



Maeve O'Rourke

## Sean McDermot Street Magdalene Consultation

Katherine O'Donnell

8 March 2017 at 17:04

To: gary.gannon

Cc: brendan.kenny

Claire McGettrick

Maeve O'Rourke

Dear Gary Gannon (and cc. Mr Brendan Kenny and members of Justice for Magdalenes Research)

Thank you very much for the inspiring intervention that you have made to ensure that the Magdalene Redress Scheme as proposed by Justice Quirke is honoured in full and that former Magdalene women will be consulted on how best to memorialize the Magdalene institutions.

Justice Quirke recommended that the Department of Justice (DoJ) establish a dedicated unit to liaise on Magdalene affairs - most recently the Minister for Justice says that her officials do not think this unit is necessary - in the absence of this Unit therefore the default must remain that the DoJ continues to administer the Magdalene Redress Scheme - we therefore propose that Dublin City Council (DCC) will ask the DoJ to administer an invitation to all of the Magdalene women in the Redress Scheme to come to Dublin for a consultation meeting (perhaps allow a six week lead-in to enable them to make arrangements).

Over €50 million was allocated to the scheme and the DoJ has not spent quite half of this allocation so there is a significant fund remaining in the budget - they should be able to fund travel expenses for the women (including those based abroad) to come to Dublin, stay overnight and be provided with lunch, afternoon tea and dinner - plus the expenses of travel companions for those who wish to bring someone to accompany them on their travel.

The schedule might be that the women are hosted at a lunch, after lunch they might be offered a tour of Sean McDermott St, and then taken to a facilitated consultation meeting with refreshments provided. An experienced facilitator (such as those who run public consultations for the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission) must be employed to work with the women in this important -indeed historic- process.

In tandem with this process we consider that it is essential that the site be properly recorded by contemporary archaeologists (we can recommend excellent academics such as Prof. Laura McAtackney with whom we have worked with previously) who can make a non-invasive digital photographic mapping of the site and an inventory of artefacts -and recommend which ones ought to be sent for preservation to the National Museum. This would not be a necessarily lengthy or onerous process but would ensure that there is a lasting academic record of the site that will allow for multiple forms of engagement even after the site is re-purposed for other uses.

We would be available to meet on March 22nd if this suited - otherwise we are happy to continue liaising over phone and email.

very best wishes

Assoc. Prof. Katherine O'Donnell, Justice for Magdalenes Research

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