

Cllr. Jimmy GUERIN



Working on issues that matter to people

Dear Householder,

September saw the beginning of the last term of the current Fingal County Council. Local elections are to be held next summer alongside the European Elections.

I believe that a lot has been achieved by the current Council and hopefully more can be done before the last meeting in June next year.

However as a local authority, I believe we have failed in our main responsibility that is to provide sufficient housing for the people of Fingal. Each year our housing crisis worsens as more people face homelessness, young people are living at home longer than ever before, rents have grown out of control and those renting see no hope of being able to buy their own home.

Fingal in my view missed an opportunity to zone more residential land in the recently adopted Development Plan to meet our needs.

We have made great headways on our cycle infrastructure and this is clear to see throughout the Howth / Malahide area. In this term we have also seen many improvements in the public realm and the additional toilet facilities that have been installed in Fingal are welcomed by all.

The ongoing disputes between the DAA and Fingal serve no one well. The DAA have not been good neighbours in how they have addressed various issues and also failed to meet many of the conditions of their current planning. I hope for the sake of all involved and in particular the residents of Fingal that all these matters will soon be resolved.

These are just some of the issues that are ongoing and in this edition of my Fingal Newsletter I will highlight some matters that are ongoing. I believe in spending my time working on the issues that matter to people and as I have often said "it's not all about trees"

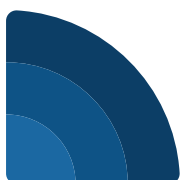
I will be calling to many homes in the coming months and look forward to meeting many of you then but if in the meantime I can be of assistance do not hesitate to contact me as per my details below.

Jimmy

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I am Your Local Councillor and I am always happy to assist people in any way I can in their dealings with the Local Authority or Government Departments. Please contact me if you feel that I can assist you in any way.

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Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) continues to be the primary source of rent support for those in private rented accommodation. Fingal County Council has set up over 242 new tenancies in 2023 to date with approximately over 3,831 tenancies set up since HAP began in 2017.

The HAP team are on hand to deal with any queries from applicants and landlords in person at the Housing Department in the Fingal County Council Blanchardstown Office, by phone on 01 8905000 via the CCU or through email hap@fingal.ie.

If you require assistance in applying for HAP or if I can provide you with further information do not hesitate to contact me.

Stay on top of Rent and Rent arrears

The new rent review process continues and tenants are required to return their Rent Assessment Form with the relevant documents so that an assessment can be carried out and the correct rent charge applied.

If you have difficulty in paying your rent I would encourage you to contact The Rent Arrears team in Fingal who are anxious to engage and work with tenants to put plans in place to reduce arrears.

It is important that tenants engage as failure to talk and address these issues could result in proceedings being issued against tenants. This is not a route that Fingal ever wish to pursue. The Rents team encourage any tenant who is experiencing difficulty paying their rent to engage with the Council to examine possible solutions. I am available to help tenants with these matters and if you are in this position do not hesitate to contact me and I will work with you to resolve these matters.

Government have failed to address the Housing Crisis.

Local authorities are failing people throughout the country as the housing crisis worsens. Parties are playing politics with this issue in the hope it will garner votes in the upcoming elections and the Government's failure to address this issue has not helped.

This is seriously affecting people's lives as they are forced to continue living at home, pay exorbitantly high rents or buy a home a long distance from where they work and then have to spend hours each day commuting. Never has such a crisis had this major an impact on thousands of people.

I have also seen the pressure people are under when they are faced with a termination of tenancy notice or a notice to quit. I have worked with many people who faced this problem and am happy to assist people when dealing with the Residential Tenancies Board (RTB). Please feel free to contact me if you need assistance with these matters and I will gladly work with you to achieve the best result.

I believe that if parties came together and worked on solving this crisis it could be solved. If the same effort and co-operation amongst politicians and people during the covid crisis was applied to the current housing crisis then it would be sorted.

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The reality is that we have a lack of homes and we are not approaching the need for houses with the urgency we should. This is evident from the recent development plan adopted where we have not provided enough suitably zoned residential land for development. We have land zoned residential for over twenty years that owners will not develop yet this is counted in and as being available. This is wrong and preventing much needed affordable homes being built in Fingal.



Cllr. Jimmy Guerin speaking in the Dail in relation to the Housing Crisis.

The high cost of homes is partly due to the lack of suitable sites. We should have de-zoned lands that have not been developed in the last ten years and zoned sufficient lands on a use it or lose it basis. If development on such lands had not commenced prior to the next plan in five years time it could be rezoned back to green belt.

There are many sites in Fingal that would provide hundreds if not thousands of much needed homes and we could have rezoned current residential land that has not been used and replaced it with more appropriate and suitable sites. Hopefully the next Council that is elected will address this serious problem when they prepare their development plan.

Delighted to have played my part in one of the largest housing development taking place in the state.



"... delighted that this motion was passed by my colleagues" - Cllr Jimmy Guerin

At a special Council meeting held on the 25th May 2021 I moved the following motion:

Motion: Councillor J. Guerin
"It is proposed that this Council agrees to the agenda item regarding the proposed disposal of lands at Ballymastone to Glenveagh Living as per the draft development agreement reached between both parties so that the planning and construction of 1200 much needed residential units can commence without further delay."

I am delighted that this motion was passed by my colleagues.

On August 25th last, a sod turning ceremony marked the commencement of the construction by Glenveagh at Ballymastone, Donabate on a 32-hectare site which will ultimately deliver 1,200 A-rated homes. This is one of the largest residential housing developments in the state. The development will comprise of affordable, private, cost rental, and social homes.

"... construction of 1200 much needed residential units can commence without further delay." - Cllr Jimmy Guerin

The first delivery of homes will be in 2024. Creating vibrant and sustainable communities involves not only making provision for housing needs but also ensuring that amenities and infrastructure are of excellent standard for the people of the area. I very much look forward to the completion of the first phase of this wonderful residential development and to see this new community flourish in the years to come.

This scheme would not be where it is without the hard work put in over the years by local Cllr Adrian Henchy who worked tirelessly over the years to bring various stakeholders together and win the local support necessary for such a development. It is fitting that Cllr Henchy is Mayor of Fingal and performed the sod turning event on the day.

Baily Court Development finally goes ahead



It is hard to believe that it is five years since I called a public meeting in Howth Yacht Club where over 200 residents, stakeholders and the Developers Marlet to discuss the Baily / Edros site. This was the first meeting of its kind where all parties, planners, developers, local politicians and residents came together and we all had a robust discussion as to how best to proceed.

Now that a consensus has been reached between the parties the long awaited development of the Baily Court / Edros site finally goes ahead. The demolition work is due to begin in September and much needed homes will soon be delivered on this site.

Since being elected a Councillor ten years ago I have received hundreds of representations to try and have something positive completed at this site. I have received a lot of criticism for supporting this but seeing first-hand the demand for homes in Fingal I have never opposed residential development anywhere in the county.

It was a pleasure to work with all concerned parties to see this come about. It appears that the scaled down version has met the needs of those opposed to the original plan as there was no further Judicial Reviews lodged in respect of the last planning approved. A win for all involved.

Autumn/Winter 2023 Programme of Events at Fingal Libraries



The Autumn/Winter events programme for Fingal Libraries will be available shortly at your nearest library. Through its event programming, Fingal Libraries aim to meet a diverse spectrum of people's needs in the areas of information, learning, culture, literacy, life skills, enterprise and leisure activities.

The Autumn/Winter 2023 programme will include an exciting range of tailored events for both children and adults planned to celebrate Positive Ageing Week and Space Week in October and Fingal Inclusion and Science Week in November. As we come to the end of another bustling year of events,

Fingal Libraries has a Winter/Christmas programme in store for all, including Christmas story-time, Family Time at your Library and Christmas themed arts and crafts for children and adults.

As a treat for the whole family, library staff across the branches have organised a fun-filled programme of events for Family Time at your Library: a Right to Read national literacy initiative encouraging families to visit their local library in December.

Look out for our brochure which will be released shortly across branches and <https://www.fingal.ie/fingallibraries>

Fingal Creates new position of Access Officer

I would like to welcome the appointment of our new Access Officer to Fingal County Council. In this newly created position, our Access Officer will promote awareness of accessibility and inclusion and will co-ordinate the provision of assistance and guidance to persons with physical, intellectual, sensory and behavioural disabilities in accessing our services.

Ensuring everyone has equal access to our information and services is key and this important appointment will be a great benefit to members of the public requiring supports.

A busy summer for the Fingal operations team.

There has been a lot of work carried out by our Operations Department throughout the summer. August last saw Fingal County Council crews responded to Storm Betty working throughout Friday night, Saturday, and Sunday to clear an unprecedented and significant number of fallen trees, prioritising those trees which were blocking public roads and footpaths.

Our operations teams in Howth Malahide are to be commended for their effort and working in the most difficult conditions to make our area safe. While there was some damage to footpaths thankfully no one was injured during the storm.

There has also been a lot of work completed on our footpaths and I was delighted to see work being carried out in Baldoyle, Sutton and Portmarnock. On top of this a lot of repair work was carried out to the dune fencing at Portmarnock beach.

Delighted to have assisted in bringing jobs to Swords

I was thrilled to have played my part in bringing the gaming company to Airside Retail Park which has resulted in over 150 direct jobs in this new facility. Initially the location was between Amsterdam and Fingal. Having been contacted by one of the main parties to the project who outlined certain difficulties I immediately contacted our CE who ensured any concerns that the conglomerate had were addressed.

If it were not for the direct involvement of our CE and executive team this project with 150 jobs would not only have been lost to Fingal but to Ireland. Sometimes it's not all about trees and the work not seen by the public is what delivers hugely for our area.



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