

Senator Marie Sherlock

Summer/Autumn 2021



Breakthrough for Special School in Cabra

Speech and language therapies and other supports are vital for the learning and development of many children. Right now, on the northside of Dublin, some children face an appalling wait of up to thirty-six months to access services.



Marie with Principal Eimear O' Rourke and parent Colin Maher

I was delighted that we made a great breakthrough for the Holy Family School for the Deaf in Cabra in April.

In February, the HSE told the school of their intention to remove the school's on-site speech and language therapy service. This was part of the HSE's wider plans to change how disability services are delivered across the country.

This prompted huge upset in the school community. After weeks of campaigning and amassing an incredible 3,345 signatures from many of you in the community, eventually the HSE dropped this plan for the school. I'm delighted to say that the HSE is now working well with the school.

Not only did this breakthrough benefit the School for the Deaf in Cabra, it also had a direct and positive knock on impact for special schools in South Dublin, Galway and Cork. Huge credit to the principal, board, parents and the school community in their fight for the pupils in the school.

Dear Resident

After a very difficult first half of the year, I hope this newsletter finds you and your family well.

Recovery from the pandemic will be painfully slow in a number of sectors and we have repeatedly called for **antigen testing** to be utilised to help sectors like aviation and the arts and events sector to re-open safely.

In the Seanad, my Labour colleagues and I put down legislation to ensure all **students nurses who work are paid** and legislation to **combat the scourge of illegal dumping** in our communities.

As Labour Spokesperson on employment affairs, I have introduced a number of important bills to introduce paid sick leave for all workers, advance the rights of those working from home, introduce protections for platform workers and provide for workers who suffer early miscarriage or who have to undergo IVF.

I'm also Labour spokesperson for Arts, Culture, Media agus An Ghaeltacht and we have been speaking out on the need to support those working in the Arts. We've highlighted the issues of music, drama and dance teachers and pupils who have faced such uncertainty about their return to in-person classes and we've spoken out on the ongoing issue of sexual harassment and abuse perpetrated by some within the traditional music industry and have stood in solidarity with the FairPlé and #MiseFosta campaign.

Locally, we also had a **public meeting on the impact of Covid on children** in February with local school principals, psychologists, early years providers and disability advocates.

In March, I was delighted to work with **local architects on a public meeting in March on the housing and planning crisis in Phibsborough**. There are very serious questions about the affordability, long term tenancy and basic living space standards associated with built to rent developments and other transient developments in our communities that are currently going through the planning system.

In May, we had a **public meeting in Drumcondra** on the need for a masterplan for the area to cover the many changes that are afoot there: Clonliffe College site redevelopment, the proposed sale of Tolka Park and the need for joined up thinking on traffic, planning and the environment.

If there are any issues, local or national that you wish to discuss, please do get in touch at **01 6184564** or **marie@mariesherlock.ie**

Best wishes,

Marie



Senator Marie Sherlock

Labour Party spokesperson
Employment, Arts, Culture, Media & the Gaeltacht

01 6184564

marie@mariesherlock.ie

@MarieSherlockDublin

@Marie_Sherlock

Housing, Co-Living and Build-to-Rent

It's hugely frustrating that there are over 4,800 build-to-rent, co-living and student accommodation units currently going through the planning system or have received approval in Dublin Central. This compares with just 2,500 units in large conventional housing projects.

Recent changes by Government on stamp duty and planning will push even more developers into developing build-to-rent apartments and other forms of transient accommodation instead of long-term homes within the community. **This has got to stop.**

We are also seeing big institutional investors using their clout to keep rents artificially inflated, making it harder than ever to set down roots in the city.



Some of the build to rent, student accommodation and co-living projects that have been approved or are seeking planning are:

Phibsborough: approval granted for 297 co-living units in the shopping centre redevelopment and built to rent at Cross Guns Bridge (205 units).

Stoneybatter: Park shopping centre - 584 student units awaiting planning.

Broadstone: approval granted for 121 co-living units in St Mary's Place North

Drumcondra: planning to be lodged for build to rent on the Clonliffe College site (1614 units).

Large scale developments which will deliver conventional new housing for the area include **Carnlough Road in Cabra** (485 units under construction), **O'Devaney Gardens** (1,047 in planning) and **Glasnevin Hill** (101 units planning approved).

Bill to tackle Illegal Dumping

Illegal dumping is a scourge across so many of our communities. As it stands, Dublin City Council is unable to use the footage collected from CCTV cameras to prosecute offenders due to data processing legislation. My colleague Senator Mark Wall has introduced draft legislation to rectify this. There is no single magic bullet to tackling illegal dumping and the reasons for it are many; overcrowded housing and lack of refuse storage, an outsourced waste collection system that is not providing a good enough service, insufficient city council resources and persistent illegal behaviour by some. We believe the ability to use CCTV is an important and powerful tool in deterring and targeting illegal dumping offenders.

Support for those working in the Arts & Events sector



Marie with National Campaign for the Arts chair Angela Dorgan and Cian O'Brien, Project Arts Theatre

As Labour spokesperson on the Arts, I'm very aware of the enormous toll that the restrictions have had on the livelihoods of artists and arts workers.

We've been supporting:

- **Plans for basic income** for the Arts as a necessary cushion to deal with intermittent income.
- **Bringing forward of re-opening grants** to allow artists and arts workers to plan.
- Calling for **clarity for dance, drama and music teachers.**
- Working with Labour councillors to ensure the City Development plan address the serious dearth of arts and cultural space. Unfortunately, there has also been a serious **hollowing out of arts and culture spaces** across the city over the past decade.

MetroLink & BusConnects

MetroLink: An outline of the design for the MetroLink stations was published in Spring 2021 and sets out the plans for the Mater/Four Masters Park stop, Glasnevin/Cross Guns stop and the Collins Avenue stop. There will also be an underground station called Griffith Park under the grounds of Home Farm FC on Mobhi Road. An Independent Expert was due to be appointed in June to assist individual households and residents' groups directly affected by the tunnel construction. The application for the Railway Order is due to be submitted this August.

Bus Connects Bus Corridor Changes: Planning application to be submitted this summer.

Bus Connects New Routes: The first new route/"spine" was introduced in June - **Route H (Malahide Rd & North Strand).**

Schedule for remaining route changes:

Route F (Finglas Rd): Jan. 2023

Route E (Mobhi Rd & Botanic): June 2023

Inner Orbital (NCR): June 2023

Route A (Drumcondra): April 2024

Route B (Navan Road): Aug. 2024

Cabra must not be by-passed. We need a DART station for Cabra

Irish Rail is extending the trainline from Heuston Station to the new Glasnevin metrolink stop via the Phoenix Park Tunnel. The new route will pass through Cabra without a stop. This is a crazy decision. People in Cabra must not be excluded from a service that will be on their doorstep. Labour councillor for the Cabra -Glasnevin area Cllr Declan Meenagh and I are campaigning to have this changed.

The area is home to thousands of families and individuals who depend on their car or van each day. We need to ensure that there are alternative, affordable and sustainable transport options in the area. There is no credibility to Government policy to encourage people to reduce car use if a whole community is then by-passed with a rail line.



School Zones

The Council is rolling out a number of 'school zones' to promote safer access and higher levels of cycling and walking to school. The following schools have recently got their school zones put in place:

- Broombridge Educate Together National School
- St Catherine's, Ratoath Road
- Lindsay Road National School, Lindsay Road
- St Columba's National School, Iona Road.

The process is relatively easy, so if your school needs a zone but it isn't planned yet, get in touch and we'll try to help!

New National Childcare Scheme excluding some of our most disadvantaged children

The high and rising cost of childcare for parents in Ireland, along with low rates of pay for childcare workers, is a huge issue for many families. The introduction of the new National Childcare Scheme in 2020 represented some progress. It introduced a small, but universal subvention for childcare for all working parents.

However, the new scheme means that some families are now entitled to less support. It particularly affects children in some of the most vulnerable families in our community.



Marie with Anne Carroll and Carmel of the Community After School Project.

Over the past four months, I've been working with several creches and after school workers and providers in the north inner city to raise their concerns about children being excluded and the fears of many services that they will have to reduce their numbers or worse, close their doors.

We've been calling on the Minister to ensure no child is excluded from care, and to secure additional supports for the most disadvantaged families.

My work in the Seanad

As Labour spokesperson on Employment Affairs, I have introduced draft legislation

- **Paid Sick leave.** Nine months after we saw near unanimous support for my bill to introduce paid sick leave for all workers, the Government has finally published its plans in give workers the right by the end of 2021.
- **Working from Home and the Right to switch off.** My legislation seeks to strengthen workers' rights in terms of access of proper equipment and workspace and expenses in respect of utilities paid plus the right to switch off from electronic communications outside their usual work hours or else be paid for out of hours work.
- **Regulation of Platform work.** Over the past 12months, many of us have come into contact with food delivery workers and they are one of many groups now employed via platforms. I've introduced legislation to ensure these workers are not exploited, that they are recognised as employees and that platform work is regulated in Ireland.
- **Reproductive health leave.** Together with my colleague Senator Ivana Bacik, we introduced draft legislation to give paid leave from work for those who suffer an early miscarriage or are undergoing IVF.

Rents and Evictions

Rent Increases:

while some landlords are exploiting a legal loophole in rent cap legislation to demand 8% rent increases, minimum notice periods still apply. Your rent cannot be reviewed until 24 months after the start of your tenancy and your landlord must give you **90** days written notice.

Rent Assistance: if your ability to pay your rent has changed because of a fall in income, you may qualify for rent supplement. To qualify

- You must work 30 hours or less and
- Have lived in your current home for more than 4 weeks and
- Lived in rented accommodation for 6 of the past 12 months.

To apply: contact your local Intreo office or contact me for assistance.

Protection from Evictions & Rent increases:

the general ban on evictions and rent increases has now ended. An exemption is provided for those directly affected by the pandemic such as those in receipt of Covid income supports. The extension in the ban on rent increases and evictions for such persons has been extended to January 12th, 2022.

To apply: *you must complete a self declaration form and submit to the Residential Tenancies Board (RTB) or contact me for assistance.*

USEFUL CONTACTS

Dublin City Council – 01 222 2222

Dublin City Council Out of Hours: 01 679 6186

INTREO office Parnell Street: (01)889 9500

INTREO office Navan Road (01)8823100

INTREO office Ballymun (01)8940000

Residential Tenancies Board

Lo-call on 0818 30 30 37 or 01-702 8100.

MABS (Money, Advice, Budgeting Service) 076 107 200

Housing Adaptation Grants

Grants are available for older people and people with disabilities to make their homes easier and safer to get around. This can include adding ramps, stair lifts, accessible bathrooms and more. You can apply if:

- Your household income is less than €60,000
- You own your home or have the owner's approval

Call **01 222 2195**, email homegrants@dublincity.ie or contact me for more information.

Working with Senator Marie Sherlock: the Labour team in your area



Cllr Declan Meenagh

Cabra Glasnevin

Phone: 087 6806199

declan.meenagh@dublincity.ie



Cllr Joe Costello

North Inner City

Phone: 0872450777

joe.costello@dublincity.ie



Lisa Connell LEA

North Inner City

Phone: 087 2124964



Cllr Jane Horgan Jones

Clontarf

Phone: 086 8375219

jane.horganjones@dublincity.ie

About me: I live in Phibsborough with my husband Ciarán and our young children. A daily cyclist, sometime chorister and long-term workers' rights advocate, I'm passionate about making our urban villages places to breathe clean air, cycle and walk, live affordably, put down roots and grow old in. An economist, I previously worked for SIPTU as Head of Policy and Equality. I was elected councillor for the Cabra Glasnevin area in 2019 and subsequently elected to the Seanad in 2020, I'm currently Labour's spokesperson on Employment affairs, Arts, Culture, Media and the Gaeltacht.

Senator Marie Sherlock

01 6184564

marie@mariesherlock.ie

@MarieSherlockDublin

@ Marie_Sherlock

Want to hear more? You can read my latest news and sign onto my online newsletter at www.mariesherlock.ie or on Facebook at @MarieSherlockDublin



Proud to be standing with the people of Cabra, Drumcondra, Glasnevin, East Wall, North Strand, Ballybough, North Inner City, Smithfield, Stoneybatter, Phibsborough, Broadstone, the Navan Road and Blackhorse Avenue