

Welcome

Welcome Pack for newly arrived citizens.
A basic guide to services in the Strabane District Council Area 2006.

English version



Contents

| | |
|---|-------|
| Welcome | 2 |
| How to access Health Services | 3-4 |
| Housing | 5 |
| Education | 6 |
| Pre-School Education | 7 |
| Employment and Training | 8 |
| Social Security Agency | 9 |
| Strabane District Council | 10 |
| Policing/Victim Support | 11 |
| Driver Vehicle and Licensing (Northern Ireland) | 12 |
| Community Groups and Voluntary Organisations | 13 |
| Foreign Embassies | 14-15 |
| Transport | 16 |
| Finance | 17-18 |
| Emotional Support Services | 19 |
| WHSSB Area | 20 |

Welcome to Strabane District Council Area

We hope you enjoy your stay and find this guide useful. This guide has been prepared to help make your stay more enjoyable.

We would like to thank the following organisations for their input in putting this together:

Western Investing for Health Partnership
Western Health Action Zone
Strabane District Council
Strabane Local Strategy Partnership
Polish Welfare Association
Strabane Ethnic Minorities Support Group
Customised Training Services
Strabane Community Work Programme
Western Health and Social Service Board

Northern Ireland Housing Executive
Department for Employment and Learning
Strabane Association for the Temporary Homeless
McColgans Quality Foods
Foyle Meats
Business in the Community
Strabane Community Safety Partnership

How to access Health Services

In an Emergency call 999

Interpreting services - It is your right to have an interpreter present. Ask a member of staff to organise this.

Medical Card - Your medical card is an essential document, it entitles you to get a whole range of Health Services. You do not have to pay for your medical card.

To apply contact:

Central Services Agency

2 Franklin Street

Belfast BT2 8DQ

Tel: 028 9032 4431

General Practitioner (GP) - Your GP or Family Doctor is responsible for looking after your health needs. By visiting the GP you can access a number of other health services such as, maternity care, mental health and medicines etc. You will need your medical card to register with a GP and can make an appointment by telephone or by visiting the practice.

Your nearest health centres are:

- Riverside Practice, Upper Main St, Strabane Tel: 028 7138 4100
- The Family Practice Upper Main St, Strabane Tel: 028 7138 4118
- Mourneside Health Centre, Ballycolman Ave, Strabane Tel: 028 7138 3737

Out of hours services - To get services when your GP is closed contact Western Urgent care. Tel: 0870 606 2288

Hospitals - Hospitals stay open 24 hours a day and provide a wide range of services including Accident and Emergency and Maternity Services.

Altnagelvin is your local hospital: Tel: 028 7134 5171

Dentist - In order to have dental treatment you first need to register with a dentist, to do this you will need your medical card.

Strabane Health Centre Dental Practice (children only) Tel: 028 7138 4114

Flynn's Dentist, 39, Abercorn Square, Strabane Tel: 028 7188 2240

Paul Brennan Surgery, 30, Bridge St, Strabane Tel: 028 7138 2820

Railway Dental Care, 9, Railway St, Strabane Tel: 028 7138 2750

Robinson's, 5, Castle Place, Strabane, Tel: 028 7138 2875

McEnhill, Edenvale, 1 Eden Terrace, Strabane. Tel: 028 7138 2227

How to access Health Services

Pharmacists/Chemists

Pharmacists (sometimes called Chemists) are experts in medicines and how they work. They play a key role in providing quality healthcare to patients. They dispense your prescriptions, provide a range of services related to specific health issues and can offer advice on healthy living and minor ailments. Working in the community, primary care and hospitals, pharmacists use their clinical expertise together with their practical knowledge to ensure the safe supply and use of medicines by patients and members of the public.

The services that may be available from your Pharmacy are:

- Emergency Contraception
- Truss Fittings
- Incontinence Supplies
- Stoma
- Needle Exchange
- Pregnancy Testing
- Oxygen

They dispense your prescriptions, provide a range of services related to specific health related issues and can advise on minor ailments.

Minor ailments include:

- Bugs and viruses
- Minor injuries
- Tummy troubles
- Women's health
- Skin conditions
- Allergies
- Aches and pains

Children's problems

What charges are there for medicines?

There are a range of medicines available from your pharmacy which can be bought directly. These are usually for minor conditions.

To treat major diseases, medicines need to be prescribed (usually by a doctor). There is a flat rate charge for each medicine prescribed called a prescription charge. The prescription charge as of April 2005 is £6.50 for each item dispensed. Not all people have to pay this prescription charge e.g. patients over 65 years old and under 18 years old. Further information can be obtained at your pharmacy.

Housing

The Northern Ireland Housing Executive is Northern Ireland's regional Housing Authority. If you have queries on housing, you can contact your local Housing Executive Office:

Strabane
PO Box 11
40-46 Railway Road
Strabane
028 7138 2637

What should I do if I feel I am homeless?

If you have no home or are in danger of losing your home you should go to your local *Housing Executive District Office* or the *Homeless Advice Centre* and the Housing Executive will assess your needs. The level of help the Housing Executive can give you depends on whether you are eligible and your particular circumstances. The help may range from advice and assistance, to providing temporary accommodation to permanent accommodation.

Emergency Arrangements: If you become homeless, or are at risk of becoming homeless when Housing Executive offices are closed or during holiday periods, a telephone referral service is available at the numbers listed below.

West Area:
Magherafelt/Cookstown
Tel: 028 9446 8833

Omagh
Tel: 028 8283 3100

Londonderry, Limavady, Strabane
Tel: 028 7134 5171

Strabane Association for the Temporary Homeless
Tel: 028 7138 3098

Dillon Court
Tel: 028 7188 6603

Homeless Advice Centre
Tel: 028 7138 3098

Education

Attendance at Primary school is compulsory for all children in the year when they reach their 5th birthday between the 2nd July one year and 1st July the following year.

For further information contact Cass Advisory Officer for Ethnic Minority Achievement at the NWTC, Tel: 028 7186 1116.

Library Services

It is free to join the library and once you are a member, you can borrow books and use the computers in all libraries in the WELB area with no charge.

You can find out where your local library is and more about what they have to offer at www.ni-libraries.net. Or contact the local library at: Strabane Community Library, Abercorn Square Tel: 028 7188 3686.

Becoming a library member is free, you just need to complete a membership form and bring some identification with your name and local address to one of your local libraries.

Then you can:

- Use computers
- Access a wide range of books
- Read the local newspapers
- Find out information

Pre-School Education

Free Pre-School Places are available in:

- Nursery Schools
- Primary schools with a nursery class
- Voluntary and private playgroups that have pre-school places funded by the Western Education & Library Board Pre-School Advisory Group (PEAG).
- Private day nurseries that have pre-school places funded by PEAG

A child is entitled to ONE free place in a school, playgroup or day nursery.

Many voluntary, private playgroups and private day nurseries may also have fee-paying places available to pre-school children.

Age Qualification

The target group is children who are aged three before 2nd July of the year they start Nursery school.

If there are still places available younger children may be admitted to nursery schools or classes.

Applying For A Place

There is an advice booklet and application form for parents. They can be obtained from a pre-school provider or from Western Education & Library Board.

Up to date advice and applications are available and processed each year between December and January.

For further information, please Tel: 028 8241 1458 or go to www.welbni.org

Surestart

Strabane Surestart is about giving children a better start in life so they will achieve well at school and grow up to be happy. A range of family services including a Community Playgroup, Community Crèche, speech and language programmes for children and parenting support programmes are available at Surestart. You can find out more by contacting them on:

Strabane Surestart
2 Melmount Road
Strabane
Tel: 028 7138 2658

Employment and Training

Do you want to find a job?

Staff at Strabane Job Centre can give you information, advice and support to help you get work.

Job Searching:

We will give you guidance on completing application forms, creating CV's and preparing for interviews.

Education and Training:

If you need some qualifications, training or work experience, there are a wide variety of courses and programmes available. We can identify the best option for you.

Disability Advisory Service:

If you have a disability or your health significantly affects the kind of work you can do, the Disablement Employment Adviser based in this office can provide specialist employment help.

Careers and Guidance Services:

You may benefit by receiving information, advice and guidance from a Career's Adviser, based in this office.

Information leaflets:

Leaflets are available and written in Chinese, Czech, Polish, Portuguese, Lithuanian, Russian, Slovakian. These can be accessed from our website www.delni.gov.uk

Translation Service:

You can access a translation service through our Language Line.

Strabane Jobcentre
23, Upper Main St
Strabane
BT82 8AS
Tel: 028 7138 2332

Strabane Social Security Office
Urney Road
Strabane
BT82 9BX
Tel: 028 7138 1000

Strabane Community Work Programme
Job Assist Centre
Upper Main St
Strabane
BT82 8AR
Tel: 028 7188 3662

Customised Training
Job Assist Centre
Units 11/12/13
5 Main Street
Strabane
Tel: 028 7138 2260

Social Security Agency

National Insurance (NI) Number Processing Centre

The Social Security Agency provides a National Insurance allocation service on behalf of the Inland Revenue.

If you work in the United Kingdom, you must pay National Insurance contributions.

You can apply for a National Insurance Number (NINO) at our National Insurance Number processing centre:

Services Provided by the Agency

- Process applications for National Insurance numbers.
- Carry out 'Evidence of identity' interviews.
- Arrange interpreters if required.
- Allocate National Insurance Numbers

Accessing Our Services

- Telephone the National Insurance Number Processing Centre
- Use the Free phone at any local Jobs and Benefits Office.

Information Point freephone number on 0800 353530

or

Strabane Social Security

Urney Rd, Strabane. Tel: 028 7138 1000

Strabane District Council

Strabane District Council is one of twenty-six local authorities in Northern Ireland, and is made up of sixteen locally elected councillors from the various political parties. You can find out more about the services the Council provides at:

Strabane District Council
47, Derry Rd, Strabane
BT82 8DY
Tel: 028 7138 2204

Strabane District Council is responsible for the delivery of a number of functions. These include:

The Chief Executive's Department - Mr. Philip Faithful CE is the principal advisor to the Council, responsible for implementing Council policies and decisions, the management of the workforce and the delivery of services to the community. The Chief Executive has a strategic responsibility for Economic Development, Corporate Policy and Planning, PR, Strabane 2000, Human Resources, Business Administration and the District Policing Partnership.

Technical Services - Bin collection, skip hire, street cleansing and litter picking, grounds maintenance – play areas and burial grounds, licensing of dogs and entertainment amusement permits and street trading.

Contact: Mr Malcolm Scott Chief Technical Officer

Culture Arts and Leisure - The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure embraces a broad development role for the delivery of high quality services in response to community needs. These include: Access to the countryside, Arts development, Community development, Community Safety, Recreation and Leisure facilities, Museum Services, sports development, Community relations and Tourism

Contact: Mrs Karen Mc Farland Head of Culture Arts and Leisure

Building Control - Responsible for assessing proposed construction work to ensure it meets building regulations, and also work on site as it progresses at certain stages.

Contact: Mr John Stewart Chief Building Control Officer

Environmental Health - Responsible for enforcement of the council's statutory duties with regard to food safety, health and safety at work, pollution control, consumer protection and public health.

Contact: Mr. Paddy Cosgrove Chief Environmental Officer

Policing/Victim Support

Police Service of Northern Ireland

In each police area there is a **Minority Liaison Officer** who will provide a follow up service to any complaint you have made or any incident you may have been involved in. They will explain police powers and procedures to you, and can help you to access other police services. They will ensure that your complaint is being satisfactorily investigated and that you are kept informed of any developments. The service is completely confidential.

Each police station in Northern Ireland has access to the National Interpreter Service by means of dedicated dual handset telephones. Your language will not be a barrier.

If you want to contact the police, the number is: **0845 600 8000**

Victim Support

Victim Support is an organisation, which helps people who are affected by crime. They provide free & confidential support to help you deal with your experience, whether or not you report the crime.

Victim Support
Annsgate House
70/74 Ann Street
Belfast
BT1 4EH
Tel: 028 9024 4039

Foyle Women's Aid is an agency which aims to stop violence against women and children in the Limavady, Derry and Strabane areas: If you require support in relation to Domestic Violence please contact:

24 Pump Street
L'Derry
BT48 6JG
Tel: 028 7128 0060
Fax: 028 7128 0061
Email: info@foylewomensaid.org

Driver Vehicle and Licensing (Northern Ireland)

Driving In Northern Ireland (NI) As A New Resident

All drivers must comply with British minimum age requirements. Generally, these are 17 years for cars and motorcycles, 18 years for medium sized vehicles and 21 years for large lorries and buses. This information is contained on the back page of the DL1 application form (available from most Post Offices, Local Vehicle Licensing Office, Orchard House, 40 Foyle Street, Derry or directly from DVLNI by calling 028 7034 1469).

How To Exchange Your Licence For A Northern Ireland Licence

To exchange your licence for a full NI one, you should complete a DL1 application form (available from most Post Offices, Local Vehicle Licensing Offices or directly from DVLNI by calling 028 7034 1469) and return it to Driver Licensing Division, DVLNI, County Hall, Castlerock Road, Coleraine, BT51 3TB, with your licence and the correct fee if applicable (see DL1 for details).

TV Licence:

Many people do not know that it is a requirement by law to have a TV licence.

Not having a TV licence is a criminal offence in NI, and potentially people could end up in prison.

Even if you are renting from a private landlord, and there is a TV in the property, the tenants are personally responsible for having the TV licence.

You can find out more details on www.tvlicensing.co.uk or Tel: 0870 241 6468

Community Groups and Voluntary Organisations

There are a range of community and voluntary organisations in each area that can provide support. For further information on local community groups please contact either;

Strabane District Council
Mrs Roisin Connolly
Community Support Officer
47, Derry Rd
Strabane
BT82 8DY
Tel: 028 7138 2204
Email: rconnolly@strabaneDC.com

or

Strabane & District Community Network
Mr. Brian O'Brien
23, Main St
Newtownstewart
BT78 4AD
Tel: 028 8166 2588
Email: sdcnetwork@btconnect.com

For details on ethnic minority associations contact:

Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities (NICEM)
3rd Floor
Ascot House
24-31 Shaftesbury Square
Belfast
BT2 7DB
Tel: 028 9023 8645 / 028 9031 9666
Web: www.nicem.org.uk

Faith Communities:

Information on the range of faith communities in Strabane District Council Area is available from:

Community Relations Department, Strabane District Council.
Tel: 028 7138 2204

Foreign Embassies

Chinese Embassy

49-51 Portland Place
London
W1B 1JL

Phone: 020 7299 4049

Embassy of Czech Republic in United Kingdom

26, Kensington Palace Gardens
London
W8 4QY

Phone: +44 20 7243 7913
Fax: +44 20 7727 7939
Web Site: <http://czechembassy.org.uk/>
Email: oeu.london@embassy.mzv.cz

Embassy of Hungary in United Kingdom

35B Eaton Place
London
SW1X 8BY

Phone: 0870 005 6721 or 0207 235 5218
Fax: 020 7823 1348
Web Site: <http://www.huemblon.org.uk>
Email: office@huemblon.org.uk
(Monday - Friday 9.30 a.m. - 12.00 noon)

Consulate General of India, Edinburgh

17 Rutland Square
Edinburgh
EH1 2BB

Phone: +44 131 229 2144
Fax: +44 131 229 2155
Email: indian@consulate.fsnet.co.uk

High Commission of India in London, United Kingdom

India House
Aldwych,
London
WC2B 4NA

Phone: 020 7379 6242 Night line
(operational outside office hours)
Web Site: <http://www.hcilondon.org/>
Email: mailsoction@hicomind.domon.co.uk
*Main switchboard (during office hours):
020 7836 8484 - please ask for the relevant
Department/Person but please note that
Visa enquiries are not entertained on this
number.*

Malaysian High Commission

45 Belgrave Square,
London
SW1X 8QT

Phone: 0870 005 6957

Consulate of Poland in Sheffield, United Kingdom

4 Palmerston Road,
Sheffield
S10 2TE

Phone: Tel and Fax (overseas)
+44 114 276 6513
Web Site:
<http://www.shef.ac.uk/uni/projects/pc>

Foreign Embassies

Embassy of Poland in London, Great Britain

47 Portland Place
London
W1B 1JH

Phone: 020 7580 4324
Web Site: <http://home.btclick.com/polishembassy/>
(Monday - Friday from 8.30 a.m. - 4.30 p.m.)

Embassy of Portugal in London, Great Britain and Northern Ireland

98 Portland Place,
London
W1B 1ET

Fax: 020 7908 7580
Web Site: <http://www.portembassy.gla.ac.uk>
Email: miguel.santos@gulbenkian.org.uk

Embassy for the Russian Federation to the U.K.

5 Kensington Palace Gardens
London
W8 4QS

Phone: +44 171 229 3628, 229 2666, 229 7281
Fax: +44 171 727 8625
Web Site: http://www.russialink.org.uk/embassy/visa_contact.htm#England
Email: dom.harhouse1@harhouse1.demon.co.uk
(Monday - Friday from 9.00 a.m. - 11.30 a.m.)

Embassy of Slovakia

25 Kensington Palace Gardens
London
W8 4QY

Phone: +44 (0) 20 7313 6470, 7243 0803
Fax: +44 (0) 20 7313 6481
Consular and Visa Information / Konzulárne a
vízové informácie: consular@slovakembassy.co.uk
Embassy e-mail: mail@slovakembassy.co.uk

High Commission of South Africa in London, United Kingdom

South Africa House
Trafalgar Square
London
WC2N 5DP

Phone: +44 (0) 20 7451 7299
Fax: +44 (0) 20 7451 7283
Web Site: <http://www.southafricahouse.com>
Email: webdesk@southafricahouse.com

The Consulate General for the Republic of Turkey in UK

Rutland Lodge, Rutland Gardens
Knightsbridge,
London
SW7 1BW

Phone: 020 7591 6900
Fax: 0207 591 6911
Web Site: <http://www.turkconsulate-london.com>
Email: turkishconsulate@btconnect.com
(Monday - Friday 9.00 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.)

Embassy of the Republic of Turkey in London, United Kingdom

43 Belgrave Square
London
SW1X 8PA

Phone: 020 7393 0202
Fax: 020 7393 0066

Transport

Translink is Northern Ireland Regional organisation for public transport. It looks after all public buses and trains in Northern Ireland. You can access information on buses and trains, including timetables at the following website: www.translink.co.uk
Or contact Translink on: 028 9066 6630 or 028 7126 2261

Translink

Foyle Street

Derry

Tel: 028 71262261

Local Airport

City of Derry Airport

Airport Rd, Eglinton BT47 3GY

Tel: 028 7181 0784

Fax: 028 7181 1426

Email: info@cityofderryairport.com

Web: www.cityofderryairport.com

Regional Airport for the North West of Ireland with services to London-Stansted, Glasgow, Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool, Nottingham and Dublin and connections to Europe, North America and worldwide. The Airport is serviced by Translink Service No.143.
(All services operate from Translink depot, Foyle Street Tel: 028 7126 2261)

Airporter.

AIRPORTER is a private coach company located in Derry, Northern Ireland, operating a daily scheduled coach service between Derry and the Belfast airports. Further details are available by contacting:

3 Clarendon Street Lower, Derry

Tel: 028 71 269996

Email: info@airporter.co.uk

www.airporter.co.uk

Northern Ireland Railways (NIR)

Waterside Station

Tel: 028 7134 2228

Operates to Coleraine/Portrush/Ballymena/Antrim/Lisburn/Belfast

A free bus service links both bus and railway stations.

Easilift - Easilift provides community transport to groups in the Strabane including sports, youth, schools, and religious groups. You can contact them on:

Tel: 028 7188 3282

Finance

Post Office
Head Office
Custom House Street
Tel: 08457 223 344
Fax: 028 7126 6986

Melmount Post Office
Melmount Rd
Strabane
Tel: 028 7138 2508

Opening Hours:
Mon 8.30am-5.30pm,
Tues-Fri 9.00am-5.30pm,
Sat 9.00am-12.30pm.

Supervalu
54, Main St
Strabane
Tel: 028 7188 2370

Banks and Building Societies.

Normal banking hours are: Monday-Friday 9.30am-4.30pm

Bank of Ireland
1, Abercorn Square,
Strabane,
Tel: 028 7182 337

Ulster Bank
Abercorn Square,
Strabane
Tel: 028 7138 2259

First Trust Bank
71, Main St,
Strabane
Tel: 0845 600 5925

Alliance & Leicester
Building Society
64, Main St
Strabane
Tel: 028 7138 2690

Northern Bank
66, Main St,
Strabane
Tel: 028 7138 2229

Money Transfers

There are a variety of money transfer services available today that allow you to easily send or transfer money between your own accounts, as well as to others like friends or family.

Typically, money transfer services are able to transfer money anywhere in the country within 24-48 business hours. Money transfers typically cost either a set fee per transfer, or a very small percentage of the overall amount of money being transferred.

Sending money with the Western Union Money TransferSM is a safe way to send money home. This is found in most travel agents in most towns. Using an Agent location, you can send as much money as you'd like, although certain security compliance requirements must be met depending on amount sent.

Citizens Advice Bureau

Citizens Advice Bureau deal with all members of the general public (urban and rural) and specifically with the elderly and infirm, carers, lone parents, the disabled, young people, ethnic minorities and other vulnerable people and groups including those affected by domestic violence, injury and/or criminal damage.

It aims to ensure that individuals do not suffer through ignorance of their rights and responsibilities or of the services available or through an inability to express their needs effectively. To provide a free, impartial, confidential and independent service of information, guidance and support to all.

Regional Office:
Citizens Advice
Regional Office
11 Upper Crescent
Belfast BT7 1NT
Tel. 028 9023 1120
Fax. 028 9023 6522
Email: info@citizensadvice.co.uk
Website: www.citizensadvice.co.uk

Strabane Citizens Advice Bureau
17, Dock St
Strabane
Tel: 028 7138 2665

Emotional Support Services

Samaritans

Samaritans provide free confidential and emotional support to anyone in the community who requires it. For further information contact:

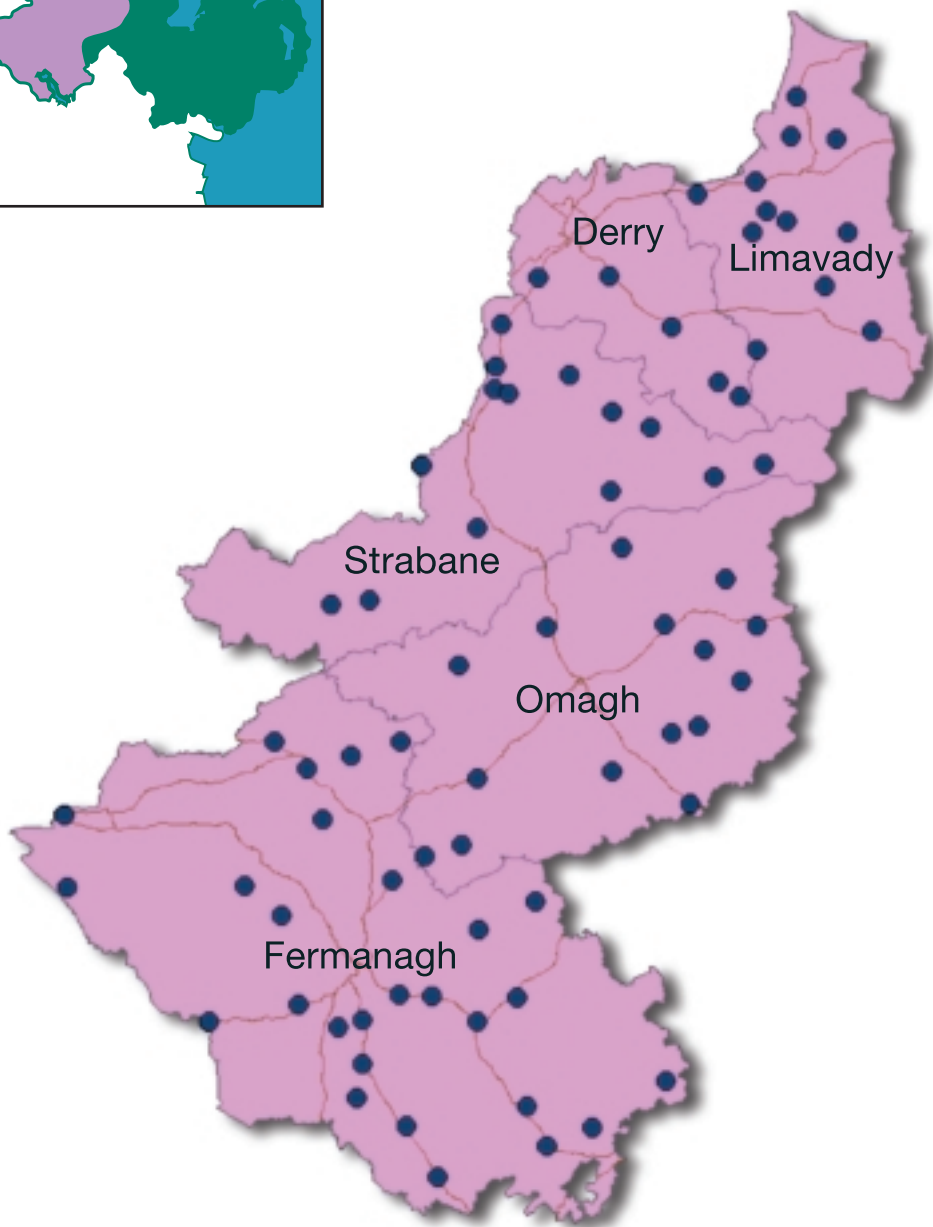
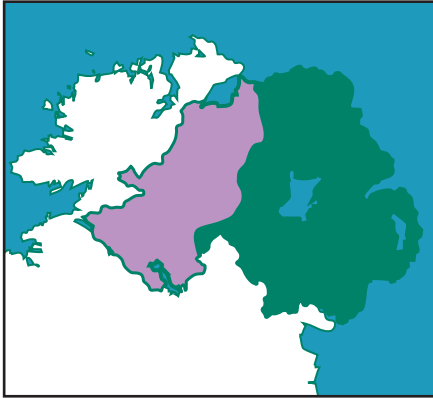
028 8224 4944 (or) 028 7126 5511 (or) 08547 909 090

The Koram Centre:

This group offers caring and counselling, either on the listening ear helpline, or by face-to-face contact. It covers areas such as depression, anxiety, loneliness, bereavement, domestic disputes, abuse and victim/survivor hood.

For further information, Email: koramcentre@btconnect.com or Tel: 028 7188 6181

WHSSB Area



Strabane District Council

47 Derry Road
Co. Tyrone
Northern Ireland
BT82 5DY

Tel: 028 7138 2204

Fax: 028 7138 1348

info@strabanedc.com
www.strabanedc.com

Western IFH

c/o WHSSB
15 Gransha Park
Clooney Road
Londonderry
BT47 6FN

ifhsecretary@whssb.n-i.nhs.uk
www.westernifh.org

