

**CROSS-COMMUNITY LABOUR**  
FERMANAGH AND SOUTH TYRONE NEWSLETTER

# THE VOICE THEY WANT TO SILENCE



**Vote O'Cofaigh on May 5th and  
Rock the  
Establishment**

The Northern Ireland Assembly has been dominated by five establishment parties for twenty years. They have completely failed to deliver for working class people.

Since being elected as a councillor in 2019 Donal O'Cofaigh has been a thorn in the side of the establishment. Their answer has been to repeatedly try to silence him by removing his right to speak.

Donal's record and the reaction of the establishment parties tells you what you need to know. He will always speak out and he will refuse to be silenced.

### No rates increases

At the February council meeting to strike a new rate for the year, Donal sought to put forward a proposal that would defend services, end private-for-profit outsourcing and protect households from another rates increase. The chair muted his microphone and the DUP, Sinn Fein and the SDLP voted through a rate hike, putting further pressure on working class people who are already facing the cost-of-living crisis.

### Free school meals for all

Also in the last month, Donal has twice used his council position to demand measures which would make a real difference to hard-pressed working-class families. He proposed that the Education Minister and Finance Minister extend Free School Meals to all children – meaning that children of households unfairly denied free school meals at present would benefit. He also proposed pushing the Communities Minister to cap rents being charged on tenants in privately-owned housing. Both proposals were passed.



### Defend our health service

In January Donal publicised the fact that the neonatal unit in the South-West Acute Hospital is "temporarily closed" and highlighted the knock-on threat to wider acute services at the hospital. Since then, he led the push to reopen the unit, linking up with local health campaigners and trade unions and raising the issue at council meetings.

In February Donal chaired a meeting to launch a trade union-led campaign to defend emergency services in the Southern Trust area. Craigavon Area Hospital was already struggling with a staffing crisis but now faces a surge in demand because of the closure of emergency surgery at Newry.

Donal has repeatedly raised the demand for trade union and community control over NHS budgets to end the scandalous waste on private-for-profit providers. Instead of pumping money into private pockets, he calls for funds to be redirected to improve health and care worker pay, enabling recruitment and retention of the staff needed to deliver frontline services.

### A voice for workers

Donal is standing in the Assembly election to give a voice to campaigners against cuts, workers on strike and young people fighting for a secure future and against climate change.

**Send Donal to Stormont  
where he will always  
fight for you.**



**“ I’m backing Donal....  
Donal O’Cofaigh has a track record of standing  
up for working people. I am backing him in this  
election because I believe he will make a real  
difference. I am asking you to consider giving  
him your number 1 vote on May 5th ”**

*Caroline Wheeler,  
Labour candidate for  
Fermanagh and South  
Tyrone, 2019 General  
Election*

*Gerry Cullen,  
left councillor Dungannon,  
1985-1997*

*Ciaran McMenamin,  
Enniskillen writer and  
actor, star of Hope  
Street*

*Bridie McCreesh,  
Unite Rep Newry  
Mourne, Armagh District  
Council and ex-Labour  
Party (personal capacity)*

*Davy Kettyles,  
left councillor Enniskillen,  
1985-2005*

*Councillor Emmett McAleer,  
anti-goldmining campaigner*

*Pat McGovern,  
teacher in Enniskillen,  
NASUWT*

*Eileen Webster,  
retired Health Service NIPSA activist*

*George Elliott,  
Fermanagh and Omagh  
District Council,  
Unite activist  
(personal capacity)*

*Andrew Cathers,  
Secretary, Fermanagh  
Council of Trade Unions  
(personal capacity)*

*John Martin,  
Northern Ireland Regional  
Secretary, National Pensioners  
Convention  
(personal capacity)*

*Jim Barbour,  
former Vice-President Fire  
Brigades Union, and leader  
of 2002 strike (retired)*

*Jim Quinn,  
Fermanagh Trades Union  
Council Centenaries  
Coordinator (personal  
capacity)*

*Helen Hamill,  
health campaigner, Fermanagh*

*Carmel Gates,  
recently elected General  
Secretary of NIPSA  
(personal capacity)*

*Laura Graham,  
NI Regional Secretary,  
Bakers and Allied Foods  
Workers Union  
(personal capacity)*

*Tanya Killen,  
health service worker  
and campaigner*

*Niall McNally,  
N-I Industrial Organiser,  
SIPTU (personal capacity)*

*Paul Dale,  
left candidate for  
Enniskillen council  
election, 2005*

*Cathal O’Donaghue,  
Moy Park Dungannon,  
Unite Shop Steward  
(personal capacity)*

*Maria Morgan,  
campaigner against  
Universal Credit cuts*

**See [www.socialistfst.net](http://www.socialistfst.net) for a full list of signatories**

# CROSS-COMMUNITY LABOUR ALTERNATIVE ORGANISING ACROSS FERMANAGH AND SOUTH TYRONE

Cross-Community Labour brings together socialist and labour activists, trade unionists and community campaigners, and young people fighting climate change.

We are seeking to build a cross-community movement because we believe that the unity of working-class people is necessary if we are to create a better future.

We are for labour and socialist policies because only these policies will solve the problems we face every day and deliver a better life for all.

Cross-Community Labour is growing across the constituency. Donal's campaign team includes activists from both Protestant and Catholic backgrounds, who are involved in community campaigns, their trade union, women's and youth campaigns and environmental groups. We are determined to provide a real alternative at every election and between elections.

There is a strong anti-sectarian, labour and socialist tradition in Fermanagh and South Tyrone. Both Enniskillen and Dungannon have elected socialist councillors in the recent past. When Donal was elected as a councillor in Enniskillen, he was building on many years of hard work by socialist councillor Davy Kettlyes.

Gerry Cullen is an ex-councillor from Dungannon. Donal works with Gerry and his supporters in Dungannon and the Clogher Valley who are championing the rights of ordinary people, most recently care home residents who have been scandalously neglected.



Caroline Wheeler, Donal's election agent, stood in the 2019 general election and won a very good vote for a first-time candidate. She continues to fight every day for the rights of carers and in defence of our health service.

Donal, a member of the socialist group Militant Left, is from Belcoo where he has been proud to stand alongside determined local campaigners against fracking over the last several years, and he supports the campaign against goldmining which will affect the area to the north of Dungannon.

**We are determined to provide an alternative voice for working people and young people right across the constituency. We need a strong anti-sectarian and socialist voice on the councils and in the Assembly. In next year's local elections CCLA intends to start candidates across Fermanagh and South Tyrone. This is just the beginning. Together we can make a difference. Every vote counts.**

## Please come out and vote for Donal on May 5th

### GET INVOLVED - JOIN WITH US IN BUILDING A REAL ALTERNATIVE

07375 530941

f: /CllrDonalOCofaigh

t: @donaloc

[www.socialistfst.net](http://www.socialistfst.net)

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