

Western People

Monday, December 4, 2017

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Build it and they will come

The remarkable success of the Cairn International Trade Centre in Kiltimagh has demonstrated beyond any doubt that jobs will inevitably be created when proper infrastructure is provided to the West of Ireland.

The state-of-the-art enterprise facility, which was opened at the height of the recession in 2009, now boasts an occupancy rate of 90% and, more importantly, the 11 different firms operating there are providing jobs for 70 people.

The success of the Cairn Centre was just one of several positive messages to emerge from the annual general meeting of IRD Kiltimagh where CEO Joe Kelly gave an upbeat analysis of the local employment situation, noting that IRD Kiltimagh now has 159 full and part-time roles in its various workspaces in the East Mayo town.

"While 70 additional jobs would probably not even be noticed in a city context, it's massive in Kiltimagh. Given that the population of Kiltimagh town is just over 1,100 people, this represents a very noticeable increase in the numbers working in the town.

"Moreover, very many of the new jobs are graduate positions and, therefore, the IRD strategy in building the Cairn International Trade Centre as a location to



The Cairn International Trade Centre in Kiltimagh is now home to 11 different companies which are employing 70 people in a town with a population of little over 1,000.

host third-level graduate employment is coming to fruition."

Mr Kelly praised the board of directors of IRD for having the vision, confidence and courage to plan and implement such an ambitious enterprise centre.

"Some years ago, the directors of IRD Kiltimagh, a voluntary community organisation, took a huge leap of faith in in-

vesting in the Cairn building. We did get a lot of help and support at the outset and over the recession years, but this is still a community project, a community investing in its own future, an investment that has now paid off in terms of jobs and a contribution to the local economy. Not one of these jobs would be in Kiltimagh but for the Cairn building. It is proof

that 'Community Self Help' actually works and should be supported and assisted by those on high."

Mr Kelly noted that IRD Kiltimagh had not only invested in a modern building but also, in the past year, invested heavily in Gigabit Symmetrical Fibre Broadband, upgraded furnishings for meeting rooms, installation of high-defi-

nition AV equipment and a state-of-the-art CCTV security system.

"All of these initiatives, coupled with the modern and attractive look of the building and a very reasonable and affordable rental charge, has led to the building and location being attractive to the many businesses that it is now home to. These new jobs in Kiltimagh have made a significant and

noticeable impact on the local economy generally and are contributing to a welcome increase in turnover for many already established local businesses and services in the town and area."

Mr Kelly said the creation of 70 jobs in Kiltimagh was not just about the Cairn Centre and IRD; it was also a reflection of the can-do spirit in the entire community,

“ This is still a community project, a community investing in its own future, an investment that has now paid off in terms of jobs and a contribution to the local economy

— Joe Kelly, IRD Kiltimagh

and he was particularly loud in his praise for the local Tidy Towns group.

"The town has a look of vibrancy and progressiveness and this has helped it to punch above its weight. Mayo County Council also deserves credit for facilitating such projects as the Eir Fibre upgrade to the town some years ago. It is only by being the very best and offering the very best, that the smaller towns and villages have any prospect of attracting new projects or otherwise creating new jobs."

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