

# Scottish Liberal Democrats



# The REAL alternative



More and more people are supporting the Liberal Democrats.

Every sign is that we can win more votes and elect more Liberal Democrat MPs.

Liberal Democrats have real ambition for Scotland and are putting forward real solutions to real problems.

Liberal Democrats offer a real alternative.

*Charles Kennedy*

**scotlibdems.org.uk**

# OUR PRINCIPLES

Freedom. Fairness. Trust. These are the qualities of the Scottish people at their best, and they are the guiding principles of the Liberal Democrats.

This manifesto is built on these principles – principles that we believe must underpin the government of this country, but which are too often lacking in public life today.

## FREEDOM

Liberal Democrats believe that individuals should govern their own lives, free from unnecessary interference by government or society. So we want to build a society which gives individual men, women and particularly young people, opportunities to pursue their aims, develop their talents and shape their successes. A country where people are free to shape their future is one that is stronger, wealthier, happier, and more fulfilled.

## FAIRNESS

Ill-health, disability, poverty, environmental pollution and the fear of crime curtail freedom, just as much as discriminatory laws or arrest without trial. So we want government to provide the essential requirements that everyone needs to make real

choices in their lives – a good education, a decent pension, a clean environment, effective policing and high quality healthcare. And we want to see fairness too in the way in which taxes are raised and minorities are treated.

## TRUST

To deliver freedom and fairness, we need to give citizens the power to hold government to account. So we want to see government brought closer to the people it is meant to serve – which is why we are committed to curtail the personal power and patronage of the Prime Minister, strengthen British democracy, and develop the role of the Scottish Parliament, backed up with reforms to extend the fair voting system - won for councils in Scotland - to both the Scottish Parliament and Westminster. And we want to see politicians keep the promises they make, as Liberal Democrats have done in government in Scotland.

Throughout this manifesto we explain how we will put these beliefs into practice, creating a society where people are more free, where government exercises its powers more fairly, and where the bond of trust is re-established between

the people and their government.

Throughout this manifesto, we recognise our responsibility to future generations, to protect the precious environment that sustains all life on the planet. Our policies promote sustainable development – because for us, environmental policy is not an optional extra but an integral part of the way in which we will govern.

Throughout this manifesto, we show how we can help achieve these aims through Britain playing a leading role in Europe and on the wider international stage, building effective global institutions and acting in accordance with international laws – because in an ever more globalised and interdependent world, isolation is in none of our interests. A government which ignores this truth does not serve this country's interests.

Throughout this manifesto you will find this Liberal Democrat approach. Freedom. Fairness. Trust.

Liberal Democrats are open and straightforward about how we will pay for our policies. At the last three general elections we set out full details of how much our policies would cost and how we would pay for them. None of the other parties did this.

Labour has increased spending, an increase only the Liberal Democrats were honest enough to propose at the last election. Given this growth in spending, most of our proposals at this election can be funded from savings in current budgets. This means switching around £5 billion each year from low-priority UK government programmes in order to fund our key proposals. Our savings include abolishing the Department of Trade and Industry, using the money set aside for the Chancellor's Child Trust Fund to invest now, when children need it most, and not introducing ID cards.

We will also make taxes fairer – cutting costs for most people. At present, people on low incomes or

in old age have to pay a higher proportion of their income in taxes and government charges than those who are much better off. That cannot be right. Today, under Labour, the poorest 20 per cent of the population pay 38 per cent of their income in tax, compared with just 35 per cent for the richest 20 per cent. That is unfair.

We will introduce a new 50 per cent rate on the portion of individual income exceeding £100,000 a year. Just one per cent of taxpayers will pay this (because they can afford to).

As a result of these savings and additional revenue, a Liberal Democrat Government at Westminster would deliver additional resources for Scotland totalling £1.8 billion over the term of the Westminster Parliament. Details of how Liberal Democrats in Government in Scotland would invest these additional resources are provided in a separate Scottish Supplement to this Manifesto.

*I believe that the 2001 – 2005 parliament will be remembered as the period during which the Liberal Democrats came of age, ushering in a new era of truly three-party politics. That is why we enter this General Election campaign with such optimism, unity of purpose and public goodwill.*

*We have been tested – inside and outside parliament – as never before. We have stuck to our principles: from our opposition to the war in Iraq to our defence of fundamental civil liberties over control orders. Again and again, we have been the real opposition to Tony Blair's increasingly discredited Government over Council Tax, top-up and tuition fees, and ID cards.*

*The challenge – and the opportunity – is now to provide the real alternative at this election. That is what this manifesto is all about – detailing our analysis and policy ambitions; and all of it is underpinned by costed and credible pledges. We are determined that what we promise can be achieved. Our figures, based on official costings, all add up. And at the heart of our programme is a determination to achieve a fairer and more straightforward tax system which delivers the social priorities we believe people want.*

*The mark of a decent society is one which creates opportunity for young people and provides security and dignity for those in their older years. At both ends of the age spectrum we believe that Britain must do better. At this election, people in England and Wales will have the chance to choose policies such as abolishing student top-up and tuition fees, and guaranteeing free long term personal care for the elderly. Liberal Democrats across the UK will point with pride to the example of Scotland, where Liberal Democrats in government have already delivered both these policies. But we want to do more for both these groups in Scotland. That's why this manifesto contains our proposals to reform maternity pay and pensions. In a separate supplement to this Manifesto, we explain how Liberal Democrats in the Scottish Parliament would invest the additional resources that a Liberal Democrat government in Westminster would deliver for Scotland.*

*Society is still scarred by inequality. Tackling that is a priority for the Liberal Democrats. For example, it's time that we redressed the scandalous discrimination against women in the state pension system. We propose a 'citizen's pension', based on residency instead of national insurance contributions, which would – at last – provide women who have spent time caring for children or elderly parents with a pension in their own right.*

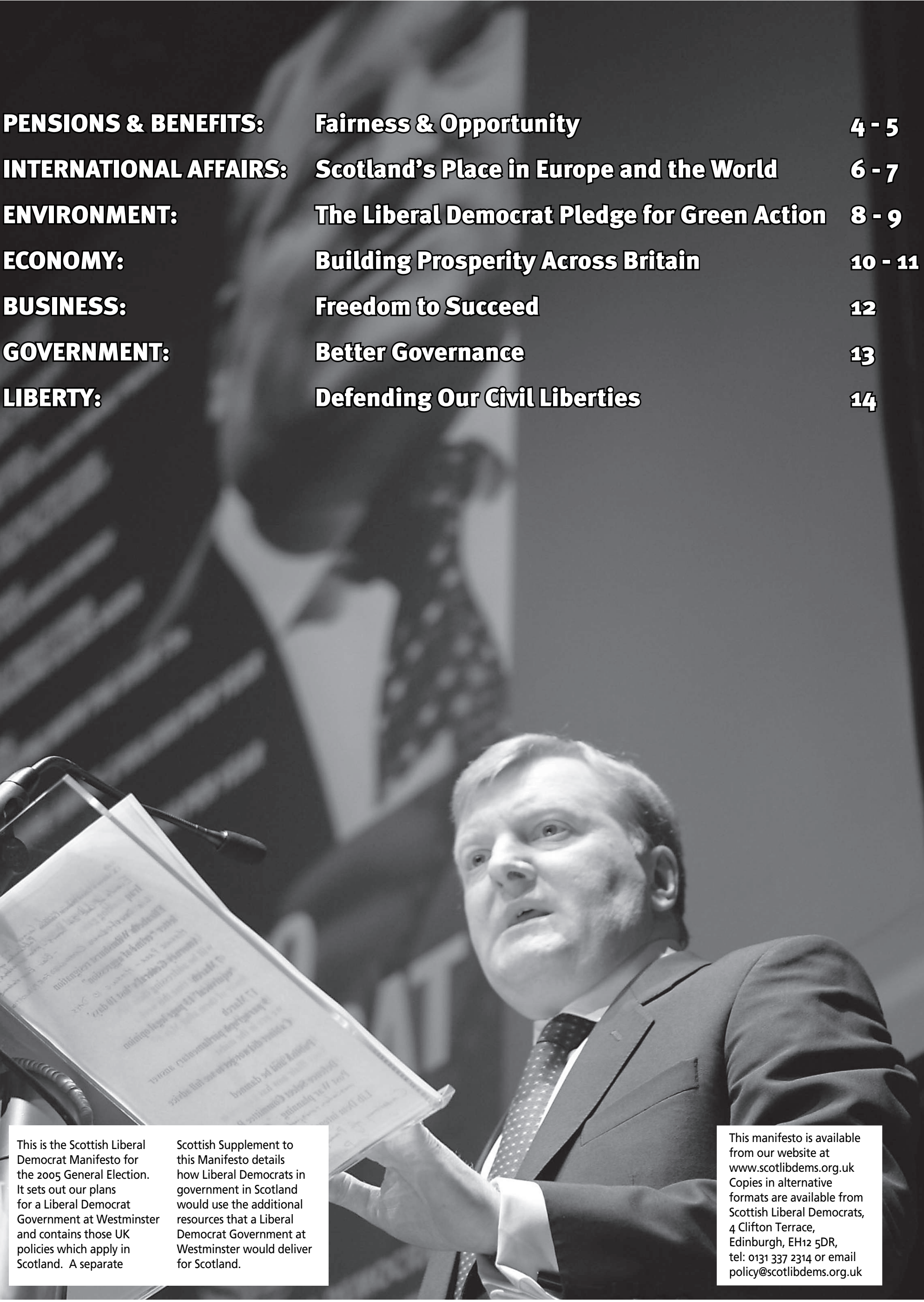
*In addition, we remain proud of a Britain which is enriched precisely because it is a multi-racial, multi-ethnic society. We will not pander to fear and prejudice. We offer fair and effective policies over the distinct issues of asylum and immigration.*

*Sustainable development is at the heart of our approach and therefore through all our thinking, there is a green thread of environmental awareness and urgency. We are by far the greenest of the three main UK political parties and this manifesto again confirms that.*

*It is a privilege at this election to be leading the most socially progressive party in British politics. Our priorities here at home are clear; our instinctive internationalism – through positive and proactive engagement with Europe, the United Nations and the Commonwealth – is definitive.*

*I am ambitious for the Liberal Democrats and ambitious for Scotland. At this election the Liberal Democrats are the real alternative. Please read, reflect – and if you like what we stand for, join us on our journey. Your support can make the difference.*

Charles Kennedy — Leader of the Liberal Democrats



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This is the Scottish Liberal Democrat Manifesto for the 2005 General Election. It sets out our plans for a Liberal Democrat Government at Westminster and contains those UK policies which apply in Scotland. A separate

Scottish Supplement to this Manifesto details how Liberal Democrats in government in Scotland would use the additional resources that a Liberal Democrat Government at Westminster would deliver for Scotland.

This manifesto is available from our website at [www.scotlibdems.org.uk](http://www.scotlibdems.org.uk). Copies in alternative formats are available from Scottish Liberal Democrats, 4 Clifton Terrace, Edinburgh, EH12 5DR, tel: 0131 337 2314 or email [policy@scotlibdems.org.uk](mailto:policy@scotlibdems.org.uk)

# FAIRNESS AND OPPORTUNITY

## OVER £100 MORE ON THE PENSION EVERY MONTH AT 75 – A MILLION PENSIONERS OFF MEANS-TESTING

Millions of elderly people are failing to receive the pensions they've earned – and deserve and need – because of demeaning and unworkable means tests. Liberal Democrats will simplify the system, immediately guaranteeing a basic pension at 75 of at least £109.45 per week, with future increases linked to earnings. That's over £100 a month more at 75 for every single pensioner. Every pensioner couple over 75 will receive at least £167.05

per week state pension – over £140 a month more than at present. This will abolish the need for means tests altogether for over 100,000 pensioners in Scotland.

### CITIZEN'S PENSION

Many women who gave up work to bring up their children receive as little as a penny a week because they haven't paid enough national insurance. From the age of 75 we will give pensioners our increased 'Citizen's Pension' as of right, making sure that 2.8 million women pensioners across the

UK have security and dignity in retirement.

### HELP PENSIONERS

Like many others, older people in Scotland no longer trust Tony Blair's government. They see that after two terms in power, Tony Blair has done nothing to reform pensions. And they still remember the derisory 75 pence pension increase offered by the Chancellor. They remember too, that it was the Tories who first broke the link between pensions and earnings.

With the track record of Liberal Democrats in government in Scotland delivering key policies such as free personal care and free bus travel, older people in Scotland know that they can trust Liberal Democrats to deliver on our promises on pensions.

Liberal Democrats will deliver for older people with our Citizen's Pension and we will go on helping older people by axing the unfair Council Tax and replacing it with a fairer alternative based on ability to pay – Local Income Tax. Replacing Council Tax with Local Income Tax means eight out of ten pensioners will be better off, with many paying no local tax at all.

### HELP WORKING PARENTS SPEND MORE TIME WITH THEIR CHILDREN

Becoming a parent for the first time is a daunting and expensive task. Giving new working parents more support has benefits for them, their babies, their employers and the economy. Liberal Democrats will give working families having their first child increased maternity pay for the first six months at the rate of the minimum wage – that's £170 a week instead of £102.80 at present – a lot more just when parents really need it.

### REFORM THE NEW DEAL TO GET MORE PEOPLE INTO WORK

The present New Deal leaves too

many people on unnecessary or ineffective schemes rather than getting them into real jobs. Liberal Democrats will instead tailor the assistance so that jobseekers receive the package of support they need to get proper, permanent work. We will also scrap benefit sanctions which leave genuine claimants unable to feed and house themselves.

### SCRAP THE CHILD SUPPORT AGENCY.

The CSA is failing. Some parents are required to pay an unrealistic amount for maintenance, whilst other payments are never enforced. We would scrap the CSA and hand over its initial assessment and enforcement functions to the Inland Revenue so that payment is enforced fairly and effectively. Special circumstances would be addressed by appeal to a specialist tribunal able to take account of individual circumstances, instead of the present unfair rigid formula.

### PROVIDE MORE SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Many severely disabled people feel the cold intensely and cannot afford to heat their homes adequately, despite the fact that the cold will often make their conditions worse. We will help severely disabled people of working age with their fuel bills by giving them the same £200 a

"Every week I am contacted by people needing help with problems caused by the unfair and complex pensions and benefits system. This affects people in Scotland just as it does others in the rest of the UK.

"I receive letters from pensioners in poverty, struggling with unfair and demeaning means tests. I hear from women denied even the basic pension simply because they took time out of work to care for their children.

"Then there are letters from people who want work to support themselves, fobbed off with government 'New Deal' schemes that just don't give them the training and skills they need to get a job. Letters from workers who are angry that they have been robbed of their company pensions. Letters from people with severe disabilities who are at their wits' end because of the bureaucracy and complexity of the benefits system.

"We are all growing older. Anyone can be suddenly disabled. These days no job is for life. Everyone wants to know that there is a safety net if they, or their family, need it – but equally, no one wants to pay benefits to cheats, or keep people on the dole longer than necessary.

"Yet over and over again successive governments have just complicated the system, hitting decent people with unfair and demeaning means tests and sanctions, introducing computer 'systems' that don't work – and yet have still failed to tackle the frauds effectively.

"Before entering parliament, I was Professor of Social Policy at Bath University, studying the mistakes governments kept making. Since being elected, I have sought to use my professional skills to develop alternatives that will work – plans that will guarantee everyone a decent old age, help when they are disabled or lose their job, and a decent start for every child. These principles of fairness and opportunity are close to the hearts of the British people, and are

values held deeply by Liberal Democrats. In one of the richest countries in the world, we should not settle for less."

#### Steve Webb

Liberal Democrat Shadow Secretary of State for Work and Pensions



## Green action

### SAVE ENERGY AND CUT FUEL BILLS

Too many older people die each year from preventable cold-related illnesses. Poor home insulation and poor-quality housing lead to cold homes. High fuel bills are the main cause of this 'fuel poverty', with the average pensioner household spending £500 a year on energy. We will help pensioners and severely disabled people cut this bill by allowing them to take a year's Winter Fuel Payment as a voucher redeemable against insulation and energy saving materials. These would be made available at about half price through a partnership with fuel suppliers. A pensioner could save more than £100 from their energy bill every year by investing just one year's Winter Fuel Payment, and help the environment as well. In this way we will invest in cutting energy use and at the same time help pensioners and severely disabled people stay warm and save money.

year Winter Fuel Payment that pensioners receive. We will also implement the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Long-Term Care to guarantee free personal care for people with disabilities who need it.

PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTOR PENSIONS

More than 60,000 workers worked for companies that have gone out

of business leaving insufficient money in their pension funds. We will bolster the government's compensation scheme to make sure that these workers are compensated at the same level available under the new Pension Protection Fund. Unlike Labour, we will give proper time for consultation before making changes to existing public sector pension schemes, and we will

honour the entitlements already built up.

BEATING FRAUD AND ERROR

Each year, around £3 billion is lost to the taxpayer due to fraud and error in the social security system – £100 for every taxpayer every year. The new tax credits could add a further £1.6 billion to that loss. We will reverse the spread of mass means-testing, simplify the

benefits and tax credit system, and extend fraud prevention and detection activities to all benefits, reducing both fraud and error.

Photo: James Boardman/ Rex Features



“I am appalled that in the fourth richest country in the world, so many pensioners, particularly older women, are trapped in so much poverty. I left the Labour Party and joined the Liberal Democrats four years ago because the more I saw Labour failing in action, the more I realised it was time to face the truth: that the Liberal Democrats are now the only party I can trust to deliver the decent pensions, and above all the free care when it's needed, to guarantee everyone dignity and security in retirement.”

**Claire Rayner**  
President of the Patients Association and member of the Royal Commission on Long-Term Care for the Elderly

# SCOTLAND'S PLACE IN EUROPE AND THE WORLD

"It is often said that foreign affairs is not a determining issue in UK elections. But on this occasion I believe that the conduct of Britain's foreign affairs, particularly in relation to Iraq, goes right to the heart of the Labour Government's credibility. Both at home and abroad trust has been eroded, and Britain's reputation diminished.

"It need not have been so. Britain, as a member of the G8, the Security Council of the United Nations, the European Union, NATO and the Commonwealth, has a unique opportunity to be a force for good in the world. British practice has been one of operating through multilateral institutions – and experience shows that when Britain does this, it provides leadership and influence.

"But Britain was taken to war against Iraq without express UN authority and on a flawed prospectus. The Government built its case on unreliable intelligence, in circumstances of doubtful legality. Who would have thought that Labour would lead the country into a war which has been compared to the fiasco of Suez?

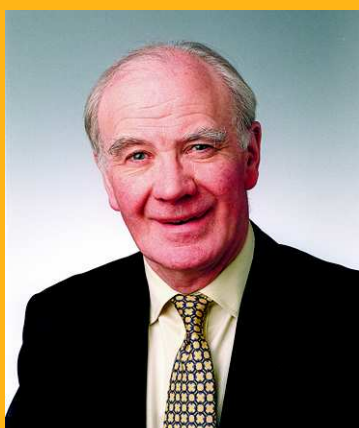
"This must never be allowed to happen again. The work of rebuilding trust and confidence should begin immediately. We can start by committing ourselves to the reforms of the United Nations set out in the High-Level Panel's sagacious report. We can influence the whole of the Middle East by an unwavering commitment to peace between Israel and the Palestinians. We can sharpen the focus on assistance for the poorest countries in the world through aid, debt relief and trade. We can pursue the cause of human rights wherever they are abused and neglected.

"We can truly put ourselves at

the heart of Europe and at the heart of its reform. We can make sure that British arms exports neither encourage conflict nor assist repression. We can fashion a new relationship with the United States: a partnership of influence, not one of uncritical subordination. We can base foreign policy on liberal values, respect for the rule of law, and human rights.

"I believe that only in this way can we maximise Britain's influence, and restore Britain's reputation."

**Sir Menzies Campbell**  
Liberal Democrat Shadow  
Foreign Secretary



## WE SHOULD NOT HAVE GONE TO WAR IN IRAQ

There were no weapons of mass destruction, there was no serious and current threat, and inspectors were denied the time they needed to finish their job. Thousands of soldiers and civilians have been killed and it has cost the UK over £3.5 billion. Britain must never again support an illegal military intervention. But by invading Iraq the Government has imposed on us a moral obligation to work towards a stable, secure and free Iraq. We welcome the recent elections. We will seek to strengthen and enlarge Iraqi security forces so that they can assume greater responsibility, include Sunni leaders in the political process, and ensure adequate provision of food, water, sanitation and health care for all the Iraqi people. We will support

the transition to a fully democratic and legitimate government, aiming to withdraw British troops by the expiry of the UN mandate at the end of the year; the open-ended presence of coalition forces is destabilising and fuels the insurgency.

## BUILD SECURITY AT HOME AND ABROAD

The best way to achieve security and to tackle the threat from terrorism is through international action. Britain must work through the United Nations, as a committed member of the EU, and with the US to promote international law, democracy and respect for human rights. We will work to reform the UN and the EU to make them more responsive to international challenges.



"The other parties like to posture. We think it's time for common sense. In the modern world, Britain is more prosperous and secure in Europe. But we need to make Europe work more effectively – through more democracy, more openness, less waste, and less bureaucracy. That's our Liberal Democrat vision for a strong Britain in a strong Europe, a powerful voice in the world."

**Sajjad Karim & Fiona Hall**  
Liberal Democrat Members of the European Parliament

## EUROPE

### EUROPE IS IMPORTANT TO SCOTLAND

Membership of the EU has been hugely important for Scottish jobs, environmental protection, equality rights and our place in the world. Scotland's trading links with Europe are critical. 57 per cent of Scottish international exports are to countries in the European Union. European enlargement to twenty-five member states will offer Scotland new opportunities to expand our trading links across the continent.

Some 75 per cent of Scotland's land mass is under agricultural production and therefore Europe matters to rural Scotland. Liberal Democrats will seek to use the forthcoming revision of the Rural Development Regulation to ensure that agricultural support is widened to give the necessary support for wider rural development. Scotland has a large number of fisheries dependent communities. In our dealings with Europe, Liberal Democrats are committed to support sustainable fisheries which will ensure both viable fishing stocks and viable fishing communities.

### MAKE EUROPE MORE EFFECTIVE AND DEMOCRATIC

European enlargement means the EU needs reform to become more efficient and more accountable. The new constitution helps to achieve this by improving EU coherence, strengthening the powers of the elected European Parliament compared to the Council of Ministers, allowing proper oversight of the unelected Commission, and enhancing the role of national parliaments. It also more clearly defines and limits the powers of the EU, reflecting diversity and preventing over-centralisation. We are therefore clear in our support for the constitution, which we believe is in Britain's interest – but ratification must be subject to a referendum of the British people.

## DEFENCE

### OUR TROOPS PROTECT THE NATION – WE MUST PROTECT THEM.

Britain's armed forces protect the country and are a force for good in the world. But with increasing overseas commitments, they are overstretched. The Government should not be cutting the size of the armed forces while at the same time asking them to take on ever more difficult tasks. We oppose Labour's plans to disband the Scottish regiments. We support the modernisation of the army but do not believe that Scotland's regiments should be amalgamated in the process.

New equipment continues to arrive late and over-budget, so we will make military procurement more open and competitive. By switching funding from unnecessary programmes, for example by cutting the third tranche of the Eurofighter programme, we will be able to invest more in protecting the welfare of the armed forces, ensuring that they are well-trained and well-equipped. We will seek new ways of sharing the military burden, by working with allies

through NATO and the EU. Liberal Democrats will be realistic about what Britain can, and should, take on, and British forces must always be able to deal with emergencies at home, such as terrorism or natural disasters.

### WORK FOR THE ELIMINATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND TACKLE THE ARMS TRADE

We will press for a new round of multilateral arms reduction talks, retaining the UK's current minimum nuclear deterrent for the foreseeable future, until sufficient progress has been made towards the global elimination of such weapons. Arms sales contribute to conflict, so we will establish a cross-party Parliamentary Arms Export Committee to monitor arms exports and scrutinise individual licence applications. We will require arms brokers to register under a code of conduct and revoke the licences of those who break the code. We will support the establishment of an International Arms Trade Treaty.



## INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### MEET BRITAIN'S PROMISE ON AID.

Liberal Democrats are committed to realising a world free from poverty. In order to achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals by 2015 (which include tackling extreme poverty and hunger, providing universal primary education, and combating HIV/AIDS) the UK needs to provide more effective international assistance. Liberal Democrats will increase British aid spending from 0.35 per cent of Gross National Income today to at least 0.5 per cent by 2007/08, and set out detailed plans for it to reach 0.7 per cent by 2011 at the latest.

### FAIR AND SUSTAINABLE TRADE AND INVESTMENT

Working through the EU and the World Trade Organisation, we will seek to remove the subsidies and tariff barriers that prevent the poorest countries in the world selling their goods on fair terms. We will work to end the dumping of subsidised agricultural exports by developed economies which is wrecking farming in Africa and other parts of the world. We will work to make sure that agreements to liberalise new sectors proceed on a genuinely voluntary basis, without undue pressure on developing countries. We will require companies benefiting from open markets to behave responsibly, and we will promote a new international agreement to encourage investment, particularly in the poorest countries.

## Green action

### PUT BRITAIN AT THE FOREFRONT OF CLIMATE CHANGE NEGOTIATIONS

Catastrophic climate change is the major environmental threat to the planet. Urgent action is needed. Liberal Democrat plans will make sure that Britain achieves its targets from the Kyoto Protocol (the international agreement on the pollution that causes climate change) well before the deadline. Britain and the EU must take the lead on negotiations for the next set of targets for greenhouse gas emissions. It is vital that we include the US and Australia but we also need to work with developing countries. Our long-term goal is 'contraction and convergence' – which means agreeing for every country a sustainable population-related allowance for emissions.

### TAKE EFFECTIVE ACTION TO PROTECT THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT

We will work through the EU to promote effective and enforceable international agreements to protect the global environment, such as the Cartagena Protocol

(on GM products). We will support international agreements and activities designed to stop international environmental crime, such as illegal logging or illegal trade in endangered wildlife, and improve customs training to tackle these illegal activities more effectively. We will argue for reforms of the World Trade Organisation, World Bank and International Monetary Fund to make sure that trade and development policies support rather than hinder environmental sustainability.

### PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

We will make sure that development assistance, whether delivered from the UK, EU, or multilateral institutions, not only meets the needs of the poor, but does so in ways that contribute to sustainable development. This means, in particular, targeting aid on renewable energy, clean water and sustainable agriculture, and increasing market access for green products from the developing world. We will devote resources to protecting biodiversity in developing countries, where many species of rare plants and wildlife are seriously endangered.

"Liberal Democrat international development policy is built on two foundations. First, we believe that this country has the wealth to help those much poorer than ourselves, and should do so. Second, we believe that we all benefit from achievement of sustainable development in the poorest countries in the world.

"This country has never lived up to the promise it made long ago to devote 0.7 per cent of its annual income to aid; it is time that it did. The response of the Scottish people to the Asian tsunami disaster was extraordinarily generous – but every day millions of families around the world are caught up in similar tragedies of famine, drought, war and terrible poverty. So it is time the UK Government lived up to its promises, to build the sustainable development to end such poverty once and for all.

"But it is not just about aid. For example, opening European markets to the products of the poorest countries helps their economies and lifts them out of poverty. Stopping subsidised European food being dumped helps their farmers prosper and grow more. Neither policy would cost a penny.

"We need to reform international institutions to make them more responsive to developing country needs; make aid more productive; make trade fairer; and take action to promote good governance, the rule of law and human rights.

"The people of this country have an outstanding record of helping those in need around the world. It is time for the UK government to match their commitment."

**Tom Brake**  
Liberal Democrat Shadow  
Secretary of State for  
International Development



# THE LIBERAL DEMOCRAT PLEDGE FOR GREEN ACTION



“Scotland has potential to generate clean energy for generations to come if we can harness the abundant natural resources around us. Liberal Democrats at Westminster and Holyrood will work together to promote renewable energy. Wind, wave and tidal energies have huge potential. We will ensure that Scotland benefits from the clean energy and from the green jobs that investing in these technologies will generate.”

**Alistair Carmichael**  
Scottish Energy Spokesperson

“Our vision for the environment is sustainable development. Catastrophic climate change is the greatest man-made threat to the planet, leading to fertile plains turning to desert, extreme weather conditions, rising sea levels, the spread of diseases and water shortages. These are not distant threats – in particular, the UK is likely to become much more vulnerable to flooding and tropical diseases such as malaria.

“Conservative and Labour politicians have preferred short-term popularity to taking the tough decisions for the long term. The environment does not even feature on Labour’s ‘pledge card’.

“I stood for parliament after years as an environmental campaigner, because I realised that it was only possible to change what the government does by changing the politicians. Otherwise ministers would go on saying they cared, but doing nothing. The Liberal Democrats can be trusted to make that change – that’s why I joined them. In Scotland, Liberal Democrats in government inherited the legacy of inaction by previous governments with Scotland’s historically poor record on recycling just one example. Now, Scottish Liberal Democrats have put the environment at the heart of government, ensuring that a green thread runs through all Scottish Executive policy – not least in our ambitious targets for renewable energy, recycling and green jobs. Liberal Democrats

at Westminster want to help to build on these policies and improve the environment in Scotland through further action at the UK level.

“My daughter is now five years old. I want her future to be bright – not destroyed before it really starts because the present generation has failed to take action. It is time the Westminster government helped people to make the changes needed – changes that can cut energy and other bills as well as protect the world’s future. It is time for a government that takes the environment seriously – before it is too late.

“That’s why the environment features on every page of this manifesto – a strong green thread running through everything we do and promise.”

**Norman Baker**  
Liberal Democrat Shadow Secretary of State for the Environment



Concern for the environment has always been a core Liberal Democrat value. Our policies are focused on three main areas: tackle climate change – cleaner transport, cleaner energy and a cleaner environment.

## TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE

Catastrophic climate change is the major environmental threat to the planet. Urgent action is needed. Liberal Democrat plans will make sure that Britain achieves its targets from the Kyoto Protocol (the international agreement on the pollution that causes climate change) well before the deadline. Britain and the EU must take the lead on negotiations for the next set of targets for greenhouse gas emissions. It is vital that we include the US and Australia but we also need to work with developing countries. Our long-term goal is ‘contraction and convergence’ – which means agreeing for every country a sustainable population-related allowance for emissions.

## CLEANER TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT

Transport is a source of increasing greenhouse gas emissions. We recognise the role of cleaner, greener fuels in tackling these emissions. Scottish agriculture has the potential to produce considerably more energy crops. We will help the development of the biofuel industry in Scotland. We will work with the Scottish Executive to realise that potential and significantly increase the use of bio-fuels in vehicles. We will also promote the use of hydrogen fuel cell technology. And we will examine wider tax

reforms through a Treasury-led Environmental Incentive Programme to reduce pollution and protect the environment, on the clear principle of taxing differently, not taxing more.

## CLEANER POWER

Energy use is the main source of greenhouse gas emissions and hazardous waste. We will introduce measures to reduce energy use overall – for example through better home insulation which will also tackle the ‘fuel poverty’ faced in particular by pensioners. We will make sure that at least 20 per cent of the UK’s electricity derives from a range of renewable sources by the year 2020. We will ensure a fundamental review of the electricity transmission charging regime to benefit all consumers and assist the Scottish Executive in meeting its target of 40 per cent of electricity from renewable sources by 2020. Finally, given their long-term problems of cost, pollution and safety, we will not replace existing nuclear power stations as they reach the end of their safe and economic operating lives. We will use renewables and save energy instead.

These and other more detailed proposals for achieving sustainable development are set out in every policy section of this manifesto.



"It's only fair and right for the environment that those who cause most pollution and congestion should pay more than those who don't. That's why Liberal Democrats will reform car tax to cut pollution and, in the long term as technology develops, scrap petrol duties and car tax altogether replacing them with a national system of road user charging based on location, congestion and pollution."

John Barrett

"We need a government at Westminster that will take the challenge of providing good transport seriously. One which accepts both that transport needs to work and that it must live within its environmental means. Any strategy which does not recognise these self-evident truths is doomed to failure."

"I live in one of the most rural constituencies in the country. Here the car is a necessity, not a luxury. But when I am in Westminster, public transport is a much more convenient way of getting about. It is blindingly obvious that the same solutions don't apply in both areas."

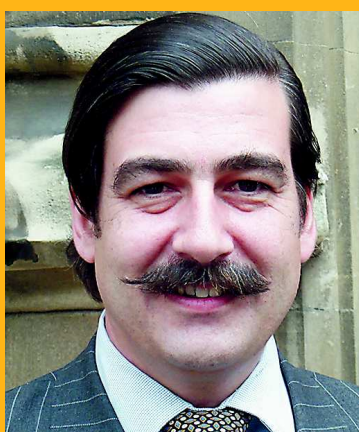
"So we need to be more creative. Our ideas for transport are all about responding to differing local needs, and helping people do the right things for the environment, rather than just taxing everyone more. We need to provide better public transport alternatives wherever possible, and we need a charging regime for car use – not ownership – which reflects both congestion and need."

"Small local changes can make a big difference. Liberal Democrats are campaigning up and down

the country to re-open railway stations and lines. In government in Scotland we are making huge progress securing funding for the Borders Railway, building new rail lines and new railway stations, and making stations safer, to help people feel more secure and make them more likely to travel by rail."

"I can't guarantee that every train will always run on time – but I can guarantee that a Liberal Democrat government will work to get Britain moving again."

**John Thurso**  
Liberal Democrat Shadow  
Secretary of State for Transport



#### ACTION ACROSS THE UK

Much of Scotland's transport is a matter for the Scottish Parliament. But many broad issues are dealt with at Westminster. Liberal Democrats want to create a truly integrated transport system. That's why we will take action at Westminster to build on the progress being made in government in Scotland where Liberal Democrats have delivered record investment in transport reaching £1 billion by 2006, with 70% going to public transport.

#### REWARD OWNERS OF LESS POLLUTING CARS WITH LOWER TAXES

For many people, particularly in rural areas, cars are a necessity and cannot be replaced by public transport. But they can be far less damaging to the environment when they use less fuel or alternative fuels. We will start by reforming the Vehicle Excise Duty system ('road tax') to cut tax altogether on cars that pollute least, funded by increasing it on those that pollute more. In the longer term, as technology allows, we will scrap petrol duties and VED altogether, replacing the revenue with a national road user charging system based on location, congestion and pollution (including the level of pollution of the particular vehicle). As a result, pollution and congestion will be

better targeted, with no need for the present system of heavy taxes on every journey.

In addition, we will encourage the development of freight interchanges to facilitate growth in rail freight, and we will develop a shipping, ports and waterways strategy. We will work with the Scottish Executive to ensure that the full potential of Scotland's ports is developed including the promotion of container transshipment hubs at Scapa Flow and Hunterston.

#### REFORM AVIATION TAXES

To encourage more fuel-efficient aircraft and discourage half-empty planes we will press for international agreement on extending emissions trading to aviation, while at the same time implementing per-aircraft rather than per-passenger charges. We will oppose the construction of international airports on new sites, and also the expansion of airports in the South East of England. We will end the regulation on busy national airports which results in retail rents subsidising landing charges and encouraging congestion and pollution. We will protect essential 'lifeline' routes to remote UK communities.

# BUILDING PROSPERITY ACROSS BRITAIN

## ALL OUR POLICIES ARE COSTED AND AFFORDABLE

Unlike the other parties, we have consistently set out costings for our manifesto pledges, explaining how much money they will need and how they will all be paid for. So this manifesto includes a specific section outlining our main costings. There is only one proposed net tax rise (to 50 per cent on the proportion of incomes over £100,000 a year, affecting just one per cent of taxpayers).

## TOUGH CHOICES IN PUBLIC SPENDING

Liberal Democrats have different

spending priorities from Labour. We believe that in order to concentrate resources on currently under-funded areas such as pensions, funding should be switched from lower priority areas. That means reducing unnecessary subsidies by the DTI to industry, and cutting wasteful new initiatives like the ID card scheme and the Child Trust Fund handouts for future 18 year-olds. This will allow us to spend more on the things that really matter and in Scotland will deliver additional resources for the Scottish Parliament to invest in its priorities.

## A STABLE, WELL-MANAGED ECONOMY

We welcome the greater economic stability that has been established since interest rates were set independently by the Bank of England (which the Liberal Democrats were the first party to advocate). Now, there needs to be more independent scrutiny and discipline in fiscal policy. We will give the National Audit Office the power to scrutinise the budget figures, including public borrowing, so that no Chancellor can fiddle the figures. We will make sure that the Office for National Statistics is independent

and accountable to parliament, not subservient to ministers. We will tackle irresponsible credit expansion in mortgages and personal loans by curbing misleading advertising and anti-competitive practices by promoters of credit cards and insurance for mortgages and loans.

## FAIRER TAXES AT WESTMINSTER

Under Labour, ordinary hard-working families pay more as a share of their incomes in tax than the very rich. Taking all taxes together, the poorest 20 per cent of the population pay 38 per cent of their income in tax, compared to just 35 per cent for the richest 20 per cent. That's not what people expected from a Labour Government. Liberal Democrats will make the tax system fairer and simpler. As a first step towards reducing tax paid by low earners, we will axe the unfair Council Tax and replace it with a Local Income Tax based on people's ability to pay. We will use some of the income from our 50 per cent tax (up from 41 per cent) on that part of income over £100,000 per year to reduce local taxes. Under Local Income Tax, the typical household will be £450 better off.

## CUT STAMP DUTY

People are increasingly struggling to afford their first home. We will raise the starting point for stamp duty from £120,000 to £150,000. This step will take 150,000 mainly first-time buyers out of paying stamp duty altogether, and cuts the cost of home ownership.

## AFFORDABLE HOMES

Liberal Democrat policy in government in Scotland is already helping to increase the supply of affordable housing with the Scottish Executive investing £1.2 billion over the next three years to build 21,500 new affordable homes – just over 16,500 homes for social rent and nearly 5,000 for low cost home ownership. Liberal Democrats want to do more to help increase the supply of affordable housing, by

making available public sector land currently owned by the Ministry of Defence, to help build more homes for rent and for affordable purchase through shared ownership schemes for local people. We will reform VAT to encourage developers to repair and re-use empty buildings and brownfield land, rather than building on greenfields and eroding the countryside. We will help protect the built environment by reducing VAT on historic building repairs.

## AN OUTWARD-LOOKING ECONOMY

Liberal Democrats support a liberal economic approach to trade, investment and migration in the national interest. We want Britain to be at the centre of a liberalised, reformed European Union. Liberal Democrats believe that Britain should work to create the right economic conditions to join the euro (subject to a referendum) in order to safeguard investment in the UK and reduce the cost and risk of trade with the rest of Europe. We will work to break down the trade barriers that prevent the poorest countries in the world selling their goods to the richer countries on fair terms.

## ECONOMIC MIGRATION

Economic migrants have helped make Britain one of the richest countries in the world, both economically and culturally. There remains a positive economic benefit from managed immigration to fill the demand for skills and labour that are in short supply. Scotland faces particular challenges in terms of its declining population and gaps in the labour market. We will consult with business, and the public services to agree numbers of work permits for economic migration to make sure that Britain continues to prosper. We will work with the Scottish Executive to ensure that decisions taken at Westminster help, and do not hinder Scotland's drive to reverse population decline. And

"I believe there is no job more important for any government than managing the economy well.

"When Labour was first elected, they seemed to understand this. Liberal Democrats were the first to propose making the Bank of England independent, to stop politicians playing with interest rates to suit their own re-election rather than the economy. Gordon Brown adopted this suggestion, even though there had been nothing in Labour's manifesto about it.

"As a result, and by balancing the books – with the advantage of relatively good world economic conditions – the economy prospered.

"But increasingly, Labour has started to make mistakes. Too many rules and tax complications, holding businesses back. Inadequate action to contain the explosion of personal debt. Economic forecasts making unrealistic assumptions about future growth. Failure to take the tough decisions to prioritise taxpayers' money, to spend it where it matters most. Over-complicated tax credits and means-tested benefits.

"As the former Chief Economist at Shell, I have wrestled with these problems all my life, including advising governments. I know these decisions are not easy – and can easily be thrown by world events.

"So I want to make clear my priorities for managing the economy:

"First, and most important, I will ensure a stable and well-managed economy. I'll stick to the Golden Rules – that government borrowing should only finance investment over the economic cycle, and that government debt should be no higher than 40 per cent of GDP. To make sure of that, I'll give the National Audit Office the job of publicly checking the budget figures.

"Second, I will insist on tough choices on public spending, cutting out low priorities in order to spend more on what matters most. As a result, all our policies are costed and affordable.

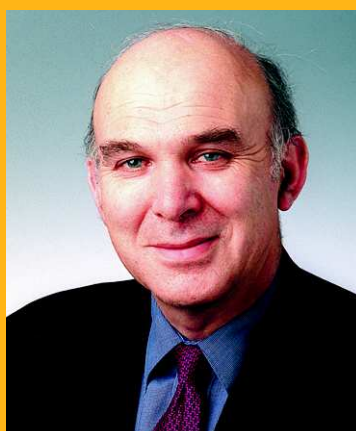
"Third, I will introduce fairer taxes. Our only net tax rise in this manifesto is on that slice of people's earnings over £100,000 a year.

"Finally, simpler taxes. Gordon

Brown has endlessly made the tax system more complex and unworkable. That, in the end, is self-defeating, simply adding to business costs, chaos at the Inland Revenue, and misery for confused taxpayers.

"These simple rules are my basic principles – and foundation stones for Britain's future prosperity."

**Vincent Cable**  
Liberal Democrat Shadow  
Chancellor of the Exchequer



we will end the scandal of asylum-seekers’ dependence on benefits, allowing them to work so they can pay their own way and use their skills to benefit everyone.

OLYMPICS IN SCOTLAND

We will support the UK’s 2012 Olympic and Paralympic bid campaigning for key events to be held in Scotland, building on the existing plans for the football competition to be held in Glasgow.

Green action

USING ECONOMIC INSTRUMENTS TO BENEFIT THE ENVIRONMENT

Green tax reforms and traded permits should be used to encourage people to act in a more environmentally responsible way. We will change the Climate Change Levy into a Carbon Tax, making it more effective at discouraging the use of the polluting fuels and energy sources that harm the environment. We will also strengthen tax incentives to use smaller and less polluting vehicles and create more energy-efficient homes. We will launch a Treasury-led Environmental Incentive Programme, examining tax reforms that will reduce pollution and protect the environment, on the clear principle of taxing differently, not taxing more.

“In Vince Cable, a former leading economist in industry, the Liberal Democrats have as Shadow Chancellor someone who can be relied on to make sure that every Liberal Democrat policy is affordable, and that economic policy delivers more stability and less red tape. This manifesto is realistic, costed, and deliverable.”

Sir Robert Smith



# FREEDOM TO SUCCEED

## CUT THE RED TAPE THAT STOPS BUSINESSES FROM GROWING

Liberal Democrats will slash the red tape, bureaucracy and over-regulation that are holding British businesses – especially small businesses – back. We will start with these three measures:

- No new UK regulation will be passed until a full assessment of its costs and necessity is published.
- New UK regulations affecting business will automatically be scrapped unless parliament specifically approves their renewal after a period specified in a 'sunset clause'.
- Wherever possible we will encourage inspectors to work

together to replace multiple inspections with fewer, all-purpose inspections.

## SCRAP THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

There is no need for a big UK department that interferes in the economy and subsidises failing companies at taxpayers' expense. The DTI is irrelevant to most enterprises, so in abolishing it Liberal Democrats will cut away its bureaucratic and wasteful functions. We will transfer its useful roles to more appropriate departments, such as support for scientific research to our Department for Education, Skills and Science. The Chief Secretary

to the Treasury will take on the role of advocate for business at the Cabinet table. Overall, this will save £8 billion of taxpayers' money over the life of a parliament.

## INVEST IN SKILLS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

What is important to business is skills and infrastructure. The proof of Liberal Democrat action in these areas can be seen in Scotland where we have secured massive investment in transport infrastructure, introduced enterprise education to schools, given young people new opportunities to learn vocational skills, supported 31,000 people into modern apprenticeships, and of course, abolished tuition fees.

## ABOLISH TUITION AND TOP UP FEES ACROSS THE UK

Decent higher education is the bedrock of a thriving economy – and all students should have access to university. So in Scotland, Liberal Democrats in government have abolished tuition fees, blocked top up fees and provided bursaries for the poorest students. But Scottish students studying in England, Wales or Northern Ireland still have to pay fees, and soon they will have to pay top-up fees too. A Liberal Democrat Government at Westminster will build on our work in Scotland to benefit all Scottish students by abolishing university top up fees and tuition fees throughout the UK. We will make grants available to help poorer students with maintenance costs so poorer Scottish students studying outside Scotland get the support they need.

## PROTECT CONSUMERS FROM RIP-OFFS

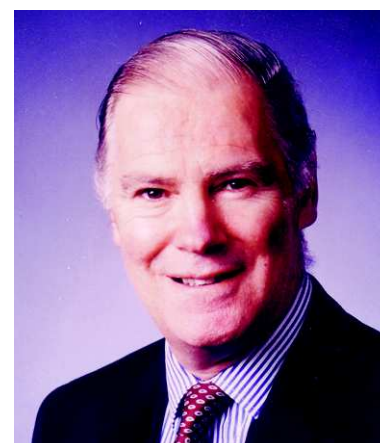
We will introduce a new legal duty on businesses to trade fairly, while cutting back unnecessary red tape and bureaucracy. Enforced by the courts, this will require less form-filling than Labour's complex rules, yet provide more effective protection for consumers, and promote free competition.

## FAIR PRICES FOR FOOD

Of every pound consumers spend on food in supermarkets just eight pence goes to the farmer. Liberal Democrats will introduce a legal duty to trade fairly, supported by a Food Trade Inspector within the Office of Fair Trading. This will protect farmers and consumers from unfair practices by supermarkets and processing companies.

## PROTECT THE POST OFFICE NETWORK AND UNIVERSAL MAIL DELIVERY

Over 3,500 post offices across the UK have closed under Labour, and hundreds more are due to be axed. Thousands also closed under the Conservatives. Our priority is to secure a viable future for the post office network, by developing a business plan based on providing a combination of commercial services, benefits transactions and government information. This will help keep more post offices open. We will maintain the obligation on Royal Mail to provide universal same-price delivery of letters throughout the UK.



"It comes down to this: government needs to concentrate on its own job – delivering a stable, sustainable economy, a skilled workforce, and a modern infrastructure. It should only intervene in the market where it can show that the benefits clearly outweigh the costs. Regulation is a last resort. Red tape must be cut. In my experience this combination is unique to the Liberal Democrats."

**Iain Vallance**  
Former Chairman of BT and former President of the CBI

"Before entering parliament in 1983 I worked in business. The red tape, bureaucracy and wasteful rules were bad enough then. They are much worse today. And, of course, the source of much of the red tape affecting small businesses in Scotland is Westminster and Europe. In Scotland, with Liberal Democrats in government, we have already delivered a small business rates relief scheme to cut the financial burden on small business.

"People running businesses up and down the country are the powerhouse of the economy. They need the freedom to generate economic growth – yet they are held back, struggling under a mountain of government rules, tax complications, bureaucracy and inspections.

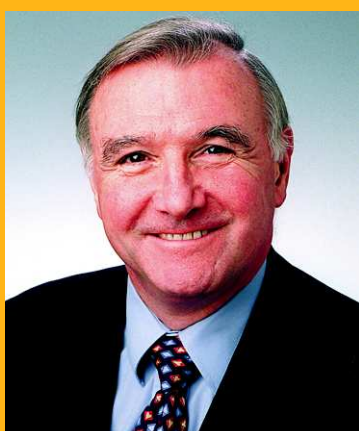
"So I have used my experience in business to make one thing sure above all else – that Liberal Democrat business policy is all about making things simpler, easier and fairer for businesses – particularly small businesses – to prosper and grow.

"That means getting government off the back of business. We will use 'sunset clauses' to prevent unnecessary UK regulations imposing a burden on business long after their usefulness has passed. And we will get rid of the top-heavy old-style DTI industrial subsidies.

"It also means a fairer playing field between small and large businesses – for example, by tackling the abuse of monopoly power through creating a duty to trade fairly. And where there is a need for government intervention, for example in tackling pollution, our promise is to harness market forces with incentives for sustainable development, so that good businesses pay less tax.

"The business people I meet want government to deliver skills and infrastructure, not ever more red tape. They want the freedom to succeed. These are our ambitions too."

**Malcolm Bruce**  
Liberal Democrat Shadow Secretary of State for Trade and Industry



## Green action

### PROMOTE CLEAN ENERGY

Liberal Democrats will make sure that at least 20 per cent of the UK's electricity comes from a full range of renewable sources by the year 2020, by increasing and reforming the obligation on energy suppliers to use renewable energy. We will ensure a fundamental review of the electricity transmission charging regime to benefit all consumers and assist the Scottish Executive in meeting its target of 40 per cent of electricity from renewable sources by 2020. Liberal Democrats will not replace existing nuclear power stations as they come to the end of their safe and economic operating lives – instead we will use renewables and conserve energy. We will encourage the use of alternatives, such as hydrogen fuels, as technology develops.

# BETTER GOVERNANCE



## CURB THE POWER OF THE PRIME MINISTER

In recent decades, Prime Ministers have exercised a growing domination over the political system, insufficiently accountable to Parliament or the people. We will curb this excessive concentration of power. We will cut back the powers of patronage, in particular through our plans for a predominantly elected second chamber. We will make the Royal Prerogative powers – such as decisions over war and peace – subject to parliamentary accountability, including bringing in a War Powers Act to require parliament's authority before a government takes Britain to war. A Civil Service Act will introduce a barrier to politicisation of the civil

service. We will also strengthen the powers of parliament to scrutinise the actions of the government, enhancing the Select Committee system.

## CUT BACK CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

We will cut the excessive number of UK government departments and reduce the number of UK government ministers by over a third. We will also move government bureaucracy out of London, saving money on office rents and spreading wealth and jobs more equally through the UK. The savings will be ploughed back into better public services.

## A MORE DEMOCRATIC BRITAIN

Liberal Democrats will improve and strengthen the UK's democratic systems. Liberal Democrats in government in Scotland are already bringing in the single transferable vote (STV) system for local elections, so that local councillors will genuinely represent their community. We will extend this fair voting system to all local elections in Britain, and to the House of Commons, Scottish Parliament and National Assembly for Wales. At the age people can marry, leave school and start work, they will have the right to vote. We will review the European electoral system so people can choose their MEPs personally, rather than just vote by party list as at present. Reform of the House of Lords has been botched by Labour, leaving it unelected and even more in the patronage of the Prime Minister. We will replace it with a predominantly elected second chamber.

## BETTER GOVERNMENT IN THE NATIONS OF THE UK

Liberal Democrats have led the way in arguing for devolution to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. We believe that people in those parts of the UK, rather than the government in London, should take the decisions on issues that affect them directly. We will therefore strengthen the powers of the Northern Ireland Assembly and extend primary legislative powers to the National Assembly for Wales. In consultation with the Scottish Parliament, we will consider how to extend its role. Liberal Democrats believe that the Home Rule settlement should be reviewed after two full terms of the Scottish

Parliament – allowing stability and time to assess its operation. To prepare for this, the Scottish Liberal Democrats established the Steel Commission, convened by former Presiding Officer Sir David Steel, to consider how best to extend the role and powers of the Scottish Parliament as part of a federal United Kingdom. The Commission has already produced an interim report, and will make its final report in due course. Underpinning these reforms will be a new system for dividing up government funding fairly within the UK, so that the system is fair for the nations and regions according to their real needs.

## MAKE THE BBC MORE INDEPENDENT FROM GOVERNMENT

The BBC has, over the last eighty years, made a major contribution to Britain's democracy, culture and standing in the world. The Liberal Democrats will make sure it remains the world's leading public service broadcaster – strong, independent, and securely funded. But the regulation of the BBC has been insufficiently independent of its own management, and of the government. Labour's proposals fail to address this. Liberal Democrats will scrap the current government-appointed Board of Governors, and introduce a new, independent external regulator appointed by parliament, to make sure that all public service broadcasters live up to their obligations to the public.



"We want to make sure that every vote counts, no matter where you live. The current system at Westminster is wholly unrepresentative.

"That's why Liberal Democrats will extend fair votes - already introduced for Scotland's councils thanks to the Liberal Democrats - to Westminster and the Scottish Parliament."

**Michael Moore**  
Deputy Leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats

"Every time you open a newspaper or see the news, the government seems to be taking more power for itself, and in particular for the Prime Minister.

"It started with Mrs Thatcher. It has got worse since Tony Blair became Prime Minister. His Policy Unit at No. 10 Downing Street tells ministers what to do. His Cabinet no longer makes the key decisions; he does. The House of Commons is no longer supreme; it is treated as a rubber-stamp, rather than as the assembly of people's representatives to whom government is accountable.

"Yet the Government does not have a popular majority for what it is doing. Even in 2001, the last election, only four out of ten voters supported it. If Britain had a fair voting system, Labour would never have had its current huge majority of parliamentary seats.

"I have served in parliament for thirty years, nearly twenty in the Commons and ten in the Lords. I have never felt so worried about the safety of British democracy. It is being eroded bit by bit. Only the opposition parties in the House of Lords, and some independent cross-benchers, saved the country from a regime of detention without trial, determined not by judges but by

ministers. Up to now, that kind of behaviour only happened in tyrannies like Pinochet's Chile, or Verwoerd's South Africa.

"The arrogant abuse of power must be stopped, by restoring cabinet government, protecting the independence of civil servants, and ensuring that parliament has the time to do its crucial job of holding the executive to account.

"Liberties, once lost, are rarely restored. The freedom of the individual lies at the heart of liberal democracy, and we Liberal Democrats are determined to defend it."

## Shirley Williams

Former Leader of the Liberal Democrats in the House of Lords



## Green action

### MAKE GOVERNMENT TAKE THE ENVIRONMENT SERIOUSLY

It is vital that government and business are made to take their environmental obligations seriously. We will use the purchasing power of government to boost the market for green products and services. Scotland will be well placed to benefit from this through Jim Wallace's Green Jobs Strategy which aims to make Scotland a world leader in cutting edge environmental technologies and efficient businesses. We will unite those areas of the UK government with the biggest impact on the environment in a single Environment, Transport and Energy department.

### CLEAN AIR AND WATER

Pollution in the air, in water and in the food chain causes or aggravates many illnesses as well as destroying the environment. We support the adoption of the EU Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals (REACH) Directive. This will mean that information becomes available to the public on the consequences of exposure to all chemicals in daily use and that those of high concern are replaced by safer alternatives.

# DEFENDING OUR CIVIL LIBERTIES

**We will not introduce ID cards. Liberal Democrats have consistently opposed Labour's expensive, illiberal and ineffective ID card scheme. Instead of ID cards, we will ensure resources are channelled into policies that will protect civil liberties, protect Britain and tackle crime.**

"This Government just keeps trying to take away citizens' basic freedoms – such as the right to jury trial, or to demonstrate peacefully outside parliament. They even wanted the power to lock anyone up at the whim of the Home Secretary. They plan to charge every citizen nearly £100 each to hold a compulsory identity card, despite the fact that other countries have found that they don't work. It's all done in the name of cutting crime and tackling terrorism; but it is the terrorists who want to take away freedom and democracy – our government should defend our liberties.

"The truth is that ID cards did not stop the Spanish train bombs, and even the 9/11 bombers had their papers in order. The US has ruled out ID cards because they don't work. What stops both terrorists and criminals is good intelligence and effective investigation – and that takes a lot more police. What protects Britain's borders is not costly ID cards for law-abiding British citizens, but a strong UK Border Force detecting illegal entry and criminal activity.

"Both the Conservatives and Labour like to talk tough, but have failed to deliver. I want my children to grow up in a safe community, while keeping intact the basic freedoms for

which the British people have fought so hard across the centuries."

**Mark Oaten**  
Liberal Democrat Shadow  
Home Secretary



## QUALITY INVESTIGATIONS, SAFE CONVICTIONS, FIGHTING CRIME AND TERROR

We will increase police resources to improve the detection and investigation of crime. We will create a co-ordinated UK Border Force to strengthen the country's borders against terrorism, people-trafficking and drug smuggling. We will work with the Scottish Parliament to ensure this new Border Force works for Scotland and works effectively with Scottish police and public authorities.

## CIVIL LIBERTIES

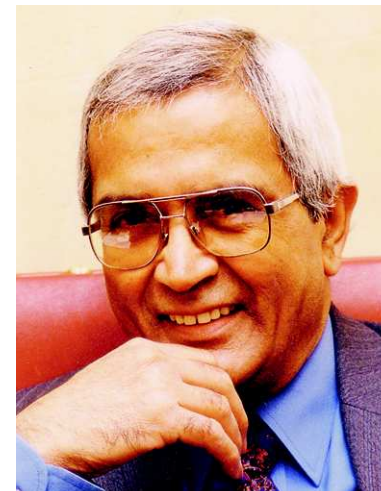
We oppose moves to reduce or remove rights to jury trial, and the routine use of hearsay evidence or revelation of previous convictions. We opposed Labour's plans to allow the Home Secretary to order house arrest and other restrictions on personal liberty. A British citizen's liberty must only be removed through a fair judicial process, not on the command of politicians. Liberal Democrats achieved substantial amendment of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, but it still has serious flaws, and we will repeal it. Effective action against terrorism is vital, and our priority will be to extend the criminal law to enable terrorist suspects to be prosecuted in the mainstream courts. We will admit evidence from communications interception. If control orders are still required they must be granted by a judge, be time-limited and be subject to a high standard of proof.

## FIRM BUT FAIR ON ASYLUM

For centuries Britain has had a proud record of granting safe refuge to those fleeing persecution. In turn, refugees have enriched the UK's culture and wealth immeasurably. The Home Office has a record of delays and bad decisions on asylum, so we will transfer responsibility for assessing asylum claims to a dedicated agency to sort out the mess, ensuring that those who need help get it, whilst those who don't can't abuse the system. We will work within the EU to develop common standards so that all EU countries take their fair share of refugees. We will also end asylum-seekers' dependence on benefits, allowing them to work so they can pay their own way and use their skills to benefit everyone.

## STRENGTHEN THE FIGHT AGAINST DISCRIMINATION

We will introduce a Single Equality Act to outlaw all unfair discrimination, (including on the grounds of race, gender, religion or belief, sexual orientation, disability, age or gender identity), thus giving equal protection for all. Liberal Democrats led the call for an amendment to the laws on incitement to racial hatred, to criminalise those who use religious words as a pretext for race hate. Our Equality Act will stop same-sex couples in civil partnerships being treated unfairly compared with married couples in pension arrangements.



"I have been been horrified to find that Labour doesn't seem to understand that in fighting crime and terrorism, the point is to defend Britain's justice and democracy, not give it away. Tough Liberal policies put more police on the beat and tackle the causes of crime. We won't surrender Britain's liberties."

**Navnit Dholakia**  
Liberal Democrat Deputy  
Leader in the House of Lords

# 10 REASONS TO VOTE SCOTTISH LIBERAL DEMOCRAT

**01**

Invest in Scotland's children

**02**

Better care when you need it most

**03**

Put patients first

**04**

1,000 more police in our communities

**05**

Axe the Council Tax

**06**

£100 more on the pension every  
month at 75

**07**

Tackle climate change

**08**

An Entrepreneurial Scotland

**09**

We should not have gone to war in Iraq

**10**

Liberal Democrats can be trusted to  
deliver on our promises



**The Liberal Democrats are the  
REAL alternative at this election.  
If you like what we stand for,  
your support  
can make  
all the  
difference.**

- ☐ **I wish to make a contribution to the campaign of:**  
☐ **£100**   ☐ **£50**   ☐ **£20**   ☐ **£10**   ☐ **Other**  
☐ **I enclose a cheque payable to the Scottish Liberal Democrats**  
☐ **Please debit my Credit Card/Switch (Maestro) card:**

**Start date**   **Expiry date**

**Issue no (Switch/Maestro):**   **Signed**

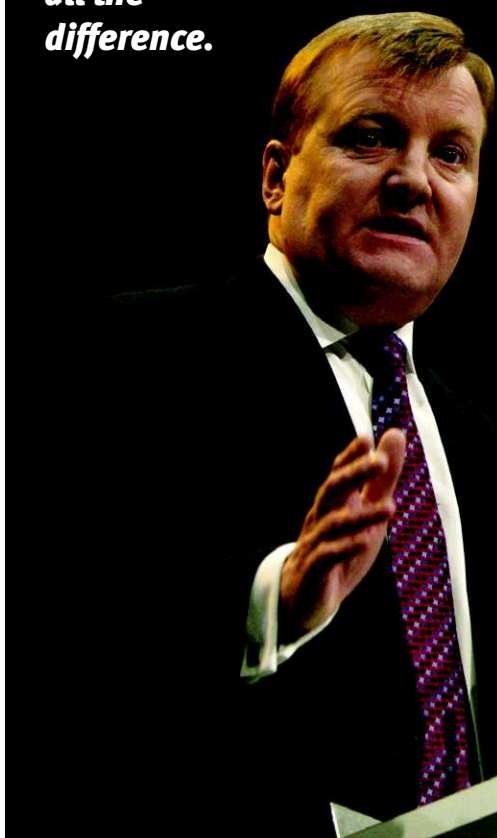
**Name**

**Address**

**Email**

**Telephone**

**Please return to: Charles Kennedy, FREEPOST,  
Scottish Liberal Democrats,  
4 Clifton Terrace, Edinburgh, EH12 0PQ**





# Scottish Liberal Democrats

## The **REAL** alternative

### Manifesto Scottish Supplement

# REAL AMBITIOUS FOR SCOTLAND

#### A RECORD OF ACTION

This General Election comes at an important time for Scotland. It is the second General Election since the establishment of the Scottish Parliament and the most open for a generation. For the first time since 1929, the election will be a genuine three party contest across the UK with the Liberal Democrats offering the Real Alternative to Tony Blair's Labour Party and Michael Howard's Tories at Westminster.

The Scottish Parliament is working - delivering real solutions to problems in Scotland. However, the colour of the government at Westminster remains important for Scotland. On issues of the economy, taxation, pensions, social security, and Scotland's role in the world, what happens at Westminster matters in Scotland.

#### AMBITIOUS FOR SCOTLAND

Liberal Democrats are ambitious for Scotland. In government, we are setting the agenda for Scotland's future, investing for the long-term in children, in older people, in enterprise and opportunity, in better health and in a better environment.

Liberal Democrats want to

- Achieve radical health improvement by preventing illness and promoting good health
- Cut crime and reoffending through effective rehabilitation and alternatives to custody
- Implement innovative education and enterprise policies to create an entrepreneurial Scotland
- Get Scotland moving through massive investment in public transport & infrastructure
- Make sustainable development the focus for Scotland's future and ensure a green

environmental thread runs through all Scottish Executive policy, not least in our ambitious targets for renewable energy, recycling and green jobs

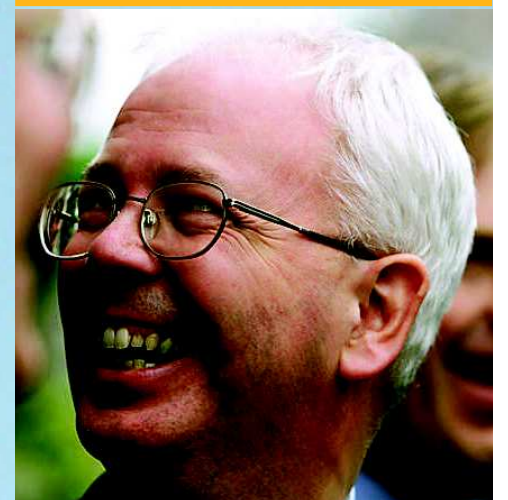
But we want to do more and, with Liberal Democrats in government at Westminster, we can.

First, we will take action across the UK that will benefit Scotland through our proposals to reform pensions, maternity pay, social security and taxation, cut red tape, and promote cleaner energy and transport. In our full Manifesto we set out these proposals in more detail.

Second, there are actions we can take in Scotland, using the additional resources that a Liberal Democrat government at Westminster will bring. Our proposals for new policies for Scotland, to build on our success in government, are detailed in this Supplement to the Manifesto.

"The Scottish Liberal Democrats are making a difference to the lives of all of Scotland's people and delivering on our promises"

Jim Wallace MSP  
Leader,  
Scottish Liberal Democrats



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# scotlibdems.org.uk

# Invest in our children; Better care when you need it most; Put patients first; 1,000 more police in our communities; Axe the council tax; Tackle climate change

Our Westminster proposals for this election will result in an extra £1.8 billion over five years for Scotland. We will invest this additional resource in six key areas:

## INVEST IN SCOTLAND'S CHILDREN

Affordable childcare, better learning and more leisure opportunities

## BETTER CARE WHEN YOU NEED IT MOST

A new package of care for older people in the community

## PUT PATIENTS FIRST

Faster diagnosis so your NHS treatment can start more quickly

## 1,000 MORE POLICE IN OUR COMMUNITIES

Cutting crime and the fear of crime

## AXE THE COUNCIL TAX

Local Income Tax is both fair and affordable

## TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE

Improve energy efficiency across the public sector and reduce carbon emissions in Scotland.

## LIBERAL DEMOCRATS ARE THE REAL ALTERNATIVE AT WESTMINSTER

Over the past four years, Charles Kennedy's Liberal Democrats have been the effective opposition at Westminster. On Iraq, ID Cards, Tuition Fees, and Council Tax, we asked the critical questions while the Conservatives lined up with Tony Blair's Labour Party. The Conservatives have flip-flopped over the big issues of the day. When called upon to make a judgement – in the heat of the moment – the Conservatives consistently make the wrong one – then try to back-track when they see political advantage. Poor judgement and opportunism have characterised Michael Howard's Tories.

At the General Election, Charles Kennedy's Liberal Democrats are the Real Alternative to Labour at Westminster and Scottish Liberal Democrat MPs elected in even greater numbers at Westminster will ensure that.

Liberal Democrats are the only party in Scotland with real ambition for this election. Labour are resigned to losing seats across Scotland. The SNP revealed the extent of their ambition is to go from five seats to between four

and six. Meanwhile the Tory ambition for seats is simply to have more than none.

## SPEAKING UP FOR SCOTLAND AT WESTMINSTER

Scottish Liberal Democrat MPs are speaking up for Scotland at Westminster. Opposing Tony Blair and George Bush's war in Iraq, campaigning to save the Scottish Regiments, criticising the detention of children of asylum seekers in Dungavel, and fighting for changes to boost Scotland's renewable energy industry.

Liberal Democrat MPs are speaking up for human rights in Scotland and across the world, ensuring that judges not politicians take decisions on individual liberty, and opposing Labour's expensive, illiberal and ineffective ID card scheme.

Liberal Democrat MPs will continue to speak up for Scotland. And only Liberal Democrats can do that effectively. The SNP are irrelevant at this election, Michael Howard's Tories cannot be trusted, while Labour MPs meekly prop up Tony Blair, casting hard-fought human rights aside in the short-term populist grab for votes.

*There is a stark choice facing voters at this General Election. People will look at the track records of the political parties and ask who will protect their family's security and freedom? Who will treat them fairly regardless of where they come from? And who can they trust to take decisions for the right reasons?*

*Across the UK, Liberal Democrats will stand up for freedom, rejecting the tyranny of politicians taking decisions on individual liberty, opposing Labour's expensive, illiberal and ineffective ID card scheme, and opposing the imposition of tuition fees and top up fees.*

*Liberal Democrats will demand fair treatment for all, rejecting the shameful bidding war of the Tories and Labour over asylum seekers and immigration, opposing the Tories' unfair Council Tax, now also supported by Labour, in favour of a fairer tax based on people's ability to pay.*

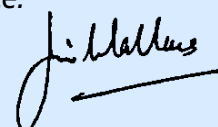
*And Liberal Democrats will take decisions for the right reasons, standing against Tony Blair's Labour Party who supported George Bush and rushed to war in Iraq without the backing of the United Nations.*

*Here in Scotland, there are – literally – hundreds of Liberal Democrat manifesto commitments being delivered. Liberal Democrats have already made the difference in government:*

- Tuition fees – gone in Scotland, still there in England
- Top up fees – blocked by Liberal Democrats in Scotland, imposed by Labour in England
- Free personal care for the elderly – delivered in Scotland, attacked by Labour ministers in England as "crazy" – but thousands of Scottish pensioners are now benefiting from the security and dignity this policy provides
- Free travel for older people – delivered in Scotland, only now considered four years later in England
- Free eye and dental checks – on the way in Scotland, but not in England
- The threat of more nuclear power – effectively challenged by Liberal Democrats. The Executive will oppose any nuclear power stations until a safe storage option for radioactive waste has been found
- Healthier school meals – Scottish school meals described as 'light years' ahead of England

*Scotland is blazing the trail for the rest of the United Kingdom. In government in Scotland, Scottish Liberal Democrats have provided the policy backbone for the Executive's most dynamic initiatives. Policies which have made a real difference. People across Scotland are benefiting: from the youngest children benefiting from free nursery places, to school children who will benefit from smaller class sizes, to students who no longer pay tuition fees and to older people who benefit from free personal care and free travel. However we know that there is much more to do. With the additional resources available from a Liberal Democrat government in Westminster, Liberal Democrats in Scotland will build on our success in government.*

*The Liberal Democrats are the Real Alternative across the UK to Tony Blair's Labour Party and Michael Howard's Tories. Liberal Democrats can be trusted to keep our promises across the UK as we have done in government in Scotland. And with more Scottish Liberal Democrat MPs, you can trust us to make the difference.*



**Rt Hon Jim Wallace QC MSP**  
Deputy First Minister  
Leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats



# MAKING A DIFFERENCE

## MAKING THE DIFFERENCE – KEEPING OUR PROMISES

In government in Scotland, Liberal Democrats are setting the agenda for the long term, investing in people, in enterprise and opportunity, in better health and in a better environment.

- More doctors, nurses and health professionals and a new focus on health promotion
- More teachers and smaller primary class sizes
- More police on the streets and record crime clear up rates
- Free personal care for the elderly
- Student tuition fees abolished and top up fees blocked
- Focus on sustainable development and a green environmental thread running through all government policy

In May 2003, the Scottish Liberal Democrats signed a Partnership Agreement for a coalition government with the Scottish Labour Party. Commenting on the Agreement, the Daily Record reported, "The LibDems under Jim Wallace have punched above their weight."

Two years later, we have ensured that 80 per cent of our manifesto commitments have either been delivered, are presently being implemented, or progressed in government.

Liberal Democrats have set Scotland on a different path to that of England by abolishing tuition fees and introducing free personal care for the elderly. However Liberal Democrats are making the difference in many other areas of government policy and keeping our promises in government:

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE FOR HEALTH

Liberal Democrats believe that prevention is better than cure and that is why we have put health promotion at the top of the political agenda. Our record includes:

- Free eye and dental checks for

all by 2007

- £26 million health promotion fund
- Healthier school meals and new nutritional guidelines in schools and nurseries, free fruit for young children, free chilled water, removing fizzy drinks, doubling the school meals budget by 2006 – putting Scotland "light years" ahead of England
- Two hours of Physical Education for children every week, £24m funding for 600 active school co-ordinators, and safer routes to school to promote physical activity for children
- Ensuring a new focus on health promotion and screening with a ban on smoking in all enclosed public places being introduced, personal health plans and Well Man clinics

In 2003 we promised more doctors, nurses and health professionals to help make the difference for health and reduce the time people have to wait for treatment. Our record includes:

- Delivering over 100 more consultants, 1,000 more nurses, and 300 more allied health professionals
- Delivering an additional Infection Control Nurses in place and recruiting 3,500 cleanliness champions to fight infection and ensure cleaner, safer hospitals
- Digital hearing aids being made available for all who need them
- Reducing mortality rates for patients with coronary heart disease, stroke and cancer – Scotland's three biggest killers

## MAKING SCOTLAND A SAFER COUNTRY

In 2003, Liberal Democrats pledged more police for Scotland and action to reduce reoffending rates. Our record includes:

- Delivering almost 500 more police, with more on the way
- Recruiting over 100 more Special Constables with more on the way
- Taking action to tackle reoffending including Drug Courts, Drug Treatment and Testing Orders, and effective Alternatives to Custody to address offending behaviour

- Doubling the number of places on restorative justice projects to 6,000 to make offenders pay back to communities

## MAKING EDUCATION FOR LIFE

In 2003 Liberal Democrats promised to employ more teachers, cut primary class sizes, invest in school buildings, tackle indiscipline in schools and reform the curriculum. Our record includes:

- Almost 6,000 teachers in training, with more on the way to meet our commitment to 53,000 teachers by 2007
- Average primary class sizes at an all time low
- 1,800 more classroom assistants than in 2001 with up to 1,000 more support staff on the way to support teachers and tackle indiscipline
- Investing £2 billion to build or rebuild 300 schools by 2009
- National tests for 5-14 year olds scrapped and reform of the curriculum
- Securing record support for further and higher education with funding increasing by almost a third – rising to over £1.5 billion for the first time ever
- 31,000 Modern Apprentices in training, learning skills for work
- Introducing Individual Learning Accounts to open up opportunities for people on lower incomes with grants to pay for courses and training

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE FOR TRANSPORT

In 2003, Liberal Democrats promised to invest in new railways, abolish Skye Bridge Tolls and extend free local bus travel for older people. Our record includes:

- Delivering record investment in transport reaching £1 billion by 2006, with 70 per cent going to public transport
- Securing funding for construction of the Borders Railway
- Beginning construction of the Stirling-Alloa-Kincardine and Larkhall-Milngavie lines. We have committed to re-opening



the Airdrie-Bathgate line and to new rail links to Edinburgh and Glasgow airports. Bills are currently going through Parliament for two new Tram lines in Edinburgh.

- Investing in new bus services through the £18 million Bus Route Development Scheme
- Abolishing Skye Bridge Tolls
- Extending free local off peak bus travel for older people to free national any time travel from next year

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE FOR RURAL SCOTLAND

In 2003, Liberal Democrats promised action to deliver a sustainable future for fishing and agriculture, improve affordable housing, and boost renewable energy. Our record includes:

- Establishing a Regional Advisory Council for the North Sea, giving fishermen and scientists a say in managing fisheries in a sustainable way
- Decoupling agriculture subsidies from production allowing Scotland to tailor rural development funding to support wider environmental and social needs
- Investing £1.2 billion in affordable housing in the next three years with more than £200 million going to build 1,000 new affordable homes in the Highlands, and a new shared equity scheme to help first time buyers get on the property ladder
- Giving local authorities the power to cut the Council Tax discount on second homes allowing them to use the receipts to fund new affordable housing

## A GREEN THREAD THROUGH GOVERNMENT

In 2003, Liberal Democrats promised to run a green thread through government ensuring that sustainable development is at the top of the political agenda. Our record includes:

- Beginning implementation of Strategic Environmental Assessment to ensure that the sustainable development test applies to all strategies, plans

and policies produced by public bodies.

- Doubling rates of recycling since 2002, building towards a new target to recycle 30 per cent of municipal waste by 2008
- Developing Jim Wallace's Green Jobs Strategy which aims to make Scotland a world leader in leading edge environmental technologies and efficient businesses
- Implementing the Nature of Scotland Act to protect biodiversity, improve management of valuable environmental sites and increase penalties for wildlife crime
- Securing £6.6m funding for the Scottish Community and Householder Renewables Initiative to support small scale renewable energy projects
- Achieving significant progress towards generating 40 per cent of Scotland's electricity from renewable sources by 2020

## MAKING A LIBERAL SCOTLAND

In 2003, Liberal Democrats promised to introduce fair votes for local government elections, to open government up to the public with new freedom of information laws, and to support the voluntary sector and the arts. Our record includes:

- Introducing proportional representation (STV) for local government elections, breathing new life into local democracy and making everyone's vote count, no matter where they live
- Securing an Independent Review of Local Government Finance
- Establishing a National Theatre for Scotland, taking action to secure the status of Gaelic, and introducing a Bill to reform charity law
- Introducing a new Freedom of Information regime which goes well beyond the system in place in the rest of the UK
- Making massive investment in social work, focussing on children and families
- Securing the future of the Children's Hearing system

# INVEST IN SCOTLAND'S CHILDREN

Liberal Democrats have never made any secret of our ambitions for education. In the twenty first century, if Scotland is going to be prosperous, if people are going to make the most of their talents and their lives, we need to invest in our children and in education in its widest sense.

- Revolutionise the provision of affordable, flexible childcare in schools
- Outdoor activities and education for young people
- Free swimming for children and young people
- New opportunities and activities for children after school and at the weekends
- New activities fund to keep young people away from crime and anti social behaviour

## KEEPING OUR PROMISES

"In government in Scotland, Liberal Democrats have already made the improvement of education a priority. We started with young children, introducing free nursery places for 3 and 4 year olds. We know that good education is hampered when it takes place in old, crumbling buildings and that is why we are building and renovating 300 schools with a commitment to the highest design and environmental standards. We are recruiting 3,000 extra teachers, cutting primary class sizes, and taking on more classroom assistants to ease the burden on teachers and give pupils more personalised learning.

"We recognise that in some schools there is a problem with indiscipline. That is why in January 2005 we announced an additional £35 million to improve discipline in schools, allowing schools to employ up to 1,000 extra support staff to

tackle problem behaviour and help teachers tackle indiscipline. We believe that schools should be about learning, not just ticking the boxes. That's why we abolished the failed league tables, introduced by the Tories, which stigmatised schools instead of helping them to improve. And in November 2004 we announced a package of reforms to cut bureaucracy and give teachers more time to teach. We are reforming the curriculum making it easier for children to learn at the pace that suits them best. And we are extending access for 14-16 year olds to college to broaden their horizons and develop vocational skills.

## A PROMISE OF MORE

"But there is much more for us to do. Liberal Democrats want to invest in our children now when it matters most. With the additional resources available from a Liberal Democrat government at Westminster,

Liberal Democrats in Scotland will launch a project to revolutionise children's hopes and aspirations, focusing on the time that children spend out of school. Our plans will deliver extra investment in children of more than £600 million above existing plans over the next five years."

**Robert Brown MSP**  
Education Spokesperson



## REVOLUTIONISING CHILDCARE, EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES

Children spend one seventh of their time in school, six sevenths out of school. However while we spend billions in schools, we spend very little investing in our children after the school bell rings.

Liberal Democrats want to extend opportunities to help working parents spend more time with their children. Our focus is on choice for parents and children, not reducing the time that parents spend with their children. Across the UK we will give working families having their first child increased maternity pay for the first six months. This will give an extra £910 on average when parents really need it. And in Scotland we want to build on this by extending the childcare options for all families.

For many families, work commitments or caring responsibilities are not always compatible with the school day. Whether it is first thing in the morning before the school day starts, or immediately after classes end, finding local, good quality and affordable childcare is not always easy. And this is a problem not just for parents who work full time. It can be particularly difficult for part time workers to find good childcare because places often go first to those who opt for full time places. We should not penalise people who want to work part time to allow themselves more time with their children.

Liberal Democrats want to change that. We want to revolutionise childcare in Scotland, giving parents the opportunity of high quality, local, affordable and flexible childcare when they need it and where their children will benefit from it.

But we want this childcare revolution to focus on developing new opportunities for children

– not to be a state babysitting service.

## GOOD QUALITY AFFORDABLE CHILDCARE

We will:

- Revolutionise the provision of flexible care in schools for before and after the formal school day, giving parents the opportunity of affordable childcare between 8am and 6pm in local schools.
- Provide a childcare place for every child whose parents want one
- Extend breakfast clubs to every school in Scotland giving children access to healthy, nutritious food before the school day starts
- Invest in activities for children after the school day ends including learning, play, sport, art, music, drama and homework clubs
- Ensure that all childcare provided meets high standards of care

## EACH AND EVERY CHILD MATTERS

Liberal Democrats want to support all our children. We believe in investing in our young people, not talking them down, because Scotland's children are our greatest resource – not our greatest threat.

The vast majority of young people are not involved in crime or anti social behaviour. We will take action to encourage all children to experience new opportunities beyond the school. Opportunities that will help them grow as individuals as well as learn. Opportunities that will improve their health as well as their minds and let them appreciate and enjoy different surroundings and environments.

## MORE LEISURE AND ACTIVITIES

We will:

- Give every child the entitlement to a week of outdoor activity during their time at secondary school. This will allow them to learn new skills and activities,

gain a better understanding of their environment, promote good health, and give a boost to tourism in Scotland

- Provide funding for local authorities to employ outdoor education officers to take the burden off teaching staff and publish guidance to promote outdoor education
- Give every child a new entitlement to free swimming
- Develop new opportunities and ways in which children can

become involved in a range of activities in the evenings, at the weekends and in school holidays. We will create a new fund for local authorities and the voluntary sector to develop affordable activities clubs offering sport, leisure, music, art and environmental activities

- Create a new activities fund to help keep young people away from crime and anti social behaviour by giving them positive alternatives. We will empower

young people to decide what services they most need in their local community. We will encourage local businesses and local police to support these projects. This could include such things as midnight football or basketball which have already proved successful in some areas in keeping young people out of trouble

- Support a bi-annual Scottish Mini-Olympics event to help develop a competitive spirit in

schools and sports clubs. 32 teams of young people representing every local authority area would compete against each other in various Olympic-style events. We will encourage businesses and community groups to back their local team through local hero bursary schemes

Photo: PA/EMPICS



“Liberal Democrats will invest in our children now when they need it most. Affordable childcare in schools. New activities out of school. Outdoor education. Free swimming. Investment in evening and weekend activities.

That is how Liberal Democrats will invest in Scotland’s children.”

Sir Robert Smith

# BETTER CARE WHEN YOU NEED IT MOST

The mark of a civilised society is how it treats its older people. We want to build on our achievement of free personal care, with a major boost for elderly care in the community.

- A new package of care for older people in the community
- Tackle delayed discharge in our hospitals – free up more beds
- New investment in community health care facilities
- New investment in Community Hospitals
- Invest in new technology to support people living at home

## TACKLE DELAYED DISCHARGES, INVEST IN LOCAL CARE

Significant progress has been made in tackling delayed discharges in Scotland, but Liberal Democrats want to do more to ensure that older people do not spend any more time in acute hospitals than they need to because of a lack of suitable community care. We will focus on improving and expanding local care, promoting a greater role for GPs and community health centres and a boost for Community Hospitals. This will also free up more beds in our acute hospitals, benefiting everyone with quicker treatment.

## COMMUNITY HEALTH FACILITIES

We will:

- Tackle delayed discharges in our hospitals – free up more beds and build on progress made by Liberal Democrat policies being implemented in government.
- Deliver new investment in local community health care facilities. In 90 per cent of cases, an individual's contact with the health service is through GPs and other local primary care services. Liberal Democrats want to invest to provide more of these services locally, under one roof. More treatments, tests, advice, support and care can and should be provided locally by enhancing existing health centres and providing new community health facilities. Our plans will benefit people across Scotland and will boost the support that older people need in the community.
- Deliver new investment in Community Hospitals. Liberal Democrats believe that Community Hospitals, often led by local GPs with specialist skills, have an important role to play in providing more care locally. We will invest to upgrade facilities and allow more older people to leave acute hospitals sooner and be treated locally in Community Hospitals – what is known as 'step-down care'.
- Create a new fund for local authorities and health boards to improve care for older people

by locating different services under one roof. Using new powers in the Smoking, Health and Social Care Bill this will allow better co-operation and joint ventures between councils and health boards to tackle delayed discharges.

## MORE PERSONAL CARE

Many older people have a range of long term health problems. International research has shown that these patients can benefit hugely from a more personalised approach to care which sets out a clear care plan to deal with their health problems. Taking a more personalised approach can be successful in preventing problems and reducing emergency admissions to hospital. It can also cut the time spent in hospital. UK pilot schemes have shown a reduction in hospital admissions of between 10 and 20 per cent.

Scottish Liberal Democrat care proposals will allow the NHS to put much more effort into meeting these complex needs and provide a more personalised service in the community. This will help avoid many of the relatively minor and easy to prevent conditions that older people can suffer from and which cause them to be admitted to acute hospitals.

## CARE IN THE HOME

We will:

- Cut unscheduled hospital admissions and provide care in the home for more older people
- Invest in new technology to support people living at home. Councils and health boards already provide support such as handrails on baths and showers. However new technology could offer many more people the support they need to lead as independent a life as possible in their own home. We will invest new resources in new 'smart' technologies such as movement and fall detectors, bed and chair sensors, and direct communications



**“A new package of care for older people in the community. New investment in Community Hospitals and local community health care facilities. Tackle delayed discharge. Cut unnecessary hospital admissions. New technology to support older people in their own homes.**

**That is how Liberal Democrats will deliver better care when you need it most.”**

**Alistair Carmichael**

## KEEPING OUR PROMISES

“In government in Scotland, Liberal Democrats have fought hard to ensure a fairer deal for pensioners and to celebrate the positive role that older people play in Scottish life. We want older people to be able to keep active – through physical activity, volunteering and leading an active social life. Through partnership government we have also delivered free bus travel and free central heating for pensioners.

“However we recognise that some older people are less able to enjoy an active life and need additional support. That is why in Scotland today older people who need personal or nursing care receive it free of charge. Free personal care for the elderly delivered in Scotland by Liberal Democrats in government.

“Too many older people are stuck in hospital for longer than they need to be because they can't get the care they need in the community. In 2003, Liberal Democrats helped to secure funding of £30 million for three years to improve community care for people leaving hospital. We have made progress on

tackling delayed discharges with a 14 per cent decrease from October 2003 to 2004. And we are making sure that older people get the care they need regardless of who is responsible for providing it.

## A PROMISE OF MORE

“But there is much more for us to do. With the additional resources available from a Liberal Democrat government at Westminster, Liberal Democrats in Scotland will invest in a new package of care for older people in the community. Our plans will deliver extra investment in services for older people of more than £400 million above existing plans over the next five years.”

**Mike Rumbles MSP**  
Health Spokesperson



# PUT PATIENTS FIRST – FASTER DIAGNOSIS

The time it takes between seeing your doctor and being referred for specialised diagnostic tests to identify the problem can be a real worry for patients. Liberal Democrats want to reduce the wait and the worry.

- Measure waiting times for specialised diagnostic tests
- Set goals to reduce waiting times for specialised diagnostic tests
- Invest in NHS diagnostic equipment
- New investment in primary care and community hospitals

## KEEPING OUR PROMISES

In 1999 the Scottish Liberal Democrats made it clear that it is the length of time that people wait for hospital treatment, not the length of the list that is important. Having changed the focus to waiting times, we have ensured that the Executive has taken action to tackle waiting times, meeting 12 and 9 month guaranteed maximum waiting time targets and introducing a guarantee that from December 2005 no patient should wait more than six months for hospital inpatient and day case treatment, or for a first outpatient appointment with a consultant.

Liberal Democrats are committed to improving diagnostics. Liberal Democrats in government have agreed funding to renew outdated NHS capital equipment, especially diagnostic equipment such as CT and MRI Scanners, to assist early detection of illness. The Executive's Capital Investment Plan will put an additional £125 million into new medical equipment by 2007. This will focus particularly on diagnostic equipment including radiography. We are also making progress in recruiting staff to perform these tests.

Liberal Democrats believe that the key to quicker and better diagnosis, is to improve and expand local care, giving a greater role to some GPs and nurses. In government we have already invested £3.5 million to develop models of Community Health Service Centres, bringing

together treatment, diagnosis and support services within a single centre in the local community. Six new services such as the Leith Community Treatment Centre are now operating in communities across Scotland.

## A PROMISE OF MORE

With the additional resources from a Liberal Democrat Government at Westminster invested in improving community health facilities, we will free up capacity in acute hospitals and be able to ensure faster diagnosis with more tests done locally.

## FASTER DIAGNOSIS

We want to ensure that illnesses are diagnosed by the quickest

route possible so that treatment can start as early as possible. Anyone who has been told by their doctor that they need to go for specialised diagnostic tests to explain what the problem is, will know the worry that comes with waiting to have these tests. Doctors will tell you that one of the most important factors in successfully treating illnesses such as cancer is cutting the time it takes to receive these diagnostic tests.

Scottish Liberal Democrats already plan to invest heavily in primary care and Community Hospitals to ensure that more people can get the care they need locally. This will ensure that local communities

have access to a range of services including diagnostic tests and minor surgery. We want to see more diagnostic tests done locally in the community, not just in acute hospitals.

## MEASURING AND REDUCING WAITING TIMES

We will:

- Measure waiting times for specialised diagnostic tests. For the first time in the UK, we will measure the time that patients have to wait between being referred by their doctor for specialised diagnostic tests and receiving those tests
- Set goals to reduce waiting times for specialised diagnostic tests
- Continue to invest in updating NHS diagnostic equipment
- Use our new investment in local health services and Community Hospitals to increase the number of diagnostic tests that can be done locally in the community rather than just in acute hospitals. This investment will free up resources in acute hospitals, helping patients across Scotland

Photo: Steve Maisey/Rex Features



**“Measure and reduce the wait between doctor referral and receiving specialised diagnostic tests. Investment in diagnostic equipment. Investment in staff. More diagnostic tests done locally.**

**That is how Liberal Democrats will put patients first.”**

**Michael Moore**  
Deputy Leader of  
the Scottish Liberal  
Democrats

# CUTTING CRIME AND THE FEAR OF CRIME

Tony Blair's ID card scheme is expensive, illiberal and ineffective and will not tackle terrorism or crime. Liberal Democrats believe that the money he would waste on ID cards would be better spent on more police in our communities.

- 1,000 more police in our communities – cutting crime and the fear of crime
- Action to tackle underage drinking
- Reduce reoffending - tackle drug use
- Give prisoners skills for work not crime

## KEEPING OUR PROMISES

"Thanks to the Scottish Liberal Democrats in government, police numbers and crime clear up rates are already at a record high. Police numbers have risen by almost 500 in the last two years. We have taken action to keep police numbers at record levels by giving the police more money to recruit staff to offset the predicted loss of officers through retirement.

"In government Liberal Democrat policies are changing the focus of the justice system to reduce reoffending. The Executive has launched a new strategy to improve management of offenders and build on initiatives such as Drug Treatment and Testing Orders, Drug Courts and the work of the Scottish Drug Enforcement Agency which continues to increase seizures of illegal drugs. We are also working to ensure that police spend more time on the streets and less time on bureaucracy. Our court reforms, passed in Parliament in 2004, will reduce the time that officers spend in court, while new technology will be used to cut paperwork.

"Liberal Democrats want to improve life in Scotland's communities. That is why, in government, we have supported

the introduction of a Quality of Life Fund which has already given £180 million (with a further £100 million on the way) to help councils to tackle local issues of vandalism, graffiti, CCTV and public safety. Anti Social Behaviour Orders and Acceptable Behaviour Contracts are being used to address problem behaviour among the small minority of people who cause real problems. And Liberal Democrats have ensured that mediation services are in place to resolve disputes. We have underlined our commitment to Scotland's Children's Hearing system and want to ensure that it is improved with increased resources and powers.

"Alcohol related crime is a major issue in Scotland. That is why the Executive is making a number of reforms to the licensing system. The Licensing Bill published in March 2005 will make it a requirement for all licensees to operate on a no-proof no-sale basis, to limit access to alcohol by under 18s. The Scottish Executive is supporting youth CAFEs (Community Alcohol Free Environments) and other alcohol free activities for young people which are now in place across Scotland.

**A PROMISE OF MORE**  
"With the additional resources

available from a Liberal Democrat government at Westminster, Liberal Democrats in Scotland will invest in more police in our communities to cut crime and the fear of crime. Our plans will deliver extra investment in justice of more than £100 million above existing plans, over the next five years."

**Jeremy Purvis MSP**  
Justice Spokesperson



## NO TO COMPULSORY ID CARDS

The total cost of Tony Blair's ID card scheme is estimated to be at least £3 billion and each citizen would have to pay up to £85 to buy their own ID card. Yet the government has presented no evidence that ID cards will reduce crime or tackle terrorism. The terrorists who carried out the atrocities in New York on September 11th and the Madrid train bombers all had valid identity papers. Across the UK, Liberal Democrats will create a co-ordinated UK Border Force to strengthen the country's borders against terrorism, people-trafficking and drug smuggling. Liberal Democrats in government in Scotland have ensured that Tony Blair's ID cards will not be compulsory for accessing devolved services.

## MORE POLICE IN OUR COMMUNITIES

Still too many communities are blighted by crime. We recognise that more can be done to reduce the fear of crime by boosting policing in communities across Scotland. High visibility policing in local communities can work to cut crime and the fear of crime. Community police officers know where, when and why trouble happens. Liberal Democrats want to give the police the resources they need to extend this knowledge into communities across Scotland.

We will:

- Recruit an additional 1,000 community Police Officers
- Develop a new national community policing strategy to bolster the role and importance of Community Police Officers and School Liaison Officers, improve training and career development, and extend cover in suburban and rural areas which often suffer when police resources are stretched
- Ensure that local policing strategies are developed as part of

the Community Planning process alongside other local services such as Community Wardens, School Liaison Officers and local anti social behaviour teams to cut crime and nuisance behaviour.

## CUT CRIME IN THE COMMUNITY

60 per cent of offenders released from prison go on to commit another crime. Even with record police numbers, high detection rates and more community police, Liberal Democrats recognise that we can only cut crime in our communities effectively by reducing reoffending in the long term.

Most young people just want to be out with their friends, have a good time and stay out of trouble. Liberal Democrats want to make sure that the activities and services are in place to ensure that they can do just that. We want to divert young people away from crime and anti social behaviour, and make effective interventions to nip any offending behaviour in the bud as early as possible.

In addition to our plans for a new activities fund to offer positive alternatives for young people, we will:

- Tackle underage drinking through better education and an alcohol referral scheme, in all parts of Scotland to help those who develop problems. Underage drinking is a real problem. Alcohol abuse costs Scottish society over £1 billion every year. Some of this cost comes from underage drinking in terms of the health dangers to young people, and the anti social behaviour that can follow. We will encourage local police and youth service agencies to work together to provide advice and guidance to young people found abusing alcohol to help address their behaviour.

### REDUCE REOFFENDING, CUT CRIME, TACKLE DRUG USE

The Scottish Executive estimates the cost of drug related crime to the public sector alone at over £330 million per annum. There were 40,465 drug related offences committed in Scotland in 2003 and many repeat offenders have significant drug problems

We will:

- Extend pilot schemes which

make offenders face up to their criminal behaviour and receive support to tackle drink and drug addictions in order to reduce the number of offences they commit in the future.

- Give prisoners skills for work not crime. We want to ensure that prisoners who agree to a tough programme of learning and training get the work skills they need to pay back to society. We will introduce a pilot scheme

to train offenders for those areas such as trades, construction and engineering where Scotland has a shortage of trained workers. Offenders will have to sign up to a strict training programme with tough penalties for those who reoffend.



"1,000 more police in our communities. A new community policing strategy. Cut crime in our communities through prevention and intervention. Reduce reoffending by tackling drug use. Give prisoners skills for work not crime."

That is how Liberal Democrats will cut crime and the fear of crime."

John Barrett

# AN ENTREPRENEURIAL SCOTLAND

Scottish Liberal Democrats understand that, no matter how many laws you pass, you cannot provide public services without a successful economy to support them. And no matter how talented you are, it is unlikely you would be successful in business without the basic infrastructure provided by the state.

## KEEPING OUR PROMISES

### LONG TERM INVESTMENT IN SKILLS

"In government in Scotland, Scottish Liberal Democrats are investing for the long term. To help prepare young people for the world of work, we are investing £83 million to take the enterprise in education project to every school in Scotland. This trailblazing policy sets the pace for the rest of the UK and is only now being copied in England. For some pupils we recognise that vocational training, not just traditional schooling, offers the best opportunities. That's why we are extending access for 14 – 16 year olds to colleges. And we are helping to deliver more workers with crucial skills needed by Scottish employers through Modern Apprenticeships – a scheme that provides quality training opportunities for people of all ages including on and off the job training, allowing trainees to earn while they learn. We have already met our target of 30,000 modern apprentices by 2006, with 31,000 in training in 2004.

"And we are taking action to ensure lifelong learning is meaningful for people of all backgrounds. The new Individual Learning Account (ILA) scheme is opening up opportunities for people on lower incomes, who previously would have faced financial barriers to learning. ILAs

provide grants of up to £200 a year to pay for courses that will help people get back into work, improve their career opportunities and fulfil their potential. We want businesses of all sizes to help their employees develop their skills. In November 2003, the Scottish Executive and Scottish Enterprise launched four pilot schemes for Business Learning Accounts which will offer businesses with fewer than 50 employees information, advice and guidance complemented by financial support for training.

### LONG TERM INVESTMENT IN FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION

"Ideas, research and technology drive modern economies. Scottish Liberal Democrats are determined to develop the potential of Scottish universities and colleges to help drive our economy. That is why I have delivered record support for universities and colleges with funding increasing by almost a third – to over £1.5 billion for the first time ever. This investment will secure their reputation as world class research and teaching institutions. And we have backed this up with a significant capital investment programme to improve their facilities too.

"Scotland has a growing reputation in research and development. We want to build on that and make Scotland a world leader. That is why in government we have invested £450 million for Intermediary

Technology Institutes to help Scotland compete globally in the key sectors of Energy, Life Sciences and Techmedia.

### LONG TERM INVESTMENT IN INFRASTRUCTURE

"In government in Scotland, Liberal Democrats have delivered record investment in transport, reaching £1 billion by 2006, with 70 per cent going to public transport. This investment is delivering new rail lines, new stations, new bus services, park and ride facilities, freight facilities grants and better rural transport. And this year we launched the first-ever infrastructure investment plan setting out our long term plan, increasing capital investment by five per cent each year for the next three years."

**Jim Wallace QC MSP**  
Minister for Enterprise & Lifelong Learning



## LONG TERM OBJECTIVES

Liberals have always embraced free trade and enterprise. It delivers for people. It delivers for society. Our focus is on delivering sustainable growth which delivers for all society. Government's role is to support and encourage people and business, not to interfere. Government should ensure that: schools and universities provide skilled, innovative people and ideas; there is effective transport for people and goods; people are getting healthier and are able to work effectively.

These are our long term objectives in government. Objectives that will make a better environment for business – and in so doing will help to create an entrepreneurial Scotland.

## CUT RED TAPE

Much of the red tape that challenges Scottish companies and impedes business growth comes from Westminster or Brussels. That is why Liberal Democrats at Westminster will:

- Introduce independent impact assessments for all new UK regulations to ensure the red tape burden is considered
- Put sunset clauses on all UK business regulation to ensure they do not outlive their usefulness.
- Establish a Small Business Select Committee in the UK Parliament to monitor the cost of bureaucracy and keep the needs of small and medium sized businesses on the Government's agenda
- Create an arms-length Deregulation Unit to reduce the burden of red-tape



"Cut red tape for business. Continue record investment in transport, education and skills.

That is how Liberal Democrats will make an entrepreneurial Scotland."

**Malcolm Bruce**  
President of the Scottish Liberal Democrats

# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Catastrophic climate change is the major environmental threat to our planet – and urgent action is needed. As part of our commitment to sustainable development Liberal Democrats will ensure that Scotland reduces its greenhouse gas emissions.

- Tackle climate change – cleaner transport, cleaner energy and a cleaner environment
- Invest in energy efficiency to cut energy use and greenhouse gas emissions
- Vigorously promote Scotland's renewable energy industry overseas
- Put a green thread through government

## KEEPING OUR PROMISES

"In government, Scottish Liberal Democrats have made sure that a green thread runs through every aspect of government. We are backing that up by implementing Strategic Environmental Assessment to ensure that all strategies, plans and policies produced by public bodies meet the sustainability test. Liberal Democrats want to redefine economic growth from the crude pursuit of growth at any price, to economic growth that will achieve a stable economy and opportunity for all, whilst taking full account of the social and environmental costs. Jim Wallace's Green Jobs Strategy will build on our commitment to sustainable development contained in the Smart Successful Scotland strategy and will ensure that Scotland is at the forefront of developing new environmental technologies and efficient businesses.

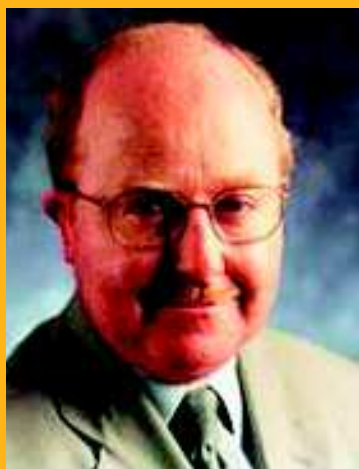
"In government, we are setting new ambitious targets for recycling municipal waste, backed up by over £200 million of funding. By 2008 we aim to recycle 30 per cent of municipal waste. And in renewable energy we are making progress towards our ambitious target of 40 per cent of Scotland's electricity generated from renewable sources by 2020. And we are at the forefront of

new renewable technology with the world's first Marine Energy Test Centre opened in Orkney in August 2004.

## A PROMISE OF MORE

"However Liberal Democrats know that there is more to do to tackle climate change and its many impacts. In addition to the action that Liberal Democrats will take across the UK on vehicle, aviation and environmental taxation, in Scotland we will look to build on our success in government. With the additional resources delivered to Scotland by a Liberal Democrat government in Westminster, we will focus on reducing energy use."

**Ross Finnie MSP**  
Minister for Environment & Rural Development



## CLEANER ENVIRONMENT

Liberal Democrats believe that government must take the lead in securing a cleaner environment. We will invest in improving energy efficiency across the public sector, sending a strong message across Scotland and leading to real savings in energy use.

We will:

- Build on our successful spend to save initiative which is already due to deliver £70m of savings in the next five years and £30m of recurring savings thereafter through the introduction of energy efficiency measures across the public sector
- Invest an additional £20m to boost energy efficiency in the public sector, cut carbon emissions and reduce energy consumption. We will focus this investment in new areas of the public sector such as Further and Higher Education, prisons, schools and other areas such as housing associations. We estimate that this additional investment will deliver around 15 per cent energy savings for participating institutions and cut carbon emissions by around 60,000 tonnes every year. This will deliver recurring savings to reinvest in front line services and future energy efficiency projects

## CLEANER ENERGY

Liberal Democrats are committed to renewable energy and to meeting our ambitious target of producing 40 per cent of Scotland's electricity from

renewable sources by 2020.

We will:

- Vigorously promote Scotland's renewable energy industry overseas, through the enterprise network and the potential of renewable energy to meet the energy requirements of rapidly growing economies, such as China and India
- Liberal Democrats at Westminster will ensure a fundamental review of the electricity transmission charging regime to benefit all consumers and assist in meeting our renewables target

## CLEANER TRANSPORT

Liberal Democrats believe it's only fair that those who cause most pollution and congestion pay more than those who don't. Liberal Democrats at Westminster will start by reforming the Vehicle Excise Duty ('single road tax') to cut tax altogether on cars that pollute least, funded by increasing it on those that pollute more.



"A focus on sustainable development. Run a green thread through Government. Action to improve energy efficiency and cut greenhouse gas emissions. More renewable energy. More recycling. Cleaner transport. Green Jobs.

That is how Liberal Democrats will tackle climate change."

**John Thurso**  
Shadow Secretary of State for Scotland

# AXE THE COUNCIL TAX

Scottish Liberal Democrats want a fairer tax system. We want to abolish Council Tax altogether and replace it with a fair tax based on the ability to pay - a Local Income Tax.

## THE COUNCIL TAX IS AN UNFAIR TAX

The Council Tax penalises pensioners and people on low incomes. They pay a far higher proportion of their income in tax than the very rich. The poorest 20% of pensioners pay nearly six times more than the richest 20% of non-pensioners, as a proportion of their income. Across the UK, the poorest 10% pay over four times more of their income in Council Tax than the richest 10%.

Council Tax takes no account of ability to pay or income. It is grossly unfair to people on low and medium incomes and pensioners. A pensioner couple, in the house they've lived in for decades, can pay the same as two high earners, living right next door.

Liberal Democrats are concerned that Council Tax revaluation will make the situation for these groups even worse, with low income households paying more because of where they live – based not on income, but the amount that house prices have risen. In Wales revaluation has led to one in three households facing huge Council Tax rises.

## LOCAL INCOME TAX IS A FAIRER TAX

Local Income Tax is a fairer tax because it is based on the ability to pay. It would be run through the existing Inland Revenue Income Tax mechanism – so saving hundreds of millions in collection costs across the UK. The typical household will save around £450 per year, and eight out of ten pensioners will have lower bills.

In fact many pensioners will pay no local tax at all.

In Scotland, Liberal Democrats have already made sure that the Independent Review of Local Government Finance has a specific remit to investigate introducing a Local Income Tax.

We will:

- Continue to campaign through the Independent Review to replace the Council Tax with a Local Income Tax.
- Hold down Council Tax bills as a first step to introducing Local Income Tax by using some of the proceeds from our proposed new 50 per cent rate on individual income exceeding £100,000.



**“Liberal Democrats want fairer taxes. Axe the unfair Council Tax. Introduce a fairer tax based on the ability to pay – a Local Income Tax. Keep down local taxes. A new 50 per cent rate for income over £100,000.**

**That is how Scottish Liberal Democrats will bring about fairness on tax.”**

**Alan Reid**



## HONEST ABOUT THE COSTS

Across the UK Liberal Democrats are open and straightforward about how we will pay for our policies. At the last three general elections we set out full details of how much our policies would cost and how we would pay for them. None of the other parties did this. Labour has increased spending, an increase only the Liberal Democrats were honest enough to propose at the last election. Given this increase in spending, most of our proposals at this election can be funded from savings in current budgets.

Across the UK Liberal Democrats will fund our key policies from two sources: switching money from low priority UK government programmes, and making taxes fairer.

Additional investment by Liberal Democrats at Westminster has implications for Scotland. Not only will Scotland benefit directly from Liberal Democrat policies in areas such as pensions, but increased UK spending means more money for the Scottish Parliament to invest in Scotland on priorities like health, education and crime. A Liberal Democrat Government in Westminster would deliver an extra £1.8 billion to Scotland over the term of the next UK Parliament. Full costings of our proposed policies across the UK and in Scotland will be available in a separate document.