

SNP Manifesto 2021

What we're doing for the LGBTI community

Scotland has been helping lead the way in the fight for LGBTI equality. The SNP has a proud record of advancing and championing LGBTI rights while in government. We have delivered the most progressive and extensive equal marriage legislation, a pardon for historical 'homosexual offences', and equal civil partnerships.

We opened up adoption and IVF for same-sex couples, reformed blood donation rules, established a Working Group on Non-Binary Equality and made Scotland the first country in the UK to approve the provision of PrEP by the NHS.

Over the next parliament we will go further. Re-elect the SNP to:

End conversion therapy

There is no place for conversion therapy in Scotland. Such practices are discriminatory and harmful to the mental health and wellbeing of LGBTI people.

The UK Government made a commitment to ban conversion therapy in their LGBT Action Plan, and we fully support this, as we know making a ban fully comprehensive will involve action in reserved areas. However, if the UK Government does not take action, we will bring forward our own legislation insofar as is possible within the powers of the Scottish Parliament.

Protect and progress LGBTI rights

We will continue to demand the full devolution of equality, employment and immigration powers so that the Scottish Parliament has the powers to protect LGBTI equality and make Scotland a fairer and more equal place to live.

We remain firmly committed to improving the lives of trans and non-binary people. Trans people continue to

experience stigma and prejudice and suffer poorer health outcomes relative to the wider population. This needs to change.

We are committed to tackling transphobia head on through inclusive education and action to tackle prejudice and hate crime.

In the next parliament we will work with trans people, women, equality groups, legal and human rights experts to identify the best and most effective way to improve and simplify the process by which a trans person can obtain legal recognition, so that the trauma associated with that process is reduced. We remain committed to making necessary changes to the Gender Recognition Act that arise from this work at the earliest opportunity.

We will ensure that these changes do not affect the rights or protections that women currently have under the Equality Act.

It is important that concerns about reforms to gender recognition law are addressed through informed and respectful discussion. However we must not allow them to be a cover for transphobia or disinformation.

Improve access to Gender Identity Services

We are aware of the urgent need to improve access to NHS Gender Identity Services. We will take action by committing to three years of centralised crisis intervention funding to improve care, support and

services. We will work with people with lived experience to explore how this is best delivered, including improving community provision.

Eliminate HIV transmission

We have made huge progress in detecting and treating HIV, and people with the virus are now able to live long, happy and healthy lives. We believe we can go further, and will bring forward a new framework to eliminate HIV transmission by 2030.

Improve mental health support

Mental health problems can affect anyone, but there is substantial evidence that LGBTI people are especially at risk of experiencing poor mental health.

We will increase Scottish Government direct investment in mental health by at least 25%, ensuring that by the end of the parliament, 10% of our frontline NHS budget will be invested in mental health services.

We will build on the success of our community link worker programme, to ensure every GP practice in the country has access to a dedicated mental wellbeing link worker, creating a network of 1,000 additional dedicated staff who can help grow community mental health resilience and help direct social prescribing.

We will ensure at least 1% of frontline NHS spending is directed to Child and Adolescent mental health support and services by the end of the parliament.

Making Scotland safer

It is unacceptable that in the second decade of the 21st century, there is still so much to do to tackle violence against women and girls. We remain committed to eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls. We will establish a new multi-year £100 million funding stream over the next three years to support frontline services and focus on prevention of violence against women and girls from school onwards.

The vast majority of people who access support are women, but men also need access to services. We will fund separate resources for services that support men who are victims of rape and domestic abuse, and we will establish a national strategy on ending intimate and sexual violence against men and boys.

We passed the Hate Crime Act at the end of the last parliament which makes it an offence to stir up hatred against people on the grounds of sexual orientation, transgender identity and variations in sex characteristics.

Deliver inclusive education

We remain fully committed to progressing delivery of the world-leading recommendations on LGBT Inclusive Education across the curriculum in order to improve the learning environment for all children and young people.

We believe an educational approach to tackling homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic bullying and prejudice in schools is essential.

LGBT history, role models and equalities education should be taught in schools to tackle the prejudice which often leads to the bullying and social exclusion of LGBT young people. To achieve this, we have funded Time For Inclusive Education (TIE) to work with decision makers, produce curriculum resources, and deliver services for teachers and pupils to raise awareness, heighten knowledge, and foster good relations. We are committed to that work and will continue to fund it until the prejudice that has blighted too many young lives is eradicated.

Ensure a diverse and inclusive Scotland

We will introduce an overarching Scottish Diversity and Inclusion Strategy covering the public sector, our educational institutions, justice system, transport, and workplaces. This strategy will focus on the removal of institutional, cultural and financial barriers which lead to inequalities in relation to gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, disability and social mobility.

We will increase and improve our data collection so that across all our policies we will be able to have a strong evidence base, gauge intersectional inequality, measure outcomes, and recommend improvements.

We will work with leaders and partners in the police and wider society to improve the diversity of Police Scotland and enhance the quality of data across the justice system, to better understand and serve the needs of our communities.