

Scottish Green Party General Election Manifesto 2024 – Executive Summary

This election could not be more important. Scientists are clear that the battle to avoid climate catastrophe will be lost or won over the next five years. A new UK Government could still take the decisive action that is needed to lead the global transition to a clean, green economy. Our future depends on it.

The Scottish Greens have shown we can deliver for people and planet. We have already:

- Introduced free bus travel for children and young people
- Scrapped peak time rail fares
- Introduced an emergency rent cap during the cost of living crisis
- Delivered record funding for nature restoration and climate action
- Made income tax fairer for people in Scotland, so that the highest earners pay more whilst those on the lowest incomes pay less

This manifesto sets out a programme of real change. In it, we lay out Green solutions across areas reserved to the UK Government that

Scotland urgently needs if we are to build a greener, fairer and prosperous country and fulfil our commitment to tackle the climate emergency.

Tackling the Climate Emergency

The climate emergency and the continued destruction of our natural world are existential threats to humanity and the single biggest issue facing the next UK Government.

The Scottish Greens will switch to 100% renewable energy, using a five point plan to;

- 1. Phase out fossil fuels
- 2. Nationalise and invest in the electricity grid
- 3. Enhance support for renewable energy
- 4. Electrify heat and transport
- 5. End support for new nuclear power stations

We will introduce a £28 billion per year Green New Deal investment programme. This includes supporting people to take up green technologies, ensuring companies invest in the renewable supply chain in the UK, and investing in restoring our natural environment.

We will end support for fossil fuel industries by scrapping tax relief for oil and gas companies working in the North Sea, and bringing in a real and effective windfall tax on their profits.

The Scottish Greens will build a modern, zero-carbon transport system. We will introduce a frequent flyer levy and a tax on private jets to drive down emissions from the aviation sector. We will develop plans for a national road user charging scheme, so that road users pay for the costs they impose on the transport system. We will use the money raised from these taxes to invest in affordable, publicly owned rail and bus networks, including links to Europe.

The Scottish Greens will restore our natural environment by investing in expanding native woodland and restoring degraded peatlands. We support the human right to a healthy environment, and will recognise Ecocide as an international crime.

We must support Climate Justice movements around the world. The climate crisis has been driven by the wealthiest countries burning fossil fuels, but it is the poorest nations in the world who are now paying the price. The Scottish Greens support the establishment of a global Loss and Damage fund, through which wealthy countries pay funds to compensate countries and communities vulnerable to damage from climate change.

An economy that works for people and planet

The Scottish Greens believe our economy should prioritise the wellbeing of people and planet over individual profit. We must create decent, well paid jobs for the future, and reinvest in our public services and local communities.

A fair tax on wealth in the UK would raise billions of pounds to restore public funding and decrease inequality between rich and poor. We would introduce a Wealth Tax on the top 1% of households in the UK, which would raise over £70 billion for our public services.

We would make the income tax system more progressive by bringing income tax rates across the UK into line with Scotland, where the highest earners pay more whilst those on the lowest incomes pay less.

To tackle the cost of living crisis, the Scottish Greens would cap the price of food essentials during periods of high inflation, as was implemented in France in 2023. We would also make energy bills cheaper by decoupling the price of electricity and gas, and abolishing standing charges for domestic electricity customers.

The Scottish Greens would introduce a real New Deal for Workers, by scrapping anti-trade union laws, banning zero-hours contracts, and raising the minimum wage to establish a real living wage.

With independence, Scotland would have full control over taxation and fiscal policy, and could use these powers to choose a different economic path. One which ensures everyone has a good standard of living, and where our communities and economy benefits from a just transition away from fossil fuels.

Putting wellbeing and dignity at the heart of politics

Countries can be judged on the way they help those most in need of support. The Scottish Greens believe we should treat everyone with compassion and dignity, through our social security system, our equalities laws, and our policy on immigration and asylum.

We would end the benefits cap, which is pushing more people into poverty, scrap the Bedroom Tax and abolish the two-child limit on child benefit. We would bring in a Minimum Income

Guarantee, whereby the social security system will step in to ensure that everyone can meet a good standard of living.

The Scottish Greens would significantly increase rights to paid leave from work, including increasing maternity leave to 52 weeks at full pay, and bring in a new legal entitlement to compassionate leave in the event of the death of a close relative or friend.

In the long term, the Scottish Greens would bring in a Universal Basic Income, which pays everyone in the country enough to live a basic but dignified life. This would make the benefits system much simpler, reducing the stress and expense involved in the current system whilst tackling poverty and inequality and giving people more flexibility to care, create and study.

The Scottish Greens want a society that values equality, human rights and non-discrimination. We would protect the long-held rights of trans people, and remove the undemocratic block on Scotland's gender recognition reforms. We would protect the Human Rights Act and ensure the UK remains a member of the European Convention on Human Rights.

We would defend and improve healthcare in Scotland. The system of allocating funding to the devolved Governments means that cuts to funding in England impact on the money that Scotland receives for its health services. This has had disastrous consequences and must be fixed. We would protect the health service from international trade deals, and devolve control over medical regulation to Scotland.

The Scottish Greens support a public health approach to drugs. We would reform the law on the possession of illegal drugs, so that possession of any drug would no longer be an offence. We support the rollout of safe consumption rooms in Scotland's cities as a first step towards a health based drugs policy, focusing on harm reduction.

Upholding Democracy in Scotland

The right to participate in a free and fair democracy is a core part of citizenship. The Scottish Greens believe Scotland should be an independent country, and the next UK Government should grant the Scottish Parliament the right to hold constitutional referendums, so we can decide on the future of our country at a time of our choosing.

We must remove the current powers the UK government has to block decisions made by the Scottish Parliament, by repealing the Internal Markets Act and removing section 35 of the Scotland Act.

We would introduce proportional representation to all levels of elections in the UK, to make elections fairer, and abolish the unelected House of Lords. We would also extend the vote to 16 and 17 year olds in all elections, and base voting eligibility on residency, not citizenship, including people with refugee status.

We must make our parliament more accessible, by reintroducing funding to support disabled people running for parliament, limiting sitting hours of Westminster to normal business hours, and providing affordable on-site childcare for MPs and staff.

The Scottish Greens would bring in greater transparency to how politics is funded in the UK, to stop 'dark money' groups from funding election campaigns. We would ban foreign organisations from buying campaign advertising in the UK, and significantly increase the level of fines for breaking electoral finance rules.

The Scottish Greens believe it is important to maintain a free and transparent media. We would provide more support for local reporting, and bring in a tax on paid streaming services, to help support more local tv and film production.

Playing a Global Role

The Scottish Greens believe that being a good global citizen means building alliances for peace and challenging violent and hostile regimes which threaten the safety of citizens. We want to see an end to all financial and political support for the arms trade.

We would reinstate the commitment to spend a minimum of 0.7% of GDP on international aid, re-establish the Department for International Development, and support peace building, climate justice, reparations and decolonisation programmes. We would work with other nations in the Global North to implement a collective programme of debt cancellation for the Global South.

With independence, Scotland could play a full role in international efforts to tackle the climate and nature emergencies. The Scottish Greens would campaign for an independent Scotland to re-join

the EU so we can regain our rights to travel, live, work and study across the continent.

The Scottish Greens recognise the right of self-determination for the people of Palestine. We are calling for an immediate ceasefire, the end of Israel's assault on Gaza, and a genuine peace process which allows all those who live in the region to do so free of occupation, discrimination and threat.

We want to see wider and more impactful sanctions on Russia for their brutal and unprovoked attack on Ukraine.

We recognise the right to self-determination of the Tibetan people and their right to their own identity and autonomy.

The Scottish Greens would adopt a welcoming and compassionate approach to refugees and asylum seekers. We would stop the transportation of asylum seekers to Rwanda, and ensure applications are processed in a fair and humane manner in the UK. We would grant people the right to work whilst waiting for their asylum claims to be processed, and ensure they are housed in decent housing in local communities.

We want Scotland to be able to set our own priorities for immigration, granting visas according to our own workforce needs. We would remove all income requirements on spousal visas, allowing families to live together no matter their income.