








Manifesto 2022

www.pbp.ie/ae-2022

Get in touch

-  peopleb4profit
 -  pb4p
 -  people_before_profit
 -  07572540489
 -  press.north@pbp.ie
-

Our Candidates



Gerry Carroll
Belfast West



Fiona Ferguson
Belfast North



Hannah Kenny
Belfast East



Sipho Sibanda
Belfast South



Amy Merron
East Derry



Shaun Harkin
Foyle



Jerry Maguire
South Antrim



Carol Gallagher
West Tyrone



Sophia McFeely
Mid Ulster



Emmett Kilpatrick
Fermanagh &
South Tyrone



Amanda Doherty
Lagan Valley



Paul McCrory
South Down

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Introduction:

THERE IS A BETTER WAY FOR WORKERS AND COMMUNITIES

People Before Profit are standing in this election to offer a radical alternative to the failed policies of the Stormont establishment and their communal headcount politics.

Instead of focusing solely on the fight to be King of the Stormont Castle, our candidates enter this election to offer a progressive, socialist alternative that speaks to working-class people who are suffering through a cost of living crisis.

We reject the communal carve-up of politics and do not accept the narrative that there are only two traditions that are dominating and irreconcilable. Our society is changing and diverse and there are many people who do not fit into, or refuse to be locked into, the traditional headcount. We welcome this. There are many people, too, that do not want to be ruled by a dysfunctional Stormont which stumbles from crisis to crisis, or by a Tory Westminster.

People Before Profit wishes to reflect our changing demographics and provide a vehicle to fight for a better society for us all. In doing so, we look to the huge movements which have been lightning rods for change - such as Repeal. These movements point to a better way, to an Ireland that is not run by the same old conservative ideologies.

Establishment Parties Have Failed

For decades, our elections have been deadlocked. We are told to choose between the largest representatives of 'our own communities' - primarily the DUP and Sinn Féin. Before every election the big parties beat the communal drums; afterwards, they work together to preside over inequality and poverty, until a new crisis in Unionism starts the game all over again.

The latest iteration of the crisis of Unionism sees the DUP whipping up fear over the protocol in a desperate attempt to deflect from disastrous polls and their failure to deliver for working-class people. Yet this is the very party that welcomed the protocol and believed the lies of Boris Johnson who they invited with open arms to their 2018 conference. Now they pretend that a 'Unionist identity' is under threat from both. Thankfully, they don't speak for the majority of people, including those from a protestant background.

Sinn Féin claims that winning the position of First Minister will take us on the high road to a united Ireland, but that position is purely symbolic. While we disagree with those who would boycott an Executive with a Sinn Féin First Minister, People Before Profit believes it will make little difference to people's lived experience, given the record of Sinn Féin working with the DUP to deliver austerity.

All of the big parties - DUP, Sinn Féin, Alliance, UUP, and SDLP - have failed to improve the lives of working people. They present themselves as political opponents and then agree to economic policies which protect the wealthy and hammer the poor.

Just look at their combined record:

- Energy prices are soaring yet the Executive has delivered little beyond a one-off £200 payment for those on benefits. No offering for workers, and no price caps.
- Our health service faced a crisis even before COVID because of underfunding, low pay, and privatisation.

- One in four children is currently living in poverty, with the use of foodbanks rising.
- The average cost of childcare is £170 a week - one-third of the average household income and the highest figure in the western world.
- As inflation nears 8%, public sector workers face yet another below-inflation pay offer, including health, local government, Housing Executive, Education Authority, and Transport workers.
- Average wages are a full £2,000 less than the UK average, with four out of ten workers on or below the poverty line.
- The Stormont Executive maintain a discredited, unfair, and discriminatory welfare system which treats people with suspicion and disdain.
- They have agreed to ‘rebalance’ the economy away from the public sector, creating a low paying private sector economy that benefits from reduced corporation tax.
- Scotland has abolished tuition fees, yet here they are over £4,000 per year.
- NHS care and nursing homes have been shut while struggling families pay a staggering £700 a week.
- The very wealthy profited greatly from COVID, yet the Stormont Executive refused to call for a “COVID wealth tax”.

People Before Profit Believe that there is Another Way

We have been told there is no money to fund jobs, healthcare, a fair benefits system, etc. The past two years have shown this to be an utter farce. When the pandemic hit politicians found money overnight for various handouts, not least £155 million for retail vouchers and hundreds of millions more on an “eat out to help out” scheme.

People Before Profit demand the same type of urgency to deal with the crippling cost of living crisis, to revitalise our health service, our housing stock, and our other public services. As hardship increases, a radical and transformative approach toward politics and economics is needed more than ever.

Real Change Comes From Below

People Before Profit are out to fight for a different kind of politics, rooted in and led by people in communities instead of elites at Stormont, which can reach across the divide and win real change for ordinary people from all backgrounds.

A new generation and workers are already leading the way by standing up for their rights. We salute the local government workers, the education workers, university workers, and all others who are taking action to raise their wages. We salute the thousands of women who have stood up to the dinosaurs of the DUP in asserting their right to control their own bodies and have abortion services in the North. We salute the young people who are rising and demanding climate action now!

To all of them, we promote a vision of a better, socialist society where there are top quality free public services, decent wages for working people, full rights for ethnic minorities, women and the LGBTQ+ community, and a real effort to stop our planet being destroyed by climate change.

THE COST OF LIVING CRISIS

Too many households are facing the same impossible choice: heat or eat. The big parties laid the groundwork for this crisis by freezing wages and implementing austerity and benefit cuts that marginalised working-class communities. Now that fuel prices and inflation are soaring, people are struggling to cope.

We are told that there is nothing our politicians can do, that the market sets inflation, and we must tighten our belts to get by. Meanwhile, multinational fuel and energy corporations are bringing home record profits.

People Before Profit takes an entirely different approach – we want to see radical measures taken to protect people from the harshest realities of this crisis, and to ensure billions in profit cannot be hoarded by fuel and energy corporations.

We would:

- Launch an Emergency Hardship Fund: distribute a direct payment of £1,000 to households hit by the cost of living crisis, including all but the top fifth of earners. This could be generated by imposing greater taxes on the wealthiest.
- Impose emergency price controls: The Stormont Executive should impose price controls on energy, fuel, and food where necessary. Cutting VAT is not enough because it allows companies to hike prices and profit even more from the difference.
- Cut rents and increase housing benefit: Rents are rising quickly as energy prices soar. We need legislation to cut and freeze rents and increase the Local Housing Allowance on which housing benefit rates are based.
- Ban companies imposing extra charges on payment metre users: 30,000 low-income households who use prepaid metres are being hit with an extra charge which should be scrapped.
- Take the private energy companies back into public ownership: Private monopolies have carved up our gas and electricity markets. A single market has been created for different companies to bid. We need an all-island, not-for-profit public energy company to cut prices.*
- Increase the minimum wage to £15 an hour, with government subsidies for small businesses: The current rate of £8.91 is pathetic and creates a low wage economy. Workers deserve a decent wage that they can live on.
- Support inflation-busting pay rises for all workers

People Before Profit also supports the efforts of workers taking industrial action to improve their wages in line with inflation, and defend their living standards during this crisis. Hovis workers in Belfast set the standard when they won an 8% pay rise, and they have been followed by a host of other workers. We reject the argument that higher wages ‘set off a spiral of price hikes’. Wage increases are a valid response to price hikes that have already occurred. Bosses and shareholders should not be allowed to profiteer from rising prices while workers suffer.

* For example, NI Electricity, which was privatised in the early 1990s is now owned by the Republic’s Electricity Supply Board (ESB). The electricity the ESB supplies is not to households but to companies that then supply homes. In the North, the main supplier to homes is PowerNI, which is owned by Energia, the main supplier in the Republic. Meanwhile, Phoenix Gas which is the main gas supplier in the North is owned by SSE Airtricity, another company based in Dublin. But just in case you think that this means all the island’s energy is at least Irish owned. It turns out that Bord Gáis Energy is owned by Centrica, formerly British Gas. Even before the current massive price hikes, Centrica’s profits had more than doubled in 2021 to £948 million, according to the Financial Times.

TIME TO TACKLE POVERTY

Poverty, including child poverty, has been rising since long before the current cost of living crisis. Around 370,000 people are living below the poverty line in NI – that is one in every five people, and one-third of these are children. More than two-thirds of children living in poverty are in families where at least one parent is working.

State support for those living in poverty or facing misfortune is deplorably low. In one of the wealthiest regions of the world, we have devastating levels of deprivation which have been worsened by Stormont's attacks on welfare.

Support for carers is similarly awful. We have more than 50,000 registered full-time carers for someone who is ill or has a disability, and that is set to increase year on year. Carers forgo their life plans—such as achieving an education or obtaining employment—to provide much-needed care.

In return for this tremendous personal sacrifice, carers receive a maximum Carer's Allowance of just £67.60 per week—the equivalent of less than £1.83 per hour. Carers are disproportionately women and girls. This highlights how the unpaid labour of women throughout their lifetime is too often taken for granted.

Anyone could find themselves unemployed or develop a disability or long term illness, or having to care for someone else. They should be able to expect decent support but disgracefully, this isn't the reality.

People Before Profit propose:

- An Anti-Poverty Act enshrining in law a commitment to 'end poverty in all its forms everywhere'.
- £15 an hour minimum wage.
- Abolish welfare reforms and create a new welfare system in line with human rights, available for all who need it: Those caring for children and others; people with disabilities; mental ill-health; long-term sickness; and terminal illnesses.
 - ▶ Guaranteed right to independent advice on welfare.
 - ▶ An end to the five-week wait for payments such as Universal Credit.
 - ▶ An end to repeat assessments for people with lifelong conditions.
 - ▶ Bring social security medical assessments in-house, removing the private sector, and using appropriately qualified health professionals.
 - ▶ End cruel and punitive sanctions which punish people for mental ill-health and do nothing to help people into work.



- A living wage for Carers.
- Remove unnecessary restrictions on applicants for Carer's Allowance: such as the requirement to have lived here for at least two of the last three years before making a claim.
- A new non-taxable weekly child payment: for children aged 0-4 and those aged 5-15 who are in receipt of free school meals, alongside the current Child Payment for disabled children and young people until the age of 20.
- Extended free school meal provision: to include all children whose families are living on low incomes, available during school holidays; and expanded funding for the provision of breakfast and homework clubs.
- Expanded Sure Start provision: in the 30% most deprived Super Output Areas, with specific funding ring-fenced for the inclusion of disabled children and their families.
- End unequal pay for young workers: Workers deserve the pay according to the work they do, not their age.
- Increase statutory maternity pay to a living wage: While unions often negotiate better maternity pay, after the first six weeks of maternity leave, statutory maternity pay amounts at most to £152 a week and often considerably less.
- 30 hours of free, high-quality childcare for working parents: Parents in Scotland, England and Wales have access to 30 hours of free childcare a week, while our 3 and 4-year-olds are only entitled to 12.5 hours of pre-school a week, which is useless for working parents. Most people are forced to use family for childcare since parents pay up to £170 a week for formal childcare – that's almost £9,000 a year for just one child.
- Defend the triple lock on the state pension: We need the triple lock to ensure the value of the state pension rises every tax year in line with inflation, average wage growth or 2.5%.
- Mandatory sick pay and bereavement pay: Make it mandatory for every employer to provide a proper sick pay scheme and to allow paid time off for bereavements.
- Review policies on security arrears, under or overpayments, deductions etc.

HEALTHCARE FOR ALL

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the crisis in our local health service, but spiralling waiting lists, the cancellation of life-saving operations, and overworked, underpaid healthcare staff who were pushed to breaking point were a reality before the pandemic.

Stormont expects the public to foot the bill for its reckless culture of mismanagement and misspending. In late 2021, an official Health Department document revealed a wish-list of measures the Stormont Executive is aiming to introduce in the next Assembly, including patients paying for GP and A&E visits, and increased charges for prescriptions, domiciliary care charges, early years registration, and community care. People Before Profit firmly believe that healthcare is a public service that must be free at the point of delivery, must be based on clinical need not ability to pay and must ensure that health and social care staff are meaningfully respected and valued through fair pay and trade union recognition.



IF ELECTED, PEOPLE BEFORE PROFIT MLAS PLEDGE:

Proper Pay for NHS Staff

Successive Health Ministers denied pay parity, proper pay, and safe staffing, forcing overstretched healthcare staff to take strike action in 2019 in order to improve patient safety and end unequal pay.

Robin Swann—with the support of all the Executive parties—has added insult to injury by awarding a below-inflation pay offer to the same staff this year, after their heroic pandemic efforts, that amounted to a pay cut in real terms.

Investing in the NHS must include investing in its staff. All NHS staff need a decent pay rise, especially as the cost of living soars. This will also make working in health and social care an attractive public service career. It will help fill vacancies and so reduce the waiting list backlog. People Before Profit stood on pickets with health workers and supported their demands for fair pay. We would:

- Work with trade unions to amplify their demands at the Assembly level.
- Support inflation busting pay rises to all health workers and offer solidarity and practical support during pay-negotiations including full support for strike action if the staff deem that necessary to remedy unequal and unfair pay, terms and conditions.

End Privatisation

For more than a decade, Health Ministers—from Sinn Féin, DUP, and UUP—have undermined the founding principles of the NHS by outsourcing services and staff recruitment to private operators. The Department of Health continues to spend hundreds of millions of pounds of public money every year on subsidising the private for-profit healthcare sector and paying recruitment agencies.

The Health Department handed over £27 million of public money to private healthcare providers throughout the COVID pandemic in exchange for taking private patients. It holds massive contracts with recruitment agencies who are ransacking the public health budget to the tune of over £280 million a year. That is an unfathomable £767,000 per day.

Outsourcing of care homes has been a disaster for residents and staff alike, leaving too many without proper care and preventing staff from giving such care. Social care in privately-run care homes has been plagued by complaints from residents and frontline staff - some so serious as to warrant policing probes and criminal investigations.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought these very serious issues to the fore. Families with disabled members found that the Direct Payments given to them as part of the “personalisation” agenda were useless during the pandemic but allowed the Health and Social Care Trusts to wash their hands of responsibility for their loved ones. Now many are discovering that they are recorded as receiving “Self Directed Support” (SDS) when, in fact, they are not directing the support they get at all.

The only people who gain are care homeowners who continue to see their profits soar. Runwood Homes, for example, raked in £20 million in profit while failing to meet basic safety standards at a number of its homes across the North.

The outgoing Health Minister and the Stormont Executive talk of “tough decisions ahead” and that they plan “changes which will be politically challenging.” They are afraid to openly admit—especially before an Assembly election—that they plan to further privatise the health service. This is why private healthcare providers such as Kingsbridge Health Care Group (KHG) have used bank loans to fund a £9 million expansion of their for-profit services.

People Before Profit have a radically different vision:

- Oppose and reverse privatisation within the NHS locally.
- Bring care homes back under NHS control ensuring that domiciliary carers would get the same pay, training, holiday, sick pay etc as Trust staff and that older or disabled people see an end to the 15-minute visits that are an insult to anyone needing care.
 - ▶ Raise conditions for care home residents to NHS standards.
 - ▶ Grant trade union membership and equal pay to all care home staff.
- End agency usage to save millions and ensure that all NHS staff are afforded permanent, protected contracts with full employment rights and equal pay.

- Bring private hospital care under the NHS control so that all medical resources and health resources are available to the public.
- Increased investment in general practice by 15% to alleviate pressure at local levels and expand the workforce, to help to reduce unsustainable workload
- Implement a multi-disciplinary team model at GP level to ensure equal and local access to mental health and social workers, physiotherapists, etc.

Tackle the Waiting List Crisis

Despite the same electoral promises we hear every election, the Executive have risked the public's health year on year by cutting hospital beds. We have the worst waiting lists on this island, across all of the devolved administrations in Britain, and in the EU.

Almost 25% of us (more than 460,000 people) are waiting to see a consultant, waiting for surgery, or start hospital treatment. Half of the 350,000 people waiting for their first consultation appointment have been waiting for more than a year. Over 112,000 people are waiting for a first inpatient or day-case admission and around 184,000 people waiting more than a year for a first hospital outpatient appointment.

Average waiting times for patients in need of a range of specialist services (such as urology, orthopaedics, pain management, general surgery, etc) is almost 6 years. Indeed, in the 12 months before the COVID-19 pandemic over 5,000 people died while on a health service waiting list in the North.

Official Department of Health briefings shows the number of people on waiting lists will rise to 700,000 by March 2026.

People Before Profit consider this situation to be untenable and we would make reducing waiting lists a priority:

- Long term, multi-year investment.
- Push the British Home Office to grant right to work permits to refugees and asylum seekers with professional backgrounds as doctors, nurses, surgeons, etc. so they can take up positions in the NHS.

A Proper Mental Health Strategy

The spend per head of population on mental healthcare is 27% lower here than it is in NHS England and 20% lower than in the Republic of Ireland, despite the needs here being higher given the impact of the Troubles.

There are huge differences locally in mental health outcomes between the most well-off and the least well-off areas (often where the Troubles hit hardest). People in the most deprived areas are more likely to die by suicide, just as they are more likely to die from heart disease or cancer. Job security, good incomes, affordable benchmarked housing, and increased welfare spending all help to reduce mental health problems, substance abuse, self-harm, and suicide.

More services are needed for early intervention, local counselling access, and loneliness, among others.

People Before Profit calls for:

- An immediate doubling of funding for mental health services to bring it, at least, in line with levels of funding for mental health services in Scotland, England and Wales.
- Long-term investment to restructure mental health services based on human rights and best international practice, and prioritising local community-based responses.
- Multi-annual core funding for services that currently depend on piecemeal funding.
- Increased access to early intervention services including family support hubs and via schools.
- A strategy on loneliness.
- Introduction of waiting time targets for counselling based on those put forward by the 123 GP campaign.

A COVID-19 Public Inquiry

Bereaved relatives and frontline care workers have called for a public inquiry into the Department for Health's handling of the pandemic, particularly in care homes where almost 1,000 people lost their lives.

People Before Profit supports a public inquiry, including the following:

- An assessment of the impact of austerity in the NHS and the outsourcing of residential and domiciliary care to private for-profit care homes. Hospital beds have been cut by 20% in Belfast and 10% across Northern Ireland over the past decade. This led to the discharging of potentially COVID-positive hospital patients into care homes so as to free up hospital beds.
- The financial resources that care homes had, specifically during the first wave of the pandemic, when there was a delay of PPE supplies to care home staff.
- The decisions taken to cancel life-saving surgeries and reduce urgent treatments and what impact this had on excess deaths since March 2020.

Oppose Bengoa Reforms

Stormont's plans to 'transform' our health service—as outlined in the Bengoa Report—will result in the closure of local hospitals, the sell-off of services to private providers, and put private companies at the head of decision-making boards.

These 'reforms' are simply stepping stones to paving the way for breaking-up the NHS altogether.

People Before Profit believes that such regressive 'transformation' of this kind must be resisted.

- Investment led reorganisation toward a more preventative, community-based system; alongside local hospitals, statutory residential homes, etc.
- Regional specialisms alongside local hospitals - not instead of. Local hospitals with A&E departments must remain open to deal with less severe medical emergencies.
- More ambulances and air ambulances to guarantee improved response times to medical emergencies and reduce transit times to local hospitals and regional centres.
- Recruit 100 more Cancer Nurses Specialists.
- A catch-up programme to implement HPV vaccination.

An All-Ireland NHS

COVID showed the dysfunctionality of operating two different health systems on either side of the border. A single all-Ireland NHS would benefit from economies of scale, allowing for savings in the long term. It would also help to solve the shortage of specialist doctors, nurses and other health care workers in border areas.

There is already a range of cross border health services, such as the North West Cancer Centre which serves Donegal as well as Derry, as well as the paediatric cardiac service which is based in Dublin for the whole island. The Stormont Executive has no problem relying on private healthcare services in the South of Ireland through the Reimbursement Scheme set out in the Cross-Border Healthcare Directive so there is no reason not to start the move towards an All-Ireland National Health and Social Care Service.

EXPAND WORKERS' RIGHTS

People Before Profit is the foremost party in championing workers' rights. Our representatives have been the loudest voice for the trade union movement in Stormont and Councils, and we have consistently supported workers on pickets.

Our vision is one that sees workers united to fight back against poor conditions and sectarian division.

In February, Gerry Carroll MLA introduced a Trade Union Freedom Bill which was designed to dismantle Thatcher's anti-union laws. Stormont has devolved power to give workers more rights yet this was the first attempt to overhaul them for the better.

The Bill was voted down by a block of right-wing parties including the DUP, UUP and the Alliance Party. The inclusion of Alliance on this list shows that their 'cross-community rhetoric' does not extend to a united working class.

People Before Profit will continue its fight for workers' rights.

We will push to:

- Legalise solidarity action: We want to unpick the cornerstone attack of Thatcher, to allow unions to strike in solidarity with others.
- Allow trade unions greater access to workplaces.
- Mandate more employers to recognise a trade union: If your employer refuses to recognise your trade union in the workplace, you can pursue legal action to have the state mandate such recognition. Only workplaces with 21 or more employees can avail of this, but 93% of workplaces across the North have less than 21 employees. They have no power to force an unwilling employer to recognise their collective bargaining. We will reduce the mandatory minimum number of employees from 21 to 5.
- Remove limitations on workplace negotiating: Our trade unions are limited to negotiating with employers on matters linked to pay, hours, and holidays. The result is that many issues which arise for workers are off-limits for their trade unions. We would lift these limitations, allowing unionised workers to be represented on all issues they are concerned with.
- Bring balloting into the 21st century: The law says trade unions must ballot for strike action and internal elections via postal vote which costs a substantial amount of money (hundreds of thousands for bigger unions). In the 21st century, there is no excuse for forbidding unions from balloting electronically, or even in person.

- Shorten and simplify notice periods before strike action can be taken: Our unions have to give 7 days' notice to an employer before they ballot in a workplace for industrial action. This provides an overwhelming advantage for employers to engage in nefarious tactics to pressure workers to not vote for action, including threats of reduced hours or the sack. We would reduce the requirement to give a notice period from seven days to two.
- Provide greater protection for workers dismissed for taking industrial action: Workers dismissed unfairly because of their participation in industrial action have the right to challenge their dismissal. However, this right is time-limited. We would expand the time frame under which an employee who was dismissed unfairly can challenge this decision to five years.
- Four Day Working Week.
- Ban agency working and zero-hour contracts.
- Workers' cooperatives: Promote and support workers' cooperatives to create a working-class cultural shift based on workers' self-management and workplace democracy.



HOUSING & HOMELESS CRISIS

We have a housing crisis that is being allowed to spiral out of control. The past year saw the highest number of homeless applications (nearly 45,000) and people in housing stress (30,000) and the lowest number of housing allocations in the past decade. Average rents in the private sector have continued to rise and house prices are at their highest level since the 2008 crash.

The Stormont Executive has failed to deliver any meaningful intervention to protect people, opting instead to continue the same failed policies as before. We need a radical change in direction to address the housing crisis.

Rent Controls and Reductions

Gerry Carroll MLA proposed a 10% reduction in rents for the private rental sector - a short-term solution to help with the cost-of-living crisis which the Executive Parties voted down. If re-elected, we will continue to push for permanent rent controls and protections for renters, including those in housing associations.

- Establish a Rental Board: with responsibility to maintain minimum accommodation standards via accommodation inspectors, secure tenancy leases, register agreed rents, and reduce existing rents to below 2011 levels.
- Cut and cap rent at 20% of tenant's income: with the option for the tenant to involve the Rental Board to mediate. In the event of loss of or reduction in income by the tenant, rents to be revised downwards, the shortfall to be made up through the social welfare system.
- Rent caps to be introduced on all dwellings valued at or below half a million pounds.
- Legal right to a minimum lease of five years: with an option to renew for further periods of five years.
- Annual rent increases should be based on inflation and can not exceed the CPI.

Retain the Northern Ireland Housing Executive

The NIHE has the potential to be the lynchpin of a comprehensive and equitable housing system. As even Price Waterhouse Cooper stated in a 2011 report: "the NIHE is one of the success stories from Northern Ireland's recent history." The difficulties it now faces are due to political inaction and wrong-headed policies by successive ministers.

Most recently, a proposal developed by the Department for Communities is to "reclassify" the NIHE, possibly with a cooperative or mutual status. Reclassifying means taking the NIHE out of the public sector and changing it to a private body. This will allow the Westminster rules on borrowing to be circumvented but will also mean a lack of public control and accountability. This is why such a reclassification is considered to be privatisation in a fancy wrapper.

Public Housing On Public Land

The currently planned target of 2,200 new social rented homes per annum would take over twenty years to house everyone on the current waiting list. This is unacceptable.

The state holds significant amounts of land – the Department for Communities is currently carrying out a survey to establish all of the public land holdings. This land needs to be used to build public housing and not gifted to private developers to subsidise their profits.

People Before Profit is in favour of revitalising the NIHE, and crucially, enabling a policy and funding environment where the backlog of maintenance and repairs can be addressed, the Housing Executive can re-commence a major programme of new home building, and new secure employment can be created by employing thousands of tradespeople and creating apprenticeships on secure public sector employment contracts.

Specifically, PBP supports:

- Lifting the restriction on borrowing imposed on the NIHE without privatisation.
- Extending the social housing grant scheme to allow the NIHE to bid for new funding, and an increase in targeted public investment.
- A massive expansion of public housing building to address the waiting lists.
- A campaign to retrofit all NIHE homes which require it.

End Homelessness

Nearly 40% of all new homeless cases are due to unfit existing accommodation or evictions. To reduce the waiting lists we need to first stop them from growing further.

People Before Profit would:

- Introduce a moratorium and ban on evictions that would result in homelessness.
- Institute a policy of “Housing First” to address rough sleeping and other forms of homelessness; as in US and Canadian cities and some EU countries.
- Introduce fiscal measures such as a land value tax or public sector equity holdings to encourage timely and appropriate development of new housing.
- Democratise housing policy through greater transparency in planning decisions, the introduction of social impact statements and the funding of independent tenant and civil society scrutiny.

EDUCATION

The gap between the educational attainment of children living in poverty and those from better-off families is one of the most blatant inequalities here.

For example, by age three, children growing up in poverty can be a full year behind children from better-off families in relation to cognitive development, social skills and school readiness generally.

As well as being hugely unfair to children, this significant inequality is costly to the local economy. Save the Children estimates that “success in closing the gap in Northern Ireland would have resulted in increased economic gains of around £400 million in 2013, rising to £1.3 billion by 2030”.

A range of evidence suggests that the social segregation which results from the division between grammar and non-grammar schools is to blame for a huge gap in attainment. Protestant working-class boys suffer particularly from this division.

There is much evidence to suggest that all children—from the most academically able to those with learning disabilities—benefit from being educated in mixed-ability, socially-mixed schools. We believe the “shared education” programme is a sham that simply reinforces segregation.

People Before Profit support:

- Proper investment in integrated, non-selective education to provide a universal, accessible, lifelong education system, free at the point of access for all.
- Reverse the thousands of teacher and classroom assistant redundancies imposed in recent years and start to reduce class sizes to a level at which all children would have a chance to learn.
- Implementation of the “free school day”, whereby children do not have to bring any money to school, “voluntary contributions” are not expected, and school expenses such as books, trips and materials are covered.
- Support inflation-busting pay rises for all education workers, including all further and higher education staff.
- Support the “Free school meals for all” campaign which would promote public health and reduce poverty across all of our communities.

A Better Deal for Higher/Further Education Students and Staff

Locally, we trail behind in public funding for Further and Higher Education (HE). Additionally, the neoliberal mindset behind the running of our universities and colleges has led to courses being cut, fees being introduced, pensions being slashed, and a deterioration in working conditions for staff.

People Before Profit is for:

- Equal public funding with England, Scotland and Wales for Higher Education.
- Drastically increased accountability in university governance: Vice-Chancellor pay is over-inflated, not transparently justified and wholly disproportionate to other university staff salaries.
- Abolish tuition fees and fund education through progressive taxation.
- Introduce a Basic Student Income.
- Introduce a Student Mental Health Action Plan.
- Introduce a Student Renters Bill to guarantee better, more affordable accommodation which is purpose-built for students.
- Cuts to staff pensions reversed and an end to precarity for PhD students and other staff who have been forced to strike in recent years.
- An end to gender and racial pay gaps in Further and Higher Education.

CLIMATE ACTION NOW

Climate breakdown is a code-red emergency. Both North, South, and in Westminster, governments have been slow to act. Young people and ecosocialists are leading the way for change through campaigns on the streets which have raised awareness and forced politicians to pass legislation. We must go further, by challenging the real root of the climate crisis - capitalism. Until then, there are radical actions we can take to mitigate and protect from climate catastrophe.

People Before Profit propose:

- A Just Transition and Workers' Superfund which offer re-skilling/re-training on full pay for migration to green jobs.
- Energy strategies that are exclusively renewable, clean, and green.
- Renewable Energy Storage: to create a buffer against supply shocks and end the reliance on a "just-in-time" supply system.
- Oppose blue hydrogen, extraction licenses, harmful dredging, gold mining and fossil fuel industry permits: Big corporate interests are looking for petroleum licensing that will open up our natural environment for drilling and fracking that could poison the water and air for generations to come. Areas like the Sperrins and Lough Neagh should be protected, not pillaged.
- Climate Mitigations: such as tree planting, rewilding, woodland creation, nature conservation, and protection of biodiversity.
- Legislate to tackle the extinction crisis and for nature's recovery: recognise the rights of nature.
- Oppose Water Charges: Climate change poses a significant threat in terms of our daily lives and requires improvement in our water and sewerage infrastructure. Water and sewerage improvements should be paid by progressive taxation on those who can pay rather than by imposing water charges on those who cannot pay.
- Oppose privatisation of Translink and expand free public transport: Privatisation leads to fragmentation, unnecessary costs, and leaves low-income and rural communities behind. Translink must be kept in public hands and must begin to explore rolling out free public transport on green hydrogen bus fleets, to increase public footfall and decrease carbon footprint. This should include a North-South and East-West Rail expansion and a Derry-Dublin rail line as a matter of urgency.
- Restore the £15m a year Fuel Duty Rebate to Translink which is the only public transport operator in the UK that does not receive such a rebate.
- Transition to electrification of public and private vehicles.
- Urgent action to deliver carbon neutrality by 2035.

EQUALITY

The last decade has been shaped by the fight for equal rights by women, the LGBTQ+ and BAME communities, Gaeilgeoirí, and more.

Where there have been victories, they have by and large come from direct action and mass protest on the streets. Decriminalisation of abortion was won in 2019 after a sustained campaign for reproductive healthcare forced Westminster to intervene where Stormont had failed.

Likewise, equal marriage became a pressure valve that Stormont and Westminster could no longer ignore, with marches on the streets and lobbying forcing parties to change policies, field more progressive candidates, and ultimately change the law.

We also recognise that any victories won by Irish language speakers, which saw the Irish language forced onto the political agenda by mass protest, came after 12,000 activists took to the streets.

In the midst of the pandemic, BAME activists were targeted by Stormont legislation, enforced by the PSNI. Their protests called for an end to racial injustice but that is exactly what they faced. Their refusal to accept such treatment saw further protest, public support, and eventually, an apology from leading police. People Before Profit supported BAME activists in resisting the criminalisation of protest.

It is unlikely this progress would have been won without such activism. History shows us that we are rarely given rights by parliaments without demands and mass movements. Indeed, this is the way People Before Profit believe we can achieve the massive societal shift needed to deliver proper equality and an end to oppression.

However, we have a long way to go. Women and LGBTQ+ and BAME people have been failed by Stormont and continue to face barriers and inequalities in society.

People Before Profit advocates for:

- Urgent implementation of the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination (CEDAW) recommendations relating to sexual and reproductive health, rights, and services; including:
 - ▶ Commissioning of abortion services locally, including telemedicine access to medical abortion.
 - ▶ Age-appropriate, inclusive and scientifically accurate education on sexual and reproductive health.
 - ▶ Increased funding for domestic abuse and rape crisis services.
- Urgent implementation of the LGBTQI+ Strategy Expert Advisory Panel recommendations across the health, education, and legal sectors, including self-ID for gender identity and accompanying funding for delivery.
- An end to local enforcement of Home Office Hostile Environment policies: no racist hard border in the Common Travel Area.
- Equal rights for asylum seekers and refugees: including but not limited to housing, welfare, working, and voting, and an end to the policy of “no recourse to public funds”.
- Fund the implementation of the Race Equality Strategy: collect and use ethnic monitoring data to allow public services to identify and respond to inequalities experienced by different social groups.

AN GHAELGE

Saol Trí Ghaeilge

Creideann Pobal Seachas Brabach go bhfuil ceart bunúsach ag daoine a saol a chaitheamh trí mheán na Gaeilge.

Tá muid den bharúil gurb iad easpa cearta dlíthiúla agus easpa córasach acmhainní an dá chonstaic is bunúsaí atá romhainn i dtaca leis an mhian réasúnta sin a bhaint amach, dhá chonstaic a eascraíonn as stair chóilíneach agus as córas caipitlíoch reatha na tíre. Agus go deimhin, measaimid gurb é an sóisialachas an t-aon chóras a bhfuil sé de chumas aige acmhainní agus cearta cuí a chur ar fáil do chách.

Dúshlán Ó Thuaidh

Tá cúig bliana caite ó thit an Lá Dearg deireanach amach, buaicphointe fheachtas an Dream Dearg ó thuaidh. Ó shin rinneadh dul chun cinn mór ó thaobh na Gaeilge de ach ag an am chéanna, tá rudaí áirithe nár athraigh ar chor ar bith.

Tá gach iarracht déanta ag an DUP go háirithe bac a chur le reachtaíocht Ghaeilge, in aineoinn gur shínigh siad suas dó i mí Eanáir 2020. Agus is den mhúnla chéanna leis an DUP atá rialtas na Breataine, nó in aineoinn gur thug siad gealltanais do phobal na Gaeilge reachtaíocht teanga a chur fríd Westminster, ní dhearna siad beart de réir a mbriathair. Is rógaí gan náire iad an scaifte i Sráid Downing.

Agus taobh leis an ardú i líon na gcainteoirí, tá an iliomad dúshlán le sárú go fóill. Tá brú millteanach ar earnáil an Ghaeloideachais, cuirtear constaicí rialta os comhair na comharthaíochta dátheangaí, déantar ionsaithe seicteacha ar an teanga go rí-rialta, agus tá baol leanúnach ann go gcuirfeadh ciorruithe i bhfeidhm ar sheirbhísí óige Gaeilge.

Cosa Ar Na Sráideanna

Le blianta beaga anuas, d'éirigh le pobal na Gaeilge buanna suntasacha a bhaint amach de bharr 'cosa ar na sráideanna'. Nuair a rinne polaiteoirí ó na páirtithe móra comhráite taobh thiar de dhoirse druidte, d'fhulaing an teanga.

Sa sampla is déanaí, ba bheart tubaisteach é nuair a rinne Sinn Féin socrú rúnda le Rialtas na Breataine leis an reachtaíocht teanga a chur i bhfeidhm. Tá an chumhacht ag Stormont Acht Gaeilge a chur i bhfeidhm agus tá teipthe orthu. Ní Rialtas na Breataine a dhéanfaidh muid a chosaint ar cheandánacht an DUP - b'ionann an margadh sin agus aistriú ó theach an diabhair go teach an deamhain.

Anuas air sin, creideann Pobal Seachas Bhrabach nach leor í an reachtaíocht teanga atá molta. Teipeann uirthi sa ghné is lárnaí: ní reachtaíocht neamhspleách í. Is le gach duine an Ghaeilge, beag beann ar chúlra, féiniúlacht, nó dearcadh polaitiúil, agus ba scannal é go ndearnadh forálacha Gaeilge a nascadh leis an Ultais. Ba cheart agus ba chóir tacaíocht a chur ar fáil don Ultais, ach ar a bonn féin, agus mar atá ráite ag Comhairle na hEorpa, is é an toradh ar an nascadh idir an Ghaeilge agus an Ultais ná go ndéantar ceist sheicteach den bheirt acu. B'iarmhairt é an laige seo, i measc laigí eile ar nós easpa cumhachta an Choimisinéara Teanga mholta, ar idirbheartaíocht a bhí scartha ón ghluaiseacht.

Mar sin de, tá Pobal Seachas Brabach ríchinnte gurb iad gluaiseachtaí ón bhonn aníos, ar bhonn áitiúil agus ar bhonn uile-Éireann, an t-aon dóigh a mbainfeadh amach na hathruithe suntasacha a bhfuil géarghá leo.

Tá Níos Mó Feisirí Sóisialacha De Dhíth

Ach tá ról rithábachtach ag feisirí sóisialacha tofa. Thig leo ardán breise a thabhairt d'fheachtas, thig leo súil ghéar a choinneáil amach d'aon chluiche polaitiúil atá á imirt, agus thig leo brú a chur ar na páirtithe móra.

Is é sin atá déanta ag feisirí tofa s'againne ó thuaidh. In 2017, ba iad Pobal Seachas Brabach an t-aon pháirtí ó thuaidh a rinne líne dhearg d'Acht na Gaeilge roimh an toghchán féin. Agus i gcomhairle cathrach Bhéal Feirste, d'imir comhairleoirí s'againne ról lárnach i mbaint amach polasaithe sráidainmneacha níos forásaí, nó níor ghlac muid leis na leithscéalta 'dlíthiúla' a bhí ag cur eagla ar pháirtithe eile.

Seasfaidh gach comhalta a thoghfad go dlúth le pobal na Gaeilge. Seasfaidh muid suas in éadan bhíogóideacht an DUP sa chéad dul síos, agus fosta in éadan neamhghníomh na bpáirtithe sin a deir go bhfuil siad báúil leis an teanga.

Polasaithe

Is é ár mian agus déanfaidh Comhaltaí Tionóil Phobal Seachas Brabach troid ar son:

- Acht Gaeilge neamhspleách:
 - ▶ a dhéanann teanga oifigiúil den Ghaeilge;
 - ▶ a chuireann dualgais reachtúla ar fhorais phoiblí ó thaobh na Gaeilge de, mar a dhéantar sa Bhreatain Bheag.
- Cur i bhfeidhm Straitéis na Gaeilge a gealladh blianta fada ó shin, agus na hacmhainní cuí leis.
- Tuilleadh maoinithe agus ardú stádais don Ghaeloideachas, lena n-áirítear:
 - ▶ Polasaí oideachais ar leith don Ghaeloideachas, a aithníonn gur earnáil í atá ag fás agus go bhfuil riachtanais ar leith aici de bharr gur mionteanga í an Ghaeilge;
 - ▶ Líon na múinteoirí a ardú;
 - ▶ Tuilleadh áiseanna foghlama a chur ar fáil;
 - ▶ Seirbhísí tacaíochta fá choinne riachtanais bhreise i gcás daoine óga i dtimpeallachtaí Gaeilge lena chinntiú go bhfaighidh siad an soláthar céanna is atá ar fáil i mBéarla.
- Aitheantas ceart do sheirbhísí óige Gaeilge, le maoiniú seasta a dhéanann freastal ar fhás agus ar riachtanais ar leith na hearnála.
- Tacaíonn muid le héilimh #GaelVóta, ina measc, bille don Ghaeloideachas agus dul i ngleic le cúlú na Gaeilge ag leibhéal GCSE.

THE IRISH LANGUAGE

Life Through Irish

People Before Profit believes that people have a fundamental right to live their lives through Irish. We see the lack of legal rights and the systemic lack of resources as the two primary obstacles to realising that fundamental right, obstacles that arise out of the colonial suppression of the language and our current capitalist system. Indeed, we're certain that only a socialist system can provide adequate rights and resources for all.

Challenges

It is five years since An Lá Dearg, the high point of the Dream Dearg campaign for Irish language rights. Since then, there has been a lot of progress, but at the same time, certain things haven't changed at all.

The DUP, in particular, have tried to oppose language legislation at every turn, despite the fact they signed up to it in January 2020. In the same mould as the DUP is the British Government, which reneged on its promise to put Irish language legislation through Westminster. The crowd in Downing Street are brazen rogues.

And despite considerable growth in interest and speakers, many challenges remain. The Irish Medium Education sector is under chronic pressure, constant barriers are erected to bilingual signage, sectarian attacks on the language are frequent, and vital Irish language youth services are under constant threat of funding cuts.

Movements On The Ground

Recent gains by the Irish language community have come through campaigns on the ground, feet on the street. When politicians got together behind closed doors, the language suffered.

In the most recent example, Sinn Féin's decision to make a secret deal with the British government to pass language legislation through Westminster was disastrous. Stormont has the power to pass an Irish Language Act, and they have failed. The British Government won't protect us from DUP stubbornness – that pact was the equivalent of jumping from the frying pan into the fire.

People Before Profit think the proposed Irish language legislation isn't good enough. It fails at the first hurdle: it isn't standalone legislation. The Irish language belongs to everybody, regardless of background, identity, or political persuasion, and it was a scandal to pair Irish provisions with those of Ulster Scots. Ulster Scots should undoubtedly be supported but on its own terms. As the Council of Europe has stated, twinning Irish and Ulster Scots legislation results in the sectarianisation of both. This fault, as well other weaknesses in the legislation, such as the lack of powers any language Commissioner would have, stemmed from negotiations that were cut off from the movement.

Therefore, People Before Profit are convinced that local and national movements from below are how we will ultimately win the change that is urgently necessary.

The Irish Language

Why We Need More Elected Socialists

However, elected socialist representatives can play a vital role. They can provide a platform for campaigns, keep a lookout for any political games being played, and they can hold the feet of bigger parties to the fire.

That's what our elected reps have done in the North over the past number of years. In 2017, People Before Profit were the only party to make an Irish Language Act a red-line issue before the election. And in Belfast City Council, our councillors played a decisive role in winning a more radical signage policy as they didn't accept the questionable legal advice which was used to cow other parties.

Every elected PBP representative will stand with the Irish language community. We'll stand up against not only the bigotry of the DUP but also the inaction of other parties which claim to support the language.

Policies

People Before Profit want to see, and our elected MLAs will fight for:

- A Standalone Irish Language Act:
 - ▶ Which makes Irish an official language
 - ▶ Which places legal duties on public bodies in regards to Irish, as is done in Wales
- The implementation of the Irish Language Strategy, properly resourced, as was promised many years ago.
- Increased funding and legal status for the Irish Medium Education sector, including:
 - ▶ An Irish language education policy, which recognises that the sector is growing and that it has specific requirements as a sector given that Irish is a minority language
 - ▶ Increased teacher numbers
 - ▶ Investment in learning resources through Irish
 - ▶ Support services for special educational needs for young people in Irish language environments, to ensure they receive the same service as is available through English
- Proper recognition for Irish language youth services, including steady, long-term funding which reflects the growth and particular requirements of the sector.
- We support the #GaelVóta demands, including the need for legislation for the Irish medium education sector and tackling the decline of Irish as a subject at GCSE level.

DISABILITY

During the COVID-19 global pandemic, we saw a disastrous and inhumane erosion of disability rights. Disabled people's specific needs were not taken into consideration and many lives were lost due to governmental negligence and lack of care.

Stormont has ignored disabled people's calls for a robust disability rights framework and for prioritising investing in sustainable and effective disability services.

Disabled people continue to be underrepresented in paid employment. Poverty levels among disabled people continue to be high and many carers for disabled people struggle to make ends meet on the meagre support offered by the government.

For example, in 2014, only 37.7% of NI's disabled people were in employment, compared to 75% of non-disabled people. Whatever chance there is of able-bodied people getting work, disabled people have even less chance and for many of them, even emigration isn't an option.

People Before Profit wants to see:

- Positive action to encourage employers to employ disabled workers.
- Updated and strengthened legislation to tackle discrimination against disabled people in the workplace.
- An end to the austerity regime imposed on disabled people via Universal Credit.
- A substantial increase of disability benefits to cover the steep rise of the cost of living and the rising rates of inflation.
- Reinstate the Independent Living Fund.
- More robust legislation protecting disabled people from predatory private landlords taking advantage of the complex housing needs of disabled people and the lack of accessible housing.
- More effective consultation with disabled people's organisations on all matters concerning disability, as opposed to tokenism and empty promises.
- Involving disabled people and their organisations in the drafting of all emergency responses to any future public health crisis to ensure a human rights compatible approach to distributing resources that affirms disabled people's human rights.
- Extend the full fare concessionary travel pass, Smart Pass, to all people who are unable to drive for medical reasons.

YOUTH SERVICES

Young people are tired of the same old politics that do not cater for their needs. Politicians failed to deliver the promised future for new generations in a post-troubles era.

In contrast to this, People Before Profit promotes policies that give youth a real stake in our society.

- Abolish student fees and launch an inquiry into the student finance system and its impact on poverty.
- Restore funding to Youth Work organisations.
- Immediate free Public Transport for those under 25 as a first step to abolishing transport fees.
- Local councils to expand apprenticeship programmes: Pay apprentices properly and lay the basis for a skilled workforce.
- End age disparity in the minimum wage - equal pay for equal work. Everyone, regardless of age, should receive the living wage.
- Implement Anti-Age Discrimination legislation that protects everyone against discrimination including those under 16.
- End the stereotyping of children and young people by the PSNI and the Policing Board.
- Make 2022 the last NI Assembly Election that excludes 16-17 year olds.



BREXIT AND PARTITION

People Before Profit is an all-island party that fights for socialist politics. For years, our island has been dominated by conservative political institutions, North and South. Predictably, the Tory vision for Brexit has been a disaster.

The DUP aligned itself with the Tory Party to push through Brexit. They did so with total disregard for the democratically expressed wishes of the people in the North. They now wish to pose as opponents of the Irish protocol and use it to polarise politics to thwart their own political crisis.

People Before Profit reject this rhetoric entirely. The DUP is a right-wing party that wants to divide workers in order to get away with policies that defend privilege and wealth.

The debate on Brexit has thrown a sharp light on the absurdity of partition. Not only are we for greater economic integration between North and South - but we also want to remove the border entirely.

Like James Connolly, therefore, we reject any move to produce a hard border - not just because of the massive inconvenience it would cause, but because it would strengthen a reactionary settlement of Ireland's national question - at the very time when that issue is re-emerging.

Neither London nor Brussels

What matters is the lives of working people in Ireland and Europe. Elites in neither London nor Brussels share this objective, as they both want to push neoliberalism in their respective areas and to make working people pay the costs. Neither should be seen as the partners of Irish workers.

People Before Profit fight for an Ireland that breaks from elites, be they in London, Dublin or Brussels. This Connollyite approach informs our view toward Brexit, which we see as a conflict between two reactionary blocks, the British state and the burgeoning EU Empire, with the people of Ireland caught in the middle and used as pawns in the game.

Both the EU and the British state are complicit in brutal austerity, denial of democracy and policies that result in the drowning of refugees. That is why we say neither London nor Brussels - but instead the interests of the working class.

Workers Shouldn't Pay the Costs of Brexit

The British elite wants to make workers in the North and Britain pay for the cost of a break with the EU by creating a low wage, low regulation economy. People Before Profit insists that working people must not bear the cost of any dislocation that occurs because of Brexit.

We support an increase in wages to meet the heightened cost of living. We want increased investment in public enterprises to create jobs - particularly jobs that help mitigate against climate change, such as those in insulating buildings or developing public transport.

At the same time, we fight to redistribute wealth and income in the country away from the rich, toward the majority. This is the best insurance we now have against the bigger powers using Brexit for their own interests.

Brexit & Partition

For a Border Poll

The Northern state is increasingly dysfunctional and crisis-ridden, and people have a democratic right to decide their future.

People Before Profit views the call for a border poll as a basic democratic demand which we support, and we will champion a new Ireland based on socialist politics.

Ending partition is not about attaching the northern state onto the reactionary southern state. Rather, it is about creating a new state, based on challenging the power of corporations, vulture funds, and wealthy elites, and instead creating an island that all workers from all communities can have a stake in.

We will fight for a new, radical Constitution which enshrines equal rights for all, including the right to a home, to free and accessible healthcare, a proper welfare support system, local services, environmental justice etc. for all who are born here or move here.

To summarise, we:

- Support a border poll and will use a referendum campaign to fight for a radical, reunified Ireland based on progressive socialist politics.
- Reject all moves to re-create a hard border, customs posts or immigration checks on the island of Ireland.
- Reject moves to weaken the economic links between North and South.
- Oppose neoliberal reforms imposed by London or Brussels.
- Oppose the imperialism of both London and Brussels.
- Oppose PESCO – the move towards a European Army.
- Ensure that working people do not pay the economic costs of Brexit.

CHALLENGE SECTARIANISM AND PARAMILITARISM

People Before Profit organise across the communal divide and strive to be a voice for working-class people throughout society. We see the major divide across our society is between the haves and the have-nots, and sectarianism as a major block to organising across the divide for a better lot for us all.

We, therefore, reject sectarianism, the communal carve-up of politics, and paramilitarism in all its forms and believe any kind of armed struggle on our streets to be counterproductive and unjust.

As socialists, we oppose those who engage in extortion and exploitation of working-class communities; self-appointed vigilantes who act as judge, jury and executioner when inflicting so-called “punishment attacks” and death upon communities are reactionary and must be resolutely opposed.

However, we cannot properly tackle paramilitarism and sectarian division without addressing the role that the state has played in the normalisation and persistence of paramilitaries, and their sense of impunity in recent years.

For example, the most recent outbreak of violence at interface areas last year was directly preceded by politicians meeting paramilitary representatives and then calling on people to take to the streets, ostensibly over the issue of the Protocol.

In reality, it was also a move to beat the communal drum and stoke up tension by politicians more interested in serving their own narrow self-interest in the face of dwindling support at the polls, than challenging division or paramilitarism.

The DUP were of course the chief force culpable in this recent debacle, which had predictable consequences. In the past, however, we have seen the way in which the entire Stormont Executive has been culpable in normalising the existence of paramilitaries.

It was well typified by the Social Investment Fund (SIF) scandal, where loyalist paramilitary figures were receiving substantial public funding and patronage—allowing them to be respected “community representatives” by day, and commanders of paramilitary groups by night.

Challenge Sectarian Political Structures and the Communal Carve-Up

People Before Profit can be relied on as a voice to challenge sectarian political structures and, by extension, we will challenge the communal carve-up of funding streams, both at Stormont departmental level and indeed at local government level, where public money is carved up between the big parties in a way that, at times, is not subject to public tender and equal process.

Instead, it is gifted to community organisations selected by those who dominate the Stormont Executive. We will fight to demand that all public funding is distributed in a fair, transparent and equitable way, through open process and open procurement.

No to State Terrorism

If elected, PBP will challenge paramilitarism in all its forms, and crucially, that means opposing state terrorism. There is much evidence to suggest that the state itself was a major force in fostering and deepening violence throughout our recent history and any real effort to address the legacy issue must reckon with this reality

One recent Ombudsman report into the murders of 19 people between 1989-1993 by members of the UDA found sustained evidence of collusion between the killers and the RUC, further highlighting what many victims' families have known all along; that state agents were actively involved in the murder of their loved ones.

This issue impacts all communities, with reports of many major atrocities involving the shooting and bombing of innocent people. Examples of this state collusion are well known; the murder of Rosemary Nelson, the murder of Pat Finucane, the horrible atrocities carried out by the Glenanne gang, the state protection for the leader of the IRA's internal security unit to name a few.

As recently as 2016, we learnt from a BBC Spotlight investigation of claims that the Special Branch had some 800 agents and informers working for them in the Belfast area alone.

Given the sheer scale of this network, and its relative size compared to the paramilitaries in question, serious questions must be asked as to how many of these agents are still active. Indeed, how many of these agents are still running the very paramilitaries in existence today?

People Before Profit fights for:

- The disbandment of all paramilitaries, including state paramilitaries.
- Opposition to the Tory push for an amnesty for soldiers, state actors, and others involved in the murder and maiming of innocent people.
- Campaigns for justice from bereaved families, such as the Bloody Sunday families, Ballymurphy families and the Springhill families.
- Truth and justice for all victims of violence during the troubles.

OPPOSE WAR AND WELCOME REFUGEES

People Before Profit regards the working people of all countries as our sisters and brothers and takes an internationalist perspective on global affairs.

We oppose imperialism and war. Both here and internationally we want spending on health, welfare and people's needs - not guns and bombs.

The removal of dictators and vicious regimes is the task of the people of those countries, not Western intervention which makes matters worse.






We support the Palestinian struggle for liberation against Israeli occupation and oppression and back the international campaign for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions against Israel.

We oppose the shocking Russian offensive against the people of Ukraine. We equally oppose the expansion of NATO and its imperialist endeavours across the world. We are opposed to PESCO and the development of an EU army.

People Before Profit welcomes and supports refugees fleeing hardship and war across the world. We are opposed to the Tory Government's Hostile Environment policies, and Stormont's implementation of them locally. If elected, our MLAs can be trusted to challenge such policies and to fight for equal access to voting, working, housing, and welfare rights for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, as well as equal access to services.

www.pbp.ie/ae-2022

Get in touch

-  peopleb4profit
 -  pb4p
 -  people_before_profit
 -  07572540489
 -  press.north@pbp.ie
-