



**North
of England
Community
Alliance**

North of England Community Alliance

ACTION PLAN 2017

A NEW VOICE FOR THE NORTH

FOREWORD

The North of England has a proud heritage but we have been failed by successive Parliaments and MPs who ignore our priorities and put their party first.

Under successive Labour, Lib Dem and Conservative Governments, the North of England has not had its fair share of resources. According to IPPR North, the Government will spend £280 per person on infrastructure spending on the North of England while spending almost 7 times the amount on London.

London has boomed while Northerners have paid the price of the banking crisis created in the City of London.



Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have been given real powers to create laws and run national services, while English laws remain under the control of the UK Parliament.

The North of England faces "grave risks" at this General Election, as the Tories invest in the West Midlands and other areas with a high concentration of marginal constituencies to maximise the number of Conservative MP's elected.

Labour is weak, divided and is not able to offer the leadership needed to improve the lives of people living in the North of England.

The North of England Community Alliance has been formed because the time has come for the North of England to take control of our destiny. We have brought forward our launch to put out platform before the people at this General Election.

With your support in 2017, we will lay the foundations for a powerful voice for the North and we will:

- Make sure the North does better from Brexit than we did from the banking crisis;
- Demand that the Westminster Village gives us our fair share of the country's resources and powers to address the North's priorities;
- Make the North truly great again.

This Action Plan sets out the ways in which we will fight for the best possible Brexit deal for the North's industry, pensioners, NHS, education, and the environment (including agriculture).

We need real powers today for the North of England to thrive, to enhance its unique identity and to help Northerners live a long and fulfilling life.

For the North, we are here to serve you.

Brian Moore

Brian Moore
Campaigns Director and
Parliamentary Candidate for Newcastle North

THE NORTH OF ENGLAND COMMUNITY ALLIANCE
Putting North of England People First

CONTROL OVER OUR LIVES

Brexit will only be successful for the North of England if it gives us real influence over the decisions that affect our lives, helps us to compete in both the UK and world economy and to make life better for our citizens.

Fair Funding



The unfair Barnett Formula penalises the North of England for investment and services. We need to create a new independent commission to oversee an agreed way of redistributing funds across the UK, based on a needs-based formula or full devolution of tax income.

A Good Deal from Brexit

We must ensure that the North is able to grow as a consequence of Brexit. We would do this by:

- Repatriating some EU funding to the North once we have left the European Union;
- Insisting that all future trade deals are for the benefit of the North of England;
- Championing the right of citizens from EU countries to remain in the UK in exchange for British citizens currently living and working in the EU. We would argue that this should be a separate deal agreed at the start of negotiations to give certainty to all those living in another country.



Devolution That Works for All



Devolution has not worked well for England with different arrangements being established across the country while Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland each have a leader and unified assembly or Parliament. Power does not currently sit at the lowest possible level, with local government in the UK having far less power than in most other countries.

We need a constitutional convention to reform the UK into a federal union with each of the four nations having their own law making body, the creation of assemblies within England and real devolution of powers as we take back power from the EU.

THE BEST START IN LIFE

Education

While talking about localism, the Tory Lib Dem coalition centralised much of the decision making and support to schools. No longer can local councillors be held to account for not providing the very best education for our children. We want to bring back power over education to Northern institutions.

We will:

- Fund education fully and fairly, reversing the £3bn real terms cuts that schools are facing and providing enough money to make the new national funding formula a success;
- Put forward a national strategy for teacher recruitment and retention that recognises teachers as high-status professionals and guarantees enough teachers for every school.
- Work to provide quality jobs for students to remain and work in the North after graduating;
- Utilise and improve the Apprenticeship schemes to improve employment, education, training for any person under-25;
- Value a broad range of subjects in the school day so that pupils' opportunities are not limited and they are properly prepared for adult life;
- Increase the standards of English, Mathematics and Science from early years, through school provision and into adult education.

Health and Wellbeing

The key to a good job in adulthood is a good education and good health and wellbeing. This starts during pregnancy and into the early years of life.

We will:

- Ensure that every woman's mental health is monitored, discussed and treated in the same way as her physical health during pregnancy and for the first year after birth;
- Tackle the obesity timebomb by banning advertising for foods high in sugar on children's television and investing in parks and safe places to play across the North;
- Make sure that schools are supported by health and social care services to allow schools to fulfil their role to promote pupil wellbeing, rather than making up for cuts to other services.

Supporting Families

- Make free nursery places available full time for all three and four year olds across the North;
- Our universal income will enable families to make real choices about whether both parents work.

Health and Social Care

The Conservatives are proposing to charge people in England for care services in their own home who need support in later life. The charge will not apply in Scotland, which is subsidised through the Barnett Formula, so is effectively a tax on English people.

We believe we should be supporting people to live independently at home and therefore we are very strongly opposed to this proposal.

We are committed to:

- Promoting community hospitals to relieve the pressure on the NHS and make sure services are as close as possible to patients;
- Putting in place support for carers and ensuring that respite services are in place across the country;
- Increasing the number of training places for doctors and nurses in the NHS
- Promoting individual lifestyle changes and supporting infrastructure that make it possible to save thousands of lives across the North;
- Working with Northern hospitals and GPs to find ways to improve early diagnosis of disease and cancer and invest in improved access to life-saving treatments;
- Giving our armed forces veterans the support they need with healthcare, especially mental health, and housing.



Pensions

We will work with other parties to ensure that pensions are protected, guaranteeing to:

- Ensure a decent pension for all protected by the Triple Lock;
- Strongly oppose increases in the state pension retirement age;
- Fight for a review into the Mineworkers' Pension Scheme surplus.

Supporting People to Make Ends Meet

Families, single people and pensioners are all facing struggles as a result of the banking crisis. While City bankers have returned to their lavish lifestyle, including their generous bonus payments, the rest of our community have been forced to pay the price through wages and pensions not keeping up with rising costs.



We will:

- Help disabled people into employment without facing discrimination;
- Increase salary of public sector workers including teachers and nurses to ensure that their salary remains competitive;
- Create a universal basic income for all UK nationals, which will replace almost all means tested benefits, dismantle some of the benefits bureaucracy and allow people to have real choices over their lives. It will end the Daniel Blake regime and the stigma of a life on benefits.

INVESTMENT IN THE ECONOMY

Support to Business

We believe that the economy of the country exists to serve the people and through a strong economy, people can live long, productive and enriched lives. Too often national politicians have lost sight of this and see the people as servants to the economy, where our wellbeing is second to a fast buck. By tackling economic inequalities and the North / South divide, we can begin to tackle health inequalities.

We will:

- Introduce a £12.3bn investment programme to fund vital infrastructure projects throughout the North;
- End the business rates system for 3 years in the North to encourage business growth;
- Rebalance spending by Government Departments which is currently too focused in the South East;
- Introduce generous grants for new businesses in the North of England;
- Tighten protections for business banking, including tightening up regulation of factoring companies;
- Work to make Brexit a success in the North.



Infrastructure Investment

The North of England loses out on infrastructure investment with substantial amounts of money spent on cross rail in the South while Newcastle is still not connected to the country's motorway network and not scheduled to be part of HS2.

We will:

- Improve train services across the North, re-opening disused railway lines to once again carry commuters to work;
- Commitment to three lane motorway from Leeds to Edinburgh via Newcastle;
- Dualing of the A69 from Carlisle to Newcastle and along the whole of the A66;
- Improve road system around Penrith;
- Expansion of the Tyne and Wear Metro network including to Cramlington, the West End of Newcastle, Hexham and Washington;
- Develop light rail systems in Leeds and Tees Valley;
- Expand our regional airports to make more parts of the world in reach of our major cities.



JUSTICE AND SECURITY

Tackling Crime

The most important responsibility of national government is to protect the population from external threats. Traditionally, the Conservative Party was seen as the party of law and order but, since 2009, police numbers have been cut by 20,000.



We will:

- Secure substantial extra funding for Northern police forces;
- Ensure that police give security training to schools and hospitals;
- Ensure that there is a police presence at all major events to safeguard people attending.



Making Justice Fair

We will:

- Reverse cuts to legal aid, to avoid justice being available to only the poor and very rich;
- Protect victims of crimes such as rape and domestic abuse so they can give evidence in court without coming face to face with their abuser;
- Review and modify the Human Rights Act so that it is no longer used by criminals as a get out of justice process;
- Make sure certain crimes result in automatic deportation for the perpetrator after a minimum period of imprisonment;
- People who commit acts of terrorism, which impacts on essential infrastructure or kills people, would be reclassified as treason;
- Call a referendum on the reinstatement of the death penalty on the statute book for the most serious cases of treason.

Working with Other Countries

We will:

- Ensure that all military action has to be authorised by Parliament;
- We will prioritise trade deals with developing countries so they no longer face punitive tariffs for importing goods into the UK;
- Replace the 0.7% of GDP commitment on international aid with the creation of a disaster fund to support countries facing natural disasters they could not prepare for. Any funds not spent will be redirected into UK development projects.

ENVIRONMENT AND FARMING

Our natural environment is a prized asset locally and nationally. Ultimately, we have just one planet but currently consuming in an unsustainable way.

The national parties cosy up to the vested interests and do not do enough to protect our environment. They have stayed silent while our farming and fishing industries have been destroyed by the EU and it is time this was reversed.

Protecting Our Environment

We will:

- Take action to make our housing stock more energy efficient and all new homes would have production of green energy and energy storage solutions through new building regulations;
- Update and consolidate EU wildlife legislation, campaigning to create a new Wildlife Act for England;
- Safeguard our Green Belts from development through strengthened legislation;
- Ensure new legislation to reduce all types of waste;
- Protect our National Parks and areas of outstanding natural beauty;
- Introduce a diesel scrappage scheme;
- Work with local authorities across the North to create a Northern Energy Company to cut bills and generate clean energy on public buildings.



Supporting the Farming and Fishing Industries

We will:

- Ensure enhanced funding for Northern farmers after Brexit;
- Create local food supply chains to cut food miles and create sustainable jobs in our farming communities;
- Make it mandatory for food manufacturers and retailers must provide clear unambiguous country-of-origin labelling on food packaging, online and at point of purchase;
- Introduce a grant for local authorities to create new allotments and to introduce local schemes for people to rent out their gardens as allotments;
- Put food and farming at the heart of the national curriculum so children and families understand the importance of food production.

ABOUT US

The North of England Community Alliance is an independent alliance of local political parties, community based organisations and individuals who want to work together to improve the lives of people in the North East, North West and Yorkshire & the Humber regions.

The Alliance welcomes passionate people who want to improve their local community and put power in the hands of people in the North of England.

We also welcome local political parties to affiliate with us so we can learn from each other, support each other and make sure we are in a position to field candidates at every level.

The North of England Community Alliance believes in unity and strength together, which is why we welcome both individuals and organisations to join us in campaigning to make the North great again.

You can find out more about us at www.northernengland.uk.

CONTACT US

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