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PRINTED BY

PCP,

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Telford

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TF7 4QQ

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Cambridge Magazine,

Winship Road,

Milton, Cambridge,

CB24 6PP

01223 434434

Published by Cambridge Newspapers,
a division of Local World Ltd.
Registered office in England No. 08290481,
One Canada Square,
Canary Wharf, London E14 5AP

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Read the story behind our front cover photograph by Martin Bond on page 131.



Picture: Tony Tweedie



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Word on the street

"If we're being pernickety, Jesus Lane should really be called The College of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Saint John the Evangelist and the glorious Virgin Saint Radegund Lane."

Emma Higginbotham ditches the car to discover the delights of Jesus Lane
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Eating seasonally

Tuck into local and seasonal produce and watch your waistline shrink

Eating seasonally is VERY Italian. Italian cuisine is (our Tine says) the best in Europe



HARD DRIVE

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The Aston Martin DB9 GT is here. Exciting and beautiful

150 GEARS & GADGETS

Our top three washer/driers, plus Modular Tech



Winter greens pan-fried with garlic? Yes please

We can even grow our own
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A listed historic moated manor is our hot property. A cool £2.8m and it's yours

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Earth summit

“ Let's not get too demoralised by one or two politicians who put their own political ambitions ahead of the future of humanity. ”

Craig Bennett, CEO of Friends of the Earth, wants to change the world. Let's help him
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BAGS OF STYLE

There's no mistaking a Cambridge Satchel Company satchel. The shape, the lines and the colours combine seamlessly to make the most lovely of bags and manage to pull off that most tricky of design tricks – a convincing merger between classic and contemporary. Founded in our fair city, the Cambridge Satchel Company is proving so popular that it has opened a second shop here to showcase its bags, on St Mary's Passage. If you have always coveted a Cambridge Satchel then this could be your lucky day...

WIN

A classic 13in satchel in pillar-box red worth £108. To enter this competition simply send an email titled Cambridge Satchel Company Competition, including your name, address and daytime contact telephone number to editorial@cambridge-magazines.co.uk to reach us by Friday, January 15. Usual terms and conditions apply. If you do not want your details used by Cambridge Newspapers, please add 'NO CONTACT'.



UP FRONT

It list. If it's on it, it's in it.

BRIGHT IDEAS

Enjoy the exquisite surroundings of Madingley Hall while stimulating the brain cells and mainlining inspiration. HQ to the University of Cambridge Institute of Continuing Education, the elegant country house is hosting an array of new day school courses for the year ahead (£85, includes tea and coffee and a buffet lunch).

How about The Pre-Raphaelite Dream – Art, Design and Interiors (January 16), One Day One Novel – *Wuthering Heights* (February 28) or Astronomy Days – Rocky Worlds and Gas Giants (March 13)? See the full selection at ice.cam.ac.uk.



MAKE A SPLASH

We like these. A cosy faux sheepskin and fur boot that is completely waterproof seems like a top idea for January. These puddle-friendly booties are made from a suede-look brushed PVC material and lined with the softest and most snuggly of faux fur, making them as comfy as slippers. Choose from three colours and go chase rainbows.



GIVE IT UP

Your old clothes that is. Look – even Benedict Cumberbatch is stripping off (very Mr Darcy-esque) before hot-footing it down to his local TK Maxx where he will leave his unwanted shirt to be sold in Cancer Research shops to help raise money to fund cures and kinder treatments for children, teens and young adults with cancer. Let's join him.

The Give Up Clothes for Good campaign with Cancer Research and TK Maxx launches in February. Get stripping. See details at tkmaxx.com/page/giveupclothes.



Picture: Benedict Cumberbatch shot by Jason Bell for Cancer Research UK Kids & Teens and brands-for-less retailer TK Maxx for its Give Up Clothes for Good campaign



WARM LEATHERETTE

Still feeling flush post-Christmas? Happen to have a classic car stashed away in the garage? We'd like to meet you, but seriously, this is perfect if you tick the two aforementioned boxes. Olivia Tullett is a locally-based designer who works wonders with leather. She can provide a bespoke service – including leather bags and frames for classic cars (price on application) and a range of wallets, passport and card holders that start from £30. Everything is made in England and there's an option of hand-stitched initials to make something pleasingly personal. Lovely ladies' bags too, and a fetching line of sheepskin coats for pooches. See ojtdesigns.com for the full monty.



► The next two Cottenham races are on January 3 (Cambridgeshire Harriers Hunt Club) and February 13 (Cambridge University Draghounds). For details see cottenham-racecourse.co.uk.

GOOD GOING

The running rails are up, the hurdles are at the ready and Cottenham Point to Point is about to welcome the crowds for this year's shiny new fixtures. For anyone not in the know, a point to point is a form of racing over fences for hunting horses and amateur riders. The first point to point, or steeplechase, was run in County Cork more than 250 years ago, when two neighbours challenged each other to race cross country – from one church with a steeple to another – jumping stone walls, ditches and hedges as they tore across the route. Excitement is still on the agenda with horses at full pelt and leaping birch fences that are 4ft 6in high. Go see.





TUDOR PELAGOS

BAKER BROTHERS

STREET TALK

Words: Emma Higginbotham
Pictures: David Johnson

With its science centre, hidden cocktail bar and dazzlingly-decorated church, there's much more to Jesus Lane than meets the eye.

We know what you're thinking. "Jesus Lane? What, the one I drive down to get to Park Street car park? Ooh, there's not much down there..." Well our advice is to ditch the car and take a couple of hours to explore this ancient thoroughfare. Trust us, you'll be (very pleasantly) surprised.

If we're being pernickety, Jesus Lane should really be called The College of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Saint John the Evangelist and the glorious Virgin Saint Radegund Lane. That, fact fans, is the official name of Jesus College (it gets its rather catchier moniker from its chapel). One of Cambridge's wealthiest colleges, Jesus is famous for its sculpture-filled grounds, which you can amble around for free. But please don't try to mount the famous bronze horse – you'll get into terrible trouble with the porters.

Looking for a hidden gem? Then peek inside All Saints' Church and prepare to be wowed, as it's decorated from floor to ceiling with richly-coloured patterns – William Morris himself (yes, he of the wallpaper) was a major contributor. No less impressive is Little Trinity, a glorious Grade I listed house that looks fresh out of a Jane Austen novel. Sadly, it isn't open for a nosey as it's used as accommodation for Jesus grad students. Harrumph.

One landmark that definitely is open for business is 7a Jesus Lane, a neoclassical beauty that's currently home to PizzaExpress – surely the chain's fanciest site. It was originally built in 1863 to house Roman baths, but they weren't popular and closed within a year. The Pitt Club – a men-only University society whose former members include George V, the Cambridge Spies and Eddie Redmayne – then took it over, and still occupies 7a's first floor.

But even if history leaves you cold, it's worth checking out Jesus Lane just for its science centre, patisserie, bike shop, barber and cocktail bar. Best investigate that one when you *haven't* got the car, though.



JESUS LANE





“

I started this seven years ago, when I was 22. I did an economics and finance degree, but I didn't want to go into the City; I was already keen on bikes, and I saw that there was a hole in the market for top-end road bikes. We now do a full range, from £250 to £20,000 – and yes, people do buy them at that price! There are a lot of wealthy people in Cambridge, but they don't boast about it – they're not rocking through town in Lamborghinis.

Stephen Hawkes, director, Primo Cycles

”



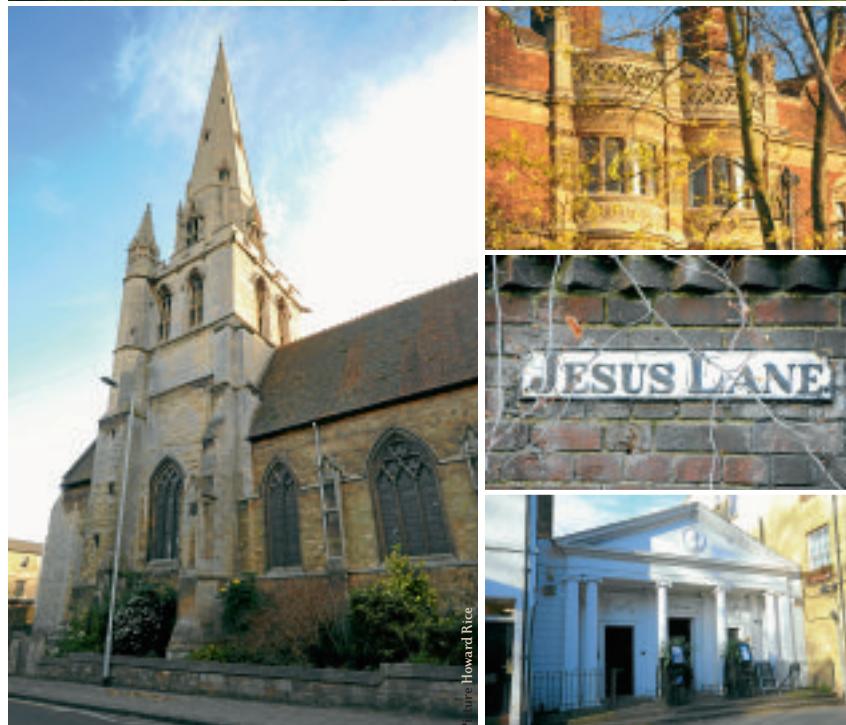


Photo Howard Rice

“
We exhibit in this church for four weeks every year; we've been coming for about 20 years, and we feel like part of the woodwork. I love pattern and surface decoration anyway, so this is such a lovely place to be. For years it was just a black ceiling, and now? It's amazing! The cleaner they get, the more the paintings coming to life.

**Margaret Gardiner, Anglian Potters,
at All Saints' Church**

”





“

Most of our business comes from private bookings – anything from two to 200 people. We have an events room where we do everything from DJ nights to charity events. We're not afraid of trying different things: we've had a wildlife charity with eagle and owl down here, a burlesque club – it's even been turned into a church.

The cocktail lounge next door is open to the public. We pride ourselves on our cocktails: they're the same price as everywhere else, but with more personality and nicer ingredients!

We're number one in the nightlife category across Cambridgeshire on TripAdvisor, which is great. It's because we treat every customer as the most important one we've ever had.

Henry Marino-Hacking, manager, Hidden Rooms

“

People come here to play with science. There are lots of things for kids to do: buttons to press, lights to flash, things to handle – but actually it appeals to all ages. We find that parents think they're bringing their kids, but find out all sorts of stuff themselves. It's a small space, but lots of people spend a good couple of hours here. It's very manageable, not overwhelming – and you always know where your kids are! You get a real sense of people relaxing when they come.

**Zoe Lewin, science communicator,
Cambridge Science Centre**

“



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Craig Bennett CEO of Friends
of the Earth in Cambridge.
Picture: Keith Jones

Green light

Craig Bennett is one of the UK's most respected environmentalists and campaigners. He lives in Cambridge with his wife, the collage artist Emma Bennett. Lisa Millard meets him to talk politics, climate change and family.

Craig Bennett is probably not on any dinner party guest-list for 11 Downing Street. The CEO of environmental campaign group Friends of the Earth pulls no punches when taking politicians to task ("I see politicians here just cutting and pasting old ideology from the US" ... "this Government is completely out of touch") and George Osborne blowing cold over solar energy has invited his ire.

"I've spoken to many business leaders over the past few months who want to see the Government be a lot bolder and cannot understand what Osborne and others in power are doing.

"He's harming British business by being so regressive on this issue and taken us back 10 years. It really is shocking."

While the Government might not welcome Craig's responses to their announcements on, say, solar power or climate change, they could certainly benefit from his analysis, passion, commitment and intelligence. He strikes me as a man who gets things done and is widely acknowledged as one of the UK's most respected environmentalists and campaigners.

We're sitting at the University Grad Café and Craig, who is in his 40s, checks his phone before getting down to business. He talks quickly and without, thankfully, jargon and 'on-message' sentiment. He's told his story quite a lot lately to the national press following his appointment as CEO in April last year; given a platform to comment on Government policy affecting the issues Friends of the Earth and its 350,000-strong membership care about – climate change, fracking, saving bees and creating a low-carbon economy among them – he is

engagingly outspoken but his critique of politicians is tempered by a positive vision and an unerring belief that there can and will be change for good.

"Despite the image of campaigners as people who are often complaining, you can't be a campaigner unless you are an optimist. Campaigners are the first and last people who think change is possible and we never take no for an answer – we always think there are ways to bring the debate back."

Craig, who lives in Cambridge with his wife – the collage artist Emma Bennett – and their two young children, signed-up to Friends of the Earth when he was 14. "I'd been watching *Question Time* on television one night – a bit sad, admittedly – and Jonathon Porritt, the then director of Friends of the Earth, made so much more sense than the politicians. I joined the next day, got involved with my local group soon after and have been with them ever since."

Back then home was Essex. After leaving school Craig studied geography at Reading University where he met and set up a Friends of the Earth group with Emma. A Masters in Nature Conservation at University College London came next before a three-year stint at the Environmental Investigation Agency – a campaigning group that looks at the illegal trade in wildlife.

"I did some undercover investigations with them and it was fascinating. I was travelling all around the world for nine months of the year – it was great in my mid-20s but it wouldn't be so good now. I grew up quite quickly in that role."

In 1998 Friends of the Earth advertised posts in its wildlife team so Craig applied. "It took me three goes to get a job there but I got one in the end," he laughs. "Every time I applied it was for a lower level until finally it reached my lowly level." ▶



Craig Bennett joins local communities awaiting the council's decision on a new opencast coal mine, in Nant Llesg, near Merthyr Tydfil in south Wales, Caerphilly County Council, August 5, 2015.

The council voted unanimously against the application.

Cuckoo bumble bee in flight

Picture: Amelia Collins



► I express my surprise – surely his previous job and experience made him a perfect match for the organisation?

"At Friends of the Earth we're quite lucky because we have a big name and a great reputation so we can demand quite a lot from the people who want to work with us."

He started as an assistant campaigner and, over the next eight and a half years, worked his way up to becoming a senior campaigner running the Corporates and Trade team looking at the impact of companies and global trade on the environment.

"It was a really, really fascinating job. Among other things I got a lot of shareholder activism going and through that route I got to know a lot of chief execs and people in business sustainability roles."

Starting a family brought Craig and Emma to Cambridge in 2005. "Em and I loved living in London but when our first child William was on his way we decided to assess where we wanted to bring children up." Their criteria black-listed M25 suburbia ("which is where I grew up", says Craig) and dormitory towns.

So they visited Cambridge for a long weekend of getting to know the place and some gentle house hunting. The couple saw a house they fancied and made an offer the next day.

"We promised ourselves we wouldn't do that but we just fell in love with the place," says Craig.

A couple of years later, not long after the arrival of their second child, Molly, Craig left Friends of the Earth to work at the Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership at the University. "It seemed the right thing to do. I needed to get some experience of working on these issues from a different perspective. But as I left Friends of the Earth, my gut instinct was I'd be back there someday."

He ran the Corporate Leaders Group on Climate Change on behalf of the Prince of Wales, pulling together senior business leaders in the UK to agree on the policy measures needed from Government to move to a low-carbon economy. "It was business asking for regulation to enable them to scale up investments to low-carbon technologies," he says.

This tone was so surprisingly different to the standard anti-regulation business language of the time, Craig wanted to be part of it and he successfully grew the initiative over the next four years.

"When I started we had about 18 companies signing a letter or two but, by the time of the Copenhagen Climate Talks in 2009, we managed to get 1,000 of the world's companies behind a common two-page statement on why business wanted to see a strong, legally-binding climate deal."

Persuasion is another of Craig's well-honed skills. The statement featured companies from every country in the G20 including China and India, which was politically significant. "It felt like an incredibly useful thing to be doing and it was a real thrill to do it," says Craig, who accompanied the Prince of Wales on many foreign tours and ran round-table meetings between HRH and business leaders to make sure tackling climate change was on the international business agenda.

With so many urgent issues pressing for political attention, has the commitment to climate change initiatives waned?

"I actually don't think it has at all," he says. "This is why the political debate in the UK at the moment is so bonkers. There's huge opportunity for business to think ahead and to put the long-term investment in low-carbon technology and services. Business can be part of the solution."

Craig believes our region has a lot to gain from solar and low carbon: "So many Cambridge academics see the potential for solar in particular to be one of the biggest game changers in the history of humanity – it's very clear

Craig with then minister for bees Lord de Mauley, centre, and Andy Atkins, Craig's predecessor at Friends of the Earth, at The Bee Summit, London, June 28, 2013, where Lord de Mauley announced the Government's review of the decline of bees, leading to a national pollinator strategy.



Follow Craig on Twitter: @craigbennett3. For more information see: foe.co.uk.

Craig
marching at
London's Climate
March on November 13,
2015, which saw more
than 50,000 people
take to the
streets.



Picture: Amelia Collins /Friends of the Earth

that it is possible for the human race to be powered by renewables at some point in the future. So let's get on with it and not faff around.

"Here in Cambridgeshire we have the high-tech infrastructure that would benefit most from this. I think Cambridge could be a beacon in Britain on so many of these issues – it has cutting-edge research and development in green technologies and a population of people interested in these issues; many national Friends of the Earth supporters are located here. Cambridge could lead the UK on this journey and it would be great if it could be loud and proud about it and shout it from the solar-panelled rooftops."

While this sounds both stirring and sensible, I wonder, faced with the threat of terrorism and the refugee crisis showing no signs of abating, is climate change the most pressing issue to act upon now? And what can we as individuals do about any of it?

"We don't look at climate change in isolation to what's happening in nature or in isolation to what's happening in economics or inequality and fairness. These issues are connected. Friends of the Earth is part of a global federation of groups in more than 80 countries, which gives us an extraordinary understanding of what's happening globally and how it affects communities.

"Climate change has played a contributing factor to the refugee crisis. It would be wrong to say it was a cause, but equally wrong to say it was not a contributing factor. The more severe climate change is, the more likely you will get refugees and terrorism. Climate change harms good governance, which creates the conditions for fundamentalism. These are multi-faceted reasons but if we don't tackle climate change in a fair way the world will be a much more

insecure place. This is not an either/or situation.

"Nobody can do everything about everything – including me and including Friends of the Earth. Focus and choose the best contribution you can make to a debate. It is so exciting and empowering to do something – the worst thing is to do nothing."

Working to change the world is no small task for a man with two young children – can such a big job accommodate a work/life balance?

"Oh, you could ask me or you could ask Emma. It is a big job but one of the challenges and benefits is that it's not 9 to 5. It involves evening and weekend work, but sometimes you can be around in the mornings and take the kids to school. That's very important.

But I couldn't do this job without Emma being home-based as an artist. And I'm enormously grateful to her for all the support she gives me."

Craig believes in the power of communities to make change, even when politicians are slow on the uptake. "I've waited my entire career for a green JFK to come along and it hasn't happened."

Craig's stewardship of Friends of the Earth will be worth watching or even joining in with and, if he succeeds putting changes in place to secure a better future, the endgame could be profound.

"The world is in trouble and we need to switch to a new narrative of what to do about it. The longer we leave it, the more it reduces the prize for future generations. Let's not get too demoralised by one or two politicians who put their own political ambitions ahead of the future of humanity.

"Let's turn this thing around and establish a stable climate and make a fair and thriving world. It can be done – the science and thinking is there – it just needs the political will and that comes from people taking action and getting involved."

WE DON'T LOOK AT CLIMATE CHANGE IN ISOLATION TO WHAT'S HAPPENING IN NATURE OR IN ISOLATION TO WHAT'S HAPPENING IN ECONOMICS OR INEQUALITY AND FAIRNESS

The moment Lancashire County Council reject Cuadrilla's application to frack at Preston New Road in Little Plumpton, Lancashire. Local residents, Friends of the Earth and anti-fracking protestors outside Lancashire County Council (County Hall), Preston, June 24, 2015.



To support Friends of the Earth see foe.co.uk/ways_to_donate.
Fracking victory: Lancashire councillors rejected an application to frack at Preston New Road in Little Plumpton, June 29, 2015. Councillors voted nine to three against fracking.



The Emperor

Owner, Oscar Sotres, took over The Emperor seven months ago. "We instantly recognised an opportunity to bring something new to Cambridge and the local area," says Oscar who was born in Mexico and has lived and worked in Cambridge for 14 years. "The community needed something modern, fresh and a bit different so we've transformed The Emperor into a little slice of South America right here on Hills Road." Oscar continues, "So many places just offer the same sort of menu and Latin food has not been fully represented in the city until now."

The Latin menu draws influences from Mexico, Peru, Ecuador, Columbia, Chile and Spain. It's all homemade, delicious, fresh and served in sumptuous portions plus, Oscar says, "You can have a proper drink with your meal as we specialise in rums and gin." The new décor is vibrant, comfortable and welcoming making The Emperor the perfect place to meet friends and treat your taste buds to something packed full of flavour from the fabulous new menu such as Ceviche (fresh seafood), lomo saltado (beef) or the cordero con tacu tacu (lamb).

Oscar completed his Masters in Cambridge and has worked in numerous restaurants around the city so when it comes to food, he knows his stuff. "After a

The Emperor has caused a stir in the local community recently by transforming from a local pub into a new Latin tapas bar sensation since it was taken over by new management and given a fresh, new menu, new decor and a lively, relaxed atmosphere.

short break from the restaurant business, I realised how passionate I am about food," says Oscar. "I know how to run a restaurant and I know how to run a business. I think life is all about being passionate and if you like something, you should do it." He goes on, "Everybody likes to go on holiday somewhere hot and try new things, so the Emperor is a little taste of holiday right here in the city. I want people to come through the door and feel that they are on holiday. I want visiting The Emperor to be much more than just going out to eat. I want it to be an experience."

Renovations on The Emperor are not quite finished as it's important to the team that local customers get used to the changes and also give their feedback. "The tapas bar is evolving into exactly what people want," says Oscar.

Now you don't need to take a flight to feel like you've travelled aboard. If you're feeling hungry and dreaming of those balmy holiday nights, then make sure to visit

**The Emperor, 21 Hills Road Cambridge
or call to book on (01223) 464633.**



The Emperor





Take me to

Former Home Secretary (and Cambridge resident) Charles Clarke has a new book out – and it's ruffling rather a lot of feathers in Whitehall. Lydia Fallon discovers more.

ith his friendly eyes, jolly smile and white beard, there's more than a whiff of a certain man in red about former Labour Home Secretary Charles Clarke.

But, it's probably best to end the comparisons there; for under Clarke's jolly exterior lurks a very un-Santa-like steely streak, and I get the impression it's not easily tamed.

Something of a loose cannon in a world of suited and booted, spin-doctored politicians, he's never been afraid to speak his mind, and has ruffled a few feathers along the way. From Gordon Brown, who he once called "deluded" and a "control freak" in an interview, to the current Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn, an "absurd vessel for the hopes of the disaffected", apparently. Crikey, just imagine what he has to say about members of the opposition.

Given his history, it's not really surprising Clarke has recently co-edited two new books charting parliament's finest and feeblest statesmen. From Atlee and Churchill to Thatcher and Blair, each individual's leadership legacy is analysed, scrutinised and, get this, put into a league table.

So what, in Clarke's opinion, makes a leader the Manchester City of Whitehall?

"Firstly, I'd say integrity: people should feel they can trust their leader, and know they'll tell them the truth about what's happening. I think courage is important: you have to have the guts to go for it, to say 'We've got to crack this problem', rather than just back off, which can be difficult as it's often easier to keep your head down. And I think intelligence: you need to think through the various options and work out how you get there. That's what I would be looking for in a leader," he says.

He's not asking for much then.

But of course the two books – *British Conservative Leaders* and *British Labour Leaders* – are much more than just the opinions of one disgruntled former politician. It's scientific stuff, vigorously

Picture:
Warren Gunn

your leader

researched by Clarke and his colleague Toby James.

"Toby had been doing work on political leadership, and looking at an American academic theory about how good some presidents have been, so we thought we'd see how we could work that in a British context," he explains. "We held a seminar with academic experts in the field, and then developed the criteria first with Labour and then the Conservatives."

In the context of each leader's respective time and diplomatic landscape, this analytical framework looked at everything from how they sorted out divisions in the party ("which can be seen today with David Cameron and the Europe question, and with Jeremy Corbyn trying to get the Labour party working together") to how successful they'd been in terms of seats gained and lost. These attributes and achievements (or flaws and blunders, as the case may be) are then considered in mini biographies of each of the leaders. "So if you want a summary of British political history, these books provide an excellent way of doing that," Clarke says.

Did the research throw up any surprises? "I think the big surprise factor is since 1900 the most successful leader in terms of seats gained and lost is David Cameron. There are quite a few people who didn't believe that, including many leading Conservatives," he chuckles. "The other two who do well are Margaret Thatcher and Stanley Baldwin, but a surprisingly bad performer is Winston Churchill."

Certain critics have accused Clarke (perhaps a little unfairly) of embarking on this study for the sole purpose of proving that Labour's worst leader was Gordon Brown and, surprise surprise, "Gordon Brown is Labour's worst performer, and Atlee by far and away the best," he admits.

Understandably, some of the lower-ranked leaders weren't best pleased with their standing in the book, although Clarke is far too coy to name names. "I'm

not at liberty to say who, but I did have one former Prime Minister who was very upset at his position, but I went to talk to him about it and he accepted we had done it in a fair way.

"People are worried about their reputation and they do want to feel like they've done very well, and if the figures show they haven't, of course they are disappointed with that – and who can blame them?"

Although never Labour leader himself (now that would have made an interesting chapter!), Clarke did have an illustrious career in the late 90s and the Noughties. An MP for Norwich South from 1997 to 2010, he served as Education Secretary, Secretary of State for Education and Skills and Home Secretary during that time. Life on the front bench is, he admits, "very up and down", but he has no regrets about choosing politics as a career path.

"There's not a regular career pattern and structure, but on the other side of the coin it is extremely engaging and extremely exciting, and I have never regretted



PASSION: Clarke in his student union days at Cambridge

CHARLES CLARKE ON . . . THE CURRENT LABOUR PARTY

"The single most important thing is to offer a real alternative to the Conservatives, particularly on the economic mandate of the country. Since the

2008 financial crash, the Conservatives have been able to win the argument that it was all Labour's fault, and the party has to persuade people it has the quality

and ability to run the economy in a way that gives people security. I think we are a very, very long way from doing that, but I think that is our number one task."

making politics the central part of my life."

With today's generation famously disengaged with the political pantomime of Prime Minister's Questions and the like, what does Clarke feel needs to be done to get young people to follow the same path he did?

"From experience I have found young people are actually very interested in politics, they are very interested in our society and what's going to happen, but they are also disaffected by the political structures we have at the moment," he says.

"I think the motivating energy of young people is very, very strong, which gives me cause for optimism, but they don't respect the political system; they don't think it talks to them, and it's a question of how to change the system to make it more in touch with where people are."

Clarke himself caught the politics bug as a teenager, a young man passionate about pushing through change. "From pretty early on I felt like I was going to be actively involved in politics, although not necessarily as a Member of Parliament; I just saw it as something I wanted to do because I felt strongly about the society I want to create, and the role I could play doing it," he says.

This burning passion never waned during Clarke's 13 years as an MP and, even now, five years since he lost his seat, Clarke still cares deeply, admitting he misses "the thrill and buzz of politics at the top level and the engagement I guess, in really trying to make things happen".

But, having taken time to "adjust away from the bubble of Whitehall", he has been able to find fulfilment in his new, considerably less hectic, life. He teaches, holding visiting professorships at the University of East Anglia, Lancaster University and King's College London, there are the books too of course (he's planning to release a memoir), and a recent move back to this fair city – he read mathematics and economics at King's College and was president of the Cambridge Students' Union – has also played its part.

"We moved from Norwich to Cambridge about a year and a half ago, and we've really enjoyed that," he says. "It's such an attractive place in terms of the vitality – the intellectual vitality and physical vitality. We felt like we needed more of that, and Cambridge seemed to be the best place we could think of that would offer it, and it has definitely been the case."

So, there's no chance of a political comeback then, à la George Galloway? "I don't think so. I don't feel at 65 I'm too old, but it's very hard to go back . . ."

British Conservative Leaders and British Labour Leaders, published by Biteback Publishing, are out now, priced £25.

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aughter, a London-based three-piece manned by a trio of exotically-named musicians – Elena Tonra, Igor Haefeli Remi Aguilera – make music that is as striking, as unique a blend of sounds, atmospheres and emotions, as its membership is geographically diverse in origin (Elena is of Irish-Italian heritage, Igor from Switzerland and Remi French).

So as I chat with Remi, the band's percussionist, I'm interested to learn how they create their dramatic music; intense yet stripped-back, honest yet somehow elusive. Is it a collaborative process?

"Elena has always done the lyrics, and very often the melody," he explains, in excellent American and French-accented English. "I don't think I'd want it any other way. It'd be terrible – I just cannot do it!"

For the rest, though, "it kind of depends. It used to be, the earlier material would always be Elena with song structure, lyrics and melody, and then we would play guitars and drums on top of that," but now, with their second album, *Not To Disappear*, out this month, "it was more of a band collaboration, where all three people bring ideas early on in the process."

And the band had a lot to live up to, with album number two. Their debut – 2013's *If You Leave* – won huge critical acclaim, and amassed a growing band of admirers for Daughter. Remi's reaction to the success is a humble one: "I don't think we saw it as a massive album, I think we were just very lucky that some people somehow connected to it, and that's what amazed us. There seemed to be, somehow, a universal feeling. That was the part that we all really enjoyed: we somehow managed to touch people in a way we had not expected."

So, inevitably, he admits, "we wanted to be pleased with it, and knew that there would be some kind of pressure, but the pressure was coming from us – to make something that is relevant or interesting."

All perfectionists, sometimes "pushing in different directions" in the studio, they seem nevertheless to have avoided heated arguments both by trusting each other's sensibilities ("Alright, I guess I trust you guys to say that this will be better for the song") and by easing the self-inflicted pressure a bit by the means of having rented out their own studio space this time round, "so we could basically go demo the songs and write songs and parts whenever we wanted. So if one day you don't feel inspired by anything, or if

everybody's in a strange mood, then it's probably just better to leave and say we'll come back with fresher minds and ears."

Another big influence in the making of *Not To Disappear* has been the live reception that *If You Leave* received. "For this one, we took all the experience from playing all the shows and festivals (and there is a lot of them), and we were influenced by the energy that came from playing those shows. The bigger the audience became, the louder or somehow more intense the songs seemed to become live."

Having joined up with Elena and Igor while all three were studying in London, for Remi, life as a drummer seems to have been something that was always predestined. Despite having no particular musical heritage, family lore tells of how, as a 2 or 3 year old ("dressed in a *Spiderman* costume") he was brought along to a music school where a cousin was having drum lessons. "Apparently this is when I told my entire family that I wanted to play drums." Formal lessons, taking in jazz and classical percussion, followed, and "somehow, it seemed to be the only thing that I was able to just keep doing. The drums win – I can't explain it. I don't think, I just do it."

And it seems that his expertise and experience really came into their own in the studio this time around. Explaining the process of song selection for *Not To Disappear*, he tells a revealing tale of how the song *No Care* came to make it – at the last moment – on to the album. "I didn't have a drum part until the very last day in the studio, when we said 'Oh, this one, this demo could be on [the album] as well'. I was already exhausted and somehow had to just come up with the drums for the different parts, so I just said 'Leave me in the studio, press record, and just don't talk to me for about an hour!... After an hour I came out of that studio exhausted, and then we decided

to go with a bunch of samples that I did. So I'll definitely remember the process of recording that one!"

And the end result is stunning – fiercely (almost viciously) percussive and propulsive, one of the album's standout tracks. What other highlights can we look forward to, among the new tracks, when they tour the album?

"Erm, live – I don't know, because we're actually in a few days going to hopefully finish rehearsing all the new songs, so I don't know which ones we're going to be playing live. But *Doing The Right Thing* is a song that all of us were really excited about, just because it was one of those that we'd rehearsed and written together in a room – it was one of the first times that we were able to do that, because of that little rehearsal space. And *How* – I remember at rehearsals, I always pushed for it."

We are chatting during an unscheduled break in the band's touring schedule. Just back from Asia, where they played Japan and Singapore, a festival in South Korea where they were due to appear got cancelled, so Remi is at his parents' home in France – "Right in the middle, a place called Clermont-Ferrand. Not a lot of people tend to know about it, unless they're into rugby or Michelin tyres."

With only a few weeks having elapsed since the horrific attacks in Paris, as a musician – particularly a French musician – I wonder how he feels about the situation.

Speaking hesitantly for the first time in our conversation, he replies. "It's something that was really worrying. Even though I didn't grow up in Paris, I have a lot of friends and family

THE BIGGER THE
AUDIENCE BECAME,
THE MORE INTENSE
THE SONGS SEEMED
TO BECOME LIVE



Igor, Elena and Remi

who were in Paris on the Monday [before], right around... where some of the shootings happened. One of my friends lives right on one of those streets out there, and... They were all having a good time. And then five days later... I hadn't been in Paris for a long time, and I love that city. It was weird, I just had to call everybody, making sure..."

But he rallies, saying firmly: "It's a crazy time, and it's amazing to see the reaction of people, who have clearly said: 'We're not going to fear being in Paris. This is our city.'"

In terms of whether it will affect him on stage, he insists: "I'm not trying to ignore or deny it, I just don't want to think about it. You don't want to be scared of something that could potentially happen. It's the same as the way I'm prepared to take the Tube a lot, even after those horrible events happened in London. It's a horrible tragedy but you have to keep doing what you do because otherwise they – people like those people – will win."

So what is a Daughter live show like? The music, on record, is so intense, served up with such an emotional kick, that I wonder whether they concern themselves with fancy visuals, or simply let their songs speak for themselves.

"That's something that we've recently thought about. With the first album we never really brought visuals to our show – and by visuals I just mean pretty lights that would help connect with the music. For this one we have a big idea of trying to bring the visual aspect to it. We're going



Remi, Elena and Igor

to be bringing a light designer with us through all our live shows, which is going to be amazing.

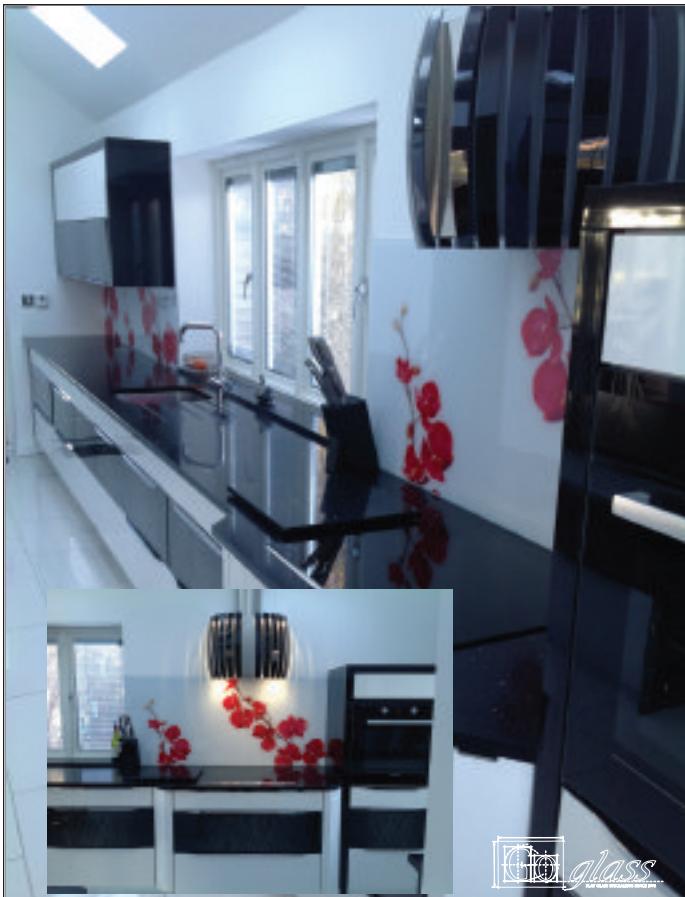
"I mean, this is how we're going to start, but hopefully people will still connect mainly with the music."

Having had the chance to immerse myself in the gorgeous, lush, troubling, moving songs from Daughter's second album – which is released on the very day the band play Cambridge – I'm fairly certain he's right. Talking of the show itself, he promises: "It'll be fun, it'll be the start of a crazy-busy experience, but hopefully really beautiful." Without a doubt.

*Daughter,
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SON *and* daughter

Daughter bring their intense and atmospheric music to Cambridge Corn Exchange this month, as they launch second album *Not To Disappear*. Jude Clarke gets the lowdown from drummer Remi Aguiella.



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HOMES & GARDENS



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46 Signs of the times

Animal instincts

The trend for table lamps that double as objets d'art shows no sign of slowing – and nobody does it better than Abigail Ahern.

The designer – hailed 'the high priestess of interiors' by *Livingetc* – cites *Alice in Wonderland* among her greatest influences. And little wonder: her animal lamps, with their flocked bases and pom-pom shades, are as eccentric as the Mad Hatter himself.

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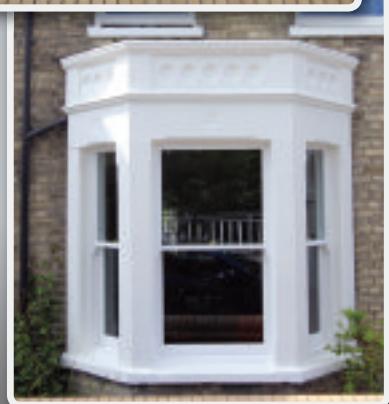
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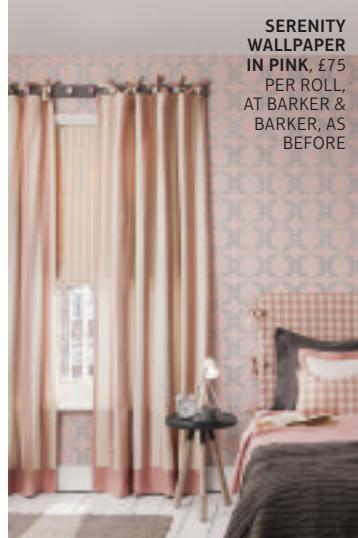
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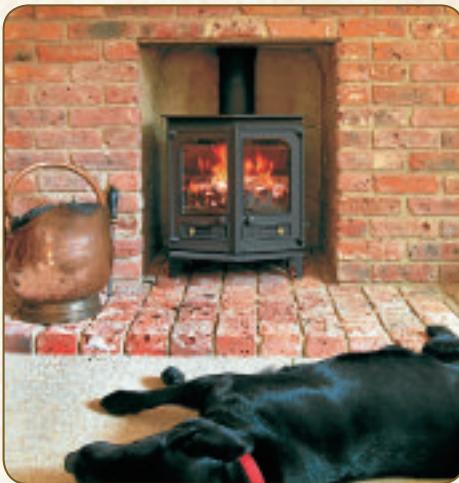
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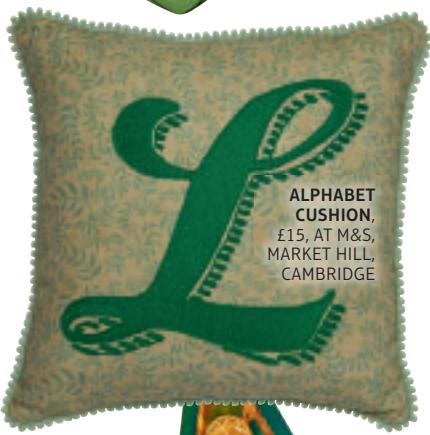
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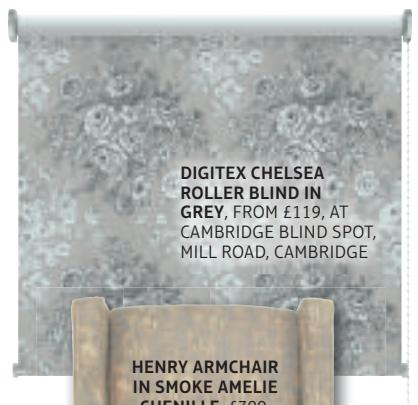
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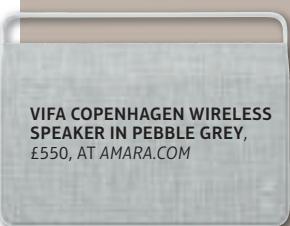
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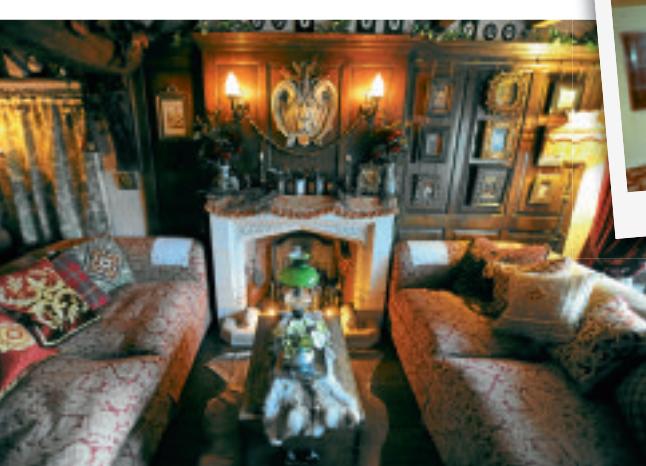


THE WATCHTOWER,
the living and dining
room inspired by a
Welsh castle



On paper, Talliston House – a three-bedroomed, semi-detached, ex-council house near Saffron Walden – appears perfectly ordinary. In person, it's perfectly extraordinary. As Alice Ryan discovers, Talliston is a labyrinthine work of living art, which defies both space and time.

Pictures by David Johnson



he tiny, chintz-papered entrance hall at Talliston House is lined with clocks. There's a wood-carved cuckoo clock, a curlicued rococo affair, a piece of classic 50s Americana. All are different. Yet all have one thing in common: they're not ticking.

"Time has no power at Talliston: you leave it at the door," explains homeowner John Trevillian. "You know how people talk about 'living in the moment'? Well, this is the definition of living in the moment . . ."

Over a period of 25 years, John has transformed the three-bedroomed, semi-detached, ex-council house in Great Dunmow into a living – and eminently liveable – work of art.

Stripping the already blank-canvas house back to bricks and mortar, he's turned every room into a fully-realised imaginary world. Each is set in a different time and place.

The sitting room is a Welsh castle at the height of Victorian; the master bedroom is a Scottish turret of the Art Nouveau period; the bathroom is a Norwegian lighthouse in the 80s; the conservatory is the Japan of the future.

The attention to detail is breathtaking: open a cupboard in the kitchen, set in 1950s New Orleans, and you'll find neat rows of Duravit sundae glasses and stacks of Franciscan Rose 'Sunday best' tea cups – all original.

Every room has its own scents and soundtrack; the staircase, inspired by an abandoned Medici mansion, is a-twitter with nesting swallows. Even the views from doors and windows are carefully controlled, courtesy of curtaining and coloured or frosted panes, so as not to break the spell. ▶



THE VOODOO KITCHEN, set in 1950s New Orleans



THE BOATHOUSE, the Norwegian lighthouse bathroom, right



► And this house does cast a spell. Once inside each room, you're utterly transported; it's magical.

"There's a stopped clock in the hall to represent each of the 13 rooms," explains John. "When you're in that room, you're in that place and time – nowhere else."

Having dedicated himself to Talliston for some quarter of a century, John says people inevitably ask 'Why...?'

"I grew up in the East End of London in a working class family; the most I could aspire to was living in a three-bedroomed, semi-detached, ex-council house in Essex," he explains.

"Not that there's anything wrong with that – I just felt my future had been mapped out by society: this is the house you're going to live in, these are the people you'll know, this is the life you're going to have."

"I wanted to take the most ordinary house possible and make it extraordinary; to show that anywhere can be made magical."

When he embarked on the project, aged 25, John had never so much as wired a plug, and had only travelled outside the M25 on a single summer holiday to Majorca. Since then, he's taught himself how to do everything from woodwork to upholstery and has travelled the globe on buying and research trips; in total, he's visited 27 countries, from Canada to Nepal.

"It's not so much the man transforming the house, as the house transforming the man," smiles the now 50-year-old. Assisted by a band of loyal volunteers – including artist in residence Marcus Cotton, a trained set painter – he's funded the million-pound project on his ad agency salary alone.

"It's proof that anyone can do it. The question is not 'Why is Talliston like this?', it's 'Why is the rest of the world not like Talliston?'... Our environments have such a profound effect on us, why not make them beautiful?"

Starting the grand tour at the front gate, John explains the layout of the house and gardens is labyrinthine, inspired by a 30,000-year-old etching on the standing stone set beside the front door. You're naturally led from one room to the next along a circular route, winding from front door right up to attic.

The front garden takes the form of an ancient stone circle, the magnificent standing stone at its apex, which has been latterly overlaid with a Gothic Revival vegetable patch, all raised woven-willow beds and rows of glass cloches.

There's plentiful period layering inside the house and out: though the Welsh castle that inspired the sitting and dining room is Medieval in date, it's imagined in the midst of a Victorian Christmas. The layering is a clever device: the rooms could have felt like museum pieces; instead, they're almost eerily real.

The frontage of the house, which itself dates from the 1930s, was originally plain pebble-dash like the property next door. Wanting to alter the façade in keeping with the project, but also in keeping with its environs, John chose to dress it in the style of an 1850s Essex house, with slate roof, leaded windows and pretty peaked porch.

Talliston means 'the hidden place'. The name couldn't be more apt: from the kerb, you could never guess what awaits inside.

Leading the way to the door, set into the pathways, are a series of bronze bees; they are, John explains, one of Talliston's leitmotifs – images which recur from room to room, a visual connection between the deliberately disparate periods and places.

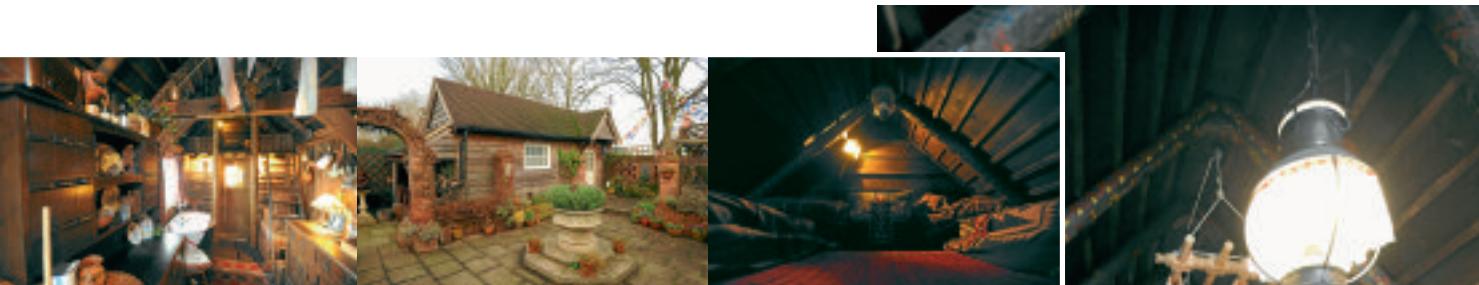
"Bees represent challenge. They have to visit 10,000 flowers to make the tiniest drop of honey; they're a reminder of the reward of hard work. We also have butterflies all through the house: they're emblems of transformation. They don't start life as these beautiful creatures; they start life as a caterpillar."

Crossing the threshold is like whooshing down the Wonderland rabbit hole; in the open and shut of a door, you're in the Welsh castle's watchtower. A bust of Pan peers out above the fireplace, lit with candles and flanked by invitingly squishy sofas; the panelled walls are lined with miniatures and all manner of Animalia, including stuffed squirrel and fox; a well-polished rood screen signposts

the dining area, converted from the castle's chapel.

Gesturing to a watercolour of the castle on the wall – in every room you'll find a picture of the property which inspired it – John explains: "The Victorians made their mark on the place; that's what we're recreating here. I like to think of it as a retreat for artists and literary types; the kind of place Arthur Conan Doyle might have gone to join a weekend party..."

The sitting area has been internally clad with great hunks of stone, while the chapel-turned-dining room is walled with whitewashed flint. Dinky Gothic windows have been inset above what would have been the chapel's altar, and reclaimed church fixtures, including the rood screen, have been installed. The look is jaw-droppingly – in truth, tear-jerkingly – complete.



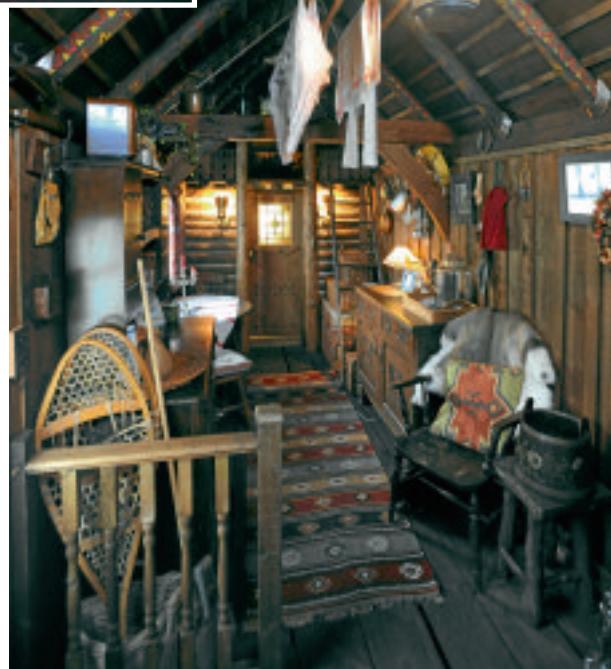
THE CABIN, the garage-turned-Canadian trapper's lodge

"It took four-and-a-half years to do this room. And people do cry when they walk in here, yes; seeing their reactions is wonderful," says John. While Talliston remains very much his home at present, he opens it to the public through *Invitation to View* (on the last Sunday of each month, May onwards) and plans to entrust it to the nation long-term.

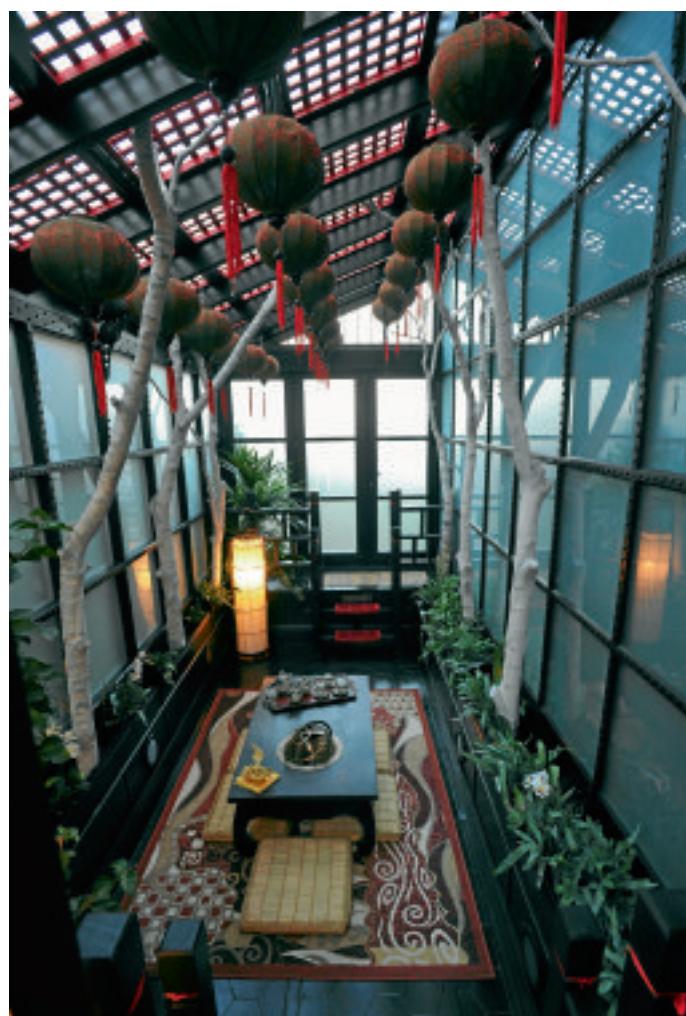
Just 18 months from completing the house, John lost his job – his whole team was made redundant – and he faced the frightening prospect of losing Talliston too. "I was five weeks away from not being able to pay the mortgage and it was scary. I realised not only what it meant to me – I'd put almost half my life into it – but also what it meant in its own right; I realised it had a life of its own."

What takes Talliston from personal project to national treasure is John's curatorly approach: a prolific writer and keen social historian, he's documented every aspect of Talliston. There are diaries charting every day's work across the 25 years, travel journals recording his trips overseas, endless photo albums showing the transformation in pictures. He also has a database of all 1,821 objects in the house, telling him what he sourced where, when and how.

With the support of the Talliston volunteers, John launched a campaign to save the house: cakes were baked and sold, tea parties thrown, personalised family crest shields (hand-painted by Marcus, they trim the master bedroom) sponsored. Sufficient funds were raised; John now has a new job, and Talliston's future is looking both secure and bright. ▶



THE STAR HOUSE,
the futuristic
Japanese tea
house in the
conservatory





THE HALL OF MIRRORS, drawn from a palazzo in Lombardy

► Next on the tour is the kitchen. Inspired by a verandah-wrapped, weather-boarded house in 1950s New Orleans, it's a light and joy-filled space, piped with Dixieland jazz. John explains that each room's scheme began with a key piece – in this case the 50s larder-fridge. Because Talliston is a lived-in home, not simply a showpiece, every room has to both fit a period and serve its modern-day function; hence the kitchen had to be set within the era of mod-cons.

"I didn't so much choose the themes as the themes chose the rooms," says John. "Originally, I thought the kitchen was going to be in Toronto – then I saw these pictures in an old *Better Homes and Gardens* of a house in New Orleans and thought 'No, that's it!'"

John maintained the original floor plan and room orientations of the semi, so the bathroom remains downstairs off the kitchen. Aping a Norwegian lighthouse in the 1980s, the dado is carved with Viking long ship motifs, and the picture rail clad with white wooden shingles.

Across the back garden (where it's 1930s Ireland, and reclaimed stone from Westminster Cathedral forms a circle seat), you arrive at the Canadian trapper's cabin, circa 1940s. The starting point for this place, all wood-panelled walls and fur pelts, was a small



THE OFFICE, recreating a slice of 1920s New York



carved bear: "A piece of tourist tat, really, but it got my imagination going..."

The space was formerly the garage: "When the former owners had it, it was full of motorbikes; it was covered in oil." Now, at the far end, it's got a raised snug, cosy with cushions and blankets, and an underneath store room, where John keeps all the behind-the-scenes necessities (such as light bulbs: "We have 40 different styles; that's a lot of spares").

Back via the futuristic Japanese tea house – complete with miniature sand garden and a spacey take on the classic torii gateway for a door – it's up the stairs to the office, the first room John created.

The staircase itself, painted to look like marble and hung with ornate mirrors, deserves special mention: there's even a real swallows' nest nestled in a high corner; a home for the aforementioned twittering birds.

"I write like other people watch television. When I was a little boy, sharing a bunk bed with my brother, I dreamed of having my own special space to write in – hence the office was my first priority." Fitted in the style of a detective's office in late-20s New York, the show-stopper is a colossal, bow-fronted desk – but your eye is also drawn to a row of specimen jars and a grimacing puppet of a scrubbed-up surgeon, scalpel at the ready.

"When people ask me 'Who did this office belong to?,' my answer is the Fox Mulder of 1920s New York,"



THE ROOM OF DREAMS,
influenced by the
Alhambra

laughs John. "It was the gilded age of exploration; he'd have brought back all kinds of specimens."

At the far end of the landing is the guest bedroom; with its generous windows, pale walls and gauze-curtained bed, it's dressed in 70s Alhambran style. "This is The Room of Dreams: the place where you'd have the perfect night's sleep."

For every yin in the house there's a yang; hence the next-door master, referred to as The Haunted Bedroom, is as dark as its neighbour is light.

Heavily panelled and draped, with fabric-covered walls and a grand four-poster, this room is taken from a turreted Georgian house on the Scottish coast. It belonged, says John, to a small boy who died; there's a picture of him on the wall, respectfully shrouded in black lace. "This is the house of my dreams, but also of my nightmares," adds John. "There's nothing creepier, that I can think of, than a dead child."

Despite the room's gloom, there are plentiful heart-warming touches: a toy bunny rabbit, a pair of dinky shoes, a pottery Red Riding Hood. Both bedrooms have wardrobes, concealing John and Marcus's clothes: "If I was to leave here tomorrow, it would be with my clothes and my laptop and that's it. Everything else belongs to the house, not me."

The 12th room is up in the loft; accessed by rope ladder, it's a Cambodian tree sanctuary. Number 13 is a pop-up tipi from Arizona which, it being winter, is currently slumbering beneath a false floor in the trapper's cabin.

With his 25-year endeavour at an end, John must surely feel proud – but also a little bereft. "I've likened it to a child leaving home," he smiles. "People find it hard to believe that I want to leave this place in trust; that it's not going to make me anything in monetary terms."

"I think of it like this: when I left my parents' house at the age of 25 – to drive here in my little green Beetle, with all my worldly goods in two boxes on the back seat – they didn't say 'Ah, we've spent the last 25 years putting all our time and energy into this boy and now he's gone, so it's all been a waste.'

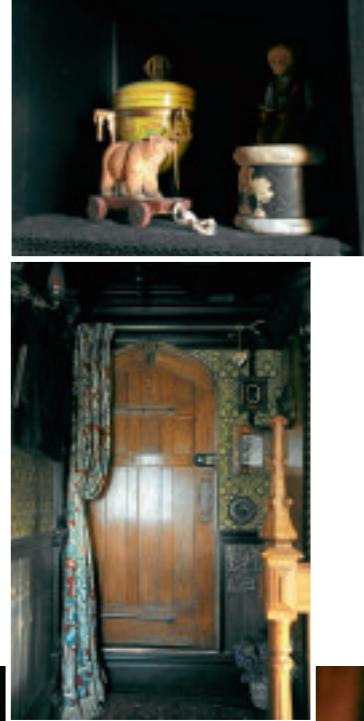
"It's the same with me and Talliston. I've put my all into it for 25 years, and now I want to see it live a life of its own."



THE LOFT,
a Cambodian
tree sanctuary



THE HAUNTED BEDROOM,
inspired by a Scottish turret



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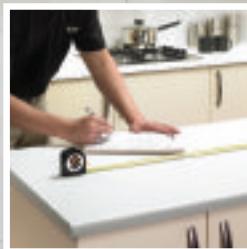
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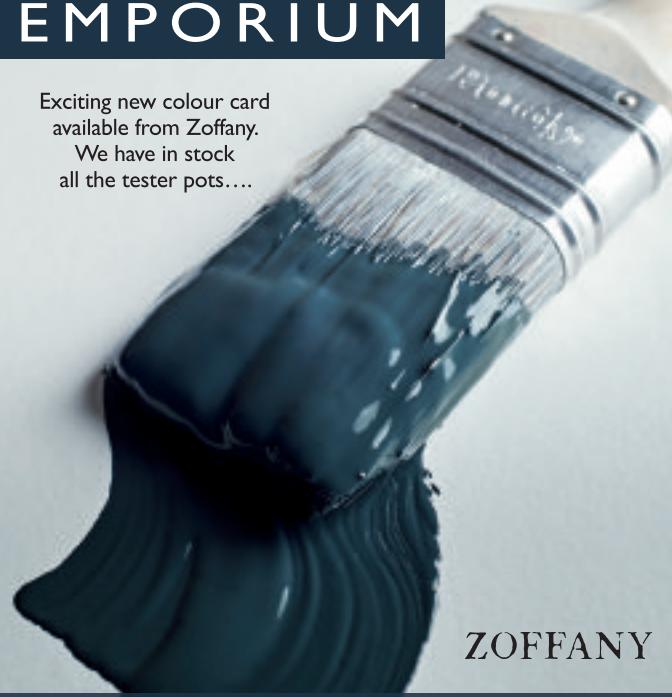
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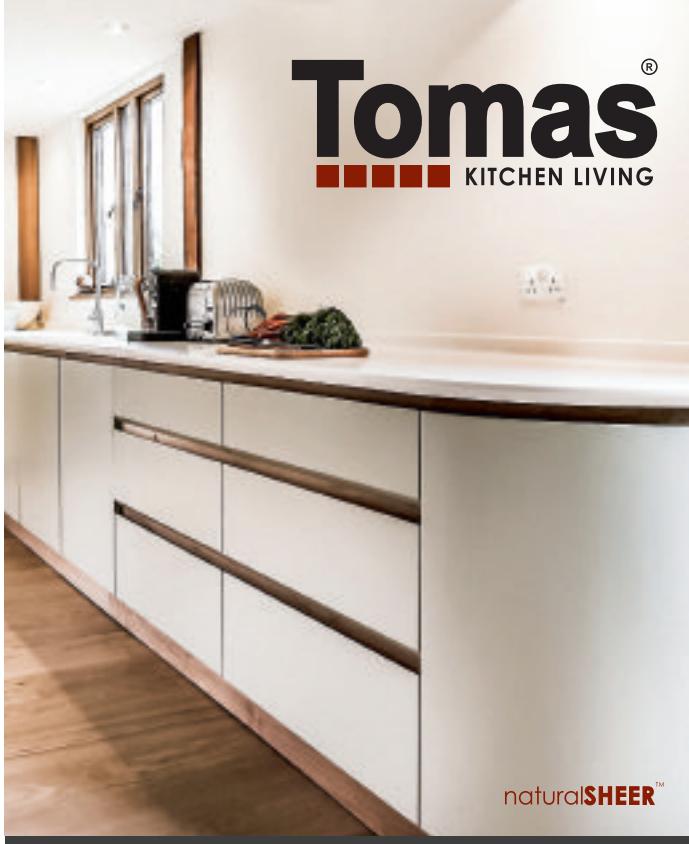
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All the **FUN** of the **FAIR**

He worked his way up from Saturday boy to head of comms at Tesco – then quit to start his own eclectic company, selling everything from hat boxes to fairground horses. Alice Ryan meets Karl Rutherford, a man with real imagination.

Pictures by Keith Jones





K

Karl Rutherford is a collector. He's got a particular weakness for vintage packaging (his office is lined with Perspex-cased cereal boxes) and old-school toys (he's got a stash of *Star Wars* merch from the 80s, all boxed and mint).

"I've always had an eye for products and packaging," says Karl. "I started trading toys when I was at school, but always bought two of everything – one to trade and one to keep in its box."

"In my teens I wasn't going out and getting drunk: I was the geek watching *MTV Cribs* and thinking 'I want a house like that one day'..."

Karl has just launched his own interiors brand, Ralph & Co, selling one-off items, from dressmaker's dummies and shop signage to school furniture and fairground lights. It's a gloriously eclectic mix – walk into the Barcham barn that serves as HQ and you don't know where to look first – but all the items have one thing in common: they're originals.

"I have a real problem with all the mass-produced, plasticky repro stuff you see for sale these days. Why would you want to buy a fake fairground light when you can have a real one, which looks and feels so much nicer? Plus it has a history to it, which makes it unique."

Though it launched little over a month ago, Ralph & Co has already made quite the impression: in its first 30 days of trading, the online store averaged an order a day. "That's amazing; I could never have predicted that," says Karl. "But it goes to show there's an appetite for these pieces. The days of people wanting matching houses, of picking everything out of the one catalogue, are over: we all want our homes to reflect who we are; to be a bit special."

Despite being both creative and entrepreneurial as a kid, Karl had a different career goal in mind – becoming a pro footballer. "I was very serious about football: I played in the national schools' team and toured in Europe. Beyond that I didn't really know what I wanted to do... And that's where Tesco came in."

At 16, Karl took a Saturday job on the till at his local Tesco in Ely. By 19, he'd caught the eye of management staff. "This lovely lady, Julie Kirby, was my inspiration; in fact she's still my inspiration to this day. She made me section manager and said: 'You're such a lovely chap. Don't ever change and you'll make a success of your life.' I've always remembered that. She reminded me it's important to be a people person, not just a business person."

Karl threw himself into the job: becoming shop-floor manager, he pioneered the supermarket's now-ubiquitous home-shopping service. "Ely became the first ever store to offer home-shopping. I was 21 at the time and the story made the *Cambridge News*: I've still got the paper clipping!" ▶





SUPER

HOT ROD*

DODGEM



After eight years at Ely, Karl was hungry for a new challenge, so phoned head office on spec. They gave him a job in marketing; again, he worked his way up the rungs to lead partner communications. In charge of the supermarket's business partnerships – which make big brands such as House of Fraser and Mamas and Papas available to Tesco customers – "it was a great job and my team was brilliant – it's always about the people". But, after 22 years with the company, "the time just felt right to leave".

Karl took voluntary redundancy and, despite a tangible affection for the company ("I didn't go to uni: Tesco taught me everything I know. I'll always be grateful for that"), says the decision was a no-brainer.

"My wife Gem and I have a 1-year-old – Ralph: the business is named after him – and I hardly ever saw him. I'd get up at 5am, have a one-and-a-half-hour drive to work, finish at 6pm and not be home until 7.30pm, by which time he's in bed. I was missing out on a lot; so was he."

"Plus, when I met Gem I told her I'd have my own business by 40; I'm 37 now, so I've beaten my own deadline..."

Karl's commitment to Ralph & Co runs deep: he's got the logo tattooed on his left forearm. The ink, he explains, spurs him on. "At the moment I am Ralph & Co. I've done everything myself – designed the logo, built the website, sourced the stock. And I've loved it, every part of it."

The combination of business prowess and personal passion is a winning one. From the cute (and cleverly memorable) logo – a silhouette of little Ralph in profile, wearing a dinky top hat – to the skilled edit of stock, Karl's hit all the right notes.

Tracking down fairground paraphernalia is, in particular, no mean feat: it's seriously sought-after. "See that litter bin in the shape of a laughing clown? I was in Kempton at half four this morning to get that. I'm seeing it as a laundry bin for a boy's bedroom – don't you think that'd be cool?"

Sourcing stock from fairs, auctions and dealers, Karl travels the country tracking down gems. "The way I see it, I'm doing the hard work for you; I want to make these brilliant pieces accessible to everyone.

"Take this morning: there I was, shining my torch into the back of a van, with a group of other blokes – all blokes with beards, weirdly... That's not something everyone can do, or wants to do, either."

Karl clearly has an eye, but his buying decisions are as calculated as they are instinctive. "I keep an eye on the trends; I watch all those programmes – *Salvage Hunters*, *American Pickers* – to see what's popular, what's coming through."

To give you an idea how shrewd he is, Karl spotted TV's Drew Pritchard (he of *Salvage Hunters* fame) investing heavily in a particular item at auction, so followed suit. "They were target practice posters. I knew it would take about six months for that episode to reach the screen, so I waited and put them on sale two weeks ago, to coincide – and they all sold."

Among his best buys to date was a collection of furniture from a school clearance sale. One cupboard turned out to be full of 1960s medical posters, which went like stink.

Look around his barn storeroom and you'll find a row of rocking horses, a stuffed boar's head, a trio of rubber glove moulds ("the other set sold as a jewellery stand: nice, eh?"), and, perhaps the pièce de résistance, a stack of deliciously vibrant fairground signs, flagging up everything from dodgems to the big wheel.

The signs are the handiwork of a retired fair hand called Eugene; Karl befriended him some years back, having bought one of his works on eBay. "I said I'd be in touch someday, wanting to sell his signage for him – and I was!"

"The idea for the business had been bubbling under for a while: when it came to it,

I wrote the business plan in one day. It was all there, in my head.

"In the future, I'd like to partner with more people like Eugene; provide them with a platform for their work."

Top customer service is also a cornerstone of Ralph & Co, Karl adds. Even though people are shopping in the most modern of ways – online – he wants the experience to have an old-fashioned charm. He calls every customer to get feedback on their purchase, which is sent out tissue-wrapped and with a complimentary box of chocolates.

The dream is to one day have a physical shop, ideally in central Cambridge, running alongside the virtual. "That's one of the reasons I've put Cambridge on the logo: it's my home city and I'm proud of it."

"Yeah, this was a big step to take," concludes Karl. "But I am so, so happy I took it: I'm genuinely doing my dream job."

For more information about Ralph & Co – and to browse and buy – go to ralphandcovintage.co.uk.

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Two Cambridge family-run businesses join forces to help homeowners to showcase the latest bathrooms and kitchens.

Two local family businesses, Andrew James Bathrooms and HBC Kitchens have recently joined forces for the first time bringing both showrooms under one roof. Andrew James Bathrooms has been on Mill Road for over 30 years and has now been completely revamped to make space for the new HBC Kitchen displays and exciting new bathroom displays too.

"We share a customer base at the same level," says Charlie Surbey of Andrew James Bathrooms. "Bathroom and kitchen renovations fit nicely together into Cambridge at the moment and we're finding with increased property prices in the city, people are releasing money from their houses to do works to the house." He goes on "They're two rooms where people can add substantial value to their homes and, with our joint offering, customers will find the most important thing is that they're buying a quality product at the most competitive price."

HBC Kitchens have been in business since 2008. "This is the third showroom we've opened," says owner Graeme. "We manufacture all the kitchen carcasses in St Ives, with a ten working day lead time, and we source all our doors from Burbidge and Uform." He goes on "For kitchen appliances we work with Miele and Neff so are able to offer customers prices that won't be beaten on the internet.

"We're finding in Cambridge at the moment there's an increased demand for the traditional look, especially in the period houses," says Charlie. "People like to mix the contemporary with the traditional so we offer a carefully selected range of quality suppliers such as Merlyn showers, Burlington, Crosswater and Roper Rhodes, as well a great choice of tiles and worktops across both departments.

The companies offer a full, free 3D design service and comprehensive on site survey. The best quality plumbing, gas and central heating supplies for the Cambridge area are also on offer

with all work guaranteed for 12 months. Plus Andrew James Bathrooms specialise in central heating systems and boiler replacements, all carried out to comply with SEDBUK legislation, by fully qualified/insured and GAS SAFE Registered engineers.

Andrew James Bathrooms and HBC Kitchens won't be beaten on price, and have some amazing offers coming up in the new year, so if you're thinking of giving your house a fresh new look, make this your one-stop-shop for new bathrooms and kitchens.

Staff are available between the hours of 8.30am - 5pm Monday - Saturday to answer any questions you may have or to arrange a free on site survey of your property. Visit Andrew James Bathrooms & HBC Kitchens, 300-302 Mill Road, Cambridge. Free parking onsite and easy access via Mill Road. Visit andrewjamesbathrooms.com, hbc-kitchens.co.uk for more information or Tel: (01223) 211970.





Jim and Judi Griffiths were all set to sell their home of 30 years. Then they replaced their dark and dated kitchen with a light-filled modern model – and fell in love with the house all over again, as Jim tells Alice Ryan.

Pictures by Keith Heppell

ONE room

“

I

n many ways, we feel like we're living in a new house. We've lived here a very long time – 30 years – but it feels like a new home now. You walk into the

kitchen and, even on dark days, the sense of space and light hits you; it really has been transformed. Before, it had oak-fronted cupboards, a pine matchboard ceiling, strip lighting: it always felt gloomy, and it was pretty dated, to be honest.

I'm a director of a company that builds houses – Gibson Developments – and I was looking at buying one of those properties. As part of the process, we got our house valued; the feedback we got included the fact the bathrooms and kitchen were dated, and that potential buyers would be looking for something more contemporary.

I'd seen these amazing Italian-style kitchens in one of our developments – they're called Bontempi Wave, from By Design in Cambridge – and was really impressed. So I asked Francis Lowman, of By Design, to look at fitting our kitchen.

He was faced with a number of challenges. We didn't want the upheaval or expense of structural work – there are only two of us living in the house now, so it's not like we need the extra room. That meant he had to incorporate both the generous 'wave' cupboards and a breakfast bar in a relatively confined space.



But Francis really pulled it off. The kitchen feels spacious, yet there's plenty of storage; a place for everything. It's a really ergonomic design.

The palette of the whole room is pale: the matchboard has been replaced with a white plastered ceiling, set with LEDs rather than strip bulbs; the cupboards are either white or dove grey; the worktops are a mottled Silestone; the walls are a very light green. Most of the kitchen appliances – fridge, dishwasher – are concealed, so it's uncluttered. And, of course, it's striking to look at: it's all curves, no sharp edges.

Ours is a five-bedroomed house off Hills Road in Cambridge, dating from the 1940s, and we were drawn to it primarily because of its size: we have four children, and needed somewhere larger at the time. We also wanted to be back in the city; we'd spent eight years prior to that living in villages, but we wanted to have the best possible choice of schools for the children.

After so long in one house, it would have been a wrench to leave. As well as the kitchen, By Design fitted two bathrooms for us too. As I said, we've got the best of both worlds now: it's like living in a new house without having to move.

”

THE BRAINS BEHIND THE BEAUTY

"The brief given by my client was to give the house a modern-looking kitchen, en suite and bathroom just like a new-build they had seen," says Francis Lowman of By Design. "Their decision was to stay and remodel or move. So we designed a gorgeous curved kitchen in a unique wave design by Bontempi, fitted with appliances by Miele and Siemens and with a Silestone worktop called LYRA, and two Villeroy & Boch bathrooms – one wet room, the other with a shower over the bath."

Prices start at £30,000 for a kitchen and £12,000 for a bathroom (both fitted).

Founded in 2003, By Design is a two-family-run company. The six-strong team offers everything from supply-only kitchens and bathrooms from British and German brands to a full design, supply and installation service, serving retail customers, trade and multiple property contracts.

For more information visit bydi.co.uk or call (01223) 248409. To contact Francis direct email f1@bydi.co.uk.

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DESIGNS FOR LIFE

Turning her growing family's home into a space both practical and aesthetically pleasing inspired Julie Brown to quit a career in graphic design and move into interiors. With a City & Guilds qualification under her belt, Julie now runs her own company – JFB Interiors, based in Wentworth, near Ely. She offers everything from a full design and project management service to the creation of a single samples board; no job is too big or too small. Taking on all kinds of challenges, from awkward room sizes and shapes to problems with colour palettes, Julie's list of happy customers appears to be growing fast: "When people smile as they walk into their new rooms, I know I've done my job."

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A DIFFERENT CLASS

If you're interested in interiors but, when it comes to design, don't know where to begin, take heed: Angel + Blume, the acclaimed interior design company in Cambridge, is running a six-week evening course on the subject – and there's still time to sign up. Starting on January 26, and running every Tuesday night until March 8, *Interior Design Your Home* covers everything from establishing personal style to planning layouts and using colour and lighting to best effect.

Places cost £140 per person for the full course of six 60-minute sessions; numbers are capped at 15, so make haste if you want to book (see angelandblume.com). Your home will be a castle in no time.



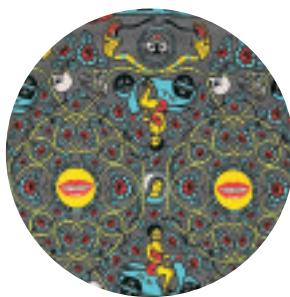
Out of Africa

It's traditional in Africa to weave stories into cloth; whether remembering a loved one or making a political point, the chosen motifs have a message. Shine Shine – a collection of fabrics patterned with modern-day flotsam and jetsam, from lipsticks and high heels to a scooter and laptop – brings the tradition bang up to date.

The brainchild of design duo Tracy Rushmere and Heidi Chisholm, the fabrics reflect the so-called 'shine' – the many little things that make up a particular person – of four individual women: Jacki So, Jennifer Paris, Julie Juu and Mary Rose.

As well as referencing social history, the prints tip their brims to tattoo art, too; equal parts reverential and playful, they're an absolute delight.

► Shine Shine fabric, 60 per cent cotton/40 per cent linen, £48 per metre, at porcupinerocks.com



LIFE'S A ZOO

These fabulous (though, admittedly, not for the faint-hearted) end-tables take the 'accessories as art' trend to the next level. New from famously eclectic furniture brand Kare, they come in eight designs, including pug, polar bear and gorilla. Animal magic, no?



Tiger, bear and elephant polyresin end-tables, £125 each, at design55online.co.uk



HEAVEN'S DOORS

Forget common-or-garden gloss-painted wood: doors can be far more than functional. In fact, they can be a focal point – as these double doors, at a home in Harston, go to show. The handiwork of glass designer Clive Sparkes, of Go Glass on Cambridge's Cherry Hinton Road, they're hand-etched with a magnificent flock of seagulls swooping down on a newly furrowed field. The brief was, explains Clive, to create an eye-catching entrance without blocking out light; the end result ticks all boxes.

After more than 25 years in the business, Clive's work is highly sought after: the BBC, Bafta and Hampton Court Palace are all on his client list.

While this large-scale bespoke project cost in the region of £2,500, Go Glass also offers a range of standard etched designs from £900.

► Find out more: visit goglass.co.uk or call (01223) 211041.

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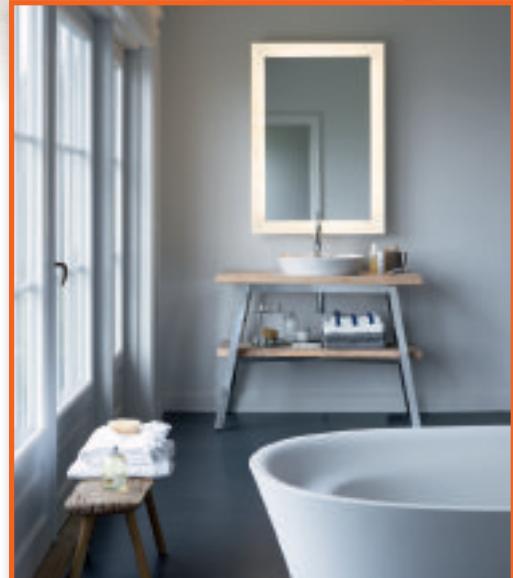
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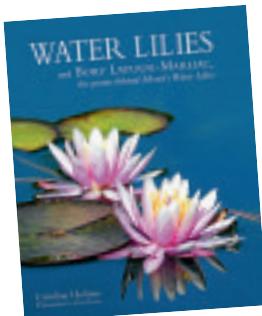
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Must-read

A biography of Monet's most famous muse – the water lily – this new release from Garden Art Press follows the flower from humble beginnings to present-day fame. Meticulously researched, beautifully written and illustrated with sumptuous images, *Water Lilies* charts a journey begun by one man – Joseph Bory Latour-Marliac, whose blooms Monet bought for his Giverny garden – and continued by millions. Equally rewarding whether you're an amateur or an expert, it's a delight to read.



Water Lilies and Bory Latour-Marliac: The Genius Behind Monet's Water Lilies by Caroline Holmes, with photographs by Peter Evans, is out now in hardback, priced £30

What to do in January

The undisputed stars of the winter garden, hellebores come into their own this month. To keep them cosy, make sure you mulch round the base of each plant; a generous layer of bark chippings is ideal.

As long as the ground's not hard as iron, now's a good time to plant bare-root fruit trees and bushes. A good tip is to buy from a local nursery rather than via mail order, because the plants will have already acclimatised to our area's weather and soil conditions.

Make yourself a cup of tea, settle down on the sofa and peruse the new season's seed catalogues. It's time to make your annual order: all kinds of annuals – from onions and cabbages to sweet peas and calendula – will need to be sown very soon.



Best bloom . . .

Eye a viburnum at the beginning of winter and you'd dismiss it as nothing special – just boring bare branches, the same as any other deciduous shrub. But round about now, as temperatures plumb new depths, something magical happens: the viburnum comes into heavy and headily-scented flower. Among the best-performing varieties on the market is Viburnum x bodnantense 'Dawn' (so good it won an RHS Award of Garden Merit). Its flowers, which unfurl in January, start out deep pink and fade slowly to white as winter wears on; standing proud on woody stems, they're glorious.

'Dawn' is far from a one-trick pony: come spring it'll be covered in pretty purple berries, while in autumn it's a mass of fiery foliage. In short: every garden should have one.

£10.99 for a 9cm pot – order at thompson-morgan.com



gardeners
WORLD



HAND THERAPY CREAM IN ROSEWATER, £15, AT CRABTREE & EVELYN, ROSE CRESCENT, CAMBRIDGE



BOOTED OFF

A half-way house between a slip-on wellibob and full-on boots, these cropped Molly wellies are set to become the gardening girl's best friend – pretty, practical and perfect for pottering.

Mid-height Molly welly – in Black Bee, Navy Dogs and Pink Posy – £36.95 a pair, at Joules, Sidney Street, Cambridge

January can, let's be honest, be a pretty depressing month. Bank balances are low, waistbands are tight, and the weather's wall-to-wall grey. One chink of cheer, however, comes courtesy of the snowdrop; its bright white blooms bringing light to these darkest of days. The diminutive bulbs look lovely even in the smallest clump – but planted in swathes they fair take the breath away. The best place to see snowdrops in this neck of the woods is,

arguably, Anglesey Abbey, the National Trust property in Lode. Spanning 120 acres, the gardens are home to an amazing 300 varieties, from the common-or-garden to the exceedingly rare (such as Galanthus 'Anglesey Abbey', which is unique to the plot). A walk through the snowdrop-dusted grounds is a sure-fire way to boost both body and soul. For opening times and more information see nationaltrust.org.uk/anglesey-abby.



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style



January's the perfect time to pep up your wardrobe with some slick new workwear, from ladylike shifts to super-smart tailoring. Louise Cummings finds elegant apparel, plus inspiring gear for gym bunnies and lounge lizards. . .

Office angel

Pop on the exec specs, fire up the laptop and show them you mean business. January can be a dreary old month, so invest in smart office attire to exude nine-to-five style. This look from Wallis is just the job.

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Compiled by Louise Cummings

**THAT'S MAGIC**

Tinker Bell would love to adorn herself in these! Twisted Fairytale is a wonderfully-whimsical collection of jewellery by British brand Orelia, just launched for spring/summer 2016. The charming array of rings, bangles, earrings and necklaces, as well as unique headpieces and body accessories, comprises finely-detailed pieces featuring semi-precious stones, rose-gold tones and ostrich feathers. We're enchanted.

Prices start from £8, at orelia.com

**PURPLE REIGNS**

An uplifting fusion of elegant iris and punchy patchouli, with a sweet edge, a spritz of Pure Dusk Purple, £12.99, at New Look, will have you skipping through the snowdrops.



CAMBRIDGE MAGAZINE

FIERCE BUY

This is animal print at its best we think; Marc Cain mint clutch bag, £185, at marc-cain.com.

**FLORAL FANCY**

The spring bulbs will be bursting into bloom before you know it. And fashion continues to mimic the natural world; be the toast of the season in these Blosome heels, £85, at Dune, Market Street, Cambridge.

STRAPPY BLACK SWIMSUIT, £40, AT LONGTALLSALLY.COM



LEOPARD PRINT TRAINERS, £24.99, AT BONPRIX.CO.UK



FLORAL SHORTS, £68, TOP, £61, AT WEAREHANDSOME.COM



SLOGAN TOP, £5, AT PRIMARK, BURLEIGH STREET, CAMBRIDGE



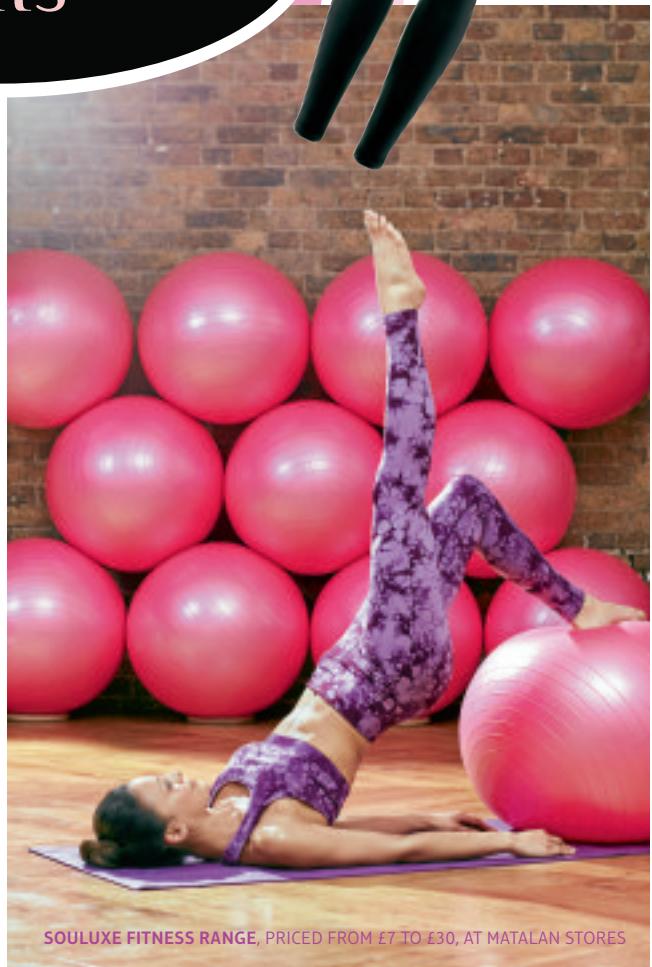
LEGGINGS, £17.99, AT NEW LOOK, LION YARD AND THE GRAFTON, CAMBRIDGE

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£17.99, AT NEW LOOK, AS BEFORE

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MATCHING SKIRT, £300,
AT TEODOSIALLOYD.COM



AUDRIE SHOES,
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MARKET STREET,
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ELSA
DRESS, £68,
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TREE.CO.UK



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PEONY CHEMISE, £8, BY GEORGE AT ASDA



PINK TARTAN PYJAMAS, £28, AT BOUX AVENUE.COM



CASHMERE GAUZY CARDI-GOWN, £395, JOGGERS, £325, AT BRORA, TRINITY STREET, CAMBRIDGE



VIOLET CHECK PYJAMAS, £45, AT CYBERJAMMIES.CO.UK



IN WEAR SILK KIMONO, PART OF THE HELENA CHRISTENSEN RANGE AT PETRUS, BRIDGE STREET, CAMBRIDGE, AND HIGH STREET, SAFFRON WALDEN



HEART TEE, £30, AT PEOPLE TREE.COM



YAWN DREAM COAT DRESSING GOWN, £195, AT LOVEYAWN.COM

Just the JOB

It's the start of a shiny new year – and for many of us time to take stock of our lives and make a host of resolutions. Let's start with your career; are you doing something you truly love? If the answer is no, and you're in need of some ideas, Louise Cummings has tracked down nine ladies and gents doing their dream jobs. Prepare to be inspired. . .



Dave Stewart

Always a keen swimmer, Cambridge graduate Mairead Kelly decided to follow her dream to become a professional mermaid after surviving a rare brain tumour. The 27-year-old from Ely performs her enchanting underwater act with the group Merlesque.

I work as an auditor by day and a mermaid on evenings and weekends! It makes for an interesting dinner party story, or if I go to a meeting of accountants, I tend to lead with 'Hello, I'm a mermaid!'

I've loved swimming since I was little, particularly under the water; I was never that fussed about doing lengths or front crawl or butterfly, so my mum, in particular, was not surprised that I wanted to be a mermaid.

One of my friends is a performer who does stilt walking and trapeze and she had very bad shin splints so wasn't able to work. Another of our friends joked that she needed to find a performance that didn't require using her legs, like being a mermaid.

I was diagnosed with a rare brain tumour in my final year at Cambridge University and I definitely think it's one of those things that makes you think you should just go for what you want and not sit back and look at the practicalities.

The first time I did a kids' party as a mermaid at one of Cambridge's outdoor pools by the Cam was pretty memorable. The kids

were so excited and that's when you get the buzz! Funny, their reaction ranges from adoration to mistrust; I think mermaids are weirdly like Santa, so really little ones love watching us but they're a lot less certain about coming up and talking to us; the fish tail freaks them out.

My favourite thing is working in aquariums; it's amazing because you get the full backstage tour, to meet all the people that work in the aquarium and to swim with all these incredible creatures. Last August we were at Blue Planet, up in Cheshire, and we swam with sand tiger sharks, nurse sharks, lemon sharks, two moray eels and guitar fish and stingrays; all sorts of things, it was quite magical.

We really want to go out to Hawaii and swim in our mermaid tails among the coral reefs, meet the creatures and have a whale of a time. This is definitely my dream job, especially as it's quite unrealistic and strange, but at the same time really awesome!

Mark Jones



Andrew Childs Photography

John Bell, 65, paints nostalgic 'chocolate box' pictures of idyllic scenes, from St Ives to Spain. More than 600 of the Somersham artist's designs are currently being used on greetings cards around the world and his work appears in various galleries.



I was always good at art in my youth but I originate from the North East of England, where, when you finished education, you got a 'proper job'. I didn't fancy ship building, so I went into the Merchant Navy and when I was at sea I'd paint and study art books.

Some years back a large greetings cards company asked me to start producing designs for them. I was chuffed to bits because for quite a few years all I did was paint for friends and family. And now my work is available around the world!

I specialise in 'chocolate box' scenes, so I'd be commissioned to paint someone sitting outside a beautiful pavement café in France perhaps. Such scenes remind people of wonderful holidays and bring back memories. I've travelled to France and Spain many times to paint, but I've got my bus pass now; I could probably still travel there on the bus, but it might take a bit longer!

At the moment I'm working on spring stock, so lots of rabbits and daffodils, and these will

feature in the spring catalogues. I love to paint my four grandchildren, Demi, Macy, Oli and Eliot and they are always so proud that they take new designs into school to show their teachers.

I love to paint pretty scenes around Cambridgeshire, as well as in Norfolk and Suffolk; you've got the big open skies, the moody fens and the windmills. Wells-next-the-Sea is very popular, as is Burnham Market, and I've just completed some scenes in Finchingfield, which is possibly the most painted and photographed village in the whole of the UK.

The best thing about my job is that I still get such pleasure from it, and I hope I bring pleasure to other people too. It's very calming and helps take me away from all the horrible things happening in the world, plus it keeps my wife happy as I'm not under her feet.

I'll never be a really rich man, but I'm always happy and content and it's great to have a little bit of income to supplement my pension!



Author, journalist and mother-of-two Ali Harris, 39, lives in Histon. Her debut novel *Miracle on Regent Street* became a *Sunday Times* best-seller and she's currently penning her fourth book, set in mid-1950s Broadway.

The first story I ever wrote was when I was 7; it was about someone waking up and the world had turned to sweets, so the clouds were marshmallow and things like that. The idea was so vivid in my head and I remember my teacher being impressed and my mum saying what a lovely story it was. I loved the escapism of reading and writing.

I was writing a book when I was working at *Glamour* magazine, which was what I 'thought' publishers wanted to read, based around a high-flying PR girl, but it wasn't very me.

While I was writing a column about dating at *Company* magazine I got spotted by an agent. She'd heard I was interested in writing a novel and said that once I'd done it, I could send it to her – and I did, but it was three years later. I didn't want to rush into it and throw away the opportunity, so I waited until I was really ready.

Writing my debut novel *Miracle on Regent Street* was just an amazing experience

because, although I'd signed with an agent, there were no deadlines or pressures; it was a special time. When it became a *Sunday Times* bestseller it felt surreal as I'd never thought about the business side of things. All I wanted was to see my book on the shelves and know that those stories had found a life outside of my computer and my bedside drawer.

I've just had a year off because my kids were very young when I got my book deal. I feel absolutely, completely revitalised and writing my current book feels so joyful I'm enjoying getting completely lost in it. It's set in mid-1950s Manhattan on Broadway and I've loved geeking out with the research, even standing on a Broadway stage!

Writing books is one of the best feelings in the world, like an out of body experience, which lifts you out of reality into another world, where the hours fly by! In those moments, writing is that perfect image of what I always dreamed it would be. It's a real pleasure.



Cambridge-born Anna Carpen, 30, became the youngest creative director in advertising in the UK two years ago. Her latest project was the big budget Christmas campaign for House of Fraser.



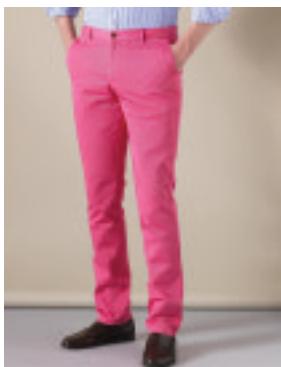
As a little girl I wanted to be a cartoonist. I was always drawing and making little books; in fact I couldn't be left alone with powder paints because I'd try to put them on the radiators! My mum would never tell me off though, because she didn't want to stifle my creativity.

I was made a creative director when I was 28 and it's pretty hard to move up the ranks in this industry being a woman. I work at 18 Feet & Rising, an advertising agency based near Oxford Circus. I really enjoy telling a story in 30 or 60 seconds and I've worked on some great campaigns; one of my favourite ads featured a load of corgis travelling across the country to watch the Royal Wedding. You think they are going to the palace, but instead they go to someone's house to watch it on Freeview. They were the same dogs from *The King's Speech*, so they were Oscar-winning corgis!

Working on the Christmas ad campaign for House of Fraser this year has been

amazing. We've been on it since April so it's been a slog, but the feedback's been great – the other day Nick Grimshaw and Annie Nightingale were talking about it on Radio 1 and the song we chose has now got to number 5 in the official charts. It's really nice to be doing work that people enjoy. This is definitely my dream job; I love the variety. One day I'll be writing a script, the next going to a casting, and then shooting the day after. My favourite thing is being on set filming, the joy is definitely in the making.

Shooting abroad is exciting and I've been lucky to work around the world, from New Zealand to Argentina, Thailand to Portugal. New Zealand was awesome as it was my first visit. The ad was for Cuprinol Wood Preserver in Auckland: the funny thing is people think that might be a boring brief, but you can take what seems like a boring product and make it really interesting. That's the beauty of the job.



Tom Cridland, 25, is a fashion designer based in Bar Hill, and inventor of The 30 Year Sweatshirt. His designs have been worn by the likes of Leonardo DiCaprio, Daniel Craig and Ben Stiller.

I don't have a fashion background – I studied modern languages at university – and it was more from the entrepreneurial side of things that I decided to start up my business. When I was 18, during the swine 'flu crisis, a friend and I designed a T-shirt that said Swine09 on it and we sold 300 in a week, making about £3,000. We felt bad for cashing in on swine 'flu so we donated the money to Médecins Sans Frontières, but we were still quite satisfied to come up with a concept, even if it was an incredibly naff one!

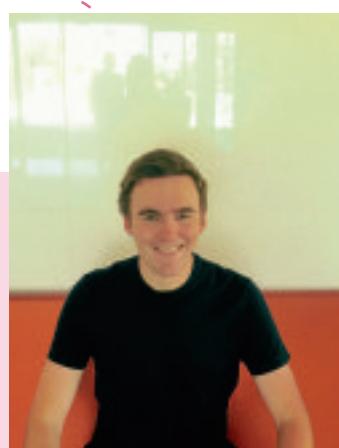
I launched Tom Cridland at the start of 2014 with just four pairs of trousers – that quickly turned into eight and now we do 14. We offer a cut of trouser that looks like that elegant on-trend slim cut, but they're comfortable, and come in a variety of materials and colours you'd struggle to find in top fashion houses.

Lots of celebrities wear our trousers, the two biggest being Leonardo DiCaprio and Daniel Craig, but there's also been Robbie Williams, Ben Stiller and Elton John's

drummer Nigel, who's a lovely guy and has become a friend.

The 30 Year Sweatshirt I designed has brought us a huge level of publicity. I thought it was different, fun and a good way of doing something in sustainable fashion. Basically, it's a sweatshirt I can guarantee will last for 30 years; it's made from Italian organic cotton and polyester, which sounds less glamorous, but we need it to keep the mobility in the fabric. I donate 10 per cent of the profits to Deki, to help entrepreneurs living in poverty. I was given a £6,000 government start-up loan for my business, which was a wonderful opportunity and one many people don't have, so I wanted to give something back.

I love to work for myself, be the one in the hotseat, setting the plan and target and seeing the results almost immediately. Invariably, that means I want to work more. Even on Christmas Day I got my laptop out for a bit! It honestly gets addictive.





After surviving a near-death car crash, which left him unable to walk or talk, Justin Miles, from near Ely, has fought back to health to become a full-time explorer, battling extreme conditions across all seven continents of the globe.



I grew up in Devon, so I was pretty much always outdoors, with moors to hike over and rivers to kayak in. But as you get older real life kicks in, you've got a mortgage to pay and you end up with a job, so your adventures get relegated to weekends and holidays.

In 1999, when I was in my 20s, I was involved in a car crash which left me brain damaged, with no grasp of reality.

As I was coming round, all I could do was watch TV and there's only so much *Richard and Judy* that anyone can watch, brain damaged or not! So I started to relive childhood memories, dreams and ambitions, thinking how I always wanted to explore – and I thought 'Do you know what? I'm going to make this happen'.

My adventures have been diverse, from climbing mountains in France, Germany and Italy to trekking through jungles in South America. A couple of months ago I did Mount Kenya and going up reminded me of why I do it: when you get to the top

and see the sunrise over the horizon it's an unbelievable, unbeatable feeling.

A really cool adventure was paddle boarding just outside the Arctic Circle, where we saw seals and Arctic foxes. On one of the days we were looking for somewhere to camp and found a beach that looked Hawaiian, all white sand with waterfalls coming off the glacial melt, with semi-submerged icebergs, so we all ended up in the water swimming, paddle boarding icebergs and having an absolute riot!

Everything I do is connected with education, so I give kids a window into my world through my activities. In Kenya, I was Skyping with schools from a rainforest and I've phoned schools from a sat phone on top of a mountain in South Africa. I talk to about 4,500 kids a month and hope I can raise awareness of the fact that 59 million kids can't go to school around the world. I hope I can, in small part, help make education possible.

Sonya Hawes, 39, from Cambourne, has been a firefighter for the past five-and-a-half years and is based in Huntingdon. Now part of the Tactical Delivery Group, she's recently qualified to drive fire engines on blue light calls.

I didn't dream of being a firefighter like some people do; I was working in a young offenders' prison and someone there was an on-call firefighter and suggested I might like the role. When I visited my mum in Cambridge and looked in the paper they were recruiting – and the rest is history!

I worked as a firefighter on Red Watch at Cambridge for the first four-and-a-half years. One of the biggest jobs was the University Arms Hotel fire in 2013. We could see it as we came out of the fire station that morning; I was with the support crew that went in with the first team, so I was there at its hottest. I've also rescued a cat from up a tree! It'd been up there for three days, then we popped a ladder up and it jumped down.

I've recently qualified to drive fire engines. My first shout was with Cambridge White Watch, so that was a big deal. I remember pulling out of the station that first time, the mix of nerves and excitement. It was the quietest I've

ever been since I joined the fire service, because I'm normally quite loud, but you have to be tuned in because pedestrians and drivers are unpredictable.

As of this year I've joined the Tactical Delivery Group; we cover the rescue vehicle and the Command Unit at Huntingdon and go out to on-call stations. I like the fact every day is different and you don't know what you're coming in to.

If there are any women out there that would like to do the job, but think they can't, I'd say it's a career that's accessible to a lot of people. There's so many roles in the fire service and there's such a sense of camaraderie. The fire service is changing, but the banter is what keeps people going and that won't change. It's one of the best jobs to have, knowing you've saved someone's property or extricated them from a vehicle. There's a lot of satisfaction, and if I'm stood in a pub and we're talking about careers, I know I am happy with where I am.



My love of nature is down to the fact that before the age of 4, we lived in Brunei, where I was surrounded by amazing wildlife. I remember catching praying mantises in a tree in our garden. Famously, when I was 4, I asked my dad what job I could do to work with animals and he said zoology, so I said 'OK, I'm going to do that'. That's how I ended up having this very clear trajectory to study zoology, then do my behavioural ecology PhD.

I had so many pets growing up: cats, rabbits, a dog, fish, and when I was 15 I got a yellow rat snake called Marigold. Next, I had Cleo, an 8ft boa constrictor, and a monitor lizard called Bert; he was about the size of a cat and used to hang out on the sofa and watch telly with me. When I went to Cambridge University to study natural sciences you weren't allowed pets, but I flaunted the rule and had Madagascan hissing cockroaches, tarantulas and a goldfish!

I'm a senior ecologist with CSA Environmental. It's great because you get to be outdoors in remote areas and visit places other people don't get to see, from woodlands to country houses. The other day I was in

the commentator's box at a famous football stadium, thinking if only I was a fan I'd be amazed right now!

As part of my job I undertake surveys for bats, badgers, newts and reptiles – and getting to see all these creatures is really cool. I've seen some awesome sights, from peregrine falcons flying around Battersea Power Station, to a badger cub trotting alongside me one afternoon in Aberdeenshire.

Bat surveys are amazing; they're a double-edged sword because they take place at dusk and dawn, when you're tired, but seeing bats makes up for it. You're always hoping you're going to get to that site where 2,000 bats fly out of a roost.

Ecology consultancy definitely ticks all my boxes. It is like detective work; you're being paid to access a site and piece together clues about whether it is likely to support protected species. It's the best feeling when you've told the client 'Oh, I think there's a maternity colony of brown long-eared bats in your barn', and it turns out there is; although the clients aren't always as pleased.



Animal-lover Dr Martin Brammah is a senior ecologist who works in Cambridge. A real-life 'Dr Doolittle', he lives in Waterbeach with wife Amber, son Milo and Labrador Charlie and has just published his first book on breeding Siamese fighting fish
– *The Betta Bible*.



Gilb Fletcher has toured all over Europe – including playing to a 70,000-strong crowd at Bestival last year – singing and playing harmonica with blues band Split Whiskers. Living and working in Waterbeach, he also raises millions of pounds through his fundraising consultancy business.



Melodie Strawbridge

My mother was a musician and was known in Lincolnshire as Fenland's Gracie Fields. She was also a mean boogie woogie piano player and she was playing right up to her 70s. So the influence was there subconsciously.

Apparently I was a good singer because I'd been asked to join various choirs, and I remember a schoolfriend of mine playing some Elmore James one day and I was just totally tuned into that. Another friend got me into playing harmonica and within two weeks I was on stage at the Key Theatre in Peterborough. I was shaking when I came off and some guy came over and said 'You were really good'.

I met most of Split Whiskers at jamming sessions in Cambridge in the late 90s; we've been together 11 years this month. We have a shared love of blues but we didn't want to do standard done-to-death blues. We do a lot of up-tempo stuff, which people love to dance to. Chicago blues is the genre and we cross boundaries into Americana with more than a hint of the Delta.

I've played all over, in some amazing

clubs in Chicago, and as a band we've toured Denmark, played Ireland and Bestival last year, which was amazing! We played the iconic 100 Club on Oxford Street last year, which felt out of this world; it's so steeped in history, it was definitely a highlight. We've played more than 1,000 gigs together now.

We also like playing intimate little pubs and clubs; the bottom line is we love to play. We've got three albums out and on the latest I've written five songs, and when you see people singing along to stuff you have written, it feels fantastic.

By day, I'm a fundraising consultant, which I love because I get to work with amazing people and truly inspiring students; I've worked with around a quarter of the Cambridge colleges, fundraising from alumni for student welfare, access, scholarships and bursaries. Even though for me, it's not about the money, I'm very proud of the fact I hold the record for raising £1.4million for one Cambridge college in a two-week campaign. So now I get to do two things I love and it's a great work/life balance!

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Compiled by Lisa Millard

FASHION clinic

Our Fashion Clinic is here to help. Need to know the latest trends? We've got them. Want an insider guide to looking lovely in winter florals? Our experts are blooming brilliant. So, don't be shy peeps – ping us a question. You will look and feel a whole lot better for it. . .

Q I am turning over a new leaf this year and investing in key pieces that offer me quality and craftsmanship as well as style. Shoes and boots are on the top of my must-buy list and I'm open to suggestions for both me and my husband. So, where should I go and what could I buy?

A We've a fantastic choice of footwear for ladies by Paul Green and for men by Loake – literally hundreds of styles perfect to carry you both through the winter season and throughout next year. If you're looking for a versatile winter/spring choice then **1** Paul Green's calf leather ankle boot, style 7358 is just the job (£140). The Austrian manufacturer offers it in five seasonal colours – tan, nougat, navy, truffle and gloss black. It is perfectly balanced with a 25mm heel, arch support and a memory foam metatarsal foot bed which sits under your toes for extra comfort. Tan, nougat and truffle look great with jeans – and, with the style neatly cut around the ankle, it can also be worn with dresses and skirts.

If it's a shoe you're looking for, we'd recommend **2** Paul Green's style 2834 (£125) – a timeless and elegant court shoe with a quality and fit that puts it above any competitors. The width is generous where needed, but the heel

clip is snug and secure, ensuring no slip. The foot bed includes the same technology as the boot and provides unrivalled comfort. It's a perfect work and occasion shoe. It's available in half-sizes, as with all of the footwear in our collection.

For him, the Loake range features a wide choice of styles – including deck shoes, loafers, brogues, and toe-caps. We stock Loake styles from size UK 6 to UK 12, including half sizes and we are fitting specialists – our manager Paul Luesby MSSF (a Member of the Society of Shoe Fitters) and his team are all trained to measure and fit footwear to the highest standard.

A particular favourite for this season is **3** the Kempton boot from Loake's 1880 range (£215). This classic style of chukka boot is perfect with jeans. This style is made by hand in Loake's factory in Kettering in Northamptonshire, renowned the world over for excellence in footwear manufacture.

Another shoe style for him is **4** Loake's Buckingham, also from its 1880 range (£215). This wingtip 'Oxford' is quintessentially British. The last is middle fitting and will complement any look – the tan and mahogany team brilliantly with navy and the black will work perfectly with a suit – be it for work or a special occasion.



James North, North Shoes,
11 Rose Crescent, Cambridge.
Contact (01223) 324788 and see
northshoes.co.uk.

Q I'm a mum in my 40s with a size 12 in an apple shape. In other words – a bit of a tummy but good legs! I struggle to find a fabulously-fitting pair of jeans that are stylish and can no longer get away with the same sort that suit my teenage daughter. Can you help?

A Yes we can! Look one size smaller in our best-selling MAC Mode jeans (£99). MAC Mode has created the ultimate jeans with the fit and feel of a second skin. They are lightweight, durable and flattering and are available in a skinny or a straight leg fit. Both styles would look great on your shape as you will be showing off your best asset – your legs. They



come in a range of different shades every season and always have a funky print option too, so you'll be able to find the perfect pair to match your seasonal wardrobe. We have customers who love them so much, they have every colour and we have to call them when the next delivery arrives. So do come and see us in the new year and give them a try. They absolutely live up to their name, Dream Jeans!

Hayley Butler, Cuckoo, St Mary's Passage, Cambridge and Burwash Manor, Barton. Contact (01223) 364345 and see cuckooclothing.co.uk. New online shop – sign in now to start shopping and claim a 10 per cent welcome discount.



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Compiled by Louise Cummings

SHAPE SHIFTERS

Jump-start your January fitness regime with some kickass gym kit. And don't try to use depleted funds as an excuse for not parting with pounds to shed lbs – Matalan has recently launched a very affordable range called Souluxe, pictured left. Fusing modern fitness fashion with everyday workwear, it features a mix of functional gym attire, running shoes and performance apparel. Our other High Street heroes in this area are H&M. Recreate the sport luxe look with this trio...



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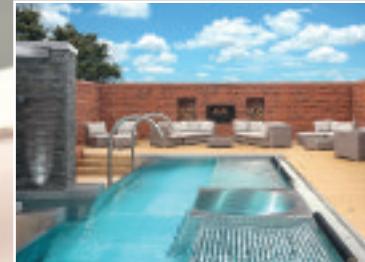
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THE CREAM TEAM

Searching for a wedding outfit can be as taxing as tracking down the bridal gown.

Which is where Sue Ross comes in. Having run Cream boutique in Royston for the past 40 years, she's an oracle on occasionwear. Louise Cummings meets to talk fashion.

Pictures by Keith Heppell





ucked away down a little side street in Royston, Cream boutique's exterior is deceptive. Peering through the double-fronted windows, you'll see elegant attire displayed on mannequins, and rails of posh frocks alongside daytime staples.

But stride inside and it's like you've stepped through CS Lewis's Wardrobe into Narnia, specifically 'weddingwear' Narnia. It's literally packed to the rafters with exquisite apparel which would make any mother of the bride shine (without outshining the bride, of course!).

Upstairs one whole room is dedicated to the luxurious label Condici, an array of sophisticated dress and bolero sets in silks, satins and crepes in 2016's hottest shades – from coconut ice and navy to pearl and gold spice – hang together, each so beautifully embellished you can't help but touch them. The room next door is a veritable lingerie boudoir, chock-full of designer smalls from Triumph, Lepel and Fantasie, among others. Back downstairs two more rooms are dedicated to sumptuous occasionwear with literally hundreds of matching sets, including vibrant designs in taffeta and lace by Ispirato and John Charles and chic looks from Gina Bacconi and Frank Lyman, perfect for cocktail, evening and cruisewear. Proving it's not a one-trick pony, there's also a large space dedicated to daywear, including laid-back creations by Seasalt Cornwall and cosy knitwear and dresses by Adini and Gerry Weber.

"We've built up such a reputation for our weddingwear over the years that people come from quite far afield," says Sue Ross, who launched Cream – alongside husband Peter – 40 years ago. "We've had people travel from Wales, the West Country, and one lady flew down especially from Scotland because her daughter-in-law's parents recommended us!"

Right on cue a customer drops by returning a flamboyant champagne-hued hat she'd hired from Cream for a family wedding. Beaming, she waxes lyrical about the day and is full of praise for Sue and her friendly staff. "That's the best part of the job, being able to find ladies the perfect outfit and sending them away happy," enthuses Sue, standing in front of a wall papered with photographs of smiling customers, resplendent in their Cream outfits. "It's lovely to see how the ladies looked on the day. They're always on such a high afterwards!"

Sue was bitten by the fashion bug as a teen, when she'd create all her own clothes on her trusty Singer. "I worked in banking in London and made all my own suits, plus outfits for the family too." When she met husband Peter on holiday in Austria, they discovered a shared passion, as he was working in the fashion business in the West End. "Peter had been in the rag trade from his late teens and used to sell to shops right up to Scotland, then he became a sales director in the West End, focusing on separates, knitwear, blouses, that kind of thing. So it was actually his idea to open a shop," Sue recalls.

By 1975, married and living in Letchworth, the couple scoured the area for premises and found the shop on John Street, where they currently trade today. Back then it was a smaller outlet, and Cream – so named because of Sue's love of Eric Clapton (who had a band of the same name) – also

sold menswear. "We called the menswear range Mr Cream, so the customers would always refer to me as Mrs Cream!" Sue laughs.

With business booming, the Royston store was extended, while more shops opened in St Neots and Biggleswade, but when the Ross's two sons came along, Peter returned to work in London, and the business downsized back to the one original shop.

The weddingwear line that Cream has become renowned for was slowly phased in, starting with Jacques Vert and then diversifying into exclusive brands. "Customers liked Jacques Vert but said they didn't want an outfit that a guest would be wearing, but something special, which is why I then started doing Condici," explains Sue. "And everything took off from there really."

With the success of the occasion lines, menswear was closed, and a further store opened in St Ives, which remained open until just eight years ago.

Through its varying outlets, Cream has ensured that countless mothers of the bride and groom have found that elusive wow-factor outfit. So how does Sue know what women want? "I think I've done the buying for so many years now, I just follow my instincts and it's almost always the styles I home in on first which become the bestsellers."

With many customers spending several hours in the boutique, Cream offers an all-round service, from fits-like-a-glove lingerie, right through to extravagant hats, frilly fascinators and fine leather shoes, which Sue imports from Spain. "Underwear is such an important part of any outfit because it affects the way the actual garment hangs and the fit," advises Sue. Customers often buy months ahead and all fittings and alterations are carried out by Sue for free one month before an event.

Having traded for four decades, Sue says she's had plenty of memorable moments, from dressing clients for tea with HRH The Queen, through to showcasing her outfits on the catwalks of some of the region's biggest wedding fairs. But one memory still makes her shudder. "I was working at the shop late with a regular customer down by the fitting rooms. I had a little polo neck jumper in my hand as we were outfit matching. Suddenly this hoodie ran in and demanded 'Give me your money, give me

your purse' and held up what looked like a weapon under his coat, so I bashed his hand with the polo neck jumper, then chased him out of the shop! And then I shook!" she explains. "The lady I was with sent me some flowers the next day with a card reading 'To Sue, the only woman I know who can fend off a robber with a polo neck'. It's quite funny looking back," she laughs.

Sue's planning on celebrating the big 40 this month with her five staff – and the passage of time certainly hasn't dulled her passion. "I'm incredibly proud to have been in business for so long; my aim was to get to 40 years. The whole business has changed so much over the years; people are buying differently, many on the internet. But I still believe that we stand apart because we offer a genuinely lovely service. I did some tricky alterations on a John Charles lace dress for a customer the other day and when I finished it fitted perfectly. She was so delighted she said 'Oh, you're wonderful' and gave me a hug and a kiss, which was lovely. It's all about making people happy."



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GO GREEN

The birthstone for the month of May, emeralds are said to grant the owner foresight, good fortune and youth. Err, yes please. Gemporia, which offers the world's largest selection of ethically-sourced gemstones and diamonds, has unveiled a lavish spring/summer 16 selection of Bahia and Zambian emerald jewels, set in yellow and white gold. And the good news is that the covetable classics won't cost the earth, in either sense, with prices starting at £120. Choose your investment piece at gemporia.com.

WATCH OUT

Brighten up your outlook with this vibrant timepiece, from the new season Italian-inspired Sicily collection at Storm London. Created in a pretty palette of uplifting shades, it features a leather mock croc strap and is £119.99 at stormlondon.com.



MUM'S THE WORD

Louise Cummings takes the weight off with an Aromatherapy Associates Ultimate Pregnancy Massage at Finn Jordan Beauty & Hair Salon in Cambridge...

Spa treatments are up there with good food and fine wine in my trio of true loves. So though I was, of course, delighted when I discovered I was pregnant, I couldn't wait for the first trimester to be over, because beside the epic tiredness and nausea, guidelines dictate that massages and facials are a no-go. Mid second-trimester, I was Googling blissful mum-to-be treatments like no-one's business and I found that Finn Jordan on Sussex Street offers specialised Aromatherapy Associates treatments. Hallelujah.

Booked in for the Ultimate Pregnancy Massage, I was promised 75 minutes of all-over massage – including a rejuvenating full scalp and facial massage – said to relieve stresses and strains, heavy legs and an aching back. Sarah Jordan, who runs the

salon with Claire Finn, was my therapist, explaining that many clients nod off because the experience is über soothing. Being given three oils to smell, I chose the aroma I found most intoxicating for my treatment: an exotic, heady nourishing oil, infused with hydrating olive oil and macadamia nut oil. Goodbye stretch marks! Lying on a heated bed, I positioned myself on my side, one leg resting comfortably on the squishy pregnancy pillow, and Sarah started with a wonderful back massage, concentrating on pressure points, then smoothing oil up and down my back in gliding movements, and focusing on my shoulder knots.

Next, shifting on to my back, the bed tilted upwards, it was time for my facial massage, which induced such a state of serenity, I

was on the brink of an undignified snore. Nourishing oils were rubbed into my long locks, and Sarah gave me a superb scalp massage, moving on to my arms and hands, before gently smoothing oil into my burgeoning belly in delicate circular movements. The therapy finished with my tired legs, my calves certainly benefiting from some serious TLC. By the time Sarah had finished I was wishing I could turn the lights off and hide out in the tranquil treatment room all night. But as it was, I certainly had one of the best night's sleep of my pregnancy so far. Now I just need to diarize a return for the Ultimate Post Pregnancy Skin Nourisher once my little one has arrived. Can't wait!

• Finn Jordan is at 3-4 Sussex Street, Cambridge CB1 1PA.
The Aromatherapy Associates Ultimate Pregnancy Massage is £85 for 75 minutes. Visit finnjordan.co.uk.

Compiled by Louise Cummings

**GRAB IT**

Credit cards at the ready, there's a new season upon us and bazillions of bags to be bought! This beauty – the Aspen concertina grab bag – is a timeless classic, available in an array of statement shades from crimson red to cinematic monochrome. We likey.

● **Aspen blue mix bag, £79,**
at fiorelli.com

GOLD RUSH

Great news for our tresses: award-winning salon collective Rush Hair has opened its latest branch on Fitzroy Street in Cambridge. The salon group, which celebrated its 21st birthday last year, has more than 70 salons in London, the South East, Liverpool and Birmingham and has notched up 53 industry awards, with stylists regulars at London and Milan Fashion Week.

Rush Cambridge franchisee Gentiana Restelica says: "I think that Cambridge is in need of something new and fun. Rush promotes fashionable hair at an affordable price, so I'm hoping to attract the student market."

● Rush is at 24-26 Fitzroy Street, Cambridge CB1 1EW. Call (01223) 941993 or visit rush.co.uk.

**PAMPER PRODUCTS**

Give your beauty routine a boost with one of this tempting trio of new product launches...



Elemis Nourishing Omega-Rich Cleansing Oil, £29.50, launching February, at elemis.com and John Lewis, Grand Arcade, Cambridge
A light but effective oil to restore balance and protect the skin's precious microflora



Crème de la Mer Lifting Eye Serum, £180, launching January, at John Lewis, as before
Combining red-algae technology and sea-based actives to strengthen, renew and uplift



Murad Advanced Blemish & Wrinkle Reducer, £45, out now, at John Lewis, as before, and Y Spa, Wyboston
A powerful serum that treats and prevents blemishes while visibly reducing lines and wrinkles



Get started on a plan today

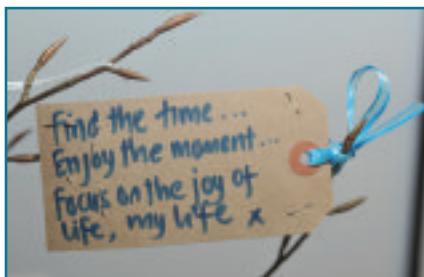
LighterLife is a low calorie diet which exists to give people the support they need to be the person they really want to be and to live a fulfilling and lighter life.

The franchise has been helping people to lose weight for over 20 years and is the weight loss plan with a difference. It's not just a diet, but a change programme to a better life and arguably the most sustainable way to lose weight and keep it off.



Michele Austin looks after the Lighterlife franchise in Cambridge. "Having lost weight with LighterLife myself, and with many years of experience in coaching and developing others,

I was delighted to be able to train as a weight-management counsellor and can now combine the two things I'm most passionate about," says Michele. "Helping individuals to lose weight, keep that weight off by enabling them to understand both their relationship with food, see why they initially gained weight and also the program develops



individuals to be the best they can possibly be." Michele continues, "Whilst a lot of people present with



being overweight as the issue, often what happens is that they discover very quickly that it's about lifestyle and things that have caused them to use food in an unhealthy way." Michele goes on, "We work in small groups and don't focus so much on the weight loss, but more on people's emotional attitude towards food. Once they've lost their weight, there's a phased reintroduction to food so that they know what they should be eating and the amounts. And then there's ongoing support for the rest of their lives if they want to take it up."

LighterLife also offer Foodpacks for people who want to try something like the 5:2 diet. Guided by the best experts, the best dieticians, scientists and medical teams, who instruct the manufacturers on exactly what to put into the Foodpacks, all are made to unique recipes, not bought off the shelf. "LighterLife Foodpacks give

you 100% of the recommended daily allowance (RDA) of key vitamins and minerals plus all the protein, fibre and essential fats you need, and in only 600 calories," says Michele. "All you need is this, and motivation, and you're on your way to a happier and healthier lifestyle."



You can do LighterLife Fast with a BMI of 20 or more so get in touch today and find out how this very low calorie diet can work for you.

Contact Michele Austin at LighterLife Cambridge, Unit 8 Chesterton Mill, Frenchs Road, Off Victoria Road, Cambridge, CB4 3NP, Tel: (01223) 362172 or 07884187677, visit lighterlife.com/micheleaustin or facebook.com/lighterlifecambridge

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A good BET

Cambridge Magazine Winter Ladies' Day saw Huntingdon Racecourse packed with style-savvy punters, keen to have a flutter on the Best Dressed titles as well as the horses. As Alice Ryan reports, the sartorial going was good...

Pictures by Keith Heppell

Proof that dressing for winter doesn't have to be drab, colour came out in force for *Cambridge Magazine* Winter Ladies' Day. With the event's Best Dressed Lady wearing sunshine yellow – and both runners-up in shades of look-at-me red – the palette reflected the punters' high spirits.

"It's about having fun, isn't it? Not just with the racing, but with what you're wearing too," said Judith Beckett, who took the Best Dressed Lady title. "I think it's lovely to see so many people making the effort. We don't have enough opportunities to dress up these days – so you have to make the most of them, don't you?"

Now in its third year, the event saw thousands of fashion and racing fans head for Huntingdon Racecourse on a chilly-but-bright November Saturday, to try their hands at both the Best Dressed and the tote.

With a ladies-only hurdle a highlight of the race card – and TV legend Derek 'Tommo' Thompson commentator for the day – the fashion marquee was another big draw.

Visitors could watch catwalk shows, staged by Cambridge Style Week (see overleaf); shop at a selection of fashion and beauty stands, including Anne Furbank of Buckden; and enter the three Best Dressed competitions – Couple, Gentleman and Lady – judged by our own *Cambridge Magazine* team.

Faux-fur, leather and retro silhouettes were all big hitters among the Best Dressed Lady hopefuls, but it wasn't just the women pulling out all the stops: the men also sported strong tailoring and notably stylish hats, from tweed caps to full-brimmed fedoras.

Winter Ladies' Day also marked the launch of Huntingdon Racecourse's own tweed: with the course's signature

colours, navy and gold, running through it, the cloth was designed in collaboration with local clothing company Royal Equestrian and woven at a specialist Scottish mill.

Two Huntingdon Tweed items – a headband and neck warmer, both lined with faux fur and made by Annabel Brocks of Suffolk – were unveiled by champion jockey Gina Andrews, official face of Winter Ladies' Day with her sister, Bridget (see royalequestrian.co.uk).

"My wife and I go to a lot of National Hunt fixtures, but you're always guaranteed a good time at Huntingdon: it's one of the friendliest courses you'll find," said Best Dressed Gentleman Stephen Grogan. "It's just a great day out."



Best Dressed Couple

IN THIRD: Chris and Hannah Clark of Leicester

IN SECOND: Andrew and Alison Miller of Sandy

IN FIRST: Donna and Alex Samujah of Swavesey



Donna and Alex – who run their own transport company, ADL in Cambridge – only decided to come racing on the spur of the moment. "We're delighted to have won Best Dressed Couple," said Donna, "and also very shocked! The whole thing was very last minute..."

It's a lovely surprise." Donna impressed judges with her Holland Cooper bobble hat and cape, both fur-trimmed, while Alex kept his look classic with jeans, white shirt and Barbour tweed jacket.

Best Dressed Lady

IN THIRD: Debbie Grogan of Shropshire

IN SECOND: Racquel Campbell of Walsall

IN FIRST: Judith Beckett of Derbyshire

Judith, who was shortlisted for Best Dressed Lady at Newmarket's autumn Dubai Future Champions Festival, took the top spot at Winter Ladies' Day with her one-off yellow and black checked outfit. "I'm really shocked to have won – but what a lovely surprise! I think I'll be celebrating with a few drinks tonight," she said.

A passionate racegoer, who has shares in several horses, Judith collaborates with Barnsley designer Katie Newsome to create her race day ensembles – which always include a hat, this one created by Karen Reedby of Kelso, and either a brolly or parasol: "Well, when you're racing, you have to be prepared for whatever the weather throws at you, don't you?"

"I saw Katie at the races with some of her friends at Doncaster, admired their outfits and it turned out Katie had made them," explained Judith. "I've been working with her ever since: I get the fabric, then take it up to her and she works her magic. She's definitely got a signature style; I think there's something a bit Vivienne Westwood about her pieces."



Best Dressed Gentleman

IN THIRD: John Fitzpatrick of Cambridge

IN SECOND: John Bailey of Doncaster

IN FIRST: Stephen Grogan of Shropshire

Stephen, who was one half of last year's Best Dressed Couple with wife Debbie, said: "It's absolutely amazing! I'm humble and proud. I didn't get lucky on the races today, but I got lucky with this!"

A professional chimney sweep – who also dresses in full Victorian garb to bring luck to newlyweds at their weddings – Stephen paired rust-coloured Calvin Klein cords with a mustard waistcoat and tweed jacket purchased in Perth, Scotland.





On the CATWALK

The creative team behind Cambridge Style Week – the city's annual showcase of all things stylish, which takes place each spring – staged three runway shows in the Winter Ladies' Day fashion marquee.

Spotlighting both top autumn/winter trends and sparkling Christmas party looks, the shows featured clothing, shoes and accessories from Cambridge Raincoat Company; John Lewis, Cambridge; Anne Furbank, Buckden; Coast, Cambridge; LK Bennett, Cambridge; Burr Bridal, Cambridge; OJT Designs, Saffron Walden; Modish, Cambridge; and Reiss, Cambridge. Hair was by Top to Toe of Wisbech, with make-up by Arbonne.

The shopping village contained fashions from Cambridge Raincoat Company, Anne Furbank and Burr Bridal, shoes and jewellery from Cloudberry Designs, and leather accessories from OJT Designs.



Compere
Marc Dillon



Catwalk
shows staged by
Cambridge Style
Week



More
contenders
for Best
Dressed

Famed British fashion designer Scott Henshall will be unveiling two new collections at Cambridge Style Week 2016. The event runs from March 15 to 20 – find out more at cambridgestyleweek.com.



Fresh faced



It's a shiny new year so let's embrace a fresh approach to beauty that brings a healthy glow and a flawless finish. Lisa Millard picks the products that add TLC and zing to a beauty routine.

Let's be honest about New Year. It's a (potential) fresh start but it's also a time to be gentle on ourselves – the weather is hitting a bleak mid-winter high and the gloomy hue hangs heavy on the soul. Have a rummage through your bathroom cabinet and bring out the products that take good care of your skin and use the longer nights for extra pampering time in the bathroom – smooth on a mineral-packed face mask before soaking in the bath. Invest in a treatment-formulated tinted moisturiser or foundation and your mission to support your skin will continue when you use make-up. Come spring you will be blooming.



01



02



03

Skin-friendly products that work wonders



01 BRYT Boost Serum, £22, at brytskin-care.co.uk

An intensely nourishing and penetrating oil serum created especially for those times when skin needs an energising drink. Best applied at night to work hard while you sleep sweetly or use liberally on a make-up-free day. Your skin will thank you for this.

02 Caudalie Divine Oil, £17.50, at Lloyds Pharmacy, St Ives

This multi-use, luxurious dry oil moisturises, nourishes and enhances thanks to a blend of grape, hibiscus, sesame and argan oils combined with anti-oxidant Polyphenols. It brushes the skin with a subtle, floral and sun-kissed fragrance that will lift spirits. Can also be used as a massage oil, so make full use of early nights.

03 Goldfaden MD Energetic Eye Cream, £115, at Space NK, Trinity Street, Cambridge

This luxury range of skincare

is developed by a long-serving dermatologist inspired to create his own treatments. It's results-focused, irritant-free and brimming with plant-based botanicals. Not cheap but you're paying for large quantities of R&D.

04 Clarins Instant Smooth Perfecting Touch, £26.50, at department stores and Boots

This award-winning make-up primer offers a speedy fix and quick results. Smooth on a thin veil of this pot of magic to soften lines and wrinkles and create a perfect base for foundation. Use alone or mix with foundation.

05 This Works Light Time Skin Plumper, £29, at John Lewis, Grand Arcade, Cambridge

Dedicated to pumping up post-sleep radiance (yes, please), this moisturiser works to plump the skin to make it appear fuller, hydrated and wide awake.

06 DHC Mineral Mask, £29, at dhcuk.co.uk

Clay is a well-known beauty

wonder and this multi-tasking, pore-purifying and deep cleansing, oil-absorbing mask (wowsa) refreshes and refines the complexion when used as a weekly treat. BTW – all DHC products are fragrance and paraben free and suitable for sensitive skin.

07 Oskia Perfect Cleanser, £32.50, at Space NK, Trinity Street, Cambridge

Packed full of vitamins, minerals, omegas and probiotics (the live bacteria strains in our body that help maintain the pH balance of our skin), this balm lifts impurities while restoring moisture. It's win/win.

08 Elemis Pro-Collagen Marine Cream, £80, at John Lewis, as before, and Y Spa, Wyboston Lakes, near St Neots

Elemis is a leading skincare brand because the products work. This is a beauty hero – an anti-ageing moisturiser that makes skin look and feel firmer and lifted.



08



07



04



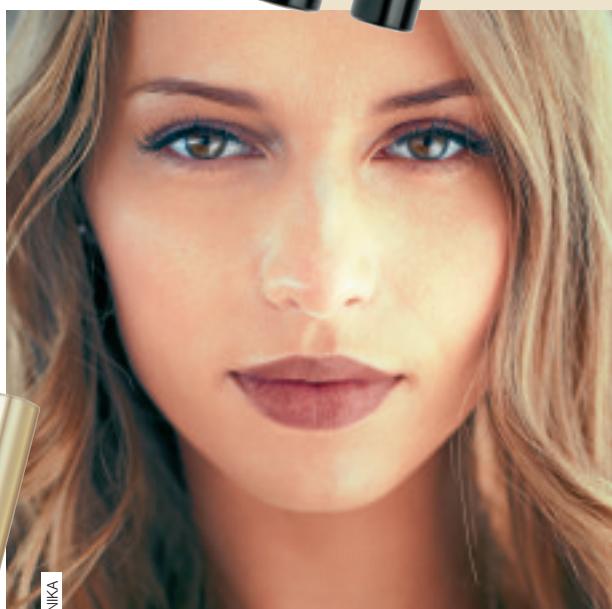
05



06



01



INIKA

07



02

03



07

01 Lanolips Lip Ointment with Rose, £7.99, at Boots stores

This natural and multi award-winning ointment will keep lips lush throughout winter. Super-hydrating but non-sticky, the formula now comes in five colours, including Rose – a lovely dusky pink. Reapply after kissing.

02 Korres Volcanic Minerals Mascara, £17, at Lloyds Pharmacy, St Ives and lloydsparmacy.com

Boasts a convincing colour and adds volume but without being too weighty on the lashes – helps to avoid creating that rather charmless clumpy look.

03 Korres Wild Rose Foundation, £20, at Lloyds Pharmacy, St Ives, and lloydsparmacy.com

Foundation formulas have come a long way, enabling coverage with a light touch and Korres has the balance just right here. A creamy but refreshing texture that is enriched with wild rose extract to give a boost of vitamin C, plus a soft-focus finish to

make lines and imperfection more easy on the eye.

04 Dermalogica Sheer Tint with SPF20, £34.80 at dermalogica.co.uk

This is a personal all-time favourite because the lightly-tinted moisturiser improves texture, hydrates and protects while covering skin with an all-day sheer of colour. Fabulous for spring and summer but just as good for skin-light winter days.

05 Inika Illuminiser Mineral Pot, £17, at Lloyds Pharmacy, St Neots, and naturisimo.com

An iridescent loose powder that creates a dewy sheen on skin and a pleasing luminosity. Works for all ages and helps to highlight cheeks and brow bones or simply dust over face and décolletage for an all-over healthy glow.

06 RMS Living Luminiser, £30, at cultbeauty.co.uk

RMS has a loyal following in the shape of many models, actresses and beauty editors who are rightly keen on founder

FINISHING TOUCH

Make-up that gives natural beauty a helping hand



04

Rose Marie-Swift's chemical-free, mineral make-up range designed to enhance natural beauty. This luminiser creates a subtle sheen as a highlighter, makes a great lip gloss and adds zing when mixed with foundation.

07 Clarins Instant Light Brush-On Perfector, £25.50, at department stores and Boots

Banish dark shadows and dastardly spots in one swish of this brush-on perfector. Illuminates the eye area and has a tightening effect on skin to hide signs of tiredness. A magic beauty wand.



06



05

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WINTER wonders

It's the time of year when beauty products have to deliver – winter weather is not skin or hair-friendly. Lisa Millard selects five winter wonders to add comfort and balm to dark days and early nights.



GHD Arctic Advanced Split End Therapy Treatment, £19.95, at SeanHanna, Grand Arcade, Cambridge and [ghdhair.com](#)

There's no denying that GHD is queen of hairdressing tools, and this treatment is cleverly activated by the heat of your styler to nourish and fortify split ends.

Hair is sleek and shiny for up to 10 washes. Just avoid the rain.



Sisley Detoxifying Night Treatment, £138, at John Lewis, Grand Arcade, Cambridge

Botanical D-Tox is a month-long detoxifying treatment that works overnight to combat the tell-tale signs of fatigue. Yes, it's a bit salty price-wise, but looking less haggard at the start of a new year is worth the investment. Combine with early nights (they're free).



Molton Brown Vintage 2015 with Elderflower Body Lotion, £26, at Molton Brown, Rose Crescent, Cambridge

Just because your body is hidden under layers of sweaters and vests, don't ignore it. Slather this body lotion over skin post-shower and the fizzy top note will lift spirits and leave skin silky. Remember to dress before leaving the house.



Elemis Pro Radiance Illuminating Eye Balm, £34, at John Lewis, as before and Y Spa, Wyboston Lakes, near St Neots

Dark, under-eye circles are not a good look but concealing them can be tricky. This Eye Balm offers an instant dose of radiance which works wonders under make-up to banish signs of tiredness. Wakey, wakey.



Bare Minerals Complexion Rescue Tinted Hydrating Gel Cream with SPF 30, £26, at Debenhams, The Grafton and John Lewis, as before

This will give Jack Frost a run for his money. A multi-tasker – comes in 10 shades – it helps lock in moisture upon contact with the skin and jump-starts a dewy complexion. Most definitely a winter wonder.

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FOOD & DRINK



100 Going coco-nutty

104 A raw deal

110 Gin fling

Beat the blues

Fancy giving your body a break after the extreme gluttony of Christmas? We recommend wrapping up, taking a wintry stroll (in your new Hunters) and having a stab at this blueberry pancake recipe, which is 100 per cent raw (yes, really!). It's taken from *The Power of Living Raw*, packed with tasty ideas to boost energy levels, enhance vitality and help the pounds melt away. We're in.

The Power of Living Raw by Nicky Arthur, £14.99, published by New Holland



Go nutty for COCONUT

January is the time a lot of us are looking to overhaul our eating habits. One simple change is to cook with coconut oil, much lauded for its health benefits. Nurture your body and feed your skin with this trio of recipes from Lucy Bee's latest feel-good cookbook.

Serves:
4

Goat's cheese and rocket frittata

You'll need:

- 1 tablespoon Lucy Bee coconut oil
- 2 red onions, thinly sliced
- 2 large garlic cloves, crushed
- 200g rocket
- 2 tablespoons chopped parsley
- 2 tablespoons sun-dried tomato pesto
- 6 medium eggs, lightly beaten
- 75g soft goat's cheese
- 3 tablespoons freshly grated Parmesan
- Himalayan salt and ground black pepper

What to do

- Preheat the grill on a medium setting. Melt half the coconut oil in a heavy-based pan, add the onions and sauté over a medium heat until soft. Add the garlic and cook for a further 2 minutes, then tip into a mixing bowl, add the rocket, parsley and pesto, mix together, then add the eggs.
- Melt the remaining coconut oil in the frying pan until hot, then pour the mixture into the pan and cook for 2–3 minutes, or until the mixture just starts to set. Scatter the goat's cheese and Parmesan over the top and cook for a further 2 minutes.
- Place the pan under the grill for 3–5 minutes, or until the top is golden and bubbling. Leave to stand for 5 minutes before cutting into wedges and serving.



Recipes taken from Lucy Bee's *Coconut Oil Nature's Perfect Ingredient*, £15 in hardback, at amazon.co.uk.



Serves:
2

Kerala fish curry

You'll need:

1 tablespoon Lucy Bee coconut oil
2.5cm cinnamon stick
3 cloves
Seeds of 2 cardamom pods
5 black peppercorns
2 shallots, finely sliced
1 garlic clove, finely sliced
7 fresh curry leaves
1½ teaspoon ginger paste
¼ teaspoon ground turmeric
Good pinch of Himalayan salt
100ml water
100ml coconut milk
Squeeze of lime juice
80g green beans, topped and tailed
250g firm white flesh fish fillets, such as hake, haddock or pollock, cubed or cut into bite-size pieces

What to do

- Heat the oil in a non-stick pan, add the whole spices and cook until they release their fragrant aromas. Add the shallots, give everything a stir for a couple of minutes, then add the garlic and curry leaves and soften for a few minutes until the shallots are translucent.
- Stir in the ginger paste, turmeric, salt and water. Bring to the boil, then lower the heat and simmer for about 7 minutes until nicely reduced.
- Add the coconut milk, squeeze in the lime juice, bring to the boil and simmer for a couple of minutes. Add the green beans and fish fillets, just covering with the sauce. Simmer gently until the fish is cooked through, 4–5 minutes.
- Serve with brown rice.



Serves:
6-8

Pineapple and passion fruit roulade

You'll need:

For the roulade

- 30g Lucy Bee coconut oil, melted, plus extra for greasing**
 - 4 medium eggs**
 - 55g stevia**
 - 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
 - 80g gluten-free plain flour**
 - 1 teaspoon gluten-free baking powder**
 - Pinch of xanthan gum**
 - Icing sugar, for dusting**
 - Edible flowers, such as violas or nasturtiums, to decorate**
- For the filling**
- 150g Greek yoghurt**
 - 150g crème fraîche**
 - 4 teaspoons agave nectar**
 - 3 passion fruit**
 - 125g fresh pineapple, cut into very small chunks**

What to do

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C / Gas Mark 4. Lightly grease a 34 x 23cm Swiss roll tin or shallow baking tray and line with baking parchment. Place the eggs and stevia in a bowl and whisk for 5–10 minutes on a high speed using an electric mixer until creamy, light and almost doubled in volume. Beat in the melted coconut oil and vanilla extract.
- 2 Sift the flour, baking powder and xanthan gum together, then gently fold into the egg mixture, until combined. Take care not to let too much air out of the mixture – stop as soon as the dry ingredients are just folded through. Pour into the prepared tin and bake in the middle of the oven for 12–15 minutes, or until the sponge springs back to the touch.
- 3 Leave in the tin to cool slightly. Place a flat sheet of baking parchment on the worktop, lightly dusted with icing sugar. Turn out the warm roulade onto the parchment and start to roll from the narrower end of the cake (the paper will remain inside) until you have a Swiss roll. Leave to cool completely.
- 4 Once completely cold, unroll the roulade and discard the parchment. Mix together the yoghurt, crème fraîche and agave nectar. Scoop out the seeds and pulp from the passion fruit and fold into the yoghurt mixture. Spread the fruity yoghurt over the roulade and scatter over the pineapple chunks, setting some aside for decoration.
- 5 Carefully roll up the roulade and place on a serving dish. Scatter the remaining pineapple chunks over the top of the roulade and dust with icing sugar. Decorate with edible flowers, such as violas and nasturtiums.





Barbara Fernandez is her own best advert. A mum-of-two in her 50s, she's got the fresh face, trim figure and irrepressible energy of a woman half her age. Yes, genetics and disposition play their part – but Barbara credits her diet above all else: for the last 15 years, she's been an advocate of raw food.

"I can still remember the first raw dish I made myself: fettuccine alfredo, with courgette spaghetti. After I'd eaten it, it felt like all the cells in my body were singing; it was almost hallucinatory! That sounds weird, right? But it was a genuine light-bulb moment."

Barbara, who lives in Cambridge, is best known in the city as The Rocking Raw Chef; her food, served at regular pop-ups at The Free Press pub on Prospect Row, has developed quite the following over the last six months.

"The best reaction I ever had was from the most unlikely guy. He looked like one of the Hairy Bikers. I was serving my version of pizza; to start with I didn't know if he'd order, but he did. Afterwards he said: 'I've never had any of this vegetarian-type stuff before, but it's really good!' . . .

"That's the reward for me. Those are the people I want to reach – the people that don't know about raw food."

To qualify as 'raw', food can't be heated above 46°C: "Up to that temperature, all the enzymes remain intact – that's what you're preserving, the nutritional value of the ingredients." Barbara's menus are also vegan (ie free from fish, meat and dairy).

So how, then, can she be putting the finishing touches to what looks like a perfectly normal strawberry cheesecake? "Well, the base is walnuts and dates blitzed; the creamy layer is made from soaked cashews, lemon juice, coconut oil and a dash of maple syrup; and the strawberry topping is frozen strawberries and a cup of dates blended with a little water. It's actually pretty simple – and quick too."

Mastering the art of raw food was, admits Barbara, "a steep – and slow – learning curve". "To start with, everything I made was brown. I'd add a bit of this, a bit of that, and the end result would leave my son, who was about 8 at the time, running from the room!"



"All the recipes I found seemed to take forever: you could make lasagne, but it took 36 hours to dehydrate this and that . . . That's just not practical, especially when you have young children."

When developing her own recipes, Barbara focuses on speed, ease, commonly-available ingredients and, of course, taste. "They have to work in real life, you know? My kids are teens now, and they aren't raw – so I like to make things which work both raw and cooked, because who wants to be making two dinners? I love things like a rich, tomato-based sauce, which is just as good with spiralized courgette as pasta."

Barbara hails from Long Island, New York ("which is really rural; an awful lot of fields . . . like something out of *Amityville Horror*") and music, rather than cooking, was her first love.

"It took me a long time to realise I had a rock voice; a Pink kinda voice, you could call it. At school my teacher threw out all these mixed messages: some days he'd say 'You're the next Lena Horne'; others he'd say 'Don't bother, music isn't for you'."

Switching to theatre studies for her degree, it was on auditioning for a role in the Sondheim musical *Company* that Barbara really found her voice. "The teacher told a friend of mine that I was amazing – and that I should go professional. That made me think maybe I could sing after all."

Having fallen in love with Paris in her teens, on graduation Barbara moved to the French capital, where she married a hypnotist and stayed for 14 years.

"He got scooped up by the Scientologists in the end, and our relationship fell apart. Yes: my life story's got it all . . ."

Barbara worked 24 jobs in those 14 years – everything from bar singer to English teacher – and was also offered two record deals. "A career in the music business sounds exciting and glamorous, but actually it was pretty horrible. One of the deals involved a radical diet: I was on 800 calories a day. When you think I was two and a half stone lighter than

I am now, it makes you realise how ridiculous it was!

"I can remember looking in the mirror and thinking 'You don't look glamorous, you look ill'; it scared me, to be honest. So I quit and went back to singing in a piano bar." ▶



Hear me **RAW**

Rock singer turned raw food chef Barbara Fernandez is a woman on a mission – to help us all live happier and healthier lives. Alice Ryan visits her Cambridge kitchen to get the lowdown on no-cook cooking.



Portrait by
Matthew Joseph –
matthewjoseph.co.uk



Food pictures
by David Johnson
and Barbara
Fernandez

► Barbara, who admits she spent decades as a yo-yo dieter, says it was her ongoing battle with weight that drew her to raw food in the first place. "I was on holiday in California, went to a juice bar, as you do, and saw this book – with the word RAW spelled out in fruit and veg on the front. It was by a guy called Juliano, one of the first raw food chefs, and it just really appealed.

"There were all these pictures of him frolicking across the kitchen and in the ocean... I thought 'He looks really happy; I want to look like that'. The message was that you could control your weight while eating really delicious food; that you didn't have to deprive yourself. That's what got me hooked."

Around the same time, Barbara and her now-husband Orlando – though they met in Paris, he's Mexican – relocated to the UK. Their two children, Arcadio, now 17, and Adara, 15, were only wee. "I didn't go raw overnight; like I say, it was a learning curve. But I knew how much better I felt when I ate raw. It started with wanting to maintain my weight, then I realised it had a positive effect on everything: my energy levels, my sense of wellbeing, my skin."

These days, Barbara eats cooked food only when social situations dictate: "Spending time with people's the most important thing. But boy do I feel it; I feel nauseous – just ill."

Realising it was impractical to go 100 per cent raw at the outset, Barbara began by mastering raw versions of her favourite Mexican foods, such as tacos and tortillas. "I'd give you a chip to try – they're made from ground flax, sweet pepper, corn and spices blended into a paste and dehydrated – but they never last long in this house!"

As her knowledge and skills grew, she branched out: puddings, like the strawberry cheesecake, are now something of a speciality. "The first time I saw soaked cashews blitzed – they make a cream; it's delicious – it blew my mind. Cashews form the basis of quite a few of my sweet recipes."

The nuts are among Barbara's best-loved go-to ingredients, along with coconut, cacao, red pepper and courgette. "And chilli. And kale," she laughs. "I have a lot of favourites!"

It was Orlando who encouraged Barbara to share her raw dishes with a wider audience. "He kept saying to me: 'What you're doing is great! People would love it...'"

A lecture by famed motivational speaker Jim Rohn was another driver: "He moved an auditorium of 16,000 people



“

AFTER I'D EATEN IT, IT FELT LIKE ALL THE CELLS IN MY BODY WERE SINGING; IT WAS ALMOST HALLUCINATORY!

”

to tears of joy. I thought 'That's what I want to do – I want to help people'. At the time I didn't know how; now I know I can do it through raw food."

Flitting around her Cambridge kitchen in her socked feet ("I don't like to wear shoes when I cook"), Barbara's expertise and enthusiasm are boundless. "Taste this. It's a blueberry tart. Good, no? And this one's my take on a pecan pie: the body of it is made from chia seeds. Have you heard of them? They're Mexican and packed full of vitamins. I use any excuse to eat them: when they're soaked they puff up into little semolina-like bubbles."

Buoyed by Orlando's backing, plus positive feedback from family and friends, Barbara started to spread the raw food word further afield. Launching her Rocking Raw Chef website – where she offers all manner of tips, advice and recipes, including snappy five-minute video tutorials – she fostered a community of online foodies.

A series of pop-ups in Cambridge followed; as well as her regular Sunday slot at The Free Press, she'll be serving her food at Mill Road's Black Cat Café on Wednesdays from the end of this month.

"When I started out, I wish there had been someone to show me the way," explains Barbara. "I now know that you don't need all kinds of expensive equipment, fancy ingredients and three-day recipes to go raw: it's actually pretty easy, and anyone can do it."

"To start with, try eating one raw meal a day – or set out to master your favourite kind of food, like I did with Mexican. Pretty soon you'll have a good repertoire going."

"And the benefits? They're endless. Going raw can be life-changing – it certainly was for me."



Portrait by
Corinne
Blandin

For more
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visit rockingrawchef.com.



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Best known in Cambridge for breathing new life into iconic bakery Fitzbillies, food writer and broadcaster Tim Hayward shares his musings on the food front.

Christmas is behind us and, once again, I find myself in receipt of many of those well-intentioned gifts 'for-the-foodie-who-has-everything'. Most of these will stay, unused, in the cupboard until next year, when they'll disappear in the annual January cull. I encourage all food lovers to adopt this useful ritual. Without it, our collections of gadgets, nick-nackery and culinary gewgaws may well overwhelm us all. If you doubt that this is a problem, take a look in your own cupboard and you too will find ...

- 1.** A pasta machine. You too must have dreamt of skeins of silken fresh pasta, hanging around the kitchen. You too spent hours forcing increasingly unworkable dough into its yawning maw. You too gave up and bought the dried stuff that the Italians really eat. If your pasta machine is electric you are either a moneyed neophyte or it was on your wedding list in 1986 and you didn't manage to lose it in the divorce.
- 2.** Some bits of a wok. Never the whole thing, you understand, just some bits. The wok itself was chucked when you realised that, without a gas ring that could power a blast furnace, 'stir frying' was largely a matter of reducing perfectly fine vegetables into an unappetising steamed slurry to be basted in soy, slopped over noodles and thrown away. The semi circular warming grid, a bamboo rack and one or other half of the scoop/shovel combination will lurk forever – even when you're sure you threw them out years ago.
- 3.** A mandolin grater. Before the food processor was the mandolin. Cripplingly expensive with a complex folding structure which made even the slickest cook

feel like M Hulot erecting a deckchair and guaranteed to remove all of your knuckles down to the bone. After having been written about in breathless tones by every cookery writer from 1950 to 1980 it became a sort of badge of honour for the serious cook. Like the Aga, the mandolin is a triumph of misty-eyed mythologising over hard reality. There may well have been elderly French grannies who still used them in 1970, but surely the last few have grated their fingers into their last gratin and bought un Robot Coupe. Professionals, of course, never used them as there was always some poor bloody footsoldier prepared to do it all with a knife for minimum wage and an earful of creative abuse. You will recognise your own mandolin by bloodstains on the box.

- 4.** At least four coffee makers. You will have a plunge pot, though there's a 50 per cent chance that the glass is broken and you never got round to replacing it. You almost certainly have one of those French or Italian stovetop jobs which seemed so essential at the end of your holiday but, back in your own kitchen, produce only a kind of oily, gritty sludge which tastes like a waste product from an illegal amphetamine factory. The truly gullible may also have a some combination of Arabic brass pot and hand grinder.
 - 5.** A sandwich toaster. One of those things that seemed a good idea when one was a student. Other things included drinking Tia Maria and tequila shots, smoking dried banana skins, rag weeks and dating people who read you their dreadful poetry at three in the morning. None of these are appropriate for anyone with a job, a mortgage or any degree of maturity.
 - 6.** Some really bad kitchen knives. I know. None of us can throw out an old knife, yet we keep being tempted by new ones before the old ones have the decency to wear out. This means that a little community of neglected cutlery has built up just to remind you that you once thought that an 'EeZeeSlyce™' serrated tomato cutter and a 'NevvvaDull' 'Chef's' knife in a self-sharpening scabbard were the ne plus ultra of kitchen technology.
- I have always been too much of a happy sybarite to consider post-Christmas 'detoxing' or cleansing of the corporeal type ... but a thorough and ruthless purge of the kitchen shelves improves all our lives.

Fitzbillies is at 51-52 Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1RG.
Call (01223) 352500 or visit fitzbillies.com. Follow Tim on Twitter @timhayward.



The Breakfast Club

It's National Breakfast Week January 24 – 30, so no time to be skipping the most important meal of the day. But if soggy toast and congealed cereal aren't floating your boat, try this zesty breakfast berry brioche from Waitrose, which features raspberries, blueberries, strawberries, cinnamon, maple syrups and Alpro yoghurt.

You'll find this and more than 5,000 recipes at waitrose.com/recipes.

ORGANIC COOKING OIL SPRAY WITH VIRGIN COCONUT OIL, £2.50, AT TESCO

Reputedly a UK first, this spray from The Groovy Food Company is a natural alternative to processed varieties and boasts a multitude of health benefits. Get spritzing!



These New Year treats have made it into our basket.

BASKET CASE

CUCKOO BIRCHER MUESLI, £1.50, AT VARIOUS SUPERMARKETS
Pimped-up muesli for adventurous palates; the Great Taste Award-winning Mango & Coconut variety is tropical heaven!



CAMBRIDGE MAGAZINE

MORPHY RICHARDS EASY BLEND DELUXE, £49.99, AT WAITROSE KITCHEN.COM

Go on, invest in this, and you can whizz up all those healthy juices, smoothies and milkshakes you promised you'd live on in your New Year's resolutions.





Make mine a double

The UK's smallest gin distillery, based in our fair city, scooped two prestigious world titles in the space of one week. The Cambridge Distillery, run by Will and Lucy Lowe, won Best Alcoholic Innovation in the World Beverage Innovation Awards for its Anty Gin and has launched the world's most expensive gin, Watenshi, which is selling for £2,000 a bottle exclusively at Selfridges. The famous Anty Gin, made in collaboration with Nordic Food Lab, is created from distilled ants, said to add a 'citrus' flavour. The unique spirit, made in batches of just 99 bottles, is served in exclusive restaurants around the world and available in top-end retailers such as Mayfair's Hedonism Wines and Selfridges. Master distiller Will says: "We're absolutely thrilled to have received this award. Lucy and I have dedicated our careers to progressing the gin industry, making innovation the main focus of our business, so there really isn't a more flattering title to have won. To be recognised at the highest level is wonderful."

Find out more at cambridgedistillery.co.uk.



Feeling blue

Time to raise a cup of the very best blend to Jamaica Blue café in the Lion Yard shopping centre, which has just celebrated its first birthday. The quirky eatery, which has outlets all over, from New Zealand to Malaysia, brews premium Jamaica Blue Mountain Coffee – considered one of the world's finest coffees – and serves classic dishes with a twist. And in true Jamaican spirit, its interior reflects a laid-back vibe, so you can easily escape the hustle and bustle of the city. The Cambridge store was the company's first UK franchise, and has been so successful four more stores are set to open across the country this year; cheers to that!



CAMBRIDGE MAGAZINE

Find out more at jamaicablue.co.uk.



Fitzbillies mark 2?

Famed for its sticky Chelsea buns, 'Cambridge institution' Fitzbillies is hoping to secure a second store in the city, four years after it reopened. Plans have been submitted for a shop and café at the site of the former Nord store in Bridge Street, which has been vacant for some time. Fitzbillies, run by husband and wife team

Tim Hayward and Alison Wright, has become such a success, customers are regularly seen queuing out of the door of the Trumpington Street eatery. A decision on the plans is expected in the coming months.

Find out more at fitzbillies.com.

Does January bring on a 'new year, new me' philosophy? Or do you turn a blind eye to the plethora of articles on detoxes, diets and exercise fads which appear without fail? Either way, I think many of us feel a little sluggish and have waistbands that feel a little tighter than before the holidays.

Shift your focus to quality over quantity and set it firmly on seasonal ingredients. This way of eating is very Italian – and Italy is where I choose to spend as much time as possible. As part of our programme at the Cookery School we organise exclusive, beyond-the-beaten-track food trips to the little-known region of Le Marche; many of our guests comment on just how simple, yet exquisite, the food is.

Home-cooking is alive and well in Italy: Italian supermarket aisles are filled with hundreds of different pasta shapes and types, where here they are stacked with crisps! Global fast food outlets can certainly be found in the big cities, but small-town Italy is blissfully devoid of them.

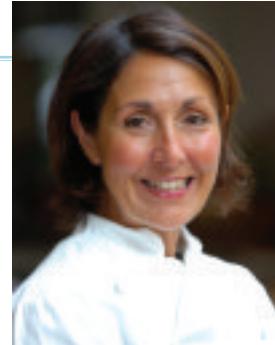
Snacking is simply not an issue. Breaks for coffee – small servings, top quality – or a soft drink, yes, but by and large people don't eat between their meals. Lunch might well be something bread-based, but in small quantities and with freshly-made fillings full of protein and fresh vegetables. Supper is made from scratch. Pasta is always served in fairly small quantities as a starter before a reasonably sized main course of lean protein with more vegetables, or it is served as a standalone everyday dish, more often than not with vegetables or in broth.

The main reason I think Italian cuisine is the best in Europe is that it's 100 per cent true to regionality and seasonality. Each area cooks with its own produce: if you were to set out in search of, say, raspberries or green beans, you won't find them even in supermarkets unless they grow in that area and are in season. This is the right way to approach food.

If you struggle to diet and tend to fall off the wagon after a few miserable weeks, I suggest that rather than cutting out certain foods from your life, you add more in. Up your intake of fruit and vegetables and free-range protein such as eggs, fish and meat.

Start the day with an omelette or a scramble – a good scramble is made in a ferociously hot pan with a drop of sunflower oil and cooks in five seconds. Pile it on to a slice of German full corn rye, and top with chilli flakes and a generous handful of spinach. I promise you won't be hungry before lunch. In fact, after a protein-packed breakfast like this, you'll be happy with a couple of whole fruits or soup at lunchtime. It takes no time to make a salad of seasonal vegetables such as thin ribbons of raw red cabbage, slices of apple or orange, some seeds and a drizzle of olive oil and a squirt of lemon juice and have this as a starter when you first sit down for supper. Packed with vitamins and

In a Cambridge KITCHEN



In her monthly column, Cambridge chef Tine Roche – founder of the city's award-winning cookery school – encourages us to eat like the Italians. . .

fibre, this sort of salad is impossible to wolf down as it is so full of texture that it forces you to chew properly and to slow down the speed of eating.

Chewing is a hugely important and, I believe, forgotten factor in gut health and weight control. Saliva produced when chewing food is essential for breaking down the food in the gut; when soft, bland food is eaten, the lack of chewing means saliva is not produced and our guts suffer and struggle to digest properly. If you start your meals, or include in them, a salad like this, you will already be on the path to increased health and a happier gut. Wine does not go very well with raw vegetables and acidic dressings, so having more of this sort of food tends to have the added bonus of you being more likely to swap some of your wine intake for water. By adding more of the good things to your daily eating, you will automatically, and effortlessly, eat less of the things you want to avoid.

As for supper itself – cook with real ingredients and make sure vegetables dominate over animal protein. Don't think 'I fancy chicken tonight – what can I have with it?', think 'The winter greens and garlic look great this month, what can I match it with?'. Pasta with broccoli, chilli and garlic; vegetable soup with little 'stelline' pasta thrown in; a piece of perfectly baked winter cod with roast tomatoes and a few slices of salty, crispy bacon; chicken baked with tomatoes and herbs served with a mix of Borlotti and Canellini beans with raw celery and thinly sliced red onion . . .

In short, cook and eat like an Italian and feel that waistband slacken with each delicious mouthful.

You can hear Tine talking about this month's topic on Cambridge 105: tune in to *Mid Mornings with Mike Prior* on the first Thursday of each month.



For more recipe inspiration see cambridgecookeryschool.com.



Make mine a MOCKTAIL

We're shunning the booze this month in favour of a couple of alcohol-free mocktails. So for all you saintly sorts out there doing 'Dry January', here's a fruity duo for you to try...



BELVOIR'S LAZY CHAM

- 1 TEASPOON AGAVE SYRUP (AS AN ALTERNATIVE USE HONEY)**
- 1 TABLESPOON LEMON JUICE**
- TOP UP WITH BELVOIR ELDERFLOWER PRESSÉ**

Stir in a cocktail shaker or small jug the first two ingredients with a little splash of the elderflower pressé. Once mixed simply strain into a champagne glass. Garnish by taking a strip of lemon peel removed with a potato peeler. If you want to be really fancy, take a pair of zigzag hemming scissors and trim the edge of the lemon peel, then twist into the glass.

IN THE MIX

BELVOIR'S BLACK AND BLUE FRUIT FOOL

- 1 PART BELVOIR BLUEBERRY AND BLACKCURRANT CORDIAL**
- 1 PART LEMON JUICE**
- 2 PARTS PINEAPPLE JUICE**

Shake with ice and strain into a chilled cocktail glass. Garnish by sprinkling some crushed frozen raspberries on to the froth on top of the drink formed by the shaking. If you want to get clever, why not buy some rice paper cupcake garnishes and float on top of the drink as well as the raspberries?

► Recipes courtesy of belvoirfruitfarms.com.



kitchen cheat

Even the most accomplished cooks need an occasional helping hand. Cambridge's Food Marketing Expert – aka Brampton mum-of-three Vhari Russell – brings us a culinary quick fix each month.



It's always tricky to find the perfect gift for post-Christmas birthdays – so this month I'm pleased to introduce Cambridge Artisan, a new company which offers hampers and gift boxes for every occasion. The range features a whole menu of lovely locally-produced goodies, including salami, coffee, tea, cheese, chutney, gin, curds, olive oil and sweet treats. The hampers and gift boxes are themed: take A Taste of Cambridge (£135) and A Little Indulgence (£25), to name but two. Why not give yourself a gift and make birthday shopping easy in 2016?

► Visit cambridgeartisan.co.uk.



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Makes:
20 cupcakes
or one 9-inch
double-layer
cake

Strawberry amaretto cupcakes

These luscious cupcakes are meant for special occasions. They are our top choice for celebrations at classes or large gatherings, as it seems they are universally enjoyed (much to my surprise, I've learned that not everyone loves chocolate).

Although the batter is sweeter than muffin batter, it can be made into lovely little muffins or cakes without the frosting. Go ahead and add blueberries, raspberries, or even small pieces of banana to the batter before baking. One cup of fruit will do the trick; just increase the baking time by five minutes.

You'll need:

2½ cups brown rice flour
1 cup chickpea flour, sifted
2 teaspoons baking soda
½ teaspoon kosher salt
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
⅓ cup canola oil
1 cup plus 4 tablespoons water
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1 teaspoon almond extract
1½ cups maple syrup
1 recipe German maple frosting – see right
10 strawberries, halved

What to do

Preheat the oven to 180°C / Gas Mark 4. Line two standard muffin tins with 20 cupcake liners or line two (9-inch) cake pans with parchment paper cut precisely to fit the bottom of the pans. In a medium bowl, combine the flours, baking soda, salt, and cinnamon. In another medium mixing bowl, combine the oil, water, vanilla, almond extract, and maple syrup. Whisk the dry ingredients into the wet ingredients. Fill the muffin cups to about two-thirds full or divide the batter equally between the two cake pans. Bake on the middle rack of the oven until the cake is golden and springs back when touched or a toothpick inserted in the center comes out with just a few crumbs attached. The cupcakes take 20 to 25 minutes and the layer cake takes 25 to 30 minutes.

When the cupcakes are cool, frost each one and top with the strawberries. For the layer cake, frost the top of each layer, stack them together, frost the sides, and dot the top with the strawberries. Serve and enjoy!

Free for all

Having food allergies can seriously mess with your menu choices. So we're delighted to discover this gem of a book, by Jennifer Katzinger, which caters for all tastes, featuring delicious recipes that are egg-free, dairy-free, gluten-free and mostly soy-free too. Whether you fancy baking these rather impressive strawberry amaretto cupcakes or making a batch of chocolate pumpkin seed brittle, creating lentil caviar on root vegetable rounds or perfecting a kale-topped pizza, it's all in these pages. Get cooking!



German maple frosting

This frosting is one of my favourites to work with because it comes together so easily and isn't too sensitive to temperature. I love the subtle sweetness of the maple syrup and the satisfying texture of the shredded coconut and chopped pecans. This frosting is intended to be spread with the aid of a butter knife or cake spatula; it does not lend itself well to piping.

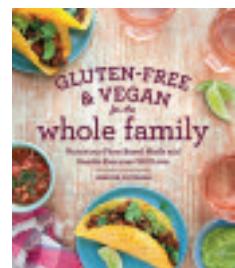
You'll need:

1 ¼ cups coconut oil
½ cup maple syrup
⅛ teaspoon kosher salt
1½ teaspoons vanilla extract
1¾ cups unsweetened shredded coconut, toasted and cooled
⅓ cups finely chopped toasted pecans

Makes: Enough frosting for 16 cupcakes or one 9-inch double-layer cake

What to do

In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment (or in a mixing bowl by hand), combine all of the ingredients and whip until fluffy and thoroughly blended. The frosting can be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to four days. Before using, bring the frosting to room temperature by slightly warming over a double boiler and mix again.



Gluten-Free & Vegan For The Whole Family, by Jennifer Katzinger, £17.99, by Sasquatch Books, at thegmcgroup.com



THE RUPERT BROOKE

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- Bacchanalia is at Victoria Road and Mill Road, Cambridge – see winegod.co.uk for more information.
- The wines featured in Paul's column are available from Bacchanalia. Similar wines may also be stocked at Cambridge Wine Merchants, Noel Young Wines, Majestic and Waitrose – just ask the wine-seller for advice.



THE WINE GUY

Our resident wine buff – Paul Bowes, of Bacchanalia in Cambridge – tells us what's new on the grapevine... .



Happy New Year!

Hope you had a tremendous festive season. I salute those of you who had a glorious time. Be it a quiet time spent with a loved one, or pulling out all the stops making it special for your kids, to just being charming at social occasions, I tip my hat to you all. Now it's January, it's all over ... really ... REALLY! I don't get the giving it all up in January thing. I know Christmas is a time that we may do a bit more socialising and a bit more drinking and a bit more eating, but it's not like we all have a completely hedonistic time of it. A bit of extra fun is a good thing and not something to be ashamed about. January need not be a time to purge ourselves and to completely cut out things we enjoy. I love January; it's a gentle time of year. A time to relax, get cosy, sort a bowl of lovely slow-cooked food, pour yourself a decent glass of vino and watch some glorious tat on the telly. Shopwise, it's great. The physical madness of Christmas is behind me, and now it is tasting season, where I go to many events to choose the best wines for my shelves. A job I relish and thoroughly enjoy, but also take very seriously, honest ... no really, honest.

So to some wines for you to enjoy this January. We can't get away from the fact that many people tend to drink less during this month, so what I've chosen is a couple of wines that will be a treat.

My first wine is **Domaine Chante Cigale Châteauneuf-du-Pape Rouge 2012**, 15 per cent, £22.99. A big yet smooth wine, with lots of warm black fruit and plum aromas, cinnamon, spices, pepper and a hint of vanilla, the palate is concentrated with damsons, red fruit, spice and stony minerality with a very elegant and warm finish. The mouth is initially very silky, but gives way to some mouth-watering acidity and firmish tannins. As with all great wines you really get a feel for the soil in which the grapes were grown. And so to a white, why not make it a double whammy of Châteauneufs: **Domaine Chante Cigale Châteauneuf-du-Pape Blanc 2014**, 14 per cent, £20.99? It's a lovely, traditional 2014 Châteauneuf-du-Pape Blanc and this blend of equal parts Roussanne, Grenache Blanc, Bourboulenc and Clairette has classic notes of citrus blossom, dried herbs, spice and hints of white flowers on the nose. Medium-bodied, pure, elegant, and lively with racy acidity on the finish, it's beautifully done, drinking well now or you could age it for a few years.

So there you go, a couple of special wines for you to enjoy during the gloomiest of months. Keep cosy out there.

Paul



THE DRINKS LIST



2015 was a fascinating year on the food and drink scene in Cambridge, being described by many as revolutionary. Why so and what might we expect in 2016? Hal Wilson ponders.



You can't cycle through the city's streets or business parks without noticing the abundance of quality street food vendors. They pop up in foodPark, marshalled by the effervescent Heidi White, they pull up outside wine shops in the evenings (an idea kicked off at our Cherry Hinton Road branch in 2013) and chances are they'll be cooking food in a pub or café near you (The Free Press, Flying Pig and Novi to name but a few). 2015 saw the addition of Provenance Wood Fired



Kitchen, Rosti Strasse and Holy Schnitzels to an already impressive line-up of Citroën vans, wagons and Airstreams.

The proliferation of these stripped-down, mobile, quality caterers really demonstrates a shift in how we want to eat and drink in Cambridge. A focus on novelty, simplicity and flavour without the anchor of a fixed location offers opportunities to Cambridge chefs and also venues that want to offer decent food without A3 restaurant licences.

Pop up drinks vehicles are also part of the mix with the foodPark Airstream Bar,



Spirited Mare, the Cambridge Wine Land Rover and Cambridge Mobile Bar serving killer cocktails, craft beers, top gin and fashion-forward wines. EAT Cambridge 2016 will be a brilliant fortnight during which to see the revolution in full swing. It is set for May 7-22.

Innovation abounds on the drinks front too. We saw new distilling licences being granted at unprecedented rates, two a week in 2015 with no let up in sight. That means more gins, vermouths and whisky being made all around the country. As the artisanal spirits market reaches some sort of saturation this year (our range now stands at 900 different spirits), it will be fascinating to see where these incredible innovators take us next. My beer buyer Kev is inundated with samples from new craft breweries (someone has to taste them all, hic!),

the best of which we are always excited to stock.

In the next few years we will see many more wines from new English wine producers, 65 of whom applied for licences in 2015.

My heart still leads me towards warmer, more established wine-producing regions and 2015 was a really good vintage across most of them. It is about time, too, after a wet 2014. While wine



holds poll position as our nation's favourite alcoholic beverage, I still feel we need to do more to make wine relevant to people and demystifying

it is my main task. Expect smarter packaging, designer bag-in-boxes, a revival of interest in top-end Australian wines and great-value European wines, delivered on the back of improving exchange rates.

Look around Cambridge and you see innovation, expertise and enthusiasm all



around you. Perhaps you'd expect nothing less from our city, but it constantly delights me and I look forward to the adventure continuing.

Hal Wilson owns Cambridge Wine Merchants, the multi award-winning wine business with branches in King's Parade, Bridge Street, Mill Road and Cherry Hinton Road, Cambridge. Call (01954) 214528 and visit cambridgewine.com.

2 for 1

on afternoon tea
(Mon-Thur)

*Offer valid throughout January only. **Quote CAM16** to receive the offer when booking



Prebook yours now on (01223) 366611

To learn more about The Gonville, visit the website at gonvillehotel.co.uk,
or visit us at Gonville Place, Cambridge, CB1 1LY.

Nominate Today



Business Excellence Awards 2016

Sponsored by

 **BARCLAYS**

The biggest night of the Cambridge business calendar is almost here!

The 2016 Cambridge News Business Excellence Awards will take place on Thursday 17th March 2016 and is now open for nominations.

Categories are:

Barclays Award for Large Business of the Year

Hewitsons Award for Business Innovation

Price Bailey Award for Business of the Year

TWI Award for Technology Export

MedImmune Award for Outstanding Contribution

BioMed Realty Trust Award for Business Person of the Year

Pure Resourcing Solutions

Award for Employer of the Year

Allia Award for Social Entrepreneurship

Small Business of the Year

New categories for 2016:

Medium Business of the Year

Independent Retailer of the year.



NOMINATE NOW:

www.cambridge-news.co.uk/business/business-awards

Deadline for entries is 5pm Friday 22nd January

For more information please contact:

Karen Ball on **01223 434397** (karen.ball@cambridge-news.co.uk)

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Isn't it great when you discover a fantastic new place to eat? Well, I say new, but in fact The Hopbine, tucked away close to The Grafton on Fair Street, isn't a new pub, or a new enterprise. I have vague memories of drinking there in days gone past, and it is somewhere I've regularly walked past en route to Midsummer Common or Maid's Causeway.

What I mean is that, until a lunch date with stepdaughter Rachel last month, it had never occurred to me as a potential place to dine. Let alone a place that was to turn out to offer SO much more than you would expect from a simple 'pub lunch'.

Arriving on a busy pre-Christmas Sunday lunchtime, we happily secured a cosy corner table in the large restaurant area to the back of the pub (which is very much still a traditional, busy-buzzy thriving pub, complete with pool table and a fine selection of ales). The menu was impressively comprehensive, offering us such a wide array of choice that we were rather spoilt – even I, as a vegetarian, found myself wavering between several appealing options.

Catching up on the week's gossip (kids, work, love, life... you know how it goes) while we waited for our starters to arrive, Rachel enjoyed a rather tasty glass of sav blanc while I (virtuously) sipped a glass of water. The first surprise of the day came when those starters arrived. This wasn't merely pub grub, even superior pub grub, this was seriously classy restaurant-standard, generously-portioned cuisine. My wild mushroom bruschetta, topped with delicious blue cheese and adorned with salad leaves, was as tasty as it was easy on the eye (no mean feat with mushrooms – not necessarily one of nature's prettiest creations). Rachel, meanwhile, was equally delighted with her scrumptious king prawns – fiery with chilli and infused with delicious garlicky butter, and accompanied by a generous quantity of warmed focaccia bread to soak up all that yummy sauce.

With starters consumed, expectations were now higher than ever for our main courses. And my nut roast (one of a wide selection of Sunday roasts on offer) certainly didn't disappoint. Possibly one of the largest, most substantial platefuls of food I can remember being served in a Cambridge restaurant, the generosity of the trimmings (deep breath: Yorkshire pud, roast potatoes, carrots, mange tout, green beans, parsnips, cauliflower cheese, cranberry sauce and a delicious gravy) matched the tastiness of the nut loaf itself; slightly spicy, substantial in texture, everything a vegetarian would want of a Sunday lunch. Wow. My lunching companion was equally impressed: her pan-fried salmon cooked just so, topped with a perfectly-poached egg, surrounded by a creamy hollandaise sauce and – the final touch – a potato pithivier and wilted spinach to set it all off perfectly. Wow again.

After all this, dessert was definitely more of a greed than a hunger-inspired choice. My chocolate pot with home-made shortbread was another triumph: deceptively rich and with lovely biscuits to dunk. Rachel's sticky toffee pudding – more like TWO portions than one – was every bit as dense, dark, sweet and heavenly as you'd expect.

So although this was our first time eating at The Hopbine I can assure you it certainly won't be our last.

CM The Hopbine is at 11-12 Fair Street, Cambridge CB1 1HA. Call (01223) 367204 or visit thehopbine.co.uk.



eating OUT

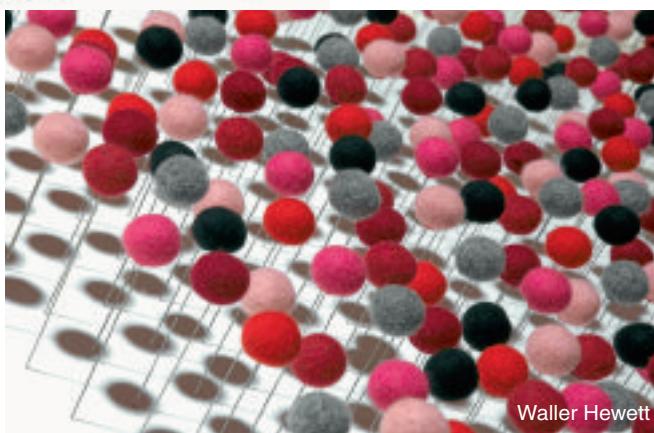
Jude Clarke is delighted to discover a new favourite eatery in Cambridge.





Byard Art
Cambridge

Own art



Waller Hewett

Own Art 20 Mixed exhibition

28 January – 21 February

Independent contemporary art gallery Byard Art, Cambridge has been selected to take part in a new extension of the Arts Council 'Own Art' scheme that makes art more accessible and easier to own.

Artists on display differ in price and medium but can all be bought on Own Art & Own Art 20

Byard Art

14 King's Parade
Cambridge, CB2 1SJ
www.byardart.co.uk
info@byardart.co.uk

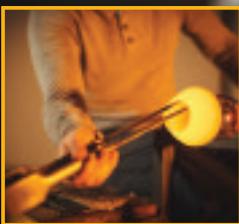
Open Times:
Mon – Sat 9.30am-5.30pm
Sun 11.00am-5.00pm
T: @byardart

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For more information visit
www.jonathanrogers.co.uk



JONATHAN ROGERS

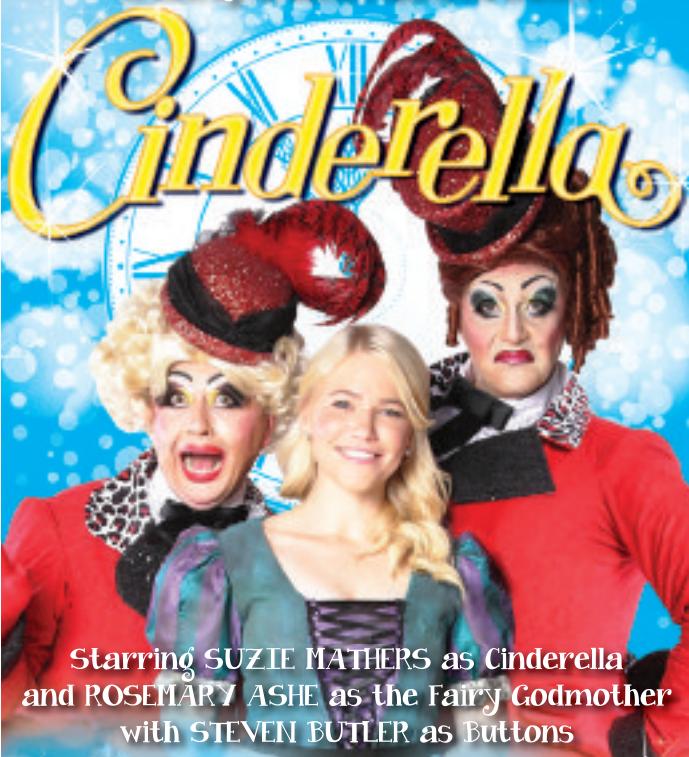
Contemporary Hand Blown Glass

Unit 4b | Clavering Farm | Mill Lane | Clavering
Essex | CB11 4RL | Tel: 07894 464619

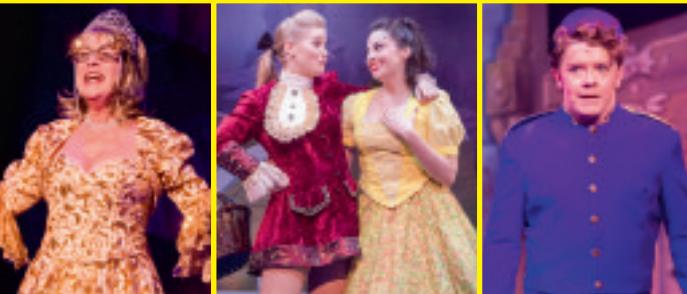
THE BIGGEST AND BEST SHOW IN TOWN!

Directed by DAVID GRINDLEY

Written by AL MORLEY and MATT CROSBY



Starring SUZIE MATHERS as Cinderella and ROSEMARY ASHE as the Fairy Godmother with STEVEN BUTLER as Buttons



'A FEEL-GOOD FEAST OF A SHOW!' CAMBRIDGE NEWS

Thurs 3 Dec 2015 - Sun 17 Jan 2016

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www.cambridgeartstheatre.com



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ARTS & CULTURE



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All that glitters

When Rebecca Ferguson sings, you can't help but listen. Her voice – raw, rich and laced with spine-tingling soul – is, quite simply, GORGEOUS, and by far the best thing to come out of a Simon Cowell talent show, we reckon. Miss Ferguson will be bringing her smoky tones to Cambridge Corn Exchange this month, taking to the stage to sing a collection of hits by jazz legend Billie Holiday. Prepare to be amazed.

Rebecca Ferguson,
Cambridge Corn Exchange,
Thursday, January 28. Tickets from cambridgelivetrust.co.uk

STEWART LEE

If you missed anti-populist comedian Stewart Lee last year, do not fear, he's back in Cambridge this month by (get this) POPULAR demand.

The famously divisive (*The Telegraph* said he is "not funny and has nothing to say", but *The Guardian* called his latest tour, "more skilful and playful than ever") stand-up, writer and director will be revisiting his 2015 show, *A Room With A Stew*, and we're expecting a rollercoaster of a ride, in the best possible way.

In anticipation, here are five things you might not know about the brilliantly funny Lee...

He co-wrote (with Richard Thomas) the smash hit musical, *Jerry Springer: The Opera*, and managed to upset Christians the world over in the process. Ooops.

He was voted the 41st Best Stand-up Ever in a Channel 4 poll. Well, it's got to be better than being 42nd.

He is married to fellow comedian Bridget Christie. They have two children. Aw.

He's got a 'Plagiarist's Corner' on his website – and has accused numerous high-profile comedians of ripping him off in the past. AWKWARD.

The first seeds of *The Mighty Boosh* were sown while Noel Fielding and Julian Barratt were working as part of Lee's Edinburgh show *King Dong vs Moby Dick*. Barratt and Fielding played a giant penis and a whale, respectively. As you do.



Cambridge
Corn Exchange,
Tuesday, February
2 at 8pm. Tickets
£23.50 from
(01223) 357851/
cambridgelivetrust.co.uk



SPOTLIGHTS

THE CIRCUS OF HORRORS



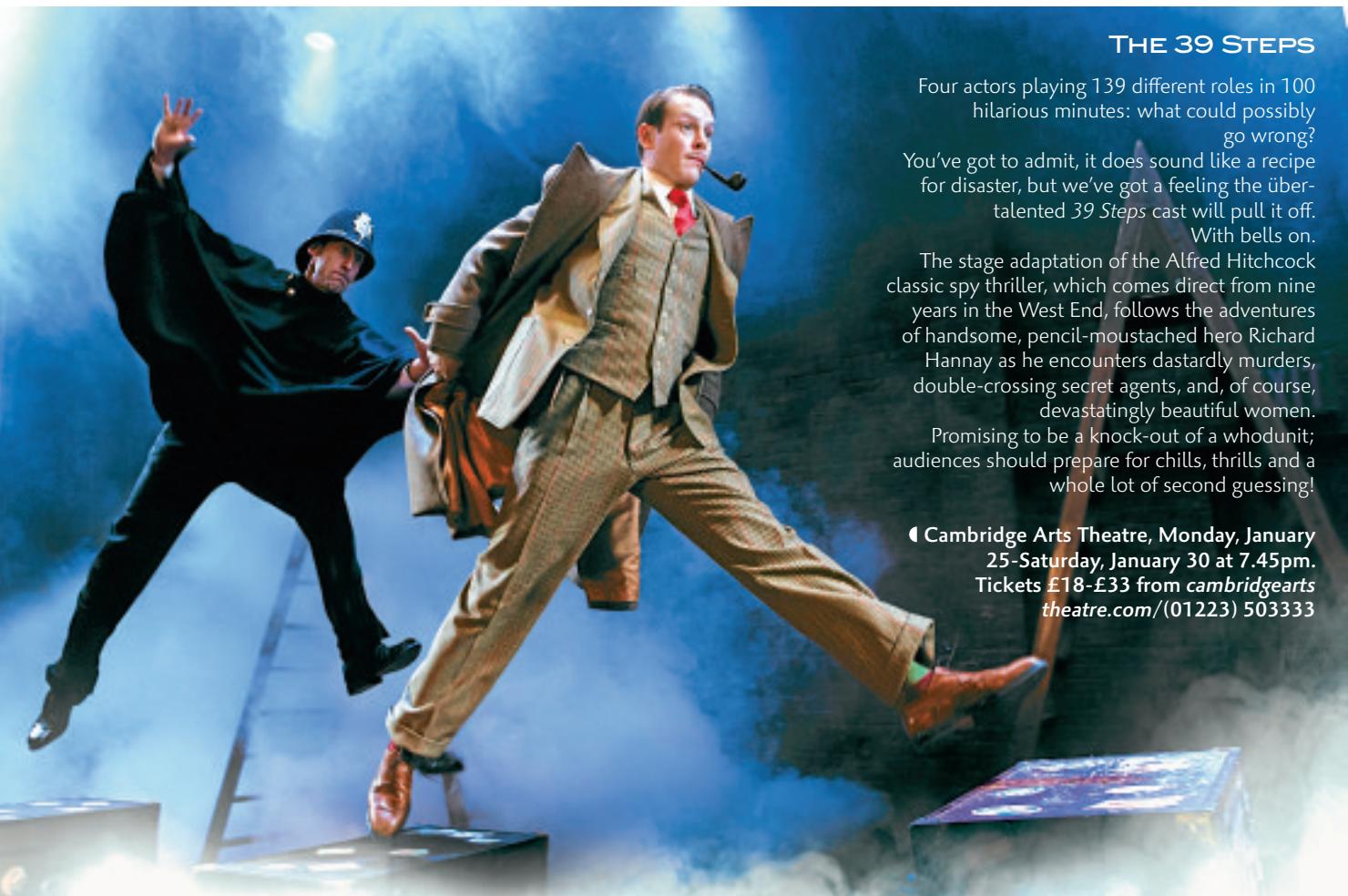
Cambridge
Corn Exchange,
Saturday, January 23
at 7.30pm. Tickets
£21.50-£28.50 from
(01223) 357851/
cambridgelivetrust.co.uk

This is not, we repeat NOT, your average plate-spinning, unicycling, ball-juggling, big top-toting circus. Oh no, it's far more spectacular than that.

First formed at Glastonbury in 1995, The Circus of Horrors is a troupe of adrenaline junkies who take 'edge-of-your-seat' to a whole new, unwordly level. Promising some of the most bizarre circus acts on earth, audiences won't know whether to whoop, gasp or shield their eyes.

Their latest show, *Welcome to Carnevil*, marks their 21st anniversary, and is set in Victorian London in 1899 – the age of the freakshow! Expect the unexpected as a swamp of killer clowns, sword swallowers, demon dwarfs and death-defying aerialists leave your imagination in a whirl, and a pretty trippy whirl at that.

Audacious and exhilarating, you'd be a fool to miss it.

**THE 39 STEPS**

Four actors playing 139 different roles in 100 hilarious minutes: what could possibly go wrong?

You've got to admit, it does sound like a recipe for disaster, but we've got a feeling the über-talented *39 Steps* cast will pull it off.

With bells on.

The stage adaptation of the Alfred Hitchcock classic spy thriller, which comes direct from nine years in the West End, follows the adventures of handsome, pencil-moustached hero Richard

Hannay as he encounters dastardly murders, double-crossing secret agents, and, of course, devastatingly beautiful women.

Promising to be a knock-out of a whodunit; audiences should prepare for chills, thrills and a whole lot of second guessing!

► Cambridge Arts Theatre, Monday, January 25-Saturday, January 30 at 7.45pm. Tickets £18-£33 from [\(01223\) 503333](http://cambridgearts-theatre.com)

**THE RAILS**

English singer-songwriter duo Kami Thompson (daughter of 70s folk rock royalty Richard and Linda Thompson) and James Walbourne concoct the kind of rich, true, 70s-inspired folk rock blend that will make you want to don bell-bottoms, lace flowers into your hair and run for the hills.

Their debut album *Fair Warning* – produced with indie legend Edwyn Collins and folk singer Eliza Carthy on fiddle – is a gem. Released on Island Records' classic Pink Label (once home to John Martyn, Nick Drake and Fairport Convention), the collection of traditional and original songs hark back to the folk rock glory days, while appealing to a new generation of folkies too. Definitely a group to file under 'ones to watch'.

► Cambridge Junction, Wednesday, January 20 at 8pm. Tickets £13 (adv) from (01223) 511511/junction.co.uk

EUROPEAN UNION CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Prepare to be dazzled as the Cambridge Classical Concert Series kicks off its 2016 programme with an evening of pure musical enchantment, courtesy of the European Union Chamber Orchestra.

Directed by Hans-Peter Hofmann, the concert opens with Bach's instantly recognisable *Brandenburg Concerto No. 3*. Catrin Finch, pictured, one of the most accomplished harpists of her generation, will follow, bringing great subtlety of interpretation to Mozart's *Concerto for Flute and Harp*, before doing full justice to the rich harmonics of Debussy's *Danses Sacre et Profane*. The evening concludes playfully with Haydn's *Symphony No. 55*, or the 'Schoolmaster' as it is often nicknamed.

A pre-concert talk, with European Union Chamber Orchestra's managing director Ambrose Miller and Catrin, will take place from 6pm at Heffers Bookshop and is free of charge to concert ticket holders.

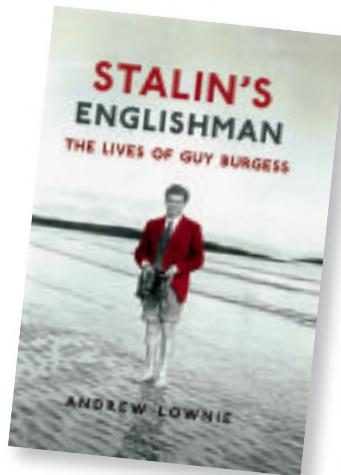
Enjoy!

► Cambridge Corn Exchange, Friday, February 5 at 7.30pm. Tickets £12.50-£38.50 from (01223) 357851/cambridgelivetrust.co.uk



Compiled by Emma Higginbotham

Books



currently reading?

STALIN'S ENGLISHMAN

by Andrew Lownie, published in hardback by Hodder, £25 – available from Heffers for £20 throughout January

Cambridge. The city of ancient colleges, the Bridge of Sighs, evensong, punting on the Cam . . . and spies.

As the decades have passed since their exposure, the Cambridge Spies have become part of our city's history.

Recruited by the Soviet Union in the 1930s, while students at the university, their names have become familiar – but their lives less so.

Andrew Lownie has, in the case of Guy Burgess, remedied this in a newly-researched biography. He sheds light on both Burgess's mercurial personality and the privileged world he grew up in – which allowed him (Burgess rarely bathed, chewed garlic, smoked like a chimney and was, if awake, usually drunk) to rise through the ranks of the BBC, MI6 and the Foreign Office, while systematically betraying them all.

It is during Burgess's final post-defection years in Moscow that Lownie eloquently describes the strange paradox of a devout, ruthless KGB spy who espoused the Communist system yet missed his gentlemen's clubs, his tailor, fine food and wine and of course, Cambridge.

heffers
of Cambridge

Picked by Bruce Dixon, senior bookseller at Heffers, Trinity Street, Cambridge

Comedienne Ruby Wax will be giving a talk and signing copies of her book, *A Mindfulness Guide for the Frazzled*, at the Cambridge Union Society on January 11, courtesy of Heffers.

But if you're expecting whimsical flim-flam about butterflies and wind chimes, you're in for a surprise: "My definition of mindfulness," says Wax, "isn't about sitting erect on a hillock, legs in a knot, humming a mantra; it's something that can help us all: learning to notice your thoughts and feelings so you can truly experience life." Tickets for the 12.30pm event are £10 (includes £3 off the book, usual price £14.99) from eventbrite.co.uk.



Mint, a new book showcasing the most exciting writing talent at Anglia Ruskin University, was launched last month. Spearheaded by six creative writing MA students, it features 23 pieces including flash fiction, poems and short stories.

Penny Hancock, thriller writer and former Anglia Ruskin student, helped to select the shortlist and also provided the foreword, in which she writes: "There must be countless creative works, some truly great, that never reach an audience. So this anthology is a valuable gift, to writers, to readers, and to everyone who believes creative writing has intrinsic value."

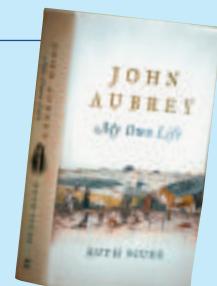
Mint, priced £6.99, is available from Heffers and Waterstones.

Congratulations to Ruth Scurr, who has been shortlisted in the biography category of this year's Costa Book Awards for *John Aubrey: My Own Life*. The Gonville and Caius historian received high praise from the judges, who said: "We were all beguiled and charmed by this hugely original take on the life of one of the 17th century's most engaging chroniclers."



Scurr will be hoping to follow in the footsteps of fellow Cambridge writer Helen Macdonald, who won both the biography category and the overall Book of the Year prize for *H is for Hawk* at last year's awards.

Category winners will be announced on January 4; the overall winner will be announced on January 26.



Ely biographer Jeremy Dronfield's seventh book, *Beyond the Call*, tells the incredible story of Captain Robert Trimble. Officially Trimble was a bomber pilot in the US Air Force; in reality he was a secret agent who, in 1945, single-handedly saved the lives of around a thousand prisoners of war in Soviet-occupied Poland.

"I've been privileged to work on some outstanding life stories, but this is the one I'm most proud of – the story of an unsung, unassuming humanitarian hero," said Dronfield.

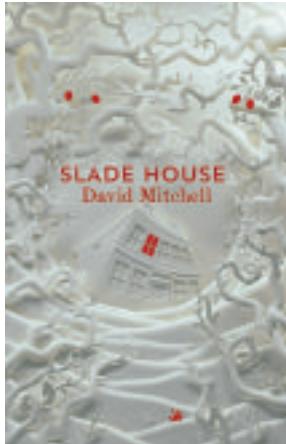
Beyond the Call is published by Icon Books, priced £9.99.



Compiled by Emma Higginbotham

Welcome to our monthly Book Club.
This time we read *Slade House* by David Mitchell (Sceptre, £12.99).

Did you read along with us? Share your thoughts by emailing emma.higginbotham@cambridge-news.co.uk or post your comments online: you can find the Book Club page under cambridge-news.co.uk/whats-on-leisure/books.



Book club

THIS MONTH, WE...

READ: *Slade House* by David Mitchell (Sceptre, £12.99)

MET AT: Louise's house, Dry Drayton

TALKED ABOUT (OTHER THAN THE BOOK): Spreading rumours, attire for January weddings, and ordinary people with famous names, poor loves.

WHAT THE BLURB SAYS:

Turn down Slade Alley – narrow, dank and easy to miss, even when you're looking for it. Find the small black iron door set into the right-hand wall. No handle, no keyhole, but at your touch it swings open. Enter the sunlit garden of an old house that doesn't quite make sense; too grand for the shabby neighbourhood, too large for the space it occupies. A stranger greets you by name and invites you inside. At first, you won't want to leave. Later, you'll find that you can't.

WHAT WE SAY:

Every nine years, on the last Saturday of October, a 'guest' is summoned to Slade House. And here we have our structure: five chapters, beginning in 1979, each following a different character as they're drawn towards a classic 'haunted house' – complete with a handless clock, eyeless portraits and a very sinister attic. So far, so scary.

But for the first time in a long time, each of us felt differently about the book.

Horror-fan Louise absolutely

loved it, finding herself "totally swept away" by the tension. Horror-phobic Julie absolutely hated it, to the point where she was too scared to even bring the book to our meeting.

Lisa, meanwhile, enjoyed it but found some sections a little too *Doctor Who*; Alice really wanted to love it, but just couldn't make satisfactory sense of the explanations; and Emma – that's me – well, I romped through the individual stories, but found the brother-sister encounters at the end of each (where they inform the reader what's going on via some very *Scooby-Doo*-ish dialogue) too irritating, and the 'truth' too convoluted. I skim-read the final pages. Sorry, Mr Mitchell.

Judging by the book's reviews, though, I'm in the minority – and much of it is undeniably great. Mitchell deftly captures the atmosphere of unease with his bleak alleyway and eerie house (watch out for the terrifying moment when our policeman discovers a certain someone locked in the attic), and there's emotional investment too: we all connected with the opening chapter's Nathan, the bullied boy who finally finds a friend,

and overweight student Sally, who's desperate to believe that she's finally desired.

But none of us has read Mitchell's *The Bone Clocks*, which we now know has strong links to *Slade House*, and it sometimes felt as if there was a code for other readers 'in the know' that we just couldn't decipher. Apart from Louise, we just didn't feel it was our bag.

Next month we'll be discussing *According to Yes* by Dawn French (Michael Joseph, £20). Why not read along with us?

WHAT WE SAY

EMMA HIGGINBOTHAM

I enjoyed the vignettes, but I didn't enjoy their hammy endings. Why didn't Mitchell leave it all unexplained until the last chapter? It would've ramped up the tension irresistibly.

6/10

ALICE RYAN

The beginning was BRILLIANT, but sadly, as it wore on, the plot seemed silly rather than spooky; the sceptic in me remained unconvinced.

7/10

JULIE RIVERS

Difficult for me to judge, as I totally bought into the horror. Ultimately it was way too scary for me: I'm still having nightmares.

6/10

LISA MILLARD

Hmm. I'm a newcomer to Mitchell and probably won't be returning. Feels like a private club that I haven't been invited to. Clever but referential.

7/10

LOUISE CUMMINGS

This eerie tale of a grim soul-snatching brother and sister really captivated me. I got lost in the storytelling and enjoyed the characterisation so much I'll be devouring the David Mitchell back catalogue.

10/10

Haunted houses



HOUSE OF LEAVES
by Mark Z
Danielewski,
published by
Transworld, £28 at
Waterstone's, Sidney
Street, Cambridge



**THE WOMAN
IN BLACK**
by Susan Hill,
published by
Vintage, £7.99 at
WHSmith, Market
Street, Cambridge



**THE TURN OF
THE SCREW**
by Henry James,
published by
Penguin, £5.99
at Heffers, Trinity
Street, Cambridge

Films



currently watching

THE REVENANT

Director: Alejandro González Iñárritu

Starring: Tom Hardy, Leonardo DiCaprio, Domhnall Gleeson

Alejandro González Iñárritu opened the cinematic new year in 2015 with the Oscar-winning *Birdman*, and returns at the dawn of 2016 with *The Revenant* – a film which is already generating as much Oscar buzz as its older *Birdman* brother. Set in the wild frontier of 1800s North America, *The Revenant* follows Hugh Glass (Leonardo DiCaprio) as he deals with wild bears, double-crossing hunting teams, frozen rivers and an all-encompassing sense of raging revenge. Do you smell a Best Actor Oscar nomination for DiCaprio just from that previous sentence? I think I might!

With a cast that includes Tom Hardy, Domhnall Gleeson and Will Poulter, there's every chance that *The Revenant* could land Iñárritu with two consecutive Oscar wins. That's part of the fun with cinema releases in January and February – all the guesswork and hedging of bets as to who and what will win the race to the prize. In an unusual move, Iñárritu chose to shoot the film only with natural light – and for a film shot in the Canadian wilderness in winter, that involves a lot of candles, shadows and sunsets. I can't remember the last film I saw on the big screen which played with natural light in such an ingenious manner. It brings to mind the effect of a Victorian stage play, lit from the wings by candles – only with more wild bears and Native American Indians.

Come the short, dark days of January, there is surely no better place to trek out to than the Arts Picturehouse for a breathtaking experience after all...

From January 15

BEST OF THE REST

CM THE HATEFUL EIGHT

Director: Quentin Tarantino

Starring: Channing Tatum, Samuel L. Jackson

In post-Civil War Wyoming, a motley crew of bounty hunters try to find shelter during a blizzard but get involved in a plot of betrayal and deception. Will they survive? Who knows, but as it's Tarantino, things are bound to get outrageously violent finding out.

From January 9



JOY

Director: David O. Russell

Starring: Jennifer Lawrence, Bradley Cooper
The inspiring true story of American inventor, entrepreneur and divorced mother-of-three Joy Mangano, and how she built a powerful business empire after inventing the Miracle Mop. There's a buzz around this David O. Russell comedy-drama, and with the wonderful Jennifer Lawrence apparently on top form (isn't she always?!), we won't be surprised if it storms to Oscar glory.

From January 1



Picked by Jack Toye, marketing manager, Arts Picturehouse

ART AND SOUL

With the New Year comes a new art exhibition at the Alliance Française Cambridge – and it looks rather wonderful.

The exhibition, which runs from January 9 to February 9, is by French artist Söberland, and features 20 black and white pieces influenced by the tattoo and street art cultures. Creating a surreal monochrome universe, with a dark and poetic atmosphere, Söberland has no plan or outline to her work, with each piece drawn from her subconscious.

The artist recently exhibited her artwork in Paris, as part of the Intercultural Festival in Saint-Denis, and works in parallel on a series of body paintings

exploring the concept of identity.

The exhibition is part of Alliance Française Cambridge's continuing mission to encourage and develop knowledge of the French language and Francophone cultures in our society.

Très bien!

• The Alliance Française is at 60 Hills Road, Cambridge CB2 1LA. Find out more about the exhibition at alliance-cam.co.uk.



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Image: Lilith



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call or email

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info@spirecambridge.com

*All prices are subject to pre-assessment criteria. Please note your initial consultation and any investigatory tests/scans are not included.

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30 New Road, Impington, Cambridge, CB24 9EL

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AWARDS NIGHT

The inaugural *Cambridge News* Property Awards took place at Ely Cathedral. Sponsored by Ashton KCJ, Hill and Price Bailey, the awards recognised the best in 10 categories, from Rising Star to Lifetime Achievement, Negotiator to Developer. Guests enjoyed drinks and dinner in the Lady Chapel.

Pictures by David Johnson



The Property Awards winners with host Lee Baldry



NEW BUSINESS

The launch of Cambridge Artisan – a local hamper, gift box and food delivery service – was celebrated at Cambridge Wine Merchants' Bridge Street bar. The brainchild of 15-year-old Amelise Burr, the enterprise aims to bring together the best of our region's food and drink.

Charlotte Burr, Tina Roche, Amelise Burr, and Artisan director Robert Burr, above. Annie Green and Josh Lovatt

Pictures by Richard Patterson



Roger and Deborah Yardy

Cambridge Classics, the family-run window business, celebrated its 15th birthday with a festive open day at its Gwydir Street HQ. The family-friendly event included everything from mulled wine and mince pies to face-painting for little ones.

Shenna and Chris Burridge

CHRISTMAS PARTY

Pictures by Keith Heppell



Tinsin Wong and Laura Yardy-Wong



OPEN DAY



Margaret Szczepanska, Toni Koszykowski, Joanne Brown, Les Koszykowski and Dr Spiros

Pictures by Richard Patterson



Cambridge's Miracle Clinic hosted an open day at its Newmarket Road premises, giving visitors the chance to learn more about the skin and body treatments available, including botox and wrinkle fillers.

Jacqueline Wolff, Autumn Wulff and Beth Cainzos-Sola



Vhari Russell, Ian Cumming and John Hoskins



Evanthia Steadman, Robert Steadman and Rudy Imhoof

WINE TASTING

Members of Grub Club Cambridge, the foodie networking group, raised a toast to the festive season with a wine tasting night at Huntingdon's Old Bridge Hotel. Ian Cumming, local *Bake Off* finalist, was guest of honour.

Pictures by Richard Patterson



Neil Connell and Rebecca Rayner



Mark Hulme and Perry Wakeman



LAUNCH EVENT

The launch of The Cambridge Roar 2016 – a whole programme of special events, held in support of both The Prince's Trust and Arthur Rank Hospice Charity – was celebrated with a VIP party at Cambridge Quy Mill Hotel & Spa. TV racing legend Derek 'Tommo' Thompson was compere.

Pictures by Warren Gunn



Richard Spendlove, Jeremy Green, mayor Rob Dryden and Martin Beazor



Russell Grant, John Butler and Andrew Rand



Bob Sadler, Anne and Roderick Watson



Neil Mackay and Jeremy Green

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

John Beazor, dealer in antiques and fine art since 1875, marked 75 years in Cambridge with a VIP reception at its Regent Street showroom. Guests, including the city's mayor Rob Dryden, celebrated with champagne and canapes.

Pictures by David Johnson

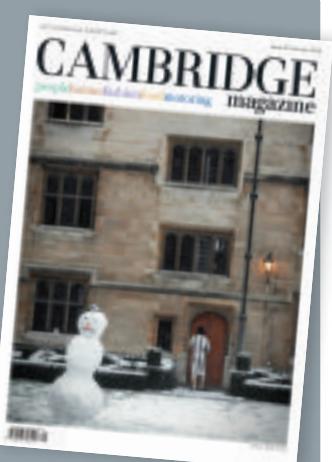


Christopher Gough-Goodman and Maria de Lima

On the cover...

Martin Bond shares his story behind the front cover image

"I took this photograph exactly a year ago when, on a rare snow-filled day, I went looking for a snow-white photograph. This was taken at King's College where the snowman caught my attention. As I was preparing for the next shot a student appeared, wearing a dressing gown and sandals despite the weather. It just captured a moment in Cambridge student life perfectly."



Our cover comes from *A Cambridge Diary*, an ongoing project which sees Martin take a portrait picture on the streets of Cambridge every day. To view the archive – and see his latest shots – visit acambridgediary.co.uk.

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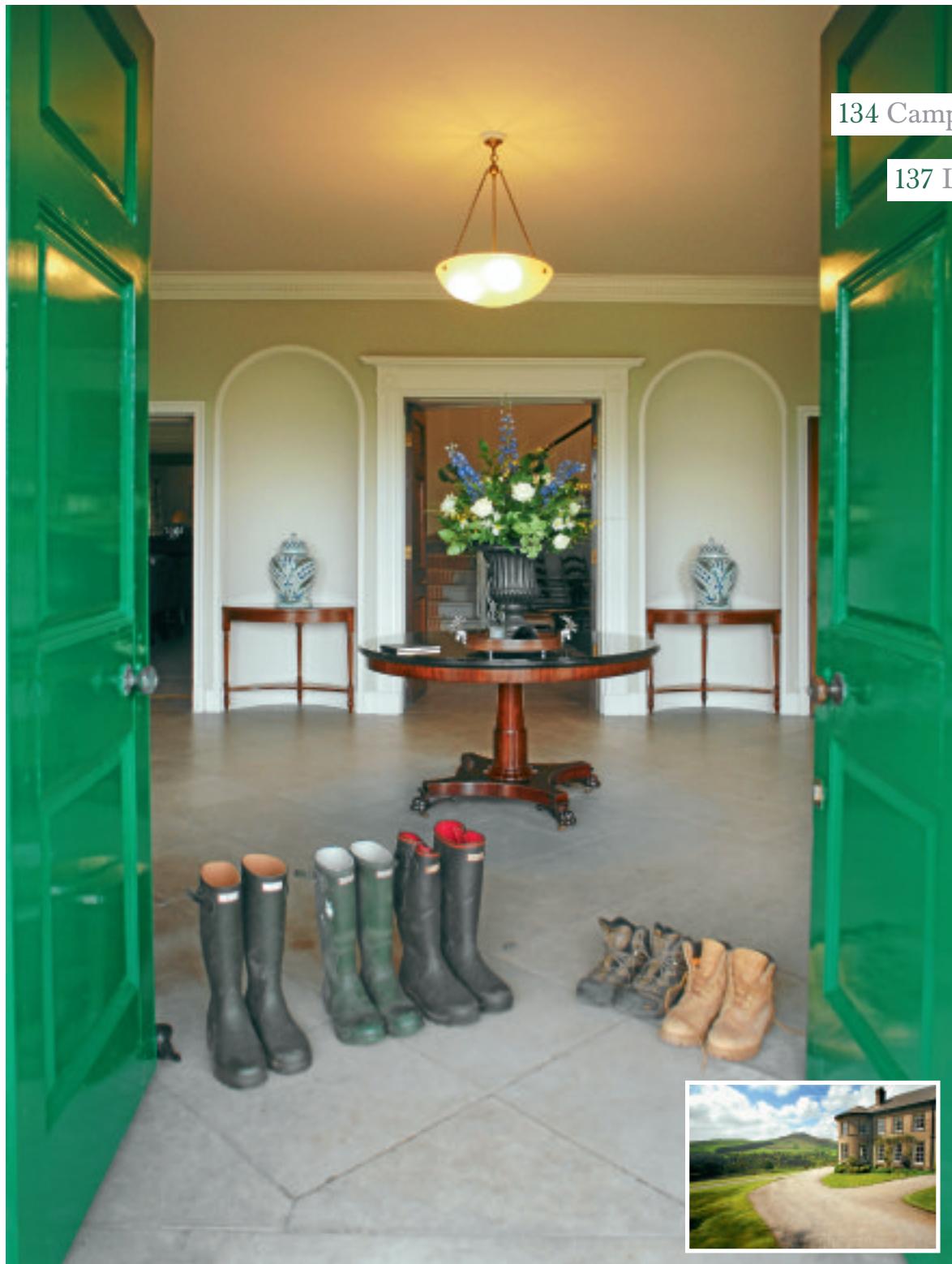
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Picture: Tony Tweedie



THE SOUTH WEST

Having caught the surfing bug while living in New Zealand, Wendy Davey and family headed South West to catch some waves. . .

It was a fix we were after, to be honest. Nothing sinister. . . not alcohol (well, maybe just a little) and not drugs.

We're talking SURF. . . and hopefully some warm sunshine and blue skies too.

My husband Martin became hooked on surfing during the 12 months we lived in big-wave-heaven on the North Island of New Zealand a few years ago when the children were 5 and 2.

We lived at Mount Maunganui, where the Pacific Ocean crashes on to soft pale sand, each wave bringing with it an army of wet-suited board riders, many of whom will have travelled a fair distance to get their kicks from this particular stretch of the Bay of Plenty.

Barefoot, wet suit on, and with a bright yellow board tucked under his arm, Martin would pad over the road to join them at every opportunity.

He got the bug.

We returned home to Suffolk in 2010, and subsequent holidays spent in Yorkshire or landlocked central France, and day-trips to Felixstowe, have not afforded the same exhilaration for Martin, with the sea 'flat as', as the Kiwis would say, and in many cases an unappetising shade of brown.

His wetsuit gathered dust.

So last summer a trip to Cornwall was planned. We would tour the surfing coast, from Newquay going north, spending as much time on the beach as the British weather allows.

We wanted to be able to stay mobile and, not being the most enthusiastic under-canvas campers (three nights is our limit), we figured a motorhome was the way to go.

Our Google search threw up Motorholme; a firm based in Bourn, Cambridgeshire, which offers motorhomes available for pick-up right across the UK, including the South West. Perfect.

Our itinerary involved the first two nights staying with friends near Plymouth; then three nights in our tent just across the border into Cornwall, and then we'd head up towards Bristol for Phase 3: to collect the motorhome for a glorious eight nights.

The weather was not kind while we were camping (is it ever?) and so we made the journey up through Devon towards the Motorholme base at Doddington Ash with two slightly grumpy children and a top box crammed with soggy. . . well, everything.

As we turned into the depot, our van was a sight to behold. Gleaming white, it was a six-berth Chausson Flash, equipped with freeview TV, DVD & CD player, grill, fridge and freezer, three gas rings, washroom with

shower, bunk beds, plus a double over the cab. It was insulated and double glazed, had central heating, cruise control, air conditioning, power steering and a 2.2ltr engine.

This was going to be good.

As Martin was briefed on the necessities, from levelling blocks to emptying the loo, the excited children and I busied ourselves with transferring the soggy contents of our car into the van, quickly Christened Charlotte, by Jessica and Tom.

Suitcases were unpacked, the van's cavernous boot was crammed with all the necessities for a family beach holiday and we were off. . . the grins on our four faces as wide as the M5.

The van was a comfy ride. Sitting high in the cab gave us great views as we popped George Ezra into the CD player and the children settled back, their heads buried in Harry Potter. (At what age do children start appreciating scenery?)

The sites varied a great deal on our holiday. The average price was about £30 a night, which struck us a bit steep when you have all the facilities on board in a motorhome. However, this was high season.

There are cheaper sites (effectively farmers offering up a field) to be found, with minimal facilities housed in temporary sheds, if you keep your eyes open.

The touring areas of the larger campsites provide electric hook-ups, loos and showers (some nicer than others), sinks for washing up, drinking water and a chemical toilet disposal unit. Some also had laundry facilities.

Our first night in the van felt like a luxury hotel after three nights in the tent and after sleeping like dogs and an early breakfast, we drove out of the site the next morning to make the drive down to Newquay.

We were booked on to a site at Mawgan Porth and by the time we arrived the sun was high and the surf was up.

My husband sprang into action at the sight of those waves. Within moments of arriving and choosing our 'spot' on the sand, he disappeared to check out the prices of surf board hire. Virtually all the main beaches up the coast have boards to buy and hire, and many have shops selling wetsuits and other gear.

Moments later he returned, having parted with a mere £8 for four hours' use of the bright blue board under his arm, and hauled himself into his wetsuit (I think he was silently relieved it still fitted).

And then he was off, striding down the beach; a man on a mission.

These Cornish seas are big and potentially dangerous and so the beaches

are manned by RNLI lifeguards. Reassuring to know when you have young children.

After an hour or so body-boarding in the waves, the children and I flopped on the beach and waited a while before a grim-faced Martin paddled back up the beach. It clearly hadn't been the happy reunion of man with board; surfing was NOT like riding a bike.

Still, there was always tomorrow.

The weather was glorious for a full five days and we pootled up the coast, stopping at sites which took our eye and exploring the coves and beaches.

We stayed a night at Bude, visited the heritage village of Clovelly, and arrived, in the rain, at Woolacombe Bay.

The surf was so good that, despite the £7 car parking charge and the grey, threatening clouds, we scooped up our boards and wetsuits and sprinted for the beach.

We had a fabulous hour or so in the waves before the heavens opened. We stood dripping on to our towels in the van, but soon felt smug as we put the heaters on and watched the poor souls from our window, peeling off wetsuits and clambering into jeans and T-shirts standing at the back of a car, in the teeming rain.

We spent the next morning at Lynton and Lynmouth and then drove along the top of beautiful Exmoor before reluctantly returning the van the following morning.

A glorious holiday. The freedom the van afforded us was precisely what we wanted. It was a sizeable beast and yet drove easily and we wouldn't have wanted anything smaller, with all the clobber that comes with two children.

See you next time, Charlotte. After all, it seems five years is too long to go without surfing and Martin clearly needs more practice.

TRAVEL FACTS

Motorholme is a UK motorhome rental company with more than 32,000 rentals under its belt. Its UK-wide network of 13 depots are conveniently placed across the country to cover all areas and many are situated near international airports to assist foreign visitors too – find out more at UnbeatableHire.com. Motorhomes are available from the following locations: Barnsley, Birmingham, Brentwood/Romford, Bristol, Cambridge, Durham, Edinburgh, Gatwick, Glasgow, London, Manchester, Oxford and Southampton.

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CORNWALL

Apart from one thieving seagull, Jude Clarke discovers she loves St Ives.

Already big fans of the South West, my husband and I know many parts of Cornwall, Devon, Dorset and Somerset from family holidays and music festival jaunts. Until now, though, St Ives had rather passed us by.

And from the moment we arrived we began to understand the gravity of our error. Because, it's fair to say, that even two such confirmed Cornwall-philes as us were utterly bowled over.

Our hotel for the first half of our six-day stay, the Pedn Olva, had reserved parking spaces for guests in the railway station's car park. Unfurling our legs after the six-hour drive we were, right away, smacked in the face by the beauty of the outlook – the sea that particular shade of pale, almost-fluorescent blue that you only seem to get in Cornwall, and beaches stretching almost as far as the eye could scan. Wow: sold!

The visual treats continued once we checked in. The hotel is perched right above one of St Ives' (count 'em) FOUR beaches, Porthminster, with almost half a mile of sand, and our bedroom window had a view to die for. After a quick dip in the small-but-perfectly-formed outdoor pool (again with fabulous beach view) we dined at the hotel's restaurant, in what was to prove to be the first of a series of impressive meals we were to experience during our stay.

Up early for a pre-breakfast swim, our first morning was spent ambling around town, getting to know its nooks, crannies, tea shops and galleries, including a pleasant hour browsing a craft market.

In the afternoon we headed for the Minack outdoor theatre, a 40-minute drive away in Porthcurno, for a matinee performance of *She Stoops To Conquer*. With seats carved into the cliff, and the sea as a backdrop, it's a stunning experience.

Seasoned Minack-goers bring their own cushions, and after a couple of hours sitting on a stone seat, we understood why: essential (ouch!).

St Ives is not only blessed with a multiplicity of beaches, but is also an utter dream for gourmets, with fabulous dining everywhere you look. And with everything so easy to reach (you can walk from one end



Pedn Olva



View from Harbour Watch

of the town to the other in about half an hour), you can really take advantage.

We ate brilliant meals each night, from the way-better-than-expected Italian from Caffe Pasta on the harbour front to the quirky vegetarian delights of Spinacio's.

Best of all was the new Porthminster Kitchen. This was serious cuisine, imaginative, inventive and an absolute thrill to eat, in stylish but unpretentious surroundings looking out again over the sea. My vegetarian umami starter, with shiitake set into a cream, black garlic and crisp bread, was one of the most original plates of food I've ever eaten, and the oriental-inflected roasted eggplant main lived up to the high expectations it had set. A must-visit for adventurous foodies.

For the second half of our visit we were staying at Harbour Watch – a small fisherman's cottage converted into a self-catering holiday home. Cosy, beautifully appointed and cleverly laid out to make the optimum use of space, we really loved our little bolthole which, as the name suggested, had yet ANOTHER wonderful view over the harbour.

Greeted on arrival with treats including tea and coffee, a rustic loaf, Cornish butter and cheese, milk, prosecco and ales, we took advantage of the vouchers also left for us to have a great lunch at The Tearoom – homity pie, crab sandwiches, coffee and walnut cake – bliss!

Perhaps the most magical aspect of this magical place rests in the art that runs through St Ives' veins. A visit to Tate St Ives is near-obligatory (we adored the vivid Bridget Rileys, Dan Flavin's light structures and Rivane Neuenschwander's room of

multi-coloured ribbons), and even better is the Barbara Hepworth museum and garden.

The sculptor's pieces, huge and imposing or smaller-scale, are given an eye-opening new dimension when displayed, as the artist intended, in her carefully cultivated gardens. This was possibly the most beautiful, soul-enriching art exhibition we had ever spent time in, each sculpture providing endless fascination as it morphed in appearance as the sun came in and out.

On an English holiday you take your chances, weather-wise, don't you? We were on the whole lucky during our Cornish sojourn, allowing us to visit each of the very different beaches.

Surfers should head for Porthmeor, opposite The Tate, while if you like beach huts and an endless stretch of sand then Porthminster is your recommended destination. Our favourite, though, was the small-but-beautifully-formed Porthgwidden. Ideal for sunbathing, great for kids, the only downside was the aggressive seagulls, a pair of which mugged me, grabbing an egg baguette from my hands!

But that was a small price to pay for such an idyllic break. In a county that is blessed with more charm than most places in the UK, St Ives has got a very real claim to being Cornwall's most wonderful destination. Seagulls do your worst: we'll almost certainly be back.

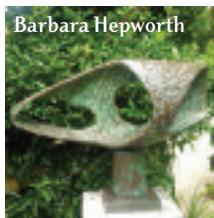
TRAVEL FACTS

Pedn Olva, West Porthminster Beach, St Ives TR26 2EA. pednolva.co.uk
Harbour Watch, Aspects Holidays, (01736) 754242. aspects-holidays.co.uk

Minack Theatre, Porthcurno, Penzance TR19 6JU. minack.com

Tate St Ives, Porthmeor Beach, St Ives TR26 1TG. tate.org.uk/stives

Porthminster Kitchen, The Wharf, St Ives TR26 1LG. porthminster.kitchen.co.uk



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LIVING & LIFE



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A dog's life

If you've resolved to live a happier and healthier life in 2016, here's an idea: give a dog a home. Cuddling a hound is proven to lower blood pressure, boost your immune system and send endorphin levels soaring. Plus you're 70 per cent more likely to achieve recommended activity levels when you've got a four-legger to take for walkies.

Tiny – the big softie pictured here – is just one of the dogs looking for love at Wood Green, the animal shelter in Godmanchester. Found as a stray in Cambridge last summer, he's described as 'affectionate, playful and intelligent: how could you resist?'

Find out more at woodgreen.org.uk.

Making a MOVE

Emily Martin puts a mixed martial arts session to the test – and rediscovers her inner Street Fighter.

Pictures by David Johnson



The sum total of everything I know about martial arts comes from 1) The movie *Karate Kid* and 2) A lot of my youth spent in my friend Alex's bedroom playing *Street Fighter* on a Mega Drive. She was always 'Chun Li'. I was always 'Ryu'.

No-one ever wanted to be 'Blanka' because he was not a handsome player. And looks are important to little girls when they're fighting on the streets, right?

So you can imagine my surprise when I found myself in my car, one dark and rainy night, on my way to Bourn Golf & Leisure to participate in a mixed martial arts class led by one of the world's foremost martial arts experts.

Not a pixilated digital fighter, but a real man with a proper *Street Fighter* name too: NATO FICARRA. I texted Alex. She was excited for me. But also worried. Mega Drive-wise, I was never very good. Nato was extremely friendly and welcoming.

We chatted and took some photos. But I wasn't fooled. The man is deadly. I'd read his bio on the Bourn Golf & Leisure website. He's recently retired

from professional fighting and is three times European Champion, 10 times British Champion and unbeaten in his last 120 fights. Woah. He's also a 6th Dan in Wado Ryu, 2nd Dan in Shotokan and a Master in Jeet Kune Do. Now I don't know what any of that is, but it sure doesn't sound like a knitting and puzzles afternoon at my grandma's.

People start arriving for the class and looking at me with an amused little twinkle in their eyes, like how that snake looks at people in *The Jungle Book*, and it makes me nervous. Also people are wearing belts. Brown and black belts. I'd heard about those.

The class just before ours started filing out of the studio. Nice ladies who'd been doing pilates. One of them caught my eye as I stood there with Nato and the black belts. "What are you doing?" her eyes screamed at me. "I don't know," my eyes screamed back. But it was too late. In we went to a lovely mirrored studio and got started.

Because I was writing this article, they made me stand at the front and go against all my natural instincts to hide at the back. Or outside. Or in my car. Or go home. We started with some stretches to warm up and, seeing as I've only ever done a light bit of yoga, stretching is as far as I ever get, so when the press ups, sit ups and star jumps kicked in, I was scared.

If you've been to an exercise class before, you'll know they can feel intimidating, isolating, embarrassing and there's always a front row of irritating keen regulars who ask the instructor questions like "Is this how I'm supposed to have my leg?", while everyone else seethes behind them, staring at the backs of their heads and hoping they'll fall over. But there was a brilliant atmosphere in this class. Everyone was friendly, cool and there were zero teacher's pets. It was welcoming and relaxed. The banter was thick and fast. I genuinely didn't want anyone to fall over. Not even once.

For the main part of the class we got into pairs and I was partnered with Philip Crow, the owner of Bourn Golf & Leisure and a regular in Nato's class. Philip and I got stuck straight into kicking each other in the rib cage. Despite it feeling a bit wrong, in martial arts you just straight up lash your foot right into people's



Nato Ficarra shows Emily Martin some moves



chests. It goes against everything you've been taught. You know, about not kicking people and stuff. And it feels pretty good. All I'd say is there is something about being kicked in the ribs by the bare foot of the owner of Bourn Golf & Leisure which feels a bit harsh, but he was very nice about it, so no hard feelings.

The class was mostly boys but there were some kick-ass girls there too. Once I'd finished giving Philip a pasting, I started on a nice lady called Neeha. At one point, I literally just looked at Neeha and she fell over backwards into some exercise bikes. She said she slipped but we both knew it was because I'm clearly a pretty awesome, natural martial artist.

By the end I was so into it I almost pulled off that special move that 'Ryu' used to have in *Street Fighter*, when he'd punch slowly upwards and all the blue stars would come out. And everyone would be like, "Woah duuuude. How did you do that?" Yep. That's pretty much how it went down. Following the hour-long class, there was a second hour which Nato said is usually more "aggressive" but I err... had plans so I couldn't stay.

And honestly, I just didn't want to hurt them anymore. 120 fights unbeaten and, in the end, Nato was defeated by little old me. He crumpled to the

ground like an autumn leaf. "FINISH HIM," growled Philip Crow as everyone looked on in amazement and my body glowed with fire. No, not really.

Obviously I got my butt totally kicked.

My legs started cramping up in the car on the way home and I had to be carried into my house where I lay on the sofa for two days, but overall, I really enjoyed it.

It was a proper workout and very fun, at the same time as

making me feel like a super-cool fighter. I'd highly recommend these classes if you want to learn how to defend yourself on the mean streets of Cambridge, if you need to shift those extra Christmas pounds or maybe, like me, you just hanker after your *Street Fighter* days and you're too old for a games console.

The benefits of martial arts include: physical improvement, stamina, flexibility, power, mobility, balance, co-ordination, speed, agility, mental well-being, better stress management, self-confidence, sensitivity, awareness, concentration and mental focus.

So that's everything really. It's awesome. Go.



► Mixed Martial Arts, Karate, Kung Fu, Kick Boxing, Self-Defence and Judo is at Bourn Golf & Leisure, Toft Road, Cambridge. Thursdays, 7.15-8.15pm and 8.15-9.15pm. £5/£6.

► Classes for kids also available on Mondays, 6.15-7.15pm. Visit bournhofandleisure.co.uk/health-a-fitness/cambridge-martial-arts for information. Contact Nato Ficarra at forchie7@googlemail.com or call 07907 892076.

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EXPAND YOUR HORIZONS

Cambridge University Press Bookshop, 1 Trinity Street,
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This shop sells a mind-blowing list of titles that cover the majority of non-fiction subjects – perfect for a little cerebral work-out. The ground floor is home to new publications, local interest titles, the best-selling Companions series and literally shelves full of books on humanities and the social sciences. Up on the first floor are subjects including classics, law, mathematics and science, alongside business and management. Theology can also be found there as well as the famous Cambridge Bibles.



New year, new YOU?

It's a brand new year. Time to start afresh, with a little help from your indie friends – as Anne Beamish, editor of *Independent Cambridge*, reports.

"I have to confess that New Year's resolutions are not really something I make – far too much pressure! Saying that, I do think the general over-indulgence of the festive period, coupled with the dark days of January, usually leaves me feeling in need of a little lift. So, here are some ideas for both mind and body rejuvenation – offered by the independents of Cambridge – to get you back on fighting form."



EATING HEALTHILY ON-THE-GO

The Garden Kitchen, 82 Mill Road, Cambridge CB1 2AS

At the heart of everything the team at The Garden Kitchen do is the philosophy of using good, basic ingredients and making them into something great. Perfect for 'on-the-go food', the kitchen offers a huge variety of fresh salads, hot and cold dishes, including Lebanese wraps, home-made soups and dals, slices, pasta and cakes – all made on the premises. So, a great place for vegetarians to know about, there are also always loads of gluten and dairy-free options (and ask about sugar-free options too, all the team are really friendly and helpful).





BUY FRESH, BUY LOCAL

Radmore Farm Shop, 30 Chesterton Road, Cambridge CB4 3AX

This family-run business sells produce from their mixed livestock and arable farm, which is located not far away in Northamptonshire. This fantastic shop also sells a full range of produce from other local suppliers and farming families and to help you cook all this delicious, nutritious produce, they have a feast of recipe ideas on their website. Not to worry if you don't live near the shop – you can order everything online and have it delivered.



EXPRESS SOME WILD EXCITEMENT AND DELIGHT!

Yippee Noodle Bar, 7-9 King Street, Cambridge CB1 1LH

Since opening in 2000, Yippee has focused on combining fresh ingredients into simple yet nutritious and flavoursome dishes. Everything is cooked to order and served straight from the bustling open kitchen at the rear of the restaurant, with all stocks and sauces prepared in-house daily. The staff there are always ready to accommodate any dietary requirements or even just help choose. Time to relax and enjoy a well-deserved treat!



EMPLOY SOME PEDAL POWER

The School Run Centre, Hope Street Yard, Mill Road, Cambridge CB1 3NA

The different permutations on transporting varying numbers of small children (and your pet dog), doing the weekly shopping or tackling the daily commute appear endless, but are all catered for by Hugh Salt at The School Run Centre. And as the Yard is traffic-free, you can test drive a classic traditional dutchbike, cargobike, mummybike, tandem or tricycle easily and in safety – a perfect way to start getting active, as well as getting somewhere in our increasingly congested city!



TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR TRESSES

Neil Curry Hairdressing, Thompson's Lane, Cambridge CB5 8AT

We all know feeling good on the inside is supposed to make us look good on the outside, but sometimes we need a little more help to achieve that and what better way than with a new haircut? If, when you visit the hairdressers, you appreciate a very professional yet personal service in a relaxing, quiet environment, then an appointment with Neil Curry will be just your thing. Truly passionate about his work, Neil specialises in precision cutting and colouring and will be the perfect person to advise you on the best new look for the new year.



TUNE IN TO YOUR CREATIVE SIDE

Millers Music, 12 Sussex Street, Cambridge CB1 1PW
Celebrating an amazing 160 years this year, Millers Music is one of the longest established music companies in Britain. Growing and modernising, Millers now sells online and even offers a click and collect service. But the most unique part of Millers is its fantastic money-back rental deal, which means you can start playing an instrument from just £8 a month, and it has its own in-house 0 per cent credit arrangement making discovering your musical side both very affordable and very flexible. So there's no excuse to not give it a go!



All these places and more can be found in the colourful and informative third edition of the book *Independent Cambridge*, available from Waterstones, Heffers, many of the independent shops and online at independent-cambridge.co.uk.

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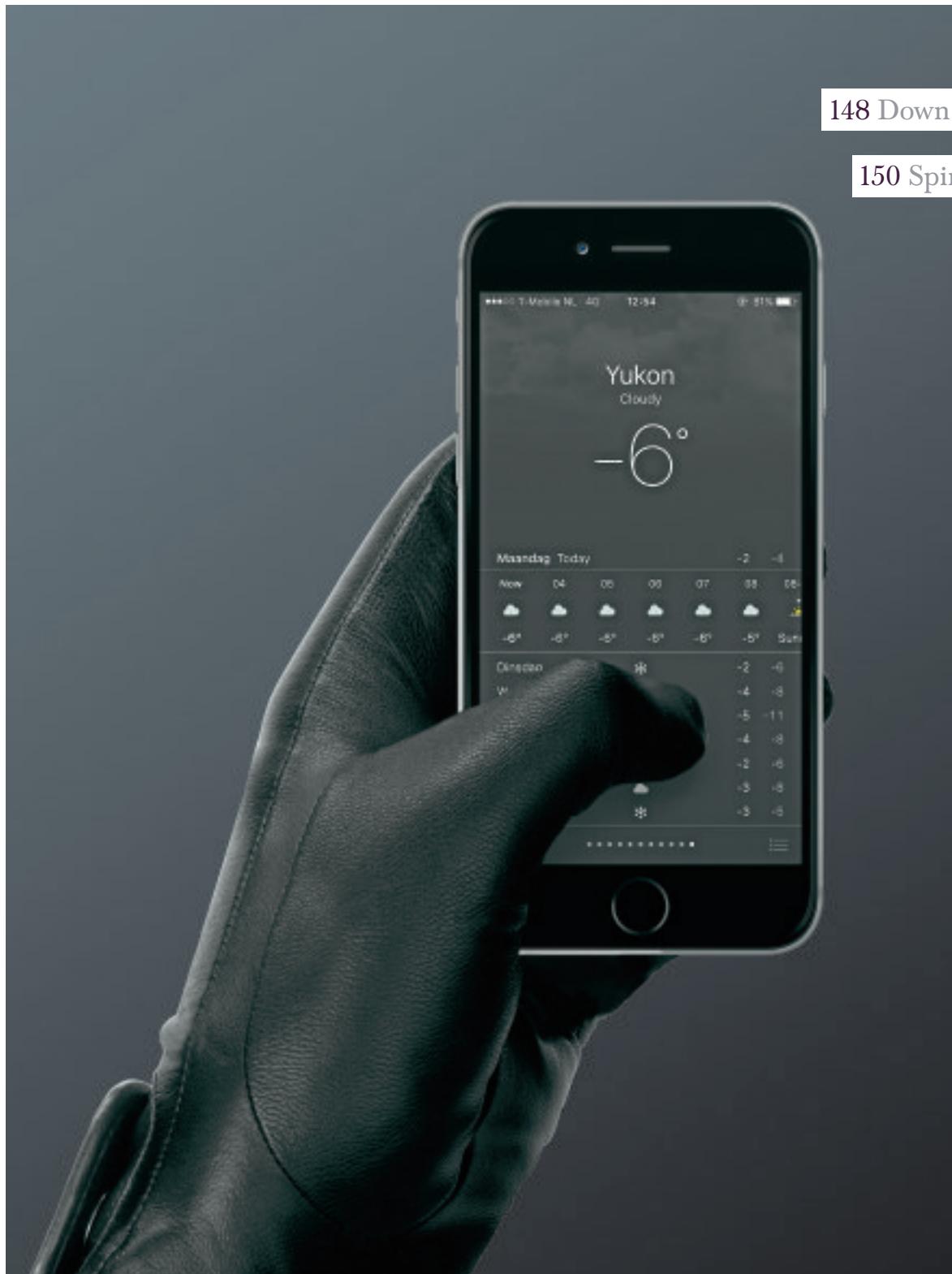
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HARD DRIVE



148 Down Bond's street

150 Spinning around

Hide and sleek

Slip into something more comfortable in the shape of Mujjo's leather touchscreen gloves. Powered by state-of-the-art nanotechnology, which mimics the conductive properties of the human skin, the gloves offer an "unrestricted touchscreen experience", which sounds promising. Perfect for people with a serious phone habit and much more effective than mittens. Design wise, they look a bit Bond-like and probably work just as well for holding a Martini.

Leather touchscreen gloves, £57.95, at mujjo.com

The name's **BOND**

Phil Huff steps into James Bond's shoes – behind the wheel of the beautiful and brilliant Aston Martin DB9 GT.



ASTON MARTIN DB9 GT





PRICE: £140,000

TOP SPEED:
183MPH

0-62MPH:
4.5 SECONDS

OFFICIAL FUEL ECONOMY:
19.8 MPG

CO2 EMISSIONS:
333 G/KM

CAR TAX BAND:
M/£505 PER YEAR

INSURANCE GROUP: 48A

ENGINE: 5.9-LITRE V12 PETROL

POWER: 547 PS
(540 BHP)

TORQUE: 620 NM
(457 LB FT)

WEIGHT: 1,785 KG

James Bond gets all the fun, driving the Aston Martin DB10 in *Spectre*. You and I won't be able to buy one of the 10 specially made models though, even if we had the money to do so, as they're all heading to museums or film collections. One will be auctioned off for charity, but that's the only chance you'll have to buy one, so instead I'm driving the next best thing; the last DB9.

When it first graced the stage at Frankfurt, Tony Blair was Prime Minister, Elton John was at the top of the music charts and the iPhone hadn't even been thought of. However, the last 11 years have been incredibly kind to the DB9, the car being bestowed with a timeless elegance that few other cars get close to.

All good things come to an end though, which means the DB9 GT I've got the keys to is something of a run-out special, although put aside thoughts of jazzy seat trims and free air-conditioning. Instead the GT is bestowed with three-stage adaptive dampers, a new infotainment system with Garmin sat-nav and some subtle styling tweaks around the car.

Oh yes, they've also taken the time to upgrade the hulking 5.9-litre V12 engine so that it now produces a mighty 547bhp.

Pretty much everything else stays the same, so there's that lightweight aluminium chassis that helps make the DB9 more boxer than wrestler, while the stunning bodywork remains virtually untouched. If it's right, then don't fiddle too much, seemingly.

Do, however, fiddle with the drive mode selector. Switch the car to sport mode and

the DB9 starts making a deep rumble from the exhausts that resonates within you, vibrating at different frequencies as the revs rise and fall. It's intoxicating enough on its own, but those adjustable dampers also stiffen the suspension while the throttle response is sharpened.

It takes 4.5 seconds to get from a standstill to 62mph; undoubtedly quick, but there are other cars that can outrun the Aston. Few can compete with what happens beyond 62mph though. The rear mounted automatic gearbox bangs through ratio after ratio, keeping the engine in the centre of its power band, accelerating the car towards the horizon. It feels unstoppable, long after the view gets blurry.

It gets a little jittery over some of Bedfordshire's bumpier back roads, but the tyres don't give up their grip easily. Seriously anti-social speeds are possible, not something ideally suited to the UK, but such is the adaptability of the Aston that a cross-continental jaunt to more accommodating venues could be carried out without a second thought.

That's when you hit the Comfort setting and the DB9 relaxes in to a comfortable cruiser more befitting its GT moniker. That adaptive suspension works more wonders, softening the ride to a degree that would make the DB9 a viable proposition as an everyday car. You'll then get the time to enjoy the hand-built cabin, something that takes 200 hours for each car.

It's not quite perfect though; flaws in the stitching are pointed out to prove its hand-built nature, but where one person sees character another might see imperfection. There are also a few surprisingly cheap bits of plastic used in the cabin, while the

instruments are quite difficult to read at a glance.

Being really picky, the rear seats are nothing more than a token gesture. Even a toddler would feel cramped back there, and I'm not convinced an adult would actually fit. A tall adult would struggle to fit in the front too, as the seats are mounted higher than you might expect. The boot's also a tad small thanks to that rear-mounted gearbox, so you won't be going away with more than a few nights' luggage.

Finally, economy is officially the wrong side of 20mpg, although scraping into double figures would probably be considered a success under normal use. That means CO₂ emissions of 333g/km, putting the Aston in the highest car tax band at £505 a year. Company car drivers will be facing a monthly tax bill of more than £1,700.

Does any of that matter though? I could find 140,000 other reasons not to buy the DB9, but that would be missing the point.

Aston Martin owners get the point, which is why many are on their third or fourth DB9. Even though the car is reaching the end of its life and the DB11 can't be far off, they're still coming in and putting their deposits down.

Simply owning the car is the point. It's an artwork that you appreciate, a piece of British engineering that shows the rest of the world that we can still make things that are both exciting and beautiful.

The head might appreciate the usability of the DB9 GT, but it's the heart that will lead the purchase decision.

You can have beauty and the beast, with a bit of Bond thrown in.



MOTO 360 SMARTWATCH

Developed by Motorola with an Android Operating System, the original Moto smartwatch was a solid first entry into the market. This follow up has developed from there to become arguably the best designed smartwatch on the market – ideal for users who want the watch for functionality as opposed to gadget-based posing.

Available from John Lewis, Grand Arcade, Cambridge, from £130 – see johnlewis.com



Pete Bassett runs Quite Great Communications, promoting new music, local brands, mobile apps and gadgets. A self-confessed gadget geek, he tells us what's rocking the tech world.



It's always tough to tell whether the new 'next big thing' in technology is actually going to be a big hit, or just another flash in the pan. With that in mind, those interested in tech may want to know more about a current trend being looked at by the big manufacturers. Only time will tell, but it has every chance of being the hot new thing in 2016.

Known as Modular Tech, this is an extension to wearable technology which allows users to modify and customise it to their needs – a concept many users of Pandora jewellery may be familiar with.

Take for example the 'Blocks' Smartwatch. This crowdfunded item includes with the watch a wristband which can be added to in the form of 'blocks' which are suited to your lifestyle. Want to add a GPS aspect? Or make

your watch into a fitness band? Add the right module/block and you're good to go. Whether Modular Tech like this will take off will of course depend on how well the early models work. But with smartphone, laptop and earphone manufacturers developing their own spins, 2016 might be a year of customisation.

**Washer/Dryers**

**BOSCH
WVH28422GB**

Extremely quiet and with an environmental efficiency rating of A, this is also one of the most affordable options.

Price: £784



**MIELE WT
2796 WPM**

An A in efficiency and a huge range of settings and options make this a worthy investment for big families.

Price: £1,299



**SIEMENS
IQ500**

Boasting some of the top washer and dryer tech to keep clothes squeaky clean, this is a solid, mid-budget buy.

Price: £968

All available from B&Q, Newmarket Road, Cambridge



If you would like your tech/gear/gadgets/apps considered for our monthly Gears & Gadgets section, email details to ask@quitegreat.co.uk.

YAMAHA MUSICCAST

A speaker system that links wirelessly and allows you to play music throughout your house from a single source, the Yamaha MusicCast is a must-have for music lovers. On a basic level, the sound quality and bass are fantastic, allowing crystal clear translation of all your guilty pleasures. On top of the sound quality, functionality is very solid. Place the speakers throughout your house, and you can synchronise music to every inch of your abode. Whether you're an iTunes buyer, Spotify streamer or even an old school CD lover, as long as you can get your device hooked up, you can make your house a seamless home of music.



Available from John Lewis, Grand Arcade, Cambridge, from £400 – see johnlewis.com

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75%
off

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Computer generated illustration of Primrose Lodge.



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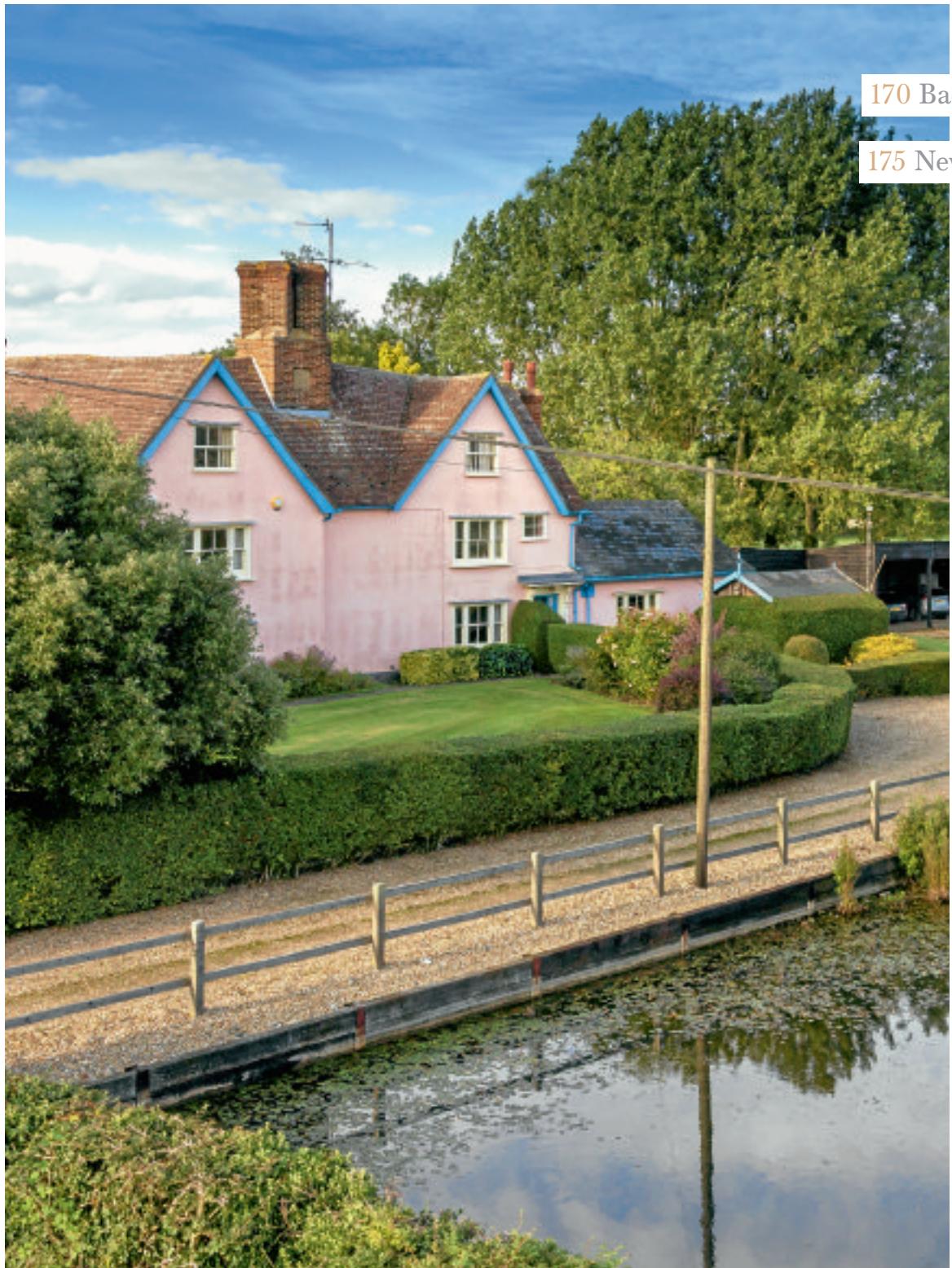
For more information or to register your interest
please contact Savills.

Telephone: 01223 347000
Email: Cambridge@savills.com

www.savills.co.uk



PROPERTY



170 Back to the 70s

175 News and views

Listed home in hamlet

We love a cosy farmhouse property, and this one – in Mill Green, Horseheath – ticks many of the boxes for us. The Grade II listed period home has a useful selection of outbuildings and is ripe for conversion and modernisation. Its setting, meanwhile, is delightful: mature gardens, adjacent pasture land and the idyllic semi-rural hamlet of Mill Green. With ample living accommodation including three reception rooms, three bedrooms, two attic rooms and a super two-oven Aga in the kitchen, enjoy the warmth and comfort of the inglenook fireplaces and the period charm of the interior's exposed beams.

On the market with Cheffins with a guide price of £1,100,000. Call (01223) 21421.

PROPERTY SPY



Detached Georgian property

Four bedrooms, Georgian grandeur and a lovely Chippenham location are on offer here. This one's a real charmer.

CHIPPENHAM, Ely
£470,000
Fine & Country (01223) 363700



17th century residence

This beautiful double-fronted three-storey home is steeped in history and full of charm. It also has great living accommodation for the 21st century family, with four bedrooms and four reception rooms.



OVER, Cambridgeshire
£750,000
Fine & Country (01223) 363700



Two contemporary homes

Conmar Mews is a select development of three homes, of which two remain for sale. With three bedrooms and a high specification, we think they'll be snapped up soon!

HARTINGTON GROVE, Cambridge
£799,950 (each)
Savills (01223) 347147



Substantial period farmhouse

Brook Farm House offers a versatile layout and an impressive six bedrooms, as well as a handy garage and mature gardens.



BOURN, Cambridgeshire
£1,000,000
Bidwells (01223) 841842



Striking converted coach house

This unusual property was constructed from a coach house and barn. It now offers characterful accommodation in a wonderful location.

SAFFRON WALDEN, Essex
£530,000
Cheffins (01223) 214214



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Property Insight



By Gavin Human, Regional Director

With the surprisingly mild weather, now is the time to make sure your home is ready for winter, if you have not already done so. Gavin Human, from Fine & Country Cambridge, offers some tips on preparing your property for the big chill.

Cold weather can wreak havoc on unprepared homes, so now is the time to take care of jobs such as checking pipes, windows, roofs and gutters and servicing the boiler. The chances are that it will save you time and money in the months ahead. If you're not sure where to start, begin by making a checklist and book a properly qualified and experienced tradesperson to tackle the more complicated tasks. This may help you avoid an expensive emergency call-out so early in the New Year. There are a few quick jobs that you can handle yourself. Start by checking that your TV aerial is securely attached. This is not a job you want to fix in the cold and wet. While you're there, give your roof a once over and look for missing or cracked tiles. If repairs are needed, roofing experts are a phone call away.

If you have an open fire or wood burner, have your chimney swept to ensure it is working to its maximum efficiency and the fuel you burn will heat your home more effectively. Another important task is to get your boiler serviced. Ask an appropriately qualified engineer to ensure it is in good working order. It is better to do this as early as possible as this is traditionally a busy time for engineers and you don't want to be left in the cold in the case of a breakdown. Bleed your radiators by opening the valves slightly to let trapped air out and once water appears close the valve again. This will make them work more efficiently. Make sure you know where your water tap is too, if your pipes burst you'll need to know how to shut down your water system quickly.

If your home is proving hard to keep warm, there are a couple of bigger projects that may be worth considering. Typically, 30% of a home's heating is lost through its windows and doors. A simple way to reduce this is to install thermal curtains or blinds, which add an extra layer to banish drafts. Approximately 26% of a home's energy is lost through the roof, so it will be worth adequately insulating your loft. Further, insulating your hot water pipes and tank will ensure your hot water stays hotter for longer and it can reduce the risk of pipes freezing.

Externally, clean out your guttering to avoid blockages and leaks that may dampen your walls. You might also want to protect your garden ornaments, furniture or any vulnerable plants by moving them under cover. Make sure your decking is wearing an extra layer of wood sealant to keep it protected.

And finally... Why not pour yourself a glass of mulled wine or hot chocolate, sit by a crackling fire and enjoy the winter vistas and the start of 2016, secure in the knowledge that you've done the best for your home.



HARDWICK guide price £3,500,000

An outstanding residence, boasting a spectacular kitchen/breakfast room, four receptions, seven bedrooms all with en suites and excellent leisure complex with indoor swimming pool. EPC Rating C.



BARRINGTON guide price £965,000

Occupying one of the best positions in this highly sought after village with split level accommodation offering a first floor sitting room with wrap round balcony and four double bedrooms. EPC Rating E.



HUNDON guide price £895,000

An expansive five/six bedroom detached barn conversion offering stunning accommodation in excess of 5,600 square feet, with 1.4 acres of gardens, occupying a beautiful edge of village location. EPC Rating D.



GAZELEY guide price £795,000

An imposing and substantial detached period property offering eight double bedrooms with accommodation that could be one large dwelling or two generous properties. EPC Rating E.



GREAT CHISHILL guide price £775,000

A delightful, thatched cottage on the fringe of the village, overlooking fields to the rear. Offering and three reception rooms, four bedrooms and a large south facing garden. EPC Exempt.



WEST WRATTING offers over £750,000

A charming three/four bedroom 17th Century Grade II Listed cottage occupying a prominent position, nestled within a 0.6 acre plot with garaging, adjoining grazing land. EPC Exempt.



LITTLE THETFORD guide price £725,000

This Grade II thatched cottage has been beautifully refurbished. With three bedrooms plus annexe. Large garden, ample parking, double garage and further workshop. EPC Exempt.



MANEA guide price £550,000

Enjoying uninterrupted south facing views with a pony paddock and field totaling approx. 2.4 acres. Three receptions, breakfast kitchen, master suite and five double bedrooms. EPC Rating D.

For your free valuation, without obligation, please contact Gavin Human on 07809 339329 or 01223 363700. Follow us on Twitter: @FandC_Cambridge.

...ST IVES ...ST NEOTS ...WOODBRIDGE ...BIGGLESWADE ...BURY ST EDMUNDS ...CAMBRIDGE ...DISS ...HUNTINGDON ...IPSWICH ...KING'S LYNN ...LONG MELFORD ...NORWICH ...

WESTLEY WATERLESS
Newmarket 6 miles - Cambridge 18 miles



SOLD

A modern farm house with established gardens and lovely views. Drawing room, family room, dining room, kitchen/breakfast room, study and cloakroom. 5 bedrooms (2 en-suite) and family bathroom. Cart lodge, log store, mature gardens with duck pond.

In all about 0.71 acres.

Guide £925,000

EPC Rating: D

RIDGEWELL

Clare 5 miles - Newmarket 19 miles



A detached cottage situated in a sought after location. Sitting room, dining room, study, shower room and kitchen/breakfast room. 4 bedrooms (1 en-suite) and bathroom. Off-road parking and garden.

EPC Rating: G
Guide £735,000

WICKHAMBROOK

Clare 8 miles - Cambridge 25 miles



SALE
AGREED

A charming detached cottage in a quiet rural location. Sitting room, dining room, snug/study, conservatory and kitchen. 4 bedrooms (1 en-suite) and bathroom. Garage and garden.

EPC Rating: C
Guide £469,995

SWAFFHAM PRIOR
Newmarket 5 miles - Cambridge 10 miles



This individually built impressive circa 3500sq ft property offers bright contemporary living accommodation finished to the highest specification. Family room, kitchen/breakfast room, 2 bedrooms (1 en-suite) and bathroom.

2 further bedrooms and utility room.
Double garage and garden.

OIEO £1,000,000

GLEMSFORD

Sudbury 7 miles - Bury St Edmunds 14 miles



A charming Grade II Listed detached property. Drawing room, sitting room, dining hall, kitchen/breakfast room and study. 6 bedrooms (1 en-suite) and bathroom. Annexe and ample parking.
In all about 0.80 acres.

Guide £750,000

BUROUGH GREEN

Newmarket 5 miles - Cambridge 18 miles



SALE
AGREED

A Grade II Listed thatched cottage. Sitting room, dining room, family room, kitchen/breakfast room and utility. 4 bedrooms (1 en-suite) and bathroom. Barn, workshop, ample parking and garden.

Guide £575,000



Cambridgeshire | Guilden Morden

Guide Price £2,800,000

Enchanting Grade II Listed house in a secluded moated setting, surrounded by private grounds of around 20 acres

Ashwell & Modern 3.7 miles, Royston 8.3 miles, Cambridge 15 miles

3 reception rooms | Kitchen/breakfast room | Master bedroom suite | 5 bedrooms | 2 bathrooms | 2 bedroom cottage | Moated gardens | Tennis court

Cambridge 01223 853153

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Around 20.8 acres in all

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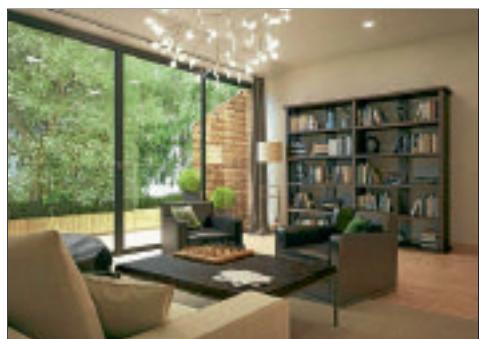
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COOKE
CURTIS
& CO

Sold

In the last couple of months of 2015 we agreed sales on all sorts of properties. In the City, in the villages to the north, south, east and west. From just over £100,000 to well over £1,000,000. We won an award for innovation. We broke the 500 barrier for Facebook likes (which is a lot for an estate agent, you can check if you like).

We continued to think creatively, to question what works best rather than to just do what estate agents have always done, to chuck out the clichés and platitudes, to reject complacency and to provide a considered, intelligent, inventive property service to local people. People like you.

So if you're doing something with a residential property in 2016, selling, buying, renting, building up, knocking down, or anything else, we'd like you to consider talking to us. We've only been around 11 months, so we're still not necessarily an obvious choice, but doesn't that just make you even more intrigued as to why so many people chose to use us in 2015? Doesn't it? It should.

STC

HOT PROPERTY



THE PROPERTY

Grade II* listed historic moated manor

WHAT IT COSTS

On the market with Strutt & Parker for £2,800,000

WHAT IT'S GOT

Three reception rooms, six bedrooms including a master suite, a moat, woodlands and a tennis court as well as a self-contained two bedroom cottage and outbuildings

THE LOOK

Beautifully refurbished to maximise light and space, with charming period features like inglenook fireplaces, beams and rare Medieval patterns in the master bedroom

FIND OUT MORE

Contact Strutt & Parker on (01223) 459500



Superb moated manor

This total dream home in Guilden Morden comes with history. Its Grade II* listing is due to the architectural and historic significance of the property, which was thought to have been built in Medieval times, after the original Manor House on the site was destroyed during the peasant uprising of 1381.

With 15th century extensions and 17th century refurbishment, the most recent renovation, in 1990, made it into the beautiful house that you will find today.

With a raised inglenook fireplace in the charming drawing room, and glazed doors out to the terrace, other highlights include the beautifully-timbered master bedroom, with its fine, rare Medieval patterns over the lime whitewash. There are six bedrooms in total, along with three bathrooms, and yet more space can be found in the self-contained two bedroom cottage and another outbuilding which houses a games room, two offices and a kitchen.

The moated gardens are delightful. Lawned gardens and ornamental flowerbeds nestle alongside the paved terrace, lavender beds flank the path to the front door, mature trees abound and all this is surrounded by what is regarded as one of the country's finest moats. Yes, you get your own moat! Beyond this there is woodland and an all-weather tennis court.

Morden Hall is a truly unique property, historic, impressive, spacious and utterly delightful.



Each month, Cambridge-based solicitors Houlden Sweeney talk property law.

Changes to Stamp Duty Land Tax

In the 2015 Autumn Statement the Chancellor announced a higher rate of stamp duty on the acquisition of 'additional properties' such as (but not limited to) Buy to Let properties and second homes. It will apply to such properties located in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. It appears the purchase of an additional home will be liable for the additional tax irrespective of the location of a buyer's first home, thereby bringing overseas investors into the scope of the tax. The additional rate will be 3 per cent above the current rate of stamp duty. It will apply to purchases of residential properties for more than £40,000 when the acquisition completes on or after April 1, 2016.

For the acquisition of a property worth £125,000, that means a stamp duty cost of £3,750 where currently none is payable, and an additional cost of £15,000 for the acquisition of a property bought for £500,000. At the top end of the market an 'additional' property acquired for £2,000,000 will bear an effective rate of stamp duty of 10.7 per cent, equivalent to £213,750, from April next year. Current indications are that where a property has exchanged before April 1, 2016 but completes on or after that date, the additional property surcharge will apply. This is likely to mean there is a rush to complete. However, there will be a number of circumstances where this is not possible, for example the purchase of new-build Buy to Let properties which have been bought off plan but are not going to be completed until after April 1. To reflect this, the new surcharge will not apply where a property exchanged prior to November 25, 2015.

For more information, call (01223) 451055 or visit houldensweeney.co.uk.

If you have a property law question that you would like Houlden Sweeney to answer on this page, email the property editor at jude.clarke@cambridge-news.co.uk.





SUPERB CENTRAL EDWARDIAN TOWNHOUSE CLOSE TO JESUS GREEN PORTUGAL PLACE, CAMBRIDGE

2,115 sq ft comprising 3/4 receptions ◆ farmhouse style timber kitchen ◆ first floor drawing room ◆ 5/6 bedrooms including master with en suite shower room ◆ bedroom 5/games room with kitchenette ◆ paved courtyard ◆ EPC = E

Guide £1.25 million

Savills Cambridge
Ed Meyer
emeyer@savills.com
01223 347261



SEMI-DETACHED CONTEMPORARY TOWNHOUSE WITH SEPARATE ANNEXE MORLAND TERRACE, BROOKLANDS AVENUE, CAMBRIDGE

3,433 sq ft including annexe ♦ 5 bedrooms including 4 en suites ♦ kitchen/breakfast room ♦ dining/reception room ♦ first floor drawing room ♦ underfloor heating throughout ♦ self-contained annexe with kitchenette, shower room and terrace ♦ double garage ♦ landscaped low maintenance south facing garden ♦ EPC = C

Guide £1.75 million

Savills Cambridge
Ed Meyer
emeyer@savills.com
01223 347261



KINGSLEY WALK, CAMBRIDGE

Three beds ◆ two baths ◆ large balcony ◆ secure parking ◆ gym & concierge service ◆ EPC: B ◆ council tax band: F
£2,950 pcm

+ £276 inc VAT tenancy paperwork fee and other charges may apply*
Savills Cambridge twicklow@savills.com **01223 347242**



CLAY FARM DRIVE, TRUMPINGTON

Three beds ◆ two baths ◆ open plan kitchen/dining room ◆ living room ◆ garage ◆ EPC: B ◆ council tax band: F
£2,250 pcm

+ £276 inc VAT tenancy paperwork fee and other charges may apply*
Savills Cambridge peaton@savills.com **01223 347205**



CORNWELL ROAD, TRUMPINGTON

4 bedrooms ◆ 2 receptions ◆ 3 bathrooms ◆ garden ◆ parking ◆ EPC rating: B ◆ council tax band: E
£1,800 pcm

+ £276 inc VAT tenancy paperwork fee and other charges may apply*
Savills Cambridge twicklow@savills.com **01223 347242**



MARQUE HOUSE, CAMBRIDGE

2 bedrooms ◆ 2 bathrooms ◆ balcony ◆ concierge ◆ allocated parking ◆ EPC: B ◆ council tax band: E
£1,650 pcm

+ £276 inc VAT tenancy paperwork fee and other charges may apply*
Savills Cambridge peaton@savills.com **01223 347205**



LET - SIMILAR PROPERTIES REQUIRED

MARLOWE ROAD, CAMBRIDGE

Four beds ◆ two baths ◆ two reception rooms ◆ kitchen/breakfast room ◆ garden ◆ EPC: E ◆ council tax band: F
Guide £2,395 pcm

+ £276 inc VAT tenancy paperwork fee and other charges may apply*
Savills Cambridge peaton@savills.com **01223 347205**



LET - SIMILAR PROPERTIES REQUIRED

KINGSLEY WALK, CAMBRIDGE

Two beds ◆ two baths ◆ semi-open plan living space ◆ patio ◆ parking space ◆ EPC: C ◆ council tax band: D
Guide £1,575 pcm

+ £276 inc VAT tenancy paperwork fee and other charges may apply*
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One New Year's resolution we can help you keep:



- Join a gym
- More family time
- Give up sugar
- Move
- Book a holiday

If you are considering a move in 2016, call your local Savills team.

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NEW

Millington Road

£1,600,000

A substantial Edwardian semi-detached residence providing well-proportioned accommodation over 3 floors with a number of original features in this rather special location within the prestigious Newnham district of the city recently voted the best place to live in Britain. Reception hall, cloakroom, 3 reception rooms, kitchen. 3 bedrooms, 2 bedrooms, separate WC. Second floor landing, 2 further bedrooms and storage room. Delightful established plot extending to about 0.168 of an acre with garden to front, kitchen garden, and generous rear garden. Single garage. EER:D



SOLD STC DEC 2015



Hinton Avenue
SIMILAR PROPERTIES REQUIRED

SOLD STC DEC 2015



Queen Ediths Way
SIMILAR PROPERTIES REQUIRED

SOLD STC DEC 2015



Stockwell Street
SIMILAR PROPERTIES REQUIRED

SOLD STC DEC 2015



Eden Street
SIMILAR PROPERTIES REQUIRED

SOLD STC DEC 2015



Trumpington
SIMILAR PROPERTIES REQUIRED

SOLD STC DEC 2015



Ainsworth Street
SIMILAR PROPERTIES REQUIRED

SOLD STC DEC 2015



Queen Ediths Way
SIMILAR PROPERTIES REQUIRED

SOLD STC DEC 2015



Milton Road
SIMILAR PROPERTIES REQUIRED

SOLD STC DEC 2015



Cherry Hinton
SIMILAR PROPERTIES REQUIRED

COUNTRY PILE



This striking 1970s individually-designed home is located in the quiet backwaters of the highly sought-after village of Barrington.

A true country residence (the charming village green is within walking distance), it combines its rural setting with impressive contemporary style, in a property that is not quite like any other you will encounter.

With split-level accommodation, a wooden staircase in the ground floor reception hall leads you up to the main hallway and on to the kitchen/breakfast room with glorious large window overlooking the courtyard garden. A handy rear lobby gives access both to that courtyard and a utility/laundry room large enough to cater for a family's needs. A dining room and study complete the accommodation on this level.

Up another wide staircase you will find a dramatic floating triple-aspect lounge, complete with wrap-around balcony (and staircase to the garden). Up again, and you'll find a master bedroom with en suite and three more good-sized bedrooms, as well as a bathroom.

With 'necklace gardens', the lush lawns and beautiful planting are offset by a sweet little brook, a wooden bridge and a 'zen' garden. Just beautiful.

Barrington

£965,000

Contact Fine & Country on (01223) 363700



Striking 1970s design

Split-level accommodation

Contemporary interior, including wooden staircases

Showstopping floating triple-aspect lounge

Four great bedrooms

Gardens with a brook winding gently through them

CITY PAD



Just off the ever-prestigious Madingley Road, in a small, select cul-de-sac, you will find this lovely city pad.

Constructed in 1994-5, it is in a wonderfully tucked-away position at the end of a long private driveway, with a fabulous outlook over a college-owned meadow which forms part of the West Cambridge Conservation Area. Who says you can't have countryside in the city?

Internally, it has really well-proportioned accommodation, with a main sitting room boasting lovely tall windows and doors as well as an open fireplace, a conservatory and a kitchen/breakfast room which runs the length of the house.

Upstairs you'll find your five bedrooms, including one with its own en suite, as well as the family bathroom off the landing.

With driveway parking as well as an integral (double) garage, there's ample vehicle space, and the property is completed by a landscaped, paved and shrub-filled terrace to the south and the principle lawned garden – well-tended and private – to the west. Perfect.

Hedgerley Close
£1,000,000
Contact Cooke Curtis & Co on (01223) 508050



Large modern family home

Prestigious location off Madingley Road

Great outlook over college-owned meadow

Tall windows, lots of light

Bags of space for the family, with five good bedrooms

Well-tended private lawned gardens



Sold

Tenison Road Guide Price £750,000

Extended and greatly improved Victorian house well placed for access to the city centre and a mainline railway station.

3 2 1 D



Sold
stc

Great Shelford Guide Price £995,000

Skilfully altered and extended semi-detached Edwardian house with accommodation of 2,680 sq ft (249 sq m) close to the centre of this highly regarded south Cambridgeshire village.

6 2 4 2 D



Sold

Chesterton Offers in Excess of £600,000

Stylish, modern townhouse situated just to the north east of Cambridge, conveniently placed for access to the city centre and Science Park.

4 2 3 1 C



Sold

Orwell Guide Price £635,000

Superbly presented Grade II listed cottage of considerable charm and character, situated within wonderful, established gardens approaching two thirds of an acre.

4 2 2 1



Sold
stc

Chesterton Hall Crescent Guide Price £850,000

Attractive semi-detached Edwardian house with off street parking and a large private garden in this highly regarded no-through road, just to the north of the River Cam.

4 3 1 1 D



Sold
stc

Gough Way Guide Price £1M

Greatly improved detached family house with planning permission to extend, delightfully situated backing on to College playing fields in this most highly regarded west city location.

5 3 2 2 D



What our clients say

Robert Couch is wonderful to work with, he is very knowledgeable, professional, responsive and simply DELIVERS!

This was a difficult sale and the professionalism of Chris Carey was a great help to us throughout.

Having had an unfortunate experience with another estate agent, the calm professionalism of Bidwells was very reassuring.

Chris Carey and his team did a wonderful job and achieved an excellent price very quickly. I cannot understand why sellers at the top end of the market would ever contemplate going elsewhere.

George Moore handled my sale expertly.

Robert was absolutely superb and I would highly recommend Robert and Bidwells to anyone.

If you are thinking of moving please speak to our team for a free no obligation market appraisal

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bidwells.co.uk



Norwich Street £2,000 pcm*

Greatly improved and exceptionally well presented Victorian house in this highly sought after central city location. Resident's parking available from Cambridge City Council. Available now.



One Tree Road £1,595 pcm*

Brand new 3 storey family home situated within the popular Trumpington Meadows development. Available now.



Ditton Walk £1,350 pcm*

End of terraced house forming part of a small superb development ideally situated close to central Cambridge. Available now.



PROPERTY NEWS



Why rent when you can buy?

Primrose Lodge are purpose-built student apartments on Primrose Street in Cambridge, which are now selling off-plan.

Attractive as a long-term investment, with mortgages available for up to 70 per cent of the costs, these studio apartments are appealing both for students and their parents, with loan repayments notably lower than paying rent.

The 30 high-specification studio apartments, specifically designed for high-end student living, have been purpose-built, with considered layouts, contemporary fittings and an exceptional finish. They have fitted kitchens and contemporary shower rooms, fitted wardrobes, stainless steel door furniture and double glazed windows.

There is a communal common room with sofas and TV, and an external patio area. There are also landscaped gardens with communal lawn and hard landscaped areas, secure covered cycle and bin stores, luggage storage area and an individual, lockable postbox for each apartment.

More information is available from Savills on (01223) 347147.



The value of outbuildings

For advice on selling or buying property, contact Fine & Country Cambridge on (01223) 363700 or visit fineandcountry.com.

Many properties, particularly in countryside locations, come with outbuildings and annexes with various states of use. Some add a large amount of value to a property, while others can dissuade buyers from making a purchase. Gavin Human from Fine & Country Cambridge explains which outbuildings are most likely to help sell a property.

Outbuildings have many uses, from garages used for storage, to stables or large annexes. Traditionally, they have been price neutral, having little or no impact on the value of a property, but more recently the outbuilding's functionality and condition are coming into play.

It is generally accepted that stables add value, especially if there are 15 or more. Other outbuildings, such as garden sheds and barns, can either add or detract from a home's value depending on a few factors.

Home buyers will want answers to several key questions. Does the outbuilding have a well-defined use? Is it in good condition? Is it costly to maintain or repair? If an outbuilding is derelict or unused, like a large dilapidated barn, old sheds or unused farm service building, then it could lessen the value of a property as expensive repair work can be very off-putting.

Converted and functional outbuildings, on the other hand, often add value. This may include outbuildings that are small and in good condition, such as storage sheds that can be used for tools or equipment or larger outbuildings, such as detached garages. Additionally, outbuildings that have been converted for home leisure use, such as a pool or cinema complex, are becoming increasingly popular status symbols and can add value to properties, especially in the upper end of the market.

Adding an outbuilding to an urban property has become fashionable as an alternative form of guest accommodation or home office. This is a reflection of the times, where more people work from home, but canny investors are also realising outbuildings can be monetised if converted into rental properties.

A garden or garage office that separates work from home can be a real plus, as can outbuildings converted into additional living space. A well-designed annexe can provide appealing guest accommodation, or be converted into granny flats for elderly relatives.

Before you set to work turning that tumble-down shed into a plush home cinema complex, do your homework. Compare your property to others in the area and give careful consideration to the cost of conversion and the likely payback. Don't forget to speak with your local planning office before you proceed so that you know exactly what is required.



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Clarkes Lane

Wilburton, Ely

O.I.R.O. £460,000

A non-estate and individual detached family home situated in a quiet lane off the village High Street. Wilburton is about 7 miles south of Ely and about 12 miles north of Cambridge. The spacious accommodation is available with early possession and comprises entrance lobby, hall, living room with open fireplace, dining room, study, utility room, cloaks/WC, kitchen/breakfast room with integrated appliances, 4 good size bedrooms, en suite shower and family bathroom with shower. EPC Band D.

- Detached family home
- Popular village location
- 3 Reception rooms
- Fitted kitchen/b'fast room
- 4 double bedrooms
- Detached double garage
- EPC Rating D



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