

# Living Democracy

supporting people power, participation and change

[www.livingdemocracy.ie](http://www.livingdemocracy.ie)

an online forum to support active citizens

- useful information
- online social network
- visibility for your campaign
- giving citizens a voice

CREATED BY CITIZENS FOR CITIZENS

## Going 'live' June 2009

If we all act together, we can be a powerful force for change.

Help build this community and strengthen the voice of the people. Go online, join [Living Democracy](http://www.livingdemocracy.ie) and let's make our voice count!

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- put your campaign on the map
- highlight your issue
- access resources
- build your community
- network with likeminded people

Log on and help build it.  
It's yours. And it's free!

## Join the Movement!

### Living Democracy

**Living Democracy** is a new, free online resource, designed by citizens for citizens, to promote and facilitate active citizenship.

**Living Democracy** is an online hub - the glue that connects many citizens groups and supports a movement of active citizens.

**Living Democracy** is not an organisation - **it is a movement** of active citizens who understand that democracy is a verb, not a noun. If democracy is to work, citizens must take action to affect what happens, and protect what's important. Living Democracy is designed to help this happen.

**Living Democracy** does not campaign. And it does not support any specific campaigns or political parties. It's a resource for all citizens, and a forum for all campaigns, facilitating effective citizenship by increasing people's capacity to self-organise and co-ordinate. It does this by giving visibility to groups everywhere, by directing people towards useful information, and by providing a medium for people to share their learning with each other. In this way, the capacity for active citizenship and the quality of our democracy will increase.

**Living Democracy** wants to give visibility to citizens voices and concerns, and create an online 'map' showing citizens, journalists and public representatives where democracy is weak and strong.

**Living Democracy** promotes skilful engagement between citizens and the forces that shape what happens. Citizenship comes with both rights and responsibilities. A strong Code of Behaviour underpins Living Democracy, and anyone using this resource is asked to sign up to these principles: Transparency, Integrity, Accountability and Stewardship.

### Living Democracy Online:

This resource will grow organically as citizens use it and add to it to create:

- a national map of active citizens and campaigns, making citizenship visible
- a social network to give visibility to people who are working to affect the issues they care about, along with a index of their experience and expertise
- a discussion forum to support conversations and information sharing
- a calendar to highlight events and give visibility to citizens' activities
- practical information of all kinds
- resources to increase people's skillfulness as they engage and seek to have their voice heard

### Living Democracy - a little history

A seminar entitled "Empowering the Citizen" was held in Dalgan Park, Navan at the end of 2005, and attended by citizens involved in challenging infrastructure projects of many kinds.

Beneath their different experiences a common pattern of disenfranchisement was revealed. It became clear that the problem we faced was a system that works in a particular way, and we decided that if we were to influence and effect change we'd have to come together in some way. We also realised that as individuals and groups we had become expert in complex issues, but we were not sharing our learning, and so collectively, we were not becoming more effective.

Following the seminar a smaller group called **The Conversation** began to explore how citizens could be more effective. From there a small design group secured support from Social Entrepreneurs Ireland and took those hopes and ideas to fruition. The result is Living Democracy - a resource by citizens, for citizens.

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