

UK independence party

LOCAL MANIFESTO 2007

Make May 3 *Independence Day* for Local Councils

Today, local councils have no real power. They have to do what they are told by central government and the EU – looking after the interests of their local communities comes last. Only the UK Independence Party believes in true local independence from Whitehall interference. This manifesto sets out UKIP's vision of how this should be done:

independence for local councils, schools, police, hospitals, social care and planning
independence for local people to decide local issues in democratic referendums
independence to spend local monies the way local people wish
independence from the costs and interference of the European Union.

Local taxes – more financial independence for local councils

Council tax has risen dramatically over the past few years, hitting pensioners in particular. Councils control only a quarter of their funding needs – the rest comes down from central government, with strings attached. A vast amount of money is wasted on bureaucracy and politically correct jobs without the public ever being consulted.

- Slash council tax by 40%, taking it back to where it was 10 years ago, in real terms
- Pay for this by eliminating government waste and by boosting the local economy
- Give local councils majority control over their finances by letting them keep local business rates and by replacing the EU-imposed Value Added Tax (VAT) with a Local Sales Tax, collected the same way, but with a proportion going direct to local councils.

Local democracy – independence for local decision making

Local councils rely on government funding and obey government orders rather than listening to those who pay the council tax. And more and more functions of councils including planning are being taken over by unelected EU-inspired regional bodies.

- Let local people call a binding referendum on any major local issue, such as planning schemes
- Dismantle regional government and return powers to county and borough councils
- Reform 'cabinet' government for greater representation and transparency
- Give local businesses a local vote as they pay local taxes but have no representation.

And to be fair to England –

- Recognise the nonsense that laws which only affect England are being decided by votes from Scottish and Welsh MPs
- Keep the full Westminster parliament for making British law but, one week in four, use English MPs alone to determine law that only applies in England. This 'English Parliament' will have no extra MPs, buildings or bureaucrats.

Immigration – independence for Britain to take back control

Under European Union law, anyone from other EU countries can live in Britain. EU rules also govern how we deal with asylum seekers. We have lost control and too many newcomers are settling here – our housing, NHS, schools and services can't cope.

- Take back control of our borders so we know who is coming in and out
- Ensure our own UK government determines who can stay, not the European Union
- Give work permits only to those whose skills we need so as not to destroy local jobs.

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Crime – independence for local policing

There are more police officers today than ever before but crime is getting worse. Our police are hamstrung by politically correct rules and bureaucracy, and our courts cannot sentence properly because there are not enough prisons.

- Make police chiefs directly elected and forces accountable to local, not regional or national, authorities for policing priorities
- Leave our police free to arrest criminals instead of filling in forms, and retain local police stations
- Ensure stricter sentencing and zero tolerance of antisocial behaviour and petty crime
- Build enough prisons urgently and make sure those who are a danger to the public stay locked up.

Transport – independence for local decisionmakers

Public transport needs to be more attractive and responsive to local needs, and there's gridlock on the roads. Over-zealous traffic enforcement is used merely to raise funds.

- Improve local control and management of public transport – rail and bus
- Rule out satellite vehicle pricing and oppose privatisation of parking facilities
- Oppose new speed cameras unless they cut local accidents.

Housing and the Environment – independence for local planning

The government claims that two million homes must be built to solve the housing shortage, yet most of this demand arises from immigration. Hardworking local people find it increasingly difficult to afford decent housing. Waste management and planning are now done by unelected regional assemblies.

- Genuine independence for local planning and no more overriding by remote appeal bodies
- Restore proper controls on immigration to ease the demand for housing
- Protect the Green Belt and use central Brown Field sites for redevelopment
- Crack down on nuisance neighbours and repair council housing to restore civic pride.

Education – independence for headteachers

Continuous central government interference in schools prevents them doing their job properly. Teachers have to put paperwork, targets and bureaucracy ahead of pupils. Standards have collapsed in secondary schools and 1 in 4 children leave primary schools unable to read and write.

- Give independence to school/college heads over teaching, examinations and discipline
- Return to selective education and grammar schools, but with fair treatment for all schools
- Scrap useless paperwork and trust teachers to do their jobs; keep special schools open
- Encourage competitive school sports, playing fields and school trips.

Health and Social Care – independence for local providers

Our hospitals and vital health services are at real risk. Services for patients and the elderly are being tied up in too much red tape and central interference, and they are being starved of cash.

- Save hospital services, manage hospitals locally, and make decision makers responsible to locals
- Improve services for the elderly and remove unnecessary bureaucracy
- Create more residential home places and resist increases in home care charges.



UKIP and *independence*

What is known as a party dedicated to withdrawing the UK from the European Union is in reality a much broader nationwide democratic *independence* campaign to return power to the people.

UKIP already has local councillors, Westminster Lords and 10 Members of the European Parliament who do not think it right that most UK law comes from unelected Brussels bureaucrats.

But the same principles apply at local level: only by returning power to the people from unaccountable bureaucrats and restoring representative democracy can things change.

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