

COUNCILLOR DEAN MULLIGAN

**DUBLIN FINGAL EAST,
GENERAL ELECTION CANDIDATE**

☎ **087 966 6260**

✉ **Dean.Mulligan@cllrs.fingal.ie**



DONABATE AND PORTRANE COMMUNITY CONCERNS AND OPPORTUNITIES NEWSLETTER

As a longtime County Councillor for the Swords ward, which proudly included Donabate and Portrane until 2019, I've long been committed to working for the betterment of this community. Now that I'm running in the upcoming general election, I want to be your advocate in the Dáil for the many issues that are facing growing communities like Donabate & Portrane.

Housing & Infrastructure Development Issues

Unrestricted Development

Unrestricted development of housing is overwhelming the peninsula's limited infrastructure. With just two GPs, one supermarket, and overcrowded schools, residents are frustrated, and I share their concerns. I have been criticised for voting against certain housing projects; like Ballymastone and Tilbury locally as well as the Fosterstown SHD in Swords which was only recently overturned via judicial review, due to a community effort which I was proud to be at the forefront of.

The truth is I cannot support developments that add hundreds of homes to an area already struggling to serve its current population. Essential services such as public transport, crèches, schools, and GP services must be in place before or developed alongside new housing.

We are facing a housing and infrastructure crisis; unless we tackle both in tandem, we are set to fail. Playing catch-up has become the norm. I have consistently fought for better planning and have held public meetings on most large-scale developments in my local area; while many of my colleagues focus on short-term political gains. We cannot allow housing to be built without the necessary infrastructure. It's time to push for sustainable planning that meets the needs of our growing community, rather than just benefiting developers. I am striving to represent you on this.

New Housing Developments

Whilst I welcome Affordable Homes being built near The Links, with Glenveagh's Phase One underway, I cannot help but disagree with the description of affordability when homes are priced at more than €400,000/€500,000. As noted above, I have several concerns over increased traffic, especially as Phase 2 will open a through-road, which could negatively impact residents.

Emergency Accommodation Concerns

The former Turvey Golf Club is proposed to be converted into emergency homeless accommodation, which has raised some concerns locally due to disinformation. I can assure you that concerns that it might become an International Protection Accommodation Service (IPAS) centre for asylum seekers, are not the case.

These concerns have led to discussions in the community, but it's important to clarify that the site will be used by the Dublin Regional Homeless Executive (DRHE) to provide emergency accommodation for those experiencing homelessness in the Dublin area. This is unrelated to the IPAS, which provides accommodation for asylum seekers. While no IPA centre for asylum seekers is planned for Donabate or Portrane it's important to remember that these are vulnerable people that have a legal right to seek asylum in Ireland under international law. Our diversity as a community is a strength, not a weakness.

Youth & Community Issues

Mental Health & Drug Use

Youth mental health remains a key concern, with drug misuse adding another layer of complexity. Excellent research has been conducted in this area via the Planet Youth Survey available at QR



While mental health challenges are often openly discussed, the issue of drug misuse requires a new approach. Using a health approach to educate, inform, and protect the youth population would be very welcome and having necessary community care services should be a priority in a growing community like Donabate and Portrane.

Lack of Cultural Spaces

Despite dedicated sports facilities (and demand for more) Donabate and Portrane lack spaces for artistic and cultural activities. Efforts to establish a youth civic centre have stalled, and groups like Crosscare (youth services) are still seeking a permanent space. The work of the DP Crossroads group, to push for a dedicated Arts and Cultural Centre in the peninsula, has not gone unnoticed but is falling on deaf ears. See video of my recent contribution to motion regarding the need for more cultural spaces:



Impact of Smyths Pub Closing

The closure of Smyths Pub has created a social void for young adults. It was a lively spot and an asset to the local community, as well as being a protected structure due to its historical significance and age. With that being said, it is a big loss to the community and an indication of the times we live in. The cost of living and the VAT rate increase on small business has crippled many local businesses across Fingal East. It has been particularly exacerbated since Covid-19. The new owners of the land, Aledo Donabate Ltd, have assured as part of the planning agreement that Smyth's will be reopened, however it has been indicated that this will not be as a pub. I will continue to follow up on this and revert back when I have more information.



Transport & Infrastructure Challenges

Public Transport Unreliability

Donabate residents face overcrowded trains and inconsistent bus services and the privatisation of services, such as the 33B, has not helped matters. Recent train schedule changes have compounded frustrations, making commuting a daily struggle. The country's rail services are in a state of flux. The fact that the peninsula is only being served by regional trains is very frustrating given that it is a commuter hotspot and a vastly developing area. I have been making strong representations to Irish Rail to rectify the recent timetable changes that have caused the recent commuter chaos and will continue to advocate for an improved rail service, including the Dart, for Donabate.

Scarce Childcare

Crèche and preschool availability remains limited, adding additional pressure to new and growing families. The cost of maintaining a crèche as a small business has flatlined. The number of non-franchised or small crèches that have closed their doors or reduced their services has skyrocketed over the last 24 months. This doesn't need to be the case. The government should be providing pre-education childcare as a core competency. We need to be getting more out of our high taxation, like other European countries.

Need for additional Schools facilities

The plans and aspirations to build school facilities at the site adjoining the new Paddocks estate is something local and national government need to pursue. We can not let developers get away with holding land hostage for appropriate infrastructure, especially when the land is zoned as community infrastructure.



Lack of Garda Presence

The need for a local Garda presence is urgent, with emergency responses currently delayed as they come from Swords, raising safety concerns within this growing population. I have been a strong advocate for increased Garda presence on the peninsula and will continue to advocate for a purpose-built station in Donabate.

Environmental Concerns

Coastal Erosion

The Burrow area is facing ongoing coastal erosion. This requires urgent intervention to prevent further damage to the coastline and protect the community. I have called for the government to seek recovery-and-resilience funding from the EU under sustainable development and crisis reaction capacity. For context the fund of 750 million for Ireland must be utilised and drawn down by 2026. To date, we have drawn down less than half at 324 million only in July of this year for a fund that has been available since 2021.



The Peninsulas Strong Sense of Community

Strong Volunteering Spirit

Despite challenges, the peninsula thrives on its community spirit, with active groups such as Tidy Towns, Clean Coasts, Lambay Cinema Club and events like Flavours of Fingal all contributing to its vibrancy. With new groups and voluntary bodies propping up all of the time, I was delighted to help facilitate a group of locals hold a community art pop up event that took place at the Hand in Donabate

Rising Far-Right Echoes

A minority of far-right voices are becoming more visible, particularly around the issue of accommodation for refugees. While not widespread, these sentiments must be resisted to prevent division within the community. It is great to see the newly formed Donabate/Portrane Against Racism group leading the charge against this needless division that distracts from the core issue of underinvestment by successive governments.

Community Developments & Improvements

Footpath & Road Enhancements

Turvey Avenue: A new footpath with road improvements offers a safer route for pedestrians between Donabate Village and the train station. It is a very welcome development on what is considered a dangerous stretch of road. I will continue to push for safer walking and cycling access down the rest of the Turvey Road to the allotments and beyond.



Before

After

Portrane Road Enhancement Project: A widened footpath and new pedestrian crossings near schools ensures safer walking routes for children and residents. It's important that Portrane is not ignored in terms of community infrastructure improvements.



Before

After



Before

After



Fingal Housing Developments

Ballisk Park

175 new homes, including social and affordable housing, are under construction, addressing the growing need for housing in the area. Construction is due to begin before the end of the year. Whilst I am happy to support housing, it was hoped some cultural facilities and infrastructural requirements could be met in conjunction with this development, which was heavily debated in the council in April of this year. Please see link to me addressing this point with respect to Tilbury site in Donabate in April of this Year:



St. Ita's, Portrane

Restoration of cottages is ongoing, with nine units already completed and five more under refurbishment. There is much potential for the old and now vacant mental health hospital. I will continue to advocate for this space to be put into use.



Public Amenities

Donabate Pedestrian & Cycle Bridge

This new connection from the village to Newbridge Park, over the commuter train line, will be very beneficial. A new bridge will improve connectivity between the Village, Newbridge Demesne, and Semple Woods.

Broadmeadow Way Greenway

Set to be completed by 2026, this scenic route will connect Donabate and Malahide, boosting recreation and transport options.

Active Travel & Safety Projects

Beaverstown Road Footpath

A new path enhances pedestrian safety and connectivity in Donabate.

Blakes Cross Junction Upgrade

Safety improvements at this junction will benefit motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians.

My commitment to you

Donabate and Portrane is a community in flux, grappling with rapid development, strained infrastructure, and growing social tensions. However, its resilient spirit, driven by volunteers and a commitment to community action, provides a strong foundation to address these issues together. Donabate and Portrane need a strong voice in the Dáil to tackle these issues head-on and with your support I will strive to be that voice.



LET'S WORK TOGETHER TO PROTECT AND IMPROVE THE PENINSULA FOR EVERYONE!

PLEASE CONTACT ME IF YOU HAVE ANY QUERIES OR CONCERNS

**PLEASE VOTE N° 1
FOR DEAN MULLIGAN**

DUBLIN FINGAL EAST, GENERAL ELECTION



STAY UP TO DATE,
SCAN QR CODE
TO SIGN UP TO MY
NEWSLETTER