

**TOGETHER** WE'RE STRONGER

OUR  
VISION  
FOR  
LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT



# CONTENTS



FOREWORD 4

CARING FOR SOCIETY 5

LET CHILDREN FLOURISH 9

IMPROVING SERVICES, CREATING JOBS 13

INVESTING IN COMMUNITIES 17

BUILDING HOMES 21

GETTING THE COUNTRY MOVING 25

PAYING FOR GOOD PUBLIC SERVICES 28

AT A GLANCE GUIDE TO TAX 29



# FOREWORD



Scottish Labour believes that council services are at the heart of people's lives and we will always protect them.

Too often local councils are represented as bureaucratic and

out-of-touch - government monoliths which spend too much money and deliver too little.

But that is not a picture I recognise of Scottish Labour councils and the work they do to improve the lives of the people they serve in what has become an increasingly fragile financial situation.

Every day the poorest, most vulnerable in our communities are cared for by Labour councils; every day our children are looked after, educated and prepared for adult life; every day young people are given the opportunity to work or go into further education; every day families are given new homes - or housing for the future is being planned and built. And all the while our councils strive hard to get the basics right from bin collections to street lighting, road repairs to recycling.

All this is being done despite the fact that there have been £1.5 billion worth of cuts to council budgets since 2011.

The First Minister promised voters she would be a champion of the poor and the working class. Instead, she has become the nation's Minister for Cuts.

Between 2010 and 2015 the Tories cut Scotland's block grant by almost five per cent. But the SNP government has gone further, cutting council funding by 6.8 per cent. And this year the cuts to local government will amount to £170 million.

Of course councils could always do more - and could do things better. But they have been starved of the financial support needed to help their communities leading to the loss of 7000 jobs in 2016 - thanks to the SNP government.

This has meant cuts to social care, education, health and housing; cuts which have led to appalling instances when our elderly are stuck in hospital because there is nowhere for them to go, when our poorest children don't achieve their potential at school, when local hospital services face the axe, and when an affordable housing shortage turns into a crisis.

Experts are predicting another £1bn worth of government cuts to council budgets by the end of the decade. On top of that the SNP government refuses to scrap the unfair council tax. That is one of Labour's priorities and would see 80 per cent of households paying less.

Scottish Labour's fairer tax plans are the only thing which can stop both the Tory and SNP governments' cuts and ensure the survival of good quality public services.

Labour councils are also committed to fighting the SNP's centralist agenda which is removing local people's control from the services they need and use; destroying the link between local taxation and local spending.

Like COSLA, we support the European Charter of Local Self-Government which ensures communities' empowerment - having local democracy as close to people as possible.

Of course these elections are about our councils and valued local services, but let's not pretend that a vote for the SNP wouldn't encourage them to believe that Scots want a second referendum on independence, while a Tory vote will see services cut further. Only Labour which is focused on delivering quality local services, such as schools and social care.

Our councils are in crisis. Scottish Labour wants to invest in public services and the workers who provide them, to ensure all of us have access to the good quality services we value. So vote Labour to elect real local champions.

**Alex Rowley, Deputy Leader and Local Government Campaign Manager**



# Caring for society

# CARING FOR SOCIETY

That we're living longer is the success story of our NHS. But as a result hundreds of thousands of families are under increasing pressure to care for elderly relatives which, sadly, can become increasingly difficult as they get more frail.

Which is why Labour councils have been working closely with local health boards to integrate NHS care with their own social care services.

However financial cuts have left them increasingly struggling to help those in need.

More than 270 Scots died in 2015 waiting for care packages - that's the shameful, tragic, human cost of the chronic under-funding of local government services.

At a time when our elderly population is growing, councils are being prevented from caring for the most vulnerable because of swingeing SNP budget cuts.

In the past year alone Nicola Sturgeon's government has ripped more than £500m from local services.

The SNP council tax freeze has crippled local government since it began, depriving local services of £2.5 billion while the SNP government's latest budget shows there will be another £170m cut from local government, forcing deprived councils to slash more jobs and cut back on valued services.

Services like those which ensure our elderly and vulnerable are properly cared for and looked after.

Without doubt the care sector is on the brink of crisis as our increasingly elderly population puts new demand on services which are under-resourced.

It was revealed recently that since Labour left office in 2007 the proportion of people aged 65 and over receiving home care has been cut by 12 per cent.

And since May 2015 when Health Secretary Shona Robison promised to eradicate delayed discharge from hospitals, a practice which occurs when social care packages are not organised for elderly people, there have been more than 900,000 bed days lost to the NHS.

Worse, research by Scottish Labour has uncovered that at least 680 people have died in hospital waiting to be discharged in this manner. Our elderly are stuck in hospitals where they don't belong because the SNP government won't give councils the cash to ensure they can get the care package they need to be looked after properly.

The moral test of a government is how it treats those at the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the aged; and those who are in the shadow of life, the sick and needy...



**Kez at Holyrood anti-cuts demonstration.**

It's not just social care which is being affected by cuts to services. In 2011 when the SNP took power as a majority government there were 728 mental health officers in Scotland – specially trained council social workers with the skills to work with people with mental health disorders. The latest figures show these jobs have been cut by eight per cent, putting more pressure on patients and staff.

## **LABOUR CARES**

Labour would do things very differently.

We would use the powers of the Scottish Parliament to stop cuts to local services. We believe it is right to invest in the social care necessary to deliver what people really need.

Scottish Labour wants to guarantee a social care package being in place within a week of an assessment being done.

That is a policy which would save our NHS thousands of pounds by ensuring that people well enough to go home are able to do so, confident in the knowledge their needs will be met.

Scottish Labour's proposals to improve the sector are built on properly supporting staff and adopting in full the recommendations of UNISON's Ethical Care Charter, which will raise standards and reduce the turnover of staff.

For we need to look after those who provide as well as receive care. We will ensure staff have time to care – and end the scandal of 15 minute "care visits". And we will pay care workers a living wage.

But Scottish Labour's National Careworkers' Guarantee goes further: ensuring that staff are paid for travel costs and travel time; that no staff are left on zero-hours contracts; and that proper training is given to all staff before they enter the workplace.

Paying people a living wage is at the heart of Labour's commitment to tackle the twin scourges of inequality and poverty.

Many councils are developing their own anti-poverty strategies but we will continue to call on the Scottish Government to bring forward a coherent anti-poverty strategy.

We have already forced the government to accept that the Fuel Poverty eradication target which it missed be re-established. But the government's latest budget sees a cut to the very funding which aims to help those who are fuel poor.

No-one should have to choose between heating and eating - which is why we would introduce a Warm Homes Act to make sure Scotland's homes are properly insulated and energy efficient.

Without doubt Labour is doing its best to ensure good care despite the cuts.

It was Labour in **Renfrewshire** who took the bold and progressive step in working with public sector trade union Unison to sign up to the Unison Ethical Care charter. Scrapping the use of zero hour contracts and securing living wage deals for private sector care workers has reduced staff attrition rates and improved the quality of care for service users.

In **Edinburgh** the Live Well in Later Life strategy has seen five new care homes built to provide high-quality care environments for older people and it hopes to develop eight health and social care community hubs - one-stop shops for health and care needs.

In **West Lothian** Labour introduced 'REACT', a new service specifically designed for over 75s. It offers an alternative to hospital admission as well as supporting early discharges from hospital and provides rapid assessment of adults in their own homes. The team can also treat medical conditions which can be managed at home, providing the care and intervention required to support people to stay out of hospital. On mental health policy, Scottish Labour is committed nationally to securing a system of 'ask once, get help fast' and plans to improve mental health in young people by ensuring every secondary school pupil has access to counselling services.

Despite funding pressures imposed by the SNP government our councils are finding unique and innovative ways of engaging with the public about the importance of good mental wellbeing.

In **North Lanarkshire** the 'Choose Life' programme was reviewed by researchers from Leeds University who reported: *"Choose Life (North Lanarkshire) awareness-raising programme has made huge steps towards improved public access to information on suicide and deliberate self-harm; increased public knowledge of suicide and self-harm, and challenging cultural myths and stigma associated with suicide... The outstanding campaign emphasis on public awareness and communication using social marketing approaches has been a pathfinder in suicide prevention work in Scotland."*



# Let children flourish

# LET CHILDREN FLOURISH

From nurseries to further education, Scottish Labour councils are delivering for children.

Yet under the SNP government, the attainment gap between children from the richest backgrounds and those from poorer backgrounds has grown wider. Shockingly, more than 6,000 children in Scotland leave primary school unable to read properly.

Pupils from a wealthier background are twice as likely to get an A-grade at Higher level than pupils from deprived areas.

Young people from the poorest backgrounds in Scotland are four times less likely to go to university than those from the wealthiest backgrounds. And it's the poorest students in higher education who end up with the most debt.

The latest international league table results have shown Scotland falling behind in maths, science and English.

Why? Because we now have 4000 fewer teachers, fewer support staff and primary classes are bigger than when the SNP came to power.

Furthermore the Improvement Service has highlighted that school spending has fallen by more than £1 billion since the SNP formed a majority government in 2011. School spending per pupil across all ages since 2010 has gone down, in real terms, by £489 at primary level and by £152 at secondary level. If pupil spend had remained at 2010/11 levels, primary schools would be £726 million better off in total and secondary schools would be £308 million better off.

*Yearly cut relative to 2010-11 per pupil spending, broken down by primary, secondary.*

£m	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Total
<b>Primary</b>	56	112	153	210	194	726
<b>Secondary</b>	59	66	65	76	42	308
<b>Total</b>	115	179	218	287	236	1,035

As a result the Children and Young People's Commissioner for Scotland said it would be "very difficult" for the First Minister to achieve her goal of eliminating the educational attainment gap at the same time as reducing local authority budgets.

All of this is bad news for children, parents, teachers and ultimately Scotland's economy.

The single most important economic policy a government can pursue is investment in education.

## UNDER THE SNP



THE ATTAINMENT GAP HAS GROWN



**6,000** CHILDREN LEAVE SCHOOL UNABLE TO READ PROPERLY



**4,000** FEWER TEACHERS



PUPILS FROM A WEALTHIER BACKGROUND ARE **TWICE AS LIKELY** TO GET AN A-GRADE AT HIGHER LEVEL THAN PUPILS FROM DEPRIVED AREAS.



**Cllr Frank McNally at the Clyde Valley School opening, North Lanarkshire.**

## **LABOUR CARES**

We know that educational disadvantage does not begin in the classroom – there’s a 14 month learning gap between children from the most deprived areas and those from the least deprived before they even set foot in school.

So investment in good quality childcare and early years education is vital to help children achieve their full potential.

We want to support local education authorities to develop excellence in learning and teaching. We reject the SNP cuts and its approach of focusing on structures in its relentless pursuit of centralising services and removing control from councils and parents.

Our fairer tax policies would enable more money to be spent directly on education from nursery right through to higher education; investing in all-age, year-round, flexible and affordable childcare, increasing teacher numbers and classroom assistants, restoring bursaries for poorer students at university and fully-funding those for college students. We also believe that local libraries are places of inspiration, knowledge and enrichment for children and the wider community. They are an important focus for learning and we want to protect them from the threat of closure and help them to modernise with new technology and web-based learning.

We will ask schools to partner with local libraries to give every child a chance to become a member and benefit from the library environment. In the face of billions of pounds of cuts, Labour councils have prioritised and invested in our children and their education.

Across the country, Labour councils have continued our legacy of school rebuilding. **South Lanarkshire** will have rebuilt all schools by 2018, and in **Inverclyde** the Labour council is pressing on with its ambitious plan to refurbish all schools in the area.

**Glasgow's** new school campus at Gowanbank will provide a world class environment for children to learn in – as well as creating hundreds of jobs and apprenticeships - while its 'Nurture in Schools' early intervention programme means that breakfast clubs for children eligible for school meals provides nutrition as well as a boost to attainment and help with wraparound childcare pressures.

We want to see a breakfast club in every primary school in Scotland - funded and staffed in ways which best suit the demands of parents and schools – to ensure more children start the day with a nutritious breakfast to get them ready for a day's learning. The attainment gap is a priority for all Labour councils and they are using exciting, dynamic methods to help their young people get the best start in life.

**North Lanarkshire's** Raspberry Pi coding classes are just one example of the extra-curricular activities which broaden children's skills and help their educational progress.

**Inverclyde's** Attainment Challenge Summer Clubs brought children and families together over the summer months. Not only does this help with childcare pressures but it provides an opportunity for children to play, learn and eat together - tackling the attainment gap at the same time.

In **Falkirk**, Larbert High School is bringing together sporting achievement with education. Through partnerships with the governing bodies of sports, further education and local business, it runs over 30 sports clubs, seven days a week for pupils - resulting in a range of positive impacts. There has been a 21 per cent increase in the number of pupils achieving one or more Higher, and a 17 per cent increase in those achieving five or more.

## **Child Benefit**

In Scotland today there are 220,000 children living in poverty. That's a national scandal. At a time when family incomes are squeezed and public services face even more cuts, that number is set to rise. Labour has set out a plan to increase Child Benefit by £240 by 2020. This will boost household incomes for more than half a million families in Scotland and lift tens of thousands of children out of poverty.



# Improving services, creating jobs

# IMPROVING SERVICES, CREATING JOBS

The impact of SNP and Tory cuts is clear – fewer options for school-leavers, less job security for those in work and wage stagnation.

The unemployment rate at the end of 2016 was 5.3 per cent – above the rate of 4.8 per cent for the rest of the UK.

The impact of SNP cuts to local government jobs is also clear: 87 per cent of the public sector job losses in Scotland since the financial crash have been in local government.

Nearly 50,000 jobs have gone in local government, the NHS, colleges and other public sector bodies in the last seven years – and last year 7000 went in councils alone. Local government, which makes up just over 50 per cent of public sector jobs, has had the biggest cut.

With up to £1bn of further cuts to come, the SNP's tax plan will strip even more from councils' budgets and undermine the principle of local accountability and quality public sector services.

But Labour has proved that SNP and Tory austerity does not have to be inevitable.

After a torrid decade of SNP cuts, Scottish Labour councils can be proud of the decisions they have made to save their local services and the livelihoods of Scots.

## LABOUR CARES

Labour councils across Scotland are leading the way as Living Wage employers - making up three quarters of those accredited by the Living Wage Foundation - ensuring their staff are paid more than £8.45 an hour.

While we raise wages for council workers they are coming under more pressure. Over the last six years more than 27,000 jobs have been lost in local councils while the demand for services has continued to rise. Despite this Labour councils will continue to work alongside trade unions to protect the terms and conditions of workers, ensuring dignity and respect in the workplace.

Our commitment to properly financing local services would also mean future workforce planning would not be centred on downsizing or cutting staff. We would recruit and retain the skilled workers that deliver much needed services instead.

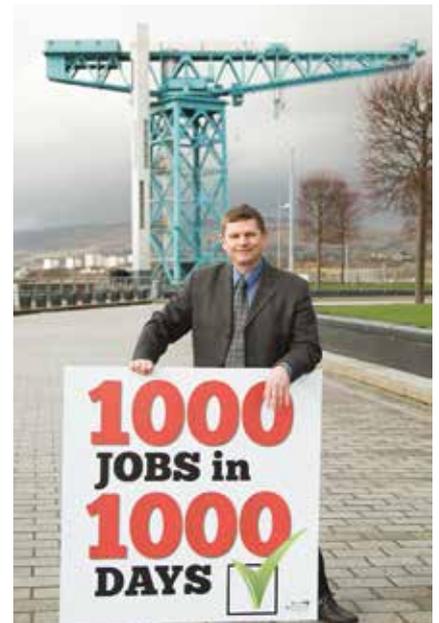


## The Edinburgh Guarantee

Labour councillors have also found new ways to improve the lives of the people they employ and represent. Many of our councils look to each other to adopt best practice and ensure that the ethos of good quality public service is maintained.

In **West Dunbartonshire** the Labour council delivered **1,000 Jobs in 1,000 Days**. The ambitious £3m project was launched to improve local employment figures by creating jobs and apprenticeships for residents, and just 650 days into the campaign, the original target was reached.

In **Renfrewshire** the Labour council's **Construction Charter** promotes local employment, fair wages, worker protection and stamps out bad industry practices, such as bogus self-employment schemes. When a council spends public money, it can make sure companies are investing in the local community, paying a fair wage and treating their workers with dignity and respect and promote and improve opportunities in education and training for local young people.



**Cllr Martin Rooney, Leader of West Dunbartonshire Council.**

In **Aberdeen** the council has found a new way of raising finance through bond markets, turning its newly awarded credit rating into £370m funding for infrastructure projects across the city. By investing in the future it can now deliver new schools, homes, transport links and an exhibition and conference centre.

Scottish Labour has endorsed Unite's call to help councils find ways to deal with historic debts which are costing more in interest payments than the original loans, to ensure that more public money is available to spend on creating jobs and improving services.

And Labour councils across Scotland are pursuing City Deals to attract millions of new investment into their areas to create economic growth.



**Cllr Jenny Laing,  
Leader of Aberdeen City Council.**



# Investing in communities

# INVESTING IN COMMUNITIES

It is sadly no longer the case that people have the same bond with their local councils that was enjoyed by previous generations.

But local decision making is key to local democracy and restoring trust in the delivery of local services.

Staff cuts are impacting on core services like refuse collection and road maintenance, leaving people feeling disaffected with local government. Similarly across Scotland, local communities have seen scores of planning decisions and local development plans called in, and decisions made centrally by ministers in St Andrew's House.

And it is local people who look set to be excluded from the long term future decisions in the planning system with SNP ministers already ruling out 'equal right of appeal', making clear their opposition to how communities can make their voices heard.

Communities are also looking for action on the 12,674 hectares of vacant and derelict land which fails to contribute to local economies, and at the same time they want to see green belt land protected from developers.

Scottish Labour is the only party committed to ensuring councils have the ability to create a land value tax, as well as devolving the Crown Estate surplus to local authorities, so they can support the local services our party is committed to protecting and develop local, sustainable economies.

And on a national level, Scottish Labour is committed to delivering powers which would allow councils to compel the sale of derelict and brownfield land for early development.

Scottish Labour councils and the Co-operative Party also want to see more of Scotland's councils become truly co-operative. Councils in Scotland are the biggest in Europe and so they must show the way by devolving services to real communities.

There are opportunities for councils to develop renewable district heating systems in partnership with communities and social housing providers and to use co-operative models.

And we support the opportunity for community groups to buy land for regeneration projects or food growing or the creation of community green spaces.

Communities have also seen their link with their local police service broken, again thanks to the centralising efforts of the SNP.

Scottish Labour is committed to keeping our communities safe at a time when local policing is facing the brunt of SNP cuts, which has resulted in station closures and cuts to community policing.

You can never go wrong by investing in communities and the human beings within them.



**Leader of Fife Council, David Ross, at a new housing development in Fife.**

## **LABOUR CARES**

Scottish Labour has always been the party of local people. In the face of an ever centralising SNP government, it is only Scottish Labour that can stand up to the assault on local services.

We will strengthen community policing by restoring local accountability and increasing community decision making.

We support the findings of the Pearson Review of Policing in Scotland, which would see the creation of local police committees, to ensure communities get the policing they need and build a strong link between local committees and the Scottish Police Authority.

The police are part of our democracy, not apart from it.

And we will not tolerate anti-social behaviour in our neighbourhoods by making tackling it a focus of local action.

Scottish Labour will ensure our councils are properly supported to deliver safe communities, where locals feel secure in their own homes. And we are committed to giving meaningful power to the communities we seek to serve.

For the decisions of the SNP in Holyrood cannot be made in isolation from those of local government, or by groups looking to run services for their communities. When a cut is made to national budgets it affects every service run at a local level, whether it is by a Labour council or a community group.

Scottish Labour has also been a strong contributor to the land reform agenda in the Scottish Parliament and our councils support community action to create a fairer distribution of land for social justice.

We also support the development of waste minimisation and good strategies to “reduce, reuse, recycle” – creating new opportunities for local jobs as well as meeting environmental targets.

Over the past five years it is Labour councils who have taken difficult but sensible decisions on the services they provide and how communities can get more involved.

**Glasgow's** desire to clean up its streets has seen it use social media and community volunteering to get people involved, while the dynamic use of social media has changed the way people get in touch to raise complaints. And its Govan Townscape Heritage Initiative has transformed the appearance and perception of Govan as a great place to live and transformed the community.

**Edinburgh** has led the way in co-operative councils. This has led to the first Petitions Committee, direct parent representation on its Children & Families committee, and a solar co-op which generates and sells renewable energy.

By encouraging the people using its services to become involved in budget decisions, the planning and delivery of services, more are involved in local decisions. ‘Participatory Budgeting’ has been rolled out as ‘Eith Decides’ in Edinburgh, and ‘Your Community Funds’ in **West Dunbartonshire** has allowed communities to apply for funding for parks and sports.



# Building homes

# BUILDING HOMES

Housing is, and always will be, a Labour priority. It was Labour’s Housing Acts which demolished hundreds of thousands of slum homes and rehomed millions.

But Scotland’s housing shortage has turned into a housing crisis under the SNP.

There are more than 142,500 people on council house waiting lists and almost 70,000 homes are overcrowded – the vast majority of these homes where children live. Yet these figures are likely to be even higher as they don’t include people waiting on housing association lists - which is all the social housing in Glasgow.

Of those waiting for social housing 34,600 people are officially homeless, while 10,570, including 5751 children, are stuck in expensive, poor quality temporary accommodation.

During the SNP’s term housebuilding across Scotland has not recovered from pre-crash levels of 25,000 homes a year. Just 16,309 were built in the year (to September 2016), and at current rates completions in the social sector will have to double if the SNP is to hit its target of 35,000 homes for social rent.

The government will not deliver on housing unless it works in partnership with local councils.

And without new homes our young people are locked into the private rental sector with ever increasing rents and house prices.

Labour believes that everyone deserves a safe, warm, comfortable home. A good home is key to our wellbeing and life chances; it can cut the attainment gap, improve our health, is vital for our mental health and will help Scotland achieve a fairer society.

Public sector house building is key to supporting the construction industry, providing jobs for young people, and regenerating our towns and cities.

That is why Labour wants a national house building plan, setting out its own vision of how government working with councils can tackle Scotland’s housing crisis.

A vote for Labour means a full national effort for housing



**142,500**  
PEOPLE ACROSS SCOTLAND ARE TRAPPED ON SOCIAL HOUSING WAITING LISTS



**748,000**  
HOUSEHOLDS IN 2015 WERE LIVING IN FUEL POVERTY



**JUST OVER A QUARTER**  
OF PEOPLE UNDER THE AGE OF 34 OWN THEIR OWN HOME



**Edinburgh City councillors supporting the 'Make Renting Right' campaign.**

It will be Labour councils across Scotland who will make use of rent control zones to protect tenants from unscrupulous landlords.

No other statistic is a reminder of how poor the SNP's record is on housing than the fuel poverty figures. A total of 748,000 households in 2015 were living in fuel poverty. That is a national disgrace.

Scottish Labour won victories in the Scottish Parliament to get fuel poverty targets reset, and forced progress on the Warm Homes Act to be delivered in 2017.

## **LABOUR CARES**

After a period of drastically reduced grants, it is Labour councils which have brought plans to construct thousands of homes across Scotland. We would build 45,000 new homes for rent by councils, housing associations and co-operatives - built to the highest standard of thermal insulation – which will create jobs and help grow our economy.

In the recent months Labour councils have announced they will build: 1,000 homes in **West Lothian**, 16,000 homes in **Edinburgh**, while **Aberdeen** is considering plans to build 2000 new council homes.

**Fife** has led the way in showing the power of Labour councils to deliver the homes vitally needed for local residents, and can champion a record of delivering 2700 new homes since 2012.

By bringing together planning and infrastructure investment experts with the construction industry, working with training and apprenticeships partners, alongside its own local government regeneration officials, it achieved its housebuilding goals.



**Cllr Barry McCulloch, North Lanarkshire.**

**North Lanarkshire's** record on housing is impressive, with much heralded plans for up to 1,800 homes by 2021. Alongside this ambition it has led efforts to tackle fuel poverty with a Collective Switching initiative, which helps groups of residents join together to get cheaper fuel bills. Its award winning Syrian Resettlement Project Team was recognised for the continuing support it provides to give families confidence and promote independence in their new communities.

On a national level, Scottish Labour is pressing for a co-ordinated approach to be brought forward across the country, to support the delivery of affordable housing and to tackle homelessness.

We would also regulate private rents – capping rent increases so rogue landlords can't charge rip off rents – and will consult on introducing a charter to drive up standards in the private rented sector.



# Getting the country moving

# GETTING THE COUNTRY MOVING

It's hard to believe there has been an SNP transport strategy in place for 10 years in Scotland when people are still waiting for real, transformative change.

Right now, the Scottish public transport system is a patchwork of services with many areas left behind with no decent provision. Indeed, in the time it has taken the SNP to decide it needs a new strategy, Scottish Labour has kept the need for reform in the public transport sector firmly on the agenda.

For instance, under the SNP buses in Scotland are grinding to a halt – we want to get them moving again.

The number of people travelling by bus has fallen by 15 per cent in the last decade, there are fewer routes and yet bus fares have risen by almost a fifth.

Not that bus operators are feeling the pinch – First Transport declared pre-tax profits of £114m in 2015-16. Stagecoach made £165m before tax in 2015 and McGills' doubled its profits to £3.22m in 2014. Yet if you are a jobseeker in rural Scotland you could pay £9 for a bus ticket for your compulsory journey to a job centre.

We want buses to be run for the benefit of communities, not simply the private profit of a few wealthy individuals. We want to see democratic control of transport and municipal ownership of buses as happens in Edinburgh and the Lothians. We will regulate Scotland's buses to give local communities and councils greater say over the services they need and want.

Scottish Labour also wants to make it cheaper and easier to get the train to work every day, hop on a bus to do the shopping, or try out healthier and more environmentally friendly ways of travelling.

We have been at the forefront of holding the SNP government to account over the running of ScotRail. We have demanded a fares freeze for passengers who have been dealing with overcrowded, delayed and cancelled trains, be they in the central belt or rural Scotland.

And we have demanded that a publicly-owned not-for-profit company be established to run ScotRail in the interests of passengers rather than profits.

The government hasn't done much for car drivers either. Anyone using Scotland's roads will know how dangerous and costly potholes can be. We need to address the issue of potholes and surface damage on our roads. The Scottish Government needs to work alongside local authorities to alleviate the millions councils spend fixing potholes, money which could be used for schools or other essential services.

In Scotland, only one per cent of all trips are made by bike and 23 per cent are made on foot. As well as providing good quality, affordable public transport we also want to see more investment in active travel, not just to improve people's transport choices, but to improve people's health and wellbeing, and make our communities safer.

A developed country is not a place where the poor have cars. It's where the rich use public transport.



**New Glasgow Airport rail link project.**

## **LABOUR CARES**

As in every area of council services, Labour is doing its best to find innovative ways of dealing with cuts and trying to improve services.

In **Edinburgh** 10 per cent of its transport budget is spent on active travel. Every street is being reviewed to make sure it is accessible for everyone. This includes identifying better crossing facilities including dropped kerbs or tactile paving. Quiet routes are also being developed to help walkers and cyclists avoid the busy main roads.

And of course the Edinburgh tram is successfully up and running with plans being drawn up to extend the route.

In **Glasgow** the Subway has seen 17 new trains with more carriages, the refurbishment of the St Enoch Station and similar work being done at Buchanan Street. There's also a £7m investment in the Govan Interchange.

**Clackmannanshire**, along with SEStran, has launched TripShareClacks in a bid to get people to car and taxi share, but also give walkers and cyclists company on their way to and from work. Car sharing can save money, reduce congestion and reduce pollution.

# PAYING FOR GOOD PUBLIC SERVICES

Scottish Labour does not believe that Tory austerity has to be pushed down to local services by the SNP government. We can stop the cuts.

Because of the different, fairer decisions Scottish Labour would make on tax, spending on public services in Scotland would increase in real terms. A 50p top rate of tax for those earning more than £150,000 a year would ensure the richest pay their fair share so we can invest more in valued public services.

With the new income tax powers of the Scottish Parliament, Scottish Labour is committed to, and will continue to campaign for, a basic rate of income tax one pence higher than that set by the Tory government – though no-one earning £21,000 or less will be affected.

In Scotland we can and should make fairer, more progressive, choices to protect our public services and those who work to deliver them.

When the SNP budget progressed through Parliament earlier this year we sought to amend it to deliver on these pledges and stop the cuts to our valued local services. However the SNP and the Scottish Greens, working together, pushed through a budget which will see a £170m cut to Scotland's councils.

And it is time for the hated council tax to go. The SNP promised to scrap it and has failed.

We would introduce a fairer system which will mean 80 per cent of households across Scotland will pay less than they do today.

Tourism taxes, devolution of the Crown Estate, and a land value tax could unlock over £150m for councils, should they choose to use them, and spur on economic growth, creating jobs and improving services.

# AT A GLANCE GUIDE TO LABOUR'S TAX PROPOSALS

## COUNCIL TAX CHANGES

Labour would scrap the unfair council tax once and for all.

Labour's replacement - a fairer system based on property value - means nearly two million households would pay less than they do today and 80 per cent of people would be better off.

Properties valued at £180,000 or less would pay local taxation at a rate of £450 + 0.35% of the property value. Properties valued above £180,000 would pay the same rate (£450 + 0.35%) and for the portion above £180,000 would pay a rate of 0.9%.

For example, a property valued at £200,000: £450 + a rate of 0.35% would apply to £180,000. A rate of 0.9% would then apply to the remaining £20,000.

Bills would be capped at £3,000 in year one, with an increase in total bills limited to three per cent year-on-year. That means that if local house prices increase by more than three per cent the cap won't.

## INCOME TAX CHANGES

Worker	Salary (Full Time hours)	The income tax you paid in 2016/17	How much you would've paid in 2017/18 with Labour
National Minimum Wage (21 to 24) at £7.05ph	£13,564.20	£512.84	£433.48
National Living Wage (25+) at £7.50ph	£14,430.00	£686.00	£615.30
Careworker on the real Living Wage at £8.45	£16,257.80	£1,051.56	£999.14
Nurse on a starting salary	£21,602.00	£2,120.40	£2,121.42
Post-probationer Teacher	£26,628.00	£3,125.60	£3,176.88
Median salary	£27,953.00	£3,390.60	£3,455.13
Police sergeant	£41,865.00	£6,173.00	£6,376.65
MSP	£61,777.00	£13,910.80	£14,436.57
First Minister	£151,269.00	£54,171.05	£55,957.50

## PROPOSED TOURIST TAX

Labour would devolve the power to local government to charge a Tourist Tax on each hotel night per person. We propose a tax charged to each stay per night per person, of a maximum of £2 per night which allows up to £70 million to be raised per annum.

Calculations commissioned by Scottish Labour also show a flat rate of £1 per night would raise about £35 million per annum.

### Tourist Tax Projections

Case	Revenue
Base Charge £0.75 per night	£26.3 million
Base Charge £1 per night	£35 million
Base Charge £2 per night	£70 million
Base Charge £1.42	£50 million
Base Charge £2.85	£100 million

## LAND VALUE TAX

Scottish Labour would devolve the powers to local authorities to tax more than 10,000 hectares of vacant, economically inactive land and give them greater powers to fund their services.

Local authorities would have the right to decide if they would use their power and the rate they charge, limited to a maximum four per cent of the value, allowing an annual revenue potential of £75m.

It would not apply to land with non-derelict buildings or facilities located on it or used for any purpose such as agriculture, recreation or sport.

The main beneficiaries would be the cities of Glasgow and Dundee and several other areas affected by industrial decline.

With a three per cent tax Dundee would gain £29 per person and Glasgow £19 per person as compared to a Scottish average of £10.77.

If the tax encourages development it will increase tax revenue from economic activity and support development goals.



“Council services  
are at the heart  
of people’s lives.  
Scottish Labour  
will always  
protect them.”