

Scottish Labour

Scottish Labour's National Recovery Plan

Volume Two of Two

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Education recovery

National Mission Three: Move the Scottish education system to the top of international league tables.

Our schools, colleges and universities create the foundations for people to succeed in life. It is our responsibility to ensure that every young person in our country gets the best start with the best education. Our immediate priority is to ensure schools across Scotland are given the resources they need to support young people as they return to school full time.

Scottish schools should be the best in the world. Our aspiration and ambition for them should never be any lower. However, for the poorest children in our schools, the attainment gap remains stubborn and vast. The young people from the most deprived postcodes are less likely to leave school with one Higher qualification than the richest pupils are to leave with five. By Primary 7 there is around a 20-point percentage gap between the richest and poorest pupils in literacy and numeracy.

The pandemic means that we now have to face an additional set of challenges. Young people and teachers have faced an incredibly difficult year. School closures resulting from Covid-19 have resulted in unprecedented disruption to Scotland's education system. The impact of this on general attainment, the

poverty-related attainment gap, social and emotional development and ultimately life chances for our young people will be very significant for many.

The falling number of young people leaving school without a positive destination may well be the early signs of the pandemic's impact on the life prospects of our young people. But the truth is the SNP has been failing our young people for years. What's more, it is young people from our poorer communities who are the hardest hit.

Comeback plan for schools

Scottish Labour's plan seeks to deliver hope to our young people that the pandemic will not hold them back. We must ensure that emerging from the doubt and anxiety of the last year, we make a promise to protect their futures. Our young people deserve the best of opportunities and our commitment to them is that through hard work and the investment of a country that believes in them, those opportunities are available for them right here in Scotland.

To recover the educational deficit, Scottish Labour believes that a personal tutoring programme is the best method of engaging young people effectively. There are a variety of tutoring models for one-to-one and small group learning and the programme should be designed and delivered by those experienced in education and working alongside young people.

Referrals to the programme could come from teachers and agencies that support pupils who are struggling to engage with school, as well as possibly pupils themselves. Importantly, the programme should be open to pupils of all ages and financed with funding provided in addition to existing education budgets. Scottish Labour's Comeback Tutoring Programme will be led and resourced nationally with delivery by local authorities. We must enhance digital training for staff and will offer digital devices to all pupils in Scotland. We will also consider targeted support for households who do not have broadband access.

Every pupil in Scotland should have a Personal Comeback Plan (PCP) based on an individual needs assessment with resources directed at those most at risk of long-term disengagement due to lockdown. While Additional Support Needs (ASN) pupils should also receive a PCP, there is an urgent need for further ASN resources across the country. Without enhanced overall support, the impact of lost learning over the past year could particularly impact this vulnerable cohort in the long-term. PCPs should be combined with a mental health assessment for every pupil and support for counselling as part of our broader strategy to improve mental health services. We must start by ensuring that a return to full-time learning for some does not worsen the mental health challenges.

This has been a time of extreme pressure for teachers and other school staff. In common with other key workers, they deserve not just thanks but also our commitment to support them in the future. Scottish Labour would implement a guaranteed completion opportunity for probationary teachers to ensure they can gain registration and refresh our workforce. Where trainee teachers have been unable to fully complete the necessary training, they must be afforded the right to do so at no cost to themselves. Additionally, Scottish Labour will end temporary contracts and zero hour supply teacher arrangements.

For over a year, children have had little contact with adults other than their parents or guardians. Our children must re-learn how to be with and trust the important and inspirational other adults in their lives: sports coaches, music tutors, teachers, youth leaders and many more. For this reason, rather than focusing on intensive academic catch up over the summer holidays, we should have a national Summer Comeback. This resourced programme with a 'Summer Comeback Pass' for young people will also provide free access to sport, transport, outdoor activities and culture. There should be resources for school trips to outdoor activity centres for all young people over the coming two years and, following this summer, we will also guarantee that every primary and secondary school pupil has at least one week

away at an outdoor centre as well as increasing support for outdoor skills training.

"I want the Parliament to focus on things that really matter, like education. We can't allow the last year to affect children's lives forever. That's why we have to make education recovery a priority and that's why I'm voting Labour." – SANDRA, SAUCHIE

Creating the best schools in the world

In the longer-term Scottish Labour will scrap Scottish National Standardised Assessments (SNSA) for all age groups which teachers and educationalists say have limited diagnostic value and do little to raise attainment. We will reinstate the Scottish Survey of Literacy and Numeracy and re-engage with Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) all of which allow for oversight of standards at both national and international levels, and help to determine where and when intervention is required to improve attainment. We will also take decisive action to tackle excessive teacher workload and provide increased support for health and well being of all those working in education, including specific support for mental health.

The disappointing responses of both the SQA and Education Scotland throughout the pandemic, resulting from inadequate Ministerial direction, have

shown that both agencies must be fundamentally reviewed. Scottish Labour will ensure these bodies are reformed and their transparency and accountability improved, something that will be especially important as part of the education-led recovery.

Scottish Labour will correct the restriction of subject choice to ensure all pupils have the opportunity to study subjects, whether academic or vocational, that they are interested in and which match their skills.

To help make this possible, we will restore teacher numbers, increasing them by 3,000 over the course of the parliament with a proportionate increase in support staff. We know there are a significant number of Scots who have committed to the teaching profession yet cannot find secure employment due to cuts from the Scottish Government. We need these professionals in our classrooms.

We will also reduce class sizes and provide local authorities with enough funding to fill the gap between the promise of Additional Support for Learning legislation and the reality of additional support needs provision. This funding will increase ASN staffing, with more support staff and at least 1,000 additional specialist teachers available across Scotland's schools.

Scottish Labour will further commit to a national transitions strategy to improve outcomes for children and young people with a disability in the transition to adulthood; and giving a right to a Transitions Plan to every child or young person with an impairment or long-term health condition.

When global relationships are so crucial, there has never been a more important time to promote multilingualism in our education system. The gender gap in some subjects will also be addressed through a strategic approach to building a better understanding of gender stereotypes and the skills in challenging them among teachers, practitioners and Career information advice and guidance staff (CIAG). This approach should lead to equality becoming a central priority in education and greater leadership and accountability throughout the system.

We need a comprehensive review of Curriculum for Excellence, including broad general education and the senior phase. A key part of this review must be the inclusion and expansion of vocational education in school settings, supporting training in partnership with trade groups and trade unions to ensure all young people are equipped for the world of work. We will also strengthen life skills education, including the 'Unions into Schools' programme, emotional learning, cooperative models, and enable the climate change emergency to be addressed in the curriculum.

Music education is a critical driver of a child's social development and emotional wellbeing; it can build confidence, promote creativity and help students develop emotional and behavioural awareness and skills. We support the mainstreaming of music education in schools, enhancing equity of access and rolling out the We Make Music schools programme. We will also ensure free instrumental music tuition for all pupils who wish to learn an instrument.

We will also introduce a Right to Play, ensuring that all children have access to spaces to play and be active. Access to extracurricular activities is key for development and nurturing good mental health. Scottish Labour will ensure that every child and young person in Scotland has free and equal access to an extracurricular activity of their choice within or around the school day.

Scotland needs to renew our pipeline of digital skills with a radical reform of the education and training approach to enable the future success of our economy. Over the last 14 years we have fallen behind leading nations. The Logan Review has made clear that Scotland's failure to recruit and retain maths and computing teachers is a structural weakness in our economy that will stop us realising our potential. Scottish Labour would renew our national approach to the digital skills pipeline to inspire, educate, train and nurture digital talent.

Scottish Labour recognises that good relationships between families and schools are vital. We understand the importance of parental and carer involvement in children's education and will therefore ensure that contributions made to learning, as well as to improving schools and nurseries, are supported.

Scottish Labour will ensure that resourcing provided to schools to tackle the attainment gap, such as Attainment Scotland Funding, truly funds evidence based interventions. We will also focus on cross local authority coordination rather than the extra bureaucracy and centralisation of Regional Improvement Collaboratives. This will ensure local democratic control of education, enabling councils to take account of local circumstances and elected councillors to be accountable to their citizens for the delivery and performance of education. Every school should publish an annual plan to improve inclusive practices so that no child misses out. The Scottish Government and each education authority should have an inclusion strategy in line with the UN Committee's advice on the Rights of People with Disabilities.

Scottish Labour will end all public sector support for fee-paying private schools, implementing the recommendations made by the Barclay Review to end their charitable status for rates relief as a contribution

towards achieving a more socially just and inclusive society.

We will provide funding and guidance to ensure the cost of school trips, and other hidden costs, do not create barriers to education. In addition we will develop statutory guidance on school uniform policies with affordability as the top priority. We will also scrap exam appeals charges to address the disparity in appeals between independent and state schools since the SQA introduced charging.

As part of our wider anti-poverty policies, we will develop and properly fund free school meal provision, including the use of breakfast clubs, and seek to extend the current universal provision of free school meals to include all primary school years. We will also establish summer catch up clubs during the summer holidays with activities and free meals for both primary and secondary pupils so young people can catch up with their friends and we can end the scandal of children going hungry during the school holidays.

We will ensure equality of status for education routes, and we will not include work on zero-hours contracts as a positive destination for school leavers.

Colleges and universities

Colleges are a vital pillar for building the economy and ensuring access to education for all. However, the number of students going to college since the SNP came to power has been slashed. Any government that is serious about inclusive growth should be giving colleges the resources they need. Scottish Labour supports the campaign against the practice of replacing lecturers with less qualified, lower paid staff, which threatens to devalue the role of Further Education.

Scottish Labour will reinvest in Further Education and give it equality of status with other education routes, ensuring it is a route to Higher Education for those who wish to progress. This includes the ability to study part-time, through distance learning, and with opportunities for those with additional support needs and those living in rural areas. We will strengthen distance learning by developing an Open College through colleges collaborating across Scotland, building on Scottish Labour's innovative creation of the Open University. We will also develop a college estate plan to repair and improve infrastructure and develop the on-site provision of childcare services. Additionally, Scottish Labour will commit to sustainable funding for students' associations.

We will improve teaching practice on health and wellbeing throughout the education system with

consistent training and additional mental health counsellors in colleges. There should be an action plan for students to improve access to mental health services in colleges.

We will also work with the education sector, as well as industry, to ensure leavers have positive destinations to move into something that will be especially important as the jobs market is re-shaped by Covid-19. Scottish Labour's plan for a Minimum Student Income would ensure that Scottish domiciled full-time students, studying up to degree level enrolled in Scotland's universities and colleges, have access to funding to help meet the cost of living while they study. We agree that no student should lose their benefit entitlements because they are in receipt of student funding and support a "special support payment" for those students receiving benefits.

Scottish Labour will improve support for estranged students, helping them to meet the cost of living in the absence of family help and looking at options for a bespoke package of support, similar to that received by care experienced students. We will also explore the possibility of student guarantor schemes at all Scottish colleges and universities so no student needs to worry about accessing housing while in education.

We will establish a resit guarantee of a free place at college to take national qualifications should this be

the chosen path of any pupil from the affected cohort. Those negatively impacted by the SQA Alternative Certification Model in 2020, even after statistical moderation was scrapped, who had no right of appeal, will be given the chance to sit those qualifications again at college, with full support. The demand for digital equipment for disadvantaged students massively exceeded the supply from the limited government pandemic funding. We will also offer a digital device to every pupil to close the digital divide.

Scottish Labour will reform Modern Apprenticeships with a National Apprenticeship Plan to raise quality, tackle gender segregation and eliminate exploitation. This should include guaranteed off-the-job training and help with equipment and travel costs, which the centralisation of courses has exacerbated. Colleges will have an essential role in achieving a just transition for workers in the move to net zero. We will also strengthen careers support, including face-to-face contact with professional staff.

Scotland's universities provide high-quality teaching and research and make an essential contribution to the Scottish economy. Scottish Labour will properly invest in the sector and increase the cap on government-funded student places. We will also ensure free tuition is fully funded and strengthen the pathways from Further Education to Higher Education. These changes will enable more students, especially

those from the most disadvantaged backgrounds, to have the opportunity to go to university. We will increase the amount invested in teaching and wider student support for each Scottish domiciled undergraduate student and commit to growing investment in Higher Education research and innovation over the next parliament.

Universities have a key role to play as part of the pandemic recovery and Scottish Labour will therefore invest in flexible, fast skills development to get working-age people back into high-value, secure jobs. In order to ensure we are nurturing talent we will also widen access to postgraduate level skills, and commit to fund a new set of international scholarships to keep Scotland open and accessible in a post-Brexit world.

We will place rent controls on student accommodation, encouraging new cooperative models through a student accommodation strategy. Our plans for NHS Scotland will improve access to services for students, particularly within mental health services. All universities and colleges should take action to end gender-based violence and harassment.

We will require universities and colleges to act as anchor institutions in our Community Wealth Building plans, including raising employment standards.

We also favour implementing the recommendations from the von Prondzynski review of governance in Higher Education in full, including on senior staff pay, and investigating new models of university governance. This includes addressing low pay in the sector and the use of short-term and zero-hours contracts with clear Good Work requirements for universities accessing funding. Curriculums should ensure that accessibility and inclusivity are considered at all levels and areas of colleges and universities work.

Scottish Labour has held talks with colleagues in Welsh Labour about the establishment of their new International Learning Exchange, which will enable Higher Education institutions to continue with reciprocal staff and student exchanges that took place under Erasmus. We will seek to join together with Wales in this scheme.

Early learning and childcare

High quality, affordable early learning and childcare (ELC) is crucial for all children. Our children deserve the very best start in their learning by being engaged with highly qualified staff trained in children's care, development and education.

Scottish Labour supports a flexible, all-age, all-year, wrap-around affordable early years service centred on the needs of the child. Our first priority is to ensure the

planned expansion to childcare goes ahead this year while also delivering the flexibility that parents and families require. Childcare should be considered a key growth sector in Scotland so we also want to see a year-on-year expansion of the hours available, with the eventual ambition of offering 50 hours a week for every child. We would also ensure that services take into account the specific needs of lone parents.

Scottish Labour wants to see the current compulsory school starting age of four or five years old retained, but there is a need for our early learning and childcare provision to be more about learning and play rather than instruction and tests. In many countries such as Finland, formal schooling starts at age seven, preceded by a 'kindergarten stage' and studies have shown that later start to formal education better prepares children for adolescence and adulthood. For early years, Scottish Labour favours a shift to more blended provision within the current school hours, with increased play-based learning and free-play, including outdoor play, and then more formal schooling from the age of six or seven. We will accelerate roll out of the entitlement to funded nursery provision for all families who legally defer the entry of their child to Primary One and we will address the gaps in provision for children with disabilities.

An expanded service also needs a massive expansion of the early learning and childcare workforce. Our

workforce plan will focus on recruiting and retaining highly qualified staff, including a graduate apprenticeship option. We will establish a national framework through sectoral collective bargaining to deliver attractive pay, terms and conditions, as well as training and career progression. The underrepresentation of men in the sector will also be addressed, and childcare will be designated as a key growth area. While the Scottish Living Wage will be an improvement for many workers in the sector, it does not fully value these skills, and pay should be commensurate with the qualifications.

"Children have missed out on so much. They have missed school and missed their pals. I want our politicians to be focused on a comeback plan to help children catch up. That's why I'm giving both my votes to Scottish Labour." – KIRSTY, CLYDESDALE

Community Learning and Development

Community Learning and Development (CLD) supports primarily disadvantaged or vulnerable groups and individuals of all ages to engage in learning, with a focus on bringing about change in their lives and in their communities. While cuts have decimated this sector with a considerable loss of expertise; the sector has been at the forefront of protecting communities during the height of the Covid-19 restrictions. In the aftermath of Covid-19, Scottish Labour believes that

the sector has a vital role in supporting learning, development, training and support.

Scottish Labour recognises the significant contribution youth work makes on equality and inclusion, prevention, early intervention, and improving children and young people's outcomes. We will ensure the sector is funded to ensure all young people have the personal development support they need to succeed in education, training and employment. We will strengthen young people's voices by ensuring they are represented on relevant national and local bodies with a statutory right to consultation. We will develop a national youth work development strategy to recruit, train and sustain a secure and qualified workforce.

Climate recovery

National Mission Four: Achieve net zero emissions in Scotland by 2045 and spark a green jobs revolution.

Climate change is one of the biggest challenges we face as a country. Tackling the climate emergency must be central to all of our policies and investment as we recover from the pandemic. Scottish Labour pushed the Scottish Government to adopt the ambitious targets of net zero by 2045, which the UK Committee on Climate Change described as a "step-change in ambition" for the country.

The next Scottish Government needs to demonstrate that we are not just a world leader in climate change ambition but that we can also lead in climate change action. The next step in doing that is to ensure that the COP26 Summit is a success and that Glasgow becomes synonymous with bold and ambitious action to tackle the climate emergency.

This means supporting faster and deeper emission reductions to limit global heating to 1.5°C and recognising our responsibilities as a developed nation, with increased support for communities impacted by the climate crisis in the global south. We support the development of a Wellbeing and Sustainable Development (Scotland) Bill during the next parliament, which should look at our contribution to global climate change and how to address this.

We must tackle the climate and nature emergencies while reducing the inequalities that Covid-19 has exposed and made worse. The pandemic reminded us of the value of green space but demonstrated that access to it is far from equal. The Scottish Parliament agrees that now is the time to fully enshrine in law a human right to a healthy environment. Scottish Labour has a plan to deliver this.

Scottish Labour's plan to transition to net zero would also kick-start Scotland's economy, tackle unemployment and deal with the rising cost of living. It

is underpinned by our proposal for a statutory Just Transition Commission, which would focus on how climate recovery would benefit those who are unemployed, underemployed or who are at risk of unemployment as a result of the current economic crisis and the transition.

Green jobs

Scottish Labour's climate recovery plan will invest in renewable energy and low-carbon infrastructure. Scotland's buildings contribute 23% of Scottish emissions and nearly 75% of these come from residential buildings. Our plan to retrofit all homes across Scotland to a minimum of energy efficiency rating C by 2030 would create around 7,500 jobs in construction and manufacturing. Our programme to build energy efficient council homes would sustain up to 19,000 jobs. Both would tackle fuel poverty, and lead to lower fuel bills, and the health benefits of warmer homes could save lives and save the NHS millions of pounds. Our plan to expand Scotland's bus network and buy electric buses from domestic manufacturers would create jobs and improve air quality.

We would use the Scottish National Investment Bank (SNIB) to introduce a Worker's Ownership Fund to enhance support for cooperative and employee-owned businesses in the low-carbon economy. The SNIB should enable an increase in the scale of low-

cost capital available to forms of low carbon infrastructure. For example, supporting the steel industry in transitioning to electric furnaces. Scotland needs a bold industrial strategy. Scotland has a long history of innovation, and our engineers are leading the way in the development of renewable technologies and establishing hydrogen as a viable energy source. We need to ensure that new technologies are not just invented here but are engineered, manufactured and exported from here by investing in skills and training, and our manufacturing sector industrial policy should aim to create a resource-efficient and more circular economy. Scottish Labour will support reduction targets for the circular economy, which adopts similar models to those used in the Climate Change Act. As well as seeking to procure local climate friendly goods and encouraging domestic producers to reduce their emissions, Scottish Labour's procurement policy would, where no supply chain exists, invest to help existing companies diversify or support the creation of new supply chains.

The changes needed in our industrial and energy strategies have to be accompanied by a just transition for the workers and communities most affected. Otherwise, the low carbon transition risks increasing inequality. The interim Just Transition Commission report highlighted that the government had not managed to maximise the opportunities of

decarbonisation, as the recent loss of contracts to manufacture turbines for a wind farm off the Fife coast showed. The Commission's final report recommendations emphasise that progress is too slow. We believe action needs sectoral plans, guarantees of job security, training and labour market measures, including sectoral bargaining, which help people move to new jobs. The Just Transition Commission should be enshrined in law to guide and support the long-term process of the shift to net zero emissions fairly.

Infrastructure projects and decisions should be prioritised to achieve net zero outcomes. This includes a clear assessment framework and an independent long-term advisory body on infrastructure investment. The financial sector also has an important role in acting on climate change. Scottish public sector pension funds have taken only limited action on climate change. Few even have credible processes to assess the impact of their investments or can evidence positive investment in the low carbon transition. Rapid action is needed to change this. "There are lots of good local initiatives like recycling. But I want the whole country to pull together to tackle climate change. That's the way we can make the biggest difference. Scottish Labour has a climate action plan and I really like that." – AIDAN, EDINBURGH

Energy and fuel poverty

Privatisation of our energy system has been a failure for people, businesses and our environment. We need security of energy supply at an affordable cost, which meets industry needs while meeting our climate change targets and transitioning to a net zero carbon economy.

Scottish Labour supports an energy strategy that takes a whole system approach, with a stable transition to a more local and decarbonised energy system. However, delivery requires more than setting long-term targets and lofty ambition. Solutions that tinker at the edges of the failed energy 'market' favour big business interests rather than challenge them.

A climate recovery needs to tackle the immediate priorities around fuel poverty issues and grasp the importance of ownership of our energy assets.

Scottish Labour supports a national energy company that can give direction and inject investment on a large scale, driving new generation capacity and working with local supply chains, engaging councils and local communities under common ownership.

Scottish Labour will support genuinely community and cooperatively owned local renewable energy projects such as the Edinburgh Community Solar Co-operative. Our industrial strategy would lay out how

domestic manufacturing capacity must evolve to create supply chains for major new energy generation and other large infrastructure projects. To avoid offshoring of jobs and a loss of income for the economy, all available levers must be used to ensure that every contract delivers a minimum share of work to local suppliers, including licensing and funding processes. We should be following the examples of other European countries which set conditions on domestic jobs. To date the SNP Government has failed to use Crown Estate and licensing powers to keep green jobs in Scotland. We cannot afford any more missed opportunities. We also need a coordinated effort to build domestic supply chains. Scottish Labour would create a Scottish Energy Development Agency to work alongside the national energy company and coordinate the growth in renewables across Scotland. It would work closely with the Scottish National Investment Bank to support the development of the Scottish supply chain and coordinate skills development. Scottish Labour would only approve new developments for offshore wind farms when a plan for supply chain manufacturing was in place and conditions on job creation in Scotland were met.

The energy system is changing rapidly with new technologies, storage and a more distributed energy mix. Scottish Labour supports a balanced energy policy using a range of electricity generation options

and storage. We also understand the continuing importance of gas to our heating and energy mix in our existing homes until viable alternatives are available, but we do not believe fracking is the answer. We also support the national smart meter rollout and encourage all homes across Scotland to get a smart meter installed to create an energy system fit for the future.

Investment in carbon capture and storage (CCS) infrastructure would deliver construction and engineering jobs across Scotland. This would support the decarbonisation of Scotland's industry, provide the opportunity for bulk production of green hydrogen to decarbonise heat and transport, and enable greenhouse gas removals to offset residual emissions.

In the North Sea, we are missing the opportunity to build expertise in decommissioning and marine renewables. This could see additional work coming to Scotland for years into the future as we establish a reputation as the experts in all stages of the offshore oil and gas business; including ultimately the decommissioning of assets which have reached the end of their life. Our industrial strategy would include a plan to support the industry and develop these skills. This is all the more important given the impact of the pandemic on the sector. Without government support and coordination to maximise these future

opportunities, the industry, including critical upstream and downstream supply chains, will be devastated. The UK and Scottish Governments need to develop a workable plan to support the industry.

Scottish Labour's Just Transition Commission would be key to driving forward new jobs and skills ensuring that no workers and communities, in any sectors, are left behind as we transition to net zero as rapidly and fairly as possible.

A quarter of Scottish households remain in fuel poverty, including 36% of pensioner households, and the statutory target to eliminate it was missed by the SNP. We agree that an Energy Efficient Scotland Bill would give clarity and confidence with new investment in energy efficiency, including a commitment to eradicating fuel poverty by 2032, with stricter interim targets. We also need a new definition of fuel poverty that includes an uplift for rural communities and a minimum standard of energy efficiency in private rented sector housing of an EPC rating of at least C by 2025. Planning laws should be used to ensure that all future houses are built to the highest available efficiency standards. The elimination of fuel poverty should be achievable in an energy-rich Scotland, but it requires political commitment and credible plans to achieve it.

Environmental action

Scottish Labour will take the radical action needed in the climate and nature emergency to deliver on our climate change ambitions and protect our environment. Ambition is good, but we believe it has to be backed up with clear delivery plans because investing in our environment is investing in our future. We must ensure the Environment Strategy is not yet more warm words.

Scottish Labour supports measures that deliver a circular economy, including introducing a Circular Economy Bill and obligations on the producers of waste and annual material flow accounts. This includes the introduction of deposit return schemes and regulatory action to eliminate plastic cigarette filters, as well as supporting global campaigns to tackle abuses in the global fashion supply chain. We will move towards a polycarbonate ban and require food manufacturers and retailers to reduce waste. We support a new litter strategy that addresses the defects in the current system, prioritises community education, commits to investment in infrastructure and reviews the barriers to enforcement. We will instigate a moratorium and a review of what place large scale incineration has in our zero waste plans for the future.

We need to persuade more people to carry refillable bottles and cut down on single-use plastic. This includes a public sector duty to expand water

fountains for refilling bottles, better access to water in schools and reform of Scottish Water.

We sought to amend the Planning Bill to give individuals and environmental organisations the right to challenge decisions that will severely impact the environment. Scottish Labour will also introduce carbon impact assessments into all policy processes. Planning of new developments and regeneration of existing areas should be around green infrastructure linking communities and habitats, allowing easy access for walking and cycling and incorporating a variety of landscapes including trees, pedestrian and cycle pathways, play areas, food growing spaces as well as flood mitigation measures.

Scotland already plants a significant amount of trees, but this must increase from the existing 11,000 hectares a year to at least 15,000 hectares a year, building to at least 18,000, as recommended by the Committee on Climate Change. This should be matched by an increase in peatland restoration to 20,000 hectares each year, alongside measures to end commercial peat extraction. Scottish Labour would establish a Scottish Conservation Corps as part of its Jobs for Recovery guarantee to help carry out this work.

Tree planting and other forms of carbon offsetting are necessary, but we should recognise that this is not a

substitute for cutting emissions. Negative emissions technologies may have a role to play, but most are untested at a large scale. Scottish Labour is committed to exploring new technology investment now rather than waiting and responding too late.

Many of the climate change mitigation actions will be nature-based. We will develop a Biodiversity Action Plan for land, air and sea, with adequate funding, which the whole country can coalesce around before it is too late. We also need greater investment in climate adaptation, which recognises the risks of flooding with coastal protection, river basin management and flood prevention schemes. We must ensure that the opportunity to sequester carbon in our marine environment is adequately funded.

Scottish Labour recognises the significance of keeping carbon in our marine environment and impact of blue carbon on our marine and wider environment, which should be adequately funded and accounted for in the UK Greenhouse Gas Inventory.

We must ensure that Brexit is not used as an excuse to weaken environmental standards through legislation or trade deals. Scottish Labour supports an ambitious Environment Act that includes legally-binding targets for nature's recovery, together with proper funding and a Nature Network for Scotland through the National Planning Framework. We will

also support a plan for ocean recovery with at least one tenth of Scotland's Seas fully protected, and a further 20% highly protected, from destructive and extractive activities by 2030. We will develop Regional Land Use Frameworks by 2023, with input from a wide range of stakeholders to set out regional land use priorities and funding requirements.

"Climate change is the biggest challenge facing the world. When we come out of the pandemic climate change won't have gone away. We have to make the most of the climate summit in Glasgow and I know Labour has a plan to do that." – NINA, HAMILTON

A joined-up approach to tackling climate change

The policies set out in other chapters of this manifesto will also contribute towards our climate recovery plan.

Transport is responsible for more than a third of Scotland's greenhouse gases and contributes towards 2,500 early deaths each year through air pollution. Our transport policies will promote environmental sustainability, helping people become less reliant on their cars. This includes tackling the decline in bus passenger journeys, even before the pandemic, by supporting councils to run their own bus services, creating a green bus fleet and moving towards the long-term aim of universal free bus travel. Also, through the public ownership of our railways, Scottish

Labour would focus on making rail more affordable for passengers, reintegrating services, line expansion including the extension of the Borders Railway, opening stations and further electrification. Our Active Travel Plan will prioritise encouraging and enabling people to get out of their cars, onto bikes, walking and using public transport for better health and a cleaner environment. We support feasibility studies to establish a network of mobility hubs across Scotland to assist in promoting active and green travel.

We recognise the link between the reform of food production and sustainability, including energy use, water, biodiversity, soil, food waste and land use. Scottish agriculture is responsible for nearly a quarter of Scottish greenhouse gas emissions, and it will not be possible to achieve our legal targets for reduction unless we reduce these emissions from agriculture. We support the principle of public money for public goods, such as clean water and air, beautiful scenery, and biodiversity provision. Peatlands, forests and seagrass will also continue to play an essential role in the shift towards net-zero emissions, and there should be a phase out of their extraction alongside investment in restoration. We should consider further incentive schemes to ensure all major landowners play their part. Land justice measures, such as those recommended by the Scottish Land Commission and Community Land Scotland, should also be reflected in climate action plans.

We want our children and young people to be learning not only about their own environment but also to share an understanding of local, national and global environments. The impact of globalisation and climate change has led to a greater awareness of environmental education, and this should lead to further developments within the Curriculum for Excellence of global citizenship education. We will ensure that the International Development Programme spending is climate proofed, including an increase in the Climate Justice Fund. We will strengthen the links between university research and our industrial strategy, including our green jobs plan. Colleges will have an important role in achieving a just transition for workers. We will develop a strategic initial and transferable skills strategy in the context of the climate emergency.

Community recovery

National Mission Five: Make every community in Scotland a place where people can grow up, settle and work, with access to public services and free from poverty and hunger.

The pandemic has brought out the best in our communities – from individuals helping their neighbours to local mutual aid groups setting up to help whole towns and villages. Scots have gone above and beyond over the last year. However, the Covid-19 crisis has also exposed the weaknesses in

our public services and brought home the devastating impact of austerity over the past decade.

Our ambition is that every community in Scotland should be a place where people can grow up, settle and work. People shouldn't have to move far from family and friends to find work, and they shouldn't have to travel to access basic services – whether that's a flourishing high street or a hospital. By building strong communities and investing in local development we can build resilience and avoid the impacts of poverty and inequality.

Cost of living

Too many people were struggling to make ends meet before Covid-19 and now the pandemic has placed even greater strain on household incomes. An immediate priority is therefore to alleviate the financial pressures on low and middle income earners, ensuring that people have enough money to live a full life.

Scottish Water has built up a surplus of £531 million, five times higher than the water regulator promised customers when setting water charges. At a time when households are under financial pressure, we believe some of this should be returned to customers as a £100 rebate for every household.

The pandemic has also shown us the importance of maintaining connections, especially for our older people, many of whom have been hit in the past year with an additional bill for their TV licence. To support our older generations we will create a Staying Connected fund, offering grants to every household with someone aged over 75 and over, up to the value of the TV licence, currently £159, to go towards either paying for the license or other digital connectivity bills.

We also need better support systems for people facing the risk of problem debt. By implementing a Debt Advice Levy we will redirect some of the huge financial benefits that creditors gain from free money advice back into sustainably funding these crucial services so they remain available for those who need them. Credit unions can also offer better alternatives to high cost credit so, as well as offering core support, we will develop the fund to help their growth and innovation, improving online accessibility and capacity for swift loan decisions.

"If we want a parliament that's focused on helping communities like mine recover from the pandemic then we have to vote for candidates who are going to put recovery first. Anas Sarwar has made his plans clear. That's why I'm voting Scottish Labour." –
SHAHID, KILMARNOCK

Social security

Covid-19 has hit low-income families disproportionately hard, deepening poverty and dragging more families into financial insecurity. Half of families in poverty have a member who is a disabled person and even before the pandemic, child poverty rates were high and projected to rise further. It is clear that in the next ten years, Scotland must transform if we are to meet our targets on child poverty and live up to our ambitions of being a nation that respects, protects and fulfils human rights and where we can all achieve our potential. Social Security Scotland will be key to this.

Scottish Labour will build a social security system based on the principles set out by the Scottish Campaign on Rights to Social Security:

- Adequacy ensuring that people have the support they need to participate fully in society.
- Respect, dignity and equality with human rights built in from eligibility and assessment, all the way through to payment.
- Simplicity easy to access, automated where possible.

The social security system must ensure no one is held back by poverty and inequality. We support the continuation of trials of universal basic income but Scottish Labour would use all the powers we have

here in Scotland to make sure that people have the support they need to participate fully in society.

The social security system we would build would secure the wellbeing and human rights of everyone and seek to guarantee a Minimum Income Standard that no one would fall below. We would lay out a bold and transformative mission to work across departments to make this happen. This would include ensuring good and fair unionised jobs, decent pay and conditions, and affordable housing costs, with a social security system there when you need it. We would recognise the additional costs that groups such as lone parents and disabled people face. We would work closely with communities in the development of the Minimum Income Standard, especially those most at risk of economic inequality.

We will create a social security system that is simple to use, easy to access and automated where possible. This will mean investing in accessible welfare rights advice services, and actively ensuring all those who are entitled to devolved and reserved benefits know what they are eligible for and receive them.

A Scottish Labour social security system will protect those facing economic inequality. Scottish Labour will automate the Scottish Child Payment, double it to £20 a week and accelerate the roll out for six to 16-year olds. We will also provide at least £5 a week

supplement per child to families with disabled children or parents. To further address child poverty, we will extend the current provision of free school meals as well as rolling this out all year, ending the scandal of children going hungry during the school holidays. We will also develop statutory guidance on school uniform policies with affordability as the top priority.

We will ensure Disability Assistance is paid at an adequate rate to cover the extra costs associated with disability. We would act immediately to ensure Disability Assistance in Scotland supported disabled people's human rights, supported them to have freedom, choice, dignity and control in their lives. This would require ending private sector assessments and guaranteeing that people who are assessing for Disability Assistance understand the specific circumstances of those they are assessing. We would remove the rule which dictates that you require support at least 50% of the time, in recognition of the fact that many people's conditions vary and that the current rule excludes people who need support, especially people living with mental ill health. Additionally, we will increase the eligibility for mobility support to people who require assistance during a 50 metre walk, increasing this from 20 metres. We would also grant 'ongoing entitlements' for people whose conditions are unlikely to change. In order to focus efforts towards eliminating poverty for disabled people, Scottish Labour would also develop a

Disability Poverty Target, with interim goals and sufficient funding to ensure aims are met.

Scottish Labour will work with carers and the people they care for to reform the Carer's Allowance. We will examine ways to improve the earnings threshold, including aligning it to at least 16 hours at the Scottish Living Wage, allowing carers to earn more from part-time work, as well as removing the cliff edge and the full-time study rule. We will also extend eligibility for support by ensuring the new Scottish Carer's Assistance is available to unpaid carers who care for 20 hours or more each week. Scottish Labour will address the 'overlapping benefit rule' that disadvantages carers on the state pension.

We have been consulting on a Scottish Employment Injuries Advisory Council Bill, which would bring Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit (IIDB) into the 21st century. The current scheme ignores many workplace illnesses and conditions, most recently those facing dismissal due to Long Covid which was contracted at work. We would continue this work in the next parliament.

Scottish Labour will work with local authorities to mitigate the impact of the No Recourse to Public Funds policy and ensure that those in need have access to support and Scotland-specific social security payments. We will introduce a targeted

national approach to get support to those families with no recourse to public funds.

We will also improve support for people in crisis. We need a full independent review of the Scottish Welfare Fund, examining its delivery with a focus on local authority administration costs, the standard and consistency of the service provided, and access to and promotion of the fund. Under Scottish Labour, the fund would also be enhanced to ensure all those facing income crisis, including those experiencing food insecurity, have access to timely and adequate emergency financial support. To specifically help those fleeing domestic violence we would establish an additional ring fenced portion of the fund, offering financial aid for anyone needing to establish a new and safe home.

Following Scottish Labour's successful campaign to scrap the bedroom tax, we will conduct a review of Discretionary Housing Payments, looking at how they can be used to support renters trying to meet their housing costs and prevent families affected by the benefit cap being made homeless.

In order to ensure social security payments are adequate, Scottish Labour will guarantee that benefits are uprated so that they do not lose value in real terms.

We will work with UK colleagues to fight for the maintenance of the Universal Credit uplift until the system is abolished and replaced. If this does not happen in Westminster, we will use the powers of the Scottish Government to maintain the uplift. In addition, we will use the full extent of the Scottish Parliament powers as well as working with UK colleagues to abolish the two-child cap, scrap the rape clause, and make split payments.

Housing

Every family in Scotland should have access to a safe, warm and affordable home. With Scottish Labour, housing will be a national priority. To reflect its importance, we will create a National Housing Agency to help coordinate the sector.

Home ownership is becoming an increasingly unrealistic prospect for young people, who too rarely have the option of social housing, and often find themselves trapped paying high rents in the private rented sector. Without the radical action we are proposing, the Scottish Government will fail another generation. Scottish Labour will eliminate the housing crisis over two parliamentary terms by:

- Giving everyone the opportunity to have a warm, well-built, affordable home for life.
- Creating a National Housing Agency to end the housing crisis for good.

- Guaranteeing fair rents and improving tenants' rights in the private rented sector.
- Committing to building at least 120,000 social houses over the next decade, with the aim of building 200,000 in that time.
- Supporting people to own their own home, with specific support for young people and first-time buyers.
- Ending rough sleeping within the next five years.

There are nearly 150,000 people on social housing waiting lists, 70,000 of whom are children. To address that, we plan to deliver a minimum of 120,000 zero carbon social houses built over the next decade, with the aim of building 200,000 social homes in that time. We will provide parity of grant funding between councils and housing associations. Councils and housing associations should also consider purchasing existing housing to help speed up the growth in the supply of social housing. Good affordable housing helps tackle poverty, underpins health, wellbeing, and feelings of self-worth. Having a decent, affordable home provides security and stability, providing the platform for a successful life.

Scottish Labour will create a National Housing Agency to implement our long-term house building strategy, both private and social, across all tenures and to bring empty homes back into use. The agency will include

representation from local authorities and it will ensure that the right housing is built in the right areas. It will also develop land banking for sites that the private sector has overlooked. The new agency will address the absence of sufficient, genuinely affordable housing in rural areas – where jobs exist and people want to live – which is leading to the near collapse of the structure of rural economic life in Scotland.

By tackling the housing crisis, we will provide the building industry with the confidence to create jobs and apprenticeships across Scotland. Scottish Labour has estimated that building 120,000 social homes would sustain at least 14,000 jobs a year. We recognise the importance of the private sector in construction and economic recovery and we need to ensure it assists in the delivery of the houses needed to solve the crisis.

The price of land lies at the centre of the housing crisis. We believe the law should be reformed to allow for the acquisition of land for social housing at existing use value and use development gain to finance essential infrastructure. We will remove the duty on public bodies to maximise the receipts from land sales to enable the transfer of land for social housing.

The National Housing Agency would be primarily responsible for the acquisition of finance, land and housing, dealing with derelict and vacant land, and

acting as the prime mover in coordinating and driving the delivery of housing. Its mission will be producing well designed, mixed tenure, neighbourhoods and communities. Scottish Labour's vision for publicly-led development would put communities first and prioritise public health, green space and energy efficiency.

Scottish Labour will introduce a Home-Ownership Support Scheme. The scheme would help those on low incomes, aiming to tackle capital inequality in a way that the Help to Buy scheme did not. The Home-Ownership Support Scheme will assist people on low incomes and include the opportunity to buy existing houses as well as new builds. So that buyers only require a small deposit, the government should also provide a portion of the upfront cost in the form of a shared-equity agreement, which would be repayable to the government on the sale of the property. In the event of the property losing value, the value of the loan would be tied to the value of the property, meaning that if a person's property lost 5% of its value, the loan would lower to reflect the loss. While social housing stock will be protected, registered Social Landlords and local authorities would also be eligible to build new homes for sale as part of the scheme.

For too many, the private rented sector has become the only housing option available to them and rents are becoming increasingly unaffordable. In the year

end September 2020, average two-bedroom rents increased above Consumer Prices Index inflation in 11 out of 18 local authorities. A quarter of the private rented sector are households with children. The number of children in private rented housing who live in severe poverty more than doubled in a decade from 2008. Scottish Labour will reform the private rented sector and rebalance the relationship between tenants and landlords. We will implement our Fair Rents Bill proposals to limit rent rises and improve quality standards in the private rented sector. Scottish Labour will make it easier for tenants to challenge unfair rents. To help protect housing stock in areas of high demand we will install a regulatory framework for short-term lets, including the licensing provisions and taxation of Airbnb.

There will be a national strategy for housing and disabled persons, led by a disabled persons organisation. The strategy will include a 10% target for new social housing, with properties which are fully accessible both within the home and externally. People have the right to independent living substantial investment is needed so that existing homes can be adapted to make this possible.

We will end rough sleeping in the next parliament. The pandemic has shown that we can take urgent action to help rough sleepers into accommodation. Scottish Labour will ensure that everyone faced with

homelessness will be confident of being offered suitable housing. No one in Scotland should be forced to sleep on the streets. We support retaining the Covid-19 provisions which make preventing rough sleeping a public health priority.

There were over 27,000 open homelessness cases on 31st September 2020 and 14,151 households in temporary accommodation, a 24% increase on the previous year. That included 7,900 children. To end homelessness, we must start with prevention. Scottish Labour will implement the recommendations of the Prevention Review Group, which makes it clear that there should be a collective responsibility across public services to prevent homelessness. In practice, it will mean that we will commit to bringing forward legislation early in the next parliament which strengthens the legal framework around homelessness prevention. This will extend a duty to prevent homelessness so that local authorities can assist anyone threatened with homelessness and ensure that no one leaves an institution such as prison or hospital without somewhere to sleep.

The Pathfinder project for Housing First has been very successful and is now being rolled out to Scotland as a whole. We fully support the aims and implementation of the programme, and Scottish Labour will ensure it is adequately funded across all

local authorities and supported to continue its excellent work in the long-term.

Social justice

Scottish Labour will create the conditions in which every person can flourish, creating opportunities for those long excluded. We will act across all policy areas, including housing, employment, education, safety and the digital divide, taking preventative action to reduce inequalities and end child poverty. Scottish Labour is the party of equality: we will work to build a society free from all forms of sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ageism, racism, antisemitism and Islamophobia, discrimination against disabled people and bigotry and prejudice in all their forms. There should be no hierarchy of prejudice, as a society we can't afford to pick and choose. We must work together to build the more equal society we wish to see. That means listening, but more importantly means taking the necessary actions to challenge structural inequalities.

We will strengthen the delivery of the socio-economic duty and fully incorporate human rights treaties into Scots Law, with clear mechanisms for resolving problems and remedying infringements. Older people make a massive contribution to our communities, and we will establish a Commissioner for Older People to reflect their needs in policy and help combat ageism.

Young people have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic's economic consequences and are also more likely to be exploited through low pay and insecure work. This is even greater for young black people, diverse minority communities and other protected characteristics. We will embed intergenerational approaches in governance and policymaking to help Scotland to become a nation where young and old support and learn from each other. We will mainstream social justice into all government policies.

Working with stakeholders we will build a targeted approach to tackling poverty in diverse minority communities, mainstreaming this into anti-poverty and child poverty strategies and action.

We also support the incorporation of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Funding for critical services, including Scottish Women's Aid and local services, needs to be stable and adequate over the long-term, otherwise vulnerable people will be placed in danger. We also recognise the need to increase awareness and strengthen staff training and fund vital services, including refuge and rape crisis services and assessment of tenancies in relation to the right to stay of domestic abuse victims. Employers can play a role by adopting domestic abuse charters, for example the GMB Domestic Abuse Charter.

Further to this, we need to develop a gender-based violence strategy that not only acknowledges the link between structural inequality and violence against women and girls, but also lays out clear action to tackle it. We support amending the Hate Crime Bill so that misogyny and hate against women is included within its scope. We also need measures to improve women's safety now; Scottish Labour would pilot physical space safety audits and provide planners with guidance on how to make communities safer including through safe walking routes.

We recognise that the Public Sector Equality Duty has not had the intended transformational impact. Equality impact assessments are often inadequate and completed too late in the development of policy. The public sector must lead by example, including better data collection, strengthening organisations' ability to address inequality, and ensuring gender mainstreaming is realised within policymaking. The Equality Act 2010 will continue to frame our equality policies. Scottish Labour is committed to making central funds available to contribute to paying for historical equal pay claims. However, action also needs to be taken to ensure that sex discrimination cannot happen now or in future. Scottish Labour will work with our partners in local government to end sex discrimination. We propose an Equal Pay (Scotland) Act, which would require all public sector bodies and organisations with more than 250 employees who

benefit from public procurement to publish regular equal pay reviews. This would ensure the public sector, and organisations that benefit from public money, adhere to equal pay legislation, and lead by example in ending the scandal of sex discrimination.

Scottish Labour will also extend the Equality and Fairer Scotland Statement development process into a full gender analysis of the Scottish budget, where the cumulative impact of spending decisions on women's equality is considered.

Disabled people face barriers, inequality and poorer outcomes across all areas of life. Poverty, prejudice, and lack of understanding prevent them from accessing vital services and information. Our Good Work plan includes radically improving the employment rate of disabled people, including better access to facilities, public services, work, training and apprenticeships. Scottish Labour would create a fund to support the development of Changing Places Toilets in public spaces and businesses across the country. We support establishing an Autism and Learning Disability Commissioner and will include the Principles of Inclusive Communication into all our strategies and services. We will continue to promote the Disabled Children and Young People (Transitions to Adulthood) (Scotland) Bill, which would give a right to a Transitions Plan to every child or young person with an impairment or long-term health condition.

We will ensure a zero-tolerance approach to violence, bullying and discrimination based on sexuality and gender in Scottish society. Scottish Labour supports the aims of the TIE campaign to develop LGBT+ inclusive education in the curriculum. Blood donations still discriminate against gay and bisexual men and their partners, undermining our public health strategy. Scottish Labour will end this discriminatory and unscientific practice. We will legislate to end the cruel practice of conversion therapy. We will reform the Gender Recognition Act to demedicalise the process and allow for the recognition of people who identify as neither men nor women. Scottish Labour shares concerns that some parents of children with intersex traits, also known as variations in sex characteristics, are still pressured into unnecessary surgeries. While some may choose to take medical steps later in life, this is a choice that must be made by individuals themselves.

Scottish Labour will establish clear statutory targets to underpin delivery of the Armed Forces Covenant and we support implementation of the recommendations of Poppy Scotland and other Armed Forces charities. We want to strengthen engagement, implement the Veterans Housing Pathway and target provision aimed at ensuring the most vulnerable service personnel and veterans experience a 'good transition.' We also recognise the challenges Armed Forces children and young people face, their opinions should

be listened to and taken seriously in all matters affecting them.

We are rightly proud that Scotland is a tolerant, welcoming country, but we are not immune to hatred and bigotry. Scottish Labour would target sectarianism through education, and by working with local communities.

It is established beyond doubt that everyday racism exists, and our collective focus must be on overcoming prejudice and discrimination. Education is key to this, and that includes teaching our shared history and learning from our shared history. Scottish Labour supports the inclusion of Scotland's historical role in empire, colonialism and transatlantic slavery, and the longstanding diversity of Scottish society, as part of the Curriculum for Excellence.

We would also develop a museum, archive and learning centre dedicated to telling the stories of underrepresented groups in Scotland's history and culture.

We reiterate our commitment to Gypsy/Traveller communities' rights. We will fully implement the Action Plan on Improving the Lives of Gypsy/Travellers, and will take action to address the persistent and harmful discrimination that Gypsy/Travellers face.

The global refugee crisis remains acute, and people in Scotland have played their part in helping those whose lives have been turned upside down by conflict.

Scottish Labour supports the New Scots Strategy and will build on this work with further steps to address destitution and respect human rights. This should include effective national standards on refugee resettlement, including accommodation and the care of unaccompanied children.

"Lots of folk in Paisley really rallied round to help other in the past year. That's the kind of unity we need, everyone pulling together. I'm voting Scottish Labour because uniting behind a recovery plan is exactly what Anas is saying." – JEN, PAISLEY

Supporting the voluntary sector

Scottish Labour recognises the importance of a strong voluntary sector in our plans to decentralise powers and democratise the economy. There are over 40,000 voluntary organisations in Scotland, with almost half categorised as registered charities.

The sector employs over 100,000 people making it a key employment sector in the country and has a turnover of over £6 billion. Each year, around 1.4 million volunteers donate their time to help these organisations to support communities and people in

need. From charities to social enterprises, cooperatives, community interest companies, development trusts, social housing providers, voluntary groups and more, they empower excluded people, regenerate communities and drive our economy. Communities of interest and place also require strong advocates independent of government we will never link funding to acquiescence in government policy.

We will support a continued partnership approach between government, charities, social enterprises and other sectors, modernise charity law, strengthen governance, and provide longer-term financing for projects delivered by the voluntary sector. We support 'Volunteering for All' outcomes and will promote employer engagement with awards and training, as well as support for community organising.

Community safety

Scottish Labour will strengthen local policing, reform our prison system and improve access to justice for all. The pandemic has resulted in a backlog of cases in our courts system, and measures will be needed to ensure justice for the victims of crime and those on remand.

The creation of Police Scotland has led to a centralisation of power in policing. Good relationships between the police and local communities are key to

maintaining trust and ensuring victims feel safe to come forward. It must be a priority for Police Scotland to build strong connections with our diverse minority communities, LGBT+ people and other under-represented communities to ensure their voices are heard and respected.

Scottish Labour will place local accountability at the heart of a modern, responsive police force with a statutory role for local government in local policing plans and budgetary allocations. Warden services need to be resourced so they can take robust action against anti-social behaviour and we will put a renewed emphasis on community policing. Over the course of the next parliament, we will increase the number of officers in local divisions by at least 500, to restore the local officers lost in recent years. Police Scotland needs a balanced workforce with investment in specialist police staff to stop police officers from being taken away from operational duties.

Police Scotland has been one of the lowest funded police forces in the UK when it comes to capital funding. Yet policing by consent also requires Police Scotland to address the infrastructure problems with data collection that undermine transparency and scrutiny. Police Scotland's ageing vehicle fleet is also a danger to officers who have had to be treated for carbon monoxide poisoning. Scottish Labour will support delivery of Police Scotland's long-term

infrastructure plan and ensure Scotland has the first ultra-low emission police service fleet of vehicles in the UK.

To tackle the growing issue of telephone and online fraud we will develop a new preventative strategy, backed by legislation if necessary.

The police and criminal justice system's resources should be targeted towards those who supply harmful drugs into our communities and exploit the crisis for their own gain. Scottish Labour believes that the practice of the police and Crown Office should be informed by harm reduction. We support the implementation by Police Scotland and the Lord Advocate, of diversion from prosecution policies, based on models in use elsewhere in the UK, to prevent vulnerable drug users being exposed to unnecessary court action.

Scottish Labour will strengthen the Victims Code for Scotland and would finally establish a Victims' Commissioner for Scotland so that the Code is properly enforced and championed. Victims and their families need much more personalised support, communication and advice, so we believe they should be provided with a single point of contact for all support services through each stage of the justice process. We support the national roll out of Children's Houses, based on the Barnahaus model, so that

every child who is a victim or witness of crime has a safe place to access care, recovery, justice, and protection based on international best practice. We will also strengthen support for the victims of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation and human trafficking.

We believe that a joined up approach is necessary for community safety, not just for victims but also when dealing with all offenders. Bringing together criminal justice agencies with health services, education providers, and social work teams, a comprehensive alternative or diversion from the prosecution system can stop the flow of unnecessary cases going to court and provide meaningful rehabilitation services. These joined up services are especially important for supporting offenders with poor mental health within the justice system and should be linked with the Violence Reduction Unit to ensure a preventative approach is consistently followed.

The number of convictions resulting in a custodial sentence has reached the highest proportion recorded in the last decade, putting further pressure on our already crowded prisons and the staff who work in them. Scottish Labour will reform our prison system, with custody used for serious crimes, not a substitute for failing mental health or drug and alcohol services. We will reform sentencing guidelines and policy so that victims and their families can have confidence in it, while also providing adequately funded, credible

and robust alternatives to remand and custodial sentences through criminal justice services. To raise public confidence in community justice measures we will also improve communication with local communities about the work completed by offenders. We favour reviewing the role of open prisons, secure care units and day custody approaches, with local custody services for women and young people in particular. This includes safe, secure facilities to deal with conditions such as alcohol overuse rather than police cells. We will seek to end the privatisation of fire and justice services, including the Scottish court custody and prisoner escort service and private prisons.

The crumbling prison estate needs to be modernised, with facilities fit for purpose for the ageing prison population. Scottish Labour will realise the ambitions of the 2012 Angiolini report (on women offenders), and its aims to reverse the dramatic increase in the size of the female prison population, by seeking alternatives to prison sentences for pregnant women and mothers who have committed nonviolent offences.

It should be an aim of custodial sentences to keep communities safe by reducing reoffending. Scottish Labour will address the imbalance in resources for rehabilitation in men and women's prisons and we will ensure that every person leaving prison has a harm

prevention plan, with a safe place to live, registration with a doctor and adequate financial support. Family and community connection is important for rehabilitation so we will maintain the availability of virtual visits in prisons following the pandemic.

Too frequently our justice system is not accessible enough to those who need it the most. The legal aid budget has decreased by at least £499 million in real terms since 2007/08 and the whole system needs to be simplified. Scottish Labour would introduce a Legal Aid Bill to reform the system, increasing its scope to support a preventative approach, and setting fees and funding at a sustainable level. Scottish Labour would also increase the limit on small claims proceedings to £10,000, matching the ceiling elsewhere in the UK, and will increase access to earlier dispute resolution in civil cases. We will also legislate to modernise the regulation of the legal profession and enhance the protections for consumers of legal services.

We support the call to reverse the current time bar for civil damages in respect of asbestos disease to make the law fairer for victims as championed by Action on Asbestos. We will remove the waiver provision from the Redress for Survivors (Historical Child Abuse in Care) (Scotland) Act 2021 to stop survivors of historic abuse facing the invidious choice between a redress payment and civil damages, and introduce a full compensation scheme, like the one in Ireland, for

victims of the Contaminated Blood scandal. We will also introduce a full pardon Bill for Scottish miners unfairly convicted during the 1984/85 miners' strike.

Scottish Labour will develop a gender-based violence strategy that funds prevention, supports victims, reforms sentencing, and promotes greater transparency. Prosecutions and convictions for sexual assault, rape, and attempted rape cases remain at unacceptably low levels. We need to improve how the courts handle such cases so that victims, the majority of whom are women, can have confidence that they will receive justice. As well as rolling out access to specialist domestic abuse courts nationally, Scottish Labour will establish a specialist sexual offences court and consider reforms to evidential requirements in these cases, including a review of the role of corroboration and increasing the use of pre-recorded and video evidence. We will implement the right for victims to have independent legal representation, particularly during hearings on past sexual history, and will support this with an extension in legal aid. Furthermore, evidence brought forward by Rape Crisis Scotland has demonstrated that a disproportionate number of rape trials result in 'not proven' verdicts. Victims organisations have argued strongly that the existence of a 'not proven' verdict in the Scottish justice system results in instances where victims of crime do not see a fair and just outcome. As such, Scottish Labour supports abolishing the 'not

proven' verdict and we view the introduction of a two-verdict system in trials as fairer, more transparent and offering greater protection to crime victims.

The backlog in the courts is also undermining swift access to justice, with suggestions that it will not be cleared until 2025. Even before Covid-19 the SNP had permanently closed more than a fifth of Scotland's sheriff courts. The move to virtual and online hearings has allowed some business to restart and we need to retain the benefits and efficiencies of digital working in our courts system with further investment. However, we will review the use of technology, particularly hearings by video so that digital inequalities do not create new barriers to justice. To help clear the backlog we will also explore the establishment of a system of courts that can rotate around the country, addressing the backlog of cases and delivering justice locally.

As well as splitting the dual role of the Lord Advocate, Scottish Labour believes the time has come for wider reform of the Crown Office and the Procurator Fiscal service. There is an urgent need to reduce the long delays for Fatal Accident Inquiries and strengthen the enforcement of their findings so that learning and transparency are embedded.

The Children's Hearings System is unique to Scotland, and we are justly proud of the 3,000

volunteer Area Support Team and Panel members who look after our children's best interests. We supported the increase in the age of criminal responsibility and favour a further review once the new legislation is firmly established.

We will ensure the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service has the resources to carry out their demanding job of protecting all communities across Scotland, including our rural areas. In particular, we will take preventative action to tackle the growing threat of wildfires. We will also strengthen local accountability with a statutory role for councils in local plans, and recognised trade unions should be represented on the statutory local scrutiny board. Three-quarters of house fires in Scotland each year are caused by electricity. We need to strengthen electricity safety measures, including a common standard for electrical safety in housing, so everyone is equally protected regardless of tenure. We support stricter regulation of fire safety and building standards in high-rise buildings, including the use of cladding materials to ensure that fire safety regulations keep pace with construction methods.

Scottish Labour will carry out a full review of Scotland's outdated animal welfare legislation, with a view to strengthening wildlife protection law and animal welfare. We will introduce a National Animal Cruelty Register to support enforcement agencies. We will reform the law on keeping domestic pets in

different tenures after life events, including domestic violence. The pandemic has highlighted concerns over the illegal importation of puppies, and we need to raise public awareness and ban imports of very young puppies, and other illegal pets not on the positive list of species that are suitable to keep as pets. We support a more comprehensive approach to public education on animal welfare. We will introduce a comprehensive ban on fox hunting and snares and the use of electric shock collars. There also needs to be more effective monitoring of raptor conservation and stronger penalties. Labour supports a ban on live animal exports for fattening and slaughter. Parliament should pay full regard to animal welfare requirements when formulating and implementing policies.

Rural areas and food

Rural communities are all too often ignored and neglected. We can see the consequences in economic dislocation, underfunded public services, poor public transport and further centralisation of power away from our communities. The pandemic has cruelly highlighted these problems and created new challenges that need to be urgently addressed. Scottish Labour supports the introduction of rural mandating guidance for all local authorities.

Rural councils deliver public services differently, and this should be reflected in funding allocation mechanisms. We will introduce a 'rural-proofing'

process so that all our laws, policies and programmes consider their impact on rural communities. Our rural policy framework will engage with all stakeholders.

Over 200,000 jobs are reliant upon a booming tourism industry in Scotland, but Covid-19 has devastated the sector. Scottish Labour will do everything it can to safeguard businesses, jobs and secure a vibrant future for this sector using our Business Restart Fund and sectoral recovery deals. Our distinct Scottish brand is known worldwide, but it will be necessary for us to work hard to get domestic and international visitors back. Our country has so much to offer, and we want to share it with the world. Scottish Labour will develop a new sustainable national plan for tourism based on improving our offer to visitors while reducing resource use and waste, minimising the transport impact, and protecting our natural and cultural heritage. Public money will also require improvement in the quality of jobs by raising employment standards, providing training opportunities, and strengthening the quality of life, particularly in rural areas.

We will develop a stronger regulatory framework for short term lets, including the licensing provisions and taxation of Airbnb after the chaos of SNP attempts at reform. This will ensure that our tourism industry is protected to grow after the effects of the pandemic, while taking account of local housing need.

We will support reviewing and strengthening the Scottish Outdoor Access Code to ensure that thoughtless and damaging practices like fly tipping, dirty camping and livestock worrying are discouraged.

Scottish Labour is committed to investing in rural public transport, improving frequency and reducing fares. We support the delivery of traffic-free greenways connecting key rural communities separated by short distances of less than 10 miles, particularly those with shared public services. There will also need to be a significant expansion of public charging points for electric vehicles to recognise the greater reliance on private cars in rural areas and the longer distances that often need to be travelled.

Scottish Labour will invest in coastal protections, better flood management, full-fibre broadband, 4G/5G extensions and digital hubs for rural communities that will underpin rural small businesses' future success. Our Good Work plans will help address the low wages in many rural communities, and we will retain and strengthen the Scottish Agricultural Wages Board.

Our plans to tackle the climate emergency will invest in housing, renewable energy and tackle fuel poverty. We will ensure that rural areas and small businesses get their fair share of public procurement and will support measures to tackle unfair delivery charges.

Going further than the Werritty report, Scottish Labour will support the comprehensive licensing of grouse moors as soon as possible, with robust criteria to end the unsustainable practices of driven grouse moors and to promote the sustainable development of our uplands, in the interests of everyone. There has been a real term cut to forestry funding, while the SNP has failed to meet its own planting targets. At least 50% of all woodland expansion should be with native species and at least 10% delivered through natural regeneration. Overgrazing by deer can damage our native woodlands, and we support modernising deer legislation and the implementation of the Deer Working Group recommendations.

We will ensure that future agricultural payments best support sustainable land use and strengthen rural communities. Farmers and crofters need clarity as a new agriculture support system is developed to help tackle the climate crisis. We will maintain current levels of funding until 2024 and from then we will put in place a new scheme that gives farmers and crofters certainty. The new financial support must recognise farmers' knowledge, recognising their experience in reducing emissions and protecting Scotland's landscape and work towards sustainable farming practices. We believe that the new agricultural support package offers a valuable opportunity to deliver on baseline environmental commitments, and incentivise

actions that deliver food production, climate and biodiversity outcomes in a complementary fashion.

Our fishing industry has suffered twin shocks with the collapse of the market following lockdown, and then the chaos brought about by the botched EU deal meaning that valuable exports have rotted in lorries, held up by paperwork at the border. Scottish Labour will support the sector to thrive as we leave the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), improving sustainability, and introducing a national landing requirement to create jobs in coastal communities. We need to do all we can, working with the UK and the EU, to reduce the barriers and bureaucracy currently faced by the export market.

Scottish Labour will also introduce new crofting legislation to support crofters' access to housing, to financial support, and to legislation that actually works for them, written in conjunction with them.

Scottish Labour supports creating a National Plan for the islands, and we will devolve more powers to island authorities and engage communities in line with our subsidiarity framework. Our plan recognises the need for resources and practical action. We will also support a community-led local development programme, which echoes the LEADER rural development ethos, to be included within the future Shared Prosperity Fund.

Scottish Labour will ensure more land is in the hands of local communities to help create a fairer, sustainable Scotland. We will legislate to ensure that no one individual can acquire large swathes of Scotland's land and prevent land ownership via offshore tax-havens. We will increase funding for the Scottish Land Fund, using the revenue from seabed licensing, and intervening when land is not used in ways that serve the public interest. Public sector agencies should be enabled to participate in land markets with the aim of transferring the land into local vehicles of sustainable local ownership, as a basis for local wealth building and income retention. This will empower local communities and repopulate our rural places to help them thrive.

Scottish Labour believes that our food system in Scotland should contribute to everyone's health and wellbeing; value the work to put food on our plate; support high animal welfare standards; protect workers' pay, terms and conditions; and sustain our wildlife, natural resources and environment for generations to come. To improve access to healthy food, Scottish Labour will deliver a comprehensive Good Food Nation Act based on proposals by the Scottish Food Coalition. We would invest in councils to create more food growing places. We are also committed to ensuring the Right to Food is included in legislation for a National Food Plan. The ever-rising use of foodbanks is morally unjustifiable in a country

where fresh, quality food is plentiful. The pandemic should also cause us to rethink supply chains for food, returning to a more localised system of production with incentives for cheaper and healthier food.

Scottish Labour will work towards a transparent supply chain and food system which supports Scottish producers and recognises the public benefits that agriculture provides. We will continue funding of "A Future in Food", to support a pipeline of highly skilled recruits to enable food and drink companies to grow and prosper.

Culture and sport

The Covid-19 restrictions have caused closure of our public and cultural spaces, limiting people's access to essential services and to places they can gather without spending money. Reopening these spaces and ensuring that none are lost must be a priority.

The pandemic has also had a devastating impact on already fragile creative industries, and our recovery plan will help restart the sector and support those who work in it. The arts and culture sector needs a long-term recovery plan that is able to respond and support the sector. It was one of the first to shut and will be among the last to fully open. People's livelihoods have been decimated and too many have fallen through the cracks. Financial support for freelancers needs to continue and we need more investment if skills and

talent are to stay in the sector and be supported into the sector.

We need to better recognise the role our cultural and creative industries have in contributing to our economy and society. Just 0.2% of the Scottish budget is spent on culture and we get so much back for so little investment. We will establish a baseline for cultural spending that reflects its value and delivers a greater share of Scottish Government budget. We will embed Good Work principles into the sector, and achieve trade union rates for the job.

There are too many economic and social barriers preventing those from more deprived communities, those with long-term health conditions, and the older generation from benefiting from all that culture has to offer, from being in the audience to performing and creating. Local authorities must be properly funded in order to support culture provision and activities, and to establish a fund for engaging marginalised groups. We also support the introduction of arts officers in local authorities. We will establish a Cultural Rucksack Programme to ensure that every child has access to artistic and cultural experiences, based on the successful Norwegian scheme.

Scotland has a vibrant music scene which needs support to thrive. We believe grassroots music venues

should be supported by continuing business rates relief after the pandemic.

The film and TV sector is growing and the demand for content is high. Scotland must be able to compete in this market and Scottish Labour will work to increase Scottish-based production and broadcasting, and for more opportunities to develop those skills including through clear routes into the industry. We support the introduction of new qualifications in filmmaking for SCQF levels 4, 5 and Higher, which is similar to the Northern Irish qualification, opening up more opportunities for young people to have a pathway into the industry.

Very little progress has been made in addressing the decline of the Gaelic language in its heartlands. Scottish Labour will work with Bord na Gàidhlig and local authorities to revitalise the Gaelic development strategy, emphasising its importance to the socioeconomic regeneration of native Gaelic speaking communities. Scottish Labour will also maintain our history of support for Sabhal Mor Ostaig, the National Centre for the Gaelic Language and Culture. As a critical comparator, the Welsh language enjoys greater protection and significantly more government investment in terms of Welsh language, culture and the arts and Welsh TV channel, S4C. The goal is to make Gaelic not only the language of the classroom

but the language of the playground, at home and through social media.

Scottish Labour supports the creation of a national framework, if necessary backed by a statutory duty, that protects and expands the essential cultural, social infrastructure in our communities. This includes local museums, historical sites, battlefields, libraries and archivist services. We will also deliver a programme of support for working-class history. All areas of Scotland should have a vibrant arts offer which is accessible, supported and employs people from a diverse range of backgrounds. We support the introduction of an Arts Bill which places a statutory responsibility onto local authorities to deliver an arts plan supported by a fair funding deal for local authorities. Many Scottish theatres, cultural institutions, museums, art galleries and cinemas, particularly those run independently, are at the greatest risk of closure because of the impact of Covid-19; Scottish Labour is committed to supporting them to maintain their long-term presence in the sector.

Creative festivals in Scotland have grown significantly over the last decade. Their survival will be, in part, dependent upon a strong return to tourism, and additional interim support will be necessary. As part of any recovery deal, we must ensure that festivals, big and small, are affordable and accessible to everyone.

Many services have transferred to leisure trusts. In consultation with local authorities, we will develop a framework and funding plan to reintegrate these services back into local government. Scottish Labour will properly fund local authorities to support the arts and sport within their area.

Scottish Labour believes sport must be run in the interests of those who participate in it and love it, not just for a privileged few. Sport is an essential aspect of our culture and public life but is rarely viewed as a policy priority. We want people from all backgrounds to have an equal chance to participate in sport and physical activity. We need a redistributive approach to sports funding to ensure that those from the poorest backgrounds are not overlooked. It should be the priority of community planning, working with national agencies like sportscotland, for every community to have access to at least one open and freely available local space for sport and recreation, which is safe and secure. Our neighbourhoods should be designed around these safe and secure facilities together with other community amenities.

We will develop a new Active Scotland Plan, enabling councils to reintegrate local services – tackling high access charges and crumbling maintenance budgets. The plan will support active travel, the Right to Play, access to school facilities and support young people with equipment grants and coaching. We will also

restrict the sponsorship of sporting events and clubs by industries that promote health-harming commodities.

Scottish Labour is committed to seeing more women and girls participating in sport at all levels, and we agree that single-sex sports opportunities can help build confidence in sports participation. It can also be essential to ensure that women from various religions and diverse minority communities can participate in sport. Sports authorities need to make rapid improvements in access provision for disabled people. We also supported calls for a public inquiry into sexual abuse in sport and will support new legislation to protect young people.

Scottish Labour supports fan ownership of football clubs in Scotland, recognising that clubs are more than just businesses. They hold a special place in the heart of so many communities, and the pandemic could significantly impact the viability of clubs. We believe there is an urgent need to reform the governance of the game in Scotland in order for football to be more inclusive, fully representative of all parts of the game and more successful. We support calls by the Scottish Football Supporters Association and others for a full and inclusive review of the game. We support the five nation UK and Ireland bid for the 2030 FIFA World Cup.

Scottish Labour will support the designation of new National Parks (including coastal, marine and city parks), recognising that National Scenic Area designation is insufficient. We support creating an Outdoor Recreation Champion within government to strengthen the understanding of the role outdoor recreation can play in delivering policies. This also requires long-term investment so that everyone everywhere can enjoy all the benefits of being active outdoors in a way that respects the environment and nature while continuing to support our economy. This includes expanding ranger services and investing in activities suitable for older people or those with a disability to reduce social isolation.

International development

International development assistance is a reserved matter. However, since 2005, successive governments have developed small programmes to support and empower partner countries, including; Malawi, Rwanda, Zambia, and Pakistan.

Scottish Labour will maintain the International Development Programme, including an increase in the Climate Justice Fund and improving its effectiveness. This includes strengthening safeguarding standards and improving transparency.

Defeating Covid-19 will require international cooperation and Scottish Labour is committed to the

global efforts to guarantee that everyone has equitable access to Covid-19 vaccines and treatments. We will not be safe until we are all protected.

Scottish Labour will support a Wellbeing and Sustainable Development (Scotland) Bill during the next Parliament, making all public bodies set objectives towards sustainable development outcomes, ensuring that they positively impact people and the environment here in Scotland and low-income countries. We also recognise that ensuring Scotland is a 'good global citizen' requires action across all government departments. We will continue to support Scotland's status as a Fairtrade Nation and ensure that Fairtrade products are included in all public sector procurement processes.

We support and also seek to achieve the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals both in international development and within Scotland itself. Development assistance should also be targeted to address inequalities, including LGBT+ rights, girls' rights and children with a disability as well as support for human rights defenders. We will also support global citizenship education in schools and maintain the funding for Scotland's Development Education Centres.

Scottish Labour will continue to make the case in Scotland and across the UK for an integrated trade and industrial strategy, which boosts exports, investment, ethical trade and decent jobs. This includes proper transparency and parliamentary scrutiny of all future trade and investment deals post-Brexit. We will preserve public bodies' capacity to make procurement decisions in keeping with public policy objectives and human rights at home and abroad. It is also essential to ensure that trade agreements cannot undermine human rights and labour standards.

While Scotland does not have its own foreign policy, it has an important role in a range of international issues, including human rights, migration and refugees, global public health, and climate change. To help inform public and policy debate, Scottish Labour will support establishing a Scottish Council for Global Affairs. Drawing on Scotland's academic centres of excellence, as well as civil society and business, this body will serve as an independent repository of expertise on international affairs, helping to enhance knowledge of international affairs within Scotland.

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Scottish Labour

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