



Scottish political party pledges for social enterprise

The Scottish Parliament Election 2016

#VoteSocialEnterprise
#SP16 #SP2016 #Holyrood2016

Please read our summary of political party manifesto commitments from: The Scottish Conservatives, Scottish Greens, Scottish Labour, Scottish Liberal Democrats and the SNP. These are the parties most likely to receive representation in the new Scottish Parliament, according to a range of opinion polls.

We haven't included every single manifesto but please be aware that there are many other political parties and individual, independent candidates standing across Scotland e.g. RISE, UKIP, the Scottish Libertarians and The Women's Equality Party.

This document highlights key policy pledges specifically for social enterprise and some related (but not every) areas. Please read the party manifestos to get the full context of each policy and information about additional and related commitments.

Please read and continue to share the manifesto for social enterprise - [For the Good of Everyone](#). The manifesto is not just for this election and will form the basis of our campaigning over the next few years.

Whichever party you vote for please have a read of the policies below and **#VoteSocialEnterprise** on Thursday 5 May!

Scottish Conservatives - [Read the full manifesto](#) "A strong opposition - A stronger Scotland" #TeamRuth

*"Business Support and Regulation...We have long supported **social enterprises**, which are some of the best examples of how entrepreneurship can deliver improved social and community outcomes - **housing associations and credit unions** being for example being an integral part of Scotland's communities. We will look to **support social enterprises through increased awareness and publicity**, through a new apprenticeship framework and helping incorporation into local supply chains. **Procurement** policy should generally aim to increase participation of SMEs and encourage locally sourced materials to be used."*

*"Business Support and Regulation...the recognition of the Highlands and Islands as a unique business landscape requiring unique support, leads us to believe that this approach could be replicated elsewhere too. In particular, we believe a **South of Scotland Enterprise** should be considered. This should have **a social as well as an economic remit** - which is the key difference between SE and HIE today. Business support has to be tailored to different kinds of enterprises as well as different enterprise sizes."*

*“Revitalising Town Centres...we believe that we should extend the present Enterprise Area approach to a more local scheme and create a network of **Regeneration Zones**. These zones would be set up in cooperation with local government and could provide incentives including **business rates** relief, LBTT relief, fast tracked planning applications, the prioritisation of high speed broadband, specific skills and training support and business advice and support. Regeneration Zones would differ from Enterprise Areas already in place elsewhere in Scotland because they would apply to any businesses willing to invest in a specific geographical location, rather than to specific sectors.”*

*“Promoting Balanced **Land Reform**...There are elements of the land reform agenda that Scottish Conservatives have supported - improved transparency of land ownership will help to tackle tax avoidance for example - but we will continue to stand up against measures that undermine individual property rights. We support **community empowerment** - in fact much of the Community Empowerment Act 2015 is based on UK Government localism legislation - but are concerned that Land Reform Act proposals prioritise community ownership over good land management.”*

*“Promoting Balanced Land Reform...**Community buyouts** are not the only form of land use, sometimes long leases are preferable to communities as well as landowners. We would therefore support opening the Scottish Land Fund to long lease funding for communities. We would also explore reintroducing business rate relief to sporting estates which manage their environment and wildlife to a high standard.”*

*“Restoring Local Accountability...Devolving power to local communities and groups should not be constrained to ownership alone, which has been the Scottish Government’s primary focus. We believe a **Community Right to Challenge** should be introduced in Scotland too. This would give **community and voluntary bodies** the right to express interest in taking over a specific council-run service. The local authority in question would be required to respond to this challenge and unless there are reasonable grounds for refusal the council would have to run a procurement exercise where the services would be opened up to bids.”*

Scottish Green Party - [Read the full manifesto](#) “A better Scotland needs a bolder Holyrood” #GreenHolyrood #VoteGreen2016

*“Scottish Greens will campaign to reverse government cuts to public services, and instead invest in Scotland’s people. With more Green MSPs we can support action to deliver thousands of jobs in clean, green industries. **We can do business differently, supporting small businesses, social enterprises and employee-owned ventures** to flourish. And we can build **an economy for people**, not growth at any cost.”*

*“Scotland can do business differently: Business models that deliver more. Green MSPs will **support social enterprises, cooperatives and employee-owned businesses to be at the heart of the economy**. These business models deliver not just profits but social and environmental improvements too. Over 112,000 people are working in Scotland’s social enterprises, with 60% of these led by women. Employee-owned businesses are delivering increased sales, employment, profits and productivity. Greens will support these **business models that challenge the status quo**, promote equality and deliver more for Scotland.”*

*“Fair pay...We believe everyone should be paid a wage that lifts them out of poverty, and that nobody should be paid less because of their gender. We will campaign to make government business support available only to those companies who plan to pay the **Living Wage**, avoid zero-hours contracts, recognise trade unions, reduce the gap between the highest and lowest paid, pay women and men equally and are environmentally responsible.”*

*“Local banks, credit unions and local currencies. Social enterprises and employee-owned companies need **finance** and the financial institutions to match. Credit unions offer a realistic alternative to the traditional banking sector for many individuals and communities throughout Scotland, providing affordable, community-based, **socially responsible lending and investment**. Green MSPs will campaign to support credit unions and local banks to create a network of accountable finance institutions. These banking institutions would be more resilient than the ‘too-big-to-fail’ banks of today. We will also explore whether local currencies can encourage local trading activity to support independent retailers and small high street traders.”*

*“Scotland can unlock **community action and enterprise**...People power. Other proposals throughout this manifesto to create a generation of community-owned energy projects, promote business models that deliver more such as **cooperatives and social enterprise** and fan-owned sports clubs are all designed to unlock community power.”*

*“A radical housing agenda...Support for **housing cooperatives**. We will support legislative changes which make it easier to establish housing cooperatives or bring rented property into shared management.”*

Scottish Labour Party - [Read the full manifesto](#) “Invest in Scotland’s Future” #BothVotesLabour

*“Building the businesses of the future...Help **social entrepreneurs** by **promoting social enterprise**, encouraging **cooperatives** and other forms of **mutual ownership**.”*

*“Building the businesses of the future...We will undertake a thorough review of non-domestic rates to make the system more transparent, predictable and streamlined, including mandatory revaluation every three years. We will preserve the exemption for small businesses and explore the case for extension to **locally important social enterprises and community organisations** such as small local and regional newspapers, and **worker cooperatives**. We will monitor the effectiveness of the scheme to ensure it provides good value for taxpayers’ money. We will invest in **Co-operative Development Scotland** and encourage the **development of co-operatives**.”*

*“Building the businesses of the future...To help entrepreneurs we will: Work with business and entrepreneurial centres to create a **network of hubs run by entrepreneurs** to create a world class platform for the jobs of the future, Have a **minister for micro businesses**, small businesses and entrepreneurs, Consult with education leaders, the Prince’s Trust and **the co-operative movement**, to explore how entrepreneurship can be built into the curriculum in order to create a nation of confident, articulate, and innovative future entrepreneurs.”*

*“Building the businesses of the future...Labour **values businesses** and we will work strategically with them to create wealth for Scotland. Labour is committed to ensuring that the power of government helps, rather than constrains, **good business**. Our plan for business is built on four core ideas: Increased productivity, Better connectivity, Simplicity and Certainty.”*

*“Building the businesses of the future...We will use the **procurement** process to tackle aggressive tax avoidance. We will join up procurement, with **local supply chains**, including our manufacturing base, to boost employment and investment in the Scottish economy.”*

*“Building the businesses of the future...We will establish a **Living Wage Commission** tasked with making Scotland a Living Wage nation and to end the use of exploitative zero-hours contracts.”*

*“Empowering local government and communities...Scotland’s **third sector** is vibrant and active. It is vitally important to communities, providing services which they rely on. Not only that, the third sector drives the principles of equality and opportunity.”*

*Empowering local government and communities...We will always support **third sector** organisations and **social enterprises** because when government and the voluntary sector work together we can tackle disadvantage together.”*

*“Empowering local government and communities...We will create legal powers, where needed, to allow councils to compel the sale of derelict and brownfield land for early development. Our reforms to local taxation will include, as part of a basket of taxes, a **Land Value Tax** which will help address this issue. We’ll also empower local communities to take over assets and run them as **co-operatives**, building on the work of so many community **development trusts**.”*

*“Empowering local government and communities...We’ll invest in **credit unions** to offer communities affordable alternatives that give them greater financial control.”*

*“Delivering a cleaner, greener future...We believe in a ‘civic energy’ future - a future that grows local schemes to produce green energy, and heat for local use. A Scottish Labour Government will pursue new ownership models - community, **co-operative**, and public - to both generate and supply our energy. We will support businesses and communities, in islands and rural areas, in towns and cities, including those people currently off-grid, to reduce their energy demand, stimulating the development of commercially viable energy production.”*

*“Growing the rural economy...Our review of the **Land Reform** Act will be tasked with identifying improvements to the legislation, including mechanisms which will ensure land in Scotland is registered within the EU, making good on the Land Reform Review Group’s recommendations.”*

*“Homes for all...We will build 60,000 affordable homes, with 45,000 of those for rent by councils, **housing associations and cooperatives**. These homes will be built to the highest standards of thermal insulation and at least 10% will be built to wheelchair accessibility standards.”*

Scottish Liberal Democrats - [Read the full manifesto](#) “Be the best again” #VoteLibDemTwice

*“An innovative economy...Support growth of **social enterprises** in Scotland, to promote the innovation they can bring, and the wide group of people they draw into the productive economy.”*

*“An innovative economy...Implement the **Land Reform** Act and establish a review by the end of the parliamentary term to consider further reform.”*

*“An innovative economy...Continue to reform **procurement** rules to encourage purchase of local food and help smaller producers and farmers access large public sector markets.”*

*“A sustainable society...We will support **fair business practice**. We will pay the **Living Wage** for all public services. We will continue and expand the Scottish Government’s Fair Business Pledge to encourage liberal business practices on decent wages, profit-sharing, workforce engagement, investment in young people, a balanced workforce, with women in senior roles, and prompt payment to suppliers. We will restrict future business development funding, such as regional selective assistance, to companies that pay the Living Wage.”*

*“A strong, productive economy...Help schools develop links with **local businesses** and universities, echoing the report of the Commission for Developing Scotland’s Young Workforce.”*

*“A Fit For The Future Investment Fund...The National Infrastructure Project to create more warm homes - giving grants and loans to households and **businesses** to cut their energy bills.”*

*“Fair taxation at a national level and managing public money...[Scottish Futures Trust] We are concerned that the so-called Hub approach advocated by the Trust bundles too many projects into a single contract. This runs the risk of locking out smaller, more **local companies** from even submitting a tender. We will examine the case for breaking contracts into smaller parts to help **small business**.”*

*“A fair Scottish welfare system...We will replace the Work Programme and Work Choice with new employability programmes that work in partnership with Skills Development Scotland, colleges, **charities** and other local agencies.”*

*“More homes for rent...Use a proportion of any future Barnett consequential from the UK which are classed as ‘financial transactions’ to fund new **housing association** properties as well as help-to-buy schemes.”*

*“Clean, green, renewable energy for the next generation...Encourage **community ownership** of energy generation projects by splitting the existing target for ownership beyond 500MW to make sure the ‘community owned’ part is substantial, recognising that “local owned” too often only benefits large landowners.”*

*“Safe and secure communities...Promote new partnerships with the **third sector** to help more prisoners get into successful employment after release.”*

SNP - [read the full manifesto](#) “Re-Elect” #BothVotesSNP

*“Scotland: A Competitive Place to Do Business...It is vital that Scotland strikes the right balance in the nature and character of business structures. Scotland is now a world leader in **social enterprise and the social economy**. Substantial growth is being seen in the sector both in the scale and range of organisations and it forms an increasingly important part of our economy. We are already investing in the development of **social enterprises** and we will strengthen the support available as part of a **10-year social enterprise strategy**.”*

*“A Fairer Scotland: Preventing Poverty...We will encourage and support **third sector** organisations, **social enterprises**, and **credit unions** to enter the market place to fill gaps in the provision of services or to offer alternatives to current providers that are not offering services people can access easily or affordably. This includes energy, banking, payday loans, debt management, and funeral planning.”*

*“A Fairer Scotland: Preventing Poverty...We will also promote the Our Power **social enterprise energy model** for councils and **housing associations** to help keep costs down for social rent tenants.”*

*“**Valuing our Third Sector**... We have made significant investment in and promoted the role of the third sector, **social enterprises** and volunteers. The sector plays an important role and we want to increase and encourage it to grow its influence. We will take steps to consolidate voluntary sector funding into **single grant funds** to provide greater clarity to applicants. We will also support the extension of core funding. We will introduce **three year rolling funding** where possible. We will introduce a system across government that highlights when funding is due to end, to provide greater clarity for the sector and enable better*

planning for the longer term. We will provide support to help **social enterprises** compete for **public sector contracts** and encourage councils to promote the **procurement** of services and goods in their local area from the **third sector**.

“The Scottish Government has taken a supportive approach to **Supported Businesses**, such as Remploy. We use public sector spending, through **procurement** policy, to assist Supported Businesses and use our influence with leading private sector companies to encourage them to use the sector. We will continue to work with the sector, with BASE and others using public sector spend, to provide practical help for those businesses employing large numbers of people with a disability, so that they have an opportunity to thrive and prosper. By increasing the number of **Modern Apprenticeships** in the **third sector** and **social enterprises** we will help to diversify skills and training.”

“A wealthier Scotland...We will achieve this through a nationwide drive to improve productivity, by **supporting businesses** to grow, encouraging innovation, enhancing our infrastructure, developing skills and promoting **fair work**.”

“Transforming Scotland’s productivity... We will also direct the **Enterprise Agencies** to focus on building a scale-up programme for **start-up companies**. And we will streamline the advice available to business to ensure resources are effectively deployed to support start-up and scale-up ventures.”

“Fostering a **culture of entrepreneurship** goes hand in hand with innovation. Our vision is of Scotland as a world-leading entrepreneurial and innovative nation - a CAN DO place for business.”

“We will also continue to support the delivery of the ‘Scotland’s Enterprising Schools’ project to enable all schools to develop a **values-based entrepreneurial culture** amongst Scotland’s young people.”

“Scotland: A Competitive Place to Do Business...Our support for innovation will be coupled with a belief in the power of **small businesses** to drive growth. That’s why we will support our small businesses - the local employers that are the lifeblood of our economy - through an extension of the Small Business Bonus that will lift 100,000 businesses out of business rates altogether.”

“We will also focus our **business development** interventions to effectively capitalise on the benefits of digital connectivity - crucial to transforming Scotland’s productivity and overcoming the challenges of geography that affect businesses.”

“More and Better Paid Jobs...We will help businesses improve productivity by supporting them to become **Living Wage** employers, targeting promotion of the Living Wage at key low pay sectors and doubling the number of accredited Living Wage employers from 500 to 1,000 by autumn 2017. And we will continue to crack down on inappropriate **zero hours’ contracts**.”

“More and Better Paid Jobs...In the private and **third sectors** we will continue to encourage organisations to sign up to the **Business Pledge**, including the commitment to workforce diversity, and to join the Partnership for Change campaign to set a voluntary commitment for gender balance in their boardrooms of 50:50 by 2020.”

“More and Better Paid Jobs...We will take all possible steps to ensure that our **public procurement** processes support **progressive workplace** practices and also that companies engaging in unacceptable practices like blacklisting, exploitative zero hours’ contracts or tax evasion, do not benefit from public procurement.”

*“More and Better Paid Jobs...Scotland is acknowledged as leading the way on ‘**inclusive growth**’ and we will work with key partners to host an international conference to share our lessons and learn from other countries experience.”*

*“Key Sectors...The future success of our economy depends upon the sustainable growth and competitiveness of Scotland’s businesses. We will target our interventions and intensify our activity in **sectors and companies where we have a distinct comparative advantage.**”*

*“Key Sectors...To target growth in regional economies, we will also establish **Regional Economic Forums**, led by the enterprise agencies with strong private sector involvement, to promote and oversee **local business support.**”*

*“Civil Justice...We will take forward a consultation to review the regulation of the legal profession in Scotland and to support a modern and effective legal sector, including **new forms of business model.**”*

*“**Extending Land Ownership** and Improving Land Management...The Land Reform (Scotland) Act marks the next step in our land reform journey but is by no means the last. In the next Parliament, we will implement the provisions of the Act, including the establishment of a Scottish Land Commission and the publication of a Land Rights and Responsibilities statement.”*

*“As part of our **Land Reform** programme, we will end the practice revealed in the infamous Panama Papers of anonymous ownership of major tracts of Scotland’s land by introducing a mandatory, public register of controlling interests in landowners or tenants.”*

*“Preventing Poverty...We will develop and implement a national strategy to tackle social isolation backed by a fund of £500,000 in 2016/17 and encourage use of the **community empowerment** fund for local community projects addressing issues of isolation and loneliness.”*

*“Developing Scotland’s Larder...Through the **Community Empowerment** Act, we will seek to increase access to land for food growing purposes, as part of our strong commitment to develop allotments and community gardens.”*

*“Developing Scotland’s Larder...We will bring forward a **Good Food Nation Bill** to draw together all aspects of the Scottish Government’s work on food and drink - including food standards, **public procurement** and food waste.”*

*“Developing Scotland’s Larder...We will put in place a joint food industry supply-chain and **public sector procurement Taskforce** to match demand with supply, ensuring more Scottish produce is procured by local authorities and public bodies.”*

*“Participation...The **Community Empowerment** Act delivered new rights for communities and is backed by the Empowering Communities Fund and the Strengthening Communities Programme. We will build on this by: Setting councils a target of having at least 1 per cent of their budget subject to **Community Choices budgeting.** This will be backed by the Community Choices Fund to help public bodies and community groups build on examples of best practice. Allowing **community councils** that can demonstrate a strong democratic mandate to deliver some services. We intend that in future community council elections will be held on the same day across the country to increase their profile and recognition.”*

*“Tackling and Preventing **Homelessness**...To tackle long-term homelessness, we will continue to develop a joined up approach between local government, health, social services and the **third sector.**”*

*“More and Better Paid Jobs...Since 2011, we have invested nearly £40 million through **Community Jobs Scotland** to support 6,500 unemployed young people aged between 16 and 29 into training posts in the **third sector**. Employers are also supported to pay CJS employees the **Living Wage**. In 2016/17 we will continue our support with a further £6 million investment to fund a 700 more CJS places.”*

*“Community Benefits and **Community Owned Energy**...We will ensure that by 2020, at least half of newly consented renewable energy projects will have an element of **shared ownership**. And we will argue for Scottish control of our share of feed-in tariffs to help promote community ownership schemes.”*

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