

Scottish Greens launch election campaign

The Scottish Greens launched its campaign for the 2021 Holyrood election on top of a very sunny Calton Hill.

The party's lead candidates in Scotland rolled out the party's slogan for the election this morning, with co-leader Patrick Harvie and parliamentary co-leader Alison Johnstone MSP.

The Scottish Greens will campaign on what they regard as their record of delivering meaningful change for the last five years and with a detailed vision for Scotland's future.

Gorgeous day for the [@scottishgreens](https://twitter.com/scottishgreens) 2021 Election launch #SP2021 pic.twitter.com/TPZGYeAaDh

– Edinburgh Reporter (@EdinReporter) [March 16, 2021](#)

Scottish Greens co-leader Patrick Harvie would not be drawn on any loss to the party following Andy Wightman's resignation from it. But he did say that the party has high hopes of increasing the number of representatives elected in 2021.

He said: "Right throughout this session of the Parliament and especially during the pandemic the Greens have been focused on making a difference for the people of Scotland and we've secured more impact than any other opposition party.

"Whether that's the fairer income tax system that Scotland has now that's invested in local services, whether it's protecting

people like private rented sector tenants from eviction during the pandemic, or reversing the unfair downgrading of young people's exam grades when the algorithm replaced the traditional exams.

"We've been focused on making a difference that's what we will continue to do and if we vote like our future depends on it a good solid group of green elected in the May election will carry on making a difference making sure that our future is better than the world before Covid.

"Right across Scotland, but including in Lothian we have really strong hopes of getting more MSPs.

Some of the polls suggest that we can get not just two but three MSPs in Lothian this time.

"That would be fantastic progress adding to the strong track record that our councillors on Edinburgh City Council have made over recent years as well."



Alison Johnstone MSP and Patrick Harvie of The Scottish Green Party launching their 2021 Scottish Election campaign on top of Calton Hill PHOTO ©2021 The Edinburgh Reporter

Alison Johnstone Lothians MSP told us it is all about building on the legacy of the previous sessions of parliament. She said: "We're going to carry on having the impact that we've had. Hopefully there will be more of us and that impact will be even greater

"In this Parliament we delivered equal protection from assault for all our young people, we've increased marine protected areas, we have delivered free bus travel for all aged 21 and under from this autumn.

"We have increased the scope of free school meals so they will include all primary school pupils and we have made sure that taxation is fairer.

“Most people in Scotland pay less – and those who can afford to pay a bit more do so.

“We are going to continue in that same vein because we really do need a green and fairer recovery from the pandemic.”

We suggested to Alison Johnstone that the Greens are just the SNP in disguise, but she explained this was absolutely not the case. She replied: “I think you need to look at the policy divergence between those two parties.

“I am certainly no supporter of SNP transport policy or a great deal of other policies which is why we’ve defeated the SNP in parliament.

“I led a debate on local healthcare services We constantly vote in a different way to that party. People only need to look at the voting records to see the evidence.”

Speaking ahead of the launch, co-leader Lorna Slater said: “Only the Scottish Greens have the solutions for a fair and green recovery from this pandemic which leaves no one behind.

“From fairer income taxes, free bus travel for young people and a public sector pay rise, we’ve shown in the last five years that Green votes make a difference.

“But our future is at stake. With global science showing we have only nine years left before the climate breakdown becomes irreversible, the Scottish Greens are the only party contesting this election with the practical solutions to address the climate emergency with the urgency it requires.

“Our manifesto will build on the detailed plans in our Scottish Green New Deal to invest in renewable energy, public transport, warm homes and protecting nature, creating tens of thousands of new well-paid jobs and rebuilding the public sector to address the urgent challenges that face our country.

“At this election Scotland has an opportunity to vote for the

country it wants, leading Europe in renewable energy and driving down emissions. That's why the time to vote Scottish Green is now."







