

MICHAEL MARRA

ROOTED IN LABOUR > READY TO LEAD

My plan for party renewal

michaelmarra.scot

My plan for renewal: **Devolve, Empower, Rebuild**

1. Devolve power and resources

Devolve power and resources from the centre of the party, giving members, local parties and regions greater influence over how Scottish Labour organises, campaigns, and develops policy.

2. Empower our movement

Strengthen CLPs and empower new regional structures with political leadership, staff support and the resources required to act with a greater role in shaping our party.

3. Rebuild in our communities

Support members to organise and campaign throughout the year, rebuilding Labour's presence in every part of Scotland.

MICHAEL MARRA

ROOTED IN LABOUR > READY TO LEAD

Renewal: Giving our party back to our members

A plan to devolve power and resources

Under my leadership, Scottish Labour will devolve real power and resources away from the centre of our party and give members and the wider Labour movement a direct role in delivering its renewal. Members across Scotland know their cities, towns, islands and villages. They understand the issues that matter to the people who live there and the political challenges facing their communities. We will trust them with the power, the influence and the resources to make political change happen.

I will ensure members and local parties have far greater influence over how Scottish Labour organises, the political priorities we set, how we campaign, and how we develop policy. We will strengthen Constituency Labour Parties and establish empowered regions with political leadership, staff support, and the resources required to respond to the different needs of places across Scotland.

This commitment is absolute. Power and resources will be transferred away from the centre. Members, trade unions and affiliates will be partners in determining how that commitment works throughout Scotland and in shaping the wider reforms our party needs.

Centralisation in our party has contributed to Scottish Labour's long-term political decline. Renewing our party means changing that - transferring power and rebuilding Labour from within-communities that founded and sustained our movement.

Why Scottish Labour must renew

We must learn the lessons from every election we fight, including the 2026 Scottish Parliamentary election. But the renewal our party needs cannot be confined to the experience of one campaign or one defeat. Scottish Labour has gone backwards in all six Scottish Parliament elections since devolution began. We must confront the long-term political and organisational factors behind that decline and make the lasting changes required to rebuild and renew our party.

Party membership has fallen and activists are thin on the ground. These are not Labour problems alone. They are symptoms of a politics that has lost touch with the population at large.. The consequences of allowing that disconnect to continue cannot be underestimated. We currently risk losing the very soul of our country to a surging populist right and an emboldened far right. Re-vitalising our party is a duty for this generation.

Our values and our mission

I believe the strength of our party lies in a united and wide Labour movement. It has made Labour the only vehicle for the fundamental social change that Scotland needs. Together, we will build a better and more equal nation and leave that legacy for our children. But our movement can only drive that moral mission when it is trusted with the power to act.

Our moral purpose is why I do what I do. It is what motivates me in all of my work and is the reason I have chosen public service and political change in every phase of my adult life. I know that is the case for Labour members across Scotland too. I know how much being a Labour Party member means to everyone who carries that membership card. It means far more than the card

itself. It is about belonging to a movement that will always put our communities and working people first. It is a belief in solidarity that has passed through my family for generations, as it has through so many families across Scotland.

We are the party that delivered the NHS, the minimum wage and so much of the social progress in our country. We stand side by side with the trade union movement. This is your party. Look at what we have already achieved when we have come together and imagine what we can achieve together as we face the challenges and opportunities ahead.

By placing members and the wider movement at the heart of renewal, we will build a Scottish Labour Party that once again delivers for every place in Scotland. Only a renewal in the places that founded and sustained our movement will meet that challenge.

Renewal through action

My commitment to the spirit and practice of devolution is absolute. The transfer of power and resources will begin immediately under my leadership to prepare us for the local elections in May 2027. It is vital that members shape the implementation of this process through partnership. This partnership approach will determine how our commitments are embedded throughout the party. This is the first and most important step in a wider renewal of Scottish Labour.

It will strengthen local parties and give our movement the ability to rebuild its presence in every part of the country.

Local parties and empowered regional structures will have greater control over organisation and campaigning, with a direct role in setting political priorities and developing policy. These responsibilities will be backed by resources and a stronger local presence.

We simply cannot argue for power to be devolved across Scotland while holding it ever tighter at the centre of our own party, as we have done for too long. Importantly, the transfer of power will begin immediately. At the same time, our movement will confront the deeper questions that have shaped Scottish Labour's decline and determine the wider political, cultural and organisational changes required to renew our party.

Implementation will not be delayed while those questions are discussed. Renewal will be a process of action, partnership and permanent change.



Devolving power and resources

Regional structures will be based on the Scottish Parliament regions. They will bring local parties together so they can organise collectively, respond to regional political priorities, and carry the voices of their members into the national party.

It is key to understand that the creation of empowered regions will not replace Constituency Labour Parties. CLPs will remain the foundation through which members come together, organise, and are represented locally.

- Each region will have political leadership and access to policy support. Staff will have a visible presence within the regions and will work alongside local parties in the communities they serve.
- Regional structures will have access to the policy, organisational, and campaigning capacity required to exercise their responsibilities effectively.
- Regional structures will also provide a clear route through which members can influence the national party. The priorities of members in every part of Scotland will be carried into national policy and campaign decisions.

The purpose of regional devolution is not to create separate or disconnected parties. It is to root Scottish Labour more deeply in every part of Scotland.

Our common purpose will unite the party across the country. Devolution will give different places the power and capacity to pursue that purpose in ways that respond to the communities they serve. A party that is more responsive to its communities will be better able to speak to the country as a whole.

An engagement and devolution tour

As leader I will hold an engagement and devolution tour across every part of Scotland. This will be an opportunity for members and the wider movement to take an active role in building the new arrangements in their areas. It will focus on how power is transferred in practice, confront the questions facing our movement, and what support is required to make local organisation effective.

The tour will not begin with a blank sheet of paper. It will begin with a clear commitment to devolution, stronger CLPs, empowered regional structures, and a real transfer of resources. Its purpose will be to ensure that those commitments are delivered with members rather than imposed upon them.

Members will be able to contribute through regional forums, local party discussions, trade union and affiliate meetings, online submissions and a national member survey. These routes will give members throughout Scotland the opportunity to influence how the reforms operate and contribute to the wider renewal of our party.

Trade unions and affiliates will be fully integrated into the process so that their experience and priorities shape the delivery of the reforms. Their involvement will reflect the central place of the wider Labour movement in the political and organisational life of Scottish Labour. Different parts of Scotland face different political and organisational challenges. The new arrangements will reflect those differences while remaining united behind Scottish Labour's common purpose.

The deeper questions facing our movement

Devolving power and resources is the first and most important step in renewing Scottish Labour, but changing our structures alone will not answer every challenge facing our party.

As we put these reforms into practice, our movement will also confront the deeper political and organisational questions that have shaped Scottish Labour's long-term decline.

The requirement for change is not in question. Nor will action be delayed while those questions are discussed. The transfer of power will begin under my leadership while our movement works together to understand how Scottish Labour must continue to change in order to renew and unite.

The engagement and devolution tour, alongside local discussions and other routes for participation, will allow members and the wider movement to address these questions while the practical work of establishing stronger local parties and empowered regional structures proceeds.

This work will examine how Scottish Labour rebuilds trust and ensures that members have a permanent role in shaping the party. It will also consider the culture of our organisation, the accessibility and accountability of its decision-making, and the relationship between members, elected representatives, trade unions, affiliates and the party's professional staff.

The questions will not reopen the commitment to devolve power. They will help our movement determine how that transfer becomes the foundation for lasting political and organisational renewal.

Some of the questions our movement will confront are set out at the end of this paper.

Mobilising our members

Renewal must give members meaningful opportunities to become involved in the political work of the party and provide them with the support required to do so. Under this plan of devolution, Scottish Labour will strengthen its offer of training and political education. This will help members develop the practical knowledge required to organise effectively, shape political priorities, and campaign in their communities.

Training will be organised with local and regional needs in mind rather than designed only from the centre. It will include practical support for community campaigning, local press activity, political education and policy development.

Members will have greater opportunities to develop campaigns around the issues that matter where they live and to contribute to the policy positions pursued by the party. It is important that we also work through local and regional structures to re-engage members who have become less active and bring new members into the political life of Scottish Labour.

Members will not be treated simply as an election workforce or asked to participate only when the party needs votes. They will have a meaningful role throughout the year and a clear route to influence the political direction of our party. Local parties and regionals will support members to organise in their communities, build relationships with local organisations and campaign on the issues affecting people's lives.

This will enable Labour to demonstrate its values through action, remain visible between elections and rebuild trust in places where our presence has weakened.

Empowering members will make Scottish Labour more relevant and visible in communities across Scotland. It will help rebuild the activist base on which any successful political movement depends.

Permanent member involvement

The final implementation plan and any necessary rule changes will be considered through a transparent democratic process through our party conference.

Renewal will become part of how Scottish Labour operates, not an exercise that ends once new structures have been approved.

Conclusion - A party rooted in every part of Scotland

The strength of Scottish Labour lies in the wider Labour movement. It has made our party the only vehicle for fundamental social change in Scotland.

Together, we can build a better and more equal nation and leave that legacy for our children. But our movement can only drive that moral mission when it is trusted with the power to act. As leader, renewal will not be something done to our members. It will be delivered with them and backed by a real transfer of power and resources.

This is the start of how we do politics differently in Scottish Labour.

By empowering members and rebuilding our party in the communities that founded our movement, we will make Scottish Labour more responsive and more deeply rooted throughout the country.

We will create a party in which local knowledge shapes national decisions, members participate throughout the year and every region has the leadership, resources and organisational support required to act.

That is how we will unite and renew our party and give people a reason to believe in Labour again.



MICHAEL MARRA

ROOTED IN LABOUR > READY TO LEAD

michaelmarra.scot