



July 24, 2024

Dear All,

I am sorry to be writing to everyone at the end of a fantastic season, but unfortunately, we were asked to meet with members of Foxrock Church Parish Finance Committee in the last few weeks and they informed us of some very serious news, which will affect the club that your children and hopefully you, get great enjoyment from.

Foxrock Church Parish Finance Committee advised us that they were selling the Foxrock Parish Sports Field by way of a 999-year lease to Foxrock Geraldine Patrick Moran GAA Club via the GAA centrally or funded by the GAA. As joint users of the ground, we would have expected to be included in this, but we weren't as outlined below.

### **History of SBRFC**

As you're aware, St Brigid's RFC is very much a community club for the benefit of the children of the area. The club was founded in 1976 by parents of children attending St Brigid's Boys School and has always played in Foxrock Parish Field, to the best of my knowledge.

We are a club for 5–13 year olds and are run by parents of the children for the children. We do not have adult teams and as I am sure you know, everything we do is for the kids benefit primarily. It has been insinuated to us that we are not a 'proper club'. This, we strongly disagree with.

### **Interaction between Foxrock Geraldine Patrick Moran's GAA Club and SBRFC**

We had a meeting with members of Foxrock Geraldine Patrick Moran GAA Club Committee in early September 2022 with a view to going to Foxrock Parish to try and upgrade the grounds jointly. We met again on September 9, 2022 and it was agreed to jointly support for the benefit of both clubs, but that members of Foxrock Geraldine Patrick Moran GAA Club Committee would contact Foxrock Parish to progress.

There were previous joint effort's in 2017 to do the same by both clubs, but nothing went ahead at that time.

We have since learnt that Foxrock Geraldine Patrick Moran GAA Club made a submission to Foxrock Parish which was heavily one-sided and not as we had agreed with them to jointly benefit both clubs.

We were advised by both parties that discussions 'had to be kept secret' for differing reasons from each party. One reason was that Dunnes Stores could not find out and the other is that the GAA centrally insist on this. Secrets are not something that sit comfortably with us, for obvious reasons in this instance.

### **Foxrock Parish Sports Field**

Foxrock Parish Sports Field was acquired many years ago and is in the ownership of a trust of the Catholic Church, the St Laurence O'Toole Diocesan Trust under Foxrock Parish (at that time, Foxrock and Cabinteely were one parish). St Brigid's Boys school is in Foxrock Parish, but both the boys and



girl's schools come under Cabinteely Parish I am told. The Foxrock Parish Sports Field has always been for the use of the children of the parish and from our perspective, has been used and enjoyed by our members for almost fifty years.

It has been said to us that we are misrepresenting the situation so we have decided to detail the facts as clearly and openly as possible.

We understand that as the agreement currently stands between Foxrock Parish and Foxrock Geraldine Patrick Moran GAA Club, **St. Brigid's RFC rights will be seriously altered and restricted versus its current usage** of the Parish Sports Field, which we have enjoyed for almost 50 years. We have been advised legally on this matter and this is our advice, despite both Foxrock Geraldine Patrick Moran GAA Club and Foxrock Parish Finance Committee stating otherwise.

We have been provided a side agreement that contains the following:

- 1) Usage times will be restricted to set times, agreed on an annual basis. This is in contrast to our current arrangement, whereby we both have set times, but also agree alternate times between both clubs, as needed with Foxrock Geraldine Patrick Moran GAA Club. This gives us no security going forward.
- 2) Our signage and posts will be 'removed on completion of allocated timeslot'. This would essentially mean we would have to remove posts each time we use the pitch.
- 5) The side agreement stipulates that 80% of our Members have to be a student of St Brigid's Boys National School and only national school pupils can be members. We were advised that this was so the club could not expand.
- 6) Guardian Angels National school (which don't use the pitch) and are not in either parish, have for some reason been added into the side agreement, yet Foxrock Cabinteely GAA who used to use the pitch have been excluded.
- 7) Foxrock Geraldine Patrick Moran GAA Club's games development officer becomes the arbitrator over what sports and when they can be played by both St Brigid's Boys and Girls National schools on Foxrock Parish Field.

Our current containers will have to be removed or agree terms with Foxrock Geraldine Patrick Moran GAA Club to take over use of them. Any right to future use will be subject to the consent of, and agreement with Foxrock Geraldine Patrick Moran GAA Club.

We have met with both Foxrock Geraldine Patrick Moran GAA Club and Foxrock Parish Finance Committee and unfortunately to date Foxrock Parish Finance Committee have not reversed the situation. This is not right and would not be a good news story for the children of our parish or the Catholic Church. In contrary, Foxrock Parish Finance Committee have advised us that they believe it is a good news story for our community.

We have repeatedly asked both Foxrock Parish to stop this sale and Foxrock Geraldine Patrick Moran GAA Club to revert to what was our agreed joint position. They have asked us to revert with what we think we would accept in order for the sale to go ahead and what would allow us to ensure the club is secure going forward. We would be happy to hear your thoughts on this.



This could be a great news story for the Catholic Church and Foxrock Parish. It would greatly benefit the children of Foxrock/Cabinteely and the disposal preferring one club over the other is clearly unfair. SBRFC were precluded from the process and therefore our children have been discriminated over the children playing in Foxrock Geraldine Patrick Moran GAA Club.

Foxrock Parish, from its website, '*encourages the participation of children and young people in order to enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual and social development*'. The disposal of the Parish Field is in direct contrast to this and would effectively prefer one set of children over 160 young parishioners from enjoying a sport that has been played in the Parish Sports Field for the last 50 years.

If Foxrock Parish no longer wish to maintain ownership of the Parish Sports Field, then it should be passed to the current users to serve the sporting needs of all parishioners of the parish.

### **What can you do to help?**

As a start we would greatly appreciate if you could send your thoughts and views as to why this is an incorrect decision for our children, our club and our community and we will pass them to Foxrock Parish. We have created a sub committee to deal with this and would appreciate anyone who feels they would be able to help us to get in touch. Please send your emails to [secretarysbrfc@gmail.com](mailto:secretarysbrfc@gmail.com).

Any support that you can provide in talking to/engaging with Foxrock Parish and Foxrock Geraldine Patrick Moran GAA Club would be greatly appreciated.

**We trust you understand the gravity of this potential decision on our wonderful club and wider community and we would appeal for your support in our endeavours to maintain and preserve our children's current status.**

Yours Sincerely

**Morgan Cassidy  
On behalf of SBRFC**