

Education

Justice

Enterprise

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Health

a partnership for a better SCOTLAND >>

a partnership for a better SCOTLAND >>

Joint Statement by the Leaders of the Scottish Labour Party and the Scottish Liberal Democrats



In the next four years of the Parliament, there is a great deal of work to do.

Work to encourage and stimulate economic growth. Work to tackle poverty and disadvantage, to improve and sustain our environment and to help all our communities live in peace and safety.

Scotland needs the stability of a strong and determined government and a vibrant parliament to deliver the change and the improvement her people deserve.

This Agreement represents the determination of two parties to work together to provide stability and innovative government. It is more than the combination of the two party's manifestos.

It sets out our vision for a Scotland where enterprise can flourish, where opportunity does exist for all and our people and our country have confidence to face the challenges of a global society. It provides a strong foundation for improvement, for progressive change and for the inclusion of ideas from all those who want to contribute to the process of making Scotland a better place.

In the next four years we are determined, together, to improve public services and tackle the real issues that matter to people in Scotland. We are determined to deliver on the promises that we have made. The people of Scotland expect our Parliament and the Executive to listen to their concerns, respond to their wishes and make a positive difference to their daily lives. This Agreement sets out the policies and the direction for government to meet that expectation.



Rt Hon Jack McConnell MSP
Leader
Scottish Labour Party



Rt Hon Jim Wallace QC MSP
Leader
Scottish Liberal Democrats

Partnership Agreement

Introduction

In this document we set out the principles which will guide our partnership in developing and implementing policies for Scotland.

We set out a number of the major initiatives which we will take together.

Guided by the principles we set out, we will work to implement these and other policy initiatives to make our partnership work for the people of Scotland.

It is agreed that the general policies and processes in place on 14 May 2003 shall be supported, unless amended by the policy agreement set out below.

We will evaluate all new spending commitments for their economic and social impact and value for money.

We want a Scotland that delivers sustainable development; that puts environmental concerns at the heart of public policy and secures environmental justice for all of Scotland's communities. Our commitment to the environment is demonstrated in every section of this Partnership Agreement.

growing

section 1

growing SCOTLAND'S ECONOMY

Enterprise and Lifelong Learning



Introduction

Growing the economy is our top priority. A successful economy is key to our future prosperity and a pre-requisite for building first class public services, social justice and a Scotland of opportunity.

We will use the powers of the Scottish Parliament to create the conditions for higher growth. We will support businesses to grasp the opportunities of the new economy. We will value enterprise, promote an entrepreneurial culture and recognise the need to support risk-taking as a means of growing the economy.



We will increase investment in research and development and promote its commercialisation in Scotland. We will encourage a culture of enterprise. We will drive up Scotland's skills base. We will make this growth sustainable, in particular taking advantage of Scotland's resources to grow our renewable energy industries.

We will work with the UK Government to maximise the conditions for economic growth in Scotland.

We will direct our support for enterprise in a way that encompasses all of Scotland's communities, both urban and rural.

We will promote Scotland as a good place to live and work, with a high quality of life which is attractive to fresh talent from around the world.

High level commitments

We will act to raise the long term sustainable growth rate of the Scottish economy. We will support the start up and growth of Scottish business, encourage and support our key manufacturing industries, such as aerospace, and nurture our financial services sector. We will support innovation and technology transfer to grow high value and high skills businesses with the potential for expansion.

We will work with Scottish businesses to improve investment in research and development and enhance productivity. We will seek an improvement in productivity levels in Scottish industry compared to our OECD competitors.

We will work in partnership with business and trade unions.

We will support the establishment of a focused annual Business Forum, bringing together Scotland's businesses and Scotland's politicians to develop ideas and maximise the drivers for growth.

We will make sure that every pupil has the opportunity to learn entrepreneurial skills at school. We will expand the number of Scottish schools involved in Enterprise in Education from 10% to 100%.



We will work towards our target for 40% of Scottish electricity generation to be from renewable sources by 2020 as part of our commitment to addressing climate change. We will work with business to develop and implement a green jobs strategy.

We will significantly improve the skills base of Scotland to be better prepared to meet the demands of the knowledge economy. We will increase the apprenticeship programme to 30,000 places.

We will continue to increase funding to improve the quality and effectiveness of further and higher education within Scotland. We will increase the proportion of graduates in the workforce. We will review the eligibility criteria for student bursaries with a view to increasing the family income ceiling and review the maximum amount available. We will support a higher threshold for repayment of student loans across the UK.

We will make sure that the benefits of economic growth are shared by all of Scotland's communities. We will reduce the gap in unemployment rates between the worst 10% of areas and the Scottish average by 2006.

Supporting activity

Supporting businesses

- We will streamline the support and practical help government offers to business and extend the one stop support for business throughout Scotland through the Business Gateway. We will ensure that the work of Scottish Enterprise is focused on business development and skills training.

- We are committed to ideas and businesses grown in Scotland and will encourage their expansion through continued use of Regional Selective Assistance; through the Scottish Co-investment Fund; and through a new Business Start Up Fund. We will work with agencies supporting business to manage the transition to the new Structural Fund landscape post 2006.
- We will also continue to encourage investment from overseas through the work of Scottish Development International.
- We will use the network of commercial sections in British embassies across the world to look for international partnerships and support Scottish business.
- We will freeze business rates for 2003/4 and limit increases to no more than inflation for the following 2 years. We will maintain our new small business rate relief scheme.
- We will support the construction industry by working in co-operation with the trade groups to create a strategy that secures the supply of relevant skills; improve safety and quality of the industry; combat rogue traders with a quality mark scheme; and consider a construction licensing authority for Scotland. We will include a construction strand in the apprenticeship scheme.
- We will work with tourism businesses to improve tourism marketing and infrastructure, including the network of Area Tourist Boards, and make full use of the British Tourist Authority. We will build on our cities' many attractions and the natural resources of our countryside to turn Scotland into a year round destination. We will ensure that tourist offices and agencies promote the opportunities for outdoor recreation across the country.
- We will work with the tourism sector to introduce an industry-led national tourism registration scheme to guarantee quality service and facilities across Scotland.
- We will build on the success of the financial services sector, particularly in Edinburgh and Glasgow, and work with the industry to improve provision for the skills and training in the areas they need most.
- We will pursue the creation of centres of excellence in industries such as aerospace.

Supporting productivity growth and a high-tech Scotland

- We will work with businesses to increase their investment in research and development to match more closely our competitors in the OECD.
- We will support the productive link between research and product development, maximising the potential of the Intermediate Technology Institutes in Aberdeen, Dundee and Glasgow.
- We will stimulate new product development and spin-outs in Scotland by supporting the translation of ideas into marketable products through our unique Proof of Concept Fund and by encouraging academics and developers to be proactive in the commercial exploitation of their work.
- We are committed to extending broadband connectivity for every area of Scotland to ensure Scotland's competitiveness, both internally and internationally, in both public and private sectors.

Growing an enterprise culture



- We will build on the Scottish Executive's 'Determined to Succeed' report, to develop an enterprising attitude and understanding of the world of work. We will encourage universities to offer business and entrepreneurial experience, making use of sandwich years and 'buddy' schemes.
- We will encourage local authorities to give school pupils the opportunity for "hands-on" enterprise initiatives and will continue to promote manufacturing and engineering to our young people through initiatives like 'Make It In Scotland'.
- We will legislate on personal bankruptcy and diligence to modernise the laws of personal bankruptcy and diligence to strike a better balance between supporting business risk and protecting the rights of creditors.

Promoting sustainable growth



- We will work towards our target for 40% of Scottish electricity generation to be from renewable energy sources by 2020. We will support the development of wave, tidal and solar energy and support the development of technologies to promote the greater use of fuel from wood and other energy crops. We will press the UK Government and electricity companies to strengthen the electricity grid. We will encourage participation in renewable energy projects by communities and local authorities.
- We will create significant opportunities for new products manufactured from waste by tasking Scottish Enterprise to assist the development of such facilities.



-  ■ We will assess economic development policies against their impact on targets set through the Scottish Executive's sustainable development indicators.
-  ■ We will return vacant and derelict land to productive use, opening up opportunities for businesses and communities.
-  ■ We will not support the further development of nuclear power stations while waste management issues remain unresolved. Where decommissioning of nuclear power stations occurs, we will aim to use and develop best practice in decommissioning and high energy technologies.

Skills

- We will develop partnerships between educational institutions and business to offer more apprenticeships and training opportunities.
- We will introduce an improved version of the Individual Learning Account and offer Business Learning Accounts to help small businesses provide training opportunities for their employees.
- We will use the Future Skills Scotland Unit to identify the needs of business and we will focus on education and training services and the career guidance service to meet them.
- We will provide childcare support in areas of high unemployment in order to help those in work, training or education.
- We will continue to work in partnership with trade unions on learning initiatives.

Higher and further education

- We will increase the higher and further education budget by 16% by 2006.
- We will merge the Higher and Further Education Funding Councils and charge them to have regard to the future skills needs of Scotland.
- We will not support the introduction of top-up tuition fees.
- We will support the aspiration of the UHI Millennium Institute for University status.
- We will set up a Lifelong Learning Forum to develop lifelong learning.
- We will work with academic institutions to promote research links, education and student exchanges and to build global networks.
- We will support improvements in the emphasis of the Research Assessment Exercise and ensure robust funding for Higher Education research.

- We will encourage recognition by business and education providers of the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework.
- We will give students in Further and Higher Education the right to refer matters to the Ombudsman when institutional mechanisms fail them.
- We will work with universities and colleges to promote greater transparency and the use of the Nolan principles in the appointment of Principals.

Sharing the benefits of economic growth

- We will realise the potential of our great cities, working with Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee, Aberdeen, Inverness and Stirling and their neighbours, to prepare growth strategies that maximise the unique characteristics and opportunities of each city.
- We will work with local authorities to establish Business Improvement Districts and Urban Regeneration Companies.
- We will regenerate those communities where there are persistently high levels of unemployment.
- We will pilot a scheme in Scotland's rural communities to allow public sector workers to test out good business ideas while retaining security of employment.
- We will continue our commitment to government job dispersal to benefit all of Scotland.
- We will improve the promotion and provision of advice on co-operative development and we will establish a Co-operative Development Agency following consultation.

Transport

Introduction

The Scottish people and the Scottish economy need reliable, efficient transport. An effective transport system is central to a thriving economy and strong communities.

We will put in place an integrated transport system that gets goods to market quickly and efficiently, and gets people to work safely and on time.

We must connect the whole country and be connected to the rest of the world. Our aim is an accessible Scotland, with a modern, safe, efficient and sustainable transport system.





Our transport system should be sustainable, minimising impacts on our environment, particularly by greater use of public transport.



High level commitments

By the end of 2006, Scottish Executive spending on transport will reach £1 billion per year, of which 70% will be targeted on public transport.

We will ensure that our transport system meets the needs of business, transport users and the environment by:

-  ■ Delivering rail links to Edinburgh and Glasgow airports
-  ■ Re-opening the Airdrie to Bathgate railway
-  ■ Re-opening the Kincardine – Alloa – Stirling rail link
-  ■ Constructing the Larkhall to Milngavie line
-  ■ Redeveloping Waverley station in Edinburgh in co-operation with the Strategic Rail Authority
-  ■ Investing in a tram network in Edinburgh
-  ■ Extending direct air routes through the Air Route Development Fund
-  ■ Improving Scotland's ferry links to mainland Europe
-  ■ Completing the central Scotland motorway network
-  ■ Completing the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Road
-  ■ Extending concessionary fare schemes on public transport, including a national free off-peak bus scheme for older people and people with disabilities
-  ■ Assessing improved public transport concessions for people with disabilities
-  ■ Progressively introducing a scheme of national bus, rail and ferry concessionary travel for young people, initially for all in full time education or training
-  ■ Supporting construction of the Borders Rail Line
-  ■ Continuing to support feasibility studies into the Glasgow Crossrail project, and other public transport initiatives in Glasgow, and the Aberdeen cross-rail link

We will improve access for our rural communities by:

- Reviewing existing bridge tolls in Scotland and entering into negotiations with a view to ending the discredited toll regime for the Skye Bridge
- Expanding the Rural Transport Initiative and developing its qualifying criteria innovatively to meet further identified needs

- Working to reduce the cost of lifeline air links within, to and from the Highlands and Islands by suitable use of Public Service Obligations to improve services, increase frequency and reduce the cost to individuals, businesses and public agencies. We will fully evaluate the current HITRANS proposals for a Highlands and Islands air network
- Ensuring sufficient resources are available for the non-trunk road network, particularly recognising the needs of pressured rural roads affected by timber production and other primary industries

We will protect the environment and improve safety by:

- Taking more action to get freight off our roads, by using Freight Facilities Grant to encourage freight carrying by rail and water
- Introducing Green Transport Plans
- Introducing 20 mph speed zones around schools and safer routes to school for walking and cycling
- Providing a national framework for safe walking to school and walking buses
- Supporting the development of Homezones to improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists in residential areas

We will ensure that our future transport system is well planned and delivered by:




- Before 2007, beginning work on the next 10 year Transport Plan and, as part of that process, conducting a strategic projects review for all transport modes, against clear criteria on safety, environmental impact and meeting the economic needs of Scotland
- Bringing forward proposals for a Strategic Transport Authority, as an agency within the Executive directly accountable to Ministers, focusing on: delivery improvements in transport infrastructure; co-ordination of national concessionary fare schemes; better investment balance between transport modes and monitoring of the delivery of national targets and standards to secure sustainable transport; taking responsibility for the delivery of quality bus contracts; securing improved working with local authorities as partners in delivery; the development of effective regional delivery partnerships; overseas routes promotion; and oversight of currently tolled bridges. The Ministerial role would be to set policy direction and budget allocation.

Supporting activity



Improving infrastructure

- We will negotiate UK Government support to develop Scottish bids to be the UK's international container hub port.
-  ■ We will continue to support local authority provision of park and ride facilities linked to fast means of transport in and out of town and city centres.
-  ■ We will learn from experience overseas with a view to setting a minimum standard for the planting of trees to act as carbon sinks beside new road developments.

Improving integration of different transport modes

-  ■ We will continue to ensure that bus timetable information is easily available and that bus services offer convenient links between communities and other types of public transport.
-  ■ We will continue to support easy to use through-ticketing schemes, including time-limited tickets.
- We will continue to invest in high quality travel information.
-  ■ We will ensure that the needs of cyclists are properly taken into account in future rail and ferry franchises.

Promoting public transport

- We will agree a new ScotRail franchise and improve on the current level of service.
- We will continue to support and invest in lifeline ferry links.
- We will ensure that, under the new contract for CalMac ferries, encouragement is given for innovation on existing ferry routes and for new or shorter crossings to islands.
-  ■ We will monitor whether the Quality Partnership powers included in the Transport Act 2001 are adequate to protect and enhance evening, weekend and rural bus services.
-  ■ We will pilot new kick-start plans to create better value bus services, provided over an 18 month period to promote particular under-used routes through enhanced frequency and marketing.
-  ■ We will promote quality contracts for bus services.
- We will support demand-responsive transport (DRT) initiatives, particularly in rural areas.

Protecting the environment and improve safety

- We will support initiatives to improve safety at railway stations and the satisfaction experienced by passengers.
- We will continue to invest in road improvements to reduce casualties.
- We will ensure that car fumes are reduced by supporting the use of emission reducing equipment.
- We will reduce light pollution and save energy by specifying appropriate lighting standards.

Rural

Introduction

We are committed to maintaining strong, prosperous and growing communities in rural Scotland.

We will work to ensure that the rural economy continues to provide jobs and opportunities for all. We will secure a sustainable future for our rural industries.

We will champion Scotland's interests by continuing to participate fully in EU business, including policy development on the future of agriculture and fisheries, working at all levels of government to secure sustainable and properly funded reforms.

High level commitments

We will ensure that rural and remote communities have their distinct needs reflected across the range of government policy and initiatives.

- We will support the more rapid development of environmentally sustainable farming that provides consumers with quality products.
- We will implement Land Management Contracts to deliver reformed Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) support which takes account of the diversity of Scottish agriculture and its economic, social and environmental impact.
- We will implement the Organic Action Plan to develop the infrastructure needed to increase Scotland's share of the organic food market and increase the proportion of organic food available in Scotland. We will increase the finance available for farmers wishing to convert to organic farming.



We will continue to work to protect the interests of our fishing industry.

- We will implement the reformed Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) founded on relative stability, maintenance of 6 and 12 mile limits, the Hague Preference and the Shetland Box and promote conservation measures based on sound, independent science and the involvement of industry stakeholders through CFP regional advisory councils. We will work at UK level to secure a sustainable future for the industry.
- We will support the growth of an aquaculture industry in salmon, other fin-fish and shellfish that is sustainable, diverse and competitive. We will reduce the number of bodies involved in regulating and controlling the aquaculture industry.
- We are committed to sustainable local management and control of the fishing resource in inshore waters. We will set in place an urgent review of the management of all fisheries within the 12-mile coastal zone with a view to delegating responsibility to local stakeholders, if necessary through reform of the Inshore Fisheries Act and other regulatory measures for inshore fisheries.

We will support Scotland's food and drinks industry to build on its reputation for high quality and its strong export record.



- We will work with the industry to ensure that more Scottish produce is processed in Scotland.
- We will continue to take every opportunity to expand the export potential of Scottish produce through the marketing opportunities of 'Scotland the Brand'.

We will support the development of environmentally sustainable and competitive forestry.







- We will seek to increase forestry and primary wood processing production over the next 15 years.





- We will promote diversification in the use of forests and of timber; a greater use of native species; and continue to encourage the use of forest products in buildings.

Supporting activity

Supporting rural Scotland

- We will provide practical support for innovation and enterprise in our rural communities. We will promote better collaboration between agencies with expertise in rural development, including the Scottish Agricultural College and the Enterprise Networks, and examine the longer term case for the establishment of a Rural Development Institute combining their functions and responsibilities.
- We will encourage local authorities to protect and develop rural services by utilising their community planning powers.
- We will ensure that rural Community Planning Partnerships work with and report to their local communities. We will encourage them to work together to develop best practice and share ideas on rural development.
- We will continue to develop, and keep under review, a scheme to assist users of water supplies not connected to the public system to bring those supplies up to modern standards and to ensure that rural consumers are not disadvantaged.
-  ■ We will implement the Water Environment and Water Services Act to ensure the sustainable management and integration of all policies affecting Scotland's water environment, including aquaculture, planning, land management, flood prevention and environmental policies.
-  ■ We will consult on the best strategy for protecting and enhancing all of Scotland's coastline, building on existing policies and including the options of establishing a national coastline park and marine national parks, and consideration of current management and rental arrangements for the sea-bed.
-  ■ We will develop the core path network to promote and provide access to the countryside and mountain areas throughout Scotland.
-  ■ We will maintain our protection for the rare bird species found in Scotland through our moorland management schemes.

Supporting agriculture

-  ■ We will seek reform of the Common Agricultural Policy to secure improvements for Scotland and to shift subsidies away from merely supporting production to those that recognise the economic, social and environmental contribution agriculture makes to rural development.
-  ■ We will encourage more sustainable agricultural activity on 13,500 farm businesses in Scotland's remote hills.

- We will implement a Crofting Reform Bill, while supporting the retention of a grant scheme for crofting counties.
- We will rigorously apply the precautionary principle in our approach to the planting of GM crops. We will assess the results of the GM farm scale trials ensuring that there are opportunities for peer review and assessment by others including environmental organisations. Until this process is concluded, we will not permit further GM trials or commercial growing of GM crops.
- We will introduce a Protection of Animals Bill.
- We will retain the current practice of widely dispersing Government Veterinary Centres and improve animal health and surveillance services.

Supporting the fishing industry and aquaculture

- We will continue to promote access for anglers to watercourses and the removal of prohibitive restrictions; promote the local management of watercourses and a proper balance between exploitation and conservation of freshwater species; and seek enhanced access whenever public investment improves fisheries.
- We will legislate to permit enforcement of regulating orders within the range of activities of the SFPA.
- We will continue to support research into fisheries including the development of centres of excellence and innovation.

Supporting the food industry

- We will continue to support the enforcement of food safety standards and high quality in the food chain through improved farm standards, rigorous monitoring of food quality control regimes and more effective restaurant and food premises inspection. We will ensure that the Animal Waste Directive is effectively implemented.
-  ■ We will encourage localised food distribution systems involving more local processing of produce.
-  ■ We will support local marketing schemes, with clear accreditation and labelling of local produce to increase consumers' power to identify and choose Scottish produce. We will work with supermarkets and farming representatives to encourage greater sourcing and clear labelling of local food items and food produced by organic and sustainable farming methods such as LEAF (Linking Environment and Farming).
-  ■ We will support regional marketing co-operatives where this is necessary to enhance the marketing strength of food producers.

delivering

section 2

delivering EXCELLENT PUBLIC SERVICES

Improving Public Services

Introduction

People deserve and expect public services that are of the highest possible quality and offer the greatest possible choice. We will continue to use the record level of investment in our public services to secure new and better facilities, particularly for our schools and hospitals. We will also match this investment with continued reform so that our public services are designed and delivered around the needs of individuals and the communities within which they live.

To make certain that everyone across Scotland can be sure of the quality of service they can expect, we will set, where appropriate, national standards to be met or, ideally, exceeded.

The interests of the pupil, the patient, the passenger and the victim of crime will always come first. We will continue the process of reform by bringing forward legislation to improve the effectiveness of health, education, fire, police and criminal justice services, and take forward social work reform across Scotland.

To ensure that services match the needs of individuals and communities, we will continue to devolve decision making to the most local level wherever possible. We want frontline staff to be empowered and local communities to have the freedom to take local decisions wherever practical.

Community Planning will continue to be one of the main methods through which we promote and share best practice in the planning and delivery of public services. And our Best Value arrangements will ensure that every public body tests its services against the highest standards in other public bodies.



We will invest in and reform public services to cut through bureaucracy, simplify funding and ensure services are flexible and focused. We will monitor progress by both regular and targeted independent inspection of performance and action against common standards, to ensure good practice is shared and to identify poor performance.

We will evaluate all new spending commitments for their economic and social impact and value for money.

Health

Introduction

Improving Scotland's health is central to the welfare of our society. Our poor health record is well known. New initiatives are required to create a step change in improving health.

We will take strong action to promote good health, introducing a range of measures to encourage safer, healthier lifestyles. To prevent ill health we will tackle issues associated with poor diet and secure improvements in treatment services for drug and alcohol related problems.

We will continue to develop our radical agenda to secure improvements in Scotland's health services, placing the patient at the heart of the design of services. We will make changes where needed to structures and boundaries. We will devolve power to the lowest level.

We will work with health staff and Health Boards to improve the quality and consistency of care through national standards, inspection and support. Where the steps of development, inspection and support do not secure the improvement needed, we will extend Ministerial powers to intervene, as a last resort, to direct the Health Board to take the specified action to secure the quality of healthcare required.

We will continue to improve the delivery of services – making the NHS more efficient by continued effort to reduce bed blocking; supporting key sectors such as community based centres and hospitals; and securing the improvement of mental health services for some of the most vulnerable members of our communities.

We can best deliver improvements to our National Health Service through the empowerment of our workforce. We will continue to develop and support our staff, increasing the overall numbers in key sections of the workforce, confirming our commitment to the 'Agenda for Change', developing more flexible working patterns, supporting continuous professional development and ensuring that we have appropriate measures in place to meet gaps in provision in key sections of the workforce or different parts of the country.



High level commitments

We will increase our programme to train, recruit and retain nurses and midwives, bringing 12,000 into the NHS by 2007 as part of our overall improvements in workforce planning in the NHS.

We are committed to improving waiting times for patients and will continue the work we have started by guaranteeing treatment for:

- **Inpatients within 9 months of diagnosis from the end of 2003, reducing this time to 6 months by the end of 2005;**
- **All coronary heart disease patients within 18 weeks of diagnosis, from 2004;**
- **A maximum wait of 26 weeks for all outpatient appointments by the end of 2005.**

We will reform the NHS to abolish NHS Trusts and establish Community Health Partnerships.

We will add emphasis to the promotion of good health in Scotland, taking particular action in the areas of diet and healthy lifestyles.

We will tackle the problem of alcohol abuse in Scotland and implement a package of measures including doubling the level of resources currently available for treatment.

We are committed to the improvement of mental health services across Scotland. We will commission research on lessons to be learned from successful approaches across the world. In conjunction with service users we will develop community services including innovative approaches to addressing crisis episodes such as 24-hour support services and multi-disciplinary care.

We will invest in health promotion and, as a priority, we will systematically introduce free eye and dental checks for all before 2007.

Supporting activity

Stepping up action on health improvement

Improving health

- We will continue to support community planning as the key framework to develop a shared plan for health improvement in a local authority area. Local government has a critical role to play in improving health in the community. Working in partnership with health boards, local authorities should produce Local Health Improvement Plans.

Significant resources are being made available to local authorities through the new Health Improvement Fund established in the Scottish Budget and we will continue to ensure that resources to tackle the root causes of ill health are available to local authorities as well as health boards.

- We will support a Glasgow Centre for Population Health.

Tackling the problem of alcohol abuse in Scotland

We will implement a package of measures to tackle the problem of alcohol abuse in Scotland including:

- A review to determine the scale of alcohol abuse and its consequences on a national basis, including assessing the resources currently devoted to tackling alcohol abuse and the costs incurred by its consequences
- Doubling the level of resources currently available for alcohol treatment and rehabilitation services in Scotland, to deliver for example increased provision of support services for families affected by alcohol abuse.

Improving diet

- We will support measures to improve the availability of affordable, quality healthy food in low income areas.
- We will ensure adequate nutritional standards for food served in care homes, hospitals, day centres and prisons.

Preventing ill health

We will support further improvements to health screening services and improve accessibility to those services by developing and piloting a range of innovative programmes, including:

- well man clinics;
 - piloting Personal Health Plans for different population groups, including geographical areas, age groups, and specific medical conditions;
 - consulting clinicians on a programme of targeted health checks;
 - establishing a national advisory framework for employers to offer health screening and services.
- We will introduce hearing tests for all new-born babies.

Promoting safer lifestyles

- We will develop and implement a National Sexual Health Strategy.
- We will urgently review the provision of drug rehabilitation services across Scotland including issues of accessibility, quality, and security of funding. We will invest additional resources in drug treatment and rehabilitation services.
- We will continue to support the successful Know the Score campaign.
- We will consult on an action plan to achieve considerably more smoke free restaurants and pubs; and we will consider in consultation with transport operators further measures to enforce restrictions on smoking in public transport.

Redesigning health service provision

- We will legislate for NHS reform and will abolish NHS Trusts and establish Community Health Partnerships.
- We will review the boundaries of local health care co-operatives and health boards to facilitate joint working with local authorities.
- We will devolve management responsibility to the frontline, and require NHS Boards to implement local health plans to improve patient care and reduce ill health.
- We will ensure public involvement in health service reorganisation plans by obliging health boards to consult stakeholders more effectively.
- We will spread good practice in service redesign through the Centre for Change and Innovation.
- We will continue to review the range of national health targets, and increase the focus on a set of strategic priorities for service improvements and patient guarantees. We will keep NHSScotland focused on no more than 12 priorities each year and publish a core set of key performance indicators relating to the NHS priorities and drawn from the Performance Assessment Framework.
-  ■ We will develop the NHSScotland environment policy statement to require more efficient fuel, energy and water use in all NHS buildings.

Reducing the number of people who are in hospital longer than they should be

- We will build on the delayed discharge action plan process. We will invest £30m a year for 3 years to provide 1,000 community and convalescent care places for people leaving hospital.

We will take action to tackle hospital acquired infection, including:

- rigorously monitoring how hospitals are meeting cleaning standards;
- supporting increased training for medical professionals to understand their role in hospital acquired infections;
- encouraging the introduction and empowerment of more specialist Infection Control Nurses who will work alongside ward managers to prevent the spread of infection.

Public service guarantees and service standards

- We will support the achievement of the national waiting time targets for cancer.
- We will maintain our commitment to free personal and nursing care for the elderly.
- We will deliver a maximum wait of 26 weeks for all outpatient appointments by the end of 2005.
- We will ensure that anyone contacting their GP surgery has guaranteed access to a GP, nurse or other health care professional within 48 hours by April 2004.
- From the end of 2003 we will guarantee treatment for inpatients within 9 months of diagnosis reducing this time to 6 months by the end of 2005.
- We will guarantee treatment for all coronary heart disease patients within 18 weeks of diagnosis, from 2004.

Addressing inequalities in health provision

- We will end postcode prescribing by ensuring drugs approved by NHS QIS are made available in each health board area.
- We will set up a review of prescription charges for people with chronic health conditions and young people in full time education or training.

Improving provision of services

- We will develop Community Health Service Centres that bring together treatment, diagnosis and support services within a single centre, to improve wellbeing. We will develop similar structures in rural areas by using, for example, outreach facilities and IT and video link technology.
- We will develop the important role of Community Hospitals and develop a strategy for sustaining small, rural and community hospitals where they are safe and effective, including the provision of minor surgery and to act as a resource to GPs.

- We will continue to protect the status of community pharmacies.
- We will ensure the resources are available to allow the routine issue of digital hearing aids and support where they are the most clinically effective option.
- We will ensure that local authorities in Scotland continue to deliver existing levels of respite care each year.
- We will strengthen patient advocacy services through the Advocacy Safeguards Agency and the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance.
- We will complete the programme to end the use of mixed sex wards.

Delivering improvements through our staff

Developing and supporting our workforce

- We will increase our programme to train, recruit and retain nurses and midwives bringing 12,000 into the NHS by 2007, as part of our overall improvements in workforce planning in the NHS.
- We will treble existing numbers of nurse consultants to 54.
- We confirm our commitment to the implementation of 'Agenda for Change'.
- We will develop an entitlement to continuous professional development for all staff and require all Health Boards to increase flexible working, starting with nurses, including a more diverse range of working practices and contracts.
- We will introduce further measures to attract and retain GPs and other health staff with a wider range of incentive packages. In respect of allied health professionals and in cases of shortage, that wider range of incentives may include contributions to student loan repayments.
- We will continue our guarantee of one year's employment for all newly qualified nurses and midwives.
- We will continue to develop a wider role for nurses to get the full benefit of their skills and give them greater career opportunities.
- We will aim to increase the number of consultants in the NHS by 600 by 2006 and continue to build on that increase thereafter.
- We will ensure a total of 1,500 extra allied health professionals, such as radiographers, physiotherapists, dieticians and chiropodists.

Right time, right place

- We will implement nationally co-ordinated nursing bank arrangements to assist nurse placement across Scotland, to improve patient services and cut the costs of agency nursing.

- We will further pursue mechanisms which encourage preventive dentistry and design appropriate reward measures to support that objective.
- We recognise the need for an increase in the number of dentists and dental graduates in Scotland. We will undertake an assessment of the reasons for the shortfall in the number of dentists in some areas of Scotland and the options for addressing that.
- We will expand the capacity of dental training facilities in Scotland by establishing an outreach training centre in Aberdeen. We will consult further on the need for its development to a full dental school.

Education

Introduction

Our schools play a vital part in unlocking the potential of our children. Our goal is for every school in Scotland to be an excellent school. We will modernise comprehensive education to secure the highest standards for every child.

High level commitments

We will ensure that our children have better schools with more modern facilities to provide first class places to learn and develop:

- **We will develop the largest ever school building programme in Scotland's history, renewing 200 more schools by 2006, rising to 300 by 2009. These schools should be available to the whole community and include high quality facilities for drama, music, sport, IT and in secondary schools, science laboratories**
- **New schools should demonstrate commitment to the highest design and environmental standards**
- **We will make sure that by 2007 every school is an integrated community school.**

We will deliver more teachers and support staff in schools to provide more focused attention to their individual learning and development in order to improve attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy, and to help close the attainment gap:

- **We will significantly increase teacher numbers to 53,000 by 2007 and increase support staff, mostly in secondary schools**



- We will target these additional teachers on reducing class sizes to a maximum of 20 in S1 and S2 for Maths and English, 25 in P1 and increasing the number of specialists working across the boundary between secondary and primary
- We will ensure that teachers have the right skills, through implementation of the national agreement on their pay and conditions, and that classroom assistants have access to development opportunities in further education.

We will provide more flexible learning and development opportunities so that pupils' experience of education is matched to their individual needs:

- We will reform the curriculum to increase pupil choice, simplifying it and making it more stimulating
- We will provide more time for learning by simplifying and reducing assessment, ending the current system of national tests for 5-14 year olds
- We will promote assessment methods that support learning and teaching
- We will measure improvement in overall attainment through broad surveys rather than relying on the national tests
- We will improve the transitions between nursery and primary and primary and secondary education so that the system fits the needs of the children
- We will introduce more flexibility in the curriculum for 3-6 year olds. We will improve pupils' confidence and attainment by changing the ethos of P1, freeing up the curriculum, introducing less formal teaching methods and enabling early professional intervention
- We will increase the number and range of specialist teachers working with primary pupils, particularly by allowing teachers to move between secondary and primary
- We will ensure that pupils have access to summer schools and camps, and that all schools have access to home-link workers and develop access to out-of-hours activity and facilities for all children
- We will enable 14-16 year olds to develop vocational skills and improve their employment prospects by allowing them to undertake courses in further education colleges as part of the school-based curriculum.

Supporting activity

A modern curriculum

- We will reform the school curriculum, to ensure that the school experience equips our young people with the skills and values they will need to live a healthy, productive and happy life in the modern world.
- We will encourage creativity with 12 months' free music tuition by Primary 6.
- We will guarantee the opportunity to learn a modern European language starting in Primary school.
- We will make sure that every pupil has the opportunity to benefit from 'Enterprise in Education'.
-  ■ We will develop curriculum materials to promote environmental awareness.
-  ■ We will emphasise citizenship, community involvement and environmental education throughout the school years, including voluntary sector and environmental involvement through work experience.
- We will encourage schools to include parenting skills in the secondary sector.
- We will continue to invest in Gaelic-medium education, including the provision of more teacher training places.

Maximising schools' performance

- We will use technology to link schools to access staff and share resources.
- We will increase devolved decision making in the use of school budgets. We will issue guidance on how to bring the proportion of the budget under the control of the Headteacher up to a minimum of 80% and move it towards 90%.
- We will support giving Headteacher Associations a place on the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers.
- We will promote improved assessment of individual schools' progress as a better measure than national league tables.
- We will tackle under-performance through inspection and support.

- We will continue to work in partnership with teachers, parents and education authorities and through the national improvement framework for school education to raise standards in Scotland's schools. We will support Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education in their responsibility to inspect and support the quality of local authority management and the improvement of school education to meet the agreed national standards. Where the established steps of inspection, professional support and development do not secure the improvements identified for the local authority, we will extend Ministerial powers to intervene, as a last resort and on the recommendations of the Inspectorate, to ensure that the action identified by the Inspectorate as necessary is taken by the local authority.

Giving every child the best start in life

- We will maintain free nursery places for every 3 and 4 year old in Scotland, helping to give every child the best possible start in their primary school.
- We will continue to work to improve the health of our children, with free fruit in Primary 1 and 2 and closer working between schools and the NHS.
- We will continue support for breakfast clubs.
- We will improve nutritional standards for school meals; end advertising of unhealthy foods in schools; work with local authorities to promote healthy eating; and actively discourage the availability of unhealthy food and drinks in schools as a condition of becoming health promoting schools.

Putting children and young people and their families first

- We will introduce financial support for all 16 to 19 year olds from low income families, to allow them to continue their education.
- We will work to strengthen the link between parents and schools, improving the quality of information that parents receive about their children's progress at every stage, replacing reports with Annual Progress Plans.

Ensuring children are safe and do not threaten the safety of others

- We will tackle violence, bullying and disruption in our schools, by building on the work of the Discipline Task Force and making truancy action schemes a priority for all education authorities.

Promoting equality, inclusion and diversity

- We will continue to include pupils in mainstream schools where this is in their best interest, but also recognising that some young people will require specialist provision, including access to specialist schools which may require co-operation across education authority boundaries.
- We will legislate to end the current bureaucratic hurdles faced by children with additional support for learning needs. We will provide a mediation and tribunal service. We will give parents and carers a greater say in the education and support provision for their child, and introduce flexibility to make sure children's education takes place in a setting and with the support that best meets their needs.
- We will put in place a national strategy for special educational needs.
- We will encourage diversity and permit local authorities to fund specialist schools.
- We will ensure gifted children have the opportunity to fulfil their talents, with appropriate access to national initiatives to give support in drama, music, sport or academic pursuits.

Supporting

section 3

supporting STRONGER, SAFER COMMUNITIES

Children and Young People

Introduction

We want to give every child and young person the best possible start in life. Helping our children realise their potential is the key to giving them a sense of self-fulfilment and equipping them for their future.

Scotland's children and young people have energy and enthusiasm that we should release and voices that we should listen to and learn from. We will work in partnership with young people, the voluntary sector, the business community, local authorities, health boards and other bodies to provide the best and most exciting opportunities that we can to allow children and young people to get involved and get active.

We will continue to provide support for children, families and carers especially those in difficult circumstances. We will act to ensure that our most vulnerable children have the protection they need and deserve.

Our aim is to deliver world class services for our children. That means a commitment not just to investment but also to reform – to cut through bureaucracy, simplify funding and ensure services are flexible and focused on the needs of children, young people and their families.

High level commitments

- We will provide opportunities for our children and young people at all ages to grow and develop through the provision of:
 - more flexible and more available childcare
 - safe places for our children to play and leisure activities that will excite and stretch our young people
 - increased access to sports and leisure facilities.



- We will encourage the more active involvement of young people in the lives of their communities and wider society through the introduction of a scheme, alongside the existing Millennium Volunteers scheme, which recognises youth volunteering and continued support for the Scottish Youth Parliament.
- We will protect our most vulnerable children through:
 - A tough new inspection system for child protection services
 - A new Children's Charter
 - A review of the Children's Hearings system
 - Improved services for children leaving care.

Supporting activity

Providing opportunities for our children and young people to grow and develop

- Alongside nursery school provision for 3 and 4 year olds we will aim to create flexible childcare provision accessible to all, expanding facilities, in the public, private and voluntary sectors and through co-operative arrangements.
- We will continue to support the establishment of youth cafes and other alcohol free activities for young people.
- We want to see more children undertaking regular physical exercise. We will encourage local authorities and health boards to build on existing best practice, channelling resources such as the Quality of Life Fund and health promotion budgets through the community planning framework, to encourage better access to swimming pools and other sports facilities.
- To encourage the active participation of young people we will:
 - develop a national strategy for youth work
 - introduce a national recognition scheme, alongside the existing Millennium Volunteers scheme, to support youth volunteering, giving young people the credit they deserve for the commitment they are making
 - develop our support for mentoring programmes for young people
 - continue to support the Scottish Youth Parliament in developing its role of representing the views of young people.

Improving and reforming services to ensure our children and young people are safe and well

- We will put in place a tough new inspection system to ensure that the reform of child protection services is delivered.
- We will introduce a Children's Charter to protect the most vulnerable, setting out children's rights in language children can understand.
- We will establish the new Children's Commissioner before the end of 2003.
- We will review the Children's Hearings system to develop and improve the current service. Scotland has led the world in developing a system that puts the child at its centre, involves local people in deciding what is the right thing to do and focuses on the care and welfare of young people. We will hold on to those fundamental principles. It is now however, time to review the system to ensure that it has the right set up and adequate resources to ensure that it does the best possible job to protect children.
- We will both invest in and reform children's services to cut through bureaucracy, simplify funding and ensure services are flexible and focused on the needs of children, young people and their families.
- We will continue to improve and develop the services provided for those leaving care to ensure that services, including mentoring and befriending, continue to be available beyond the age of 16.
- We will improve procedures, services and support for adoptive and foster parents.

Justice (including Youth Crime and Prosecution)

Introduction

We will continue to work for a Safer Scotland, reducing crime, particularly violent and drugs related crime, and reducing re-offending. Alongside measures to improve education and opportunity, we will tackle the causes of crime to make communities safer places to live and work. We will deal swiftly and effectively with those who commit crime and secure a criminal justice system that fully supports victims and witnesses. We will combat anti-social behaviour, particularly by a minority of young people. We will reform the courts and legal system to deal with cases more efficiently. We will continue to modernise the law and legal system to protect individual rights.



High level commitments

We will tackle crime and disorder by reducing violent and drug related crime and cutting re-offending.

- We will increase the number of police officers on operational duty in every Scottish force and improve on the current record level of overall police numbers.
- We will support Chief Constables to meet their target of an increase of 500 in the number of special constables.
- We will continue to expand the Scottish Drugs Enforcement Agency.
- We will use the model of Drug Courts across Scotland, where they are needed.
- We will continue to improve the range and quality of the sentences available to courts:
 - extending the availability of Drug Treatment and Testing Orders and other community penalties
 - extending reparation by offenders
 - expanding the role of restorative justice
 - improving the quality of prison programmes
 - reducing the number of offenders sent to prison by more use of Supervised Attendance Orders.
- We will review devolved licensing powers to shut down drug dealing premises in Scotland and ensure that premises are not re-occupied by new dealers.
- We will work with the Home Office on reserved matters relating to drug dealing premises.
- We will improve the efficiency of police forces by providing more common support services, while enhancing community accountability for policing through local police boards.

We will work to make communities safer, and people feel safer.

- We will take forward the White Paper on the Fire Service by introducing a Fire Services Bill to modernise the service, meet local needs, increase local decision making and improve consultation with the workforce.
- We will review the law and enforcement on knife crimes.
- We will expand CCTV, in shopping and other areas, supporting businesses and others to reduce crime.

We will legislate to tackle Anti-Social Behaviour.

- **We will introduce Anti-Social Behaviour orders for under-16 year olds.**
The order will continue to be made through the civil court and on application by a local authority or registered social landlord. Application for the order may be made without referral first to the Children's Hearing. Sanctions for breach of the Order will be dealt with by following the normal procedures in place for ASBOs and through referral to the Children's Hearing.
- **As a last resort, and once offers of guidance, support and counselling have been refused or ignored, we will give the courts powers to make civil orders requiring parents to act in the best interest of their children.** Such an order would be based on the parent's actions or failures, not their children's. If, when considering a referral, a Children's Hearing considers that a parent has failed to act in a child's best interest, and that voluntary arrangements have failed, the Reporter would apply to the court for a parental order. A further failure to act in a child's best interests in breach of a parental order would be an offence. Before any sentence could be imposed, the court would be required to take into account the best interests of the child in respect of whom the initial referral was made and also any other children within the parent's care. The sentence would be either a fine or a community disposal. Non-payment of a fine would initially be dealt with by means of a Supervised Attendance Order.
- **We will provide sufficient secure accommodation and allow children who might otherwise be in secure accommodation to remain in the community through the use of electronic tagging.**
- **We will ban the sale of spray paint to under 16s.**
- **We will protect emergency workers from assault and obstruction.**
- **We will make kerb crawling a criminal offence.**

We will address Youth Crime.

- **We will support the Children's Hearings system, expanding fast track hearings, if these are evaluated as successful, and increase the resources available to deal with persistent offenders.**
- **We will roll out Youth Courts where they are needed, subject to successful evaluation as necessary.**
- **We will consult on a national system of warnings for young offenders, with a restorative element where appropriate.**
- **We will direct £10 million to provide additional support to localised action and initiatives to divert young people away from crime.**

We will reform the courts and legal system

- We will set up a judicially led Sentencing Commission to review sentencing and make recommendations on:
 - the use of bail and remand
 - the basis on which fines are determined
 - the effectiveness of sentences in reducing re-offending
 - the scope to improve consistency of sentencing
 - the arrangements for early release from prison, and supervision of short term prisoners on their release.
- We will publish proposals for consultation for a single agency to deliver custodial and non-custodial sentences in Scotland with the aim of reducing reoffending rates.
- We will legislate to protect vulnerable witnesses such as children and improve the support for victims and witnesses with increased privacy protection, including witnesses in Anti-Social Behaviour cases. We will boost victim support and court support schemes and expand the witness service to the High Court. We will encourage prosecutors to give appropriate information to victims whenever practical, on their reasoning for action taken or discontinued.
- We will set up an independent Police Complaints Body.
- We will legislate to reform the operation of the High Court.
- We will take forward the review of summary justice.
- We will place the reformed judicial appointments system on a statutory basis, and ensure that QCs are appointed in a more open and independent way.
- We will establish a Scottish Human Rights Commission.

Supporting activity

- We will take forward the Nicholson review on licensing.
- We will take forward the National Strategy on Domestic Abuse.
- We will work with the Home Office to introduce new protections for the public against inappropriate use of airguns and imitation guns.
- We will take strong action to reduce environmental crime through:



- increased training and support for prosecutors and police in dealing with environmental and wildlife crime



- consulting on access to courts for NGOs on environmental matters under the Aarhus convention



- legislation on nature conservation
- strengthening the enforcement of environmental law including consideration of the establishment of environmental courts and other options for improving prosecution and dispute resolution.



- We will complete the introduction of environmental information regulations to improve public access to environmental information.
- We will continue the modernisation of the Prosecution Service.
- We will regulate the private security industry.
- We will legislate to reform family law for all of Scotland's people.
- We will continue to modernise legal aid.

Social Justice

Introduction

We want a Scotland where everyone can enjoy a decent quality of life.



Too many lives are damaged by poor housing, a blighted environment and poverty. We want everyone to have a decent home. We will work to ensure that neighbourhoods are kept safe and clean and ensure that our planning laws work to improve the environment for all. We will tackle the social, educational and economic barriers that create inequality and work to end child poverty by tackling deprivation and social need.

We will support those who make a valuable contribution to the people and communities of Scotland through their work in the voluntary sector and through volunteering. In order to ensure that the sector is valued by government, we will rationalise and improve its funding mechanisms, respecting its independence.

We will act decisively to confront the evils of racism and sectarianism.

High level commitments

We will work to improve the quality of life for all in Scotland.



- **We will introduce a quality of life commitment, support minimum standards for the removal of graffiti and litter and establish urban environmental task forces to tackle these problems.**
- **We will extend the neighbourhood warden scheme across Scotland and continue to evaluate its success.**



We will regenerate communities and secure a decent environment through reforming our planning laws.

- We will improve the planning system to strengthen involvement of communities, speed up decisions, reflect local views better, and allow quicker investment decisions.

We will deliver good quality, sustainable and affordable housing for all



- We will reduce the number of households living in Fuel Poverty by 30% by 2006.
- We will encourage local authorities, where appropriate, to pass control of housing to community based housing associations and tenants' co-operatives. We will transfer 70,000 houses by 2006 to community ownership, subject to the approval of tenants.
- We will invest in effective long-term improvement of social housing stock and develop a range of housing choices. We will provide an additional 18,000 new and improved homes for social rent and low-cost home ownership by 2006. We will take forward plans to increase the availability of affordable housing in rural areas.
- We will extend the home insulation and central heating programme to improve another 4000 homes by 2006, initially directing resources to the over 80s who have partial or poorly functioning heating systems. We will evaluate the success of the programme, with a view to extending the scheme to other pensioner groups beyond 2006.



We will work with communities to improve their standard of living.

- We will support an extension of the money advice service, building on the work of local authorities, the Citizens Advice Bureaux network and other voluntary sector bodies, to help those burdened by multiple debt.
- We will support credit union development and community banking arrangements to ensure alternatives to mainstream banking are available and we will encourage local enterprise and trading schemes.
- We will work with the Post Office to explore what role the Executive can play in efforts to revitalise the Post Office network in Scotland.

We will support the voluntary sector.

- We will act on the recommendations of the strategic funding review of voluntary sector funding, to support 3 year rolling core funding for the voluntary sector and improve its availability, effectiveness and sustainability.



We will promote equal opportunities.

- **We will act against racist abuse and attacks. We will encourage the integration of refugees into local communities. We will tackle sectarianism and implement the proposals of the cross-party working group on tackling religious hatred.**
- **We will continue to improve the accessibility of public buildings.**






Supporting activity

Improving quality of life

- We will continue to assist public bodies to improve quality of life for local communities.
- We will continue to work with professional bodies, local authorities, the voluntary sector and higher education institutions to improve social work training in order to meet the new demands of the profession. We will take all appropriate steps to ensure best use of valuable social worker resources.
- We will evaluate the local pilot projects in order to assess the desirability of creating a national voluntary citizen's entitlement card for appropriate public services, taking care to protect individual privacy.
- We will increase, and encourage enforcement of, penalties for litter and extend local authority powers to tackle graffiti and fly-posting.
- We will introduce "acceptable behaviour contracts" for anti-social individuals and families.
- We will pilot an extension of the Land Fund to include communities not currently covered to assist the purchase of land for community activity.
- We will pilot 'good neighbour' declarations that set out the responsibilities of landlords, other agencies and tenants.
- We will encourage local authorities to set up proactive anti-social behaviour units.
- We will set targets for local authorities to recycle 25% of waste by 2006 and 55% by 2020 through increasing use of doorstep collection and through provision of recycling facilities in every community.
- We will continue to work with local authorities to deal with the nuisance of abandoned vehicles.
- We will strengthen local authority powers of enforcement to tackle fly-tipping and double the level of fines.

-  ■ We will require the production of a pollution inventory for every community, accessible through the Internet.
-  ■ As part of our commitment to sustainable economic growth, we will require public bodies to conduct waste minimisation audits to reduce the amount of waste produced.
- We will support a voluntary proof of age scheme, backed by national awareness campaigns, and test purchasing systems to reduce the supply of alcohol, tobacco and solvents to young people.

Enhancing the environment and reforming planning

-  ■ We will consult on new rights of appeal in planning cases where the local authority involved has an interest, where the application is contrary to the local plan, when planning officers have recommended rejection or where an Environmental Impact Assessment is needed.
- We will examine the mechanisms required for pre-application consultation and mediation in the planning process, including, where appropriate, involvement by local councillors, revising the councillor's code of conduct to assist this, so communities can engage with developers over controversial applications.
- We will use the National Planning Framework to support area regeneration.
-  ■ We will review planning guidance to set strong minimum standards for including public open space in new developments.
- We will enhance the urban landscape, particularly by introducing a more effective system for improving conservation and design.
-  ■ We will increase protection for communities affected by flooding through investment in flood alleviation measures and flood defences. We will support planning controls on building on flood plains.
-  ■ We will strengthen building standards to ensure that energy conservation levels improve to high and effective levels and consult on ways to ensure that new homes and public buildings increasingly incorporate solar power or other renewable energy sources.
-  ■ We will reform planning guidelines to ensure that new housing includes provision for separating waste, and space for kerbside collection of recyclable material.
-  ■ We will encourage awareness of the benefits of grey water schemes in new developments.

Improving Scotland's housing



- We will introduce a decent homes standard. We will use the standard to define a new energy banding system to classify houses according to energy efficiency, offering tangible benefits to homeowners for energy conservation improvements they make to their homes.
- We will provide effective support for homeless people and eradicate the need for rooflessness.
- We will build on the recommendations of the Housing Improvement Taskforce.
- We will introduce a single seller survey.
- We will establish an improved framework for encouraging the maintenance of private housing by reforming the law of the tenement to introduce a common factoring scheme. We will explore the possibility of owner-funded long-term maintenance funds.
- We will support standards for a voluntary accreditation scheme for private landlords to offer tenants and neighbours a level of quality assurance.
- We will ensure that more homes are barrier free.
- We will review restrictions that prevent social landlords playing a full role in community regeneration.

Supporting communities

- We will merge Social Inclusion Partnerships with Community Planning Partnerships, ensuring that the new partnerships are fully accountable to the local community.
- We will investigate the feasibility of community based insurance schemes, through credit unions, initially for areas at risk of flooding. We will support home insurance schemes tied to rents paid to landlords in the socially rented sector.
- We will work with the DTI to tackle harassment by loan sharks, introduce fairer credit schemes and new protection from exorbitant interest rates.
- We will implement the Debt Arrangement and Attachment (Scotland) Act.
- We will work with the UK Government to secure a Scottish Opportunities Fund to provide sustainable core funding to relevant voluntary organisations.

Supporting the voluntary sector

- We will encourage compacts between local authorities and the voluntary sector and improve the partnership with health boards.
- We will legislate on charity law.

Sport, Culture and the Arts



Introduction

Sport, culture and the arts have a key role in today's diverse Scotland. Our vision is for a Scotland where our cultural life is inclusive and accessible. We recognise our proud and distinctive heritage and want to embrace the diversity in our language and our culture. We will develop a plan to support our traditional and other languages. We will promote the widest possible participation in a vigorous and diverse cultural life in Scotland, bringing real benefits for communities and individuals.

The creative industries will have an increasingly important role in the future economy. Scotland can already demonstrate considerable impact within this sector and we will improve the conditions for these industries to flourish.

We will promote excellence in culture and sport throughout Scotland and we want these aspects of Scottish life to play a part in the wider promotion of Scotland's image overseas and in the attraction of more cultural and sporting events to Scotland.

Sport, culture and the arts are integral to healthy communities and to developing self-confident individuals. We are committed to generating wider opportunities to participate in sport, culture and the arts – particularly in schools, and amongst under-represented communities. We will aim for excellence in sport, culture and the arts too – successful Scots on a world stage can have a major impact on participation at a domestic level.

High level commitments

We will develop a new focus for Scotland's languages recognising both our heritage and our diversity.

We will establish new partnerships in the arts and in our cultural society to develop national and local programmes aimed at achieving excellence.

We will maximise the contribution that sport, culture and the arts can play in the promotion of Scotland and in the attraction of international events.

We will promote a Scotland where everyone can participate in sport, excelling at their own level.

Supporting activity

We will develop a new focus for Scotland's languages recognising both our heritage and our diversity.

- We will legislate to provide secure status for Gaelic through a Gaelic Language Bill. We will introduce a national language strategy to guide the development and support of Scotland's languages, including British Sign Language and ethnic community languages. We will give local authorities and other public bodies a responsibility to draw up a languages plan which reflects the communities they serve.
- We will establish new partnerships to develop national and local programmes in arts and culture aimed at achieving excellence.
- We will consult on the future governance of the arts, culture and the creative industries in Scotland. We will look at the creation of a single cultural organisation for Scotland. This will include a review of the structure and purpose of the Scottish Arts Council as well as the other national and regional cultural bodies and companies. It will look at the future role and funding of the arts in Scotland.
- We will support a National Theatre for Scotland to commission and create work in collaboration with theatre artists and theatre companies across Scotland.
- We will actively promote our young talent by increasing the links between public support and commercial enterprise.
- We will support local authorities and others who are bringing cultural opportunities to our towns, cities and rural communities. We will continue to support investment in our libraries and museums.

We will maximise the contribution that sport, culture and the arts can play in the promotion of Scotland and in the attraction of international events.

- We will aim to bring significant sporting and cultural events to Scotland through Event Scotland.
- We will support the Scottish Year of Highland Culture in 2007 and use the celebration in 2009 of the 250th anniversary of Burns' birth as one means to encourage Scots worldwide to return to Scotland.

- We will strengthen the link between Scotland's arts and culture and the promotion of tourism and economic growth.
- We will establish support for international festivals.
- We will develop Scotland as a production centre for film, TV and new media and as a location for film-making; encourage and promote wider creative industries; and support the promotion of Scottish films and TV programmes overseas.

We will promote a Scotland which encourages participation in sport.

- We will implement the targets in the second stage of our sports strategy including the development of six indoor multi-sport facilities across Scotland, including a national indoor arena of competitive standard and two municipal stadia.
- We will develop the sporting champions scheme.
- We will promote golf internationally and make sure that international competitions such as the Ryder Cup are used to support the development of young golfers and increase the opportunity for young Scots to learn golf.
- We will work with **sportscotland** to complete the physical education and sports programme of new and refurbished sports facilities, including swimming pools.
- We will improve support for clubs and groups that provide coaching for sports and encourage them to provide coaching facilities for school children.
- We will develop accreditation schemes to allow greater numbers of people to act as coaches and physical activity trainers and promote New Deal programmes which provide opportunities to train as sports assistants.
- We will promote local community sports strategies.

developing

section 4 developing A CONFIDENT, DEMOCRATIC SCOTLAND

Governance

Introduction

A forward-looking successful country needs a democratic framework that works well for its people. We will work with others to shape effective partnerships which put the needs of communities and the country first.

There are some decisions that require to be made in Europe to be most effective. There are other decisions best made at a UK or Scottish level. We support the principle of subsidiarity so that the right decisions are made at the right level including within Scotland.

We need a stable, devolved Scotland. We will ensure that the work of the Scottish Parliament matches the priorities of the Scottish people.

We believe in elected local government and recognise its crucial importance. We will work with local government in the shared objectives of ensuring responsiveness to local people and their well being.

We want to ensure high quality public services for every community and local services that help build communities. We believe effective local services are best delivered by elected councils, in partnership with the voluntary sector and other local bodies. We will make sure local services join up to deliver for the communities they serve.

We will renew local democracy, acting to improve democratic participation and widen the range of people who become involved in local government.

We will invest for the future. We will seek to maximise the value to the public of all our expenditure. We will protect public spending that saves the taxpayer money in the long term. We will not use the income tax varying power of the Scottish Parliament.



To maintain the stability, effectiveness and accessibility of the Parliament, we continue to support the retention of 129 MSPs.

High level commitments

We will advance Scotland's place in Europe and the wider world by:

- working with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Scotland Office to promote Scottish interests through the UK network of embassies and consulates around the world
- working to represent Scotland in the EU, both directly and through the strength of the UK government
- expanding the constructive role of Scotland within the European Union through collaboration with other legislative regions and nations
- building on the interest the establishment of the Scottish Parliament has generated by forging links with new EU member states and developing countries
- engaging positively as a member of the British-Irish Council.

We will renew local democracy by:

- reforming voting arrangements in order to increase participation, including further investigation of postal and electronic voting
- introducing for the next local government elections the proportional Single Transferable Vote system of election. The multi-member wards would have either 3 or 4 members, depending on local circumstances.

We will help improve local public services, in partnership with local authorities by:

- encouraging local authorities to ensure that Community Planning works effectively, including finding new and innovative ways of involving their local communities, protecting public services in rural and urban areas and developing new multi-function facilities
- eliminating inefficiencies and reducing barriers to quality by selectively reviewing the boundaries of public organisations that deliver services to identify areas where the creation of coterminous boundaries would facilitate their co-operative work
- following consultation with COSLA, we will establish an independent review into local government finance
- actively implementing the protocol which ends the two-tier workforce and protects workers who are transferred to new employers under contracts for the delivery of public services.

We will help improve the public service infrastructure in a way that delivers best value, continuing to develop a range of funding options including PPP, where appropriate, and other innovative and workable models.

Supporting activity

Scotland's place in Europe and the wider world

- We will continue to champion Scotland's interests in appropriate EU Council meetings and inside the UK and will work with Scotland's MEPs to help promote a united voice in the European Parliament.
- We will assist the Scottish Parliament in its role in scrutinising European legislation.
- We will promote the need for an effective regional policy in Europe.
- We will build on our participation at the Earth Summit held in Johannesburg by working with the UK Government, where appropriate, to meet our commitments to tackle climate change, and promote renewable energy and other aspects of sustainability.
- We will encourage the work of Scotland's NGOs which are active in international education programmes, disaster relief and encouraging international development.
- We will work with our excellent academic institutions to promote research links, education and student exchanges to raise Scotland's profile and increase opportunities for our young people and build global networks with Scottish institutions at their heart.

Improving the Executive's contribution to the working of the Parliament




- We will support robust Parliamentary arrangements to hold the Executive to account.
- We will continue to require NDPBs to submit their performance and results to Parliament.
- We will ask the Scottish Law Commission to investigate methods by which legislation can be published in plain English.
- We will continue to support awards for contribution to public service and the well being of Scotland.

Renewing local democracy

- We will remove unnecessary political restrictions on standing for local authority election.

- We will lower the age limit for local government candidates to 18.
- We will establish an independent remuneration committee for councillors and bring forward severance and pension arrangements for local authority councillors.

Environment in the public sector

-  ■ We will take measures to reduce energy use, including the increased use of solar power and the introduction of energy conservation measures, throughout the public sector.
- We will retain Scottish Water in public ownership and will support it with the resources necessary to invest in our public water and sewerage services so that they meet health standards.
-  ■ We will legislate to introduce strategic environmental assessment to ensure that the full environmental impacts of all new strategies, programmes and plans developed by the public sector are properly considered.
-  ■ We will use the public purchasing rules to enhance the status of recycled goods and those capable of reuse.

working

section 5

working TOGETHER

Introduction

The partnership parties' objective is to form and maintain the devolved Government of Scotland until the dissolution of Parliament before the election in 2007. To achieve this they will make every effort to resolve any disagreements which may arise and threaten its continued operation.

To work effectively and deliver their programme the partnership parties will need goodwill, mutual trust and agreed procedures which foster collective decision making and responsibility while respecting each party's identity.

Close consultation between the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister, other Ministers and the MSPs of the two partnership parties will be the foundation of the Partnership's success. In the working of the Partnership, the principle of fairness will underpin both partnership parties' approaches to all aspects of the conduct of the Executive's business, including the allocation of responsibilities, the Executive's policy and legislative programme, the conduct of its business and the resolution of disputes.

Collective responsibility

Collective responsibility is accepted by the Partnership parties to mean that:

- all the business of the Executive, including decisions, announcements, expenditure plans, proposed legislation and appointments, engages the collective responsibility of the Executive as a whole and must be handled with an appropriate degree of consultation and discussion so as to ensure the support of all Ministers
- Ministers have the opportunity to express their views frankly as decisions are reached
- opinions expressed and advice offered within the Executive remain private

- decisions of the Executive are binding on and supported by all Ministers
- mechanisms for sharing information and resolving disputes are followed.

To achieve this, the Executive will update and publish the Scottish Ministerial Code and the Guide to Collective Decision Making.

Portfolios

The initial structure of portfolios and their allocation between the partnership parties will be agreed between the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister and will be published as an annex to this Agreement. The allocation will be based on the principle that the partnership party with fewer MSPs shall have a share of Ministerial appointments at least equal to its share of partnership MSPs. The First Minister, following consultation with the Deputy First Minister, will appoint Ministers. The First Minister will nominate Labour Party ministerial appointees and the Deputy First Minister will nominate Liberal Democrat ministerial appointees. The First Minister and the Deputy First Minister will agree the nomination of the Law Officers. Any changes to the structure of portfolios or their allocation between the partnership parties during the lifetime of the Agreement will be agreed between the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister.

The roles of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister

The partnership parties agree that, subject to the approval of the Parliament, the Leader of Labour in the Scottish Parliament will be nominated for appointment as First Minister and the Leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats will be appointed as Deputy First Minister in the Partnership Executive. Both the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister will be responsible for and engaged in policy and presentation across all portfolios, and arrangements for this will be agreed between them and the Permanent Secretary.

It is essential that both the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister are kept fully informed across the range of Executive business so that they can engage in any issue where they consider that appropriate. The procedures to be established for handling business within the Executive will require officials to copy all relevant material to the offices of the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister. Both the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister will have appropriate official, political and specialist support to enable them to discharge their roles effectively.

The Partnership Parties' support for the Executive in Parliament

The partnership parties should aim to agree on all matters of Executive policy. Both partnership parties are committed to constructive dialogue between Ministers and backbenchers to build a strong partnership.

The two Parliamentary parties will operate in support of the Partnership Executive on all issues covered by this Agreement. Whilst preserving the independence of the committee system, members of the partnership parties serving on the same committee will co-operate on the formal business and legislation of the Executive. Whilst each will make its own business management arrangements to ensure effective party support for the Executive, the business managers will consult and co-operate with each other to ensure the delivery of the Executive's programme.

Matters of new Executive policy outside this Agreement must be agreed by both partnership parties. In all portfolios, Ministers will meet regularly with the nominated spokesperson or lead backbencher from both partnership parties to discuss policy. Any disagreement should be referred through internal party mechanisms until both partnership parties agree.

Matters reserved to the UK Parliament are outside this Agreement. Should it be necessary, the partnership parties will decide how to deal with these on a case by case basis.

Neither partnership party will support spending proposals brought before Parliament other than by the Executive or covered by this Agreement unless considered and agreed by both parties.

The partnership parties will agree and put in place appropriate political arrangements to facilitate an effective working relationship at all levels, including re-establishing the Backbench Liaison Group and regular meetings of the Partnership Group. In addition, the Executive will re-establish the practice of regular meetings of Deputy Ministers, who have an important role to fulfil in liaising with Parliamentary committees, and backbench MSPs of both parties.

Ratification of this Agreement

The partnership parties will ratify this Agreement according to their own internal procedures.

The Partnership Agreement will come into effect after ratification immediately on signature by the partnership party leaders.



Governance



Children & Young People



Social Justice



Rural & Environment



Culture & Sport