

# An Agenda For A Better And Fairer Bermuda



PROGRESSIVE LABOUR PARTY  
**2017 PLATFORM**





THE PROGRESSIVE LABOUR PARTY  
PLATFORM 2017



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# Dear Fellow Bermudians,

The Bermuda we know and love is in peril. Over the last four and a half years we have seen an increase in heavy-handedness from government, bigotry and a general lack of tolerance for each other. This is not who we are, and we can rise.

We have 2,068 fewer jobs in Bermuda today than in 2012, our cost of living is the highest in the world, we have too many crumbling schools, qualified Bermudians cannot obtain the jobs they seek, and our seniors are met with disrespect when they voice their concerns.

In essence, we are losing that uniquely Bermudian spirit that combines generosity, strength and unity.

It's that spirit of unity and generosity that we see right before and after hurricanes; that spirit of diversity that we see at a Heroes Weekend Carnival; the spirit of celebrating Bermudian tri-athlete Flora Duffy as well as English Premier League footballer Nahki Wells. However, under the OBA, times have become harder; so much so that some of us no longer have the ability to look out for our neighbours.

## ***Bermuda can and must do better***

Governing a country is largely about priorities and plans. We in the PLP have made public education, seniors' quality of life, and job creation our priorities, and we have the plans to help Bermuda do better in each of these areas.

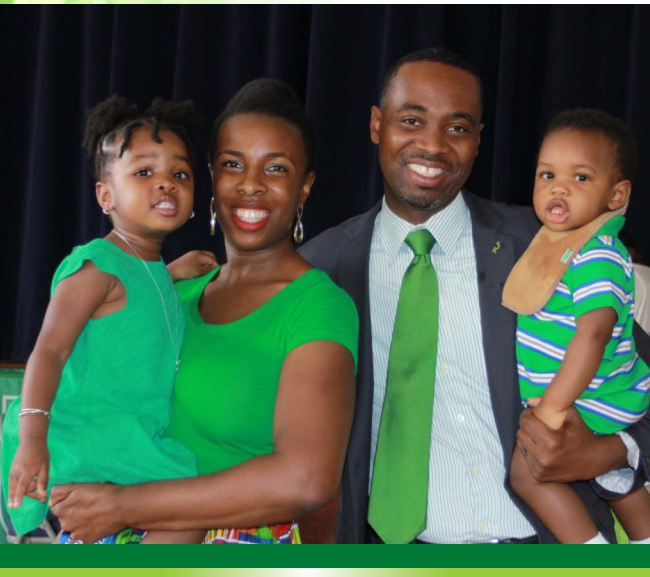
I believe that Bermuda can deliver on the promise of a good public education system, leading to a good quality of life. Regrettably, today too many Bermudians believe they need to enrol their children in private schools to ensure a decent education; we must do better for parents and our students.

In a country that mandates a retirement age, the government has a moral obligation to ensure that retired people still enjoy decent health care while living in a society that allows them to live in dignity; we must do better for our seniors.

## ***Time for change***

Our platform is a combination of fresh, new ideas and some very good old ideas to bring about needed positive change in Bermuda's society. It is a change that will:

- put our children and their future first;
- provide tools and opportunities for Bermuda's unemployed and underemployed workforce;



“It is time to put  
Bermudians first!”

- promote an economy that works for all Bermudians;
- reduce the racial tension that has permeated our country;
- assure quality and affordable health care; and
- give seniors the quality of life that their sacrifice deserves.

Now is the time to have new priorities and a new vision of Bermuda, which only the PLP can deliver; a vision that prioritises stability, collaboration, cooperation and inclusion.

***It is a vision that puts Bermudian values and Bermudians first.***

We know we have to put Bermudians first because happy, healthy, stable and prosperous Bermudians are the most welcoming people in the world. We are proud to share our home with our neighbours and visitors alike.

However, when Bermudians feel like second-class citizens in their own home or see others unfairly benefitting at our expense, then we see problems that tear at Bermuda's social fabric. As a result of unchecked inequality, some of the more prosperous among us feel free to gallop all over Bermuda's social media, bragging about being a "have" and not caring at all for "have-nots".

***Actions that deliver***

In order to deliver the social framework that Bermudians require, the PLP will take actions to balance our budget, increase employment, educate our citizens, heal our social fabric, rebuild our infrastructure, make government more responsive and reduce structural inequality.

As we all know, Bermudians are tired of fighting. We are tired of bickering and are tired of the divide. Bermudians want ideas that inspire the best in us and engender a sense of unity and optimism for the future.

Bermudians deserve a government that, through its actions, promotes transparency, openness and honesty and restores stability, bringing unity to an island that desperately needs it. Former Premier Alex Scott, creator of the 'Social Agenda', said, "*Bermuda works best when we work together*".

My pledge to the people of Bermuda today is that the Progressive Labour Party is ready to unite our citizens, ready to restore hope, and ready to lead Bermuda to meet the challenges of a changing world.

***It is time for change. It is time to put Bermudians first!***

On to victory,

**David Burt**  
***Proud Leader of the PLP***



## FIRST 100 DAYS

In the first 100 days of your next PLP Government, we will execute the following plans to bring immediate change to Bermuda's society:

- Re-establish the **Bermuda First** advisory group consisting of local and international business and community leaders to develop a long-term economic and social vision for Bermuda.
- Appoint a **Gang Violence Reduction Coordinator** to have a singular focus on implementing programmes to reduce gang violence and anti-social behaviour. The PLP will give reducing gang violence the priority it deserves.
- Grant additional powers to the existing **Price Control Commission** to examine ways to reduce the cost of living in Bermuda.
- Conduct an urgent review of health and safety in all public schools to ensure that all our students and teachers are learning and working in a safe environment.
- Provide financial support to students in need to ensure access to Bermuda College for all Bermudians.
- Increase job training to prepare Bermudians to fill jobs held by guest workers.
- Commence the installation of **Wi-Fi in all public schools** and ensure that all schools have functioning computer labs so our students have access to the latest technology.
- Provide access to funding to community clubs via a loan guarantee programme enabling them to upgrade their facilities and become self-sufficient while creating jobs for Bermudians.
- Double the guarantee capacity of the **Bermuda Economic Development Corporation** (BEDC) to give more access to capital for entrepreneurs.
- Appoint a **Director of Cooperative Economics** at the BEDC to promote cooperatives within Bermuda to boost community-based economic empowerment.

- Conclude negotiations with **Public Sector Unions** to ensure continued provision of high-quality public services.
- Establish a **Bipartisan Committee on Immigration Reform** to ensure fairness in our immigration system while putting Bermudians first.
- Establish a **Tax Reform Commission** to make Bermuda's tax system fairer and increase Bermuda's global competitiveness to stimulate economic activity and to create jobs for Bermudians.
- Reverse the OBA's immigration policy which removed the requirement that businesses who bring in overseas entertainers must also employ a Bermudian group at the venue at the same time.
- Install fitness equipment in Bermuda's public parks.
- Review the privatisation contract between AECON and the Bermuda Government for the L.F. Wade International Airport to see if Bermuda can get a better deal.
- Issue a Request for Information (RFI) for the establishment of a **Technology Hub** at Southside.
- Implement the SAGE Commission's recommendation to establish three permanent **Parliamentary Oversight Committees** in order to improve governance, reduce waste and increase efficiency.
- Update the **Ministerial Code of Conduct** to ensure that the Cabinet is held to the highest ethical standards.
- Implement a **Code of Conduct for members of Parliament**.
- Implement the **Code of Practice for Project Management and Procurement**.

# EDUCATION

## Putting Our Children and Their Future First

The Progressive Labour Party will put Bermudians first by ensuring that public education is our top priority. The continued reduction of investment in education under the OBA is a sad reflection of their lack of priorities where our Bermudian children are concerned. Your next PLP Government will give public education the priority it deserves, so that it becomes the first choice for all Bermudians. We will ensure that our education system is modern, accountable, and prepares Bermudians for success in a rapidly changing world. We will restore confidence in the public education system and ensure that Bermuda College is accessible to all.

### IMPROVING ACCOUNTABILITY IN EDUCATION

Bermuda's public school system has suffered from a lack of accountability over the years. Regardless of the many reports on education, there appears to be a lack of accountability to ensure that recommendations are carried out and student outcomes are improved.

#### Your next PLP Government will:

- Ensure that all levels of the public education system - teachers, principals, school boards, the Ministry of Education, and the government - will be held accountable and responsible for maximising students' opportunities to learn. Internal and external accountability measures will be developed for all levels of the education system, tailored in each case to match the responsibilities of that level of the system.
- Minimise political interference in the educational system by empowering educational professionals to assume a higher level of accountability and responsibility for learning outcomes.

### SHORT-TERM EDUCATION OBJECTIVES

- Conduct a review of all school facilities to identify and correct any health and safety issues.
- Commence the installation of Wi-Fi in all public schools and ensure that all schools have functioning computer labs so our students have access to the latest technology.
- Ensure the necessary services, personnel, resources and supplies are provided to all schools to allow them to deliver the curriculum effectively.



- Increase funding for scholarships so that students in public schools have more opportunities to secure higher education, and implement a low interest rate student loan programme to improve higher education access and reduce costs to students.
- Increase accessibility to Bermuda College by providing financial support to students in need and providing childcare services to working parents who wish to upgrade their skills via continuing education. Finances and family should not be a barrier to tertiary education.
- Ensure training and professional development for teachers to improve learning outcomes for students.

## MID-TERM EDUCATION OBJECTIVES

- Review and implement the recommendations from the ongoing **Department of Education's Strategic Review** with realistic and achievable yearly milestones to ensure the public school system remains nimble and modern with real-time data to measure performance of the system.
- Align the Department of Workforce Development, the Community Education and Development Programme, and Libraries and Archives with the Ministry of Education to ensure life-long learning and accessibility to education.
- Provide exposure to STEAM education at the primary school level.
- Ensure parents have access to the technology resources necessary to assist in their children's schooling.
- Ensure that there is sufficient psychological support for students, to identify and address learning or behavioural difficulties at the earliest opportunity.



## LONG-TERM EDUCATION OBJECTIVES

- Reform public education by phasing out middle schools and introducing signature schools at the secondary level, which focus on the learning styles and interests of our children, including academic, technical and the trades, business, sports, arts, and special needs education.
- Remove geographic restrictions to encourage students from different parts of the island to attend the best school suited to their talents, regardless of the location of their registered living address.
- Review the feasibility of learning environments and educational programmes to meet the needs of children in special education in a more cost-effective way.
- Establish standards of early educational achievement, so that our children can have early access to the basic skills required prior to entering primary school. The PLP understands that educational standards in early childhood programmes allow for a student to meet greater success in the educational environment.



# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The PLP believes that upgrading the skills of Bermuda's labour force through a solid workforce development plan is critical to our long-term prospects for broad-based and inclusive economic growth. It's not enough just to create more jobs: Bermudians must be given a fair shot at the jobs that already exist today. Opportunities to prepare Bermudians with skills to enter the job market are a key step in getting our young people employed. The workforce development programme is designed to assist in preparing our people for the world of work.

## Your next PLP Government will:

- Create a **National Workforce Development Plan**, in collaboration with our key stakeholders, to ensure that Bermudians are properly prepared to take advantage of both current and future jobs opportunities. The plan will include the following:
  - A **National Skills Policy** for employers to address chronic skills shortages across different occupational groupings.
  - Track the skills of Bermudians living here and abroad who are seeking employment opportunities.
  - Increase options for on-island training to prepare Bermudians for today and tomorrow.
- Enhance training programmes at Bermuda College to allow it to provide more degree and technical educational offerings.
- Collaborate with Bermuda College to promote mobile application development skills by having students design, maintain and enhance mobile apps that make government better and more efficient. This practical work will provide real-world experience to our students, will make government services more convenient, and will benefit the college as the applications developed could be licensed to other governments worldwide. The apps developed will help the government relay information to its citizens and allow residents to communicate issues to the government.

# ECONOMY

## Prosperity for All Bermudians

In order for Bermuda to succeed, we need to return our economy to a path of balanced growth that creates jobs, provides rising incomes and assists our budget challenges. It is our belief that a better environment must be created in which Bermudian businesses can thrive, opportunities for Bermudians can be created, and in which capable, qualified Bermudians can earn opportunities to work, train and succeed at every level. We will ensure a fairer Bermuda for all by enacting policies to grow Bermuda's economy.

**Your next PLP Government will grow our economy by:**

- Forming a **Bermuda First** advisory group consisting of local and international business and community leaders to develop a long-term economic and social plan for Bermuda. Bermuda needs to draw on the intellectual capital of our stakeholders to get all sections of our community moving in the same direction. An economic plan that has broad community support will assist us in creating balanced long-term economic growth that will create jobs in Bermuda.
- Creating a **Tax Reform Commission** drawing participants from both political parties, international business, local businesses, trade unions, hoteliers, academia and the Bermuda Bar. Its mission will be to conduct a review of our system of revenue collection and taxation and to make recommendations to parliament on revenue and tax reform that make our tax system fairer and enhance Bermuda's international competitiveness to increase the number of jobs based in Bermuda.
- Creating an **Economic Diversification Unit** to create new economic pillars in Bermuda. This unit will identify new opportunities for economic diversification and subject them to structured analysis and research. Once areas have been identified and agreed upon, the unit will seek local and overseas investment to develop new local industry, which will create jobs in Bermuda.
- Bringing jobs back to Bermuda by creating a payroll tax exemption for any Bermuda company that decides to repatriate previously outsourced jobs back to Bermuda.
- Developing an economic development fund called the **Bermuda Fund**. This fund will have strict governance controls so that it will not be subject to political whims, and will be run for the specific purpose of generating positive returns, while investing in the development of Bermuda-based businesses. Similar plans in both Singapore and Ireland have delivered positive results for their economies, and the PLP will advance this initiative to create jobs in Bermuda.
- Developing a **Technology Hub** at Southside. This will allow start-ups in the technology field that require little more than a computer and an Internet connection to use our regulatory environment while developing their new products and services in Bermuda. The vision is to transform Southside into a technology-based community with living facilities as well as an active office community.



## PROMOTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The PLP's position is that a key path to empowerment for Bermudians lies in the expansion of entrepreneurship and the facilitation of doing business in this jurisdiction. We have heard how the government is often the biggest obstacle when it comes to Bermudians getting their business started. Red tape and bureaucracy have strangled far too many legitimate business concepts in the cradle, and that must end.

### Your next PLP Government will:

- Provide new tax relief for first-time entrepreneurs to assist them in creating Bermudian jobs.
- Reform our laws to allow greater freedom for peddlers and vendors.
- Expand access to capital for first-time business owners through liberalisation of the 60/40 rule, enabling entrepreneurs to access financing options outside of local banks.
- Double the guarantee capacity of the **Bermuda Economic Development Corporation**, enabling new small business owners with credible business plans to have increased access to the capital they need to create jobs for themselves and others.
- Develop domestic capital markets that create local investment vehicles for Bermudians to invest in Bermuda. We must provide the banks with competition and allow local entrepreneurs alternative access to capital thus boosting local businesses.
- Appoint a **Director of Cooperative Economics** at the Bermuda Economic Development Corporation to promote cooperatives within Bermuda to boost community-based economic empowerment.

## CONSUMER PROTECTION

### Your next PLP Government will:

- Improve the regulation of debt collection agencies.
- Regulate payday lenders to curtail those who would lend, at the extraordinary rate of 260%, to people who may be in a tough situation.
- Establish a cap on over-the-limit fees at banks. This punitive practice has been addressed in many jurisdictions with regulations restricting a bank to one over-the-limit charge per billing cycle.
- Consult with the Bermuda Monetary Authority (BMA) to modify foreclosure rules, preventing banks from going after homeowners when the bank sells the property for less than the amount outstanding on the loan.

# GOOD GOVERNMENT & FISCAL PRUDENCE

There is a difference between good governance – which deals with integrity, following the law and zero tolerance for corruption – and a good government. The Progressive Labour Party is firmly committed to both, and after the next election Bermudians will have a government that strives to practise the best habits of good government.

The PLP believes that accountability and fiscal responsibility are the key competences of good governance.

## ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT AND FISCAL PRUDENCE

**Your next PLP Government will:**

- Balance Bermuda's budget by 2019.
- Create an **Economic Advisory Council** to provide sound and independent economic advice to the government. This council will be chaired by an economist who will be seconded to Bermuda from a global central bank.
- Strengthen the role of the **Public Accounts Committee** and ensure that it has all the resources necessary to identify wasteful spending and hold the government of the day accountable.
- Implement the **Code of Practice for Project Management and Procurement**.
- Improve governance, reduce waste and improve efficiency by implementing the SAGE recommendation to establish three **Permanent Parliamentary Oversight Committees**.

## BETTER GOVERNMENT

**Your next PLP Government will:**

- Introduce **integrity in public office legislation** to modernise our laws surrounding voter fraud and other aspects of our electoral and political process that are subject to abuse by those who would seek to use wealth, influence, or intimidation to obtain political power.
- Update the **Ministerial Code of Conduct** to ensure that the Cabinet is held to the highest ethical standards.
- Implement a **Code of Conduct for members of Parliament**.

- Introduce **Campaign Finance Reform** that will bring transparency to political donations; set caps on individual donations; oversee political spending by political parties; and examine voter fraud, conflicts of interest and other aspects of our electoral and political process that are subject to abuse by those who would seek to use wealth, influence or intimidation to obtain political or economic power.
- Enact **anti-corruption legislation** which will: designate an independent corruption watchdog; broaden the definition of official corruption; increase the requirements for disclosure of financial interests for politicians and senior civil servants; give the Auditor General the power to “follow the money” with government contracts; and void any contract entered into by the government which has been found to be procured via corrupt practices.
- Implement a process where initiatives/petitions that gather a certain threshold of signatures can be placed either before parliament for debate or to the country via referendum.
- Ensure that major issues are discussed in public forums and are not just limited to prepared speeches in parliament. Our public discourse does not do enough to enlighten voters about the issues, and government must do better. This will also include debates before general elections.
- Implement an interactive **Citizens Forum** based upon the DemocracyOS platform to engage in constructive discussion on issues and to broaden the base of consultation on matters that affect Bermudians.

## GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY

**Across-the-board cuts do not tackle inefficiency, which is the core of the problem, and they often reduce productive investment.**

**Your next PLP Government will make government more efficient by:**

- Conducting an extensive review of the technology used within the government and funding investments to make the government more efficient and more responsive to both internal and external users via technology.
- Implementing performance-based pay for all civil servants to incentivise and reward workers for increasing department revenues, reducing department expenses, and increasing the performance and efficiency of a government department or ministry.
- Reviewing the SAGE Commission’s recommendations regarding the consolidation of government departments and ministries to implement cost savings.
- Undergoing a comprehensive review of the Public Service Commission legislation.
- Requiring all travel booked with public funds to be recorded under a business frequent flyer plan in the name of the Government of Bermuda. The benefits accumulated from this travel will be used to assist students who are recipients of training awards with the costs for their travel and to help other citizens in need.

# CREATING A FAIRER BERMUDA

## Your next PLP Government will:

- Introduce **Equality Impact Assessments** as a component of our legislative and policy development process to ensure that current and future laws or policies do not expand or encourage discrimination.
- Reinforce the powers of the **Human Rights Commission** to investigate and penalise businesses that discriminate against Bermudians in hiring, promotion and compensation. Companies must provide similar benefits to foreign staff and local staff.
- Review the key recommendations from the **Joint Select Committee on Women's Issues**.
- Provide support to working single parents participating in educational or career development by expanding access to reliable and affordable childcare.
- Evaluate approaches to best support **family-first policies** for families with children in lower income households to break the cycle of poverty.
- Provide the resources needed to ensure that the **Land Title Registry** is fully operational.
- Ensure more affordable housing is available for seniors and families.
- Institute a phased plan to make government buildings more accessible to our seniors and physically challenged citizens.
- Remove compulsory military service or "conscription" from the laws of Bermuda.

## SAME SEX RELATIONSHIPS

The issue of same sex marriage remains a matter of conscience for our members. We accept that same sex couples should have similar legal benefits as heterosexual couples, save for marriage, and will introduce legislation to achieve this aim. The issue of same sex marriages has been a divisive one due to the lack of leadership by the OBA. Their failure to lead is an example of why they are unfit to lead. Our position takes into account the divisive nature of the issue and strikes the right balance



# EMPLOYMENT & LABOUR RELATIONS

## A Fairer, More Diverse and Inclusive Workforce

The PLP was created by and for workers; our foundation was laid by labour stalwarts of our past. The PLP and the country's trade unions are critical parts of Bermuda's labour movement. That fact demands that solidarity is maintained so that we can collectively advance the interests of working-class Bermudians. We are a labour party, and our roots demand that we are the political voice of labour, the guardian of labour rights in the legislature and the champion of the hard-working men and women that the unions represent.

### Your next PLP Government will:

- Address the current structural imbalance of pension benefits that exists between guest workers and Bermudians by requiring equal treatment for Bermudian and expatriate labour. Currently, employers are not required by law to provide the same level of pension benefits to guest workers as they are to Bermudians, thus making it more expensive to employ Bermudians.
- In collaboration with the Bermuda Trade Union Congress, update labour legislation to ensure that labour disputes are handled more effectively and that labour rights are protected for all.
- Ensure that employment is created for those in our society who are deemed unemployable. We will jump-start social enterprises and promote social entrepreneurship to get our people back to work. We will make the required changes to laws to ensure that social enterprises become a reality within the first year of our term in office.
- Review the Employment Act to extend the allowance for paid maternity leave to 13 weeks and make allowances for paternity leave.
- Ensure fairness in our tax structure by performing a comprehensive examination of the social insurance programme to increase the take-home pay for low-income earners.
- Introduce legislation to provide for **unemployment insurance**, which will ensure that workers between jobs are not forced to go to the government for financial assistance.

# OUR TEAM



**LEADER DAVID BURT**

18 Pembroke West Central



**RENEE MING**

1 St. George's North



**KIM SWAN**

2 St. George's West



**LOVITTA FOGGO**

3 St. David's



**VANCE CAMPBELL**

9 Smith's West



**ERNEST PEETS**

10 Smith's North



**CHRIS FAMOUS**

11 Devonshire East



**WALTON BROWN**

17 Pembroke Central



**JASON HAYWARD**

19 Pembroke West



**GRAHAM MAULE**

20 Pembroke South West



**ROLFE COMMISSIONG**

21 Pembroke South East



**CURTIS RICHARDSON**

22 Paget East



**DENNIS LISTER III**

28 Warwick West



**ZANE DESILVA**

29 Southampton East



**QUINTON BUTTERFIELD**

30 Southampton East Central



**CRYSTAL CAESAR**

31 Southampton West Central



**SCOTT SIMMONS**

32 Southampton West



*Leading you in 2017 and beyond!*



**TINEE FURBERT**

4 St. George's South



**DERRICK BURGESS**

5 Hamilton East



**WAYNE FURBERT**

6 Hamilton West



**ANTHONY RICHARDSON**

7 Hamilton South



**ROSE ANN CAREEN TUCKER**

8 Smith's South



**GEORGE SCOTT**

12 Devonshire South Central



**DIALLO RABAIN**

13 Devonshire North Central



**WAYNE CAINES**

14 Devonshire North West



**WALTER ROBAN**

15 Pembroke East



**MICHAEL WEEKS**

16 Pembroke East Central



**EMILY GAIL DILL**

23 Paget West



**LAWRENCE SCOTT**

24 Warwick South East



**KATHY SIMMONS**

25 Warwick North East



**NEVILLE TYRRELL**

26 Warwick South Central



**COL. DAVID BURCH**

27 Warwick North Central



**JAMAHL SIMMONS**

33 Sandys South



**KIM WILSON**

34 Sandys South Central



**DENNIS LISTER**

35 Sandys North Central



**MICHAEL SCOTT**

36 Sandys North

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# IMMIGRATION

Throughout our history, immigration laws and policies have been mired in the combustible mix of race, politics and class. They have divided our community, created distinct benefits for some and resulted in the marginalisation of others. We can never forget the historic protests in March 2016, when the OBA tried to force blanket status grants on Bermudians without consultation.

## Your next PLP Government will:

- Complete **comprehensive bipartisan immigration reform** to ensure that the rights of Bermudians are advanced and protected, while recognising the need to grow our economy with fair and balanced work permits and residential policies. Our reform will ensure that Bermudians will come first, employer abuse is minimised, and the land in Bermuda is protected for Bermudians.
- Reverse the OBA's immigration policy which removed the requirement that businesses that bring in overseas entertainers must also employ a Bermudian or Bermudian group at the venue at the same time. We will require entertainers' work permit submissions to include the payment of travellers' fees.
- Adopt policies, inclusive of random checks, to ensure that employers of vulnerable work permit holders are acting within the law and adhere to policy.
- Impose a set of graduated penalties for employers who act in bad faith with regards to the hiring of Bermudians.
- Collect emigration statistics to identify trends and gather a better understanding of the core reasons for Bermudians leaving our shores.



# SENIORS

## Putting Our Seniors and Vulnerable Persons First

Every government has the responsibility to ensure that its senior population enjoys a quality of life that reflects the value we place on them as citizens. The PLP is proud that it introduced FutureCare for our seniors to assist them in their golden years. The PLP will continue to ensure that our seniors are able to live in dignity.

### Your next PLP Government will:

- Institute annual cost of living increases for social insurance pensions that will be linked to the rate of inflation to help lessen the hardships that too many of our seniors now endure. The OBA made seniors wait five years for a pension increase, which is the longest period of time between increases since the UBP was in office.
- Review the laws to reflect international best practices to enact a **Charter of Rights and Responsibilities** for seniors.
- Expand the home healthcare benefit under HIP to provide additional income to families, while reducing overall costs to the healthcare system.
- Eliminate existing government fees for seniors in need.
- Increase the **Prescription Drug Benefit** for seniors on FutureCare.
- Develop incentives for private sector creation and operation of retirement communities, residential care homes or senior independent living communities, providing seniors with greater options and alleviating the stress placed on families and the hospital.
- Reduce age discrimination in the workplace.
- Create an **Office of the Public Guardian** to assist legally with the management of care and funding for dependent persons who are cognitively impaired with no family members or next of kin.



# NATIONAL SECURITY & THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

The PLP believes that a cornerstone of government is to provide a safe community for all Bermudians. We must recognise that enforcement is a large part of the solution, but not the entire solution. We must be able to identify and address the root causes of crime and ongoing gang activity that are rooted in poor education outcomes and income inequality.

## REDUCING GANG VIOLENCE

Your next PLP Government will seek to eradicate the gang culture by building stronger families, schools and communities, while also strengthening both enforcement and legislation.

### Your next PLP Government will:

- Appoint a **Gang Violence Reduction Coordinator** to have a singular focus on implementing programmes to reduce gang violence and anti-social behaviour. The coordinator will review the effectiveness of existing programmes, while ensuring that all social services are effective in dealing with the root causes of crime.
- Ensure that opportunities are available to young people who wish for a pathway out of gangs by providing financial support to social enterprises that provide employment opportunities and skills development to Bermudians seeking an exit from gangs.
- Offer parents, teachers and other community leaders tangible training and assistance that teaches them how to identify those at risk of becoming involved in gang activity, and the ability to help prevent young people from moving towards a life of crime.
- Provide financial support to Bermudians seeking a way out of gangs who wish to return to school for a GED or increased skills/training.





## CRIME REDUCTION

### Your next PLP Government will:

- Develop the first **National Crime Reduction Plan** that will be focused on prevention, rehabilitation and reintegration.
- Continue to forge strategic partnerships as part of our National Crime Reduction Plan to identify policies and programmes that are proven to reduce crime and increase public safety.
- Provide resources and expertise for the continuing implementation of Bermuda's national DNA database to bring offenders to justice.

## DRUG POLICY REFORM

### Your next PLP Government will:

- Decriminalise cannabis possession for amounts under 7 grams to ensure that young people are not prevented from future opportunities due to non-violent drug possession.
- Allow licensed medical practitioners to prescribe their patients medicinal cannabis to address legitimate health issues and establish a regime for domestic medicinal cannabis production.
- Commission a review of Bermuda's drug policy to examine ways to reduce drug abuse. The PLP will publish a Green Paper for consultation within the first year of our term in office to examine Bermuda's options going forward.

## COURT SERVICES AND COMMUNITY PROTECTION

### Your next PLP Government will:

- Strengthen the legislation regarding the provision of child support to ensure that those who have a legal obligation are held accountable.
- Enact legislation to mandate inmates to contribute a portion of their earnings to the Victim Compensation Fund.
- Amend the law to permit the naming of sex offenders in regards to particular sexual offences.

# EMPOWERING BERMUDIAN FAMILIES

Like many countries, Bermuda faces the challenge of an aging population, high youth unemployment, low revenue growth, an unsustainable tax structure and high government debt. These factors have contributed to the widening of the gap between the two Bermudas, resulting in too many of our people being trapped in a cycle of multi-generational poverty. The PLP believes that a shift in social welfare is required to address this change within our society.

The PLP's aim is to promote social cohesion and equality by implementing a **Social Investment Strategy (SIS)** based on the following fundamental principles.

## Your next PLP Government will:

- Aim to reduce the need for long-term social assistance by focussing on prevention, and empower people by investing resources as early as possible at critical stages of individuals' lives.
- Increase people's ability to access opportunities in the labour market by strengthening our citizens' current and future skill sets. Investments will be made in further education and the training of Bermudians.
- Implement performance benchmarks and accountability measures to ensure that the government's programmes and policies are responsive to the needs of our community, and evaluate the effectiveness of social investment strategies using performance data.

## Your next PLP Government will:

- Implement a **living wage** to ensure that people who are employed full-time earn a wage that keeps them out of poverty.
- Reform the **Financial Assistance Programme** to better protect against abuse and improve outcomes, including:
  - Requiring able-bodied unemployed persons who are on financial assistance to upgrade their education/skills to prepare them to return to the workforce.
  - Rewarding recipients who find work and not penalise them for taking a part-time position. Financial assistance should move people back to work, not keep them on assistance.

# HEALTH

## Quality, Affordable Health Care for Bermudians First

The cost of health insurance is causing real hardship to Bermudian families. As a country, we must recognise the fact that our healthcare system is not servicing our needs. The PLP is committed to reducing the cost of health care while improving outcomes and promoting healthy living. We must also adequately deal with mental health and the scourge of addiction in our communities.

### MANAGING THE UNSUSTAINABLE COST OF HEALTH CARE

**Your next PLP Government will:**

- Implement the **National Health Plan** to reduce healthcare costs for all Bermudians.
- Allow small businesses to join with other small businesses to obtain group medical insurance coverage through local insurance providers. The sharing of risk across these small businesses will lead to reduced costs.
- Reduce healthcare costs through greater competition in the local insurance market and through the use of technology to make healthcare delivery more efficient.

### MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION

**Your next PLP Government will:**

- Conduct a comprehensive review of mental health services in Bermuda and make progressive reforms to adequately address mental health challenges in our community.
- Work in collaboration with addiction professionals to design a continuum of care service that will increase access to services and improve long-term outcomes for people suffering with addiction.

### PROMOTING HEALTHY LIVING

**Your next PLP Government will:**

- Increase community health education and require nutritional information to be published in local restaurants.
- Implement a sugar tax, with the revenue derived to be used for health education and early intervention.
- Install fitness equipment in public parks around the island in an effort to promote healthy lifestyles for Bermudians.

# TOURISM

The Progressive Labour Party recognises that tourism is the second pillar of our economy and must be expanded. While it is vital to expand tourism, we must ensure that increases in tourism directly benefit Bermudian employees and Bermudian entrepreneurs. In 2015, under the OBA and the Bermuda Tourism Authority (BTA), Bermuda recorded the lowest level of visitor air arrivals since 1966.

## **PROMOTING TOURISM AND ENHANCING OUR PRODUCT**

### **Your next PLP Government will:**

- Promote medical tourism to increase utilisation of our new healthcare facilities that provide cutting-edge treatments approved in the UK but not yet available in the United States.
- Modernise regulations and laws that inhibit the development, modernisation and visitor enjoyment of our tourism product and nightlife.
- Reverse the increased energy taxes on hotels implemented by the OBA.
- Work with the Ministry of Transport and the BTA to facilitate the development of a safe, reliable water-taxi service, with supportive infrastructure and links to existing ground transportation services that will create jobs for Bermudians.
- Work with the BTA and stakeholders to facilitate the creation of new products, services and activities for cruise ship shore excursions that benefit Bermudian entrepreneurship and create jobs for Bermudians.

### **In partnership with the BTA, your next PLP Government will:**

- Modernise hotel concessions to stay ahead of our global competition, while creating better accountability for hiring, training and promoting Bermudian workers and entertainers.
- Promote local events so that Bermudian entertainers can showcase their talents to our visitors.
- Expand airlift and facilitate price competition out of our target jurisdictions.
- Create new business opportunities for Bermudians through the development and enhancement of our beach and park tourism product.
- Collaborate with workforce development initiatives to ensure that Bermudians have maximum access to employment opportunities in the tourism sector.

- Modernise the **National Tourism Plan** to reflect today's realities and the evolving tourism market.

**To increase accountability of the BTA, your next PLP Government will:**

- Develop a **Transparent Accountability Monitoring** process for funds utilised by the BTA, while demanding greater return on investment.
- Reform the **BTA's Entertainment Investment Initiative**, ensuring that it has a greater focus on diversity, inclusion, and return on investment.

**To develop the vacation rental market, your next PLP Government will:**

- Ensure fair and safe regulations are in place to support the expansion of vacation rentals and to diversify our tourism product, while not subjecting them to excessive taxation.





# INFRASTRUCTURE

A vision for the future must take into account the requirement to invest in our civil infrastructure. As we succeed in growing our economy over the next decade, we must also prepare our infrastructure for more people living and working in Bermuda.

## Your next PLP Government will:

- Implement the **National Infrastructure Strategy Plan**, which identifies important improvements and repairs to our infrastructure that will not only enhance our overall quality of life, but will create business opportunities for construction companies and jobs for Bermudian construction workers.
- Commence the redevelopment of the **Hamilton Waterfront** which was stalled due to the OBA's poor governance.
- Support the Corporation of St. George to address sewage treatment in the East End.
- Ensure that all infrastructure projects are subject to a tender process in accordance with the Good Governance Act 2011.
- Not privatise public assets to foreign companies, robbing Bermudians of future revenue. Any private funding for infrastructure development will be done through **Bermuda Government Crown Corporations**, ensuring that profits remain in Bermuda for the benefit of Bermudians.
- Incentivise the construction of studio and one-bedroom apartments in the city of Hamilton which will be affordable enough for young Bermudians to purchase, creating jobs and bringing new life to the city.
- Review the privatisation contract between AECON and the Bermuda Government for the L.F. Wade International Airport to ensure that Bermuda gets a better deal.



# COMMUNITY, SPORTS & CULTURE

## COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS AND SPORTS

### Your next PLP Government will:

- Enable local community organisations and parish councils to pay nominal rents for the use of vacant and derelict government properties. Rather than sell government properties like Admiralty House and Teucer House, we should lease them to deserving community organisations such as Chewstick and the North Village Community Club. This will create construction jobs for Bermudians and increase government revenue from taxes.
- Extend loan guarantees to community clubs for renovations of their facilities in order to make them self-sufficient, in return for verified management controls. If we as a country can extend government guarantees to a private hotel development over which we have no control, then surely we can extend guarantees for the upgrading of our country's social infrastructure to assist in tackling anti-social behaviour and to provide employment in our communities.
- Create a local lottery, which will benefit sports development and national sporting bodies. A lottery that is dedicated to sports funding will assist in directing additional resources to our athletes and will be implemented within two years.
- Enhance the **Cultural Legacy Fund** to continue to promote, enhance and celebrate Bermudian culture.

## RACE RELATIONS

**Race relations in Bermuda have become more strained over the past few years. The PLP will reduce the racial tension and increase a broader understanding of racial differences by dealing with the issue and not ignoring it.**

### Your next PLP Government will:

- Work in alignment with organisations, such as CURB, to develop community-based solutions.
- Encourage educational sessions with various community partners with the view to bring about greater understanding of racial relationships and diversity.

# TRANSPORTATION

## **Your next PLP Government will:**

- Invest in proper maintenance programmes for public transport assets to minimise downtime and extend the life of our buses and ferries.
- Ensure all new public transportation is accessible for Bermudians with physical disabilities.
- Introduce electronic fare collection on public transport.
- Extend the public transport network by use of minibuses to areas that are not currently served by public buses. These minibuses can collect payment via the new electronic fare system.
- Reduce the competition for tourism dollars between the government and public service vehicles. The first step to accomplishing this goal will be to reduce the current use of public buses whose sole purpose is to take visitors on sightseeing tours.
- Reduce the red tape for entrepreneurs looking to enter business by reforming and simplifying the antiquated system of acquiring a truck permit.
- Provide the option for commercial vehicles to be licensed for six-month periods.

## **ROAD SAFETY**

**Bermuda has a high rate of road injuries and fatalities as a result of drunk driving. We must change the culture of drunk driving in our society and encourage more respectful behaviour on our roads.**

## **Your next PLP Government will:**

- Enhance the government's collaborative partnership with the Road Safety Council and local insurers to improve the quality of the Project Ride Programme.
- Implement sobriety checkpoints in an effort to increase enforcement and reduce the number of people who decide to drink and drive.
- Introduce stricter penalties and fines for vehicles illegally parked in marked disabled parking bays.

# ENVIRONMENT

## Sustainable Solutions for Preserving and Protecting our Beautiful Home

The PLP will work to protect our environment, usher in a new era of renewable energy which will reduce our cost of living, and reduce waste and litter in Bermuda.

### Your next PLP Government will:

- Lease the many acres of government arable land that are currently not being used in order to boost domestic food production. The incentive is to modernise the equipment used to boost productivity and make the domestic industry more profitable.
- Promote and develop community gardens that can assist in meeting the needs of the less fortunate in our community.
- Review and reform the Bermuda Plan to ensure that it provides the right framework of balance to sustain development and protect the environment.
- Review the current system for handling raw sewage waste and work with the private sector to facilitate systems that will properly treat sewage waste.
- Produce a Green Paper for consultation on establishing a mandatory recycling programme, a charge on single-use plastic bags, and a beverage container deposit system. This Green Paper will review options and examine the costs and potential environmental and economic benefits for the island.

### INVESTING IN THE GREEN ECONOMY

#### Your next PLP Government will:

- Embrace private sector investments to develop large-scale generation of alternative energy, be it water, wind or solar technology.
- Ensure energy equality by assisting those on fixed incomes to reduce their energy costs through supporting reduced interest loans for installing energy-efficient technologies and solar panels for energy production.
- Take the lead in investing in the Green Economy by outfitting government buildings with renewable energy generation technologies, enabling the government to become a net producer of energy, thus saving it \$20 million annually. The PLP will also convert the government's fleet of light vehicles to hybrid and electric vehicles.









THE PROGRESSIVE LABOUR PARTY  
PLATFORM 2017



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