

#SP16 Scottish Parliamentary Election countdown – Four days to go



Willie Rennie has probably been all over Scotland but we have noticed that a lot of his campaigning has centred on Edinburgh. Today he will be at Craigie's Farm just outside the city on the A90.

Speaking ahead of the visit Mr Rennie said:

"Over the last five years, with just five MSPs, Lib Dems have made a real difference, persuading the SNP to extend free care to thousands of extra two year olds across Scotland, challenging on police centralisation and pushing back against armed police on our streets and out of control stop and search.

"Liberal Democrats have been the lone voice at the Scottish Parliament standing up on these issues and challenging the SNP.

"We will always play a grown up, constructive role at Holyrood. And with more MSPs in the next parliament we will deliver on mental health, climate change and protecting our civil liberties."

Meanwhile Nicola Sturgeon will be in Stirling:

The SNP Leader will say that she would support Scotland's students by protecting free education and college places and providing the best possible financial support for those who need it.

Nicola Sturgeon says that she wouldn't have become First

Minister without the benefit of a university education and that candidates standing in this election had no right to deprive today's young people of the opportunities that they had been given.

The SNP will:

- Guarantee free university education based on ability to learn.
- Protect the Educational Maintenance Allowance – scrapped by the Tories south of the border – for nearly 60,000 school and college students.
- Guarantee a university place for every care experienced young person meeting the entry requirements and provide them with a full bursary.
- Retain student bursaries, including for student nurses – also scrapped by the Tories south of the border – and review student funding to make it fairer.
- Maintain full-time equivalent college places
- Appoint a Commissioner for Fair Access and ensure that people from deprived backgrounds have a fair chance of getting to university.



Ms Sturgeon commented ahead of the visit:

“I have always backed Scotland's students and as First Minister I will always support those who want to go to college and university.

“The SNP is the only party that has always supported free university education and I will never support tuition fees in Scotland.

“And to ensure we support education at every level we will protect college places and maintain the Educational Maintenance Allowance to help young people stay on at school.

“Where Labour were responsible for introducing fees in

Scotland and the Tories want to reintroduce them the SNP will always keep education free. The other parties in this campaign have made a series of broken promises to Scotland's students.

"My promise to students is absolutely clear. I will always back our young people and work to create more opportunities for them. Only by giving both votes to the SNP in this election can students elect a First Minister absolutely committed to a fair, free education system – accessible to all."

The Scottish Greens today welcomed an editorial in the Sunday Herald newspaper, in which the paper says it wants a parliament with Green voices "strengthened", helping push the government "from a progressive position."

The paper also highlights the SNP's "conservative" use of Holyrood's new tax powers. Under the Scottish Greens' proposals, everyone earning less than £26,500 would get to keep more of what they earn, while higher earners would be expected to contribute a fairer share.



The Scottish Greens, led by Maggie Chapman and Patrick Harvie, say they have been polling strongly on the regional vote, with analysis suggesting Green MSPs will be elected from across the eight electoral regions on Thursday.