

nuacht *Sinn Féin*

South & East Belfast
Béal Feirste Thoir agus Theas
Summer 2022



Go raibh mile maith agaibh: **DEIRDRE HARGEY TOPS THE POLL IN SOUTH BELFAST**

Deirdre Hargey has thanked the voters of South Belfast for electing her to the Assembly. Deirdre topped the poll in South Belfast when she received the highest number of first preference votes and recorded the biggest share of the vote for Sinn Féin in the constituency. Ms Hargey said: "The 5th of May was an historic election which saw voters go to the polls and elect a Republican First Minister for the first time ever. People voted for a First Minister who will deliver for everyone, who will support workers and families and who will support the health service by providing an extra £1 billion to help address the waiting lists emergency, revitalise services



and to support health workers.

In South Belfast, the voters returned an historic result for Sinn Féin also as I was elected on the first count after topping the poll with 9,511 first preference votes.

I am deeply grateful for this endorsement and humbled by the extent of the trust placed in me and my Party.

I commit to doing all within my ability to deliver for all communities in South Belfast and look forward to making a real difference to the lives of workers and families in this great constituency."

Sinn Féin: Éire chun cinn **Putting Ireland First** www.sinnfein.ie

New British government must respect international law and honour agreements – O’Neill

Sinn Féin First Minister Designate Michelle O’Neill said that a new British Prime Minister needs to work immediately to restore the north’s political institutions, honour international agreements and bring an end to threats to break international law.

Responding after the resignation of British Prime Minister Boris Johnson as leader of the Tory Party, Michelle O’Neill said:

“It has been utterly absurd that people here were subjected to Boris Johnson for any length of time. He has no mandate in Ireland and is a figure of absolute disrepute.

“He has tried to sabotage our peace agreements, a quarter century of progress and our shared future and is truly no friend of the people of the north.

“He has failed workers and their families struggling with the cost of living.

“He has failed victims of the conflict and their families.

“He delivered the hardest Brexit possible against the wishes of the majority of our people, our political representatives and our businesses and he has torn up international agreements and shown contempt for international law.

“And he has attacked the Good Friday Agreement, backing the boycott of our democratic institutions to placate Tory Brexiteers and the DUP in a desperate attempt to hold on to power.



Michelle O’Neill MLA, First Minister Designate with Deirdre Hargey MLA

“This has prevented ministers who have a mandate from local people from tackling the cost-of-living crisis and investing an additional one billion pounds to help fix our health service.

“The current Tory chaos at Westminster is a daily reminder of the complete ineptitude and arrogance of this British government.

“The people of the north deserve better than this, only two months ago

the majority of the electorate voted in the Assembly elections for real change.

“There is an onus on a new British Prime Minister and British government to begin work immediately to restore the Assembly, the Executive and the North South bodies, to respect the democratic wishes of the people, to honour international agreements and end the threats to break international law.”

“The people of the north deserve better than this, only two months ago the majority of the electorate voted in the Assembly elections for real change.”

Four Winds Flower Baskets, ‘a fantastic win for local residents’

Local Sinn Féin Councillor Ryan Carlin welcomed the installation of new flower planters and hanging flower baskets to the Four Winds area following his request to council last year.

“I’m personally delighted to have kept my promise and delivered on this for local residents.” said Councillor Carlin, “This is the first time the council has included the Four Winds as part of its annual flower allocations following my appeals last year. They have been so well received by local residents. We must now ensure the area is included every year going forward and these stunning flower displays are built upon.”

“I raised this issue in committee last year. The Four Winds area is as large as many of our villages within the council area which are regularly serviced, yet the Four Winds has been too often overlooked.”

“The Parks Manager and I identified sites in the area that would have the greatest impact and agreed on the Four Winds roundabout and in front of the businesses on Newton Park.”

They’ve made a great impact already and have really brightened up the area. We will continue to build on this now going forward.



Cllr Ryan Carlin welcomes the installation of new flower planters to the Four Winds area



Sinn Féin leader in the Seanad, Niall Ó Donnghaile

Seanad supports Sinn Féin motion rejecting British ‘Travel Waiver’ requirement

The Seanad unanimously supported a Sinn Féin Motion rejecting outright the proposal by the British Government in their ‘Nationality and Borders Act’, that non-Irish and non-British citizens travelling from the South into the North will have to apply for a US-style electronic travel waiver.

Speaking after the debate, Sinn Féin’s Leader in the Seanad, Niall Ó Donnghaile said;

“The British Government’s Nationality and Borders Bill has serious implications for the free movement of non-Irish and non-British citizens throughout Ireland.

“It will impact tourists, students, workers and communities.

“In relation to tourism in particular, we need to remember that the tourism industry is on its knees as a result of the pandemic. It cannot take the unwanted imposition of this so-called waiver. Tourism Ireland’s research has continuously confirmed that hassle and expense are key deterrents for travellers when choosing their holiday destination and, therefore, consumer perception on ease of travel is paramount.

“On an industry-wide level, Tourism Ireland estimates the introduction and associated ETA costs could be £160 million and affect more than 500,000 visitors. Derry, in particular, because of its Border proximity could be hit hard. Key visitor attractions could also be hit. It is obvious on any sensible rule of thumb that this Act should not have become law, should not be implemented and that the Irish Government should use its high standing and status in the international community to mobilise international opinion to convince the British Government to bin it.

“I hope, as the motion calls on him to do, that the Minister will lead strongly in mobilising international pressure and opposition to ensure that Ireland and our people, workers, students, communities and valued visitors are all protected from the potential impact of this British Government legislation.”

Bodenstown

'AN ALL-IRELAND CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY IS NECESSARY'

On Sunday 19 June the sun shone brightly down on the many republicans who had travelled to Sallins, in County Kildare, to participate in the first Bodenstown commemoration in recent years. The island of Ireland is replete with monuments, statues, gravesides and speaks special places where those who fought for Irish freedom and independence are remembered.

Bodenstown holds a special place in all of this. Bodenstown graveyard holds the family plot of Theobald Wolfe Tone. It is where his body was brought after his death in British custody in Arbour Hill, Dublin, on 19 November 1798. His graveside has been a special place of pilgrimage and on the nearest Sunday to 20 June, Tone's birthday, republicans gather. This year the main speaker was Sinn Féin Leas Uachtarán and First Minister designate Michelle O'Neill.

In her speech Michelle O'Neill set out our primary political objectives; "an end to partition, an end to the union with Britain, the construction of a new national democracy - a New Ireland - and the reconciliation of our people."

She said: "We have never been closer than we are now, to achieving our objectives. Ireland is changing. And the demand for change is growing in every town, village and city on our island. Ireland needs republican politics now more than ever. The politics of fairness and hope. And the politics for prosperity and equality for all... Sinn Féin's vision for a new society is better than anything that has come before."

Commenting on the impact of the Assembly

election in May the First Minister designate said; "The people of the North gave Sinn Féin an overwhelming endorsement for our vision for change, and the future. Our performance reflects changing public attitudes and the progressive shift in politics on our island. Irrespective of religious, political or social backgrounds our commitment is to make politics work through partnership, co-operation and delivery working with others who want progress. Sinn Féin wants to work together with others to deliver for people."

Commenting on the impact of Brexit and the actions of the British government and of the DUP Michelle O'Neill said: "The outworking of Brexit and the decision of the DUP to support it; the shift in the balance of power at Stormont, the irreversible loss of the unionist political majority and their perpetual veto has created a political landscape which many within the leadership of the DUP and the Tory party seem incapable of reconciling themselves to.

We know that the Protocol is being used by political unionism to undermine the Good Friday Agreement.

The reality is that the Protocol is working, and that Boris Johnson is incapable of accepting in a straightforward, honest and truthful way that this is the case... It is not taken lightly that this British Government discards international law at a whim in such a reckless way, and only ever in their own selfish interests... a majority of those MLAs recently elected support the Protocol

because it is working, giving us continued access to the European single market, creating jobs and providing economic benefits."

The Leas Uachtarán of Sinn Féin warned that the "Good Friday Agreement is under a full-frontal attack and that the human rights framework on which citizens and society at large rely is being grossly undermined. The Tory government has abandoned any pretence of "rigorous impartiality" in the discharge of their responsibilities. Its approach represents a head-on collision with the Good Friday Agreement, and importantly everyone who cherishes, values and depends on it across this island, and beyond." She also said: "This is a defining moment for our politics and for all of our people. It presents us all with an exciting opportunity to re-imagine relationships in this society on the basis of fairness, equality and social justice. As a First Minister for All I intend to work with those from all political perspectives, through partnership - not division.

I want to create as much opportunity for our young people in Ballymurphy, as I do for those on children and young people on the Shankill Road.

I want to get to work now, and deliver on the cost of living crisis bearing down on people.

I am very proud of our place on this island, and these islands, which is a rich tapestry of languages, a vast heritage and cultures, including the orange, green and rainbow of cultures, and multiculturalism.

The scale of what has been accomplished since



the advent of the Good Friday Agreement twenty-four years ago has resulted in the transformation our society ... This includes advancing peace and reconciliation, and eradicating the cancer of sectarianism in our society.

Michelle O'Neill expressed her firm belief that within this decade there will be an opportunity to achieve constitutional change. She said; "We must plan for Ireland's future beyond this Brexit chaos. Brexit has, and continues to be, a huge catalyst for constitutional change, and will undoubtedly lead to the ending of the Union with Britain.

A stark choice has opened up between the narrow, inward-looking vision of Brexit Britain and the open, inclusive vision of a New Ireland. Many of those of a British or unionist identity are now considering the merits of reunification- not to become republicans, but to remain European. I firmly believe that within this decade the people will have the freedom to freely choose new constitutional and political arrangements on this island, as underpinned by the provisions of self-determination in the Good Friday Agreement. Far from diluting the unionist tradition or British identity and culture in any future arrangements these rights like others must be guaranteed. Everyone who has a stake in this transformation from across this island must be involved in designing what shape that takes. There must be space created for mature dialogue where nobody feels they are being asked to compromise or surrender their identity or allegiance."

Concluding the First Minister designate said that the conversation about future constitutional change is not about victories. She said; "We want reunification not just for republicans, but for everyone. This is not about victories. This is about something better for us all.

- ▶▶ It's about re-entry back into the EU for all of Ireland.
- ▶▶ An Irish national health service, free at the point of entry.
- ▶▶ Meeting the challenge of the climate crisis on our island.
- ▶▶ An end to the duplication of public services.
- ▶▶ Maximising the full economic potential and opportunities for everyone who shares this island.

Consequently, there is a direct challenge and responsibility on the Irish



"We must plan for Ireland's future beyond this Brexit chaos. Brexit has, and continues to be, a huge catalyst for constitutional change, and will undoubtedly lead to the ending of the Union with Britain."

Government to plan for constitutional change, to avoid the dangers, jeopardy and pitfalls of the Brexit referendum in Britain.

This requires a structured dialogue led by the Government through an All-Ireland Citizen's Assembly. It should be established without further dithering and delay.

The decisions we make now will shape the direction of our country for the next generation.

To conclude, let me quote the great Wolfe Tone himself;

"From my earliest youth I have regarded the connection between Great Britain and Ireland as the curse of the Irish nation, and felt convinced that, whilst it lasted, this country could never be free nor happy.

Let's make this the moment we turn the tide for workers, for families and for Ireland. Let's make history.

ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE - Digging for the Future

Belfast City Council announced a Climate Emergency in 2019 and since then Council have worked with partners to reduce Belfast's net carbon emissions as quickly as possible. One way of doing this is through Council's Belfast One Million Trees project which aims to plant one million native trees across Belfast by 2035 in an effort to reduce carbon, improve air quality and reduce flooding.

Sinn Féin representatives have been proactively working to tackle climate change by helping to plant out a new orchard with school children and allotment volunteers at Musgrave Park on Stockman's Lane.

Councillor Geraldine McAteer said

"I think it's a brilliant idea to plant an orchard in Musgrave Park, which is one of the "green lungs" we have in the city. Woodlands Trust have donated hundreds of trees including 20 different species of Irish Heritage apple trees. It has been exciting to plant out these trees with very energetic local school children. Not only do they enjoy planting the trees, but they learn about outdoor management – how the trees support flood alleviation, boost pollination and help tackle climate change.

The children are literally doing a great job at digging for the future. When the trees begin to mature, the fruit will be free for people to pick, eat and cook.

City Council's Park Community Engagement Team have told me that planting the Orchard will save on cutting grass, which will in turn save on using petrol or diesel and reduce our carbon



Cllr Geraldine McAteer and Deirdre Hargey MLA at Musgrave Park

footprint".

Deirdre Hargey MLA and Cllr McAteer also joined Allotment volunteers at Musgrave Park to dig in more trees at the new orchard. Deirdre Hargey MLA said, "I want to congratulate Council staff, the Woodlands Trust, teachers, pupils and allotment volunteers for their hard work and enthusiasm – they are very inspirational. So much so, that I will be back with some local residents to help plant more trees to see if we can boost the One Million Tree target in south Belfast.

Gormley welcomes creation of new pedestrian crossing

South Belfast Sinn Féin Councillor John Gormley has welcomed the installation of a new pedestrian crossing on Belfast's Lower Ormeau Road.

"In April 2021 and again in August 2021 I wrote to the Minister for infrastructure setting out the case for a new pedestrian crossing on the Lower Ormeau Road in front of the Brickworks development at 163 Ormeau Road (opposite Farnham Street).

"I pointed out that a lot of people cross the Ormeau Road at this location, without the safety of a pedestrian crossing, to access shops and other services. The opening up of the new housing development at the Brickworks (between Rugby Avenue and University Avenue) has increased this pedestrian



traffic, and I highlighted the large number of young children who live in the Brickworks and frequently cross the Ormeau Road. Many have family connections, friends and childcare living in the streets directly across the Ormeau Road.

"I said that residents of the area regularly witness 'near misses' as people – young and old – dodge the traffic to cross the road.

"I was delighted when the Minister contacted me in September 2021 to confirm that my proposal for a new crossing had been accepted.

"It's great to see the new crossing finally coming into operation and I know that it will be widely welcomed as an important contribution to road safety in the area."

Cllr John Gormley at the new pedestrian crossing on the Lower Ormeau Road



Hargey supporting families and workers with cost of living

The cost of living is out of control and workers and families are under real financial pressure. It comes to no surprise that the inaction of the Tory Governments in London and Dublin have been rendered incapacitated by their crony style politics which puts profit over the helping normal people in this time of crisis.

No one should ever face the choice between putting food on the table or paying an essential bill and Sinn Féin in government has taken measures to ensure that workers and families across the North are getting the support they need to enter work, pay bills and put money in the pocket for those who need it most.

To help young families back into work, Deirdre Hargey created a scheme which meant that young parents would get financial support with childcare covering the cost of £1500 for people starting employment who is claiming Universal Credit. This has removed a crucial economic barrier for working class people particularly women into starting their career without worry of a huge initial cost.

In the time of rising bills, the cost of internet access can be daunting for many people particularly young people starting work as we have moved into the world of online applications and zoom job interviews. Deirdre has launched a scheme that will cover the costs of internet bills for job seekers. Digital exclusion has been one of the inequalities thrown into sharper focus by the Covid-19 pandemic and these measures will ensure that all people are supported with changes to our way of life.

Despite the current deadlock caused by DUP intransigence, Deirdre Hargey has worked to ensure much needed direct cost of living payments of up to £650 will be given to those most in need. The payments will be made to those on income-related and disability benefits, as well as pensioners. However, Deirdre said the funding does not go far enough "Many people are struggling, including workers and families who are not eligible for benefits," she said. "The absence of a functioning Executive and no budget in place makes the challenge of dealing with these issues all the greater. Sinn Féin wants to form a government for all to put money in the pockets of workers and families who are struggling."

Thousands on the streets of Belfast demanding an Acht Gaeilge

Bhí na mílte daoine ar shráideanna Bhéal Feirste le gáirid ag éileamh cur i bhfeidhm Acht Gaeilge.

There was 20,000 people on the streets of Belfast recently demanding the implementation of the agreed Acht Gaeilge legislation. SF joined with the thousands of Gaeilgeoirí, families and Activists to demand the implementation of the legislation. This was one of the biggest turnouts for a demonstration in Belfast for many years and the organisers are to be commended for the festival / family-friendly feeling of the event.

In the face of repeated blockages from the DUP, Sinn Féin negotiated with the then SOS in the summer of last year, that Acht Gaeilge Legislation would be legislated in Westminster.

SF have stood with Pobal na Gaeilge at every turn over the last few decades and SF will continue as we see the legislation implemented and measures and objectives set out by the incoming Commissioner.

Sinn Féin First Minister Designate, Michelle O'Neill, remarked on the introduction of the legislation to Westminster,

"Gaeilgeoirí have waited over 15 years for the British government to live up to its promises and deliver Acht, they shouldn't have to wait a day longer.

"It's also good news that An Ciste Infheistíochta Gaeilge will receive £4 million of funding to continue to assist and develop Irish language communities and projects and create jobs.

"It's important that we now see the Irish Language Act delivered to give official recognition of the Irish language in this state, appoint An Comisínéir Teanga, repeal draconian laws preventing the use of Irish in our courts and ensure that people can access public services through Irish."



Small business consultation UNDER PRESSURE

Lisnasharragh Representative Stevie Jenkins has been engaging with a number of businesses on the Ormeau road regarding the issues they have been facing with the heightened cost of living and how it is impacting businesses in the area.

“Since the May election, we have been busy following up with constituents’ issues picked up on the doorstep. One issue raised continuously was the cost-of-living crisis, not only in homes, but in local small businesses.”

The collapse of the Executive by the DUP over the protocol has concerned people as it means that without a functioning government a long term plan to address these issues cannot be put into place. Sinn Féin is now the largest party in the executive and understand that support is needed urgently.”

Jenkins adds “ Indeed, a number of food outlets have not survived the post-Covid economic crisis. With this in mind, the Communities Minister, Deirdre Hargey and I have visited several of our establishments. The consistent message is that products are now dearer from wholesalers, utilities are more expensive, and fewer customers are coming through the door. It is a perfect storm. It is perhaps, the classic example of the urgency of getting a fully-functioning Executive up and running immediately. Only around the Executive table can Ministers come up with collective mitigations. In the interim, the evidence-gathering continues. We are listening and ready to engage.”



Lisnasharragh Sinn Féin representative Stevie Jenkins with Deirdre Hargey MLA

Improvements to Strand Walk interface

Mairéad O’Donnell has called on Alliance’s Minister for Justice to act upon residents wishes to re-image heavy fortified fencing directly in front of their homes, along Strand Walk.

Ms O’Donnell said “The environmental improvements along Strand Walk have been of great benefit to the residents who live here. This was an area that was neglected for some time now. With overgrown bushes, broken brick work and heavy fencing, it had become somewhat of a dumping ground”

Works carried out by Housing Executive have included clearing out dead shrubbery, repairing of



Sinn Féin representative Mairéad O’Donnell at the Strand Walk

brickwork and resurfacing of grassed areas. Along with new lighting along this pathway and freshly painted railings, this area is much brighter, cleaner and greener.

While residents have welcomed these

improvements there remains an outstanding piece of work to be carried out by Dept, for Justice. This will involve the relocating of heavy fortified fencing, directly in front of some residents homes.

“I have been meeting with statutory agencies, including Department of Justice for some time now in relation to improvements along this area. While DoJ had previously consulted residents, there now appears to be a stalling on their behalf to conclude the last phase of works”

“Residents here have been waiting for a number of years to have these works completed and I am calling on Alliance’s Justice Minister to instruct her department to carry out this much needed improvement.”

Carlin congratulates Carryduff Colts on fantastic Cross Community Cup

Local Sinn Féin Councillor Ryan Carlin was delighted to attend the Carryduff Colts Cross Community Cup at Lough Moss in June along with South Belfast MLA and Communities Minister Deirdre Hargey.

Over 150 boys and girls teams attended from all communities across the north to compete in the Cross Community competition with the Carryduff club organising a family fun day of football, BBQ and refreshments.

"Carryduff Colts have delivered again this year with a fantastic, inclusive, community day of sport." Said Councillor Carlin. "It was great to be invited to attend along with MLA Deirdre Hargey and again support the fantastic work of the Carryduff Colts and their Committee."

"It was great to see council facilities at Lough Moss being used for such a brilliant event and discuss with the club members the critical need for better facilities at Lough Moss and the delivery of the planned multi-sport 3G Pitch at Lough Moss leisure centre."



Cllr Ryan Carlin and Deirdre Hargey MLA at Lough Moss

STREET CLEANSING AND BIN COLLECTIONS Council Task Force to be established

Ensuring that bins are collected on time and streets are clean is a basic responsibility of Belfast City Council, yet in recent months there have been a number of challenges in the effective delivery of cleansing services in the city. Balmoral Sinn Féin Councillor Geraldine McAteer has met with City Council managers on bin collection days to find out what the problems have been in Balmoral and identify solutions.

"It's my firm view that people pay their rates and they are entitled to get their bins collected – and to be informed if there are going to be problems with collections. In the current financial climate when prices are soaring, people expect to have the service that they are paying hard-earned money for delivered on time.

I have been getting a lot of complaints from residents in Richmond, Beechmount and Marguerite Parks and Diamond Gardens who are very frustrated about the missed bin collections. They do appreciate that we have major construction of sewerage pipes in the area which will ultimately alleviate the flooding in this district but there appear to be consistent problems with bin collections in other parts of Balmoral in which there is no construction going on. I thought it was important to meet with all the key people on site to see what exactly the issues are and how they can be addressed.

I have met with both the engineering Project Manager on site at Diamond Gardens to look at ways in which bin lorries can



Cllr Geraldine McAteer

be facilitated in the area and I met a Council cleansing Department Manager on site at 8.30.a.m. when bins were being collected. As we walked around the area, he explained that there are very narrow street corners to get 35ft bin lorries around and this is made impossible if some cars happen to be parked out on the street.

We discussed getting smaller bin lorries on collection days and getting greater co-operation from DfI, residents and local businesses around where cars and lorries are parked on bin collection

mornings".

Sinn Féin has called on a cross-party Cleansing Task Force to be established at Belfast City Council, chaired by Lord Mayor, Tina Black. The Task Force will consider Improved service delivery structures, street inspectors, increased staffing levels, additional fleet, for example smaller bin lorries and better communication with citizens. This was supported at Council People and Communities Committee by Cllr McAteer:

"Having clean neighbourhoods is a necessity for our ratepayers and this council must do everything in our power to address this issue. Regular bin collections are vitally important to the health and wellbeing of our citizens; however, large numbers of streets are being missed on a weekly basis. The Cleansing Task Force will consist of elected members from each party, senior management, cleansing management and convened by the Mayor. We must use everything at our disposal to resolve this problem".

Lavinia Square and Mews developments

Sinn Féin Councillor John Gormley has welcomed recent developments and commitments by Clanmil Housing Association to improve Lavinia Square and Lavinia Mews. "Over the last year I have been working closely with LORAG (the Lower Ormeau Residents' Action Group) and Clanmil on a number of issues and it is good to see progress being made on these.

"The grass verges in front of some of the houses in Lavinia Mews had become very badly cut up by parked cars. Muddy puddles were forming when it rained, causing a lot of grief for residents as mud was being walked into their houses. Clanmil have now laid tarmac along Lavinia Mews to resolve the problem, and residents are very happy with the outcome.

"Clanmil have also improved access to the central pathway through Lavinia meaning that the Council sweeper vehicle can now get access to the pathway to clean it. The cleaning of this pathway has been problematic for some time and I hope that the improved access will lead in turn to an improved cleaning regime for the pathway."

Councillor Gormley has also talked to LORAG and Clanmil about the signage at the entrance to Lavinia. "This signage has fallen into disrepair and is now an eyesore. Many residents have raised it as an issue. It gives a poor first impression to visitors and needs replaced with a new boundary wall and new signage. Clanmil have agreed to bring forward options for discussion and consideration and I look forward to reviewing these."

"I would like to congratulate Lavinia residents for making Lavinia such a pleasant place to live and I will continue to work with Clanmil and LORAG to support their efforts."



Sinn Féin representative Mairéad O'Donnell

Mairéad O'Donnell calls on Translink to live up to their commitments

Sinn Féin's Mairéad O'Donnell has said "Translink had stated as far back as the early 2000s their intention to relocate from their depot within the Short Strand.

This allowed the local community to begin planning for the best community use of the site.

However, in recent years Translink have reneged on that commitment stating that the financial cost to relocate would be too great."

"I am calling on the Chief Executive of Translink to demonstrate Translink's commitment to building a cleaner, greener environment by relocating their depot outside of our community. It is immoral that a corporate organisation such as Translink will put the profits of their company before the lives and legitimate aspiration of our residents"

"Translink's Vision Statement states that 'We are responsible for our actions. We are good neighbours and corporate citizens in the communities where we operate'

Mairéad O'Donnell went on to say "It is now well past the time for Translink to display willingness to their closest neighbours, that is the residents of Short Strand"

"I have extended an invitation to Minister for Infrastructure John O'Dowd and Communities Minister, Deirdre Hargey to meet with community representatives, to put to them the Vision of this community and push forward with the relocation of Translink's Short Strand Bus Depot so that this site could be brought into community use for much needed housing and community facilities.

Cherryvale playing fields crossing secured

A long standing Sinn Féin grassroots campaign finally was got over the line with support from other parties in Belfast City Council. Lisnasharragh representative Stevie Jenkins born and raised on the Ormeau road was delighted the work that he and team Sinn Féin had done on this issue finally bore fruit.

“In 2016, when I became the Sinn Féin rep for the area I grew up in, my first campaign was to get a solid safe crossing at the main entrance. I had seen too many near-misses. It was only a matter of time. The cumann and I leafleted to garner support and collected 980 signatures which we submitted to the Department for Infrastructure. We then held a public meeting on the issue in the Good Shepherd Parish Centre where a number of key stakeholders offered their views. Finally, we invited the Department to meet us face-to-face. Mairtín Ó Muilleoir and I hosted them and showed them the site. The spadework was done.”

Stevie volunteers time coaching football in the area and takes parts in local runs both of which shown him the necessity of ensuring community safety in accessing what is a busy playing fields with sports of all codes featuring in the lives of residents from all over South Belfast.



Cllr John Gormley and Lisnasharragh Sinn Féin representative Stevie Jenkins



DEIRDRE HARGEY WELCOMES GASWORK HOUSING PROGRESS

Belfast city council has approved the next stage of planning permission for 94 social homes on the Gasworks site. This is the largest inner city housing project in generations and will be of great benefit for the community who have fought for housing inequality to be addressed for decades.

Hargey states “This has been down to the hard work on the ground over many years in the residents led campaign with community & political activists”. Deirdre Hargey and John

Gormley have stood with residents in both the Market and Lower Ormeau for the right to residents to live in the inner city to not be priced out by big business and developers and to secure the right of future generations of working-class families to live in the city.

Sinn Féin are dedicated to securing homes for all workers and families being priced out by this current housing crisis. As Minister for Communities, Deirdre has launched a scheme to build 100,000 homes over 15 years and to create the

largest house building project in the housing executive in 50 years.

Deirdre stated “Access to a safe and secure home is a basic human right – I have set out how I will build quality homes where they are needed” and says that the experience of those frozen out of housing due to the crisis needs are a priority “by engaging with those people who are in housing need. This approach is built on the principle that those who are most affected by poor housing are best placed to help design or redesign it.”

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£20,000

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100th anniversary of the execution of Liam Mellows, Rory O'Connor, Joe McKelvey and Richard Barrett



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