



Scottish Conservatives

2011 MANIFESTO



I am Betsy Lynch and I am the candidate for the Scottish Conservative Party.

Some politicians say: 'give us your vote and we will sort out all your problems'. We say: real change comes not from government alone. Real change comes when the people are inspired and mobilised, when millions of us are fired up to play a part in the nation's future.

A vote for the Conservatives is a vote for change.

Cleaning up Politics

The Scottish Conservative Party believes that our current political system is broken. It is vital that we have political reform. We need much greater co-operation across party lines, and changes to our political system to make it far more transparent and accountable. We intend to cut the perks and bureauracracy associated with parliament. We also intend to establish a fixed 5 year term in parliament.

Economy

We need immediate action to tackle the deficit in a fair and responsible way, ensure that taxpayers' money is spent responsibly, and get the public finances back on track.

We will significantly accelerate the reduction of the structural deficit over the course of a Parliament, with the main burden of deficit reduction borne by reduced spending rather than increased taxes.

We will reduce spending on the Child Trust Fund and tax credits for higher earners.

Local Government

We believe that it is time for a fundamental shift of power from Westminster to people. We will promote decentralisation and democratic engagement, and we will end the era of top-down government by giving new powers to local councils, communities, neighbourhoods and individuals.

We will transfer power back to local communities.

We will increase transparency and accountability, by ensuring councils publish online their spending, tenders and contracts over £500.

We will work with councils to improve the quality and frequency of rubbish and recycling collections in your local area.

Jobs and Welfare

The Government believes that we need to encourage responsibility and fairness in the welfare system. That means providing help for those who cannot work, training and targeted support for those looking for work, but sanctions for those who turn down reasonable offers of work or training.

We will re-assess all current claimants of Incapacity Benefit for their readiness to work.

We will ensure that Jobseeker's Allowance claimants facing the most significant barriers to work are referred to the new welfare to work programme immediately.

We will ensure that receipt of benefits for those able to work is conditional on their willingness to work.

The Environment

We need to protect the environment for future generations, make our economy more environmentally sustainable, and improve our quality of life and well-being. We also believe that much more needs to be done to support the farming industry, protect biodiversity and encourage sustainable food production.

We will work towards a 'zero waste' economy, encourage councils to pay people to recycle, and work to reduce littering.

We will also promote high standards of farm animal welfare. We will end the testing of household products on animals and work to reduce the use of animals in scientific research.