

Northern Ireland

Liberal Democrats wish to see a permanently peaceful, stable, non-sectarian and truly democratic society in Northern Ireland. We will work constructively with the political parties in Northern Ireland and with the Irish Government to ensure the political stability of the Northern Ireland Assembly and other institutions of the Belfast Agreement. To grow the economy, tackle social exclusion, overcome inequality and deliver efficiencies in public services, Liberal Democrats will support policies and initiatives that promote sharing over separation and counter the cost of division. A key aspect of this is dealing with the legacy of the past. The Stormont House Agreement represents another stage in the intensive work necessary to build long-term peace, stability and prosperity in Northern Ireland.

In Government we delivered on the commitment to enable the devolution of Corporation Tax to Northern Ireland by April 2017. We will continue to work with all parties to implement the full package of measures in the Stormont House Agreement and address outstanding issues. We will build on this by:

- ♦ Keeping under review the prospect of further devolution of fiscal powers to the Northern Ireland Assembly and other powers that would improve the financial accountability of the Assembly.
- ♦ Promoting a strong mechanism for working constructively with civic society in Northern Ireland.
- ♦ Working to ensure the interface is smooth and effective between national security and counter-terrorism policing on the one hand, and local policing and criminal justice activities on the other.
- ♦ Supporting changes to the powers and internal mechanisms of the Northern Ireland Assembly that reinforce the development of normal, democratic principles and enhances the creation of a shared future beyond sectarianism and division.
- ♦ Working with the political parties in Northern Ireland to tackle the cost of division and ensuring all Government policies in Northern Ireland support the aim of a genuine Shared Future for all.

England

Devolution of power to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland has implications for the UK Parliament and its dual role in legislating for England as well as the federal UK. It is possible that a future UK government could use the support of MPs representing Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland to secure the passage of legislation that only affects England, even if the majority in England were opposed. This would be a key issue for our proposed Constitutional Convention to address.

Liberal Democrats believe an English-only stage in legislation