

A Fair Deal for a Fair City

Labour's Manifesto for Dublin



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Foreword

Dublin should be one of the most attractive, vibrant and sustainable cities in Europe. With easy access to the sea, mountains and parks; a rich cultural heritage; and as host to a wide variety of international companies, Dublin's potential is enormous.

Over one in four people in Ireland live in Dublin, with around half of the population aged under 40. The greater Dublin area accounts for four out of every ten jobs and half of all goods and services produced. In short, Dublin is the engine of economic growth in Ireland. It must also be an engine of economic recovery.

Dublin needs strong and creative leadership, with a clear vision for the future of the city, if we are to get its economy moving again. Twelve years of a Fianna Fail government has taken its toll on the capital. Priority was given to the needs of developers, rather than the needs of those who live, work and play in Dublin. The result has been gridlock, inadequate public transport provision, and a city that is not family friendly.

It is time to take Dublin back, and to put the needs of Dubliners – young and old, new and native – at the heart of our capital city.

Labour councillors in Dublin have already made a real difference to the city's quality of life. They are responsible for unprecedented investment in parks and playgrounds, a 25 per cent increase in the size of new apartments, the introduction of a Planning Information Service, and extended opening hours for libraries across Dublin city.

Labour's goal is get Dublin back working. First on the agenda is jobs, but Dublin's competitiveness also depends on reducing its energy consumption, improving the efficiency of public transport, and enhancing its creative and cultural potential.

We have a vision for Dublin. Dublin should be one of the best places to grow up and grow old in. It should be a city that makes the most of the talents of its citizens, of its enviable environment, and of its cultural reputation. Most of all, it should be a city that inspires pride in its inhabitants.

1. Get Dublin's economy moving

- Support small and medium enterprises by introducing a 'Dublin Loyalty Card' entitling holders to discounts or special offers at participating shops, restaurants and businesses.
- Promote and enhance Dublin as a cultural, sporting and conference destination, by working to bring major sporting events like the Heineken Cup to the capital.
- The number one issue in this campaign is jobs and the economy. Labour candidates are campaigning on Labour's Action Plan for Jobs, which includes
 - Temporary nationalisation of the banks and establishment of a Banking Commission, to get credit flowing to business and protect and create jobs
 - Investment in a smart green economy, through a revised National Development Plan, the establishment of a State Investment Bank, and sustained investment in broadband
 - A Programme of training and education and working experience to take people off the dole and equip them with new skills
 - A PRSI exemption scheme for employers who take people off the dole.
 - Labour councillors will ensure that local government does everything it can to facilitate and implement job-creating strategies.

2. Take action on training

- Conduct a city-wide skills survey to assess the needs of those who have been made unemployed, and use this information to adapt further education provision to better meet their needs.
- Keep the Vocational Education Colleges of Further Education open during the summer to meet extra demand.
- Maintain and extend library opening hours, and develop libraries as local information hubs for people seeking information on local job and training opportunities.
- Create a council apprenticeship scheme that enables young apprentices to get on the job training, and which contributes to the work of the council in maintaining safe and attractive houses, streets and landscapes.

3. Make transport a priority

- Reverse the cutbacks to Dublin Bus services, and work with public transport providers to maximise public transport coverage throughout the capital.
- Expand the number of Park and Ride facilities around the city to reduce the number of private cars in the city centre, and to stop suburban housing estates being used as car parks.
- One of the primary responsibilities of a directly elected mayor should be to chair a Dublin Transport Authority, tasked with developing integrated public transport for the capital, integrated ticketing, a internet 'route planner' for public transport which also displays real-time traffic information, and real-time bus information at bus stops.

4. Reduce Dublin's carbon footprint

- Progressively retrofit local authority housing and local authority buildings to bring them to a high standard of energy efficiency.
- Replace outdoor lighting, including traffic lights, with energy efficient alternatives.
- Promote the development of a district heating network for Dublin to reduce energy costs in the city.
- Make Dublin a cycle-friendly city by prioritising the development of safe, uninterrupted, 24 hour bicycle lanes, expanding the number of safe bicycle stations; and rolling out safe cycle training and 'Safe Cycle to School' routes for children.

5. Plan for sustainable communities

- Require a developer seeking a planning application for large residential or commercial developments to notify residents, within a specified radius, by leaflet drop of their application.
- Keep schools in community use by opposing the purchase of schools for development purposes in the Dublin city area.
- Introduce planning enforcement bonds, which are retained by the council in the event of a developer breaching the terms of his or her planning permission.

6. Meet Dublin's housing needs

- Roll out an 'empty nester' downsizing scheme to allow older people to sell their homes to the council, and be re-housed in more suitable accommodation.
- Increase the stock of social housing through the purchase of suitable unsold houses and apartments from developers at cost price.
- Work to find new ways of financing the regeneration of social housing, for example through Labour's proposed National Investment Bank.
- Make eliminating homelessness a priority, starting with reducing the number of people forced to sleep rough to zero by 2011.

7. Put Dublin's culture on the map

- Develop a pedestrian-friendly 'cultural triangle' at the top of O'Connell Street, linking a new, world-class city library in the Ambassador Theatre, the Hugh Lane Gallery, the Irish Writers' Museum, the Garden of Remembrance, the Gate Theatre and a revitalised Parnell Square.
- Develop a Museum of Dublin, charting the history of the city, in the redeveloped Docklands.
- Enhance Dublin's nightlife through the development of 'night football' or 'night basketball' for young people, night markets and free concerts.

8. Provide more space for recreation

- Develop public parks along the banks of the Dodder and Tolka rivers.
- Enhance access to Dublin Bay and the Dublin Mountains for recreational use.

- Make a proportion of land owned by the local authority available for community farming and allotments.

9. Make Dublin a child-friendly city

- Continue the successful roll-out of The Labour Party's 'Right to Read' scheme, to improve family literacy.
- Promote family-friendly events in public spaces around the city, such as open-air screenings of major sporting events.
- Ensure all residential developments are 'childproofed' to ensure sufficient living space for families, and recreational space for children.

10. Put Dubliners in charge

- Introduce a directly elected Mayor for Dublin.
- Establish a Senior Citizens' Forum in every local authority electoral area. This would give senior citizens the opportunity to give their views on matters which affect them, in a forum which would invite representatives from all agencies that directly affect the lives of our senior citizens, such as the HSE, Dublin City Council, Dublin Bus and the Gardaí.
- Use city-wide referendums to give those living in Dublin a greater say in decisions that directly affect them.