

**SCOTTISH  
COUNCIL  
ELECTIONS,  
THURSDAY 5 MAY 2022**



**ALBA**

*Manifesto*

 **ALBA** *for Independence*

***Scottish Local Elections 2022***

**ALBA  
STANDS  
FOR  
SCOTLAND**

***The ALBA Party Manifesto***

# CONTENTS

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- 1. A message for the voters of Scotland – The Rt Hon Alex Salmond*
- 2. Introducing the Manifesto*
- 3. Taking action on Independence*
- 4. Tackling the cost of living crisis*
- 5. Standing up for women and girls*
- 6. A Summary of ALBA's pledges*
- 7. It's time for action*

# A message for the voters of Scotland from The Rt Hon Alex Salmond

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On May 5 Scotland goes to the polls to elect the women and men who will run the local services we all rely on. ALBA is standing well over 100 candidates, from all walks of life and in all parts of Scotland. In this election we hope to have the first ever people elected under the ALBA banner determined to work hard to earn your trust in local communities across the country.

Scotland stands at a pivotal moment in its history.

Council budgets are facing challenges, as never before, while one in four children live in poverty [1] [2].

Household incomes are under unprecedented financial pressure as families face a cost of living crisis which is squeezing household budgets to “breaking point”[3]

The sex-based rights of women and girls are under concerted and increasing attack[4].

This manifesto sets out ALBA’s specific pledges on how we can make life better for all households and for every community. ALBA is only just over one year old but, with two national Conferences already under our belt, ALBA continues to develop a comprehensive policy platform to meet the modern needs of a modern Scotland.

However, the focus of this Manifesto reflects three key themes:

**Taking real action on Independence as an urgent necessity.**

**Tackling the cost of living crisis.**

**Standing up for women and girls.**

Seven separate national elections have come and gone since the referendum of 2014, including two mandates at Holyrood and three Westminster elections, with a clear Independence majority. But little or no action has been taken to move the dial on Independence. We have the opportunity at this Election to finally take our own future into our own hands through an Independence Convention to co-ordinate the independence drive. It is an opportunity I urge you to take. We face a clear choice at this Election. Stagnation with any other party or action with ALBA.

ALBA stands for Scotland and I hope you will join ALBA in standing up for Scotland.

**On May 5 vote Scotland, vote ALBA.**

*Alex Salmond.*

# **ALBA stands for Scotland – Introducing the Manifesto**

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**ALBA stands for Scotland – quite literally!**

But we not only stand for Scotland – We stand up for Scotland and its people at every possible opportunity and you can too by voting for ALBA in this Election.

With 6,700 members, and rising, in all airts and pairts of Scotland, ALBA activists, councillors and MPs have already been standing up for Scotland.

The more votes that are cast for ALBA and the more ALBA councillors that are elected the more action there will be on Independence and the more we can accomplish for Scotland.

A vote for ALBA in this Election is:

**A vote for real action on Independence through the establishment of an Independence Convention.**

**A vote to tackle the cost of living crisis through our targeted Five-point plan to address family and child poverty.**

**A vote to boost ALL household incomes by pushing for a fully funded Council Tax Freeze and one third off fuel bills and a doubling of the winter fuel payment to pensioners.**

**A vote to protect the sex-based rights of women and girls and embed those rights at a local level.**

**A vote for councillors who will work hard to improve the facilities and services in their local community – and for councillors who will stand with working people in their fight for fairness and justice.**

Only by voting for ALBA can you make any of this happen.

**That is why, on May 5, you should vote for ALBA**

# ALBA stands for Scotland by taking action on Independence

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Independence is ALBA's priority. Independence is not an aspiration for the hereafter but for the HERE and NOW! It shouldn't be a mantra with which to rouse the faithful before a party conference but the clear basis for taking the action necessary to deliver progress towards achieving it. Without the full powers of independence neither the health of the people or the economy of the nation can hope to fully recover from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Despite a renewed mandate for an Independence Referendum in 2021, the will of the people of Scotland, as expressed in that Election has yet to be implemented. Indeed, the Scottish Government have yet to even request the transfer of powers from Westminster, through a Section 30 Order, which is one way to enable that Referendum to take place.

The Scottish Government have effectively handed the UK Government and Boris Johnson a veto over Scotland's constitutional future. ALBA believes this is unacceptable and that this situation cannot be allowed to continue.

With your support for ALBA in this Election it won't!

**It's time for Scotland to seize the political initiative from Westminster**

**It's time to break the constitutional log-jam.**

**It's time for Scotland to decide its own future, not Boris Johnson and his Westminster Tories.**

That is why ALBA is proposing that an Independence Convention, comprised of all Scotland's elected representatives be established immediately following these Elections. MSPs, MPs and Councillors, as well as representatives of civic Scotland, trade unions and business, would be invited to attend. The Independence Convention would re-assert Scotland's Claim of Right. It would underline that it is the people of Scotland who are sovereign, not the UK Parliament, and it would signal, to Westminster and to the world that Scotland is on the march once again!

**ALBA WILL:**

**Take real action on Independence through the establishment of an Independence Convention.**

**Only ALBA is prioritising Independence in this Election.**

That is why on May 5, you should vote for ALBA 1 and use your preference votes for other independence supporting candidates.

# ALBA stands for Scotland by taking action on Independence

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The SNP Government under Alex Salmond delivered the first ever independence referendum in Scotland's history in September 2014. Since then:

## **The Independence Mandate**

The Scottish Government has secured a mandate from the Scottish people to deliver an Independence referendum in both the 2016 and 2021 elections.

## **A majority favour an Independence Referendum**

In the most recent 2021 Scottish Election, a majority of people voted on the regional list for parties (SNP, Scottish Greens and ALBA) that support Scottish Independence.

## **Scotland dragged out of the EU**

Scotland has been taken out of the European Union and the Single European Market against the expressed wishes of the Scottish people.

## **A majority in the Scottish Parliament**

A majority of MSPs continue to support independence and have done so since 2016.

## **A majority of Scottish MPs**

A clear majority of independence supporting MPs have been returned to Westminster in three separate elections since 2015.

# ALBA stands for Scotland by tackling the "cost of living crisis"

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Scotland is facing a real cost of living crisis, one that cries out for real action, from both the UK and the Scottish Governments – action which has been sadly lacking to date.

Inflation is already at a 20 year high with the Bank of England expecting it to rise to around 8% or higher this year[5].

The lifting of OFGEM's energy price cap in April has already seen average annual household bills rise by £700 while the cost of unregulated fuels like fuel oil has tripled over the last year.. [6] [7] [8].

The rise in energy costs is pushing more and more households into fuel poverty across the country and especially in rural and island communities.

847,000 households – more than one in three in Scotland (38%) will be spending over 10% of their income on fuel. In 14 of Scotland's 32 Councils the rate is higher still with the Western Isles set to see fuel poverty rise to a staggering 57%[9].

Scotland has the top five cities in the UK affected by fuel poverty in the UK (Dundee, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Falkirk).[10]

Pay and benefit rises are running at less than half the rate of inflation – representing a real terms pay cut for families.

The rise in National Insurance contributions is a further punitive tax rise for workers.

While the UK and Scottish Government have failed to rise to the challenge, the decision by Inverclyde Council to authorise a payment of £350 to families in need, shows the type of real action which councils can take to help mitigate the impact on households of the cost of living crisis.

ALBA will act to tackle the crisis through our targeted five-point plan to address family and child poverty.

In addition we propose a doubling this coming year of the winter fuel payment offering 1 million Scottish pensioners, and households with severely disabled children, increased payments of between £100 and £300 to help with heating.

All of our proposals are measures that Councils have the power to implement. ALBA's councillors will push for the adoption of its Five-point plan within their Council Budget and spending plans for the coming year and for the Scottish Government to fund it. If this package and the enhanced winter fuel payments were to be implemented across all 32 Scottish councils it would represent an investment of £1,341 million – just over 2% (2.48 per cent) of the total Scottish Government Budget.

**It is not the power, or the finance which is lacking – it is the political will!**

# ALBA stands for Scotland by tackling the "cost of living crisis"

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Scotland is awash with natural resources. **We produce five times the oil and gas we require and yet every price rise makes us poorer.** We can already keep the lights on using renewable electricity alone. The price of wind or water has not gone up but Westminster prices Scottish electricity on the international price of gas.

Our problem is that our resources are controlled by international capital, London pockets the revenues and Scots pay the bills. That is why we have huge levels of fuel poverty in our land of energy plenty.

**ALBA STANDS FOR SCOTLAND AND SAYS NO TO GREAT ENERGY RIP OFF**

# ALBA stands for Scotland by tackling the “cost of living crisis”

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## **ALBA PROPOSE:**

Establishing an annual £500 payment targeted at every low earnings household in Scotland in receipt of council tax reduction. This will benefit half a million households at a cost of £250 million. [11]

## **ALBA PROPOSE:**

Increasing the Scottish Child Payment from £25 to £40 per week for all eligible families. This will benefit 400,000 children across 250,000 households at a cost of £312 million. [12]

## **ALBA PROPOSE:**

Introducing universal free breakfasts for all nursery, primary and secondary pupils and extend free school meals to all primary and secondary pupils. This will cost £350 million. [13]

## **ALBA PROPOSE:**

Doubling the Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) from £30 to £60 per week for all 16-19 year olds in full time school or college to help close the poverty related educational attainment gap. This would benefit 30,000 young people at a cost of £23 million.

## **ALBA PROPOSE:**

Guaranteeing free universal access for all children and young people to Council sport facilities. This could potentially benefit one million young people with a cost (based on a take up rate of 80%) of £206 million.

## **ALBA PROPOSE:**

\* Doubling the winter fuel payments this coming year.

Boosting ALL household incomes through a fully funded Council Tax Freeze.

That the Chancellor reduce all household fuel bills by one third. This will be funded by a windfall tax on the excess profits of energy companies and the £5 billion savings in interest payments by the 1 per cent reduction in the Retail Price Index.

A public share in all of the offshore wind licenses issued in Scottish waters, the formation of a public energy company so that Scots can have access to clean, green and affordable electricity.

Only ALBA stands with and for Scotland by offering credible and costed solutions to tackle child and family poverty and to tackle the “Cost of Living crisis” in this Election.

**That is why on May 5, you should vote for ALBA.**

# ALBA stands for Scotland by standing up for women and girls

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ALBA supports the equality of all citizens and looks forward to the fundamental rights of all our people being enshrined in the written constitution of an Independent Scotland.

A constitutional base for equality will enhance the drive for equal pay and render the injustice such as that suffered by the WASPI women on pensions unconstitutional as it will end discrimination against people with disabilities.

ALBA's measures to address inequality include the promotion of the Community Supermarket with Credit and Claimants Unions and transport services, the creation of Talking Therapies Services for adults seeking support to overcome addictions, a locally managed drive to end homelessness, with emphasis on those involved with the criminal justice system, comprehensive social care using not for profit, person-centred values and the Living Wage paid to all employees and the introduction of a guaranteed basic income for all care-leavers paid up to age 20, provision of adequate permanent housing and the encouragement of all care leavers into full time education, employment or training.

Everyone has the right to receive equal treatment under the law regardless of who they are.

ALBA recognises that the Equality Act 2010 already provides protection to those who possess a protected characteristic. These are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. ALBA supports these protections in law and believes that they must be upheld.

The Scottish Government's proposed reforms to the existing Gender Recognition Act (GRA) has profound implications for councils and the provision of the public services they provide.

ALBA is concerned that even before there has been parliamentary consideration and public debate of these proposed reforms, some councils and public bodies, such as Police Scotland and the Scottish Prison Service appear to be already adopting a policy of gender self identification which does not have the support of the public, and has not been properly debated.

ALBA believes that it is possible to reform the existing process but that these proposed reforms are ill thought out, will not improve the lives of Trans people and instead pose a risk to the rights, safety, dignity and privacy of women, which single sex exemptions were designed to protect.

ALBA recognises the existing rights in law for people to change their legally recorded sex but opposes gender self identification as a replacement for the current legal process of gaining a Gender Recognition Certificate.

# ALBA stands for Scotland by standing up for women and girls

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ALBA strongly believes that the rights of women and girls to safe spaces, as allowed under the single-sex exemptions of the Equality Act 2010 must be maintained.

ALBA agrees with the Human Rights Watchdog, The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) which has warned the Scottish Government over its plans to scrap the existing safeguards.[14]

ALBA believes that the Scottish Government should pause GRA reform legislation until the view of women's groups and the Human Rights watchdog the EHRC are fully taken into account, and the legality of the reforms are assessed in light of the recent Court of Session ruling on the sex and gender.

ALBA believes that any future reforms to the existing GRA should be informed by a Citizens Assembly, conducted in a respectful, sensitive and positive way on how best to reform the Gender Recognition process for Trans people in a manner which allows the rights of women and all other protected characteristics to be given equal consideration.

## **ALBA WILL:**

**Embed the sex-based rights of women and girls at a local level.**

**Only ALBA stands for Scotland by prioritising the rights of women and girls in this Election.**

That is why on May 5, you should vote for ALBA.

ALBA stands for Scotland

# A summary of the ALBA pledges which all our elected Councillors will campaign for

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## **ALBA WILL:**

Take real action on Independence through the establishment of an Independence Convention.

## **ALBA WILL:**

Establish an annual £500 payment for low earnings households.

## **ALBA WILL:**

Increase the Scottish Child Payment from £20 to £40 per week for all eligible families.

## **ALBA WILL:**

Extend free school meals to all primary and secondary pupils.

## **ALBA WILL:**

Double the Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) from £30 to £60 per week for all 16-19 year olds in full time school or college.

## **ALBA WILL:**

Guarantee free universal access for all children and young people to Council sport facilities.

## **ALBA WILL:**

Boost ALL household incomes through a fully funded Council Tax Freeze.

## **ALBA WILL:**

Embed the sex-based rights of women and girls at a local level.

## **ALBA PROPOSE:**

Doubling of winter fuel payments to pensioners and families with severely disabled children this coming year.

One third off all fuel bills funded by a windfall tax on energy companies and the savings on interest payments by reducing the Retail Price Index.

All offshore wind licenses to carry a public share, the establishment of a public energy company so that all Scots can have access to clean, green and affordable electricity.

Only ALBA stands for Scotland

**That is why on May 5, you should vote for ALBA.**

# Standing up for Scotland – It's Time for Action!

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ALBA has issued a clear “call to action” in this Election.

How much longer can our councils stagnate? and how long must our nation continue to underperform?

People in Scotland have had enough of being seen as voting fodder for Westminster parties and career politicians at Holyrood.

They have a stake and they want a say in the decisions which impact them and their families and they want this most of all at a local level. That is just one of the many reasons why these elections matter.

## **ALBA SAYS:**

It's time to stand up for families facing the “cost of living crisis.”

It's time to stand up for women and girls - to protect their sex-based rights, which have been hard fought for, over many decades.

It's time to take real action NOW on Independence and to implement the mandates which have been secured in election after election through the establishment of an Independence Convention to co-ordinate the new drive towards independence

Only ALBA is issuing a clear “Call to Action”. ALBA is the catalyst for

**THE REAL CHANGE Scotland needs in this Election.**

**A VOTE FOR ALBA IS A VOTE FOR ACTION ON INDEPENDENCE!**

That is why on May 5, you should vote for ALBA - the party which literally Stands for Scotland.

# References

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- [1] Councils face complex and urgent challenges, Dr William Moyes, Chair of the Accounts Commission, Audit-scotland.gov.uk. “Scottish Government funding to councils had fallen, in real terms, by 4.2% between 2013/14 and 2020/21.”
- [2] Child Poverty in Scotland: The Facts, Child Poverty Action Group, 2022.
- [3] Scottish Budget: people still face a cost of living crisis, Citizens Advice Scotland, 2022.
- [4] Forwomen.scot. Murray Blackburn Mackenzie.org
- [5] Will inflation in the UK keep rising?, Bank of England, 18 March 2022.
- [6] From 1st April 2022, Ofgem’s new price cap for standard variable and pre-payment meter tariffs will come into force; both will apply from 1st April to 30th September. The new prices are: £1,971 for standard variable tariffs; and £2,017 for Pre-Payment meter customers.
- [7] Energy bills set to rocket by a massive £693/year for millions as new price cap is confirmed. Money Saving Expert, March 2022.
- [8] Britons in rural areas face crisis as heating oil prices more than triple, The Guardian, 19 March 2022.
- [9] Fuel poverty set to break the 50% barrier in parts of Scotland, Energy Action Scotland, 8 March 2022.
- [10] Money Super Market, March 2022.
- [11] There were 496,580 council tax reduction recipients in Scotland in March 2021. This would be paid via credit into council tax accounts or as a cash payment. This effectively means that water and sewage charges are made free for half a million of Scotland’s poorest households and they can take the rest as cash if they choose, or they can take the £500 as a lump sum.
- [12] The Scottish Government have now committed to increasing the Scottish Child Payment to £25 per child at a cost of £1,300 per eligible child. ALBA’s proposed increase improves upon this.
- [14] The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has stated: “The established legal concept of sex, together with the existing protections from gender reassignment discrimination for Trans people and the ability for them to obtain legal recognition of their gender collectively provide the correct balanced legal framework that protects everyone.” Letter from Baroness Kishwer Falkner, EHRC Chairwoman to Shona Robinson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, housing and local government, March 2022.



**On May 5 vote Scotland, vote ALBA.**

**[www.albaparty.org](http://www.albaparty.org)**