

A lack of investment is cutting off opportunities for our young people.

13 August 2017



Education was supposed to be the number one priority for the SNP – but the numbers just don't add up.

Since the SNP came to power, education has seen a smaller share of public spending, meaning that millions of pounds less has been spent on education than if the SNP had kept pace with Labour's choices.

Under Labour, 13% of public spending was on the Education and Training budget. Under the SNP, that area has fallen to 11.8% of spending.

If the SNP had kept pace with Labour's investment in Education and Training, it would have spent 13% or £75.6 billion.

That means the SNP has spent £6.9 billion less over its period in office than if they had kept pace with the Labour years – or, on average, £773 million a year less.

Meanwhile, there has been a huge fall in pupils sitting key subjects since Nicola Sturgeon became First Minister.

At Higher level, there has been:

- An 11 per cent drop in Chemistry
- A 14 per cent drop in Maths
- A 12 per cent drop in Physics

At National 5 level there has been:

- A 24 per cent drop in French
- A 26 per cent drop in German
- A 31 percent drop in Italian

These figures show that a lack of investment is cutting off opportunities for our young people.

This week, Labour's summer campaign 'For The Many' turns to education with a back to school theme. We'll outline ideas on how we would make Scottish education better.

Keep up with the campaign so far by clicking the image below:



Scotland can be fairer, greener and better with Labour

12 August 2017



Scotland can be a fairer, greener and better country, here are 15 things we would do to make Scotland greener.

1. Aspiring to generate 50 per cent of our electricity, heat and transport demand from renewables by 2030.
2. Stress-testing all Scottish Government policies against climate commitments.
3. Banning onshore fracking.
4. Cancelling the SNP's plan to cut air passenger duty which will lead to an annual increase in greenhouse gas emissions of 50,000 tonnes.
5. Tackling fuel poverty including introducing tougher targets to make private rented homes more energy efficient.
6. Creating more jobs in low carbon industries.
7. Supporting calls for a Just Transition Commission.
8. Calling for robust change from the Scottish Government through the Transition Training Fund.
9. Extending the powers to re-regulate local bus services and introducing regulationsto protect bus routes of critical community value.
10. Returning ScotRail to the public sector and ensuring train ticket prices

are fairer, taking more cars off our roads.

11. Introducing a plastic bottle deposit scheme.

12. Encouraging public and private sector bodies to take part in 'active travel' schemes and persuading workers to commute by public transport. This also addresses air quality.

13. Supporting the development of a Sustainable Energy Innovation Centre, currently under review by the Scottish Funding Council.

14. Addressing biodiversity concerns including protecting our bees by prohibiting neonicotinoids as soon as our EU relationship allows us to do so.

15. Enacting an animal welfare plan to protect Scotland's wildlife.

Read more about our summer campaign, For the Many, by clicking the image below:



Tax and spend, SNP style.

10 August 2017

This is tax and spend, SNP style.

1.) The SNP's proposal to cut the rate of Air Departure Tax by 50 per cent is estimated to cost as much as **£189 million a year by the end of the Parliament.**

2.) That is more than the SNP government's attempt to deal with the education attainment gap, the pupil equity fund, **which has a budget of £120 million.**

3.) That's against a backdrop of **4,000 fewer teachers**, a teacher recruitment crisis falling literacy and numeracy standards.

4.) The Scottish Government's own analysis has shown, the effect of a cut in APD will be to increase air travel and associated greenhouse gas emissions by **more than 50,000 tonnes**.

It is time for Derek Mackay, the Finance Secretary, to drop this tax break for frequent flyers and instead focus on improving the lives of working families.

Our summer campaign, For The Many, is this week focused on making Scotland a greener country.

Read about our campaign by clicking on the image below:



SNP must rule out increasing bus pass age

Scotland's public transport system is a patchwork of services, with many areas left behind with no decent provision.

Bus services are grinding to a halt and passenger numbers have declined by 78 million since 2007.

Public money has been siphoned off through privatisation and used to fund the rocketing earnings of directors, dividends for shareholders, and the coffers of overseas governments.

A different system is possible. Labour will prioritise public service over private profit.

As part of our summer campaign, For the Many, we have unveiled a plan to save our lifeline bus and ferry services, which includes:

- Extending the powers to re-regulate local bus services to all areas that want them – a policy the SNP dropped before 2007 while accepting donations from bus tycoon Sir Brian Souter.
- Creating municipal bus companies that are publicly run for passengers not for profit, based on the successful Lothian Buses model.
- Introducing regulations to designate and protect bus routes of critical community value.
- Keeping ferry services, such as CalMac, in public hands by not subjecting them to tender in the future.
- Encouraging public and private sector bodies to take part in 'active

travel' schemes to persuade workers to commute by public transport.



We are also challenging the SNP to keep the free bus pass for all those aged 60 and over.

The free bus pass was delivered by Labour and a Labour government would protect it.

But the SNP Government has cut the bus pass budget by £10m, and there is still no commitment from ministers to keep the age eligibility level at 60.

There are now over one million people in Scotland benefitting from the bus pass, which has given older and disabled people the freedom to travel when they choose – many of whom would otherwise be unable to do so.

As part of our campaign to build a country that works for the many, not the few, Labour would prioritise public service over private profit.

Read more about our summer campaign by clicking on the image below:



Labour's plan to improve Scotland's railways

Labour would invest in a modern, integrated, accessible transport system that is reliable and affordable.

Our transport systems illustrate the abject failure of Tory policies; relentless deregulation, privatisation and fragmentation. In Scotland, ten years of the SNP has also left people desperate for transformative change.

This week, we revealed that ScotRail trains are failing to match the national punctuality target at nearly 60 per cent of stations where trains terminate. There has been an improvement in performance in recent months following an outcry from passengers. However, ScotRail is still falling short of its contractual target.

That's why we have unveiled a blueprint to improve Scotland's railways, with a publicly-owned network as the backbone.



Here is our plan:

- **Bring ScotRail and the Caledonian Sleeper into public ownership when the franchises expire – a demand first made by Scottish Labour when the First ScotRail franchise ended, which was ignored by the SNP.**
- **Automatic refunds to passengers for tickets purchased by card if their train is delayed.**
- **Fairer fares for passengers – the SNP refused Labour's demands for a price freeze this year, but Scottish Labour will press for a fair deal in 2018.**
- **Free WiFi across the entire network under a UK Labour government.**
- **End the expansion of driver-only operations.**
- **Introduce legal duties to improve accessibility for people with disabilities.**
- **Retain Network Rail in whole, rather than letting the Tories strip it of powers.**
- **Support the completion of the HS2 high-speed rail line to Glasgow and Edinburgh.**
- **Encourage public and private sector bodies to take part in 'active travel' schemes to persuade workers to commute by train.**

Delayed trains are still a major problem on the ScotRail network, despite

improvements in recent months.

Passengers have always been entitled to compensation for significant delays, but many are unaware of their rights. Scottish Labour has repeatedly called on the Scottish Government to run an awareness campaign.

Now we are going further and demanding that automatic compensation is introduced for passengers paying by card if their train is 30 minutes or more late.



Scottish Labour will continue to keep up the pressure on ScotRail and the SNP Government to meet the expectations and needs of Scotland's passengers in the months ahead. This week, our summer campaign – For The Many – is focusing on making Scotland a greener country. Read more about our campaign by clicking on the image below:

