

## Local Government Election Manifestos 2019 and the Environment

### Alliance

(<https://allianceparty.org/document/manifesto/2019-local-government-manifesto.pdf>)

#### **Better Value for Money** (pg.4)

“Spending money to improve recycling facilities will provide an environmental benefit for future generations, as well as saving councils money on landfill and incineration.”

#### **Shared Spaces** (pg.9)

“Alliance wants to see well-designed public spaces where leisure and social activities thrive in cities, towns and villages, as well as arts and leisure provision that reflects the needs of residents.”

#### **Community Planning** (pg.10)

“Better community planning, with greater focus on sustainability, the environment, health and well-being, and families.”

“Community planning should always support and promote sharing, sustainability and the environment.”

“In rural areas in particular, integrating community transport and more traditional public transport options is vital...”

“Planning powers should be used to develop policy to promote sharing, integration and green spaces.”

#### **Environment** (pg.10)

“Alliance is a pro-environment party. We believe that agriculture, biodiversity and animal welfare are part of our natural heritage. We will:

- Protect and increase our green spaces and woodland.
- Measure air quality in our local areas and develop action plans to ensure we maximise the health and ecological benefits of clean outdoor air.
- Prioritise animal welfare and seek to tackle cruelty against animals. We want to see improved powers for councils to deal with animal welfare issues such as wildlife crime, puppy farms and the use of snares. We remain committed to a ban on hunting with dogs.
- Continue to push for a ban on circuses with wild animals and will ensure they are unable to use council land.
- Robustly challenge and seek innovative solutions to persistent public nuisances, such as dog-fouling and fly-tipping.”

### **Sustainability and Recycling (pg.11)**

“Reducing plastic use and carbon emissions, and improving recycling are essential to protect our environment. Despite improvements in recent years, recycling collection rates remain lower than EU targets across Northern Ireland. We will:

- Recognise the council’s responsibility to ensure that it is as easy as possible for people to recycle and this should take into account access to transport and mobility needs.
- Drive co-ordination of waste management across council areas and within council areas, removing confusing rules and barriers to recycling in order to provide a standardised and accessible service to rate-payers and drive up recycling rates.
- Push for increased opening hours of recycling facilities, including Sundays.
- We want to see councils become Carbon Neutral, recognising their responsibility to be leaders in sustainability and recycling, and setting an example for other businesses and households in the district to follow.
- We will ensure council facilities end their use of single-use plastics by 2022 and should consider how they can incentivise businesses in their areas to do the same.”

### **Sustainable Transport (pg.11)**

“Alliance wants to see transport infrastructure that works for everyone, whilst balancing the need for investment in public transport and sustainability. We will:

- Push for councils to be leaders in sustainable transport, ensuring meeting venues are as accessible as possible by public transport.
- Seek to promote and expand Park and Ride facilities, taking cars out of towns and freeing town centres to be active travel areas (walking, cycling and public transport), in a way which doesn’t create overflow parking problems in residential areas.
- Lobby for councils to be given responsibility for on-street parking so that they can take a more strategic approach to parking which takes into account the number of disabled parking bays and the number of electric car charge points required, as well as issues around residents parking and problem parking on pavements.
- Work with the Department for Infrastructure and Translink to improve space, lighting and safety at all rural bus stops to enable and encourage residents to access and use public transport as an alternative to car use.”

### **Active Travel (pg.12)**

“Alliance is fully committed to the delivery of first class integrated, sustainable and active travel for the people of Northern Ireland and to realising the multiple health, environmental, social and economic benefits of cycling in particular. We will:

- Work with the Department of Infrastructure to deliver safe and convenient cycling lanes.

- Push for the development and realisation of the health, rural regeneration and tourism potential of Greenways across the region and, where possible, with connectivity to the rest of the island.
- Create public, secured cycle parking areas and ensure hire bikes are available in all major towns, close to or in public transport hubs.”

### **Community Well-being (pg.13)**

“Alliance believes that council service provision must have the well-being of communities at its heart in order to improve the lives of its residents and develop vibrant and welcoming neighbourhoods and communities. We will:

- Push for increased park provision, including play parks, dog-friendly areas and outdoor gyms.
- Deliver adequate allotment provision which matches demand.”

### **Business and Tourism (pg.14)**

“Alliance believes that we need to support local businesses in order to generate our own wealth and create local jobs and a thriving local economy. We will:

- Establish an integrated strategy for sustainable tourism, which recognises local strengths and assets that can be developed and projected to a wider audience.”

### **Regeneration (pg.15)**

“We believe that local councils are best placed to deliver local solutions on town, city and area-based regeneration.

- We want to see regeneration powers urgently devolved to councils and their use monitored thereafter.
- Councils should become “one-stop-shops” for regeneration and development, ensuring targeting social need is central in decision-making.”

### **Brexit (pg.16)**

“[Brexit] poses a huge range of economic, social, environmental, security and political challenges for Northern Ireland.”

## Democratic Unionist Party

([www.mydup.com/images/uploads/publications/DUPLG2019Manifesto\\_compressed.pdf](http://www.mydup.com/images/uploads/publications/DUPLG2019Manifesto_compressed.pdf))

### **Promoting The Circular Economy (pg.25)**

“Bins are what are most associated with Councils in many people’s minds. Beyond providing this vital service to ratepayers there are our broader responsibilities to the environment and opportunities for new jobs.

Targets require Councils to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill and to increase our recycling rates. Failure on either costs both Councils and ratepayers. The different types of waste and the manner of their collection can affect both. This and recycling itself are key features of what is called the ‘Circular’ economy with a potential value for Northern Ireland of £150m. It is how savings can be made and jobs created by dealing with our forms of waste better, as well as handing on an environment to future generations we can be proud of. Therefore, your local DUP will support:

- Driving up recycling rates throughout the Province by implementing a recycling collection model that encourages householders to recycle, while ensuring the collection of high quality materials.
- Support a circular economy approach to recycling to create local jobs and economic growth opportunities for Northern Ireland.
- Work across Councils to develop shared recycling facilities for Northern Ireland”

### **The Building of Partnerships for Stronger Communities (pg.27)**

- “Active Lifestyles - When developing new leisure facilities, parks and walkways design priorities will be to encourage exercise and active travel.
- Improving the infrastructure for ultra low emission vehicles. At present there are no hydrogen fuelling stations in Northern Ireland and the number, and type, of electric car charging points is patchy and does not measure up to those available in other European countries. It is the UK Government’s aim to “accelerate the development of the zero emissions market” and in order for that to be achieved the current infrastructure needs improvement and investment.”

### **Celebrations for Northern Ireland’s Centenary in 2021 (pg.31)**

“A lasting legacy - This can be promoted through public art projects and environmental projects e.g. the development of centenary woods and centenary greenways.”

### **Tourism (pg.34)**

“[We will] seek greater investment in restoring many significant historical sites which have strong tourism potential, but have fallen into disrepair. There are many public-private partnership opportunities in this area.”

### **Rural Communities (pg.35)**

“A healthy rural landscape is the lifeblood of the country therefore it is important that we protect and improve the environment. The DUP has supported the creation of environmental farming schemes, which deliver tangible environmental benefits. Agriculture and the environment must work hand in hand and your DUP team will take a pragmatic approach on Council to sustainable farm development going forward. We also want to encourage local Councils to improve facilities including parks, outdoor trails, greenways and utilising public assets better to allow greater access to rural areas.”

## Green Party NI

([https://issuu.com/greenpartyni/docs/green\\_party\\_le19\\_manifesto](https://issuu.com/greenpartyni/docs/green_party_le19_manifesto))

### **Green Means Go!** (pg.2)

“Green means climate action. We must listen to voices such as that Greta Thunberg when they warn that ‘our house is on fire’ and appreciate that our environment has limits. Green Councillors will be the first line of defence against catastrophic climate change - particularly as Brexit threatens our environmental protections.”

“Green councillors will move towards a sustainable economy that addresses climate breakdown as well as economic inequality.”

### **Green Means 10 Commitments** (pg.5)

“Ensure that all Council premises are single-use plastic free.”

“Divest fully the pension schemes of Council staff and Councillors away from fossil fuel companies.”

“Improve air quality standards through increased pollution monitoring and reporting in line with World Health Organisation standards.”

“Ensure that communities take the lead on planning and development of our towns and cities, reforming the current model where private developers lead.”

“Create Exercise on Prescription programmes in collaboration with the Department of Health to help people recovering from illness or injury.”

### **Addressing climate breakdown** (pg.6)

“Green Councillors will...

Ensure that all Council premises are free from single-use plastics.

Encourage active and environmentally friendly travel like cycling and walking through the growth and development of schemes like Belfast Bikes and the provision of good cycling and walking infrastructure.

Support local and organic food production through food growing initiatives, allotment provision, community gardens and urban vegetable growing.

Promote energy justice to ensure that each Council area eradicates energy injustice.

Commit Councils to a carbon reduction strategy with tougher yearly targets for reductions in energy use, and a staged increase in renewable energy generation.

Oppose fracking and mining and commit to leaving fossil fuels in the ground and transitioning to clean energy sources.

Improve the quantity and quality of recycling through a target of 70% for household recycling and composting by 2025.

Improve our infrastructure to boost the circular economy model and allow for a greater range and volume of recycling to be processed in Northern Ireland.

Protect wildlife sites and local green spaces from development by ensuring enforcement of the Wildlife and Natural Environment Act to protect habitats.

Manage flood risk on public land in sustainable ways that benefit people and nature.

Transform and re-wild derelict and brown field sites to open spaces, seeking opportunities for new forestry planting which will help soak up carbon from the atmosphere.”

### **A thriving and just economy (pg.8)**

“Green Councillors will...

Divest the pension schemes of Council staff and Councillors away from fossil fuel companies and into ethical pension provision.

Encourage regeneration of local town centres, promoting independent retailers ahead of chain stores or out-of-town developments.”

### **Creating healthy and happy communities (pg.10)**

“Green Councillors will...

Increase opening hours of Council managed green spaces and public parks alongside the use of smart lighting systems to increase safety while managing cost and environmental impact.

Support the One Million Trees Project to ensure that people can enjoy trees planted across urban areas as well as protecting trees and green spaces in place at present.”

### **Planning for sustainability (pg.14)**

“Green Councillors will...

Ensure that communities take the lead on planning and development in our towns and cities, reforming the current model where private developers lead.

Require all new builds to meet the highest environmental standards, minimising carbon emissions and increasing energy efficiency.

Integrate a sustainable construction strategy as a condition of all planning applications. This covers recycling and reuse of materials, reduction of waste materials, energy generation, energy conservation, landscaping and sustainable transport facilities.

Require Local Development Plans to be co-designed with communities and stakeholders to ensure that they provide for sustainable and inclusive development.

Implement Developer Contribution Schemes to bring wider community benefit in areas where significant development is taking place.

Oppose the high densification of Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) in a single area. Ensure that HMO landlords are held to account for the safety and welfare of tenants and the impact of their property and its tenants on their surrounding environment.

Support the introduction of third party rights of planning appeal to balance the rights of communities with developers.

Develop a scheme to incentivise developers and landowners to redevelop and protect buildings from falling into dereliction.”

**Leisure, recreation and arts for all (pg.16)**

“Green Councillors will...

Create Exercise on Prescription programmes in collaboration with the Department of Health to help people recovering from illness or injury.

Improve animal welfare and safety standards at Belfast Zoo and ensure that all animals are kept for genuine conservation purposes.

Refuse licences for circuses using animals and ensure that every council has at least one animal welfare officer.”

## Social Democratic and Labour Party

[http://sdlp.ie/site/assets/files/43536/sdlp\\_manifesto\\_2019-3.pdf](http://sdlp.ie/site/assets/files/43536/sdlp_manifesto_2019-3.pdf)

### **Partnership in Councils** (pg.3)

“SDLP Councillors have continued to work to create jobs, create cleaner, greener and safer communities...”

“We support the devolution of further powers to our councils - including responsibility for regeneration so that people can be more involved in setting their own vision for what their community should look like in five, ten or twenty years. It is our strong belief that planning, community planning and regeneration powers should be strings of the same bow, used together to transform local places.”

### **First class community health services** (pg.8)

“Encourage people to lead more active lives by creating new greenway and quietway infrastructure which will incentivise walking or cycling. We’ll also press for active travel hubs as a key part of the transformation of transport services in Belfast and Derry and introduce an active health strategy for every council.”

“Increase the amount of green space in our towns and cities, enhancing our environment and providing people with the opportunity to exercise in a welcoming space.”

“Press for the introduction of clean air zones in those councils where people are most at risk of health complications related to higher concentrations of particulate matter.”

### **Planning towns and cities for the future** (pg.15)

“Enhanced collaboration between statutory partners and the voluntary and community sector in the community planning process.”

### **Making great places** (pg.16)

“Our councillors will protect and enhance our parks, beaches and green spaces and we will work to develop age appropriate facilities in all community recreation facilities. We will work to encourage healthier lifestyles by improving upon, and promoting the use of, existing health and wellbeing facilities, sports facilities, allotments and projects to enhance quality of life.”

### **Education** (pg.21)

“The SDLP believes that councils should support cycling by ensuring that school children are trained in on-road cycling in their local communities. This should be complemented with council support to encourage safe routes to schools, making it easier for pupils to walk and cycle to school safely.”

### **Climate Change (pg.25)**

“Climate change is the seismic global challenge facing this generation. Failure to take action now will result in significant changes to our global climate and weather that will devastate developed and developing economies as well as leaving millions homeless.

The SDLP is committed to making changes at a local level so that Northern Ireland can play its part in addressing the causes and impacts of climate change, including the reduction of carbon emissions and promoting sustainability.

The SDLP believes that climate change adaptation should be a material consideration in all future planning decisions.

The SDLP supports the divestment of NILGOSC pensions from fossil fuels. We believe that, as political leaders, we should be prepared to make personal and civic investments in technologies that will reduce reliance on fossil fuels.

We support the development of a clean air strategy, and further support the introduction of clean air zones in those councils where people are most at risk of health complications related to higher concentrations of particulate matter.

We will press for councils across the North to cooperate with local authorities in Great Britain on a decarbonisation agenda in homes to reduce reliance on solid fuel burning.

The SDLP will work to establish a climate change committee on each council.”

### **Fracking and Precious Metal Mining (pg.25)**

“In government, when others wanted to exploit our natural resources for reckless profiteering, the SDLP took a stand and introduced a moratorium on fracking until we could be assured by scientific evidence that there would be no lasting impact on our environment or on local communities. We stand by that approach.

It is our duty, as political leaders and custodians of our natural environment, to leave our stunning landscapes in a better state than we found them for future generations to enjoy. But, more importantly, our first responsibility is to protect the health of local people and local wildlife.

The SDLP supports a moratorium on strip mining and precious mineral/metal mining until we can be assured that the extraction process poses no risk to our environment, public health or local communities.”

### **Flooding (pg.25)**

“The Met Office predicts that, within 50 years, rising global temperatures will have a marked impact on local weather patterns. Alongside harsher, drier summers, rain patterns are likely to intensify in future autumns and winters. Our towns and cities must become more flood resilient to deal with the economic and human impact of increased storm activity.

Over the course of the last few decades, increased development has led to a decrease in the permeability of our town and city centres. This has made them less resilient to severe

flooding incidents. In anticipation of future climate changes, local government must take action to invest in water harvesting technologies, sustainable urban drainage systems and enhance the levels of green space capable of absorbing excess water.

The SDLP will also press for an inter-council coastal community network to develop a coastal adaptation plan to deal with the threat of rising sea levels and increased erosion which threatens homes and businesses. This work should enhance ongoing collaboration between Northern Ireland and the Welsh Government as part of the Ireland Wales Programme.”

**Cleaner, Greener Places (pg.27)**

“Making climate change adaptation a material consideration for future planning proposals.”

“Divestment of the Local Government pension scheme from fossil fuels.”

“The introduction of a clean air strategy and clean air zones in those council areas with high concentrations of particulate matter.”

“Cooperation across councils on a decarbonisation agenda to reduce reliance on solid fuel burning.”

“A climate change committee on each council.”

“A moratorium on strip mining and precious mineral/metal mining across Northern Ireland until it can be proven that there will be no risk to the environment or public health.”

“Investment in water harvesting technologies and sustainable urban drainage systems to prepare for enhanced instances of flooding.”

“Enhancing green space in towns and cities to increase the permeability of our urban landscape and improve flood resilience.”

“Establishment of an inter-council coastal community network to develop a coastal adaptation toolkit.”

Sinn Féin

([https://www.sinnfein.ie/files/2019/A4\\_2019manifesto6C.pdf](https://www.sinnfein.ie/files/2019/A4_2019manifesto6C.pdf))

**Regeneration (pg.7)**

“Council purchasing power should be harnessed for public good. Contracting out Council services to the lowest cost tenders undermines the quality of public services and creates a race to the bottom on workers’ pay and conditions. Services should instead be delivered in a way that maximises social, economic and environmental well-being.”

**Environment (pg.8)**

“Tackling climate change is a priority for Sinn Féin. Major efforts will be made in all councils to reduce the carbon footprint and we will be fully supportive of renewable energy alternatives.

Investing in the built environment, making the area not just an attractive place for local people to live, also has the benefit of making the area an attractive place for investment. Investors are attracted to areas which have a high quality of life standard with access to amenities.

Sinn Féin believes that councils have an important role in protecting our environment. We want to see a movement away from the burning of fossil fuels to a cleaner and greener environment.

One of Sinn Féin’s major efforts in all councils will be to tackle the issue of climate change and help reduce the carbon footprint and we will be fully supportive of renewable energy alternatives.

We want to see councils adopt carbon neutral heat sources for any new council buildings and undertaking to retro fit older buildings. They should also remove single use disposable plastics from their offices and facilities.

Taking steps to protect the environment would also allow councils to play a part in creating jobs and generating an income that helps offset rate increases.

That direct financial investment in the environment should also be backed up by councils calling on the local Government Officers’ Superannuation Committee to desist from investing in fossil fuel companies.

Waste can be a valuable commodity and Sinn Féin wants to see councils use the best recycling model in terms of efficiency, viability and economically.

We want to see councils proactively pursuing the three R’s when it comes to dealing with waste, Reduce, Reuse and Recycle, so as to reduce the amount spent on landfill as well as generating an income from the waste.

One such approach would see councils adopt a kerb box scheme alongside the blue bins. Rather than councils paying for landfill or paying companies to take away and process our

waste, we want to see councils creating a circular economic model using their statutory obligations for the management of waste to create local jobs and an income stream.

Rather than giving the resource away, the retention of valuable processed recyclable products provides each council area with the opportunity to create local employment whilst generating a sustainable income from the sale of recyclables.

Sinn Féin is committed to protecting local communities and the environment from the harmful effects of chemical and nuclear waste. This is evident by our continued opposition to the use of cyanide in gold mining and the dumping nuclear waste materials, which is harmful to the environment and people's health."

### **Rural Communities (pg.13)**

"Sinn Féin believes that rural communities, farmers and rural dwellers, are at the heart of our society. They are an integral part of protecting our ecology as well as ensuring that not only do we have high standards of food available locally but also through their efforts we have a thriving agri-food sector."

"The sustainability of our countryside depends on people and families being able to reside there. Sinn Féin wants to see a review of strategic planning policy PPS 21 in order to ensure that it is meeting the demand for rural housing while protecting the open countryside and the environment."

## Ulster Unionist Party

(<https://uup.org/assets/images/UUP%202019%20Council%20Manifesto.pdf>)

### **Putting the super back into super councils (pg.3)**

“The powers we want to see wrestled from the grip of Stormont Departments include;

- Community regeneration
- Street lighting
- Roadside grass cutting
- Libraries
- Youth services
- Minor roads maintenance
- On-street car parking
- And responsibility for the natural and built heritage

We also want to see the revenue generated locally through the Landfill Tax, to be devolved from the UK Government in order to allow Councils here to invest in their waste management infrastructure.”

### **A new single model of waste management (pg.4)**

“Whilst much progress has been made on reducing waste over the last decade, unfortunately there are indications that waste tonnages are on the rise, that recycling rates are starting to level off and that we are increasingly unlikely to meet the key 2020 target within the revised Waste Framework Directive. As a result, the cost of waste treatment and disposal will likely increase as landfill supply ends and export increases. Whilst individual councils are trying to tackle the problem, there is neither sufficient nor effective leadership from the centre.”

### **Our priorities for Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon (pg.5)**

“Our rural communities and farming families are facing great uncertainty. The ambiguity about how, or even when, we will be leaving the European Union is incredibly destabilising for the local sector. Ulster Unionist Councillors believe that the design of a post-Brexit land based support model - which both safeguards our environment and financially supports our farmers - has to be an immediate priority. Right now our farmers have no leadership, just when they need it most.”

### **Our priorities for Ards and North Down (pg.7)**

“Invest in increased enforcement to deter dog fouling, littering and dumping”

“Become the greenest Borough in Northern Ireland”

### **Our priorities for Fermanagh and Omagh (pg.11)**

“With all the unknowns of Brexit our farming community is crying out for some certainty on future support. The Ulster Unionist Party wants to see the development of a sustainable agriculture and land-use policy that is good for nature but which also financially supports our farmers.”

**Our priorities for Mid and East Antrim (pg.13)**

“The outgoing Ulster Unionist Councillors on Mid and East Antrim Council have been to the forefront of highlighting appalling incidents of animal abuse. It’s clear however that there is more that could be done to tackle the abuse. That is why the Ulster Unionist candidates want legislative change which would make it much easier to refer unduly lenient sentences for animal welfare abuses to the Court of Appeal.”

**Our priorities for Mid Ulster (pg.14)**

“Whilst the current level of financial support for farmers is supposedly guaranteed up until 2022, with all of the uncertainty and fluidity of Westminster, it is imperative that preparations start now in designing a fit-for-purpose scheme that not only is good for the environment but which also supports our farmers financially.”

**Our priorities for Newry, Mourne and Down (pg.15)**

“With all the uncertainty of Brexit our farming community is crying out for some clarity on future support. The Ulster Unionist Party wants to see the development of a sustainable agriculture and land-use policy that is good for nature but which also supports our farmers financially.”