

# Residents rally round to save swimming pool

**NORTH inner city residents have rallied round to save their local swimming pool.**

The facility at Sean MacDermott Street, along with those in Coolock and Crumlin are under threat of closure by Dublin City Council.

According to Joe Mooney, a spokesperson for the Save Our Swimming Pools campaign, in recent months, locals have launched the SOS Aqua Club to promote activities in the pool at Sean MacDermott Street.

Mr Mooney said this will bring in increased income for the council and also shows the untapped potential for pool use.

"The SOS Aqua Club initially promoted aqua aerobics for women once a week," he told *Northside People*.

"This is now attracting over 50 regulars and is so popular that an extra session each week will have to be added.

"The list of programmes now being promoted include ladies' and teen aqua aerobics, men's keep fit and under 10s and adult swimming lessons.

"These activities are catering for all age groups, both male and female, and are in addition to the existing 30 user groups in the pool and the many individual swimmers."

Mr Mooney said if the pool was to close, there is no alternative for most of these users.

"Its closure would be detrimental to the community and a major loss," he added.

"Local residents are prepared to work closely with Dublin City Council to help keep the pool open."

Sian Muldowney, from the SOS Aqua Club, said: "Our message is clear: have fun, stay healthy and save our swimming pool.

"These activities show what can be done and how greater pool use can be promoted.

"At a time when we are all more health conscious, and youth obesity is a national issue, the importance of swimming cannot be over estimated."

Ms Muldowney said that acting on a purely voluntary basis, locals have introduced these new initiatives.

"We need the city council to match our efforts, and work with us," she added.

"If they do, we can save our swimming pool, and we will make it more successful than ever."

Meanwhile, north inner city ward councillor Cieran Perry (Ind) said an unexpected €30 million collected in the Non Principal Private Residences property tax could provide funding to help keep the pools at Sean MacDermott Street, Coolock and Crumlin open.

"This windfall could provide a solution, and I am urging the city manager not to waste this opportunity," stated Cllr Perry.

"According to the Department of the Environment, the €200 levied on people with more than one property will raise over €68

million, which is €30 million in excess of what was expected.

"One third of the levies were raised in Dublin, so it is expected that approximately €10 million of that excess is due to be paid to the local authorities in Dublin."

Cllr Perry said that as this money was unexpected, it has not been budgeted for, and its use has not been decided yet.

"Dublin City Council must use some of this windfall to continue funding the three swimming pools, and I will be recommending this to the city manager," he added.