



LOCAL
ELECTION
CANDIDATE

FINE
GAEL

IAN NUNOO

☎ 087 641 3150 ✉ ian.nunoofg@gmail.com 📱 [ian.nunoofg](https://www.facebook.com/ian.nunoofg) 📷 [ian.nunoofg](https://www.instagram.com/ian.nunoofg)



Dublin City Council
Sports and Leisure Department
Civic Hall
Wood Quay
Dublin 8

Subject: Submission for the Expedited Construction of a Multi-Sport Playing Pitch for Dublin 8

Dear Stakeholders of Dublin City Council,

I am writing to request that Dublin City Council prioritize and expedite the construction of a much-needed multi-sport playing pitch suitable for GAA, soccer and rugby for the residents of Dublin 8. As the local election candidate for Dublin South - West Inner City I have been speaking to the constituency at length and the biggest issue raised is the need for more sporting and community facilities. The current dearth of recreational spaces, especially green areas, in Dublin South - West Inner City has had profound repercussions, particularly for the more than 8,500 children who are left without access to essential outdoor facilities for physical activity and play. Currently between the river Liffey and the Grand Canal in Dublin 8, there are no full-sized playing pitches in any field sport available to local clubs. This stark fact has far-reaching ramifications for organisations such as Sporting Liberties who support 32 clubs and has over 1000 members. The deficiency in not having playing pitches not only affects the physical health and well-being of youth and adults but also undermines the social fabric of the community.

Moreover, within the recent years the closures of several community centers—namely, St. James Parochial Hall, Donore Avenue Youth and Community Centre, and Carman's Hall—have only compounded the issue, leaving residents with even fewer options for organised recreational activities and community gatherings. The loss of these vital establishments has left a void in the heart of Dublin 8, underscoring the urgent need for alternative spaces to foster community cohesion and provide opportunities for leisure and sport.

YOUR LOCAL FINE GAEL TEAM

Sen. Mary Seery Kearney
T: 083 405 0415
E: mary.seerykearney@oirl.ie

Ian Nunoo LE Candidate
T: 087 641 3150
E: ian.nunoofg@gmail.com

Frances Fitzgerald MEP
T: 083 386 6022
E: frances.fitzgerald@europarl.europa.eu

Paddy Dingle LE Candidate
T: 089 978 6341
E: Patdingle@live.com





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Interim measure:

Margaret Kennedy Road could serve as a viable supplementary multi-sport pitch location, provided that it meets the necessary criteria for accessibility, safety, and suitability for sports activities. It is worth noting that the 2014 planning permission for council homes off Donore Avenue included a stipulation mandating the provision of a park before occupancy. Regrettably, this obligation has gone unfulfilled, resulting in the current state of the space—an eyesore marred by neglect and litter. This failure to uphold commitments not only reflects poorly on the council's integrity but also perpetuates inequity by depriving residents of the promised amenities essential for a high quality of life.

Long term measure:

To address the longer term need for the area, scope needs to move beyond backfilling facilities that should already be in existence. I propose the utilization of the underused depot site at Marrowbone Lane as a potential location for the creation of a sports campus including multi-sport playing pitches, full suite of strength and condition equipment, Aquatics section, athletics, rehabilitation and much more. This site presents a prime opportunity for redevelopment into a vibrant community hub and a center of excellence that caters to the diverse recreational needs of Dublin South - West Inner City.

The lack of progress with development in the St. Teresa's Gardens has been disheartening. Despite the commitment of improvement and revitalization, there has been little to no action taken to address the urgent need for recreational amenities. It is concerning to note that DCC have no plans to provide any sports facilities within the Donore Project, despite the clear demand from the community.

However, I am aware that LDA intends to deliver a new full-size Municipal Playing Pitch in the area along with 543 social and affordable housing units, who are working closely with DCC. Again, this development presents a significant opportunity to address the pressing need for recreational facilities in the area. Looking outside of Dublin 8, some forward-thinking developers have made arrangements for sites such as the Cherrywood development, where the playing fields and parks were delivered first and later handed over to Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council for ownership and maintenance, I urge the council to engage with LDA / Hines to prioritize the construction of the playing pitch.

This proactive approach would not only expedite the delivery of much-needed recreational amenities but also demonstrate the council's commitment to meeting the needs of the community in a timely and efficient manner. Once completed to the council's specifications, the playing pitch would serve as a valuable resource for locals, local sporting clubs, and schools fostering community engagement and promoting active lifestyles.

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E: ian.nunoofg@gmail.com

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Furthermore, it is imperative that the council ensures the playing pitch is accessible to all residents, regardless of socio-economic background, and that adequate measures are put in place to maintain the facility in good condition over the long term. The other consideration is around GAA facilities in the area of which should be part and parcel of any development action plan.

Human Rights:

Access to green spaces is not just a matter of recreational convenience; it is a fundamental human right enshrined in various international treaties and conventions. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, for instance, recognizes the right of every child to engage in play and recreational activities, as well as to enjoy access to natural environments. Similarly, the European Convention on Human Rights protects the right to private and family life, which encompasses the right to enjoy a healthy environment conducive to physical and mental well-being.

Conclusion:

The absence of green and sporting spaces in Dublin 8 perpetuates social and environmental injustice, disproportionately affecting marginalized communities and exacerbating existing inequalities in the area. By failing to provide adequate recreational amenities, the council not only neglects its duty to promote social inclusion and equity but also undermines the principles of environmental justice and sustainable development. I have seen the work and advocacy Sporting Liberties have done over the years on this matter to reverse this situation and I am in support of their efforts.

Therefore, I urge the Dublin City Council to take immediate and decisive action to expedite the construction of a multi-sport playing pitch in Dublin 8. By prioritizing this initiative, the council can demonstrate its commitment to upholding human rights, promoting social justice, and fostering inclusive urban environments that prioritize the well-being of all residents.

Thank you for considering this submission. I eagerly await your prompt action on this matter and stand ready to support efforts to enhance the quality of life for all residents of Dublin 8.

Sincerely,

Ian Nunoo

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