

This material was extracted from a document which listed the policy announcements of the Scottish Labour, Scottish Conservative, Scottish Green, Scottish Liberal and Scottish National Parties. Red text highlighted where material had been added since the previous version of the document.

Scottish National Party

Political

- “Let me make it clear that education will be at the front and centre of our plans for the next session of Parliament....In the coming weeks, we will set out further plans to achieve both excellence and equity in education by building on the work that we are already doing through the attainment challenge.
- ...
- *We will use the powers that we have as a Government to the full. Of course, I believe as strongly today as I always have that independence is the best future for our country. That is why, in the months to come, we will also lead a renewed debate on how the enduring principle of the case that decisions about Scotland are best taken by people who live here is relevant to and demanded by the circumstances of the world in which we live today.*” [Nicola Sturgeon, Scottish Parliament debate, 05/01/2016]
- *“While the Scotland Bill obviously represents a huge missed opportunity, we are clear that we will use each and every new power coming to the Scottish Parliament to the fullest, and in line with the government’s progressive vision for Scotland.”* [John Swinney, SNP website, 02/01/2016]
- *“A country...that walks taller, thinks bolder and aims higher – that is the Scotland we can deliver if we win the election on 5 May.”* [John Swinney, speech to SNP spring conference, 13/03/2016]
- *“We will not achieve our dream of independence just by wishing that the outcome of the referendum had been different – or wishing that we could do it all again next week...We will achieve independence only when we persuade a majority of our fellow citizens that it is the best future for our country...this summer the SNP will embark on a new initiative to build support for independence.”* [Nicola Sturgeon, speech to SNP spring conference, 12/03/2016]
- Confirmed that the SNP will use the message “*Nicola Sturgeon for First Minister*” on ballot papers for the Scottish Parliament election. [[Scotsman](#), 02/04/2016]

Policy Commitments

Tax

- **Income Tax:** [Multiple sources: [BBC](#), [Scotsman](#), [Daily Record](#), 22/03/2016]
 - No increase to the basic (20%), higher (40%) or additional rate (45%). Although Nicola Sturgeon has not ruled out increasing the additional rate of income tax in future, if the risk of income being moved out of Scotland can be mitigated. [[BBC website](#), 29/03/2016]
 - Higher rate threshold frozen in real terms, increased by CPI to £43,387 in 2017/18 with increases limited to CPI in subsequent year. (The UK Government plans to increase the higher rate threshold for the rest of the UK to £45,000 in 2017/18)
 - Will ensure the personal allowance reaches £12,750 in 2021/22. While the personal allowance is a reserved matter, if the UK Government has not increased the personal allowance to £12,750 by 2021/22, an SNP Government in Scotland would introduce a 0% band between the level of the personal allowance and £12,750.
- Reduce **Air Passenger Duty** by half over the course of the next parliament [John Swinney, [SNP website](#), 19/03/2016]

- **Business rates:** [[Scotsman](#), 18/03/2016]
 - Review of business rates to be chaired by Ken Barclay (former RBS Scotland chair). Any changes would be revenue neutral.
 - Small business bonus scheme to be continued for the next 5 years if the SNP is re-elected.
- **Council tax reform:**
 - Rates for bands E, F, G and H increased to generate an additional £100 million per annum for investment in schools. Households with low incomes will be entitled to an exemption from the increase in rates.
 - Additional support will be provided to low income households with children through council tax reduction – benefiting 77,000 families by an average of £173 per year.
 - From April 2017 local authorities will have the discretion to increase council tax by up to 3% per year.
 - Will formally consult local government on the potential assignment of devolved income tax to councils. [Scottish Government website and multiple sources, 02/03/2016]

Social Security

- Want to take a different approach with new social security powers by establishing a Scottish social security agency. This would help remove the stigma of accessing benefits and ensure the system treats individuals with dignity and respect. For specific benefits, if re-elected, the SNP would:
 - Increase carer's allowance to the same rate as jobseeker's allowance
 - Abolish bedroom tax
 - Make Universal Credit payments more flexible

[Alex Neil, Social Justice Secretary, [Scotsman](#), 27/02/2016] (More details on a Scottish social security agency and plans for specific benefits announced on the Scottish Government website).
- In relation to disability benefits, a re-elected SNP Government would:
 - *“Continue the £52m Independent Living Fund – scrapped by the Tories*
 - *Support disabled people into employment with a £20m fund*
 - *Maintain – not cut – disability benefits when they are devolved to Scotland.”*

[John Swinney, [SNP website](#), 27/03/2016]
- Using new powers will replace the Sure Start Maternity Grant with an expanded Maternity and Early Years Allowance, which will:
 - Increase payment on the birth of a first child from £500 to £600.
 - Restore payments for second and subsequent children of £300.
 - Introduce payments of £250 for low income families at other stages in children's lives (when they begin nursery and when they start school).

[[SNP website](#) report of Nicola Sturgeon's speech to SNP conference, 12/03/2016]
- *“Our employment and welfare programmes will be designed to take account of mental health conditions and bring an end to the difficulties people face with the DWP.”* [Nicola Sturgeon, [Daily Record](#), 03/04/2016]

Education and Childcare

- *“We will expand free early learning and childcare to all three and four-year-olds and disadvantaged two-year-olds to 30 hours a week.”* [Angela Constance, [Sunday Herald](#), 13/03/2016] Will also extend free meals to 2, 3 and 4 year olds in nurseries. [[SNP website](#) report of Nicola Sturgeon's speech to SNP conference, 12/03/2016]
- Multiple references to the “National Improvement Framework for Scottish Education”, which was published by the SG on 06/01/2016.
- Every nursery in the poorest neighbourhoods will have an extra qualified teacher or childcare graduate by 2018. [Nicola Sturgeon, Sunday Mail interview reported in the [Scotsman](#), 21/02/2016]

- £100 million raised from council tax changes earmarked for the Scottish Attainment fund and will go “directly to head teachers, enabling them to invest in extra teachers, classroom assistants, and additional learning support”. [[SNP website](#) report of Nicola Sturgeon’s speech to SNP conference, 12/03/2016]
- *“The SNP will keep education free, keep grants for our poorest students, maintain education maintenance allowances for the poorest 16 to 19 year olds and increase modern apprenticeships to 30,000 a year.”* [Angela Constance, [Sunday Herald](#), 13/03/2016]
- Young people who have experience of care, who meet entry requirements, will be offered a place at university and will be supported by a full bursary of £7,625 from 2017/18. [Nicola Sturgeon, [Herald](#), 22/03/2016]
- The Commission on Widening Access [to university] [report](#) was published by the Scottish Government on 14/03/2016. The SNP *“will consider them all carefully and aim to bring forward a full response early in the next Parliament”*. [Angela Constance, [SNP website](#), 15/03/2016]
- *Providing new nurseries would be “the biggest infrastructure project of the next government”* [Nicola Sturgeon, [BBC Website](#), 07/04/2016]

Health and Social Care

- *“Health and social care integration is the most significant reform of how we deliver healthcare since the creation of the national health service. In the coming months, we will set out further plans to shift the balance of care and the balance of investment even more decisively towards primary and social care.”* [Nicola Sturgeon, Scottish Parliament debate, 05/01/2016]
- Will consult on ways of increasing organ donation, including a “soft” opt-out system. [Maureen Watt, Public Health Minister, quoted in the Times, 09/02/2016]
- *“...an SNP government will continue to increase the NHS resource budget in real terms every year of the next parliament”* and will invest an extra £50 million in cancer treatment. [[SNP website](#) report of Nicola Sturgeon’s speech to SNP conference, 12/03/2016]. Also references to the new Scottish Government cancer strategy ([Beating Cancer: Ambition and Action](#)). [[SNP website](#), 16/03/2016]
- Will provide five new elective treatment centres – in Edinburgh, Livingston, Dundee, Inverness and Aberdeen. [[Scotsman](#) report of Nicola Sturgeon’s speech to SNP conference, 12/03/2016]
- *Repeated the SNP’s commitment to keep free NHS prescriptions* [[Scotsman](#), 01/04/2016]
- *“Over the next five years we will invest at least £150 million to improve mental health services in Scotland. We also will work with mental health charities, stakeholders and service users to put in place a ten-year plan to transform mental health care in Scotland, including for children and young people. That means looking at innovative ways of delivering better mental health services for children and young people, and bringing together healthcare and education to ensure faster treatment without stigma.”* [Shona Robison, [SNP website](#), 03/04/2016]
- *“We have no plans to change the law on abortion, including the time limit”*. [SNP spokesman, Times p5, 05/04/2016]
- Will ensure primary care, social care, and mental health each receive an increasing share of the NHS budget in each year of the next parliament. [Shona Robison, [SNP website](#), 06/04/2016]
- Will invest £200 million to expand the Golden Jubilee Hospital. [Shona Robison, [SNP website](#), 06/04/2016]

Housing

- Under the SNP the Scottish Government announced a five year commitment to delivering at least 50,000 affordable homes, 70% for social rent. This was backed by a new £50 million infrastructure flexible grant and loan fund. [[Scottish Government](#), 29/20/2016]

Justice

- Ensure money from court fines paid in Scotland stays in Scotland [John Swinney, [SNP website](#), 19/03/2016]
- *If the SNP is re-elected “we will protect the frontline police budget in real terms in each year of the next parliament – ensuring that our police are well equipped to keep Scotland’s communities safe.”* [Michael Matheson, [Sunday Herald](#), 03/04/2016]

Business and Employment

- Committed to maintaining the Small Business Bonus Scheme for the entirety of the next Parliament. Will carry out a review of the business rates regime to ensure it supports growth and investment. [Fergus Ewing, SNP website, 31/01/2016]
- Abolish fees for employment tribunals [John Swinney, [SNP website](#), 19/03/2016]
- Replace the Work Programme and Work Choice [John Swinney, [SNP website](#), 19/03/2016]
- Would increase the number of apprenticeship training places from 25,000 a year to 30,000 a year by 2020. The additional places would be “*in high-level science, technology and engineering courses that deliver the skills employers need and the high-wage jobs our young people deserve*”. [Nicola Sturgeon, [BBC website](#), 28/03/2016]
- Introduction of a “Jobs Grant” to help those that have been out of work start a new job. £100 (or £250 for those with children) will be offered to young people who have been out of work for 6 months and are starting a job for more than 16 hours a week. The SNP suggested this could help 6,000 young people a year as part of a drive to reduce youth unemployment to 40% by 2021. [[Scotsman](#), 29/03/2016]
- *“Our employment and welfare programmes will be designed to take account of mental health conditions and bring an end to the difficulties people face with the DWP.”* [Nicola Sturgeon, [Daily Record](#), 03/04/2016]

Energy

- Current policy is a moratorium on fracking until a long-term decision can be made on the basis of scientific evidence (which is due to be completed next year). At the leaders’ debate Nicola Sturgeon said, “*If there is any suggestion [fracking] harms the environment, it will not be allowed in Scotland.*” [Herald, p6. 25/03/2016]

Equality

- Pledged to introduce legislation that will require gender balance on public boards in the first year of the next Parliament. [SNP website, 17/01/2016]
- Pledged to reform gender law by: [[Herald](#), 01/04/2016]
 - Recognising that some people have a non-binary gender. They will be able to change their birth certificate to recognise their gender status and use it on official documents such as passports.
 - Will allow transgender people, who switch from the gender recorded at birth, to change their birth certificates without having to seek approval from a tribunal of lawyers and doctors, as at present.
 - Will give legal recognition to transgender young people under the age of 18. In future, 16- and 17-year-olds will be able to change their birth certificate with the permission of their parents.
- All new, guidance and promoted teachers should undertake training on equality to tackle prejudice-based bullying. [[Scotsman](#), 31/03/2016]

Environment

- Paying people to recycle waste “*may feature in the SNP’s Holyrood election manifesto*”. [Sunday Time Scotland (p15), 14/02/2016]

Digital

- Over the next Parliament superfast digital broadband will be delivered to all premises across Scotland. [[SNP website](#) report of Nicola Sturgeon’s speech to SNP conference, 12/03/2016]

Islands

The SNP have launched a manifesto for the islands. “*Investment and empowerment are at the heart of the SNP’s manifesto for the islands – a firm commitment to support the local economies while giving islanders a greater say over public services and resources.*” [Nicola Sturgeon, Times p10, 05/04/2016]. The manifesto for the islands has “*ten key pledges*”:

- “*Give Island communities a stronger voice with a new Islands Bill, and continue the Islands Working Group*”
- “*Develop a National Islands Plan to ensure our islands fulfil their economic potential*”
- “*Maintain the Air Discount Scheme at 50 per cent; invest in quality ferry services; keep ferry fares as low as possible, and provide concessionary travel for our older people*”
- “*Superfast broadband will be extended to all premises by 2021, and island businesses will benefit from the Small Business Bonus too*”
- “*Record investment in our NHS, supporting health care across our islands with more health care in the community*”
- “*Free childcare doubled and action to improve attainment in our schools*”
- “*Ensure Winter Fuel Payments, which are being devolved to Holyrood, will be paid early to people who are “off-grid” – making a huge difference to older people in remote areas*”
- “*£5 million investment to support island and Rural produce*”
- “*Support the energy industry on the islands and push the UK Government to deliver the connections that are needed*”
- “*Ensure island communities receive the full revenues from Crown Estate assets around their shores and have a greater say in how the assets of the Crown Estate are managed*”
[Derek Mackay, [SNP website](#), 04/04/2016]

Significant Dates

- 12-13 March 2016 – SNP Spring Conference

Scottish National Party

Analysis/ Commentary on policy commitments [name / date / headline / link]

Tax

- [Scot Macnab \[Scotsman, 2/02/16\] - Taxing times for Scotland's major parties](#)
- [Jenny Hjul \[Herald, 26/02/16\] - Sturgeon's tax plans are really robbing Scotland](#)
- [David Torrance \[Herald, 29/02/16\] – Now is the time for Sturgeon to be radical on council tax](#)
- [COSLA \[02/03/2016\] Local Tax: a missed opportunity](#)
- [STUC \[02/03/2016\] STUC on Council Tax Reform](#)
- [Ruth Davidson \[Scottish Conservatives website, 02/03/2016\] – Council tax reforms must not earn Scotland a 'high tax reputation'](#)
- [Jackie Baillie \[Scottish Labour website, 02/02/2016\] – The SNP have broken their promise to abolish the council tax](#)
- [Willie Rennie \[Scottish Lib Dem website, 02/03/2016\] – SNP's council tax policy is utterly insulting](#)
- [Brian Taylor \[BBC website, 02/02/2016\] – The SNP's long, slow retreat from local income tax](#)
- [Jim Gallagher \[Scotsman, 03/03/2016\] - SNP proposals - the good, the late and the daft](#)
- [Daily Record leader \[Daily Record, 03/03/2016\] Nicola Sturgeon has played a cautious game over tax... and it's a clever move](#)
- [Herald Leader \[Herald, 03/03/2016\] - Cautious reform on council tax is better than no reform at all](#)
- [Times Leader \[Times, 03/03/2016\] Taxing Times \[not available online\], “...it does not tackle the basic unfairness of council tax. Second, it provides an awful foretaste of the direction the government is likely to take when it confronts this issue of income tax....what is likely to emerge \[for income tax\] is a crude manipulation of tax bands in order to hit the largest earners hardest... There is nothing progressive about a top-heavy taxation system that drives business and investment away.”](#)
- [Gerry Hassan \[Daily Record, 06/03/2016\] – Our politicians talk left, act radical and do nothing.. and we pretend not to notice](#)
- [BBC website - further reaction to local tax proposals \[07/03/2016\] – SNP issues council tax challenge](#)
- [Herald Leader \[Herald, 08/03/2016\] – Time to tell us what you will do with new powers](#)
- [Ian Swanson \[Scotsman, 09/03/2016\] – Sturgeon can afford to be bold on tax reforms](#)
- [Ian Macwhirter \[Sunday Herald, 13/03/2016\] - Labour crying 'gotcha' over oil revenues simply reminds voters of when they lined up with the Tories](#)
- [Scott Macnab \[Scotsman, 16/03/2016\] – Calling a tune means paying a piper for SNP](#)
- [\[Herald, 16/03/2016\] – SNP's council tax system is regressive, confirm experts \[Reporting on the SPICE paper\]](#)
- [Scotsman Leader \[Scotsman, 18/03/2016\] – Budget debate gives Scots distinct choice](#)
- [Ian Macwhirter \[Sunday Herald, 20/03/2016\] - The narcissism of small differences between will dominate this election campaign](#)
- [Brian Taylor \[BBC, 22/03/2016\] – The Taxman Cometh](#)
- [Douglas Fraser \[BBC, 22/03/2016\] – The tax battle lines](#)
- [Kenny Farquharson \[Times, 23/03/2016, p9\] – Sturgeon batting with a conservative game plan \[not available online\], “\[The income tax proposal\] puts the Nationalists firmly in the centre ground of the Scottish political landscape. To their right is the Tory party, which promises a tax giveaway for the prosperous. To their left is Labour, which promises a tax hike for the rich. Slap-bang in the middle of these two is the spot where Ms Sturgeon has now pitched the SNP's tent”.](#)
- [Herald Leader \[Herald, 23/03/2016\] – Election battle over tax has begun in earnest](#)

- [Tom Peterkin \[Scotsman, 23/03/2016\]](#) – SNP’s tax plans based on pragmatism not vision
- [Ian Macwhirter \[Herald, 24/03/2016\]](#) - Shame on the SNP for choosing to park its conscience
- [Professor Jim Gallagher \[Herald, 29/03/2016\]](#) - Councils should be very wary of SNP plan to give them some income tax revenues
- [Douglas Fraser \[BBC website, 29/03/2016\]](#) – Could the SNP’s tax plan raise an extra £2bn?
- [Douglas Fraser \[BBC website, 30/03/2016\]](#) – Would a 50p tax rate lose or gain money for Scotland?
- [David Eiser \[Centre on Constitutional Change, 29/03/2016\]](#) – Taxing Times
- [David Torrance \[Herald, 04/04/2016\]](#) - Why we should be having an open and honest debate on tax
- [\[BBC Website, 04/04/2016\]](#) – Holyrood 2016: BBC Scotland poll suggests voters divided on tax
- [Adam Corlett \[Resolution Foundation, 08/04/2016\]](#) – Battle of the bands: the prospect of council tax reform in Scotland and beyond

Education and Childcare

- [\[Scotsman, 15/03/2016\]](#) – SNP’s free childcare plan ‘is unworkable’
- [Tom Peterkin \[Scotsman, 16/03/2016\]](#) – SNP rhetoric on education runs short of reality

Social Security

- Lesley Riddoch [Scotsman, 29/02/16] – [Real benefits from devolved powers](#)

Business and Employment

- Herald Leader [Herald, 30/03/2016] – [Youth employment grant pledge is welcome](#)

Islands

- [Herald Leader \[Herald, 05/04/2016\]](#) – [Time to deliver on promise of more powers for the islands](#)

General

- Andrew Whitaker [Scotsman, 17/02/16] - [Imagine an SNP v Tory Holyrood](#)
- [\[Holyrood Magazine, 12/03/2016\]](#) - Nicola Sturgeon on the 2016 Scottish Parliament elections
- [\[BBC Website, 05/04/2016\]](#) – Holyrood 2016: NHS is top priority to voters, BBC poll suggests

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Scottish Green Party

Political

- "...the Green Party will make a clear commitment to introduce proposals on local taxation that are just and progressive"...[On Welfare] "We need to be bolder. Scotland's Parliament and Scotland's Government can be bolder on that agenda and the Greens will come forward with proposals to make sure that that happens" [Patrick Harvie, Scottish Parliament debate, 05/01/2016]
- "We bring fresh, new, bold ideas to Parliament. We will work constructively with others who share our aims. Holyrood - and Scotland - needs a diverse politics and progressive champions to hold the Scottish Government to account." [Patrick Harvie, Campaign Launch, 08/02/16]
- "Scotland can build a more equal society, meeting the needs of our people and respecting the environment we all depend upon. That's why we need a bolder Holyrood, with Green MSPs bringing a constructive challenge to everything the Government does." [Patrick Harvie Glasgow Evening Times 02/03/16]
- "There is clearly a need for change in how we do local democracy, but it is vital that this process is driven by a real desire to empower communities and strengthen governance.[Andy Wightman, Scottish Green Party website, 06/03/16]
- "Oil & Gas is not our future the time for transition is now" [Patrick Harvie, Question Time 10/03/16]
- "This is a significant moment for Scotland, and while the package of devolved powers isn't everything we wanted, it will allow us to take more responsibility and take a different approach from Westminster". [Alison Johnstone, [Scottish Green Party Website](#), 16/03/16]
- "Taxation isn't just an accounting mechanism to ensure we fund public services, it should also be about income and wealth inequality in our society because our economy belongs to all of us." [Patrick Harvie, STV debate 29/03/2016]
- "As the fourth Scottish Parliament ends, we would urge everyone to work during the next parliament to strengthen local democracy. Local councils are a vital part of how we are governed." [Andy Wightman, [Daily Record](#), 27/03/2016]
- "Green MSPs will campaign for all care and support workers to be paid significantly above the Living Wage, financed by progressive taxation" [Alison Johnstone, [Scottish Green Party Website](#), 06/04/2016]

Policy

Taxation and wages

- A minimum wage set by a Minimum Wage Unit annually – raised in steps to £10/hour by 2020. The minimum wage would be a pre-condition of government tenders or service level agreements to third parties. **For those who are carers introduce a "carers wage"**.
- Remove tax exemptions on the 11,000 acres of derelict land – raising £30m for house building.
- **Income tax:** 60p rate of income tax to apply to those earning more than £150,000 and a new 43p rate starting at £43,000. There would also be 18p and 22p rates for those earning £11,500 to £19,000 and £19,000 to £43,000 respectively. [[BBC news website](#), 29/03/2016]

- Replace **council tax** over 5 years with a Residential Property Tax (RPT) for individual properties. Would be applied at a rate of 1% on annually updated values, It would mean a property valued at £150,000 would be liable for RPT of £1,500 but with a £10,000 tax-free allowance the owners would only pay £1,400. [[Scottish Green Party website](#), 29/03/2016]

Social Security

- **Increase carers allowance to £93 a week** [[Scottish Green Party Website](#), 06/04/2016]

Equality

Have launched a [justice and equality manifesto](#) (09/03/2016). On equalities it advocates:

- The introduction of a Gender Equality Bill
- Working with disabled people's organisations to co-produce a strategy for inclusion which works towards equal access to resources, fulfilling employment, public services, and participation in politics and public life.
- Work with communities to identify those within groups of those with protected characteristics whose life chances are reduced.
- Will lobby for a government-led review of legislation and services to identify inequalities for LGBTI+ couples and for Civil Partnerships to be available to all couples.
- A legal duty on local authorities and public institutions to deliver effective services directly to the LGBTI+ community.
- Campaigning for the devolution of equalities law and encourage measures to increase the participation of all groups that are underrepresented in politics and public life.

Education

- Childcare and Nursery to start from 8 months.
- The School curriculum to be broader. Literacy and numeracy to sit alongside creative and interpersonal skills, as well as physical education, confidence and good mental health [[Sunday Herald](#), 13/3/16]
- EU domiciled students won't pay for their undergraduate degree and all students to be entitled to a non-repayable living grant.
- **Introduce a Scotland Guarantee which would give every school leaver education, a job or further training.**
- 4,000 extra teachers over the next parliament [[Sunday Herald](#), 13/3/16]
- Funding parity for college and university students. [[Sunday Herald](#), 13/3/16] **Further detail on this includes supporting the National Union of Students' *Scotland's Shaping Scotland's Future* campaign, including calls for financial support to increase with inflation, a benefits system that does not claw back student support payments and improved services for students experiencing mental ill-health. [07/04/2016]**
- Oppose "marketization" of higher education and enable universities to concentrate on teaching and research. [[Sunday Herald](#), 13/3/16]
- **Giving protection to Additional Support Needs posts, in recognition of their role in closing the attainment gap between children from different backgrounds. [[Scottish Green Party Website](#), 06/04/2016]**
- **In addition to the above the following proposals were included in the mini-manifesto - [Scotland can Guarantee a future for our young people](#) [07/04/2016]:**
 - **Closing the Attainment Gap:**
 - **Statutory hours of education** 27.5 hours a week of education during Secondary and 25 hours during Primary.
 - **The Attainment fund:** work with other parties to close the gap with funding that targets pupils in need who do not qualify for the Attainment Scotland Fund.
 - **Oppose more testing by** resisting a return to nationalized standard tests in schools.

- **Equality and Diversity:**
 - Push to strengthen links between education and other children’s services with child poverty strategies.
 - Funding for training for teachers to enable them to tackle diversity issues in the classroom.
 - All schools become UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools, where children’s human rights are embedded in a school’s ethos and culture. Also promote inclusive LGBTI+ school environments.
- **Further Education and vocational training:**
 - **Greater investment in further education.**
 - Re-introduction of part-time and access courses that are vital for allowing those from the most deprived backgrounds to access education.
 - Supporting measures to address the underrepresentation of minority ethnic young people in further education.
 - **Increased support for Modern Apprenticeships** to break gender stereotypes and increase opportunities for disabled people and people from minority ethnic groups.
 - Apprenticeships must pay at least the living wage.
- **Scotland can deliver a world class education system:**
 - **Student Support during Summer Months** through student options to access a national hardship fund to help prevent students dropping out of education between academic years, or to rebalance their bursary and extend their loan payments to stretch over the summer months.
 - **Widening access:** by using the findings of the “widening access commission” to ensure that bold access is taken.

Health & Social Care

Scotland can be an active healthy society mini-manifesto – key points [23/03/2016]:

- Make healthcare jobs more appealing with less paperwork and more time for learning and development. Give senior healthcare professionals greater power over the operation and organisation of care, with a greater focus on long-term targets for preventative care and provide a living wage for carers.
- Will seek to ensure that all primary care services - GPs, community and practice nurses, pharmacists and others have the resources to improve shared working and caseload, and fight to ensure that primary care provision is equitable.
- Keep the NHS public & increase funding
- **Child Health**
 - Expand the Sure Start Maternity Grant to increase payments, include second children, and extend eligibility where possible to help provide financial stability for pregnant mothers at risk of poverty.
 - Push to grow the network of community-based projects to help parents have the healthiest pregnancy possible and support to raise children.
 - Support local authorities to provide free fruit, practical food education and work towards free school meals for all primary pupils.
 - Work with local authorities to create safe and exciting outdoors spaces – more green spaces, more walking and cycling routes, accessible sports centres and more access to wild land.
 - Push for a levy on retailers and caterers who have multiple outlets. A levy would aim to discourage the promotion of unhealthy foods. It would hit companies whose sales failed to meet nutritional targets and encourage the supermarket chains, who are the source of most of our food, to become much healthier places to shop. Also support campaigns to ban price-promotions on sugary foods and to end unhealthy food and drink advertising aimed at young people.
- **General Health**

- A focus on mental health: ensuring that mental health is given the same consideration as physical health.
- Help tackle the big killers like cancer by creating comprehensive care plans to address the increased number of diagnoses and patients living beyond treatment with long-term health problems. Plans should address patients' wider care needs, including emotional, financial and practical support.
- Health in the work place: work to continue to provide advice on occupational health risks.

Justice

The [justice and equality manifesto](#) (09/03/2016) advocates :

- **Tackling violence** through increased support for the vital work undertaken by the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit and for a sustainable, long-term funding plan to resource violence against women services, including women's aid groups and rape crisis centres. Whilst also ensuring that there is appropriate support for LGBTI+ people who have experienced violence.
- Hate Crime: work to improve the research, collection of data and reporting processes.
- Sex work: advocate for the rights of sex workers to enjoy full legal protection from exploitation, trafficking and violence and access to better support and healthcare.
- **Reform to Police Scotland** by:
 - **Encouraging Diversity** across all levels of the organisation.
 - **Improving Accountability.** Green MSPs will advocate for proportionate use of force; and an evidenced need for any firearms deployment. The manifesto also calls for reviews into authorisation procedures and privacy protection mechanisms regarding surveillance powers; and a review of the Police Complaints Procedure, with a view to introducing greater independence from the Police.
- **Reoffending** can be reduced through:
 - Partnership working of agencies and services and encouraging greater use of diversion from prosecution schemes and programs of meaningful activity for those given a custodial sentence.
 - Community Sentences prison sentences of less than six months to be abolished; investment in community sentencing and effective restorative justice.
- **Access to Justice:**
 - Will ensure geography and means are not a barrier to accessing justice and will enhance legal aid.
 - Support greater use of Alternative Dispute Resolutions mechanisms and Scotland's full compliance with the Aarhus Convention on rights and access to justice on environmental law.
 - **Children.** Green MSPs will support measures to strengthen protection for children from assault, including removal of the defence of 'reasonable chastisement'.
 - **Violence against women:** work to establish a right to independent legal representation for women who have experienced domestic abuse and rape and sexual assault; remove means testing for Protective Orders; abolish the not proven verdict in Scottish law; and implement medical examination guidelines.
- **Drugs:**
 - Decriminalisation of the cultivation and possession of cannabis for personal use, and decriminalisation of possession of drugs that grow wild in the UK.
 - Licensing for the supply of cannabis and propose that other currently illicit drugs required as part of a programme of treatment for addiction are supplied through pharmacist-run treatment centres. Enforcement of existing laws should prioritise targeting major illicit suppliers, and penalties should reflect accurate assessment of harm.
 - Increased investment in drug and alcohol treatment programmes.

Housing

- Local Authorities to have greater powers to buy properties on the open market to avoid building on greenfield sites.
- New housing designed to be low energy use.
- **Tenants' rights strengthened by introduction of a minimum operating standard .**
- *"With a bigger group of Green MSPs elected in May, we are committed to putting rent controls and tenants' rights on the top of the political agenda"* [Patrick Harvie, [Scottish Green Party Website](#), 17/03/2016]

Transport

- Subsidised bus passes for people on low incomes, the elderly, disabled and unemployed.
- A Road Equivalent Tariff for all ferry services and some air services where it's the best transport option.
- More investment in low carbon transport options such as walking and cycling

Culture, Arts & Sport

The Scottish Green Party have launched a [cultural manifesto](#), which covers Sport, the Arts and Culture. Its commitments would be paid for through a discretionary 'Overnight Visitor Levy'. Visit Scotland figures for 2014 show 64.29m nights, if these were taxed at £1 per night this would raise £65 million. Specific proposals include:

- **Arts and culture**
 - Introduce a new 'Outcome for Culture' across all government departments, using the existing Scottish Government's National Performance Framework.
 - Protect cultural spaces such as studios and arts venues through the national planning framework.
 - Introduce an 'Intermittent Work Scheme' which ensures that people from a range of backgrounds are able to access employment and stay in the Creative Industries.
 - Work with local authorities to protect arts and culture budgets and increase funding to national creative bodies, to allow for outreach work. Through the use of community right to buy legislation and the "right of first occupancy" encourage the use of the public spaces for cultural activities.
 - Support UK-wide lobbying for the evidence-based reform of intellectual property and copyright legislation to promote the remuneration of artists rather than multinational corporations.
- **Sport**
 - Steady investment in sport, to allow for great community involvement and good quality facilities and trained staff.
 - Repeal the Offence Behaviours (in football) Act 2012 and work to tackle discrimination.
 - Work with local authorities to provide quality sport and physical activity throughout the curriculum.

Land Reform

- Use the 1919 Land Resettlement (Scotland) Act to enable communities to buy small holdings and other land [[The Herald](#), 20/03/16]

Global Affairs

[Scotland can be a global citizen](#) mini-manifesto [24/03/16] – key points:

- **Diplomatic relations**
 - Establish a Scottish diplomatic service to further Scottish interests in devolved areas.
 - Support Scotland gaining observer status at international bodies like the UN and Nordic Council.
 - Recognise the state of Palestine.

- **Peace making**
 - Establishing a Scottish peace centre tasked with researching conflict issues and developing best practice for nonviolent conflict prevention and resolution.
 - Curtail arms trading by cutting Scottish Enterprise and Scottish Development International support to enterprises involved in arms sales to human rights abusers.
 - Would establish a transition fund to help defence sector workers retrain.
 - Campaign for a Nuclear Free world and pressure Westminster to remove trident from the Clyde.
- **Europe**
 - Oppose TITP - Green MSPs would pursue measures to ensure that it never takes effect in Scotland
 - Make Scotland the Renewable Energy Capital in Europe. Scotland has the engineering know-how and technical expertise to become a major global player in renewable energy. This position would greatly aid the EU in achieving the sustainable development goals of the Europe 2020 strategy.
 - Will push for the use of the Teckal exemption to ensure that local, publicly owned enterprises are favoured in procurement by the Scottish Government or local authorities.

Democracy

Scotland Can be a bolder democracy mini manifesto [29/03/2016] – key points:

- **Give Scotland a written constitution**
- **Strengthen local democracy** through a Local Democracy Act that will require local authorities to create local democracy and public participation plans to devolve decisions and budgets to a more local level and will give councils the powers to implement new structures for local democratic participation. The Act would enshrine a clear duty to promote community participation in all local decisions about taxation; spending and services, including a legally-defined minimum proportion of local authority budgets to be decided through participatory budgeting
- **People's parliament:** Will champion new ways for the public to become involved in the legislative process, including through radical democratic processes like citizens' juries.
- **Local Communities:**
 - **Protecting the role of local government:** The written constitution mentioned above will have an entrenchment of the rights and powers of local government.
 - Support proposals made by Cosla's Commission on Local Democracy, on which all 5 main parties were represented, that Scottish Ministers should be placed under a legal duty to explain why the decisions they make are not being made locally. Local government should have a 'right to challenge' to take on functions currently exercised by national bodies.
 - **Local funding:** Will fight for local governments to be able to levy their own local taxes – including entirely new ones where there is a clear public demand – and to set property tax rates to match local needs. This would result in local government raising at least 50% of its own income.
- **Reforming Holyrood:**
 - **More effective Parliamentary Committees:** strengthening the committee system's ability to hold government to account and as a first step will call for committee chairs to be elected by Parliament, establish public scrutiny committees made up of randomly selected citizens; community representatives, local councillors and others; and regular Public Questions session, in which members of the public can pose questions to Scottish ministers.
 - **Public Voice at Holyrood:** citizens should be able to push Holyrood into holding debates on issues of public interest by presenting petitions with an appropriate threshold, without the Public Petitions Committee having a veto. Citizens should be able to play a direct role in the legislative process: on presenting a petition signed by

an appropriate number of voters, citizens and be able to trigger a vote on important issues of devolved responsibility.

- **Accountable and open Public Services:**

- Using the model of the Public Sector Equality Duty, will call for a Democracy and Public Participation Duty to apply to all public bodies and all other organisations performing public functions. This would require organisations fulfilling public functions to show that the public are consulted adequately when they take decisions and to demonstrate how their decisions will impact on their right to be involved with the design and delivery of their public services
- Will campaign for the appointment of “citizen governors” on bodies like Creative Scotland and the Scottish Police Authority.
- Extend the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act to automatically apply to any organisation performing a public function and end the exemption for the Royal Family.
- Will fight for all public authorities to routinely publish the public data they produce (with exemptions for personal information) in easily useable formats through a national online open public data gateway.
- Will fight for more powers to be devolved on a case-by-case basis, as well as calling for a new devolution package once it becomes clear what the strengths and weaknesses are of the forthcoming Scotland Act.

Food and the Environment

Scotland Can Be An Environmental Leader mini manifesto [04/04/2016] – key points:

- **Farming and Agriculture:**

- **The introduction of a food, farming and health act.** The act would provide a framework to deliver a range of food policies addressing health, environment and social justice. It would also set a range of targets such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions from food production; address rising food insecurity amongst Scotland’s poorest; establish a statutory commission to monitor progress and report annually to Parliament; incorporate the Right to Food in Scots law, as set out in the UN International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.
- **Support for farms that provide public benefit:** champion a system that supports farmers and is clearly tied to the delivery of public benefits such as rural jobs, water management, biodiversity and carbon sequestration.
- Support the development and implementation of a Scottish Organic Action Plan led by the Scottish Organic Forum with targets for increasing organic production.
- **Promote community food hubs.** Localising food system supports local economies. By supporting the promotion of community food hubs across Scotland, bringing farmers and consumers together to shorten food chains.
- **Support for new farmers:** Through the expansion of mentoring schemes and by lobbying for a shift its New Entrants to Farming programme to support environmentally and economically sustainable farming while our land reform proposals will improve access to suitable land.
- **Sustainable farming methods:** continue to support research on farming methods that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, enhance biodiversity and increase carbon storage. This includes providing alternatives to the use of synthetic pesticides, herbicides and chemical fertilisers.
- Argue for Scotland’s ban on genetically-modified crops to remain in force, and will continue to campaign for a ban on neonicotinoids to protect wild pollinators and bee populations, and enhance biodiversity.
- **Healthy soil** support measures to reduce soil erosion, from planting cover crops and strengthening hedgerows to contour ploughing.

Animal Welfare:

- **Increase protection for wildlife:** protection should be increased to all wildlife not just endangered species. Hunting legislation should be strengthened to ensure no animal is hunted with hounds and snaring would be banned,
- Review of **animal welfare** legislation to ensure high standards are being met. Support the phasing out of the intensive indoor barn rearing of poultry and pigs, using local or mobile abattoirs to reduce the stress of live animal transport and support calls for the introduction of CCTV in abattoirs for better monitoring.
- The development of a suite of secondary legislation addressing the trade in exotic pets and the welfare of circus animals and racing greyhounds.
- **End routine antibiotic use:** call for a ban to the routine adding of antibiotics to animal feed, and support clear labelling of, and eventually a ban on, products from animals reared on genetically modified animal feed.
- **Land and Sea**
 - Support Forestry Commission Scotland and other organisations to develop more community greenspaces throughout the country, covering woodlands, wetlands and open spaces.
 - Protect greenbelts from further encroachment, which threatens both levels of local biodiversity and communities' identity.
 - New National Parks: possible areas include the Isle of Harris, Galloway and the coastal areas of Mull, Coll and Tiree.
 - Large scale ecological restoration projects of native flora and fauna will be supported, such as the continued restoration of internationally-important peatlands, coastal machair habitats and the eradication of rhododendron from strategically important sites.
 - Work to ensure that the decision-making process takes evidence from marine monitoring into account and support the introduction of blue belt planning legislation which lends similar protection as green belts to these environments.
 - Oppose ship to ship oil transfers and protect fish stocks.
 - Support prioritising high-value, low impact fishing methods which support coastal communities and demand a moratorium on new sea-cage salmon farms.
 - **Public Water:** Scottish Water Should remain in public ownership
- **Low Carbon Society.**
 - Support measures to transition to climate-ready neighbourhoods that reduce emissions, limit flood risks and increase resilience to extreme conditions and the the expansion of the Climate Challenge Fund to move beyond mitigation efforts and provide funding for community adaptation.
 - **Effective planning for changing conditions:** public sector to take a lead role in planning for unpredictable weather conditions and find cost-effective solutions that support communities and individuals to respond.
 - **Flooding protection:** press for increased investment in flood protection, and support measures to reinstate natural flood defences, including reintroducing river meanders and regenerating mudflats and saltmarshes. Increase the resilience of natural coastal defences, such as sand dunes and invest in harbour infrastructure.
 - **Changing economy:** Promote a circular economy' that moves away from the traditional 'make-use-dispose' approach to products and instead keeps resources in use for as long as possible before recycling them back into supply chains. Introduce a Deposit Return Scheme for drinks bottles where a small deposit paid when buying cans or bottles is refunded when empty containers are returned.
 - **Investment in low carbon projects:** The Greens call for a greater portion of Holyrood's infrastructure budget to be spent on low carbon projects (currently its 50% but international standards are 70%).
International Treaties. Ensure that the Scottish and UK governments deliver their commitments from the Paris 2015 Agreement.

Energy

[Scotland can ban fracking once and for all](#) mini manifesto [07/04/2016] – key points:

- **Transition to fossil free energy resources**
 - **Green Jobs:** support a managed transition plan which will deliver over 200,000 jobs in renewable energy and associated industries.
 - Increase funding for Modern Apprenticeships and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics to enable more young people, particularly young women, to move into renewable energy generation, supply and support.
 - **Increase the use of green technology** through increased research and development for strategically critical sectors, such as liquid air energy storage and tidal stream and Increased investment in domestic energy storage system.
 - **A greener Grangemouth** by increasing investment in the research, development and demonstration of alternative bio-based feedstocks at Grangemouth. Keep options open to support a public-worker ownership model.
 - **A Scottish Renewable Energy Bond:** Support the introduction of a bond to create capital to finance further development and expansion of renewable energy projects in Scotland.
 - **Resist subsidy cuts** Green MSPs will be against further cuts to the UK Government's renewable energy subsidies.
- **Community Energy Generation**
 - **Control local energy** by establishing socially-owned companies to drive investment in energy efficiency and low-carbon energy, such as combined heat and power (CHP) and micro-renewable systems.
 - Local authorities to be supported to create municipal utility companies under public control, which deliver clean energy, cheaper heating and the opportunity for profits to be ploughed back into public services.
 - **More community renewable energy generation:** look to extend the Scottish Government target for renewable energy capacity to 1GW provided by community renewables and 1GW from locally owned projects by 2030.
 - **Help for communities:** support measures to make available greater levels of grants, loans and financial advice for communities setting up new renewable energy schemes and to assist them to connect to the national grid.
 - Support the case for **community buy-outs** of renewable energy schemes on Scotland's largest estates, and recognize this may need further legislation beyond the current Land Reform proposal.
- **Energy Efficiency**
 - **New Build and Retrofitting Standards:** call for high efficiency standards to deliver net zero carbon new buildings by 2030, and will push for the rate of retrofitting to be accelerated to ensure that all existing properties also achieve Band C by 2025.
 - **Support for combined heat and power (CHP) systems:** to meet our target of 50% of all our energy use from renewables by 2030, we must move to generating more renewable heat. We believe that increased opportunities for CHP systems, including district heating, should be prioritised, particularly in new housing developments and new public buildings
 - **Taking a whole-house approach:** the Scottish Greens call for coordinating action to deliver a whole-house approach to energy efficiency and usage, bringing together insulation schemes with fuel poverty programs and area-based energy advice schemes to help keep homes warm into the future.
- **Fracking**
 - Continue to oppose fracking

Significant dates

- Campaign launched 8th February 2016 full manifesto to follow later. Conference 5/6 March

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Scottish Green Party

Analysis/ Commentary on policy commitments [name/ headline/ link]

General

- Stephen Daisley [STV news, 05/02/2016] Can the Greens make a breakthrough at Holyrood?
- Michael Gray [Common Space, 08/02/2016] Greens target 250,000 voters
- Jeremy Watson [Times, p7, 09/02/2016] “Greens to create 200,000 jobs”
- Aiden Kerr [STV, 04/03/2016] Holyrood needs fewer SNP 'cheerleaders' and more Greens
- Mure Dickie [Financial Times, 07/03/16] Scottish Greens Aim to Capitalise on discontent with SNP Caution
- David Torrance [Herald, 07/03/16] Could the Greens hold the balance of Power at Holyrood

Environment

- Magnus Gardham [Herald, 08/02/2016] Scottish Greens pledge to ban fracking as party launches campaign

General

- [Holyrood Magazine, 16/03/2016] Scottish Greens co-convener Patrick Harvie on constructive opposition
- [Caroline Erskine \[STV News, 01/04/2016\] A good week for Patrick Harvie](#)
- [Natalie Bennett \[The Herald, 06/04/2016\] Celebrate Scotland's Commitment to making political progress before the rest of the UK](#)

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Scottish Liberal Democrats

Political

- *“By adding a penny for education onto income tax, we could reverse college cuts, increase free early years care, introduce a pupil premium – targeted support for pupils who would benefit from extra help the most – and crucially, stop the SNP’s cuts to council education budgets”* [Willie Rennie, SLD website, 02/02/2016]
- *“The last five years in the Scottish Parliament have been dominated by independence. The next five years should be dominated by a bright, green and liberal programme for Scotland”* [Willie Rennie, [SLD website](#), 04/01/2016]
- This vision is framed around the following aspirations [Willie Rennie, [SLD website](#), 04/01/2016]:
 - Everyone should have the opportunity to gain new skills and have a fair chance to get on in life. Getting there will take hard work. But it is vital. This is what this year’s Scottish Parliament election needs to be about
 - Children and young people deserve a good quality education with nursery education and a pupil premium to give every child a chance of a good job
 - People deserve a good quality health service with better mental health services and more GPs
 - The planet must be protected, with action on climate change including warmer homes and better public transport
 - Traditional Scottish freedoms must be protected including power transferred to local communities and trusting police, nurses, doctors and teachers to do their job
 - Liberal Democrats will approach this election with a clear, positive plan to put the divisions of the referendum behind, reform our public sector to improve services and make the next 5 years about delivering on the things that really matter for people across Scotland
- Willie Rennie: *‘Liberal Democrats will go into this Scottish Parliament election with a bold platform focussed on boosting public services like our schools and hospitals.’* [[Scottish Liberal Democrats homepage](#), 18/03/2016]
- *‘We’ll roll back SNP centralisation & put power back in the hands of communities’*. [[Liberal Democrats homepage](#), 29/03/2016]

Policy Commitments

The Scottish Liberal Democrats published a pre-manifesto on 27/02/2016 which presents a wide range of policy commitments. Some of the key commitments are included below, with the full document available here:

https://issuu.com/gregfoster5/docs/premanifesto_for_web?e=17904016/33387309#search

Taxation

- Plans to **increase income tax** by a penny from 1 April 2016 - changes to the tax threshold mean that people earning less than £19,000 would still get a tax cut next year. The extra money would therefore be raised while protecting those on the lowest incomes - the “fair, progressive approach that Scotland needs”. [[SLD website](#), 29/01/2016]
- A **Zero-Rate tax band** from 2017 to increase the point at which people pay tax - taking more low paid people out of income tax completely and cutting the taxes of people on low and middle incomes . Paid for by the economic benefits and increased tax revenues arising from the investment in education [[The Herald](#), 16/02/16]
- Following George Osborne’s budget announcements and the plan to raise the 40p threshold to £45,000, Willie Rennie commented: “ *Scottish Liberal Democrats will never*

stomach that. When Scotland receives the Smith powers to set tax bands, our priority is a zero-rate tax band, which will effectively extend the personal allowance and lift thousands of people on low incomes out of tax altogether". [BBC News, 17/3/2016]

- Following George Osborne's budget announcement, Willie Rennie said: '*Liberal Democrats have outlined our plans for a penny for education – an increase of 1p to income tax that would raise £475m a year to invest in nurseries, schools and colleges. This is the progressive alternative to the austerity that the SNP propose.*' [Sunday Herald, p.11, 20.3.2016]
- Willie Rennie commented on the SNP's announcement regarding tax, and of not adopting the UK government's plans to raise the starting point for the 40p tax rate: "*The SNP's proposals are pathetically timid. This plan raises no extra money, not a single pound more, for public services desperately in need of investment. This is a missed opportunity; the SNP are refusing to use the full set of new tax powers coming to us at Holyrood. The Liberal Democrats' penny on income tax for education would make a transformational investment in education. £475m a year for nurseries, schools and colleges.*" [BBC News, 22/3/2016]
- During the Scottish leaders' debate on 24/3/2016, '*Willie Rennie rejected SNP plans to cut air passenger duty (APD) by 50 per cent, arguing it would encourage a race to the bottom and harm Scotland's attempts to meet climate change targets*' [The Scotsman, 26/3/2016].

Social Security

Proposals from the pre-manifesto include [SLD [pre-manifesto](#), 27/02/2016]:

- Increase Carers' Benefit to the level of jobseekers' allowance.
- Fully remove the bedroom tax from the Scottish system.
- Replace the Work Programme and Work Choice with new employability programmes that work in partnership with SDS, colleges, charities and other agencies.

Education

- Committed to making the biggest investment in Scottish education since devolution by increasing income tax by a penny - raising £475m a year for education. Proposals in the [5 year plan](#) include a Pupil Premium, an expansion in nursery education, reversal of college cuts and stopping school cuts. [SLD website, 29/01/2016]
- £170 million (of the £475 million) would go on the pupil premium. Primary Schools would get £1,400 for every pupil who needs extra support, with secondary schools receiving £900 for every child from a deprived background. "...*the pupil premium in England closed the attainment gap by 5% in three years and raised attainment for everyone.*" [Willie Rennie, [speech to the SLD conference](#), 27/02/2016]
- Will make sure education investment delivers skills for Scottish businesses to improve productivity. Including: developing links between schools, local businesses and universities; give schools the freedom to develop specialisms; time for "good citizenship" in the curriculum; increase delivery of industry-recognised vocational qualifications. [SLD [pre-manifesto](#), 27/02/2016]
- Liam McArthur MSP reiterated that Liberal Democrats would use income tax powers to raise £475m a year to invest in education. Their penny for education policy would let them '*match the pupil premium policy that has seen schools in England and Wales take big strides towards closing the attainment gap*' and '*would give schools £1,400 for eligible primary school pupils to support things like one to one tuition...secondary school pupils would receive £900*'. '*We would also make a big investment in college funding...and increase bursary support for students. We would also boost free nursery care and head off the massive council cuts that are set to hammer education budgets.*' [Sunday Herald, 13/3/16]
- Liam McArthur MSP: '*Over the last nine years, we have lost 152,000 college places. This has hit people who can only study part-time the hardest...Female students in particular*

have seen their opportunities disproportionately cut. College lecturers and support staff have lost their jobs. That is why today we've announced plans to invest £108m a year in colleges, funded by our penny for education policy.' [[Scottish Liberal Democrats homepage](#), 14/3/2016]

- Via their penny for education promise, Scottish Liberal Democrats aims to give more families access to free childcare. [[Liberal Democrats homepage](#), 29/3/2106]
- The party wants to bring about a 'digital revolution' in Scotland's schools, using online courses to transform learning. Willie Rennie announced plans for universities to expand the Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) that are already available so they could be used by older school students. He said this would allow all pupils to study the subjects that inspire them, with topics being examined in a "new and exciting way". Willie Rennie said: "This is not about replacing traditional classroom learning. It is about complementing the hard work that teachers do in our classrooms." [[The Herald](#), 06/04/2016]

Health and Social Care

- "To be the best we need the best health care so we need to reverse the decline in the NHS. We support a step change in mental health services, the recruitment of more GPs and better social care." [Willie Rennie, [speech to the SLD conference](#), 27/02/2016]
- Specific mental health proposals [SLD [pre-manifesto](#), 27/02/2016]:
 - Change the law to put mental health on the same statutory footing as physical health
 - Make more therapies available by training more nurses, counsellors and psychologists
 - Properly resource services to treat children and young people to end six-month waits
 - Continue to work on suicide prevention and increase support for survivors of childhood sexual abuse.
- NHS proposals [SLD [pre-manifesto](#), 27/02/2016]:
 - Increase proportion of NHS funding allocated to primary care
 - Train, recruit and retain more GPs
 - Increase the number of support staff (nurses, allied health professionals and councillors) working in general practice
 - Increase resources available to GPs in the most deprived areas to tackle health inequalities.
- Jim Hume MSP: 'Liberal Democrats want mental health support in Scotland needs to be transformed. That starts with proper investment... We will go into this election with a bold plan to put mental health care front and centre in an NHS that is fit for the future.' [[Scottish Liberal Democrats homepage](#), 14/03/2016]
- Willie Rennie on young people's mental health issues: '... today I confirmed that Liberal Democrats will go into this election with a clear commitment to doubling the funding we put into CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services). This will help us improve access to treatment and open two new specialist centres serving the north of Scotland in Inverness and Aberdeen. We want to see a step change in the way that we treat mental ill health in Scotland. Providing this funding boost will be a vital first step in the right direction.' [[Scottish Liberal Democrats homepage](#), 22/03/2016]
- The party has said they would introduce a mental health 'rapid reaction force', and providing full-time 24/7 cover in police divisions and A&E departments, as part of a "revolution" in the way mental health problems were treated. Under the plans, mental health staff would be deployed to police custody centres and work with police officers in "joint cars" to provide emergency care. [[BBC News](#), 03/04/2016]
- 'We'll recruit & retain more GPs & end the GP crisis.' [[Liberal Democrats homepage](#), 29/03/2106]

- 'We'll join up health and social care to improve social care in Scotland.' [[Liberal Democrats homepage](#), 29/03/2106]
- Responding to news that the Catholic Church urges worshippers to lobby against abortion, the Liberal Democrats said: 'Having an abortion is a choice a woman should be able to make herself. The right to choose is an inherent liberty that we support and we have no plans to change abortion law as it currently stands once it is devolved to the Scottish parliament.' [The Times, p.5, 05/04/2016]

Economy

- Will pay the Living Wage for all public services and will continue to expand the SG's Fair Business Pledge to encourage decent wages, profit sharing, workforce engagement, investment in young people, a balanced workforce, with women in senior roles and prompt payment to suppliers. Will restrict future business development funding to companies that pay the Living Wage. [SLD [pre-manifesto](#), 27/02/2016]

Law / Justice

- Manifesto commitment to change drug policy and treat drug use as a health and social issue rather than a criminal one. "... while others try to look tough on crime, we are the only party willing to look at **alternatives to address the addictions** that so often underpin it" [Willie Rennie, [The Herald](#), 21/2/16]
- To fundamentally reform of the way drug users (not drug dealers) are prosecuted and sentenced by extending the presumption against prison sentences for addicts from 3 to 12 months [[BBC News](#), 14/2/16]
- Recognise that a large proportion of current prisoners have addiction problems and institute a step-change treatment of their addiction prior to release [SLD [pre-manifesto](#), 27/02/2016]
- The Scottish Liberal Democrats' manifesto for the upcoming Scottish Parliament election proposes to end the use of imprisonment for vulnerable people addicted to drugs, calling for it to be treated as a health issue instead. Drug dealers would still face tough criminal sanctions and people failing to abide by treatment or education plans would be subject to additional penalties. [[Scottish Liberal Democrats homepage](#), 22/3/2016]
- 'We'll restore the traditional model of Scottish policing' (As opposed to policing being centralised. [[Liberal Democrats homepage](#), 29/03/2106]
- Alison McInnes (Scottish LibDems Justice spokesperson): 'We would end ministerial control over appointments and require policing plans to be approved by councils, giving communities a voice again.' [Sunday Herald, p.9, 03/04/2016]
- Mr Rennie unveiled plans to give councils a veto over policing strategy in their area. He said: "What it will do is make the police chief come to the councils and explain what they are doing." [The Herald, p.6, 06/04/2016]
- Alison McInnes (Scottish LibDems Justice spokesperson): 'For our hardworking officers and staff, we will free them from suffocating top-down targets and let them serve communities using their professional skills.' [Sunday Herald, p.9, 03/04/2016]

Energy

- Focus on renewable heat, adopting the first ever industrial heat strategy, promoting combined heat and power, using waste heat more effectively and developing geothermal heat from disused coalmines. [SLD [pre-manifesto](#), 27/02/2016]
- '...the party revealed it would go into the Holyrood election calling for an outright ban on the controversial gas extraction method, a week after members voted to allow it at their conference' – 'an anti-fracking commitment will now be included in the party's manifesto'. [The Herald, p.7, 5/3/2016; see also [BBC News](#) 5/3/2016 and [The National](#) 7/3/2016]
- 'We'll make improving the energy efficiency of homes a national infrastructure project.' [[Liberal Democrats homepage](#), 29/3/2016]

- 'We'll invest in low-carbon transport across Scotland to reduce our carbon emissions.' [[Liberal Democrats homepage](#), 29/3/2016]
- 'We'll end open cast coal mining.' [[Liberal Democrats homepage](#), 29/03/2016]
- 'We'll boost investment in renewable energy so we reach our goal of 100% renewable energy generation.' [[Liberal Democrats homepage](#), 29/3/2016]
- Willie Rennie: "We need to see action across the board to help get Scotland greener. That means boosting renewable energy, supporting green transport, improving energy efficiency and much more." Further, Mr Rennie noted that "Liberal Democrats will take the urgent steps required to start meeting Scotland's green goals". [[BBC News](#), 04/04/2016]
- 'We will create catch-up zones to tackle fuel poverty in remote and island areas which have fallen behind in getting homes insulated and warm' [[LibDems homepage](#), 4/4/2016].
- 'We will also introduce new building standards for greater energy efficiency and restart the review of standards that was cancelled by the Scottish Government in September 2015' [[LibDems homepage](#), 04/04/2016].
- 'This ambition [see above] will be incorporated into a Warm Homes Act, to secure the growth of district heating and renewable heat. It will be backed up by new resources for householders and business from our Fit For The Future investment plan which will be part of our fully costed manifesto.' [[LibDems homepage](#), 04/04/2016]
- 'We will also use new powers to shape the Energy Company Obligation to combine support from power companies and the Scottish Government to provide new, bigger warm home grants for homeowners and tenants.' [[LibDems homepage](#), 04/04/2016]
- 'We will also adopt the first ever industrial heat strategy which will promote combined heat and power, and back moves to boost low-carbon travel.' [[LibDems homepage](#), 04/04/2016]

Employability / Skills

- Mr Rennie referred to the report from [UK Commission for Employment and Skills](#), and said he wants to see more investment in education in order to address skills gaps. [[BBC News](#), 28/03/2016]
- The party wants to free public sector workers from top-down targets. [[Liberal Democrats homepage](#), 29/03/2016]
- 'We'll make sure big companies like Amazon won't get government grants unless they pay employees the living wage.' [[Liberal Democrats homepage](#), 29/03/2016]

Information technology

- 'We'll oppose the SNP's national identity database.' [[Liberal Democrats homepage](#), 29/03/2016]
- 'We'd give everyone in Scotland the right to see who has accessed the personal data held on them by public bodies.' [[Liberal Democrats homepage](#), 29/03/2016]
- 'We'll ensure every home in Scotland has access to broadband.' [[Liberal Democrats homepage](#), 29/03/2016]

Infrastructure / Transport

- 'We'll invest in improving cycling & walking across Scotland.' [[Liberal Democrats homepage](#), 29/03/2016]
- 'We'll introduce a Scotland wide smart card system to make it easier for people to travel by bus or train and give automatic access to the cheapest fares.' [[Liberal Democrats homepage](#), 29/03/2016]

Agriculture

- Willie Rennie said his party would stand up for rural Scotland, and 'promised the Lib Dems would give farmers the support they need by sorting out the delayed CAP'

payments, and ensure supermarkets pay a fair price for produce'. [BBC News, 07/06/2016]

Significant Dates

- Spring conference 26/27th February 2016

Analysis/ Commentary on policy commitments

Political

- Magnus Gardham [Herald Scotland, 27/02/2016] [LibDem fightback has a long way to go](#)
- [Andrew Whitaker \[Scotsman, 22/03/2016\] Scottish Lib Dem plans may not be enough](#)

Taxation

- Severin Carrell [Guardian, 27/01/2016] [Scottish Lib Dems call for 1p tax rise to raise £475m for education](#)
- Brian Taylor [BBC, 27/01/2016] [Penny for Willie Rennie's tax raising thoughts](#)
- [Willie Rennie \[Scottish Lib Dem website, 02/03/2016\] – SNP's council tax policy is utterly insulting](#)

Environment

- Daniel Sanderson [Herald Scotland, 26/02/2016] [Lib Dems to back fracking after policy u-turn](#)

General

- [Holyrood Magazine, 16/03/2016] [Scottish Liberal Democrat leader Willie Rennie on polls, penny for education and frustrations over parliamentary niceties](#)

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