

NEWSLETTER

ATHENRY

GALWAY EAST WINTER 2019



Welcome to my Athenry Newsletter.

Athenry reflects all that is good about the Galway East constituency. It is a dynamic, progressive town that is focused on a prosperous future while enjoying the benefits of a rich, historic past.

The people of Athenry are blessed with a can-do positive attitude and I am determined to help them and the town achieve their full potential.

The loss of the proposed Apple data centre was a setback but it is an incentive for us to redouble our efforts to achieve inward investment by ensuring the IDA land is ripe for development.

We need to grow our businesses and enterprises to create more jobs and greater prosperity so we can all enjoy a greater quality of life. In doing so, it is vital that we protect the most vulnerable and those who care for them so that no-one is left behind.

My vision is to deliver on the plans that will create a vibrant economy and an environment which we can be proud of. Our children will provide the skills, creativity and innovation for generations to come and I am delighted to have played a central role in investing in that future with state of the art school buildings and facilities coming on stream.

This newsletter is a good opportunity to update you on the progress we have made so far in Athenry and the work that is still to be done.

My constituency office is a one stop centre to help and advise on a whole range of issues for individuals, clubs and organisations. It is open 5 days a week.

If you need assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best Wishes.

Seán Canney TD

Minister for Rural Affairs, Natural Resources and Digital Development

INDEPENDENT

SEÁN
CANNEY_{TD}

THE FUTURE FOR ATHENRY



The new school building works under way for Clarin College

PROGRESS FOR CLARIN COLLEGE

Construction work on the new Clarin College is making great progress. We will soon have another first class education facility in the town. The €20 million project will facilitate 1,000 pupils. It will include two special needs classrooms and will have modern sports and meeting facilities. It is expected that the college's construction will be completed in early 2020.

There have been many major positive developments for Athenry since 2016 when I was first elected as a TD for Galway East.

KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN ATHENRY

- New school building for the Presentation College.
- New school building for Clarin College under way
- Upgraded Wastewater Treatment Plant
- €3.6 million for the Bia Innovator food science project from the Rural Regeneration Fund
- New Link Road to the Presentation College and M18/17 from Gort to Tuam

As Minister of State in the Department of Rural and Community Development, I am responsible for many of the supports that are vital to Galway East.

My Department administers the Rural Regeneration Fund, the Town and Village Fund, LEADER funding, CLÁR funding, the Outdoor Recreation Fund, Dormant Accounts and the Local Improvement Scheme for roads.

These funds are crucial for the regeneration of towns like Athenry but also provide much-needed support for the many thriving community associations and sports clubs in the town and its surrounding areas.

GALWAY EAST

Seán Canney,
Independent TD
Minister of State

St. David's, The Mall, Tuam, Co. Galway H54 P526
Tel. (093) 26476 Mob. (086) 2513639
Email: sean.canney@oireachtas.ie
www.seancanney.com

MILESTONES IN EDUCATION

The new €20 million **Presentation College** opened for classes earlier this year.

After many false dawns, the school which will serve 1,000 students has become a reality.

I am delighted for the parents, staff, Principal Cathal Moore and the Board of Management who fought a very intensive and ultimately successful campaign, which I strongly supported at Government level.

The recent opening of the **Link Road** has improved access to the college and eased traffic problems.

Athenry is entering a new era in post-primary education with the construction of the new **Clarín College** building and the creation of a new **Gaelscoil campus** with **Coláiste an Eachréidh** and **Gaelscoil Riada** to be permanently located on the current Clarín College site. There has also been investment in National Schools in the catchment area, including **Monivea**.

IDA SITE NEEDS TO BE READY FOR JOBS DIVIDEND



Athenry Link Road

The **IDA site at Athenry** should be ready and fully serviced so that the town can reap a jobs dividend from foreign direct investment. The site is pivotal for job creation.

I have had discussions with the **IDA** and **Galway County Council** to ensure that the necessary infrastructure is in place.

Following the acquisition of land in Athenry, the IDA and the County Council have recently completed the access road off the motorway to the site.

The next phase of work at the site is to ensure that an adequate water supply and storage capacity is available. It is imperative that **Irish Water** completes the pipe network in order to provide a fully-integrated service.

A constant water supply with an adequate reservoir is vital to attract Med Tech, Pharma and other industries to the town.

I continue to work with all the relevant economic development agencies and Government departments to ensure that Athenry reaches its full potential.

ATHENRY ON THE RIGHT ROAD



As chairperson of the **Atlantic Economic Corridor Task Force**, it is my job to maximise our infrastructure and network connectivity to attract businesses to the region.

The opening of the new link road combined with the **M17/M18** from **Gort to Tuam** puts Athenry in an ideal position for economic expansion.

With links to **Galway** and **Dublin**, the town has huge opportunities for development.

Athenry town centre needs a master plan to identify its priorities and address traffic congestion in the town.

I have received many calls from business people who fear that any attempt to change the bye laws about pedestrianisation of the town centre would have a serious negative impact on their business.

I want to acknowledge the works that have been carried out to upgrade footpaths around the town. Recently I received confirmation that Galway County Council has applied for additional funding to set back boundary walls and link existing footpaths to enable safer access to the Tuam Road for residents on the Garrai Glas estate.

It is imperative that the next section of the ring road is put in place. I am encouraging **Galway County Council** to submit their final plans to the **Department of Transport** for approval to proceed.

FLOODING SURVEY



Following the heavy rainfall and flooding in August, I have been working closely with Cllr Gabe Cronnelly on this issue.

We have had confirmation that a complete hydrology survey of the **Clarín River** from **Athenry to Clarínbridge** will be undertaken.

Galway County Council is now seeking funding from the **Office of Public Works** to carry out the survey.

BIA INNOVATOR READY TO PROCEED

Athenry's multi-million euro **BIA Innovator** campus is ready to move towards construction with the signing of the lease on the land for Teagasc to allow the project to proceed.

I recently received confirmation of the lease being signed by my ministerial colleague, the Minister for Agriculture Michael Creed TD. This was great news and essential for the development of Athenry as a major food and tourism centre.

The BIA Innovator project received funding of €3,544,000 in February from the **Rural Regeneration Fund** - a fund that is awarded by my Department, the **Department for Rural and Community Development**.

I expect construction of the BIA Innovator hub to move ahead shortly now that all outstanding issues for the project have been resolved. The BIA Innovator Campus will be a 24,000 sq ft centre for start-up food businesses and entrepreneurs.

It is expected to create **360 new jobs in 40 companies** during its first three years of existence, along with **2,400 training places**. The Rural Regeneration Fund grant also provided for upgrades to Athenry town centre to create a new, dynamic public realm.

SUPPORTING FARMERS



Meeting IFA President Joe Healy at the National Ploughing Championships

With Brexit looming, this year has been a particularly tough year for farmers with the beef and lamb sectors under severe financial pressure.

Budget 2020 included the following measures:

- €85 million for beef farmers in the event of a No Deal Brexit
- €20 million for suckler farmers
- €12.1 million for Targeted Agricultural Modernisation Scheme (TAMS).

The **Beef Taskforce** needs to proceed with its work to ensure our family farms are supported.

It is critical that everybody sits around the table to tackle issues that have been there for decades.

I am encouraging all farmers to set up or join producers' organisations in order to negotiate price.

For far too long, the control of price has rested with the processors and the retailers. It is my view that producers' organisations are the only way to shift the balance back to farmers.

I am also calling for the **Department of Agriculture** to fast-track the appeals process and release all outstanding farm payments without delay.



WESTERN RAIL CORRIDOR

The independent review of the viability of the **Western Rail Corridor** extension from **Athenry to Claremorris** will be completed for Irish Rail shortly.

The existing line from **Limerick to Athenry via Ennis** is the fastest growing line in Ireland with considerable passenger growth that has even led to over-crowding. Student numbers in particular have shown significant increases.

The demand for more rail services is clearly established along with increased provision of public transport as part of our plans to reduce carbon emissions on our roads.

I support the introduction of a loop and second platform in **Oranmore** on the **Athenry to Galway** line to ensure fast, frequent and cheap services into and out of **Galway City**.

GREENWAYS

I am a strong supporter of greenways and I am delighted that funding is being provided for them by the **Department of Transport** with additional funding from the carbon tax being provided by my **Department**.

I have always stated that the **Western Rail Corridor** and the **Greenway** should complement each other. It should not be a case of one or the other. **Athenry** deserves both.

HOUSING

The upgraded **Wastewater Treatment Plant**, which will service 9,500 households, is a major boost for the town.

This upgrade will allow for Phase Two of the pipe network to commence next year and once completed, it will enable many housing estates to be connected to the scheme.

The housing estates can then be taken in charge by **Galway County Council**.

Another major boost to the town would be connection to the gas supply network. I am working with local stakeholders to make the business case for connection to **Gas Networks Ireland**.

NEW FIRE STATION

Great news that the **Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government** has given the go-ahead for Athenry's new **Fire Station**.

The approval by the Department means that the design phase can proceed and that we can progress towards the tender process.

Discussions with the IDA about the site for the Fire Station are at an advanced stage.

RURAL BROADBAND

I am determined that the **National Broadband Plan** will deliver to all our citizens. It is vital for the balanced development of our country that rural areas benefit from the same level of service as Dublin.

Over the next 25 years in Galway we will be investing **€152 million** in high-speed broadband. The national plan will deliver fibre to 1.1 million people in 540,000 homes, 56,000 small and medium businesses, 44,000 farms and 670 primary schools.

As chairperson of the **Mobile Phone and Broadband Task Force**, I am working to ensure that all our broadband and mobile networks are mapped and improved to achieve the best possible standards.

The **National Broadband Plan** must be implemented without delay. Some public representatives are trying to change the goalposts by calling for the NBP network to be taken into public ownership.

The same representatives are calling for the plan to be implemented as soon as possible. They cannot have it both ways.

To take the network into public ownership would delay high-speed broadband by another five years.

A recent survey showed that **64%** of people believed the NBP contract should be signed. I intend to make this happen.

SUPPORTING MEN'S SHEDS

I was delighted that my Department, the **Department for Rural and Community Development**, allocated **€500,000** from the Dormant Accounts Fund to the **400 Men's Sheds** around the country.

Men's Sheds were set up to address social isolation among our older men. They also make a great contribution to the community in general.

Athenry Men's Shed is thriving and I was delighted to meet members recently at the Men's Shed showcase in Oranmore.



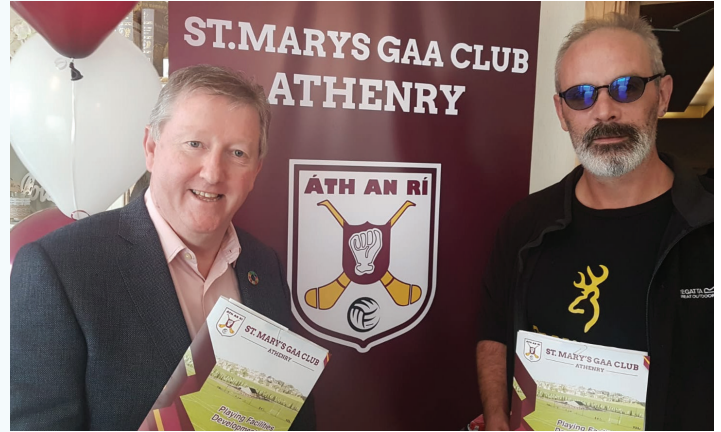
CLINICS

I hold regular clinics in Athenry. Details are available in the local media and on my website.

If you have any urgent issues please do not hesitate to get in touch on the numbers below.

St. David's, The Mall, Tuam,
Co. Galway H54 P526
Tel. (093) 26476
Mob. (086) 2513639
Email: sean.canney@oireachtas.ie
www.seancanney.com

SPORTS AND RECREATION



I recently attended the launch of **St Mary's GAA Development Plan** with Cllr Gabe Cronnelly.

I am continuing to work closely with **St Mary's GAA, Athenry Football Club, Athenry Athletics Club** and other sports clubs and organisations in the area to help them source funding for improvements and new facilities. **Athenry Golf Club** received a sports capital grant of **€23,000** in the 2017 allocations from the **Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport**.

The proposed bog walk at **Attymon** also has my full support.

Athenry Community Council Trust was recently granted **€8,015.82** to supply and install a wheelchair-friendly carousel at **Athenry playground**.

The award was made under **LEADER** funding administered by my Department, the **Department of Rural and Community Development**.

FESTIVALS AND TOURISM

As **Minister for the Office of Public Works**, I was successful in making **Athenry Castle** more accessible to local groups.

As a supporter of the **Bia Lover Festival of Food**, I am pleased to see it firmly established as a mainstay of the calendar year.

I was delighted that **Athenry Music Festival** received a **€5,000** grant from the **Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht**.

My own Department recently awarded **€5,000** to **Athenry Show** from our fund supporting agricultural shows throughout **Rural Ireland**.

Finally, I particularly want to congratulate Athenry for coming first in its category in the county section of the **Tidy Towns Competition 2019**, a competition that is supported by my **Department**.



INDEPENDENT

SEÁN
CANNEY TD

WORKING HARD FOR GALWAY EAST