

Scottish Socialist ★ Party



Holyrood Election Manifesto 2011

SOLIDARITY WITH THE SSP!



“I am very pleased to support the campaign of the SSP in the coming election.

All across Europe people are finding their jobs threatened, wages and benefits cut and the quality of life reduced. The great public institutions that have been built by past generations are now to be dismembered, sold off, privatised.

Blaming the bankers is not an adequate response. Socialists know that it is not individual greed but the very system itself that generates these disasters. Private corporations and banks will always put profit before people, otherwise they would not keep up with their competitors.

Only a party that starts from the independent interests of working people can begin to redress the balance. A secure job, care for the

elderly, a good education independent of private interests, a fully funded health service, decent housing - these are not unreasonable demands. But now they are revolutionary. The system cannot allow them. Which other party, to take but one example, now calls for full employment?

Scotland has a long history of radical struggle, like the great cities of England. We should show solidarity with those around the world who fight for justice, peace and the rule of law.

Socialism is the heart of that. A strong vote for the SSP would be the best news for ordinary people wherever they live. And it would be brilliant for Scotland - you might find some of us were coming to work here even more than we do now!”

- Ken Loach

Scottish Socialist Party



- Pages 4&5 -* **INTRODUCTION:**
Open The Doors! Light of the day, shine in; light of the mind, shine out!
- Page 6 -* **ECONOMIC CRISIS:**
There is an alternative!
- Pages 7&8 -* **SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE TO CUTS:**
Make the rich pay!
- Page 9 -* **INDEPENDENCE:**
For An Independent Socialist Scotland!
- Pages 10-20 -* **SSP POLICIES:**
Poverty and Wealth, Jobs and Workers Rights (*page10*), Privatisation and Social Ownership, Safer Communities (*page11*), General Health, The NHS (*page12*), Additional Health Needs, Care and Support of Elderly People, Carers' Rights, Higher and Further Education (*page13*), Schools, Special Education, Transport (*page14*), Housing, Sport Culture and Entertainment (*page15*), Local Government, The Voluntary Sector, Energy, Pollution and the Environment (*page16*), Land and Rural Regeneration (*page17*), Animal Welfare, Women's Rights, Youth Rights, Disabled People's Rights (*page18*), Elderly People's Rights, LGBT Rights (Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual), Racism and Sectarianism (*page19*), War and Peace, International Solidarity (*page20*).

HOLYROOD ELECTION MANIFESTO 2011

OPEN THE DOORS!

Light of the day, shine in; light of the mind, shine out!

WHEN the late Edwin Morgan wrote this arms-wide opener, the Scottish Parliament was a minor, the new building reeked of fresh paint and nervy optimism, and the impacted earth of British politics, north of the border at least, was in the process of being turned over, ready to be sown with new seeds.

Fast forward a few years and where are we?

The politics of Westminster are more entrenched than ever, and the radical elements in Holyrood seem scattered to the winds.

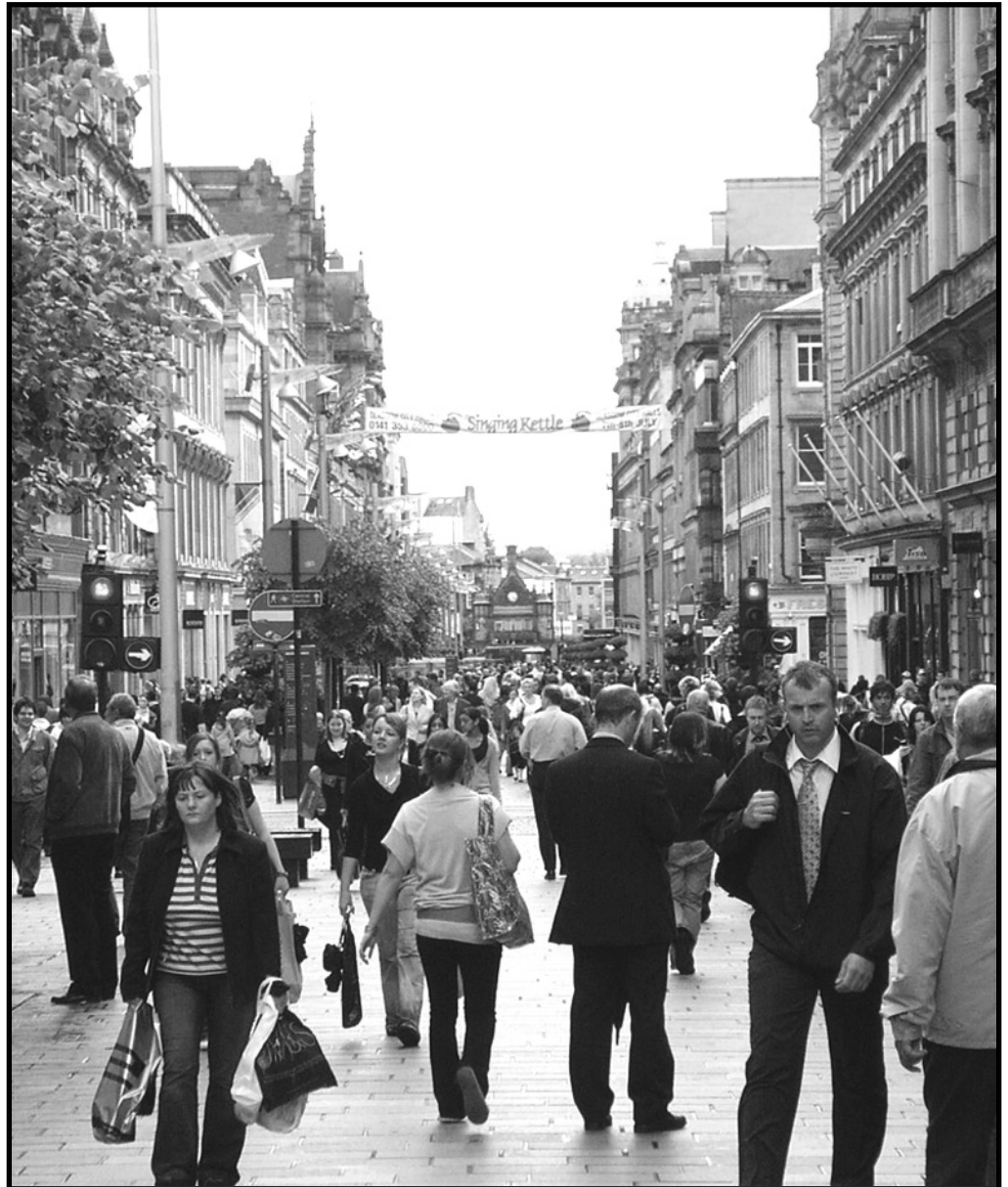
People don't talk about better things anymore, like good, free food for schoolchildren, Scottish independence, the dismantling of nuclear weapons; they just talk about how bad things are, and wonder how they'll cope if things continue to deteriorate.

And while we're scrabbling to make ends meet, those distant beings at the very peak of the economic pile are finding new ways to screw us ever harder, to make us pay for what we already own, to dodge tax and pare profit from a bone.

This is a frozen spring, progress dead in the ground, lifeline services and public infrastructure cold to the touch, optimism iced over.

Surely this is the time to cast a safe vote, to kick out at the Tories, not that they'll even feel it, and return the devil we know.

Not a time for risks, or



flights of the imagination.

The spirit of open doors and shining light has been well and truly petrified by austerity.

But, you know what?

There's never been a better time to strike a light in the darkness, and use your vote to return a Scottish Socialist to the Scottish Parliament, rather than a hand-wringing

'realist' who tells you we must all share the pain.

Why must we?

We didn't cause this crisis. It's not down to extravagant public spending and civil service tea breaks.

It was the overheated housing market, the subsequent near-collapse of the banks, followed by the stupendous sums of public

money used to bail them out, that brought us to this impasse.

That, and a global economic system that pushes for ever-increasing profit, whether that delivers enough food to feed us, enough homes to house us, enough jobs for us to live by, or not.

In fact, while millions go



without the basic things in life, such as clean water, shelter and medicine, avalanches of unwanted, unused goods pile up in warehouses, in landfill and in aid parcels that no one can use; wonderbras, film merchandise, gadgets, the accumulated detritus of a consumer culture out of control.

Meanwhile, fields of spinach, mountains of oranges, whole crops of potatoes, lie rotting, because they're not up to supermarket scratch, or there is a glut in the market, caused by the supermarket system getting its orders wrong.

We're not just supposed to pay for this mess, we're supposed to take responsibility for it too.

It's us, you see, wanting too much, forcing the world's corporations to strip the planet, and the domestic

government to strip the welfare state.

If you think this sounds like a con trick, then join the queue. Or even better, join us.

The SSP is built on social solidarity and the spirit of resistance to oppression, injustice and nasty con tricks that strangle communities and people's lives.

We don't have time for hand-wringing.

We're out there, fighting the cutbacks, the hacking to bits of our hard-won health service and public sector, the almost casual cancellation of youth clubs, patient transport systems, teaching assistants and class size promises.

Life can be better than this.

We have the resources, the know-how, we are just lumbered with a government that lacks the political will.

We can, and should, be expanding the public sector, because more and more of us

need it, and it creates jobs and training, it holds communities together and it supports families.

We should be raising the minimum wage, because we can afford to do this, through cutbacks in the defence budget and the raising of taxes on the rich, and because it helps to build strong, local economies.

We should be holding onto our schools and community halls, not closing them down like we were going out of business.

We should be feeding our children healthy, locally sourced food, not the nutritionally deficient rubbish cooked up by the lowest bidder.

We should be investing in sustainable energy and a fully comprehensive, free public transport system, not building nuclear power stations and motorways and subsidising motorists at the petrol pump.

The future cannot be grown from starved soil and stayed hands.

Nor can it be created behind closed doors.

The future is ours if we make it so, and we ask you to join us and to support us in the fight for a better, fairer, more light-filled world.

This May, we are standing on every regional list in Scotland.

We believe the world can be won, that we can live together as equals, and face the challenges of climate change, economic recession and social uprising together, fairly and sanely.

We will always hold that there is no justice without social justice, and that if we set our minds to it, another, better world is not only possible, but impossible to resist.

Come on, open the doors! Let the people in!

THERE IS AN ALTERNATIVE

THIS election is dominated by the economic cutbacks being imposed on Scotland by the Westminster government and the unwillingness of the Scottish Government to stand up against these cuts.

The economy in Scotland was, for the last 20 years, built on banking and financial services. New Labour and the SNP trumpeted the 'success' of the big Scottish banks RBS and HBOS – seeing them as the future for the economy.

All of this was built on sand.

The economic growth produced by the banks was an illusion that was always going to collapse when the 'get rich quick' schemes they engaged in turned sour.

Those banks, egged on by New Labour and the SNP, had become greedier and greedier, making money from the poorest people in the UK and across the world.

When the banks collapsed, it was the UK government, borrowing billions of pounds on our behalf, which bailed them out.

This collapse of the banks created a crisis of capitalism: a crisis caused by the greed of the rich and powerful.

An alternative response by the government was possible at the time of the banking collapse, and this alternative is still possible today.

The government could choose to tax the rich and powerful, the people that caused the crisis with their greed, to pay the debts. It could take the opportunity to rebuild the economy in a sustainable way, designing the economy to serve the needs of the people rather than the needs of big business.



Instead, New Labour, the SNP and the Tory/LibDem coalition made the choice to cut public services, cut pensions and cut benefit levels to pay for the crisis.

The Scottish Socialist Party has a different approach.

We are on your side, not the side of the rich and powerful.

We have fought beside you to save your schools, to save your hospitals, to save your libraries and swimming pools.

We have opposed cuts to pensions and benefits levels, and we have resisted in communities across Scotland the actions of Labour, SNP and Liberal councils who have implemented Tory cuts.

The Scottish Socialist Party does more than just opposing cuts.

We have an alternative plan that would allow us to pay for all our public services, create jobs and re-orientate the economy towards sustainability.

Scottish Socialist Party MSPs have in the past

proposed scrapping the council tax and introducing an income-based tax based on the ability to pay.

Under our proposals, 77 per cent of people would be better off, but by taxing the rich more we would raise enough money to protect all of our public services.

We would end the scandalous practice of tax avoidance and tax evasion by big business – a practice which is effectively theft from ordinary working people.

We would promote public ownership of services so that our economy would be run for the good of the people rather than for profit. We would introduce fair shares for carbon, rapid improvement in housing insulation and heating systems and free public transport to ensure that Scotland plays its part in ensuring that climate chaos does not occur and protecting Scots from rising electricity and gas prices.

We would end spending on illegal and immoral wars,

such as in Afghanistan and Iraq, and rid ourselves of nuclear weapons. The money spent on killing would be spent instead on building a better society.

The 2011 Scottish Parliamentary election presents a choice for the people of Scotland.

You could vote for Labour, the SNP or Liberals – but their policy is to cut public services in an attempt to repair the discredited capitalist system. If you get a chance, ask them how they would pay for their promises.

The truth is that they would make you pay by cutting your services or increasing your council tax.

But you have a choice.

You could vote for the Scottish Socialist Party. We will provide a voice for you within parliament – fighting cuts and proposing alternative funding mechanisms which offer a realistic way of funding public services and creating a sustainable economy to serve the needs of all of society.

MAKE THE RICH PAY

NEW figures that show how Scotland can be shielded from ConDem council cuts

It's the biggest political fraud since the Blair government fabricated dodgy documents to prove the existence of imaginary weapons of mass destruction.

But in contrast to the impassioned debate over the Iraq war, the myth that savage cuts in jobs and services are unavoidable has been swallowed whole by the media and by opposition parties.

So far, the debate Britain's budget deficit has focused narrowly on the scale and tempo of the proposed cuts. No mainstream political party has presented any serious alternative.

None have dared suggest that the solution to the debt crisis lies in raising revenues rather than slashing spending.

Now the Scottish Socialist Party can reveal new figures that show how Scotland could avoid axing services, slashing jobs and cutting pay.

Research

Our research – verified by accountants and economists – shows that by replacing the Council Tax with a new income-based Scottish Service, with a sliding scale of payments based on income, the Scottish Government could raise an additional £1.5billion a year.

This stunning statistic is based on the Inland Revenue's own figures for individual income in Scotland during the financial year 2007-2008 (the latest available). If the Scottish Service Tax model had been implemented during that



financial year, it would have generated £3.4billion.

This compares to the Scottish Government's projection for 2010-2011 of a total £1.8billion yield from the Council Tax – including, crucially Council Tax benefits.

That means a Scottish Service Tax, set at the rates suggested by the SSP, could raise up to £1.5billion extra for local jobs and services.

Council Tax

Under the old rates system, which existed in Scotland until the end of the 1980s, the differential between the highest and the lowest bills was 14 to 1.

The Poll Tax, introduced by the Thatcher government in 1989, abolished all differentials in favour of a flat rate, per capita, local tax.

After the Poll Tax was swept away by a mass non-payment campaign, the Tory

government hurriedly cobbled together a fallback. The Council Tax substituted a single flat payment for a new tax, based – like the old rates system – on property.

But the differential in Council Tax bills between the highest and lowest valued properties was now just three to one, even though the gap in Scottish salaries can reach 100 to one and more.

Measured against the Poll Tax, it was the lesser of two evils – the equivalent at the time of a heavy smoker switching from Capstan Full Strength to Silk Cut.

But it is essentially a regressive Tory tax, designed for the express purpose of protecting the wealthier social classes from paying their fair share of local taxes.

Scottish Service Tax

The idea of a redistributive local tax system to replace the Council Tax was first

raised in the founding 16-point programme of the SSP back in late 1998.

Over the next few years, the detail of the policy was refined by economists from Paisley University Business School. Based on the principle of progressive taxation, the Scottish Service Tax proposed a rising scale of tax bands based on income.

Under the latest version of the plan, all individual income would be taxed at the following rates:

Under £10,000 – zero.
£10k-£30,000 – 4.5 per cent
£30k-£50,000 – 10 per cent
£50k-£70,000 – 15 per cent
£70k-£100,000 – 18 per cent
Over £100,000 – 20 per cent.

In concrete terms, an individual earning £25,000 would pay an annual bill of £675 in Scottish Service Tax.

(continued on next page)

(continued from previous page)

This is because the first £10,000 of their income would be exempt, and the remaining income would be taxed at 4.5 per cent.

Someone on £32,000 would pay a total bill of £1,100. The first £10,000 of their income would be exempt; the next £20,000 would be taxed at £900; the final £2,000 would be taxed at £200 (i.e. 10 per cent).

Surplus

When it was first launched, and subsequently updated, the Scottish Service Tax model produced a modest surplus.

Over time, incomes in Scotland rose substantially, especially at the upper levels. For example, in 1999-2000, there were 60,000 people in Scotland with an income above £50,000 a year. By 2008-2009, this figured had tripled to 187,000.

As a result the total tax Scottish Service Tax yield on incomes over £50,000 now stands at over £2billion, compared to under £600million in 1999-2000.

Over the same period, because of political pressure, Council Tax rises were held to a minimum, rising by less than one third during the same period (even before the Council Tax freeze introduced by the SNP Government).

Pittance

Many people on lower incomes benefited. But one unfortunate side effect of the curb on Council Tax levels is that the wealthy now pay an increasingly paltry fraction of their income in local taxes.

In 2007, for example, Fred Goodwin, paid a Council Tax bill of just £2,338 out of his £4million income.

A basic grade nurse living in a modest council house in

the same city faced a bill of £1,169. As a percentage of her income, she had to pay 120 times more than Fred Goodwin, the banker who managed to lose £24billion.

The Scottish Service Tax would redress the incongruity of individuals on sky-high salaries paying a pittance towards local services, while low paid workers pay a sizeable chunk of their income.

But most important of all, because of rising incomes at the top, the Scottish Service Tax now has the potential to turn the Scottish budget deficit into a spectacular surplus.

Recession

The recession of the past two years has meant rising unemployment and a drop in real earnings for many low-paid workers.

But high inflation and a modest growth in overall income levels – especially among higher earners – means that the Scottish Service Tax would raise even more money next year than in 2007-2008.

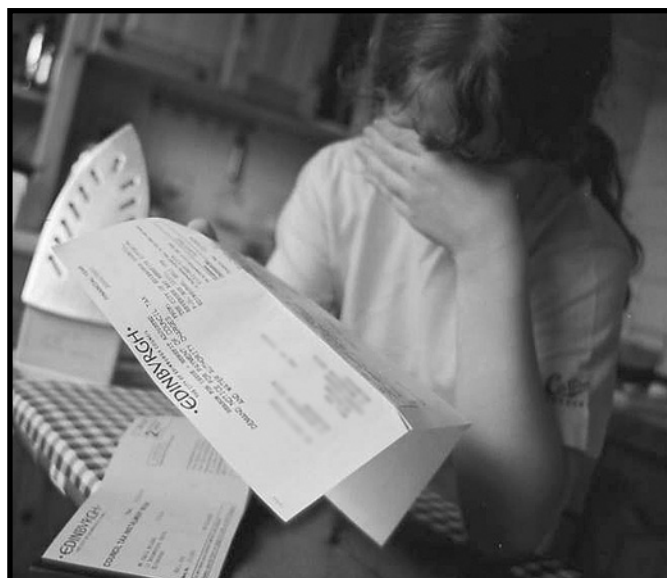
A fair new local tax system would also help propel Scotland out of recession by transferring idle cash from wealthy bank accounts to the low paid.

As a general rule people on low incomes tend to spend their money, while the more prosperous tend to hoard it. Thus, the Scottish Service Tax would provide an vital stimulus to the wider economy.

Viable

The Scottish Service Tax offers a constructive and viable way forward. Those who have opposed it in the past should reconsider their position in the light of the changes of the past two years.

At a UK level, we can



plead and demand that the Westminster Government tax the rich fairly and scrap Trident to plug the deficit. We might as well present a petition to the bronze statues of Lloyd George and Benjamin Disraeli in Parliament Square.

In Scotland, the balance of forces is different. Out of a total of 129 MSPs, 93 represent either the SNP or Labour, both of whose support base is strongly rooted in the public sector.

With cross-party party support, a version of the Scottish Service Tax could be implemented by the Scottish Parliament within a year.

United Front

For its part, the Scottish Socialist Party has always been prepared to cooperate with other parties and independents to bring about progressive change.

Although the Scottish Service Tax was developed by the SSP and remains a flagship policy, the general idea has attracted much broader support.

Without demanding 100 per cent agreement on every detail of the policy, the SSP would be prepared to open up discussions with other political parties, councils,

local authority trade unions, COSLA and the STUC.

Our goal would be to build a Scotland-wide united front to stop the cuts by moving towards a progressive system of local taxation.

Sacrifices

When the idea of Scottish Service Tax was first publicly launched in 2000, it was an idea ahead of its time. Most mainstream politicians ran scared of any policy that smacked of wealth redistribution.

The rich would flee the country, shrieked the Labour Party in a briefing document against the Scottish Service Tax.

It would lead to a brain drain, they warned: people like Fred Goodwin and the other directors of HBOS and RBS would be packing their Mercs and speeding south down the A1 to avoid the tax. It should've seemed like a great idea at the time...

Today, such touching concern for the welfare of the rich looks even more tasteless. Everyone has to make sacrifices, say the politicians and the economists.

If that's the case, then let the biggest sacrifices be made by those who can afford to tighten their belts.

FOR AN INDEPENDENT SOCIALIST SCOTLAND

THE Act of Union was a travesty from the moment it was signed – a stitch-up between the ruling classes of two nations, designed to further their own agenda and to hell with the people.

The intervening three hundred years have witnessed no significant redress of this democratic deficit. Scotland remains the short-changed northern neighbour: a dumping ground for nuclear missiles yet with no say in defence policy; an underpopulated nation yet with no say over immigration.

Scottish troops are still used as the British state's cannon fodder.

Scottish culture and history are still largely suppressed in our schools.

Scottish votes and voices continue to be drowned out, unheard.

The United Kingdom, this nominally multi-national creation, was, and remains, nothing less than an Anglocentric, centralist state with all political power vested in the Crown and Westminster.

There is no doubting that many Scots on the make have benefited from the Union. But the people, the ordinary, working people of Scotland, have gained nothing from the Union and lost much.

The SSP has been at the forefront of the call for independence, as a major democratic advance, a means by which, at last, we can decide who, if at all, we go to war with, how we treat our workers, how we run our welfare state and organise our energy resources.

We believe that independence is an idea whose time is coming.

The SSP was the first party to sign up to the Independence Convention, which now also involves Scotland's two other pro-independence parties. We



will continue to support the work of the Independence Convention, whose role is to promote the cause of independence and to provide a forum for all of the pro-independence forces in Scotland to discuss the road forward.

The SSP supports the call for a referendum on Scotland's future and we will fight for a yes vote on independence.

We challenge the pro-Union parties to explain why, if they are so confident that they represent the majority of the Scottish people, they continue to deny the Scottish people the right of self-determination in a democratic referendum.

In Scotland the bulwark of today's British state is not the Tory Party, who have long since been kicked into touch. No, the arch-Unionists in this election are the Scottish Labour Party. The ex-party of the working class are now giving it big guns for Queen and Coronation Street, warning that armed guards will surely stalk the Tweed and ex-pats will never again see their loved ones south of the border.

But the more ludicrous their arguments, the more surely we all know they're losing.

They are on the run, and the

SNP are the pretenders to their throne.

The SSP opposes the SNP's increasingly pro-business vision of an independent Scotland, which promises hundreds of millions of pounds in Corporate Tax cuts to big business. This could only be achieved by plundering our public services.

The SSP is fighting for a different Scotland.

Instead of slashing corporate taxes to the level of the Irish Republic, as the SNP propose, we would slash military spending to Irish levels. Scotland's current share of the UK's bloated military budget is over £3billion, while the Republic of Ireland spends just £700million.

We would use the extra billions to transform Scotland.

Nor do we subscribe to the bizarre idea that the British monarch should remain the Head of State in an independent Scotland.

Our call is for a Scottish socialist republic, in which the people are sovereign, not some descendant of the house of Saxe-Coburg, and not the multinationals who like to squat on our shores till the government subsidies run out.

We seek to throw out the weapons of mass destruction

that lurk on the Clyde, and bring our troops safely home. We will fight to become a nation, a beacon, of peace, not an exploited outpost of the dying British Empire.

We will welcome people fleeing oppression, war and poverty, and offer them full rights and a place in our society.

We will cherish our civil liberties, not straitjacket them with ID cards and Criminal Justice legislation. We will live in real hope, not manufactured fear.

We will look after our workers, repealing Thatcher's anti-trade union laws and delivering a fair minimum wage for all, including those under 21.

We have a powerful vision of the nation we can be, in which everyone has rights, and democracy is extended and extended, from proportional representation in all elections to participatory democracy forums at local level, where neighbourhoods can vote on and veto the decisions that affect them.

This is our world, and we will fight tirelessly to bring it into the hands of the people, to bring socialism into being.

We harbour no illusions that independence, in itself, will cause this transformation.

But we believe it can help us on our way, by delivering massively increased democracy and making the ideas of socialism – equality, wealth redistribution, peace and human solidarity – more easily achieved.

Should the referendum on independence be won, and we believe it will, we will argue for the establishment of a Constitutional Assembly, independent of political parties, to draw up a brand new constitution for Scotland to be ratified in a further referendum.

BUILDING A BETTER SCOTLAND

Socialism - Independence - Internationalism

In a devolved Scotland the SSP is committed to implementing the following:

- For a Yes vote in any independence referendum.
- The introduction of participatory democracy at community level by establishing local assemblies with the power to make and veto decisions that affect their community.
- An increase in the maximum number of councillors per ward from 4 to 6, to allow greater proportionality and more representative local government.

We will also campaign for the following measures, which are not within the Scottish Parliaments powers:

- A directly elected Constitutional Assembly, representative of Scotland's regional, gender and ethnic diversity to draw up options for a new constitution for Scotland, which would be put to a further referendum vote.
- A nuclear-free Scotland that is outside of NATO.
- Military spending to be reduced to no more than the per capita level of the Republic of Ireland, which would mean slashing the defence budget by £2.5billion.
- A new relationship with the European Union which would safeguard Scotland's independence.
- All individuals living in Scotland to be entitled to full Scottish citizenship, irrespective of national origin.
- A socialist Scotland based on the principles of equality, democracy, liberty, generosity and solidarity.
- The abolition of the monarchy and all its structural and ideological supports, including the offensive ceremony whereby elected MSPs are forced to swear an oath of allegiance to an unelected monarch.
- No unelected second chamber.
- All elections to be conducted under a genuinely proportional system, and the scrapping of the anti-democratic first-past-the-post system.

- The reduction of the voting and candidacy age to 16.
- The extension of the right to vote to people who are homeless and to those who are in prison.
- Participatory democracy in the workplace.
- Support for the open source software movement and for all public bodies to use open source software where available and appropriate.
- Greater use of referenda to allow ordinary people a say in controversial decisions.

Poverty and wealth

In a devolved Scotland the SSP is committed to implementing the following:

- A new income-based Scottish Service Tax to replace the Council Tax.
- The scrapping of domestic water charges, with household water financed via the Scottish Service Tax.
- Special funding to enable Scotland's 32 local authorities to recruit and train a team of welfare rights workers with special responsibility for identifying and assisting people who are failing to receive benefits to which they are entitled.
- An expansion of locally-based money advice centres and credit unions.
- A change in debt legislation to remove the threat of eviction and house repossession.
- The extension of concessionary travel to carers.
- The establishment of a cross-party working group, which would involve people affected by poverty and anti-poverty organisations, to address poverty and inequality in Scotland.

We will also campaign for the following measures, which are not within the Scottish Parliament's powers:

- A basic state pension of £160 a week and the restoration of the link between pensions and earnings.

- Restoration of benefits to 16 and 17 year olds.
 - The restoration of lone parent benefits slashed by Westminster.
 - A progressive tax system which will increase the top rate of taxation and reduce the tax burden on those on low incomes.
 - An overhaul of disability benefits to remove means testing.
 - The increase of all benefits by £30 a week with subsequent annual increases in line with inflation.
 - The regulation of banks and building societies to outlaw the practice of charging customers to access their own money, and charging customers who exceed their agreed overdraft limit, with refunds backdated five years.
 - The protection of public sector pension schemes.
 - Carers Allowance to be replaced with the national minimum hourly wage rate.
 - Rigorous new laws to prevent big business avoiding legitimate taxation.
 - A new corporate tax regime which forces Scotland's most profitable companies to pay their fair share of taxation, at least to Nordic levels.
 - A two tier VAT system, with luxury goods taxed at 20 per cent and VAT on all other goods reduced from 20 per cent to its 1979 level of 8 per cent.
 - Public ownership of North Sea oil with the profits used for the benefit of the people rather the profiteers.
- n A socialist Scotland that will stand up to the forces of neo-liberalism and the free market.

Jobs and workers rights

In a devolved Scotland the SSP is committed to implementing the following:

- A national minimum wage of £9 an hour for all public sector workers – two thirds of median male earnings.
- A 35 hour week for all public sector workers without any loss of earnings.
- The funding of 5000 new apprenticeships in construction-related trades.

■ Confiscation of the assets, including factories, offices and equipment, of multinational companies which shift production from Scotland to low wage economies elsewhere.

■ Full support for trade unionists forced to take strike action in defence of their living standards and working conditions.

■ All public sector trainees to be paid trade union negotiated rates of pay.

■ The regeneration of local economies by returning the Uniform Business Rate to the control of local authorities.

■ A skills diversification programme involving the Scottish Trades Union Congress, in preparation for the future decommissioning of Scotland's nuclear power plants and nuclear weapons bases.

■ The right to jury trials on demand for cases involving compensation claims against employers, for example by victims of asbestos-related disease.

■ A 'corporate killing bill' and other legislation that will serve to hold company executives to account for the actions of their companies.

■ Workers' control of health and safety at work through elected health and safety stewards.

■ Opposition to deregulation of Health and Safety legislation and cutbacks to H&S enforcement agencies.

■ Support for an NHS-based Occupational Health Service.

■ Promotion of International Workers' Memorial Day.

■ Support for government funding of a Scottish Hazards Centre to assist, advise, train and represent workers in pursuit of improved health and safety in the workplace (including non-unionised ones).

We will also campaign for the following measures, which are not within the Scottish Parliament's powers:

■ A £9 per hour national minimum wage - based on two-thirds median male earnings - for all over 16.

■ A 35 hour maximum working week without any loss of earnings as the first step towards a four-day working week.

■ 12 months' statutory paid maternity leave without loss of rights; and one month's statutory paternity paid leave.

■ Partners being given the option of transferring some of their paid

maternity/paternity leave to each other.

■ 6 weeks paid annual leave for all workers, plus public holidays (including defence of the May Day public holiday).

■ Free trade unions and the scrapping of all laws designed to restrict the rights of trade unionists.

Privatisation and social ownership

In a devolved Scotland the SSP is committed to implementing the following:

■ Public ownership and democratic management of all public utilities, and the replacement of all PFI/PFI and Scottish Futures Trust/NPD projects in favour of public funding paid for by progressive taxation (including a new Scottish Service Tax which would generate an extra £1.5 billion a year for public services in Scotland).

■ An end to private catering and cleaning contracts in the NHS and education.

■ Defiance of European Union laws over tendering where these laws threaten the livelihoods of Scottish workers.

■ Mandatory ethical and workers rights provisions to be included in all public sector procurement agreements.

■ The establishment of a Scottish national rail corporation to take over the Scotrail franchise when it expires in November 2014.

■ The creation of ten regional, publicly-owned bus companies, accountable to local councils.

■ The reversal of the part-privatisation of water and sewerage; and for Scotland's water supply to be municipalised and run by groups of local authorities, along the lines of the police and fire boards.

We will also campaign for the following measures, which are not within the Scottish Parliament's powers:

■ The establishment of a democratically run Scottish National Oil Corporation to take over the North Sea oilfields, with the profits used for public investment, including in renewable energy.

■ The extension of public ownership into profitable sectors of the economy,

including the banks and financial institutions.

■ New forms of public ownership which reject top down nationalisation in favour of democratic management involving workers, communities, consumers and representatives of local and national government.

Safer communities

The SSP will campaign for:

■ Replacement of the toothless Joint Police Boards with new community, regional and national police boards, which would hold the police to account and would include elected councillors, MSPs and directly elected community representatives.

■ A new drugs policy which will allow free heroin on prescription to registered addicts, under controlled conditions, to reduce petty crime and to undermine the lucrative criminal empires which have been built on the illegal supply of heroin.

■ The expansion of drug and alcohol rehabilitation and detox facilities.

■ A zero tolerance approach to violence and abuse towards children, women and vulnerable people.

■ A Scottish-wide strategy to reduce domestic abuse, including special domestic abuse courts, domestic abuse awareness training and roll out of the Caledonian System (domestic abuse perpetrator programme) through Scotland rehabilitation programmes.

■ All convicted sex offenders to be legally required to undergo a sex offender programme either within the community or within custody, depending upon the level of risk they pose.

■ Increased police resources specifically dedicated to monitoring and supervision of sex offenders.

■ The establishment of special secure units providing intensive rehabilitation for sex offenders who are judged to pose a continuing risk to the public.

■ An end to the practice which allows those accused of sex offences the right to cross-examine their alleged victims in court, and for these principles to be extended into civil litigation proceedings.

■ A reduction in Scotland's prison population – already the highest in Western Europe pro-rata to the population – by expanding alternatives

SSP POLICIES

to custody for offenders who are not a danger to the public.

■ An end to the waste of the police and legal resources devoted to arresting and prosecuting people for the possession of cannabis for personal use.

■ Community youth forums across Scotland to identify what amenities are needed in each local area.

■ Local youth facilities in every community, run by young people.

■ Education, prevention and treatment to tackle bullying.

■ A system of accountability over the Crown Office Procurator Fiscal Services, judges and sheriffs, with the involvement of organisations such as the Law Society of Scotland and Victim Support Scotland.

■ The right of prisoners to vote in elections, in line with recent legal rulings.

■ Extend ability to claim legal aid regardless of income for any case where a victim is seeking protection from unsafe contact abuse, violence, stalking, and harassment.

■ Introduce domestic abuse risk assessments by qualified and accredited professionals for any disputes in regards to domestic abuse and children.

■ Introduce multi agency violence against women task squads throughout Scotland to target perpetrators.

■ Roll out of multi agency risk assessment conferences throughout Scotland with fully funded advocacy services for adult victims and their dependents.

■ Legislative change that criminalises the buyers of sex from women and men in the “sex industry”.

■ The extension of legal aid to cover workplace and consumer disputes.

■ A new fast track appeals system to deal with suspected miscarriages of justice.

■ The reversal of all privatisation and PFI in the prison service.

■ The expansion of prison rehabilitation programmes, including education, training, psychiatric and psychological support, drug and alcohol detox, rehab and abstinence programmes.

■ Resistance to all Westminster interference in devolved matters.

■ For the Scottish Parliament to have the right to set its own laws on asylum, drugs, anti-terrorism and media regulation.

General Health

The SSP would work towards eradicating the scandalous health inequalities that blight Scotland. Health inequalities arise from the power and income differences between groups which generate health problems more frequently for those who are most disadvantaged. Our range of progressive economic and social policies, as well as our investment in the NHS, will make the difference that every government since the introduction of the NHS has failed to do.

In a devolved Scotland the SSP is committed to implementing the following:

■ Free healthy school meals with milk and water for all state school pupils.

■ A continued policy of no prescription charges.

■ All school children to be entitled to receive and be encouraged to take up a minimum of three hours of physical education of their choice, with a range of alternatives for those who are unable to participate in standard PE classes.

■ Funding to enable local authorities to remove admission charges to fitness facilities, including swimming pools, sports centres and gymnasiums.

■ Free toothpaste and toothbrushes for all children and a dental hygiene campaign in all schools.

■ The establishment of a network of community-run supermarkets specialising in healthy local produce at the cheapest possible retail prices, starting with areas of high deprivation.

■ Increased funding for community psychiatric nurses to tackle Scotland’s mental health crisis which affects one in five of the population, and is disproportionately concentrated in deprived areas.

■ Mental health treatment to be directed primarily towards rehabilitation rather than alleviation of symptoms.

■ People suffering mental illness to have access to a full range of treatment options – modern medication, counselling, short- and long-term psychotherapy, occupational therapy, diversional activities.

■ Treatment for mental illness to be primarily community-based, though backed up with modern, well-staffed

inpatient facilities with single sex wards.

■ Respect for the rights of people with mental health problems, including public education to challenge the stigma associated with mental health and derogatory labelling of people with mental health problems.

We will also campaign for the following measures, which are not within the Scottish Parliament’s powers:

■ A publicly owned Scottish pharmaceutical corporation which would supply a range of cheap generic medicines for the NHS and work with universities to research new drug treatments. This corporation would sell generic medicines to third world countries at cost price, to help alleviate suffering from Aids and other treatable diseases.

■ Investment to be directed towards promoting health, preventing illness and curing disease when it does occur rather than on the profitable symptom-control medicines favoured by the private pharmaceutical companies.

■ All medical and scientific research to be published and made available for free on NHS databases.

■ A ban on the advertising of junk food.

The NHS

In a devolved Scotland the SSP is committed to implementing the following:

■ A fully democratic and decentralised NHS, integrated with social services within the framework of local government. The day to day running of the NHS to be supervised by elected health boards consisting of medical professionals, other healthcare workers and local communities.

■ The cancellation of all existing PFI and PPP projects in favour of public investment.

■ A mean bed occupancy rate of 85 per cent to ensure there is adequate capacity to cope with any surge in demand.

■ Increased capacity in order to achieve a mean bed occupancy rate of 85 per cent in general wards; and a mean 75 per cent for intensive care units to ensure there are sufficient

available beds to cope with any surge in demand.

- An expansion of primary care services within a public model. All legislation expanding the role of the private sector in primary care repealed.

- An end to hospital closures except with the approval of the local community.

- The phasing out of private health care and the incorporation of private medical facilities, services and resources into the NHS.

- A charge on private medicine providers to recoup the costs to the public purse of the training and education of their staff.

- A ban on consultants working for the private sector.

- Proper funding for physiotherapy services.

- A living income for student nurses.

- Free childcare for NHS shift-workers.

- Zero tolerance of violence against health workers.

- Staff employed by private contractors to be brought back into NHS employment with NHS pay and conditions.

We will also campaign for the following measures, which are not within the Scottish Parliament's powers:

- The funding and resources to create a Scottish NHS which would match the best in the world.

Additional health needs

In a devolved Scotland the SSP is committed to implementing the following:

- Free personal care for everyone who needs it, including those under 65 with debilitating conditions such as dementia.

- Free access to autism specific health services which acknowledge that the condition may in some cases be a health problem that can be helped by medical intervention.

- All families with children who have been awarded on the higher rate care component of DLA to be entitled to at least 4 weeks respite care per year.

We will also campaign for the following measures, which are not

within the Scottish Parliament's powers:

- Free care for everyone who needs it, without means-testing, including those in nursing homes and those under 65 with debilitating conditions such as dementia.

- Increased funding for research into the causes and the most effective treatments for complex conditions such as dementia and autism.

- People with autism to be eligible for all relevant benefits, including those connected with mobility, personal care, housing support and independent living.

Care and support of elderly people

In a devolved Scotland the SSP is committed to implementing the following:

- Full support for the manifesto of Alzheimer Scotland, which includes increased funding for dementia services and dementia drug treatments to be available free on the NHS.

- A standard level of free elderly care services across Scotland's 32 local authorities.

- Central funding to the Care Commission which monitors elderly care projects. As things stand, care organisations are forced to pay the costs of inspection.

Carers' rights

In a devolved Scotland the SSP is committed to implementing the following:

- Recognition of the indispensable role of Scotland's half a million carers who contribute £5.3 billion worth of care to the Scottish economy every year.

- Investment of at £10 million in carer organisations to ensure a fully functioning carer-support infrastructure.

- Long term core funding arrangements for carers' organisations that will safeguard their existence.

- A cash investment of £135 million a year to allow full time carers to have guaranteed annual breaks from caring.

- Free access for carers to suitable training programmes and an extra £1.5 million to be invested in a programme of Expert Carer Training.

- An action programme to ensure that

schools, health authorities and social services identify young carers and provide them with effective professional support.

- At least £1 million a year to provide support services for young carers.

We will also campaign for the following measures, which are outwith the powers of the Scottish Parliament:

- Carers Allowance to be replaced with the national minimum hourly wage rate.

Higher and further education

In a devolved Scotland the SSP is committed to implementing the following:

- Defending higher and further education as public services.

- Ending any form of student contribution to fund HE which should be paid for from progressive taxation.

- The reinstatement of student grants as a first step towards ending student poverty.

- Investment in affordable, quality accommodation for students, while ensuring that no guaranteed above-inflation rent increase agreements are reached with suppliers.

- Curbing the undue influence of private businesses in the education system

- The unification of all colleges into a co-operative network of institutions working together rather than competing against one another, under local democratic control.

- Removal of the requirement for 50 per cent business sector representation on college boards, replacing this with representatives from teaching unions, ancillary staff, students, local councils and local communities.

- Encouragement of life-long learning by providing equal educational opportunities for mature students based on experience and prior learning.

- An end to the capping system in Further Education to enable colleges to meet demand for learning in the communities they serve, including evening class provision and ESOL classes (English for speakers of other languages).

- Increased provision of adult numeracy and literacy programmes.

SSP POLICIES

We will also campaign for the following measures, which are not within the Scottish Parliament's powers:

- Students to be eligible for housing benefit.
- Employers to be compelled to allow paid time-off for training and life-long learning opportunities.

Schools

In a devolved Scotland the SSP is committed to implementing the following:

- Maximum class sizes of 20.
- No school closures except with the agreement of the local community.
- The termination of all PPP and PFI projects and a return to the principle that education facilities be publicly funded.
- School boards to become fully representative of local communities.
- The opening of all schools and their facilities free of charge for non-profitable learning activities outside school hours and term time.
- Enhanced facilities for pupils with additional needs.
- Democratic and egalitarian restructuring of schools, with plenary staff decision-making and flattened pay scales.
- Participation in decision-making by pupils, so as to embed the practice of democratic principles at the earliest age.
- Support for the Parent Involvement Network as part of a national forum, involving parents, teachers and school students, to help shape and monitor the school curriculum and ensure its relevance to the needs of 21st century Scottish school students.
- Bilingual education to be available for children from ethnic minorities.
- Promotion of Gaelic and Scots, with all their diverse dialects.
- Nutritious free school meals with milk and water for all primary and secondary pupils and replace the private sponsorship of school meals with freshly prepared meals.
- A desegregated education system that allows for the rights of religious observance by all denominations. This would be implemented by consent and agreement rather than by compulsion and enforcement.

■ The recruitment of specialist teachers to support existing teachers in the areas of PE, Art, languages, Music and IT to enable class teachers to focus on core skills.

- A long term solution to staffing shortages that does not rely on supply teachers.
- A broadening of the criteria of assessment in schools to ensure league tables are not just exam-based.
- Free publicly funded pre-school education for all three and four year olds in place of nursery vouchers.
- Quality pre-school care for babies and toddlers up to the age of three.
- Free after-school care for all primary and secondary school pupils.
- Clean and well-supervised toilet facilities in all primary and secondary schools.
- An £9 an hour minimum wage for all education workers with either holiday pay or the entitlement to claim benefits outside term times.

Special education

In a devolved Scotland the SSP is committed to the following:

- The staffing, resources and facilities to make it easier for children with special needs to integrate into mainstream education, while maintaining existing special education units to allow parents to choose what is in the best interests of their child.
- A 1:1 student-teacher ratio for children with classic autism, and a system of regular three-month re-assessments of the effectiveness of teaching strategies.
- Smaller class sizes for children with Aspergers.
- An expansion in the number of speech and language and language therapists in schools.
- Closer involvement of parents in the education of children with special needs.
- The integration of the children of asylum seekers and travelling families into mainstream education, backed up by specialist language teachers and child support workers.
- The fast-tracking of Additional Support Needs Tribunals.
- The development of an anti-bullying strategy within schools, which would include training teachers in how to deal with bullying, and educating pupils on

human diversity, including conditions such as autism and Aspergers.

Transport

In a devolved Scotland the SSP is committed to implementing the following:

- Free bus, rail, underground and ferry travel within four years to cut carbon emissions, enhance social inclusion and save public money by reducing congestion, cutting road accidents and slashing the roads repair bill.
- Re-regulation of Scotland's buses.
- The establishment of a Scottish National Bus Corporation, publicly owned and democratically run by regional boards.
- The transfer of the Scotrail franchise when it expires in November 2014 to a publicly owned and democratically managed Scottish National Rail Corporation.
- Immediate free rail, bus, underground and ferry travel for all pensioners, schoolchildren, students, people with disabilities, carers and benefit claimants.
- A review of all new road building and upgrading, with priority given to road safety improvements and better road maintenance rather than bigger and faster roads.
- All money raised by government and local authorities from parking meters, and car parks to be ring-fenced for public transport.
- A system of ferry pricing based on the Road Equivalent Tariff which successfully operates in Norway. This means that the cost of a ferry journey for a bus, lorry or car and occupants should be no more than the cost of a road journey over the same distance.
- 20 mph zones (around schools for instance) with traffic calming in all residential streets where requested by the local community to cut the unacceptably high number of child deaths.
- Expansion of the provision of low-cost park-and-ride schemes to reduce congestion in major towns and city centres.
- A national cycle strategy worked out with cycling organisations to develop an extensive network of safe, well-maintained and well-lit cycle tracks; and high quality cycle training for all primary 6/7 pupils.

■ The development of a similar strategy to encourage walking, including the funding of well-lit, properly maintained pavements and footpaths.

■ The phasing in of alternative fuels (e.g. electric motors, H fuel cells) for public service vehicles.

■ The bringing back into public ownership of trunk road maintenance.

We will also campaign for the following measures, which are not within the Scottish Parliament's powers:

■ Special road tolls for heavy goods vehicles, based on annual mileage as registered on tacographs.

■ A shift of heavy goods from road to rail wherever feasible, facilitated by the building of new dedicated freight lines.

Housing

In a devolved Scotland the SSP is committed to implementing the following:

■ The cancellation of Scotland's local authority housing debt with no strings attached.

■ The building of 100,000 fully accessible new homes for rent over four years, bringing public sector house building into line with the private sector.

■ The right of local authorities to impose a land value tax on land and property worth over £1million to help finance the building of social housing for rent.

■ A new minimum housing standard in both the public and private rented sectors, with central heating, double-glazing and high standards of insulation.

■ A major renovation programme to include all stock, except where tenants themselves favour demolition.

■ The replacement of the 'right-to-buy' policy with a graduated rents discount set at the same level as the discount available for tenants to buy their council homes. After 25 years, tenants would pay zero rent until their tenancy is terminated or transferred to another member of the family.

■ An end to all wholesale housing stock transfers.

■ Construction companies to be required to build one new home for rent

for every five new homes built for sale. These new homes for rent would be owned and managed by the relevant local authority or community-based housing association and would contribute towards the target of 100,000 new homes for rent.

■ All tenants, including new tenants and those in the private sector, to be guaranteed secure tenancies in line with the new Scottish secure tenancy agreement.

■ The transformation of the appearance of our housing schemes, employing environmental artists, landscape gardeners and others with relevant skills.

■ Council and housing association tenants to be involved in all strategic planning decisions.

■ The extension of the Scottish Secure Tenancy to private sector tenants.

■ All homes identified as 'below tolerable standard' in the private sector to be brought into public ownership if the landlord fails to bring them up to standard within a six month deadline.

■ A national construction apprenticeship scheme to turn around the skills shortage in the building industry. This would aim to train 5,000 new apprentices each year.

■ The establishment of council tenant forums with real powers at neighbourhood and city-wide level, along with similar forums for housing association tenants and for those in the private rented sector.

■ Each tenant forum to be allocated £5 for every house that they represent. This will generate at least £4-5million for the re-establishment of the tenant movement in Scotland.

■ Council and housing association tenants to be involved in all strategic planning decisions.

■ Homeless organisations to be provided with the resources they require to end rough sleeping, including hostels as an interim measure until proper homes are available for everyone.

■ Safe housing for women/families who have suffered domestic violence or other forms of abuse.

■ An end to the public funding of private home ownership.

■ Legislation to give local councils the power to ban holiday homes in their area where they believe there is a local housing shortage.

■ Legislation to stop social landlords evicting their tenants, particularly vulnerable households and families with children.

■ With 62 per cent of Scotland's social housing currently falling beneath the New Scottish Housing Quality Standard, the SSP campaigns for housing investment to make vital improvements in order to prevent social housing seriously damaging the physical and mental health of tenants across Scotland.

We will also campaign for the following measures, which are not within the Scottish Parliament's powers:

■ Public ownership and democratic management of the construction industry.

■ The reinstatement of housing support grant from central government back to local government, based on pre-1980s levels, increased in line with the retail-price index. This would provide Scotland's councils with sufficient funding to carry out repairs, house building, and renovation as well as to reduce rents.

Sport culture and entertainment

In a devolved Scotland the SSP is committed to implementing the following:

■ Free access to all publicly-owned cultural and recreational centres including art galleries, museums and sports centres.

■ A commitment to revitalise the Gaelic language, including setting a four-year target of making available Gaelic language lessons to all children and adults who wish to learn the language with Gaelic and Scots to be given equal legal status with English.

■ Support for the Gaelic Digital Service, and for the necessary infrastructure and coverage to make the service available on all media platforms including the internet.

■ Encouragement of the various ethnic cultures that have enriched Scotland over the past half-century.

■ An end to the sell-off of football pitches and other sports facilities to property developers.

■ Senior football clubs to distribute a

SSP POLICIES

portion of their seats, free of charge, to pensioners and benefit claimants via local community councils.

- Free football coaching schools in local communities open to girls and boys.

- Coaching and training facilities to allow Scottish athletes to compete at world class levels.

- A national film studio in Scotland to develop the outstanding acting, writing, and film-making talent in the country.

- A national project aiming to transform the drab appearance of our towns and housing schemes through murals, ornamental gardens, sculpture, fountains, monuments, mazes, performance areas and architectural restoration.

- The replacement of Creative Scotland with an artist-led organisation which is more open, democratic and representative body.

- No cuts in community-based arts ventures.

- No cuts in Scotland's overall arts budget.

- Action to ensure that all publicly-owned sporting, leisure and recreational facilities are fully accessible to disabled people.

We will also campaign for the following measures, which are not within the Scottish Parliament's powers:

- A Scottish Six O'Clock news broadcast on BBC.

- The responsibility for broadcasting to be transferred to the Scottish Parliament.

Local government

In a devolved Scotland the SSP is committed to implementing the following:

- Total opposition to all local authority spending cuts. The surplus generated from the implementation of a Scottish Service Tax would provide £1.5 Billion to maintain and extend local government services.

- An end to the Uniform Business Rate, with local councils given back control over non-domestic rates subject to an equalisation mechanism to ensure that all local councils get a fair deal.

- An income-based Scottish Service Tax to replace the Council Tax.

- A fully proportional electoral system, to be achieved by reinforcing the new STV electoral with larger multi-members wards of seven or eight members.

- An end to privatisation, PFI and PPP in the provision of local facilities and services.

- A gradual decentralisation of powers to local councils, for example in transport and health, backed by additional funding.

The voluntary sector

In a devolved Scotland the SSP is committed to implementing the following:

- A four-year minimum funding period for all publicly funded projects, to reduce the atmosphere of uncertainty that surrounds those projects which are funded on a year-to-year basis.

- Reduced water bills for voluntary organisations.

- The funding of training programmes for independent community representatives, which would be conducted via the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations.

- The democratisation of local planning by ensuring that elected and accountable community representatives have at least 50 per cent representation on all planning forums.

- The nurturing of grassroots democracy by working with the Scottish Council of Voluntary Organisations and the existing network of community groups to train independent community representatives.

- All publicly funded projects to provide trade union rates of pay and conditions to all paid employees.

- Investment in not-for-profit community transport by funding an increase in services and routes.

- Increased funding for youth work and a reform of the funding allocation system so that national youth and sporting organisations are not forced to negotiate with 32 separate local authorities.

Energy, pollution and the environment

In a devolved Scotland the SSP is committed to implementing the following:

- Responsibility for energy to be

transferred from Westminster to the Scottish Parliament and the wealth of Scottish energy resources to be brought into public ownership. This will allow the full development of these resources in an ecologically sustainable and socially just manner putting people and planet before profit.

- An independent audit commission, to enforce Scottish climate emissions targets of at least three per cent a year.

- The tightening of building regulations to compel construction companies to use sustainable sources for their construction materials and to ensure that energy efficiency is built into the design of buildings and appliances fitted.

- Every new building, including private homes, to be carbon neutral by 2016.

- 100 per cent grants, available to all, for insulation and double-glazing in private homes.

- All rented housing to have compulsory insulation and double-glazing.

- The replacement of overhead pylons with underground cables where environmentally beneficial.

- The cancellation of all airport expansion projects.

- A ban on the transportation of nuclear materials on Scotland's roads and railways.

- The protection by law of ancient forests.

- An expanded, fully integrated, publicly owned, fully accessible and free public transport network.

- The cancellation of new road-building projects.

- A reduction in urban traffic by extending pedestrianisation of town and city centres and halting all further development of out-of-town shopping malls.

- Diversification and alternative employment opportunities for fishing communities.

- A conservation scheme to protect wildlife habitats and parkland from industrial development.

- An audit of all contaminated land to identify areas that may pose a potential health hazard and embark on a safe and comprehensive containment or clean-up programme.

- Environmental education to be incorporated into the curriculum of primary, secondary, further and higher education.

■ Kerbside collection of materials for recycling, including glass, from every household in Scotland.

■ Recycling bins in every public building and workplace.

■ All suppliers of goods to the public sector to be legally required to use biodegradable and recyclable packaging.

■ A ban on any release of genetically modified organisms into the environment and effective testing of food and animal feed imports from countries which do grow GM crops to ensure that food and feed imports are not contaminated.

■ A ban on the sale of GM food products.

■ Public contracts to be refused to any company with a record of dangerous work practices or polluting the environment.

■ Local communities to be provided with information about any plan to construct a mobile phone mast within a one mile radius and to have the right of veto.

■ No new incinerators.

■ Serious waste reduction targets to be set for every local authority area, backed by whatever resources are necessary to deliver these targets.

We will also campaign for the following measures, which are not within the Scottish Parliament's powers:

■ An international 90 per cent reduction in emissions of carbon dioxide by the year 2030 together with significant reductions of other greenhouse gas emissions.

■ Investment in alternative energy technologies, including community-owned wind farms, tidal power and clean coal technology.

■ Public and community ownership of energy, including oil, windfarms, electricity, coal and gas, with a proportion of all profits ring-fenced for investment in alternative energy.

■ An end to the imposition of pre-payment meters on those who owe debts to gas and electricity companies.

■ Refunds backdated by five years to households which have been forced to pay the higher charges associated with pre-payment meters.

■ Increased taxation on aviation fuel, with revenue used to improve high

speed rail and ferry links between Scotland and mainland Europe.

■ Resistance to the building of any new nuclear power plants in Scotland, and the setting of a clear timetable for the decommissioning of existing nuclear power stations.

■ A target date for all public service vehicles to be carbon-free.

■ A target date for all private vehicles to be carbon-free.

■ Legislation making it illegal to own, as well as to import, illegally logged timber.

■ All biofuels to have sustainability and greenhouse gas certification.

■ The establishment of elected anti-pollution boards at national and local level to monitor and enforce pollution controls, and for these boards to have the power to impose penalties.

■ A shift of focus away from pure economic growth as measured by gross domestic product, in favour of a more balanced measurement of the quality of life.

Land and rural regeneration

In a devolved Scotland the SSP is committed to implementing the following:

■ The building of 20,000 fully accessible new homes across Scotland's rural communities for low cost rent to local people.

■ Public and community ownership of Scotland's vast landed estates and corporate farms.

■ Local councils to be allowed to set special local taxes on second homes.

■ Extra funding for public amenities and public transport in sparsely populated areas that lack social facilities.

■ The shop in single shop villages to be exempted from business rates.

■ Local and regional initiatives to bring performing artists and productions to rural areas, and encourage the development of sport, drama, live music and the performing arts.

■ The release of funds to increase the numbers of mobile and small cinemas serving isolated areas.

■ A halt to the closure of small rural schools.

■ The setting up of a network of community post offices to replace those lost through UK government cuts.

■ Increased funding to the Rural Transport Community Initiative to allow people living in remote and isolated areas access to social, leisure, shopping, health and other services.

■ Government grants to enable small farmers to establish farming co-operatives, where they can agree prices for produce and thus resist the power of supermarkets to drive down prices.

■ Government grants for local food cooperatives, selling local produce in town centres, villages and housing schemes at reasonable prices.

■ Grants and assistance to help farmers convert to organic farming.

■ Free school meals with the ingredients purchased from local farmers.

■ The expansion of the number of allotments in Scotland and the protection of existing allotments from the infringement of developers in recognition of their important environmental, health and recreational role in our communities.

■ The establishment of a national body along the lines of SportScotland to promote and support gardening in all its forms.

■ Road Equivalent Tariff scheme to be rolled out across every Scottish ferry route.

■ Elected and accountable River Boards to remove fishing rights in rivers and lochs from the control of private landowners and bring them under public control, thus allowing the relevant authorities to keep control of fish stocks.

We will also campaign for the following measures, which are not within the Scottish Parliament's powers:

■ Full trade union rights and protection for farm workers.

■ The rural economy to be geared towards providing quality local foods for regional markets, rather than exports.

■ Immediate withdrawal from the EU Common Fisheries Policy with a 25 mile offshore limit within which only Scottish fishermen and women can fish.

■ Local management of sea fisheries, based on the Finnish model, where environmental sustainability is a key priority alongside community sustainability.

Animal welfare

In a devolved Scotland the SSP is committed to implementing the following:

- Full support for the ban on foxhunting and resistance to any future moves to water down the legislation.
- A ban on the abuse of animals in entertainment and sport.
- An end to battery farming, factory farming and other forms of intensive farming.
- Stringent new legislation for zoos to ensure that animals held in captivity do not suffer ill-treatment.
- Similar legislation to prevent cruelty to animals at market and at slaughter.
- Financial support for co-operatively owned local abattoirs to avoid transport of live animals over long distances.
- Animal welfare to be incorporated into the curriculum of primary and secondary schools, as part of personal and social education.

We will also campaign for the following measures, which are not within the powers of the Scottish Parliament:

- A ban on animal testing for cosmetics, household products and military research.
- A ban on unnecessary use of animal testing in medical research.
- The replacement of the ineffective Dangerous Dogs Act with new non-breed based legislation which recognises the responsibility of owners for aggressive behaviour by their dogs.

Women's rights

In a devolved Scotland the SSP is committed to implementing the following:

- Free, publicly funded nursery places for all pre-school children.
- A minimum 12 months' maternity leave, on full pay for public sector workers, with the right to return part time if requested.
- After-school, weekend and holiday clubs in every locality for school age children.
- Equal access for all women to abortion services regardless of where they live in Scotland.
- An end to cuts to, and full funding for Women's Aid and other agencies

which provide refuges, helplines and drop in centres for women who have experienced violence, abuse, rape and child sexual abuse.

- Free environmentally-friendly sanitary protection for all women.
- The expansion of initiatives such as 'Routes Out of Prostitution'.
- The decriminalisation of women involved in prostitution, recognition of men who buy sex as abusers, and increased police resources to enforce a clamp down on kerb-crawlers in red light districts.
- The closure of saunas and massage parlours which operate as legalised brothels.

We will also campaign for the following measures, which are not within the Scottish Parliament's powers:

- A minimum 12 months maternity leave on full pay, for all workers, with the right to return part time if preferred.
- The average worker's wage for any parent, male or female, who chooses to care full-time for their children or any other dependants.
- Equal representation for women at all levels of government.

Youth rights

In a devolved Scotland the SSP is committed to implementing the following:

- A maintenance grant for all college and university students.
- Continued opposition to student fees, extend abolition of fees to all students studying in Scotland, regardless of national origin. Recognition of free education as a universal right.
- The funding of 5000 new apprenticeships.
- Community youth forums across Scotland to identify what amenities are needed in each local area.
- Funding to set up local youth facilities in every community, run democratically by young people.
- Free access to all publicly owned cultural and recreational centres including sports centres, arts galleries and museums.
- Free bus and ferry travel for school, college and university students.

- The right to vote and stand for office at 16.
- Support for current initiatives to establish a national school students union to support and represent school students facing bullying, harassment and discrimination. The union would also represent students on new democratic school boards.

We will also campaign for the following measures, which are not within the Scottish Parliament's powers:

- An end to discrimination against young workers by establishing a uniform national minimum wage for all workers over 16 years. (The SSP would set this figure at two thirds the median male earnings, currently £9 an hour). (Note: The SSP has an active youth wing, Scottish Socialist Youth. Visit their website at www.ssy.org.uk)

Disabled people's rights

In a devolved Scotland the SSP is committed to implementing the following:

- A network of staff to be employed and trained specifically to provide full support and assistance to those applying or being reassessed for disability living allowance and incapacity benefit.
- Full funding for community care.
- Increased support for those who care for or assist family or friends with disabilities, including education, respite and counselling services.
- Comprehensive and enforced standards of accessibility on all public transport.
- Housing to be adapted to meet the needs of disabled occupants on request.
- Existing public buildings to be converted to ensure access for disabled people.
- Increased resources to promote and provide training in British Sign Language, for assistants, public sector workers, education employees and others.
- BSL to be taught in all schools, with free courses in BSL at all levels for any adult or child who wishes to develop their skills in the language.
- Reduced waiting lists for Community Care Assessments, rehabilitation and Occupational Therapy services.

■ A consultation with disabled people and their personal assistants or carers on the provision and location of more disabled parking bays close to shops, cinemas, hospitals and other facilities.

■ Free access for all disabled people to educational, sporting, cultural and other leisure facilities.

■ Increased funding to allow local authorities to meet the demand for Direct Payments, which allow disabled people to receive the assistance necessary to allow them to live fulfilling independent lives in the community.

■ The guaranteed right of disabled people to autonomy, including the right to choose where to live and to plan their own packages of personal assistance and/or care through local authorities.

■ Care packages to be portable across local authorities.

■ The guaranteed right of disabled people to be treated with dignity, including at the end of their lives.

■ Disabled children and old people to have the same right to life and medical treatment as non-disabled people; no disabled people to be starved to death because the medical profession considers them untreatable.

■ Adequate resources, advice and support for disabled adults to obtain suitable employment which they find enjoyable and fulfilling and which has a career structure.

■ Funding and support for disabled people's organisations to ensure the views of disabled people are clearly heard.

We will also campaign for the following measures, which are not within the Scottish Parliament's powers:

■ Replacement of the Disability Discrimination Act with fully comprehensive, enforceable civil rights legislation as demanded by the disabled people's movement. This legislation will be backed up by heavy fines and even imprisonment for the bosses of organisations that do not comply with it. Such rights will include: access to information in appropriate formats; full access to education at all levels; the right to employment for all disabled people and fair treatment at work; equal access to all goods, facilities and services.

■ Better accessibility to all goods, facilities and services including public transport, public buildings and the majority of housing stock. This would include wheelchair users and those with mental health impairments.

■ A total reform of the benefits system to remove all barriers to disabled people moving in and out of work; and to provide all disabled people with an income equal to at least the living wage plus additional allowances to take account of the additional costs of being disabled.

■ Resources to enable all disabled people the opportunity of living independently in a fully accessible and attractive house with appropriate personal assistance.

■ Free care without means testing for all those who could benefit from it, with freedom of choice over the means of obtaining this personal assistance and/or care.

■ The right for disabled people to participate fully in all aspects of society.

■ British Sign Language (BSL) to be recognised as an official language of an independent Scotland.

Elderly people's rights

In a devolved Scotland the SSP is committed to implementing the following:

■ The scrapping of rents for pensioners who are housing association or council tenants, including for those who live in sheltered housing.

■ Free access for pensioners to sports, leisure and educational facilities designed specifically for pensioners.

■ Forums which bring together elderly and younger people to exchange experiences and break down age barriers.

We will also campaign for the following measures, which are not within the Scottish Parliament's powers:

■ The basic state pension to be increased to £160 a week and linked to prices or earnings, whichever is the higher.

■ Reduction of the retirement age to 55, for men and women.

■ Retirement to be genuinely voluntary, with the right of workers to

continue whether part-time or full-time beyond retirement age.

■ The pension industry to be taken into the public sector and to be administered transparently and democratically.

■ Free heating, phone rental and TV licenses for all pensioners.

LGBT rights (Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual)

In a devolved Scotland the SSP is committed to implementing the following:

■ Guaranteed long term funding for community projects supporting LGBT people, under direct democratic control of service users, with full transparency and accountability.

■ Educational projects in schools and colleges aimed at eradicating homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and isolation.

■ The strengthening of civil partnership legislation to full equality with marriage, including religious ceremonies.

■ Measures to tackle rural LGBT isolation through funding outreach and support projects across Scotland.

■ LGBT officers for local authorities, with secure funding for LGBT projects.

■ Full implementation of anti-discrimination laws in provision of goods and services, including hospital visitation rights for partners.

We will also campaign for the following measures, which are not within the Scottish Parliament's powers:

■ Full recognition of homophobic persecution as a legitimate reason to seek asylum, equal immigration rights, ending the two year co-habitation rule and granting leave to remain to LGBT asylum seekers.

■ Equal pension rights, including survivors' rights for all pension schemes.

Racism and sectarianism

In a devolved Scotland the SSP is committed to implementing the following:

■ Educational projects on issues of racist and sectarian stereotyping and discrimination in all schools.

SSP POLICIES

■ All public information to be provided in the main languages of Scotland's ethnic minority communities.

■ Full support for organisations challenging racism and sectarianism, including Show Racism the Red Card, Nil By Mouth and the Scottish Anti-Fascist Alliance.

■ Work with football clubs, in particular the Old Firm, to eradicate sectarianism from our culture.

■ The SSP supports the long struggle of Scottish Gypsy Travellers for recognition as a distinct ethnic minority with full legal protection. Full implementation of the 37 recommendations agreed by the Scottish Parliament in 2001. A full apology from the Scottish Government for the past discrimination and genocidal policies of previous governments and public bodies.

We will also campaign for the following measures, which are not within the Scottish Parliament's powers:

■ The granting of Scottish citizenship to all people residing in Scotland at the time of independence, including asylum seekers and so-called "illegal residents".

■ A warm welcome to any asylum seekers who come to Scotland in the future, and the offer of Scottish citizenship to those who want it.

■ For Dungavel Detention Centre for asylum seekers to be turned into a museum of anti-racism and multiculturalism.

War and peace

In a devolved Scotland the SSP is committed to implementing the following:

■ A declaration by the Scottish Parliament calling for the immediate withdrawal of UK troops from Afghanistan.

■ A declaration by the Scottish Parliament opposing any UK involvement in US or NATO led military action against Iran, North Korea or anywhere else.

■ A declaration from the Scottish Parliament opposing the use of Scottish airports and airspace for US "rendition" and secret torture flights, or the transportation of military personnel and hardware.

■ The transportation of nuclear warheads on Scotland's roads, railways and waterways to be prohibited.

We will also campaign for the following measures, which are not within the Scottish Parliament's powers:

■ The removal of all nuclear weapons from Scotland.

■ Scotland's overall military budget to be brought into line per capita with that of the Republic of Ireland with the savings diverted to vital public services.

■ Guaranteed employment and/or retraining with no loss of pay for workers who would no longer be employed in the defence industry and special funding earmarked for local communities currently dependent on defence spending.

International solidarity

In a devolved Scotland the SSP is committed to implementing the following:

■ Solidarity with those forces in the Arab world struggling for democracy, progress and against the oppression of pro-western dictatorships.

■ Solidarity with all those resisting globalisation and neo-liberalism worldwide, including trade unionists, anti-poverty campaigners, national liberation movements, environmentalists, and small farmers' and peasants' movements.

■ Ethical procurement policies by all public bodies, and opposition to the award of contracts to companies who fail to observe basic ethical standards on child labour, poverty pay and environmental degradation.

■ Support for the stance of those governments resisting globalisation and imperialism, such as in Cuba and Venezuela and for the peoples around the globe struggling for self-determination.

■ Support for the Palestinian people in their just fight for an independent homeland; and for Israeli dissidents and peace campaigners.

■ Support for all other peoples struggling for national self-determination.

■ Agricultural and industrial subsidies and grants distributed in Scotland to be vetted to ensure they do not contribute

to increased impoverishment or environmental degradation overseas.

We will also campaign for the following measures, which are not within the Scottish Parliament's powers:

■ Fair trade country status for Scotland.

■ The immediate and total cancellation of debt from the poor countries of the Third World to the rich countries of the First World.

■ International pressure to abolish the United Nations' Security Council and to democratise the General Assembly – the sovereign body of the UN.

■ The refoundation of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) as a Fair Trade Organisation (FTO) – ensuring minimum environmental and social standards are met in internationally traded products.

This new organisation would be democratic – and the system of 'green room' decision making, where more powerful countries plan strategies in private – would be banned.

■ The replacement of international lending institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund with an international clearing organisation – to ensure debts are written off and reparation paid to countries who have suffered at the hands of the current system.

■ Full support for the introduction of a Tobin-like tax on all cross-border commercial transactions, reducing a major cause of economic instability and providing a fund for international development.

■ A new and radical style of open and transparent diplomacy, with all negotiations and deliberations to be held in public.

■ A truly internationalist Scotland that welcomes refugees and supports all those struggling worldwide against political, economic and national oppression.

■ The withdrawal of Scotland from NATO and the initiation of an international campaign for its abolition.

■ The funding of schemes to encourage young Scots to teach and work on overseas development projects.

■ A worldwide alliance of socialist and progressive political parties, trade unions and grassroots organisations.

■ Scotland to be an international force for peace not war, for social justice not corporate profit.

THE SSP IN ACTION



IN February this year the Scottish Parliament finally passed a bill to abolish prescription charges.

The Scottish Socialist Party warmly welcomed this, after all, we were the party that first introduced a bill to do this in 2004, winning support from other parties but ultimately defeated by an unholy coalition of Labour, Tories and Liberal Democrats.

Thanks to that campaign, Parliament subsequently saw the error of its ways and has now scrapped this tax on the sick.

The Scottish Socialist Party is not just a protest vote, although there is no doubt that many of our voters want to protest against the gross

inequalities and injustices in our society.

The SSP was the party that introduced the bill to end the hated warrant sales that were a disgrace in a modern society.

We were the party that put free, nutritious school meals on the political agenda, before even Jamie Oliver!

It was also the SSP that first introduced a bill to replace the unfair council tax with a Scottish Service Tax, a fully costed alternative based on a person's ability to pay rather than the value of their house.

On each occasion the SSP has been criticised by the establishment parties as being unrealistic but on each occasion it has just been ahead of the game.

Some of those policies have

proven so popular that they've even now been adopted by other parties.

And there's a lot more where they came from.

Our members standing for election are all committed to building a different Scotland.

One where the homes and communities of the many are put before the profits and bonuses of the few.

One where the destruction of our environment is not a fair price to pay. One where people of all backgrounds are genuinely treated as equals.

Our members fight for these values every day- in community campaigns and in our trade unions; on the streets and occupying buildings in a bid to protect services enjoyed by generations before.

If elected, they will fight for them in Parliament too.

And finally, if elected a Scottish Socialist Party MSP will take only the wage of an average skilled worker, just as they have when they've been elected before.

This is an important point of principle for us.

Our representatives will not get rich off their time in Parliament.

They will not play the expenses system like so many others have in the past.

Our MSPs will take a wage that will ensure they understand the day to day problems faced by the majority of us.

For a workers' MP on a worker's wage- vote SSP.

Promoted by Kevin McVey
on behalf of the
Scottish Socialist Party,
Suite 370, 4th Floor
Central Chambers
93 Hope St,
Glasgow
G2 6LD

Partaidh Soisealach



na h-Alba



Join the Scottish Socialist Party

Fill in this form and send to: SSP, Suite 370, 4th Floor, 93 Hope St, Glasgow, G2 6LD

Or see our website:

scottishsocialistparty.org

Or telephone us:

0141 221 7470

- ☐ I would like to join the Scottish Socialist Party
- ☐ I would also like to join Scottish Socialist Youth
- ☐ I would like more information on the Scottish Socialist Party

Name.....

Address.....

Phones.....

email.....