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Delivering a Greener, Fairer, Independent Scotland

One Year On



Ministerial Foreword

The Bute House Agreement is an important new development in Scottish politics. It represents a new model of co-operation in government. It brought Green politicians into government for the first time anywhere in the UK and signals our shared commitment to working together to build a greener, fairer and independent Scotland.

The SNP Scottish Government and the Scottish Green Party share the common goal of improving the lives of all who live in our country, and to protect and enhance our society and natural environment for the benefit of future generations. The Bute House Agreement commits us to an ambitious programme to meet those challenges and to grasp the opportunities of our time.

These challenges are enormous: the climate and nature emergencies, the beginning of the recovery of our public services and society from the Covid-19 pandemic, and the unfolding of the disastrous consequences of the exit from the EU. And they have only become greater since the Agreement was signed, with the cost of living crisis intensifying, the prospect of a recession on the horizon, the growing impact of the Russian invasion on Ukraine, and the uncertainty created by the complete absence of a functioning UK Government. The Agreement was reached to equip us best to deal with challenges like these, because we believe that new ideas and new ways of working are required to deal with new problems. **An unstable world needs more co-operation and more constructive seeking of consensus if governments are to be equal to what the people need of them.**

When we signed the Agreement we spoke about the importance of trust, a willingness to be challenged and a readiness to step out of our comfort zones. That commitment to responsible and stable government is demonstrated in this report. In its first year the Agreement has delivered a legislative programme of 16 bills, an approved Budget, a Resource Spending Review and has seen work begin on a number of longer-term reforms, as well as delivering for households, communities and businesses.

In addition, much of the last year has involved the continued management of and recovery from the Covid pandemic as we slowly and carefully lifted restrictions and began the work of restoring and improving public services impacted by the pandemic.

This progress has come from detailed and constructive engagement between all Scottish Ministers and the MSPs of the Scottish Green Group. We are grateful to all of our colleagues for their commitment and hard work over the course of the year. The foundations laid in the last year will enable us to make progress for the people of Scotland over the lifetime of this Parliament.

The Agreement and the co-operation between the Scottish Government and the Scottish Green Party have also enabled the government to respond quickly and effectively, within the limitations of the devolved settlement, to the cost of living crisis.

Our approach contrasts sharply with that at Westminster and in the UK Government where seeking common ground is so often undermined. Since the Agreement was made, we have also seen the Welsh Labour Government and Plaid Cymru enter into a Co-operation Agreement – despite their different views on the constitutional position of Wales. The cross-party working provided for in the Bute House Agreement is commonplace in other European countries. Our Agreement shows what can be achieved by working together and we remain open to working with other parties where it is in the best interests of citizens across Scotland.

We are united in our belief that Scotland should become an independent country and assume our place among other modern European nations and globally within the wider family of independent countries. We believe that the people of Scotland should decide what is best for the future of our country and we will continue to do everything we can to make this to happen. At the same time, further attempts to diminish the powers and responsibilities of the Parliament, and Scottish self-government, will be resisted firmly by both the Scottish Government and the Scottish Green Party.

As this report sets out, in our first year in partnership we have achieved a lot. But there is much more we must, can and will do. Our shared ambition and commitment to delivering a greener, fairer and independent Scotland is stronger than ever.



Rt. Hon. Nicola Sturgeon MSP
First Minister of Scotland



John Swinney MSP
Deputy First Minister



Lorna Slater MSP
Co-Leader of the Scottish Green Party



Patrick Harvie MSP
Co-Leader of the Scottish Green Party

Summary

The policies set out in the Bute House Agreement respond to the many and varied challenges and opportunities that Scotland faces. This report sets out what has been achieved so far and the plans to go further.

In the first year of the Agreement, particular progress has been made across a range of areas such as:

- Doubling the Scottish Child Payment to £20 per week per eligible child from April 2022, with plans to extend eligibility to under 16s and further increasing the payment to £25 per week by the end of 2022. This payment, unique to Scotland, lifts children out of poverty by putting money directly into the pockets of those who need it most.
- £58.6 million in Scottish Child Payments was awarded to eligible families from launch until 31 March 2022, providing payments for 106,000 children under the age of six in 82,000 households.
- Bringing ScotRail into public ownership.
- Setting out a strategy for over a million homes to be using zero carbon heating systems by the end of the decade and allocating funds from a total planned investment of £1.8 billion to cut energy bills, improve building energy efficiency and reduce climate emissions.
- Opening the first £20 million of the ten-year £500 million Just Transition Fund for the North East and Moray to help finance organisations, businesses and communities to transition to net zero, creating jobs in low carbon industries contributing to making the area and Scotland as whole more prosperous.
- Introducing free bus travel for under 22s to cut the cost of living for young people, encourage sustainable travel behaviours early in their lives and improve access to education, leisure, and work. Since the launch of the scheme over 17.5 million free journeys have been taken by almost 450,000 card holders.



- Investing a record £150 million in active travel in 2022-23, including more than doubling the funding for the National Cycle Network, a new walking fund, and supporting pilots for free bikes for school age children who cannot afford them. So far, 2,067 bikes have been provided through the pilots.
- Publishing Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation setting out how Scotland will transition to a wellbeing economy, which prioritises people and the planet, and launching the Wellbeing Economy Monitor.
- Banning many of the most problematic single use plastics to tackle the damage they cause to our seas, beaches and public areas.
- Setting out proposals to deliver a New Deal for Tenants which will include action to introduce greater safeguards against evictions, introduce new rights to personalise homes and improve tenancies, and make decisive progress towards a national system of rent controls, better regulation of the rented sector, and new quality and energy efficiency standards.
- Setting out proposals to create at least one new National Park by asking the public what they value most in these spaces and what criteria should be used to decide the location of the new park.
- Launching the Nature Restoration Fund which will invest £65 million over the course of the parliamentary term on projects to tackle the twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss by restoring Scotland's natural environment on land and at sea. 100 projects have been funded so far ranging from peatland restoration to rewilding Scotland's rainforests.
- Consulting on a Circular Economy Bill to enable us to advance a zero waste and circular economy – increasing reuse and recycling rates and improving waste and recycling services.
- Making plans to expand wind energy generation in Scotland, awarding of lease option agreements for up to 25 GW of offshore wind energy, including 15GW of floating offshore wind, and consulting on an ambition that an additional 8-12 GW of onshore wind be installed by 2030.
- Publishing an independent review of the future of incineration and confirming that the Scottish Government does not support the development of further municipal waste incineration capacity, with very limited exceptions.

Progress in the First Year



The Bute House Agreement set out an ambitious shared policy programme, including an accelerated response to the climate emergency, a commitment to reform Scotland's public services and to act on pressing social issues, and a reaffirmed commitment to independence.

The first year of the Agreement has demonstrated delivery across these key priorities, supported by the strong, collaborative relationships between both parties. A cornerstone of the Bute House Agreement is the approach to how politics is done. The Scottish Government and the Scottish Green Party have worked together collaboratively, establishing mutual trust, and developing a good faith approach to governing.

Patrick Harvie and Lorna Slater, co-leaders of the Scottish Green Party, were appointed as the Scottish Government Minister for Zero Carbon Buildings, Active Travel and Tenants' Rights, and Minister for Green Skills, Circular Economy and Biodiversity, respectively. As committed to in the Agreement, Mr Harvie is a member of the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Legislation and both he and Ms Slater are members of the newly formed Cabinet Sub-Committee on the Climate Emergency, placing them at the centre of delivering the Government's agenda and shaping future policy. Mr Harvie and Ms Slater both help to shape the Scottish Government's priorities as members of the Public Services and Economy Ministerial Group chaired by the Deputy First Minister.

The world has changed substantially since the Agreement was reached 12 months ago. The conflict in Ukraine and the rising cost of living crisis have profoundly impacted the lives of people of Scotland. However, the stable and collaborative government provided by the Agreement, has helped government to deliver immediate action in the face of these challenges, including supporting those displaced from Ukraine and using the powers available to Ministers to address the cost of living crisis.

In order to support households and businesses through the ongoing cost crisis, a number of immediate actions have been identified. These actions include undertaking an emergency budget review to assess any opportunities to redirect resources, and continuing to maximise direct financial assistance available to those most in need, principally through ongoing work to extend eligibility for and increase the value of the Scottish Child Payment; attempting to limit increases in costs by considering options for regulatory action and engaging with energy companies, banks and food retailers to examine what help they can provide; working with partners to strengthen emergency food and fuel provision, prioritising a 'cash first' approach; and providing further advice to households on reducing energy consumption.

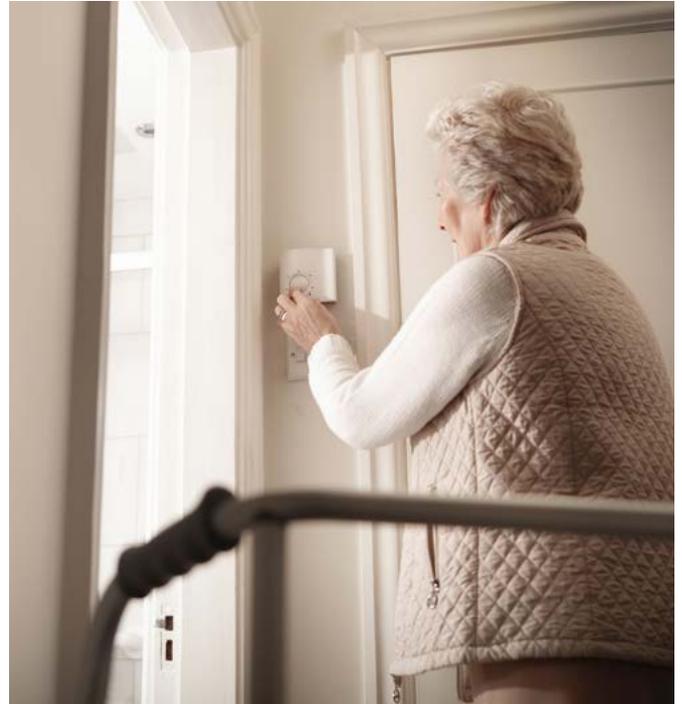
The Bute House Agreement is embedded within the Programme for Government 2021-22 'A Fairer, Greener Scotland', which set out an agenda for the full parliamentary term. This first year of work has seen the development of an agreed legislative programme of 16 bills – 5 of which have already been passed by the Scottish Parliament, the successful passage of the Government's Budget, the publication of *Best Start, Bright Futures: Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2022-26*, an updated Climate Change Plan and a Resource Spending Review, along with delivery on a range of policies and programmes committed to in the Agreement. The forthcoming Programme for Government 2022-23 will set out the actions from the Bute House Agreement to be taken forward in the next twelve months.

Responding to the Climate Emergency

- **£150m invested improving cycling and walking infrastructure**
- **Almost 450,000 of young people benefitting from free bus travel**
- **Brought ScotRail into public ownership**

Climate change is the most significant global crisis we collectively face, and this Government is committed to accelerating Scotland's response to the climate emergency. The Scottish Government's platform at COP26, held in Glasgow, was used to amplify voices of those worst affected by climate change and often marginalised in climate change discussions, connecting them with global decision makers and supporting their participation in the conference. The Government also focused on doing what it could to mobilise increased international action as the first developed nation to pledge finance for loss and damage.

The commitments in the Bute House Agreement represent a step change in our support for active travel. In March 2022, the Minister for Active Travel, Patrick Harvie, announced record funding of £150 million for active travel in 2022-23. This includes more than doubling the funding for the National Cycle Network, increasing the Cycling, Walking and Safer Routes budget, which is paid to local authorities, from nearly £24 million to £35 million, a continuation of the pilot to provide free bikes for all children of school age who cannot afford them and the launch of a review of how Active Travel is delivered in Scotland.



Rail plays a key role in helping to meet climate change targets and cut transport emissions. **ScotRail was brought back into public ownership in April 2022 which presents a real opportunity to deliver a railway which is for the whole nation, and fully focused on being run for the benefit of its users.** Enhancement projects committed to as a result of the Agreement will see railway lines transformed to accommodate quieter, more environmentally friendly electric trains, whilst increasing capacity of services and improving network resilience.

In January, free bus travel for under 22s was launched. As well as reducing the cost of living for young people, this is helping make public transport a more attractive option. Since the launch of the scheme on 31 January 2022, over 17.5 million free journeys have been made.



The draft second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2) was published, which sets out recommendations for the next 20 years. STPR2 is an important tool for achieving the Government's commitment to a 20% reduction in car kilometres by 2030 and contributing to Scotland's net zero greenhouse gas emissions target by 2045.

Scotland needs to decarbonise how we heat our homes and buildings and make them more energy efficient to help end our contribution to climate change and cut the cost of energy for households in Scotland. The Resource Spending Review committed £1.8 billion to deliver the Heat in Buildings Strategy over the next five years which will reduce greenhouse gas emissions from Scotland's homes, workplaces and community buildings and help ensure that poor energy efficiency is removed as a driver of fuel poverty. The £300 million Heat Networks Fund was established in March 2022 and will support the development and roll out of zero emission heat networks. To ensure new buildings are supporting the transition to net-zero, plans have been set out in the New Building Heat Standard consultation that will mean direct emissions heating systems, such as those powered by fossil fuel, would no longer be installed in any homes and non-domestic buildings from April 2024. This follows an immediate end to support for oil and LPG boilers in our Heat in Buildings Delivery programmes that the Scottish Government introduced in September 2021.

While oil and gas has played a significant role in Scotland's recent energy past, the future lies with renewables and the unlimited extraction of fossil fuels is incompatible with protecting the planet from the worst impacts of climate change.

The last year has seen the award of lease option agreements for up to 25 GW of offshore wind energy, including 15GW of floating offshore wind. We have consulted on an ambition that an additional 8-12 GW of onshore wind be installed by 2030 and set out plans to develop a world leading green hydrogen industry. Seizing the opportunities of low carbon energy development across Scotland is a major focus of the Scottish Government and Scottish Green Party and increasing Scotland's renewable energy generating capacity and securing accompanying jobs and investment will be central to our work over the rest of the parliamentary term.

Work is underway as part of the Bute House Agreement on developing a draft energy strategy and Just Transition Plan, which will be published later this year ahead of a public consultation. The Scottish Government and the Scottish Green Party have together opposed licensing of fossil fuel extraction in the North Sea without rigorous climate assessment, including those fields already licensed, but where drilling has not commenced. Further analysis, as part of the Bute House Agreement, and announced by the First Minister ahead of COP26, is being carried out to better understand our energy requirements as we transition to net zero. The work, which is expected to be completed by the end of this year, is also assessing how these requirements align with our climate change targets and the goal of the Paris agreement to limit global warming to well below 2, preferably to 1.5 degrees Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels.

Economic Recovery and Infrastructure

- £500 million Just Transition Fund for the North East and Moray opened
- Proposals set out for the fourth National Planning Framework
- Wellbeing Economy Monitor launched

In March 2022, Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation was published, setting out a vision for a wellbeing economy, and a fairer, wealthier and greener Scotland. This included a range of actions to support the transition to a net-zero economy and ensure our economy captures the opportunities that come with becoming a low and zero carbon economy, develops within safe environmental limits and prioritises and serves the collective wellbeing of current and future generations. The Wellbeing Economy Monitor, which will help guide this transition, was launched on 24 June 2022. To support the transition to a zero waste and circular economy, the Minister for Green Skills, Circular Economy and Biodiversity, Lorna Slater, also published proposals for a Circular Economy Bill. The Bill will help significantly increase reuse and recycling rates, and modernise and improve waste and recycling services.



To support those communities and businesses most affected by the just transition to net-zero, the Scottish Government opened the ten year £500 million Just Transition Fund for the North East and Moray on 31 May 2022. The fund will help finance organisations, businesses and communities to transition to net zero, creating jobs in low carbon industries and contributing to making the area and Scotland as whole more prosperous.



Planning plays a crucial role in building a wellbeing economy and improving our places. We consulted on Scotland's fourth National Planning Framework (NPF4), marking a turning point for planning in Scotland by putting the climate emergency and nature recovery at its heart. It will be finalised this year and will play a key role in guiding the transformation of our places and enabling investment in the infrastructure we will need to secure a green economic recovery. Clear and consistent national planning policies will help us to deliver on a wide range of government policies and commitments, so that future development mitigates and adapts to climate change, builds in nature-based solutions, and encourages local living including 20 minute neighbourhoods.

A commitment was made in the Bute House Agreement to review the role of incineration in Scotland's waste hierarchy. The response from Minister for Green Skills, Circular Economy and Biodiversity, Lorna Slater, to the independent review on waste incineration in Scotland, noted that the Scottish Government will set out, through statutory and other frameworks, that there is no longer support for the development of further municipal waste incineration capacity in Scotland, with very limited exceptions.

A Fairer Scotland

- Over 106,000 children benefitting from the £20 per week Scottish Child Payment
- Introduced the Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill
- Proposed the New Deal for Tenants

The cost of living crisis is leaving those most vulnerable in society at greater risk of falling into poverty, making our commitment to a fairer Scotland more important than ever before. The SNP Scottish Government and the Scottish Green Party are united in the commitment to eradicating child poverty and agree that Scotland should be the best place in the world to grow up.



Significant work has been done since the Agreement to deliver a fairer, more equal Scotland. **The Scottish Child Payment was doubled to £20 per week per eligible child from April 2022, a payment unique to Scotland designed to lift children out of poverty. Estimates suggest over 106,000 children were in receipt of the Scottish Child Payment by the end of March 2022. Work is also underway to extend Scottish Child Payment to under 16s and a further increase to £25 per week by the end of 2022.** The extension forms part of the *'Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2022 - 2026'*, which also commits to delivering a new Parental Transition Fund to tackle financial insecurity for families when parents and carers enter the labour market, backed by up to £15 million each year. With household finances being stretched now more than ever the commitment to invest at least £7 million per year to mitigate the deeply damaging effects of the UK Government's Benefit Cap which hits the poorest families the hardest has never been more important.



Best Start Foods, a prepaid card that can be used in shops or online to buy healthy food, is being extended to people in Scotland subject to the UK immigration status of No Recourse to Public Funds who meet existing eligibility criteria, mitigating some of the harmful impacts this status can have on affected people's lives.

Ministers believe that equality, inclusion and human rights should underpin decision-making and delivery across the work of government and the wider public sector in Scotland. Work has progressed in protecting and advancing LGBTI rights, in recognition that trans people continue to suffer poorer outcomes relative to the wider population. The Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill was introduced to parliament on 2 March 2022. The Bill will ensure that the system for trans people to obtain legal recognition is simplified, reducing the trauma associated with the current process.

The Scottish Government has committed to bringing forward legislation to implement a ban on conversion practices

in Scotland which is as comprehensive as is possible under currently devolved powers by the end of 2023. An Expert Advisory Group on Ending Conversion Practices has been established and is working on forming recommendations for the Scottish Government. These will be published later in 2022.

Ministers believe that adequate housing is a fundamental human right, and we have been working together to prevent and end homelessness in Scotland. A consultation on a New Deal for Tenants was run successfully, with responses gathered from a wide range of stakeholders. The responses received will help inform policy development and some legislative aspects will be included in a Housing Bill. This will provide better protection against eviction, new rights to keep pets and decorate, along with a commitment to deliver robust rent controls. In addition, councils now have the power to control holiday lets in areas where they are putting pressure on residential housing.

Public Services Recovery and Reform

- Teacher numbers increased by 885
- New mental health community services accessed by more than 18,500 people
- Proposals to cut the cost of school uniforms published

The Scottish Government and the Scottish Green Party believe in Scotland's ambition to be the best place for children and young people to grow up. Scotland's education system needs to ensure that all children have the best opportunity to succeed, regardless of their social circumstances or additional needs.

The Bute House Agreement commits to support the recruitment of at least 3,500 additional teachers and 500 classroom assistants over the course of the parliamentary term. Teacher numbers increased by 885 over the year to December 2021 following the commitment to permanent funding of £145.5 million to local authorities to support education staffing. This will ensure sustained employment of these additional teachers, while meeting local needs and benefitting Scotland's children and young people.

To address equalities issues around uniform policy and reduce the cost of school uniform, a consultation was launched in May 2022 seeking views on what should be included in national guidance for education authorities and schools on school uniform.



Improving young people's outcomes is at the heart of everything the Government seeks to do. Work has begun on the commitment to provide support for children and young people's mental health and wellbeing by embedding counselling through schools, training for staff and the publication of new guidance to support whole-school approaches to mental health and wellbeing in schools. The Mental Health in Schools working group is now focussed on embedding and evaluating these approaches as part of a strategic approach to improving children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. **By December 2021, more than 18,500 children, young people, parents and carers accessed the newly established community services and we have committed to doubling funding for this, from £15 million to £30 million, by the end of this parliamentary term.**

The Bute House Agreement committed to transforming Scotland's social care system to help everyone in Scotland to thrive and live a full life. The National Care Service Bill, introduced to the Scottish Parliament in June 2022, provides the basis for a National Care Service that will have human rights embedded throughout and ensures the best possible outcomes for people accessing care and support, ending the postcode lottery of care. The service will be co-designed with people who have direct experience of social care services and ensure fair employment practices and national pay bargaining for the social care workforce.

The needs of the trans community, including non-binary people, are an important shared priority. **As often the most stigmatised in our society, the trans community must be supported and this includes improving the health services they may require. Therefore, the Agreement commits to centrally fund improvements in gender identity services.** In December 2021 the NHS Gender Identity Services: Strategic Action Framework was published, backed by a £9 million commitment, which sets out collaborative work to improve access to, and delivery of these clinical services.

Our Natural Environment

- New £65 million Nature Restoration Fund launched and funding projects
- Over 4,000 hectares of new native woodland created
- Land Reform Bill proposals published

Over the last year significant steps have been taken to deliver on the commitment to protect and enhance Scotland's natural environment. **The £65 million multi-year Nature Restoration Fund has been established, which supports projects that restore wildlife and habitats on land and sea and address the twin crises of biodiversity loss and climate change.** Minister for Biodiversity, Lorna Slater, announced support for the expansion of the beaver population, and NatureScot will publish Scotland's National Beaver Strategy this autumn. In addition, despite the main planting season being severely affected by winter storms, the native woodland creation target of 4,000 hectares was surpassed.



The Scottish Government is currently seeking views on the ambitious joint commitment on proposals for the Land Reform Bill, which will be introduced to the Scottish Parliament by the end of 2023. The Bill aims to address long-standing concerns about the highly concentrated pattern of land ownership in rural areas of Scotland. Work has also been taken forward on the commitment to create at least one new National Park. An initial public consultation on our approach to this generated a range of ideas and comments on the role and functions of National Parks in Scotland. The responses are being used to inform further focused consultation with stakeholders in late summer and autumn and will be used to develop an Evaluation Framework to identify areas for National Park designation.

Everyone in Scotland deserves to have access to healthy, nutritious food. **The Good Food Nation (Scotland) Act 2022 received Royal Assent on 26 July and will underpin the work that is already being done across the Scottish Government to make Scotland a Good Food Nation.** The Act also commits to establishing a Food Commission for making recommendations, conducting research, and providing advice to Scottish Ministers.



A Democratic, Outward-looking Scotland

- **Scottish Independence Referendum Bill published**
- **Building a New Scotland prospectus papers launched**
- **Opened a new Scottish Government hub in Copenhagen**

The Scottish Government and the Scottish Green Party believe that independence within the EU would provide the best conditions for Scotland, the people who live here, and future generations, to thrive. **Ministers have committed to give the people of Scotland a choice in a referendum in this parliamentary term.** It is Ministers' shared belief that this has never been more necessary as the world has changed dramatically since the last Independence Referendum with the exit of the UK from the EU, the Covid-19 pandemic, and most recently, the conflict in Ukraine and the growing cost of living crisis.



The Scottish Government published a Scottish Independence Referendum Bill on 28 June 2022, alongside the route map to a referendum, and announced a proposed referendum date of 19 October 2023. The Lord Advocate referred to the Supreme Court the devolution issue of whether a Bill for a referendum on Scottish Independence would relate to reserved matters.

To help the people of Scotland make an informed decision and make the case for a referendum, a series of papers titled *'Building a New Scotland'* will form a prospectus for an independent Scotland. The first paper, *'Independence in the Modern World. Wealthier, Happier, Fairer: Why Not Scotland?'*, which was published in June, set out detailed analysis of the UK's performance across a range of economic and social indicators relative to that of ten European countries. The second of these papers was published in July 2022, *'Renewing Democracy Through Independence'*, setting out the Scottish Government's view that people who live in Scotland have the right to choose how they should be governed and to decide if Scotland should become an independent country.



Given the UK’s withdrawal from the European Union, the importance and value of strengthening Scotland’s international relationships, presence and voice has never been clearer. To help develop these relationships the Government committed to establishing Scottish Government offices in Copenhagen and Warsaw to promote Scotland’s interests and reputation in the Nordic and Central European regions. The Copenhagen Office became operational on 17 May 2022 and work is underway to establish an office in Warsaw within this parliamentary term.

The Scottish Government believes that the Scottish people should have a voice in the decisions that affect their lives. Turnout for the 2021 Scottish Parliament elections was higher than ever, and Ministers have committed to promote legislation on electoral reform that enables more people to stand as candidates at Scottish Parliament and local government elections, and to improve the accessibility of elections, with a particular focus on people with sight loss, to ensure as many people can vote as possible. To achieve this the Scottish Government is looking at ways to build on work supporting citizens assemblies to increase citizen

participation. Furthermore, a Scottish Government consultation on electoral reform will launch later this year to gather the views from the people of Scotland on how electoral reform can best be achieved in Scotland. Ministers recognise that creating a range of meaningful and inclusive opportunities for the people of Scotland to have their say on what matters to them is a vital part of a healthy democracy.

The Bute House Agreement recognised the need to prevent further damage to the devolution settlement from attempts to undermine and constrain its powers, for example action being taken in devolved areas by the UK Government through the Internal Market Act or the “levelling up” agenda. Together Ministers have sought to protect the devolution settlement. For example, the new regulations passed by the Scottish Parliament banning the use of single use plastics were at risk of being undermined by the UK Government’s Internal Market Act, which would have allowed plastic materials made elsewhere in the UK and imported into Scotland to be legally sold. Ministers from both sides of the Agreement were active in securing the necessary changes to allow the regulations to operate as intended.

Looking Ahead



The Programme for Government 2022-23 provides an important opportunity to demonstrate continued high ambitions for Scotland. The Programme for Government 2021-22 set out the long term aims for this parliamentary term supported by the Bute House Agreement, and this year's Programme for Government will build on this, setting out a clear, bold and ambitious plan for the delivery of those aims, including detailing targeted new policies to respond to the new challenges we face.

The Government is primarily focussed on four key tasks: reducing child poverty; addressing the climate crisis; the recovery from Covid of our public services including the delivery of the National Strategy for Economic Transformation; and the development of the prospectus for an independent Scotland and the delivery of a referendum in the second half of 2023. Alongside addressing these challenges, Ministers recognise that the cost of living crisis requires a response within the powers available to the Scottish Government. Alongside the Government's existing investment of £3 billion, Ministers will continue to review their actions and will do more where that can be done, whilst holding the UK Government to account over its lack of meaningful action.

The Bute House Agreement is an Agreement for this parliamentary term. After one year, firm foundations have been built, demonstrating delivery and progress on shared policy priorities and adopting an approach that is both challenging and constructive. That commitment will be strengthened moving forward.

The Programme for Government 2022-23 will set out the specific packages of actions to be delivered in the next twelve months including actions from the Bute House Agreement. This will include the next stage in delivering a range of key commitments such as:

- Increasing the Scottish Child Payment to children under 16 to £25 per week per eligible child by the end of 2022.
- Increasing ambition on climate change, including further measures to reduce emissions from the transport and agriculture and land use sectors and accelerate the deployment of renewables.
- Introducing the Land Reform Bill to the Scottish Parliament in 2023 to empower communities to benefit from the opportunities that nature restoration and the journey to net zero presents.
- Publishing a new Biodiversity Strategy in 2022, followed by a delivery plan in 2023 which will set out how the Government will tackle the biodiversity crisis in Scotland.
- Progress the education reform programme to establish a new independent inspectorate, national agency for Scottish education and qualifications body, underpinned where required by legislation.
- In response to recommendations from the OECD Review and the final report by Professor Ken Muir, an inclusive and wide-ranging National Discussion will take place, providing an opportunity for learners, parents and carers, and practitioners, to shape the future vision for Education in Scotland, based on their experiences, reporting in early 2023.



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