

CAMPAIGN NEWSLETTER NO 10, APRIL 2011

1. Election campaign

First of all, our thanks go to those of you who came to our hustings events which went ahead in Belfast (6/14 April) and Derry (11 April), as well as to those who helped out in other ways and emailed in with questions. Unfortunately our event in Armagh (18 April) was cancelled due to low turnout; we'll be looking into ways to boost our support in that area (and in general) over the coming months. However, the other hustings provided a great opportunity to challenge candidates on a wide range of issues.

Questions that came up included economic, environmental, social and education policy, and ways of remembering the past and challenging sectarianism. There was also a stimulating debate on power-sharing reform at one hustings. And of course, the gender equality hustings – for which the Belfast Feminist Network must claim most of the credit – brought a fresh focus to issues including marital roles, reproductive rights and childcare, as well as female representation in politics. Overall, these hustings showed that there is plenty of room for discussion and debate with the parties over the issues which are central to our own agenda.

Between the various hustings, we had public representation from the DUP, Sinn Féin, UUP, SDLP, Alliance Party, Green Party and People before Profit. We're also busy arranging private meetings with representatives from these parties, in order to discuss our election agenda and how it fits with their manifestos. Although we've managed to meet some of the parties (SF and AP) already, this process will extend beyond the election period and hopefully have some influence over the next Programme for Government.

2. Membership survey

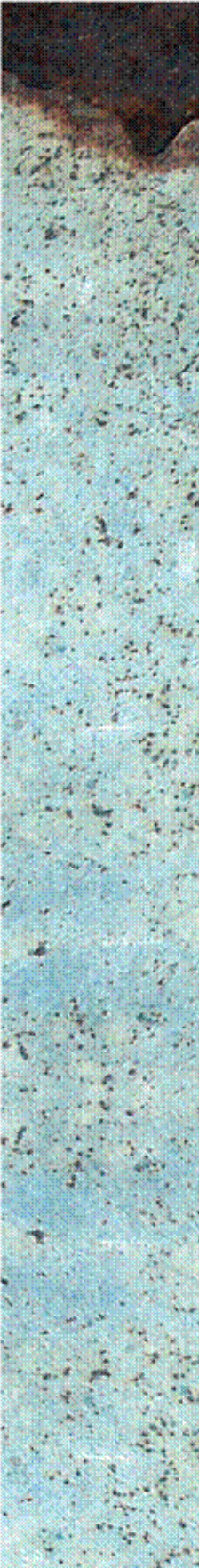
We've now got over 450 people on our mailing list, as well as nearly that number on Facebook. Even allowing for overlap, that's far more than we can keep track of. So, we're designing a membership survey which will allow us to figure out roughly who our supporters are and what they want from us, as well as what we can expect from you over the coming months. **We'll be sending a link to the survey over the next few days – when you get it, please take a few minutes to fill it out**, as it will really help us to plan the next phase of our campaign. We need to have your responses by May 28 in order to analyse the results before our...

3. ...AGM!

The AGM is being planned well in advance, so please note the following information now.

Event: AGM

Date: 4 June, 2011



Time: 10am-1pm

Venue: Chinese Welfare Centre (1, Stranmillis Embankment)

Agenda:

(i) Officers' reports

(ii) Membership analysis: presenting the results of our online membership survey, giving an indication of where we stand in terms of members' individual profiles, expectations and contributions.

(iii) **A new committee!** If you'd like to get more involved in PfC, now's the perfect time. The committee meets once a fortnight (usually Monday evening, but that's negotiable) to discuss campaign developments and proposals. We're looking for interested individuals who can commit even just a few hours a month to help out with the various things it takes to keep Platform for Change going (e.g. communications, publicity, web design, event management....the list goes on). *If you want to talk to us in advance about possibly standing for the committee or getting involved in some other way, just email contact@platformforchange.net and one of us will get back to you via phone or email.*

(iv) Discussion workshop: what an 'ideal' party would look like

Tea/coffee will be served – to help us gauge numbers for this, **please RSVP** to nuala.mckeever@platformforchange.net.

4. Feedback

As always, we invite questions and comments to:

Robin Wilson (Chair)

Email: robin.wilson@platformforchange.net

Mobile: 07771607707

or

Nuala McKeever (Secretary)

Email: nuala.mckeever@platformforchange.net

Yours sincerely