



AONTÚ

Mary T. Sweeney is a native of Oldtown, Letterkenny, married to John, and they have three children. She was the first female auctioneer in Donegal and was well known at The Bonagee Auctions/Mart and beyond. She lectured for 18 years in Art & Design.

Mary T. is keenly interested in the development of Letterkenny and has an unparalleled record as a hardworking community activist. Mary T. is the chairperson of the Letterkenny Hospital Campaign.

Over the years, she has been known for fundraising for the Friends of Letterkenny Hospital, and has been an Adult Literacy Volunteer tutor, a co-founder of the Letterkenny & Drumkeen Environment Group which opposed the Corravaddy Super Dump and promoted the first recycling programme for Donegal County Council. Mary T. has been a leading right to life campaigner in Donegal.

Mary T. SWEENEY Letterkenny

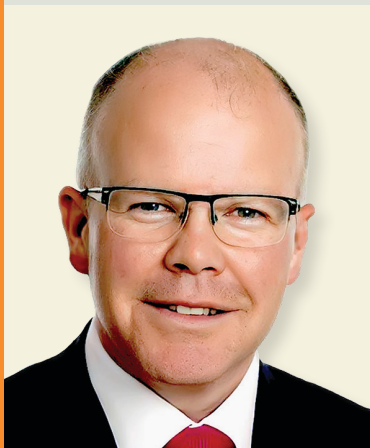
171 COUNCIL HOUSES VACANT IN DONEGAL DURING A HOUSING CRISIS

We're facing a housing disaster like never before. Total reform is required regarding Donegal County Council's approach to designing social housing, with a need to explore modern, innovative build techniques. So many families are terrified and the threat of homelessness is a growing reality for them.

Many families are trapped as they are earning above the threshold to qualify for social/affordable housing but are earning too little to qualify for a mortgage, as mortgage interest rates soar. These people are in the dreadful predicament of either paying enormous rents in the private rental sector or are being forced to live with family, with no end in sight. Shockingly, many young people are now in fear of never owning a house in their lifetime. All this is happening needlessly, while there are over 170 vacant Council Houses across Donegal.

This is a scandal which would not have come to light, were it not for a housing investigation instigated by AONTÚ. AONTÚ's research has also shown that it takes an unacceptable average of 8 months for Councils to turn around a Local Authority house and re-let it. This is shocking given that a private sector rental property takes 3 weeks to be turned around and re-let.

Your elected councillors are clearly not doing their jobs. Mary T. Sweeney will ensure that these 170 vacant Council homes are immediately brought back into use.



**Aontú Leader
PEADAR TÓIBÍN TD**

AONTÚ supports 100% redress, to replace all buildings impacted by the MICA SCANDAL. Mary T. has been a public advocate for a full and transparent process of redress alongside AONTÚ's Peadar Tóibín, TD, and is seeking an independent comprehensive survey to identify all homes and properties affected.

100% REDRESS FOR MICA HOMEOWNERS

Mary T. has campaigned for a dedicated laboratory in Donegal to assess and certify building materials to ensure that current new, and rebuilds, will not be exposed to use of the same deleterious materials.

It beggars belief that Mica homeowners have been unforgivably let down by both local politicians and by Government alike. They have been treated as second class citizens when compared to the support afforded with regard to the pyrite homes in Dublin, Kildare and Meath.

DEMANDING ACTION ON

- **OLDTOWN BRIDGE**
- **LECK BRIDGE**

Since 2019 Mary T. has been consistently highlighting the need for maintenance to be carried out on the historic Oldtown bridge. Capstones from the bridge, which have been knocked off, remain un-replaced.

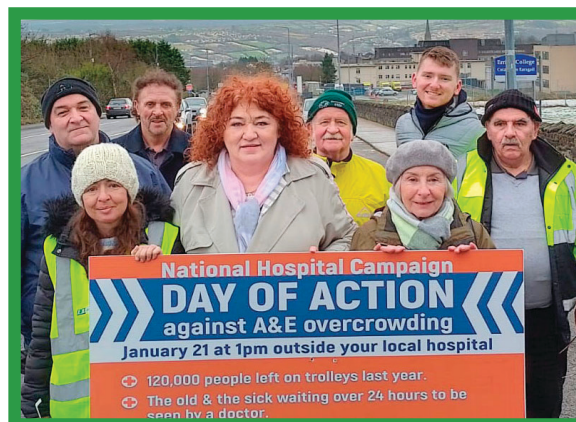
She organised a presentation to Donegal County Council outlining the significance of the bridge to local infrastructure and the immediate need for a second bridge across the River Swilly at Leck, in addition to the much discussed/debated Bonagee link bridge.

- **FIGHTING FOR BETTER HEALTHCARE**
- **IMPROVED HOSPITAL SERVICES**

Minor Injury Units in both North Donegal and West Donegal, to alleviate pressure on Letterkenny University Hospital. We need investment, adequate staffing and better staff retention levels at the hospital to bolster care and reduce the stress on both patients and staff. An honest independent external review of our hospital is urgently required, not the internal review that is currently taking place.

There are almost 3,000 people on the outpatient waiting list alone for Letterkenny University Hospital. Donegal has the largest waiting list in the country for services such as Ophthalmology. We are also at crisis point with our lack of mental health services. The lengthy delays at the Emergency Department have caused widespread concern. This has prompted local GPs and Consultants to speak out publicly on their concerns over waiting times and the resulting impact on patient care.

Both the Government and the Minister for Health have continued to neglect the needs of residents in Donegal who need accessible and timely healthcare solutions. AONTÚ and Mary T. will fight to ensure that waiting time are addressed, that facilities are accessible and that hard-working healthcare providers are listened to, valued and supported.



RESIDENTIAL ZONED LAND TAX [RZLT]

on some landowners in Donegal. Donegal County Council has signed off on this tax and 'selective' mapping, which will see certain landowners across Donegal faced with an excessive annual tax bill amounting to 3% of the Market Value of their affected land. Many of those with homes with an adjoining orchard or field, greater than one acre in area, will now fall under this tax scheme, forcing those who have zoned land, as shown on the RZLT maps, to either develop or sell it. Many landowners are still unaware of this punitive / unjust bill.

The Government has put in place this "one size fits all" approach, without taking into consideration the financial impact on homeowners, particularly during this Cost of Living Crisis, and how it will affect families and communities in Donegal and elsewhere. This is nothing short of a landgrab; however, you can trust Mary T. to be your unapologetic voice, to challenge this injustice.

FIGHTING BACK AGAINST THE CULTURE WARS

on the new Relationship Sexual Education and the Social Personal Health Education [RSE/SPHE] curriculum which is currently being introduced to our 12–15-year-old Students and she has voiced the legitimate, and very understandable concerns of parents regarding curriculum content which will be taught to their children.

Parents should rightly expect that their children be taught factual and scientifically established information. However, government ideology is being promoted instead. Mary T. has also voiced concerns about the erosion of parental rights in determining what children will be taught, especially at such a young and most impressionable age.

AONTÚ has expressed the need to address issues on gender, for example, with compassion and understanding at every level. However, we firmly support the rights of parents, as primary educators, to be aware of, and have input into the content presented to their children, at school.



For assistance on local issues, contact Mary T: Tel 087 670 7002 Email marytsweeneyaontu@gmail.com

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