

their programme for the first three months of 2009, the centrepiece of which is the upcoming Unfringed Festival at the end of January.

Despite suffering a slight cut in annual funding received from the Arts Council, the Belltable remain confident that they have programmed a busy schedule of events for the coming months. "There is a lot happening over the

the Unfringed festival and music events - there are some very interesting works taking place," said Joanne Beirne, artistic director of the Belltable.

Full details of the festival are to be announced next Monday, January 19 but the busy programme is known to include a premiere of Alone It Stands author John Breen's new play *The Magic Boy*, and *The Gentlemen's Tea Drinking Society*

O'Malley park was fined €63.49, the equivalent of £50, which was the maximum penalty available to the court.

"It's nothing to do with me. It's my brother Francis and his friends and he's going to go back in there with his friends drinking," Mr Kelly said upon leaving the court, adding that he would appeal his conviction.

Meanwhile, Francis Kelly said he had been drinking with his friends at his home for the past 15 years because he is

Francis Kelly raises a pint of Guinness at the shebeen following the court case yesterday

PICTURE: SEAN CURTIN/PRESS 22

barred "from every pub in Limerick".

"It's illegal to drink in a public place, so I see it that I'm forced to drink with my friends in my own house, and I don't see anything wrong in it," Mr Kelly said.

He disagreed with Judge Tom O'Donnell's finding that the premises was being used for a commercial enterprise.

"I disagree with that

totally. I'm drinking in my house with my friends just like hundreds and thousands of people all over the country do every day, and that's all I'm doing," he said.

In his judgement, Judge O'Donnell said the shebeen at 9 Lilac Court, Keyes Park, which was raided by Roxboro gardai on April 17 last year, had "all the appearances, ves-

tiges and attributes of a bar and dare I say it, the ambience of a bar".

He said the premises had a full bar counter, several bar taps, a TV with a live feed from CCTV cameras at the rear door, a fully stocked stand-alone fridge, kegs, slabs, several bottles of varied spirits, a dart board, a pool table, a game machine, alcohol advertisements on the

...that money and exchange hands in a tab system which is evidenced by the notebook"- seized by gardai from behind the counter on the night of the raid.

"I am satisfied that Anthony Kelly was an occupier of a bar and was fully cognisant of what was going on," Judge O'Donnell told the court.

Mr Kelly was convicted as charged. An order was made for all the alcohol seized at the shebeen to be destroyed.

Unemployment up by 70 per cent

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He said: "The Department of Social and Family Affairs will be sending an advance team to Dell in April to ensure that workers are fully aware of their entitlements," he said.

The number of people now seeking work in Limerick is nearly twice that of Clare, and is a fifth of the number of people on the Live Register in Dublin.

In terms of other major regions, Galway had 16,479 people on the Live Register, and Cork had 28,064.

Males aged over 25 comprising the largest group in Limerick seeking work, but the number of females seeking work increased in all regions and the largest percent-

age increase was in the Mid-West region, at an increase of nine per cent.

Figures released by the Central Statistics Office yesterday show that of the 14,030 people seeking employment across Limerick, 2,233 people signed on in Newcastle West. A further 1,722 people signed on in Kilmallock, Co Limerick, are also looking for jobs.

In December last, there were 236,908 Irish nationals and 54,455 non-Irish nationals on the Live Register. This represents a monthly increase of 8.3 per cent in Irish nationals and 9.2 per cent in non-Irish nationals. Among non-Irish nationals the largest number on the Live Register were nationals from the EU Accession states.

Tanaiste has asked local man to head up taskforce following Dell announcement

By GERARD FITZGIBBON

THE TANAISTE has confirmed that the Government is to seek EU funding to help the 1900 workers who are to be made redundant by Dell.

Mary Coughlan made the announcement during her first visit to Limerick since the company confirmed it is to cut two-thirds of its workforce at Raheen last week.

She said that the Government will be seeking aid from the €500 million European Globalisation adjustment fund for the affected workers, even though only a small number of countries had received money from it in the past.

Ms Coughlan also said that she has approached a "particular gentleman" in the region to head a government task force for the Mid-West to handle the fallout of the Dell job losses.

The Tanaiste met with worker representatives



Tanaiste Mary Coughlan talking to the media about the Dell job losses at the Castletroy Park Hotel (LL)

and local elected officials during her visit to Limerick on Tuesday, where she outlined details of the Government's plans to handle the crisis in the coming months.

When asked why she had waited one week to visit the city, Ms Coughlan said that it was appropriate that Dell "deal with the matter themselves," and that she had diary commit-

ments.

"[The visit] is an opportunity to empathise with those people who are unfortunately going to lose their jobs, to provide for them information appertain-

ing to what the Government is doing in order to support them in the decisions that they will be making over the next period of time, and also to reiterate our firm commitment to providing alternative employment," she said.

She added that all relevant state agencies were working on the situation, and will be aiming to provide "tailor-made packages for each individual" affected by the job cuts.

Ms Coughlan said that the Government have no plans to insist on revised redundancy terms for workers, stating that this is a matter of consultation between employees and Dell over a statutory 30-day period.

"It's appropriate that we allow that process to finalise over a 30 day period, and then on that basis they can deal with their own issues. I think it's inappropriate for me at this moment in time in interfere with those discussions between the workers and the company," she said.