



Scottish Liberal Democrats

The REAL alternative

Manifesto Scottish Supplement

REAL AMBITION FOR SCOTLAND

A RECORD OF ACTION

This General Election comes at an important time for Scotland. It is the second General Election since the establishment of the Scottish Parliament and the most open for a generation. For the first time since 1929, the election will be a genuine three party contest across the UK with the Liberal Democrats offering the Real Alternative to Tony Blair's Labour Party and Michael Howard's Tories at Westminster.

The Scottish Parliament is working - delivering real solutions to problems in Scotland. However, the colour of the government at Westminster remains important for Scotland. On issues of the economy, taxation, pensions, social security, and Scotland's role in the world, what happens at Westminster matters in Scotland.

AMBITIOUS FOR SCOTLAND

Liberal Democrats are ambitious for Scotland. In government, we are setting the agenda for Scotland's future, investing for the long-term in children, in older people, in enterprise and opportunity, in better health and in a better environment.

Liberal Democrats want to

- Achieve radical health improvement by preventing illness and promoting good health
- Cut crime and reoffending through effective rehabilitation and alternatives to custody
- Implement innovative education and enterprise policies to create an entrepreneurial Scotland
- Get Scotland moving through massive investment in public transport & infrastructure
- Make sustainable development the focus for Scotland's future and ensure a green

environmental thread runs through all Scottish Executive policy, not least in our ambitious targets for renewable energy, recycling and green jobs

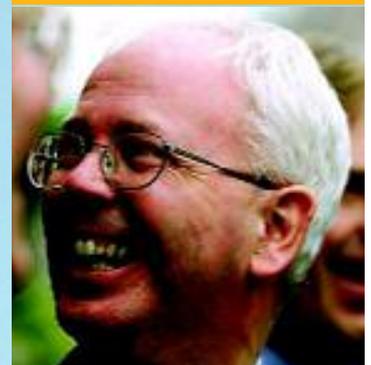
But we want to do more and, with Liberal Democrats in government at Westminster, we can.

First, we will take action across the UK that will benefit Scotland through our proposals to reform pensions, maternity pay, social security and taxation, cut red tape, and promote cleaner energy and transport. In our full Manifesto we set out these proposals in more detail.

Second, there are actions we can take in Scotland, using the additional resources that a Liberal Democrat government at Westminster will bring. Our proposals for new policies for Scotland, to build on our success in government, are detailed in this Supplement to the Manifesto.

"The Scottish Liberal Democrats are making a difference to the lives of all of Scotland's people and delivering on our promises"

Jim Wallace MSP
Leader,
Scottish Liberal Democrats



scotlibdems.org.uk

Invest in our children; Better care when you need it most; Put patients first; 1,000 more police in our communities; Axe the council tax; Tackle climate change

Our Westminster proposals for this election will result in an extra £1.8 billion over five years for Scotland. We will invest this additional resource in six key areas:

INVEST IN SCOTLAND'S CHILDREN

Affordable childcare, better learning and more leisure opportunities

BETTER CARE WHEN YOU NEED IT MOST

A new package of care for older people in the community

PUT PATIENTS FIRST

Faster diagnosis so your NHS treatment can start more quickly

1,000 MORE POLICE IN OUR COMMUNITIES

Cutting crime and the fear of crime

AXE THE COUNCIL TAX

Local Income Tax is both fair and affordable

TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE

Improve energy efficiency across the public sector and reduce carbon emissions in Scotland.

LIBERAL DEMOCRATS ARE THE REAL ALTERNATIVE AT WESTMINSTER

Over the past four years, Charles Kennedy's Liberal Democrats have been the effective opposition at Westminster. On Iraq, ID Cards, Tuition Fees, and Council Tax, we asked the critical questions while the Conservatives lined up with Tony Blair's Labour Party. The Conservatives have flip-flopped over the big issues of the day. When called upon to make a judgement – in the heat of the moment – the Conservatives consistently make the wrong one – then try to back-track when they see political advantage. Poor judgement and opportunism have characterised Michael Howard's Tories.

At the General Election, Charles Kennedy's Liberal Democrats are the Real Alternative to Labour at Westminster and Scottish Liberal Democrat MPs elected in even greater numbers at Westminster will ensure that.

Liberal Democrats are the only party in Scotland with real ambition for this election. Labour are resigned to losing seats across Scotland. The SNP revealed the extent of their ambition is to go from five seats to between four

and six. Meanwhile the Tory ambition for seats is simply to have more than none.

SPEAKING UP FOR SCOTLAND AT WESTMINSTER

Scottish Liberal Democrat MPs are speaking up for Scotland at Westminster. Opposing Tony Blair and George Bush's war in Iraq, campaigning to save the Scottish Regiments, criticising the detention of children of asylum seekers in Dungavel, and fighting for changes to boost Scotland's renewable energy industry.

Liberal Democrat MPs are speaking up for human rights in Scotland and across the world, ensuring that judges not politicians take decisions on individual liberty, and opposing Labour's expensive, illiberal and ineffective ID card scheme.

Liberal Democrat MPs will continue to speak up for Scotland. And only Liberal Democrats can do that effectively. The SNP are irrelevant at this election, Michael Howard's Tories cannot be trusted, while Labour MPs meekly prop up Tony Blair, casting hard-fought human rights aside in the short-term populist grab for votes.

There is a stark choice facing voters at this General Election. People will look at the track records of the political parties and ask who will protect their family's security and freedom? Who will treat them fairly regardless of where they come from? And who can they trust to take decisions for the right reasons?

Across the UK, Liberal Democrats will stand up for freedom, rejecting the tyranny of politicians taking decisions on individual liberty, opposing Labour's expensive, illiberal and ineffective ID card scheme, and opposing the imposition of tuition fees and top up fees.

Liberal Democrats will demand fair treatment for all, rejecting the shameful bidding war of the Tories and Labour over asylum seekers and immigration, opposing the Tories' unfair Council Tax, now also supported by Labour, in favour of a fairer tax based on people's ability to pay.

And Liberal Democrats will take decisions for the right reasons, standing against Tony Blair's Labour Party who supported George Bush and rushed to war in Iraq without the backing of the United Nations.

Here in Scotland, there are – literally - hundreds of Liberal Democrat manifesto commitments being delivered. Liberal Democrats have already made the difference in government:

- Tuition fees – gone in Scotland, still there in England
- Top up fees – blocked by Liberal Democrats in Scotland, imposed by Labour in England
- Free personal care for the elderly – delivered in Scotland, attacked by Labour ministers in England as “crazy” – but thousands of Scottish pensioners are now benefiting from the security and dignity this policy provides
- Free travel for older people – delivered in Scotland, only now considered four years later in England
- Free eye and dental checks – on the way in Scotland, but not in England
- The threat of more nuclear power – effectively challenged by Liberal Democrats. The Executive will oppose any nuclear power stations until a safe storage option for radioactive waste has been found
- Healthier school meals – Scottish school meals described as ‘light years’ ahead of England

Scotland is blazing the trail for the rest of the United Kingdom. In government in Scotland, Scottish Liberal Democrats have provided the policy backbone for the Executive's most dynamic initiatives. Policies which have made a real difference. People across Scotland are benefiting: from the youngest children benefiting from free nursery places, to school children who will benefit from smaller class sizes, to students who no longer pay tuition fees and to older people who benefit from free personal care and free travel. However we know that there is much more to do. With the additional resources available from a Liberal Democrat government in Westminster, Liberal Democrats in Scotland will build on our success in government.

The Liberal Democrats are the Real Alternative across the UK to Tony Blair's Labour Party and Michael Howard's Tories. Liberal Democrats can be trusted to keep our promises across the UK as we have done in government in Scotland. And with more Scottish Liberal Democrat MPs, you can trust us to make the difference.



Rt Hon Jim Wallace QC MSP
Deputy First Minister
Leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats



MAKING A DIFFERENCE

MAKING THE DIFFERENCE – KEEPING OUR PROMISES

In government in Scotland, Liberal Democrats are setting the agenda for the long term, investing in people, in enterprise and opportunity, in better health and in a better environment.

- More doctors, nurses and health professionals and a new focus on health promotion
- More teachers and smaller primary class sizes
- More police on the streets and record crime clear up rates
- Free personal care for the elderly
- Student tuition fees abolished and top up fees blocked
- Focus on sustainable development and a green environmental thread running through all government policy

In May 2003, the Scottish Liberal Democrats signed a Partnership Agreement for a coalition government with the Scottish Labour Party. Commenting on the Agreement, the Daily Record reported, "The LibDems under Jim Wallace have punched above their weight."

Two years later, we have ensured that 80 per cent of our manifesto commitments have either been delivered, are presently being implemented, or progressed in government.

Liberal Democrats have set Scotland on a different path to that of England by abolishing tuition fees and introducing free personal care for the elderly. However Liberal Democrats are making the difference in many other areas of government policy and keeping our promises in government:

MAKING A DIFFERENCE FOR HEALTH

Liberal Democrats believe that prevention is better than cure and that is why we have put health promotion at the top of the political agenda. Our record includes:

- Free eye and dental checks for

- all by 2007
- £26 million health promotion fund
- Healthier school meals and new nutritional guidelines in schools and nurseries, free fruit for young children, free chilled water, removing fizzy drinks, doubling the school meals budget by 2006 – putting Scotland "light years" ahead of England
- Two hours of Physical Education for children every week, £24m funding for 600 active school co-ordinators, and safer routes to school to promote physical activity for children
- Ensuring a new focus on health promotion and screening with a ban on smoking in all enclosed public places being introduced, personal health plans and Well Man clinics

In 2003 we promised more doctors, nurses and health professionals to help make the difference for health and reduce the time people have to wait for treatment. Our record includes:

- Delivering over 100 more consultants, 1,000 more nurses, and 300 more allied health professionals
- Delivering an additional Infection Control Nurses in place and recruiting 3,500 cleanliness champions to fight infection and ensure cleaner, safer hospitals
- Digital hearing aids being made available for all who need them
- Reducing mortality rates for patients with coronary heart disease, stroke and cancer – Scotland's three biggest killers

MAKING SCOTLAND A SAFER COUNTRY

In 2003, Liberal Democrats pledged more police for Scotland and action to reduce reoffending rates. Our record includes:

- Delivering almost 500 more police, with more on the way
- Recruiting over 100 more Special Constables with more on the way
- Taking action to tackle reoffending including Drug Courts, Drug Treatment and Testing Orders, and effective Alternatives to Custody to address offending behaviour

- Doubling the number of places on restorative justice projects to 6,000 to make offenders pay back to communities

MAKING EDUCATION FOR LIFE

In 2003 Liberal Democrats promised to employ more teachers, cut primary class sizes, invest in school buildings, tackle indiscipline in schools and reform the curriculum. Our record includes:

- Almost 6,000 teachers in training, with more on the way to meet our commitment to 53,000 teachers by 2007
- Average primary class sizes at an all time low
- 1,800 more classroom assistants than in 2001 with up to 1,000 more support staff on the way to support teachers and tackle indiscipline
- Investing £2 billion to build or rebuild 300 schools by 2009
- National tests for 5-14 year olds scrapped and reform of the curriculum
- Securing record support for further and higher education with funding increasing by almost a third – rising to over £1.5 billion for the first time ever
- 31,000 Modern Apprentices in training, learning skills for work
- Introducing Individual Learning Accounts to open up opportunities for people on lower incomes with grants to pay for courses and training

MAKING A DIFFERENCE FOR TRANSPORT

In 2003, Liberal Democrats promised to invest in new railways, abolish Skye Bridge Tolls and extend free local bus travel for older people. Our record includes:

- Delivering record investment in transport reaching £1 billion by 2006, with 70 per cent going to public transport
- Securing funding for construction of the Borders Railway
- Beginning construction of the Stirling-Alloa-Kincardine and Larkhall-Milngavie lines. We have committed to re-opening



the Airdrie-Bathgate line and to new rail links to Edinburgh and Glasgow airports. Bills are currently going through Parliament for two new Tram lines in Edinburgh.

- Investing in new bus services through the £18 million Bus Route Development Scheme
- Abolishing Skye Bridge Tolls
- Extending free local off peak bus travel for older people to free national any time travel from next year

MAKING A DIFFERENCE FOR RURAL SCOTLAND

In 2003, Liberal Democrats promised action to deliver a sustainable future for fishing and agriculture, improve affordable housing, and boost renewable energy. Our record includes:

- Establishing a Regional Advisory Council for the North Sea, giving fishermen and scientists a say in managing fisheries in a sustainable way
- Decoupling agriculture subsidies from production allowing Scotland to tailor rural development funding to support wider environmental and social needs
- Investing £1.2 billion in affordable housing in the next three years with more than £200 million going to build 1,000 new affordable homes in the Highlands, and a new shared equity scheme to help first time buyers get on the property ladder
- Giving local authorities the power to cut the Council Tax discount on second homes allowing them to use the receipts to fund new affordable housing

A GREEN THREAD THROUGH GOVERNMENT

In 2003, Liberal Democrats promised to run a green thread through government ensuring that sustainable development is at the top of the political agenda. Our record includes:

- Beginning implementation of Strategic Environmental Assessment to ensure that the sustainable development test applies to all strategies, plans

and policies produced by public bodies.

- Doubling rates of recycling since 2002, building towards a new target to recycle 30 per cent of municipal waste by 2008
- Developing Jim Wallace's Green Jobs Strategy which aims to make Scotland a world leader in leading edge environmental technologies and efficient businesses
- Implementing the Nature of Scotland Act to protect biodiversity, improve management of valuable environmental sites and increase penalties for wildlife crime
- Securing £6.6m funding for the Scottish Community and Householder Renewables Initiative to support small scale renewable energy projects
- Achieving significant progress towards generating 40 per cent of Scotland's electricity from renewable sources by 2020

MAKING A LIBERAL SCOTLAND

In 2003, Liberal Democrats promised to introduce fair votes for local government elections, to open government up to the public with new freedom of information laws, and to support the voluntary sector and the arts. Our record includes:

- Introducing proportional representation (STV) for local government elections, breathing new life into local democracy and making everyone's vote count, no matter where they live
- Securing an Independent Review of Local Government Finance
- Establishing a National Theatre for Scotland, taking action to secure the status of Gaelic, and introducing a Bill to reform charity law
- Introducing a new Freedom of Information regime which goes well beyond the system in place in the rest of the UK
- Making massive investment in social work, focussing on children and families
- Securing the future of the Children's Hearing system

INVEST IN SCOTLAND'S CHILDREN

Liberal Democrats have never made any secret of our ambitions for education. In the twenty first century, if Scotland is going to be prosperous, if people are going to make the most of their talents and their lives, we need to invest in our children and in education in its widest sense.

- Revolutionise the provision of affordable, flexible childcare in schools
- Outdoor activities and education for young people
- Free swimming for children and young people
- New opportunities and activities for children after school and at the weekends
- New activities fund to keep young people away from crime and anti social behaviour

KEEPING OUR PROMISES

"In government in Scotland, Liberal Democrats have already made the improvement of education a priority. We started with young children, introducing free nursery places for 3 and 4 year olds. We know that good education is hampered when it takes place in old, crumbling buildings and that is why we are building and renovating 300 schools with a commitment to the highest design and environmental standards. We are recruiting 3,000 extra teachers, cutting primary class sizes, and taking on more classroom assistants to ease the burden on teachers and give pupils more personalised learning.

"We recognise that in some schools there is a problem with indiscipline. That is why in January 2005 we announced an additional £35 million to improve discipline in schools, allowing schools to employ up to 1,000 extra support staff to

tackle problem behaviour and help teachers tackle indiscipline. We believe that schools should be about learning, not just ticking the boxes. That's why we abolished the failed league tables, introduced by the Tories, which stigmatised schools instead of helping them to improve. And in November 2004 we announced a package of reforms to cut bureaucracy and give teachers more time to teach. We are reforming the curriculum making it easier for children to learn at the pace that suits them best. And we are extending access for 14-16 year olds to college to broaden their horizons and develop vocational skills.

A PROMISE OF MORE

"But there is much more for us to do. Liberal Democrats want to invest in our children now when it matters most. With the additional resources available from a Liberal Democrat government at Westminster,

Liberal Democrats in Scotland will launch a project to revolutionise children's hopes and aspirations, focusing on the time that children spend out of school. Our plans will deliver extra investment in children of more than £600 million above existing plans over the next five years."

Robert Brown MSP
Education Spokesperson



REVOLUTIONISING CHILDCARE, EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES

Children spend one seventh of their time in school, six sevenths out of school. However while we spend billions in schools, we spend very little investing in our children after the school bell rings.

Liberal Democrats want to extend opportunities to help working parents spend more time with their children. Our focus is on choice for parents and children, not reducing the time that parents spend with their children. Across the UK we will give working families having their first child increased maternity pay for the first six months. This will give an extra £910 on average when parents really need it. And in Scotland we want to build on this by extending the childcare options for all families.

For many families, work commitments or caring responsibilities are not always compatible with the school day. Whether it is first thing in the morning before the school day starts, or immediately after classes end, finding local, good quality and affordable childcare is not always easy. And this is a problem not just for parents who work full time. It can be particularly difficult for part time workers to find good childcare because places often go first to those who opt for full time places. We should not penalise people who want to work part time to allow themselves more time with their children.

Liberal Democrats want to change that. We want to revolutionise childcare in Scotland, giving parents the opportunity of high quality, local, affordable and flexible childcare when they need it and where their children will benefit from it.

But we want this childcare revolution to focus on developing new opportunities for children

– not to be a state babysitting service.

GOOD QUALITY AFFORDABLE CHILDCARE

We will:

- Revolutionise the provision of flexible care in schools for before and after the formal school day, giving parents the opportunity of affordable childcare between 8am and 6pm in local schools.
- Provide a childcare place for every child whose parents want one
- Extend breakfast clubs to every school in Scotland giving children access to healthy, nutritious food before the school day starts
- Invest in activities for children after the school day ends including learning, play, sport, art, music, drama and homework clubs
- Ensure that all childcare provided meets high standards of care

EACH AND EVERY CHILD MATTERS

Liberal Democrats want to support all our children. We believe in investing in our young people, not talking them down, because Scotland's children are our greatest resource – not our greatest threat.

The vast majority of young people are not involved in crime or anti social behaviour. We will take action to encourage all children to experience new opportunities beyond the school. Opportunities that will help them grow as individuals as well as learn. Opportunities that will improve their health as well as their minds and let them appreciate and enjoy different surroundings and environments.

MORE LEISURE AND ACTIVITIES

We will:

- Give every child the entitlement to a week of outdoor activity during their time at secondary school. This will allow them to learn new skills and activities,

gain a better understanding of their environment, promote good health, and give a boost to tourism in Scotland

- Provide funding for local authorities to employ outdoor education officers to take the burden off teaching staff and publish guidance to promote outdoor education
- Give every child a new entitlement to free swimming
- Develop new opportunities and ways in which children can

become involved in a range of activities in the evenings, at the weekends and in school holidays. We will create a new fund for local authorities and the voluntary sector to develop affordable activities clubs offering sport, leisure, music, art and environmental activities

- Create a new activities fund to help keep young people away from crime and anti social behaviour by giving them positive alternatives. We will empower

young people to decide what services they most need in their local community. We will encourage local businesses and local police to support these projects. This could include such things as midnight football or basketball which have already proved successful in some areas in keeping young people out of trouble

- Support a bi-annual Scottish Mini-Olympics event to help develop a competitive spirit in

schools and sports clubs. 32 teams of young people representing every local authority area would compete against each other in various Olympic-style events. We will encourage businesses and community groups to back their local team through local hero bursary schemes

Photo: PA/EMPICS



“ Liberal Democrats will invest in our children now when they need it most. Affordable childcare in schools. New activities out of school. Outdoor education. Free swimming. Investment in evening and weekend activities.

That is how Liberal Democrats will invest in Scotland’s children.”

Sir Robert Smith

BETTER CARE WHEN YOU NEED IT MOST

The mark of a civilised society is how it treats its older people. We want to build on our achievement of free personal care, with a major boost for elderly care in the community.

- A new package of care for older people in the community
- Tackle delayed discharge in our hospitals—free up more beds
- New investment in community health care facilities
- New investment in Community Hospitals
- Invest in new technology to support people living at home

TACKLE DELAYED DISCHARGES, INVEST IN LOCAL CARE

Significant progress has been made in tackling delayed discharges in Scotland, but Liberal Democrats want to do more to ensure that older people do not spend any more time in acute hospitals than they need to because of a lack of suitable community care. We will focus on improving and expanding local care, promoting a greater role for GPs and community health centres and a boost for Community Hospitals. This will also free up more beds in our acute hospitals, benefiting everyone with quicker treatment.

COMMUNITY HEALTH FACILITIES

We will:

- Tackle delayed discharges in our hospitals – free up more beds and build on progress made by Liberal Democrat policies being implemented in government.
- Deliver new investment in local community health care facilities. In 90 per cent of cases, an individual's contact with the health service is through GPs and other local primary care services. Liberal Democrats want to invest to provide more of these services locally, under one roof. More treatments, tests, advice, support and care can and should be provided locally by enhancing existing health centres and providing new community health facilities. Our plans will benefit people across Scotland and will boost the support that older people need in the community.
- Deliver new investment in Community Hospitals. Liberal Democrats believe that Community Hospitals, often led by local GPs with specialist skills, have an important role to play in providing more care locally. We will invest to upgrade facilities and allow more older people to leave acute hospitals sooner and be treated locally in Community Hospitals – what is known as 'step-down care'.
- Create a new fund for local authorities and health boards to improve care for older people

by locating different services under one roof. Using new powers in the Smoking, Health and Social Care Bill this will allow better co-operation and joint ventures between councils and health boards to tackle delayed discharges.

MORE PERSONAL CARE

Many older people have a range of long term health problems. International research has shown that these patients can benefit hugely from a more personalised approach to care which sets out a clear care plan to deal with their health problems. Taking a more personalised approach can be successful in preventing problems and reducing emergency admissions to hospital. It can also cut the time spent in hospital. UK pilot schemes have shown a reduction in hospital admissions of between 10 and 20 per cent.

Scottish Liberal Democrat care proposals will allow the NHS to put much more effort into meeting these complex needs and provide a more personalised service in the community. This will help avoid many of the relatively minor and easy to prevent conditions that older people can suffer from and which cause them to be admitted to acute hospitals.

CARE IN THE HOME

We will:

- Cut unscheduled hospital admissions and provide care in the home for more older people
- Invest in new technology to support people living at home. Councils and health boards already provide support such as handrails on baths and showers. However new technology could offer many more people the support they need to lead as independent a life as possible in their own home. We will invest new resources in new 'smart' technologies such as movement and fall detectors, bed and chair sensors, and direct communications



“A new package of care for older people in the community. New investment in Community Hospitals and local community health care facilities. Tackle delayed discharge. Cut unnecessary hospital admissions. New technology to support older people in their own homes.

That is how Liberal Democrats will deliver better care when you need it most.”

Alistair Carmichael

KEEPING OUR PROMISES

“In government in Scotland, Liberal Democrats have fought hard to ensure a fairer deal for pensioners and to celebrate the positive role that older people play in Scottish life. We want older people to be able to keep active – through physical activity, volunteering and leading an active social life. Through partnership government we have also delivered free bus travel and free central heating for pensioners.

“However we recognise that some older people are less able to enjoy an active life and need additional support. That is why in Scotland today older people who need personal or nursing care receive it free of charge. Free personal care for the elderly delivered in Scotland by Liberal Democrats in government.

“Too many older people are stuck in hospital for longer than they need to be because they can't get the care they need in the community. In 2003, Liberal Democrats helped to secure funding of £30 million for three years to improve community care for people leaving hospital. We have made progress on

tackling delayed discharges with a 14 per cent decrease from October 2003 to 2004. And we are making sure that older people get the care they need regardless of who is responsible for providing it.

A PROMISE OF MORE

“But there is much more for us to do. With the additional resources available from a Liberal Democrat government at Westminster, Liberal Democrats in Scotland will invest in a new package of care for older people in the community. Our plans will deliver extra investment in services for older people of more than £400 million above existing plans over the next five years.”

Mike Rumbles MSP
Health Spokesperson



PUT PATIENTS FIRST – FASTER DIAGNOSIS

The time it takes between seeing your doctor and being referred for specialised diagnostic tests to identify the problem can be a real worry for patients. Liberal Democrats want to reduce the wait and the worry.

- Measure waiting times for specialised diagnostic tests
- Set goals to reduce waiting times for specialised diagnostic tests
- Invest in NHS diagnostic equipment
- New investment in primary care and community hospitals

KEEPING OUR PROMISES

In 1999 the Scottish Liberal Democrats made it clear that it is the length of time that people wait for hospital treatment, not the length of the list that is important. Having changed the focus to waiting times, we have ensured that the Executive has taken action to tackle waiting times, meeting 12 and 9 month guaranteed maximum waiting time targets and introducing a guarantee that from December 2005 no patient should wait more than six months for hospital inpatient and day case treatment, or for a first outpatient appointment with a consultant.

Liberal Democrats are committed to improving diagnostics. Liberal Democrats in government have agreed funding to renew outdated NHS capital equipment, especially diagnostic equipment such as CT and MRI Scanners, to assist early detection of illness. The Executive's Capital Investment Plan will put an additional £125 million into new medical equipment by 2007. This will focus particularly on diagnostic equipment including radiography. We are also making progress in recruiting staff to perform these tests.

Liberal Democrats believe that the key to quicker and better diagnosis, is to improve and expand local care, giving a greater role to some GPs and nurses. In government we have already invested £3.5 million to develop models of Community Health Service Centres, bringing

together treatment, diagnosis and support services within a single centre in the local community. Six new services such as the Leith Community Treatment Centre are now operating in communities across Scotland.

A PROMISE OF MORE

With the additional resources from a Liberal Democrat Government at Westminster invested in improving community health facilities, we will free up capacity in acute hospitals and be able to ensure faster diagnosis with more tests done locally.

FASTER DIAGNOSIS

We want to ensure that illnesses are diagnosed by the quickest

route possible so that treatment can start as early as possible. Anyone who has been told by their doctor that they need to go for specialised diagnostic tests to explain what the problem is, will know the worry that comes with waiting to have these tests. Doctors will tell you that one of the most important factors in successfully treating illnesses such as cancer is cutting the time it takes to receive these diagnostic tests.

Scottish Liberal Democrats already plan to invest heavily in primary care and Community Hospitals to ensure that more people can get the care they need locally. This will ensure that local communities

have access to a range of services including diagnostic tests and minor surgery. We want to see more diagnostic tests done locally in the community, not just in acute hospitals.

MEASURING AND REDUCING WAITING TIMES

We will:

- Measure waiting times for specialised diagnostic tests. For the first time in the UK, we will measure the time that patients have to wait between being referred by their doctor for specialised diagnostic tests and receiving those tests
- Set goals to reduce waiting times for specialised diagnostic tests
- Continue to invest in updating NHS diagnostic equipment
- Use our new investment in local health services and Community Hospitals to increase the number of diagnostic tests that can be done locally in the community rather than just in acute hospitals. This investment will free up resources in acute hospitals, helping patients across Scotland

Photo: Steve Maisey/Rex Features



“Measure and reduce the wait between doctor referral and receiving specialised diagnostic tests. Investment in diagnostic equipment. Investment in staff. More diagnostic tests done locally.”

That is how Liberal Democrats will put patients first.”

Michael Moore
Deputy Leader of
the Scottish Liberal
Democrats

CUTTING CRIME AND THE FEAR OF CRIME

Tony Blair's ID card scheme is expensive, illiberal and ineffective and will not tackle terrorism or crime. Liberal Democrats believe that the money he would waste on ID cards would be better spent on more police in our communities.

- 1,000 more police in our communities – cutting crime and the fear of crime
- Action to tackle underage drinking
- Reduce reoffending - tackle drug use
- Give prisoners skills for work not crime

KEEPING OUR PROMISES

"Thanks to the Scottish Liberal Democrats in government, police numbers and crime clear up rates are already at a record high. Police numbers have risen by almost 500 in the last two years. We have taken action to keep police numbers at record levels by giving the police more money to recruit staff to offset the predicted loss of officers through retirement.

"In government Liberal Democrat policies are changing the focus of the justice system to reduce reoffending. The Executive has launched a new strategy to improve management of offenders and build on initiatives such as Drug Treatment and Testing Orders, Drug Courts and the work of the Scottish Drug Enforcement Agency which continues to increase seizures of illegal drugs. We are also working to ensure that police spend more time on the streets and less time on bureaucracy. Our court reforms, passed in Parliament in 2004, will reduce the time that officers spend in court, while new technology will be used to cut paperwork.

"Liberal Democrats want to improve life in Scotland's communities. That is why, in government, we have supported

the introduction of a Quality of Life Fund which has already given £180 million (with a further £100 million on the way) to help councils to tackle local issues of vandalism, graffiti, CCTV and public safety. Anti Social Behaviour Orders and Acceptable Behaviour Contracts are being used to address problem behaviour among the small minority of people who cause real problems. And Liberal Democrats have ensured that mediation services are in place to resolve disputes. We have underlined our commitment to Scotland's Children's Hearing system and want to ensure that it is improved with increased resources and powers.

"Alcohol related crime is a major issue in Scotland. That is why the Executive is making a number of reforms to the licensing system. The Licensing Bill published in March 2005 will make it a requirement for all licensees to operate on a no-proof no-sale basis, to limit access to alcohol by under 18s. The Scottish Executive is supporting youth CAFEs (Community Alcohol Free Environments) and other alcohol free activities for young people which are now in place across Scotland.

A PROMISE OF MORE
"With the additional resources

available from a Liberal Democrat government at Westminster, Liberal Democrats in Scotland will invest in more police in our communities to cut crime and the fear of crime. Our plans will deliver extra investment in justice of more than £100 million above existing plans, over the next five years."

Jeremy Purvis MSP
Justice Spokesperson



NO TO COMPULSORY ID CARDS

The total cost of Tony Blair's ID card scheme is estimated to be at least £3 billion and each citizen would have to pay up to £85 to buy their own ID card. Yet the government has presented no evidence that ID cards will reduce crime or tackle terrorism. The terrorists who carried out the atrocities in New York on September 11th and the Madrid train bombers all had valid identity papers. Across the UK, Liberal Democrats will create a co-ordinated UK Border Force to strengthen the country's borders against terrorism, people-trafficking and drug smuggling. Liberal Democrats in government in Scotland have ensured that Tony Blair's ID cards will not be compulsory for accessing devolved services.

MORE POLICE IN OUR COMMUNITIES

Still too many communities are blighted by crime. We recognise that more can be done to reduce the fear of crime by boosting policing in communities across Scotland. High visibility policing in local communities can work to cut crime and the fear of crime. Community police officers know where, when and why trouble happens. Liberal Democrats want to give the police the resources they need to extend this knowledge into communities across Scotland.

We will:

- Recruit an additional 1,000 community Police Officers
- Develop a new national community policing strategy to bolster the role and importance of Community Police Officers and School Liaison Officers, improve training and career development, and extend cover in suburban and rural areas which often suffer when police resources are stretched
- Ensure that local policing strategies are developed as part of

the Community Planning process alongside other local services such as Community Wardens, School Liaison Officers and local anti social behaviour teams to cut crime and nuisance behaviour.

CUT CRIME IN THE COMMUNITY

60 per cent of offenders released from prison go on to commit another crime. Even with record police numbers, high detection rates and more community police, Liberal Democrats recognise that we can only cut crime in our communities effectively by reducing reoffending in the long term.

Most young people just want to be out with their friends, have a good time and stay out of trouble. Liberal Democrats want to make sure that the activities and services are in place to ensure that they can do just that. We want to divert young people away from crime and anti social behaviour, and make effective interventions to nip any offending behaviour in the bud as early as possible.

In addition to our plans for a new activities fund to offer positive alternatives for young people, we will:

- Tackle underage drinking through better education and an alcohol referral scheme, in all parts of Scotland to help those who develop problems. Underage drinking is a real problem. Alcohol abuse costs Scottish society over £1 billion every year. Some of this cost comes from underage drinking in terms of the health dangers to young people, and the anti social behaviour that can follow. We will encourage local police and youth service agencies to work together to provide advice and guidance to young people found abusing alcohol to help address their behaviour.

REDUCE REOFFENDING, CUT CRIME, TACKLE DRUG USE

The Scottish Executive estimates the cost of drug related crime to the public sector alone at over £330 million per annum. There were 40,465 drug related offences committed in Scotland in 2003 and many repeat offenders have significant drug problems

- We will:
- Extend pilot schemes which

make offenders face up to their criminal behaviour and receive support to tackle drink and drug addictions in order to reduce the number of offences they commit in the future.

- Give prisoners skills for work not crime. We want to ensure that prisoners who agree to a tough programme of learning and training get the work skills they need to pay back to society. We will introduce a pilot scheme

to train offenders for those areas such as trades, construction and engineering where Scotland has a shortage of trained workers. Offenders will have to sign up to a strict training programme with tough penalties for those who reoffend.



“1,000 more police in our communities. A new community policing strategy. Cut crime in our communities through prevention and intervention. Reduce reoffending by tackling drug use. Give prisoners skills for work not crime.

That is how Liberal Democrats will cut crime and the fear of crime.”

John Barrett



AN ENTREPRENEURIAL SCOTLAND

Scottish Liberal Democrats understand that, no matter how many laws you pass, you cannot provide public services without a successful economy to support them. And no matter how talented you are, it is unlikely you would be successful in business without the basic infrastructure provided by the state.

KEEPING OUR PROMISES

LONG TERM INVESTMENT IN SKILLS

"In government in Scotland, Scottish Liberal Democrats are investing for the long term. To help prepare young people for the world of work, we are investing £83 million to take the enterprise in education project to every school in Scotland. This trailblazing policy sets the pace for the rest of the UK and is only now being copied in England. For some pupils we recognise that vocational training, not just traditional schooling, offers the best opportunities. That's why we are extending access for 14 – 16 year olds to colleges. And we are helping to deliver more workers with crucial skills needed by Scottish employers through Modern Apprenticeships – a scheme that provides quality training opportunities for people of all ages including on and off the job training, allowing trainees to earn while they learn. We have already met our target of 30,000 modern apprentices by 2006, with 31,000 in training in 2004.

"And we are taking action to ensure lifelong learning is meaningful for people of all backgrounds. The new Individual Learning Account (ILA) scheme is opening up opportunities for people on lower incomes, who previously would have faced financial barriers to learning. ILAs

provide grants of up to £200 a year to pay for courses that will help people get back into work, improve their career opportunities and fulfil their potential. We want businesses of all sizes to help their employees develop their skills. In November 2003, the Scottish Executive and Scottish Enterprise launched four pilot schemes for Business Learning Accounts which will offer businesses with fewer than 50 employees information, advice and guidance complemented by financial support for training.

LONG TERM INVESTMENT IN FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION

"Ideas, research and technology drive modern economies. Scottish Liberal Democrats are determined to develop the potential of Scottish universities and colleges to help drive our economy. That is why I have delivered record support for universities and colleges with funding increasing by almost a third – to over £1.5 billion for the first time ever. This investment will secure their reputation as world class research and teaching institutions. And we have backed this up with a significant capital investment programme to improve their facilities too.

"Scotland has a growing reputation in research and development. We want to build on that and make Scotland a world leader. That is why in government we have invested £450 million for Intermediary

Technology Institutes to help Scotland compete globally in the key sectors of Energy, Life Sciences and Techmedia.

LONG TERM INVESTMENT IN INFRASTRUCTURE

"In government in Scotland, Liberal Democrats have delivered record investment in transport, reaching £1 billion by 2006, with 70 per cent going to public transport. This investment is delivering new rail lines, new stations, new bus services, park and ride facilities, freight facilities grants and better rural transport. And this year we launched the first-ever infrastructure investment plan setting out our long term plan, increasing capital investment by five per cent each year for the next three years."

Jim Wallace QC MSP
Minister for Enterprise & Lifelong Learning



LONG TERM OBJECTIVES

Liberals have always embraced free trade and enterprise. It delivers for people. It delivers for society. Our focus is on delivering sustainable growth which delivers for all society. Government's role is to support and encourage people and business, not to interfere. Government should ensure that: schools and universities provide skilled, innovative people and ideas; there is effective transport for people and goods; people are getting healthier and are able to work effectively.

These are our long term objectives in government. Objectives that will make a better environment for business – and in so doing will help to create an entrepreneurial Scotland.

CUT RED TAPE

Much of the red tape that challenges Scottish companies and impedes business growth comes from Westminster or Brussels. That is why Liberal Democrats at Westminster will:

- Introduce independent impact assessments for all new UK regulations to ensure the red tape burden is considered
- Put sunset clauses on all UK business regulation to ensure they do not outlive their usefulness.
- Establish a Small Business Select Committee in the UK Parliament to monitor the cost of bureaucracy and keep the needs of small and medium sized businesses on the Government's agenda
- Create an arms-length Deregulation Unit to reduce the burden of red-tape



"Cut red tape for business. Continue record investment in transport, education and skills.

That is how Liberal Democrats will make an entrepreneurial Scotland."

Malcolm Bruce
President of the Scottish Liberal Democrats

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Catastrophic climate change is the major environmental threat to our planet – and urgent action is needed. As part of our commitment to sustainable development Liberal Democrats will ensure that Scotland reduces its greenhouse gas emissions.

- Tackle climate change – cleaner transport, cleaner energy and a cleaner environment
- Invest in energy efficiency to cut energy use and greenhouse gas emissions
- Vigorously promote Scotland's renewable energy industry overseas
- Put a green thread through government

KEEPING OUR PROMISES

"In government, Scottish Liberal Democrats have made sure that a green thread runs through every aspect of government. We are backing that up by implementing Strategic Environmental Assessment to ensure that all strategies, plans and policies produced by public bodies meet the sustainability test. Liberal Democrats want to redefine economic growth from the crude pursuit of growth at any price, to economic growth that will achieve a stable economy and opportunity for all, whilst taking full account of the social and environmental costs. Jim Wallace's Green Jobs Strategy will build on our commitment to sustainable development contained in the Smart Successful Scotland strategy and will ensure that Scotland is at the forefront of developing new environmental technologies and efficient businesses.

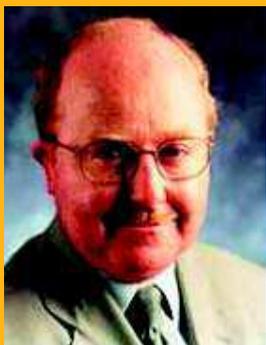
"In government, we are setting new ambitious targets for recycling municipal waste, backed up by over £200 million of funding. By 2008 we aim to recycle 30 per cent of municipal waste. And in renewable energy we are making progress towards our ambitious target of 40 per cent of Scotland's electricity generated from renewable sources by 2020. And we are at the forefront of

new renewable technology with the world's first Marine Energy Test Centre opened in Orkney in August 2004.

A PROMISE OF MORE

"However Liberal Democrats know that there is more to do to tackle climate change and its many impacts. In addition to the action that Liberal Democrats will take across the UK on vehicle, aviation and environmental taxation, in Scotland we will look to build on our success in government. With the additional resources delivered to Scotland by a Liberal Democrat government in Westminster, we will focus on reducing energy use."

Ross Finnie MSP
Minister for Environment & Rural Development



CLEANER ENVIRONMENT

Liberal Democrats believe that government must take the lead in securing a cleaner environment. We will invest in improving energy efficiency across the public sector, sending a strong message across Scotland and leading to real savings in energy use.

We will:

- Build on our successful spend to save initiative which is already due to deliver £70m of savings in the next five years and £30m of recurring savings thereafter through the introduction of energy efficiency measures across the public sector
- Invest an additional £20m to boost energy efficiency in the public sector, cut carbon emissions and reduce energy consumption. We will focus this investment in new areas of the public sector such as Further and Higher Education, prisons, schools and other areas such as housing associations. We estimate that this additional investment will deliver around 15 per cent energy savings for participating institutions and cut carbon emissions by around 60,000 tonnes every year. This will deliver recurring savings to reinvest in front line services and future energy efficiency projects

CLEANER ENERGY

Liberal Democrats are committed to renewable energy and to meeting our ambitious target of producing 40 per cent of Scotland's electricity from

renewable sources by 2020.

We will:

- Vigorously promote Scotland's renewable energy industry overseas, through the enterprise network and the potential of renewable energy to meet the energy requirements of rapidly growing economies, such as China and India
- Liberal Democrats at Westminster will ensure a fundamental review of the electricity transmission charging regime to benefit all consumers and assist in meeting our renewables target

CLEANER TRANSPORT

Liberal Democrats believe it's only fair that those who cause most pollution and congestion pay more than those who don't. Liberal Democrats at Westminster will start by reforming the Vehicle Excise Duty ('single road tax') to cut tax altogether on cars that pollute least, funded by increasing it on those that pollute more.



"A focus on sustainable development. Run a green thread through Government. Action to improve energy efficiency and cut greenhouse gas emissions. More renewable energy. More recycling. Cleaner transport. Green Jobs.

That is how Liberal Democrats will tackle climate change."

John Thurso
Shadow Secretary of State for Scotland

AXE THE COUNCIL TAX

Scottish Liberal Democrats want a fairer tax system. We want to abolish Council Tax altogether and replace it with a fair tax based on the ability to pay - a Local Income Tax.

THE COUNCIL TAX IS AN UNFAIR TAX

The Council Tax penalises pensioners and people on low incomes. They pay a far higher proportion of their income in tax than the very rich. The poorest 20% of pensioners pay nearly six times more than the richest 20% of non-pensioners, as a proportion of their income. Across the UK, the poorest 10% pay over four times more of their income in Council Tax than the richest 10%.

Council Tax takes no account of ability to pay or income. It is grossly unfair to people on low and medium incomes and pensioners. A pensioner couple, in the house they've lived in for decades, can pay the same as two high earners, living right next door.

Liberal Democrats are concerned that Council Tax revaluation will make the situation for these groups even worse, with low income households paying more because of where they live – based not on income, but the amount that house prices have risen. In Wales revaluation has led to one in three households facing huge Council Tax rises.

LOCAL INCOME TAX IS A FAIRER TAX

Local Income Tax is a fairer tax because it is based on the ability to pay. It would be run through the existing Inland Revenue Income Tax mechanism – so saving hundreds of millions in collection costs across the UK. The typical household will save around £450 per year, and eight out of ten pensioners will have lower bills.

In fact many pensioners will pay no local tax at all.

In Scotland, Liberal Democrats have already made sure that the Independent Review of Local Government Finance has a specific remit to investigate introducing a Local Income Tax.

We will:

- Continue to campaign through the Independent Review to replace the Council Tax with a Local Income Tax.
- Hold down Council Tax bills as a first step to introducing Local Income Tax by using some of the proceeds from our proposed new 50 per cent rate on individual income exceeding £100,000.



“Liberal Democrats want fairer taxes. Axe the unfair Council Tax. Introduce a fairer tax based on the ability to pay – a Local Income Tax. Keep down local taxes. A new 50 per cent rate for income over £100,000.

That is how Scottish Liberal Democrats will bring about fairness on tax.”

Alan Reid

HONEST ABOUT THE COSTS

Across the UK Liberal Democrats are open and straightforward about how we will pay for our policies. At the last three general elections we set out full details of how much our policies would cost and how we would pay for them. None of the other parties did this. Labour has increased spending, an increase only the Liberal Democrats were honest enough to propose at the last election. Given this increase in spending, most of our proposals at this election can be funded from savings in current budgets.

Across the UK Liberal Democrats will fund our key policies from two sources: switching money from low priority UK government programmes, and making taxes fairer.

Additional investment by Liberal Democrats at Westminster has implications for Scotland. Not only will Scotland benefit directly from Liberal Democrat policies in areas such as pensions, but increased UK spending means more money for the Scottish Parliament to invest in Scotland on priorities like health, education and crime. A Liberal Democrat Government in Westminster would deliver an extra £1.8 billion to Scotland over the term of the next UK Parliament. Full costings of our proposed policies across the UK and in Scotland will be available in a separate document.

