

## Scottish Liberal Democrat Manifesto

### Health

**More nurses and doctors. Free eye and dental checks.**



### Education

**More teachers and smaller classes. A transition year between nursery and school.**



Scottish Parliament 2003

# Make the Difference

Fresh Thinking for Four More Years

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## Make the Difference: GET THE BEST FOR SCOTLAND

**People across Scotland know that Jim Wallace and the Liberal Democrats have delivered their promises.**

From free personal care to the abolition of tuition fees, Liberal Democrats have made the difference in the last four years.

With bold new plans to promote better health, recruit more teachers and cut crime, people can trust the Liberal Democrats to make the difference again.

The choice is clear.

Labour's London government has not scrapped tuition fees or introduced free personal care.

The SNP will put independence as a priority before schools and hospitals.

The Conservatives only propose to cut services to pay for tax cuts.

**Only the Scottish Liberal Democrats can really make a difference for Scotland.**

"Jim Wallace and the Scottish Liberal Democrats have made a real difference. We have scrapped tuition fees and brought back grants. We have made personal care free for the elderly. We have made Labour have blocked these things in England. People can't trust Labour ruling on their own. The more votes we get, the more difference we can make."



**Rt Hon Charles Kennedy MP**  
Leader of the Liberal Democrats

## Fresh Thinking for Four More Years



### A message from Jim Wallace, Leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats

The Scottish Liberal Democrats are ambitious for Scotland. We want to improve people's health, raise standards in education, make Scotland safer and establish a better environment for business.

Achieving radical, long-lasting reform takes sustained effort, so this manifesto has fresh policies that will work over the long-term. It includes bold proposals for three spend-to-save initiatives focused on delivering radical change to improve health, cut youth crime and reduce the cost of energy.

Thinking for the long-term means reversing the damage that we are doing to our environment, which seriously affects people's health and quality of life. That is why a green thread runs throughout our manifesto, with action for the environment in every area of policy.

Empowering people within their communities is central to Liberal Democrat thinking and to this manifesto. The Executive and the Parliament do not always know best.

Wherever practical, decisions should be taken as close as possible to those affected by them. We will invigorate local councils and local democracy, making people's votes count by reforming the electoral system for local government. We will introduce new powers to enable councils to improve the health, safety and environment of their communities. We will increase the choice people have in choosing services by enhancing the role of the voluntary sector.

It is the Liberal Democrats who are best placed to deliver on the great expectations people have for the Scottish Parliament. We played a vital role in establishing it and have been responsible for many of its most radical reforms, including free personal care, the abolition of tuition fees and land reform. Liberal Democrats are determined to change people's lives for the better. In this manifesto, we publish the policies that can do so. Only the Liberal Democrats can make the difference.



## FRESH THINKING FOR FOUR MORE YEARS

### A difference for health

- **Free eye and dental checks** for all
- Cut waiting times by recruiting **2,000 extra nurses and 300 extra consultants** above current plans
- **Tackle bed blocking** by cutting hospital acquired infections and providing more convalescence care
- **Increase investment in promoting good health**, with a new focus on diet, exercise and preventing illness
- **Digital hearing aids**, free to all who need them
- **Boost the services available at GP surgeries**, with faster local treatment

Scottish Liberal Democrats have three key objectives for Scottish health policy:

**Transforming the health of Scotland by promoting healthier eating and exercise.** We guarantee to spend an increasing share of the Scottish budget on health promotion, alongside measures to make health promotion a responsibility of local councils. We will encourage regular health screening to detect potential problems early and in time to address them. We believe that this long-term approach is essential if we are to repeat the success of countries around the world that have transformed their citizens' health. We will learn from their experience as well as looking for innovative Scottish solutions.

**Putting patients first and cutting waiting times,** treating more patients more quickly and offering greater patient choice. We will increase capacity in the NHS by increasing, year on year, the resources available to the health service including the number of professional staff available to treat patients. We will put the patient at the centre of the NHS. We will, where appropriate, take practices that have proved successful in one health board and transfer them nationwide.

**Improving and expanding local care,** promoting a greater role for the primary care sector to diagnose and treat patients in local communities. We will take measures to recruit and retain staff including GPs, dentists and other health professionals and to establish Community Health Service Centres.

#### Transforming the health of Scotland



**“We will increase the number of nurses, attracting back trained staff who have left the NHS.”**

**Margaret Smith**  
Scottish Liberal Democrat  
Health Spokesperson

#### Green Action

Develop greener

**Healthier eating, healthier people**

Poor diet is a major underlying cause of poor health. We intend to help people achieve a step change in eating habits through education and improved food quality in schools and throughout Scotland, building on the Diet Action Plan. We will:

- Ensure that school meals, and indeed the wider curriculum, reflect a commitment to improving the health of every citizen.
- Ban the sponsorship of school canteens and the marketing of unhealthy fizzy drinks on school premises to ensure a consistent approach to healthy eating across Scotland.
- Support school breakfast clubs and the supply of free fruit to children at school.
- Take steps to improve the availability of healthy food in those parts of Scotland where there are lower aspirations for a healthy diet, including establishing farmers' markets in deprived areas and support for food retail co-ops.
- Pilot schemes to improve dramatically diet amongst those at highest risk.
- Set nutritional standards for food served in prisons, care homes, hospitals and day centres.

**More exercise, healthier people**

An essential partner to a healthier diet is regular exercise. The Physical Activity Task Force aims to improve fitness levels across all age groups. We will:

- Extend resources for GPs and physiotherapists to prescribe exercise sessions, in conjunction with local authorities.
- Increase the number of children undertaking regular physical exercise through free access to swimming pools, gyms and other sports facilities.
- Increase the availability of school sports co-ordinators by giving them roles across a group of schools.
- Enable secondary school sports teachers to take their expertise into primary schools.
- Improve support for clubs and groups that provide coaching for sports.

**Promoting good health**

Measures to promote better health will be more successful if they are implemented within a clear framework. To achieve this we will:

- Make health promotion a key function of local authorities, making them responsible for producing Good Health Local Plans, in conjunction with health boards. For the first time, these Plans will bring together services such as education, housing, transport, leisure and the local environment, seeking to significantly improve people's health, alongside existing services that treat illness.
- Increase the health promotion budget by £100million a year within three years and establish a new fund worth £20million per year to make a difference by supporting a range of initiatives to reduce the cost of future ill health.
- Assist joint working on health promotion and planning by aligning where practical the boundaries of local primary health care co-operatives, health boards and local authorities.
- Encourage employers to promote better health amongst their employees by measures such as subsidised gym membership and healthy lunches.
- Develop a strategy to bring public sector employers into the Scottish Health At Work programme.

**Early intervention and regular screening**

The earlier that potential medical problems are detected the more likely it is that they can be successfully treated. To encourage regular screening and help the prevention and cure of illness we will ensure that the availability of health services reflects people's lifestyles and takes account of particular needs. We will:

- Abolish charges for eye and dental check-ups to underpin our commitment to health promotion and early intervention.
- Develop Personal Health Plans setting out each person's entitlement to services like screening and taking account of an individual's medical history. This will include chronic problems such as asthma where self-management plans can have an increasing role. As well as facilitating earlier intervention these plans will enable health authorities and employers to improve targeting of a range of services. Personal Health Plans will particularly help those who would not normally come into contact with the health service.
- Provide a national framework for employers to offer their employees health screening and other health services to complement NHS services.
- Increase the provision of health services in readily accessible areas such as shopping centres to attract those who rarely use health services.
- Address the reluctance of men to participate in health screening by developing regular mens' health checks and Modern Man Clinics in workplaces or other suitable venues.
- Review the application of health charges, including prescription charges, seeking to ensure a consistent approach. In particular we will support exemptions for chronic conditions like diabetes.
- Exempt full-time students from prescription charges.
- Renew outdated NHS capital equipment, especially diagnostic equipment such as radiographic systems, to assist early detection of illness.
- Support campaigns to promote breast-feeding, giving training to medical professionals and peer support networks.

**Putting patients first**

**Cutting waiting times - more staff**

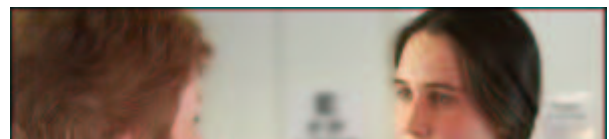
**energy, transport and procurement policies for the health service.**

For example, health providers should aim to minimise travelling distances for patients and staff when considering location of facilities. As the largest public sector organisation, these will significantly boost our success at meeting sustainability objectives.

**Develop the NHS Scotland environment policy** statement to require more efficient fuel, energy and water use in all NHS buildings.

**Improve health by enhancing the local environment:** give local councils the resources to make public transport more attractive, provide safe walking routes and promote healthy, locally produced food.

**Help local authorities provide home insulation** where this will help tackle long-term illness.



Waiting times in our hospitals are unacceptably long. Improving the efficiency of the system can help address this. But it takes increased resources - particularly trained, professional staff - to solve this problem. We will:

- Employ 300 more consultants, over and above existing plans, in the next four years - taking total recruitment to 1,500.
- Employ 1,500 more health professionals such as radiographers, physiotherapists, dieticians and chiropodists.
- Employ 2,000 extra nurses over and above existing plans in the next four years - a total of 12,000 recruits.
- Improve facilities, training opportunities and conditions for nurses.
- Address the drop-out rate of student nurses - which is as high as 25 per cent - by repaying the student loans of newly qualified nurses who continue to work in the NHS in Scotland.
- Place real value on the work of nurses, empowering them to undertake a wider range of work, giving them opportunities to develop their careers to more senior levels and to specialise. We will make sure clinical nursing is retained as a senior post and increase the number of nurse consultant posts.
- Attract back to the NHS those health professionals who have left due to family commitments or are considering early retirement. Introduce a more diverse range of working practices and contracts. This will include "less-than-full-time" contracts.
- Develop NHS nurse banks to help health boards to access experienced staff, who are committed to the NHS but want flexible hours, instead of using expensive agency nurses.
- Insist that health boards pick up the cost of nurses and other professionals retraining in order to return to practice.

### **Cutting waiting times - more beds**

The second part of our plan to cut waiting times is to increase the number of beds available for treatment by reducing the beds occupied by those for whom social care, either at home or in care homes, would be more suitable.

A national plan to tackle Hospital Acquired Infections will reduce the misery, illness and waste caused when patients acquiring infections in hospital. Currently one million bed days annually are occupied by people with such infections. We will:

- Develop a more effective discharge planning system through the Joint Future programme.
- Provide NHS step-down convalescence care, where beneficial to the patient, at a level between hospital and home.
- Evaluate the impact of the National Waiting Times Unit, to identify any bottlenecks in the system and take action where appropriate.
- Reduce waiting times through targeted measures, including substantial initiatives to address the delay in treatment for particularly serious conditions. This will be underpinned by waiting time guarantees.
- Spread good practice in service redesign among health boards to raise standards across Scotland and encourage innovation.
- Train medical professionals to understand their role in preventing such infections, and introduce more specialist Infection Control Nurses, empowering them to play a key controlling role in preventing the spread of infections within hospitals.
- With Health Boards, take steps to enforce standards of cleanliness and guarantee that hospital cleaning budgets are not subject to cost cutting to the detriment of standards. Ward managers should monitor the cleaning of wards.

### **Improving and expanding local care**

#### **Enhanced community services**

In 90 per cent of cases, an individual's contact with the health service is at the primary care level - GPs and other local services. These can be made more locally accessible to individuals and become more efficient if there is greater co-ordination and integration at a local level, utilising models like local health co-operatives. To achieve this we will:

- Significantly expand the work of the primary health care sector, developing Community Health Service Centres. By bringing together more treatment and diagnosis services within a single centre, people will have better access to their local health services, including physiotherapy, mental health services, suitable alternative therapists, health promotion and screening, dietary advice and minor operations.
- Ensure that rural areas can benefit from a similar structure using peripatetic specialists and outreach facilities as well as IT and video link technology.
- Expand the capability of community hospitals to provide minor surgery and act as a resource for GPs.
- Engage with the medical profession to deliver a strategy for sustaining small, rural and community hospitals, not least for maternity services.
- Provide more respite breaks for carers, build on the Carers' Strategy and examine whether increased provision of NHS convalescence care can assist this.
- Oblige health boards to consult stakeholders more effectively in reorganisation plans.
- Abolish hospital trusts as separate legal entities, removing an unnecessary layer of bureaucracy and empowering primary health care providers to get on with their jobs in the context of health board and national guidelines.
- Seek more local management of hospitals, including the involvement of clinicians.
- Require health boards at a local level to produce clear plans to improve patient care and reduce ill health.
- Reduce the number of nationally set targets for the health service.
- Increase the length of time doctors can spend with their patients by enhancing the roles of other health professionals, such as pharmacists and practice nurses, who may be better suited to dealing with certain problems. As well as enabling patients to spend more time with their doctors, this will help them get treatment more quickly and easily.
- Take innovative measures to recruit and retain GPs and primary care teams in areas, particularly rural ones, which struggle to maintain an adequate health service network,. This will include increasing the number of salaried GPs, the provision of relocation expenses to GP Principals and repaying the student loans of newly qualified staff.
- Introduce a GP Contract Bill to transform primary health care and reward the provision of extra services.



#### **Dentistry**

Dentists play a vital role in the early identification of a wide variety of health problems including oral cancer from which hundreds of people in Scotland die every year.

Dentistry is particularly cost effective when regular visits allow pro-active intervention and effective education. Everyone in Scotland should enjoy access to NHS dentistry regardless of

where they live. To improve dental health, we will:

- Reintroduce free dental checks for all.
- Reform the remuneration arrangements for dentistry, to reward dentists for preventing dental disease amongst their patients as well as treating disease and decay.
- Encourage local authorities and health boards to attract dentists to their areas by making student loan repayments for individual graduates who commit to the area.
- Increase the number of dental training places and establish a new school of dentistry in Aberdeen to attract more dentists into practice.
- Improve children's oral health through a range of measures to support dentistry, including new information and training resources for carers of pre-5s, targeted initiatives to distribute toothpaste and a commitment to ensure that by 2005 all children receive dietary advice.

### **Patient Choice**

People coming into contact with health services often complain that, while they receive excellent treatment from members of staff, within the system as a whole they feel like nothing but a number. Moving from waiting lists to waiting times has been one step to correct this, and we will continue to develop the system to allow staff to focus more on the individual patient. We will:

- As capacity expands, give patients the freedom to choose any appropriate and cost-effective treatment for their condition anywhere in Scotland. Patients will be empowered to do this through the provision of accurate information about options and outcomes by, for example, a national database of waiting times, treatment outcomes and likely quality of after-care.
- End postcode prescribing by making the decisions of NHS Quality Improvement Scotland binding on health boards and establishing a national list of health service drug options. We will seek to lower the cost of pharmaceuticals to health boards through national purchasing arrangements.
- Make information about the health service, including hospital waiting times and treatment outcomes, available to GPs and the public, online and through libraries. Review information to ensure that those statistics collected and published are relevant, transparent and complete.
- Develop long-term common standards for the NHS IT structure to allow better transfer of patients and booking of appointments, and enable a wider range of professionals to update records. This will also facilitate the provision of Personal Health Plans.
- Routinely issue digital hearing aids to those who need them, training more audiology staff to provide a modern high quality service. Increase funds for the modernisation of audiology services and the provision of digital hearing aids through bulk purchasing.
- Strengthen patient advocacy services to assist patients unable to make informed choices themselves.
- Evaluate the clinician-led Cancer Plan model and extend it if appropriate.
- Phase out mixed-sex wards.

### **Good mental health**

One in four Scots will suffer from mental health problems in their lifetime. We will increase the availability of services for those suffering mental ill health, including multi-disciplinary care and outreach work. Further, we will encourage campaigns to raise awareness and reduce the stigma attached to mental ill health. Specifically, we will:

- Support the work of community mental health nursing teams, allowing services to be delivered within local communities.
- Develop 24-hour mental health services - including drop-in centres - to reflect the unpredictable nature of mental health crises and the benefits of early, highly skilled intervention. Service users and advocacy groups will be involved in designing these services.
- Make sure that mental health services are sensitive to the age of the person receiving them - particularly young people.

### **Better sexual health**

A healthy sex life is an important and enjoyable part of people's lives, yet there can be significant health dangers attached unless care is taken. Around 20,000 people in Scotland are treated for sexual health problems every year. To address this problem we will:

- Develop and implement a National Sexual Health Strategy to enhance self-respect and tackle the complacency which has led to increased risk-taking, particularly amongst the young. It will seek to reduce the stigma attached to sexual health issues. Sexual health screening will be incorporated into our Personal Health Plans.
- Reflect the differing cultural, gender and orientation of individuals in designing sexual health services and ensure that the health advantages from delaying sexual experience amongst young people are included.

### **Alcohol**

Previous governments have paid insufficient attention to the major problem of alcohol abuse. Tackling alcohol problems reduces the serious social, criminal and medical costs that arise from a hard-drinking culture. Our nation's attitude to binge-drinking needs to be addressed. Progress has been made with the National Plan For Alcohol, the establishment of the Nicholson Committee on licensing and an increase in funding of schemes to combat alcohol abuse. We aim to cut the level of alcohol abuse and its impact on families and communities. We will:

- Take steps to determine the scale of alcohol abuse and its consequences on a national basis, including assessing the resources currently devoted to tackling alcohol abuse and the costs incurred by its consequences by the health service, police and local authorities.
- Double the resources available for alcohol treatment and rehabilitation services.
- Evaluate public information campaigns highlighting the danger of excessive drinking and take them forward if they are proven to be effective at changing behaviour.
- Increase the provision of support services for families affected by alcohol abuse and ensure that those released from prison and at risk of alcohol or drug abuse are monitored and given appropriate support.
- Take forward the recommendations of the Nicholson Committee's review of licensing. This may include policies to improve enforcement, reduce binge drinking and address the over-supply of licences in some residential areas.
- Support a voluntary proof of age scheme, backed by national awareness campaigns, and test purchasing systems to reduce the supply of alcohol to young people.

- Support youth cafes and other alcohol-free activities for young people.

**Drugs**

Drugs continue to cause serious health, social and criminal problems in Scotland. The most effective way of dealing with Scotland's drug problem and the serious impact it has on our communities is to cut demand for drugs through rehabilitation and support services with a twin-track approach of harm prevention and reduction. There has been some progress in this area, with over half of resources spent on drugs now devoted to treatment and rehabilitation but more needs to be done. We will:

- Provide increased resources for a spectrum of drug treatment and rehabilitation programmes. Every drug user who wants a life without drugs should receive the support they need.
- Expand and extend the innovative Know the Score campaign, continuing to emphasise the benefits of harm reduction. We will make certain that particular attention is paid to making the programme relevant to young people and include the option not to take drugs.

**Smoking**

Smoking continues to cause serious health problems and accounts for 13,000 premature deaths in Scotland each year. Every individual smoker should be encouraged and supported to stop. We will:

- Enforce restrictions on smoking on public transport and in other public places.
- Develop a Ten Year Action Plan to create smoke-free restaurants and pubs.
- Evaluate public awareness campaigns to reduce smoking, and pursue the most effective approaches.
- Continue to back campaigns to identify shopkeepers who sell cigarettes to those under 16 years of age and impose tougher penalties on them.
- Use education to persuade children not to take up smoking and empower them to champion the cause with their parents.



A DIFFERENCE FOR HEALTH

**A parliament to make a difference**

- Put **schools and hospitals before tax cuts**, and protect investment that will bring long-term benefit and savings
- Save money for the health service by **reducing ill health**
- **Cut crime** by giving young people new positive opportunities
- **Cut energy bills** with an ambitious energy saving programme

The Scottish Liberal Democrats have a proud record in supporting home rule for Scotland. The strength of the YES vote in the referendum reflected the support for the Parliament and contributed to high expectations for its first term. Scottish Liberal Democrats believe the Parliament has achieved a great deal, but must be given time to reach its full potential. We campaigned for a Parliament that will succeed over the long-term and do not favour hasty or destabilising changes in its powers. Our objective is to move to a proper federal system for the UK - of the type that is normal in Europe - in which the Scottish Parliament, National Assembly for Wales and other institutions have a secure and constitutionally guaranteed status.

**The Scottish Parliament**

The Scottish Parliament has already improved the lives of hundreds of thousands of people in Scotland. Guaranteed free nursery places for all 3 and 4 year old children whose parents want it, the abolition of tuition fees and the reintroduction of student grants are giving more young people a better start in life. Free personal care and free local bus travel have benefited older people. These are reforms that have only been possible because of the Parliament. There are many others, like the Adults With Incapacity Act, which have brought long-overdue help to many people in Scotland. We will:

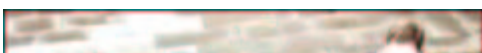
- Support the retention of 129 MSPs to enable the Parliament to function effectively.
- Follow the success of the first Constitutional Convention by beginning preparation for a second Convention in 2009, seeking like the first to involve wider society. After ten years of experience we will be in a good position to see how the Scottish Parliament has worked to improve quality of life and governance in Scotland. The Convention will be able to identify any helpful improvements to the Parliament's powers and methods of working.
- Maintain the Barnett formula in the early years of the Parliament to provide financial stability. As regional government develops in England, move to a needs-based formula which reflects the needs of the devolved institutions including consideration of the geographical nature of the areas for which they are responsible.
- Support a robust parliamentary committee system, reviewing the size of committees to ensure they can work effectively, and encourage them to hold meetings around Scotland.
- Establish prestigious annual Scottish Parliament Awards to recognise achievement in diverse areas of Scottish life.

**Spend to Save**

Scottish Liberal Democrats will protect public spending that saves the taxpayer money in the long term. We propose three specific programmes to make a positive investment to reduce long term costs.

• **Reduce ill health**  
Ill health costs the health service more than £6billion every year. On top of that are the financial costs to business and the personal misery suffered. The Liberal Democrats are already committed to spend £100million a year more on health promotion within the next three years. We will increase that with a new fund of £20million per year, to make the difference to a wide range of projects designed to reduce ill health.

• **Reduce youth crime**  
Youth crime costs an estimated £700million every year in Scotland. Liberal Democrats are already committed to increase spending on dealing with young offenders by more than £55million in the next three years. We will increase that with a new £20million fund to make the difference by supporting a range of



Improving governance

Scottish Liberal Democrats believe that the bureaucracy of government has adjusted rapidly to devolution but seek to improve it further. We are sceptical of the value of proliferating government targets. A whole industry has been set up by Whitehall to measure the performance of the UK government. We will:

- Develop partnerships with the UK Government where appropriate and seek recompense when Scottish Executive action leads to savings in the UK budget.
- Support the abolition of the UK Cabinet post of Secretary of State for Scotland, believing it better that the Scottish Executive should further develop its role as a voice for Scotland in its relationships with the UK Government, through formal and informal mechanisms.
- Expand the constructive role of Scotland within the European Union through collaboration with other legislative regions and nations.
- Build on the interest the establishment of the Scottish Parliament has generated by forging links with new EU member states and developing countries.
- Require Quangos to submit their performance and results to the relevant Scottish Parliament committees
- Ask the Scottish Law Commission to investigate the methods by which legislation can be published in Plain English.

**Government finance**

Scottish Liberal Democrats believe that government both central and local has a duty to taxpayers to spend their money effectively and wisely. The debate about public as opposed to private provision is often misleading: there are some services that are best delivered by the state while others may be better delivered by private, voluntary or mutual organisations. It is important that people get the best services in the most financially efficient way. To achieve this we will:

- Encourage greater choice in the provision of new capital for public services, by supporting the development of mutual organisations and non-profit distributing organisations to build and maintain public assets.
- Seek to change Treasury rules to allow public authorities to borrow money and issue bonds, and ensure that rules relating to Public Private Partnerships enable different types of funding to compete on equal terms. This will create a range of options for public authorities considering capital investment, including traditional public procurement.
- Establish a national client advisory service to make sure that examples of best practice in developing public sector contracts are shared with all public authorities.

**Taxation**

Public spending in Scotland is planned by the Treasury to rise to by 23 per cent to more than £25billion over the next three years. Scottish Liberal Democrats believe that it should be possible to incorporate the policies contained in this manifesto within that total. We do not propose to use the tax-varying power.

However, we are concerned that this level of public spending could be reduced if there are poor levels of UK economic growth, or change of government or a shift in government policy at Westminster.

In those circumstances, or if Scottish public services do not succeed in delivering improvements in the quality of Scottish life through a lack of money, then additional tax revenue may need to be raised by invoking the Scottish Parliament's tax varying power in the latter part of the parliament. Scottish Liberal Democrats would be prepared to make that investment and put improved public services before tax cuts.

initiatives that will divert young people from crime in the first place.

- **Save energy costs**  
Public bodies spend hundreds of millions of pounds on energy every year. We have ambitious plans to reduce public sector energy use, supported by a new £20million fund to make the difference, installing solar power and energy conservation measures throughout the public sector.

**Green Action**

Ensure greater use of sustainability indices in Scotland to **measure environmental damage** and the government's response at a national and international level.

**Implement strategic environmental assessment** across the range of the Scottish Executive's work and spending, audited by the Parliament, preferably through an Environmental Audit Committee or by strengthening the remit of the existing Audit Committee.

Make sure this assessment measures the Executive's success in **meeting our objectives for a sustainable Scotland** and contributing to international climate change obligations.



A PARLIAMENT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

**Make an environment for business**

- Recapture Scotland's traditional **spirit of enterprise** and innovation
- **Promote enterprise in education** in every school in Scotland
- **Tackle the skills shortage** that hinders Scotland's progress
- **Oppose university top-up fees** and help Higher and Further Education institutions meet the future skills needs of Scotland
- Develop new environmental industries, beginning with renewable energy, to **create thousands of new jobs in research and manufacturing**

- **Promote Scottish tourism** with a 2009 Homecoming Year, celebrating Robert Burns' 250th anniversary

Scottish Liberal Democrats have five key aims to transform Scotland's economy:

**Ensure that Scotland has a highly skilled workforce**, acknowledging that in the competitive modern world of business and industry people need to be flexible and capable of transferring skills in order to be successful. A high investment economy with an international outlook is essential to wealth creation and the attainment of social justice.

**Develop an entrepreneurial approach in Scotland**, seeking to support business in recapturing the spirit of enterprise and innovation that were characteristics of Scotland during the Industrial Revolution.

We will help the transfer of Scottish academic research into marketable products for business and ensure that Scotland's infrastructure is capable of meeting the needs of business.

Though we seek to improve Scotland's public services, it is business, not state sponsored employment, that is the key to our future prosperity - indeed public services may be able to learn from business.

We aim to improve Scotland's productivity across the board, including primary and manufacturing industries, lifting Scotland's economic performance to match the best in Europe.

**Ensure that Scotland is at the cutting edge of environmental technology**, which will be required worldwide as mankind meets one of the great challenges of the 21st century - living in harmony with the natural environment.

**Promote tourism**, ensuring that the benefits of prosperity are apparent in rural and urban parts of Scotland.

**Make sure Scottish Higher and Further Education continue to compete with the best in the world.** Build on the achievements of the radical benefits to students brought about in the last four years of the Scottish Parliament, providing robust support to retain and improve the quality of teaching, learning and research in Scotland. Focus the sector on meeting the skills needs of the nation.

#### **A highly skilled workforce**

Scottish business consistently states that it needs a more flexible, better skilled workforce and has welcomed the combination in the first Scottish Executive of Enterprise and Lifelong Learning in one department. Skills and flexibility cannot be learned overnight: we aim to improve skills for the long-term prosperity of us all. We will go further and integrate enterprise into the education system, embedding it into the school curriculum and the fabric of Further and Higher Education. We will:

- Ensure the work of Scottish Enterprise is focused on business development and skills training.
- Develop the Future Skills Scotland audit to identify the needs of business - both locally and nationally - over the next decade and focus education services, particularly Further and Higher Education and the careers guidance service, on meeting those requirements.
- Develop partnerships between educational institutions and business to offer more apprenticeships and training opportunities, building on the modern apprenticeship scheme.
- Enable 14-16 year olds to develop vocational skills and improve their employment prospects by allowing them to undertake courses in Further Education colleges as part of the school-based curriculum.
- Encourage Higher Education institutions to address professional skills shortages.
- Expand opportunities for sandwich years in a business environment for students.
- Promote a "buddy" scheme for final year business students, where students are involved with and mentored by a company in Scotland.

#### **Supporting an entrepreneurial approach**

Our commitment to lifelong learning means that we seek to encourage entrepreneurial people to learn and innovate throughout their learning and working lives. This should begin at school. Scotland's universities have a key role to play in turning the world-class research and innovation they nurture to business advantage. We will:

- Massively expand the number of Scottish schools actively involved in Enterprise in Education from 10 per cent to 100 per cent, encouraging innovation and the willingness to take risks that makes for successful business.
- Ensure the careers service promotes self-employment and enterprise to pupils as legitimate career options, with information about where to seek further advice.
- Build on the Scottish Executive's Determined to Succeed report, to develop an enterprising attitude and understanding of the world of work, in all its diversity.
- Give school pupils the opportunity for "hands-on" enterprise initiatives with the support of £100 grants from the Scottish Executive for projects.
- Train enterprise development officers to co-ordinate the expansion of enterprise in education activities in every school cluster.
- Support entrepreneurs' clubs in universities and extend them over time to senior school students.
- Sustain the development of Intermediate Technology Institutes in Aberdeen, Dundee and Glasgow.
- Stimulate markets for Scottish developed products by encouraging academics and developers to be pro-active in the pursuit of equity and shareholding in the commercial exploitation of their



**“Scotland must capture the world market for wave and tidal energy.”**

**Tavish Scott**  
Scottish Liberal Democrat  
Convener

### **Green Action**

**Gross Domestic Product** as a measure on its own does not convey the full impact on the wealth and quality of life of economic activity and, in particular, ignores the environmental degradation caused by some activities. Government measures must address this.

**Support growth in manufacturing in renewable energy**, combining the objectives of creating economic growth and supporting the environment.

**Identify further sectors** where the Executive's sustainability policies can create new jobs and wealth, such as agriculture, tourism and public transport.

**Assess economic development policies** by their impact on the targets set through the Scottish Executive's sustainable



work, rather than rely on a system of product licensing.

- Establish a new annual Scottish Parliament Award to recognise entrepreneurial achievement and the transfer of science into production.

### Supporting business

Business needs to be supported by modern and effective public infrastructure. We propose a comprehensive package of transport initiatives to link Scotland to other countries and improve internal communications. We will:

- Streamline the overlapping services to business and the way in which Local Enterprise Companies operate, continuing their role in business support and development, assisted by local authorities through their planning function.
- Support collaboration between small and medium-sized enterprises to compete with bigger firms for contracts.
- Support the construction industry, - Scotland's biggest - by working in co-operation with the trade groups to create a strategy that secures the supply of relevant skills, improve the safety and quality of the industry, combat rogue traders with a quality mark scheme and consider a construction industry licensing authority for Scotland.
- Develop the food and drink industries with particular focus on building new capacity to meet our health objective of improving the national diet and increasing the amount of Scottish organic production.
- Make sure the newly established joint public-private co-investment body works in a dynamic way with financial institutions to ensure that capital is available to help businesses expand.
- Use the network of commercial attaches based in British embassies across the world to look for international partnerships and support Scottish business.
- Improve the IT infrastructure and extend broadband connectivity for every area of Scotland, using both fixed links and satellite connections for remote areas. Fund links to schools and public agencies, if possible with sufficient capacity to allow local businesses to access broadband in remote areas.

### The business of the environment

With its vast natural resource - our weather - Scotland could be at the cutting edge of the development of environmental technologies, following the example of Denmark who seized the opportunity to dominate the global market for wind energy.

Our programme for government includes a strong focus on measures to protect and replenish the environment. Many of these, particularly recycling of waste and development of renewable energy, offer new opportunities for enterprise, innovation and business. Studies have suggested that more than 5000 jobs could be created in developing renewable energy from wind, wave and tidal power. To help Scottish business take advantage of this opportunity we will:

- Support the development of wave, tidal and solar energy through a specific research programme, putting Scotland in the driving seat of technological advance.
- Press the UK Government and electricity companies to strengthen the electricity grid, particularly on the West and North coasts, to allow the opportunities for renewable energy to be exploited.
- Task Scottish Enterprise to assist the development of facilities for manufacturing products from waste. The National Waste Strategy will generate millions of tonnes of raw materials suitable for transformation into marketable products. This creates a massive opportunity for new industries to be developed, in Scotland, to harness the wealth that can be generated from waste.
- Develop links with European regions such as Catalonia, regions in Germany and the new EU members in eastern Europe, to enhance the opportunities available to develop, amongst other benefits, environmental industries.

### Tourism

Tourism is one of Scotland's biggest industries - and with good reason. Scotland enjoys a cultural and historical reputation together with opportunities for sport and leisure, all set within striking architectural and natural landscapes.

International events have damaged tourism in Scotland as well as many other parts of the world. Steps should be taken to build growth in the sector.

We will support the tourist industry. We want to see the industry itself leading development through bodies such as VisitScotland and an area tourist board structure, appropriately funded and suitably focused. We will:

- Expand transport links to Scotland from abroad and within Scotland.
- Make full use of the British Tourist Authority to help market Scotland abroad but encourage Scottish bodies to step in when niche markets for Scotland are not being exploited.
- Take the opportunity of the 250th anniversary of Burns' birth to declare 2009 Scottish Homecoming Year to encourage people worldwide with Scottish roots to come to Scotland both to discover the history they have left behind and get to know the new, cosmopolitan and diverse Scotland of today.
- Create a new opportunity for cultural tourism, establishing Executive support for International Festivals and creating new one-stop cultural centres, similar to Irish Heritage Centres, to serve as examples of regional cultural, artistic, musical and culinary excellence.
- Promote access to the countryside, mountain areas and water, including rivers, canals and lochs, for international and domestic visitors to enjoy Scotland's unique scenery and wildlife.
- Ensure that tourist offices and agencies promote the opportunities for outdoor recreation across the country.
- Support action by the enterprise agencies to help improve quality and standards in tourist businesses.
- Encourage Scottish businesses, large and small, to accept the Euro where appropriate, prior to its introduction in the UK.
- Continue to build on the important city break and conference business and use Scottish cities as gateways to the rest of the

development indicators, ensuring that the enterprise networks' finance and expertise is harnessed to meet those targets.

**Tough, new targets for local authorities to recycle 25 per cent of waste by 2006 and 55 per cent by 2020** present an opportunity to transform millions of tonnes of raw materials into marketable products, giving huge opportunities for new industries to be developed in Scotland to harness the wealth that can be generated from waste.

**Change the public purchasing rules** to enhance the status of recycled goods and those capable of re-use.

**Build on Scotland's environmental reputation for tourism** by bringing the remainder of the *Nature of Scotland* proposals into law and protecting landscapes.

country.



Alex Cole-Hamilton

### Higher and Further Education

Scotland's universities and colleges are vital drivers both of our economic future and of the achievement of a liberal, well-educated and articulate society. Fifty per cent of our young people now enter Further and Higher Education.

The abolition of tuition fees in Scotland has led to a huge increase in university applications, while the reintroduction of student grants has allowed more people from poorer backgrounds to consider university or college, many for the first time. Scottish Liberal Democrats will continue to back our universities and colleges. We will:

- Increase the funding of Further and Higher Education in Scotland substantially above inflation over the lifetime of the next Parliament.
- Encourage investment partnerships between universities and colleges and business to increase private investment in the sector.
- Fully merge the Further and Higher Education funding councils and help institutions develop funding partnerships to meet more closely the skills needs of business.
- Use extra resources to sustain and improve the quality of teaching, learning and qualifications, and to improve the estate and facilities offered

at universities and colleges, valuing lecturers and guaranteeing young people a quality learning experience.

- Take forward the Scottish Credit & Qualifications Framework system of accreditation to create a parity of esteem between Further and Higher Education and use this principle to take forward the funding of the sector.
- Support a UK-wide review of the pay of teachers and academics in Further and Higher Education, aiming to raise salary levels at least to the level of teachers' pay and to provide stable employment contracts in place of short-term research contracts wherever possible.
- Provide robust funding for Higher Education research, particularly if changes to policy in England from 2006 threaten to jeopardise the capacity of Scottish institutions to attract and retain high quality teaching and research.
- Build excellence in research, supporting departments to achieve national and international standing. Change the emphasis of the Research Assessment Exercise, so that it no longer simply rewards past performance but assesses the potential against wider criteria with the intention to offer a realistic incentive to less highly-rated departments to improve their rating.
- Assist colleges to collaborate, increasing efficiency by sharing administration and procurement services, and by reducing duplication of courses.
- Appoint university and college principals using a public appointments process based on the Nolan principles.
- Build on the abolition of tuition fees and the restoration of grants, pressing Westminster for a higher threshold for repayment of student loans across the UK.
- Oppose top-up fees in Scotland and campaign at Westminster to stop their introduction anywhere in the UK.
- Give students in Further and Higher Education the right to refer matters to the Ombudsman when institutional mechanisms fail them.



MAKE AN ENVIRONMENT FOR BUSINESS

## Make education for life

- **Recruit 3,000 extra teachers** to reduce class sizes
- **Abolish the current system of 5-14 national tests**, giving teachers and children more time to teach and learn
- Smooth the move from nursery to primary with **a full-time transition year at age 5** before starting formal schooling at age 6
- **Build and renovate hundreds of schools** to create a world-class learning environment
- Give pupils the chance to **develop vocational skills** from the age of 14 onwards

Scottish Liberal Democrats believe that education equips people with the skills and knowledge needed to thrive in the modern world and enables individuals to reach their full potential.

We will continue to improve education in Scotland in key areas:

**Raise standards in education**, aiming to close the attainment gap between boys and girls and between different areas of Scotland. We will use the expected fall in school rolls to cut class sizes.

**Respect teachers and improve educational facilities**, ensuring that there are resources in our education system to train and retain high quality staff, enable teachers to work to maximum effect in schools built and maintained to world-class standards and with sufficient books and other teaching resources.

**Enhance education choices and opportunities**, involving parents and seeking to empower children by involving them in decisions about their personal curriculum, while ensuring that literacy and numeracy remain central.



**“We will raise education standards by recruiting more teachers and reducing bureaucracy.”**

Nicol Stephen

**Raise standards**

**Improving attainment by improving the system**

Considerable investment in education, accompanied by reform, has delivered real progress over the past four years. The stages when children begin new phases of their education still prove problematic. To raise attainment levels and smooth the transition between nursery and primary and then primary and secondary education, we will:

- Get pupils off to a better start, building on the educational benefits of nursery places for three and four-year-olds. Learning from successful practice in other countries, we will create a transition year, effectively replacing the current P1, and raising to six years old the entry to formal primary school. This full-time, teacher-led year will equip children from all backgrounds with the skills they need to make a success of education and allow early intervention from a wide range of professionals for children who need extra help. In turn, this will help primary schools make more progress more quickly in subsequent years.
- Build relationships between primary pupils and their future secondary teachers by allowing teachers to move between primary and secondary and using the cluster group of primary schools attached to each secondary school to bring children together before they transfer on.
- Support the use of summer schools and camps, organised by local authorities and the voluntary sector, to smooth the transition for children between P7 and S1 years by building their confidence.
- Work to reduce class sizes across the whole age range of pupils whilst recognising that additional teachers may be more effectively deployed in support of other teachers rather than exclusively to reduce class sizes.
- Use technology to link all schools - to make sure they can all access suitably qualified staff and share resources - using broadband links developed across Scotland.
- Build on the work of the Discipline Task Force with a particular emphasis on reducing violent and disruptive behaviour and bullying, supporting teachers in tackling discipline problems, protecting the education of those children who are not involved in disruptive behaviour and diverting disruptive pupils from a downward spiral of truancy and crime.
- Make truancy action schemes a priority for all education authorities.
- Expand the range of interventions by specially trained youth workers, away from the school, to help those pupils who pose a particularly severe risk to their own, and other children's, education.
- Ensure that particularly gifted children have the opportunity to fulfil their talents, when appropriate, with access to a national initiative to give support in drama, music, sport or academic pursuits.

**Respect teachers and cut bureaucracy**

The McCrone agreement brought about significant reform in teaching, establishing a new pay and conditions package. In educating our children, teachers have a key role in developing Scotland's future and we will continue to work in partnership with them, to enhance their roles and improve education. We will:

- Increase the number of teachers by 3,000, above existing plans, over the next four years.
- Give teachers more time to teach and children more time to learn by cutting the amount of bureaucracy confronting teachers in school.
- Scrap the current national tests for 5-14 year-olds and abandon national league tables. Her Majesty's Inspectorate will undertake national sampling to monitor overall standards but without the red tape and stress for pupils caused by national tests.
- Simplify the Standard Grade and Higher exam system through consultation over the next four years, to make more time available for learning and reduce the exams burden.
- Devolve more power down to schools, including more budgetary control for head teachers.
- Give headteachers a place on the Scottish negotiating committee for teachers.
- Give opportunities for greater innovation and broader diversity of provision within the comprehensive system, supported by changes to school boards, to ensure the involvement of, and accountability to, parents.

Liberal Democrat Deputy  
Minister for Education

**Green Action**

**Emphasise citizenship education** and promote opportunities for experience in the voluntary sector and on environment projects as part of work experience placements.

**Recognise the importance of education for the environment**, enabling curriculum materials to be developed to promote environmental awareness.

**Support new school buildings** that demonstrate commitment to the highest environmental standards.

**Develop safer routes to schools and promote "walking-buses"** and safer cycling to reduce the number of children travelling to school by car.



**Buildings, books, equipment and support**

To learn and teach to the best of their ability, children and teachers must have access to the books and equipment they need. They should have support from classroom assistants.

School buildings should be of a high, safe standard and meet all the needs of modern education. To achieve these objectives we will:

- Transfer resources from measurement to achievement, by ensuring that a proportion of the money saved by scrapping national tests and abandoning the preparation of national league tables is diverted to the purchase of books and equipment.
- Recruit more classroom assistants to give teachers extra support in the classroom.
- Encourage training and opportunities in Further Education for classroom assistants to develop a worthwhile career path and maximise the value they can bring to a child's education.

- Ensure school buildings are of a high standard by pursuing a major building and renovation programme. These schools should be available to the whole community and include high quality facilities for drama, music, sport and IT.
- Improve the attractiveness of science and technological subjects in schools by investing in modern laboratory facilities in all secondary schools, linking with science centres and using leading Scottish engineers and scientists as role models.

### Enhance choices and opportunities

#### Supporting children and giving them choice

Education begins in the home and parents should support their children's education throughout their school careers. We seek to involve parents more constructively in the education of their children and empower children by giving them more choice in a diverse curriculum. We will:

- Improve information for parents on their child's progress, introducing Annual Progress Plans to replace existing reports. These would set individual goals for each child for the coming year. This will not be restricted to academic performance.
- Adopt a more flexible approach to the curriculum, giving new opportunities to pupils to study a wider range of courses, including those at Further Education colleges, from the age of 14. This fuller spectrum of opportunities could address the needs of some of those children who are turned off school and at risk of dropping out through truancy.
- Increase the opportunities for parental support and involvement outside school, conforming to child protection legislation.
- Use specialist teachers based in secondary schools to provide primary school teaching in sport, drama, art, music, science and languages. This will require flexibility in the use of secondary school teachers.
- Give every child the opportunity to access free music tuition during their school careers.
- Develop an entitlement for children to at least one out-of-hours activity.



Alex Cole-Hamilton

#### The curriculum and the wider community

The school curriculum must be focused on equipping children for adult life, building up skills for their future. The current curriculum is too crowded, but there are themes like enterprise in education, the environment and citizenship that need a clearer role, within a balanced education. We will:

- Review the overcrowded 5-14 curriculum, including an opportunity for a Dynamic Curriculum Forum to allow business, civic groups and environmental groups to contribute ideas to that process.
- Establish a dialogue with Scotland's faith communities to enable them to contribute to the review of the curriculum, aiming to develop a better understanding of the range of faiths and denominations in Scotland today and increase religious tolerance. We have no plans to change the status of denominational schools, or establish new ones. However, we support joint provision of services where appropriate such as through joint campus schools, teaching of minority subjects and out-of-hours activities.
- Fund the seven national special needs schools on a national basis for the work they perform as centres of excellence and for the training outreach service they offer, and consider the need to support others.
- Promote a National Strategy for Children with Special Educational Needs which recognises the additional support needed to include children with special needs appropriately in mainstream schools whilst recognising that mainstream education is not appropriate for the needs of all children.
- Extend the teaching of foreign languages in primary schools and provide teaching facilities in Gaelic and other minority languages where there is demand.
- Make schools genuinely community schools, accessible to all and open to community groups. Insist that PPP/PFI specifications fully provide for this.
- Recognise after-school and breakfast clubs, sporting and cultural clubs and informal education through youth work and community education as a full part of the school community.
- Encourage diversity and permit local authorities to fund, for example, Rudolph Steiner schools.



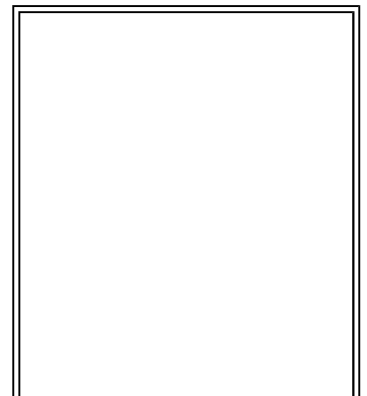
MAKE EDUCATION FOR LIFE

## Make Scotland a safer country

- Recruit 3,500 police officers in the next four years to **keep police numbers at their highest ever levels**
- Cut crime and **divert young people away from offending**
- Cut reoffending with **effective rehabilitation**
- Improve the **rights of victims**
- Use the Drug Enforcement Agency to **target the supply of drugs**

To make people across Scotland safer by cutting crime Liberal Democrats have four key objectives. We will:

**Cut crime.** Crime rates are far lower than their peak under the Conservatives and detection



rates are higher than ever - and more than double those in England. But crime is still too high. A small minority of offenders commit the vast majority of offences, many of them drug-related. We aim to reduce violent crime and pursue policies that work to stop people reoffending.

**Cut youth crime.** More than 30 per cent of recorded crime is committed by young people. Addressing criminal behaviour at an early stage will help cut crime now and in the future. We will implement a robust range of measures to tackle youth offending and protect communities.

**Support the police** and other justice agencies so that they have the resources and skills they need to be effective and efficient.

**Help communities and victims**, making them feel safer, reducing the fear of crime which can damage community life. Give particular support to victims of crime, both in relation to court cases and as they return their lives to normal.

## Cut crime

### Getting drugs and weapons off our streets

Drugs and violent crime ruin lives. To tackle these problems we will:

- Use the Scottish Drugs Enforcement Agency to target the supply of the most dangerous drugs to Scotland's streets and work for effective rehabilitation to reduce demand for drugs.
- Roll out specialist drug courts across Scotland.
- Support police initiatives to detect and tackle gun and knife crime, including possession of knives, with tough sentences for possession and use of knives and other weapons. Initiate a knife amnesty for a fixed period to give an opportunity to remove weapons from communities.

### Effective rehabilitation to cut crime

Prisons are appropriate for many offenders and offences. But they can turn lesser offenders into more serious criminals. We seek to prevent reoffending. We will:

- Build on the progress already made in increasing the range and availability of programmes to stop reoffending.
- Expand the availability of Drug Treatment and Testing Orders, electronic tagging and other alternatives to custody to give opportunities for offenders to move away from crime whilst retaining employment and family links.
- Work to cut the present delays in starting community service and supervision orders, to reduce the opportunity for breaches and recidivism.
- Commission research on the effectiveness of sentences and alternative disposals handed out by courts and panels in reducing future offending.
- Take steps to reduce the number of offenders sent to prison for fine defaulting by more use of community sentences including Supervised Attendance Orders. Evaluate the pilot mandatory scheme in Glasgow.
- Introduce a statutory requirement for sentencers to show that all fine enforcement measures had been tried and other community sentences actively considered before imprisonment is used.
- Review the basis on which fines are levied to make sure they can reflect ability to pay and review the maximum levels of fines available to courts.
- Give priority in the prison service to providing secure, humane custody and effective rehabilitation to promote public safety and reduce reoffending.
- Review the services available to offenders in prison and on release from custody and recognise that support may be needed for up to two years following release.



Cate Gillon

## Reduce youth crime

Youth crime accounts for nearly one in three offences recorded by the police. Yet the vast majority of young people do not commit any offences and only a tiny number of young people commit more than one offence. The Scottish Executive has published a ten point youth crime action plan and has allocated increased resources of more than £55million over the next three years. We propose to take forward these enforcement measures with an additional Youth Crime Reduction Fund to support diversion from crime. The fund will be worth up to £20million a year and will support a wide range of action to make the difference to youth crime, including supporting the voluntary sector and sporting and cultural

organisations working with young people. We will:

- Continue to expand the availability of sentences that work to stop reoffending, seeking to divert young people from a life of crime.



**“I want to reduce the misery of crime and help victims. That means effective action to reduce crime.”**

**Jim Wallace**  
Liberal Democrat Justice Minister

## Green Action

Review the adequacy of **enforcement of current environmental, pollution and planning laws**, and consider the possibility of specialist environment courts.

**Introduce access to the courts for non-governmental organisations** and others on environmental matters, in line with the Aarhus convention.

**Improve conservation** through legislation to protect the nature of Scotland.

**Build on the wildlife protection legislation** in the Criminal Justice Bill and ensure that it is effectively enforced.

Encourage the Police College at Tulliallan to provide courses to train **Wildlife Protection**

- Expand the role of restorative justice, which brings offenders face to face with the consequences of their actions - a system proven to reduce reoffending. This may prove effective with young offenders who consider themselves "untouchable" by the system.
- Support Children's Panels and give them the resources they need to reduce youth offending by turning young people away from repeat offences. Increase the range of disposals available to Children's Panels and provide sufficient secure accommodation for violent and persistent offenders.
- Evaluate the pilot Youth Courts and extend them, if they have been successful.
- Promote parental responsibility through voluntary measures to agree acceptable behaviour contracts and encourage schools to include parenting skills in the curriculum.
- Pilot a network of youth justice action officers responsible to the court charged with developing long-term personal plans for persistent offenders, ensuring that they are diverted from crime and that ongoing offending is dealt with speedily and effectively.
- Recognise that, for the most persistent and serious young offenders, secure accommodation is appropriate. We will devote more resources to making secure accommodation better at reducing reoffending than it does at present.
- Review the services provided for those leaving care, who are most at risk of entering a life of crime, to ensure that family-style services, including mentoring and befriending, continue to be available beyond the age of 16.
- Increase support for schemes aimed at persistent offenders that have proved more effective at reducing reoffending than traditional methods, in the way that Freagarrach and the Airborne project have.
- Improve the information given to panels and judges on the availability of non-custodial facilities.
- Support retailers who operate 'No Proof, No Sale' schemes and support the Young Scot Dialogue Youth Card pilot to restrict the ease with which young people can get hold of restricted goods like tobacco, alcohol, solvents and fireworks.

**Officers.**

**Provide training for procurators fiscal** to assist enforcement of the wildlife crime legislation.

**Introduce a Protection of Animals Bill** to allow local authorities to take into their care animals at risk of abuse.

**Support the police**

The police, courts and the Scottish Prison Service have dedicated staff. We aim to provide them with the resources they need to be even more effective and have a bigger impact on crime. We will:

- Recruit 3,500 police officers over the next four years to replace the substantial number of officers expected to retire and to increase even further the record number of police in Scotland.
- Give the police the back-up they need to spend more time detecting crime and protecting communities and less time on paperwork.
- Recruit 500 more Special Constables by 2006.
- Expand the role of community policing, encouraging deployment of officers for longer postings to give them the opportunity to get to know their community and increase their role in youth work to prevent crime.
- Increase investment in police IT and support staff to free up officers for street duty.
- Increase police efficiency by expanding the range of services organised on a nationwide basis like the Scottish Drugs Enforcement Agency and the Police College. Enable police forces to improve their purchasing power by coming together to negotiate supply contracts.
- Retain the present number of police forces to maintain local links and accountability.
- Increase public consultation and participation in policing by giving a greater role to accountable police authorities in the preparation of annual police plans.
- Build on the significant investment already under way in Scotland's courts by improving the operation of the courts system, reducing the amount of time wasted by police officers and witnesses attending courts for trials that are cancelled at the last moment, taking forward Lord Bonomy's recommendations.
- Consider the report of Sheriff Principal McInnes with a view to making summary criminal proceedings more efficient. We believe our justice system should continue to have a lay element.
- Develop partnerships between the police and business organisations to work to prevent crime but reject proposals for commercial sponsors to buy special privileges and enhanced cover.
- Reform and regulate the private security industry to improve public safety and secure higher quality standards.



**Help communities and victims**

The plight of victims of crime has been neglected for decades. We have significantly improved the treatment of victims in the last four years. We will build on this, making sure the justice system protects victims. We seek not only to make people and communities safer, but to feel safer, while recognising that many more people fear crime than will ever be a victim of it. We will:

- Support victims before, during and after court cases, addressing the impact crime has had on their lives.
- Boost victim support and court support schemes and extend the successful Witness Service to other courts.
- Introduce a national information and support service to keep victims informed about how young offenders are being dealt with.
- Legislate to protect vulnerable witnesses, such as children.
- Encourage prosecutors to give appropriate information to victims whenever practical on their reasoning for action taken or discontinued.
- Improve services so that they inspire confidence in the system and meet the needs of victims of different types of crime, such as domestic abuse, and reflect the differing needs of victims depending on ethnicity, gender or disability and those who are the victims of hate crimes.

- Take forward the recommendations of the Working Group to Address Domestic Abuse.
- Protect public service workers from attack. Ensure effective responses to problems through co-ordination between the relevant agencies.
- Ensure that every public service organisation has a written policy for dealing with attacks on its staff and a named individual responsible for monitoring its implementation.
- Develop measures to protect shopkeepers from harassment.
- Continue to expand the use of CCTV to help prevent crime.
- Introduce security grants for small shops to install CCTV and other measures to reduce crime.
- Evaluate the present Neighbourhood Wardens pilot projects. If successful and if the police believe they have been helpful in reassuring communities, roll the system out to all areas that would benefit from it, recognising that effective law enforcement depends on an effective and well-resourced police force.
- Create a new initiative with architects and builders to make new developments more secure at the design stage.



MAKE SCOTLAND A SAFER COUNTRY

## A difference for transport

- Start construction of new rail and light railway projects including the **Borders railway, Edinburgh trams and the Aberdeen cross-rail**
- **Build rail links** to Glasgow and Edinburgh airports
- **Abolish tolls** on the Skye Bridge
- Create a new **Highlands and Islands air network** to cut air fares, promote tourism and support lifeline links
- **Extend concessions for older people** to allow them to travel for free across Scotland using off-peak buses
- More action to get **freight off our roads**

Slow moving transport is slowing the Scottish economy and causing frustration to passengers and motorists alike. The Scottish people and the Scottish economy need fast, efficient transport. Scottish Liberal Democrats have three key objectives to get Scotland moving:

**Better public transport**, making the second Scottish Parliament one of delivery on key transport projects including rail, air and ferry services.

**Make transport work for people**, making sure that services meet the needs of people rather than operating companies.

**Support lifeline links for rural Scotland**, upgrading the air network to support public services and boost tourism.

### Better public transport



ScotRail/Scottish Railways Museum

#### Rail and Light Rail

The Scottish Executive's Ten Year Transport Plan sets out the new rail projects that are needed to get Scotland moving.

The first term of the Scottish Parliament allowed for the development of detailed public transport plans and consortia for major projects.

Scottish Liberal Democrats are determined that the next one will be about delivery of improved public transport, ensuring that decades of expenditure on roads to the detriment of public transport is ended. We will make the aims of future policy on rail to increase the number and proportion of journeys taken by train, reduce overcrowding for commuters and reduce journey times on some longer distance journeys to allow effective competition with cars. We will:

- Start construction of new rail and light railway projects, including links to Edinburgh and Glasgow airports. Begin construction work on projects such as the Borders Railway, the Stirling-Alloa-Kinross link, the Airdrie-Bathgate line and the Aberdeen cross-rail link.
- If necessary, use Scottish Executive funding to get the projects underway, but seek to involve the private sector where this can get them completed more quickly.
- Ensure that local authorities have sufficient powers to enter partnerships with the private sector that could, for example, harness increased land values in areas near to public transport development.
- Support suburban metro systems for Edinburgh and Glasgow, for the latter area exploring the development and better signposting of the fifty stations connected by the existing heavy rail



**“We will deliver long awaited projects - such as the Borders Railway”**

**Euan Robson**  
Liberal Democrat deputy minister

### Green Action

**Introduce Green Transport Plans** to require major employers, those providing public sector facilities and housing developments to ensure that their working arrangements and associated transport infrastructure will encourage reduced dependence on cars.

**Improve freight facilities grants** and extend them further to water transport to get freight off roads and onto railways, coastal and inland waterways.

network.

- Support initiatives to improve safety at railway stations and the satisfaction experienced by passengers.
- Support business by developing better transport links, including rail links to Glasgow and Edinburgh airports and encouraging the establishment of direct flights from Scotland to international destinations.
- Support the long term development of a new high-speed rail service to link London with Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen to shrink journey times and offer easy access to city centres and the Channel Tunnel, recognising that air travel has an environmental cost that makes it unattractive for many journeys.
- Begin work on the next Ten Year Plan so that no time is lost in continuing public transport investment and improvement.

### Support lifeline links

Lifeline transport services are often essential to island communities to provide links with the Scottish mainland. To continue to protect and enhance these links we will:

- Seek to ensure that under the new contract for CalMac ferries, encouragement is given for innovation on existing ferry routes and for new or shorter crossings to islands. Expand the Rural Transport Initiative which has been highly successful in developing new services.
- Abolish tolls on the Skye Bridge, giving residents and tourists free access to Skye.
- Support tourism and business links with the Highlands and Islands through the development of an improved air network. Work with the enterprise agencies to consider the full economic benefits and the business case for suitable subsidy, building on the existing Public Service Obligations.

### Road transport

We seek to limit national road building to the levels already announced by the Executive. Future roads should only proceed when necessary for safety reasons, to connect isolated communities or for environmental reasons when it is better to re-route traffic in the interests of cutting pollution. We will ensure road transport is integrated into the public transport system:

- Ensure that bus timetable information is easily available and that bus services offer convenient links between communities and other types of public transport by using the powers in the Transport Act.
- Monitor whether the Quality Partnership powers included in the Transport Act 2001 are adequate to protect and enhance evening, weekend and rural bus services.
- Pilot new kick-start plans to create better value bus services, provided over a 18 month period to promote particular under-used routes through enhanced frequency and marketing. The aim is to generate growth in passenger numbers and reduce the public subsidy.
- Improve and upgrade rural roads affected by large volumes of timber traffic and reduce the amount of timber traffic on unsuitable roads by promoting internal routes within forestry areas.
- Continue to invest in road improvements that will reduce the number of casualties amongst drivers, passengers, pedestrians and cyclists.
- Promote co-operative sales outlets for fuel in isolated and island areas to drive down where possible the cost of fuel towards the Scottish average.
- Support Demand Responsive Transport initiatives to improve public transport services particularly in rural areas.

### Make transport work for people

The transport system is about enabling people and goods to move around. We intend to ensure they can get around Scotland speedily and with the minimum inconvenience. We will:

- Build on the free local concessionary bus travel for older people, turning it into a nationwide scheme by incorporating journeys across council boundaries.
- Work with transport operators to improve concessions for people with disabilities accessing a range of public transport.
- Introduce a Network Railcard for all ages, to allow discounted travel across Scotland.
- Invest in high quality travel information to give people choices about their means of travel.
- Support easy to use through-ticketing systems, including time-limited tickets to facilitate rapid transfers between different types of transport.
- Evaluate examples from across the world of the provision of shared electric vehicles or bicycles, and make this work available to local authorities with a view to establishing pilot schemes in Scotland.
- Develop the role of the existing South East Scotland, West Scotland and North East Scotland transport partnerships to assist effective integration of public transport across their regions.
- Establish a Highlands and Islands Transport Authority to integrate different modes of transport.
- Support park & ride facilities linked to fast means of transport in and out of town and city centres.

**Set a minimum standard for the planting of trees** to act as 'carbon sinks' beside new road developments, ensuring that the costs of this are included in the economic assessments for such roads.

Maintain the right of local authorities to use congestion charging as an option to pay for improved public transport. Encourage delivery of partial improvements before charging begins.

**Support the development of Homezones** to improve safety for pedestrians in residential areas.



Sam Taylor



- Provide a national framework for safe walkways to school and Walking Buses.
- Develop the Core Path Network to benefit walkers and landowners, following the Land Reform Act.
- Make sure that the needs of cyclists are properly taken into account in the contracts for future rail and ferry franchises.
- Continue to extend freight facilities grants, including for water transport, to take, for example, timber from roads to waterways and coastal transport.
- Negotiate with the UK government to secure support to develop Scapa Flow as the UK's international container hub port.
- Support the continuation, and expansion, of direct ferry links from Scotland to mainland Europe.



A DIFFERENCE FOR TRANSPORT

## A difference for rural Scotland

- Attract GPs and other health professionals to work in rural areas
- Develop organic farming in Scotland
- Support the Scottish food and drink industries and promote quality food
- Give local communities a stake in renewable energy projects
- Fight to protect Scottish fishing through regional control of fisheries and a new long-term fisheries policy

Remote and rural communities are a key part of the fabric of Scotland, but are especially vulnerable to change.

The Scottish Liberal Democrats have stood up for the interests of rural communities in public services, transport, agriculture and fishing by establishing a Cabinet Minister for Rural Development at the heart of government. To build on these achievements Scottish Liberal Democrats have three key objectives for rural Scotland:

**Building sustainable communities**, enhancing the viability of our rural and remote communities by making sure public services are available to people in all areas of Scotland.

**Improving prosperity, the promotion of tourism**, the use of our forestry assets and the protection and sustainable care of our natural environment.

**Revitalising Scottish farming, fishing and food**, helping them meet the demands of modern consumers.

### Building sustainable communities

The network of public services is often under pressure in rural areas. To increase their viability we will: Take imaginative steps to attract and retain GPs, dentists and other primary health care workers to rural areas, enabling rural authorities to contribute to student loan payments for newly qualified staff and use technology to improve the range of services in small GP practices.

- Increase the number of salaried dentists and GPs working in rural areas and support the expansion of GP practices in rural areas to offer a wider range of services to cut down travelling time by patients.
- Encourage local councils to protect rural services and develop new multi-function facilities by utilising their power of community planning under the Local Government Act 2002.
- Adopt the principles of Your Guide to ensure the availability of services and information with IT back-up in the most appropriate Post Office or government locations.
- Take forward plans to increase the availability of affordable housing in rural areas.
- Ensure that rural and remote communities have their distinct needs reflected across the range of government policy and initiatives.
- Support the development of the Scottish National Rural Partnership to take on the role performed by the Rural Forum in supporting local initiatives to create jobs, maintain services or enhance the environment, promote dialogue between different interest groups, gather intelligence and help shape official policy.
- Reduce the cost to consumers of first-time connections to the public water and sewerage system.

### Rural prosperity

Rural areas face considerable challenges, not least transport problems caused by long distances between communities and higher fuel prices, which add to the cost of delivering services and products. We propose a full package of tourism and transport improvements that will promote and serve rural, remote and island areas. We seek to harness to the full the natural advantages of rural areas, with industries like forestry, which supports over 10,000 jobs in Scotland and contributes £800m per annum to the economy. We will:

- Expand the use of digital links, including broadband, to all parts of Scotland, allowing the dispersal of jobs, easy access to services and education to be available.
- Exploit potential job opportunities flowing from research by the Scottish Agricultural and Biological Research Institutes in agriculture, animal welfare and public health.



**“Scotland’s rural communities should be able to thrive, not just make do.”**

**Ross Finnie**  
Liberal Democrat Rural Development Minister

### Green Action

**Transform coastal marine stewardship areas into coastal partnerships** with boards representing stakeholders.

**Create a coasts and firths action plan** to enhance the natural environment of the coastline.

**Give local communities a stake in the expansion of renewable energy** by giving the opportunity for communities to purchase land for small wind generators, the money made returning to local communities.

Make sure the

- Develop the range and quality of jobs accessible to those living in rural areas by continuing to relocate civil service jobs to areas across Scotland.
- Consider establishing a Rural Development Institute, combining the educational, commercial and technology transfer functions of the Scottish Agricultural College with the business advice service offered by Scottish Enterprise and Highlands & Islands Enterprise, to lead agricultural education, enterprise development, marine diversification and innovation.
- Implement the Water Environment and Water Services Act to ensure the sustainable management and integration of all policies affecting Scotland's water environment, including agriculture, aquaculture, planning, land management, flood prevention and environmental policies.
- Seek to double forestry and primary wood processing production over the next fifteen years.
- Support sustainable forestry management and reforestation, making greater use of native Scottish species. Support the development of technologies to promote the greater use of fuel from wood.

expansion of wave power and other renewable technologies offers an opportunity for the creation of manufacturing and maintenance jobs in remote areas.

Pursue a range of measures to protect and promote Scotland's natural environment including legislation to improve nature conservation.

### Revitalising Scottish farming, fishing and food



Sam Taylor

#### Revitalising farming

Farming is at the heart of business in rural areas. We aim to enhance and protect farming, assisting farmers to meet the demands of modern consumers and to help them work with the natural environment. We will:

- Seek reform of the Common Agricultural Policy to shift subsidies away from merely supporting production to those that recognise the economic, social and environmental contribution agriculture makes to rural development.
- Implement Land Management Contracts to deliver reformed Common Agricultural Policy support to take account of the diversity of Scottish agriculture and its economic, social and environmental impact.
- Implement the Organic Development Plan, to develop the infrastructure needed to increase Scotland's share of the organic food market. The Organic Development Plan will substitute and replace organic imports into the UK, increase the overall size of the UK market for organic produce, reduce the cost to the consumer and improve the quality and variety of food on offer

through local outlets across Scotland.

- Increase the payments available for farmers wishing to convert to organic farming.
- In accordance with EU rules assess the GM Crop trials, ensuring that there are opportunities for peer review and assessment by others including environmental organisations. Until this process is completed and the public debate concluded we will not permit any further GM field trials or commercial growing of GM crops. If there are future trials, they should be controlled by a reformed scientific advisory group including environmental and socio-economic interests.
- Implement a Crofting Reform Bill, while supporting the retention of a grant scheme for crofting counties.
- Retain the current practice of widely dispersing Veterinary Centres and improve animal health and surveillance services.

#### Revitalising fishing

Scotland's fishing industries have been an integral part of rural Scotland for centuries. Recent events have highlighted the problems whitefish fleets face and the Liberal Democrats have ensured a £50million support package for affected fishing communities. We will continue to fight to protect the interests of all fishing communities. We will:

- Support a sustainable fishing industry through a new Common Fisheries Policy founded on relative stability, maintenance of six and twelve mile limits, the Hague Preference and the Shetland Box and conservation measures based on sound, independent science and the involvement of industry stakeholders.
- Work to achieve agreement for more powers over fishing to be delegated to Regional Advisory Councils and press for them to be given powers to set Total Allowable Catches and other regulating measurements for inshore fisheries.
- Legislate to give enforcement to the regulating orders for fishing.
- Support the growth of an aquaculture industry that is sustainable, diverse, competitive and economically viable. Reduce the number of bodies involved in regulating and controlling the aquaculture industry.
- Support research into fisheries including the development of centres of excellence and innovation.
- Support the establishment of Marine National Parks and develop the opportunities for offshore wind farms, tidal energy sites and artificial reefs to provide suitable areas for conservation of fish stocks.
- Seek at Westminster to abolish rental charges and transfer control of the sea-bed from the Crown Estates to local authorities, who could then draw up management plans with local interests fully involved.
- Develop best practice in freshwater aquaculture to protect wild river fish stocks from cross breeding and prevent developments that present a danger to the environment and ecology.



Sam Taylor

### Revitalising the food industry

The quality of Scottish food and drink products deserves to be celebrated and promoted in Scotland and abroad. To support the growth of the Scottish food and drink industry we will:

- Continue to take every opportunity to expand the export potential of Scottish produce through the marketing opportunities of "Scotland the Brand."
- Encourage localised food distribution systems involving more local processing of produce. Promote direct sales, farmers' markets and alternative marketing schemes to ensure that producers have a stake in each stage of the food chain, and that value added is retained and reinvested in the local community.
- Support local food chains, reducing the number of "food miles" that produce travels before reaching the serving table through measures including creative public procurement
- Develop local accreditation schemes for locally produced food. Enhance producers' marketing strength by developing regional marketing co-operatives.
- Negotiate agreement with the major supermarket chains and with farming representatives of a Code of Practice for sourcing and labelling local food items, alongside those produced by organic and sustainable methods such as LEAF (Linking Environment and Farming).



A DIFFERENCE FOR RURAL SCOTLAND

## Make a liberal Scotland

- **Make everyone's vote count** with the proportional Single Transferable Vote system for council elections
- Boost the role of the **voluntary sector**
- Expand and streamline **childcare facilities**
- Establish a **national theatre for Scotland**
- **Expand the role of sport** in local communities
- Establish an independent **Scottish Human Rights Commission**
- Bring in new rights for public access to **environmental and pollution information**

Scottish Liberal Democrats aim to empower people and communities to help themselves to achieve their fullest potential. Scotland's diversity of culture, language, sport and individual identity should be nurtured.

We believe in a pluralist society where the voluntary and independent sector is recognised as a full partner with formal levels of government. Power should be exercised by the individual and the community at the lowest practical level.

The individual life chances of many people in our country are gravely damaged by poverty, ill-health, illiteracy and fractured homes and communities. No one should be excluded from individual and community opportunity in this way in an effective liberal democracy.

We will:

**Transform local government**, making it responsive to people and giving it increased powers to help communities.

**Empower the voluntary and independent sector**, enabling the dynamism and flexibility of Scotland's rich and diverse civic society to use their experience in partnership with government and private business to provide effective choices to people.

**Promoting equality** in all aspects of life in Scotland.

**Invigorate arts and culture**, seeking to maintain national cultural institutions while backing independent and local projects to promote diversity and strengthen communities.

**Build effective opportunities for individual and community wealth creation** to reduce poverty and enhance personal fulfilment, including the expansion of childcare facilities, aiming to develop flexible childcare provision accessible to all.

### Transform local government

Scottish Liberal Democrats will enhance local government as a partner of the Scottish Parliament and the Executive, giving councils important new functions, particularly in public health and the environment. We will:

- Make people's votes count by introducing the proportional Single Transferable Vote for local government elections in time for 2007, implementing the Local Governance Bill. Councils must be far more accountable to the people who elect them.
- Reform local government finance. Replace council tax with a local income tax related to ability to pay and allow local authorities power over business rates - including the power to reduce them to attract business.
- Seek a consensus between the Scottish Executive and local authorities in relation to the freedom given to councils to spend money in areas of their choosing. This must include means



**"We want a Scotland where everyone has the chance to succeed"**

**Nora Radcliffe**  
Liberal Democrat  
Group Convener

### Green Action

**Support community heating schemes and renewable energy**, where whole communities can benefit from provision of low cost energy, generated, for example, by biomass or wind power in the local area.

Support **community shareholding** in local renewable energy projects.

Bring in new rights for the **public to access**

of agreeing outcomes between the Scottish Executive and local authorities in relation to achieving national public policy objectives.

- In distributing funding to councils, ensure that account is taken of the variable costs that may be incurred due to particular local circumstances.
- Encourage councils to devolve responsibility where appropriate, by passing control of housing to community based housing associations and tenants' co-operatives, community controlled non-profit-distributing trusts providing one stop services, and similar bodies owned and run by local people.
- Support the establishment of fairly elected community councils and elected burgh councils in urban areas with limited power to use revenue to tackle community issues
- Support the development of the Scottish Executive's White Paper on the fire service with its emphasis on fire prevention and a professionally based service.

### Back the voluntary and independent sector

Voluntary and independent sector organisations reach many parts of society not reached by local or national government. Voluntary and community organisations are the third arm of public life in Scotland, delivering essential local services which contribute vitally to community life. We aim to enhance their independence, rationalise and improve their funding, and make sure they are fully valued by government. We will:

- Establish a body in partnership with the sector to advise, regulate and co-ordinate funding of voluntary organisations.
- Ensure that local authorities, health boards and other funders embrace three year rolling core funding for the voluntary sector.
- Negotiate with Whitehall to secure a Scottish Opportunities Fund to take over the responsibilities of the UK-wide New Opportunities Fund and Communities Fund in Scotland. The new Fund will provide relevant voluntary organisations with an element of sustainable core funding at grassroots level and help them to secure suitable matching funding from local authorities.
- Empower the Scottish Opportunities Fund to support adequate voluntary sector training, particularly focused on those dealing with young people, and to provide funding to voluntary groups to cover the cost of administering police checks.
- Reform the existing competitive bidding process for funding which tends to work against successful existing projects and causes waste and red tape.
- Streamline the Executive's approach to the voluntary sector, combining the Voluntary Issues Unit with the Active Communities Initiative, giving a clearer focus.
- Encourage local compacts between local authorities and the voluntary sector, monitored by the Executive's new unit.
- Introduce a system of 'light touch' starter grants for new community groups.
- Following the conclusions of the Scottish Executive consultation on the recommendations of the McFadden Report, legislate to reform charity law and take further steps to assist the sector.
- Improve the partnership between voluntary sector providers and health boards.
- Develop a compact between faith based organisations and funding authorities as to the best way to fund community and care projects supported by churches and other religious bodies, and to secure the best deal for those who rely on voluntary sector social welfare services.

**environmental information** based on strong freedom of information principles.

Legislate to require the production of a **pollution inventory** for every community, listing a wide range of pollutants and accessible through the internet.



### Communities, wealth creation and life opportunities

Everyone in our communities should have access to opportunities to free themselves from poverty, and all levels of government should help them do so.

Targeting those excluded from the jobs market through lack of skills, training, good health or confidence in order to bring them into employment will attack poverty, improve living standards and help create the wealth necessary to pay for better public services.

Accessible, flexible and comprehensive childcare is important in tackling inequality and poverty and equipping people for work. We will encourage the public sector to lead the way. We will:

- Encourage the development of community banking agreements to bring improved financial services to deprived communities, currently left to the mercy of irresponsible lenders.
- Support credit unions and time banks as examples of ideas of mutualism that allow communities to move forward without control or direction from of government.

- Assist the start up of local co-operatives and micro-businesses.
- Aim to create flexible childcare provision accessible to all, building on the achievement of nursery school provision for children of three and four, expanding childcare facilities, particularly in the public sector and through co-operative arrangements.
- Encourage Local Enterprise and Trading Schemes, which can help people develop and retain skills, particularly when they are looking for jobs.
- Support home insurance schemes tied to rents paid to social landlords, as too often people with the lowest incomes have the highest chance of being a victim of burglary.
- Establish a statutory right to independent debt and money advice and ensure that users have a choice of providers where practical. Monitor the implementation to ensure that there is not monopoly provision by local authorities. Ensure that improved financial services are linked to better provision of financial advice and counselling to reduce the problems of unsustainable debt.
- Review the effectiveness of Social Inclusion Partnerships, taking account of the extent to which they involve local people. If necessary, we will consider replacing them with not-for-profit voluntary organisations or greater local authority involvement.

## Promoting equality

Liberal Democrats welcome the diversity of modern Scottish society and seek to ensure that everyone, regardless of ethnicity, sexuality, gender, disability or age is treated on an equal basis. We will:

- Ensure that public services enable asylum-seekers to live with dignity and assist host communities in using the skills and experience of refugees.
- Implement the proposals of the Scottish Executive's cross party working group on tackling religious hatred.
- Improve building standards to improve accessibility for disabled people and life-long suitability of new homes.
- Continue to improve the accessibility of public buildings for both employees and service users.
- Improve the quality of transport information, to reflect integrated services for people with disabilities.
- Make sure public authorities recognise the distinct needs of people with disabilities as victims of crime and patients.
- Amend the social justice strategy to include milestones to address disability issues.
- Recognise the rights of unmarried and same-sex long-term partnerships in legislation, including the opportunity to register a long-term partnership, preferably, but not necessarily, in conjunction with steps at Westminster to deal with the tax, benefits and pensions aspects of such partnerships.
- Encourage organisations to adopt positive policies such as flexible retirement ages and part-time working, aimed at retaining experienced older workers.
- Support the Scottish Youth Parliament and seek to engage young people in the development of Executive policies.
- Support lowering the voting age limit to 16.

## Invigorating arts and culture

Scottish Liberal Democrats place high value on the importance of culture and the arts in Scotland, recognising their key role in today's diverse Scotland. We will:

- Implement an independent review of the Scottish Arts Council's structure and purpose, considering whether national arts, culture and festival bodies should receive funding directly from the Scottish Executive.
- Evaluate the benefits of establishing a new role for the Scottish Arts Council to provide funding and advice to independent and smaller arts and culture bodies. Enable it to establish productive partnerships with business and develop programmes to help communities develop pride in themselves, particularly focusing on areas of social and economic disadvantage.
- Establish a national theatre for Scotland, based on an institutional, virtual model.
- Support the role of libraries in schools and communities, particularly in fostering and sustaining readership and literacy. Evaluate the feasibility of opening libraries on Sundays, on a nationwide basis.
- Work with VisitScotland and other partners to promote Scottish arts and culture to visitors and overseas.
- Celebrate the 250th anniversary of Burns' birth in 2009 by encouraging Scots worldwide to return to Scotland to a feast of literary achievements, cultural festivity and family research.
- Examine the practicality of establishing regional Cultural Centres based on the Ireland model of Heritage Centres, which serve as an exemplar of cultural excellence and regional activity.
- Foster interest in the arts and culture by building upon existing partnerships between museums and galleries and schools and by increased touring of exhibitions of the national collections.
- Encourage Edinburgh fringe artists who receive central funding to perform in venues outside Edinburgh following the festival.
- Continue to support Arts Development Officers and Co-ordinators across Scotland.

## Language

Scotland has a distinctive and colourful language heritage. Today in Scotland there are speakers of English, Scots, Gaelic, many community languages such as Chinese and Urdu and British Sign Language. Language enriches our entire society and allows citizens to access public services and communicate with each other. We will:

- Recognise the importance to Scotland's history and culture of our heritage languages of Gaelic and Scots. We will continue to be committed to helping these languages flourish.
- Introduce a Languages of Scotland Bill which will give councils and other public bodies a responsibility to draw up a languages plan which reflects the communities they serve.
- Place Bòrd Gàidhlig na h-Alba on a more secure footing by making it a statutory body with responsibility for drawing up a 'Strategy for Gàidhlig'.
- Support steps to recruit more teachers and interpreters of British Sign Language.

## Sport

The Scottish Liberal Democrats are dedicated to promoting sporting opportunities for people in Scotland, at all levels, whatever their ability. Sport is integral to healthy, responsible communities, developing self-confident individuals.

Scottish children are now amongst the unhealthiest in the western world. Greater accessibility to sport will help reduce Scotland's growing weight problems, breakdown racial barriers and combat anti-social behaviour and street crime.

At international, national, regional and local levels sport is often at the heart of complex inter-agency initiatives and we need to ensure coherent support for sport. We will:

- Promote sport in schools to encourage young people to take up sport outside school.
- Extend the sports champions scheme across Scotland, in primary and secondary schools, with the active primary schools programme and school sports co-ordinators to provide long-term support.
- Ensure that school facilities are available to the community at large and encourage facilities that the community has to be made available to the school, wherever possible.
- Promote local community sports strategies to assist local authorities, schools and sports clubs to share facilities.
- Encourage clubs to provide coaching facilities for schoolchildren, to support local strategies and boost their future membership.
- Develop accreditation schemes to allow greater numbers of people to act as coaches or physical activity trainers and promote New Deal programmes which give unemployed people opportunities to work and train as sports assistants to School Sports Co-ordinators.

- Ensure that the importance of playing fields to local communities for public amenity and informal recreation, as well as sport, is recognised.
- Promote Scotland as a tourist destination for a diversity of sports, from golf to outdoor activities, and continue to seek to attract major sporting events;
- Promote golf internationally and make sure that international competitions are used to support the development of young golfers.

**Protecting individual rights**

Scottish Liberal Democrats believe the state must protect and promote the rights of the individual. We will:

- Legislate to establish an Independent Police Complaints body.
- Put the independent Judicial Appointments Board process on a statutory basis.
- Make the appointments process for Queen's Counsel more open and independent.
- Establish an independent Scottish Human Rights Commission.

**Civil Law reform**

The quality of our civil justice system has a direct impact on people's lives. We will:

- Reform family law by taking forward the White Paper.
- Modernise the laws on diligence and personal bankruptcy.
- Improve the legal system by continuing to reform civil legal aid.
- Establish a Civil Justice Forum to bring all stakeholders together in improving the civil courts system.



MAKE A LIBERAL SCOTLAND

**Make a better place to live**

- Make towns, cities and communities **work for people**
- Protect local **post offices**
- **Fight to defend** local pharmacies
- Recycle 25 per cent of household waste by 2006 and 55 per cent by 2020. Go further and cut the amount of waste produced by 2010
- Drive forward to achieve the target of **40 per cent of Scotland's electricity from renewable sources** by 2020
- **Tackle fuel poverty** by expanding the central heating scheme
- **Reward those who take conservation measures** with a new energy banding system
- Expand the role of **community renewable energy**, especially solar power, in towns and cities
- Long term improvements in Scotland's housing stock - including **new ways to support private owners**

Home is where the heart is. Yet the lives of many thousands of people, particularly in some of Scotland's urban areas, are damaged by bad housing, an unattractive environment, declining communities, poverty and an atmosphere of failure.

People often feel they have little control over their local communities. We seek to improve their quality of life, with four key objectives:

**Renewing urban centres**, seeking to reverse decades of neglect and give communities pride in their surroundings, similar to that often found in mainland Europe.

**Giving people power over their homes and communities.** We will help the homeless and support people in all types of housing tenure to improve their homes and communities to suit their needs.

**Improving the quality of housing**, adopting a long-term approach to ensure everyone can live in homes of a good standard.

**Enhancing the urban environment**, to make urban areas healthier places for people to live, promoting green energy sources in towns and cities, improving energy conservation and meeting tough targets for recycling waste.



**Renewing urban and suburban centres**

We seek to renew declining town centres and give support to suburban centres by re-invigorating town-centre businesses, preserving attractive areas and improving others and reforming the planning process to fully take into account the views and needs of the local community. We will:

- Establish Business Improvement Districts



**“We want to catapult Scotland up the recycling league tables within the next three years.”**

**Robert Brown**  
Liberal Democrat  
Communities Spokesperson

**Green Action**

Require all local authorities reduce waste, reuse waste and **recycle or compost 25 per cent of municipal waste by 2006** and 55 per cent by 2020.

Insist that the Scottish Executive's recycling

involving public-private partnerships to improve urban centres.

- Set up a task force to work with smaller retail chains to help revitalise the Post Office network in Scotland, seeking local business opportunities for commission-based selling of services and access to government information, including the Your Guide concept.
- Fight to protect community-based pharmacists and resist Westminster attempts to strip them of their special status.
- Review planning rules to ensure maximum opportunities to regenerate railway station premises as a hub for nearby areas through conversion to business use.
- Exploit historic links as part of town and suburb regeneration, including working with the Lyon Court.
- Remove restrictions on social landlords and encourage them to incorporate wider community interests, such as shops and services, into their regeneration plans.
- Initiate a pre-application consultation and mediation process for large developments including involvement by local councillors, revising the councillors' code of conduct to assist this.
- Enhance the urban landscape, particularly by introducing a more effective system for improving conservation and design, supporting the preservation of historic facades, and streetscapes.
- Support a Public Mediation Service so that communities can engage with developers over controversial applications without resorting to legal routes.
- Encourage urban environmental task forces to tackle eyesores, litter, graffiti and dog mess, encouraging Local Authorities to allow direct access to the task forces by local bodies like community councils and housing associations.
- Invest in flood prevention measures and support planning controls on buildings in flood plains.

**Giving people power over their homes and communities**

People are the key to community regeneration. We will help the homeless and support people in all types of housing tenure to improve their homes and communities to suit their needs. We will:-

- Build on the local housing plans and homelessness strategies required by the Housing Act 2001 and the Homelessness Act 2003 to provide effective support for homeless people, eradicate rooflessness and provide good quality housing for all our citizens.
- Proceed with community empowerment by breaking down municipal monopolies, supporting housing associations and tenant co-operatives, implementing stock transfers and investing in effective long term improvement of social housing stock.
- Establish a Scottish Home Owners Trust to develop Owner Support Groups and good practice.
- Reform tenement law and establish owner-funded long-term maintenance funds.
- Increase the amount of money devoted to Private Sector Housing Grants to help home-owners tackle poor quality housing.
- Ensure that more homes are barrier free and usable throughout the whole of an individual's life.

targets are met through provision of **kerbside collection** of recyclable material.

**Reform planning guidelines** to ensure new housing includes provision for separating waste and space for kerbside collection of recyclable material.

Conduct an early review of progress and establish new targets for future years, aiming to **reduce the total amount of waste produced**.

Take action to meet the **40 per cent target for renewable energy** in Scotland by 2020.

Make all public buildings and publicly supported housing increasingly **incorporate solar power or other renewable energy** as part of their design.

**Oppose plans for any new nuclear power stations** in Scotland.

Change planning guidance to make sure **out-of-town developments include sufficient public transport links** to allow visitors to choose transport other than cars.

**Grant third party rights of appeal** in planning cases where the local authority involved has an interest, where the application is contrary to the local plan, when planning officers have recommended rejection or where an Environmental Impact Assessment is needed.

**Reduce light pollution** in the night sky and



Cate Gillon

**Improving the quality of housing**

Scotland's homes are a diverse mix. We will enable those in poorer quality housing to improve it, raise standards in the private rental sector and make it easier for home-owners to maintain and sell their property. We will:

- Extend the Executive's home insulation and free central heating scheme further, aiming to include those in receipt of higher level Disability Living Allowance and to allow replacement of inadequate or defective systems.
- Allow the assessment of the

need for particular types of housing in the local area to be included as a planning consideration, supporting the incorporation of affordable housing in mixed developments.

- Establish a definition of "Basic Standard of Decency" to prioritise Executive, local authority and housing association investment in stock.
- Take forward the recommendations of the Housing Improvement Task Force.
- Introduce a "log book" system for recording maintenance of housing.
- Implement a framework for sellers' surveys to reduce the costs of moving house.
- Establish standards for a voluntary accreditation scheme for private landlords to offer tenants and neighbours a level of quality assurance.
- Enable housing associations to offer a factoring service for private tenements.

**Enhancing the built environment**

The Scottish Executive has established the highest standards for insulation of new buildings in the UK under the Building Standards (Scotland) Regulations, with new buildings up to 25 per

cent more efficient as a result. The Warm Deal has resulted in 130,000 dwellings being improved and created hundreds of jobs. We will extend these achievements and develop new sources of green energy in our cities. We will:

- Define a new energy banding system to classify houses according to energy efficiency, offering tangible benefits to homeowners for energy conservation improvements they make to their homes.
- Ensure energy conservation levels match the highest levels in Europe by reforming building standards.
- Ensure new homes incorporate solar power or other renewable energy sources by further reforming building standards and planning rules.
- Promote the installation of grey water schemes in new developments, collecting rain water in homes to reduce demand for fully treated water, also by reforming buildings standards.
- Encourage other green housing initiatives.
- Set strong minimum standards for including public open space in new developments and make the National Playing Fields Association a statutory consultee on relevant planning applications to help protect existing spaces.
- Establish a Scottish committee of producers to disburse money from the climate change levy imposed on energy production to energy conservation.

save energy by specifying pollution-reducing lighting for new public lighting.

Increase investment to tackle contaminated and derelict land.



MAKE A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE

## A record of action



Jamie Paterson

Labour Government in London.

### **In 1999, Liberal Democrats promised to focus on health promotion.**

We now have a Health Improvement Fund that invests in a range of projects including fresh fruit for children and breakfast clubs in schools.

### **In 1999, Liberal Democrats promised to employ more doctors and more nurses.**

We now have 500 extra doctors and more than 1,600 extra nurses.

### **In 1999, Liberal Democrats said we would provide a nursery place for all three and four year olds whose parents wanted it.**

Now all of these children - around 100,000 three and four-year-olds - receive free nursery education every year.

### **In 1999, Liberal Democrats said we would abolish tuition fees and increase financial support for students.**

Thanks to the Liberal Democrats, more than 100,000 students have had their tuition fees abolished and many thousands receive grants.

### **In 1999, Liberal Democrats said we would keep the police service strong and fight crime by tackling it at its roots, concentrating on prevention and detection.**

We now have a record number of police officers. Clear up rates in Scotland are double those in England and Wales.

### **In 1999, Liberal Democrats said that we would introduce a concessionary fare scheme for older people.**

**In 1999, we took the difficult option of choosing to work within government for the people who voted for us, writes Jim Wallace.**

We resisted the easy option of running away from responsibility to sit and snipe from the comfort of the opposition benches.

Looking back, I have no doubt we made the right decision. We have made the difference. You only have to compare the actions of the Liberal Democrat in partnership government in Scotland and the majority

## Costings

A full costing of this programme for government will be available in a separate document.

With the exception of specified items, all departments will have to work within current spending plans, unless growth in the resources available allows more in due course.

Our three spend-to-save initiatives will add to existing Executive plans and make a difference to the three key issues they are designed to tackle - reducing youth crime, reducing ill health, reducing energy waste and costs.

The money to pay for these funds will come from prudent use of Scottish Executive provision for contingencies and modernising government.



Over one million older people across Scotland now enjoy free local travel.

**In 1999, Liberal Democrats said we would establish a way to achieve the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Long Term Care.**

Thanks to the Liberal Democrats, over 75,000 older people now benefit from free personal care.

**With just these seven policies we have changed the lives of millions of people in Scotland today.**

And we have done much more - too much to mention here.

**Let there be no doubt - over the last four years, it is the Liberal Democrats who have made the difference.**

**Labour, on their own, would have been a disappointment.**

We know what they would be like on their own. They govern at Westminster with a majority of over 150.

**Have they set a challenging target on renewable energy?**

No.

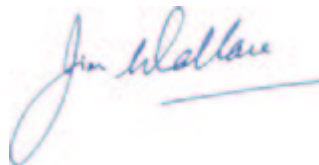
**Have they abolished tuition fees?**

No.

**Have they introduced free personal care for the elderly?**

No.

**Our record of action has helped to build people's trust in the Liberal Democrats. They know what we promised in 1999, and they know that we've delivered.**



**Jim Wallace QC**  
Leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats

**You too can make a difference**

Click [here](#) to join the Scottish Liberal Democrats or send a donation.

