



# SCOTTISH COMMON PARTY Manifesto 2025–2029

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**For a Common, Fair and Independent Scotland**

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## Foreword from the Chair

Scotland is a generous country. Every day, people look after neighbours, raise families, run small businesses, keep our public services going and volunteer in their communities. What is missing is not goodwill, but a politics that matches that spirit – one that starts with everyday problems and ends with practical, responsible solutions.

That is why we founded the Scottish Common Party. We are a people-first movement, built on a simple idea: **common sense, common decency, common good**. We believe in lower bills, faster care, affordable homes, safer streets and real chances to work and learn – wherever you live in Scotland.

When I came to Scotland in 2010 to play cricket, I found more than a team – I found a home. I worked in care and as a tradesman and saw up close the pressures families face: rising rents, long waits for treatment, parents juggling two or three jobs, young people feeling they have to leave their own communities to get on. I stood for public office and helped lead grassroots campaigns because I knew that if we organised together, we could do better than this.

This manifesto is the next step in that journey. It sets out a clear direction for Scotland: strong public services, fair work and opportunity, and decisions made closer to the people they affect. It is organised around six priorities that come directly from conversations in our towns, cities and rural communities: tackling poverty; accessible healthcare; affordable housing; the welfare of our elders and youth; early years intervention; and energy and environmental justice.

We are ambitious, but we are also honest. Scotland is an energy-rich nation where too many still live in fuel poverty; a country with world-class schools and hospitals under strain; a place of strong communities where too many people feel ignored. None of this will be fixed by slogans or by pretending there are easy answers. It will take hard choices, open reporting and leadership that owns its mistakes as well as its successes. That is the standard we are setting for ourselves.

If you share that vision – if you want politics that listens first, reports openly and treats everyone with respect – I invite you to read this manifesto, challenge it, improve it and, most importantly, help us deliver it.

Kamran Butt

Chair, Scottish Common Party

Glasgow, November 2025

## Contents

1. Preamble – A Manifesto for the Common Good
2. Our Core Beliefs
3. Our Case for Independence
4. 1. Tackling Poverty
5. 2. Accessible Healthcare
6. 3. Affordable Housing
7. 4. Welfare of Our Elders and Youth
8. 5. Early Years Intervention
9. 6. Energy and Environmental Justice
10. Conclusion – A Common, Fair and Independent Scotland

## **A Manifesto for the Common Good: Building a Fairer Scotland, Together**

For too long, too many communities in Scotland have been left behind. We have been made to believe that poverty is unavoidable, that crushing energy bills are inevitable, and that a secure home is a privilege for the few.

We reject this.

We are the Scottish Common Party (SCP) and we believe Scotland's future must be built around the people who live here: families, pensioners, workers, disabled people, carers, children and all underrepresented groups who give Scotland its life and character.

This manifesto is our covenant with them. It is a plan to move power away from the already-powerful and towards the people and communities who have been asked to carry the burden for too long.

### **Our Core Beliefs**

We believe in a Scotland where:

- Community is stronger than corporate interest.
- Prosperity is measured by the eradication of poverty, not by wealth hoarded at the top.
- Dignity is guaranteed from childhood to retirement.
- Our natural environment is protected fiercely for future generations.

These beliefs guide every policy in this manifesto.

### **Our Case for Independence**

The Scottish Common Party believes that Scotland's future should be decided by the people who call it home.

Independence is not about isolation; it is about empowerment. It is about having the tools to build a fairer society and a stronger, more resilient economy rooted in Scottish values.

With independence, Scotland can:

- Unlock our full potential by harnessing our natural resources, world-class universities and creative industries for the common good.
- Invest in green prosperity, backing offshore wind, tidal power and innovation, and prioritising wellbeing over austerity.
- Make our own decisions, with full control over taxation, welfare, energy and foreign policy.
- Rebuild international partnerships, ensuring Scotland's voice is heard on the world stage.

Independence is not an end in itself. It is a means to deliver social justice, environmental responsibility and economic security, while working cooperatively with our neighbours and putting Scotland's people first.

## 1. Tackling Poverty

Poverty is not an act of God; it is the result of political choices.

In a nation rich in natural resources and human talent, it is unacceptable that over a fifth of children grow up in poverty. That is a betrayal of our future.

We will work relentlessly to transform this reality. Our first strategic aim is to end child poverty in Scotland. That means shifting from short-term mitigation to long-term transformation:

- Moving beyond one-off top-ups and sticking plasters.
- Replacing punitive systems with income security and dignity.
- Building community power and resilience.

We will move from a sanctions-driven welfare model invented at Westminster to a Scottish system that protects people instead of punishing them.

**250,000 children in poverty is not a statistic; it is 250,000 reasons to act.**

### Our Actions on Poverty

#### 1. Introduce a Guaranteed Adequate Income

We will pilot and then implement a new social security model that ensures no individual or family falls below a liveable income threshold, removing the need for food banks and emergency charity to survive.

#### 2. Expand the Scottish Child Payment

We will immediately increase the Scottish Child Payment and commit to automatic annual uprating in line with inflation, extending eligibility to all families under financial pressure until the Guaranteed Adequate Income is fully in place.

#### 3. Establish a Community Wealth Act

We will legislate for a Community Wealth Act, creating a £100 million per year fund over the next five years to support community kitchens, advice services, credit unions, community banks, worker cooperatives and community-owned businesses. This will help local authorities develop Community Wealth Building strategies that keep money circulating locally and strengthen community resilience.

#### 4. Launch a National “Benefits Take-Up” Drive

We will fund a permanent, national benefits awareness and support campaign to ensure everyone receives every penny they are entitled to, tackling the bureaucracy and barriers that currently leave millions of pounds unclaimed.

## **5. Devolve and Transform Welfare**

We will campaign to fully devolve welfare and abolish the demeaning DWP sanctions regime in Scotland, replacing it with a Scottish Social Security System built on dignity, rights and support rather than suspicion and punishment.

## 2. Accessible Healthcare

The health of a country is its real wealth.

Scotland's NHS—founded on the principle of being free at the point of need—is under severe strain. Staff are overworked and underpaid, waiting lists are unacceptably long, and mental health services are stretched to breaking point. This is not a temporary crisis but the result of political underfunding and neglect over decades.

Yet the NHS should remain one of our greatest achievements.

We will act to restore the NHS to its founding values, ensuring it is there for everyone when they need it.

We will:

- Agree a fair pay settlement for all NHS staff.
- Invest in recruiting and training thousands more healthcare workers.
- Fully integrate mental health as a core part of the NHS.
- Bring services closer to people through community health hubs.

### Our Actions on Healthcare

#### 6. **Negotiate a Fair Pay Settlement for NHS Staff**

We will ensure NHS workers receive pay that reflects their value, skill and commitment, helping to retain experienced staff and recruit new talent. GP pay will be set at a competitive, fair level comparable with other European countries to ensure strong recruitment and retention.

#### 7. **Recruit and Train Thousands of New Healthcare Professionals**

We will expand education and training programmes to tackle staffing shortages and cut waiting times, including for doctors, nurses, allied health professionals and social care staff.

#### 8. **Integrate Mental Health Services into the NHS**

We will fully integrate mental health into core NHS planning and delivery by guaranteeing same-week mental health assessments for those in need, expanding community-based services and crisis teams, and increasing access to a range of therapeutic interventions.

#### 9. **Establish Community Health Hubs**

We will create new Community Health Hubs that bring together GPs, dentists, optometrists and mental health services, making care easier to access, particularly in under-served and rural communities.

## **10. Support Disabled People and Carers**

We are committed to an inclusive approach that actively involves disabled people and carers in designing services. We will understand and remove barriers to accessing care and public services, co-create improvements directly with disabled people and carers, and build long-term relationships and trust through ongoing engagement.

### 3. Affordable Housing

Scotland faces a housing emergency.

More than 150,000 households are on waiting lists, while private rents—especially in cities like Edinburgh—have risen sharply in a decade. Housing has been turned into a speculative asset, not a basic human right. This damages communities, deepens inequality and destroys aspirations.

We will re-centre housing as a public good.

We will support the delivery of 10,000 additional social-rented homes by 2035, focusing especially on those who serve and protect our communities: NHS staff, teachers and emergency workers.

We will also introduce strong rent protections, strengthen tenants' rights and mandate high energy-efficiency standards for all new homes.

#### Our Actions on Housing

##### 11. Deliver 10,000 Social Homes

We will commit to delivering 10,000 new homes for social rent over the next decade through direct public investment, empowered housing associations and partnerships with community-led housing organisations.

##### 12. Introduce Robust Rent Controls

We will give local authorities power to designate Rent Pressure Zones, within which rent increases will be capped at inflation plus 1%, using data-driven decisions where housing costs are spiralling.

##### 13. Strengthen Tenants' Rights

We will abolish “no-fault” evictions, extend minimum eviction notice periods and create a National Tenants' Support Fund to assist tenants' unions and advice organisations.

##### 14. Mandate High-Efficiency Building Standards

We will require all new homes to meet Passivhaus or equivalent high-efficiency standards, ensuring that they are affordable to heat, accessible to live in and better for the climate. This will help reduce fuel poverty and cut Scotland's carbon emissions from day one.

## 4. Welfare of Our Elders and Youth

### A Covenant with Our Elders

A society that fails to honour its elders has lost its soul.

In Scotland, around 14% of pensioners live in poverty and more than 100,000 older people can go a week without a proper conversation. This is both a social and moral failure.

Our elders built the welfare state and much of the society we now enjoy. They deserve security, respect and connection—not isolation and insecurity.

We will guarantee real-terms protection for pensions, support older people with energy and transport costs and build community spaces that combat isolation.

### Our Actions for Older People

#### 15. Upgrade the Scottish Pension Supplement

We will maintain and strengthen a Triple Lock for the Scottish Pension Supplement—raising it each year by the highest of inflation, average earnings or 2.5%. We will also keep the system under regular review to ensure it remains fair, sustainable and transparent.

#### 16. Expand the Free Bus Travel Scheme

We will extend free bus travel to include carers travelling with the people they support and explore extending concessions to local ferry and tram services where appropriate.

#### 17. Increase the Winter Heating Allowance

We will raise the Winter Heating Allowance to £500, making it an automatic, recurring payment to all eligible households so that no older person has to choose between heating and eating.

#### 18. Create Community Wellness Hubs

We will establish 20 new Community Wellness Hubs by 2035, bringing together GP services, social care, libraries and cafés and social spaces. These hubs will be designed to tackle isolation, integrate health and social care, and provide safe, warm public spaces for older people and the wider community.

### Our Vision for Scotland's Young People

Scotland's future depends on the strength, creativity and wellbeing of its young people. We will put young Scots at the heart of national renewal, ensuring every young person grows up safe, supported and able to shape their own future.

Our promise is to build a Scotland where being young means being heard, valued and supported.

## **Our Commitments to Young People**

### **19. Pathways to Opportunity**

We will expand Developing the Young Workforce with more apprenticeships, practical vocational training and fair routes into quality jobs across all regions.

### **20. Fair and Compassionate Youth Justice**

We will invest in youth justice focused on prevention and rehabilitation, so that young people in trouble get a real second chance and support to address the root causes of offending.

### **21. Learning for Life**

We will strengthen Community Learning & Development so that every young person can access mentoring, guidance and community-based education and activities.

### **22. Empowered Youth Voice**

We will embed young people in decision-making at every level, from local councils to Parliament, so that policies reflect real lived experience and young people have genuine influence over the decisions affecting their lives.

## 5. Early Years Intervention

The attainment gap in Scotland does not begin at school—it begins before a child reaches primary one.

By the age of five, children from the most deprived communities are already developmentally behind their peers. Early intervention yields the greatest returns, and every £1 invested in high-quality early years support can produce significant long-term economic and social benefits.

At the same time, child health is under strain. Around one in four children is at risk of being overweight or obese, and mental health services are overwhelmed, with some children waiting over a year for a CAMHS appointment when they need help most.

We will treat early years as the foundation of a fair society, not an afterthought.

### Our Actions on Early Years

#### 23. Expand Funded Childcare to 50 Hours per Week

We will provide 50 hours of funded, high-quality childcare per week to all 1–5-year-olds, available flexibly to support parents who are working, studying or seeking work.

#### 24. Provide Universal Free School Meals

We will extend universal free breakfasts and lunches to every primary and secondary school pupil, using fresh, locally-sourced Scottish produce and supporting Scottish farmers and food producers.

#### 25. Launch an “Active Childhood” Initiative

We will invest £50 million annually to refurbish school sports facilities, provide free swimming lessons and fund after-school sports clubs and physical activity for all children.

#### 26. Double Family Link Workers

We will hire and train 1,000 additional Family Link Workers to provide intensive, home-based support for families facing hardship, ensuring they have practical help, emotional support and clear routes into services.

#### 27. Embed Graduates in Nurseries

We will fund 500 additional graduate-level early years practitioners in nurseries in the most deprived areas, improving learning quality, speech and language outcomes, and social and emotional development.

We will also uphold the rights of every child and extend the Scottish School Meals Programme so that all P1–P7 pupils can access nutritious food throughout the school day, helping tackle both hunger and educational inequality.

## 6. Energy and Environmental Justice

Scotland is an energy-rich nation, generating more renewable power than we currently use. Yet more than 30% of households live in fuel poverty. This is not misfortune. It is the result of a privatised energy system that allows the wealth of our winds and waters to be extracted for multinational profit, while Scots shiver in cold homes.

At the same time, our natural environment—our greatest inheritance—is under threat. Species are at risk, peatlands that store vast amounts of carbon are being degraded, and biodiversity loss is accelerating.

We will take back control of our resources and be fierce guardians of our land, seas and skies.

We will:

- Introduce a Social Energy Tariff.
- Build a publicly-owned National Energy Company.
- Enact a Natural Capital Act.
- Invest in communities to own and benefit from renewable energy.
- Retrofit homes to be warmer, greener and cheaper to heat.

### Our Actions on Energy and the Environment

#### 28. Legislate a Social Energy Tariff

We will implement a Scotland-wide Social Energy Tariff that caps the unit price of essential household energy, takes basic domestic energy needs out of speculative markets and protects low-income households from extreme price volatility.

#### 29. Launch a £5 Billion Green New Deal

We will deliver a Green New Deal for Scotland, investing at scale in offshore wind, tidal energy and green hydrogen production. This programme will be led by a National Energy Company, ensuring profits are reinvested into public services and communities.

#### 30. Fund Community Energy Ownership

We will create a £1 billion Community Energy Fund to provide grants and interest-free loans for community wind, solar and hydro projects, and support for local people to buy stakes in energy infrastructure.

#### 31. Initiate a National Retrofit Scheme

We will launch a national mobilisation to make every building in Scotland more energy-efficient by training and deploying thousands of tradespeople, insulating homes and public buildings and installing renewable technologies such as heat pumps and solar panels. This will cut bills, reduce emissions and create up to 100,000 good, green jobs.

### **32. Enact a Natural Capital Act**

We will introduce a Natural Capital Act that will legally bind the Scottish Government to reverse biodiversity loss by 2030, restore at least 250,000 hectares of peatland and expand native woodlands and protect vital habitats.

## **Conclusion: A Common, Fair and Independent Scotland**

The time for tinkering at the edges is over. The era of vague promises and managed decline must end.

This manifesto is not just a list of policies; it is a declaration of intent and a covenant with the people of Scotland.

We have named the injustices we refuse to accept: children going to bed hungry; families choosing between heating and eating; pensioners living and dying in isolation; young people forced out of their own communities; households in an energy-rich nation trapped in fuel poverty.

Our covenant is built on a simple, uncompromising belief: the true strength of Scotland lies in the full inclusion of every person in the prosperity we create together.

Dignity and security must be universal, not reserved for a fortunate few. A fair Scotland means abolishing absolute poverty, fixing the injustice of our energy system, ensuring every family has a secure, affordable home and honouring and caring for older people as a central part of our national life.

This is the Scotland we see when we talk about a Common, Fair and Independent future—a Scotland where no life is written off, no community is expendable, and no one is left behind.

**Let us build our future: Common, Fair and Independent.**