

# **MANIFESTO**

OUR LIVES  
OUR RIGHTS  
OUR FUTURES

A joint manifesto by Ayrshire Independent Living Network, Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living and Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living

## **Scottish Parliament Election May 2026**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Disabled people make up nearly a quarter of the population in Scotland

Many disabled people face barriers poverty exclusion harmful policies and lack of funding

These problems are not unavoidable  
They are the result of political decisions

This manifesto calls on political parties and the next Scottish Government to take action

It sets out clear and practical commitments for equality human rights and social justice

The organisations behind this manifesto are led by disabled people

Their work is based on lived experience peer support and the social model of disability

Disabled people are experts in their own lives

Policies work better when disabled people are involved  
Policies fail when disabled people are excluded

The next Parliament must choose inclusion partnership and fairness

Nothing about us without us

Independent living means having the same freedom choice dignity and control as everyone else

It means having the right support at the right time in the right way

## **OUR SHARED VISION**

We want a Scotland where

Disabled people are equal citizens

Human rights are protected in law and in practice

Support systems enable participation not dependence

Lived experience shapes education policy and public services

Inclusion is built in from the start

Independent living is the foundation of equality participation and a fair society

## **CORE PRINCIPLES**

Choice control dignity freedom and equality must guide all policy and practice

Human rights must guide all decisions with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Disabled People at the centre

Disabled people must be equal partners in decision making

Lived experience is essential knowledge

Information services and environments must be accessible to everyone

Disabled people and their organisations must receive fair and stable funding

There must be no cuts to personal support

## **PRIORITIES**

### **1 Rights and democratic inclusion**

Disabled people must have real enforceable rights

Decisions must be made with disabled people not for them

The next Scottish Government must

Bring the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities into Scottish law

Make sure rights can be enforced and challenged

Make all public bodies follow disabled people's rights

Ensure clear responsibility at government level

Give disabled people real roles in decision making with voting rights

Replace token consultation with real partnership

Make participation accessible

Create strong systems for accountability and scrutiny

## **2 Independent living for all**

Independent living is a human right

It means choice control dignity freedom and equality

The next Scottish Government must

Protect the right to independent living in law and practice

Remove charges for non residential social care

Protect and expand the Independent Living Fund

Base support on need not strict criteria

Protect personal budgets from cuts

Ensure self directed support gives real choice and control

Create flexible funding systems

End inappropriate institutional care

Support people to live in their own homes and communities

Ensure smooth transitions from children to adult services

## **3 Value lived experience and inclusive participation**

Lived experience improves policy and services

The next Scottish Government must

Recognise lived experience as expertise

Create paid roles for disabled people

Include lived experience in training and service design

Ensure disabled people shape policy from the start

Provide accessible information including plain language

Make digital services accessible

Remove jargon and complex language

Allow time and support for participation

Fund access and participation costs

#### **4 Ending disability poverty**

Disabled people are not poor by accident

Poverty is caused by policy decisions

The next Scottish Government must

Increase disability benefits to reflect real living costs

Introduce a minimum income guarantee

Reduce poverty through fair social security

Protect disabled people from cuts

No one should have to choose between basic needs and independence

#### **5 Accessible and climate resilient communities**

Accessible and inclusive communities benefit everyone

Accessibility must be built in from the start

Disabled people are affected by climate change and must be included in solutions

The next Scottish Government must

Set targets for accessible housing

Prioritise disabled people in housing

Improve accessible transport

Apply inclusive design to all infrastructure

Include disabled people in climate planning

Deliver a fair transition to a sustainable future

Recognise the right to a healthy environment

Check climate policies for their impact on inequality and poverty

No one should be left behind

## **6 Fair work and economic participation**

Disabled people face barriers to work because of systems not ability

The next Scottish Government must

Support transitions from school to work

Create pathways to secure flexible and fairly paid jobs

Remove barriers in recruitment and progression

Design employment support with disabled people

Provide work experience and internships

Offer specialist careers advice

Improve support for workplace adjustments

Ensure disabled people are not left out of pocket

## **7 Investing in disabled people's organisations**

Disabled people's organisations are essential

The next Scottish Government must

Provide long term funding

End short term funding cycles

Fund accessibility and participation

Protect preventative services

Simplify reporting processes

Recognise funding as essential to rights and inclusion

## **FINAL MESSAGE**

Independent living human rights and equality are essential

They are the foundation of a fair and inclusive Scotland

The next Scottish Parliament must act