LET’S TAKE BACK OUR COUNTRY

Election Manifesto 2023

NEW ZEALAND FIRST

☑️ PARTY VOTE

Authorised by H. Howard, 41 Jervois Road, Ponsonby.
2023 Election Planks & Key Announcements

The New Zealand we know and love is hanging by a thread. Everything is failing everywhere all at once. Woke extremism and political squabbling is not going to save us. To give hope back to our people, our families, our communities, our workers, and our businesses, we need to take action by:

1. Defending Freedom and Democracy
2. Tackling the cost-of-living crisis
3. Providing Opportunity for all in our education, health, employment, and infrastructure
4. Getting tough on rising crime
5. Improving the lives of our Seniors

Foreword

This manifesto has been prepared having full regard to the state of the New Zealand Economy as we know it. Current growth in the GDP of New Zealand’s economy is 0.9%. The IMF has warned that of the Asia Pacific economies, GDP averaging 4.4%, New Zealand’s economy is the worst. They further forecast that next year of the 160 countries they measured, New Zealand would come in at 159.

On past experience it is clear that immediately after the election there will have to be an “opening of the books”. Then a realistic assessment of the true state of the economy followed by a focus on the essential basics New Zealanders need right now with a mini-budget before Christmas. The range of policies within this manifesto have that caveat of concern realistically in mind.

The dire economic circumstances required New Zealand First to await the PREFU (Pre Election Economic Fiscal Update) and the OCR, announced on 4th October 2023, before finalising.

Contents

2023 Election Planks & Key Announcements 2
Defending Freedom and Democracy 4
Tackling the Cost-of-living Crisis 4
Creating Opportunity for All 6
Getting Tough on Rising Crime 9
Improving the Lives of Our Seniors 11

Policy by Topic 13
Government & Communities 13
Democracy & Government 13
Foreign Affairs, Trade & Exports 13
Defence 14
Law and Order 15
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Area</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Justice, Courts and Corrections</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media and Broadcasting</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Workforce Development</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors and Superannuation</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economy &amp; Enterprise</strong></td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Productivity Growth Fund</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy &amp; Resources</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Intensification and Planning Legislation</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Government Co-Governance</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance and Revenue</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Development</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Business</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism and Destination Management</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration and Employment</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racing</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health</strong></td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Care and Services</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prostate Cancer</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHARMAC and Medicines</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accident Compensation Corporation</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaping, smoking and nicotine</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport and Physical Health Policy</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Primary Industry &amp; Environment</strong></td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biosecurity</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aquaculture and Fisheries</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult and Community</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compulsory Sector</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary and Vocational</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Defending Freedom and Democracy
No-one is more important than anyone else. We all matter, each and every one of us.

New Zealand First wants every kiwi to be treated the same, to have equal opportunity and to be treated with fairness and respect. Today we see a nation divided by race, with the government and other political parties focusing on virtue signalling and politically correct extremism.

Fighting against racist Separatism
- New Zealand means New Zealand and not, ‘Aotearoa New Zealand.’
-立法使英语成为新西兰的官方语言。
- All public service departments, Crown Entities and SOEs will be required to communicate in English except those specifically related to Maori.
- Rule out working with any political party that promotes separatism.
- Withdraw from the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) as it removes the rights of New Zealand citizens to write their own laws.

Defending Freedom
- Protect freedom of speech by opposing hate speech laws
- Support legislation that protects the right to lawfully acquired property.
- Amend the Building Act, to require in the interest and safety of women and girls, that all public sector organisations provide separate, clearly demarcated, unisex and single sex bathrooms.
- Amend the Sport and Recreation New Zealand Act to remove public funding from bodies that allow non-biological women to be selected unequally against biological women.
- End all vaccine mandates, still operating in some organisations and medical facilities, and hold a credible fully independent Inquiry into New Zealand’s Covid-19 Response.

Defending Democracy and our nation’s Sovereignty
- Hold a binding referendum on a four-year Parliamentary Term at the 2026 Election
- Require a national interest test to stop us being dictated to by the United Nations and agencies like the W.H.O.
- Defund any public participation in the World Economic Forum and related bodies, where their deliberations intend the removal of independent democratic decision making by sovereign nations.

Tackling the Cost-of-living Crisis
All our costs are going up and up – food, power, fuel, health care, rents, rates, and mortgages. If we want to buy essential food or pay your mortgage or rent without always struggling to do so, then let’s take on those foreign banks and supermarkets, charging more here than they do elsewhere.

New Zealand First’s seven-point solution for the cost of living crisis:
1. **Balance the budget to take the heat off interest rates and inflation. Use policies to get our economy out of the red and back to black responsibly.**
   - NZ First commits to orthodox economic solutions and not economic extremism from the far left or the far right. NZ First has studied the Irish Celtic Tiger success along with the successes of Singapore and Iceland and believe these are much more sound models than economic experimentalism - already tried in New Zealand and failed.
   - NZ First's fiscal policy is to create surpluses to deal with unfunded commitments and to pay down debt by setting Total Government Expenses at no more than $165bn, while holding Core Government Expenses to no more than $133bn for 2024/25.

2. **Refocus government on ‘must haves’, not the ‘nice to haves’**
   - NZ First will ensure not one more cent is spent on light rail or new cycle lanes while we have potholes and traffic going ever slower. This is the start of a root and branch review of every spending line.
   - NZ First will challenge welfarism that has gone in too many areas from a hand up to a handout. NZ First believes that the government and businesses have a role in finding employment for willing workers in a successful economy.
   - Hard working taxpayers expect more so we will make two-years the lifetime entitlement for the JobSeeker WorkReady benefit - presently numbering over 99,000 New Zealanders.

3. **For KiwiSavers, we'll give you full access to clear your mortgage**
   - NZ First will evaluate the utility of the Singaporean model where at a certain level of savings kiwis can apply savings above that level to downsizing their mortgage.

4. **Retirees will face less squeeze through a 50% SuperGold rates rebate**
   - NZ First will fund rates relief for SuperGold card holders, who are mostly on fixed incomes, to apply for a 50% local authority rates rebate for those who own and live in their only home or equivalent such as an apartment, up to a maximum of $1,600 each year, at an estimated cost of between $1bn to $1.2bn.

5. **Examine the feasibility of lifting the adult Minimum Wage to at least $25 an hour by allowing businesses a tax concession to do so**
   - New Zealand cannot climb back to being a first world country with a low wage regime. And higher wages is critical to keeping New Zealand’s trained workforce in New Zealand.

6. **Foreign owned banks, supermarkets, and energy ‘gen-tailers’ will face a full scale pricing and monopoly investigation, as they have in other countries.**
   - There have been five inquiries in the Australian parliament into the Australian banking costs. There has not been one inquiry here.
   - Big supermarkets are making exorbitant profits, one up to 19% in one year, or over three times the inflation rate.
   - NZ First will make groceries cheaper and introduce real choice, by forcing the supermarket duopoly to divest themselves of their distribution centres and cool-stores.
   - NZ First will put a regulated duty on the banks to deliver ‘fair value’ through UK-style consumer duties, remove all woke investment rules and create a
Financial Services Ombudsman as an Office of Parliament.

- NZ First will lower power prices by forming a Ministry of Energy and abolishing the Electricity Authority. Generators will be required to divest themselves of retail while allowing local lines companies into generation, retail, and even transmission.

7. **Tax reforms in the next term of Parliament**
   - NZ First will legislate to make the lowest tax bracket (currently $14,000 pa) of income tax-free no later than 1 April 2027; providing an extra $28.27 a-week for workers.
   - NZ First will adjust tax brackets for inflation starting 1 April 2024, with the first adjustment taking place in 2027 and every three years thereafter.
   - NZ First will get more private homes built for renters by reinstating interest tax deductibility.
   - NZ First will secure a Select Committee Inquiry into GST off basic fresh foods. We must examine if this would deliver real benefits for taxpayers before legislating for it. We would want to ensure savings get to consumers before we support legislation to this effect.

---

**Creating Opportunity for All**

New Zealand used to be a country where hard work was justly rewarded, anyone could make it, and everyone was looked after. A country for the many, not just the few.

New Zealand must again become an innovator and world leader, by levelling up our education, health, employment and infrastructure.

**A Better Educated New Zealand**

- Enforce compulsory education and address truancy
- Focus on doing the basics better through emphasising the ‘Historic Three R’s’ Reading, Writing, Arithmetic.
- Provide better pathways and funding for STEM subjects
- Remove gender ideology from the curriculum
- Review the New Zealand curriculum to remove critical race theory and de-colonialism.
- Conduct a Select Committee Inquiry into the future NCEA to see if it is delivering for students, parents and employers
- Change ‘Fees Free’ in the first year, to make it ‘Fees Free’ in the third year, for full-time students successfully passing all coursework to that point
- Free apprenticeships for in-demand vocations by refunding fees and course costs after successful completion of each trade examination
- Student Loan Abatement Scheme for in-demand critical workers so that one-year of student loans is wiped, for every two years of full time work in New Zealand post-qualification or registration
- Make Apprenticeship Boost permanent and return to a Targeted Trade and Apprenticeship Fund.
A Healthier New Zealand

New Zealand First's five-point plan for better healthcare:

1. Return New Zealand to a single health system for all based on need not race
   - NZ First will abolish the Māori Health Authority, other race-based initiatives.

2. A new patient-focussed medicines buying agency to replace Pharmac and increase its funding, from the last Budget of $1.2bn, with an additional $1.3bn for life changing medicines.
   - NZ First will replace Pharmac with a new agency focused on patients' health and recovery - not cost savings and lack of essential medicines.

3. A GP-controlled Waitlist Reduction Fund to get the 60,000 kiwis languishing on the waitlist, and funded by basing health-care on need
   - NZ First will make $925m available each year to end the waitlist.
   - GP's know best what their patients' needs are and this fund will enable GP's to buy approved specialist appointments and operations for a healthier New Zealand.

4. More GPs and better access to healthcare
   - NZ First knows that we need approximately 2000 extra doctors now, not in seven-years' time, so obtaining these doctors will be an immigration priority, and we'll amend the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 to fast-track New Zealand Medical Council registered doctors into General Practice as well.
   - NZ First will also adopt Digital Health Clinics in harder to staff areas led by Nurse Practitioners using digital technology connected to General Practitioners and Specialists.

5. Acquire the latest in diagnostic technology
   - Ensure a diagnosis is available in hours not days of patient testing. This will save enormous medical costs and expedite the speed and number of patient referrals.

6. Attracting the best while retaining talented Kiwis
   - NZ First will enable Residence within 30-days of arrival and Permanent Residence within two years, with a commitment to live and work in New Zealand for the next eight years, for in-demand clinical staff trained and
registered in Australia, Canada, Singapore, Ireland, the United States and the United Kingdom.

7. **Speeding up medicine approval to put Kiwis at the front of the queue**

   - NZ First will repeal the *Therapeutic Products Act 2023* prioritising New Zealand, not global, interests.
   - NZ First will end MedSafe waste, and instead commit New Zealand to enter into mutual recognition agreements, so that any medicine becomes registered here when approved by any two peer regulators.
   - Those two peer regulators will prioritise: The US Food and Drug Administration, European Medicines Agency, UK Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency, Health Canada, Singapore’s Health Sciences Authority, or Australia’s Health Administration.

**A New Zealand with Employment Opportunity**

   - Examine the feasibility of lifting the adult Minimum Wage to at least $25 an hour by allowing businesses a tax concession to do so.
   - Hard working taxpayers expect more so we will make two-years the lifetime entitlement for the JobSeeker WorkReady benefit - presently numbering over 99,000 New Zealanders.
   - NZ First will legislate to make the lowest tax bracket (currently $14,000 pa) of income tax-free no later than 1 April 2027; providing an extra $28.27 a-week for workers.
   - Remove the Accredited Employer Worker Visa and replace it with a Skills Shortage Visa and Labour Shortage Visa
   - Free apprenticeships for in-demand vocations by refunding fees and course costs after successful completion of each trade examination
   - Reinstate the Targeted Trade & Apprenticeship Fund so that we can assist employers to take on more Apprenticeships and Trade workers.
   - Establish an ‘Essential Worker’ workforce planning mechanism to better plan for skill or labour shortages in the long term.
   - We will end the abuse of immigrant workers working in slave-like conditions by ensuring those who are responsible for such maltreatment are seriously held to account.

**Building a better New Zealand with Infrastructure**

   - Work towards the establishment of a New Zealand Infrastructure Bank Limited as a core crown agency and endowed with the capital to provide a sovereign means to fund long term publicly owned assets.
   - Work towards establishing a Ministry for Infrastructure by abolishing the Infrastructure Commission and absorbing the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development along with infrastructure elements from other departments.
Policy by Plank

- Establish a Ministry of Energy while abolishing the Electricity Authority as part of an industry shakeup that will see generators forced to divest retail assets, while enabling local lines businesses to retail, generate, and engage in transmission.
- Establish a Crown Owned Company with the Port of Auckland and Northport to relocate operations to Northport and realise real value from prime real estate in Auckland.
- Investigate the reopening of the Marsden Point Oil Refinery to regain sovereignty over our own fuel security.
- Build a dry dock at Marsden Point to service domestic and international shipping needs and to support our Navy Vessels. This includes establishing a Fuel Security Plan to safeguard our transport and logistics systems and emergency services from any international or domestic disruption.
- Commit to keeping Tiwai Point Aluminium Smelter open, and not closing the finest aluminium producer in the world, and preserving 2200 direct and associated jobs.

Getting Tough on Rising Crime

New Zealand First believes that keeping society safe should be the priority of law-and-order policies. Every New Zealander deserves to feel safe, secure, and have their person and property respected. That is why New Zealand First continues to fix the flaws in our justice system, while ensuring that victims of crime are prioritised over offenders.

The safety of our communities is the first responsibility of the Government and includes the capabilities and resourcing of our police. New Zealand First is the only party with the record of seriously boosting police force numbers with the necessary funding, training, and personnel to meet the challenges of our growing population. That is why in our last time of government we targeted an increase of 1800 new frontline police. That commitment in its maturity saw 2338 new police trained.

When it becomes clear to potential criminals that crime doesn't pay, the current ballooning crime-rate will come down along with incarceration rates.

New Zealand First will:

- Commit to no less than 500 new frontline police in the first 18 months of government.
- Double the number of Youth Aid officers.
- Introduce minimum mandatory prison sentences for serious assaults on police officers, corrections officers, and first responders.
- Review Police pay and conditions in order to maintain police numbers and to reduce attrition.
- Adequately resource community policing including Māori and Pasifika wardens, and Neighbourhood Watch.
- Introduce a Youth Justice Demerit Points System to tackle youth crime.
- Review fleeing driver legislation and ensure adequate resourcing to curb the exponential increase in fleeing driver incidents.
Justice Courts and Corrections

New Zealand First will:

- Prioritise the principles of the Sentencing Act to focus on the needs of the victim and the community, and lastly the offender.
- Implement policies in our secondary education system to maximise driver licence qualifications amongst all young people and extend that provision for prisoners wishing to gain a licence while in prison.
- Fund tattoo removal for rehabilitated gang members in prison - whilst assigning that cost back to that prisoner if they replace those tattoos with other gang associated tattoos.
- Increase the use of mandatory minimum sentences for serious violent and sexual offenders.
- Introduce a ‘degrees of murder’ regime that utilises ‘life for life’ for First Degree Murder.
- Remove community sentences or discounts (such as cultural reports) for violent offenders who are considered a threat to the community.
- Establish a ‘Gang only’ Prison to reduce recruitment of non-gang prisoners - there are a suspected 3000 gang members in prison currently, with 2000 spare beds. There is existing space within the current system, with existing gang member prisoners, to isolate them in a specific isolated prison.
- Designate Gangs as ‘Terrorist Organisations’ under the Terrorism Suppression Act.
- Include gang membership as an aggravating factor during sentencing.
- Implement ‘prisoner-constructed prison portability units policy’ so that the costs of labour on such construction will be removed from the taxpayer to the prisoners themselves – as already happens in some overseas jurisdictions.
- Introduce harsher penalties for fleeing drivers.
- Review and work to increase the fines for lower-level crimes such as texting while driving and shoplifting.
- Introduce an enforcement law for dangerous littering.
- Introduce a ‘Youth Justice Demerits’ system to provide accountability and certainty of support for youth offenders, youth aid officers and law enforcement.
- Introduce a greater range of non-custodial sentences such as the confiscation of specific property, larger and long-term reparation, payments, and fines.
- Remove concurrent sentences for those who commit offences while on parole, on bail, or whilst in custody.
- Investigate the applicability of operational funding to equip corrections officers with body cameras and appropriate protective equipment.
- Provide consistency in legislation and replace the term ‘prison officer’ and ‘prison guard’ with ‘corrections officer’.
- Provide a minimum mandatory cumulative prison term for assaulting Corrections Officers
- Introduce Mental Health Response Units to adequately address Mental Health distress and life-threatening harm in the community.
Improving the Lives of Our Seniors

New Zealanders who have worked hard all their lives deserve the right to retire at 65, and be looked after when they do.

New Zealand First changed the laws, got rid of the pernicious surtax, restored Super to 66% of the net average wage, and brought in the Super GoldCard with free public off-peak hour travel on buses, trains, and ferries. Then added 13,000 businesses giving discount concessions to GoldCard carrying purchasers.

New Zealand First’s six-point plan for superannuitants and aged care:

1. **The age of retirement will remain at 65 years. No ifs, buts, or maybes.**
   - NZ First will keep the age of National Superannuation entitlement at 65 years and the current 66% of net average wage maintained, and not lowered by shifting the link to inflation.

2. **Reduce the cost-of-living squeeze through a 50% SuperGold rates rebate.**
   - NZ First will fund rates relief for SuperGold card holders, who are mostly on fixed incomes, to apply for a 50% local authority rates rebate for those who own and live in their only home or equivalent such as an apartment, up to a maximum of $1,600 each year. When retired couples are taken into account the estimated cost will be approximately $480m.

3. **Provide aged-care dignity by beginning to fully fund the placement shortages**
   - NZ First knows we will need approximately 78,000 residential care beds by 2040, but on current progress, there will be just 33,000 and if nothing is done, it will place impossible strain on the public health system. NZ First commits to:
     - Immediately fund 2,000 new standard residential care beds over the next term of Parliament
     - Begin to address standard bed residential care support to providers by indexing it to inflation
     - Engage openly and constructively with the aged-care sector
     - Undertake a Select Committee Inquiry into aged care provision to include supporting people with early onset conditions and what asset thresholds are appropriate in 2023/24
     - Secure bi-partisanship agreement to fully fund the care and dementia beds that New Zealand needs now and with a focus on the long term needs by 2040.

4. **Boost retirement savings through KiwiSaver Mortgage Clearance.**
   - NZ First will evaluate the utility of the Singaporean model where at a certain level of savings kiwis can apply savings above that level to downsizing their mortgage.

5. **Improved healthcare with world-leading medicines, specialist access and operations.**
● NZ First will introduce a new patient-focussed medicines buying agency to replace Pharmac and increase its funding, from the last Budget of $1.2bn, with an additional $1.3bn for life changing medicines.
● The new agency will be focused on patients' health and recovery - not cost savings and lack of essential medicines.

6. **Retirement village property title.**

● NZ First will liaise with retirement village owners and occupiers to seek a mutually agreed way forward to safeguard the interests of the 50,000 plus New Zealanders living in retirement villages, having been assured by retirement village owners that this is achievable.
This following policy represents some of New Zealand First's intentions within certain categories and areas. What’s important is that the country has an understanding of the government’s fiscal position and that before making endless commitments that we are in an economic position to do so.

Government & Communities

Democracy & Government

Parliament must be a responsive and accountable institution that works for communities. New Zealand First believes that the best approach to ensure this, is smaller and more effective government, coupled with direct democracy through referendum. We also recognise the important role that local government plays in our democracy, and believe its actions must achieve the best return for ratepayers.

Policy (additional to defending freedom, democracy and women):

- Where practical timelines permit, remove the use of personal votes by Members of Parliament on all conscience issues and replace them with citizens binding referenda
- Continue to advocate for greater use of binding referenda in major policies that affect society and provide effective education on complex issues.
- Ensure greater contestability of policy advice and make social impact a necessary component of the economic cost and benefit analysis
- Review the legislative and cost burden that central government has placed on local government to first lessen, and second, share the impact upon ratepayers
- Establish an independent firearms authority (IFA)
- Continue to safeguard our state and local government assets through restricting their sale or use that is outside of New Zealand’s national interest
- Repeal the Local Electoral (Māori Wards and Māori Constituencies) Amendment Act.

Foreign Affairs, Trade & Exports

New Zealand First believes that our country must have an active role to play in international politics. We believe in promoting New Zealand’s interests and facilitating cooperation and trust between other nations. It is through our foreign policy that New Zealand gains fair free trade agreements, cooperation on pressing issues such as climate change resilience, and sound representation of our citizens living abroad.

New Zealand is a trade and exports driven country. New Zealand First believes our approach to international relations should focus on independence, resilience, and cooperation with a diverse group of trading partners.
Policy by Topic

Policy:

- Undertake a Select Committee Inquiry on the introduction an exporters tax of 20% for new business or product lines
- Deepen the “Pacific Reset” to the greater Indo-Pacific region in recognition of its growing importance to New Zealand’s security and wellbeing
- Launch Closer Commonwealth Economic Relations “CCEA” with the UK, Australia, Canada, Singapore, Malaysia and Brunei and invite India and other suitable Commonwealth states to join as associates
- Continue work towards a full free trade agreement with the United States
- Work with importers and exporters on supply chain resilience and to have the means to substitute locally to avoid disruption
- Undertake an independent Review into New Zealand Trade and Enterprise to ensure a stronger focus on all export businesses large and small
- Expand the New Zealand Export Credit Office whilst lessening its cost on exporters, and relate its oversight by rewarding applicants successes, and set at least a break-even expectation.
- Maintain our strong Foreign Affairs links to collaborate with our partners on border policy that is responsive to the economic and security needs of New Zealand.

Defence

Defence is a core government function as we have never been in a benign strategic environment. Defence is vital for the vast area of the world we occupy, as well as in foreign affairs, and with Humanitarian and Disaster Relief; domestic or international. New Zealand’s continental shelf is far larger than our EEZ being over six-times the land area of New Zealand at around 1.7 million square kilometres. This is dwarfed by our 30 million square kilometre Maritime Area of Responsibility that’s more than three times the land area of Canada, extends from the mid-Tasman to halfway to Chile, and from the South Pole to almost the Equator.

Policy:

- Progressively increase real Defence spending to reach 2% of GDP by 2030
- Establish a permanent, ring-fenced Defence Capital Fund as part of the Budget to fund defence capability and estate procurement
- Instruct NZDF uniformed staff to deliver a tri-service Defence Command Paper based on what New Zealand needs and when. This plan will be expected to establish tri-service long term size, structure and equipment needs
- Continue to support the role the New Zealand Defence Force plays in youth development
- Establish the New Zealand Border Protection Force combining functions of the New Zealand Defence Force, New Zealand Customs Service and Immigration New Zealand to coordinate the protection of our borders from biosecurity incursions
- Undertake a fundamental review of military medals and honours
Veterans

- Respond to the findings of the national conversation on the establishment of a Covenant between service people, the government and the people of New Zealand
- Continue to implement the recommendations of the independent report Warrant of Fitness (an independent review of the Veterans’ Support Act 2014)
- Working with the Veterans community, investigate the establishment of a Veterans’ Day
- Respond to the recommendations of the Veterans’ Advisory Board that the definition of a veteran be expanded so that all who have served are considered veterans

Law and Order

New Zealand First believes that keeping society safe should be the priority of law-and-order policies. Every New Zealander deserves to feel safe, secure, and have their person and property respected. That is why New Zealand First continues to fix the flaws in our justice system, while ensuring that victims of crime are prioritised over offenders.

The safety of our communities is the first responsibility of the government and includes the capabilities and resourcing of our police. New Zealand First is the only party with the record of seriously boosting police force numbers with the necessary funding, training, and personnel to meet the challenges of our growing population. That is why in our last time of government we targeted an increase of 1800 new frontline police. That commitment in its maturity saw 2338 new police trained.

New Zealand First will:

- Commit to no less than 500 new frontline police in the first 18 months of government.
- Double the number of Youth Aid officers
- Introduce minimum mandatory prison sentences for serious assaults police officers, corrections officers, and first responders.
- Review Police pay and condition in order to maintain police numbers and to reduce attrition.
- Adequately resource community policing including Māori and Pasifika wardens, and Neighbourhood Watch.
- Introduce a Youth Justice Demerit Points System to tackle youth crime.
- Review fleeing driver legislation and ensure adequate resourcing to curb the exponential increase in fleeing driver incidents.

Justice, Courts and Corrections

New Zealand First will:

- Prioritise the principles of the Sentencing Act to focus on the needs of the victim and the community, and lastly the offender.
Policy by Topic

- Implement policies in our secondary education system to maximise driver licence qualifications amongst all young people and extend that provision for prisoners wishing to gain a licence while in prison.
- Fund tattoo removal for rehabilitated gang members in prison - whilst assigning that cost back to that prisoner if they replace those tattoos with other gang associated tattoos.
- Increase the use of mandatory minimum sentences for serious violent and sexual offenders.
- Introduce a ‘degrees of murder’ regime that utilises ‘life for life’ for 1st Degree Murder.
- Remove community sentences or discounts (such as cultural reports) for violent offenders who are considered a threat to the community.
- Establish a ‘Gang only’ Prison to reduce recruitment of non-gang prisoners and fund up to an additional 500 corrections placements or as is required.
- Designate Gangs as ‘Terrorist Organisations’ under the Terrorism Suppression Act.
- Include gang membership as an aggravating factor during sentencing.
- Implement ‘prisoner-constructed prison portability units policy’ so that the costs of labour on such construction will be removed from the taxpayer to the prisoners themselves – as already happens in some overseas jurisdictions.
- Introduce harsher penalties for fleeing drivers.
- Review and work to increase the fines for lower-level crimes such as texting while driving and shoplifting.
- Introduce an enforcement law for dangerous littering.
- Introduce a ‘Youth Justice Demerits’ system to provide accountability and certainty of support for youth offenders, youth aid officers and law enforcement.
- Introduce a greater range of non-custodial sentences such as the confiscation of specific property, larger and long-term reparation, payments, and fines.
- Remove concurrent sentences for those who commit offences while on parole, on bail, or whilst in custody.
- Investigate the applicability of operational funding to equip corrections officers with body cameras and appropriate protective equipment.
- Provide consistency in legislation and replace the term ‘prison officer’ and ‘prison guard’ with ‘corrections officer’.
- Provide a minimum mandatory cumulative prison term for assaulting Corrections Officers
- Introduce Mental Health Response Units to adequately address Mental Health distress and life-threatening harm in the community.

Media and Broadcasting

New Zealand First believes that a free and flourishing media is essential for democracy.

Recent technological and cultural changes have disrupted the traditional media business model, undermining the ability of journalists and news outlets to fulfil their role as ‘the fourth estate’.
Policy by Topic

Declining revenue and a reduction in investment in journalism has seen the rise of clickbait journalism as mainstream media are pushed into a losing battle for viewership and listenership.

The shift away from news neutrality corresponds with an increasing lack of trust in the media and trust is the bedrock upon which a healthy functioning democracy is founded.

To sustain a diverse news and media ecosystem and as it transitions to digital, greater efficiencies and value for money, while maintaining plurality and editorial independence, will require collaboration across a range of outlets.

Greater transparency between content and commerce, fair and balanced reporting and strengthening regional news will go some way to restoring trust in the fourth estate that is critical for the media to thrive and for our democracy to function properly.

- Royal Commission of Inquiry into media independence in New Zealand.
- Establish the role of a Media Ombudsman to replace the Broadcasting Standards Authority.
- Legislate for a new Public Media Act, replacing the Broadcasting Act, Radiocommunications Act and the Māori Television Service (Te Aratuku Whakāta Irirangi Māori) Act 2003 (noting the specific language component must be maintained)
- Require major global tech platforms like Google and Meta to support NZ journalism by paying a fair price for NZ published content
- Enable the broadcasting industry to get economies of scale through mandating that TVNZ and other Crown media entities including Māori media work together in creating efficiencies and capabilities across technology and content to provide greater value for the New Zealand public while ensuring plurality is maintained across the fourth estate
- Require and mandate Radio New Zealand (RNZ) to support the health of the sector by providing shared services, facilities, content, training and staff development, technical services and infrastructure for publicly funded radio including iwi and community radio
- Strengthen local democracy in the regions by supporting regional community newspaper and radio newsrooms including Access and iwi stations and enable them to link together to form a national network broadcasting and streaming video, audio and text
- Examine tax deductions for domestic news subscriptions, press patron subscriptions, and large corporate sponsorships of news outlets
- Facilitate collaboration of media entities through simplifying competition rules for merger activities whilst protecting our national interest
- Secure and futureproof RNZ Concert as an important entity in our public broadcasting stable noting the station plays a crucial and unique role within the arts sector in New Zealand
- Future proof funding to enable iwi radio to develop its full potential as valued community radio stations and integral community hubs including as a media training pipeline for rangatahi in provincial New Zealand
Policy by Topic

- Open up new frequencies for Access and Community radio and extend funding for successful applicants

Media Workforce Development

- Provide 50% government subsidised 2-year internships in collaboration with the news media sector for journalism/media graduates and ensure a regional spread of cadets
- Support media industry workforce development training programmes like Local Democracy Reporting and Te Rito to ensure a pipeline of emerging media talent
- Require journalism and media training institutions through their five-year strategic plan to show how they are giving life to providing a diverse talent pipeline for the media sector

Seniors and Superannuation

When previous governments have attacked the status of our seniors, only New Zealand First has steadfastly defended them. From the surtax of the 1980s and 1990s, or more recent attempts to lower the percentage of Super, or to increase the age of entitlement, it has been only New Zealand First that has championed their cause and will continue to do so. During COVID-19 it became obvious that our seniors were only seen by Government departments as “vulnerable” and told to “go home, stay home”. With Kiwi’s over the age of 65 expected to grow to 1.2 million by 2034, we believe that they deserve a stronger voice in all government decisions.

Policy (in addition to Improving the Lives of Our Seniors):

- Undertake a Select Committee inquire into fully funded aged care
- Two free Doctor’s Visits annually, including an annual eye test, for SuperGold card holders, and acting to prevent thousands going blind who may not have if they received earlier treatment.
- Work to increase the Accommodation Supplement for SuperGold card holders and and retain the Winter Energy Payment
- Develop a Seniors Housing plan to address the increasing number of Seniors in rental accommodation and requiring Accommodation Supplement support
Economy & Enterprise

Regional Productivity Growth Fund

The PGF was intended as an infrastructure fund but ended up becoming Labour’s Wellington-centred idea of economic development after 2020. While a lot of good was done and which will be seen in water storage especially, the Regional Productivity Growth Fund is what the PGF ought to have been from day one i.e. the infrastructure to unblock businesses who invest their private capital and to grow jobs. This is different from long-lived public infrastructure as it is focussed on providing modal solutions, opening up land, sea and the seafloor, water supply, power and internet to get all regions humming.

Infrastructure (in addition to the tackling the cost of living):

- Repeal Labour’s planning laws to temporarily reinstate the Resource Management Act before replacing it with legislation modelled on Ireland’s Planning and Development Act and England’s Town and Country Planning Act to restrict third party appeals, provide greater certainty and replace the Environment Court.
- The key short term focus is remediating infrastructure in areas damaged by severe weather events, focus on productive rural regions, as well as addressing aquatic and terrestrial pests, weeds and biosecurity.
- The medium-term focus will be on infrastructure that improves productivity. A new Ministry of Infrastructure will be tasked with determining an optimal investment programme and whole of government infrastructure pipelines to provide greater investment and employment certainty for private sector contractors.
- Develop a multimodal logistics, transport and land-use National Supply Chain and Freight Strategy.
- Respond to Canberra trying to poach our games industry with a 40% refundable tax offset for eligible games developers spending at least $600,000 on qualifying New Zealand game development expenditure from 1 July 2024.
- Establish a Ministry of Energy to focus on powering and fuelling New Zealand economic growth where cheap renewable energy should be a core competitive advantage.
- The Ukraine war means we must have a sovereign energy supply meaning the Crown Minerals (Petroleum) Amendment Act 2018 will be repealed with the Ministry of Energy to actively investigate the potential of former coal mines, rather than the importation of inferior coal from other countries, and white hydrogen.

Manufacturing

- We will look to invest in domestic manufacturing companies and industries that can demonstrate increased productivity, reduced supply chain vulnerability, diversification, value chain and value add advancement and increased export capability.
- It will do this by co-investing with private sector investors through mechanisms like the Elevate Venture Capital Fund, accelerated depreciation, supplying debt funding, equity in nationally strategic projects, and guarantees for exporters entering new markets or with significant export deals.
Policy by Topic

- The aim is unashamedly driving for increased global competitiveness and market penetration in key industries such as food and fibres, digital technologies and green energy.

Buying Local

- Create a Crown guarantee for Tier-1 capital to expand New Zealand owned registered banks so that at least one could become New Zealand local and central government’s banker
- Amend the Banking (Prudential Supervision) Act to prohibit any New Zealand registered bank discriminating against, or debanking, businesses or individuals on the basis of business type or political belief
- Develop a Government procurement strategy consistent with our international agreements that prioritises buying local goods such as the Wool First initiative.

Trade

- We will continue to seek new Free Trade Agreements and encourage market diversification
- We will power-up the Export Credit Office supporting export market penetration and diversification for Kiwi exporters.

Education and Skills

- Focus our education system on core skills (reading, writing/communication, maths, science), key life and social skills, creativity and developing critical thinking.
- Ensure extra focus and support for people with learning difficulties and support excellence
- Develop closer links between education and employment.
- Incentivise STEM learning at all levels – including ongoing upskilling of the teachers.
- Build centres of excellence – particularly around CRIs, Universities, Callaghan Institute.
- Change ‘Fees Free’ to make the make it “Third-Year free” for full-time students successfully passing all coursework to that point
- Free apprenticeships for in-demand vocations by refunding fees and course costs after successful completion of each trade examination
- Student Loan Abatement Scheme for in-demand critical workers so that one-year of student loans is wiped, for every two full time years worked in New Zealand post-qualification or registration.
- Make Apprenticeship Boost permanent rather than let it expire in December 2024 and return to a Targeted Trade and Apprenticeship Fund.
- Develop a coherent Population Strategy including focusing immigration on addressing skill shortages, economic opportunities and meeting our humanitarian responsibilities. The Strategy will interface with economic development, infrastructure, housing and education.
- Replace the Accredited Employer Worker Visa with the critical skill shortage and the critical labour shortage visa.
Incentivising Productivity and Innovation

- Support the film and game development industries to level the playing field with other countries through a 40% refundable tax offset for eligible spending.
- Increase the rates of depreciation for agriculture, manufacturing, research and development.
- Undertake a Select Committee Inquiry on the lack of capital holding productive industries and businesses and the role that the state could play after getting New Zealand back into sustained surpluses.
- Encourage Callaghan Innovation, CRIs and Universities to set up regional centres of excellence and business incubators.
- Review Callaghan Innovation grants for its effectiveness with furthering New Zealand’s core competitive advantages and post-Ukraine, energy needs.
- Focus efforts to reduce regulations to lower the cost of doing business including new planning laws modelled on those operating in Ireland and England that does away with the Environment Court.
- Back to Black and budget surplus in 2024/25 with a cap on total government spending and Core Crown expenditure.
- Set two years as a permanent cap for the unemployment benefit to get people, able and needing to work, back to work: In the 1950’s we had almost no unemployed, yet, in June 2023, 831 working age Kiwis had been on the dole for 20 to 30 years; 246 for between 30 and 40 years and 9 for 40 years plus.
- Restore 90 day trials to provide employer certainty.

Savings and Investment
We do not save enough. This reduces our ability to invest in our country and in ourselves including buying a home and retirement savings. It is predicted that the proportion of retirees renting will double over the next 25 years. This will create a greater burden on the state and New Zealand needs a serious policy shift to restore our former record of being one of the highest Property Owning Democracies in the world.
NZ First will incentivise savings and investment by:
- Continuing to grow the NZ Super Fund.

Supercharge Kiwisavers by:
- Giving those with sufficient balances the ability to clear the mortgage they have on the family home
- Maximise returns by repealing woke KiwiSaver default investment rules that stop investment into any lawful sector while ensuring the NZ SuperFund is similarly unencumbered
- Make Kiwisaver membership compulsory from the 18th birthday, and after commencing employment
- Restore the Kickstart with auto-enrolment at birth from 1 July 2024
- Encourage all under 18 year olds to get into Kiwisaver by offering an annual state contribution of $250, if $250 has been saved in the preceding year (up until the 18th birthday)
- Supporting the growth of Kiwisaver funds. Review fees and increase the Government contribution in line with inflation since 2007 (48%) to a current maximum of $1,540.
Local Government

- Enable and resource the Ombudsman to investigate whether consultancies are genuine
- Undertake a Select Committee Inquiry into the sharing of GST from council rates with the local authorities they originate from
- Transfer half of Crown Minerals Royalties to the regions they came from
- Begin devolution of central government decision-making and resources to the regions to counter the "Wellington Knows-All" approach.

Energy & Resources

New Zealand First is committed to ensuring that our energy sector is sustainable because our environment and decarbonisation must be at the forefront of our country’s thinking. Businesses that operate within the sector must be given surety, and this includes consumers of energy. Long term planning is required across diverse sectors and industry to ensure energy and electricity costs do not increase for all users. It would be disingenuous of New Zealand to simply move the problem of carbon offshore.

Policy:

- Introduce greater planning certainty by temporarily reinstating the Resource Management Act before replacing it with legislation modelled on Ireland’s *Planning and Development Act* and England’s *Town and Country Planning Act*
- Establish the Ministry for Energy while abolishing the Electricity Authority and task the Commerce Commission to handle competition aspects
- Force the generators to divest themselves of retail, while enabling the local lines businesses to enter retail as well as to generate electricity to increase competition and supply; especially with water storage
- Investigate the rebuild of Marsden Point as an oil refinery but upgraded to process the quality of oil found in New Zealand as part of post-Ukraine energy sovereignty
- Implement a Fuel Security Plan to ensure that our country is no longer hindered by supply or refinement challenges and to take advantage of our potential for increasing supply chain security using our own resources in oil, gas and coal, and stop importation of inferior coal as is happening now.
- Conduct a national audit of our natural resources, exploring their full potential including novel gases in former coal mines, geothermal, previous metals, rare earths and white hydrogen
- Continue to support and encourage other hydrogen options including for export
- Repeal the Crown Minerals (Petroleum) Amendment Act 2018 and examine potential for a state owned exploration company to explore offshore using seismic data in the Great South Basin and Canterbury Basin
- Support domestic electricity generation policies such as “net metering” and incentives for household solar panels and generators
- Require Transpower to invest in New Zealand's capacity for distributed generation
Transport

New Zealand First supports land, air, and sea links that build an integrated transport system while improving regional connectivity. Transport funding and planning can no longer be only urban focused due to its importance as an enabler of economic growth in the regions. Considerable work has already been done to ensure transport is economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable while also being fit for future use.

Policy:

- “Waka Kotahi” to become “New Zealand Transport Agency” once again, and end the “Boat on the Road” nonsense.
- Require new cycle lane funding to be resourced by local government with an immediate moratorium on any new cycle lane funded from the National Land Transport Fund.
- Cancellation of Road to Zero with monies prioritised for local and regional road reengineering improvements to speed New Zealand up to 100 km/h and 110km/h, not slow it down.
- Immediate cessation of work on Auckland Light Rail and voluntary liquidation of the Crown company given costs have spiralled from $168 million a kilometre in 2019 to at least $608 million in 2023. NZ First will instead back a heavy rail spur from Puhinui Station to the Airport at a fraction of the cost.
- Cessation of ‘Lets Get Wellington Moving’ except for the new road tunnel and funding to connect the airport to SH1 as “four lanes to the planes”.
- Utilise New Zealand’s coastal shipping capabilities through championing initiatives such as “Blue Highways”, expanding our Merchant Fleet, and building a Drydock in Northport.
- Rebuild the inshore fishing vessel fleet through government-backed loans for owner-operated vessels up to 24 metres and built within New Zealand.
- Develop the infrastructure with industry to expand the use of electric and hydrogen fuel cell vehicles.
- No roads to be privatised or corporatised.
- Undertake a Select Committee Inquiry on the use of Road User Charges instead of fuel excise to ensure our whole roading network is properly funded and integrated so that city and regional New Zealand work in conjunction to increase efficiency and productivity, facilitating trade and connectivity.
- Support quality affordable public transport in urban and rural areas.
- Further investigate the re-opening of the Wairoa to Gisborne rail line.
- Build the Marsden spur linking Northport to the Northland rail-line.
- Complete a full rebuild and improvements to the Christchurch-Picton rail corridor.
Infrastructure

New Zealand First believes that investments in infrastructure must facilitate long-term benefits and be able to adapt with the fast-paced nature of our modern world. New Zealand should not be unnecessarily restricted by a lack of Government action or bureaucratic red tape. That is why we have and will continue to commit to investing in infrastructure in New Zealand beyond roads and bridges. New Zealand First will continue to support the New Zealand Infrastructure Commission to meet challenges such as skill and labour shortages, unclear regulations, and poor risk management. We will ensure that New Zealand has a visible, coordinated pipeline of infrastructure projects well into the future.

Policy:

- Establish a new Ministry of Infrastructure that absorbs the infrastructure elements on a whole of government basis.
- Introduce greater planning certainty by temporarily reinstating the Resource Management Act before replacing it with legislation modelled on Ireland’s Planning and Development Act and England’s Town and Country Planning Act

Housing

Home ownership and quality of housing is a fundamental component of ensuring that our nation can excel. It is an essential tool for ensuring equality in our society. New Zealand First believes that through direct government intervention, home ownership can again become an integral part of each New Zealanders’ lives. That is because regardless of circumstance, all New Zealanders should be able to live in a healthy, affordable, first-world home, and have increased opportunity to become home-owners.

Policy:

- Ministry of Infrastructure to unlock land close to major population centres where houses are better than productive land use
- Introduce greater planning certainty by temporarily reinstating the Resource Management Act before replacing it with legislation modelled on Ireland’s Planning and Development Act and England’s Town and Country Planning Act
- Establishing a Housing Commission to ensure a non-political approach in solving New Zealand’s housing issues including new towns and better use poor quality agricultural land near to main centres
- Continue to encourage the use of New Zealand expertise in prefabricated housing
- Restore tax deductibility to encourage more landlords into meeting rental accommodation shortages.
- Support social housing especially for seniors housing and public rental housing projects
- Undertake a Select Committee Inquiry into improved policy for first homes for Kiwis
Housing Intensification and Planning Legislation

Policy:

- Address and correct recent legislation where the government without consultation, without any rights of appeal, or addressing inadequate infrastructure such as draining and sewerage, passed legislation for the intensification of housing.
- New Zealand First will repeal the Resource Management (Enabling Housing Supply and Other Matters) Amendment Bill, which threatens both community cohesion and the ability for councils to plan and provide for requisite infrastructure alongside housing development across New Zealand cities.
- New Zealand First opposes the impractical decisions and ill thought out law where changes to the NPS-UD (National Policy Statement - Urban Development) restrict councils’ ability to be flexible, and include definitions of “walkable catchments” inviting council misinterpretations, where the result will be intensification spillovers into adjacent neighbourhoods without their consent. For the larger centres (cities), six-story minimum developments or suburban three-story house developments, must be the result of sensible law changes and not undemocratic imposition on households and councils without proper consultation and agreement.

Local Government Co-Governance

Policy:

- Unbeknown to many New Zealanders, Labour’s RMA reforms, enacted only in the final fortnight of the last session of Parliament, introduced the co-governance model into the planning legislation. The likely outcome of this is 50:50 council/iwi planning committees which will decide how every section in every community in every small town, every city and every large city across the country can be modified or developed. That is undemocratic and New Zealand First will stop it.

Finance and Revenue

New Zealand First believes that protecting our financial interests must operate in tandem with the calculated use of our nation’s revenue. That is why we continue to promote policies that ensure New Zealand has a level playing field against international competitors, while investing in the areas needed to facilitate our own financial growth. Finance and revenue policies must be stable and not focused merely on short term gain.

Policy:

- Establish a tax-free threshold of $14,000 by 1 April 2027 at the latest
- Increase the penalty framework for tax evasion
- Conduct a Select Committee review into the double-taxation of ‘tax like’ instruments such as GST upon rates and excise tax
Policy by Topic

- Explore the feasibility of introducing a lower business tax rate for SMEs as in Australia
- Introduce a 100% depreciation rate for business equipment, and an agreed timeline with business, worth up to $20,000 for each item, or a higher sum for approved capital outlay
- Amend Capital Limitation Rules in the Income Tax Act to treat seismic strengthening as “repairs and maintenance”
- Support local procurement policies that encourage government departments, state-owned companies, and local government bodies to give weighting to domestic service providers or products
- Upgrade New Zealand owned bank’s capabilities so that they may better compete with overseas owned registered banks
- Oppose a comprehensive capital gains tax

KiwiSaver

- See Savings and Investment

Economic Development

Our economy is a source of freedom. Economic policy must work to improve the lives of ordinary Kiwis and put New Zealand on a pathway to prosperity. Our approach involves capitalising on the natural assets, local talent, enterprise, and the environment New Zealand is endowed with. New Zealand First believes that a new economic direction is needed now more than ever.

Policy:

- Back the primary industry sector and help it grow sustainably by supporting value driven innovation and enterprise
- Promote and enable aquaculture
- Prioritise policies to promote New Zealand’s manufacturing sector
- Further improve government procurement policy with “NZ Made”
- Facilitate assistance in the marketing of new or innovative products and provide improved lower cost intellectual property protection for New Zealand based innovators
- Increase the resourcing of the New Zealand Export Credit Office.
- Implement policies such as a ‘National Interest Test’ to keep key strategic assets and New Zealand farmland in New Zealand hands
- Improve rural connectivity through funding smaller local internet service providers to fill remote area internet gaps
Small Business

Small business is big business in New Zealand. They are the backbone of growth, employment, and community in our country and New Zealand First believes that the Government should support them.

Policy:

- Continue to support the nation-wide roll-out of ultra-fast broadband and support initiatives for electronic learning and upskilling of management capability, marketing, and vocational skills
- Redefine small to medium enterprise from 19 employees to 50 full-time equivalent staff
- Negotiate for the full reinstatement of the 90 day trial programme and expand its reach to more small businesses.
- Provide further support for business linked internships helping bridge the gap between industry and training
- Investigate the feasibility of a digital CV scheme to help employers and job-seekers during the hiring process
- Continue to streamline and simplify tax exemptions.
- Establish once and for all what the ‘red tape’ challenges are that hold all small businesses back and then work to remove them
- Assist with the cost of staff training and apprenticeships in the workplace

Tourism and Destination Management

New Zealand First believes that our tourism industry is an essential export earner and will continue to ensure that resources and funding are focused on the growth of domestic tourism.

Policy:

- Utilise tourism to support thriving and sustainable regions
- Ensure that regions are visitor-ready by working with the Tourism Industry to improve the social acceptance of tourism with appropriate infrastructure that benefits locals and visitors.
- Explore ways to improve productivity within the tourism industry
- Maximise the value of Maori Tourism as a unique asset in the New Zealand tourism experience.
- Help New Zealand deliver other exceptional visitor experiences
- Use tourism to protect, restore and champion New Zealand’s natural environment, culture and heritage
- Work towards tourism improving the lives of New Zealanders
Immigration and Employment

In post-COVID New Zealand, support for Kiwis to retain or regain employment is vital. New Zealand First has always believed in the safety net of social welfare but also understands the desire of all Kiwis to have pride in honest employment. Some members of our society will require more support than others to gain and retain employment. We need a system that acknowledges this, and the levers to provide that support locally. New Zealand First also recognises that many members of our disabled community can and want to work and so we will provide better support to both the employer and employee to realise this aspiration.

Policy:

- Restore the Targeted Trade and Apprenticeship Fund so that employers can have greater confidence taking on new apprentices.
- Negotiate for the full reinstatement of the 90 day trial programme or at least expand its reach to more small businesses.
- Re-establish Careers New Zealand as a separate entity but widen its target demographic to cover all New Zealanders regardless of age. Currently no agency has responsibility for careers advice after secondary school, so Careers New Zealand would have this responsibility.
- Extend funding and professional development around career advice and job transition for librarians across New Zealand so they can better support their community, regardless of age or employment status, with employment and training advice.
- Enhance local workforce development councils and industry workforce planning to better target financial support for on and off the job training.
- Through greater focus on and investment in both local and nationwide skills needs minimise the importation of labour.
- Streamline and target apprenticeship financial support to ensure a continual stream of skilled workers in New Zealand key industries as these change and grow to minimise reliance on imported skilled workers.
- Reinstate Workbridge as the primary employment agency for Kiwis who are differently abled and resource them to provide the appropriate level of pastoral support to both the employee and employer.
- Actively set up a seniors employment plan and support uptake of the employers toolkit for nature workers.

Immigration

- Replace the Accredited Employer Worker Visa with a Critical Skill and Labour Shortage Visa to ensure that Kiwi workers are at the front of the job queue.
- Guarantee that immigration policy is based on New Zealand’s interests such as meeting critical skill gaps.
- Maintain parent category visa cap at 1000 and ensure that sponsors can adequately support and fund their family during and after migration.
- Develop strategies that encourage regionally dispersed immigration so that it lessens the burden on already overloaded urban cities.
Policy by Topic

- Introduce a ‘rural visa scheme’ that will apply to communities of less than 100,000 residents, while placing into law an obligation for migrants to stay in their specified place of settlement until, and two years after, they have secured permanent residency.

Population Plan:

- Have a nationwide review to set a 30 year ‘Population Plan’ to gain a majority view on the level of future population numbers. This will enable government to plan infrastructure with consideration for natural population growth, immigration, and attrition via death or emigration.

New Zealand First recognises that social development is an integral aspect of our country’s ability to prosper. We believe in ensuring every part of society advances, as this ultimately benefits the entirety of New Zealand.

Racing

The racing industry has long been an integral part of New Zealand’s economic wealth creation, lifestyle and entertainment.

This industry should have a realisable aspiration to contribute $3.5bn to our GDP, a sum equivalent to this industry’s contribution to Ireland’s economy. We have the land, the grass and animal food, and the people to be a racing world leader.

Currently the industry employs thousands of mainly young New Zealanders with a reach to associated industries that includes thousands more. This industry employs over 15,000 people either directly or indirectly, with a further 12,000 associated with the racing infrastructure on a voluntary basis.

If regular race goers are included, then well over 55,000 New Zealanders have a weekly involvement. To truly become internationally renowned, planning, rationalisation, and collaboration have to become paramount.

As well as potentially contributing much more to our economy, this industry has the imminent prospect of trembling its export wealth where racing stock is transported internationally by air. The recent TAB NZ Entain partnership has boosted stakes money for racing. But with guaranteed stakes for only the next five years a longer-term plan is required.

For this industry to be successful its control must be returned to the hands of expert racing people with a sound knowledge of their industry and democratically elected and having the respect of their codes. Having “skin in the game” leads to better decision making.

New Zealand First had the Racing Act 2020 passed as a result of the Messara Report recommendations that also called for continued consultation with all stakeholders.
Policy by Topic

New Zealand First provided funding for the Cambridge, Awapuni, and Riccarton all weather tracks, to ensure race days were not cancelled for weather events which were costing the industry millions with each cancellation. We recognised the economic potential of the racing sector and were responsible for initiatives to continue its growth.

Policy:

- Wise investment in racing has made, and will continue to make, a growing contribution to this country’s GDP. And we will work with New Zealand Trade and Enterprise to develop export channels and opportunities.
- New Zealand First believes that the long term sustainability of the industry, and racing self determination, are achievable objectives. We will promote at government level that racing expertise and knowledge makes this a highly specialised industry. That can only come from the government respecting stakeholders and all participants.
- New Zealand First believes that in a computerised age, the administrative costs in this industry are far too high. These costs must be addressed so that the most critical person in the racing industry, the owner, gets a much fairer go.
- New Zealand First will work towards greater parity with raceday prize money in NSW, so that sound investment is the outcome and no longer a costly hobby. There was a time in New Zealand Racing where winning just one race would pay for the cost of the horse for the next twelve months. That must not go on being a distant nostalgic prospect.
- New Zealand First policy is to properly market the industry, using the very best of the latest technology, to attract the rapid growth of younger participants, future owners, and breeders.
- As with any industry, a realistic sustainable growth plan is required and critical and New Zealand First will work towards that.
- The safety and the health of racing stock, be they horses or greyhounds, requires constant vigilance as does health, and safety, and the mitigation of gambling harm.

There are political parties proposing to fund their tax cuts through online wagering operators.

The TAB has estimated there is $400 million leaking to offshore wagering operators per year.

That tax policy expects to raise $170 million from this source (43% tax rate). That is not credible. This policy will boost the profits of offshore wagering corporations, at the expense of the funding of NZ Racing, sport, and the community.

The social licence that gambling operates in New Zealand, including Racing, Sport, Lotto, and the pokies, is that profits are returned to the community not corporations.

If that policy is implemented, it will cost Racing & Sport the $100 million that Entain committed to pay if geoblocking was introduced into New Zealand.

A large number of these operators are located in tax havens.

These on-line operators do not have the ‘problem gambling harm minimisation’ requirements of New Zealand operators and will prey on the most vulnerable.
Health

Primary Care and Services

New Zealand First believes in ensuring quality healthcare for all New Zealanders. That is why we are proposing a suite of policies that help equip communities with the resources they need to improve health standards. Through doing this, we can address some of the longstanding health issues in our country and improve patient health. New Zealand First believes that policies must help address problems at their root, and at the frontline, while adequately resourcing our public health system so it can handle the stress of present and future health problems.

Policy:

- Based on the Primary Care core funding model review, revisit the funding formula with an anticipated increase in the capitation funding for General Practice by reprioritising government expenditure to enable funding increases for primary health care.
- Remove the separate Maori Health Authority, to focus on a single healthcare system based on clinical needs.
- Reprioritising government expenditure, providing funding increases for primary health care, and reassign wasted resources to urgently deal with hospitals and waiting lists.
- Funding Emergency Departments and medical staff, so that our medico-patient ratios are first world again.
- Fund St John Ambulance service to their requested 95% required funding level.
- Ensure Plunket is funded to do its job properly
- Fund Mike King’s Gumboot Friday charity
- Support the review of the core funding model of Primary Care to ensure it’s fit for purpose and identify what systematic changes are required.
- Expand free dental care through a yearly free check-up and x-ray for 18 - 25 year olds, Community Service Card holders and Super Gold Card Holders to halt preventable dental disease. This would be funded and provided at community based dental facilities rather than overloading hospital services.
- Engage with the sector stakeholders to ensure a complete stocktake of paramedic equipment, staffing and services to ensure that they are fit for purpose across the country.
- Introduce funding for paramedic equipment and infrastructure to bring it up to an agreed standard for all regions. This includes the training and skill mixing of paramedics to provide a wider provision of first responder services across the country.
- Expand the range of services delivered in general practice (including allied health and mental health services).
- Incentivise hospital-based services to support community medicine and general practice, which will facilitate the move to functioning as one system
- Fund mobile health buses to take specialists and specialist services to the people.
- Incentivise more General Practitioners to become Rural GPs by an adequately funded GP capitation formula that takes into account social determinants including rural isolation.
Policy by Topic

- Fund capital development of community medical facilities and fund new technology within practices to facilitate virtual care.
- Universal vision screening by trained optometrists for year 5 and year 6 primary school students, and, for those who need it, a follow up full eye exam and to be fitted with glasses if required
- Provide mental health programme ‘Gumboot Friday’ with $10m over three years to go toward administering and delivering free counselling services for young people.
- Support ASH (Action for Smokefree 2025) in their policy to divert tobacco and cigarette smokers to much safer products, as in Japan, and stop attacking the low-income with exorbitant taxes ($2 billion) whilst claiming to support Smoke-Free by 2025.
- Investigate various solutions to address the workforce crisis in General Practice, including:
  - Immediately prioritise “health services sector immigration” to fill the current shortages of doctors, nurses, specialists, and midwives.
  - increasing numbers of medical students,
  - exploring incentives for continued work in New Zealand,
  - exploring more foundationally sustainable and effective working conditions and healthcare models that support our existing GPs and Primary Care workforce. Short term we would consider the international workforce as Critical Skill Shortage.

Prostate Cancer

Policy:

- Support The Prostate Cancer Foundation’s call for a 3-year prostate screening pilot programme for all men over 50, or those men over 45 with a family history of prostate cancer, and those men over 40 who have the gene variant BRCA2 in the Tairawhiti and Waitemata regions with a view to scaling up nationally. (cost $6.5m)
- Fund better access to prostate cancer medicines and treatments.
- Fund better access to ultrasound and MRI as a diagnostic pathway in the public health system.
- Support men with advanced disease by funding PSMA-PET scans to detect cancer spread and limit the need for unnecessary radical treatment.
- Support health literacy and practice for men’s health including prostate cancer to enable men to know their own risk profile and support their taking action.

PHARMAC and Medicines

Policy:

- New Zealand First will double the PHARMAC budget ($1.3b) and
  - fund all medicines on the Medicines Waiting Lists ($400-$500m)
  - immediately clear the cancer medicines waiting list ($210m)
  - establish a $100 million rapid access scheme for innovative medicines particularly for rare disorders.
Policy by Topic

- The medicines budget (Combined Pharmaceutical Budget) will gain new investment in publicly funded community and hospital medicines to approach the OECD average of 0.8% of GDP by 2026. This will finally see us in alignment with our peer nations and enable Pharmac to fund over 200 medicines on its multiple waiting lists.
- Fund new Diabetes medicines which have been proven to reduce the negative side effects that diabetics experience
- Establish a clear and transparent process with a 1-year timeline for technical review (health technology assessment) by the Pharmacology and Therapeutics Advisory Committee (PTAC) of medicines and establish a 90-day time limit for PHARMAC assessment of new medicines after a positive technical recommendation from PTAC
- Increase funding for Arthritis early intervention programmes to develop awareness and education workforce programmes for treatment and management of arthritis
- Establish a $100 million rapid access scheme for innovative medicines including rare disorders
- Establish a $50 million new medicines industry development partnership programme to match industry investment in local R&D, data analytics, manufacturing.
- Support the redevelopment of a New Zealand based pharmaceutical manufacturing industry
- Establish a New Zealand quality standard for New Zealand manufacturers and exporters in the Natural Health industry and other stakeholders to ensure that there is an appropriate regulatory regime for complementary medicines

Repeal the Therapeutic Products Act 2023

- Undue overseas influences should not restrict the right of New Zealanders to look after their own health with natural and therapeutic treatments of their own choice.
- New Zealand First will repeal the Therapeutic Products Act 2023

Breast Cancer Policy

- Extend the free mammogram screening age to include women aged 40-74 years-old
- Support access to timely diagnosis of breast cancer, including investment to allow all patients to be diagnosed within 28 days of specialist referral (this is the existing Faster Cancer Treatment target)
- Support access to timely treatment for breast cancer ensuring that high-risk patients get the treatment they need, when they need it
- Funded access to highly strategic breast cancer drugs including for the deadliest form of breast cancer, Triple Negative Breast Cancer. Young women are more likely than any age group to be diagnosed with TNBC
- Support health literacy and practice for women's health including breast cancer awareness to enable women to know their own risk profile and be supported to take action

Modern Diagnostic Technology

- New Zealand First will invest in New Generation Rapid Diagnostics. This groundbreaking medical technology has just become available overseas but not here. Instead of waiting 3-5 days for diagnostic laboratory results the patient will have to only wait up to 35 minutes. We can cut our annual diagnostic budget by half whilst seriously improving our health monitoring systems
Chronic Disease Epidemic

- In the focus on New Zealand’s health system in 2023 there clearly are major problems, successes, failures, and inadequacies and whilst appreciating the enormous contribution of those in the health sector New Zealand should nevertheless be seriously focussing on what is a potential ‘chronic disease epidemic’. There are many alarming developments which cannot be explained against the facts of what was happening in the New Zealand health system half a century ago. The next government must understand that the chronic disease afflicted numbers cannot be dismissed purely by saying that statistics were not kept for those conditions 50 years ago. They were kept. There is a rightful deep suspicion that the seemingly alarming rise in chronic disease condition afflicted numbers cannot be blamed just on failures in our current health system. Other first world nations have experienced a large percentage rise in the cost to now, in some countries, requiring half of the entire health spend.
- Whatever the causes might be, including a less active lifestyle, New Zealand needs to undertake a deep study to find out what may be behind the potential deterioration of New Zealanders’ overall health.
- Hopefully the serious intent of such a study will not be deflected by the claim that New Zealanders are living longer, they are, but the potential incidents of chronic disease condition increases cannot and should not be ignored.

Accident Compensation Corporation

New Zealand First believes that the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) is a state responsibility and should be maintained as such. We oppose any concept of privatisation, although private providers may be contracted in selected areas of treatment or retraining at the discretion of ACC. We will strongly oppose attempts to undermine the scheme.

Policy:

- Investigate legislative changes to free ACC from strict requirements when considering income when paying compensation for victims of serious crime
- Review the operations of dispute processes at ACC to ensure that claims are client centred and resolved in a timely manner
- Amend rules for victims of serious crime and those who have ongoing life debilitating injuries from having to continually supply documentation to ACC for their annual compensation and entitlements
- Ensure that ACC contributes to Kiwisaver when workers are receiving weekly compensation
- Amend the way backdated compensation is taxed so claimants are not subject to pay tax at a higher rate when receiving lump sum payments
- Review the changes to the work-related gradual process test for injury cover
- Ensure the Dean Report recommendations regarding the cost to review are lifted, to address the barriers of review for those on modest incomes
- Amend legislation so that defined potential precedent setting ACC claims can be challenged in the Supreme Court
- Provide certainty to claimants by ensuring that review decisions are enforceable
Policy by Topic

- Update and review the list of Occupational Diseases to provide financial support to those who have been exposed to carcinogens through their work and have developed cancer as a result
- Investigate the inclusion of all Birthing Injuries to be included as well as other birth related trauma for both the mother and child.

Vaping, smoking and nicotine

NZ First supports age-appropriate access to nicotine, which in adults, is generally as safe as caffeine is. NZ First fully supports a Smokefree New Zealand but we must split nicotine away from harmful smoking. That’s what vaping has done. Vaping has us seriously on track to become smoke free far quicker than punitive taxes ever achieved.

NZ First will repeal the and replace 2022 ’Smoked Tobacco’ Amendment and 2023 Regulations put in place by Labour to achieve an illusory Smokefree 2025. Labour’s target already admits that 5% tobacco users will nevertheless mean that New Zealand will be smoke free.

Policy:

- Banning disposable vapes and require Specialist Vape Retailers to have full time staff to open
- Introducing serious penalties for anyone caught selling to those under 18, including, ‘three-strikes for retailers’ - sale bans of 3 months, 6 months and five-years
- Reimbursing all smoked tobacco application fees to applicants, while axing retail outlet reduction and low nicotine tobacco.
- Stop the millions spent on subsidising nicotine gums, patches and lozenges that have a questionable record of being effective
- Axing the tobacco excise increase due on 1 January 2024 and apply the excise to smoking products only
- Legalising Swedish Snus which saw Sweden become smoke free in 2023 to help fishing, forestry, construction and flyers to all go smoke free
- Reviewing legislation to make sure it’s consistent and fit for purpose.
Sport and Physical Health Policy

New Zealand First believes there should be a focus on making New Zealanders healthier from birth until the end of life.

While important, too much focus is on being sick, medicines, and Big Pharma, when the equal focus should be on living more active lives and using the natural assets we have around us so we are healthier and can play a more proactive part in our local communities. New Zealand is a place of space, fresh air and sunshine and we should encourage outside activity, mixing with others, and ensuring that we are gaining the benefits available in a country like New Zealand.

We will focus back on people’s health and sport being one vehicle of many to help achieve that. New Zealand First would continue to support High Performance sport but not at the expense of getting New Zealanders active and healthier.

This policy implemented properly will result in a much more healthier New Zealand and a much reduced health bill.

- Support exercise programmes for people from newborn Babies, Toddlers, Preschoolers and a daily exercise programme for children at school through to Exercise groups for Adults.
- Trained Physical Education Teachers in primary and secondary schools, and sports people would be encouraged to be part of this process.
- Co-ordinators in each community whose role is to encourage local people to be active in all sorts of physical activity, sports and recreation including music and arts. This programme would utilise local parks and indoor facilities, and encourage all people at whatever level they want to participate. Parenting programmes relating to supporting their children in sport and physical activity participation would be encouraged.
- A much-increased focus on sport and physical activity in teacher training of both primary and secondary teachers.
- A relaxing of administration work for teachers and a focus on extracurricular participation with students in local and regional sporting opportunities.
- From the beginning of year 6 made available to students and their families, an Advice Programme focussed on improving attitudes of people in sport and physical activity, including the behaviour of adults on the sidelines of sporting events.
- A programme that will assist people into sport that can’t afford to be involved. This programme will identify keen people who want to participate and who can be helped by sporting involvement.
- Prioritise Coach and Referee/Umpire education within sport encouraging more people into coaching and refereeing, and therefore providing support to all those who want to take part in sport at all levels. This process will be supported by PE Specialists at Primary and Secondary schools.
- Encourage people into the governance of sport who are the appropriate people and not based on race or gender.
Policy by Topic

- Support the integration of sport into Tertiary Education organisations in a similar but smaller version of the NCAA, a USA college concept. This programme encourages sports people to gain Tertiary qualifications while following their sporting dreams.
- Introduce a programme for rehabilitating sportspeople back into our community after their sporting careers are complete. So many sports people must be encouraged to remain engaged and pass on to young people what they have learnt.
- Support a community funding program that allows funds (untagged) to be generated for all community groups, and not just sport. This concept is self-sustainable and would support all parts of all our communities nationwide. This programme provides both untagged funds and funds available for future projects. This programme could be the largest funder of facilities and programmes in the country and can be coordinated with those that already exist.
- Increase the tax benefits for corporate givers when funding authorised community programmes to 50%.

Commonwealth Games 2026

- New Zealand First will prepare a bid to hold the 2026 Commonwealth Games in Christchurch.
- Victoria Australia has pulled out of the commonwealth games in 2026, as has Alberta Canada for the 2030 games.
- The Commonwealth comprises 56 countries - far more than half of a majority in the UN.
- Using the fiscal planning of the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Games, which ran at a profit, at no cost to the American taxpayer, we could rightly ask the Commonwealth for financial help, and have the 2026 Commonwealth Games in Christchurch - as we did in 1974, and again in 1990.
- Victoria has already had to pay a sizable sum to the Commonwealth Games Federation for pulling out and New Zealand could rightfully ask for that amount to ensure these games proceed.
- New Zealand is a Commonwealth country, and that is important to kiwis, not just academic and media elites.
- It is an opportunity for New Zealand to showcase Christchurch and the South Island to the Commonwealth and the rest of the world.
- Organised properly, along the lines of the Los Angeles Olympic Games, it won’t be a cost, but a benefit, with the infrastructure lasting for decades.
- Most importantly, it will be a signal to the world that New Zealand is seriously back.
Primary Industry & Environment

New Zealand's primary industries sector and the regional communities that support it are vital to the New Zealand economy. Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture directly or indirectly contribute billions to our export earnings, while also showcasing to the world that our products are some of the finest.

We believe in supporting the sector that lies at the centre of our communities, through policies that foster its growth and advancement. New Zealand First recognises the critical role of a thriving primary sector as the engine room of New Zealand’s economy as the earner of 82% of our country’s foreign exchange.

Agriculture

Emissions reduction plan:
- New Zealand First will not support emissions pricing in any form unless adopted by trading partners, especially the European Union
- New Zealand First supports the adoption of standardised farm level reporting
- New Zealand First will incentivise the uptake of the emissions reduction mitigations, such as low methane genetics, and low methane producing animal food, by repurposing money funded by the emissions trading scheme revenue and funds earmarked for the purchase of overseas carbon credits. Support developing science, which is common sense as opposed to consigning and transferring billions of dollars from our economy to foreign economies as our response to climate change action.

Freshwater:
- Deliver a freshwater plan that actually works for the productive sector and the environment by replacing the Te Mana O te Wai in RMA planning and reinstate the ‘Four Wellbeing’ provisions.
- New Zealand First supports Farm Environment Plans administered by Regional Councils and targeted at a catchment by catchment level.
- Slash red tape and regulatory blocks on irrigation, water storage, managed aquifer recharge and flood protection schemes through the Regional Infrastructure Fund.

Biodiversity and Special Natural Areas:
- Put Property Rights into the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act and require full commercial compensation where any right is affected or taken.

Forestry:
- Right tree, right place on land suited to forestry and protect productive farmland by ensuring that exotic planting on LUC class 1,2,3,4 and 5 will not be permitted to enter the ETS for Carbon Sequestration.
- Amend the ETS to recognise farm forestry and shelterbelts. Right Tree, Right Place requires native tree planting for permanently sequestering carbon and spending and employment within New Zealand, whilst focussing seriously on pest control including deer, possums, pigs, and goats.
- Amend the National Environmental Standards for Plantation Forestry (NES-PF) to place a duty upon harvesters to contain and remove post-harvest slash.
- Amend the Overseas Investment Act to prevent foreign investment for farm forestry conversion on otherwise productive soils.
Policy by Topic

- Undertake a Select Committee Inquiry into the processing of forestry waste (slash) for other uses such as biofuels in order to lessen its negative environmental impact.

Pest Plants and Animals:
- Enhance animal pest and plant biosecurity investment such as through investment in Jobs for Nature.
- Put approved prisoners to work on such projects, help reduce penal costs to taxpayers, whilst turning prisoners’ lives around with assigned national environmental purpose work engagement.

Regional Infrastructure:
- Establish a Regional Infrastructure Fund to ensure rural New Zealand has world-class infrastructure.

Primary Sector Research and Development:
- Review the CRI (Crown Research Institute) model to ensure primary industry scientists have the resources to give New Zealand a productive advantage over peer competitors focussed upon practical farm extension.

Brand New Zealand and Free Trade:
- Brands are best done by exporters not government and NZ First will substantially increase funding to the New Zealand Export Credit Office to secure export success.
- Provide support for the intellectual protection of inherently New Zealand regions and varieties.
- Prioritise a Free Trade Agreement with India as part of New Zealand First’s initiative for a Commonwealth Free Trade Agreement.
- Keep the name “New Zealand” and not waste previous billions of dollars of marketing abroad by changing our country’s name.

Wool:
- Require government, central and local, procurement to specify natural fibres over those made from oil.
- Provide legal support to exporters facing regulatory barriers for the use of natural fibre products from the automotive industry to aviation.

Live Shipments:
- Support the export of live animals by air and by sea via customised vessels but only after ensuring stringent animal welfare codes of practice are in place and are followed.

Animal Welfare:
- Require NAWAC (National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee) to have 50% farmer representation.

Pathway to Farm Ownership:
- Remove Landcorp SOE and create it as Crown Entity for the purposes of share farming, sharecropping and sharemilking under New Zealand First Farms.
- As a Crown Entity, Landcorp would be required to work with Crown Research Institutes and tertiary education providers.
Planning:
  ● Repeal the most recent changes to New Zealand legislation to temporarily reinstate the RMA before replacing that with a Town and Country Planning Act modelled on legislation used by the Republic of Ireland and the UK.
  ● Re-establish Catchment Boards focussed on active management of rivers, streams and flood protection.

Economic Change Focus:
  ● New Zealand First will incentivise added value here in New Zealand, before the export of developed products. We will modernise our economy and again become wealth creators, maximising added value before exporting. No longer will our ports export the present proportion of logs, in their most raw state, overseas where added value goes to other economies, their businesses, and workers, and not our economy, our businesses, and our workers.

Biosecurity

Keeping our environment safe means protection at every possible avenue of risk. Unfortunately, we have already seen how devastating pests and invasive species can be for our environment and economy meaning we cannot treat these matters lightly. New Zealand First has and will continue to champion proactive policies that ensure our border and environmental protection agencies are well resourced to weather the storm of possible biosecurity risks.

Policy:
  ● Ensure that Biosecurity NZ and other border protection agencies have adequate resourcing and technology
  ● Increase offshore inspection capacity to prevent Brown Marmorated Stink Bug and similar invasive pests from entering the country
  ● Ensure that the appropriate agencies are involved before and at the border as well as post-incursion
  ● Facilitate greater international cooperation regarding the control and eradication of animal and plant diseases
  ● Require effective coordination between relevant government agencies to ensure appropriate deterrents exist to the poaching and trafficking of protected species.
  ● Update instant fines and other means of providing effective deterrents against border breaches
  ● Establish a New Zealand Border Protection Force combining functions of the New Zealand Defence Force, New Zealand Customs Service and Immigration New Zealand to coordinate the protection of our borders from biosecurity incursions
Aquaculture and Fisheries

NZ First believes that the marine environment represents a new frontier for economic development. We need to boost our economic performance, increase our foreign exchange revenue in such a way that does not damage marine ecosystems.

- Aquaculture will be exempted from the 2010 NZ Coastal Policy Statement
- A capital fund will be established to de-risk the expansion of the offshore marine farming sector in collaboration with private sector - including infrastructure
- All marine farming permits due for review before 2030 will be extended to 2050 to ensure that future investment is safeguarded and expanded
- A sharper focus will be placed on kelp growing as a possible blue carbon contribution towards net zero, with priority access to research funding.

Quota Management- Harvesting

- The QMS is an important resource management tool. It provides the right long term incentives for sustainable fisheries and the ecosystems they depend on. Nevertheless, it can still be improved without endangering the systems that provide the discipline to maintain those incentives.
- Subject to resources being available, NZ First proposes reviewing the suitability of the systems dealing with by-catch as well as encouraging local community fish harvesting and supply.
- NZ First will ensure there is a high level and regular engagement between the seafood sector and government. This will give effect to the importance that our Party attaches to primary industry.
- The renewal of the inshore fishing fleet is a matter of critical importance. NZ First will collaborate with the industry to establish a mechanism to expedite the development of a modern and climate friendly fleet.
- Cameras on boats must be fit for purpose. NZ First will consider short term loans to lessen the initial cost of this programme on the industry, in acknowledgement of the public good it will provide.
- Restricting fishing, including prohibiting bottom trawling, will only occur where there is evidence to conclude that harvesting will cause damage to outstanding biodiversity and/or critical habitats. Any restriction will be subject to rational economic analysis to ensure that quota owners can continue to operate effectively along the entire coastline.
- NZ First will remove the overlap in jurisdiction between the Fisheries Act and the RMA to ensure fishing activity is managed under the Fisheries Act.
- A Crown- Industry working party will be established to address maritime safety issues so that pragmatic options apply to the small coastal fishing fleet.
- NZ First will ensure that the fishing interests of New Zealand, whether in our EEZ or distant and international waters, are recognised and safeguarded for our economic development.
Policy by Topic

Environment

A founding principle of New Zealand First 30 years ago is that sound environmental policy is sound economics. As New Zealanders, we should be proud of our natural environment and treat it with the respect it deserves. New Zealand First believes the government must strike a fair balance between environmental stewardship and utilising our natural resources. When this is done properly, good environmental policy becomes sound economic policy, helping New Zealanders get the most out of our environment while ensuring its longevity and our continuing prosperity.

Policy:

- Support an evidence-based approach to complex environmental issues where it is often challenging to achieve the correct balance
- Advocate for government and industry working together to achieve better environmental outcomes
- Support the ‘Right Tree, Right Place” while ensuring that native species play an important part in the planting strategy. See also “Forestry”, and “Pest Plants and Animals”, in this manifesto.
- Address pollution of streams, rivers, and beaches as an absolute priority in the improvement of New Zealand’s environment, and work in cooperation with local government and employment agencies to affect this outcome.
- Halt creation of any new landfills and urgently advance work on the development of rubbish disposal alternatives through conducting a nationwide recycling and recovery strategy
- Develop a nationwide Waste-to-Energy strategy.
- Develop an easy to use, uncomplicated recycling labelling regime for food and drink packaging.
- Seek higher Crown levies on minerals extracted and return 50 percent of royalties to the regions of source
- Work towards ensuring that the right to take and use water is first available only to New Zealand people (citizens and permanent residents) and New Zealand owned companies
- Ensure developers are responsible to the community avoiding, remedying or mitigating adverse environmental effects
Conservation

Our country has a unique ecosystem of international significance meaning it must be protected from potential threats, and be preserved for future generations. New Zealand First advocates for conservation policies that are proactive, create employment, and engage with local communities.

Policy:

- Establish a ‘New Zealand Native Tree Seed Bank’ and support greater use of ‘Native Tree Sanctuaries’
- Fund the Kauri dieback response to include more monitoring, research, compliance staff, and disease control
- Support threatened species recovery programmes while also protecting their natural habitat
- Continue on our 2017 commitment to support scientific research into 1080 alternatives through the likes of National Science Challenges
- Expand the poison free pest trapping zones and ensure pest control on Crown land is effectively implemented
- Support coordinated and tax incentivised development of the possum fur industry and continue to support pest eradication and the trapping industry
- Support new initiatives for community groups, iwi, and conservation groups to participate in conservation projects
- Protect our waterways through supporting riparian planting, assisting land owners in creating wetlands, and fencing off waterways to improve river quality
- Enhance and protect the rights of all New Zealanders to access their cultural heritage sites through clarifying and amending legislation associated with protecting these heritage sites, buildings and objects
- Require effective coordination between relevant government agencies to ensure appropriate deterrents exist to the poaching and trafficking of threatened species
- Rationalise pastoral leases, where grazing of value exists, to promote ecologically sustainable land use with strong attention to special natural areas
- Provide financial support and aid the development of water harvesting schemes such as storage dams where appropriate
- Give the West Coast access to the Department of Conservation held stewardship land for sustainable and environmentally approved mining
- Ensure the Department of Conservation survey all Stewardship Land within 10 years and remove from the Conservation Estate those lands that should not be so designated.
Policy by Topic

Education

Adult and Community

It has never been more important, in recent history, that New Zealanders have multiple opportunities to build on the skills they have or develop new skills that not only provide greater opportunity for employment but keep communities connected. New Zealand in just three decades has descended from a world leader in education to, against our former world-leading record, an alarmingly failing education system.

Policy:

● The modern economy frequently requires adults, for future employment and engagement purposes, to undergo retraining, and the state should help them do so.
● Ensure that goals within the ACE (Adult and Community Education) Strategy have sufficient budgets.
● Review student support systems to improve adequacy for life-long learning.
● Ensure that the ACE sector is constantly considered in discussions around New Zealand’s economic recovery from Covid-19.
● Work with the ACE sector to develop and implement an appropriate and affordable quality assurance process for ACE programmes and activities.
● Investigate full funding for co-ordinators inside school clusters to once again open our school facilities up for community use outside compulsory school hours.

Compulsory Sector

New Zealand First believes that New Zealand needs a quality public education system and acknowledges the importance of principals, teachers, support staff, parents, boards of trustees and the community in the delivery of a full and rich education for our young people.

New Zealand First is committed to a quality public education sector where the principles, values and key competencies of our New Zealand curriculum documents are at the centre of all teaching and learning.

Policy:

● New Zealand First is going to focus on education and not parent-unmandated indoctrination.
● Deliver the final and full tranche of Learning Support Coordinators across New Zealand to all schools.
● Build on the recent pilot of access to counsellors for primary students and progress counsellor/student ratios at secondary schools.
● Review the representation on the Teachers Council in line with requests from sector representatives and remove certain tasks that have increased costs and should be the responsibility of Government.
Policy by Topic

- Review Section 156 Designated Character Schools in the Education Act 1989 to recognise schools such as Hohepa and the education they deliver for a certain number of our students.
- Continue the work required to shift from the decile system to better address access challenges and 'outside of school' factors that impact on student achievement.
- Complete the creation of consistent School Entry Assessment tools and practices that teachers and school leaders use to identify those students with learning needs.
- Continue to work with the sector to develop screening tools, funding and resourcing models to best meet the needs of children challenged by dyslexia, dyspraxia, Asperger’s and autism.
- Continue to advocate for increases in the Ongoing Reviewable Resourcing Scheme (ORRS) to cover the three percent of the school population identified by the Ministry of Education as high needs.

Early Childhood

New Zealand First is committed to inclusive early childhood education (ECE) that is accessible to all within safe, nurturing and stimulating environments. We would urgently review the funding model for Playcentre and their dual role as early childhood education role models and as centres that can make parents better parents. New Zealand First is most concerned about the loss of access to education providers for our rural and isolated communities.

Policy:

- Review the adult to infant (under 2s) staffing ratio in ECE centres as an urgent health and safety matter.
- Work with the sector to amend relevant criteria to ensure an increased ability of isolated rural communities to participate in early childhood education such as Playcentre and Mobile Kindergartens.
- Support the HIPPY organisation in their provision of early childhood education opportunities for 4 and 5 year olds and their families.
- Establish a fund for research into best practice and innovation in New Zealand early childhood education.
- Work to bring more ECE Centres into the Learning Support Delivery Model so as to better support those children needing early learning support.
- Build on the pilots to shift from a “refer out and wait” early intervention system for young children who need learning support to a “send in the experts and deliver” model of early intervention.
- Pursue the opportunity to bring ECE Centres into local clusters to better support the transition of all students into the compulsory sector.
- Work with Playcentre to recalibrate their funding model to recognise that they provide support around parental education while also teaching how children learn through play.
Policy by Topic

- Seek to partner with Playcentre in rural communities so that Justice can use their facilities during weekends and after hours for supervised parent / child visits to address the lack of these facilities in small towns.

Tertiary and Vocational

New Zealand First will implement upfront investment in post-secondary education. This policy will remove the financial burden of student loans, particularly on our young people and replace this with a payable skill debt to the country. The Up Front Investment Tertiary Policy will reduce both the human and financial waste currently created by inadequate workforce planning and under-resourced careers advice.

Our post-secondary study suite of policies, which includes investigating the introduction of a universal student allowance, and removing current lurching from skill shortage crises to individual profession oversupply. In a post-COVID New Zealand now more than ever we must ensure that workforce planning is done and directly linked to our education system. Use the opportunity to train our own for the skilled workforces needed before we look offshore to fill gaps we have failed to fill.

Policy:

- Investigate the introduction of a universal student allowance, not subject to parents means testing, as a priority for all full-time students.
- Immediately introduce a dollar-for-dollar debt write-off scheme so that graduates in identified areas of workforce demand may trade a year’s worth of debt for each two years of paid full-time work in New Zealand in that area.
- Work with the sector to reset the international student market to provide quality education and experiences to those students, but also provide high quality income for our nation. International Education must return to quality performance, and should not supplant this commitment to excellence, by using back door immigration as an inducement.
- Continue to support the resourcing of apprenticeships and on-job learning to develop a skilled workforce and address unemployment across all ages.
- While respecting institutional autonomy and diversity, require through the external review processes that institutions can demonstrate that they have independent, autonomous and well-resourced systems of student advocacy services for genuinely engaging, through student representatives, with students.
- Work with NZUSA and the sector to establish an expert reference group with a view to implement two thousand ‘First in the Family’ scholarships per year. These will create a step-change in educational aspiration by promoting fee-free education with wrap-around support from secondary, through transition and to completion for those who would be the first in their immediate family to achieve a degree.
- Minimise the “opportunity costs” (administration and compliance) and financial barriers for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to employ apprentices and provide flexibility for provincial and rural New Zealand students.
- Encourage strategic alliances between industry crown research institutes and tertiary institutions to increase the number of scholarships and government funded research grants available to graduates, universities and employers.
Policy by Topic

- Remove mandatory student loan repayments for all current students earning under median wage, as well as graduates provided they stay and work in New Zealand for at least 5 consecutive years post-graduation.
  - Introduce optional repayment rates of 12% (current), 15%, and 18%.
  - Change the mandatory repayment rate to 10% income to ease the burden of debt on students and graduates.
- Investigate funding mechanisms for shortfalls in tertiary institution funding to protect at-risk departments and programs from being cut.