



manifesto/01

“With a stronger voice in creating a better

We stand for Scotland. Will you?

Find out why voting SNP will give us a strong voice at Westminster, drive Scotland forward to Independence and make sure Scotland gets the best deal.

/ Join a nurse, teacher, victim of crime, and entrepreneur as they discuss the core issues of health, education, crime and jobs with our key Shadow Ministers.

// Dip into the heart of our manifesto and see how we would start creating a better Scotland now.

/// Discover our imaginative initiatives for investment in public services and infrastructure.

//// See what it takes to be an SNP MP, then catch up for a day with one of our best known leaders Alex Salmond.

///// Lastly scrutinise our Contract with the People and see how we will dedicate ourselves to protecting Scottish public spending from London cuts.

Westminster we can start Scotland now."

The SNP is a democratic left-of-centre political party committed to Scottish Independence. We want to create a just, caring and enterprising society by releasing Scotland's full potential as an independent nation in the mainstream of modern Europe.

By taking decisions ourselves, instead of leaving it up to London, we can transform the life chances of our children. We can have a health service of which we can be proud. And we can create a safer, more secure Scotland.

Only the SNP wants the vast wealth produced by the people of Scotland to stay in Scotland. Because only the SNP believes in the ability of the people of this country to control and manage that wealth.

The London parties, by contrast, believe Scottish resources should continue to be controlled by Westminster. They do not believe we are capable of running our own financial and economic affairs.

The SNP, however, has always been trusted to fight for the Scottish interest.

And that is why a vote for the SNP in the forthcoming Westminster elections is so important.

The SNP is the only mainstream party in Scotland with no divided loyalties. Unlike the other parties we do not take our orders from London. We stand for Scotland.

SNP MPs will be committed to:



John Swinney MSP
Leader of the SNP

- Driving Scotland forward to Independence, completing the powers of the Scottish Parliament.
- Protecting Scotland from the worst failings of Westminster rule.
- Delivering the best deal for Scotland.

The more SNP MPs we have at Westminster the more Scotland's voice will be heard and our influence will be greater.

It'll mean that New Labour can't take Scotland for granted any more.

It'll mean we can support measures when they make sense, and fight them tooth and nail when they will cause us damage.

It'll mean we in Scotland will have more control over our future, instead of suffering at the hands of a remote New Labour party machine.

All of which can only be good for you, your family and your community.

This election will be about who can best be trusted to speak up for Scotland. We ask you to put your faith in the SNP as we put our faith in you.

NHS - Sick of New Labour

The health service seems to have gone from bad to worse under Labour. Waiting lists are up, patients are waiting longer for treatment and there are 1,000 fewer nurses in our hospitals.

For those in the front line of our health services, the pressure is intense.

Nicola Sturgeon, SNP Shadow Minister for Health & Community Care, sat down with nurse Anna Easton to find out just what it was like for her and her colleagues.

Nicola / "When did you come into nursing?"

Anna / "In 1967 when I was 17. Since then I've worked in various areas - maternity and special baby care, general nursing, theatre and now care of the elderly. I have seen a lot of changes in these years. When I first started there were plenty of nurses on the wards. But these days there is a shortage. That puts a lot of pressure on us - everybody gets exhausted making sure patients receive the care they need. It's not uncommon for nurses to end up off sick themselves, putting even more pressure on the staff. It's a vicious circle."

N / "Why do you think there is a shortage of nurses now?"

A / "It's not an attractive profession any more. We get low wages and work under increasing pressure. More and more students are dropping out before they even finish their courses. And when they do come on to the wards as young nurses they are immediately thrown into the deep end because of the shortage of staff nurses. I think they should be with another staff nurse for at least six months till they find their feet. That's not happening and you soon find that a lot of them will just go away and look for other jobs that are better paid and less stressful."

N / "Are there specific things that government could do to reverse the trend?"

A / "For a start, they could be honest about it and admit there's a problem. They must do more to recruit and retain nurses. Partly it is about addressing the problem of low pay, there's no doubt about that. But there are other things they could do as well. For example, they could pay for the courses that nurses who have been out of the profession for a while have to take before they can return to work, or encourage more flexible working and better child care facilities for nurses with young families. But taking some of the pressure off is probably the single most important thing they could do. Nobody in nursing expects an easy life but at times these days it is intolerable. Staff morale is probably lower now than at any time since I came into nursing."

N / "Many people complain to me that the kind of treatment patients get depends too much on where they live rather on what they really need. Is that something you would agree with?"

A / "Yes - in fact, it is something that has affected my own family. I have a son who has multiple sclerosis. He has been told that he is a suitable candidate for the drug Beta Interferon. But they won't prescribe it for him because they are only allowed to prescribe for a few people and they've already reached the limit. They can't afford to prescribe for anyone else. That shouldn't happen. If a drug is suitable for someone and will help, they should get it. My son now receives benefit because he can't work, whereas if he was getting the drug that he should be getting he might be able to

go back to work. None of it makes any sense to me."

N / "You work with older people. One of the big issues over the past few months has been free personal care - help with washing, dressing and going to the toilet - for older people. What's your view?"

A / "I think if somebody needs personal care they shouldn't have to pay for it. If they were in a hospital they would be getting it free - it should be the same if they are at home or in a residential home. A lot of elderly people who are being cared for in the community aren't getting the care they need. I have a friend who does a bedding service and she's appalled at the state some of these vulnerable people are in. She puts one old man to bed and she says his wife has been in the same clothes for the last three weeks. They can't afford the care they need."

N / "Labour in Scotland has said they support free personal care, although Labour at Westminster are still against it. Do you think they are going to be true to their word?"

A / "I hope so but I'll believe it when I see it and not before. We've got to keep them under pressure."

N / "Four years ago, Labour promised to reduce waiting lists and improve patient care. What's your verdict?"

A / "They're not doing a very good job. There is a lot of talk, but not much evidence of real improvement for patients. It's frustrating and I really think it's time for change."



/An end to the scandal of postcode treatment/Free daily fruit for all children in primary schools/Removal of charges for dental check-ups/Waiting times for inpatient treatment cut by half/1,500 more nurses/Free personal care for all older people



A New Class System for Scotland

"Classes of 18 or below would make a difference. Any more than that and you can't devote enough time to each child." Nicola Fisher is in discussion with SNP Shadow Minister for Children & Education Michael Russell.

When it comes to education Tennessee may seem a long way from the classrooms of Scotland. However, on closer examination, it seems we can learn a great deal from our American cousins.

The results of a recent Tennessee study called Project STAR (Student/Teacher Achievement Ratio) makes vital reading for any parents of children of school age or younger.

It concluded that by reducing class sizes to eighteen or less in Primary 1, 2 and 3, pupils achieved marked improvements in reading and mathematics. There were also benefits in performance and behaviour.

Nothing new in that you might say. Class size has been an issue for decades.

And, of course, you'd be absolutely right. The debate about class size has been raging since the nineteenth century. Yet, surprisingly, no political party seems prepared to grasp the nettle and commit to making fundamental change, still less carry it out. Until now, that is.

Based on the observations of the Tennessee Project STAR and other research the SNP has pledged to cut primary 1, 2 and 3 classes to eighteen.

Some so-called experts have tried to dismiss Tennessee Project STAR as impractical, but working teachers know better.

Primary teacher Nicola Fisher is just one: "classes of 18 or below would make a difference. Any more than that and you can't devote enough time to each child. You can look after them in groups or as a class, but it's really difficult to target individuals. In a smaller class you can really get into the nitty gritty with the children and help them develop their own ideas. You just can't do that in a setting in which you have 33 individuals all looking for your time."

"There's another side to it as well. Coming in to a large group of individuals is daunting enough for adults, it's going to be even more so for children. Some of them are as young as 4, and their first experience of formal education is to come into a room where there are about 29 other people, many of them complete strangers. In a smaller class size they would be coming into a much more relaxed environment."

It would appear many working teachers, as well as parents, would concur with the Tennessee findings. But can it be made to work? The SNP certainly believe so.

Education needs more resources, more care and more support.

The SNP will implement class size reductions by increasing investment in teachers, schools and materials. These reductions would be phased in, initially targeting areas of social deprivation, followed by continuing reductions in every part of the country, taking into account the best international research and practice. At the same time as class numbers become less, the number of classroom assistants will become more. It's a common sense policy based on sound findings from in-depth research, at home as well as abroad.

However, class reductions alone won't stop the rot spreading through Scotland's schools.

Another area for concern is the issue of assessment and target setting that can disrupt the whole learning process and produces no clear benefit for young people themselves.

"My biggest worry is the affect it has on the children, the stress they are under is unbelievable. Now I administered maths national testing just before the Easter holidays and I had a group of children who didn't attain it. They maybe only missed it by one or two marks but these children were

devastated, in tears even."

Then there's the constant pressure to test earlier and earlier from schools, the authorities and the Scottish Executive.

The SNP is committed to critically examining the present externally imposed target setting for schools and bringing about a reduction in the burden of assessment on young people, teachers and schools.

Other measures have to be taken too. Children learn best in good and safe surroundings. The SNP's plans for education include a major programme of school refurbishment, linked to the party's plans for a Scottish Trust for Public Investment.

A re-examination of the duties of parents is also necessary with the aim of ensuring that parents play a fuller partnership role with schools. To achieve this the SNP propose to bring forward far reaching changes in the formal parental representation in schools.

The SNP also intend to impose a moratorium on further change in the classroom and in educational administration until an Education Convention is established. The result would be to further increase participation from all concerned about education in Scotland.

Everyone agrees education should be valued for its own sake. It is the fundamental means by which society builds social cohesion and engages young people creatively in our national life and culture. It may be a cliché to say that a nation's children is its future, but it is true nevertheless. The SNP wants all Scots to fulfil their potential. By drawing out of each generation the best they have to give, they will give more to their society and gain more for themselves.



/A reduction in Primary 1, 2 & 3 class sizes/A moratorium on further destabilising change until the establishment of an Education Convention/An end to the publishing of selective information and misleading league tables/A major programme of school investment and repair



It's Criminal

When they burgled Allan Angus's house they took his TV, stereo and for a while, his life.

Allan Angus wears the look of a weary traveller waiting for a delayed flight. He has a right to, he's been broken into four times in the last four years, the fourth time his wallet was stolen from his bedroom as he slept. Chatting with Roseanna Cunningham, SNP Shadow Justice Minister, he says the first time was after he'd been to see Braveheart at the cinema. "I haven't been to the cinema since," he says ruefully. "For about a year I didn't leave the house after dark."

"Not at all?" Roseanna looks distinctly concerned.

"No, unless it was a very short journey, the lights left on and I came straight back so I didn't have much time," Allan shrugs. "As I say, when a criminal gets off or doesn't get caught, the victim is the one that suffers all the time."

And Allan has suffered more than most. But then since Labour came to power in 1997 crime has increased. Violent crimes by 22%, crimes involving offensive weapons by 36% with vandalism, drug offending, shoplifting and fraud all getting worse.

"Crime is one of our highest priorities," Roseanna explains. "We would spend £25 million putting 1,000 more police on the streets of Scotland, which works out at about 14 extra police per constituency." Roseanna asks him if that would make a

difference. For the first time this evening Allan nods.

"Aye," he replies. "When I was burgled I never saw police walking past. If I had I might have been more willing to go out and stay out overnight. As long as they're visible, not just driving about."

The SNP actually view crime quite differently to other parties. "Tackling crime is not the sole responsibility of the police," Roseanna says, getting animated. "Good citizenship is about playing a role in the fight against crime. Good citizenship is about recognising that any individual right carries with it an obligation - to respect the rights of others."

"One of the things we are talking about has to do particularly with crime being committed by younger people. We want to make parents more directly responsible if their kids are out of control. Say they found that it was young people who burgled your flat, Allan. We would say to their parents that you lost this amount of money and they are responsible for the way their children behave, so they should pay a share of it."

This obviously goes down well with Allan because he smiles and says "I would definitely support that. I would feel that something would have actually been achieved."

"And you would be happier about getting out and about again?"

"There's no doubt about it," he says. And, still smiling, he bids us good night.

When we leave Allan, Roseanna talks more about the SNP's ideas on Crime. They plan to set up a Sentencing Advisory Panel, which would operate in Scotland and wouldn't lay down hard and fast rules for Sheriffs and Judges but would issue guidance that was based upon society's changing views about the seriousness of certain crimes. She also outlined the SNP's hard line on sex offenders. "It has been our stance for some considerable time that our criminal justice system should provide for a form of life-time supervision for those offenders for whom it was considered there would never be a point when they were no longer regarded as a danger. This would take the form of an Order for Lifelong Restriction, ensuring constant monitoring and a recall to custody if the Order were breached."

She leaves me with the impression that it's her personal quest to make sure every person in Scotland lives on the same street. Safe Street.



/1,000 more police on Scotland's Streets / Greater Parental Responsibility - parents to be held responsible to victims of their children's crime / Tough action on Sex Offenders / Victims of crime should not become victims of the criminal justice system



The Greenhouse Effect

Can the SNP make Scottish business grow? Kenny MacAskill is convinced they can, as he tells DJ MacLennan.

DJ MacLennan has a lot to say about business in Scotland. He should have. He's one of the new breed of entrepreneurs emerging, albeit slowly, from Scotland. As his company prepares to launch their new website ScottishQuality.com, he couldn't resist the chance to tell Kenny MacAskill, the SNP's Shadow Minister for Enterprise & Lifelong Learning all about his experiences.

"We're putting together our website at the moment and we're spending five or six hours a day on the internet, all using a slow modem," he explains. "You can forget the information superhighway, it's more like the slow lane."

Kenny takes up the challenge. "The main thrust of the SNP's ideas is that Scotland's infrastructure must be improved for the country to be able to compete. So we want more people to have access to the kind of broadband technology which increases the speed at which information is downloaded from the Net."

"Well, lack of broadband has undoubtedly held back our business," DJ adds.

Kenny is in full flight now, outlining the way that his party are trying to redefine the way that they approach the issue of

employment. No longer should government just dole out jobs he says. Its aim should be to create the ideal conditions to nourish business creation and development. Establishing Scotland as an 'incubator for business' means providing the right infrastructure along with skilled and educated workers so that businesses can multiply and grow.

"For example, did you know that Nokia is a village in Finland with a latitude almost the same as Shetland? From a country which had no indigenous resources, Nokia is now a top five brand."

DJ is nodding his head, adding, "They originally manufactured welly boots and other rubber products. Then they thought, 'this isn't working out' and moved in to telecoms. Without any fear. They thought let's get the people, let's get the skills. This is a new technology so we probably know as much as anyone else does, so let's go for it."

"We want to be the ones who are creating the Nokias and the Ericssons and there is absolutely no reason why we can't be," Kenny elaborates on building up the infrastructure. "We need to build up our road, rail and even our air services. But we also need to invest in our people. By doing that we invest in our nation. There needs to be a drastic realignment of skills training and it must start with identifying where Scottish shortages lie and where future skills

may be found."

'Upskilling Scotland' is something you'll hear a lot if you hang around Kenny MacAskill. It's central to the SNP's policies, but it's by no means all they have up their sleeve. He believes that Scotland has been ill-served by London economic policy. Taxation, membership of the single currency, interest rates, controls over inflation and net public expenditure are all powers still retained by Westminster.

"The profusion of red tape is not appropriate to Scotland. We are a small nation. Our sectors are easily identified, our economic policy, our regulation and administration must be tailored around them," he continues. "We must make it desirable for people to start businesses here, like you did DJ. We must make it easier to get venture capital and business support. And then we must sell our country abroad. We want to build up a network of commercial embassies to allow the government to act as a facilitator for business, allowing previously untapped markets to be developed."

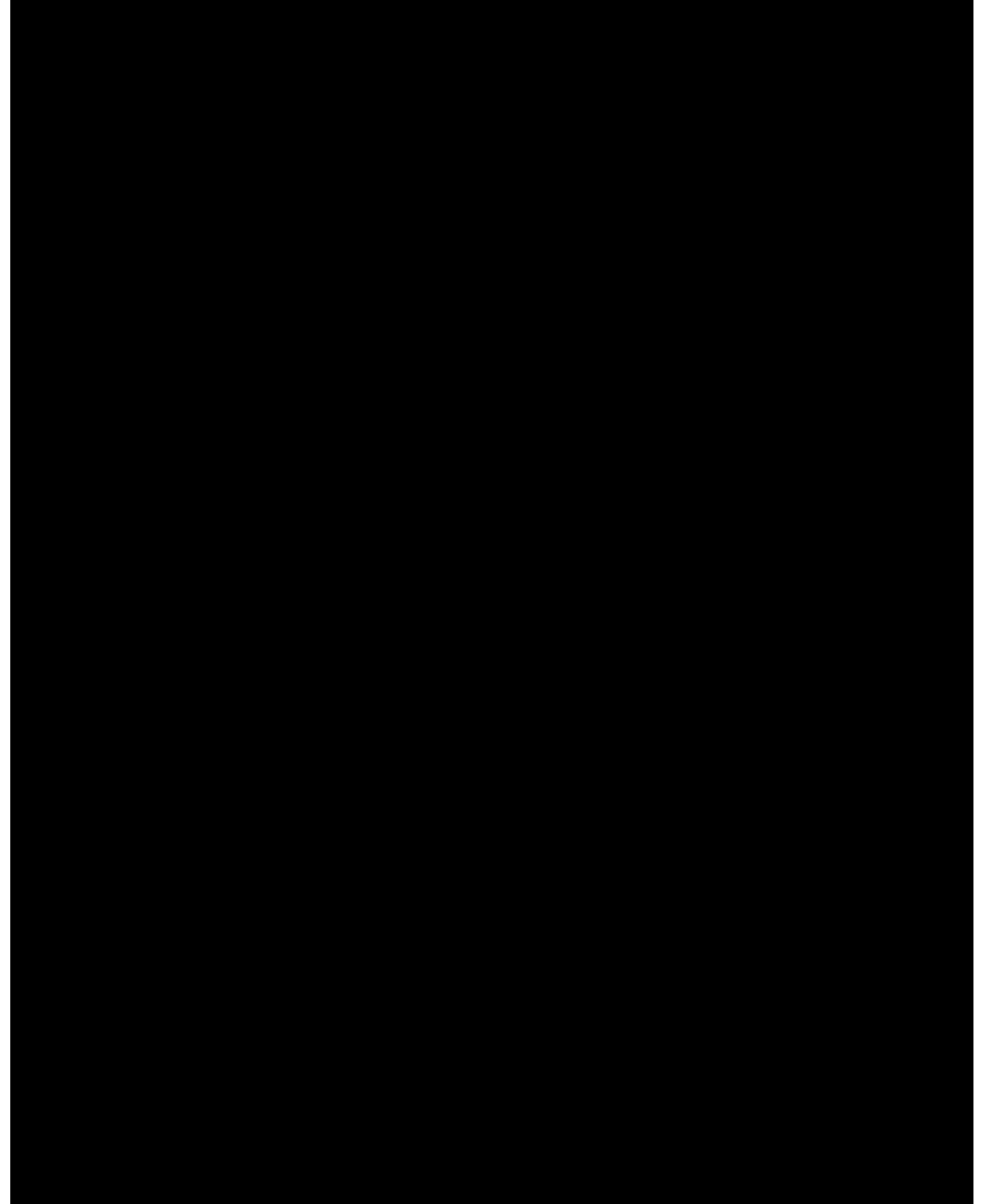
"That would be absolutely ideal for us. At the moment Scotland is certainly not being adequately represented abroad, particularly in business." DJ speaks like a man who's spent a while trying to find just such a person.



/Building a modern transport and telecommunications infrastructure/Up-skilling Scotland for the Global Economy/Complete abolition of tuition fees and the re-alignment of skills training/Creating a Competitive Environment/Selling Scotland to the world/Promotion of an entrepreneurial culture



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Show me the Money

Scotland has won the economic argument for Independence

After decades of scaremongering from some, implying we would lag far behind our European friends and neighbours, the old scare stories don't scare anyone anymore.

People now know Scotland is a rich nation, more than capable of paying its way, and are confident of their own ability to contribute to a robust and thriving economy.

But the SNP believes that for Scotland's natural wealth, resources, talent and ambition to fulfil their potential, Scotland's parliament must obtain the normal financial powers of any normal parliament.

Only then can we see the investment so urgently needed in our schools, hospitals, housing and transport infrastructure.

But first, let's look at the figures. Last year and this Scotland will contribute - even by the most cautious estimates - almost £8 billion pounds more to the London Treasury than it receives. That's over £1,500 for every person living in Scotland.

Overall, Scotland's balance sheet as a percentage of GDP - wealth created per head - is the healthiest in the EU, and across Europe as a whole second only to Norway.

Comparisons with Norway are intriguing, and the SNP believes we can learn much from our friends across the North Sea.

Like Scotland, Norway secured a win on the "natural lottery", discovering invaluable offshore oil and gas.

But the Norwegian experience of the wealth created by that windfall has been very different.

Since oil and gas were discovered off Scotland, £160 billion in revenue has flowed to the Treasury, equivalent to £32,000 for everyone in Scotland.

But that money has not been invested in Scotland's future. Sadly, it represents one of the biggest wasted chances of the last quarter century, anywhere in the developed world.

However, all is not lost. As much oil and gas is estimated to remain in Scottish waters as has already been extracted, worth an estimated £85 billion in revenues over the next 25 years.

To make sure that wealth is not also squandered, the SNP plans to borrow an idea from Norway, which since 1995 has invested a share of its oil revenues in international bonds and equities. The Norwegian Oil Fund is now worth over £30 billion.

The SNP's proposed Fund for Future Generations would see some of Scotland's oil revenues similarly invested, with a Scottish financial institution invited to manage the fund.

Based on Norway's experience, the fund could yield £1 billion a year within five years and outstrip revenues themselves within a decade.

The SNP's core costed commitments in health, education and crime amount to no more than £260 million in total at their peak, so by the end of the end of the next parliamentary term, income from the fund would be worth four times the cost of these pledges.

The SNP believes the fund offers fantastic potential for sustained public investment, while meeting our responsibility to future generations by not wasting a valuable but finite asset.

Although any scope for more investment is welcome, the SNP believes a fundamental overhaul of the funding of public capital projects in Scotland is urgently needed.

The private finance initiative (PFI) introduced by the Tories has been continued, with minor changes, by Labour, under the name PPP.

PFI/PPP schemes are growing five times faster in Scotland than elsewhere in the UK, and their cost to taxpayers threatens to be astronomical.

Because the cost of borrowing is significantly higher outside the public sector, it is estimated that for currently agreed schemes, Scottish taxpayers will pay £7 billion for projects with a real value of only £2.5 billion.

The SNP's answer to this ludicrous waste is the Scottish Trust for Public Investment.

The STPI would seek the best quality service at the lowest cost, operating outside the public sector, but on a not-for-profit basis, holding assets in trust for the nation.

Governed by trustees - their appointment approved by parliament - it would seek finance with risk secured against the whole range of its projects.

By spreading risk, bringing expertise under one roof and not seeking profit, it would deliver far cheaper investment than PFI/PPP schemes.

This would save Scottish taxpayers many millions of pounds. For every 1% that the interest on a £1 billion project could be reduced below 9.5%, the STPI would save £8m a year - £240m over a 30-year PFI/PPP contract.

While these policies offer unprecedented scope for long-term investment, the SNP sees a clear need for honesty on taxation.

The tax system has now reached the point where indirect "stealth" taxes constitute so much of the overall burden, as to be wholly dishonest, unfair and confusing.

This is characterised by 32 tax rises under New Labour, none of which were in their manifesto, and means most people don't know how much tax they pay.

The SNP will end this dishonesty, by underpinning its tax policies with two guiding principles.

Firstly, it will not increase the overall tax burden to pay for new initiatives or increase income tax without including such measures in its manifesto. Secondly, it will undertake a Comprehensive Taxation Review. This will propose reforms to restore simplicity and fairness without raising the tax burden.

More immediately, the SNP proposes a 10p a gallon fuel tax cut. This will cost £65m, to be paid for by a new 5p band of income tax on income over £100,000.

Together, the SNP's economic policies offer new and imaginative ways of securing public investment, while restoring honesty and fairness to taxation - a package which promises to unlock Scotland's natural potential.

/£260 million commitments in health, education and crime - measures costing half the government underspend in Scotland 1999/2000, but which will make a real impact now
/STPI investing more for less in our schools, hospitals and transport / Restoring honesty to taxation / Immediate 10 pence a gallon fuel tax cut



Short changed by London.

Countryside Matters

Scotland is a nation famed for its countryside and agricultural treasures. That is why the SNP is committed to protecting it and ensuring that all Scotland's rural communities are allowed to prosper.

When tourists visit Scotland for the first time they are astounded by our beautiful countryside and stunning coastlines.

Our lush, colourful fields and deep blue waters have given us a rich history.

Yet these natural and fruitful assets have been crippled over the past months to almost breaking point.

It has not been an easy time for those living in rural communities.

The wave of foot-and-mouth disease has brought rural areas to a standstill and tourism and farming businesses to the brink of bankruptcy. Farmers have also had to

face the contamination of their crops because of GM pollution.

Those living in rural areas have felt the effects of high fuel prices where public transport is just not an alternative and they face the possible closure of the local post office.

And our coastal communities are suffering as the fishing industry fights for survival.

So where does it all end?

Well, the SNP is fiercely committed to protecting Scotland's rural interests - as a matter of urgency - and ensuring they can flourish again.



The recent outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease is the latest blow to hit the countryside.

Farms

Our farmers have really suffered over the last few months. The average farm income last year dropped to just £3,900. And sheep hill farmers in Less Favoured Areas are earning as little as £5.76 a week. Is this a liveable wage in the 21st century?

The recent outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease is the latest blow to hit the countryside.

The SNP is committed to supporting our farmers and ensuring that they have access to all European money, which they are entitled to and deserve.

This also means supporting the rural community during the change in Less Favoured Area payments and ensuring that small farmers and crofters are not driven out of business.

The SNP also wants the public to have confidence in Scottish produce. They want Scotland to be a "GM free nation", supporting a moratorium on Genetically Modified foods, and want GM products to be labelled.

The high cost of fuel is a real burden in rural areas where there is no realistic public transport option and car use is not a luxury but a necessity. In some areas the cost of fuel to families can be as much as 13% of the weekly income. With the average price for fuel in remote areas costing 83.4p per litre it is an area needing urgently addressed.

The SNP has pledged an immediate 10p a gallon fuel tax cut. They want to lower fuel duties and introduce a package of measures to help those industries dependent on fuel. The SNP is committed to ending the petrol price disparity in Scotland and extending the fuel duty rebate.

However the SNP is also aware that there has to be an alternative to taking the car. That is why they are committed to providing safe, affordable and dependable public transport in rural areas, for example, the reinstatement of the Borders rail link. The SNP want to ensure that our rural communities are reconnected to allow them to fully participate in employment, social and educational opportunities.

Fisheries

Fishing is one of Scotland's oldest industries and is a vital part of our economy yet the industry is in crisis.

There have been unwelcome changes to Scottish fishing boundaries and fishermen have been forced to trawl in areas with immature haddock.

In a bid to conserve fish stocks, Scottish fishermen voluntarily tied-up their boats and put their livelihoods at risk. They called for a tie-up scheme that would have compensated them for not fishing and a long term decommissioning scheme for those wishing to leave the industry. Despite 25,000 jobs being at risk, their pleas to the Lib-Lab coalition government fell on deaf ears.

The SNP believe that our fishermen are not second-class citizens and should not be ignored. They need a government who will listen.

Fuel Tax and Transport

It is no secret that although Scotland is the major oil producer in Europe we have the highest fuel prices.

Post Offices

In many rural areas the Post Office is the hub of the community. Many pensioners, the disabled and parents with young children rely on popping out to the post office which also doubles as the local shop.

However Scotland's rural post offices are threatened by closure thanks to a London government plan for Automated Credit Transfer (ACT). If no alternative sources of income are found, this could result in the closure of 80% of the surviving post offices in the Borders and Dumfries & Galloway areas.

Post Offices rely on the 40% of revenue that is generated by the payments of benefits to survive. Without that, over the next five years Scotland could lose around a quarter of its post offices.

Changes are fine as long as they are aimed at improving services and not just a cost saving exercise. The SNP supports rural post offices and believe that the method of benefit payment should be a matter of personal choice. Although not against ACT, they think it should be implemented with safeguards to avoid financial and social exclusion.



POWERS

social security and child support
regulation of the profession of architects

consumer protection
public expenditure
classification of films
employment rights

international relations including dealings with the EU

broadcasting
equal opportunities

betting, gaming and lotteries

railway services and aviation

oil and gas

postal services

AT WESTMINSTER

We stand for completing the powers of the Scottish Parliament. That means equipping Scotland with the same powers as every other normal country in the world. Glance through some of the powers that are currently with London and which we would bring back to Scotland.

regulation of pension schemes

monopolies and mergers

protection

control of weapons

customs powers and coastguards

rights and duties

defence

economic and monetary policy

opportunities

taxation

gas ownership

regulation of health professionals

What Sort of MP Do You Want to Represent You?

The more SNP MPs elected to the Westminster Parliament, the more we can do for Scotland.
And every vote for the SNP is a vote for the strongest voice for our country.

If you don't believe us - try this short test. Choose the answer that best reflects your view of the way your MP should be standing for Scotland at Westminster.

1 / The Chancellor announces plans for increases in health spending which will mean 6% extra for the NHS in England but only 4% extra for the NHS in Scotland, including the local hospital in your constituency which has cancelled operations because of staff shortages. Do you:

A / Support the government position while telling local hospital staff and patients that they have never had it so good.

B / Not notice that Scotland is to get less, vote for the measures because you have been told to do so, and then blame all the problems in your local hospital on the previous government.

C / Point out that this is what happens every year because of the way London controls the money. Stand up for your local hospital by calling for Scotland to get the same increase as elsewhere in the UK - say that it should be the Scottish Parliament, not the London Treasury which has full control of the budget.

2 / The road and rail infrastructure in your constituency is crumbling, journey times are getting longer, and constituents are unhappy at the high level of tax they are paying on their petrol. Do you:

A / Make a speech commending the government for privatising the road maintenance contracts, blame the previous government and privatisation for the chaos on the railways and then go and vote for the privatisation of Air Traffic Control.

B / Ask the party machine to send you the latest rebuttal letter which points out that it was the previous government who started off the hikes in petrol taxes, but forgets to mention that you have voted for every petrol tax increase over the past four years.

C / Stand up for your area by calling for local control over road maintenance, insist that upgrading of the local railway become part of the contract for the train companies which have already made massive profits from the line, and point out that you have voted against all the government's inflation busting increase in petrol taxes.

3 / The Ministry of Defence announces that they are to fire more depleted uranium shells into the sea near your constituency (on top of the 7,000 already fired). A few days later they confirm that the fourth Trident Nuclear submarine is to be based on the Clyde. Do you:

A / Issue a press statement confirming your complete confidence that the radioactive material in the shells will cause no damage to the local environment and dismissing calls for a halt until safety issues have been fully examined.

B / Attempt to erase all records of your membership of CND, and write to the MoD to make sure you have an invitation to the swanky party being organised to celebrate the arrival of the new nuclear boat.

C / Stand up for your constituency by calling for a halt to the test firing of the uranium shells until safety questions are answered, and stand up for Scotland and world peace by demanding the immediate removal of Trident from the Clyde.

If you answered mainly A - you have chosen an ambitious Labour MP, who is 'on-message', and who, for the sake of their career is willing to put the demands of the party machine over the interests of Scotland or your area.

If you answered mainly B - you have chosen a typical Scottish Labour MP. They'll vote as they are told, and they have been able to put aside some long held principles.

If you answered only C - congratulations, you have chosen an SNP MP. An SNP MP who will stand for Scotland and stand up for you. Their role at Westminster is defending Scottish interests, being a voice for the people the Labour Party machine too often forgets. With SNP MPs like this around, your voice will be heard loud and clear and New Labour will be shaken out of their complacency.

A Day in the Life of Alex Salmond

Alex Salmond stood down as leader of the SNP last year but he'll be standing up for Scotland in these Westminster elections. For 14 years, Alex has fought Scotland's corner at Westminster. He and the SNP team will make sure our voice is heard and Scottish interests are protected in London.



6am Early morning call to go on radio and discuss the leaking of New Labour plans to cut public spending in Scotland. Labour boast about their commitment to public services but the reality is that they have continued the Tory policy of cutting Scotland's share of public spending. But the cut in Scotland's share is still not happening fast enough for some Labour people like John Prescott and Peter Mandelson.

This would be bad news for health and education in Scotland, which is already missing out on spending increases compared to England. Until Scotland has full control over its money, it is very important that we fight this proposal from London. Both Labour and Tory MPs will back the government so it is vital that we have SNP MPs in London to fight our corner. In the studio, I explain that issues like this illustrate why it's important to have MPs standing for Scotland at Westminster.



10am I'm booked in to spend the morning campaigning in Edinburgh. Our campaigners are enthusiastic and we get a good response on the streets. There is a lot of disenchantment with Labour and no one even mentions the Tories. People seem to realise that in England the election is a walkover for Labour but here it's very much a two horse race with the SNP pushing Labour very hard.

In Leith there is a local campaign to re-open a children's swimming pool. I'm reminded that up and down the country local councils are cutting services because of financial cutbacks. In my own area the schools bus service is being cut. It's normally Labour and Liberal Democrat councils that are restricting services but they can't blame a Tory government any more. It is Labour who are in power in London and a Lib-Lab coalition in Scotland that are imposing the cuts.



1pm At lunchtime I head to Edinburgh airport to fly down to Westminster. I've put down an amendment to the Finance Bill to cut fuel duty on petrol by 10p a gallon. This is an important issue as Scotland, despite our oil wealth, has the highest petrol prices in Europe. Throughout my time at Westminster the SNP has opposed

the fuel duty escalator, which is bad for rural Scotland and for our economy and particularly for tourism.

When it was first introduced by the Tories the Labour party did not oppose it. So it was no surprise when Gordon Brown hiked it up even faster than the Tories. The Finance Bill gives me a chance to raise this important issue again and keep up the pressure on the government. Needless to say I expect no support from New Labour MPs who put London Labour ahead of the needs of Scotland.

7pm After the Finance Bill I get in contact with my local office to get an update on what's happening in the constituency and what I need to deal with. This is the part of the job that gives me the most satisfaction and I think it's hugely important.

The thing that I'm most proud of as the MP for Banff & Buchan is my involvement in the campaign to raise the fishing boat Sapphire, which went down off Peterhead with the loss of four fishermen. The Government refused to help pay for recovering the vessel even though the families wanted to get their men folk back for a decent burial. But the community and all of Scotland got behind the families and despite all the odds we succeeded.

10pm The Finance Bill goes on well into the evening and this gives me an opportunity to prepare an article on pensions for the following day. Pensioners have neither forgotten nor forgiven Labour's miserly 75p rise in the basic pension. The SNP supports the restoration of the link between pensions and earnings, which was severed by the Tories. Despite all pensioner groups in Scotland demanding the link with earnings New Labour have kept the old Tory policy and refused. The removal of the link has cost pensioners dear and our old folk have one of the worst pensions in Europe.

Labour and Tory MPs will back the government. Only the SNP will stand for Scotland's pensioners - just as the SNP always stands for Scotland.

Our Contract with YOU & SCOTLAND

The more SNP MPs elected to the Westminster Parliament, the more we can do for Scotland. And every vote for the SNP is a vote for the strongest voice for our country.

Each and every SNP MP will go to Westminster with three key aims.

1 / Drive Scotland forward to Independence - completing the powers, of the Scottish Parliament. The stronger our voice, the stronger we can be in making the case for Independence delivered by a democratic referendum.

2 / Deliver the best deal for Scotland - the larger the SNP presence in the House of Commons, the better chance we have from day one after the election of making sure that Scotland gets the best deal.

3 / Protect Scotland from the worst failings of Westminster rule - the more SNP MPs, the greater the chance we have from day one after the election of stopping the next fuel tax hike or the next attack on Scottish public spending.

In practice this will mean a "Contract with the People" which is a contract of trust. It sets out what the public can expect of the

SNP and shows how SNP MPs will assert the interests of Scotland.

Every SNP MP will:

Always make the case for Independence and for more powers for the Scottish Parliament.

Never support any Labour or Tory measure that reduces the ability of the Scottish Parliament to deliver for Scotland.

Always put Scottish interests first.

Always argue that Scotland's health service, schools and police forces must get a fair allocation of spending from Westminster.

Always argue for Scotland's Parliament to have full fiscal freedom to make our resources work for Scotland and deliver fair wages to Scotland's workers plus a competitive advantage to business.

Never support the existence on Scottish soil of nuclear weapons.

On June 7th these people are all standing for Scotland. Now it's your turn.

Aberdeen Central Wayne Gault/Aberdeen North Alasdair Allan/Aberdeen South Ian Angus/Airdrie & Shotts Alison Lindsay/Angus Michael Weir/Argyll & Bute Agnes Samuel/Ayr Jim Mather/Banff & Buchan Alex Salmond/Caithness, Sutherland & Easter Ross John Macadam/Carrick, Cumnock & Doon Valley Tom Wilson/Central Fife David Alexander /Clydebank & Milngavie Jim Yuill/Clydesdale Jim Wright/Coatbridge & Chryston Peter Kearney/Cumbernauld & Kilsyth

David McGlashan/Cunninghame North Campbell Martin/Cunninghame South Bill Kidd/Dumbarton Iain Robertson/Dumfries Gerry Fisher/Dundee East Stewart Hosie/Dundee West Gordon Archer/Dunfermline East John Mellon/Dunfermline West Brian Goodall/East Kilbride Archie Buchanan/East Lothian Hilary Brown/Eastwood Stewart Maxwell/Edinburgh Central Ian McKee/Edinburgh East & Musselburgh Rob Munn/Edinburgh North & Leith Kaukab Stewart/Edinburgh Pentlands Stewart Gibb/Edinburgh South Heather Williams/Edinburgh West Alyn Smith/

Falkirk East Isabel Hutton/Falkirk West David Kerr/Galloway & Upper Nithsdale Malcolm Fleming/Glasgow Anniesland Grant Thoms/Glasgow Baillieston Lachlan McNeill/Glasgow Cathcart Josephine Docherty/Glasgow Govan Karen Neary/Glasgow Kelvin Frank Rankin/Glasgow Maryhill Alex Dingwall/Glasgow Pollok David Ritchie/Glasgow Rutherglen Anne McLaughlin/Glasgow Shettleston James Byrne/Glasgow Springburn Sandy Bain/Gordon Rhona Kemp/Greenock & Inverclyde Andrew Murie/Hamilton North & Bellshill Chris Stephens/Hamilton South John Wilson/Inverness East, Nairn & Lochaber Angus MacNeil/Kilmarnock & Loudoun John Brady/Kirkcaldy Shirley-Anne Somerville/Linlithgow Jim Sibbald/Livingston Graham Sutherland/Midlothian Ian Goldie/Moray Angus Robertson/Motherwell & Wishaw Jim McGuigan/North East Fife Kris Murray Browne/North Tayside Pete Wishart/Ochil Keith Brown/Orkney & Shetland John Mowat/Paisley North George Adam/Paisley South Brian Lawson/Perth Annabelle Ewing/Ross, Skye & Inverness West Jean Urquhart/Roxburgh & Berwickshire Roderick Campbell/Stirling Fiona Macaulay/Strathkelvin & Bearsden Calum Smith/Tweeddale, Ettrick & Lauderdale Richard Thomson/West Aberdeenshire & Kincardine John Green/Western Isles Alasdair Nicholson/West Renfrewshire Carol Puthucheary

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