



**sdip...now more than ever**

HITS 2003-2007

- The only party living up to all of the Agreement. No messing. No posing.
- Delivering Patten - and more. Strongest against crime.
- Best for growth, jobs and combating poverty.
- Strongest on key issues. Schools. Hospitals. Roads. No top up fees.
- For fair rates. Against water charges.
- 100% for a United Ireland and 100% for the Agreement.
- Best for North-South development and the island economy.

**The only party FOR YOU FIRST**





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## A Manifesto for Equality, Justice & Prosperity

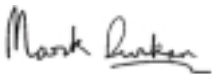
The SDLP stands in this election proud of our record and confident of our prospects. In the Assembly and the Executive, we delivered real change. We are determined to build an Ireland where we ensure equality, justice and prosperity for all.

After five and a half years of stop-go politics, we need non-stop progress. That is why the SDLP is determined to secure the full implementation of the Good Friday Agreement. We will not renegotiate the Agreement with anybody.

The SDLP have the policies to invigorate our economy, improve our society and unite our community.

Our manifesto sets out our proposals for government. The following is a preview of those proposals.

Now more than ever, you want to vote for honesty. For real and radical change. For one party you know is FOR YOU FIRST. I am asking you to **vote SDLP on 26 November**.



Mark Durkan SDLP Leader





## The SDLP wants to build a new Ireland of equality, justice and prosperity.

We will work to:

- 1 Demand the full implementation and development of the Good Friday Agreement. The SDLP will not renegotiate the Agreement with any political party.
- 2 Seek a referendum on Irish unity within the lifetime of the next Assembly.
- 3 Confront Sectarianism, creating new laws on sectarian graffiti, kerb-painting & flag-flying and tougher penalties for sectarian crime.

- 4 **Invest in new business, business growth and social economy enterprises:** create a new "Enterprise Growth Fund" to increase the number of business start-ups and assist non profit-making enterprises to become self-sustaining.
- 5 Create a new **anti-poverty strategy** and secure a comprehensive **Bill of Rights** including social and economic rights.
- 6 **Move quickly to replace the "Eleven plus"** and academic selection with a transfer system based on choice and equality of opportunity leading to high quality all-ability education for all.
- 7 **Tackle waiting lists** by restructuring the health service to reduce bureaucracy and maximise front-line resources and invest in community care to reduce "bed-blocking".
- 8 **Change the face of government**, bringing in the unions, business and the voluntary sector to agree a five-year programme for government and introducing reforms to **spend less on bureaucracy and more on public services.**
9. Deliver more **police officers on patrol**, faster response times and better clear up rates for crime.
- 10 **Tackle the shortage in supply of social housing:** overhaul supply and planning responsibilities to overcome the gross failure to meet "new build" targets.

## Top 10 All-Ireland



**The SDLP is 100% committed to the Agreement and 100% committed to a United Ireland. We believe that all-Ireland development will benefit all communities, North & South.**

In addition to the referendum on unity referred to above, we will work to:

- 1 Create an **all-Ireland Transport & Infrastructure Body** to produce and implement a strategic development framework



- networking air and sea-ports and economic corridors across the island.
- 2 Create a new **all-Ireland Food Marketing body** to promote our excellent local produce, capitalising on the clean, green image of Ireland.
  - 3 Establish a new **all-Ireland Research Alliance** to work with universities, colleges and other institutions to operate a “mix and match” service with businesses to generate economic benefits from new research as quickly as possible.
  - 4 Deliver the **all-Ireland Charter of Rights** to promote the highest level of human rights protection throughout the island and promote all-Ireland co-operation on tackling child poverty.
  - 5 Establish a **North-South Further & Higher Education body** to encourage collaboration in policy, teaching, research, evaluation, recognition of qualifications and models of excellent practice.
  - 6 Create an **all-Ireland Criminal Assets Bureau**, modelled on the Criminal Assets Bureau in the South, to deprive criminals of their wrongful gains without fear or favour throughout the island.
  - 7 Agree **all-Ireland free-travel for pensioners** through mutual recognition of schemes North and South.
  - 8 Commission an **all-Ireland framework** for investing in **early-years provision**, both statutory and community-based, including special needs.
  - 9 Advance North-South co-operation to create an **all-Ireland Sex Offenders register**.
  - 10 Create an **all-Ireland Public Safety Body** to promote a safety culture throughout the island and to systematically reduce accidents across all government departments and all sectors.

# Top 10 for balanced and sustainable growth



The **SDLP** is committed to addressing the decades of under-investment across the North, particularly in rural areas and promoting balanced and sustainable growth across the North.

We will work to:

- 1 **Decentralise government functions and agencies** including 2000 jobs to towns across the North within 5 years, targeting areas of high unemployment and promoting balanced regional development.
- 2 **Expand focus of Regional Transportation Strategy** to address needs across the North and secure investment for

upgrading of key roads and rail-links including the Derry-Belfast road and major routes in the South-East and South-West.

- 3 **Protect farmers and rural interests in CAP Reform**; investigate merits of a hybrid system to protect vulnerable sectors from perceived dangers of full de-coupling.
- 4 **Expand Rural Transport initiatives** particularly Demand Responsive Transport (e.g. community taxis, "rural rover" bus services).
- 5 **Campaign for entry to the Euro-zone** - a key priority in raising farm incomes
- 6 **Develop a new cross-cutting Rural White Paper**, a comprehensive plan to promote job and wealth-creation, improve social inclusion and access to services and strengthen the fabric of rural society.
- 7 **Legislate for a 10p tax on plastic bags** to help protect the environment.
- 8 **Overhaul planning policy** to enable diversification and development of rural businesses such as agri-tourism.
- 9 **Invest in quality, accessible health and social care** including quality acute services for every county.
- 10 **Expand the gas network** on an East-West and South-North basis and explore **a role for farmers in increasing our supply of renewable energy**, (e.g. willow production) especially in areas outside the gas network.

# Top 10 for solidarity across generations



**The SDLP is the party of rights and equal opportunities, committed to the creation of a fairer, shared society.**

- 1 Ensure that the **new anti-poverty strategy** specifically addresses **child poverty, pensioner poverty and fuel poverty**, the latter a particular problem for all too many young families and pensioner households.
- 2 Grow the Children's Fund and expand the Social Inclusion Fund to support development and delivery of **local services to children and older people**. The new measures under the SIF to support schools in areas of social need and provide

funding for **community services for older people**.

- 3 Deliver sustained investment in **pre-school provision** through both the community and statutory sectors, recognising that early years intervention supports families and communities, provides lifetime benefits to children and long-term returns to society.
- 4 Improve **support for families with children with a disability**, including appointment of a named support person to help families to access all relevant support services.
- 5 **Extend financial support** for learning throughout life and oppose **top-up fees** so that finance is no barrier to education and a skills deficit no impediment to our economy.
- 6 Support young households, tackling **housing affordability**, including extension of the co-ownership scheme and developing high quality, affordable childcare schemes in partnership with the community & voluntary sector, the commercial child-minding sector and employers.
- 7 Extend the children's **half-price travel scheme** to 16-18 year-olds in full-time education and extend concessionary travel to people with disabilities.
- 8 Implement and improve the **Valuing Carers** Strategy, research the levels and types of need including those of elderly and young carers and appoint a named contact/support person to advise and assist on accessing benefits and services.
- 9 Outlaw **age discrimination** while extending additional concessions to older people, such as **rate relief**.
- 10 Introduce **free personal care**, building on SDLP success in budgeting for free nursing care.

# For you first - change delivered



Since the last Assembly elections, the SDLP has delivered an unequalled record on issues that matter to you

- 1 Drove creation of the "Executive Programme Funds" to fund community regeneration, investment in infrastructure, public services and economic innovation.
- 2 Delivered an additional £687 million to the health budget

- an increase of over 37%, including funds for free nursing care.
- 3 **Delivered a £77 million student finance package** - reintroducing grants and cutting the numbers liable for fees to less than half - students now agree it is the best package on these islands.
- 4 **Tackled Foot and Mouth disease swiftly and decisively** and initiated development of an all-Ireland animal health strategy.
- 5 **Led the way on policing, delivering the Patten agenda - and more.**  
"The PSNI is now subject to more accountability than any other police agency I'm aware of" American Patten Commission member, Kathy O'Toole, Irish News, Wednesday 5 November 2003.
- 6 **Secured a 13% increase in education budget.**
- 7 **Established a new Children's Commissioner** with world-leading powers and a Children's Fund to help tackle child poverty.
- 8 **Inspired creation of the Reinvestment & Reform Initiative which allowed new Cancer Centre to be built** and will enable unprecedented increase in spending to upgrade roads, schools etc.
- 9 **Secured finance to fund free public transport for pensioners,** instead of proposal by DUP for a scheme half-funded centrally and half through Council rates.
- 10 Established an **All-Party Assembly Group on International Development**, which launched a Strategy document in March 2003.



For more information see our  
full manifesto on [www.sdlp.ie](http://www.sdlp.ie)

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