



PEOPLE BEFORE PROFIT
FIGHTING FOR WORKERS & ECO-SOCIALISM

EVICT FIANNA FÁIL

AND FINE GAEL

PUT CAMPAIGNERS

ON OUR COUNCILS

**Why we need
People Before Profit Councillors
and
Left Councils**

INTRODUCTION: WE NEED RADICAL CHANGE

People Before Profit is an eco-socialist 32 county party. We want to truly transform Irish society and build a 32-county socialist republic that genuinely puts people before profit.

At the next general election we need to elect a Left Government that will build affordable houses, bring vacant homes back into use and make public housing available to all. It will control and reduce rents and ban vulture funds. It will tax the rich to fund quality health and education services for all, nationalise the energy system to drive a rapid transition to 100% renewable energy and provide free and frequent public transport countrywide, to cut living costs and reduce our carbon emissions.

The first step in doing so will be to get rid of Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael.

Many councils across the country are dominated by Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael. They have failed to deliver on housing and worsened public services. A deliberate game of pass the parcel is set up so that the national government run by Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael blame local councils for lack of social housing. These in turn blame the government. Meanwhile thousands languish on the housing list for years.

We should use the local elections to pay back Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and the Greens for all of their policies since they got back into power. They lifted the Eviction Ban which saw homelessness skyrocket while at the same they have given tax breaks to big landlords. Their housing plans have failed to provide people with homes but have been very successful in enriching landlords and developers.

We need to use the local elections to deliver a clear message to the establishment parties. We need to vote for radical change. People Before Profit is the only party that will not enter coalition with Fianna Fáil or Fine Gael. At local councils we will not vote for Mayors from the establishment parties. We will not engage in horse trading for positions with extra pay.

We need to elect left councils which put the needs of people over the needs of big business, and are willing to challenge whoever is in government on issues like housing and funding for local services. Councils that will put people's needs first and stand up

to the government. A left council that will fight central government for extra central funding to build homes and provide services. We will only vote for budgets that provide better services but do not impose extra household property taxes. If the government does not accept such budgets or threatens to disband councils – as they have done in the past – we shall mobilise people power to oppose them.

If Elected People Before Profit Councillors Pledge to:

- **Vote against the election of Fine Gael/Fianna Fáil Mayors.**
- **Work to clear the housing lists and build social housing. Stop developers building up land banks to create dearer homes. Impose stiff charges on vacant homes and building land. End the scandal of homelessness.**
- **Demand greater investment in housing, retrofitting and maintenance: People Before Profit wants a State Construction Company to work with councils to build tens of thousands of new houses and retrofit hundreds of thousands of homes.**
- **Fight for more council staff so that we have decent local services.**
- **Demand an end to charges for waste collection: Bring waste collection back into public ownership.**
- **Vote against cuts to services. Impose a tourist tax to help fund better services. Increase the rates on big multi-nationals.**
- **Vote against increased taxes and charges for the public: abolish the Property Tax.**
- **Oppose privatisation. No unnecessary tenders for private companies, especially those that do not give union rights.**
- **Stand up to racism and the scapegoating of refugees.**
- **Demand a greater say for you in what happens in your community.**
- **Provide a voice for those fighting for better services: we will organise and support campaigns for better services.**
- **Treat council tenants with respect. We want an independent appeal board to hear about council neglect on repairs. No council homes to be left vacant for more than a month.**
- **Campaign to make local Councils apartheid free zones by breaking any diplomatic ties with Israel, rejecting any investment or procurement relationship that involves companies who help Israel to violate Palestinian rights.**

WHAT'S WRONG WITH OUR COUNCILS?

Our councils are developer led and controlled by the council bureaucracy. They are also underfunded.

1. For too long Councils have been dependent on developers and the private sector to deliver services.

HOUSING

Instead of building houses directly, councils have voted to give land away to developers. The developers will then build houses and give a small number of these to the council while the rest of them are sold at sky-high prices, meaning local people are priced out. This model has failed for people but worked for developers.

Of the 7,500 social homes built in 2022, 70% were purchased from the private sector. The number of local authority builds on state land was only 1,689, with the four Dublin councils building just 476. Compare that with 1975 when councils built 9000 houses.

The failure to build social and affordable houses has huge social and economic costs.

- Almost 58,000 are on waiting lists, with nearly a quarter being on the list for over 7 years.
- Another 68,000 households are on Housing Assistance Payments (HAP).
- Nearly 14,000 people are homeless, over 4,000 of these are children.
- The state hands over nearly €1 billion a year to landlords to subsidise rents.
- Average rents are through the roof being over €1,800 and €2,300 in Dublin
- Nearly two thirds of 20 to 24 year olds and a third of 25-29 year olds live with their parents.

WASTE COLLECTION

Bin collections have been privatised and are now run by private companies. Privatisation has brought increased charges, a decline in recycling and an increase in dumping. Ireland is unlikely to reach EU targets for recycling for 2025. Municipal waste recycling rate was 41% in 2020, the same as 2016, however it must reach 55% by 2025.

Charges can be as high as €360 a year. Panda, one of the biggest waste collection

companies, recently announced price increases of up to 8%. Businessman Eamon Waters recently sold the company that owns Panda to Macquarie, an Australian financial services giant. He was reported to have received a windfall of €367m from the €1bn sale. Huge profits are being made at the public's expense.

Conditions of employment for bin workers are much worse than they were when waste collection was done by council workers.

2. Overly centralised and little democracy.

Our councils have too little power and are controlled by full time bureaucrats appointed by the government. In Dublin, for example, the vast majority of councillors voted against an incineration plant but the Chief Executive just imposed it on the city.

The strong position of the chief executive limits the role of the elected representatives. For example, the Chief Executive is responsible for writing the annual Budget with councillors being left with limited options to amend it. This gives a semblance of democracy but the reality is that unelected management make the majority of decisions.

The lack of democracy at local level is made worse by the powers of the Minister for Housing and Local Government to overturn democratic decisions of councils. In 2022, the Minister overturned a decision of South Dublin Council to ban the construction of data centres in South Dublin. The ban was proposed by People Before Profit Councillor Madeleine Johansson.

In Ireland a number of functions have been lost to central government (for example water) or to new quangos including higher education grants (to SUSI), driving licences (to NDRL) and public transport (to NTA). This has not necessarily improved the services. In the case of driving licences, both fees and administrative processing time increased because of centralisation.

Compared to other countries, local authorities have little autonomy or control. A small fraction of government spending (8%) goes through Local Authorities. On average it's over 20% across the EU. Ireland ranks third worst for local democracy in Europe, after Moldova and Hungary.

Research shows that locating services in local government brings down costs and charges, improves conditions for workers and boosts service quality.

3. Not Enough Staff.

The government has starved local authorities of funds. This has led to cuts in staff. As can be seen below, employment levels were cut by 24% between 2008 and 2018. While some recovery has taken place, employment levels in 2022 were 9% lower than in 2008. The number employed in 2022 was lower than in 1980 despite huge population increases of almost 50% since 1980.

YEAR	Number of Local Authority Workers
1980	32,505
2008	35,007
2018	28,224
2022	31,735

Local authorities lack the staff and resources to deliver high quality services to the public. In County Galway staff numbers are 24% below what they were in 2008, while across the four Dublin authorities the fall is 14%.

No wonder council tenants frequently complain about serious issues with housing maintenance and a slow response from the council. In October 2017, the European Committee of Social Rights ruled that Ireland had failed to take sufficient and timely measures to ensure the right to housing of an adequate standard for many families living in local authority housing across the country. The Community Action Network took the case on behalf of Local Authority tenants.

Specifically, the Committee found that Ireland was in violation of the right of the family to social, legal and economic protection, including the provision of family housing. Despite this ruling tenants continue to live in substandard accommodation and are forced to fight for adequate maintenance.

4. Funding.

Austerity impacted local government finances. In 2008 central government provided €2.3b to councils. This figure fell to €1.5 b in 2018 and only recovered in recent years being €2.7b in 2023. The largest impact was felt in housing where funding fell by 88% between 2008 and 2014 leading to a drop of 91% in housing output.

Some of the gap in funding was filled by the imposition of the Local Property Tax in 2013. This now provides councils with 7% of their income and raised €426m in 2023. This is an unfair tax on many people’s family home, often before they even own them.

Councils are very dependent on central government for financing with 42% of their combined funding coming from central Government through different grants and subsidies. But there are strings attached as parcels of funds are directed to specific obligations which means that if money is saved under one heading, it doesn’t necessarily follow that it can be spent on another priority where extra funding is required.

The rest of the finance comes from Commercial Rates (27%) and Income from Local Goods/Services (24%) including rents, waste and parking charges. We believe there is considerable scope to raise additional funding from levying higher rates on large multi-nationals. We also want a tourist tax to help fund the services. In general, People Before Profit believes that the wealthy and large corporations should pay more.

WHAT WOULD WE DO?

People Before Profit councillors will argue for measures that put the needs of ordinary people before the needs of big business. We will challenge whoever is in government on issues like housing and funding for local services. We want Left Councils that will argue for and carry out the following measures.

A State Construction Company: Housing for All

The housing crisis is the result of profiteering by landlords, vulture funds, builders, banks and developers. It's not the fault of immigrants and refugees. The supply of social and affordable housing needs to be ramped up to drive down prices and rents. People Before Profit wants to widen access to social housing for all and create a state construction company that will work with councils to ramp up house building, retrofit homes and ensure houses are maintained to a high standard. We will stop developers hoarding land banks to drive up the price of houses.

Build Houses on Public Land

Councils are sitting on land that could build over 20,000 homes. A study by the Land Development Agency in 2023 shows that there is currently publicly-owned land available to build almost 67,000 homes. As well as councils, this land belongs to government agencies and semi-state companies across 10 cities and regional towns.

A state building company would work with councils to get these houses built now.

Bring Vacant Houses Back Into Use

The quickest way to bring new homes into the housing system is to make available those that already exist. According to Census 2022 there are over 166,000 empty homes in the state excluding holiday homes. 65,000 of these were also vacant in 2016 and over 40,000 have been vacant since at least 2011. Vacant and derelict properties should be compulsory purchased.

In 2023 PBP councillor Madeleine Johansson put a motion to South Dublin County Council to Compulsory Purchase (CPO) derelict sites in the county. Her proposal aimed to CPO ten residential properties listed as derelict in the county, providing much-needed homes. Councillors of the establishment parties Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael, Green Party and Labour Party all voted against it.

People Before Profit propose the introduction of substantial “use it or lose it” taxes on vacant and derelict buildings and sites.

Ramp Up Investment in Maintenance and Retrofitting

Councils need to ramp up retrofitting of Council houses to reduce emissions and cut energy costs for tenants. At the current rate even the inadequate government targets to retrofit a third of council homes by 2030 will not be met. We need to retrofit 100% of council homes that need it to meet our climate targets.

We also need action to address the poor condition of some council housing. Financial allocations for retrofitting and maintenance need to increase. We will fight for increased recruitment of maintenance staff and an end to outsourcing of maintenance work to private contractors. Council tenants should be able to go to an independent board with complaints about council maintenance.

Recruit Building Workers

Councils need to be re-skilled to play an active role in building homes and maintaining them. The council should launch a new apprenticeship programme for young people, and offer higher pay and conditions to attract workers from the private sector.

Bring Services back under Council Control

Privatisation has been a disaster for most services. The councils should bring services back under public ownership starting with the bin service. Waste collection should be free and provision for recycling needs to be expanded.

We support the keeping of water services under local control. A referendum should be held to protect the right to, and public ownership of, water.

Create Living Environmentally Friendly Communities for All: Bring in Free and Frequent Public Transport

We need more investment to create liveable communities where people can easily walk or cycle to shops, schools and other local facilities. People Before Profit has campaigned for Free and Frequent Public Transport to reduce car use and emissions.

We need more investment in active travel, making it easier for people to walk or cycle, with more and better pedestrian crossings.

We want more investment in parks and public amenities with better lighting and safer design of public spaces including parks and public transport stops.

We should provide new facilities and want to see more teen spaces and youth clubs, areas of special conservation and playgrounds, community centres, free community childcare, mother and baby groups and breastfeeding support.

Our cities, towns, public transport and buildings should be accessible for all. All housing developments that the state constructs should be designed for accessibility and be fully disability proofed so all people with disabilities can live independently. We need to invest in our public transport system so our buses can accommodate more than one wheelchair user at a time.

Ban Data Centres

Dublin is the European Capital of data centres with 77 out of the 82 in Ireland. They create very few jobs and are environmentally destructive. By 2030 they could be using 30% of our electricity, making it hard to reach renewable energy targets and increasing the risk of power cuts.

People Before Profit has campaigned to ban data centres.

Who Lives Here Belongs Here: Migrants Are Welcome Here

We are anti-racist champions and proponents of diversity. Migrants make a huge contribution to Irish society and without them our hospitals would not function and our buses would not run. Many vital care services would collapse without the contributions of migrants. Councils should welcome people from all communities and backgrounds and do more to ensure our towns and cities are accommodating and accessible.

We will welcome migrants and refugees and stand against racism wherever it rears its ugly head. We will campaign to:

1. **Provide a welcoming environment for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, including investment in more local services to help all newcomers in our local communities.**
2. **Support the right to remain for asylum seekers, migrants and refugees, and oppose direct provision. Refugees should have the right to work and contribute their skills to society.**

Make the Corporations Pay for Local Services: Abolish the Local Property Tax

People Before Profit councillors will support the abolition of the LPT and have opposed all attempts to increase it. Local government should be able to fund itself properly through increased revenue and funding powers.

While central government should increase funding, for example to replace revenue from abolition of the LPT, councils should be able to levy increased rates on large companies who benefit from the services.

While council can only levy one level of rates we believe that increasing rates could be combined with a rebate scheme to protect smaller businesses from large rates increases. This has been implemented in Limerick City and County Council since 2014. People Before Profit councillors in South Dublin have consistently proposed this but it has been voted down by all mainstream parties including Sinn Fein.

Workers' Rights

Council workers provide a crucial public service. They keep our communities clean and safe, run our community centres, parks and various other services. But they are overworked, underpaid, and deserve much better especially during this cost-of-living crisis.

People Before Profit supports trade union demands for pay increases that match inflation and for a Living Wage.

We would work to ensure councils reduce agency employment. We will champion the expansion of council employment as well as better terms and conditions for staff, including increased trade union rights. All council contracts should stipulate that workers' trade

union rights are protected.

Greater Democracy

Councils should be run in the interest of the people. Full time Executive Officers should work under the direction of elected councillors. They should be removed if they refuse to implement decisions made by elected councillors. If they try to undermine the decisions of those who are elected, we will vote to remove them.

Councillors should be accountable to the people. They should hold regular forums in the community to give local people a say. Councillors should be subject to a right of recall and removal if they breach election promises and betray commitments given to the people who elect them.

A voice for Palestine - make Councils Apartheid Free Zones

People Before Profit stands behind the people of Palestine in the struggle against apartheid and settler colonialism. The Israeli state is guilty of genocide and war crimes. Since October 2023 Israel has murdered over 35,000 people, many thousands more injured and traumatised, while some 2 million people in Gaza face starvation.

Palestine is the litmus test of our humanity and the political establishment have failed that test. The Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael government have refused to expel the Israeli Ambassador, while Irish political parties North and South are content to wine and dine Joe Biden in the White House, as he funds and arms Israeli apartheid. The ongoing use of Shannon airport for the US military is a flagrant breach of Ireland's neutrality and to the cause of Palestine solidarity.

If elected, our councillors would be champions for Palestine solidarity and will fight to implement a Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) policy at local government level. We wish to make local Councils apartheid free zones by breaking any diplomatic ties with Israel, rejecting any investment or procurement relationship that involves companies who help Israel to violate Palestinian rights, and striving to ensure local councils reflect the mass public support for Palestinian rights.

A vote for a People Before Profit candidate is a vote for someone who will:

- 1. Organise Palestine solidarity initiatives in their community and inside the Council chamber.**
- 2. Fight to make local Councils apartheid free zones.**
- 3. Challenge any investment or procurement arrangement that is complicit in apartheid Israel.**
- 4. Support the Palestine solidarity movement in its demand for a ceasefire and a dismantling of apartheid structures.**
- 5. Propose that local Councils adopt a firm position to expel the Israeli ambassador and to immediately close Shannon airport to the US military.**

An Ghaeilge

Tacaíonn an Pobal Seachas Brabús leis na geallúintí atá á long ag pobal na Gaeilge agus na Gaeltachta, ina measc:

People Before Profit supports the commitments being sought by the Irish language and Gaeltacht community. These include:

- 1. Go bhforbrófar polasaí tithíochta Gaeltachta in aon údarás áitiúil le ceantar Gaeltachta faoina chúram.**
The development of a Gaeltacht housing policy in any local authority with a Gaeltacht area under their remit.
- 2. Go mbunófar Rannóg na Gaeilge san údarás áitiúil le beirt lánaimseartha ar a laghad ag feidhmiú ann.**
The development of a Gaeltacht housing policy in any local authority with a Gaeltacht area under their remit.
- 3. Go bhforbrófar Straitéis don Ghaeilge san údarás áitiúil agus í a fheidhmiú.**
The development and implementation of a Strategy for the Irish Language in the local authority.
- 4. Go mbunófar Coiste Gaeilge mar chuid de struchtúr an údaráis áitiúil.**
The establishment of an Irish Language Committee as an integral part of the structure of the local authority.
- 5. Go gcuirfead tacaíocht ar fáil chun an Ghaeilge sa phobal a threisiú.**
The provision of supports to strengthen the Irish language in the community.

People Before Profit Pledges to stand with those Fighting for Improved Services

People Before Profit believes that real change comes for people organising to change their communities and society more generally. Our councillors have stood with those who fight injustice and for better services. We played a central role in the campaign to stop Water Charges.

We have campaigned to ban data centres, for public housing and the compulsory purchase of vacant homes. We want to see domestic violence refuges in every county. Nine counties, including Carlow, are without a refuge. Our councillor in Carlow, Adrienne Wallace, has used her position to fight for a refuge.

In Tallaght Central, People Before Profit successfully organised residents to campaign for investment in Watergate Park, with extra lighting installed and extra picnic benches and a teen space on the way. A similar campaign in Tallaght South has resulted in a commitment to refurbish the play space in Kiltalown Park.

In Dun Laoghaire we led the campaign to Save the Seafront. Throughout Dublin we have fought for better bus services and against cuts to services resulting from the implementation of Bus Connects.

We give a pledge to stand with those who want to fight for better communities.

People Before Profit wants to see the election of a Left Government at the next election which would:

- 1. Take on the speculators and solve the housing crisis** by ending reliance on the 'market'. We would create a state construction company tasked with clearing the housing lists within five years by doubling current housing targets. We would enforce building standards and compensate all those affected by building failures.
- 2. Take on the landlords and the rip-off of renters.** We would ban vulture and cuckoo funds, bring in rent controls to reduce rents and provide security of tenure for all tenants by banning economic evictions.
- 3. Tax the rich to fund quality public services.** We need a National Health Service. We need to make education and childcare free at point of access.
- 4. End Ireland's corporate tax haven status.** We would close the tax loopholes, increase the corporation tax rate to 20% and introduce a millionaire's tax on net assets exceeding €1 million.
- 5. End the scandal of low pay and poverty.** We would increase the minimum wage to €15 an hour to provide a living wage for the lowest paid and raise wages for all. We would end poverty rates for pensions and social welfare and provide a living income to carers.
- 6. Oppose all forms of racism, discrimination and oppression:** We would end Direct Provision and allow asylum seekers to work, access housing and social protection payments.
- 7. Separate Church and State.** We would bring church controlled hospitals and schools into public ownership and democratic control, and prepare a new secular constitution which puts people's rights first.
- 8. Replace imperialist-driven foreign policy, with one based on solidarity.** We would end the use of Shannon airport and Irish airspace by the US military, withdraw from all military adventures, support the struggle for Palestinian liberation and oppose all steps to bring us closer to NATO or create a European army.
- 9. Set a target for a just transition to a zero carbon and ecologically sustainable economy by 2030.** We would nationalise the energy system to enable a rapid transition to 100% renewable, low-cost electricity. Introduce free and frequent public transport and take the big polluting companies into public ownership to enable the necessary rapid transformation of the economy. We would nationalise the banks with publicly controlled credit to aid a just transition.

Your People Before Profit 2024 local election candidates:

Carlow/Kilkenny



Cllr Adrienne Wallace
Carlow MD



John Cahill
Tullow MD



Kevin Shore
Kilkenny City

Cork City Council



Shane Laird
Cork City South Central

Cork County Council



Rola Abu Zeid - O'Neill
Cobh Municipal Area

Dublin City Council



Léna Seale
Cabra-Glasnevin



Eoghan Ó Ceannabháin
North Inner City



Andrew Keegan
Artane-Whitehall



Conor Reddy
Ballymun-Finglas



Brigid Purcell
South Inner City



Mary Martin
Pembroke



Bernard Mulvany
Clontarf



Clara McCormack
Donaghmede



Cllr Hazel De Nortúin
Ballyfermot-
Drimnagh



Cllr Kelsey May Daly
South West Inner
City



Shay L'estrange
Kimmage-
Rathmines

South Dublin County Council



Kay Keane
Tallaght South



Jess Spear
Tallaght Central



Conor Kelly
Rathfarnham/
Templeogue



Philomena Foster
Firhouse-
Bohernabreena



**Cllr Madeleine
Johansson**
Palmerstown-
Fonthill



Darragh Adelaide
Clondalkin



Mark Kerins
Lucan

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council



Cllr Melisa Halpin
Dún Laoghaire
Central



Dave O'Keeffe
Ballybrack



Cian Mac Aonghusa
Blackrock

Fingal County Council



Ollie Power
Swords



Bryn Edwards
Balbriggan



Andrew Doyle
Ongar

Galway City Council



Adrian Curran
Galway City
Central



Denman Rooke
Galway City East



Maisie Mc Master
Galway City West

Galway County Council



Andrew Mannion
Ballinasloe

Limerick City and County Council



Ruairí Fahy
Limerick City North

Longford County Council



Dave Smyth
Longford

Louth County Council



James Hickey
Dundalk South

Mayo County Council



Joe Daly
Castlebar

Sligo County Council



Cllr Gino O'Boyle
Sligo-Strandhill



Emma Henrick
Sligo-Drumcliff

Waterford City and County Council



Patrick Curtin
Waterford City
South

Wexford County Council



Aisling Hudson
Gorey

Wicklow County Council



Frank Hayes
Bray East



Anthony McNulty
Baltinglass



**Dr. Kellie
McConnell**
Greystones



Lorraine Farrell
Arklow

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