

Scottish Socialist Party



PHOTO: CRAIG MACLEAN

A Socialist Action Plan
*To cut bills,
raise incomes
and vastly
improve
universal
public
services*



PHOTOS: CRAIG MACLEAN



Introduction

WE LIVE IN THE 6TH-RICHEST ECONOMY on planet Earth. Yet a million Scottish people officially live in poverty. They cannot afford the bare necessities of life, such as food, housing, heating, or travel, which cruelly stunts their lives amidst the fabulous wealth of the nation.

This criminal reality is caused by the rampant profiteering by multinational energy companies, the major supermarkets, private landlords, and privatised transport companies - combined with the hoarding of wealth by a class of millionaires. But that's capitalism. A system entirely based on the maximisation of profit for the few at the expense of the many.

The Scottish Socialist Party proudly presents the case for genuine, radical socialist change. We want to change the way Scotland is run, root-and-branch. We stand for people, not profit; for public ownership, not privatised profiteering; for an independent socialist Scotland, a democratic republic, which is nuclear-free, poverty-free, pollution-free, and a force for international peace and cooperation, not imperialist wars without end.

Join the Scottish Socialists

We appeal to anyone who agrees with that vision of socialism, independence and internationalism to join the Scottish Socialist Party and fight for it.

However, in recognition of the limited powers granted to the Holyrood parliament under devolution, we refuse to sit passively and wait for 'the glorious day'. We instead seek to mobilise working-class and young people - the majority population - in collective struggle for an immediate plan of socialist action that could transform the daily lives of millions.

That is why we are standing SSP candidates in every corner of Scotland in the May 2026 Holyrood elections.

To win socialist MSPs who will spurn careerism and corruption by living on not one penny more than a skilled worker's wage.

Scottish Socialist MSPs who will combine with thousands of others outside the parliament in pursuit of parliamentary Bills to change lives.

If elected, Scottish Socialist Party MSPs will pursue (amongst other measures) parliamentary Bills on the following priority policies, to combat the cost-of-living crisis:

- free public transport for all on buses, trains, ferries, trams and subways in a publicly owned, expanded People's Transport Service, powered by green energy
- immediate abolition of the hated, unfair Council Tax, replaced by an income-based Scottish Service Tax, where 8 out of 10 people would pay less, but taxation of the very rich with double tax funds for council jobs and services
- build 100,000 eco-friendly council houses for affordable rent, to the highest environmental standards to combat fuel poverty and ill-health, creating 150,000 construction jobs and apprenticeships
- renegotiate and cancel all Private Finance Initiative schemes in our hospitals, schools and other services, to save £1.25 billion in PFI fees this year alone, for investment instead in hospitals and schools
- for a publicly owned, fully funded, National Care Service, free at the point of use, democratically controlled and fit for the 21st century, with properly trained, well-paid staff and full trade union rights
- declare an immediate, non-statutory Living Minimum Wage of £15-an-hour for Scotland's 600,000 public sector workers and the 130,000-plus employed in private companies with public sector contracts - as a step towards a legally-enforced £15-an-hour minimum wage for all workers aged 16 and over
- propose a No-Cuts Defiance Budget by the Scottish government, protecting and improving all jobs, wages and services - including in local government, NHS, fire and rescue. For MSPs to then lead a mass campaign of workers and communities to win back some of the £6 billion cut by Westminster from Scottish government funding over the last decade
- introduce a 4-day, 30-hour maximum working week on 5 days' pay throughout Scotland's public sector and private companies with public sector contracts - to create at least 60,000 new jobs
- fully fund and democratise all sectors of education, with a maximum of 20 students in mainstream classes; increased jobs for educators and support staff; a Living Student Grant at 16; and elected boards of management involving, staff, students, communities and government



EVERY VOTE FOR THE Scottish Socialist Party is a vote for socialist action against the cost-of-living crisis.

A vote for concrete measures to cut household bills, increase people's incomes, and vastly improve universal public services.

In the remainder of this socialist manifesto, we expand on some of the aims, policies and track record of the Scottish Socialist Party.

We appeal to you to read it, to vote Scottish Socialist Party, and to consider going one step further by joining the Scottish Socialist Party.

Collective action

Improvement in working-class people's lives can only be achieved by collective action.

The struggle for socialism is not a spectator sport. In the words of the great Edinburgh-born socialist and trade unionist, James Connolly:

"The only true prophets are those who carve out the future they announce."

Help carve out a decent future for yourself and future generations.

Vote Scottish Socialist Party.

And consider becoming a member of the SSP.

The SSP offers anti-poverty, anti-war, socialist voices for Holyrood

The world has gone to Hell in a handcart, with wars, genocide, climate catastrophe, rising inequality, and public services falling apart at the seams, as public wealth is poured into killing machines instead of life-saving hospital equipment.

As wages, pensions and benefits stagnate, prices on life's daily essentials skyrocket. The cost-of-living crisis has never gone away and is more acute by the day.

Capitalist politicians are drowning in a sea of corruption, living on a different planet to the rest of us. Getting their political careers funded by private health firms and arms companies. Waging illegal wars of mass slaughter while they tell us there's no money for wages, schools, housebuilding, healthcare, or decent public transport.

Socialist MSPs on a worker's wage

That's why the Scottish Socialist Party are challenging the parties of big business and the rich in the Scottish elections, standing candidates in all 8 parliamentary regions, to give everyone in Scotland the chance to vote for principled socialists.

For a socialist plan of action to cut household bills, raise people's incomes, vastly improve universal public services.

For socialist MSPs who will demand investment in people not profit; in pay and public services; for public ownership to end rip-off prices on food, heating, housing and public transport, caused by privatised profiteering.

For socialist MSPs who will live on nothing more than the average skilled worker's wage, rejecting the £75,000 salary pocketed by other MSPs from all the other parties.

Scotland's working-class majority need genuine working-class voices in Holyrood.

Voices that won't be silenced or bought off by the demands of capitalist big business; by arms firms or privatised healthcare companies that fund Labour, or the billionaire Easdale brothers - owners of McGill's buses, vociferous opponents of even mild steps towards council control of bus services - who've handed Scottish Labour at least £150,000 for their Holyrood election campaign. He who pays the piper calls the tune!

We need working-class socialist MSPs who will remain working-class fighters, living on the average skilled worker's wage, to remain grounded, accountable, uncorrupted and incorruptible.

Unique amongst all political parties, that's what the SSP has built into its constitution.

And contrary to the corrosive habit of other political parties who say one thing but do the opposite, the SSP has always put words into deeds. No, we are not 'all the same'! When we had six SSP MSPs they all stuck to that principle, living on less than half the MSP's salary of the time, taking home the average skilled worker's wage.

Proudly working-class SSP candidates

Every single SSP candidate is proudly working-class, and proud to remain so if elected as an MSP.

They include workers in retail, the NHS, housing, further education, councils, fire and rescue services, schools, the print industry, office admin, the railways, ambulance services, customer services, social work, addiction services, nursing, etc. Members of their trade unions: UNITE, UNISON, GMB, USDAW, FBU, ASLEF, EIS...

That stands out in stark contrast with most candidates of the other political parties being political professionals, spending most of their life either as paid assistants to MSPs and MPs, or as politicians themselves.

At best, they observe the lives of the working-class majority. The SSP candidates live the life of the majority population, making them even more determined to transform the lives of those they seek to represent.

To rise with the working class, not out of the working class.

The SSP is the only anti-poverty, anti-war, anti-capitalist, pro-trade union, pro-independence, socialist party on the 8 regional lists.

Everyone in Scotland should seize the opportunity to vote socialist in their so-called 'second vote', on the peach voting paper, to elect socialist MSPs who will stand up for people and planet, not profit; for universal public services, not privatised profiteering; for the millions, not the millionaires.

Socialist measures - for people, not profit

In the words of Edinburgh-born socialist and trade union leader, James Connolly, "for our demands most moderate are, we only want the earth". The SSP has the goal of an independent socialist Scotland, a democratic republic, which acts as a beacon for socialist democracy abroad, offering the hand of peace and international cooperation to the peoples of other countries. A clean, nuclear-free, poverty-free, independent socialist Scotland which treats all who live in it as equals, regardless of creed, colour, country of birth, or identity.

That is our goal, and proud of it.

However, we recognise the straitjacket of devolution limits the powers of the Scottish parliament. Power devolved is power retained, by the remote, corrupt Westminster and Whitehall administrations, who rule at the behest of the faceless, unelected bankers, boardroom directors and military top brass who make up the ruling capitalist class.

At every opportunity we advocate the case for independence to empower the people of Scotland to take the earth, the industries, banking, energy, and decisions on war and peace into their own hands, collectively.

For a Socialist Green New Deal based on public ownership of energy, construction, transport, major industries, banking and big, landed estates - to create over 350,000 new, green jobs.

But we simultaneously refuse to hide behind the excuse of devolution's limitations to sit passively and wait, whilst poverty, pollution and wars of blood and plunder devastate the lives of the Scottish people.

Elected Scottish Socialist MSPs - in combination with SSP members outside the parliament, taking united action with thousands of others - will fearlessly demand emergency action within the powers of devolution.

And they will go further, seeking to burst asunder the straitjacket of devolution, in defiance of Westminster and its capitalist paymasters.

When the Labour government carries on where the Tories left off in carrying out austerity cuts, the SSP demands defiance, not compliance, by the Scottish government.

Throughout the history of devolution, successive Labour-Lib Dem, SNP and SNP-Scottish Green governments have complied with Westminster's demands for cuts. They've bowed the knee to the Westminster razor gangs, devolved the destruction to local government, health boards, Further Education boards and others, rather than defy the cuts to jobs and services.

By contrast the Scottish Socialist Party persistently opposes all cuts and privatisations, and combines with trade unionists and communities in demanding that Holyrood stands up for the Scottish people, sets No-Cuts budgets - Defiance Budgets - to save every job, wage and service, and then mounts a mass campaign of workers and communities to win back some of the £6 billion-plus stolen by Westminster from Scotland's funding through the block grant system in the past 10 years.

Furthermore, the SSP condemns successive Scottish governments for their failure to use even the existing powers of devolution to challenge the grotesque poverty and inequality which scars the face of Scotland.

In the pages which follow we will outline some of the immediate measures which Scottish Socialist Party MSPs would advocate and propose legislation to implement, which could confront the cost-of-living crisis that dominates the lives and thoughts of millions of people in Scotland today.

The SSP is fighting for a package of measures to cut household bills, raise people's incomes, and vastly expand and improve universal public services.

Measures that would immediately put money in the pockets, postcodes and public services of millions, on the road towards an independent Scottish socialist republic.

For peace through socialism

We are Scotland's consistently anti-war party. Within days of the 9/11 atrocity, in 2001, the SSP met and collaborated with Scottish CND to initiate the Scottish Coalition for Justice not War. In 2003 that Coalition put 100,000 people on the streets of Glasgow for the demonstration against Tony Blair's collusion with George Bush in their illegal, blood-soaked invasion of Iraq for oil and empire.

The SSP has an unrivalled record of marching and protesting with thousands of others against genocide in Gaza, condemning British government arms sales to Israel, RAF involvement, and the grotesque use of public funds to subsidise the profits of the same arms companies making billions out of war - as the SNP / Scottish Green Party coalition and subsequent SNP Scottish governments have done.

The SSP has not hesitated in condemning the unprovoked, illegal US-Israeli war on the people of Iran, and the abject failure of Keir Starmer to firmly oppose this illegal and bloody assault on the Iranian people's right to self-determination. A war involving the RAF, allowing the use of British military bases and Prestwick airport for US imperialism's military aircraft, as they go off on their murder mission, slaughtering thousands of Iranian and Lebanese civilians. We want the Scottish government, which owns Prestwick airport, to firmly oppose and obstruct its use to refuel US warplanes and defy British government diktats which say it can be used.

The SSP aims at a Scottish government that takes the defence industry into democratic public ownership, with workers' control, to diversify and redeploy workers' skills to build for social need and peace, not war - including ferries, marine engineering equipment for renewable energy production, and fleets of green-powered vehicles for an expanded, reliable, integrated, free public transport service.

We don't want Scotland to be stained with a reputation for collaboration in imperialist wars, occupations and plunder of other countries and continents, as happened at the height of the British empire, where the sound of bagpipes and sight of tartan was a source of terror in places like Africa.

We want a Scotland that builds floating hospital ships, and food-ships, and aids the peoples of poorer nations, instead of building warships and sending young economic conscripts to kill and be killed in other people's lands.

We stand opposed to war, for international solidarity and peace through socialism.

Raise your sights - vote SSP

People shouldn't go into the elections to "vote Labour holding their noses", as advised to - in his desperation - by Labour's Anas Sarwar.

Nor should pro-independence voters waste their 'second' vote for the regional lists on the SNP, which will only serve to boost the fortunes of the pernicious Tory extremist millionaires of Reform UK.

They should raise their chins, lift their sights, and proudly vote SSP for an immediate programme of socialist action to make living affordable. And ultimately to win a secure future in an independent socialist Scotland that harnesses the nation's wealth for its people, not for the millionaires who rip us off for profit every day, trash the planet we live on, and drag us into wars without end.

Axe the Council Tax

For a progressive income-based Scottish Service Tax

Council Tax bills have increased - again! By up to 8%. For worsened local services. While council workers suffer increased workload, as staffing levels are slashed.

For 28 years the Scottish Socialist Party has campaigned to abolish the Council Tax and replace it with a fair, income-based Scottish Service Tax - based on people's ability to pay.

The Council Tax is regressive, grossly unfair. Low- and middle-income families pay a much higher percentage of their income on Council Tax than the invisibly small minority who are super-rich, on annual incomes above £200,000.

The richest man in Scotland, Anders Povlsen, estimated wealth £9 billion, owns 222,000 acres of land and several castles. The one by Loch Ness (Aldourie) has 12 bedrooms, a Great Hall, libraries, Lairds Room, breakfast room and other luxury spaces, nestling in 500 acres of gardens, ancient woodland and wildflower meadows. His Council Tax bill is only two-and-a-half times that for a minimum wage worker in a typical 2-bedroom flat with no garden.

That's just reinforcing the inequality which leaves a million below the poverty line, unable to afford to live.

The SSP's alternative consists of 6 income bands, with progressively rising rates of Scottish Service Tax, paying more the richer you are.

It would mean about 8 out of 10 people pay less - but the extremely rich would pay far, far more.

By making the rich pay their fair share, the SSP's Scottish Service Tax would have meant last year's tax funding for local jobs and services DOUBLED from £2.7 billion in Council Tax to £5.3 billion. No cuts, but vast improvements for workers and communities.

WHAT YOU'D PAY UNDER THE SSP'S ALTERNATIVE:

The 1.8 million adults on incomes below £12,000 would pay ZERO - nothing!

The 13,000 individuals with incomes above £200,000-a-year would ON AVERAGE pay £77,000 towards local jobs and services.

HERE are the income bands and tax rates under the SSP's Scottish Service Tax:

- The first £12,000 of a person's income is zero rated; tax-free
 - The income bracket £12,000 to £30,000 is taxed at 4.5%
- | | | |
|--------------------------|---|-----|
| £30,000 - £50,000 | - | 10% |
| £50,000 - £70,000 | - | 15% |
| £70,000 - £100,000 | - | 18% |
| All income over £100,000 | - | 20% |

Examples of earnings and the annual bills under the Scottish Service Tax:

£15,000	-	£135
£20,000	-	£380
£25,000	-	£584
£30,000	-	£810
£33,211	-	£1,381
£50,000	-	£2,810
£75,000 (MSP salary)	-	£6,710

Labour has done nothing to oppose the Council Tax. They've defended it for decades.

The SNP promised to scrap it in the 2007 Scottish elections - 19 years later, they've done absolutely nothing to implement that promise. Tinkering round the edges of this inherently regressive, unfair system does nothing to tackle its inequality.

The SSP is the only party to demand outright abolition of the Council Tax and put forward a progressive, fully costed alternative.

One that would make most people better off twice - with lower bills and vastly improved services - because our system would *double* the money for local jobs and services.

The additional funds raised by taxing the rich minority through our Scottish Service Tax would not only fill the £4.7 billion 'black hole' facing the Scottish government's public finances by 2029/30, as projected by the Scottish Fiscal Commission, but also finance council housebuilding, money-saving District Heating Schemes, free childcare, and other vital community services. Vote SSP to Axe the Council Tax - make the rich pay!

Save Our NHS and Education - Expel the PFI Loan Sharks

Both Labour and the SNP use profiteering Private Finance Initiative (PFI) schemes (even if they change the initials for it!) to build and maintain hospitals, schools and other public services.

Instead of slapping a 5% wealth tax on all millionaires and reversing the cuts to Corporation Tax rates on big business profits - as the Scottish Socialist Party has fought for - successive Labour governments have handed consortia of bankers and venture capitalists PFI contracts which guarantee them fabulous profits at public expense. And the SNP have followed suit.

On average, we the public must repay £5 for every £1 invested by these corporate loan sharks. Buy five hospitals or schools - but only get one!

Eight Scottish hospitals are privately owned through this extortion racket, six of them because of Labour government PFI privatisation, the other two due to the SNP government's use of the same method.

PFI fees cost NHS Lothians £100 million this year, and Glasgow City Council £70 million, for example.

This year alone, PFI fees will cost Scotland £1.25 billion. Some councils spend over 40% of their Council Tax income on PFI repayments.

The PFI fees plundered by these moneylenders - many of them based overseas or in tax havens - deprive our hospitals of funds to hire nurses, doctors, support staff, equipment and bed spaces.

It means classes in Scotland's schools average 33-plus, adding to teachers' workload and stress, and Additional Support Needs staff being cut.

Reducing the quality of our kids' education, depriving qualified teachers of a secure job.

PFI sacrifices doctors, nurses, medical

research and equipment, but certainly not the annual donation to the Fat Cats' Protection League!

Labour, SNP and Reform UK all threaten even more privatisation, including through Labour's 250 new neighbourhood health centres.

The SSP says:

- Cancel all the rip-off PFI schemes. Invest in people's health, not moneylenders' wealth. In kids' education, not cash for the loan sharks
- Introduce a windfall tax on the profits already made by PFI contractors, to invest in schools and hospitals
- Defend the NHS's founding principles - make it fully publicly owned, free at the point of need, properly funded by progressive taxation of the rich.
- Make GPs, dentists and pharmacists NHS employees, not profit-driven businesses
- Take Big Pharma into public ownership, as part of a fully public NHS. Stop these multinational drugs barons profiteering from sickness and crippling the NHS
- Build a National Care Service, publicly owned and democratic, free at the time of need, fit for the 21st century, with well-trained, well-paid staff

The Scottish Socialist Party fought for and WON free prescriptions in Scotland - whereas people in England are charged £10 per item!

That shows the SSP can make a difference to everyday life.

Vote Scottish Socialist Party to expel the loan sharks: stop the billionaires bleeding our public services dry.

Build 100,000 Homes Fit For Humans - Not Landlord Profiteering!

It's official! Scotland is suffering a housing emergency. And things are getting no better.

Homelessness is on the rise. There are 250,000 people languishing on Scotland's social housing waiting lists - many of them for years. Families suffer dampness and overcrowding. Young people can't afford their own independent living. A new Highland Clearances is in full swing as young people are forced to leave their families and communities for lack of affordable or decent housing, depopulating rural and island Scotland, whilst thousands of second homes lie empty for most of the year.

Private landlords rip off renters for substandard accommodation, some of it a death trap.

83 Westminster MPs rent out 170 properties, raking in £830,000 per year in rent. At least 23 outgoing Holyrood MSPs do the same, earning rent as landlords.

Private companies screw £800/£900 monthly rent out of students for a single room, with many turned away from university courses they enrolled on, due to severe housing shortages.

Meantime, construction workers suffer job insecurity, or outright unemployment. It's madness - capitalist madness.

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to point out the solution to housing shortages is to build houses!

But that's not happening - either under the SNP government, the previous SNP/Green coalition, or the past Labour-Lib Dem Scottish government.

Only 4,122 social sector houses were built in Scotland in the 12 months ending September 2025 - with 250,000 on the waiting lists!

The SSP demands:

- Build 100,000 eco-friendly council houses, for affordable rent. Built to the highest environmental standards, to combat ill-health, and slash fuel poverty and global-warming emissions. Built to match the needs of families, single renters, young, old, and disabled people - with tenants' input to planning community facilities
- Create 150,000 construction workers' jobs and apprenticeships. Research in February 2025 for housing charity Shelter proved building 90,000 council houses would sustain 140,000 jobs, and that the initial investment costs would be recovered in the first 3 years
- Retrofit every existing home, free of charge, with insulation, draughtproofing, new eco-boilers and fast free broadband. For Scottish government funding to employ teams of council workers to tackle this systematically, district by district, street by street
- Tax the rich to fund an emergency housebuilding and renovation programme by councils, with rent cuts and caps to make them affordable, and secure tenancies in all sectors
- Introduce a graduated rent reduction for all social housing tenants, with zero rent after 25 years, until their tenancy is terminated or transferred to another family member
- Public ownership of banks and building societies to provide cheap or interest-free loans and mortgages
- Democratic public ownership of the construction and supply industry to coordinate and fund a People's Housing Service. You can't plan what you don't control, and you can't control what you don't own!

Free Public Transport for All

Combat poverty, pollution and social isolation

The exorbitant cost of travel by train, bus and ferry prevents many people from visiting friends and family or enjoying the beauty of Scotland. Workers fork out over £1,400 a year just to travel to work by bus.

Privatised train and bus companies rip off passengers for profit, cut routes and service frequency, and slash staffing levels, causing frequent cancellations when drivers fall sick.

Rural and island Scotland is blighted by a lack of public transport and fleets of ageing ferries, which frequently cancel and leave communities stranded. Alongside the lack of housing and jobs this drives the exodus of young people from rural and island communities.

Over-dependence on cars is not just increasingly costly and therefore exclusionary, but adds to air pollution, asthma and other respiratory conditions, heart diseases and cancers. It causes misery and mental stress in traffic jams - regardless of whether some drivers can afford EVs - as well as losses to production and the costs of road accidents.

Unlike some environmentalists, the eco-socialist SSP rejects measures that punish working-class people, such as the policy of workplace parking fees - spearheaded by the Scottish Greens and accepted by their SNP coalition partners of the time - which has empowered councils to introduce this regressive, punitive tax on workers, which would do little to nothing to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Instead, for over 25 years the SSP has pioneered and fought for free public transport for everyone.

Our persistent campaigning has helped win concessions: people under 22 and over 60 now get free bus travel, and peak train fares have eventually been scrapped.

However, the SSP demands the Scottish government go much further.

The SSP demands:

- Take all privatised buses, trains and companies building and maintaining railway rolling stock (ROSCOs), ferries and buses into democratic public ownership, with workers' control
- Build new fleets of ferries, green buses and trains in Scotland - incorporating Alexander Dennis and 'the Big Caley' Glasgow Works into a publicly-owned Peoples Transport Service
- Use the skills and facilities of Scotland's shipyards to build ferries instead of warships and aircraft carriers. For socially useful peaceful production, defending and expanding jobs and apprenticeships
- Make travel free for everyone on buses, trains, ferries, subways, trams and metro-rails. On a vastly expanded and integrated service, powered by renewable energy. Made reliable by increased staffing levels and organised to cater for night-shift workers and others.
- Instead of subsidising privatised, profiteering bus companies' profits by nearly £500 million a year, we demand the Scottish government invest those sums in a publicly owned transport service, free at the point of use.

These measures would combat poverty, car pollution and social isolation. And create at least 60,000 transport service jobs. Over 100 cities and regions across the world have introduced free transport.

If SSP members are elected to the parliament they will prioritise a Free Public Transport Bill.

For a Publicly Owned People's Energy Service

End profiteering, fuel poverty and pollution

Energy bills have rocketed - and are rising again, exacerbated by war in the Middle East, which the energy giants seize as an excuse to make even bigger profits out of heating your home.

In just one month since Trump's gangster imperialist assault on Iran, four energy multinationals - Shell, Chevron, BP and Exxon Mobil - have enjoyed up to 25% increases on their valuation, by a combined total of £174 billion.

Just the 20 largest UK energy companies grabbed a mind-boggling £483 billion in profits in 3 years. That's £7,000 for every man, woman and child in the UK.

That's why a million Scottish households shiver through the winter, suffering fuel poverty. Why pensioners die of cold-related diseases each winter - in one of the most energy-rich countries on Earth. It's obscene.

Thousands of North Sea and Grangemouth workers have lost their jobs - with the threat of a further cull to come. But Grangemouth's viciously anti-trade union co-owner, Jim Ratcliffe, has personal wealth of £29.6 billion; he's hidden away in Monaco since 2020, dodging £4 billion in taxes since! It's obscene - it's capitalism!

In 2022 the SNP/Scottish Green Party coalition sold off ScotWind licences for 17 giant offshore wind farms for £700 million. It amounted to a fire sale of wind power in Scottish waters!

Economists calculated that it lost a potential £5.5 billion per annum to the Scottish Government if this had instead been done through a state-owned energy company.

They showed how investment costs on infrastructure could be recovered within the first year of production, thereby gifting these multinational energy companies 24 years of pure profit-making.

Not even one of the companies gaining these licences to make money is Scottish. BP and Shell - amongst the biggest polluters on the planet - grabbed 20% of the total. The same SNP and Scottish Green Party administration had previously (in 2021) abandoned their promise of establishing a national energy company - which the SSP always warned was no more than a glorified shop, as it was to deal only with retail of energy, not its production.

The SSP says:

- take production and supply of all forms of energy into democratic public ownership, with workers' control and elected boards of management of a People's Energy Service - subject to recall and on a skilled wage, to make them accountable
- tax the rich and big corporations to fund Council District Heating Schemes, powered by clean energy, to cut overheads and reduce heating bills. Instal solar panels on all possible public buildings and housing blocks.

Such a People's Energy Service would take the profiteering out of heating. It would slash energy bills for households and small businesses.

It would allow a rapid, worker-led transition to the production and distribution of clean, green, affordable energy. With workers' control, the expertise of energy workers could be deployed to carry through a genuinely Just Transition - instead of the present set-up being neither just nor a transition.

Research proves it would create at least 70,000 new, sustainable jobs. Jobs in Further Education colleges could also be expanded to train and upskill workers and apprentices, and in universities to research new green technologies.

The SSP is the only party fighting for public ownership and working-class control of a People's Energy Service.

Vote SSP to heat our homes, not the profiteers' bank balances!

Vote SSP for people and planet, not privatised profiteering and pollution.

Defend Our Fire and Rescue Service

Scotland's fire and rescue services are amongst the worst impacted by austerity cuts, with life-threatening consequences.

Since April 2013, when eight local bodies were merged into the centralised Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS), 1,239 firefighters' jobs have been slashed. Fire stations have been left in a state of dilapidation: 45% of them classified as "in bad or poor condition", 100 lacking adequate toilets, 150 having no shower facilities and 280 lacking dignified changing areas.

In an occupation widely recognised by scientists as carcinogenic, such conditions combined with staffing cuts compromise the ability to reduce dangers by timely withdrawal and rotation of firefighters at high-risk incidents or provide proper decontamination facilities - making firefighters far more prone to cancers than the average worker of the same age.

Cumulative budget cuts of £900m from the inception of the SFRS to 2027/28 means response times have risen every year - by 18% in 10 years.

That can literally be the difference between life and death. The bravery and

professionalism of firefighters and control staff is of no use if staffing shortages and cuts to fire appliances means they don't arrive on time with adequate resources.

The March 2026 fire at Glasgow Central station, where 18 appliances, four high reach appliances and 200 firefighters were deployed, highlighted the dangers posed to public and firefighters alike by the cuts proposed in the ongoing SFRS Service Delivery Review. Many of the stations and appliances involved face closure or removal, in cuts originally planned for December 2025. The SSP's concern is that the proposed cuts have not been defeated but merely deferred until after the Holyrood elections.

The SSP will continue to campaign alongside the Fire Brigades Union members - as we did during the 2002/3 firefighters' strike against the Labour government's attacks, before and since - to protect and improve this vital frontline service, and the health and conditions of all firefighters.

The SSP demands:

- Proper government funding to restore capital and resource budgets to their 2013 real terms levels
- Invest in recruitment and retention of firefighters to reverse the loss of 1,239 jobs and develop positive modifications to the role of firefighters in negotiations with the FBU
- Upgrade all fire stations to safe and dignified conditions, with proper decontamination facilities.



Save and Expand Education

Every branch of education is in a special class of crisis.

The number of pre-school teachers has been decimated. Class sizes in Scotland are amongst the highest in all the OECD countries, with 33-plus being commonplace. Understaffing means teachers work the equivalent of 1.5 days per week extra, totally unpaid. Many qualified teachers are on precarious contracts, stymied from a secure career, often driven to abandon the profession.

Whilst studies show about 40% of children and young people have recognised Additional Support Needs, ASN staff cutbacks means their needs are neglected, and aggressive behaviours in the classroom are often exacerbated.

The Scottish Funding Council's Report in autumn 2025 showed that 22 out of 24 Further Education colleges will be in financial deficit at the end of the 2025/6 financial year. Scottish government funding has been slashed by 17% for the FE sector in the past 4 years. Grotesquely overpaid FE college principals - some earning more than Scotland's First Minister - have responded with job cuts, increased class sizes, cuts to available courses in a sector that overwhelmingly caters for working-class people - ranging from apprentices and school leavers to 'second chance' mature students.

The university sector is at least equally in crisis, with savage cuts to jobs and pay. Funding per student has been cut by 39% in real terms in the past decade, according to Universities Scotland. Instead of waging a campaign for proper, full public funding, grossly overpaid and unaccountable university bosses have indulged in vanity projects and increasingly relied on overseas students (with annual fees of £30,000-plus), for funding - with the numbers of the latter doubling from 24,000 in 2006/7 to a peak of 47,700 in 2022/3. However, this source of income has begun to dry up, with a 16% fall in the number of overseas students coming to Scotland in 2024.

Education is teetering on the brink. It requires vast investment for the future of society. Investment based on an entirely different funding model, centred on progressive taxation of big business profits, millionaires and the richest minority; an end to the marketisation of Higher Education; and elimination of the profit motive, whether in research or student accommodation, with full public ownership and democratic control.

The SSP demands:

- redirect the £16 billion - £1.5 million-a-day, for the next 30 years - of Scottish people's taxes being squandered on Trident nuclear weapons to investment in schools, colleges and universities
- a Living Grant for all students from the age of 16, based on a £15-an-hour minimum wage - with a guaranteed, well-paid job at the end

- build 100,000 eco-friendly council homes, including accommodation specially designed for students, integrated in the community, at affordable rents
- cut class sizes to a maximum of 20 in mainstream classes, 15 in practical classes, and provide one-to-one tuition for those with Additional Support Needs. Invest in vastly more educators and support staff, with decent wages and job fulfilment through smaller classes
- cut out PFI profiteering - take back public ownership of our schools
- stop school closures, except where communities genuinely agree to it. Keep schools local, within safe walking distance, to enhance health and cut traffic emissions. Reverse all cuts to free school transport services in more remote areas
- provide free, publicly funded kindergartens and pre-school nurseries for all children from the end of maternity/paternity leave, recruiting fully trained, well-paid staff
- provide free, publicly funded after-school care and school holiday schemes
- provide universal, nutritious, free school meals for all at primary and secondary schools
- open schools' facilities, free of charge, for adult education, cultural and sporting activities outside of school hours, making them a community hub
- provide full Scottish Government funding for FE colleges and universities, from progressive general taxation of the rich and big business
- urgent Scottish Government intervention against bad governance in both further and higher education; public funding should mean public control
- sack the boards! Introduce democratised education centres, publicly owned and funded, with elected management boards representing all grades of staff, students, parents, local communities, elected councils and the government.
- elected board members to be on skilled wages, not the grotesquely inflated remuneration packages currently enjoyed by unaccountable principals, vice-chancellors and senior management in Scotland's colleges and universities
- make education a human right, and the source of progress towards a clean, green economy where people live in harmony and cooperation, not the source rent, interest and profit.

Demand an Immediate £15-an-hour Minimum Wage

Low pay is the single biggest source of poverty in modern Scotland, with at least 52% of all those living below the breadline being in work, and 75% of children who suffer poverty having one or more parent in a job. Criminal profiteering by capitalist big business, accompanied by cuts to public sector budgets, are the root causes of a million people in super-rich Scotland being officially classified as poor. That's criminal. That's capitalism.

Through united action with the organised trade union movement, Scottish Socialist MSPs will fight for immediate measures to combat poverty pay. We recognise power over the statutory minimum wage rests with Westminster. That on its own is a devastating argument for the full powers that come with independence. However, the SSP refuses to sit back and wait until we get full-blown Scottish self-government. We demand action here and now, even within the straitjacket of devolution.

The SSP demands:

- the Scottish Government to declare a Scottish Living Wage of at least £15-an-hour immediately - rising with inflation or average wages, whichever is greater - for all 600,000 public sector workers and the additional 130,000 or more who work in small and medium private companies with public sector contracts
- use devolved powers over procurement, planning permission and other measures to insist on a £15-an-hour minimum wage for any employer seeking public sector contracts, until the work is taken in-house, ending the loss of up to £3 billion to public services from outsourcing and the outflow of profits
- the £15-an-hour minimum wage to apply to all aged 16 and over. Scrap the age wage discrimination of lower youth minimum rates
- Scottish government funding to fully implement equal pay for women and ethnic minorities. No downgrading of male workers' pay - equalise upwards

Demand a 4-Day, 30-Hour Week on 5 Days' Pay

Capitalism is riddled with contradictions. One of the biggest lunacies of the capitalist system is the fact that millions of workers suffer severe physical and mental ill-health from the stresses and strains of overwork and the long-hours culture which characterises British capitalism, while millions of other workers and young people can't even get a job, or suffer the poverty, indignity and chaos to their lives of zero hours or short hours contracts.

The number of workers on these low-paid, insecure contracts has increased in recent years. Workers can't plan their lives, medical appointments or holidays, and are deprived of mortgages or loans because there is no security of income.

The SSP has always rejected the weasel words of Labour and SNP politicians who have spoken of scrapping "exploitative zero hours contracts"; they're all exploitative and should be abolished outright - which the Labour government has failed to do in recent legislation.

The SSP pioneered the alternative of a guaranteed minimum 16-hour contract for every worker who wants one - with no exemption clauses for employers.

After pioneering this as SSP policy, one of our members successfully proposed it at the 2019 Scottish Trades Union Congress, where it became the official policy of Scotland's entire trade union movement without a single vote against.

Likewise, the SSP has long fought for a 4-day week on 5 days' pay, as a measure to share out the work, cut drudgery, create new jobs, increase family and leisure time, allow greater sharing of childcare, and enhance democracy by affording workers the time to participate in the running of their workplaces, communities and the wider affairs of state.

We oppose this measure being bastardised into a system where 5 days' work is crammed into 4 days, with no new jobs, simply intensifying workload and stress. Or a week's hours being squeezed into 4 days rather than 5.

The SSP demands:

- abolish all zero hours contracts. For a legally guaranteed minimum 16-hour contract for every worker who wants one. No exemption for employers. Only the worker, accompanied by their union representative, can negotiate lesser hours, giving them a degree of control over their working lives
- cut hours, not jobs or pay
- for a 4-day, 30-hour maximum working week on 5 days' pay.
- for the Scottish government to set the benchmark with this measure for the 730,000-plus workers employed in the public sector and private companies holding public sector contracts
- create at least 60,000 new jobs by sharing out the work
- make new technology a blessing, not a curse, for workers, through public ownership and workers' control - to rapidly further reduce the working week to less than 30 hours, without loss of earnings

Unite Against Racism

Scapegoating of asylum seekers, immigrants and people of colour more generally has escalated in recent years, in tandem with the crisis of a capitalist system and capitalist governments which dismally fail to guarantee decent jobs, housing, public services, wages and futures for our young people.

Disgust and disappointment at the betrayals by Labour in government, and the lacklustre managerialism of the SNP in Holyrood, has fuelled the growth of far-right forces, including Reform UK and outright fascist grouplets.

Starmer's Labour has chased after Reform UK in its scapegoating and racist legislation, legitimising the false gospel of the far right.

Media perpetration of the 'stop the boats' propaganda has served to cause confusion and divisions, distracting some of the poorest people from the real culprits and causes of their plight.

The enemies of the working class are not desperate people arriving in small boats; the real threat comes from dangerous, billionaire exploiters and profiteers arriving by private jets or luxury private yachts. It's not the 7,000 asylum seekers in Scotland who have caused 250,000 people to be stuck on the social housing waiting lists, some of them for years. It's the

failure of governments to build affordable council houses or invest in renovation and retrofits of existing housing stock, and the rent-racketeering private landlords who profit from housing misery and scarcity of good social housing.

Asylum seekers, refugees, and immigrants didn't cause the banking crisis of 2008 and subsequent decades of austerity cuts - bankers and money-markets speculators did.

Immigrants and people of colour born in Scotland didn't create the crises in our public services. On the contrary, doctors and nurses born outside the UK make up a huge percentage of the dedicated staff who keep our NHS functioning, and migrant workers likewise have propped up the care sector, fruit-picking, agriculture and other sectors - often on dirt-cheap wages.

It's the failure of successive governments to tax the rich and big business and thereby invest in public health, education, housing and other public services which has robbed whole communities of what is required for a civilised existence - regardless of where members of those communities were born, or of their skin pigmentation.

The SSP says:

- Unite in collective action against poverty and inequality, for decent homes, public services and genuine socialist change
- Demand devolution of immigration laws to Holyrood, pending full Scottish independence
- Reject all racist immigration laws and racist divisions in workplaces and communities, incited by millionaires to weaken our ability to resist their exploitation. For working-class unity and socialism
- Demand the right of asylum seekers to work and contribute to society, with secure tenancies in public rented accommodation
- For a fully funded nationwide anti-racist and anti-sectarian roadshow to go into Scotland's schools, community centres and workplaces, involving popular artists, musicians, sportspeople, local trade unionists and anti-racist campaigns in an ongoing education project
- Build for a Scotland that welcomes all those either fleeing wars, persecution and climate catastrophes or simply wishing to make Scotland their home, thereby enriching our culture and collective communities
- For an independent socialist Scotland, free of racism, sectarianism, misogyny, homophobia, transphobia or other divisive prejudices and forms of discrimination and oppression. A socialist democracy of equal citizens.

Reject Reform UK - Millionaire Tory Extremists! Tax the Millionaires - Don't Vote for Them!

Labour and the SNP have sickened, disappointed and betrayed working-class people. In rage, some falsely imagine Reform UK is "different" and "worth giving a go." They are NOT!

Reform UK is riddled with multi-millionaires and former Tory party MPs.

Five of their 8 MPs are former Tory MPs - including ex-Tory Cabinet Ministers

Nigel Farage's personal wealth is over £3.2 million - adding £1.7m from jobs on the side last year, like selling gold bullion

Reform UK's chair Zia Yusuf is 'worth' £5.2 million, while deputy leader Richard Tice is 'worth' £40 million

These millionaire politicians voted to keep zero hours contracts and bosses' right to fire and rehire workers on worse wages

They voted against improved paternity leave, bereavement leave, sick pay and modest improvements to workplace rights

Reform UK want to charge you for hospital treatment, through privatised health insurance schemes

They want to drastically reduce taxes on the very rich and slash public services by £150 billion

They want to divide us along racist lines. To weaken working-class resistance to their plans to enrich their landlord, banker and billionaire friends. Including those financing Reform UK, such as Lord Bamford, multi-billionaire owner of the giant JCB construction machinery company, who has long been one of the biggest donors to the Tory Party but gave Reform UK £200,000 in late 2025.

The detested Tory Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher - who in the 1980s brutalised Scotland's mining communities, steelworks, print industry, shipyards and public services, and imposed the hated Poll Tax - is long since dead.

But Thatcherism is alive and vicious in the form of Farage's Reform UK. They are arch-

Thatcherite Tories, with a heavy dose of racist bigotry - no friends of the working class.

Don't forget Nigel Farage boasted: "I'm the only politician who keeps the flames of Thatcherism alive."

DON'T VOTE FOR THE MILLIONAIRES - TAX THEM!

Reject racist scapegoating and division by Reform UK's millionaires.

Unite for socialist change.

Vote for the SSP - who fight to use the nation's wealth for its people, regardless of colour, creed or country of origin.

For an Independent Socialist Scotland

A Modern Democratic Republic

Do you want the right to decide your own future?

Do you want Scotland to have the powers to:

- introduce a £15-an-hour, legally enforced Scottish minimum wage immediately, rising with inflation or average wages, whichever is greater
- abolish all zero hours contracts and guarantee a minimum 16-hour contract for every worker who wants one
- introduce a Scottish state pension that matches the best in Europe, instead of being the worst, as it is now - with voluntary retirement for men and women at the age of 55
- provide benefits that match the real cost of a decent, dignified life - and abolish benefits sanctions
- guarantee full average wages for sick workers and Statutory Sick Pay of at least £380-a-week
- repeal all anti-union laws
- scrap Trident weapons of mass nuclear annihilation - for bairns, not bombs; welfare not



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warfare; investment in people and public services, not weapons, arms profiteering and wars

- reverse the 50% cut to Corporation Tax on big business by successive Tory and Labour governments since the 1980s
- take all major industries, services and banking into democratic public ownership
- establish a modern democratic republic, free of the scandal-ridden, elitist, unelected monarchy
- free Scotland from the NATO nuclear military alliance
- stop Scotland going to wars and instead act as an international beacon of peace and socialist cooperation?

Those are just some of the socialist policies the Scottish Socialist Party campaigns for.

However, to aspire to this kind of Scotland, we need the powers that come with independence. Devolution reserves powers

over these issues to Westminster.

The SSP stands up for the right of the Scottish people to decide. For the right to a second independence referendum, at a time of the Scottish people's choosing, without any veto by Westminster.

But we don't just want to change flags and anthems. We want to change the entire system.

The SSP campaigns for:

- an independent, nuclear-free, peaceful, green Scottish socialist republic, with equal rights for all, regardless of colour, creed, country of birth, or identity.
- an independent socialist Scotland that welcomes people fleeing wars, persecution and climate catastrophes, and acts as a force for international peace and cooperation, not wars without end - aiming to help build an alliance or federation of equals, of socialist democracies across Europe and beyond

Track Record of the SSP

We don't expect blind faith in what we promise after the 2026 Holyrood elections.

We regard elections as an extension of daily struggles people are involved in to keep their heads above water, improve community facilities, afford the bills and have a decent life for their kids. Struggles the SSP are in the thick of, as members of our communities, trade unions and youth organisations.

We are ready and confident of being judged not just by our words, but by what we do all year round, every year. We are, after all, the party whose founding motto is 'Struggle, Solidarity, Socialism'.

Since the last Holyrood elections, the SSP has shown active support on virtually every picket line of striking workers, against cuts to pay, pensions, jobs or conditions.

We initiated and successfully agitated and organised for a mass STUC demonstration on Holyrood during the 2021/22 wave of workers' action on the cost-of-living crisis.

We won widespread support amongst trade unionists for our demand for a one-day general strike to unify that movement.

When multi-billionaire Jim Ratcliffe declared closure of Grangemouth refinery — and the London and Edinburgh governments both failed to save these skilled jobs — the SSP marched alongside the workers; broadcast their case through our media; had the union convener as guest speaker at SSP conference; and throughout, stuck to our demand for democratic nationalisation of Grangemouth, under workers' control, to apply the expertise of the workforce to an urgent transition to green production.

The Scottish Socialist Party was the only party staging street meetings in Falkirk demanding public ownership of the closure-threatened Alexander Dennis factories to build fleets of green buses, to help achieve our pioneering policy of free public transport for all.

From the first week onwards of the genocidal assault on Gaza, the SSP was ever-present on demonstrations in solidarity with the Palestinian people; amongst the first to demand an end to Labour's arms sales to

Israel, but also cessation of the SNP/Scottish Green coalition's subsidies to the same war-profiteering arms companies.

We've been visible opponents of Trump's criminal war on Iran, with its catastrophic consequences at home and abroad.

We've consistently united with other anti-racists against attacks on people seeking asylum from war and climate catastrophe, at demonstrations in Paisley, Perth, Falkirk, Dundee, Aberdeen, Glasgow, Edinburgh, etc - to the extent the racist far right have started to display placards declaring "Scottish Socialist Party - the enemy within".

Of course we've been part of every independence demo, advocating an independent socialist republic, with an end to the corrupt, elitist monarchy - which epitomises and helps to maintain all the worst inequalities that capitalism imposes - and for an independent Scotland that leaves the US-dominated nuclear alliance, NATO.

In all weathers, we've been on Scotland's streets demanding an end to fuel poverty and profiteering through democratic public ownership of energy; for a 5% wealth tax on millionaires to fund our NHS, education and housing; for expulsion of the PFI loan sharks from hospitals and schools, to save the £1.25bn this year alone being squandered on PFI repayments to consortia of bankers and venture capitalists.

On street stalls, in meetings with trade unions, at anti-cuts protests, we've fought for 'No Cuts' budgets by councils and the Scottish government, and championed our policy of immediate Council Tax abolition and its replacement with our income-based, progressive alternative: a Scottish Service Tax where 80% of people pay less, but taxation of the super-rich would have last year doubled funding for councils from £2.7bn to £5.3bn.

We stand proud of our record of battling for genuine socialist change, ready to be judged by the court of the working class.

What difference would SSP MSPs make?

Some people, heartily sickened by politicians, may ask “What difference would it make if a few Scottish Socialist Party MSPs were elected”?

The difference would be enormous. But only because we would combine what SSP MSPs did inside parliament with our actions outside it, in combination with thousands of others.

This is best illustrated by the real-life methods of the SSP when we had six MSPs, when we pioneered several policies to transform ordinary people’s lives.

It was the SSP which lodged the Bill to abolish prescription charges. We didn’t leave it at shuffling bits of paper round parliament. We were out on the streets engaging the public, winning support, and combined with health professionals and their unions, to end the taxation of sickness.

Labour and Lib Dem MSPs defeated the Bill, but it laid the foundations for the eventual abolition of prescription charges by the SNP government, which removed the burden of £10-per-item currently suffered by people in England.

The same method was applied to other measures presented by SSP MSPs. When we introduced the Bill to abolish the barbaric poindings and warrant sales, with its humiliation and victimisation of the poor, we took to the streets, built demonstrations, lobbied Parliament, and brought sufficient pressure on other MSPs to get the Bill passed.

We gathered support for the SSP’s Bill for universal free, healthy school meals from teachers’ unions, parents’ groups, and the public at street campaign stalls, unions and workplaces.

If SSP MSPs are elected this May, they will revive the party’s demand for universal provision of free, nutritious school meals, linking up with the likes of the STUC women’s committee, who are likewise committed to that life-enhancing measure.

We organised a demonstration of thousands in Glasgow for abolition of the Council Tax as well as pushing it in parliament. The SSP has taken that policy into the unions with renewed

vigour recently and would prioritise a Bill to ‘Axe the Tax’.

One of our flagship policies is free public transport for all, on buses, trains, ferries, trams and subways. SSP members would engage with transport workers’ unions, island communities and campaigns for better transport to force through a transformative Free Public Transport Bill — if we get MSPs elected.

That’s what’s on offer from the SSP.

People are being bombarded by the SNP leadership to “vote SNP 1 and 2”. The claim that this will boost the prospects of a pro-independence majority of MSPs is dangerously misleading. The voting system means that the greater the number of local constituency MSPs gained by the SNP, the fewer they will gain from votes cast in the ‘second’, regional lists (the peach-coloured voting forms).

In 2016, a million votes for the SNP on the regional lists only produced 4 SNP MSPs. Worse still, in 2021 a million SNP votes only produced 2 regional list MSPs. And eminent psephologist, John Curtice, recently calculated a similar volume of second votes in May 2026 for the SNP would elect either one or no regional list MSPs from the Scottish National Party.

It’s a wasted vote for anyone aspiring to Scottish independence. The only people it will help are Reform UK and Labour - unionist parties which rely almost exclusively on the regional list (‘second’) vote to win MSPs.

Unlike a second vote for the SNP, voting SSP on the regional lists is not a wasted vote. It’s a vote for socialist change, for independence, against poverty and pollution, for workers’ rights, against ‘forever wars’ and racism, against the pernicious Tory extremists of Reform UK.

Above all it’s a vote for action, to transform the lives of the working-class majority by collective struggle, with the great advantage of having tribunes of the people inside Holyrood to broadcast the case and assist the struggle for immediate, radical reforms on the road to an independent Scottish socialist republic.

STRUGGLE
SOLIDARITY
SOCIALISM



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