

# GENDER EDIT OF A STRONGER & MORE RESILIENT SCOTLAND: THE PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT 2022-23

This gender edit of the Scottish Government's Programme for Government 2022-23 compiles all references to women, gender and core issues with implications for gender equality which appear in the document.

This year's Programme for Government is focussed on measures to address the escalating "cost crisis", which is already impacting on women in Scotland and is dominating political discourse and advocacy across the UK. The programme was cut down by Scottish Ministers to around a quarter of its original size,<sup>1</sup> reflecting the need to divert resources pegged for the usual slate of legislative and policy activity to alleviating pressure on household budgets. It makes clear that commitments made are subject to the forthcoming Emergency Budget that is expected from the UK Government,<sup>2</sup> and subsequent outcomes of the Scottish Government's Emergency Budget Review and the Scottish Budget for 2023-24.

This crisis is profoundly gendered, with those on low incomes left most exposed to economic volatility. Women have less access to resources and economic security than men. Within this Black and minority ethnic women, disabled women, unpaid carers, lone parents, women with insecure immigration status, younger and older women, and other marginalised groups are yet more likely to experience poverty and/or financial precarity as a result of spiralling inflation. Gender must therefore be mainstreamed throughout Scottish Government's response, with policy and spending aimed at preventing poverty and other harms for women.

This gender edit examines the Programme for Government in sequence, with emphasis added by Engender.

## First Minister's Foreword

"We are also supporting pay offers which put money into people's pockets, for example with an investment of more than £250 million on a recurring basis into local government pay. This means those paid £20,000 or less get a rise of £2,000, others

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<sup>1</sup> From around 160 pages to xx pages [Cost of living set to dominate future plans at Holyrood - BBC News](#)

<sup>2</sup> An Emergency Budget 2022 is expected on 14<sup>th</sup> Sept or 21<sup>st</sup> September

£1,925 or 5%, and the increase for the best paid is capped in order to boost the lower paid.”

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“Our legislative agenda will bring significant reform to health and social care, with the creation in law of a new National Care Service for Scotland – the most significant development in health and social care since the creation of the National Health Service.”

“We will progress major reforms in the justice system through consultation on Baroness Helena Kennedy’s **recommendations for offences related to misogynistic conduct**, continued reform of bail and remand, and a Criminal Justice Reform Bill that will propose **the end of the not proven verdict in Scots Law and provide anonymity for complainers in sexual offence cases.**”

“The Scottish Government will also support Gillian Mackay MSP with the development and drafting of her proposed Member’s Bill to protect **safe access for women to healthcare facilities that provide abortion services**, subject to the detail of a forthcoming Supreme Court judgement. And we will consider what further actions we need to take **to embed women’s rights to safe access to healthcare in the future.**”

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## The Cost Crisis

“By the end of March 2023, we will have allocated almost £3 billion in measures that will help to mitigate the impact of the cost crisis on households. This package spans a range of support for energy bills, childcare, health and travel, as well as social security payments that are either not available anywhere else in the UK or are more generous. It includes:

- £294.4 million for family payments, including Bridging Payments, Best Start Grants, Best Start Foods and the Scottish Child Payment. The Scottish Child Payment alone has delivered an extra £20 a week to around 104,000 children under the age of 6. **In November, this will be further increased to £25 per week** and extended to an estimated 304,000 children under the age of 16.
- £64 million of continued investment to extend universal provision of free school meals during term time – already available to those in Primary 1 to 3 – to children in Primary 4 and Primary 5 and alternative holiday meals provision for eligible children.

- £300 million for concessionary travel, making bus travel free for over 2 million people in Scotland, including all children and young people under 22, disabled people and everyone over 60.
- £437 million to reduce household bills through Council Tax Reduction and Water Charge Reduction.
- **Uprating 8 social security payments delivered by Social Security Scotland by 6%**, compared to the 3.1% used for UK Government uprating.
- Helping those in need this winter through our £214 Child Winter Heating Assistance which supports families of severely disabled children and young people with their energy costs.
- Providing over £68.1 million this year to mitigate the UK Government “bedroom tax”, and an additional £14.9 million to begin mitigating against the damaging impact of other UK Government welfare cuts including the benefit cap and changes to the Local Housing Allowance rates.
- Investing a total of £161 million across Warmer Homes Scotland, Area Based Schemes, and Home Energy Scotland, cutting energy bills and climate emissions.”

### Maximising financial assistance to those in need

“By the end of 2022, our 5 family payments will be worth up to more than £10,000 by the time a family’s first child reaches 6, and £9,700 for subsequent children. Increasing the amount of the Scottish Child Payment – the most ambitious child poverty reduction measure in the UK – whilst also expanding it to thousands more families, is an important action that can mitigate the cost crisis. This Programme for Government confirms that from 14 November this year the Scottish Child Payment will increase to £25 per week per eligible child. From that date, applications will also open for over 280,000 children aged between 6 and 15. This means that over 400,000 children in total will potentially be eligible for the increased payment. This will provide £1,300 of additional funding per eligible child per year, in addition to any financial support provided by the UK Government or other support provided by the Scottish Government. This means that over 100,000 children in low income households will have benefitted from a 150% increase in the Scottish Child Payment in just eight months.

We are also **awarding Best Start Grant, Early Learning Payment and School Age Payment automatically to eligible families in receipt of Scottish Child Payment**, without the need to apply, increasing take-up and maximising financial assistance for families. Through mitigating the benefit cap we will give further support for housing costs to up to 4,000 families with around 13,100 children. On average, the benefit cap takes away almost £2,500 per household per year. **In Scotland, 97% of all households affected by the benefit cap are families with children, and 68% are lone-parent families.** This financial support will help around 91,000 households sustain their tenancies, support not provided on this scale anywhere else in the UK.”

“We will also:

- Subject to agreement with CoSLA, begin to roll out the provision of universal free school meals to Primary 6 and Primary 7 pupils, and take further action to reduce the cost of the school day for families, including reducing the cost of school uniforms through new guidance.
- Use our Emergency Budget Review to double our Fuel Insecurity Fund to £20 million in 2022-23, to help households at risk of self disconnection or self-rationing of energy use as the energy price cap rises from October.

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- Use our Emergency Budget Review to provide local authorities with additional Discretionary Housing Payment funding to mitigate the UK Government benefit cap as fully as possible within devolved powers, and give local authorities more flexibility to take account of energy bills in their prioritisation of households for Discretionary Housing Payments.”

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### Help for tenants

“We recognise the huge pressures the cost crisis is placing on households, and the particular issues that will be faced by many people who rent their home. [...] **As part of this we intend to introduce emergency legislation to protect tenants by freezing rents** and imposing a moratorium on evictions until at least 31 March 2023. We also intend to act to prevent immediate rent increases.”

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### A Stronger and More Resilient Scotland

**“The pandemic illustrated to everyone the importance of high quality and affordable social care**, something which will also be important as the cost crisis develops. We are determined that the people of Scotland enjoy a high quality of life with community health and social care services available when they need them. The focus must be on prevention and early intervention to avoid people reaching crisis point.

The National Care Service is one of the most significant pieces of public service reform to be proposed by the Scottish Government. It is being designed together with people who have lived experience of accessing and delivering social care support services, and a human rights based approach is being embedded throughout its development and delivery. As the National Care Service Bill progresses through Parliament, it will pave the way for more integrated and person centred care, ending the postcode lottery of care that exists across Scotland under the current system.”

“The Criminal Justice Reform Bill which will be introduced this year will take forward a number of changes to our system. These will include **ending the use of the not proven verdict** and granting automatic anonymity to complainers in sexual offences cases. We will build on this by **developing proposals to help challenge misogynistic behaviour and change attitudes**, based on Baroness Helena Kennedy’s recommendations for **new criminal offences relating to misogynistic conduct**.”

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### Children, Young People and Scotland’s National Mission on Child Poverty

“In the next 12 months we intend to take forward key actions from Best Start, Bright Futures. In addition to the expansion of the Scottish Child Payment, we will:

- Continue to deliver immediate financial support to as many low income families with school age children as possible through Bridging Payments, including a further two Bridging Payments which will support around 145,000 eligible children and be worth as a minimum £130 in both October and December.
- Widen eligibility for Best Start Foods by legislating to remove all income thresholds from Best Start Foods in 2023-24, supporting an additional 20,000 parents, and move to a cash payment instead of a payment card.
- Award Best Start Grant, Early Learning Payment and School Age Payment automatically to eligible families in receipt of Scottish Child Payment, without the need to apply.

- Develop a new Parental Transition Fund of up to £15 million each year to help tackle financial insecurity for families when parents and carers enter the labour market

[...]

- This year we will also provide over £68.1 million to mitigate the UK Government “bedroom tax”, and an additional £14.9 million to begin mitigating against the damaging impact of other UK Government welfare cuts including the benefit cap and changes to the Local Housing Allowance rates.
- Invest £20 million to design and test options for all-year-round school-age childcare systems that meet the needs of children and families.
- Build the evidence base required to inform the development of a high quality offer of early learning and childcare for 1 and 2 year olds.

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### Excellent Public Services: Recovering Strongly from the Pandemic

“In all of the work we undertake in our public services we will take a person centred approach to delivery and reform. We will:

- Invest £3 million this year through the long COVID Support Fund to assist those living with long-term effects of infection

[...]

- Publish a new Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy in the year ahead and a new long-term suicide prevention strategy and delivery plan with CoSLA and develop a new dementia strategy.

[...]

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- **Appoint a Women’s Health Champion to help drive forward all the actions in our Women’s Health Plan**, including on better diagnosis and treatment of endometriosis, and better access to information and support for menopause.
- Continue to work in partnership with NHS Scotland to deliver improvement in delivery of, and access to, NHS gender identity services.
- Support the development of national legislation, as quickly as practicable, subject to a forthcoming Supreme Court opinion, **to safeguard access for women to healthcare facilities that provide abortion services**, without fear, harassment or intimidation.

- Introduce legislation **to abolish the not proven verdict** as part of a package of reforms to the criminal justice system.
- Consult on legislative provisions to modernise justice processes including greater use of digital processes.
- Consult on specific draft **laws to tackle misogynistic criminal behaviours**, improving the experience and transparency of the justice system for women and victims of misogyny, with a view to introducing **a Misogyny and Criminal Justice Bill later in this Parliament.**”

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### Transforming Our Economy

“We remain committed to the vision for Scotland to be a leading Fair Work nation by 2025. **Payment of the Real Living Wage – while we recognise this is a cost for businesses – is all the more important now as a way of supporting those in low pay jobs through the cost crisis** and is an important enabler for sustaining productive, committed and engaged workforces during these difficult times”

“We will:

[...]

- Respond swiftly to the whole system review being undertaken by Ana Stewart, leading entrepreneur and investor, on identifying the barriers facing women in business.

[...]

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- Undertake research and advice to improve workplace productivity and wellbeing, including on the delivery of a four-day working week pilot and ensure that digital and technological innovation is used as a key driver for improved productivity and work standards/conditions.
- Publish a refreshed Fair Work Action Plan and introduce Fair Work conditionality for Scottish Government grants, subject to devolved competence.”

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### Tackling the Climate Emergency

“To deliver our vision of an affordable, zero carbon and modern transport system, we will:

- Freeze ScotRail fares until March 2023, and complete a Fair Fares Review – delivering options for a sustainable and integrated approach to all public transport fares.  
[...]
- Work with third sector partners and local authorities to consider how best to provide free bus travel to asylum seekers and refugees including displaced people from Ukraine.  
[...]
- Continue the Network Support Grant to support bus services by keeping fares at more affordable levels and networks more extensive.  
[...]
- Introduce regulations to enable bus franchising and Bus Improvement Partnerships, giving local authorities more options to improve bus services.
- Work with women’s groups **to identify and publish recommendations on women and girls’ personal safety on public transport** to support future access and usage of public transport.”

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## Supporting Our Communities

“We will work to **reduce marginalisation and discrimination of people in our society** who often find they experience even greater hardship during times of difficulty. Our work to promote equality and human rights supports our ambition for supporting strong communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe, where human rights are respected.”

“To support our communities, we will:

[...]

- Introduce a new Housing Bill before the end of this parliamentary year that will see further reform of the rental sector in Scotland and begin to deliver a New Deal for Tenants. Careful consideration will need to be given to the impact of addressing the cost crisis, which we will do by introducing emergency legislation planned to protect tenants by freezing rents and imposing a



moratorium on evictions until at least 31 March 2023. The exact timings of a new Housing Bill will be kept under close review as we deliver our emergency response to support tenants through the winter months.

- Support more households with energy efficiency measures during this cost crisis having widened the eligibility criteria for the £55 million Warmer Homes Scotland fuel poverty programme to include more groups within the 60 to 75 years age range, further increasing the reach of this programme.

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[...]

- Provide a New Deal for Tenants with an ambitious series of reforms of the renting sector, including legislation to introduce robust rent controls for the long term, building on immediate actions during the cost crisis.
- Continue development of **our world-leading Human Rights Bill and consult on our proposals for the Bill.**
- Publish a new Hate Crime Strategy for Scotland.
- Develop a Bill to end conversion practices, covering both sexual orientation and gender identity.”

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### Scotland in the World

- “Provide funding of £300,000 over the next two financial years to The HALO Trust, a Scottish-based charity specialising in removing landmines and other dangerous explosive devices, helping build capability to continue this work including a focus on employment of women.”

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### Outcomes and Equalities

“In the coming year we will develop engaging and relevant guidance and materials to **teach young people about consent and healthy relationships**. This will support the **prevention of sexual harassment and gender-based violence**. We have recently opened a consultation on the national statutory guidance on Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood. We will also deliver a national framework for responding positively to gender-based violence in schools, activity which will contribute to our overarching ambitions that **girls and young women should have a gender-competent experience of**

**school**, underpinned by the work of the Gender Equality Taskforce and Equally Safe in Schools.”

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“We are taking action to further Scotland’s position as a global leader in human rights and equality. Our work to promote equality and human rights supports our ambition for strong communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe, and where human rights are respected. **We will continue to take action to mainstream equality and human rights and take forward specific action to address discrimination, including racism, to tackle violence against women and girls and end conversion practices.** We will continue to develop the world leading Human Rights Bill through extensive consultation and participation activity.”

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### The Legislative Programme 2022-23

“We have made good progress delivering legislative commitments announced in the 2021-22 Programme for Government.”

“A Gender Recognition Reform Bill was introduced to reform the Gender Recognition Act 2004 to provide a more streamlined process for transgender men and women applying for legal gender recognition.”

“The National Care Service Bill establishes the legal case for a National Care Service.”

“Subject to the detail of a forthcoming Supreme Court judgment, the Scottish Government will also support Gillian Mackay MSP with the development and drafting of her proposed Member’s Bill to protect **safe access for women to healthcare facilities that provide abortion services.**”

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### Summary of Bills for Introduction

#### Criminal Justice Reform

“The Bill will progress the ambition and priorities set out in the Vision for Justice in Scotland of **delivering person centred and trauma informed practices, including taking greater action to improve the experience of women and children** and to hear victims’ voices. The Bill will abolish the not proven verdict in criminal trials in Scotland and take forward any accompanying reforms. It will also deliver legislative reforms building on the recommendations of Lady Dorrian’s Review on Improving the Management of Sexual

Offence Cases, including, amongst a range of proposals, protection of the anonymity of complainers of sexual crimes under Scots law.”

### Housing

“We intend to introduce a Bill to protect tenants by freezing rents and imposing a moratorium on evictions until at least 31 March 2023. We also intend to introduce a new Housing Bill by the end of this parliamentary year which will begin to deliver our New Deal for Tenants and some other aspects of Housing to 2040. The timing of this Bill will need to be carefully considered on an ongoing basis in light of our emergency response to the cost crisis and identify effective means to secure affordable rents for the longer term.”

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### **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

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### **ABOUT US**

Engender is Scotland’s feminist policy and advocacy organisation, working to increase women’s social, political and economic equality, enable women’s rights, and make visible the impact of sexism on women and wider society. We work at Scottish, UK and international level to produce research, analysis, and recommendations for intersectional feminist legislation and programmes.