



A NEW BEGINNING FOR WATERFORD CRYSTAL AS NEW MANUFACTURING FACILITY, VISITOR CENTRE AND RETAIL OUTLET OPENS IN THE HEART OF WATERFORD

22 June 2010: A new beginning for Waterford Crystal is marked today with the official opening of the House of Waterford Crystal on the Mall in the heart of Waterford city. The new facility, which comprises manufacturing facility, visitor centre and retail outlet, ensures that the combined history of over 200 years of heritage, tradition and craftsmanship, remains firmly rooted in Waterford. This milestone event is the result of an agreement between WWRD Holdings Limited (“WWRD”), the leading luxury goods group which owns and operates the Waterford Crystal, Wedgwood and Royal Doulton brands and Waterford City Council.

The House of Waterford Crystal will employ 79 full-time and 33 part-time staff, with a further 30-40 temporary staff during peak season, and will annually produce around 40,000 hand crafted high end pieces using traditional methods. It will also act as a central laboratory for Waterford Crystal’s designers to ensure that all of the brand’s products have an enduring connection with Waterford’s unrivalled tradition of craftsmanship and design.

The manufacturing facility contains a brand new continuous melt tank furnace that has been tailor-made for Waterford Crystal’s specifications, and will produce two tonnes of molten crystal every day. It uses leading edge technology to deliver molten crystal of the highest quality for skilled master blowers to hand-shape and hand-blow Waterford Crystal’s range of premium products. All aspects of the manufacturing process will be fully accessible to visitors, who will learn about both historical and contemporary production techniques through direct interaction with the craftsmen and from audiovisual materials. In addition, the onsite retail centre will represent the largest display of Waterford Crystal anywhere in the world.

Pierre de Villeméjane, CEO of WWRD, said: “Today represents the culmination of a huge amount of hard work on the part of WWRD, its owners - KPS Capital Partners - and Waterford City Council to get this project off the ground. We are extremely proud of the House of Waterford Crystal, and its commitment to quality, heritage and cutting-edge design represents everything that this brand stands for. We look forward to welcoming visitors from all over the world to our new centre, and to continuing the city of Waterford’s extraordinary tradition of producing crystal of the very highest quality.”



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