



Manifesto 2016



The change **we** need . . .
and the **voice** you want

Party Leader's Message



Working class communities are struggling to find any semblance of the much-vaunted peace dividend. High unemployment, social exclusion, poor housing and high levels of deprivation underpinned by an education system which has consistently failed our young people and serves only to condemn future generations to the same spiral of unmet need, draining hope from working class communities. We deserve better.

The budget deficit is growing; Health service waiting lists are escalating, much needed services have lost funding and trust between politicians has hit a new low. Our Executive parties, as dysfunctional and myopic as they are, had been tasked with the privilege of governing this country and they have failed, miserably. We deserve better.

We need a governance that will ensure that our people have satisfactory housing that meets the social needs of our people, gainful employment that provides a living wage under satisfactory terms and conditions of employment, adequate health care from the cradle to the grave that is free to all at the point of delivery, efficient public services and utilities that are controlled by elected representatives and accountable to the public, a safe and healthy environment that enhances individual and community life, and a free education system that provides life-long learning for all our citizens. We need a governance that puts people first.

The Progressive Unionist Party advocates a platform of enlightened policies all of which seek to improve the lives of present and future generations in Northern Ireland. Join us in our fight to address the inequalities that segregate the working classes from a prospering society. Join us in building the Northern Ireland our children and their children can be proud to call home. Vote for the change we need and the voice we deserve.

Vote PUP on May 5th.

B.Hutchinson

A Contract between the Progressive Unionist Party and the People

OUR SIX KEY COMMITMENTS 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 prompt crisis intervention and coordinated action from the health and justice systems. *This requires strong political leadership.*
- **Press** for adequate funding resources to enable doctors, nurses and other health professionals to deliver high quality care and support.



2. EDUCATION

- **Demand** an end to 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 and encourage parents in their role as co-educators, to reduce absenteeism, and improve educational outcomes.
- **Introduce** vocational teaching from age 14. The vocational subjects would cover a range of activities and skills relevant to future employment.



3. ECONOMY

- **Increase** support and encouragement 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 lobby government to establish 'enterprise zones' for areas of greatest need.
- **Support** the six Regional Colleges in developing centres of excellence to meet the employment and training needs of the local labour market, *prioritising stronger links with business and local employers.*



5. HOUSING

- **Campaign** for high quality and affordable, mixed tenure housing.
- **Lobby** for a national policy and action plan to tackle the appallingly levels of fuel poverty.
- **Create** legislation placing a statutory obligation for cavity wall inspections by Building Control on all new properties.
- **Promote** an energy efficiency scheme and financial resources for retrofitting of existing housing stock.



6. REGENERATION

- **Assist** in reducing out-of-town shopping through a renewed emphasis on 'town-led regeneration'.
- **Provide** for a properly resourced, comprehensive, regeneration strategy using housing led initiatives to tackle dereliction and, develop vacant space for community renewal purposes.



**IF YOU SUPPORT OUR CONTRACT FOR CHANGE
VOTE PUP NO.1 ON MAY 5TH**

Health and Social Care

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.

We will continue to support the NHS – and its staff – in Northern Ireland. Our Health service has suffered from chronic underfunding and today doctors, nurses and surgeons struggle to carry out their jobs in difficult circumstances.

We are committed to addressing the socio-economic factors that influence health. In particular we are committed to working to combat ill-health associated with multiple deprivations.

- (I) We are unrelentingly opposed to policies and decision which will result in, or contribute to, any reduction in the standard of care for the sick and disadvantaged. In particular we fully oppose the privatisation, dismantling and handing over the welfare state to PPP/PFI initiatives and unaccountable trusts.
- (II) By extension we oppose the 'Transforming Your Care' social policy which recommends the closure of NHS care homes which would undermine the values of the NHS which prides itself in providing healthcare free at the point of delivery. The growing elderly generation are deserving of equal healthcare, dignity and support where necessary to ensure minimal disruption to their lives and lives of their families.
- (III) NI mental health services have undergone and are still undergoing significant reconfiguration in recent years. We believe that we need time to embed these changes. The year-on-year cuts to mental health budgets are putting good quality care in jeopardy through staff shortages and closures of much needed rehabilitation services for the most vulnerable in society. Historically mental health services in NI have been chronically underfunded, receiving proportionately less money than physical health services, and less money than English mental health, despite the higher needs here. Psychiatric bed numbers across NI have dramatically reduced in the last fifteen years in response to patient and professional calls for alternatives to hospital and better community care. The money saved by closing wards was meant to be reinvested into community-based services, but through funding cuts, this has not happened at the rate intended. We believe Government should urgently invest in the creation and development of dedicated psychiatric liaison teams to all general hospitals and reinvest the money saved into other health care initiatives. We also believe there is a need for more investment in the provision of specialist supported accommodation and rehabilitative day centres for people recovering from serious mental illnesses such as schizophrenia, and other issues such Alcohol Related Brain Injury, and learning disabilities. Better investment is needed in the community and voluntary sector with access to talking therapies and mental well being activities for common mental health problems before they develop into more severe or engrained disorders. We commit to tackling the disparity between physical and mental health, and stop the year on year disproportionate cuts to mental health budgets. We must also seek to prioritise 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.
- (IV) It is necessary to provide training to managers and employees to demystify mental health problems, and give them skills to support people who are showing symptoms such as stress, anxiety, paranoia or depression. We will continue to promote the extension of 'return to work' rehabilitation and retraining schemes which support those with a history of ill-health, and in particular mental ill- health, return to appropriate employment.
- (V) We would seek a review of the Department's provisions for sexual health care. Good sexual health is important to individuals, but it is also a key public health issue. Our aim is to reduce inequalities and improve sexual health outcomes, build an honest and open culture where everyone is able to make informed and responsible choices about relationships and sex, reduce the rate of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) using evidence-based preventative interventions and treatment initiatives whilst tackling the stigma, discrimination and prejudice often associated with sexual health matters.
- (VI) Each year 1400 people in Northern Ireland suffer an out of hospital cardiac arrest; the current survival rate for an out of hospital cardiac arrest is 7.5%. Research proves that using a defibrillator in conjunction with administering CPR can increase the survival rate to over 70% whilst allowing time for paramedics to arrive on the scene. The Progressive Unionist Party has supported calls on the NI Executive to devise a strategy that will see an increase in provision of defibrillators in public buildings and to ensure compatibility with the NI 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. The Statistical Bulletin published by the Department of Education in May 2015 outlines 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 maths and English was 63.5%.*

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

The Progressive Unionist Party believes that we maintain societal division through segregated education and strongly endorses a policy of integrated education at both primary and secondary levels, which, upon implementation, would save a considerable amount of financial resources. Savings that could and should be reinvested in tackling educational underachievement by:-

Increasing 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 offer early intervention, giving support to those families most in need. It is the most effective way of helping all children reach their potential.

Ensuring there is sufficient nursery places to meet the demand We believe that every child living in Northern Ireland should have a fair start in life and the opportunity to attend Early Years nursery placements. The early introduction of children into such institutions increases and encourages the child's cognitive, social and personal development. Early Years professionals monitor child development which leads to the early discovery of latent learning difficulties that can hinder a child's development. 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.

Implementing 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 implementing the strategy as outlined in the 2011 Autism Act as a matter of priority.

Introducing Parent Support Workers Every primary school serving areas of social deprivation should have a dedicated parent's support worker tasked with building relationships between parents and the school, encouraging the parents in their role as co educators, reducing absenteeism and improving educational outcomes for the children.

Introducing a Pupil Profile To replace academic selection -Year on year teachers would be required to complete a profile for each pupil. Such a profile would depict a pupil's academic progression inclusive of strengths and areas of weakness, creativity and social ability. Such a profile will not only assist in early detection of SENs (special educational needs) and identify areas of progression or regression but will also assist post primary schools in streaming their pupils accordingly.

Introduction of Vocational Qualifications (14+) To would include vocational subjects that are related to a broad employment area such as business, engineering, ICT, health and social care or Vocational courses that lead to specific jobs such as hairdressing, accounting, professional cookery, plumbing, etc. Also introducing Vocational Apprenticeships from 16 years of age which are 'work-related' where the young person will be trained for a job role and get paid as you learn.

Introduction of post primary collegiates Each would include 5 to 15 schools that would work together to make a wider range of courses available. (I) Each Collegiate would enable pupils to experience different types of courses. Within the Collegiate children could take courses in, or transfer to, other schools. (II) Schools would provide the statutory curriculum but there would be more flexibility to choose different courses and to develop specialism's like sport, new technology or performing arts.

Introducing LLW as a compulsory subject in post primary education Learning for Life and Work (LLW) is a subject that includes the contributory elements of Employability, Local and Global Citizenship and Personal Development. Pupils from year eight up to and including year twelve will be enabled to: (I) Explore self employment and identify relevant sources of support. (II) Develop an understanding of how to maximize and sustain their own health and Well-being. (III) Respond to the specific challenges and opportunities which diversity and inclusion present in Northern Ireland and the wider world.

Performance Management We believe a more rigorous performance management is required in schools with consideration given to linkages between high performing and low performing schools to raise expectations, create confidence and produce improvements. In addition we would incentivise performance and leadership encouraging those most able and talented to tackle the challenges set out in areas of educational underachievement.

Oppose a rise in student fees Education is a human right, and a means of advancing oneself, and achieving a decent standard of living. It provides opportunities and freedoms, which cannot otherwise be enjoyed by ordinary people. Based upon this, we believe that each person within Northern Ireland should have an equal opportunity to attend a first class primary and secondary school in order that the foundations are laid from a young age, for our citizens to enjoy the full benefits of education. This extends to the right to further education, and for these reasons we will oppose rises in student fees, which prevent many of our young people from going to college or university, and so are disadvantaged when entering the labour market. We are opposed to this discriminatory practice, and believe education, as a public good, should be equally available to all.

Economy

Northern Ireland generates approximately £12bn per annum in tax revenue; approximately £11bn is returned in Departmental Expenditure Limits, commonly referred to as our Block Grant, and approximately £9.6bn (variable) per annum in Annually Managed Expenditure otherwise referred to as Welfare and Benefits such as Pensions, Tax Credits, Job Seekers Allowances, Housing and Disability benefits.

In other words we spend much more than we make and our economic performance could be significantly improved.

This is underpinned by the Northern Ireland Labour Market research which highlights that we have 563,000 citizens economically inactive, either through unemployment, disability, retirement, long term illness, studying or caring for family. Furthermore, during November 2015 and January 2016, 53,000 were estimated to be unemployed, in that very same month, there were only 4512 notified job vacancies, 2415 of which were full-time, 1663 of which were part-time and 424 of which were casual. In other words over 91% of those who are unemployed, cannot get a job and will not get a job because there is not enough work available.

The Progressive Unionist Party supports the creation of a just and sustainable economy which provides livelihood opportunities for all our citizens. We have always sought radical alternatives to stimulate and improve the Northern Ireland economy. In the current economic climate innovative ideas are essential to create jobs, help new business creation and encourage Foreign Direct Investment.

Moving toward a Circular Economy - In essence a circular economy is about moving from a system of waste to one of endless resourcefulness by re-purposing waste to generate energy, create employment and minimize the impact on the environment.

Investing in an energy retrofit upgrade in Northern Ireland - particularly in fuel-poor households, would not only make these houses energy efficient but create range of job opportunities. A comprehensive retrofitting scheme would address the current 'heat or eat' dilemma faced by many citizens.

We believe that building more new homes will make a significant social and economic contribution to Northern Ireland. As well as delivering much needed new homes, increasing our housing supply would provide significant additional benefits for everyone: job creation, investment in infrastructure and facilities for local communities.

Revising and renewing Easter Licensing Law - to reflect our contemporary and diverse society. The current arrangements do not deter the consumption of alcohol, or the practice of gambling, but instead, channel money away from local economies towards off-shore ones, and as such, it is our view they are not fit-for-purpose.

Better investment in the development of social enterprises - that combine societal goals with entrepreneurial spirit. For example, the Social Supermarkets or Community Shops referenced in 2015 report on the mitigation of Welfare Reform, commissioned by OFMDFM, that specifically targets food poverty whilst creating employment opportunities.

Prohibiting the use of Zero Hour contracts - and instead legislating for minimum hour contracts, particularly for those in society who require flexible working arrangements.

Increasing the minimum wage as the national living wage increases - Paying a living wage benefits employers- as employees are retained for longer, absent less, and will be more flexible regarding hours and tasks. It also benefits the economy as low-paid workers will spend their wages locally, thus stimulating economic growth and creating more jobs.

Review domestic rates - Domestic rates should not be capped as this unfairly advantages those on high income salaries and 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.

The Department for Social Development has a number of key strategic priorities, two of those priorities read as follows:

**1.
to provide access to decent, affordable, sustainable homes and housing support services**

**2.
to meet the needs of the most vulnerable by tackling disadvantage through a transformed social welfare system.**

With social housing waiting lists in excess of 39,000 and over 19,000 immoral benefit sanctions throughout 2014, these priorities have not been met and our politicians charged with responsibility in this department have failed miserably. In order to build a fair, just and equitable society the Progressive Unionist Party proposes the following amendments to Northern Ireland's social development policy:-

- (I) To legislate that an inspection of cavity walls becomes a statutory obligation for Building Control on all new build properties.
- (II) The Bi-annual House Condition Survey carried out on behalf of the government by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive should include a through wall and loft inspection. Government policy on decent homes and tackling fuel poverty is dependent on the accuracy of this information.
- (III) Creation of fuel co-operatives for those with oil heating who cannot afford to fill their tank when it is empty. Weekly payment to the fuel co-operative and regular oil deliveries could allow these people to heat their homes and enjoy a basic standard of living which no person should be denied.
- (IV) Housing policy should place emphasis on 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, which will not only begin to address the rising levels of those people deprived of shelter and homes but also reduce the number of under-occupied homes across the province. Private developers should be incentivised to undertake this work, which will be cheaper and more effective than building brand new properties.
- (V) A review of the Social Security Benefit Sanction policy to ensure compliance with human rights legislation, in particular the right to food and right to welfare.
- (VI) Protection of Northern Ireland Green Belts by opposing, where appropriate, the continued building of housing and commercial developments on rural land. There is a pressing need for a renewed focus on developing inner city brown-field sites. A cross-party working group should be formed in order to address the untapped spaces which mark the city. 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 the present constitutional position of Northern Ireland within the United Kingdom.

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

- (I) The Progressive Unionist Party support a form of government which moves towards aligning our system to that which operates in the rest of the United Kingdom, providing an official opposition as opposed to mandatory coalition. We have promoted the concept of 'sharing responsibility' since 1979.
- (II) The Progressive Unionist Party recognises that 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. Based upon this reasoning, we welcome incoming migrant workers and their families to Northern Ireland. We do this because, despite the media's rhetoric, we know that the majority of migrants come here to work hard, and build a decent life for themselves and their families. 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. We believe there is strength in diversity, as can be seen from the current makeup of the Northern Irish population.

Our history is rich with positive examples of economic migration and the cultural traditions which they bring. Chinese, Jewish and more recently thousands of Eastern Europeans have moved to this region, built successful work and home lives, and integrated well in Northern Ireland. As we have stated, most migration benefits our country, economically, socially and culturally. Given the current stresses on the welfare system, however, the PUP support measures which deter people from moving here in order to claim benefits. We believe that a life on benefits is not a full, rich existence, and as we want meaningful work for current residents, so too we advocate it for incoming members.

We support: 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. In addition, we support 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. Again, support for local communities who are adapting to changing demographics is critical to ensure that immigration is seen as a positive asset to our society.

We advocate for the successful integration of all people, and this extends towards migrant families and workers. We do, however, note the potential to improve the systems which are currently in place. One example of this, reflective of the concerns of our constituents, is that we lack the checks necessary to ensure that incoming migrants do not present a criminal threat, i.e. stringent checks on criminal records. In recent years we have seen examples of foreign visitors committing serious criminal acts in Northern Ireland. A number of these people had previous convictions in their own country which were not disclosed when they applied to live in Northern Ireland. The PUP will seek more in-depth background checks on those wishing to move to Northern Ireland, as the welfare and safety of our communities is integral to our Party ethos. Given all of this, we remain committed to strength through diversity, as defined by the United Kingdom which we all support. As such, we welcome incoming migrants and all mechanisms which shall ensure their successful integration and positive contributions to our society.

- (III) We will continue to lobby for change in the method used to fill Parliamentary positions at Westminster. We want to see a change

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 with rigorous opposition to organised crime, illicit drugs trade, anti-social behaviour and more.

Our policy position is outlined below:-

- (I) The Armed Forces Covenant recognises that the government has an obligation to the Armed Forces community and it establishes how they should expect to be treated. The Covenant was published in 2011 with a detailed document outlining the steps being taken to support the armed forces community. The Covenant exists to redress the disadvantages that the armed forces community may face in comparison to other citizens. Northern Ireland is the only region of the United Kingdom that has failed to implement this Covenant. The Progressive Unionist Party will seek to overturn this decision and ensure veterans living in Northern Ireland are not treated any less favourably than those in England, Scotland or Wales.
- (II) Implementation of the Marriage Equality Act in Northern Ireland. Similar to England, Scotland and Wales and in line with the European Human Rights Convention, we will seek to enshrine the protections of those religious institutions, who do not endorse the act, into legislation.
- (III) The Progressive Unionist Party supports a woman's right to control her body via the assertion of her reproductive rights. At present this particular aspect of healthcare is bound over by criminal legislation and has remained as such for a century and five decades. We would seek to change this outdated legislation and extend the 1967 Abortion Act to Northern Ireland. By decriminalising abortion here, we can ensure that all citizens in Northern Ireland have access to local, safe and free reproductive healthcare alongside those living in Great Britain.
- (IV) Strengthen and expand laws defining rape, sexual assault and revenge porn; train police and judges about sexual violence and improve the application of existing laws. Improving existing laws and their implementation may serve to improve the quality of care afforded to survivors and may serve to curb sexual violence by strengthening sanctions against perpetrators.
- (V) The Progressive Unionist Party fully supports the European Court of Human Rights and the implementation of the Human Rights Act 1998 in the United Kingdom. Subsequently we support the institutions in place working towards the application and protection of social, economic and cultural rights for all our citizens here in Northern Ireland. In order for a truly democratic, fair and just society, all citizens should be treated as equal individuals by its government and actively challenging discrimination where necessary, whether it's racial, religious belief, sexual orientation, disability, gender-based or otherwise.
- (VI) We will seek adequate funding to educate prisoners. Educational underachievement and crime go hand in hand. Young men and women with numeracy and literacy problems make up a high percentage of today's prison population. We believe education and skills training in prisons and young offenders centres can prevent reoffending upon release from jail.
- (VII) Given the unique history of Northern Ireland compared to the rest of the United Kingdom, it is necessary to acknowledge the role and impact of political prisoners in today's society. The involvement of released prisoners, former paramilitary activists and others within the political process will enable them to embrace the principles of participative democracy and to play an active role in working for social change, for the enrichment of their own personal lives as well as the corporate life of their community. We are dedicated to an honourable and equitable society, founded in democratic and accountable principles, from this we call for the abolition of social exclusion and discrimination which prevents prisoners from making a meaning contribution towards political and community reconstruction. The Progressive Unionist Party supports the removal of all impediments that prevent former political motivated prisoners from resuming full citizenship.
- (VIII) We support Community Based Restorative Justice schemes which work alongside PSNI and other statutory agencies. Historically proven effective in tackling anti-social behaviour and low level crime, working particularly with young people, early intervention into their behaviour can help stop the elevation of criminal participation and keep them out of the criminal justice system while still addressing

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.

- (I) Northern Ireland has experienced heavy floods over the past decade, which have affected thousands of people and caused millions of pounds worth of damage. We will seek to prioritise flood prevention by developing a province-wide strategy seeking joint and co-ordinated action between government, statutory agencies and emergency departments. A compensation system should support the victims of flood disasters to restore their economic independence and their living conditions in a timely manner.
- (II) Road safety education is paramount in Northern Ireland for both road users and pedestrians. We would seek to enhance government-funded programmes educating citizens of the potential dangers. We would also seek to reduce speed limits in at risk areas whilst introducing and promoting Safe pedestrians routes or Safe Route to School Schemes.
- (III) We are committed to the reformation of Animal Welfare in Northern Ireland; we fully support a ban on wild animals in circuses and wish to maintain the ban on hunting with dogs. We will seek: tougher sentencing, adequate enforcement of legislation and the creation and the implementation of an animal abusers registry.
- (IV) Simplify fares for all public transport with discounted rates for off-peak journeys and for those on low incomes. Our public transport system needs to evolve and with any significant expansion, consideration needs to be given to the de-carbonising of our transport infrastructure. We would like to further encourage more walking and cycling especially for short journeys. The Progressive Unionist Party will support initiatives and schemes to improve accessibility in the heart of communities and for arterial routes and not just focussed within the city centre.
- (V) Increase the number of schools that participate in the Eco-Schools programme. This programme extends the curriculum, works beyond the classroom, develops responsible attitudes and commitment to the environment, both at home and in the wider community. It enhances awareness and participation in tackling environment issues and promotes civic duty. We welcome that Northern Ireland was the first out of forty-nine participating countries to be awarded the prestigious Green Flag and we would like this to continue.
- (VI) Encouraging private home owners to generate their own energy. Greater incentives and education should be given to the Northern Ireland public to encourage private wind turbine and solar panel installation. These home and land owners can generate enough energy for their private use and also sell any extra back to Northern Ireland Electricity.
- (VII) Seek tighter 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.

It is important that Agriculture and the agri-food industries remain a core source of employment and industry for Northern Ireland.

A comprehensive policy will sustain and develop these industries ensuring we support farmers, exporters, communities and the environment in harmony with one another.

According to the Agricultural Census published by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development: "despite showing an increase of 3 per cent in 2015, the number of farms has been in long-term decline." In 2014 there were 24,200 active farms in Northern Ireland. This was a significant decrease from the 31,000 farms present fifteen years ago. "This is a result of economic drivers that make off-farm work more financially attractive while simultaneously encouraging the formation of larger scale production units to minimise costs and maintain farm income."

We believe the Northern Ireland Assembly should:

- (I) Seek to assist the Northern Irish Dairy industry promote its brand globally and generate more demand in export across International Markets.
- (II) Seek to establish a single marketing body for the agri-food industry in Northern Ireland, complimented by a food promotion strategy.
- (III) Subject to satisfactory compliance with the food safety controls set out by the Food Standards Agency, the Northern Ireland Assembly should move to obtain Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy BSE 'negligible risk' status from the World Organisation for Animal Health.

Such a move would give Northern Ireland trade advantage ahead of the rest of the U.K whilst reducing disposal costs.
- (IV) 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.

With plans to expand the industry it is imperative the partnership remains active, for continuity and community.
- (V) 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.
- (VI) 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.
- (VII) Agricultural education and training must be made available at an earlier stage in the Northern Ireland curriculum to meet the growing opportunities that exist within the agri-food industry. Furthermore it is essential that government seek to 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. a positive asset to our society.

We advocate for the successful integration of all people, and this extends towards migrant families and workers. We do, however, note the potential to improve the systems which are currently in place. One example of this, reflective of the concerns of our constituents, is that we lack the checks necessary to ensure that incoming migrants do not present a criminal threat, i.e. stringent checks on criminal records. In recent years we have seen examples of foreign visitors committing serious criminal acts in Northern Ireland. A number of these people had previous convictions in their own country which were not disclosed when they applied to live in Northern Ireland. The PUP will seek more in-depth background checks on those wishing to move to Northern Ireland, as the welfare and safety of our communities is integral to our Party ethos. Given all of this, we remain committed to strength through diversity, as defined by the United Kingdom which we all support. As such, we welcome incoming migrants and all mechanisms which shall ensure their successful integration and positive contributions to our society.

- (III) We will continue to lobby for change in the method used to fill Parliamentary positions at Westminster. We want to see a change

Our Candidates



Billy Hutchinson - North Belfast

Billy Hutchinson leader of the Progressive Unionist Party, elected to Belfast City Council in the 2014 Local Government Elections and a community development worker in North Belfast. Wishes to tackle the socio-economic deprivation faced by North Belfast and believes that local people deserve better and are ready for change.

Ian Shanks - South Belfast

Ian Shanks, a homeless outreach volunteer, family man and community activist. Ian is determined to tackle the inequalities that segregate the working classes from a prospering society. His daughter, aged five, is his motivation, he wants to build the Northern Ireland that she and other children can be proud to call home.



John Kyle - East Belfast

John Kyle a registered GP with several decades of service in inner East Belfast. Elected to Belfast City Council in the 2014 local government elections. John has been and is at the forefront of the Progressive Unionist campaign to develop an education system that serves every child.



Jim McCaw - East Entrim

Jim McCaw former soldier and a committed local activist has campaigned to see the extension of the Armed Forces Covenant to Northern Ireland. Jim has supported local food banks whilst working to alleviate the need for them. A devoted father, who is also a long standing member of the Orange Order and a director on the board of Carrickfergus Community Forum.

Russell Watton - East Londonderry

Russell Watton, member of the Orange Order and Apprentice Boys of Derry. Elected to Causeway Coast and Glens council in 2014 local government elections. Russell is passionate about giving a voice to the voiceless and those who others have failed. He is committed to building the politics of integrity as demonstrated by his conduct in council.



Sophie Long - Upper Bann



Sophie Long a 29 year old PHD candidate at the Queens School of Politics and the youngest of the Progressive Unionist Party candidates in the 2016 Assembly Elections. Sophie is committed to empowering working class communities and demonstrating politics is for everyone.

Contact Information

N. I. Assembly Election Candidates

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Upper Bann Candidate, Sophie Long	07885 431644
East Londonderry Candidate, Councillor Russell Watton	07981 545952

Party Officers

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Deputy Leader	Councillor Dr. John Kyle	07515 409757
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