been. We need the talents of everyone possible for recovery in education.

Our proposal is to help children and young people bounce back from the disruption to their education. We will make every hour of learning in school count for more rather than cram children into longer hours at their desks. We will offer:

- A teacher job guarantee. No teacher should be unemployed or feel underemployed when the new school term begins in August. We need the talents of everyone in the teaching profession, so children get the most out of their time back in school. Every qualified teacher should be guaranteed a job. They will help with smaller class sizes, more one-on-one help, and additional support needs in the classroom.
- New pupil support assistants to give more in-class support to children who need it.
- An immediate term-time expansion of outdoor learning and increased provision of residential outdoor education to engage children, boost mental health, through experiences that can prove life-changing and increase understanding of the climate emergency.

- New investment in local grassroots activities and sports with a Scottish Government funded entitlement for children and young people to use over the holidays.
- A new programme of extra supported study for S4-S6, guided by the judgement of class teachers. These young people don't have years left in schools. This part of our programme is to guide revision, work through problems and consolidate understanding, not extra classes with new materials that teachers need to prepare. These are opt-in sessions for both children and staff, with a financial bonus for those who lead them.

We will also offer families the legal right to defer Primary 1 and have it replaced with funded early learning and childcare starting this August, removing the £4,500 price tag that the current government has left hanging over families.

Play based education until age 7 to give children a flying start

We will help more children get off to a good start at school by using play-based learning until the age of 7. Our plans will help children acquire important learning and social skills before formal schooling starts.

The UK is almost unique in Europe in expecting children as young as 4 or 5 to begin formal education. By the age of 9, pupils in Finland have much higher reading levels than pupils in the UK, having started at the age of 7.

We will start this longer statutory Early Years Phase as a series of voluntary pilots and will use existing buildings.

We will continue to expand nursery education to meet the promise of 1140 hours for 3 and 4-year-olds and eligible 2-year-olds. This will provide the flexibility and choice that parents were promised, so families can passport their entitlement in order to suit their circumstances.

We will increase the 1140 hours entitlement to cover all two-year olds.

We will value the expertise and contribution of teachers in Early Learning and Childcare settings.

We will go further still to introduce an ambition to extend funded early education and childcare hours to one-year olds. Well-supported childcare has helped Sweden achieve the third highest economic participation rate among OECD countries, and the second highest for women.

We will extend holiday clubs and activities to meet the needs of eligible children during the holidays.

We will encourage parents to study and learn new skills by extending the existing childcare provision that is available for students to cover their periods of independent study and vocational placements. We will also encourage universities and colleges to be more parent-friendly with parental leave, breastfeeding and changing areas, and sensible notice periods for timetable changes.

We will stop the SNP's national testing of five-year-olds, as requested by Parliament in 2018.

More in-class support to help every child reach their potential

Our country is stronger when every individual is able to achieve their potential. For too long people's success in life has too often depended on how well-off their parents were. The result is a gap in attainment between rich and poor. It means the whole country misses out on the talents of thousands of people.

An attainment gap exists. The Scottish Government hasn't tackled this. We will.

We will provide more in-class support to help every child reach their potential.

We will support children with additional support needs.

We will extend the Pupil Equity Fund which provides money directly to schools for extra teachers, more pupil support assistants, one-to-one tuition and hobbies for children from less well-off backgrounds. By making the fund a permanent feature we will give confidence to schools to recruit additional staff and reduce short-term contracts.

We will take further action to give more children the opportunity to succeed. We will:

- Tackle the digital divide by making sure every child has access to connected technology.
- Bring in a new Armed Forces Pupil Premium to recognise the disruption faced by the children of service personnel, and their needs for extra mental health and pastoral support, matching the provision that has

existed since 2011 for service families elsewhere in the UK.

- Make sure pre-school children from disadvantaged backgrounds are better supported when they start in education with a Nursery Premium which will have an emphasis on involving parents in their child's development.
- Create a government-wide focus on attainment, starting with an extended programme to support parenting of the youngest children through family nurse partnerships.
- Give more young people the confidence and skills to achieve highly in their lives with a more securely funded youth work service to allow it to reach young people who are not engaged successfully in formal education.

We recognise that poverty and hunger can be major factors in preventing children from achieving their potential. We will double the Scottish Child Payment to tackle child poverty. We will increase the provision of free meals to all primary school children, especially making sure breakfast is taken before learning starts.

Liberal Democrats instigated the introduction of free school meals for primary school children in 2014. We will support the extension of free school meals all year round for P1-P7 children.

Work with teachers to raise standards

Teachers have shown creativity and resilience during the pandemic. By

contrast their governing national agencies have been flat-footed.

To help make Scottish education the best again we will bring major change to the SQA and Education Scotland. We will make sure people with recent teaching experience have more say and can set the direction of the organisations.

We will ask serving teachers to steer the response to the OECD's review into Scottish education when it is published in full.

Our plan to raise standards will give every young person the opportunity to meet their potential. We want to see Scotland as a whole rise back up the international rankings for education. We will:

- Raise standards and make sure that no child slips through the net on reading and writing by getting teachers to lead a literacy task force.
- Ask teachers to lead reforms of the way primary schools tackle maths. Without maths, none of the STEM subjects - science, engineering and technology - is possible.
- Give young people better access to expert teachers in STEM subjects by bringing back principal teachers for each of them and for each science. That will create a more attractive career path for graduates in STEM subjects within teaching.
- Convene a group of language teachers to recommend new strategies to improve the uptake of foreign languages in schools, noting the lack of evidence of success of the

current 2+1 language policy in primary schools.

- Develop a data led evaluation approach to all new educational initiatives and pilot programmes to ensure change leads to improvement.
- Keep pace with the best in the world and understand Scotland's progress in education by rejoining the international assessments.

Improve teacher pay and tackle workloads

We want to put teachers at the heart of raising attainment. We will reward them with a fresh review of working conditions, non-contact time, routes to promotion, and pay to attract and retain the best recruits to the profession. This is equivalent to a second McCrone commission that we hope will match in its impact its forebear of twenty years ago.

In advance of this we will increase the starting salaries of teachers to £30,000, helping attract more graduates in science, technology, engineering and maths.

We will help teachers focus on the needs of each individual pupil by providing a guaranteed minimum level of support staff.

We will boost the teaching workforce with simpler processes to allow qualified teachers from outside Scotland to join the Scottish teaching profession while maintaining professional standards.

We will extend the amount of teacher training that can be undertaken remotely, making it easier for people in remote,

island and rural areas to train and carry out their placements locally.

We will pay a new “teacher premium” supplement for schools in disadvantaged areas, and agree new, optional, three-year packages for probationer teachers to help local authorities get staff to take up posts in particular geographical areas.

We will encourage regional collaboration between local authorities, aiming to match the success of the Northern Alliance which has worked well to find innovative ways to increase teacher numbers in hard-to-fill areas.

Our approach will provide effective workforce planning, and a motivated and successful teaching profession.

Education for life

We want to make sure every young person can achieve their potential, with an education that embeds skills for life. We will:

- Integrate civil and citizenship education into the current curriculum, including financial education, and teaching about relationships and diversity, and make sure that we learn the lessons of the Black Lives Matter movement by changing the way we teach history to include a wider perspective on empire, slavery, and Scottish and British involvement in them.
- Increase the capacity of schools to teach about the climate emergency by increasing the support given in initial teacher training and providing additional subject-specific materials.

- Fully implement the recommendations of the LGBTI Inclusive Education Working Group, underpinned by new statutory guidance on the conduct of relationships, sexual health and parenthood education for schools.
- Guarantee that every primary and secondary school pupil has at least one week away at an outdoor centre, as well as taking regular classroom lessons outdoors. This will play an important part in helping young people relate to nature and each other, and to understand and respect their access rights and responsibilities.
- Make music tuition free in schools in order to encourage participation and equal access.
- Give better support to teachers who have been required to deliver digital learning to allow its potential to be used positively in the future, for example by sharing learning resources between schools.
- Champion an education service that is inclusive for each disabled child and disabled young person so that they receive appropriate care and support before, and during, the transition to adulthood.
- Take forward the conclusions of the Angela Morgan review of additional support needs.
- Ask the inspectorate to assess how well we respond to the needs of children with English as a second

language, and make them eligible for Pupil Equity Funding.

- Use the education system to tackle head-on the health issues which reduce healthy life expectancy in Scotland, by reviewing PE and the Home Economics curriculum to focus on fitness and healthy cooking.

To underpin standards, we will re-establish the independence of the school inspectorate and separate it from the policy and advisory functions of Education Scotland.

None of this work can wait. It needs five years of needle-sharp focus from the government. Every year we wait we let down another year group of young people.

Colleges and universities

We will robustly fund universities and colleges. The work we need them to do is more significant than it has ever been and is fundamental to the national interest.

We've seen Scottish institutions and experts play their part in the biggest scientific effort in history and help us all during the pandemic. Now they will be critical to our needle-sharp focus on recovery, building our resilience and in responding to the climate emergency.

We want to restore colleges to a powerful role in local economic development, training people of all ages in the skills they need to start - or change - their careers.

We will support people to access retraining and further education with a new Training Bond to cut back the financial barriers in their way.

We will support our universities to offer world-class opportunities. Brexit has already lost us expert academics and researchers from Scottish universities. We have to make sure an independence campaign doesn't marginalise those from the rest of the UK too.

We will offer stronger support through the Scottish Funding Council for research in Scottish universities, recognising that Scotland's weight on research is declining, with a special focus on areas of medical research where programmes have reduced because their charity sponsors have lost income during the pandemic.

We want to make Scotland the home to science by building on our great strengths, encouraging more people to take up science all through school, and helping more women establish successful careers in science.

We bitterly regret the loss of opportunities by withdrawal from the Erasmus programme. We will follow the lead of the Liberal Democrat education minister in Wales and establish an international scheme to allow thousands of Scottish students to study abroad and thousands of international students to study here. We will also work to make the most of the UK Government's Turing Scheme.

We will fund more places at Scottish universities for Scottish students.

We will encourage Scottish universities to widen access and help more young people from poorer backgrounds through to completion of their courses, and to undertake outreach work in schools in disadvantaged areas.

Students have had a rough time in the pandemic. Their studies were disrupted. They too often found themselves unfairly paying for expensive accommodation they couldn't use, their chances of summer jobs were curtailed and the number of career opportunities shrank. Our proposals to support graduate work placements will make a real difference.

We will provide bursaries to student paramedics.

We will take further steps with university and college health services to improve mental health for students.

We will repair the system of bursaries and grants, noting that the SNP came to power in 2007 promising to “dump the debt” for students. After 14 years student debt has doubled. Students will not be required to repay student loans if their income is less than £25,000.

Good health with restored health services

The virus has shown how much we should value the health and care services and the people who work in them.

We have to act now to build health services back up after the virus. Our plan is urgent. We can't wait years for a referendum to come and go.

Our proposals will build a stronger NHS for the future and improve health and wellbeing, and allow us to achieve the targets for treatment that were being missed before the pandemic.

- **An urgent plan to put recovery first for the NHS.**
- **A bigger range of specialists, diagnosis and treatment in local communities.**
- **Train more mental health specialists for community centres, hospitals, workplaces and schools.**
- **Reduce the misery of drug abuse with compassion and health treatment rather than prosecution.**
- **More to promote preventative health to take the pressure off the NHS.**
- **National standards and fair pay for all social care staff.**
- **A national effort to improve wellbeing based on people's lived experiences to tackle the barriers to good health.**

The need to help the NHS

The health service has been there for all of us during the crisis of the pandemic. NHS workers have put in extra shifts and sacrificed their own wellbeing to keep us safe. We will recognise and support their efforts.

The pandemic meant the cancellation of hundreds of thousands of treatments and diagnoses. There is a huge backlog of work that needs to take place.

We will undertake an urgent plan to use the skills and experience of our health service staff, together with the lessons learned from the innovation in the crisis, to get our NHS and our country's health strong for the future.

We will conduct an urgent catch-up programme for the NHS, increasing the number of diagnosis and treatment centres within health boards.

We will empower GPs and health professionals working in the community to refer people for appropriate tests on suspicion of cancer and other life-limiting conditions. We will expand testing capacity in every health board to meet the need to assess more people.

We have supported a Scottish Budget that contains resources for a pay deal within the NHS which recognises the astonishing commitment of staff, and the need to make appealing long-term careers in the health service.

It will be important to listen to the views of NHS staff as to which service innovations they pioneered during the pandemic will be essential to rebuild the health service. There is lots of scope to use new technology and digital links, but we want to consult with NHS workers on what is going to work best.

Any new targets for this work will be crafted by NHS professionals to avoid distorting clinical priorities.

We will give patients a clearer picture of how long they will wait for diagnosis and treatment, and scrap the current government's "12 week wait" letters which are too often inaccurate.

Patients need a new strong voice to stand up for them. The Patients' Rights Act from 2011 isn't delivering for them, as the legally binding waiting-times guarantee was broken 200 times a day pre-pandemic. People have to wait in pain for treatment and for justice. We need

change. We will support the appointment of a patients' commissioner to advocate for all patients in a daunting system, and help shape and direct their complaints.

We will address the past failings of workforce planning in the NHS by presenting an annual workforce report for debate in the Scottish Parliament, including a study of the reasons newly qualified staff leave the Scottish NHS for work elsewhere.

More local health services

We will build stronger local health services so that people can get the care they need more locally.

We want a bigger range of specialists, diagnosis and treatment in local communities.

We will expand the services available in GP surgeries.

We will aim to increase the number of trained GPs in Scotland. We will increase the number of mental health professionals working at GP practices to help meet demand and improve access. We will also embed more nurses, dieticians and physiotherapists with GPs so that people can get a wider range of diagnosis, treatment and follow-up care within their community.

We will empower pharmacists to do more prescribing, making use of secure health records.

These steps will allow us to move to 15-minute appointments with GPs to help people have more effective diagnosis and support from their doctor.

We want a new deal to increase the range of treatments and diagnosis that are undertaken in hospitals across the country. The current model of centralisation has left people in many parts of Scotland, not least the highlands, islands and north east, with long journeys to hospital.

We will do this by creating strong clinical networks to give peer support to professionals working in remote and rural communities. We will change professional education to support this new decentralised model, including the development of the necessary skills. We will work with the professional bodies to support this change.

We will take forward the positive innovations, such as video diagnosis and support, that were forced by the pandemic but which have the potential to speed up the delivery of more local services.

Mental health services

We want mental health to be taken as seriously as physical health by the Scottish Government. That means an end to the long waits for diagnosis and treatment. It means more services available close to where people live. It means people having local, direct access to mental health treatment. There is no health without mental health.

We will set a target for 15 per cent of new health spending to be directed to mental health. This will recognise the cost of mental ill health to our families and communities, the health service and the economy.

We will train more mental health specialists for community centres, hospitals, workplaces and schools.

We will do this by doubling the number of specialist psychiatrists in training for young people. We will go further and double the number of people training on counselling courses.

We will help people train to be counsellors by offering £5,000 grants to students undertaking courses. We will do that so that a wider range of people from diverse backgrounds are able to train, given the hundreds of hours of commitment they need to make to qualify.

We will also bring the counselling profession into NHS workforce planning systems to make sure people have easier access to talking therapies and early interventions.

We will provide more walk-in services at mental health emergency centres – similar to A&E – to meet the needs of people in mental health distress or crisis.

We will support a preventative approach with more counsellors available for every school.

We will increase the overall number of people training to be psychiatrists and psychologists to work in the NHS.

We will reform the way in which children and young people access mental health services, ending waits of a year and longer for treatment. We will abolish so-called rejected referrals by integrating Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services into a new wider system of multi-disciplinary support, with safety nets and ladders so that families are never sent back to the

start of the process. There should be no “wrong door” for mental health services.

To start this we will expand and take forward the pilot of family workers in GP practices in East Renfrewshire led by Children 1st to cut the need for formal CAMHS services and provide better in-community support.

We will refresh the mental health strategy to raise its ambition in line with our new plans.

To lead by example we will issue guidance on the recording of mental health-related absences by public bodies.

Better perinatal health

We will offer new parents greater access to mental health services. Our offer will build on the work of the existing programme board:

- The current post-natal six-week check to include support from a GP and health visitor with specific training on maternal mental health, supported by a new time-bound plan to increase core training for GPs and health visitors on mental health.
- Referral to a suitable community peer-support network, operated by voluntary groups or the third sector, and supported by a health visitor.
- Where inpatient care is needed this is offered with provision for the mother’s continuing care for the baby, with the range of bed spaces expanded to allow more women to receive care close to home.

- A new campaign to remove the stigma of mental ill health for new mothers, and to provide reassurance that keeping mothers and babies together is a foremost concern.

We will create dedicated facilities for perinatal loss, with a standard of care equivalent to that provided to patients undergoing labour and delivery. We will accompany this with comprehensive mental health support for families affected by perinatal loss.

Make it easier to get help in a crisis

We will work with businesses and organisations towards an ambition of having a mental health first aider in every workplace, capable of providing peer support and identifying signs of ill health among colleagues.

We will restart the suspended training programmes for this and suicide prevention, and rapidly expand the number of people participating.

We will take a trauma-informed approach to train anyone who might encounter a person in distress.

We will give health professionals more insight into the likely problems experienced by people in their care through the proper capture and recording of adverse childhood experiences.

We will bring more relevance and timeliness to suicide statistics, and start work immediately on a new suicide and self-harm prevention strategy.

Drugs and Alcohol

Alcohol related illness continues to affect too many people in Scotland and has not improved in years. It affects families and ruins lives. We understand that drug and alcohol abuse is often linked to other issues such as mental health and poverty. We will work hard to address the causes of these additions as well as provide more support for their treatment.

We will reduce the misery of drug abuse with compassion and health treatment rather than prosecution.

We will take radical steps with the prosecution authorities and the Lord Advocate to help establish heroin assisted treatment and safe consumption spaces.

We will establish new specialist Family Drug and Alcohol Commissions to help provide wraparound services and to take a holistic approach to those reported for drug offences, learning from best international practice such as that in Portugal.

This will be part of our plan for people caught in possession of drugs for personal use to be diverted into education, treatment and recovery, ceasing imprisonment in these circumstances. This will build on the agreement brokered by Liberal Democrats in the last week of the last parliamentary session.

We will protect and enhance drug and alcohol partnership budgets, and adopt the principle that individuals and families shouldn't have to pay for the care and treatment of those at risk of death from drugs or alcohol.

We will use emergency housing funding to help people keep their homes and tenancies while they undergo treatment and rehabilitation.

We will link the minimum unit price of alcohol to inflation.

Social care services

We support the recommendation of the Independent Review of Adult Social Care that there should be a step change in social care.

We believe that social care should be provided on a human rights basis, guaranteed for everyone, and be considered a normal part of life that merits investment to allow people to achieve their goals and secure their wellbeing. A preventative approach should be championed.

We will work with other parties to create a broad national consensus for reform.

However, we do not support the creation of a National Care Service as set out in the independent review because we are concerned that this risks losing local innovation and skills, and could repeat the expensive mistakes made by the similar creation of Police Scotland.

Yet we do need step change, as it is the key to improving the quality of life for social care users, and implementation should begin as soon as possible through existing systems and should not be delayed by a need to create new organisations to deliver it.

We will prioritise the establishment of national pay bargaining and commit to funding the outcomes so that care

workers get fair pay and better career progression as soon as possible.

The social care workforce should be respected for the work they do, and we will make it a requirement that any care service by any provider must comply with fair work requirements which are set nationally.

We support the establishment of national care service standards, with the funding put in place to meet those standards, and effective complaint resolution for those people for whom services fall short.

National standards and local commissioning will involve disabled people and other care users, and be informed by local experience of unmet needs.

Our reforms will allow carers to build relationships and trust with care users, moving away from narrow task-based contracts.

We will scrap charges for care services delivered at home, helping people to stay in their homes if they choose.

We will make sure people do not have to pay for their care when they have advanced dementia.

We will give relatives of care home residents the status of essential caregiver to ensure they are not separated from their loved ones in care homes in the way they have been during the pandemic.

More to promote preventative health and effective rehab

The NHS serves us astonishingly well in our times of need. It has shown its strength during the pandemic. As we

rebuild the NHS to deal with the backlog of treatments and diagnosis we will redouble our efforts to promote wellbeing and preventative health measures.

We need to get ahead on prevention, support and research. We will renew the strength of science that is researching new treatments for conditions that blight the lives of too many people. We will give a voice to representative groups, charities and the third sector who are working hard to make lives better. We will ask the Scottish Parliament to initiate a major programme, supported by the Scottish Government, to listen and act on their expertise and lived experience to improve wellbeing and tackle ill health.

We will reinvigorate anticipative care, where the NHS steps in early to help people at risk of developing serious conditions, improving the quality of their life. Noting the recent poor life expectancy statistics, we know this is not a new issue and understand the sorrow of lives that are cut short.

We will help people understand better the health promotion and screening services available to them and move more of them closer to where they live. We will:

- Reinvigorate the Detect Cancer Early programme to include new ways to promote the importance of cervical screening and other cancer screening programmes.
- Prioritise the science to increase genetic screening for cancer.
- Keep people healthy with new mobile preventative services and screening.

- Get blood pressure checks in more places.
- Help preventative services work better by integrating screening services and social prescribing.
- Revamp social prescriptions by getting more buy-in from service providers such as sports facilities.
- Appoint an Outdoor Recreation Champion within government to help everyone in Scotland get the benefits.
- Support wellbeing by making it easier for people to use active travel, reserving more space for safe cycling and walking.
- Use the education system to promote healthy lifestyles to pupils and parents, and identify indicators of future problems.

We will help the NHS and public services serve people more efficiently by increasing the priority of work on long-term and hidden conditions. We will:

- Help more adults with ADHD by taking it more seriously at a national level and helping GPs to prescribe more suitable treatment and management, especially on the transition from child and adolescent mental health services to adult care.
- Prevent unnecessary harm by providing screening tools and training for ADHD across police custody suites, courts, prison and probation services.
- Examine what support can be given to ex-football and rugby players suffering from dementia, and develop research

into the potential link between brain injuries, dementia and ball sports.

- Support educational and youth organisations to encourage young women to discuss any body confidence issues with medical professionals.
- Commit the Scottish Chief Scientist Office to a biomedical research programme on the burden of M.E. and expand this work to include study of Long Covid and chronic fatigue, particularly as they affect women.
- Establish a clinical network to research and support Long Covid.
- Support the Home to Hospital service established by Chest, Heart and Stroke Scotland so that it operates across Scotland and can provide one-to-one support for Covid survivors across Scotland, as well as people with chest, heart and stroke conditions. We will create a right to rehab which will help people after their hospital care and help them achieve their goals.

We will remove criminal sanctions for receiving an abortion, and for appropriately regulated medical professionals providing them. We will provide funding so that users of reproductive healthcare services are provided with enough specialist advice to make fully informed decisions. We will legally enforce safe zones around abortion service providers so that those visiting can travel to them free of any harassment or pressure on their decision.

We will take palliative care more seriously, reinvigorating the clinical network and adopting a new five-year plan which

accelerates the missed objectives of the previous plan.

We will commit to a charter for mesh care to ensure that the campaign led by survivors leaves a lasting legacy.

Sport

We will celebrate and encourage a return to sport at grassroots and national levels for all ages and gender.

Grassroots sport will benefit from the investment and interest in our Bounce Back Education plan, and the new funded entitlements for children and young people to use over the holidays.

We will extend the discounts offered to young people with a Young Scot card to more sports centres, cultural and arts venues.

We will ensure that Scotland doesn't miss out on the golden legacy of Judy, Andy and Jamie Murray by supporting the development of accessible tennis facilities, with covered courts, including in rural areas, to get more people playing tennis with more pathways for their potential successors.

We will promote more fan ownership and involvement in professional football clubs and leagues to secure better governance, inclusive decision-making, transparency and accountability, and a better fan experience.

We will participate in the UK-wide preparatory work for a 2030 Men's World Cup bid being funded by the UK Government and propose it to be the first climate crisis compliant tournament and a model of how to hold major events in future.

We will establish an island travel scheme for teams and individuals to compete in national events.

We will work for an equitable culture within Scottish sport to encourage as many people as possible to take part. We will make sure opportunities are not dictated by gender, ethnicity or any other characteristic, and work to make sure funding allocations are fair.

We will support anti-racism and anti-homophobia campaigns and work to make sport inclusive and intolerant of discrimination at all levels.

Business and employment

After years of division over referendums and the shock of the pandemic, business needs greater certainty to face the future.

Productivity is the driver for our prosperity. Our plans on education and mental health will help make sure we have a workforce equipped for the challenge. Scotland's economic potential is built upon its people and networks, its knowledge base and its natural assets. Our ambition is to build a robust and diverse economy where businesses can thrive, and everyone can have access to work.

We will take the opportunity to rebuild and repurpose economic activity towards climate friendly industry, pursuing new green investments. We recognise that small and local businesses can often, by their nature, be quicker to adapt.

We will take special care to give the regions of Scotland heavily invested in fossil fuels a fair transition to new industries which use their immense technical, scientific and engineering skills.

As we look to the future, we acknowledge that the experience of the last 12 months has fallen heavily on the shoulders of the young. So we will give young people stronger opportunities to start their careers, and give workers of all ages the opportunity to retrain to acquire skills of the future.

Support for business growth and resilience will be as important as entrepreneurship and company creation. Efficient access to international markets and an undisrupted relationship with our largest trading partner – the rest of the UK – is essential.

- **A job guarantee for every 16-24 year old.**
- **2,000 paid graduate internships with small businesses.**
- **New £5,000 Scottish Training Bonds to help people change careers.**
- **Scotland to be the most diverse business culture in Europe.**
- **Scottish workers given the best chance to manufacture offshore wind turbines.**
- **Increase the range of jobs and careers available to people in rural areas.**
- **New support for arts performances in more communities than ever before.**

Skills and work experience

We will support people to up-skill and access work experience.

We will offer a job guarantee for every 16-24-year-old so that they all have access to a job or training.

To do that we will expand support for apprenticeships, offer jobs through public agencies and our new programmes for the creative industries, and in other sectors such as low carbon and artificial intelligence.

We will create a new national programme for 2,000 paid graduate internships with small businesses. This programme will be run through the enterprise agencies and university careers services. It will support placements for graduates from 2020 and 2021.

Paid graduate internship opportunities like this will provide an effective way to support both graduates and the local economy.

Support the work of Scottish Union of Supported Employment to ensure disadvantaged and disabled people can get access to work.

Training bonds for new skills

We will offer new Scottish Training Bonds for people to help them change careers. We will accompany the bonds, worth up to £5,000, with careers advice to help people future-proof their new skills. Bonds will be targeted at people facing redundancy and those who don't have the cushion of income to sustain themselves during their training. We will work in partnership with businesses to develop and supplement their own

schemes as part of their employee incentives.

We will support people who have unconventional CVs, such as no formal certification or extended periods of absence from the workplace, to build a recognised career passport.

Our aim is to make sure Scotland has a reputation as the most highly skilled and adaptable workforce in Europe.

A diverse business culture

We will take steps to help Scotland support the most diverse business culture in Europe, to value more sectors and encourage more women into business. We will:

- Encourage enterprise bodies to recognise the value, beyond traditional economic measures, of more diverse sectors, and to increase their support for innovation activity and new technology in businesses that provide services such as care and education.
- Encourage enterprise bodies to value and support more small and micro businesses, taking account of local community impacts, supporting them beyond the start-up phase to include expansion, collaboration and diversification.
- Offer direct support from government agencies to enable more employee, cooperative and community ownership of businesses particularly whenever the government sells up its shares in companies.

- Overhaul public sector procurement policies to ensure they support local suppliers, micro-bidders, fair employment practices and to take note of the level of state aid in non-Scottish bids.
- Empower local partnerships between businesses, colleges, universities and communities, making sure that the city deals across Scotland and the economic transition in the North East follow partnership principles. We will restore community focus to Highlands and Islands Enterprise, removed by the current government.
- Ensure the mission for the Scottish National Investment Bank is ambitious and diverse. It should maintain the supply of risk capital into early-stage businesses and act as a guarantor in low income, rural, under-banked business opportunities working in partnership with enterprise agencies to ensure wrap-around support.
- Support the development of a “Made in Scotland” quality standard, beyond food and drink, to support consumer choice and aid exports.
- Launch a consultation on how to support local retailers to maximise the opportunities around online retail and to reduce the environmental impact of deliveries.
- Change planning regulations so that town centres can adapt to new demands with the support of local communities.
- Establish a rapid-reaction service, like the Partnership for Continuing

Employment to bring together all public agencies to explore how community assets, such as bank branches, post offices or pubs, can be maintained.

- Establish a right for communities to protect threatened community facilities through different ownership or the use of shared premises as hubs. Community groups or cooperatives should be given a fair chance to purchase or acquire these assets.
- Provide transition support and specialist low carbon advice free of charge to businesses on how to minimise the impact of their work on the environment.

New green industries

Our investment plans for warmer homes, new heat networks and hydrogen power will create thousands of jobs and fantastic business opportunities. These will use the technical and engineering skills from the oil and gas industry and be part of a just transition.

We will support the development of a centre of excellence for carbon capture and efficient energy generation. We will involve the construction and renewables industries, along with utility companies, in partnership with colleges, universities and planners to ensure every opportunity is taken to create an economy that is fit for the future.

We want to give Scottish workers the best chance to manufacture offshore wind turbines. The fiasco with BiFab where government promises failed to deliver sustained employment showed we need a

Scotland-wide effort to scale-up capacity and compete with the world. We need to make sure that Scottish yards are well-placed if the UK Government changes policy, as promised, to include the use of local skills as a factor in awarding Contracts for Difference – the government auctions for offshore wind power.

Connectivity

Modern digital connections are essential to give every part of Scotland the opportunity to thrive. We need high speed connections supported by reliable mobile phone signals to support a wide variety of business, education and new innovations in telemedicine in every corner of the country.

Connections to superfast broadband across Scotland have been delayed. The contract for the highlands and islands has only just been awarded, and delayed again for four years.

Even under that contract many households and business will be left out of connection and be saddled with high costs into the future.

We will make sure that the work for the islands and remote parts of the country is not left until last.

We will also establish a network of community connection managers. They will broker bespoke solutions for communities that fear they will be left out of the main programme by pooling the compensation vouchers they are entitled to and using further financial support from the main contract. We won't leave it to a monopoly provider to give everyone cost-effective connections.

The rural economy and land reform

The rural economy is already worth a quarter of the whole Scottish economy. It is important that it thrives and grows.

Our plans for rural and remote areas will see thousands of new jobs and public services developed locally, building more diverse and growing communities. We will increase the range of jobs and careers available to people in rural areas:

- Encourage colleges to become rural enterprise hubs, meeting local skills needs and supporting innovative new businesses.
- Roll out superfast broadband to support business growth, education and public services in rural areas.
- Start a programme to consider new civil service jobs and government agencies for rural locations, learning from remote working during the pandemic.
- Increase support for the NHS in rural areas to increase the number of skilled professionals living in those communities.
- Take opportunities for major projects such as space ports to anchor new high-skill and high-wage jobs in remote areas.
- Increase biodiversity and restore peatlands to create scientific, technical and engineering opportunities in remote areas.

Our plans for land reform will help provide the housing and business

opportunities needed to develop diverse communities. We will:

- Expand the Scottish Land Fund to help further community ownership across Scotland, empowering sustainable communities to repopulate.
- Prioritise land acquisition for communities by developing a localised service to assist self-builders and communities in securing land to meet housing demand, coordinating with local authorities, landowners and housing associations.
- Institute a First Time Builders Fund, modelled on the Scottish Government's First Home Fund, to support population growth in rural areas where there is no existing housing stock available for purchase.
- Extend and expand the Rural Housing Fund and the Islands Housing Fund, and reduce the barriers for communities to access them.
- Give the Scottish Land Commission the power to legally enforce the voluntary Rights and Responsibilities Protocols that govern the relationship between landowners and communities, like the mandatory codes of practice overseen by the Tenant Farming Commissioner.
- Afford rural communities enhanced consultation rights and consideration by public bodies, similar to the Islands Act, to ensure that the unique challenges facing rural communities in mainland Scotland are addressed.

- We will support landowners and managers to stimulate innovation, diversification and support new entrants.

Food and drink

Our farming businesses work hard, sometimes in truly challenging conditions. Over the decades farmers have proven to be adaptable and innovative in new crops and techniques.

Agriculture provides the raw materials for Scotland's flagship food and drink exports worth over £5 billion per annum. We support the target to double Scottish food and drink turnover to £30 billion by 2030.

We will consult on a Good Food Nation Bill to bring together reforms needed to promote food and drink as a resilient part of our economy. This will include measures to cut food miles by valuing seasonal Scottish produce in a Scotland-first public procurement policy. We will help food producers and processors navigate the tendering processes so that they can seek out opportunities to secure procurement contracts. We will use the Good Food Nation Bill to create a right to food, with cross-government work to end the need for food banks.

We will continue to use the UK's extensive network of overseas missions to promote Scottish food and drink, as well as use Scottish enterprise agencies directly overseas.

Helping Scottish farming meet new challenges

We will work with the farming and crofting communities to develop a new system of

farm support to replace closing EU schemes. We will provide new incentives to help farmers transition to a more sustainable agriculture, provide support for high quality food production, ensure fairness in the supply chain and help young people into the industry. We will match the scale of resources from the old schemes.

Our priority will be to develop a new system of agriculture support that recognises Scotland's particular strengths and needs.

We will use the recent conclusions of the expert working groups on agriculture support as a starting point in driving the transition to a more sustainable food production system. We will 'croft proof' future agricultural support to make sure active family farmers and crofters are properly supported.

In particular we want the Scottish industry to get the benefits from growing consumer awareness of the carbon footprint of food and the need to cut 'food miles'.

We will have a focus to reduce carbon in the livestock sector through more efficient production. We will support Scottish farming to match the sector in England and Wales which has committed to carbon neutrality by 2040.

Brexit has brought considerable problems, red tape and border controls for exporters. We will work with the UK Government to resolve as many of these as possible in time for autumn lamb exports.

We will work hard to get Scottish seed potatoes back into Europe.

We will ensure that high UK food standards are not undermined in new trade deals.

We will work for a level playing field in the UK single market which takes nearly 70 percent of Scottish food exports.

We will develop simpler governance of crofting with the Crofting Commission enabled to be the leader in the active management of crofting.

We will take steps to make it easier for people to move into farming, and for people to pass on farms through their family.

We will continue to press the UK Government to take action to repair the damage that Brexit has caused to the attractiveness of Scotland for seasonal workers from Europe.

We will expand and diversify the Farm Advisory Service to provide new jobs, training and skills, that support sustainable land use.

We will continue Scottish Government support for the National Rural Mental Health Forum.

We will help farmers with the costs of clearing up fly-tipping and increase efforts to catch tippers, using the proceeds of a new restitution order.

Fishing and aquaculture

Scotland's coastal and island communities depend on healthy and growing fishing and aquaculture industries. Their future recovery will depend on partnership working.

We will work with the fishing industry, scientists and conservationists to manage

inshore waters sustainably, and as locally as possible. We will seek to end unsustainable fishing practices such as gill net trawling, and work to eliminate plastic pollution from our seas.

As other industries compete for the use of marine space we will seek to balance the competing demands of different users including aquaculture, marine renewables and marine protected areas so that all interests can be accommodated.

We will work in partnership with the UK Government to ensure that our UK immigration system allows the fishing industry access to the labour that they need to crew their boats while investing in the necessary training and education to provide the crews of the future.

Science and sustainability must be at the heart of management and regulation of industries producing caught and farmed fish and shellfish. While continuing to seek the best scientific advice from bodies such as ICES we shall learn from the experience of countries like Norway and Iceland which have their own domestic bodies gathering data and which can be used more quickly.

We support the Scottish aquaculture industry and the high value it adds to its Scottish produce. We will support the industry to make continual improvements to production standards, and do all we can to smooth its route to international markets.

Gaelic language

We want a holistic approach to supporting Gaelic.

Housing is tied to the Gaelic crisis in our communities. We recognise that there are barriers to Gaelic being spoken in the home, even though that keeps the community vernacular strong. One barrier is people forced to move out of their Gaelic-speaking communities because there are no homes they can afford, or there are simply no jobs. Our land reform and plans for community housebuilding will help local communities put this right.

We will seek to extend opportunities for Gaelic immersion through initiatives such as Gaelic after-school clubs, Gaelic sports, and community Feisean, which would also create jobs within communities.

We will continue to support existing media that work to normalise Gaelic outside of the classroom, particularly online, where there is growing interest in the language.

We will address the limits to Gaelic medium education when the parents don't have Gaelic. We will continue to support accessible Gaelic language initiatives to make sure parents and children alike can empower themselves to learn together. The SpeakGaelic initiative from MG Alba and Sabhal Mòr Ostaig is an important new resource.

Gaelic medium education has grown in popularity since 2010. Access is not equitable across Scotland, which is a particular problem across the Gàidhealtachd where there are comparatively few Gaelic medium primary schools. We will work with local authorities to invest in Gaelic medium education and teacher training to ensure more thorough and equitable distribution across Scotland.

We recognise that many community-level difficulties with maintaining Gaelic have come about as a result of an erosion of local autonomy. We are committed to reversing government centralisation to ensure that community voices are heard and listened to as a rule of policymaking. This will empower Gaelic speaking communities to make decisions about how to best sustain their language and culture.

Get tourism back in Scotland

We recognise that Scottish tourism business had a difficult pandemic. Too many of them were not eligible for support schemes until very late, if at all.

The uncertainty and the constantly changing regulations during the pandemic made it difficult to plan.

We hope that the industry can look forward now to a brighter future, especially with more people choosing holidays in Scotland. We will take steps to give quality Scottish tourism the best possible opportunity to succeed.

We will enact a substantial programme of capital works in tourist areas to provide better car parking, electric charging points and signage to manage tourist numbers better.

We will aim to create and publicise a network of public toilets with waste and rubbish disposal points across Scotland.

Get the arts and cultural sector bouncing back

The creative industries and their performance spaces such as theatres were hit hard in the pandemic. We need

to make sure that we don't lose them during the recovery. Hundreds of people graduated in the summer of 2020 from courses in music, theatre and the arts, and in associated production and technical skills. In order to protect a vibrant and diverse cultural sector in Scotland we need to take urgent action. We will earmark money for a new *Show Must Go On Fund*. This will have five-year objectives to:

- Create graduate internship opportunities in the arts, paying for graduates to start their careers within art and cultural companies.
- Protect performance, rehearsal and exhibition spaces that are at risk because of the lower footfall legacy of the pandemic.
- Step up support for in-person performance with the aim to get more arts into more communities than ever before, to inspire and entertain.
- Set up a government-backed cancellation insurance guarantee so that producers have confidence to begin preparations for new shows.
- Support seat purchase initiatives to help shows go ahead with social distancing.
- Develop a new initiative to have more high-quality Scottish arts performances available digitally.
- Work towards a Creative Schools initiative to support the arts equivalent to Active Schools for sports.

- Make learning an instrument free again in schools through agreement with local authorities.
- Work with the General Teaching Council Scotland to introduce professional recognition of instrument music teachers.

We will also work with UK Government to resolve problems in their Brexit policy which are now restricting people touring and performing abroad.

Transport

Efficient transport is essential for the health of the economy, society and the environment.

As we put recovery first after the pandemic, we will make changes to transport to respond to the new ways of working that the pandemic brought.

We will make sure that every part of Scotland has an excellent local transport system and good links to the rest of the country.

Transport, along with heat, is the sector where least progress has been made on cutting carbon emissions. We will move every form of transport away from fossil fuels.

- **Create single through-tickets and swipe cards that work for buses, trains and ferries across Scotland.**
- **Reopen railway lines and move away from fossil fuels on the network.**
- **Give the public confidence in electric vehicles by progress**

towards a network of well-maintained rapid chargers.

- **Support active travel, making it easier to make safe journeys by bike or on foot.**
- **New local powers to integrate all forms of transport and to control local bus services.**

Supporting low-carbon transport

The single biggest challenge to stop carbon emissions from transport will be to encourage drivers out of their cars and onto public transport, or to switch to electric vehicles if this is not possible.

We will give the public confidence in electric vehicles by progress towards a network of well-maintained rapid chargers.

To lead by example, we will end all excuses for the public sector not to switch to electric vehicles, to give the public sector a role in keeping the charging network maintained. We will set a legal presumption by the end of the Parliament that every new vehicle purchased for the public sector will be low carbon.

To promote low carbon transport we will:

- Make it easier to integrate chargers into streetlights or other street furniture as technology allows, and require new developments to include charging points as standard.
- Help people get around the high initial cost of electric vehicles by using car clubs in more places.

- Change town planning processes to make sure roads have separate spaces for cyclists, walkers and motorists, to keep them all safe.
- Make cycling more attractive with a new challenge fund to help install showers and changing rooms in workplaces or community facilities.
- Decarbonise commuting through more support for e-bikes, as part of a plan to increase government support for households to buy or use forms of electric transport.
- Aim to double the share of the budget spent on active travel, and bring forward the £50 million programme for Active Freeway routes from town centres to outlying neighbourhoods, which has been delayed until 2025 by the current government.
- Plan so that every child has done their cycling proficiency test by the end of primary school, and every adult can take tuition and a test if they want it.
- Extend free bus travel for young people to include ferry links.
- Insist on a Fatal Accident Inquiry for each pedestrian death and require regional transport authorities to take remedial action.
- Make sure Scotland is well-placed to benefit from a good share on UK Government investment from its Transport Decarbonisation Plan.
- Make sure Scotland gets a good share of the benefits from the UK Government's plan for alternative fuels for ferries, including by 2022 to

start marine vessel trials in Orkney, and work towards hydrogen ports.

Rail recovery

We will support recovery in public transport by driving improvements to services under Scotrail through stronger protections for passengers and use of new ministerial directions over performance.

We will use the opportunity of government control of Scotrail alongside our plans for regulation of buses to better integrate local transport for the benefit of the passenger. We will embrace the opportunity to run railways better, as the UK Government makes major changes in response to the Williams Review of rail franchising.

We will continue to invest in rail routes to speed up journeys. We will reopen railway lines closed under the Beeching cuts in the 1960s, and phase out fossil fuels on the network. We will report annually to the Scottish Parliament on progress and on re-opening new stations on existing railway lines. The success of the Borders Railway gives the potential to extend the route to Hawick and Carlisle.

We will continue steps to get more freight onto railways to reduce congestion and pollution.

We will move away from fossil fuels for ground transportation and for ferries, supporting a transformation to hydrogen and battery power in remote and highland areas, with electric power where it is possible in other areas.

Limiting aviation

We will seek to limit air transport outside of lifeline routes or those with no reasonable alternatives. We will replace air passenger duty with a frequent flyer levy to target the costs on the most polluting users, maintaining exemptions for Highlands and Islands connections. We will also ensure passengers on private jets pay rates that reflect the per-passenger impact of these flights on the environment.

We will also work closely with the UK Government to make sure Scotland gets a good share of the benefits from its plans to research and invest in the production of sustainable aviation fuels and develop zero-emission aircraft.

We will stop the Scottish Government-owned Highlands and Islands Airports from ripping off customers on parking charges, and restore the local air traffic control functions that are being centralised by the SNP.

Integrating public transport to meet the needs of passengers

We will bring operators together to create single through-tickets and swipe cards that work for buses, trains and ferries across Scotland.

We will extend this system so that people can buy a time-limited pass for journeys by trains, buses, hired bikes and car clubs. We will do this by developing existing smart zones and making use of the support given to operators to install contactless systems during the pandemic.

We will give every part of Scotland locally controlled oversight of transport to make sure the system delivers economic

opportunity and equity, and tackles the climate emergency. You can't integrate local transport from a desk in Edinburgh.

Regional transport partnerships will have the resources to integrate all forms of transport locally, with new powers to control bus services in their areas.

We will give local communities control over the routes and timetables for bus services, ending Mrs Thatcher's deregulation and giving people a better service that suits passengers rather than bus company owners.

These regional partnerships will be able to tackle inequality and shape demand with new services, not just respond to current pressures.

We will ask regional transport partnerships to lead innovation through demand-responsive transport, using technology to bridge the gap between taxis and buses.

We will set the ambition across government to make all city and town centres vehicle-emissions free by 2030 to support active, public and zero emission travel.

Core transport connectivity

We support the recommendations of the Infrastructure Commission that more emphasis needs to be given to the maintenance of public assets, and the poor condition of many roads shows why improvements are needed.

We also recognise that communities deserve a standard of core connectivity to the rest of Scotland and new safety measures. That is why we continue to support investment programmes such as

the A9, A96 and for the A82 and A83 corridors.

This goes hand in hand with the need to accelerate journey times on the Highland mainline railway and Edinburgh to Aberdeen line. These are core connections.

Supporting core connectivity means retaining the Air Discount Scheme for the northern isles, and restoring its use for business.

We will institute a full assessment of the potential of a year-round ferry link from Campbeltown to Ardrossan to reduce the need to travel by road past the Rest and Be Thankful.

Support the police, cut crime, help victims

Everything we do is aimed at helping every individual to reach their potential. That means reducing crime and the fear of crime.

Police officers and police support staff work incredibly hard, day in day out. As key workers, they have been on the frontline throughout the pandemic.

Our plans will help the police to cut crime, working with other local services, and supported by a justice system that works effectively to support victims and cut reoffending.

- **Better support to police officers and civilian staff in their difficult jobs especially where they plug the gaps in other public services.**

- **Cut crime and improve rehabilitation services for people leaving prison so they are less likely to re-offend and cause more damage.**
- **Get more mental health support workers alongside the police.**
- **Give greater confidence to victims of crime.**
- **Increase the influence of communities over the way they are policed and enable more effective crime prevention.**
- **Reform Fatal Accident Inquiries to stop delays and learn the lessons more quickly.**

The police are increasingly having to plug the gaps in other public services. They are picking up the pieces of Scotland's mental health crisis. Three years after Scottish Liberal Democrats secured a government commitment to give the police a share of 800 new dedicated mental health professionals, they've only received 16 extra staff.

Since the SNP's botched centralisation, the national force's finances have been consistently in the red. It has had three chief constables, four board chairs and four chief executives during its short history.

We will ensure that Police Scotland has the support and resources it needs to protect our communities and its employees.

Support the police

We will make sure that police officers do not have to work in terrible working

conditions with shoddy buildings and ageing equipment. We will prioritise modernisation and investment in IT capabilities, unlocking future savings and ending the reliance on analogue technology in a digital age.

We will respect the skills and experience that police support staff bring to the service.

We will recruit specialist mental health staff to work alongside the police and take on more of the workload when police officers are required to act like social workers of last resort. We will expand the Community Triage and the Mental Health Hub services so that those suffering mental distress are supported by a trained professional as soon as possible.

Police officers and support staff will benefit from our wider mental health plans and new initiatives to support their own wellbeing, including a mental health first aider in every workplace to support colleagues.

We will ensure the police have the resources to conduct annual staff surveys, so that emerging issues can be identified and addressed.

We will legislate to bring back democracy into Police Scotland, making sure local policing plans are approved by locally elected people. We will remove the sole right of ministers to appoint the Scottish Police Authority.

We will enact the recommendations of Dame Elish Angiolini's independent review into police complaints handling.

Our proposals to tackle homelessness, to take stronger action to help recovery from drug and alcohol abuse, to offer

more education and training opportunities, and mandate more outreach youth services, will all have an impact in reducing crime.

All this work needs local public agencies to work together in partnership, which is why it is important to have good local links for police services.

We will guarantee sufficient resources for the police's Wildlife Crime Investigation Unit.

Liberal Democrats support the highest standards of animal welfare. We will clamp down on illegal pet imports and maintain the protection of standards for all animals.

We will take forward reform of the wild mammals legislation following Lord Bonyon's report. The changes will sufficiently protect animals, meet the needs of our rural communities, work effectively and give all those involved in its operation the clarity that makes it fit for purpose.

Cut crime by cutting reoffending

We will tackle crime by reducing reoffending, which is shown internationally to be the most effective way to cut the numbers of crimes and make communities safer.

The total economic and societal cost of reoffending is estimated to be £3 billion a year. This shows the value in taking action to cut reoffending.

Scotland's prison population is at record levels and people are remanded at double the rate of England. They are so overcrowded that the Scottish Prison

Service had to cease its rehabilitation service, self-harm has spiralled and there are waits of up to 42-weeks for basic education courses.

The lack of throughcare and proper support for people in prison and when leaving custody increases the likelihood of reoffending.

We will implement healthcare plans for people suffering ill health within two weeks of their entering prison, giving them the best chance for their health, especially mental health, to be improved upon release and to get on in life.

We will make sure people have a bank account and have had their social security eligibility assessed before they leave prison alongside a new right to welfare, housing and healthcare appointments within 48 hours of release, underpinned by Housing First principles.

We will work with justice partners to measure post-prison destinations such as education, employment or training, and to publish the results alongside existing reconviction rates, to provide an evidence basis for future policy.

We will speed up the rollout of the new women's prison estate, designed to help reduce reoffending.

We support purposeful activity in prison to equip people for employment, including literacy and numeracy skills, leading to accredited qualifications. We will encourage people on remand to undertake short education courses, with the assurance that their engagement with purposeful activity does not imply guilt.

We will extend the Scottish Business Pledge to develop a commitment to

providing a level playing field for applicants who have completed a sentence.

We will work towards introducing a presumption against remand, based on public protection, so that people awaiting trial are only imprisoned where it is necessary to safeguard communities and public safety. We will invest properly in alternatives, such as Bail Supervision Orders and electronic tagging.

Give confidence to victims

Scotland's justice system can cause further trauma and harm. Victims often speak of secondary victimisation, and some have described the experience as worse than the crime itself.

We will listen to the lived experience of victims and legislate to make targeted changes to improve their experience, for example by introducing a right to anonymity for victims of sexual crimes.

We will give victims a voice using feedback from support organisations on the Victims' Taskforce, improving issues such as access to information, feeling safe and experiencing compassion.

We will reduce the amount of time cases take to complete and address court backlogs, by supporting the overwhelmed Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service.

We will support this work with an independent director of prosecutions to run the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, separate from the Lord Advocate's position as the Scottish Government's legal advisor.

We will initiate an independent investigation by a non-Scottish prosecutor to examine how the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service runs itself and supports its staff, and to recommend the additional resources for summary prosecution, diversion and criminal defence needed to run a faster and more efficient justice system.

To put victims first we will:

- Build a more restorative justice system so that victims, where they agree, can get the damage of crime repaired by the perpetrator.
- Support the increased use of victims' statements and their involvement in sentencing and reparation, in ways that are proven to cut reoffending.
- Ensure enough victim and family information liaison workers, so that victims are fully supported throughout the criminal justice process.
- Target recent increases in fraud and online abuse by introducing a new online crime office.
- Fully incorporate the Barnahus model for child victims and witnesses, which allows them to give evidence in a home-like setting away from court.
- Treat the victims of domestic abuse more fairly by building a presumption that the perpetrator will be required to leave the shared home, updating the Matrimonial Homes (Family Protection) Act.
- Develop a new 'Destitution Fund' for people experiencing domestic abuse

unable to access other sources of help.

Fatal Accident Inquiries

When people lose a family member in a sudden and unexpected way, they are often left with years more pain waiting for the Fatal Accident Inquiry to begin.

Fatal Accident Inquiries are still being published up to a decade after incidents, despite there being lessons that need to be learnt from the tragedy.

We will commission a full independent review of the systems of Fatal Accident Inquiries to investigate and propose reforms that address the protracted timescales, structural barriers and lack of public confidence in the process. This review will learn from the coroner systems in the rest of the UK. It will also determine the options for removing such inquiries from the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service's responsibilities altogether. It has shown itself to be incapable of handling them and the delays it oversees routinely torment grieving families.

We will aim to ensure that Fatal Accident Inquiries begin within 12 months to ensure lessons that can save lives are learned.

Fireworks

We will take forward the work of the Firework Review Group to tighten restrictions around how fireworks are accessed and used by the general public in Scotland.

We will assess the impact of the new restrictions on firework sales put in place for November 2021.

We will consult on going further to establish “no firework” zones, further mandatory conditions of sale, and the options to give more power to local authorities so that decisions can be made close to communities affected.

Tackle the climate emergency

We will act to tackle the climate emergency and declare a nature emergency.

We are trustees of our world, and our society, and must pass on a sustainable legacy which will benefit future generations.

Climate change, pollution and the degradation of the natural world pose the greatest threats to the wellbeing and freedom of present and future generations.

We want the Scottish Parliament to put tackling the climate and nature emergencies at the centre of the urgent work needed in the next five years. Every delay makes the chance to avoid catastrophic climate change less likely. We cannot afford distractions.

We will ensure that net zero carbon and nature recovery objectives are built into decision-making, reward rapid progress and encourage behavioural change.

Our plans will accelerate action to tackle climate change to meet the tougher target of a 75% reduction by 2030 that was put into Scottish law after work by the Scottish Liberal Democrats, making it one of the strongest objectives in the world.

We will meet Scottish climate change targets in full by 2045, which is five years earlier than the UK's Climate Change Committee recommended, acknowledging how hard that will be.

We will be proud to host the COP26 in Glasgow and want the Scottish Parliament to have agreed to our ambitious climate emergency plans by the time delegates arrive. We will also highlight the opportunities to visit the best of Scotland such as the Galloway & Southern Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere and our leading research science hubs.

- **Move one million homes to zero emission heating by 2030.**
- **Invest in low carbon heat networks.**
- **Double the programmes to end fuel poverty.**
- **Invest in new skills for a just transition from fossil fuel industry as demand drops.**
- **Make it easier to re-purpose town centres and transport systems to fit post-pandemic life.**
- **New national parks, and new woodlands close to where people live.**
- **A fully independent environment standards organisation to keep government on the right track.**

Putting nature at the heart of tackling climate change

We will declare a nature emergency to tackle the loss of species in Scotland.

We will use nature to help fight climate change and foster biodiversity through restoration of peatlands and woodland.

We will propose a Nature Recovery Law to set legal targets across government to clean up our air, soils, seas and rivers. We will:

- Set legally binding nature recovery targets, with an action plan and financial support for delivery.
- Protect and restore carbon-rich habitats while phasing out harmful practices.
- Expand woodland using at least 50 per cent native species, increasing Scotland's forest cover by an additional 36 million trees every year.
- Develop a formal strategy for Scotland's Wild Land Areas.
- Set a national target that 30 per cent of all publicly owned land should be used for rewilding, including land owned by Forestry and Land Scotland, Crown Estate Scotland, and Scottish Water.
- Implement the recommendations of the Deer Management Review to control numbers and restore biodiverse landscapes.
- License of the practice of muirburn in the uplands.
- Implement the recommendations of the Werrity Grouse Moor Review to establish licensing for driven grouse shooting.

Our national parks take effective action to tackle the climate emergency and support

biodiversity crisis. They promote mental and physical health and wellbeing, and boost rural employment. We support development of a new national strategy to designate more national parks, as part of a wider network of protected landscapes.

We will appoint an Outdoor Recreation Champion within government to help everyone in Scotland get the benefit of these new national parks.

The electrification of Scotland – and warmer homes

We will bring forward an Energy Efficiency and Zero Carbon Bill to underpin a new zero carbon homes strategy. This will introduce ambitious targets so we can meet our emissions and fuel poverty targets.

We will declare home insulation a national strategic priority and set a target to have covered the whole country by 2030, accompanied by a doubling of fuel poverty budgets and by providing incentives for all householders. These steps have been estimated to create 34,000 new jobs in energy efficiency.

We will use the Passivhaus standard which reduces energy usage by three quarters. Its costs are likely to fall when the standard becomes the norm.

Important elements of the Energy Efficiency and Zero Carbon Law will be to:

- Scale up investment in energy efficiency and low carbon heating for Scotland's homes, with an initial five-year programme that will improve 80,000 homes per year.
- Switch a million homes from polluting mains gas to heat pumps by 2030 as

part of our major new infrastructure programme.

- Invest in low-carbon heat networks, including the potential for connecting whole towns.
- Set a target for all new social housing, including affordable homes, to be built to Passivhaus standards by 2025, and increase building standards to require all new-build residential properties to meet EPC A ratings by 2025, and Passivhaus standards by 2030.
- Introduce the delayed energy efficiency regulations to require landlords to meet higher energy standards within five years, and make it easier for people in shared buildings to agree to upgrades and improvements.
- Review and improve the Community Wind Benefit Scheme to make it easier for more communities to receive a share of the profits of wind generation on their doorsteps.
- Make it easier for people to get information and financial support for energy-saving by integrating the cluttered landscape of advisers.

We will work to make sure that people in Scotland get the benefit from lower cost heat pumps to replace fossil fuel boilers as part of the UK Government initiative to scale up demand, making sure Scottish business is gearing up to be in the supply chain.

We will work with the UK Government to build resilience in the electricity grid to support more electric power for heat and transport.

Planning for greener, cleaner communities

We will make changes to the national planning framework to help us be effective in tackling the climate and nature emergencies.

The reforms will also help us to make the best recovery from the pandemic. We support the appetite for 20-minute-neighbourhoods where people can access most of the things they need in daily life within a short distance of their home.

We will make it easier for local planning authorities to make the changes needed to respond to post-pandemic life. We recognise that decisions on repurposing buildings and changing transport networks are best tailored to local need, decided locally, not over-ruled nationally, and require the involvement of local people and businesses in shaping them.

Our intentions for the new national planning framework are to:

- Make sure access to green, open spaces, wildlife corridors and woodland is available to every community.
- Protect green belts and gaps between settlements for the long-term benefit of local communities, the climate and nature.
- Create a Brownfield First policy, under which planning applicants should demonstrate that no brownfield land is available for their proposal before permission can be granted on greenfield sites.

- Set out that the climate emergency and Scotland's 2045 net zero target are material considerations to be afforded significant weight in planning decisions.

- Make district heating the normal choice for new developments, and support the move away from new gas heating installation.

- Encourage the use of living roofs to boost biodiversity and create a new network of habitats for pollinators, provide new green living spaces, reduce flooding and save energy.

- Ensure the ownership of common land, infrastructure and play areas on new housing estates is with local councils, with a thirty year maintenance dowry, to avoid future problems of neglect and unfair charges for homeowners.

- Make sure there are community engagement plans in place at the planning stage of major infrastructure projects to allow local people to have an effective voice.

- Preserve parks and playing fields as important community green space.

- Identify the biggest polluters and work with them to establish transition plans.

Changing energy production to be greener

The first renewable electricity targets were set by a Liberal Democrat environment minister in the first term of the Scottish Parliament.

To help achieve our 2030 climate targets, we will set a new target for 100% of energy generated in Scotland to come from renewables by 2030.

We will also develop the principle that Scottish electricity should be “100% renewable for 100% of the time” to support the development of diverse generation sources and storage solutions.

We will plan for the inevitable end of oil and gas by getting the transition right, accepting that decisions taken across the world to tackle the climate emergency will cut demand for fossil fuels almost completely. We will establish a successor to the Just Transition Commission, with a membership that includes affected workers and communities, trade unions and environmental interests.

We will strengthen the duty on public bodies in the Climate Change Act to require that their contribution towards delivery of emissions reduction targets must be in line with Just Transition principles and require them to develop Just Transition Plans.

We will make sure Scotland takes forward an ambitious strategy for using hydrogen for diverse energy needs, and ensure we are well-placed to get a good share of the UK Government’s investment flowing from its own Hydrogen Strategy, not least the research into blending green hydrogen with natural gas and town-sized hydrogen networks.

We will support an increasing number of projects developing underground geothermal energy for heating.

The economic and environmental benefits from a circular economy

An estimated 300 million plastic straws, 276 million pieces of plastic cutlery, 50 million plastic plates and 66 million polystyrene food containers are used every year in Scotland.

A brilliant way to tackle the climate emergency, cut pollution and bring new business opportunities to Scotland is by embracing the circular economy. This is work to minimise the use of natural resources by the reuse of goods and materials.

By extending a product’s life through repair, reuse and repurposing, waste becomes a commodity, and reduces residues sent for disposal.

Research for the UK Government by the Waste and Resources Action Programme demonstrates that developing a circular economy could create over 200,000 new jobs in the UK. We will take action to make sure Scotland gets a good share of them.

The proposed deposit return scheme for drinks containers and the coffee cup levy, both of which followed successful Scottish Liberal Democrat campaigns, will remove plastic and other material from the waste stream. Our aim is to end the mainstream use of single-use plastics.

We will introduce a Circular Economy Law including targets that reduce the emissions produced in creating everything we consume, and use other parts of our programme, to achieve:

- Comprehensive assessment, monitoring and reporting of Scotland’s

material, land, carbon and water footprints.

- A duty to produce a Resource Reduction Plan, updated every five years.
- Better use by public sector bodies of circular economy principles in their procurement strategies.
- New targets for repurposing, repair and reuse to drive manufacturers towards system change, supported by the enterprise agencies for people wanting to launch relevant businesses in their area.
- Ambitious targets for the collection of post-consumer textiles, accompanied by the rollout of necessary infrastructure, and the implementation of measures to encourage the fashion industry to increase the recycled fibre content in fabrics and yarns.
- Commitments from industries including food and drink, agriculture, energy, construction and facilities management sectors, along with major public sector resource consumers such as the NHS, to adopt circular economy approaches and reduce waste and environmental impact.
- More use of international influence to establish global standards on product design.

We will make sure businesses in Scotland get a good share of the benefit from the UK Government's proposed right to repair policy for household goods, which is copied from a similar EU proposal.

Improving the marine environment

The seas and lochs around Scotland contain some of our greatest natural and economic treasures.

In common with oceans around the world, pollution by plastics threatens all of that. Our proposals for a circular economy to cut waste and single-use plastics will help begin the process of recovery.

We will start a Marine Recovery Plan to restore more of our seas, encourage marine biodiversity and boost eco-tourism businesses alongside traditional maritime industries.

- Designate new marine protected areas where this is backed by scientific evidence.
- Support research to demonstrate how Scotland's marine area acts to capture carbon in the seabed and marine ecosystems.

We recognise the potential benefits to the Scottish economy of a well-managed seaweed cultivation sector and will seek to establish a sensible structure that avoids over-harvesting.

Effective finance and governance to meet the environmental challenge

We will contribute to global action on the climate emergency, not least by keeping Scottish environmental standards comprehensively high and keeping pace with improvements in EU law on the environment.

We support a fully independent Environment Standards Scotland to keep government on the right track.

We will consult on the establishment of a specialist Environmental Court, to provide a speedier, more accessible and cost-effective environmental justice system.

We support calls from environmental stakeholders to develop and promote an indicative Nationally Determined Contribution for Scotland, showcasing our commitment to climate justice and highlighting our 75% carbon reduction target by 2030 to encourage other developed nations to raise their own ambition.

We will press for OFGEM to have sustainability as part of its remit.

Social justice, housing and communities

We stand with the weak against the strong and will use the power of government to tackle the social and economic injustices that limit freedom.

The evidence from around the world is that societies and economies are stronger when inequality is reduced.

Our intentions are to end homelessness, child poverty and fuel poverty.

- **Double the Scottish Child Payment to £20 per week to tackle child poverty.**
- **Build 60,000 affordable homes to help address homelessness.**
- **New Help to Renovate loans to bring derelict homes back into use.**

- **Develop a system of Universal Basic Income to provide everyone with a safety net.**
- **Guarantee respite care for unpaid carers.**

Tackling poverty and homelessness

Having the right to an adequate home is one of the basics of life. Safe, secure and good quality housing is the very foundation to ensuring fair and equal opportunities for all.

We will build more homes that people can afford, with an initial programme for 60,000. We will use all the financial tools available to government to pay for this, evaluating and learning from the last five years of pilots and trials to get the most from our investment. Our programme will aim for 40,000 homes for social rent in the next five years.

We will conduct an urgent review of the reasons properties are left vacant, to take the steps needed to bring more of them into use, with the specific aim of increasing the housing supply.

We will create a new Help to Renovate loan scheme to bring neglected properties back into use with a particular focus on helping first-time buyers onto the housing ladder and achieving low emission properties.

To help deliver more suitable land for housing we will take forward the recommendation of the Scottish Land Commission to force the sale of derelict sites that blight communities.

We will conduct an assessment of publicly owned brownfield land and consult on a

mechanism for selling such land on a plot-by-plot basis direct to communities for self-building.

We will make it much simpler, through permitted development rights, for urban derelict land and rural farm buildings to be used for zero emission homes.

We will seek to end homelessness by taking forward the Housing First and Rapid Rehousing principles, providing both housing and other support services to individuals in need. We will address the additional challenges for young homeless people with special pathways to link suitable jobs and training to housing.

We will bring forward new legislation which would strengthen the duties on public bodies to prevent homelessness.

We will give adequate powers to local authorities to manage the numbers of second homes in their area where there is evidence of problems.

We will introduce proportionate short-term let licensing to sustain communities and provide support to local authorities who are struggling to provide the permanent homes people need.

We will establish a Scottish Standard for Housing to apply across all forms of tenure, to include zero emission heat, energy performance, lifetime accessibility and a minimum of gigabit-ready broadband. Such a clear standard will allow the construction industry to both contribute to and benefit from a green recovery.

We will offer free safety assessments to homeowners whose flats have external cladding to determine which properties have material needing to be removed in

the light of the Grenfell Tower tragedy, with government support for remediation in line with the recent expert working group recommendations.

We will end fuel poverty, establishing catch-up zones for communities furthest behind and investing substantially in energy-saving measures, creating thousands of green jobs, and helping meet our ambitions on child poverty.

The current government's plan still leaves 5 percent of Scottish households in fuel poverty in 2040. This is unacceptable and we will prepare a new Scottish social security benefit to tackle fuel poverty in those properties where government action will not be able to make the difference needed.

A safety net for everyone

We support action to make respect for human rights and dignity the cornerstone of UK and Scottish social security.

We commit to work together with other parties to help realise these principles for people living in Scotland.

We will double the Scottish Child Payment and support other measures, such as free school meals, as part of a programme to end child poverty, with the intention to meet the targets unanimously agreed by Parliament.

We will continue to call on the UK Government to make permanent the £20 uplift in Universal Credit introduced during the pandemic to address child poverty.

We will consider top-up social security payments, similar to the child payment, for families with one or more disabled

parent or disabled child, to make a bigger impact on child poverty.

We will start new campaigns to ensure everyone who should be in receipt of the new Scottish Disability Payments, Children's Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payment or Attendance Allowance is getting it.

We will remove the requirement for reassessment for social security entitlements where conditions are irreversible, and use better assessment criteria for people with fluctuating conditions such as Multiple Sclerosis.

We will work with the UK Government to develop a system of universal basic income that can give everybody a safety net in the 21st century. Such a system would have protected us all at the start of lockdown.

We will review the Scottish social security system to meet our aims on human rights, and take care not to jeopardise payments to people in need as we bring control of new benefits to Holyrood by 2024. The present SNP government delayed the transfer of responsibility because of the complexity involved, yet still proposes to put them at risk again by an independence campaign.

We will continue to press for justice for WASPI women from the UK Government and will consider a new Scottish benefit to close the gap in cases of hardship.

Supporting carers

People who care for others – whether paid or unpaid, young or old – do a remarkable and important job. They

deserve our support but are far too often forgotten and ignored.

Unpaid carers provide love and support to thousands of people across the country. They often sacrifice their own wellbeing and financial security to meet the needs of the people they care for.

We support an enhanced Carers Allowance in Scotland and are campaigning for a UK-wide uplift of £1,000 per year to recognise the value of carers. We will make it easier financially for carers to access education and training.

We will recognise unpaid carers with guaranteed respite support for them, and give support for those who want to continue in employment.

We will give carers the right to flexible working hours where it is in our power to grant this so they can balance employment and caring responsibilities.

We will work with local government to introduce a package of carer benefits including free leisure centre access and self-referral to socially prescribed activities and courses.

We will also extend the support and financial assistance available to carers following a bereavement that means their caring role comes to an end, recognising the need to both grieve and adjust.

We will provide information and support to carers following the end of their caring role. This will include a new fund to support training and education for carers returning to work after caring. We will extend eligibility for financial support for up to six months after a person's caring role comes to an end.

We will engage carers and service users in an update of the 2016 Carers Act in order to improve it in the light of lessons from the pandemic.

Help with the cost of living

The pandemic hit many family budgets hard, with lost earnings and lost employment. As the global economy expands it may bring with it the threat of inflation. We will do what we can to help people address the cost of living.

We will work with the Association of British Insurers to reduce premiums in Scotland by sharing information on flood risk and developing a new claims portal, like that in England and Wales, to cut the cost of motor insurance claims by avoiding litigation.

We will cut costs for parents with our comprehensive offer on childcare and early education.

We will save money for homebuyers by helping more properties achieve the highest energy efficiency ratings and become eligible for a lower mortgage rate from some high street lenders.

Our plans to replace the unfair council tax will explore if the new system can include a valuation process in common with business rates to make it more efficient and cut costs for taxpayers.

Democracy

The SNP have centralised the life out of Scotland. The pandemic has exposed the short-sightedness of that policy. Restrictions have meant people can't travel for centralised services. Local communities have often shown a

better grasp of their local needs in the face of the crisis.

Power is safer when it is shared rather than hoarded at the centre. We will give more local control over local taxation, economic development, education, the police, transport planning and health services.

We will seek to work at a UK level to reform the UK to a federal future. We will give all four administrations a say over the direction of the whole UK and make sure the Scottish Parliament cannot be overruled on the say-so of the UK Government and has influence over UK wide decision-making.

This will be better than umpteen years of strife and turmoil with an independence campaign.

- **Work at a UK level to reform the UK to a federal future.**
- **A new fiscal framework to ensure local councils get a fair share of the budget.**
- **Keep pace with EU policy to keep the option to rejoin the EU in the future.**
- **A new Contempt of Parliament rule, so a minority government can't ignore Holyrood.**
- **New steps to listen and act on the advice of service users and public sector workers.**

Reform of the UK

We will seek to work at a UK level to reform the UK to a federal future.

The recent Internal Markets Act showed in clear terms the limits of a system that does not involve the four administrations jointly in making decisions which cut across their responsibilities on matters such as food, building and environmental safety. Our plans for the UK will:

- Recognise that the Government of the UK must enjoy the support of the majority of those who vote in each UK General Election.
- Create a United Kingdom Council of Ministers, to bring together the governments of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland together with regional leaders across England.
- Pass legislation in which Westminster renounces the ability to unilaterally change the powers of the devolved parliaments across the UK or to pass laws in their areas of responsibility.
- Establish a United Kingdom Constitutional Convention to bring together political parties, parliamentarians, local government and civic society to address the alienation that exists and finalise and confirm the move to a federal union.

Reforming the Scottish Parliament

To improve the operation of Scottish politics, make it work better for people, and address emerging problems in the balance between the elected parliament and the government, we will:

- Return to the system of four-year parliamentary terms.

- Change the voting system for the Scottish Parliament to single transferable vote.
- Support a new rule of Contempt of Parliament, so a minority government can't rule as though it had a majority, and that Parliament - not ministers - has the final say.
- Work with other parties to further a culture of respect inside Holyrood, including improving induction for staff, and use the experience of remote working in the pandemic to make it a more flexible and family-friendly workplace, to allow a wider range of people to consider standing for election.
- Continue to call for the introduction of a recall system for elected representatives.
- Progress the work of the Independent Review of Safeguarding in Politics, secured by Scottish Liberal Democrats, to introduce robust new procedures to protect children and vulnerable adults so politics catches up with the progress made in other professions.
- Give organisations that receive funding from the Scottish Government a new 'license to criticise', giving them a stronger voice and recognising through a new legal guarantee that the services we rely on are worse off if organisations are concerned that speaking out will have implications for their future funding and survival.

- Strengthen and expand the public's right to information, ensuring people can scrutinise their government and hold organisations to account, applying Freedom of Information rules to companies which provide government services.
- Introduce a new 'duty to record' so that the public can access accounts of important ministerial meetings and decision-making processes.
- Strengthen the role of the Public Audit Committee so that it can scrutinise business grants of more than £250,000 before they are paid to satisfy themselves that the recipient company pays a fair level of UK tax, and also save us from the embarrassment of ministers signing agreements with dubious companies.

After the failures exposed by the Salmond-Sturgeon inquiry into harassment of women we will establish a new confidential complaints process within the civil service, with a strong external element, to give confidence to those wishing to make a complaint against ministers.

Stronger local government

Good decisions about local services are best made locally, with democratic local authorities given the power to act in the best interests of the communities they serve. Local government in Scotland has suffered from centralisation and loss of control.

We will strengthen local governance in partnership with local councils, recognising that reform has stalled under the current government.

We will develop a fiscal framework with local government that recognises the important work that local councils do, the freedoms they need to innovate and serve their communities, and their need for a fair share of Scottish Government resources.

We will give back to councils the powers to set local domestic and business taxation, and remove the financial penalties used by the present government to exert control. This will give local councils control of more than half of their revenues and give them a real stake in economic progress.

We will give a full power of general competence to local authorities to allow them to meet the needs of the people they serve.

We recognise that local communities did a power of work during the crisis to identify and support those people in need in their areas. So we will offer local communities the opportunity to establish a burgh or island council to serve their area, established by a charter defining its functions, to give a truly local democratic focus to services. We will listen to the experiences of communities during the pandemic, and give them the chance to empower themselves more formally.

Listening to people

People have a right to participate in their democracy.

We will engage with public sector workers to take their advice on improving services, using their frontline experience during the pandemic.

We will listen and act on the lived experiences of disabled people and health services users in planning the recovery from the pandemic.

We will ask all of Scotland's representative groups for disabled people to come together to steer reforms that make sure the mistakes of the pandemic – where disabled people were neglected – are not repeated and their lived experience guides a fairer recovery.

We will ask all the expert health groups to take part in a major inquiry by the Scottish Parliament to steer a path to tackle health and illness issues raised by them before and during the pandemic.

We will give volunteering organisations the flexibility and certainty they need with longer term funding agreements.

We have championed the concept of citizens' assemblies. We want groups of citizens to be able to look in depth at issues, study the evidence and make recommendations. We will take forward the work of Scotland's Climate Assembly and the Citizens' Assembly, decoupling its work from the current government's drive towards a divisive referendum campaign.

We will give young people a bigger role in shaping policies affecting them through the Youth Parliament.

Managing the public finances to meet our ambitions

We will initiate a full spending review at the conclusion of the pandemic period to guide the recovery in public services and the economy.

The spending review, in particular, will align the capital programme with our climate change priorities, not least ending fuel poverty.

We will adopt and extend the current principles of fair work, equal pay for equal work regardless of age, prudent borrowing, competitive tax systems, continual efficiency within government, and we accept the Infrastructure Commission's recommendations for a greater emphasis on the good maintenance of public assets.

Our programme for government will include a pipeline of projects ready to be started as the pandemic eases and more money becomes available for the recovery. We do not want a lack of preparations to leave gaps in the programme. Some of our programme may overhang the end of the parliamentary term.

We will seek to work with the UK Government so that its Shared Prosperity spending programme is efficient and complements rather than competes with Scottish Government investment.

We will institute a system of more robust scrutiny of the Budget prior to autumn and spring revisions to bear down on emerging underspends and use taxpayers' money to full effect, rather than see hundreds of millions remain unused.

We will learn the lessons of the impact of the pandemic to guide reforms to the fiscal framework between the UK and Scottish governments, so that Scotland benefits appropriately from decisions made on matters within the responsibility of the Scottish Parliament, while

remaining protected by framework of support from the UK Government at times of crisis. We remain disappointed that Scottish ministers never complied with the parliamentary vote to publish an estimate of the amount of UK Government support paid directly to individuals and businesses during the pandemic, and regret the loss of transparency as a result.

We do not favour continued use of public-private partnership funding, preferring to move to capital investment programmes funded by direct borrowing, with democratically accountable management and ongoing maintenance, rather than rely on expensive and inflexible PPP and PFI contracts.

We will support the refocusing of public pension funds towards sustainable investments and report on progress.

We do not propose substantial changes to the rates and bands of Scottish income tax, but will continue to maintain a stable system, with appropriate and affordable indexation of the thresholds.

Council Tax reform – maybe this time

The Scottish Government has promised to scrap the unfair council tax for the last 14 years. We will restart the cross-party process to replace the council tax that has been left dangling by the SNP.

We will explore if the new system can include a valuation process in common with business rates to make it more efficient and cut costs for taxpayers.

We want reform. We have proposed a switch to a land value system, used

elsewhere in the world, which does not penalise homeowners for improving their properties. The Independent Review of Local Taxation said there is merit in that system and encouraged further work. The Scottish Land Commission has carried out some further studies and these should be part of the cross-party work to scrap the council tax.

Business rates reform

We will reform business rates to take the burden off high street retailers, who are unfairly hampered compared to purely online retailers who have lower premises costs.

We support a land value element for this new tax to avoid penalising businesses which improve their properties, install renewables or made their customers safer from the virus.

A study elsewhere in the UK concluded that a switch to such a system would cut bills for most properties on local high streets. This will help high streets develop into community hubs, with a good shopping and social experience, and allow them to compete with online. The new system would raise more from under-used sites and land “banked” by developers. It will also help remote and rural areas grow into vibrant communities.

We will review the rates relief system to give more support to shops on local high streets which have low turnover but a high rateable value.

We will give local authorities control of the level of tax and reliefs in their area to foster new partnerships between councils and local business.

Liberty, liberalism and our place in the world

We live in a gloriously diverse world. We are all stronger because of it. All the evidence is that societies and economies are stronger when every person can contribute. That means stopping the discrimination that rules many people out of living their lives to the full.

Scotland needs to benefit from the diverse talents of everyone to increase wellbeing and productivity. That means there should be opportunity for everyone whatever their background, rich or poor, and regardless of gender, sexuality, race, religion, disability or other aspects of what we look like or where we come from.

Liberal Democrats will always be robust in public support for the rights and safety of marginalised groups.

The pandemic limited our freedoms and opportunities. Some groups of people were affected particularly badly. Young people lost out on education and the chance to start their careers. The economic sectors hardest hit were often those where the majority of employees are women and young people. Disabled people saw many of their rights suspended by the emergency legislation. People from ethnic minorities were often working in essential jobs in the face of the pandemic and suffered higher mortality rates from the very start.

- **Establish a cross-party commission to recommend urgent steps to**

prevent violence against women and girls in all its forms.

- **Stop future emergency legislation removing fundamental rights from disabled people.**
- **End the harmful practice of sexual orientation and gender identity conversion therapy.**
- **New pay audits to ensure fair opportunities for people from ethnic minorities and disabled people.**
- **Incorporate four United Nations human rights treaties into Scots law.**
- **Support a close relationship with our European neighbours.**

Human rights and equalities

As we put recovery first we will put human rights first. We will bring international human rights standards into Scottish law wherever we can. We will ask representatives from different equality groups to help shape public services to learn from the mistakes made in the pandemic.

Too often people face violence, discrimination, bullying and abuse because of who they are.

Violence and abuse has left women and girls across the world less able to lead their lives to the full.

Disabled people have been badly treated. The pandemic restrictions reinforced the isolation experienced by many. Disabled people are often subject to violence, discrimination and abuse just for being who they are.

Homophobia and transphobia continue to be real problems for too people.

The Black Lives Matter movement was born in tragic circumstances and delivered a powerful message on the need for change. Our urgent intention is to make sure that people from ethnic minority backgrounds live their lives free from discrimination, abuse and violence so that they can achieve their individual potential.

Research by Scottish Liberal Democrats has revealed that there are thousands of racist incidents recorded in schools in Scotland every year.

Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and sectarianism cause harm and fear every day.

It is important we act. We will:

- Establish a cross-party commission to recommend urgent steps to prevent violence against women and girls in all its forms.
- Take forward as a priority the recommendations from Dame Helena Kennedy's working group on misogyny.
- Take forward the findings and recommendations of the Morrow reports on tackling sectarianism.
- End the harmful practice of sexual orientation and gender identity conversion therapy in the next parliamentary session, working with the UK Government where necessary.
- Fully implement the recommendations of the LGBTI

Inclusive Education Working Group and update guidance to schools.

- Commit to the principle that future emergency legislation must not remove fundamental rights from disabled people.
- Design education that is inclusive for all, and give each disabled child and disabled young person appropriate support in the transition to adulthood.
- Act on the recommendations of the EHRC inquiry into the treatment of ethnic minority workers during the coronavirus pandemic and the Scottish Government Expert Reference Group on COVID-19 and Ethnicity.

We will incorporate four United Nations human rights treaties into Scots law: the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. We will strengthen existing human rights commitments, including bringing the age of criminal responsibility into line with United Nations recommendations.

The mark of a strong society is where people can rise to the level of their potential and establish rewarding careers on equal terms. That is not the situation in Scotland today where many groups of people do not get the chance to succeed.

Research by Scottish Liberal Democrats has shown that people from ethnic minority backgrounds in Scotland are still

massively underrepresented in senior positions in education, police and the judiciary. Our proposals on employment are intended to close the gender pay gap, which is still estimated at 10 percent in Scotland, and we will monitor progress.

We will implement The Promise from Scotland's Independent Care Review so that care-experienced young people and adults get the support they need.

We will:

- Carry out pay audits of government, local government and agencies to provide evidence on unfair disadvantage experienced by ethnic minority and disabled employees.
- Set a target of a 50:50 male to female split for apprenticeships, with plans to achieve progress year on year, particularly in high paid sectors such as engineering.
- Create an occupational segregation commission to drive public bodies' actions to tackle the occupational segregation which limits opportunities for women and men in different workplaces.
- Support the employer accreditation programme Equally Safe at Work.
- Work with employers to encourage them to adopt flexible working arrangements which address the barriers to employment faced by disabled people.
- Make disabled people a priority group for access to the young person's job guarantee, and include disabled

people in the design of employability support schemes.

- Put in place specialist employability programmes to enable more people with visual impairment to find work, including through new apprenticeship schemes for blind and partially sighted people.
- Give every child or young person with a disability or long-term health condition the right to a transitions plan to help with their move from child to adult services.
- Uphold the human rights of learning-disabled children with new statutory guidance to eliminate the unnecessary use of restraint and seclusion in schools and children's services, supported by a comprehensive training plan for families and education staff.
- Consider the case for a commissioner to protect the rights of autistic people and people with learning difficulties.

We will decriminalise sex work in line with best international practice and the risks to those involved, and include stronger action to tackle people-trafficking.

A voice for everyone

Part of our hopes for a human rights approach to government is to listen and engage with people's lived experience to help shape the future. We will:

- Give organisations led by disabled people and advocating on their behalf the opportunity to shape the recovery from the pandemic, to avoid the mistakes of the past and give them a

stronger place in the future of Scotland.

- Give the Scottish Youth Parliament a greater role in shaping and reviewing public services used by young people.
- Ensure that all NHS healthcare professionals can meet the needs of their LGBTI patients by incorporating training that addresses barriers faced due to both sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Commit to funding mandatory training for mental health professionals, including front line CAMHS staff, on supporting LGBTI people, and ensure mental health and suicide prevention training delivered to NHS staff is inclusive.
- Ensure that LGBTI people can access welcoming and inclusive social care services, by providing targeted training for staff with a focus on those working in residential care settings.
- Support the creation of an empire and slavery museum to tell the true story of Scotland's history.
- Support greater diversity in public art so that it better reflects who we are.
- Update guardianship and adults with incapacity legislation so that the focus is on increasing empowerment and supported decision making.
- Enable people to exercise their rights whatever the challenge and wherever they live through consistent and funded provision of advocacy services, securely funded legal aid, mediation and arbitration.

Freedom to achieve your goals

A full life in a liberal society is more than just personal safety and the opportunity to work. It needs the chance to be creative, to thrive and to enjoy life.

We will take further steps to give people better chances to achieve their goals in life in diverse ways:

- Open the Independent Living Fund Scotland to new claims.
- Establish a National Low Vision Plan, modelled on the Welsh Low Vision Service, to enable more consistent service provision across Scotland.
- Support NHS Lothian to re-provision the eye pavilion in Edinburgh to provide high quality services.
- Remove the requirement for reassessment for social security entitlement where conditions are irreversible.
- Create an accessibility standard ensuring all government documents and communications are available in alternative formats, – including braille, large-print and audio.
- Implement the pavement parking ban, legislated for by the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019, by the end of 2021.
- Ensure that NHS reproductive health and fertility services recognise, and address, barriers and health inequalities faced by LGBTI people, particularly by lesbian and bisexual women.

- Improve laws on gender recognition in line with international best practice to allow trans people to change the legal gender on their birth certificate with a simple process based on the principle of self-determination, and without intrusive medical diagnosis requirements, and include the recognition of non-binary people. This de-medicalised system to change legal gender will better support trans people to live their lives free from discrimination.
- Increase investment in activities suitable for older people or disabled people, such as health walks, new sporting opportunities or riding groups, helping to reduce social isolation and loneliness.
- Champion the contribution of older people to volunteering, community work, education and culture.
- Review public authorities' implementation of the Fairer Scotland Duty guidance during the next Parliament. Examine whether the duty can be extended to cover more of the barriers people face.

We will also aim to fully incorporate the Right to a Healthy and Safe Environment into Scots Law in line with the UN framework principles, and the Aarhus Convention.

We will bring forward legislation to enshrine wellbeing and sustainable development, and make it a statutory requirement for public bodies to take full account of the sustainable development impact of their decisions to help achieve global sustainable development goals.

As more and more data and biometric information is available on every citizen, we will develop the approach taken in Estonia where data is considered to belong to the citizen and where people have the right to know who has accessed their information. We will take steps to safeguard people from misuse of their data, CCTV images, facial recognition or biometric information.

We will treat people who are refugees or asylum seekers with compassion, uphold their human rights and support them as far as we can to play a full part in the life of their communities, including steps to stop them being evicted from their temporary housing.

We support a right to work for asylum seekers, helping to avoid impoverishment, providing dignity and allowing them to contribute to the economy, and will campaign for this.

Our place in the world

People who live and work in Scotland have much that we can contribute to a better world. Our combined actions on the climate emergency will help ourselves as well as people on the other side of the planet who will be among the first to be harmed by the devastation of climate change.

We can use our freedoms to speak out in support of people elsewhere who are persecuted and oppressed.

The choices we make can help make trade across the world fairer and bring prosperity to fellow citizens of the world.

- Continue to develop and deepen the relationships between Scotland and

Malawi at governmental, community, educational and environmental levels.

- Continue to keep the climate emergency as a central objective of our international work.
- Put a stronger human rights protocol in place to govern our relationships with other countries.

Scotland has an important place in promoting global issues such as human rights, migration and refugees, public health and the climate emergency.

To develop public policy on these issues, and to give a voice to our academic centres of excellence, we will support the establishment of a Scottish Council for Global Affairs, as an independent, non-partisan centre of expertise on international affairs.

We are the most pro-European of parties. We have been resolute in our opposition to Brexit because the EU is good for trade for businesses, for free movement and good for our way of life. So, we deeply regret what has happened.

Over the last year we've had the most traumatic of times with the worst pandemic for a hundred years. Thousands of people have sadly lost their lives. Thousands more have lost their jobs. We owe it to those people to put recovery from the pandemic first.

What we should not do is repeat the mistakes of Brexit with independence. We know that breaking up long term economic partnerships is a very difficult and damaging thing to do.