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Communities Minister Gordon Lyons talks books with pupils from Largymore Primary School as they celebrate World Book Day at Lisburn Library.

MINISTER ANNOUNCES FUNDING FOR NEW BOOKS IN LIBRARIES ACROSS NI

Communities Minister Gordon Lyons has announced additional funding of £1million for new books for libraries across Northern Ireland.

Welcoming the delivery of new stock at Lisburn City Library, the Minister said: "I'm delighted to visit Lisburn City Library to mark World Book Day and to welcome the newly arrived stock of books."

"I'm pleased to be able to support the funding of this replenishment of stock in all libraries."

"Books are not only important for learning and knowledge, they also stimulate the imagination and encourage creativity and communication."

"It is a joy to see the

excitement of younger readers today and to know the pleasure they will bring to readers of all ages and interests"

The Minister also took part in a storytelling session with children from Largymore Primary School and heard about the vital role local libraries play in encouraging reading, providing access to information, and supporting lifelong learning.

Minister Lyons added: "Our local libraries play a vital role within

communities, not only providing a place to read and learn, but somewhere where people can gather, study and access technology. They offer an ever-evolving range of services, including digital learning platforms, and community programmes and help address the issues around social isolation. It is important that we continue to invest in our libraries to ensure they remain the heart of our local communities."

Libraries NI Chief Executive Jim O'Hagan

said: "We are very grateful to be able to buy books again and we know that our customers will be delighted to hear that new titles are arriving in libraries and also online. Reading for pleasure plays a vital role in enhancing literacy skills, promoting wellbeing, fostering continuous learning, alleviating stress and for boosting memory and concentration."

The new book stock will include books for all ages and interests, eBooks and eAudiobooks for libraries across Northern Ireland.

£450,000 road scheme for the Hilden area

Infrastructure Minister John O'Dowd has announced a £450,000 carriageway and footway resurfacing scheme for the Hilden area of Lisburn.

The resurfacing scheme, which extends from Millbrook Walk to Grand Street and includes Wilson Street, will deliver significant benefits for residents, road users and pedestrians.

Work on Roseville Park, Roseville Walk, Barley Hill, Huguenot Drive and Wilson Street got underway recently.

Infrastructure Minister John O'Dowd said: "This is a substantial investment for the Lisburn area which will deliver significant benefits for local residents, road users and pedestrians. The investment demonstrates my commitment to improving our road network, which is vital for connecting our businesses and communities. I would like to thank residents, local businesses and commuters

for their patience while this essential infrastructure work is carried out."

To facilitate the scheme, Roseville Park, Roseville Walk, Barley Hill and Huguenot Drive will be closed between the hours of 7.30am and 5.30pm until Friday 20 September 2024 (Monday to Friday only).

During periods of closure a diversion will operate via Victoria Crescent - Wesley Street - Low Road - Grand Street and vice versa.

Subject to favourable weather conditions, the works will be substantially complete by Friday 20 September 2024, however the Department will keep the public informed of any change. For more information about this and other improvement schemes visit: <http://www.TrafficwatchNI.com>.

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City Council launches new Corporate Plan

Addressing council staff, Mayor of Lisburn & Castlereagh, Councillor Andrew Gowan said:



“Lisburn & Castlereagh is a fantastic place to live, visit and do business. In the last few years, we have achieved so much in very challenging circumstances. Progress on transformational projects like the opening of the first augmented reality (AR) digital sculpture trail on the island of Ireland at Hillsborough Forest, and progress on the redevelopment of Dundonald International Ice Bowl and 3G pitches at Lough Moss and Laurelhill are just a few examples of the success for us to build upon.

“There is a particular focus on being responsive in our approach to different needs across the council,

empowering communities through digital innovation, knowledge sharing and partnerships. This requires us to work together and to build strong relationships with each other and our community and business partners.

“I look forward the next four years as we continue to make Lisburn and Castlereagh the place to be.”

Noting the civic leadership of Elected Members, Mr Burns outlined the council values and themes that will be the roadmap for delivering better lives for all through growth, prosperity and community wellbeing right across the council area.

Mayor of Lisburn & Castlereagh, Councillor

Andrew Gowan praised staff for their continued efforts and said they are central to the council’s success. He added, “Staff at Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council work tirelessly across a range of services to deliver outstanding projects and services for residents. As Mayor, I get to see at first-hand how all the pieces come together and the amount of work that goes on behind the scenes to make things happen.”

“This ranges from supporting fundraising for my Mayoral charity to developing hugely successful village plans right through to embracing equality and ensuring our essential services are

as inclusive as possible. On behalf of all elected members, I want to thank LCCC staff for going above and beyond every day. I am proud to be Mayor of Lisburn and Castlereagh.”

The Corporate Plan 2024-2028 was developed after extensive consultation with Elected Members, staff and the wider public. It contributes to key strategies including the council’s 10-year investment plan and the community plan.

For more information about Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council’s Corporate Plan and Ambitions see <https://www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/w/corporate-plan-and-ambitions-24-28>



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TWO THIRDS OF PEOPLE IN NI BELIEVE RENT IS TOO EXPENSIVE

As Lisburn and Castlereagh Rental Prices Soar By 10%

Two thirds of people in Northern Ireland believe rent is too expensive, a new survey has revealed.

The survey by CompareNI.com asked people in Northern Ireland about their experience with renting.

The majority of those surveyed (68%) said they believed rent in the region is too expensive.

Recent data analysed by CompareNI.com shows rental prices across Northern Ireland have increased by 10% in the last year.*

The data has also detailed the soaring average cost of rent in regions across Northern Ireland. The highest costs for rental properties on average were in Belfast at £952 per month, Ards and North Down were next with £878 per month, followed by Lisburn and Castlereagh at £843 per month and Newry, Mourne and Down at £720 per month.



Causeway Coast & Glens saw the highest annual rate of rental price growth at 13.6%, averaging £703 per month, closely followed by Mid and East Antrim with an annual rent increase of 13.4%, averaging £691 per month. Derry City and Strabane, Belfast, Lisburn and Castlereagh, Newry, Mourne and Down,

Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon all saw rental prices grow by 10% over the last year. With costs becoming unmanageable, the survey by CompareNI.com also found that one in five renters in Northern Ireland have had to borrow money, or forgo essentials like food or heating in order to afford rent. The high demand and lack of supply of rental

properties is a persistent challenge for people in Northern Ireland with 70% of respondents stating they did not believe there were enough rental properties available. This is reflected in recent data that showed market supply was down by 8% on Q4 of 2022 and market demand was up 30% during the same time frame.* In addition to this,

available houses are disappearing fast. On average, pre-covid rental properties were on the market for an average of 37 days before they reached let agreed, now the average time is just 25 days. CompareNI.com can help people in Northern Ireland find savings on all sorts of household bills and essentials such as home and contents, pet and travel insurance.

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Translink Leaves Sustainable Legacy in Wallace Park

As the ongoing Lisburn Area Renewals (LAR) project begins to wind down, Translink is continuing to deliver a range of community initiatives in partnership with local organisations, community groups and schools in the Lisburn area that will bring a number of benefits for the local community.

The initiatives are part of an ongoing programme of engagement connected with the essential track works currently ongoing on the rail line in the Lisburn area. Projects include working with Tonagh Primary School and Tonagh Neighbourhood Initiative to deliver environmental legacies, Live-Life Wellbeing Centre to support long-term community

development, and the local charity Sensability, which supports people with learning disabilities, to deliver a programme of musical events called 'Sensability and Song'. Together, these will help provide a long-lasting, positive legacy associated with the project in the Lisburn community. As part of these initia-



tives, maple trees have been planted in Wallace Park in Lisburn to mark the conclusion of the project and to leave a positive, sustainable legacy that can be enjoyed by the community in the city for generations to come. Councillor Thomas Beckett, Chair of Communities and Wellbeing Committee said: "Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council are delighted to be involved in the Lisburn Area Renewals project culminating with

planting native trees in Wallace Park today, providing biodiversity and conserving the tree eco-system. Apart from the many physical benefits, trees also bring people together as they create a welcoming, calming environment and we are grateful to Translink's Lisburn Area Renewals project for leaving a lasting legacy." Helen Halliday, Senior Programme Manager, Translink, said: "From the

start of this project, we have been proactively engaging with the wider community in Lisburn to explain the importance of these essential works and have very much welcomed support from local people, organisations, and representatives across the community. "We live in a world where focus on sustainability and biodiversity is only getting more important, and Translink is doing everything we can to ensure that we are good and effective environmental custodians of the environment. "We are delighted to have been able to add a little to the impressive range of native trees in Wallace Park, Lisburn's main green canopy, as a permanent, sustainable reminder of the LAR project and the benefits it brings in terms of building a society that is Better. Connected. More information on the project is available online at www.translink.uk/lar

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Ulster Bank marks 'No More Week' by opening Safe Spaces for economic and domestic abuse victims.

Ulster Bank has announced that, a selection of branches will offer Safe Spaces to people experiencing economic and domestic abuse as part of a wider campaign launched by NatWest to mark 'No More Week' including the branch in Lisburn

A total of 19 Ulster Bank branches will act as Safe Hubs for anyone experiencing harm in locations throughout Northern Ireland with Belfast's Connswater, City Centre and Ards also on the list.

Safe Spaces, launched by domestic abuse charity Hestia as part of the 'UK Says No More' campaign, are designated locations which anyone experiencing economic and domestic abuse can use. Upon asking a member of staff to use a space, people will be given access to a private room to help them deal with the issue. They will be provided with the use of a phone if they need one, and the chance to discreetly contact family, friends, or specialist support.

This coincides with 'UK Says No More' Week, launched by the charity Hestia, which raises awareness against domestic abuse and sexual violence in the UK. The campaign provides open-source tools and resources for individuals and organisations to take action and get involved in making a difference.

Specialist training on Safe Spaces and domestic abuse awareness has been carried out by employees across

NatWest, Royal Bank and Ulster Bank branches.

This work follows NatWest's, Ulster Bank's parent group, further donation of £1m to The Circle Fund, totalling £2m in partnership with SafeLives. The Fund has supported frontline services with crisis intervention, increasing safety and ensuring survivors are supported in the right way, at the right time. For example, it has been used to provide secure locations and Ring doorbell systems. It has also provided essentials such as food and cots, winter shoes and bus fares.

Terry Robb, Head of Retail Banking at Ulster Bank said: "We know that people from all walks of life can experience economic and domestic abuse. As a bank we have a duty to provide support to our own customers and indeed people within our local communities, identify those who need support and offer them a Safe Space where they can go on to access the help and care they need.

"To date we have designated 19 branches in Northern Ireland as Safe Spaces however we hope that as more of our colleagues undergo this specialist training, we



can offer this vital service across the wider branch network."

It's really important to be playing a part in helping not only our own customers, but people within our communities who need help by providing a Safe Space where they can go and access support safely."

Patrick Ryan, Chief Executive at Hestia, said: "Having a safe place to seek support is vital for victims of domestic abuse. 1 in 5 people in England and Wales will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime. By bringing our Safe Spaces to everyday places like banks and pharmacies, it means that anyone experiencing domestic abuse has the chance to access specialist help and advice, or to call a loved one.

"It is fantastic to see

more Safe Spaces on our high streets – and we are delighted that Ulster Bank has partnered with us to ensure that more victims can safely access support. Staff across over 360 branches have participated in our domestic abuse training, and we hope that other organisations will follow their lead."

Ulster Bank has a dedicated team who support customers experiencing domestic, economic and financial abuse. Customers can:

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New Attraction Set to Herd Crowds of Spectators at this Year's Balmoral Show

Sheep dog displays are the latest attraction to be added to the action-packed 2024 Balmoral Show programme.

The Cattle Rings this year will host two impressive demonstrations for visitors from full-time farmer and international sheep dog trialist, James P. McGee. James, from Ballybofey in Donegal, has bred and trained sheep dogs at Glencregg Farm for many years having

always had an immense appreciation for the expertise involved in this mesmerising skill.

Renowned for their patience, gentleness, obedience, and endless energy, sheep dogs help farmers to move and gather livestock efficiently across fields and farmland. With their help, farmers can use their land more sustainably and ensure their flock have enough nutritious food every day.

Visitors at this year's Show will have the chance to catch a glimpse of James and his trusty collie companions, Roel Dog Becca (2 years old) and Airgid Gold (18 months old). On Wednesday and Friday evening, his captivating masterclasses will demonstrate the commands and techniques he uses on a daily basis to efficiently and seamlessly herd his sheep. Whether you're 'coming by' or 'taking time', it's sure to be a mesmerising watch.



Information on other attractions and classes across the Show's busy rings and arenas is now available on the Balmoral Show website.

For those with a keen interest in sheep dog training, James also now offers an online training programme which can help to prepare your dog for life on the farm or competitive sheep dog trials. Uploading at least 1 video per week, James' online tutorials could help farmers save time and move their sheep more efficiently across their farmland.

The Balmoral Show in partnership with Ulster Bank will return to the Eikon Exhibition Centre showgrounds from Wednesday 15th May to Saturday 18th May 2024. Tickets are available online now and must be purchased before arriving at the showgrounds.

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An evening of music in Lisburn

Thursday, May 9 will see a fundraising concert held at the Lagan Valley Island in aid of two local branches of charities: the Cancer Fund for Children and SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity.

Hosted by the Mayor of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council, Councillor Andrew Gowan, the concert will feature performances by The Band of the Royal Irish Regiment, the Bugles, Pipes and Drums of the 2nd Battalion Royal Irish Regiment, The Northern Ireland Military Wives Choir, the talented choir, ensemble, and pianist from Strathearn Girls School, and the captivating vocals of soprano Lauren Kells.

A spokesperson for branch said: "We're delighted to have such a range of performances for people to enjoy on the night, from the excitement of the two military bands, to the enchanting voices of the Military Wives Choir, Lauren, and the young - but no less excellent - performers from Strathearn.

"It really promises to be a night to remember at a wonderful venue, and is in aid of two charities that do so much locally, so book your tickets before they all go."

Doors open at 7pm for a 7.30pm sharp start. Tickets are priced at £15 and can be bought by visiting laganvalleyisland.co.uk/whats-on.

SSAFA works throughout Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, England, Scotland, and Wales as well as many countries overseas providing support to serving and former military personnel and their families.

To learn more about its work or to access support or fundraise, visit ssafa.org.uk/northern-ireland.



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Hundreds of Local Families celebrated World Autism Acceptance Week

Recently Northern Ireland's autism charity, Autism NI, welcomed hundreds of local autism families to celebrate World Autism Acceptance Week at W5 in Belfast.



(L-R) Rebecca Allen (5) and Aaron Allen (9) from Lisburn and Autism NI's CEO, Kerry Boyd enjoy Autism NI's Family Fun Day at W5 to celebrate World Autism Acceptance Week.

The event saw families come together to celebrate and show their support for our autistic community.

The Family Fun Day was the final event in a week of celebrations hosted by Autism NI. The Charity organised several activities and campaigns with local businesses, schools, families and the wider public during World Autism Acceptance Week which took place in

April.

Autism NI CEO, Kerry Boyd said, "Our key message this World Autism Acceptance Week was to 'Be Kind To Different Minds'. It is vital that everyone within our society takes the time to understand autistic people and learns how to support our autistic community, whether that is within the classroom, at work or

within the local community. Our Charity's mission is to build an inclusive society in Northern Ireland where autistic children and adults have the best support and opportunities to live fulfilled lives, and we need the general public to help us achieve this.

Local Mum, Pauline Taggart, added "Days like this let my child be free and enjoy time with

other children without fear or judgement, and it is also good to interact with other families and share experiences."

With over 35,000 autistic people in Northern Ireland, the local charity encouraged everyone to get involved and show their support for our vibrant autistic community.

For further information please call 028 9040 1729 or visit www.autismni.org



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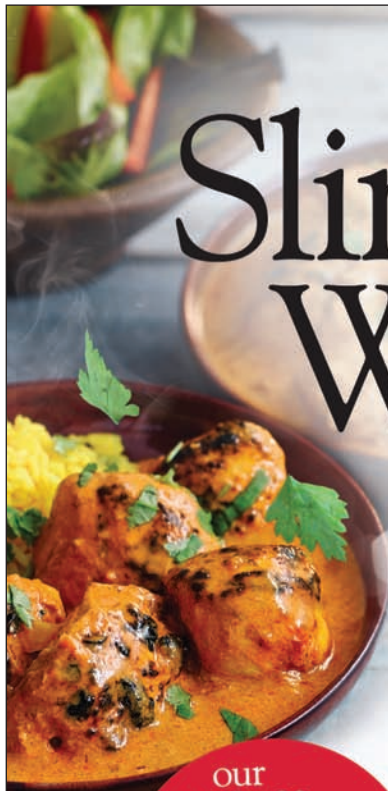


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<p>THURSDAY MOIRA PRESBYTERIAN Meeting Street 9.30am Call Jill on 07709 301 686</p>	<p>THURSDAY TRINITY METHODIST CHURCH Knockmore Road 5.30pm & 7.30pm Call Christine on 07981 745 742</p>
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ONE OF NATURE'S GREAT DOUBLE ACTS.

The Latin name for the jay is *garrulus glandarius*, 'garrulus' meaning noisy and *glandarius* meaning 'of acorns'.

Acorns are the jay's primary food, and there would be no jays without acorns. Indeed, there would be fewer, maybe no oaks, without jays. They are members of the smart crow family, about the size of jackdaws, and like their 'cousins' the magpies, have beautiful feather colours, in the case of jays mostly pink, black, white, and

distinctive electric-blue wing panels. They live year-round in mainly broadleaf woodland, but also sometimes in heavily wooded suburbs. But you're more likely to hear than see one (they screech), because they are notoriously secretive.

The best time to see them, other than as a flash of colours, is about October in woodland, where, if you stand stock-still and are lucky, you might watch them feeding on the ground; if you twitch at all, they

will be gone, almost literally in a flash.

They are feeding mainly on acorns but may be seen carrying them off in their beaks, because, being smart, they have a cunning plan to see them through the winter months by hiding them, mostly in the ground. They are expert at relocating their caches, but will not find them all, meaning some acorns will germinate and develop as new trees.

When acorns fall from

oaks, they are food, not just for jays, but squirrels, mice, deer, even wild boar back in the day, and if the jays didn't cache them far from the parent oak, they might all get eaten. Also, of course, if acorns did germinate beneath an adult parent oak, they wouldn't thrive and probably would die in the shade.

Oaks need jays to distribute their offspring, and jays need oaks to provide their food.

Nature is interwoven,



and there are many critical relationships, acorn and jay combo is just one of them. examples of plants and what scientists call a symbiosis. The oak, JVA animals which evolved

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Moving from Tax Credits to Universal Credit – important information

Over the past few months lots of working parents who have been in receipt of Tax Credits have received notification that they have to move onto Universal Credit instead.

Employers For Childcare

Universal Credit allows for higher financial support towards registered childcare costs than Tax Credits and so families using childcare can often find that they are better off moving to Universal Credit.

The Government has committed to ensuring no one is worse off by moving to Universal Credit by providing 'Transitional Protection' to make up the loss between what is received under the old benefits, and Universal Credit.

However, there are strict rules around the eligibility for Transitional Protection so you should



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always seek independent advice before applying for Universal Credit. Other benefit changes in 2024 In addition to households being moved to Universal Credit as mentioned above, the amount that is being paid through all benefits, including Universal Credit, Tax Credits, Housing Benefit etc, is increasing from April 2024 by at least 6.7%. So, if you receive benefits, you may be entitled to more money from April onwards. For free, independent advice on the financial support your family is entitled to, including with registered childcare costs, call our Family Benefits Advice

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Lisburn Hearing Centre – Celebrating a Year of Transforming Lives!

It's one year since Scottish audiologist, Colin I'Anson, bought Lisburn Hearing Centre business.

David Parkinson founded the company in 2006 which has been served the community continuously ever since. Colin celebrated the anniversary on April 6th.

Colin says "It's been a busy and memorable year! Being an audiologist is very rewarding as you get to meet so many people and you can make such a big difference to people's hearing and quality of life." As well as continuing to help people with their hearing Colin has been able to give the shop front a face-lift and a new website is on the way!

Colin first qualified as a hearing aid audiologist in 2007 and has 17 years of experience working at House of Hearing in Edinburgh specialising in the fitting of bespoke hearing solutions and wax removal.

In addition to Colin's audiology credentials Lisburn Hearing Centre has access to a wide range of brilliant hearing aids ideally suited and matched for the needs of each individual customer.



Colin I'Anson is celebrating 1 year of making a difference at Lisburn Hearing Centre

"Lisburn Hearing Centre is a well established and customer focussed business. As has always been the case we strive to ensure that customers and families always continue to receive a first class service from us. Both wax-removal and hearing-

aid-fitting dramatically improve a person's quality of life. Doing that while providing a personal and consistent service continues to be our priority and I hope that this will continue to set us apart for many years to come.

For more information Tel: (0)28 9264 0302, email hello@lisburnhearing.com or see www.lisburnhearing.com. Lisburn Hearing Centre is located at 2a Smithfield Square, Lisburn, just between Greens and McCalls.

A pain in the... Heel

"Heel pain is one of the most common reasons people choose to see a podiatrist" – Ciaran Canney, Clinical Director at Foot Medic explains.

Heel pain is also one of the most commonly mis-diagnosed foot conditions, so its important to see someone who truly understands the anatomy and condition. Heel pain can affect anyone, from any walk of life and its thought to affect more then 10% of people at some point in their life and If you're female, you're more likely to suffer from heel pain.

"When patients come to see me they're often at the end of their tether. Being in pain from that 1st step when they wake up can make each day miserable. The important thing to remember is that even if it takes time, in general heel pain can be fixed. It's just important to get the diagnosis right and use a multifactorial approach to get the best outcomes".

Ciaran, who has been in the industry for 14 years explains "As a healthcare business

we have invested in technology and training that helps us to help our patients faster and more effectively. By using 'pro-inflammatory' treatments we can help tissues to heal faster, especially those patients who have struggled for a long time Our approach is more intense than many patients are used to and often involves a combination of clinical imaging, orthotic support, pro inflammatory therapies and structured, tailored rehab and strengthening programs"

Plantar fasciitis accounts for most heel pain cases but it's important to bear in mind that it is not the only cause. Accurate diagnosis and a robust, tailored treatment plan are essential. You can get your own assessment by contacting Foot Medic Hillsborough today.



The clinic offers routine podiatry but also goes beyond this to offer specialist services like Children's podiatry, steroid and joint injection, nail surgery, sports podiatry, advanced musculoskeletal therapies, 3D printed orthoses and biomechanical assessment. With the help of analytics such as 3D foot scans, slow motion gait analysis and ultrasound imaging

– problems can be assessed quickly and with treatments including shockwave therapy, restorative light therapies, minor surgery and joint injection, there is a whole range of problems that can be assisted when you put you step foot into Foot Medic! Call 028 9278 9105 Or, BOOK ONLINE at <https://footmedichillsborough.co.uk>



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Commonly asked questions about personal finance

Handling finances can be complicated, and it's something that most people have difficulty with at some point in their lives. In fact, many people find themselves with more questions than solutions on how to manage their money and achieve financial stability.

However, finances don't have to be overwhelming, and there are ways to feel more in control of your money by being informed and implementing strategies that will keep you on top of things.

Nina Appelgren, personal finance expert at Lånea, has answered some of the most frequently asked questions about personal finance to demystify some of the confusion around finances and provide guidance on how to make the most of your money.

How do I create a budget?

While creating a budget can be an individual task, there are steps that most people should follow to keep track of their money accurately and budget more efficiently.

Tracking income is the first step to creating a successful budget. This should include your annual salary including bonuses, any income from side hustles or freelance work, and any benefits that you may receive.

You should then compile a list of all your potential monthly expenses. This will include rent or mortgage repayments, groceries, utilities and other bills such as phone and Wi-Fi bills, subscription services, leisure

and transportation expenses.

From this, assign a specific amount of your salary to each expense. Prioritise the essentials and don't forget to factor in savings. Ideally, you can save a portion of your annual salary – around 10-20% is a good amount to aim for.

Be sure to consider financial goals or future big purchases that you're building towards, as you may want to set aside more money for these.

Try using spreadsheets or budgeting apps to help track your finances. Some people may opt to create their budget manually, or some may prefer to rely on technology – regardless of your preference, there are many tools at your disposal that can help you.

Remember, you can adjust your budget whenever you need to, or whenever your financial circumstances change.

What is a good credit score?

Credit scores fall between 300 and 850. Good is generally considered around 670-700 and up – 800 and over is excellent.

While credit score requirements may vary, having a good credit score will make you more likely to be approved for loans



which you are likely to need for big purchases such as buying a house. In general, it will approve your access to borrowing and may also bring other benefits such as lower insurance and interest rates.

There are different factors that can affect credit scores, such as payment history, credit usage and length of credit history. It's a good idea to regularly check the score and work to maintain or improve it.

What are ways to improve credit score?

To improve your credit score, it's important that you are paying your bills on time, as a consistent payment history will keep it high. Similarly, reduce any debt where you can and pay them off as soon as possible.

Additionally, be sure

to use your credit cards responsibly. Avoid maxing out, and don't take on more debt than you can handle. Regularly check your credit report to ensure the information is accurate.

Where you can, limit new credit applications – only apply for them when necessary, as applying for a lot of credit within a short period can negatively affect your credit score.

It is important to note that if you have never taken out a line of credit, you won't have a credit score at all.

What are the best ways to manage debt?

The first step to dealing with debt is looking at your budget to see where you can cut back and reallocate funds to paying off your debt.

This may not go very

far, but it is best to start somewhere manageable, as this will further motivate you to handle these debts. You should try to prioritise high-interest debt first to save money long-term and avoid accruing more interest payments.

Look into debt consolidation if you need to, which is where several loans are combined into one. This can make things simpler and may also reduce your borrowing costs and interest rates.

Try negotiating with creditors if you're struggling as you may be able to agree on a lower interest rate, payment plan or settlement amount. If necessary, don't be afraid to seek professional help as this may be the best route if you're overwhelmed by debt.

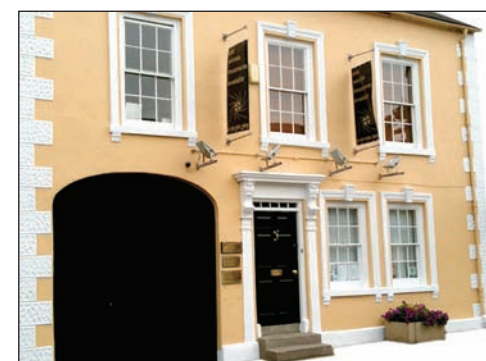
MOIRA DENTAL CARE 35 YEARS ON THE MAIN STREET

As you travel up the Main Street in Moira, you can't help but admire the 18th century buildings which have been carefully restored and conserved. Standing tall amongst them is 77 Main Street, which houses Moira Dental Care.

Established in 1988, Moira Dental Care started out with a single dentist working out of his basement surgery. Over the last 35 years, they have loyally served the community of Moira and surrounding areas. They are proud to even have patients who lived in the house at one stage of their lifetime.

When Marilyn Todd took the helm of the business in 1999 as a young dentist, her dream to expand the clinic took wings.

Over the years she and her husband have carefully handpicked a team of skilled dental care professionals. Today, Moira Dental Care boasts four modern surgeries with a clinical team comprised of six dentists and a dental hygienist. The team



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FUTURE-PROOF YOUR HOME

Is your home geared up to support the needs of you and your family in the coming years?

Ensure a sound structure. There's little point investing in smart tech and eco-improvements to upgrade your home if the basics have not been met. Future-proofing your home starts with a sound structure that will last for many years.

With a solid structure, the next step in future-proofing your home is to make sure it can be flexible to meet your needs, both now and in the future. You need a home that can evolve as needs change. In practical terms, this means a home that has the potential to accommodate the needs of multigenerational living, that can offer versatility and accessibility.

Here are four popular ways to do this: Broken-plan layouts. The open-plan layout is hugely popular in the UK. However, as property prices rise and people live longer, more families will likely come together under one roof. A broken-plan layout helps

to accommodate the needs of a multigenerational family in the same home. While cooking and dining together in an open-plan kitchen-diner is great, older generations might appreciate a quieter living area to relax. Similarly, many family members might crave a calm, tech-free zone. Broken-plan layouts help to create zones within an open-plan setup, offering a sense of separation within a shared space. This can be done with structural elements such as partition walls or sliding, moveable walls. It can also be done with distinct features such as furniture or different flooring.

An extension. With the potential to house more family members under one roof in the future, an extension could be a worthy investment. A well-designed extension will typically add value to your home while also making the most of unused space. A side-return extension is a good example

of this. Consider how your family will use the newly extended space and build these factors into your plans. For example, in a kitchen extension, make the layout as spacious as possible to give everyone plenty of room to move around. You could also build accessible elements into your kitchen design. If a home extension is not possible, why not consider a garden room? A garden room offers tremendous versatility, extra space (outside of the main hubbub of the house), and they tend to add value to your property.

A conversion. Remember, your home setup doesn't have to remain static. Rooms can be converted to service different requirements as the need arises. Many of us will appreciate how our homes adapted during the pandemic to allow working from home.

Going forward, you may wish to consider conversions that offer

greater accessibility. For example, a second reception room could become a ground-floor bedroom, and a downstairs WC could be changed into an accessible wet room. Or perhaps you're able to consider more major changes such as a loft, garage, or basement conversion.

Exterior landscaping. It's not just the inside of your home that might need to offer greater flexibility in the future.

The outside of your property may also need some consideration. Younger family members will enjoy space to play and run around in the garden. However, older family members may appreciate a paved area in a sunny corner for a morning coffee, and a raised bed to plant some veggies. Pathways and gentle slopes are good forward-planning moves as an alternative to steep steps. Meanwhile, careful planting will make

sure your garden design brings everyone joy with the desired amount of maintenance. And remember, your garden is a natural extension of your home - the perfect space to enjoy as a family. Outdoor seating, lighting, and even heating can help everyone to make the most of what it has to offer.

Finally, if three generations (or more!) all inhabit the same home, where will they all park their cars? If you don't have a driveway, consider adding one. It can add between 5-10% to the value of your home as well as being more convenient than on-road parking.

Incorporate smart technology. Smart home technology includes a range of internet-connected systems that we use in the home on a daily basis. This includes our heating, lighting, security, home entertainment systems, and more. Smart technology



is becoming increasingly popular, offering greater control, versatility, and cost savings to homeowners. And with multiple generations in a household, smart home tech can offer peace of mind and help to make life easier. For example, being able to turn the heating on and off remotely to help lower your heating bills, setting reminders on smart devices, checking

who's at the door with a video doorbell, or installing a smart lock for keyless entry.

Make eco-improvements. Future-proofing your home with eco-improvements does require an initial investment. But you will save money on your energy bills in the long run. If you have multiple generations in one home, this decision will pay dividends in the future.

In addition, a sustainable home is environmentally friendly and a major draw for home buyers, no doubt adding value to your home. There are various ways to future-proof your home with eco-improvements:

For this and more information and inspiration see <https://www.checkatrade.com/blog/expert-advice/future-proof-your-home/>

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Enjoy your garden even more this summer

Summer is the perfect time to enjoy your garden, make the most of this season.

Here are some easy tips to help you create a beautiful and enjoyable outdoor space!

Water Effectively:
Thoroughly water the soil surrounding your plants rather than doing it little by little. This encourages deeper root growth and reduces the need for frequent watering.

Create small pools of water around your plants

to allow proper absorption. Well-hydrated plants will thrive in the summer heat, giving you more time to relax and enjoy your garden.

Feed Your Plants:
Regularly feed your plants to keep them healthy and vibrant. Use a general-purpose plant food for most plants, but choose one specifically designed for edible plants

if you're growing fruits or vegetables.

Set a reminder to feed your plants according to the instructions on the packaging.

Add Instant Colour:
As summer progresses, some plants may stop flowering, leaving gaps in your garden. Summer bedding plants are an excellent solution.

These low-cost plants add instant colour and work well in containers. Position them near outdoor seating areas or your front door to enjoy their showy blooms.

Refresh Your Garden Furniture:

Old, worn-out garden furniture can affect the overall look of your outdoor space. Consider investing in new pieces such as a dining set, outdoor sofa, parasol, or deckchairs.

Fresh furniture creates a welcoming atmosphere for family gatherings and



guests. Choose comfortable and stylish options to enhance your garden's appeal.

Host a Summer BBQ:
Invite friends and family over for a barbecue. Set up a cozy outdoor dining area with fairy lights, cushions, and a grill.

Enjoy delicious food, good company, and the warm summer evenings in your garden.

Grow Your Own Fruit and Vegetables:

Use a small corner of your garden or even containers to grow your own produce. Tomatoes, herbs, and strawberries are great choices.

Harvesting fresh fruits and veggies from your garden adds a rewarding touch to your summer experience.

Remember, your garden is your personal oasis, and these simple steps will help you make the most of it during the sunny months!

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The Little Green Allotments are a place where you can have the garden of your dreams. Whether you're a seasoned veteran or just starting out, Little Green is a place for all to grow fresh, delicious crops all year round. We are passionate about providing a tranquil and serene space



to make gardening fun, sustainable and accessible for everyone. Come visit us today to see what The Little Green Allotments is all about!

Little Green stretches over our 5 acre family farmland which has been in the Phillips family for 7

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to give your lawn a timed release of nutrition over several months, feeding your grass and stimulating growth. This sophisticated treatment also includes a weed control, keeping your lawn looking its best ready for summer.

Now is also the perfect time for our Oasis treatment as it helps your soil to make the best use of any available moisture, meaning you'll need to water up to 80% less. This popular treatment now features an innovative seaweed extract which has

proven to have an almost immediate effect on the colour of your lawn.

At this time of year, we also recommend a regular mowing regime. Dry, sunny days are the best conditions for mowing, however it's important that your mower blades are kept sharp to avoid causing damage to your grass. It's also important that your grass isn't cut too short as this will weaken it, attracting unwanted weeds. When dry, we advise raising the height



of your cut from 1" to 2" and give it a good drink the day after mowing.

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Read her inspirational story:

"I started slimming world in January 2023 and by December 2023 I was 6 stone lighter! The food optimising plan is so generous that I can lose weight while still eating the food I love and my eating habits have totally changed.

Before slimming world I found it difficult to walk the dog and clean the house. I never wanted to go out with friends due to my size and low confidence. I have now increased my body magic so much by taking my dog on longer walks (sometimes run), going to the gym, I go out more with my husband and friends, and wear clothes I feel confident in.

At a size 24 I struggled to buy clothes in main street shops. The night I joined slimming world I had just ate a huge amount of food, stood up and told my husband I was off to slimming world.

Now at a size 12 and 6st 10.5lbs lighter I realise that that was

an impulsive decision that has become the best one I have ever made!

One of the best feelings was when I bumped into a friend who I hadn't seen in over a year, she didn't



recognise me and I had to tell her who I was!

The food I ate before never filled me and I realise now it is because it had no nutritional value. Now, I feel fulfilled with what I eat and have more energy.

I attend the Thursday 7:30pm group at Holy Trinity Church. My consultant Christine has been amazing on

this whole journey and I am so thankful for her guidance and support as well as the members who attend the group. At group we discuss food ideas, support each other and always have a laugh. I can't express enough how important it has been for me to be part of a group who are all on the same weight loss journey, supportive and building

great friendships! I would not have been able to do this without the support of my slimming world group. This is the year I will be handed my target certificate as I am so determined to reach that final goal!"

If you want to find out more about joining a Slimming World group near you contact Christine on 07981 745742

Take the Plunge – Wild Swimming

For many, swimming in the ocean is reserved only for far flung locations where the water is more akin to a bath than a glass of icy water.

However, the benefits of wild swimming are manifold and doing so can have a long-lasting positive impact on your health.

The majority of the benefits associated with open swimming are based on the cold temperature of the water – something that those in Northern Ireland are familiar with. The cold water often proven to stimulate your

parasympathetic nervous system which promotes a sense of relaxation and can deliver a better night's sleep.

Whilst it might be a nightmare for some, submersing your body in cold water forces the brain to release certain endorphins which have been shown to boost the mood and increase general happiness. Another consequence of the cold temperatures is the

positive impact that it can have on ones metabolism.

The cold water forces your body to work harder to keep warm, which in turn, increases the calories that you burn. As the temperature of the water decreases, the amount of energy that your body will burn to stabilise the core temperature increases, thus accelerating your metabolism.

Finally, wild swimming

is good for promoting better circulation. The cold water forces out body to rush blood to our organs in order to retain a core temperature, making the heart work harder as more blood needs to be circulated. The increased blood flow through your capillaries, arteries and veins promotes good health and enables the body to both better fight infection and repair damage.

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Discover a World of Gymnastics Magic at Rainbow Gymnastics!

Unlock your child's potential at Dundonald's premier gymnastics academy, where we cater to enthusiasts of all skill levels in a secure, nurturing, and exhilarating environment. From the grace of artistic gymnastics to the dynamic moves of circus acrobatics, tumbling, and exclusive boys' groups, we've got something for everyone!

Pride and prowess define our competitive training programme, celebrating outstanding achievements and sculpting champions of tomorrow. Is your child the next gymnastics star? If they were born between 2018-2019, we're excited to meet them!

Step into our expansive, purpose-built facility — one of Northern Ireland's largest, equipped with cutting-edge gear designed to launch dreams into reality. And there's more! We're thrilled to offer newcomers a complimentary trial session and a special discount on membership fees.

This year, we're keeping the momentum going all summer long! Our recreational programme and highly acclaimed summer schemes are set to make this season unforgettable.

Join the Rainbow Gymnastics family today and watch your child soar to new heights. Your adventure begins here!



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TOP TIPS TO ENHANCE YOUR MENTAL WELL-BEING EVERY DAY!

Reframe Unhelpful Thoughts:

Our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are interconnected. Sometimes, we fall into patterns of unhelpful thinking. Recognize these patterns and take steps to view things differently. Reframe negative thoughts to improve your mental health and well-being.

Example: Instead of thinking, "I'm terrible at this," try, "I'm learning and improving."

Be Present (Practice Mindfulness):

Take time to be aware of yourself and the present moment. Mindfulness helps you gain perspective and reduces stress. Pay attention to your thoughts, feelings, and the world around you.

Try This: Practice mindful breathing or meditation to stay in the present.

Prioritize Good Sleep: Quality sleep significantly impacts our mental and physical well-being. Ensure you get enough rest. Establish a consistent sleep routine and create a calming bedtime environment.

Tip: Avoid screens before bedtime and maintain a regular sleep schedule.

Connect with Others: Meaningful relationships are crucial for mental well-being. Spending time with friends, family, or talking about your feelings can prevent loneliness and improve your mental health.

Action: Reach out to someone you care about today.

Live a Healthy Life: Physical health and mental well-being are intertwined. Regular exercise, a balanced diet, and staying hydrated contribute to overall wellness.

Remember: A healthy body supports a healthy mind.

Self-Care Matters: Dedicate time for yourself. Engage in activities you enjoy, whether it's reading, painting, or taking a relaxing bath. Prioritize self-care to recharge and boost your mental resilience.

Self-Care Idea: Take a



nature walk or listen to soothing music.

Write a Letter to Future You:

Reflect on your goals, aspirations, and positive affirmations. Write a letter to your future self,

expressing encouragement and envisioning a brighter tomorrow.

Try It: Jot down your hopes and dreams for the

future. Remember, good mental health is an ongoing investment. These simple changes can make a

significant difference in your well-being. Start today and take care of your mind just as you do your physical health.

Dreams and Magic in Motion at Rainbow Gymnastics!

Rainbow Gymnastics is under the new ownership and management of Tamlynn Carlson.



gymnastics academy, cater to enthusiasts of all skill levels in a secure, nurturing, and exhilarating environment. From the grace of artistic gymnastics to the dynamic moves of circus acrobatics, tumbling, and exclusive boys' groups which include Parkour, we've got something for everyone! Pride and prowess define our competitive training programme,

celebrating outstanding achievements and sculpting champions of tomorrow.

Is your child the next gymnastics star? If they were born between 2018-2019, Rainbow Gymnastics is excited to meet them!

Step into the expansive, purpose-built facility — one of Northern Ireland's largest, equipped with cutting-edge gear designed to launch

dreams into reality.

This year, Rainbow Gymnastics is keeping the momentum going all summer long with a full recreational programme and highly acclaimed summer schemes set to make this season unforgettable.

Join the Rainbow Gymnastics family today and watch your child soar to new heights.

Your adventure begins here!

Tamlynn started gymnastics at the age of 6 in South Africa, she quickly achieved — becoming National Tumbling Champion 3 times and was on the National SA team for artistic gymnastics. She competed at events like Rosebowl and African Champs. In 2017 Tammyln Coached gymnasts on the SA national squad and they competed at Olympic Hopes, African Champs.

In 2018 she moved to England where she served as Head Coach at a Centre in Stockport. One of her gymnasts attended the National Finals for the North West in 2019 for National 3.

In 2022 she produced the North West Compulsory 3 Champion and was on the team in the National Finals — the team

came 3rd overall and Tammyln's gymnast was placed 1st on floor.

Tammyln has FIG Level 2 and BG level 4. She has completed training camps with Kelly Hill USA and Paul Hall GBR. She was also 1 of 2 gymnasts selected to represent Ireland at the European Gymnastics coaching course in Frankfurt, Germany in 2023.

Says Tammyln: "We have an absolutely brilliant facility — one of the biggest and best in Northern Ireland.

We are very proud of the gymnasts excelling in national level competition at present and we are equally pleased to bring the many physical and health benefits of gymnastics to children participating at all levels!"

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Can you give your Sunday morning to Air Ambulance NI, Sunday 5th May at Moy Park Belfast City Marathon?

Air Ambulance NI aspires to have at least 100 people around the marathon route to cheer on the participants.

Grace Williams, Area Fundraising Manager for the charity said, "We are asking people who live in Belfast and surrounding areas to consider

giving the gift of your time, by volunteering to help at one of Air Ambulance NI's seven water and cheer stations along the marathon route: Stormont Estate (start line), Ormeau Park, Boucher Road, Northumberland Street, Antrim Road, The Big Fish (city centre) and the finish line. Our supporters will be with a group of other cheerers, so this is a chance to meet new people and play your part in helping to save lives. As the marathon


event is now sold out, volunteering is a great way to get involved in the biggest marathon event the city has hosted in 42 years. Volunteers don't need previous experience and we will provide everyone with charity branding, refreshments and cheer materials including noise makers and pom poms. You'll need a strong voice to cheer and a sense of fun and positivity! If you can gift your morning on Sunday 5th May and you would like to join

us at one of our cheer or water stations, please email belfastmarathon@airambulancenl.org. Air Ambulance NI is a local charity that works in partnership with the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service to provide the Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS). This service brings emergency medical interventions direct to seriously ill or injured people with the aim of saving lives, brains and limbs. When life hangs

in the balance, every second counts and the air ambulance can reach anywhere in Northern Ireland in twenty-five minutes. The crew is made up of a doctor, paramedic and pilot and on average they are called out twice per day. The service operates seven days a week for twelve hours per day. On scene, the team deliver specialist interventions to patients that can mean the difference between life and death. These interventions can include

advanced pain relief, a pre-hospital blood transfusion and a pre-hospital anaesthetic. Since its inception in July 2017, HEMS has been called out over 4,000 times. Air Ambulance NI aspires to raise £2.5 million each year to maintain and sustain this service. For further information please contact Air Ambulance NI by calling the charity on 028 9262 2677 or emailing belfastmarathon@airambulancenl.org

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FLYAWAY Aerial Studio, Lisburn

How Anita Cheung's Dream has become an uplifting reality open to all in Lisburn

Tell us about you? My name is Anita and I opened Flyaway Aerial Studio in 2015 where I run pole and aerial classes. I started pole in 2012 and aerial in 2013 and throughout the years have completed certifications and courses, and taken part in workshops so I can always be developing and improving my own skills and knowledge to offer the best teaching experience possible. How did you come to set up the business? I initially just wanted a place where I could share my love for pole and aerial. This passion has not changed but over the years I have also focused on trying to build a community that welcomes people from

all walks of life. Flyaway Aerial Studio is a safe space that is free from judgment and where someone can enjoy learning and improving themselves for themselves. I believe that pole and aerial should be fun to learn, and be as inclusive & accessible as possible for all. What's different about Flyaway Aerial Studio? Flyaway Aerial Studio offers classes in pole, aerial hoop, aerial silk, aerial hammock and trapeze. These disciplines are a great way to get fitter and stronger whilst also improving general mobility and flexibility. You get a full body workout in a fun, welcoming and social environment.

Many students also benefit from a boost in their self-confidence and self-esteem because of the supportive community we have and many have developed lasting friendships. Some people will ask me if one apparatus is easier/better than the others and I always reply each is challenging but rewarding in their own ways so they should choose based on their own preference. If all else fails, we encourage you to try them all! Tell us about your premises. Flyaway Aerial Studio was initially just fitted for pole classes but when we realised there was also a demand for aerial classes, we added them to our

timetable even if we were limited by space and height. Flyaway underwent a major renovation this year and I couldn't be more pleased with the results. It has been a big hit with our clientele and it has allowed us to utilise the space so much better. We now offer a bigger variety of pole classes and we also have much more space and height for our aerialists to grow and improve. What are your long term/mid-term goals for the business? Our biggest goal was always to carry out the studio renovation so I am delighted this has now been accomplished. For now, I hope to continue welcoming new faces

through the door and introducing more of the wider community to this amazing sport. I am committed to keep growing Flyaway and I am always keeping an eye out for opportunities to add more classes into the timetable. It will be Flyaway's 10 year anniversary in 2025 so I will also be planning something big to celebrate that. Make sure you follow us on social media for details. Flyaway Aerial Studio is on Instagram, Facebook and TikTok under @flyawayaerialstudio. You can call/whatsapp on 07481602606. Email is hello@flyawayaerialstudio.com. Website: www.flyawayaerialstudio.com

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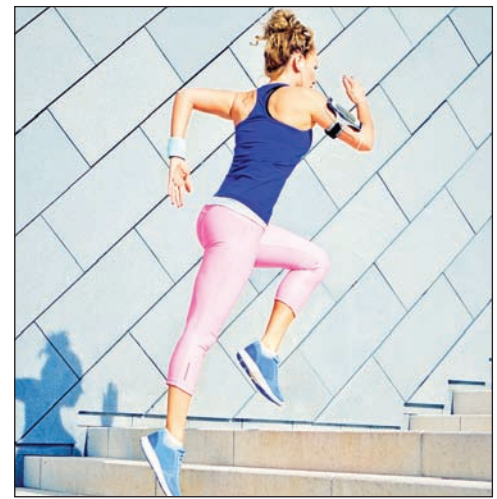
Physical Exercise vs. Meditation: Which is most effective?

At first glance it is simple, physical exercise has been encouraged as the epitome of healthy living since time began whereas meditation is but a passing fad... right?

Wrong. Meditation, in its various forms, has become a serious player in the health industry over the past decade and its endorsements go far beyond reality TV stars and celebrities looking to spark that next avant-garde trend. Studies published in various journals including the Journal of the American Medical Association have suggested that mindfulness and meditative practices might be more beneficial as a treatment of back pain than traditional exercises. The study suggest that through mindfulness, individuals are able to train

their brains to respond more effectively to pain – the benefits of which can both be more effective and can last longer than traditional medication or physiotherapy. Indeed, whilst various other studies have shown that mindfulness meditation has a positive impact on both mental health disorders such as depression, stress and anxiety as well as control of one's pain threshold, there remains significant scepticism regarding its ability to treat physiological conditions. It is argued by advocates of mindfulness that the

benefits of meditation such as improved sleep patterns, reduced anxiety and decreased levels of stress can have a positive impact on physical performance. It allows individuals to focus on a particular goal and teaches them how to pursue this with minimal stress - consequently lowering blood pressure and associated cardiovascular conditions. For many, meditation is a legitimate and highly effective treatment for mental health conditions however whilst it might have benefits for combating physiological illnesses, it should not be considered



an effective replacement for exercise. The benefits that come from mindfulness are a consequence of soothing mental stress and it is therefore first and foremost a means of treating the mind rather than the body. However, the benefits cannot be denied and medical professionals would encourage everyone to include both into their routines as a means of enjoying the best of both worlds.

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WHY OUTDOOR PLAY MATTERS FOR KIDS!

Playing outside isn't just about fun—it's a crucial part of a child's development. From newborns to toddlers, the great outdoors offers a wealth of experiences that contribute to their growth and well-being.

Let's explore why outdoor play is so important:

Better Sleep for Babies
Research shows that babies sleep better at night if they've had some fresh air and sunshine during the day. So, that stroll in the park or playtime in the backyard isn't just enjoyable—it also promotes better sleep for your little one.

Fun Learning Opportunities

Outdoor play is a brilliant sensory experience for babies and toddlers. The ever-changing nature of the outdoors stimulates their senses, allowing them to see, explore, and learn. As they touch leaves, pinecones, and puddles, they're gaining valuable experiences through all their senses.

Motor Skill Development

Young children need opportunities to use their whole bodies and develop both gross and fine motor skills. Whether it's crawling, toddling, running, or jumping, playing outdoors provides the space for physical exploration. Picking up natural treasures like leaves and fir cones also hones their fine motor skills.

Encouraging a Healthy



Lifestyle

Outdoor play helps children burn off energy, promoting a healthy lifestyle. Physical activity supports better sleep, healthier eating habits, and overall well-being. These positive habits established during childhood can last a lifetime.

Environmental Awareness

Being outdoors allows children to connect with nature. They become aware of the environment, appreciate its beauty, and learn about the world

around them. Kids who develop this knowledge and appreciation are more likely to become environmentally conscious adults.

Positive Impact on the Whole Family

Fresh air has a magical effect on parents too! Even a short walk outside can lift spirits, blow away the cobwebs, and improve everyone's mood. It's especially helpful after a sleepless night or during grumpy moments at home. So, the whole family benefits from outdoor

adventures.

Making Friends and Building Social Skills

Outdoor play helps children grow socially. They learn to form friendships, respond to physical interaction, and use their imaginations to entertain each other. Problem-solving, relationship-building, and respect for nature all happen naturally during outdoor play.

In summary, outdoor play isn't just about swings and slides—it's a gateway to holistic development.

So, grab those wellies, head outside, and let your little ones explore, discover, and thrive in the great outdoors!

Remember, the benefits of outdoor play extend beyond the playground—it's an investment in your child's health, happiness, and future.

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Introducing Padel54 – the new activity just down the road in Moira!

Ever thought about trying Padel for your next friends, family, team-building, customer or corporate event? Whatever your preference, we're here to make it happen.

Played by celebrities and sports -stars padel is the fastest-growing racquet sport across Europe. The BBC recently highlighted the sport and its growth across the UK & Ireland.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/newsbeat-68607780>

It's perfect for team building because it combines fun and physical activity in an easy-to-learn game suitable for all ages, fitness levels, and skill sets. And, it's great for socializing and networking.

Situated in Moira, less than 20 minutes from Belfast with

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At Padel54, our primary mission is to ignite the

passion for Padel by introducing this sport to as many members of the community as possible. Our special focus lies in introducing the game to the younger generation, and we're actively seeking

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HOW EXERCISE AS A FAMILY CAN IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH!

Summer is the perfect time of the year to stop that sedentary lifestyle that dominates many of our routine lives.

Between working office jobs and wanting to relax in the evenings, it is far too easy to put exercise off for another time.

With the onset of longer nights and warmer weather, the summer months are the perfect time to get out and about with your family. Not only will this bring the obvious health benefits that come with healthy living, but it also creates the perfect time to bond and become closer as a family.

For adults, going for an afternoon walk away from the distractions of the house, the TV and the Smartphone will grant you the opportunity of speaking with partners or family members and becoming closer as a result. For many, having a family pet such as a dog is a great motivation to go for a walk,

however if you don't have one, the mental and physical health benefits should be motivation enough.

As for children, babies and toddlers spend an awful lot of time strapped into car seats or plopped in front of the TV. Not only does this prevent them from practicing their emerging motor skills and strengthening their heart, lungs, and muscles, but it can also set them up for a sedentary lifestyle, and even obesity, as adults. A good habit of physical activity, on the other hand, will last a lifetime.

Ensuring that one achieves appropriate levels of physical exercise has been directly linked with good mental health. Studies have shown that running for 15 minutes a day or walking for an hour can decrease

an individual's likelihood of developing depression by 26%. An increased amount of exercise in an individual's life can promote a number of positive changes in the brain which directly combat poor mental health by promoting feelings of calm and well-being. It also leads to a release of endorphins which energize your experience and make you feel good.

Exercising as a family is a great way of promoting a healthy lifestyle that children can continue throughout their lives into adulthood. This exercise is particularly important for adolescents, whose bodies and brains are still growing. The every same endorphins that make you feel better while working out, also improve cognitive

ability and levels of concentration – making exercise the perfect thing for study breaks or those seeking to prevent age-related cognitive decline.

Exercise can be thought of as an investment in body, mind and soul. As parents, it is important to promote a healthy understanding of body image and doing sporting activities as a family is a great way of both improving the relationship ties within the family dynamic as well as fostering a sense of self worth at an individual level. Greater levels of exercise have been linked to greater body confidence – something that is becoming more and more important in the lives of young people.

The physical benefits of exercise



are obvious. As well as greatly improving the quality and quantity of sleep that each individual gets, it also gives you a greater level of

energy during the day, boosts your immune system and can reduce the impact of stress. Even small amounts of exercise such as a short walk around

the park, a cycle to the shop, a dance in the house or even a family trip to the swimming pool can have notable health benefits in all aspects

of one's life. The simple act of raising your heart rate really can work wonders – and doing it as a family...well that's just the cherry on top.

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Direct Belfast – Glasgow Express now departing from Belfast, Europa Bus Station.

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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.

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, Europa Bus Station 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.

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ULSTER BANK REAFFIRMS SUPPORT FOR FARMERS IN LEAD UP TO BALMORAL SHOW

While inflation may have eased in recent months, there are always ongoing issue impacting farm businesses.

Currently the main issue is the weather with a continued dry period long over due. Farmers may need additional cash to help them through a prolonged winter and Ulster Bank is here to provide support where it can.

That's the message from Senior Agriculture Manager, Cormac McKervey, at an event hosted by Ulster Bank recently, ahead of its principal sponsorship of this year's Balmoral Show which returns to Balmoral Park.

Members of the Guild of Agricultural Journalists and other stakeholders joined senior figures from within the bank for an

update on a number of key issues facing the local agri-food sector and to learn more about Ulster Bank's commitment to the industry.

Senior Agriculture Manager, Cormac McKervey, and Ulster Bank's Chief Economist, Richard Ramsey, updated media, and other invited guests, on the overall health of the local food and farming sectors and provided an outlook on other related economic issues.

They were joined by Ulster Bank's Head of NI, Mark Crimmins, who encouraged those in the audience to tap into the bank's knowledge and connections to the

agrifood sector and asked for their support as Ulster Bank plays a leading role in tackling climate change and grasping the opportunities presented by a new, greener economy.

The gap between farmer deposits has closed over recent years. The debt level remains below £1bn for the 8th successive quarter while deposits are slightly over £600m. The bank remains keen to lend to the sector.

After the sector update, Richard Ramsey presented his annual Ulster Bank Ulster Fry Index which indicates that the average price of all ingredients making up the traditional cooked breakfast plate

decreased slightly in the 12 months to the end of February, following last year's record rise.

Tea saw the biggest price increase in the index with a rise of 6% throughout the previous 12 months, however this was slightly offset for brew lovers with a 7.1% fall in milk prices. Rises were also recorded in pork sausages (2.5%) eggs (3.2%) and sliced loaf (1.4%)

Other items which have come down slightly in price since last year's Index was released include bacon (-2.8%) butter (-7.6%) and coffee (-1%).

Overall, the Ulster Fry Index sits at just 0.9% lower than the 2023



figure which saw the highest increase recorded since Ulster Bank began tracking the index in 2007. The previous highest rise came in 2009, just after

another recession and cost of living crisis.

The price change in the various breakfast items in the Ulster Bank Ulster Fry Index in the past year

are contained within the accompanying infographic.

Further information about the Ulster Fry Index is available at www.ulstereconomix.com

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Kidz Farm Joins the New Balmoral Show Children's Area

The Balmoral Show is pleased to welcome the Kidz Farm as an exciting addition to the showgrounds' new Children's Area. From farmyard favourites to exotic animals, this engaging and educational attraction is set to once again be a family favourite at the action packed 4-day event.

Children will be able to explore two dynamic zones as they learn more about a variety of animals. The charming farmyard themed discovery zone will feature everything from pint-sized pygmy goats to giant rabbits. There will also be an interactive goat-milking activity, allowing children to experience a hands-on approach to farm life.

As they travel through the Kidz Farm, young visitors will also be introduced to a reptile themed zone that adds a touch of excitement and encourages curiosity. From here young explorers can encounter a variety of scaly wonders with slithering snakes and mesmerizing lizards, not to mention giant snails, tortoises, and even tarantulas.

Kenny Walsh from the Kidz Farm said 'We can't wait to be a part of the Balmoral Show this year and help young visitors learn all about different animals.

Our interactive experience helps children to go beyond observation and encourages them to think about how to care for a variety of creatures. We'll have knowledgeable staff at hand across the four days to try and answer as many of their curious questions as we can'.

The Balmoral Show in partnership with Ulster

Bank will return to the Eikon Exhibition Centre showgrounds from Wednesday 15th May to

Saturday 18th May 2024. Tickets are now available online at www.balmoralshow.co.uk. For

further updates you can follow the Balmoral Show on Facebook, Instagram and TikTok.




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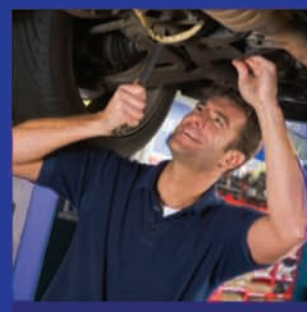
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DISCOVER ALL THAT BELFAST HAS TO OFFER THIS SPRING

Exciting activities not to be missed.

Looking for inspiration for your family days out this spring? Well, why not explore some of Belfast's most iconic venues and discover the newest activities and attractions that Belfast and the surrounding region has to offer. As the longer days appear and Belfast comes alive for days and nights out, explore the top attractions and experiences in and around the capital that are sure to put a spring in your step.

Belfast 2024

Belfast 2024 is a cultural celebration made by the people of Belfast. The year-long programme sees the city come to life with many creative projects, inspiring initiatives and unforgettable moments.

There is an array of Spring events to choose from on the programme including the opening of Show Some Love Greenhouse, a city centre collaborative space, and community boat building workshops.

Belfast is also gearing up to begin the event with Little Amal this Spring, who visits the city from 16-19 May. The 12-foot puppet of a 10-year-old Syrian refugee child, will take a journey across the city, making it her home for a weekend. The full programme of activities can be found at www.belfast2024.co.uk.

Awful Auntie

Why not check out David Walliams' Awful Auntie at The Grand Opera House, sure to be hit for every kid, whether young or not so young.

It tells the story of Stella who sets off to visit London with her parents - but she has no idea her life is in danger! Waking up three months later, only Stella's Aunt Alberta can tell her what has happened. But not everything Alberta tells her turns out to be true and Stella quickly discovers

she's in for the fight of her life against her very own Awful Auntie.

Following their acclaimed productions of Gangsta Granny, Billionaire Boy and Demon Dentist, Birmingham Stage Company presents this fabulous new production of David Walliams' amazing adventure story, featuring a very large owl, a very small ghost and of course a very Awful Auntie! The show runs from Thursday 25 to Saturday 27 April.

Spring Spectacular at Hillsborough Castle and Gardens

Running until 6 May, come along and see the gardens of Northern Ireland's Royal residence erupt in colour as the Spring Spectacular returns for 2024. Be dazzled by over half a million bulbs in bloom as 76 different varieties spring to life, of which 32 are new to the gardens. Daffodils and crocuses will mark the emergence of the gardens from Winter, handing over to tulips and camassia later in the Spring.

Take a stroll amongst the blooms for a perfect relaxing day out, savouring the tranquillity of the beautiful grounds.

Clifton House Tour: Experience the Belfast Poorhouse

One of the oldest and most beautiful buildings in Belfast, Clifton House is celebrating 250 years since its doors first opened in 1774.

To mark this special anniversary, visitors can enjoy a newly launched unique guided tour, exploring the early development of the house and its evolution through the years, during which time it has survived rebellions and revolutions while continuing to look after the welfare of the people of the city.

Visitors will also have an



opportunity to view a new exhibition in the Heritage Centre which displays some of the key artefacts and archives that tell the story of this Poorhouse and its vital role in society.

McConnell's Distillery Signature Tour

Dating back to 1776, McConnell's Irish Whisky has been re-launched by Belfast Distillery Company and has just recently opened a working distillery at Crumlin Road Gaol to visitors.

McConnell's was Born in Belfast, one of the world's great industrial cities, and has been synonymous with the city for many decades. Indeed, whiskey was once one of Belfast's premier industries, back in the 1800s producing more of the spirit than any other city on the island of Ireland.

The team at Belfast Distillery Company is restoring this great tradition through the McConnell's Distillery and Visitor Experience in the heart of the city.

Visitors can explore the state-of-the-art distillery, where every step echoes heritage and innovation, immersing themselves in the passion behind the award-winning whiskies. Learn about the distilling process

and of course, taste some of McConnell's Irish whiskies along the way.

Colin Glen

Explore Colin Glen Forest in search of some familiar friends this Spring. Discover the country's only official Gruffalo Trail. Delve deeper into the Gruffalo and Stick Man stories, searching for the famous characters in the woods, listening wide-eyed and wondered to the classic tales.

Visitors can also try one of the other popular attractions such as Ireland's first alpine coaster, the Black Bull Run and the 250m Forest Flyover zipline at Colin Glen's Mountain Entrance. Or why not try out Ireland's longest zipline, River Rapid which opened to the public on Friday 15 April. The 700m dual zipline with a 100ft high take-off offers fantastic views of Belfast and beyond as you zip across the Colin River at up to 50mph.

Maritime Mile

Discover Belfast's historic waterfront with a stroll along the Maritime Mile this Spring. Covering one mile of water and 10 kilometres of connected pathway, this award-winning curated experience connects and celebrates Belfast's vibrant heritage waterfront.

It stretches from Sailortown to the Titanic Pump House and includes views of the Big Fish, SS Nomadic, Titanic Belfast and Titanic Slipways. A perfect activity for milder days, walking in the footsteps of giants, exploring Belfast's iconic waterfront.

Belfast Traditional Music Trail

A unique way to experience Irish music, the Belfast Traditional Music Trail is a true treat. With two professional musicians as guides, walk through cobbled alleyways, past famous landmarks and into private bars in some of the city's oldest buildings.

At each stop you will be treated to a performance of traditional tunes, songs and stories, all creating a personal 'session'. Enjoy a tippie along the way while learning about the instruments, language, customs and history that make up Ireland's vibrant musical tradition. This interactive experience undoubtedly shows why Belfast is considered one of Ireland's best cities for traditional Irish music.

For more inspiration on what to see and do in Belfast, check out www.visitbelfast.com.

Most popular times of the year to quit smoking

New analysis has identified the months of the year when most people show interest in stopping smoking, with spring months of March and May ranking second and third.

The study conducted by GoSmokeFree analysed Google searches for quitting-related terms made across UK regions over the last three years and scaled this against local populations to calculate the searches made per 100k residents.

Terms analysed include 'give up smoking', 'smoking cessation aids', and 'nicotine gum'. Searches for fitness-related terms like 'gyms near me' and 'exercise routines' were also compared to see if people prioritise fitness alongside their lung health.

The most popular time of year is January for both fitness and quitting smoking,

with an average of 893,110 and 440,670 Google searches made related to each goal.

This spike can be attributed to New Year's resolutions, where individuals set goals for the upcoming year that often focus on improving their health. The start of a new year symbolises a fresh start and motivates many to stop smoking.

March is the second most popular time to kick the habit, with 438,830 average monthly searches for quitting smoking made across the UK. However, fitness goes on the backburner with March sitting in 11th place with 643,030 searches.

As the weather begins

to warm up, March could see an increase in quitting attempts - albeit not as high as January - as the beginning of spring might symbolise renewal and motivate some to restart their New Year's resolutions.

Like March, May marks the onset of spring; a time when people engage in outdoor activities and may want to quit smoking to improve their health and fitness levels.

The improved weather conditions can also enhance mood and increase motivation to pursue lifestyle changes. This is evident in the data, as May took third place as the best month to

quit with 410,920 average Google searches per month.

May took fifth place for health and well-being related queries with 819,680 overall, meaning it's on people's minds, but not as prevalent as at the start of the year.

With 406,510 average searches for stopping smoking-related terms, October's increase in interest that places it in fourth may be due campaigns like Stop-tobacco actively encouraging smokers to quit.

The month also lands in sixth place for interest in health and fitness activities, which could also be attributed to kick

starting a healthy routine while partaking in Stoptober (803,330 average Google searches per month).

With November and December leading into and during the holiday season, they likely see reduced quitting attempts due to social gatherings, holiday stress, and a general postponement of major lifestyle changes until after the festive season.

November takes fifth place with 402,570 quitting-related searches and December ranks last (12th) for smoking cessation-related queries with 355,190.

Article supplied by <https://www.gosmokefree.co.uk/>

Abarth reveals the New Abarth 600e, the most powerful ever

The New Abarth 600e recently its first public debut in Milan, where the new commercial was shot. Ready, exciting, muscular, and aggressive, the first pictures instantly reveal the "evil" essence of the Abarth 600e Scorpionissima launch version, which will be produced in a limited edition of 1,949 units.

Designed to leave Abarth fans speechless, the Scorpionissima model is built around three main features: a design to reach maximum performance, a car structure to make it the most powerful Abarth ever, and a competitive spirit to attract motor enthusiasts. Thanks to its loaded equipment, the New Abarth 600e will be able to thrill enthusiasts, giving them the possibility to drive safely without giving up on the aggressive and muscular look of their car.

Equipped with 240HP, the New Abarth 600e Scorpionissima is fiercely competitive and powerful. There has never been a more powerful Abarth. In addition, the equipment of this new Abarth proves that performance is the mantra that inspired Abarth engineers. Made to be unique in the field of electric cars, the Abarth 600e will feature a mechanical limited-slip differential that guarantees excellent driving stability, improved handling, and traction.

The exceptional



performance of the limited-slip differential takes the car to new heights, especially when combined with its high-performance tyres, which were jointly developed with the supplier for Formula E to ensure maximum grip and guarantee excellent racing dynamics in all kinds of conditions.

A harmonious equilibrium is attained by balancing performance and limited resistance, ensuring an improved range in an electric vehicle.

From the exterior, it is clearly an Abarth! The exclusive Hypnotic Purple, the launch color inspired by the post-puncture hypnotic effect, highlights its aggressiveness, while the aerodynamic rear spoiler is designed to maximize performance. It also features a large footprint, expansive wheels, a low profile, and 20-inch wheels designed to accommodate an extensive brake system. Moreover, the New Abarth 600e

Scorpionissima will come with an authenticity certificate. And of course, there is more to come. Stay tuned.

Abarth's goal – to turn the ordinary into the extraordinary – is once again achieved with the most challenging yet performing project developed in recent years. The new jewel in Abarth's house is a combination of knowledge, tradition, innovation, and performance coming from different expertise and partnerships.

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property and will always be on hand to answer any questions you might have.

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comes inclusive of measuring, fitting and VAT. For more information visit their website www.Garolla.co.uk or, alternatively, give them a call on 028 9246 0041.

ALL-NEW DACIA SPRING

Dacia's first all-electric model, Spring is widely credited for making electric mobility accessible to all. First launched in 2021, it was the third most sold electric car to retail customers in 2022 and 2023. In total, more than 140,000 Dacia Spring have been registered worldwide since its launch.

Spring's energy efficiency and carbon footprint were particularly praised in 2022, when it was awarded the maximum 5-star rating from the independent European organisation Green NCAP.

Dacia Spring is the perfect solution for people looking for simple, affordable and efficient zero-emission mobility. Data collected via the vehicle's on-board connected systems shows that the average daily trip made by Spring drivers covers just 23 miles, at an average speed of only 23 mph.

In 75% of cases, cars are recharged at home.

It is even more attractive than ever, with an entirely renewed and more robust design, and yet still as practical, with exceptional interior storage space for its segment. It is more efficient, thanks to carefully managed weight, while remaining the most affordable full-electric model on the market. Pre-ordering for the All-New Dacia Spring is now open.

Dacia continues its mission to be the best value for money car brand that constantly redefines the essentials. Applying this to Spring, Dacia wants to encourage drivers to make the shift to all-electric cars in an accessible way. A car's design – along with efficiency, price and practicality – is one of the essential pieces in the puzzle.

The All-New Spring features the new Dacia design, first seen on the latest generation Duster. It is a robust and assertive style that makes the Spring more attractive than ever. The interior has undergone a spectacular transformation with a complete overhaul of the entire space, just as the only part of the exterior body to remain unchanged is the roof.

The highly structured, highly constructed volumes of Dacia's new design style give renewed strength to Spring. A powerful look that comes from a



clean, simple, pared-back silhouette, such as that seen on the highly sculpted bonnet.

The new Dacia identity is evident in the two black bands, one at the front, the other at the rear, which meet in a glossy finish, with specific matte stripes at the rear. The two strips are framed by the brand's iconic Y-shaped light signature, which is particularly striking with the full-LED daytime running lights at the front and the parking lights at the rear.

The All-New Spring is available in a range of six shades, including newly introduced Brick Red and Beige Safari colours.

Smart yet practical accessories further optimise storage capacity in the All-New Spring. Consumers can opt for additional space housed under the front bonnet, providing an extra 35 litres of storage space.

The centre console can fit an exclusive cup holder, made using cutting-edge, flexible, and resource-efficient 3D-printing technology.

The All-New Spring also works with Dacia's innovative YouClip system. The simple and clever system invented by Dacia engineers can be used to attach various dedicated accessories, practically and robustly, to key places inside the car.

For an easier driving experience, every All-New Spring features a customisable digital dashboard with a 7-inch display.

Located behind the new height-adjustable steering wheel, the colour display shows essential information in a simple and efficient manner.

The All-New Dacia

Spring is equipped as standard with a 7 kW AC charger that can charge the battery from 20% to 100% on a domestic outlet in less than 11 hours, or in just 4 hours on a 7 kW wall box. A 30 kW DC charger enables fast charging from 20% to 80% in 45 minutes.

More practical than ever before, the New Dacia Spring now features a bi-directional V2L (vehicle-to-load) charger so it can be used as an energy source to power electrical devices. A specific adapter that plugs into the car's charging connector, located under the grille, acts as a traditional 220V/16A socket.

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Jobs you definitely need an expert for!

If you've got a problem at home and are wondering if it's something you should or shouldn't tackle, then take a look at our list of 10 jobs you definitely need a professional for.

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.

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

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. This costs in the region of £200-£1,000 (small flat - detached home) and they will identify the type of asbestos in your home and any associated risks.

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! Many DIY bathtub installations have resulted in the bath not being sealed correctly, leading to severe leaks. Another bathtub DIY fail is the tub not being secured in place, so it ends up moving around or falls through the floor.

Foundation work. The foundations of any building are the most important part of the structure. If the foundations are wrong, then the subsoil can spread and the structure can settle unequally, leading to structural problems down the

line. Good foundations are a lot more than just digging a hole and pouring some concrete in, it needs to be exactly right. The average cost to lay foundations will depend on the type of foundations needed.

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.

Tree removal. Cutting down a tree is dangerous work. Especially when you don't know what you're doing, lack the experience of removing a tree, and do not have the right equipment to do the job. 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.

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

Article used courtesy of: <https://www.checkatrade.com/blog/expert-advice/home-jobs-you-shouldnt-do-yourself/>

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HOW MUCH VALUE DOES A DRIVEWAY ADD TO A HOUSE?

There are many benefits of having a driveway; providing easy access to your property, easily able to keep an eye on your car, effortlessly hop in and out whenever you need to, and they tend to be far easier to maintain than gardens or lawns.

Having a driveway can also potentially lower your car insurance premiums, compared to parking on the street. But the key question is – does a new driveway add value to a house?

In most cases, yes it does. On average, it's estimated that laying a driveway can add between 5-10% to the value of a property. So, depending on the factors above, this could mean the chance to add thousands of pounds to the listing price of your home.

Paved driveway value.
A paved driveway is an excellent choice for adding value to your home, as well as providing you with a great looking, highly functional driveway. Paved driveways create a smart first impression for any home. They offer a smooth, flat surface, but with the finer detail that comes with using a skilled craftsman. When laid and finished correctly, they simply scream quality. This says to future buyers that this is a quality driveway that will last for years, requiring hardly any maintenance. However, paved driveways aren't the cheapest option, compared to the cost of other driveway materials. They take some time and skill to lay. However, you should end up with a quality finish that lasts for years and adds value to your home.

Concrete driveway value.

Concrete is much quicker to lay than other types of driveway, such as block paving for example. It can be easily poured into whatever design you have in mind, and even finished with an appealing imprinted pattern. The relative cheapness of concrete driveways means that it can initially be seen as good value for money. However, concrete lacks the craftsmanship and fine detail of other paving types. Plus, concrete can often look as cheap and cheerful as it is. Unless maintained or resurfaced, its appearance can deteriorate significantly over time. This can affect its value, and the kerb appeal of your house.

Block paved driveway value. Block paved driveways have some serious kerb appeal. If installed with skill and care, they can look amazing. You'll have a huge range of design, colour and style options to choose from, all of which can enhance the exterior appearance of your property. Needless to say, this can add value. Block paving and cobblestones are also known to be very long-lasting and quite easy to maintain. If any pavers come loose, they can be easily repaired or replaced in small patches. Durability is another plus point for potential buyers, along with low



maintenance. So, how much value does a driveway add when it's made from block pavers? It all depends on how much you spend – as it can be quite labour intensive to build a block paved driveway – and the quality of the finish.

Asphalt driveway value. Asphalt or tarmac driveways are quite cheap and quick

to lay, and they can be a handy option if you need a basic solid flat surface without much fuss. In short, they provide a uniform appearance and can be a good short-term solution. But they don't look as appealing as other driveway types when finished. A major issue is with maintenance and deterioration. This can affect how

much value they add to your property, and how appealing your home will be to potential buyers.

Gravel driveway value. Gravel is one of the cheapest types of driveway to install, and it can also look very attractive. Gravel driveways are also good from a security perspective. Many people like them because they aren't permanent, unlike tarmac or concrete, so you could choose a different driveway later on. You'll need to find a way to manage the stones, so they don't end up all over the street, and gravel driveways are no use at all on sloping sites. In terms of adding value

to your property, gravel is a pretty decent option. You won't spend much on it, there aren't any worries about durability and it can be aesthetically pleasing to buyers. And there's always the opportunity to install a different driveway later on.

How much would it cost to re-do your driveway? The cost of your driveway will really depend on the size of your drive and the style of driveway you choose. Costs vary from £30 – £90/m2.

For this and more home inspiration see <https://www.checkatrade.com/blog/expert-advice/how-much-value-does-driveway-add-house/>

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