

# What Kind of Nation?

Manifesto for  
a future Scotland

evangelical alliance  
scotland







“Scotland stands  
at a crossroads.”



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We publish this document with the prayer that it will be used by God to infinitely benefit Scotland as together we ask the vital question: *What Kind of Nation?*

Fred Drummond and Kieran Turner  
Evangelical Alliance Scotland, April 2014





# Introduction

Scotland stands at a crossroads. On 18 September 2014 the people of Scotland will vote in the most important ballot in the nation's history. Whatever the outcome, the result of this vote will not only take its place in history but will set the future path of the nation for generations to come. It is vital therefore that the people of Scotland are informed and included in this process and that wider civic society is able to speak into the issues raised by this debate.

The Scottish Church is a vital part of civil society, as a part of communities across Scotland, numbering hundreds of thousands of members and providing considerable programmes of non-taxpayer funded welfare and support in Scotland.<sup>1</sup> We welcome this opportunity to contribute to the national debate and trust that our voice, along with others, will be useful in shaping the future of Scotland.

In particular this document aims to offer a vision of Scotland in terms of values and strategic policy direction based on those values. Much of the referendum debate to date has focussed on purely economic terms. This is understandable in the present situation but it is vital that we place the debate in a wider context. This debate must evolve to consider the sort of nation Scotland aspires to be, the values that we hold as Scots and those we wish to pass on to our children. Only on this basis will we as a nation be able to decide whether that path is best served as part of the United Kingdom or in an independent Scotland.

The Scottish Parliament values of wisdom, justice, compassion and integrity are rooted in Scotland's Christian heritage. As a Christian community, we offer our vision as one which we believe will enhance and enrich our society if the principles within it are adopted. We offer it as a people committed to the future of our nation and as those who will continue to work, whatever the referendum result, towards the common good and wider benefit of Scottish society.

**Evangelical Alliance Scotland**

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<sup>1</sup> Some of the best-known Scottish examples include Bethany Christian Trust, Glasgow City Mission, Blythswood Care and the Trussell Trust network of foodbanks based in churches across Scotland. In addition there are countless individual church community projects in towns and villages across Scotland working with young people, older people and groups such as asylum seekers, refugees and the unemployed.



# A values-based debate

*“It is clear that effective leadership must incorporate a values dimension”<sup>2</sup>*

(World Economic Forum)

- What fundamental values do we wish to live by?
- What kind of society do we want to live in?
- What kind of Scotland do we aspire to be?

The starting point for our referendum debate must be values. In a world reeling from the recent scandals in finance, the media and politics, and in a context where 93 per cent of the population believe their politicians cannot be relied upon to tell the truth<sup>3</sup>, the starting point must be values.<sup>4</sup>

The antidote to this current, narrow debate is to focus the referendum debate around values: Scottish values, universal values and biblical values. It is only when the debate engages with our values, hopes and aspirations that we can truly begin a discussion about what kind of nation we aspire to be.

A bland economic debate focused solely on the technical aspects of independence, involving only the political classes, does little to invigorate a nation that has lost its faith in politicians, and where a perception can exist that the political class has lost contact with the people. The referendum is a golden, once in a generation opportunity to change this and re-engage with individuals, communities and civil society, to change the way we do politics and debate fundamental questions:

So what then are our starting values? There are a number of contenders from centuries of Christian and Scottish philosophical thought. Love, grace, kindness, generosity and selflessness are all good, biblical starting points. However with the debate centred ultimately on the future powers of the Scottish Parliament the best starting point is the four well-known Christian values that are inscribed at the heart of Holyrood: wisdom, justice, compassion and integrity.

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2 World Economic Forum - Global Agenda Council on Values Pg. 2  
[http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_GAC\\_Values\\_2013.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GAC_Values_2013.pdf)

3 The British Social Attitudes Survey 2013 asked whether politicians could be trusted to tell the truth when in a tight corner. Ninety-three per cent said ‘almost never’ or only ‘some of the time’  
<http://www.bsa-30.natcen.ac.uk/read-the-report/politics/can-people-make-a-difference.aspx>

4 The Church of Scotland project *Imagining Scotland's Future* also attempted to bring a values dimension to the national debate.



This whole document is based on these four values and applying them to the economy, family, civil society and the environment. Throughout, our aim is to use these values to cast a vision of a nation. It is then up to the people of Scotland to decide whether this vision is best obtained by saying 'Yes Scotland'<sup>5</sup> or deciding we are 'Better Together'.<sup>6</sup>

## Wisdom

**“The wisdom of the prudent is to give thought to their ways, but the folly of fools is deception”**

(Proverbs 14:8)

Wisdom is a quality that all should seek. The opposite of foolishness, wisdom takes a long-term perspective, weighing up, discerning and then making decisions that will be for the long-term good. In a world where we are bombarded by many choices, it is vital to have this understanding that enables decisions to be made, based on the long-term interests of Scotland.

The Bible has a great deal to say about wisdom. The ancient Psalmist states that: “The fear of The Lord is the beginning of wisdom.”<sup>7</sup> Wisdom begins by having a *God context* and, accordingly, to take the possibilities of God out of any solution is to lack wisdom. A mark of the life of Jesus Christ was that as he grew in his understanding, his insight and authority were seen to grow.<sup>8</sup> This wisdom was directly linked with the impact he had on others. To have a positive effect on others requires wisdom and stature. Finally, wisdom is regarded as so important that individuals are encouraged to ask God for it. In times of confusion, when a way

does not seem certain or there is a lack of clarity, we are to ask God to give us wisdom.<sup>9</sup>

A flourishing Scotland will be a Scotland with wisdom at its core. A Scotland where decisions are taken by government with the long-term good of society in mind, rather than simply short-term gain: political or economic. It will be a Scotland where the key decisions that are taken are done so after careful deliberation and with the whole society in mind, not individual self-interest. It will be a Scotland led by those who have wisdom, leaders who combine knowledge and experience with humility, integrity and a willingness to learn.

## Justice

**“Let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never failing stream”**

(Amos 5:24)

A wise Scotland will be a just Scotland. Justice strikes at the heart of our humanity that seeks fairness, equity, and protection for the vulnerable. The Christian vision of justice is one of care for the vulnerable, advocacy for the weak and society working for the common good. It is one that believes in the dignity of the human person and forms the basis for the modern understanding of human rights.<sup>10</sup> In Scotland we recognise the key nature of justice with our distinct legal system dating back centuries, resting as it does on its biblical foundations.<sup>11</sup>

Justice is part of the character of God, as the embodiment of justice in His dealings with all people, and closely linked with His compassion. In the life of Jesus we see a man who embodied justice. He spent time with everyone but showed favouritism to none, stopping to speak to the

5 Yes Scotland website: <http://www.yesscotland.net/>

6 Better Together website: <http://bettertogether.net/>

7 Psalm 111:10

8 Luke 2:52

9 James 1:5

10 “The fact remains that human rights originated in monotheism - the belief that there's only one God, who creates a single moral law for all human beings.” Philosopher John Gray <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-25505393>

11 The Bible in Scots Law: A Guide for Legal Practitioners <http://www.socofadvocates.com/files/File/Notice%20board/BibleInScotsLawLeaflet.pdf>

leper, the blind, the outcast and the weak. He spent time with Roman leaders, tax collectors and the wealthy, yet he gave status and worth to women and children in a male-dominated world. No matter the people or group involved he gave dignity and spoke honestly, sometimes with challenge and sometimes to encourage.

Justice is the exercising of authority in a fair way. It is about conduct and action. It is contrasted to favouritism, to bias, or to different sets of rules for different types of people. A just nation is one that does not favour those who are 'like us', but one that treats everyone equally – the rich and poor, the stranger, the widow and the orphan, should all expect to be treated with the same respect and care. To be just is to challenge hypocrisy wherever it is found and to test whether lifestyle matches up with words. It is to hold leaders to account for how they deal with all sectors of the society.

A just Scotland will be one in which everyone is protected, where no one is left behind and where the background of a person has no bearing on their chances in life. It will be a Scotland where the government exists to restrain evil and promote good, providing a space for individuals and communities to flourish.<sup>12</sup> It will be a tolerant Scotland at ease with diversity, protecting the public square from tyranny and offering liberty for all. We desire such a Scotland.

## Compassion

**“Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another. Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the alien or the poor”**  
(Zechariah 7:8)

A wise and just Scotland will also be a nation of compassion, looking out for the stranger and offering support to the vulnerable. The Christian vision of compassion is fuelled by the command to love our neighbour.<sup>13</sup> This vision has led to countless social movements for change, from eradication of leprosy to the abolition of slavery, from the hospice movement to the Salvation Army, and more recently in the form of foodbanks, international debt campaigns such as Jubilee 2000, money advice projects like Christians Against Poverty, soup kitchens and Street Pastors.

Compassion is a golden thread that runs through the biblical narrative. Used more than 40 times in the Bible, it is used both in reference to God's relationship with people and also to how people should relate to one another.<sup>14</sup> The recurring theme is that a positive community is based on how it treats its weakest members. In the Old Testament the ancient prophets continually challenge their communities about their commitment to the poor, the broken and those facing isolation.<sup>15</sup> The power of compassion is also a mark of the life and ministry of Jesus. On several occasions he is said to be moved with compassion.<sup>16</sup> There are many examples of Jesus meeting those in need and this compassion always led to action that in turn brought about transformation.<sup>17</sup>

For Christians, real compassion leads to radical action. In a world full of need, hearts can be hardened to issues both local and global. However, the mark of a compassionate Scotland will be how we bring hope, dignity and identity to those most in need. There has never been

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12 The Hebrew word 'tsedek' points to justice in the sense of right relationships.

13 Matthew 22:36-40

14 Exodus 34:6, Psalm 86:15, Isaiah 30:18, Lamentations 3:22, Joel 2:13, Matthew 9:36, 2 Corinthians 1:3, Ephesians 4:32, Colossians 3:12, 1 Peter 3:8 are some examples.

15 Isaiah 10:1-3, Jeremiah 5:27-29, Amos 2:6-7, Zechariah 7:9-10

16 Matthew 9:36, Matthew 20:31

17 An example is found in the first chapter of the Gospel of Mark where Jesus meets a leper who is a picture of sorrow, exclusion and need. Immediately Jesus is moved by compassion and significantly heals him with a touch. This leper was excluded yet Jesus breaks with the societal norms to reach out and touch him.



such a need for this value in modern Scotland. In an era of bankers' bonuses, exploding debt, expenses scandals, food poverty and homelessness there has never been a more important time to ask, 'Who is my neighbour?'<sup>18</sup>

## Integrity

*“Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but whoever takes crooked paths will be found out”*

(Proverbs 10:9)

Our vision of Scotland will also be fuelled by integrity. A wise Scotland, a just and compassionate Scotland, will be a nation that has integrity at its core. In an age of increased cynicism in business, politics and the media<sup>19</sup> integrity will be the value that enables us to move forward beyond present problems and into a brighter future. The Christian story again gives relevant insights. Examples of the Old Testament prime minister Joseph and civil servant Daniel bring issues of personal integrity to the fore.<sup>20</sup> Combined with this are the numerous commands to leaders and governments to avoid corruption and to use positions of power for good rather than dishonest gain.<sup>21</sup>

This should not be surprising because integrity is a characteristic of God, who does not lie or change His mind.<sup>22</sup> Again this quality is seen in the life of Jesus. Whether engaging with lepers or the wealthy, the powerful or the weak, he was consistent. The truth was told in love even when unpopular, and even when insulted and ambushed there was no deceit to be found



in his mouth. Even when justified there was no retaliation or use of power but instead transparent love, hope and truth.<sup>23</sup>

Whether in business, commerce, politics or church, the temptation is to hold principles lightly, to tailor our message to suit our audience or to court popularity. To have integrity is to have moral consistency and to be the same, no matter who you are dealing with. To have integrity is to live with a vision and set of principles acting as a compass for life. A person of integrity believes in truth and honesty and does not change for expediency's sake. Modern Scotland is so in need of this ancient wisdom.

18 Luke 10:29


19 The three great scandals of recent times – banking crisis (2008), political expenses scandal (2009), phone hacking media scandal (2011/2) leading to the Leveson Inquiry.

20 Genesis 39-41, Daniel 1-2, 6

21 Exodus 18:21-22, Isaiah 1:23, Jeremiah 22:16-17, 1Timothy 3:1-9, Titus 1:7

22 1 Samuel 15:29

23 Matthew 26:50-54, Mark 14:60, John 19:10-11



“For far too long we have invested everything in the valueless pursuit of pure financial gain”

# What kind of economy?

## Economy, poverty and welfare

“No society can surely be flourishing and happy, of which the far greater part of the members are poor and miserable”<sup>24</sup>

Adam Smith

“A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions”<sup>25</sup>

Jesus

“This country is a paradoxical tapestry of rich resources, inventive humanity, gross inequalities, and persistent levels of poor health and deprivation”<sup>26</sup>

Christie Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services

Our approach to the economy will define us as a nation. For far too long we have invested

everything in the valueless pursuit of pure financial gain. We have defined our status and success by this approach, both individually and nationally, and we have taken a reckless course in the pursuit of ever more - no matter the cost to others, wider society, or the environment.

In pursuit of these goals huge debts have been built up at both national and individual levels as we have sought to keep pace with others. We have assumed that wealth creation is the only path to social progress, tackling social inequality and building personal fulfilment. In the UK now, average personal debt (excluding mortgages) stands at almost £9,000 per household and in Scotland personal financial debt is £2,500 per person, with the youngest proportionately owing most.<sup>27</sup> It only takes a brief look around Europe, as well as to the fortunes of our two biggest banks, to see where this trajectory has led us, and how broken this model is.<sup>28</sup>

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24 The Wealth Of Nations, Book I Chapter VIII, page 96, para. 36. Cited in the *Condensed Wealth of Nations*, Pg. 22 <http://www.adamsmith.org/sites/default/files/resources/condensed-WoN.pdf>

25 Luke 12:15

26 Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services, page two <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/352649/0118638.pdf>

27 The average personal debt in the UK (excluding mortgages) is £8,761 per household <http://www.moneywise.co.uk/investing/financial-goals/20-ways-to-escape-debt-good> In Scotland ONS statistics point to debt of around £2,500 per person with the youngest owing the most <http://www.scottisheconomywatch.com/brian-ashcrofts-scottish/2013/01/personal-debt-spending-and-recovery.html>

28 This can be contrasted with Nordic countries where Norway, Sweden and Finland have no net debt and Denmark has a relatively small figure at eight per cent (International Monetary Fund) [http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2013/01/weodata/weorept.aspx?sy=2011&ey=2018&scsm=1&ssd=1&sort=country&ds=.&br=1&c=142%2C128%2C939%2C172%2C144&s=GGXWDN%2CGGXWDN\\_NGDP%2CGGXWDG%2CGGXWDG\\_NGDP&grp=0&a=&pr.x=72&pr.y=17#cs4](http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2013/01/weodata/weorept.aspx?sy=2011&ey=2018&scsm=1&ssd=1&sort=country&ds=.&br=1&c=142%2C128%2C939%2C172%2C144&s=GGXWDN%2CGGXWDN_NGDP%2CGGXWDG%2CGGXWDG_NGDP&grp=0&a=&pr.x=72&pr.y=17#cs4)



At the same time as pursuing this approach, social inequality has risen both domestically and internationally.<sup>29</sup> We live in a world where resources are so unevenly spread that a billion people go to bed every night hungry and three million children die malnourished every year.<sup>30</sup> In modern Scotland, while in absolute terms the situation is better, we see pictures of inequality much closer to home. Our biggest city, Glasgow, is the unemployment capital of the UK<sup>31</sup> at the same time as Aberdeen, our third largest, has some of the highest property and accommodation prices.<sup>32</sup> Dundee has a world-beating life sciences industry and a booming computer games industry alongside terrible deprivation and a notorious teenage pregnancy rate<sup>33</sup>. Meanwhile, our capital city, Edinburgh, is well known for its finance, its legal firms and its brothels.<sup>34</sup> All across Scotland poverty and success sit side by side, dynamic wealth creation alongside ostentatious greed. All going on in the current context of a fierce debate about the provision of welfare support - both its purpose and affordability.

We believe that a wise, just and compassionate approach to these matters should be defined by three guiding principles:

- An economy with values
- A holistic approach to poverty
- An effective and dignified welfare system

### An economy with values

A Christian understanding of the economy is one based on shared relationships and promotion of the common good.<sup>35</sup> It is based on the premise that there is a purpose for economic activity beyond that activity itself<sup>36</sup> and that purpose is found in promoting the wellbeing and relationships both between people and God, and between people themselves.<sup>37</sup> It never endorses wealth creation for its own sake and indeed promotes a special responsibility for those who are rich to care for the most vulnerable in society.<sup>38</sup> It is a model based on mutual benefit and not 'getting one over' on the competition, employee or employer. It is a model that promotes relationship, community and family, and above all is incompatible with selfishness and greed.

Our vision for Scotland is just such a nation. A nation where ethical values are at the heart of our financial, legal, political and business worlds. A nation where the value of business

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- 29 Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services, Pg. 8  
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/352649/0118638.pdf>  
UK Parliament Social Mobility and Income Inequality  
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/research/key-issues-for-the-new-parliament/social-reform/social-mobility/>
- 30 IF Campaign <http://enoughfoodif.org/about-campaign/guide-if>  
Wealth Distribution – The Richest one per cent own 46% of global assets  
[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/10/09/richest-1-percent-wealth\\_n\\_4072658.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/10/09/richest-1-percent-wealth_n_4072658.html)  
Understanding the effects of Global Trade rules:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ldZwGDXtsmk>
- 31 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-23958763>  
<http://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/top-stories/glasgow-jobless-capital-of-the-uk-1-3075930>
- 32 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-24348196>
- 33 <http://news.stv.tv/tayside/260439-dundee-once-again-named-teenage-pregnancy-capital-of-scotland/>
- 34 <http://www.scotsman.com/news/insight-crackdown-on-edinburgh-saunas-1-3159754>
- 35 The idea of the Common Good has its ancient roots in Catholic Social Teaching  
*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, pages 83-85  
<http://ideas.time.com/2013/04/04/whatever-happened-to-the-common-good/>
- 36 Church of Scotland Special Commission on the Purposes of Economic Activity  
[http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/9765/Economics\\_Commission\\_email\\_and\\_web\\_version.pdf](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/9765/Economics_Commission_email_and_web_version.pdf)
- 37 Jubilee Centre offers a relational approach to economics, *Cambridge Papers* Vol 20, No.1 Pg. 4
- 38 Luke 10:30-37, Luke 14:12-14, Deuteronomy 15:7-11, Isaiah 58:6-7, Matthew 5:42, Leviticus 25:35

is recognised alongside the value of those who work in the business and are served by the business. It is a nation where industrial relations are strong because both sides look for constructive solutions to disputes, where the workforce supports the business and the management make the wellbeing of their workforce their priority.

It is a society where in a globalised world companies are rooted in communities and see their ethical and environmental responsibilities as core and not just optional extras. A society where social enterprise may flourish and dynamic creativity is unleashed to tackle Scotland's most pressing social needs. In short it is an economy with values.

### Holistic approach to poverty

Allied to this must be a ruthless commitment to eradicating poverty in all its forms. Poverty in Scotland takes a range of forms: material, relational, spiritual, and poverty of being – all of them are unacceptable in 21<sup>st</sup> century Scotland. Successive government commitments to tackling material poverty and child poverty, should be commended, but a broader definition of poverty is required that considers more than just the income a person or family receives.<sup>39</sup>

That is not to say that material poverty and inequality should be forgotten. It cannot be right that the poorest 20 per cent of the population contribute a larger percentage of their wealth in tax than those in the top 20 per cent.<sup>40</sup> It cannot be right that those in work find themselves having to rely on state handouts and reliant on visiting foodbanks. It cannot be right that after

60 years of the welfare state, where a person is born can still affect educational achievements, health and life expectancy as much as ever.<sup>41</sup>

As Christians we believe such inequality to be an affront to God and a blatant attack on our humanity as individuals made equally in the image of God.

### Promoting true welfare

The Christian Church has always had an interest in the provision of welfare to society. Following the biblical instructions to care for the poor, needy and most vulnerable in society, churches and individual Christians have contributed vast amounts of time, energy and money developing and providing services for the most needy in society. From Victorian evangelicals challenging slavery, to John Knox's vision of a 'school in every parish', from the growth of the hospice movement to Thomas Chalmers' implementation of school provision in the poorest areas, churches have been at the forefront of this work. In the modern world this work continues with foodbanks, debt advice centres, Street Pastors, homeless projects, destitute refugee support, youth and children's work and the visiting of older people – all of this to fulfil the command we believe we have been given to seek the welfare of the city.<sup>42</sup>

We are therefore concerned by what we see in modern Scotland with the welfare state often lacking in dignity, offering inadequate support and giving few incentives to take personal responsibility. We are concerned with a system that is unwieldy, complicated and over-bureaucratic, but above all one that is ineffective at releasing people from the effects of poverty

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39 Save the Children statistics on Child Poverty in Scotland

[http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/sites/default/files/docs/Severe\\_Child\\_Poverty\\_In\\_Scotland\\_February2011.pdf](http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/sites/default/files/docs/Severe_Child_Poverty_In_Scotland_February2011.pdf)

The Oxfam Humankind Index, based on a number of quality of life factors, is an example of a potentially more fruitful approach to wellbeing and therefore to measuring poverty. <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/scotland/blog/2012/04/what-makes-scotland-happy>

40 <http://www.politics.co.uk/news/2013/07/10/it-s-official-the-rich-are-getting-poorer-and-inequality-is>

41 Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services Pg. 7  
The Enabling State: A Discussion Paper, Pg. 9

42 Jeremiah 29:7



and into well-paid and secure work.<sup>43</sup> Our vision for Scotland is a welfare system that is based on dignity, support and responsibility, and one that supports relational welfare.

Far too often the recipients of welfare are unconnected with the providers of welfare and this can cause misunderstanding and resentment on both sides. Moving to a system of family, community and relationally-based welfare would enable real support to be given to those who find themselves in need of welfare. It would change the system so that

no one could simply be given benefit every month and left to fend for themselves. It would also connect those who fund the welfare state with those who need it, building relationship and understanding between these groups and avoiding unhelpful categorisations such as 'strivers versus skivers'. In all of this we would like to see the development of a *social covenant*, where a commitment to work and contribute to society for those who are able is accompanied by a commitment to support those in need, at an individual, family and community level.

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43 The Christian understanding of work is rooted in the creation story of Genesis 1-2. Work is designed to be positive, purposeful and is key to wider welfare. Christians are therefore strong advocates of well-paid work both for individual wellbeing and also as a practical answer to some of the challenges facing the welfare state.



### Policy recommendations

- **Integrity and Transparency Authority**

An agency to promote and resource (and enforce) the highest standards of integrity in business, finance and politics.

- **Moving long-term to a financial system based on shared equity rather than ever-increasing debt**<sup>44</sup>

Promoting shared ownership of assets and purchases based on shared savings rather than increased debt.

- **Support and incentives for the Living Wage**

To promote the dignity and value of well paid work.

- **Consideration of targeted wealth redistribution**

Through philanthropy, tax incentives or taxation to tackle specific poverty projects.

- **Tighter controls on qualifications for borrowing**

Protecting the vulnerable from unsustainable debt.

- **Local relational welfare provision**

Community support for those in need at the most local possible level.

- **Community back-to-work projects**

To help bring skills, dignity and confidence to the long-term unemployed. Regular volunteering for those not on health-based benefits.

- **Community empowerment to tackle poverty**

Utilising the skills of community groups and faith groups who are committed for the long-term.

- **A Social Welfare Covenant**

An obligation on all who are able to work, coupled with a dignified support system for those who are unable to do so.

- **Empowering church and community groups to meet housing needs**

Empowering communities to take ownership of housing stock and unleashing them to meet the needs of their communities.

- **State support for effective and distinctive faith-based drugs rehabilitation work**

Offering support for holistic faith-based approaches to drug rehabilitation where these are proved effective in outcomes.

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44 For more information see Jubilee Centre, *Cambridge Papers*, Vol 20, No 1, Pg. 4





# What kind of family?

**“When families break down, society breaks down”**

## Relationships, marriage and children

**“The family, as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and wellbeing of all its members and particularly children, should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so it can assume its responsibilities within the community”**

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child <sup>45</sup>

**“The first bond of society is marriage”**

Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 BC) <sup>46</sup>

**“The importance of the family cannot be overstated. A child’s physical, emotional and psychological development occurs within the family environment; it is where the vast majority of us learn the fundamental skills for life”**

Centre for Social Justice <sup>47</sup>

**“Communities and families have an inherent tendency to be good at precisely the thing which governments and public services have demonstrated to be their inherent weakness”**

Sir John Elvidge, *The Enabling State* <sup>48</sup>

There can be no greater role for government than that of supporting families and children. Families are the foundational building block of society and provide the context for us to live, the support networks at life’s most critical times, and the ideal environment for raising children. Conversely, dysfunctional family relationships are among the most harmful of life’s experiences, leading to stress and illness, providing the context for unhealthy and abusive relationships and ultimately in many cases entire family breakdown.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) correctly states that the family is the fundamental grouping of society.

45 <http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>

46 EANI, *Marriage: The New Radical*, Pg. 1

47 The Centre for Social Justice, *Every Family Matters*, page one <http://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/UserStorage/pdf/Pdf%20Exec%20summaries/Every%20Family%20Matters.pdf>

48 *The Enabling State*, A Discussion paper

It is recognised that most people, in all cultures across the world, will live in families and that this is fundamentally a good thing, for the individuals involved and also for wider society. It is part of our human DNA. It is particularly true that for children secure and nurturing relationships within the family contribute hugely to child development.<sup>49</sup> It is for this reason that families are provided protections in the European Convention on Human Rights<sup>50</sup> and it is for this reason that supporting families should be a cornerstone of government policy.

Economically strong families also create a strong society. Half of Scottish private sector employees are employed in family businesses<sup>51</sup> and across the UK as a whole these businesses contribute 33 per cent of GDP and provide £73 billion in tax revenues for the government. Families also save vast amounts of money with carers, usually family members, providing unpaid care in the UK equating to some £90 billion.<sup>52</sup>

It is clear then that there are great benefits to strong families but it is equally as clear that there is huge negative impact when families break down. In the UK today family breakdown costs every person over £1,500, which means that in Scotland over £8 billion is lost every year to the cost of broken families.<sup>53</sup> This is not to mention the emotional and social cost to individuals and families such breakdown entails. Therefore

there must also be a focus from government on doing all it can to prevent family breakdown in the first place, giving increased prominence to mediation and support services, and pursuing family-friendly policies to lessen the pressure on families.

If Scotland is to succeed as a nation it will be built on the strength of our families. Families fulfil roles that the state and market cannot and this unique role should be cherished, affirmed and supported. To do this, three key principles should underpin our approach to family:

- Selfless relationships
- Recognising marriage
- Nurturing our children

### Selfless relationships

Relationships are at the core of our humanity and their effective functioning is central to every society. Christians worship a God who in His essence is a community of relationship and who makes it possible for people to have right relationships with God and with each other. When relationships go right they provide significant benefits across society but when they go wrong the costs are severe.

Prevailing individualism suggests that relationships are only important to the extent

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49 In relation to child wellbeing, a typical finding of cross-national studies is that, "much can be done to improve child wellbeing through economic and other supports where the institution of marriage has seriously weakened and cohabitation has become common. But even in nations that have the most extensive welfare measures, such as the Scandinavian countries and France, a substantial gap in child wellbeing remains between those children who grow up in intact families, and those who do not... all the evidence we have shows that individuals fare best, both in childhood and in later life, when they benefit from the economic and emotional investments of their natural parents who reside together continuously and cooperate in raising them." Popenoe, D. 2009. *Social Science and Public Policy*. Vol 46, Number 5, pp. 429-436.  
<http://www.marriagefoundation.org.uk/Web/Content/Default.aspx?Content=414>

50 European Convention on Human Rights [http://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/Convention\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/Convention_ENG.pdf)

51 <http://www.familybusinessunited.com/research/the-oldest-family-businesses-in-scotland/>

52 Three Million family businesses in UK support 9.5 million people and contribute £73 billion in tax. Carers, usually family members, provide unpaid care worth almost £90 billion. EANI, *Relationships Revolution*, Pg. 4

53 Relationships Foundation, *Counting the Cost of Family Failure*, 2013 Update [http://www.relationshipsfoundation.org/Shared/Uploads/Products/61374\\_Cost%20of%20Family%20Failure%20PDF.pdf](http://www.relationshipsfoundation.org/Shared/Uploads/Products/61374_Cost%20of%20Family%20Failure%20PDF.pdf)  
Scottish population at 2011 census was estimated to be 5,295,000  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-20754750>



to which they work for *me*, supporting *my* preferences and desires. This unhealthy focus on the rights of an individual outside of the context of community leads to further unintended consequences. By viewing our relationships disproportionately through a lens of personal rights we can erode personal responsibility and respect.

What is needed is a revolution in how we approach relationships in Scotland. We need a recognition of the value of good relationships across every aspect of friendship, family, business and society and a government that supports this goal. This revolution starts with one key component – the recognition that the greatest of relationships are selfless. This is seen in marriages, friendships and parenting across society and this value must be at the heart of the nation if Scotland is to truly flourish. Where trust is built through mutual fulfilment, business and political relationships are strong. Where trust is fractured, business and politics suffer. We want to see a nation where relationships move from selfish to selfless, from contract to care and from consumer to covenant in family, in business and in communities across Scotland.

“This revolution starts with one key component – the recognition that the greatest of relationships are selfless”

## Recognising marriage

The core relationship in any society and in civilisations throughout history is marriage. It is

the fundamental building block of society and couples enjoy physical, emotional, financial and spiritual relationships, as do any children and other extended family members. All the statistics suggest that marriage is good for the individuals involved and good for society as a whole.

Married people are happier, live longer and are healthier and wealthier than society as a whole.<sup>54</sup> Marriage is also fundamental to the future of society and its wellbeing is the stable context for raising the next generation. This is particularly true when statistics for parental breakdown

are considered. While 27 per cent of couples who were cohabiting when their child was born are no longer living together when their child turns five, the figure for married couples is significantly lower at nine per cent.<sup>55</sup> If we truly want to “get it right for every child”<sup>56</sup> as a society then we will support marriage as a cornerstone

of family policy.<sup>57</sup> This is not a moral crusade (though there are many moral reasons for supporting marriage).<sup>58</sup> It is simply common sense for the common good of Scotland.

For all of these reasons it is concerning that much of the Scottish political establishment seems to be opposed to the very notion of supporting marriage. Marriage has been reduced to ‘two people who love each other’ and perhaps more than any other institution has been damaged by the rampant individualism

54 The key positive benefits identified are higher income, improved health and wellbeing, increased happiness and child wellbeing. <http://www.marriagefoundation.org.uk/Web/Content/Default.aspx?Content=414>

In relation to health benefits one survey by Professor Andrew Oswald of Warwick Business School suggests the health effects of being married can be as beneficial as giving up smoking. <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/economics/staff/academic/oswald/healthlong2005.pdf>

55 Institute for Fiscal Studies, *Cohabitation, marriage, relationship stability and child outcomes* <http://www.ifs.org.uk/comms/r87.pdf>

56 <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright/background>

57 Popenoe, D. 2009. *Social Science and Public Policy*. Vol 46, Number 5, pp. 429-436. <http://www.marriagefoundation.org.uk/Web/Content/Default.aspx?Content=414>

58 The theological basis for marriage has its origins in the creation story of Genesis 1-2. Marriage was the first human relationship at creation involving the complimentary nature of one man and one woman. The traditional Christian understanding is that marriage is for mutual comfort and companionship, the procreation of children (and providing a stable context for their development), and the restraint of unhealthy sexual desires that would damage relationships and individuals. Further biblical understanding can be found in Ephesians 5.

that has no regard for wider society. While marriage is undoubtedly about love it is also far more than that, encompassing long-term commitment to sustainable relationships and families which in turn form a vital building block for a stable society, which promotes the health and wellbeing of all. While there are debates about precisely what effective support government can offer, it must surely be the case that there starts to be a recognition of this most fundamental of human relationships.

### Nurturing our children

Bringing up children well is fundamental to the future of Scotland and there is much to be commended in the Scottish government's policy ambition to make Scotland, "the best place in the world for children and young people to grow up".<sup>59</sup> Christians have always taken special care and responsibility for looking after children, particularly those who are forgotten. In Scotland it was Christians who started the first schools, birthed the Sunday school movement, ran orphanages and fed the poor. All of this was done from the conviction that each and every child is a gift from God.<sup>60</sup>

Children have incredible potential and for this to be truly realised they should be supported in the context of the natural family unit. While there is a role for wider society in this it is the case that parents have the primary responsibility for their children, supported by the extended family, friends and where necessary, the state. It is concerning at times to see approaches to child rights that take little regard for the context of a

child's relationships within a family community and rather see a child in a radically individual way. As has already been stated, radically autonomous and individualistic approaches to relationships lead to fractured relationships and damage for all.

Where children are not able, for whatever reason, to enjoy a secure upbringing with their own family, then as a community and society we must respond. Fostering and adoption in particular have an enormous role to play and once again it is encouraging to see churches responding to this need through programmes such as Home for Good.<sup>61</sup> As a society we must also learn to value more and support those who take on this worthwhile task. The move towards early intervention where risk is identified is welcome and as a society and community we must take responsibility together for supporting our most vulnerable children and young people.

It is also important to highlight the vital role of education in the development of our young people. In Scotland it was the famous vision of John Knox that led to Christians establishing schools across the land, paving the way for Scotland to become the most literate nation in the world.<sup>62</sup> At its heart education is about developing wisdom and maturity and this is best done in the context of a holistic community. We strongly support the role of local churches and other community groups as part of the wider school community, enriching Scottish education and giving the best possible support to parents and teachers in bringing through the next generation.

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59 <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/legislation>

60 Psalm 127:3, Psalm 139:13-16, Matthew 18:1-3

61 Home for Good is an initiative of the Evangelical Alliance, CCPAS and Care for the Family to encourage churches to promote fostering and adoption <http://www.homeforgood.org.uk/>

62 Alex Salmond speech to Scottish Church Theology Society, 14 January 2014. Available on request.



## Policy recommendations

### ■ Relational impact assessments or family-proofing policy

To ensure strong relationships are at the heart of society by testing policy against the effects on relationships and families.

### ■ Relationship skills and education

To help provide the tools for strong relationships with long-term commitment and stability at the heart.

### ■ Support for marriage in tax system

Recognition for the most fundamental and foundational relationship with infinite benefits for wider society.

### ■ Commitment to support fostering and adoption

To allow all children in Scotland to benefit from the love of a family and have a Home for Good.

### ■ Recognition of the role of parents and grandparents

Supporting and strengthening the unique role of family as the best context for raising children.

### ■ Strengthening parental authority

To make clear that in all but the most serious circumstances parents have the right to raise their children as they deem appropriate, without interference from the state.

### ■ Supporting fatherhood

Recognising the importance of male role models in the home and at school. Supporting and resourcing men for fatherhood and providing incentives to encourage men into the teaching profession.

### ■ Incentives to companies for family-friendly policies

Taking the strain off business while supporting families. Offering a lower business rate where family-friendly policies apply.

### ■ Community partnership in education

Recognising that education is not only the job of the state but that the best education is holistic and has communities, churches and parents at the heart.





# What kind of society?

## Freedom, justice and community

*“And, dying in your beds many years from now, would you be willing to trade all the days from this day to that for one chance, just one chance, to come back here and tell our enemies that they may take our lives, but they’ll never take our freedom”*

Braveheart<sup>63</sup>

*“The Lord detests dishonest scales, but accurate weights find favour with him”*

Proverbs 11:1

*“In the context of global financial shocks, ageing populations and climate change, many now feel that it is the time to look afresh at the relationship between society and government”*

Sir John Elvidge, *The Enabling State*<sup>64</sup>

In Scotland we treasure our freedom. We value the freedoms to express ourselves, to associate, to debate ideas and to live in accordance with our

values. We value our distinctive legal system and a history of justice that allows the context for this freedom to be expressed. This space created by freedom and protected by justice in turn provides the context for the third pillar of society to flourish, namely community. In Scotland we value our civic space, our civil society; where organisations, community groups, charities and faith groups provide vibrancy to our national life and benefit for the common good. For civil society to flourish in Scotland there are three areas that must be developed:

- Protecting freedom
- Transforming justice
- Empowering communities

## Protecting freedom

Freedom and its related values of tolerance and liberty are Christian values.<sup>65</sup> We believe in a society where people are given fundamental freedom to live in accordance with their beliefs, and where their individual liberty is valued and

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<sup>63</sup> <http://www.paramount.com/movies/braveheart>

<sup>64</sup> The Enabling State, *A Discussion Paper*, <http://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/getattachment/b90e80a4-a243-4f6b-bfb1-34b15c3cb7b3/The-Enabling-State---A-Discussion-Paper.aspx>

<sup>65</sup> The Christian understanding of humanity is that God created people as free beings with an ability to choose actions and relationships. Because of this, liberty of the individual and tolerance of views are to be respected.



not oppressed. We support a Scotland in which the freedom of speech, conscience and religion are given fundamental importance. We have no wish to impose views on others but nor do we wish to have views imposed that impinge on the fundamental rights of individuals to live according to conscience in all areas of life. Increasingly there are concerns that current understandings of secularism can lead to an aggressive, imposed form of public life where no room for faith discussion is left at the table.<sup>66</sup> Rather than tyranny of religion there can be tyranny of the secular in which all views are welcome except those of faith.<sup>67</sup> We advocate instead for a plural public square in which both secular and faith views are heard.

In this plural public square the principle of tolerance logically leads to that of reasonable accommodation of views, even when these do not fit neatly with current cultural trends. This principle holds that all views should be 'reasonably accommodated' in a civilised society provided no harm or denial of rights is caused to others.<sup>68</sup> For true tolerance to flourish, reasonable accommodation is a pre-requisite.<sup>69</sup>

## Transformative justice

Allied to freedom is the role of justice. Scotland can be proud of its legal history and the protections contained within it that promote a safe and free context in which to live. There is much to be grateful for in Scottish justice but also many areas that could be improved to create a true nation of justice across all areas of society. For justice to flourish in Scotland there are three principles upon which it will be based: upholding good and opposing evil, bringing down the oppressor and liberating the oppressed, and above all being transformative for offender and victim alike.<sup>70</sup>

When Scotland is compared with these standards the picture does not look as healthy, particularly in the field of criminal justice. As with many developed nations the prison population has grown<sup>71</sup> and reoffending rates remain stubbornly high at a colossal economic cost to society.<sup>72</sup> All too often a revolving prison door is in operation with the same group of offenders who are neither deterred nor transformed by the experience of prison. There are questions as

66 Christians in Parliament and the Evangelical Alliance, *Clearing the Ground*

67 For more information see *Clearing the Ground* report, or *Neither Private nor Privileged*.

68 An example of this would be allowing employees of a supermarket who are members of a particular faith group to have a festival holiday provided the service to customers was not impeded.

69 The Oxford English Dictionary defines tolerance as: "The ability or willingness to tolerate the existence of opinions or behaviour that one dislikes or disagrees with."

<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/tolerance>

Reasonable accommodation is a practical expression of this definition of tolerance

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/news/2011/july/commission-proposes-reasonable-accommodation-for-religion-or-belief-is-needed/>

70 In the Christian understanding of justice God is the source of all justice (Deuteronomy 32:4)

As a characteristic of God, biblical justice upholds good and opposes evil and it brings down the oppressor and liberates the oppressed. It is also transformative and is a saving act of God (Amos 5:24). For a fuller explanation see *Votewise Now!* pp 24-32

71 The current Scottish prison population is around 8,000. This compares to around 6,000 in the year 2000 and is anticipated to rise to 9,500 by 2020. Between 1980 and 2020 the prison population will have doubled.

<http://www.sps.gov.uk/Publications/ScottishPrisonPopulation.aspx>

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/TrendPris>

72 The cost of the Scottish prison service is £350 million

The average cost of keeping an inmate in prison is £32,000 per year

<http://www.sps.gov.uk/Publications/Publication-4809.aspx>

Economic and Social Costs of crime in Scotland was £4.9 billion in 2010-11

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/09/8279/3>

Reoffending rates in Scotland

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/TrendReOffending>

to the necessity of prison for many of the prison population and the concern that offenders end up in prison for lack of any alternative,<sup>73</sup> with women in particular often held without being of any obvious danger to the public.<sup>74</sup> While prison may act as a physical barrier to crime for the duration of the sentence, once this is over, the cycle starts again, adding to the distress of victims who can often feel left out of the whole justice process.

What is needed is justice that restores.<sup>75</sup> The government of Scotland must radically invest in a system that brings restoration for victims and transformation for offenders. As Christians we believe in redemption and the power of personal transformation for those who truly desire it.<sup>76</sup> We strongly support the existing restorative justice services in operation but the whole system must be redesigned with the purpose of transforming offenders at the heart. This needs to be done at a community level with reintegration of offenders into the wider community an absolute priority. As with so many other areas churches and other community groups have a valuable role to play.<sup>77</sup>

### Empowering communities

In the future Scotland, community will be at the heart. One of the most significant current national debates is that of the role of wider civic Scotland, particularly in the area of public

service reform. It is widely recognised that the role of the state is changing and that in future there will be a greater reliance on the third sector for much of what is needed to make our communities flourish. Combining short-term financial pressures with long-term demographics it is abundantly clear that the state can simply not provide as it has done in the past and that the current model is unsustainable. Added to this, a reflection on 60 years of the welfare model concludes that while much has been achieved in areas such as health inequalities, educational attainment and social mobility, the gaps remain as wide as ever.<sup>78</sup>

This debate has led to discussions of public service reform set out in the Christie Commission,<sup>79</sup> in turn leading to concepts such as the 'enabling state'.<sup>80</sup> Whatever the outcome of these discussions, it is abundantly clear that in the future Scotland will need a larger civil society if it is to renew and transform communities.

The primary way to this civic renewal is to unleash the power of communities. In legislative terms the principle of subsidiarity is key and future governments in Scotland should avoid past centralising tendencies.<sup>81</sup> Informally this can already be seen in many spheres and in many of these areas churches and other groups are playing a large and increasing role. The

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73 Of the prison population:

70 per cent of prisoners have a mental health problem

<http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/help-information/mental-health-statistics/prisons/>

80% of Scottish prisoners are functionally illiterate

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-20852685>

<http://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/publications/causes-of-crime-report>

74 <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/Review/commissiononwomenoffenders>

75 For further information see Chuck Colson, *Justice that restores*

76 Psalm 130, Romans 3:23-24

77 Caring For Ex-Offenders Scotland <http://www.cfeoscotland.org/>

Prison Fellowship Scotland <http://www.pfscotland.org/>

78 Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services, Pg. 7

79 Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services

80 The Enabling State: A discussion paper

81 Subsidiarity is the principle that decisions should be de-centralised and made at the most local possible level in family, community or local political groups. It has its roots in Catholic Social Teaching and has developed extensively in German political thinking. For more information see *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, Pg. 211



explosion of foodbanks in Scotland is perhaps the best-known example with more than 40 currently in operation, but there are many further examples of community development.<sup>82</sup> When public sector budget cuts arise it is often the churches that are the last organisations left in the community as reflective of their long-term commitment to the area. This is a fact not lost on local authorities.<sup>83</sup> These community commitments can include everything from visiting elderly residents, to providing youth clubs and supporting local schools. It is vital work done every day in Scotland, often unrecognised, that binds communities together and goes far beyond the walls of the Church.<sup>84</sup>

We therefore see a vision of Scotland where power resides in communities and where

churches, faith groups and all areas of civil society are free to flourish for the common good. We see a Scotland in which the goodwill of thousands is unleashed in our communities leading to their long-term renewal and transformation. Often civic groups can be

“*The primary way to civic renewal is to unleash the power of communities*”

constrained by bureaucracy, burdensome legislation and indeed an assumption that the public sector will provide for all needs. It is time for this to change, for partnerships to develop, and for the Scottish government to make explicit its intention to clear the barriers

in this area, ensuring churches and other groups are not viewed as competitors with suspicion but rather as partners for community transformation.

82 There are at least 43 food banks currently operated by the Trussell Trust in Scotland plus many more operated on a more informal basis

83 Christians in Parliament and the Evangelical Alliance, *Faith in the Community*

84 Churches are recognised as especially good at providing bridging social capital – social capital that provides links between different groups in communities.

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/9781861348388.pdf> Pg. 7



### Policy recommendations

- **Building a plural public square**

Rejecting the myth of secular neutrality and instead building a public square where all views are welcome including those of faith.

- **Reasonable accommodation**

Building a tolerant society where views are reasonably accommodated - especially those that conflict with fashionable cultural views.

- **Transformative justice**

Rebuilding the criminal justice system around effective transformation of offenders.

- **Victim-centred justice**

Putting the needs and restoration of victims at the heart of the criminal justice system.

- **Community-based rehabilitation**

Utilising the resources of churches and community groups in providing community-based rehabilitation programmes to tackle reoffending.

- **Commitment to the changing role of the state**

Moving from provider of services to enabler of communities.

- **Subsidiarity**

Decisions affecting communities to be made at the most local level possible.

- **Recognition of the role of churches**

As community leaders and in the provision of services.

- **Revolution in community engagement**

Putting communities at the heart of every aspect of government policy.







# What kind of environment?

## Environment, resources and the land

*“God saw all that He had made, and it was very good”*

Genesis 1:31

*“Farewell to the Highlands, farewell to the North,  
The birth-place of Valour, the country of Worth;  
Wherever I wander, wherever I rove,  
The hills of the Highlands for ever I love”*

My Heart's in the Highlands, Robert Burns<sup>85</sup>

*“I caught a fleeting glimpse of life  
And though the water's black as night  
The colours of Scotland  
Leave you young inside”*

Hearts of Olden Glory, Runrig<sup>86</sup>

*“None of Nature's landscapes are ugly so long as they are wild”*

John Muir<sup>87</sup>

In Scotland we feel an historic connection to our land. It is an environment of indescribable beauty that has been the inspiration for countless films, poems, songs and novels. It is a land that supports hundreds of thousands of Scottish jobs in tourism, energy, farming and fishing, as well as small communities across the length and breadth of Scotland.<sup>88</sup>

How we steward our environment and natural resources will directly impact not only our own lives but those of generations to come. How we promote the care of our environment will determine whether we continue along

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85 [http://www.bbc.co.uk/arts/robertburns/works/my\\_hearts\\_in\\_the\\_highlands/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/arts/robertburns/works/my_hearts_in_the_highlands/)

86 <http://www.amazon.co.uk/Hearts-Of-Olden-Glory/dp/B001JZ8G38>

87 <http://www.adventure-journal.com/2013/10/the-aj-list-20-inspiring-quotes-from-john-muir/>

88 Oil and Gas accounts for 100,000 jobs in Scotland and is worth £15 billion. The Scottish government has committed to creating 130,000 renewable energy jobs by 2020. SPICe, *Energy subject profile*  
Tourism supports 200,000 jobs and generates £4 billion in spending. SPICe, *Tourism in Scotland*

unsustainable paths that put the very beauty of Scotland in jeopardy. How we approach these issues will ultimately show whether we are living as a nation only for ourselves, or whether we aspire to be a more sustainable and selfless society.

The Christian understanding of environmental conservation is one that is rooted in the very beginning of creation.<sup>89</sup> The concept of stewardship has developed over the millennia as an understanding of our responsibility not only to ourselves and families, but to future generations and ultimately to God. It is an inherently selfless concept that is inextricably linked to the wider Christian ethic of loving our neighbour.

*“Whatever else may be disputed one thing is clear – human greed causes environmental destruction”*

We therefore envision a Scotland where our environment is taken seriously and resources are not wasted; one where our beauty is cherished to the point that it is protected and where we do not mortgage our future on the selfish pursuit of ‘ever more’. A Scotland where resources are stewarded responsibly, and shared equitably and where communities are empowered to own, steward, protect and cultivate the land for the long-term benefit of all. It is a vision of justice, responsibility and ultimately of selfless sustainability. For this to happen, three principles should be followed:

- Selfless sustainability
- Stewarding resources
- Community-based land

### Selfless sustainability

A sustainable approach to the environment will require a selfless approach. In the environmental debate, whatever else may be disputed,

one thing is clear – human greed causes environmental destruction. This can be seen at every level from global discussions to the most local communities. At a global level it is seen in negotiations about emissions, energy use and pollution of the seas and atmosphere. Closer to home it revolves around protection of ecology, animals and beauty, or neighbourhoods scarred by inappropriate developments or inconsiderate littering. Fundamentally this is due to the detachment from the environmental resources that have proven benefits on our quality of life and losing the understanding that people and the environment work best when working together.

There is much in Scotland to be supported already and we recognise successive government’s aspirations in many of these areas. The Scottish

Parliament is to be commended for the stated commitment to reducing emissions in the Climate Change Act of 2009<sup>90</sup> and the strong targets contained within it. Similarly, recycling targets<sup>91</sup> and the commitment to renewable energy as a sustainable way of harnessing Scotland’s natural resources are also to be recognised.<sup>92</sup> However it is only as a selfless approach to environmental matters permeates all aspects of Scottish society that the future of our natural environment will truly be secure.

### Stewarding resources

This is nowhere more apparent than in the use of our resources. The statistics of Scotland’s natural resources are staggering. With 25 per cent of Europe’s tidal energy potential, 25 per cent of its offshore wind and 10 per cent of its wave potential, Scotland has the capability to lead the world in renewable energies. In established technologies oil and gas have

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89 Genesis 1-2

90 Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2009/12/contents>

91 Recycling Targets <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/waste-and-pollution/Waste-1/wastestrategy/recycling>

92 Renewables Targets: 100% equivalent electricity by 2020  
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Business-Industry/Energy/Energy-sources/19185/17612>



estimated future values of between £120 billion and £1.5 trillion and since oil was discovered in the North Sea, some £300 billion has been raised in tax revenue.<sup>93</sup> In food and drink, whisky alone accounts for one quarter of all the UK's food and drink exports in revenue terms, providing £135 per second to the Exchequer, while food products such as salmon, beef and dairy are now worth over £1 billion in exports to the Scottish economy.<sup>94</sup>

Harnessing our natural resources while preserving them for future generations is therefore absolutely crucial to Scotland's future and the sustainability of our resource use must be considered.<sup>95</sup> In Christian terms this concept of stewardship is a recognition that our resources are given to be utilised for the common good. It has its roots at the heart of the creation story<sup>96</sup> and distinguishes itself from the idea of absolute ownership with its consequent absolute powers.<sup>97</sup> We do not have the right to do what we like with these resources, but rather we have the right to care for them in a just and fair way. Through stewardship infinite resources are protected and finite ones used to provide wealth in a long term and equitable way. In both cases future generations prosper. We wish to build such a Scotland.

## Communities and land

Any discussion of Scotland's resources cannot be complete without a discussion of Scotland's relationship with its land. More than 290,000 Scots today live in rural areas<sup>98</sup> yet across the whole of Scotland only 432 individuals own half of Scotland's private land.<sup>99</sup> Issues of land ownership in Scotland are not new of course with the historic 1886 Crofting Act brought in to protect communities following the land injustices of the infamous clearances. Nevertheless deep questions remain about what the current situation says about modern Scotland where the equivalent of 0.01 per cent of the population can own half of the territory of a nation.<sup>100</sup>

In Scotland there is a growing recognition of the injustice and unsustainability caused by this situation and the Scottish Parliament has already acted in the area of Land Reform.<sup>101</sup> Community buyouts such as the Islands of Eigg and Gigha have enabled struggling communities to grow and flourish.<sup>102</sup> However it is clear that more must be done to secure the future of Scotland's rural communities and to move to a more community-based model of ownership in the long term, where this is desired locally. Future land ownership in Scotland should meet two

93 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-24866266>  
<http://news.sky.com/story/1216506/should-uk-have-stockpiled-massive-oil-wealth>

94 <http://www.scotch-whisky.org.uk/what-we-do/facts-figures/>,  
<http://news.scotland.gov.uk/News/Food-drink-success-3ee.aspx>

95 The sustainability of such exports must be considered. Salmon for example is already farmed at beyond sustainable levels and cannot be maintained at its current level.

96 Genesis 1-2

97 In Christian thinking it is God who owns all. "The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it." Psalm 24:1

98 Urban Rural classification 2011-2012, Scottish government  
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/About/Methodology/UrbanRuralClassification/Urban-Rural-Classification-2011-12>

99 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-25647169>

100 This is an equivalent figure because of the many foreign landowners in Scotland.

101 Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2003/2/contents>

102 <http://www.isleofeigg.net/>, <http://www.gigha.org.uk/>

tests. First, it should preserve the beauty and steward the resources of the land, and second, it should be the ownership pattern that best strengthens the local community. In some cases

this may vary between locations but what is clear is the principle that those who live on the land should, finally in Scotland, have a stake in its future.

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## Policy recommendations

### ■ **Oil and Renewables Sovereign Wealth Fund**

A fund to ensure future generations benefit from Scotland's current energy resources – based on the smaller example of Shetland.

### ■ **Community land reform**

Community land reform based on the principles of preserving beauty and strengthening communities across Scotland.

### ■ **Community renewables**

Legislation to ensure communities are able to have governance and ownership of renewables located in their vicinity. Support for a funding model to develop community ownership of renewable assets.

### ■ **Sustainable development**

Development and planning in Scotland to move from a model of predominantly economic development to one that considers social and environmental impact on an equal footing.

### ■ **Ecology**

Policy support to maintain and actively encourage national ecological coherence, preventing the continued fragmentation of habitats due to over-development.

### ■ **Biodiversity**

Policy and funds applicable to developers to ensure future developments are designed with biodiversity improvements from the ground up.

### ■ **Protecting wild land**

Valuing and protecting wild land while encouraging sustainable access. Promoting and valuing the beauty of Scotland.

### ■ **Application of the 'precautionary principle'**

Consider greater application of 'the precautionary principle', an approach that by law defends the environment in the absence of a full understanding of how a development may impact the land.

### ■ **Supporting rural communities**

Recognising the unique needs of rural Scotland and ensuring the sustainability of isolated communities.



# Conclusion Desires for a better Scotland

There is much that has been covered in this report and much more that could be said to build a better Scotland. Inevitably a document such as this can only scratch the surface. We have tried to outline key themes that together paint a vision of what Scotland as a nation could be. These are our desires for Scotland:

## **We desire a Scotland where...**

- The economy is based on values
- Poverty is unacceptable
- Welfare is effective and dignified
- Relationships are treasured
- Families are supported
- Marriage is honoured
- Children are nurtured
- Freedom is protected
- Justice is transforming
- Communities are empowered
- Our environment is cherished
- Resources are stewarded
- Land is shared

This is who we aspire to be. This is where we believe the Bible takes us. This is the future we have dreamed of and the nation we have longed for. These are the results of a nation seeking wisdom, living for justice, showing compassion and walking in integrity. It is the kind of nation that will flourish in every conceivable way.

Will we choose to be this nation? What will be our legacy for those who come behind? Will it be continued self-interest or long-term stewardship? Will it be support for our families and communities or simply thinking of ourselves? Will it be measuring life in values or simply pounds and pence?

Before us stands a choice: a choice about who we want to be as a nation. Usually such a debate only happens following severe upheaval, revolution or violence. Yet we have a unique opportunity to consider our future and who we desire to be.

So as we stand at this unique moment, participating in the making of history, now is the time to answer: "Scotland: What kind of nation?"





# Policy recommendations

- **Integrity and Transparency Authority**

To promote and resource (and enforce) the highest standards of integrity in business, finance and politics.

- **Promoting a financial system based on shared equity rather than personal debt**

To move away from our debt-fuelled economy into a more sustainable model based on shared equity and assets.

- **Support and incentives for the Living Wage**

To promote the dignity and value of well-paid work.

- **Consideration of targeted wealth redistribution**

Through philanthropy, tax incentives or taxation to tackle specific poverty projects.

- **Tighter controls on qualifications for borrowing**

Protecting the vulnerable from unsustainable debt.

- **Local relational welfare provision**

Community support for those in need at the most local possible level.

- **Community back-to-work projects**

To help bring skills, dignity and confidence to the long-term unemployed. Regular volunteering for those not on health-based benefits.

- **Community empowerment to tackle poverty**

Utilising the skills of community groups and faith groups who are committed for the long term.

- **A Social Welfare Covenant**

An obligation on all who are able to work, coupled with a dignified support system for those who are unable.

- **Empowering church and community groups to meet housing needs**

Empowering communities to take ownership of housing stock and unleashing them to meet the needs of their communities.

- **State support for effective and distinctive faith-based drugs rehabilitation work**

Offering support for holistic faith-based approaches to drug rehabilitation where these are proved effective in outcomes.

- **Relational impact assessments or family proofing policy**

To ensure strong relationships are at the heart of society by testing policy against the effects on relationships and families.

- **Relationship skills and education**

To help provide the tools for strong relationships with long-term commitment and stability at the heart.

- **Support for marriage in tax system**

Recognition for the most fundamental and foundational relationship with infinite benefits for wider society.

- **Commitment to support fostering and adoption**

To allow all children in Scotland to benefit from the love of a family and have a Home for Good.

- **Recognition of the role of parents and grandparents**

Supporting and strengthening the unique role of family as the best context for raising children.

- **Strengthening parental authority**

To make clear that in all but the most serious circumstances parents have the right to raise their children as they deem appropriate, without interference from the state.

- **Supporting fatherhood**

Recognising the importance of male role models in the home and at school. Supporting and resourcing men for fatherhood and incentives to encourage men into the teaching profession.

- **Incentives to companies for family-friendly policies**

Taking the strain off business while supporting families. Offering a lower business rate where family-friendly policies apply.

- **Community partnership in education**

Recognising that education is not only the job of the state but that the best education is holistic and has communities, churches and parents at the heart.

- **Building a plural public square**

Rejecting the myth of secular neutrality and instead building a public square where all views are welcome including those of faith.

- **Reasonable accommodation**

Building a tolerant society where views are reasonably accommodated; especially those that conflict with fashionable cultural views.

- **Transformative justice**

Rebuilding the criminal justice system around effective transformation of offenders.

- **Victim-centred justice**

Putting the needs and restoration of victims at the heart of the criminal justice system.

- **Community-based rehabilitation**

Utilising the resources of churches and community groups in providing community-based rehabilitation programmes to tackle reoffending.

- **Commitment to the changing role of the state**

Moving from provider of services to enabler of communities.

- **Subsidiarity**

Decisions made at the most local possible level.

- **Recognition of the role of churches**

As community leaders and in the provision of services.

- **Revolution in community engagement**

Putting communities at the heart of every aspect of government policy.

- **Oil and Renewables Sovereign Wealth Fund**

A fund to ensure future generations benefit from Scotland's current energy resources – based on the smaller example of Shetland.

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