



Independence for Scotland Party

A Manifesto for Independence



Independence. Nothing less.



Introduction

Independence for Scotland Party (ISP) was formally recognised by the Electoral Commission in May 2020. The work to create the party in the midst of a global pandemic had been proceeding for many months by that date.

Despite mandates being given at each election in Scotland since 2014 for another referendum to be sought by our parliament in Holyrood, nothing placed the unfairness of the constitutional arrangement of the United Kingdom into such stark relief as the outcome of the UK-wide referendum on continued membership of the EU in June 2016. Two-thirds of Scots voted to maintain our historically strong links with our European neighbours but on January 31st we formally left the EU.

Continued inaction by the Scottish Government did nothing to address poverty or the imminent threat to our economy and jobs, so we founded and built a new party. The 2021 election had demonstrated the absurdity of being asked to give both votes to the SNP which wasted just over a million pro-independence votes, gifting London-based parties additional representation in Edinburgh and the ability to block any change that would benefit Scotland and her people.

As Scotland has fully-one-third of Europe's entire renewable energy potential, energy must be at the future of our nation's economic planning. To date, ISP remains to fully committed to Common Weal's 21 for 21, therefore ISP will continue to contest elections. We will continue to develop policies that will benefit the people of Scotland.

ISP remains committed to changing taxation to an asset-based tax system being the simplest, most efficient way to fund Universal Basic Income and its effect on state pension and benefits.

About Us

Our members

Independence for Scotland Party (ISP) is a member-led, grassroots party. The membership is represented by elected office holders in each of Scotland's eight parliamentary regions. Candidates and elected representatives of the party do not report to or take direction from a Party Whip or unelected delegates but instead take instruction from the office holders in their regional branch.



Representatives are expected to vote on a basis guided by the party's accepted policies, otherwise with their conscience. Should any branch be dissatisfied by their representative, they can vote to replace them.

We feel this is the most democratic way to govern a party and to ensure implementation of members' ambitions and party aims, and we have an Executive who will all stand for election at the autumn conference.

Our Executive

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| Colette Walker | Founder and Party Convener |
| Julie McAnulty | Deputy Convener |
| Joan McDowall | Founder and Ordinary Member |
| Colette Walker | Interim Party Treasurer |
| Kevin Borthwick | Nominating Officer |
| Julia Pannell | Communications Officer |
| Fiona Nelson | Ordinary Member |
| John Forbes | Ordinary Member |

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Independence

ISP believes it is not acceptable for one nation to be required to have to ask another for the right to determine its constitution and future.



Plebiscite Commitment

ISP contest Scottish Parliament elections as plebiscites. It is the party's stance that if a majority of seats return pro-independence MSPs, this is a binding expression of the Scottish people's desire for independence from the United Kingdom. The Acts of Union were a bilateral treaty. In international law, such a treaty is annulled when one or both parties withdraws.

The Scottish Constitution

ISP proposes a written Constitution for Scotland based on the original constitution as set out in the Declaration of Arbroath (1320) the Declaration of the Clergy (1310) and the Claim of Right (1689) confirming the fundamental democratic institutions and functioning of the State and setting out the rights and liberties of the sovereign Scottish People.

We support an Interim Constitution being adopted before an independence vote and coming into force on Independence Day. The Interim Constitution will form part of the Independence 'offer' to the Scottish people and protect their rights during the change to an Independent Scotland. Following consultation with and the approval of the Scottish people, It will be passed into Scots Law.

The final Constitution of Scotland will be developed and ratified after Independence in a process and timescale set out in the Interim Constitution. We suggest that five years would be appropriate. Both Interim and Final Constitutions will be amendable by a two thirds majority of MSPs, followed by a simple majority in a national referendum to distinguish these from ordinary domestic law.

ISP also supports the introduction of direct democracy, subject to the consent of the Scottish people. This is a mechanism by which the electorate can vote on major issues that affect them and on single points of policy. ISP favours the Swiss model of direct democracy, which is written into the Swiss Constitution and we see it as a necessary balance against politicians introducing legislation against the will of the people. For further information on this, click on the following link.

<https://www.isp.scot/the-exiled-scot/>

Civil Service

ISP believes that an impartial, non-political civil service is a fundamental building block of a democratic state. We consider that the Civil Service Code setting out standards of integrity, honesty, objectivity and political impartiality should have legal force in regard of civil servants in Scotland.

An independent Scottish State will require a range of additional departments which the devolved Government currently lacks. In order to build the capacity to take on the full powers of independence, it will be necessary to identify existing staff capacity, the probable transfer of undertakings protection of employment (TUPE) of UK-employed staff to the Scottish State, and additional recruitment requirements. 'The Big Four' financial services companies will be barred from all layers of government: it's time to end the revolving door of current lobbying practices.

ISP will conduct a review into the relationship between the government and third sector organisations lobbying for political change that receive Scottish Government-funding. This is to prevent situations where groups are established or funded to promote specific policy changes and are tasked with consulting on, or reporting back to government about, those same policies. Government consultations must be impartial, and publicly funded organisations should not be placed in positions that compromise their impartiality. ISP also supports the introduction of direct democracy, subject to the consent of the Scottish People. For further information on this, click on the following link.

<https://www.isp.scot/the-exiled-scot/>

If elected, ISP will seek to establish a formal scoping exercise to identify staffing requirements for at least the following:

- Home Office
- Foreign Office
- Defence Department
- Customs and Borders Agency
- Pensions Authority
- Central Bank
- Expansion of Revenue Scotland to collect all taxes
- Expansion of Social Security Scotland to administer all benefits

Once complete, draft implementation Bills will be prepared.

Monarchy and an Elected Head of State

ISP does not support the appointment of a new monarch without consultation of the Scottish electorate nor should MSPs and other elected officials renew their oath without consulting constituents. The independence of Scottish laws, courts and officers is guaranteed by the Act of Union and there is no equivalent in Scotland of England's 'divine right' of kings: we, the people of Scotland, remain sovereign. The

Scottish Crown is vested in the people and holds the 'rights rents and privileges' (that is, the law, the land and the offices of state) as the rightful possessions of the Scottish people, not the monarch. This is laid out in the Claim of Right, (1689) which forms part of the Scottish Constitution and which is the pre condition to the Treaty of Union (1707).

More than independence, we believe that the issue of real democracy, and who is elected to serve as Head of State, unites the majority of Scots in common cause.

Digital ID

We oppose Digital ID. It's not about convenience, it's about control. Digital ID would hand governments and corporations the power to monitor, track, and restrict people's lives. It is a direct threat to privacy, freedom, and democracy.

Digital ID means exclusion. Access to services, rights, and daily life could be switched off at the push of a button. No one should live in a society where participation depends on state permission or corporate approval.

We believe in protecting privacy, freedom, and dignity. We will work to raise awareness of the risks of Digital ID, support those who share these concerns, and promote alternatives that respect individual rights and a free society

Economics of an independent Scotland

ISP believes that an independent Scottish Currency issued through a Scotland-housed Central Bank is the best way to maximise the economic potential of Scotland's resources and create prosperity for the Scottish people. We propose the currency be issued by a Scottish Central Bank, and be the legal tender for purchases, exports and debts attached to Scotland.

ISP believes that a Scottish Public Bank will allow Scotland to utilise the capital of the Scottish people to best effect with a remit of improving infrastructure, re-industrialisation, agricultural development and supporting technological progress.

The Public Bank would take on national projects of strategic use that serve the public, invest in sustainable and profitable projects, provide low interest loans, and return profits made on loans to the Scottish Government for its spending.

ISP supports the establishment of a Sovereign Wealth Fund. This Fund would be seeded by the Scottish Government and would make sustainable, ethical and environmentally responsible investments in Scotland in partnership with the Scottish Public Bank, the government, other bodies and businesses with a view to long-term returns. The Fund will be owned by, and therefore accountable to, the Scottish people.

ISP supports the right of every Scot to have a personal bank account, ensuring access to both cash and online banking services. This approach to how economics in an independent Scotland will function is based on human-centred capitalism which decrees that human well-being is more important than economic metrics, and that free markets exist to serve our common goals and values.

Tax: transitioning to a fairer, asset-based system

ISP is the first political party to commit to replacing income-based taxes with an asset-based tax system. The technology to make this transition now, without any need for new investment, already exists: it is being used by governments and corporations globally. ISP asserts that owning land in Scotland requires paying the applicable taxes. Failure to comply will result in the property being nationalised for the public good. Political commentators and opposing parties often advocate for a Land Value Tax, but this approach risks disputes over

land valuation and who determines it. A simpler solution, especially for addressing industries that pollute and contribute to climate harm, is to tax the use of the land itself.

To find out more, go to:

https://www.isp.scot/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Leaflet_TheTronTax.pdf

Minimum Income Guarantee

The ISP is committed to ending poverty and building a society where no one lives in fear financially no matter their circumstances.



Technological change and automation will eliminate or transform millions of jobs in the coming decade. Persistent inequality and cost of living pressures already leave too many unable to meet basic needs. A bold, modern social contract is required. We will introduce a Minimum Income Guarantee - a regular, unconditional cash payment sufficient to keep every adult and child above the poverty line, regardless of employment status, wealth, or background.

We will pay for it with progressive taxation - closing tax loopholes and cracking down on evasion and by reallocating existing welfare spending into a single, efficient payment. A Minimum Income Guarantee is not charity , it is an investment in human potential.

It will ;

- Unlock entrepreneurship and lifelong learning
- Strengthen families and communities
- Provide a stable platform for a 21st century economy driven by automation and AI
- Guarantee dignity and independence for all

The ISP will make the Minimum Income Guarantee the cornerstone of an independent Scotland , which aims to end poverty, rewards work, paid or voluntary and ensures every resident has the security to thrive

Freeports

ISP opposes the establishment of freeports, seeing them as an annexation of land from the normal tax and laws of Scotland and a prelude to introducing fracking by the back door. ISP also notes with alarm that installations like Grangemouth and Rosyth come within the area marked out for freeports. Strategic assets like these should not be beyond the normal controls of the Scottish Government. ISP will campaign and do all in its power to reverse this policy.



Employment



Our nation – and our world – faces a “perfect storm” of economic and environmental crises that threaten not only the global economy but life on Earth as we know it. The dire, existential threats of war, climate change, and a stagnating and unfair economic system require a new approach for supporting a more resilient, climate-friendly economy that can provide meaningful and rewarding employment for its citizens. ISP proposes to:

- Introduce a living wage for all employees, prohibit exploitative zero-hour contracts and take other measures to curtail abuse in the gig economy.
- Work towards a legal obligation on companies with more than 20 staff to offer the opportunity of a four-day working week.
- Initiate a review of all local and central government functions and structures to create opportunities for decentralisation of work and promote working from home.
- Introduce grants for people wishing to attend college or other institutes of further education to retrain for green, sustainable employment. Larger companies will be required to contribute financially to training.
- Double investment in environmentally friendly technologies that support highly skilled jobs in Scotland.
- Work towards companies allowing office staff to work from home for up to three days a week.
- Invest in sustainable businesses including cooperatives and non-profits by providing grants and loans with an emphasis on small, locally based companies.
- Ensure that Scotland maximises the benefits of its clean energy production and is not tied to gas-based energy pricing mechanisms.
- Invest in existing clean energy technologies and redirect funds from fossil fuels toward research in wind, solar, tidal, and geothermal energy.

- Create jobs through research in sustainable, non-toxic materials and closed- loop cycles that eliminate waste and pollution, as well as organic agriculture, permaculture, and sustainable forestry.

Energy

Acknowledging the reality of a climate emergency, it is important for Scotland to have an awareness and vision of what energy policy should be with regard to what exists and what is required. As oil and gas used in energy production and vehicles decline, there will still be a transition period. In addition, there will be a demand for products produced using hydrocarbons, namely plastics.



ISP calls for the set-up of a state-owned and operated Scottish energy company which would manage the careful transition from oil and gas. This company, with responsibility for managing assets in the oil and gas sector, would also therefore be responsible for phasing out supply from foreign countries, which often have a far worse environmental and human rights record. This nationalisation would allow for financial proceeds to directly benefit the people of Scotland, with an expansion of research and development of more environmentally sound energy solutions. These measures seek to address the concerns of workers in the oil and gas sector. To effectively manage this transition, Scotland requires a state-controlled oil refinery. Grangemouth is the clear choice. ISP would prioritise efforts to bring it back online for this purpose.

As Scotland has an abundance of natural and sustainable energy sources, ISP is firmly against all new nuclear installations, both fission and fusion, in Scotland.

Environment

ISP acknowledges that climate change is a threat to environmental stability and considers action on this issue to be essential.



ISP does not feel that the Scottish Government's environmental commitments are ambitious enough to ensure that Scotland leads the way on meeting internationally mandated targets. ISP proposes to bring in environmental legislation to be implemented in the immediate aftermath of an independent Scotland. This legislation will be based on the outline of Common Weal's Common Home Plan. This plan aims to radically transform Scotland's economy to tackle the environmental crisis and additional social problems faced by the Scottish population.

Land Reform



ISP proposes modernisation of Scotland's land laws to broaden and diversify ownership. These reforms will operate transparently and responsibly, stimulating Scotland's economy, particularly in rural and agricultural settings.

Rural areas are suffering badly because of the lack of affordable housing and the number of dwellings that are being taken up as second homes/Air B&Bs. This is causing an exodus of young people from these areas as they cannot afford to stay there. ISP sees it as a priority to enable the local population to stay and flourish in their own place, and we will be looking at ways to make this possible.

Agriculture

Scottish agriculture produces some of the highest quality food in the world, based on generations of know-how, a clean environment, and a positive engagement with issues of animal welfare and nature conservation. However, Scottish farming is facing unprecedented challenges due to Brexit and intensive price-driven competition from outside Europe. ISP proposes to adopt a twin-track agricultural policy supporting Scotland's place as a world-leading producer of quality food with the highest standards of animal welfare and environmental protection.

The first track involves agriculture close to markets and contains the following proposals:

- Increasing investment in research and development over the next decade.
- Actively support the sale of Scottish produce globally.

- Commit to the highest standards of animal welfare and biodiversity conservation. The second track concerns remote rural farming, which faces significant challenges from global market conditions and an ageing farming population:

- Add value and generate employment in the farming sector by increasing processing capacity, particularly in the Highlands and Islands.
- Offer no interest loans to enable investment in farming and crofting businesses.

Forestry

Trees and forests make an important contribution to the well-being and economy of Scotland. However, the current monocultural approach does not provide sufficient benefits to local communities, especially in remoter parts of Scotland.

We want Scotland's forests to be fully compatible with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including 'access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all', 'sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth', and 'full and productive employment and decent work for all'.

ISP's priorities in this area are:

- Develop forest areas in Scotland. A substantial amount of forest creation will be achieved through natural regeneration and planting of native species.
- Promoting small-scale local processing industries to provide full-time and highly skilled local jobs in remote areas. Funding for this will come from a New Zealand-style forest levy on all timber harvested in Scotland.
- Introducing land reform measures that will encourage greater diversity in forest ownership, with an emphasis on community ownership and management.
- Establishing local forestry strategy plans to ensure that all forestry activity supports the local economy and communities.

Equalities



ISP is committed to the vision of an independent Scotland, free from all forms of bigotry and discrimination. Scotland has been subject to gross inequalities as a part of the UK through the hostile environment immigration approach, religious intolerance, and the impacts of austerity, hitting women the hardest.

It is imperative that action is taken in order to achieve a vision of ensuring every Scottish citizen can access their human rights. ISP supports the entry into the Council of Europe and the adoption of the European Convention of Human Rights in full following independence. ISP supports more action to be taken on misogyny and crimes such as rape, sexual assault, and harassment towards women, which does not place additional burdens on the victim. We do not, however, support jury less trials for rape and serious crime in general. ISP encourages mandatory training for employers on harassment in the workplace and the addition of consent in the secondary school Personal and Social Education curriculum. ISP supports the Equality Act (2010).

ISP plans to accelerate the setting up of the Scottish Social Security Agency.

ISP will work towards replacing the UK's humiliating and degrading approach to administering benefits with a medically led assessment which will not require anyone with an evident physical or mental diagnosis to appear before a panel.

GRA

ISP propose to provide clarifying guidance to the GRA as applying only to those who have a clinical diagnosis of transsexualism and not to transgender identity or any variation. This is to avoid violating the Equality Act 2010, without changing or

expanding on the original purpose. The GRC is no longer necessary as same sex marriage is legal. Very few individuals who change birth markers on identity documents bother to go to the trouble of a GRC, which changes sex markers on your birth certificate. Sex markers can be changed with a GP letter, which is rarely verified. This applies to driving licences, passports, tax IDs and NHS numbers.

This is an unnecessary legal fiction which should be ended, and anyone with a GRC who wishes to reverse it, should be able to do so.

Education



ISP aims for a modernised education system that empowers pupils, parents and teachers, whilst increasing standards at all levels. A radical review, incorporating the best of international experience, of the structure and performance of education in Scotland is required.

ISP proposes that:

- Entry to formal primary education should begin at the age of six, dependent on the child's birthday.
- There should be a gradual and planned increase in entry standards to the profession, as has successfully operated in Finland.
- Teachers' pay should be commensurate with an upskilled profession.
- As resources allow, aim to move towards a four-day teaching week, with one day per week for marking and professional development. It is unproductive and exhausting for teachers to spend 'free' time on schoolwork.
- The tax position of state and private schools should be equal, and public funds should be directed to level up opportunities.
- Each school should have a fully trained psychological counsellor.
- Pupils with challenging behaviour should have intensive support and, when necessary, options other than formal lessons.
- The primary role of schools is not to provide 'free childcare', and to achieve our policy objectives, we recognise that funding for childcare will also need to increase.
- Languages, including Scots and Gaelic, should be given greater priority within the teaching curriculum.
- Free music tuition within schools is restored, with costs falling on pupils as part of a greater emphasis on creative arts.
- Encouragement of fitness and sports activities through enhanced funding for facilities and programmes, streamlined with wider health and well-being outcomes.

Parents must be informed of the full curriculum in schools and have access to teaching materials. This should also apply to after-school activities, and parents should have the right to withdraw their child if they feel it is inappropriate. Material should be age-appropriate, particularly with sex education, and parents should be consulted through the PTA and local school board on sensitive subjects.

Europe

Scotland has a long history of association with Europe, predating the Union by centuries. ISP aims to renew those connections with Europe by requesting to join the European Free Trade Association (EFTA).



We would then seek to join Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway in the European Economic Area (EEA), as this would regain the 'Four Freedoms' (free movement of goods, persons, services, and capital). EFTA/EEA is the fastest and most practical way to recover the rights of the Scottish people to live, work, and trade in all 30 EEA states.

Scotland would also seek to be a member of the Council of Europe.

When Scotland becomes independent, then all international treaties and agreements will revert to the signatory authority, i.e. UK Government. This provides Scotland with a unique opportunity to re-evaluate and decide on which agreements and treaties it will consider pursuing and which organisations it may consider joining.

The ISP believes that only where a demonstrable benefit to Scotland is clear should becoming a signatory to any Treaty or Agreement be considered. The UK is a signatory to 15,000 treaties and agreements. Some of these are important political treaties such as the European Convention on Human Rights and Membership of the Council of Europe. Others may require more detailed consideration, such as NATO membership.

Trade partnerships like the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) would need to be considered on merit. Similarly, the 2021 UK-Australia Free Trade Agreement would need to demonstrate a positive impact for Scotland including the Agricultural Sector.

International travel, visas, extradition, fishing rights and many other areas are all covered by bilateral or multi-lateral agreements which Scotland would need to consider adopting or negotiating. All of these would be

considered on merit and benefit . ISP supports membership of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) and will resist attempts to remove us from the ECHR. We will also seek to sign up Scotland to the International Convention on the Rights of the Child.

ISP does not rule out an independent Scotland seeking to become a member of the European Union in the future but recognises that a closer relationship with Europe and more time for independence to evolve would allow us to apply from a position of strength.

Defence



ISP supports the establishment of a conventional, non-nuclear, Scottish Defence Force immediately after independence.

This will require the establishment of a Scottish Defence Department and potentially an Intelligence and Security Agency.

ISP suggests that a multi-party Defence Committee, with input from military experts, should be established to identify base and manning requirements, and ascertain assets which could be obtained during independence negotiations.

The ISP will consider the restoration of traditional Scottish regiments.

Scotland's neighbours, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, and Iceland are NATO members, while Ireland, is not. The invasion of Ukraine, a sovereign European nation, by Russia has clearly changed the importance of membership for all democratic nations in Europe but ISP considers that the decision on joining NATO should be a question for the Scottish people post-independence.

Fisheries



Stand up for Fishing

Scotland's fishing industry is the backbone of our coastal communities, our food security and our marine economy. In 2024 it delivered a record £756 million in value and 561,000 tonnes of high quality, low carbon seafood, proof that fishing is modern, efficient and essential. Yet our fleet now faces an existential threat from spatial squeeze, inadequate compensation and policies that too often prioritise everything except food production from the sea. For the 2026 Scottish Parliament elections, the Scottish Fishermen's Federation calls on all candidates to commit to the following seven non-negotiable policies:

1. Safety First Full continued support for the Scottish Fishing Safety Group so that every fisherman comes home safe, every trip.
2. Maximum Fishing Opportunities A resolute Scottish Government commitment to fight for the very best quota and access in annual negotiations and international agreements.
3. Workable, Pragmatic Catching Policy A future catching policy that is practical and enables the fleet to meet the objectives of the Fisheries Act and Fisheries Management Plans without destroying viability.
4. Moratorium on New Offshore Wind Consents No further offshore wind developments until cumulative impacts on fishing are fully assessed and affected fishermen receive proper, fair financial compensation to keep the fleet profitable and viable.
5. Balanced Marine Protection Inshore MPAs (Marine Protection Areas) and priority marine features managed on the proven offshore model, genuine balance between conservation and sustainable fishing, not exclusion.
6. Fishing protected in the New National Marine Plan Explicit recognition and protection of fishing as a core marine activity in Scotland's forthcoming National Marine Plan.
7. Investment in Marine Science

Immediate and sustained funding for research and data collection to understand changing seas and fish stocks and to underpin evidence based management decisions. Scotland needs renewable energy AND renewable food. 86% of the Scottish public agree that producing food from our seas is as important as producing energy. Fishing is not just our past – it is part of Scotland’s greener, healthier future.

Health

Health Infrastructure

On matters concerning general NHS and health infrastructure,

ISP's proposals are as follows:

- Investigate the potential for track and trace to be expanded to support NHS communications.
- Country-wide roll-out of at-home HPV smear tests.
- Urgent re-examination of PFI contracts across Scotland and pressure put on consortia to pass profits made from refinancing loans back to health boards.
- Aim for a minimum nurse staffing level for hospitals by reviewing bank nursing and salary levels to encourage nurses to stay and others to join.
- Adopt a community-led approach to public health through community workers as opposed to communications coming from government.
- Streamline existing networks with healthcare infrastructure.



Care Homes

Regarding care homes and health for older people, ISP proposes the following:

- Upgrade of care homes through measures such as safe visiting areas, the setting of minimum staffing levels and increased wages to attract more staff into the field.
- A review of care home performance during the pandemic with recommendations for improvement to be implemented in full.
- The establishment of a Commissioner for Older People to advocate for older people's right .
- A more targeted approach to vulnerable adults in supported accommodation with appreciation that not everyone who is in care is elderly.

- A review of safeguarding and an insistence that all care workers be PVG approved, not just their supervisors.

Drug Addiction

It is unacceptable that those suffering from addiction are treated as criminals and left in squalor without support.

ISP's priorities to tackle this issue are:

- Support multi-agency pilots for safe injecting facilities and streamline these with harm reduction services.
- Decriminalisation of cannabis for personal use and extending access and research for health-related treatments.
- Introduce a 'flag' system on methadone prescription which offers rehab services after a certain period of time.
- Consider drug addiction as a public health issue as opposed to criminal.

Mental Health

ISP have outlined several manifesto commitments such as Minimum Income Guarantee, a more secure working environment and actions to tackle homelessness. It is expected that these will go some way in reducing personal and familial anxieties regarding financial and social situations.

ISP calls for:

- An urgent mental health review, involving relevant third sector services, to be conducted and recommendations implemented.
- Accurate and clear data from the Scottish Government on all aspects of mental health to be published regularly for mental health responses to be more accountable and better streamlined by services.
- An increase in the access to talking therapies, with the potential for free services for all citizens to be explored.

- Further bolstering of both formal and informal systems of support, particularly for men and young people.

Mental health and suicide, are growing problems in our society. There is a direct causal link between mental health and poverty; statistics show that suicide is three times higher in areas of deprivation and over the period up until 2022, there was an 8% increase in suicides in Scotland (according to the National Records of Scotland).

ISP recognises that one cannot talk about solving these problems without addressing the root cause, which is why we have built into our manifesto social policies such as Minimum Income Guarantee.

However, there is also a sex difference in rates of suicide; men are three times as likely as women to complete a suicide and it is the biggest killer of men under 65 after cancer. There therefore needs to be a targeted approach to mental health, particularly male mental health to tackle this.

ISP proposes the following;

- There needs to be a review of how data is recorded for suicide. Attempted suicides are being recorded as breaches of the peace and actual suicides are being recorded as undetermined intent. There may be some finessing to be done, as it is distressing for families to have a verdict of intentional self harm as cause of death but there needs to be a way of recording this in the general statistics so that the data does not get lost.
- There needs to be better access to talking therapies and CBT and more professional availability in the NHS. More funding and training is required to address the long waiting lists and referrals. Mental health affects one in four people; it should not be an afterthought of care but an integral part of it. ISP proposes having a text messaging service or telephone system that people can chat on, about their mental health and receive support.

- ISP recognises that peer to peer groups where people can talk about their mental health, particularly male only groups can be of great benefit. ISP proposes supporting such groups in a structured way across Scotland.
- ISP also supports a structured support of peer groups for those families who have experienced bereavement through suicide.

Housing



There is a chronic shortage of housing in Scotland and ISP considers that it is a fundamental duty of Government to ensure that all Scots have access to good quality housing. Homelessness is unacceptable in a wealthy nation.

ISP's housing priorities are:

- Fund new affordable rented housing by Registered Social Landlords.
- Encourage the conversion of offices, no longer needed due to increased home working, to good quality affordable rented housing, to create sustainable city centre living.
- Support the internationally proven 'Housing First' model to end homelessness.
- Introduce national minimum space standards for all new housing.
- Provide funding which is appropriate for rural and remote areas, in particular self-build homes, in addition to small scale housing projects for rent. Also provide funding to rural councils to allow them to buy back housing and rent it out.
- Make it mandatory that all property in Scotland, be registered in Scotland. If this is not done within a certain timescale, then it can be taken back by the government.

Justice

ISP supports Scotland being a safe and resilient country with a justice system that works towards fair and equal treatment of every citizen.



ISP considers it a priority to depoliticise the Crown Counsel by removing the Lord Advocate and Solicitor General from the Scottish Cabinet and implement a more transparent communications system between Counsel and Police Scotland. We also believe that a register of interests should be created for judges to ensure public confidence in these positions of authority.

ISP will also insist that the Lord Advocate, in line with the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2016, produce a code for investigative functions and issue this to all relevant bodies. This is long overdue and currently there is a lack of coherence and logic about how investigations are conducted and whether all reasonable lines of enquiry are in fact pursued.

In addition to this, ISP believe that sexual offences by adults against people under 25 should have a more severe punishment. This is in line with current guidance from the Scottish sentencing Council and the law society that treat under 25s as less mature and more vulnerable and suggestible in situations. This should apply in cases of grooming, where the adult holds a position of trust/ authority ie teacher or lecturer or adult within their circle of support and there should be a distinction between assent and consent for an under 25 as they are not fully mature.

ISP considers that greater provision for sheriff courts and sheriffs, and more trained staff and funding for the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal is a requirement to ease the current backlog of cases. This provision will allow a gradual phase out of Justices

of the Peace and a renewed adherence to the 180-day limit for prisoners on remand. Trials should be held within a reasonable distance of where the crime was committed. There needs to be a review in rural areas and the Highlands and Islands of this, particularly for jury trials.

As stated in an earlier section, ISP opposes jury-less trials for rape and for serious crime in general.

ISP will lobby for the Lord Advocate to complete the provision laid out in the 2016 Scottish Criminal Justice Act to bring in a proper code of practice for the investigation of crime and a Scottish equivalent of 'pursuing all lines of reasonable enquiry.' There has been a real problem with this particularly in cases of child abuse involving government and other public bodies; there needs to be a stipulation in writing with regard to the pursuit of crime. ISP does not support the Hate Crimes Bill and will vote in favour of efforts to repeal this. We will work with other parties to review and improve existing legislation.

The current state of legal aid means that those seeking justice cannot get it. ISP supports the prioritisation of greater legal aid funding so that natural law is not governed by income, and reviews into how these inequalities can be better addressed.

ISP will pursue the VAT repayment of £76.5m from HMRC paid by Police Scotland to fund better equipment and resources for officers. We further support gradual measures which support more localised policing, and particularly consider the reinstatement of area control rooms and call centres in the Highlands and Islands and North East a priority in this regard.

Local Government



Local government in Scotland ranks amongst the poorest in Europe for governmental autonomy and representation. 'Local' authorities in Scotland are too large and remote, while Community Councils are too small and effectively powerless. The full powers of independence provide an additional incentive to move authority from the Scottish Parliament which does not have the capacity to micromanage local decision making.

ISP proposes that the current local government framework be reviewed on a cross-party basis, with the overarching aim of enhancing local democracy and bringing Scotland more in line with European practice.

The current model of 32 local authorities will be enhanced with an additional lower tier of municipal or Burgh councils, bringing local democracy closer to the people.

Both levels of local government will have set, autonomous and constitutionally entrenched powers. This will require devolution of powers from Holyrood to local government.

Scottish Governance



ISP believes that legislation around Freedom of Information and lobbying must be strengthened. The Scottish Government before, during and after independence has a duty to the people to represent them openly and honestly.

ISP propose the following reforms to these areas:

- Extend Freedom of Information legislation to cover third sector organisations receiving over £200,000 per annum in remuneration from the Scottish Government.
- Curtail unnecessary reasons for exemptions from Freedom of Information requests.
- Move Freedom of Information appeal requests to a body independent of the original authority.
- Extend lobbying legislation to include written and oral meetings, including those with unpaid lobbyists. · Require that minutes be taken and a declaration of spending on lobbying as part of all lobbying information returns.

Direct Democracy / Direct Government in an Independent Scotland

ISP also supports the introduction of Direct Democracy.

We believe that sovereignty lies with the people of Scotland, not with politicians or distant institutions. Our current system of parliamentary democracy has failed to deliver accountability, transparency, or meaningful consent, allowing governments to enact laws without proper consultation and to break promises with impunity.

In an independent Scotland, we will replace this outdated model with direct government, placing real power in the hands of the people.

Citizens will have the right to propose legislation, demand binding referendums on major or controversial decisions, amend or reject laws, and recall elected representatives who fail to serve the public interest.

Decision-making will follow the principle of subsidiarity, ensuring that power is exercised at the level closest to

the people - from local communities upward - with the people remaining the ultimate authority at every stage. Direct government strengthens accountability, encourages informed participation, and delivers fairer, more consensual politics. It ensures that government acts with the consent of the governed, restoring trust in democracy and placing control where it belongs: with the sovereign people of Scotland.

Transport

ISP believes that an integrated transport system informed by a clear strategic vision is a fundamental requirement for a connected and prosperous nation.



ISP considers that:

- A revised National Transport Strategy, including a clear priority list of strategic and local projects, is a pressing requirement.
- International travel connections are a strategic necessity.
- Road , rail, airports, ferry ports must be integrated wherever possible.
- Fixed links offer long term savings and better reliability than ferries.
- Nationalisation of ScotRail was announced in March 2022 but the rail network, the infrastructure by which trains move between stations, remains outside Scottish Government control: this must change if true reductions in costs and better management are to be implemented as part of a nationalised service.
- CO2 emissions from transport must be reduced.
- Single ticket and public transport timetabling are required.
- In the longer term, free public transport for all should be explored.

Transport in the Highlands and Islands

Roads

ISP will;

- ensure that the dualling of the A9 is completed as soon as possible, preferably by the end of the Holyrood 2026 – 2031 parliamentary session.
- give priority to improvements to the A96 and especially for by-pass or ring road option for Nairn, Elgin and Keith ensure that a permanent and robust solution is put in place for the Rest and Be Thankful. The favoured solution is a tunnel at projected

cost of £430 million. Other comparable projects have been carried out in Norway for a much lower cost, so we may look at pricing , but otherwise we think this is the best option.

- provide local authorities with additional ring-fenced funding to address the poor state of roads in the Highlands & Islands, specifically pothole repairs

Ferries

ISP will;

- abolish CMAL and replace it with a single non-profit infrastructure and operations company to be run for the benefit of Islanders. The Board of this entity must have a minimum of 50% island resident representation.
- undertake an urgent review of the possibility of using catamaran craft on crossings under 1.5 hours on all routes to increase capacity, reliability and operating hours.
- provide all island residents with 2 return passenger tickets per annum for inter-island or mainland ferries. This will be in addition to the 2 currently given to concession holders at present bookings
- ensure that some provision is made on all sailings for emergency require that the ferry operating companies give priority to Island residents for bookings
- ensure that the current scale of fares is frozen for 5 years to enable some resilience to be built into the network before any further increases.
- Include the Orkney inter-island and Shetland inter-island routes in all future strategies for ferries including replacement and upgrading of ferries.

Integration

ISP will;

- give local authorities the power to require operators of different transport systems to integrate for the benefit of passengers.
- give local authorities the power to implement local integrated services that combine different functions in 1 vehicle. Example the Post Bus service that ended in 2007 to include passenger services, mail and parcel deliveries to remote areas. General •
- ISP will maintain the current Scotland-wide concessionary travel.

Information and further reading

Producing a manifesto, let alone condensing the effort of thousands of hours of research, analysis and passionate debate into a document like this, which attempts to distil our shared vision for a modern, progressive Scotland, would simply not be possible without the dedication of unpaid volunteers. Not everyone who has contributed is a party member, we would like to thank you now for your patience and your time - some of you have asked to remain anonymous but you know, and we know, who you are and you're awesome. You are all the Scotland we strive to be.

For readers inclined to read a little more widely, we recommend having a look at what the organisations below are up to.

ISP supports, in full, the policy manifestos and pledges of the following organisations:

Common Weal	commonweal.scot/
Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland	https://www.alliance-scotland.org.uk/blog/news/manifestos-published-across-the-sensory-sector-for-the-2026-scottish-parliament-election/
Coalition for Racial Equality & Rights Scotland	www.crer.scot/
Inclusion Scotland	inclusionscotland.org/
RNIB	www.rnib.org.uk/
SAMH	www.samh.org.uk/
Sight Scotland	https://sightscotland.org.uk/influencing-change/election-2026
Women Speak Scotland	womenspeakscotland.com/
Poverty Alliance	www.povertyalliance.org/manifesto2026/
Salvo Scotland	https://salvo.scot/