

RE-ELECT



Manifesto 2016
Easy Read Version

Re-Elect the SNP (Scottish National Party)

Since 2007 things have been better for every home in Scotland because of the SNP Government.

We have:

- changed education for the better
- supported the Health Service
- made changes to policing
- taken employment levels to a record high
- built thousands of affordable homes

We have spent money to modernise our schools, colleges and universities.

We have also made some of the biggest transport improvements the country has ever seen.

We have always planned to build a country where strong public services are supported by a successful economy.

Yes, we are proud of our record, but we know there is still a lot more to do.

With your support we can build on the good work we have done over the past nine years.

Together, we can continue to make a better future for everybody who lives and works in Scotland.



A Healthier Scotland



The NHS is our most important public service. It is there when we need it, and we must make sure that it is ready for the future.

We need to make sure the money is there to do this. But our health and care services also need to change so they are fit for generations to come.

We will make sure that the NHS stays publicly owned, and its services are publicly delivered and free to those who need them.

Our services will support people living longer, often with complex conditions.

Our aim is to deliver care as close to home as possible. We will build on health and social care integration by helping the NHS to become a Community Health Service.

How will we make Scotland healthier?

- We will spend more money on the health service. We will look at how we spend the money and make sure we are spending it on the most important things.
- We will change the health service so that more services are in the community.
- People in Scotland are living longer so we will change the health service so they can get the services they need.

- We will make sure all Scottish children get the right support from birth until they are adults.
- We will make social care better and give more support to carers.
- We will change the law so that mental health conditions are taken as seriously as any other health conditions.
- We will make sure our employment and benefit services are easier to use for people with mental health conditions.
- We will do what we can to make Scotland healthier by getting more people to be active and involved in sports.
- We will learn from the good things that have been done already so that we make a better health service for the future.



A Smarter Scotland



A good education is the best gift we can give our young people. It is also the best way to build a successful economy.

Scotland has a good education system, with great schools and teachers.

We have improved childcare and put new courses in place.

Our pupils are getting record exam passes and a record number of young people are leaving school to go onto further education and employment.

But we need to do more – too many children from poorer areas do less well at school because of their background. That must end.

Making sure Scottish education is world class – for all our young people – will be the main mission of the next SNP Government.



A Wealthier Scotland



We want to grow Scotland's economy and make good opportunities for all the people of our country.

We believe that by using Scotland's many strengths to make more money, we can deliver more and better paid jobs, share the success amongst our people more equally and create stronger and more sustainable growth.

We will make all of Scotland more productive, by supporting businesses to grow, encouraging new ideas, building better transport, developing skills and promoting fair work.



A Fair Tax System



Taxes should be in line with a person's ability to pay. They should be easy to pay and they should be run smoothly.

We will keep this in mind when using the new tax powers given to the Scottish Parliament.

Every decision we take on tax has to be paid for by hard working people across the country.

All the decisions we take will be well thought out. They will be fair to all taxpayers, they will be fair to our economy and they will be fair to our public services.

How will we make a fair tax system?

- We will freeze the Basic Rate of income tax through the next parliament to protect people on low and middle incomes.
- We will keep Council Tax frozen until 2017.



A Fairer Scotland



Tackling inequality in Scotland is at the heart of what we want to do in government.

We don't have all the powers that we would want to make a difference to people's lives, but we will always use the powers we do have to push for the changes we want to see in our society.

The UK government's changes to the welfare system have attacked some of the poorest and most vulnerable people in our society. The powers given to the Scottish Parliament are limited, but they do give us the chance to do things differently – with fairness, respect, and dignity.

How will we make a fairer Scotland?

- We will take action so that everyone in our society will have the same access to education, employment and healthcare.
- We will lower council tax bills for low income families and try to make basic services easier to afford.
- We will give proper support to people who have difficulties finding work. Employment services will fit in with local needs.
- We will set up a new Social Security Agency which will treat people with dignity and respect. We will make it easier for people to apply for benefits and make appeals. We will do away with the Bedroom Tax.

- We will raise Carers Allowance so it is the same as Jobseeker's Allowance. We will keep the Scottish Welfare Fund, and bring back Housing Benefit for 18-21 years olds.
- We will pay more Carer's Allowance to people who are looking after more than one disabled child.
- We will try to make the pension system fairer by giving women the same retirement age as men.
- We will change the way that disability benefits are assessed so that the system treats people with dignity and respect.
- We will do what we can to put an end to discrimination and bullying because of gender, race or disability.
- We want to make human rights part of the law in Scotland, and will work hard to protect the human rights of everyone across the UK.



Scotland's Future



The SNP believes Scotland should be in charge of its own future.

In 2014 we held a referendum that got people across the country talking about what kind of nation we want to be and how we want to be governed.

This has changed Scotland for the better. We are more confident in our views, of our place in the world and more involved in how our country is governed.

We did not get independence for our nation, but we did get more powers for the Scottish Parliament. This means more decisions are made closer to home.

How will we change Scotland's future?

- We will use our new powers to change the benefits system, spend more money on public services and protect people on low incomes.
- We will do all we can to protect Scotland from Tory cuts and attacks on welfare, trade unions and public services.
- We believe that the Scottish Parliament should have the right to hold another referendum if it is clear that more than half of the people in Scotland want independence.
- In the next parliament, we will try to get the Scottish people to agree that being an independent country is the best option for our country. We will listen to the people who voted No in 2014 and we hope to change their minds.

A Thriving Rural Scotland



The SNP will always stand up for the interests of the Scottish countryside.

We want our rural communities to do well and be well supported by high quality public services.

We want more young people to have the opportunity to build careers and successful futures in the areas where they grow up.

We want to build rural Scotland's future, investing in homes, transport and communication.



A Greener Scotland



Scotland is a world leader on tackling climate change.

We are an example to the rest of the world and have made big steps towards making Scotland cleaner and greener.

An Empowered Scotland



We believe the future of our communities should be decided by the people who live in those communities.

Over the last nine years we have made it possible for more communities to buy and use land for their own good.

How will we make an empowered Scotland?

- We want communities, public services and local councils to work more closely together.
- We will look at the needs of our island communities and make a plan to meet those needs.
- We want to make it easier for people from all backgrounds to get more involved in making decisions about our communities.

- We will give more support to charities and voluntary organisations. We will help businesses who employ large numbers of people with disabilities.
- We will build more affordable homes, and more council houses. We will help communities to buy empty land and do something useful with it.
- We will give advice and help to disabled people who need to make adaptations to their homes.
- We will help homes to be more energy efficient, to cut bills, reduce pollution and make people healthier.
- We will work with local councils, health, social services and charities to tackle long-term homelessness.
- Planning is important if we want to make great places to live, work and spend our leisure time in. We will change the way we plan so that things can be built more quickly and cheaply.



A Safer Scotland



Delivering safer and stronger communities is very important for the people of Scotland. Everyone has the right to feel safe and have confidence in their police and fire services.

We need to fund the police service properly, have a fair and fast justice system, and find the best way to deal with people who break the law.

The most important thing for our justice system is to keep the people of Scotland safe. Crime is at a 41-year low, violent crime is down, knife crime is down and there are more than 1,000 extra police officers working in our police service.



An International Scotland



Scotland is a diverse, welcoming and outward-looking nation. Kindness and fairness are very important to us.

Our relationships with the rest of the world are important – they are good for trade, investment, travel, education and swapping ideas, and help to promote the things that matter most to us, including human rights.

We want Scotland to make the most of opportunities around the world and to have a say in the world around us on the issues that matter most.

The SNP believes that Scotland must play its part in tackling global issues like extreme poverty, the impact of climate change, helping refugees who are running from war and repression and the impact of disasters and emergencies.

We believe it is best for Scotland to stay part of the EU (European Union). We think that people in Scotland and across the UK will vote to stay part of the EU. But we will campaign positively for an “in” vote, to remain in the EU.



A Creative Scotland



Culture is important and getting involved in it is a force for good for people and society.

Our culture and heritage changes the way we think about our nation and the world. It makes us question, challenge and see the world in different ways and to learn about ours and other people's experiences.

We will continue to help the cultural sector to develop and be successful and for our artists to be supported in their work.

We want to have a Scotland where people are confident to express their creativity, and a nation that is confident in getting involved on the world stage.

