**Constituency Profile**

**Upper Bann**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Westminster 2010** |  | **Votes** | **% Vote** |  | **Assembly 2011** |  | **Votes** | **% Vote** |
| **Turnout %** | 55.8% | **DUP** | 14,000 | 33.8% |  | **Turnout %** | 55.3% | **DUP** | 11,499 | 27.1% |
|  **Turnout Valid Votes** | 41,383 | **UCUNF** | 10,639 | 25.7% |  | **Turnout Valid Votes** | 43,113 | **UUP** | 10,426 | 24.6% |
|  |  | **SF** | 10,237 | 24.7% |  |  |  | **SF** | 11,528 | 27.2% |
| **Combined Nat** | 37.4% | **SDLP** | 5,276 | 12.7% |  | **Combined Nat** | 38.6% | **SDLP** | 4,846 | 11.4% |
| **Combined Un** | 59.5% | **ALL** | 1,231 | 3.0% |  | **Combined Un** |  54.7%\* | **ALL** | 2,765 | 6.5% |

\* Includes DUP, UUP, TUV & UKIP

***Key Questions:***

* Can Joanne Dobson make the breakthrough for the UUP and finally turn the tide on the DUP in the constituency where the incumbent DUP MP signed the death knell of David Trimble back in 2005?
* Can Sinn Fein pull off a miracle and squeeze through the two unionist candidates to claim the most unlikely of wins?
* **Assembly Watch:**
	+ Can Sinn Fein stretch their advantage over the SDLP to the point where the two automatic nationalist seats fall to the party?
	+ Can the overall nationalist vote rise to the point where, if turnout was matched in the Assembly election, a third nationalist seat could be within reach?

**2015 RESULTS**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Westminster 2015** |  | **Votes** | **% Vote** | **+/- (2010)** | **+/- (2011)** |
| **Turnout %** |  | **DUP** |  |  |  |  |
|  **Turnout Valid Votes** |  | **UUP** |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **SF** |  |  |  |  |
| **Combined Nat** |  | **SDLP** |  |  |  |  |
| **Combined Un** |  | **ALL** |  |  |  |  |

**Constituency Profile**

**South Antrim**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Westminster 2010** |  | **Votes** | **% Vote** |  | **Assembly 2011** |  | **Votes** | **% Vote** |
| **Turnout %** | 54.1% | **DUP** | 11,536 | 33.9% |  | **Turnout %** | 50.1% | **DUP** | 12,317 | 38.3% |
|  **Turnout Valid Votes** | 34,009 | **UCUNF** | 10,353 | 30.4% |  | **Turnout Valid Votes** | 32,164 | **UUP** | 5,730 | 17.8% |
|  |  | **SF** | 4,729 | 13.9% |  |  |  | **SF** | 4,662 | 14.5% |
| **Combined Nat** | 22.6% | **SDLP** | 2,955 | 8.7% |  | **Combined Nat** | 25.1% | **SDLP** | 3,406 | 10.6% |
| **Combined Un** | 69.7\* | **ALL** | 2,607 | 7.7% |  | **Combined Un** | 60.8%\*\* | **ALL** | 4,554 | 14.2% |

\* Includes DUP, UCUNF (UUP) & TUV

\*\* Includes DUP, UUP, TUV & BNP

***Key Questions:***

* Can Danny Kinihan knock off Willie McCrea and secure a seat for the UUP in the constituency they ran the larger unionist party closest in 2010?
* Will Alliance retain their share of the vote from 2011, or will there be a significant degree of tactical voting from Alliance voters to try and push Kinihan ahead of McCrea- as the inflated Combined Unionist figure from 2010 indicates has already occurred before?
* **Assembly Watch:**
	+ Can the SDLP motivate their core base to turn out after failing to do so in the past two major constituency elections, at the cost of losing an Assembly seat?
	+ Any return to the vote percent breakdown between the DUP and UUP in 2010 would make a second Assembly seat for the UUP a more realistic target seat.

**2015 RESULTS**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Westminster 2015** |  | **Votes** | **% Vote** | **+/- (2010)** | **+/- (2011)** |
| **Turnout %** |  | **DUP** |  |  |  |  |
|  **Turnout Valid Votes** |  | **UUP** |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **SF** |  |  |  |  |
| **Combined Nat** |  | **SDLP** |  |  |  |  |
| **Combined Un** |  | **ALL** |  |  |  |  |

**Constituency Profile**

**Fermanagh South Tyrone**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Westminster 2010** |  | **Votes** | **% Vote** |  | **Assembly 2011** |  | **Votes** | **% Vote** |
| **Turnout %** |  | **IND U** | 21,300 | 45.5% |  | **Turnout %** | 69.0% | **DUP** | 11,720 | 24.4% |
|  **Turnout Valid Votes** |  |  |  |  |  | **Turnout Valid Votes** | 47,999 | **UUP** | 9,262 | 19.3% |
|  |  | **SF** | 21,304 | 45.5% |  |  |  | **SF** | 19,338 | 40.3% |
| **Combined Nat** | 53.1% | **SDLP** | 3,574 | 7.6% |  | **Combined Nat** | 52.0\* | **SDLP** | 4,606 | 9.6% |
| **Combined Un** | 45.5% | **ALL** | 437 | 0.9% |  | **Combined Un** | 46.3%\*\* | **ALL** | 845 | 1.8% |

\* Includes SF, SDLP & INDEP (Pat Cox)

\*\* Includes DUP, UUP & TUV

***Key Questions:***

* Straightforward issue of whose turnout will be greatest: that of Sinn Fein or the unionists?
* **Assembly Watch:**
	+ Can Sinn Fein squeeze even more votes out of an SDLP party hoping to claw back the solitary Assembly seat lost in 2011? A further reduction in the SDLP % share would make their push for an Assembly seat even less likely.

**2015 RESULTS**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Westminster 2015** |  | **Votes** | **% Vote** | **+/- (2010)** | **+/- (2011)** |
| **Turnout %** |  | **DUP** |  |  |  |  |
|  **Turnout Valid Votes** |  | **UUP** |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **SF** |  |  |  |  |
| **Combined Nat** |  | **SDLP** |  |  |  |  |
| **Combined Un** |  | **ALL** |  |  |  |  |

**Constituency Profile**

**North Belfast**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Westminster 2010** |  | **Votes** | **% Vote** |  | **Assembly 2011** |  | **Votes** | **% Vote** |
| **Turnout %** | 56.8% | **DUP** | 14,812 | 40.0% |  | **Turnout %** | 50.3% | **DUP** | 12,412 | 37.1% |
|  **Turnout Valid Votes** | 36,993 | **UCUNF** | 2,837 | 7.7% |  | **Turnout Valid Votes** | 33,470 | **UUP** | 2,758 | 8.2% |
|  |  | **SF** | 12,588 | 34.0% |  |  |  | **SF** | 10,671 | 31.9% |
| **Combined Nat** | 46.3% | **SDLP** | 4,544 | 12.3% |  | **Combined Nat** | 43.9% | **SDLP** | 4,025 | 12.0% |
| **Combined Un** | 47.7% | **ALL** | 1,809 | 4.9% |  | **Combined Un** |  45.3% | **ALL** | 2,096 | 6.3% |

***Key Questions:***

* The unionist pact makes this a virtual *fait accompli*, but can Kelly push the Sinn Fein and overall nationalist vote- with Maginness- closer to the 50% mark?
* **Assembly Watch:**
	+ Sinn Fein are after the solitary SDLP seat in North Belfast. Look for the breakdown within nationalism. Any increase in the gap between the two parties will likely mean that intelligent candidate selection could knock Maginness out in 2016.

**2015 RESULTS**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Westminster 2015** |  | **Votes** | **% Vote** | **+/- (2010)** | **+/- (2011)** |
| **Turnout %** |  | **DUP** |  |  |  |  |
|  **Turnout Valid Votes** |  | **UUP** |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **SF** |  |  |  |  |
| **Combined Nat** |  | **SDLP** |  |  |  |  |
| **Combined Un** |  | **ALL** |  |  |  |  |

**Constituency Profile**

**East Belfast**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Westminster 2010** |  | **Votes** | **% Vote** |  | **Assembly 2011** |  | **Votes** | **% Vote** |
| **Turnout %** | 58.7% | **DUP** | 11,306 | 32.8% |  | **Turnout %** | 53.6% | **DUP** | 14,253 | 44.0% |
|  **Turnout Valid Votes** | 34,488 | **UCUNF** | 7,305 | 21.2% |  | **Turnout Valid Votes** | 32,347 | **UUP** | 3,137 | 9.7% |
|  |  | **SF** | 817 | 2.4% |  |  |  | **SF** | 1,030 | 3.2% |
| **Combined Nat** | 3.5% | **SDLP** | 365 | 1.1% |  | **Combined Nat** | 4.0% | **SDLP** | 250 | 0.8% |
| **Combined Un** | 59.4%\* | **ALL** | 12,839 | 37.2% |  | **Combined Un** |  67.0\*\* | **ALL** | 8,512 | 26.3% |

\* Includes DUP, UCUNF (UUP), & TUV

\*\* Includes DUP, UUP, INDEP (D Purvis), PUP, TUV & BNP

***Key Questions:***

* Can Naomi Long make lightning strike in the same place twice? And, if not, can she match or improve upon the 37% figure garnered in 2010, consolidating the party’s grip on its second Assembly seat here?
* Will the albeit miniscule nationalist constituents vote tactically in significant numbers in an effort to help Long defy the DUP?
* **Assembly Watch:**
	+ As stated above, Long matching her 2010 figure will likely make safe the second Assembly seat for Alliance.

**2015 RESULTS**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Westminster 2015** |  | **Votes** | **% Vote** | **+/- (2010)** | **+/- (2011)** |
| **Turnout %** |  | **DUP** |  |  |  |  |
|  **Turnout Valid Votes** |  | **UUP** |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **SF** |  |  |  |  |
| **Combined Nat** |  | **SDLP** |  |  |  |  |
| **Combined Un** |  | **ALL** |  |  |  |  |

**Constituency Profile**

**Foyle**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Westminster 2010** |  | **Votes** | **% Vote** |  | **Assembly 2011** |  | **Votes** | **% Vote** |
| **Turnout %** | 58.0% | **DUP** | 4,489 | 11.9% |  | **Turnout %** | 57.8% | **DUP** | 7,154 | 18.4% |
|  **Turnout Valid Votes** | 37,889 | **UCUNF** | 1,221 | 3.2% |  | **Turnout Valid Votes** | 38,847 | **UUP** | - | - |
|  |  | **SF** | 12,098 | 31.9% |  |  |  | **SF** | 13,200 | 34.0% |
| **Combined Nat** | 76.6% | **SDLP** | 16,922 | 44.7% |  | **Combined Nat** | 69.3% | **SDLP** | 13.699 | 35.3% |
| **Combined Un** | 15.1% | **ALL** | 223 | 0.6% |  | **Combined Un** | 18.4% | **ALL** | 334 | 0.9% |

***Key Questions:***

* Can Sinn Fein run the SDLP close in Foyle, something they’ve never managed to do at Westminster level even though the Assembly statistics from 2011 show the parties running closer than ever before in Foyle?
* Will the unionist constituents vote tactically to shore up Durkan- the difference in combined unionist % of the vote from 2010 and 2011 confirms the trend of unionists opting for the SDLP at Westminster. Watch for the % figures to see if this is continued in 2015.
* **Assembly Watch:**
	+ The fifth nationalist seat, held currently by the SDLP, could fall to Sinn Fein if the party does surpass the SDLP to take the seat, or even if it appears that they’ve missed out only due to tactical unionist voting, which would likely return to the unionist parties for Assembly elections.

**2015 RESULTS**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Westminster 2015** |  | **Votes** | **% Vote** | **+/- (2010)** | **+/- (2011)** |
| **Turnout %** |  | **DUP** |  |  |  |  |
|  **Turnout Valid Votes** |  | **UUP** |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **SF** |  |  |  |  |
| **Combined Nat** |  | **SDLP** |  |  |  |  |
| **Combined Un** |  | **ALL** |  |  |  |  |

**Constituency Profile**

**Newry and Armagh**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Westminster 2010** |  | **Votes** | **% Vote** |  | **Assembly 2011** |  | **Votes** | **% Vote** |
| **Turnout %** | 60.9% | **DUP** | 5,764 | 12.8% |  | **Turnout %** | 61.3% | **DUP** | 6,101 | 13.1% |
|  **Turnout Valid Votes** | 44,906 | **UCUNF** | 8,558 | 19.1% |  | **Turnout Valid Votes** | 46,514 | **UUP** | 8,718 | 18.7% |
|  |  | **SF** | 18,857 | 42.0% |  |  |  | **SF** | 18,995 | 40.8% |
| **Combined Nat** | 65.4% | **SDLP** | 10,526 | 23.4% |  | **Combined Nat** | 64.3% | **SDLP** | 10,948 | 23.5% |
| **Combined Un** | 33.4%\* | **ALL** | 545 | 1.2% |  | **Combined Un** | 33.8%\*\* | **ALL** | 734 | 1.6% |

\* Includes DUP, UCUNF (UUP) and INDEP Willie Frazer

\*\* Includes DUP, UUP, TUV and UKIP

***Key Questions:***

* Can McNulty close the gap on Sinn Fein, bring the SDLP over the 30% threshold to make the constituency contest next time around open to tactical unionist voting swinging it the way of the SDLP?
* Watch for the combined nationalist % turnout. Breathing renewed life into this intra-nationalist constituency contest could have the effect of growing nationalist turnout.
* **Assembly Watch:**
	+ A rejuvenated SDLP in this constituency will have as its first target clawing back a second Assembly seat from Sinn Fein. Increasing the party vote to around the 30% mark makes that a credible objective for next year.

**2015 RESULTS**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Westminster 2015** |  | **Votes** | **% Vote** | **+/- (2010)** | **+/- (2011)** |
| **Turnout %** |  | **DUP** |  |  |  |  |
|  **Turnout Valid Votes** |  | **UUP** |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **SF** |  |  |  |  |
| **Combined Nat** |  | **SDLP** |  |  |  |  |
| **Combined Un** |  | **ALL** |  |  |  |  |

**Constituency Profile**

**South Belfast**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Westminster 2010** |  | **Votes** | **% Vote** |  | **Assembly 2011** |  | **Votes** | **% Vote** |
| **Turnout %** | 57.7% | **DUP** | 8,100 | 23.7% |  | **Turnout %** | 52.4% | **DUP** | 7,845 | 24.3% |
|  **Turnout Valid Votes** | 34,186 | **UCUNF** | 5,910 | 17.3% |  | **Turnout Valid Votes** | 32,308 | **UUP** | 4,382 | 13.6% |
|  |  | **SF** | - | - |  |  |  | **SF** | 4,038 | 12.5% |
| **Combined Nat** | 41.0% | **SDLP** | 14,026 | 41.0% |  | **Combined Nat** | 36.4% | **SDLP** | 7,718 | 23.9% |
| **Combined Un** | 41.0% | **ALL** | 5,114 | 15.0% |  | **Combined Un** |  38.6%\* | **ALL** | 6,390 | 19.8% |

\*Includes DUP, UUP and UKIP vote totals.

***Key Questions:***

* The Combined Unionist and Nationalist turnout figures should be fascinating. The nationalist side in particular is fiercely competitive, given Sinn Fein’s decision to run probably their most popular politician in the north against an MP with a formidable record for turning the vote out on the day.
* The unionist vote breakdown will be as intriguing. Alliance’s decision to select Paula Bradshaw, the UCUNF candidate here in 2010, means that the unionist vote could split between Bell, McCune and, to a lesser extent, Stoker, whilst also shedding some votes to Bradshaw.
* There’s a sense that Bell and O’Muilleoir have played their hands well, whilst McDonnell has been quiet- at least in terms of media coverage. Whether or not a ‘perfect storm’ develops which lifts Bell across the line remains to be seen, though South Belfast’s more liberal nature could dash DUP hopes of reclaiming South Belfast for unionism.
* **Assembly Watch:**
	+ There are five parties with around quota. The sixth seat, currently held by the SDLP, will almost definitely fall to either the DUP or SDLP, depending on the respective unionist/ nationalist turnouts next year. This election might give an indication of whether or not the trend of unionist turnout outstripping that of nationalists will continue.

**2015 RESULTS**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Westminster 2015** |  | **Votes** | **% Vote** | **+/- (2010)** | **+/- (2011)** |
| **Turnout %** |  | **DUP** |  |  |  |  |
|  **Turnout Valid Votes** |  | **UUP** |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **SF** |  |  |  |  |
| **Combined Nat** |  | **SDLP** |  |  |  |  |
| **Combined Un** |  | **ALL** |  |  |  |  |

**Constituency Profiles**

**The ‘Safe’ Seats**

**West Belfast:** Sinn Fein’s share of the vote at Westminster and Assembly elections in West Belfast has remained consistently between 66%-70% this century, so retaining that vote share will remain the party’s objective as it is crucial to securing the five constituency MLA seats next year. Watch for the performance of the People Before Profit candidate, Gerry Carroll. He has the potential, in the medium term, to attract votes from dissident and disaffected republicans, as well as the Left in this constituency. If he can gain up to 10%, then an Assembly seat becomes a distinct possibility. If the SDLP vote continues to languish in and around 13% or even increases, their seat remains safe. But if Carroll starts to pose a challenge to the SDLP on first preferences, then he could seize the SDLP seat, though the 5th Sinn Fein MLA seat could also be the one to go in that scenario, not least due to unionist transfers likely propelling the SDLP above Sinn Fein and the PBP candidate.

**Lagan Valley:** The margin of Donaldson’s victory will be the primary interest, given how the DUP turned the 53.1% share of the popular vote in 2011 into four Assembly seats. The UUP will be looking to increase party share to 25%+, which would set them up to challenge for a second Assembly seat. Alliance will look to retain the 11-13% share of the vote, whilst nationalism will hope to break through the 10% mark collectively in terms of the combined SDLP- Sinn Fein vote.

**North Down:** Although the DUP are comfortably the largest political party in the constituency- with 44%+ gained in 2011, a full 26% ahead of the second placed party, Alliance, such is the popularity of Independent Sylvia Hermon that her re-election is being taken as a racing certainty. Hermon’s margin of victory over the DUP candidate in 2005 (Peter Weir) was almost 5,000 votes, or 15% (the DUP did not stand in 2010), so of primary interest will be if the DUP can run Hermon close enough to make this a battleground constituency next time around. The UUP are not standing this time, whilst Alliance will be hoping to hold on to as much as possible of the 18% of the vote that lumped for the party in 2011, though tactical voting for Hermon has hit the party hard at Westminster elections, and this will be expected to be the same this time around- a similar pattern experienced by the Greens. Not since the 2003 Assembly elections has the combined nationalist vote exceeded 5% in North Down.

**East Antrim:** The DUP’s margin of victory will indicate whether a UUP challenge will be credibly mounted for a second MLA seat next year. The 23.7% taken in 2010 by the UCUNF (UUP) candidate, Rodney McCune, shrunk to a paltry 16.9% by 2011 for the UUP, and returning a figure matching or exceeding that of McCune would be crucial in order to mount a challenge for that second MLA seat. Nationalism secured an MLA seat here for the first time in 2011, and retaining in excess of the 12.8% vote share claimed collectively by Sinn Fein and the SDLP in 2011 will be important to consolidating that seat, with Oliver McMullan looking to consolidate his overall vote share and build towards a 10%+ share of the overall vote. The consistency of the Alliance support is noteworthy, even with the boundary changes taking effect from 2010. In 3 of the last 4 constituency wide elections here- 2005, 2007 & 2011- Alliance took between 15-16%, with that pattern only broken in 2010, when the party vote slumped to 11%. Naturally, the party will hope the trend of taking 15%+ will continue this time. The TUV will hope to match or exceed the 6% taken in 2010, which would be an increase on the 4.6% secured in the 2011 Assembly election here.

**North Antrim:** The DUP has taken in excess of 45% of the vote in every constituency wide election here this century. The party increased its vote share to 47.6% in 2011, up from 46.4% in 2010, and matching that will be vital to ensuring the third Assembly seat does not become vulnerable to a challenge from either an SDLP candidate or a second UUP or TUV candidate. For the latter to happen, either unionist challenger would need to considerably improve on the vote share to date: both parties took just under 12% in 2011, more than 10% less than the 22.2% needed by the UUP to claim a second seat here in 1998- the last time that happened, and then it was at the expense of the Sinn Fein candidate, with the DUP also claiming three seats. The TUV took 16.8% with Jim Allister here in 2010, and will hope to claw back some of the vote lost between 2010 and 2011 this time around. The 24.4% share of the vote secured by the combined nationalist parties in 2011 was not enough to see the SDLP claim a seat, and the party will hope to take the vote share over the 10% threshold to give them a chance of competing for the seat next year,, whilst Sinn Fein will be seeking to further consolidate upon the 15.3% share taken in 2011.

**Strangford:** The DUP will look to match the 45.9% taken in 2010 by Jim Shannon, which was increased upon as a vote share in 2011 to almost 49%, whilst the UUP will be hoping to take closer to the almost 28% secured in 2010 than the just over 20% won in 2011. Then, it appeared that Alliance voters tactically voted for Nesbitt in 2010, but returned to the fold in 2011. Alliance will be keen to hold onto the 2011 vote share of 14.4%, as opposed to the 8.7% of 2010, and the absence of any real discussion of an upset here in 2015 should help them with that objective. Poor nationalist turnout has meant that a seat has remained unclaimed here, and it will be interesting to see if the combined nationalist vote share can top the 12% for the first time, setting up a challenge next year.

**South Down:** Margaret Ritchie will be returned in the SDLP’s safest constituency, but her margin of victory will be the primary point of interest. Ritchie secured 48.5% in 2010 for the SDLP, a vote share which fell significantly to just under 36% in 2011, and it will be interesting to see if her percent figure ends up closer to the 2010 or 2011 tally. The 30.9% of the vote taken in 2011 was Sinn Fein’s highest ever in the constituency, and the party will look to further build on that, making inroads into SDLP territory in the process. For unionism, the key interest will be to see if the Wells scandals and resignation will have a detrimental impact upon his vote. Not since 2003 have the UUP outpolled the DUP in South Down, though the gap between the parties in 2010 was 1.3% and in 2011 had increased to 1.9%. UKIP’s Henry Reilly claimed 5.6% in 2011, and retaining this or building further into the support of rival unionists will remain his objective. Watch for tactical voting from unionists: in 2010, unionists accounted for 19.4% of the votes; in 2011 this rose to 28.7% of the overall vote, suggesting that Ritchie received a significant degree of support from unionists in her bid to keep ahead of Sinn Fein.

**Mid Ulster:** Sinn Fein have not taken less than 45.5% in constituency wide elections this century here. Matching the just under 47% taken in the 2013 by-election will remain the target in order to secure the three MLA seats. Contrastingly, the SDLP will hope to build on the 17.4% taken in that by election, which represented a 3% gain on its 2010 and 2011 returns. Taking in excess of 20% will be crucial to lay the foundations for a challenge for a 2nd MLA seat for the SDLP. The unionist battle will see the DUP seek to match the 16.7% taken in 2011, whilst the UUP will hope to build on the 11% secured in 2010- which dropped to 10.3% in 2011. The TUV claimed 7.3% in 2010, though this fell to 4.9% in 2011, so it will be interesting to see if the party can reclaim some of the vote support share lost in between those two elections.

**West Tyrone:** Sinn Fein secured in excess of 50% of the vote in this constituency for the first time in 2011, and there is little to suggest that the party won’t secure in the region again this time to make the 3 Assembly seats look fairly safe for next year. The SDLP vote in this constituency has not topped 14.6% since Brid Rodgers claimed 28.7% in 2001, and the party would hope for signs that it was finally beginning to claw back support from Sinn Fein- in which case, the SDLP would hope for a marked advance on the 14% taken in 2010. The DUP came close to claiming both unionist seats in the 2011 Assembly election, with its 23% share more than doubling the 10.4% taken by the UUP, and both parties’ objectives will focus on either further widening (DUP) or reducing (UUP) that gap with next year’s election in mind.

**East Derry:** The UUP were badly stung in 2011 in this constituency when the Independent candidate, David McClarty,claimed the party’s only seat in the Assembly. They will be seeking to reestablish the 17.4% support gained in 2010, and perhaps build on that towards the 20% figure. The DUP share in 2010 was 34.6%, and this increased to 36.9% by 2011. However, the absence of a TUV candidate in 2015, as well as David McClarty, means that both unionist parties will fight over the additional unionist votes to be claimed. The 34.8% share of the vote taken by the combined nationalist parties in 2010 was increased to 36.0% in 2011. It will be interesting to see if the combined nationalist share can increase again, bringing it towards the 40% threshold, and whether or not Sinn Fein can further open up the gap of 6.2% it held over the SDLP in 2011.