

REGIONAL TOWNS ZONE IN ON FREE WI-FI

Seven town centres are set to become free public Wi-Fi zones under a new ground-breaking scheme, which will see free high-speed broadband installed in Sligo, Westport, Monaghan, Knock and Carrick-On-Shannon, with two further locations due to be announced in Kerry and Donegal.

This unique initiative, which will be supplied by Magnet Networks and supported by local authorities and business groups, will give locals and tourists unlimited access to speeds of up to 100mps.

It will not come at a cost for the local towns, as Magnet Networks have been allowed by local businesses to install access points on their premises, providing seamless connectivity within the town centres.

Carrick-On-Shannon was the first town to go live, followed by Sligo, Knock and Monaghan in June while Westport and two locations in Kerry and Donegal are due to go live by August. Each access point in the town has a 150m range, so that users will always be in range of a high-quality signal.

ONE-OFF REGISTRATION

"The beauty of Magnet Networks' free Wi-Fi is that you only need to register once, so tourists visiting different towns along the Wild Atlantic Way, for example, will automatically enjoy free connectivity at no cost in a range of towns," noted Mark Kellett, CEO of Magnet Networks.

"As the project is financed by giving local businesses the opportunity to sponsor the Wi-Fi and send promotional offers, tourists can be directed to attractions or places to eat and drink. For example, if a local restaurant sponsored the Wi-Fi, they would be able to send out a coupon at a set time to everyone who has logged on that day giving them 10% off," said Kellett.

"This will be a great way for local businesses to stand out, which is particularly useful in towns such as Carrick-On-Shannon and Westport where there are so many options for tourists to choose from."

He added that his company has a strong track record in providing world-class Wi-Fi services to public spaces such as the new smart city at Wembley Park in London, and events such as



Mark Kellett, CEO, points to the free unlimited Wi-Fi in Sligo, Westport, Monaghan, Knock and Carrick-On-Shannon town centres with two further locations to be announced in Kerry and Donegal later this year. (Pic: Conor McCabe)

the NFL games at Wembley and the X Factor finals.

"Our aim is to extend this service throughout Ireland, and we are asking interested towns to get in touch through wifi@magnetnetworks.com."

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

This initiative follows on from the success of Magnet Networks' public-private partnership in Galway – the first of its kind in Ireland – which brought local businesses together to create a high-speed digital corridor from Spanish Arch to Eyre Square.

Free public Wi-Fi by Magnet Networks has been operating in Galway City Centre for over a year now, and is an integral part of the city's business and tourism offering.

"Magnet Networks' Wi-Fi adds to the already vibrant experience that only Galway City can offer," said Alfie Jones, ICT Manager at Galway City Council.

"We are delighted with the response from the business community and look forward to watching the service grow to more areas of the city," he added.