

# NEWSLETTER

**GALWAY EAST**

**SPRING 2019**



Welcome to my Spring Newsletter!

We have had great news over the past few weeks, including a €44 million investment for Tuam and significant funding for Athenry

The Presentation College, Athenry, has now opened and we have received a whole range of grants for health, education, roads, tourism and community projects across the constituency.

Millions are being delivered for Rural Ireland under the National Development Plan and as chair of the Atlantic Economic Corridor Task Force, I am determined that we should maximise our opportunities for Galway East.

Rolling out broadband is a major priority and we must protect vital economic sectors like agriculture against any adverse effects that Brexit may present.

In this Newsletter, I have updated progress in the many areas that I have delivered on since being elected.

My constituency office is a one-stop shop for advice on a whole range of issues. Our staff are available to you Monday to Friday 10am to 1pm and 2pm to 4.30pm.

Best wishes,

Seán Canney TD

**INDEPENDENT**

**SEÁN  
CANNEY**

## €44 MILLION BOOST FOR TUAM

We have had tremendous news for **Tuam** with Valeo's announcement of a €44 million investment in its Research, Development and Innovation plant in the town creating 50 new jobs.

The firm, which specialises in Advanced Driver Assistance Systems for autonomous vehicles, strongly endorsed the town in particular and the **Western Region** in general by making such a significant investment.

Valeo employs more than 1,000 people in Tuam and is increasing its research operation from 450 people to 500.

Our constituency is ripe for economic expansion with its improved roads network, in particular the M17, our strong infrastructure in terms of energy and essential services and our growing connectivity.

As chairperson of the **Atlantic Economic Corridor Task Force** I am focussed on fully exploiting the economic potential of towns like **Tuam, Athenry, Loughrea, Gort and Portumna**.

In **Gort** we have seen the completion of the NATUS factory that has created 75 jobs.



Left to right, Marc Vrecko Valeo, Minister Seán Canney TD, Martin Shanahan CEO IDA and Fergus Moyles Valeo Tuam.

We are harnessing all our key stakeholder agencies to promote development, including the **AEC** and the **Western Development Commission**.

We are also seeing great success with **Galway Local Enterprise Office** creating nearly 200 jobs for a range of business across the county last year.

I am determined that we should build on these achievements and push for more growth in all areas.

## €8.3 MILLION FOR RURAL REGENERATION



Announcing the latest funding with Ministers Heather Humphreys and Michael Ring.

- The Rural Regeneration Fund issued from my Department saw **County Galway** receive nearly €8.3 million over the last two funding rounds
- In the last round, **Athenry** received a grant of €3,544,000 for the development of the BIA Innovator project and the establishment of the town as a food and tourist centre. The grant will also provide for upgrades to the town centre to create a new dynamic, public realm.
- **Galway** will also benefit from funding for **National Parks**, under which **Derrycrag Nature Trail, Woodford**, will receive €80,000 for upgrading.
- Design funding of €525,000 has been allocated to Galway County Council for street widening works at Bridge Street, **Dunmore**, while another €175,000 has been allocated to the council to develop a master plan for **Tuam** town centre.
- Further details of more funding inside.

**GALWAY EAST**

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## MASTER PLAN FOR TUAM

Funding granted for the design and planning of major upgrades to the centre of **Tuam** will leave the town ideally placed for the next round of the Rural Regeneration Fund.

The master plan will set out the future use for the **Town Hall**, the **railway station** site, the old **fire station** site and the **Town Centre**.

Separately, the Department of Justice has included **Tuam Courthouse** in its national refurbishment plans, while the Department of Social Welfare intends to bring all its services together with the establishment of the **Old Library** as an Intreo Centre. Planning permission for the development was granted earlier this year.

Around the town, we also have the new NCT centre coming on stream at the former Hi-Way Garage site.



The new fire station for Tuam has been completed and is now fully operational.

## ON THE RIGHT ROAD

We have significantly invested in our roads over the past three years with allocations increasing year on year.

**County Galway** will receive nearly €29 million in 2019 from the Department of Transport for regional and local roads, an increase of €6 million on last year.

Most of the money will be for upgrades, including €1 million for former national roads.

Other projects include:

- €420,000 for the **Dunkellin River Bridge**
- €300,000 for the R332 at **Kilbannon**.
- €400,000 for bridge rehabilitation work, including **Bolagh Bridge at Woodford**
- €546,040 for **Community Involvement Schemes**
- €15,000 for design work for the **Athenry Relief Road**
- €1,380,000 for road drainage works - double the previous year's allocation.

The Department of Rural and Community Development, for which I am Minister of State, granted €856,959 to **Galway County** under the **Local Improvement Scheme**, an increase of 24% on the previous year. This is for roads that are not part of the County Council's jurisdiction and represents an increase of 24% year on year.

Galway also received €2.5 million from Transport Infrastructure Ireland for local projects including **Milltown to Carrownurlar**, **Claregalway** traffic calming, **Abbeyknockmoy to Annagh Hill**, **Ballindereen to Kinvara** and **Kilmeen to Kinvara**.

## RURAL BROADBAND

As Minister of State for Digital Development, I am determined that rural broadband is rolled out. No one should be left behind. This is vital for both our quality of life and economic development. High speed broadband provides opportunities for the next generation to live, work and raise families in local communities.

It opens up a range of possibilities around remote working either at home or in local digital hubs.

All our communities need to be smart ones.

## SCHOOLS PROGRESS REPORT



Construction going well for the new Clarin College.

I am delighted that we have made great strides in the construction of new schools and refurbishment of existing schools across the constituency.

The roadmap for Tuam's national schools was announced recently. The plan is for the three national schools to amalgamate into one 32-classroom school with a separate building for **Educate Together**. This should secure the future of Tuam's national schools for the next 40 years.

The new €20 million building for **Presentation College, Athenry**, is now open as is the new building for the **Archbishop McHale College, Tuam**, while the construction of **Clarin College, Athenry**, will be completed by the end of 2019.

I am delighted that tenders for the €4.3 million build for **St Oliver's Special School in Tuam** have now been submitted to the Department of Education. The preferred contractor has been chosen and I expect construction work to begin shortly.

Other schools that have received funding for improvements or extensions include **Annagh Hill NS, Kilnadeema NS, St Brendan's NS, Loughrea, Scoil an Croi Ro Naofa NS, Belclare, Killasolan NS, Ballinasloe, St Colman's NS, Cummer, St Kerrill's NS, Gurteen, Ballinasloe, Newtown National School, Abbeyknockmoy, Seamount College, Kinvara, Holy Rosary College, Mountbellew, Presentation College, Headford, Colaiste Mhuire, Ballygar, St Brendan's NS, Portumna, Killeen NS, Portumna, Scoil Iosaif Naofa NS, Kinvara, Kilglass NS, Ahascragh, Kiltullagh NS and Craughwell NS**, which is now being prepared for tender.

## HEALTH MATTERS

Nothing is more important than our health and I am determined to seek improvements to all aspects of health care across the constituency.

More than €40 million has been spent on the **Tuam Health Campus** and we are continuing to add new services to our Primary Health Care Centres, for example the **Community Nursing Unit** and the **Chiropody Clinic** in Tuam.

The 50-bed unit for **Portiuncula** is proceeding in line with the National Development Plan, while the refurbishment of the old **Grove Hospital** is also on track.

My own department granted much-needed funding of €100,000 for the provision of a 25-seater bus for **Cancer Care West** under the the 2018 **CLÁR Programme**.

As Minister for Rural and Community Development, I approved funding of €30,719 for **Galway Autism Partnership** to provide support and training for families and carers.

## WESTERN RAIL CORRIDOR

I was delighted that Phase One of the Western Rail Corridor won at the Golden Whistle Awards in London this year for its improved punctuality performance.

The independent review of the extension of the route from **Athenry** to **Claremorris** via **Tuam** has begun.

Since 2011, Phase One passenger numbers between **Ennis** and **Athenry** have increased 298%, while numbers have gone up by 62% for the route between **Limerick** and **Galway**.

## SPORTS AND COMMUNITIES

I want to congratulate Corofin GAA on their magnificent second consecutive All Ireland success and also to congratulate St Thomas's on reaching the final of the hurling.

I am delighted that Phase One of **Tuam Stadium** has been completed and opened for the Galway-Kerry match in February.

Several **Galway East** sports clubs received awards under the 2019 **Sports Capital Programme**, including:

- €48,000 for **Caherlistrane GAA Club** to upgrade its football pitch lights
- €52,400 for **Kilonly Community Recreation Group** to complete its astro turf pitch lighting
- €60,500 for **Kiltormer GAA's** floodlights
- €31,300 for **Tommy Larkins GAA** astro pitch and lighting in **Ballinakill/Woodford**, €69,400 for the all weather playing surface, fencing and lighting at **Clonberne Community Centre**
- €4,000 for re-roofing at **Loughrea Tennis Club**
- €3,300 for gym equipment at **St Cuan's College, Castleblakeney**

Organisations benefiting from **LEADER** funding include:

- €16,065 for **Craughwell Athletic Club** towards the development of walkways and a jogging path
- €5,537 for **Galway Rural Development Company CLG** to conduct a study into developing tourism at monastic sites along **Shannon-Erne** waterways
- €12,177 for **Sustainable Energy West** to help community groups in **Loughrea** carry out energy audits.
- €39,109 for **Ardrahan GAA** to complete a walkway and exercise park
- €41,625 for **Shiven Rovers AFC Newsbridge** to install a lift and disabled toilet
- €96,929 for **Caltra Community Centre's** new stage storage area
- €146,000 for **Laurecetown Community Group**, which also received €50,000 under the 2018 **CLÁR Programme**
- €27,493.20 for **Bullaun Sports Field, Loughrea**
- €6,810 for **Kilkerrin Community Centre**
- €20,070 for **Moylough Parish Sports Centre**
- €25,026.75 for **Garrafrauns Community Centre**
- €28,133 for **Shragh Community Centre**
- €36,574.10 for **Colemanstown United FC**
- €29,283 for **Padraic Pearse's GAA**
- €20,782 for **Ballindereen GAA Centre**
- €169,963.56 for **Mullagh GAA**
- €19,693.56 for **Ballinakill Community Development**

## THE GREAT OUTDOORS

**Greenways** are an important amenity both for local people and tourism and I support their implementation.

Projects receiving funding under the Outdoor Recreation Scheme administered by my Department include:

- €100,000 for Waterways Ireland's to develop the **Hymany Way** in **Portumna**
- €199,000 for Galway County Council to develop walking trails in **Clarinbridge** for the **Cowpark, Coillte** and **Brothers of Charity** sites
- €100,000 for **Loughrea's Local Heritage Working Group** for restoration projects

## ON THE TOURIST TRAIL



Tourism is a huge economic opportunity for the people of **Galway East**. It has been a central part of major initiatives around the **Wild Atlantic Way** and **Ireland's Hidden Heartlands** brands.

One of our most recent notable achievements was the €3.2 million grant for the restoration of **Meelick Weir**, which has great potential as a tourist attraction with its spectacular crossing over the Shannon to Luskagh in County Offaly.

Significant works have been carried out at **Portumna Castle**, including the road between the castle and the marina, the new café and the upstairs exhibition space. Most recently, the State has purchased the **Gate Lodge** (above), a move that should prove crucial to the Castle's ambitious plans.

**Coole Park** has been boosted by €250,000 from the Rural Regeneration Fund while **Kinvara** received €124,781 to bring forward a full design for its boardwalk project to provide access from the village to **Dunguaire Castle**.

At **Knockma**, there have been major improvements with an extension to the pathway around the hill offering spectacular views and we are looking at enhancing the visitor experience at **Ross Errilly Friary** in **Headford** following a meeting with the **Office of Public Works**.

Geotourism received a major boost when I announced development funding for a range of Galway community projects, including **Glengowla Mines**, **Connemara**, the **Joyce Country** and **Western Lakes Geopark** near **Clonbur** and the **Sliabh Aughty Furnace Project**.



With campaigner **Charlie Killeen** at the turning of the sod for the €3.2 million restoration project for **Meelick Weir**.

## TACKLING FLOOD RELIEF

I am determined to ensure that we continue to maintain and improve our defences against flooding.

I recently received confirmation that **Portumna's** flood relief scheme is to progress. The project will vastly improve the town's flood defences and secure jobs in the cruising industry that had been under threat.

Other ongoing works include **Dunkellin** and **Claregalway**, which will be completed this year. The OPW is moving ahead with its major programme of works for **Ballinasloe** and some works were completed last year on the **Kiltiernan** flood relief scheme. We have also seen works carried out at **Loughrea, Derryober, Gortaha, Woodford** and **Rafarn**.

I am happy to report that the **Gort Lowlands'** scheme has now moved to full design stage.

**Galway County Council** has received more than €2.5 million for various minor flood schemes across the county since 2016.

## WATER SUPPLIES

I am delighted at the news that Irish Water has signed the contract for the €13.8 million extension of the **Tuam Regional Water Supply to Loughrea**, serving more than 9,000 people with safe, reliable water.

The design for **Kilrickle's** supply has now been completed and costings are being finalised. When completed, clean, fresh water will be supplied to houses in **Kilrickle** and **Kilcooley** after many years of campaigning.

## TYRE COLLECTION

The €700,000 farm tyres collection scheme funded by my Department was a major success. Four rural collection centres were set up last autumn, including one at **Athenry**.

## NEW HOUSING STOCK

**Galway County Council** and **Galway City Council's** housing **Task Force** has been set up to deliver more housing to the area.

I am pleased to see construction at the **Gilmartin Road** site in **Tuam** progressing. This project will provide 61 modern homes and enhance the streetscape of this important entrance to the town.

## HEADFORD OPW

Planning permission has been granted for the extension of new offices for the Office of Public Works building in **Headford**.

The project can now progress to the preparation of tender documents for the works to be carried out. The development will enhance the streetscape in Headford at this location.

## ON THE FARM



Meeting IFA President Joe Healy and colleagues.

**Farmers face major challenges with the uncertainties of Brexit and I am pleased that my colleague Minister for Agriculture Michael Creed has pledged multi-million euro supports for farmers in the event of No Deal.**

The beef industry in particular is threatened with a potentially serious crisis and I am fully supportive of the Government's pledge to do whatever is necessary.

I was pleased that in the Budget we were able to allocate an additional €57 million for measures aimed at helping low income farmers.

I was delighted at the restoration of the Areas of Natural Constraint payment, the new payment for weighing calves, the extension of the Young Trained Farmer stamp duty relief and the renewal of stock relief measures.

I have also been calling on the factories to provide proper compensation to farmers whose beef carcasses were excessively trimmed.

On climate action, I very much welcome grants like the Dairy Farm Grant which will help implement the use of energy efficient milking equipment on our farms.

We have to all work together to transition the economy from brown to green. This should be a collaborative approach where everyone can both see and feel the environmental and economic benefits of climate action.



At Action Tuam's recent meeting on how to develop the town's economic potential in the digital age. Left to right Paddy Coyne Chairperson Action Tuam, Minister Seán Canney, Lisa Cooley Manager AIB Tuam, Minister of Trade, Business and Enterprise Pat Breen and Editor of the Tuam Herald David Burke.

**WORKING WITH  
CLLR BILLY CONNELLY  
LINKING LOCAL AND  
NATIONAL ISSUES**

**INDEPENDENT**

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