

# NEWSLETTER

## LOUGHREA/PORTUMNA AREA

### GALWAY EAST SPRING 2020



Welcome to my Loughrea and Portumna 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 **Glan Agua, Channele, ALS and Green Isle Pastry** 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 works. 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

SEÁN  
**CANNEY**TD

## LOUGHREA TOWN HALL TO GET €2.2 MILLION

I was delighted to recently announce the huge investment boost that will transform Loughrea Town Hall.

My department, the **Department of Community and Rural Development** allocated more than **€1.6 million** for the town hall restoration project in the latest round of funding for the **Rural Regeneration Fund**.

This is a gamechanger for the town. It will see the building transformed into a 158-seater theatre along with a multi-functional space for the arts, culture and community events.

The building will include dedicated hubs for tourism, learning and visual arts. There will also be a digital and creative enterprise hub on the first floor which will create **74 jobs** within three years. The new jobs will inject an estimated **€3.5 million** into the local economy in terms of additional spending.

It will be great to see the old building revived, having fallen into disrepair since the late 1980s.

I worked very closely with all the key stakeholders in the town who have been directly involved in this very exciting project, which will have an overall cost of **€2.2 million** and will take approximately two years to complete.

The project will also include enhancement works for **Barrack Street**, including a new footpath, resurfacing and relining of the parking area, installation of new bollards and landscaping at the **Potato Market area, Temperance Hall and the wider Barrack Street area**.

I want to acknowledge the work of all the stakeholders in bringing the proposals to fruition and congratulate them on their achievement.

**Galway County Council** is the lead applicant for the project along with five other partners, including **Loughrea Chamber of Commerce, Loughrea Arts, Recreation and Culture group, Naomh Brendáin Credit Union Ltd, Loughrea Tidy Towns and the Sustainable Energy West Committee**.



**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](mailto:sean.canney@oireachtas.ie)  
[www.seancanney.com](http://www.seancanney.com)



# PORTUMNA FLOOD RELIEF SCHEME

**Galway County Council** has appointed a **Project Manager** to oversee the **€1.5 million Portumna Flood Relief Scheme**.

The project will vastly improve the town's flood defences and secure jobs that were under threat in the leisure cruising industry as a result of previous flooding.

I first became involved in this project when I was elected in 2016 and became Minister for the Office of Public Works. There have been several floods over the past years and work on barriers and sluice gates will help protect the quays and the town.

Some boating businesses were badly affected by flooding in the past but now their future in Portumna should be secure.

Around the constituency, we have been making real progress with flood relief schemes,

**Galway County Council** has been successful in securing more than **€2.5 million** for various minor flood relief schemes across the county since 2016.

Flood relief works in the area have been funded or carried out for **Loughrea, Gortaha, Derryoover, Baunykav, Kylebrack, Kilreekil, Rafarn, Castlenancy, Gurtymadden and Skecoor, Kiltormer**.

## ON THE ROAD

County Galway has received nearly **€29 million** euro for rural roads this year along with another **€856,959** for the **Local Improvement Scheme** for roads that do not fall under the direct responsibility of **Galway County Council**. The Local Improvement Scheme funds up to 90% of the cost of road improvements where there are five or fewer eligible residents and 85% where there are six or more residents. The remainder will be provided by the road users.

Transport Infrastructure Ireland allocated funding for repairs on the N65 at **Gurtymadden** and works are progressing at **Kilmeen Cross** for which €462,080 has been allocated to strengthen the road.

## SMALL FESTIVALS AND SUMMER SCHOOLS

The Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht approved grants of €5,000 each to support small festivals and summer schools. These included **Carrabane Community Arts Festival** and the summer school on history and folklore at the **Irish Workhouse Centre in Portumna**.



*Visting the Irish Workhouse Centre in Portumna*

# EXCITING PLANS FOR PORTUMNA CASTLE



**Portumna Castle** is for many the jewel in the crown of Fáilte Ireland's marketing drive for **Ireland's Hidden Heartlands**.

There have been many exciting developments over the last three years during my time as Minister for the Office of Public Works and now as **Minister for Rural Affairs**.

The coach house has been restored as a ground floor café and first floor exhibition space.

Following my intervention, the **Gate Lodge** at the castle's entrance has been acquired for the State and will be refurbished and integrated into the tourist amenity that the castle offers.

Business plans are being developed to turn the first floor of the castle into a performance and multi-functional area.

The Office of Public Works will also move to tender for the new bus park which will be essential to attracting greater numbers to the castle.

With the improvements made to the **Marina** and the nearby **Irish Workhouse Centre, Portumna** is rapidly developing as a must-visit destination with all the benefits to the local economy that follow on from that.

## MAKING PLANS FOR MEELICK



A high level meeting of stakeholders and local campaigners met in **Meelick** to discuss plans for the future of tourism in the area.

I felt it was important to bring all the stakeholders together to see the enormous potential to develop Meelick within the **Ireland's Hidden Heartlands'** brand.

Work is currently being carried out to replace **Meelick Weir** and boardwalk across the Shannon thanks to €3 million in Government funding. In addition, **Waterways Ireland** is constructing a pathway to the **Martello Tower** and **Victoria Dock**.

## LOUGHREA WATER SUPPLY

Works are progressing well on the **€13.8 million** extension of the **Tuam Regional Water Supply to Loughrea**.

Once completed the works will supply safe, secure and reliable drinking water to around **9,000 people in Loughrea** and its surrounding areas and will also support future economic development in the area.

The project involves the construction of 20 kilometres of water mains from Carrowmonesh in Oranmore to Seefin Reservoir outside Loughrea.

A new reservoir is being built at Seefin and there will be four new pumping stations at **Seefin, Derrydonnell, Lake Road and Knockanaima**. The two existing water treatment plants at Loughrea will be decommissioned.

## KILREEKIL GROUP WATER SCHEME

The **Kilreekil Group Water Scheme** is going to tender. The works should move to construction by mid 2020. When completed, people living in the area will fulfill their right to have a clean and safe supply of drinking water following a campaign of more than 40 years.

## SCHOOLS

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 four special education training rooms at **St Brendan's Boys National School, Loughrea**, two special education training rooms at **St Brendan's National School, Portumna**, roof works at **Tynagh National School**, mechanical works at **Leitrim National School, Kylebrack**, an additional mainstream classroom for **Kilrickle National School** and additional classrooms and facilities for wheelchair users at **St Raphael's College, Loughrea**.

## LOUGHREA JOBS

As chair of the **Atlantic Economic Corridor Taskforce**, it is my priority to promote economic investment in all nine counties that stretch from Kerry to Donegal.

The key measurement of success is employment and I am pleased to see the recent jobs expansion in the area. I opened **Glan Agua's** new premises and was delighted to attend **Chanelle's** launch.

I recently visited **ALS Minerals**, where more than 100 people are currently employed. There is clearly potential there for more jobs to be created.

## KILLIMOR FOOTPATHS

**Killimor** received **€100,000** from my department under the **Town and Village Renewal Scheme** to upgrade and extend footpaths at four locations around the village in order to improve safety and access.

## FAMILY SUPPORTS

**Loughrea** is to receive a new Family Support Worker as part of a Government initiative to provide additional funding for Family Resource Centres around the country.

The extra allocation will provide greater capacity for the centre's services to reach vulnerable children and families around Galway and Roscommon.

## 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.

I recently visited two BCPs in the Galway East area at **Ballinakill National School** and **Leitrim Community Centre, Kylebrack**. 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.*

## HOUSING

I am calling for funding for waste water treatment schemes for potential growth centres around County Galway. Lack of infrastructure is preventing new housing developments and contributing to the ongoing shortage of supply.

This must end so that development can go ahead at places such as **Kiltormer, Kiltullagh, Carrabane and Tynagh**.

## LEADER FUNDING

LEADER funding is specifically aimed at providing investment in rural communities. **Leitrim Community Centre, Kylebrack** received **€34,226** in one of the most recent funding rounds.

Previous awards made for a variety of projects have included: **Sustainable Energy West, Loughrea**, for community groups to carry out energy audits at their premises; **Mullagh GAA** to refurbish the community centre and car park and develop a walking track with lighting around the centre; **Ballinakill Community Development** for improvements at the community centre; and improvement works at **Bullaun Sports Field**.



## SUPPORTING FARMERS

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 the **Targeted Agricultural Modernisation Scheme (TAMS)**.

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

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.

## LOUGHREA ANGLING CLUB

I recently met with **Loughrea Angling Club** and inspected facilities at the anglers' boatshed and the hatchery. As Minister with responsibility for **Inland Fisheries** I will continue to support and promote the angling community.

## FUNDING MEN'S SHEDS



Loughrea Men's Shed

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 **Loughrea and Portumna Men's Sheds** at the **Men's Shed showcase in Oranmore**.

## SPORTS REPORT

I continue to support all our sports and recreation clubs in their pursuit of funding.

In the recent **Sports Capital grants**, **Killimor GAA** received €40,490, **Bullaun Sports Field** received €25,033, **Kilnadeema Leitrim GAA** received €65,973, **Kiltullagh Community Development Group** received €68,561, **Leitrim Community Field** received €15,792, **Loughrea Athletic Club** received €23,626, **Mullagh GAA** received €38,939, **Portumna Lawn Tennis Club** received €6,109 and **Portumna Town FC** received €7,290.

In earlier **Sports Capital Grant** funding rounds in 2019, **Loughrea Golf Club** received €63,322 for machinery and equipment that was vitally needed for the club's survival, while **Portumna Golf Club** received €51,746, **Kiltormer GAA** received €60,500 and **Loughrea Tennis Club** received €4,000 for re-roofing.

## LOUGHREA WALKS PROJECT LAUNCHED

I was delighted to officially launch the **Walks Project** in Loughrea to restore the historic wall and bridges on the former Clanricarde estate.

My Department - the Department of Rural and Community Development - has allocated **€100,000** for the first phase of the project under the **Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme**.

The **Walks Project Committee** should be congratulated on making a successful application for funding.

The entire restoration project will cost in the region of **€450,000**.

## WALKWAYS AND GREENWAYS

Further allocations from my Department under the **Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme** include:

- **€100,000** to develop the **Hymany Way** in Portumna. The Hymany Way has also recently been included in the **National Walks Scheme**.  
The scheme, which is administered by my department, the Department of Rural and Community Development, contracts landowners and farmers along walking trails to carry out essential maintenance work.
- **€100,000** for the **Portumna Greenway** to complete the final stages of its paths linking local tourism sites.



INDEPENDENT

## CLINICS

I hold regular clinics in **Loughrea, Portumna and Killimor**. 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.

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

SEÁN  
CANNEY TD

WORKING HARD FOR GALWAY EAST