



**FOR STRENGTH  
NOT WEAKNESS**



**MANIFESTO 2023**

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## P R E F A C E

Though these are Local Government elections, they are inevitably overshadowed by the Protocol in its latest guise, the Windsor Framework. Others refuse to tell you where they stand on this issue. Many speculate - with justification - that once these elections are out of the way they will meekly roll over and accept a border in the Irish Sea. And rule from Brussels, over which you have no say, will continue. Last year the 66,000 votes secured by TUV and the rising tide of support for us caused Protocol implementors to slam on the brakes. Our opposition made a pause necessary.

Now they seem to be wavering.

If you want your voice to be heard clearly and unambiguously for the Union then there is only one option - it must be TUV 1.

This has the added benefit of securing you representatives on council who are committed to securing the best deal for the ratepayer. Candidates who stand up for you on the local issues that matter and won't allow your money to be squandered on the fluff which is all too often a feature of local government.

On 18th May speak with strength, not weakness. Vote TUV 1.

*William Ross*

President, TUV

# THE CONSTITUTION

## Defending the Union

The Union that matters, and to which TUV is committed, is **the Union** that binds us to GB, not the EU. Yet, shamefully, we have been left under the substantial control of the EU and, colony-like, subject to its laws and court.

It is because our Union is being dismantled and disrespected by the Protocol, as repackaged by the Windsor Framework, that TUV has led the way in legal and political challenge. This we will continue to do, because to come to terms with the Protocol/Windsor Framework is to accept that never again will Northern Ireland be a full part of the United Kingdom. This we cannot and will not do. Whether others buckle or not, TUV will stand firm.

## What all Unionist leaders promised

On 28th September 2021, the leaders of all unionist parties solemnly pledged as follows in a united declaration: -

***“We, the undersigned Unionist Political Leaders, affirm our opposition to the Northern Ireland Protocol, its mechanisms and structures and reaffirm our unalterable position that the Protocol must be rejected and replaced by arrangements which fully respect Northern Ireland’s position as a constituent and integral part of the United Kingdom.”***

You can decide whose actions match these solemn words.

## Your verdict matters - make it clear on 18th May.

In this election voters will give their verdict on the Windsor Framework. TUV is clear in rejecting the Windsor Whitewash as coming anywhere close to restoring our full place within the United Kingdom.

## Windsor Framework - the triumph of spin over substance

It is clear the substance of the Windsor deal does not live up to the overselling spin which accompanied it.

- **Protocol stays - Irish Sea border stays - EU law stays - ECJ stays.**
- **The legal framework under which the Windsor adjustments are made expressly prohibits any change to the “essential elements” of the Protocol, only tinkering is possible.**
- **To accept the Windsor Whitewash is to accept that Northern Ireland will never again be a full part of the United Kingdom.**

The realities of the Windsor Framework are these: -

- Northern Ireland, a proclaimed part of the United Kingdom, remains wholly within a foreign Single Market for goods subject to the vast plethora of EU laws that control it and all that is overseen by a foreign court, the European Court of Justice.

In its own commentary on the deal the EU was emphatic: the European Court of Justice (ECJ) remains “**the sole and ultimate arbiter of EU law.**” So, the hundreds of EU laws applied to NI by Art 5(4) and Annex 2 of the Protocol remain and none of them are subject to local control or variation - the much vaunted ‘Stormont Brake’ has no application to these existing imposed laws. **NI continues as a colonial rule taker subject to the supremacy of a foreign court.**

- Being trapped in perpetuity in the EU’s Single Market for goods, while GB’s market rules can and will diverge, increasing detachment from the U.K. and increasing attachment to the Republic of Ireland is inevitable. Hence, for any Unionist, the folly of embracing membership of the EU’s single market. **It is not a matter of economic advantage but of constitutional detriment.**
- Northern Ireland remains wholly within the orbit and control of the EU’s Customs Code. The effect is that EU territory starts at our sea border where the border customs infrastructure will be strengthened and food goods coming from GB for NI consumption only can still be checked.

The EU has boasted, “**There is no dual regulatory regime.** While UK public health standards will apply to goods entering Northern Ireland from Great Britain, **EU requirements for animal health and plant health remain fully in place...**”

- Even for goods staying in Northern Ireland there will still be customs paperwork with **21 data elements normally required for a standard customs declaration**, as required by the EU Customs Code to mark the passage from external territory to EU territory, with the load manifest of every lorry declared to a foreign power, the EU! So much for the promised “equal footing” of Article 6 of the Acts of Union.
- Moreover, to transfer goods to NI, they must come via a “trusted trader.” The very fact that you must be in a trusted trader scheme to trade within your own country is both obnoxious and confirmation in itself, and with the above identified impositions, that **Article 6 of the Acts of Union remain in suspension**, as confirmed by the former Attorney General John Larkin KC.
- So, clearly, despite the PM’s contrary assertion, there will still be a customs border in the Irish Sea setting Northern Ireland apart in an all-Ireland/EU orbit.
  - Expensive labelling requirements for all goods coming into Northern Ireland, will add expense and disincentives for suppliers.
  - The boasted reform allowing UK excise changes on alcohol, of course, applies only to hospitality sales and not to off sales or supermarkets where EU laws take precedence.

The EU has decreed, “**The UK will not be able to apply any duty rate below the EU minima.**” In its published commentary the EU says, “Each solution in the areas of VAT and excise come with conditions and safeguards .... Furthermore, **the solutions cannot negatively affect the EU Single Market...**”

- The PM has sought to make much of the so called “Stormont Brake.” It applies only to future changes in applicable EU law, does not provide a veto to MLAs, but only to the UK government if they agree that a high threshold has been met.

This caused one commentator to say, “**Far from unionists having their foot on the brake, they would be in the back seat with permission to ask the driver to brake.**”

So, overall, for anyone whose compass is set by sovereignty considerations and whose goal is the strengthening, not weakening, of the Union with GB, this is a deal which falls far short. The EU graciously allowing us to transport our pets comes nowhere close to the UK recovering sovereignty over this part of the United Kingdom. Therefore, there is no justification for returning to Stormont to prop up the Protocol.

The High Court has emphatically ruled in **Rooney-v-Poots** that an Executive and its ministers must by law implement and operate the Protocol and its Irish Sea border. Any unionist who does so is hastening the dismantling of the Union.

So, there is no basis for the return of Stormont. For unionists to re-enter government under the Windsor Framework is to become Protocol slaves, implementing both foreign laws and the Irish Sea Border. Stormont would be a Vichy government run by Protocol collaborators.

While others have equivocated and dithered and some have buckled, TUV is clear: the Windsor Framework does not remove the Union-dismantling Protocol. Moreover, accepting the Windsor tinkering also means accepting the booby prize of a Sinn Fein First Minister. No thanks! **TUV is not in the business of taking the knee to foreign EU rule or Stormont Sinn Fein rule.**

TUV is clear **any border should be at the international frontier**, not at NI's ports.

If you want to be heard in defence of the Union and against the partitioning of the UK, then you will be heard loudest and best by voting TUV - no one doubts where TUV stands, or wonders whether we will weaken once the election is over. **Be sure. Vote for strength, not weakness. Vote TUV.**

# THE COST OF LIVING CRISIS

These are tough times. The rising cost of living and inflation are imposing hardship on us all, working families and pensioners alike.

TUV has never pretended that the Stormont Assembly can do much in face of a global rise in energy prices or international inflation trends, nor can local councils. But we will use the platform of council to press for all available help.

TUV says spend the money where it matters and is needed and forget the politicised pet projects.

Ending the iniquitous Protocol, which is driving up consumer prices, would help because companies naturally pass on these additional costs. Under EU law even the cost of the checks should be passed on to business and thereby to consumers! Yet, there are demands from the EU acolyte parties for even more 'rigorous implementation' of this costly Protocol. TUV stands resolutely opposed to this.

Another advantage of scrapping the Protocol is that it would free us from the EU VAT regime which insists on at least 5% VAT on energy bills. A 5% reduction in electricity and gas prices would help everyone, but the Protocol prevents it. VAT on commercial bills is a whopping 20%.

On all these bread and butter issues, TUV is on the side of the hard pressed consumer and eager to oppose unnecessary burdens and squander.

Of course, TUV's proposal to cap rates increases would ensure people can keep more of their own money and councils are required to live within their means.

# THE COUNCIL ELECTIONS

## False propaganda about vote splitting

Not for the first time, some are trying to scare unionists into voting for them by claiming that to vote for others is to “split the vote.”

Councillors are elected in multi-member constituencies where no party has enough candidates to fill all the seats. Unionists can safely give their first preference votes to their candidate of choice and then build the total unionist vote by using their transfers for **other unionist candidates**. This is the clear recommendation of TUV. Vote TUV 1 and then use your preferences and no vote will be split.

We do not recommend transfers to Sinn Féin’s little helpers in the Alliance Party.

## Opposing Sinn Fein on council

TUV’s resolute opposition to the Republican agenda is well known. All TUV councillors will seek to frustrate the advancement of Sinn Fein’s pernicious agenda in the council chamber.

Unionists need councillors who will stand firm and face down Republicans in council chambers the length and breadth of the Province. Belfast provides a good example of this.

In addition to funding for Feile an Phobal, which holds three festivals a year and is notable for giving a platform to the Wolfe Tones with their “Ooh aah up the Ra” chant, the council has pumped public money into capital projects of long-term benefit to West Belfast.

£1.35 million went to the Roddy McCorley Centre on the Glen Road for a so-called ‘Visitor Centre’ to rewrite history.

Belfast City Council’s contribution to a “visitor centre” at Belfast City Cemetery was £1.12 million. This cemetery contains the graves of many Unionists, including the notable Sir Edward Harland and Lord Pirrie, and the trailblazing educationalist Margaret Byers, but BCC still intends to erect Irish language signage, creating an inferior complex for Unionist and visitors that will cancel out its avowed intention to attract people from all communities.

The council also gave £3.5 million to the project for the restoration of the old St Comgall’s school on Divis Street, billed as a prospective multi-use community centre.

BCC’s recently approved policy that allows Irish street signs if only 15% of occupiers want them is intolerable.

Untainted by coalition with Sinn Fein/IRA at any stage in our history, TUV is best placed to call out Sinn Fein hypocrisy when they profess concern for “rights.” Having shown wanton disregard for the most basic human right - the right to life - over the thirty years of a terrorist campaign which they continue to not just justify but celebrate, Sinn Fein’s double standards will not go unchallenged by TUV.

The abuse of the “call in” procedure, whereby decisions can be defeated by only 20% of councillors voting against, is intolerable. An example of this happened recently in Ards & North Down, in respect of 365 day flying of the Union flag-this is something which needs to be reversed.



# BETTER SERVICES FOR ALL TARGETING COUNCIL SQUANDER

## Curbing rate rises

We were promised, when the eleven new super councils came into operation, we would see a saving of £438m over 25 years. Ratepayers have seen no sign of this. Rates have risen and there has been a culture of squander across many councils.

TUV is a low tax party. We believe that you should keep as much of your money as possible and that you have a right to expect value for money when it comes to the money you contribute in direct taxation or in rates.

And we have a track record to prove this.

On Mid and East Antrim Council, where TUV has its strongest presence, we have proposed savings year on year which have been consistently voted down by other parties.

If you want to derail the council gravy train, then you will vote TUV 1 on election day.

Others talk about delivering value for money. TUV has consistently demanded changes to wasteful expenditure.

## Giving YOU the power when it comes to rates

Councils across Northern Ireland have seen dramatic rises in their rates bills since the last election. No political party sought a mandate to do this. TUV is proposing a radical new policy for Northern Ireland which will prevent any rates rise above an annually set fixed maximum, which this year in England is 5%, without the explicit consent of voters in a referendum.

In England, the 2011 Localism Act prevents councils from setting an excessive rise in council tax without holding a referendum.

A local referendum must be held, and won, for an authority to increase council tax by more than the amount specified by the Secretary of State.

TUV is proposing that any council which proposes a rates rise above the fixed maximum will have to hold a referendum on the same basis with the outcome decided by a simple majority. No rates rise above 5% on the current GB example would therefore be possible without the agreement of ratepayers.

Interestingly, since the legislation was introduced in England, only one referendum has had to be held and it was lost.

TUV believe that you should have a similar power over rates set in your area.

## **TUV - voice of challenge**

The lack of transparency and accountability in some councils has been quite shocking. Whether it is £1 land deals in Causeway or dysfunctional leadership in Mid & East Antrim, TUV is the voice of challenge.

Effective management, prudent use of ratepayers' money and transparent accountability have been the constant demand of TUV councillors in putting the spotlight on evident failures. In Mid & East Antrim TUV alone consistently challenged the culture of the previous leadership in the council and is the only party to have opposed inflated salaries being paid through agency recruitment.

The least ratepayers should be able to expect is prudent expenditure of their money in the delivery of basic services. Neither squander, feting the Gaelic culture nor building bureaucratic empires is delivering what ratepayers require. TUV in council, as in Stormont, will speak up for you.

## **Helping local business**

The decline in town centres across Northern Ireland deeply concerns TUV. Once bustling high streets and their remaining businesses are now struggling to survive. Crippling rates have been a major contributor to decline. Aesthetically pleasing artwork on empty shop fronts may bring cosmetic change but is no substitute for kickstarting economic revival in our town centres.

In the absence of Stormont, it will have to be direct rule Ministers that take up this challenge – TUV demand incentives to promote growth in town centre shopping as a cost-effective and viable alternative to out of town locations.

As things stand, businesses are being penalised if they choose town centre premises because of higher rates. A more equitable distribution of the rates burden is required than what successive revaluations have produced. Northern Ireland needs a strategy for business to enhance employment opportunities, along with training and upskilling opportunities. Injecting vibrancy back into our town centres is an imperative.

With the councils having economic development powers, opportunities exist. Restoring a viable economic hub is essential to a strategy for growth.

## **Cleaner streets**

TUV will push to have our streets as tidy as possible and will ensure that there are more dog waste bins in areas where they are required.

Adequate litter bins and regular street cleaning is necessary. These practical services which councils provide are essential and where your rates should be directed. More spent on matters such as this and other expenditure cut is what ratepayers need and demand.

Keeping street lighting in an adequate state of repair is fundamental to safe streets.

## **Delivering quality council services**

TUV recognises that you, as a ratepayer, demand the best return for your money.

Recognising local talent is important but lavish Freedom of the Borough ceremonies are not what you have in mind when you think of the services local government needs to provide.

TUV pledges to stand up for you when it comes to cutting unnecessary expenditure.

When it comes to waste disposal, TUV wants to see the maximum possible level of recycling. However, we also recognise the practical realities of life for working people. If you pay rates, you expect your bin to be lifted regularly. TUV councillors will reject suggestions of reducing the regularity of bin collections.

TUV wants to see quality leisure facilities which benefit the whole community. Sensible opening hours which accommodate people with increasingly busy lives –increased opportunities for both early and late opening hours- is necessary.

Children’s play parks must be maintained to a high standard with toilet and changing facilities in all major parks, along with opening hours that meet public demand, including on public holidays.

## **A fair deal on Planning**

There is continuing concern about the connections between some political parties and developers which has caused considerable public unease. This is one area of additional power to councils which we believe has failed to gain public confidence.

Transparency is key when it comes to planning. Decisions need to be made on policy, not because of politics.

## **Housing**

TUV believes that everyone is entitled to decent housing. The most common request of Housing Executive and Housing Association tenants is for repairs to be carried out in a timely manner. Given the expenditure proposed by others on items which deliver no tangible day to day benefit - such as an Irish Language Act - we believe that adequate funding can be found for basics like preventative maintenance and investment into the direct labour organisation DLO creating employment.

The dereliction of housing in working class areas cannot continue. TUV proposes a policy of one house down and at least one house up in urban areas.

TUV believes that social engineering should play no part in housing policy.

The current policy which allows people from overseas who arrive in Northern Ireland to jump to the head of the housing list needs to be revisited.

## **Community identity matters**

Immigration remains a live issue.

Where assimilation has not occurred it is often the indigenous community that feels uncomfortable. Local councils have a role in addressing these matters. TUV councillors will not run away from such issues but will ensure local communities are supported and their rights and interests protected.

## **Celebrating our culture**

In the last councils TUV councillors were to the fore in campaigning – in many cases successfully – for council funding to mark the centenary of Northern Ireland and important national events like the Platinum Jubilee of Her late Majesty the Queen and the current Coronation celebrations.

## **Affordable energy and sensible energy policies**

TUV believes it is important that we act as responsible custodians of our environment so we can ensure future generations enjoy the rich diversity of our planet. However, we reject punitive green taxes and rushing headlong into supporting economically damaging policies for the sake of “political correctness.” The pursuit of “net zero” will devastate our agri-food industry and result in economic hardship for all.

For electric cars to become more viable there must be provision of sufficient charging points. Viable green energy opportunities certainly deserve promotion. TUV has long supported the development of hydrogen buses by Wrightbus. Equally, though, we have insisted on respect for safety issues regarding Battery Electricity Storage Systems and proper application of planning laws.

The whole RHI mess shows the folly of rushing to embrace any policy which gives the impression of being “green.”

Stormont’s preoccupation with the all-Ireland single electricity market has served us ill. Aligning Northern Ireland to the ROI monopolistic and more expensive southern market, instead of the bigger opportunities of the UK market and networks, has been a mistake, producing prices higher than they need be.

Individual responsibility is something to be encouraged, whether in maximising recycling or controlling the curse of illegal dumping and littering.

## **Transport**

Rationalising the operating hours of bus lanes to ensure they do not operate outside peak periods would assist traffic flow.

TUV understands and shares the frustration of many over the failure to provide adequate expenditure on road maintenance particularly in respect of the rural road network. Neglect to fix the potholes is a basic failure that must be addressed.

## Fair and equal policing

Blatant two-tier policing must end. The police's handling of a number of issues has shattered confidence in the PSNI, particularly the handling of the Storey funeral for which no one was held accountable.

Council input into policing through the Policing and Safety Partnerships enables local policing concerns to be addressed. TUV councillors have pursued the need for adequate rural policing, sufficient policing patrols and proper allocation of resources.

Just as at provincial level we oppose the reintroduction of discriminatory 50:50 recruitment, so at a local level we demand that all are treated equally under the law and that none are above the law.

Ours is a zero-tolerance attitude to crime which has no room for pandering to paramilitary interests.

## Health

Though not a council responsibility, the provision of a fully functioning and effective NHS is critical to us all. TUV councillors will use their influence to campaign against bureaucratic empire-building being prioritised over frontline services. We need more doctors and nurses, not more deputy directors. TUV is opposed to the closure of minor injuries units which will only increase pressures on hospital A & Es.

Nor should the closure of more local facilities be the default position to save money. Yes, some services may require streamlining, but it must not be about trumping local need.

Our U.K. NHS is of prime importance. It creaked under COVID but came through, though years of underinvestment in our health service took its toll.

Waiting lists are appalling. It is nonsense to suggest that getting devolution back will sort this. The situation in which we now find ourselves is, in large measure, due to Stormont's failure to prioritise health. Under DUP/SF rule hundreds of beds and associated staff have been removed from Northern Ireland hospitals. All because Stormont, shamefully, had greater priorities. Today we are paying the price.

Sustaining long term investment in health is a TUV priority. While others would squander millions on the Irish language, north/south structures and so called "rights agendas," we say put the money into more nurses, doctors, and beds in our hospitals.

TUV recognises the importance of facing up to the mental health problem. TUV supports increased funding for Community Mental Health services to support people experiencing mental ill-health, both in their recovery and to further support early intervention strategies which will help prevent the need for hospital admissions. We also believe that there is a need for adequate acute psychiatric beds so that anyone who requires an urgent admission should be able to access it within their Trust area. No patient should be forced to travel outside their Trust area where they are less likely to benefit from the support of family and friends – something which is vital when it comes to mental wellbeing.

Strenuous efforts are now required to make up the lost ground in meeting general needs, particularly in respect of cancer.

A readily accessible GP service must also be restored, which of itself eases the burden on Emergency Departments. Getting an appointment with a GP should not be a challenge.

The haemorrhaging of skilled nurses and realignment to agencies is robbing our health service of vital staff. The level of reliance on agency staff is astounding and debilitating. The drift to agencies must be disincentivised and loyalty to the NHS rewarded.

The Covid experience demonstrated how swiftly our hospitals can be overwhelmed, not least because of lack of nursing staff. In our Assembly manifesto TUV proposed that a Nursing Reserve Service should be created - somewhat akin to the Army Reserve – whereby retired and former nurses could be enlisted, required to keep up with relevant training, modestly remunerated as reserves and available to be called upon in emergency. We will continue to campaign for this.

The primary focus of our NHS is the saving of lives, yet some want it to become an agency for death through the full commissioning of abortion services. TUV, being unashamedly pro-life, opposes such demands by Sinn Fein, the Greens, and most Alliance MLAs.

Halting the pandemic of destruction of the unborn, which abortion on demand represents, is a key TUV goal.

## Education

Many TUV councillors are active on school Boards of Governors, seeking to sustain services and improve standards. The shortage of funding and the imbalance between sectors is hitting the controlled sector particularly hard. Disappointingly, the UUP refused to help block the privileged position given to the integrated sector by the Alliance Private Members Bill in the last Assembly.

TUV sees tackling educational underachievement as its number one educational priority, particularly for the Protestant working class.

To do this, we propose the following:

- An evidence-informed curriculum overhaul;
  - Investment in teacher recruitment and fair teacher pay;
  - Creation of a system in which children can find different paths to successful outcomes;
  - A commitment to academic selection, but also to creating a more equal system of exceptional Grammar and non-selective schools.
  - A creation of a culture of "celebration" for hard work and achievement across all aspects of school life.
  - Helping children to see value in education, by ensuring it connects them to a job market which harnesses their skills and talents.
- Vocational training, for those seeking apprenticeships, commencing at school, and moving on to FE with employer support.

Developing a culture of trust in and respect for the teaching profession, which has been eroded.

- Supporting schools to connect with their communities, parents, and external agencies.

TUV believes in a fair deal for classroom assistants including greater job security and holiday pay.



## Autism

More than 13,000 children between the ages of four and fifteen have a diagnosis of autism in Northern Ireland, representing an estimated 4.5% of the school age population. The number has more than trebled in a decade. TUV recognises that further support of this sector is a top priority.

With 2516 confirmed diagnosis in 2022 alone, and most diagnosed children having Special Educational Needs (SEN), it is imperative that a joined up approach between the Departments of Health and Education is employed and the bureaucratic nightmare that faces many parents is alleviated.

We seek funding to enhance the Special Schools network, where many are now at full capacity, and a streamlining and expediting of the statementing process.

Through the efforts of TUV councillors on Mid and East Antrim Council, we have achieved targeted support for those with autism through a range of measures including support and training for local businesses, installation of Changing Place Units, a new Sensory Garden, Makaton communication lessons and inclusive play equipment in our parks.



TUV will continue to provide strong representation on these matters, striving to make all council areas Autism Friendly.

## Childcare

In England, parents can apply for 30 hours free childcare if they are working. Under the Barnett formula, Stormont received funding which would have permitted us to run a similar scheme here in Northern Ireland but chose to squander it on its own priorities.

This is a scandal which once again underscores how Stormont does not deliver for ordinary people.



## **Our valued elderly**

TUV recognises the invaluable contribution which our senior citizens continue to make to Northern Ireland. Yet, their lives are often made more difficult by decisions such as the closure of bank branches, making adequate public transport even more necessary.

Council run services must adequately meet our senior citizens' needs. It is vital that long-term funding is secured to protect the rural transport services which are so important to so many of our elderly.

Deficiencies in the availability of care packages is causing upset to many families. TUV will continue to campaign on these issues.

## **Agriculture and fishing**

Food production and farming is an integrated £5 billion industry in Northern Ireland. The centrality of our farming and food sector to Northern Ireland's economy means its future must not be jeopardised by pursuit of an anti-farming ideology associated with climate change activists. The support by Sinn Fein, SDLP, Alliance and the UUP of the Green Party's Private Member's Bill was ill-judged and wholly prejudicial to the future of farming. TUV was clear and determined in opposing this disastrous Bill and will continue to protect farming interests.

The devastating situation in Ukraine has brought massive detriment both to world food production and the cost of essential feedstuffs and materials like fertiliser. Hence the utter folly of pursuit of net zero Climate Change demands which will reduce our food production capacity in Northern Ireland.

Going forward, as sectors feel the pressure of the new world situation and its ramifications, focused assistance will inevitably be required. TUV will campaign for such as and when necessary.

Though we have left the EU, the iniquitous Protocol still casts a dark shadow over the farming industry with absurd restrictions and tariffs on vital supplies and restraint of free trade, particularly with our biggest market, GB. Liberation from the Protocol will boost the industry; TUV will be relentless in pursuit of such deliverance.

It is clear that support for farming is a long-term necessity. In future the support model must be orientated strongly in support of family farms and the food industry, rather than subservient to unrealistic greening demands.

TUV repudiates the contention that farmers are the enemy of good environmental practice. On the contrary, as custodians of the land, farmers have special interest in maximising sustainability. Thus, TUV will continue to vigorously oppose extremist demands by misguided climate change activists to wipe out much of our farming industry.

Handing on our planet in as good condition as possible should be a common goal, but devastating food production and related industry is utter folly. Virtue signalling is no substitute for reasoned and pragmatic solutions.

Farming has particular planning needs. An oppressive Ammonia Strategy is but one of the hurdles that TUV councillors seek to navigate in aiding agricultural planning applications.

TUV believes it is intolerable that, though disguised by the grace periods, the Northern Ireland fishing fleet, under the Protocol, should not be allowed to land their catches in their own ports without being treated as foreign vessels and having to complete paperwork and submit veterinary certificates. The Windsor Framework does not address this.

## **Sport**

The success of both our women's football team and local golfers has demonstrated that sportsmen and women from Northern Ireland can compete with the best on the international stage. Sadly, however, all is not positive when it comes to sport in Northern Ireland. As any football fan knows, the Belfast Agreement has led to a situation where the Republic of Ireland has been able to poach many of our most promising footballers. However, when it comes to other sports young men and women do not have the right to choose which national flag they compete under. TUV will fight for the right of athletes from Northern Ireland in all sports to compete on the international stage for the United Kingdom. We will also contend in favour of the playing of the National Anthem at major sporting events.

The extensive funding of the GAA never seems to satisfy, with renewed demands for further tens of millions for the Casement Park redevelopment. Meanwhile the Stadia Fund has not delivered as promised for football. TUV will not be silent on these issues.

It is vital that there is proper provision for leisure centres and other council run sports facilities are properly maintained. MUGA pitches have greatly enhanced provision, but their availability needs extended in some areas. Likewise, many play parks need refurbishment.

## **Innocent victims**

TUV believes that we need to radically change the whole approach to the issue of legacy and victims. To this end TUV believes that:

- The definition of victim needs to change to exclude victim makers. Until this root problem is addressed there can be no real progress on victims' issues. The innocent must reclaim the word "victim."
- There can be no amnesty. Many victims continue to demand justice and should not be denied this.
- Terrorists have already proved they have no interest in the truth so any form of "truth commission" should be rejected.
- The PSNI should get serious about criminal investigations of historic crimes where evidence exists. Political considerations should play no part.
- The Republic of Ireland should face up to its role in facilitating terrorism in Northern Ireland by providing a safe haven for terrorists.
- Legislation on the glorification of terrorism needs to be revisited and applied equally across the UK regardless of the terror group being celebrated.

- Legislation on the glorification of terrorism needs to be revisited and applied equally across the UK regardless of the terror group being celebrated.
- Jim Allister has ensured that European Day for Innocent Victims of Terrorism has been marked in the Northern Ireland Assembly since he was first elected. In consequence the day has grown in significance with many council buildings now illuminated to mark this day.

## Moral issues

You know where you stand with TUV when it comes to the big social issues of the day.

While others went back into government with Sinn Fein on the basis of an Act (the Executive Formation Act of 2019) which redefined marriage in law in Northern Ireland and introduced one of the most liberal abortion regimes in Europe, TUV warned against such a course of action.

We continue to stand unashamedly for traditional family values.

The attack on gender identity is the latest target of agitators determined to rip apart the fabric of society. TUV will actively oppose this, including the so called “progressive” agenda in our schools.

TUV’s moral compass means we remain resolute in opposing terrorists in government, amnesty for terrorists, destruction of the unborn and the dilution of marriage and gender identity as determined at birth.

Just as we support the rights of the unborn, so at the end-of-life stage we oppose euthanasia. We believe in the sanctity of life.

TUV will oppose the branding of council buildings with rainbow lights or flags. We will oppose proposals such as council funded “pride” events.

## Fundamental freedoms

The right to life is paramount but is not the only fundamental right under attack in Northern Ireland.

Denial of religion, conscience and belief can come in many forms, even from those who proclaim their liberalism! The Asher’s Bakery case was a classic illustration of an illiberal attempt to suppress freedom of expression and conscience. Thankfully, it failed, and the Supreme Court upheld the right of a business to refuse to be a vehicle to promote values which conflict with its owner’s beliefs.

The appalling role of the Equality Commission in that case causes TUV to believe it requires fundamental overhaul.

We do not have to agree with what is said to defend the right to say it, provided it is otherwise lawful.

Attacks on street preachers and the ban on protests in proximity to abortion clinics show that liberties which have long been taken for granted are under attack or have gone.

TUV believes that religious belief, teaching, and practice is a fundamental human right and will oppose any moves to dilute this.

Your TUV councillor will speak up for such on local Police Community and Safety Partnerships.



**VOTE**  
**UUV**