



# **Manifesto**

**Westminster  
Election 2024**

***A Manifesto For Radical Change***

# Candidates



**Gerry Carroll**

Belfast West



**Fiona Ferguson**

Belfast North



**Shaun Harkin**

Foyle



# Introduction

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**People Before Profit is fighting this election to provide a socialist alternative to the Tory agenda that has devastated working class communities for the past 14 years.**

This election is an opportunity to kick out the Tories and to elect fighting socialist representatives who will put the interests of working class people at the centre of politics.

The campaign takes place at a time when our society is gripped in crises; our health service is on its knees, vital services like schools and transport struggle immensely, while workers experience pay cuts during a cost-of-living crisis. Our natural environment is being ravaged by a devastating climate emergency, while war and militarism rages across the world causing untold misery.

People Before Profit identifies the main source of our problems in a political and economic system that prioritises profit and wealth for the few over the interests of the vast majority. For years, the Tory government at Westminster has functioned as a cabinet of millionaires who act in the interests of their wealthy friends.

The Tories take the lion's share of blame for attacking ordinary people and upholding a system of gross privilege and inequality in recent years. But the parties that have made up successive Stormont Executives have also shown no ability to break from the regressive Tory agenda when it comes to funding public services and challenging the power of the rich.

The result has been record levels of inequality, creating a context where the wealth of corporations skyrockets while ordinary people turn to food banks in harrowing numbers. People Before Profit believes that another world is possible, one where the interests of ordinary people are at the heart of decision making and democratic planning. If elected, People Before Profit MPs will be champions for workers, communities, and all those who face injustice.

We will also be a powerful voice for Palestine solidarity, against apartheid, and against the genocide that is being committed by the state of Israel. Palestine is the litmus test of our humanity and the Westminster establishment have long failed that test by being complicit in aiding and abetting Israeli apartheid. People Before Profit can be relied upon to be a consistent voice for Palestine, for the BDS movement and for dismantling apartheid.

A vote for People Before Profit MPs is a vote for representatives who will fight tooth and nail for working class people, be a voice for people power, for grassroots change and social and economic transformation. This manifesto highlights some of the key issues we will prioritise if elected.

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# Challenging Inequality and Redistributing Wealth

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Corporations are raking in obscene profits while public services crumble and working class people struggle just to get by.

Average profit margins have increased by over 30% since their pre-pandemic rates, yet companies are paying amongst the lowest rates of corporation tax since the 1980s. Bills have skyrocketed to new unaffordable levels as profiteers reap the rewards of low tax and deregulation.

Under Tory rule, living standards have plummeted to their lowest level since records began. 22% of the population live in poverty (around 14.4 million people), with the rate being higher in constituencies with large working class areas like West Belfast (28.5%), North Belfast (27.6%), and Foyle (25.3%). This means people are having to skip meals, go without electricity, or are struggling to pay their bills.

In Tory Britain, the richest 1% hold more wealth than 70 per cent of people. The world's richest 1% have pocketed £21 trillion in new wealth since 2020, nearly twice as much as the other 99% of the world's population.

Meanwhile, Tory austerity has cost public services some £500 billion. We urgently need a radical redistribution of wealth if we are to deal with the cost-of-living crisis, uplift working people, and invest in public services.

- **Tax the rich. Redistribute wealth in the interests of the majority.**
  - **Raise corporation tax in line with income tax: 45% tax on profits over £125k.**
  - **Reverse banking surcharge cut. Save £29 million per week.**
  - **Wealth tax on millionaires and billionaires.**
  - **End £3 billion annual spending on Trident and redirect into public services.**
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# Workers and Trade Unions Rights

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An unprecedented strike wave in recent years has exposed the poor pay and conditions facing too many workers. In the face of soaring inflation, they took action to demand the pay rises they have been denied for too long.

People Before Profit support workers fighting to improve their lot and oppose measures which would curtail their collective power. We will fight to strengthen their hand and further their demands.

We commit to fighting for;

- **£15 minimum wage, with state subsidies for small businesses.**
  - **Enable workers to vote for strike action in person and online.**
  - **Repeal Margaret Thatcher's anti-trade union laws.**
  - **Repeal the The Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Act 2023 & resist its application to the North.**
  - **Ban zero-hour contracts, ensuring workers have guaranteed work hours.**
  - **End unfair fire and rehire practice.**
  - **Nationalise key industries and put workers in the driving seat.**
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## Health and Social Care

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The number one issue for many people in this election is healthcare. The waiting list crisis is no accident; our services have been underfunded and privatised by the Tories and Stormont for decades, and workers face greater workloads for lower pay.

NHS dentistry is unattainable for most people, despite the cost-of-living crisis which leaves them struggling to foot the bill for treatment. People Before Profit would reverse decades of cuts and privatisation, and fight for the investment needed.

- **Reverse decades of funding cuts and pay stagnation.**
  - **Make NHS dentistry accessible to all.**
  - **Reduce waiting lists, including for mental health.**
  - **End privatisation including agency spend and private surgeries. Redirect the funding.**
  - **Reform the nursing bank to better suit nurses and the needs of the NHS.**
  - **Bring GPs, dentistry and domiciliary care fully into the public sector.**
  - **Rapidly expand nursing and doctor training - reduce barriers to study for working class people.**
  - **Oppose the cutting of hospital beds by Westminster and Stormont.**
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# Housing for All

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The housing crisis across the North is worsening. Rents are soaring, mortgage interest rates are too high, housing waiting lists are growing, and conditions in rented accommodation can be unlivable.

People Before Profit want to see a National Construction Company which would blanket build social housing on behalf of the Housing Executive. This would alleviate waiting lists and employ thousands, including apprentices and students to train them on the field.

- **Develop a National Construction Agency.**
  - **Allow the Housing Executive to build homes again. Blanket build public housing to reduce waiting lists.**
  - **End the transfer of public land to private developers.**
  - **Enforce penalties on landlords who rent out substandard housing.**
  - **Annual rent increases should not exceed CPI inflation.**
  - **Properly enforce restrictions on HMO development.**
  - **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 rents at 20% of a tenant's income.**
  - **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.**
  - **Ban no-fault evictions and introduce a mortgage moratorium for those who cannot pay.**
  - **Oppose people with recently granted "settled status" from being evicted from their homes and fight for housing for all.**
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## Unity over Division

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Sectarianism is weaved into the very fabric of our political system. A system of institutionalised sectarianism and division reigns at Stormont, which is run on the basis of communal designation and division. The political establishment benefits as they work together to inflict Tory cuts, they whip up tensions and position themselves as defenders of one side of the community.

People Before Profit will fight to unite all working class people who have been failed by communalism and austerity. We challenge all forces of sectarianism, whether they are in parliamentary chambers or paramilitary groups.

- **End the cosy relationship between paramilitaries and state agencies.**
- **Work across the communal divide to fight for better conditions for all.**
- **Challenge institutionalised sectarianism.**
- **Fight against local cuts which pit communities against each other.**
- **End communal funding carve-ups between the nationalist and unionist political establishment.**

## Students and Young People

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Students and young people face challenges every day, from low pay to substandard housing, hiked tuition fees, and difficulties finding opportunities. Mental health rates are far too high for under-18s and with an ongoing cost of living crisis, many feel hopeless about their future.

- **Resist tuition fee hikes and fight for free education for all.**
  - **End apprentice exploitation by paying at least the minimum wage.**
  - **Challenge unscrupulous landlords who rent out unfit properties.**
  - **Fight to enact rent caps.**
  - **End unequal pay disparity for young people.**
  - **Lower voting age to 16.**
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## Standing up to oppression

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The far-right are attempting to gain a foothold across these islands, using the cost of living and the housing crises to scapegoat minorities and whip up tensions in local communities. They have attacked the rights of women and LGBTQ+ people and demonised those seeking asylum, leading to disgraceful physical attacks and intimidation.

People Before Profit are clear that the governments in Westminster, Stormont and the Dáil are responsible for lack of housing, low pay, and deteriorating conditions. The Tory establishment in particular has normalised anti immigrant rhetoric in a shameless effort to deflect from their own failures in government.

We will always resist racism, transphobia and misogyny, wherever it appears and we have led various campaigns on the ground to defend those under attack. We are out for a society of equals that everyone has a stake in.

- **Challenge racism, transphobia and misogyny on the streets and in parliamentary chambers.**
  - **End the hostile environment and close inhumane detention centres.**
  - **Give asylum seekers and refugees the right to vote and work.**
  - **Defend the hard fought for rights of women including the right to choose.**
  - **Ensure RSE in schools is consistent and inclusive.**
  - **Improve access to public healthcare for the trans community.**
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# Education Fit for the Future

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Our schools are a reflection of our divided past, with children from across the communal divide being educated separately. The cost of sending children to school is too high, including uniforms and lunches, and the size of classes are too high.

Special needs education faces its own unique set of challenges, including lack of places, access to respite for parents, and lack of staff.

People Before Profit believe that education should be an equally accessible resource which is free for all. We want to see all pupils given the same opportunity to learn and thrive.

- **Universal free school meals.**
  - **Subsidised uniform costs.**
  - **Reduce class sizes.**
  - **Increase pay for education staff including classroom assistants.**
  - **Increase special needs school numbers by building more special needs schools.**
  - **Increase spending and investment into school estates.**
  - **End academic selection.**
  - **Fight to fund and open a new Irish Medium Education secondary school in Belfast.**
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## Climate: 'We Only Want the Earth'

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The climate crisis is one of the biggest we face in our lifetimes. The endless drive to produce profit sees unsustainability and climate destruction run rampant. While the energy companies and major corporations responsible hike up our bills, they are raking in billions. Investment in public transport and infrastructure is crucial to overcoming the climate disaster, but also in combating the cost of living crisis as well as the frightening levels of social isolation that exist in our society.

We understand that the climate crisis is the product of a for-profit system, is out of control, and will require system change to ultimately solve it.

- **Keep carbon in the ground - ban new drilling applications.**
  - **Take energy companies into public ownership.**
  - **Retrofit homes.**
  - **Introduce free public transport and develop cycling infrastructure fit for purpose.**
  - **Prioritise investment in railways to address chronic network and accessibility gaps.**
  - **Introduce stronger sanctions for big polluters such as those responsible for the crisis at Lough Neagh.**
  - **Environmental protections to combat pollution of rivers, coastal waters and lakes.**
  - **Investment to combat deteriorating conditions in roads and sewage and water infrastructure.**
  - **Support a Just Transition which will transform climate destructive industries into green energy production by reskilling workers.**
  - **Oppose any attempt to implement water charges or "mutualise" NI Water.**
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# Championing Palestine and Challenging Imperialism

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People Before Profit has always championed Palestinian liberation and condemned the apartheid conditions and settler colonialism of Israel. We also oppose the role of Western imperialism in funding and supporting Israel's murderous regime.

We have been involved in Palestinian solidarity across Ireland and will consistently use whatever electoral platforms we have to raise the cause of Palestine.

We believe that the apartheid structures of Israel must be dismantled in favour of a state where people of all religions and none can live safely and freely together.

- **End apartheid.**
  - **End settler colonialism.**
  - **Refuse to cosy up to allies of Israel in Washington, Brussels and Westminster.**
  - **Pressure our governments to break ties with and sanction Israel.**
  - **Expel Israeli ambassadors.**
  - **Support the right to return of Palestinians expelled during and since the Nakba.**
  - **Challenge Zionism and racism and all ideologies which elevate the rights of one religion or race over another.**
  - **Oppose the escalation of war in Ukraine - no to NATO and Russian imperialism.**
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# Saol Trí Ghaeilge

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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.

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.

- **Official recognition of the Irish language. Aitheantas oifigiúil don Ghaeilge.**
- **Implementation of existing Irish language legislation and Irish Language Strategy. Cur i bhfeidhm Acht Gaeilge agus Straitéis na Gaeilge.**
- **Increased funding and legal status for the Irish Medium Education sector. Tuilleadh maoinithe agus ardú stádaís don Ghaeloideachas.**
- **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. 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.**
- **Investment in learning resources through Irish. Tuilleadh áiseanna foghlama a chur ar fáil.**
- **Irish Support services for special educational needs for young people in Irish language environments. Seirbhísí tacaíochta fá choinne riachtanais bhreise i gcás daoine óga i dtimpeallachtaí Gaeilge.**

- **Proper recognition for Irish language youth services, including steady, long-term funding. Aitheantas ceart do sheirbhísí óige Gaeilge, le maoiniú seasta a dhéanann freastal ar fhás agus ar riachtanais ar leith na hearnála.**
- **We support the #GaelVóta 2024 demands. Tacaíonn muid le héilimh #GaelVóta 2024.**

## Supporting The Arts

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We recognise the importance of the arts to society, in enriching our lives, improving our wellbeing, providing a creative narrative for our time and recording it for future generations. Unfortunately, the arts are not afforded the respect or investment it deserves.

Artists often struggle with low pay, precarity, and finding access to studios. There are barriers which prevent working class artists from achieving success and government funding cuts have hit the arts sector hard.

Artists are underpaid, undervalued, and under pressure. We commit to fighting with and for them.

- **Provide state grants to ensure working artists do not fall below a £15 per hour minimum wage.**
  - **Publicly owned studio space open to artists who need it.**
  - **Reverse funding cuts under the Tory government and provide new funding streams.**
  - **Support the demands of trade unions such as Equity for fair conditions, pay and pensions across the arts sector.**
  - **Support trade unions demands around the protection of jobs and arts to mitigate against attacks on workers, or the recreation of their work through the use of AI.**
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## For A Socialist Ireland

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People Before Profit is a 32-county party made up of activists from across Ireland. We are fighting for a socialist Ireland in the vision of James Connolly which doesn't simply remove the border but creates a new state that everyone has a stake in.

- **End partition and upend the two failed states, North and South.**
  - **Create an all-Ireland NHS.**
  - **End tax handouts and loopholes that benefit big business and the rich, and implement corporation tax rates which can fund public services.**
  - **Make Ireland a safe haven for all, where access to services and rights is guaranteed.**
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