

Scotland can lead world with Labour's plan to end period poverty

14 August 2017



Access to sanitary products should be a basic right, but too many people in Scotland can't afford or obtain what they need.

That's why Labour MSP Monica Lennon is proposing world leading legislation to end period poverty.

Monica has launched a consultation on her Member's Bill which proposes:

- Put a duty on Scottish Ministers to introduce a universal system of free provision of sanitary products.
- Put a duty on all schools to provide free sanitary products in school toilets.
- Put a duty on all colleges and universities to provide free sanitary products in campus toilets.
- Introduce measures to allow Scottish Ministers to extend these duties to other bodies in future, following a period of review, if deemed appropriate or necessary.

You can have your say in the consultation by visiting www.periodpoverty.scot

A wide range of experts, organisations and charities, including the Children and Young People's Commissioner, have spoken out in support of the proposal

Children and Young People's Commissioner, Bruce Adamson said:

"Period poverty is a human rights issue. Having proper access to sanitary products is an essential element of human dignity and impacts on the ability to access other rights such as education, leisure and cultural activities.

I welcome this consultation which is particularly important for young people. It is important that as many young people as possible make their views heard

through this consultation."

EIS President, Nicola Fisher said:

"At its AGM in June the EIS passed a motion to campaign for free sanitary products to be made available for pupils and students in all schools, colleges and universities. We fully welcome this consultation and look forward to engaging in open and constructive discussion to investigate how best these products can be made easily accessible in educational establishments. We would also encourage many teachers and pupils to take part in order to help put an end to period poverty. It is shameful that in this day and age, many women and girls struggle to access basic sanitary products, which can have a significant impact on their health and wellbeing. This is a matter of basic human dignity, to which we should all be entitled, regardless of income."

The Trussell Trust Scotland Network Manager, Ewan Gurr said:

"The Trussell Trust network of foodbanks work at the frontline where we see the shame and embarrassment that the inaccessibility and unaffordability of sanitary items creates for many women and girls."

It has been a pleasure to work alongside Monica and others to raise the profile of period poverty and we fully support the launch of the consultation. It is our hope and belief that it will add weight to the call for approaches that place dignity at the heart of provision."

Suki Wan MSYP for Glasgow Shettleston, and Vice Chair of Scottish Youth Parliament said:

"This event, and the consultation being launched today, goes to the very heart of the Scotland we all want to live in. An overwhelming majority (99%) of the Scottish Youth Parliament's members, which democratically represents young people across Scotland, believe that access to menstrual hygiene products is a basic human right. The proposed bill would facilitate access to this right, particularly for young people who struggle financially, those who are homeless, or those who live in extreme poverty. It will help break down the 'taboo' status of menstruation in everyday conversation, and the multiple discrimination women and trans people who menstruate experience as a result of period poverty. On this pressing issue, SYP stands in support of the bill and ending period poverty for good – so Scotland can really become the best place in the world to grow up."

NUS Scotland Women's Officer, Shuwanna Aaron said:

"This consultation will be welcome news to people in Scotland who have periods. No one should have to experience the indignity of having to go without vital sanitary products they simply cannot afford and it's important to remember that as well as impacting women, period poverty can also affect non binary people and members of the trans community."

"We've already seen great examples of students' associations and community organisations providing free products but with limited resources and ever

declining budgets this is simply an unsustainable solution. The unfair cost of sanitary products can have significant financial impact on households, individuals and students struggling financially. In turn there can be a hugely negative impact on health and wellbeing, and it's imperative to ensure that everyone in this country has access to the sanitary products they need."

Women's Aid South Lanarkshire and East Renfrewshire CEO, Heather Russell said:

"We have been enthused by Monica Lennon's address of this issue which is reflective of wider challenges faced by women.

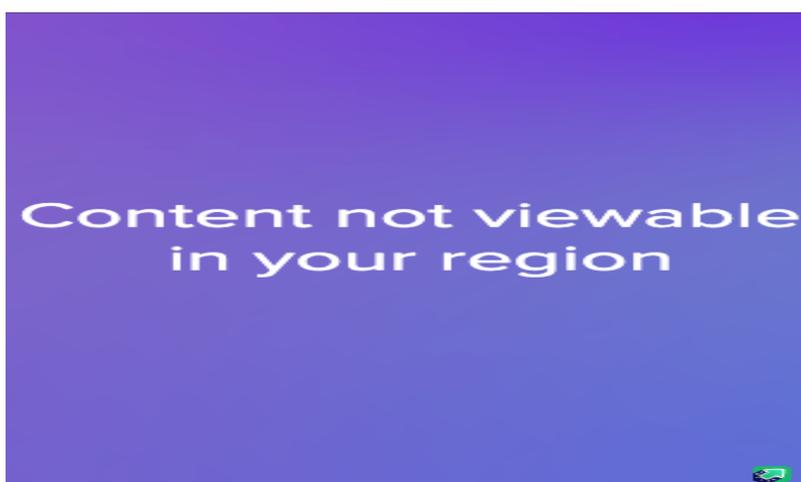
"Women's Aid South Lanarkshire and East Renfrewshire have always distributed donations including sanitary wears to those we support, however, following meeting and discussions with Monica we moved to a more respectful 'help your self' approach. This allows any person who requires sanitary wears to take what is required without having to ask from readily available stocks of donated goods in our office toilets, and all refuge accommodations.

"In understanding the challenges those we support are faced with we feel it important to lighten the load in any way that is practicable. With this in mind our 'help your self' approach has been extended to all generously received donations including clothes, toiletries and food.

"Whilst we do what we can as an organisation, we have our limits. As such, we fully support Monica's proposed Members Bill which seeks to make access to essential sanitary products a legal right and look forward to further supporting her in this endeavour."

As Scottish schools come back from their summer holidays, Scottish Labour's summer campaign, For The Many, is this week focused on education and schools.

To read more about our campaign, click the image below.



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 per cent 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.

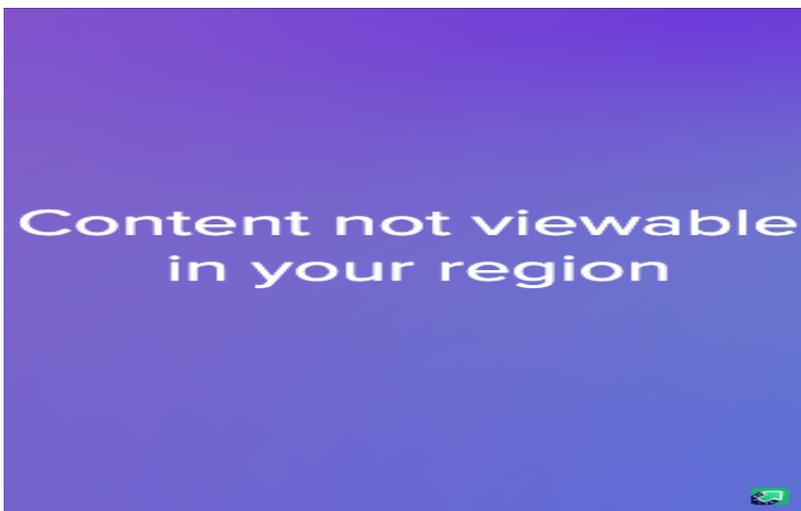
12. Encouraging public and private sector bodies to take part in 'active travel' schemes and persuading workers to commute by public transport. This also addresses air quality.

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.

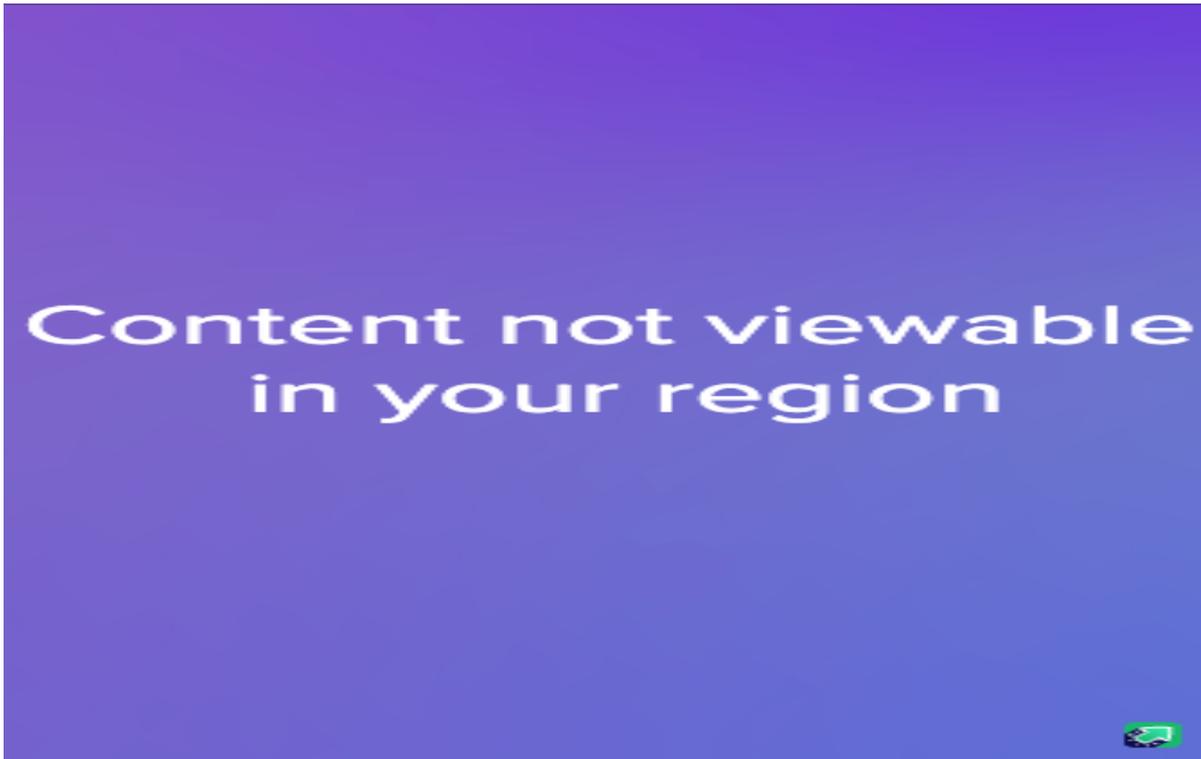
Public money has been siphoned off through privatisation and used to fund the rocketing earnings of directors, dividends for shareholders, and the coffers of overseas governments.

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:

