

SNP Manifesto 2021

What we're doing for disabled people

Our vision is an independent Scotland that is more equitable and inclusive for all. With the full powers of independence, Scotland will have control over the necessary economic and legislative levers to ensure that disabled people can fully participate in public life and enjoy the same kinds of opportunities and choices that so many people take for granted.

On the road to independence, we will continue to work with disabled people in Scotland. By re-electing a SNP Government, together we will:

Strengthen rights

We will bring forward world-leading human rights legislation to reduce inequality and advance the rights of everyone and ensure human rights are embedded in every aspect of life in Scotland. As part of this, we will incorporate into Scots Law the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

We passed the Hate Crime Act at the end of the last parliament which makes it an offence to stir up hatred against people on the grounds of disability.

A diverse and inclusive Scotland

We will introduce an overarching Scottish Diversity and Inclusion Strategy covering the public sector, our educational institutions, justice system, transport and workplaces. This strategy will focus on the removal of institutional, cultural and financial barriers which lead to inequalities in relation to gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, disability and social mobility.

We will increase and improve our data collection so that across all our policies we will be able to have a strong evidence base, gauge intersectional inequality, measure outcomes, and recommend improvements.

Invest in our NHS

We will increase frontline NHS spending by at least 20% to support and renew our NHS as it recovers from Covid-19. This will increase funding of frontline services by over £2.5 billion.

We want to see as much health care as possible provided in the community and closer to people's own homes, because that is what we know patients want. As such, primary care and GP services will see a greater share of NHS frontline investment over this parliament, with an increase of at least 25% in primary care funding.

Improve transitions for children

We will introduce a National Transitions to Adulthood Strategy to ensure there is a joined up approach to supporting our disabled young people and improve guidance to all those providing support, ensuring that no young person is left behind.

Learning Disability, Autism and Neurodiversity

We will bring forward a Learning Disability, Autism and Neurodiversity Bill to delineate support and services from existing mental health legislation and ensure that human rights are protected and promoted.

To help make sure the new legislation is championed when it is implemented we will create a Learning Disabilities, Autism and Neurodiversity Commissioner through the new law.

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We will work with people with lived experience on an inclusive approach to ensure the Commissioner can safeguard their rights.

Create a National Care Service for all

To ensure our social care system consistently delivers high quality services across Scotland, we will establish a National Care Service. The National Care Service will oversee the delivery of care, improve standards, ensure enhanced pay and conditions for workers and provide better support for unpaid carers. We will ensure that those who use care services have the opportunity to play a central role in the development of the National Care Service.

We believe social care services, just like health care services, should be provided on a truly universal basis, free at the point of use. If reelected, an SNP government will abolish charges for non-residential care.

These changes can only be delivered with increased investment. We will therefore increase public investment in social care by 25% over the parliament, delivering over £800 million of increased support for social care.

Build a fairer Social Security system

We have built Scotland's new social security system with, for and around the people who use it. At its heart are the principles of dignity, fairness and respect and a belief that social security is an investment in our people.

These principles will underpin the disability and carer benefits which will be introduced in the next parliament. Child Disability Payment will start later this year to be followed by Adult Disability Payment.

We will make sure there are long term awards for people with conditions that are unlikely to change, and for those where changes may happen in future, we will review cases as simply and efficiently as possible to ensure people are getting the right level of support.

We will continue to fully mitigate the Bedroom Tax, which would otherwise have disproportionately impacted disabled people.

Champion fairer employment

We will expand the specific duties that require a listed public authority to publish gender pay gap information to disability and ethnicity reporting and ensure these areas are included within their Equal Pay Statement.

With the full powers of independence, we can do much more to protect workers' rights and end discrimination. Until then, we will continue to call for the devolution of employment law to the Scottish Parliament.

As part of supporting disabled people into work and closing the employment gap we will increase specific support for disabled parents into work. We will nearly double the planned investment in the Parental Employability Support Fund to £15 million in the next two years to help improve employment chances and support parents into good, secure jobs.

We will complete the expansion of free, high quality childcare to 1,140 hours – the same time a child spends in primary school – by August 2021.

In the next Parliament we will go further, by building a system of 'wraparound' childcare, providing care before and after school, all year round, where the least well-off families will pay nothing.

Improving the accessibility of transport

Our vision is that all disabled people can travel with the same freedom, choice, dignity and opportunity as other citizens.

We will continue to implement the Transport Act that includes measures to improve accessibility of bus travel for all, and while rail accessibility is reserved to the UK Government, we remain committed to improving access at stations beyond the UK Government programme.

To make it safer and easier for people to get around, by the end of the parliament, 10% of transport capital budget will be spent on walking, cycling and wheeling.

Improve housing

Through our 20 year vision for housing, we will embed a person-centred approach, that aligns housing support with social care services, so people have choices and flexibility to live independently

We will increase the supply and choice of accessible and adapted homes and introduce a new Scottish Accessible Homes Standard which all new homes must achieve.

Support our carers

We will award a double payment of Carers Allowance Supplement this year, worth £460, in recognition of the extra burden the pandemic has placed on carers.

We will introduce an improved Carers Assistance payment to replace carers allowance. It will pay a further £10 per week to those who are caring for more than one disabled person, and increase the period of paying the benefit when a carer loses someone they have cared for from 8 weeks to 12 weeks.

Improve representation

We will establish a similar scheme to the new Minority Ethnic Leadership and Development Programme we have established with the John Smith Centre for disabled people to remove the barriers many disabled people face when it comes to leadership positions.

We will increase support to projects which are supporting disabled people and those from a minority ethnic background into positions on public boards to increase representation.

We will continue with our Access to Elected Office Fund which offers financial assistance to disabled people contesting the Scottish Parliament and Local Authority elections.