

# The Retailer



**NIIRTA**  
Northern Ireland Independent  
Retail Trade Association

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

## NEW FINANCE & ENVIRONMENT MINISTERS SET OUT THEIR PRIORITIES FOR RETAILERS




**NIIRTA**  
Northern Ireland Independent  
Retail Trade Association



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# NIIRTA WELCOMES NEW DFP & DOE MINISTERS

The Northern Ireland Independent Retail Trade Association (NIIRTA) has welcomed the appointment of Mark H Durkan MLA as DOE Minister and hailed the contribution of outgoing Minister Alex Attwood MLA.

NIIRTA Chief Executive Glyn Roberts said:

“Alex Attwood made a great contribution to supporting local town centres in his time as Minister by rejecting many unsustainable out of town superstore applications. He was a strong supporter of town centres and our independent retail sector”

“Mark H Durkan must build upon his predecessor’s contribution and stand up for our local town centres and ensure we have a new planning policy which supports their future growth”

“With Northern Ireland having the worst Town Centre Shop Vacancy Rate in the UK of nearly 1 in 4 shops vacant he must ensure that his department plays a key role in tackling this problem”

“We look forward to working with Mark in his new role and wish him every success”

Commenting on the appointment of Simon Hamilton MLA as Minister for Finance and Personnel Mr Roberts thanked his predecessor Sammy Wilson MP for his record of support for independent retailers and small businesses.

“Sammy Wilson leaves office with a strong record of supporting independent retailers and small businesses in Northern Ireland. He

deserves considerable credit for expanding the Small Business Rate Relief Scheme and introducing the Empty Premises Rate Relief Scheme”

“Both these measures have been helpful in supporting Town Centres in these challenging economic times”

“NIIRTA has an excellent working relationship with Simon Hamilton and looks forward to working closely with him as Minister”

“The key challenge for Minister Hamilton is to build upon his predecessor’s Rate Reform Programme and ensure that the current Rates Revaluation delivers even more for small traders and Town Centres”





# FIRST MINISTER OPENS NEW NIIRTA HEAD OFFICE

First Minister The Rt. Hon Peter Robinson MLA has officially opened the new Northern Ireland Independent Retail Trade Association (NIIRTA) office at 245 Upper Newtownards Road, Ballyhackamore, Belfast.

Among those attending the launch open day included Naomi Long MP, Alasdair McDonnell MP, Jim Nicholson MEP, Robin Newton MLA, Sammy Douglas MLA, Chris Lyttle MLA, Cllrs Gavin Robinson, Adam Newton, John Hussey, Tom Haire and many local business leaders and retailers.

First Minister The Rt. Hon Peter Robinson MLA said:

“NIIRTA has firmly established itself as a passionate champion for independent retailers across Northern Ireland.

“I’m delighted to officially open their new office and wish them well in this new chapter of their ongoing support for an essential part of our economy”.

NIIRTA Chief Executive Glyn Roberts said:

“NIIRTA is delighted with our new office on Upper Newtownards Road which gives us more space and better facilities to help us to support our members with an improved service”

**“NIIRTA HAS FIRMLY ESTABLISHED ITSELF AS A PASSIONATE CHAMPION FOR INDEPENDENT RETAILERS ACROSS NORTHERN IRELAND.”**

**FIRST MINISTER THE RT. HON PETER ROBINSON MLA**

“We are a growing business organisation supporting over 1400 independent retailers, wholesalers, suppliers to the sector and traders’ groups in Northern Ireland”

“As a business organisation which is actively lobbying for a better deal for its members, our new office being such a short drive away from Stormont will be a

big time saver”

“At our launch, we outlined the need for every political party to give their full support to Small Business Saturday on 7th December. Nearly 30 local business organisations have now pledged their support”

“We have also urged the Executive to establish a Northern Ireland Town Team to tackle the growing challenge of Northern Ireland having the worst shop vacancy rate in the UK, with 1 in 4 shops empty”

“This Town Team should be jointly chaired by the First & deputy First Ministers and include the Ministers for DRD, DOE, DSD & DFP and key stakeholder organisations to agree a coordinated regeneration plan and future policy”

“While our local retail sector is facing huge challenges, we believe with a better policy environment and with retailers themselves embracing new technology, it will have a sustainable future”



Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4

**“BETTER  
FACILITIES  
TO HELP  
US TO  
SUPPORT  
OUR  
MEMBERS  
WITH AN  
IMPROVED  
SERVICE”**

**NIIRTA CHIEF  
EXECUTIVE  
GLYN ROBERTS**

**NIIRTA'S NEW ADDRESS:  
245 UPPER  
NEWTOWNARDS ROAD,  
BALLYHACKAMORE,  
BELFAST, BT4 3JF  
T: 028 9020 0004**



Photo 5



Photo 6

*Photo 1: NIIRTA Board members meeting with First Minister at the office open day*

*Photo 2: Glyn Roberts with SDLP Leader Dr Alasdair McDonnell MP at the new NIIRTA Office open day*

*Photo 3: Glyn Roberts & First Minister speaking at the official opening of the new NIIRTA office*

*Photo 4: Members of the NIIRTA Board & First Minister Peter Robinson MLA at official opening of new NIIRTA Office*

*Photo 5: Welcoming Deputy Mayor of Craigavon Cllr Colin McCusker to the new NIIRTA Office*

*Photo 6: Welcoming East Belfast MP Naomi Long to the new NIIRTA Office*





# SMALL BUSINESS SUMMIT ON RATES & SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY

The Northern Ireland Independent Retail Trade Association (NIIRTA) organised a mini summit recently. Local Chambers of Commerce and Business Organisations attended the event at Titanic House to discuss Small Business Saturday and the forthcoming Rates Revaluation.

Outgoing Shadow Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Vernon Coaker MP and the outgoing Finance Minister Sammy Wilson MP addressed the thirty strong gathering of business representatives.

On Small Business Saturday- Sammy Wilson MP MLA said: “The Small Business Saturday proposal is innovative and I would like to voice my support and encourage others to get involved in developing this concept into a reality. Such an initiative could assist the small independent retailers who play a vital role in our local economy.”

Outgoing Shadow Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Vernon Coaker MP said: “I’m really pleased to be at Titanic Quarter with the Finance Minister to launch Small Business Saturday. It’s great to have the support of the Executive and I look forward to working with them, local councils and businesses over the next number of months”

“There’s been a great response from Northern Ireland to the Small Business Saturday initiative. I want to thank

the FSB, NIIRTA, Pubs of Ulster, Ulster Chemists’ Association and Chambers of Commerce for driving it forward in towns and villages right across the province.”

NIIRTA Chief Executive Glyn Roberts said: “We are delighted at the progress being made in Northern Ireland to make 7th December Small Business Saturday. This is not just about supporting independent traders across the UK, but valuing the contribution small businesses make to the economy as a whole across the UK”

Commenting on the 2015 Rates Revaluation which is now well underway Sammy Wilson MP said: “The business landscape is transforming and needs an Executive that reacts and responds to this rapidly changing world.

“The 2015 Revaluation will be challenging due to difficult market conditions and in particular the turbulence in the rental market, but, I believe this exercise is about grasping the opportunity now to rebalance business rates ensuring that the burden is shared and distributed fairly.

“I would like to take this opportunity to encourage businesses to get online to complete their forms in hard copy and provide Land & Property Services with the market evidence it needs to ensure the job is as good as it can be.

“The rates revaluation and local government reform will mean that hard decisions are being taken not only by me, as Finance Minister, but also my Executive colleagues.

“Business ratepayers I hope understand that the Executive is committed to creating the right conditions for Northern Ireland to emerge from the downturn into sustained recovery and in doing so rebalance, reposition and diversify our economy.”

Concluding, NIIRTA Chief Executive Glyn Roberts said: “NIIRTA would urge the DFP Minister to ensure that this Rate Revaluation further supports small business and town centre traders as its central focus. It is surely not fair that large out of town hypermarkets pay less per sq. ft. in rates than small town centre retailers and we would urge the Minister to close this loophole and create a level playing field”

*Photo: Glyn Roberts, NIIRTA CEO, Vernon Coaker MP, NI outgoing Shadow Secretary of State & outgoing Finance Minister Sammy Wilson MP at the Small Business Summit at Titanic Centre*

# NIIRTA HOSTS UKIP LEADER NIGEL FARAGE & SECRETARY OF STATE

The Northern Ireland Independent Retail Trade Association (NIIRTA) has hosted a working lunch on the economy with UKIP Leader Nigel Farage MEP on a recent visit to Belfast.

NIIRTA Chief Executive Glyn Roberts said: "We welcome the opportunity to meet with Mr Farage and to discuss the key economic challenges facing Northern Ireland."

"Key issues such as devolving Corporation tax powers, general taxation, business regulation and urban regeneration were discussed at our working lunch"

"As it is only a matter of time until the UK Referendum on EU membership is held it is important that the views of the local business community are central in the forthcoming debate"



Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 4



Photo 3

Photo 1: Brenda Shankey, Chair of Ballyhackamore Business Association, Glyn Roberts, NIIRTA CEO and Nigel Farage MEP supporting Independents Day

Photo 2: NIIRTA CEO Glyn Roberts welcoming UKIP Leader Nigel Farage MEP to the NIIRTA Office

Photo 3: Secretary of State Theresa Villiers MP meeting local traders in the new NIIRTA office

Photo 4: Secretary of State for NI Theresa Villiers MP being welcomed to the new NIIRTA office by CEO Glyn Roberts





Photo 1

# INDEPENDENTS MONTH

The Northern Ireland Independent Retail Trade Association (NIIRTA) launched this year's Independents Day with the Minister for Agriculture, Michelle O'Neill at the Magherafelt store of NIIRTA President Paul Stewart.

In a further move, NIIRTA also launched its Suppliers' Forum with the aim of improving trading opportunities between its retail, wholesale, producer and supplier members.

NIIRTA President Paul Stewart said:

"Independents Day is more than just encouraging consumers to shop independently, it is about celebrating the huge contribution our local traders make to our local economy, local producers and town centres"

Glyn Roberts NIIRTA Chief Executive said: "In an age of ever more clone towns and multiple stores, independents provide real choice to shoppers in our town and city centres. They also have been the

route to market for many well known local companies such as Mash Direct and Genesis Bakery and continue to do so for so many local producers and manufacturers"

"Independence Day is the right time to launch our new Supplier Forum to ensure we as business organisation do more to support local suppliers and producers to seek out new trading possibilities with our Retail and Supplier Members. In recent years we have welcomed many local suppliers to the independent sector as members and want to encourage many more to do so"

"The Suppliers' Forum will involve regular events for producers and suppliers to meet with Retailers and Wholesalers to improve communication and provide greater opportunities to promote new products and services throughout the supply chain"

"NIIRTA is fully supporting the recent Agri-Food Board report, Going For

Growth and we believe our Suppliers Forum is supportive of its aim of an improved Supply Chain which supports ambitious growth targets in sales and employment"

Speaking at the launch the Agriculture Minister Michelle O'Neill MLA said:

"I am delighted to launch NIIRTA's 'Independents Day' initiative for 2013 highlighting the very best of our local produce from the north of Ireland. I have long been an advocate of sourcing local food and commend NIIRTA for this initiative.

"While the ever-increasing global demand for food provides great







Photo 2

opportunities for our producers, the local market is still the key market outlet for many of our producers and I am pleased that NIIRTA has launched a Suppliers' Forum to further cement linkages within the supply chain. I have no doubt this initiative will lead to increased trade between

members in support of the objectives of the recently produced Going for Growth report.

"I wish NIIRTA and all the independent retailers continued success with this initiative and thank them for their ongoing efforts to bring local food to local communities whilst remaining the heart of our rural towns."



**"IT IS ABOUT CELEBRATING THE HUGE CONTRIBUTION OUR LOCAL TRADERS MAKE TO OUR LOCAL ECONOMY, LOCAL PRODUCERS AND TOWN CENTRES"**

**NIIRTA PRESIDENT PAUL STEWART**

Photo 1: Glyn Roberts, NIIRTA CEO, NIIRTA President Paul Stewart & Agriculture Minister Michelle O'Neill MLA launching 2013 Independents Month

Photo 2: Celebrating Independents Day in Comber with Ards Mayor Cllr Stephen McIlveen & Cllrs Girvan, Oswald & Gibson



## NIIRTA WELCOMES 5P CARRIER BAG CAP

The Northern Ireland Independent Retail Trade Association (NIIRTA) has welcomed DOE Minister's Mark H Durkan's announcement that he is to cap the Carrier Bag levy at 5p and not increase it to 10p next year.

NIIRTA Chief Executive Glyn Roberts said:

"NIIRTA has strongly lobbied the Minister to cap the levy at 5p and we welcome that he has listened to the concerns of our members not to proceed with the proposed increase to 10p next year"

"That be said we are disappointed that Minister Durkan still intends to place a levy on reusable carrier bags. We believe this is clearly contradictory to the 'environmental' aims of the levy and should be dropped"





# NIIRTA - THROUGH THE LENS

Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4

*Photo 1: New Belfast Lord Mayor Cllr Mairtin O'Muilleoir at the NIIRTA Summer Reception in City Hall*

*Photo 2: Lord Mayor meeting with NIIRTA and other traders groups*

*Photo 3: NIIRTA hosting Enniskillen Traders meeting to discuss G8 opportunities*

*Photo 4: NIIRTA CEO Glyn Roberts welcoming Martina Anderson MEP to the NIIRTA stand at the Sinn Fein Ard Fheis*



Photo 5





Photo 6



Photo 7



Photo 9



Photo 8



Photo 10

*Photo 5: Simon Hughes MP Lib Dem Deputy Leader & NIIRTA CEO Glyn Roberts at the Alliance Party Conference*

*Photo 6: Hosting the New York City Small Business Commissioner Rob Walsh with Chris Lyttle MLA & Robin Newton MLA*

*Photo 7: Outgoing Finance Minister launching Rates Revaluation with James McKay & Glyn Roberts*

*Photo 8: NIIRTA CEO Glyn Roberts meeting with President Higgins & wife Sabina Higgins at Aras an Uachtarain Summer Reception*

*Photo 9: Glyn Roberts with Sinn Fein MP Michelle Gildernew & Phil Flanagan MLA meeting with Irvinestown traders*

*Photo 10: NIIRTA CEO Glyn Roberts & Chambers of Commerce representatives visiting Brussels as guests of Martina Anderson MEP*



# ANNAGHMORE MUSHROOMS - A GROWING FAMILY

We can't get enough of our 'shrooms, can we? They're just so good in a fry or whizzed up in a creamy soup. Annaghmore marketing has been working hard to satisfy demand since 2006. Their specially designed houses are in Oxford Island on the shores of beautiful Lough Neagh. They're really up to speed with modern growing methods.

They've invested in a new pack house; rapidly cooling systems with their specially designed trays and refrigeration holding rooms. All that means super quality mushrooms with a longer shelf life.

Everything is about attention to detail. They manage every step of our production and supply chain diligently. They listen to and work closely with customers to make sure they're 100 per cent happy. That's why they have such a good reputation for service.

Their mushroom products are marketed



and distributed not only into the Northern Ireland market place but throughout the rest of the UK.

#### Product Range:

Full range of white and brown cap mushrooms. These can be bought either in loose form or pre-packed in various weights labelled to customer

requirements. They can also be bought washed and sliced. Mushrooms are fully traceable and grown under the most stringent quality assurance practises ensuring 100% food safety. The mushrooms are cooled to add shelf life and the cool chain is maintained from the time of picking to the point of delivery.

**welcome to a  
growing family**

**Our products are exquisite. But  
what really sets us apart is trust.**

Your customers rely on you, just like you rely on your suppliers. So you need to be your own trust. Annaghmore Mushrooms is a family-run business that guarantees quality products and a personal service you can depend on.

We have a big family of customers and we would like you to be part of it.

**[annaghmoremushrooms.co.uk](http://annaghmoremushrooms.co.uk)**



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# NIIRTA MEETS SHADOW BUSINESS SECRETARY

The Northern Ireland Independent Retail Trade Association (NIIRTA) recently hosted a working lunch in Bangor of local business leaders and

State for Business, Innovation & Skills. Outgoing Shadow NI Secretary Vernon Coaker MP was also present. Following the business lunch, the Shadow Business Secretary went on a walkabout to meet local traders in Bangor Town Centre. Speaking after the meeting, NIIRTA Chief Executive Glyn Roberts said:

support our struggling retail sector and for National Insurance holidays to encourage small traders to employ more staff"

"We are delighted that Mr Umunna agrees with us on the need for a 'Small Shop Saturday.' This would be a designated day across every village, town and city to give more to support local traders and to also recognise their unique contribution to the economy and local community"



"This was an extremely worthwhile meeting at which we re-stated the united view of the local business community that

the early devolution of Corporation Tax to the Northern Ireland Executive should be a priority"

political representatives for the first visit to Northern Ireland of Chuka Umunna MP, Shadow Secretary of

"NIIRTA is supportive of the Labour Party policy of reducing VAT to

*Photo 1: Shadow Business Secretary Chuka Umunna MP at NIIRTA working lunch*

*Photo 2: Glyn Roberts NIIRTA CEO and Chuka Umunna MP Shadow Business Secretary at the NIIRTA working lunch in Bangor*



# THE BEST WAY IS SUBWAY®

The SUBWAY® brand is one of the UK's most popular franchise opportunities, with over 1,600 stores in the UK and Ireland. The brand has more than 300 outlets open or in development in convenience stores and on forecourt sites throughout the countries. There are currently opportunities available for convenience store operators to partner with the franchise and open an outlet within an existing store.

Partnering with the SUBWAY® brand provides excellent dual branding opportunities, high rental returns and increased customer market share. The outlets are efficient, convenient and provide a quick service, which draws a steady flow of customers – creating energy and a beneficial atmosphere.

Due to the simplicity of the operation, there is an adaptable approach to the size and physical layout of its stores. The format means that staff levels can be increased at peak times and downscaled to one employee during quiet periods. A SUBWAY® store can also maintain a full range of products maximising sales throughout the day, whilst managing wastage at less than 1%. Unlike traditional food outlets, there is no need for grills or fryers in a SUBWAY® store.

Caroline Thomson, National Accounts Manager for the SUBWAY® brand, commented: "I've seen many companies quickly integrate SUBWAY® stores into forecourts and convenience stores with great success. The collaborative approach that the SUBWAY® brand takes,

delivers real benefits for companies, including increased footfall and sales and excellent business growth opportunities."

To find out more about opportunities to partner the SUBWAY® brand, please contact Caroline Thomson on 02894 452420, email [Thomson.c@subway.co.uk](mailto:Thomson.c@subway.co.uk) or call SUBWAY® UK and Ireland on 0800 085 5058 (UK) or 1800 413 076 (Republic of Ireland) or visit [www.subway.co.uk/property](http://www.subway.co.uk/property)



# NEWLY APPOINTED ENVIRONMENT MINISTER MARK H DURKAN MLA, SETS OUT HIS PRIORITIES FOR READERS OF THE RETAILER

As the new Environment Minister, I want to build on the sterling work done by my predecessor Alex Attwood. He made a lot of big planning decisions which benefited the independent retail sector and put in town before out of town.

DOE has an important role in helping the retail sector. Many of the big 'Article 31' planning decisions will involve retail. Not all decisions I make though, will please your members. That goes with the turf of decision making. But fairness, based on reason, with decisions taken as speedily as possible, will be at the core and to the fore of my work as Minister.

The Environment portfolio is wide ranging. I come to it though with a clear vision-a better environment, a stronger economy.

Many of our Planning Policy Statements help to provide jobs. We have through a multitude of these Statements. I will bring simplicity. I will produce a single Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS). Within it, I am determined to bring forward a new updated Retail Planning Policy. I am pushing for the draft SPPS to be published for public consultation by the end of this year. I would encourage your members to read and respond to it.

We need to bring planning power closer to people. Through local government reform, some planning, urban regeneration, local economic development and tourism functions will transfer to District Councils. This will put sharper focus on developing the economy in local areas. Local people making decisions. Local people influencing decisions. Councils should also have a strengthened role in ensuring that the local investment climate fits the needs of local businesses; supporting small and medium size enterprises, encouraging the formation of new businesses, attracting external investment and

generally supporting the growth of business in their local areas.

A stronger economy but not at the expense of the environment. Rather, in tandem with it. I believe prosperity and well being can, and will be, created through the environment and our heritage excellence.

We are blessed with much splendour where we live. It needs protected and enhanced. I commend the way in which your members embraced the new carrier bag levy, helping to rid our streets and countryside of this unnecessary, unsightly litter, preventing it going to landfill.

I recently launched the first ever systematic survey into the litter polluting our shorelines. I will tackle it with a joined up

approach through our Marine Litter Strategy, combining education and enforcement, working in partnership with councils and communities.

I will be tough on fuel laundering and waste crime. I will not tolerate criminals draining our economy, polluting our rivers.

Making the environment relevant to young people will be a key priority for me. I want to increase the number of eco schools, children influencing adults to re-use, reduce, recycle and bin properly.





the wall or else rationalising their shop portfolio as their leases run out, leaving gaps in our High Street. As we move out beyond the core shopping areas there is also an increasing surplus of secondary space, much of which is no longer fit for its former purpose.

As Finance Minister I have responsibility for business rates and I am determined to do what I can to help create a business environment that encourages local enterprise. While business rates are an important source of revenue for the Executive I believe that we have also been successful in targeting rate relief where it is most needed to help establish the right conditions for business success when combined with other initiatives. Indeed in terms of business rates the Executive has already shown that it is prepared to take steps, many of which have 'led the way in the UK' in tackling a range of issues and NIIRTA can take considerable credit for presenting the case, on behalf of the business community, for many of these initiatives.

## NEWLY APPOINTED FINANCE MINISTER SIMON HAMILTON SETS OUT HIS PRIORITIES

In the current Programme for Government the Northern Ireland Executive has made it clear that its number one priority is 'Growing the Economy'. In taking this work forward we need to ensure that our towns and cities support and contribute to the economic and social well being of the region as a whole. Thriving town and city centres are not merely a measure of effective economic performance. They also serve to bind us together as citizens of Northern Ireland as they represent true shared space for all parts of our community and of course they provide an attractive destination for visitors.

Our independent traders have been at the sharp end of social and economic

changes that are occurring at an increasing pace. The retail sector in particular has been transformed in recent years by the growing dominance of 'mega stores' and also the growth of multi channel retailing, notably internet shopping. That change, combined with the continued downturn, is leading to the disappearance of many traditional shops, which are now lying empty or else occupied by charities. The slowdown in retail spending is compounding the effects of long term, fundamental shifts in how, where and even when we shop.

The private investment bubble of the mid-noughties has made the fall even more dramatic with many towns being faced with household names going to

First there is the growing issue of empty retail units. My Department introduced a new scheme last year to provide a rate concession for new businesses occupying long term empty shops. In doing so the measure pre-empted the Portas review outcomes which were published after we announced the Northern Ireland scheme. Initially introduced for one year, the scheme has now been extended until the end of the budget period and has also been adopted by the Scottish Government with the Welsh following suit. Since the scheme began about 150 new ventures have started up in these long term empty shops, taking advantage of a 50% discount on their rates in the first year of trading. There is also the recent scheme that allows the window displays in empty shops to be used for non commercial purposes, without triggering full rate liability, thus helping to enhance the appearance of our shopping streets.

More than 50% of business ratepayers in Northern Ireland now receive some



form of relief through the rating system. Almost 25,000 business premises get at least 20% small business rate relief, part paid for by the large retail levy. Furthermore that scheme is now better targeted, as it excludes ratepayers with multiple premises and those entitled to other relief such as industrial derating. The savings generated have been recycled into the scheme, to the advantage of more of our local traders. In addition to this the regional rate here in Northern Ireland has been frozen in real terms throughout the budget period. I believe that the range of measures we have in place are the right mix of policies that put business needs to the fore, while recognising that rates are there to help pay for essential public services and investment in infrastructure and so there are limits to what we can do.

Another issue is the current distribution of the rating burden amongst business ratepayers. My Department, through Land and Property Services, is in the process of delivering a full non-domestic Rates Revaluation which will take effect in April 2015 and this will restore greater fairness in how the business rates burden is shared amongst ratepayers. This decision was made in response to calls from the business community and it was taken despite the decision to postpone elsewhere in the UK. The last revaluation of business properties in Northern Ireland was in 2003 and was based on 2001 rental values. Nevertheless, this exercise will be highly challenging due to the state of the rental market, which is still quite erratic due to the continued presence of many distressed lettings and unusual letting deals.

Since this announcement was made, however, there has been a lot of public misunderstanding about what it will mean for business ratepayers. Many business ratepayers are under the mistaken impression that reductions in rents since the downturn will lead to corresponding reductions in rate bills. This is not necessarily the case. Even when values decline, the Executive and district councils still need to raise the same amount of money to pay for public services, so everyone cannot be a winner. Far from it. As with every Revaluation exercise, there will be

winners and losers and many will not find their bills changing much.

Changing the rating system or reducing everyone's rates will not save our town and city centres. Those that move with the times by responding to rapidly changing consumer tastes and preferences will do best, especially those that embrace the opportunities presented by creative use of the internet and mobile technology. However, as I am sure it is obvious to all independent traders, a 'one size fits all' solution will not be effective. Diversification will work for some destinations, developing a niche market will work for others. The traditional role of town centres is changing forever and for some, a diminished retail function is inevitable. Whatever the solution, those that don't adapt and evolve will find themselves in a spiral of decline.

Other Departments are also playing their part. The Department for Social Development (DSD) leads on urban regeneration policy in Northern Ireland placing a key focus on town and city centres. Their work aims to create places where people want to spend time, ensuring that the High Street is the hub of the community; places where people want to

invest their time and money and even work and live there.

DSD is also taking forward new policies that will allow private enterprise to seize opportunities and fulfil the potential of our town centres with the introduction of Business Improvement Districts and opening them up through pavement café licensing. The legislation to allow this will be in place very soon.

Independent retailers have a key role to play in meeting this challenge but the Executive recognises that they cannot do this on their own. The Executive is deeply committed, as am I, to creating the right conditions for Northern Ireland to emerge from the downturn into sustained recovery and in doing so rebalance, and reposition our economy, a key element of which includes support for our town centres and the diversification of our retail product.

Independent traders lie at the heart of this revival. With private enterprise and government working in tandem we can focus our efforts on developing a sustainable and successful future for independent trading in Northern Ireland.





# CROSS GROUP AND NUALIGHT WIN EUROPE'S FIRST CONVENIENCE SECTOR LED RETROFIT PROGRAMME

## OVER 130 STORES ACROSS NORTHERN IRELAND AND SCOTLAND

In a landmark project for LED lighting in the convenience sector, over 130 stores in Northern Ireland and Scotland are converting their fluorescent lighting to Nualight's Blaze LED fixture. This is the first major LED retrofit in the convenience sector in Europe and represents a turning point for the retail industry in its journey to sustainability. The project is a result of the partnership between Cross Group (specialists in refrigeration and air-conditioning) and Nualight (specialists in LED lighting for food retail).

The Nualight Blaze fitting was selected after a competitive tender process to source the best LED lighting system for the stores. Cross Group, is the exclusive distributor of Nualight LED fixtures in Ireland and the UK.

The maintenance-free Blaze fitting delivers 67% energy savings, five times longer life than traditional fluorescent lamps, superb colour vibrancy, and a unique optical design for a bright and natural ambience. The Blaze is designed and manufactured in Europe by Nualight, and comes with a

complimentary range of LED spot lights for enhancement and accent lighting.

For a typical convenience store, annual savings of ca. £3,500 can be achieved in energy, bulbs and maintenance over each year of the 8.5 year average lifetime of the installation (based on 16-hr operation per day). This makes real business sense, particularly when the "refresh effect" is factored in. Upgrading old fluorescent fixtures to Blaze gives each store an instant facelift, making stores feel fresher, brighter and more modern.

Joe Conway, Commercial Director, Cross Group, said: "In what is the first convenience store LED retrofit roll-out in Europe, we are delighted to have fought off very stiff competition to land this deal. The Cross Group - Nualight partnership strives to offer lighting flexibility, vibrant colour displays and lower costs to retailers. The Nualight Blaze fitting brings this to a new level, creating a bright and fresh atmosphere, so that the stores feel as if they have been completely refreshed. Blaze is a unique solution with a distinctive

aesthetic, and optical design developed specifically for minimal glare and very high energy-efficiency."

The Cross Group is currently engaged in a wide range of LED retrofit projects across Northern Ireland and the UK, with special emphasis on retail supermarkets, car parks, warehousing and commercial buildings. Cross Group is a Carbon Trust "Accredited Company" and hold ISO 9001 quality standard.

For further information please contact the Cross Group on 02837 526090.

### Editor's Note:

Nualight is a global leader in LED food retail lighting with 65% market share in UK & Ireland.

The Cross Group is a diversified, dynamic group of companies with interests in a number of sectors. The core of the business is founded in commercial and industrial refrigeration and air conditioning, with energy efficient technologies playing an increasing role.





Photo: Prof. Meghan O'Sullivan, Pubs of Ulster CEO Colin Neill, Dr. Richard Haass & NIIRTA CEO Glyn Roberts

# PUBS OF ULSTER & NIIRTA MEET WITH HAASS

The Chief Executives of Pubs of Ulster and the Northern Ireland Independent Retail Trade Association recently met with Dr Richard Haass and Professor Meghan O'Sullivan.

In a joint statement, Colin Neill, Chief Executive of Pubs of Ulster and Glyn Roberts, Chief Executive of Northern Ireland Independent Retail Trade Association (NIIRTA) said:

"We welcome the opportunity to meet with Dr Richard Haass and Professor O'Sullivan and we are encouraged to hear of the support they have for the hospitality and retail sectors in Northern Ireland. We asked Dr. Haass to continue to back us to help boost confidence and let people know that Northern Ireland is very much open for business."

"Resolving issues around the past, parades, flags and identity are essential if we are to move our economy forward"

"Divided societies are bad for business and will limit the economic potential of Northern Ireland. Economic issues need to be part of these talks and are a critical element of a Shared Future"

"Some of the worst poverty, unemployment and dereliction can be found on both sides of interfaces and we outlined the need for greater investment in those areas as part of wider strategy"

"The bottom line is that most businesses, particularly in the service sector, depend on people coming through the door and this is where the greatest and most immediate support is needed. We need to capitalise on great initiatives such as Backin' Belfast and ensure that one of the key economic drivers of our economy is protected and enhanced."

"The work of Richard Haass and his team

is vitally important because it shows that Northern Ireland is serious about working together and continuing to move forward and must compete as an international tourist destination. Our hospitality and retail sectors are central to making that aspiration a reality.

"Pubs of Ulster and NIIRTA are also working right across the board to make sure that every lever that can be used to create a more sustainable environment for the service sector is being pulled at the NI Executive, Assembly and Westminster level."

"Our focus is on our members, particularly at this time, who are the lifeblood of the towns and cities across Northern Ireland. Many of our town and city centres are shared spaces, where people, shop, socialise, work and increasingly are living and their well-being is essential to vital economic growth".



# BEAT THE FREEZE, URGES NORTHERN IRELAND WATER

*Photo: Sara Venning NI Water, DRD Minister Danny Kennedy, David Fry CBI & Philip Mynes NIIRTA*

NIIRTA has joined with Regional Development Minister, Danny Kennedy MLA and Sara Venning, interim Chief Executive of NI Water, in highlighting the new 'Beat the Freeze' message at the launch of NI Water's Winter Preparations Campaign at Parliament Buildings.

Following on from the successful, 'Two Step Pipe Check' campaign of 2012, the new message reinforces the call to check that businesses are prepared for the cold weather conditions.

Danny Kennedy MLA said: "The cold snap in March of this year, following a relatively mild winter, clearly demonstrates the unpredictability of our weather. It also acts as a reminder of the need for all of us to prepare our properties, now, before winter returns.

"By taking a few simple steps, we can all play our part and help 'Beat the Freeze'.

The advertising campaign will be rolled out through various media outlets including TV, radio, print and billboards. An information leaflet will also be distributed to households in Northern Ireland.

The Minister continued: "Preparation is once again at the very core of NI Water's advisory campaign.

"'Beat the Freeze' is a quick and cost effective approach to help combat the cold weather. Simply take a few minutes to ensure that water pipes are protected and well insulated. If not, then take action now and potentially save money, time and the inconvenience of dealing with a burst pipe."

Interim Chief Executive, Sara Venning, commented: "There are simple procedures the general public can carry out in order to 'Beat the Freeze'. These include knowing where your stop valve is and keeping the contact number of a registered plumber on hand to deal with any bursts on your property.

"The devastation caused by burst pipes cannot be underestimated. Not only can the water cause structural damage to a property, but the lasting damage to a business can be to stock, equipment, storage facilities, etc, that may not be replaceable.

"On a wider scale, if you imagine the impact of thousands of litres of water pouring out of burst water pipes, any water distribution network would struggle to maintain continuity of supply in those circumstances. Insulating your pipework is an essential action to protect your water supply and that of your neighbours."

Glyn Roberts, Chief Executive of NIIRTA, commented: "Independent retailers suffered badly during the major freeze thaw of 2010/11, and while winters since then have been relatively mild, there is no guarantee that this winter will not see a return to those severe conditions, with an attendant economic impact. NIIRTA would encourage business owners to take steps to 'Beat the Freeze' and protect internal water pipes and fittings now to minimise the possibility of disrupted trade later on."

The launch was supported by representatives from a number of organisations, including the Utility

Regulator, CCNI, UFU, Federation of Small Businesses, NIIRTA, CBI among others.

#### Notes to Editors:


NI Water has produced a handy stop valve tag to encourage customers to locate their valve in the event of a burst pipe. Customers can obtain a free tag and other promotional items, including room temperature cards and ice scrappers by phoning our Waterline number 08457440088, emailing or contacting us through Facebook or Twitter. We also have a Customer Care Register which is designed to meet the needs of those requiring extra help or support from the organisation. Joining is simple, customers can phone the Waterline number or obtain further information by visiting our website [www.niwater.com](http://www.niwater.com)

In January 2011 a single burst pipe in a vacant business property lost over 30 million litres of water. This was enough to:

- Supply a family of 4 with water for 137 years
- Fill 15 million kettles
- Make 120 million cups of tea
- You could have 375,000 baths
- You could have 850,000 showers
- Flush a toilet about 3,000,000 times







## Keeping Northern Ireland on the path to a low carbon economy.

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Indeed, in the 17 years since the natural gas industry established itself here Phoenix customers across business, public sector and domestic households, have helped prevent over 3.1 million tonnes of carbon dioxide from entering the atmosphere - equal to removing over 1 million cars from Northern Ireland's roads for a full year.

Into the future, natural gas has an important role, alongside renewable technologies, in helping to further reduce Northern Ireland's carbon footprint as well as continuing to provide a solid foundation for the local economy.

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\*Calls may be recorded or monitored. Calls cost from 3p per minute from a BT landline. Calls from other phone networks may vary.

# JOHNSONS COFFEE – 100YRS OF COFFEE EXCELLENCE

2013 is a landmark year for local company Johnson Brothers (Belfast) Limited. While the fourth generation family owned company celebrated a century in business back in 1993, it can now boast 100 years of local coffee roasting. In fact, Johnsons is Ireland's oldest family owned coffee roasting company.

The business dates back to 1893 when brothers Henry & Robert Johnson imported and sold fine groceries and pharmaceutical products. Their first experience within the coffee market was in 1910 when a sales agency was agreed for a liquid coffee essence branded "KIT", a brand produced by the brother of "CAMP" coffee. After a few successful years, and with the encouragement and advice from the folk at Kit coffee, the Johnson brothers decided to manufacture a product locally.

Consequently, IREL Coffee was launched in 1913. IREL (first four letters of Ireland) was a liquid coffee essence, pre sweetened with added sugar. The product was an immediate success and initial experience and shrewd judgement formed a brand ethos for quality and this transferred across to Irel whole bean and ground coffees which extended the range.

Quality of product was the driving force behind the brand. High grown 100% arabica coffees were sourced from the main coffee producing continents and imported into Belfast for blending and roasting. However, from the very beginning, the Johnson family were aware that quality service did not end at the production stage.

"We realise the responsibility of roasting; we have to father the coffee into every cup" said Robert Johnson in 1916.

As the great depression impacted upon the global economy, DP Johnson, second generation management, developed



sales of the range beyond the hitherto grocery sector into the hotel and cafe outlets of Belfast and beyond, with third generation Michael & Patrick Johnson introducing a vacuum packed coffee tin that allowed the consumer to enjoy fresh coffee long after purchase was introduced, a feature also found on the later form fill oxygen free valve pack – the first of its kind in the UK & Ireland.

With the IREL brand having long been replaced with the "Johnsons" named pack, various blends were sold into grocery and foodservice with the addition of machinery and brand support. However, growth has accelerated greatly during the last 25 years as demand for specialty coffee has grown. Current generation Johnson Brothers, Dermot & Andrew, have developed the brand through four packaging re-designs in recent years. Further, the development of Bellagio Espresso as the number one choice within food outlets and more recently grocery, has seen the volume produced at the Lisburn roasting plant grow.

Today coffees are imported into Lisburn from up to twenty coffee producing regions and relationships have been

developed with individual growers over many decades, all of whom understand the quality demanded for use in Johnsons brands.

However, supply to the hospitality sector is no longer a simple coffee delivery, as group sales director Philip Mills explains;

"We now offer a comprehensive package including filter and espresso brewing equipment, maintenance service, barista training, account sales management and marketing brand support. Sales across Ireland are now complimented by a growing customer base in Scotland, England and the Isle of Man; all customers enjoying the experience derived from 100 years of true excellence in coffee."

Indeed, sales have grown too in far off lands with the original IREL brand being relaunched as an export brand in 2005. This has been sold into various independent grocery chains in the USA, from the Mid West to the Eastern Seaboard, plus the Dubai consumer can now enjoy the Johnsons brand. In 2012 Johnsons Coffee was awarded gold in the Great Taste awards by the Guild of Master Foods.



Where in the world  
does  
**great coffee**  
come from?



**Lisburn.**  
(Really!)

New filter blends from Johnsons Coffee.  
Roasting coffee in Northern Ireland from  
the world's finest beans for over 100 years.

**Johnsons**  
COFFEE

**A WORLD OF COFFEE, LOCALLY ROASTED**

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Email: [sales@johnsonbrothers.co.uk](mailto:sales@johnsonbrothers.co.uk) Web: [www.johnsonscoffee.com](http://www.johnsonscoffee.com)





# THINKING OF A REFIT?

## LOOK NO FURTHER THAN STEPHENS CATERING EQUIPMENT

Stephens Catering Equipment is the country's number one supplier of food service equipment. With over 40 years of experience in the Retail, Hospitality and Industrial sectors, we have seen many changes over the years. We have an established core of 25 manufacturer trained and qualified service engineers who are employed directly and help deliver excellence in everything we do and ensure equipment is working effectively and efficiently throughout the product's life cycle.

We employ our own autocad drawing experts who will work with you to deliver a bespoke kitchen solution designed to be efficient, practical and exceed all current environmental health and safety standards. Our on-site manufacturing fabrication department means we can be totally adaptable. Not only do we manufacture stainless steel benches, tabling and shelving but over the last few years we have grown this department and now offer canopies and bespoke counters with wooden or laminate fronts and corrian or granite tops.

Stephens Catering Equipment has developed strong partnerships with the leading manufacturers in catering equipment in the marketplace today.

From Foster Refrigerator to Rational Combination ovens and Frymaster oil conserving fryers, we supply and install cutting edge equipment into your kitchen. More recently we have seen a huge shift in Energy Efficient Equipment. In a recent big retail fit-out we completed we fitted two Falcon Induction tables, White Efficiency Rational combi ovens, a Hobart's new water saving pot washer and the Frima Vario Cooking Centre which is the world's most efficient upright refrigeration from Foster - it costs less to run than a light bulb!

The move to energy efficient equipment like induction reduces your labour costs and running costs. It will cut down on cooking time, therefore reducing your energy bill and as you are only using the energy when needed, it will reduce the heat in your kitchen. We are an approved supplier of energy saving equipment by the Carbon Trust, so if you are considering replacing an old kitchen or simply upgrading some of your equipment, we can help get you a

Carbon Trust Loan.

Old inefficient equipment is costing you more in running and maintenance costs not to mention labour. Why not consider an upgrade with up to date energy efficient equipment? Give us a call today and we will carry out a free site survey of your kitchen. Let us help to save you money!



**STEPHENS**  
Catering Equipment Co Ltd







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# DISCOUNTED RATES ON CARD PAYMENT ACCEPTANCE FOR MEMBERS

As the number of UK consumers choosing to pay for goods and services using credit and debit cards continues to grow, NIIRTA members are reminded that they can take advantage of discounted rates for credit and debit card acceptance through our preferred partner, First Data Merchant Solutions.

Businesses often don't realise they have a choice in who they choose for their payment acceptance services. 'Many think they have to go to their bank,' said Phil Curtis, Head of First Data Merchant Solutions, 'but this isn't true - banks can usually provide a service but it's not their speciality. At First Data, electronic payments are all we do. We have deep insight into how payments can help businesses grow and offer tools that can help our customers increase their profitability and reduce costs.'

First Data Merchant Solutions is part of the global First Data Corporation which currently enables over six million

merchants to accept card payments around the world.

We are specialists in providing simple, secure and reliable credit and debit card acceptance services, whether you accept cards in person, over the phone or online.

Here are a few things you may not know about First Data:

- Over six million merchants around the world currently use our card acceptance services
- We have UK based call centres and payments experts to advise and support customers
- We serve start ups and small businesses through to some of the most well known high street names in the UK

'We are delighted to be helping NIIRTA members get more value from their card

acceptance,' said Phil. 'It's our goal to make card acceptance simple, secure and reliable for our customers.'

Electronic payments have continued to grow in the UK both online and offline. According to the Merchant Acquiring in Europe 2012 report:

- the average UK business accepting cards in a shop-type environment via a point of sale terminal had 19 card transactions per day in 2010 with a £50 average transaction value – up from £43 in 2001.
- 70% of adults (36.6 million people) used payment cards to purchase goods and service over the internet in 2010

If you'd like to find out more about our discounted credit and debit card acceptance offer through First Data Merchant Solutions, call 0800 652 5808 between 8.30am and 5.30pm Monday to Friday.

Merchant Solutions are provided by FDR Limited, trading as First Data Merchant Solutions, as agents for Bank of Scotland plc, the registering member under the Relevant Card Schemes.



# BANK SURVEY SHOWS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT FOR LOCAL TRADERS

The Northern Ireland independent Retail Trade Association has conducted a telephone survey of 100 of its members on their experiences in Banking.

The survey focused on NIIRTA members' ability to access finance, credit card and overdraft services, the bank branch closure programme and overall customer satisfaction with their banks.

NIIRTA Chief Executive Glyn Roberts said: "This is the first ever survey of the views on banking services from independent retailers across Northern Ireland and shows that a majority of those surveyed are satisfied with the services they receive from local banks"

"This survey will be part of our submission to the House of Commons NI Affairs Committee enquiry and its findings will be discussed with the Finance Minister and in continued engagement with Banks"

"We will be presenting our survey to the NI Affairs Select Committee in November"

**On Accessing Finance**  
 "65% of those who have applied for

finance within the last three years were successful in accessing it, which suggests an improving trend given the difficult trading conditions in the last year"

"However banks still have some way to go in this area as 35% were turned down for finance. We hope that when we repeat this survey next year there will be great improvement shown in this area"

## Bank Over Drafts

"64% of those surveyed have an overdraft with a third of them unhappy as their bank had unilaterally changed the conditions of the overdraft resulting in a negative impact of their business"

## Credit Cards

"62% of those surveyed have a company credit card with only 3% claiming that their bank had altered the contract to the detriment of their business"

## Bank Branch Closures

"Given the recent closure of bank branches, we were keen to see how this had impacted on footfall and spending patterns. While 76% said there has been no impact, 24% said they have been affected. Rural members especially

expressed concern at the greater distances they now had to travel to their local banks to lodge money"

"Along with the Lord Mayor of Belfast we are pressing Banks to adopt a Vacancy Strategy to tackle this issue and to examine options for alternative use for empty buildings"

## Service From Banks

"42% rate the service from their bank as good or excellent, 38% average and 20% below average or poor. The banking sector overall will be happy with this figure and it demonstrates that they have responded to pressure from our members and Government to improve"

## Concluding Glyn Roberts said:

"Overall it appears from our survey of independent retailers, the Banking Sector is making progress in service provision. NIIRTA will continue to engage with our members, Government and banks to ensure that they continue to move in the right direction"

"Banks have a key role to play in investing for recovery and need to learn from their past mistakes and look towards the future"

## NIIRTA WELCOME NI AFFAIRS COMMITTEE BANKING ENQUIRY

The Northern Ireland Independent Retail Trade Association (NIIRTA) has welcomed the NI Affairs Select Committee enquiry into Banking in Northern Ireland.

NIIRTA Chief Executive Glyn Roberts said: "This is a welcome enquiry which we hope will provide solutions about how

we improve access to finance for small traders and ensure we have Banks fit for purpose which play their role in investing for recovery"

"This inquiry must be about learning from past mistakes and looking to the future"

"NIIRTA looks forward to submitting evidence to the Committee"

"We are also keen to hear from any NIIRTA member who has experienced a problem with their Bank. Contact the NIIRTA office on 90220004 or email glyn.roberts@niirta.com"



# NORTHERN IRELAND TRANSPLANT ASSOCIATION

CONTACT@NITRANSPLANT.ORG

HAVE YOU  
SPOKEN TO  
YOUR FAMILY  
ABOUT YOUR  
WISHES?  
TELL THEM  
TODAY!

## WHAT WE DO

The Northern Ireland Transplant Association was formed in 1991 and by January 2011 we had grown from 2 to over 200 members. Our group of volunteers aims to increase support for organ donation and assist those in Northern Ireland who have been affected by organ transplantation. Transplantation raises all sorts of difficult, practical and emotional issues and we exist to complement the information and support of medical staff.

Our group has three primary objectives:

- Increasing Organ Donation through promoting the Organ Donor Register
- Supporting those affected by organ transplantation emotionally
- Raising funds to help provide practical support to affected families



**ERICA FERGUSON**  
**NITA CHAIRPERSON**  
**LIVER RECIPIENT**

Back in 2002 I was a busy working mum leading a relatively normal lifestyle. I kept fit, enjoyed my family and friends. I thought life was great and nothing would ever happen to me. Then on St Valentine's Day I started to feel unwell - the whites of my eyes were a funny colour - yellow actually! I went to the doctor who took one look at me and rushed through emergency blood tests.

The results came back within an hour and they showed my liver blood numbers were in the 4000 which is extremely serious. I was then rushed to the hospital in Belfast where they discovered I was in acute liver failure.

From there I was air lifted to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham. It turned out that a virus had destroyed my liver and I was in need of a liver transplant. I was placed on the super urgent transplant waiting list and the first available liver in Europe had to go to me as I had only 48 hours to live.

It was a traumatic time for me and my family who were at my bedside in Birmingham. I received my transplant 12 hours after being placed on the list which was a miracle! I needed this organ to keep me alive but sadly I suffered a lot of complications as my donor was someone three times my size.

This resulted in me needing another transplant. I was placed back on the transplant list where this time I had to get a perfect match - the organ had to come from someone who was the same blood group, tissue type, size and weight as myself. Amazingly in April 2004 I received my second transplant. My donor was someone who was a perfect match for me. While I have had a few setbacks, I am doing extremely well. If it was not for people like Mary and her beautiful son Padraig I would not be alive today to tell my story.

When I was 3 days old it became apparent that there was a problem with my heart. I had my first surgery at 6 days old and a further operation when I was aged 3. In 1983 when I was 6 years old I had 8 hours of open heart surgery which made a great difference but could not correct my problem.

In 2003 I had a pace maker fitted to support my heart which had deteriorated again and once more we were warned that if my condition worsened only a transplant would save me. In 2006 I had a cardiac arrest and died for 20 minutes. At this stage I had an internal cardiac defibrillator implanted so if my heart stopped again the defibrillator would restart it. It took me a long time to recover from the cardiac arrest and just when I began to feel safe again I managed to contract septicaemia and endocarditis which is an infection of the heart.

Early in 2010 I was airlifted to The Freeman hospital in Newcastle upon Tyne where I was told that my only option was an urgent heart transplant. I had no choice other than to join the waiting list. I had to remain in Newcastle and was told that without a new heart I would never be able to leave the hospital. I couldn't even leave the ward.

Early on 7th July 2010 a nurse told me that a heart had become available. The operation went so well and the heart was such a good match that I was able to be moved from Intensive Care in less than 24 hours. I recovered really well and for the first time in my life I had a normal heart that worked just like anyone else's. In fact everything about me was normal - I could breathe without effort, walk upstairs, climb hills and even go to the gym for the first time in my life. I returned home in September 2010 and was determined to compete in the British Transplant Games which were in Belfast that year. I am proud to say that I won a medal - my first ever sports medal!

I know that my donor was a young male and without him and his incredibly brave family I would have died 3 years ago. I have had the best and healthiest 3 years of my life, I need drugs and check-ups to stay well but now I have a future which I would not have had without my transplant.



**LORRAINE CUMMINGS**  
**NITA MANAGEMENT**  
**HEART RECIPIENT**

**JOIN US ONLINE!**



/NITransplantAssociation



@NITransplants

**WWW.NITRANSPLANT.ORG**



# NIIRTA WELCOMES AGRI-FOOD BOARD REPORT

The Northern Ireland Independent Retail Trade Association (NIIRTA) has welcomed the 'Going For Growth' report recently published by the Agri-Food Board and pledged its support to achieve its recommendations.

NIIRTA Chief Executive Glyn Roberts said:

"NIIRTA welcomes this very comprehensive report and given the majority of our members are food retailers we want to work in partnership with the Agri-Food board to achieve an effective supply chain which can support their ambitious growth targets in sales and employment"

"We need a more effective partnership of retailers, processors, suppliers and farmers to implement the key targets outlined in the report and NIIRTA is committed to playing a constructive role in that process."

*Photo 1: NIIRTA & NRC Meet with DARD Minister Michelle O'Neill MLA on Horsemeat Crisis*

*Photo 2: Glyn Roberts representing NIIRTA at Ulster Farmers Union meeting to discuss Horsemeat Crisis*



**KEVIN COOPER**  
**PHOTOLINE**

**OFFICIAL NIIRTA  
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**PUTTING NIIRTA, YOU AND  
 YOUR BUSINESS IN THE PICTURE**

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 FOR QUOTATIONS AT:  
 PHOTOLINE@SUPANET.COM**







# A SMARTER TOMORROW

To stay ahead in business today – or even just to survive - you have to be ‘smart’. The pace of change has never been greater and keeping up with all of the advances in technology, as well as ‘the day job’, is an almost impossible task. Innovation and knowledge are the keys to success and both will be found at a new business-to-business event, The Smart Business Show, at the Odyssey Arena, Belfast, on 29th & 30th May 2014. This is a new, unique and highly innovative exhibition which will help businesses stay ahead of the competition.

The Smart Business Show is the first of its kind in Ireland and is the brainchild of a small but creative exhibition organising and magazine publishing company based in Saintfield, Co. Down. SelfBuild Ireland Ltd has built up an excellent reputation over more than a decade, running targeted, successful and well organised shows in Belfast, Dublin, Cork and Galway. Its magazine of the same name is a ‘must read’ for architects, self-builders and home improvers.

The Smart Business Show show has four key zones: Smart Money - Smart Start-up, Growth and Management - Smart Information, Communication and Technology - Smart Marketing. Whilst the main show takes up the entire floor of the Odyssey Arena with 120 stands, there are breakout rooms and corporate boxes for exhibitors to entertain clients. There will be a Networking Café in the centre, and a Keynote Theatre for inspirational

business speakers to engage and inform their audience on the latest in business innovation such as 3D printing, The Future of the Workplace and Communication. Each of the four key zones will have their own individual TalkZone as well as Zone Clinics.

Spokesman for the organisers, Brian Corry, said, “Most businesses have completed all of their cost-cutting, downsizing and restructuring. There is a general feeling that the worst of the economic downturn is past and businesses are looking for ways to grow, to bring new ideas forward, find solutions to problems and develop opportunities, both at home and abroad. Achieving this or even just maintaining your market share means keeping up to date with the changes in every area of business life, especially in technology. Things like using social media as a marketing tool, cloud technology, selling online, website advertising and optimisation, digital marketing, big data and more.

All of these provide enormous opportunities for business today but were barely dreamt of ten or even five, years ago. The Smart Business Show is not just about technology; it’s also a business innovation event where visitors can pick up a wide range of ideas in other sectors such as management and HR. For young people, training, recruitment and job opportunities will be addressed with start up advice and a competition for a Dream Smart Job.”



The organisers have already signed up the cream of Northern Ireland’s business organisations as Partners. The list includes the Federation of Small Businesses, the Law Society of Northern Ireland, the Institute of Directors Northern Ireland division, Momentum NI, the Northern Ireland Retail Consortium, Sync NI, Business Network International, Innovation Ulster limited/University of Ulster, the Management and Leadership Network, The Sales Institute of Ireland and the Northern Ireland Independent Retail Trade Association.

Brian commented, “We have so many Partners already confirmed, whose members run into tens of thousands, that we have an assured top quality visitor base. This is an all Ireland event and we are confident that The Smart Business Show will help companies to face the future, fit and able to compete with the best in their market.

Being the best at what you do is the way ahead for everyone, leading ultimately to increased prosperity and employment.”

The Smart Business Show takes place in the Odyssey Arena Belfast on the 29th and 30th of May 2014. See [www.smartbusinessshow.com](http://www.smartbusinessshow.com) for further details.



# The People's Choice



**No.1**  
**Selling Crisp in NI\***

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\*AC Nielsen 2013



A blue-tinted photograph of a landscape with two large wind turbines on the left and right, and a line of trees in the distance. The foreground is a field of tall grass.

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