



EAST DOWN ADVERTISER

Issue 256 - East Down BT24 • BT30 • BT31 • BT33

Support Local

SALE NOW ON



Jacksons

OF SAINTFIELD | MOIRA
WEDDING GIFT LIST SERVICE

SALE NOW ON



GARDEN FURNITURE SALE | 1/2 PRICE FASHION & SHOE SALE | HEALTH STORE, BOUTIQUE, HARDWARE, COFFEE SHOP, INTERIORS



Participants in a recent workshops organised by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's Slieve Croob District Electoral Area (DEA) Forum which introduced local people to the Makaton language programme.

WORKSHOPS INTRODUCE MAKATON LANGUAGE PROGRAMME

Recent workshops organised by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's Slieve Croob District Electoral Area (DEA) Forum introduced local people to the Makaton language programme.

Using signs, symbols and speech to support those with learning or communication difficulties, the workshops were held in Drummaroad, Drumaness and Castlewellan.

Participants fully immersed themselves in the events to help their understanding of Makaton

which is widely used in schools, health settings and in the home to help those with learning and speech disabilities to communicate.

The use of the language programme helps reduce frustration, accelerate vocabulary development, boost confidence, improve attention and memory and

helps users express needs, thoughts and emotions.

Parents and family members joined teachers from a number of local schools at the Castlewellan event and were pleased the workshop had been organised by the DEA Forum.

The Council Chairperson said the

language programme has been described as transformative, helping boost people's confidence and communication in a more inclusive environment where they feel understood.

Continued on page 4

Play Shines a Spotlight on Violent Behaviour

A powerful play examining themes of control and violence in relationships and the importance of communication and respect to avoid harm has been shown to over 1,000 post-primary school students across the district.

The hard hitting production is part of Newry, Mourne, and Down District Council's continued campaign and commitment to Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG).

Entitled The Voice Within, the specially commissioned play written and directed by Spanner in the Works Theatre Company, follows a teenage partnership and highlights behaviours and attitudes that lead to control and violence in a relationship.

The production, which was followed by an interactive workshop,

highlighted the signs of harmful and coercive behaviour that can lead to women and girls experiencing violence and abuse in relationships.

Organised and delivered by the Council's seven District Electoral Areas (DEAs), the play is supported by The Executive Office Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG) Momentum Funding and concluded with a performance in Newry Town Hall on 24 February which was attended by Newry, Mourne and Down Council Chairperson, Councillor Philip Campbell.



CLIMATISE YOUR PROPERTY FOR THE FUTURE.

RESIDENTIAL AIR CONDITIONING SPECIALISTS
YOU CONTROL THE TEMPERATURE OF YOUR HOME

Heating, ventilation and air conditioning service
• Bedrooms • Kitchens

ALL DOMESTIC INSTALLATIONS VAT FREE UNTIL 2027

Tel: 07776 845831

Email: info@belfastcooling.com
www.belfastcooling.com



A RESIDENTIAL HOME THAT REALLY CARES!

"Each tastefully decorated bedroom offers complete privacy where residents are encouraged to express their own personal tastes!"



tullywestmanor@googlemail.com
www.tullywestmanor.com

TULLYWEST MANOR RESIDENTIAL HOME, TULLYWEST ROAD, SAINTFIELD, BALLYNAHINCH BT21 7LX TEL: 028 97511 234

FOUR SEASONS HOTEL CARLINGFORD

Discover Carlingford

With Four Seasons Hotel Carlingford

+353 42 937 3530 | info@fshc.ie
4seasonshotelcarlingford.ie

The Irish Equine Rehabilitation & Fitness Centre

Premiere Care and Premiere Caring at The Irish Equine Rehabilitation & Fitness Centre

Located just outside Lisburn, lies a facility that has redefining equine recovery and performance: the Irish Equine Rehabilitation & Fitness Centre (IERFC).

This state-of-the-art centre offers a holistic and innovative approach to equine rehabilitation and fitness, catering to horses of all disciplines and levels, from top-tier athletes to beloved companions. Due to impressive results The IERFC has quickly established itself as a leader in its field and in 2022 received a Royal Visit from The Princess Royal, Princess Anne!

What underlines the success of the centre? Founder and Owner Michelle Kane reveals that the business grew out of her own need to access quality rehab and fitness resources in order to rehabilitate her own injured horses.

Michelle, who has over 50 years experience, and a wealth of industry experience says: "It's vital that family ponies and horses belonging to hobby owners can access the same quality rehabilitation services as a grand prix show jumper, a 4* eventer or a Grade 1 racehorse owners and that the cost is achievable for all. Every equine

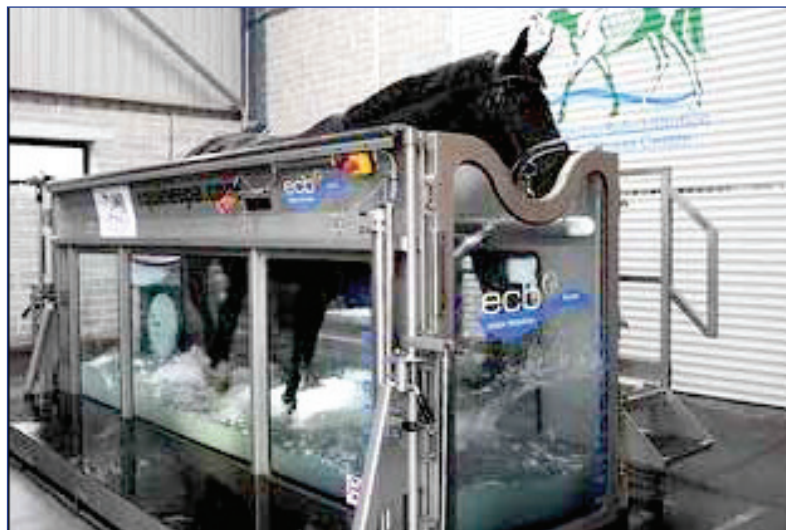
client through the doors has a bespoke plan and access to the best resources available."

A family run and family friendly business The IERFC prides itself on providing bespoke, individually tailored rehabilitation or fitness programs. The tranquil setting, with 12 stables, promotes relaxation and recovery, essential for a horse's physical and mental well-being during a period of rehabilitation. The team at IERFC team was the first team in Ireland to achieve formal qualification in Water Treadmilling and have since achieved many more specialist qualifications. The Centre works closely with local vets and also with a network of world class sports injury specialists including renowned vets, chiropractors, dentists, physiotherapists, massage therapists, body workers and farriers to ensure every horse receives a comprehensive and integrated care package which is reviewed and tweaked as necessary

on a daily basis.

The IERFC boasts an impressive array of facilities designed to optimise equine recovery and enhance fitness including: ECB Water Treadmill with Incline; ECB Cold Saltwater Hydrotherapy Spa; Cryogenic therapy, Class 3B & 4 Laser to optimise healing and Shockwave therapy, all of which can be undertaken in a dedicated Treatment Room with Solarium; there is also a Standalone Dry Salt Therapy Room as well as State-of-the-Art Stabling; Carpet Gallop Anti Concussion Sand Arena and Indoor Lunge Pen; and in addition to individual grass turnouts there is also a secure graze pen.

A range of hand-picked products and supplements are available from the Centre, and The IERFC is one of only a few establishments stocking the award winning Connexion from Equine-X which promotes nutritional support for connective tissues, after successfully trialling the product for



A purpose built state of the art bespoke Equine Rehabilitation & fitness centre offering water treadmill with incline, cold saltwater spa, cryogenics, Class 3B & 4 Laser, Shockwave and dry salt therapy alongside post operative care.

many months.

Whether it's a day visit for specific treatments or a longer-term livery for fitness bootcamp, recuperation and recovery or for post-operative care, the IERFC offers flexible options to meet each horse's individual needs. By combining cutting-edge technology with experienced horsemanship and a dedicated team, IERFC is helping horses across Ireland and beyond

return to soundness, achieve peak fitness, and enjoy a better quality of life.

The IERFC is located at 6 Aghalee Road, Lower Ballinderry, Lisburn Tel: 07522 227335 and Michelle is happy to discuss your equine's needs.

Email: ierfc@outlook.com or see www.ierfc.co.uk

Article used is copyright of The Irish Equine Rehabilitation & Fitness Centre



Revolutionising Equine Rehabilitation



- We ARE Ireland's premier facility for rehabilitation and fitness in a bespoke and purpose built venue outside Lisburn Co Antrim
- We HAVE revolutionised rehabilitation in Ireland
- We provide expertise through experience and qualifications
- We provide exemplary levels of diligent care, in a home from home environment, in a relaxing, tranquil setting which promotes recovery & well being
- We meet your horses every need, working alongside a team of excellent vets, chiropractors, dentists, physiotherapists and farriers.

What we offer

- Bespoke, individually tailored rehabilitation plans
- Fitness programmes for build core strength and stamina
- A selection of treatments - water treadmill, cold salt water spa, cryogenics, dry salt therapy and more ...
- Drive in sessions or livery packages available

Who uses us

- Every equine needs us and our clients range from family ponies to top level competition horses across all disciplines



www.ierfc.co.uk | ierfc@outlook.com | 07522227335
6 Aghalee Road, Lower Ballinderry, Lisburn, BT28 2JN

Council Invites Traders to Apply for 2026 Artisan Markets Initiative

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is inviting artists, makers, food producers and creative enterprises to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) to take part in its refreshed Artisan Markets Programme for 2026.

Running across key locations within the district - Newcastle, Downpatrick and Warrenpoint - the Artisan Markets will bring together high quality local producers, creators and small businesses, offering them an opportunity to showcase their work, reach new customers and contribute to thriving town centres.

The Council also welcomes applications from local food trucks and mobile catering businesses, including those offering tea, coffee, ice cream and other high quality food and drink produce.

The Council will open the Expression of Interest process all potential traders must complete an EOI form in order to be considered for participation in any Council run Artisan Market throughout the year.

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Chairperson, Councillor Philip Campbell said, "Artisan markets play a vital role in supporting small businesses, stimulating footfall and



celebrating the creativity that exists across our district.

These markets bring our towns and villages to life and we are delighted to once again open our doors to talented makers, producers and traders who want to be part of this growing programme. We encourage both new and returning traders to submit an Expression of Interest during the application window."

The Artisan Markets Initiative offers participants access to high visibility trading opportunities supported by Council promotion, themed events and marketing activity. This includes social media campaigns, on site branding, cross promotion with town centre initiatives and opportunities to take part in special seasonal markets.

While submitting an Expression of Interest does

not guarantee a trading space, applicants will be assessed based on product quality, sector variety, geographic spread and the overall balance needed to create a vibrant market experience.

The Expression of Interest form is now live www.newrymournedown.gov.uk/artisanmarkets

Alternatively, traders can contact the Council's Business Support team at: business@nmadd.org



Perfect for a city break
in Glasgow!

Book Online Now!

BELFAST GLASGOW EXPRESS

COACH & SAIL

£49

ALSO AVAILABLE FROM

Belfast Stena Line Terminal £48

Lisburn £51

Lurgan £53

From Belfast Grand Central Station

Book your trip today!



www.hannoncoach.com
 Tel: 028 9265 0700

WIN A £80 VOUCHER COVERING FULL SPA PACKAGE

To enter go to our Facebook Page. Like | Share & tag 3 friends on our Post GOOD LUCK!




NOW OPEN!

Elevate your relaxation experience at AH! Spa Ltd, where we transform the ordinary into the extraordinary.

Our state-of-the-art facilities and unique offerings are designed to take you on a serene journey of tranquillity and rejuvenation

Experiences include:

- ~ Luxury Massage Chairs
- ~ Infrared Saunas
- ~ Lazy Yoga ~ Holistic Wellness

Special Offer for EDA Media readers:

20% OFF YOUR NEXT VISIT

We invite you to book now and claim 20% off your next visit includes our massage chair sessions and infrared saunas and Yoga mat recovery. Limited time offer—relax today, renew tomorrow! Offer is single use only. T&C's apply

ONLINE & PHONE BOOKING ONLY

www.ahspa.uk 07784592088

AH! Spa,
33 Ballynahinch Road
Carryduff, BT8 8EH

FREE PARKING

Monday - Friday 10am - 8pm
Saturday - 12pm - 4pm Sunday - 1pm - 5pm











BAIZE CRAFT

WE ARE HIRING!

Join our team of enthusiastic Table Fitters delivering and installing home games room products ranging from slate bed pool tables to Table Tennis tables. The role can, at times, be quite challenging but, also very satisfying upon completion. There may be some days where you are helping the warehouse team. You must be prepared for manual handling of the heavy goods, with the specialist equipment provided.

On the job training will be given with one of our experienced fitters. Your 2-3 year goal will be to be able to lead the installation and service of these goods with the help of an assistant, with individual goals along the way. Achievement of individual goals will be financially rewarded. Full driving licence is essential.





Daily Tasks Include:

- Delivering and installing products within customers houses throughout the country.
- Carrying out service work (Recovering)
- Stock Organisation
- A keen eye for detail and personal organisation
- Willingness to learn about the products
- Problem solving
- Customer service
- Punctuality is required.

Email your CV to: matthew@baizecraft.com

Tel: 028 9263 8649

Web: www.baizecraft.com

120 Saintfield Rd, Lisburn BT27 5PG



MEMORABLE EVENING OF RECOGNITION AND CELEBRATION AT THE CHAIRPERSON'S CIVIC AWARDS

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Chairperson, Councillor Philip Campbell was delighted to host a memorable evening of recognition and celebration at the Chairperson's Civic Awards recently at the Millbrook Lodge Hotel, Ballynahinch.

The special ceremony, presented by BBC Radio Ulster's Connor Phillips, brought together nominees, families, community representatives and elected members from across the district to honour the individuals and groups whose dedication, kindness and commitment make a real difference to local

communities. The Civic Awards recognise outstanding contributions across a range of areas including volunteering, community pride, fundraising, arts, culture and heritage, youth leadership and human endeavour. The event followed a highly successful public nominations campaign that encouraged residents to recognise the people who go above and beyond for others.

Guests enjoyed a drinks reception and photography before the awards ceremony and dinner, as winners were announced across seven categories. One of the most inspiring moments of the evening came as the Chairperson's Award was presented to Cian McEvoy from Castlewellan, a remarkable young person whose story embodies strength, resilience and determination. Born with a rare congenital heart condition, Cian has spent much of his life undergoing medical treatment and hospital care. Despite these significant challenges, he has never allowed adversity to define him or limit his ambitions. Through dedication, perseverance and countless hours of training, Cian achieved international success in 2025 when he won gold at the WUKF European Championship — an extraordinary accomplishment that reflects both his sporting talent and his unwavering spirit. Accepting the award, Cian encouraged others with a simple but powerful message: "Just believe in yourself." Host Connor Phillips described him as "an absolute legend," while Cian humbly paid tribute



to his coach, whom he described as his own legend. His story serves as a powerful reminder of what can be achieved through courage, hard work and belief.

During the evening, guests also supported the Chairperson's chosen charities, The Laurence Trust and Head Injury Support, through a charity raffle, raising valuable funds for their work in the community. Highlights from the Civic Awards 2026 will be shared across the Council's social media channels using the hashtag #CelebratingYOU.

Civic Awards 2026 Winners

Chairperson's Special Award:

Cian McEvoy Arts, Culture and Heritage Award:

Iúir Cinn Fleadh is a volunteer-led festival which has filled Newry City each August bank holiday with music, language, storytelling and community celebration, attracting thousands of visitors and supporting local businesses.

Community Pride Award:

Stephen Harris, who has been the heart of the Downpatrick Community Allotments for almost 15 years, serving as the driving force behind their

transformation.

Fundraising Award:

Gervase McCartan from Newry, who has dedicated over 40 years of fundraising to Cancer Research, raising more than £1.25 million for clinical trials at Queen's University Belfast and the Patrick G Johnston Centre. Gervase also celebrated his 93 birthday on the evening of the awards and received his award to an audience rendition of 'Happy Birthday'.

Human Endeavour Award:

The staff team from Cuan Court Children's Home, Downpatrick, who go above and beyond to care for the

children. From care workers to management, they give love support and guidance tirelessly, helping young people to achieve better outcomes.

Volunteering Award: Ita Gibney for her devotion to over 35 years to the Newtownhamilton community as Volunteer Manager of the Community Centre.

Youth Impact Award: Rachel Carvill, 17 from Mayobridge is a high-performance athlete and proud international representative of Ireland. She is a 2nd Dan Black Belt in Taekwondo and excels in amateur boxing.

DENTURE DESIGN PRACTICE
66/67 Park Street Dundalk Co Louth A91 NV60 Tel: 042 932 9755

CUSTOM-MADE PROSTHETICS MADE FROM A-Z ON-SITE TO PATIENT'S REQUIREMENTS
SOFT RELINES | FACIAL RE-CONTOURING

Before After

WWW.DENTUREDESIGNPRACTICE.COM ESTABLISHED 1985

WELCOME TO NORTHERN IRELAND'S NUMBER 1 DRONE PILOT TRAINING PROVIDER

DRONE PILOT TRAINING ACADEMY

QUOTE THE EAST DOWN ADVERTISER FOR 10% OFF BEGINNER TRAINING

A2 COFC & GVC

BRING YOUR OWN DRONE TO DRONE PILOT TRAINING ACADEMY AND WE WILL TEACH YOU HOW TO FLY IT!

Available for Beginners Drone Pilot Training and Demos. Terms & Conditions apply.

Contact Robert Dobbin on 07565 481 897 www.dronepilotdeploy.com

EAST DOWN ADVERTISER
Support Local

Pick up your FREE copy at:

<p>Carlises Petrol Station 105 Belfast Road, Ballynahinch, BT24 8FF</p> <p>Donard Service Station 76 Crossgar Road, Ballynahinch, BT24 8XS</p> <p>Maxol Service Station 11a Crossgar Road, Saintfied, BT24 7AS</p> <p>Todays Local 133 Main Street, Dundrum, BT33 0LX</p> <p>Brennans Dundrum 12 Main Street, Dundrum, BT33 0LU</p> <p>Brennans Seaforde 149 Newcastle Road, Seaforde, BT30 8PL</p> <p>Ballykinlar Filling Station, 75 Commons Road, Ballykinlar, BT30 8DQ</p> <p>Wilson's Annsborough Stores 44 Ballylough Road, Castlewellan, BT31 9NN</p> <p>Lennons Spar 1 Newcastle Road, Castlewellan, BT31 9DP</p> <p>Smyths Centre 12 Railway Street, Newcastle, BT33 0AL</p>	<p>Ballymote Supervalu 40 Killough Road, Downpatrick, BT30 6PY</p> <p>Costcutters 112 Market Street, Downpatrick, BT40 6LZ</p> <p>Day Today 14a Scotch Street, Downpatrick, BT30 6AQ</p> <p>Gibney Stores 68 Stream Street, Downpatrick, BT30 6DF</p> <p>Spar Foodstore Connolly's 61-63 Edward Street, Downpatrick, BT30 6JH</p> <p>Tels Confectionary 30 St Patricks Avenue, Downpatrick, BT30 6DW</p> <p>Connolly's Vivo Essentials 18 Downpatrick Road, Strangford, BT30 7LZ</p> <p>Mace 2 Downpatrick Street, Strangford, BT30 7LZ</p> <p>Supervalu Crossgar 1 Downpatrick Road, Crossgar, BT30 9EW</p>
---	---

Continued from page 1

During the workshops, participants learnt 40 signs and symbols on the basic information on the Makaton programme. Emer Hamill from Ardglass, who attended

the Castlewellan event, was delighted the workshops had been arranged. Her nine year-old niece has Down Syndrome and is non-verbal. She is educated at a special unit at St Nicholas' Primary School in Ardglass where her

teachers use Makaton. "When she comes home from school, she is using Makaton and I am learning the language so I can communicate with her," said Emer.

"I am one of my niece's carers and at the minute I only know about 10 Makaton signs and I'm here to learn more. I learnt the signs by watching Mr Tumble on children's television and my niece also watches him too. When she learns a new sign at school, I have to ask the teacher what it means."

Emer said the workshop will really benefit her and is encouraging other people with loved ones who have learning

or communication difficulties to learn Makaton.

"I am pleased these workshops have been organised. As far as I am aware, there are no other classes of this kind and they are invaluable. None of the local further education colleges offer Makaton classes and I am pleased to be here to learn more and communicate better with my niece," she said.

Emer added, "Attending this workshop is just the start for me and I intend to keep learning Makaton which is an invaluable skill for me and many other families and teachers across the district."

THE DISABILITY AND BATHROOM CENTRE

- Mobility Scooters
- Walking Aids
- Wheelchairs
- 4/3 Wheel Walkers
- Hand Rails
- Walk in Baths

Supply & Fitting
FREE QUOTATIONS

MOBILITY SCOOTER SALE ON NOW

SEE OUR FACEBOOK PAGE FOR NEW & GENTLY USED MOBILITY PRODUCTS!

www.thedisabilityandbathroomcentre.com
thedisabilitycentre@hotmail.co.uk
20, The Square, Portaferry, Newtownards, Co. Down, BT22 1LW.
Tel: 078 0229 8910 or 028 42 728 580

Coney Island CARAVAN SALES & HIRE

Dog Friendly

TOURING VANS, MOTORHOMES & TENTS WELCOME!

75 Killough Road, Ardglass, Downpatrick
Tel: 07902 030050

SERC Student Success at IFEX 2026

South Eastern Regional College (SERC) is celebrating a host of wins at the Northern Ireland International Food Exhibition (IFEX) which took place at the Eikon Exhibition Centre in Lisburn from 24 – 26 February.

SERC had 23 students from the college's Bangor, Downpatrick, Lisburn and Newtownards Campuses taking part in competitions, with 21 of them taking podium places including five Gold, five Silver, 11 Bronze and two students awarded Merits.

Matthew Beech (Dunmurry), Level 3 Diploma in Professional Chef, had double reason to celebrate when he lifted a Gold in the WorldSkills Knife Skills category and the Riso Gallo Young Risotto Chef of the Year (All Ireland Regional Heats) with fellow students Owen Mendez (Bangor), Level 3 Professional Chef, awarded Silver, and Abbie McCormick (Newtownards), and Levi Grant (Lisburn), both Level 2 Professional Chef, taking Bronze. Matthew will now go forth to represent Northern Ireland in the Grand Final in London on 1 June.

In the Edible Arts - Decorative Exhibit, Angel Armstrong (Belfast) Level 3 NVQ Diploma in Professional Cookery - Patisserie and Confectionery, as student lead alongside Lecturer Ruth Doherty as support, took a well-deserved Gold.

The final Gold was awarded to Dean Mackintosh (Bangor) from the Level 2 Traineeship in Professional Chef who took the top spot in the NI Culinary Ability Awards.



Enjoying success at IFEX SERC students (second left) Matthew Beech (Dunmurry), took Gold in the WorldSkills Knife Skills category and Gold in the Riso Gallo Young Risotto Chef of the Year (All Ireland Regional Heats); with (l-r) Levi Grant (Lisburn), Level 2 Professional Chef, Bronze; Owen Mendez (Bangor) Level 3 Professional Chef awarded Silver; and Abbie McCormick (Newtownards), Bronze. Matthew will now go forth to represent Northern Ireland in the Grand Final in London on 1 June.

Ohla Vasylieva (Newcastle), lead student and Kateryna Kushymenko (Ballynahinch), support student, both Level 2 Professional Bakery, took Silver in the Celebration Cakes (Fondant); Cara McKendry (Crossgar), Bronze and Sophie Burdett (Belfast), Level 2 Certificate in Professional Bakery was recognised with a Merit in the same category.

Silver medals also went to Bilyana Demirok (Carrickfergus), Level 2 Patisserie, in the Finger Food (Tasted) category and Oscar Manley (Killough), Level 2 Traineeship in Professional Chef, for NI Dessert of the Year. Bronze medals were

presented to Emma Dawson (Banbridge) and Eve Cockfield (Poyntzpass), both Level 2 Traineeship in Professional Bakery, and Alesandra Tailford (Lisburn), from the Level 3 NVQ Diploma in Professional Cookery - Patisserie and Confectionery, in the Novelty Cake category; Brooke Edgar-McAleenon (Lisburn), also Level 3 NVQ Diploma in Professional Cookery - Patisserie and Confectionery for Afternoon Tea (Tasted); Gabrielle Harrison (Newtownards), Level 3 Diploma in Professional Chef for Plant-Based Chef Challenge; Thomas Kelly (Downpatrick)

and Abbie McCormick (Newtownards) Level 2 Traineeship in Professional Chef for Classical Junior Chicken; and Grace Dugan (Belfast), Higher Level Apprenticeship in Culinary Arts for the prestigious Student Culinarian of the Year 2026. Merit Awards were also presented to Noah Brown (Donaghadee) Level 3 Apprenticeship in Professional Cookery for Young Seafood Chef of the Year and Ethan McCallum (Ballynahinch) Level 2 Traineeship in Professional Chef for Plant-Based Chef Challenge. Visit www.serc.ac.uk Real Learning for Real Life #BetterOffAtSERC.

AIR AMBULANCE NORTHERN IRELAND CHARITY

Air Ambulance NI is a charity needing £5,500 per day to operate

Help save lives like Hannah's, by becoming a CLUB AANI MEMBER

Membership starts from £2 per week

You'll receive an exclusive welcome pack, gold pin badge & an annual invitation to our base

Visit www.airambulancenri.org or call 028 9262 2677

CLUB AANI

NI103900

Mark Skip Hire & Recycling

As a local family-run recycling business with over 20 years experience we can offer you fast, reliable and cost effective recycling solutions for your domestic or business needs.

• Large Skip Bags • Bin emptying • Rubbish removal

<p>Recycling Services</p> <p>We work with both business and domestic clients, no job is too large or small.</p>	<p>Deliveries</p> <p>We can deliver a variety of materials to you by either tractor and dump trailer or by skip lorry.</p>	<p>Man With Van Service</p> <p>We can load the waste for the customer and remove it immediately. Ideal for garage/shed clearouts, house removals</p>	<p>Load While You Wait</p> <p>Mark Skip Hire also offers a Load while you wait service</p>	<p>Same Day</p> <p>At Mark skip hire we offer a same day delivery & collection service</p>	<p>NIEA Approved</p> <p>Mark Skip Hire has been approved by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency</p>
--	---	---	---	---	--

Need a skip? We can deliver today! (Mon-Sat) in the following areas :

• Kilkeel • Newcastle • Castlewellan • Downpatrick • Rostrevor • Warrenpoint • Newry

<p>Phone</p> <p>07736 686 144</p>	<p>Phone</p> <p>02841 764 348</p>	<p>Email</p> <p>markskiphire@gmail.com</p>
--	--	---

THE WOOL DEN
 Find us on f The Wool Den
 Contact: Elizabeth 078 3337 1000
 OPENING HOURS:
 Tues to Fri 10am-5pm *
 Sat 10am-2pm *
 3 Chilton Drive, Ballynahinch

BARNEY'S SHOE REPAIR
 10 Church Street, Ballynahinch, BT24 8AF
 Telephone: 028 97 56 5949
Dry Cleaning service Now Available
SHOE REPAIRS
 • Lost & Broken Keys Replaced • Shoe Repairs While You Wait • Heels Lowered • Watch Batteries • Watch Straps Replaced • Trophies Supplied
 • Engraving (plaques and trophies) • Leather Goods Repair • Zip Replacement (on Leather Goods & Handbags)
 • Key Cutting • Security Keys Cut • Spare Car Keys Cut
 Pick up point in Dromore at Clean and Classy

Need the perfect centrepiece for your next celebration?
 Bespoke cakes and cupcakes designed to make your special occasion even more memorable.
FREE DELIVERY within a 10 mile radius of Saintfield.
 Tel: 075 1165 4131

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY EVENT IN KILLOUGH

Women from across Rowallane came together recently to celebrate International Women's Day through a creative pottery workshop and lunch hosted at Preacher House Pottery in Killough.

Organised by Rowallane DEA, the event provided an opportunity for local women to connect, learn a new skill and celebrate the important role women play in communities across the district, with participants creating their own ceramic candle burners. The hands-on session offered a relaxed and welcoming environment where attendees explored their creativity while building new friendships and connections. International Women's Day, celebrated globally on 8 March each year, recognises the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women, while also highlighting the importance of continuing to advance equality and opportunity for women everywhere. The Killough event provided a positive opportunity for women to come together in a



supportive and creative setting and formed part of Rowallane DEA's ongoing work to support community engagement and wellbeing across the area, while celebrating and recognising the contribution women make to local communities every day.

CROSSGAR GOLF CLUB
 Crossgar Golf Club is a delightful par 64 course, located on the outskirts of Crossgar. The course itself displays very tight fairways and challenging greens and a good test for any golfer.
 231 Derryboye Road, Crossgar, Downpatrick, BT30 9DL
 Telephone: +44 (0)28 4483 1523
 Email: crossgargolfclub@gmail.com

GUITAR TUITION
 • Beginners to improvers
 • Mature adults a speciality
 • No music knowledge required
 • Convenient to Saintfield, Crossgar, Killyleagh, Ballygowan & Killinchy
 Fulfill your ambitions, contact David on
02844 830 843 or 07926 781535

Light Vehicle Intercampus Competition Kicks into Gear

Level 3 Apprenticeship NI in Vehicle Maintenance & Repair (Light Vehicle) students put their skills to the test recently in an intercampus competition hosted at SERC Downpatrick Campus.

During the competition, apprentices had to complete many industry-focused tasks, which included inspecting a vehicle and reporting on recommended repairs following manufacturer procedures, evaluating brake systems, measuring an engine, as well as identifying and diagnosing a body electrical fault, carrying out correct testing procedures, and recommending effective repairs. First place went to Downpatrick campuses' Conaire Small (19, Newcastle), in joint second place came Lisburn apprentices Ethan Boyd (19, Dromore) and Callum McGoldrick (21, Lisburn), and third was awarded to Downpatrick campuses' Ben Norrie (24, Cloghy). SERC Deputy Head of School Hugh Kelly comments, "A big well done to all the students who took part — your hard work, skills, and commitment to excellence truly shone through. These hands-on competitions help prepare our learners for real-world industry standards, and we couldn't be prouder!" Visit www.serc.ac.uk Real Learning for Real Life #BetterOffAtSERC

Sign up to our Digital Magazine Today!

Family Focus

Family Jacksons
 OF SAINTFIELD | MOIRA
 GARDEN FURNITURE SALE
 4/24 PRICE FASHIONS
 HEALTHY SNAKE
 HARDWARE
 CENTRE, SHAW, INTERIORS
SALE NOW ON SALE NOW ON

Fostering changes lives
 Now more than ever, we need foster carers like you
 Foster with 115
actionforchildren.org.uk/fostering

Family Focus

subscriptions@edamedia.co.uk

Downpatrick Volunteers Scoop Wins at UK-Wide Heritage Railway Awards

Volunteers from the Downpatrick & County Down Railway have been recognised at the prestigious Heritage Railway Association Annual Awards, the sector's flagship event often described as the "Oscars" of the heritage railway world.

The awards ceremony took place at Venue Cymru in Llandudno, North Wales, bringing together more than 300 representatives from heritage railways and preservation groups across the UK and Ireland.

This year's competition was the most competitive yet, with a record 110 entries submitted across categories covering engineering, restoration projects, visitor experience and volunteer achievement. Entries were assessed by an expert judging panel chaired by the National Railway Museum.

Despite competing against some of the largest heritage railways in Britain, the volunteer-run railway in Downpatrick secured recognition across three categories.

Christopher McCausland won the Rising Star of the Year award, recognising emerging leaders in the heritage railway sector.

Volunteer Shea McKee was Highly Commended in the national Young Volunteer of the Year category, while the railway's joint project with the Irish Traction Group, the "Moyexit" rescue of four historic diesel locomotives from Moyasta in County



The winning teams - back row L to R - Christopher McCausland the new Rising Star, Shea McKee with TWO trophies to try to fit into hand luggage and Infrastructure manager David Crone. Front Row: DCDR chairman Robert Gardiner with the ITG's Peter Jones, Fiachna Mac Murchú and DCDR Ops Manager Morgan Young.

Clare, was also Highly Commended in the Achievement of the Year category.

Downpatrick & County Down Railway Chairman Robert Gardiner said the results were a tribute to the strength of the railway's volunteer team.

"Once again Downpatrick has triumphed in the people categories, which reflects our commitment to fostering and nurturing new talent while recognising volunteers who go above and beyond," he said.

"For a small volunteer railway in Northern Ireland to be recognised alongside some of the biggest organisations

in the heritage railway sector shows that our wee railway can stand toe-to-toe with some of the major industry players."

He added that the recognition was particularly meaningful as the railway continues its recovery following the devastating floods that struck the site in 2023.

"These awards recognise the extraordinary work done by volunteers across the heritage railway movement. To see our volunteers recognised on a national stage again means a great deal, particularly as the railway continues to rebuild after the floods."

The latest honours follow a series of major recognitions for the volunteer-run organisation.

The Downpatrick & County Down Railway recently received the King's Award for Voluntary Service, the highest honour given to volunteer groups in the UK, and was also named Social Enterprise of the Year at the Social Enterprise Northern Ireland Awards in 2024.

Together, these accolades reflect the impact of the railway's volunteers in preserving Northern Ireland's railway heritage while creating a major visitor attraction and community asset in Downpatrick.



WALK IN SERVICE

NO APPOINTMENT NEEDED

COUNSELLING • BEFRIENDING • THERAPIES • INFORMATION

"Look beyond the behaviour and see the person who is hurting"

279-281 Antrim Road, Belfast BT15 2GZ

OPEN: Mon to Fri 9am-9pm • Sat & Sun 10am-6pm

See website for more information

Telephone 028 9080 5850

Freephone 0800 088 6042 • Email info@pipscharity.com

www.pipscharity.com

Charity No: NIC104726

Too many live lost to suicide. Sign the petition



Scan the QR code to sign.

or visit:
[www.pipscharity.com/
standwithpips](http://www.pipscharity.com/standwithpips)

Planting the seeds of hope.

Alana at Ormeau Golf Club

Fairy Tree Bistro



You don't have to be a member to come here...

Open Daily from 11am

11am – 3pm Lunch Bites | 3pm- 11pm A la Carte Menu

Our A La Carte menu includes...

Steak/ Scampi/ Vegetarian Option/ Roast Beef/ Battered Chicken Goujons and more



ALL EVENT BOOKINGS!

Having a wedding Celebration or a Family Gathering?
NO ROOM CHARGE FOR LARGE GATHERINGS
Wedding Party? FREE DJ

SUNDAY CARVERY

Every 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month

For details of our St. Patricks Day Menu And Mother's Day Carvery see our Social Media

Our Golfer's Fry is Famous!

50 Park Road, Belfast, BT7 2FX

www.ormeaugolfclub.com

Tel: 028 9064 0700 | E: fairytreebistro@gmail.com




Hinch Single Malt Irish Whiskey named Best Irish Small Batch Single Malt

Hinch Irish Whiskey Single Malt was named Best Irish Small Batch Single Malt at the World Whiskies Awards Ireland 2026, a significant recognition that follows Emma Millar's recent promotion to Head Distiller and reflects her influence on the development and character of the award-winning liquid.

Emma, who has been part of the Hinch Distillery team since its inception in 2020, has played a central role in developing and shaping the character of the Single Malt, working closely on its maturation journey in ex-bourbon American oak and Oloroso sherry casks to create a finely balanced

expression with notes of orange, honey and ginger. The award represents an important milestone both for Hinch Distillery and for Emma in her new leadership role, highlighting the craft and consistency behind the liquid. The awards were announced at a ceremony held at the

InterContinental Dublin on 26 February 2026, bringing together leading figures from across the Irish whiskey industry to celebrate the year's achievements. Emma Millar, Head Distiller at Hinch Distillery, said: "This award reflects the care and attention that goes into every

stage of our whiskey making process. Having worked closely with the Single Malt over the past five years, it is especially rewarding to see it recognised in this way so soon after stepping into the role of Head Distiller. It highlights the importance of understanding the influence of cask maturation and allowing each whiskey to develop its own character over time."

Hinch's 15 Year Old Sherry Cask Finish was also named Best Irish Blended Limited Release (13 to 20 Years), while the distillery's 5 Year Old Double Wood Madeira Cask Finish was recognised as a Category Winner in the 12 Years and Under section.

Winners of the World Whiskies Awards Ireland will go on to compete for the title of World's Best in their category, with the results to be announced at the World Whiskies Awards 2026 Global Dinner on 25 March 2026.

WHAT WE CAN ALL DO FOR HEDGEHOGS.

As their name indicates, hedgehogs mostly live in or around hedges, and that has been their downfall, as rural hedges have been increasingly removed to accommodate intensive agriculture.

It's estimated that hedgehog numbers in farmland have fallen by more than 50% in the last 20 years. While they have been adaptable by occupying urban and suburban gardens and parks, even there their numbers are declining.

Anybody with a garden can help. First, if you have a hedge, please don't remove it and replace it with a fence. I

know it can be a bit of a chore to trim, but hedges are not just useful to hedgehogs, they are shelters and nesting places for other wildlife, particularly birds.

Hedgehogs travel about a mile every night to find food, being the gardener's friend by gobbling up slugs and insects, and if they're blocked by fences, then, inevitably, they will die. So, if you must have fences, just do one simple thing: leave a small, roughly 13cm



x 13cm (5" x 5"), gap at the bottom of them.

You can even get hedgehog highway signage to display over the gaps. And why not encourage your neighbours to do the same and create a really useful hedgehog-friendly habitat?

Second, leave some areas of lawn or garden to simply grow, revealing native grasses and other

plants, including wildflowers (which will also help bees and other insects). A scrubby corner could be hedgehog paradise!

Third, stop using slug pellets, which not only kill hedgehog prey, but the hedgehogs themselves. If you're lucky to have garden hedgehogs they'll happily deal with the slugs.

Finally, if you have

a suitably dense hedge (even under those pesky leylandii!), why not buy or make a hedgehog home: <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/actions/how-build-hedgehog-home>

Think about what you can do. You'll make Beatrix Potter's Mrs Tiggly-Winkle happy and be doing your bit for wildlife recovery.

JVA

LISBURN HEARING CENTRE CALL TODAY 02892 640302

Ear Wax Removal by Micro-Suction

Qualified hearing aid audiologist

THE TAILORED

HOME & GARDEN MAGAZINE

- Home Interiors
- Renovations
- Lifestyle

THE TAILORED
HOME & GARDEN MAGAZINE

Designer Door Co. 252 Upper Newtownards Road Belfast BT4 3EU Telephone 028 9099 6009

Subscribe for FREE

email: subscriptions@edamedia.co.uk

- Accounts Preparation
- Taxation - All Businesses
- Tax Advice & Planning
- Covering all Taxes - Including
- New Businesses & Ventures
- Book-Keeping / Statutory Returns



PETER E O'HARE & CO
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

CELEBRATING OVER 30 YEARS IN BUSINESS

**32 High Street,
 Ballynahinch, BT24 8AB**

**Telephone
 02897 565800-**

**E-mail:
 info@peterohare.co.uk**

Discover Ultimate Relaxation at AH! Spa

Experience pure bliss at AH! Spa where luxury meets advanced wellness and cutting-edge technology.

Our 4D high-end massage chairs and infrared saunas and lazy Yoga mats deliver transformative benefits to make relaxation more effective than ever before. This is the perfect space to elevate your wellness journey and find your daily "AH!" moment.

Unwind in our state-of-the-art 4D high-end massage chairs and enjoy a precision therapy session designed for total body relief. These innovative chairs target muscle and joint pain while effectively reducing inflammation and stiffness. By enhancing circulation and facilitating faster recovery and reduced soreness, they help you bounce back from daily stress. Each session utilizes gentle and deep tissue kneading to promote significant stress reduction and improved

sleep. You can enjoy this premium experience for just £30 per 30 minutes.

Harness the power of infrared heat for superior results and deep rejuvenation. Our saunas provide powerful detoxification through sweating and flushing toxins from the body. This therapy is a great way to boost metabolism and calorie burn to support weight loss and overall health. Regular use leads to improved heart health and lower blood pressure and stronger immunity. You will notice glowing skin and better sleep and a renewed sense of vitality after every visit. A 30-minute session is available for £30.

Perfect for passive recovery and low-effort flexibility, our innovative lazy Yoga mats combine gentle support and Yoga-



inspired design. These mats allow you to ease tension and enhance mobility without physical strain and serve as a perfect complement to our other treatments. Whether you are looking for a quick stretch or a way to amplify your spa session, these mats offer a unique way to recover. We offer 2 x 15-minute sessions for only £15.

Special Offer for EDA Media readers: 20% off

your next visit!
 We invite you to book now and claim 20% off your next visit includes our massage chair sessions and infrared saunas and Yoga mat recovery. Limited time offer—relax today, renew tomorrow! Offer is single use only. T&C's apply. Tel: 077 8459 2088 Website: www.ahspa.uk Address: AH! Spa Ltd, 33 Ballynahinch Rd, Carryduff BT8 8EH

North Down Marquees: Your Premier Event Partner

Four decades of delivering marquees, event setup and furniture hire, North Down Marquees has stood as Northern Ireland's gold standard for transforming ordinary landscapes into breathtaking venues.

Whether you are dreaming of a romantic wedding or planning a large-scale corporate gala our dedicated team offers a comprehensive "One Stop Shop" experience designed to take the stress out of event planning.

Our structures are defined by architectural elegance. We can incorporate sophisticated glass windows and clear PVC roofing into our designs, offering guests stunning views of the surroundings while ensuring everyone stays comfortable regardless of the unpredictable weather.

Stepping into our inventory is like entering an "Aladdin's Cave" of event essentials. We provide everything in-house, boasting Northern Ireland's most extensive range of furniture. From tableware, glassware & cutlery, kitchen equipment, wedding



chairs, banquet chairs, tables (round, long trestle, posers), outdoor furniture, lounge furniture, dancefloors, staging and bars, we ensure every detail of your decor and infrastructure is handled with care.

North Down Luxury Toilets can provide a state of the art range of modular vacuum toilets. This non chemical option can be connected directly to the local water supply. We also have Mobile VIP Trailer Toilet Hire units

which requires 13amp power supply and fresh water should also be available on site.

We pride ourselves on offering scalable solutions for any occasion. Whether you are hosting an intimate garden party or a grand event for over 1,000 guests, we tailor our layouts to fit your specific vision. Our experienced team provides full support from the very first enquiry to the final dance, managing all the logistics so you can focus entirely

on the celebration. To get started, we offer a complimentary site consultation. This visit allows us to assess your location and provide an accurate, tailored quote for your event.

Contact Us Today You can find us at 39 Ballynahinch Rd, Carryduff, Belfast BT8 8DL. For enquiries, please give us a call at +44 (0) 28 9081 5535 or reach out via email at info@northdownmarquees.co.uk.

Minister announces plans to tackle welfare fraud and error

Communities Minister Gordon Lyons has launched a new drive to tackle fraud and error in the benefits system.

Speaking in the Assembly, Minister Lyons said: "Fraud is not a victimless crime. As I've said before, when individuals cheat the system they are taking support from those who need it most - family, friends, neighbours and their fellow citizens."

"At this time of significant budget constraint, we must be united in ensuring that public money is directed to our key services - to help families in financial distress, to the homeless, to those who are sick and to educate our young people. Not to criminals."

The latest measures come after the Minister reintroduced the practice of naming those who have been convicted of benefit fraud.

Minister Lyons said: "I have taken away a shield of anonymity from those who steal from all of us and the response from the public to shining a light on these stories has been overwhelmingly positive."



Communities Minister Gordon Lyons pictured in Parliament Buildings as he announced a new drive to tackle benefit fraud.

The Minister commissioned a specialist working group within his Department to examine the issue. This group has made a number of recommendations designed to enhance prevention of fraud and take swift action when it occurs.

The Minister said that in line with the recommendations of the

Report, his Department will:

- Enhance and expand current fraud and error activities.
- Strengthen the specialist training and support for staff to double-down on fraud and error, including mistakes made by officials.
- Maximise technology solutions in conjunction with DWP and other

Departments, at Westminster and locally, to aid investigative efforts.

• Increase the public's understanding of benefit fraud and to share in our zero-tolerance approach.

Minister Lyons warned that some measures are subject to funding bids and said they cannot proceed without the necessary financial support.



EVENTUS
INDUSTRIAL STRUCTURES

Temporary Structures Built for The Irish Industry

From loading canopies to warehouses, we deliver flexible, compliant solutions that keep your business moving.

WHY CHOOSE US

- ◆ Rapid Installation
- ◆ Engineered for Irish Weather
- ◆ Modular & Scalable
- ◆ Trusted Local Expertise

2026 North Down Marquees LTD T/A
 Eventus Industrial Structures

GET IN TOUCH
 +44 (0)28 9081 5535
 info@eventusis.co.uk

39 Ballynahinch Rd, Carryduff,
 Belfast, BT8 8DL,
www.eventusis.co.uk





HORTICULTURE COMPETITION AT BALMORAL SHOW 2026

The 157th Balmoral Show will take place from Wednesday 13th May to Saturday 16th May 2026 at the Eikon Exhibition Centre, Lisburn.



This year's Horticulture Competition sponsored by Hillmount Garden Centre and 3T Power is fresher, more vibrant and exciting than before.

Creativity is the name of the game as participants "Create a Critter" using a colourful array of fruits and vegetables. From kiwi turtles to fruity butterflies and even cauliflower cuckoos, entrants are invited to let their imaginations run wild, combining the tastiest produce to craft their favourite animals.

Jenny McNeill, Royal Ulster Agricultural Society commented, "This year

the RUAS Horticulture Committee wanted to highlight the variety of fresh and vibrant produce at our fingertips with this creative competition.

"We encourage everyone taking part to include an array of fruits and vegetables to design their tasty masterpieces. Our other top tips are to use larger, more sturdy items for the base and smaller, lighter items to add those all-important features and finishing touches."

The competition is free to enter and has three categories for veggie visionaries of all ages

including pre-school/primary school, 12-17 years old and an over 18 category.

All entries must be no more than 50cm tall and the base must fall within a 28cm² area.

The closing date for this competition is Friday 17th April at 5pm.

The Balmoral Show in partnership with Ulster Bank will return to the Eikon Exhibition Centre showgrounds from Wednesday 13th May to Saturday 16th May 2026.

For the latest updates on the Show follow Balmoral Show on Facebook, Instagram and TikTok.

TRUST CANCER TEAM HELPS PARENTS NAVIGATE CANCER CONVERSATIONS WITH CHILDREN

Receiving a Cancer diagnosis can be life-changing.

One of the most challenging issues for parents is finding the right way to explain the diagnosis and what lies ahead to their entire family, particularly children.

To mark World Cancer Day, staff at the South Eastern Trust's Macmillan Cancer Unit are highlighting the support available to help families navigate these difficult but vital conversations.

South Eastern Trust, Haematology/Adolescent and Young Adult Clinical Nurse Specialist in the Macmillan Cancer Unit, Lisa Callender explained how the Team provides guidance, support and signposting to parents faced with the prospect of explaining a cancer diagnosis to their children.

"As we mark World Cancer Day, it is important to remember that Cancer does not just affect the patient, it also affects their families, including children, young people and Grandparents. "It is important to remember that children and young people are always listening and always picking up subtle clues. It is not always what you say but how you say it. We would encourage patients

to explain what their diagnosis is and how this is going to impact them going forward."

Lisa stressed the importance of honesty when explaining a Cancer diagnosis to a child or young person. "Children do not tend to live in shades of grey, they see things in black and white. They respond much better when you are honest with them. The best place for a child or young person to get information is from the people they trust and love the most, their parents or carers."

One of the many things a Cancer diagnosis brings is uncertainty. Lisa emphasised the importance of helping children understand what to expect. "It is important for children to know that Mummy or Daddy may go through some difficult times. Their appearance might change, they may be feeling very sick and have less energy, but they haven't changed who they are. They are still Mummy, they are still Daddy. They are still the person that brought you into this world. They are the person who got on their hands and knees and played with you or chased you around the park. They

might not be able to do that as well as they have done in the past but they are still here and will want to do that again in the future."

Macmillan Health and Wellbeing Co-ordinator, Karen Kelly highlighted the role of the Support Centre within the Unit, which provides a wide range of information and practical help for families. "Receiving a Cancer diagnosis can be incredibly challenging on a personal level. It is not a standalone experience, it affects the people closest to you and those you love most.

"It is not uncommon for us to meet people who are overwhelmed by the thought of having that conversation with their children. Parents are often very aware of how a child might cope with the diagnosis and how it could affect the whole family."

Karen explained that the Unit recognises how crucial it is for families to receive the right support at the right time. "We can offer parents the opportunity to bring their children into the Unit, show them around and help them understand where Mum and Dad are going to be. This can help reduce fear of the unknown and



make the experience less daunting."

Karen continued, "We talk to parents about the importance of being open with their children. Many parents want to be honest but often struggle to find the words and they just appreciate a little bit of guidance.

"We provide literature and booklets which help parents begin those conversations in a way that is appropriate for the child or young person. When it comes to a Cancer diagnosis, it's not always what you say, it is how you say it. We encourage the use of plain language and avoiding sugar coating the situation.

Karen encouraged anyone with concerns

about talking to their children about a cancer diagnosis to reach out for support. "There is so much we can do to help both you and your family. We can provide information, practical tools and guide families to professionals with expertise in supporting children and young people through this experience.

"We all know that children can pick up so much and they can become very aware when they feel something is being hidden from them. When parents whisper, children listen harder. Being clear and honest from the beginning helps children feel included and makes them feel safe, knowing they understand what is happening."



1 SALES POSITION AVAILABLE

1 TRAINEE SALES POSITION AVAILABLE
18 YEARS UPWARDS

Want to work 9 to 5 Monday to Friday with no weekend work or late nights?

Want to earn commission on top of a basic salary?

- Free parking
- Early release
- Staff outings
- Ad-hoc bonuses



Interested?
email hr@edamedia.co.uk



FAMILY FOCUS AND CARE SERVICES



SuperValu
Ballynahinch

EPIC DEALS

CHECK OUR FACEBOOK FOR DAILY OFFERS





NOW SERVING JERSEY GOLD WHIPPED ICE CREAM

In-store pickup
Tel:
028 9756 3434

105 Belfast Road,
Ballynahinch,
BT24 8FF

BALMORAL SHOW 2026

The 157th Balmoral Show is set to return to the Eikon Exhibition Centre from Wednesday, 13th May to Saturday, 16th May 2026, marking another milestone for Northern Ireland's premier agri-food event.

As the largest celebration of its kind in the country, the showgrounds at Balmoral Park will once again transform into a bustling hub of activity, drawing over 100,000 visitors who come to soak up the famous "Balmoral Buzz." Whether you are a lifelong farming enthusiast or a first-time visitor looking for a quintessential family day out, the 2026 program promises a balanced blend of traditional agricultural competition and high-octane modern entertainment.

In the Main Arena, the headline attraction for 2026 is the Bolddog FMX team, whose gravity-defying freestyle motocross stunts are sure to provide a heart-pounding spectacle. For those who prefer the elegance of equine sports over revving engines, the International Show Jumping competitions remain a crown jewel of the show, featuring top-tier riders competing for prestigious

titles. The arena schedule is packed from morning until evening, ensuring there is a constant rotation of action, from the thundering hooves of the heavy horse displays to the precision of the sheepdog trials.

Food lovers will find their sanctuary in the NI Food Pavilion, which remains the beating heart of the show's gastronomic offering. This year, the pavilion will feature an array of artisan producers showcasing everything from award-winning cheeses and local spirits to handcrafted desserts. Visitors can enjoy live cooking demonstrations and learn about the important "field to fork" journey, highlighting the sustainability and quality of Northern Ireland's local produce. It is a fantastic opportunity to sample new flavours and chat directly with the makers behind the province's most successful food brands.

At its agricultural core,

the show will host over 3,500 animals across hundreds of competitive classes. From the majestic Clydesdale horses and sleek beef cattle to various breeds of sheep, goats, and pigs, the livestock displays offer a masterclass in breeding and animal husbandry. The Cattle Parade remains a highlight of the weekend, offering a mesmerising sight as the champion winners from various categories circle the arena in a display of rural pride and excellence.

For the curious, the poultry and rabbit sections often provide a quieter but equally charming look at smaller prize-winning specimens.

Beyond the animals and food, the showgrounds offer extensive shopping and leisure opportunities with over 500 trade stands. You can find everything from the latest massive farm machinery and tractor tech to boutique country fashion

and garden furniture. A revamped Horticulture Area will provide inspiration for gardening enthusiasts, while the Downtown Stage offers a festive backdrop of live music and local talent. For the younger visitors, the Funfair is a mandatory stop, providing classic thrills and games that round out the perfect day of exploration.

As you prepare for your visit, it is worth noting that the show maintains a strict no-dogs policy, with the exception of assistance animals, to ensure the safety and comfort of both visitors and the valuable livestock on display. The gates open at 9:30 am each morning, staying open until 7:00 pm from Wednesday to Friday, and closing slightly earlier at 6:00 pm on Saturday. With 65 acres of site to cover, comfortable footwear is your best friend—because "fashionable" wellies are only practical if they can handle several miles of walking.

Go beyond beauty at Bonnie Aesthetics

Bonnie Aesthetics at 14c Main Street, Newcastle is a boutique salon which combines clinical expertise with a deeply personalized approach to client care.

Bonnie Aesthetics is far more than a traditional beauty salon; it is a comprehensive wellness hub offering a sophisticated menu of services designed to enhance your natural features and boost your confidence. Their service list is extensive, ranging from foundational beauty treatments to high-end clinical aesthetics. For those seeking rejuvenation, their Anti-Wrinkle treatments—addressing concerns like hyperhidrosis, gummy smiles and lip flips—provide subtle yet impactful results.

The clinic specializes in precision Dermal Fillers, offering bespoke solutions for lip augmentation, nasolabial folds and facial contouring including jaw and chin sculpting.

What sets Bonnie Aesthetics apart is their commitment to skin health. Their "Skin Booster" menu features the latest innovations in the industry, including Prophil, Seventhyal, and Lumi Eyes alongside specialized

Biorepeel chemical peels. These treatments are specifically designed to hydrate the dermis from within - restoring a youthful glow and improving skin texture.

New to the clinic is Endolift. Endolift (or endo laser) is a minimally invasive, non-surgical laser procedure used for skin tightening, contouring, and fat reduction in the lower face, neck and body. It uses hair-thin optical fibers inserted under the skin to melt fat and stimulate collagen, offering results similar to a facelift without scars or general anesthesia. An easy way to tighten skin and reduce small fat deposits (e.g. jowls, neck, jawline) often in a single session. Results are immediate, lasting up to five years, with minimal downtime, mild swelling or bruising.

For clients looking for total body wellness, Bonnie Aesthetics offers the revolutionary Lemon Bottle Fat Dissolving



Non surgical fac , neck , jowls and chin lift

injections and Vitamin Injections (B12, Vitamin D, and Biotin) to support energy levels and metabolic health. Their facial treatments which include microneedling with Hyaluronic Acid and dermaplaning ensure that your complexion remains flawless.

Beyond aesthetics, the salon excels in classic beauty services. From expert nail care (Gel, Biab, and Acrylic) to a variety of lash styles—ranging from Natural Volume to Russian

Volume—every detail is handled with artistic precision. The clinic also provides sunbeds, enabling year round tanning without the sun.

With a new "HIFU Facial" now available, Bonnie Aesthetics continues to stay at the forefront of beauty technology. Booking your esthetic treatment is simple: you can visit their booking portal at bonnie14.booksy.com scan the QR code on their advert. For all other treatments contact at 07833 673 624.



Over 55's Breaks



AN CHÚIRT HOTEL, DONEGAL

1 OR 2 NIGHTS B&B, 2-COURSE DINNER, REFRESHMENTS, ACCESS TO LEISURE CENTRE & DISCOUNTS LOCAL AMENITIES

STARTING FROM €165 FOR ONE NIGHT, PLUS 10% OFF YOUR WHEN YOU USE THE CODE: GOLDEN

Rates based on 2 adults sharing. T&Cs Apply.



+353 (0) 74 953 2900 | www.anchuirhotel.com



BONNIE AESTHETICS
Tanning & Beauty salon

Newcastle's Number 1 Destination for Aesthetics, Tanning and Beauty

- ANTI-WRINKLE TREATMENTS
Hyperhidrosis | Gummy Smile | Lip Flip
- DERMAL FILLERS
Lip Fillers | Nasolabial Folds
Marionette Lines | Cheek Augmentation
Chin Augmentation | Jaw Augmentation | Rhinoplasty
- SKIN BOOSTERS
Prophil/Nucleofill | Seventhyal
Neofound | Lumi Eyes | Illuma Luna
Biorepeel Chemical Peel
- FACIALS
Microneedling Hyaluronic Acid
Dermaplaning | Lux Micro Facia with Tox
- LEMON BOTTLE FAT DISSOLVING
- VITAMIN INJECTIONS - Vitamin B12 | Vitamin D | Biotin
- BROWS AND LASHES
Classic Lashes | Russian Volume Lashes | Natural Volume Lashes
- NAILS - Gel | Biab | Extensions | Acrylic

NEW ENDOLIFT!
Incredible results for chin, jawline, neck and body – such as arms and tummy! Get immediate results without surgery or general anesthesia. Lasts up to 5 years!

NOW AVAILABLE - HIFU FACIAL

BONNIE AESTHETICS TANNING & BEAUTY SALON
07833 673 624 | bonnieaesthetics2020@gmail.com
14c Main Street, Newcastle BT33 0AD
www.bonnie-aesthetics.co.uk
Aesthetic Booking Link: Bonnie14.booksy.com

SCAN TO BOOK HERE



Discover Glasgow the Easy Way with HANNON Coach & Sail

Planning a city break in Glasgow? Skip the airport queues and travel stress and choose the Belfast-Glasgow Express with HANNON Coach & Sail—a comfortable, hassle-free way to reach the heart of Scotland’s largest city.

Now departing from the new Belfast Grand Central Station, this award-winning service offers a smooth coach-and-ferry journey straight into Glasgow city centre, making it the perfect alternative to flying. Already a firm favourite with seasoned travellers, the Belfast-Glasgow Express is proudly rated 5-Star on TripAdvisor.

Glasgow is a vibrant, stylish city with something for everyone. From world-class culture and nightlife to outstanding restaurants and bars, it’s a destination that never disappoints. Shoppers are particularly well catered for—Glasgow is widely recognised as the UK’s top shopping destination outside London, with its famous ‘Style Mile’ offering unbeatable retail therapy.

With a simple flat fare of just £49, including



ferry travel and luggage, the Belfast-Glasgow Express delivers outstanding value. With no hidden costs and flexible travel options, passengers can pick and mix dates and times to suit their plans—making it ideal for a spontaneous spring getaway or a longer city break.

The service operates twice daily from Belfast

Grand Central Station (Stand 18) and drops passengers at Glasgow Buchanan Bus Station, close to the Style Mile and a wide range of excellent city-centre hotels.

Company Director Aodh Hannon says the service’s popularity comes down to convenience and simplicity.

“People love the fact

that it’s so hassle-free compared to flying, no airport transfers and with no extra charge for luggage it is a massive help with keeping the cost of a break down.”

Bookings can be made online at www.hannoncoach.com, or by phone through HANNON’s friendly booking team on 028 9265 0700 (Monday-Friday).

CARAVANNING AND CAMPING IN NI

If you are planning to spend your summer under canvas or in a caravan within Northern Ireland, the most critical step you can take right now is to finalize your bookings immediately.

Many of the premier council-run sites along the Causeway Coast, including Benone, Juniper Hill, and Carrick Dhu, are open for reservations and are seeing high demand. Private parks like Newcastle and the Fermanagh Lakelands are also reporting high occupancy for July and August, meaning that those who wait until the first signs of warm weather to book may find themselves limited to less central locations or smaller, inland sites.

The regional landscape for 2026 is defined by a distinct move toward specialized “experience” camping. In the Sperrin Mountains, which recently secured renewed global recognition as a

Dark Sky location, sites like Dungannon Park and various “almost-wild” spots are seeing a surge in popularity from stargazers. Meanwhile, the Fermanagh region remains a primary draw for water-based holidays. However, travellers should note that the popular Crom campsite has confirmed a closure for the 2026 season, which has redirected a significant amount of traffic toward Castle Archdale and the Kinnego Marina on Lough Neagh. Planning your route around these shifts in availability is essential for a smooth trip.

Vehicle preparation in the early spring is particularly vital for Northern Ireland’s unique terrain. Whether

you are navigating the steep, winding roads of the Mourne Mountains or the coastal gusts of the Antrim plateau, ensuring your towing mirrors are correctly adjusted is a legal requirement that carries heavy fines if neglected. This is also the time to conduct a “damp check” on your caravan or motorhome, as the high humidity of the past winter can lead to costly repairs if issues aren’t caught before the summer heat. There can be long lead times for servicing, so booking a mechanical and habitation check this month is a wise move to avoid a pre-holiday breakdown.

Finally, 2026 is seeing a significant push toward sustainable, low-impact

touring across the country’s forest parks and coastal reserves. Many sites are now offering discounted rates for campers who arrive by bike or foot, or those who utilize portable solar arrays rather than relying on traditional electric hook-ups.

Investing in a high-quality leisure battery or a portable power station now will not only save you money on “pitch-plus-electric” fees but will also grant you more freedom to stay at smaller, more remote sites that lack full infrastructure. By combining early bookings with a few key gear upgrades, you can ensure your Northern Irish summer holiday is both environmentally friendly and stress-free.

Family Guide to Summer Health

Summer is a season of sun-drenched memories and late sunsets, but it also demands a bit of proactive planning to keep the whole family in top shape.

While it’s tempting to let all routines slide, maintaining a few core health habits ensures that the season remains more about poolside fun and less about heat exhaustion or sunburn.

Staying hydrated is the cornerstone of summer wellness. By the time a child complains of thirst, they are likely already experiencing the early stages of dehydration. To keep things interesting, try “water with a twist” by infusing pitchers with sliced strawberries, mint, or cucumber. A

helpful trick is to freeze water bottles halfway overnight and top them off in the morning; this provides a steady stream of ice-cold water as it melts throughout the day. Complement this by snacking on seasonal, water-rich fruits like watermelon and berries, which provide hydration and essential vitamins without the heavy “food coma” associated with winter comfort foods.

Sun safety is equally vital and requires more than just a single morning application of sunscreen. Families

should aim for a broad-spectrum SPF 30 or higher, applied fifteen minutes before heading outdoors and reapplied every two hours—or immediately after swimming. It is also wise to plan high-energy activities for the early morning or late evening to avoid the peak UV intensity between 10 AM and 4 PM. When you do head back inside, make a habit of performing a quick “tick check,” especially after hikes or backyard play, to keep pests at bay.

Finally, remember that

while summer offers a break from the school run, the body still thrives on a consistent wind-down routine. The late-setting sun can easily disrupt sleep cycles, leading to cranky kids and exhausted parents. Maintaining a predictable evening ritual helps everyone recharge for the next day’s adventures. By balancing the freedom of the season with these simple health safeguards, your family can make the most of every warm, golden hour.

12TH - 14TH JUNE 2026

JUNE COUNTRY MUSIC 2026

WEEKEND AT THE ABBEY HOTEL DONEGAL

 EFFIE NEILL Friday 12th 9:15pm	 JIMMY BUCKLEY Friday 12th 11:30pm	 JORDAN MCPOLIN Friday 12th 1:30am
 TAMMY MEEHAN Saturday 13th 2:30pm	 DAVID JAMES Saturday 13th 9:15pm	 PATRICK FEENEY Saturday 13th 11:30pm
 CONOR O'DONNELL Saturday 13th 1:30am	 MIKE DENVER Sunday 14th 3pm to 5pm	 TREVOR LOUGHREY Sunday 14th 9pm

PACKAGE €259PPS
2 NIGHTS B&B INCLUDING ADMISSION TO ALL DANCES
STAY SUNDAY NIGHT FOR AN EXTRA €60PPSS

For more info visit:
www.abbeyhoteldonegal.com
 e: info@abbeyhoteldonegal.com
 t: + 353 (0)74 97 21014

THE WOOL SHOP

10B DONARD STREET, NEWCASTLE

NEW LOOK WOOL SHOP!
Hobby & Craft Store.
 Extensive range of knitting yarns & haberdashery.
 Excellent Service & Value For money.
 Our experienced staff can help you complete your project!

VOUCHERS • PATTERNS • YARNS
 Great gifts ideas for kitters & Crocheters

0284372 2961 Open Mon - Sat 10am-4pm

SELECTING A CARE HOME

Selecting a care home is a deeply personal balancing act between clinical necessity and emotional comfort.

To move beyond the polished surface of a brochure, you must prioritize questions about the facility's greatest asset: its staff. Beyond simple ratios, inquire about staff turnover and longevity. A revolving door of caregivers often signals deeper systemic issues, whereas a stable team suggests a more consistent, compassionate environment. It is also vital to confirm that the staff possess specific training tailored to your loved one's unique needs, such as dementia care or specialized physical support.

A resident's quality of life depends heavily on their sense of autonomy. Ask how much control a resident has over their daily rhythm—from when they wake up to what they wear. A truly person-centred home should offer a variety of social activities that reflect individual interests rather than a rigid, one-size-fits-all schedule. Similarly, check if residents are encouraged to bring their own furniture and



memorabilia. A room that looks like a hospital ward rarely feels like a home, so the ability to personalize the space is a significant indicator of the home's philosophy.

Medical and nutritional oversight require equal scrutiny. You should ask how the home manages complex dietary requirements and whether snacks and drinks are available around the clock. On the clinical side, clarify how they handle medication management

and emergencies, and ask about their relationship with local doctors. Financial transparency is just as critical; ensure you receive a comprehensive breakdown of weekly fees and potential "extra" costs like hairdressing or specialized outings to avoid stressful surprises later.

Finally, while the answers to these questions provide a framework, your own observations are the most reliable guide.

During a tour, look past the decor and watch the interactions. Do the staff address residents by name with genuine warmth? Do the residents appear engaged and well-groomed? The "feel" of a home—the smell, the noise level, and the general atmosphere of respect—often tells you more than any prepared answer. Trusting your intuition alongside these practical queries ensures you find a place where your loved one can truly thrive.

Minister celebrates community fund programme

Communities Minister Gordon Lyons has praised the work of those involved in the community sector across Northern Ireland as he met some of those who have benefited through his Department's continued investment in its Neighbourhood

Renewal programme. The Department for Communities (DfC) invests over £20million per annum in Neighbourhood Renewal, supporting the work of voluntary and community organisations in the most deprived areas across Northern Ireland, with the Small Capital Investment Programme being a key component of this funding.

In 2024/25, the Fund helped over 1,500 people secure employment through targeted training and employability interventions, as well as giving more than 5,500 adults the opportunity to volunteer within their communities.

Speaking at a community event at the Ecos Centre in Ballymena, Minister Lyons said: "These projects may be described as "small capital," but their impact is anything but small. Investment in small capital costs keeps services running and allows groups to adapt, expand, or innovate. Whether it's roof repairs, upgraded IT equipment, a kitchen refurbishment, or essential accessibility improvements - these are not minor details - they are the practical enablers of meaningful community impact. My Department's ongoing investment in Neighbourhood Renewal reflects a long term commitment, one



Angela, John and Jim Communities Minister Gordon Lyons pictured with (l-r) Angela Mulholland, West Bann Development, Jim McLroy, Harryville Men's Shed and John Hunter, Community Sports Network, Shankill at a recent visit to see the work of those involved in the community sector across Northern Ireland and to meet some of those who have benefited through his Department's continued investment in its Neighbourhood Renewal programme.

that is not only financial but deeply rooted in our belief in the power of communities to shape their own futures."

Over the last year alone, DfC has supported 77 community projects through his fund, with an investment of £1.18m.

A number of community representatives attending today's event took the opportunity to share their stories on the positive impact this funding has had.

Angela Mulholland, West Bann Development said: "This funding has ensured that as a service provider

to the local community, we were able to continue to offer a first-class service and providing people with a safe secure environment to learn, play and create."

Jim McLroy, Harryville Men's Shed added: "Men's Shed provides a vital role within the community offering a safe, welcoming space where men can connect, learn, and support one another. This investment has played a vital role in helping to maintain and strengthen the services we provide to men across the Ballymena community.

Theresa Brady, Ionad na Fuiseoige said: "Small capital funding meets a real need in the community - relatively small amounts of money required that can make a huge difference to the local area."

John Hunter, Community Sports Network, Shankill added: "Relatively small investments can deliver significant, long-term impact. This funding has created lasting benefits, improving safety, expanding opportunities, and allowing us to meet a broader range of community needs.




KEEPING YOUR LOVED ONES HAPPY AND SAFE AT HOME

At Jark Downpatrick LTD we can provide your loved ones with vital support to enable them to live happily and safely at home. We will tailor our service to fit your needs.

Area's Covered: Downpatrick, Crossgar, Castlewellan, Newcastle, Ballynahinch, Dromara, Killyleagh, Royal Hillsborough, Lisburn & Moira.

OUR SERVICE

- ✓ **DAY SITS**
 - Providing companionship
 - Personal Care tasks
 - Medication tasks
 - Shopping
 - Social outings
 - Home cooked meals
- ✓ **NIGHT SITS**
 - Medication tasks
 - Settling loved ones into bed for the night
 - Round the clock security
 - Companionship
 - Home cooked meals

CONTACT US TODAY

☎ 02844 839 996

@ dphc@jark.co.uk




LOOKING FOR A NEW CAREER? JOIN JARK DOWNPATRICK TODAY

If you are looking for a change of career or would like to join a supportive, ever growing business then Jark Downpatrick is the right move for you.

Areas Covered:

DOWNPATRICK	CROSSGAR	CASTLEWELLAN
NEWCASTLE	BALLYNAHINCH	DROMORA
KILLYLEAGH	LISBURN	MOIRA
ROYAL HILLSBOROUGH		

CONTACT US TODAY

☎ 02844 839 996

@ dphc@jark.co.uk

Competitive Rates of Pay

Advanced Glaucoma Care in the heart of Royal Hillsborough: Glaucoma Laser

A new service has been launched in Affdea Hillsborough Private Clinic to help patients suffering from Glaucoma, under the care of Mr Jonathan Bonnar, Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon with a Specialist interest in Advanced Cataract and Glaucoma Surgery.

Proven Benefits of Glaucoma laser

- up to 70% of patients did not need drops at 6 years.

- Less likelihood for glaucoma to progress than those taking drops.

- Less likelihood to require glaucoma surgery than those taking drops.

- Effects can last up to 6 years, and the procedure can safely be repeated if needed to try and keep you free from drops.

Data taken from a recent, extensive UK study.

Unlike invasive eye surgery, this laser option:

- Causes no permanent tissue damage

- Has a low risk of complications

- Doesn't require incisions— return to normal activities the next



day.

Who is it for?

SLT laser is now the NICE recommended first line treatment for open angle glaucoma and high eye pressure (OHT), in preference to drops. The

majority of patients with open angle glaucoma or OHT are eligible.

Talk to us to see if it's right for you!

028 92 280 103
Email: info.ni@affdea.com

Why Hydration is the Unsung Hero of Healthy Aging

While many health conversations surrounding the elderly focus on heart health, bone density, or cognitive maintenance, one of the most fundamental pillars of well-being is frequently overlooked: hydration.

For older adults, drinking enough water is not merely about quenching a temporary thirst; it is a critical requirement for maintaining metabolic balance, physical safety, and mental clarity. Unfortunately, as the body ages, the biological systems designed to keep us hydrated begin to shift, making dehydration a “sneaky” but serious threat to independent living.

The challenge begins with a subtle change in how the brain communicates with the body. In younger people, the “thirst centre” of the brain is highly sensitive, sending clear signals when it is time to drink. In older adults, this mechanism becomes less responsive. This means an individual might be biologically dehydrated but simply won't feel the sensation of thirst until their fluid levels are dangerously low. This lack of a “warning light” makes it much easier to slip into a state of chronic dehydration without even realizing it.

Beyond the neurological signals, the physical makeup of the body also changes in ways that

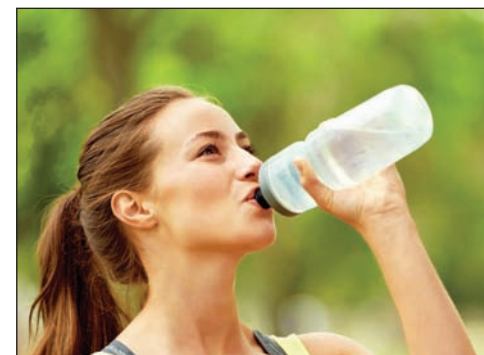
impact fluid storage. As we age, we naturally lose muscle mass and tend to gain a higher percentage of body fat. Since muscle tissue holds significantly more water than fat, the body's natural “reservoir” for fluids begins to shrink. Coupled with kidneys that gradually become less efficient at conserving water and concentrating urine, the aging body has a much smaller margin for error when it comes to fluid loss.

The consequences of this imbalance often manifest in ways that are easily mistaken for other age-related conditions. One of the most common and alarming signs of dehydration in seniors is a sudden onset of confusion or “brain fog.” This mental cloudiness can be so pronounced that it is frequently misdiagnosed as early-onset dementia or even a stroke. In reality, the brain simply lacks the hydration and electrolyte balance necessary to fire its neurons correctly. Restoring fluid levels can often clear this confusion with surprising speed.

Physical safety is also

directly tied to how much water is in the system. Dehydration causes a decrease in overall blood volume, which can lead to a condition known as orthostatic hypotension. This is that sudden, dizzy lightheadedness one feels when standing up too quickly from a chair or bed. In the elderly, this brief moment of instability is a primary culprit behind dangerous falls and fractures. Keeping blood volume steady through consistent hydration is one of the most effective ways to maintain balance and prevent these life-altering accidents.

Internal health also suffers when fluids are scarce. Water acts as the body's primary flushing agent, moving waste through the kidneys and keeping the digestive system moving. Chronic dehydration is a leading risk factor for kidney stones and can make urinary tract infections (UTIs) far more frequent and severe. Furthermore, digestive issues like constipation are often a direct result of the body



trying to pull water from the intestines to compensate for a lack of intake elsewhere.

Given that the thirst reflex isn't always reliable, staying hydrated requires a more deliberate strategy than just “drinking when you're dry.” It is often easier to focus on high-water-content foods like cucumbers, watermelon, and oranges, or to incorporate more soups and broths into the diet. For those who find plain water unappealing, infusing it with lemon or berries can make it more palatable. Taking small sips throughout the day is generally more effective—and more comfortable—than trying to consume large amounts of fluid all at once.

Finally, it is essential to remember that hydration is a balancing act that should be managed alongside a healthcare provider. Certain common medications, such as diuretics for blood pressure, increase the rate at which the body loses fluid. Conversely, individuals with specific heart or kidney conditions may actually need to limit their fluid intake to avoid putting too much strain on their systems. When managed correctly, however, proper hydration acts as the “oil in the engine,” keeping every biological system running more smoothly and helping to preserve vitality well into the golden years.



Olympic Stairlifts

Making steps safer one stairlift at a time.

Indoor and external, straight and curved

We supply, install, test and maintain Passenger Lifts, Access Lifts, Goods Lifts and Stairlifts along with escalators & Moving walkways. We have installed over 15,000 projects throughout the UK & Ireland over the last 40 years.







Head Office:
Olympic House, 2 Lissue Walk, Lisburn, BT28 2LU
Telephone: +44 (0)28 9262 2331
www.olympicstairlifts.co.uk










FUNDING BOOST FOR DISTRICT'S COMMUNITY TRANSPORT PROVIDERS

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council has helped drive the success of two local transport providers connecting people and communities.

The Council's partnership with the voluntary sector helped pave the way for Down Community Transport and Newry and Mourne Community Transport to secure £200,000 from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, supported by the Strategic Stakeholder Forum, to each purchase a new minibus to meet a growing demand for services.

The additional minibuses have not only had a positive impact on drivers and staff, but individuals and community groups. Over the past year, the transport providers carried almost 11,000 passengers on nearly 3,400 journeys, helping address social isolation and enhance community well-being.

Together, they employ 16 drivers, have 19 mini buses and a number of volunteer drivers, making a positive difference in people's lives and ensuring they can remain active in their respective communities by getting out and about, with the Dial-A-Lift (DAL) service assisting those who find it challenging to access public transport.

Newry, Mourne and

Down District Council Chairperson, Councillor Philip Campbell said, "Community transport providers play an invaluable role, particularly at the heart of rural communities. For many with mobility needs, the community transport service is a lifeline.

"The organisations have faced significant funding pressures in the past and I am delighted the service is going from strength to strength. Transporting almost 11,000 passengers in a year shows the reliance people place on this invaluable service which is staffed by committed individuals, providing access for a wide group of people including the elderly, those with disabilities, Special Education Needs and community group members."

Clr Philip Campbell added, "Community transport providers are making a positive difference across Newry, Mourne and Down and an important contribution to people's overall health and wellbeing, with their staff among the many unsung heroes who work across our district."



Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Chairperson Councillor Philip Campbell (second left), with Chris Moore (left) from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund which, supported by the Strategic Stakeholder Forum, provided funding for two new minibuses for Down Community Transport and Newry and Mourne Community Transport. Included are Down Community Transport manager Shelieen Brady and Newry and Mourne and Community Transport Chief Executive Stephen Yeomans.

Down Community Transport Manager, Shelieen Brady, has thanked Newry, Mourne and Down District Council for its support and funding provided through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

"This investment has made a genuine and measurable difference across the district. The funding has enabled both organisations to introduce two new accessible buses, strengthen DAL and group hire services and respond to growing community demand," she said.

"The funding has enabled

fleet modernisation and expansion of our combined fleet to 19 buses. This has improved reliability, comfort, safety, and service flexibility while creating local employment. The impact goes far beyond transport alone, with the buses reducing isolation, increasing independence, and strengthening community wellbeing."

Newry and Mourne Community Transport Chief Executive, Stephen Yeomans, said the funding it received had an exceptionally positive impact on the organisation

and many individuals and community groups across the Council area.

"The additional finance has enabled us to deliver affordable and accessible transport, reducing social isolation and allowing more people with mobility needs to participate in social, recreational and community services," he said.

The funding has allowed us to modernise our ageing fleet. We have been able to extend our services, respond more flexibly to community need and support increased volunteering and partnership working."

Tullywest Manor is celebrating over 30 years in business!

Tullywest Manor is situated in a beautiful rural setting, overlooking the hills, lakes and farmlands of the Co. Down countryside.

It opened its doors to its first residents on 17th March 1989. The aim is to provide high quality services catering for the individual needs of each resident, ensuring that privacy, dignity and respect of each resident is maintained at all times.

Residents coming into care here encouraged to maintain their normal social interests, hobbies and outings with relatives and friends as well as participate in activities and outings arranged by the home

Residents views and suggestions for social activities, outings are sought at Resident meetings and actioned if appropriate

Tullywest Manor features a large lounge, dining room, entrance hall with seating area and a spacious conservatory, where residents can circulate



and meet with each other and relatives.

Each tastefully decorated bedroom, most with en-suite, offers complete privacy where residents are encouraged to express their own personal tastes.

Tullywest recognises the need for a person-centred approach to care. Encouraging staff to learn more about the Residents lives helps us tailor our care to each individual need.

Tullywest Manor recognises that

residents are individuals with family and relatives of their own and encourage this bond to continue. They aim to create a comfortable atmosphere of homeliness happiness and caring.

12 Tullywest Rd,
Saintfield,
Ballynahinch
BT24 7LX
Telephone: (028) 9751 1234
Email: tullywestmanor@googlemail.com
https://www.tullywestmanor.com/

Tullywest Manor

RESIDENTIAL HOME

A RESIDENTIAL HOME THAT REALLY CARES!

"Each tastefully decorated bedroom offers complete privacy where residents are encouraged to express their own personal tastes!"

**Tullywest Manor Residential Home
Tullywest Road
Saintfield, Ballynahinch, BT21 7LK
Tel: 028 97511 234**

**tullywestmanor@googlemail.com
www.tullywestmanor.com**



Bell's SuperValu Crossgar: A Cornerstone of Quality and Community

Bell's SuperValu Crossgar is a multi-award-winning hub that combines the scale of a major retailer with the personal touch of a local family business.

This flagship location has become a vital resource for the Crossgar community, driven by a simple but powerful philosophy: "Real Food, Real People."

The store's commitment to excellence is now officially recognized on a national level. Bell's SuperValu Crossgar was recently named the Winner of "Outstanding Customer Service of the Year" at the Neighborhood Retailer Awards. This prestigious accolade reflects a team dedicated to ensuring every shopper feels valued, whether they are popping in for a morning coffee or doing a full weekly shop. This dedication to service is matched by their accessibility, with the store remaining open Monday through Sunday from

06:00 to 23:00.

Bell's really is a one-stop destination. Beyond the wide choice of quality fresh foods and a traditional butchery department, the site features a spacious forecourt for vehicle refueling and a variety of household fuels as well as a self carwash and a free to use ATM.

There's even a wide selection of bedding plants ready for use in your garden! For those on the move, the hot food deli and hot drinks station offer quick, quality meals, while the in-store Post Office and Lottery services ensure that essential errands can be completed all under one roof.

Local sourcing is a hallmark of the Bell's experience. Every

Wednesday from 07:30 to 13:00, the store hosts Ryan's Fresh Fish on-site, bringing the very best of the day's catch directly to the doorstep of the Crossgar community. This commitment to fresh, local produce is complemented by a well-stocked Off-License and a dedicated delivery service for those who prefer to shop from the comfort of home.

To stay updated on the latest seasonal offers and community news, residents can connect with the team via their Facebook page or reach out directly at 028 44 831088. At Bell's SuperValu, the focus remains firmly on providing quality, convenience and a warm welcome to every customer who walks through the door.

SOME SUMMER IDEAS FOR FAMILY DAYS OUT

Summer 2026 in Northern Ireland is shaping up to be a legendary season, especially with the arrival of some massive cultural milestones.

Whether you are a local looking to rediscover your own backyard or you are planning to host visiting family, the calendar is packed with a mix of high-energy festivals and quiet, scenic escapes. From the bustling streets of Belfast to the windswept North Coast, there is a refreshing variety of ways to keep the kids entertained—and perhaps even enjoy yourself in the process.

The Rhythm of the City: Belfast's Big Summer

One headline event for this year is the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, which descends upon Belfast from August 2nd to 9th. This is the first time the city has hosted the "World Cup" of Irish traditional music, and it is expected to transform the city centre into a massive, family-friendly carnival. You can expect the streets to be alive with sessions, pageants, and plenty of free outdoor performances. Just before the Fleadh kicks off, Belfast TradFest runs from late July into the first week of August, offering a perfect warm-up with world-class concerts and workshops that are surprisingly accessible for younger listeners. If you need a

break from the music, the Ulster Museum in the Botanic Gardens remains a reliable refuge, offering everything from Takabuti the mummy to dinosaur exhibits, and it is conveniently located right next to the park for a post-museum picnic.

Coastal Adventures and Maritime Magic

Heading north, the Foyle Maritime Festival in Derry-Londonderry returns in late June to celebrate the city's seafaring history along the River Foyle. It is a fantastic spot for children who love ships, street performers, and the inevitable excitement of a fireworks finale. Further along the Causeway Coast, the Red Sails Festival in Portstewart takes over the promenade in mid-July. It is a quintessential local festival featuring Irish dancing, live music on the waterfront, and sandcastle competitions that bring out the most relaxed parents. For those who prefer a bit of speed, the North West 200 in May often kicks off the summer vibes early, but for a family day out later in the season, the Ulster International Rally in Ballymena this August celebrates its 50th anniversary with plenty



of high-octane spectacle. Festivals in the Fields: Arts and Nature

For a more laid-back, "boots and grass" experience, the Stendhal Festival in Limavady remains the gold standard for family-focused music events. Taking place in early July at Ballymully Cottage Farm, it offers a dedicated family programme that manages to be cool enough for teenagers while keeping toddlers safely occupied with arts and crafts. If you are looking for something closer to home in County Down, Down Time Summerfest

in Downpatrick provides a quirky mix of horse racing, BMX displays, and live music in the heart of St. Patrick's country. It is the kind of event where you can watch a high-energy stunt show and then wander over to a quiet heritage workshop within the same hour.

Thrills, Spills, and Indoor Backups

We all know the Northern Irish summer can occasionally involve four seasons in a single afternoon. When the clouds turn grey, W5 at the SSE Arena is still the champion of indoor entertainment, with over

250 interactive exhibits that make science feel like a playground. For the older, more adventurous kids, The Jungle NI in Moneymore offers llama trekking and tree-top adventures that are perfect for burning off excess energy. Alternatively, the Exploris Aquarium in Portaferry allows for an immersive look at the local marine life of Strangford Lough, providing a great educational hook that doesn't feel like a school lesson. Whatever the weather, the key this year is to keep a rain jacket in the boot of the car just in case.

Bell's SuperValu Crossgar

Real Food Real People

- Wide choice of quality fresh foods
- Spring flowers bouquets & bedding plants for your garden
- Off License
- Fuel with spacious forecourt
- Household fuel
- Free ATM
- Self Service Car Wash

POST OFFICE

ATM

Hot Food

Hot Drinks

Butchery

Pet Services

Call 028 44 831088
 1 Downpatrick Road, Crossgar, BT30 9EQ
 bellscrossgar@supervalu.co.uk
 Opening Hours Monday - Sunday 06:00 - 23:00

Sign up to our FREE Digital Magazine Today!

AgriLife

farm | equestrian | life

subscriptions@edamedia.co.uk

'LIFE BEYOND PROGRAMME PROVIDES LIFELINE TO BEREAVED FARMING FAMILIES ACROSS NI'

When tragedy strikes a farm, its impact reaches far beyond the yard gate. A sudden accident, suicide, or the death of a loved one can leave farming families not only heartbroken but facing immediate uncertainty about the future of their home, livelihood and legacy.

Through its established Life Beyond bereavement support programme in partnership with Embrace FARM (ROI), Rural Support continues to stand shoulder to shoulder with farming families across Northern Ireland — providing both emotional counselling and practical farm business support during some of life's most devastating moments.

Life Beyond is uniquely tailored to meet the realities of agricultural life. Recognising that home and workplace are one and the same for farming families, the programme delivers holistic, one-to-one support following loss — whether through farm accident, suicide, sudden or expected death. Support is free, confidential, and

shaped around the specific needs of each family.

When the blue lights leave the farmyard, Rural Support remains — helping families pick up the pieces, rebuild resilience, and move forward at a pace that feels right for them. The charity stays by their side for as long as it takes.

The loss of a key family member can have devastating emotional and operational consequences. Alongside grief, families often face urgent pressures relating to livestock care, financial management, legal matters, and succession planning. Life Beyond works with families to:

- Stabilise and safeguard the farm business during crisis
- Provide practical guidance on financial

and operational matters

- Offer professional counselling and emotional support
- Strengthen family communication and coping strategies
- Protect the sustainability of the farm for future generations

By supporting individual farm families, the programme also strengthens the wider agricultural sector. Farming families are the backbone of rural communities and food production in Northern Ireland. Ensuring they remain viable following bereavement helps protect rural livelihoods, community wellbeing, and long-term sector resilience.

Rural Support has recently secured funding from The National Lottery Community Fund



Gyles & Life Beyond

in Northern Ireland, helping to ensure the continued delivery and long-term sustainability of the Life Beyond programme for years to come.

Rural Support understands that asking for help can be difficult. Life Beyond is delivered

with compassion, discretion and a deep understanding of the pressures facing farming families.

If you or someone you know in the farming community has been affected by bereavement and would benefit from support, contact Rural Support in confidence

by calling their freephone confidential Support Line 0800 138 1678 or visit www.ruralsupport.org.uk and click 'Get Help' at the top left hand side of the page.

When loss changes everything, Life Beyond helps farming families find a way forward.

North Down and Ards Women's Aid

North Down and Ards Women's Aid provides a vital service to women and children affected by domestic and sexual abuse.



Our vision for WA is the elimination of domestic abuse, but this is a collective responsibility. Domestic abuse is not just a legal or justice issue; it is a cultural and societal problem. We must all work together to end domestic abuse and violence against women and girls. Partnership working is vital in eliminating domestic abuse."

Domestic abuse can include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Coercive Control (a pattern of intimidation, degradation, isolation and control with the use or threat of physical or sexual abuse.
- Psychological and / or emotional abuse
- Physical or sexual

abuse

- Financial or economic abuse
- Harassment and stalking
- Online or digital abuse.

NDAWA offer safe, confidential and non-judgemental support for you, whether you are still in your relationship or have left. Not everyone wants to stay in refuges, but you can still get support if planning to leave an abusive relationship or help with safer coping strategies to stay.

If you would like more information about NDAWA services, or the One Stop Shop, please contact NDAWA on 028 9127 3196 or email info@ndawomensaid.org

Women's Aid
NORTH DOWN & ARDS
02891 273196

Working to end Domestic Abuse

North Down & Ards Women's Aid provides a wide range of free support services to women and their children affected by domestic and sexual abuse.

- Our services include -
- Emergency refuge accommodation
 - Floating support service for women in the community
 - Children's services
 - Group support programmes including
 - Journey to Freedom
 - One Stop Shop - free multi-agency drop in service
 - Court support

Our range of Children's Services include:

- Art Workshops
- Helping Hands
- Transformers
- Healthy Relationship Programme

We also provide awareness raising sessions and training to our local community, schools, businesses and agencies.

One Stop Shop

A multi-agency drop-in service for women experiencing:

- Physical Abuse
- Financial Abuse
- Coercive control
- Sexual Abuse

The One Stop Shop provides FREE, immediate and confidential access to Women's Aid, legal support, benefits advice, housing support and safety advice.



10.00 am-12.00 noon
No appointment necessary
Crèche facilities are available
LOCATION: House Church, Crawfordsburn Road Newtownards, BT23 4EA

For any further information about the One Stop Shop or Women's Aid support services Contact us at 02891 273196

NEXT DATES:

14th & 28th April
12th & 26th May

Our sessions are held on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month!

Housing Executive



THE RISE OF LIVED-IN LUXURY

As 2026 gains momentum towards the summer months we are collectively moving away from the “catalog-perfect” minimalism that dominated the early 2020s and leaning into something much more soulful.

For Spring/Summer 2026, the vibe is authentic, immersive, and unapologetically tactile. If your home feels like a curated collection of your life’s best moments rather than a sterile showroom, you are exactly on trend.

The Palette: Deep Teals and Sun-Kissed Earth

Forget the washed-out pastels of yesteryear.

This season, designers are embracing colours with serious gravitas. Transformative Teal has emerged as a powerhouse shade, sitting right between blue and green to offer a look that is both dramatic and

grounding. It works particularly well when used in velvet upholstery or as a bold “colour drench” on walls. To balance this depth, we are seeing a surge in Amber and Burnt Caramel. These warm, unctuous tones replace the flat beiges of the past, bringing a sense of a sun-bleached Mediterranean retreat to any room. Perhaps most surprising is the breakout duo of Icy Blue and Burgundy; the crispness of the blue lifts the weight of the deep red, creating a look that feels both retro and avant-garde.

“Texture-Maxxing” and Materiality

The primary goal

this season is to make every surface worth touching, a movement we’ve dubbed “Texture-Maxxing.” Light Scandi oak is taking a backseat to richer woods like walnut and chocolate mahogany, which provide a traditional anchor to otherwise modern rooms. We are also firmly in a new Stone Age. Travertine and Calacatta marble are no longer reserved for countertops; instead, they are appearing as stone-base lamps, fluted side tables, and heavy marble trays that add physical and visual weight to your decor. To soften these hard surfaces, natural fibers

remain essential. While linen is still the king of summer, it is now being joined by heavy bouclé, wool, and even wrought iron for a mix of textures that feel high-end yet entirely approachable.

The Shape of Things: Curves and Postmodernism

Sharp angles are officially out, replaced by fluid, undulating lines that feel more organic. The “skirted sofa” has returned with a vengeance, proving that what was once considered “grandma style” can be reimagined as romantic and sophisticated with the right piping and fabric. This flows into a massive revival of European Postmodernism from the 1970s through the 1990s. We are seeing a preference for low-profile modular sofas and space-age fiberglass coffee tables that prioritize comfort and flow. The trend

of “sofa-scaping” has also taken hold, where homeowners choose one massive, curved statement piece and design the entire room’s energy around its silhouette.

Folk Bohemia and Fruit Motifs

Decor accents are becoming more whimsical and artisan-focused this year. We are seeing a move toward Folk Bohemia, which is far removed from the “boho” trends of a decade ago. This version is more colourful and craft-heavy, featuring Kelim rugs, intricate lattice patchwork cushions, and hand-painted ceramics. Adding a theatrical flourish to these spaces is the rise of fruit motifs. From pear-shaped paperweights to pomegranate-shaped glass ornaments and oversized apple sculptures, these playful nods to the bounty of summer add



a sense of humor and vitality to bookshelves and coffee tables.

The New Direction of Home

The overarching theme for 2026 is intention. Whether you are adding a splash of chartreuse to a

bathroom or layering rugs for extra depth, the focus is squarely

on how a space makes you feel rather than how it looks in a photograph. We have reached a point where we are done decorating for “the grid” and

have finally started decorating for the human beings living inside. The transition from cool, clinical whites to rich, lived-in layers marks a return to the home as a true sanctuary of personal expression.



CELEBRATING 20 YEARS IN BUSINESS

- DOORS
- WINDOWS
- CONSERVATORIES

SPECIALISING IN

- ALUMINIUM
- PVC WINDOWS
- REPLACEMENT OF SLIDING SASH WOODEN WINDOWS

16a Moneydarragh Road, Annalong, BT34 4TY
Tel: 028 4376 7181
Mob: 075 2545 6369



Skip the Hassle, Call McKinstry!

Commercial Bin Collection - Skip Hire
- Metal and Wood Recycling



Trusted by businesses and households in Northern Ireland for **over 50 years**, at McKinstry we make disposal simple.

Call today for your free, no-obligation quote
028 9082 5362
hiredesk@mckinstrykiphire.co.uk



Spring Cleaning & Beyond: A Checklist for Your Home Refresh

Spring has sprung, and with it comes the urge to refresh and revitalise our homes. After a long winter, it's time to shed the dust and embrace the warmer weather with a clean slate.

Inside the Home:

Deep clean your home by washing windows, cleaning blinds, and thoroughly cleaning carpets and rugs. Dust every surface, wash or dry clean curtains and bedding, and de-clutter and organise closets and drawers.

Perform essential home maintenance by checking smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, inspecting and cleaning gutters, repairing any winter weather damage,

and servicing your heating and cooling systems.

Freshen up your home by painting walls or touching up trim, rearranging furniture, and adding fresh flowers or vibrant houseplants.

Outside the Home:

Tackle yard work by raking away debris, mowing the lawn, trimming hedges, weeding and fertilizing gardens, and planting spring bulbs and flowers. Maintain your outdoor



WILSON'S LAWNMOWERS ANNSBOROUGH STORES

Castlewellan, Co. Down
wilsonslawnmowers.co.uk
028 437 70818 | 028 437 78221

We are dedicated to ensuring that we take care of all of our customers and that their needs are met and exceeded. In sales, repair and servicing alike, we are committed to providing expert support for all of the products we offer. We are a family run business that has been open for more than 76 years, we pride ourselves in helping out our customers with anything they need help with from small to large problems!

Do you want information about a product, information on servicing costs or have a machine fixed?

Don't be afraid to ring or call down during our opening hours and we will do our best to help you out!

- SALES SERVICE
- REPAIR
- CONSUMABLES
- EXPERT ADVICE

TRY GOING GREEN with emissions-free battery ranges from Cramer - ranges also comes with a free second battery.

Monday to Friday
9am - 5pm
Saturday
9am-12 pm



garden care network
FREE 5 YEAR WARRANTY

spaces by cleaning and repairing outdoor furniture, washing or replacing outdoor rugs and cushions, inspecting and repairing fences and decks, and cleaning and preparing the grill.

Create a cosy outdoor oasis by adding comfortable seating, a fire pit, string lights, and colourful plants and flowers.

By tackling these springtime home jobs, you can create a fresh, inviting space for the warmer months ahead. Enjoy the process of revitalising your home and welcoming the new season with open arms!

WINDOW VISION

- New PVC windows & doors • Low Energy Glass installer
- Conservatory Glazing • Bespoke Aluminium Frames
- A range of colour options available in windows & doors

Contact Peter Deegan on 075 9923 3975
Email: windowvision@hotmail.co.uk

WHAT TO DO ABOUT DAMP WALLS

Frustratingly, many homes throughout the country are affected by damp internal walls. Not only do patches of damp look terrible, but they can also be hazardous to your health and affect the structural integrity of your property.

If you're struggling with these issues, learning how to treat damp walls internally can save your home and your wellbeing.

Rising damp is a very common issue, that can affect flats, houses and any other structure. But what causes rising damp in internal walls?

Rising damp starts low and moves up your home's walls, causing serious issues. Often this is due to your damp proof course failing through poor installation, age, or damage.

Water is very good at working its way into our homes through your damp proof course thanks to tiny tears or mistakes made during the installation process.

What's more, over time, structures near your home (like steps) can also cause water to penetrate your damp proof course. Moisture then begins to seep into your walls, spreading through the materials and causing issues.

Condensation refers to patches of moisture that can form on the walls of your home, which can lead to

health issues and structural damage. If you're unsure, you can check whether your walls are damp using your hand or a damp meter.

This frustrating problem can be caused by:

- Issues with your gutters
- Damage to your roof
- Breaks or cracks in your wall's mortar
- Damage from fixings in your home usually by screwing or bolting things to your walls

If you're struggling with damp in your home, you may be wondering "how do you stop damp coming through internal walls?" The best remedy here is damp proofing.

This can prevent the health, structural and aesthetic issues associated with excess moisture in your home.

Depending on the cause of your moisture issue, you can protect your home and family by using damp proof paint, damp proofing treatments or cavity trays.

Rising damp is particularly irritating as it can be quite tricky to remedy. Damp walls, degrading skirting



boards, staining and fluffly substances in your plaster are all signs of rising damp and it's important you act ASAP. Learning how to treat rising damp on internal walls is done by identifying the cause and fixing the issue.

It's inadvisable to simply get rid of the signs of rising damp, as unless you fix the root cause, it will come back again and again.

Generally, repairing any tears in your damp proof course is the best way of eliminating rising damp. What's more, if your damp proof course is being

bridged by structures next to your home, removing these can also eradicate the cause of rising damp.

Alternatively, if your rising damp is caused by significant damage to your damp proof course, you may need to replace the entire course. We would recommend you hire a professional to install a new damp proof course as this is a difficult, time-consuming job.

If you're unlucky enough to have issues with damp internal walls, your best option is to contact an expert. They'll be able to

quickly locate the source of your problem and suggest the best treatment options. This will save you many headaches plus time and energy that could be better spent elsewhere.

If you'd like to have the assurance your damp problem is being dealt with once and for all, working with a tradesperson is a great choice. The average cost of a damp proofing course is £850.

For further information see <https://www.checkatrade.com/blog/how-to/treat-damp-walls-internally/>

Window Vision announces new partner in business!

Established in 2009 Window Vision is celebrating 17 years in business with some exciting news!

The company, founded by Peter Deegan, is delighted to be welcoming Peter's son Rory as a partner in the business. Rory will continue to work alongside his father in the business, as he has been doing while gaining hands on experience in the company, for the past ten years!

The company has built a reputation for delivering precision-engineered windows and doors that do more than just fill a gap—they transform the living environment.

Window Vision stands out by offering a versatility that caters to both traditional and contemporary tastes. Their product range is extensive, moving beyond standard white frames to offer a vast range of colour

options in both windows and doors. Whether a client is looking for the sleek, minimalist profile of bespoke aluminium frames or the durability and low maintenance of modern PVC solutions, the company provides tailored designs that complement any architectural style.

In an era where energy costs and sustainability are top of mind, Window Vision prioritizes thermal efficiency. The company is a specialist in Low Energy Glass and K-Glass installation. By incorporating these high-performance coatings, their windows act as a thermal barrier, reflecting heat back into the room and significantly reducing energy loss. This "vision" for a more efficient home extends

to their Conservatory Glazing services, where they specialize in turning overheating or drafty glass rooms into comfortable, year-round living spaces.

The company emphasizes a "right-first-time" approach. This hands-on expertise ensures that every installation—from a single entrance door to a full-scale conservatory renovation—is handled with the same level of craftsmanship and attention to detail.

With Peter and Rory both partners Window Vision are looking forward to many more years of successful trading as a local family business. Phone: 075 9923 3975 Email: windowvision@hotmail.co.uk Web: Windowvision.co.uk

After the Rain: Finding and Fixing Roof Leaks

The storm has finally broken, leaving behind that crisp, petrichor-scented air and a sense of relief.

But as the clouds part, a rhythmic drip... drip... drip... echoes through the house. A roof leak is rarely a sudden, dramatic event; it's usually a quiet invader that waits for the silence after the rain to reveal its path. Tracking down the source is often more of a detective's game than a handyman's chore, as water is notoriously deceptive about where it enters and where it eventually lands.

Because of gravity and the pitch of your roof, the water entering your home rarely takes a direct vertical path. It might seep through a crack near the chimney, run six feet down a rafter, and then finally soak through your ceiling in the middle of a bedroom. When you spot a "tea stain"—those telltale brownish or yellowish rings—on your ceiling, remember that the actual hole in your roof could be several feet away from the spot on your drywall.

If you have attic access, the best time to investigate is while the roof is still wet. Armed with a flashlight, look for damp insulation or dark streaks along the wooden rafters. If the rain has already stopped, look for "shiners"—nails that missed the rafter and are now covered in white frost

or rust. These cold nails often collect condensation or serve as the perfect "dripping point" for water traveling along the underside of the roof deck.

Stepping outside provides a different set of clues. You aren't just looking for a hole; you're looking for irregularities in the roof's "armor." Missing or cracked shingles are the most obvious culprits, appearing as dark, bald patches against the uniform texture of the roof. However, the most vulnerable areas are the "penetrations"—anywhere a builder cut a hole for a chimney, a plumbing vent, or a skylight. These areas rely on metal flashing and rubber seals that often dry out and crack long before the shingles themselves fail.

Keep an eye on your gutters as well. If you notice a heavy accumulation of black, sandy granules in the troughs, your shingles are shedding their protective layer. This is a sign of an aging roof that is becoming brittle and losing its ability to shed water effectively. Similarly, clogged gutters are a primary cause of leaks; when water can't flow away, it backs up under the shingles or rots the wooden fascia boards behind the gutter line.

The most effective way to

handle a leak is to prevent it through seasonal check-ups. Ideally, you should clear your gutters twice a year—once in late autumn and again in spring—to ensure water has a clear path to the ground. While you're up there, a quick visual check of the "pipe boots" (the rubber seals around plumbing vents) can save you thousands. These rubber components typically last about ten years, which is often half the lifespan of the shingles

themselves. Replacing a cracked boot is a simple, inexpensive fix that prevents a major interior headache.

When it comes to repairs, many small issues have straightforward solutions. A single missing shingle or a small crack in the flashing can often be addressed with high-grade roofing cement or a targeted patch. However, if your roof is over twenty years old and you see widespread curling or "balding," a patch

may only be a temporary bandage. In these cases, a full replacement is usually the only way to ensure the structural integrity of your home.

DIY repairs are excellent for pride and the pocketbook, but roofs are inherently dangerous. If the pitch of your roof is steep or you feel even slightly uneasy on a ladder, call a professional. No repair bill is more expensive than an afternoon in the emergency room.

Thomas Kelly & Co Ltd

Independent wallpaper & paint shop established in 1941 based in Ballynahinch

Stocking all your decorating needs this Spring including Wallpaper, Paint, Woodcare and much more in decorating supplies

Please keep checking our Facebook Page for all the latest Special Offers & Promotions.

Find us at 6-8 Dromore Street, BALLYNAHINCH, BT24 8AG

Emails: shop@thomaskelly.co.uk Website: www.thomaskellys.co.uk FB: thomaskellysballynahinch

Multi surface

WILLIAM KIRKWOOD & SONS

EST. 1903

50 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE PRODUCING PRESERVATIVE PRESSURE TREATED TIMBER

William Kirkwood & Sons are experienced timber merchants based in Castlewellan, County Down. Our family run business has been providing quality timber and timber products to the wholesale and retail sectors for over a century.

William Kirkwood & Sons
5-9 Newcastle Road, Castlewellan, County Down, BT31 9DP

Tel: 028 4377 8276
Email: info@wkirkwoodandsons.co.uk
www.wkirkwoodandsons.co.uk

FAMILY-RUN BUSINESS

DRAFT RURAL POLICY

Our New Approach 2026-2041 is a new draft policy that aims to understand, champion and support rural communities.

Developed through an intensive co design process involving government departments, local councils, voluntary and community organisations and academic partners, the draft policy places rural voices and lived experiences of rural communities at its core.

The 15-year policy sets out five strategic proposals aimed at bringing people and government together to help shape a thriving, sustainable and inclusive rural Northern Ireland. The policy is guided by clear criteria to ensure it is fair, effective, delivers good value for money and can be implemented in practice. It supports collaboration across government, respects the roles of all Northern Ireland departments and complies with the Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. Welcoming the launch of the public consultation, Minister Muir said: "This



draft policy led by my Department is an approach to understand, champion and support rural communities. It aims to reflect the diversity of rural areas and the experiences of those who live and work in them.

"The proposals seek to identify how people and government can work together to address the challenges and opportunities that face rural communities and highlight the need for coordinated action to support improved outcomes."

Minister Muir added: "I want everyone to talk rural. Contributions from individuals, community groups and sector representatives will play a vital role in refining the proposals and informing future decisions. Together, we can unlock the full potential of rural Northern Ireland."

James Perry & Sons

- Heating Oil, Agricultural Oil
- Derv & Petrol, Marine
- Coal & Smokeless Fuels
- Lubricants & Oil Tanks

Now Stocking Wood Pellets
Prompt Delivery - Payment Plans Available
Tel: 028 4176 2310




Why Choose Us?

- Horse welfare is at the heart of everything we do
- Highly trained & experienced staff, fully insured and certified
- Work with leading professionals – vets, physios, farriers & more
- Drive-in appointments available for convenience

What we offer:

- State-of-the-art rehabilitation & fitness facilities
- ECB water treadmill for low-impact strength training
- K-Laser therapy for pain relief & tissue healing
- BEMER therapy for enhanced circulation & recovery
- Instant Cryo for targeted inflammation reduction
- Combi-Floor with vibration, PEMF & weigh scale
- Private treatment room for vet, physio & therapy sessions





T: 07801 448 269 | www.glebeequine.co.uk

Glebe Equine: Enhancing Equine Well-being in Hillsborough

Glebe Equine: Enhancing Equine Well-being in Hillsborough

Established in February 2025, this relatively new venture has quickly positioned itself as a provider of state-of-the-art equine fitness and rehabilitation services.

Glebe Equine, Glebe Road, Hillsborough, offers a comprehensive suite of therapies and programs tailored to meet the diverse needs of equine athletes and companions alike. Whether a horse is recovering from an injury, undergoing fitness training, or simply requiring therapeutic care, Glebe Equine provides a supportive environment and advanced modalities to promote their well-being.

Services Offered at Glebe Equine:

Glebe Equine boasts an impressive array of services, focusing on innovative and scientifically backed approaches to equine care:

- ECB Water Treadmill - The ECB Water Treadmill is a highly effective and fully customisable piece of equipment designed to support each horse's individual needs. With adjustable water height, incline, and speed, we can tailor every session to target specific goals—whether it's improving overall fitness, rebuilding strength after injury, or addressing muscle weakness and asymmetry.

The buoyancy of the water reduces concussion on the joints and limbs, making it a safe and low-impact way to develop topline, improve stride length, and enhance cardiovascular health. It's a brilliant tool for both performance horses and those in rehabilitation.

- InstantCryo - Instant Cryo is a fast-acting cold therapy that delivers targeted pain relief, reduces inflammation, and minimises swelling. It can reach difficult-to-access areas anywhere on the body, making it ideal for treating acute injuries, managing chronic conditions, and aiding post-exercise recovery at Glebe Equine.

- K-Laser - The K-Laser is a high-powered therapeutic laser that uses specific wavelengths of light to relieve pain, reduce inflammation, and accelerate healing. At Glebe Equine, we use it for effective pain relief and recovery in cases of tendon and ligament injuries, joint issues, wounds, and muscle soreness—supporting your horse's comfort, recovery and performance.

- Combi-Floor: This cutting-edge platform combines vibration therapy (for improved circulation and muscle relaxation),



Pulsed Electromagnetic Field (PEMF) therapy (to support cell regeneration and reduce inflammation), and an optional weigh scale to monitor progress. It aids in injury recovery, reduces stiffness, supports hoof growth, and is beneficial for pre and post-exercise recovery.

- BEMER Therapy: This technology enhances circulation and supports the body's natural recovery processes.

- Solarium & Wash Bay: Facilities to aid in muscle relaxation and general well-being.

- Private Treatment Room: A dedicated space for veterinary, physiotherapy, and other therapy sessions.

A Focus on Holistic Well-being: Glebe Equine's philosophy appears to centre on a holistic approach to equine care, recognising

the interconnectedness of fitness, rehabilitation, and overall well-being. By offering a variety of advanced therapies under one roof, they aim to provide a comprehensive and convenient solution for horse owners seeking to optimise their equine partners' health and performance.

Glebe Equine is well-positioned to serve horse owners in the surrounding areas of County Down and further afield. The facility's investment in modern technologies and its focus on tailored programs suggest a commitment to providing a high standard of care within the local equine community.

For those interested in learning more or booking services, Ella at Glebe Equine can be contacted 07801 448269 or see www.glebeequine.co.uk

BMW Unveils the All-New iX3

BMW has officially signaled the start of a "new era" with the premiere of the all-new BMW iX3, the first series-production model of the Neue Klasse.

This next-generation Sports Activity Vehicle (SAV) introduces a radical shift in design, sustainability, and digital architecture, aiming to skip an entire vehicle generation in terms of technological advancement.

Performance and Ultra-Fast Charging

The iX3 50 xDrive will launch as the longest-range battery electric vehicle (BEV) in the UK, boasting a WLTP range

of up to 500 miles. This is made possible by sixth-generation BMW eDrive technology, featuring high-voltage batteries with new cylindrical cells that increase energy density by 20%.

Key performance and charging metrics include:

- Output: 469 hp and 645 Nm of torque.
- Acceleration: 0 to 62 mph in 4.9 seconds.
- Charging: An 800-volt architecture allows for 400

kW rapid charging, adding 231 miles of range in just 10 minutes.

- Bidirectional Charging: The iX3 debuts Vehicle-to-Home (V2H) and Vehicle-to-Load (V2L) capabilities for the brand.

A Digital "Superbrain" Architecture

The iX3 debuts a "digital nervous system" powered by four high-performance computers known as superbrains. The "Heart of Joy" unit manages driving dynamics, processing data 10 times faster than previous systems to coordinate braking, steering, and power delivery.

Inside, the cabin is defined by the BMW Panoramic iDrive and Operating System X.

This setup features a full-width windscreen display (Panoramic Vision) that projects information across the driver's entire field of vision, paired with a newly designed 3D Head-Up

Display. Sustainability and Design

BMW has adopted a "secondary first" approach, with approximately one-third of the iX3 constructed from recycled materials, including marine plastics and PET textiles. Consequently, the vehicle's lifecycle carbon footprint is 34% lower than its predecessor. The iX3 will be manufactured at the fossil-fuel-free Plant Debrecen in Hungary.

The exterior introduces a "reduced" design language, featuring vertical kidney grilles and flush door handles, while the interior is entirely leather-free, utilizing Econeer materials.

Pricing and UK Availability

The BMW iX3 50 xDrive is priced from £58,755 OTR. While series production begins in autumn 2025, the first UK customer deliveries were scheduled for 7 March 2026

PART WORN TYRES, CARRYDUFF
NEED-A-TYRE?
We supply tyres for any car, any van, any make, any model.
Call: 07707 560688
EXCELLENT OFFERS ON TYRES - NEW TYRES ALSO AVAILABLE
PLUS we guarantee not to be beaten on price!
 Tullyard Business Park, Drumbo,
 66 Tullyard Road, Drumbo

MCA MOTORS
 8 Newcastle Rd, Kilkeel BT34 4AP

- MOT PREP - BRAKES - TIMING BELTS
- SERVICING - CLUTCHES
- DIAGNOSTIC COMPUTER AVAILABLE
- STOCK BATTERIES, BULBS, WIPERS
- NUMBER PLATE SUPPLIER 2D / 3D / 4D

CALL TONY: 07742 507 701
MON-FRIDAY 8:30 - 5:00PM SAT: Booking Only

GRANSHA EQUESTRIAN CENTRE
RIDING LESSONS FOR ALL AGES AND STANDARDS
IF YOU HAVE TROUBLE BOOKING ON THE GRANSHA EQUESTRIAN APP, PLEASE PHONE OUR BOOKING LINE 02891422203 BETWEEN 9 & 5, MONDAY - FRIDAY
www.granshaequestriancentre.com
 10A KERRS ROAD, BANGOR, BT19 7QD.
 Enquiries to email - granshariding@yahoo.com

KEEP ON TRUCKIN'

The UK pickup market in 2026 has undergone a quiet revolution.

No longer just "rattle-and-hum" workhorses for muddy fields, these vehicles have become the Swiss Army knives of the British road. Here is the story of the five best pickups currently available in NI.

The Tech-Savvy Titan: Ford Ranger

If you take a stroll through a leafy suburb or a bustling construction site, you're almost guaranteed to see a Ford Ranger. In 2026, it remains the undisputed king of the UK market. The big news this year is the Ranger PHEV, which has become the darling of the "lifestyle" crowd. It offers over 25 miles of pure electric range—perfect for sneaking through Zero Emission Zones—while still packing the 3.5-tonne towing punch needed for a weekend with the horsebox. For those who want more "oomph," the Raptor variant remains the ultimate toy, featuring Fox Live Valve dampers that

make speed bumps feel like cotton wool.

The Indestructible Legend: Toyota Hilux

Further north, where the roads turn to gravel and the weather turns to spite, the Toyota Hilux is the local hero. Now in its ninth generation for 2026, the Hilux has finally embraced the future without losing its "bulletproof" soul. The new 48V Hybrid system has smoothed out the diesel clatter, making long hauls on the M6 significantly more civilized. It's the truck you buy when you don't just want to get there, but you absolutely must get back. With Toyota's 10-year service-activated warranty, it's the closest thing to a lifelong companion you can buy on four wheels.

The Executive Suite: Volkswagen Amarok

For the business owner who needs to tow a mini-digger on Monday but host a client on Tuesday, there is the Volkswagen Amarok. While it shares



its DNA with the Ford Ranger, the VW feels like it went to a much posher school. The interior is a masterclass in "truck-luxury," featuring high-grade leathers and a minimalist dashboard that wouldn't look out of place in a Touareg. It's the quietest ride in the segment, making it the premier choice for those who treat their cab as a mobile office.

The No-Nonsense Workhorse: Isuzu D-Max

If the Amarok is a tailored suit, the Isuzu D-Max is a pair of high-quality steel-toed boots.

It doesn't pretend to be an SUV. It's rugged, slightly loud, and incredibly honest. In 2026, the D-Max EV has started appearing on fleet rosters, offering a 1-tonne payload with zero tailpipe emissions—a feat many thought impossible for a dedicated 4x4. For the traditionalists, the V-Cross trim offers just enough creature comforts (like Apple CarPlay and heated seats) to keep you happy without making you feel like you're being "soft."

The Value King: KGM Musso

Finally, we have the

KGM Musso (formerly SsangYong). In a world where pickup prices have crept toward luxury SUV territory, the Musso remains the champion of the "more for less" philosophy. It's unique in the UK for offering the Saracen+ model, which features an extra-long load bed that makes it a favourite for landscapers and logistics firms. It might not have the "badge appeal" of a Ford or VW, but with a refined multi-link rear suspension, it actually rides more comfortably than many of its leaf-sprung rivals.

Kimmins launches two new hard hitting road safety campaigns

Minister for Infrastructure Liz Kimmins has launched two powerful new road safety campaigns which went live on television screens recently.

The hard-hitting campaigns – called 'Priority List' and 'Control or Speed' – address two of the main causes of deaths and serious injuries on our roads – speeding and, more generally, driver behaviour.

Launching the campaigns the Minister said: "Too many people are dying on our roads, something that has been brought into sharp focus within recent weeks. We are only just into the third month of 2026 and, tragically, 15 people have lost their lives.

"We must all do everything we can to ensure no more families are plunged into the unimaginable and life changing grief that road deaths bring to their door.

"As Minister, I want to do all I can to ensure everyone who uses our roads, does so safely. To help drive real behavioural change on our roads we need a societal conversation about how we all behave when we are travelling and, today I am launching two new powerful and hard-hitting advertisements to help

stimulate that conversation.

"The first campaign, 'Priority List' challenges the everyday choices drivers make that lead to collisions - inattention, driving too close, and momentary distractions. These may seem minor in the moment, but they can have devastating, life changing consequences. The campaign highlights how a split second decision to take a risk can end in tragedy, a scenario many of us will sadly recognise.

"The second, addresses excessive speed, which remains a major factor in deaths and serious injuries, particularly on rural roads where you are likely to encounter more difficulties. Despite the risks, many drivers believe they are in control when speeding. However, evidence shows that speed reduces reaction time, increases stopping distances, and leads to more severe outcomes. The message of this campaign, entitled 'Control or Speed', is simple: you can have control, or you can have speed - but you cannot have both."

Minister Kimmins added: "The campaigns will run across TV, radio, digital platforms, and outdoor media, with a focus on raising awareness among all drivers with a particular focus on younger drivers.

"Alongside this work, my Department is reviewing several speed related matters, including national speed limits on rural roads and dual carriageways, HGV limits, and the wider use of 20mph zones. A public consultation is now open, and I encourage you to take part and make your views heard."

These latest road safety campaigns complement recent work undertaken by the Department for Infrastructure to improve road safety behaviour. Current campaigns include safety around school buses for children www.sharetheroadtozero.com / DriversThinkSafetyWhen PassingBuses, Be Bold. Be Seen www.sharetheroadtozero.com/be-bold-be-seen and our most recent TV



campaign which highlights the dangers of drug driving <https://sharetheroadtozero.com/TVWebPages/never-ever-drive-on-drugs> You can respond to

the consultation on the review of speed limits here: <https://consultations2.nidirect.gov.uk/dfi-1/speed-limit-review-2026>

Smart Space
Container Specialists
• STORAGE
• SALES
• CONVERSIONS
Contact Us 028 91 629462
www.smartspaceni.co.uk
info@smartspaceni.co.uk

AGRI-WEB
Rubber Stable Mats | Shredded Rubber for horse Arenas
100% no tyres used
A range of Rubber Mats suitable for Play Areas, Grass Protection, Trailers, Vans, Garage Flooring, Stables, Kennels etc
Contact Agri-Web Ltd - 25 Enterprise Road, Bangor, BT19 7TA | Tel: 028 9127 5913

BRADY INSURANCE

YOUR FARM INSURANCE PROFESSIONALS...

The agricultural sector has a range of specialised insurance needs. With over 50 years of experience providing farmers across Northern Ireland with tractor and farm insurance, Brady Insurance can make sure you have the perfect policies. You can choose from a range of combined farm insurance policies that will protect your property, your vehicles and your employees. Visit one of our branches in Enniskillen, Pomeroy, Fintona or Castlederg to arrange a quote.

COMPREHENSIVE COVER

bradyinsurance.co.uk

VEHICLE, CAR AND 4X4 INSURANCE
Most farms rely on a combination of heavy machinery and vehicles. Brady Insurance can provide you with affordable, reliable insurance for any vehicle on your farm. We've got policies that cover 4x4s, combine harvesters, cars or any other vehicle.

SAVE YOURSELF TIME, MONEY AND BOTHER
Are you looking for affordable farm or tractor insurance? Brady Insurance is a third generation family company with over 50 years experience in the Northern Ireland insurance industry. We will compare all current farm insurance policies on the market to find the best fit for your needs and your budget.

Call us now on:
028 8775 8323 Pomeroy
028 8167 0031 Castlederg
028 8246 4006 Fintona
028 6632 4371 Enniskillen

WARM HEALTHY HOMES STRATEGY LAUNCHED

Communities Minister Gordon Lyons recently set out a long-term, cross-government approach to tackling fuel poverty in Northern Ireland.

Speaking after visiting a home in Hopewell Crescent, Belfast to launch 'Warm Healthy Homes: A Northern Ireland Fuel Poverty Strategy 2026-2036', Minister Lyons said: "I am pleased to launch the Warm Healthy Homes strategy, a new approach that has secured Executive backing and which will help lift families out of fuel poverty. "This is a comprehensive 10-year strategy to ensure that cold, damp homes become a thing of the past.

Fuel poverty affects nearly one in four households, and its consequences are linked to poor health and financial stress, particularly for the less well off. This strategy sets out a clear pathway to change that." The Minister continued: "Together with the draft Anti-Poverty Strategy and the Housing Supply Strategy, the Warm Healthy Homes Strategy will tackle the root causes of poverty and provide meaningful measures and actions which

will make a real difference to people across Northern Ireland. "As part of the strategy, I will introduce a new Warm Healthy Homes Fund next year, for which I intend to allocate £150million to deliver of energy efficiency investment in its first five years. This fund will transform low-income households, modernising energy inefficient homes. Through this fund, along with energy wellbeing advice from trusted partners in the community, I want to ensure those



Communities Minister Gordon Lyons (right) pictured at the launch of the Warm Healthy Homes Strategy in Belfast with (left) John McMullan, Vice Chair, Northern Ireland Housing Executive; and householder Trevor Rainey, who had a Low Carbon retrofit upgrade fitted to his home by NIHE last summer.

worst affected have the information and means to upgrade their homes for the better. I also want to improve housing standards and my Department has already begun consulting on a revised Decent Homes Standard for social housing." Householder Trevor Rainey, who had a Low Carbon retrofit upgrade fitted to his home by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive last summer, said: "Since the work was done my bills are a lot lower, the house is warmer and the hot water is

great in the mornings. I'd recommend it to anyone." The full Warm Healthy Homes: A Northern Ireland Fuel Poverty Strategy 2026-2036 document is available at: www.communities-ni.gov.uk/articles/warm-healthy-homes-2026-2036-new-fuel-poverty-strategy-northern-ireland The Minister has made a written ministerial statement to the Assembly: www.communities-ni.gov.uk/news/announcement-warm-healthy-homes-strategy

Premium equestrian fencing

Loughwood

- Superior Pine posts and rails treated with Tanasote®, the modern alternative to creosote.
- Horses do not crib on Tanasote® treated timber - 6 year trial evidence.
- Long life guaranteed.

25 YEAR WARRANTY

W: www.loughwood.net
T: +44 28 406 51309
E: info@loughwood.net

J. D. O'Hare

Agricultural Contractor

Hedge Cutting

* Saw & Flail Available *

Contact: 028 4063 0033
or 077 1560 9392

TINNELLY GROUP

Buyers of all grades of Ferrous & Non Ferrous Scrap Metal

- ✓ End of Life Vehicles
- ✓ Catalytic Converters
- ✓ Skip Hire Available

+44 28 302 65331
INFO@TINNELLY.COM

CAFRE Land-based Engineering students explore UK machinery manufacturers

Final-year Land-based Engineering students from the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE) recently completed a three-day study tour across England, gaining first-hand insight into leading manufacturers, dealerships and the latest advances in agricultural machinery technology.

The tour commenced at the Case New Holland (CNH) Industrial plant in Baildon, one of the UK's leading agricultural machinery manufacturing sites. Students learned how New Holland grew from the Fordson brand into today's CNH machinery

range and its place in the global market. A guided factory tour offered a rare opportunity to observe the assembly lines in full operation, including the production of New Holland T6 and T7 tractors as well as methane-powered models. Students

gained an appreciation of the global supply chain and the precision required to produce machines tailored to diverse international regulations. The group then travelled to Ulting, Maldon, to visit Ernest Doe & Sons - one of the UK's largest and longest established agricultural machinery dealerships. Students gained an insight into the company's extensive history, including the development of the iconic DOE Triple-D tractor. With preparations underway for the annual Doe Show, the group had an opportunity to explore large stocks of second-hand machinery and tour the dealership's workshops, stores, and sales facilities. Through

the visit, students gained a deeper understanding of the operational scale and the logistics involved in managing a major multi depot dealership. On the second day, students attended NEC Birmingham for the LAMMA Show - the UK's largest agricultural machinery exhibition. With major global manufacturers in attendance, the show offered the students an unparalleled opportunity to explore emerging technologies and engage directly with industry experts. Exhibits supported learning across the students' curriculum, covering transmissions, electronics, cultivation systems, and engine technologies. For

students preparing their Application Equipment assignments, the show offered significant value by allowing them to collect detailed technical information on machinery that is not typically used in Northern Ireland. On the final day, the group visited McConnell Power Arm factory in Shropshire. As pioneers of the tractor mounted hedge cutter and long-standing leaders in vegetation management technology, McConnell has an 85 year history of innovation, including the world's first tractor mounted hedge cutter and developments such as parallel arm geometry and hands free cruise control. Marketing Manager Wayne Brown provided an overview of

the company's structure, global reach and ongoing product innovation. A guided factory tour allowed students to observe production processes first-hand and learn about the company's latest technological advancements. Overall, the study tour offered students invaluable exposure to the wide range of career opportunities available within agricultural engineering, including manufacturing, design, sales, aftersales, and advanced machinery technology. The associated visits provided essential context to their studies and highlighted current and future developments within the sector. For further information, visit www.cafre.ac.uk

KPC EQUESTRIAN

MANUFACTURING EQUESTRIAN JUMPS, FILLERS, WINGS, MOUNTING BLOCKS AND MUCH MORE.

KILLYLEAGH - CO DOWN.
TEL: 07593 807525

Eventing IRELAND

McMILLEN Driver Training

Specialising in HGV & LGV Training

For all upcoming courses, check our website: www.mcmillendrivertraining.co.uk

- Driver CPC Courses
- Forklift Courses
- ADR Courses
- All Classes of LGV Training
- Transport Manager's CPC courses

Training Centre, 100a Hill Street, Lurgan, BT66 6BQ
T: 028 3834 9082

TAXIDRIVER Periodic Training | drivercpc We are now able to deliver Taxi CPC

Jamisons

INDEPENDENT LAND ROVER VEHICLE SPECIALIST

Sales | Parts

238 Castlecat Road, Dervock, Ballymoney, BT53 8BP
Tel: 028 2074 2888
www.jamionsgarage.co.uk

f Instagram

MAINTENANCE TASKS FOR APRIL

April is nature's alarm clock, but it's also the month where your home and garden demand a little manual intervention to shake off the winter blues.

As the soil warms and the days stretch out, the priority shifts from simply surviving the cold to preparing for the "high season" of summer living. It is the bridge between the hibernation of March and the frantic growth of May, making it the perfect window to tackle tasks before they become overwhelming.

The Garden Awakening
In the garden, your primary mission is to get ahead of the growth curve. The Maiden Mow is the first major milestone; when the grass finally starts to push upward, give it a light trim. It is crucial to set your mower blades high for these first few passes, as scalping the lawn too early can stress the root system. While you're out there, launch a proactive strike against weeds. Young, tender weeds are significantly easier to pull than the established monsters they will become by June. Once the beds are clear, applying a thick layer of mulch will act as both a weed suppressant and a moisture-lock for the warmer months ahead. Don't forget the "room" outdoors either—April is the ideal time to scrub down the patio furniture and check if your wooden decking or benches need a



fresh seal of oil to survive the summer sun.

Shielding the Exterior
Moving to the house itself, your home's exterior has likely spent the last few months taking a beating from wind and rain. Start by inspecting the gutters; even if you cleared them in the autumn, winter storms often deposit a fresh layer of grit and stray twigs that can lead to overflows during April showers. While you have the ladder out, give the windows and frames a deep scrub. Winter leaves a greasy film of salt and pollution on the glass that dulls the natural light entering your home. A thorough cleaning doesn't just improve your view—it

allows you to inspect the seals and frames for any rot or cracks that might have developed during the freeze-thaw cycles of the colder months.

Technical Health and Safety

Inside the home, the focus should shift toward efficiency and safety. Before the first heatwave

hits, service your cooling systems or at the very least, swap out the HVAC filters. A dusty filter forces the system to work harder, driving up your energy bills and shortening the unit's lifespan. Similarly, take a moment to pull your refrigerator away from the wall and vacuum the condenser coils.

Dust buildup here acts as insulation, making your fridge work overtime to keep things cold. This is also the standard time to perform your bi-annual safety check: test the batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors to ensure they are fully operational for the season ahead.

The Seasonal Transition
Finally, April is the best time for a functional declutter. As you rotate your wardrobe from heavy wools to lighter linens, be

ruthless with what you put into storage; if you didn't wear a coat all winter, it likely doesn't deserve space in your closet next year. This seasonal swap-over is the perfect excuse to deep-clean the hidden corners of your bedroom and storage areas that usually get bypassed. By clearing out the physical and mental "winter weight" now, you create a refreshed environment that matches the energy of the world outside.

A Quick Warning:

Before you hook up the garden hose for the first time, check your outdoor taps for hairline fractures. If water was trapped in the

pipe during a freeze, the first time you turn the tap on could result in a hidden leak behind your siding or in your basement.

Ross Stewart
PVC, FASCIA & GUTTERING
WINDOWS | DOORS | DOUBLE GLAZING
BEAUTIFULLY CRAFTED PVC WINDOWS & DOORS
WE REPLACE BROKEN DOWN
DOUBLE GLAZING UNITS, HANDLES, HINGES ETC.
Contact Ross on **078 0164 2867** or **028 4063 8013**

Need Security Services in Belfast?
HH SECURITY
• Manned Guarding
• Event Security
• Corporate Security
• Surveillance & Access Control
• Security Inspections
Strong, Reliable, Uncompromising Security
Tel: **074 7126 0938** or **078 7218 2171**
info@hellhoundsecurity.com

Unit D, Annahilt Business Park,
55 Glebe Road, Hillsborough
asis Blinds
CELEBRATING OVER
20 YEARS IN BUSINESS
• VERTICALS • ROLLER • VENETIAN • VELUX
Also Aluwood & Wooden Venetian FREE MEASURING & FITTING
Tel: **028 9263 8666** / **077 0108 1747**

P TULLY CONTRACTS
Building + Roofing Specialists
ROOFS RETILED FROM £3,900
• Extensions • Houses Repointed • Chimneys Renewed • Insurance Work Undertaken
• Sun Rooms • Roofs Re-slatted • Lead Work • All Work Guaranteed
• Loft Conversions • Roofs Repaired • New Guttering & Fascia • Free Estimates
• Garages • Flat Roofs • Vent Roof Tiles
25 Years' Experience
Mob: **078 6035 6648**

ROOFING SOLUTIONS NI
Over 25 years experience
FREE ESTIMATES ON ALL QUOTES
Tel: **07720 312 990**
• Roofs repaired & replaced
• All leadwork undertaken
• Flat roofing repaired & replaced
• Chimneys re-pointed & replaced
• New gutters & fascia boards • Dry Verge Systems
• Vent Roof tiles Supplied & fitted • Houses re-pointed
• All work undertaken • All work guaranteed

Derek Graham
Painting & Decorating
Trading Since 1981
• Interior & Exterior
• Commercial or Domestic
• Wallpapering
FREE QUOTATIONS Keenest Rates
Tel: **078 8931 2785**

WinDow and Door
repairs & replacement
uPVC Specialist who can replace any of the items below:
Handles - Hinges - Door Seals - Letter Boxes
Glass Steamed Up Or Broken - Panels - Locks
Also able to supply and install windows and doors and fix door or window draughts
No Call Out Fee
Mobile: **077621 91062**

Downpatrick Plumbers
Domestic Plumbing & Heating
Complete Bathroom Refurbishment
Boiler Installation & Servicing
34 Ardmore Avenue, Downpatrick
Call Damien on:
028 4461 4031 or **077105 47513**

FLAT ROOFING
• SPECIALISTS •
Butyl Rubber & Felt Roofing
uPVC Fascia, Soffit & Guttering
Tile, Slate & Guttering Repairs
WORK GUARANTEED - FREE ESTIMATES
Mob: **07803 950645**
~ 30 years experience ~
www.jamesoconnorroofing.co.uk

Painting
Interior & Exterior
FREE ESTIMATES
Phone Christopher
078 8750 6826

TECHTON REWIRES
HOME REWIRE SPECIALISTS
Over 50 years combined electrical experience and specialising exclusively in home rewires.
• Home visit and quotation on the same day.
• 18th edition electrics installed with full certification.
• Re plastering (if required) included and house back to how we found it. • Moving out not necessary.
• Fully qualified & insured.
PHONE: **079 0352 0162**
EMAIL: tehtonrewires@gmail.com

Oldtown Joinery
Design, Manufacturing & Installation of the finest quality hand-built, bespoke staircases
Celebrating over 30 years in business!
Phone: **028 7938 6768** or **0772 500 3932**
www.oldtown-joinery.co.uk
Email: oldtownjoinery@hotmail.com
Address: 17G Deerpark Rd, Bellaghy, County Derry, BT45 8LB

J HAUGH ELECTRICS
WIRED FOR SUCCESS
TEL: **07925 855247**

LOUGHRAN CONCRETE LTD
Built on a solid foundation
• Pre-Cast Concrete Products • Mini Mix Concrete
• Floor Screed • Ready Made Mortar
Greenbank Industrial Estate,
Ballinacraig Way, Newry, BT34 2QX
Phone: **028 3026 5745**
www.smithconcrete.co.uk | info@loughranconcrete.com

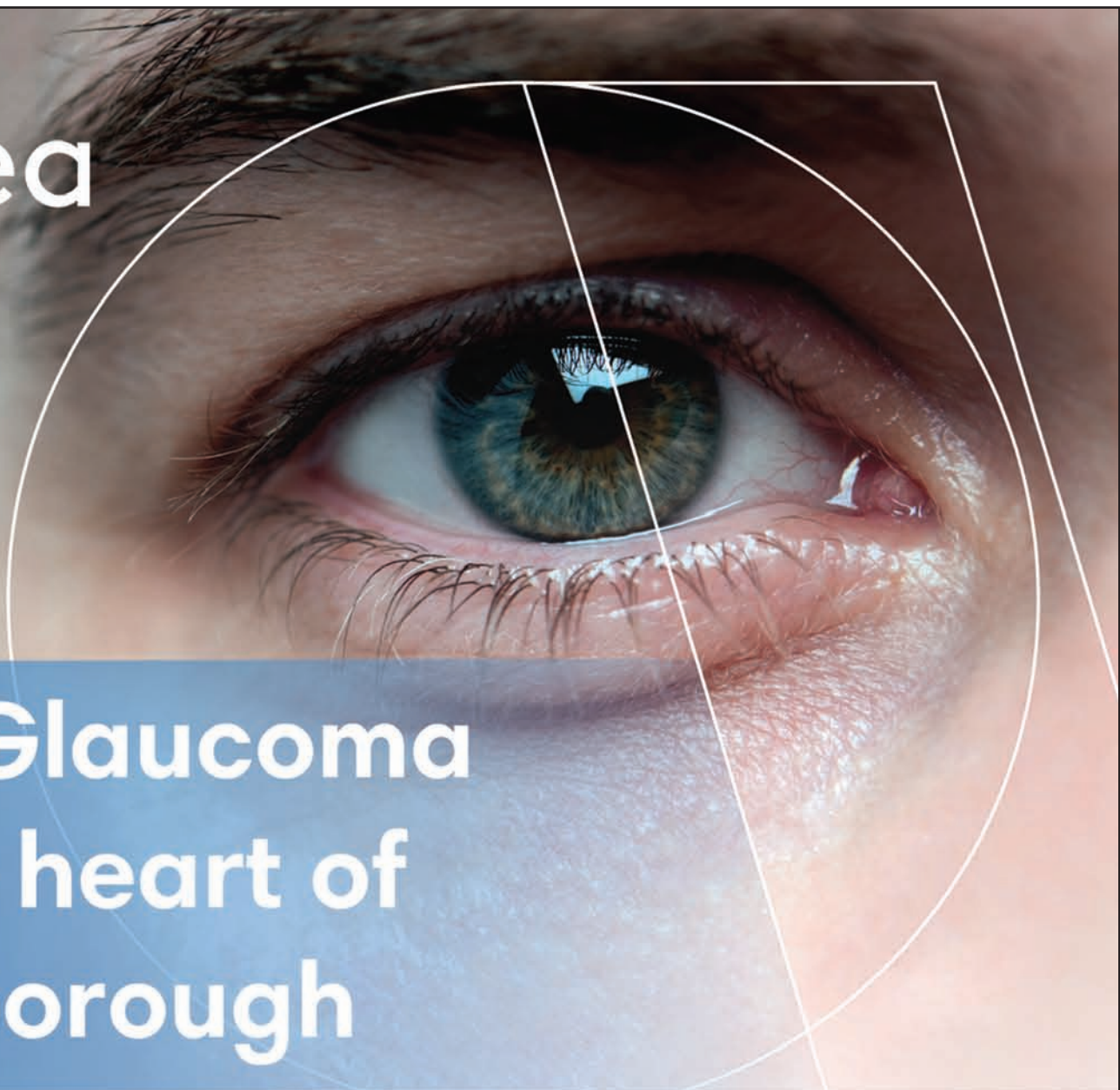
NK Locksmith
Aluminum Doors, Domestic Garage Doors, uPVC Doors, Fire Doors, Steel & Timber
• NO CALLOUT CHARGE
• Key Cutting Service including Car Keys
Neil Knox | M: **07725 892 957**
www.nklocksmith.co.uk

PORT HEAT
PLUMBING & HEATING SPECIALIST GAS & OIL
- BOILER INSTALLATIONS & REPLACEMENTS
- BOILER SERVICING & REPAIRS
- HEATING & RADIATOR INSTALLATIONS
- GAS SAFETY CHECKS & LANDLORD CERTIFICATES
- BATHROOM INSTALLATIONS
- PLUMBING INSTALLATIONS & REPAIRS
ALL ASPECTS OF PLUMBING & HEATING UNDERTAKEN
15+ YEARS EXPERIENCE
24/7 EMERGENCY CALL OUT
GAS SAFE REGISTERED
OFTEC REGISTERED
07715815184
porthheatsservices@gmail.com

Tree Cutting Services
• Trees Dismantled
• Dangerous Limbs Removed
• Conifers & Hedges Topped & Trimmed
• Trees Reduced or pruned
• Stumps Removed
• All Fencing & Paving
• All Waste Removed From Site
• Fully Insured
• Competitive Rates
• All Work Carried Out By Certified Tree Surgeons
For A Free Quotation Call:
07712 085390

DC Joinery
All types of joinery work
• Doors
• Floors
• Decking
• Stairs
• Kitchen/Bathroom units
• Garden fencing
• Radiator covers
Find us on f
Tel: **077 0332 0111**

EST 1978 - CELEBRATING 40 YEARS IN BUSINESS
A&C MORROW CHIMNEY SWEEPS
Cleanest Sweep in Town
• All types of Chimney Swept
• Cows, Bird Guards
• Gutters Cleaned & Repaired
• Chimney Reaming and De-Scaling
• Fireback Replacement & Installation
Member of NIACS
Mob: **07 785 500 064** | Tel: **028 90 648 946**
E: acmsweeps@gmail.com
W: www.acmsweeps.com



Advanced Glaucoma Care in the heart of Royal Hillsborough

Trusted expertise, modern laser solutions

With more than 20 years of expert eye care we provide compassionate, results-driven treatment in a relaxed setting.

Alongside our specialist glaucoma services, we offer affordable, advanced treatments for a wide range of eye conditions, delivering comprehensive care tailored to your needs.

Contact us directly for an appointment:

Northern Ireland: **028 92 280 103**

Email: info.ni@affidea.com

Affidea Hillsborough Private Clinic
2 Main St, Hillsborough, BT26 6AE

Selective Laser Trabeculoplasty (SLT) is a quick, 5-10 minute, non-surgical laser treatment that lowers eye pressure with minimal discomfort, often reducing the need for daily drops and providing long-lasting results.

As well as glaucoma care we offer treatments for a wide range of different eye conditions:

- Cataract surgery
- Lid surgery
- Lacrimal washout
- Cyst removal

Quick access to appointments with no referral required



Innovative
technology



Comfortable
surroundings



Consultant-
delivered care



Affordable
treatments