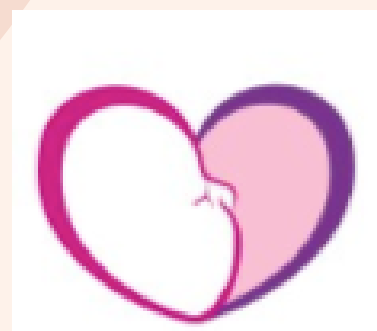


Breastfeeding Welcome Here

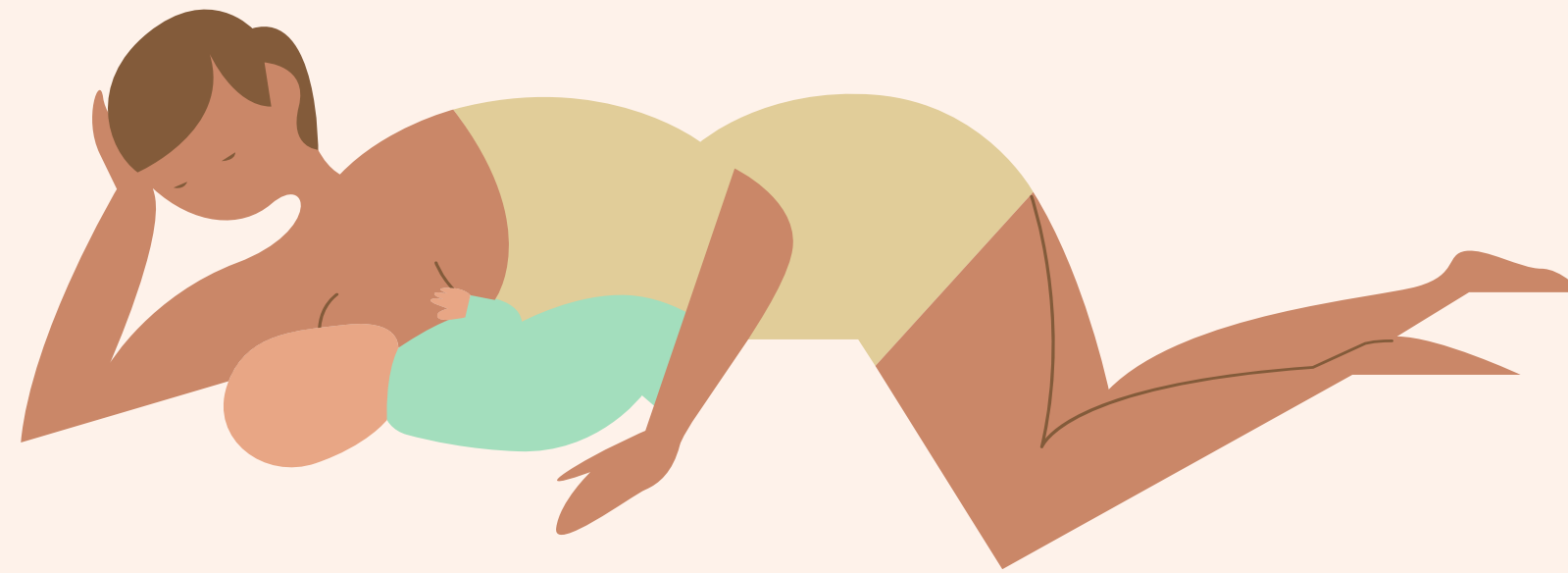
**Supporting Families, Changing Culture and
Building Confidence Across Northern Ireland**

**Dr Louise Hanna
Health and Social Wellbeing Improvement Officer**



Breastfeeding
Good for baby. Good for mum





Why Was The Scheme Needed?

Breastfeeding provides significant health benefits for both mother and baby.

However, many mothers reported:

- Feeling uncomfortable breastfeeding in public
- Fear of negative reactions
- Lack of confidence
- Feeling isolated from community life
- Families told us that public attitudes and environments mattered.

We recognised that supporting breastfeeding could not be the responsibility of healthcare services alone.

Research consistently shows that concerns about breastfeeding in public can influence mothers' confidence and breastfeeding continuation.



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The Beginning Of The Journey

The Breastfeeding Welcome Here Scheme was launched in Northern Ireland in 2005.

The aim was simple:

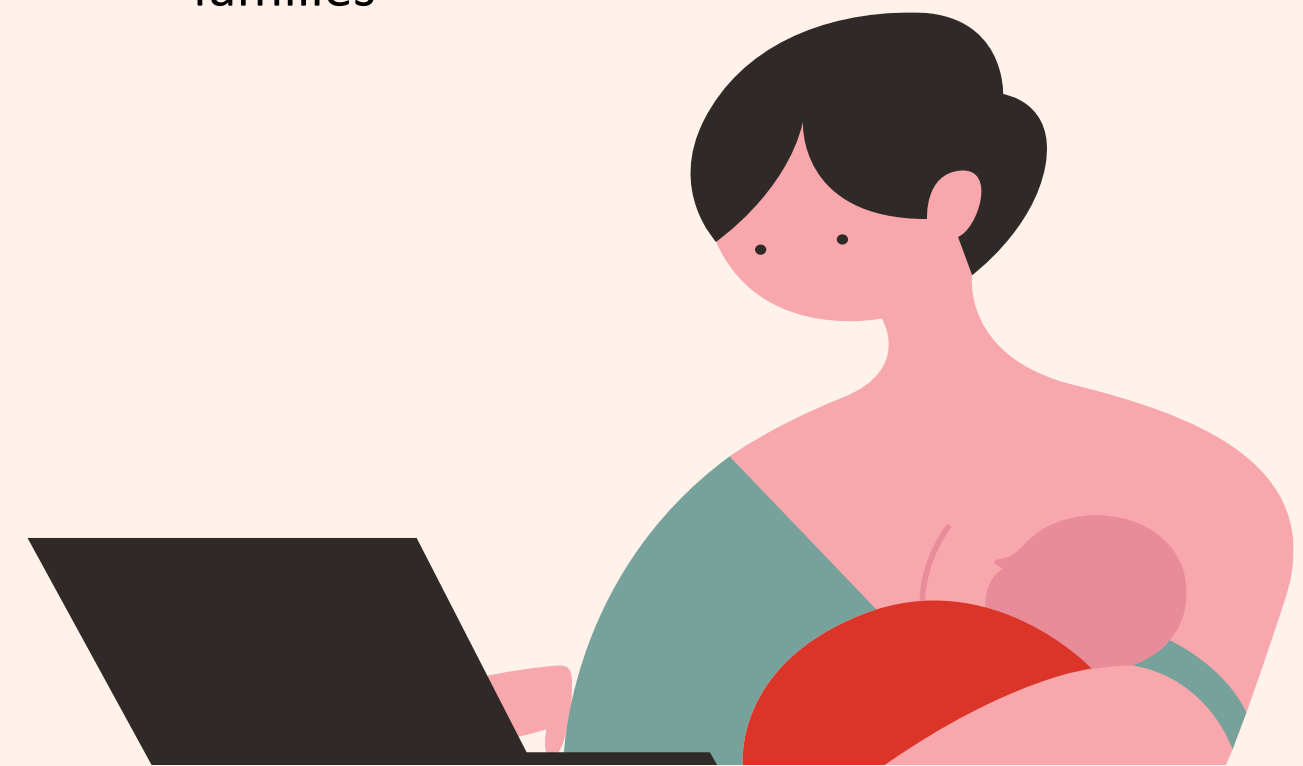
- To create public spaces where mothers felt welcomed, supported and confident breastfeeding their babies.

Participating organisations commit to:

- ✓ Welcoming breastfeeding families
- ✓ Supporting mothers to feed wherever they choose
- ✓ Displaying Breastfeeding Welcome Here signage
- ✓ Creating positive experiences for families



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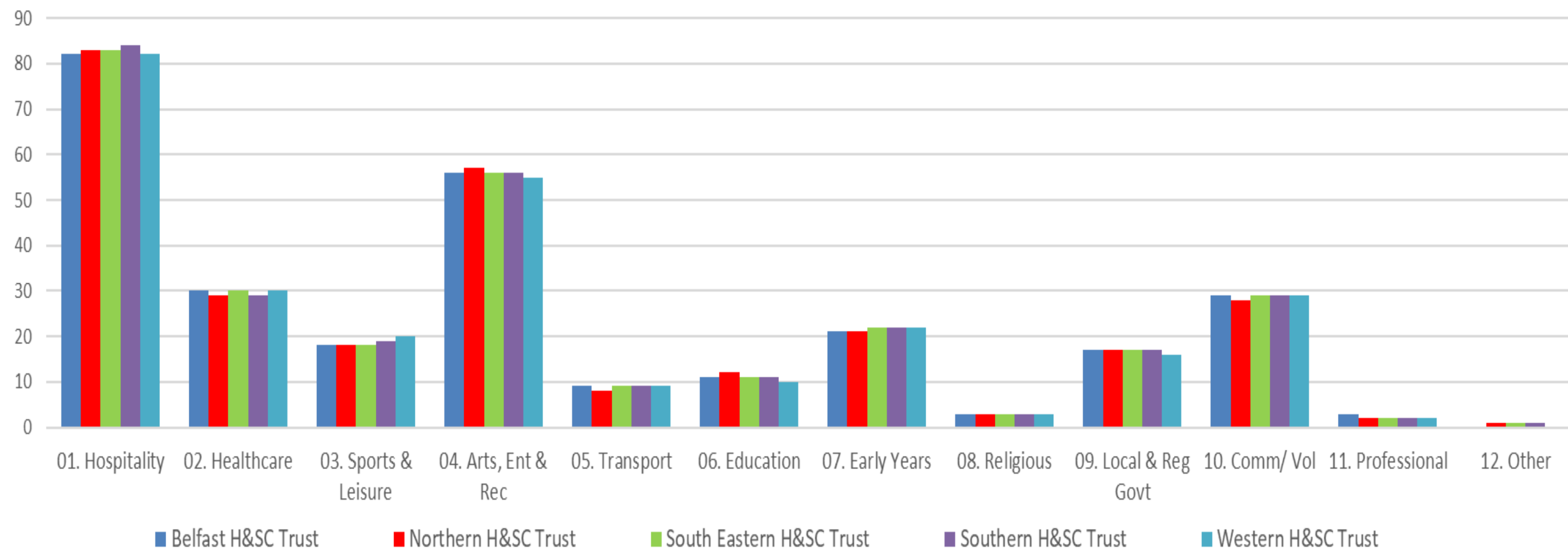
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A Small Idea That Grew

Type and Count of Organisations/Locations by H&SC Trust

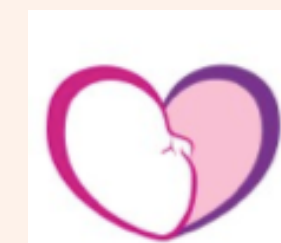
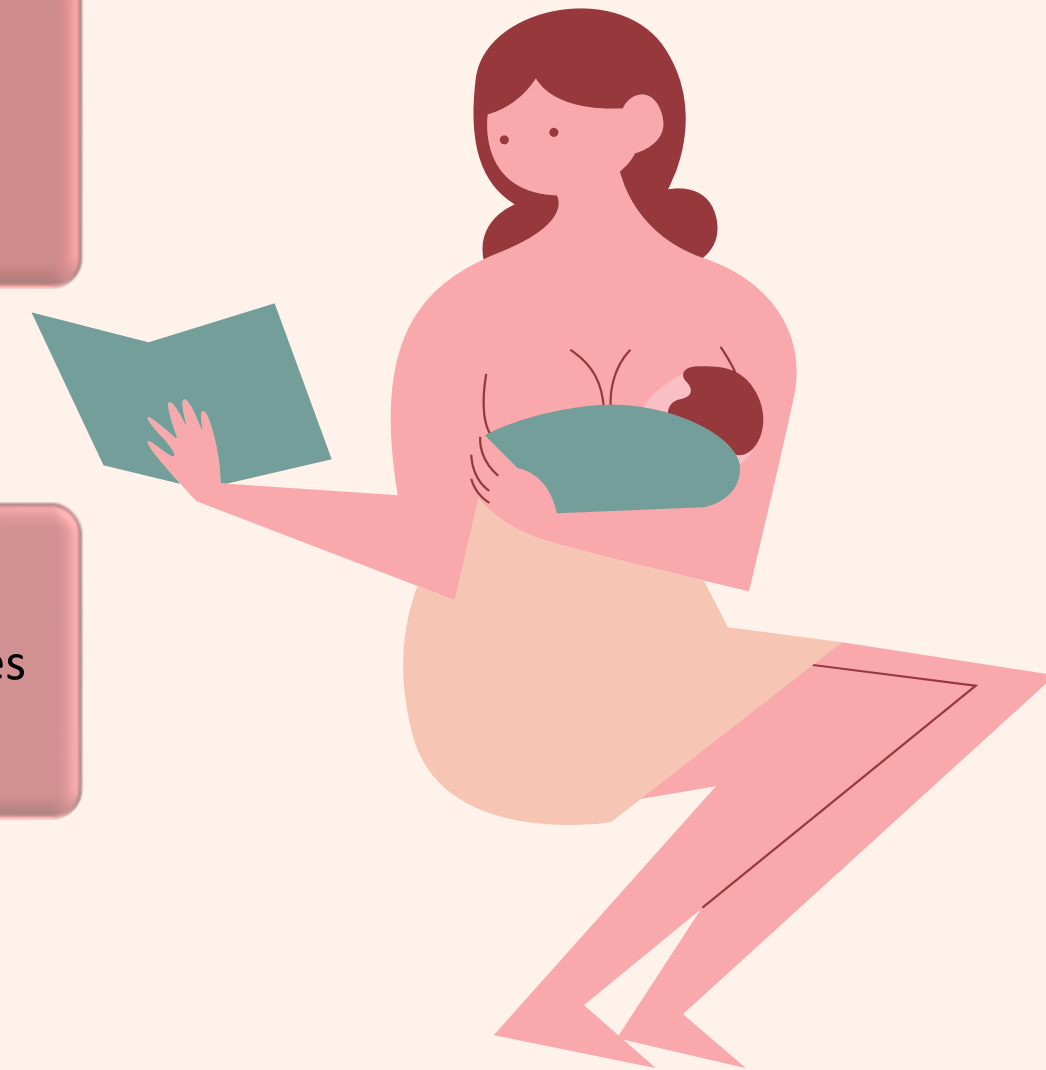
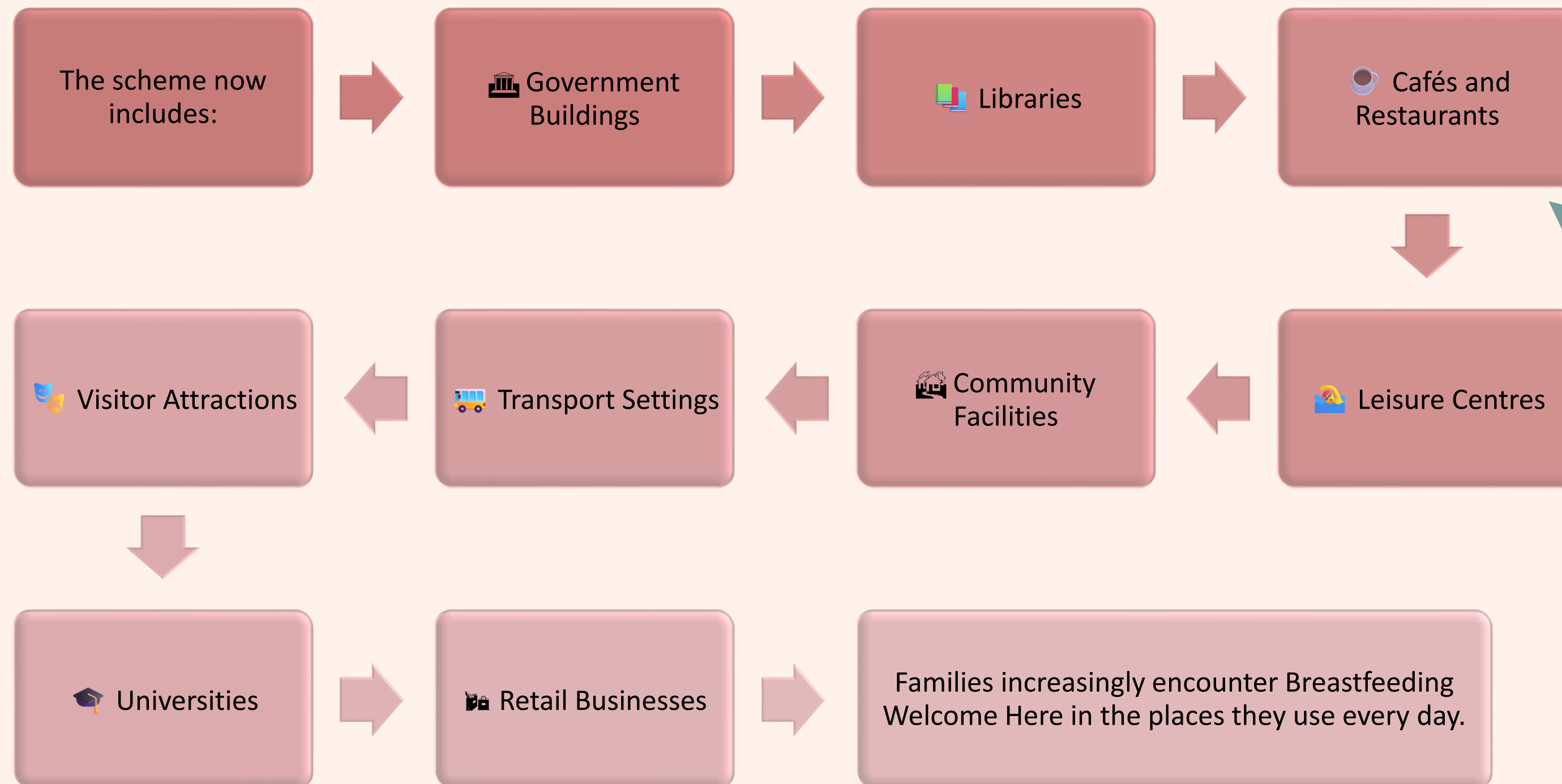


Since 2005 the scheme has continued to expand.

Almost 1,500 organisations and venues now registered across Northern Ireland.

The PHA is currently undertaking a review and refresh of the supporting database to ensure the scheme remains accurate, sustainable and fit for the future.

Where Will You Find Breastfeeding Welcome Here?



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Breastfed Babies Website

What is it?

A helpful online resource that supports breastfeeding families across Northern Ireland.

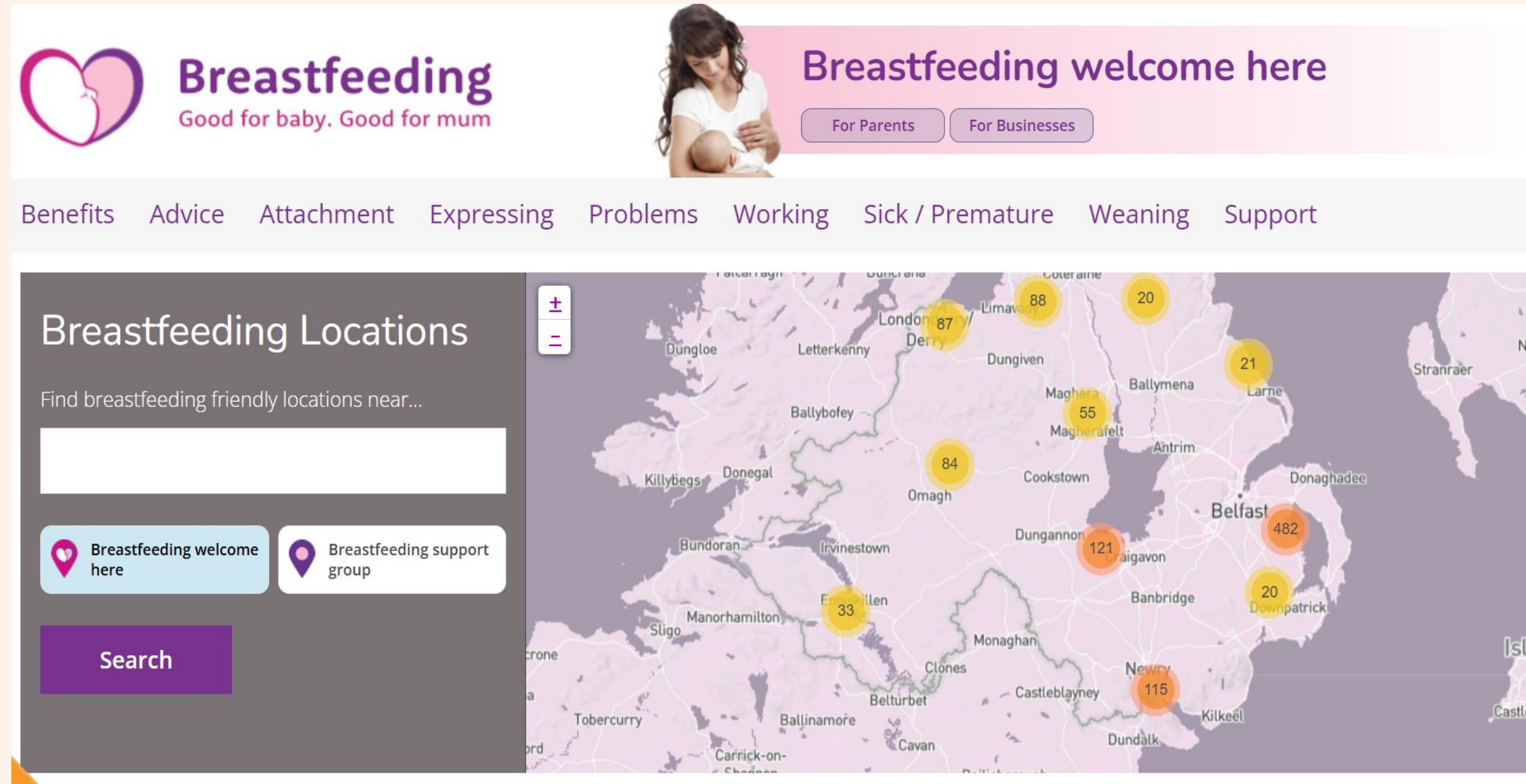
What can you find there?

- A list of breastfeeding-friendly venues and support groups
- Places that welcome and support families
- Advice and information on breastfeeding

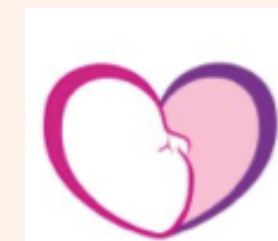
Why is it useful?

It helps parents feel confident about feeding their baby when out and about.

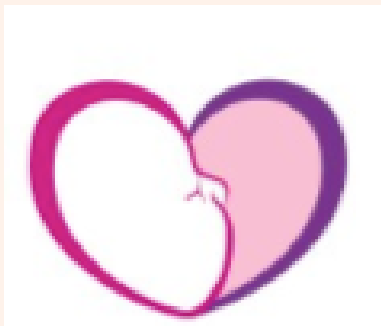
Visit: <https://www.breastfedbabies.org>



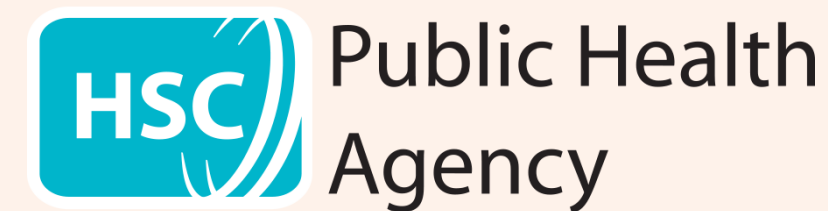
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Partnership Has Been Key

One of the greatest strengths of the scheme has been partnership working.

We have worked alongside:

- Local Government
- Community and Voluntary Sector
- Businesses
- Libraries NI
- Health and Social Care Services
- Family Organisations

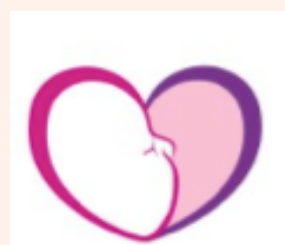
Supporting breastfeeding is not solely a health agenda. It is a community, economic and wellbeing agenda that benefits everyone.

The scheme contributes to wider priorities including:

- ✓ Community Planning Partnerships
- ✓ Health and Wellbeing Improvement agendas
- ✓ Early Years and Starting Well priorities
- ✓ Tackling Health Inequalities
- ✓ Creating Healthy Places and Communities



Spotlight On Local Government



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Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council

Councils influence many of the environments where families live, work and spend their leisure time. Through Community Planning and local health improvement priorities, councils are uniquely placed to champion breastfeeding-friendly communities.

By embedding Breastfeeding Welcome Here within local venues and services, councils have helped:

✓ Increase visibility

✓ Promote inclusion

✓ Build confidence

✓ Support family wellbeing

This is a fantastic example of how partnership working can create real, lasting change — helping to build a community where breastfeeding is visible, supported, and truly welcomed.

Together, this collaborative effort has supported the development of 120 premises across the borough, including 56 council premises, proudly recognised as Breastfeeding Welcome Here spaces.



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Why Organisations Join

**Benefits for
Participating
Organisations:**

Enhances
reputation as
an inclusive
organisation

Supports local
health and
wellbeing
priorities

Contributes to
environmental
sustainability
by supporting
breastfeeding
as a low-waste
infant feeding
option

Demonstrates
commitment
to supporting
families

Creates
welcoming
environments
for customers
and visitors

Encourages
increased
footfall and
repeat visits
from families

What Difference Does It Make?

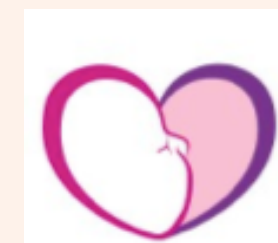
For many mothers, one positive experience can significantly improve confidence and continuation. That matters.

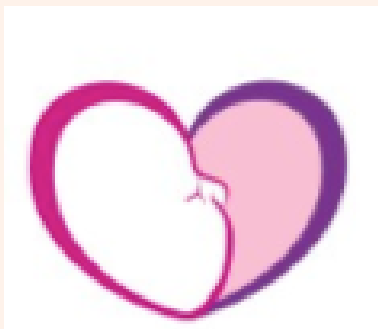
**Almost 1,500 visible
signs of support across
Northern Ireland.**

But the true measure of success is how families feel.

- It is measured in confidence.
- Parents tell us:
 - “Seeing the sign reassured me.”
 - “I felt welcome.”
 - “I didn’t feel judged.”
 - “It gave me confidence to feed my baby.”

A small sign can make a significant difference to how families experience public spaces.



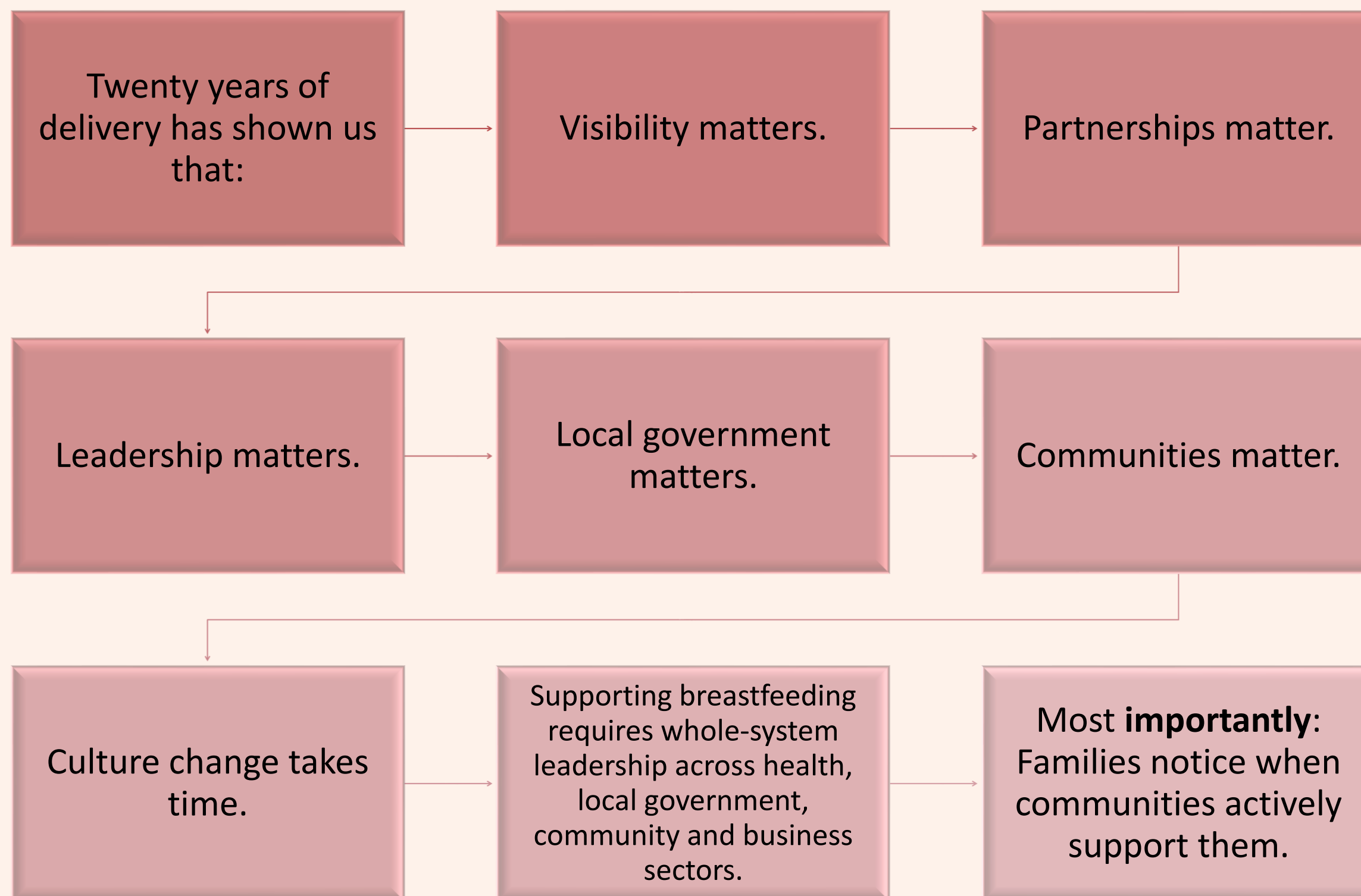


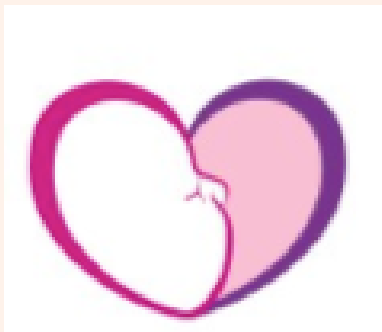
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What Have We Learned?



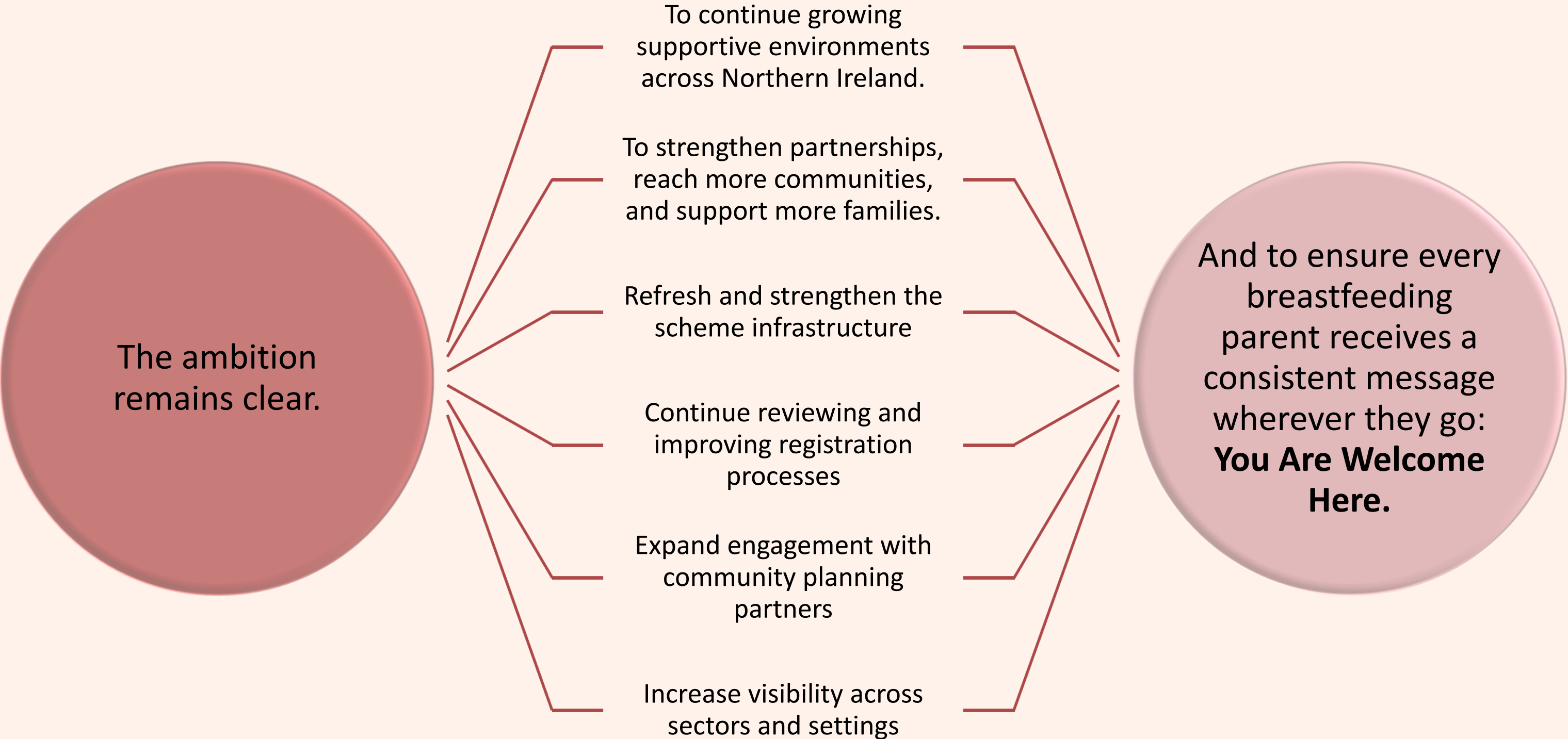


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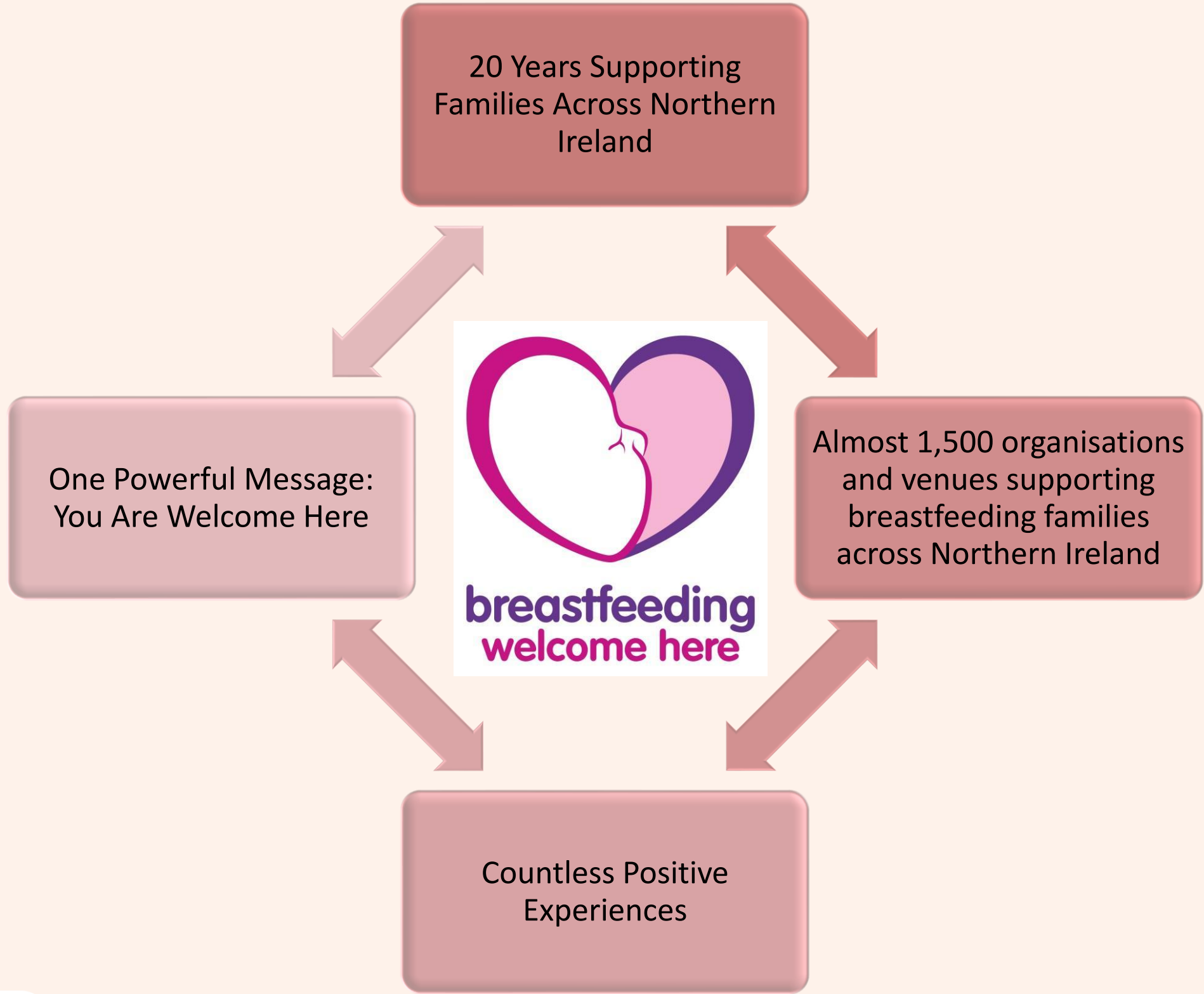


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Looking Ahead



Closing Remarks



Breastfeeding Welcome Here Celebrating Our Success

