



AONTÚ

Gráinne McPhillips from Drumnalaragh, Ballinagh is challenging for a council seat in Ballyjamesduff LEA in 2024. Gráinne stood for election in 2019, narrowly missing out on a seat but has continued to actively work for her local community. Having been a primary school teacher for some years, Gráinne has recently been appointed principal to a rural Cavan school.

Within Macra na Feirme, Gráinne has organised many events and activities both at county and club level, ensuring young people have outlets to socialise

and develop in their local areas. Gráinne has helped with fundraisers for local charities including those supporting Palliative Care, SOSAD and Motor Neuron.

Gráinne has been very active in support of local organisations such as those in Drumkilly Hall, Castlerahan GAA and the Drumavaddy Festival.

Gráinne McPHILLIPS Ballyjamesduff

676 EMPTY HOUSES IN CAVAN

The housing crisis has hit Cavan hard, being one of the major issues that is raised by Gráinne Mc Phillips. Aontú

has brought to light the shocking statistic that there are over 3,500 local authority homes throughout the country that are boarded up. This includes more than 100 local authority houses vacant in Cavan at this moment. With over 500 families on the housing waiting list in Cavan, it is incredibly frustrating to see such vacancy. Aontú has found out that it is taking an average of 8 months to get a council house back into use. Faster turnaround of council homes for new families is a priority for Gráinne.

There are also 575 derelict private homes in the county of Cavan. Having assisted many local people with the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant Gráinne understands further supports are needed, particularly for young people who are struggling to attain their first home.

COST OF LIVING HURTING FAMILIES

Nearly 20% of people are living in poverty due to rising housing costs and increasing prices from

fuel to groceries. Inflation has risen sharply, and interest rates are rising too, impacting mortgages and loans. Home energy prices increased by 50% and people's utility bills are crippling them.

Families now need to find €2,500 more this year to heat their homes, to buy food and fuel their cars. Over 50% of the price of fuel is government taxes. Yet they have increased carbon taxes several times, making the crisis worse. Gráinne sees first-hand the impact the housing and cost of living crisis coupled with poor infrastructure are having. Aontú is pushing for a reduction in fuel taxes during the Cost-of-Living Crisis.



Aontú Leader
PEADAR TÓIBÍN TD

CHANGES TO SPHE AND RSE

For the past number of months, the media has been awash

with information and debate in relation to changes to the primary, junior cycle and senior cycle SPHE curricula. As a young person and educator, Gráinne is in favour of equal rights and equality, but sensitivity and respect are required as we navigate these changes as a whole society.

To open the discussion on these changes to curricula, Gráinne arranged a public meeting in September where guest speakers were invited to outline the changes and those in attendance had an opportunity to engage in a Question-and-Answer style discussion.

For assistance on local issues, contact Gráinne: **Tel** 086 266 6429 **Email** grainnemcphillips1@gmail.com

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LOCAL NEWS

Aontú's Sarah O'Reilly has been the strongest voice for fixing the County's roads throughout Cavan and thanks to her two new pothole fixing machines having recently been deployed, despite the chronic underfunding of the Council's Road Programme budget from central government.

Gráinne welcomes the news that consultants are currently designing a safety scheme at Cashel Cross N55. Work is due to commence toward the end of 2023.

Our local area is rich with artistic talent and creativity and this year many exhibitions, performances and launches have been held. Gráinne Mc Phillips would like to congratulate the following:

- Seán Ó hUltacháin's Cuisle Bhréifne exhibition of Gaelic Art.
- Kim Gaffney's book telling the legend of Orwin and Sebana on the shores of Lough Sheelin.
- Vanessa Galligan on the formation of Hoodwink Productions.

HEALTH

Shockingly over 8,000 men, women and children are currently waiting for treatment at Cavan General Hospital. Last year there were 100,000 people on trolleys. 75,000 people actually left A&E's without being seen because of overcrowded A&Es. Its estimated that 360 people died because of this overcrowding nationally.

Gráinne is a member of the National Hospital Campaign and led a protest outside of Cavan General Hospital to highlight the deepening Crisis in our A&E's and the need for urgent investment. Aontú's Sarah O'Reilly also successfully passed a motion at Cavan County Council supporting local health care staff and demanding further investment and reform for the HSE.

Overcrowding is leading to massive pressure being put on staff and to a rise in adverse incidents. Aontú research has shown that 3,154 people have died in the Irish health service in the last 5 years as a result of adverse incidents. We will not give up until the people of Cavan have the health service we deserve.



FARMING

Aontú is the ONLY political party which voted against the Climate Action Bill in the Dáil because we knew that it would lead to Carbon Tax and unfair penalisation of ordinary hard-working farmers. The government's approach to climate change is flawed, they are replacing Irish agricultural production with foreign food products that have a higher environmental cost.

They stopped turf-cutting here, but import peat from Latvia. The Mercosur Trade Agreement is the nail in the coffin for the Irish beef farmer. Brazilian beef is replacing Irish beef in the EU market – produced by way of wildfires, deforestation, and over-grazing, not to mention the emissions associated with it's transportation.

Aontú has introduced legislation in the Dáil which would ban the below cost sale of beef and force supermarkets and factories by law to give the farmer a fair price per beast. Gráinne Mc Phillips and Cllr. Sarah O'Reilly have stood with farmers outside factories and at Dáil protests. Agriculture is the backbone of rural Ireland we need to ensure that the future of Irish farming is protected.







EDUCATION RECRUITMENT CRISIS

As the principal of a school in Co. Cavan, Gráinne Mc Phillips knows first hand the issues facing schools in relation to the severe recruitment & retention crisis in teaching and calls on the Government to provide the necessary resources to allow more full-time teachers be recruited rather than relying on the limited availability of substitute teachers.

Another issue facing schools is the lack of resources to support children with special educational needs. Many children are on long waiting lists to access necessary supports. Furthermore, children who require psychological and educational assessments are finding huge delays due to a lack of resources. Urgent action needs to be taken to ensure all children have equal opportunities to succeed in our education system.



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