

Dear Nicola Sturgeon, Douglas Ross, Anas Sarwar, Lorna Slater and Willie Rennie

We are writing to you today as leader of your party to urge you to support the Poverty Alliance *Everyone Aboard* campaign, calling for the extension of free bus travel to everyone receiving Universal Credit (and other low-income benefits) and all young people under 25.

As a society, we believe we should look out for each other. But those whose finances have suffered most during the pandemic, people on low incomes and young people under 25, risk being left behind in our economic and social recovery.

Under 25s have been hit hard by the consequences of the Covid-19 crisis, particularly in relation to employment. As we begin to recover from the effects of the pandemic, access to the labour market will be more important than ever for young people, especially those from rural and remote areas in Scotland, and access to free bus travel would help facilitate this.

Women have also been hit especially hard by the crisis. Women disproportionately rely on buses and are more likely to be living in the grip of poverty, so removing the burden of high ticket costs would help to loosen that grip.

In the next Scottish Parliament, we can reach our child poverty reduction targets. Free buses can play a role in helping to reach these targets by opening access to employment, education, and extra-curricular development opportunities, especially for groups such as lone parents who are more reliant on buses and more likely to live in poverty.

Extending free bus travel to more young people and those receiving Universal Credit would encourage a shift towards public transport use and help make sure no one gets left behind as we transition to more sustainable ways of travelling.

The next Scottish Parliament has the chance to build a Scotland for all of us, one where no one is left behind. On the road to recovery, we can make sure everyone has a seat, by providing free bus travel to everyone receiving Universal Credit (and other low-income benefits) and to all young people under 25. Please support the campaign.

Yours Faithfully,



Peter Kelly
Director, Poverty Alliance



Signatories

Organisations:

Carolyn Sawers, Corra Foundation, Acting CEO

Ewan Aitken, Cyrenians, CEO

Isabella Goldie, Deafblind Scotland, CEO

Morven Brooks, Disability Equality Scotland, CEO

Frazer Scott, Energy Action Scotland, CEO

Martin Dorchester, Includem, CEO

Jonny Kinross, GCP Edinburgh, CEO

Margo Uprichard, The Louise Project, CEO

Brenda Black, Edinburgh Community Food, CEO

Viana Maya, Prespect, CEO

Lisa Duthie, Community Food Initiatives North East (CFINE), CEO

Paul O'Connor MBE, Garthdee Community Council, Chair

Kate Wimpres, SURF, Chair

Rob McDowall FRSA, Welfare Scotland, Chair
Brenda Carson, STUC Women's Committee, Chair
Ellie Harrison, Get Glasgow Moving, Chair
Agnes Tolmie, Scottish Women's Convention, Chair
Paul O' Connor MBE, Aberdeen SCVO, Chair and Director
Jacqui Reid, Community Action for Erskine, Chairperson
Shruti Jain, Saheliya, Chair
Clair Coyle, West Dunbartonshire Community Foodshare, Charity Manager
Narek Bido, Addictions Support & Counselling, Chief Executive
Professor Ian Welsh OBE, Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE),
Chief Executive
Angela Moohan, The Larder, Chief Executive Officer
Marie Ward, Cranhill Development Trust, Chief Executive
Michelle Carruthers MBE, The Food Train, Chief Executive
Kate Polson, Rock Trust, Chief Executive
Satwat Rehman, One Parent Families Scotland, Chief Executive
Ian Morrison, Whiteinch & Scotstoun Housing Association, Chief Executive
Morag Wilson, Stepping Stones North Edinburgh, Chief Executive
Professor Ian Welsh OBE, Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE),
Chief Executive
Emma Cormack, The Health Agency, Chief Executive Officer
Roy O'Kane FRSA, Kanzen Karate Ltd, Chief Officer
Betty Stone, Edinburgh Tenants Federation, Convenor
Sabine Goodwin, Independent Food Aid Network, Coordinator
Elaine Downie, The Poverty Truth Commission, Co-ordinator
Donald Maclean MSYP, Scottish Youth Parliament, Depute Convener of the
Transport, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee
Rhona Willder, Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance (SIAA), Development
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Martin Crewe, Barnardo's Scotland, Director
Dr Richard Dixon, Friends of the Earth Scotland, Director
Trishna Singh OBE, Sikh Sanjog, Director
Jimmy Paul, WEAll Scotland, Director
Liz McArthur, ReAct, Director
Colin Campbell, Kidron Project, Director
John Dickie, CPAG in Scotland, Director
Hugh Foy, Xaverians UK Region, Director: Programmes and Partnerships
Jimmy Wilson, FARE Scotland, Director
Emma Ritch, Engender, Executive Director
Margaret Nakityo, Afreshe, Executive Director
Emma Jackson, Director, Christians Against Poverty Scotland
Anna Ritchie Allan, Close the Gap, Executive Director
Alison Wilson, Amina - the Muslim Women's Resource Centre, Financial Advocacy
Officer
Larry Flanagan, Eis Union, General Secretary

Traci Kirkland, Govan Community Project, Head of Charity
Susan Paxton, Scottish Community Development Centre, Head of Programmes
Cath Tearne, Inverclyde HSCP, Health Improvement Senior
Heather Fiskin, Interim Director Policy and Research, Inclusion Scotland
Christine Norval, Children's University Scotland, Learning and Engagement Manager
Alan Bell, Recharge Youth Centre, Manager
Tom Heron, The Vennie, Manager
Frank Mosson, Bridgeton Citizens Advice Bureau, Manager
Pauline Buchan, The Cottage Family Centre, Manager
Roger Bromley, Former Professor & former Community Cllr, Member
Brian Durkin, SSVF Scotland, Member
Danny Collins, Society of St. Vincent de Paul Scotland, National President
Karen Miller, Ayr Housing Aid Centre, Office and Finance Manager
Elaine Milmine, 3D Drumchapel, Drumchapel Community Centre, Operations Manager
Ian Bathgate, St. Bartholomew's RC Church, Parish Priest
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Annie Tohill, Kairos Women+, Project Worker
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Shumela Ahmed, Resilience Learning Partnership, Managing Director
Beth Cadger, Article 12, Scotland Coordinator
Nicoletta Primo, Girl Guiding Scotland, Senior PR and Policy Officer
Mandy Sheridan, Argyll and Bute's poverty action group, Service Improvement Officer
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Dr Lukas Hardt, WEAll Scotland, Team Member
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Maria Robb, Daughters of Charity
Lynne Crawley, East Ayrshire Council H&SCP
Franks Bowness, Fife Interfaith Group
Ian Bruce, GCVS, Chief Executive
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Liane Coia, Maryhill Integration Network
Karen McCurry, Multiple Sclerosis Centre

Rhoda Walker, Orkney Foodbank
Susan Lyons, Spirit Advocacy
Andrew Stevenson, The Destiny Project
Fiona Bain, What Matters 2 U East Ayrshire
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Individuals:

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David Churchley, Community activist
John McIntyre, Community activist
John Revie, Community activist
Kate Black, Community activist
Kate Black, Community activist
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Gerry O'Connor, Community activist
Derek Kelter, Community activist
Doug Taylor, Activist
Angela Feeney, Campaigner
Judy Hamilton
Douglas Hamilton, Former Chair of Poverty and Inequality Commission

This campaign is supported by:

