



The Harrogate Agenda explained

The Harrogate Agenda (THA) is not a political party but a movement which aims, through its Six Demands, to make our system of government democratic. We believe that we have never had real democracy as defined by the original Greek translation as 'People Power.'

Power, within our current system of government, is directed through Parliament and resides in an unelected executive. General Elections allow us periodically to vote for parties or candidates who then mostly ignore the wishes of the majority, instead following the instructions of the European Union and other agencies, pandering to minority and special interest groups. The current system isolates the political process and elected representatives from any form of control by the people. This has to change.

THA is building a grassroots supporter-based (not members) movement in order to make that change. Taking inspiration from the Chartist's of the early 1800s, THA's Six Demands were developed and agreed democratically by its founding supporters. If implemented they would result in genuine democracy.

THA is determined not to go the way of movements in the past who, despite having some apparent short term success and media attention, sooner or later fade into obscurity and fail. To avoid the same fate THA's aim is not based on specific issues or grievances but to change the system of our governance, to give us the lasting changes needed for 'People Power'.

THA's first stage is to run a number of workshops to explain to attendees how the Six Demands will give people real power and make the government their servant and not their master. After firm foundations have been laid with supporters around the country, which we envisage will take at least five years, the second stage, of taking actions to withdraw our consent to be governed by the current system will commence.

These actions will be guided by tried and tested principles to make ourselves ungovernable, as advocated by Professor Gene Sharp, who is considered the foremost authority in civil resistance and nonviolent revolution. The peaceful nature and extent of these actions will make it difficult or even impossible for the state to resort to prosecutions and will enable those who are protesting to turn the tables on the government, by enjoying the protection of the very laws that would otherwise be deployed against them.

By using this two stage approach THA can avoid the experience of other movements that are weakened and defeated by starting their protests too early. Challenging the system, before establishing a large, firm base, gives the government the time and space to wear down and defeat the movement without giving in to what they wanted.

THA's approach, of not playing by the state's rules but working within the law, would wrong foot the establishment and be far less likely to be undermined. Then, as 'People Power' builds up pressure, THA would press home its advantage by insisting the process be started to introduce our Six Demands which will give us the lasting change we seek.