

# INDEPENDENT LIMERICK

Newsletter of Independent Community Candidate Cathal McCarthy

## TAKE BACK THIS CITY

**We live in a country that has more private golf courses than children's playgrounds; this is a reflection of the society that was created during the 'boom' years.**

The so-called 'Celtic Tiger' was a wild animal that inspired a culture of greed, which has permeated every level of society.

Those who engage in serious criminal and anti-social behaviour are at the bottom. At the top, we have: politicians, greedy developers, speculators and bankers, all engaged in anti-Community and anti-Family behaviour. They have enslaved young couples and Families into paying for houses that were overvalued and require two wages to cover the mortgage.

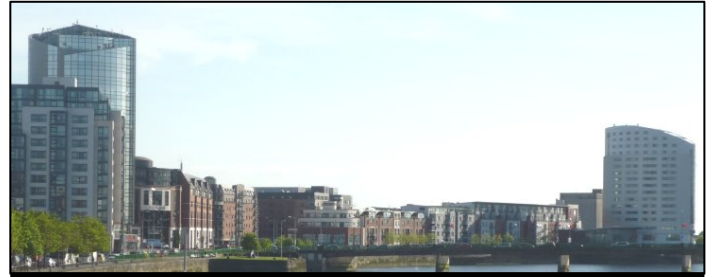
Our City's reputation has been continuously damaged by 'watershed' after 'watershed' and on top of all our problems we now have to contend with job losses of an unprecedented scale.

Our Council is corrupt; it is under resourced and failing to serve the needs of our Communities. It is being micro-managed by central government and our Councillors are not speaking out, especially when it comes to regeneration and the developer's agenda it promotes.

This City is the sum of all its parts and the regeneration of our troubled estates should not be done to the detriment of our more settled areas and county suburbs. Displacing people is not a realistic solution. We need to tackle the problems head on.

We were promised a dedicated Garda Service for the regeneration areas in the *Fitzgerald Report*. This never happened. Instead, our politicians began counting Gardaí as they came into the Limerick Division without any regard as to how they were deployed. The Limerick Division covers the City, the County and parts of Co. Clare.

Meanwhile, law-abiding residents in the regeneration areas are left defenceless. Anti-social behaviour and



New Limerick: our City has never looked nicer, but it is frayed at the edges; our Communities are not listened to

illegal dumping are rife. Without the promised "highly visible Garda presence at all times" to deter such activities and restore "confidence and stability", decent people are 'choosing' to leave and forfeit their right to a new house in the newly regenerated area.

Limerick City Council, with instructions and funding from Dublin, is implementing this depopulation process in order to clear the land for developers while our Councillors remain silent.

Homeowners, most of whom are elderly, are being bought out for a pittance and turned back into tenants. They are getting the 'market rate' we are told.

Is this how we treat our most vulnerable residents; allowing their areas to be deliberately run down, leaving them defenceless and then cheating them out of their property rights? Is this the kind of society you want to live in?

....Continued overleaf



### - A NOTE TO VOTERS -

I will be calling to your door in the coming weeks asking for your Number 1 vote.

I am distributing my Newsletter in advance of my calling, to give you an idea of my views

and campaign issues. If you are out when I call, but would like to meet me or if you would like to help me canvass your area, then please contact me on 087 29 29 676

I look forward to meeting you - Cathal McCarthy

In its haste to depopulate, Limerick City Council has also displaced some troubled or 'at risk' Families, denying them the opportunity of social regeneration and leaving other Communities to endure their dysfunctional behaviour.

Such is the impact of this displacement that we now have Communities in our county suburbs calling for their own dedicated Garda service.

Now more than ever, we need to strengthen our Communities if we are to survive the global economic depression. The current model of regeneration is not sustainable. It never was to begin with. It is dependent on the sale of private houses and apartments to fund the social & affordable housing and Community facilities. Given that we are faced with massive job losses, who will be able to afford to buy these over-priced houses and apartments?

Our government, with its banker and developer pals, is hoping that the property market will 'recover' in the next three years and our false economy can be re-inflated. Depopulation is the order of the day.

This culture of greed needs to be challenged. We need a regeneration centred on Community needs. We need our Council to work for Communities and Families, not developers and bankers. Our City needs to be more than just a nice place to look at or visit; it needs to be a great place to live and raise a Family.

There will be many promises made during this election. If I were to promise you that once elected I could rid the City of crime, bring economic stability and that we'd all live happily ever after, I would be lying. Change does not come easy; it takes hard work and commitment.

I can promise you to work hard and commit myself full-time to making your voice heard in Limerick City Council. I have not been, and I will not be silent.

This year is the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Limerick Soviet, when the people of Limerick challenged the might of an Empire and ran this City for the common good. Ninety years on, and it is time to make our voices heard again.

Think long and hard about who you are going to vote for – you can change this City for the better. You have the power. I'm calling on you to take to the polling station and vote!

Make June 5<sup>th</sup> Limerick's Independent's Day!

Together, we can work to **take back this City** for Communities, **take back this City** for Families and **take back this City** for law-abiding Residents.

– Cathal McCarthy  
Independent Community Candidate



Here I am pictured with Fr. Joe Young in January 2008, when we issued a joint statement on regeneration and Community policing.

I first met Fr. Joe in October 2007 after he contacted me to say thanks for defending him in the *Limerick Leader* and the *Irish Examiner*.

Our then Mayor had accused Fr. Joe of "giving Limerick a bad name" because he had spoken out about the exodus from Southill of residents escaping criminal and anti-social behaviour.

Thankfully, Fr. Joe is one priest that will never take a 'vow of silence' when it comes to injustice and will always try to lend himself to a solution.

## FREE DETOX FOR HEROIN ADDICTS

There is a serious drugs crisis in our City that is not being properly addressed. This is not just "a matter for the Gardaí"; it is a social problem that needs urgent intervention. Much of our 'petty' crime is drug fuelled yet there is no detox centre in Limerick.

I will be actively supporting Fr. Joe Young's initiative to help addicts leave their environment and get free detox & rehabilitation with the *Community Cenacolo* at centres in Portugal, France and Italy.

The *Community Cenacolo* was started in Saluzzo in the North of Italy in 1983 by a nun called Sr. Elvira. Sr. Elvira was concerned by the destruction she saw among young people through drug abuse and she felt called by God to help them. Although a religious organisation, there is no obligation on addicts to convert or have religious beliefs to avail of their detox programme.

### Community Cenacolo Information Sessions

**Venue:** Pastoral Centre, St. Michael's Courtyard, Denmark Street, Limerick

**Date:** Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May

**3.00pm:** This session is for heroin addicts

**7.30pm:** This session for the parents of heroin addicts

# Party Politics, No Thanks!

*My Priority is You!*

Cross-Party animosities have corrupted Irish politics and this election seems to be driven more by personalities than it is by policies. I do not serve a political party; I will serve you. I will be An **Independent Voice** for your Community  
**Regeneration:** The regeneration of our troubled estates is not being done to the benefit of law-abiding residents. I will promote a regeneration centred on Community needs and social justice.

**Safety & Security:** I will campaign for the establishment of Garda sub-stations in areas most affected by anti-social behaviour. I will continue to call for the hiring of security personnel to monitor CCTV cameras on the Southside. Presently, these cameras are not monitored at all.

**Drugs Crisis:** There is a serious drugs crisis in our City that is not being properly addressed. I will actively campaign for the establishment of a detox centre.

**Housing:** All standard housing should be affordable. One wage should be enough to keep a roof over your head. I will campaign for more affordable housing. Families become fractured when both parents are forced to work.

**Tenants Enforcement:** The remit of the Tenants Enforcement office should be extended to deal with the problem of private landlords renting to tenants that engage in anti-social behaviour and give legal support to local residents. More officers should be employed.

**Waste Management:** There are only 37 staff employed by our Council's Cleansing Department, none of them are under 55yrs. As members retire they are not being replaced. I will oppose the deliberate undermining of this essential Public Service. I will promote a new approach to waste-management that pays people to re-cycle.

**Council Meetings:** I will campaign for more accountability and transparency on Limerick City Council by proposing that all Council meetings be broadcast live on the Internet.

**Public Transport:** We need a more efficient public transport system. I am opposed to the introduction of Bus Lanes where it interferes with residential parking.

**Bin Waiver:** I will work for Freedom of choice in the Bin Waiver Scheme. At the moment, one company holds a monopoly on bin waivers.

## **My Personal Details:**

**Surname:** McCarthy.

**Christian Names:** Cathal Gerard Joseph.

**Date of Birth:** 21 May 1970

**Address:** 5 Weston Gardens, Rosbrien, Limerick.

**Family:** I live with my partner, Cindy. We have two children, Cathal Óg (7) and Ruairí (5½).

**Occupation:** Web Designer, I also work in the building trade, advertising as *Odd Job Contractors*.

**Interests:** Politics, History, Cinema and Music

## The Lisbon Treaty: A Step Too Far

Last June, the Irish people decisively rejected the Lisbon Treaty. And we had good reason to do so. The Lisbon Treaty would have transferred more power from the people to a powerful and un-elected elite in Brussels. It would have reduced Ireland's influence in the EU, threatened our public services, allowed abortion on demand to be foisted on the Irish people and committed the EU to greater military spending.

By our vote, the Irish people rejected the transformation of the EU into a federal European superstate. The result was victory for popular sovereignty, social solidarity, the unborn child and peace. Because of our constitution, Bunreacht na hÉireann, the Irish people were the only people in Europe to hold a referendum. Other European peoples wanted to have a referendum but their governments wouldn't let them. This was because the French and Dutch people originally rejected the Treaty in referenda when it was presented to them as the EU Constitution in 2005.

Although I am a candidate in the Local Election, the Lisbon Treaty is not just a European issue; it will impact locally, nationally and internationally. Since our rejection of this Treaty last year, our government and the major opposition parties have gone to great lengths to convince people that the No vote was a rejection of Europe and even tried to claim that it contributed to the economic downturn. This is simply not true. Now our government will ask us to vote again. Why are they so keen?

The Lisbon Treaty is a great deal for politicians; they will have less to do for the same pay, all they'll have to do is import legislation from Brussels.

As a pro-lifer I have serious concerns about the Lisbon Treaty facilitating the introduction of abortion on demand to Ireland by way of a legal challenge in the European Courts, but this is not my only concern. This Treaty takes power away from the people and places it in the hands of un-elected EU officials. It would make our Constitution, Bunreacht na hÉireann, obsolete.

Our government claims to have received guarantees on abortion, privatisation and our neutrality, but these guarantees aren't worth the paper they're written on. They are political promises – and we all know what they are worth. The Lisbon Treaty remains unchanged.

I have read the abridged version of the Treaty (the only version made available) and it's a challenging read to say the least, full of legalese and referrals to other treaties. Our own Constitution has 50 Articles that are easy to read and understand. If Europe needs a new Treaty, then it should contain articles of association that clearly define the relationship between member states, while respecting our Constitution, democracy and the diversity of the different members. Keep power at home. Vote NO to Lisbon.

# WASTE MANAGEMENT? WHAT WE NEED IS: **A MEAN GREEN RECYCLING MACHINE**

There is a serious problem with waste management in this country. Limerick is no exception. Aside from the obvious issue of illegal dumping, there is also the individual public offence of littering.

How do we encourage such individuals to take responsibility for their rubbish? When I was a child you used to get money back for glass bottles. What if people got money back for recycling? Is this possible?

Yes it is! My good friend and neighbour, Darren Maher put me on to this. It is common in many European countries, especially Finland. Below, Darren demonstrates how it works. If elected to Limerick City Council, I will campaign to have such a system piloted in Limerick.

**STEP 1:** Bring your bottles, cans and plastics to the machine, which is located next to the supermarket and deposit them.



**STEP 2:** The machine scans the barcode on your recyclables and when you're finished it prints out a receipt that you can spend in the supermarket.



## SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESS

Now, more than ever, we need to support local business. As an Independent Candidate in the local elections, I am proud to say that all my election material was produced not just in Limerick, but also by Independent businesses in my native Southside constituency.

### **10,000 Newsletters:**

Produced by Docucentre, 47 O'Connell Street, Limerick City. Tel: (061) 410 566

### **10,000 Leaflets:**

Produced by CE Printing, Kilmallock Road Industrial Estate Limerick City. Tel: (061) 600 702

### **50 Posters:**

Produced by SignLynx, Eastlink Business Park, Ballysimon Road, Limerick City. Tel: (061) 603 786

### **Promotional Photography:**

Taken by Egleston Bros. Leopold House, O'Connell Avenue, Limerick City. Tel: (061) 413 886

### **Ballot Paper Photographs:**

Formatted by Whelan Cameras, 30 O'Connell Street, Limerick City. Tel: (061) 415 216

It is sad to think that despite all the rhetoric about supporting local business being trumpeted by the political parties, none of their candidates saw fit to produce their election material locally.

## REGENERATION: An Interesting Little Fact

### **Many estates are now part of the Southside Regeneration Area without realising it.**

An amendment to the Limerick Regeneration (Establishment) Orders (S.I. No.275/276 of 2007) was passed by the Dáil in May 2008, which included an additional Article, defining the Agency's remit with deposited maps.

For some reason, these maps are not available on the Agency's website, even though the amendment states *"the Agency shall make copies of the deposited map available for inspection by members of the public at all reasonable times at its offices, and shall also publish the map on the Internet."*

**In the Southside:** Georgian Village, Kennedy Park, Glasgow Park, Rathbane, Ryans Cottages, Donnellan's Buildings, Hayden villas, Weston Villas, Rosbrien Terrace, Punches Close and most of Roundwood in Rosbrien are all legally part of the Southside Regeneration Area.

These maps are a clear indication of the states long-term intent towards many Limerick estates that are not currently targeted for demolition.

# So, what does "regeneration" really mean?

The word regeneration means to revive, restore or rejuvenate, the renewal of lost parts. When "regeneration" comes on the agenda for housing estates, it generally means there are massive changes ahead for local residents and the surrounding areas. To date, the experience of regeneration of estates in Dublin tells us that some dramatic physical changes are planned.

It's not exactly the same in each estate, but in general what the Regeneration Agencies and Limerick City Council aim to do goes along the following lines:

- The area will be significantly depopulated and existing homes will be demolished to clear the land.
- Redevelopment of the land at a much higher density meaning more housing, apartment blocks and a substantial increase in population.
- Regenerated area will have a mix of private, affordable & public housing / apartments.
- Remaining residents will be re-housed either on site or in other places.

In short, the regeneration process involves:  
Depopulation – Demolition – Redevelopment.

The regeneration process takes years from start to finish. Here in Limerick it could be argued that regeneration started with the publication of the Fitzgerald Report in April 2007, when Limerick City Council began the depopulation phase. It is now anticipated that regeneration will be completed by 2018, although it will probably take longer because of the 'downturn' in the housing market.

In Dublin, the experience of St. Michael's Estate and similar regeneration projects like Fatima Mansions and Ballymun shows that substantial sections of the population leave the estate before the whole process of regeneration is finished. In Limerick the depopulation and demolition phase is being overseen by the City Council while the Regeneration Agency produce plans for redevelopment.

Most of the work will not be carried out directly by Limerick City Council in the traditional way; instead the Regeneration Agency will enter into a deal with a private developer, who will become the key driver of the project (this is called **public-private partnership (PPP)**, an approach encouraged by government since 2001.

The public housing and community facilities are funded mainly through the sale of private apartments and houses. Some new facilities may be developed, but what you get will ultimately depend on the deal that is struck between the Regeneration Agency and the private developer.

In May 2008 Dublin City Council shelved five regeneration projects when the PPP model collapsed as the developer pulled out, citing the downturn in the housing market. Two of the projects were on unoccupied sites and the others, (St Michael's Estate, O'Devaney Gardens and Dominic Street) were at an advanced stage in the process, with residents having signed off on plans and picked a developer in January 2007. Indeed, the residents of St. Michaels had agreed to the demolition of their estate back in 1998!

Some of the same people that oversaw the regeneration projects in Dublin are now overseeing the regeneration of Limerick. At the launch of the draft 'Master Plan' it was announced that regeneration would cost €3 Billion, with €1.3 Billion coming from private investors and €1.7 Billion coming from the government.

However, what most people don't realise is that most of that €1.7 Billion isn't cold hard cash; it's the value that has been placed on the land. So, if you're living in a regeneration area and wondering "is the money there?" wonder no more. The money is there all right; you're living on it!

Regeneration areas have deteriorated drastically in the past two years. Far from restoring "confidence and stability", anti-social behaviour waxes and wanes, illegal dumping is rife and the rats are thriving; encouraging people to leave. Why should residents have to wait for the housing market to 'recover' to see improvements in their area?

Another kind of regeneration, centred on social and Community needs, is possible - a Community Agenda. But that will depend on how well your Community can organise and act to influence the future of your estate.

I have recently established Limerick Regeneration Watch; a voluntary organisation made up of residents affected by the regeneration process.

We aim to empower residents to take ownership of the regeneration process and ensure that our rights are safeguarded. People have a right to live in a clean, safe and secure environment while awaiting regeneration. Get involved! Join Limerick Regeneration Watch today! Visit:

[www.LimerickRegeneration.org](http://www.LimerickRegeneration.org)

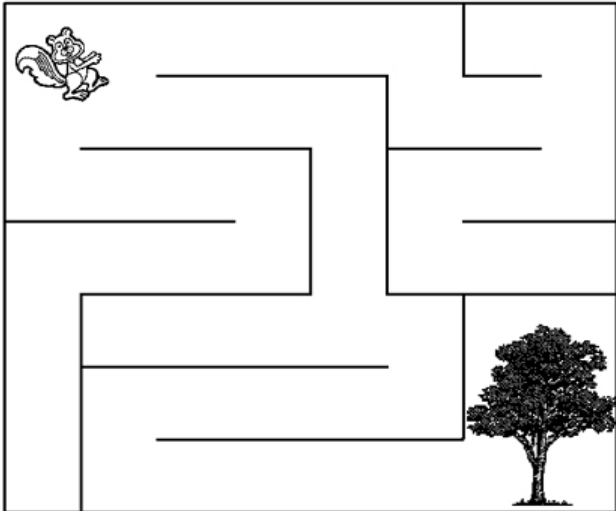
## A BROKEN PROMISE

**"Put in place intensive policing arrangements:** As a result of my consultations it has become clear that, although policing on its own cannot solve the problems in the long term, intensive policing intervention is required in the short to medium term **to allow the other interventions an opportunity to work.** This cannot happen against the continuing backdrop of crime and intimidation...**there needs to be a highly visible Garda presence at all times in these estates in order to restore confidence and stability in the communities.** A policing structure, headed by a Superintendent, should be established that is exclusively dedicated to the policing of these areas. **This will involve a minimum of 100 additional Gardaí,** with appropriate management structures, **whose sole function will be the policing of these areas."**

- Extract from the *Fitzgerald Report* (April 2007)

## THIS NEVER HAPPENED!

We live in a country that has more private golf courses than children's playgrounds. If elected, I will campaign for supervised playgrounds and more public amenities. I will also campaign for more amenities that cater for teenagers. In the meantime here's some fun for children of all ages to enjoy.



Help the squirrel to find the way home

### GOO: A RECIPE FOR FUN !

Try out this rainy day activity that's cheep and cheerful, real messy fun that cleans up very easily – a simple rinse, no soap required! A new experience to fuel the imagination. Hours of fun guaranteed! Suitable for ages 1 – 100.

#### Ingredients:

Corn flour  
Water  
Food Colouring (small amount)

#### Preparation:

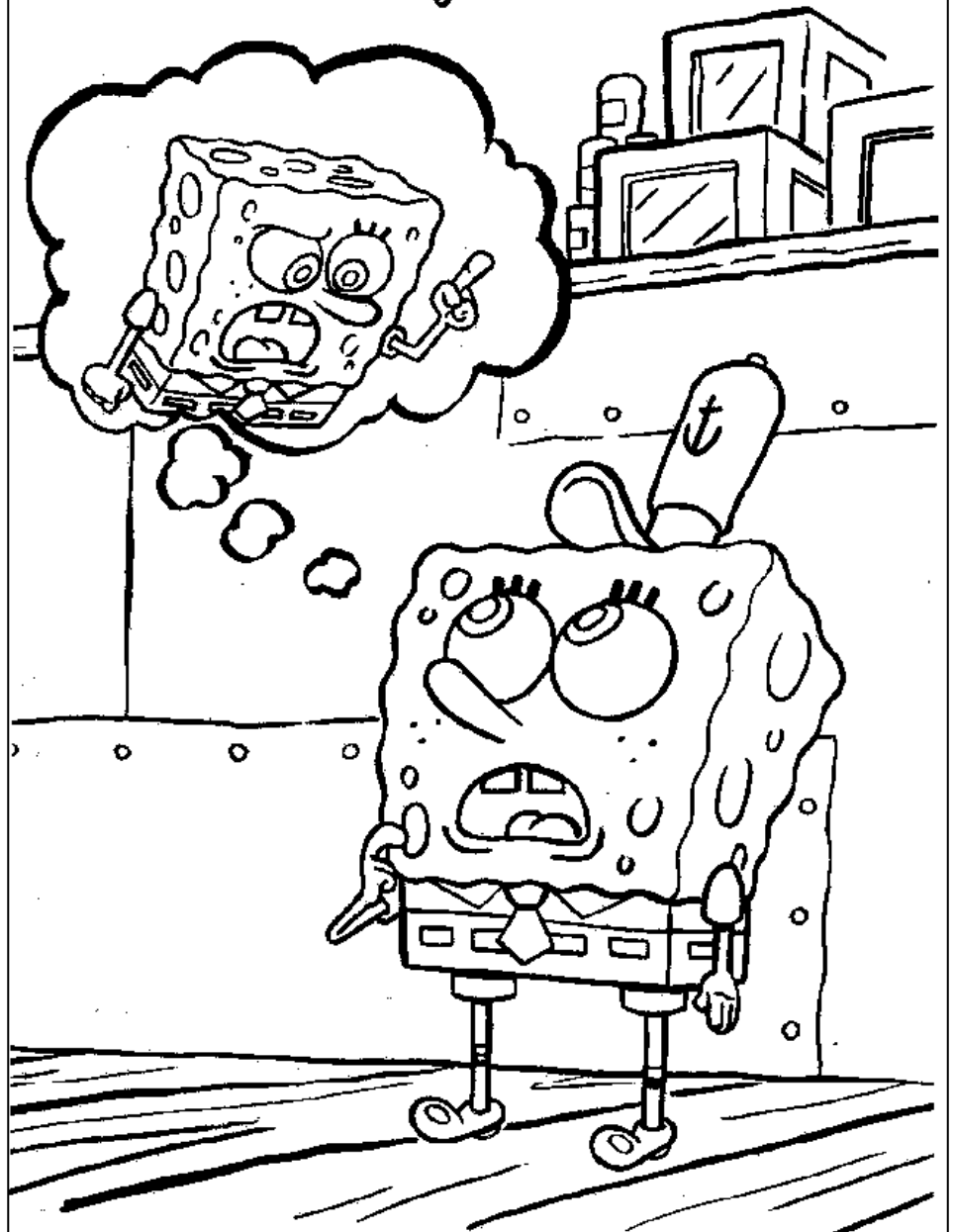
Clear kitchen table, roll up sleeves and provide some containers, small figurines / dolls to play in GOO.

#### Mixing:

Pour some corn flour into a plastic tub / basin. Add a small amount of water and food colouring and mix with a spoon. Repeat until mixture has a thick gluey consistency. When you scoop up a handful of GOO, it should be somewhat solid – let a lump of it rest in the palm of your hand and watch it liquefy and ooze away between your fingers – very satisfying!

GOO can be GREEN ALIEN SLIME, YELLOW QUICKSAND OR A PINK GOO DOLL BATH the possibilities are limited only by your imagination. HAVE FUN  
GOO also doubles up as non-toxic glue suitable for papier-mâché.

**“Stop thinking that way, soldier! You've got to find a way to win!”**



# An Independent Voice

On Saturday, February 28<sup>th</sup> 2009, I attended the first ever National Conference for Independent politicians. The conference was held in Athlone, the geographical centre of Ireland and was organised by Marian Harkin MEP and Kathy Sinnott MEP.

At the Conference I proposed the establishment of an **Independents Charter**, to explain to the voter the importance of direct representation and to demonstrate that Independents are a credible alternative to the party system, which has corrupted Irish politics. My proposal was well received and unanimously adopted by the Conference.

The strong criticism of the absence of leadership in national politics by Kathy Sinnott MEP, whose suggestion that cut backs should not damage the interests of the weakest and disadvantaged in society was unanimously supported.

From the first National Conference for independent politicians emerged concern at the way in which Irish society had deteriorated by taking the focus off the core requirement to protect the weak and the Family. *“There has to be a change to the excessive respect given to bankers and developers rather than to the real heroes like the St. Vincent de Paul, carers, and the other huge army of volunteers who increasingly will have to fill in for the deficiencies of government in the decades ahead”*, said Marian Harkin MEP.

Strong resentment was expressed at the conference concerning the polling regulations, which refused politicians the right to describe themselves as Independent Candidates on the ballot paper.

A unanimous resolution was passed criticising the level of coverage of Independent politicians by the national media and especially by RTE. *“As politicians who, on average, represent 10% of the electorate we receive only a fraction of the coverage afforded to a number of political parties with a smaller mandate and this is an unacceptable situation which must be addressed”*, said Finian McGrath TD.

Senator Joe O’Toole made the core point that politics was about service and that Independent politicians who responded to the needs of the community would be carrying on that noble tradition.

Leading economist, Professor Ray Kinsella also addressed the Conference *“The kind of decisions to be taken need to address the fundamental imbalances in the economy and also the need for a programme to restore confidence and creditability to Ireland’s standing within international markets”*, he said.



A section of the delegates attending the first ever Independents Conference. I’m pictured second from the left, back row next to Cllr. David O’Connor. Pictured in the front row are Kathy Sinnott MEP, Marion Harkin MEP, Finian McGrath TD and Catherine Murphy TD.

He added that the single most important set of policies should be those that directly supported the Family, which was the ultimate shock absorber in mitigating the effects of job losses and morale issues arising from a crisis whose scale and suddenness had traumatised society.

A minute’s silence was observed following tributes paid to the late Independent politician Tony Gregory TD. *“The fact that Tony did not wear a tie was a symbol of how he always remained part of his community and as such, was a role model for Independent politicians”*, said Marian Harkin MEP.

It was an honour to have been invited and to have my proposal adopted. Already, in Kildare, Laois and Leixlip, Independent Candidates are issuing joint statements. I believe that we are witnessing the birth of *A New Politics* in Ireland and I am proud to be a part of it. Below is my contribution.

## The Independent’s Charter

- To serve only the People and to directly represent the best interests of the Communities who elect me as their public representative.
- To uphold the democratic principles of Bunreacht na hÉireann and fulfil my duties in accordance with the Constitution and the law.
- To never join a political party or serve any other vested interests and to actively oppose the corruption of our Democracy by such vested interests.
- To only make allegiances with those who further the best interests of my constituents.
- To represent all of my constituents equally and to never, by my actions or omissions, betray the trust and good faith that has been placed in me.

On 16<sup>th</sup> April 2009 I led a delegation of residents from regeneration areas to Brussels to petition the EU on issues of anti-social behaviour and illegal dumping. When I made my appeal to the European Parliaments Committee on Petitions I was entitled to give MEP's and Commissioners additional written information. My handouts consisted of several documents in clear plastic envelopes. I asked that if they read anything at all that they should read the letter that I had placed face out at the back. I am asking you to do the same. If you read anything at all in this Newsletter, read this letter.



## THEY WRECKED OUR HOME AND LEFT US WITH NOTHING

I AM old now, old beyond my years. Exposure to violence, beatings, abandonment and abuse have scrawled lines on my heart and face that will never be removed. I am facing the end of my life with the most terrible memories suffered in city during our 'Tiger' years. Little did I think that my life would end like this.

It wasn't always so. It was a spring day in the early Seventies when I arrived in O'Malley Park with my husband and three children. It was a wonderful place, for us as young parents and the children. There was so much to do: we even had cycling outings, fancy-dress parades and of course bingo. The neighbours were great.

We eventually purchased our house from Limerick City Council. It was a great day: we had never dreamed that owning a house would be possible for us. Over the years we put in a new kitchen, heating system and double-glazed windows. We were so proud of it. The children had a good life there; they completed school, went to college, got jobs and started their own families.

But gradually our lives changed, with a growing level of violence. Stolen cars and the shattering of windows became the order of the day. But worse, certain families were targeted, for no apparent reason, and they faced a routine of horror. Bricks through the windows, cars reversing into your front garden wall and constant verbal abuse.

Little did I think that it would come to us. We had a mid terrace house, the house on one side was vacant. That house was broken into on one Easter Sunday and trashed. It was used for drug parties. Our neighbour on the other side was attacked the same year: she had bangers put through her letterbox and all her new specially re-enforced windows broken. After decades together, my neighbour left. Now our house stood alone between two derelict houses, one of which was put on fire, threatening our own.

Once I overheard the children being encouraged to break our windows and to attack us, I came out to plead with them to leave us alone. But that did not happen. Shortly after retiring my husband was pelted with stones. Another time, when I was coming back from the shop with messages, I was knocked to the ground and kicked around along with my messages. I was hurt but it was the laughter of the children doing it that frightened me most.

The wall of our front garden was constantly battered with cars, we had it either rebuilt or repaired six times. For two years I slept in my clothes just in case I had to leave suddenly during the night. We became prisoners.

The end came. Returning from a rare visit to our grandchildren, we found our house ransacked. All our medication was floating in urine in the kitchen sink. The Gardai came but had to leave quickly as their car was under attack. They never came back.

We begged every local and national politician. I can't say whether they listened or not, but no one ever did anything. So we left. In City Hall we were advised that we were still liable for our now derelict house, but it was uninsurable, so we just handed in the keys to City Hall.

A good lady at the council helped us find a place to rent and assured us that we would qualify for rent allowance but we were not eligible as we had a house and gave it back to the Council, and my husband had a small work pension that put us over the limit. We arrived in our new rented accommodation, after almost 40 years in our own house, with nothing.

I am far from well, but I still work. I have to. We have never received any compensation for our home. The last sighting of the home that I loved was actually on TV. I happened to be watching the news and saw my house being torn to the ground by some yellow machine. It tore through my heart. No one said anything or warned us.

There are many like me and my story is not the worst. Some fled their houses and died shortly afterwards. Some of us, the old neighbours, still meet in the city just to remind ourselves of the old great days in O'Malley Park. Everyone has rights - children, the elderly, those in prison - but we had none.

NAME AND ADDRESS WITH EDITOR  
Limerick Leader - Published Date: 23 / 10 / 08

This letter makes me angry every time I read it. Not just because it reminds me of what happened to my neighbours, but because we do have rights.

**Article 40.3.2°:** "The State shall, in particular, by its laws protect as best it may from unjust attack and, in the case of injustice done, vindicate the life, person, good name, and property rights of every citizen." – Bunreacht Na hEireann

If elected, I will not be silent, I will give people a voice on Limerick City Council – Cathal McCarthy