



ALL FOR UNITY SAVE OUR SCOTLAND

A Manifesto for Change

Photograph by
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www.alliance4unity.uk



SAVE OUR SCOTLAND - A Manifesto for Change

Introduction

All for Unity is a broad alliance of patriotic people who care about Scotland and want the best for it. We offer pragmatism, experience, professionalism and a fresh approach.

We want the return to Scotland of solidarity, community, excellence, entrepreneurship and good humour. We need unity, not division in Scotland.

We want a vibrant, self confident country that is at ease with itself. We want everyone in Scotland to think of themselves, once more, as Scottish, rather than nationalist or unionist.

We advocate policies that will strengthen and stabilise our economy and allow us to develop world class public services. Policies that will make life in Scotland better for us all.

Post Brexit and the coronavirus Scotland needs stability and time to rebuild. We believe passionately it is in Scotland's interest to remain part of the United Kingdom.

We want to help form a Government of National Unity that will heal Scotland and restore honesty, competence and good governance to our public services and institutions, for all Scots.

All for Unity draws its candidates from all political affiliations. Politicians at Holyrood are often criticised for having limited experience of the real world. Apart from politics, All for Unity candidates have a wide range of work experience including agriculture, business, e-commerce, education, finance, IT, law, manufacturing, medicine, military, philosophy, police and telecommunications.

Our manifesto is a positive vision for Scotland's future.

All for Unity is actively working towards a pro-UK coalition so our Manifesto for Change is a statement of the principles we would bring to the work of building a cross party coalition with Labour, Conservatives and Liberals to make Scotland a happy, healthy and prosperous nation again.

Our Policies

Independence Referendum



We had our vote in 2014 and that was supposed to be it for a generation. We do not support the SNP's argument for a second secession referendum. But equally we don't believe that the Tory policy of 'just say no' is sensible either.

All for Unity is lobbying the government to introduce a Canada style Clarity Act that would lay down clearly the conditions for granting another Scottish independence referendum and the rules for holding it.

- No referendum would be granted unless a clear majority of adults in Scotland entitled to vote (rather than those who actually do vote) cast their votes for parties standing for secession.
- The franchise for any referendum on breaking up the United Kingdom would include all Scots resident in the United Kingdom so that we could not have a situation where the football captain of Scotland could not vote while the captain of Lithuania had a vote.
- The wording of any referendum would be Leave/Remain more accurately reflecting the seriousness of separation and removing the bias of Yes/No.
- The threshold and turnout would be set so that Scots could not be forced to give up their British passports unless a majority of the electorate voted for it.
- Questions over the currency that an independent Scotland would use, the share of the UK's national debt, the border and the terms of any trade agreements with the rest of the United Kingdom would be settled beforehand so that Scots would know exactly what the conditions would be.
- In the event of a vote for separation the democratic deficit inherent in the geographical distribution of Leave/Remain voters would be addressed by a second 'People's Vote' allowing the Scottish regions - many of them former kingdoms and principalities - to ratify the decision. They could opt as regions either to leave with an independent Scotland or to remain as devolved administrations within the United Kingdom to avoid being dragged out of Great Britain against their democratic will.

Devolution



We support the principle that Scottish law should be made in Scotland but it is clear that devolution must be reformed. We want to restore confidence in, and respect for, the Scottish parliament. Our proposals in coalition would be:

- To rename the Scottish 'government', the Scottish Executive, and devolve many of its resources and powers to Scottish regions so that power sits closer to the people.

- The Saltire belongs to everyone in Scotland. We want to restore pride in and ownership of the Saltire to all in Scotland, regardless of political belief. We wish to restore symbols of the Crown to all official signs and headers; prevent the executive using the hashtag #WeAreScotland; and ensure that the Union Flag is flown alongside the Saltire on all government buildings, always.
- To reduce the high cost of government in the SNP's centralised Scotland and make sure that any savings go into front line services.
- To review electoral law by overhauling the current hybrid first-past-the-post and proportional representation system, which few voters in Scotland understand, to make it more transparent and more reflective of the votes cast, and to avoid skewed results.
- If List MSPs are to continue after the review, we would propose a law that MSPs may only serve for one term after being elected on the List in order to ensure that politicians treat being an elected representative as a vocation rather than as a career, to ensure a regular influx of new ideas and enthusiasm and to reduce the endemic corruption and cronyism in the Holyrood 'club'.
- To introduce measures to prevent electoral fraud by tightening up on postal voting procedures, making it mandatory that voters have fixed addresses and stopping the registration of voters under the age of fifteen.
- To introduce a 'Derek's Law' after the disgraced former Finance Minister to ensure that any MSP found to have acted in a manner unbecoming of an elected representative is forced to stand in a by-election immediately or stand down.
- To carry out a review of the separation of powers between the legislature, the executive and the judiciary and ensure that there are adequate checks and balances.
- To end the practice whereby the Lord Advocate sits in the cabinet and is subject to the influence of the ruling party.
- To grant MSPs parliamentary privilege to allow them to speak freely in the Legislature and hold the Executive to account.
- It is clear that the committee system has failed to hold the executive to account or give adequate scrutiny to legislation. We would like to see a review to seek ways of strengthening committees or alternatives to the current unicameral legislature.

The Constitution



We acknowledge that the constitution is a reserved matter dealt with by the UK Parliament at Westminster. So we would lobby to stop all ultra vires spending of taxpayers' money on planning for separation, close down the SNP's Department for the Constitution, Europe and External Affairs and redeploy the money to front line services.

But we also believe that the last fourteen years of corruption and failure have shown the constitutional settlement to be flawed and that the ideas for reforming Holyrood must come from within Scotland.

We have come up with the ideas for the government to strengthen the Unity of the United Kingdom and to make devolution work honestly and fairly for the good of all people in Scotland.

Unity



We believe that Britain is stronger together and in the security and solidarity that come with Unity.

We would urge the British government to take steps to strengthen shared institutions. For example, we are recommending that the Bank of England is renamed the Bank of Britain and that our shared currency, Sterling, is manifested in one single range of British banknotes.

Good Governance



Evidence of corruption has corroded trust in the executive. We would wish to see immediate steps to restore transparency and accountability by:

- Immediately opening the books by calling in external auditors to investigate the channelling of Covid business relief money to partisan spending, and away from businesses and even hospices.
- A Government Financial Transparency Bill ensuring all Government spending is open to simple scrutiny.
- Working with the British government to ensure that all public money raised in Scotland and Barnett Formula funds are properly accounted for and audited each year by an external auditor.
- Dismantling the SNP's client state by making QUANGOs such as Creative Scotland independent of the executive.

The Economy, Business and Jobs



Our candidates come from every political orientation. However, we all believe in a mixed economy where a revitalised private sector can generate tax revenues to support well-funded public services.

Companies cannot make long-term investments in Scotland when 'Neverendum' causes so many unanswered questions about the general political and economic climate, economic growth rates, exchange rate stability, general health of the banking system, interest rates, currency, borders, tariffs and the threat of higher taxation after separation. We believe a Clarity Act will remove this uncertainty.

We need to reverse the trend of declining inward investment in Scotland and we would propose providing a strong Scottish voice within UK initiatives and using trade missions within the FCO and British Council. The disestablishment of Scottish pseudo embassies would provide extra funds for the promotion of Scotland.

This summer, as lockdowns are eased and finally withdrawn, there will be a great requirement for Scottish Government to be able to assess and respond rapidly to the many different types of needs of all the different kinds of businesses across Scotland. The people tasked with this role need to be qualified and competent to make these assessments rapidly and to manage implementing workable solutions.

Around one million jobs are dependent on Scotland's small business and self-employed community. The events of 2020 forced half of Scottish small businesses to close, at least temporarily, with insolvencies and joblessness set to rise as a result.

We propose a Small Business Recovery Unit, as requested by the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) to safeguard small business interests, and for when new laws and tax and spending plans are considered – as well as improving the government's understanding of small firms.

The Scottish National Investment Bank (SNIB) and the Scottish National Infrastructure Company (SNIC) are just ways for the SNP to centralise and wield their power, directing funds to those businesses they favour, and who favour them. We wish to see them scrapped.

The fact that companies have to deal with a different financial and regulatory environment in Scotland is an impediment to investing and creating jobs in Scotland. Implementing steps to harmonise across the UK, where feasible, should be the goal.

Income tax is higher in Scotland than in England which is an impediment to attracting and recruiting employees to work in Scotland. We propose a genuinely independent commission to examine optimal tax rates and make recommendations.

Skills funding should be more closely aligned to industry needs and strike a better balance between undergraduate learning, work-based learning and short, focused, industry-led courses to help people rapidly upskill and retrain. We would argue for support for Scottish universities and colleges with the funding and means necessary to achieve this.

We will support the government initiative to establish free ports in Scotland, reversing SNP opposition.

Education



Scottish education used to be the envy of the world. Despite greater resources per pupil available through the Barnett Formula, it has deteriorated rapidly during the last 14 years, falling behind other parts of the UK in international league tables. It has failed those from deprived backgrounds the most, and the Covid generation has been particularly disadvantaged. We would campaign in coalition for

- Developing national interventions for addressing the attainment gap, learning from ad hoc temporary projects in individual Scottish schools, including tutoring and mentoring programmes
- Introducing an individualised tutoring and mentoring programme to allow young people to catch up after Covid.
- A Scottish Education recovery programme; placing literacy and numeracy at the centre of the learning process again.

- Expanding further education provision and support for further education students
- Giving individual schools more autonomy like their English counterparts to respond to local conditions
- Changing spending priorities to ensure more teachers and fewer bureaucrats, making savings from the elimination of waste and ultra vires spending in the SNP's budget.
- Reversing the decline in classroom assistants, additional needs staff and educational psychologists.
- Enhancing the voices of parents in educational policy by reviewing the roles of the National Parent Forum, Connect and Us For Them Scotland as bodies for representing parents' and carers' interests.
- Pushing for the replacement of Education Scotland with an independent inspectorate and institute devoted to spreading best practice in teaching and learning.
- Reforming the SQA and removing its monopoly over educational qualifications.
- Restoring and expanding Scotland's participation in international education comparison surveys so that we can benchmark how we are doing, and ensuring that reports like the OECD report cannot be suppressed by government.
- Piloting a scheme to raise the age at which children start primary school from 5 to 6, in line with best practice in other countries, with corresponding expansion in nursery and kindergarten provision.
- Radically overhauling the Curriculum for Excellence, with a shift back to knowledge-based learning and removal of nationalist propaganda.
- Improving modern language provision at primary and secondary levels so that every child can achieve a Nat 5 in a modern language as a minimum.
- Expanding instrumental music programmes so many more children are given the opportunity to play an instrument, regardless of family income.
- Expanding outdoor learning and sport so that they are a standard part of the curriculum for all year groups.

Scottish further education has also been damaged by nationalist ideology.

- Despite the outward appearance of free university education for all, social mobility in Scotland has declined compared to the rest of the UK and many lose out through a cap on places. We would propose to review the funding of university places to see if a fairer solution can be found.
- We would promote free speech and diversity of opinion on campuses

Health



We would argue strongly for emergency funding and organisational prioritisation for a post-Covid taskforce to clear the backlog of cancer screenings and other critical operations.

We would protect our NHS, the most critical British institution.

We will improve the management of the NHS in Scotland. We are currently short of 850 GPs and have 500 consultant vacancies in our hospitals. We would campaign to:

- Increase the number of medical students in Scottish medical schools who are domiciled in Scotland.
- Recruit medical students from the areas of Scotland that have a particular need for doctors
- Introduce a requirement for medical students to work in the NHS for 5 years post-graduation to encourage them to stay in the NHS.
- Increase recruitment and retention to general practice.
- Initiate an effective GP retention scheme to encourage older GPs to remain in general practice.
- Encourage the reintroduction of more generalist training in hospitals. Consultants have become over specialised - we need generalists eg geriatricians and general surgeons and general physicians who can cope with whatever comes through the door.
- Trainees in hospital careers should spend time outside teaching hospitals in rotations that include district general hospitals.
- We want to increase the provision of mental health services for all, particularly young people.
- Most physiotherapists and occupational therapists should be in the community including general practice.

Our social care system is creaking.

- We need to provide enough carers at a reasonable wage to stop high turnover and make caring a rewarding career.
- We would encourage more supported housing for the elderly with a communal entrance and flats and a communal area.
- We would encourage New Zealand style retirement villages where the elderly are catered for.

Scotland is the drug deaths capital of Europe and the statistics are a national disgrace.

- We must clarify the reasons for our high level of drug deaths
- We would increase funding to drug rehabilitation centres.

Justice



We would campaign for repeal of the Hate Crime Bill immediately and in full.

The separation of powers is an essential tenet of Scottish justice. It has been significantly eroded under the SNP. We propose a Bill strengthening this in law.

The role of the Lord Advocate is untenable. The head of the Crown Office cannot also sit in Holyrood as part of the devolved administration. We would propose to preserve the role of the Lord Advocate as head of the Crown Office but remove all political links.

We would argue for strict liability offences to be scrutinised and repealed where necessary.

There are presently three verdicts available to Scottish Courts: Guilty, not guilty and not proven. Our justice system is based on evidence and proof. We would propose the removal of “guilty/not guilty” which are emotive and misleading. Verdicts would be limited to “proven” and “not proven”.

We will resist all attempts to remove the need for corroboration in the prosecution of offences.

We will campaign to amend any laws that reverse the burden of proof so that no Scot can stand in the dock without the presumption of innocence.

The Holyrood Committee system is flawed and needs reconsideration. There are insufficient checks on MSP actions. We would make proposals (to Westminster) to amend the Scotland Act to ensure all Committee Inquiries are truly independent, transparent and fair.

We believe the investigations into the handling of the Salmond Affair have not been free or fair. We will initiate an independent judge-led inquiry.

Civil Rights



We would resist any attempts to remove Scotland from the European Convention on Human Rights.

We support free speech within the parameters of previous discrimination and incitement laws.

Housing



We recognise the housing and homelessness crisis in Scotland.

- We would push for any quantitative easing by the Treasury being used to provide funding for projects to increase the housing stock.
- We would encourage the building of new, low cost, starter homes.
- We would campaign for greater change of use to turn high street shops back into domestic housing to regenerate communities in town and city centres.
- We wish to end homelessness by empowering and resourcing local authorities to convert empty town centre shops into hostels.

Agriculture



We support our farmers who look after our environment and underpin the vital tourism and food & drink sectors of our economy.

We recognise the difficulties of competing in a global market place from less favoured areas of Scotland and with the higher environmental, animal health and health and safety standards that we rightly expect in this country. And we will campaign to ensure that where subsidies are required to ensure a level playing field they are available.

We understand the pressures of farming are greatly added to by the burden of bureaucracy, and that these are contributing to a mental health crisis in Scottish agriculture. We propose a red tape review to reduce unnecessary administration.

We will fight for a fair deal for farmers where it is evident that corporate capitalism is failing and processors and retailers have disproportionate power. We propose:

- A groceries adjudicator with real teeth that oversees the whole supply chain.
- The reform of labelling and ending the practice of allowing food imported from overseas and packaged in Scotland to be labelled with the Saltire.
- Taking action against cartels and encourage greater competition in markets.
- Taking steps to reverse the decline in the number of Scottish abattoirs and allow on-farm slaughter to increase animal welfare and reduce journey time

Environment



Climate Change is an existential challenge and we need to do everything possible to move to a post carbon economy and encourage renewable forms of energy generation.

We also need to recognise the serious impact this is likely to have on parts of Scotland and take steps now to allow areas reliant on the oil industry to transition to the new economy while avoiding the mistakes made during de-industrialisation.

And we must not make the cure worse for our environment than the problem:

- The latest science argues that forestry is not always a better carbon sink than well managed moorland or grassland. We propose a pause in the afforestation of the uplands to put in place robust legislation that protects our iconic heather moorland – rarer in global terms than rainforest - and the habitat for endangered Scottish species, and insists on intelligent planting: the right trees in the right place.
- We acknowledge the impact on greenhouse gases of feeding non-grass crops to livestock. We will encourage regenerative agriculture and help farmers to transition to carbon-neutral grazing systems.
- We would push for a review of cycle lanes in cities and their removal where it is evident that extra congestion has been counter-productive. We will campaign for discrete continental-style cycle lanes to be incorporated in any new development.

- Plastic is a stain on all our environments. We propose a law to force retailers and manufacturers to use biodegradable packaging unless a need for plastic can be proven.

We support the concept of Wilding and the re-introduction of certain species to enhance our biodiversity but we believe clear guidelines are required:

- Wilding should be based on the extensification of herbivore grazing to create biodiverse habitats in line with scientific evidence.
- Wilding must not simply be the abandonment of land and new 'Highland Clearances.'
- The re-introduction of extinct species must be accompanied by a workable licensing system for their control.

We recognise the damage done to the environment recently by unthinking legislation by the SNP/Green coalition on the advice of charities and NGOs. We would support the formation of a policy forum comprising rural workers' trade unions, the custodians of the land, to help legislators. This forum would be accorded statutory consultee status.

We propose a review into the effects on marine and riparian environments of intensive salmon farms, and fish welfare issues and legislation to regulate or even ban them if necessary.

We recognise deer as an important indigenous species and support land managers who maintain a stable deer population. We would campaign to stop the Scottish government's encouragement of deer being culled at a late stage of pregnancy.

We would accelerate work on Just Transition, creating multi-stakeholder boards for oil and gas plants such as Mossmorran and Braefoot Bay.

We would commission an independent, expert study of the health, social and environmental impacts of Mossmorran.

Law and Order



Faith in policing has been damaged by the centralisation of Police Scotland under the direct control of the executive.

- We support retaining the economies of centralisation but making the police locally accountable again with each former constabulary area having a nominated chief constable answerable to the people via policing committees on regional councils.

Transport



We recognise the importance to our economy of Scotland's transport infrastructure.

We propose a review of the country's major road network with a view to supporting fishing, agriculture, forestry, aquaculture, manufacturing and heavy engineering.

Improvements to our roads are essential, with priority given to the A82, the most dangerous road in Scotland, the dualling of the A1 from the border to Edinburgh and a solution must be found to the landslides on the Rest and Be Thankful.

We support the government's proposals for a road link between the Mull of Galloway and Northern Ireland and the upgrade of the A75 in order to strengthen the economy of the South of Scotland.

We would encourage a Government of National Unity to avail of funding, available from the United Kingdom government, for connectivity projects such as the road projects above.

Urban and rural roads are potholed and neglected because local authorities have been cash starved for many years. We will investigate increasing funding to permit repairs and this will be partly funded by cancelling non essential spending, such as road signs in Gaelic.

We would encourage a review of disused rail lines around Scotland.

An urgent review of ferry services to the West coast of Scotland is required, to include a solution to the two incomplete rusting ferries in a Clyde shipyard and the discontinuation of the Gourrock to Dunoon ferry service.

Culture, Media and Sport



We value the importance and integrity of a free press. Allowing journalists to pursue their craft free from intimidation or threats is an essential keystone of democracy, while we would seek to strengthen and uphold existing legislations that protect the victimisation of individuals, in tandem with holding the powerful to account. The political intimidation of journalists must be stopped.

The anonymity of online bullying and the spread of misinformation is destroying debate and social progress, and we will actively seek legislation to hold individuals accountable for their online actions.

The truth matters and we need to restore the values of the Enlightenment. We will investigate legislating to prevent the wilful spreading of fake news.

We support the continuation of Gaelic broadcasting at an appropriate level but are sceptical about a separate BBC Scotland channel, that is underfunded and a substandard version of a schedule already available on the network. We would argue for a review of whether this is the best of use of licence fee payers' money.

We celebrate the splendour and variety of Scottish culture, which belongs to us all. We shall ensure our culture is globally celebrated. We would ensure that any funding body such as Creative Scotland is open and sensitive to the international nature of our artists and recognises that anything created in Scotland is de facto part of Scottish culture, whether it speaks of Scotland or not. This must be recognised in the disbursement of its funding.

The creative industries have the potential to substantially boost the Scottish economy if properly managed. We propose, as happened in both Canada and Australia, with incredible results, a tax haven for all domiciled production companies, and all and any productions using Scotland as a location, Scottish artists and technicians. The rewards would be enormous, both culturally and economically.

We recognise the importance of internet connectivity in the modern world and would seek to improve access to high speed broadband in rural areas in Scotland.

Summary



The exciting policies above are all possible with All for Unity MSPs. A pro-UK coalition with a pragmatic approach is the way to make Scotland a better and happier place.

To bring in a Government of National Unity, we urge voters to lend their first vote to the best placed pro-unity candidate in constituencies and their second vote to All for Unity on the regional lists.

All for Unity wants the best for you and your family. All for Unity wants the best for Scotland.



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