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Over 25,000 people have attended Round Tower centre since it opened

By Maurice Garvey

OVER 25,000 people have visited the Round Tower Visitor Centre in Clondalkin, since it opened to the general public on July 3 2017.

Feedback to the massive €4 million project – which features an interpretive centre, restaurant and gardens – has been extremely “complimentary” according to South Dublin County Council.



The council did not disclose to The Echo how much revenue has been generated in the first seven weeks of operation.

However, with over 500 people visiting the centre a day, potentially spending approximately €10 each in the restaurant and retail centre, it is entirely feasible that the centre has generated €250,000.

This would be a modest figure, according to Thyes Kavanagh, Chair of Clondalkin Chamber of Commerce, who says the economic benefits of the centre can be felt by surrounding businesses in the area.

“It has made a phenomenal difference – other businesses in the village and Mill Centre have benefitted from it too,” said Kavanagh.

“The Happy Pear do really nice food, but children like chicken nuggets, and if they ask for things like that, we send them to McDonalds or the Mill. Most of the parking by visitors is done in the Mill car park. Traders in Clondalkin have contributed €28 million in rates to SDCC, so they will certainly feel they are entitled to benefit.”

Kavanagh is a member of the Clondalkin Heritage Group, which was heavily involved in the planning process for the visitor centre.

He continued: "The first thing we noticed was pride with individual groups who were fighting for the Round Tower centre to open. It was put to SDCC that it needed a commercial element, in order to get some money in, and then they could see it as an asset and not a liability.

"The heritage group delivered flyers to the local hotels last year, informing them of the local tourist sights. Otherwise they were just getting a bus timetable into the city centre. When they see all the things on offer here in Clondalkin, it means they will come back.

"We have 44 volunteer tour guides for the centre. In 14 weeks of training, only two missed a single class each. The monastic garden in the centre has medical and culinary benefits, with thyme, lavender, and it is seasonal. All these elements feed off each other, and means that the centre ticks a lot of boxes."

Admission to the centre is free to the public.

The retail centre and restaurant Brú Chrónáin are managed by The Happy Pear owners Stephen and David Flynn.

The Round Tower Visitor Centre features in the brochure for National Heritage Week (August 19-27 2017).