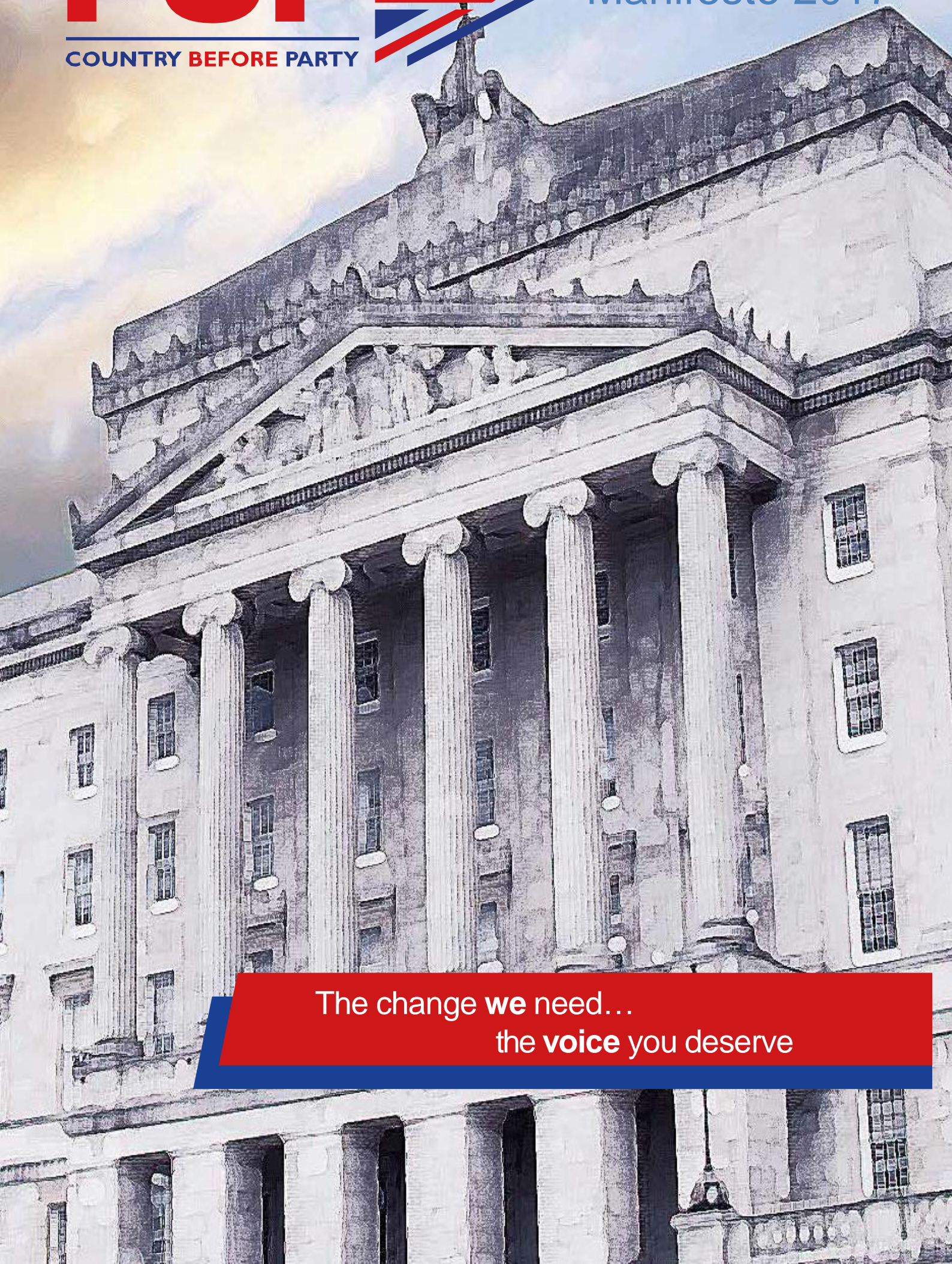




Manifesto 2017



The change we need...  
the **voice** you deserve

## Party Leader's Message



Working class communities deserve better. Better than the false start of the last Executive and better than the empty promises of the last decade. We need an Executive that will ensure good jobs, warm homes and prosperity for everyone, not just the privileged few.

The Progressive Unionist Party remains true to the values and aspirations that guided our founders. We are proud of the history of our party, born out of a determination of loyalist leaders in Long Kesh to move away from the futility of conflict to the potential for peace and prosperity offered by political activism and democracy.

We remain true to those principles, our neighbours and the communities that bore the brunt of the troubles, and continue, to this day, to deal with the legacy of conflict.

The PUP has an excellent track record in working hard at local government level, providing leadership and offering a progressive vision for the future of Northern Ireland in the United Kingdom.

Northern Ireland's journey has to be about facing the future, not the past. Building on our positive policies, we are offering the change needed to sustain people, communities and peace.

After a decade of DUP misrule, we are still waiting to see the genuine peace as underpinned by The Belfast Agreement. We want a better future together, not one built on division.

Vote for the change we need and the voice you deserve.

**Vote PUP on March 2nd**

*Billy Hutchinson*

# **OUR SIX KEY COMMITMENTS**

## **to you the Electorate**

### **ARE AS FOLLOWS:**

#### **1. HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**

- Develop psychiatric liaison teams for all general hospitals, reducing the 'revolving door' experience of many mental health patients and reinvest savings into other health initiatives.
- Commit to a zero suicide goal, through effective crisis intervention and coordinated action from the health and justice systems.
- Press for adequate funding to enable doctors, nurses and other health professionals to deliver high quality care and support.

#### **2. EDUCATION**

- End the cycle of educational underachievement and disadvantage in working class communities.
- Ensure that every primary school serving areas of social deprivation will have a dedicated parent support worker to support parents in their role as co-educators, to reduce absenteeism, and improve educational outcomes.
- Introduce vocational teaching from age 14. The vocational subjects that cover a range of activities and skills relevant to future employment.

#### **3. ECONOMY**

- Increase support for 'start ups' and existing small to medium enterprises.
- Encourage further investment in research and development that seeks to enhance innovation, industry and infrastructure.
- Actively support local businesses and investment initiatives to grow the economy, create jobs, and encourage inward investment.

#### **4. EMPLOYMENT**

- Develop skills and training and create jobs through new apprenticeship and employment schemes and 'enterprise zones' for areas of greatest need.
- Support the six Regional Colleges to develop centres of excellence to meet the employment and training needs of the local labour market and prioritise stronger links with business and local employers.

#### **5. HOUSING**

- Campaign for high quality and affordable, mixed tenure housing.
- Create legislation placing a statutory obligation for cavity wall inspections by Building Control on all new properties.

#### **6. REGENERATION**

- Prioritise the renewal of our town and city centres through 'town-led regeneration'.
- Tackle dereliction and develop vacant space for community renewal projects through a properly resourced housing led regeneration strategy.

**IF YOU SUPPORT CHANGE**  
**VOTE PUP N0.1 ON MARCH 2nd**

## Health and Social Care

### The Progressive Unionist Party

*The NHS, our greatest war memorial, a living institution which embodies the principles on social justice; care at the point of need, not based on the ability to pay, is emblematic of the 'Spirit of 45', a time when veterans and women campaigned for a truly just United Kingdom.*

*As a Party, which is committed to protecting the fruits of British democracy, our defence of the welfare state is non-negotiable.*

*The concept of care from 'cradle to grave' was hard won by our forefathers at the close of World War 2 and we believe this underpins the value of life in the United Kingdom.*

*Today doctors, nurses and other health care worker struggle to carry out their jobs in unacceptable circumstances. There is a better way.*

*We are committed to addressing the socio-economic factors that influence health.*

- Opposes the 'Transforming Your Care' social policy which recommends the closure of NHS care homes undermine the values of the NHS which prides itself in providing healthcare free at the point of delivery.
- Believes that the growing elderly population deserves equal healthcare, dignity and support where necessary to ensure minimal disruption to their lives and lives of their families
- Will increase psychiatric bed numbers across Northern Ireland as well as investing in community-based services
- Will invest in dedicated psychiatric liaison teams to all general hospitals and reinvest the money saved into other health care initiatives.
- Will provide specialist supported accommodation and rehabilitative day centres for people recovering from serious mental illnesses such as schizophrenia, other issues such Alcohol Related Brain Injury, and learning disabilities.
- Invest in community and voluntary sector provided talking therapies and mental well-being activities for common mental health problems before they develop into more severe or engrained disorders.
- Implement a Zero Suicide Strategy, we believe that a zero suicide goal is realistic and achievable; however, it requires political commitment, prompt crisis intervention and coordinated action from the health and justice systems.
- End the disparity between physical and mental health
- Increase the provision of defibrillators in public buildings and to ensure compatibility with the Northern Ireland ambulance service systems.

## Education

*Educational underachievement is not unique to Loyalist working class communities, nor is it a recent phenomenon. Its importance is underlined by the well-documented association with consequential long term socio-economic malaise.*

*Extensive research has been undertaken, much is known about the problem, it has been widely discussed and yet it persists. In May 2015, the proportion of school leavers achieving three or more A-Levels A\*-C or equivalent was 37% in 2013/14 and the percentage of school leavers achieving at least 5 GCSEs at A\*-C including GCSEs in mathematics and English was 63.5%.*

*In seeking to identify what actions are necessary to lead to improved outcomes we know that expectations need to be realistic and goals achievable given the complexity of the problem and timescale necessary to see sustainable improvement.*

*The Progressive Unionist Party believes that segregated education maintains damaging social division. We strongly endorse a policy of integrated education at both primary and secondary levels. This will save significant financial resources, savings that could and should be reinvested in tackling educational underachievement.*

### The Progress Unionist Party will

**Increase the number of Sure Start Facilities** the first three years of a child's life are pivotal in determining how well he or she will do in terms of education, future employment and health. Sure Start services support those families most in need. It is the most effective way of helping all children reach their potential.

**Ensure there is a nursery place for every child that needs one** every child living should have a fair start in life and the opportunity to attend Early Years nursery placements. This will increase and encourage the child's cognitive, social and personal development through the early discovery of developmental issues. We want to equip children with the capacity to deal with the transition into mainstream, primary education so that they are able to fully engage with classroom based learning.

**Implement the NI Autism Strategy** diagnosis waiting times far exceed the goal of 13 weeks. There is no coherent transition process for young people with autism moving from education to employment. We commit to the implementation of the 2011 Autism Act as a matter of priority.

**Introduce Parent Support Workers** every primary school serving areas of social deprivation should have a dedicated parent's support worker to build relationships between parents and the school and encourage the parents in their role as co educators. This will reduce absenteeism and improve educational outcomes for the children.

**Introduce a Pupil Profile to replace academic selection** the development of profile for each pupil by teachers who work with them every day is a fair and accurate reflection of a child's educational progression. It will assist in early detection of SENs (special educational needs) and assist post primary schools in streaming for the best educational outcomes for each child.

**Introduce Vocational Qualifications (14+)** subjects such as engineering, ICT, health and social care or job specific vocational courses leading to high value careers such as plumbing and engineers for both men and women are central to ensuring a good job for everyone who needs one. Increasing Vocational Apprenticeships from 16 years of age means that no young person will be left behind as they learn valuable skills on the job.

**Introduce post primary collegiate** a combination of five to fifteen schools will work together to make a wider range of courses available, enabling pupils to experience different types of courses. Within the Collegiate children could take courses in, or transfer to, other schools. While schools provide, the statutory curriculum increased flexibility and cooperation will encourage the development of specialisms like sport, new technology or performing arts.

**Introduce LLW as a compulsory subject in post primary education** Learning for Life and Work (LLW) with its focus on employability, local and global citizenship and personal development will help equip young people for life as well as work. Pupils from year eight up to and including year twelve will:

- Explore self-employment and identify relevant sources of support.
- Develop an understanding of how to maximize and sustain their own health and Well-being.
- Respond to the specific challenges and opportunities which diversity and inclusion present in Northern Ireland and the wider world.

**Introduce performance management in schools** more rigorous performance management is required in schools linking high performing and low performing schools to raise expectations, create confidence and produce improvements. We will incentivise performance and leadership, encouraging those most able and talented to tackle the challenges set out in areas of educational underachievement.

## Economy

*While some people are economically inactive either through disability, retirement, long term illness, studying or caring for family, there should be enough work available for everyone: -*

**The Progressive Unionist Party will**

**Support the creation of a just and sustainable economy where** a good job is there for everyone who needs one.

**Support Innovative ideas** essential to create jobs, help new business creation and encourage the investment that will create the inclusive economic growth that the people of Northern Ireland need.

**Support moves toward a Circular Economy**- we need to move from a system of waste to one where we use waste to generate energy, create employment and minimise the impact on the environment.

**Invest in an energy retrofit upgrade in homes and businesses across Northern Ireland** by making energy efficient an infrastructure priority we will create warmer homes, efficient businesses and avoid the waste of previous interventions and create job opportunities.

**Build the homes people need** which will make a significant social and economic contribution to Northern Ireland. As well as delivering much needed new homes, increasing our housing supply bring job creation, investment in infrastructure and facilities for local communities.

**Revise Easter Licensing Law** - the current arrangements do not deter alcohol consumption or gambling as intended, but instead damages tourism and drives people to online gambling. We need to introduce laws that bring economic benefit while protecting the vulnerable.

**Support the development of social enterprises**- that combine social goals with entrepreneurial spirit. For example, social supermarkets or community shops will reduce food poverty while creating job opportunities.

**End the use of Zero Hour contracts** –by legislating for minimum hour contracts, particularly for people who need flexible working arrangements.

**Increase the minimum wage as the national living wage increases** will benefit businesses as they retain satisfied productive staff for longer and will benefit the economy as low-paid workers spend their wages locally.

**Review domestic rates** - Domestic rates should not be capped as it disadvantages those who are in low income employment and those who are asset rich but income poor.

## Social Development

*Homelessness and poverty whether fuel, food or financial, are consequences of an economy which does not provide for its people, of increasing welfare sanctions and a depleted social housing market.*

*We need to provide access to decent, affordable, sustainable homes and housing support services*

*We need to meet the needs of the most vulnerable by tackling disadvantage through a transformed social welfare system.*

### **In order to build a fair, just and equitable society the Progressive Unionist Party will**

- Legislate so that an inspection of cavity walls becomes a statutory obligation for Building Control on all new build properties.
- Ensure that Bi-annual House Condition Survey carried out on behalf of the government by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive will include a thorough wall and loft inspection. Government policy on decent homes and tackling fuel poverty is dependent on the accuracy of this information.
- Support the creation of fuel co-operatives for those with oil heating.
- Prioritise the re-purposing of derelict and or vacant buildings, transforming them from empty retail units and factories into much-needed homes, including one bedroom homes. Private developers should be incentivised to undertake this work, which will be cheaper and more effective than building brand new properties.
- Review the Social Security Benefit Sanction policy to ensure compliance with human rights legislation, in particular the right to food and right to welfare.
- Protect Green Belts across Northern Ireland by opposing, where appropriate, the continued building of housing and commercial developments on rural land.
- Focus on developing inner city brown-field sites. This waste ground can be put to use and turned into commercial and residential sites, protecting our valuable rural spaces and green heritage.

## Devolution

*The Progressive Unionist Party is fully committed to maintaining and strengthening Northern Ireland's position within the United Kingdom.*

*We believe that the interests of people both British and Irish is best served politically, socially, economically and culturally is best served within the United Kingdom.*

*The principles of tolerance and respect which are at the core of British democracy argue that each group respect the traditions of the other, and live harmoniously, cooperating and sharing traditions*

*The United Kingdom, as outlined in the Principles of Loyalism, provides civil and religious liberties for a diverse range of peoples and communities. This is one of our defining principles as Unionists.*

**In order to maintain and strengthen Northern Ireland's position within the United Kingdom and to strengthen harmony between all people, the Progressive Unionist Party**

- Supports the concept of 'sharing responsibility'
- Believes there is strength in diversity, as can be seen from the current makeup of the Northern Irish population
- Seeks appropriate support for local communities who are adapting to changing demographics to ensure that immigration is seen as a positive development for all our communities and economy
- Seeks more in-depth background checks on those wishing to move to Northern Ireland to ensure the safety of our communities
- Supports stronger protocols for deterring 'welfare migrants', given that as a Party, we do not see this as presenting a full and enjoyable life for incoming migrants.
- Supports new systems which help recent migrants to settle into their new communities. This might entail programmes which twin newly-arrived families with more settled migrant families.



## Justice

*We acknowledge the need for an effective and representative police service to uphold law, defend peace and protect the innocent.*

*To achieve this, goal a police force needs to have respect for the communities it serves. This respect must be two-way and can only be built through partnership.*

*In the absence of full armed conflict the police service must now adjust to the new environment.*

*We must develop initiatives that will assist in the development of safe and secure communities, reduce organized crime, the drugs trade, human trafficking, anti-social behaviour and more.*

*Given the unique history of Northern Ireland it is necessary to acknowledge the role and impact of political prisoners in today's society.*

*we call for the abolition of social exclusion and discrimination which prevents prisoners from making a meaning contribution towards political and community reconstruction.*

*The involvement of released prisoners, former paramilitary activists and others within the political process will help deliver the peace that people deserve.*

**We are dedicated to an honourable and equitable society, founded in democratic and accountable principles. The Progressive Unionist Party will**

- Implement the Armed Forces Covenant to ensure veterans living in Northern Ireland are not treated any differently than those in England, Scotland or Wales.
- Implement the Marriage Equality Act in Northern Ireland to ensure that people in Northern Ireland are not treated any differently than those in England, Scotland and Wales.
- Seek to enshrine the protections of those religious institutions, who do not endorse the act, into legislation.
- Extend the 1967 Abortion Act to Northern Ireland to ensure that women have access to the same local, safe and free reproductive healthcare as those in England, Scotland and Wales.
- Strengthen and expand laws defining rape, sexual assault and revenge porn
- Provide training and support all those in the criminal justice, court system and health service on sexual violence
- Improve the quality of care for survivors reduce sexual violence by strengthening sanctions against perpetrators.
- Supports the European Court of Human Rights, the implementation of the Human Rights Act 1998 in the United Kingdom and the institutions in place working towards the application and protection of social, economic and cultural rights for all.
- Provide education and skills training in prisons and young offenders centres to help prevent reoffending upon release from jail.
- Remove all impediments that prevent former political motivated prisoners from resuming full citizenship.
- Support former political prisoners to embrace the principles of participative democracy and to play an active role in working for social change, improving own family lives as well as the life of their community
- Support Community Based Restorative Justice schemes that have a proven history of tackling anti- social behavior and low level crime.
- Work with young people to intervene early and keep them out of the criminal justice system

## Environment

*Underpinning any social or economic plans should be a comprehensive environment policy. Access to clean, safe water, air and a healthy living environment are necessary components of every society.*

*The Progressive Unionist Party wish to see environmental issues be prioritised in all areas of planning, development and regeneration.*

*We welcome that Northern Ireland was the first out of forty-nine participating countries to be awarded the prestigious Eco-Schools Green Flag and we would like this to continue.*

### The Progressive Unionist Party will

- Prioritise a flood prevention strategy that co-ordinates action between government, statutory agencies and emergency departments.
- Deliver a compensation system to support flood victims, to restore their economic independence and living conditions in a timely manner.
- Enhanced road safety education programme.
- Reduce speed limits in at risk areas whilst introducing and promoting Safe pedestrians' routes or Safe Route to School Schemes.
- Reform Animal Welfare in Northern Ireland; we fully support a ban on wild animals in circuses and will introduce a ban on hunting with dogs.
- We will seek tougher sentencing, adequate enforcement of legislation and the creation and the implementation of an animal abuser's registry.
- Simplify fares for all public transport with discounted rates for off-peak journeys and for those on low incomes
- Expand and decarbonize our public transport system
- Encourage more walking and cycling especially for short journeys
- Support initiatives and schemes to improve accessibility in the heart of communities and for arterial routes and not just focused within the city centre.
- Increase the number of schools that participate in the Eco-Schools programme
- Encourage home owners to generate their own energy.
- Tighten controls on the dumping of toxic waste together with stricter penalties for those convicted of river pollution and illegal dumping.

## Agriculture

*The Progressive Unionist Party recognises the significant role agriculture plays in sustaining Northern Ireland's economy.*

*We support farmers, exporters, communities and the environment in harmony with one another.*

### **The Progressive Unionist Party will**

- Assist the local Dairy industry promote its brand globally and generate more demand in export across International Markets.
- Subject to satisfactory compliance with the food safety controls set out by the Food Standards Agency, seek Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy BSE 'negligible risk' status from the World Organisation for Animal Health.
- Maintain funding provisions for the Farm Safety Partnership, which is a successful initiative that has heightened awareness of safety at work within farming communities, with a notable decline in annual incident reports.
- Ensure a robust scientific base for the measurement of greenhouse gas emissions to promote Northern Ireland as a low carbon location for food production within Europe.
- Commission research into the associated costs, environmental impact and economic growth of the agri-Food industry in Northern Ireland should we opt to a fast-track a solution for poultry waste into energy.
- Make agricultural education and training available at an earlier stage in the Northern Ireland curriculum to meet the growing opportunities that exist within the agri-food industry.
- Introduce vocational training to the sector on essential skills and capacity building in ICT, literacy and funding applications as Northern Ireland moves to a digital trading and administrative environment.

# Contact Information

## N. I. Assembly Election Candidates

North Belfast Candidate, <b>Councillor J.A. Corr Johnston</b>	07934819824
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East Londonderry Candidate, <b>Councillor Russell Watton</b>	07981 545952

## Party Officers

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