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BBQ Stars Jim and Romilly Moore Fire Up the Grill to Support Action Cancer

Celebrity Chef Anna Haugh Returns for Taste Autumn

An exciting programme of foodie activity starts on Friday 5 September with Taste Autumn in Ards and North Down, giving you the chance to savour some of the Borough's finest food and drink with celebrity chef Anna Haugh, including the popular Tide and Turf Food Festival in Portavogie on Saturday 6 September.

The very best of our local seafood, beef and harvest foods will be celebrated with free and ticketed events including exclusive foodie experiences in unique locations, chef demonstrations, with a focus on our delicious local produce. Highlights of the programme include Demo and Dine (Friday 5 September) as well as the Tide and Turf Food Festival (Saturday 6 September), both in Portavogie Harbour.

runs from 5-28 September and includes other events such as Stargazing (5 September), Chilli Festival (13/14 September), distillery experiences, an Evening with Peter Corry (19 September), Taste AND at Bangor Castle (27/28 September) and more. For a full list, to book tickets and plan your journey with parking information and bus timetables, go to Taste Autumn in Ards and North Down - Ards & North Down

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HOST A BREAST FRIENDS BBQ THIS SEPTEMBER AND HELP SAVE LIVES

BBQ social media influencers and husband and wife duo Jim Moore (aka @ onlysluggin) and Romilly Moore from Newtownabbey are calling on people across Northern Ireland to host a "Breast Friends BBQ" to raise vital funds for Action Cancer's life-saving breast screening service.

The campaign encourages friends, families and neighbours to come together this summer & autumn around the BBQ to enjoy good food

and meaningful conversations, all while supporting a great cause. Action Cancer is the only charity in Northern Ireland providing free breast

screening to well women aged 40-49 and over 70 (outside of the NHS screening age range).

When it comes to breast cancer, the earlier it is detected the

better. For every 1,000 breast screenings, six breast cancers are detected.

Continued on page 4

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Asda Bangor colleague praised for kindness to young mum

An Asda Bangor security colleague has been praised for her kindness after she stepped in to help a first-time mum feed her baby.

Claire Strain was on shift when she spotted a mum who was shopping and needed to stop to feed her tot earlier this summer.

She said: "The lady came into the store fairly close to closing. I noticed her stop in the George department as her baby needed feeding. I could see she was looking under pressure as the store was due to close, but I took her down a chair, made sure she was comfortable and told her to sit there as long as she needed."

Once the baby had been fed, Claire, 48, says the customer thanked her for her help.

Claire said: "Once the mum got the baby settled, she told me it was her first experience out of the house, just the two of them. That's a scary experience for any new mum and I'm just glad she was able



to get that bit of time to sit down and take a breath."

A mum herself, Claire says she knows all too well that when a new baby needs feeding, they need feeding, no matter where they are.

She said: "I've had three of my own. They're all grown up now, but seeing

mums and dads with babies and young children brings it all back – I just wanted to make sure she knew everything was ok and to make her shopping experience as stress free as possible.

Anything I can do to give a bit of support is my pleasure."

Ami Craig,

Community Champion Asda Bangor, said: "Claire is a very friendly, approachable colleague who can always be found with a smile on her face. It does not surprise me that she went out of her way to help a young mum – it's just in her blood, she is a credit to our store."

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'FABULOUS' PRIDE EXTRAVAGANZA IN HOLYWOOD OXFAM.

Alliance representatives Andrew Muir MLA and Cllr Gillian McCollum have praised the Oxfam Pride Night Extravaganza held at the charity's Hollywood Superstore.

On Thursday, 31st July, the charity store opened late to celebrate Belfast Pride and invited customers to enjoy the LGBTQIA+ event with drag artists, musicians and a DJ set.

Speaking after the event, North Down MLA Andrew Muir said:

"Since opening its doors last year, the Oxfam Superstore has been such a welcoming and vibrant addition to the town, and the annual pride celebration is such great fun. The drag acts and musicians are fantastic and, of course, there's an opportunity to pick up a bargain and



Photo (L-R) Cherry Bombscare, Stacy Brown, Manager of Oxfam Hollywood Superstore, Cllr Gillian McCollum, Andrew Muir MLA, Madeleine Scott and Emma Bitch.

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raise money for a good cause.

"Pride is about celebrating LGBTQIA+ culture and communities, and it's great to see Oxfam being a part of that and promoting an ethos of inclusivity."

Gillian McCollum, Alliance Councillor for Hollywood and Clondeboyne, added:

"The Pride Extravaganza was absolutely fabulous, with

lots of love and fun in the room. It was great to have a browse while enjoying the drag artists and listening to the stunning musicians. Well done to store manager Stacy for a brilliant night, and I can't wait to go again next year!

"Oxfam does such amazing work supporting international development, and the local staff and volunteers are wonderful."

Hockey Player Chris Cargo Inducted into Sporting Wall of Fame

Bangor's Chris Cargo has been officially inducted into Ards and North Down Borough Council's Sporting Wall of Fame.

The successful international hockey player, who won 195 caps for Ireland, has joined the Borough's other sporting greats on the prestigious Wall of Fame displayed in Bangor Aurora Aquatic and Leisure Complex as well as Ards Blair Mayne Wellbeing and Leisure Complex.

Cargo was announced as the latest inductee at the Ards and North Down Sports Awards earlier this year and he has now been officially inducted after a ceremony in his hometown's leisure centre where his plaque was unveiled.

The Mayor of Ards and North Down, Councillor Gillian McCollum, said:

"The Wall of Fame is a very prestigious award that honours the Borough's outstanding sportspeople who have reached the highest level within their chosen sport. Inductees are restricted to a maximum of one per year, and nominations are carefully considered by the Ards and North Down Sports Forum judges. I am delighted that Chris Cargo is now included on our Wall of Fame after his glittering hockey playing career."



From playing hockey at Bangor Grammar, Chris went on to win an outstanding 195 caps for Hockey Ireland, scored 28 international goals, was twice captain of the team, and is currently eighth on Ireland's all-time cap list. His club career highlights include winning two English Premier League titles for Reading Hockey Club and Hampstead & Westminster Hockey Club.

While playing for Royal Racing Club de Bruxelles, he finished runner-up in the Belgian Honour Division, and he also won a Euro Hockey League bronze

medal for Reading Hockey Club. Internationally, he played in three European Championships and won Ireland's first medal with bronze in 2015. He played in the 2018 World Cup in India and was part of the first Irish Hockey team in 108 years to qualify for and then play in the Rio 2016 Olympic Games.

The Ards and North Down Sports Forum, which sponsored the Wall of Fame award, exists to support the development, establishment and sustainability of local sports clubs. It is a voluntary organisation

that includes members of the Council's Sports Development team as well as volunteers from affiliated sports clubs, organisations and associations that are based within Ards and North Down.

The Forum acts as a consultative body between Ards and North Down Borough Council and the sporting community, while also providing grants to support local organisations and athletes, as well as contributing to sports development in the area. For more information, visit leisureardsandnorthdown.com/sports-development

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Continued from page 1

Each screening is free to the woman but costs the charity £120 to deliver each appointment. Screening takes place at Action Cancer House and on board the Big Bus mobile unit (supported by SuperValu and Centra). Fundraising generated from the Breast Friends BBQ campaign will help fund appointments for local women in your community.

"Barbecue has always brought people together," says Jim Moore who amassed

over 1.6 million social media followers. "Now we're asking folks to add a bit of purpose to their grill-outs this summer by supporting Action Cancer's incredible breast screening programme. It's a simple way to make a big difference."

Joanne Henderson, mum of two from Holywood, is an Action Cancer Ambassador having been diagnosed with breast cancer at the age of 42. Joanne added:

"Action Cancer saved my life through early breast cancer detection. I had no signs or symptoms and have no idea how long



before I would have noticed anything. I may not have reached the age of 50 for my first mammogram with

the NHS.

"Please get together with your loved ones, spread awareness and support this wonderful cause.

The funds raised by your BBQ could save the life of a local woman in your community, someone

just like me."

For a Breast Friends Fundraising Pack, which includes special pink themed recipes created by Romilly, please email breastfriendsbbq@actioncancer.org or call Lisa McClenaghan on 028 9080 3361.

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Intergenerational Celebration at Bangor City Hall

Intergeneration event at Bangor City Hall that brought together young people and older residents from across Ards and North Down to celebrate connection, inclusion and empowering communities.

The event marked the finale of a year-long collaboration between Youth Voice Ards and North Down, the Over 50s Council and U3A groups, with support from Linking Generations Northern Ireland. What started as a series of exploratory meetings in April 2024 blossomed into a powerful partnership, bridging generational divides and sparking meaningful dialogue.

One of the standout achievements of the collaboration was the creation of an eight-episode podcast series that was launched during Global Intergenerational Week in April on Spotify. It explores themes of age, identity and community, and aims to inspire both younger and older generations to build stronger, more connected lives.

The Intergeneration Event featured interactive workshops, storytelling sessions and a showcase of the podcast and campaign materials. Attendees left the event inspired by the creativity, compassion and commitment on display.



The Mayor of Ards and North Down, Councillor Gillian McCollum, said: “This event was an excellent example of what can happen when generations come together with open hearts and shared goals. By working together, the future of our Borough is brighter and everyone in Ards and North Down can feel a sense of belonging.”

The event also highlighted two major youth-led campaigns: SEND Campaign: Promoting Inclusion and Understanding Recognising a gap in awareness around Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), Youth Voice members developed a comprehensive campaign to promote inclusion and acceptance. The initiative aims to foster a borough where all young people, regardless of ability, feel that they are seen, supported, and empowered.

Mental Health Campaign: Empowering Young Ambassadors Another group of passionate young advocates focused on mental health, initially addressing challenges faced by young men before expanding their efforts to support all youth. In partnership with Action Mental Health, they completed a six-week Mental Health Ambassador programme, equipping them with tools to support peers and signpost vital services.

For more information, including links to the podcast series, visit www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk/YouthVoiceAND.

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.

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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.

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MAYOR OF ARDS AND NORTH DOWN, COUNCILLOR GILLIAN MCCOLLUM, ANNOUNCES CHOSEN CHARITIES

The Mayor of Ards and North Down, Councillor Gillian McCollum, has announced the three charities she will support during her term of office: Orchardville, St Vincent de Paul, and North Down & Ards Women's Aid.

Commenting on her choices, the Mayor said: "I am proud to support these three charities, each of which provides vital assistance to the people of

Ards and North Down. The work they do within our Borough is invaluable. The overarching theme of my upcoming year as Mayor is that of belonging.

"As a former school governor, chair of several PTAs, and through my work with volunteers and local charitable organisations, I believe passionately in the power of community and what can be achieved when we work together. I look forward to hosting fundraising events throughout the year and would love for as many people as possible to

get involved. With your support, we can help make a positive difference."

Orchardville is a Northern Ireland-based charity that supports young people and adults with a learning disability or autism to live, learn and work. Established in 1982 by a group of parents, it is now one of the leading providers of services for people with disabilities in Northern Ireland.

With a vision of an inclusive society for all, Orchardville works in partnership with participants to support

their independence and employability. The charity offers a range of opportunities including employment services, community day programmes, and social groups that help participants become more confident, independent, and healthy.

Founded in 1833 by a group of students in Paris, the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul was inspired by the life and work of St Vincent de Paul. The organisation quickly expanded, with the first groups in Ireland established in 1844 and a local presence in Newtownards from 1893. Today, SVP operates in 130 countries worldwide.

Saint Vincent de Paul is a volunteer-led organisation that believes everyone should have the means to live with dignity. Within Ards and North Down, there are six local groups – two in Bangor and one each in Newtownards, Holywood, Portaferry, and Kircubbin. The organisation provides practical assistance to individuals and families experiencing financial



The Mayor of Ards and North Down, Councillor Gillian McCollum, with Lydia Lynas (Orchardville), Sean Johnston (St Vincent de Paul) and Emalyn Turkington (North Down & Ards Women's Aid).

hardship. This support includes help with food, gas, electricity, essential white goods, and clothing.

North Down & Ards Women's Aid is a local charity that provides support and protection to women, children and young people affected by domestic abuse. Established in 1982, the organisation offers confidential, non-judgemental services that aim to empower those affected and help them rebuild their lives.

Services include emergency refuge accommodation, floating support in the community and specialised programmes for children and young people who have witnessed or experienced abuse. Women's Aid also works in the community to raise awareness about domestic abuse and promote safe, healthy relationships.

Every year, North Down & Ards Women's Aid supports hundreds of women and children across the Borough. Their work

plays a vital role in creating safer communities and offering hope and support to those most in need.

All funds raised throughout the Mayoral year will be divided among the three charities. To make a donation, visit: www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk/MayorsCharityDonation.


For more information on upcoming fundraising events or how to get involved, contact the Mayor's Office: 0300 013 3333 or mayors.office@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk.

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LIVE HERE LOVE HERE SCHEME RETURNS

Northern Ireland’s largest community and civic pride campaign, Live Here Love Here, has announced the return of its Small Grants Scheme for 2025, following a successful year in Ards and North Down Borough Council, where 14 local projects were awarded a total of £32,376 in funding.

Throughout 2024, volunteers contributed an impressive 1,554 hours, demonstrating the vital role of community effort in tackling environmental challenges and promoting local stewardship.

Delivered in partnership with ten local councils, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, and Belfast Harbour, applications for the 2025 Small Grants Scheme are open until August 18. Community and volunteer groups, schools, not-for-profit organisations, and un-constituted groups are invited to apply, with successful applications awarded grants from £500 to £3,000.

Projects funded last year in Ards and North Down Borough Council included initiatives by Bangor Foodbank & Community Support, North Down YMCA, Millisle Health & Wellbeing Group, Peninsula Healthy Living Partnership, Holywood Shared Town, Portaferry in Bloom, and Victoria PS Ballyhalbert, all working towards transforming shared spaces, enhancing biodiversity, and strengthening local engagement.

Crawfordsburn Primary School Garden received a



grant to support planting trees and shrubs, tools, pond dipping kits, and other materials. The school gardening club came together to transform waste ground into a more enjoyable and engaging space for the school community. They enhanced existing facilities, including the school pond, to encourage wildlife and help children learn through hands-on experiences. The project also opened up the area around the pond for

wildlife investigation and expanded the vegetable garden to promote sustainability and community involvement.

The Small Grants Scheme had a record-breaking year in 2024, awarding £196,342 to 115 projects across Northern Ireland. With 4,500 volunteers revitalising neglected spaces, the scheme has supported environmental improvements, civic pride, and community wellbeing

across the region.

Live Here Love Here is currently hosting Connecting Communities events across Northern Ireland, offering opportunities to meet local volunteers and learn more about applying to the 2025 Scheme.

To apply for the Small Grants Scheme, or for more information on the Connecting Communities Events, visit liveherelovehere.org/smallgrants.



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Are you claiming financial support towards childcare for school aged children?

Working parents can get help with wraparound childcare costs for older children.

Employers For Childcare

Many working parents find it challenging to manage and afford childcare for children who are at school. Organising the morning drop-off and the afternoon pick-ups, and the childcare required to allow parents to be in work on time in the mornings and also be able to work into the late afternoon. This is often referred to as 'wraparound' childcare as it wraps around the school day.

In addition, there is the added complication of childcare that is required when schools are closed, whether for the weeks of school holidays or for those one-off days of closure that happen during each term, as well as perhaps having other younger or older children requiring a different form of childcare.

Find out what financial support is available

Many parents don't

realise that there is help available with the cost of registered childcare for older children. This can include some wraparound childcare such as breakfast or after school clubs, as well as registered childminders and day nurseries. Parents may be paying a number of different providers to meet their childcare requirements and may be able to get financial support through Universal Credit, Childcare Vouchers or Tax-Free Childcare plus the Northern Ireland Childcare Subsidy Scheme to help meet their bills. Eligible parents can claim support through any of these schemes for children under the age of 12, however for older children below the age of 16 only Universal Credit and Childcare Vouchers offer support, unless the child is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance,



Finding suitable childcare

The Family Support NI website www.familysupportni.gov.uk is a useful resource for families looking for registered childcare and includes a search function for all registered childcare providers across Northern Ireland. This includes some breakfast and after-school clubs and also information on day nurseries and childminders who offer transport to and from school. It's worth

speaking to your local primary school to see what childcare it may offer and whether it accepts Tax-Free Childcare, the NI Childcare Subsidy Scheme or Childcare Vouchers as forms of payment.

Further information

To find out more about what financial support you are entitled to towards childcare, contact Employers For Childcare's Family Benefits Advice Service on 028 9267 8200 or email hello@employersforchildcare.org.

NORTH DOWN AND ARDS WOMEN'S AID

North Down and Ards Women's Aid work with women, children and young people affected by domestic and sexual abuse.

We currently have funding to deliver our Safe Relationship Awareness Project which works to educate young people about the dynamics of healthy relationships and the warning signs of abuse to develop a project committed to ensuring young people have the tools to navigate relationships safely.

The project is delivered over a six-week period, comprising of weekly hour-long sessions, each delving into various aspects of relationship dynamics. There are a multitude of topics covered across the six-week period, all chosen to align with the needs of young people as well as the current societal issues that can impact our understanding of relationships.

We explore what a healthy and unhealthy relationship can look like, educate on forms of abuse and coercive control, tackle the

SAFE Relationships

AWARENESS PROJECT

6-week course

*featuring true stories of our service users depicted by actors

Women's Aid

NORTH DOWN & ARDS

influences of social media and technology abuse, discuss the lines of consent all while ensuring the space is kept safe and open for discussions. This project is completed in groups, which can be a great advantage for learning but also creating a safe space for attendees to share experiences.

We have received fantastic feedback from students and teachers about their experience of the Safe Relationship Awareness Project to date and we look forward to continuing on this work in the months ahead. We hope to continue the education of our young people as when it comes to

relationships, knowledge truly is power and through this work we plan to continue the empowerment of the next generation.

If any school, youth group or community organisation are interested in The Safe Relationship Awareness Project, please contact our Bangor office on 028 9127 3196.

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Autism NI celebrates 35 years of inclusion

Northern Ireland's longest serving autism charity, Autism NI, celebrates its 35th anniversary this month, marking over three decades of advocacy, campaigning and support services for autistic people and their families.

Autism NI's CEO, Kerry Boyd, said: "I am proud to say that Autism NI was the first autism charity established in Northern Ireland, founded in 1990, at a time when very little was known, or understood, about autism. The Charity's work back then was very much pioneering, and the staff team had to navigate an environment and system that was not familiar, or ready, to support the needs of autistic people.

There are so many 'firsts' that Autism NI was at the forefront of, and we are all very proud to have been part of that journey, including the successful lobby for the first autism specific legislation for Northern Ireland, the Autism Act (NI) in 2011. The passing of this legislation was a real turning point for the Charity in realising its vision of creating a better future for our autistic community – one where autistic people can thrive and reach their full potential. Our legacy of leading the way and driving positive change, still runs through the heart of our work today. But we could never have existed without the support of our incredible families, volunteers, staff, and supporters who have helped to build, develop and expand this Charity over the years.

Vice-Chair, Anne Hayward, said: "It's amazing to see Autism NI reach such a milestone. The invaluable

work the Charity has done over the decades has changed so many lives, including my own.

To find out more about Autism NI and its support services, please visit www.autismni.org

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MAKING WAVES IN NORTHERN IRELAND

H2O Swimming Academy Expands Across the Region

Since opening its doors in 2016, H2O Swimming Academy has grown into one of Northern Ireland's most trusted names in swimming education. With a reputation for high-quality teaching and a strong focus on individual progress, the academy now operates in six locations across the region, including its popular centres in Belfast Holywood and Bangor.

From Parent & Toddler sessions (3–36 months) that encourage early water confidence, to children's learn-to-swim classes (ages 3+), adult swimming lessons, and private 1:1 instruction, there's something for everyone – whether you're just starting out or looking to improve technique. The Bangor location specialises in children's swimming lessons from age 3+, providing young swimmers with a safe, fun, and structured

learning environment. What sets H2O apart is its commitment to small class sizes – with a maximum of six swimmers per class – allowing instructors to give focused, personalised support. This structure not only helps boost confidence but also accelerates skill development. "At H2O, we're passionate about giving every swimmer the chance to feel safe, confident, and happy in the water," said a

spokesperson for the academy. "We believe that learning to swim is an essential life skill – and it should be enjoyable too!" Whether you're looking for your child's first splash or you're an adult seeking to conquer a fear of water, H2O Swimming Academy combines professionalism with a warm, welcoming approach that gets real results. For more information or to book, visit www.h2oswimming.com

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Milne adds two more sites to Holiday Park Portfolio

Milne Holiday Parks has recently expanded its portfolio with the exciting acquisition of two new holiday parks, now known collectively as Groomsport Bay.

This significant development further solidifies Milne Holiday Parks' position as the leading provider of high-quality holiday destinations along the stunning Northern Irish coastline.

Milne Holiday Parks now boasts a collection of seven beach-front parks, offering an enviable selection of locations for those dreaming of owning a home by the Sea. The addition of

Groomsport Bay complements their existing parks: Cranfield Bay, Mourneview, Silvercove, Pebble Beach, Cranfield House and Shanslieve All 12x month holiday parks. Each of these parks offers unique characteristics and access to the beautiful beaches and landscapes that Northern Ireland is renowned for.

The appeal of owning a holiday home at a Milne

Holiday Park is further enhanced by the attractive financial options available. Prospective owners can step into their dream with deposits starting from as little as 10%. Flexible finance options are available at low rates, making holiday home ownership more accessible than ever. This allows families and individuals to invest in a lifestyle of relaxation and coastal enjoyment with-



Cranfield Bay Caravan Park

out undue financial strain.

Currently, Milne Holiday Parks offers an impressive selection of over 200 new and pre-owned holiday homes for sale. This extensive range ensures that there is something to suit various tastes and budgets. Adding to the appeal, Milne Holiday Parks is currently offering free site fees for 2025 & 2026 on new purchases, representing a significant £6000 saving for new owners. This limited-time offer presents a compelling reason to explore the opportunities available at their six beach-front locations.

Owners at Milne Holiday Parks can enjoy their holiday homes ALL Year Round, allowing for extended breaks and the flexibility to visit whenever they desire. This extended

season maximizes the value of ownership and allows for enjoyment across different seasons, from summer beach days to cosy autumn retreats and refreshing spring escapes with the added bonus of being able to rent out their holiday homes with great returns.

For those interested in learning more about owning a holiday home at any of the Milne Holiday Parks, including the new Groomsport Bay, further information can be found on their website: www.milneholidayparks.com. Additionally, individuals can text "HOLIDAY HOME" to 07860 617 616 to request a call-back and speak directly with a representative who can provide personalised assistance and details on available properties and financing options.

MOURNE LIVING CELEBRATES STORE OPENING WITH BIG PRIZE GIVEAWAY

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SCAN ME

HALLOWEEN IS COMING ...

With its rich folklore and stunning landscapes, Northern Ireland is the perfect place to embrace the autumn season with your family.

The cooler, crisp weather and changing colours create an ideal atmosphere for outdoor adventures, spooky fun, and celebrating the harvest. From picking your own pumpkins to navigating a corn maze, here's a guide to some of the best family-friendly autumn activities across Northern Ireland.

Pumpkin Patches and Halloween Fun

Picking your own pumpkin has become a cherished autumn

tradition for many families. These events often offer more than just a chance to find the perfect gourd; they also include fun activities like spooky trails and face painting.

Mountpanther Farm Park in County Down hosts a large Halloween event with a pumpkin patch where you can pick and have your pumpkin carved. They also have a spooky trail and other surprises.

Streamvale Open

Farm, located just outside Belfast, is well-known for its pumpkin patch experience, which includes a "Broomtastic Disco" and a haunted house.

The Ark Open Farm in Newtownards also opens its pumpkin patch for the spooky season, often featuring a Halloween trail and marshmallow toasting.

Northern Ireland, particularly County Armagh, is famous for its Bramley apples,

which have PGI (Protected Geographical Indication) status. While traditional "pick-your-own" apple farms are not common, you can still celebrate the apple harvest at various events and farms.

Look for orchard tours and tasting experiences at places like Long Meadow Cider in Portadown. These visits often give families a chance to learn about the history of apple growing, see the orchards, and

sometimes even taste the freshest apples right from the tree.

For those looking for a bigger spectacle, Northern Ireland has some fantastic Halloween festivals.

Derry Halloween is arguably Europe's largest Halloween festival, a multi-day event that transforms the city into a hub of spooky celebration. It's a fantastic experience with a large carnival parade, fireworks, and a

"Awakening the Walled City" trail that's suitable for families.

Smaller, local events in cities like Newry also offer family-friendly fun

with street carnivals, craft caves, and spooky discos.

Lisburn to Host Prestigious ITF Taekwon-Do Championships

Taekwon-Do Northern Ireland is gearing up to host the highly anticipated 2025 ITF Taekwon-Do Northern Ireland Championship, an invitation-only event set to showcase some of the world's finest martial arts talent.

The championship will take place on Sunday, September 21st, at the National Badminton Centre in Lisburn.

Grandmasters, Masters, Instructors, Coaches, Competitors, and Spectators are all cordially invited to participate in what promises to be a historic display of Taekwon-Do skills. The event is open to a wide range of participants,

including Juniors (6-17 years), Adults (18-34 years), and Veterans (35 years & above). All competitors must hold a rank from Green Belt (6th Kup) to Black Belt (6th Degree).

Organizers are strongly urging prospective competitors to register early to secure their spot, as the championship is expected to be well-attended.

Master Leo Maguire, President of Taekwon-Do Northern Ireland, expressed his delight in welcoming participants: "We look forward to welcoming you all to enjoy a one-day display of Taekwon-Do skills from some of the very best ITF Taekwon-Do athletes in the World."

The National Badminton Centre, located conveniently close to Belfast and Lisburn, offers

participants the opportunity to experience the rich culture and history of Northern Ireland.

The championship schedule for Sunday, September 21st, will run from 10:00 AM to 8:00 PM, with categories structured as follows:

- All Junior Belts (Under 18 Years of age): Green Belt, Blue Belt, Red Belt, and Black Belt (6th Kup to 3rd Dan).

- All Adults (18-34 Years): Green Belt, Blue Belt, Red Belt, and Black Belt (6th Kup to 6th Dan).

- All Veterans (35 Years & Above): Green Belt, Blue Belt, Red Belt, and Black Belt (6th Kup to 6th Dan).

For those interested in exploring Taekwon-Do in Northern Ireland, a full list of classes across the region can be found by visiting www.taekwondo-ni.co.uk.



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PLANNING YOUR PERFECT AUTUMN GETAWAY

As the vibrant greens of summer begin to mellow into a kaleidoscope of fiery reds, rustic oranges, and golden yellows, Northern Ireland transforms into an enchanting autumn wonderland.

With crisp air, fewer crowds, and a magical quality to the light, it's an ideal time to explore its dramatic coastlines, ancient landscapes,

and charming cities. If you're dreaming of a cozy and captivating escape, here's how to plan your perfect autumn getaway in Northern Ireland.

Beyond the breathtaking foliage, autumn offers several advantages for visitors:

- **Stunning Scenery:** From the Sperrin Mountains to the Glens of Antrim, the natural landscapes are ablaze with colour, offering incredible photographic opportunities.
- **Fewer Crowds:** Popular attractions, while still accessible, are generally less busy than in the peak summer months, allowing for a more relaxed experience.
- **Cozy Vibes:** Think roaring fires in traditional pubs, hearty local food, and a sense of warmth and welcome that perfectly complements the cooler weather.

• **Harvest Festivals & Events:** Many towns and villages host harvest festivals, food events, and cultural gatherings throughout the autumn, offering a taste of local life.

Northern Ireland might be compact, but it's packed with diverse regions, each offering unique autumn experience.

The Causeway Coast & Glens: This iconic stretch of coastline is spectacular at any time of year, but autumn adds an extra layer of drama.

- **Giant's Causeway:** Witness the hexagonal basalt columns against a backdrop of autumnal hues and crashing waves.
- **Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge:** The walk to the bridge offers stunning coastal views, made even more vibrant by the changing leaves.
- **Dark Hedges:** Famous from Game



of Thrones, these intertwined beech trees are particularly atmospheric in autumn, especially with morning mist or a golden sunset.

• **Glenariff Forest Park:** Known as the "Queen of the Glens," its waterfalls and walking trails are magnificent amidst the autumnal colours.

The Mourne Mountains: For hikers and nature lovers, the Mournes are a must-visit.

Explore the numerous trails, from gentle rambles to challenging ascents, all offering panoramic views of the golden landscape and coastline.

• **Tollymore Forest Park:** A truly magical spot with ancient trees, follies, and the Shimna River, all bathed in autumn's glow.

Fermanagh Lakelands: Discover a serene landscape of shimmering loughs and ancient islands.

• **Lough Erne:** Take a boat trip to explore monastic sites like Devenish Island, surrounded by the peaceful autumn scenery.

• **Marble Arch Caves Global Geopark:** While underground, the surrounding landscape of Cuilcagh Mountain is stunning for autumnal walks.

Belfast & Derry/Londonderry: These vibrant cities offer a blend of history, culture,

and excellent food.

• **Belfast Botanic Gardens:** A peaceful oasis showcasing beautiful autumnal displays.

• **Ulster Folk & Transport Museum:** Experience traditional rural life and see how autumn harvests were celebrated in days gone by.

• **Derry/Londonderry City Walls:** Walk the historic walls and admire the city and surrounding Foyle Valley bathed in autumn light.

Autumn in Northern Ireland is a truly magical experience. With careful planning, you can immerse yourself in its stunning natural beauty, rich history, and warm hospitality, creating memories that will last long after the golden leaves have fallen. So pack your bags, embrace the crisp air, and prepare to be enchanted!

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Lord of the Flies

JV Allister asks if the common horse fly is predator or hero?

It's a hot day in late summer some years ago. You're cutting your lawn, or if you're a farmer you're saving late hay or harvesting barley, flies whizzing around your head, attracted to your sweat, and then it strikes, and you yelp. Cleg attack!

It's likely that clegs as they're known in Scotland and Ulster are in decline, along with other insects through loss of habitat and the impact of intensive farming, but common horse flies as they're properly named, and flies in general, have been around for millions of years, an integral part of our connected environment.

We take flies for granted and sometimes want to kill them if they annoy us, but they're important to our eco system, for instance having emerged as pollinators of plants even before bees evolved.

And they're important to natural recycling. You see, we didn't invent recycling as we know it over the past few decades, nature has been doing it for eons. Many flies are attracted to decaying matter, animal or vegetable, feeding and laying the eggs that produce larvae. Without flies, fungi and other organisms that recycle and convert dead and decaying matter, we'd have serious threats to our health and wellbeing.

Incidentally, there are approximately 150,000 fly species globally, from fruit flies to mosquitoes and bluebottles, so they're not just prolific and necessary to our nature systems, but successful, otherwise they wouldn't be around in such numbers.

But back to clegs aka common horse flies, which are less interested in decaying matter than... blood! While they mostly feed on nectar and plant juices in damp grassy areas, the females need blood to produce eggs, and so prey on cattle, and horses of course, and sometimes humans. That annoying bite on your bare wrist, ankle or neck will be painful, but because of the decline in our insect population it will be increasingly rare.

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Embrace the Autumn Splendour: Tips for Your Next Walk

Autumn is arguably one of the most beautiful seasons for outdoor exploration. Here are some tips to make your autumn walks even more enjoyable:

1. Time it Right: The peak of autumn colour varies each year and by region, but generally, late September to mid-November offers the best chances in many temperate climates.

2. Seek Out Deciduous Woodlands: While urban parks can offer glimpses of colour, dedicated woodlands and forests will provide the most immersive and spectacular autumnal experience. Look for areas with a variety of tree species for a diverse palette.

3. Go on a Sunny Day (with a bit of chill): Bright sunshine will make the colours pop and truly glow. The best days for viewing often follow crisp, cool nights (which help promote anthocyanin production).

4. Look for Water Features: Lakes, rivers, and ponds create stunning reflections of the colourful foliage, doubling the beauty.

5. Dress in Layers: Autumn weather can be unpredictable. Layers will allow you to adjust to changing temperatures throughout your walk. Don't forget waterproofs in case of an unexpected shower.

6. Wear Sturdy, Comfortable Footwear: Trails can be wet, muddy, or covered in fallen leaves, which can be slippery. Good walking shoes or boots are essential.

7. Bring a Camera: You'll want to capture the breathtaking beauty. Experiment with different angles and lighting to get the best shots.

8. Pack a Flask and Snacks: A warm drink (tea, coffee, or hot chocolate) and some autumnal treats (like apples or flapjacks) can enhance your walk, especially on a cooler day.

9. Engage Your Senses: Beyond the visual feast, autumn offers a symphony of other sensations. Listen to the satisfying crunch of leaves underfoot,
- can breathe in the earthy scent of damp soil and decaying leaves, and feel the crisp air on your cheeks.

10. Leave No Trace: Remember to stick to marked paths, take only photographs, and leave the natural environment as you found it for others to enjoy.

So, as the days shorten and the air grows crisp, pull on your walking boots and head outdoors. The fleeting, vibrant beauty of autumn's foliage is a spectacle not to be missed, a true celebration of nature's artistry before winter's slumber.

HANNON Coach & Sail is perfect for a city break in Glasgow!

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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.

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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 for a shopping trip. There are also a great range of hotels just minutes from Glasgow Buchanan Bus Station.

Company director Aodh Hannon says people seem to really love the convenience of the service as we take you right into the heart of the city centre.

"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," said Mr Hannon.

The service can be booked online at www.hannoncoach.com up to 1 hour before departure or by phone using the very friendly telephone booking service.

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PEOPLE IN NI TOO BUSY TO MAINTAIN HEALTH, ACCORDING TO NEW RESEARCH

More than half (54%) of people in Northern Ireland are too busy to stay on top of their health and almost half (47%) have missed or delayed a health appointment, according to new research.

Dental exams (19%), eye checks (22%) and GP visits (15%) were the most missed or delayed appointments, with 'work commitments' as the most cited reason why (45%). Others referenced difficulty getting an appointment (18%) or waiting until they had a symptom before booking (11%).

Now an expert is urging the public not to put health on the back burner. Stuart Douglas, Director and Ophthalmic Optician at Specsavers Bangor in Bloomfield Shopping Centre, commented: "When life gets hectic, it's all too easy to push check-ups to the bottom of your list, but your health should never be ignored, including your eyesight."

"Not all conditions have obvious symptoms, so seeing the optician or dentist only when you're experiencing changes won't enable these to be identified and treated early."

"Glaucoma, for example, can develop slowly over time without



any obvious symptoms, meaning many people don't realise there's a problem until irreversible damage to their vision has already been done.

"That's why regular eye checks are so important – they're not just about checking your vision; they're a vital part of catching conditions like glaucoma early."

Despite glaucoma being one of the most common eye conditions, people know little about the condition. 54% vaguely knew the signs and

symptoms, while 22% knew almost nothing about the condition at all.

The research, commissioned by Specsavers, also revealed that people across NI have health problems they've not yet checked out – including dental concerns (9%), vision or eye health issues (11%) and mobility or joint pain (24%).

Despite this, around one in five haven't had an eye test (22%) in the past two years and 7% haven't had a dental check in the last five years.

The research also uncovered other areas adults skip over because they've been short of time, which included getting a full night's sleep (28%) and drinking enough water (17%).

Of those who don't prioritise their own health, 38% put their children's needs first, while 19% put financial planning and budgeting at the top of the priorities list. 33% say they need less work stress to prioritise their health, while a further 21% are simply wishing for 'more hours in the day'.

Stuart Douglas added: "It's easy to let health checks slide when you're juggling a busy schedule, but looking after your eyesight is something you simply can't afford to ignore."

"A quick and simple eye check every couple of years – or more often if you're at higher risk – could protect you from serious long-term consequences such as avoidable vision loss."

"Your vision is one of your most precious senses, and it deserves your attention."

To book an eye check at Specsavers Bangor, Bloomfield Shopping Centre, visit www.specsavers.co.uk/stores/bangorbloomfield or call 028 9145 5001.

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destinations across the globe, and hear firsthand from passionate experts ready to guide you every step of the way. The show is divided into three distinct areas to make your day seamless and inspiring – Explore, Dream & Discover.

Start your journey in the Explore area, located in the Robinson Suite, with sessions tailored especially for those new to cruising or interested in exotic regions such as Asia and the South Pacific. Note, you will need a booking to access these sessions, so for more information, please contact: events@oasis-travel.co.uk.

Next, move to the Dream space in the Stuart Suite, the heart of the exhibition, where you



can sit down with cruise line representatives and make your bookings. Finally, the Discover space, located in the Hollywood Suite which offers lively, no-booking-required presentations that highlight what makes each cruise brand unique.

With exclusive deals,

insider knowledge, and a world of possibilities waiting, the Northern Ireland Cruise Show is your passport to adventure.

The world is waiting - are you ready? Visit Oasis-Travel.co.uk to secure your FREE tickets.

AUTUMN TASKS IN THE HOME

Autumn cleaning is about creating a cosy, functional, and organised space for the winter months.

Focus on tasks that ready your home for the cold.

- **Windows and Doors:** Check all windows and doors for drafts. Apply weather stripping or caulk where needed to prevent heat from escaping. This will help you save on heating bills. Clean the windows inside and out before the weather gets too cold and wet.
- **Heating System:** Have your furnace or boiler serviced by a professional to ensure it's running efficiently and safely. Clean or replace the filters in your furnace. Bleed your radiators to remove trapped air, which allows



them to heat up more effectively.

- **Fireplace and Chimney:** If you have a fireplace, get the chimney cleaned to prevent fire hazards from soot and creosote buildup. Stock up on wood or other fuel.

- **Gutters and Downspouts:** Clean out any leaves and debris from your gutters before the rainy season begins. Clogged gutters can lead to water damage to your roof and foundation.
- **Outdoor Furniture and Garden:** Clean

and cover your patio furniture. Store any cushions indoors. Mow the lawn for the last time and plant bulbs for spring flowers. Drain garden hoses and turn off outdoor faucets to prevent pipes from freezing and bursting



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AUGUST & SEPTEMBER 2025 FESTIVALS AND EVENTS

As summer transitions into autumn, County Down, Northern Ireland, bursts with vibrant events and festivals throughout August and September 2025.

From world-class music to local food celebrations, historical insights, and family fun, there's something to captivate every visitor.

August: A Month of Music, Arts, and Outdoor Adventures

August in County Down is particularly rich in cultural offerings, with Bangor taking centre stage for arts and music.

Clandeboyne Festival (August 16th-23rd, Clandeboyne Estate, Bangor): This esteemed classical music festival returns to the historic surroundings of the Clandeboyne Estate.

Founded by acclaimed pianist Barry Douglas, the festival promises a week of captivating concerts and performances exploring "Aspects of Summer." Audiences can expect a distinguished roster of artists, including violinists Tatiana Samouil and Michael d'Arcy, cellist Arto Noras, and pianists Julie Alcaraz and Gustavo Díaz-Jerez. A highlight is the "Celtic Orbit" performance, a unique collaboration featuring Barry Douglas with Irish flautist Eimear McGeown, harpist Catriona McKay, and fiddle player Chris Stout. Advance booking is

highly recommended.

Open House Festival (Throughout August, Bangor): Bangor truly comes alive for the entire month of August with the Open House Festival. This non-profit festival offers a diverse programme of free and ticketed events celebrating music, film, and theatre. From intimate gigs to larger performances, the festival transforms various venues across the seaside town, including Bangor Castle Walled Garden and The Court House. Keep an eye on their programme for specific dates and acts.

Beyond the major festivals, August offers a range of ongoing activities and family-friendly experiences:

Donaghadee Summer Festival (Ongoing until September 21st, Donaghadee): This bumper summer festival continues into August with a mix of beloved returning events and new additions across various locations in and around Donaghadee.

Sir Samuel Kelly Project (Ongoing until September 30th, Donaghadee): Visit

the Sir Samuel Kelly Lifeboat at Marina Carpark and explore an exhibition detailing its fascinating story.

Dragonfly Festival (Ongoing until September 21st, WWT Castle Espie Wetland Centre, Comber): Make special family memories at WWT's first-ever Dragonfly Festival, offering a chance to connect with nature.

Discover Groomsport - Walking Tours (Ongoing until September 13th, Groomsport): Join local ambassadors for free walking tours, delving into the amazing history of Groomsport village.

Inspiration and Transformation Exhibition (Until August 31st, North Down Museum, Bangor): Explore an exciting new exhibition showcasing the works of County Down artists, celebrating the region's long history of artistic expression.

Summer Camps and Outdoor Adventures: Throughout August, several multi-activity summer schemes are available, such as the Strangford Lough

Activity Centre Summer Scheme (until August 21st, Killinchy) and Kids Summer Adventure Camp (various dates, Rostrevor). For animal lovers, Cranfield Alpacas in Kilkeel offers various alpaca adventure and field walk experiences, while the Slievenaman Goat Trail and Petting Farm in Newcastle provides a unique countryside adventure with breathtaking Mourne Mountain views.

Summer of Play at Castle Ward (Until August 31st, Downpatrick): Experience a summer of medieval adventure with thrilling challenges, interactive quests, and fantasy fun at Castle Ward.

September: Culinary Delights and Autumnal Entertainment

As the leaves begin to turn, September in County Down brings a focus on food and a continuation of cultural events.

Eats and Beats Festival (September 6th-7th, Newcastle): This highly anticipated festival returns to Newcastle, offering a vibrant celebration of food



and music. With two live music stages showcasing local and international talent, and an array of locally sourced produce, artisanal delights, and live cookery demonstrations, it's a feast for the senses.

Entry is free, with select ticketed events for cookery demonstrations and VIP experiences.

Newcastle Restaurant Week (September 1st-7th, Newcastle): Leading up to and coinciding with Eats and Beats, Newcastle Restaurant Week provides an opportunity to sample special dishes made with local seafood, farm-fresh vegetables, and homemade desserts at participating eateries.

Other notable events in September include:

LUX Beginners Jewellery Making Workshop (Various dates in September, Hollywood): Unleash your creativity and learn the art of jewellery making in a fun and relaxing workshop setting.

Paddy Raff - Here's One for Ya! (September 13th, Down Arts Centre, Downpatrick): Catch Northern Irish comedian Paddy Raff on his successful tour, promising more comedy songs and hilarious tales.

Grant Thornton Race Evening (September 5th, Down Royal Racecourse, Lisburn): Enjoy a thrilling day out at the races with family and friends.

Comic Con Northern Ireland (September 6th-7th, Eikon Exhibition Centre, Lisburn):

A fantastic event for families and fans of pop culture, with a wide range of activities and attractions.

Garden Workshops (Ongoing until September 14th, Hillsborough Castle & Gardens, Royal Hillsborough): Join expert gardeners for hands-on workshops in the idyllic setting of Hillsborough Castle's gardens.

Scarva Band Concerts (Ongoing until September 28th, Scarva Bandstand): Enjoy free outdoor band concerts every Sunday afternoon.

Forest-bathing (September 28th, Killeavy Castle Estate): Deepen your connection with nature through a calming and restorative forest-bathing experience.

Downpatrick Racecourse Fixtures (September 19th, Downpatrick): Another opportunity to enjoy the excitement of live horse racing, followed by live music.

County Down in August and September 2025 promises an abundance of experiences, from captivating cultural festivals to outdoor adventures and culinary delights. Be sure to check individual event listings for specific times, ticketing information, and any updates. Plan your visit to this beautiful part of Northern Ireland and immerse yourself in its vibrant autumnal offerings!



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Embracing Outdoor Workouts in Cooler Weather

As the days get shorter and the air turns crisp, it's easy to retreat indoors and let your fitness routine hibernate for the winter.

But autumn is a fantastic season for outdoor exercise. The cooler temperatures can make high-intensity workouts more comfortable, and the beautiful scenery—think vibrant changing leaves and golden sunlight—provides a refreshing backdrop that can boost your mood and motivation.

The Benefits of Exercising Outdoors in Autumn

Working out in the autumn air offers unique advantages. The cooler climate helps your body regulate its temperature more efficiently, which can improve endurance and prevent overheating during intense sessions. A brisk autumn walk or run can feel invigorating, and the natural light exposure can help combat seasonal mood changes. The changing landscape also provides a visual feast that makes your workout feel less like a chore and more like an enjoyable experience.

Tips for Staying Safe and Comfortable

To make the most of your outdoor autumn workouts, a little preparation goes a long way.

- Dress in Layers: This is the golden rule of cold-weather exercise. Start with a moisture-wicking base layer to draw sweat away from your skin, a middle layer for insulation (like a fleece or wool), and a wind-resistant or waterproof outer layer. As you warm up, you can shed layers.

- Protect Your Extremities: Your hands, feet, and ears are most susceptible to the cold. Wear gloves or mittens, thermal socks, and a hat or ear warmers.

- Stay Hydrated: Just because it's cooler doesn't mean you don't need to drink water. You can still become dehydrated, so carry a water bottle with you.

- Choose the Right Footwear: As the ground may be wet or covered in leaves, opt for shoes with good traction. If you're running, consider trail shoes for better grip.

- Mind the Daylight: With earlier sunsets, it's crucial to be visible. Wear bright or reflective clothing, and consider a headlamp if you'll be out around dusk or dawn.

Inspiring Autumn Workout Ideas

Don't be limited to your usual routine. Autumn is the perfect time to try something new.

- Trail Running or Hiking: Take to local trails and immerse yourself in the changing colours. The varied terrain will challenge different muscle groups and keep things interesting.

- Outdoor Yoga: Find



a secluded spot in a park and practice your yoga flow surrounded by nature. The serene environment can enhance your sense of calm.

- Raking Leaves (A Fun Challenge): Turn a chore into a workout! Raking leaves is great for your core, arms, and shoulders. For an extra cardio boost, jump into the piles you create with your family or friends.

- Bodyweight Circuits: Use a park bench for incline push-ups or step-ups, a tree for support during lunges, or find an

open field for sprints. The world is your gym! By embracing the beauty and challenges of the season, you can make autumn a time of fitness growth and renewed appreciation for the great outdoors.

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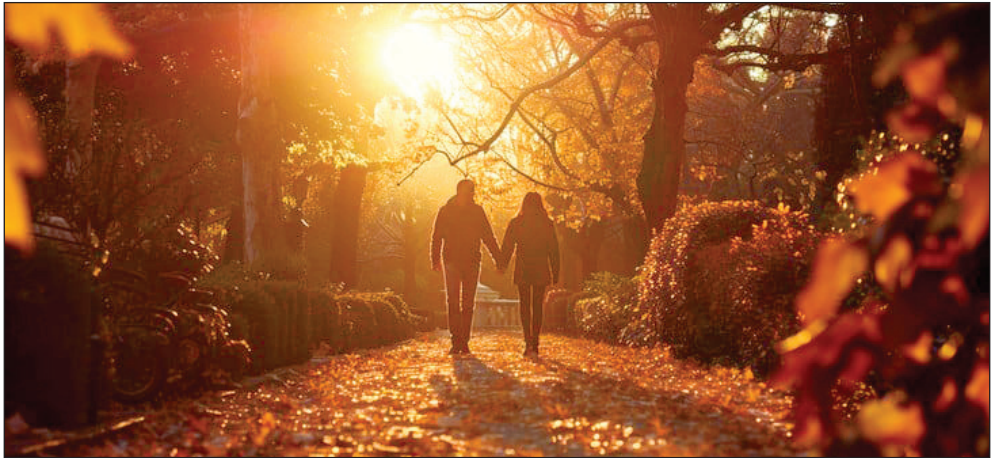
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EMBRACE THE AUTUMN SPLENDOUR: TIPS FOR YOUR NEXT WALK

Autumn is arguably one of the most beautiful seasons for outdoor exploration. Here are some tips to make your autumn walks even more enjoyable:

1. Time it Right: The peak of autumn colour varies each year and by region, but generally, late September to mid-November offers the best chances in many temperate climates.
2. Seek Out Deciduous Woodlands: While urban parks can offer glimpses of colour, dedicated woodlands and forests will provide the most immersive and spectacular autumnal experience. Look for areas with a variety of tree species for a diverse palette.
3. Go on a Sunny Day (with a bit of chill): Bright sunshine will make the colours pop and truly glow. The best days for viewing often follow crisp, cool nights (which help promote anthocyanin production).
4. Look for Water Features: Lakes, rivers, and ponds create stunning reflections of the colourful foliage, doubling the beauty.
5. Dress in Layers: Autumn weather can be unpredictable. Layers will allow you to adjust to changing temperatures throughout your walk. Don't forget waterproofs in case of an unexpected shower.

6. Wear Sturdy, Comfortable Footwear: Trails can be wet, muddy, or covered in fallen leaves, which can be slippery. Good walking shoes or boots are essential.
7. Bring a Camera: You'll want to capture the breathtaking beauty. Experiment with different angles and lighting to get the best shots.
8. Pack a Flask and Snacks: A warm drink (tea, coffee, or hot chocolate) and some autumnal treats (like apples or flapjacks) can enhance your walk, especially on a cooler day.
9. Engage Your Senses: Beyond the



visual feast, autumn offers a symphony of other sensations. Listen to the satisfying crunch of leaves underfoot, breathe in the earthy scent of damp soil and decaying leaves, and feel the crisp air on your cheeks.

10. Leave No Trace: Remember to stick to marked paths, take only photographs, and leave the natural environment as you found it for others to enjoy.

So, as the days shorten and the air grows crisp, pull on your walking boots and head outdoors. The fleeting, vibrant beauty of autumn's foliage is a spectacle not to be missed, a true celebration of nature's artistry before winter's slumber.

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A Guide to Seasonal Autumn Produce

As the vibrant greens of summer fade to earthy tones, a new palette of produce takes centre stage.

Autumn brings a bounty of hearty, nutritious, and delicious fruits and vegetables that are perfect for warming meals and cozy gatherings. Eating seasonally is not only great for flavour, but it can also be more sustainable and economical.

Fruits of the Season

Autumn's fruits are perfect for baking, snacking, and making warming desserts.

Apples: A true autumn staple. With hundreds of varieties, there's an apple for every purpose, from crisp eating apples like Gala and Honeycrisp to firm baking apples such as Granny Smith and Braeburn. How to use them: Beyond the classic apple pie, use them in salads, make homemade applesauce, or roast them with cinnamon and a drizzle of maple syrup for a simple dessert.

Pears: Pears come into their own in the fall. Varieties like Conference and Comice are sweet and juicy when ripe. How to use them: Pears are fantastic poached in red wine or spices, baked into tarts, or sliced into a cheese board for a sophisticated starter.

Plums: Late-season plums are rich in flavor. How to use them: They are excellent for making jam, compotes, or simply roasting with pork or



chicken for a sweet and savory dish.

Vegetables to Enjoy

The vegetables of autumn are robust and versatile, forming the foundation of many comforting dishes.

Squash and Pumpkins: From butternut to acorn and delicate courgettes, squash is the star of autumn. How to use them: Roast cubes of butternut squash with herbs, make a creamy pumpkin soup, or stuff a whole acorn squash with a savory filling of rice and vegetables. Don't forget to toast the seeds for a crunchy snack!

Root Vegetables: Carrots, parsnips, and potatoes are at their peak. How to use them: Roasting these together brings out their natural sweetness. They are also essential for hearty stews, chunky soups, and mashed dishes.

Cabbage and Brussels Sprouts: These cruciferous vegetables thrive in cooler weather. How to use them: Sautéed Brussels sprouts

with bacon and chestnuts are a classic side dish. Shredded cabbage can be used in slaws or braised with apples for a tangy accompaniment.

Mushrooms: Foraged or store-bought, mushrooms like shiitake, cremini, and oyster mushrooms are in abundance. How to use them: Sauté them with garlic and herbs, add them to risottos, or use them as a hearty base for a mushroom gravy.

Herbs and Nuts

Autumn also brings fresh, aromatic herbs and a bounty of nuts.

Herbs: Rosemary, sage, and thyme are perfect for flavouring roasted meats and vegetables. Their earthy notes complement the season's produce beautifully.

Nuts: Walnuts and chestnuts are harvested in the fall. How to use them: Walnuts are great in salads, baking, or as a snack. Roasted chestnuts are a classic autumn treat, either on their own or used in stuffings and purees.

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EFFORTLESSLY ELECTRIC: THE ALL-NEW NISSAN LEAF IS THE EV FOR EVERYONE

Nissan Motor Co, Ltd. Recently launched the all-new LEAF. The third-generation electric vehicle (EV) benefits from over 15 years of real-world insights gained through global sales of nearly 700,000 units.

Beyond appealing to EV intenders, the all-new LEAF provides a compelling alternative for internal combustion engine (ICE) buyers with its substantially increased maximum range, enhanced charging speed and a technology suite that makes daily driving easier and enriches owners lifestyles. The all-new LEAF is targeted to arrive at retailers across the United States from autumn, with other regions to follow. The all-new LEAF embodies Nissan's Timeless Japanese Futurism design with a distinctive Japanese aesthetic conveyed in a simple yet powerfully modern way. A fastback-like silhouette and features such as flush front door handles, aero-tuned wheels and a flat underbody combine to ensure the all-new LEAF not only looks bold and sleek, but also offers a 0.26 drag coefficient for U.S. and Japan models, and an even more impressive 0.25 for European variants.² The interior is spacious with an almost entirely flat floor courtesy of Nissan's CMF-EV platform and the wide horizontal instrument panel appears to be floating. A Nissan-first Dimming Panoramic Roof featuring heat shielding with embedded Polymer Dispersed Liquid Crystal (PDLC) technology allows owners to enjoy natural light and year-round comfort at the touch of a button. The all-new LEAF delivers a responsive, ultra-smooth drive. The all-new, 3-in-1 EV powertrain with an integrated motor, inverter and reducer is



10% smaller than its predecessor and features Nissan's unique motor control, which enhances refinement. The new motor, paired with a new, high-rigidity motor-mount bracket, supports a 75-percent reduction in motor vibration compared to the outgoing model. For select regions, newly available Intelligent Distance Control Assist helps intuitively maintain a set distance from the vehicle in front while driving in city traffic and also optimizes regenerative braking. The all-new LEAF is available with two liquid-cooled lithium-ion battery options, both of which offer thermal conditioning functionality. Select models are powered by batteries with 52 kWh of usable capacity, supporting an output of 130 kW and 345 Nm of torque. Larger 75 kWh batteries are also available, providing 160 kW and 355 Nm of torque. An enhanced thermal recovery and management system harvests heat created by the onboard charger (OBC) to warm up the battery, increasing its regeneration potential in cold weather. Additionally, on applicable grades a new intelligent navigation-linked thermal conditioning function optimizes battery cooling based on the selected drive route. When connected to a fast charger, owners can replenish 10-80% of their charge in as little as 35 minutes. An available Intelligent Route Planner also enhances EV ownership by providing real-time route information, state of charge and identification of convenient charging stations. The all-new LEAF features a comprehensive suite of advanced and innovative driver assist technologies to make daily driving easier and

more intuitive. Beyond providing zero emission mobility, the all-new LEAF offers features and functionality to enhance the lifestyle of owners. Specifically for Europe, the all-new LEAF is Vehicle-to-Grid (V2G) compatible, such that in the future it will be able to send stored energy back to the power grid. This function will help customers reduce energy costs while supporting a more stable and sustainable energy system. The all-new, third generation Nissan LEAF will be assembled at the Tochigi Plant in Japan, as well as at Nissan's state-of-the-art production facility in Sunderland, northeast England. Further details including pricing will be provided closer to the start of sales in each respective market.

KIA EV3 NAMED AUTOTRADER'S CAR OF THE YEAR FOR 2025

The Kia EV3 has collected two major award wins at the Autotrader Drivers' Choice Awards 2025: 'Best Mainstream Electric Car' and overall 'Car of the Year'.

The awards, formerly known as the Autotrader New Car Awards, feature 25 categories. Finalists and overall winners are determined by the real-world opinions of more than 225,000 UK car owners, who completed an online survey sharing exactly what they think of their car. Every vehicle is rated across 16 different criteria, from reliability and performance to appearance and running costs. Owners were also asked about their overall satisfaction with their car and how likely they would be to recommend it to others. The EV3 impressed UK customers for offering great value and a complete, refined package, with owners naming the model both the EV that



represents the best of the best in terms of 'mainstream' vehicles, and the best car overall of 2025. The Kia EV3 is priced from £33,005 and offers up to 375 miles on a single charge* on the WLTP 'combined' cycle, a range of three competitively equipped trim levels, and space for five occupants. Erin Baker, Autotrader's Editorial Director, said: "It may be Kia's most affordable current EV on sale, but the EV3 still manages to pack a premium punch. It scored top marks for the quality of its features which, combined with

eye-catching looks and a great driving experience, has made the EV3 a massive hit with its owners. One told us: 'This was my first ever electric car, and it really stood out among all the other EVs, particularly within my price bracket. It's quirky, futuristic, packed full of brilliant features, and it's really easy to drive. Plus, I can get the whole family in it with room to spare. We absolutely love it.' Congratulations Kia on a very well-deserved win." Kia is no stranger to success at the Autotrader

Drivers' Choice Awards. Last year, the Kia EV6 was named 'Best Car for Families' and 'Best Car for Dog Owners', whilst in 2023 the Soul EV collected 'Best Value Electric Car', and EV6 was named 'New Car of the Year'. The EV3 is soon to be joined by the EV4 and EV5. Both models will embark on a nationwide tour of 'Kia Electric Experience' events across the Kia UK dealer network, starting 8 July, and showcasing the latest of Kia's electric offerings to customers.

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WHAT TO DO WHEN YOUR OUTSIDE DRAIN IS BLOCKED

If your outside drain is blocked, we'll take you through your options on how to clear it yourself, including tools and expert techniques.

You're here because you've probably noticed a stench, damage to electrical fittings, or there's a lot of water sitting on the ground outside your home.

The following are often causes of a blocked drain. Leaves (covering the grid or inside the drain); Food waste, fat or oil from the kitchen sink; Soil or sand due to a collapsed drain; Objects lodged in the pipes; Tree root damage or Toilet

roll build-up.

Before deciding what to do - whether to repair yourself or hire a professional - you'll need to assess the damage. Take a look at the drain and see what you're dealing with. It might be that the blockage is caused by leaf litter on the grid, in which case you can just clear it by hand. In most blocked drain cases though, you'll need to lift the cover and take a look

inside.

To lift a cover you might need a screwdriver or a piece of rope. Once you have access to the pipe below, you're looking to see if the blockage is visible or out of sight, this will give you an idea of the work and tools needed to clear it.

If, after assessing the cause of the blockage, you're confident that you can clear it yourself, then you can source the tools needed for the job. Different clogs require different solutions to clear them. If the blockage isn't too serious - using a solution is an obvious first step. If that doesn't work you'll need: Rubber gloves with long sleeves; Goggles and a face mask; Drain rods; Bucket and bin bags and a Pressure hose.

Armed with the tools and equipment above, including



the all-important safety gear, you can take action yourself if your outside drain keeps blocking.

Bear in mind that clearing an outside drain without the help of a professional is

only possible if it's not too clogged or too complex a job.

Remove any blockages - This is all about doing the obvious and simple stuff first, as that might be all

it takes to clear a blocked drain outside your house. Put on your long-sleeve gloves, goggles and face mask, remove any debris you can easily reach, such as leaves, soap scum or

food waste, and place it in your bucket or bin bag.

Clear the blockage with your rods - If clearing the drain by hand doesn't work, then it's time for the rods. Start with one and carefully insert down the drain and into the pipe below. If you feel resistance, twist the rod into the blockage with sufficient pressure until you break through. Can't feel it? Connect more rods until you find the blockage.

Clean up the debris - You don't want to do all that dirty work only to have to do it all over again in a few days, so clear up any material you removed and use the opportunity to clear away anything nearby that might cause another blockage. Again, pop it in your bucket or bin bag.

It's important to take care when using rods or any

kind of invasive equipment down your outside drain and pipes, as any damage caused could result in a hefty repair bill and a lot of upheaval to access the area.

To avoid this, or if your drain won't unblock, it's always advisable to call in a professional to take care of the job and it might not cost as much as you think.

On average you'll pay £60 for a call out, with drain rodding costing £80, jetting £175 and a drain CCTV survey for really difficult jobs costing on average £250. They will have the equipment, know-how and insurance to unblock your outside drain efficiently and safely. Plus, you don't get dirty!

For more information see <https://www.checkatrade.com/blog/expert-advice/outside-drain-blocked-problem-solve/>

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HOW TO FIND A GOOD TRADESPERSON!

The majority of tradespeople are hard-working, reliable and will do a good job, but we’ve all heard of the cowboy horror stories.

Let’s help you to avoid the bad eggs with this guide that looks at how to find a good tradesperson in your area.

Request quotes from at least 3 tradespeople

With all home improvement projects, we always recommend obtaining at least three quotes from different tradespeople in your area. You’ll want to shop around to make sure you’re paying a fair price for the work.

Make sure they have the relevant qualifications

To get the best results, it’s important to hire tradespeople who are dedicated to their trade. Look for a tradesperson with relevant qualifications and accreditations, and check if they’re part of national trade schemes.

Choose tradespeople with local experience

Hiring a tradesperson



with a lot of local experience can be really valuable. They’ll have a working knowledge of local planning permission, have access to a local network of suppliers and labour, and will be close at hand should you need them during the course of your project.

Ask for customer references (and contact them)

We do this to make sure a tradesperson’s reviews on our website are real, but there’s certainly no harm in you following up on customer references.

When you’ve found a tradesperson (or tradespeople) you think

could be right for the job, ask them to provide you with references from previous customers about the quality of the tradesperson’s work, what it was like to work with them, and would they hire them again.

Ask these 10 questions...

Before you hire a

tradesperson, it’s a good idea to meet with them in person to discuss the work you need them to do.

That way, you can find out more about their experience and approach to their trade.

If you want to know how to find a tradesperson you can trust, ask potential candidates these questions:

1. How long have you been working in the business?
2. What qualifications and/or accreditations do you have?
3. Have you done many projects like this before?
4. Can you show me examples of previous projects that you’ve worked on?
5. Do you have appropriate insurance, and can you provide valid certificates?
6. Could you provide me with references from previous customers for me to contact?
7. Do you offer a customer satisfaction guarantee?
8. How long will it take you to complete the

work? And when can you start?

9. How much will it cost, and what are the payment terms?

10. What steps do you take to keep your work on schedule and within budget?

The average cost of a tradesperson will depend on the trade, the nature of the work, and where they are located (labour costs in London tend to be higher than in the North).

To help you plan a budget, here are some average rates you can expect to pay:

- Plumber costs – £40 - £60 Per hour or around £350 per day
- Carpenter prices– £30 - £45 per hour
- Builder rates – £50 per hour or £400 per day
- Electrician rates – £50 per hour or £400 per day
- Painter and decorator prices– £250- £400 per day

For more info see <https://www.checkatrade.com/blog/hiring-guides/find-good-tradesperson/>

Essential Home Maintenance Checklist for summer/ autumn

In summer/ autumn our attention often turns to enjoying the outdoors.

However, these months also present the perfect opportunity to tackle essential home maintenance tasks, ensuring our properties remain in top condition and ready for whatever the season – and beyond – throws our way.

Don’t let the allure of barbecues and beach trips distract you entirely. Investing a little time and effort now can save you significant headaches and expenses down the line. Here’s a run-down of the most popular and crucial home maintenance tasks to add to your summer to-do list:

Embrace the Great Outdoors (and Maintain It!):

The exterior of your home bears the brunt of the elements year-round, so summer is the ideal time for a thorough check-up:

Guard Your Gutters: Clogged gutters are a silent menace. Overflowing rainwater can damage your roof, fascia boards, and

even your foundation. Take a ladder and scoop out any accumulated leaves, twigs, and debris. A good clear-out at the start of summer is a smart move.

Roof Review: While you’re up high (exercise caution!), take a good look at your roof. Are there any missing, loose, or cracked tiles or slates? Check the flashing around chimneys, vents, and skylights for any signs of damage or gaps. Addressing these small issues now can prevent costly leaks. If you’re unsure, a professional inspection is always a wise investment.

Wash Away Winter’s Grime: Winter can leave your home’s exterior looking dull. A good power wash can revitalize siding, walkways, driveways, and patios, removing dirt, mildew, and algae. This not only improves aesthetics but also prevents potential damage.

Window and Door Wisdom: Give your windows

a sparkle inside and out to maximize natural light. Inspect frames for any rot or damage and ensure seals and weather stripping are intact to maintain energy efficiency.

Paint and Protect: Summer’s warmer and drier conditions are perfect for tackling any peeling, cracking, or fading paint on exterior walls, fences, gates, and sheds. A fresh coat not only enhances curb appeal but also protects the underlying materials from the elements.

Deck and Patio TLC: Your outdoor living spaces deserve some attention too. Clean decks and patios to remove slippery algae and

dirt. Inspect for any signs of damage and apply sealant or stain to wooden decks for lasting protection.

Green Thumb, Safe Home: Keep trees and shrubs trimmed, especially those close to your house, to prevent potential damage from strong winds or overgrown branches. Ensure proper drainage in your garden to avoid water pooling near your foundation.

Fortify Your Fences: Check fences for any damage, loose posts, or broken panels. Summer is a good time for repairs or a fresh coat of paint or stain to keep your boundaries secure and looking their best.

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