



# *Briefing*

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## **GENERAL ELECTION 2017 – WHAT ARE THE PARTIES SAYING?**

The four main parties contesting the General Election have now published their manifestos, setting out what policies they will prioritise if they are elected on Thursday 8 June.

Below, NFU Scotland has summarised the key policies and proposals for agriculture and rural affairs. These are verbatim from the manifesto texts and have not been subject to any analysis by NFU Scotland. In line with Electoral Commission rules and as an apolitical organisation, NFU Scotland cannot promote the policies or activities of one political party over another.

Digital copies can be accessed by clicking on the following hyperlinks:

[Conservatives](#) / [Scottish Conservatives](#)

[Labour](#) / [Scottish Labour](#)

[Liberal Democrats](#)

[SNP](#)

[Scottish Green Party](#)

	SNP	Conservatives	Labour	Liberal Democrats	Scottish Greens	UKIP
<b>General</b>	<p>Seek additional powers for the Scottish Parliament to boost our economy, mitigate the impact of Brexit, and protect the most vulnerable from cuts to public services.</p> <p>Demand a place for Scotland at the Brexit negotiating table and the inclusion of the case for Scotland remaining in the Single Market to be included in the UK's negotiating remit.</p> <p>Continue to demand that the CAP convergence uplift is passed on to Scottish farming, and press for clarity and certainty over</p>	<p>Protect the interests of Scottish farmers and fishermen as we design our new UK farming and fisheries policy.</p>	<p>Champion sustainable farming, food and fishing by investing and promoting skills, technology, market access and innovation.</p>	<p>The Liberal Democrats will not enter into a coalition with either the Conservatives or Labour.</p> <p>“Deliver on our promises to Scotland in full.”</p>		

	existing agricultural funding, including the LFASS.					
<b>Brexit - General</b>	<p>Continue to press the UK government to work with the Scottish Government to support Scotland's businesses in the wake of Brexit.</p> <p>Seek a guarantee from the UK government that they will seek the consent of the Scottish Parliament under the Sewel Convention to the terms of the Brexit Bill.</p>	<p>No deal is better than a bad deal for the UK.</p> <p>Maintain as frictionless a border as possible for people, goods and services between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.</p> <p>There may be specific EU programmes in which the UK might want to participate and if so, it is reasonable that the UK makes a contribution to the EU budget.</p> <p>Enact the Great Repeal Bill which will convert EU law into UK law, meaning to</p>	<p>Accept the referendum result but introduce fresh negotiating priorities that have a strong emphasis on retaining the benefits of the Single Market and the Customs Union.</p> <p>Drop the Great Repeal Bill and replace it with an EU Rights and Protections Bill that will ensure there is no change to workers' rights, equality law, consumer rights or environmental protections as a result of Brexit.</p>	<p>Hold a referendum on whether to leave the EU on the terms negotiated by the UK Government; or stay in the EU.</p> <p>Allocate the devolved parliaments any powers repatriated as a result of Brexit but ensure that this devolution does not disadvantage the nations of the UK.</p>	<p>Devolve all powers coming back from the EU over fishing and farming to Scotland.</p> <p>Fight against any roll-back on social and environmental protections and collaborate with other countries to tackle climate change and protect the natural environment.</p>	<p>Parliament must become sovereign and able to make its own laws without restrictions. This ends the jurisdiction of the ECJ and relinquish membership of the European Court of Human Rights.</p> <p>No 'divorce settlement' to the EU or contribution to the EU budget.</p> <p>Brexit must be concluded by the end of 2019.</p>

		<p>rules will not change overnight but it will be possible to correct those laws that do not operate appropriately.</p> <p>The devolved legislatures will have the power to pass legislation to amend, repeal or improve any piece of EU law it chooses, where they have the power to do so.</p> <p>Bring forward a number of additional bills to the Great Repeal Bill to ensure there is a clear statutory basis for UK authorities to exercise powers.</p>	<p>Introduce a 'presumption of devolution' where devolved powers transferred from the EU will go straight to the relevant region or nation. Improve engagement and dialogue with the devolved administrations to ensure final Brexit deal addresses specific concerns.</p>			
<b>Brexit - Trade</b>	<p>Demand the UK Government to include the case for Scotland remaining in the Single</p>	<p>Use the UK's muscle to promote Scottish exports around the world as new trade deals are developed.</p>	<p>Work with devolved administrations to bring forward integrated trade</p>	<p>Maintain membership of the Single Market.</p> <p>Ensure that future trade deals require</p>		<p>The UK must resume its seat on the World Trade Organisation in order to be able to</p>

	<p>Market within its Brexit negotiating remit.</p> <p>“Scotland does not have to choose between the Single Market and the UK market. Whatever future the people of Scotland choose, it is in everyone’s interests that Scotland and the rest of the UK maintain a smooth trading relationship. After all, the rest of the UK exports over £50 billion a year to Scotland.”</p> <p>Ensure that UK agencies are working with Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise to support Scottish businesses to export.</p> <p>Seek to ensure that any future trade deals secure geographical indications for key</p>	<p>Negotiate a new deep and special partnership with the EU, which will allow free trade between the UK and the EU’s member states.</p> <p>Ensure there are as few barriers to trade and investment as possible.</p> <p>Lodge new schedules with the WTO, in alignment with EU schedules.</p> <p>Seek to replicate all existing EU free trade agreements and support the ratification of trade agreements entered into during the UK’s time as an EU member.</p> <p>Continue to support the global multilateral</p>	<p>and industrial strategy that boosts exports.</p> <p>Develop ‘best-in-class’ free trade and investment agreements that remove trade barriers and promote skilled jobs and high standards.</p> <p>Secure continued EU market access for British farmers and food producers.</p> <p>Ensure the UK continues to set the highest standards in food quality and welfare. Will not allow Brexit to undercut farmers and flood food chain with cheap</p>	<p>high safety, environmental and animal welfare standards for food imports, including clear and unambiguous country of origin labelling for meat and dairy products.</p>		<p>set our own tariff and non-tariff barriers.</p>
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	<p>Scottish food and drink products. Maintain current standards and regulations over animal and plant health, and environmental and food safety.</p> <p>Call for greater transparency in any proposed international trade deals following Brexit, with the UK and Scottish Parliaments being given a say.</p>	<p>rules-based trade system.</p> <p>Introduce a Trade Bill in the next parliament.</p> <p>Reconvene the Board of Trade with a membership charged with ensuring that exports from Scotland and the other devolved administrations are increased, and trade policy is influenced by all parts of the UK.</p>	<p>and inferior produce.</p> <p>Re-join the WTO's Government Procurement Agreement.</p>			
<b>Brexit – Agricultural support</b>	<p>Demand urgent clarity from the UK government on long-term funding arrangements after the UK leaves the EU, and ensure that current funding levels are matched. Argue for the Scottish Government to have full control of EU</p>	<p>Continue to commit the same cash total in funds for farm support until the end of the parliament (in 2022).</p> <p>Set up new frameworks for supporting food production and stewardship of the</p>	<p>Reconfigure funds for farming and fishing to support smaller traders, local economies, community benefits and sustainable practices.</p>	<p>Support the transfer of powers over a replacement for CAP to the Scottish Parliament and keep support payments at the same levels as CAP for Scottish farming under any future system.</p>	<p>Direct funding for farming methods that safeguard our future, through sustainable management of soils, water and carbon and wildlife-friendly farming.</p>	<p>Support farming and wildlife through grant schemes prioritising the preservation of natural habitats.</p> <p>Continue to make available to the agriculture sector</p>

	<p>agricultural funding following Brexit.</p> <p>Ensure that powers repatriated from Brussels to the UK that currently sit within the competences of the Scottish Parliament (agriculture, fisheries and the environment) are returned to the Scottish Parliament.</p>	<p>countryside after we leave the EU. Common UK frameworks will be required in some areas.</p> <p>Work with farmers, food producers and environmental experts across Britain and with the devolved administrations to devise a new agri-environment system, to be introduced in the following parliament (2022-27).</p> <p>Increase decision-making power of the devolved legislatures as powers return from the EU and are repatriated, but take care to ensure that no new barriers within the UK are created.</p>		<p>Protect support for domestic industries such as farming and tourism.</p> <p>Reform agricultural subsidies to ensure British farming remains competitive. Rebalancing funding away from direct subsidy and refocusing support towards effective land management, countryside protection, flood prevention, food production and climate-change mitigation.</p> <p>Move support away from large landowners and ensure smaller farms are protected by delivering a more localised agricultural policy.</p>		<p>funds that would normally be paid to them via Brussels.</p> <p>Introduce a Single Farm Payment which is 'more ethical' Subsidies will be capped at £120,000 and payments directed to farmers not landowners. To qualify, land must meet ELS conditions. Organic farms will be paid 25% more. There will be 'additional support for hill farmers' and an end to set-aside, rotation restrictions and the 3 crop rule.</p> <p>Consider a support scheme for farmers who commit to</p>
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				Champion different forms of land ownership to encourage new and younger entrants into farming.		producing livestock without antibiotics.
<b>Brexit – Labour</b>	<p>Call on the UK government to guarantee EU nationals' right to remain in the UK.</p> <p>Seek devolution of immigration powers.</p> <p>Oppose the Skills Immigration Charge and support a review of the citizenship application process, with a view to bringing down the cost and reducing complexity.</p> <p>Press the UK government to ensure border checks are as seamless as possible</p>	<p>Migration Advisory Committee to make recommendations on how the visa system can become better aligned with our modern industrial strategy.</p> <p>Maintain the Common Travel Area.</p> <p>Reduce immigration to sustainable levels, by setting annual net migration in the tens of thousands, rather than the hundreds of thousands.</p>	<p>Allow EU workers employed across farming, fishing and food manufacturing to remain in the UK, and reinstate the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme.</p> <p>Take decisive actions to end the exploitation of migrant labour undercutting workers' pay and conditions.</p>	<p>Press for the UK to unilaterally guarantee the rights of EU nationals in the UK and UK citizens living in the EU.</p> <p>Call for overhaul and simplification of the registration process and requirements on EU nationals to obtain permanent residence and UK citizenship.</p> <p>Maintain freedom of movement.</p> <p>Hold an annual debate in parliament on skill and labour</p>	<p>Push for the Brexit deal to include retention of freedom of movement.</p>	<p>Britain must have full control of its immigration and asylum policies.</p>

	after the UK leaves the EU.	Continue to bear down on immigration from outside the EU.		market shortfalls and surpluses to identify the migration necessary to meet the UK's needs.  Continue to allow high-skilled immigration to support key sectors of the economy.		
<b>Animal stewardship and welfare</b>	Oppose any relaxation of the laws on fox-hunting.	Make CCTV recording in slaughterhouses mandatory.  Take early steps to control the export of live farm animals for slaughter on leaving the EU.	Promote cruelty-free animal husbandry and consult on ways to better enforce agreed standards. Enforce stricter penalties for animal cruelty offences.	Develop safe and humane ways of controlling bovine TB, including by investing to produce workable vaccines.  Introduce stronger penalties for animal cruelty offences, increasing the maximum sentencing from six months to five years.  Introduce a ban on caged hens.		Ban live animal exports.  Introduce CCTV in all abattoirs.

				Update farm animal welfare codes and promote responsible stewardship of antibiotic drugs.		
<b>Rural policy</b>		Bring sustainable growth to the rural economy and boost rural areas.	Introduce a 'rural-proofing' process so that all laws, policies and programmes consider impact on rural communities.			
<b>Food and supply chain</b>	<p>Press the UK Government to commit to introducing clearer food labelling.</p> <p>Press for a review of the Dairy Voluntary Code of Practice for the dairy sector and for contract provisions and arrangements to better meet the interests and needs of milk producers.</p>	Promote efforts to reduce unhealthy ingredients and provide clearer food information for consumers, as the decision to leave the EU will give the UK greater flexibility over the presentation of information on packaged food.	Extend the role of the Groceries Code Adjudicator.	<p>Introduce a national food strategy to promote the production and consumption of healthy, sustainable and affordable food.</p> <p>Support whisky exports to markets overseas through intellectual property protection of Scotch Whisky and ambitious trade deals. Also</p>		Introduce labelling rules which clearly identify halal slaughtered meat.

	<p>Press all relevant UK government departments and agencies to apply for and achieve the Food for Life catering award and to purchase more Scottish food produced to current farm assurance standards.</p> <p>Advocate a review of alcohol taxation to better reflect alcohol content, while supporting health benefits through minimum unit pricing.</p>			<p>press for a review of excise taxation to end high duties on Scotch Whisky.</p> <p>Increase the powers of the Groceries Code Adjudicator and extend its remit to include businesses further up the supply chain, ensuring that farmers receive a fair price.</p> <p>Introduce mandatory targets on sugar reduction for food and drink producers.</p>		
<b>Environment</b>	<p>Continue to uphold Scotland's GM-free status and commitment.</p>	<p>[In England] – help Natural England to expand provision of technical expertise to farmers to deliver environmental improvements on a landscape scale.</p>	<p>End the badger cull and introduce a new Clean Air Act in England and Wales.</p> <p>Set targets for plastic bottle deposit schemes in</p>	<p>Maintain high environmental standards in UK law, and co-operate closely with the EU on climate change and energy policy.</p> <p>Suspend the use of neonicotinoids until</p>		

		Produce a comprehensive 25 Year Environment Plan that will chart how we will improve our environment as we leave the EU.	<p>England and Wales.</p> <p>Protect bees by prohibiting neonicotinoids.</p> <p>Base environmental decisions on sound principles and scientific assessments.</p> <p>Establish a science innovation fund, working with farmers.</p>	<p>proven that their use in agriculture does not harm bees or other pollinators.</p> <p>Introduce a series of environmental laws in England and Wales, focusing on transport, nature, buildings and waste.</p> <p>Develop safe, effective, humane and evidence-based ways of controlling bovine TB, including by investing to produce workable vaccines.</p>		
<b>The constitution and devolution</b>	“If the SNP wins a majority of Scottish seats in this election, that would complete a triple lock” delivering the mandate to hold a second independence referendum, following the election of an SNP	Now is not the time for another referendum on independence. In order for a referendum to be fair, legal and decisive, it cannot take place until the Brexit	<p>Oppose a second Scottish independence referendum.</p> <p>Create a Minister for England to create a relationship of</p>	<p>Oppose a second independence referendum and oppose independence.</p> <p>Fight to ensure that the priorities and long-term interests of</p>	Fight for further devolution of tax, social security, employment, migration and energy to be devolved to the Scottish	Establish an English Parliament to put England on the same footing as the other devolved assemblies.

	<p>Government in 2016 and the vote in the Scottish Parliament in favour of holding a second referendum on independence.</p> <p>The SNP believes that if Scotland chooses to become independent, we should be a member state of the EU. The process by which Scotland could seek membership of the EU will be set out before Scottish citizens will be asked to vote in a referendum on independence.</p> <p>Replace the First Past the Post voting system with proportional representation for elections to the House of Commons and introduce proposals to extend the vote to 16 and 17 year olds.</p>	<p>process has played out and it should not take place unless there is public consent for it to happen.</p> <p>No decision-making that has been devolved will be taken back to Westminster. The powers of the devolved administrations will increase as we leave the EU.</p>	<p>equals with the devolved administrations.</p>	<p>the nations of the UK are fully taken into account during negotiations.</p> <p>Establish a UK constitutional convention, with the aim of delivering home rule to a federal United Kingdom and a codified constitution.</p> <p>Retain the Barnett Formula and the agreed fiscal framework as the basis for future spending allocations for Scotland and Northern Ireland.</p>	<p>Parliament and local councils.</p> <p>Support a referendum offering Scottish voters the choice between staying in “a hard-Brexit UK or an independent Scotland free to rejoin the EU”.</p> <p>Be open to the concept of holding a second referendum on the deal negotiated with the EU.</p>	
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	<p>Vote for the abolition of the House of Lords.</p> <p>Fight to protect the Barnett Formula.</p>					
<b>Infrastructure and investment</b>	<p>Support extension of the Annual Investment Allowance, which encourages firms to invest in plant and machinery, from the current £200,000 per year to £1 million per year.</p> <p>Demand an Industrial Strategy that works for Scotland.</p> <p>Push for clear guidance and a mandate for the Small Business Commissioner to play a role in delivering the Industrial Strategy.</p>	<p>Scotland and Scottish industries will be central to the Industrial Strategy.</p> <p>Bring forward a Borderlands Growth Deal.</p>	<p>Extend HS2 high-speed rail into Scotland, consulting with (and, where necessary, compensating) communities.</p> <p>Establish a Scottish Investment Bank, with £20bill available to local projects and Scottish businesses.</p>	<p>Develop a high-speed rail network stretching to Scotland.</p>		

<p><b>Connectivity</b></p>	<p>Protect Scottish air connections to other parts of the UK and continue to work with local partners as part of City and Regional Deals to deliver improved connectivity, including an Inverness Airport Rail Hub.</p> <p>Ensure the UK government continues to work with the Scottish Government to secure an exemption from air passenger taxes on Highlands and Islands flights.</p> <p>Call for the Universal Service Obligation for broadband to cover up to 30Mbps with an appropriate update mechanism to ensure that rural areas are not left behind,</p>	<p>Introduce a full fibre connection voucher for companies across the country by 2018 and deliver a clear path to national coverage over the next decade.</p> <p>By 2022, extend mobile coverage further to 95% geographic coverage of the UK.</p>	<p>Extend broadband and 4G to rural areas.</p>	<p>By 2022 provide every property in the UK with a superfast broadband connection with a download speed of 30 Mbps, an upload speed of 6Mbps, and an unlimited usage cap.</p> <p>Work with Ofcom to ensure that mobile phone companies provide fast and reliable coverage in rural areas.</p> <p>Invest £2billion in innovative solutions to ensure the provision of high speed broadband across the rural UK working with devolved administrations and local authorities.</p>		
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	<p>Support the Scottish Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Connectivity to host a summit on mobile “not spots” with service providers and the UK government.</p> <p>Ensure a ‘rural areas first’ policy for new spectrum deployments is instilled within new mobile spectrum licensing.</p> <p>Call for UK government to regulate for fair delivery charges for rural communities.</p>					
<b>Other</b>	<p>Support an increase of the Minimum Wage to the level of the real Living Wage.</p> <p>Demand that the UK Government meets the funding put forward by the Scottish</p>	<p>Regulate more efficiently through the Red Tape Challenge and the One-In-Two-Out Rule.</p> <p>Support the development of onshore and offshore</p>	<p>Scrap quarterly reporting for businesses with a turnover under £85,000.</p>	<p>Expand renewable energy, aiming to generate 60 per cent of electricity from renewables by 2030. Restore UK Government support for solar PV and onshore wind and</p>	<p>Create a government-led Green New Deal to invest in green industrialisation for homes, transport and energy. Create</p>	

	<p>Government to develop the south of Scotland.</p> <p>Press the UK Government to phase the introduction of the Quarterly Digital Tax Reporting over a five-year transition period, and consider industry calls for exemptions to those who are not incorporated or VAT-registered.</p> <p>Call for the introduction of a fuel duty regulator.</p> <p>Press the UK government to include onshore wind in its Industrial Strategy and demand an increased focus on offshore wind, tidal energy and wave power. The SNP will also support the development of renewables in the Northern and Western</p>	<p>wind projects in the remote islands of Scotland.</p> <p>Conduct a full review of the business rates system.</p>		<p>building more electricity interconnectors. Support investment in new renewable technologies.</p>	<p>a local network of banks to lend to low-carbon enterprise.</p> <p>Ban fracking across the UK and fight to reverse cuts to renewable energy subsidies.</p> <p>Get rid of age-banded wages.</p>	
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	Isles and a clear timescale for the delivery of electricity interconnectors for the islands.					
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