

ANOTHER SCOTLAND IS POSSIBLE



END CUTS

A MANDATE FOR
INDEPENDENCE



TAX THE
RICH

REAL LAND
REFORM



RISE MANIFESTO 2016

INTRODUCTION

Scotland has changed over the last five years. But too much has not changed, and Scotland can be so much better than this.

The political landscape has certainly shifted. Holyrood, not Westminster, is now the centre of our public life. Labour, once dominant, is competing for second place with the Tories. Nearly a decade into office, the SNP is on course for a second parliamentary majority.

And then there's the 2014 independence referendum.

The entire British establishment - Whitehall, the banks, the media - championed the Union and yet still 1.6 million Scots voted Yes. Never before had Scotland been so animated, so energised, or so unapologetic. For a few hours on 18th September 2014, we controlled our own destiny.

But for all the political drama of our recent history, all the heart-stopping and heart-breaking moments, Scotland's material circumstances haven't changed. They remain the same as they were when Labour ran the Scottish Parliament.

Here are the facts. One in five Scottish kids live in poverty. 20 per cent of Scots struggle to pay their monthly bills. Wages are stagnant. Personal and household debt is growing. Meanwhile, the wealthy sit back and watch their riches swell.

RISE stands for radical independence: a second independence referendum within the lifespan of the next parliament and a socialist vision of an independent Scotland.

We are a product of 2014: a coalition of Yes activists, trade unionists, organisers, and ordinary people, like you, who saw the transformative potential of independence and fought for change.

Real change.

Not just a new constitution but a new country. A fundamental shift in power. An end to poverty pay, sexism, and discrimination. A democratic economy, run for the mass of people who create the wealth not the minority who hoard it. A better, more accountable political system that serves us, the citizens of Scotland, instead of a spoilt elite.

If elected to parliament this May, that's what we'll campaign for in Edinburgh: radical independence.

Before we win independence, however, we've got to make the best of the powers we have. So RISE has a plan - a set of proposals that are both provocative and practical, far-sighted and realistic.

This document provides information about our policies on everything from independence and democracy to tax and inequality, justice and education to unpaid care and transport. They reflect our values and highlight the scale of our ambition.

Scotland may not yet be independent but it isn't powerless. What we lack is the political will to tackle the problems we face as a country. What we lack are socialist voices at Holyrood articulating socialist ideas and socialist arguments.

That can change on 5 May. Scotland can change on 5 May. Scotland can be so much better than this.

A hand is visible in the bottom left corner, reaching upwards. The background is a close-up of a rainbow flag, with the yellow, green, and blue stripes clearly visible. The lighting is bright, creating a sense of hope and positivity.

RESPECT

Living Income for Unpaid Carers

The care provided by friends and family members to ill, frail or disabled relatives is now worth a staggering amount. This type of care work is still work and it should be treated as such. Our carers deserve a living income.

Anti-Sexism Bill

Improving the lives of women in Scotland is paramount if we want to build a more equal society. Representation in politics isn't enough. RISE will tackle sexism head on.

Abolish Police Scotland and Repeal the Offensive Behaviour at Football Act

We will decentralise Police Scotland and give power to local communities, and we will end the criminalisation of Scotland's football fans.

Support LGBTI+ Education in Schools

RISE is proud to support the aims of the Time for Inclusive Education (TIE) campaign and our MSPs will fight to implement all of its recommendations. Although many schools have worked hard to address issues faced by LGBTI+ students, it is clear that we still have a very long way to go.



I NDEPENDENCE

A Second Independence Referendum at the time of our Choosing within the Lifespan of the Next Holyrood Parliament, with or without Westminster's Permission

RISE believes that Scotland needs the full powers of an independent country in order to tackle the full extent of inequality of wealth and power.

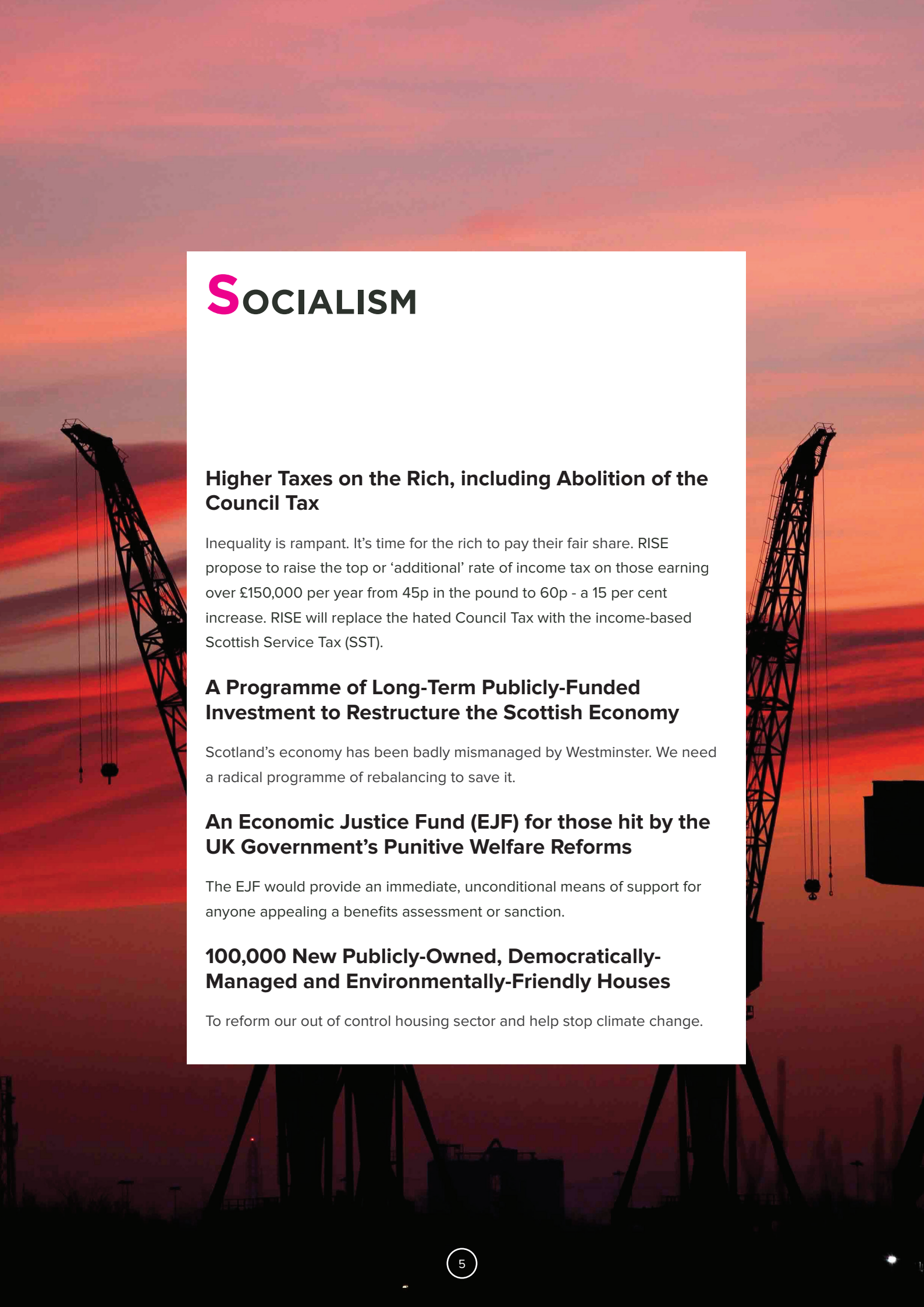
We support a second referendum on independence within the lifespan of the next parliament at a time of Scotland's choosing, with or without Westminster's consent.

A Modern Democratic Republic

We will campaign for a consultative referendum on the British monarchy in Scotland and argue for a democratic, republican constitution once independence is achieved.

An Independent Scottish Republic, free from NATO and Nuclear Weapons

To be truly independent, Scotland must be rid of nuclear weapons and out of NATO. We would redirect defence spending towards green energy investment and universal basic income.



SOCIALISM

Higher Taxes on the Rich, including Abolition of the Council Tax

Inequality is rampant. It's time for the rich to pay their fair share. RISE propose to raise the top or 'additional' rate of income tax on those earning over £150,000 per year from 45p in the pound to 60p - a 15 per cent increase. RISE will replace the hated Council Tax with the income-based Scottish Service Tax (SST).

A Programme of Long-Term Publicly-Funded Investment to Restructure the Scottish Economy

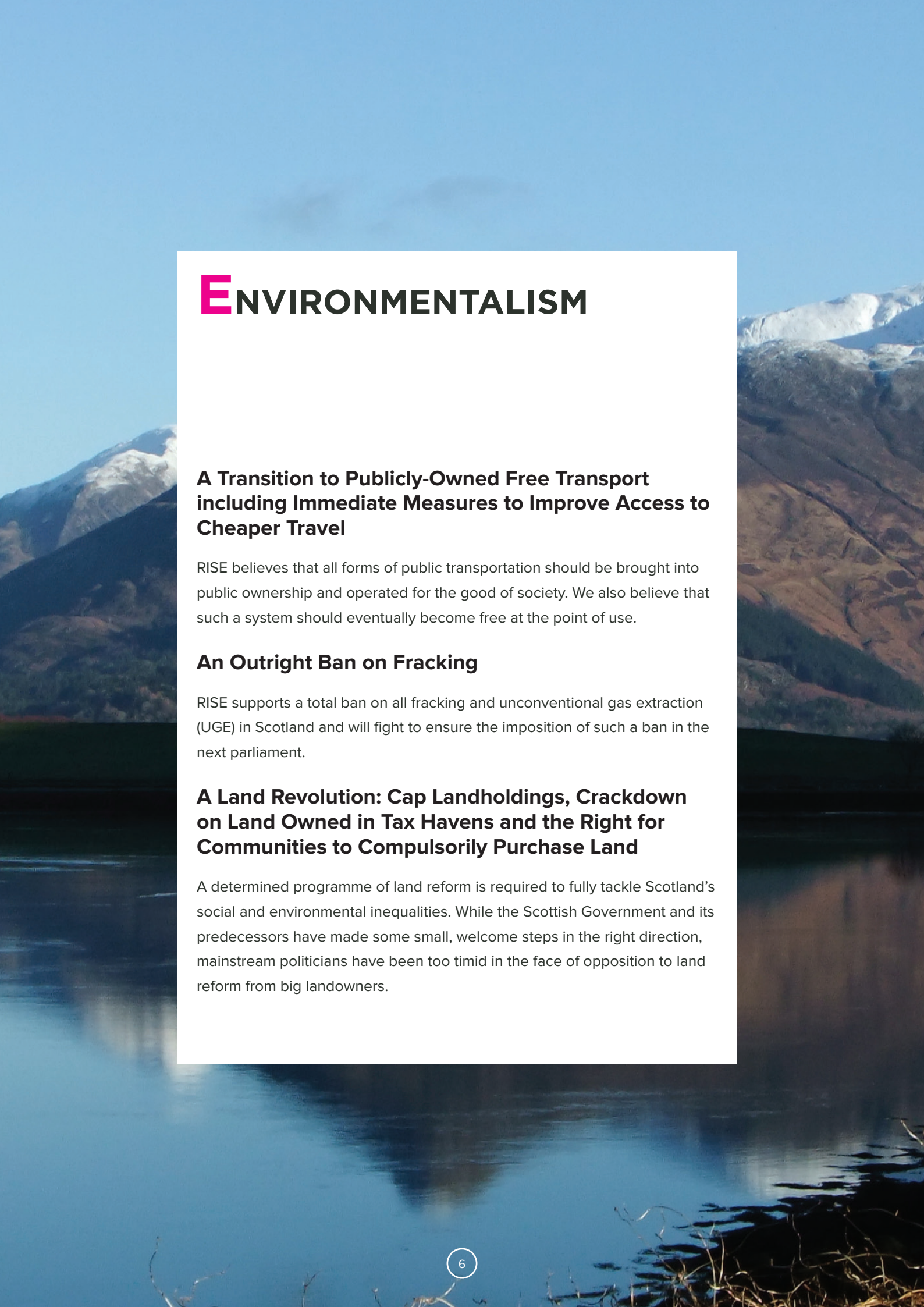
Scotland's economy has been badly mismanaged by Westminster. We need a radical programme of rebalancing to save it.

An Economic Justice Fund (EJF) for those hit by the UK Government's Punitive Welfare Reforms

The EJF would provide an immediate, unconditional means of support for anyone appealing a benefits assessment or sanction.

100,000 New Publicly-Owned, Democratically-Managed and Environmentally-Friendly Houses

To reform our out of control housing sector and help stop climate change.



ENVIRONMENTALISM

A Transition to Publicly-Owned Free Transport including Immediate Measures to Improve Access to Cheaper Travel

RISE believes that all forms of public transportation should be brought into public ownership and operated for the good of society. We also believe that such a system should eventually become free at the point of use.

An Outright Ban on Fracking

RISE supports a total ban on all fracking and unconventional gas extraction (UGE) in Scotland and will fight to ensure the imposition of such a ban in the next parliament.

A Land Revolution: Cap Landholdings, Crackdown on Land Owned in Tax Havens and the Right for Communities to Compulsorily Purchase Land

A determined programme of land reform is required to fully tackle Scotland's social and environmental inequalities. While the Scottish Government and its predecessors have made some small, welcome steps in the right direction, mainstream politicians have been too timid in the face of opposition to land reform from big landowners.

INDEPENDENCE & DEMOCRACY

RISE believes that Scotland needs the full powers of an independent country in order to tackle the full extent of inequality of wealth and power.

We support a second referendum on independence within the lifespan of the next parliament at a time of Scotland's choosing, with or without Westminster's consent.

We are committed to using the powers of the Scottish Parliament to the fullest extent possible; however, even after the implementation of the Scotland Bill, our parliament will lack control over key areas of our lives. This makes securing an independence referendum a pressing concern.

RISE's first major act in parliament will be to table the following resolution:

“Bearing in mind its unique status having been elected by the people of Scotland, and recognising its prime responsibility is to respond to circumstances that affect the economic and social wellbeing of the nation it represents, the Scottish Parliament resolves to assert its right to a mandate to call for and achieve a second referendum on independence, at the time of its choosing, during the lifetime of this Parliament.”

We will establish a community led convention to reform local democracy. It will review council boundaries and sizes, allowing them to better recognise social and environmental realities. Below council level, we believe it is necessary to bring back democratic representation for towns and villages. The convention would be tasked with establishing a new, more responsive kind of local government.

Nationally, RISE will ensure that councils' spending decisions are made using participatory budgeting techniques such as those developed in Porto Alegre, Brazil, which allow citizens to decide for themselves how their funds are spent. We will give voters the power to initiate referenda or recall elected representatives if enough support can be gathered by petition.

RISE is a republican organisation. We will campaign for a consultative referendum on the British monarchy in Scotland and argue for a democratic, republican constitution once independence is achieved.

To be truly independent, Scotland must be out of NATO. We would re-direct defence spending towards green energy investment and a universal basic income.

We want a Scotland that reflects the needs and interests of everyone that lives here, regardless of where they were born, their race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation. We will make Scotland a beacon for people fleeing persecution around the world.

TAX & BORROWING

Income Tax

The first income tax rate reform that RISE proposes is to raise the top or 'additional' rate of income tax on those earning over £150,000 per year from 45p in the pound to 60p - a 15 per cent increase. Those earning over £150,000 represent the top 0.7 per cent of earners in Scotland. The richest 1 per cent have seen their share of total income rise exponentially over the past 20 years.

RISE contest the idea that increasing tax on the richest 1 per cent will lead to a fall in revenue. Applying the UK Government's Taxable Income Elasticity (TIE) rate - used to assess the degree in which registered income falls as tax on additional rate payers rise - a 60p top rate in Scotland would lead to total revenue increasing by £140 million. It is not the case that rich people can simply change their place of residence to another part of the UK. Income tax in the UK is based on primary place of work.

The current income tax rates for 2016/17 include a 40 per cent band on taxable income between £32,000 and £150,000 per year after allowances. RISE believes that this band spans too large an income group - £32,800 is the Scottish median household income for a couple with children. We believe a band for the top 10 per cent of earners, levied at 45p in the pound (an increase of 5p), is fair for those earning comfortably above the median household income. We therefore propose a new band covering those earning between £50,000 and £150,000 per year, levied at 45 per cent. This new upper rate would raise an additional £300m in Scottish revenue. Those earning between £50,000 and £150,000 per year represent the top 10 per cent of earners in Scotland and are worth almost as much as the bottom 50 per cent of Scottish earners combined.

RISE proposes establishing a special tax avoidance team, working with Revenue Scotland and HMRC, to target additional rate earners seeking to avoid, evade, or manipulate the tax system.

Scottish Service Tax

RISE will replace the hated Council Tax with the income-based Scottish Service Tax (SST). The provisions of the SST are both simple and effective. Unlike the Council Tax, the SST is based on the principle of progressive taxation. The SST is based entirely on ability to pay, and taxes income through six bandings that apply at a higher rate as incomes rise. These bandings are carefully calibrated across income ranges at a fair and balanced rate. The first income banding, between £0 - £10,000, will be tax free; income between £10,000 and £30,000 will be taxed at 4.5 per cent; income between £30,000 and £40,000 will be taxed at 15 per cent; income between £40,000 and £50,000 will be taxed at 18 per cent; income between £50,000 and £90,000 will be taxed at 21 per cent; income above £90,000 will be taxed at 23 per cent.

The SST would dramatically shift the burden of local government taxation onto the shoulders of the richest people in Scotland and away from those who can least afford it. It will raise £4bn in total per year, providing an additional £2.1bn per year for councils which have borne the brunt of austerity cuts in recent years.

Land Value Tax

RISE recognises the need for a Scottish Land Value Tax (SLTV), which will help to tackle serious issues with land ownership and wealth inequality. The SST is designed as an immediate replacement for the Council Tax but, ultimately, we wish to see a combination of SST and SLVT as a means of making Scotland's system of local taxation fairer for everyone. We will work with other political organisations to secure its implementation.

Whisky Tax

RISE seeks the introduction of a £1 per bottle production tax for the Scotch whisky industry. This product is a natural resource to Scotland and has been promoted and patented as such by whisky industry leaders. The prospect of capital flight from increasing taxation is, therefore, extremely slight. The industry makes what are characterised as 'super-profits' - profits with extraordinarily high margin rates, sometimes as high as 60 per cent. The argument that the extra cost would be passed on to the consumer holds little weight: most whisky bottles are already at a price where £1 more or less would constitute only a small price change. Neither will £1 extra be a game changer for whisky exports markets, where whisky is sold as a luxury product. A production tax of £1 per bottle would raise up to £1bn for the people of Scotland annually.

Borrowing

The UK Government paints all government borrowing as fiscally reckless. But Tory economic mismanagement has embedded weak growth as a feature of British capitalism. With interest rates at historic lows, both local government and the Scottish Government can borrow to invest in public infrastructure very cheaply. Public sector led investment is far cheaper than the extortionate interest rates charged on privately financed initiatives in Scotland. Public-Public Partnerships will allow us to fund a green new deal for Scotland, with a massive investment in social housing, public transport, and renewable energy infrastructure.

The Scottish Government has new powers to borrow up to £450m per year and local authorities do not have formal limits on what they can borrow. It is better to take on cheap government debt than expensive commercial bank and PFI debt that will saddle future generations with the fiscal burden for years to come. As the Edinburgh school closures show, the Tory/New Labour PFI experiment has been a disaster.

WORK AND ECONOMY

RISE is a socialist organisation. We want Scotland's industry and wealth to belong to the people of Scotland. We want key public utilities and industries such as finance, energy, transport, minerals, telecommunications, and water brought back into public hands and run democratically by the people.

We are opposed to austerity. We would spend 3 per cent of Scotland's GDP on creating 100,000 green jobs over a ten to fifteen year period, signalling a £4.5bn investment in the Scottish economy. This will be funded partly through additional revenue raised from our tax reforms and partly through an increase in Scottish capital borrowing.

RISE will defy austerity by refusing to implement cuts.

The key economic priority for RISE is getting people into work, doing the jobs that are most urgent: preparing Scotland for climate change, building 100,000 ecologically sustainable, publicly-owned homes, creating a comprehensive renewable energy infrastructure, and expanding our public transport network.

RISE agrees with the Scottish Trades Union Congress that employment and wage laws should be devolved to Scotland. We want to tackle pay inequality, end wage discrimination, and enforce tough sanctions on employers who refuse to pay women equally or meet the National Minimum Wage. Employers who fail to meet these standards will face sanctions.

We would aim to establish a minimum income of £20,000 per annum, and raise the minimum wage to £10 per hour, rising with inflation, as well as setting a pay cap of £100,000 per year. Under devolution, the £10 per hour minimum wage would apply to public sector workers. In public companies and institutions, no directors or managers should be paid colossal sums: huge pay packets encourage corruption not efficiency. We would ensure that no public contracts or subsidies went to companies who engage in blacklisting or fail to pay a Living Wage.

We would seek support for an Employment Freedom Bill. This would remove all current anti-union laws, and establish a legal right to union representation. Certification Officers will become Union Development Officers and public funding will be provided to allow unions to conduct postal and electronic balloting. We will end zero hours contracts and youth exploitation by establishing decent minimum standards for all workers. We will impose sectoral pay negotiation on all parts of the economy, whether they are unionised or not. We will also make it a part of licensing arrangements that all bars, clubs, and other workplaces requiring workers to stay until late at night must pay for taxis to ensure they get home safely.

SOCIAL SECURITY

UK Government welfare cuts have cost lives. According to the DWP's own figures, thousands have died after being found fit for work. The fact that Westminster retains control over most key aspects of social security is a key reason as to why we fight for independence. We support an immediate end to sanctions, workfare, and Work Capability Assessments.

Under the arrangements included in the Scotland Act (2015), it will be very difficult for the Scottish Parliament to raise benefit levels. In the long term these devolved arrangements will prove unworkable.

But people who depend on food banks cannot simply wait for independence. We will institute a national review of food banks and pursue measures to combat food poverty.

RISE will create an Economic Justice Fund (EJF). The EJF would provide an immediate, unconditional means of support for anyone appealing a benefits assessment or sanction. Funding for advice and support agencies should be increased, and we will support campaigns that challenge unfair and exploitative treatment directly.

Ultimately, RISE hopes to establish a Scottish Universal Basic Income (SUBI). SUBI would be an unconditional monthly payment provided as a right to all residents of Scotland. This would replace much of the current welfare system as it relates to employment and income, ensuring that nobody, whether in or out of work, would have to suffer the indignity of extreme poverty. Those with additional personal needs, such as disabled people, would be supported at a higher rate. In order to implement this policy, however, Scotland would need full control over welfare and tax.

CARE AND DISABILITY

Unpaid care work is still work, and it should be treated as such. Unpaid care work in Scotland is valued at £10.8bn a year according to Carers UK, COSLA and the Scottish Government. Carers provide essential support to those with an illness or disability, yet the support they receive is a tiny fraction of this amount. The Carers Allowance amounts to just £62.10 per week for at least 35 hours of care. Carers in full-time education, full-time work, or receiving a pension may not even receive this amount.

The Scotland Act will allow us to take the urgent steps necessary to provide greater support to Scotland's army of unpaid carers. If elected, RISE MSPs will bring forward a Living Income for Carers (LIC) Bill. The key provisions of the Bill include:

- The creation of the LIC of £200 per week for all those caring for 35 hours a week or more.
- Allow all unpaid carers in full time education and / or work to access the new Living Income for Carers.
- Provide the LIC regardless of whether a recipient has other earnings thus eliminating the current 'underlying entitlement' clause. This would significantly simplify a system that many carers and non-carers already find confusing and demeaning.
- Provide annual health checks to all carers.
- Introduce a mandatory right to paid care leave of 10 days per year enforceable on all employers.

RISE believes that providing the LIC is an important step in establishing and reaffirming the value of all unpaid work, whether housework, childcare, or unpaid care. As a result we believe that LIC would be an important step forward, not just for carers, but for all of Scotland.

RISE estimates the annual cost of the LIC at around £1.78bn per year. The policy would be funded through the additional revenue generated by our Income Tax reforms, the Scottish Service Tax, and the new Whisky Tax. In time we hope it would become partially self-funding. Providing hundreds of thousands of unpaid Scottish workers with a living income would act as a powerful stimulus on the Scottish economy, and therefore boost Scotland's annual revenue yield.

Recent cuts to care services by local councils have left disabled people with little choice in how their care is delivered. We believe these services should be brought back into the public sector, fully restored and funded through progressive taxation. We oppose cuts to and charges for care services. Eligibility should be based on the needs of the individual, and assessment of these needs should be made open to fully independent arbitration. We condemn the closure of day centres like the Accord Centre in Glasgow. We will also demand a legal requirement for all care provision to be to the standard of the UNISON ethical care charter.

The UK government has victimised disabled people through its austerity agenda. The Department for Work and Pensions' assessment procedures for benefits have become humiliating rituals. We will establish an Economic Justice Fund to support disabled people fighting DWP sanctions and campaign for an end to Work Capability Assessments. We see no need for large companies to be involved in what should simply be a matter between doctor and patient. RISE will continue to campaign for full control of the benefits system in order to restore all cuts to disability benefits.

We will also make it a requirement for all new planning permission applications, whether public or private, to meet standards of accessibility.

RISE is a signatory to the One in Five campaign.

WOMEN

RISE is a feminist organisation. We support at least 50 per cent representation of women in public life and encourage representation of all genders including trans, non-binary, and intersex. Our commitment has resulted in our having the highest representation of women of any party fighting this election: 55 per cent of our candidates are women.

RISE MSPs will table a Bill aimed at tackling sexist behaviour in Scotland. The Bill will contain five key points:

- Protect funding for Violence Against Women (VAW) organisations, including women's aid groups, rape crisis centres, and VAW advice and support services. This funding should be ring-fenced in order to ensure that lifeline services have the resources they need.
- The Scottish Government should work more closely with women's organisations, police services, and other stakeholders to develop a clear strategy for tackling sexual harassment in public places.
- The development of a new anti-misogyny education programme. We will call for gender equality and anti-sexism education to part of the school curriculum from an early age and ensure that teachers challenge out-dated gender expectations. Support services for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender pupils should be enhanced in line with the aims of the Time for Inclusive Education (TIE) campaign.
- Make the hatred of women a hate crime. It is not currently an offence in Scotland to incite hatred against women. The law should be extended to make the incitement of hatred against women illegal.
- Anti-misogyny licensing requirements. Licensing requirements for pubs and clubs should be stricter to ensure that reports of sexual assaults and harassment are taken seriously.

RISE will fight to end gender and pay inequality. According to Close The Gap, the average woman in Scotland earns £175.30 per week less than the average man. RISE will make sure that gender pay laws are enforced and that employers who break those laws are subject to sanctions.

We recognise that the pay gap is not the only way women are marginalised in the job market. Women are over-represented in low pay sectors, including cleaning, catering, and retail. Women are also much less likely to be hired for upper management positions and are widely under-represented in Science, Technology, Engineering and Medicine (STEM) jobs. RISE will fight to improve gender representation in these sectors, and will insist that apprenticeships funded by the government adhere to 50/50 gender representation guidelines.

RISE will use the new abortion powers being devolved to Scotland to ensure that a woman's right to choose is no longer restricted by the need for two doctors to sign-off on a procedure. We will vigorously oppose any attempt to reduce term limits. Referrals should not be denied on religious grounds, nor should access to contraceptive methods. We will seek cross-party support to invest in abortion services, including aftercare, and to cut down on waiting times.

LGBTI+

RISE is proud to support the aims of the Time for Inclusive Education (TIE) campaign and our MSPs will fight to implement all of its recommendations. Although many schools have worked hard to address issues faced by LGBTI+ students, it is clear that we still have a very long way to go. More must be done to build an education system that is truly inclusive for all young people.

The Scottish Government should step in and offer funding for LGBTI+ training, with the initial goal of having at least one member of staff in each school trained specifically to deal with homophobic bullying and other LGBTI+ pastoral issues. For the avoidance of doubt, this requirement must apply to all schools.

RISE also believes that the contribution of LGBTI+ groups and individuals to our society should be both highlighted and celebrated, and that the achievements of the LGBTI+ rights movement should be clearly recognised within the school curriculum.

There are few more important acts of altruism than giving blood yet the system in Scotland remains beset by out-dated discrimination. RISE will demand that men who have sex with men, and their sexual partners, are no longer banned from becoming blood donors.

RISE backs the Scottish Transgender Alliance's Equal Recognition Campaign, which calls for trans people's rights to self-determination and recognition of the need for intersex people to have full bodily autonomy. We welcome the announcement of legal recognition for people who do not identify as men or women but would go further, removing the need for a psychiatric diagnosis in legal gender recognition, and removing the age limit at which people can get legal recognition of their gender identity. We support the extension of the availability of civil partnerships to all couples, regardless of their gender identification.

ANTI-RACISM

RISE is an anti-racist organisation and has a zero-tolerance policy towards racism.

To improve awareness of Scotland's history, RISE believes that all young people should learn about our nation's involvement in slavery and Scotland's historical role in the British empire. We also recognise the need for on-going education about the specific social challenges faced by black and minority ethnic people (BAME).

Racism in Scotland is still pervasive. RISE intends to challenge institutional and ingrained racism and will work with other organisations to build a broad anti-racist movement, encouraging self-organisation of BAME individuals.

RISE will support, contribute to, and encourage membership attendance at anti-racist demonstrations throughout the year.

We will campaign to help raise awareness of challenges faced by asylum seekers and refugees. We strongly oppose the new Immigration Bill and believe that all detentions and deportations should be halted immediately. We are also committed to an open border policy and the unionisation of migrant workers.

We will fight to end racist hiring practices and to ensure representation of BAME communities in key public positions, including politics. RISE will do its part by fostering and promoting BAME candidates for election.

In light of the death last year of Sheku Bayoh in Police Scotland custody, we recognise the relevance of the Black Lives Matter movement in Scotland and will bring the fight to end racist policing to Holyrood.

RISE rejects Islamophobia and stands in solidarity with Muslims under attack.

We believe all UK residents should be allowed to vote in the upcoming referendum on EU membership, regardless of where they were born.

YOUTH

The 2016 election is the first in which 16 and 17 year olds will be allowed to vote. RISE believes that young people in Scotland face significant challenges, with cuts to further education and youth services, soaring rents, low wages, and poor job prospects. Our Youth Network has been formed to tackle these issues and will be launching a Youth manifesto.

RISE will support community youth services in Scotland's poorest areas and we will seek to end the discriminatory stop-and-search practices of Police Scotland. We believe that all young people should receive a living wage and we will fight for the Scottish Parliament to receive full powers over the minimum wage. RISE supports a minimum wage of £10 per hour for all workers aged sixteen and above.

In addition to our policies on education, we emphasise that we will give students more control over their schools, colleges, and universities through democratically-elected representation and management. No educational establishment should be run for the benefit of management. We will also stop the British military from using our schools and colleges as recruiting grounds.

We will oppose all cuts to SAAS maintenance loans and grants and work to increase the funding available to students regardless of their background.

We fully support the aims of the Time for Inclusive Education campaign, which campaigns to make schools and other educational institutions safe for everyone regardless of their sexuality or gender identification.

As detailed elsewhere, we support stricter rent controls so that young people can live independently in decent, affordable housing.

We believe that Pupil Councils should be fully recognised within school governance frameworks and that they should control a specific annual budget, to be used for improvements to their school communities. Schools should also be encouraged to hold hustings and voter registration events to encourage young people to become fully engaged in the political process.

In line with their ability to vote in elections, we believe that 16-18 year olds should have the right to withdraw themselves from Religious Observance rather than require parental permission to do so.

PENSIONERS

RISE believes that everyone has the right to a decent income and a proper standard of care in retirement. We oppose all moves to raise the retirement age. Instead, we will introduce flexible retirement ages, a position supported by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation: “The gap in life expectancy for men between the most and least deprived parts of the same council area can be as much as nine years. The gap in life expectancy for women is seven years. Flexible retirements would address this inequality by ensuring people that are forced into early retirement by working conditions that are detrimental to health maintain a right to a long and well deserved pension.”

RISE commits to bringing all care services back into the public sector in order to ensure quality for service-users and workers. We also believe that all services should be focused on individual needs as opposed to profitability. Everyone has the right to an excellent standard of care, regardless of their ability to pay. All assessments of need should be open to independent arbitration.

JUSTICE

RISE believes that the establishment of a single Scottish police force has failed, with local accountability being damaged by the centralisation of power. Issues such as the routine arming of police or the failures to properly respond to calls for assistance have damaged trust in the police. We support the break-up of Police Scotland and the establishment of police forces which are representative of, and accountable to, local communities.

We demand an urgent and fully independent inquiry into the actions of Scottish police forces in relation to the policing of, and spying on, protest groups. There is no place in Scotland for secret political policing, and we will fight to bring the facts to light.

Though progress has certainly been made in tackling Scotland's problems with institutionalised racism it is clear that there is more work to be done. High-profile cases, such as Sheku Bayoh's death while in police custody, reaffirm the relevance of movements such as Black Lives Matter to Scottish society. Lead by our BAME network, RISE will continue to campaign for justice for all members of society, regardless of the colour of their skin or their ethnic background.

Like others we deplore discrimination and violence, but we do not believe that a demonstrably flawed piece of legislation provides an effective solution to the problem. We therefore support the position of groups such as Fans Against Criminalisation and Scotland Against Criminalising Communities, and will move for the abolition of the Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Scotland) Act.

It is vital to recognise that 'Stop and Search' procedures disproportionately affect specific groups such as BAME individuals and young people. As such, RISE calls for the new statutory code of practice on this matter to deal specifically with issues of discrimination and prejudice. RISE is opposed to the use of 'Consensual Stop and Search' tactics and welcomes moves to end this unacceptable practice.

We also oppose in full the implementation of the PREVENT strategy in Scotland and will demand the power to reject this invasive policy. RISE will support any organisations opposing PREVENT and will campaign against it.

RISE supports calls for reform of defamation law in Scotland and believes that such legislation must be modernised to better reflect the realities, and requirements, of the 21st Century.

RISE also believes that we can save millions in revenue while improving public health and safety by decriminalising drugs. We support a pragmatic approach based on scientific assessments of the effects of different substances, including the decriminalisation of cannabis for both recreational and medicinal use.

Criminal justice solutions to drug addiction only empower drug dealers. We need a smarter solution that focuses on prevention, rehabilitation, and community cohesion. Addiction should be treated as a health and social issue, not a crime, and people with drug abuse problems should have full access to care services.

EDUCATION

Schools alone cannot solve the widespread social problems which drive educational inequality, but we should tackle the specific aspects of our education system which magnify, rather than mitigate, these problems.

If we are serious about tackling the 'attainment gap' then our top priority should be supporting the teaching profession by giving them the trust, the tools and the freedom they need. Teachers' working conditions are students' learning conditions.

Unions have been clear that workload levels have increased with the introduction of Curriculum for Excellence and the New Qualifications, making it increasingly difficult for teachers to get on with their jobs. The primary curriculum is too cluttered, and in secondary schools the burden of assessment has become a direct barrier to better learning and teaching.

Teachers' professionalism and dedication has also been taken for granted: the average teacher now works an extra 33 per cent above their contractual requirements due to a needless system of bureaucracy, accountability and micro-management.

We believe that teacher numbers must be increased year on year, with a focus on areas of deprivation and those which struggle to recruit staff. Crucially, teachers' Non-Contact Time must be protected in order to allow greater opportunities for collaborative practice and teacher-driven Continuing Professional Development.

We will also fight to protect Additional Support Needs (ASN) provision in Scottish education, and to reverse cuts to this vital service. Student support staff are absolutely essential and their professionalism and dedication must be recognised.

RISE agrees that decisions around the assessment of pupils must be made by teachers, not politicians. We have consistently argued that plans to impose standardised testing on schools will do nothing whatsoever to address the shocking levels of educational inequality in our country. Instead, this regressive and politically-motivated move will lead to damaging league tables, increased teaching to the test and the further undermining of the teaching profession. Both our children and our educators deserve better.

RISE is absolutely clear on this matter: politicians have no business telling teachers how to do their jobs.

In Scotland our children start formal schooling far too early. Ultimately, RISE wishes to see the establishment of a universal, play-based Kindergarten stage for ages 3-7, with formal schooling starting thereafter. Such a fundamental shift is not possible within a single parliamentary term but should, nonetheless, become a high-priority goal in Scottish education.

RISE recognises that Further Education is a vital component of our education system, offering opportunities for people - a large proportion of them working class - to improve their lives. In recent years the FE sector has borne the brunt of brutal education cuts, with courses slashed and jobs lost across the country. It is also clear that the government's flagship policy of college regionalisation has failed on its own terms - educational experiences for students have not improved and financial savings have failed to materialise.

RISE will campaign to have cuts to colleges - both in terms of finances and course provision - reversed and for an immediate end to the use of Arms Length Foundations, into which almost £100m of public money has been funnelled in recent years.

RISE fully supported the recent strike by FE lecturers and will support unions as they continue to improve working conditions for educators. We will also extend that support to Higher Education staff, especially those fighting against the indefensible use of zero-hours contracts.

RISE supports the NUS education manifesto and will back their Shaping Scotland's Future campaign in parliament. We will continue to campaign for wide-ranging reforms to student funding to ensure a fairer deal for Scotland's students, with a focus on the restoration of bursary support for those on low-incomes.

Last year Scotland's private schools enjoyed a £10 million tax break through their 'charitable status'. It is clear that such institutions - with average yearly fees of more than £10,000 - are not charities, and RISE rejects the idea that schools which both symbolise and perpetuate social inequality should avoid paying taxes. We will demand that this indefensible arrangement is brought to an end.

RISE also believes that all members of Local Authority education committees must be democratically accountable to local people at the ballot box. We therefore support the campaign to remove the requirement for unelected religious representatives on education committees.

Military recruitment at schools, colleges and university campuses must end immediately.

TRANSPORT

If we are serious about transforming Scottish society and the Scottish economy, then it is vital that we radically change our approach to public transport. RISE believes that all forms of public transportation should be brought into public ownership and operated for the good of society. We also believe that such a system should eventually become free at the point of use. To that end we would seek the creation of a new National Mass Transit Service for Scotland.

Although such a system would require significant public investment, the potential benefits are enormous. In rural or remote areas of Scotland, a free, service-focused transport system could help tackle issues of isolation, depopulation, unemployment, and the high cost of living. In our towns and cities, world-class and fully-accessible public transport would improve residents' quality of life by tackling congestion, road maintenance costs and road-traffic accidents, while also reducing - and ultimately eliminating - the cost of travelling for work or study.

Free and expanded public transport could also generate further income from extra tourism, and from the economic boost that would be achieved by increasing the spending power of millions of workers. Reducing congestion, accidents, health and pollution costs would save the Scottish Government between £300 and £500 million, with an additional saving to business of up to £1 billion. While substantial sources of funding would be required to establish and run an expanded, integrated, free public transport system it would, in overall terms, be to the advantage rather than to the detriment of the Scottish economy.

This radical shift would also drive a nationwide focus on public transport as a key means of meeting Scotland's responsibilities around tackling climate change.

We hope to slowly phase this policy in over the next five years, starting with extending free public transport to students and the unemployed and increasing subsidies for ferries to Scotland's islands. As we introduce reforms that relieve pressure on the roads network, we will shift revenue earmarked for the road budget to the public transport system.

The National Mass Transit Service would be responsible for the massive expansion of public transport, returning to areas that lost their rail services in the 1960s and have suffered since the deregulation of the buses. Expanded and needs-based free public transport will also encourage the rebalancing of Scotland's population to rural areas.

As an immediate measure, the peak travel premium will be scrapped and fares capped.

HOUSING

There is a chronic shortage of good quality, affordable housing in Scotland, with 150,000 households on initial waiting lists and 23,600 waiting to move to more appropriate homes. One in ten houses are affected by dampness or condensation, and 940,000 are living in fuel poverty. Almost half of Scotland's social housing currently falls beneath the Scottish Housing Quality Standard, yet the average weekly Local Authority rent increased by 49 per cent between 2002-03 and 2013-14.

The situation for private tenants is often worse, with rents continuing to increase faster than earnings and too many properties not up to acceptable standards. Scottish rents have increased at a faster rate than any other part of the UK. The number of people in private rented accommodation has tripled in a decade to 140,000, and housing costs now take up a quarter of their monthly income on average. Private landlords' profits have boomed through the exploitation of a serious, but solvable, problem in Scottish society. The time has come to tackle this issue head on. RISE will implement rent controls.

RISE supports the Living Rent Campaign. Their calls for strict rent controls and indefinite tenancy agreements will lead to protection for those renting within the private sector.

Compliance with the Scottish Quality Housing Standard should also become a legal requirement, with failure to meet these expectations resulting in fines and, ultimately, the removal of properties from the housing market.

RISE believe that an urgent programme of building good quality, publicly-owned, affordable homes for rent is vital, and that an ambitious target of 100,000 new homes over the next five years should be set.

To achieve this, we would establish a new National Unitary Authority to plan and manage this project.

Local Authorities will be encouraged to use their borrowing powers as part of a new Public-Public-Partnership arrangement which will replace the failed PFI schemes of the past.

The new Unitary Authority will then co-ordinate this nationally and will be governed by an elected board representing tenants, communities, local authorities and housing associations.

Keeping these properties in the public sector would represent a long-term investment for Scotland by replacing the social housing lost through the Right to Buy policies of the past, with rental income and associated savings in social security payments offering value for money over the long term.

The Scottish Government must actively facilitate tenants to get more organised and defend their interests. This means support for truly independent tenants' organisations, and democratic management of housing stock, elected by staff and those that live there.

Tenants should also be able benefit from incentive-based rents which recognise, for example, that they should not continue to pay monthly rental fees if they have already paid for the costs of the property in which they live.

We will reform the planning system, ensuring all newly-built homes, public or private, must meet minimum standards of sustainability and access. New planning rules will also facilitate the growth of self-built and cooperative housing.

LAND AND ENVIRONMENT

Climate change is no longer a distant threat but a lived reality for people across the world. In Scotland we have recently seen devastating floods in the North East and the Borders, with scientists advising that our changing climate will increase the frequency of extreme weather events. Drastically cutting carbon emissions is one of the most important tasks of any government.

Over time, RISE aims for all of Scotland's energy resources, both renewable and fossil-based, to be taken into public hands. We believe Scotland's natural wealth belongs to the people of Scotland. A new, publicly-owned energy agency would manage a massive transition away from fossil fuels in favour of developing Scotland's immense wind, tidal, and other renewable energy potential. This would allow us to significantly cut the cost of energy for consumers. We would aim to diversify the massive industrial skill-set of the North Sea oil industry by redeploying its skilled workers in the development and maintenance of our new energy infrastructure.

RISE supports a total ban on all fracking and unconventional gas extraction (UGE) in Scotland and will fight to ensure the imposition of such a ban in the next parliament. We believe that the evidence from the United States suggests that the environmental consequences of fracking are negative and severe. Our opposition extends to the current test drilling being carried out by INEOS. We will support all community-based campaigns against fracking and UGE.

As outlined in previous sections, the posts in expanding our renewable capacity would be just some of 100,000 green jobs that RISE would create with its environmental transition plan. Others would be delivered by massively expanding our public transport system, maintaining our ecosystem, developing sustainable agriculture and engaging in programmes of reforestation and re-wilding. We support the call of the Scottish Crofters Federation for sustainable resettlement of land depopulated by the Clearances.

A determined programme of land reform is required to fully tackle Scotland's social and environmental inequalities. While the Scottish Government and its predecessors have made some small, welcome steps in the right direction, mainstream politicians have been too timid in the face of opposition to land reform from big landowners. Land-owning families and absentee tax avoiders are still allowed to treat large portions of our country as their private fiefdoms.

RISE will cap the amount of land any individual or entity can own. It will outlaw the ownership of land in tax havens, and apply this retrospectively. We will ensure that all land in Scotland is placed on a publicly searchable register within ten years and will also give tenant farmers the right to buy their land. We support plans to modernise succession law by removing the distinction between moveable and immoveable property.

We will give communities the right to initiate Compulsory Purchase Orders for their land and will support the development of Community Enterprises (CE), self-built and co-operative housing. For many rural communities, particularly those on Scotland's islands, the cost of workshops and premises for small businesses and self-employed people can be prohibitive. We will provide public subsidies to support CEs.

Far too much of our land is misused. Hunting estates create conditions suited for blood-sports but not for biological diversity. We would curtail the size of these estates and begin a process of reforestation, re-wilding and re-introduction of native species. To assist in this, we call for newly re-introduced beavers to immediately be given protected status, in light of their crucial role in flood prevention.

DIGITAL RIGHTS, FREEDOM OF INFORMATION, & PRIVACY

RISE opposes the growth of the surveillance state and mass harvesting of online data.

RISE will campaign for the creation of a 'Digital Bill of Rights' to protect the security and freedom of the online public. We will work with groups like the Open Rights Group Scotland and Open Knowledge Scotland to develop this.

RISE is a movement driven by its grassroots. This means that we recognise the democratic right to freely access governmental information and data. As a principle of democratic accountability, RISE will campaign to end the erosion of the Freedom of Information Act and for it to be extended to include private and arms-length organisations in receipt of public money and engaged on public contracts. RISE expects the Scottish Information Commissioner - Scotland's FOI watchdog - to remain politically neutral at all times.

The Digital Bill of Rights would enshrine internet access as a basic right, as well as the support of strong cryptography for all internet sessions. In order to create equal access to the Internet for everyone in Scotland as a human right, we will establish a publicly owned Internet Service Provider (ISP) to drive broadband access at affordable/free rates to all corners of Scotland.

INTERNATIONALISM

The ongoing conflict in Syria and the Middle East has led to the displacement of millions of human beings. One of the results of this has been huge numbers of people attempting to enter Europe. The response of the EU has been to militarise its borders. We want Scotland to be a beacon for people fleeing persecution from around the world.

RISE will also demand the Scottish Government provide refugees and asylum seekers with immediate and free access to food, transport and language courses. We will also campaign for asylum seekers to be given the right to work.

We will provide a welcoming strategy, working with various integration networks for new asylum seekers and refugees. We also support the immediate end to indefinite detentions and the closure of the Dungavel Removal Centre.

RISE takes no official position on the upcoming referendum on Britain's membership of the European Union. RISE supports a socialist Europe: some of our members believe that will come about through reform from within the EU, while others believe that the EU is undemocratic and should be broken up.

Scotland should exit the NATO alliance, whose aggressive expansionism is making the world unsafe. We will fight against Scotland's involvement in wars and international networks of debt and exploitation.

In the spirit of Scotland's historic commitment to taking in 'new Scots', RISE is committed to creating an open and fair nation for all. We therefore support an open border policy. To avoid the potential pitfalls of such a policy, RISE will campaign for unions to organise migrant workers and build cross-border unity against global pay injustice and inequality.

RISE unequivocally supports the creation of an independent Palestinian state, opposes Israel's occupation of Palestinian land, and will call for the Scottish Parliament to formally and publicly support the rights of the Palestinian people.

CULTURE

Respect for artists is vital and should be at the centre of all cultural policy. We must strive for acknowledgement of the artist's right to work, and build an environment in which their work is seen for its true value - one which far surpasses economic gain.

Artists reflect us as a nation, how we see ourselves and how we portray ourselves globally. Artists throughout history have defined our nation in paintings, in song, in the written word. We must respect and invest in our artists, for their cultural value is immeasurable.

A true democracy needs debate generated by creative people, challenging the norm, exciting opinions in others.

We must change the perception of 'the arts' to one which is seen as a serious employment option. RISE will argue for artists to receive state benefits without being forced to accept low paid service jobs.

Scotland needs a BBC Charter committed to the use of creative artists who work in Scotland. This will help to ensure that we are able to harness the talent of our artists and better reflect our vibrant and creative nation.

In recent years Local Authority cuts have had a huge impact on arts funding. RISE believe that funding for the arts in education is vital, and that creative subjects such as Music and Art should be core subjects in school curriculum.

RISE wishes to see artists in residence in all primary and secondary schools, and would support moves for a set percentage of Local Authority budgets to be ring-fenced for arts and culture spending.

RISE will also seek to increase funding for Creative Scotland, and ensure that no community is excluded from cultural provision.

HEALTH

A 2015 Scottish Government paper advises that very clear linkages exist between socio-economic deprivation, poverty, poor health and well-being, raised morbidity levels and lower life expectancy. Health inequalities reflect wider inequalities that stem from the divisions present in our society and as such RISE believe that by tackling inequality in other areas head on, we can begin to improve Scotland's health record.

Too often our discussions around healthcare in Scotland focus on short term targets, like waiting times or recruiting a particular number of workers.

RISE believe this to be the wrong approach. Issues like health - and education - can't be worked on in isolation. Instead of short-term, target-driven political point-scoring, healthcare must be treated as a long-term investment in the well-being of the future population.

Our NHS deserves investment. Our NHS workers deserve respect. Our population deserves access to free-at-the-point-of-use, world class healthcare. All PFI and PPP contracts in the NHS should be cancelled immediately. Whilst the NHS budget might be ring-fenced to protect from budget cuts, there's no doubt that the service is under real financial pressure. Our tax-raising measures will ensure that this pressure is released.

The NHS workforce is over-worked and undervalued. In a recent survey, just a quarter of nurses and less than a fifth of ambulance personnel felt there were sufficient staff to allow them to work well. Even senior managers believe the service is too stretched, with just 38% saying there are enough staff.

We support full empowerment of the trade unions in the NHS. 43% of NHS employees do not feel it is safe for them to speak up if they are concerned about quality or safety issues. The trade unions are the best mechanism for increasing pay for our NHS workers. RISE would support any trade union calls for the abolition of the pay review body for NHS Scotland staff to allow the trade unions to collectively negotiate on pay for their members.

Patients and staff must not be financially burdened when using NHS services. RISE wants free parking facilities and improved transport infrastructure to and from all NHS services.

The integration of health and social care is a huge project. Whilst we support this initiative, we want the immediate introduction of a project watchdog made up of trade unions, staff, MSPs, health experts, service users from across the NHS and Local Authorities to oversee the integration. This is necessary in order to ensure that care delivery is not compromised by budget cuts.

RISE will invest in mental health services, including increased funding for Community Psychiatric nurses. We want to tackle the causes of mental health, such as stress on young people, unemployment, poverty and loneliness. Everyone must have quick and decent access to good mental health options across Scotland, and RISE will push for mental wellbeing to be viewed with the same importance as physical health.

We will expand the provision of free healthy school meals with water and introduce free toothpaste and toothbrushes for all school pupils. We also reiterate our commitment to free prescriptions.

We want all Local Authorities to have funding that enables the removal of charges for access to sports facilities for low earners, as well as unemployed people and students.

We support investigating the viability of a publicly-owned pharmaceutical company to supply cheaper drugs to the NHS and to work with universities to research new drug treatments.

CHARTER OF POLITICAL ETHICS

RISE wants to do politics differently, to break from the parliamentary norm. We are building an organisation that aims to be open, transparent, accountable, and fair. Our elected representatives will be committed to setting the standard we want to see across Scottish politics. All our candidates have signed up to a five point charter of political ethics:

- 1. A Worker's Wage.** All elected representatives of RISE will take no more than the average wage of a skilled worker and donate the remainder of their salary to RISE and other progressive organisations.
- 2. Transparency.** Shadow lobbying is a blight on the democratic system. RISE representatives will keep a public log of every person and group they are lobbied by.
- 3. Equality.** RISE representatives will promote the interests of groups marginalised by mainstream politics. Our candidate lists will always be at least 50 per cent women. Following these principles has contributed to RISE having the best women's representation of any party.
- 4. End Political Careerism.** Politics should not be dominated by a professional political class. RISE representatives will serve a maximum of two consecutive terms.
- 5. Community Organisation and Participatory Democracy.** RISE MSPs will use their position to develop community participation by supporting grassroots organisation and campaigns. Our MSPs will give grassroots organisations access to influence the Scottish Parliament.

