

# NIIRTAnews

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*The magazine for the Northern Ireland Independent Retail Trade Association*



## Victory in campaign to stop on street car park charges



## Local Traders Win Car Park Charges Campaign

*Regional Development Minister, Danny Kennedy, has announced that he will not be proceeding with the plan to roll out on-street parking charges to 30 towns and cities across Northern Ireland.*

Speaking in the Assembly, Mr Kennedy said: "Given the tough economic climate that town centre businesses are operating in I do not believe it is the right time to be implementing such a widespread proposal.

"I have consulted widely and have heard a united voice in opposition to these proposals. As part of my review I met with local public representatives, town centre traders, local Chamber of Commerce and the Northern Ireland Independent Retail Traders Association. I would like to pay particular tribute to

the Northern Ireland Independent Retail Traders Association and their Chief Executive Glyn Roberts who have contributed significantly and constructively to this review."

The Minister added: "I recognise that on-street charging can provide vital traffic management improvements in certain circumstances and this decision does not close the door on schemes where all stakeholders can agree that this is right for an individual city or town; as was the case in Lisburn and Newry in 2008."

Referring to the budget Minister Kennedy said: "The proposal to roll out on-street charging was included in my Department's Budget 2011-2015, and so I have to now find approximately £8.8million from other

areas over the budget period, to make up the projected revenue lost from on-street parking. Given the pressures in all areas of my budget, this is a very difficult task, however, I am determined to minimise, as far as possible, the impact on frontline services in my Department."

The Minister announced he proposes to offset the shortfall with: £2million by greater efficiency within his Department; £2million reduction in Roads Service operational expenditure; £2.1million of income from off-street parking charges in provincial towns, and on-street charges in some cities; and £2.7million reduction in the subsidy paid to Translink.



Sammy Wilson MP, Finance Minister, Glyn Roberts NIIRTA CEO & Peter Robinson MLA, First Minister supporting the Park the Charge Campaign



David Ford MLA, Alliance Party Leader & Minister for Justice and Glyn Roberts supporting the campaign on a visit to Larne



DRD Minister Danny Kennedy MLA  
with UUP Leader Tom Elliott MLA

He concluded: "This announcement, not to roll out new on-street parking charges demonstrates how a local Minister listens to the views of local people and delivers outcomes which reflect their needs. I hope traders across Northern Ireland will welcome the decision I have taken."

Glyn Roberts NIIRTA Chief Executive said: "We are absolutely delighted at Minister Kennedy's decision to drop these charges"

"This is a good result for our town centres and our independent retail sector that campaigned hard to get these proposed charges dropped in the thirty towns"

"It is also a good day for devolution as it shows that having locally accountable ministers can make a positive impact in changing policy" "The current system in the 30 towns where shoppers can park free for the first hour or two works to ensure a

turnover in traffic and prevents people from parking all day. To have charged for this could be the final nail in the coffin for our town centres"

"At a time when we should be encouraging more shoppers to visit our struggling town centres, these charges would have resulted in more shoppers being forced to go to out of town stores which offer free car parking."

27 Business Organisation from right across Northern Ireland came together to oppose the Department of Regional Development plans for additional on street car parking charges in 30 local towns.

Business Organisations & local Chambers of Commerce jointly put their names to an open letter to the local party leaders calling for the car parking charges to be dropped. This was launched at Stormont along with the Park the Charges campaign.

The Park the Charges campaign was supported by the First Minister Peter Robinson MLA, Finance Minister Sammy Wilson MP, UUP Leader Tom Elliott MLA, SDLP Leader Margaret Ritchie MP, Alliance Leader David Ford MLA and a wide number of MPs, MLAs and local Councillors from all parties.

The 27 organisations supporting the letter included NIIRTA, Londonderry Chamber of Commerce, Pubs of Ulster, Ulster Chemists Association, Belfast Chamber of Trade, Armagh City Centre Management, Derry City Traders Forum, Enniskillen Business Partnership, Larne Traders Forum, Down Business Forum and Dungannon Traders Association. The following Town Chambers of Commerce also supported the letter- Ards, Ballycastle, Ballymoney, Ballymena, Banbridge, Bangor, Carrickfergus, Coleraine, Cookstown, Lurgan, Roe Valley, Magherafelt, Newcastle, Strabane, Portadown and Omagh.

# Conference Looks at Economic Future

*Delegates attending the annual Retail N.I. Conference will hear major speeches on the economy and the outlook for the next year.*

The conference, organised by Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce, will be held at the Stormont Hotel on Wednesday, October 5, starting at 9:00am.

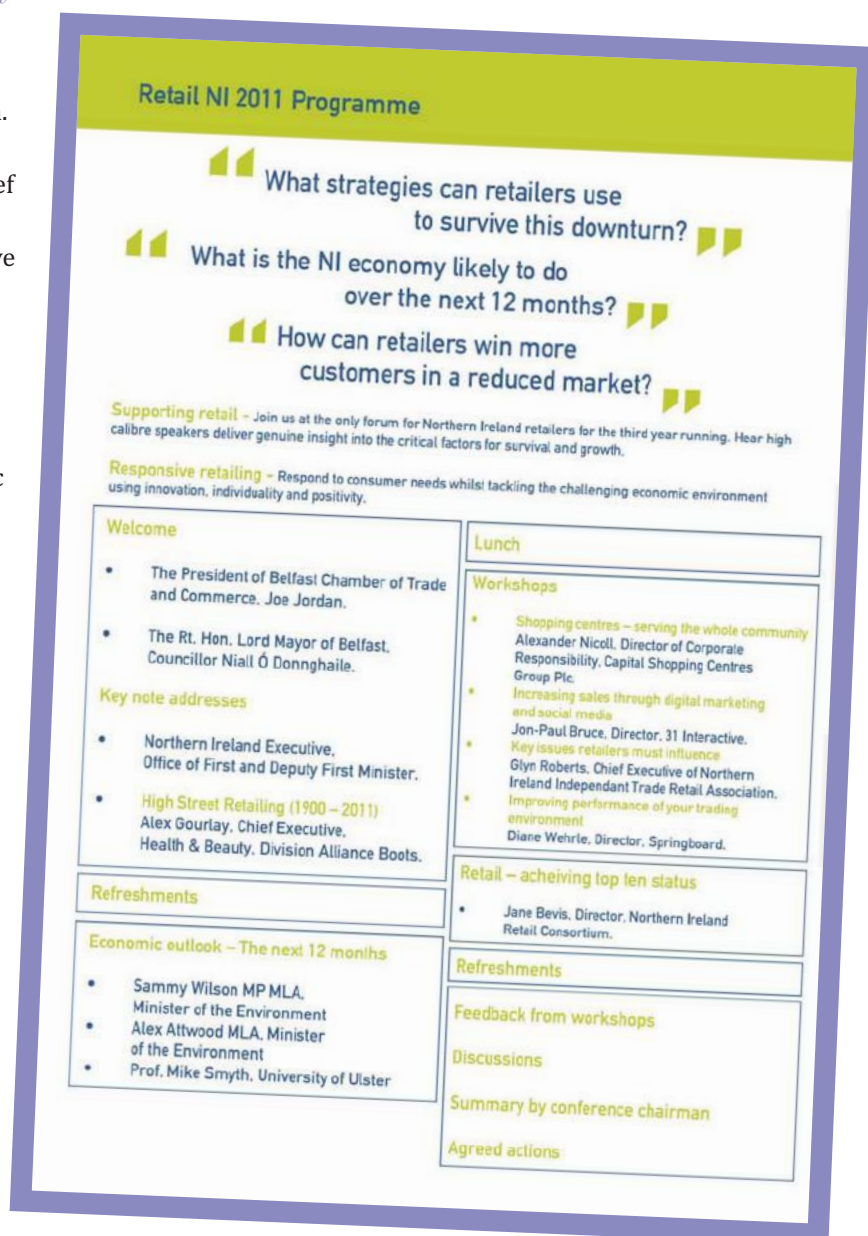
One of the main speakers will be Alex Gourlay, Chief Executive of the Health and Beauty Division at Alliance Boots. He will be joined by a representative from the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister.

Two government ministers, the Environment Minister Sammy Wilson and the Environment Minister, Alex Attwood, will speak on the economic outlook for the next year, as will Professor Mike Smyth, from the University of Ulster.

Delegates will be welcomed by the President of Belfast Chamber of Trade Joe Jordan and Commerce and the Mayor of Belfast Niall O Donnghaile.

Joe Jordan said: "The conference is only in its third year but already it is a firm date in the calendar for many businesspeople from Northern Ireland. Once again this year, we have been fortunate to secure a number of keynote speakers.

"They are people who work at the cutting edge of business or have senior government positions and this will be a great opportunity to hear their opinions and aspirations for the future."



## NIIRTA AGM

Tuesday 27 September at noon at NIIRTA Offices

Northern Ireland Independent Retail Trade Association  
261-263 Ormeau Road, Belfast BT7 3GG

Please contact the office if you wish to attend • Tel: 028 9022 0004



# Retail has a crucial role to play

*New DSD Minister Nelson McCausland MLA writes for NIIRTA News*

I believe that the retail sector has a crucial role to play in the strength of our economy and in the health of our towns and cities. One of my department's key roles in helping our economy through the current economic crisis is to help support and build our town and city centres, to keep them vibrant, attractive and prosperous places to work, live and visit.

DSD takes a key role in the planning and development process for our town and city centres, through managing the masterplanning process and, where appropriate, enabling comprehensive development schemes. One of our visible interventions is in our public realm schemes, where we can have a dramatic impact in terms of delivering attractive town centre spaces where people want to spend time and building confidence to enable a thriving private sector. A recent scheme in Newcastle, Co. Down, delivered in partnership with Down District Council, resulted in a 300% increase in footfall within the town centre – a clear demonstration of the value that can be added by tailoring development to the unique strengths of a town. I want to increase

the opportunities for our town and city centres, and our small businesses in particular. Most people will say that they are in favour of independent shops, with their reputation for the personal touch and a level of customer service that the large chains often do not deliver. And yet, in an age of online shopping and out-of-town developments, the small shops and town centres that people profess to love seem to be under a greater threat than ever.

Another challenge for many small businesses is the impact of promotions by the major multiples. The cut and thrust of business is not something I wish to interfere with, save in one regard: inappropriate drink promotions. Given the problem alcohol creates in our society, it is clearly unacceptable that some supermarkets sell beer for less than some mineral waters. This is something I am determined to see dealt with.

I want our towns and cities to remain distinctive and unique, to be the best that they can be, even if economic circumstances work against us. For example, the recent 'virtual window'

scheme in Dungannon, to which my Department contributed, has transformed the appearance of a number of derelict properties to create the appearance of a 'living' and more welcoming street. It does not involve bringing buildings back into use and is therefore a short-term solution, but it is a measure that has seen success in other countries and which can act as a precursor to new investment and re-development.

My proposals for new legislation to enable Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) will potentially have a significant impact. They will hand a measure of control back to businesses themselves. In a defined local area, businesses will be able to prioritise the work that needs to be done to make their area more appealing, to put together a costed bid for this work and to vote on whether it should be implemented. Businesses can already do this and cover the cost voluntarily, but the legislation will give additional powers. It will bring businesses together and give them a vested interest in identifying, costing and delivering the improvements that they agree are needed in their local area.

While the work I have outlined above is particularly relevant to the retail sector, it forms only part of the work of my Department, and that of my Executive colleagues' Departments, in ensuring Northern Ireland is a prosperous and harmonious country. In my role as Social Development Minister, I will always aim to make a real difference to our communities. While this may sometimes be a slow process, I believe we are making steady progress that will stand the test of time for the benefit of future generations.



NIIRTA Delegation meeting with Minister McCausland (from l to r) Des Stephens, NIIRTA Planning Adviser, David Hunter, Larne Traders Forum, Glyn Roberts, NIIRTA CEO, Nelson McCausland MLA, Peter Carrington, Lisburn Road Business Association and Paddy Doody, NIIRTA Chair

## Powering NI's Retail Sector

The retail sector in Northern Ireland has faced significant challenges in recent years with companies under pressure to save money and make their businesses as efficient as possible.



Alan Egner, Power NI's Business Sales and Marketing Manager, said; "We have 80 years experience of providing energy for small businesses in Northern Ireland and we've introduced a range of special tariffs, new technology and grants which will help small businesses to both improve energy efficiency and save money."

"One such option for businesses, especially those in the food retail industry, is our Nightsaver tariff offering businesses with storage heating or lots of fridges and chillers, seven hours of low cost electricity per night." Power NI's Weekender tariff is another option available and could see companies benefit from cheaper electricity at the weekend and in the evenings.

"We have found that bars and restaurants, for example, who do the majority of their business at the weekends, are making significant savings with this option. For example a pub could reduce their bills by up to 20 per cent if they switch over to our Weekender tariff," advised Mr Egner.

As well as providing sector-specific tariffs, Power NI is working in partnership with NIIRTA (Northern Ireland Independent Retail Trade

Association) and the Northern Ireland Sustainable Energy Programme (NISEP) to deliver a number of energy saving schemes.

Refrigeration typically accounts for 75 per cent of the total energy bill in local convenience stores. A grant of up to £4,000 is available to NIIRTA members to fit transparent doors and efficient lighting helping them reduce energy usage by a massive 40 per cent.

"We have a range of initiatives and grants which will help our local companies become more energy efficient. SMEs in all sectors can benefit from one or more of these schemes and I would strongly encourage them to get in touch so we can help them to save money."

Customers can contact Power NI on 08457 455 455 or online at [www.powerni.co.uk](http://www.powerni.co.uk)

## NIIRTA Meet with New Sinn Féin MLAs

Sinn Féin MLAs for Fermanagh & South Tyrone Phil Flanagan & Sean Lynch have met with Glyn Roberts, Chief Executive of the NI Independent Retailers Association, and Joe Kelly, spokesperson for the newly formed Enniskillen Business Partnership.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss issues affecting independent retailers across Fermanagh & South Tyrone and in particular, those in Enniskillen. Speaking after the meeting, Phil Flanagan said: "This was a very productive meeting and I am grateful for Glyn for taking the time to travel to Fermanagh to meet with us.

"Throughout the meeting, we discussed a number of areas where small retailers are facing massive challenges at the minute and what role we, as locally



Sean Lynch MLA, Glyn Roberts NIIRTA CEO, Phil Flanagan MLA & local trader Joe Kelly on a recent visit to Enniskillen Town Centre: Pic from Fermanagh Herald

elected representatives can play in helping them through this period.

"Foremost on our mind was the current consultation on the expansion of the Small Business Rate Relief Scheme. I have written to as many small businesses in Fermanagh as I could find, seeking their views on this proposal and encouraging them to engage with DFP and to make

arrangements for an event in Enniskillen to discuss the proposals."

Sean Lynch said: "As newly elected MLAs for Fermanagh & South Tyrone, we are very keen to engage with local businesses and to assist them as they attempt to lead the fight to get our local economy up and running again.

"We are all too aware how difficult trading conditions currently are for small retailers and it is useful to meet with representatives from the industry to learn how best we can assist them.

"We will continue to actively support small retailers and that is why we have so publicly supported the proposal to extend the Small Business Rate Relief Scheme, which is currently out for public consultation."

# Attwood pushes on with levy on shopping bags

*Environment Minister Alex Attwood is asking the public their views on charging for the use of shopping bags and on how much we should pay for their use.*



A charge on single use carrier bags is due to be introduced by 1 April 2013. The Minister is launching a public consultation to get the public's view on this.

Over 200million carrier bags are used in Northern Ireland every year with a great environmental cost in disposing of them.

In Wales a charge of 5p will be placed on single use carrier bags from October 2011, while England and Scotland do not currently propose to introduce a charging system. In the Republic of Ireland a charge of 22 cents is payable for most plastic bags.

Alex Attwood said: "I am determined that we treat the environment as what it is: one of our most valuable assets. Over 200million carrier bags are used in Northern Ireland each year. The aim of this charge is to

both reduce bag usage and at the same time raise revenue that would be used to provide funding for the environment and other Government priorities. This is a green initiative. It can symbolise a change of attitude, a change in culture, a change for the better.

"Throw away bags are an eyesore and result in hidden costs which each and every one of us pays. Not only do we pay for the costs of producing them in our shopping bills, but we pay for their impact on the environment and the costs of cleaning them up."

The Minister advised that the detailed framework for implementation of the new arrangements will be determined by legislation due to be taken through the Assembly next year.

The Minister added: "I have yet to take final decisions on key issues such as the amount of the charge and the types of bags which will be subject to it. I want to listen first to what everyone has to say, including consumers, retailers and environmental organisations. The outcome of this consultation will help me to assess various options for the introduction of the charge – with a view to identifying the most

effective and efficient approach. But I am determined to press on. My department is about environmental justice, protection of our world, green jobs, a green future and recognising our built and natural heritage as central to our economic potential.

"I encourage everyone with an interest in the issue to fully participate to ensure that the new arrangements are implemented in the best possible way."

Glyn Roberts NIIRTA Chief Executive said: "NIIRTA supports measures to reduce plastic bag use but the proposed levy seems to be poorly thought through. It's unclear if it is intended to discourage plastic bag use or if it is a revenue raiser. It has to do one or the other – it can't do both."

"The Department of the Environment has had £4m per year deducted from its budget to fund the Green New Deal, and it is proposed the levy will raise enough money to replace it. It appears, therefore, that the levy is intended to be a revenue raiser. Using the levy in this way will send a confusing message to the public. So, essentially, the public is being asked to buy plastic bags, thereby

generating waste, in order to tackle waste."

"We have real concerns that this levy, far from protecting the environment, will actually cause it greater harm as proven in the Republic where more consumers are buying black plastic bin liners (which take 1000 year to biodegrade on landfill) because single use bag usage has dropped"

"It will also put retailers in the position as unofficial tax collectors adding to their operating costs and an already growing red tape burden"

"A new strategy should be developed by the DOE, working with retailers, environmental groups and packaging companies, which builds upon the voluntary approach of educating customers and avoiding more plastic bags going to landfill"

The consultation runs from 20 July 2011 to 12 October 2011.

Copies of the consultation paper are available on the DOE website at: <http://www.doeni.gov.uk/waste> and NI Direct on <http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/have-your-say-current-consultations>

# NIIRTA Assembly Election Walkabout

*During the recent Assembly Election campaign NIIRTA, along with colleagues in local Chambers of Commerce, invited Party Leaders on walkabouts to showcase the best of town centres and to meet local traders.*



Glyn Roberts and Former SDLP Deputy Leader and Deputy First Minister Seamus Mallon on a visit to Larne



David McNarry MLA, Glyn Roberts and Newtownards Chamber Vice President Andrew Getty



UUP Leader Tom Elliott MLA, Glyn Roberts, Cllr Tom Hamilton & Andrew Getty Vice President Newtownards Chamber on a visit to the town



First Minister and DUP Leader Peter Robinson MLA visits NIIRTA President Paul Stewart in his store in Magherafelt Town Centre

# Role Models Needed

*Young people need role models. That's the message from Ian Jeffers, Director of The Prince's Trust.*



Pictured during his work experience at Smyths toystore is Chris O'Donnell from Derry who took part in Get into Retail programme last year. Chris is now working at Argos.

Jeffers believes the retail sector is full of great role models for young people and he is asking for us all to step up to this challenge.

"With continuing rises in youth unemployment we are really concerned about the long term impact on our most disadvantaged young people," commented Ian Jeffers "Unemployment can have a brutal impact on young people, with thousands suffering from mental-health problems, self-loathing and panic attacks." But it needn't be all doom and gloom. Jeffers believes that the programmes delivered by The Trust provide the vital support and encouragement that young people need.

"We have developed a very successful programme that breaks the vicious circle of no work experience and no qualifications. The Get Into programmes give young people aged 16 to 25 who are work ready, but do not have vocational skills, a mixture of practical training and experience that will enable them to get a job in sectors including retail, catering, social care, food processing and construction. To support our next programme – Get Into Retail, I want to engage with retailers that could provide two weeks work experience and be real role models to our young people."

In partnership with People 1st The Trust is running a Get into Retail in Belfast from September 12th to October 7th and work experience opportunities are required from 26th September.

During the course, young people will:

- learn new skills in retail and gain their EDI Level 1 in Retail Knowledge and First Aid certificates
- get practical experience of work
- improve their employability skills, including communication, teamwork, and reliability
- stage a final presentation
- get help with job interviews and preparing their CVs

The programme consists of 2 weeks training followed by 9 days work experience.

## What's in it for you?

- The opportunity to assist the local community, thereby demonstrating social responsibility
- Offering a development opportunity to current employees as 'buddies'

## Accessing a potential new recruit

The opportunity for PR- successes can make local 'good news stories'

The opportunity to attend the final graduation in UTV Studios, Ormeau Road, Belfast on 7th October.

## And, an extra pair of hands!

The Prince's Trust Northern Ireland aims to support over 3000 disadvantaged young people this year and it can only do this with the support of local businesses.

If you are interested in providing some work experience either for this programme or later in the year, please contact Debbie or Aoife on 028 90758128.

# NIIRTA Summer Parliamentary Reception

*NIIRTA held a summer Parliamentary Reception in the NI Assembly's Senate Chamber which was attended by over 150 MLAs, NIIRTA members and guests. At the reception NIIRTA launched its Independents Day Pledge and heard about Finance Minister Sammy Wilson's plans to expand the Small Business Rate Relief Scheme.*



Finance Minister Sammy Wilson MP, NIIRTA Chair, Paddy Doody, Glyn Roberts and David Strahan MD Phoenix Supply  
(Kevin Cooper Photography)

The Northern Ireland Independent Retail Trade Association has called for a radical pro-business Programme for Government to be produced and launched the Independence Day Pledge to encourage shoppers to buy only from Independent Retail on the recent Independence Day.

Its call was made at the NIIRTA Summer Parliamentary Reception at Stormont, hosted by Finance Minister Sammy Wilson MLA and attended by over 150 MLAs and leading members of the local business community.

Glyn Roberts NIIRTA Chief Executive speaking at the event said: "I firmly belief that at long last the tide is beginning to turn in favour of a level playing field for our independent sector and our town centres.

"We strongly welcome the fair rates levy proposals and extension of the Small Business Rate Relief scheme launched recently by the Finance Minister and would urge our entire small business sector to write in to support these proposals. Because no matter what town I visit I hear the same concerns about small traders struggling to pay their rates bill.

"A fundamental review of the proposed additional on street car park charges in our 30 towns is now taking place by the new DRD Minister and we are very hopeful that these charges will be dropped.

"Planning Service is now rejecting a larger number of unsustainable out of town superstore applications by the multiples"



NIIRTA Parliamentary Reception in the Senate Chamber (Kevin Cooper Photography)

“We want to see a new partnership between multiple & independent retailers to invest in our town centres, offer real choice to the consumer and above all build up our private sector toward a sustainable economic recovery. I hope with the launch of the NI Retail Consortium we can achieve that partnership.

“We want to see an even more radical pro-business Programme for Government developed by the Executive which enables our small business and independent retail sector to be at the cutting edge of a new open and prosperous economy.

“Our town centres should be designated Enterprise Zones in which every Government Department can pull out all the stops to get investment and create new jobs to create 21st Century towns that are centres of retail excellence. “We also want to see the Executive produce a multi-department Small Business Act which removes the barriers to growth for our small business sector such as red tape, and access to finance.”

Sammy Wilson MP MLA Minister for Finance & Personnel said: “Independent retailers are often at the heart of local



Employment & Learning Minister Stephen Farry MLA, Skillsmart Retailer Neil Moss and Glyn Roberts launching the Independence Day pledge at the Summer Reception (Kevin Cooper Photography)

economies in cities and towns, throughout Northern Ireland. They provide local services and are a source of much needed employment while contributing significantly to the local character of many areas.

“However, I also recognise that these have been challenging times for many businesses. The recession has dented consumer confidence while the increase in out of town shopping has impacted on traditional smaller independent retailers.

“That is why I am seeking to support local retailers by expanding the Small Business Rate Relief scheme.”

The Finance Minister encouraged the Association and its members to respond to the DFP consultation paper on dealing with the expansion of the small business rate relief scheme and the large retail levy. The consultation was published on Tuesday 28 June 2011.

The Minister continued: “I recently published proposals on the changes I would like to make. These proposals are all about finding balance and co-existence in the market place. It is not about favouring small over large. I want to create conditions where small businesses can survive in these difficult times.

“I would urge all those interested parties to respond to this consultation to help inform the development of future policy.”



David Strahan, MD Phoenix Supply, UUP Enterprise Spokesperson, Mike Nesbitt MLA and Glyn Roberts at the reception (Kevin Cooper Photography)



David Strahan, MD Phoenix Supply, Sinn Fein MLA Jennifer McCann and Glyn Roberts at the reception (Kevin Cooper Photography)



Finance Minister Sammy Wilson MP addressed the Reception in the Senate Chamber (Kevin Cooper Photography)

# Perry Street, Dungannon – NI's first virtual high street!

*Perry Street in Dungannon has been transformed from a run down terrace of derelict and boarded up properties into a living street, complete with new and inviting “interiors” seen through the refurbished shop windows.*



The Virtual Window Scheme involved the painting and tidying up of derelict properties and the installation of pictorial scenes into boarded-up window openings to create a “living” appearance and street scene.

The pilot project was developed and funded by Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council in partnership with Dungannon Regeneration Partnership (DRP), Dungannon Enterprise Centre and the Department for Social Development (DSD) in response to the problem of dereliction and under-investment in this area of Dungannon town centre. Thirteen individual, run-down properties were transformed into colourful book shops, gift shops, galleries, cosy houses and restaurants through a variety of virtual window graphics; the aim being to transform the visual appearance of the properties and to generate private sector interest in the site.

The images disguise parts of the street, giving the impression the units are occupied and present an impression of what Perry Street could look like if fully redeveloped and occupied. Only on closer inspection do passers by realise the fronts are

fake and there is a storyboard about the project.

Perry Street is situated on the one of the main thoroughfares into the town and within the Town Conservation Area and therefore the graphics were carefully selected in keeping with traditional design.

Passers by will also see a cat and a dog peeking out of the windows. Visitors are invited to find the butterflies, a symbol of the rebirth and rejuvenation of Dungannon Town Centre, hiding in the shop windows.

This work undertaken has provided an enormous uplift to what had been a very run-down street scene as demonstrated

by the before and after images.

The project has generated plenty of interest at a local regional and national level, benefitting existing businesses in Perry Street by attracting more visitors and shoppers while reducing vandalism. Such schemes contribute to the overall regeneration and development of Dungannon town. This is an exciting and unique approach to attracting investment and one which is brand new to Northern Ireland.

Further information: Paul McCreedy, Town Development Manager, Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough council, 15 Circular Road, Dungannon, Co.Tyrone BT71 6DT. Tel: 028 8772 8602. E-mail: paul.mccreedy@dungannon.gov.uk.



Glyn Roberts with Town Centre Managers visiting Perry Street

# Smart recruiting in recession

By Kim Johnston

*HOPEFULLY many of you reading this are successfully weathering the economic storm. Maybe some of you are emerging from the downturn in better shape than you could have anticipated, having restructured to adapt to the uncertain climate.*

If you are one of those businesses in the fortunate position of being able to recruit new staff, make sure you approach this with the same care that you have taken to steer your company through the downturn.

Getting the right person in a recession isn't as easy as it sounds though. Yes, there are a lot of unemployed people there for the picking, but finding the right one amongst a deluge of CVs can be like finding the proverbial needle in the haystack!

The people in your organisation are certainly your greatest asset. It's what has carried you through this far, and it's what will drive the business forward. So it's too important to get it wrong.

The importance of talented management shouldn't be

underestimated. There needs to be a systematic and deliberate approach to attract, develop and retain people with the aptitude and abilities to meet both the current and future operational needs of your business.

The thing is though, good people don't necessarily move for money, and they're not necessarily looking at job boards – often they're getting on with their work, doing a good job for the organisation they're currently working for.

So, how do you get hold of the right person, if they're not answering your ad and may not even be looking to move? Not an easy question to answer.

It takes expertise to identify and then attract the right person for the job. Using a Head Hunter who will proactively search for your ideal



candidate, and who has the contacts to find this person can be invaluable.

It takes careful evaluation, and time to do this. Getting the right combination of skills, experience and personality that will match your culture is a skill in itself.

If you get it right though, you stand to enhance your productivity and performance, keeping you a step ahead of the pack as we move forward in these uncertain times.

For further information visit [www.kimjohnston.co.uk](http://www.kimjohnston.co.uk) or email: [kim@kjexecs.com](mailto:kim@kjexecs.com)



NIIRTA has signed up to the Grow NI Campaign which is a coalition of over 25 business groups to call for a reduction in Corporation Tax for Northern Ireland. Picture shows Mervyn McCall, IoD Chairman, Eamonn Donaghy, Grow NI Chair, Francis Martin Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce President, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Owen Paterson MP, Ian Coulter CBI Vice Chairman and Glyn Roberts NIIRTA CEO at the Grow NI launch.

# Caem Store –Designing for Retailers

Caem Store Design Ltd started out as Store Design and Display Centre in the early 70s when it was sole distributor of Peugeot shelving and has come a long way since then. When Peugeot stopped producing shelving, Store Design and Display Centre sourced and became sole agent in Northern Ireland for Italian shelving system Caem. Today, known as Caem Store Design Ltd, it has evolved from a company that was purely involved with the supply and fitting of metal shelving to become one of Northern Ireland's foremost Design and Shopfit companies.

Many of the leading retailers in Northern Ireland entrust Caem Store Design to the company and CSD prides itself on the partnership between design quality and quality of service that it can offer. Caem Store Design are fully aware of the importance of working closely with customers and to this end the company can provide a package of services from an initial survey of the client's premises right through to CAD drawings, mood boards & computer generated 3D presentation walk-throughs. The range of products provided by CSD is extensive and can be used in applications such as Retail outlets, Cafés, Offices and Reception areas. As well as being flexible in the applications that their shelving can be used for CSD's shelving comes in a fabulous range of colours and can be dressed with timber or graphics to suit its surrounding environment. Moreover CSD always keep shelving in stock and as a result can provide a responsive service should a customer need sundry items.

If we now move on to the range of design tools that Caem Store Design has at its disposal we find that the company has a young, dynamic design



Island Wines

team who are well versed with current trends in the industry. All designs are produced using CAD software and provide customers with a perfect illustration of how their fit out will look upon completion.

Caem Store Design can make bespoke items in its workshops and employ highly skilled tradesmen to ensure that all products are made to the highest quality. Offering a full turnkey package CSD will take care of everything including building work, ceilings, painting & decorating, electrics & lighting, flooring, joinery, plumbing, shopfronts, shutters and signage.

Caem Store Design Ltd pride itself on securing repeat business, and is delighted with its continuing relationship with many of the major retail groups in Northern Ireland. These include Gordon's Chemists, Hendersons Group (Spar, Euro Spar, Vivo & Vivo Xtra), Maxol Group,

Medicare, Original Factory Shop, Palmer & Harvey (Your Store) and Wineflair.

A recent project of note that was carried out by the company was for Island Wines in Islandmagee, where the brief was to come up with a modern, warm and inviting interior to accommodate Island Wines customer base. At the location the silver shelving contrasting with walnut facade and stylish graphics provided a very homely welcoming atmosphere.

A second project involved work in Scotland where CSD was pleased to continue their work for Gordon's Chemists. This contract involved working closely with Gordon's Management team to design and fit the best retail layout solution possible, it came about as a result of the high standard of workmanship that was evident in the work carried out by Caem Store Design at the Gordon's branches throughout Northern Ireland.

For further information please contact our office on (028) 9084 9228 or email: [enquiries@caemstoredesign.com](mailto:enquiries@caemstoredesign.com) [www.caemstoredesign.com](http://www.caemstoredesign.com)



Gordons Chemists

# Training to be Queen

*Official figures from the Office for National Statistics have shown that UK retail sales fell 1.4% in May. This, coupled with the rise in the cost of raw materials such as cotton has increased the competitive nature of the retail industry.*



Serving up a treat - Suzi Donnelly, SERC lecturer and Northern Ireland's first qualified WorldHost Master Trainer for Retail, a new customer service programme is pictured along with McCall's of Lisburn Sales Director Alistair McCall at the launch of the Mary Portas retail training programme

Northern Ireland's first retail skills shop has just been launched with the aim of improving the retail experience through better customer service, staff commitment and enhanced quality. South Eastern Regional College (SERC), in partnership with the National Skills Academy for Retail, has launched the Greater Belfast Retail Skills Shop and is offering a range of exclusive training opportunities for high street retailers and independents alike. Amongst the offering will be the Mary Portas guide to successful retailing, a series of master classes where retailers can learn skills and tips to improve their business inspired by Mary Portas, star of hit television series *Mary Queen of Shops*.

The Mary Portas guide to successful retailing master classes were developed by shop owners and managers to impact on the key areas

affecting independent businesses and are based on the expert advice from Mary Portas herself, the famous retail guru. It includes her own advice on essential elements like visual merchandising, marketing, buying and finance. It is an inspirational programme combining Mary's retail knowledge and dynamism with practical tools and skills that can be directly applied to any retail business. It is ideal for retail businesses such as high street boutiques, delicatessens, convenience stores, home-ware and gift shops and small department stores.

One independent retailer who has already signed up to avail of this fantastic opportunity is McCall's of Lisburn. An award winning company with 55 years of retail experience they committed to seeking business improvement techniques.

Sales Director Alistair McCall commented; "As an Investor in People company we are continually seeking ways to improve. Our sales team is very committed to our customers and we believe SERC and the National Skills Academy for Retail can offer us a fresh insight to hone our approach. We look forward to taking part in the Mary Portas guide to successful retailing master classes and the benefits it can bring to our company and more importantly our customers."

Suzi Donnelly, SERC lecturer and Northern Ireland's first qualified WorldHost Master Trainer for Retail, a new customer service programme, had this to say; "At SERC we recognise the importance of retail training. The Mary Portas guide to successful retailing master classes are very popular throughout England and have a proven record of improving business performance. The retail industry is a highly competitive market and for many, customer service can be the deciding factor between choosing one retailer over another."

Suzi added; "With a recommended retail price of £200 the one day courses will be running throughout the year and will include the 'My Shop, My Future' masterclass, 'Principles of Customer Service – Retail', 'Sales Powered by Service', 'Buying for your Customer' and 'Marketing for more Customers.'"

To find out how WorldHost can support your business in meeting your customers' expectations, or to sign up to the Mary Portas Guide to Retailing email [retail-skills-shop@serc.ac.uk](mailto:retail-skills-shop@serc.ac.uk), alternatively visit: [www.serc.ac.uk/business/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.serc.ac.uk/business/Pages/default.aspx).

# Foundation Degree Contributes to Retail Success

The Northern Regional College (NRC), one of Northern Ireland's leading providers of further education is a key player in providing the retail sector with a new and valuable qualification in retailing, the Foundation Degree in Retailing.

Anne Birt-Macartney, NRC's Course Director for the Foundation Degree in Retailing commented, "the degree is particularly suitable for all individuals who wish to carve out a professional career in retailing, SME's organisations and the larger employers within the sector. Given the economic climate, there are increasing pressures on retailers small and large to be more competitive and efficient. This degree course provides a platform where students will learn the knowledge and skills in how to make effective management and leadership decisions and deliver critical and complex business solutions".

The Foundation Degree in Retailing is an innovative part-time e-learning course which has been designed to

meet the needs of students already in employment within the retail sector.

The programme provides a better vocational understanding of the industry and comprises of twelve units, over two years, which includes Personal and Professional Development, Retail Environment, Managing Information, Retail Operations, Consumer Behavior, In-Store Customer Marketing, Manage and Develop People in Retail, Work Based Learning, Retail Law, Manage Retail Customer Service and Leadership in Retail. This work-based programme is supported by group seminars and Master Classes.

"NRC is pleased to be part of the consortium of specialist tutors from the six Northern Ireland Colleges and the University of Ulster who deliver this programme. This unique course was developed using the National Sector Skills Council (Skillsmart Retail) framework and in consultation with leading retail organisations" commented Anne Birt-Mccartney.

Commenting on the programme the President of the Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce Francis Martin, recently said that, "he was delighted to see that the Retail Foundation Degree has got off to such a good start in Northern Ireland and, with participants in the first year progressing so well, it further demonstrates that retail is becoming a profession in its own right.

"The retail sector is becoming increasingly more important to the Northern Ireland economy and it is a tremendous boost that, on completion of this Degree, retail employees will have the skills to make effective management decisions within a retail business and propose critical and effective solutions to complex problems within a business context."

To learn more about the Foundation Degree in Retailing programme, contact NRC at Tel: 02890 855000 ore Email [anne.birt-mccartney@nrc.ac.uk](mailto:anne.birt-mccartney@nrc.ac.uk) or Web: [www.nrc.ac.uk](http://www.nrc.ac.uk)



## Your Local College Can Help You Says New Colleges NI Boss

Colleges Northern Ireland, the body representing the six Regional Colleges, is encouraging all of Northern Ireland's retailers to look at how their local college can help them.

New Colleges NI Chief Executive Gerry Campbell said: "Our colleges offer quality options that can support our local businesses and help them to become more efficient and grow."

Northern Ireland's six Regional Colleges deliver training to local and international companies and provide a full suite of Business Support Services in key areas, including:

- Enterprise, Entrepreneurship & Business Start-up
- Training & Workforce Development
- Knowledge Transfer & Innovation

Gerry Campbell added: "Colleges are working with businesses across Northern Ireland to provide relevant training and skills and to support

innovation. Business support extends beyond the provision of training and workforce development and includes a wide range of support activities aimed at improving business competitiveness and productivity."

Practical business support solutions include:

- Product Design & Prototyping;
- Lean manufacturing;
- Innovation;
- Business Improvement Techniques;
- Market Research and Marketing;
- Computer Systems & Software applications including free Open Source Software options.

The six Regional Colleges supported 4,500 businesses and 20,000 employees/ business owners/managers in 2009/10. They provide tailored support programmes that can be developed with dedicated College Business Support Units located in each of the

Colleges.

A majority of companies work with colleges through knowledge transfer programmes and other business support services that utilise college expertise and resources to help grow their business. These include:

- Invest Northern Ireland Innovation (INI) Voucher Scheme
- Knowledge Transfer Programmes - including KTP & Fusion
- Mentoring & Consultancy
- Interact Programme
- ApprenticeshipsNI
- Manufacture – Innovate – Grow (MIG) Programme
- Connected Programme
- Invest NI Enterprise Development Programme (EDP)

To find out more visit your local college or contact Colleges NI: e-mail: [info@collegesni.ac.uk](mailto:info@collegesni.ac.uk) website : [www.collegesni.ac.uk](http://www.collegesni.ac.uk) Phone: 08290 682296 Twitter: @CollegesNI

# New Northern Ireland Strategic Partnership for Responsible Energy Management

*Three Northern Ireland organisations recently signed a strategic partnership to launch a new Responsible Energy Management (REM) Certification programme that could make Northern Ireland the centre of excellence for energy management.*

International ISO Certification Body, Global Trust Certification in conjunction with the Centre for Competitiveness and South Eastern Regional College (SERC) have come together to form this Strategic Partnership.

Global Trust have already have had success with a similar certification model for sustainability management which has now led to sustainability projects in over 26 countries.

The new Energy Management Program has been set up to deliver cost savings and green credentials for organisations across the island of Ireland and internationally through a straightforward and cost effective process for energy management. This new offering can be an effective addition to existing operating and marketing strategies for all types of organisations.

David Browne of Global Trust commented that, "We are pleased to be offering a service that enables organisations to capitalise on the benefits of energy management without requiring significant time,

money or expertise. REM also provides a stepping stone towards ISO type standards and the scalable nature of the programme allows multiple sites to be certified in a practical, cost effective manner."

Bob Barbour of the Centre for Competitiveness, the consultancy partner for REM stated that, "The REM programme delivers an end to end solution that will leave a lasting legacy due to the focus on best practice energy management, continuous improvement and cost savings. This will significantly enhance the competitiveness of client organisations."

Thompson Keating of SERC, the training partner for REM commented that, "REM training through the Environmental skills centre at SERC will provide the opportunity to equip individuals and organisations with the skills required to manage energy effectively which will lead to further employment opportunities for many within the NI economy."

Phil Vernon, Business Development Manager of Global Trust and the REM Program highlighted that,



"the REM program already has a range of interested parties across the retail, manufacturing, construction and food processing sectors," and would encourage any organisations interested in the REM certification programme to take the first step towards energy efficiency by contacting any of the Partners.

More Information:  
Mr Phil Vernon, Global Trust  
Tel: 0044 2890662715  
Email: philvernon@gtcert.com  
Mr Michael Smith, Centre for Competitiveness Tel 0044 2890737950 Email Michael.Smith@cforc.org  
Mr Thompson Keating, SERC Tel 004428 91276695 Email TKeating@serc.ac.uk

# Vitality to Our Communities Article by Máirtín Ó Muilleoir

*A key priority for Belfast City councillors in the time ahead is to create the new thoroughfares which bring life and vitality to our communities.*

As traders come under pressure — onerous rates, internet shopping, tighter grips on purses and wallets — we have to come up with innovative and radically new ways to help them survive and thrive.

This much is clear: our arterial routes are not coming back as retail-only environments. However, even as the empty shopfronts become ever-more conspicuous, the search for a new type of community high street could bring benefits to those businesses which see it through this economic downturn.

For the thoroughfares of the new Belfast will be hubs of community and connectivity (and, no, I don't mean digitally-wired. They'll be that of course but they'll also connect our people and our neighbourhoods), boasting all types of ingenious endeavour. They will be hotbeds of entrepreneurship, cultural vibrancy, sporting endeavour and, thankfully, retail activity.

Instead of the butcher's, baker's and fruit and veg shop of old, you're as likely to have a craft shop, a gallery, a fitness club, a dance troupe, a tourist information spot, and a community hub, filling in the spaces between our merchants' storefronts. But these reborn and recrafted arterial routes will be rich with footfall, purchasing power and ambition.

They will be places your future customers want to visit.

How will we get there: by encouraging (with funding) the networks of traders, craftworkers, small businesses and merchants to build their strength and their offering. By filling in the gaps with Council-supported newbuild projects designed to make our main roads boom again (in the right way!). What will this future look like: take a dander along the Lisburn Road next time you're about and admire the new Agape community complex, the Paperclip



Glyn Roberts, Cllr Máirtín Ó Muilleoir and South Belfast MLA Alex Maskey on a recent visit to the Lisburn Road

architectural practice with its stunning shopfront space and that great jewel adapting to the times in which we strive, the Arcadia Deli. Only one of that troika is a retailer but together they form the basis of the high street of tomorrow on which our retailers will depend.

Máirtín Ó Muilleoir is an entrepreneur, publisher of several newspapers and websites and Sinn Féin councillor for Balmoral. You can follow him on [www.twitter.com/newbelfast](http://www.twitter.com/newbelfast)



NIIRTA CEO Glyn Roberts visiting Diane Dodds MEP at her Balmoral Show stand

## It's A Sweet Thing

East Belfast MLA Robin  
Newton opening Sweet Thing  
with owner Emma Dunn

It was this time last year that I took the decision to open a sweet shop. I had been in the same job for six years and wasn't finding it much fun being a Credit Controller in the middle of a recession! So I began to seriously formulate the idea and look for a location. My mother has had a business on the Belmont Road for over twenty years so it seemed like an obvious choice to seek out premises on a road I knew well. There were a few vacant shops and after some negotiations I agreed to take a lease on a three storey building which had formerly been an insurance office.

I still hadn't settled on a name but on one of my final mornings driving up the M2 to my previous job I put Van Morrison's "Astral Weeks" CD on and the song "Sweet Thing" came on. Hence the name was chosen. After getting the shop fitted out and decorated the way I wanted it came to the fun part of picking all the sweets. I managed to track down a great supplier who brings in all kinds of weird and wonderful sweets and what this man doesn't know about sweets isn't worth knowing! I had decided to mainly tap into the retro market which is very big at the

moment and to try and capture some of that feeling which we all remember from when we were small. I literally wanted to make people feel like they were a kid in a sweet shop! I sell quite a varied selection of sweets from the traditional Belfast favourites like Brandy Balls and Buttered Brazils through the sweets I remember growing up like Kola Kubes and Sports Mixture to the sweets that children like today such as Blue Raspberry Bon Bons and Football Gums.

I finally opened on the 5th of December 2010 and began trading. Unfortunately this month was also the coldest December in 21 years so what with the cold and snow trading was difficult to say the least! I have now been open for nine months. It has been much more difficult than I expected - in fact had I known how difficult it would be I'm not sure if I would have made the leap. Trading conditions are still challenging and I expect them to remain so for the foreseeable future. Having said that it's great fun sourcing and sampling all the sweets, and I really enjoy the look on people's faces when they come into my shop and find that I stock a particular sweet that they haven't seen for years. In fact



many of the products that I stock have been brought in because they have been requested by my customers - meaning that people from East Belfast don't have to travel too far for their favourite sweet. Independent Retailers with shops like mine are vital to the local community as we are more accountable to our customers and the people of the wider community. We also ensure the unique character of an area which is particularly relevant on the Belmont Road as it has formed the shopping heart of Strandtown Village for well over 100 years. I personally also like to source local products wherever possible so I have a variety of products including fudge and chocolate which are locally made in East Belfast.

For further information please visit [www.sweetthingbelfast.co.uk](http://www.sweetthingbelfast.co.uk) or better still, visit our shop: Sweet Thing, 21 Belmont Road, Belfast BT4 2AA



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Securing Your World

# Turn to Your Industry Charity for Personal Help and Guidance

Your industry charity, Caravan, is able to help anyone in the grocery industry, from factory to shop floor, who is worried about their finances, feelings stressed or is experiencing problems whether at home or at work.

Caravan can help: by talking the situation through with one of our trained advisors via phone, email or online. For people who prefer not to ask for help, or may never pick up a phone to get support, there is a web-based range of self-help tools and advice, including online chat.

The Caravan Helpline provides general support and information in key areas, for example: personal issues, including family, children and relationships; career support including working relationships; people skills; health and mental health issues; some legal



issues; financial support including benefits information; and a counselling service. There is also a wide range of factsheets which cover an ever-increasing range of subjects from debt to career management.

Uniquely, the Caravan Helpline offers a telephone counselling service for people who have experienced incidents which are harmful, threatening or challenging. Callers will be asked to briefly recount, but not relive, the incident with trained counsellors, who will be able to talk through ways of coping with the situation and help them to deal with any related emotional issues. An online counselling service is also available and can be found with the Helpline website.

The Caravan Helpline is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week and is open to all who work in the grocery industry, from the factory to the shop floor. You can access it online at [www.caravan-charity.org.uk/helpline](http://www.caravan-charity.org.uk/helpline) or by calling freephone 08088 021122.

## Health Minister announces next steps to introduce tobacco display ban

Health Minister Edwin Poots has announced the next steps for the introduction of controls on regulating the sale of tobacco products in Northern Ireland.

The Minister reaffirmed his commitment to introducing regulations in Northern Ireland to ban the display of tobacco products at point of sale and sales from tobacco vending machines.

Minister Poots said: "Despite all the available evidence on the harm caused by smoking, hundreds of children and

young people are still taking up this life-limiting habit each year. By removing displays of tobacco products from view in shops, and preventing children from accessing them through vending machines, we are building upon measures already in place aimed at reducing the prevalence of smoking."

Commenting on when the regulations would be introduced, the Minister said: "After taking into consideration views from stakeholders during the consultation process, and

in view of the ongoing legal challenges to the equivalent regulations in England, I have decided that the display ban regulations will not be commenced in Northern Ireland until Spring 2012 at the earliest. With regards to regulations banning tobacco sales from vending machines, I hope to introduce these from 1 February 2012.

"My Department continues to follow the legal challenges, with a view to making the regulations as soon as possible once the legal position is clear, and a

further announcement will be made in due course. I must stress that retailers will be informed of the final commencement date as soon as possible, to allow necessary adaptations to be made to their premises."

The Minister added that his Department had made some amendments to the draft regulations to bring them into line with changes proposed to the English regulations. He said: "It is hoped that these amendments will facilitate retailers in complying with the legislation."

# Social Development Minister Nelson McCausland Launches Masterplan for Bangor Town Centre

Nelson McCausland said: "Bangor has many qualities such as its strong maritime history, rich Christian heritage and built environment. The masterplan shows how the town centre can build on these assets to create an exciting and dynamic place where the waterfront and town meet. By creating a rich mix of uses and activities the Masterplan shows how it is possible to create a diverse town centre that people will want to visit and where business want to locate and grow. Re-establishing Bangor as a vibrant and high quality thriving tourist destination can be achieved through the implementation of the regeneration proposals identified in the masterplan."

The masterplan sets out the vision and plan for Bangor town centre and the masterplan proposals include:

- creating a world class waterfront by capitalising on the marina and developing a 'necklace of activities' around the promenade;
- redevelopment of the Queen's Parade site for high quality retail, offices and homes that will act as the catalyst for regeneration throughout the town centre.
- The development of a new hotel / theatre at the waterfront adjacent to a major new plaza for major events and markets that can be used for parking when no events are planned;
- Creating a tree lined avenue along the length of Abbey Street with new gateway features at the entrance to the town and at the various roundabouts town.
- The redevelopment of Pickie Fun Park;
- New environmental improvements along the length Main Street, High

Street and Hamilton Street with new unique lighting to signal a bright and vibrant town centre; and

- Making the town centre both more cycle and pedestrian friendly and carrying out junction improvements to Main Street and Hamilton Road to reduce congestion.



Minister McCausland continued: "In the current challenging economic times, now is the right time to set out how Bangor plans to grow and prosper for coming generations. The masterplan proposals published today provide a realistic vision of how the town can make the best use of its unique features and secure its ongoing success and prosperity. This is good news for Bangor and I want thank all

the people that played a part in helping to develop this document."

Mayor of North Down Council, Councillor James McKerrow said: "The Council is delighted to see the launch of the Bangor Town Centre Masterplan. I would like to thank the members of the Masterplan Advisory Group for their hard work in preparing this document, which provides a vision for regeneration for the next 20 years. Many local people contributed their thoughts during the consultation process and as a result we have a document that represents our widest aspirations for the town.

"These are challenging economic times, however the Council is committed to town centre regeneration. We are spending £1.6million on the redevelopment of Pickie Family Fun Park at Bangor Marina – work will start in September – which I am confident will act as a catalyst to attract further new investment. We look forward to working with all our public and private sector partners to see the Masterplan being implemented in the months and years ahead."

Glyn Roberts NIIRTA Chief Executive who attended the launch said: "This is an excellent document which highlights a coherent Retail and Tourism led regeneration programme for Bangor Town Centre and its seafront"

"Key to the success of this Master Plan is attracting more retailers to Bangor Town Centre, to improve upon its overall retail offer to stimulate the local economy of North Down as a whole"

# Growing your business abroad



John McKee

## Domestic market challenges open the door for business opportunities abroad.

The challenging times faced by Northern Ireland retail SMEs are both oft quoted and well documented. Economic downturn, globalization and the purchasing power of corporate rivals have combined to markedly erode the margins previously achieved by local retailers. But amidst the troubling stories of empty high streets and businesses in receivership, innovative retailers are beginning to learn that challenge is the opportunity for greatness. Furthermore, with the contraction of domestic demand, many retailers are realizing that the greatest opportunities lie abroad. Exports are widely regarded as an essential component of a healthy Northern Ireland economy. Business development specialists Linkubator provide business consultancy and strategic support for Northern Ireland businesses and SMEs. Led by the father and son team of Will and John McKee, Linkubator's mantra is 'building better business'. Recently, Linkubator have been working with local retail organizations to help them win sales outside of Northern Ireland.

Linkubator's Managing Director John McKee believes that Northern Ireland retailers are ideally suited to embracing the export challenge and achieving sales abroad: "The conventional view was once that only large publicly traded companies had the resources to export their goods. But the reality is that independent retailers in Northern Ireland are the ones who are sufficiently flexible to respond to market changes and meet demand profitably. What is required of our business leaders is the courage to pursue these opportunities."

The Linkubator Senior Management Sales Programme helps business organizations bridge the gap between the margins they face in the domestic market and the revenues that could be generated in the export market. This intensive part-time programme combines group based learning and one-to-one mentoring in order to provide business leaders with unique tools to penetrate sales barriers and explore new revenue opportunities for their goods and services whether at home or abroad. If you want to learn how to establish logistics in foreign territory, leverage your selling proposition with multinational buyers and learn how to conduct sales negotiations on the world stage, Linkubator is here to provide you with the tools to achieve your export goals.

Register your interest now in the Senior Management Sales Programme in order to receive a complimentary copy of Will and John McKee's book *Star: Leadership Behaviours For Stellar SME Growth*. Simply send your details to [mail@linkubator.com](mailto:mail@linkubator.com) or contact John McKee on 028 94466532.

## NIIRTA

### Benefits of Membership

Do you have a News Story? Contact NIIRTA with the details and we'll cover it if we can!

### What is NIIRTA?

It's not just a lobbying body – it's a trade association with an excellent range of services and benefits available to members.

### What can NIIRTA do for you?

NIIRTA can provide retailers with advice on a whole range of issues – from rates reductions and car parking to crime prevention and legislation information.

### Here's a list of what's on offer from NIIRTA...

**NIIRTA News** – a regular update on issues affecting you!

**Public Affairs** – NIIRTA is the voice at Government level on all issues affecting your business

### NIIRTA Advice Helpline 028 9022 0004 –

Available 9.00-5.00 – Monday to Friday – for specific advice on employment and other issues.

**HCMA** – a sickness and injury scheme similar to BUPA – contact NIIRTA for details or telephone 01423 866985 (and quote NIIRTA).

### Willis Insurance –

Property insurance at competitive rates – Contact NIIRTA or Ian McClure at Willis Insurance – 028 9089 5068 and mobile 07961 453303

**XACT** – Health & Safety/Food Management System available at competitive rates – 'No Obligation' audit facility available to NIIRTA members. Contact Xact on 0845 665 3006.

### Follow us on Facebook and Twitter



## Sinn Fein Ard Fheis

*For the first time NIIRTA had an exhibition stand at this year's Ard Fheis which came to Belfast's Waterfront Hall for the first time. Senior Sinn Fein Ministers and representatives visited the stand and were updated on NIIRTA's ongoing lobbying activities. NIIRTA will also be doing similar events at the forthcoming UUP, SDLP, DUP & Alliance Party conferences.*



Sinn Fein Irish Presidential  
Candidate Martin McGuinness  
MP & Glyn Roberts



Glyn Roberts with Michelle Gildernew MP, Chair of the  
Assembly Health Committee



Caral Ni Chuilin MLA, Minister for Culture, Arts & Leisure  
and Glyn Roberts



Glyn Roberts with Acting deputy First Minister & Education Minister  
John O'Dowd MLA