



# *Sinn Féin*

2015 WESTMINSTER ELECTION MANIFESTO

**EQUALITY NOT AUSTERITY**  
**COMHIONANNAS NÍ DÉINE**



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## INTRODUCTION

A Chairde,

Over the last eight years, despite unprecedented challenges caused by a global recession and an assault by the Tory party on the Executive budget, progress has been made. The economic crisis has caused real hardship for many families and businesses, that is why we have so strongly opposed austerity and prioritised building the peace, delivering unprecedented job creation, targetting investment to frontline services and protecting the most vulnerable.

- » Over £8bn invested in economic regeneration.
- » Unprecedented inward investment with over 800 international companies locating in the North, employing more than 75,000 people.
- » Unemployment has fallen for 27 months in a row.
- » The transfer of powers over corporation tax, as a first step in the securing of control over all fiscal powers.
- » Reform of Local Government, including the reduction in the number of Councils from 26 to 11.
- » Transfer of powers on Policing and Justice.
- » Improvements in outcomes for children at primary and secondary level.
- » Revitalising the Irish language community through investment in Irish medium education and the Liofa Project.
- » A deal on CAP reform for farmers in the North.
- » An unprecedented all-party agreement on dealing with the past.

During the Stormont House negotiations we demonstrated once again that it is possible to take an effective stand against the Tory assault and to deliver for the people. We successfully negotiated a significantly enhanced package of welfare protections for some of the most vulnerable people within our society. These agreements must now be delivered.

However, all of this work is now being undermined as a result of four years of Tory cuts and austerity targetting public services and the most vulnerable in society. They are threatening further cuts after this election. This is not acceptable or sustainable.

Austerity imposed from London is the price citizens are paying for the union. That is economically wrong and fundamentally undemocratic. Our economy, our society and our future should be in the hands of a government accountable to and elected by our citizens.

This austerity agenda is the single greatest threat to the people of the North and it's political institutions.

The absence of fiscal powers have made the Executive's task even more difficult. The political institutions in the North need to move to the next stage – financial powers need to be transferred to the Assembly and Executive. It is the people who live here who will make the best decisions, not a cabinet of millionaires in London – which is neither elected by, nor accountable to the people here. Taxes raised here should stay here and the Executive and Assembly should decide how they are spent. It is only with independence and self-determination that we will have the ability to determine our own future.

In the coming weeks, while other parties are seeking to prop up either Labour or Tories and their policy of cuts for narrow political agendas, Sinn Féin will be relentless in seeking the best deal for all our people. We have achieved more in direct negotiations with the British Government than other parties have in decades on the back benches at Westminster.

This election is an opportunity to take a stand against the Westminster politics of austerity and for a vision of a united, prosperous, equal and inclusive Ireland.

After the election we will be seeking an immediate negotiation with the incoming British Government to restore the budget and protect public services and to gain full control over our economy.

A vote for Sinn Féin will strengthen our hand.

**On May 7th, Vótáil Sinn Féin**



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'GAD' with a flourish.

**Gerry Adams TD**  
President of Sinn Féin

## RÉAMHRÁ

A Chairde,

Le hocht mbliana anuas, in ainneoin na ndúshlán a d'eascair as cúlú domhanda agus ionsaí ag páirtí na dTóraithe ar bhuiséad an Tionóil, rinneadh dul chun cinn. Chruthaigh an ghéarchéim eacnamaíochta fíorchruatan do chuid mhór teaghlach agus gnólacht, agus sin an fáth a ndeachaigh muid in éadan na déine agus go ndearna muid tosaíocht do shíocháin a thógáil, ag cruthú fostaíochta nár tharla roimh agus ag díriú isteach ar infheistíocht a dhéanamh ar sheirbhísí bunlíne.

- » Breis agus £8bn infheistithe in athghiniúint eacnamaíochta.
- » Infheistíocht isteach nach raibh roimhe agus breis agus 800 cuideachta idirnáisiúnta ag lonnú ó Thuaidh, ag fostú breis agus 75,000 duine.
- » An líon difhostaíochta ar feadh 27 mí i ndiaidh a chéile.
- » Aistriú cumhachtaí i leith cáin chorparáide, mar chéad chéim chun smacht ar chumhachtaí foscacha a dhaingniú.
- » Athchóiriú ar Rialtas Áitiúil, lena n-áirítear laghdú ar líon na gComhairlí ó 26 go 11.
- » Aistriú cumhachtaí Póilíneachta agus Cirt.
- » Feabhsuithe ar thorthaí páistí ar leibhéal bunscoile agus meánscoile.
- » Pobal na Gaeilge a athbheochan trí infheistíocht a dhéanamh sa Ghaeloideachas agus sa Tionscadal Líofa.
- » Margadh ar athchóiriú CAP d'fheirmeoirí ó Thuaidh.
- » Comhaontú uile-Pháirtí nár tharla riamh ar chúrsaí staire a láimhseáil.

Le linn idirbheartaíocht Theach Stormount léirigh muid arís gur féidir seasamh éifeachtach a ghlacadh in aghaidh ionsaí na dTóraithe agus beart a dhéanamh ar son na ndaoine. Déirigh linn idirbheartaíocht a dhéanamh maidir le beart a méadaíodh go suntasach de chosaintí leasa shóisialaigh do chuid de na daoine is mó i mbaol sa tsochaí. Ní mór na cosaintí seo a chur i bhfeidhm anois.

Tá an obair seo ar fad i mbaol anois mar thoradh ar cheithre bliana de chiorruithe na dTóraithe agus na déine a dhíríonn isteach ar sheirbhísí poiblí agus ar na daoine is mó atá i mbaol sa tsochaí. Tá said ag bagairt tuilleadh ciorruithe i ndiaidh an toghcháin seo. Níl sé seo inghlactha ná inbhuanaithe.

Is é an clár déine seo an bhagairt is mó do mhuintir an Tuaiscirt agus a institiúidí polaitíochta.

Mar gheall ar easpa cumhachtaí foscacha bheith ag an Tionól, is amhlaidh go bhfuil an tasc atá roimhe níos deacra. Ní mór do na forais pholaitiúla ó Thuaidh bogadh ar aghaidh chuig an gcéad chéim eile – ní mór cumhachtaí foscacha a aistriú chuig an Tionól agus an Feidhmeannas. Is iad na daoine a bhfuil cónaí orthu seo a dhéanfaidh an cinneadh is fearr, ní comh-aireacht milliúnaithe i Londain – nach roghnaíonn muintir an cheantair seo, agus nach bhfuil freagracht dó. Ní mór don cháin a fhaightear anseo fanacht anseo agus ba choir don Tionól agus don Fheidhmeannas cinneadh a ghlacadh faoin dóigh a gcaitear iad. Is le neamhspleáchas agus le féinchinnteoireacht amháin a mbeidh deis againn ár dtodhchaí féin a mhúnlú.

Fad atá páirtithe eile ag iarraidh seasamh le Páirtí an Lucht Oibre nó leis na Tóraithe agus a bpolasaithe siúd na gciorruithe ar mhaithe le cláir chúnga pholaitiúla, coinneoidh Sinn Féin orainn gan staonadh ag iarraidh an margadh is fearr a bhaint amach dár gcuid daoine.

Tá níos mó bainte amach againn trí idirbheartaíocht dhíreach le Rialtas na Breataine ná mar atá déanta ag aon pháirtí eile agus iad na deiceanna de bhlianta ina suí ar chúibhinsí Westminster.

Deis atá sa toghchán seo chun seasamh i gcoinne pholaitíocht Westminster na déine agus chun fíis na hÉireann aontaithe, rathúla, cothroime agus uileghabhálaí a bhaint amach.

I ndiaidh an toghcháin beimid ar lorg idirbheartaíochta le Rialtas úr na Breataine chun an buiséad a athshlánú agus chun seirbhísí poiblí a chosaint chomh maith le smacht iomlán a fháil ar an ngeilleagar againn féin. Déanfaidh vóta ar son Shinn Féin muid a láidriú.

### Vótáil Sinn Féin ar 7 Bealtaine



**Martin McGuinness**  
Deputy First Minister



## SINN FÉIN: BUILDING A UNITED, PROSPEROUS, EQUAL AND INCLUSIVE IRELAND

The key priorities for Sinn Féin in this election are:

### ENDING AUSTERITY

- » An immediate negotiation with the incoming British government to secure a workable budget including the reinstatement of £1.5bn to the budget to support job creation and the delivery of strong public services. This is 0.002% of the total British Public Expenditure budget.
- » Return economic powers for a fair recovery – we are seeking full control over income tax, national insurance, corporation tax, capital gains tax, borrowing powers and the setting of the minimum wage. Financial benefits flowing from such decisions must be retained and reinvested here.

### DELIVERING A FAIR RECOVERY

- » A civic compact for a fair recovery – bringing together civic society, business, trade unions and all political parties.
- » Continue to prioritise job creation, both FDI and support for Small and Medium enterprises
- » Fully implement the welfare protection in the Stormont House agreement.
- » Ensure greater security of employment and an end to zero hour contracts.
- » Support a moratorium on evictions for those in mortgage arrears.
- » Seek the provision of high-quality affordable childcare capped at 15% of income for those on low incomes and those in education and training.
- » Create a Border Economic Development Zone to harmonise trade and maximise returns for border businesses.



### UNITING COMMUNITIES, UNITING IRELAND

- » Tackle sectarianism, homophobia and racism and deliver equal rights for all.
- » Support quotas and legislation to increase the participation of women in politics and public life.
- » Progress an Acht na Gaeilge and a Bill of Rights for all Citizens.
- » Continue to campaign for a border poll on Irish Unity.
- » Create a Border Economic Development Zone to harmonise trade and maximise returns for border businesses.
- » Promote the work of reconciliation.
- » Deliver a process for Truth, Justice and Dealing with the Past.
- » Oppose referendum on exiting the EU. If there is to be a referendum on European membership, then there must be a separate and binding referendum here.



## SINN FÉIN: ÉIRE AONTAITHE, RATHÚIL, CHOTHROM AGUS UILEGHABHÁLACH A THÓGÁIL

Is iad mórtosaíochtaí Shinn Féin sa toghchán seo ná:

### DEIREADH A CHUR LE DÉINE

- » Idirbheartaíocht láithreach le Rialtas úr na Breataine chun a chinntiú go mbeidh buiséad inoibrithe ann lena n-áireofar athinfheistíocht de £1.5 billiún chun tacú le cruthú post agus chun seirbhísí poiblí láidre a thabhairt. Níl ann seo ach 0.002% de bhuiséad iomlán Caiteachas Poiblí na Breataine.
- » Cumhachtaí geilleagracha a thabhairt ar ais ar son slánú cothrom - táimid ag iarraidh smacht iomlán ar cháin ioncaim, ar árachas náisiúnta, ar cháin chorparáide, ar cháin ghnóthachan caipitiúil, chomh maithe le cumhachtaí iasachta agus socrú an íospá. Ní mór sochair airgid a thagann de bharr na gcinntí seo a choinneáil agus a athinfheistiú anseo.



### SLÁNÚ COTHROM A CHUR I GCRÍCH

- » Comhshocrú Sibhialta le haghaidh téarnamh cothrom – an tsochaí shibhialta, gnólachtaí, Ceadchumainn agus gach páirtí polaitiúil a thabhairt le chéile.
- » Coinneáil orainn ag tabhairt tús áite do chruthú post, d’infheistíocht dhíreach choigríche agus do thacaíocht do ghnóthais bheaga agus mheánmhéide.
- » Cosaintí leasa a socraíodh i gComhaontú Theach Chnoc an Anfa a chur i bhfeidhm ina n-iomláine.
- » Slándáil bhreise fostaíochta a chinntiú agus deireadh a chur le conarthaí náid uaireanta.
- » Tacaíocht a thabhairt do mhórtosaíocht ar dhíshealbhú na ndaoine sin a bhfuil riaráistí morgáiste acu.
- » Soláthar cúram leanaí ar phraghas réasúnta agus ar ardchaighdeán a lorg a bheidh caidheáilte ag 15% d’ioncam dóibh siúd nach bhfuil ach ioncaim íseal acu agus dóibh siúd atá i gcúrsaí oideachais nó traenála.

### POBAIL A AONTÚ, ÉIRE A AONTÚ

- » Dul i nGleic leis an Seicteachas, leis an Homafóibe agus leis an gCíniúchais agus cearta cothroma a thabhairt do chách.
- » Acht na Gaeilge agus Bille Cearta a thabhairt isteach do gach Saoránach.
- » Coinneáil orainn ag feachtasaíocht ar son pobalbhreithe ar cheist na teorann agus ar Aontú na hÉireann.
- » Crios Teorann um Fhorbairt Gheilleagrach a chruthú chun cúrsaí trádála a chomhoiriú agus chun na brabúis is mó a bhaint amach do ghnóthais na teorann.
- » Tús áite a thabhairt d’obair an athmhuintearais.
- » Próiseas a thabhairt i gcrích chun Fírinne, chun Cearta agus chun Dul i nGleic leis an Am a Chuaigh Thart.
- » Tacú le Cuótaí chun rannpháirtíocht ban i gcúrsaí polaitiúla agus sa saol poiblí a mhéadú.
- » Dul in aghaidh reifrinn maidir le himeacht ón AE. Má tá reifrinn le bheith ann maidir le ballraíocht na hEorpa, ní mór reifrinn faoi leith agus ceangailteach a bheith ann fosta.

## A UNITED IRELAND FOR ALL ÉIRE AONTAITHE AR SON CÁCH

Across Ireland the support for republican ideals is growing. People are hungry for real change.

Sinn Féin is the only all-Ireland political party with elected representatives in every forum across the island, the all-Ireland Ministerial Council, the Executive, Dáil, Seanad the Assembly, the European Parliament, and at local council level. We are the only party with the strategy and policies to achieve Irish unity and independence.

We are seeking a new, agreed and united Ireland for all of us who share this island. We want to build a just, fair and equal Ireland, an economically prosperous and socially and culturally diverse Ireland.

The question of Irish Unity is a fundamental democratic choice for all the people of Ireland. It is about the power to choose who we should be governed by and the power to build a country that reflects our priorities as a nation.

The real democratic value of Irish Unity will be that the people of Ireland north and south are in charge. It will no longer be possible for governments to be elected and pursue policies against the wishes of all the Irish people.

The republican vision of a united Ireland is based on the principles of equality, inclusion and sovereignty. There can be no place for sectarianism, exclusion or discrimination.

The identities of all citizens must be respected and supported. This includes those who cherish their British identity. A united Ireland must and will deliver and be a place for all our citizens.

Sinn Féin has called for a referendum on Irish Unity to be conducted in the next political term. We are seeking an informed, reasoned and respectful dialogue on the issue of Irish reunification.

The right to a referendum on Irish Unity is one of several outstanding issues within the Good Friday Agreement and other agreements which the British Government needs to act upon. The end point of constitutional change for this island north and south is now for the people to determine through a referendum on Irish Unity.

- » Continue to work for full implementation of the Good Friday Agreement.
- » Build a National Conversation on Building a New United Ireland for all people.
- » Call for a timetable for the full integration of public services across the island.
- » Call for the Irish Government to plan for Irish Unity
- » Continue to campaign for an island-wide referendum on Irish Unity.



## ENDING AUSTERITY, INVESTING IN JOBS, DEFENDING PUBLIC SERVICES DEIREADH A CHUR LE DÉINE, INFHEISTÍOCHT I bPOIST, SEIRBHÍSÍ POIBLÍ A CHOSAINT

Since coming to power the Tory-led British Government has removed £1.5 billion from the budget in the north.

Parties that received no popular mandate from the people have cut the public service budget allocated to the north in the form of the Departmental Expenditure Limit in 2014 by 14 per cent.

This cut has a huge impact on our budget. In addition to this they have sought to impose harsh welfare cuts on vulnerable citizens. They are threatening further cuts after this election. This is not acceptable or sustainable.

The British government attack on the north has led to greater inequality, reduced health and education services and lower living standards.

Their austerity agenda has deepened the recession. It has had a greater impact on our society because we are dealing with the legacy of conflict, decades of underinvestment, a small private sector and the cost of continued partition.



### **Despite the loss of £1.5bn from the local budget Sinn Féin has:**

- » Protected the Health budget.
- » Maintained essential public services.
- » Protected people from water and prescription charges.
- » Protected people from welfare cuts.
- » Ensured that older people benefit from free transport.
- » Retained the Educational Maintenance Allowance to support young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to stay in education.
- » Invested in business and created jobs.

While other parties are solely focused upon administering the budget, Sinn Féin are focused upon delivering a fair recovery.

We have prioritised job creation and growing the economy. This remains the core of our approach to delivering a fair recovery. The economy can and will be more successful if we invest in our successful industries like science, innovation and engineering, and promote new emerging sectors like renewables, the creative sector and life-sciences.

Economic growth and jobs are the platforms to build prosperity, to tackle poverty and address the wider issue of societal inequalities.



# EQUALITY NOT AUSTERITY

## Sinn Féin will:

- » Seek an immediate negotiation with the incoming British Government to secure a workable budget, including the immediate reinstatement of £1.5bn in spending power to the budget to invest in public services and economic growth.
- » Seek the ability to retain the benefits of Executive and Assembly policies within the Executive budget for investment in public services rather than the Westminster budget.
- » Continue to oppose austerity and protect core public services such as health, education and welfare.
- » Establish a body to access EIB funding for major infrastructure projects;
- » Enable the Housing Executive to use its assets to borrow in order to finance a major house-building programme.
- » Support Small and Medium Size Enterprises by tackling utility costs, increasing SME access to procurement and dealing with debt distress.
- » Grow the Green Economy to ensure we are at the forefront of renewable energy services and supplies.
- » Invest in infrastructure to improve connectivity.
- » Create more diverse, high quality routes into work, in particular by strengthening the quality of apprenticeships and other vocational qualifications.
- » Introduce a progressive assets levy of 1% on assets over one million to create an Investment in Jobs programme;<sup>1</sup>
- » Conduct a review of both domestic and commercial rating systems.
- » Seek progressive realisation of the Living Wage.
- » Cut MLAs wages by 15%.
- » Reduce departmental spend on hospitality by 15%.
- » Reduce consultancy and professional fees expenditure by £22.5 million.
- » Review excessive, high wages in the public sector.
- » Remove the upper limit of £400k on domestic rates to generate £6.9 million.
- » Remove the rates rebate on second homes.



<sup>1</sup> The Levy would not be imposed on working farmland, business assets, 20% of the family home or pension pots.

## BUILDING A FAIR RECOVERY – RETURNING ECONOMIC POWER SLÁNÚ COTHROM A THÓGÁIL - CUMHACHT GHEILLEAGRACH A THABHAIRT AR AIS

Sinn Féin believe that the constitutional future for the people of Ireland north and south is within a United Ireland. Ensuring that the economy in the north is just, equal and sustainable is a key objective towards securing and maximising the return and stability of the island economy for all citizens north and south.

The current relationship between the Stormont and London means that Westminster's economic and political needs will always supercede the needs of our people and our economy.

The debate on EU membership, the British HGV levy, agriculture and fisheries, and the Tory welfare cuts agenda represent but a few examples of British policy development that has undermined the needs of the people and economy of the north. They ignored the reality that the economies north and south are interlinked and interdependent and put British needs first.

The Tory party is advocating a vote on future membership of Europe. There is no consideration of the needs of the people of the Six Counties and the consequences of leaving the EU on this part of Ireland. If there is a referendum on European membership then there must be a separate and binding referendum here so our people can be masters of our own destiny.

Economic growth, investment and jobs will not be driven by Westminster but from the Assembly. The current economic arrangements for the north, where only some powers are allocated to the north have created a fundamentally unstable economy. We need the powers to manage and grow the economy and we need our public services to benefit from growth.

In order to build a strong progressive tax base, to increase jobs and growth and to work towards eradicating in-work poverty, policy responsibility for taxation must be vested in the Assembly and Executive. In particular, the full control over income tax, national insurance, corporation tax, capital gains tax, fuel duty, air passenger duty, inheritance tax and the setting of a minimum wage must be returned.

Sinn Féin welcomes the transfer of powers on corporation tax to the Executive. We are working to ensure that we receive the full benefit of any decision to reduce the Corporation Tax rate. That means that any financial benefits flowing from a reduction must be retained and reinvested here to provide for better public services and economic growth. Sinn Féin continues to negotiate on that basis.

The price of maintaining the union is further austerity, economic stagnation, poverty and inequality. That is a price we cannot and will not pay.



# EQUALITY NOT AUSTERITY

## Sinn Féin will:

- » Immediately seek the transfer of all economic and fiscal responsibility to the Executive and Assembly ensuring all tax revenues are retained in the north rather than returned to Westminster. This means control of and access to all receipts including those which are currently collected by Westminster.
- » Seek authority to devolve tax rates, and vary all aspects of those taxes (bands, base rates, exemptions) in order to build a fair taxation system. In particular, the full control over income tax, national insurance, corporation tax, capital gains tax, fuel duty, air passenger duty and inheritance tax.
- » Ensure a sustainable framework for public finances, including the necessary borrowing and investment powers.
- » Seek the transfer of the Crown Estate, banking regulations, broadcasting powers and key economic levers including the minimum wage, decisions over welfare policy and administration to the control of the Executive and Assembly.
- » Demand a separate binding referendum on EU membership for the north if one is to happen.
- » Campaign for all-Ireland representation at the EU commission and Council of Ministers.



## BUILDING A FAIR RECOVERY – BUILDING THE ALL-IRELAND ECONOMY SLÁNÚ COTHROM A THÓGÁIL - GEILLEAGAR UILE-ÉIREANN A THÓGÁIL

Different economic structures north and south have undermined economic growth, inhibited trade and labour market mobility. Island-wide trade has yet to reach its full potential.

The potential of our island economy is strong. Harmonising tax regimes, currencies and legal systems, public services and two competing economies for an island nation of 6.4 million people is central to creating a fully integrated and healthy economy, creating greater opportunities for growth, harmonising workers' rights and creating a better business climate for advancement of entrepreneurial spirit north and south.

Sinn Féin is focused upon rebuilding, realigning and repairing the island economy in order to create growth in employment, improve skills, nurture innovation and research, develop entrepreneurship, expand trade and exports, encourage inward investment, and support and manage comprehensive public services like social care, health, and education.

There is no doubt that a planned and agreed approach to economic development across the island of Ireland would deliver greater:

- » Export trade and inward investment.
- » Economic and jobs growth and improved workforce skills.
- » Productivity and innovation.
- » All-Ireland trade and reduced costs.
- » Research and development.

Integrated island-wide co-operation within public services makes economic sense. With vision, commitment and determination we could deliver better services to all the people of Ireland.

### **Sinn Féin are proposing the following workable solutions:**

- » Full and detailed examination of delivery models of integrated public services across the island.
- » Identification of all-island shared projects from planning stage to completion.
- » Create a Border Economic Development Zone to harmonise trade and maximise returns for border businesses.
- » Upgrade island-wide rail, road and waterways infrastructure.
- » Remove transaction costs for cross-border trade.
- » Develop air corridors across a network of airports to improve worldwide connectivity for business on the island.
- » Review the regulatory barriers to doing business on the border.
- » Examine and present solutions to address the impediments for businesses transferring staff north and south.



## BUILDING A FAIR RECOVERY – A FAIR SOCIETY AND DECENT WORK SLÁNÚ COTHROM A THÓGÁIL - SOCHAÍ CHOTHROM AGUS OBAIR FHIÚNTACH

The Tory party has focused on cutting welfare protections to those most in need. While other parties supported these cuts Sinn Féin held out and achieved protections at Stormont House for families with children with disabilities, adults with severe disabilities, the long-term sick and larger families.

This agreement must now be honoured. There can be no further attacks on those most vulnerable in our society.

However the British Government have not just stopped at welfare they have also undermined the rights of workers. Being in work is no longer an escape route out of poverty as employers are not required to pay a Living Wage. Zero-hour contracts don't guarantee a weekly income.

Flexible working can indeed be a benefit to employees as well as employers, but only if it is based on a guaranteed income and guaranteed hours.

Lack of adequate housing is a major cause of poverty. The shortage of adequate social housing is forcing many people into the private rented sector, where the quality of housing is not guaranteed and where landlords can charge exorbitant rents. We recognise the need to increase the stock of social housing and have set out a plan to do that.



### Sinn Féin will:

- » Ensure the full implementation of the welfare protections agreed in the Stormont House Agreement.
- » Seek the establishment of a Poverty Commission, as set out in our submission to the Stormont House talks.
- » Campaign for a Living Wage.
- » Campaign for greater security of employment and an end to zero hour contracts.
- » Work for enhanced workers' rights.
- » Work to ensure pension credits are paid automatically.
- » Promote a pilot scheme to ensure maximum take-up of benefit entitlement for parents of children with disabilities and for adults with complex needs.
- » Seek a moratorium on evictions for those who are in mortgage arrears.
- » Seek the establishment of a state-owned community bank to provide low-cost credit to ordinary people.
- » Work to resolve unmanageable personal debt including the renegotiation of loans and credit-card debts and debt cancellation.
- » Seek to introduce rent controls in the private rented sector.
- » Seek provision of high-quality affordable childcare capped at 15% of income for those on low incomes and those in education and training.
- » Develop a single youth policy agenda across departments north and south.
- » Tackle youth unemployment by working in partnership with Councils, schools, careers teachers, youth services and business.



## UNITING THE COMMUNITY - RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND RESPECT AN POBAL A AONTÚ - CEARTA, COTHROMAS AGUS MEAS

Sinn Féin believes in a rights-based society underpinned by social and economic justice, where everyone is treated equally and given equal access to opportunities.

Rights, equality and respect are the way to build a united community. There can be no justification for discrimination under the guise of a conscience clause, no acceptance of sectarianism under the guise of tradition and no resort to racism under the guise of tabloid populism. Sinn Féin is seeking to build a pluralist, inclusive and equal society.

### **Sinn Féin will prioritise:**

- » The implementation of an Acht Gaelige as agreed to promote the Irish language and safeguards the rights of Irish speakers.
- » A Bill of Rights for all Citizens and an All-Ireland charter of fundamental rights.
- » The resolution of parades disputes in line with that agreed in the Stormont House Agreement.
- » Ending segregation through the removal of peace walls building on experience and dialogue between local communities.
- » Campaigning against all forms of racism and for an inclusive and welcoming society which embraces all our citizens equally.
- » Campaign to reduce the gender pay gap.
- » Support quotas and legislation to increase the participation of women in political and public life.
- » Campaigning to ensure everyone has access to legal redress if they are discriminated against.
- » Campaigning against all age discrimination in accessing goods, facilities and services.
- » Ensuring the law treats all children equally regardless of family status or the sexual orientation or gender identity of their parents.
- » Campaigning to ensure that those aged 16 and over are entitled to vote.
- » Developing legislation to address online bullying and harassment in all forms including sectarianism, transphobia, homophobia and racism.
- » Opposing the Conscience Clause, recognising it for what it is, an attempt to erode human rights and reduce the effectiveness of equality legislation.
- » Championing the cause of transgender people to ensure that they have equal access to goods, facilities and services.
- » Supporting the right of the lesbian, gay and bisexual people to marriage equality.
- » Including equality protections for LGBT citizens and prohibitions on homophobic and transphobic discrimination in the forthcoming Bill of Rights for the north.
- » Pushing for legislation north and south for equal treatment of prospective LGBT parents in reproductive and adoptive services, and in related social and other public services.



## TRUTH RECOVERY AN FHÍRINNE

During the negotiations which led to the Stormont House Agreement Sinn Féin resisted attempts by the British Government and other parties to have current and future inquests removed from Coroners' Courts and placed within the remit of the Historical Investigations Unit. Once again the British government and its allies within unionism sought to thwart the efforts of embattled families seeking the truth about the circumstances of their loved ones' deaths. For Sinn Féin this was a red-line issue we would not cross. That resistance has ensured that families will have Article 2 compliant inquests and we will continue to give full support to them as they seek to achieve maximum disclosure from a reluctant British government.

The creation of the Historical Investigation Unit (HIU) provides families with the opportunity to learn more about the truth surrounding the death of their loved ones. The Stormont House Agreement commits the British government to making full disclosure to the HIU and we will be seeking to ensure that they do not resile from their commitment to supply all of the relevant information to the families.

We continue to press the British government to hold a full independent public inquiry into the murder of Belfast solicitor Pat Finucane. This was a commitment given at Weston Park. During the negotiations in December the Irish government, despite its alleged support for such an inquiry, failed miserably to address this issue and hold the British government to account.

The families of the Dublin/Monaghan bombings and the Ballymurphy massacre are still waiting on information in files held by the British government so as they can learn the full truth regarding the death of their loved ones. In the Stormont House Agreement both governments recognised that there were outstanding investigations and allegations into conflict-related incidents, including a number of cross-border incidents and committed to co-operation with all bodies involved to enable their effective operation. We will be working to ensure that the British government provides all information to the Barron Inquiry.

We will be working to ensure that the British government provides all information to the families of Pat Finucane, of the victims of the Dublin/Monaghan bombings and of the Ballymurphy massacre.



## IMPLEMENTATION OF AGREEMENTS COMHAONTUITHE A CHUR I BHFEIDHM

Sinn Féin have honoured all agreements that we have entered into. Making and implementing agreements is the foundation stone of the political process.

There are key elements of the Good Friday Agreement that have still not been implemented, including a Bill of Rights and the establishment of a Civic Forum.

In addition at Weston Park the British government agreed to establish a full inquiry into the murder of Pat Finucane. At St Andrew's in 2006 there was a commitment made by the British government to legislate for the Irish language through an Acht Gaeilge.

They reneged on those commitments too.

Since the Stormont House Agreement was reached on the cusp of Christmas Eve Sinn Féin has engaged positively with the Party Leaders' group to ensure its full implementation. This includes the provision agreed to protect welfare benefits

Sinn Féin continues to demand the implementation of all outstanding agreements and will continue to work constructively to drive forward the peace process.

### **Sinn Féin will:**

- » Continue to work for full implementation of the Good Friday Agreement.
- » Push for a Bill of Rights and work towards an all-Island Charter of Rights.
- » Push for the re-establishment of the Civic Forum and north-south consultative forum.
- » Push for the review and improvement of north south bodies.
- » Deliver Acht na Gaeilge.
- » Deliver a referendum on Irish unity.
- » Deliver the full implementation of the Stormont House Agreement.





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