

A green jobs recovery for Scotland

Scottish Parliament Elections 2021



Friends of the Earth Scotland



What do you want Scotland to look like in 2026? We want to see a country where people can travel to their new, good green jobs by free public transport, with less climate pollution, and homes powered by renewable energy. The MSPs and Scottish Government we elect in May will have the power to make this happen.

MSPs elected in May will be tasked with rebuilding from the impacts of COVID-19, whilst sitting for five of the nine years we have left to achieve our most crucial 2030 climate change target. All political parties and candidates must commit to tackling these crises in tandem, supporting policies to deliver a zero-carbon, circular, economy in the next parliament - one that values the people within it and creates quality new green jobs. Delivering the pace and scale of change required will need a complete reprogramme of our economy, we can't go back to the thinking and policies that got us into this mess.

In order to deliver this much needed transformation we need a radical new approach to the economy. Friends of the Earth Scotland sent a full 'manifesto' of policies to parties ahead of the election, but here we highlight four actions which show the kind of change which we need:

- Launching a publicly-owned renewable energy company, generating power
- Time for Scotland to go fossil fuel free
- Free bus travel, on publicly owned buses
- Putting people and climate action at the heart of decisions about the economy

Get in touch if you want to discuss any of these policies or how you can support our work on the election, by contacting: [**info@foe.scot**](mailto:info@foe.scot)

Further information on FoES and our election work, including our longer manifesto proposals, can be found at [**https://foe.scot/election2021**](https://foe.scot/election2021)

A publicly owned renewable energy company, generating power.

We need to see urgent and far-reaching action to shake up Scotland's energy sector, creating a rapid growth in renewable energy in Scotland that is provided to consumers at fair prices, using equipment built locally. Progress towards expanding Scotland's renewable energy sector has been frustrating in recent years, with jobs lost or put at risk in the renewable energy supply chain in places like Bifab, when work on building Scottish wind projects was sent overseas.

Scotland's energy system is currently a complex patchwork of private companies whose key priority is profit, not investing in creating green jobs and reducing emissions from energy. We must transform our approach to energy, making the system fairer and work in the best interests of people, while tackling the climate emergency.

To fully unlock Scotland's renewable energy potential, and secure a fair share of the benefits for Scottish communities, parties should commit to **launching a publicly owned energy company which will develop new renewables projects** and provide affordable, renewable energy, particularly benefitting for those in fuel poverty.

This will:

- Create green jobs in energy generation in Scotland, including in areas like manufacturing wind turbines by prioritising local supply chains.
- Increase the amount of renewable energy being created in Scotland
- Offer support for other models of ownership, like community owned energy
- Provide energy at an affordable price, prioritising those in fuel poverty

Time for Scotland to go fossil fuel free.

Scotland is committed to reaching net-zero emissions by 2045, but too much of our energy for electricity, heating our homes and powering our transport still comes from climate polluting fossil fuels like oil and gas. Currently 24% of all the energy used in Scotland comes from renewables - a good start, but we need to reach 100%.

We know that to limit climate change we need to leave fossil fuels in the ground, but currently the Scottish Government still supports drilling for every last drop of oil and gas in the North Sea. Our research shows that the 5.7 billion barrels currently being extracted will exceed the UK's share of the Paris Agreement goals, but the Government want to drill for a climate-busting 20 billion barrels.

At this election, all parties must commit to building more renewable energy to replace fossil fuels. At this election, all parties must commit to building more renewable energy to replace fossil fuels, and back a target for **100% of energy used in Scotland to come from renewables by 2030.**

They must also **set an end date for taking oil and gas out of the North Sea**, in line with our Paris Agreement obligations, and back plans that will deliver a just transition away from fossil fuels that supports workers and communities.

This will:

- Cut the 16% of Scotland's climate emissions that come from energy supply
- Create jobs in clean energy, with the potential for three clean energy jobs to be created for every oil and gas job at risk from winding down oil and gas production
- Support for workers and communities who currently work in fossil fuels

Free bus travel, on publicly owned buses.

Transport is Scotland's largest source of climate emissions - responsible for almost a third of our total annual emissions. Changing how we travel is key to tackling the climate crisis. Transport decisions in the next Parliament must focus on moving away from the car-centric system we have at present, recognising that the future lies in increasing access to public transport and boosting walking, cycling, and wheeling.

Buses have a key role to play in this process, but Scotland's bus network is patchy at best - leading to a constant decline, with a decrease of 100 million journeys in the ten years before the pandemic. It's no coincidence that this has happened as more buses have been run by private operators, cutting routes and raising fares. This is likely to have had the most impact on people on the lowest incomes, from ethnic minority communities, and people living with disabilities, who are the least likely to have access to a car.

Scotland has significant potential to create green jobs in bus manufacturing and maintenance, but workers at existing manufacturers in Scotland have faced job losses as demand for buses has fallen. Recent investment in electric buses from the Scottish Government is welcome - but to create more green jobs, and protect existing ones, we need to see the bus network expanding through public ownership and free travel.

The need for a new approach to Scotland's buses is clear. Buses should be run in the interest of passengers and communities, not shareholders. Parties should commit to **supporting local authorities to run their own bus services.**

In addition, to encourage more people back onto our buses they need to be an attractive, affordable option. Parties should commit to **extending free bus travel to all**, starting with a trial in the Glasgow city region in the lead up to the UN Climate Summit in November 2021.

This policy will:

- Create demand for bus manufacturing and maintenance jobs in Scotland,
- Make buses a more attractive and affordable low carbon option, compared to polluting alternatives like private cars
- Connect communities with loved ones and health care, allow access to educational and work opportunities
- Tackle transport poverty

Putting people and climate action at the heart of decisions about the economy.

The climate crisis spans every area of the economy, meaning that tackling it will require a well managed transition in almost everything we do. A strategic approach is especially important to ensure that we seize all the opportunities that exist to create new, quality jobs.

Scotland's 'Economic Strategy' sets out the Government's vision of how it will develop the economy. However, our current strategy is not fit to meet the challenges we face - written before the Scottish Government declared a climate emergency, before COVID-19, and focusing largely on economic growth. Ignoring the impact of economic decisions on people and the planet has only worsened the crises we face.

We need a new approach to the economy, one that focuses on tackling climate change, creating green jobs, and improving people's wellbeing. To achieve this, the Scottish Government can no longer afford to cross its fingers and hope that guidance and frameworks will encourage the required scale of change in a fair way. Instead we need to see a focus on greater investment and intervention from the Government, particularly in those areas where emissions remain high, like energy and transport.

Given the new recognition that we are in the midst of a climate emergency, and the limitations of purely chasing economic growth, parties should commit to changing its approach to the economy, replacing the Economic Strategy with **a new strategy focussed on delivering a Just Transition to a more equal, zero-carbon economy.**

This policy will:

- Put creating green jobs, decarbonising the economy and building a fairer society at the heart of all Government decision making
- Drive greater decarbonisation through Government leadership, particularly in polluting sectors
- Ensure economic decisions work in the best interest of people