

**STEPHEN MANNING** is a married father of three children, one of whom has special needs. Stephen has lived in Dundalk and Tuam, more recently returning to Co. Mayo where he has been resident for over ten years, living in west, central and east Mayo. His family has roots in the Ballinrobe area. Stephen lived and worked abroad in various roles and occupations, most notably in sports instruction and higher education, where he taught at schools, colleges and universities.

He is currently the owner of *CheckPoint Press*, a specialist book publisher, as well as being the Administrator of the *Integrity Ireland Association* – a voluntary, citizens-driven network and support group which has been set up to tackle corruption, cronyism and cover-ups in Irish institutions particularly in the areas of law enforcement, the legal profession and the Courts.



Stephen Manning  
Phone: 086 218 9229  
Email: [stm@checkpoint.ie](mailto:stm@checkpoint.ie)  
[www.integrityireland.ie](http://www.integrityireland.ie)  
[www.facebook.com/IntegrityIRL](https://www.facebook.com/IntegrityIRL)

Stephen believes that true democracy is being seriously undermined here in Ireland and that the institutions of the State—most notably central government—are being shamelessly, yet knowingly subverted and manipulated by vested interests, at the great personal and cultural expense of the people of Ireland.

*“It is time to return real democratic power to the people of Ireland, and that begins with a radical reform of the current broken political system and of the institutions of the Irish State – many of which are clearly unfit for purpose.”*

Stephen is inspired by the *1st Independent MAYO* initiative which he sees as a truly ground-breaking approach to restoring grass roots political representation to a largely disillusioned and disenfranchised populace. The idea of diverse independent candidates pooling their resources in a collaborative competition where each can be assessed ‘on merit’ by the voters in face-to-face local debates is a welcome break from the usual practice of mainstream political parties simply imposing *their* chosen candidates on the electorate. The history of party politics in this State has become so tarnished and contaminated by the constraints of party membership (such as not being able to vote according to one’s conscience, or according to one’s pre-election promises) that surely, it is time for a different approach. By encouraging the electorate to vote for genuinely independent representation, we can begin to return true democracy to the political process and thereby strip vested interests of the undemocratic influence they wield over established parties.

Areas of immediate concern to Stephen are:

- Rescuing politics from the grasp of career opportunists by derailing the proverbial ‘grave train’ and linking TDs wages to the average working wage.
- Ensuring the restoration, protection and development of rural Ireland.
- Establishing a genuinely independent ‘statutory oversight body’ staffed by credible, qualified professionals, to deal with the historical problem of corruption, cronyism and criminal cover-ups in Irish State agencies.