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Pictured are Caroline McComb, Director of McComb's Coach Travel; Judith Owens MBE, Chief Executive of Titanic Belfast and local school pupil Zoe Kennedy.

## Trains get Green Light at Belfast Grand Central Station

Translink has commenced rail services from Belfast Grand Central Station.

This sees the rail line between Belfast and Lisburn reopen for passenger services and Enterprise services will operate to/from Belfast Grand Central Station.

A new rail timetable is in place and passengers will be encouraged to plan their trip using information on the website [www.translink.co.uk](http://www.translink.co.uk) or Journey Planner available.

Translink Group Chief Executive Chris Conway said: "We know this will be good news for many of our rail customers, who need to use this main terminus station for Belfast. The start of rail at Grand Central Station will bring enhanced connectivity and integration of the wider public transport network with bus, coach and rail connections across the island." The new train

station will also see automatic ticketing gates introduced and passengers can purchase tickets which they can scan at gates to speed up journeys and enhance convenience.

"Passengers can buy their ticket from one of the rail ticket vending machines in the station, use the mLink mobile app or iLink Smartcard. You can also buy online and collect at the ticket vending machine".

Chris added: "The launch of an hourly Enterprise service between the island's two capital cities is planned from Tuesday, 29th October."

Passengers are advised to check their journey in advance on the Translink website: [www.translink.co.uk](http://www.translink.co.uk); Journey Planner, or by phoning the Contact Centre on 02890 666630.



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## TITANIC BELFAST ANNOUNCES EXTENDED SCHOOL TRANSPORT BURSARY

Titanic Belfast has announced it will once again give schools in some of Northern Ireland's most deprived areas the opportunity to apply for free transport to enable pupils to enjoy an educational visit in the 2024/25 academic year.

Over the last year, the School Transport Bursary, which is funded through Titanic Belfast's new Community Impact Fund, and in partnership with McComb's Coach Travel, enabled 615 pupils from across 15 schools the chance to enjoy a visit to the world-leading visitor attraction.

For the new academic year, Titanic Belfast has extended the programme across a 30-mile radius of Belfast giving even more schools the opportunity to apply.

Schools that meet the criteria - which includes over 50 per cent of the students in receipt of Free School Meals and living in Northern Ireland's most deprived areas, can apply by Sunday 22nd September, for visits to take place between November 2024 - March 2025.

**Continued on page 6**

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# Legacy of 'An Irish Goodbye' celebrated with new mural in Belfast city centre

A new mural has been unveiled in Belfast city centre, celebrating the Oscar-winning short movie *An Irish Goodbye*.

The colourful artwork, on Winetavern Street in the Smithfield area, has been created by street arts collective Peaball – the team behind the iconic Derry Girls mural.

Lord Mayor of Belfast, Councillor Micky Murray, joined the cast and crew of the film at a special event to mark its completion, as part of Belfast City Council's Belfast 2024 celebration of culture.

"Belfast 2024 is all about highlighting and showcasing our city's creativity and we couldn't let it happen without paying tribute to one of our greatest creative success stories – *An Irish Goodbye*," said Councillor Murray.

"The film really put our local film sector on the map when it picked up both BAFTA and Academy Awards last year, so this is a fitting tribute to a creative collaboration which has done so much to promote Belfast on a world stage.

"Well done to the Peaball crew on creating another really striking and memorable piece of art. The location is perfect too - directly overlooking the site of Belfast Stories, the new home for storytelling and screen in our city when it



opens in 2030."

The mural features the film's directors Tom Berkeley and Ross White, as well as actors James Martin, Seamus O'Hara and Paddy Jenkins.

Alongside their depictions, there are also nods to iconic scenes within the movie, including the famous balloons used by the brothers as part of their mother's final farewell.

"All of us behind *An Irish Goodbye* are totally honoured that Belfast City Council have decided to pay tribute to the film's

success in this touching way," said directors Tom Berkeley and Ross White.

"The people of Belfast were behind us every step of the way of this little film's incredible journey, from its humble beginnings on a farm in Templepatrick, all the way to the Dolby Theatre in Hollywood.

"As surreal as it is for the team to see our faces 10ft high across a wall, Peaball's wonderful artwork will hopefully go on to serve as a constant reminder of all the love, support and hard work that so many put into this film."

The mural is the next in a series of works by Peaball in Belfast and becomes the latest addition to the city's eclectic street art collection – much of which has been funded by council.

"*An Irish Goodbye* is a fantastic addition to Belfast's street art scene, honouring the film's Oscar win and showcasing the talent of our team at Peaball," said the collective.

"It's a proud moment for the city, highlighting this historic Oscar win and the city's famous creative spirit."

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# Strong visitor numbers in Belfast for Summer 2024

**Strong visitor numbers in Belfast for Summer 2024**

An estimated 133,490 visitors travelled into the city centre during July 2024 – an increase of 39% on the previous year.

Footfall was up 24.1% year on year from July 2023, with foot traffic in the retail core increasing by 1.6% over the same period. On average, people spent three hours 26 mins in the city centre during July 2024 – up 4% from the year before.

The figures were presented to elected members of Belfast City Council at the latest meeting of their all-party city centre working group, alongside updates on progress on initiatives to enhance the city's vitality, cleanliness, safety, investment and prosperity.

They included: New retail, hospitality and transport additions, Belfast Grand Central Station. The addition of two extra Safer Neighbourhood Officers to provide high-visibility patrols, challenge low-level anti-social behaviour and work in partnership with PSNI, Extern, DePaul and others to support vulnerable people. Council continues to deliver a daily and night-time cleansing operation, including street cleaning, emptying litter bins and power washing pavements. During autumn, this is supplemented with



additional resources to help clear leaf build-up, where possible. A packed autumn of events and activities for Belfast 2024, the biggest ever city-wide celebration of creativity.

Following the success of last week's Shadowdock spectacular at Thompson Dry Dock and the unveiling of a new mural celebrating Oscar-winning short movie An Irish Goodbye, next up is North Star – a celebration of the city's black cultures at The Telegraph Building from 24-25 October as part of the Belfast International Arts Festival.

The Wiggle Room at The MAC is a free digital playroom for families, running until November 29, while the new Augmented Reality experience, in

partnership with BT, opened recently at the free visitor exhibition in City Hall.

Councillor Michael Long, Chair of the council's All party Working Group on the City Centre, said: "We're really starting to see rewards from the proactive work we're delivering with our partners across the city centre – with new businesses locating here, new hospitality venues opening, new planning applications being submitted and exciting new additions to our entertainment offer.

"Later this winter, we'll take stock of our current Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy and set our priorities for the next ten years.

"Central to this will be continued partnership working, because it will take a joint, sustained effort from everyone with an interest in our city centre to ensure it reaches its full potential.

"So, in the run-up to the busy Christmas period, we'll continue to work with the NI Assembly, relevant Stormont departments, traders and their representatives, the Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) and all our statutory, public and private partners, to ensure Belfast city centre is vibrant, welcoming and safe, with something for everyone to come and enjoy."

For more information, visit [www.belfastcity.gov.uk/citycentre](http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/citycentre)

## Looking for a Primary School?

We would love to welcome you to Leadhill Primary School. We have a range of ways to provide you with the information you need:



Visit our school website

Bring your child to 'Stay and Play' sessions on Fridays from 2:30 to 3:15 on 8, 15, 22, and 29 November.

Arrange to take a tour of the school. Visits can be arranged by appointment throughout December and January.

Take part in our Toddle Time group each Wednesday from 9 -11am

Find out about our Wrap-Around childcare solutions

Find out about our Pre-School Playgroup for children from 2 years and 10 months.



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(Parent comment)

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# UK'S BIGGEST TEXTILE CRAFT SHOW COMES TO BELFAST

The UK's biggest textile craft show arrives in Northern Ireland for the first time ever this November.

The highly anticipated Knitting & Stitching Show is the perfect platform for crafters to shop, learn and connect with fellow makers. With a winning combination

of quality craft exhibitors, workshops, demonstrations and inspiring textile art galleries, the K&S show takes place at the Titanic Exhibition Centre in Belfast from Thursday 7th November to Sunday 10th November. Featuring over 140 crafting workshops and 100 brands to shop from, the event will include

cross stitch, embroidery, knitting & crochet, dressmaking, sewing, patchwork & quilting and everything in between! The K&S event launched in London in 1991, closely followed by launches in Harrogate and Dublin in the mid 90s. Over a 30-year period, The Knitting & Stitching Shows have grown to become the



market leading consumer textiles exhibition in the UK. The Knitting & Stitching Show in Belfast will be the 5th event

in Immediate Live's successful craft portfolio (including The Festival of Quilts, Stitch Festival and K&S Shows in London and Harrogate) and each offering a creative wonderland for crafty folk to indulge in. Visit [theknittingandstitchingshow.com](http://theknittingandstitchingshow.com) to explore all the events taking place and get your tickets now!

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### Continued from page 1

Speaking of the huge impact the initiative has for schools and pupils, Rachael Waugh, a teacher at Wheatfield

Primary School in North Belfast said: "Last year, we were delighted to have been successful in applying for the School Transport Bursary. We can see Titanic Belfast and the cranes from our

classroom window, so having the opportunity to take my class there was brilliant. Without the bursary, we would not have been able to give the children the experience of visiting such an amazing local attraction. Their enthusiasm for the topic of the Titanic really grew once they knew they were going to the attraction."

Judith Owens MBE, Chief Executive of Titanic Belfast said: "Given the story of Titanic is so well known, our educational programme really resonates with children

in an impactful way so we are keen to do whatever we can to make it as accessible as possible. However, we know that one of the reasons some schools are unable to enjoy a school trip is because of the cost of transport. We launched the School Transport Bursary in 2023 to play our part in helping ease the burden for schools and following its success, I'm thrilled to see it return for a second year.

Once again, we have partnered with McComb's Coach Travel and together, we are looking forward

to facilitating an engaging educational experience for children. We have been able to extend this year's initiative to schools within a 30-mile radius, so I would encourage teachers to visit our website to check out the criteria and apply if they are eligible."

Caroline McComb, Director of McComb's Coach Travel added: "Once again, we are delighted to team up with Titanic Belfast to give schools and pupils the chance to take part in this fantastic education programme."

Titanic Belfast offers school visits throughout the academic year for self-guided tours and guided tours of the Titanic Experience and the Abandon Ship and Get The Message Workshops. It has also developed a full programme of resources and activities for classes to use before, during and after their visit.

To view the full entry criteria or to apply for the School Transport Bursary teachers can visit [titanicbelfast.com/schooltransport](http://titanicbelfast.com/schooltransport) by Sunday 22nd September 2024.

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# IT'S A DERRY GOOD NIGHT FOR IAN AT ULSTER TATLER AWARDS

'Derry Girls' star Ian McElhinney wins Lifetime Achievement Award

ONE of Northern Ireland's finest actors Ian McElhinney has been awarded with the prestigious Lifetime Achievement accolade at the 17th annual Ulster Tatler Awards 2024, which took place recently at Belfast City Hall, Belfast.

Born in Belfast in 1948 and married to playwright Marie Jones, herself a former Lifetime Achievement recipient, Ian received the award to a huge standing ovation from a full house of more than 400 guests at the ceremony.

The star of TV blockbusters such as Game Of Thrones and Derry Girls joins a growing list of local luminaries who have picked up the award in the past, including Dame Mary Peters OBE, Sir James Galway, Brian Friel, Phil Coulter, Gloria Hunniford, Michael Longley, Gerry Armstrong, Barry McGuigan, Terri Hooley, wife Marie Jones, Ciaran Hinds, Pat Jennings, John Linehan, pianist Barry Douglas MBE, and local legend Pamela Ballantine who was honoured at last year's ceremony.

In a career spanning more than 40 years, McElhinney has established himself as one of the most acclaimed and distinguished actors that Northern Ireland has ever produced, starring in a host of hit films and TV shows, including Star Wars (Rogue One), The Tudors, Cold Feet, Krypton, Unforgotten,

Queer As Folk, Hornblower, The Fall, Taggart, High Country, and, of course, Game Of Thrones and Derry Girls.

The son of a Church of Ireland clergyman and a teacher, Ian first caught the acting bug as a teenager when he was asked to participate in a school play. Concerned about the insecurity of such a career, his parents encouraged him to follow a more conventional path, so he finished school and went to university in Edinburgh, where he became involved with the drama club and realised that acting was his passion. However, upon completion of his degree he decided to further his education in an American University, before returning to the UK to take up a teaching position in England.

Still, the lure of acting continued and whilst he enjoyed teaching, by the age of 30 he knew that he wanted to become a professional actor, so he made the brave decision to move home to Northern Ireland and embark upon a full-time acting career - at a time when the Troubles were in full swing.

The rest, as they say, is history and Ian has since gone on to achieve remarkable success, winning numerous awards and accolades along the way, last night's being the most



Lifetime Achievement winner Ian McElhinney & wife Marie Jones

recent.

Other big winners on the night, which was hosted by UTV presenter Pamela Ballantine, included Newtownards gymnast Rhys McClenaghan who picked up the Sportsman of the Year Award after winning the Gold Medal in the men's pommel horse at this summer's Olympic Games in Paris, becoming the first gymnast to win an Olympic medal for Ireland.

The Ulster Tatler Special Merit Award 2024 was presented to football club Cliftonville FC after lifting the Irish Cup for the first time since 1979. Cliftonville manager, and former Northern Ireland international, Jim Magilton received the award on the night, along with a congratulatory video from Cliftonville superfan and local TV star Tim McGarry.

The Celebrity of the Year award was won by Cool FM's Rebecca McKinney while Belfast 'celebrity chef' Paul Rankin was recognized for his Outstanding Contribution to the Food Industry in Northern Ireland.

Originally from Ballywalter in County Down, Rankin trained in London with the world-renowned chef Albert Roux, before returning to Belfast to open his first restaurant Roscoff, which went on to become the first restaurant in Northern Ireland to win the prestigious Michelin Star. Paul went on to become a household name, presenting the TV cookery show Gourmet Ireland with his then-wife Jeanne, publishing cookery books, opening the award-winning Cayenne restaurant and launching his own range of bakery products.

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## Patients encouraged to sign up for My Care portal

People are encouraged to sign up for access to the My Care patient portal, which allows patients and service users to view information on their digital medical record.

The My Care portal gives patients instant access to information on their healthcare through their digital devices via an app or web browser.

The patient portal has been created to coincide with the move from paper patient records to electronic patient records through the roll out of encompass.

Patients and service users across the South Eastern and Belfast Health and Social Care Trust areas, where encompass is already live, can now access their information via the app or

webpage by creating a My Care account.

Patients in the Northern, Southern and Western Health and Social Care Trusts will be able to access their personal health record via My Care once encompass goes live in their Trust area.

Dan West, Chief Digital Information Officer at the Department of Health and Head of Digital Health and Care Northern Ireland, said: "My Care is a further step forward in the delivery of our Digital Strategy, which aims to improve

health and care outcomes by developing new ways for people to access health services through digital transformation. I am delighted to support raising awareness of the portal."

The HSCNI Senior Responsible Owner for encompass, Dr Dermot Hughes, said: "My Care is an important component running alongside the introduction of encompass and has huge benefits for patients. We are continuing with work to roll out encompass across the remaining three Trust areas

and have no doubt that My Care will play a significant part in its success."

Patients can continue to receive traditional communication such as appointment letters alongside My Care. Patients may also permit proxy access to third parties such as a carer or family member to assist with managing their care should they wish.

Further information on My Care, including how to create a My Care account can be found at My Care – DHCNI (hscni.net)

## Can you help Belvoir Park Primary School celebrate its 60th anniversary with your memories?

Belvoir Park Primary School was built in the early 1960's as part of Belvoir Park Estate opening its doors to pupils in 1964.

The name Belvoir – meaning 'beautiful view' in French and pronounced today as 'beaver' – dates to Norman times. The thriving Nursery unit, now providing 52 Full-time places, added in 1977, has recently benefitted from a complete refurbishment. In 1999 Belvoir Park Primary school was one of the first mainstream schools to open Specialist Provision classes, catering for P4-7 children with speech and

language developmental delay. It now has 3 Speech and Language Provision classes and 3 Social Communication Provision classes catering for pupils from P1-P7. Belvoir Park Primary School prides itself on its inclusive environment and being connected to its community. The school community believes that every child has the right to an educational experience that aims to meet their

individual needs.

We have many activities planned for current pupils this year and are preparing a whole school show for around Easter, that will take place in Belvoir Park Theatre. With such a long history we are appealing to anyone who has photos or memories of the school throughout the last 60 years to share them with us by emailing us at [info@belvoirps.belfast.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@belvoirps.belfast.ni.sch.uk). We are keen to share

this with our pupils as they create their own memories.

We are hosting an Open afternoon from 4:30pm to 6pm on Tuesday the 3rd December 2024. We wish to extend the invitation to past staff, pupils, and any other members of the local community. We would love you to come along and see the school now and share stories and memories of your time at the school.

For more information see [www.belvoirparkps.co.uk](http://www.belvoirparkps.co.uk)



**We are pleased to invite you to the Dundonald High School Open Day**

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# Specsavers Connswater encourages eye tests for children with competition in local East Belfast community

**DIRECTORS** at Specsavers Connswater have marked six months in their new location within Connswater Retail Park with a community initiative, aimed at promoting eye tests for children.

To encourage this important health check, the store is hosting a Halloween-themed colouring competition for kids, starting in store this week from 1st October to 31st October, with winners being announced shortly after.

Research from the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) reveals that around 890 children in Northern Ireland aged 0-17 are partially sighted or blind. To help spot any sight issues in children as early as possible, Specsavers Connswater is urging parents in the local community to prioritise eye tests as part of their children's regular health care.

As well as families who come into the store, the competition is also offering families in the East Belfast area a chance to win a number of prizes from other local businesses, including a family pass to Movie House Cinema, courtesy

of Cityside/Yorkgate and a family voucher for the nearby McDonald's at Connswater Retail Park.

Following a significant £650,000 investment, Specsavers Connswater transformed its store earlier this year and expanded its team from 7 to 37 members since its establishment in 2001. The dedicated staff bring over 440 years of combined experience in eye and hearing care, ensuring that the community receives top-notch service.

Store director Paula Cunningham emphasises the importance of eye health for children, stating, "Taking your child for an eye test should be as common as taking them to the dentist. 80 per cent of what is taught in schools is visual, and for children to grow and develop, their sight needs to be properly looked after. In addition to underlying conditions, eye health can be affected by the overuse



Connswater Specsavers Store Directors Paula Cunningham and Lynsey Caldwell

of electronic screens." Store Director Lynsey Caldwell adds: "Screen fatigue won't permanently damage a child's eyes, but it can make symptoms of existing eye conditions such as short-sightedness more pronounced. We are delighted to engage with our local community in East Belfast with this initiative to encourage families to come into the

store and prioritise their eye health."

Located at Unit 7A Connswater Retail Park, Specsavers Connswater offers convenient access and free parking for families seeking quality eye and hearing care.

To learn book an eye test for you or your child visit <http://www.specsavers.co.uk/stores/connswater>.

## OPEN WEEK

Monday 2nd December to Friday 6th December 2024

Guided tours of the school available each day at the following times  
9.30am - 10.30am | 1.00pm - 2.00pm

Please email the principal to book a tour.

Brooklands Primary and Nursery School is a warm and welcoming place where every child is valued, listened to and respected, and we hope that we will be welcoming your child in to the Brooklands family from next year.

Our pupils' successes are possible, due to the trusted relationships we have with our parents and the whole school community, where we all work together to achieve the very best outcomes for the children, where they reach their potential and thrive, as confident, independent learners who care for one another, and the world around them.

**For working families we have Wrap Around Care which opens at 8.00am with Breakfast Club and runs through until 5pm each afternoon.**

Our After School Club is staffed by our own dedicated team of classroom assistants and includes a healthy snack with indoor and outdoor activities.

**Brooklands Primary School**  
Brooklands Avenue, Dundonald, Belfast, BT16 2PA  
Telephone: 02890 487 589 | Email: [jarmstrong775@c2kni.net](mailto:jarmstrong775@c2kni.net)

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Belfast 7A Connswater Retail Park (next to Ulster Bank) Tel 028 9045 8156

Glasses from our kids' £65 and teens' £90 ranges are free with an under-16s' NHS optical voucher. The second pair is half price from the same price range or below. Both pairs come with Specsavers single-vision lenses with a scratch-resistant treatment and UV filter. Plus, under-16s get a free NHS eye test. Cannot be used with other offers. To the same prescription only. Additional charge for extra lens options. Offer available in UK only.



# Gilnahirk Primary School

Today's Learning for Tomorrow's World

## Open Morning

Friday 6th December  
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Principal's address at 11am  
followed by guided tours of the  
school by Year 7 children.

**Principal: Mr D Corbett**  
BA(Hons), PGCE, PQH(NI)

www.gilnahirkps.org.uk/school-tour  
148 Gilnahirk Road, Belfast, BT5 7QQ | T: 028 9040 1697  
E: dcorbett546@c2kni.net





# KNOCKNAGONEY PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY UNIT

**School Principal, Mrs Angela McCullough, explains why Knocknagoney PS and Nursery Unit is such a perfect choice for your child.**

“As I begin my second year as Principal of Knocknagoney Primary School and Nursery Unit, I am looking forward to continuing to build on the exceptional work that takes place each day in our school. We are child-centred and family-orientated, fostering close links with parents/carers to provide the best learning opportunities for our pupils. In the most recent inspection, the Education & Training Inspectorate commended:

- The commitment of staff to the education and welfare of the children.
- The quality of teaching and learning.
- The supportive and inclusive ethos throughout the school.
- The quality of the children's behaviour and the pastoral support within the school.

Our classrooms are bright

and modern with interactive smartboards, iPads and a range of ICT equipment, supporting and preparing pupils for a technologically advanced future. We are fortunate to benefit from a well-equipped Assembly Hall, on-site school kitchen, Library and ICT Suite. Alongside our dynamic team of teachers and classroom assistants, our pupils also benefit from Pastoral and Learning Support Teachers. Our school boasts spacious grounds with areas for multisports, an Eco-Garden, outdoor classroom and an extensive range of play equipment. We offer wrap-around care options, as well as a range of extra-curricular activities. We have an established choir and also offer external music tuition, as well as football training by qualified coaches.



Knocknagoney Primary School strives to provide the best opportunities for our pupils with a rounded educational experience, where pupils fulfil their potential and are prepared for the journey ahead.”

## A feathered survivor: The collared dove

**JV Allister reports**

Even people who are not particularly interested in birds are likely to be aware that many of our native species are in decline, particularly those which evolved to feed or breed in specific habitats, such as the farmland yellowhammer, whose numbers are down by nearly 60% in Ireland, mainly because of changes in agriculture. However, species which can or have adapted to change can thrive. For

instance, magpies are successful generalists and opportunists when it comes to habitat and food, but there's another bird of note which is flourishing, and literally spreading around the world. It was about 1960 that I first heard that collared doves had been spotted in Northern Ireland (in Fermanagh I think), but you'll find them almost everywhere now, mainly in parks and gardens.



The Eurasian collared dove as it's formally known, has been one of the great colonisers of the bird world, travelling far beyond its native range, particularly over the last century, to countries colder than its range at the end of the 19th century in warm temperate and subtropical Asia. Amazingly, in about 70 years collared dove numbers went from zero in the UK and Ireland to about one million breeding pairs today. And, importantly, they don't seem to have out-competed original natives for food and habitat but might have benefitted from garden bird feeders (they mostly eat grain and seeds) and their ability to nest and produce

young for a large part of the year. These delicate doves, much smaller than wood pigeons, are a welcome addition to our parks and gardens, but because of their ground feeding habit their main predator is the domestic cat. But the doves seem to be able to overcome predation, even if their population has probably reached its peak. I really don't know why collared doves have been so successful, but as we face new man-made changes to our world, particularly climate, it's encouraging to know that some animals have a particular ability to adapt to change, and to thrive. JVA

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Services:

At Jo Jingles we run fun music and movement sessions for babies and children aged 3 months to 7 years. Public classes run term time across South and East Belfast with locations in Fourwinds, Stranmillis, Castlereagh and Stormont. Nursery school, toddler groups, playgroups and after school sessions are available on request.

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What is our aim?

To encourage the physical, mental, and emotional development of every child attending classes through our music and movement programme. To give children their first structured, fun, introduction to music. To give every child attending classes the chance to play age specific musical instruments. To make learning fun!

Contact Number: 07979733309. Email: [nicola.donaghy@jojingles.co.uk](mailto:nicola.donaghy@jojingles.co.uk).  
Facebook: Jo Jingles Greater Belfast. Instagram: [nicola\\_joingles](https://www.instagram.com/nicola_joingles)  
Webpage: [www.joingles.co.uk/greater-belfast](http://www.joingles.co.uk/greater-belfast)

Nicola Donaghy was awarded Best Newcomer Award in September 2023 at the last Jo Jingles Regional Conference. Jo Jingles as a brand are finalists in the 2024 National Children's Awards for 3 categories: Most Loved Music, Dance or Performing Arts Activity, Most Loved Baby Activity and Most Loved Academic or Creative Activity.



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## Dentist Dr Nigel Smith wins awards success across Ireland and UK!

**Hollywood Dental Care has recently been named BEST NEW PRACTICE in IRELAND at Irish Dentistry Awards 2024!**

Members of the Hollywood Dental Care Team attended the glittering awards ceremony in Dublin at the beginning of September.

Dr Nigel Smith received the Award and was also delighted to learn that his other practice Nigel Smith Dental was Highly Commended in the category for Best High Technology Practice!

Dr Nigel Smith is looking forward to attending the Private Dentistry Awards 2024 in London in November where he is a finalist in the Principal Dentist of the Year category. Being the only NI representative at these prestigious awards only adds to the achievement!

Nigel Smith Dental and Hollywood Dental Care are also rightfully proud to announce their recent nominations for several prestigious categories at the UK Dental Awards 2024. The practices are finalists in multiple categories,

including Practice of the Year UK, Most Attractive Practice in the UK, and also Most Improved Practice UK. Additionally, Dr Nigel Smith has been recognized as a "one to watch" at the Northern Ireland Cosmetic Medicine Awards. Both Clinics welcome new private patients and look forward to sharing the results of these awards in the coming weeks.

These nominations once again demonstrate their commitment to providing exceptional dental care. These accolades highlight their dedication to patient satisfaction, clinical excellence, and community involvement.

Both Nigel Smith Dental and Hollywood Dental Care offer Invisalign – for adults and teenagers, a popular orthodontic treatment that uses a series of clear aligners to straighten teeth. Invisalign offers several benefits, including:

- Discreet: The clear



aligners are virtually invisible, making them a great option for those who want to avoid traditional metal braces.

- Comfortable: Invisalign aligners are made from smooth, BPA-free plastic, making them more comfortable to wear than metal braces.

- Removable: The aligners can be removed for eating, drinking, and brushing, making it easier to maintain oral hygiene.

- Shorter treatment time: In many cases, Invisalign treatment can be completed in a shorter timeframe than traditional braces.

Nigel Smith Dental and Hollywood Dental Care continue to set the standard for dental excellence in the region. Their recent award nominations and multiple accomplishments already earned are a testament to their dedication to patient care, clinical excellence, and community involvement.

• Nigel Smith Dental Care: 107 Hamilton Rd, Bangor BT20 4LN, UK. You can reach them at +44 28 9127 0657.

• Hollywood Dental Care: 94-96 High St, Hollywood BT18 9HW, UK. You can reach them at +44 28 9042 3306.

## The Station House Hotel is a Contemporary, Boutique Family Run Hotel in Letterkenny Town Centre & in the Heart of the Wild Atlantic Way.

**Make a break for it to Letterkenny this Autumn and relax and unwind at the Station House Hotel with a much-deserved break away.**

Superbly located in the heart of the thriving town of Letterkenny, so you only have to open their doors and you are right where all the action is! From the endless number of family-friendly activities to shopping centres, charming boutiques, the vibrant nightlife scene, relaxing restaurants, the theatre and more, and with easy access to all major routes and natural attractions, Letterkenny has so much to offer. You can choose from a range of their guestrooms for your accommodation, whether you're travelling as a couple, with family or friends they have a number of room types for you to choose from!

The Station House is also home to the Depot Bar & Restaurant, a true



locals local and one of Letterkenny's best and most popular bar and restaurant. It provides the perfect excuse for a pause and to pamper your palate, offering a wide range of sumptuous dining options. Just a short drive

from the Station House Hotel you can indulge in the magnificent Wild Atlantic Way and the natural beauty of Co. Donegal.

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A warm welcome awaits you at the Station House Hotel.



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Website: [www.stationhouseletterkenny.com](http://www.stationhouseletterkenny.com)

# APPLYING FOR A SCHOOL PLACE

Visiting a school is an important step in choosing a school, and this personal touch reflects Leadhill's approach in supporting families.

As a smaller, nurturing school in the Castlereagh area, working to support parents and children is central to what Leadhill has to offer. Leadhill parents recognise the value of a primary school setting where every adult knows every child. Our school welcomes and supports children from all backgrounds and promotes inclusivity and child-centred approaches.

This year, Leadhill are offering a range of flexible opportunities to visit.

Bring your nursery-age child to 'Stay and Play' sessions on Fridays from



2:30pm to 3:15pm on 8, 15, 22 and 29 November. Come along to all the sessions or just to those that suit. Parents can enjoy a cuppa and a chat while children enjoy a range of

activities in the P1 classroom. Arrange for a visit at a time that suits you, throughout December and January.

Mrs Millis, the Principal will take the time to tailor your visit to address the things that matter to your family. Visiting Leadhill during the school day gives a fantastic opportunity to experience the nurturing, family atmosphere and meet our fabulous staff and pupils.

For younger children, Toddle Time - Leadhill's toddler and adult group, meets

every Wednesday during termtime from 9 - 11am. This provides another great opportunity to get to know Leadhill and to see how the school can meet the needs of your family

The Leadhill Website provides a useful window into life in Leadhill. Visit us on [www.leadhillps.com](http://www.leadhillps.com).

Leadhill would love to welcome you for a visit. Contact the school office on 028 90401101 or email Mrs Millis on [amillis370@c2kni.net](mailto:amillis370@c2kni.net) to arrange for a suitable date and time.

# Clover Energy Systems: A solar energy solution available locally to you!

Clover Energy Systems is a leading Ireland wide provider of solar energy solutions, offering innovative and sustainable options for homeowners and businesses.

The company is based locally in Ballynahinch and covers all of Northern Ireland. Clover Energy Systems helps clients reduce their carbon footprint, lower energy costs, and contribute to a greener future!

One satisfied customer told EDA Media:

"After receiving notification that our electricity rate was increasing by 25%, we decided it was time to think seriously about solar. As we are nearing retirement age the idea of securing energy costs and reducing bills was very appealing. After much research for MCS accredited companies, we got in touch with Clover Energy Systems to see what solutions were available for our home.

We spoke to Tim who was able to provide a lot of information over the phone and arranged to come out and survey the house in person. To begin, he assessed the condition of our roof, had a look at equipment locations and then sat down for a chat to answer all our questions. Within a couple of days, we received our final



quotation which included 16x PV panels, a hybrid inverter and a battery. We were very happy with the proposed system and scheduled our installation date. Three weeks later the Clover team arrived and the entire process was finished within two days. The team were fantastic - they left everything clean and tidy and took the time to explain exactly how the system works.

Needless to say, after one full year, we are over the moon with the results. Previously we were buying

around 5000 units of electricity per year but this year we have only imported 598 units! We also are being paid for the electricity we feed back to the grid which helps offset the winter bill. Overall, we are incredibly happy with our system and couldn't recommend Clover Energy Systems more."

The Benefits of Solar Energy include reduced energy Bills, Increased Property Value and Energy Independence

Special Offer: £500 Discount For a limited time,

Clover Energy Systems is offering a £500 discount to Advertiser readers on all solar installations. This exclusive offer is available to new customers who book their installation before 31st October 2024. Don't miss out on this opportunity to save on your solar energy investment.

Contact Clover Energy Systems Today

To learn more about solar energy and how it can benefit you, contact Clover Energy Systems at 0800 048 7716 or visit their website at [cloverenergysystems.com](http://cloverenergysystems.com)

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15TH - 17TH NOVEMBER 2024

**FRIDAY 15TH NOVEMBER 2024**

STUART MOYLES & BAND  
9.30pm - 11.30pm

MICHAEL ENGLISH  
11.30pm - 1.30am

ADRIAN RYAN  
1.30am

**SATURDAY 16TH NOVEMBER 2024**

ALANNA MAHER  
2.30pm - 4.30pm

PATRICK FEENEY  
9.30pm - 11.30pm

JIMMY BUCKLEY  
11.30pm - 1.30am

KIERAN MC AREE  
1.30am

**SUNDAY 17TH NOVEMBER 2024**

MIKE DENVER  
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STEPHEN BENNET  
9.00pm - 11.00pm

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# Rainy Day Fun: Indoor Activities for Kids

Stuck indoors due to a downpour? Don't worry, there's plenty of fun to be had! Here are some creative indoor activities to keep your kids entertained:

**Indoor Adventure**

Set up a tent in your living room or bedroom for a cozy camping experience. Create a campfire atmosphere using flashlights or fairy lights. Enjoy camping snacks like roasted marshmallows (supervised) or hot dogs and s'mores. Tell stories around the "campfire" for a fun and spooky experience.

**Camping**

Hide clues around your home leading to a final prize. Create riddles or puzzles to make the clues more challenging. Choose a theme like pirates, animals, or superheroes for added excitement.

**DIY Crafts and Experiments**

Paint masterpieces using watercolors, acrylics, or finger paints. Build a cardboard castle by cutting



out shapes from cardboard boxes and assembling them. Conduct simple

experiments like making slime, volcanoes, or crystal gardens. Create homemade playdough by mixing flour, salt, water, and food coloring.

Board Games and Puzzles

Break out the board games and enjoy classic games like Monopoly, Scrabble, or Clue. Solve jigsaw puzzles of varying difficulty. Play card games like Go Fish, Uno, or Rummy.

**Indoor Picnic**

Spread a blanket on the floor and create a picnic atmosphere. Prepare delicious food like sandwiches, fruits, and snacks. Decorate the area with flowers, balloons, or other decorations for a festive feel.

With a little creativity, you can turn a rainy day into a memorable adventure for your kids. These indoor activities are not only fun but also encourage learning, creativity, and bonding.

## Strand Church

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For more details see our new website  
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# FALL/WINTER 2024: A SEASON OF BOLD COLOURS AND TIMELESS CLASSICS

The upcoming Fall/Winter 2024 season is set to be a vibrant and exciting one, with a mix of bold colour palettes and timeless classic silhouettes.

Designers have embraced a fusion of retro-inspired aesthetics and contemporary trends, resulting in a diverse range of looks that cater to every style.

Key trends to watch out for:

- Bold Colour Palettes**
  - Vibrant hues:** Expect to see a resurgence of bold and bright colors, such as electric blue, fiery red, and deep purple. These hues are perfect for making a statement and adding a touch of excitement to your wardrobe.
  - Earthy tones:** For a more grounded look, earthy tones like rust, olive green, and terracotta will be prevalent. These colors offer a sense of warmth and comfort, making them ideal for the cooler months.
- Retro-Inspired**



**Aesthetics**

- 70s revival:** The 70s are making a comeback with flared trousers, suede jackets, and bohemian-inspired patterns. Think earthy tones, fringe detailing, and oversized silhouettes.
- 80s nostalgia:** The 80s are also influencing the fashion scene, with shoulder pads, neon colors, and bold geometric prints. Embrace the power

- dressing trend and channel your inner pop star.**
- Timeless Classics**
  - Tailored suits:** Tailored suits are a staple for the Fall/Winter season. Opt for classic cuts in neutral colors or experiment with bold patterns for a more daring look.
  - Trench coats:** A timeless piece that never goes out of style, trench coats are a must-have for the

- cooler months. Look for classic styles in beige or camel, or try a modern twist with a bold color or statement detail.**
- Knitwear:** Cozy and comfortable, knitwear is a wardrobe essential. From chunky sweaters to elegant cardigans, there's something for everyone.
- Sustainable Fashion**
  - Eco-friendly materials:** As

consumers become more conscious of their environmental impact, sustainable fashion is gaining momentum. Look for pieces made from eco-friendly materials like organic cotton, recycled polyester, and vegan leather.

- Ethical brands:** Support brands that prioritize ethical practices, fair labor standards, and sustainable sourcing. Whether you prefer a bold and daring look or a more classic and timeless style, the Fall/Winter 2024 season offers something for everyone. By incorporating these key trends into your wardrobe, you can create stylish and versatile outfits that reflect your personal style and stay ahead of the fashion curve.

## Experience the Cozy Elegance of Our Winter Warmer Package

As the chilly winds sweep across the Antrim Coast, The Causeway Hotel is thrilled to announce the return of our much-anticipated Winter Warmer package.

Nestled near the iconic Giant's Causeway, our historic hotel offers the perfect retreat for those seeking a blend of comfort, luxury, and breathtaking natural beauty. 3\* Hotel of the Year, Duty Manager of the Year, Excellence in Service and Great Irish Breakfast are among the prestigious accolades awarded to the hotel by The Irish Hotel Awards 2023. Starting from £330 for midweek stays and

£350 for weekends, the Winter Warmer package includes a restful two night's stay, sumptuous dinner both evenings in our 1836 Ballroom restaurant, and a hearty breakfast each morning. This exceptional offer allows guests to immerse themselves in the serene beauty of Northern Ireland's winter landscape while enjoying the warm, welcoming hospitality for which The Causeway Hotel is renowned. Whether you choose to

take a brisk walk along the rugged coastline, visit the enchanting Giant's Causeway, or simply unwind in the bar, The Causeway Hotel provides an idyllic setting for creating cherished memories. With free entrance to the Giant's Causeway Visitor Experience included, guests have the opportunity to delve into the history of this UNESCO World Heritage site, adding an educational and awe-inspiring dimension to

their stay. The Winter Warmer package is more than just a getaway; it's an invitation to experience the magic of winter in one of Northern Ireland's most scenic locations. Renowned for eclectic yet charming decor, our cliff-edge hideaway guarantees a shift from magic beach walks to mellow fireside talks. To book your stay, contact our friendly reception staff at 028 2073 1210 or email reception@thecausewayhotel.com

### Bethlehem Nursery School



## OPEN DAY

### MONDAY 6TH JANUARY 2025

### 9.30AM - 11AM

PARENTS AND CHILDREN ARE INVITED TO VISIT.

If you have any queries, please telephone the school and speak to the Principal, Mrs Jacqueline Mallon.



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# UPCOMING EXHIBITION & SALE OF MARGEY ORIGINALS AT THE CULLODEN

Portrush based artist Adrian Margey will be returning to the Culloden Estate & Spa with his latest Exhibition and Sale of work from Friday 1st until Sunday 3rd November.

The artist is looking forward to showcasing his most recent depictions of Belfast, North Down, Ards Peninsula, Mourne, North Coast and Donegal with collectors and visitors to the much anticipated annual exhibition. Margey's reputation is growing both at home and overseas. He held his first USA exhibition in Washington DC in 2022

and was invited to live paint at the 'Experience Ireland' showcase in Milan this spring.

Although Adrian holds a PhD from Queen's University Belfast, he is a self-taught artist. Adrian cites the Fauves, the Irish Impressionists and the indigenous artists of South America as his main influences. His signature 'contemporary' style combines a kaleidoscope palette with

lazy brushstrokes and expressive knife work. His more impressionistic style which uses naturalistic colouring is now also in demand.

Margey's exciting new collection will showcase his extra-large canvases as well as smaller works in a variety of styles and colour palettes. Depictions of Belfast's River Lagan, Strand Cinema and Crown Bar will be on



show alongside other canvases focusing on North Down's Kinnegar Pier, Seapark and Crawfordsburn to name but a few. Margey's vibrant interpretations of Strangford Lough, Scrabo, Sketrick Island, Mount Stewart and Castle Espie will shine a light on the beauty of the Ards Peninsula.

The artist's commission diary is now open for Christmas and visitors

to the show are welcome to discuss their ideas for bespoke pieces with the artist at the exhibition. The show will run Friday 1st & Saturday 2nd November: 11am - 6pm and Sunday 3rd November: 11am - 6pm. Admission is free - everyone welcome. For more information visit [www.adrianmargey.com](http://www.adrianmargey.com) telephone the Portrush Studio on 07841593762.

## NEW OWNERS OF THE PIZZA CO. INVEST £550,000 TO EXPAND AND RELAUNCH CHAIN OF OUTLETS

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### The Pizza Co. announces opening of new Lisburn store and brand

LOCAL pizza chain, The Pizza Co. has announced a major investment of £550,000 following a recent change of ownership, marking the start of an ambitious growth strategy for the business, which currently operates six outlets in Greater Belfast and employs 200 dedicated staff. The new management team comprising of Matthew Stevenson, formerly a manager of the Botanic outlet, Conall Humston, and Matt McGrath, has installed state-of-the-art technology

such as a new POS system, touchscreen self-service tills, and real-time driver tracking, alongside a complete rebrand of all six stores across Greater Belfast, undertaken by Belfast creative agency, Aspect Media. Matthew Stevenson, Director, commented: "Purchasing the brand with Conall and Matt is hugely exciting. I previously worked for The Pizza Co. at its Botanic Avenue store, so I know the business well. We have made significant

investments in all areas, and we're buzzing to open the next chapter in The Pizza Co. story, with a fresh identity that encapsulates our new approach to the exciting journey ahead of us. "As three long-time friends with 50 years of combined industry experience, we are ideally placed to take The Pizza Co. to the next level. We recently opened our newest store in Lisburn, and have exciting plans in place for further expansion of the brand across Northern



Ireland. Our passion for quality pizza, combined with an unwavering dedication to improving the customer experience, and a commitment to give back to the communities within which we operate, is a winning formula and one that we are excited about sharing through our planned expansion.

"We are already seeing the benefits of our new technology which has led to quicker delivery times and happier customers. Last week alone, we delivered 82% of our orders within 30 minutes," says Matthew. "Food provenance and quality is paramount to us, with the standard of our pizzas now significantly improved with dough meticulously hand-rolled, proven for up to four days and hand-stretched on-site by our skilled pizza chefs. We avoid synthetic cheeses

- instead using 100% local diced Mozzarella - and our distinctive sauce uses tomatoes sourced from Northern Italy. Simply put, we aim to serve the best and freshest takeaway pizzas in Northern Ireland."

Dedicated to supporting the local communities in areas surrounding their outlets, The Pizza Co. currently donates meal vouchers totalling £2,400 every week to local sports clubs, schools and youth groups, while also sponsoring local basketball, soccer and GAA clubs. "We are a local company and as such see ourselves as an extension of the neighbourhoods surrounding our outlets," explains Matthew. "This level of engagement is an integral aspect to our projected growth and expansion where we can share our success with customers."

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# Autumn Nature Trail: A Family Adventure

Autumn is a magical time of year, with its vibrant colours and crisp air. A nature trail is a wonderful way to explore the beauty of the season and spend quality time with your family.

Here are some tips for planning an autumn nature trail and a list of items your child might seek:

**Planning Your Nature Trail:**

- Choose a location: Consider local parks, nature preserves, or even your own backyard. Look for areas with a variety of trees and plants.
- Set a goal: Decide how long you want to spend on

the trail and how far you want to walk.

**Bring the essentials:** Pack snacks, water, sunscreen, and insect repellent.

**Involve your children:** Let your children help plan the trail by choosing where to go and what to look for.

**Items to Seek on Your Autumn Nature Trail:**

- Leaves: Collect leaves

in different shapes, sizes, and colors.

- Acorns: Gather acorns and identify different oak tree species.
- Pinecones: Find pinecones from various pine trees.
- Mushrooms: Look for mushrooms (but don't touch or eat them unless you're sure they're safe).
- Animal tracks: Search for animal tracks in the



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mud or snow.

- Bird nests: Look for empty bird nests in trees or bushes.
- Insects: Observe insects like butterflies, bees, and spiders.
- Wildlife: Try to spot animals like squirrels, deer, or birds.
- Natural objects: Collect other interesting items like berries, rocks, or feathers.

Once you've collected your items, you can create a nature journal or press the leaves and flowers. You can also use the items for crafts or decorations. A nature trail is a fun and educational way to appreciate the beauty of autumn and connect with nature.

# HANNON COACH & SAIL IS PERFECT FOR AN AUTUMN CITY BREAK IN GLASGOW!

Direct Belfast – Glasgow Express now departing from the new Belfast Grand Central Station.



An award-winning service offering hassle-free travel, HANNON Coach & Sail is ideal for an autumn city break in Glasgow and the perfect antidote to flying and airport stress! Already hugely popular with those in the know, the Belfast – Glasgow Express Coach Service is rated 5-Star on TripAdvisor.

A shopper's paradise, Glasgow is recognised as having the best retail therapy in the UK outside of London.

Consistently voted 'top of the shops', the city is Scotland's premier shopping destination.

Not just shopping, Glasgow is also famous for its fantastic nightlife, and great choice of restaurants and bars. Glasgow is the perfect choice for your next city break away.

With a simple flat fare of £44 which includes the cost of the ferry and your bag, our Belfast – Glasgow Express offers a really attractive, convenient and low-cost

alternative to flying.

The service is operated by HANNON Coach and leaves twice a day from Belfast, Grand Central Station (Stand 18) and drops visitors right in the heart of Glasgow's 'Style Mile'. The simple flat fare allows passengers to pick and mix dates and times of travel to suit and with no luggage charges it makes a perfect travel option. There are also a great range of hotels just minutes from Glasgow Buchanan

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# Financial support for children with disabilities or additional needs

Financial support for children with disabilities or additional needs

## Employers For Childcare

Disability Allowance (DLA) and Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

Children under 16 with a disability or additional needs may be entitled to Disability Living Allowance (DLA), while those over 16 can receive Personal Independence Payment (PIP). The amount received will depend on the condition and how it affects the child.

Depending on household circumstances, entitlement to DLA or PIP can also help with entitlement to other benefits such as Universal Credit, Tax Credits and Carers Allowance.

Higher payments of other benefits

As soon as possible after receiving a positive DLA or PIP decision you should contact whoever pays your current benefits to tell them you're now getting DLA or PIP, as this could result in you getting higher payments of the following:

- Universal Credit
- Child Tax Credit
- Housing Benefit.

You'll be exempt from the 'benefit cap' which limits the amount of benefit payments a household can receive, and also may be eligible for help towards your household rates if you have made any adaptations to your home to meet the needs of the person with the disability.

If you do not currently receive any benefits

The awarding of a disability benefit is a significant change in circumstances. The entitlement to DLA or PIP may mean that households with a higher income, and who would not otherwise be eligible, can qualify for support.

You should contact an independent benefits advisor who can check if this change means that your household has now become entitled to any other benefits, such as Universal Credit.

Carer's Allowance and



Carer Element

Parents and others who care for someone in receipt of DLA or PIP could be eligible to receive Carer's Allowance, which is paid weekly at a rate of £81.90. Eligibility depends on both the circumstances of the carer and those of the person being cared for.

If the carer is in receipt of Universal Credit and is in receipt of Carer's Allowance, or would be in receipt of Carers Allowance if it weren't for their income being too high, they may be eligible for an additional Carer Element

of Universal Credit of £198.31 per month.

For a couple with one partner working and the other not working but in receipt of Carers Allowance they can meet the criteria for financial support with their registered childcare costs which otherwise require both members in a couple to be working.

Further information For personalised advice on what support your family may be entitled to, contact the Family Benefits Advice Service on 028 9267 8200 or email hello@employersforchildcare.org.

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# Festive Fun at the MAC

In the heart Belfast city, you'll find the MAC. With theatres, art galleries and a café bar all under one roof, it's a great spot for family days out.

This Christmas, we're excited to welcome you to enjoy festive fun for all the family.

The Adventures of Red Riding Hood

27 November 2024 - 1 January 2025

Tickets: £27.50 - £12.50

Join us on an action-packed journey through the enchanted forest with our feisty heroine, Red Riding Hood, and

her fairytale friends. But in a race to visit Granny Hood with a festive hamper of goodies, could it be a case of mistaken identity for media star Red Riding Hood, the jealous Goldilocks, or the Big (or not so) Bad Wolf?

Packed with original songs, larger than life characters and lots of opportunities to join in the fun, find out if good

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# BUDGETING FOR CHRISTMAS: TIPS FOR A STRESS-FREE HOLIDAY SEASON

The holiday season can be a magical time, but it can also be a financially stressful one.

With gifts, decorations, food, and travel expenses adding up, it's easy to overspend. However, with a little planning and budgeting, you can enjoy a festive season without breaking the bank.

Setting a budget is the first step to a stress-free holiday season. Determine how much you can afford to spend on Christmas by considering your income, expenses, and savings. Once you've set your budget, create a spending plan by breaking it down into categories like gifts, decorations, food, and travel. This will help you stay on track and avoid overspending.

Prioritizing is

another important factor. Not everyone needs to receive an expensive gift. Focus on giving meaningful presents to the people who are most important to you. Christmas experiences such as Santa Visits or Pantomimes are always a great investment!

Shopping early can also help you save money. Start your Christmas shopping early to avoid last-minute purchases that can lead to overspending. Use coupons and discounts to save even more money on your purchases.

Making a gift list can help you stay organized and avoid impulse purchases.



Decide on a budget for each person on your list and stick to it. Consider homemade gifts as a more meaningful and often less expensive alternative to store-bought items.

Setting aside money each week can help you avoid relying on credit cards. Remember to be mindful of hidden costs like shipping costs, taxes, and gift wrapping when

calculating your budget.

Avoid impulse purchases by sticking to your list and only buying what you need.

Shopping online can save you time and money, as you can

compare prices and find deals from the comfort of your home. Using cash instead of credit cards can also help you stay within your budget.

Bringing a list when you go shopping can help you stay focused and avoid impulse purchases. Don't be afraid to haggle for a better price, especially at flea markets and thrift stores. Consider secondhand shopping as a way to find unique and affordable gifts.

By following these tips, you can enjoy a stress-free and affordable Christmas season. Remember, the most important thing is spending quality time with loved ones, not breaking the bank.

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**STAY THE NIGHT**



## Headteacher Peter Chambers says that Hollywood Steiner school offers an alternative to mainstream education!

**IN A RECENT BEST OF BELFAST PODCAST PETER DISCUSSED HOW THE SCHOOL HAS DOUBLED IN BUDGET, SIZE, AND STAFF SINCE 2020. HE ALSO HIGHLIGHTED THAT MOST PEOPLE IN NORTHERN IRELAND ARE UNAWARE OF ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION OPTIONS!**

One of the key aspects Peter emphasized was the power of delaying traditional desk-based learning until the age of six. Instead the school focuses on practical skills like outdoor play, baking and crafts. Peter explained that smaller class sizes create a more conducive learning environment, allowing teachers to focus on teaching rather than constantly managing poor behaviour. He also shared how the school encourages a more informal atmosphere by allowing students to call teachers by their first names and eliminating school uniforms.

Founded in 1975, Hollywood Steiner school is looking forward to celebrating 50 years in the anniversary year, 2025!

A co-educational, independent and integrated school the educator is a proud member of the global Steiner school network, with over 1400 schools in 75 countries. Within the UK and Ireland, there are 29 and 6 Steiner schools, respectively, making us the sole representative in Northern Ireland.

At Hollywood Steiner School, you'll find a welcoming community that feels like an extended family. The campus serves as a community hub, hosting events throughout the year.

At the heart of Hollywood Steiner is the Waldorf Curriculum. This curriculum prioritizes childhood development, starting with preschool and kindergarten. Nature-based experiences and imaginative play are key components. Formal reading and writing instruction begins at age 6, aligning with global standards. The approach fosters moral responsibility, empathy, and a sense of wonder, leading to emotionally mature and academically successful students.

Unlike traditional education, the Waldorf model allows children to learn at their own pace. This personalized approach ensures a deep understanding of concepts and skills. This independent school offers a rich, diverse, and integrated education that emphasizes cooperation over competition.

### Why Choose Hollywood Steiner School?

The school consistently scores well above the NI average and in this years GCSE results 88% of students achieved seven GCSE A\* - C (pass grades), including English and Maths.

Hollywood Steiner school is suitable for every child. For academically advanced students, we provide a balanced approach that nurtures their social-emotional and creative strengths. For those who may need additional support, our curriculum offers a nurturing environment that allows them to grow at their own pace and reach their full potential. The Waldorf curriculum fosters well-rounded individuals who are both happy and successful!



## Where the magic of childhood lives

Curious about Steiner Waldorf Early Years education and want to discover more?

To view a prospectus and book a walkthrough, visit [hollywood-steiner.co.uk](http://hollywood-steiner.co.uk) or speak with Jude on 028 9042 8029

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# Autumn Health Hacks

Autumn might be one of the most picturesque seasons of the year, but few will deny that the colder, darker and wetter weather makes it harder to stay motivated to exercise.

Exercising in this season can be somewhat daunting. Dragging oneself from the comfort of their warm and comfortable bed to battle the elements during a morning run is the stuff of nightmares for many – however you can reap serious rewards when bracing the weather to get out and about this autumn season.



Seasonal adjustment disorder is but one condition that can be alleviated by regular exercise.

Numerous studies have shown that incorporating exercise into your daily routine can boost one's mood

as well as decreasing stress, anxiety and depression. So getting up and out will not only benefit your physically,

but also mentally. Changing up your routine is one way of staying motivated to exercise this autumn.

Whilst going for a morning run might have seemed attractive when the weather was dry and warm, the colder and wetter mornings might be better suited for an indoor swim. Perhaps joining a gym is the best way to stay fit over the winter, providing an indoor environment that can encourage exercise no matter the weather.

In the same way, mixing up your diet is important to staying healthy this autumn. Salads and fruit might have been the order of the day during the summer months, but your body will need more sustenance to fight off the flu and keep you warm during the winter season. Mixing some soups, chowders and shakes into your diet can be a great way of diversifying your diet and making sure that you do not get bored eating the same old meals time and time again.

One benefit of the nights getting longer is that many find it significantly easier to get a long night sleep. As it gets dark earlier, it is often easier to get into a night time routine and securing those essential 8 hours rest per night – studies have found that those who get less than 6 hours sleep per night tend to have a higher than average BMI.

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# TESCO NI RAISE OVER 50K FOR MARIE CURIE

Tesco stores across Northern Ireland have helped to raise £52,537 for Marie Curie, one of the UK's leading end-of-life charity.

The money was raised by volunteer collections at Tesco stores across the Province in only one weekend.

Tesco NI partnered with Marie Curie to facilitate collections as part of Marie Curie's Great Daffodil Appeal, which is a public collection campaign that happens annually.

Robert Wilson, Tesco Newtownbreda Community Champion, said, "Tesco are delighted to maintain their strong connection with Marie Curie across all our stores and we always welcome their volunteers at springtime for their daffodil appeal."

"At our store, customers and colleagues certainly show their appreciation of the care that Marie Curie nurses provide, which is reflected in the generosity of their donations, and this support is evident in all Tesco stores nationwide."

Conor O'Kane, Senior Partnership Manager (NI & Scotland), at Marie Curie is very grateful for Tesco's contribution: "Marie Curie



(L-R) Marie Curie Senior Partnership Manager Conor O'Kane, Marie Curie Community Fundraising Marie Harris, Tesco Newtownbreda Community Champion Robert Wilson and Marie Curie volunteers Jeanette Montgomery and Ciaran Crossey celebrate the great results.

was delighted that Tesco NI again supported our annual Great Daffodil Appeal. Thanks to Tesco NI staff for their welcome and their stellar support for all our volunteers across the collection weekend.

"To Tesco customers, our huge thanks for your

phenomenal generosity. Your kindness will ensure that people across Northern Ireland will receive vital end-of-life support, whatever the illness. Thank you."

Tesco regularly supports Cancer Research UK, British Heart Foundation,

Diabetes UK, Trussell Trust and FareShare through food donations and collections, in-store donations, charitable events, Race for Life participation, sponsorship, and matching customer contributions and donations.

## Packed Lunch Perfection: Tips for Nutritious School Lunches

Packed lunches offer a great way to ensure your child is fueled for a day of learning. But with so many options, it can be tough to know what to include.

Here are some tips for creating nutritious and delicious school packed

lunches:

Planning ahead is key to ensuring your child has a healthy and satisfying lunch every day. Weekly meal planning helps you stay organized and avoid last-minute unhealthy choices. Involving your child in the planning process can encourage healthy eating habits and make mealtime more enjoyable.

A balanced lunch should include a variety of foods from all food groups. Carbohydrates provide energy for the day, so opt for whole grains like brown rice, whole-wheat bread, or quinoa. Protein keeps your child feeling

full and satisfied, and can be found in lean meats, beans, lentils, or eggs. Healthy fats support brain development, so include sources like nuts, seeds, and avocados. Fruits and vegetables are packed with vitamins, minerals, and fiber, so variety is key!

Sandwiches don't have to be boring. Beyond the basics, try whole-grain wraps, pita bread, or even lettuce leaves as a base. Experiment with fillings like hummus, avocado, grilled chicken, or leftover roast. Add-ons like sliced cucumbers, tomatoes, or a sprinkle of cheese can add extra flavor and nutrition.

Smart snacks can help

your child stay fueled throughout the day. Fruit and vegetable sticks are easy to grab and go, while nuts and seeds provide a great source of protein and healthy fats. Yogurt is a nutritious option, and you can choose plain or Greek yogurt with added fruit. Whole-grain crackers or cereal bars are also a satisfying and nutritious choice.

Making packed lunches fun can encourage your child to eat healthy. Use cookie cutters to create fun shapes from sandwiches or fruits. Involving your child in the packing process can also make mealtime more enjoyable.



Consider allergies and dietary needs when packing your child's lunch. If your child has allergies or dietary restrictions, there are plenty of alternatives available. Label clearly all food items to avoid any confusion.

By following these tips, you can create packed lunches that are both nutritious and enjoyable. Remember, a healthy lunch can make a big difference in your child's overall well-being and academic performance.

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# THE ALL-NEW DACIA DUSTER

The All-New Dacia Duster is now available to order via [dacia.co.uk](http://dacia.co.uk) and at Dacia retailers across NI with prices starting from £18,745, or just £193 a month on a 6.9% APR representative\* four-year Personal Contract Purchase (PCP) deal.

Building on the merits of its predecessor, the All-New Duster enhances the multi-award-winning formula with a distinctive new design, greater interior comfort and space, and the latest technologies including hybrid powertrains and advancements in safety.

With its bolder, more robust style, the All-New Duster is always ready for adventure. The underbody shields, wheel-arch guards, snorkel and bumper inserts are made from a sturdy new material called Starkle that flaunts its unpainted finish with a mottled look that comes from its up to 20% recycled composition (as well as being 100% recyclable). The front and rear skid plates, meanwhile, are dyed in the mass, meaning the plastic is already coloured when the part is made.

This is better for the environment since it does away with the need for painting, while scrapes and



scratches won't alter the original colour.

Inside, the new, more vertical dashboard is both welcoming and practical, and combined with its more cohesive design that matches the robust nature of the exterior, the use of the new CMF-B platform creates more space for passengers and their luggage.

Dacia's new YouClip system, an example of the brand's famed good thinking, provides thoughtful mounting points for

accessories such as tablet and smartphone holders throughout the interior.

The All-New Duster is powered by a choice of three engines, including an advanced hybrid powertrain for the first time.

The All-New Duster range starts at £18,745 with the Essential trim, which comes equipped with a Y-shaped LED lighting signature, longitudinal roof bars, tinted windows, front electric windows with driver's one-touch operation, height

and reach adjustable steering wheel, 6-way adjustable driver's seat, 4-way adjustable front passenger seat, height adjustable front and manually adjustable door mirrors, air conditioning,

automatic locking, central dials with 3.5-inch TFT information display, and Dacia's clever Media Control system that revolves around a smartphone docking station integrated into the dashboard.

As with all models in the range, it benefits from a comprehensive array of safety and driver assistance systems, including six airbags, cruise control with speed limiter,

traffic sign recognition with speed alert, rear parking sensors, driver attention warning, lane departure warning, lane keep assist, advanced emergency braking system, emergency E-Call, vehicle dynamic control, and hill start assist.

From £21,245, the Expression trim adds body-coloured door handles, grey door mirrors, 17-inch Tergan diamond cut alloy wheels,

automatic wipers, electric parking brake, rear electric windows, high central armrest with console storage, 7-inch digital driver display, adaptive hill descent control on 4x4 models, rear camera, and 10.1-inch Media Display with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto.

The All-New Dacia Duster is available to order now, with first deliveries expected in November.

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# WHAT DOES YOUR HOME INSURANCE ACTUALLY COVER?

Home insurance is a crucial financial safety net, protecting your property and belongings from unexpected events. However, understanding the exact coverage can be confusing. Here's a breakdown of what your home insurance typically covers:

**Building Coverage**  
Home insurance covers damage to the main structure of your home, including walls, roof, floors, and foundation. It also extends to damage in outbuildings like garages, sheds, and patios.

**Contents Coverage**  
In addition to protecting the building itself, home insurance covers your personal belongings inside your home.

This includes furniture, electronics, clothing, and other personal items. Some policies may also extend coverage to your personal belongings when they're away from your home.

**Additional Coverages**

Beyond the basic building and contents coverage, many home insurance policies offer additional benefits. These can include:

- **Liability:** Covers bodily injury or property damage caused by you, your family members, or pets on your property.

- **Loss of Use:** Provides temporary living expenses if your home becomes uninhabitable due to covered damage.

- **Water Back-Up:** Covers damage caused by water backing up into your home, such as from a sewer or sump pump failure.

- **Tree and Shrub Damage:** Covers damage to trees and shrubs on your property caused by



covered perils.

**Common Exclusions**  
While home insurance provides extensive coverage, there are some common exclusions that you should be aware of:

- **Flood Damage:** Flood insurance is typically

separate from home insurance.

- **Earthquakes:** Earthquake coverage is also usually an additional policy.

- **Neglect:** Damage caused by intentional neglect or failure to

maintain your property.

- **Business Activities:** Home insurance doesn't cover business-related activities conducted at your home.

**Important Considerations**

When reviewing your home insurance policy, keep these key factors in mind:

- **Deductible:** This is the amount you're responsible for paying out-of-pocket before your insurance coverage kicks in.

- **Coverage Limits:** Your policy will have limits on how much it will pay for specific types of damage.

- **Perils:** The types of events covered by your policy (e.g., fire, theft, storms) will vary.

**Review Your Policy Regularly**

It's essential to review your home insurance policy annually to ensure it meets your changing needs and that you understand the specific coverage you have. If you have questions or concerns, don't hesitate to contact your insurance agent.

## PropertyPal and Propertynews announce merger with major investment in technology and innovation

PropertyPal today announces a strategic merger with Propertynews, uniting two of Northern Ireland's leading property websites.



This merger combines the best of both platforms' technology, people, and skills, with the aim of driving innovation and enhancing the experience for home searchers and agent advertisers across Northern Ireland.

Both the PropertyPal and Propertynews brands will continue to operate as distinct websites, appealing to their loyal audiences. Significant investment is planned for both platforms focusing on marketing, upgrading the underlying technology infrastructure, and enhancing their software suite for agents. The merger will deliver greater value and improved services for both agents and website users.

Jordan Buchanan, CEO of PropertyPal, said: "This

merger is very positive for our people, our customers, and our website users. We are bringing together the best of our technology, people, and cultures to create something even better. Our aim is to enhance the value we offer to consumers and agent partners alike."

He continued: "By combining our resources and expertise, we will deliver more efficient, cost-effective, and user-friendly platforms. Our commitment to innovation and customer satisfaction remains at the core of everything we do, and I am confident that this merger will drive forward our vision of providing exceptional service and support to the Northern Ireland property market. We look forward to working closely with our agents and stakeholders during this exciting transition and beyond."

A new leadership team will oversee these efforts, ensuring that the websites meet the evolving needs of their users and agents.

GCD Technologies, former owner of Propertynews, becomes a shareholder of the parent company, PropertyPal Ltd and GCD Managing

Director, Andrew Gough, will join PropertyPal's Board of Directors. The new Board of Directors will also include Conor MacCarrick, former Board member of Propertynews, and Jordan Buchanan, CEO of PropertyPal, who also becomes a shareholder of the new PropertyPal. These new board members will join the existing team, including Cecil Hetherington (Chair) and Errol Maxwell (Founder), to work alongside the management team guiding the future of PropertyPal and Propertynews.

Additionally, Emma McNally, Commercial Director at Propertynews, will step into the role of Chief Operating Officer at PropertyPal. The new leadership team, integrating the combined talents and expertise of both teams, will continue to drive the strategic goals and customer engagement for both brands. This merger marks the beginning of a new chapter for PropertyPal and Propertynews, bringing together the best of both websites to drive growth and innovation within the Northern Ireland property market.

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# 10 HOME JOBS YOU CANNOT DIY

When it comes to jobs around the home there are some things you shouldn't try yourself, especially when 47% of Brits have had a DIY disaster\*.

Your unqualified hands could put you in a lot of danger, and worse, put others in danger. You could even invalidate your home insurance, which would leave you in a really difficult situation and with a heavy repair cost.

This list by no means covers everything, but it does answer the most common queries we get on whether to hire a pro or not for a job.

1) Fixing a gas leak. In fact, anything to do with gas. You must legally be on the Gas Safe Register to deal with any gas appliances. Attempting to fix anything gas related can have serious effects on your health and the safety of others around you, not to mention the potential of an explosion.

2) Removing asbestos. Asbestos is dangerous, so removing it is best left to the professionals. Asbestos comes with serious health risks. So much so that in 1999, the dangers of asbestos were officially recognised in the UK.



All use of asbestos was banned. To have asbestos removed, you will need a qualified surveyor to carry out an inspection.

3) Fitting a new bath. Whether you're upgrading your entire bathroom, or you're having issues with your current bathtub, you should definitely leave the installation of a new tub to a

professional. Failure to do so could result in a leak in your home and a very unrelaxing soak in the tub!

4) Knocking down an internal wall. Knocking down an internal wall is a great way to open up your living space and create a free-flowing area to enjoy. But knocking down an internal wall is not a DIY job, so

don't start swinging your sledgehammer around. The wall could be load-bearing. If you attempt to knock down a load-bearing wall without any steel reinforcement, it will result in your ceilings falling through, and whatever is above it coming down too.

5) Foundation work. The foundations of any building are

the most important part of the structure. If the foundations are wrong, then the subsoil can spread and the structure can settle unequally, leading to structural problems down the line. Good foundations are a lot more than just digging a hole and pouring some concrete in, it needs to be exactly right.

6) Window installation. A poorly fitted window leads to lots of problems. These include: Injury to yourself, your family, and people passing by Reduced home efficiency (energy loss, draughts and leaks) Lack of security Legal and insurance ramifications Structural issues and a poor finish (mould and mildew may appear) Avoid these risks and work with a professional window fitter.

7) Tree removal. Cutting down a tree is dangerous work. Although there's a risk of falling from a height, there's also the risk of being hit by

debris. And even if the falling debris misses you, other people, houses and vehicles nearby may not be so lucky. A professional tree surgeon will know exactly how to control the removal of your tree. They have the experience, they have the tools, and they know how best to cut a tree of any size. Even better, they will remove your tree much quicker than you would yourself.

8) Electrical work. Electrical work, similar to gas work, requires a highly qualified professional to take on the job, due to safety reasons. Incorrect or unsafe wiring is dangerous. Not only is it a massive fire risk, but it could electrocute you, a member of your family, or guests.

9) Roof installation and repairs. Your roof protects you from the elements, but only if it has been installed or repaired correctly. Keeping it watertight and making sure there are no leaks is so important. A damaged roof can lead to lots of problems

in your home, from damp, leaking ceilings to severe structural damage. Patching it up yourself can be dangerous without the correct safety equipment. Getting up onto the roof is a risk to yourself. Then once you're there there's also the risk that you do not patch up the roof correctly, meaning the damage will worsen over time.

10) Pest infestations. Pest control specialists

can have your home cleared of unwanted visitors quickly without you having to live in fear of living with whatever pest it may be. Prices usually start at around £120 to have mice and rats removed. Pest controllers can also remove bedbugs, cockroaches and ants.

For more guidance see <https://www.checktrade.com/blog/expert-advice/home-jobs-you-shouldnt-do-yourself/>

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## Cozy Up This Autumn: Tips for Creating a Warm and Inviting Home

As the days grow shorter and the nights draw in, there's nothing quite like curling up on the sofa with a good book or a warm cup of tea.

Creating a cozy atmosphere in your home can help you relax, unwind, and enjoy the autumn season to the fullest. Here are some tips to help you transform your space into a cozy haven:

1. Embrace Warm Colours and Textures

• Color palette: Opt for warm tones like deep reds, golden yellows, and rich browns to create a sense of warmth and comfort.

• Textures: Incorporate cozy textures like wool, velvet, and faux fur into your home decor. Think of plush throws, soft cushions, and shaggy rugs.

2. Lighting Matters

• Layer lighting: Combine overhead lighting with table lamps, floor lamps, and candles to create a soft and inviting ambiance.

• Warm light bulbs: Use

warm-toned light bulbs to emit a cozy glow.

3. Cozy Corners

• Reading nooks: Create a cozy reading nook with a comfortable armchair, a soft throw, and a side table for your book and drink.

• Fireplace: If you have a fireplace, light it on chilly evenings for a warm and inviting atmosphere. If not, consider using a faux fireplace or a wood-burning stove.

4. Add Natural Elements

• Plants: Bring the outdoors in with houseplants. Not only do they add greenery and life to your space, but they can also help improve air quality.

• Natural materials: Incorporate natural materials like wood, stone, and rattan into your home decor.

5. Create a Sense of Homeliness

• Personal touches: Display family photos, artwork, and other personal items to make your home feel truly yours.

• Scented candles: Light scented candles to fill your home with a warm and inviting fragrance.

6. Cozy Textiles

• Throws and blankets: Keep a collection of cozy

throws and blankets on hand for snuggling up on the sofa or bed.

• Curtains: Consider heavy curtains to block out cold drafts and create a more intimate atmosphere.

By following these tips, you can easily transform your home into a cozy and inviting retreat. So, grab your favorite blanket, light a candle, and enjoy the autumn season!

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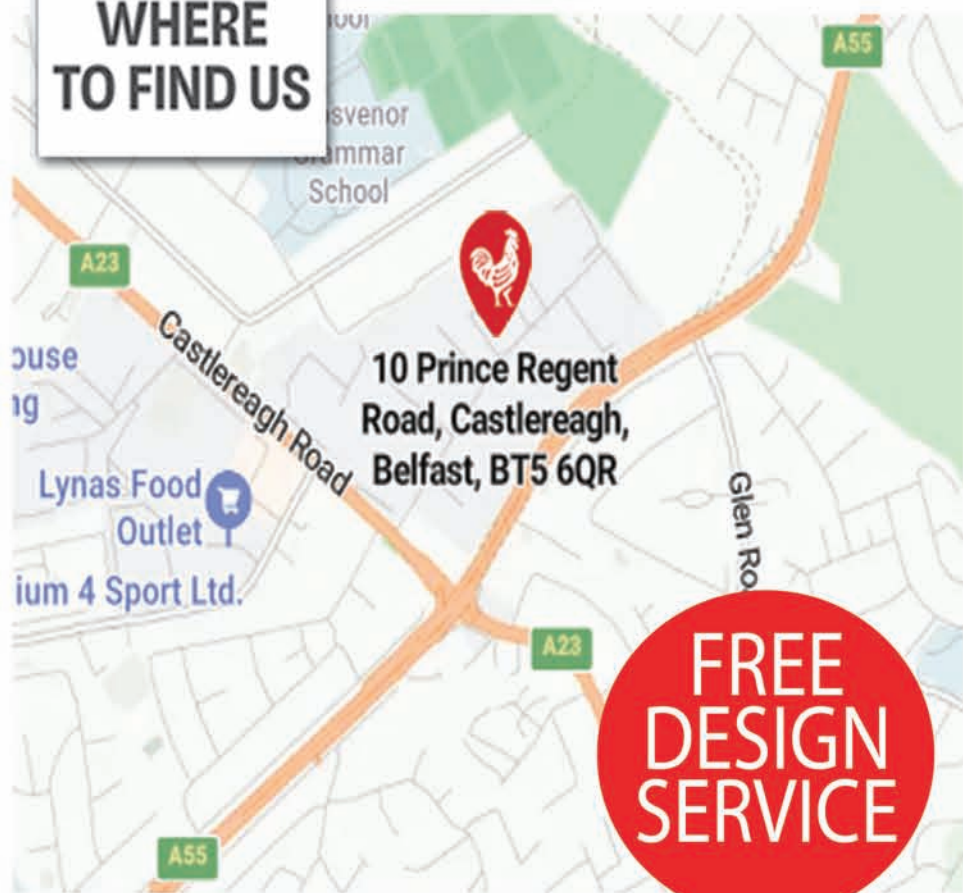
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