

General Election 2024 – today's election messages from the major parties

SNP

The SNP says that only a vote for the SNP will protect Scotland's Parliament from what they regard as increasing Westminster power grabs, as Scotland marks the 25th anniversary of the official opening of the Scottish Parliament on Monday.

The SNP has challenged Labour to repeal the post-Brexit legislation that has unpicked Scotland's hard-fought for devolution settlement, like the Internal Market Act.

The party says that in recent years there have been increased incidents of Westminster "power grabs" with legislation blocked by the UK Government, despite receiving cross-party support in the Scottish Parliament.

Fiona Hyslop MSP, who was first elected to the first Scottish Parliament in 1999, said: "Scotland's Parliament has been transformative for the lives of people who live here. On its 25th anniversary, the SNP affirms our commitment to protecting our national Parliament and its hard-fought-for powers from

the shameful power grabs of Westminster.

“Over 17 years in government, the SNP has delivered free university tuition, abolished prescription charges, delivered the ‘game-changing’ Scottish Child Payment, the Baby Box and kept our precious Scottish NHS in public hands. In recent years, Holyrood’s powers have been under threat with Westminster overriding decisions made by our elected national Parliament. On this milestone anniversary, I call on Sir Keir Starmer to repeal the dangerous anti-devolution legislation introduced by the Tories when he becomes Prime Minister next week.

“The SNP will stand against Westminster’s erosion of our Parliament’s powers and always put Scotland first. We want decisions about Scotland to be made right here in Scotland.

“People who want to protect our Parliament from Westminster powergrabs need to vote SNP on Thursday to ensure that decisions about Scotland are made in Scotland, for Scotland.”

Scottish Labour

Today Scottish Labour leader Anas Sarwar will visit Methil along with Shadow Scottish Secretary of State Ian Murray and local candidate Richard Baker to promote their election message saying that the party has set out its plans to

deliver quality jobs in Scotland.

A Labour government has pledged to deliver:

- A Green Prosperity Plan that will create 69,000 green jobs in Scotland.
- A New Deal for Working People that will deliver a genuine living wage, ban exploitative zero hour contracts, end fire and rehire and expand day one rights.
- A National Wealth Fund capitalised with £7.3 billion of funding to make strategic investments in key industries.
- A British Jobs Bonus allocating up to £500 million per year from 2026, which will help build supply chains across the country.
- A New Industrial Strategy that will ensure we seize the opportunities of the future to deliver jobs and growth.

Labour warned that “Scotland cannot afford another five years of Tory incompetence”, urging voters to take this opportunity for change.

Scottish Labour leader Anas Sarwar said: “This week we finally have an opportunity to call time on 14 years of Tory economic misery and vote for change.

“Working people have been forced to pay the price for Tory failure for too long, but Labour has a plan to stop the chaos and kickstart a decade of national renewal.

“A Labour government will be firmly on the side of working people – creating jobs, delivering growth, boosting pay and tackling insecure work. Change is within touching distance, but we only get change by voting for it.

“Scotland cannot afford another five years of Tory incompetence, sleaze and failure – we need to make sure we

take this opportunity to deliver change.

“Together, we can boot the Tories out of office and elect a Labour government that will deliver quality jobs in every part of Scotland.”

Scottish Conservatives

The Conservatives are setting out with an ad van campaign beginning today in East Renfrewshire before moving to other key seats where the party claims they are neck and neck with the SNP.

The Scottish Conservatives say that Reform candidates who are also pro independence could help the SNP win several Scottish seats.

The Scottish Conservatives pointed to evidence from recent polls showing that while Reform will only win a small percentage of the vote, it could be enough to “elect an SNP MP by the back door”.

Party chairman Craig Hoy said Reform candidates may want to help the SNP, since several of them are pro-independence.

Gordon and Buchan candidate, Kris Callander, and Dundee Central candidate, Vicky McCann, both supported independence.

Reform’s deputy chairman, David Kirkwood, is another independence voter. He is standing in the Dumfriesshire, Clydesdale and Tweeddale seat.

When asked directly last week, Reform chairman Richard Tice

couldn't say how many of his candidates are pro-independence.

Scottish Conservative party chairman Craig Hoy said: "The Scottish Conservatives are ready to defeat the SNP in key seats up and down Scotland where it's a straight fight between us and the nationalists.

"If everyone who wants to beat the SNP votes for the Scottish Conservatives, we can do it and finally end their demands for independence.

"But the result will be so close in many seats. Even a few votes for Reform could elect an SNP MP by the back door.

"We know several Reform candidates are pro-independence, so it may well be that helping the SNP is what they really want.

"On Thursday, in key seats, vote Scottish Conservative to guarantee the best possible chance of beating the SNP."

Scottish Liberal Democrats

Scottish Liberal Democrat leader Alex Cole-Hamilton today used a visit to the Highlands to unveil his party's plan to deliver £1 billion extra a year to "fix Scotland's crumbling infrastructure", saying a vote for the party would deliver new NHS buildings, get dangerous concrete

out of classrooms and stop sewage dumping in Scotland's rivers.

The Liberal Democrats' spending plans will have benefits for Scotland – on average from an additional £1 billion in capital funding in each year of the next UK Parliament.

This uplift would give the green light for infrastructure projects the length and breadth of the country. The party is proposing fixes including:

Extra investment in local hospitals and NHS equipment to bring down waiting lists and end long journeys for treatment;

A new fund help public authorities deal with the dangerous concrete crisis, making buildings safe and ending the scandal of crumbling classrooms and hospital wards;

Upgrades to tackle the dumping of sewage by the government-owned water company

Scottish Liberal Democrat leader Alex Cole-Hamilton said: "People are waiting an age for treatment but the SNP have poured cold water on essential NHS projects all across Scotland. They have left staff working in buildings containing dangerous concrete and paused the National Treatment Centres that were supposed to catch-up on surgeries and diagnostics.

"A vote for the Liberal Democrats on Thursday is a vote to fix Scotland's crumbling and life-expired infrastructure. Our plans would deliver £1 billion more a year.

"It could get shovels in the ground for new hospitals in Fort William and Lerwick, build a new Edinburgh Eye Pavilion, and end long journeys for the young people and pregnant mums forced to travel hundreds of miles for care.

"This big investment from the Liberal Democrats could also fix cavernous potholes in the roads, get the sewage out of our

rivers and give more children the best school buildings.

“People are moving away from the SNP and backing the Scottish Liberal Democrats because they want a local champion who will stand up for local health services, fix crumbling buildings, bring down waits and end long journeys for treatment.”



Scottish Liberal Democrat leader Alex Cole Hamilton and Edinburgh West candidate Christine Jardine outlined their party's bold plans to tackle the climate crisis by launching a national insulation programme.

PHOTO Alan Simpson

Scottish Greens

The Scottish Greens say the next UK Government must act quickly to ensure that train travel is cheaper than flying in a bid to cut emissions and reduce flights.

The party is calling for the next government to use taxation on aviation, including a frequent flyer levy, to subsidise rail tickets on the most popular air routes.

It is part of a package of measures included in the party's manifesto to reduce aviation, including the removal of tax breaks on aviation fuel and a £1000 per head tax on all private users landing in the UK.

Lorna Slater, Co-Leader of the Scottish Greens, said: "As a matter of principle, taking the train should always be cheaper than flying.

"Traveling by rail in the UK is far more expensive than in many other countries, so it is no wonder that so many are choosing to fly. We badly need to turn that around. It is ridiculous that people who use the train are being punished for making cleaner and greener choices.

"The next UK Government must take urgent action to make it easier and cheaper to do the right thing. That means using taxes from aviation to cut the price of trains and increase the number of direct rail connections between cities across the UK.

