

NEWSLETTER

GORT/KINVARA AREA

GALWAY EAST SPRING 2020

Welcome to my Gort/Kinvara Area Spring Newsletter,

It is a good opportunity to reflect on what has been achieved and the exciting plans we have ahead of us. We have thriving enterprises in our area such as **Natus** but we need to do more to grow our businesses to create jobs and prosperity.

The **National Broadband Plan** is essential to economic growth in Rural Ireland and I was delighted to be at the recent signing of the contract. As **Minister for Digital Development** and as **Minister of State in the Department of Rural and Community Development**, this is something I have taken a strong lead on.

Delivering on support for Rural Ireland was key to my negotiations in the Programme for Partnership Government in 2016.

My Department now has a whole range of funding supports that are making a huge difference to Rural Ireland - the **Rural Regeneration Fund**, the **Town and Village Renewal Scheme**, **CLAR**, **LEADER** and the **Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme**.

During my time as **Minister for the Office of Public Works**, I prioritised flood relief schemes. I continue to work closely with the **OPW** and I am delighted to see so much progress being made around the county.

While working on major projects, I also feel that it is vital as your TD that I can help on a practical day-to-day basis.

My constituency office is a **One Stop Shop** 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

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FLOOD RELIEF UPDATE

The design work for the **Gort Lowlands Flood Relief Scheme** is nearing completion with advanced works being carried out as a result of the surveys undertaken.

I initiated the project when I was **Minister for the Office of Public Works** in 2016 and I am delighted at the progress that has been made.

It was essential that we worked with local stakeholders to ensure that we have a sustainable solution for the flooding problems in **Gort** and **South Galway**.

I have been working closely with the **Office of Public Works**, **Galway County Council**, the **South Galway Flood Relief Committee** and the families affected and I want to acknowledge the input of all involved.

At **Rinrush**, where 12 families were left marooned in the floods of 2016, approval was recently given for advanced works to create an emergency access road above the flood line. This is of enormous importance to the residents there.

Galway County Council has undertaken a survey and costing for a Minor Works application for funding to tackle the problem of flooding at **Kinvara Quay**.

After the properties along the quay last flooded, I brought the Minister for the Office of Public Works Kevin Moran to Kinvara to see at first hand the devastation caused.

I have stressed the importance and urgency of getting the problem resolved.



DUNKELLIN BRIDGE

I was delighted to see the reopening of **Dunkellin Bridge**, which had been closed since its collapse in 2018 causing considerable difficulties for local residents.

I visited the bridge with Cllr Geraldine Donohue and we kept in close contact with **Galway County Council** and the **Office of Public Works** to ensure the work was carried out as quickly as possible.

The project received €420,000 from the **Department of Transport** for improvement works in 2019 as part of Galway County's €29 million allocation for regional and rural roads.

The **Dunkellin Flood Relief Scheme** is also progressing towards completion, while works have been carried out at the **Ballinderreen** section of the **Kiltiernan** scheme.

GALWAY EAST

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GORT COMMUNITY SCHOOL



Meeting Gort Community School Board of Management.

Gort Community School received funding approval last year to commission a design team for a €4.1 million expansion project.

The school has received approval to design and plan six new classrooms, a science lab and prep area, one Special Education Teaching room, one technical graphics room and three Special Education Needs base rooms, including one prefab replacement.

The school was originally designed for 700 students but the expansion project will allow it to accommodate 1,000 students

OPPOSING BIOGAS IN GORT

Biogas is a greener way of generating energy but to locate plants in towns like **Gort** is a serious mistake.

Silage, slurry and other materials can produce unpleasant odours when transported in their raw form so building plants in towns and villages must be avoided.

There are huge advantages to biogas production because it reduces waste going to landfill and recycles it to create energy but we need to be sensible about locations. People must come first.

SCHOOLS REPORT

Schools throughout **Galway East** have benefited from the Minor Works Scheme and funding from the Department of Education for emergency works and additional accommodation.

Funding has included works at **Gort National School, Gort Community School, Ballyglass NS Ardrahan, Kinvara NS and Seamount College, Kinvara.**



JOBS BOOST FOR GORT



I am delighted at the completion of the **Natus** factory in **Gort** that has created 75 jobs.

The decision to increase the workforce at the medical facility from 125 to 200 has been a major boost for the town.

Natus is now in its 15th year in Gort and the new development secures its future.

Natus manufactures a large range of healthcare products used for screening, detection, treatment, monitoring of common medical

ailments such as hearing impairment, epilepsy, sleep disorders, newborn jaundice, newborn metabolic testing and neurological dysfunction.



Official opening of NATUS new facility

ON THE ROAD

Natus's decision to expand in **Gort** was influenced by the new **M18/17** between **Ennis** and **Tuam**.

Maintaining and improving our roads infrastructure is essential for economic development in both **South Galway** and the wider Western region.

Recent major road investments in the **Gort/Kinvara** area have included €4 million for phase 2 of the **N67 Ballinderreen to Kinvara** road realignment and €840,000 for pavement works on the N67 west of **Kilcolgan**.

The funding for the N67 is very welcome. The section of the road leading to Kinvara is notorious. It is in a poor state and no longer fit for purpose as traffic use increases.

The realignment works will make the road safer but I am pleased that the road's character will still be retained by re-building the stone walls which are such an attraction for the many tourists and tour buses that use it.

COOLE PARK



I was delighted that the development of interpretative and educational amenities at **Coole Park Visitor Centre** was part of the Government's €285 million investment in natural heritage under the **National Development Plan**.

Coole Park, along with the **Coole-Garryland Nature Reserve**, is a wonderful resource for lovers of flora and fauna and its beauty has inspired artists and writers throughout the centuries.

The Park's connections with the Gregory family and Yeats draw people to the park in their thousands every year, offering a welcome boost to the local economy.

PROTECTING OUR HERITAGE

Maintaining and improving historic amenities is not only important for tourism but also so that we can enjoy and celebrate our local culture.

Funding under the Historic Structures Fund and the Built Heritage Investment Scheme in 2019 included:

- €15,000 for Doorus House and Walled Garden
- €30,000 for Lough Cutra Castle, Gort
- €15,000 for St Coman's Church, Kinvara.

KINVARA BOARDWALK

The proposed **Kinvara** boardwalk between **Dunguaire Castle** and the village was allocated nearly €125,000 by my Department, the **Department for Rural and Community Development**, under the the **Rural Regeneration Fund**.

The funding is for the development of designs to bring the project forward to planning stage.

The boardwalk, when completed, will greatly enhance the pedestrian and visitor experience for this unique and picturesque area.

SMALL FESTIVALS FUNDING

The Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht approved grants of €5,000 each to support small festivals and summer schools.

These included the **Cruinniú na mBád Festival** in **Kinvara**.

RURAL BROADBAND

I have been a consistent supporter of the **National Broadband Plan (NBP)** which was key to supporting Rural Ireland in my negotiations for the Programme for Partnership Government when I was first elected in 2016.

High speed broadband is essential for economic development and I am delighted that the NBP will end the digital divide between urban and rural Ireland.

National Broadband Ireland will connect 1.1 million people in more than 500,000 premises, 54,000 farms, 44,000 businesses and 695 schools.

We will also be rolling out nearly **300 Broadband Connection Points** to provide digital hubs to rural areas. These will all be operative within the next 12 months.

The Broadband Connection Point in your area is at **Tierneevin National School**. The BCP's have been specifically selected by local authorities and their Broadband Officers to provide Wifi and other facilities in advance of the main deployment of the National Broadband Plan.



Speaking at the media launch of the National Broadband Plan with Taoiseach Leo Varadkar and Ministers Donohoe, Humphreys, Bruton, Flanagan, Ring and Creed.

CLOONDINE GROUP WATER SCHEME

I have received confirmation from **Galway County Council** that €68,000 has been allocated to the **Cloondine Group Water Scheme** for ancillary works related to the scheme's amalgamation with the **Ballyaneen Rakerin Group Water Scheme**.

The amalgamation will also include connection to **Kilbeacanty GAA** and the village centre.

I am also working closely with the Council to provide pipe upgrades to the Ballyaneen Rakerin Group Water Scheme.

It is imperative that we continue to maintain and upgrade our group water schemes and I acknowledge the voluntary efforts of group water scheme members to maintain their services and the support provided by Galway County Council.

SUPPORTING FARMERS

The years leading up to Brexit have been particularly tough for farmers with the beef and lamb sectors under severe financial pressure.

Support for farmers is a top priority for me.

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 the Targeted Agricultural Modernisation Scheme (TAMS)

The **Beef Taskforce** has met. This is an important development because only by engagement can we achieve a just formula for factory prices.

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

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

AGRICULTURAL SHOWS

My department, the **Department of Rural and Community Development**, recently gave grants of €5,000 each to support the **Gort** and **Ardrahan** agricultural shows.

I want to acknowledge the efforts of all the volunteers who do so much during the year to make these shows happen.

FUNDING 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.

I recently met members from **Gort Men's Shed** at the **Men's Shed showcase** in **Oranmore**.

CONSTITUENCY CLINICS

I hold regular clinics in **Gort** and **Kinvara**.

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 with my **Constituency Office** on the numbers below.

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SPORTS & RECREATION

I continue to support all our sports and recreation clubs in their pursuit for funding. In the **2019 Sports Capital Grants**, the following clubs received awards.

- Gort GAA Club €64,185
- Gort Community Council €52,515
- Gort Golf Club €24,507
- St Colman's Basketball Club, Gort €3,104
- Kilbeacanty GAA €40,359
- Ballinderreen GAA Club €72,206
- Kinvara GAA €2,757
- Kinvara Hockey Club €3,662
- Kinvara United €5,398

Under the **Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme** run by the **Department of Rural and Community Development**, **Gort River Walk Development Group** and **Gort Tidy Towns** received €19,760 for the development of a river bank walk in the centre of the town.

CLÁR FUNDING

CLÁR funding is administered by my Department, the **Department of Rural and Community Development**. It supports areas of population decline.

I was delighted that **St Colman's Park Trustees Gort**, were awarded €45,000 for footpaths and public lighting last year.



INDEPENDENT

SEÁN
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WORKING HARD FOR GALWAY EAST