

# We need to renew the UK and bring Scotland together.

By Kezia Dugdale

The effects of Brexit and the drumbeat of a second independence referendum coming from Nicola Sturgeon means that questions about how we run our country are again at the centre of our politics.

But what is clear is that neither a Tory hard Brexit nor a divisive second independence referendum is what the majority of Scots want.

People want change, but they don't want the country to be divided again. Instead, we need to start thinking about how we work together. We need a new deal for how power is redistributed in this country. One that brings power closer to communities. Not just in Scotland but across the whole UK.

Nicola Sturgeon and Ruth Davidson sit in the Scottish Parliament chiefly because of the efforts of the Scottish constitutional convention in the 1980s, which led to the creation of the Scottish Parliament.

It was Labour that championed devolution for decades. And it is bitterly disappointing to Labour politicians like me that in a decade of SNP government, they have not unlocked the potential of devolution.

That potential includes bringing power closer to the people, bridging the gap between the governed and those who govern and to give people more influence over the decisions that affect their lives.

The vote for Brexit isn't just the failure of the Remain campaign; it's a failure of our system of government.

If you think Westminster feels remote in Glasgow then imagine how it feels in Wigan or Sunderland.

I lost count of the number of colleagues from across the rest of the UK who reported back from the doorsteps during the EU referendum that people were willing to gamble on Brexit because, really, how much worse could it get?

In Scotland those feelings revealed themselves two years earlier during the independence referendum.

Then it was my turn on the doorstep to hear that, while the SNP had not made the case, people were willing to take a leap into the dark because, really, how much worse could it get?

In a generation the UK has gone from feeling that things can only get better to things can't possibly get worse.

That's why we need to change how we govern ourselves.

Our system of government was not doing the job it should have done before Brexit or the independence referendum.

That's why I want to see a People's Constitutional Convention and a new Act of Union to renew the UK for a new age.

This proposal means more powers for Scotland but strengthens the whole UK as well.

It seeks to build out from the benefits we already derive from being part of the UK, and it would bring power closer to people.

Our country feels so divided just now. Between remain and leave, yes and no, rich and poor. But together we're stronger. That's why Labour is making the case for bringing power closer to communities, redistributing power through the UK the way we redistribute wealth through the UK.

That's a better future for Scotland than a hard Tory Brexit, or a divisive second independence referendum.

That's why we need to change how we govern ourselves.

This article originally appeared in the Daily Record on 14/02/17

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## [News story: Doors open at unique nuclear archive](#)

Speaking today at the Nucleus (Nuclear and Caithness Archive) in Wick, NDA chairman Stephen Henwood, said:

Today we see a new chapter in the important role Caithness has played in the UK's nuclear history. For many decades Dounreay was at the forefront of the development of the British, and world, nuclear industry and now Nucleus will see this knowledge protected for future generations.

NDA Chief Executive John Clarke added:

Across the UK, at over 17 sites, we have accumulated large volumes of important and valuable records, some dating back to the 1940s. Now we have Nucleus, we have ensured that this information is accessible, secure, and managed efficiently for the taxpayer.

At its peak, Dounreay employed more than 3,000 staff and brought a

wide range of contracts for local businesses. By placing Nucleus in Wick, the NDA is honouring our responsibility to help offset the economic impact of closing down sites that were once major regional employers.

Located near one of the UK's earliest nuclear research sites, Dounreay in Scotland, the Nucleus archive will have a dual role: as well as housing nuclear records, the facility will contain a collection of local Scottish records that has outgrown its existing home.

An exercise lasting at least five years is now under way to collect many thousands of important plans, photographs, drawings and other records from locations across the UK for transfer to Nucleus.

The site's records – including plans, drawings, photographs and other information – will be the first nuclear collection transferred to Nucleus from the 17 NDA sites. The Caithness collection, with records dating back to the 16th century, are already in place.

Up to 26 km of shelving has been installed in a series of secure pods to take the material and ensure it is preserved. Nucleus will employ a staff of approximately 20 including archivists, preservation experts and support staff.

An operation has already been under way for a number of years to retrieve, collate and organise the huge quantities of records that are currently stored at or near individual sites.

It is hoped that, during 2017, Nucleus will be granted Place of Deposit status by The National Archive at Kew.

Once achieved, it will become one of the largest accredited repositories outside London.

An official opening ceremony will take place later in the year.

Archive material will be catalogued, indexed and stored in a carefully controlled environment, with humidity and temperature kept stable to minimise the potential for deterioration.

Old decaying documents will be transferred to archive-quality paper by on-site preservation specialists, and digitised for improved accessibility.

It is anticipated that interest in the nuclear material will be overwhelmingly from academics, regulators, journalists, industry representatives and all other researchers. The information will be provided digitally, wherever possible, avoiding risks of damage to the original material.

The triangular single-storey building has a large public area, including a reading room and community space for exhibitions, study or training.

The archive will also fulfil an important role for the future geological

disposal facility (GDF) that is being developed for the UK, acting as a central repository for detailed waste records that must be safeguarded for many generations.

Discussions are also under way with the wider nuclear industry, including the Ministry of Defence, new build developers and operators of the UK's current nuclear power stations, to potentially consolidate their records at Nucleus.

[Nucleus Archive – video showing construction progress](#)

[Case study: NDA archive: Nucleus \(the Nuclear and Caithness Archives\)](#)

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## **£104 million to heat Wales' most vulnerable households**

The Welsh Government [Warm Homes programme](#), which includes Nest and Arbed, provides funding for home energy efficiency improvements to low income households and those living in deprived communities across Wales.

The £104 million funding includes £32 million of the additional £40 million funding announced in the Final Budget last month. The remaining £8 million will be invested in other green growth initiatives.

The Welsh Government funding will also lever in around £24million of European funding, in addition to Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funding.

The Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs, Lesley Griffiths, announced the funding during a visit to Trowbridge to see how households have benefited from previous Arbed funding.

Cardiff County Council were recently successful in receiving further Arbed grant funding and take up has been extremely positive, with over 75% of residents signing up for a survey within two weeks of applications opening.

There are now over 300 homes in the area involved in the Arbed scheme, with a further 100 planned over the next few months.

The Cabinet Secretary said:

“During the winter months how to keep warm while also meeting high energy bills is a very real concern for many low income households across Wales. I am therefore delighted we are committing £104million to our Warm Homes programme over the next four years.

“The Warm Homes Programme aims to make improvements to homes, such as boiler and heating upgrades and applying loft insulation, to

increase energy efficiency, reduce household bills and in turn reduce energy use and climate change.

“There is also an emphasis on using the local supply chain to make these changes, creating jobs, developing skills and boosting the local economy.”

Mr and Mrs Foley, who received external wall insulation in Phase 2 of the Trowbridge energy efficiency scheme, said

“Not only does our home look lovely, but we have made over £200 worth of energy savings in just 6 months! The energy advice we have been given has been so helpful. Simple tips for everyday life. We are so grateful for the scheme.”

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## **It is now clear that the Government is unwilling to commit the necessary resources to our nation's defences – Griffith**

**Nia Griffith MP, Labour's Shadow Defence Secretary**, responding to the International Institute for Strategic Studies' Military Balance report, said:

“This report exposes the Government's complete and shocking failure to maintain its commitment on defence spending to our Armed Forces and to the country.

“Just weeks after the Prime Minister was lecturing our allies about increasing spending to meet the 2 percent NATO commitment, it is now clear that her Government is unwilling to commit the necessary resources to our nation's defences.

“As the Defence Select Committee has shown, the MoD was already barely scrapping over the 2 percent mark and had changed its accounting methods to give the illusion of keeping the commitment. To be spending less than 2 percent of GDP on defence is utterly unacceptable, particularly in this time of immense global uncertainty.

“Labour is committed to spending at least 2 percent of our GDP on defence spending, as we consistently did when in government.”

ENDS

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## [Press release: Lengthy bans for carbon credit company directors](#)

World Future sold voluntary emission reduction carbon credits (VERs) at highly inflated prices to members of the public as an investment. The credits had no investment potential.

In January Edward George Lee became the last of the four to agree to a disqualification with the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. Mr Lee, 71, of Woodford Green, Essex accepted a four year, six month disqualification which commenced on 6 February 2017.

In 2015 and 2016 his fellow directors, James Laurence Ward, 31, of London E18; Hollie Emily Chapman, 31, of Loughton, Essex and Julie Margaret Sellers, 55, of Croydon, had earlier accepted disqualifications of between 12 and 14 years.

The disqualifications follow an investigation by the Official Receiver, whose involvement commenced with the winding up of the company in the public interest. The winding up order was initiated following a Company Investigations probe into the affairs of the company.

The Official Receiver's investigation uncovered that between June 2011 and March 2012 World Future sold VERs to members of the public as an investment and netted at least £2,484,500.

VERs are fundamentally different from the licences to pollute (such as CERs) that can be readily traded in the compliance carbon market established under the Kyoto protocol. VERs are intended to be retired by businesses or individuals to offset their carbon footprints. Unlike with CERs, there is no readily accessible market where customers can sell on their VERs in the hope of being able to make a profit.

Ward acted as a director of World Future throughout its trading life without being formally appointed and caused it to trade with a lack of commercial probity by selling VERs as investments that had no potential to show a return to investors. He was only formally appointed as a director after the trading had ceased.

Chapman, Sellers and Lee were appointed at various times to be directors, but took no part in the day to day trading of World Future. Their inaction

facilitated Ward and another individual to control World Future and cause it to trade with a lack of commercial probity while concealing their involvement. The other individual is already subject to a 14 year disqualification for action as a director in another company.

Commenting on this case Anthony Hannon, Official Receiver in the Public Interest Unit, said:

This company held itself out as having extensive expertise in the carbon credit market and made bold claims about the potential returns available when investing in carbon credits.

The directors and salespeople had no such trading experience and were only able to make sales on the basis of systematic misrepresentations about the VERs they sold. The truth is that the VERs were impossible to resell, making them worthless as investments. The company was run entirely for the benefit of those running it, at substantial cost to the investors who had been misled.

The lengthy periods of disqualification in this case show that this kind of behaviour will not be tolerated by the Insolvency Service.

## **Notes to Editors**

World Future Ltd (CRN: 07662439) was incorporated on 8 June 2011. The trading address shown on its literature was Level 37, 1 Canada Square, Canary wharf, London E14 5AA, but this was an accommodation address where the company had no physical presence. The company's actual trading address was at Docklands Business Centre, 10 – 16 Tiller Road, London E14 8PX.

The petition to wind up the company was presented in the public interest by the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills following an investigation conducted by Company Investigations (Live), another specialist unit within the Insolvency Service which uses powers under the Companies Act 1985 (as amended) to conduct confidential enquiries into the activities of live limited companies in the UK on behalf of the Secretary of State.

The winding up order against World Future Ltd was made on 6 March 2013.

The company had previously entered creditors voluntary liquidation on 7 June 2012.

On 14 May 2015 the Secretary of State accepted a disqualification undertaking from James Laurence Ward for a period of 14 years. The period of disqualification commenced on 4 June 2015.

On 13 November 2015 the Secretary of State accepted a disqualification

undertaking from Julie Margaret Sellers for a period of 12 years. The period of disqualification commenced on 4 December 2015.

On 8 March 2016 the Secretary of State accepted a disqualification undertaking from Hollie Emily Chapman for a period of 12 years. The period of disqualification commenced on 29 March 2016.

On 16 January 2017 the Secretary of State accepted a disqualification undertaking from Edward George Lee for a period of 4 years and 6 months. The period of disqualification will commence on 6 February 2017.

A disqualification order has the effect that without specific permission of a court, a person with a disqualification cannot:

- act as a director of a company
- take part, directly or indirectly, in the promotion, formation or management of a company or limited liability partnership
- be a receiver of a company's property

Disqualification undertakings are the administrative equivalent of a disqualification order but do not involve court proceedings. Persons subject to a disqualification order are bound by a [range of other restrictions](#).

The Insolvency Service, an executive agency sponsored by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), administers the insolvency regime, and aims to deliver and promote a range of investigation and enforcement activities both civil and criminal in nature, to support fair and open markets. We do this by effectively enforcing the statutory company and insolvency regimes, maintaining public confidence in those regimes and reducing the harm caused to victims of fraudulent activity and to the business community, including dealing with the disqualification of directors in corporate failures.

BEIS' mission is to build a dynamic and competitive UK economy that works for all, in particular by creating the conditions for business success and promoting an open global economy. The Criminal Investigations and Prosecutions team contributes to this aim by taking action to deter fraud and to regulate the market. They investigate and prosecute a range of offences, primarily relating to personal or company insolvencies.

The agency also authorises and regulates the insolvency profession, assesses and pays statutory entitlement to redundancy payments when an employer cannot or will not pay employees, provides banking and investment services for bankruptcy and liquidation estate funds and advises ministers and other government departments on insolvency law and practice. Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is [available](#).

All public enquiries concerning the affairs of the company should be made to: The Official Receiver, Public Interest Unit (South), The Insolvency Service, 2nd Floor, 4 Abbey Orchard Street, London SW1P 2HT. Tel: 020 7637 6578 Email: [piu.or@insolvency.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:piu.or@insolvency.gsi.gov.uk).

**Contact Press Office**

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 7596 6187

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on: