

Sinn Féin - Organising for Unity

Balmoral Sinn Féin would like to thank all of those who voted for Sinn Féin and who helped with our campaign during the recent European elections. That election saw Bairbre deBrún re-elected as an MEP for the Six Counties, topping the poll in the process. This was an historic development, the first time since partition that Sinn Féin has topped the poll.

This result comes in a year that Republicans have been marking the 90th Anniversary of An Chéad Dáil Éireann. A united Ireland built on equality as outlined in the Democratic Programme of An Chéad Dáil Éireann is the live political project for republicans in 2009.

Our strategy involves building the necessary political strength to achieve our objectives. We seek to maximise popular opinion in active support of Irish unity. That is why, within a week of Sinn Féin topping the poll in the North, we launched a Task Force on Irish Unity.

This Task Force has a responsibility to roll out a series of events throughout Ireland and to mainstream their work into every elected forum on the island. In addition it will be working to mobilise the Irish diaspora, and those who have supported Irish freedom in the USA, Australia, Europe and Britain to encourage

them to put their weight behind the campaign for Irish re-unification.

Thousands have already attended events addressed by Party President Gerry Adams in the US while a similar event has taken place in England.

Because of the sectarian foundations of the Northern state and because unionism could not be trusted to govern fairly, the current political institutions are all-Ireland in nature.

In addition, there are also many equality and other legal safeguards such as compulsory power-sharing and partnership political arrangements in place. It has taken some time, but the majority of Unionism is now locked into these arrangements. There can be no going back on this.

Moving forward, the struggle for Irish freedom continues to develop



• South Belfast MLA Alex Maskey, Gerry Adams MP and Balmoral representative Vincent Parker

in this new phase where a peaceful and democratic path to a united Ireland exists. But there remains a significant way to go. The next stage is the completion of the job of uniting Ireland, our primary political objective. We believe that we have a strategy and a political project that will deliver a united Ireland.

Activity by small militarist factions will not advance the cause of Irish freedom. Whatever their motivation they offer no realistic alternative to the strategy pursued by Sinn Féin which has been

endorsed by the vast majority of Republicans and nationalists in Ireland

The Good Friday Agreement contains a legislative, peaceful and democratic mechanism to set up a new and democratic Ireland. The economic and political dynamics in Ireland today make a united Ireland a realistic and realisable objective in a reasonable period of time.

For Sinn Féin it isn't a matter of IF we will get a united Ireland. It is a matter of HOW and WHEN.

Parker lobbies for Finaghy Youth Group

Sinn Féin's Vincent Parker has been engaging with the GAA with the aim of gaining official recognition for Finaghy Youth Group as users of Woodlands Playing Fields on a permanent basis.

Explaining the benefit to the Finaghy community Vincent Parker said, "Finaghy Youth Group does great work with young people in this area. At present the GAA has the facilities management contract. Official recognition of Finaghy Youth Group as a user, on a permanent basis, would benefit over sixty children from the area. It would allow the Youth Group to formalise soccer training for the children which would include access to, and use of, all of the facilities.

"Such a development can only benefit the local community and I am hopeful that this issue can be resolved to the benefit of all parties involved."

Caithfidh Rialtas na Breataine agus an Feidhmeannach gníomhú ar ghlaon na NA don Ghaeilge

Dúirt FPE Shinn Féin Bairbre de Brún go gcaithfidh Rialtas na Breataine agus an Feidhmeannach gníomhú i ndiaidh an ghlaon ó Choiste Náisiún Aontaithe ar Chearta Eacnamaíoch, Sóisialta agus Cultúrtha ag iarraidh orthu Acht Gaeilge a chur i bhfeidhm.

Dúirt an Iníon de Brún, "Léirigh coiste na Náisiún Aontaithe an imní atá orthu nach bhfuil cosaint ann go fóill don Ghaeilge agus do chainteoirí Gaeilge i dTuaisceart na hÉireann, in ainneoin reachtaíochta oifigiúla in Albain agus sa Bhreatain Bheag ag cosaint a dteangacha dúchasacha.

Tá an coiste an-soiléir ina mholadh go gcaithfidh Rialtas na Breataine agus an Feidhmeannach Acht Gaeilge a chur i bhfeidhm, agus d'iarr orthu 'eolas mionsonraithe a thabhairt ar an dul chun cinn atá déanta ina chéad tuarascáil thréimhsiúil eile.'

"Caithfidh Rialtas na Breataine agus an Feidhmeannach gníomhú i ndiaidh an ghlaon ó Choiste Náisiún Aontaithe ar Chearta Eacnamaíoch, Sóisialta agus Cultúrtha ag iarraidh orthu Acht Gaeilge a chur i bhfeidhm.

"Flags at Finaghy are divisive and a set back for community relations"- Parker

Sinn Féin representative Vincent Parker has said that the erecting of Union Jacks, Ulster Flags, and loyalist flags by loyalists at Finaghy crossroads is "divisive and only serves to set back community relations in the area."

Vincent explained that, in June, he witnessed 15 loyalists erect flags along the Upper Lisburn road and Finaghy crossroads, including Finaghy Road North, and said, "The annual erecting of these flags is divisive in this community and sets back

community relations in the area.

"Residents that I have spoken to are sick and tired of the flags being erected every year.

"The erection of these flags is divisive and serves to intimidate local nationalists. The immediate Finaghy crossroads area, on both sides, is a predominantly nationalist community, and local residents are disappointed that there has been no progress on flags issue over the past year.

"Finaghy crossroads is a shared neutral space, and those that erect these flags should accept that.

"Positive community relations have been built upon in the area over the past number of years, but this is a set back. I would call on loyalist community leaders to engage in already established forums for discussion in order to find a resolution. For our part Sinn Féin will continue to work to try and resolve this issue in the best interests of all residents."

Sinn Féin push for Orchardville landscaping assessment



• LANDSCAPING: Balmoral Sinn Féin representative Vincent Parker.

Vincent Parker has welcomed Belfast City Council's speedy actions in emptying waste-bins and cutting grass in the Orchardville area on Finaghy

Road North but has asked the council to ensure that the frequency which the public bins are emptied is reviewed and has urged them to carry out an assessment on the green areas to assess the viability of carrying out public realm work on the sites.

local residents to the council. He explained, "A number of residents of the Orchardville area contacted me regarding bins overflowing and the grass being allowed to become unkempt at Finaghy Road North.

"There is an onus on the Belfast City Council to maintain such public spaces to an acceptable standard. I, therefore, contacted the council and asked them to address this problem. I welcome the fact that they have moved speedily to address these issues. However, in order to ensure that such problems do not recur I have asked the council to review the frequency which the bins are emptied along this road and have requested that they carry out an assessment on the green areas to assess the viability of carrying out public realm work on the green areas that were overgrown."

Belfast City Council moved to make the improvements after Balmoral Sinn Féin representative Vincent Parker relayed the concerns of

Sewage overspill at homes must be tackled

• NI Water meeting to planned to discuss overspill problems

Balmoral Sinn Féin representative Vincent Parker has scheduled a meeting with a representative of NI Water to discuss a sewage overspill occurring at the back of homes in Orchardville Crescent.

It is hoped that this meeting will take the form of a site visit which will include the NI Water area manager meeting with residents affected by the sewage overspill.

The overspill of sewage is an ongoing problem which has occurred a number of times in the last number of months.

Speaking after discussing the issue with residents Vincent Parker said, "The ongoing problem of overflowing sewers at the back of these houses is unacceptable. Residents have told me that this overflow, which occurs on a regular basis, results

in the back gardens of a number of properties in the street being covered in sewage. Not only is this highly unpleasant for the residents but it also represents an obvious health risk, especially for families with young children.

He added, "While NI Water reacted quickly to deal with the issue when I initially contacted them, and have offered short-term respite during recent occasions when there has been an overspill, the reality is that this is an ongoing problem which needs a permanent solution."

"Although NI Water have given a commitment to increase the capacity of the sub-station, a move which is to be welcomed, residents remain concerned that increasing the capacity of the sub-station, in itself, will not resolve this problem", explained Vincent,



• NI WATER MEETING: Vincent Parker

"I have asked water service for a formal site assessment and I look forward to discussing this issue with NI Water's area manager.

This problem clearly poses a health risk and I will be urging the Water Service to tackle this issue as a matter of urgency."

Working to ensure Woodlands commitments are followed up

Balmoral Sinn Féin representative Vincent Parker is to meet with a representative of Belfast City Council's Parks and Leisure Committee to ensure that commitments given to residents living around the Woodlands Park area are followed up.

This latest meeting comes on the back of an earlier meeting arranged by Sinn Féin which was attended by Vincent Parker, Alex Maskey MLA and local residents, the PSNI, the GAA and representatives of Belfast City Council. The meeting discussed how Woodlands Playing Fields could be better secured to minimise incidents of anti-social behaviour in the area.

Vincent explained, "The outcome of the previous meeting was positive in that a number of points were agreed upon by all present. Most of the points agreed by the various parties to the meeting have been implemented. However, it remains for the City Council to erect signage notifying the changed opening and closing times, thereby

notifying the public that the Playing Fields are no longer open on a 24-hour basis. It is essential that all that was agreed is implemented and Sinn Féin wants to ensure that this is the case".



• WOODLANDS COMMITMENTS: Vincent Parker

Upton Park flooding issues

A number of residents in Upton Park have raised concerns about flooding in the area, particularly at times of heavy rainfall.

Sinn Féin have been in contact with NI Water about this issue and have been informed that the area has been highlighted on a Drainage Study currently being carried out by NI Water.

This Drainage Study is examining the existing and future needs of the area and a scheme to help resolve the issue is currently being considered. This study is due to be completed in August/September 2009 and it is hoped that NI Water will be in a better position to advise residents on how they will tackle the issue in the long term.

Sinn Féin will continue to keep you updated on any further developments.

• All-Ireland economy must be developed

Greater fiscal autonomy required for Assembly to tackle local economic problems

- by Alex Maskey MLA

In February of this year it was reported that, the Royal Bank of Scotland, which lost £28 billion and had to be bailed out by taxpayers' money, would pay £1 billion in staff bonuses. The payment of such bonuses by the same financial organisations and banks that played a large role in creating the financial mess which now exists on a global scale has, unfortunately, become commonplace across the globe.

The payment of such bonuses at a time when so many ordinary people were suffering economic hardship, many losing their jobs or falling behind on mortgage repayments, has quite rightly been described at "morally outrageous".

"Morally outrageous" is a rather timid way of describing this situation; especially when in the same month we learned that the Royal Bank of Scotland (yes, the same bank that was to pay £1 billion in staff bonuses) stated that they would have to get rid of 2,300 members of staff. This reminds me of the old saying "the rich get richer and the poor get poorer".

Added to this the fact that the most recent budget by the British Government, the same British Government that have ploughed billions of pounds of the taxpayers' money into the banks who are getting rid of workers while simultaneously paying large bonuses to their directors and shareholders, has cut back on public spending to the tune of

£30 billion and, locally, has called upon the Assembly here to cut back on its spending to the tune of £122 million with an added possible reduction in the annual grant to the Assembly.

Within the same timeframe that this was happening workers in Visteon's Belfast plant were staging a sit-in to demand their basic entitlements after losing their jobs. Hundreds of other jobs have since been lost across the North including the loss of jobs in large scale industries such as Bombardier in East Belfast.

Perhaps, it is time for the political parties here to reassess their opposition to the Sinn Féin motion which called for the acquisition of more fiscal powers for the Assembly. With greater fiscal powers for the Assembly locally elected politicians would be in a better position to act in the best interests of the people here.

If anything is to be learned from the British budget it is that decisions taken by the British Treasury are taken in the interests of the British Government and Banking system. The same government and banking system which colludes to use taxpayers' money to pay bonuses to directors and shareholders while ordinary people lost their jobs.

The reality is that the British government budget, and the present economic climate in which we find ourselves, only strengthens the argument for greater fiscal control in the hands of locally elected and accountable politicians.

As an Irish Republican I believe

"...decisions taken by the British Treasury are taken in the interests of the British Government and Banking system"


"As an Irish Republican I believe that our future lies in developing the all-Ireland economy"



• FISCAL AUTONOMY CALL: South Belfast MLA Alex Maskey

that our future lies in developing the all-Ireland economy and in order to do so efficiently means acquiring a degree of fiscal autonomy sufficient to enable us to better develop and manage economic policies to suit the specific conditions that effect us here, and to work towards a degree of harmonisation with the Southern economy.

I would hope that other politicians would begin to act in the best interests of the people of the North instead of maintaining their dogmatic opposition to anything which appears all-Ireland in nature.

Join Sinn Féin 

HELP SINN FÉIN TO BUILD AN IRELAND OF EQUALS

If you would like to join Sinn Féin fill in the form and send it to:
South and East Belfast Sinn Féin, Unit 3, 174-178 Ormeau Road, Belfast BT7 2ED.

Name:.....
 Address:.....

 Tel/E-mail:.....
 Age:.....

Sinn Féin: Working for YOU!

Sinn Féin is an activist based Party intent on giving you the best representation possible. If you need advice or have a problem, no matter how big or small, feel free to contact us at :

**Oifig Shinn Fein,
 174 Bothar Ormeau,
 BT 7 2ED.
 Tel: (028) 90243194**

**Open Monday - Friday 10am - 2pm
 e-mail: sandebelfast@sinn-fein.ie**