



# Peter DEVIN KELLS

As a secondary school teacher and a small farmer, Peter Devin is very aware of the struggles for young people and farmers in Ireland at the present time.

Peter is fifty years old and is married with two children. He was born in Kells and now lives in Moynalty. He was always interested in politics but got actively involved when Aontú was founded over four years ago. He felt that finally there was a party he could get behind, as Aontú stands up for the ignored and disenfranchised in society and it speaks common sense instead of political posturing.

## NAVAN HOSPITAL

Navan Hospital A&E is the most important piece of health infrastructure in County Meath. It has saved the lives of thousands of people. The HSE are trying to close Navan A&E despite all nearby facilities being under unprecedented pressure with record wait times. Thousands of patients attending A&E nationwide are leaving without being treated as Emergency departments continue to be overwhelmed. In 2021, 927 patients had died by the time an ambulance arrived. In many cases this was due to late arrival because A&Es are so overstretched.

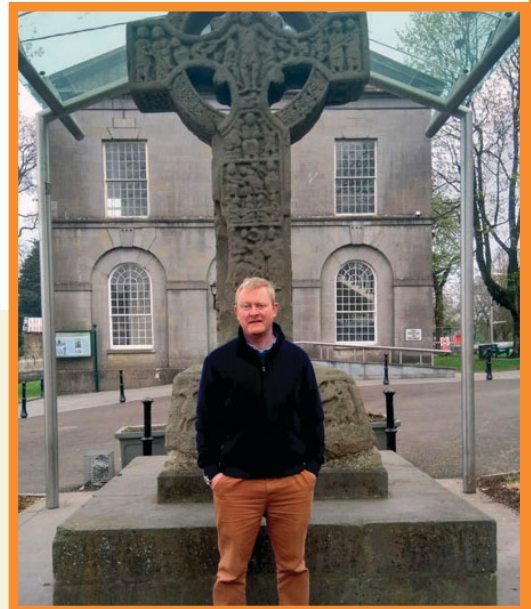
Aontú is the party that has been defending your hospital. Peter Devin, together with Cllr Emer Tóibín and Peadar Tóibín TD will continue to fight to save Navan Hospital.

## FARMING

For centuries, the Kells district has had a fine tradition of agriculture. This area produces some of the finest beef in the world, and it also has strong milk and sheep industries. Farmers are not rewarded adequately for their work. Farmers are struggling to get a fair price for their produce or to turn over a profit. There is a threat of herd reduction from the government.

Farmers need concrete assurances that their standard of living and working will improve. They need to be able to trust that their government won't throw them under the bus. Everywhere a farmer turns they are faced with rigorous and complicated rules for running their farms and acquiring subsidies. The overbearing TB test is a consistent difficulty to cattle farmers' livelihoods. In the sales yard, the farmer is at the mercy of the big export buyers, in the factory he is at the mercy of the big beef barons.

When young farmers inherit, in many cases they are crucified with enormous taxes that will halt all their progress for years to come. Aontú wants to break the control that monopoly firms have on farming and give control back to the farmers. We also wish to see Inheritance tax reduced.



## GOVERNMENT IS HURTING MEATH COMMUTERS

Government are jacking up the price of petrol and diesel for the 2nd time in just a few months. None of this is an accident. These are deliberate attacks on drivers and commuters many of whom have no alternative mode of transport. The Government increased Tolls already this year and plan to do so again next year. Rich Ministers are purposefully pushing up the cost of commuting. There is a cruelty to the government approach.

Aontú is only party calling on the government to scrap the Excise Duty increases.



Irish electricity prices are the highest in Europe. The



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## TARA MINES WORKERS MUST NOT BE FORGOTTEN

Workers at Tara Mines have been treated terribly

by both Boliden and the Government. Peter Devin is extremely concerned for those who are losing their incomes. Mr Devin is concerned for their mental health. He is concerned about child poverty, about back to school costs facing these families, rising rents and inflation.

We demand that the government lower energy costs and that Boliden reopen Tara Mines immediately.

## HOUSING CRISIS

Here in Meath homeless services are operating to full capacity. There are currently 3,599 people on the housing list in Meath. There are 1,893 people availing of the Housing Assistance Payment in Meath – where the local authority pays the rent to a private landlord. There are 56 people in the county availing of the Rental Accommodation Scheme, which is similar.

Meath County Council currently own a total of 56 properties which are currently vacant. Vacant properties which are actually owned by the county council should immediately be brought back into use given the scale of the crisis we are currently facing. The greatest hoarder of vacant properties in this country is the State itself.

The government has locked the younger generation out of the housing market, thereby sucking the life and blood out of our county. Many young people are now almost accepting as fact that they will never own a house in their lives. Government policies facilitated a housing bubble, followed by a housing shortage. We now have exorbitant prices and high rents, and have seen huge increases in waiting lists for social housing, and homelessness. 12,441 people are now homeless in Ireland; 3,700 are children. This national shame is a far cry from our 1916 proclamation to “cherish all children equally”.

Aontú has delivered Bills in the Dáil that would end Air BnB short term rentals squeezing families out of homes in towns above 10,000 people. We have fought for proper grants to be provided to bring some of the thousands of derelict and empty homes in Meath back into use. We need to elect politicians who are not afraid of concrete.

## MENTAL HEALTH

The suicide rate in this country is alarmingly high and has been for years.

The need for early intervention and support to those with mental health challenges is where we need to focus our attention.

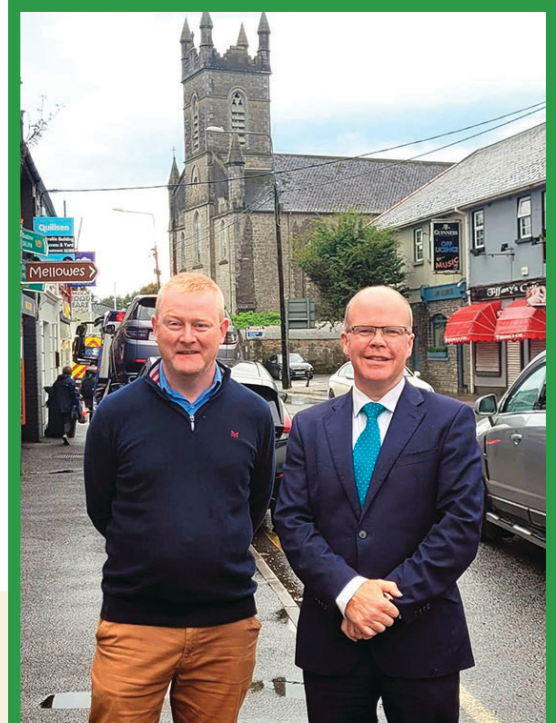
Meath is massively under resourced in coping with these issues and it seems that not only are services inadequate but are being depleted and not replaced. Much like the ongoing saga with Navan hospital, Mental health services are being taken out of local areas and being streamlined into large urban centres.

At local level it is largely left to courageous voluntary services to deal with this huge problem. The HSE has some provision (although limited and understaffed) in Navan, Ashbourne and Trim. There is nothing in Kells or any of the towns surrounding it. With the siege against Navan hospital, it looks like people in the Kells and North Meath areas will be forgotten when it comes to both our physical and mental health. This is unacceptable.

## CRIME AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN MEATH

There is a drug problem in every town and village in north Meath. In many places disaffected young people are causing trouble - mainly due to a lack of facilities and because of narcotics. It may also be because of issues in the home - there are many reasons why young people act out. We need a greater Garda presence in Meath. The Justice Minister is from Meath, and yet this county has the lowest ratio of Gardaí to citizen in the country. Minister McEntee has been challenged repeatedly on this by Peadar Tóibín TD and she has done nothing at all.

The Safer Meath Campaign is trying to highlight the seriousness of the situation. Through meetings, petitions, and activism we are trying to get the Minister for Justice to see how concerning this is - in her own county, at her own front door. We hope she will do something. Please support us in this by signing our petition or turning up at the next meeting.



Peter with Aontú leader, Peadar Tóibín TD.



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