

MANIFESTO 2011



Assembly
& Council
Elections
5th May 2011



MAKE STORMONT WORK
FOR YOU



traditional unionist
voice

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The current Stormont has not delivered for you. Instead of good government we get endless deadlock, massive waste and no right to an Opposition. Vote again for those who have presided over such failure – or stay at home – and you'll get more of the same.

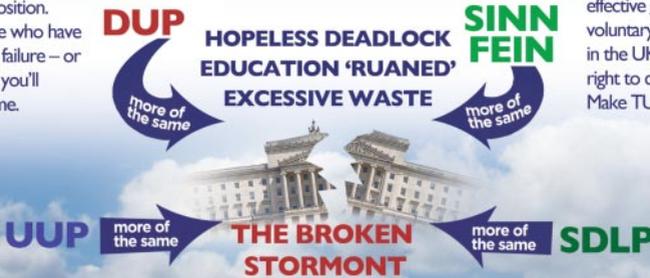


MAKE STORMONT WORK FOR YOU

VOTE  **TUV**

THE STORMONT YOU NEED

By voting TUV you reject the failure of the past and choose the positive change necessary to make Stormont work: effective government through voluntary coalition, as elsewhere in the UK, an Opposition and the right to change your government. Make TUV YOUR choice.



The Assembly Election on May 5th 2011 offers you the chance to put the failures at Stormont to right. This is your opportunity to help create a better Northern Ireland where Unionism actually delivers for unionist voters!

If you are one of the MANY unionists who despair of the failure of this Assembly then please take a few minutes and read our vision for a better form of government with policies and principles that can make a real difference to your life.

Let's make May 5th the day you helped bring real change...

Introduction by Party President William Ross

NOW UNIONISM HAS A CREDIBLE VOICE CALLING FOR A BETTER NORTHERN IRELAND

“It may seem a long time since the last Assembly election in 2007 but it’s important that we recall what we were promised by those who then came seeking our vote. We were assured that the era of concessions to Republicans was over. We were promised no compromise with terrorism. Sinn Fein success was portrayed as something that would do irreparable damage to Northern Ireland.



Yet within two months, those who made these boasts had rolled over and betrayed their word. Since then, there has been a political marriage between the DUP and Sinn Fein which deepens by the day. What passes for political stability at Stormont is presented as a wonderful achievement – but the question I ask you is simple; Is Stormont working for you? Is it working for the good of Ulster?

We’ve seen the growing unemployment, the crumbling of our economy, the record waiting lists at our hospitals, the water taps from which no water flows, the lack of accountability by those in power – and I say to you – isn’t it time we had some real change? Change that can benefit everyone in Northern Ireland.

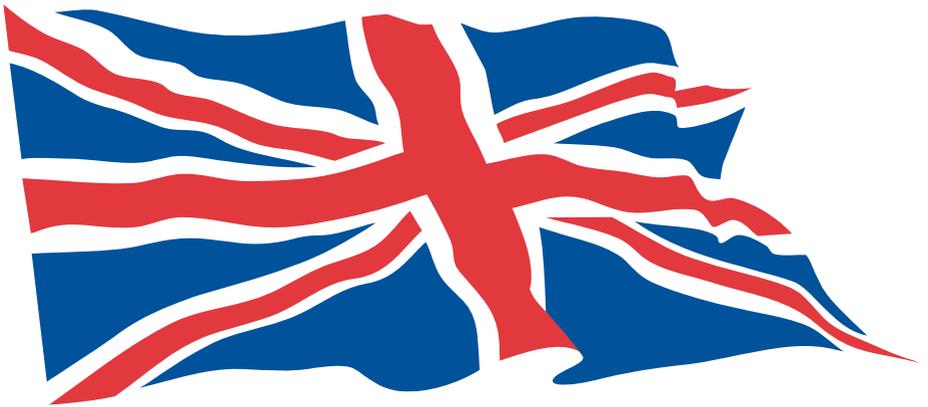
You know where you stand with TUV. We want a Stormont that works for you. We want to see Northern Ireland prospering again. We do not believe that Sinn Fein wreckers should be allowed to continue destroying Education, Roads, Water Services, etc. Unlike others, we keep to our word and so I hope you will choose May 5th to bring about a NEW start for Unionism by lending your vote to Traditional Unionist Voice.”

POSITIVELY WORKING FOR BETTER GOVERNMENT

Treating you as a first class British Citizen

TUV is the only Unionist Party – indeed, the only party - in this election that is unapologetically demanding equal democratic rights for all of the citizens of Northern Ireland, and demanding them now, not in the distant future.

We believe that you should have the right to change your government just as those who will also vote on May 5th in Scotland and Wales will be able to change their governments. Under the current failed system you are denied this basic right. TUV stands ready to change this third rate system and replace it with one that is proven to work throughout the rest of the world.



With no party commanding a majority, TUV believes that the foundation stone of any good government is voluntary power-sharing with a vigorous Opposition to hold the Executive to account. This is the gold standard for a properly accountable government which effectively works on your behalf rather than simply pursuing the narrow and selfish interests of those within it.

Government for the people, not for the politicians, is our simple but powerful message.

If, like us, you are fed up with the hopeless deadlock and non-delivery that has characterised the outgoing Assembly, we ask for your vote so we can start the process of bringing about the Stormont that Northern Ireland needs.

Let's deliver a functioning Stormont that is able to get to grips with the many issues that confront us. In these difficult times, we just cannot afford another four years of the inertia and bickering that we have seen since 2007.

Ministers must be held accountable to you, the people, not simply to their Parties.



During the Water crisis in December 2010, the Sinn Fein Minister Conor Murphy was rightly criticised for failing the people of Northern Ireland as they were left without water. All the democratic political parties at Stormont recognised his failure but were impotent to do anything about it because with Sinn Fein's support he was untouchable. TUV believes that this is wrong and that every Minister must be made accountable to you – the voter. Likewise, Catriona Ruane has run amok through education, utterly unfettered by the Assembly, including those who promised "they'd put manners on" Sinn Fein.

As a British citizen, why settle for the third rate and failed current system when you could join with TUV in creating a 1st class system that restores vision, honour and integrity to the government of Northern Ireland?

The failed Stormont we can't afford



Futile trading of Policing & Justice
for **nothing** on parading



A Shrine at the Maze



IRA back in business; security
sacrificed



Log jam & chaos



Untold millions **squandered** on North
South bodies and Irish language



Rising unemployment; **no strategy**
for recovery



Education **Ruined**



You deserve better



*traditional
unionist
voice*

Putting Northern Ireland back to work

Despite all the phoney promises of huge foreign investment, during the time of the outgoing Assembly, more jobs have been lost in Northern Ireland than has been the case for decades. With 60,000 people without employment, TUV places the restoration of our economic prospects as a priority.

Cutting the growing dole queues, helping local business create new jobs, focusing on targeted and sustained investment - these are the economic objectives of TUV.



Like you, TUV has been shocked to see unemployment here increase by more than 100% since the Assembly of 2007 came to power. We read the forecasts that indicate it will get much worse as cuts bite and we appreciate that now, more than ever, you need competent political representation that can help foster new jobs whilst supporting Northern Ireland's hard-pressed employers.

Northern Ireland is the only part of the UK to fail to show any economic recovery and there is a simple reason for this. Decades of IRA violence has ensured that our private wealth-creating sector has been weakened and remains smaller than any other UK region,. Until we address this structural imbalance in a meaningful way, we will continue to lag in the slipstream of the rest of the UK.

Even worse, under the current failed Stormont, a North/South agenda for economic growth has been prioritised. The Irish Republic's economy has crashed. Yet, Stormont seeks to grow our economy by linking it to the bankrupt South. This is madness.

TUV advocates the dynamic development of East-West links, plugging Northern Ireland into the more vibrant British economy which is still the

world's sixth largest! A coherent strategy of helping local business gain bigger shares of economic activity in England, Scotland and Wales is essential. Beyond that boundary, TUV advocates assisting Northern Ireland business gain market share in the emerging new economies around the world. DETI objectives and focus will need to change to achieve this.

TUV believes in boosting local employers by moving some basic functions from the public sector to the private sector. This has the twin advantages of sustaining overall employment numbers and reducing costs to the taxpayer, whilst creating a new generation of local entrepreneurs.

Those who join the all-Ireland harmonisation agenda by clamouring for the Republic's rate of Corporation Tax ignore the resulting intolerable strain on the Block Grant causing even deeper cuts. Instead TUV believes the Block Grant needs to be recalibrated to take better account of the specific socio-economic needs of each part of the UK. Thus 'the Barnett formula', as Lord Barnett himself has conceded, needs revised and updated.

TUV believes that it is vital that the Stormont government must have clear economic priorities and that it must carry them out.

Why should the only jobs that matter be those of the politicians at Stormont?



Help us bring much needed change in the economy by voting TUV on May 5th.

Our alternative to Stormont's shambolic budgetary mismanagement

Managing the public finances effectively is a core function of government. Stormont's performance has been woeful. Instead of a coherent budgetary response to the substantial cuts announced from Westminster, we saw a sham of a Budget, with no spending details, just aspirational targets of the most meaningless variety and no evidence of a joined up approach to manage the pain. Little wonder seasoned economic experts described Stormont's budget as 'vacuous'.

However, its priorities provide a telling commentary on this failed government. Whereas DETI, charged with economic development, faces a massive 64% cut in its capital budget and confesses in its budget statement that it won't have any money for new industrial development over the next 4 years, the Maze Shrine project is to have all the money it needs. The fact that money can be found for the Provo Project at the Maze, but no money will be available for new industrial development projects across Northern Ireland, is a shocking indictment of Stormont and the priorities of its DUP/Sinn Fein coalition.



It is such absurd choices that TUV will oppose vigorously in the Assembly.

Likewise, though money is being cut on roads and water infrastructure and maintenance, the cross-border political project, the A5 motorway, is prioritised and money can still be found to waste on promotion of Irish and the useless North/South bodies, which cost us £100m per annum.



The working Stormont you need

TUV's roadmap to making Stormont work

RReal delivery, not deadlock



Obliterate waste and bloated
bureaucracy



A strong and vibrant Opposition



Democratic right to vote a party
out of Government



Mandatory coalition out,
voluntary coalition in



An employment strategy, not
language strategy



Prudent fiscal governance



Placing our Children's education above political dogma

Few things matter more for the future of Northern Ireland than the education of our children. Yet our world class education system that has served us so well has been thrown into utter chaos by Sinn Fein. In simple terms it has been **RUANED**.

Caitriona Ruane, the Sinn Fein Education Minister, was gifted the opportunity to undermine our highly successful education system through the foolish actions of those unionists prepared to work a system that allows a Minister to do exactly as he/she wants. In Ruane's case, she ignored the wishes of the overwhelming number of parents that want to see some form of academic selection retained.

TUV strongly supports academic selection where that suits the abilities of children who wish to avail of it. We also believe that parents are entitled to have their children prepared accordingly in primary school. For those children who do not take the academic route there must be equal consideration and secondary education funded adequately to make the most of their talents.



There must be no funding hierarchy whereby secondary schools are disadvantaged. Northern Ireland must value all of its children but in order to do this we must facilitate the academic potential of some – rather than thwart it – and utilise and enhance the different talents of others. TUV believes in choice, not prescription.

We would not disturb the Dickson Plan in the areas where it successfully operates.

We are concerned at the disparity in pre-school provision, noting the frequent disadvantage in rural areas and the inequality in opportunity for many local children in consequence of the socio-economic priorities set by the minister.

TUV rejects the Education and Skills Authority (ESA) as we believe this will have disastrous consequences for education. Power will be concentrated in the hands of the so-called “progressives” who have driven the anti-transfer and anti-academic agenda.

The audacity of Sinn Fein in misusing the education portfolio to lavish scarce resources to promote Irish medium education knows no bounds, nor has it been curbed by those deluded unionists who claim they “control Stormont”. As controlled schools are closed, Preparatories strangled and others starved of funds, Ruane has advanced her aggressive pro-Irish agenda at all costs. This educational dictatorship must end. Irish should be a language available for study, but should not be a state funded medium for teaching.

TUV wants to see Sinn Fein out of Education and out of all Ministerial Offices

Some unionists like to pretend that they have “put manners” on Sinn Fein. Yet YOU know that the havoc caused in Education by Ruane is proof of the falsity of that claim.

TUV seeks to restore balance in Education believing that children come before dogma. Don't you agree?

Cutting the waste from government, getting best value for your money

It is striking that the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister has a staff complement greater than that of the White House. Such selfish and lavish waste of public funds is unacceptable to TUV. In an age of austerity restraint must be reflected at the very top of the political sphere.

TUV is the party that seeks to get value for the taxpayer, believing that since government uses your money, it must be held responsible for every penny of it.

A good start in the new Assembly would be to move to axe the bloated North/South quangos which cost you £100m per annum – a vast sum that could be used to protect more useful and valuable services.



TUV will look carefully at every quango and ensure that only those that can demonstrate a positive utility for the people are retained.

TUV opposes jobs for the boys, preferring jobs for the people.

TUV is appalled at well paid MLAs benefiting from subsidised meals even as many families struggle to put food on the table. For the past four years the politicians at Stormont were content to have you foot the £500,000 per annum subsidy of the canteen they used.

At a time when many working people are having their salaries frozen, isn't it appropriate that MLAs showed leadership and accepted the same?

Why is the Stormont bureaucracy the only part of the economy to show jobs increasing even as elsewhere jobs are lost?

At this time of stretched finances, you will have shared our surprise to read that Stormont is preparing to take a £6.5m loss on a property in Belfast it bought for £9m but is selling for £2.5m. Just think of how these funds could be better used and that's just the tip of the financial iceberg!

There needs to be a seismic change in the way politicians think. They are put in place by you, the voter, and they must remember that it is your money they spend.

Wastefulness at Stormont extends across the spectrum and also into local government. It flourishes to excess under the aegis of 'the equality industry' which has grown up under the overly onerous Section 75 obligations. Having to consult every obscure and supposed interest group not only slows government but adds greatly to the cost, particularly given the culture of engaging expensive consultants on almost every issue.

TUV wants to ensure every penny is used sensibly and gets you the best value possible.

Prioritising Health, putting the patient first

Northern Ireland has extremely skilled and committed doctors, nurses and allied health professionals who have always tried their very best to help all in need. Perversely the Department of Health has frequently made poor decisions that have often frustrated their best efforts. This situation has not improved under devolution with our health service falling behind the rest of the UK, with even many of our statutory residential homes being forced into closure.

The facts make grim reading.

When the Minister for Health stated that by the end of March 2011 no patient should have to wait longer than nine weeks for a first outpatient appointment, to many that may not have seemed all that ambitious. However, the waiting time statistics published by the Department of Health reveal that not even this modest goal is likely to be reached.



In recent times the number of people waiting longer than nine weeks rose to a staggering 54,472 or, to put it another way, a massive 125% rise on a year previously. This is intolerable.

Waiting times for a first appointment at an Integrated Critical Assessment and Treatment Service, a Diagnostic Service, Endoscopy and Inpatient Admission have all seen massive rises as well.

We must bring real change to Health and that means getting priorities right. TUV believes in getting to the point where:

- ✔ Hospital outpatient and inpatient waiting lists are effectively dealt with.
- ✔ Hospitals are clean and safe for patients.
- ✔ Frontline services are staffed effectively and efficiently to make sure that we all get 21st century healthcare.
- ✔ Adequate protection is in place for children who suffer abuse and neglect.
- ✔ The disabled and those with special needs are allowed to live quality lives and are not excluded from everyday life.
- ✔ Older people are cared for in a caring and dignified way.
- ✔ All communities have adequate and safe emergency cover at all times.

TUV believes that reducing unnecessary waste within the Health Service will assist in ensuring that allocated funds are directed to the greatest need. Putting the bureaucracy before the patient is not the way to achieve the service you deserve.

With hospitals closed and bed numbers reduced, TUV recognises the stress caused to local communities. TUV believes that no hospital should close until there are the extra beds available in other hospitals equal to the numbers of beds closed.

The cost of bureaucracy amongst the Health Trusts has kept rising despite a reduction in their numbers. This is a particular problem at senior levels where empire-building is afoot. TUV believes that available finance must

be directed to the point of patient choice and use. For example, the monopoly position of many services provided by The Belfast Trust should be opened up and other Trusts allowed to purchase services as they best deem fit. The cost of such decisions should be borne by the Trust unable to supply the treatments in a timely fashion.

Northern Ireland is a small region within the UK and sometimes patients need to go to the mainland for treatment. Our senior doctors should be able to direct this on the basis of medical need without having to seek the permission of health bureaucrats.



The current configuration of Trusts has resulted in the Belfast Trust being much larger than the other Trusts. This has resulted in an excess preponderance of spending in Belfast and a failure to roll out new treatments to patients elsewhere when at times this can be sensibly achieved. TUV recognises that some treatments are best provided on a regional basis. However, other services, even complex ones, can be delivered in the larger Area Hospitals. TUV advocates a radical rethink of the Trust boundaries in order to maximise ease and equality of access for all the population.

Some of the most modern treatments are only available in Northern Ireland after an unacceptable wait. This actually results in a greater cost to the NHS. We are committed to ensuring that new treatments are available to patients in the same time frame as they are in the rest of the UK.

Northern Ireland's health care budget is under significant pressure. Whilst we support wholeheartedly the principle of care free at the point of use

and that no emergency patient should be turned away, it is a recurrent problem that patients from the Republic of Ireland receive expensive non emergency care in NI hospitals. TUV have no problem with care being provided to citizens of the Republic: it is a sensible example of cross border cooperation. However, such care should be paid for: there are agreements already in place and TUV would seek to strengthen these arrangements so that Northern Ireland's NHS claims back from the Dublin government the cost of all non emergency care provided to its citizens. The failure of our Trusts to have proper procedures for recouping this money is disadvantaging NI tax payers and is completely unacceptable especially at a time of economic hardship.

In some cases the Republic's government has chosen to avail of NI health care for non emergency procedures and has purchased such services: again such cooperation is no threat to our NHS and indeed can help it. However, TUV will ensure that the proper price is paid for these services and with healthcare inflation tending to run significantly ahead of general inflation, also ensure that the full cost of such arrangements is borne by the Dublin Government meaning that Northern Ireland is not financing the Republic's system.

In 2009 TUV highlighted the complete failure of the devolved Minister's plans to recruit additional NHS dentists. Two years on almost no progress has been made; much of the problem is due to pay proposals which were completely unrealistic and on this issue additional expenditure will be necessary.

UNIONISM THAT STICKS TO ITS WORD

Standing resolutely against IRA/Sinn Fein's wrecking agenda

TUV recognises IRA/Sinn Fein for what it was and still is, and treats it accordingly. You know our actions match our words.

If others truly cared about thwarting Sinn Fein, they would not have promoted them to the heart of government and then happily sit with them as joint partners at the very top of power. Voting TUV means opposing Sinn Fein 24/7.

TUV is concerned about the current terrorist threat, regardless of which flag of convenience is chosen by the IRA. We detect an unwillingness by those in power to spell out the full extent of IRA activity; even here the politics of 'the peace process' holds sway. The prevalence of on-going targeting and threats, particularly directed at members of the security forces, illustrates the republican leopard has not changed its spots.

Yet, quite disgracefully, personal protection weapons are being withdrawn from vulnerable ex-security personnel whilst ex-republican prisoners are employed as Sinn Fein bodyguards and freely carry weapons. The service and lives of ex-security forces may mean little to those delighted to have terrorists in government, but to TUV they are heroes deserving of maximum thanks and protection.

TUV is clear that there can be no pandering to terrorism. IRA resurgence must be nipped in the bud. Whatever policing and military steps are necessary must be taken.

In this context of on-going terrorist threat it is abject folly to diminish prison security and control through what is passed off as prison reform. The lessons of the past demonstrate the risks of losing control of the prisons. However, under David Ford we are seeing a rush to get rid of brave officers and proven structures, with the danger of facilitating paramilitary control.

Rejecting the Maze Shrine

While innocent victims are marginalised and cuts hit frontline services, an IRA Shrine at the Maze is set to be delivered under the guise of a 'Conflict Transformation Centre'.

Why does the 'Conflict Transformation Centre' have to be built at the Maze if there is no link with the ugly prison buildings? If there is no connection between what is proposed and the Provo's citadel of rebellion, why are Provo prisoners to sit on the management board overseeing the development?

We agree with **Nigel Dodds MP** when he once said, *"However it is dressed up, whatever spin is deployed, the preservation of a section of the H-Blocks – including the hospital wing – would become a shrine to the terrorists... That would be obnoxious to the vast majority of people and is something unionist people cannot accept."*

Now, alas, the whole Maze site, including its housing, will be branded and blighted by this blot on its landscape, something which could have been avoided if successive DUP ministers in DOE had delisted and demolished the prison buildings.



TUV will continue to expose and oppose this shameful Provo project. We will use all influence afforded to us by your vote to try and stop this wicked concession going forward.

Refusing to reward terrorism

TUV believes that, both in deference to the innocent victims of the past and as a protection for the future, for all time there should be statutory testimony to there being no reward for terrorism.

Thus, we propose that it should be provided in primary legislation that no one with a terrorist conviction can ever hold ministerial office. If terrorist groupings do, in time, transform into exclusively democratic parties, then this would be a decreasing imposition, but, nonetheless a timely reminder of the political price to be paid for terrorism, or reversion thereto. And, it would show fitting respect for the victims of terrorism.

Terrorism should never pay. Indeed, it should carry a lifelong disincentive. Hence, the logic and necessity of a statutory provision which puts government office beyond the reach of anyone –'loyalist' or republican – with a terrorist conviction. Why should the victim survivors of terrorism pay a life-long price, but the perpetrators be able to gain the highest office in the land? This perversion of justice and democracy must be reversed.

So, TUV believes that by law we should have no terrorists in government, in contrast to others who happily sit in government with them.

TUV is the Unionist Party that Sinn Fein wants to see defeated. Ask yourself why.



Voting for those who put Sinn Fein into government will keep them there

TUV believes IRA/Sinn Fein is unfit to hold any government office, not just the office of First Minister. They are as unfit to control Education as OFMDFM.

The DUP seeks to seduce votes by talking up the threat of McGuinness as First Minister, but it was they who put Sinn Fein into government in 2007 and at Westminster they didn't even try to stop the legislative change which creates the possibility of a Sinn Fein First Minister. Not one DUP MP spoke against it, or tabled a single amendment to stop it, or forced a single vote on the issue and DUP peers voted for the clause making the change. Why, because they wanted to create the threat of McGuinness as First Minister in an effort to coerce unionists into voting DUP. Thus, in this election we urge voters not to play their cynical and devious game, but vote TUV, the party opposed to Sinn Fein in every office.



By supporting TUV voters are taking the strongest stand possible against IRA/Sinn Fein. Voting for those who put Sinn Fein into government will keep them there.

If Sinn Fein was the biggest party, McGuinness could only take office as First Minister if Unionist MLAs nominated a deputy. So, Sinn Fein can be kept out if the DUP and UUP join with us in pledging that no Unionist will be nominated to serve under him. Will they do that? Why risk another disappointment, vote TUV.

Resolute against any further dilution of The Union

Being neither Irish nationalists nor little Ulster nationalists, TUV believes emphatically in the integrity and unity of the United Kingdom. Devolution certainly has its place in delivering better local administration, but it must not become an instrument to hollow out the essentials of The Union.

The essence of The Union is equal citizenship, which is not a one way street. A common fiscal regime is inextricably linked to the maintenance and purpose of The Union, which is why devolved institutions in Northern Ireland have never had tax-raising powers. The matters reserved to Westminster are the common bond that binds the UK together and warrants our representation in Parliament. Reduce those reserved matters and you further detach from the rest of the UK. Hence, the reason why IRA/Sinn Fein see the transfer of tax-raising powers as its next staging post to Irish unity.

From fiscal parity flows benefit parity. So any region of the UK whose tax take is below its spend should be careful what it wishes for. You can't cut the link on tax, and in particular contribute less to the Treasury, and expect to keep parity in benefits and expenditure. Hence, the inevitable and large reduction in the block grant which would result from devolving power over corporation tax to Stormont.

And, of course, it wouldn't end at corporation tax, because once the first tax chord is broken those whose agenda is political, not economic, would soon be demanding more. Enabling legislation at Westminster to permit devolution of tax-raising powers away from London would be the scene-setter for the next Hillsborough showdown when Sinn Fein would again put the gun to the DUP's head and require them to roll over as the price for clinging to power. It worked so effectively over policing and justice, the same trick will be pulled again.

So, we warn Unionists against the folly of cutting the ties that bind us in to the United Kingdom. When one recognises that under the Belfast Agreement harmonisation is the means to attaining Irish unity, then the political and constitutional objective behind the plausible call to harmonise our corporation tax rate with that of the Republic is clear for all to see.

Supporting the victims of terror

Despite all the hype from some about a caring interest in victims, the reality is that innocent victims of terrorism are one of the most politically exploited and neglected sectors in the new Northern Ireland.

Having their innocent victims still hurting while the IRA sits in government, is an inconvenient embarrassment for those who ushered Sinn Fein into the top office in the land, where Martin McGuinness – the personification of the IRA's wicked campaign – has joint oversight of victims' issues. But the comfort of office eases the embarrassment. Even at the Hillsborough negotiations nothing was secured for victims.



At the heart of the inequity meted upon innocent victims is the atrocious definition of "victim" which remains in The Victims and Survivors Order (NI) 2006. By equating victims with those who made them victims, we have this obscenity of the perpetrator having the same standing and rights as his innocent prey. Until this definition is changed there will be no justice for victims.

At every election since coming to power the DUP has promised that they would have the Assembly change the definition, even though they knew

the nationalist veto they accepted as the price of office would prevent such change. For example, just before the European election **Diane Dodds** promised, ***“Very soon, legislation will be brought before the Assembly to change the definition of a victim. It has been passed to the Bill Office and is at an advanced stage.”*** Two years later the Bill is dead.

Thus after four years of devolution the atrocious definition of “victim” remains.

Devolution which can't even deliver a just definition of “victim” is devolution in hock to the forces of terrorism. TUV is pledged to continue the fight both for justice and adequate funding for the victims sector, with a proper statutory definition of ‘victim’ being the key requirement.

TUV shares the belief of so many of those who have lost loved ones that justice must be the over-riding priority and that means bringing the guilty to account, not sanitising their evil deeds and then trying to equate them with their victims.

Defending civil and religious liberty for all

Many in the media have attacked the Orange Order for rejecting the Public Assemblies Bill arguing that if they don't like the Parades Commission they should have accepted the alternative offered. Some Unionist politicians – angry that the agreement they forged with IRA/Sinn Fein was democratically rejected - have foolishly joined those who have publicly criticised Grand Lodge.

By contrast TUV believes that the Grand Lodge was right to reject the atrocious anti-democratic liberty-restricting Public Assemblies Bill.

TUV also believes that there is a better way to resolve the problems surrounding parades.



TUV advocates clear positive proposals which would enshrine the human rights of those wishing to exercise their fundamental freedoms of peaceful assembly.

The starting point of this legislation ought to be a statutory affirmation and protection that the right to freedom of peaceful assembly is paramount, thereby giving primacy to this fundamental human right in

any balancing exercise necessary in determining between competing rights, with the resulting onus on those wishing to displace the fundamental right.

In terms of foundational principles the legislation ought to specifically declare that where a parading route is historically traditional such will be a strong material consideration in reaching any determination. Likewise, in pursuit of the concept of shared space the legislation should specify that arterial routes, which are substantially non-residential, should carry a statutory presumption in favour of parading. It can not be a pre-conditional starting point that the Loyal Orders must engage with Sinn Fein backed residents groups, because such will merely entrench the intransigence such groups have shown. Nor, must there be reward for intransigence or violence as we've seen heretofore.

Only when there is recognition that human rights are not just a Nationalist / Republican preserve can genuine progress be made on this issue.

Likewise, there must be parity in approach over the growing number of illegal republican parades, many of them to glorify dead terrorists and conducted with full paramilitary displays in the presence of Sinn Fein ministers. The manner in which the authorities, including the Parades Commission, have turned a blind eye to such odious spectacles is something TUV will pursue with vigour in the Assembly.

Christians have rights too

A disturbing trend in legislation and the development of human rights jurisprudence is the concerted attack on core Christian values and beliefs. From forcing B & B providers to accommodate lifestyles alien to their beliefs to elevating sexual orientation rights above freedom of expression and religious belief, we have seen Christian ethics and beliefs lampooned and curtailed.

On these issues we believe our law has got out of kilter with the protection of freedom of expression so central to the constitutional imperatives upon which our Nation was founded.

Support for traditional family values is a key issue for TUV. Thus, in the Assembly we will be both pro-life and pro-family.



SOLUTIONS THAT MAKE SENSE

A 21st century water service

Those tens of thousands of people who found themselves without water over the Christmas/New Year period understand only too well how inadequate our water system has become and how bereft of accountability our system of government is; the Minister responsible is simply untouchable.

Years of underinvestment, partly caused by Government having to divert funds to fight the IRA terror campaign, combined with the hopeless Sinn Fein appointed management, have created an intolerable situation.



Northern Ireland deserves a 21st century water service. If the DUP/Sinn Fein coalition, despite its previous stance, moves to introduce water charges, then TUV insists that:

- Northern Ireland householders do not end up paying twice for their water. The element that is currently in the annual rates bill must be removed and thus rates reduced for all.

- Northern Ireland Water should be privatised in order for the necessary investment to be made available. This privatisation should proceed on the basis that the Government retains a **golden share** in order to make sure that no extraordinary decisions are taken against the interests of the householder, including foreign sale, as the Stormont regime allowed with NIE.
- Water metering on a pay as you go basis may be introduced by the privatised company, in the same way as it has been introduced across the rest of the United Kingdom. Those who use the most water should pay for it. Those who use least water may end up paying less than they do at the moment.
- Any standing charges for meters must accurately reflect true installation and maintenance costs.
- There must be an appropriate discount for those not reliant on public sewers.

In all circumstances, the clear goal must be to modernise, upgrade and manage a water service that is fit for the 21st century.

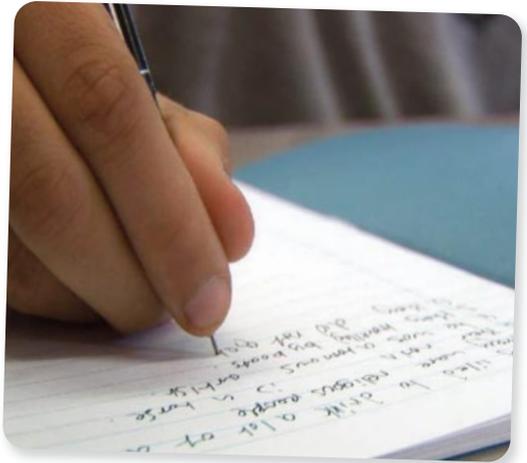
Helping our University Students

Northern Ireland's students represent a rich vein of talent that can contribute to the future well being of our society.

TUV views the proposals to increase Tuition Fees as retrograde, ill-conceived and unfair.

TUV also appreciates the additional costs that have accrued to our Universities with more and more students going through them and therefore seeks to provide a balanced approach to dealing with the funding crisis.

To that end, TUV will seek to maintain Tuition Fees at the current rate for Northern Ireland students. Scotland makes special provision for its own students, so, why not Northern Ireland? TUV will seek to work with local Universities to ensure that students get best value and optimum utility from the courses offered locally.



Far too many of our most able students end up leaving Northern Ireland and stopping this "brain-drain" is a key aim of our policy. We want to make sure that the brightest and most able graduates feel that Northern Ireland can meet not only their academic needs but will be a place where they choose to work after their education.

Helping Agriculture thrive

Farming and the related agri-food industry remains central to our economic success. The greater importance of this sector to this part of the United Kingdom and the resulting tensions with DEFRA, means Stormont needs to fight hard for local farming interests. Hard-pressed by the bureaucracy of Europe on one hand and the anti-farming tendency of DEFRA on the other, Northern Ireland agriculture often feels the pinch. Every sector has passed through tough times and deserves attention.

With major CAP reform underway the needs of the industry require focused attention in Stormont. Food security, which includes sensible protection from imports cheapened by non-compliance with EU production and processing standards, and maintaining adequate food supply at sustainable farmgate prices are challenges that must be met. TUV, as evidenced by Jim Allister's championing of agricultural issues while an MEP, is committed to fighting hard for the entire sector.



Each sector has its own specific needs, but a common need is stability in price and management of overheads. Global pressures are often determinative, but hands on involvement in Stormont can help. Too often agriculture is allowed to drift from one crisis to another. Bringing

DARD under local control has done little to help. Still DARD lacks a clear vision for our red meat sector and dairy farmers have to ride the market rollercoaster with little long-term planning. Restructuring of the industry is often promised, but never sustained with tangible help.

Likewise, the poultry sector has been left to face the trauma of the new cage regime without help, while even the cash-strapped Republic can help our competitors and the Minister can find £13m for new offices for herself and department.

Under Sinn Fein we have seen politically inspired focus in animal health and elsewhere on 'Fortress Ireland', yet when tested it failed spectacularly in the dioxin crisis, confirming us in our view that 'Fortress Northern Ireland' is the far safer and better option.

A Minister who plays politics with farming is not serving the industry's needs. Yet, even on the 2nd tranche of the Farm Modernisation Scheme she deliberately imported disadvantage to lowland farmers by weighting the aid in favour of the most nationalist areas. Such travesties TUV will resist with vigour in Stormont.

Minister Gildernew seldom walks the walk of leading a department which is truly on- side with farming, even streamlining multi discipline farm inspections to a bearable level has not happened. With TUV in opposition to Sinn Fein and not hampered by any governmental alliance with the Minister, we will be the toughest in pressing the Department for action and in exposing her preferences for pouring money into soft social projects rather than front line farming needs.

Defending Our Fishermen

The Common Fisheries Policy has abjectly failed. It is supposed to deliver both sustainable stocks and economic prosperity for the sector yet has done neither.

Rather, our industry has spiralled into decline under its stewardship, reduced often to 3 days fishing per week. It is hard to imagine a more unsuitable management tool in a mixed fishery than quotas, which is the prime control instrument of the CFP.

Top down, over-regulation and multi-layered micro-management from Brussels, has been disastrous. It is hard to find a sector where stakeholders feel more disconnected and alienated, or where there is a greater sense of inequity.



Repatriation of control of fishing policy from Brussels to the UK would have our full support. Indeed, quitting the EU altogether would serve the UK's national interests even better.

On fishing policy root and branch change is required, but equally a change of mindset is essential. Fishermen are not the enemies of sustainability. On the contrary, they have the greatest vested interest in maintaining sustainable fisheries. Thus, they must be engaged, not excluded, in sustainable management.

Reward for complete record-keeping, with catch allocations, not landing allocations, and the capacity to pool, swap and trade allocations between vessels, would all contribute to locally administered management capable of providing the results on sustainability and economic reward, which the CFP has lamentably failed to deliver.

Looking after the Senior Citizen

In these tough times many senior citizens are hurting badly. Runaway fuel costs, rising care costs and unfair treatment of modest savings in means testing are all diminishing the standard of living of many pensioners. It is not fair that the prudence of many senior citizens in making savings during their working lives should be punished by unfair rules in their golden years.

The threat of water charges and rate hikes are adding to the pressure. Thus, there is much for politicians to do in protecting the interests of our senior citizens.

We will not make unrealistic promises, but within the Assembly we will strive to protect concessions already won for the elderly and seek to ensure adequate and fair provision for this expanding section of society.



Supporting PMS savers

The delay in bringing relief to hard-pressed PMS savers has been disgraceful. Though repeatedly promised a just and equitable settlement, and despite being facilitated with Westminster's contribution, the Stormont Executive persistently dragged its feet. Months of past promises piled up with no delivery to savers in desperation. Only the approach of the election spurred some action.



The Treasury Select Committee was explicit in finding that DETI's acquiescence and inaction over a gap in the regulations governing PMS was critical to the savers being left outside the banking compensation scheme. Yet, to this day DETI has refused to say sorry or face up to its obligations. Instead, the Executive insists that its £25m contribution must be repaid. This is shameful, though, under TUV and other pressure, DETI has retreated from its previous stance that the £25m would have to be repaid before the savers got any balance monies due after the assets are realised.

Jim Allister from outside the Assembly has been a key supporter of the PMS savers. Once inside Stormont TUV will be relentless in ensuring delivery of the long overdue fair and just settlement.

Value for money Local Government

Stormont's dither and delay on Local Government reform has seen millions wasted on preparations, but no result. The proposals proffered by the Sinn Fein/DUP coalition, including the surrender of the capital city, Belfast, to non-unionist control must be revisited. By aligning Castlereagh with Belfast, rather than Lisburn, the Sinn Fein agenda can be thwarted.

Not satisfied with the absurdity of mandatory coalition at Stormont, the DUP, though they pretend opposition to it, nonetheless in government has proposed imposing the same on Local Government through the application of D'Hondt. TUV is opposed to mandatory coalition in both Stormont and Council.

The winter confusion over responsibility for pavement gritting illustrated practical issues which have not been resolved adequately by Stormont. Joined up government isn't just required within the devolved Departments but across Government, both regional and local.

Above all, local government is about providing reliable local services through affordable rates. Thus, as at Stormont, cutting waste and excess at council level are key targets of TUV. This year's rates bills show substantial increases, underscoring the urgency of transparent value for money, a blitz on waste and accountability to those who pay the piper.



In every council TUV's pledge is to:

- Deliver best value 21st century local services.
- Meet Council's' environmental obligations efficiently but cost effectively.
- Drive down rates as low as possible by cutting needless expenditure.
- Defend the symbols of our British Council Chambers against Sinn Fein attack.
- Seek local policing which keeps citizens safe and stamps out anti-social behaviour.
- Support aggressive economic promotion of the council area.
- Fight fearlessly for constituents' interests on planning and other local issues.
- Ensure our councillors work tirelessly on behalf of the community.

REFERENDUM ON WESTMINSTER VOTING SYSTEM

Stable and strong government is desirable. The present first-past-the-post system is far more likely to produce a clear winner and, therefore, more stable government. The Alternative Vote system would tend to result in perpetual coalition and greater instability.

Thus TUV recommends a 'No' vote.





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