

# **General Election 2024 – Rishi Sunak visits Scotland to launch manifesto**

**Although his first visit during this General Election was to Scotland, the Prime Minister Rishi Sunak who assumed the Tory leadership in October 2022, has not been to Edinburgh for some time.**

He accompanied Douglas Ross, the soon to be former leader of the Scottish Conservatives, at a press launch in the Grassmarket where the audience was made up of faithful party members as well as press and photographers.

Mr Sunak continued: “The 4th of July is Scotland’s chance to end the decade of division, to put independence on the back burner for a generation, to get back to the issues that really matter to communities up and down this country. But that can only happen if the SNP are routed, and not just if the SNP lose some seats but lose big. Voting Scottish Conservative is the only way to ensure that that happens.”

Accusing the SNP of an obsession with independence- echoed by Mr Ross – Mr Sunak said: “Every Scottish Conservative MP returned will make the UK stronger and it sends a clear message that Scotland wants politicians who concentrate on the priorities of the Scottish people and not constitutional monomania.”

The manifesto is “ Focused on Your Priorities” but on just about every page the SNP gets a mention. I asked Douglas Ross if this was perhaps not just as obsessive behaviour and why it is the SNP the party is running from and not Labour.

He said: “In key seats up and down the country it is a straight choice. Between the Scottish Conservatives and the SNP. If people unite behind the Scottish Conservatives we can beat the SNP, end their obsession with independence and get the focus onto the issues that are in the manifesto. It is about improving our NHS, it is about raising educational standards, it is about putting the justice system on the side of the victims rather than the criminals, recruiting additional police officers across the country and about prioritising infrastructure projects that had been promised by the SNP but those promises have not been delivered. It is about cutting the tax burden for people across the country.

“All of these issues are coming up on the doorstep when we are knocking on doors and speaking to voters. And that is why they should be the priority for every party. They are the priority for the Scottish Conservatives. Independence is the priority for the SNP.”



Asked about the Scottish Conservative candidates who are standing in Edinburgh – many of whom are councillors Mr Ross denied this was simply the easy choice given the rushed announcement about the election. Mr Ross was a former councillor and said: “I think councillors make very good candidates. I was one a number of times. They bring their experience in local government and the challenges they see in local government as a result of the SNP cutting budgets centrally and the difficult decisions local councils have to make. Scottish Conservative councillors up and down the country will make great champions for their areas focussed on the issues we’ve outlined in our manifesto today.”

The manifesto states that the five key priorities for all Scottish Conservative MPs elected on July 4 will be:

- Recruiting 1,000 extra GPs as part of a strategy to reduce waiting times across Scotland’s NHS
- Restoring our schools by backing teachers to teach and increasing subject choices for pupils
- Making our streets safer by recruiting 1,000 extra police officers and introducing longer sentences for dangerous criminals
- Cutting income tax and national insurance to help ordinary Scottish workers and families
- Upgrading Scotland’s neglected roads, including the A9, A96, A90, A75, A77, A83 and A1.

[Read the manifesto here.](#)



