

Change

Scottish Labour Party Manifesto 2024

An opportunity we can't afford to miss

I firmly believe that Scotland's best days lie ahead of us.

As I travel around our country, I am reminded every day of the passion and talent of people in every part of Scotland. We are an extraordinary nation that contributes so much to the rest of the UK and the world.

But I also hear from people and businesses who are frustrated and angry after being let down by their governments for so long.

Families are struggling to put food on the table or heat their homes, they can't access a GP and are left waiting months for a hospital appointment, and they are worried about opportunities for their children and grandchildren.

Fourteen years of chaos under the Tories, and 17 years of failure under the SNP, have diminished hope, created division, and shattered opportunities.

People are fed up with politicians who focus only on their own priorities and put party before country.

They fear this is as good as it gets. But I refuse to accept that.

We can change our politics.

Changing Scotland's politics

By changing our politics we can move on from the chaos of the past few years.

Labour will bring back honesty, decency, and integrity to public life, and restore ambition and optimism. We will be a government that is always on the side of the people of Scotland.

Turning fear into hope, conflict into co-operation, and despair into opportunity.

We can change our country so that Scotland is a place where everyone is entitled to dignity, with our country back on a route to prosperity, and where young people once again have hope for the future.

This election is an opportunity to deliver that change for this generation – and the next.

Yes, a vote for Scottish Labour is a vote to change Scotland for you, your family, and your community.

But it is also a vote to give all young people in Scotland a more hopeful future.

Our first steps for change

In the pages of this manifesto we outline the change that Labour will deliver if we have the opportunity to serve the people of our country.

We have six first steps for change. These ambitious pledges are the cornerstone of Labour's plans to

transform our country and deliver a decade of national renewal, boosting wages, cutting bills, strengthening our economy, and renewing our public services.

- We will deliver economic stability to grow our economy and keep taxes, inflation and mortgages low.
- We will cut NHS waiting times by investing in our NHS and funding 160,000 additional appointments every year in Scotland, paid for by cracking down on tax avoidance and non-dom loopholes.
- We will set up GB Energy in Scotland, a publicly-owned clean power company, to create good jobs and cut bills for good, paid for by a windfall tax on oil and gas giants.
- We will make work pay with a New Deal for Working People that will ban exploitative zero-hour contracts and deliver a genuine living wage for 200,000 Scots – the first step to tackling poverty, which is in the very DNA of our party.
- We will create jobs and opportunities for young people by improving access to apprenticeships, supporting first-time buyers, and creating 69,000 Scottish jobs in the clean energy industries of the future.
- And we will maximise Scotland's influence using the UK's footprint on the global stage to promote Scottish businesses, boost exports, and attract investment to create jobs.

A Labour government in Westminster will have Scotland at its heart, working to deliver the change our country needs.

This is just the start

We will work in the national interest, building a respectful relationship with the Scottish Government and resetting devolution so that it works for all the people of Scotland.

But change for our country is a two-step process. It starts with a vote for Scottish Labour in the general election so that we can turn the page on Conservative chaos, elect a Labour government at Westminster led by Keir Starmer, and have Scottish MPs at the heart of that government.

But there is so much more that we want to do with the powers of devolution as well. We need a change of direction at Holyrood as much as we need one at Westminster.

The SNP has failed the people of Scotland – breaking our NHS, ruining our once world-leading education system, and tarnishing our politics by wasting and misusing your money. A complete failure to deliver economic growth which has left public services in crisis.

The second step towards the change that Scotland needs is at the next Scottish Parliament election, when we have the opportunity to fix the SNP's mess by electing a Scottish Labour government.

We are starting that work now.

This manifesto recognises that voters want to know about the changes a future Scottish Labour government would make within the devolution framework. We have set out our vision to save our NHS, grow our economy, and give young people opportunities for the future.

Building the future together

This election is a key moment in our nation's history. The choice is more of the same or change with Labour.

I know that Scotland has extraordinary potential just waiting to be unlocked. Labour will unlock that true potential. We have worked tirelessly so that our party is ready to serve you again.

This manifesto sets out the journey to a better future for Scotland for you, your family, your community, and the next generation of Scots.

With your support, it is a future we can build together.

Anas Sarwar

Leader of the Scottish Labour Party

My plan for change

This election is about change.

A chance to stop the endless SNP and Conservative chaos that has damaged the finances of every family in Scotland.

A moment where we can turn the page on a set of ideas that have left us vulnerable in an increasingly volatile world.

And an opportunity to change Scotland and change Britain – to rebuild our country so it once again serves the interests of working people.

Restore hope

Every great nation is held together by shared beliefs. To outsiders they may not seem exceptional or distinctive, but they are essential for a sense of collective national purpose. Britain is no different but at this moment two of our most important beliefs are in grave danger.

First, the idea politics should be driven by a sense of service to the country, not considerations of party or self-interest.

Second, the idea if you work hard then – whoever you are, wherever you started in life – this is a country that will respect your contribution and give you a fair chance to get on.

When I consider these beliefs, it is hard not to think back to my childhood. Then, as now, our place in the world was uncertain. Then, as now, our economy was gripped by stuttering growth and a cost-of-living crisis that hurt working people.

Yet back then, there was at least a degree of security in being able to take those two fundamental beliefs for granted. For families like mine, this was a comfort. The knowledge that this country would offer your children a better future gave us hope. A hope that may not sound high-minded or particularly idealistic, but which families like mine could build a life around.

Stop the chaos

To restore this hope, we must first end the SNP and Conservative chaos. The visible decline in our communities – families weighed down by soaring mortgages; people waiting on trolleys in A&E; sewage in our rivers – is not an accident. Rather, it is a direct result of two governments that put their own interests and obsessions above the issues that affect families.

Turn the page

We must turn the page on the SNP and Conservative ideas that have caused the chaos.

We are in a volatile moment, with a major war in Europe for the first time in a generation and ever greater threats

to the living standards of working people. This 'age of insecurity' requires governments to step up, not stand aside.

We must return to the foundations: national security, secure borders, and economic stability. But it also requires an enduring partnership with businesses across these nations to deliver the economic growth we need. It needs more focus on long-term strategy, not the short-term distractions.

Because whether it is crashing the pound to give tax cuts to the richest 1 per cent; degrading public services because of a mess made by the banks; or the failure to invest in clean energy that left us exposed when Putin invaded Ukraine – so much of what Britain has been through is explained by a failure to face the future. Only Labour can turn the page.

Rebuilding our country

We must rebuild our country – Scotland and the rest of the UK. It will not be easy. Not only because there is no quick fix to the mess the SNP and Conservatives have made. But also, because their failures have sapped our collective confidence that we can still achieve great things. I reject this with every fibre of my being. Despite all the chaos they have inflicted, the country I see is one where working people never let each other down. They came together in the pandemic – missed

weddings, funerals and last goodbyes – to save the lives of people they will never meet. They dug deep in the years of austerity, to keep delivering the public services people needed. And throughout the cost-of-living crisis, they found a way to support those less fortunate than themselves.

We are still a great nation. We can still achieve great things. What we lack is a UK government and a Scottish government that can match the ambition Scots have for their family and community, with a credible long-term plan.

This manifesto is that plan. Fully costed, fully funded – built on a rock of fiscal responsibility.

At its heart are five national missions – with first steps to begin the journey of rebuilding – that provide a clear destination for everyone invested in Scotland's future. As part of a renewed country, where wealth is created in every community. Where the golden opportunity of clean power is harnessed for lower bills. Where everyone feels safe to walk the streets. Where you can go to work and know you will be treated with dignity and respect. Where our children have the skills to thrive. Where our NHS is at the cutting edge of healthcare. Where we reconnect with friends and allies on the world stage. And where we show that politics can be about serving the country.

Scotland can lead the way and lead the change.

It's time for change

Serving our country is the only reason I came into politics. The defining purpose of my Labour leadership has been to drag my party away from the dead end of gesture politics and return it once more to the service of working people. I have changed my party. Now I want the chance to bring that change to Scotland.

To succeed we need everyone, every community, to play their part. I know, after everything you have been through in the past 14 years, that this is a hard request to make. But I also expect, deep down, that you know this is what we need – an end to the chaos, a turning of the page, and a patient but determined effort to rebuild.

This is your chance to choose that change, to make sure we seize this chance to change our country. For your community and for Scotland.

So, I invite you to join us in this chance. To be part of this common endeavour of national renewal. To use your vote, not to send a message, but instead to send a government.

A Labour government with Scotland at its heart

Keir Starmer

Leader of the UK Labour Party

Labour's first steps for change

1. Deliver economic stability with tough spending rules, so we can grow our economy and keep taxes, inflation, and mortgages as low as possible.

2. Cut NHS waiting times by investing in our NHS and funding 160,000 additional appointments every year in Scotland, paid for by cracking down on tax avoidance and non-dom loopholes.

3. Set up Great British Energy a publicly-owned clean power company, headquartered in Scotland, to cut bills for good and boost energy security, paid for by a windfall tax on oil and gas giants.

4. Make work pay with a New Deal for Working People that will ban exploitative zero-hour contracts, end fire and rehire, and deliver a genuine living wage.

5. Create jobs and opportunities for young people by improving access to apprenticeships, supporting first-time buyers and creating 69,000 Scottish jobs in the clean energy industries of the future.

6. Maximise Scotland's influence using the UK's global trade networks to promote Scottish businesses, boost exports and attract investment to create jobs.

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Mission-driven government

Ending the Conservative chaos at Westminster is vital, but we know that turning the page with a new government is not enough on its own to tackle the deep-rooted challenges our country now faces. We also need to change how it is governed.

For too long, we have been held back by governments across the UK and here in Scotland that, because they lack a relentless focus on long-term ends, are buffeted about by events. Politics has enormous potential to change lives for the better, but too often different governments have pursued their own narrow goals rather than working together. Government is at its best when working in partnership with other governments, business, trade unions, civil society, faith groups, and communities. But without a shared project those partnerships barely get off the ground.

The first opportunity to start that change is by electing a UK Labour government.

As well as a new administration with new priorities, Keir Starmer has made clear that the government he leads will be mission-driven with a relentless focus on ambitious, measurable, long-term objectives that provide a driving sense of purpose for the country:

- 1) Kickstart economic growth** to secure the highest sustained growth in the G7 – with good jobs and productivity growth in every part of the country making everyone, not just a few, better off.
- 2) Make Britain a clean energy superpower** to cut bills, create jobs and deliver security with cheaper, zero-carbon electricity by 2030, accelerating to net zero.
- 3) Take back our streets** by halving serious violent crime, such as violence against women and girls, and raising confidence in the police and criminal justice system.
- 4) Break down barriers to opportunity** to make sure there is no class ceiling on the ambitions of young people in Britain.
- 5) Build an NHS fit for the future** that is there when people need it; with fewer lives lost to the biggest killers; in a fairer Britain, where everyone lives well for longer.

This will mean a new way of doing government across the UK that is more joined up, pushes power out to communities and harnesses new technology, all with one aim in mind – to put the country back in the service of working people.

A UK Labour government will reset the devolution relationship – but where powers are devolved, we need to take a different approach in Scotland as well. That

is why Scottish Labour is committed to reforming how government operates in Scotland. We want to change from the narrow and divisive short-termism of the SNP and instead push power out to communities, using the economic levers available in Scotland to deliver growth and ensure that politics once again acts in the interests of the people of Scotland.

Delivering this change will require perseverance. The starting point for delivering UK Labour's missions is to ensure the foundations of good government are right. Labour will make sure we have strong national security, secure borders, and economic stability. Building on these secure foundations, we have already set out the first steps for change. We present the policies in this manifesto, as the starting point of the journey of rebuilding our country and delivering the change that Scotland needs.

Build strong foundations

National security

No policy commitment in pursuit of UK Labour's missions matters unless we uphold the first duty of any government: to keep the country safe. Peace and security are hard earned. They require constant vigilance. Over the last 14 years geopolitical tensions have risen, while the Conservatives have hollowed out our armed forces. Now Putin is attempting to break European security with his full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Labour will meet this challenge by strengthening our armed forces and protecting our national security to keep Scotland and the UK safe.

Defence is a reserved issue and UK Labour's commitment to the UK's nuclear deterrent is absolute. It is a vital safeguard for the UK and our NATO allies. As the party that founded NATO, we maintain our unshakeable commitment to the alliance, and we will apply a NATO test to major defence programmes to ensure we meet our obligations in full.

In recent years, threats to our safety and security have multiplied and diversified. Alongside greater conventional threats, we are faced with the growing emergence of hybrid warfare, including cyber-attacks and misinformation campaigns which seek to subvert our democracy. To ensure that Scotland and the UK are fully prepared to deal with these interconnected threats,

Labour will conduct a Strategic Defence Review within our first year in government, and we will set out the path to spending 2.5 per cent of GDP on defence.

From the Skripal poisonings to assassination plots by the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, threats from hostile states or state-sponsored groups are on the rise, but we lack a comprehensive framework to protect us. Labour will take the approach used for dealing with non-state terrorism and adapt it to deal with state-based domestic security threats.

Terrorism remains a significant threat. Labour will bring in 'Martyn's Law' to strengthen the security of public events and venues. We will update the rules around counter-extremism, including online, to stop people being radicalised and drawn towards hateful ideologies. Labour will also ensure the police and intelligence services have the powers and resources they need to protect the public from terrorism and hostile espionage.

Build strong foundations

Secure borders

Scotland is a tolerant and compassionate country. We have a proud tradition of welcoming people fleeing persecution and abuse. Those who have made a home here in Scotland have enriched our communities, contributing to Scottish society with their skills and talents. Schemes like Homes for Ukraine, Hong Kong humanitarian visas, and the Syrian resettlement programme have provided important routes for refugees seeking sanctuary. But under the Conservatives the system has been broken. Our borders need to be controlled and managed: the small boat crisis along the UK's south coast, fuelled by dangerous criminal smuggler gangs, is undermining our border security and costing lives.

Rather than a serious plan to confront this crisis, the Conservatives have offered nothing but desperate gimmicks. Their flagship policy – to fly a tiny number of asylum seekers to Rwanda – has already cost hundreds of millions of pounds. Even if it got off the ground, this scheme can only address fewer than one per cent of the asylum seekers arriving. It cannot work. Chaos in the Channel has been matched by chaos at home. The Conservatives' unworkable laws have created a 'perma-backlog' of tens of thousands of asylum seekers, who are indefinitely staying in hotels costing the taxpayer millions of pounds every week.

Labour will stop the chaos and go after the criminal gangs who trade in driving and profiting from this crisis. We will create a new Border Security Command, with hundreds of new investigators, intelligence officers, and cross-border police officers. This will be funded by ending the wasteful Migration and Economic Development partnership with Rwanda. This new Command will work internationally and be supported by new counter-terrorism style powers, to pursue, disrupt, and arrest those responsible for the vile trade. We will seek a new security agreement with the EU to ensure access to real-time intelligence and enable our policing teams to lead joint investigations with their European counterparts.

A UK Labour government will turn the page and restore order to the asylum system so that it operates swiftly, firmly, and fairly; and the rules are properly enforced. We will hire additional caseworkers to clear the Conservatives' backlog and end asylum hotels, saving the taxpayer billions of pounds.

UK Labour will set up a new returns and enforcement unit, with an additional 1,000 staff, to fast-track removals to safe countries for people who do not have the right to stay here. We will negotiate additional returns arrangements to speed up returns and increase the number of safe countries that failed asylum seekers can swiftly be sent back to. And we will also act upstream, working with international partners to address the

humanitarian crises which lead people to flee their homes, and to strengthen support for refugees in their home region.

Build strong foundations

Economic stability

Every commitment a UK Labour government makes will be based on sound money and economic stability. This is a non-negotiable principle for our changed Labour Party. Siren voices, including the SNP, may claim that there are no limits on what government can spend, or that tax cuts pay for themselves. We reject this flawed ideology that was tested to destruction by the disastrous Conservative 'mini budget'. Scots and people across the UK are still paying the price of those unfunded commitments through higher mortgage costs, and taxpayers continue to foot the bill through higher interest payments, meaning less money for investment and public services. The impact was not confined to these shores. The Conservatives' recklessness sent a signal of instability across the world that damaged our standing, making the UK a less attractive place for business to invest.

The chaos is not over. The desperate Conservatives have now made yet more unfunded tax cuts and spending promises at a scale beyond the 'mini budget'. This would be devastating for families across the country.

Labour will turn the page on this economic chaos. Our approach is based on strong fiscal rules which will govern every single decision we make in government.

Our fiscal rules are that:

- The current UK budget moves into balance, so that day-to-day costs are met by revenues
- Debt must be falling as a share of the economy by the fifth year of the forecast.

These rules allow for prudent investment in our economy. This represents a clear break from the Conservatives who have created an incentive to cut investment; a short-term approach that ignores the importance of growing the economy. Labour will strike a balance between prioritising investment and the urgent need to rebuild our public finances. There will be no return to austerity.

Labour will never sideline the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) for political convenience. Instead, we will strengthen the role of the OBR. Every fiscal event making significant changes to taxation or spending will be subject to an independent OBR forecast.

Labour will safeguard taxpayers' money. We will end the link between access to ministers and an inside track for public contracts. We will appoint a fixed-term Covid Corruption Commissioner and use every means possible to recoup public money lost in pandemic-related fraud and from contracts which have not delivered. And we will not tolerate fraud or waste anywhere, whether in social security or the excessive use of consultants.

Alongside strong national finances, our country needs resilient family finances too. The Conservatives and the SNP have left families across the country struggling with the cost of living. Across the UK we will take action to support families by tackling the underlying causes of the crisis.

Labour will bring down the cost of energy. Across the UK we will reduce food prices by removing barriers to business trading, make it easier to own a home, and make work pay. We will also keep mortgage rates as low as possible, with a strong, independent Bank of England – which will continue to target stable inflation of 2 per cent.

The Conservatives have raised the UK tax burden to a 70-year high, while the SNP has used income tax as a substitute for economic growth – hiking taxes even higher for people in Scotland. Labour, both in the UK and Scotland, will grow our economy to ensure taxes on working people are kept as low as possible while investing in our public services. A UK Labour government will not increase taxes on working people and will not increase National Insurance, VAT or the basic, higher or additional rates of Income Tax across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Income tax is devolved in Scotland and the SNP has chosen to increase taxes for nurses, whilst opposing a windfall tax on international oil and gas giants who have been making record profits.

Scottish Labour would make better decisions than the SNP and will not raise taxes for working people.

Labour will address unfairness in the tax system. A UK Labour government will abolish non-dom status once and for all, replacing it with a modern scheme for people genuinely in the country for a short period. We will end the use of offshore trusts to avoid inheritance tax so that everyone who makes their home here in the UK pays their taxes here. Private equity is the only industry where performance-related pay is treated as capital gains. Labour will close this loophole.

UK Labour will modernise HMRC and change the law to tackle tax avoidance. We will increase registration and reporting requirements, strengthen HMRC's powers, invest in new technology and build capacity within HMRC. This, combined with a renewed focus on tax avoidance by large businesses and the wealthy, will begin to close the tax gap and ensure everyone pays their fair share.

Labour will stop the chaos, turn the page, and return to the foundations of national security, secure borders, and economic stability.

Kickstart economic growth

- **Deliver economic stability for households with tough spending rules**
- **A new partnership with business to boost growth everywhere**
- **A new industrial strategy that supports Scotland's growth sectors**
- **A National Wealth Fund to invest in jobs**
- **Planning reform to get Scotland building**
- **A New Deal for Working People that will make work pay**

Sustained economic growth is the only route to improving the prosperity of our country and the living standards of working people. The Labour Party has a proud legacy of delivering social change in our country, but we know that that this is only possible if it is backed up by a strong economy.

That is why economic growth is Labour's first mission for government. It means being pro-business and pro-worker. We are the party of wealth creation.

This election follows the chaos of the Conservatives' 'mini-budget' and an unprecedented fall in living standards. This damage has been exacerbated by the miserable economic record of both the Conservatives and the SNP, which has seen a flatlining of wages and productivity leaving Scottish families worse off. Scotland is being failed by two governments which do not understand economic growth.

The Conservatives have failed to deliver because of their inability to accept that a strong economy can only be built on the contribution of every community and every person – the many not the few. Second, that sustainable growth requires government to be a strategic partner with business. Markets must be shaped, not merely served. Meanwhile, the SNP has failed to use the powers of the Scottish Government to grow Scotland's economy and has instead presided over low growth and low productivity.

The result has been insecurity in the financial resilience of households but also in Scotland's economy. At the very time when our world has become less stable and secure, both of Scotland's governments have failed to respond, unable to grasp the trade-offs involved with a new era of rising global competition and tension, and leaving our economy on an increasingly shallow and insecure footing.

It is time to turn the page. Labour will restore stability, increase investment, and reform our economy.

A UK Labour government, with Rachel Reeves as Chancellor, will embrace a new approach to economic management – securonomics – that understands sustainable growth relies on a broad base and resilient foundations. Our approach will depend on a dynamic and strategic state. This does not mean ever-growing government, but it does mean a more active, smarter UK government that works in partnership with business, trade unions, local leaders, and devolved governments.

In our Business Case for Scotland, Scottish Labour has also set out our plans to support the economy in the devolved context. We believe that the Scottish government needs to work better in partnership, planning strategically for our economy and using its convening power to bring workers, organisations and business together to overcome barriers and realise opportunities.

Labour will stop the chaos and support business through a stable policy environment in Scotland and across the UK. At a UK level, Labour will strengthen our economic institutions, and in Scotland we will streamline the cluttered landscape of agencies and strategies, giving investors the certainty they need to fuel growth. We will strategically use public investment where it can unlock additional private sector investment, create jobs, and provide a return for taxpayers.

Parts of our economy will also require substantial reform if we are to create the wealth our country needs. Scotland is hampered by a planning regime that means we struggle to build the infrastructure and housing the country needs.

The country remains too centralised, with the economic potential of too many regions and communities across Scotland ignored. Our labour market fails to provide secure jobs and, as a result, for far too many people, particularly in the everyday economy, work does not pay.

The innovation, dynamism and sheer hard work of Scottish business and workers has never been in question. The next Labour government will work with them to kickstart economic growth and rebuild our country.

Strategic partnership through industrial strategy Labour will introduce a new industrial strategy for the UK, which

is mission-driven and focused on the future. We will work in partnership with industry to seize opportunities and remove barriers to growth. Critically, we will end short-term economic policy making at a UK level with the establishment of a UK Industrial Strategy Council, on a statutory footing, to provide expert advice. We will ensure representation on the Council from Scotland, as well as business and trade unions, to drive economic growth in all parts of the country.

UK Labour will take a sectoral approach, backing what makes our country great and where we enjoy advantages over other countries: our excellent research institutions, professional services, advanced manufacturing, and creative industries. We will ensure a pro-business environment, with a competition and regulatory framework that supports innovation, investment, and high-quality jobs. Procurement and trade policy will also be aligned with our industrial strategy priorities. In opposition, UK Labour has worked with the automotive, life sciences, and creative sectors on the approach we will take so they have certainty over the policies that will apply to them. A UK Labour government will set out plans for these and other vital sectors of the economy.

Financial services are one of Scotland's greatest success stories – home to the second largest hub after London. Labour will create the conditions to support innovation and growth in the sector, through supporting new

technology, including Open Banking and Open Finance and ensuring a pro-innovation regulatory framework.

Scottish Labour has also identified key sectors in which we believe Scotland has huge potential – our green energy industries, our tech and innovation sectors, and harnessing the economic power of our unique national brand. Too often our politics in Scotland has focused on what we cannot do, rather than what we can. Scottish Labour is committed to using the many devolved levers we have, including skills, regulation, regional development, enterprise agencies and technology so they are working to deliver on the economic potential of Scotland and its people, not holding us back.

Boosting investment

Business has for too long been hampered by governments that do not work with it. As a result, investment in Scotland and the UK is too low. Public investment, where it supports and de-risks additional private investment, is one important tool being used successfully across the world. It can create good jobs across the country and would mean Scottish taxpayers can reap the benefits of economic growth. To realise these opportunities Labour will establish a National Wealth Fund for the UK.

Capitalised with £7.3 billion over the course of the next UK parliament, the National Wealth Fund will have a

remit to support Labour's growth and clean energy missions, making transformative investments in Scotland and across the UK. The fund will have a target of attracting three pounds of private investment for every one pound of public investment, creating jobs across the country. Labour's National Wealth Fund plans to allocate:

- £1.8 billion to upgrade ports in Scotland and across the UK and build supply chains here
- £1.5 billion to new gigafactories so our automotive industry leads the world
- £2.5 billion to rebuild our steel industry
- £1 billion to accelerate the deployment of carbon capture
- £500 million to support the manufacturing of green hydrogen.

Scotland's huge energy potential means we have the conditions to benefit substantially from this investment, supporting jobs and businesses in communities right across our country.

Labour will also act to increase investment from pension funds in UK markets. We will adopt reforms to ensure that workplace pension schemes take advantage of consolidation and scale, to deliver better returns for savers and greater productive investment for UK PLC. A UK Labour government will also undertake a review of

the pensions landscape to consider what further steps are needed to improve pension outcomes and increase investment in UK markets.

Business taxation

The business tax regime matters for investors. It is not just the rates of tax that matter, but also certainty. Under the Conservatives there has been constant chopping and changing – corporation tax has changed 26 times – and multiple fiscal events have made drastic changes often at little notice.

Labour will stop the chaos and turn the page with a strategic approach that gives certainty and allows long-term planning. At a UK level, we are committed to one major fiscal event a year, giving families, businesses and devolved government in Scotland due warning of tax and spending changes. We will publish a roadmap for business taxation for the next UK parliament which will allow businesses to plan investments with confidence.

Labour will cap UK corporation tax at the current level of 25 per cent, the lowest in the G7, for the entire parliament, and we will act if tax changes in other countries pose a risk to UK competitiveness. We will retain a permanent full expensing system in the UK for capital investment and the annual investment

allowance for small business. And we will give firms greater clarity on what qualifies for allowances to improve business investment decisions.

The current business rates system in Scotland disincentivises investment, creates uncertainty and places an undue burden on our high streets. Scottish Labour has set out proposals to make business rates fairer, starting with reforms that level the playing field between the high street and online giants. We want to create a new system that will better incentivise investment, tackle empty properties and support entrepreneurship.

Innovation

Delivering growth and raising productivity depend on fresh thinking and new ideas. Technological advancement and innovation have the ability to transform our economy in ways that are yet to be embraced. Scotland has many cutting-edge businesses, but innovation needs to be converted into commercial success in every corner of our country. Labour will make Scotland and the UK the best place to start and grow a business.

At a UK level, we will ensure our industrial strategy supports the development of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) sector, and we will create a National Data Library to bring together existing research programmes, helping

deliver data-driven public services, while maintaining strong safeguards and ensuring everyone benefits.

UK Labour will scrap short funding cycles for key R&D institutions in favour of ten-year budgets that allow meaningful partnerships with industry to keep Scotland and the UK at the forefront of global innovation. A UK Labour government will work with universities to support spinouts; and work with industry to ensure start-ups have the access to finance they need to grow. We will also simplify the UK procurement process to support innovation and reduce micromanagement with a mission-driven approach.

Regulators are currently ill-equipped to deal with the dramatic development of new technologies, which often cut across traditional industries and sectors. Labour will create a new Regulatory Innovation Office, bringing together existing functions across the UK government. This office will help regulators update regulation, speed up approval timelines, and co-ordinate issues that span existing boundaries. UK Labour will ensure the safe development and use of AI models by introducing binding regulation on the handful of companies developing the most powerful AI models and by banning the creation of sexually explicit deepfakes.

Scotland's technology sector has huge potential but it needs a Scottish Government that is active in helping it develop. Scottish Labour has been clear that we need to reform Scotland's enterprise agency landscape so

that it is better aligned to deliver innovation, upskill workers, and attract investment to support the sector. Scottish Labour also believes that there is a key role for government in Scotland to plan for the digital and tech skills the industry needs and to push productivity gains out across our economy. Where possible this should be done in co-operation with the plans of a UK Labour government so that Scottish businesses benefit from Labour's mission-driven approach.

Across Scotland and the UK, Labour will support diverse business models which bring innovation and new products to the market, including the co-operative sector. Scottish Labour will aim to double the size of Scotland's co-operative and mutuals sector, working with them to address the barriers they face, such as accessing finance.

Small business

Labour's plans for economic growth in both Scotland and the UK have been developed with businesses of all sizes in mind. Scotland is an SME economy, but small firms, entrepreneurs, and the self-employed face unique challenges that need reform from UK and Scottish governments.

At a UK level, Labour will take action on late payments to ensure small businesses and the self-employed are paid on time. We will improve guidance and remove

barriers to exporting for small businesses. Reform of the British Business Bank, including a stronger mandate to support growth in the regions and nations, will make it easier for small and medium sized enterprises to access capital. We will also reform procurement rules to give them greater access to government contracts.

Within Scotland, we want to reform the business support system so it can provide small businesses with targeted and stage-specific advice. By streamlining support, business will be able to better access skills development schemes, capital support, and help to adopt tech that will improve productivity and growth.

The Post Office is an essential service in communities across the country. UK Labour will look for ways to strengthen the Post Office, in consultation with sub-postmasters, trade unions and customers, and support the development of new products, services and business models, such as banking hubs, that will help reinvigorate the high street in communities across Scotland and UK.

Scottish Labour backed overturning the wrongful convictions of sub-postmasters shamefully affected by the Horizon IT scandal in Scotland; and at a UK level, Labour will ensure justice and compensation are delivered swiftly for them.

Economic infrastructure

Across the UK, major infrastructure projects have been

abandoned or delayed. Cost overruns and uncertainty over supply chains have become commonplace as the Conservative government U-turned on commitments. In Scotland, schools, hospitals, public transport, and roads are all under threat because of the SNP's economic and fiscal mismanagement. Crucial transport projects have been kicked into the long grass or severely delayed. Failures to process planning applications mean Scotland has missed out on crucial renewables projects and housebuilding is grinding to a halt.

Labour will end this chaos by developing a ten-year infrastructure strategy for the UK. This will be aligned with our UK industrial strategy and local development priorities. The strategy will guide UK investment plans and give the private sector certainty about the project pipeline. We will work closely with business to map and address the delivery challenges we face. We will create a new National Infrastructure and Service Transformation Authority, bringing together existing bodies, to set strategic infrastructure priorities and oversee the design, scope, and delivery of projects.

UK Labour will also ensure that economic regulation supports growth and investment, promotes competition, works for consumers, and enables innovation.

In an ever more connected world, our communication network is also vital. Under the Conservatives, UK investment in 5G is falling behind other countries and the rollout of gigabit broadband has been slow.

Similarly, the SNP has failed to deliver on its promises for the R100 programme. UK Labour will make a renewed push to fulfil the ambition of full gigabit and national 5G coverage by 2030.

Royal Mail remains a key part of the UK's infrastructure. Labour will ensure that any proposed takeover is robustly scrutinised and that appropriate guarantees are forthcoming that protect the interests of the workforce, customers and the United Kingdom, including the need to maintain a comprehensive universal service obligation – which is particularly important to people in rural Scotland.

Labour will also explore new business and governance models for Royal Mail so that workers and customers who rely on Royal Mail services can have a stronger voice in the governance and strategic direction of the company.

A modern transport network

Throughout Scotland we need to modernise our transport infrastructure. Long promised improvements to the road network by the SNP have not been delivered. Ferry projects have run over time and over budget, islanders struggle with cancelled journeys, and passengers on Scotland's railways face steep fare hikes. Thousands of bus services have been cut, meaning people – especially in rural areas – do not have access to affordable public transport.

Despite long-standing promises to integrate transport systems, transport services across Scotland have remained fragmented and inefficient, with companies and sectors failing to speak to and plan with each other. Bus routes in Scotland have collapsed while the SNP has stood idly by. Scottish Labour campaigned for powers over bus services to be devolved to local authorities and we are committed to seeing locally controlled and owned bus services, with capped fares and integrated travel systems across our towns and cities.

Cars remain by far the most popular form of private transport. We need to maintain and renew our road network and we have long-term commitments to upgrade key routes in Scotland like the A9. We want to support the transition to electric vehicles and the rollout of charge points across Scotland. At a UK level, as set out in our automotive sector plan, Labour will also give certainty to manufacturers by restoring the phase-out date of 2030 for new cars with internal combustion engines, and supporting buyers of second-hand electric cars by standardising the information supplied on the condition of batteries. We will also further support drivers by tackling the soaring cost of car insurance.

Scottish Labour believes the public ownership of ScotRail was an opportunity to transform Scotland's railway for the benefit of passengers, but the Scottish government has overseen cuts to routes and hiked fares. A UK Labour government will bring the rest of

the UK's railways into public ownership as contracts with existing operators expire or are broken through a failure to deliver. This approach will not cost taxpayers a penny in compensation to the train companies, but will allow Labour to create GB Railways, a unified system that relentlessly focuses on safe, accessible, reliable, affordable and efficient services. GB Railways will then work hand-in-hand with ScotRail to deliver routes across Scotland and improve standards for passengers. Open access operators are an important part of the rail system and will have an ongoing role, but Labour's plans will mean that all railways, including Network Rail and all routes into and throughout Scotland, finally work for public and passenger benefit.

Labour will also work with Scotland's aviation industry to secure its long-term future, including through promoting sustainable aviation fuels and encouraging airspace modernisation. Scottish Labour wants to partner with the industry to attract more international routes into Scotland to support our tourism strategy and our plans to promote 'Brand Scotland'.

Get Scotland building

Planning is devolved in Scotland, but the broken system is holding back development in our cities and rural areas. Scotland faces a housing shortage, however developers who want to build homes face bureaucratic and lengthy planning processes. Businesses which

want to locate and invest in Scotland come up against challenges in securing appropriate bases. Scotland has the potential to become a world leader in clean energy, but the process for consenting and approving renewable energy projects is too slow and unpredictable for investors. Without change, Scotland risks losing out on investment and opportunities, hampering our growth and holding back our potential.

Scottish Labour wants to transform our planning system so that it is no longer a barrier to development – but an enabler of economic growth. To deliver this we have proposed reforming Scotland’s National Planning Framework 4 to ensure that it aligns with our long-term strategic objectives on growth, housing, and net zero. It should also encourage consideration of the potential for economic growth and job creation.

We would also increase capacity in the wider system to reduce timescales and provide greater certainty for developers. Scottish Labour would create a national planning agency with expertise and specialist planning teams that local governments can draw on to supplement local departments. Decision making would remain local, but this national resource would be available to help communities deal with large and complex projects. Over the long term, through the skills system, Scottish Labour would seek to create a pipeline of town planners to boost expertise within local councils.

Scottish Labour would also work with local authorities to streamline the process for strategically important projects. We plan to explore options for greater use of regional planning and enterprise zones to identify key areas for development, learning from the success of areas like Clyde Gateway. Our new approach will prioritise the development of suitable brownfield land, but also unlock ugly, disused grey belt land for housing and construction where it is suitable. Scottish Labour also believes we should review the fees structure and timescales across the country. As well as options to direct additional resource into the system, reforms should aim to increase flexibility for small businesses and allow councils to make a full cost recovery when deadlines are met.

If we are to unlock Scotland's potential, we need to give certainty to investors and developers. Our new approach to planning will improve Scotland's competitiveness and support the creation of communities that are enjoyable to live in, with quality housing, sustainable innovation and thriving enterprises which support good jobs.

Immigration

People who have come to the UK to work have made a substantial contribution to our economy, to our public services and our communities in which they live. But under the Conservatives and the SNP, our economy has become overly dependent on workers from abroad

to fill skills shortages. As a result, we have seen net UK migration reach record highs; more than triple the level than at the last election in 2019. The overall level must be properly controlled and managed. Failure to do so reduces the incentives for businesses to train locally. So, Labour will reduce UK net migration.

We will reform the points-based immigration system so that it is fair and properly managed, with appropriate restrictions on visas, and by linking immigration and skills policy. Labour will not tolerate employers or recruitment agencies abusing the visa system, and we will not stand for breaches of employment law. Employers who flout the rules will be barred from hiring workers from abroad.

Conservative and SNP policy is incoherent, with decisions on migration, skills and sectoral pay determined in isolation. Labour will bring joined-up thinking, ensuring that migration to address skills shortages triggers a plan to upskill workers and improve working conditions in the UK. We will strengthen the Migration Advisory Committee, and establish a framework for joint working with skills bodies across the UK, the Industrial Strategy Council and the Department for Work and Pensions. The needs of our economy are different across the regions and nations, and different sectors have different needs. Given skills policy and employment support are devolved we will work with the Scottish Government when designing workforce plans

for different sectors. This will ensure our migration and skills policies work for every part of the UK. We will end the long-term reliance on overseas workers in some parts of the economy. The days of a sector languishing endlessly on the shortage occupation lists with no action to train up workers will come to an end.

Supporting people into work

Too many people are out of work or not earning enough. In Scotland and across the UK, long waits for treatment of health conditions, particularly mental health, are contributing to the rise in economic inactivity.

Employment support is largely devolved in Scotland, but we believe there is scope for better joined-up working to help people into good jobs. Under a UK Labour government, there will be a new approach to Jobcentre Plus so that it focuses on helping people into work and helping them get on at work. In Scotland we will partner effectively with devolved provision, with more proactive working with local and devolved services so that job centres are responsive to local employers, inclusive for all users and offer the best opportunities for people right across the country. The SNP has cut the funding for Scotland's young person's guarantee, but a UK Labour government will work collaboratively with the Scottish Government to ensure all reserved aspects of Labour's youth guarantee effectively support young people in Scotland.

Labour also wants to support more people with health conditions or a disability into the workforce. A UK Labour government will tackle the backlog of Access to Work claims and give disabled people the confidence to try out work without the fear of an immediate benefit reassessment if it does not work out. We believe the UK Work Capability Assessment is not working and needs to be replaced, alongside a proper plan to support disabled people to be able to work.

Making work pay

Greater in-work security, better pay, and more autonomy in the workplace improve the lives of working people and bring substantial economic benefits. The UK's outdated employment laws are not fit for the modern economy, and recent Conservative legislation has fuelled hostility and confrontation leading to the worst period in industrial relations since the 1980s.

For too many people a job does not offer the route out of poverty that it should: either because work is insecure, inflexible, or low paid; or because people face barriers when trying to move into a better job. Responsible businesses face being undercut when rights are not enforced properly.

Labour will stop the chaos and create a partnership between business and trade unions. A UK Labour government will implement 'Labour's Plan to Make Work

Pay: Delivering a New Deal for Working People' in full – introducing legislation within 100 days. We will consult fully with businesses, workers, and civil society on how to put our plans into practice before legislation is passed. This will include banning exploitative zero hours contracts; ending fire and rehire; and introducing basic rights from day one to parental leave, sick pay, and protection from unfair dismissal. We will strengthen the collective voice of workers, including through their trade unions, and create a Single Enforcement Body to ensure employment rights are upheld.

These changes will improve the lives of working people in Scotland and across the entire UK. Within the devolved context, Scottish Labour believe there is more the Scottish Government could do to improve conditions for workers, and we will explore how we can entrench the reforms of a UK Labour government.

Labour will also make sure the minimum wage is a genuine living wage, delivering a pay rise to over 200,000 workers in Scotland. To do this we will change the remit of the independent Low Pay Commission so for the first time it accounts for the cost of living. Labour will also remove the discriminatory age bands, so all adults are entitled to the same minimum wage.

Labour will stop the chaos, turn the page, and kickstart economic growth by reforming our economy.

Make Scotland a clean energy superpower

- **Headquarter GB Energy in Scotland to cut bills and create jobs**
- **Energy security to end our exposure to dictators like Putin**
- **69,000 new high-quality jobs in Scotland's clean energy industries**
- **Investment in Scotland's clean energy potential**
- **Warmer homes to slash fuel poverty**

The climate and nature crisis is the greatest long-term global challenge that we face. The clean energy transition represents a huge opportunity to generate growth, tackle the cost-of-living crisis and give Scotland and the UK energy security once again. That is why clean energy by 2030 is Labour's second mission.

The Conservatives have failed to grasp opportunities in this area for two related reasons. First, because they simply do not accept that economic growth, energy security, lower bills, and addressing climate change can be complementary. Second, because they are ideologically opposed to using the role of the state, including public investment, to guarantee that they are.

The damage done by 14 years of chaotic 'sticking plaster' policies was exposed when Putin invaded Ukraine. The cost of fossil fuel energy on the international market rocketed. The Conservatives' neglect of the UK's energy infrastructure - and the SNP's failure to deliver on its own commitment to a public energy company or to improve the energy efficiency of homes - landed Scottish families with among the highest energy bills in Europe. That is just one way we are paying the price. While countries around the world are racing ahead to claim the jobs and wealth that the transition offers, Scotland is losing out.

But it is not too late. Scotland has tremendous untapped advantages: our long coast-line, high winds, shallow waters, universities, and skilled offshore

workforce combined with our extensive technological and engineering capabilities developed in the North Sea. With a serious industrial strategy and a genuine partnership between the public and private sectors, Labour is determined that we can still make Scotland and the UK a clean energy superpower.

Labour will take decisive action to seize this economic opportunity. We will shape markets and use public investment to crowd in private funding. At the heart of our approach will be our Green Prosperity Plan where, in partnership with business through our National Wealth Fund, we will invest in the industries of the future. Our plans to harness clean power and invest in home insulation upgrades will deliver the lower bills, good jobs, energy security, and climate leadership Scotland needs.

Labour will provide leadership at home so we can influence others to ensure every country plays their part in meeting our collective obligations to future generations.

Labour will also tackle the nature emergency, where Scotland's peatlands, forests and natural habitat play an essential role. We will improve access to nature, promote biodiversity, and protect our landscapes and wildlife.

Labour understands the route ahead – we have been clear that this transition presents an opportunity to create good jobs, with no community left behind, and

well-paying jobs in existing energy industries. The Conservatives and SNP propose an alternative course which denies reality, delays action and will increase costs for Scotland with greater insecurity and the continuation of jobs and supply chains being offshored. Communities in Scotland are still scarred by the damage the Conservatives did in the 1970s and 1980s with this same chaotic approach. Labour is setting out a different choice, with a plan that will secure the energy jobs of the future in communities across the country.

Clean power by 2030

Families and businesses will have lower bills for good, from a zero-carbon electricity system. We have chosen this mission not because it is easy, but because working people can never again be left vulnerable to dictators like Putin.

To deliver our clean power mission, Labour will work with the private sector to double onshore wind, triple solar power, and quadruple offshore wind by 2030. We will invest in carbon capture and storage, hydrogen and marine energy, and ensure we have the long-term energy storage our country needs. A new energy act will establish the framework for Labour's energy and climate policies.

Labour will end a decade of dithering that has seen the Conservatives duck decisions on nuclear power,

while the SNP opposes its development in Scotland completely. Nuclear power currently provides up to 23 per cent of the electricity consumed in Scotland and will need to remain part of our energy mix if we are to achieve energy security and clean power in Scotland. A UK Labour government will ensure the long-term security of the sector UK-wide, extending the lifetime of existing plants. New nuclear power stations in England and Small Modular Reactors will play an important role in helping the UK achieve clean power while securing thousands of good, skilled jobs. Scottish Labour believes Scotland should not miss out on the economic opportunity that nuclear energy offers.

UK Labour will maintain a strategic reserve of gas power stations to guarantee security of supply. We will ensure a phased and responsible transition in the North Sea that recognises the proud history of our offshore industry and the brilliance of its workforce, particularly in Scotland and the North East of England, and the ongoing role of oil and gas in our energy mix.

We will embrace the future of energy production and storage which will make use of existing offshore infrastructure and the skills of our offshore workforce. Labour will not revoke existing licences and we will partner with business and workers to manage our existing fields for the entirety of their lifespan. Crucially, oil and gas production in the North Sea will be with us for decades to come. The North Sea will be managed

in a way that does not jeopardise jobs and our offshore workers will lead the world in the industries of the future.

A UK Labour government will not issue new licences to explore new fields because they will not take a penny off bills, cannot make us energy secure, and will only accelerate the worsening climate crisis. In addition, UK Labour will not grant new coal licences and will ban fracking for good.

To support investment in this plan, Labour will close the loopholes in the windfall tax on oil and gas companies. Companies have benefitted from enormous profits not because of their ingenuity or investment, but because of an energy shock which raised prices for families. Labour will therefore extend the sunset clause in the Energy Profits Levy until the end of the next UK parliament. To deliver greater fairness for households struggling with the cost of living, a UK Labour government will also increase the rate of the levy by three percentage points, as well as removing the unjustifiably generous investment allowances. We will also retain the Energy Security Investment Mechanism.

Switch on GB Energy in Scotland

To drive forward investment in clean, home-grown energy production, Labour will create a new publicly-owned company, GB Energy. It will be owned by the taxpayer and deliver power back to the public.

GB Energy will partner with industry and trade unions to deliver clean power by co-investing in leading technologies; will help support capital-intensive projects; and will deploy local energy production to benefit communities across the country. To support this, Labour will capitalise GB Energy with £8.3 billion over the next parliament.

The company will create jobs and build supply chains in every corner of the UK. Scotland will be the powerhouse of our clean energy mission, with GB Energy headquartered here so it can harness the expertise and experience of Scotland's world-renowned energy industry.

Local power generation is an essential part of the energy mix and reduces pressures on the transmission grid. UK Labour will deploy more distributed production capacity through a Local Power Plan. GB Energy will partner with energy companies, local authorities, and co-operatives to install thousands of clean power projects, through a combination of onshore wind, solar, and hydropower projects. Communities across the country will be invited to come forward with projects, and Labour will work with local leaders and the Scottish Government to ensure local people in Scotland benefit directly from this energy production.

Energy system reform

Under the Conservatives, the broken energy market has let consumers down. They have allowed scandalous abuses on their watch, including poor customer service, companies going to the wall with the costs falling on billpayers, and the mass forced installation of pre-payment meters.

Labour will ensure a much tougher system of regulation that puts consumers first and attracts the investment needed to cut bills. Too much of the burden of the bill is on standing charges and we will work with the UK regulator to reduce them. We will strengthen the regulator to ensure it can hold companies to account for wrongdoing, require higher standards of performance, and ensure there is automatic customer compensation for failure.

The national grid has become the single biggest obstacle to the deployment of cheap, clean power generation and the electrification of industry. With grid connection dates not being offered until the late 2030s, important business and infrastructure investment is being stalled or lost overseas. Labour will work with industry to upgrade the UK's national transmission infrastructure and rewire the country.

High-quality jobs

As we invest in Scotland's energy potential, Labour is

determined that we will create new high-quality jobs, working with business and trade unions, as we manage the transition. We will rebuild supply chains at home. And, as the first major economy to transition to a clean-energy system, we will export the technologies of the future.

UK Labour's National Wealth Fund will directly invest in ports, hydrogen and industrial clusters in every corner of the country. This will support port investment in Scotland and create a decarbonisation hub at Grangemouth. UK Labour will also secure the future of the UK's automotive and steel industries.

A UK Labour government will also deliver a British Jobs Bonus, allocating up to £500 million per year from 2026, to incentivise clean energy developers to offer good jobs, terms and conditions, and to build their manufacturing supply chains in industrial heartlands, coastal areas, and energy communities across the UK – including in Scotland.

UK Labour will end the injustice of the Mineworkers' Pension Scheme. We will review the unfair surplus arrangements and transfer the Investment Reserve Fund back to members, so that the mineworkers who powered our country receive a fairer pension.

Warm homes plan

The energy shock of recent years has highlighted the

urgent importance of improving energy efficiency in homes. A UK Labour government will invest an extra £6.6 billion over the next UK parliament, doubling the existing planned government investment, to upgrade homes and cut bills for families.

The Warm Homes Plan will offer grants and low interest loans to support investment in insulation and other improvements such as solar panels, batteries and low carbon heating to cut bills. Nobody will be forced to change their boiler as a result of our plans, and UK Labour will also work with the private sector, including banks and building societies, to provide further private finance to accelerate home upgrades and low carbon heating.

Housing is devolved, so a UK Labour government will seek to partner with the Scottish Government in the roll out of the plan to ensure Scottish households benefit and that we improve the energy efficiency of hundreds of thousands of Scottish homes. A UK Labour government will save families hundreds of pounds, slash fuel poverty and get us back on track to meet our climate targets. Our plan will mean 16,000 good skilled jobs for tradespeople in every part of Scotland.

Accelerating to net zero

Scottish industry is held back by high electricity costs, which have often made investing here uncompetitive.

Labour's clean energy mission will drive down those bills, making Scottish businesses internationally competitive while our National Wealth Fund supports the most energy intensive sectors to decarbonise.

Labour supports the introduction of a carbon border adjustment mechanism in the UK. This will protect industries as we decarbonise, prevent countries from dumping lower-quality goods into our markets, and support the UK to meet our climate objectives.

Labour will ensure the institutional framework for policy making reflects our commitments to reach net zero and meet our carbon budgets. The Conservatives' decision to prevent the Bank of England giving due consideration to climate change in its mandates will be reversed.

The UK's world-leading financial services industry has a major role to play in mobilising trillions of pounds in private capital to address the greatest long-term challenge of our age. Labour will make the UK, including Scotland, the green finance capital of the world, mandating UK-regulated financial institutions – including banks, asset managers, pension funds, and insurers – and FTSE 100 companies to develop and implement credible transition plans that align with the 1.5°C goal of the Paris Agreement.

Improving resilience

Preparing for the future not only means tackling the

climate and nature emergencies, but also adapting to the changes we will see in our environment. Scotland has been left exposed by poor risk management, inadequate infrastructure, and a disjointed approach across government and regulators. Without action, flooding and coastal erosion will pose greater risks to lives, livelihoods and people's wellbeing.

Scottish Labour believes we need to see improvements in resilience and preparation with closer collaboration between the UK and Scottish governments, working closely with local authorities, local communities, and emergency services, including Fire and Rescue.

Protecting nature

The climate crisis has also accelerated the nature crisis. Responsibility for protecting Scotland's remarkable natural environment sits with the Scottish government, and there is much more that could and should be done to protect it for future generations. Scottish Labour has pledged to develop a Biodiversity Action Plan for our land, air, and sea. Scotland's environment is a critical cornerstone of cultural, health and economic wellbeing in Scotland, but is also a potential great natural resource in the transition to net zero. Labour will provide climate leadership and renew our natural heritage in partnership with civil society, local communities and business.

Clean water

Scotland's coasts, rivers, and lochs are being polluted by huge rises in sewage dumping, with serious damage being done to people's health, our countryside, and our tourism industry. Although Scotland has a publicly-owned water company, there is an alarming lack of monitoring of Scottish waterways. Improvements are required to Scotland's water infrastructure so it can cope with the volumes of sewage and storms we are now experiencing.

Scottish Labour believes there must also be stronger regulations on Scottish Water to ensure it is delivering for the people of Scotland. Despite storing up high levels of cash reserves, Scottish Water sought to hike bills above inflation amid the cost-of-living crisis, while handing out huge bonuses to directors. Scottish Labour is clear that this recklessness with public finances must end and all available resources must be directed to improving Scotland's waterways.

Supporting Scottish farmers

Food security is a national security issue. Agriculture policy is devolved, and Scottish Labour wants to champion Scottish farming while protecting the environment. We believe that we need to use public procurement to support local food producers, increasing the proportion of all food purchased across the public sector that is locally produced or certified to

higher environmental production standards. Scottish Labour will work to safeguard the sustainability of our agricultural sector, and the jobs that are supported in the supply chain while we work towards our net zero ambitions. The farming support budget must be used to properly support jobs and communities, while also encouraging practices that are beneficial for our food and environment.

Animal welfare

Scottish Labour is committed to strengthening wildlife protection law and animal welfare in Scotland, including humane wildlife control and appropriate land management. Labour will ban the import of hunting trophies and we will end puppy smuggling. We will also partner with scientists, industry, and civil society as we work towards the phasing out of animal testing.

We must end the climate and energy chaos, turn the page on failed policies, and make Scotland a clean energy superpower.

An NHS fit for the future

- **Fund 160,000 new NHS Scotland appointments every year to cut waiting times**
- **A 10-year workforce plan**
- **Improved access to cutting-edge clinical trials and specialist centres across the UK**
- **Access to a mental health professional in every GP surgery**
- **A National Care Service worthy of the name**

The 1945 Labour government founded our National Health Service on principles that have stood the test of time:

The best health services should be available, free for all. Money should no longer be the passport to the best treatment. People should get the best that modern science can offer.

Labour will always defend the NHS. We have saved the NHS before, and the next Labour government will get it back on its feet. A Labour government, in the UK or Scotland, will never privatise the NHS and we will act to end the development of a two-tier system of health that has prevailed under the Conservatives and SNP.

While the Covid-19 pandemic placed the NHS under unprecedented stress, the reality is that the health service was struggling before then. Because of the crisis we see today, Scottish Labour is committed to immediate action to tackle waiting list backlogs.

This first step to save our NHS and deliver change can start on 5 July with the election of a UK Labour government, but Scottish Labour's ambition goes beyond this. Scottish Labour is committed to protecting the NHS in Scotland for the generations to come, and making sure it is fit for the future. To achieve this we must value our dedicated NHS workforce and improve access to care, as well as deliver long-term reforms to modernise services and bring care closer to communities.

Immediate recovery

Scottish patients and NHS staff were promised a recovery following the Covid-19 pandemic, but the pressures across the system remain acute. The equivalent of almost one in six Scots are on NHS waiting lists for appointments, tests or treatment.

Tackling this crisis has to be the first priority. That is why a UK Labour government will invest in the NHS, paid for by closing the non-dom tax loopholes and cracking down on tax avoidance. UK Labour's plans will deliver millions every year in health-related funding for Scotland. This funding would be sufficient to deliver 160,000 more appointments every year for patients in Scotland by operating additional clinics and theatre procedures in the evenings and weekends. This increased capacity would help to cut waiting lists, drive down waiting times, and reduce the need for patients to pay out of their own pocket for private care.

Future of the NHS

Protecting the NHS is about more than reducing the backlog. The NHS of tomorrow must be rooted in local communities where Scots can easily and conveniently access healthcare services and have a greater say and input over their care. Scottish Labour has proposed reducing the number of NHS territorial boards from 14 to three. We will take account of the special circumstances of the islands and carry out a review of special boards

to reduce bureaucracy and ensure that resources are focused on the frontline. These reforms are about decentralising decision making and delivering services closer to communities.

Workforce

The NHS in Scotland would be nothing without our dedicated and hardworking staff. They are the ones who provide the clinical expertise and compassionate care that makes our health services so valued by patients and the Scottish public.

It is crucial that our NHS is a place where staff feel valued and empowered to deliver the best care possible to patients. That is why one of Scottish Labour's first priorities would be to deliver a retention strategy that offers experienced clinicians and healthcare workers options to extend their time working within the NHS. We want Scotland's NHS to embrace new ways of working, supporting staff to do their jobs flexibly and providing opportunities for further training, clinical research, and mentoring.

Creating a supportive culture is about more than pay. That is why Scottish Labour wants all healthcare staff to have access to dedicated changing facilities, rest rooms for breaks, hot meals 24/7, and protected time for learning and professional development. Staff must also feel empowered to offer new ideas and speak up

when things go wrong – not face a culture of bullying and cover up. Scottish Labour believes there needs to be a review of how adverse incidents are handled in Scotland’s NHS and of whistleblowing practices in all health boards.

In the long term, Scotland needs a proper workforce plan. Scottish Labour would ensure that Scotland’s NHS has a 10-year workforce plan that creates domestic medical and nursing training places, forecasts service demands, and meets the needs of future generations.

As part of our plans to reform the NHS, Scottish Labour has committed to establishing a National Clinical Council of healthcare professionals who can directly advise on this and inform government planning on service delivery, workforce planning, and patient safety.

Better services

Scottish Labour wants the health service to be about more than treating illness. It must also help people to live healthy lives. That means more quality services that offer early interventions, are easy to access within people’s communities, and encourage healthy living.

We owe it to our young people that they are given the best start in life. This begins with maternal and child health so that mothers are given access to good healthcare which will reduce inequalities, and support them in having a healthy pregnancy and safe childbirth.

Despite the publication of a Women's Health Plan, women continue to face inequalities in how they experience healthcare. We want to see greater uptake and ease of access to screening services, including the roll out of cervical screening self-sampling. Scottish Labour believes all women must have access to the full range of reproductive services, irrespective of where they live.

The local GP surgery is the first port of call when a health problem starts, and where patients should be treated by staff they know and trust. Excellent primary care is the key to earlier diagnosis, but in recent years it has become harder to access GP appointments as services struggle to cope with demand. Scottish Labour wants to see an end to the 8am rush for appointments and a return to advance booking of consultations.

Modern GP surgeries provide a range of services, delivered by multidisciplinary teams including mental health workers, physiotherapists, pharmacists and nurses. Growing these teams to meet demand will be a key factor within our workforce plan, and Scottish Labour is committed to improving the joint working between primary care teams through records and data sharing, and successful triage.

Where relevant in Scotland, Scottish Labour supports the implementation of the expert recommendations of the Cass Review to ensure that young people presenting

to the NHS with gender dysphoria are receiving appropriate and high-quality care.

Mental health

Recent years have seen an increase in those living with poor mental health. This is still not given parity with physical health. The proportion of health funding dedicated to mental health in Scotland lags behind other UK nations, and Scottish Labour has called for this to be increased to 11 per cent of frontline NHS spending.

For those who find themselves in crisis, it is crucial that services are available. Scottish Labour believes Scotland needs specialist mental health provision within emergency departments where those in need of immediate support can be treated.

Not everyone with poor mental health will need acute or specialist care, but Scottish Labour wants to improve the support available to people in their own communities. That is why we have committed to ensuring there is a mental health professional available in every GP surgery.

In recent years child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) have been overwhelmed with demand and far too many children and young people have been turned away or left on long waiting lists without treatment. Scottish Labour is committed to reforming the referral and triage process to ensure no one is turned away without support. We will learn from

best practice already happening in parts of Scotland and ensure successful pilots are rolled out country wide.

Scottish Labour fought for counselling to be available in schools, but provision is still variable. A one size fits all approach does not work and each child or young person will have different needs, with some requiring specialist support. Scottish Labour believes every child and young person should be able to access specialist mental health services at school.

Cancer

Cancer remains the most common cause of death in Scotland, and everyone will know someone, whether it is a family member, friend, or neighbour, who has received a cancer diagnosis. Early diagnosis is paramount as any delay can change someone's diagnosis from survivable to incurable. We need targeted interventions to improve the uptake of cancer screening in our most deprived areas. Scots should have access to the latest advances in screening, so Scottish Labour supports the roll out of lung cancer screening across the country.

We also need to shorten the length of time that patients wait for tests and to start treatment following a diagnosis. Scottish Labour's plans for more appointments will help reduce those waiting times and our plans to modernise hospital equipment with state-of-the-art scanners will also help find cancer earlier.

Scottish Labour will also work with clinicians and cancer charities to design a cancer strategy that sets out a comprehensive vision for cancer care, including how we improve screening services and reduce waiting times.

Dentistry

Across Scotland it is getting harder to access NHS dentistry, and we need to reform the current system if this service is to be sustainable for the future. Scottish Labour wants to end the postcode lottery in access to NHS dentistry and will develop incentives for newly-qualified dentists to work in NHS dentistry in areas where they are most needed, so that everyone is able to register as an NHS patient.

Promoting good oral health from a young age is also crucial for preventing decay and dental problems in later life. The world-leading Childsmile programme was designed by Scottish Labour and we want to build on this legacy. We want to see the scheme expanded with more targeted interventions in deprived areas, and will consider options for encouraging older children and teenagers to engage with their local dentist.

Public health

We will prioritise prevention, taking steps to help children develop habits from an early age. As well as ending the sale of single use vapes, we will ensure the next

generation can never legally buy cigarettes. Across the UK, Labour will also ban the promotion and advertising of vapes and junk food towards children and young people.

Labour is committed to reducing gambling-related harm. Recognising the evolution of the gambling landscape since 2005, Labour will reform gambling regulation, strengthening protections. We will continue to work with the industry on how to ensure responsible gambling.

Scotland's drug deaths crisis is a public health emergency, bringing heartache to individuals and communities. As it stands, many people struggling with drug dependency are either unable to access recovery and rehabilitation services in their community or have to wait too long. Scottish Labour is committed to a harm reduction approach, prioritising recovery services in local communities and tackling the issue at its root. We support the opening of a pilot safe consumption room in Glasgow, alongside drug testing facilities and greater access to naloxone packs. In recognising the need to get recovery services right across communities, Scottish Labour is committed to improving access to residential rehabilitation to all, regardless of where they live and fully implementing the Medication Assisted Treatment standards, including better integration between recovery services and mental health support.

Technology

Scottish Labour believes that if we are to create an NHS that is fit for the 21st century, the NHS cannot stand still. New technologies can help improve access to healthcare, deliver faster and more effective ways of working, and offer new treatments for patients. Scottish Labour wants to ensure that patients and staff in Scotland benefit from these advances, making the care in Scotland the best that it can be.

Access to healthcare

Virtual care can allow patients to be monitored remotely and allows for treatment at home. The potential for this extends beyond reducing delays to discharge from hospital and can deliver a convenient route to help patients manage their conditions in a way that suits them. Virtual care can also allow individuals to access expert care without having to travel long distances, which can be especially valuable for individuals living in rural parts of Scotland. That is why Scottish Labour wants to see virtual care scaled up to support those living with chronic conditions such as COPD, heart failure, and diabetes, as well as improving access to specialist advice and monitoring.

Digital solutions can also improve the way that patients engage with and access care across the health system. Scottish Labour wants to increase the availability of online booking for appointments, routine checks and

repeat prescriptions, harness the benefits of digital reminders, and increase access to health advice online. The NHS is modernising in other parts of the UK and Scottish Labour believes NHS Scotland should also embrace these technologies, learning from best practice, as UK Labour reforms the NHS app in England giving patients greater control over how they interact with health services.

More effective ways of working

Scotland's GPs still do not have access to e-prescribing and rolling this out across the country would be a priority for Scottish Labour. Patient records are still not connected across all health services and this can lead to disjointed working and miscommunication with patients. Scottish Labour believes patients should own and have control over their own health records. Patients should be empowered to allow all services to access their records to improve their health journey.

Digital technologies can also provide patients with options to join clinical trials, alternative routes to care besides going to their GP, and reminders of screening for which they are eligible.

With thousands of patients on waiting lists for tests and diagnoses, we also need to embrace innovations that will speed up the process. Much of the equipment used by the NHS is outdated and has not kept up with new

developments. New AI-assisted scanners can assist clinicians in diagnosing patients faster and improve outcomes by identifying issues earlier because they are more effective at finding smaller tumours and saving lives. Scottish Labour wants Scotland's NHS to have access to state-of-the-art MRI and CT scanners, and we will review NHS procurement strategies to ensure that equipment and technologies are updated regularly.

New treatments

There is no shortage of exciting innovation in Scottish universities and research centres. The revolution taking place in data and life sciences has the potential to transform our nation's healthcare; and with our world-leading life sciences sector and universities, Scotland has much to contribute to these developments.

The Covid-19 pandemic showed how strong mission-driven, industrial strategy partnering with industry and academia, could turn the tide on a pandemic. However, improvements can be made in how innovation and breakthroughs in Scottish universities translate into widespread uptake of new treatments and procedures. At a UK level, Labour will accelerate the approval of clinical trial activity in the NHS and deliver better access for patients to the latest treatments, regardless of where they live.

By using NHS data to identify patients who would benefit, and by reforming the process for establishing clinical trials, UK Labour will open up access for patients beyond the big research centres. A Labour government will also work with the devolved governments so that patients can access clinical trials regardless of which NHS area they live in. Patients should receive the best possible treatment and care that is available across the UK. Scots that require specialist care should always be able to be treated in specialist centres elsewhere in the UK and vice versa. This collaboration and sharing of resources and talent saves lives.

Across the UK, Labour will also adopt better horizon scanning for emerging treatments, like new revolutionary drugs for dementia, so that we can prioritise and prepare the NHS to implement them at speed.

Social care

Social care is crucial for the dignity and wellbeing of our family, friends, and neighbours. Labour is committed to ensuring everyone lives an independent, prosperous life. Social care is vital to achieving this, but hundreds of thousands of people suffer without the care they need for a dignified life. The sector in Scotland and across the UK needs deep reform: there are inconsistent standards, chronic staff shortages, and people are not always treated with the care, dignity and respect they deserve.

In Scotland, the Feeley Review in 2021 made several recommendations for improving social care for which Scottish Labour continues to campaign. We want to see non-residential care charges abolished without further delay, and unpaid carers granted a right to respite.

Recruitment remains a challenge and limits capacity in the sector. Scottish Labour believes social care staff should be treated like the skilled professionals they are, acknowledging the important work that they do. Fair pay agreements for the social care sector in England form part of Labour's New Deal for Working People but there is no reason why the Scottish Government could not take sector-wide negotiations forward in Scotland today.

Scottish Labour first called for a National Care Service over a decade ago, but we cannot support the SNP's current plan which focuses on changing structures rather than culture. We want a National Care Service that is worthy of the name and works with local communities to design services and improve the quality of care across Scotland.

The pandemic restrictions saw care home residents separated from their loved ones with significant impacts on some of the most vulnerable in society. Scottish Labour is committed to protecting the right of care home visiting and will implement Anne's Law.

Labour will stop the chaos in Scotland's health and care services, turn the page, and reform them in line with Labour's founding principles so that our NHS is fit for the future.

Safer communities

- **Action to tackle violence against women and girls**
- **Tough sanctions to restrict online sales of deadly knives**
- **Greater protections to keep young people safe online**
- **Restoring trust in community policing**
- **Putting victims at the heart of the criminal justice system**

Security is the bedrock on which opportunities are built, communities can thrive, and local economies can prosper. Security means knowing someone will be there for you if things go wrong, and that laws will be respected and enforced.

Scottish Labour's vision for policing and justice is that when you call the police, they should come.

When you report a crime, you should have total confidence that it will be taken seriously and investigated no matter who you are or where you live. Police should enjoy the trust of communities. If you are a victim, you should have faith that justice will be delivered and that criminals will be punished.

Sadly, that sense of security has slowly been eroded over the past 17 years, and now our justice system is stretched to breaking point. Police Scotland has been gutted, with officers no longer able to investigate every crime. Our prisons are so over-crowded that the government has been forced to announce an emergency plan to release prisoners early. Court backlogs continue to delay access to justice, while sexual offences and violent crimes are increasing, and our young people are being drawn into anti-social behaviour.

This must change. Scottish Labour will restore community policing and tackle the epidemic of serious violence. We need a greater focus on prevention,

including holding companies and executives cashing in on knife crime to account. We must never tolerate the violence against women and girls that stains our society. And we need to reform the justice system to put victims first, tackle the prisons crisis, and cut reoffending.

The SNP has failed to get the basics right. Scottish Labour would restore confidence in our policing and justice system, create safer communities, and prevent our young people from being drawn into crime in the first place.

Rebuilding community policing

Visible neighbourhood policing is the cornerstone of our consent-based policing model, but the centralising approach of the SNP has seen the number of local officers increasingly eroded.

Scottish Labour wants to see community policing numbers restored so that police officers are more visible, more responsive and more in tune with the needs and concerns of the community they serve. This will also enable the public to once again have confidence that Police Scotland will investigate the crimes that are reported to them. As well as prioritising more community police officers, Scotland needs a police retention strategy and improved co-ordination and interaction between emergency services to ensure the best use is being made of police officers' time.

Public confidence depends on the belief that police officers will conduct themselves to the highest standards. Scottish Labour supports the intentions behind the Police (Ethics, Conduct and Scrutiny) Bill, but we would go further. Scottish Labour wants local accountability to be enhanced, with a role for local government in local policing plans. To support the rebuilding of community links, the voices of under-represented communities in Scotland must also be better heard in the police accountability process.

Police officers must be properly equipped and their investigative techniques must keep pace with modern threats. Scottish Labour supports the full roll out of body worn video cameras for police. Scotland's police must be able to continuously modernise to be able to keep pace with modern threats, such as cybercrime, fraud, trafficking and terrorism. To support this, and improve collaboration between forces, Labour will also ensure that services elsewhere in the UK are organised to more effectively tackle cross-border issues, such as serious organised crime. UK Labour will also introduce a new expanded fraud strategy to tackle the full range of threats, including online, public sector and serious fraud. We will work with technology companies to stop their platforms being exploited by fraudsters, protecting people in Scotland and across the UK.

Cracking down on anti-social behaviour and knife crime

Anti-social behaviour is not merely a 'low-level' nuisance. It hits the poorest communities hardest and, if left unchecked, leads to more serious offending. That is why tackling anti-social behaviour was central to Scottish Labour's plan for justice when we were last in government. Scottish Labour believes that developing a cross-government framework to crack down on anti-social behaviour, working with the police, schools, youth services and community groups, is essential to addressing such concerns and supporting young people in Scotland.

Shoplifting has risen exponentially in recent times alongside increasing attacks on shopworkers. Scottish Labour has led the way on addressing this situation, introducing the Protection of Workers (Retail and Age-restricted Goods and Services) (Scotland)

Act in the last Scottish parliament, but the police need more support and capacity to bring perpetrators to justice.

To get knives off our streets, a UK Labour government will ban ninja swords, lethal zombie-style blades and machetes, strengthening rules to prevent online sales across the UK. Executives of online companies that flout these rules will be personally held to account through tough sanctions.

Tackling violence against women and girls

For too long, violence against women and girls has been ignored. In Scotland today, at least one in five women will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime, while both violent and sexual crime have increased in recent years and misogynist hate has been allowed to proliferate unchecked online.

Scottish Labour recognises that bold action must be taken to protect women and girls in Scotland. That is why we launched a comprehensive consultation on measures to prevent violence against women and girls, and we support the use of every government tool available to target perpetrators and address the root causes of abuse and violence.

We know that the justice system in Scotland too often fails women and girls, and rape victims find the justice system retraumatising. Scottish Labour supports the creation of a single point of contact for rape victims and has called for a pilot scheme to give independent legal representation to victims of rape and serious sexual crimes. We also agree that the right to anonymity for rape victims should be placed on a statutory basis. While structural change is important, transformational change within the court system will only come through changing culture and practice. The first step is to embed trauma-informed practices and procedures throughout our courts and justice system.

To reduce court delays, Scottish Labour supports the proposal to establish a special sexual offences court and the 'not proven' verdict should be abolished to improve the transparency in the system. However, we have serious concerns with proposals to change jury sizes and pilot juryless trials and we will not back these plans as currently proposed.

Violence and abuse do not come from nowhere. Misogyny is the root cause, and tackling sexism from a young age is critical to ending gender-based violence later down the line. That is why we believe schools should be supported to address misogyny, with a strategy to teach young people from all ages about healthy relationships and consent.

Scottish Labour has also repeatedly called for the criminalisation of misogyny, and for sex to be included as an aggravator within the Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Act. Spiking is a devastating crime for victims, leaving women feeling vulnerable when they go out. Scottish Labour will explore how the law in Scotland can be strengthened so police better respond to this crime. We have also proposed closing loopholes in the law on the distribution of intimate images so that images cannot be shared without consent.

Children and young people face significant harm online, with inappropriate content too easily available at their fingertips on a smartphone. We have seen an increase in extreme misogynistic content online driving a culture

of violence against women. A UK Labour government will build on the Online Safety Act, bringing forward provisions as quickly as possible, and explore further measures to keep everyone safe online, particularly when using social media.

Getting a grip of our prisons and reducing reoffending

Scottish prisons are close to breaking point. Years of inaction has culminated in inmates being released early, while prisons are increasingly unsafe due to overcrowding, and buildings are in a state of disrepair. The Scottish Government has repeatedly delayed new construction projects, but it is clear that Scotland's prison estate needs to be modernised and improvements are necessary to prevent prisons becoming a breeding ground for more crime.

We need action to reduce reoffending. Improvements are required to the provision of purposeful activity for prisoners, and there must be better access to mental health support, substance misuse services, and rehabilitation programmes in Scotland's prisons. We know a joined-up community approach is crucial for ending the cycle of reoffending, which is why Scottish Labour has called for a harm prevention plan for everyone who leaves prison, with a safe place to live, registration with a doctor, and other support. Labour mayors elsewhere in the UK are already pioneering this approach.

Scotland has one of the highest remand rates in Europe, partly driven by huge court backlogs which delay justice for all, but also because of a lack of confidence in community alternatives. Scottish Labour wants to see community sentences made more available and reliable to reassure sheriffs who are making sentencing decisions, and to keep the public safe. This includes modernising Scotland's outdated electronic tagging system, as well as using new tech to track individuals at all times when they are out on bail. Vital changes are also needed to fix the failures of the victims' notification scheme and improve the communication with local communities about the community work completed by offenders.

For more serious crimes, including domestic abuse and sexual crimes, Scottish Labour is clear that sentences should reflect the crime and that victim safety is paramount. Scottish Labour has called for a review of the sentencing guidelines for under-25s to ensure we have clarity and consistency in sentencing.

Historical injustices

Too many victims of historical injustices have had to face years of campaigning, reliving some of their worst moments in the media, just to receive justice. Many have had insult added to injury by years of legal delays. Without justice and the truth, victims and their families cannot move forward. At a UK level, Labour will right

this wrong, acting on the findings of the Infected Blood Inquiry, the Grenfell Inquiry, and the Covid-19 Inquiry, to ensure swift resolution for affected families across the country.

At Westminster, Labour will introduce a 'Hillsborough Law' which will place a legal duty of candour on UK public servants and authorities, and provide legal aid for victims of disasters or state-related deaths. We will ensure the victims of the appalling Windrush scandal have their voices heard and the compensation scheme is run effectively, with a new Windrush Commissioner. Labour will also ensure, through an investigation or inquiry, that the truth about the events at Orgreave comes to light.

Scotland is not immune from scandals or a culture of cover up. Scottish Labour has stood up for the families in the QEUH scandal and we are committed to passing 'Milly's Law', establishing an independent public advocate who can act on behalf of bereaved families and has the authority to investigate incidents to establish the truth.

Labour will stop the chaos where too many criminals act with impunity, we will turn the page with community policing, stronger online protections, and justice for historical wrongs to renew our criminal justice system.

Break down barriers to opportunity

- **Mortgage guarantee and support for first time buyers**
- **Review of Universal Credit and a new strategy to tackle child poverty**
- **Increased investment for Scotland's education system**
- **A modern curriculum so young people are ready for work and life**
- **Reform apprenticeships so they work better for young people and Scotland's economy**

Whoever you are, wherever you come from, Scotland should be a country where hard work means you can get on in life. Under the Conservatives, this basic promise – that if you work hard, you will enjoy the rewards – has been broken. We are a country where who your parents are – and how much money they have – too often counts for more than your effort and enterprise. Too many people sense that success is something that happens to others. This is an appalling waste of talent as well as a huge injustice. So, breaking the pernicious link between background and success will be a defining mission for Labour.

Tackling poverty and giving families security

First, we must recognise that greater opportunity requires greater security. Tackling economic insecurity – at work, at home, in our communities and public services – is the golden thread that runs through all of UK Labour’s missions.

The last Labour government lifted 120,000 children and 130,000 pensioners out of poverty in Scotland. That progress transformed life chances and ensured security in retirement. The next Labour government will build on that legacy of pursuing opportunity and social justice.

Good work will be the foundation of our approach to tackling poverty and inequality. We will create more good jobs, end insecure employment, and make work

pay so that many more people benefit from the dignity and purpose of work.

Labour is committed to reviewing Universal Credit so that it makes work pay and tackles poverty. We want to end mass dependence on emergency food parcels, which is a moral scar on our society.

More than one in four children are living in poverty in Scotland. In the past decade, child poverty has increased by 50,000 and 70 per cent of children in poverty are living in working households. This not only harms children's lives now, but it also damages their future prospects, and holds back our economic potential as a country. Labour will develop an ambitious strategy to reduce child poverty. We will work with the voluntary sector, faith organisations, trade unions, business, devolved and local government, and communities to bring about change.

We will take initial steps to confront poverty, slashing fuel poverty, banning exploitative zero hours contracts, introducing a real living wage, and improving support to help people get into good work.

Our system of state, private, and workplace pensions provide the basis for security in retirement. A UK Labour government will retain the triple lock for the state pension. We will also adopt reforms to workplace pensions to deliver better outcomes for UK savers and pensioners. Our pensions review will consider

what further steps are needed to improve security in retirement, as well as to increase productive investment in the UK economy.

Safe and secure housing

Economic security also means having a secure roof over your head. Scottish Labour believes that everybody should have a home that is safe, secure and affordable, but this remains a far-off dream for too many Scots.

Despite the growing recognition that Scotland is facing a housing emergency, the SNP chose to cut the housing budget by almost £200 million in a single year. Tackling the housing crisis will require an increase to housing supply and, as well as reforming planning to unlock private investment and development, we need to tackle the shortage of affordable homes. Our reform of planning will strengthen the requirements for new affordable homes within new developments, and ensure that discounts for low-income buyers are retained when homes are subsequently sold on. Increasing the supply of affordable homes must be done in partnership with local authorities to ensure that communities have the housing they need.

Too many Scots are stuck in the private rented sector, unable to save up deposits or access social housing. Tenants should be protected from unaffordable rents and unscrupulous landlords, but rent regulations

must be practical, workable, and reflect the intent of legislators. Scottish Labour also supports proposals to drive up standards in the rented sector in Scotland, improving the rights of tenants to make their house a proper home.

Scottish Labour is committed to improving levels of home ownership. Owning your own home should not be the privilege of the wealthy or for those who can rely on their families for financial support. Across the UK, a Labour government will introduce a permanent new comprehensive mortgage guarantee scheme to support first-time buyers who struggle to save for a large deposit with lower mortgage costs.

In Scotland, Scottish Labour would also reform the rules for existing support schemes so that they are available to more low-income first-time buyers. To help those struggling with the rising costs of mortgages, Scottish Labour has called for a relaunch of the Scottish Mortgage to Shared Equity Scheme to ensure nobody loses their home due to the Conservatives' disastrous mini-budget.

While families struggle to get on the housing ladder, thousands of homes across Scotland are lying unused and empty. A Scottish Labour government would address this, working with local government to buy up neglected and empty homes, selling them on to future homeowners who will turn them back into homes that are lived in and loved.

Regardless of tenure, Scottish Labour believes that every family in Scotland should have a home in which they feel safe and secure. It is essential that when safety issues are highlighted, action is taken swiftly to ensure that families are not at risk. We must never again see a repeat of the Grenfell fire disaster. In the seven years since, progress in removing dangerous cladding from homes across Scotland has been painfully slow. Scottish Labour believes the remediation process must be accelerated and treated with the urgency it deserves.

The last Labour government in Scotland oversaw a decrease in homelessness and all but abolished rough sleeping. That progress has since been undone, with rising numbers forced to sleep on the streets, or sofa surfing, and thousands of people stuck in temporary accommodation. Building on our past experience of progress, a Scottish Labour government will partner with local authorities to develop a cross-government strategy to reduce homelessness, increase housing supply, and end Scotland's housing emergency.

Education

Education can transform a child's life chances and clear the way to opportunity for all. On the foundation of economic security, we can build an education system that prepares children for life, work and the future.

Labour will look after young people from cradle to career. No matter a child's background, they should leave education equipped with the skills they need for work and life. We want our young people to leave school confident and resilient, with a high-quality education, core skills in literacy and numeracy, and learning in digital, STEM and creative studies.

Labour will spread opportunity at every age and every stage because every child should believe that success belongs to them.

Best start in life

The first years of a child's life are critical for their development and setting them up for success. It is important that in these early stages of life children are supported to learn and grow, while parents and carers are supported in a way that suits their family and working life.

Scottish Labour recognises the value of high-quality early years care. It was under Scottish Labour that free early years provision was first introduced in Scotland in 2002, and we supported its extension. Yet, while the number of hours has increased, too often provision of nursery care is unavailable and many families are missing out.

A Scottish Labour government will make it a priority to work with the sector to look at how we can build greater

flexibility into the system. This will ensure parents who work shifts or who need greater wraparound care are not excluded from provision. Scottish Labour also recognises the need to better support families with disabled children and to encourage more registered childminders to join and stay in the profession.

Supporting children in the early part of their life means giving parents the flexibility they need to care for their family. UK Labour will review the parental leave system, so it best supports working families, within our first year in government.

Raising attainment and school standards

Scotland once had a world-renowned education system. Under the last Scottish Labour government, the performance of students in maths, literacy and science was among the best in the world. But after 17 years of an SNP government this is sadly no longer the case, with Scotland slipping down international standards on the core subjects of reading, maths and science. Scottish Labour wants to restore our education system and raise our school standards again.

High-quality teaching and support makes the biggest difference in education. Our teachers and education staff do an excellent job but are over-stretched in often difficult circumstances. We want to raise school standards for every child across the country, and

that means prioritising the state sector for additional investment, rather than continuing to subsidise private schools. A UK Labour government will end the VAT exemption for private schools and invest this money into the state education system. The funding this will deliver for Scotland will be significant and could deliver more staff and support in Scotland's schools. For example, it is the equivalent of over 1,800 more teachers in Scotland.

Raising attainment and improving standards is not just about more teachers; support staff who can work directly with pupils are also key. We therefore want to develop a proper workforce plan for schools so that our pupils and education workforce are properly supported for years to come.

There needs to be robust data collection within Scottish schools so that we have accurate information on what is happening in classrooms. This will enable effective responses to the needs within our education system, such as trends or gaps in additional support needs provision.

There have been numerous reviews and recommendations about how the curriculum and school education in Scotland can be reformed to deliver the best possible start for our young people. We want the curriculum to prepare young people for life and our modern economy. Poor implementation and a lack of support for teachers has undermined the Curriculum for Excellence. Many of the institutions involved in delivering

education in Scotland have been deemed unfit for purpose, most recently with the exams scandal during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Scottish Labour supports replacement of the SQA and Education Scotland with new bodies so that the system of curriculum development, accreditation, and assessments is fit for purpose, and Scotland once again has an independent inspectorate. The current assessment regime needs to capture the strengths of every child, to recognise attainment and achievement, and have the right balance of exams and assessment methods.

It is crucial that what children are taught in school equips them for life and work. Scottish Labour believes there must be a focus on raising standards in numeracy and literacy throughout all years. In many schools across Scotland, pupils have also faced a narrowing of the curriculum and a curtailing of the choices available to them, particularly in more deprived areas. Scottish Labour wants to see this reversed with greater equality of choice and opportunity provided in Scotland's schools, learning from successful models where resources have been pooled across schools. It is also crucial that the curriculum keeps up with innovation and developments in wider society. There needs to be a greater focus within the curriculum on digital skills, and we have an ambition to make Scottish pupils among the most digitally literate within a decade.

Scotland needs better support for careers development in schools so that young people are inspired to undertake careers in the industries of the future and are equipped with the skills they need. To reform careers advice in schools, a Scottish Labour government would work in partnership with industry, as well as the public and third sectors, to develop a 'Skills to School' programme to encourage pupils to think about their future options and open up new opportunities with employers, sectors and industries they may not have considered.

Supporting the workforce

Providing our children and young people with a quality education is dependent on the hard work and commitment of our teachers, support staff and the wider team of specialist professionals around them. The SNP promised to make education its priority, but schools have not been given the resources they need. Many teachers are unable to find permanent jobs, with cuts across the country and support staff forced to work from cupboards because they are not properly resourced.

Teachers and school staff are angry about the chaos that the education system is in. They are the experts and must be listened to if we want to improve the system. Scottish Labour believes collaboration should be central to education again, so that together with the expertise of

teachers and school staff, changes are based on what is best for pupils.

Scottish Labour wants to see teachers properly supported. They should have sufficient non-contact time to prepare for classes, the teaching resources they need, and the staff teams required to educate and care for children. All staff should have the stability of secure contracts.

No teacher or pupil should feel unsafe in the classroom, but in recent years there have been widespread reports of rising violence and aggression in Scottish schools. This is unacceptable. Scottish Labour want to help headteachers and staff to take a zero-tolerance approach to violence, addressing the underlying conditions that have seen children's needs go unmet and staff unsupported.

Delivering for all

Too many children's life chances are being scarred by rising poverty. The poverty-related attainment gap remains starkly wide in Scotland, and the most recent round of cuts risks making the situation worse. We will consider how wider use of free breakfasts and targeted nurture support in schools can help children from deprived areas. Labour's plans to tackle poverty by reducing bills, making work pay and delivering a new child poverty strategy will also support families and help children come to school ready to learn.

Understanding the unique challenges for our care-experienced young people and empowering them to fully participate in education and wider life is a crucial part of delivering opportunity for all. Scottish Labour reaffirms its commitment to The Promise and recognises the importance of the ongoing implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

There has been a stark rise in school absences, but the records on attendance and monitoring of home-schooling provision is patchy across Scotland. Scottish Labour wants to ensure no child falls through the cracks. As well as measures to encourage attendance, we propose creating a national attendance register to monitor absence levels, improve attendance, and ensure support and alternative provision is targeted in the right places.

Poor mental health is also a barrier to learning and the struggle to access support is holding children and young people back. Every child and young person should be able to access specialist mental health services at school so they have access to early support to address problems before they escalate.

While schools are trying to do their best for all pupils, too often our education and wider health and social care systems do not meet the needs of everyone, including those with additional support needs. Mainstreaming has been a rightly celebrated approach which Scottish

Labour supports, but its implementation has been undermined by a lack of proper resources. The number of pupils with additional support needs has increased rapidly in recent years, while the number of specialist teachers and specialist support services has declined. Scottish Labour will work with headteachers, schools and parents on how to implement the recommendations of the Morgan Review so that they no longer have to fight for support every day, and can deliver better outcomes for all.

Further and higher education

Colleges are vital to supporting Scotland's economy and their local communities. They deliver vital training and skills development, particularly for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, and people who need or want to re-train.

Scottish Labour wants to restore colleges to their full potential. Our partnership approach will bring together colleges, communities, businesses and local training providers to provide young people with better job opportunities and deliver the highly trained workforce that local economies need.

Apprenticeships will also be a key component in Scottish Labour's plans to grow the economy and develop the jobs of the future. We want to build on the success of the modern apprenticeship model, making it more

flexible, easier to access, and better suited to the needs of individuals and industry. This includes the creation of sector-specific clearing systems so that people can find roles more easily and good candidates do not drop out of the system and miss out on opportunities. Scottish Labour will also work with colleges, training providers and businesses to explore options for more 'modular' apprenticeships that can be moulded to fit the need of individuals and businesses. These would allow apprentices to bolt-on additional modules that are more specific to their role and apprentices who are upskilling or re-skilling could bypass modules in which they already have proven skills.

UK Labour will reform the Conservatives' broken Apprenticeships Levy, replacing it with a Growth and Skills Levy. Decisions over how the levy funding that comes to Scotland is spent are for the Scottish Government, but Scottish Labour believes it could be better spent on skills development. With greater clarity over the funding available in Scotland, we will consider how this resource could be prioritised to meet the needs of communities, businesses and workers.

While increasing the quality and value of vocational skills, Scottish Labour will also continue to support the aspiration of every child who wants, and meets the requirements, to go to university. Scotland's universities are among the best in the world and home to

groundbreaking research. The sector creates jobs and contributes to local and national economies. Scottish Labour remains committed to free tuition for Scottish students attending Scottish universities and we want to ensure that the progress made on widening access continues.

Access to arts, music, and sport

With Labour, the arts and music will no longer be the preserve of a privileged few. Culture is an essential part of supporting children and young people to develop creativity and find their voice.

The creative industries make an important contribution to Scotland's cultural life and to our economy. The sector is worth nearly £4.5 billion and it supports 80,000 jobs, but there remains huge potential for growth that can benefit every community in Scotland. We have identified the sector as a key component of our 'Brand Scotland' offer and believe there is a role for the Scottish Government to develop clearer career paths in the sector and take steps to encourage investment in Scottish creatives.

As part of our UK industrial strategy, a UK Labour government will implement our sector plan for the creative industries, creating good jobs and accelerating growth in film, music, gaming, and other creative sectors. UK Labour will also work with the BBC and our other public service broadcasters so they continue to

inform, educate and entertain people, as well as support the creative economy by commissioning distinctive Scottish and UK content.

Access to music, drama, and sport has become difficult and expensive because of ticket touting. Labour will put fans back at the heart of events by introducing new UK-wide consumer protections on ticket resales.

The Edinburgh International Festival and Fringe are globally-recognised platforms for creative excellence. Scottish Labour will ensure the Edinburgh festivals form part of our wider plan to treat our creative industries as an economic asset and to promote tourism so they can continue to attract investment and be enjoyed by generations to come.

Labour will deliver international events, such as the Men's UEFA European Football Championship which will involve games staged in Scotland, with pride. We will seek new opportunities where we can, creating a legacy to inspire the next generation of talent while promoting exercise and healthy living.

All children, regardless of their background, should get to experience the arts, culture, sport and creative activities. As a first step, Scottish Labour wants to improve access to sport in schools and expand the provision of music tuition through a national online support platform so that all children have the chance to learn these skills.

In Scotland we acknowledge the fan-led review carried out by the Scottish Football Supporters Association. Scottish Labour wants to see fans have a greater say in the way football is run, and we would consult on the issue of football governance and the need for an independent regulator for Scottish football. We also support anti-racism education to stamp out racism in football and beyond.

Respect and opportunity for all

Everyone in this country deserves governments that match their ambition. Labour will ensure no matter where you live in Scotland, and whatever your background, you can thrive. We will turn the page on policies that promote division and pitch communities against one another.

Women's equality will be at the heart of UK Labour's missions. Our Plan to Make Work Pay will transform the lives of working women, including by strengthening rights to equal pay and protections from maternity and menopause discrimination and sexual harassment. And Labour will take action to reduce the gender pay gap, building on the legacy of Barbara Castle's Equal Pay Act.

A UK Labour government will introduce a landmark Race Equality Act, to enshrine in law the full right to equal pay for Black, Asian, and other ethnic minority people,

strengthen protections against dual discrimination and root out other racial inequalities.

Labour is committed to championing the rights of disabled people and to the principle of working with them, so that their views and voices will be at the heart of all we do. UK Labour will introduce the full right to equal pay for disabled people. Building on gender pay gap reporting, we will introduce disability and ethnicity pay gap reporting for large employers. A UK Labour government will also tackle the Access to Work backlog in the UK system and make sure people can try out a job without fear of an immediate benefit reassessment if it does not work out.

Delivering opportunities for all means that everyone should be treated with respect and dignity. So-called conversion therapy is abuse – there is no other word for it – so Labour will finally deliver a full trans-inclusive ban on conversion practices, while protecting the freedom for people to explore their sexual orientation and gender identity. Scottish Labour believe we must also modernise, simplify, and reform the intrusive and outdated gender recognition law. As this is devolved but also interacts with reserved legislation, Scottish Labour believes that any legislation in Scotland must provide dignity for transgender people and be consistent with the Equality Act.

Labour is proud of our Equality Act and the rights and protections it affords women; we will continue to support the implementation of its single-sex exceptions.

Labour will end the division of the last 14 years, and turn the page to ensure everyone can thrive and there is respect and dignity for all.

Reset our politics

- **A new Ethics and Integrity Commission to clean up politics at Westminster**
- **Immediate reform to modernise the House of Lords**
- **A reset of devolution and better co-operation between the UK and Scottish Government**
- **A Scotland Office acting to promote Scotland within the UK and internationally**

Over the last 14 years, trust in politics has been shattered. Partying in Downing Street while the whole country sacrificed their freedom. Handing lucrative Covid contracts to friends and donors. Failing to expel MPs caught breaking the rules. The behaviour of the Conservatives has understandably led to a widespread belief that many politicians are in it for themselves. As a result, there is now a crisis of confidence in our political system's ability to deliver any change.

This is not limited to Westminster – in Scotland, the SNP has also failed to uphold the standards expected in public life. The scandals may be different, but the SNP has also sought to protect its own and failed to address the behaviour of its MPs and MSPs, from sexual harassment scandals to accusations of financial mismanagement and defending the inappropriate use of public expenses. The people of Scotland also deserve better from their representatives.

It is not just sleaze and scandal that have eroded trust. Just as corrosive has been the inability of politicians to keep promises made to the public. Over the last 14 years, the vast chasm between the slogans and solutions of the Conservative Party has shown an almost unprecedented contempt for democracy and serving the national interest. From claiming “we’re all in it together” while decimating public services, to the empty promises to “level up”, gimmicks and gestures have shamefully replaced the hard graft of governing.

Similarly, the SNP has a long legacy of broken promises and failed commitments, all announced to get a headline but ditched when delivery became too difficult.

In contrast, Labour has been transformed from a party of protest to one that always puts the interests of the country first. Now we are determined to do the same with our politics, returning government to the service of working people. This will require a reset in our public life; a clean-up that ensures the highest standards of integrity and honesty. We will make sure elected representatives focus on serving their constituents. We will deepen our democracy by reforming both our UK and Scottish parliaments and devolving power to communities. And rather than stoking division – as do both the Conservatives and the SNP – we will ensure there is respect and collaboration in the interests of the Scottish people.

Setting the highest of standards in public life is not just about better behaviour or decision-making, though it will improve both. It is also central to restoring trust between the public and politics. This plan recognises that politics must make the first move in repairing that bond. After years of chaos, division and disrespect, it is completely understandable for the Scottish people to be cynical of any political appeal to come together in the national interest. But the challenges we face demand nothing less – it is the lifeblood of national renewal.

Restoring public service

Key to rebuilding the trust of the people in politics is cleaning up Westminster. Labour will restore confidence in the UK government and ensure ministers are held to the highest standards. We will establish a new independent Ethics and Integrity Commission, with its own independent chair, to ensure probity in the UK government.

Labour will review and update post-government employment rules to end flagrant abuses seen under the Conservatives. This includes enforcing restrictions on ministers lobbying for the companies they used to regulate, with meaningful sanctions for breaching the rules. We will give the Independent Adviser on Ministerial Interests the powers to start investigations into misconduct and ensure they have access to the evidence they need.

MPs work hard to serve their constituents but can be hamstrung by arcane procedures and outdated working practices. Labour will establish a new Modernisation Committee tasked with reforming House of Commons procedures, driving up standards, and improving working practices. The absence of rules on second jobs also means some constituents end up with MPs who spend more time on their second job, or lobbying for outside interests, than on representing them. As an initial step, Labour will support an immediate ban on MPs from taking up paid advisory or consultancy roles. We will task

the Modernisation Committee to take forward urgent work on the restrictions that need to be put in place to prevent MPs from taking up roles that stop them serving their constituents and the country.

The task of cleaning up our politics also extends to Holyrood. It cannot be right that MSPs are held to a lower standard than the MPs representing us at Westminster. Scottish Labour has set out plans to reform the Scottish Parliament, banning second jobs, introducing the right to recall MSPs who have engaged in wrongdoing, splitting the dual role of the Lord Advocate, and establishing stronger sanctions for breaches of the Ministerial Code.

We will ensure members of the Scottish Parliament have the same free speech protections in the Scottish Parliament as those enjoyed by MPs, so elected representatives, whether in Westminster or Holyrood, can hold power to account.

Scottish Labour believe we also need to push power out of Holyrood and into the regions of Scotland to empower communities and better support regional economic growth. As well as a fairer funding formula for local government, Scottish Labour's plans for reform within Scotland include a Local Democracy Act that will allow for the creation of regional mayors and support greater co-operation across regions.

UK constitutional reform

The House of Lords is outdated, and not representative of the people it is supposed to serve. Although Labour recognises the good work of many peers who scrutinise the government and improve the quality of legislation passed in parliament, reform is long overdue and essential. Too many peers do not play a proper role in our democracy. Hereditary peers remain indefensible. And because appointments are for life, the second chamber of parliament has become too big.

The next Labour government will therefore bring about an immediate modernisation, by introducing legislation to remove the right of hereditary peers to sit and vote in the House of Lords. Labour will also introduce a mandatory retirement age. At the end of the parliament in which a member reaches 80 years of age, they will be required to retire from the House of Lords.

Labour will ensure all peers meet the high standards the public expect of them, and we will introduce a new participation requirement as well as strengthening the circumstances in which disgraced members can be removed. We will reform the appointments process to ensure the quality of new appointments and will seek to improve the national and regional balance of the second chamber.

While this action to modernise the House of Lords will be an improvement, Labour is committed to replacing the House of Lords with an alternative second chamber

that is more representative of the regions and nations. In government, UK Labour will consult on proposals, seeking the input of the public on how politics can best serve them.

Upholding democracy

Labour is committed to strengthening our democracy and upholding the integrity of elections. Rather than encouraging full participation in our democracy, the Conservatives have brought in partisan changes that make it harder to vote, while doing nothing to strengthen protections against foreign interference.

To encourage participation in our democracy, Labour will improve voter registration and address the inconsistencies in voter ID rules for UK elections that prevent legitimate voters from voting. For example, in the case of HM Armed Forces Veteran Cards. We will increase the engagement of young people in our vibrant democracy, by extending the right of 16- and 17-year-olds to vote in all elections, including all future UK general elections. And we will protect democracy by strengthening the rules around donations to political parties.

Greater collaboration and respect across the country Labour is the party of devolution. It was a Labour government that oversaw the creation of the Scottish Parliament, but 14 years of the Conservatives in

Westminster and 17 years of the SNP in Holyrood has seen devolution undermined and under attack. The Conservatives disrespect the legitimate role of devolved governments and parliaments, while the SNP finds ways to manufacture conflict and attempts to deflect blame for its poor record in government.

Labour will change this, resetting and renewing the devolution relationship. We will ensure the structures and institutions of intergovernmental working improve relationships and collaboration on policy. Labour will strengthen the Sewel Convention by setting out a new memorandum of understanding, outlining how the nations will work together for the common good.

We will renew opportunities for the Prime Minister and leaders of devolved governments to collaborate with each other. As recommended in the Report of the Commission on the UK's future, we will establish a new Council of the Nations and Regions. This will bring together the Prime Minister, the First Ministers of Scotland and Wales, the First and deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland, and the Mayors of Combined Authorities.

The next UK Labour government will also ensure that UK-wide bodies are more representative of our nations and regions, this includes representation for Scotland on the Industrial Strategy Council, and Scottish skills bodies working jointly with the Migration Advisory Committee. UK trade negotiators will work with the Scottish

government to promote our fantastic businesses and services internationally. Labour will restore decision-making over the allocation of structural funds to the representatives of Scotland. The planned investments in public services outlined in this manifesto by a UK government will also result in additional funding for Scotland.

Scottish devolution and the Scotland Office

The people of Scotland deserve governments that are focused on delivering for them. With Labour, the Scotland Office will once again act as Scotland's voice at the heart of the UK Government. It will have a key role for improving intergovernmental working and supporting the work of the Scottish Government at home and internationally.

Labour does not support independence or another referendum, but we know that after 14 years of the Conservatives, the people of Scotland need change. Labour will take a different approach in Scotland: we will protect and respect devolution and reset relations between governments so that politics once again delivers for working people. Labour will strengthen Scottish democracy and devolution, championing Scotland at home and abroad.

We will ensure the devolution settlement for Scotland also enables collaboration on UK Labour's national

missions for government. We will maintain the arrangements in the new Scottish fiscal framework.

A UK Labour government will have a more collaborative approach to the Scottish Government on its international engagement, not create conflict as the Conservatives and SNP have done. We recognise that within devolved competencies, the Scottish government has an important role to play in promoting Scotland internationally. In respect to wholly devolved issues, Labour will support the Scottish Government to partner with international bodies where relevant and appropriate, for example to collaborate on global health initiatives. The UK Government will retain full responsibility over foreign policy.

The Scotland Office will maximise Scotland's influence, and with Labour it will once again become an advocate for Scotland, both at home and abroad. The Scotland Office will ensure the voice of Scotland is properly heard on issues under the competence of the UK Government. Scotland has an enviable international reputation. Its culture, products and services are internationally renowned – from whisky and salmon to computer game development, bioscience and financial services. Therefore, a UK Labour government will champion 'Brand Scotland' across the world through the Scotland Office, and our diplomatic and trade networks, to promote Scotland and its businesses.

Labour will end the chaos of sleaze and division, turn the page, and reset politics with Scotland at the heart of the next government.

A strong and connected country

- **Unshakeable commitment to NATO and national security**
- **Standing up for our armed forces and veterans**
- **New trade agreements**
- **The UK leading a Clean Power Alliance**
- **Modernise international development**

With Labour, the UK will once again be strong on the world stage, confident in the pursuit of our national interest, progressive but realistic about the challenges we face. We will reconnect with allies and forge new partnerships to deliver security and prosperity at home and abroad.

The world has been growing more volatile and insecure. War has returned to Europe for the first time in a generation, there is devastating violence in the Middle East, rapid technological change and the climate crisis are fuelling geopolitical tensions, and malign actors are seeking to divide us.

This darkening global landscape demands a strong and connected UK.

Instead, chaotic Conservative foreign policy has weakened our alliances, squandered our climate leadership – a huge diplomatic opportunity – and undermined our reputation as upholders of the international rule of law. At home, the Conservatives' attacks on our globally respected institutions – universities, courts and the BBC – have undermined our soft power, traditionally a source of great strength, and diminished our influence. The SNP's hubris and failure to deliver on issues such as climate change has undermined Scotland's reputation internationally.

This failure on the international stage has cost the Scottish people. We are less secure, with families exposed to high energy bills and food prices as a result.

Labour will turn the page and reverse this, reinvigorating alliances and forging new partnerships. Our commitment to NATO as the cornerstone of European and global security is unshakeable. We will be confident in our status outside of the EU, but a leading nation in Europe once again, with an improved and ambitious relationship with our European partners. We will once again be a good partner for international development, and a defender of the international rule of law. And we will return to the forefront of climate action by creating the green jobs of the future at home and driving forward the energy transition on the global stage, with Scotland at the centre.

We will once again be a reliable partner, a dependable ally, and a good neighbour. An optimistic country at the start of an era of renewal.

Rebuilding relationships

The UK and Scotland are always stronger when we work with others. The United States is an indispensable ally for the UK. Our special relationship is crucial for security and prosperity, and transcends whatever political parties and individuals are in office. We will continue to work with the United States on the basis of our shared values and common interests including economic co-operation, defence and intelligence.

We recognise how damaging the thin Brexit deal done by the Conservatives has been for Scottish businesses

and communities. Labour will not reopen the divisions of the past. The UK will stay outside of the EU. But we must resolve the mess left by the Conservatives if we are to seize the opportunities ahead and make Brexit work. There will be no return to the single market, the customs union, or freedom of movement; but Labour will reset the relationship and deepen ties with our European friends, neighbours and allies.

We will work to improve the UK's trade and investment relationship with the EU, by tearing down unnecessary barriers to trade, reducing red tape for Scotland's major exporters. We will seek to negotiate a veterinary agreement to prevent unnecessary border checks and help tackle the cost of food; will help our touring artists; and secure a mutual recognition agreement for professional qualifications to help open up markets for UK service exporters.

A UK Labour government will seek a new ambitious UK-EU security pact to strengthen co-operation on the threats we face. We will rebuild relationships with key European allies, including France and Germany, through increased defence and security cooperation. We will seek new bilateral agreements and closer working with Joint Expeditionary Force partners. This will strengthen NATO and keep the UK safe.

Multilateral institutions remain indispensable, but they are struggling under the strain of new global challenges. Labour will work with allies to build,

strengthen and reform these institutions. We will use the UK's unique position in NATO, the UN, G7, G20 and the Commonwealth to address the threats we face and to uphold human rights and international law. Only as part of the UK is Scotland's voice heard at all these top tables. Labour values international law because of the security it brings. Under Labour, the UK will unequivocally remain a member of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Defending the UK's security

Labour's first duty in government will be to keep the country safe. We will launch a Strategic Defence Review to assess the threats we face and the capabilities needed to address them. At the heart of our security are the men and women who serve and risk their lives for this country. The next UK Labour government will strengthen support for our armed forces communities by establishing an independent Armed Forces Commissioner and putting the Armed Forces Covenant fully into law. Where the Covenant covers devolved areas, Scottish Labour believes it should also be put on a statutory basis in Scotland. We will also scrap visa fees for non-UK veterans who have served for four or more years and their dependents. In Scotland, Scottish Labour will work to ensure veterans have access to the mental health, employment, and housing support they need.

Strengthening our security requires a long-term partnership with our domestic defence industry. UK Labour will bring forward a defence industrial strategy, aligning our security and economic priorities. We will ensure a strong defence sector across the whole of the UK. We will establish long-term partnerships between business and government, promote innovation, and improve resilience. We will prioritise UK businesses for defence investment and reform procurement to reduce waste. Labour will support industry to benefit from export opportunities, in line with a robust arms export regime committed to upholding international law.

Strengthening our defences also requires stronger leadership, clearer accountability, faster delivery, less waste and better value for money. Labour will establish a fully functioning military strategic headquarters and armaments director to create a strong defence centre capable of leading the UK in meeting the increasing threats we face.

With a UK Labour government, our military, financial, diplomatic and political support for Ukraine will remain steadfast. Labour will support efforts to hold Putin's Russia to account for its illegal war, backing calls for a Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression. We will work with our allies to enable the seizure and repurposing of frozen Russian state assets to support Ukraine. And we will play a leading role in providing Ukraine with a clear path to NATO membership.

Labour will also work with our allies and international financial centres to tackle corruption and money laundering, including here at home and in British Overseas Territories.

Labour is fully committed to AUKUS, the trilateral security partnership with Australia and the United States.

We will ensure it delivers its full economic as well as security potential, increasing jobs and investment in communities across the UK.

After 14 years of damaging Conservative inconsistency over China, Labour will bring a long-term and strategic approach to managing our relations. We will co-operate where we can, compete where we need to, and challenge where we must. We will improve the UK's capability to understand and respond to the challenges and opportunities China poses through an audit of our bilateral relationship. We will always act in our interests and defend our sovereignty and our democratic values. We will stand with and support members of the Hong Kong community who have relocated to the UK.

Defending our security also means protecting the British Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies, including the Falklands and Gibraltar. Labour will always defend their sovereignty and right to self-determination.

Championing UK prosperity

UK Labour's first mission in government will be to grow

our economy. This will be at the heart of everything we do, including our foreign policy. We will use our diplomatic network to attract foreign direct investment into Scotland and the rest of the UK, expand markets for exporters, and shape emerging regulatory frameworks.

Scotland and the UK are proud trading nations and flourishing international business is a vital part of our plan for growth. Openness to trade allows our firms to grow and delivers greater choice and value for consumers. Rather than prioritising insubstantial agreements which do not bring meaningful benefits to the UK, a Westminster Labour government will seek targeted trade agreements aligned with our industrial strategy and economic strengths, to bring prosperity to communities across Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

UK Labour will publish a trade strategy and use every lever available to get business the access it needs to international markets. This will promote the highest standards when it comes to food production. As well as striking new free trade agreements, Labour will seek to negotiate standalone sector deals, such as digital, or mutual recognition agreements, to promote our services exports.

We will lead international discussions to modernise trade rules and agreements so they work for the UK, promoting deeper trade and co-operation including through the World Trade Organisation and the

Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership. UK Labour supports implementation of the OECD global minimum rate of corporate taxation and backs international efforts to make sure multinational tech companies pay their fair share of tax.

UK Labour will build and strengthen modern partnerships with allies and regional powers. We will seek a new strategic partnership with India, including a free trade agreement, as well as deepening co-operation in areas like security, education, technology and climate change. We will deepen our co-operation with partners across the Gulf on regional security, energy and trade and investment.

Recognising the growing political and economic importance of African countries, we will deliver a new approach to the continent to foster opportunities for mutual long-term benefit.

Climate leadership

We cannot address the urgency of the climate and nature crisis without co-ordinated global action. A failure to act will cause environmental devastation, fuelling displacement, conflict and famine. By being climate leaders at home, including meeting our agreed targets at both Scottish and UK levels, Labour will restore the strong global leadership needed to tackle the climate crisis.

International allies and competitors have already recognised the opportunities and are racing ahead, investing in new technology and creating the jobs of the future. COP26 in Glasgow presented the chance for us to show leadership on the world stage and make historic progress in tackling climate change, but the Conservatives squandered the opportunity that came with the UK's presidency. Labour will move faster by working together with our international partners, especially those at the forefront of the climate crisis, including Pakistan and Bangladesh, and the COP30 hosts, Brazil.

A UK Labour government will create a new Clean Power Alliance, bringing together a coalition of countries at the cutting edge of climate action. This will help to deliver lower energy bills while accelerating the energy transition and protecting and enhancing clean energy supply chains.

Strengthening diplomacy

Labour will strengthen the UK's influence abroad, defending our national interests, promoting progressive values and protecting UK nationals.

Our diplomatic leadership is bolstered by the soft power of our world-leading cultural institutions. Rather than running these institutions down, we will work across government to bring leading creative and cultural

institutions together to increase the UK's international clout. And we will work with our proud diaspora communities to enhance our cultural links across the world.

Long-term peace and security in the Middle East will be an immediate focus. Labour will continue to push for an immediate ceasefire, the release of all hostages, the upholding of international law, and a rapid increase of aid into Gaza. Palestinian statehood is the inalienable right of the Palestinian people. It is not in the gift of any neighbour and is also essential to the long-term security of Israel. We are committed to recognising a Palestinian state as a contribution to a renewed peace process which results in a two-state solution with a safe and secure Israel alongside a viable and sovereign Palestinian state.

Labour will also strengthen support for UK nationals abroad. We will introduce a new right to consular assistance in cases of human rights violations.

Modernising international development

With previous Labour governments, the UK gained world-leading expertise in international development, with the aim of making the world a safer, more prosperous place. Under the Conservatives, this capacity has been degraded, and as a result the UK has lost influence.

Labour will turn the page to rebuild our reputation on international development with a new approach based on genuine respect and partnership with the global South to support our common interests.

To counter the growing influence of malign actors and boost efforts to combat threats like climate change, the UK's development work must be closely aligned with our foreign policy aims, co-ordinated to tackle global poverty, instability, and the climate and nature crisis. Our mission statement will be 'to create a world free from poverty on a liveable planet' as a signal of our commitment to greater multilateral action, and our intention to lead on this agenda.

Regaining the UK's global leadership on development is a key part of our plan to reconnect with our allies and partners. Labour will strengthen international development work within the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office. We will renew expertise and focus, especially in priority areas such as supporting economic transformation, tackling unsustainable debt, empowering women and girls, supporting conflict prevention, and unlocking climate finance.

We are proud that Scotland is a Fair Trade nation. Although international development is reserved, Scottish Labour introduced a voluntary contribution from Scotland and we believe all international development spending by the Scottish Government must be in line with strategic goals.

At a UK level we are committed to restoring development spending at the level of 0.7 per cent of gross national income as soon as fiscal circumstances allow. We will deliver value for money for taxpayers by working closely with the Independent Commission for Aid Impact to apply the highest standards to our aid spend – bringing in robust measures of development effectiveness, transparency, and scrutiny.

Labour will end the chaotic approach to foreign affairs, turn the page and reconnect with our allies, to once again stand strong on the world stage.

Change

This election is an opportunity to deliver the change that Scotland so desperately needs.

It is our opportunity to stop the chaos, turn the page, and start the process of rebuilding our country.

A country restored to the service of working people; united in our common determination to build and share wealth.

And with a renewed confidence that the future will be better for every child in Scotland.

We believe that Scotland's best days lie ahead of us.

This manifesto contains our plan to build that future, starting with a Labour government at Westminster and working towards a Scottish Labour government at Holyrood.

This is an opportunity we can't afford to miss.

Together, we can make sure Scotland is at the heart of a Labour government and build a better future for our country.

Labour's first steps for change

1. Deliver economic stability

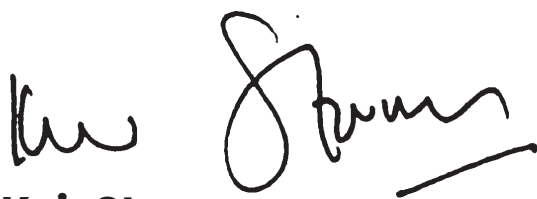
2. Cut NHS waiting times

3. Set up Great British Energy

4. Make work pay

**5. Create jobs and opportunities
for young people**

6. Maximise Scotland's influence



Keir Starmer
Leader of the UK Labour Party



Anas Sarwar
Leader of the
Scottish Labour Party

 **Scottish Labour**

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