



A journey into politics 18th of September 2014. A date many of us will never forget, for many different reasons. For me, it was when my political “career” started off. I never used to be a follower of politics in anyway, simply putting on Sunday Politics would make me leave the room. Now, it's

me that puts it on! Around a month before the referendum I ventured up town to the Yes shop. I decided to go because everyone had been talking about Independence and **I wanted to see what it was all about.**

From the second I walked through the door I could feel the emotion in the room and how excited and engaged everyone was. I was approached by one of the volunteers in the shop asking if I needed any help, so I explained that I was there for answers and information. I ended up spending 3 or 4 hours in there talking to everyone, near the end of my stay in the shop two men in traditional Scottish dress came into the shop. They were playing music and talking to all the volunteers to keep spirits up, they picked me out from the people that were there and got me dressed up in traditional Scottish clothes, the whole thing was great, I had only just started to get involved and I already felt like part of a big campaign.

Oh, I forgot to mention, I couldn't even vote in the referendum. Yes, you read that right, I couldn't vote. At the time of the vote **I was only 15 years of age.** That shocked everyone there too.

After **feeling so included** I asked what I could do to help, so I was directed towards the campaign hub, just around the corner. There I was greeted by a local councillor and he sent me on my way with a leaflet run to do. I ended up doing another few runs that day too.

So, that's how I got involved with all this stuff. Of course, **I also done my own research** to make sure that I was in support of Independence.

After the referendum I felt **so lost and confused**, after all that effort and all those high spirits and optimistic people, Scotland voted against her own independence. I had no idea what to do, after feeling so involved I suddenly felt like it was for nothing. So I joined the SNP, this I believe, was one of the best decisions I have made in my life. I was one of those tens of thousands new members to the party.

When people ask me what I think of the “big bad world of politics” I always have the same answer. I don't really know yet, I haven't really had time to sit back and look at it all. As I describe it, I was thrown in at the deep end. The members of the local SNP party were shocked to meet a young and passionate new member, so **I got stuck right in**, at my first AGM I was elected **Youth Officer for my branch**, a position that I still hold to this day. Before me, that position hadn't been filled in my branch for a while.

At the start of 2015 we had the general election campaign. This was my first full campaign for the SNP, I put my heart and soul into the campaign and was delighted at the news that my candidate, Douglas Chapman was elected! I am now campaigning for the election of Shirley-Anne Sommerville, and this year **I will cast my first ever vote in an election.** And of course, **I will be voting SNP with both of my votes!**

That's the story of my political “career” from the start until now.

Daniel Anderson

Today (Wednesday 20 April, 2016) **Nicola Sturgeon launched the SNP manifesto for the 2016 election.** It's a manifesto brimming with ideas to **move our country forward.** Here's just some of what the SNP manifesto will deliver for Scotland.

Tackling attainment in our education system

We'll invest an additional £750 million over the next Parliament to close the gap in educational attainment in our schools, with more money going directly to headteachers.

We will develop a new, fair and transparent funding formula for schools – to ensure that resources go to where they are needed the most.

We will work to empower teachers and parents - within a framework of strong national policy and inspection - to drive more of the decisions that shape the lives of their schools.



Transforming early-years support

We will almost double free childcare to 30 hours and create 600 new childcare centres, with 20,000 more qualified staff by 2021.

We also support parents with a ‘baby box’ for every newborn child in Scotland, offering essential items for a child's first week; provide new financial support for low-income families to meet essential early years costs, and recruit 500 health visitors by 2018 so every child benefits from a health development check at 30 months.

Making sure our NHS is fit for the future

We will transform our NHS with nearly £2 billion of extra investment, deliver more healthcare closer to home, take new action to tackle cancer, and improve mental health services.

Supporting businesses and delivering more and better paid jobs

We will lead a national drive to improve productivity, giving support for business, innovation, infrastructure, skills and fair work.

We will extend the Small Business Bonus, so 100,000 of our small businesses will be removed from business rates completely.

We will extend payment of the Living Wage – ensuring that all social care workers receive the Living Wage by October 2016 and double the number of accredited employers from 500 to 1,000 by autumn 2017.

Creating more opportunities for Scotland's young people

We will increase the number of Modern Apprenticeships to 30,000 a year by 2020 – 5,000 of which will be in highly skilled careers.

We will use our new powers to introduce a Jobs Grant to help unemployed young people back into work. We'll also provide all those eligible for the Jobs Grant with free bus travel for three months to help them take up offers of work.

Scotland's future

We believe that the Scottish Parliament should have the right to hold another referendum if there is clear and sustained evidence that independence has become the preferred option of a majority of the Scottish people – or if there is a significant and material change in the circumstances that prevailed in 2014, such as Scotland being taken out of the EU against our will.

We will undertake new work, starting this summer, with the aim of persuading a clear majority of people in Scotland that independence is the best future for our country.

A Scottish approach to social security, with fairness and dignity at its heart

We will create a Scottish Social Security Agency, with fairness and dignity at its core.

We will increase Carer's Allowance so that it matches Jobseeker's Allowance.

We will scrap the Bedroom Tax.

We will keep disability benefits universal and reform assessment procedures to ensure they work for service users, and stop the revolving door of assessments and related stress and anxiety for those with long-term illnesses, disabilities or conditions.

We will restore housing benefit for 18-21 year olds - giving back to our young people what the Tories have taken away.

Building warm, affordable home

We will build at least 50,000 new homes across Scotland, and introduce a Warm Homes Bill to tackle fuel poverty and improve energy efficiency.

Shining a light on who owns Scotland's land

We will end the practice revealed in the Panama Papers of anonymous ownership of major tracts of Scotland's land by introducing a mandatory, public register of controlling interests in landowners or tenants.

Leading on tackling climate change

We will introduce a new Climate Change Act, with an ambitious new target of reducing emissions by more than 50 per cent by 2020.

We will ensure that, by 2020, at least half of all new renewable projects have an element of shared ownership and we will look to establish a government owned energy company to support local and community energy.

Connecting rural Scotland

We will deliver superfast broadband to 100 per cent of premises across Scotland, to bring our most remote communities closer to the markets they need.

The Hazards of Tactical Voting

At the Hamilton street stall last Saturday I was astonished how many SNP voters did not know about or understand how the second Regional vote works. One guy said he didn't think voting SNP twice was allowed! We have also had Labour telling people in Hamilton that it is illegal to vote SNP twice (no kidding).

This confusion, coupled with the Greens, SSP and RISE campaigning for SNP's second vote, there is a real danger that SNP could fail to win an outright majority in the next parliament.

The attached leaflet explains why we all should vote Christina Moxley on the constituency ballot paper and SNP on the regional ballot paper. Please share this with any of your family or friends who vote SNP.

Jim Savage,
Political Education Officer
Hamilton South Branch

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More and more reports are coming in that Labour activists are informing the electorate that it is illegal to vote for the same Party twice in the Scottish Elections on May 5.

This is of course wrong and misleading, casting your votes for the same party on each ballot is perfectly legal, after all the SNP election slogan is #bothvotesSNP.

Shame on you Labour.

Continuing on from last issues "Better Together's broken promises open the door to Independence"

In the last issue (35) Gordon MacIntyre-Kemp highlighted the first 4 of the 11 broken promises he included in the Business for Scotland article "Better Together's broken promises open the door to Independence". Renewable Subsidies, Carbon Capture, Secure in the EU with no vote and Labour Majority, this issue covers numbers 5 to 10.



UK's rescue coordination centre shuts as operations move south
Search and rescue operations have been coordinated from Scotland since the 1940s.
STV TV

5. Scotland should lead, not leave the UK – An almost perfect piece of political spin from both Gordon Brown and Johann Lamont but no one seemed to tell David Cameron. The day after the referendum Cameron announced English Votes for English Laws (EvEL), effectively meaning no MP from a Scottish constituency can ever be prime minister of the UK and ipso facto can't lead the UK.

6. Pensions not safer in UK – Gordon Brown warned that independence came with a pensions time-bomb. The UK Government backed that claim and now we see pension age increases for women meaning **some will lose out up to £30,000**. UK Government policy since the referendum means that middle to high earners will be better off through their pensions but that low earners will bear the cost of pension reforms. A Scot earning around £15,000 with a working life of 30 years, could see their pension drop £1,800 per annum.

7. It was Scotland's pound – We were told that Scotland could not continue to use the pound after independence. Denying claims that it was a political manoeuvre, the No Camp claimed that a currency union was unworkable. However last week on STV's Scotland Tonight Sir Mervyn King who ran the Bank of England for a decade said "it would have been totally feasible, there was no need for an independent currency."

8. Slower meaningless devolution – David Cameron claimed that "A No vote would lead to faster, fairer, safer and better change and that draft legislation for new powers for Scotland would be in place by January, 2015". John Swinney tells us that almost every concession for more powers in the watered down Smith Commission document had at least one Unionist party trying to block it. We now also know that the Westminster negotiators tried to use the Scotland Bill fiscal agreement talks to cut Scotland's budget by £7bn over ten years.

9. Uncertainty was a myth – David Cameron claimed inward investors had told him they wouldn't invest in Scotland until after the referendum due to uncertainty but 2014/15 turned out to be a record year for Scottish inward investment, the number of projects increased by 17% to 91 between April 2014 and March 2015.

10. Job losses – Some strangely specific claims were made by the No camp on protecting jobs. They claimed that the Scottish HMRC tax offices would close and many jobs would be lost as they also collect taxes for England. Since the referendum it has been announced that 2,500 HMRC jobs in Scotland are to go. Again Better Together teamed up with steel workers' union Community to claim that a No vote would protect steel jobs, but now 270 steel jobs have gone in Scotland.