



Dia Daoibh a cairde,

My name is Mary Fitzpatrick and I attend this Ard Fheis as Fianna Fáil's candidate for Dublin Central.

As a candidate for Dublin Central I must draw this Ard Fheis' attention to the Governments total failure to deliver on the promises they made more than three-years ago in their "action plan on housing", Rebuilding Ireland.

In their plan they identified the housing crises as an **emergency** and promised to address the emergency crisis with the following five pillars:

- Address Homelessness
- Accelerate social housing
- Build more homes
- Improve the rental sector
- Utilise existing housing

The Government did not identify affordability as a key pillar, and we are all paying the price since.

In terms of **Addressing Homelessness** Fine Gael's action plan promised that by mid-2017 families would not be housed in B&Bs and Hotels.

Well more than two years on from that broken promise I am still helping families every day to try to avoid homelessness.

More often than not the only accommodation available for them are B&B or hotels. Many are fine establishments but have no laundry facilities, no cooking facilities or general living space to do homework or other normal daily activities that most families engage in. These accommodations are no substitute for family homes. These unsuitable living conditions are making people ill. Destroying family life. Causing people to drop-out of school, college, training and become unemployed.

Instead of addressing and eliminating homelessness the Government has invested in homelessness and made it a multi-million-euro growth industry in Dublin Central.



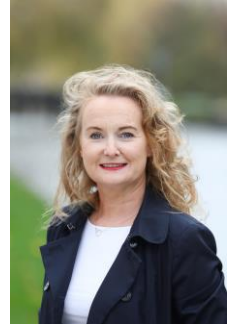
With regards their promise to **accelerate the delivery of social housing** we were all hopeful when in 2016 the Government identified the O'Devaney Garden site in Dublin Central as their national flagship housing development.

They promised homes would be built and families would move in by 2018.

Well 2018 has come and gone and still there are no new homes in O'Devaney Gardens and the date by which there will be is ever more elusive.

O'Devaney is a site that was home to more than a 1,000 people, it has the capacity to provide more than 600 homes yet to date the government continues to fail to realize its potential as a prime urban residential community.

O'Devaney is only one of many sites in Dublin Central but it is supposed to be their national flagship development.



Their 3<sup>rd</sup> pillar stated they would **build more homes**.

Well not only have they not built more homes in Dublin Central, a constituency with acres of land zoned and serviced with capacity for up to 10,000 homes they have in fact built ZERO new homes in Dublin Central.

The sad and unacceptable reality is that since Fine Gael took office eight years ago they have not built one new social, affordable, private or co-operative home in Dublin Central - not One.

Their determination to leave the building of homes to the private sector has resulted in more than 8,000 purpose-built student accommodation units, hotels and office space but ZERO homes, social, affordable or any other type in Dublin Central.

Such is the recognition locally of the Governments total abdication of responsibility for the building of homes that the Catholic dioceses will partner with the GAA, a voluntary sporting organization, and not the government or any agent of the government to develop 1,000s of homes on their more than 30acre Clonliffe site in Drumcondra.

Dublin Central is the heart of our capital, the heart of country. If the Government is not building homes in Dublin Central where there is such huge demand from workers of all ages, where there are acres of suitable state owned land, serviced with electricity, sewerage, broadband, public transport and represented by the Governments' most senior Minister for Finance and Public Expenditure what hope for the rest of the county?



In terms of their last two pillars they said they would improve the rental sector and utilize existing homes.

The reality is their persistent reliance on the private rental market has driven massive increases in rental costs to the point the point of unaffordability. Workers will pay more to rent than they would for a mortgage in Dublin Central.

The government's failure to build homes and their over reliance on HAP is a ticking time bomb socially, economically and politically.

The Governments over-reliance on HAP and other private housing subventions has cost the state more than €1b in 2018 alone. Left unchecked this bill will continue to inflate and make the children's hospital seem like a bargain when it is done.

Their over reliance on HAP has inflated rental rates, is driving people in to homelessness, pricing workers out of the rental market, costing the state a fortune in HAP payments for insecure tenancies and denying people the opportunity to get on with their lives and to have a place to call home.



As for their last pillar promise to utilize existing housing stock by introducing a vacant site tax and investing in refurbishment of state-owned housing.

The vacant site tax that came into effect this January is only being applied to 27 sites in Dublin Central and area where the last census recorded more than 4,500 vacant sites....so clearly that pillar is another monumental failure.

In terms of refurbishment of existing housing stock, Dublin Central is littered with boarded-up city council units in prime urban locations like Constitution hill, Dorset Street, Summerhill and Cabra. These and other state-owned properties in Dublin Central have the potential to provide homes for 1,000s of people but eight years on from Fine Gael entering government far too many of them remain boarded-up and derelict.

A Caire, the bottom line is. In each of the five pillars of their “action plant on housing” Fine Geal has utterly failed to address homelessness and build new homes in Dublin Central.

Dublin Central is a constituency at the heart of our capital city, the birth place of our democratic republic, with acres of state owned and serviced lands, represented in Dáil Eireann by the Government’s most senior Minister, Minister for Finance and Public Expenditure.

A constituency directly adjacent to the Taoiseach’s own constituency and one which he must pass through every day on his way to Leinster house.

Yet it is a constituency where young people growing up to day have no hope, if Fine Gael continue in Government, of ever having their own home in Dublin Central.

I do not know any other constituency in the country where there are 100s of acres of prime state owned urban land, zoned and serviced for housing with the capacity for 1,000s of homes that would put up with being denied by their own Government the opportunity to have a home in their own community?

Where families are forced to live in overpriced, overcrowded and insecure tenancies while Government policy drives the delivery of luxury Air BnBs.

[www.maryfitzpatrick.ie](http://www.maryfitzpatrick.ie)



Where the only way young people can have a chance to start their own home is to move 100s of miles away from friends and family and endure long commutes back to Dublin central.

The issue in Dublin Central is not a lack of available land, or appropriately zoned or serviced lands or funding.

The only thing preventing the delivery of affordable homes in Dublin Central is the lack of political will from Government to build homes.

Working people of all ages need Fianna Fáil, as the only party that can credibly lead an alternative government, to champion the provision of social, affordable, private, co-operative and cost rental homes in Dublin Central.

Fianna Fáil must ensure that well designed, energy efficient affordable homes will be built in Dublin Central.

Fianna Fáil must ensure that working people of all ages can once again have an opportunity to afford to live and work in Dublin Central.

Fianna Fáil must drive an accelerated plan for the refurbishment and development of all state-owned lands and properties in Dublin Central.

From the 1930s and in much poorer economic times Fianna Fáil built homes for working people, from East Wall to the Markets to Cabra.

Fianna Fáil has a responsibility to the working people of Dublin Central to end this dangerous and expensive Fine Gael charade of a housing action plan and to get on with the business of providing homes for working people.

Go raibh maith agaibh go leir.