

# Start your own business event in Castlerea

■ **Pauline Scott**  
A start your own business enterprise event, which will take place in Castlerea Enterprise Hub on Friday, 14th May, was launched on Wednesday afternoon in Tully's Hotel, Castlerea.

The event will be an information day for those looking for an alternative to unemployment, those thinking of setting up a business or those interested in re-entering the workforce.

Highlights of the free event will include information and training stands, enterprise workshops, showcasing of innovative enterprises and day-long mentoring.

A very successful 'Alternative to Unemployment - Start your own business' event was held in Kilbride in November 2009 and this is a second such event, building on the success of the first event. Speakers at the event will include Michael Guthrie of Finola Foods; Benny O'Connell of Benny's Home Bakery; Mick McEnroe, Managing Director, Harmac Medical Products and Martina Earley, CEO of Roscommon Integrated Development Company (RIDC).

Speaking at the

launch in Tully's Hotel on Wednesday afternoon, Noel Connolly of RIDC said that the backdrop to the event is the high level of unemployment at the moment, the fact that businesses are struggling and the opportunity to focus on the positive and help those aiming to set up a business.

"Castlerea has a very strong tradition in regard to local businesses and sole traders and owner managers and self employment. In difficult times, Castlerea has shown its ability and self-reliance and I have no doubt that that entrepreneurial spirit is out there and what we want to do is to build on the energy, enthusiasm and positive attitude," said Mr. Connolly.

He outlined that the event in Castlerea Enterprise Hub will have four facets, information stands, an opportunity for local business to showcase, enterprise workshops and business mentoring. Speaking of the mentoring, Mr. Connolly said, "That was a huge success at the event in Kilbride, with huge demand and very positive outcomes".

Roscommon County Enterprise Board will have three mentors present on



Pictured in Tully's Hotel, Castlerea, at the launch of the Start Your Own Business enterprise event which will take place in Castlerea Enterprise Hub on Friday, 14th May, were (left to right): Una Quinn, Roscommon County Development Board; Benny O'Connell, Castlerea Enterprise Hub; Martina Earley, RIDC; Noel Connolly, RIDC and Louise Ward, Roscommon County Enterprise Board. Picture: Andrew Fox.

the day, who are experienced in providing assistance on a one-to-one basis covering the requirements of starting your own business, especially the need for marketing, planning and accounts. Anyone interested in availing of this service can pre-book by contacting Louise Ward at the Roscommon County Enterprise Board on (090) 66 26263 or email [louise@roscommon.ie](mailto:louise@roscommon.ie)

Louise Ward told guests at Wednesday's launch of the success of last year's

event in Kilbride. "Since the event in Kilbride, our enquiries have more than doubled. People are setting up new businesses and we are astonished in the Enterprise Board at the number of people contacting us, it is steadily increasing, so that's a good story."

Una Ni Chuinn of Roscommon County Development Board said that the enterprise event is an opportunity for local people to do something for themselves. Recalling the Kil-

bride event, she said that many entrepreneurs were encouraged by hearing the positive and negatives that successful entrepreneurs had to offer.

Martina Earley of CEO of Roscommon Integrated Development Company said that the event would provide a one-stop-shop for people thinking of setting up a business and with four thousand people in the county out of work, it is an option being examined by many. She also praised the way

the various agencies were coalescing to provide the best service available to local entrepreneurs.

Local entrepreneur Benny O'Connell said that Castlerea Enterprise Hub is an example of a local community coming together to try and do something for themselves. "I think that's very important when we find ourselves in the midst of a recession, you can whinge and ring Joe Duffy, what we have chosen to do is to try and make it happen for our-

selves. We are endeavouring to provide a focal point for the community and offer support for those setting up businesses. We are trying very hard to provide these facilities with the generosity of John Murphy, who has given use the premises rent free for 18 months.

"The event on the 14th is to concentrate people's minds on what is available locally. We will be available to show the various options available in Castlerea Enterprise Hub and we will do everything possible to make this happen."

"We have appealed to local businesses to partake in the day and show off their wares. Small and medium enterprises in Ireland employ huge numbers of people and other recessions have been worked out with small companies and we in Castlerea are trying to do that in our own small way."

Local councillor Paschal Fitzmaurice said, "All the focus is on the Government to bring companies to Ireland. I am glad to see us focusing on ourselves to create employment. We need to lead people and show them how they can get grants and achieve these projects."



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