

"To advance and encourage business understanding of the Assembly and the Assembly Members' understanding of business."

# Northern Ireland Assembly and Business Trust **Newsletter**

Issue 9

Spring 2012



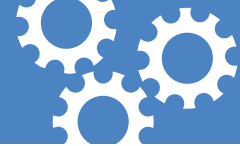
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## Feedback

The NIABT encourages feedback from NIABT members on all things NIABT, e.g. the newsletter and events.

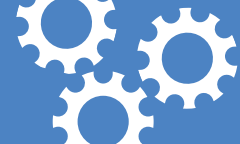




## Chairman's Notes

- I was delighted to be appointed to the role of NIABT Chairman in June 2011 following the retirement of Sean Neeson. Sean, as most of you will know, was Chairman of the NIABT since its inception in 2002 and was instrumental in developing a number of exciting and innovative programmes to promote the NIABT to both MLAs and to existing and prospective business members. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Sean and to wish him the best of luck in his retirement. Sean's shoes will be hard to fill, but I can assure him and members that I intend to continue to build on his good work and to support and develop the NIABT's reach throughout Northern Ireland. As a long standing member of the NIABT Board of Trustees, I have had the opportunity to support the Trust and to engage directly with members and the wider business community. I very much look forward to continuing this work as Chair and to further strengthening existing relationships and cultivating new ones to ensure that the NIABT continues to develop a shared learning and understanding between MLAs and the local business community.
- As well as my appointment as Chair in June, Glyn Roberts, CEO of NIIRTA was appointed Vice-Chair. This is a new position, with the Vice-Chair elected from the business members of the NIABT Board. I look forward to working closely with Glyn in the future.
- In addition to holding events in Parliament Buildings, getting out and about across Northern Ireland, meeting with regional businesses and promoting the work of the Trust has been an important focus for us this year. In September 2011, the NIABT held a procurement seminar in Derry~Londonderry and also took this opportunity to visit Ilex Urban Regeneration Company and Culture Company 2013 to learn more about the work of both organisations and their plans for 2012.
- This year, we also organised for the first time, an education programme at Westminster, where business members and MLAs were given an insight into its workings through a busy programme of meetings and briefings. We are planning to make the Westminster programme an annual visit, as we believe that creating and maintaining links with our MPs is crucial to understanding the processes at Westminster and how legislation shaped there affects businesses here in Northern Ireland.
- Similarly and especially in light of the current economic difficulties in the Eurozone, the NIABT's annual European Programme in Brussels took place in November 2011. This event provided the NIABT delegation with valuable understanding of how the crisis has an impact on the economy in Northern Ireland.
- The popular NIABT breakfast briefings have also continued at pace in 2011 with organisations such as NAMA, the Office of Fair Trading and the Northern Bank on hand to brief members on the issues that are important to the business community.
- 2012 will be an important and indeed pivotal year for Northern Ireland and I hope the same will be true for the NIABT. I trust that that you will continue to work with the Trust this year as we continue our efforts to enhance and grow positive partnerships between local businesses and parliamentarians.





## Events Highlights

### 21 June – Annual General Meeting

Following the election at the NIABT AGM in June 2011, the new Board of Trustees comprises:

- Robin Newton MLA, Chair
- Glyn Roberts, NIIRTA, vice Chair
- Sue Ramsey MLA
- Leslie Cree MBE MLA
- Dominic Bradley MLA
- Chris Lyttle MLA
- David McClarty MLA
- Gareth McGrath, NI Assembly
- John Rooney, Rooney Fish
- Lord Ballyedmond, Norbrook Laboratories
- James Devlin, BT NI
- Katherine McDonald, Stratagem
- Alec McRitchie, Bombardier Aerospace
- Joanne Stuart OBE, Attrus Ltd
- John O'Farrell, NI-ICTU (co-opted)

Following the formalities, the AGM continued with Minister Arlene Foster providing an interesting briefing to members on the way forward for the Northern Ireland economy.



21 June –  
Annual General Meeting



21 June –  
Annual General Meeting



21 June –  
Annual General Meeting



13 September –  
Briefing on the National Asset  
Management Agency

### 13 September – Briefing on the National Asset Management Agency

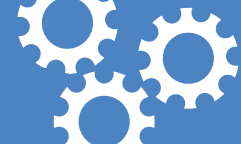
Ronnie Hanna, Head of Credit and Risk at NAMA presented the NIABT with an overview of the work of NAMA and the impact this could have on Northern Ireland.

There was a large turnout from the Northern Ireland business community, all of whom were eager to hear more and ask questions on this very pertinent subject.



13 September –  
Briefing on the National Asset  
Management Agency





## 14/15 September – Westminster Programme

This year for the first time, the NIABT organised a Westminster Education Programme which proved popular with a wide range of parliamentary and business members. The programme provided a thorough introduction on how central government works and how crucially legislation shaped there affects businesses in Northern Ireland.



14/15 September –  
Westminster Programme

During the 2 day programme, the delegates received briefings and were joined by a number of MPs including Ian Paisley Junior MP, Jim Shannon MP, Hugo Swires MP, Sir Alan Haselhurst MP, David Simpson MP and NI Affairs Committee Chairperson Laurence Roberson MP. Laurence provided information from a political perspective, highlighting examples of recent high profile committee reports on Corporation Tax and Airport Tax and answering questions from NIABT Members.

Dr Alasdair McDonnell MP MLA hosted a working dinner at the House of Commons, where discussion took place on a number of business related issues including the importance of ensuring appropriate training for school leavers entering the work force. Lord Ballyedmond and Ian Paisley Junior MP were also in attendance.

On day 2, after a working lunch hosted by Lord Ballyedmond in the House of Lords, during which we were joined by Lord Maginnis, the group embarked on the final part of their programme.

Lord Empey joined Lord Ballyedmond and Lord Maginnis and all three took part in an interesting discussion on the important scrutiny role of the House of Lords. The visit culminated in a tour of the House of Lords with Lord Maginnis, Lord Empey and Lord Ballyedmond providing a unique overview of the history and tradition that exists there.



14/15 September –  
Westminster Programme



14/15 September –  
Westminster Programme



14/15 September –  
Westminster Programme

## 29 September – Derry~Londonderry Procurement seminar

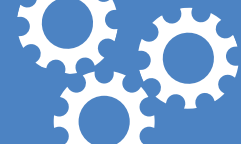
This event was part of a series of public procurement related events being provided in the area and was enhanced by input from Ilex Urban Regeneration Company, Culture Company 2013 and Derry City Council.

John Gibson, Head of Procurement for the Northern Ireland Assembly was joined by Norah Anne Barron, Managing Director of Pi Communications. John and Norah Anne were able to draw on their experiences of public procurement.

Following questions from members, Darren Richardson, a consultant with Core Consultants, provided details of the forthcoming "Successful Tendering" programme, managed by the "Enterprising Derry" project.



29 September – Derry~Londonderry  
Procurement seminar



## 30 September – Ilex and Culture Company 2013 visit

At Ilex Urban Regeneration Company, Chief Executive, Aideen McGinley, gave an interesting presentation on local Regeneration Projects and the company's plans for further regeneration throughout the City.

The group then moved on to visit to the Peace Bridge which gave members the opportunity to see regeneration in action. The impressive structure, which redefines the local cityscape provides both pedestrian and cycle access from the Cityside to the redeveloped Ebrington Site. The former military site at Ebrington, when complete will provide a mix of housing, commercial and retail space.

At Ebrington, Andrew Potter, Business Development Manager with City of Culture, delivered an overview on the work of the organisation and some of the exciting plans in store in the run up to 2013.



30 September – Ilex and Culture Company 2013 visit

## 11 October – Briefing on the global economy

Angela McGowan, Chief Economist with the Northern Bank was the guest speaker at the monthly Northern Ireland Assembly and Business Trust (NIABT) breakfast briefing on 11th October.

Focusing on the current economic crisis, Angela provided a recovery update at global, national and local levels. She noted that economic recovery has been hampered by a number of factors including the escalation of the Euro debt crisis and the current political turmoil in the US.

However, Angela stressed that Northern Ireland has its own unique selling points such as advanced technology which can allow for remote working, particularly useful for growing the Business Services market. Other opportunities such as Northern Ireland's expertise in agriculture and its history of innovation and entrepreneurship could also serve to attract foreign investment.



11 October – Briefing on the global economy

## 17 October – Trustee Dinner with delegation of the Association of South East Asian Ambassadors

On the 17th October, members of the NIABT Board met with a delegation of Ambassadors from the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN Ambassadors). The group were visiting to establish links with the Northern Ireland Assembly and were also keen to meet with local business representatives to gain a better understanding of the Northern Ireland economy.



17 October – Trustee Dinner with delegation of the Association of South East Asian Ambassadors

## 18 October – Culture Company Engagement reception

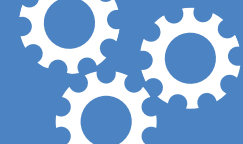
On 18th October, NIABT Chair Robin Newton MLA opened a Corporate and Community Engagement Reception co-hosted by the NIABT and Culture Company 2013. A number of stakeholders, MLAs and representatives from the local business community attended the reception where they received briefings from Junior Minister Martina Anderson MLA, Shona McCarthy, Chief Executive of Culture Company 2013 who gave a Culture Company and City of Culture Programme Update and discussed the Corporate and Community Engagement Strategy.

Colm O'Neill, BT CEO, Principle Partner and Corporate Engagement Champion and Martin Bradley MBE, Chairperson of Culture Company 2013 also addressed members.



18 October – Culture Company Engagement reception





15 November – North/South collaborative opportunities in EU Framework Programme 7



15 November – North/South collaborative opportunities in EU Framework Programme 7



15 November – North/South collaborative opportunities in EU Framework Programme 7



21-24 November – European programme in Brussels

## 15 November – North/South collaborative opportunities in EU Framework Programme 7

Simon Grattan, EU programme co-ordinator of InterTradelreland and Aidan Gough, also of InterTradelreland, presented an overview of North/South collaborative opportunities in EU Framework Programme 7. After the briefing and Q & A concluded, Alban Maginness MLA, Chair of the Enterprise, Trade and Investment (ETI) Committee announced the launch of the Committee's Inquiry into developing the Northern Ireland economy through Innovation, Research and Development.



15 November – North/South collaborative opportunities in EU

## 21-24 November – European programme in Brussels

The Northern Ireland Assembly and Business Trust brought both MLAs and local business representatives together for their annual working visit to Brussels and the important EU institutions.

The visit took place over three days and was designed to help local business leaders find out more about the opportunities for investment and the best way to work with the EU.

The intensive programme began with a talk from the Northern Ireland Executive Office's team on how the Executive's Office can assist businesses and on some of the issues that they are currently dealing with.

An important part of the day was devoted to discussions around funding opportunities and investment strategies that local companies here may be able to take advantage of. The presentations led by Farha Brahmi, EU R&D Liaison Officer and Damian Nicell, Business Development Director Europe resulted in energetic and vigorous discussions about the best way for local companies to increase their presence in Europe.

The final day of the programme featured talks by Dawn Howard from the British Agriculture Bureau and Sean McGuire from the CBI on how Northern Ireland businesses can lobby more effectively. Tim Render from the UK Permanent Representation to the EU then spoke about regional aid and CAP reform--a topic of great interest to those NIABT members involved in agri-business.

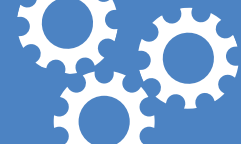
The final piece of business was a meeting with Northern Ireland MEPs to network and talk over some of the presentations that the NIABT members had received.



21-24 November – European programme in Brussels



21-24 November – European programme in Brussels



## 12 December – Christmas reception

This year's NIABT Christmas reception focused on some of the exciting events and initiatives taking place in Northern Ireland in 2012. Guest speakers were Alastair Hamilton from Invest NI and Kathryn Thompson from the NI Tourist Board who spoke about some of the key celebratory events that have been lined up to celebrate the centenary of the Titanic. Members' also heard from Anne McReynolds from the Metropolitan Arts Centre, Northern Ireland's new flagship home for the arts about some of its exciting events and plans for the year ahead.



12 December –  
Christmas reception

## 13 December – Competition Law briefing

The NIABT's December 2011 Breakfast briefing was presented by Kyla Brand and Marcia Poletti from the Office of Fair Trading who delivered a comprehensive and topical presentation on Competition Law. As always the briefing was well attended by members who heard how competition law promotes efficient and effective markets, as well as important information on the risks for companies that are non-compliant.



13 December –  
Competition Law briefing



13 December –  
Competition Law briefing

## 17 January – Confucious Institute briefing

Professor Pól Ó Dochartaigh, MRIA, FRHistS, Dean of the Confucius Institute for Northern Ireland (CINIU), presented an overview on the organisation's work and also led a discussion on the benefits of trade links with China for Northern Ireland businesses.

Although first established in the UK in 2004, the institute has only recently set up a base in Northern Ireland. With over 17 institutes in the UK and two in the Republic of Ireland, the programme aims to create a greater

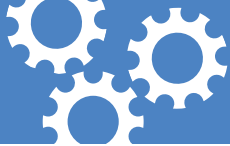
awareness of the Chinese language and culture as well as developing opportunities to develop better trade links with China.

The Confucius Institute at the University of Ulster will work in partnership with the Zhejiang University of Media and Communications in Southeastern China. They will offer a number of tailor made courses to Northern Ireland businesses that want to take that important first step towards growing their business potential in China.



17 January –  
Confucious Institute briefing





## What our Members are Saying...

**We talked to our Business and Parliamentary Members to get a flavour of what the Business Trust means to them.**



*"If we can continue to get the political sector working with the business community via the Business Trust then this will benefit all of our communities."*

**James Devlin, BTNI at the NIABT educational visit to Ilex Urban Regeneration Company and Culture Company 2013 in Derry~Londonderry in September 2011.**



*"The economic analysis provided today by Angela McGowan of the Northern Bank was extremely relevant to all who gathered today for this breakfast event on the global economy."*

**Robin Newton MLA, NIABT Chair at the Angela McGowan global economy briefing in Oct 2011.**



*"Angela McGowan gave us a realistic perspective on where we are globally within the economy."*

**Joanne Stuart, Attrus Ltd at the Angela McGowan global economy briefing in Oct 2011.**



*"I benefitted greatly from Dr Malone's presentation. This is the first time I have had a comprehensive explanation on the construction of the EU and how it all links together."*

**Robert Harkness, Aldebaran Consultants at NIABT European Programme in Brussels in Nov 2011.**



*"The work that the Business Trust is doing is very important in terms of, reaching out to and engaging with the business community."*

**Alban Maginness MLA at NIABT European Programme in Brussels in Nov 2011.**



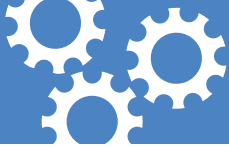
*"The European Programme has been excellent. The speakers have been both knowledgeable and well matched to their subject area and have put their message across in a style that is easy to understand."*

**Robin Newton MLA, NIABT Chair at NIABT European Programme in Brussels in Nov 2011.**



*"When you come here to Brussels you get a sense of how everything operates and it is very useful to be here with representatives from the business sector to hear their perspective."*

**Sue Ramsey MLA at NIABT European Programme in Brussels in Nov 2011.**



## ETI Committee launch Inquiry into Research and Development

The Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment launched an Inquiry into Research and Development via a formal announcement on 10 November 2011. The Committee asked to hear from local businesses about their experiences of developing and getting funding for R&D projects, and from bodies, such as local councils, who have a role to play in developing their local economy. The deadline for writing to the Committee was Friday 16 December 2011.

While recent figures show an increase in spending on R&D, Northern Ireland has one of the lowest spends on R & D compared to other regions in the UK. Government expenditure on R & D is the second lowest of all UK regions and higher education expenditure on research and development is the lowest of all UK regions by a considerable margin.

Committee Chair, Alban Maginness, MLA said: "R & D is important – it allows businesses to grow and expand. The more we put into it the more we stand to gain through developing new and innovative products and services which ultimately lead to commercial success."

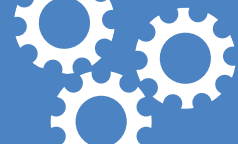
"It is absolutely essential that Northern Ireland maximises its potential to access all available opportunities for R&D support for business. R&D projects that result in commercial success provide important opportunities to grow the economy and to significantly increase the number of jobs in the high-value, high-wage sectors such as biosciences, ICT and engineering."

"The Committee recognises that the current structures within the business and higher education sectors in Northern Ireland make it difficult to access support for R&D. Through our inquiry we hope to understand these issues and identify possible solutions."

"At the end of our inquiry we will produce a report which will highlight to the Assembly and the Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment how important this issue is and what needs to be done to ensure Northern Ireland does not continue to lag behind the rest of Europe."

The latest figures for R&D expenditure in Northern Ireland show an increase in total R&D expenditure, however almost 60% of total R&D expenditure is accounted for by only ten companies; locally owned companies account for only 32% of R&D expenditure and expenditure by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) has fallen and now represents just 10% of companies involved in R&D.





## Launch of NIA Website

### New Assembly ‘Shop Window’ Launched

The new Northern Ireland Assembly website is live! As the window to the work of the Assembly, the website combines ease of use and lots of new features designed to make finding what you want easy and fast. The Assembly has taken people's views on board along the way and it's been designed with the general public in mind.

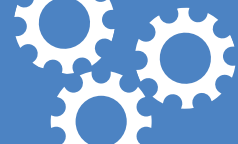
Finding out about Your MLAs is now much easier. If you don't know who your MLAs are you can use our Constituency Map to find out. The new information management system (AIMS) allows you to search for questions that MLAs have asked Ministers – both in the Chamber (oral) or in writing. You can also see the answer they received.

As well as finding out which debates your MLAs took part, we've a great new feature that lets you see how your MLAs voted. This will be available for votes when the House divides. The information will be available shortly after the vote has been counted.

Other new features include an email subscription service to receive alerts when new information is added to the website for the areas you are interested in. What's happening at the Assembly is front and centre on the home page, making it very easy for you to find out what is going on. And all the old favourites are still there too – watching Assembly debates live, RSS feeds for general alerts, details on Committees and their work, and much more.

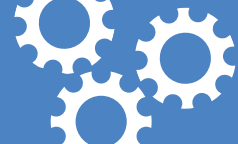
The screenshot shows the Northern Ireland Assembly website homepage. At the top is a blue header with the Assembly logo (a stylized floral emblem) and the text "Northern Ireland Assembly". To the right of the logo is a search bar with a "Search" button and a "Quick Links" dropdown menu. Below the search bar are links for "RSS Feeds", "Online Tour", and "Accessibility". A horizontal navigation bar below the header contains links for "HOME", "ASSEMBLY BUSINESS", "YOUR MLAs", "NEWS AND MEDIA", "VISIT AND LEARNING", and "ABOUT THE ASSEMBLY". The main content area is titled "Now at the Assembly" and features three columns: "Today's Agenda" (stating "There are no diary items scheduled today" with a "View full agenda" link), "Latest" (listing "Order Papers w/c 13.02.2012", "The Official Report", and "All Party Notice - North-South Ministerial Council Agriculture Meeting"), and "Live Coverage" (showing a video of a speaker with a "View Live Coverage" and "View Videos" link). At the bottom, there are three sections: "Visit" (with a photo of the Assembly building), "Assembly Business" (with a photo of the Assembly chamber), and "The AIMS Portal" (with the AIMS logo).





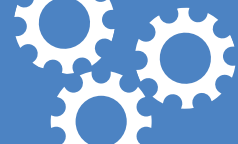
## Complete business membership as of 6 February 2012

- 121 Dietitian
- Action for Children
- Aiken PR Limited
- Aldebaran Consultants Ltd.
- Anderson Spratt Group
- Andras House Ltd
- ANIFPO
- Apple Recruitment
- Arbarr Electronics Ltd
- Aria Property Solutions
- Arup
- ASA Marketing Group
- AsItIs Consulting
- Attrus Ltd
- Axon Power & Control
- B/E Aerospace Ltd
- Belfast Distillery
- Belfast International Airport
- Bombardier Aerospace
- Belfast City Centre Management
- BSX2
- BT NI
- Business Sense NI
- Carecall
- Causeway Chamber
- CB Richard Ellis
- Centre for Competitiveness (NI) Ltd
- Chambré Public Affairs
- CMS Global Ltd
- Cobalt Trinity
- Construction Employers' Federation
- Consular Association of NI
- Core Systems NI Ltd.
- CPC Office Supplies Ltd.
- Culture Company 2013
- DCP
- Deloitte LLP
- Early Years
- eDoc Deposit Ltd
- Electricity Saver Ireland
- Enterprise Equity Firm
- Fabrio Ltd.
- Federation of Small Businesses
- Firmus Energy
- Fitzwilliam Hotel
- Funeral Services NI
- George Dorrian Independent Researcher
- Global Financial Services
- Goldblatt McGuigan
- Guys Home Interiors
- H & J Martin Ltd.
- Habitat for Humanity (NI)
- Harland & Wolff Heavy Industries Ltd
- Hughes McMichael Ltd
- INC Marketing Ltd.
- Interim Selling Solutions
- Island Regeneration Ltd.
- JPR (NI) Ltd.
- JR Consultancy
- John Sisk and Son Ltd.
- Kim Johnston Executive Search Ltd
- La Mon Hotel
- Lafarge Cement Ireland
- Law Society of N.I.
- Legal Island
- Londonderry Chamber of Commerce
- Lumen Financial Planning
- Magowan Tyres (NI) Ltd
- Mallusk Enterprise Park
- Manufacturing Northern Ireland
- McClelland Salter
- MCE Public Relations
- McGimpsey Communications
- McKinty Associates
- Mesh Technology
- Mivan Ltd.
- NB Chartered Marketing
- Next Level Impact
- NI - ICTU
- NI Chamber of Commerce
- NI Food & Drink Association
- NI Independent Retail Trade Association
- NITourist Board
- Norbrook Laboratories
- O'Kane Poultry Ltd.
- Omega Chamber of Commerce
- Ortus
- The Outlet
- PA Consulting
- Paul McAlister Architects
- Precision Gear Company (PGC)
- Priority Press
- QPANI
- Raymond Cullen Demolition
- Rio/Brazil
- Rooney Fish
- Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors
- Royal Mail
- Rural Generation Ltd.
- Sandycove
- Savills (NI) Ltd.
- Select Management and Security Ltd.
- Semta NI
- The Spirit of Enniskillen Trust
- Stakeholder Communications
- Stellar Leadership Ltd.
- Stratagem
- Stredia
- Tennants Textile Colours Ltd.
- Triage Hospitality Ltd.
- Tyrone Timberframes Ltd.
- U105
- Ulster Bank
- Ulster Community Investment Trust
- Ulster Language Services
- Watson and Co Chartered Marketing
- W.H. Nutt & Son
- Whitemountain Quarries
- W Oliver (Exorna) Ltd.
- WJ Law & Co
- Women in Business (NI) Ltd
- Wrightbus Ltd
- Young Enterprise NI



## Events Diary

Date	Time	Event	Venue	Details
28 Feb	5:30pm	Young Directors Networking Event	Parliament Buildings	<p>In partnership with the Young Directors' Forum (IOD), the NIABT is hosting an event to highlight both the role of the Northern Ireland Assembly and the important contribution made by Young Directors.</p> <p>This event will provide an excellent opportunity for the Young Directors' Forum and MLAs to actively engage and to discuss the challenges and opportunities faced in the current economic climate</p>
13 Mar	8:15am	Property market update with CBRE/RICS	Parliament Buildings	Join us at this "Northern Ireland Property Market Outlook" breakfast briefing. This briefing will review activities in various sectors of the property market over the preceding year as well as providing key predictions for the incoming year.
22 Mar	11:00am	Craigavon regional business lunch	Brownlow Community Hub, Brownlow Rd., Craigavon	This NIABT awareness event for non NIABT businesses is being organised in conjunction with Lurgan and Portadown Chambers of Commerce. If you would like to nominate a business from either of these areas to attend, please forward details to the NIABT
22 Mar	7:00pm	Omagh regional business dinner	Silverbirch Hotel, Omagh	This NIABT awareness event for non NIABT businesses is being arranged in conjunction with the Omagh Chambers of Commerce. If you would like to nominate a business from this area to attend, please forward details to the NIABT.
17 Apr	8:15am	Eurozone breakfast briefing with David Phinnemore	Parliament Buildings	At this briefing, Dr Phinnemore will focus on the proposed changes to the Lisbon Treaty which are expected in March 2012, and what likely effect the changes will have in Northern Ireland.
27 Apr	Tbc	Core Systems visit incorporating visit to Hydebank Young Offenders Centre	Core Systems, Glenbank, Crumlin Road, Belfast and Hydebank Young Offenders Centre	<p>Core Systems Ltd, Northern Ireland's most experienced biometric identity management experts will provide a company presentation at their office in Glenbank, Crumlin Road.</p> <p>Members will visit the Young Offenders Centre, Hydebank to see first hand how the electric locking system and the centralised control of locking and biometric access control system work. Members will also visit the enhanced housing unit to see the prisoner secure messaging system that enables offenders to communicate with family and friends.</p>
8 May	8:15am	NICVA Social economy briefing	Parliament Buildings	Details will be available in due course.

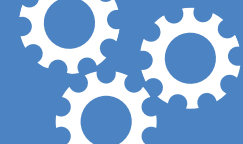


Date	Time	Event	Venue	Details
16 May	7:30am	Balmoral Show business breakfast	Abercorn Suite, King's Hall complex.	This showcase and now annual event on the NIABT calendar will be held on the first day of the Balmoral Show. We will have a briefing from a prominent guest speaker. NIABT business members, MLAs and businesses from the agri-food will be invited.
May/June	tbc	Oireachtas Educational Programme	Dublin	We are still in the initial stages of developing this new and exciting Education Programme which will be open to all NIABT members. Details will be posted on our website in due course.
18 June	5:00pm	Annual General Meeting	Parliament Buildings	The AGM is open to all members. Further details will be provided to members in due course.
12/13 Sep		2 day Westminster Education Programme	Westminster	Following on from our successful visit in 2011, we are pleased to offer members the opportunity to take part in this two day residential educational programme. Details will be posted on our website in due course.
26-29 Nov		4 day Brussels Education Programme	Brussels	Participation in this popular and now annual four day residential educational programme will be available to all NIABT business members and MLAs. Details will be posted on our website in due course.


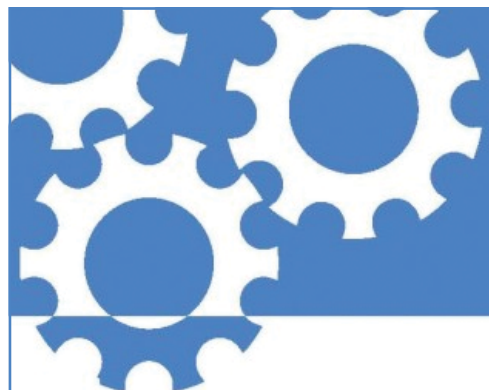
Remember, you too can now follow us on Twitter @NIABT! where we will be providing lots of information on past and upcoming events.

The screenshot shows the Twitter profile for NIABT (@NIABT). The header includes navigation links: Home, @ Connect, # Discover, a search bar, and a user icon. The profile section features the NIABT logo (a gear with 'NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY AND BUSINESS TRUST' text), the name 'NIABT', the handle '@NIABT', and a bio: 'Northern Ireland Assembly and Business Trust - connecting businesses and MLAs Northern Ireland http://www.niabt.org.uk'. To the right, it shows '109 TWEETS', '140 FOLLOWING', and '361 FOLLOWERS'. Below the profile is a 'Tweet to NIABT' section with a text input field containing '@NIABT'. On the left sidebar, there are links for 'Tweets', 'Following', 'Followers', 'Favorites', and 'Lists'. The main content area displays three tweets from NIABT: 
 1. '2 weeks til the next NIABT briefing on social media. Over 40 have confirmed for this Valentine morning event! Still time to register.' (31 Jan)
 2. 'Next NIABT breakfast briefing on 14 Feb on social media. Ciaran Norris, head of Digital at Mindshare will provide the briefing.' (20 Jan)
 3. 'NIABT Diary Date - 14 Feb 8:15am - Social media briefing to be delivered by Ciaran Norris, Head of Digital at Mindshare.' (17 Jan)






Catch up on the latest news on the website [www.niabt.org](http://www.niabt.org)



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Featured Content

### NIABT Focuses on North West Regeneration

The Business Trust visit to the North West included a seminar on public procurement, a briefing from Ilex and a visit to the new Regeneration Bridge

## Welcome to the NIABT website

The Northern Ireland Assembly and Business Trust (NIABT) works to forge links with, and promote the exchange of knowledge and information between, local businesses and parliamentarians in Northern Ireland and in Europe. Open to businesses from all sectors and of all sizes, the NIABT organises activities including breakfast briefings, educational visits, fellowships and seminars and an annual European visit.

NIABT aims:

- to provide Assembly Members (MLAs) with a better insight into how local businesses work, helping them to make informed judgements when reviewing Department policy and legislation relating to the local economy;
- to improve the business community's understanding of how the Assembly and devolution work and how policy and legislation is developed.

Membership gives you:

- opportunities to participate in seminars on industry-related topics;
- a greater insight into how the Northern Ireland Assembly works and how you can get involved;
- links with Europe and the opportunity to learn about how European legislation affects you;
- the opportunity to travel to Europe;
- excellent networking opportunities with other businesses and MLAs

### Latest News

- North/South Collaborative Opportunities in EU FP7
- City of Culture Engagement Reception
- Dinner with the ASEAN Ambassadors
- Northern Bank Briefing to Business Trust Signals Hope for Recovery
- NIABT Focuses on North West Regeneration

### Upcoming Events

- 14 February 2012 – Social Media Breakfast Briefing with Ciaran Norris, Mindshare
- 23 February 2012 – President's Dinner 7:00pm
- 28 February 2012 – Young Directors Networking Event

[View more](#)

### Our tweets

- 2 weeks til the next NIABT briefing on social media. Over 40 have confirmed for this Valentine morning event! Still time to register.  
[1 week ago](#)
- Next NIABT breakfast briefing on 14 Feb on social media. Ciaran Norris, head of Digital at Mindshare will provide the briefing.  
[3 weeks ago](#)

### Contact Us

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Or by telephone ...

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