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Mayor Alistair Cathcart Announces Chosen Charities

Live Here Love Here Small Grants Scheme Open

The Live Here Love Here Small Grants Scheme, which receives funding from Ards and North Down Borough Council, reopened for applications recently.

It offers an exciting opportunity to apply for funding for projects that help revitalise shared greenspaces which benefit the community and the environment.

The Mayor of Ards and North Down, Councillor Alistair Cathcart, said:

“Ards and North Down Borough Council is pleased to continue to support the Live Here Love Here Small Grants Scheme. The Scheme provides funding for worthwhile projects that will enhance our local environment right across our Borough. There are grants of £500 to £5,000 available.”

A Connecting Communities Roadshow event will be held at Ards Blair Mayne Wellbeing and Leisure Complex from 2pm to 4pm on Tuesday 10 September where the Live Here Love Here team

will be on hand to provide advice on completing applications for this year's Small Grants Scheme.

The Connecting Communities event in Newtownards will provide the opportunity to meet other like-minded people, share ideas and best practice, and come together to affect real change. The Live Here Love Here team will be on hand throughout the afternoon and will be able to provide advice on applying for and making the most of the grant.

There will be opportunities to learn more about Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful's Carbon Smart sessions as well as advice on how to get a Green Flag for Communities accreditation.

For more information, including details on how to book your free ticket for the event, visit livehereandlovehere.org.

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MAYOR ANNOUNCES CHOSEN CHARITIES

The Mayor of Ards and North Down, Councillor Alistair Cathcart, has announced the charities that he has chosen to support during his term of office.

They are Action Cancer, the Sea Cadets (Ards and North Down Units), and St. John Ambulance (Dufferin Cadets and Bangor and Ards Adults ambulance unit).

Commenting on his choices, the Mayor said: “I am proud to be supporting these three charities that provide so much assistance to the people of Ards and North Down. That work

that they do within the Borough is invaluable. I look forward to hosting some fundraising events that will help to raise much-needed funds for them and I would love for as many people as possible to get involved. With your support, we can help make a positive difference.”

Action Cancer is Northern Ireland's leading, local cancer charity. Its mission is to

save lives and support local people through cancer awareness, prevention, detection and support.

The charity provides early detection, support and prevention services to more than 20,000 people on an annual basis. Services include digital breast screening, skin cancer detection, support and therapeutic services, MOT health checks,

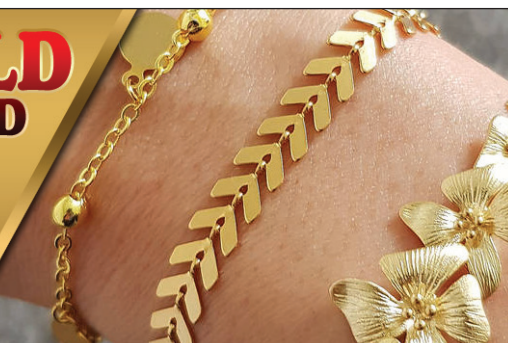
health promotion programmes, and the charity's 'Big Bus' mobile unit travels to 200 locations throughout Northern Ireland annually. All money raised through the Mayor's Charities for Action Cancer will stay in Ards and North Down to support local people.

Continued on page 4

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Ards and North Down Gains Seven Green Flag Awards

Seven locations in Ards and North Down have achieved a Green Flag Award, including Cairn Wood and Clondeboye Cemetery that have received the prestigious accolade for the first time.



The Green Flag Award is an internationally recognised certification for environmental quality management for parks and open spaces. While Cairn Wood and Clondeboye Cemetery have claimed their first Green Flag, other winning areas include Kiltonga Nature Reserve (Newtownards), Castle Park (Bangor), Ballymenoch Park (Holywood), Londonderry Park

(Newtownards) and Linear Park (Bangor). The Mayor of Ards and North Down, Councillor Alistair Cathcart, said: "Winning seven Green Flag awards is the most that Ards and North Down has ever received. This is a fantastic achievement and is credit to the Council staff who work so hard in maintaining the high standards of our parks and open spaces, as well as

many green-fingered volunteers throughout the Borough." Parks and open spaces wishing to achieve Green Flag status must have a site management plan in place and be able to demonstrate that they comply with a range of strict criteria including horticultural standards, cleanliness, environmental management, biodiversity, community involvement and safety

standards. The awards are judged annually by a panel of experts, who volunteer their time to assess the management plans and the applicant sites through a rigorous judging process. Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful, the environmental charity that runs the scheme in Northern Ireland, revealed that 105 Green Flag awards were presented this year.

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ENTREPRENEURS INVITED TO MAKE 'ULTIMATE PITCH' FOR BUSINESS INVESTMENT

Entrepreneurs from across the Ards and North Down Borough Council area are being given the chance to secure up to £5,000 in investment for their business idea with the launch of Go Succeed: The Ultimate Pitch.

The new competition launched by the government-backed enterprise support service is open to individuals, businesses and social

enterprises of all shapes and sizes and in every sector.

Local heats will take place across each of Northern Ireland's 11 council areas, with entrants making the 'ultimate pitch' to a panel of judges. Local heat winners will progress to the final with an overall winner announced at a special event in November, coinciding with Global Entrepreneurship Week.

Maura Bettes, Ards and North Down Borough Council, said:

"Go Succeed has already made an incredible impact on businesses and entrepreneurs across Northern Ireland through our series of workshops, masterclasses, mentorship programmes, grants, and other services.

"It is clear that this region is a place rich with commercial ingenuity, new ways of thinking and unique business ideas, and that's exactly what we want to celebrate with The Ultimate Pitch.

"Whether you have an idea for a brand new start-



up; already have an existing business that is preparing to launch a new product or service; or you just need help unlocking the next stage of growth, we want to hear from you."

In addition to an overall winner who will receive the Go Succeed Ultimate Pitch Award, individual prizes will include the Go Succeed Impact Award for the best social enterprise, the Go Succeed Inclusive Entrepreneurship Award and the Go Succeed Rising

Star Award for the most inspiring 16-25 year-old entrepreneur.

As well as the financial award, winners will receive a package of support including marketing and other business support services.

The panel of judges will be drawn from across the business and civic communities.

Entrants have until 12th September to apply to the competition with local heats being held within council

areas throughout October.

Applicants will have the opportunity to attend masterclasses on how make the ultimate pitch ahead of regional heats.

The final will take place in Innovation Factory, Belfast on 21st November.

Go Succeed (www.go-succeed.com) is funded by the UK Government and delivered by Northern Ireland's 11 councils. The service supports entrepreneurs, new starts

and existing businesses with easy-to-access advice and support including mentoring, masterclasses, peer networks, access to grant funding and a business plan, at every stage of their growth journey.

To find out more information about Go Succeed: The Ultimate Pitch, view a full list of terms and conditions, and apply, visit www.go-succeed.com/TheUltimatePitch

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Continued from page 1

The Sea Cadets is part of a national youth charity for young people aged 10-18, which aims to inspire young people to achieve their potential through challenge and nautical adventure, guided by the customs and traditions of the Royal Navy. Through various activities and adventures, young people learn teamwork, respect, loyalty, self-confidence, commitment, self-discipline, honesty and how to be the best version of themselves.

Sea Cadets offer a range of different activities and these activities lead to development of key skills such as resilience, self-belief and social confidence. It enables them to feel more confident and motivated in school, more comfortable speaking to people, a better team player as well as developing skills which benefit them as they enter the work force.

St John Ambulance Dufferin Cadets are aged between 10 and 18. They are taught about everything that can be found in a first aid manual

and gain substantial hands-on experience. They take part in a 'Grand Prior' youth programme where they work towards earning a Grand Prior badge. As a Cadet Unit, they provide first aid services at many events in the Borough. Three cadets have progressed to become paramedics and one has qualified as a doctor, with four more expected in the next two years. Meanwhile, Bangor and Ards Adults is an ambulance unit that provide medical cover to a variety of events including motocross

and existing businesses with easy-to-access advice and support including mentoring, masterclasses, peer networks, access to grant funding and a business plan, at every stage of their growth journey. To find out more information about Go Succeed: The Ultimate Pitch, view a full list of terms and conditions, and apply, visit www.go-succeed.com/TheUltimatePitch

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Helen's Bay and Kircubbin Play Parks Officially Opened

New and refurbished play parks have been officially opened by the Mayor of Ards and North Down, Councillor Alistair Cathcart, in Kircubbin and Helen's Bay.



The play parks complement the new parks already opened earlier this year in Bangor, Ballygowan and Newtownards. They mark a £650k investment by Ards and North Down Borough Council and include brand new equipment complete with more accessible equipment

for children of all abilities to use. Launch events for Kircubbin and Helen's Bay were held on Saturday 10 August with entertainment provided by Carnival Promotions at the new play park in The Green, Kircubbin, while Kids Bee Happy Sand Art and Tales from the

Wild entertained the children at the newly refurbished Helen's Bay play park. The Mayor of Ards and North Down, Councillor Alistair Cathcart, said: "These fantastic new and refurbished facilities will better serve the children in our Borough. It is so important that they

have the opportunity to play in safe areas. This a very welcome investment and the Council will continue to invest in our play parks on a rolling basis. It was wonderful to see the kids having so much fun and I am sure they will continue to enjoy the play parks for many years to come."

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ADVICE NI WARNING AS THOUSANDS OF SCAM VICTIMS GO UNREPORTED

Advice NI has warned that thousands of scam victims across Northern Ireland, including Newtownards, are going unreported and unsupported in debt recovery, as fraudulent schemes become increasingly sophisticated and difficult to detect.

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It advises the consequences of these scams can be life-changing, leaving many individuals facing long-term debt and severe financial issues.

Recent data from the Police Service of Northern Ireland revealed 5,412 reports of fraud amounting to approximately £23.1 million in losses were reported from December 2022 to January 2023. According to Sinead

Campbell, Head of Money, Debt, and Quality at Advice NI, these figures only scratch the surface given how rarely incidents of fraud are reported.

Sinead said, "Based on our data, we've seen 167 cases of fraudulent debt worth a total £1.6 million reported over the last three years. That equates to only 10 per cent of victims - estimated over a three-year period - reaching out for debt advice and financial support with an average loss of just under £10,000 per person. These are life-changing amounts of money that thrust people into long-term debt and severe financial hardship, not to mention the significant emotional impact.

"The latest scams are becoming increasingly sophisticated, with criminals now leveraging AI to mimic the language of national debt lines and even impersonate debt collectors. This new wave of AI-driven fraud is designed to intimidate and deceive victims with alarming precision. It's

understandable that people might feel ashamed or embarrassed, but there's absolutely no reason to be. We see new scam tactics emerging every week and it's crucial to understand that these scams are designed to be hard to spot, making anyone vulnerable to being caught off guard."

Bill McCluggage, Chair of NI Fraud Forum said, "We are facing an epidemic of scams, and fraud now represents 40 per cent of all crimes with criminals targeting individuals via messaging, email and social media. At some point we are all likely to fall victim to fraudsters and if a deal seems too good to be true it usually is.

"When contacted out of the blue by someone you don't know, take a moment to stop and think before parting with your money or information. Remember, it's okay to say no and only criminals will try to rush or panic you into releasing information. If you think you've been scammed, then contact your bank

immediately. You can also report phishing emails by forwarding them to report@phishing.gov.uk or forward scam texts to 7726."

To help spot potential scams Advice NI has identified several precautionary measures, including remaining cautious of unsolicited communications.

Sinead adds, "If you receive an unexpected email, call, or message from someone claiming to be from your bank or another organisation, verify their identity through official channels before engaging. Banks and legitimate loan companies will also never rush or pressure you by imposing tight deadlines. They will also never ask for personal details such as passwords, account numbers, or PIN numbers."

The leading debt advice charity also urges individuals to look out for spelling and grammatical errors as scams can often contain subtle errors in the text or unusual phrasing. Scammers may not be



as meticulous with their communications so small mistakes can be a red flag.

Sinead concludes, "If you have fallen victim to a scam and are grappling with financial challenges, remember that you are not alone.

Seeking support is the first step towards finding a possible solution and we advise people to reach out as soon as possible. We have more than 65 members across Community Advice Ards and North Down can

offer free, bespoke advice to help you regain control of your finances. It's essential to understand that being a victim is nothing to be ashamed of, and we assure complete confidentiality in every case."

Contact Community Advice Ards and North Down by calling the freephone helpline on 028 913 10487 to speak directly to an adviser between 9:00am and 5:00pm Monday to Friday or visit www.caand.co.uk

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US Consul visits area

The US Consul, James Applegate, recently visited Ards and North Down. The visit included tours of key local businesses and educational institutions.

The visit commenced at Lakeland Dairies in Newtownards, where the US Consul met with the team. Lakeland Dairies, with approximately 260 employees, has a rich history of over 100 years in producing high-quality dairy products. The company sources fresh milk from 3,200 family-owned farms and serves customers in over 80 countries, including the United States. The Newtownards facility specialises in long-life milk products like UHT milk, contributing significantly to Ireland's dairy industry's growth.

Next, the US Consul visited WHALE, a global supplier of high-quality low voltage pump, plumbing, and heating systems for mobile units such as marine vessels, caravans, motorhomes, and healthcare environments. Acquired by Brunswick Corporation in 2014 and now part of the Navico Group,

WHALE employs around 200 people and exports globally, including to the US. The tour continued at Copeland Distillery, which was established in 2016 and is located near the historic harbour of Donaghadee. The distillery employs 17 people and produces award-winning gins, rums, and a new range of malt and pot-still whiskey. Copeland Distillery exports its products to various countries, including the US, through its distributor Tradebright.

The visit concluded with the US Consul meeting Glenlola Collegiate Principal Mr. Eric Thompson, teacher Mr. Keith Dorman, and six pupils. The students presented their experiences from a recent exchange visit to Tallwood High School in Virginia Beach, part of the longstanding Sister Cities relationship between North Down and Virginia Beach.

Speaking during the



visit, the Mayor of Ards and North Down, Councillor Alistair Cathcart said, "We are delighted to welcome the US Consul to Ards and North Down. This visit underscores the strong economic and cultural ties between our region and the United States. The collaboration and innovation demonstrated by our local businesses and educational institutions are a testament to our community's resilience and forward-thinking spirit. We look forward to fostering even deeper

connections in the future."

Consul General James Applegate added, "In June I was honoured to join political and civil leaders in Ards and North Down to commemorate the Borough's unique role in advance of D-Day. I was delighted to return today to learn more about our present-day connections in business and educational exchange. I am grateful to Ards and North Down Borough Council, as well as local business and academic leaders, for building these exciting and mutually-beneficial links."

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Minister O'Dowd meets new DVA vehicle test staff during tour of the Newtownards Test Centre

Infrastructure Minister John O'Dowd has met a group of new vehicle examiners during a visit to DVA's Newtownards Test Centre.



Infrastructure Minister John O'Dowd has met a group of new DVA vehicle test examiners and staff during a tour of the Newtownards Test Centre. Following a recent recruitment campaign, the new examiners are undergoing training at the Newtownards centre, which is the largest MOT testing centre in the north, conducting 150,000 tests each year.

They are among approximately 40 new recruits undergoing training following a recent recruitment competition.

Minister O'Dowd visited the centre as part of a series of visits to

meet DfI staff. Newtownards is DVA's largest test centre and carries out approximately 150,000 vehicle tests each year. Approximately 6,000 driving tests are also carried out each year at

the centre. The Minister said: "The Department has been recruiting a number of vehicle examiners in recent months as part of its commitment to reduce MOT waiting times. I was delighted to

meet some of those new recruits and to hear about their training.

On successful completion of their training, they will be deployed to test centres across the north from mid-September."

the centre. The Minister said: "The Department has been recruiting a number of vehicle examiners in recent months as part of its commitment to reduce MOT waiting times. I was delighted to

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Hollywood Dental Care has walked away from The Irish Dentistry Awards 2024 with the Award for Best New Practice! 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!

Hollywood Dental Care is a premier dental practice located in

the heart of Hollywood. With a commitment to providing exceptional dental care, they offer a wide range of services to meet the needs of patients of all ages. Hollywood Dental Care welcomes new patients!

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At Hollywood Dental Care, you'll be greeted by a friendly and experienced team of dental professionals. They are dedicated to providing personalized care and ensuring your comfort throughout your visit.

The practice is equipped with modern dental technology, allowing for accurate diagnoses and efficient treatments. Their comfortable and welcoming environment creates a relaxed atmosphere for patients.

Whether you're seeking routine dental care or specialized treatments, Hollywood Dental Care is your trusted partner for a healthy and beautiful smile.

For more information or to



schedule an appointment, please visit their website or contact them directly.

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PIZZA CO: A BUSINESS WITH A PASSION FOR PIZZA

Three friends with a combined 50 years of experience in the pizza industry have joined forces to put Pizza Co on the local culinary Map.

Matthew, Matt and Conall bought the brand in October 2023 after Matthew Stevenson had worked for the brand from 2013 (with the previous owners). The company now boasts five stores with a sixth, larger store opening this month in Lisburn, creating 25 new jobs. This expansion represents a significant investment of £250,000. A key focus for Pizza Co is its staff. Recognizing the demanding nature of the business, with long hours and weekend work, the company prioritizes staff retention. The team is viewed as the backbone of the operation, and their contributions are greatly valued.

To enhance the customer experience, Pizza Co has invested £300,000 in various improvements. These include a new app with GPS driver tracking, self-ordering kiosks, a revamped prep kitchen and a state-of-the-art dough mixer imported from Italy. A complete rebrand has also been undertaken, encompassing a whole new look, uniforms, signage, branding etc.

Beyond business growth, Pizza Co is committed to giving back to the community. The company distributes over 300 children's meal vouchers each week to local sports clubs, schools, and youth groups. Additionally, Pizza Co supports various sports teams, including the Belfast Trojans and Belfast Bulls.

With a strong foundation built on industry expertise, a dedicated team, and a customer-centric approach, Pizza Co is poised for continued success.

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sideboards to create the perfect dining experience.

• Bedroom Furniture: Beds, wardrobes, and dressers to ensure a restful and organized sleep space.

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Algram is dedicated to providing furniture that is not only stylish but also built to last. They source high-quality materials and work with skilled craftsmen to ensure that every piece meets their exacting standards. Each piece of furniture is carefully constructed with attention to detail, resulting in products that are both functional and aesthetically pleasing.

Exceptional Customer Service

At Algram, customer satisfaction is paramount.

Their friendly and knowledgeable staff are always on hand to offer expert advice and guidance. Whether you're looking for a complete home makeover or simply need help choosing the perfect piece of furniture, Algram's team is committed to providing you with an exceptional shopping experience.

Visit Algram Today
If you're looking for stylish, modern furniture that is both functional and durable, be sure to visit Algram. With their wide range of products, commitment to quality, and exceptional customer service, Algram is the perfect destination for your furniture needs.

START OFF THE NEW TERM BY FINDING OUT WHAT SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE WITH YOUR CHILDCARE COSTS

The new school term is a great time for families to find out what financial support they may be entitled to, including with registered childcare costs.

Employers For Childcare

Many parents don't realise that they can claim support with childcare for older children who are using registered childcare provision that 'wraps around' the school day such as breakfast and after school clubs.

We would encourage all working parents, whatever their circumstances, to do a quick check with the Family Benefits Advice Service to make sure they aren't missing out on financial support they are entitled to. This can include help with school costs such as uniforms or school

meals, or with other costs (such as housing) as well as childcare costs.

Childcare support
Most working parents are entitled to help paying for registered childcare through one of the following schemes:

- Tax-Free Childcare
- Universal Credit
- Childcare Vouchers (existing claimants only)
- Tax Credits (existing claimants only).

In addition, for parents who use Tax-Free Childcare and have children below school age, there is a new Northern Ireland Childcare Subsidy Scheme in operation

from September, which reduces the childcare costs for eligible working parents by 15% for all qualifying children.

Find out what your family is entitled to The Family Benefits Advice Service can

help you work out what form of support is best for your family, considering your circumstances both now and in the future. Call the team on 028 9267 8200 or email hello@employers

forchildcare.org for free, impartial and confidential advice. Last year, we identified an average of over £5,000 for parents who received a personalised 'better off' calculation, so it's a call well worth making.

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Transforming Care at home

Since opening a new branch in January this year, Home Instead has been making an impact across the Ards and North Down area.

Specialising in providing compassionate care to adults and older people in their own homes, Home Instead offers a wide range of services, from home help and meal preparation to companionship, dementia care, personal care and live-in care.

Based at its new High Street office in Newtownards, the new service has been overwhelmingly well received. Clients appreciate the personalised care, which is tailored to their specific needs and preferences—whether it's preparing a favourite meal or maintaining a preferred morning routine. This attention to detail has made Home Instead a valuable addition to the existing care options in the region.

One client commented: "There's a world of difference between having 60 minutes of dedicated quality care with a matched Care Professional, and the short 10-minute visits I was



Home Instead employees Debra Stafford and Henry Anstey are two of the office team supporting clients and Care Professionals in Ards and North Down.

used to previously. It's also great to have help with the running of the household as well as my personal care needs. Twice each week I have a longer visit which allows us to do shopping, errands in the community and even some cooking together to make it easier for me to manage by myself the rest of the time. The SE Trust contributes a little and I'm grateful for this, but I top up the amount myself.

I suppose I increasingly realise that quality of life in my later years will not be funded by the public purse."

For job seekers, Home Instead offers an attractive opportunity. With a minimum visit length of one hour, Care Professionals have the time needed to build meaningful relationships with clients and deliver high-quality care that truly enhances the client's quality of life.

Attractive pay rates of £12.50 per hour together with an additional 45p per mile for travel, has made positions at Home Instead appealing to those looking for part-time or full-time work.

If you are interested in speaking with the team at Home Instead, please call 028 9124 2030, email info.ards@homeinstead.co.uk, or visit www.homeinstead.co.uk/ards-and-north-down

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 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.

Call 028 9265 0700 (Mon – Fri) or visit www.hannoncoach.com



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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 North Down, Ards Peninsula, Mourne, North Coast, Belfast 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 Strangford Lough, Scrabo, Sketrick Island, Mount Stewart and Castle Espie will shine a light on the beauty of the Ards Peninsula with other canvases focusing on North Down's Kinnegar Pier,



Seapark and Crawfordsburn to name but a few. 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 or telephone the Portrush Studio on 07841593762.

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Roald Dahl Afternoon Tea

(Saturday 21st September, 12:00pm - Adults £45pp / Kids £25pp)

Renowned for its lavish appeal, The Old Inn invites you to a whimsical Roald Dahl Afternoon Tea experience on Saturday 21st September. Take in the cosy atmosphere of The Old Inn as you delight in this timeless tradition with a fanciful twist, paired with a private screening of the enchanting Matilda. The afternoon will take your

taste buds on a tantalisingly tasty journey with an array of treats inspired by Roald Dahl's beloved stories - think BFG Snozzcumber, cream cheese and cous cous and Muggle-Wumps peanut butter and jelly with a brioche bun. Got a sweet tooth? Delight in James & The Giant Peach scones, Matilda's chocolate truffle cake and

scrumdiddlyumptious Ladybird macaroons. Join us on Saturday for an afternoon guaranteed to ignite your imagination with delicious dainties whilst watching the tale of courage, kinship, and adventure that is Matilda. Book your table now: <https://www.theoldinn.com/Roald-Dahl-afternoon-tea2.html>.



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#OTHERS LIVE WHEN YOU GIVE

Mulroy Woods Hotel: Your Perfect Wedding Venue in Donegal

Mulroy Woods Hotel is a stunning wedding venue nestled in the heart of Milford, Donegal.

With a commitment to providing personalized experiences, the hotel offers couples the opportunity to create their dream wedding, tailored to their unique vision.

Exclusively Yours
One of the most appealing aspects of Mulroy Woods Hotel is its exclusive approach to weddings. The hotel ensures that each couple receives undivided attention by hosting only one wedding per day. This allows for a truly intimate and personalized experience, free from distractions or crowds.

Customizable All-Inclusive Packages

Mulroy Woods Hotel offers flexible all-inclusive wedding packages that can be customized to suit your specific needs and preferences. Whether you're dreaming of a small, intimate ceremony or a grand celebration, the hotel can accommodate your vision. From the menu to the décor, every detail can be personalized to create a truly memorable event.

Catering for All
The hotel caters to both small and larger wedding celebrations, ensuring that couples of all sizes can find the perfect venue.



Whether you're planning a wedding for 20 guests or 200, Mulroy Woods Hotel can provide the ideal setting for your special day.

Civil Ceremonies
For couples seeking a convenient and hassle-free wedding experience, Mulroy Woods Hotel offers civil ceremonies on-site. This means you can enjoy the convenience of having your ceremony and reception in the same location, creating a seamless and stress-free day.

Looking for a Break?
In addition to being a

popular wedding venue, Mulroy Woods Hotel also offers a relaxing and enjoyable getaway. Enjoy a mid-week break for two people sharing, complete with a delicious two-course dinner, for just €318.00 in total. This package is available from September to December, excluding all bank holidays.

Mulroy Woods Hotel is the perfect choice for couples seeking a personalized, exclusive, and unforgettable wedding experience. With its stunning location, customizable packages,

and commitment to excellence, the hotel is sure to exceed your expectations.

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The first full arch implant restorations were done in 2002 and have continued since that's 20 years experience and an expanded team year on year, the full range of Dental care is available on site in Helens Bay. Digital workflows have been developed as new technologies were added such as intra oral scanners, digital X-ray and facial bone CT scanner and most recently facial scans

This has enhanced the ease of treatment and allows the

delivery of high quality new teeth that fit seamlessly into the patients faces

The team at Helens Bay continue to work to improve patients new smiles and functionality as techniques progress

The future is very exciting as they approach their 30 year anniversary lead by the same dentist !

All new patients see Dr Gareth Small who brings his considerable knowledge and experience to assist in solving dental concerns

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A Spotlight on Dental Excellence: Nigel Smith Dental and Hollywood Dental Care

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

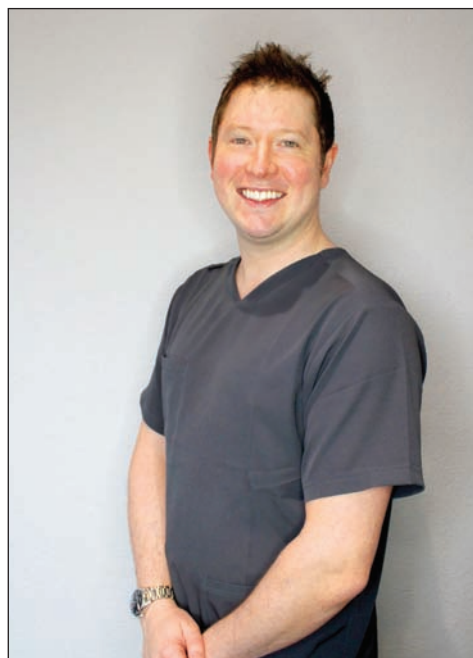
Dr Nigel Smith Dental and Hollywood Dental Care are proud to announce their recent nominations for several prestigious categories at both the Irish Dental Awards 2024 (see our special feature on page 8) and UK Dental Awards 2024. The practices are finalists in multiple categories, including

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, 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. In many cases, Invisalign treatment can be completed in a shorter timeframe than traditional braces. Dr 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.

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.

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 atmosphere.
 - 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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NEWTOWNARD WINS HIGH STREET HERO SILVER

Reeling in the post Olympic Euphoria of Olympic Gold champion Athlete Rhys McClenaghan Newtownards recently received even more good news! **NEWTOWNARDS** was awarded silver at this year's High Street Hero Awards!

Coming second only to Ballymoney in the NI High Street of the Year Category. It is the second year of success for Newtownards which was also named as a Gold winner last year.

Individual retailers were also proud to bring home awards this year. They were Warden Bros in the Best Homeware Retailer category, Northern Card Gaming in the Best Generalist Retailer category and Eurospar Hardford Link in the Best Forecourt category. Knotts Bakery was awarded bronze in the Best Deli/Bakery category.

The President of the Newtownards Chamber of Commerce, Derek Wright, said: "Newtownards is an award winning town which is great. It is wonderful to have so many businesses winning awards for our town centre."

A record 15,000 votes



were cast in this year's High Street Heroes, with dozens of independent retailers shortlisted across the 12 award categories.

A special reception was held in Belfast City Hall to celebrate the winners from across Northern Ireland.

Finalists were welcomed by Lord Mayor of Belfast, councillor Micky Murray, who spoke at the ceremony.

Congratulating the winners, Mr Murray said: "Independent

retailers boost not only our economy, but also our quality of life, so it's wonderful to be able to shine the spotlight on those who make our daily lives a little bit easier and brighter as they serve our communities - whether that's in a bakery, chemist, coffee shop, or another independent retailer. Well done everyone."

Retail NI Chief Executive, Glyn Roberts said: "The High Street Heroes Awards celebrate the best and brightest retailers that Northern

Ireland has to offer, and this campaign has shown just how valued each one of these independent retailers are in their local communities, especially in Ballymoney where once again voters turned out to see their high street crowned."

The High Street Hero NI Awards are a joint initiative powered by Retail NI and supported National Lottery operator Allwyn, SSE Airtricity, Roam Local NI and media partner Belfast Live.

Inspirational Newtownards Olympian Returns Home

Newtownards recently rolled out the red carpet to welcome Gold Winning Horse Pommel Champion Rhys McClenaghan!

Rhys, who clinched gold at the 2024 Olympics in Paris was born and raised in Newtownards. McClenaghan's early years were marked by a passion for gymnastics. Beyond his athletic accomplishments, McClenaghan has become a role model for young people in Newtownards. He has used his platform to inspire others to pursue their dreams, regardless of their background or circumstances. His story is a reminder that with hard work, dedication, and the support of a loving community, anything is possible.

Rhys McClenaghan continues to make his mark on the world of gymnastics, his connection to Newtownards remains

strong. He always says that whenever he sees Scrabo he knows he is home.

Newtownards was also cheering on local swimmer Barry McClements as he competed in men's backstroke and butterfly races in the pool at the Paralympics.



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Kodak Express launch new 'Tech Repair Service.'

Tech Repair Solutions is part of Kodak Express. This is the place to go for all your technology needs. We have already been encouraged by the number of customers coming through the door at Kodak Express 13 Frances street Newtownards, since we launched the new service last month.

Tech Repair Solutions provides professional laptop and game console repair service. For example updating your laptop, screen repair on laptops and phones and replacing parts in games consoles.

We also offer new and refurbished laptops, printers and ink cartridges.

Our mission is to provide clear and simple advice on technical issues that

everyone can understand.

The launch of our home service will assist you with various issues. This includes filling out forms, applying for services online, checking your printer is working and ensuring your computer is running smoothly.

We will offer our home service on a Monday and Tuesday to anyone who may find it difficult to

access Newtownards town.

We will collect any item you want fixed, call you with a price to repair and deliver it back you in perfect working order.

If you are doing a declutter at home, would you please consider dropping your unwanted or broken devices into us - we will securely wipe your data and recycle as many

parts as we can.

Customers can schedule a repair appointment by calling Matthew on 02891 828601 or visiting our store. We provide a free, no obligation diagnostic service on your device and a one year limited warranty on all repairs.

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Roy Lyttle has been growing vegetables in Ards and North Down for over 45 years. Our main crop at this time of year is Leeks. At other times of year we produce Parsley, Scallions, Celery and white Cabbage. Roy and Sheila's son Alexander now takes responsibility for crop growing and maintenance. When ready, the vegetables are harvested before being trimmed, prepared, washed, packed and labelled in the farm's packhouse. Products are delivered across Northern Ireland & South of Ireland to multinationals, independent retailers and processors.

We welcome Schools and Community groups to visit our farm.

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Bell's Centra, Killinchy: Your Local Hub for Fresh Food and More

Bell's Centra in Killinchy is more than just a convenience store. It's a community hub offering a wide range of fresh, high-quality products and services. From daily essentials to delicious treats, you'll find everything you need under one roof.

Our Brands and Services:

- **Happy Pear:** If you're looking for healthy, plant-based food, Happy Pear is your go-to. Their range includes ready-to-eat meals, snacks, and fresh produce, all made with natural ingredients.
- **Moo'd Ice Cream:** Indulge in a creamy and delicious ice cream from Moo'd. With a variety of flavours to choose from, there's something for everyone.
- **Fresh Produce:** Bell's Centra is committed to providing fresh, locally sourced fruits and vegetables. You'll

find a wide selection of seasonal produce, perfect for your weekly shop or food shop top ups!

- **Bakery:** Enjoy freshly baked bread, pastries, and cakes made with high-quality ingredients.
- **Deli:** Grab a quick bite to eat from the deli counter, offering a range of sandwiches, salads, and hot food.
- **Frank and Honest Coffee:** Coffee that's honestly the best and good to go!

More Than Just a Store

In addition to its extensive product range, Bell's Centra, Killinchy offers a variety of services to make your shop-

ping experience even more convenient:

- **ATM:** Access your cash 24/7 with the on-site ATM.
 - **Parcel Point:** Send and receive parcels easily through the Parcel Point service.
 - **Lottery:** Try your luck with the National Lottery.
- Whether you're a local resident or just passing through, Bell's Centra is a must-visit destination for your shopping needs. With its friendly staff, quality products, and convenient services, it's the perfect place to pick up everything you need.

AGEING WELL CAMPAIGN URGES PEOPLE TO GET ACTIVE TO HELP LIVE LONGER AND STRONGER

A new campaign focussing on the importance and benefits of physical activity to help live longer and stronger, has been launched in community pharmacies across Northern Ireland.

The 'Live longer and stronger' campaign aims to raise awareness of age-related deconditioning and the importance of physical activity and will run in community pharmacies throughout August and September as part of the Living Well service.

Living Well is offered in over 500 pharmacies across Northern Ireland and provides information and advice on public health issues. It is delivered in partnership with the Public Health Agency (PHA), Community Pharmacy NI (CPNI), and the Department of Health (DoH).

Jeff Scroggie, Health and Social Wellbeing Improvement Manager and Ageing Well Lead at the PHA said: "It is never too late to

gain health benefits from physical activity. Ageing is inevitable, but the pace at which physical changes occur can be slowed or even reversed with regular physical activity.

"Including some physical activity into your weekly routine will benefit you mentally as well as increase your quality of life. It can help make you feel happier, keep your brain sharp, prevent falls and help to keep you living independently to enjoy life and activities with friends and family for longer."

Local Community Pharmacist Killian Johnston from H Sweeny Pharmacy, Quayside Shopping Centre in Derry/Londonderry, welcomed the

campaign.

He said: "Community pharmacy is an ideal setting to help encourage people to look after their health by engaging in initiatives such as the Living Well campaigns.

"You are more likely to maintain your independence and overall wellbeing if you have led an active lifestyle and made healthier choices throughout your life. The more time spent being physically active, the greater the health benefits including better sleep.

"Pharmacy teams will be promoting the benefits of physical activity and where possible, signposting to relevant local groups and activities people can take

part in. We would encourage patients and customers to call into their local pharmacy to ask for advice and information."

Gerard Walls, Senior Health and Social Wellbeing Improvement Officer at the PHA, said: "The UK Chief Medical Officers recommend being active for at least two and a half hours each week, including doing activities that can help improve muscle strength and balance at least twice a week. We would recommend breaking up the activity into smaller bouts across the week and limit the amount of time spent being sedentary, such as lying or sitting.

"It is also important to remember that everyone has a

different starting point, if this level of weekly activity is not achievable for you, start with light activities, such as walking, try to walk a bit faster than normal, cleaning or gardening is also a good way to try to build up gradually.

"Research shows that from 50 years of age we naturally lose muscle and bone density year on year, but being active can help reverse this.

"Regular physical activity provides physical and mental health and wellbeing benefits, including having a healthier heart and helping to lower the risk of developing conditions like dementia, Type 2 diabetes, stroke and some cancers.



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INTERIOR DESIGN IDEAS TO LIVE BY

There are so many beautiful interiors out there, how on earth do you choose?

The good news is that there are generally no right or wrong choices with interior design. Sure, there are some rules to guide you, but your home interior should be a reflection of the needs and likes of you and your family.

Step one – form and function. The first stage of planning your home interior is finding the balance between how you want your home to look and feel and what you need it to provide for you and your family. So, as well as thinking about how different home interior designs make you feel and which styles you're drawn to, consider how you use the rooms in your home and what's important to you. For example, if you enjoy hosting friends and family, it makes sense to design spaces that will easily accommodate visitors. If clutter makes you twitch, make storage a priority, and if self-care is important, why not create an indulgent spa bathroom? Take the time to consider the history of your home and how this might impact your style choices. Edwardian house interior design ideas, with

their large windows and wide hallways, will differ from those for a new build property, for example. One of the final points to bear in mind is flow. Unless you're designing a studio apartment, you'll create a more cohesive feel in your home if you think about the flow from room to room when making your design choices.

Step two – room layout. First of all, consider the function of the room to give it a clear purpose. It's entirely possible to use one room for more than one purpose, but aim to 'zone' the room into different areas when planning the layout. In addition to furniture and lighting ensure there's enough space to comfortably move around the room – 'empty' space is key to help increase the feeling of spaciousness.

Step three – colour scheme. Now it's time to add your personality to the space. With lots of inspiration out there, it can be hard to know how to narrow down your choices. Start with a mood board. You can either do this the old-fashioned way,



cutting out images from magazines, or use an app such as Pinterest. Colour-drenching, neutrals, or feature walls; your mood board will help to steer you in the right direction. By putting together the images you're drawn to, you'll begin to gather a clearer picture of the styles, features, and colours that you like.

Step four – lighting. Do not underestimate the importance of good lighting when planning your house interior ideas. Many experts agree that it's best to have between five and seven different lighting sources in each room. For overall

lighting (general lighting), consider recessed ceiling spotlights. For task lighting, you might opt for a desk lamp or a reading lamp by an armchair. Spot lighting can be used to illuminate items in a cabinet or a piece of wall art, whereas atmospheric lighting could be a dimmable lamp or some string lights. The right combination of these varieties of lights in a room will help to create a warm, homely (and functional!) space. Always use a qualified electrician for your lighting installations.

Step five – Finishing touches. Taking inspiration from your mood board, opt

for accessories, decorative touches, soft furnishings, and artwork that align with the concepts you were drawn to, helping to add all-important accent colours. Remember to include mirrors and plants within your interior design ideas. Hanging a mirror is not only a practical addition, but it opens up the room, creating the illusion of more space. Plants can bring energy and life to your design scheme alongside health benefits and a pop of colour too.

For more information see <https://www.checktrade.com/blog/ideas/interior-design-ideas/>

Autumn Garden Jobs: A Checklist for a Beautiful Spring

As the days shorten and the nights grow colder, it's time to prepare your garden for the upcoming winter and set it up for a vibrant spring bloom. Here's a checklist of essential autumn garden jobs to keep your outdoor space looking its best.

Planting and Sowing
 • Plant spring bulbs: Now is the perfect time to plant spring bulbs like daffodils, tulips, and hyacinths. These will emerge from the ground in early spring, adding a burst of color.
 • Sow hardy annuals: Some hardy annuals can be sown directly into the ground in autumn for spring blooms. These include cornflowers, calendula, and poppies.
 • Plant trees and shrubs: Autumn is a great time to plant deciduous trees and shrubs, as the cooler weather allows them to establish themselves before the winter.
 Pruning and Maintenance
 • Prune deciduous shrubs: Prune deciduous shrubs that have finished flowering, such as roses and hydrangeas. This will help them to maintain their shape and encourage healthy growth.
 • Remove dead or damaged plants: Clear away any dead or

dying plants to prevent the spread of diseases.
 • Mulch flower beds: Apply a layer of mulch to flower beds to help retain moisture, suppress weeds, and protect plant roots from frost.
 • Clean up fallen leaves: Rake up and dispose of fallen leaves to prevent them from smothering plants and encouraging pests.
 Preparing for Winter
 • Protect tender plants: If you have tender plants that can't withstand frost,

take steps to protect them. This might involve covering them with frost blankets or moving them indoors.
 • Winterize containers: Bring potted plants indoors or move them to a sheltered location to protect them from the cold.
 • Store garden tools: Clean and store garden tools in a dry, sheltered place to prevent rust and damage.

By completing these autumn garden jobs, you can ensure that



your garden remains healthy and vibrant throughout the winter months and is ready to burst into life come spring.

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A GUIDE TO BUILDING AN EXTENSION

Getting the planning and preparation right is vital when building an extension.

Building an extension can add extra space and value to your home. Whether you need a guest bedroom, bigger living room, or home office, an extension can

transform your home. But, an extension needs careful and precise planning, preparation and execution. Where to start when building an extension? Doing some initial planning will help your extension build go smoothly. Here's a general checklist of things to do before building an extension:

1. Planning permission. Because of permitted development rights, you won't usually need planning permission for single-storey or conservatory extensions. However, whether you can build without planning permission depends on your property type, the build, and location. Check with your local planning authority if you're unsure.
2. Building regulations. All homeowners must comply with building regulations. These regulations outline the

required standards for safety, structural integrity, insulation, fire safety, and accessibility. Hiring trades registered with a Competent Person Scheme means they can sign off on work to meet the regulations.

3. Lawful development. Even under Permitted Development, applying for a Lawful Development Certificate (LDC) can be a good idea. Getting an LDC confirms that the building and the construction work did not require planning permission.

4. Party wall agreement. Your home extension might involve building work near or on a wall shared with your neighbour's property. In this case, you may need a party wall agreement.

5. Neighbours. Always consider your neighbours. Even if you don't need to worry about a party wall, it's a good idea to



inform your neighbours of your plans and any future disruption.

6. Leasehold or freehold. If you own the leasehold, not freehold, to your property, always check the lease details. Speak with your freeholder before planning or designing an extension.

7. Home insurance. An extension will likely increase the rebuild cost

of your home should the worst happen. Your home insurance provider may need to readjust your premiums. Always update your insurer about major home renovations to avoid a void policy and make sure you're covered.

Project management. Before planning or designing an extension, consider who will manage the project. You can

manage your extension build yourself or hire a professional project manager for a smoother process. Professionals who can help you manage your extension in part or fully include: Architects, Interior designers, Project managers and/or Extension builders

For more information see <https://www.checkatrade.com/blog/planning-guides/building-extension/>



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Bright Ideas: Lighting Design Tips for Your Home

Illuminate Your Space with Style

Good lighting can transform a room, making it feel cozy, inviting, or vibrant. Here are some expert tips to help you create a beautifully lit home:

Kitchen
Combine ambient and task lighting. Use recessed lighting or a pendant light for overall illumination, and install under-cabinet lights for focused task lighting. Consider natural light. If possible, place your kitchen near a window to maximize natural light.

Bedroom
Create a relaxing

atmosphere. Use warm white bulbs and dimmers to create a soothing ambiance. Layer your lighting. Combine a ceiling light with bedside lamps and wall sconces for a versatile lighting solution.

Living Room
Set the mood with ambient lighting. A chandelier, pendant light, or floor lamp can provide overall illumination. Highlight features with accent lighting. Use wall sconces, picture lights, or table lamps to draw attention to artwork or





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architectural details. Bathroom Use waterproof fixtures. Choose lights specifically designed for bathrooms to prevent moisture damage. Combine ambient and task lighting. A ceiling light provides overall illumination, while vanity lights offer focused task lighting.

Hallway
Ensure adequate lighting. A well-lit

hallway provides safety and security. Consider sconces or a ceiling light. Create a welcoming atmosphere. Use warm white bulbs to create a warm and inviting feel.

Remember: Lighting is a personal preference. Experiment with different fixtures, bulbs, and placements to find the perfect lighting solution for your home.



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Howdens Newtownards: A Local Favourite for Kitchen Supplies

Howdens is a well-known name in the UK when it comes to kitchen and joinery supplies.

Their Newtownards branch, situated in the heart of the town, has become a go-to destination for trade professionals. With a wide range of products and excellent customer service, Howdens Newtownards is a popular choice.

A Vast Selection of Products

Whether you're looking to renovate your entire kitchen or simply need a few replacement cabinets, Howdens Newtownards has something to offer. Their extensive product range includes:

- Kitchens: From modern and minimalist to traditional and classic, Howdens offers a variety of kitchen styles to suit any

taste and budget.

- Joinery: Need doors or other joinery products? Howdens has you covered with a wide selection of high-quality options.

- Worktops: Choose from a variety of materials, including laminate, granite, and quartz, to find the perfect worktop for your kitchen.

- Appliances: Howdens also carries a range of appliances, such as ovens, cooktops, and fridges, to complete your kitchen setup.

Expert Advice and Customer Service

One of the reasons why Howdens Newtownards is so popular is their commitment to providing

excellent customer service.

Their knowledgeable staff are always on hand to offer advice and guidance. Howdens Newtownards has 2 in-house designers both with an excellent level of experience. Depot Manager, Steven and his team would be very happy to see you to discuss your project. They can help choose the right products for the project, create a design plan, and even arrange delivery and installation.

A Convenient Location
Howdens Newtownards is conveniently located at Unit 1, 41 Portaferry Rd, Newtownards BT23 8NN, UK. With ample parking available, it's a hassle-



free experience to visit their trade showroom and explore their extensive product range.

If you are a tradesman

looking for high-quality kitchen and joinery supplies in Newtownards, Howdens is definitely worth a visit. With

their vast selection of products, expert advice, and convenient location, they're a trusted name in the local community.



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PropertyPal and Propertynews announce merger

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.

Emma McNally, the newly appointed COO of PropertyPal, said: "This is a significant milestone for both websites. Through a united approach, we will strengthen our offerings to drive growth and innovation. By combining our technical, commercial, and sector expertise, we will deliver a best-in-class user experience and create

additional value for our customers. I am eager to engage with our expanded team and

valued business partners to achieve our shared vision for success."

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THE NEW 2025 PEUGEOT E-3008

By 2025, PEUGEOT will offer the widest range of electric cars of any generalist brand in Europe, and PEUGEOT is replacing its best-seller with an all-new electric fastback SUV: the Next-Level E-3008.

PEUGEOT has transformed the E-3008, taking to a whole new level the creativity of its design and the driving pleasure and electric performance it offers to its users:

ALLURE of a fastback SUV with a reinvented and efficient design. EMOTION produced by the next-gen PEUGEOT Panoramic i-Cockpit® which takes driving pleasure to a whole new level. EXCELLENCE 100% electric range (up to 700km) and performance, thanks to the new STLA Medium platform from Stellantis.

The current PEUGEOT 3008 is a best-seller that has charmed more than 1,320,000 customers in 130 countries over the past 7 years. PEUGEOT is committed to offer a complete EV line-up as soon as 2025 and 100% of the brands' sales in Europe will be electric by 2030. PEUGEOT is entering a new

era with the new E-3008.

The PEUGEOT E-3008 is the first model to use Stellantis' brand new STLA Medium platform, which takes the brand to the next level. This innovative platform has been designed to offer best-in-class performance for the most important criteria for customers: range (up to 700km), recharge time (30 minutes), driving pleasure, performance, efficiency and connected services and functions (Trip Planner, Smart charging, Vehicle to load and Over The Air updates).

The Next-Level PEUGEOT E-3008 will be produced exclusively at the Sochaux plant in France and is now on sale across the UK.

The range will be based on two trim levels, Allure and GT, with 3 option packs to keep the choices simple, and three all-electric powertrains (210bhp, 230bhp Long



Range and 320bhp Dual Motor (4-wheel drive). Hybrid powertrains will also be available, according to market.

L I N D A JACKSON, CEO OF PEUGEOT: "The launch of the Next-Level E-3008 is a major step in PEUGEOT's radical transformation into an alluring 100% electric brand that sets new benchmarks for design, driving pleasure and efficiency. With its

exterior design, spectacular PEUGEOT Panoramic i-Cockpit®, driving pleasure and unprecedented electric performance, the Next-Level E-3008 ushers PEUGEOT into a new era as the French brand offering the widest range of mainstream electric vehicles on the market."

With the new E-3008, PEUGEOT design is entering a new electric era, where Allure has style at the service of efficiency.

MATTHIAS HOSSANN, PEUGEOT DESIGN DIRECTOR: The new E-3008 brings together the inventiveness and audacity of Peugeot, it embodies all of our brand values. Reinventing the 3008 means working on its modernity, reconciling dynamic design with optimal efficiency through a fastback silhouette and innovating with a new generation of PEUGEOT Panoramic i-Cockpit®

THE ALL-NEW DACIA DUSTER

The All-New Dacia Duster is now available to order via 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.

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 seatbelts and headrests, manually adjustable door mirrors, air conditioning, automatic central locking, analogue 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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KIA EV3: UK PRICING AND SPECIFICATION ANNOUNCED

Kia UK has announced pricing and specifications for the Kia EV3 this summer, with pre-orders now open for the brand's most affordable electric vehicle yet.

Following the example of the EV6 and EV9, Kia will offer three grades to EV3 buyers in the UK: 'Air', 'GT-Line' and 'GT-Line S', each with a generously equipped specification as standard.

The EV3 'Air' is offered with a choice of 58.3kWh or 81.4kWh battery packs, with the ability to travel up to 267 miles with the 58.3kWh version, or up to 372 miles on the larger long-range 81.4kWh battery pack. 'GT-Line' and 'GT-Line S' versions are offered solely with the larger 81.4kWh battery choice, and are capable of driving up to 347 miles on a single charge (WLTP 'combined' cycle*).

UK customer deliveries will start from late 2024,

with customers able to choose from all variants from launch. Fleet customers will benefit from the two per cent BIK (benefit-in-kind) rate for EVs in 2024/25 and three per cent for the 2025/26 tax years.

Standard equipment across the EV3 line-up

Every EV3 offers a generous repertoire of standard equipment. This includes:

EV3 'Air' from £32,995

The starting point for the EV3 line-up is the 'Air' grade. This is priced from £32,995 on-the-road for the 58.3kWh battery pack, and £35,995 with the long-range 81.4kWh battery pack. Both battery packs feature a front-wheel drive single-motor powertrain, producing up to 201bhp and peak torque of 283Nm.

The 58.3kWh battery pack is capable of travelling up to 267 miles on a single charge, while the long-range 81.4kWh has a maximum driving range of 372 miles (WLTP 'combined' cycle).

As with almost all Kia models, the generous list of standard equipment means the only option for customers to choose is the paint. EV3 'Air' models feature an eye-catching Sunset Orange as standard, with four optional premium colours – White Pearl, Midnight Black, Lithium Silver, and Frost Blue – available for an additional £625.

EV3 'GT-Line' from £39,495

By choosing the 'GT-Line' grade, the EV3 features the long-range



81.4kWh battery pack for a driving range of up to 347 miles (WLTP 'combined' cycle), more aggressive 'GT-Line' styling cues, and an even longer list of standard equipment adding the following over 'Air' variants:

Like the 'Air', the EV3 'GT-Line' is offered as standard with Sunset Orange paintwork. For £625 extra, available premium paint options are White Pearl, Midnight Black, Shale Grey or Pistachio Green.

EV3 'GT-Line S' model from £42,995

The flagship of the EV3 lineup is the 'GT-Line S', with a price tag of £42,995. Like the 'GT-Line', it features the 81.4kWh long-range battery pack and WLTP 'combined' cycle

range of up to 347 miles. It also represents the pinnacle of the EV3 line-up with the following specification highlights:

The 'GT-Line S' is priced at £42,995 and is offered with the same choice of standard and premium exterior paint finishes as the 'GT-Line' model. Additionally, the 'GT-Line S' model is available with an optional heat pump for £900.

As with all new Kia EVs going forward, the EV3 has a strong focus on sustainability. Integrated into the dashboard for every version of EV3 is a QR code, which if scanned will direct the user to a landing page detailing Kia's sustainability mission, and more

information on exactly which recycled materials have made their way into the EV3's cabin.

The Kia EV3 is the latest battery electric vehicle to arrive as part of Kia's 'Plan S' strategy, which will see the brand launch 15 EVs by 2027, nine of which are destined for the UK. Order books for the EV3 open on 1 August as the most affordable way of purchasing a new zero-emissions electric vehicle from Kia. The EV3 plays a significant role in Kia's transition to becoming a global leader in sustainable mobility solutions.

You can buy your Kia at dealerships province-wide including www.downneys.co.uk

New Grandland: The Stylish and Sustainable SUV now available at Ballyrobert Vauxhall!

Vauxhall has officially launched the New Grandland, a spacious and versatile SUV that sits at the top of the brand's refreshed SUV lineup.

This new model is the first to showcase many of the bold design features first seen on the Vauxhall Experimental concept, including the 3D Vizor and illuminated Griffin logo. The New Grandland is available in three well-equipped trim levels: Design, GS and Ultimate.



The New Grandland offers a choice of fully electric or fuel-efficient hybrid powertrains, giving drivers greater flexibility. The electric version features a 73kWh battery and a range of up to 325 miles (WLTP). Vauxhall has also announced plans to introduce a long-range electric version with a 98kWh battery and an estimated range of 435 miles next year.

Inside, the New Grandland boasts a spacious and comfortable interior

with plenty of storage options. The driver-oriented infotainment system features a 10-inch touchscreen and wireless Apple CarPlay and Android Auto compatibility. The New Grandland also comes with a range of advanced driver assistance systems, including adaptive cruise control, lane keep assist, and traffic sign recognition.

Pricing for the New Grandland starts from £34,700 OTR, with first deliveries expected to begin in October.

Vauxhall is also offering a number of incentives to encourage customers to switch to electric, including

a free wallbox or one year of free charging.

For more information see www.ballyrobert.co.uk

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INSPIRING CONSERVATORY IDEAS

Whether you're building a new conservatory or looking to give your current conservatory a little TLC, get inspired for your next project with a mix of these fun and unique ideas!

When it comes to conservatory ideas, it's all about the ambience and elegance. How they look and feel is what makes them so popular. Not only are they cheaper than extensions, but they also add value to your home and connect you to your garden.

With the wide range of conservatories available, choosing the right one for your home can feel overwhelming. However, despite what the internet will have you believe, it requires only a few considerations.

Questions to ask yourself include:

What square footage am I working with? Which conservatory design will fit in with the style of my house? How do I want to use my conservatory? (i.e. For dining, sunbathing, botany, or reading etc.)

Once you've answered these questions, it's just a matter of choosing your

design and deciding how best to decorate it.

Glass extensions are a sleek and effortless way to upgrade your conservatory. Not only do they invite lots of light and warmth into your home, but they also work with almost any brickwork or cladding design. Double glazing and integrated doors offer a seamless transition into your garden, while landscaping your outdoor space gives you something beautiful to look at on a rainy day.

An orangery Bringing nature indoors with tall parlour palms and hanging baskets full of Mandevilla ('Rocktrumpet') is ideal. Better yet, if you're opting for an orangery, the world is your botanical oyster. For a fragrant oasis, attach Bougainvillea and Jasminum azoricum to trellises; decorate tables with Stephanotis

floribunda-filled pots, and place giant Phoenix palms in lonely corners. Succulent popularity is spiking in the world of interior design. If you're less green-fingered than the average gardener, having a selection of cacti displayed in terrariums, vases, and/or refined concrete pots is a (literally) effortless way of modernising your space.

A coloured conservatory Have you been searching for conservatory colour ideas? Teal is a multifaceted colour available in a spectrum of shades - from pale celeste and aquamarine to rich evergreen and ocean blue. Choosing the right shade for your conservatory is just a matter of light. The brighter the room, the darker you can get away with. That said, to maintain balance, we suggest you stick to the middle of the palette.

A contemporary dining



area A great way to utilise your modern conservatory is to turn it into a garden dining room. Think quintessential picnics with jute decor and polished brass place settings. You can either design a more formal dining area by sticking with a traditional dining table and chairs or opt for something a little more sociable and choose benches and relaxed floor seating.

Small conservatory ideas. Stackable furniture. When it comes to decorating a small conservatory, maximising your space and working with the light is essential. Stackable rattan furniture is perfect for keeping things neat and compact. Bring the outdoors in with faux fur rugs, woven Scandinavian baskets and a hanging chair or two.

They take up less space than sofas or tables and are great for unwinding after a long day. A natural sanctuary. Turning your small conservatory into a natural sanctuary is a great use of space. Conservatory ideas for small spaces include using slimline furniture and potted plants that work well together, leaving you to inject colour with accessories such as accent chairs,

floor lamps, and cushions. Perfect for enjoying a Sunday afternoon reading or taking a restorative nap while rain patters on the rooftop.

Multifunctional furniture. Whether you turn your small conservatory into a kitchen, dining room, reading nook, home garden, or zen retreat, there are several space-saving designs that can help make the most of your space. Think stackable coffee tables,

fitted pantry shelves, L-shaped window benches, and foldaway furniture.

Finish the look with decorative cushions, throws, and plants. Built-in storage and corner shelves keep your conservatory floor clutter-free and roomy. Pick a rug for the perfect finish and get ready to enjoy a minimalist environment!

Information used courtesy of <https://www.checkatrade.com/blog/ideas/conservatory-ideas/>

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*.

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 unevenly, 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.checkatrade.com/blog/expert-advice/home-jobs-you-shouldnt-do-yourself/>

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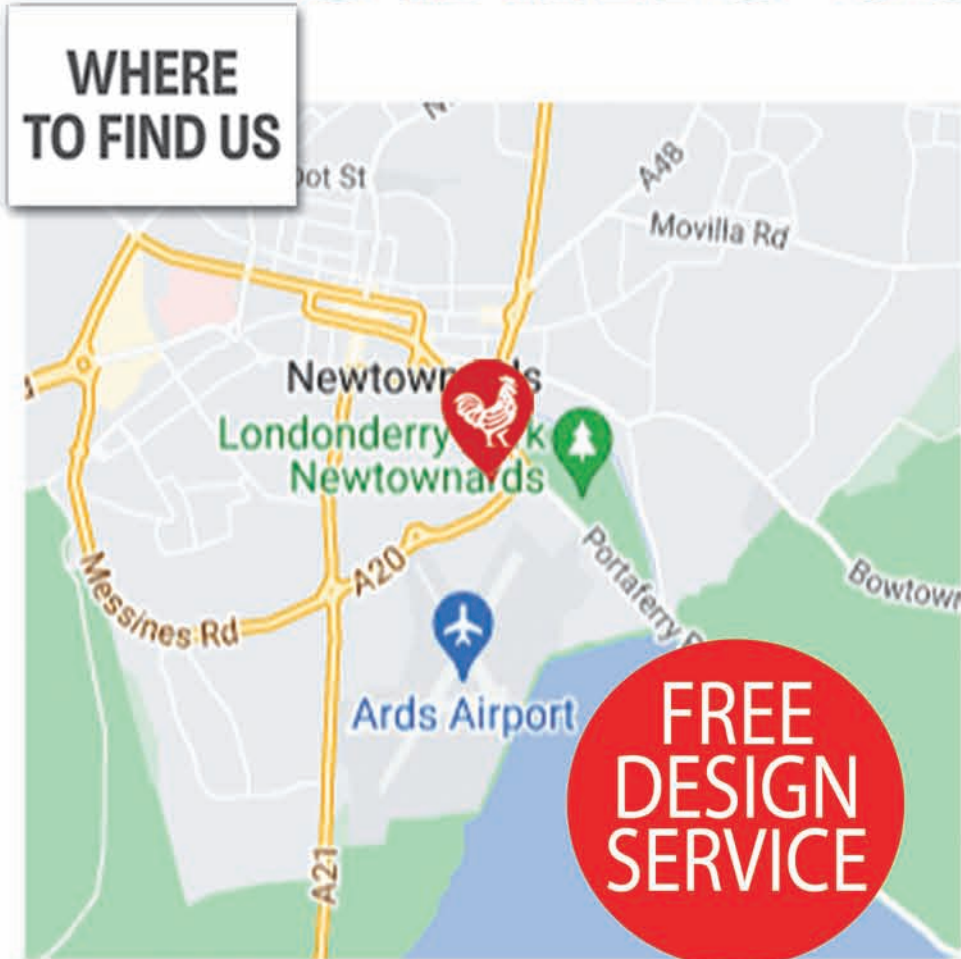
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