



OUR 5 POINT PLAN FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

**REAL ACTION
ON THE ISSUES
THAT MATTER
TO YOU**

Who we are....

The DUP is the party for the people whose identity is focused on their Northern Ireland heritage and our place in the United Kingdom. For over 50 years we have been the party for Northern Ireland and have earned the reputation to be the people's party by virtue of our work in and for the community. The DUP takes its position, democratically bestowed on it, to make Northern Ireland the best region in the United Kingdom.

What we seek....

The DUP wants to contribute to make Northern Ireland a place of peace, stability and prosperity. We want to ensure that the people in every district and community benefit and see their standard of living improve and their way of life become more enjoyable. We want to normalise our institutions and political arrangements to demonstrate that democratic standards apply and fairness and equality of opportunity is the right of all. We will strive to make Northern Ireland the most prosperous part of the United Kingdom.

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Introduction

We all know Northern Ireland is a great place to live, work and raise a family.

But it can be even better. We have a bright future to look forward to, because those who came before us believed in Northern Ireland and in the Union.

Northern Ireland's strong place in the Union has created jobs, improved our standard of living and given us the NHS.

Over the last five years, with your support, the DUP has fought for and delivered more for health services, greater investment in infrastructure, more jobs and education.

As we come out of COVID, and post Brexit there is much to be done to ensure, as a people, we come through stronger, more prosperous and more unified.

In this election campaign the DUP has launched **a five-point plan to build a better future for Northern Ireland within the Union, by fixing our National Health Service and investing £1 billion more in it, growing our economy and creating 20,000 jobs in the next 5 years, helping working families by delivering 30 hours free childcare per week and tackling the cost of living crisis, keeping our schools world-class, and working to remove the Irish Sea border.**

Sinn Fein wants to win this election to implement their long-held plan for a border poll.

If Sinn Fein wins the most seats on Thursday 5th May, they will push for a border poll, which means Northern Ireland will face months and years of arguing and fighting, rather than fixing our health service and focusing on rebuilding and growing our economy.

Now is not the time for more division and uncertainty.

That is why this election is so important.

Your vote will decide whether Northern Ireland's future is one focused on fixing our health system, tackling the cost of living crisis and replacing the Protocol or focused on a divisive Border Poll.

The DUP is the only party that can stop Sinn Fein's border poll plans.

A first preference vote for any party other than the DUP will not unite and strengthen the unionist cause, but will help Sinn Fein deliver their border poll plan.

On May 5th your vote will make the difference. Let's work together and focus on the issues that matter to all of us.

Support your local DUP candidates and then transfer to other Pro-Union candidates.

Let's work together to focus on the issues that matter to you and help me move Northern Ireland in the right direction.



Rt Hon Sir Jeffrey Donaldson MP
Leader



OUR **5** POINT PLAN FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

Fix the NHS

- ✓ Investing an extra £1 billion to cut waiting lists using a partnership with the independent sector
- ✓ Deliver an additional 750,000 hospital assessments and procedures
- ✓ Train more GPs per year
- ✓ Reward staff and end dependence on overpriced agency sector
- ✓ Introduce a social care cap
- ✓ Implement Bengoa reforms for a better health service



Grow the economy

- ✓ Support 20,000 jobs in the next 5 years
- ✓ Create higher paid jobs in AgriTech, Life and Health Sciences and Advanced Manufacturing
- ✓ Create 5000 new tech jobs
- ✓ Make NI 100% fibre broadband
- ✓ Deliver a modern career service in schools
- ✓ Expand our apprenticeship programme
- ✓ Make tourism a £2 billion industry



Keep our schools world-class

- ✓ Fair funding model for all schools
- ✓ Build more new schools in the next 5 years
- ✓ Modernise curriculum for the 21st century workplace
- ✓ Widen access to breakfast and homework clubs
- ✓ A cap on school uniform costs
- ✓ Restructure special educational needs services



Help working families

- ✓ Deliver 30 hours free childcare per week
- ✓ Fair access to pre-school places
- ✓ Financially support hard-pressed families with an Energy Support Payment
- ✓ Deliver Energy Efficiency schemes to support better-insulated homes
- ✓ Support calls for a Windfall Tax on energy firms
- ✓ Make going green affordable to homes in NI



Remove the NI Protocol

- ✓ The Protocol must be replaced by arrangements that restore our place within the UK internal market
- ✓ Any new arrangements must be able to command the support of Unionists as well as Nationalists
- ✓ We will judge any new arrangements against our 7 tests to determine whether they respect NI's position as part of the UK



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**DUP**
www.mydup.com

In Government

Over the last number of years DUP Ministers have been working to deliver on the policies and priorities that matter to the people of Northern Ireland. Our Ministers have made a significant contribution in shaping the work of the wider Executive as well as leading their respective Departments. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has necessarily altered and impacted the work of Ministers and their policy objectives.

The Executive Office

In addition to the work of leading the Executive and representing Northern Ireland DUP First Ministers and Junior Ministers have worked to secure: -

- ✓ The appointment of a Mental Health Champion for Northern Ireland.
- ✓ The launch of Historical Institutional Abuse Redress Board, with payments already made to thousands of victims.
- ✓ A new commissioner appointed for Institutional Childhood Abuse.
- ✓ Commencing implementation of Mother and Baby Homes report
- ✓ The Urban Village programme regenerating communities.
- ✓ Funding for Tackling Paramilitarism programmes.
- ✓ A New medical school in Londonderry.
- ✓ Commencement on work on a Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy.
- ✓ The Minority Ethnic Development Fund (MEDF).
- ✓ The signing of the £1 billion Belfast Region City Deal.
- ✓ The Troubles Permanent Disablement Payment Scheme.

- ✓ Appointment of a new Victims Commissioner, and support of approximately £15m annually for victims.
- ✓ The formation of the High Street Task Force to regenerate town and city centres.

Economy

The DUP, through its Ministers, has delivered a number of key economic objectives. Even during one of the darkest economic periods in our recent history, over 3300 new jobs were created, Northern Ireland cemented itself as a global leader in sectors such as cyber security and fintech, Belfast was named as one of the world's leading tech cities and the local economy recovered quicker than any other region of the UK.

While there is much more to do we have made progress in a number of areas: -

- ✓ Provided over **£600m in financial support** during the COVID pandemic to businesses across Northern Ireland through more than 50 bespoke schemes including small and micro businesses, hospitality, supply chain businesses and the newly self employed. The DUP also increased the level of funding available for student hardship and delivered a **£500 Covid Disruption Payment** to all students studying in Northern Ireland.
- ✓ Delivered **80 Assured Skills Academies** with companies including PwC, Microsoft, Deloitte, KPMG and ASOS.
- ✓ Secured **£286.8m for the roll out of the Economic Recovery Action Plan** including delivering the **£140m High Street Scheme**, providing over 1.4m people with a pre paid £100 card to help inject an economic stimulus to our High Streets and re-orientate people back to the High Street and away from online shopping trends.

- ✓ Secured funding for the **Tourism Recovery Action Plan**; and COVID response agreed with key stakeholders across our tourism and hospitality industry.
- ✓ Delivered key legislation such as the **Parental Bereavement and Pay Bill** to ensure working parents will be entitled to statutory paid leave following the death of a child, stillbirth or miscarriage and amended legislation to protect holiday entitlements for workers furloughed during the lockdown.
- ✓ Launched the **'Embrace a Giant Spirit'** campaign to promote Northern Ireland as a leading tourist destination.
- ✓ Delivering **Project Stratum**, Northern Ireland biggest infrastructure project with over **£165m investment in hyperfast broadband** as a direct result of the DUP / Conservative Confidence and Supply Deal. This project, when complete, will make Northern Ireland the best-connected country in the world.
- ✓ Initiated key reviews of Agri-Food, Careers Services and Invest NI.
- ✓ Secured widespread support for a new **10X Economic Vision**, including supporting strategies such as Skills for 10X, Trade and Investment for a 10X Economy and the Review of Careers Services.
- ✓ Delivered **100 bursaries** to allow students to undertake masters degrees as part of our plan to mark Northern Ireland's Centenary and invested over **£98m in the FE sector** over the past three years.
- ✓ Delivered the **Northern Ireland Domestic Aviation Scheme**; a vital intervention to secure Northern Ireland's air connectivity during the global pandemic.



- ✓ Led the first ever **'Northern Ireland Day' at World Expo** in Dubai, showcasing why Northern Ireland is such a great place to live, work, visit and invest.
- ✓ Launched **'Path to Net Zero' Energy Strategy** and 22 point Action Plan for implementing it. This strategy will help reduce our reliance on importing fossil fuels and create hundreds of new jobs as Northern Ireland establishes itself as a global leader in hydrogen technology and clean energy.
- ✓ Delivering upon **City and Growth Deals**; over **£1.3 billion of funding** for innovative and exciting projects delivered in collaboration with National and Local Government.
- ✓ Secured the future of **HMS Caroline** so this key part of our maritime history stays in Belfast.

Education

The DUP, through its Ministers, has delivered a number of key education objectives. While progress has been made we recognise there is much more to do.

- ✓ The DUP has **increased the number of Nurture Units** in Northern Ireland over the last mandate by 100% with the number now standing at 62. These units support some of our most vulnerable pupils.
- ✓ We supported schools during COVID-19 with an **additional £149m** of funding
- ✓ Our DUP Ministers have increased funding for some of our most vulnerable members of society with **spend on children with Special Educational Needs rising by 77%** during this mandate.



- ✓ We have introduced during this assembly term **the most progressive School Starting Age legislation** within the UK. The School Age Bill will provide real choice to the parents of many thousands of children born in April, May and June each year and also to premature children who would have been Young for Year if born at term. No longer will any child in Northern Ireland be required to start school a year earlier due to their premature birth.
- ✓ We created the **Engage programme to support children coming back to school** during COVID-19. Our DUP Education Ministers have invested **more than £42m in this scheme**.
- ✓ Our Ministers introduced the 1st Northern Ireland wide report into **Educational Underachievement** and have now implemented the majority of the action points from the Fair Start report.
- ✓ We **introduced the first Holiday Hunger scheme** in Northern Ireland and also rolled out the “period poverty” pilot for schools.
- ✓ We created the Primary School Counselling pilot “Healthy Happy Minds” with a **direct investment of £7m**.
- ✓ We have **introduced mandatory CPR training** into the Curriculum for all pupils aged 11-14 with CCEA and the Education Authority working closely with the British Heart Foundation and the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service to develop guidance, resources and training.
- ✓ As part of the **NI100 celebrations** the Department of Education rolled out a specific programme to give students a better shared understanding of the last 100 years of Northern Ireland’s history and also **provided funding directly to schools to allow them to mark the event**.
- ✓ As part of our commitment to reforming education we have **delivered an “Independent Review of Education”** which is due to report next year.
- ✓ In 2020 and 2021 our Ministers **provided the funding for free summer schemes** across all schools in Northern Ireland.
- ✓ The Department is currently rolling out a **programme for the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee**. This will not only provide resources to mark this historic event but also will provide funding directly to schools to allow them to mark it.
- ✓ The **Childcare Sector** - DUP Ministers have supported the sector **with £36 million being paid to childcare providers**, to enable the sector to remain viable and childcare places to be available for families, at a time when the essential role played by early education and childcare to our broader society and economy was demonstrated more clearly than ever.
- ✓ We have provided **20,000 digital devices** to all statutory Nursery, Primary School, EOTAS centre, Special School and Post Primary teachers.
- ✓ In 2021 we **invested £21m investment in the provision of education in Special Schools**. 17 Special Schools benefited from the funding providing 61 additional classes, the recruitment of approximately 60 additional teachers and 145 additional classroom assistants.
- ✓ This year we **have provided £2 million to assist schools in enhancing their outdoor learning spaces** and provide good quality play equipment.



Agriculture & Environment

The DUP, through its Ministers, has delivered a number of key objectives in the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs. While progress has been made we recognise there is much more to do.

The DUP has: -

- ✓ Distributed over £28m in Covid-19 business support to farm businesses - the most comprehensive package of support anywhere in the British Isles or Europe.
- ✓ Delivered £3.4m to farms impacted by flooding in the North West.
- ✓ Increased on-farm capital investment by doubling the value of Tier 1 of the Farm Business Improvement Scheme to £15m.
- ✓ Delivered a new future agriculture policy which will improve on-farm efficiency, target support toward productive farming and move away from land-based payments.
- ✓ Announced a new and holistic approach to tackle bovine TB and enable a healthier cattle and wildlife population.
- ✓ Allocated £75m for the refurbishment of the CAFRE sites in Cookstown and Antrim.
- ✓ Committed £10m approval to build new beef facilities at AFBI and CAFRE estate.
- ✓ Introduced a protein crop scheme to help tackle our reliance on imported protein.
- ✓ Provided a 4.3% uplift in the Basic Payment Scheme in 2020 and 6.29% increase in 2021 to help farmers cope with unprecedented challenges.
- ✓ Cut red tape and reduced cross-compliance penalties.
- ✓ Enhanced the independence of our appeals panels' process.
- ✓ Strengthened Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD) enforcement measures.

Backing Rural Communities

Since 2017, the DUP has demonstrated our commitment to rural dwellers by: -

- ✓ Delivering a £1m Rural Halls Refurbishment Scheme.
- ✓ Allocating funding to isolated minority border communities to build capacity.
- ✓ Providing £650,000 for outdoor recreation projects, including walking trails.
- ✓ Launching a £2m scheme to help support vital search and rescue teams.
- ✓ Piloting the Rural Digital Inclusion Scheme and Micro Business Growth Schemes
- ✓ Providing £200,000 to local agriculture shows as well as an independent review.

Delivering a Cleaner Environment

Protecting our environmental heritage will be key to Northern Ireland's success for generations to come. In the last Assembly, DUP Ministers have: -

- ✓ Introduced ground-breaking Climate Change legislation with balanced protections for agriculture.
- ✓ Delivered £13.5m for projects to deliver for habitats, species and improved water and air quality through the DAERA Environment Fund.
- ✓ Published a Green Growth Strategy.
- ✓ Launched a Soil Nutrient Health Scheme.
- ✓ Maintained public access to forest and country parks during Covid-19 restrictions.
- ✓ Funded the Forests for our Future scheme to help landowners plant their own woodland.
- ✓ Promoted improved recycling rates across local authorities.
- ✓ Launched Northern Ireland's first-ever Rural Community Pollinator Scheme to improve the health of our bees.



Our Plan to Fix the NHS

The Democratic Unionist Party wants to fix our NHS and is committed to:

- ✓ investing an extra £1 billion to cut waiting lists using a partnership with the independent sector
- ✓ delivering an additional 750,000 hospital assessments and procedures
- ✓ training more GPs per year
- ✓ rewarding staff and end dependence on overpriced agency sector
- ✓ introducing a social care cap
- ✓ implementing Bengoa reforms for a better health service

Frontline professionals see at first hand the need to do things differently, and they should be encouraged and empowered to lead the change. Despite the challenges, there are many positive aspects to our health and care, and a great deal to be proud of. The task at hand is to deliver a service everyone can be proud of, at every stage.

Modernising the Health System

There are many areas within our health system requiring change, and we have engaged with health professionals, service users and the wider community throughout the current mandate of the Northern Ireland Assembly to understand fully where change and modernisation are required.

The DUP will support:

- ✓ Full implementation of the *Systems not Structures* report by Prof Rafael Bengoa.
- ✓ The Executive Covid Taskforce being repurposed into a Transformation Taskforce.
- ✓ Transformation being clinically led with frontline professionals empowered to lead the change.

- ✓ Extending and expanding the Transformation Fund, which originated from the DUP Confidence and Supply Agreement, allocating it a further one-quarter of a billion pounds over the course of the next Assembly term.
- ✓ Investing an additional £2 billion in Health above baseline over the next three years.
- ✓ Refocusing resources into the community and primary care, including more new health and care centres.
- ✓ Rolling out fully Province-wide additional multidisciplinary primary care teams as piloted through DUP Confidence and Supply funding in Belfast, Down and Londonderry.
- ✓ Emergency Departments being for Emergencies- i.e., ambulance arrivals and those referred by doctor. Urgent and ambulatory care, and rapid assessment services to be co-located with EDs, and Acute Care at Home expanded.
- ✓ A new approach to service planning with the Health and Social Care Board abolished, and reinforcing a culture of innovation and improvement.
- ✓ Maximising the opportunities offered from healthcare data in predictive analytics, research and the evolution of personalised medicine.
- ✓ Increase the proportion of spend on prevention, health improvement and early intervention.
- ✓ Initiate a new focus on tackling key population health challenges such as obesity and diabetes, substance misuse and self-harm.
- ✓ Implementing a new cancer strategy, offering more chemotherapy and other treatments at local units.



- ✓ Prioritise the acquisition of resilience and coping skills from an early age.
- ✓ Dramatically improving access to mental health services and deliver a world-leading psychological trauma service.
- ✓ Access to timely specialist treatment for all patients presenting with eating disorders.

Staffing

Staff are at the heart of our health service, and they have excelled during the recent pandemic. We are determined to ensure they are well supported and that the sector is attractive to those who might consider working in healthcare.

The DUP will support:

- ✓ Enthusing and motivating staff, and ensuring fair pay and safe-staffing levels.
- ✓ Increasing the number of health professional training places in line with the HSC workforce strategy and Medical Student Places Review.
- ✓ Incentivising the retention and return of staff financially and/or through support for training, freedom to pursue professional development areas of interest, long-term rostering or guaranteed leave, in areas such as domiciliary care, ICU or general practice, allowing a reduction in locum and agency spend.

- ✓ The workforce being rebalanced towards community and primary care, and a gradual reduction in the boundaries between professions with the expansion of new roles such as physician associate and community paramedic
- ✓ Resolving the pension accrual issue which is perversely limiting the activity of senior clinicians.
- ✓ Providing indemnity for primary care as in other parts of the UK.

Technology

Technology is at the heart of modern health provision and we see the results regularly with improved diagnosis and treatment rates, aided with the latest health care innovations.

The DUP will support:

- ✓ Every citizen to have access to, and the ability to input into, their medical data online during the next Assembly mandate.
- ✓ Using digital health technologies to drive improvement through high quality, targeted and co-ordinated care, access to specialist expertise, patient engagement, system learning and resource management.
- ✓ All community-based staff to have mobile access to health and care systems as we progress towards a paper-free service.
- ✓ Establishing a Digital Health Technology Hub to enable universities, business and clinicians to accelerate the development of medical technology devices and diagnostics.
- ✓ Maximising the benefits from technology, data and artificial intelligence, and through the opportunities offered in life sciences and genomics.

Despite the myriad of challenges there are many things we do in Northern Ireland exceptionally well. We have a great opportunity to make Northern Ireland a leader in high quality healthcare.

The DUP will support:

- ✓ Embedding Northern Ireland as a global centre of excellence in e-health.
- ✓ Building on current strengths to be a leader in precision medicine.
- ✓ Establishing a Clinical Research Centre of Excellence bringing together the NHS, industry and researchers, transforming our capacity to trial drugs and medical technology.

Time To Cut Waiting Lists

The DUP wants to transform Northern Ireland's intolerable waiting lists from the worst in the UK to the best by 2030, investing an extra £1 billion to deliver full NHS capacity plus an additional 750,000 hospital assessments and procedures.

This will include £700m more over the course of the next Assembly term to guarantee an additional 650,000 hospital assessments and procedures over and above the regular everyday service by 2027, and seeing the full £1 billion pounds invested by 2030.

Continuing in the same way as before with small contracts with local providers will not have the necessary impact. We will seek to partner on a much larger scale with a national or global independent/non-profit provider organisation who can work alongside us and provide the additional skilled staff required in the short term as we enhance our own capacity.

We will separate planned surgery away from emergency care designating an increased number of sites as specialist centres for planned surgery with seven-day theatre schedules, multidisciplinary mega-clinics, and establishing regional endoscopy and diagnostics centres.

The DUP can point to having made a positive impact on waiting lists when previously in charge of the Health Ministry.



Prior to the Northern Ireland Executive having to surrender £200m in welfare fines to the Treasury, significant progress had been made on waiting lists.

The number waiting on outpatient appointments had been decreased by more than 31,000 (or 24%) to under 100,000 from a then-high of 130,783 just after the DUP inherited the Health Department in 2011. Also, within two years, the number waiting on admission for treatment was decreased by 10,000 (or 17%).

Within Emergency Departments the DUP Minister managed to achieve consecutive months with 76 and 77 twelve-hour waits in Emergency Departments across Northern Ireland compared with more than 1,500 each in January and February

during the first winter after inheriting the post. The number waiting longer than 12 hours to be assessed, treated and discharged from Emergency Departments was slashed by 44%.

Making progress on waiting times is painstaking and slow but slides in the wrong way extremely quickly, and unfortunately the protracted refusal of other parties to act to reform welfare put paid to that hard-earned progress.

We recognise that additional money alone is far from the answer, as Northern Ireland already has the highest spend per capita of all of the UK.

We must maximise the outcomes from additional investment.

We want to see services and waiting lists organised on a regional Northern Ireland-wide basis to permit same-time access regardless of where anyone lives.

A rapid review team should be tasked with exploring whether the direct payments model in social care could be extended across into areas of healthcare too.

Huge resources are squandered through patients fit for discharge requiring extended stays in hospital, awaiting confirmation of community care arrangements.

We are proposing a powerful new unit to minimise delayed transfers from hospital and the consequent bed days lost, driven from the Department and operating cross-system and across Northern Ireland.

The DUP will support:

- ✓ Investment of an additional £700m to tackle waiting lists over the next Assembly term.
- ✓ Exploring partnering on a much larger scale with national or international independent/ non-profit providers who can work alongside us and deliver the additional skilled staff required in the short term as we enhance our own capacity.
- ✓ Maximising existing capacity through designating more sites as dedicated elective centres, seven-day theatre schedules, multidisciplinary mega-clinics, and establishing regional endoscopy and rapid diagnostics centres.
- ✓ Organising services and waiting lists on a regional Northern Ireland-wide basis to permit same-time access regardless of where anyone lives.
- ✓ A rapid review team to consider whether the direct payments model in social care could be extended across into areas of healthcare.
- ✓ A powerful new unit to minimise delayed transfers from hospital and the consequent bed days lost, driven from the Department and operating cross-system and across Northern Ireland.

Finding a Remedy for General Practice

It is clear that general practice is not working and needs fixed.

Patients aren't being assessed in a timely manner, the workload is continually expanding and there aren't sufficient staff to run the service optimally.

90% of all contacts within the NHS occur with a GP, and the number of patients with multiple long-term conditions is rising with people living longer with illness. On average each person is consulting their GP more often.

The DUP wants to see resources redirected into primary and community care, and the number of doctors, and subsequently general practitioners, trained increase substantially following the HSC workforce strategy and Medical Student Places Review. In advance of that however we also need to look at all the other factors contributing to the present situation including the system and structures.

Practices have historically operated as a small business, providing services as a private contractor. However the composition of the primary care workforce has changed, and fewer trained GPs want to take on a partner role in that type of business model.

We need to explore alternative models, which could still permit those who wish to remain partners to do so. Any new system should be designed in such a manner that existing practice arrangements could remain; particularly since individual GPs may have invested substantial sums in them doing so.

More GPs have been retiring and reducing hours than could be balanced by those newly qualified, increasing the pressure on those they leave behind. Doctors have been abandoning the salaried GP role in practices too, leaving a large cohort of trained GPs in Northern Ireland who are



choosing not to work in primary care, or only working very limited hours. There is justification for a bold substantive offer that could transform work-life balance in order to incentivise the return of some of this readily available valuable existing resource.

Indemnity should be provided for primary care as is the case in other parts of the UK, and pay and conditions must enthruse and motivate staff. As well as any financial incentivisation, support for training, freedom to pursue professional development areas of interest, long-term rostering or guaranteed leave are elements that can be employed in a range of different specialisms where there are workforce gaps.

Working as part of a much larger team is attractive to many doctors. It means, in simple examples such as arranging annual leave or if a colleague is off sick, there is a much broader group to carry the burden rather than just one or two colleagues.

Having larger groups of GPs and multidisciplinary staff also provides the

scope for additional services to be offered, innovations and enhanced integration with secondary care, the community/voluntary sector and local government through area-integrated partnerships.

Examples for alternative larger or medium-sized employer models might include via a trust or a not-for-profit organisation for instance. There are already seventeen GP Federations set up as community interest companies covering the entire Northern Ireland population. Doctors and other staff could be employed in a manner more akin to their counterparts in health and social care trusts.

Much of the present primary care estate is no longer fit for purpose. The Primary Care Infrastructure Development programme which aims to roll out new Primary and Community Care centres in a number of our larger towns should be reinvigorated and accelerated.

Technology needs to be embraced and better utilised. The morning rush to obtain an appointment by phoning the practice is

utterly unacceptable for a modern service, and new ways need to be provided. This will include the ability to seek assistance and obtain an appointment online via your mobile phone. There is no reason why primary care and public services should be any less equipped for modern communications than business and retail for instance, and individuals should have digital access to their medical information.

While many patients will continue to prefer a face-to-face consultation, YouGov found patients would prefer a same day video consultation by 61% to 21% over waiting longer to be seen face to face.

It is essential that continuity of care and the longstanding personal patient-GP relationship is retained. GPs need to be free to operate at the level they have been trained for, with members of the multidisciplinary team providing appropriate support within their competencies where medical attention is not required.

The multidisciplinary primary care teams including social workers, physiotherapists and mental health practitioners, piloted through DUP Confidence and Supply funding in Down, Londonderry and Belfast should be rolled out fully Province-wide.

Democratic Unionist Party proposals for General Practice include:

- ✓ a new Health Minister quickly establishing a working group involving clinicians, service users and officials, to consider an alternative employer model which could co-exist alongside traditional small-scale partner-run practices.
- ✓ refocusing resources into primary and community care.
- ✓ increasing year on year the number of GPs trained.
- ✓ incentivising GPs currently not working or working limited hours back into general practice.
- ✓ providing indemnity for primary care.

- ✓ reinvigorating the Primary Care Infrastructure Development programme with locations for the next phase of new Primary and Community Care centres announced as one of the early decisions of a new Health Minister.
- ✓ progress on technology in primary care including access to an electronic health and care record for every Northern Ireland citizen, and the ability to arrange appointments that suit the individual.
- ✓ full rollout of multidisciplinary primary care teams across Northern Ireland.

Reforming Social Care in Northern Ireland

Fundamental reform of social care in Northern Ireland is needed. Such reform must place a greater focus on the needs of individuals.

The DUP will support:

- ✓ The Executive legislating for a fair, sustainable model for adult social care, including a cost cap for individuals.
- ✓ Implementing the Transforming your Care recommendation for a policy review to determine the potential benefits of independent price regulation within the care sector.
- ✓ Permitting care home operators in Northern Ireland to reclaim VAT to the same extent as other parts of the UK through the updating of Health Trust contracts, making additional resources available to reinvest back into our care home network.
- ✓ Anticipatory care plans and regular multidisciplinary reviews for all care home residents to monitor needs and aid earlier intervention.
- ✓ Concerted action to strengthen our domiciliary and social care workforce, making it a more attractive profession by improving working conditions, establishing clear career pathways and providing support for staff. Mandatory



training and professional development should be introduced, with pay and progression linked to skills, experience and qualifications.

- ✓ Significantly reducing the bureaucratic burden which accompanies working in social care services.

Mental Health

The Confidence and Supply Agreement with the Conservative Party helped secure significant additional investment for mental health services, approximately £10million over five years. This included funding for a number of projects:

- ✓ £190k to prevent substance misuse
- ✓ £189k for forensic mental health services

- ✓ £165k Mental Capacity Act training
- ✓ £610k recovery model
- ✓ £25k service improvement
- ✓ £540k suicide prevention
- ✓ £403k talking therapies
- ✓ £274k 'Think Family'- to improve outcomes where parents have mental health issues.

Working with the Mental Health Champion and local communities, we will continue to prioritise and invest in this area. We will ensure that services are accessible to everyone in the community, and work with a range of groups including sports and employers to ensure that awareness is maintained and those in need of help know that it is there for them.

Our Plan To Grow the Economy

- ✓ Support 20,000 jobs in the next 5 years
- ✓ Create higher paid jobs in AgriTech, Life and Health Sciences and Advanced Manufacturing
- ✓ Create 5000 new tech jobs
- ✓ Make NI 100% fibre broadband
- ✓ Deliver a modern career service in schools
- ✓ Expand our apprenticeship programme
- ✓ Make tourism a £2 billion industry

Support 20,000 jobs in the next five years

We have ambitious targets to grow the Northern Ireland economy in the next five years, across a whole range of sectors, from technology to tourism, construction and retail. We want these jobs to be spread across the whole of Northern Ireland, to both our town and cities, and our rural communities, and accessible to those at all levels of the skills range. We will work with employers to understand their needs and encourage growth as Northern Ireland returns to the international stage to sell its goods and services.

Make tourism a £2billion industry

We will grow the local tourism industry into a £2billion sector, boosting visitor numbers year on year and investing in infrastructure and attractions to remain a destination of choice. We will continue to welcome growing numbers of cruise ships and encourage visitors to enjoy the local experience right across Northern Ireland. We will work with local communities

to grow the neighbourhood tourism sector and ensure the hospitality sector is supported with a dedicated strategy, designed to support its growth and attractive as a career choice.

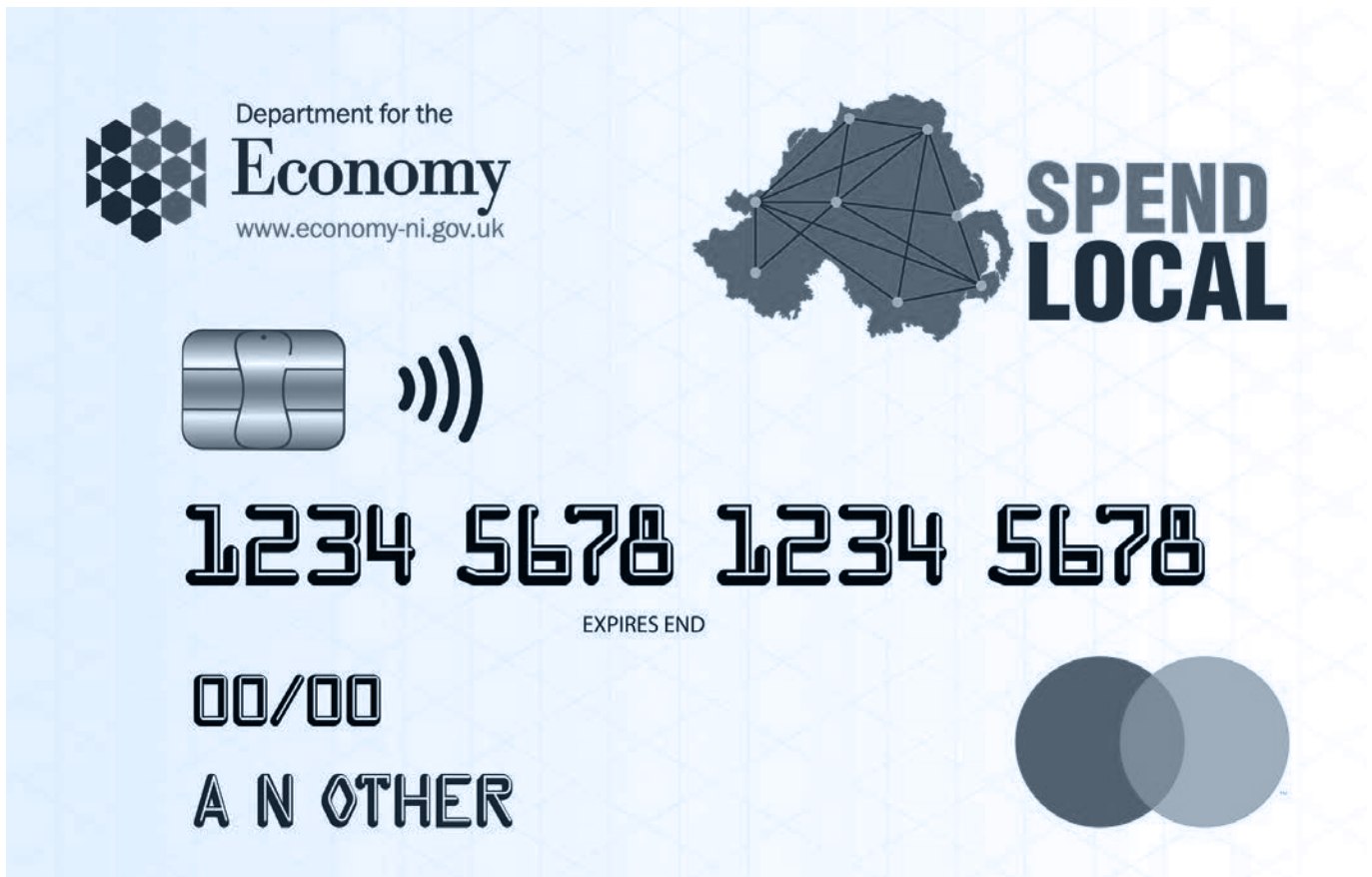
Economic Growth A Key Priority

The DUP has always made economic growth a key priority of the Northern Ireland Executive, which is why we have held the economic portfolio at Stormont since 2007 and ensured that the economy was at the heart of every Programme for Government.

Over the past fifteen years the Northern Ireland economy has been transformed. Where once we were internationally renowned for our shipbuilding, rope works and linen industry, today we are global leaders in cyber security, advanced manufacturing and fintech. Belfast is one of the top tech cities in Europe and Northern Ireland is the top location in the UK, outside of London, for foreign direct investment. But there is more to do.

We have overseen the growth of our tourism industry into a £1 billion pound sector, helped grow our creative industries and helped thousands of small businesses grow and find new markets outside of Northern Ireland.

When the COVID pandemic hit we faced the prospect of mass unemployment and businesses failing. The Department for the Economy, under a DUP Minister, stepped up to provide immediate financial support to businesses forced to close, developed a detailed plan to kick-start the recovery and also published a long term plan to reshape the economy for future growth.



Support Schemes

DUP Ministers provided over £600m worth of financial support through some 50 bespoke financial support schemes. This support was vital and helped save tens of thousands of jobs and hundreds of businesses throughout Northern Ireland. DUP Ministers also provided an additional £10m of hardship funding for students, provided a £500 payment to local learners, and the £4.5m Northern Ireland Domestic Aviation Kick-start Scheme was a lifeline for the aviation sector.

Economic Recovery

The DUP secured £286.8m funding for an Economic Recovery Action Plan (ERAP); setting out a series of immediate measures to help accelerate economic recovery.

Included in ERAP was the hugely successful High Street Scheme - a £140m scheme

which not only delivered a much needed injection of stimulus to businesses who suffered most during lockdown, but also reoriented people back onto the High Street after many had shifted to online shopping habits.

As a result of these actions, Northern Ireland recovered quicker than any other region of the UK and is well placed to capitalise on new opportunities for growth.

Moving forward our focus is on building an innovative, inclusive and healthy economy, which delivers opportunity for everyone in every community across Northern Ireland.

10X Vision

Last year, DUP Economy Ministers launched the new 10X economic vision for Northern Ireland. 10X is unashamedly ambitious, seeking to place Northern Ireland amongst the elite, small open economies in the world.

We do this by focussing on our strengths and seeking to grow key sectors such as digital, agri-tech, advanced manufacturing, life and health sciences, and fintech. The 10X vision has been endorsed by a wide cross section of the business and education sector, and has been complimented by supporting action plans such as Skills for a 10X economy; trade and investment for a 10X economy and the review of careers services.

City and Growth Deals

The DUP was instrumental in securing a series of City and Growth Deals for Northern Ireland. These packages of funding will help new regional areas leverage additional investment, support job creation and deliver economic growth. Across Northern Ireland more than £1.3 billion will be invested in a range of exciting projects to promote new technologies, centres of excellence and world leading research and see national and local government work in partnership with local universities and the private sector to transform our economy.

Broadband - Project Stratum

This £165m project, secured through the DUP / Conservative Confidence and Supply Deal, is one of the biggest and most important infrastructure projects to be delivered in Northern Ireland. This has been a game changer for many rural communities across the Province.

Northern Ireland at 82% full fibre is already massively ahead of England on 67%, Scotland on 60%, Wales on 49% and the Republic of Ireland on 41%.

At current build rates, by 2025, Northern Ireland will be the first country in these islands to bring fibre to 100% of our premises, a key factor as we continue to make NI the best place to live, work, visit and invest.

Skills

The number one reason why investors come to Northern Ireland is because of the skills of our people. Over recent years we have invested record levels of funding in our world class FE Colleges, worked collaboratively with our Universities and carried out a review of careers education to ensure our young people not only understand where future opportunities will be, but ensure they are equipped with the right skills in order to take advantage of them. The DUP is committed to increasing the level of funding for skills, rolling out more skills academies and expanding all age apprenticeships across key sectors of the economy.

Clean Energy

Recent energy price rises are impacting on every person and business in Northern Ireland. This is happening because of the global price volatility that comes with fossil fuels.

In December 2021 the DUP Economy Minister launched the 'Path to Net Zero' energy strategy which sets out how we will work towards phasing out fossil fuels, ending this volatility and ensuring that more of the money we spend on energy stays in the local economy and helps to create wealth and jobs.

However we know that the cost of living crisis is impacting people now.

As part of our five-point plan we are supporting calls for a Windfall Tax on energy firms and we want to make going green affordable to more homes in Northern Ireland. We want to see an Energy Support Payment to help hard-pressed families as well as more help with energy efficiency schemes for householders

Northern Ireland is already a leader in renewable energy, but through investment in new technologies such as hydrogen, we aim to be a global leader in clean energy.





Our Plan To Help Working Families

- ✓ Deliver 30 hours free childcare per week
- ✓ Fair access to pre-school places
- ✓ Financially support hard-pressed families with an Energy Support Payment
- ✓ Deliver Energy Efficiency schemes to support better-insulated homes
- ✓ Support calls for a Windfall Tax on energy firms
- ✓ Make going green affordable to homes in NI

The cost-of-living crisis is very real for many families in Northern Ireland. Global issues are affecting the price of gas and oil and impacting and the knock-on effect is hitting consumers hard. We are committed to supporting those most in need and ensuring measures are in place to support our community during the hard times.

Deliver 30 hours free childcare per week

We will introduce a childcare strategy as a priority, which will deliver affordable, flexible, high-quality provision of early education and care initiatives for families with children aged 3-4. This will include 30 hours free childcare per week. We will engage with parents and employers to ensure the right model is co-designed in place going forward, and as part of this strategy, wrap around school provision will be improved to ensure access to childcare is strengthened. We will also work with the private sector to develop in-house programmes which work for both the employer and employee.

Fair access to pre-school places

There has been a frustration expressed by some working parents that because of their employment status they don't meet the required criteria. We want to address and rectify this. We believe that everyone should have fair access to pre-school places. There must be a review and if found necessary, reform of the admissions criteria for pre-school education to ensure that working families are not placed at a disadvantage. Early years support and learning is vital for every child and we will support parents to ensure their child gets a place.

Financially support hard-pressed families with energy support payment

We welcomed the Energy Support Payment given to families but were concerned by the narrow eligibility criteria. A huge swathe of the community, those in employment struggling with rising costs, have been ignored. We don't believe this is fair and will champion support for those who have yet to receive the help they need.

Deliver energy efficiency schemes to support better-insulated homes

We will deliver a programme of energy efficiency schemes, in both public and private housing, focused on retrofitting. This should be funded by the windfall tax and rolled out as a priority in a new Executive. There are opportunities for skills development in this area and we will work with local employers and training

providers to ensure the workforce is there to deliver this programme. We will also consider a package of measures to encourage greater efficiency in the home and establish minimum energy efficiency standards in the domestic private rented sector. We will also initiate a review of planning requirements for new development to ensure that home insulation is a priority.

Support calls for a Windfall Tax on energy firms

The DUP support calls for a Windfall tax on the big energy firms, who are continuing to report extraordinary profits during these difficult times for many families. We believe that it is reasonable to ask that some of these profits be given up to help support those in society most in need. We believe that such a tax should be ring-fenced to ensure that it reaches those most in need, with further engagement with the energy firms to ensure that fairness is at the heart of the pricing policies going forward.

Make going green affordable for homes in Northern Ireland

Many in Northern Ireland are keen to follow a more environmentally friendly lifestyle and would willingly adapt their homes to do so. However, the reality of cost is often a barrier. We believe that if we are to make the green transition then we must ensure it is affordable and provides value for money. This should include financial support for small-scale energy generation for householders, for example solar panels and heat installation measures across the home.

Remove the NI Protocol

USE YOUR VOTE TO SEND A MESSAGE - THE IRISH SEA BORDER MUST GO

The Northern Ireland Protocol has created a border in the Irish Sea

The Protocol represents an existential threat to the future of Northern Ireland's place within the Union.

The longer the Protocol remains, the more it will harm the Union itself.

The checks on the Irish Sea border are the symptom of the underlying problem, namely, that Northern Ireland is subject to a different set of laws imposed upon us by a foreign entity without any say or vote by any elected representative of the people of Northern Ireland.

Why should anyone seeking election to the Assembly want to deny themselves the right to have a say or a vote on vast swathes of the laws governing our economy and which affect the people of Northern Ireland so directly?

The DUP is seeking the restoration of democratic decision making to the Assembly, replacing the democratic deficit created by the Protocol.

That places the power in the hands of all the parties in the Assembly.

Why will Pro-Protocol parties not join us in order to give their voters a say in the laws that will govern them?



How can they be happy to remain powerless law takers rather than empowered lawmakers?

Independent reports have concluded that the Protocol does not deliver the best of both worlds for NI.

Beyond costing our economy one hundred thousand pounds per hour;

- It has driven up haulage costs between GB and NI;
- It has placed a border between us and our most important trading partner - Great Britain;
- And the Protocol has jeopardised our medicine supply in the middle of a health pandemic.

We have made progress in convincing many of the merits of our case.

The Government knows that the Protocol does not enjoy the support of Unionists and Brussels can be in no doubt that the Protocol has cast its long shadow over Northern Ireland's political arrangements.

Now is the moment to send a clear signal that the Irish Sea border must go and the Protocol must be replaced by arrangements that restore Northern Ireland's place within the United Kingdom internal market.

We will judge any new arrangements against our 7 tests to determine whether they respect NI's position as part of the UK

New arrangements must:

1. Fulfil Article 6 of the Acts of Union, which requires that everyone in the United Kingdom is entitled to the same privileges.
2. Avoid any diversion of trade.
3. Not constitute a border in the Irish Sea.
4. Give the people of Northern Ireland a say in the making of the laws which govern them.
5. Result in "no checks on goods going from Northern Ireland to Great Britain or from Great Britain to Northern Ireland."
6. Ensure no new regulatory barriers develop between Northern Ireland and the rest of the United Kingdom unless agreed by the Northern Ireland Executive and Assembly.
7. Preserve the letter and spirit of Northern Ireland's constitutional guarantee requiring the consent of a majority of the people of Northern Ireland for any diminution in its status as part of the United Kingdom.

Protecting life

The DUP is a Pro-Life party and our members elected to the Northern Ireland Assembly will continue to support Pro-Life policies and reject abortion.

Until 2019 Northern Ireland had some of the strongest protections for the unborn in the United Kingdom and across Europe. Sadly, Westminster, in a free vote for MPs, imposed the UK's most liberal abortion regime on Northern Ireland despite the Assembly voting to express its opposition. The DUP voted against this at Westminster.

The Assembly rejected a DUP Bill seeking to end abortion to full-term on the grounds of disability, or non-fatal disability last year.

The DUP is committed to promoting a culture of choosing life in Northern Ireland and this value must flow through into the support and services provided.

We will champion greater support services for women in crisis or unexpected pregnancy and continue to take a Pro-Life stand in the Northern Ireland Assembly and at Westminster.



Our Plan To Keep our Schools World-Class

- ✓ Fair funding model for all schools
- ✓ Build more new schools in the next 5 years
- ✓ Modernise curriculum for the 21st century workplace
- ✓ Widen access to breakfast and homework clubs
- ✓ A cap on school uniform costs
- ✓ Restructure special educational needs services
- ✓ Support Well-being and COVID recovery for our children
- ✓ Improve Educational outcomes for our most disadvantaged students
- ✓ A focus on Early Years
- ✓ Coding in Primary Schools
- ✓ Reduce bureaucracy and administration for schools
- ✓ Support for more Outdoor Play

- ✓ Universal Free School Lunches for all children
- ✓ Review of home to school Transport
- ✓ School Funding
- ✓ Support parental choice and the right of schools to use academic selection
- ✓ School Street Schemes

The DUP supports shared education in Northern Ireland. It enables schools from different sectors to come together, work in partnership and collaborate. We wish to see the creation of a single education system in Northern Ireland. By looking towards the education of our children and young people, we can help to shape the best future possible for all. It is our responsibility as the largest political party in Northern Ireland to ensure that our young people can reach their full educational attainment.

Fair funding model for all schools

We support shared education in Northern Ireland, but we do not believe that one sector deserves more funding than another. No child's education should suffer because of this. We will ensure that pressure is kept on the UK Government to uphold their New Decade New Approach commitment 'to financial flexibility to re-profile funding provided as part of the Fresh Start Agreement for shared and integrated education'. Community engagement is central to developing a bottom-up approach to shared and integrated education. Without community buy-in, the transition to shared and integrated education is not feasible.

Build more new schools in the next 5 years

Environment has an important part to play in education and our schools and places of learning must be fit for purpose, now and in the future.

The DUP Education Minister has already announced a **£794 million** investment for **28 new schools** benefiting some **25,000 pupils**.

We are committed to building more new schools across Northern Ireland in the next 5 years, with a focus on better utilising technology within the classroom.

Modernise curriculum for the 21st century workplace

As society changes, so too do our places of work. We support the increased promotion of vocational and digital based subjects in both secondary and grammar schools and combining traditional education with

day-release schemes to learn vocational trades first-hand, whilst also ensuring that young people leave education with basic Maths, English and IT requirements. As our workforce becomes increasingly digital, our education system needs increased support to ensure that children from Key Stage 1 and up receive the best coding training possible.

Widen access to breakfast and homework clubs

Breakfast and homework clubs are invaluable to both tackling educational underachievement and supporting working parents. We support the continuation of the Extended Schools Scheme with enough funding to ensure that there are places for all pupils who wish to avail of this. There is a greater role for community based after schools' clubs as an additional way to widen access to these clubs and a place to development our library network to encompass new approaches to tackling educational underachievement and building up digital capability.



A cap on school uniform costs

The cost of school uniforms can be extortionate, a problem that is increased depending on the number of children in a household. This can cause both financial difficulties and unnecessary concern to many families across Northern Ireland. We support a cap on the cost of school uniforms.

Restructure special educational needs services

Children in Northern Ireland deserve the opportunity to reach their full potential. For some, this may require additional support.

We support measures to improve early intervention and diagnosis for those with Special Educational Needs to ensure each child has the necessary support. We will commit to introducing mandatory training on Special Educational Needs during all teaching degrees, with updated training to be provided to all current teachers. We also need to modernise and expand the Special School estate with more school builds to support those need them.



Support Well-being and COVID recovery for our children

Our DUP Education Ministers have invested heavily in programmes such as Engage, extending School Counselling (Health Happy Minds) and Well-being funding for schools but we need to recognise that some children are still coping with issues related to their experiences during lockdown. We will continue to prioritise these programmes that have been so effective in supporting our children through the pandemic and beyond.

Improve educational outcomes for our most disadvantaged students

Over the last assembly term the numbers of students achieving 5 GCSEs (A*- C including English and Maths) has increased 7%. In 2016/17 it was 69.6% increasing and to 76.2% in 2020-21 with alternative awarding. This represents good progress but more needs to be done to support students who are struggling.

We have continued to focus on this priority whilst other political parties have used it as a sound bite. We will commit to supporting these students through the sound recommendations made by the Expert Panel in Educational Underachievement in their 'Fair Start' report.

Focus on the Early Years

There has been significant and sound research to suggest that the Early Years are key in a child's educational journey. Parents need supported to understand that early language development and play are very

important. Early intervention is key and funding needs to support this ambition. We will commit to a new-targeted programme of support for children under two years old and we will work with the Department of Health to achieve this. This will be themed around the Sure Start Development Programme.

Coding in Primary Schools

We know that the workplace is changing and therefore our children need to be prepared to for that changed environment. More jobs will rely on digital skills and underpinning many of these will be the ability to code. We will establish Coding pilots for Primary Schools alongside partners in industry. These will be evaluated to test the best method for teaching our children how to code in a fun and informative way.

Reduce bureaucracy and administration for schools

A school's primary focus should be on the education and support of its children but we know the demands on Classroom Assistants, Teachers and Principals has risen steeply over the last two years. We want to devolve more decision making powers to schools, especially with regard to procurement and purchasing.

Support for more Outdoor Play

One of the lessons of the Covid-19 pandemic has been the rediscovery of the outdoors for adults and children alike. We have already provided a significant investment of £2 million this year to assist schools to enhance their outdoor learning spaces and provide good quality play equipment.

Outdoor play has proven educational benefits and is also effective at developing other skills such as teamwork and problem solving for children. We want to develop and support schools as they repurpose their outdoor space. We will now establish a fund for schools to support them in creating better outdoor spaces surrounding their school and also work with partners such as Forest Schools to allow those in urban areas with less access or space to realise their ambitions in this area.

School Lunches

We have learnt through COVID-19 the importance of ensuring that children get at least one hot meal a day. We need to ensure that primary school children have access to a free, healthy and nutritious meal. We need to be ambitious in this area and therefore we will work to seek to do more.

Review of Home to School Transport

We will examine this important area for many children in Northern Ireland who are limited at the moment in which school they can attend because of the inability to get free transport. This will open up a level of parental preference not realised yet in Northern Ireland because some parents simply cannot afford to take their children to a particular school because of the





distance of travel. The party will lobby the Executive for additional funding to support this new scheme.

School Funding

We need to re-examine how schools are funded and provide a greater level of certainty for school leaders within budget cycles. One key aspect of this is a three-year budget from the NI Executive that would allow better planning for services and capital.

But we need to go further and address the gap between the per capita funding of our children in Northern Ireland and the other regions in the United Kingdom. It is no longer sustainable that Education is under-funded by the wider NI Executive and this must change.

School Street Schemes

All parents will know that the ‘school drop off’ can be a stressful time of the day. It can also be a hazardous time for children and whilst accidents are very rare we must create a new way of getting our children to school. A School Street is effectively a pedestrian and cycling zone. This has a number of benefits such as supporting active travel, cleaner air, reducing vehicle movement and creates a safer and more pleasant start and end to the day for everyone in and around school communities. We will work with the Department of Infrastructure to roll these out across Northern Ireland for those schools that wish to take part in the scheme.

Delivering for our agri-food sector

The agri-food sector continues to be the backbone of the Northern Ireland economy, with over 100,000 people employed either directly or indirectly. We are focused on finding solutions to the practical challenges facing the industry. The DUP's track record speaks for itself. Amid the challenges of the pandemic and the ongoing volatility of agri-food markets, we continued to prioritise agri-food as an integral part of our economy and the lifeblood of our rural communities, providing £75m in Covid-19 support.

The DUP: -

- ✓ Distributed over £28m in Covid-19 business support to farm businesses - the most comprehensive package of support anywhere in the British Isles or Europe.
- ✓ Delivered £3.4m to farms impacted by flooding in the North West.
- ✓ Increased on-farm capital investment by doubling the value of Tier 1 of the Farm Business Improvement Scheme to £15m.
- ✓ Delivered a new future agriculture policy which will improve on-farm efficiency, target support toward productive farming and move away from land-based payments.
- ✓ Announced a new and holistic approach to tackle bovine TB and enable a healthier cattle and wildlife population.
- ✓ Allocated £75m for the refurbishment of the CAFRE sites in Cookstown and Antrim.
- ✓ Committed £10m approval build new beef facilities at AFBI and CAFRE estate
- ✓ Introduced a protein crop scheme to help tackle our reliance on imported protein.

- ✓ Provided a 4.3% uplift in the Basic Payment Scheme in 2020 and 6.29% increase in 2021 to help farmers cope with unprecedented challenges.
- ✓ Cut red tape and reduced cross-compliance penalties.
- ✓ Enhanced the independence of our appeals panels process.
- ✓ Strengthened Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD) enforcement measures.

Supporting our Farmers

With 25,900 active farm businesses in Northern Ireland, employing roughly 51,000 people, primary agriculture is a catalyst for household prosperity and economic growth across Northern Ireland.

The DUP wants to ensure our farmers are profitable, productive and sustainable in the future. We will continue to drive forward policy that encourages food production, delivers for the environment and provides new and exciting export opportunities for local farms.

The DUP will: -

- ✓ Deliver financial support to farm businesses to address rising input costs and market volatility as a result of the situation in Ukraine.
- ✓ Prioritise food security and self-sufficiency within policy brought forward by any new Executive.
- ✓ Promote further reductions in red tape facing agriculture and a range of penalties that are fair and fit the crime when rules are broken.
- ✓ Design farming with nature policies and support outcome-based payments.



- ✓ Exploit the untapped potential of horticulture and vertical farming through extra capital investment on-farm and harnessing excess heat from anaerobic digestion.
- ✓ Develop strategies and incentives to address excess farm nutrients via the production of green energy.
- ✓ Support local farmers to be more efficient, sustaining production while improving agriculture's environmental footprint.
- ✓ Remove barriers to woman becoming more involved in the control and management of farm businesses.
- ✓ Press the Government to provide tax incentives which would help encourage long-term leases for land.

Protecting our animals

The DUP believes Northern Ireland should have high animal welfare standards. We believe those who deliberately harm

animals should be prosecuted and punished to send a deterrent message that such abuse will not be tolerated.

In the past five years, the DUP: -

- ✓ Introduced Finn's Law in Northern Ireland to prevent those who attack or injure service animals from claiming self-defence.
- ✓ Supported enforcement activity against illegal puppy smuggling at our ports.
- ✓ Explored the feasibility of a Veterinary School in Northern Ireland.
- ✓ Continued to invest in the AFBI disease detection and animal disease research.

We will: -

- ✓ Introduce and enhance Lucy's Law in Northern Ireland to ban third party sales of dogs and pups.
- ✓ Allocate more resources to tackling organised and cross-border crime that preys on the abuse and exploitation of animals.

- ✓ Create a register of animal welfare offenders.
- ✓ Promote responsible pet ownership, including through educational and youth projects.
- ✓ Launch biosecurity pilot projects to protect farm animals from threat of TB, avian influenza and other diseases.

Promoting the best of local food

The DUP is passionate about high-quality and sustainable local produce. We will continue to promote what Northern Ireland's farm businesses have to offer.

In the last mandate, the DUP: -

- ✓ Opposed international trade agreements which threaten to undercut and undermine local agriculture.
- ✓ Allocated £300k to promote Northern Ireland produce.
- ✓ Delivered the "Our Food. The Power of Good" campaign to encourage consumers to buy local.
- ✓ Launched the Northern Ireland Food Strategy Framework.
- ✓ Retained the School Milk Programme.

We will: -

- ✓ Seek greater prominence of our products on supermarket shelves via British PGI status.
- ✓ Develop a Northern Ireland brand with a clear focus on our environmental credentials.
- ✓ Expand the school milk programme to include fruit and vegetables and encourage a more balanced diet via education.
- ✓ Increase spend on promotion of Northern Ireland produce.
- ✓ Increase expenditure by Executive departments and the wider public sector on Northern Ireland produce.

Backing our rural communities

Rural communities across Northern Ireland continue to be fantastic places to live, work and raise a family. Since 2017, the DUP has demonstrated our commitment to rural dwellers by:

- ✓ Delivering a £1m Rural Halls Refurbishment Scheme.
- ✓ Allocating funding to isolated minority border communities to build capacity.
- ✓ Providing £650,000 for outdoor recreation projects, including walking trails.
- ✓ Launching a £2m scheme to help support vital search and rescue teams.
- ✓ Piloting Rural Digital Inclusion Scheme and Micro Business Growth Schemes.
- ✓ Providing £200,000 to local agriculture shows as well as an independent review.

We will: -

- ✓ Pilot projects to deliver better and more accessible rural childcare provision.
- ✓ Incentivise more and better use of rural halls and premises.
- ✓ Focus on providing support for business creation but also encouraging rural SMEs to move to the next level encouraging continuous growth.
- ✓ Continue to work across Departments to encourage significant investment in rural villages and towns.

Delivering a cleaner environment

Protecting our environmental heritage will be key to Northern Ireland's success for generations to come. In the last Assembly, DUP Ministers:

- ✓ Introduced ground-breaking Climate Change legislation with balanced protections for agriculture.



- ✓ Delivered £13.5m for projects to deliver for habitats, species and improved water and air quality through the DAERA Environment Fund.
- ✓ Published a Green Growth Strategy.
- ✓ Launched a Soil Nutrient Health Scheme.
- ✓ Maintained public access to forest and country parks during Covid-19 restrictions.
- ✓ Funded the Forests for our Future scheme to help landowners plant their own woodland.
- ✓ Promoted improved recycling rates across local authorities.
- ✓ Launched Northern Ireland's first ever Rural Community Pollinator Scheme to improve the health of our bees.

We will: -

- ✓ Promote substantial investment to deliver on the aims and provisions of the Climate Change Act.
- ✓ Support the re-wetting of our peatlands.
- ✓ Promote initiatives to encourage a circular waste economy.
- ✓ Seek to reduce packaging requirements and explore sustainable alternatives.
- ✓ Deliver a headline Farming with Nature policy.
- ✓ Tackle pollution in hotspot areas using targeted policies, capital support and more meaningful enforcement action.
- ✓ Invest in research and development to identify green and clean solutions.
- ✓ Reduce food waste.

Building on the success of our fishing industry

The DUP wants to see Northern Ireland's fishing industry be prosperous and sustainable. The United Kingdom's exit from the European Union and specifically the Common Fisheries Policy has already led to additional fishing opportunities for the local fleet and we are committed to building on this progress and ensuring the sector can contribute to green growth.

The DUP has: -

- ✓ Supported a more resilient fishing sector during Covid-19 by providing £3m in grant support.
- ✓ Strengthened conservation measures to protect Brown Crab.
- ✓ Helped deliver an uplift in local quota allocations as a result of Brexit.
- ✓ Taken forward the Fishing and Seafood

Development Programme, including significant investment.

- ✓ Approved the Strategic Harbour Development Programme, an important step to ensuring vital invest in our harbour for the future.

We will: -

- ✓ Examine opportunities to provide practical and financial support for fishermen impacted by rising input costs.
- ✓ Provide funding to redevelop Northern Ireland's harbour infrastructure at Kilkeel, Ardglass and Portavogie.
- ✓ Fight for a fair, local allocation of fishing quotas within the United Kingdom.
- ✓ Invest in modernising fishing vessels and gear to reduce costs and maximise fishing effort at sea.
- ✓ Lobby the Government to provide additional access to labour, reflecting the particular needs of Northern Ireland.



Strengthening and Promoting Northern Ireland

As Northern Ireland moves into its second century, we are looking towards the future of the Union and celebrating the rich cultural traditions which set this place apart. We will continue to support the development of our marching bands culture, building on successful programmes such as the Musical Instrument funding, and encouraging their growth and embracing of new ideas.

We firmly believe the Parades Commission must be disbanded and a new mechanism put in place which better recognises the right to parade, with dignity and respect. We will develop plans to regenerate Craigavon House and Fernhill House, and encourage further, the development of the Ulster Scots identity including a positive educational and research agenda, strengthening international relationships and a programme of celebration.

We reiterate our support for well-structured cultural celebrations which promote and educate the positives of history and identity including the work of the Loyal Orders and bonfire celebrations. The service of



individuals from Northern Ireland within the Armed Forces deserves recognition and we will continue to ensure that the necessary services and support structures are available for all veterans.

We want to engage further with the Arts and help to grow this sector, creating more opportunities for individuals interested in undertaking a career and strengthening its ties with local communities. We want to build on the international success of our local music and film industries, especially encouraging new local talent to come forward, and we will invest in new facilities across Northern Ireland to meet the growing demand. The legacy of Game of Thrones, for example, demonstrates the long-term value that can support local employment and promote everything we have to offer.

We want to host a programme of homecoming events involving the Northern Ireland diaspora based around the world. We want to promote the message that we are open for business and we want the world to rediscover everything we have to offer.





Fixing Government

The DUP believes that, in principle, devolution offers the best way to achieve our vision and that it is better that locally elected representatives are able to take local decisions and can set our own domestic policy priorities.

However, devolution is not perfect and for it to work successfully it must be based on the concept that political stability can only be achieved when supported by Unionists as well as Nationalists. The recent Northern Ireland Protocol has undermined stability and for political balance to be restored the UK Government and the EU will have to recognise that the Protocol is not supported by Unionists in Northern Ireland.

Our Long-Term Goal

The DUP wants to see politics and the government at Stormont normalised. We have had a long-term objective of seeing government established by those who can agree to govern together. We remain convinced that a voluntary coalition represents the best long-term option for Government in Northern Ireland. We believe this should be on the basis of a concise agreed coalition plan that can subsequently be augmented by a more comprehensive Programme for Government and supported by a weighted majority in the Assembly.

Fundamental Reform of the NI Civil Service

The Northern Ireland Civil Service is in serious need of reform and modernisation in order to improve delivery of vital public services and support the work of Ministers in the devolved institutions. It is important to note there are many hard-working individuals, who on a daily basis contribute substantially within the NICS.

The DUP supports a fundamental appraisal of the Northern Ireland Civil Service. This should include a fundamental root and branch reform of NICS structures as well as examining the benefits of closer collaboration with the Home Civil Service, whilst learning from experience in other jurisdictions;

We want to build a civil service for the next century that embraces technology, modernisation and innovation.

The DUP supports: -

- ✓ Driving and improving cross-departmental collaboration to avoid a departmental 'silo' mentality into which both Ministers and Officials become trapped;
- ✓ A recruitment programme for the NICS that reflects a full range of skill sets and depends less on general posts;
- ✓ Strengthening non-executive appointments to individual departmental boards to develop consistency of governance approach across departments;
- ✓ Greater collaboration between both the third sector and private sector and the NICS in the development of policy proposals for Ministers.

More fiscal powers to Stormont?

The Democratic Unionist Party noted the findings and recommendations made in the interim report published by the Fiscal Commission published in January 2022.

Whilst we agreed with the understanding and representation within this report

of why fiscal devolution might be considered important, we are also pragmatic in our considerations and do not believe that the necessary capacity exists in the contemporary context of Northern Ireland to devolve additional fiscal powers at this time.

We believe that there are a number of fundamental weaknesses with our model of devolved government which will ultimately undermine the potential for additional fiscal powers being devolved to the Northern Ireland Executive/Assembly.

It is ironic that despite a long campaign asking for the devolution of Corporation Tax powers, which was supported by ALL the Executive parties, once this was achieved the political will was lacking to use it as a tool to stimulate our local economy. There is a need for a much greater level of stability before we should consider significant additional changes to the fiscal powers in Northern Ireland.

We do not believe that income tax should be devolved to Northern Ireland. We would question whether the administrative capacity is in place to manage what is an extremely complex and fundamental element of the taxation system.

In respect of the apprenticeship levy we wish to see a reform of this system and are willing to consider innovative proposals to make the system fairer and more effective. Whether this means having it fully devolved to Northern Ireland should certainly be part of the consideration, however the key factor must be the development of a fairer system which will provide greater support for local employers and truly benefit those who are reliant upon it.

In the case of Air Passenger Duty, we believe this should be abolished altogether by the UK Government rather than being devolved. Whilst the Chancellor has announced a future 50% cut, he should have abolished it completely immediately. It is driving up costs for those who need to travel and hampering local airports, especially in Northern Ireland where we are competing with Dublin.



Strengthening Our Communities

Strong communities underpin a strong Northern Ireland. The DUP is committed to their social and economic development by creating a series of business & community champions and role models who can inspire economic and social renewal.

We will initiate a revamping of the Urban Village and Building Successful Communities schemes, encompassing more areas of Northern Ireland and continue to invest in the Communities in Transition programme, helping many communities move on from the presence of paramilitarism.

We believe that many future community-funding programmes should have sustainability, skills development and economic regeneration as their core criteria, and we will establish community hubs with access to high-speed broadband, to improve community access to online services and learning.

We want to increase investment in new social and affordable housing, including a retrofitting programme to upgrade existing properties to improve energy efficiency. A safe, secure and warm home also produces health and educational benefits.

We will invest in anti-drug programmes, through both justice and education, to tackle the scourge of drugs in all their forms, in our communities, and provide greater support for those at risk of suicide.

The DUP continues to believe that a radical reform of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive is essential, and should receive more powers to address the issue of vacant properties.

We also believe there should be greater regulation of short stay holiday homes, the proliferation of which risks undermining many communities, especially in urban areas, which are changing beyond recognition.

A Safer Northern Ireland

The DUP has been a strong advocate for safer communities across Northern Ireland. We have used our leadership of the Justice Committee and our membership of the Policing Board to promote more effective and visible policing and a fairer justice system.

As a result, we were able to deliver on manifesto commitments to: -

- ✓ Implement the Criminal Finances Act, targeting the wealth of organised crime gangs.
- ✓ Extend financial support for tackling paramilitarism.
- ✓ Deliver the DUP policy of a Troubles victims' pension, ensuring not a single penny is handed to perpetrators.
- ✓ Allocate extra resources to community policing, including 400 extra neighbourhood officers.
- ✓ Challenge the harm caused by glorification and commemoration of terrorist atrocities.
- ✓ Provide legal protection against attacks on service animals.
- ✓ Place a minimum of twelve-months of statutory support for confirmed victims of modern slavery into law.
- ✓ Speed up justice through committal reform.
- ✓ Extend support services for serving and retired prison officers.

The votes of DUP MLAs were also instrumental in: -

- ✓ Tackling domestic abuse through a new coercive control offence.
- ✓ Giving victims of domestic abuse who evidence in family courts better protection.
- ✓ Banning stalking, up-skirting, down blousing and cyber-flashing
- ✓ Making it illegal to masquerade as a child online.

- ✓ Providing victims of serious sexual crime with extra support during court hearings.
- ✓ Protecting funding for multi-agency hubs that support the most vulnerable.

Prioritising policing

The DUP believes a fully resourced police service is essential to fighting crime and preventing harm across Northern Ireland. In the past ten years, the PSNI budget has reduced by 20%. By 2025, a further 1,000 officers and 350 staff are deemed to be at risk. A smaller and unrecognisable police service would be unacceptable, especially at a time when crime is increasingly becoming more harmful and sophisticated. This outcome would be marked contrast to commitments in New Decade New Approach to strengthen and enhance the PSNI workforce.

The DUP will fight to ensure law and order is prioritised as part of strategic funding package agreed by parties after the election. In addition, we will: -

- ✓ Secure a multi-year budget settlement for policing.
- ✓ Invest in the PSNI's digital and estates modernisation plans.
- ✓ Deliver and maintain the New Decade New Approach commitment to 7,500 local police officers.
- ✓ Promote recruitment of part-time officers to meet targets envisaged Patten.
- ✓ Veto any return to 50:50 discrimination
- ✓ Seek to defend neighbourhood policing from the threat of budget cuts.
- ✓ Press for a strategic PSNI workforce strategy, with a specific focus on investigative expertise.
- ✓ Seek a cross-cutting approach in areas like mental health and vulnerability to reduce demand on policing resources.



Restoring fairness

Perceptions of two-tier policing are now widespread. The hands-off approach to the funeral of Bobby Storey and the revelation that the police provided republicans with a defence from prosecution have generated understandable anger in Unionist and Loyalist communities. This was compounded by the decision to bow to Sinn Fein's demand for a reform of policing in South Armagh.

Fairness must be restored. This requires cultural and systematic change at senior levels of the PSNI. Policing will not be successful unless it commands the support of both traditions.

The DUP will: -

- ✓ Press for a dedicated PSNI engagement strategy for the Unionist community.
- ✓ Seek accessible career opportunities for working-class Protestants.
- ✓ Oppose attempts to denigrate the status of 'Northern Ireland' within PSNI branding.
- ✓ Reject any further narrow and politically-motivated reforms of policing.
- ✓ Promote continuity in neighbourhood policing roles to retain local knowledge and relationships.
- ✓ Pursue more interactive solutions for crime reporting, including through social media.
- ✓ Encourage greater uptake of PSNI Nextdoor App.
- ✓ Enhance outreach into schools and local community groups.
- ✓ Ensure every community benefits from re-investment of the assets of crime.



Protecting those who protect us

It is vital that police officers and staff have the tools and the support to lead the fight against crime across Northern Ireland. Police time and resources are increasingly being stretched and coupled with the rise in online and serious sexual crime this is having a direct impact on the health and wellbeing of those in frontline roles.

The DUP will: -

- ✓ Pursue enhanced occupational support for police officers and staff, with a focus on earlier intervention.
- ✓ Provide specific support for those in particularly stressed and exposed roles, including Public Protection Branch.
- ✓ Support the continued roll-out of spit and bite guards.

- ✓ Promote more regular engagement between the Policing Board and Police Federation.
- ✓ Commit recurrent funding for training in new domestic and sexual offences.
- ✓ Deliver professional development opportunities, including skills exchanges with police forces in Great Britain.
- ✓ Ensure reform of police pensions or injury on duty schemes is co-designed with officers and staff.

Tackling crime and paramilitarism

The lowering of the terrorist threat for the first time in twelve years is testament to the recent successes of the PSNI and national security and intelligence agencies. Several dissident republican groups have been

disrupted and senior and experienced terrorists have been taken off our streets.

However more can and should be done. The DUP wants to root out the dangers of extremism and create opportunities for young people at risk of falling prey to paramilitaries.

We need to break the cycle of crime, control and chaos wrought by these elements in many communities.

The DUP will: -

- ✓ Ensure that operational policing resources reflect the substantial terror threat.
- ✓ Support measures that speed up court proceedings for terrorism offences.
- ✓ Seek more robust sentencing for serious offences, including murder, in line with other parts of the United Kingdom.
- ✓ Introduce Harper's Law to provide automatic life sentences for offenders who kill emergency services workers in the line of duty.
- ✓ Hold PSNI Terrorism Investigation Branch to account for its failure to tackle crime by Provisional IRA as detailed in the 2015 Assessment on Paramilitary Groups.
- ✓ Support the work of the Paramilitary and Organised Crime Taskforces.
- ✓ Endorse a twin-track approach to addressing the causes and effects of paramilitarism.
- ✓ Promote earlier intervention in repeat offending and repeat victimisation.
- ✓ Seek capital investment in prison facilities and fairer pay, benefits and in-work support for prison staff.
- ✓ Introduce Charlotte's Law to restrict parole for killers who refuse to disclose the location of their victim's body.
- ✓ Support a multi-agency approach to restorative justice and rehabilitation, with the interests of victims front and centre.

We will also seek safeguards for those who express deeply held views reasonably

within any new hate crime framework in Northern Ireland.

Defending the most vulnerable

Sadly, in Northern Ireland is becoming more violent, harmful and focused toward children and young people in our society. Regardless of whether a crime is committed in person, on a mobile phone or behind a computer screen, there must be robust approaching to preventing harm and ensuring a victim-focused approach to investigations.

The DUP will: -

- ✓ Ensure police officers are better trained to meet their obligations under the Victim and Witness Charters.
- ✓ Ensure the PSNI plays a substantive and proactive role in the UK's response to cyber-crime.
- ✓ Support specific measures to target the abuse and exploitation of children and young people.
- ✓ Seek a more targeted and cohesive approach to rural crime, particularly in border areas.
- ✓ Promote initiatives to increase outcomes for crime against older people.

Dealing with the Past

The Belfast Agreement resulted in the early release of terrorists and ensured that anyone later convicted of a Troubles-related offence would serve a maximum of two years in prison. Letters of comfort were later provided to on-the-run suspects. This erosion of the rule of law was never justified. Two decades later, it is still unacceptable. The Government's plan to grant an amnesty in all but name to those responsible for wrongdoing would extinguish the flame of justice for many innocent victims of terrorism. It must be rejected.

The DUP has strongly resisted an amnesty for perpetrators. There must be no rewriting of the past. Routes for innocent victims to seek justice must be retained and strengthened. We will continue to apply these tests to any fresh proposals for dealing with the past.

Our representatives have fought to enhance practical support for innocent victims and veterans, oppose the glorification of terrorism and defend the memory of those who served our communities during Northern Ireland's darkest days. They:

- ✓ Delivered a pension for victims permanently injured through no fault of their own.
- ✓ Supported legislation to extend the Armed Forces Covenant to Northern Ireland.
- ✓ Appointed a Veterans Commissioner.
- ✓ Ensured memorials to murdered police officers were not placed out of sight in PSNI stations.



Terrorists were responsible for 90% of Troubles deaths. Despite this, the focus of current investigative activity is imbalanced and skewed toward the actions of the security forces. The latest round of pledged legacy inquests doesn't contain a single murder carried out by republicans. This is not a moral or sustainable position.

Unfounded allegations of collusion have also besmirched the name and record of the RUC. The Police Ombudsman previously exceeded its powers to make such claims and more recently has accused the RUC of collusive behaviour despite bringing forward no evidence capable of being tested in the courts. This is deeply divisive and damaging to public confidence.

The DUP will: -

- ✓ Reject a statute of limitations for wrongdoing during the Troubles.
- ✓ Prioritise a victim-centred and victim-led approach to investigating the past.
- ✓ Strengthen legal protection for former officers and veterans against vexatious and baseless allegations.
- ✓ Oppose any reforms which help terrorists escape justice.
- ✓ Pursue a UK-wide definition of a victim which rejects any equivalence between the perpetrator and the victim.
- ✓ Increase transparency in out-of-court settlements agreed by the PSNI relating to legacy.
- ✓ Seek a fundamental appraisal of the functions of the Police Ombudsman's Office.
- ✓ Oppose any expansion of police oversight powers, including to compel retired officers.
- ✓ Crack down on political litigation and prevent human rights legislation being exploited to rewrite the past.
- ✓ Seek support to define collusion in legislation.

World-class Infrastructure

The DUP is committed to building a world-class infrastructure that ensures Northern Ireland is a competitive and attractive place to do business, maximises the opportunities flowing from our place in the Union and ends regional disparities.

During the Troubles, Northern Ireland experienced significant underinvestment in its road, rail and air networks. We want to reverse that trend, promoting a more efficient planning process as well as solutions which prioritise a safer and cleaner environment. We will ensure infrastructure investment creates opportunity for local construction companies and workers.

In the past five years, the DUP Ministers and MLAs: -

- ✓ Fought for investment in new and improved road networks.
- ✓ Secured the Londonderry to London air route until the end of March 2023.
- ✓ Lobbied for extra capacity to meet the backlog in driver and vehicle testing.
- ✓ Supported a regional planning IT system.
- ✓ Pushed for a MOT exemption for historical vehicles.
- ✓ Pressed for trailer tests to be scrapped in line with Great Britain.
- ✓ Fought for and delivered vital Covid support funding to coach, bus and taxi operators.
- ✓ Endorsed an Infrastructure Commission as part of the Executive's Covid recovery plan.
- ✓ Progressed the City and Growth Deals programme, including in the North-West.
- ✓ Urged the Government to honour its financial commitments to turbo-charged infrastructure in Northern Ireland as contained in New Decade New Approach.

Roads

The DUP believes a more strategic and ambitious approach is needed to repair, upgrade and maintain the state of Northern Ireland's roads. The condition of the rural road network is particularly concerning that the cost of damage incurred to motorists and vehicles is hurting continues to rise. Ensuring there are effective and timely road connections between towns, cities and villages across Northern Ireland is key to the success of our economy and a fair and inclusive society.

The DUP will: -

- ✓ Seek the timely delivery of key capital projects such as:
 - o Upgrades to the A5 and A6.
 - o The York Street interchange.
 - o The Ballynahinch bypass.
 - o The Newry Southern relief road.
 - o The Enniskillen Southern bypass.
 - o Pursue the completion of the A26 dualling between Ballymena and Coleraine.
- ✓ Support the North-West Transport Hub and progress plans for the Belfast Transport Hub.
- ✓ Continue the A1 safety work.
- ✓ Improve road connections to rural and hard-to-reach areas.
- ✓ Ensure a more strategic approach to planning roads maintenance, including through exploring options to rationalise existing operations.
- ✓ Address the impact of coastal erosion on the local road network.

Planning

It is indefensible that around three-quarters of significant and major planning applications in Northern Ireland are not completed within the normal target of 30



weeks. This is preventing much-needed investment in key infrastructure across our Province. The DUP believes the planning process should be a catalyst for driving our economy forward, not holding it back.

We will: -

- ✓ Press for an urgent and fundamental appraisal of the planning system, including a review of the Strategic Investment Board and its functions.
- ✓ Streamline the delivery of key infrastructure, including scoping the potential for a specialised procurement and delivery unit to take forward major projects that have been approved.
- ✓ Promote an end to lengthy delays in determining in major applications.
- ✓ Oppose policies that further constrain development in the countryside.
- ✓ Ensure the needs of our ageing population and those living with disabilities are embedded as first principles within the planning process.
- ✓ Ensure the planning and design process includes green solutions such as electric vehicle charging points as default.

National connectivity

The DUP believes Northern Ireland should benefit from high-quality and accessible infrastructure links with the rest of the United Kingdom. In the last mandate, our Economy Minister worked with the Department for Transport in London to protect domestic air routes from Londonderry to Great Britain. They also ensured Northern Ireland's needs were accounted for as part of the Union Connectivity Review.

We will: -

- ✓ Promote unfettered access to Northern Ireland's single largest market in Great Britain by working to remove the Protocol.
- ✓ Support better road links for local hauliers by securing upgrades to Scotland's A75 and A77 as envisaged by the Union Connectivity Review.
- ✓ Invest in more lorry park facilities.
- ✓ Seek to protect, expand and attract investment in current air routes domestically and around the world.

- ✓ Deliver a regular high-speed train service between Belfast and Londonderry as envisaged by the Union Connectivity Review.
- ✓ Provide marketing support for air tourism in Northern Ireland.

Water

The crisis in available water and sewerage capacity in Northern Ireland is curtailing economic investment and access to fair and affordable housing. Without drains there can be no cranes. 25 of 27 'economic hub' towns have compromised water infrastructure but only 12 will see investment by 2027. This situation cannot go on.

The DUP will: -

- ✓ Promote strategic investment in our water and wastewater treatment works.
- ✓ Ensure the Department for Infrastructure adopts a more informed and ambitious approach to the next price control.
- ✓ Explore the merits of granting NI Water borrowing powers.
- ✓ Balance extra investment with new, innovative and sustainable technological solutions.
- ✓ Expand the Living with Water Programme beyond Greater Belfast.
- ✓ Ensure spending for the water network is fair to all communities and regions.

Sustainable travel

The DUP will continue to invest in infrastructure that supports active travel, public transport provision and a shift to more sustainable and carbon-neutral solutions. It is unacceptable that Northern Ireland has only a third of the total number of rapid-charging points and top-up chargers for electric vehicles recommended by the independent Committee on Climate Change currently in operation. Even among those that are in place there are concerns around a postcode lottery.



We will: -

- ✓ Deliver on action 18 of the Department for the Economy's Path to Net Zero Strategy to publish an electric vehicle infrastructure Action Plan.
- ✓ Maximise drawdown of funding for electric and ultra-low emission vehicles and make grant opportunities available to consumers.
- ✓ Promote greater investment in active travel routes and greenways, co-designed with communities and service users.
- ✓ Support e-travel schemes, including in rural, coastal and off-shore communities.
- ✓ Improve cycling networks across Northern Ireland.
- ✓ Support the shift to alternative energies and away from diesel.
- ✓ Ensure strong environmental performance of suppliers to government is built into procurement policy.

We will also: -

- ✓ Provide ongoing financial support for rural and community transport.
- ✓ Support ongoing plans to reduce emissions on the Rathlin and Strangford to Portaferry ferry services.
- ✓ Increase efficiency of our windfarm network.
- ✓ Expand recycling waste management.



Hydrogen

Northern Ireland is uniquely placed to use renewable electricity to produce green hydrogen. This would make use of the wind that is available when the demand for electricity is lower. We want to see our Province become a world leader in the development of electrolyzers, hydrogen fuel, and hydrogen-fuelled vehicles for which there will be a rapidly growing demand world-wide.

We will: -

- ✓ Deliver investment and initiatives to establish Northern Ireland as a global leader in hydrogen technology.
- ✓ Assist local companies with the skills and experience to exploit opportunities in demand for net-zero and low emission vehicles.
- ✓ Promote the economic and environmental benefits of producing clean hydrogen.
- ✓ Ensure the green economy is at the heart of the Executive's future skills strategies.

Broadband

The DUP is committed to continued delivery of Project Stratum, which has already extended broadband coverage to over 76,000 new users. We believe digital connectivity to be as central to the success of our economy and our society as electricity or water.

The DUP will: -

- ✓ Seek to make Northern Ireland 100% fibre broadband by 2025 through extension of Project Stratum.
- ✓ Ensure Northern Ireland is best placed to benefit from further Government initiatives, including Project Gigabit.
- ✓ Expand gigabit-capable broadband in rural areas.
- ✓ Help businesses to exploit growth opportunities flowing from high-speed broadband connection.
- ✓ Ensure the roll-out of rural broadband is complemented by digital literacy projects.

Delivering change for people with disabilities

The DUP believes in a fair and inclusive society. We are committed to ensuring that those living with a disability in our society are not disadvantaged in accessing public services and can lead independent and fulfilling lives.

Northern Ireland has the highest level of disability in the United Kingdom, with one in five people affected. This requires a sustained and tailored response, one which meets the specific needs of people with disabilities, irrespective of whether the disability is physical, learning, sensory, hidden or mental-health related.

In recent years, the DUP has delivered on previous manifesto commitments to: -

- ✓ Deliver more accessible play facilities for children and young people with disabilities across Northern Ireland's local council areas.
- ✓ Support better changing facilities for children, young people and adults with disabilities.
- ✓ Provide a greater range of events and initiatives that meet the specific needs of people with disabilities.

In the last Assembly, we also: -

- ✓ Introduced legislation to help speed up diagnosis, intervention and support for those with autism.
- ✓ Prioritised removing barriers to training and employment facing d/Deaf and disabled people.
- ✓ Supported a pilot for sign language interpretation during Question Time in the Assembly.
- ✓ Allocated additional funding for special schools and brought forward new SEN regulations.

- ✓ Ensure children with Special Educational Needs have the right to participate in decisions involving their education.
- ✓ Welcomed the inaugural Disabled Person's Parliament at Stormont.
- ✓ Delivered the Troubles Permanent Disablement Payment Scheme.

Moving forward together

In order to build a truly shared and inclusive society, the needs of people with disabilities must inform how government makes policy and plans for the future. We want disabled people to have more involvement in this process and at an earlier stage.

In the next mandate, the DUP will: -

- ✓ Seek to expedite delivery of a new Disability Strategy, co-designed with service users.
- ✓ Support an intensive review of current disability legislation.
- ✓ Support the introduction of a Sign Language Bill and enhanced signing provision within the school curriculum.
- ✓ Ensure public bodies and community providers have the resources to go beyond minimum legal requirements to make buildings more accessible and services more accommodating.
- ✓ Promote the principle of universal design to ensure new buildings and services are inclusive of those with disabilities from the start.
- ✓ Ensure the planning system practically delivers on the challenges facing people with disabilities.

- ✓ Expand availability of supported living to more people, including those with complex needs and who require more intensive support.
- ✓ Consider the reopening of the independent living fund.
- ✓ Ensure disabled people are enabled to be equal partners in the decisions about their health, care and wellbeing.

Better recreation and play facilities

Access to sport and recreation holds the potential to richly enhance the lives of people in our community with a disability. In addition to presenting benefits for physical health and emotional wellbeing, we believe these activities can help disabled persons, particularly children and young people, to develop important social and life skills.

The DUP has already secured local investment in specialist play equipment across Northern Ireland. We will: -

- ✓ Roll-out more changing places toilets across Northern Ireland.
- ✓ Pursue fair and uniform regional access to disabled play facilities.



- ✓ Seek a feasibility study into the first fully accessible indoor waterpark in Europe.
- ✓ Promote better opportunities for those with disabilities to participate in informal, individual, group and elite sport.
- ✓ Provide more respite and short breaks for those with disabilities and their families, including siblings.

Protecting the most vulnerable

Allegations of abuse, neglect and degrading treatment against residents at Muckamore Abbey Hospital and Dunmurry Manor Care Home have underlined the need to overhaul and strengthen safeguarding protections for those whose disability or circumstances may increase their exposure to harm or exploitation.

The DUP will: -

- ✓ Support new adult safeguarding legislation in the Assembly which prioritises the prevention of harm and affords disabled persons the dignity and protection they deserve.
- ✓ Progress the Muckamore Abbey Hospital Public Inquiry and seek resources to expedite the criminal investigation into allegations of abuse.
- ✓ Seek an increase in the social care and learning disability workforces.
- ✓ Promote a partnership approach to preventing, detecting and reporting harm.
- ✓ Ensure the provisions of the Victims Charter applies to, and delivers for, disabled persons.
- ✓ Provide special measures within the criminal justice system and courts to support disabled victims of crime.
- ✓ Record and respond to trends in deaf or disabled persons who are subject to domestic abuse, stalking or coercive control.

Valuing our Older People

By the end of the next Assembly mandate in 2028, the proportion of Northern Ireland's population aged over 65 will outnumber those aged under 15 for the first time. The DUP recognises the need to build an age-friendly society. We are committed to promoting the health and wellbeing of older people, ensuring they secure safe accommodation, equal access to services, have vibrant social and economic opportunities and are protected against crime, abuse and poverty.

The DUP: -

- ✓ Supported the extension of the Executive's Active Ageing Strategy until May 2022.
- ✓ Helped deliver a one off £200 COVID-19 Heating Payment for older people.
- ✓ Raised awareness of the abuse and neglect of older people and need for a cross-agency plan to improve the experience of older people in the criminal justice system.
- ✓ Ensured the Winter Fuel Payment was retained across the United Kingdom through the Confidence & Supply Agreement.
- ✓ Backed a £8 million pilot providing those aged over 55 with the opportunity to purchase homes which are more suitable to their needs.

Age-friendly policy

DUP MLAs will prioritise age-friendly policy in the next mandate by: -

- ✓ Supporting a specific indicator for an age-friendly society within a future Programme for Government.
- ✓ Delivering a new and fully-resourced Active-Ageing Strategy for Northern Ireland.

- ✓ Pursuing the co-design of ageing well policies alongside older people and their advocates.
- ✓ Supporting the introduction of lifetime home standards across all new builds and renovations to reflect the needs of older people.
- ✓ Ensuring major transformation projects such as the Encompass Programme recognises obstacles to digital literacy among older people.
- ✓ Making sure that older people benefit from measures to fix health waiting lists.
- ✓ Promoting a dementia-friendly approach to public policy and provision of services.
- ✓ Committing to examine how current legislation protects older people in terms of access to goods or services.

Empowering older people

The DUP will seek to give older people the confidence and capacity to live enriched and independent lives by: -

- ✓ Expanding access to public, private and community transport.
- ✓ Focusing on ensuring older people can live at home for longer, including through an overhaul of adult social care.
- ✓ Encouraging even greater uptake and use of the 60+ SmartPass and Senior (65+) SmartPass which the DUP introduced 20 years ago.
- ✓ Incentivising older people to stay active.
- ✓ Addressing the adverse impacts of the shift toward a cashless society on older people, particularly in rural areas.
- ✓ Promoting earlier and better-informed conversations about advanced care planning.



Older persons make a vital and inspiration contribution to life in Northern Ireland, whether it is via volunteering, caring, employment or childcare.

The DUP will support and enhance opportunities for older people to participate in society by: -

- ✓ Working with the private sector to support older people who wish to remain employed after retirement age.
- ✓ Encouraging reskilling and experience sharing.
- ✓ Investing more in essential digital skills for persons over the age of 55.
- ✓ Ensuring job and volunteering opportunities available to older people are publicised - and can be accessed - in a range of formats.

- ✓ Introducing legislation to strengthen statutory protections for informal carers.

A safer and more secure future

The DUP believes our older generation should be able to live in safety, free of the threat of crime, abuse and exploitation.

We will: -

- ✓ Support the introduction of an Adult Safeguarding Bill and ensure the distinct challenges facing older persons are accounted for.
- ✓ Promote more comprehensive guidance on CCTV use in care homes and other settings.

- ✓ Pursue greater accountability in decisions older persons in care home, hospital and community settings.
- ✓ Build on the success of the Scamwise NI partnership
- ✓ Redouble efforts to address emerging threats to older people, including online financial crime.
- ✓ Lobby for national fraud and cybercrime statistics to be broken down by age of complainant.
- ✓ Promote better outcome rates for recorded crime against older people
- ✓ Endorse tougher custodial sentences for serious crimes against older people.
- ✓ Ensure the operational and strategic priorities of policing and PCSPs reflect the threat of acquisitive crime and anti-social behaviour on older people.
- ✓ Commission a financial abuse prevalence study among those aged over 65.

Tackling poverty and isolation

We want to ensure older people have the financial and practical support to maintain a high quality of life, in warm homes, and that they can continue to play an active role in our local communities. Pensioner poverty has been rising steadily since 2012 according to the charity Independent Age.

In an economic climate that has forced households across Northern Ireland to cut back amid rising prices for essentials such as food and fuel, the DUP believes it is crucial that older people get exactly what they are entitled to. Those who have contributed to society over many years deserve to be supported and rewarded later in life.

The DUP will: -

- ✓ Continue to provide access to an experienced benefits adviser by retaining the Make the Call Service.



- ✓ Trial the introduction of the offer of preventive support visits for anyone aged over 75, with a focus on maximising uptake of statutory services and entitlements.
- ✓ Continue to fight for free TV licences for those 75+.
- ✓ Supporting dedicated strategies to tackle loneliness.
- ✓ Place funding for voluntary advice services on a more stable foundation.
- ✓ Ensuring a fair level of spend from the Supporting People programme benefits older persons.
- ✓ Retain the Winter Fuel Payment.
- ✓ Press the Government to restore the triple lock on state pensions and promote a pension system that wards against poverty in old age.

Sport for the future

Building on Success

Our Province has a rich sporting heritage. We can be proud of the many achievements of renowned sportsmen and women like Dame Mary Peters, Alex Higgins, George Best, Rory McIlroy and Carl Frampton who have firmly put Northern Ireland on the map.

Northern Ireland has built on this elite success to attract major sporting events like the Giro d'Italia and UEFA Super Cup. However, with the right support, the DUP believes the future can be even brighter.

We will: -

- ✓ Provide funding and marketing support for the joint UK and Ireland bid to host football's 2028 European Championship, ensuring Northern Ireland achieves direct benefits.
- ✓ Support the Irish Football Association's plans to establish a National Training Centre.
- ✓ Promote ambitious growth and performance targets for men's and women's rugby as well as hockey.
- ✓ Invest more in specialist services including nutrition, physiotherapy and sports psychology to support elite level athletes.
- ✓ Grow Northern Ireland's emerging sport tech sector, helping to export goods and services.
- ✓ Seek a more strategic and resilient approach to regional sports funding through the Executive.
- ✓ Increase Northern Ireland's sport tourism offering.
- ✓ Ensure wider recognition of Northern Ireland sporting bodies.
- ✓ Seek revised branding that better reflects Northern Ireland's integral role in Team GB and NI.

- ✓ Retain freedom for athletes to choose their national team.
- ✓ Attract further major sporting events and fixtures to Northern Ireland.

Better stadia and sports grounds

The DUP is committed to delivering high-quality local facilities for all sports and all communities across Northern Ireland. These organisations are a key part of the social fabric in our Province; connect families and communities, whilst encouraging those from all backgrounds to get active.

The politicisation of the Executive's commitment to a sub-regional stadia programme in the last two years was completely unacceptable. The failure to deliver this vital funding must be urgently rectified in the new mandate. We will fight for a fair deal for every sport and ensure no single sector can again be held to ransom.

The DUP will: -

- ✓ Press for the release of sub-regional stadia funding for local football without further delay.
- ✓ Lobby for further national investment in grassroots sporting facilities as part of the Government's levelling up agenda.
- ✓ Encourage increased participation in sport by persons of all ages and abilities, including those with disabilities.
- ✓ Ensure the rollout of defibrillation technology, CPR education and concussion awareness to more sporting facilities and settings.
- ✓ Support the local road-racing calendar and promote a more resilient and sustainable future for the sector.
- ✓ Oppose the naming, or use, of public or private sport facilities to commemorate terrorists.





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