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## MY VISION

This manifesto sets out how to build a better Scotland.

It's a manifesto to benefit this and future generations.

At the heart of our case is the belief that decisions about Scotland's future are best taken by the people who live in Scotland, wherever they come from.

We are an extraordinary country, diverse and outward-looking, with great potential and much to look forward to. But the future of our country is at stake.

This election really matters.

People are heartily sick of Brexit and the mess at Westminster. But there is no end in sight to the Westminster Brexit chaos.

A vote for the SNP is a vote to escape Brexit.

It's a vote to put Scotland's future in Scotland's hands.

SNP MPs will always stand up for Scotland. We answer to the people who live here – not to any leader at Westminster.

This manifesto sets out our plans to keep Scotland and the UK in the EU, protect the NHS, reverse Westminster cuts to the Scottish budget, help with the cost of living, protect the environment and win a fair deal for pensioners.

There is a real chance the SNP could hold the balance of power after the election on December 12 and the larger the number of SNP MPs, the more we can do for Scotland.

The SNP is willing to take part in a progressive alliance to lock the Tories out of office.

In any discussion, we will demand that the democratic right of people in Scotland to decide their own future is respected.

As an independent European nation we will always get the governments we vote for; the Scottish Parliament will have full control of tax and social security policy; no Westminster government could ever threaten our NHS and we could choose to spend money on Scotland's priorities instead of wasting billions of pounds on Trident.

So, at this election there is a choice for Scotland.

A chaotic, Brexit-obsessed Westminster could decide our future for us. Or we can demand our right as a country to decide our own future.

It's time to put Scotland's future in Scotland's hands.





# OUR KEY PLEDGES

The chaos of Brexit has exposed just how dysfunctional Westminster really is.

We have had an unelected Prime Minister with no mandate seek to impose a damaging Brexit on Scotland, and a paralysed Parliament delivering for no one. Scotland deserves better.

Now more than ever, it is vital to have strong SNP voices standing up for Scotland.

Here are our key pledges and the issues that SNP MPs will prioritise:

## **Scotland's future in Scotland's hands**

We believe that the best future for Scotland is to be an independent, European nation.

Not for our own sake, but because it allows Scotland to become the open, tolerant, inclusive and democratic nation we are determined to build.

By making all our own decisions here in Scotland, we could end poverty faster, play our full part in tackling the climate emergency, ensure a fair deal for pensioners and create new opportunities for jobs and our economy.

We have a clear mandate to deliver a new referendum on becoming an independent country, and we are making it clear at this election that next year we intend to offer the people of Scotland a choice over their future.

It is important to ensure a referendum is put beyond legal challenge. Before the end of the year, we will demand that the UK Government transfers the necessary powers under The Scotland Act to ensure the decisions about the referendum can be taken by the Scottish Parliament.

## **Escape from Brexit**

Scotland voted overwhelmingly to remain in the EU but has been completely ignored by Westminster and our interests have been trampled over throughout the entire process. This is unacceptable.

There is no way that Brexit will be done in the next few months. Instead it will go on for years as the UK has to try to negotiate trade agreements with the EU and countries around the world.

We will work with others across Scotland and the UK to escape from Brexit. In a UK context, we will support a second EU referendum with Remain on the ballot paper. And if it is the only alternative to a 'no deal' Brexit, we will support the revocation of Article 50.

Whatever Scotland's constitutional status it is important for the UK to remain as close to the EU as possible. SNP MPs will always vote to protect Scotland's place in the single market and customs union.

## **NHS**

We will call on the UK government to match Scottish per capita NHS spending, which will deliver increased funding for Scotland.

We will propose a new National Health Service Protection Act to guarantee that trade deals will not undermine the founding principles of the NHS, nor open it to profit driven exploitation.

## **End austerity**

More than a decade of austerity, years of low wage growth and a freeze on social security payments, has left families struggling and our public services stretched. We will not stand by whilst Scotland is denied its fair share of public spending.

SNP MPs will demand an end to austerity and instead press the UK Government to invest in public services and the economy, starting with a reversal of the cut Scotland has seen to its real-terms budget.

### **Eradicating poverty and inequality**

SNP MPs will demand an end to policies which are pushing people into poverty, debt and desperation including ending the two child cap on tax credits and associated rape clause, an end to the punitive benefit sanctions regime, and a halt to Universal Credit. We will also press for an immediate end to the benefit freeze and for uplifts in the value of income replacement benefits of at least inflation.

### **Tackling the drugs crisis**

SNP MPs will call for the devolution of drug policy so the SNP Scottish Government can take all the steps needed to tackle addiction, reduce health risks and take the vital steps to tackle drug-related deaths and harm in Scotland.

### **Fair pensions**

We will always protect the Triple Lock, ensuring that pensions continue to rise by inflation, earnings or 2.5 per cent – whatever is highest.

We will oppose any increase to the state pension age.

We will also continue to support the WASPI campaign, and fight to reverse the cut to Pension Credit and demand that the government re-instates the free TV licence for all over-75s.

### **A tailored migration system**

We will seek the devolution of immigration powers so that Scotland can have an migration system that works for our economy and society.

We will oppose in all its forms the ‘hostile environment’ of the UK immigration system, and we will stand firm against the demonisation of migrants.

### **Devolution of employment law**

Pending Scottish independence, we will press for the devolution of employment law so that the Scottish Parliament can protect workers' rights, increase the living wage and end the age discrimination of the statutory living wage.

### **The climate emergency**

Scotland has the world's most ambitious emissions reductions targets in law, but we can only end our contribution to climate change if the UK Government plays its part and meets its targets.

SNP MPs will demand the UK matches Scotland's ambition, meets its Paris Climate Agreement responsibilities and sticks to future EU emission standards – regardless of our position within the EU.

We will propose a Green Energy Deal that will ensure green energy schemes get the long-term certainty needed to support investment and that a UK Government plays its part in delivering a Green New Deal for Scotland.

### **Scrap Trident**

SNP MPs will build a cross-party coalition to scrap Trident as quickly and as safely as possible. We believe the billions spent on Trident should be invested in our public services.

# WESTMINSTER IS BROKEN

This election really matters.

At stake is who will decide Scotland's future – Westminster leaders like Boris Johnson or the people who live here?

People in Scotland are sick of Brexit and fed up with Westminster. It's a mess.

Whatever people's view on the European Union, and however they voted on Brexit, it is obvious that Westminster is broken.

Three years of political chaos has exposed that for all to see.

There is no end in sight. A vote for the SNP at this election offers an escape route for Scotland.

It's a vote for Scotland's right to choose our own future in a new independence referendum.

## Brexit is a disaster for Scotland

Brexit has destroyed the idea of the United Kingdom as a partnership of equals.

Wales and England both voted to leave and under the Boris Johnson deal will leave.

Northern Ireland is to get a special deal and the right to choose its future.

Scotland – the nation of the UK with the highest remain vote – is to get nothing.

The Tory Brexit deal will take Scotland out of the EU, out of the Single Market and Customs Union, all against our will.

That is unfair and anti-democratic.

Brexit will put barriers between our businesses and the world's largest single market.

It will make Scotland poorer, cost jobs, hit living standards and threaten environmental standards and workers' rights.

The trade deal the Tories plan with Donald Trump also risks opening the NHS up to US multinational companies.

It risks opening our markets to chlorinated chicken and hormone injected beef.

The Boris Johnson deal does not get Brexit done. It will just herald the start of lengthy and complex trade talks.

It opens the door to many more years of Brexit dominating Westminster politics. And if trade talks fail next year, or don't reach a conclusion in time, a no deal Brexit will be back on the table.

Scotland has the right to choose a better future.

## Westminster's broken promises

Brexit has broken the Britain Scotland was promised in 2014. Here's what the Westminster parties promised in the first Independence Referendum...and how they broke those promises.

- 1. European Union:** The Better Together campaign claimed that a Yes vote would remove our EU Citizenship. Now, the UK Government is removing Scotland from the EU against our will.
- 2. Lead the UK:** They said "Don't leave the UK. Lead the UK." The Prime Minister now says that the Scottish Parliament will not get a say in Brexit – despite Northern Ireland getting a voice under his Brexit deal.
- 3. Boris Johnson:** Better Together suggested Boris Johnson being Prime Minister was a 'scare story'. Boris Johnson became Prime Minister of the UK, unelected, less than five years after the 2014 referendum.
- 4. Protection for our NHS:** We were told Scotland's NHS would be safe as part of the UK, but now we see the NHS is up for grabs in a future trade deal with Donald Trump.
- 5. Protecting Scottish Pensions:** The Westminster parties claimed that staying in the UK would protect pensions. The UK Government have since removed pension entitlement from WASPI women, and some Tories are openly suggesting raising the state pension age to 75.
- 6. Shipyards:** Before the referendum, the No campaign promised contracts for 13 Type-26 frigates to be built in Govan and Scotstoun shipyards. Now only 8 such frigates are to be built, and only some of the work on these ships will come to Scotland.
- 7. Social Security:** The No campaign said that the most vulnerable in Scotland would be better protected with a No vote. Instead, £3.7 billion a year is set to be cut from social security spending in Scotland next year and the UN has labelled the UK welfare system a "digital and sanitised version of the 19th-century workhouse".
- 8. New Powers:** Unionist parties told us the Scottish Parliament would be the most powerful devolved assembly in the world. Not only did the Scottish Parliament's Finance and Constitution Committee judge that such new powers fell short of what was promised, now the UK Government has launched a power grab on Holyrood under the guise of Brexit.
- 9. Public Sector Jobs:** It was claimed in the referendum by the UK Government that it provided valuable employment through civil service jobs in Scotland. Within a year of the referendum, 2,500 of these jobs were put on the line with the planned closure of 17 HMRC centres.
- 10. Defence Personnel:** Voters were warned a Yes vote would damage Scotland's defence. Yet since the referendum, the Tories' have failed to meet their commitment to increase defence personnel and announced they would close a fifth of the MoD's estate in Scotland.
- 11. Barnett Formula:** They promised the Barnett Formula would remain but billions have been pledged to other parts of the UK – bypassing Barnett – as part of political pacts with the DUP.

# SCOTLAND'S FUTURE

The SNP believes Scotland should be an independent country in a new partnership of equals with the rest of the UK and our European neighbours.

We believe a better Scotland can be built for this and future generations if decisions about Scotland are taken by the people of Scotland.

It is our core belief that responsibility for Scotland's future should rest with all those who have made our country their home, no matter where they come from.

At present, our future is not in our hands. It is in the hands of the Westminster Parliament and Government.

The question we face as a country is this: who has the right to determine our future, Westminster politicians or the people who live here?

In an independent Scotland:

- we will always get the governments people vote for,
- as part of the EU, we will be a member of the world's largest trading block and single market, which is currently eight times the size of the UK alone,
- economic and migration policy will be tailored to Scotland's needs,
- the Scottish Parliament will have full control of tax and social security policy,
- we won't have to waste money on Westminster priorities like nuclear weapons or Brexit, and
- our NHS will never be under threat from a UK Government trade deal with Donald Trump.

If we are not independent:

- we will continue to get Westminster governments we don't vote for,
- Westminster can take us out of the EU and out of the Single Market of more than 500 million people, and
- in the words of the UK Government Treasury, Brexit will make us "permanently poorer",
- Westminster will continue to control social security policy, with the threat that the Tories could raise the retirement age as high as 75, and
- our NHS will be under threat from a Donald Trump trade deal.

If Westminster maintains control over Scotland, major changes which could profoundly damage this and future generations will be imposed without our consent.

We believe people in Scotland have the right to choose their own future - a choice between Westminster control and becoming an independent country.

# Scotland's economic strength

Our country has massive economic strengths. Here's just a few:

## **Overall Wealth**

Scotland would be ranked 16th in the OECD in terms of GDP per head, higher than the UK, France, Japan or New Zealand.

## **Renewables**

Scotland accounts for around one quarter of Europe's tidal resource, around one-quarter of its offshore wind resource and around 10% of its wave potential.

## **Food & Drink**

The latest food and drink export figures show exports were valued at £6.3 billion (in 2018). These are now at record levels, and are up 78% since 2007

## **Education**

Scotland has 4 of the top 200 universities in the world. Per head of population, Scotland has more universities in the top 200 than any other country in the world, except Switzerland.

## **Exports**

Scotland's international exports are stronger than ever. Since 2011, our international exports, excluding oil and gas, have increased by over 57% and are now worth £32.4 billion. Of this, almost half were exports to the EU.

## **Inward Investment**

Scotland has been the leading Foreign Direct Investment destination in the UK - outside of London - for five years running.

## **Culture and creativity**

The Creative Industries contribute more than £7 billion to the Scottish economy each year and support more than 80,000 jobs.

## **Fair Work**

Scotland is leading the way on fair pay. Scotland is the best performing of the four UK countries in terms of paying the real Living Wage at 81.6%.

## The choice of making Scotland an independent nation is in your hands

There is a clear mandate to hold a referendum on independence during the current term of the Scottish Parliament. Scotland has already voted for it but Westminster has so far refused to respect that mandate.

A vote for the SNP in this election, therefore, is a vote to endorse the following position:

- the people of Scotland have the right to choose their own future in a new referendum on becoming an independent country,
- it must be for the Scottish Parliament not Westminster to decide when an independence referendum should be held - and the SNP intends that it will be in 2020.

An SNP election victory will be a clear instruction by the people of Scotland that a new referendum on independence should be held next year, on a precise date to be determined by the Scottish Parliament.

### An agreed process

In order to put a referendum beyond legal challenge, we will seek a transfer of power, such as a section 30 order under The Scotland Act.

Westminster should not have the right to over-rule a decision of the Scottish Parliament on whether or when to hold an independence referendum.

An SNP election victory will therefore also be a clear instruction by the people of Scotland to Westminster to ensure a referendum is put beyond legal challenge and under the control of the Scottish

Parliament. It is unsustainable for a UK Government to ignore such a democratic instruction.

The Scottish Government has said it intends to seek that transfer of power before the end of this year.

An agreed process means that no-one will be able to question the legitimacy of the referendum both here in Scotland and in the wider international community. For EU member states in particular, it will be essential to demonstrate that a referendum has been held legally and constitutionally.

### Scotland's future in Europe

The people of Scotland voted decisively to remain in the EU and their wishes should be respected. And whatever the different views of Brexit might be, there is no doubt that the whole process has descended into chaos and confusion.

The SNP will therefore continue working with others across Scotland and the UK to stop Brexit. We will support a referendum with remain on the ballot paper to allow Brexit to be stopped for the whole of the UK. And if we face a situation where the only alternative is a no deal Brexit, we will support the revocation of Article 50.

The SNP believes the best future for Scotland is to become an independent member of the EU. Whatever Scotland's constitutional status it is in our interests for the UK to remain as close to the EU as possible.

The Brexit deal negotiated by Boris Johnson will not "get Brexit done". Instead it opens the door to many more years of negotiations on the UK's future relationship with the EU.

Talks on a future trade deal have not even started and there is a high chance they could break down next year meaning “no deal” will be back on the table.

The deal that Boris Johnson wants will take Scotland out of the EU, out of the Single Market and out of the Customs Union. It threatens environmental standards and workers' rights, and it will leave the NHS vulnerable to a trade deal with Donald Trump.

It will make Scotland poorer – a GDP loss equivalent to £1,600 per person by the end of the next decade – compared with continuing EU membership. And by ending freedom of movement it will increase the risk of Scotland's working population falling, damaging our economy, prosperity and public services.

It is time therefore for Scotland to look to the future, rather than being embroiled in never-ending Brexit debates that drag us back to the past.

12 of the other 27 EU member states have populations similar to or smaller than Scotland. For countries of our size the attractions of being part of the world's biggest trading block and single market are obvious.

The more Ireland, for example, has broadened its export base as a result of EU membership, the wealthier it has become.

We are strongly committed to upholding the core values of the EU. Scotland's abundant energy resources, leadership on tackling climate change, world-class universities and many other attributes mean we not only have much to contribute to EU membership, but also a lot to gain.

# JOANNA CHERRY:

## Standing Up for Democracy and The Rule of Law

The past three years have highlighted the reality that the Tories simply do not care for democracy and will stop at nothing to pursue their own narrow party interests.

With the Brexit chaos consuming Westminster, Joanna Cherry QC has led the battle to protect democracy and prevent the Tories from imposing lasting harm, while working to protect Scotland's place in the EU.

### **Prevented Boris Johnson from crashing the UK out of the EU without a deal**

The court case brought against Boris Johnson forced him to promise the Scottish Courts that he would obey the law to request and accept an extension from the EU to the Brexit deadline, which stopped Scotland and the UK crashing out of the EU on 31 October without a deal – an outcome that would cost thousands of jobs, hit the economy, and harm people's livelihoods.

Despite all the bluff and bluster that Boris Johnson was going to ignore the Benn Act and crash Scotland and the UK out of the EU with no deal, the court action and campaign by Joanna Cherry QC forced him to comply.

### **Stopped the illegal shut-down of parliament**

Joanna Cherry also lead the case against the anti-democratic shutdown of the Westminster Parliament. As Boris Johnson took steps to force through a no-deal by proroguing Parliament, the SNP candidate for Edinburgh South West took the case to the Supreme Court to challenge the lawfulness of the move.

All 11 justices on the UK Supreme Court followed the ruling of Scotland's highest court and declared the shutdown to be unlawful.

### **Article 50 Case in the European Court of Justice**

Alongside the SNP's candidate for Stirling, Alyn Smith MEP, as the only MP to play a part in the Article 50 case, Joanna Cherry's participation was vital to securing success. The European Court of Justice in Luxembourg found against the UK government and ruled that the Article 50 Notice can be unilaterally revoked to stop Brexit, and if Parliament so decides the UK can avoid crashing out without a deal.



# STRONGER FOR SCOTLAND

## Our Achievements at Westminster

The Westminster system has been shown to be broken and incapable of meeting Scotland's needs. However, SNP MPs have worked hard to stand up for Scotland and will continue to do so.

- Standing up for Scotland**

Led by Ian Blackford MP, SNP MPs have fought to make Scotland's voice heard at Westminster. From holding Theresa May and Boris Johnson to account at Prime Minister's Questions, to leading the fight against a 'no-deal' Brexit, the SNP has been the real opposition to the Tories at Westminster.

- Fighting the Power Grab on Scotland's Parliament**

The SNP at Westminster has led the campaign to protect Scotland's Parliamentary powers from a Tory government, trying to roll back 20 years of devolution. We will never let a UK government ignore Scotland's voice in decision making. Decisions for the people of Scotland must be made by the people of Scotland

- Blocking a No Deal Brexit**

We co-sponsored the critical piece of legislation in the House of Commons that forced the Prime Minister to seek an extension to Article 50, ensuring we didn't crash out of the EU on October 31st.

- Protecting the democratic process**

The SNP was integral to the legal challenge over Boris Johnson's undemocratic attempt to prorogue parliament, winning a victory that prevented the unlawful attempt of an unelected Prime Minister to close down Parliament and undermine democracy being successful.

- Securing a VAT exemption for Scotland's Police and Fire services**

Pressure from SNP MPs stopped the Tories charging Scotland's police and fire services £40 million of VAT each year. We will continue to demand the UK Government refunds the £175 million in VAT owed to Scotland's emergency services.

- Securing a Post-work study visa**

The SNP has been pressing for the reintroduction of the post-study work visa since the Tory - Lib Dem UK government scrapped it in 2012. The Tory government finally u-turned and the scheme will now operate for students starting courses in the UK from 2020/21 onwards, delivering a big boost to Scotland's world class universities.

- Getting Justice for Scotland's Farmers**

In 2013 the UK was given extra money from the EU to increase farm payments in Scotland, but instead the Tories chose to spend it across the UK, giving Scottish farmers only a fraction of what they were due. The SNP has ensured that £80 million has now been handed over by the Westminster government – and we will keep up the pressure until every penny of the £160 million owed to Scottish farming and crofting comes to Scotland.

- Scrapping immigration fees**

Pressure from the SNP forced the UK government into a major climb-down over its plans to charge fees for EU citizens applying for settled status.

- Pushing for a new approach on drugs**

The SNP sponsored a Private Members Bill aimed at legalising safe drug consumption rooms for people suffering from addiction. The Bill would create safe consumption rooms to help reduce the number of people dying from drug overdoses and tackle a rise in HIV among drug users.

- Protecting Scottish whisky**

SNP MPs campaigning prevented a tax raid on Scottish whisky and the SNP is now fighting to protect the sector's EU protections. We will oppose any trade talks with the US until they drop the new tariffs on Scotch whisky.

- Tackling violence against women and girls**

We have campaigned tirelessly for the UK Government to ratify the Istanbul Convention - the gold standard approach to tackling violence against women and girls.

- Universal Credit**

The SNP has fought hard against the roll out of the Tories' Universal Credit which is causing real hardship. The efforts of our MPs have secured an increase in the work allowance worth an additional £630 a year for working people, reduced the waiting time for UC payments and secured vital additional funding for the transition to Universal Credit worth £1 billion.

- Fighting the Tory Rape Clause**

The appalling two-child cap and the rape clause have been a focus of SNP MPs. Recent changes to the policy mean it only applies to children born after April 2017, but SNP MPs won't stop until this policy is scrapped completely.

- Scrapping rip-off DWP phone charges**

SNP MPs successfully campaigned for the UK government to introduce a free phone number for all those requiring assistance from the DWP, ensuring vulnerable people aren't ripped off getting advice on jobs, pensions and benefits.

- Protecting workers and family rights:**

SNP MPs have been at the forefront of arguing for and securing protections for workers and families. From campaigning to extend parental leave for parents whose babies need neonatal care, to legislation that would stop young people being exploited through unpaid trial shifts and demands that Westminster ban exploitative zero hour contracts, we have been on the side of workers and their rights.

- Leading the campaign against problem gambling**

The SNP was at the forefront of cross-party efforts to reduce the maximum stake on Fixed Odds Betting Terminals to £2, and helped stop Tory attempts to postpone this from spring to autumn 2019.

- Demanding action on tax evasion**

The SNP has led the fight at Westminster against global tax evasion, including a rare Finance Bill amendment forcing the UK to come clean on their ineffective anti-tax avoidance measures. We will continue to fight to ensure big corporations and the super-rich pay their taxes like everyone else.

# ALISON THEWLISS:

## Preventing Drug Deaths in Scotland

In 2018 there were 1,187 drug-related deaths in Scotland – the highest since records began. Each death is a tragedy for the victims and their families. In response, the SNP Scottish Government recently established a task force to tackle this problem in partnership with frontline agencies, those in recovery, and their families. However, we know there is much more that can be done at a UK level to tackle drug deaths.

In the House of Commons, Alison Thewliss introduced a Private Members' Bill aimed at legalising safe drug consumption rooms. The facilities have been proposed by Glasgow's Health and Social Care Partnership, and has gathered cross-party support from MPs at Westminster and a majority of MSPs in the Scottish Parliament, as well as the unanimous backing of Glasgow City Council.

However, the Home Office has repeatedly ignored the evidence and blocked the proposals - refusing to allow the facilities to be piloted. The Scottish Government is unable to implement the proposals due to the 1971 Misuse of Drugs Act being reserved to Westminster.

It is only with a strong group of SNP MPs returning to the House of Commons that we will be able to pressure the UK government to heed the evidence and take action.

Experts and those with lived experience stress that a Supervised Drug Consumption Facility (SDCF) could reduce the harm associated with drug use, and afford those with a drug addiction the dignity of a safe, clean space where they can engage with support services.

Drug deaths are a public health emergency and we desperately need a fresh approach. The Tories have displayed a shocking lack of empathy towards people struggling with addiction. If the UK government refuses to act, then they must devolve the powers to Scotland so that we can step in and help to save lives.



# ENDING AUSTERITY AND INVESTING IN PUBLIC SERVICES

The SNP always fights for the interests of the people of Scotland. That is why tackling austerity and securing investment in our public services remains the priority for SNP MPs. The pre-election bribes of the Tories – and Labour – do not mean an end to austerity, not least with the prospect of Brexit, of any kind, around the corner. Instead we must fight for our vision of an economy that provides opportunity for all.

We will not support an unfunded Tory race to the bottom, but instead will fight for a society where opportunities are created for all and the benefits of increased prosperity are shared fairly. Economic growth must be sustainable, it must increase wellbeing and everyone must have the opportunity to contribute to that growth.

We will stand up for jobs and businesses in Scotland and we will demand the support businesses need to grow and to boost productivity.

SNP MPs at Westminster will:

- demand the devolution of the tax powers Scotland needs to make the system fairer – as we have already done with Income Tax – while protecting public services,
- reject the ‘race to the bottom’ tax policy of the Tories, opposing tax cuts for big business and the wealthiest, instead supporting a crackdown on tax avoidance and evasion,
- back a reduction in employers National Insurance contributions – helping firms with the cost of creating new jobs, and
- oppose any increases in VAT – helping families make ends meet.
- The full powers of Independence would allow Scottish Governments to tailor all economic policy to the needs of our citizens
- It opens the way to a Scotland with increased prosperity, reduced inequality and greater opportunity.

## An end to austerity

Tory austerity has caused untold damage to our communities and has had a deep impact on our public services.

By 2019-20, Scottish public services, like schools and hospitals, will have lost out on over £13.9 billion of real-terms investment.

We will therefore not support any UK government that does not end austerity and begin to replace the funds lost over the last ten years.

And, we will not stand by whilst Scotland is denied its fair share of public spending, particularly when the DUP in Northern Ireland are the beneficiaries of a £1 billion Brexit bung.

Instead, we will press the UK Government to reverse its cuts to the Scottish budget, invest in public services and the economy and follow Scotland’s lead in putting wellbeing at the heart of policymaking.

## Help for household finances

More than a decade of austerity and years of low wage growth have left too many families struggling. Instead of tax cuts for the wealthy, SNP MPs will back plans to help the majority with a freeze on National Insurance contributions and Value Added Tax.

The SNP has already introduced the most progressive income tax rates in the UK. Overall the average income tax bill in Scotland is less than in the rest of the UK, with those on low incomes paying less whilst those who can afford to pay more.

SNP MPs will support reform of VAT, including the continuation of VAT-exemption on essential items like children’s clothes, and will hold the UK

government to a commitment to remove VAT from sanitary products. We will press the UK to keep pace with the EU and scrap VAT on e-books and e-journals.

We also want the UK to devolve control of National Insurance to Scotland, allowing us to make our own decisions on a tax that directly impacts employers' ability to afford to create new jobs. Either here in Scotland or while in the control of Westminster, we must make sure that National Insurance rates and thresholds fit devolved income tax rates.

And for homeowners seeking to move but unable to get a mortgage due to issues with cladding following the Grenfell tragedy, we will press the UK Government to work with the mortgage industry to identify a viable solution that is compliant with Scots law.

## **Help with home energy bills**

Households across Britain spend around £30 billion on gas and electricity each year, an average of around £1,123.

For those who switch their energy suppliers regularly, the market is working. But for the two thirds of households who don't switch either supplier or tariffs – often those on the lowest incomes, older people, and those without access to the internet – that's just not the case. The difference in switching to the cheapest tariff can be as much as £300.

We want to reform the market for all consumers whether that's a family home or a small business. SNP MPs would press for the introduction of an Ofgem database of people who have not switched suppliers alongside a national free switching service, which compares the whole market – all the energy tariffs available with clear explanations of costs, and average bills. This free service would

be accessible by everyone, and the service could use the database to contact people who hadn't switched to encourage them to get a cheaper deal. We would also be open to consideration of new legislation to cap the most expensive tariffs.

This switching service would also look at where collective switching could work to the advantage of households – for example in the social rented sector.

SNP MPs would support legislation to:

- put a duty on energy suppliers to use clear language in explaining tariffs and costs
- introduce a cap on credit that can be built up
- provide a minimum of quarterly bills so arrears cannot be built up
- contact all customers who have been on the same tariff for two years unless it is the cheapest tariff and
- ensure that, in the event an energy supplier fails, the full credit built up by a consumer is paid back and if there are arrears to be paid, then customers are treated fairly and administrators follow Ofgem rules of repayment not their own.

## **Protecting our health service**

We all rely on our NHS – that is why we are committed to making sure it is fit for the future.

The SNP Scottish Government has delivered record levels of funding for the NHS in Scotland, up 6% in real-terms over the last decade - with more to come. On our current plans frontline health spending will exceed £15 billion by 2021/22.

As a result, frontline health spending per head in Scotland is £136 per person (6.3%) higher than in England. This amounts to over £740 million more spending on frontline health services in Scotland, compared to the UK.

We are calling on the next UK government to close this spending gap.

This would not only substantially increase health investment in England but will also allow us to increase the frontline investment to NHS Scotland to more than £17 billion by 2024/25.

And, our increased health investment comes despite Westminster reducing Scotland's fiscal resource budget by £1.5 billion (5%) in real terms between 2010/11 and 2019/20. We've increased health resource funding by 13.1% over the same period.

Now Scotland faces the real risk that Tory Brexit trade deals with Donald Trump's United States will open the NHS to multinational US health companies.

SNP MPs will demand that any future UK government pass a new National Health Service Protection Act, guaranteeing that trade deals do not undermine the founding principles of the NHS nor open it to profit-driven exploitation.

The SNP will also continue to press the UK Government to accept responsibility for the contaminated blood scandal and pay compensation to the surviving victims and bereaved families.

## NHS Protection Act

There is not a life in this country that our precious NHS has not touched.

The Tories' desperation for a post-Brexit trade deal with Donald Trump has exposed how vulnerable our NHS could be to future trade deals in the hands of those who don't care about it.

That's why a vote for the SNP is a vote to demand that our NHS is protected explicitly in law from being included in future trade deals.

We will propose a new law to explicitly protect the NHS in Scotland, Wales and England, and 'Health & Social Care in Northern Ireland', from being subject to future trade deals.

The NHS Protection Act would enshrine in law that our NHS must be protected as publicly owned, publicly operated, and its services publicly commissioned.

The Act would stipulate that any goods or services that are procured by the NHS must be explicitly prevented from being subject to any future 'investment protection mechanisms' or 'investor-state dispute resolution mechanisms'.

As a result, the new law would force any future government to have these explicit protections and exemptions on the face of any future trade agreements. Any proposed agreements without these explicit protections could not be considered for approval by either the UK government or UK parliament.

To give a double-lock on protecting our NHS, the new law would also ensure that future trade deals would require the explicit consent of the Scottish Parliament, Welsh Assembly, and Northern Irish Assembly; and conformation that any trade deal entered into did not adversely impact on our respective health services prior to any deal being ratified.

We would also support moves to re-instate a publicly owned, publicly operated, and publicly-commissioned NHS in England through the replacement or significant amendment of the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

## Powers to tackle the drug crisis

Recent statistics showing a rise in the numbers of drugs deaths in Scotland means that we must act urgently to save lives.

The Scottish Government has put in place a further £20 million over two years to support local services and provide targeted support but we want to go further and take the radical step of creating a supervised Drug Consumption Facility (SDCF) in Glasgow.

The Scottish Parliament has backed these plans and MSPs from all political parties - except the Conservatives – have united to call on the UK to change the law and allow the facility to be opened.

It will save lives and make our streets safer. Despite this, the UK Government has refused consent.

This decision is actively preventing Scotland tackling vital issues that are a matter of life and death to some of the most vulnerable people in our society. SNP MPs will therefore call for:

- the devolution of Misuse of Drugs Act to allow for the full range of effective public health measures to tackle the drugs death crisis, and
- pending that devolution, the UK Government to introduce a Supervised Drug Consumption Facility.

## Maintaining Law & Order

Everyone has the right to feel safe in their community and have confidence in their police and fire services.

Despite the constraints on Scotland's public services through a decade of UK austerity, policing services have been maintained and improved.

Since the SNP took office in Scotland, we have recruited an additional 1,000 police officers – this is in stark contrast to England and Wales, where the UK Government have slashed police numbers by more than 21,000. If we had followed the same approach, there would be more than 2,000 fewer officers in Scotland.

The recent announcement that the UK will now recruit 20,000 officers for England & Wales in coming years will not even reverse their cut. As a direct alternative to the cuts agenda seen in England and Wales, we have increased our total funding for the Scottish Police Authority by £42.3 million while giving our police officers the best pay deal anywhere in the UK.

Scotland's police officers received a 6.5% 31 month pay deal in comparison to only 2% for English and Welsh officers in 2018 and 2.5% in 2019.

Despite emergency services in England having tax relief from VAT, the UK government failed to deliver the same relief for Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, which cost Scottish taxpayers more than £175 million over five years.

After repeated SNP calls for the end to VAT charges on our police and fire services, the UK Government finally relented. The decision to end this injustice was long-overdue but it doesn't go far enough.

We will continue to demand the UK Government refunds the £175 million in VAT owed to Scotland's emergency services.

## Co-operating to keep us all safe

The strengthening of internal security is, more than ever, an international affair.

We rely on vital EU tools and databases, like the European Arrest Warrant, Europol, Passenger Name Records and the Schengen Information System to assist Police Scotland, the Crown Office and the Procurator Fiscal Service to fight crime across borders and keep people safe.

It is clear that Brexit will have an impact on how Scotland protects the public and delivers justice. We will continue working with others to stop Brexit and retain criminal justice systems that we benefit from as a member of the EU. If this is not possible, we will campaign to keep as many of the existing measures as possible to keep Scotland safe.

## Investing in our children

Scotland has embarked on a massive programme of investment in our children and their education.

The massive expansion of early learning and childcare - from 600 hours per year to almost double that at 1,140 hours - will transform lives, giving more children the best possible start.

And if the SNP is returned to government after the next Holyrood election, we will expand childcare into the school holidays for primary pupils from the poorest backgrounds.

And our £750 million Scottish Attainment Fund is closing the attainment gap in our schools and lifting standards for all.

The results are beginning to be seen. The attainment gap is closing and we have record numbers of students from poorer backgrounds going to university in Scotland – aided, of course, by our commitment to free higher education. There will be no return to tuition fees in Scotland.

All of this has been put in place despite the huge real-term cuts to Scotland's budget at the hands of Westminster Tories.

SNP MPs will never cease to argue for Scotland to receive our fair share of funding, reversing the real-terms cuts imposed against our will so that we can continue to invest in our children's future.

- multilateral efforts to address tax challenges from the digitalisation of the economy,
- further action by the UK government to tackle international tax avoidance,
- the full implementation of the 5th Anti-Money Laundering directive and a fit for purpose online retailer tax,
- a review of the tax rules around intermediaries – known as the IR35 tax rule - and problems with implementation of the Loan Charge, and
- a comprehensive inquiry into the digitisation of tax, to uncover the reasons for HMRC and UK Government delays that mean we still do not have the 21st century tax payments system that could help tackle avoidance and evasion.

## Tax Fairness

After a decade of austerity, it is more important than ever that everyone pays the taxes they owe for the public services they enjoy. The SNP has legislated to close tax loopholes in Scotland and we have led the fight against tax avoidance at Westminster. SNP MPs will back improvements to tax collection and tougher action on tax avoidance, including:

- a review of the closure of HMRC offices in Scotland and across the UK,
- immediate action, including reform of Companies House, to uncover the beneficial ownership of Scottish Limited Partnerships, other companies and trusts,
- measures to improve the transparency of tax paid by international companies to ensure that they make a proportionate contribution to tax revenues,

## AN OPEN MODERN ECONOMY

We want Scotland to be the best place to live, work and do business.

We believe that Scotland should be able to emulate the performance of the most successful small countries in the world. To do that we need the powers of independence and the right economic strategy.

We believe that strategy must be founded on the three P's of population, participation and productivity. We must grow our population, we must tackle inequality and improve participation, and we must increase the productivity of our economy.

The SNP will always promote policies that reflect the needs of Scotland's businesses and economy while putting fair work at the heart of everything we do.

In government, we have created a National Manufacturing Institute which will be the centre of excellence for manufacturing in Scotland and launched the Scottish National Investment Bank which will invest in Scottish businesses and help to grow our economy.

Unlike successive Westminster governments, we will never turn our back on Scottish industry. We have stepped in to secure a future for Scottish Steel, Pinney's, BiFab and more recently, Ferguson's shipyard – taking it into public control.

But a fair society isn't just about the right to work, it must be about the right to fair work. That is why in Government we have launched 'Fair Work First' – championing the Real Living Wage, opposing exploitative zero hours contracts and ensuring that companies that want grants from government sign up to fair work principles. Scotland now has the highest rate of workers in the UK earning not just the UK mandatory living wage, but the real Living Wage.

We will call on the UK Government to adopt our Fair Work First approach.

While the SNP Scottish Government does everything it can to promote Fair Work, save jobs and support businesses, the reality is that most powers over employment and the economy remain reserved to the UK government.

### MICHELIN: A tale of two governments

Just over a year ago, as a result of a change in the global tyre market, Michelin announced its decision to close its plant in Dundee. While the plant will close, thanks to the work of the Scottish Government and Dundee City Council, Michelin will retain a presence in Dundee.

With a £30 million investment from the company, matched by the Scottish Government, the Michelin site will be transformed into the Michelin Scotland Innovation Parc – a centre for low carbon skills and innovation.

Despite being involved in the Michelin Action Group, the UK Government has not contributed a single penny to the efforts to secure a future for the site. The SNP will push the UK Government to match our £30 million investment – ensuring they play a full part in securing new jobs and a bright future for the Michelin site.

SNP MPs will demand that powers over employment are devolved to Scotland to allow our parliament to get on with the crucial job of supporting employment and helping business to thrive.

In the meantime, we will press for the statutory living wage to rise to at least the level of the real living wage, and for an end to age discrimination. And, SNP MPs will demand tougher action to close the gender pay gap, including introducing fines for businesses that fail to meet an agreed Equal Pay Standard.

Action is now needed on the Taylor Review findings and rights for those working in the gig economy, whether agency workers, those on zero hours or in insecure work, we need to ensure those workers can still get access to the employment rights others in secure employment have.

Under the SNP Scotland's economy is strong, we've seen growth and a high employment rate – yet our economic stability is seriously threatened by the UK Government's EU exit plans which, in whatever form they take, will damage the Scottish economy. Scotland has an alternative to the inevitable economic decline of Brexit Britain.

Our future can be one of greater prosperity and higher living standards.

Scotland is an energy powerhouse; we have world-leading universities; and our innovative companies export across the world.

Countries Scotland's size lead the world. We want to join them.

### **Systemic reform of the economy**

The UK economy needs fundamental, systemic reform. Ten years after the financial crash, there is still a clear need for radical change based on the principles of Fair Work and environmental sustainability.

The starting point must be that prosperity and economic justice are not in conflict. As Scotland has begun to demonstrate with the limited powers we have, a more equal economy generates more stable, sustainable growth, at lower social costs and greater wellbeing.

It is no longer enough to address economic injustice through redistribution using the tax and benefit system alone. Injustice needs to be tackled at source. And, perhaps most urgently, the environment cannot continue to suffer the impact of unrestricted economic growth that has led to the climate emergency now facing the planet.

We need to change the way the economy works and that requires the wholesale transfer of powers to Scotland.

Until Scotland has those powers, SNP MPs will campaign at Westminster for the UK to adopt progressive, sustainable economic reform that reshapes the economy, tackling economic and environmental injustice at source.

### **Fighting for jobs**

Whether it is at Ferguson's on the Clyde, the smelter in Fort William, steel making in Motherwell, renewable energy in Fife, the energy industry in the North East or fish processing in Annan, the SNP government has fought for threatened jobs wherever and whenever there has been a chance to save them.

Now we must fight for jobs in the face of the threat from Brexit.

Scotland's exports to the EU are worth almost £15 billion yet the Tories want to drag us out of the European Union, the world's largest free trade area of 500 million consumers – against the people of Scotland's wishes.

The best way forward is to stop Brexit and escape from the chaos. If that isn't possible, SNP MPs will always act to protect Scotland's place in the single market and customs union.

The Tories have placed uncertainty upon Scottish businesses resulting in the Scottish economy already being £3 billion smaller than it would have been without the Brexit vote. Having got us into this mess, Westminster must give firms the legal, accounting and technical advice they need to continue doing business.

SNP MPs will therefore press for a fit-for-purpose support service for small and medium sized businesses, to help firms navigate Westminster's Brexit mess.

Whilst Scotland has a strong labour market, crippling Brexit uncertainty is putting jobs at risk. To lower the cost of employment at this time, SNP MPs will back a rise in the National Insurance discount businesses receive – the Employment Allowance – when they increase employment from £3,000 per business per year to £6,000 per business per year.

### **Increasing Productivity**

Despite Westminster's Brexit mess, Scottish firms continue to export more and more to the world. Scottish business is not standing still and Westminster must now do its part by supporting measures to boost productivity.

SNP MPs will press the UK Government to introduce fit for purpose sector deals – including manufacturing – focussed on supporting productivity improvements right across the economy.

A key lever of improving productivity comes from city and region deals which can improve connectivity, innovation and productivity. However, Westminster has underfunded Scottish deals to the tune of £400 million – failing to match the

level of investment being made by the Scottish Government. SNP MPs will demand the UK stops short-changing Scotland on city and region deals, urge the UK Government to deliver for all of Scotland through an early agreement to deliver Growth Deals for those areas of Scotland yet to receive them, and make up the shortfall in their investment in existing deals.

We support the call from the Shetland Islands, the Orkney Islands and the Outer Hebrides for a much more ambitious Islands Growth Deal which will allow the tremendous potential of the Islands to be realised.

The SNP will continue to lead the campaign to ensure Westminster protects the funding Scotland has benefited from through EU Structural and Social Funds. We will stand up against the Westminster power-grab and demand that the roles of the Scottish Government and Scotland's local authorities in dispersing these funds is protected, so they are invested in Scotland's priorities not Westminster's.

### **Boosting Infrastructure and Investment**

Investment in modern physical and digital infrastructure is vital to a thriving, productive economy in the 21st Century. In Government, the SNP has recognised this through the National Infrastructure Mission which will see an additional £7 billion invested in Scotland over the period to 2026.

The creation of the Scottish National Investment Bank will provide £2 billion of long term, patient capital to businesses and infrastructure projects that will help transform the Scottish economy and reduce our carbon emissions.

To ensure public projects serve the public interest we are currently conducting work on the establishment of a National Infrastructure Company – an idea that puts fair working conditions at the heart of public infrastructure projects.

To build on the work of the Scottish Government, SNP MPs will push for an increase in the capital borrowing limits that restrict our ability to invest in infrastructure and grow our economy. We will also demand that Scotland gets a fair share of any investment by the British Business Bank and that it works closely with the Scottish National Investment Bank.

We will also press the UK Government to invest in digital connectivity including superfast broadband and 5G technology. Since 2013, we have increased broadband to 95% of premises across Scotland, on time and on budget. Now only the SNP is committed to providing access to superfast broadband to every home and business in Scotland, investing £600 million towards this, with the UK Government providing just £21 million of that.

SNP MPs will press for Scotland to get its fair share of the £5 billion UK Government funding to roll out gigabit broadband to the hardest to reach areas. We will call on the Shared Rural Network to deliver 95% 4G mobile coverage in Scotland – as applies for the rest of the UK. And we will press for the current review into the UK Telecoms Supply Chain to be concluded promptly .

SNP MPs will work to bridge the digital divide to improve the availability and affordability of broadband and mobile services. We will press the UK Government to reclassify the internet as an essential service and support affordable housing providers to make the service available. We will also work with broadband and mobile service providers to make more affordable tariffs and packages more widely available – and call for the UK Government to legislate for a social tariff.

If the UK leaves the EU, SNP MPs will monitor the impact of voluntary free roaming arrangements for mobile phone use in the EU. We will press for legislation to protect Scottish and UK consumers should these break down.

## **Tourism and hospitality**

Scotland's tourism industry is of huge importance to our economy, contributing around £7 billion to GDP and employing over 200,000 people.

The SNP Scottish Government is working to ensure that Scotland retains its reputation as an open, warm and welcoming destination. However, any risk to freedom of movement will have a catastrophic impact on our tourism sector where EU nationals make up over 11 per cent of the hospitality sector's workforce.

Against the backdrop of Brexit, we are working collaboratively with Scotland's tourism industry to future-proof the workforce.

However, the impact of Brexit goes deeper than this. The EU currently accounts for six out of Scotland's ten key visitor markets and around 44% of our overseas visitors. Adding barriers to travelling freely will put recent industry success at risk.

We will continue to stand firm against Scotland being taken out of the EU and SNP MPs will press the UK government to make it as easy as possible for international tourists to visit Scotland.

To provide further support to our tourism industry the SNP will call on the UK government to examine a reduction in VAT for the hospitality sector, levelling the playing field with other EU nations and creating new jobs.

## **Broadcasting and Creative Industries**

Creative industries are of huge importance to Scotland socially, culturally and economically, with the total contribution to the economy (GVA) having grown by 62% between 2008 and 2017.

We continue to support tax incentives for creative industries, including for film and television, and for more work to increase equality, inclusion and diversity across the sector.

We will press for responsibility for broadcasting in Scotland to be devolved to the Scottish Parliament and for greater authority and funding to be moved from the BBC network to BBC Scotland.

In the meantime, we welcome the creation of a new BBC Scotland TV channel and its associated investment, and we will continue to push for a fairer share of the TV licence fee raised in Scotland being spent in Scotland.

To prevent the UK Government playing games with the licence fee – as it did when it transferred the cost of free licences for over 75s from the government to the BBC – we believe the licence fee should be set independently of UK government.

We will also press for the UK government to take responsibility for licence fees for over 75s and ensure that free licences continue to be available.

If Brexit happens we will argue for streamlined visa schemes for artists and performers which ensures people from across the world can come to Scotland to perform, work and collaborate, and Scotland's culture sector and creative industries can continue to benefit from international partnerships and shared experiences.

### **Improving Corporate Culture**

The SNP has led the way in promoting improved social responsibility and corporate culture, not least through the Scottish Business Pledge. This partnership between Government and business is based on boosting productivity and competitiveness through fairness, equality, environmental action and sustainable employment.

It is a commitment to fairness – including mandatory elements such as paying the living wage, closing the gender pay gap and not using exploitative zero-hours contracts. By bringing these

together companies across Scotland have shown they can improve productivity and competitiveness and build sustainable growth that also achieves fairness, equality, opportunity and innovation.

At Westminster, the SNP will further support the growing trend in the private sector towards greater corporate responsibility. By taking a greater stake in the communities within which they operate, firms can become partners for social progress. Whilst it is always better to work collaboratively as partners, the SNP supports direct intervention when firms fail to meet their legal and social obligations.

SNP MPs will back moves to increase worker representation on company boards – a practice common place amongst our more productive, investment-rich European competitors and one that we believe will promote a greater social responsibility amongst companies.

We will also argue for greater representation of women and minority communities on public and private sector boards. In Scotland, the public sector is on track to ensure that all public boards have 50-50 gender balance by 2020 due to statutory targets we put in place. We would support similar UK legislation for the private sector. The evidence shows that companies and organisations do better when they properly represent society.

SNP MPs will back moves to ensure executive pension contributions are the same as for all workers in the company. According to the Investment Association, shareholder pressure has resulted in thirty percent of FTSE 100 companies pledging to cut executive pension contributions. Whilst we support the sector's call for firms to set out plans to align executive pension contributions with those of other workers, we will support calls for this to be extended to all staff and put onto a statutory basis.

We will also consider proposals to ensure fairer pay by ensuring that the balance of salaries of all employees within a company or organisation are considered when senior pay packages are decided.

Scotland has great expertise in long term investment and one of the greatest business risks at present comes from climate change. It is vital that shareholders can assess the climate change related business risks before they decide to invest in firms.

We therefore support industry calls for firms to include climate change related disclosures in their annual reports and will back steps to put this onto a statutory basis. SNP MPs would also support moves to introduce an easy to understand system of climate-friendly external auditing of firms, so that small investors can better understand the climate related risks of investments, including employee pension schemes.

One of the building blocks of a thriving business sector is contracts being met in full and on time. With too many of Scotland's SME's suffering from late payments, SNP MPs will support the introduction of effective legal protections to ensure small businesses are paid on time.

The biggest corporate failure in recent years was the financial crash and it is vital that those responsible are held fully to account. The SNP will support measures including the reinstatement of the reverse burden of proof which, before being removed by the Tories, required senior bank managers to demonstrate they had done the right thing where wrongdoing had emerged on their watch.

It seems unfair to many that the taxpayer stepped in to bail out the banks, but that the shares could be sold off on the cheap; allowing financial investors to reap the profit. To ensure that taxpayers get their money back, the SNP will press for the public

interest to be fully protected in any future disposal of RBS shares, including in decisions on how any windfall revenues should be used.

## Protecting Consumers

The EU has led and remains at the forefront of consumer protection, not least in giving us greater rights over how our data is used. We will stand up for consumers and push for greater devolution of powers over consumer protection to the Scottish Parliament.

SNP MPs will:

- support a freeze in further Insurance Premium Tax hikes to ensure consumers aren't penalised for taking steps to reduce risks,
- following the introduction of a cap on interest rates and charges for pay day loans, push for the cap to be lowered further and for a cap on credit card interest rates and unauthorised overdrafts to be introduced,
- fight to ensure Scotland does not face a return of mobile roaming charges banned from the EU,
- press for stronger legal protection against ticket touting and push for a ban on software used by ticket touts,
- push to stop consumers being short-changed through lost gift-card money,
- press for a streamlined complaints and redress process for those miss-sold under the Coalition Government Green Deal,
- call on the UK government to regulate to ensure fair delivery charges for rural communities, and
- stand up for those impacted by miss-selling, such as through the Equitable Life Scandal.

## Protecting Access to Cash

The Tories have sat back whilst bank branches, ATMs and post offices have closed. The SNP will stand up for our citizens' rights to access cash.

We will fight against bank, ATM and post office closures and demand the UK Government and big banks guarantee communities' access to cash.

SNP MPs will support moves suggested by the Treasury Committee to force big banks to pay more to the Post Office when they leave it as the last place in town to do basic banking. And we will urge a strategic review of support provided to the Post Office and support increases in the remuneration given to sub postmasters.

### **Tackling Problem Gambling**

Having led the campaign against Fixed Odds Betting Terminals, the SNP will continue to tackle problem gambling, pushing the UK Government to treat it as a public health matter and tackle it with a joined-up strategy.

We will press for greater devolution of gambling regulation to the Scottish Parliament and press the UK Government to stop underage gambling on video games. We will support changes to charity lottery law to reduce bureaucracy and maximise returns to good causes and we will support a full public health inquiry into gambling related harm.

### **Protecting our children from online harm**

The internet is an amazing resource we all now take for granted, and technology means we are just a click away from finding out anything we want to know and online communities can help us feel connected. However, the online world can also be a place where our children see images that are unsuitable or are distressing and where they could be put at risk from harm.

We all want our children to be safe and do we all we can to protect them, but when it comes to online harm, we are behind the times in tackling it.

SNP MPs will demand that new laws tackle this issue and protect our children including:

- New standards and measures to be put in place so social media, gaming and technology organisations protect their users fully including having a statutory duty of care and mandatory obligations to tackle unsuitable content that can lead to self-harm and suicide, sexual exploitation, grooming, abuse and extremism.
- Appointment of a new independent Online Regulator with the ability to take action such as imposing heavy fines and blocking access to sites.
- Age verification for sites that are not suitable for children or have lower age limits, like the existing rules for films.
- A duty on the UK Government to provide free and up-to-date expert resources to help protect people and support learning about online harm and abusive behaviour and how to report it. It would also provide support for parents to keep their children safe – from learning about what social media platforms do through to parental controls and learning how to chat to children about online safety and privacy.
- Regular awareness campaigns to highlight these resources.
- A levy on technology companies to fully fund the regulator and associated resources.

# CLIMATE CHANGE – A MORAL AND ECONOMIC RESPONSIBILITY

Scotland – like the rest of the world – faces a climate emergency.

We have a moral responsibility to tackle climate change and will lead the way in showing how our society can transition to net zero while creating economic opportunity and providing the assurance of rewarding work for all.

We have a huge opportunity to lead the world in building the new economy of the future, creating sustainable technologies and jobs that can secure our prosperity.

SNP MPs will:

- demand the UK accelerates its action to meet Scotland's climate change targets – the toughest legal targets in the world - of a 75% reduction in emissions by 2030, net zero carbon emissions no later than 2040 and net zero of all emissions by 2045,
- campaign for the UK government to bring forward plans to move to electric vehicles to match the Scottish target of 2032,
- press for the accelerated deployment of fully operational carbon capture utilisation and storage facilities to ensure Scotland is not denied this opportunity again,
- support substantial reforms to the UK tax system to support greener choices, including a greener tax deal for heating and energy efficiency improvements in homes and businesses and new vehicle and tax incentives regime for transport,
- campaign for the UK to remain aligned with EU environmental regulations even if Brexit takes place, and
- propose a Green Energy Deal that will ensure renewable energy schemes get the long-term certainty needed to support investment.

Independence would allow us to go even further, and not rely on a UK government for action on reserved areas – a reliance that has seen them reduce support for renewables, undermine the drive towards Carbon Capture and Storage and fail to live up to the challenge of the Climate Emergency.

## **Scotland must end its contribution to Climate Change**

Scotland has the world's most ambitious emissions reductions targets in law. These are underpinned by the best scientific advice available from the Committee on Climate Change (CCC), the independent UK-wide group of experts tasked in law with providing advice on climate change to government. SNP MPs will campaign for the UK Government to fund and resource the dedicated CCC office in Scotland that the Scottish Government is committed to establishing.

Earlier this year, the CCC advised that Scotland could reach net-zero emissions by 2045 – five years ahead of the rest of the UK.

We have put a target to achieve this in law with our world-leading Climate Change Act. It means that we will end our contribution to global climate change by 2045 at the latest, with Scotland becoming carbon neutral by 2040.

## **Westminster must play its role**

As the CCC made clear, we can only end Scotland's contribution to Climate Change if everyone plays their part – including the UK Government. They have control of major parts of policy and infrastructure and if they do not meet their targets, we will be less able to meet ours.

That's why it is crucial the UK government does not backtrack on promises to follow the CCC advice. SNP MPs will work to hold them to account on this.

We urge the UK Government to adopt the same approach and match our tougher, faster interim targets so that the decisions that need to be taken – for example on how we heat our homes and investment in transport, are taken as early as possible.

For too long, reckless Tory policies have damaged the environment. From fracking – which harms wildlife, causes disruption and threatens to contaminate soil and water – to tax hikes on solar power and reducing support for offshore wind, recent UK governments have taken the wrong path on climate change.

This short-sighted approach must end.

SNP MPs will work to prevent the threat of Brexit being used by the UK to reduce commitments to tackle climate change. This includes the UK sticking to future EU emission standards regardless of our position in relation to the EU. SNP MPs will never engage in a race to the bottom and will seek to prevent the sell-out of Scotland's environment to any dodgy trade deal.

## **Helping people reduce their carbon footprint**

We all need to play our part in tackling climate change. That's why we want to help people reduce their own emissions, whether it be by using public transport more or by promoting greener homes.

That means taking bold action through investing in services, changing planning rules, decarbonising the railways and building better infrastructure.

## **Better, greener public transport**

We all know that the way the rail network is run – using a model of franchise contracts to run services while the infrastructure sits with Network Rail – isn't working. We want Scotland's rail services to be significantly better and significantly greener into the bargain.

We support the overdue and necessary change to full Scottish public sector control of the structure, governance and operation of the Scottish railway system, and, unlike the Labour Party who plan to hand powers over railways back to Westminster with a single GB-wide company – we will insist our railways are run here in Scotland and that they can be run by the public sector.

To make our transport system greener, we are committed to:

- investing over £500 million in improved bus priority infrastructure to make bus travel the faster, greener option and encourage people out of their cars,
- reducing emissions from Scotland's railways to zero by 2035,
- pursuing the UK Government to commit to improvements on the journey times between Scotland and London - improving connections to the North of England at the same time, and
- helping people with the cost of ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs), including second-hand cars, by providing an additional £17 million for loan funding
- to reduce domestic flights, the Scottish Government will work with the UK Government to improve our rail journey times between Edinburgh and London.

## **Better, greener taxes**

We will support substantial reforms to the UK tax system to support greener choices, with SNP MPs campaigning for:

- tax incentives to enable people to make the switch to low-carbon heating systems more affordable.
- the re-design of vehicle and tax incentives to support industry and business investment in zero emission and sustainable transport choices – such as reduced VAT on bicycles and additional incentives for businesses and individuals to use Ultra Low Emission Vehicles, and
- a reduction in VAT on energy efficiency improvements in homes, ending the Treasury's 20% tax on making people's homes warmer and greener.

## Funding Green Infrastructure

We must harness the massive investment power that government can bring to bear.

Therefore, we will:

- put the transition to net-zero at the heart of the Scottish National Investment Bank's work,
- unlock additional resource for emissions-reducing investment through a Green Growth Accelerator combining public and private investment to transform cities and regions,
- bring to market a £3 billion portfolio of projects, including renewables, waste and construction, ready for green finance investment, and
- We will press for an increase in new woodland creation, working towards a target of 60 million trees planted annually in the UK by 2025, with 30 million of these in Scotland to help tackle the Climate Emergency and to support biodiversity and rural employment. We will share Scotland's success in this area in an effort to drive up planting rates across the UK.

## Leading the world on aviation

We all know that aviation contributes to climate change. But we also know that many of Scotland's remote and rural communities rely on flights. We do not believe that aviation can simply be the preserve of the better off. We believe we must find solutions that allow all of Scotland's communities to flourish

That's why we are committed to making the Highlands and Islands the world's first net zero aviation region by 2040, with trials of low or zero emission flights, including electric planes, starting in 2021.

The SNP believes aviation emissions should be counted within national emissions and targets. Aviation emissions in Scotland count towards our carbon reduction targets and the same approach should be taken across the UK.

## Supporting Carbon Capture & Storage

We want Scotland to be a leader in the development of Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) technology,

which has the potential to create thousands of jobs while helping to fight climate change.

Too often the UK has held this ambition back – not least when they reneged on their commitment to a £1 billion project set to benefit Peterhead Power Station.

SNP MPs will pressure the UK Government to accelerate deployment of fully operational carbon capture utilisation and storage facilities in Scotland to ensure we are not denied this opportunity again.

## Transitioning our economy

### A Just Transition

We've established a Just Transition Commission to advise Scottish Government ministers on how to maximise the economic and social benefits of decarbonising Scotland, and manage the risks and challenges, so that we can move to a net-zero economy in a way that is fair for all. This will also help to tackle inequality and poverty, and promote a fair and inclusive jobs market.

Our next steps include supporting Scotland's people to gain the skills they need to share the rewards of these new approaches to investment through a Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan.

SNP MPs will press the UK to join Scotland in establishing and developing strategies that ensure a fair transition.

### Net Zero Fund

The UK Office for Budget Responsibility estimate that oil and gas revenues will be worth £8.5 billion over the five years to 2023-24. We will press for that revenue to be put to work in building the transition to a greener, sustainable future.

We will demand the ring-fencing of oil and gas receipts, creating a Net Zero Fund, to help pay for the energy transition through investment in areas such as renewable energy, electric vehicles and carbon capture utilisation and storage.

And, because the communities that currently host the oil and gas industry cannot be left behind in the

transition, we will demand that 12% of the fund – at least £1 billion over 5 years – will go to a Net Zero Industrial Strategy to help diversify the economies of oil hubs like Aberdeen, Falkirk and Shetland.

## Getting the energy mix right

Scotland has already made great strides in greening our energy production – but there is more we can and must do.

Nearly 75% of Scotland's electricity in 2018 came from renewable sources, and we've doubled our exports of renewable electricity to the rest of the UK. We're also investing over £10 million in the marine energy sector and tidal innovation, as well as developing a bioenergy action plan through cutting-edge research.

Wind power output in Scotland hit a record high in the first half of 2019, producing almost double the amount of energy required to power all homes in Scotland.

Now, Scotland and the UK must go further and we are committed to:

- pressing the UK to accelerate action to decarbonise the gas grid – a critical recommendation of the CCC,
- ensuring that, from 2024, all new homes must use renewable or low carbon heat,
- pressing the UK to properly support the renewables industry or else devolve the powers to Scotland to let us get on with the job,
- opposing new nuclear power plants and prioritising investment on cleaner, cheaper forms of electricity generation, including reform of the UK support for renewables to ensure it takes into account wider economic considerations such as supply chain benefits, not just price, and
- allowing onshore wind and solar power to bid for 'contracts for difference' support – the UK's main renewables support mechanism. We will also seek to ensure that it supports less mature technologies like floating offshore wind and tidal stream generation so that Scotland's economy benefits from these industries.

SNP MPs will press the case for more support for the critical renewables industry by proposing a Green Energy Deal that will:

- ensure green energy projects get the long-term certainty needed to support investment,
- deliver a wave and tidal energy industrial strategy with adequate funding,
- allow onshore wind to compete for 'contracts for difference' support – the UK Government's main mechanism to support low-carbon electricity generation,
- reform the punitive transmission charging regime that discourages investment in Scotland,
- set a clear timescale for the delivery of the interconnectors to Scotland's islands,
- press the Tories to ditch their plans to quadruple the VAT on home solar, and
- support a diesel scrappage scheme if trading in ultra-low emission vehicles.

To ensure the Scottish supply chain benefits from the boom in renewable energy, SNP MPs will demand that the UK Government uses the support it provides through the contracts for difference mechanism to ensure that supply chain benefits are taken into account and that wind energy firms follow through on promises made to support domestic supply chains.

## Opposing Fracking

Following a comprehensive period of evidence-gathering and consultation, the SNP Scottish Government has set out a finalised policy of no support for unconventional oil and gas – such as 'fracking' - in Scotland.

This means the Scottish Government will not issue licences for new unconventional oil and gas development, and that Scotland's planning framework will not support development using unconventional oil and gas extraction techniques, including coal bed methane and hydraulic fracturing, commonly known as 'fracking'.

## **NEIL GRAY:**

### **Scrapping The Cruel Tory Benefits Freeze and Reforming Universal Credit**

The Tories have been responsible for inflicting a decade of devastating Tory austerity that has led to lasting harm being imposed on our public services, economy and families.

The UK government's welfare cuts have led to a rise in poverty and food bank use, with organisations such as the Trussell Trust warning that Tory policies - from Universal Credit, benefit sanctions, the benefits freeze, to the bedroom tax – having been a key factor in the dramatic increase in food bank use and extreme poverty in the UK over the past seven years.

In Westminster, Neil Gray, the party's Social Justice spokesperson, has led the way in opposing the Tories' flawed Universal Credit policy - an ill-thought-out welfare scheme which has forced families into debt, foodbank usage and destitution.

The SNP candidate for Airdrie & Shotts has consistently campaigned calling on the UK government to immediately scrap the benefit freeze – which will have cost Scots £300 million a year, negatively affected more than 27 million people, and plunged 400,000 people into poverty.

Rather than heeding the evidence and acting to prevent more people from facing poverty and hardship, the Tories are ploughing on regardless.

SNP MPs have led the way in campaigning against these cuts, and the SNP Scottish Government has done what it can by mitigating the Bedroom Tax, boosting Carer's Allowance and establishing the new Best Start Grant's. However, Scotland needs a strong voice in Westminster that will work day in day out to stop the Tories in their tracks.

This General Election is an opportunity to send a clear message to Westminster that its deep and damaging cuts will not be tolerated by people in Scotland. Only a vote for the SNP will send a strong group of SNP MPs to Westminster to oppose Tory austerity and instead champion a social security system that will bring dignity, fairness and respect back.



# A FAIRER SCOTLAND

While handing tax cuts to the wealthiest, the Tories have cut support for the most vulnerable, entrenching poverty, across the UK. By 2021, the total loss to people in Scotland as a result is estimated to reach around £3.7 billion per year.

As a result the Tories have also presided over the introduction of the disastrous and discredited Universal Credit system which has led to rising poverty, rent arrears and an increase in the need for foodbanks.

It is time to end the deliberate targeting of the poorest and most vulnerable by successive Westminster governments.

SNP MPs will:

- demand the end of the two-child benefit cap, the rape clause, and a halt to Universal Credit,
- demand an immediate end to the benefit freeze, the abolition of the bedroom tax and the introduction of a period of uplifts to benefits of at least inflation,
- demand an end to the punitive benefits sanctions regime,
- oppose any rise in the pensions age, and
- demand a UK wide benefit take-up campaign so people are encouraged to get the help they are entitled to, particularly pension credit.

Since 2014, the Scottish Government has spent around £100 million a year to protect people from the worst aspects of Tory policies that push people into poverty and our MPs have consistently opposed Tory austerity.

As an independent Scotland, we can build a fairer, more inclusive, society - where everyone feels valued, human rights are respected and we properly support our most vulnerable people and tackle poverty head on.

## Respect and dignity in our social security system

Scotland has shown that dignity and respect can successfully be placed at the heart of a social security system. With the limited powers we have, a system has been built that does exactly that. It is based on a simple set of principles we have placed in law: that social security is a public service, an investment in the people of Scotland and is itself a human right, essential to the realisation of other human rights.

Our system has been up and running for less than 18 months and has already helped more than 91,000 people with £190 million in vital financial support.

The contrast with the UK system could not be more stark. As a result of Tory cuts, people across the UK are being pushed into debt, hardship and poverty. The policies being pursued are harmful. Families are no longer eligible for child tax credits for their third or subsequent child. Thousands of families in Scotland have already had their income cut and when Universal Credit is fully rolled out this policy will push a further 20,000 children into poverty. In-work poverty has risen faster than employment, with most parents of children in poverty in work.

SNP MPs have been at the forefront of the campaign against the Rape Clause, which requires women to prove they've been raped in order to receive support for more than two children. We believe it is utterly unacceptable for women to have to disclose that they have been raped to access UK Government benefits. SNP MPs will continue to fight for the abolition of the two-child cap and the rape clause.

The four-year benefit freeze represents one of the biggest cuts to social security we have seen in recent times and represents a cut of £300 million a year in Scotland alone. By 2020, across the UK, the benefit freeze will have negatively affected more than 27 million people and plunged 400,000 people into poverty across the UK. We call on the UK Government to immediately end the freeze alongside the benefit cap, and commit to a period of above inflation increases to restore lost value and tackle poverty.

The Tories punitive benefit sanction scheme has been shown to be ineffective in supporting people into work yet it has contributed to rising poverty across the UK. The recent changes that have been implemented do not go far enough. It is time for the whole scheme to be scrapped.

The Tories have been pressed by SNP MPs to match Scotland and adopt a fair definition of terminal illness, based on clinical judgment not timescales. SNP MPs will vociferously demand this change and a more humane attitude for people facing the most tragic of circumstances.

Over the past six years, the roll-out of Universal Credit has pushed people into poverty, debt, and crisis. The SNP has been vocal about the many issues with this shambolic system from the in-built minimum five-week delay in receiving the first payment to the abolition of the child element, and changes in the work allowance.

Universal Credit is having catastrophic consequences, with rent arrears and debt spiralling and families increasingly relying on emergency welfare support and foodbanks.

The system is fundamentally flawed and is clearly not working for people. Yet there are changes that could be made immediately which will effectively deliver a new radically different benefit that supports rather than penalises people

without requiring individuals to go through a new application process. In the meantime both natural and managed migration must be halted.

SNP MPs have been the consistent critics of Tory policies that push people into poverty and have also been instrumental in forcing the UK government budget U-turns on some of the proposed cuts to tax credits and disability benefits.

A vote for the SNP will strengthen Scotland's hand against further Tory cuts.

## **Tackling care leaver poverty**

We recognise that the care system requires root and branch reform. That's why we set up the independent Care Review to provide recommendations on how best to build a system based on love.

But we also accept that we cannot wait. Care experienced young people have made clear that changes is urgent and we agree.

That is why we are taking action on devolved issues and will go further in future. At Westminster, our MPs we will demand further support to care-experienced people from the UK Government, particularly new measures to prevent and mitigate poverty amongst care leavers, including the 'levelling-up' of incomes of care leavers by ensuring the real Living Wage applies to all, and for care leavers to be exempt from the Shared Accommodation Rate for Housing Benefit to support them to secure and maintain their own tenancy.

## **Fairness in retirement**

According to a report from the OECD, the UK State Pension is the lowest in the developed world. While pensioner poverty in Scotland is the lowest in

the UK, it is unacceptable for any person to face hardship in their old age.

We will continue to argue for a fairer pensions system. SNP MPs will oppose the Tory plan to increase the State Pension Age to 68 by 2038 and will stand firm against any move to raise the State Pension Age to 75.

The Triple Lock on the State Pension, which ensures the State Pension rises by inflation, earnings or 2.5 per cent, whichever is highest, protects the income of pensioners, many of whom rely on their pension as their only source of income. The SNP will stand up for pensioners against any attempts to remove the Triple Lock on the State Pension.

We will also fight to reverse the cut to Pension Credit that means older couples in Scotland could be £7,000 worse off per year.

Pension Credit has one of the lowest take-ups so we will call for a pension credit awareness and take up campaign to ensure our poorest older people are getting the benefits they are entitled to.

We support the establishment of an Independent Savings and Pension Commission, to ensure pensions and savings policies are fit for purpose and reflect the demographic needs of different parts of the UK.

We'll stand up for the women in Scotland, and across the UK, who have been short-changed by the Tory Government due to the accelerated timetable for increases in the women's State Pension Age. SNP MPs will continue to support the Women Against State Pension Inequality (WASPI) campaign in their efforts to secure fairness for the women affected.

The SNP will call on the UK government to take steps to extend auto-enrolment, so that more low paid and self-employed workers can benefit from regular pension savings.

And, we believe it was unfair to pensioners for the Tories to force the BBC to take responsibility for deciding whether the license fee remains free to over-75s. We will therefore support the urgent reversal of the decision to make pensioners pay and demand that the UK Government fully fund licences for over 75s. To prevent the UK government from short-changing pensioners in the future, licence fees should be set independently of the UK government.

## **Child poverty**

It is shameful that so many of our children grow up in poverty. SNP MPs will always hold the UK government to account on the impact of their policies which under the Tories and the Lib Dems over the past decade have increased child poverty.

The Tory government scrapped targets to reduce child poverty, as well as the Commission that reported on them. Scotland is now the only UK nation to have clear targets for the eradication of child poverty set out in law. We have also established a Poverty and Inequality Commission.

The SNP Scottish Government has taken decisive action to tackle child poverty head on by committing to introduce a new £10 a week Scottish Child Payment for low income households by the end of next year - a step that could lift 30,000 children out of poverty when fully rolled out.

This comes after the successful introduction of our three Best Start Grant payments and Best Start Foods, providing eligible parents and carers with help to meet the costs of raising their children.

In the first seven months, we made more than 42,000 grants, putting £12.9 million in the pockets of low-income families, lifting thousands of children out of poverty – nearly £11 million more than the UK government had paid out in the whole of the previous year.

Our Best Start Foods replaced the UK Healthy Start Voucher scheme but did so at a higher level and introduced a new payment card to remove the stigma associated with the old paper vouchers.

But we do this in the face of continuing cuts, austerity, and without powers over all social security or employment that are needed to make the radical changes our society needs to eradicate child poverty, invest in our people and give our children the best start in life.

SNP MPs will urge the UK government to follow the lead of the SNP Scottish Government by introducing a benefit that will reduce child poverty, re-establish UK-wide child poverty targets and establish a Poverty and Inequality Commission to provide expert advice on using Westminster powers to tackle poverty and to report on progress. Whilst the Tories policies on welfare have been criticised by the UN, the actions of the SNP Scottish Government have been praised for its attitude to social security and the action it is taking to support families on low incomes. Last year the Scottish Government invested over £1.4 billion to support low income households, including £100 million a year to protect people from the worst aspects of Tory policies that push people into poverty. However, in the face of a block grant reduction of £2 billion since 2010, and without full powers, it is not possible to mitigate their £3.7 billion cuts in full.

With independence, we can tackle the deep-seated inequalities in our society and shift the curve on poverty without our efforts being undermined by another government's policies. Poverty is unacceptable and not inevitable. With full powers over social security and employment, we can introduce inclusive and progressive policies rather than having to tackle poverty and support our citizens in the face of cuts from another government.

## **Parental Rights**

The SNP will continue our work to increase parental rights - maternity, paternity, and adoption rights - working to introduce legislation to support parents and children get the best start in life.

Mothers are currently entitled to take a year for maternity leave yet are only entitled to maternity pay for 36 weeks, with just six weeks at 90% pay. That is not fair and works against those on lowest incomes. It also means that parents, mainly mothers, who take a full year are also losing out on pension provision. We would therefore increase the provision of paid leave for both parents and promote shared parental leave.

Building on models successfully introduced in Scandinavia and, in particular, Iceland, we will seek legislation to:

- increase maternity leave to one year,
- set maternity pay at 100% of average weekly earnings for the first 12 weeks, then 90% for 40 weeks or £150.00, whichever is lower.
- increased shared parental leave from 52 to 64 weeks, with the additional 12 weeks to be the minimum taken by the father in order to encourage an increase in shared parental leave
- introduce a principle of 'use it or lose it'
  - whereby the paternity leave cannot be transferred in order to encourage fathers to take the leave - while protecting maternity leave if a couple choose not to take advantage of the provision.

In addition, because we know the extra pressures that a baby in neonatal care creates for families, parents would receive an extra statutory paid week of leave for every week their baby is in neo natal care.

We would also increase paternity rights by increasing the statutory weeks allowed as well as the weekly rate of Paternity Pay to 100% of average weekly earnings for one week then 100% for 2 weeks or £150.00 (whichever is lower).

Dads can still be discriminated against before the birth, with rights at present to only take unpaid leave to attend two antenatal appointments. We would increase this to paid leave for six antenatal appointments.

We will also continue to press for extended legal protection against redundancy for pregnant parents, those on shared parental leave, and adoption leave, and new parents for up to six months after their return to work.

And we will maintain our campaign for a three month time limit for bringing a claim in redundancy cases to be extended to six months to allow parents more time to enforce their rights.

We will also urge the UK Government to match our commitment to supporting low income families by introducing payments at key times in a young child's life as the SNP Scottish government have done with nursery and school payments of £250 as well as matching the new Scottish Child Payment.

# A SUSTAINABLE RURAL ECONOMY

Brexit, especially a No-Deal Brexit, threatens catastrophic harm to almost every area and sector of Scotland's rural economy. The SNP is clear that the best option for Scotland's rural, coastal and island communities is to stay in the EU. Since 2016, SNP MPs have worked hard to protect the interests of rural Scotland. We will continue to do all we can:

- to prevent a no deal Brexit;
- to resist the UK Government grabbing devolved powers over farming or fishing or attaching strings to any future funding;
- to make the UK Government pay all the costs to Scotland's rural economy resulting from Brexit;
- to maintain current and future EU standards and regulations in key areas like animal and plant health if we leave the EU;
- to prevent Scotland's interests being used as bargaining chips in future negotiations with the EU or in any future trade agreement

## Safeguarding the success of our world-class food and drink sector

Scotland's food and drink is a global success story, worth a record £14.8 billion in 2018. The EU – Scotland's biggest overseas regional food and drink export market – is of vital importance to the sector.

Brexit represents a huge threat to the cost and quality of produce exported from Scotland. The sector has already estimated huge losses in annual value thanks to the creation of trade barriers and tariffs, as well as the loss of vital workers from Europe.

Around 10,000 EU citizens are employed in food and drink, particularly in food processing, and up to 22,000 seasonal migrant workers are employed in the soft fruit and vegetable sectors. SNP MPs will continue to call on the UK government to guarantee EU nationals' right to remain in the UK, and for devolution of migration policy. If the UK Government insists on creating a seasonal migrant

workers' scheme, rather than retaining freedom of movement, we will press for it to meet the needs of workers and businesses in Scotland.

The food and drink sector estimates that a no-deal could lead to a loss of £2 billion worth of food and drink sales, with implications for rural communities where many producers are based and the loss of trade for key products like seed potatoes. This is unacceptable.

We will continue to fight to maintain Scotland's membership of the EU to protect the future success of the industry. Should the UK leave the EU, we will fight to prevent damaging tariffs and for affected sectors like seafood, fisheries and red meat to be fully compensated. The removal of import tariffs on other products including cereals, horticulture, potatoes and eggs could open up Scotland to sub-standard imports. We will press for a future deal with the EU that protects and enhances Scotland's high value agricultural outputs.

Scotland produces food and drink products that are respected and renowned around the world, including whisky, Stornoway Black Pudding, Arbroath Smokies, Dunlop Cheese and Scotch Lamb. Staying in the EU allows us to protect and promote their identities through Protected Geographical Indications (PGIs), yet the UK Government's refusal to take no deal off the table puts future recognition at risk. SNP MPs will press the UK Government to prioritise reciprocal recognition of PGIs to protect Scotland's iconic products and will work with the Scottish Government to create more PGI products.

Scotch whisky is one of our most iconic products, supporting 41,000 jobs across the UK, many of them in remote rural areas in Scotland, and generating nearly £5 billion in exports for the Scottish economy in 2018. SNP MPs will encourage reform of the UK excise duty structures and fairer

tax for Scotch whisky. They will also seek UK Government investment to improve the whisky industry's connectivity and sustainability, including funding for low carbon projects.

Whisky is likely to be impacted significantly by US tariffs. SNP MPs will do all they can to encourage resolution of this EU-US situation (for Scottish products like cashmere and shortbread too) and will press the UK Government to fund additional promotion and marketing in this vital export market for key Scottish produce.

EU regulation over animal and plant health and environmental and food safety gives Scotland access to export markets around the world. SNP MPs will support the Scottish Government's efforts to maintain all these current standards and regulations. They will campaign to ban the import into the UK of any supposed trophy of any animal on the CITES list of endangered species.

## **Protecting our agricultural sector**

Scotland currently receives around £580 million each year through the EU's Common Agricultural Policy, providing a lifeline for many farmers, crofters and rural businesses. Despite SNP MPs pressing for certainty, the UK Government has refused to set out how this funding will be replaced beyond the end of this UK Parliament.

This autumn, to mitigate the potential damage of a no deal Brexit, the SNP government has paid out over £330 million to over 13,800 businesses in what are effectively advance basic payments. They were the first administration in the UK to act, ensuring Scotland's farmers and crofters received support at the earliest possible point in the payment year.

SNP MPs will fight to ensure funding over agriculture and rural policy is repatriated to Scotland if we are dragged out of the EU against our will and will always

fight for fair funding for Scottish farmers. As a result of Scotland's historically low average farm payments, the UK has been eligible for additional EU 'convergence uplift' funding, funding the UK government refused to pass on to Scottish farmers, short-changing them to the tune of around £160 million. Thanks to campaigning by the SNP, the UK Government has belatedly passed this vital support to Scotland's farmers, with the first tranche of £80 million coming this year.

SNP MPs will press for the UK Government to deliver the remaining £80 million and for the future funding due to Scotland of approximately £25 million per year to be secured, with no strings attached.

The UK Government had the chance to devolve the red meat levy with its Agriculture Bill. SNP MPs won important concessions that would have seen Scotland finally benefit from around £2 million that should be used for promoting quality beef, lamb and pork at a time when prices are compromised, and future trade is uncertain. The Bill fell as a result of the chaotic Tory handling of Parliament.

Tariffs put many of Scotland's key food exports at huge risk, not least dairy which faces tariffs of 70% on milk and cream, and around 40% on cheddar if Scotland leaves the EU without a deal. We will continue to do all we can to prevent Brexit.

The standing of farmers and crofters must be improved in the supply chain. We will press the UK Government to increase confidence between producers, their customers, and consumers. This means strengthening and extending the remit of the Groceries Code Adjudicator so it has real clout to root out unfair treatment of farmers as the primary producers. And we will listen carefully to the sector's views on mandatory written contracts and press the UK Government to better meet the interests and needs of milk producers. SNP MPs will expect any

compensation arrangements for any farming sector in the UK to apply to Scotland equitably and fairly.

Successful food production is driven by demand as well as supply. SNP MPs will press for all relevant UK government departments and agencies to apply for and achieve the Food for Life catering award and to purchase more quality Scottish food produced to current farm assurance standards.

We will not allow the UK government to dismantle Scotland's GM-free status and commitment.

## **Standing up for fisheries and maritime**

The SNP has a long record of standing up for Scotland's coastal communities and places a priority on our fishing and aquaculture sectors. We will fight against any attempts to sell out Scotland's fishing communities through the Brexit process.

Europe is the most important export destination for Scotland's fish and seafood exports, with salmon being the UK's most valuable food export. The UK exports 75 per cent of the fish it catches, with three quarters of that going to the EU. With around 4,500 EU nationals working in fish processing, we need to ensure that they remain in their Scottish communities.

In a no deal Brexit, Scotland's salmon and seafood industry may need four times as many export health certificates, with a potential cost of £15 million. Any disruption to trade flows could be devastating for fresh seafood exports, which must hit a tight delivery window. SNP MPs will press for prioritisation to be given to seafood and fish exports leaving these islands and will press for the UK Government to fully fund any additional costs.

The Tories betrayed our fishing industry in the 1970s, dismissing the livelihoods of our coastal communities as 'expendable'. Since then, under

the Common Fisheries Policy, successive UK Governments have traded away our interests and put those of fishing communities elsewhere in the UK ahead of those in Scotland.

SNP MPs will fight for Scottish control of Scottish fisheries, as we have done for many years. An independent Scotland, with control over Scottish fisheries, could have avoided the disastrous situation the Tories have left our fishing communities to face by having our own seat in the annual negotiations.

If we leave the EU, we will seek to protect our fishing interests by insisting on Scotland playing a central role in future annual negotiations. The SNP is clear that access to Scotland's waters must not be traded away permanently by the UK Government, nor should our waters be closed off to our international neighbours and partners. The UK Government must also not enter into annual access arrangements which harm Scotland's fishing interests. SNP MPs will also seek to ensure that the same standards apply to all vessels fishing in our waters and that the UK Government funds all appropriate, additional compliance measures arising from being an independent coastal state.

And if we remain within the EU, the SNP will push, as we always have, for fundamental reform of the CFP to shift from a one size fits all fishing policy towards a policy which suits different fleets and different geography.

Whatever the future holds, SNP MPs will work within international guidelines to help our fishing industry grow sustainably, with benefits flowing to Scotland's coastal communities. We will press for any rules, restrictions or obligations that apply to a Scottish vessel fishing in Scottish waters to apply equally to any other vessel permitted to fish in Scottish waters.

## STUART McDONALD: Protecting Freedom of Movement

Freedom of movement has brought amazing possibilities for Scots to live, work and study across the EU. It has opened the door to opportunities and allowed people to benefit from and experience other communities and cultures.

However, that is under threat from the increasingly isolationist Tory government that is intent on rolling back on these rights – once again pulling up the ladder of opportunity from behind themselves.

In Westminster, Stuart McDonald, the party's Immigration spokesperson, has worked across party lines and with organisations, including the 3million campaign, to support EU nationals already living in Scotland and the UK, and to prevent the Tories from creating another Windrush scandal.

In the last Parliament, Stuart McDonald and SNP MPs played a key role in forcing the UK government to scrap fees that EU citizens were being charged to stay here, and have supported efforts to give EU nationals more certainty over their future in the country.

Scotland has benefited hugely from freedom of movement and losing those rights would be devastating for our NHS, social care, universities, and key sectors of the economy like farming, hospitality and construction. That is a price that we must not be made to pay.

Unlike Labour, SNP MPs have been unequivocal in their support for free movement rights and opposed the Tory government's toxic Tory Immigration Bill from the very beginning. It would be catastrophic for Scotland and would extend the Tories' hostile environment.

And unlike Labour and the Tories, Stuart McDonald has championed the benefits of immigration to Scotland – pressing the UK government to scrap its hostile environment or devolve the powers to the Scottish Parliament instead so we can put in place a tailored immigration system that addresses our social and economic needs.

In an independent Scotland, the rights of EU nationals will be safeguarded and strengthened.



# DEFENDING DEMOCRACY AND PEOPLE'S RIGHTS

Our democratic institutions should be representative of and accountable to the people they represent. In recent years, they have been under sustained attack. The assault on basic democratic processes by the Tory Brexiteers led to the humiliation of the UK Government being found to have acted illegally in trying to shut down Parliament. SNP MPs will always stand firm in defence of our democracy and the right of our people's voice to be heard.

## **Democratic Reform**

We will back the replacement of the first-past-the-post system with the Single Transferable Vote, a system that makes sure every vote and every part of the country counts.

SNP MPs will continue to oppose the undemocratic House of Lords and vote for its abolition.

We will work to ensure that there is as much support as possible for disabled people, and people from all backgrounds, to stand for election to the House of Commons.

We trust our young people. That's why we have extended the franchise to 16 and 17-year-olds in Scottish Parliament and local government elections. We believe that these young citizens have the right to have their voice heard at Westminster too and will back giving 16 and 17-year-olds a vote in all elections.

While Scotland is enfranchising EU citizens, the UK still refuses to do so. SNP MPs will work to extend the franchise for Westminster elections to include EU citizens and all those with a right to remain in the UK – as we are doing in Scotland.

There is still significant work to be done to achieve gender balance in our Parliaments. We will press for the devolution of the power to tackle this issue here

in Scotland, including giving the Scottish Parliament the option of adopting candidate quotas. We will also support any further reforms that are effective in tackling sexism, bigotry or harassment in politics, including reporting by political parties on candidate diversity data.

And because we recognise the need for all voices to be heard during elections, the SNP will introduce legislation to establish an independent debates commission for televised political debates during all elections and referenda. It is clear this cannot be simply left to broadcasters – an impartial and independent commission – separate from government and the media is required.

## **Extending Human Rights**

The Tories' obsession with Brexit threatens the fundamental rights that people in the UK currently enjoy – not simply because we will lose the rights we have as EU citizens, but also because many Tories have openly said that they want to see the end of hard won rights that protect employment, the environment, health and safety. Tory denials don't explain why they removed safeguards that had been written into the EU exit deal Theresa May negotiated. Many of these safeguards have been removed from Boris Johnson's deal.

In contrast, the Scottish Government is a leader in human rights. It has moved to enshrine extended rights in law with the planned incorporation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and has established a human rights taskforce to develop a new statutory framework to improve human rights protection for everyone in Scotland.

The European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) is already enshrined in the Scotland Act 1998, ensuring that human rights are protected by the Scottish Government and all Scottish legislation.

The SNP re-affirms its commitment to the Council of Europe and the ECHR.

SNP MPs will oppose any attempts by the UK government to scrap the Human Rights Act and withdraw the UK from the ECHR.

They will also press for the UK to introduce new rights including a right to food for all and to support and resource action which makes such a right meaningful for people.

The SNP has adopted the definition of anti-Semitism and Islamophobia and will continue to challenge all forms of racism and bigotry. We recognise the importance of working with diverse communities to ensure concerns are addressed.

We will urge the UK to follow Scotland's lead by incorporating the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child into domestic law. And we will press for ratification of the Council of Europe's Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence – the Istanbul Convention – to have a clear timetable.

We will support an inquiry into the contribution and mechanisms that small nations and devolved administrations can develop to support the international rules based order, including in relation to climate change, the use of new technology as well as the protection and promotion of the rule of law, human rights, peace-making and poverty alleviation both at home and abroad.

## Defending existing rights

Scotland is a welcoming and progressive country, and we value the contribution of all those who choose to make Scotland their home. Our diversity makes us stronger and more competitive as a nation.

Wherever you come from, if you have chosen to make Scotland your home, the SNP's message is simple – we welcome you and we want you to stay.

The SNP has been consistently clear that Freedom of Movement has benefited Scotland and should be allowed to continue so that, as well as people coming here, we too can live, work, study and travel across the EU freely.

EU citizens living and working in Scotland significantly enrich our society and make a huge contribution to Scotland's economy and public services. It is deplorable that the UK Government is forcing them to apply to retain their existing rights, and we continue to urge them to implement a declaratory system with proof of status.

SNP MPs will oppose Tory plans to introduce a minimum salary threshold - preventing anyone earning less than £30,000 from being admitted to the UK. Given that this translates into a salary level higher than almost two-thirds of people in Scotland earn, it would limit immigration solely to the better off.

That is simply wrong and we will oppose these plans at every opportunity.

We will continue to campaign for an extension to the no-deal three-year 'Temporary Leave to Remain' scheme, which discriminates against students in Scotland.

The UK government has introduced an Immigration Skills Charge – a charge for employers, including in the public sector of up to £5,000 per non-EEA worker. This fee penalises businesses, will lead to skills shortages, harm our economy and remove funding from frontline public services. We oppose this policy and remain concerned that the UK government will implement a similar charge for

## A Scottish migration system

Scotland relies on migration for growing our population – more so than anywhere else in the UK. In fact, all of Scotland's population growth over the next 25 years is projected to come from migration. Scotland needs people to want to work here, in our businesses, our universities and in our public services.

UK immigration policies do not take into account Scotland's unique circumstances and they are harmful to our communities and future prosperity. Tory immigration proposals would be disastrous for Scotland, sending our working-age population into decline, threatening tax revenues and causing serious staffing shortages in our NHS, care services and key sectors such as tourism, agriculture and construction.

With independence, and full power over migration policy, we can build asylum and immigration systems geared to meet Scotland's needs and built on fairness and human rights.

In the meantime, the SNP will continue to seek devolution of migration powers so that Scotland can have an migration policy that helps to grow our population and works for our economy and society. And we will stand firm against the UK's hostile immigration environment and the demonisation of migrants. This includes campaigning to end visa fees for children and to ensure an automatic system of settled status for children in care and care leavers.

The UK Migration Advisory Committee recommended regional rural immigration pilot projects which was a welcome acknowledgement of the need for tailored migration policy for different parts of the country. We believe Scotland should be the location for these pilots.

We believe there should be an additional route for migration to Scotland, alongside UK routes, by means of a Scottish Visa. This could operate within a UK framework but the requirements should be set by the Scottish Government, accountable to the Scottish Parliament, and be designed to reflect and address Scotland's economic and demographic circumstances..

workers from the EU post-Brexit. SNP MPs will oppose any such moves and continue to press for the charge to be scrapped altogether.

Access to citizenship has become increasingly expensive. We support a review of the citizenship application process, with a view to bringing down its cost and reducing its complexity.

The reality that even the most vulnerable children – those in care – are now at risk of deportation simply because they cannot access the right documents is beyond deplorable, and SNP MPs will oppose such illiberal policies at every turn.

We will also continue to urge the UK government to introduce a less restrictive approach to family migration, including the repeal of the minimum

income requirements for family visas, so families can settle in Scotland long-term.

SNP MPs will continue to press the UK government to end indefinite immigration detention. No other European country has indefinite detention.

We continue to oppose the detention of children and vulnerable people, including pregnant women and people with mental illnesses. We will continue to call for the UK government to pursue alternatives to detention - we need a new approach which prioritises compassion and fairness over punishment and isolation.

## A Place of Refuge

We believe that every country has a responsibility to tackle global issues such as the plight of refugees and the humanitarian impact of disasters and emergencies, and that the UK nations should be a place of safety.

Tragically, the UK Government's approach has been mired in the 'hostile environment' policy that has seen them fail in their most basic humanitarian moral duty.

That is why SNP MPs will demand that an independent body make decisions on asylum applications in place of the Home Office. This is part of a wider set of reforms supported by the SNP including:

- the introduction of a fair asylum system and an end to detention for those claiming asylum
- reopening of the Dubs Scheme for unaccompanied children, ending the scandal of children being abandoned by the UK,
- the extension of the rules around family reunification to children,
- a new scheme to ensure that families retain the right to remain together,

- the creation of safe and legal routes for people to find protection in the UK, and
- the right to work for asylum seekers, allowing them to contribute to our economy more fully and enabling parents to support their children.

The Syrian resettlement programme has shown how successful and life transforming refugee resettlement can be when properly resourced. The SNP will call on the UK Government to follow UNHCR recommendations and commit to taking 10,000 people per year under the Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement programme and to further commit to long term refugee resettlement beyond 2021.

We will continue to urge the UK Government to fundamentally change their approach to housing asylum seekers. Accommodation must be safe, suitable and dignified and accommodation providers need to be held accountable for standards by local authorities, and in Scotland, our housing regulator. There must be a legal duty on providers that there will be no lock changes in eviction cases. People cannot be made destitute because of a failed Home Office system.

SNP MPs will push for reform of the detention and asylum system for LGBT+ individuals escaping countries where homosexuality is still criminalised, removing unfair and invasive demands for 'proof' of sexuality or gender identity.

## CAROL MONAGHAN:

### Fighting for Veterans Rights

A career in the armed forces should not only be something that people can take pride in pursuing, but one that receives the best possible care and support.

However, time and time again the UK government has badly let down our veterans, with analysis revealing that homelessness among veterans in the UK could be higher than 13,000. That is simply unacceptable.

In Westminster, the SNP has been at the forefront of demanding that the UK government steps up efforts to safeguard and strengthen the rights of our armed forces and veterans.

Carol Monaghan, the SNP's Armed Forces and Veteran Affairs spokesperson, has vigorously campaigned for an overhaul of the UK government's failing approach to our Armed Forces and Veterans community, and to instead seek to promote employment, social inclusion, health and wellbeing for veterans and their families.

With a strong voice in Westminster, SNP MPs will continue to challenge the UK government over its record and pressure the government to tackle homelessness by committing to a key SNP pledge that the Ministry of Defence use vacant MoD homes to house homeless ex-servicemen and to ensure that Commonwealth personnel in the UK armed forces and their families to receive indefinite right to remain during and after service in the UK military.

The SNP will continue to do everything it can to honour the sacrifice of those who risk their lives for the defence and security of our country.



# A SAFER WORLD

## Taking our place; playing our role

We want Scotland's people to be better able to engage in a global world, our businesses to be more globally competitive and our nation to be strengthened through international co-operation. We believe in multi-lateral international co-operation to address the challenges the world faces and we want Scotland to play our full part.

We already seek to maximise the role Scotland plays – through action and leadership – in helping tackle global issues such as extreme poverty, injustice and inequality.

The SNP will continue to demand that the Government keeps to the UK's commitment to spend 0.7% of GDP on overseas development assistance, and that this money is concentrated in the hands of the Department for International Development and not spent on projects other than humanitarian aid.

The world's poorest and most vulnerable countries are the least responsible for climate change yet face its biggest impacts. SNP MPs will call for the UK government to redouble its efforts to tackle the international development challenges stemming from climate change, and to follow the lead of the Scottish Government by introducing a dedicated Climate Justice Fund.

We will continue to call on the Government, through the Foreign Office, to ensure that those human rights defenders that risk their lives to address injustices and protect others are given as much support as possible, including protections via asylum in serious cases.

The UN's Sustainable Development Goals are a blueprint for building a better future for all. SNP MPs will continue to press the UK government to act on these goals so we can tackle global challenges including poverty, injustice and inequality.

## Foreign affairs

We place great importance on being a good global citizen, and we expect the UK government to participate fully in international institutions respecting their role and working with them for international peace.

SNP MPs will press for action on UN Security Council Resolution 1325, supporting women who play crucial roles in peacebuilding. Women who are disproportionately affected in armed conflict must be protected.

The SNP will continue to work with international partners to progress a lasting peace settlement in the Middle East, pursuing a two-state solution for Israel and Palestine. We will press the UK government to remain committed – with EU partners – to the Iran nuclear deal.

The UK has illegally maintained a military base in the Chagos Islands that resulted in the eviction of the entire local population. The SNP will continue to call on the UK to immediately withdraw from the Chagos Islands, in line with the UN's resolution that the UK should return control of the Chagos Islands to Mauritius.

We will continue to call on the Government to use all diplomatic channels to protect the Anglo-Sino Agreement that underpins the rights of the people of Hong Kong and use its influence to de-escalate violence in the region.

SNP MPs will continue to call on the UK government to ensure that it does all that it can to de-escalate the enflamed tensions between India and Pakistan

over the status of Kashmir. We support the right of Kashmiri people to self-determination.

We will call on the UK government to commit to introducing mechanisms to prevent identity based violence and mass atrocities.

The SNP will continue to call on the Government to use all diplomatic channels to secure redress and justice for the Rohingya peoples that have been displaced.

SNP MPs will continue calls for recognition and protection for Kurdish minorities in Turkey, Iraq, and Syria.

SNP MP Hannah Bardell set up the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Deaths Abroad, Consular Services and Assistance to improve support for families of those who die in suspicious circumstances abroad. We will press all relevant UK government departments, agencies, services and third-party organisations to recognise secondary victimisation and adopt a 'trauma-informed' approach to protect and support families traumatised overseas. We will also press for all recommendations in the APPG report to be implemented.

## A safer Scotland

With new security priorities in the wake of Brexit, and emerging threats in hybrid warfare, SNP MPs will continue to call on the UK government to carry out a new Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR). A review should assess the need for permanent basing of ocean-going conventional patrol vessels in Scotland.

## Defence

The Tory government has presided over cuts to the defence estate in Scotland, while committing

billions to a new generation of Trident nuclear weapons. It is becoming increasingly apparent that Scotland's distinct defence needs are not being met by the current UK government's defence policy. SNP MPs will campaign to retain existing Scottish bases and regiments. We will support our veterans and we will press for investment in conventional defence. We will also fight for the delivery of all contracts for Royal Navy Fleet Solid Support Ships to be restricted to UK shipyards.

### **Scrappling Trident**

The SNP has never and will never support the retention or renewal of Trident. We believe that nuclear weapons are immoral, ineffective and expensive.

We want to see a world free from nuclear weapons, and with independence, Scotland can be an advocate for disarmament on the global stage.

In times of imposed austerity, the estimated £205 billion to be spent on a Trident replacement over the next 30 years could be far more effectively used to support our public services and build a better future for our children.

At Westminster SNP MPs will build a cross-party coalition to scrap Trident as quickly and as safely as possible.

We will press the UK government to meet their international obligations on nuclear disarmament.

### **Looking after our service personnel**

The duty of care to our service personnel, veterans and their families must always remain a key priority of any UK government.

A career in the armed forces should not only be something that people can take pride in pursuing, but one that receives the best possible care and support.

SNP MPs will continue to press the UK government to give our armed forces a representative staff body to speak up for the interests of members. A representative body on a statutory footing could help affirm the rights and status of military personnel as employees, while also assisting in terms of pay and conditions negotiations, and as an investigative body for widespread concerns or issues.

SNP MPs will continue to call for Commonwealth personnel in the UK armed forces and their families to receive indefinite right to remain during and after service in the UK military.

We believe that veterans are an asset to our society, and we urge the UK government to do everything it can to honour the sacrifice of those who risk their lives for the defence and security of our country. The SNP will press the Ministry of Defence to use vacant MoD homes to house homeless ex-servicemen.

In 2012, HM Treasury announced that the proceeds from LIBOR fines would be used to support Armed Forces and Emergency Services charities. Since then, the LIBOR grant scheme has closed, threatening the funding good causes rely on. SNP MPs will call for the UK Government to make good this funding from other sources.

To provide practical support for veterans requiring social care, the SNP Scottish Government changed the rules to ensure the War Disablement Pension is exempt from the assessment of income, meaning our veterans get the help they need and keep the full value of this pension. SNP MPs will press the UK government to adopt this approach across all social security benefits.

### **Munitions**

SNP MPs have led the way in challenging the UK Government's indefensible and unethical arms export policy, which sees billions of pounds worth of weapons being traded with serial human rights violators.

We will continue to urge the UK government to immediately halt all military support and arms sales to regimes guilty of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. SNP MPs will never accept the use of lethal autonomous weapons – this is immoral and must be banned under international law.

And, here at home, the SNP will press the Ministry of Defence to take responsibility for the environmental impact of military munitions as a polluter. There is no such thing as acceptable environmental damage, and no department of government should have an environmental 'get-out-of-jail-free card'.

This publication is also available in audio, large print, easy read and Braille. If you would like a copy in these formats please call 0800 633 5432.

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