

A Message from the Quarrying Industry

Explaining the role and benefits of our Quarrying Industry

Our industry knows very well the vital contribution that the quarrying industry makes, not only to the NI economy but also to every aspect of modern life. The fact is if something cannot be grown then it has to be dug from the ground. Quarry products are the essential ingredients of civilization. Everyone uses them and everyone benefits. They literally help us to make more of life.

If you work in the industry, it seems obvious, our houses, schools and factories; our roads railways and airports - and everything that travels on them - are made from minerals. And yet people fail to make the connection between these every day essentials and the mines and quarries where they are produced.

Our modern society has increased its demand for quarry products from less than 500,000 tonnes in the 1940's to a current annual requirement of about 25,000,000 per year, that's about 20 tonnes per man woman and child in the Province.

Our quarries do not create this demand, they must meet it. In order to sustain the current level of economic growth and prosperity we enjoy, high production of primary construction materials will continue for the foreseeable future, particularly in Counties Down and Antrim.

This will mean faster use of quarry stone reserves. When these reserves run out, quarries will have to be replaced or extended. They are an essential factor in our way of life and will exist for as long as we do.

We possess a natural environment of wonderful diversity, from the beautiful Strangford shores to the towering ramparts of the Sperrins. Every County has its own unique beauty and we are all justly proud of this, our natural inheritance. But we have two other equally wonderful resources, our people, living and working in what is becoming one of the most progressive economies in the world, and our built environment. From our heritage of historical stone monuments to Belfast's City Hall and the new Waterfront, all of these structures have one thing in common, they came out of the ground - they all came from quarries.

The challenge we face today is to integrate our living and working environments.

Our industry has a great story to tell about its economic contribution and environmental achievements. We have high operating standards aimed at reducing our impact on the environment during production and we continue to improve the quality and value of our site restoration schemes.

Continued economic growth and prosperity in your area rely on the continued local supply of primary construction materials. The Quarrying Industry depends on your support.