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Our Vision

The NDPs Manifesto, influenced by its core principles, its commitment to service to the people of the BVI, as well as its ongoing plans for recovery and development provides a strong framework for delivering its Vision for BVI, where:-

“BVI will be a thriving, prosperous and united society, underpinned by a robust economy, healthy populace, fully developed human capacity, modern and resilient infrastructure, protected and productive environment and transparent and accountable governance”
Commitment of Service

Desirous of building a more effective and meaningful partnership with the people of the Virgin Islands for the continued peace, sustainable development and increased prosperity of our beloved Territory, the National Democratic Party hereby commits to the core principles in the following eight undertakings for the more efficient conduct of the people's business and to build confidence that government is working in the public's interest.

This Commitment of Service for better governance and government is the product of a painstaking review of our philosophy of politics, our original purpose and mission in the context of the changing needs of the people of the Virgin Islands in a changing domestic and global environment. The review formed an integral part of a continuing process of organizational renewal as the leadership of our party transitions from an older to a younger generation.

With the NDP's decision to take a more long term approach to development that will be reflected in our updated policy platforms, this Commitment of Service articulates the basis of a more engaged relationship with key stakeholders and the people of the Virgin Islands as we move forward together as one people towards the third decade of the 21st Century and beyond. This Commitment is yet another example of the innovation which the NDP has brought to BVI politics since its debut back in 1998.
Through this Commitment of Service with the people of the Virgin Islands, the National Democratic Party hereby declares that it stands for the following:

1. Building a strong and vibrant economy, capable of generating high levels of growth, with the benefits to be fairly shared among the people of the Virgin Islands and support a continued high standard of living for our people as the just reward for their efforts.

2. An inclusive approach to politics where emphasis is placed on consensus-building that brings our people together in the noble endeavor of national development, instead of dwelling on differences which only promote discord, division and undermine cooperation in the national interest.

3. Respect for democracy. We believe that if democracy is to have more meaning to the average citizen beyond the two-minute exercise of voting every four years, there must be an expansion of opportunities for people’s genuine participation in the business of government, especially through ideas and suggestions that inform the development of public policy.

4. Good Governance based on Respect for the Rule of Law, Honesty, Integrity, Transparency, Accountability and seeing these core values reflected in the conduct of public officials, both elected and appointed, as the cornerstone of efficient, responsive and responsible government.

5. Visionary Government which is people-centered, solutions-driven and geared towards the delivery of better results. To reform and render government “fit for purpose” today in the fundamentally different environment of the 21st Century, reconfiguration is necessary to ensure greater responsiveness to the needs of citizens.

6. Patriotism which speaks to genuine devotion and love of country, putting the best interests of Virgin Islanders and Belongers first in every consideration, and defending and preserving traditional aspects of Virgin Islands culture and heritage which make us who we are, define our way of life and differentiate us from the rest of the world.

7. Unity. We support unity among all the people who call these islands home, because we all share a common interest in the continued success of the Virgin Islands. We see uniting our people as the basis of social cohesion for the peaceful and orderly development of our Territory through deep respect for human rights, multi-ethnicity, non-discrimination and protection of vulnerable and marginalized groups.

8. Balanced development. Such occurs from a philosophical understanding that development of the economy must ultimately be for the benefit of the society and its people. It is about the pursuit of the Biblical ideal of the just society where people’s happiness comes through fair access to public services for fulfillment of their developmental needs such as education, health care, sanitation, a clean and healthy environment, access to justice and good infrastructure. When a strong economy supports a strong society, no one who is focused on improving his or her life is really left behind.

We, the leadership of the National Democratic Party, solemnly pledge to abide by these commitments, formally adopted on Monday, the 10th day of December in the Year of Our Lord 2018, with the overriding objective of harnessing the talents, skills and energies of all of our people and applying them in building a thriving society.
BETTER, STRONGER TOGETHER

A Message
From Our Chairman

It is a great honour to be leading a renewed, refocused and re-energized National Democratic Party in the 2019 General Election as we seek a renewal of your mandate to continue building a better, stronger future for all who proudly call these Virgin Islands home.

This realistic, practical and doable platform represents our road map for taking the Virgin Islands to the next level of development in an increasingly complex and challenging 21st Century global environment. Our manifesto, takes us beyond 4 years. It builds on NDP’s successful track record of transformation and modernization, and sets out a development agenda which will be the springboard to our longer term development aspirations over the next 20 years or more.

The 2019 General Election finds the Virgin Islands at a crossroads on its development journey. After the harrowing experience of devastation by three natural disasters in 2017, our Territory today is showing encouraging signs of a rebound. Our comprehensive Recovery to Development Plan is beginning to bear fruit but it needs to be fully implemented for its true potential to be realized. I believe that in order to deliver on our core principles and our promise for a better, stronger future; our horizon must be long term. The core work that has been started with the recovery to development plan will lay a strong foundation for the more important work to be undertaken through a National Development Strategy.

The 2019 General Election is also taking place at a time when small countries face an increasing threat of marginalization as a result of sweeping technological, economic and other changes on a global scale that are fundamentally rewriting the rules of business, trade and other forms of human interaction.

These issues make the task of governing a lot more challenging today than in years gone by. For this reason, visionary and transformational leadership within all levels of government is needed now more than ever to effectively navigate these challenges. To make a difference, it is no longer sufficient for elected representatives to have only a grasp of local issues. Because so much at the domestic level is being shaped by the external forces of globalization, we also must have a good understanding of these global issues and demonstrate confidence and competence in our ability to engage the outside world.

Team NDP 2019 comprises well-rounded and talented men and women who are ready, willing, able and excited about taking the Virgin Islands to the next level of growth, development and prosperity. I am proud to be their leader. Just as I was able as minister to transform the education sector over the last eight years, I am asking you for the opportunity to, along with my team do the same with respect to the future of our Territory.

The 2019 General Election will determine who leads the Territory on its most critical development path. At this time, continuity is critical as the economy is poised to make a steady shift from the present post-disaster recovery and reconstruction mode to sustainable growth over the medium to long term. Now, therefore, is not the time to gamble with the future.

The NDP offers continuity and stability which are so critical to promoting investor confidence and economic growth. With the NDP, your future is in safe, secure and competent hands. I urge you to go out on Election Day, vote solidly for the candidates of the new NDP and help make the Virgin Islands “better, stronger together!”

Myron V. Walwyn
It is a great honour to be leading a renewed, refocused and re-energized National Democratic Party in the 2019 General Election as we seek a renewal of your mandate to continue building a better, stronger future for all who proudly call these Virgin Islands home.
VOTE TEAM NDP, ALL THE WAY!
A National Strategic Development Perspective

The absence of a National Strategic Development Plan has long been identified as a key impediment to BVI’s sustained development. As a result, the basis of our development as a Territory has been largely influenced by the ebb and flow of partisan politics and visions over the past several decades.

Recognizing this challenge and, fully appreciating that national strategic planning is critical to the sustainable long term development of our Territory, a re-elected NDP shall ensure the development of a national strategic plan as an overriding priority.

Through long term national planning, a re-elected NDP Government shall ensure that we set a vision for who we aspire to be as a Territory, and that the plan provides a framework and the implementation modalities for achieving that vision.

Critically, a re-elected NDP Government shall ensure that the plan is developed by, and in consultation with the people of the Territory; seeks and receives legislative and political support, and that it builds on the some of the already excellent work being undertaken such as the Recovery and Development Plan, as well as other sectorial plans (Tourism, Financial Services, Environment, Renewables etc.)

A re-elected NDP Government shall aim to deliver the national strategic development plan for the Territory within the first year of being re-elected to Office that speaks to the Development of Vision 2040 (BVI post Irma/Maria); what the Virgin Islands should look like/ will be in 10 years’ time and all development and spending plans falling in line with that vision.
A Better Stronger Economy

The National Democratic Party recognizes that economic growth is critical for the creation and expansion of a country’s wealth; as well as for a government to deliver on the expectation of every citizen to see a continuous improvement in his or her quality of life.

Growth, however, is not the product of wishful thinking. It flows from purposeful government action aimed at creating an enabling environment which generates confidence and motivates the private sector to invest in productive activity in the performance of its role as engine of economic growth.

As we seek to grow our economy, a re-elected NDP government shall function as a facilitator of business activity and will pursue the achievement of a consistently high level of growth as its number one objective for the economy. This will be done through a policy framework which promotes confidence and creates the enabling environment for a thriving economy.

A re-elected NDP Government’s sectoral focus for growing the economy will be on tourism, financial services, construction, entrepreneurship and innovation, small business development and fishing and agriculture.
A re-elected NDP shall aim to grow the Territory’s economy by ensuring that:

- Our world leading position in tourism is maintained and improved by enhancing visitor experience, hospitality standards, accommodations and overall tourism product, remaining the premier yachting destination by providing incentives for its growth and efficient operation.

- Our world leading position in financial services is maintained and improved and that we become the leading facilitator of global finance, and that we diversify our financial services and its subsectors; and develop economic substance by bringing brick and mortar business activities to our shores.

- The economy is diversified by investing in new economic sectors (including fishing and agriculture) and supporting new emerging ones (construction and renewable energy) that will contribute to growth and employment.

- We encourage and facilitate entrepreneurship and innovation.

- We establish an enabling environment for business development centered on efficiency, streamlined procedures, efficient support services and technology; and a highly skilled and productive workforce.

- Support and incentives are provided to banking institutions to re-establish banking services on Virgin Gorda. In the interim, shall mandate all banks to explore the feasibility of establishing banking services on the Sister Islands as a priority.

- An appropriate level of public investment is made in a telecommunications infrastructure to deliver on the Territories objective of greater capacity, speed, reliability, resiliency and low costs.
Tourism

Tourism is the lifeblood of the Virgin Islands economy and offers the greatest scope to drive an immediate economic expansion compared with the other sectors. Moreover, it is the sector that offers the most solid, reliable and realistic prospects for long term economic growth. For this reason, continuing with the development and implementation of a National Tourism Strategic Plan is of utmost priority.

We shall ensure that prior to the end of 2019, the Territory has a comprehensive national Tourism strategy that will provide the road map and an implementation plan to deliver growth and transformation in this sector for all BVI Islanders.

Meantime, consultation involving all tourism stakeholders, relevant government ministries as well as the general public is required. Completion and implementation of the plan will ensure that government, key stakeholders and the general public work cohesively in support of the sustainability of tourism over the next 10 years.

In support of the continued success of tourism, a re-elected NDP government will, among other things:

- Establish a full-fledged Ministry of Tourism.
- Increase the annual subvention to the BVI Tourist Board to support promotion and marketing.
- Enhance existing tourism products and provide incentives for diversification through the development of new products/businesses in the following areas:
  - Eco Tourism
  - Adventure Tourism
  - Sports Tourism
  - Culinary Tourism
  - Medical tourism
  - Arts and Cultural Festivals
- Identify key tourism zones/areas and commission the development of separate master plans for these areas with significant private sector and community input.
- Review the current investment strategy for tourism-related ventures to attract targeted investments including resorts, hotels, inns, guesthouses, mixed-use developments, villas, restaurants, attractions/tours, transportation, shopping and yachting services.
- Require that investment strategies include avenues for the education of BVI Islanders as well as the adoption of tourism-related attractions and beaches to aid in their funding and beautification.
- Enhance Community Tourism where certain villages will be uniquely themed, and a relevant development plan established.
- Encourage tourism investment in the hotel sector by streamlining the Hotel Aid policy and procedures.
- Encourage tourism investment in the marine sector by creating a Yachting Aid policy; and provide specific focus for locals to participate more meaningfully in this sector through both ownership and employment.
- Establish a ‘one-stop-shop’ to expedite business permissions in the marine sector.
- Review and align laws to facilitate “one-stop-shop” initiative.
- Introduce service standards for all hospitality businesses that are of a global standard.
- Improving air and sea access to first world standard, as well as to facilitate a more convenient way for visitors (repeat and new) to get to the Virgin Islands from the major source markets.
Financial Services

Our financial services have grown exponentially over the last 35 years to the extent that at least 75 cents out of every dollar the Territory earns today is attributable to this sector. Despite the strong headwinds of change dictated by international standard setters, the sector remains strong and well entrenched in our economy. Our strategic objective is for financial services to continue to fuel our development, especially social and infrastructure, and create new employment.

A re-elected NDP recognizes that there must be a fundamental shift in the value proposition so that the BVI remains in sync with the international standard setters. Although BVI companies are based on legal substance, there is an insistence in the European Union that BVI entities show physical substance, i.e. bricks, mortar and employment. The current NDP Government has met and overcome many challenges. These new challenges will be no different.

The EU requirement for substance presents an opportunity on which we must capitalize but, more importantly, it presents greater opportunities for the people of this territory. A re-elected NDP recognizes that this development presents the opportunity to put into place most of the recommendations of the McKinsey Report of 2014 as they relate to adding value to our offerings.

Developing facilities like a special economic zone for knowledge-based industries shall receive priority. The objective is to develop this Territory into an innovative, entrepreneurial technology hub benefiting from a tax-exempt environment. This will mean stripping away the red-tape and financial constraints normally associated with setting up a BVI company with a physical presence. The special economic zone will enable international companies to easily and cost-effectively set up offices with staff on the ground, have a genuine offshore physical presence and generate active business income in the BVI.
A re-elected NDP recognizes that a special economic zone is a natural offshoot of the territory's international business operations. Companies across the globe in the Internet & Technology sector, in Media, Marketing and Film, in the Bio-tech and Life Science industries, and in Commodities and Derivatives should find BVI to be a natural choice to establish their businesses as part of their global tax mitigation and expansion strategies. A strong promotional push for these types of activities will be made.

A re-elected NDP recognizes that responding to the new requirements of the international standard setters is vital to the strength of our jurisdiction and the livelihood of our community. It will require all of us - the people of BVI, government and industry - to band together and prioritize our long-term future. A re-elected NDP is committed to seeing through the implementation of these efforts, as the current government has already started acting on many of the recommendations.

A re-elected NDP recognizes that in a time of political and economic uncertainty across multiple markets, BVI shall remain focused on promoting our role within the global economy. Specifically, a re-elected NDP shall look at how BVI can support UK businesses in a post-Brexit world by leveraging our international relationships with key strategic partners in Asia and Africa. More widely, a re-elected NDP shall also look for our own opportunities in new markets to further strengthen our global economic position.

Among other things, a re-elected NDP Government shall:

- Continue to secure the integrity and credibility of BVI within all relevant international institutions and commercial organizations whilst at the same time reinvigorating our reputation as a well-regulated finance and business centre of substance.
- Promote the jurisdiction in all relevant markets based on sound, evidence-based research, alliance building and product development.
- Continue to bring immigration and labour policies and processes in line with international best practices to attract and retain the necessary skilled labour that will be needed to broaden into and sustain a substantive offering.
- Ensure that the core business of company incorporations remains solid while adding value to this business in every way, including the establishment of family offices that will create further investment and employment.
- Give priority to investment in sound infrastructure and seamless telecommunications.
- Attract more ultra-high net worth individuals by providing products that would make the jurisdiction more attractive.
- Expand our marketing efforts to reach more clients in Latin America and Africa.
- Introduce "sandbox" regulations in order to provide a flexible and appropriate regulatory regime that will facilitate the development of innovative financial sub-sectors such as fin-tech.
Construction

Construction is officially recognized in most countries as a major contributor to economic activity and overall national output. However, the approach in BVI has been rather ad hoc and informal, hindering the industry in various ways from developing its true potential.

As we look to further transform and modernize the economy, the National Democratic Party believes that the time has come for construction to be officially recognized as an industry and also regulate it appropriately. This will allow, among other things, for the industry’s economic contribution to be more accurately reflected.

Among other things, a re-elected NDP Government shall:

- Provide for the effective regulation of the industry through the Construction Association to safeguard against unscrupulous practices.
- Require competency-based certification for contractors and contracting firms.
- Require competency-based assessments of construction workers and linking their skill level to an industry-agreed pay scale.
- Review the existing Hotel Aid Ordinance and other policies that grant tax breaks and incentives to investors, by allowing any expenditures that are made through local suppliers by the hotel aid recipient to be also tax free.
- Require all builders involved in public procurement to set aside a percentage of their revenue for supporting the training and development of trade persons.
- Provide for greater enforcement of construction firms and workers making necessary statutory deductions and payments.
Business Development

In the modern market economy, business is assigned the pivotal role of engine of economic growth. Through the production of goods and services for sale to consumers, businesses create wealth for their shareholders and contribute to generating prosperity at a national level.

The NDP’s vision is for the development of BVI into a thriving business centre with a good mix of indigenous and international companies. A re-elected NDP will give special attention to promoting increased indigenous ownership of companies. By facilitating more BVI Islanders to go into business, the NDP believes its strategic goal of economic empowerment can be advanced on another level.

To promote business development and entrepreneurship, a re-elected NDP Government shall, among other things:

- Re-establish the Economic Advisory Council comprising representatives of government, the private sector and civil society to advise on key aspects of economic and development policy.
- Create a Business Development Advisory Board comprising leaders of industry in BVI to provide advice, ideas and support for an integrated approach to business development.
- Introduce within the Ministry for economic development a stronger mandate for business development via the addition of senior level officials who will be responsible for coordinating all business development initiatives.
- Identify new sectors and sub-sectors for business development - fin-tech, fishing, innovative tourism, and create the enabling environment -- legislation, policy, procedures -- to foster these areas.
- Develop and introduce new “all business” incentive legislation that gives varying benefits to qualifying business in qualifying sectors.
- Implement a resident by investment policy to incentivize qualifying persons to invest in BVI.

- Set up an independent (from Government) business bureau to run a more successful version of the small business bureau/loan programme.
- Streamline business licensing and other governmental approvals to create greater efficiency and ease of doing business in BVI, while maintaining necessary regulatory and other controls to protect BVI and BVI Islanders.
- Create a dossier of local businesses that the government could use to introduce to investors and developers so that these businesses could offer and promote their services.
- Implement the National Trade and Investment Policy
- Finalize and implement consumer protection legislation in order to prevent unfair business practices and protect customers;
- Convene a committee of business persons on the Sister Islands to explore ways of easing the financial burdens on those businesses, given that they have higher operating costs than on Tortola.
Entrepreneurship

Recognizing the need to continuously drive that innate entrepreneurial spirit, a re-elected NDP shall:

- Partner with the private sector (MWM’s Business Network, Branson Institute, Richardson Foundation) through a formal Memorandum of Understanding to promote a more national reach for existing entrepreneurship programmes and channel entrepreneurs to and through these programmes.
- Partner with other private sector organizations to create new entrepreneurship programmes that are industry specific.
- Enhance the mandate of the Trade Department to require a greater focus on putting laws, policies, and procedures in place to facilitate entrepreneurship.
- Synergize existing programmes such as YES, Small Business Bureau, and Incubator to support the growth and development of young BVI entrepreneurs.
- Expand the current innovative incubator programme in partnership with the private sector to provide:
  - Additional office work space for entrepreneurs
  - Physical space, including warehousing and buildings, for small businesses.
  - Low cost or marginal rent for the conduct of business in defined areas.
  - Support services (training, technical, financial etc.)
- Establish an Innovative Business Lab to provide support to help entrepreneurs materialize and conceptualize their business ideas.
- Develop an “access to capital programme” through partnerships with banks, donor agencies, negotiation of lower rates, microfinance programme.
- Develop an incentive programme inclusive of duty breaks, tax holidays for business that start up in innovative sectors, utilize green technology, or provide ancillary services to targeted sectors.
- Mainstream concept of entrepreneurship into school curricula to ensure students master basic skills necessary to become entrepreneurs.

Fishing & Agriculture

As tourism and financial services emerged as the two main sectors of the BVI economy, the contribution of agriculture simultaneously declined. However, an important lesson from the major disruption following the three natural disasters in 2017, is that food security should not be taken for granted.

A re-elected NDP Government shall pursue policies to promote the revitalization and transformation of farming and fishing based on modern concepts. The objective is to ensure that as much as possible, a large portion of what we consume is locally produced; and that farming and fishing become larger contributors to our economy.

Accordingly, a re-elected NDP shall:

- Merge the Departments of Agriculture and Fisheries to create administrative, operational and policy synergies that would help with the sectors’ development.
- Transform the function of the divisions to be primarily policy, licensing, supervisory, regulatory and enforcement.
- Encourage and support the creation of properly functioning and well-resourced farming and fishing co-ops that are private sector-led to manage the commercial and entrepreneurial facets of the sectors.
- Provide or support the provision of incentives and hard assets, business assets and equipment to farmers and fisher folk.
- Seek the involvement of industry stakeholders to consider the introduction of micro-insurance for farmers and fisher folk as a means of improving protection against man-made and natural disasters.
- Review current legislation and regulations governing the fisheries sector to address identified gaps and meet international standards;
- Review current laws and regulations regarding the importation of pesticides and agricultural products, use of genetically modified seeds and plants, and plant quarantine methods.
- Encourage private sector participation in greenhouse technology, as well as provide for the training of traditional farmers in innovative farming techniques.
- Review the impact of diversifying the agriculture industry by exploring other cash crops, understanding new techniques such as through a study on cultivating and marketing cannabis for medicinal purposes, and promoting the use of organic farming, etc.
Provide guidance and incentives for the development of sports fishing and larger scale commercial fishing opportunities.

Re-establish “farmers market” in a centralized and structured location.

Provide incentives and subsidies to farmers, as well as access to land and, a reliable supply of water.

Digital Economy

Our world has experienced three great revolutions that propelled mankind forward, created great corporations and wealthy individuals, improved our cumulative health and increased our lifespan. The three industrial revolutions, driven respectively by steam power, science and the rise of digital technology, forever changed mankind. The world today is on the threshold of a fourth industrial revolution -- digital transformation.

Digital transformation facilitates large scale and sweeping impact across many industries that, in turn, drive all areas of a country's economy - from essential utilities to cutting edge technologies. One of the key results of digital transformation is the creation of new jobs that never existed before. A re-elected NDP Government will continue to drive such transformation and facilitate a digital revolution in our country.

A re-elected NDP shall achieve this through the following areas:

- Provide the residential and business sectors with access to consistent and quality broadband connection through partnership with the telecom providers and government taking the lead where necessary.
- Establish an Internet Exchange Point (IXP) between the telecom service providers to facilitate the efficient routing of internet traffic locally. This will better serve e-commerce and the routing of all local traffic.
- Continue the move to E-government by making public services available digitally, making it easy for persons to access these services and pay bills online.
- Create the policy framework for the growth of new technologically driven sectors in the economy. For example, Fintech and Data Analytics.
- Ensure that the people of the Virgin Islands are adequately prepared for the new economy.
- Enact legislation to facilitate an economic zone for ICT companies and green technology so as to give the Virgin Islands access to world leading innovators and talent.
- Enact already drafted data protection legislation to protect the privacy of the personal information of our citizens.
Human Resource Development

The NDP believes that a country’s people are its most precious asset. As people make things happen in an economy, ensuring that they are fully equipped with the necessary skills is critical to promoting sustainable growth.

BVIslanders are at the centre of the NDP’s plan to build a better, stronger economy and society. Accordingly, a re-elected NDP shall pursue a comprehensive human resources development (HRD) strategy to provide more opportunities for our people to become the best that they can be, not only in their chosen fields of work, but also to become well-rounded citizens who are confident and capable of competing with the rest of the world.

Our HRD strategy draws on extensive research conducted by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) across the region. Covering from early childhood education, primary and secondary school, college and university, technical and vocational education to life-long learning, the strategy will place emphasis on developing skills which will be in increasing demand in a changing economy.

A key objective of the HRD strategy is empowering BVIslanders to take a bigger and more direct role in charting the future course of our country instead of feeling sidelined in the national development process because of a lack of opportunities.

Under the HRD strategy, a re-elected NDP Government shall, among other things:

- Consider the implementation of a regional programme hosting virtual education and training in tourism and hospitality at the Marine Centre of the HLSCC, in collaboration with the Eastern Caribbean Tourism Institute.
- Review the tourism-related programme offerings at the HLSCC to ensure the needs of this sector are met, including revitalizing the culinary arts and hospitality programme with the addition of a tourism specific element.
- Review and, where necessary, expand current offerings in technical education and training with a view to making them more relevant to the development needs of the country.
- Explore the feasibility of establishing a trade school either as a stand-alone or as an add-on to the HLSCC.
- Provide support to facilitate workplace skills learning in small, micro and medium enterprises and to self-employed persons.
- Increase enrolment in Tertiary Education addressing special vulnerabilities and other socio-economic needs.
Education

The NDP recognizes that achieving meaningful improvements in education is critical to enhancing workforce productivity, global competitiveness, and innovation. Thus, building a globally competitive education system is a critical determinant of economic growth and prosperity within the Territory. The NDP’s Education Strategy takes cognizance of certain key education principles for sustainable development.

- **Inclusiveness** that places emphasis on the provision of educational opportunities for the broadest range of learners, including those with differing abilities who need special learning contexts;

- **Equitable provisions** that call for a diversity of educational opportunities appropriate for learners who have differing learning styles and/or who may not be able to learn effectively in the traditional classroom governed by teacher talk;

- **Quality and excellence** that include total quality management in HRD sectors including teaching and leadership innovation and effectiveness, competency-based curricula addressing 21st Century literacies and skills and linkages to the workplace and the community, availability of adequate educational and institutional resources, and quality assurance and certification of skills, competencies and attitudes;

- **Lifelong learning** that advocates for the availability of educational opportunities for adults, members of the workforce, second chance learners and those who decide to return to learning after the traditional school age.

The NDP’s vision is for all citizens, at every stage of their learning journey, from early childhood to adulthood, to be able to reach their full potential and be successful in life, at work and in society; with the goal being for every citizen, to be able to contribute to the socio-economic advancement of the Territory through a quality education system that enables learners of all ages to reach their true potential.

The plans to achieve this vision and goal for education in the Territory require a dedicated focus in the following areas:

- Improving the quality and accountability of leadership and management:
  - Qualified leaders are in place across the education system and are supported by Boards (where applicable).
  - Revised legislation, knowledge management and accountability frameworks that devolve decision making to schools.
  - Education leaders, managers and aspiring leaders have access to continuing professional development.
  - Additional office work space for entrepreneurs.
- Improving the quality and accountability of leadership and management:
  - Qualified leaders are in place across the education system and are supported by Boards (where applicable)
  - Revised legislation, knowledge management and accountability frameworks that devolve decision making to schools.
  - Education leaders, managers and aspiring leaders have access to continuing professional development.
  - Additional office work space for entrepreneurs

- Improve teachers’ professional development
  - Improved teacher quality.
  - Pre-service training and professional development programmes are in place for all prospective and in-service teachers and teacher trainers respectively, relevant to each stage of their career.
  - Regular and systematic teacher appraisal operates in conjunction with established teacher professional standards.
  - Establish a BVI Teacher Education Institute at HLSCC.
  - Continue the licensure programme for principals and expand it to include all teachers.

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning
  - Learners are engaged with all learning and their expectations met.
  - Achievement levels are significantly improved; all learners attain required levels of literacy, numeracy and technological skills, and are equipped to use relevant competencies at school, at college, at home and for future work.

- Improve curriculum and strategies for assessment
  - Primary school curricula, teaching and learning incorporate exploratory learning experiences that develop basic technical competencies and an appreciation for the world of work.
  - Competency-based curricula linked to the CVQ framework established across secondary and tertiary education and in all other educational settings in work and in community.
  - A Qualification Framework established that enables learners to move seamlessly between academic and vocational qualifications in formal and informal educational settings.
  - Introduce STEM curricula.

In addition to the aforementioned plans, several important development issues are identified as cross-cutting themes. These are:
- Improving achievement levels in the core subjects of literacy, numeracy and technology.
- Integrating technology in the classroom and in education (Smartboards in all classrooms by 2023).
- Reviewing existing multiple curricular pathways for learners in schools.
- Improving student support services to learners in schools.
- Increasing skills offerings for youth and adults.
- Increasing support for disability and special learning needs in the normal classroom environment; and
- Providing second chance learning or alternative learning options for out-of-school youth and adults.
- Partnering with telecom companies to ensure 100% Wi-Fi coverage at every educational institution in BVI

Additionally, a re-elected NDP government shall:
- Complete the rebuilding of the L block of the Elmore Stoutt High School which is currently out for bids.
- Complete the rebuilding of all primary schools by the end of 2019.
As a people-focused government, the NDP has been always conscious of issues that stand in the way of working people enjoying a continuous improvement in their standard of living.

Cabinet approved the transformation and renaming of the Labour Department to “Labour Department and Workforce Development” to be more reflective of today’s BVI worker needs. Accordingly, in this new term, attention will be given to bringing relief through action on the following issues.

- Review and reform of the payroll tax system to take into consideration the existing realities of our populace to reflect the differing cost of living, in particular on the Sister Islands.
- Bolster BVIIslander financial services talent to sustain the industry in the long term, and create more opportunities for BVIIslanders to enter and contribute to the industry starting immediately.
- Expand the scope of employment creation and employability skills for the Territory’s youth in the blue, green and orange economies so we have a sustained cadre of skilled youth to keep the economy active and progressive.
- Mandate HLSCC to introduce programmes as part of a mandatory requirement for front-line persons in the workforce (public and private sector), customer service training and other related programmes.
- Make further investments in the Ministry of Education and Culture’s Apprenticeship Programme and Youth Employment Services.
- Empower BVIIslanders through access to more education and training opportunities for personal and professional development in preparation for an increasingly greater role in contributing to and sharing in the country’s success.
- Expand the availability of government scholarship opportunities for BVIIslanders beyond first degrees, as is currently the case, to post-graduate studies right up to master’s degree and doctorate level.
- Examine and introduce the long overdue need to implement an unemployment benefits programme, that would be intended to assist workers, particularly those in such industries like tourism and financial services that are vulnerable to external forces beyond our control, to compensate workers, in particular, for their loss of income, should they become unemployed.
Health And Quality Of Life

The NDP’s philosophy underpinning Healthcare Services is based on internationally accepted principles: access to care for all, solidarity through medical insurance (which is compulsory for all and available to all) and high-quality healthcare services.

A re-elected NDP is committed to delivering the Government’s health reforms under the health plan based on key factors and supported by major initiatives including:

- Supporting the BVIHSA in the delivery of high-quality services across all four equally important domains of (i) access to services, (ii) the quality and safety of those services, (iii) doing this within the financial resources available and (iv) effectively harnessing the efforts of the workforce. This will call for better planning, including strategic workforce planning, and leadership development.

- Developing medical tourism as an economic pillar, by accelerating current plans to provide services for specialist healthcare to be conducted in BVI.

- Recognizing the need to support and partner with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that contribute to health system improvement.

- Re-examining the National Health Insurance (NHI) Scheme to ensure its sustainability and to ensure the objectives of the NHI Scheme for universal access of care is met and, where necessary, make adjustments.

- Strengthening the Virgin Islands’ healthcare legislative and policy framework by adopting a holistic, evidence-based approach which involves public consultation, current situation, regulatory analysis and priority setting as well as the promotion of evidence-informed policy making.

- Recognizing that patient safety is a top priority and underpins all of the NDP’s administration’s health policy and service delivery work. A re-elected NDP shall provide through systems of licensing, clinical effectiveness, focused patient safety initiatives, indemnity and competence assurance, a major programme of patient safety reforms.

- Increasing the availability of a well-equipped healthcare workforce in BVI. A re-elected NDP recognizes that to ensure the delivery of quality healthcare, the greatest asset is an engaged, empowered and well-equipped workforce with employees who have competencies, tools and opportunities to succeed in the pursuit of excellence in programme and service delivery. Access to such human resources is critical to achieving this goal and one of the key priorities is attracting, retaining and developing top talent.

- Investing in the improvement of a more robust primary healthcare system. A re-elected NDP recognizes that the strategies to improve the current system involves the prioritizing and development of comprehensive primary care services as a fundamental building block of a new, more integrated model of health and social care.

- Review and improvement of existing primary health systems policies that are related to essential drugs, technology, quality control, human resources and accreditation.

- Implement policies and initiatives that seek to promote healthy individual behaviours and lifestyles, tackle hygiene and broader determinants of health and the importance of health screening.

- Promoting the provision of necessary infrastructural capacity to support the delivery of more comprehensive and integrated primary care services.

- Improvement of chronic disease management in primary care.

- Examining the expansion of the role of the community pharmacy in managing the health of patients.

- Retrofitting community clinics to support a more advanced delivery of care in which the upgrade and expansion of community clinics are key elements towards improving the performance of the health-care delivery system and the creation of a client-centric health-care environment.

- Clinics will therefore be expanded in areas of high, unmet health needs, including communities with poor access to health services.

- Extend community clinic hours.

- Operationalize and fast track the outfitting of the Iris O’Neal Clinic on Virgin Gorda.

- Prioritizing mental health and preventative health as critical in that prevention and early intervention are key to minimizing the prevalence and incidence of poor mental health as well as the severity and lifetime impact of mental disorders and mental illnesses.
Building An Inclusive Community

Pride And Cultural Identity

The NDP recognizes the importance of embracing and showcasing the diversity of our cultural identity and heritage, by developing and promoting our culture, history and traditions and cultivating our talent, arts, sports and creative industries.

In this regard, a re-elected NDP shall review current structures with a view to establishing a statutory body that would be legally and materially responsible for culture and the arts. This body will support the development of artists and the arts, manage and oversee all cultural festivals, commission artistic and cultural work, and foster an appreciation of BVI culture and art through education campaigns, public lectures, marketing, and its programming.

A re-elected NDP shall also establish another separate statutory body that would be legally and materially responsible for historical and heritage sites, museums, and monuments. This heritage trust will manage cultural assets/tangible heritage, oversee policies and legislation, facilitate public-private partnerships, and secure the accuracy of the way BVI’s history is interpreted throughout the territory through training and tours of all kinds.

Additionally, a re-elected NDP shall institute programmes and classes on BVI culture for persons desirous of making BVI their home.

Accordingly, the following specific actions shall be undertaken:
- Establish a BVI Foundation for Arts and Culture.
- Establish a BVI Heritage Trust.
- Draft a Cultural and Heritage Development Strategic Plan.
- Create Culture and Heritage Policies.
- Continue the good works of the Festival and Fairs Committee.
- Establish a National Museum and Gallery.
- Complete the Historical Register.

A re-elected NDP shall seek public input in the development of a national mall-cultural park, as well as defining what it means to be a Virgin Islander as we seek to promote pride and unity.
Youth

The NDP recognizes that our youth have the ability to find creative solutions, propose new innovations and provide fresh and dynamic ideas. Indeed, our youth have a key role to play in leading this stage of Recovery and Development in the Territory.

A re-elected NDP shall continue its decade-long policy of acquiring land for resale to young Virgin Islanders to stabilize the cost of housing and development and provide access for more persons to own land and property.

A re-elected NDP shall also continue to provide opportunities for training and development in order to prepare our youth to take up their roles and advance the Territory.

Programmes:

- Modern and rights-based reforms to meet the needs of our Territory, especially for justice-involved youth, through providing a Centre to manage the transformational and learning needs of young men and women who find themselves in conflict with the law; and developing a dedicated Second Chance programme for youth who have been justice-involved that offers a comprehensive range of inter-linking supports across all sectors so they can transform their behaviours and lives, re-enter society and contribute meaningfully to the Territory.

- Establishment of a Youth Centre and Approved Safe Space for youth to lead, innovate and participate in virtual and other programmes that channel their talents, and support their development in a myriad of areas.

- Development of a Youth Entrepreneurship Policy and Ecosystem to make it easier for young people to own and operate businesses, to have access to training, mentorship and essential physical spaces and imbedded utilities required to grow their business in a responsive environment, and to benefit from secure financing services. This Policy will extend to active entrepreneurship education through after-school programmes for school-aged children to enhance business opportunities and economic development in a niche area, and provide safe, secure and creative environments for students after school.

- Implementation of an Annual Youth Achievement programme where young people who contribute to achieving territorial goals and the Sustainable Development Goals - the SDG 2030 Agenda -- in innovative ways in their schools, communities, and other spaces, will be eligible for National Awards.

- Enhance the overall environment for young people to be further valued and central to our decision-making processes in social, economic and political spheres including through:
  
  - Financial and technical supports to enhance youth governance and young people's management of development and decision-making.
  - The establishment of a National Youth Advisory Council which, among other things, shall meet with the Government caucus on a quarterly basis on issues affecting youth.
  - Development of a National Youth Ambassadors Corp.
  - Young capacity building and certification as peer trainers in a range of settings.
  - Providing opportunities to represent the Territory regionally and globally on platforms relating to our sustainable development.
  - Updating the Virgin Islands National Youth Policy and Action Plan.
  - Continued strengthening of the capacity of the Department of Youth Affairs and Sports to service the needs of BVI youth.
  - Implement a State of Youth Survey as a critical youth-led data gathering investment that will lead to the design of a 5-year strategic vision plan that effectively integrates the issues of youth in all sectors of development.
Sports

A re-elected NDP shall, consistent with international trends, implement the two broad dimensions of contemporary sport:

1. Total Participation in Sport (TPS)
2. High Performance Sport (HPS)

The term “Total Participation in Sport” is based on the “Sport for All” concept in which all sectors of the society - children, youth, adults, senior citizens and the specially challenged, regardless of gender, ethnicity or religion - are encouraged to be involved in an active lifestyle. It is one of the building blocks on which a successful sport development programme is framed. Total Participation in Sport (TPS), by its very nature, therefore is all embracing since it focuses on all.

On the other hand, the term “High Performance Sport” refers to “Competitive sport organized in accordance with International Federations and Olympic Committee rules and conditions at national or international level to determine winners”.

High Performance Sport (HPS), by its very nature, therefore, tends to focus on an elite set of athletes. In light of the increasing scientific and competitive nature of HPS over the last two decades, a re-elected NDP shall give special consideration to our elite athletes if they are to develop and compete successfully on the world stage.

In making provisions for these two broad areas of sporting activity, a re-elected NDP shall provide for the under-noted objectives:

- To develop a healthy, disciplined, united and productive society through greater participation
- In sport and physical recreation by all members of the society. In this regard, special opportunities are to be made available to children, young people, women, girls, senior citizens and the specially challenged.
- To actively encourage the establishment of Physical Education Programmes at all educational levels and to foster the sport development phase of these programmes through the provision of sport coaching programmes throughout the education system.
- To provide opportunities for the fulfillment of the social, psychological, emotional and physiological needs of the individual through sport and physical recreation.
- To strive to attain excellence at the highest level of sporting competition, develop national pride and patriotism.
- To promote and facilitate the development of sport as an industry that will contribute to the earning capacity of the individual as well as the national economy.

- To put in place a specific policy regarding rewards for our elite athletes based on their level of success in international competition.

A re-elected NDP shall complete the full redevelopment of A.O. Shirley Recreation Grounds by 2020, as well as restore the other recreational grounds throughout the various communities that were damaged by the natural disasters of 2017.

A re-elected NDP shall equip our national sporting facilities to world class standard so we can

- Produce world-class athletes, sportswomen and men in all sporting disciplines, leveraging previous successes.
- Resume hosting regional and international events.
- Develop the ancillary infrastructure and talents necessary to benefit from a robust sports tourism eco-system.
Seniors

The NDP recognizes that elderly care initiatives should aim to provide support and services to promote the availability of care to our elderly population. Such initiatives shall include:

- Ensuring policy development and service delivery meet the needs of vulnerable elderly citizens and residents, including people with dementia.
- Expanding the availability of services provided by the Adina Donavon Home for the Elderly and the establishment of hospice care for the elderly who are sick or terminally ill, but do not require hospitalization.
- Investing in a trained, competent workforce to provide aged care services.
- Improving access to appropriate health services, transport and safe and suitable housing for the elderly population.
- Formulating a National Aging Plan which promotes the well-being and social integration of the elderly and a positive image of older people.
- Placing increased focus on healthy physical and mental activity, mobility and strength programmes for the elderly.
- Accelerating the current home rebuilding assistance and ownership programme for the indigent.
- Access to annual health checks including physical, mental and oral health, sight and hearing, strength and mobility and medication reviews.
- Better support for achieving good nutrition, reducing undernutrition and promotion of evidence-based practice in vitamin and calcium supplementation for older people.

Women

The NDP recognizes that issues surrounding the empowerment of women is critical in today’s BVI. In this regard, a re-elected NDP shall draw from existing policies from United Nations (UN) Women’s Empowerment. These policies cover the following five components:

- Generating Women’s Sense of Self-Worth.
- Women’s right to have and determine their choices.
- Women’s right to have the power to regulate and control their own lives, within and outside the home.
- Women’s right to have access to equal opportunities and resources.
- Women’s ability to contribute to the growth and development of their society.

A re-elected NDP Government shall follow through on the following policies in the BVI context. They were established in alignment with the aforementioned five components and are based on the idea that when women are empowered, they become strong, healthy and feel valued. This is transferred to loving, nurturing homes and families which contribute, in turn, to making our community stronger.

- Implement Self-Help Groups (SHGs) with the objective of providing holistic empowerment of women through a sustained process of improving economic and social status by offering support measures to enhance their capabilities and skills, including skills development and training in traditional and non-traditional sectors.
- Integrate education for girls into our “Life Skills” curriculum so as to prepare them to make healthy decisions and adopt the necessary skills that would effectively prepare them to contribute to the socio-economic development of our society.
- Create Women Focus Groups (WFGs) that establish a “Woman Cell” on every National Advisory Committee to ensure participation of women in the decision-making process at the national level.
- Adopt measures to promote the reproductive rights and responsibility of women, especially our younger women, to enable them to make informed decisions and educate them on their vulnerability to sexual and health problems and the consequences of irresponsible practices.
- Adopt measures in collaboration with Health Services and Social Development to educate women on safe, effective and affordable methods of family planning and nutrition for pregnant and lactating mothers.
- Adopt measures in collaboration with Health Services and Social Development to support women in important decisions like marriage and the implications associated with unplanned multiple child births that are not properly spaced out.
- Implement programmes to provide support systems for the emotional and mental well-being of women, particularly single women and mothers, to help them acquire skills in effective parenting, coping, dealing with abusive relationships and violence. This will include violence and abuse of our most vulnerable, our children, so that they can become confident and strong and can be more effective wives and mothers who feel empowered to take up their rightful places in our society.

- Create a “Women’s Recognition Programme” for Virgin Islands women who have taken on various roles and excelled in many fields. In most cases, success has been achieved at very high standards. We must recognize these successes publicly so that these women can become role models for aspiring young girls and future generations.

- Implement special programmes aimed at providing complementary services to ensure that the benefits of all general programmes implemented are sustained over time and that their reach is extended both qualitatively and quantitatively to all women. This is critical to ensuring all strategies to empower women have far reaching, sustained results.

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**Housing**

The NDP recognizes that since the storm events of 2017, there has not been a singular focus on housing in the Virgin Islands, and that creating and implementing a housing policy requires complementary input from across government and civil society. Accordingly, a re-elected NDP shall as a priority create a “Housing Authority” to function as a statutory body.

The “Housing Authority” shall be mandated to give priority consideration, among other things, to the following:

- Review and make changes where necessary to existing social housing programmes.
- Provide for the clarification of land tenure and occupancy arrangements for owners and tenants.
- Develop and enforce laws stating the duties and rights of tenants and landlords.
- Work with the relevant agencies to update and enforce climate-smart construction codes.
- Work with the private sector to develop insurance products that meet the needs of all in case of a disaster.
- Promote affordable designs of climate-smart housing and settlements.
- Increase government housing support to vulnerable groups.
- Support access to affordable housing finance.
- Support all citizens, especially our youth, through the established Government initiative of buying large tracts of land for resale at greatly reduced prices, and continuing the programme of tax breaks for first time home owners.
Sister Islands

The main focus of economic development in BVI has traditionally been on Tortola and, to a lesser extent, Virgin Gorda, primarily with tourism. Our other Sister Islands -- Virgin Gorda, Anegada and Jost Van Dyke -- all have an equally important role to play in the development of BVI and must be so empowered.

Accordingly, a re-elected NDP shall review existing governance mechanisms to allow for greater participation by the Sister Islands by providing them with greater autonomy and representation. Such mechanisms include introducing a system of community government for the Sister Islands (Virgin Gorda in the first instance) to complement the work of District Representatives and deal with certain matters like disaster planning and response, and the environment. Community government representatives shall be nominated by both Government and the Opposition to ensure a balance of representation.

A re-elected NDP shall provide support and incentives to banking institutions to re-establish banking services on Virgin Gorda within six months. Meanwhile, all banks will be asked by Government to explore the feasibility of establishing banking services on all of the Sister Islands as a priority.

Anegada and Jost Van Dyke

A re-elected NDP shall, among other things, inclusive of statutory obligations:

- Designate Anegada, with its open spaces and abundance of shallow water, as an agriculture/aquaculture hub by introducing facilitating Agribusiness Development legislation and establishing government-sponsored agriculture/aquaculture projects (e.g. beef, sheep, goats, conch, whelks and fishes).
- Create economic zones on Anegada and Jost Van Dyke for any business, with exemptions from taxes and customs duty for 5 to 20 year periods, with supporting legislation with regard to the location, development and type of structure required for any business to operate successfully. Here the focus will be on green and environmentally compatible businesses which add value to the development of these local economies.
- Make available expanded medical services through the provision, as appropriate, of either a doctor or nurse whose services will be available 24 hours.
- Continue and prioritize the distribution of lands on Anegada.
- Review and increase the current level of ferry services between Anegada and Tortola.
- Commit to increasing the physical presence of legislators on the ground in these communities.
- Restore the Setting Point dock, adding suitable facilities and designating the area as an entry port.
- Restore the resource centre and nearby sports facilities for the community's youth.

Virgin Gorda

A re-elected NDP shall, among other things, inclusive of statutory obligations:

- Bring clarity to the vexing issue of land distribution in North Sound, and continue with and expand its distribution.
- Proceed with the long outstanding separation of the passenger and cargo situation at the main ferry dock.
- Improve and expand the playing field in conjunction with FIFA.
- Restore the Jeffery Caines arena.
- Separate BFEC Primary School from the Secondary School.
- Construct bathroom facilities at Spring Bay and Savannah Bay.
The NDP recognizes the environment as an invaluable resource for economic, wellness and social security for a stronger Virgin Islands. The Virgin Islands has a strong, comprehensive and universally accepted climate change framework inclusive of a Climate Change Committee, Climate Change Policy and most recently, the legal establishment of The Virgin Islands Climate Change Trust Fund.

The Trust Fund provides a clear, accountable, independent mechanism for investment of international climate change finance in local adaptation and mitigation projects.

Accordingly, a re-elected NDP recognizes that the following actions are important to help the Territory preserve its natural environment and mitigate against the effects of climate change:

- Conducting a Total Economic Valuation of the Virgin Islands’ environment.
- Instituting the legal framework necessary to establish rules and an organizational structure for environmental protection.
- Developing and adopting supporting policies, including the Marine Estate Administration Policy, Beach Use Policy and revised Climate Change Policy.
- Continuing the process to declare and transfer to the National Parks Trust all areas included in the Virgin Islands Protected Areas System Plan 2007-2017.
- Updating the Virgin Islands Protected Areas System Plan with a greater emphasis on identification of terrestrial areas of environmental and historical significance.
- Implementing measures to reduce threats to coral reefs, including:
  - A Certificate of Environmental Clearance System (as included in the draft Environment Bill) to better regulate sediment run off and nutrient pollution;
  - An expanded and enhanced mooring buoy system to reduce anchor damage to reefs; and Marine spatial planning to minimize development threats to coral reefs.
- Developing and implementing programmes and measures to support the restoration of salt ponds, natural contours, and mangroves and to reduce marine pollution, flooding and developing land reclamation, land excavation and drainage standards and guidelines.
Clean, Efficient and Resilient Energy

Virtually every aspect of modern life -- our homes, businesses, and government, domestic and international transportation -- is powered by energy. Access to a clean, efficient, resilient and affordable supply of energy is therefore critical for economic growth and development to occur.

As a small island country which experienced the full brunt of climate change in the form of two devastating Category 5 hurricanes nearly two years ago, the National Democratic Party believes it is in our interest to harvest the abundant energy available to BVI naturally in sunshine, constant trade winds and ocean currents and accelerate a shift towards cleaner and renewable energy.

The GOVI Energy Policy (2016), developed by the NDP, identifies the following targets:

Reduce BVI's carbon footprint by:

- Aiming to reduce fossil fuel electrical generation by 5% annually over the next 20 years so that BVI is energy independent by 2039.
- Having 10% of vehicles and marine vessels in the Territory as non-fossil fuel-driven by 2023.
- Encouraging public/private partnerships to design and build solar, wind, and ocean energy farms throughout the Territory at optimal locations.
- Synergizing all existing policies, plans, and proposals for the development of renewable energy. Create clear distinctions within our renewable energy policies for the production of renewable energy on a commercial and retail basis.
- Requiring prospective companies that are involved in the renewable energy sector to develop employment and training programmes to ensure BVI Islanders participate meaningfully in the sector.
- Giving effect to NDP-tabled legislation already passed by the House of Assembly, allowing individuals and corporations to install solar, wind and other forms of renewable energy generation devices on their private homes and businesses.
- Encouraging individuals and business owners to make renewable energy installations through the offer of incentives such as rebates offering reduced import duties on such equipment.
- Legislating special regulations governing inspections of such installations to ensure safety when connected to the electricity grid.

- Introducing legislation allowing net metering so that surplus electrical energy generated by a household, for example, could be fed back into the national electrical grid and the household would receive credit.
- Protecting and reducing vulnerability to the energy distribution system by implementing plans to place cabling underground in targeted areas on Tortola and Virgin Gorda.
- Reducing the vulnerability of energy transmission to the Sister Islands, where feasible, by developing independent energy generation systems.
Transparent and Accountable Governance

The NDP acknowledges that good governance is the cornerstone of any well-functioning government in successful democracies. As such, we regard the practice of good governance as not only critical for the overall development of our society, but especially necessary to keep the trust of the people we serve.

A re-elected NDP will give priority to improving governance through systemic and institutional changes to ensure that government works better for all. Additionally, it shall give strong focus and commitment to governance issues in the short, medium and long term to include:

- Constitutional Advancement
- Transparency and Accountability
- Government Operations and the Public Service
- Law and Order and National Security
- Communications

Constitutional Advancement

The Virgin Islands 2007 Constitution made clear the rights and responsibilities of BVI and the UK. The UK’s decision to impose public registers of beneficial ownership on its Overseas Territories (OTs) by threat of Order in Council has created a sense of unease in BVI. In modern times, the instrument of Order in Council has only been used to ensure UK adherence to international human rights law. This decision was made without consultation with or the consent of the BVI Government.

It is clear that the relationship between the Territory and the UK is no longer fair or balanced. Indeed, this divergence of approach creates an infringement of certain human rights in the BVI Constitution, including those relating to the protection of private and family life and privacy of home and other property, essentially causing an inherent conflict between the Constitution and any Order in Council.

These events have demonstrated that a new and fundamentally different ‘constitutional construct’ is required; one better suited to the strategic goals and aspirations of BVI. A constitutional review will determine these desires and aspirations so that the Territory can move towards greater self-governance and to a deepening of the democratic institutions of government, as well as to enhance good governance, transparency and accountability. This will place BVI on a more progressive constitutional footing.
Transparency and Accountability

A re-elected NDP Government shall deliver on initiatives that will provide greater accountability and transparency including:

- Advancing Freedom of Information legislation.
- Implementing a Ministerial Code of Conduct.
- Exploring how best to implement Integrity Legislation.
- Full adherence to and enforcement of the Declaration and Registration of Interests.
- Continuing to publish relevant Cabinet Decisions.

- Enhancing registration of major contracts and agreements.
- Continuing on the great progress made in presenting Audited Accounts (up to the year 2015) to the House of Assembly for approval and ensuring that they are presented more timely in the future.

Government Operations and the Public Service

The impact of the 2017 natural disaster events caused significant disruption to government operations, detracting from incremental improvements over the past several years. The Governance Action Plan of a re-elected NDP Government shall include reforms to deliver greater continuity in the event of future disasters as well as greater efficiency and improvements in the provision of government services.

To this end, a re-elected NDP shall continue to pursue its public sector transformation agenda with a focus, among other things, on:

- Redesigning the public service by merging some critical services to create greater efficiencies, critically assessing the needs of the public, assigning the right resources to meet those demands and building capacity where there may be gaps.
- Committing greater funding and resources to training and re-training of the public service to deliver world-class public services.
- Implementing the automation of government services (E-government Initiative), including application and processing of permits and licenses and collection of fees and taxes.
- Greening the public services, including reducing the use of paper files, by digitizing government documents.
- Implementing a performance monitoring framework for statutory bodies and ensuring that they are aligned to the overall goals of their portfolio ministry.
- Formalizing and encouraging public/private collaborations for services and initiatives that are best served by significant private sector input or support.
- Fast tracking pilot E-government initiatives that focus on services that are critical to Sister Islands residents, such as paying fees and taxes and applying for licenses and permits, in order to minimize the need for travel to Tortola.
- Accelerating the rebuilding of the Central Administration Complex and other government buildings to ensure a productive, fit and safe working environment.
- Instituting a programme that rewards persons for creating efficiencies and savings in government operations.

- Introducing the already drafted “Public Service Management Act” that speaks to a modern public service and seeks to:
  - Establish a high performing apolitical service that is responsive to Government priorities.
  - Focus on the delivery of services in a professional and non-partisan way.
  - Promote the effectiveness and efficiency of government ministries and departments.
  - Provide for the administration of service and the employment and management of officers and employees;
  - Provide for the rights and obligations of officers and employees.
  - Promote equality of employment opportunity in the service.
Law and Order

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Implementing institutional changes that will promote greater cohesion and cooperation between various agencies. In this regard, proposed actions include:

- Integrating the criminal justice system so that courts, police and other law enforcement work more harmoniously.
- Building a hall of justice to house all of our courts and relevant offices in support of modernizing our court system.
- Strengthening law enforcement with the addition of necessary human and technical resources.
- Supporting the Royal Virgin Islands Police Force initiative for greater community policing.
- Identifying and addressing the root causes of crime and ongoing gun-related activities that are destroying families.
- Seeking to eradicate the gun culture through building stronger relations between communities and law enforcement.
- Appointing a Gun Violence Reduction Coordinator to have a singular focus on implementing strategies to reduce the incidence of gun violence. The coordinator will review the effectiveness of existing strategies/legislation, while ensuring that all social services are effective in dealing with the root causes of crime.
- Introducing legislation to decriminalize cannabis possession for amounts under seven grams to ensure that young people are not prevented from future opportunities due to having a criminal record and to allow persons who have been convicted of possession of the same, to have their conviction reversed.
- Establishing a Human Rights Commission.

Communications

The NDP recognizes that better communication with residents and other stakeholders is important in delivering good governance. In a new term, a re-elected NDP Government will also encourage greater engagement, participation and ownership of the Territory’s development.

Accordingly, a re-elected NDP shall:

- Establish a Unit for Public Outreach and Engagement within the Office of the Premier to spearhead a more effective approach to government communication that reflects 21st Century reality.
- Continue to diversify the mechanisms for the delivery of Government communications with a focus on more dynamic media channels.
- Promote a culture and practice of more public consultation in relation to major governmental initiatives and issues.
- Reinstitute “Government on the Road” where at least once annually, the Government conducts town hall meetings to update the public on the Government initiatives and to receive feedback from the public on its priorities.
- Create a continuing awareness among our people that they have a right to participate in the Governance of our country. Introduce a programme for residents’ input towards proposing innovative and creative solutions for efficiency of government operations and make use of the referenda process to make decisions on sensitive issues.
Modern and Resilient Infrastructure

The NDP believes that modern and resilient infrastructure are key facilitators for growing the economy, providing a high quality of life, safety and social cohesion. To this end, a re-elected NDP Government shall invest in robust infrastructure with a key focus on roads (and associated structures), ports, utilities, and telecoms.

To ensure that BVI has modern and resilient infrastructure, a re-elected NDP Government shall:

- Develop holistic and long term plans which are consistent with our national development plans and strategy.
- Improve and enforce building standards and regulations.
- Incorporate new resilient techniques.
- Adopt a new building code and introduce new regulations.
- Regulate the registration of licensed architects, engineers and other building professionals.
- Establish a classification system for contractors.

Roads

Our roads are one of the main transportation structures that connect us, facilitate commerce and social cohesion. Therefore, a re-elected NDP Government shall advance plans for the development of our roads, including sidewalks, ghuts, drains, retaining structures, and sea defenses.

The agenda includes:

- Continuing the reconstruction of approximately 60 miles of primary road infrastructure using advanced techniques and world class engineers and builders.
- Reconstruction of secondary road infrastructure.
- Rehabilitation and extension of sea defenses with rock armor and other structures to protect vulnerable coastal roads;
- Exploring alternative mechanisms for financing and maintaining roads, including introduction of vehicle user fees.
Water and Sewerage

Long-term development of water infrastructure will focus on improving the efficiency of the water supply and distribution systems, providing equitable access to a reliable water supply across the Territory, and exploring alternative water sources that can be channeled to households.

Projects, programmes and policy initiatives of a re-elected NDP Government will include:
- Comprehensive reassessment of the water supply and distribution network.
- Re-establishment of a water desalination plant in communities where the water supply is constrained by the distribution system.
- Greater connectivity of the distribution network.
- Conducting a comprehensive study of wells and springs territory-wide to create alternative access to water.
- Implementing a territory-wide programme for new metering incorporating new technology to ensure accurate and efficient billing.
- Introducing smart technology to monitor water production, consumption, distribution losses and leakages, so as to create greater efficiencies in the management, production, and distribution of water.

In relation to sewerage, a re-elected NDP Government is committed to the implementation of a holistic resolution to this vexing problem within the Territory. To this end, our priorities are:
- Implement recommendations from the recent sewerage consultancy.
- Redevelop the sewerage network in Cane Garden Bay, East End, and Road Town as priorities.
- Implement subsidized pumping programmes using local waste truckers to support waste removal for households that are in compliance with planning requirements for waste collection.
- Ensure strict enforcement of planning regulations for the proper collection, disposal and treatment of waste.
- Update regulations to provide stricter penalties for breach of regulations.

Telecommunications

Telecommunications are pivotal to the development of the Virgin Islands across all sectors of our economy. It is especially critical to the further development of our financial services sector, our health and education sectors, and our aspirations for new innovative business areas.

A re-elected NDP’s overarching vision for this sector is to improve the telecommunications infrastructure to deliver greater capacity, speed, reliability and resiliency at fair and affordable prices.

To this end, a re-elected NDP Government shall:
- Require the Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (TRC) to develop a strategy to deliver on the territory’s objective of greater capacity, speed, reliability, resiliency, fairness and low costs.
- Require the TRC to help negotiate Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with local internet service providers promoting cooperation between relevant areas of their operational networks.
- Require each of the existing telecom companies to produce a strategic plan that shows alignment with the territory’s overarching objectives.
- Partner with existing telecom companies to support, through incentives, the delivery of services to meet the territory’s telecom objectives.
- Improve market regulations and enforcement mechanisms to deter and punish poor practices or breaches by telecom companies.
- Partner with telecom companies to provide greater Wi-Fi coverage at key public locations across the territory.
Air and Sea Ports

Anegada and Jost Van Dyke
Modernized port facilities capable of delivering people and goods efficiently is a key objective of the NDP. In that regard, a re-elected NDP Government shall:

- Commission a strategic plan which will scope, identify, and cost upgrades or expansions to passenger and cargo facilities territory-wide.
- Conduct a round-table discussion with marine port users (cargo, ferry and private vessels) to source views, comments and suggestions on how to inform the redevelopment of port facilities as well as the policy and legal framework including incentives to facilitate marine operations.
- Prioritize the redevelopment of key ports and set clear time-frames for each.
- Develop Anegada’s main port as a port of entry with border control services.
- Conduct a feasibility study to assess the viability of developing a regional trans-shipment port at Port Purcell.

Airports
A re-elected NDP shall:

- Advance plans for the expansion and modernization of the Terrence B. Lettsome International Airport, through a public/private partnership;
- Upgrade the Taddy Bay Airport’s terminal to include expanded customs and immigration facilities, departure lounge and amenities.

Waste Management
A re-elected NDP Government shall develop a bold new vision in relation to future waste management. In this regard, it shall implement new laws and policies to enable the territory to recycle 50% of its waste by 2023. The objective is to bring an end to the open burning of garbage at Cox Heath.

Policies shall include but not limited to:

- Implementing strict laws on the storing, keeping, disposal and handling of bulk waste.
- Implementing strict laws banning the use of certain plastics and other non-biodegradable products.
- Passing legislation making it mandatory to recycle specific items.
- Encouraging, incentivizing and funding, where appropriate, private sector-led recycling programmes.
- Encouraging households to recycle waste by exempting recycle bins from duty.
- Partnering with the private sector in support of the collection of recycled items.

- Incrementally phasing out the mass collection of garbage via large dump bins which can make the surrounding environment quite unsightly. This will be achieved by:
  - Removing such bins from areas readily accessible to other means of collection.
  - Removing such bins from roadsides in areas where they are prevalent.
  - Expanding door to door collection in those targeted areas, thus creating new business opportunities.
A re-elected NDP Government will continue to safeguard BVI’s international reputation in all areas, especially related to financial services and tourism but equally in the areas of telecommunications. It will also monitor and seek to ameliorate the effects of climate change and related developments, particularly in this post Irma period.

Accordingly, priority shall be given to the following:

**Brexit Impact On BVI**

The UK is actively seeking post-Brexit trade deals with the world’s largest economies including China, the United States and India, as well as with Commonwealth countries. BVI can economically benefit from participation in the activity undertaken by the UK to secure these agreements. A re-elected NDP Government will ensure that we have a proactive partnership with the UK so that we are included in UK trade missions abroad and BVI’s involvement is consistently considered by the UK.

While new trade agreements are being negotiated, a re-elected NDP Government can play a role in maintaining the competitiveness of British firms by facilitating UK investment into emerging markets. BVI’s strong relationships in Asia and especially in China may be helpful here. Similarly, BVI can facilitate international investment directly into the British economy to support critical sectors such as housing and infrastructure where inward investment is needed. The BVI Government and BVI Finance will work together to ensure this message is articulated to the UK.
UK financial support for BVI following Irma and Maria:

BVI has not received grant-in-aid from the UK since 1978. However, the devastation wrought by Irma and Maria severely impacted its financial position. Levels of debt by borrowing commercially to cover the cost of the recovery and the operation of government must be significantly increased.

The severity of the damage and the impact on economic output and BVI’s earning potential, particularly as tourism revenues recover, mean the government will have to borrow on the back of a UK loan guarantee to rebuild public infrastructure. Lenders such as the UK have asked for certain elements to be in place for the loan to move forward.

A re-elected NDP Government shall complete these requirements so that BVI has the monies needed for full recovery and to build back stronger, smarter, greener and better.

Representation of OTs in the UK and Commonwealth

BVI and other OTs have consistently reaffirmed their position that they do not wish to have seats in the UK Parliament and that the annual Joint Ministerial Council, held between the UK and OTs, is the appropriate framework, albeit not perfect, by which OTs can make direct political representation to the UK Government at ministerial level if deemed necessary. A re-elected NDP Government shall continue BVI’s relationship with the UK on this basis.

BVI is included in the Commonwealth under the UK and participates to the fullest extent permissible, particularly the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA).
Regional Organization

BVI is an associate member of CARICOM, OECS, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) and UNESCO. BVI is also a full and active member of a range of organizations where engagement is essential to the continued positive development of the BVI economy.

European Union

BVI has established a strong relationship with the EU. UK OTs have associate status under Part IV of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union as Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs). Cooperation between the EU and OCTs is set out in the 2013 Overseas Association Decision (OAD). This is aimed at enhancing OCTs' competitiveness, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability, and creating more reciprocal relations between OCTs and the EU based on mutual interests and shared values.

The benefits from BVI’s associate membership of the EU include: preferential terms for trade, expertise to strengthen the private sector, funding to support sustainable development, free movement rights for BVI citizens, programmes which support economic diversification and political dialogue on sectors such as financial services. These are valuable benefits which have opened many opportunities for BVI people.

As the UK moves forward with its own departure from the EU, support which the UK provided in the EU will disappear and BVI will have to engage independently to ensure that strong relations are maintained with the EU. A re-elected NDP Government, through its London Office, will move to ensure that these relations remain strong.

Other Bodies:

There are a number of international bodies in which the UK engages on BVI’s behalf. However, BVI’s presence alongside UK ministers and officials will be increasingly important especially in fora whose decisions and recommendations can have a direct impact on BVI. A re-elected NDP Government will prioritize where a greater international presence might be required. One example of where it will be needed is the area of climate change.

Climate change and its negative effects are a risk for BVI as a vulnerable chain of islands in the Caribbean subject to more frequent and powerful storms and sea level rises. BVI will look to reduce that risk as much as possible with more resistant buildings and infrastructure.

However, BVI currently receives no UK funds for climate change adaptation and is also not eligible for any non-EU international funding for climate change, biodiversity and disaster preparedness, despite the UK’s contribution to the Green Climate Fund and Global Environment Facility and providing direct financial support to small island developing states in the Caribbean in these areas. How BVI will meet this unfunded liability in the advent of Brexit is a major concern.

International Representation

A higher profile in several of these areas will help identify funding sources as well as opportunities to impact on policy. In this regard, a re-elected NDP Government will strengthen the International Affairs Secretariat by adding qualified and more experienced staff.

Given the growing importance of the US to BVI, a re-elected NDP Government shall also give priority to ensuring that there is the right level of BVI representation in the US.
VOTE TEAM NDP, ALL THE WAY!

MYRON V. WALWYN
SANDY UNDERHILL
TREFOR GRANT
HENRY CREQUE

AARON PARILLON
3RD DISTRICT CANDIDATE

MARK VANTERPOOL
4TH DISTRICT CANDIDATE

ELVIS "JUGGY" HARRIGAN
5TH DISTRICT CANDIDATE

ALVERA MADURO-CAINES
6TH DISTRICT CANDIDATE

HIPOLITO DIEGO PENN
7TH DISTRICT CANDIDATE

MARLON A. PENN
8TH DISTRICT CANDIDATE

DR HUBERT O'NEAL
9TH DISTRICT CANDIDATE

BETTER, STRONGER TOGETHER