

DURHAM, TEES VALLEY AND NORTH YORKSHIRE

FEBRUARY 2009

# Living

FEBRUARY 2009

COMPLIMENTARY

## BE MY VALENTINE

Treats for her and for him

## THE CHARMS OF YARM

A delightful walk by the river

## LINGER AWHILE

The ancient beauty of Ripon

## STYLED FOR THE OSCARS

Beautiful dresses for special occasions

## YOU DESERVE IT

Win pamper days at the Feversham Arms and Headlam Hall



# THE CHORISTER SCHOOL

The only truly independent  
Prep School in Durham

Excellent education on a World Heritage site.

## OPEN MORNING

Saturday 28th February

9.30-11.30am

## VOICE TRIALS

Saturday 7th February

7+ and 10+  
Scholarships  
Tuesday  
3rd March

Come and be  
a Chorister  
21st March  
12.30 - 6.00pm

The Headmaster  
0191 384 2935  
[enquiries@choristers.durham.sch.uk](mailto:enquiries@choristers.durham.sch.uk)



DURHAM, TEES VALLEY AND NORTH YORKSHIRE

# Living

FEBRUARY 2009



FEBRUARY tends to sort out the 'sitters' from the 'do-ers'. While many of us have to force ourselves to get motivated, others are sparkling with ideas. Take 'cupcake queen' Angie Townsend, for instance. On Page 58, she tells us how she has reinvented herself, not once, but many times. And in an era when the concept of a career for life seems to be evaporating, she is a true inspiration. So how about making some changes? Maybe a hobby or interest to brighten the dark days before spring. This month, we have some great ideas – from getting started as an antiques collector, to learning the slow route to creating super meals, or sampling invigorating walks in Yarm and Ripon. And speaking of changes, after two happy years as Associate Editor, seeing the launch of **Living** and its growing success, it is now time for me to hand over the reins. It has been an absolute delight. My very best wishes for the future.

*Sue*



## CONTENTS

### 4 STYLED FOR THE OSCARS

Dresses for special occasions

### 10 BECAUSE YOU DESERVE IT

Your chance to win a spa break

### 12 STAR-STUDIED

Celebrity beauty choices

### 14 LINGER AWHILE

The ancient beauty of Ripon

### 22 THE ANTIQUES COLLECTOR

A beginner's guide to spotting the fakes and discovering treasures

### 23 THROUGH THE KEYHOLE

Following in Loyd Grossman's footsteps

### 28 DECOR 'TO TAKE HOME'

A hotel full of inspiring ideas

### 34 LOVE LACE

Undercover information... for men

### 37 YOU SEXY THING!

A former soldier finds a career in corset design and fitting

### 40 HEARTFELT TREATS

Gift ideas for Valentine's Day

### 42 THE CHARMS OF YARM

A delightful walk by the river

### 50 ENGLAND'S GLORIES

Celebrating the qualities that set our beautiful country apart from the rest

### 54 SLOWLY DOES IT

Taking it easy to create fabulous food

### 57 EATING OUT

Gisborough Hall

### 58 CAKE QUEEN

Small, but yummy

### 61 LIVING MOTORS

All that's best on the road

### 70 CIRCUS COMES TO TOWN

Behind the scenes at the Cirque Du Soleil

### 74 SOCIAL AND WEDDINGS

Special events in the region

### 84 TRAVEL

The lure of the Scillies

### 98 MY NORTH

Middlesbrough goalkeeper Ross Turnbull



Win pamper days at the Feversham Arms and Headlam Hall



Cover picture: Ceriso basque, £22.50, code T81 7536Q, Marks & Spencer

Durham, Tees Valley and North Yorkshire Living is published by Newsquest (North-East) Ltd, at Priestgate, Darlington, DL1 1NF.

EDITOR: Peter Barron ASSOCIATE EDITOR: Sue Fox

CONTENT: Chris Lloyd (chris.lloyd@nne.co.uk) DESIGN: Jenny Needham, Jenny Laue

LIVING ADVERTISING MANAGER: Trish Taylor 0191-3740299 DISTRIBUTION: 01325-505296

Living 3

Living FASHION



Want to look like a star? These glorious dresses by Venexiana certainly earn our Oscar nominations, and would be first choice for a **very** special occasion. We also have some stunning styles to buy on the High Street ►

# Styled for the Oscars



THIS PAGE AND OPPOSITE: Red carpet evening gowns by Kati Stern, £3,000, for Venexiana. Visit [katicsternvenexiana.com](http://katicsternvenexiana.com)



Oscar fashion successes 2008, from top, Terri Seymour, Nicole Kidman and Kate Winslet



Seattle peacock  
duchesse satin  
dress with fitted  
bodice and ruched  
skirt, £2,345 by  
Suzanne Neville.  
For stockists, call  
0207-8239-107



*We foster*

**Ian and Trudy Langthorne  
of Peterlee. Foster carers  
for teenagers for 8 years**

Ian says: "I gave up my job to become a foster carer for teenagers, it was the best thing I've ever done! I get much more out of fostering than I ever did out of my original job. I think it's something we will always do, even when our own children have grown up. People tend to have the wrong impression about fostering, but I would tell anyone to go and find out what it's really about."

*Could You?*



Making a difference where you live

For more information telephone:

**0191 370 6149**

Or email:

**fostering@durham.gov.uk**

Or visit our website

**www.durham.gov.uk/fostering**

**www.durham.gov.uk/fostering**

**T: 0191 370 6149**



Expecting a new arrival? It's no bar to glamour, as demonstrated by Catherine Zeta-Jones, above. Our choice is the Beata dress, £229, from bellybutton, at [bellybuttoninternational.com](http://bellybuttoninternational.com)



**Oscar-winning styles at High Street prices**

RIGHT:  
Kypris green dress, £200,  
Boulevard black dress, £200,  
Olympia blue dress, £180, all from Monsoon. Styles may vary



MAIN PICTURE:  
J by Jasper Conran silk jumpsuit, £80, mock croc clutch, Debenhams

RIGHT: Venezia cocktail dress, £90 and Foscari bracelet, £12, Long Tall Sally





# Because you deserve it

The new spa at the Feversham Arms in Helmsley is a luxurious bolthole, says **JULIA BREEN**



**T**HERE'S a smattering of snow on the ground outside and the evening is drawing in. It might be a cold winter afternoon, with the half-light just illuminating the heated swimming pool and jacuzzi outside, but I'm sitting on a huge, cosy sofa, sipping tea and enjoying delicious sandwiches and scones.

I'm in the new Verbena spa at the Feversham Arms, in Helmsley, North Yorkshire. But it doesn't feel cold and clinical like some spas. It is designed to mirror the luxury of the main hotel which adjoins it. There are large, comfortable armchairs and sofas dotted around, perfect for lounging on in fluffy dressing gowns and chatting with girlfriends.

The atmosphere is muted, designed for pure relaxation. Afternoon tea is delicious. A cake stand with sandwiches – melt-in-the-mouth medium rare beef and horseradish and smoked salmon; a sweet, crumbly scone with clotted cream – is brought to my table with a pot of tea.

The Verbena Spa has been open since October, and serves both the adjoining Feversham Arms Hotel, and its nearby sister hotel, the Black Swan, in Helmsley. Simon Rhatigan, former managing director of Tom's Companies – who was instrumental in opening the Seaham Hall Hotel and Spa – bought the Feversham, with his wife Jill and other private partners in 2003, and has transformed it into a truly luxurious bolthole. More recently, the hotel has been expanded to include extra rooms around

the courtyard, and the spa, which opened in October.

As well as the treatments on offer, guests of the hotel or spa can take advantage of a saunarium, aromatherapy room, salt vapour room and outdoor hot tub and heated pool – although pregnant women are advised against using all but the pool, foot spas and relaxation room.

Magazines and newspapers are dotted around. As a mum-to-be with a two-year-old, it's pure heaven to be able to just sit for half an hour in a huge armchair with a magazine and a cuppa. But the true relaxation is yet to come. I'm here for Verbena's "Baby Love" package – a nurturing mother-to-be massage – and the sole grooming treatment for feet.

The massage is first, and I'm led into one of the softly-lit treatment rooms. The twin treatment beds have been moved to the side of the room, and an assortment of bean bags and towels laid on the floor especially for pregnant women.

Here, I sink back into the bean bags in a more comfortable sitting position – at six months' pregnant, lying on my back is distinctly uncomfortable – and I'm covered with a warm blanket.

I turn on my side as my masseuse works on one side of my back, with firm strokes which dissolve my tension. She then works on my legs, ankles and feet, with movements designed to help reduce puffiness and swelling – before starting on the other



## WIN A SPA PACKAGE WORTH ALMOST £200

LIVING magazine has teamed up with Verbena Spa to offer one lucky reader – and a friend – a one-hour herbal lavender repair facial, entry to the spa and use of the heat facilities, plus afternoon tea for two. The prize is valid until April 30, and must be taken between Monday and Thursday (midweek). The herbal lavender facial is deep-cleansing to draw out skin impurities, and will help reduce unwanted shine, refine the pores and treat skin breakouts.

For your chance to win the package, just answer this simple question: **In which town is the Feversham Arms and Verbena Spa?**

Answers, with your name, address and a daytime telephone number, on a postcard to: Verbena Spa competition, Living Magazine, PO Box 14, Priestgate, Darlington, DL1 1NF, by February 20.

side. She asks if I mind my bump being massaged – which I don't – and she works expertly on that. The pressure is perfect – not so intense that I'm concerned about the baby, yet not so light as to be ineffective. The hour-and-a-quarter slips by almost unnoticed, and I feel like I've melted into the beanbag by the time she's finished. If I won the Lottery, I'd have one of these massages every day.

I'm given a few minutes to relax and slowly ease myself off the beanbag without becoming light-headed, then I move into the main part of the spa, next to the nail bar, for the sole grooming treatment.

My feet are exfoliated, massaged, and moisturising oil treatments applied, before they are slipped into pre-warmed plastic booties. There's no toenail-painting involved in this treatment, just a warming, nourishing, relaxing treatment – particularly good if you love having your feet rubbed.

By the time the treatments are finished, I float back to the changing room and get changed, ready for the drive back through the snow. Even a huge traffic jam just outside my village doesn't raise my stress levels too much. My car seat feels like a giant cushion, and that night I sleep better than I have in weeks.

■ **The Baby Love package is £125 at weekends, £115 weekdays and includes a nutritious lunch, mother-to-be massage and sole grooming treatment.**

# DANIEL JOHN

HAIR//  
COUNTY  
DURHAM



- Hair by Daniel John is one of the most successful salons which offers its customers five star luxury from its contemporary decor to their ultimate massaging back washes for pure relaxation.
- Ample free parking.
- Offering all services in hair and beauty our clientele require.
- The salon has a full range of loreal, tigi, and ghd hair products and dermalogica and OPI beauty products.
- All beauty needs catered for, from Dermalogica facials and Nouveau eyelash extensions to St. Tropez false tanning, Biosculpture gel and Creative acrylic nails
- Daniel and his team would like to welcome all new and old clients to his new salon for the ultimate pamper experience.



### Special Valentine's Offers

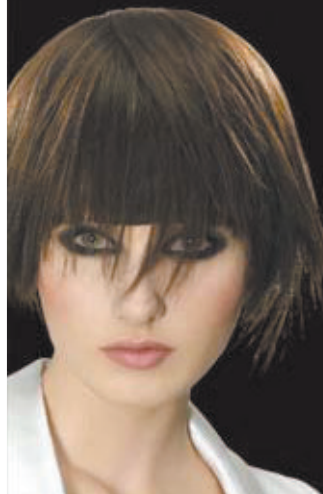
Colour Cut & Style \_\_\_\_\_ from **£34.95**

Nouveau Contour Eyelash  
Extensions \_\_\_\_\_ from **£25.00**

Full Set of Nails & St Tropez Tan \_\_\_\_\_ **£45**

### Gift Vouchers available

### Special Valentine's Gift Packs



25 Morton Crescent,  
Fencehouses,  
Houghton-le-Spring  
DH4 6AD

T: 0191 385 2225

north east  
england

## Living BEAUTY

Oh to be a fly on the wall inside a celebrity's bathroom cabinet, to get the real beauty buzz. Showbiz's most beautiful stars may have hair and make-up artists on hand to transform them for the red carpet, but what about the products they just can't live without from day to day? **Lisa Haynes** finds out



RACHEL STEVENS LOVES: **Bobbi Brown Creamy Concealer, £14.68 (bobbibrown.co.uk)**

'If you look tired, whack that underneath your eyes and you'll look like you've had a good night's sleep'

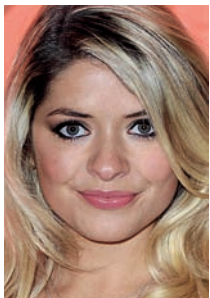
# Star-studied



MYLEENE KLASS LOVES: **Pantene Volume & Body Shampoo and Conditioner, £1.89 each.** "It's phenomenal – my hair is poker straight and this really puts that extra lift into it."

EMILY MORTIMER LOVES: **Zelens skincare, from £30 (spacenk.co.uk)** "Zelens sinks into your skin so beautifully and is very subtle – in a very short time I saw an incredible difference in my skin."

HOLLY WILLOUGHBY LOVES: **Benefit Her Glossiness, £13 (benefitcosmetics.co.uk)** "I always have lip balm and lip gloss. I hate getting cracked lips in winter. I love Benefit's Her Glossiness Life on the A-list."



CAT DEELEY LOVES: **SUQQU Mascara Base, £22 (Selfridges)** "The SUQQU mascara base, followed by two coats of mascara, create fabulously full flirty lashes – perfect for fluttering."

JAMELIA LOVES: **Dr Bragi Age Management Marine Enzyme, £117.45 (victoriahealth.com)** "I'm glad I've found Dr Bragi's face serum as I have sensitive skin – although I'm sure I'll have trouble keeping my husband from stealing it."



MARTINE McCUTCHEON LOVES: **MAC Studio Fix Fluid, £18.60 (maccosmetics.co.uk)** "To cheat a glow without getting messy with fake tan, I use MAC Studio Fix in a shade that's slightly darker and more golden than my natural skin colour. Mix this with moisturiser and blend it over your face, décolletage and hands."



EMILIA FOX LOVES: **Givenchy Phenomen' Eyes, £18.50 (01932-233-824)** "Wow, that mascara is the best I have ever tried. It gives every lash the attention it deserves from corner to tip and no clogging at all."



DAVINA McCALL LOVES: **Aveeno Daily Moisturising Lotion, £4.99 (0845-601-5791)** "My son Chester has eczema and this helps. If I'm running around and need to moisturise, I grab that."

ALESHA DIXON LOVES: **Frederic Fekkai hair products, from £15 (lookfantastic.com)**

"I love Frederic Fekkai products. They really help to keep my hair soft and shiny. I use everything from the Shea Butter Moisturising Shampoo and Conditioner to the Ironless Straightening Balm and Ultra Light Finishing Cream."



# Saks is 35!

Celebrate with  
35% off

We do award-winning  
hairdressing and  
cutting edge beauty

Call in or ring to book



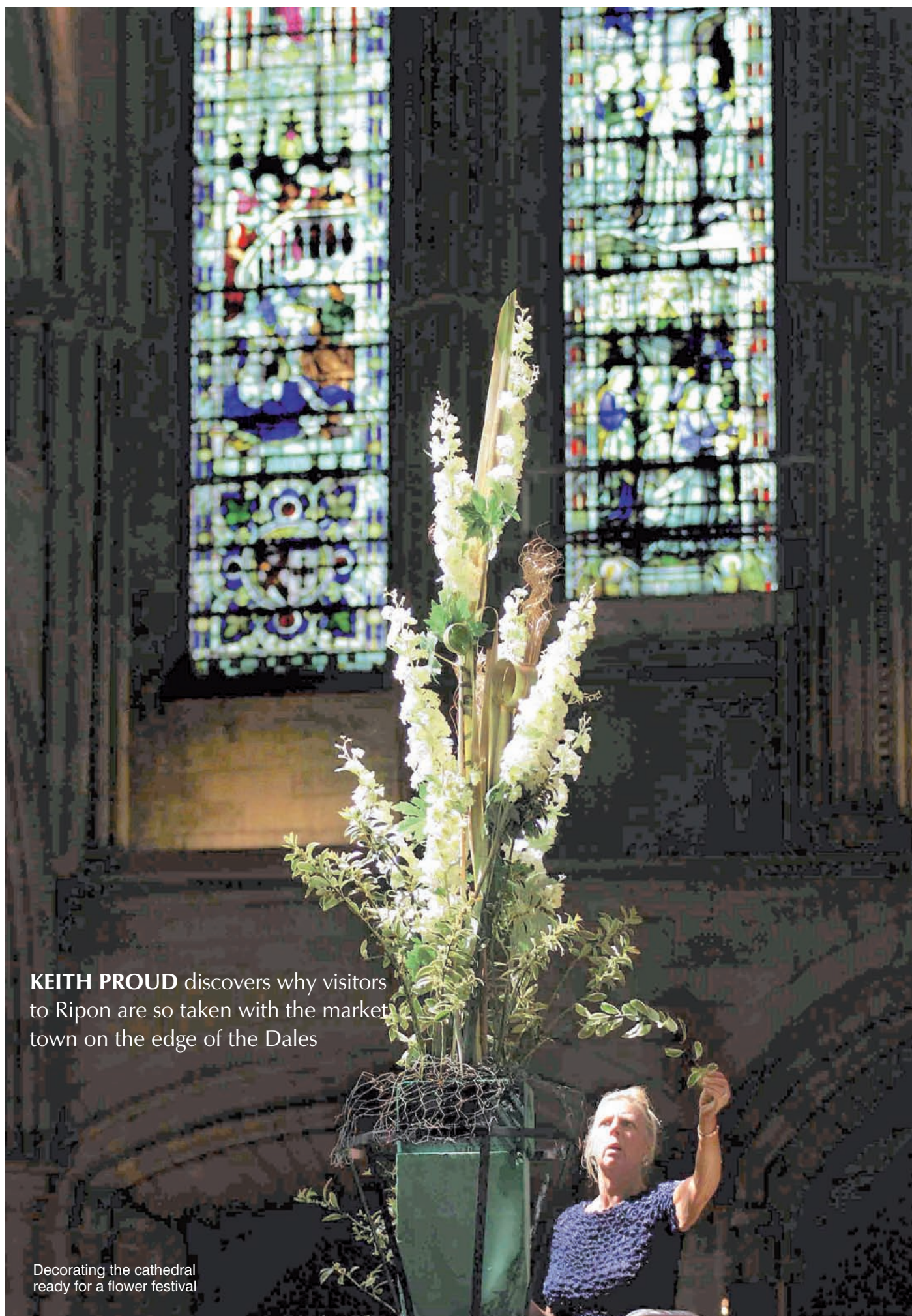
Terms & Conditions: Ring local salon for terms and conditions. Offer of 35% discount valid on selected hair and beauty services, with selected staff at participating Saks salons nationwide until February 14th 2009. Offer not valid on clinics including injectables and teeth whitening, or homecare. Cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer and is subject to availability. Mention offer at time of booking.

  
**Saks**  
HAIR & BEAUTY

[www.saks.co.uk](http://www.saks.co.uk)

<b>BARNARD CASTLE</b>	<b>01833 637 020</b>	<b>SCOTCH CORNER *</b>	<b>01748 850 101</b>
<b>DARLINGTON</b>	<b>01325 481 525</b>	(QUALITY LIVING HEALTH CLUB)	
<b>GUISBOROUGH</b>	<b>01287 630 055</b>	<b>STOCKTON</b>	<b>01642 602 863</b>
<b>HARTLEPOOL</b>	<b>01429 263 881</b>	<b>STOKESLEY</b>	<b>01642 712 755</b>
<b>MIDDLESBROUGH</b>	<b>01642 246 864</b>	<b>SUNDERLAND</b>	<b>0191 567 5157</b>
<b>NORTHALLERTON</b>	<b>01609 771 477</b>	<b>TEES BARRAGE *</b>	(HAIR) <b>01642 632 138</b>
<b>REDCAR</b>	<b>01642 498 321</b>	(DAVID LLOYD)	(BEAUTY) <b>01642 632 135</b>
		<b>YARM</b>	<b>01642 785 040</b>

\* Open to non-members of the health club



**KEITH PROUD** discovers why visitors to Ripon are so taken with the market town on the edge of the Dales

Decorating the cathedral ready for a flower festival

## Living IN RIPON

# 'Linger awhile amid its ancient charm'

**W**ELCOME to Ripon', is the message on a windswept sign by the roadside, on the main route into North Yorkshire's cathedral city. All-comers are cordially invited to "linger awhile amid its ancient charm".

Visitors to the city, which sits perched on the edge of the Yorkshire Dales, might well concur that "charming" is perhaps the single word most apt to sum up the place, although "historic" is another appropriate adjective that might spring to mind.

Equally, those who eschew the temptations of Ripon's more serene delights, in favour of white-knuckle thrills, a pint or two of something foamy, or a bet on the horses, are well catered for.

Let's dive straight in, and take a look around two of Ripon's ecclesiastical treasures.

The first, a towering 12th Century minster, which became a cathedral in 1836, is the first point of reference for many making their way into the city, so comprehensively does it dominate its surroundings.

It is the fourth church to have stood on the site and today's incarnation, in Minster Road, comes complete with a breathtaking west front. Acts of worship have taken place here since as early as the 7th Century, when Saint Wilfrid built one of England's first stone churches.

Some five miles away lie the ruins of the Cistercian monastery, Fountains Abbey, built at around the same time as the minster.

The grade I-listed building, now operated by the National Trust, forms an idyllic World Heritage Site – Yorkshire's first – with the adjacent Studley Royal Park.

Fountains Abbey served the purpose for which it was built for more than 400 years, until 1539, when Henry VIII ordered the dissolution of monasteries.

These days, visitors can enjoy picking over the ruins of the abbey, before exploring the seemingly endless acres of open space on offer at Studley Royal. And the beauty of the estate is that it is just as compelling whatever the weather; visitors can take a picnic in the summer months or wrap up ►



## GEOFFREY BENSON & SON

### *Fine Furniture*

Come and visit us at  
**THE HOME OF  
TRADITIONAL FURNITURE**  
in Green Hammerton, on the A59  
between York and Harrogate.



**York Road,  
Green Hammerton, York  
Tel: 01423 331330**

**[www.geoffreybenson.co.uk](http://www.geoffreybenson.co.uk)**



Granite Worktops all produced on our own premises  
 Natural Stone Showroom Featuring: Limestone, Travertine, Slate & Marble, Stone Floors & Staircases



**Showroom** at Old Station Road, South Bank,  
 Middlesbrough, Cleveland TS6 6AD

Tel: 01642 440375 Fax: 01642 453400  
 Email: [gandtcreations@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:gandtcreations@hotmail.co.uk)



## 6 *A place where harmony reigns, more often than not*

warmly to enjoy the atmospheric chill that winter brings.

Back in the city centre, a row over the future of one Ripon's historic buildings – the 104-year-old spa baths – is expected to rumble on for some considerable time. Plans for a development of flats, although retaining the grade II-listed frontage, have been met with a furious response. There have been meetings, petitions and lots of protests on various websites. The development of a 25-metre swimming pool nearby could hinge on the outcome of the battle of the baths, which shows no sign of abating.

A place where harmony reigns more often than not, even on a drizzly winter's afternoon, is the city's bustling market square.

Weekly markets are held on Thursdays, next to the 300-year-old obelisk. Tradition dictates that a hornblower sounds his instrument at 9pm every night, to let citizens of Ripon know that all is well.

It may be a bit of a shaggy dog story, and it does seem improbable at best, but one local shopper was convinced that contingency plans were put in place, during the Cold War, to make Ripon the seat of Government, should some explosive, unpleasant fate befall Whitehall.

Visitors seeking a romantic getaway, or simply looking to treat themselves, could do a lot worse than check in at The Old Deanery, in the shadow of the cathedral. Eleven individually designed bedrooms, some with hand-carved 16th Century panelling, offer a touch of old world luxury. And its restaurant? That has found a winning formula, with local produce expertly prepared by an award-winning chef.

Indeed, those with an inherent instinct for seeking out a warm fireside, a homely welcome and a decent drop of real ale, or a nice single malt,

will find manna from heaven in Ripon.

The exact intricacies remain a mystery to the uninitiated, but it is said that regulars in some hosteleries have developed a drinking game, of sorts, that centres around the – let's call them unique – names of certain city centre pubs.

Certainly, there are some oddly-monikered drinking establishments here. Walking around the city's narrow streets, two in particular raised childish titters: Tom Crudd's Bar, in the Market Square, and the One Eyed Rat, in Allhallowgate, a stalwart of the Good Beer Guide for more than a decade.

There are, doubtless, countless more. So, next time you find yourself in Ripon, think on. Daft pub names, they are everywhere. See what you can find.

Speaking of beer, it is possible to work up a substantial thirst by getting stuck into the city's shopping experience. A successful mix of familiar stores and bespoke retailers ring the Market Square and the arterial side streets leading onto it.

Ample parking is to be found in the city, including on the square itself, where shoppers can leave their cars, free of charge, for an hour. Take heed, though. Beady-eyed "parking management operatives" – that will be traffic wardens, then – are on the prowl at busy times.

The danger of getting a fine or, God forbid, being towed or clamped, is nowt though, compared to the peril posed by other road users. Let's simply say that parking spaces in the Market Square are at a premium, and leave it at that.

But it might not be that way for much longer. David Winpenny, chairman of Ripon Civic Society, says support is growing for a campaign to pedestrianise the Market Square.

"One of the things the civic society is trying ►



Deer basking in the sunshine at Fountains Abbey; the temple of piety at the abbey, and Studley Royal water gardens

# TAYLOR MADE WARDROBES

Murphy  
Wall Beds . . .

*space-saving  
solutions.*

All sizes  
from single to  
kingsize

## Darlington Showroom

310 North Road, Darlington  
01325 487847



## Made to Measure

- Sliding Wardrobes
- Bedside Tables
- Dressing Tables
- Custom-made Interiors
- Designer Mirrors

## Stockton Showroom

Hunters Building, Bowesfield Lane  
Stockton-on-Tees  
01642 679086

OPENING TIMES:  
Monday - Friday 10-5, Saturday 10-4

www.taylormadewardrobes.co.uk



Above,  
visitors are  
dwarfed by  
the ruins of  
Fountains  
Abbey

to do is make the city centre a car-free zone. I think it as an achievable aim," he says. "More and more people are coming round to that point of view, including the businesses. They had been a bit wary, but we think it would increase trade, as it has done in places like York and Leeds."

Fancy a day at the races? For more than 300 years, Ripon has hosted some of the most exciting horse racing in the country, putting it on a par with such famous racecourses as Aintree and Cheltenham. Ripon's track is affectionately known as the garden racecourse, because of the brightly-coloured flowerbeds that adorn it.

Those looking for an adrenaline rush with less of a financial risk attached to it will undoubtedly be drawn to the wholesome charm of Lightwater Valley.

The out-of-town theme park, set in 175 acres, started life as a pig and strawberry farm. It has grown into one of the UK's leading tourist attractions, with more than 40 rides, including what was Europe's longest rollercoaster - The Ultimate, opened in 1991, by the boxer, Frank Bruno.

And it's not all white-knuckle thrills. Lightwater



## RIPON RACES 2009 FIXTURES

**Thursday, April 16**  
Betfair 'Cock o' the North'  
Handicap

**Saturday, April 25**  
Totesport betXtra Handicap

**Friday, May 8**  
Satellite Information Services

**Sunday, May 17**  
Ripon, Yorkshire's Garden  
Racecourse Handicap

**Tuesday, June 2**  
Nick Wilmot-Smith Memorial

**Wednesday, June 3**  
Directors Cup

**Wednesday, June 17**  
Norman Wells Memorial Handicap

**Thursday, June 18**  
Ladies' Day Handicap

**Monday, July 6**  
Commercial First Mortgages  
Handicap

**Saturday, July 18**  
Ripon Bellringer Handicap

**Monday, August 3**  
Armstrong Memorial Handicap

**Saturday, August 15**  
William Hill Great St Wilfrid  
Handicap

**Saturday, August 22**  
Ripon, Cathedral City of the Dales  
Handicap

**Monday, August 31**  
Ripon Champion Two-Year Old  
Trophy

**Tuesday, September 1**  
City of Ripon Handicap

■ More information:  
[ripon-races.co.uk](http://ripon-races.co.uk);  
Tel: 01765-602156;  
Fax: 01765-690018;  
Email: [info@ripon-races.co.uk](mailto:info@ripon-races.co.uk)

Valley also boasts a 30,000sq ft shopping village and a birds of prey centre.

On a more educational tip is the prison and police museum, in Allhallowgate. Along with the nearby courthouse and workhouse museums, this exhibit, which is housed in a former jail and police station, forms the city's law and order trail.

The prison and police museum's building dates back to the late 17th Century, when it was built as Ripon Liberty Prison, which it served as for more 60 years. The boys in blue came along in 1887, and hung around until the Fifties.

The building's former uses are interpreted in interactive displays in the museum. Exhibits include a pillory, a pair of stocks, a whipping post and a police box similar to Doctor Who's spaceship, although not an exact replica. On entering, visitors are greeted by an old-fashioned constable, dressed in a closed-neck tunic. This is a nod to the building's former lives.

Be warned, though. Like most of Ripon's tourist attractions, opening times are liable to change depending on the time of year. Visitors would be well advised to make a quick telephone call, or consult

appropriate websites, before setting out.

The last words on what makes Ripon such a special place go to David Wimpenny, who went to school in the city before moving away. Since returning, 12 years ago, he has become a stalwart of the civic society.

Mr Wimpenny is in no doubt as to where the city's charm lies: in its history, its buildings and, most of all, its people. And it is that community spirit, he says, which forms a cornerstone of Ripon's unique appeal.

"There are more than 60 different groups and societies operating in the city today. That is really quite impressive, given that the population of Ripon is only a little more than 16,000," he says.

"I think Ripon's location, as well, as a historic city between the national parks of the Yorkshire Dales and North York Moors, make it a place people want to visit again and again. It is handy for visiting other cities, such as York, so it is a great base from which to explore the North of England.

"I think people are very proud to say they are from Ripon, and they are working hard to keep the place as nice as it can be."



Ripon Baths, where the row over the historic building goes on



# An Invitation to William House Quality Care and Education

Choosing a nursery for your baby/ child is one of the most important decisions as a parent we have to make. To help you make your choice William House Nursery would like to invite parents to visit and see our facilities and opportunities we offer. There is an opportunity to meet nursery staff, view nursery rooms and activities while they are happening. Help and information is available regarding funding, free nursery entitlement places and childcare vouchers, also the admissions procedure.

William House has built up a superb nursery team, committed to providing a happy relaxed home from home atmosphere in which your baby and children can flourish. Our team is highly dedicated to provide the very best possible start for your baby/ child. Children's experiences in the earliest years of their lives are crucial to their development, encouraging all children to enjoy their time together.

Nursery Director Mrs Mary Boulton and Nursery Manager Mrs Emma Calvert express William House simply provides a natural and positive environment supporting individual development, providing a wealth of experiences within nursery indoor and outdoor. In addition extracurricular activities such as: music, yoga and musical theatre are offered.

William House is based in Darlington on Barton Street and

**Above all, William House offers all children the opportunities for**

Come and see us or to find out more about William House Nursery and arrange a visit please contact:-

**Telephone: 01325 489997**

**Email: [info@williamhousenursery.co.uk](mailto:info@williamhousenursery.co.uk)**

**Web site: [www.williamhousenursery.co.uk](http://www.williamhousenursery.co.uk)**

# William House Nursery and Education is a Priority

provides childcare and education for children from birth to eleven years. The nursery helps growing families in our Baby Unit, through the early years foundation stages right through to the before/after school and holiday club.

The nursery has individual nursery rooms which accommodate the very different needs of each age group and importantly the children are within a small group. Our priority is for children to enjoy their first experience of nursery and learning.

William House is sensitive and responsive being flexible to families who work shift patterns as well as parents who require full or part time places. The emphasis is working together with families to support in the demands of modern life.


We are a forward thinking nursery and have undergone a refurbishment of nursery rooms to enhance the environment created, working within the early year's foundation stage framework.

William House Nursery is committed to providing the highest quality childcare and education provision. This has been recognised by Ofsted inspectors achieving an outcome of 'GOOD'. William House Nursery has also successfully achieved Investors in People Award and Tees Valley 5 Star Food Hygiene award for excellent standards of hygiene.


ties for a great start to build the foundations for a successful future.

## William House Private Day Nursery Ltd.





The Moorland Rug Company Ltd



Traditional, Contemporary and Bespoke Design Rugs  
44 Front Street  
Stanhope DL13 2UE  
**Tel. 01388 526454**

**Your one-stop home improvement centre**




**Kitchens Fully Fitted**  
from only  
**£3,995**

**Bedrooms Fully Fitted**  
from only  
**£1,995**

**We do it all... project managed from start to finish!**



592 - 596 Durham Road, Low Fell NE9 6HX  
Tel/Fax: 0191 487 9340 Mob: 0784 470 147

**Made to measure replacement doors from only £19.99**

# ANTIQUES: A BEGINNER'S GUIDE

## FURNITURE

A piece of furniture can be described as fake if it deliberately makes you think it's older than it really is. If a fake is made from new wood, it is usually relatively easy to spot because it will be lacking the patina of ageing, but if it is made from older wood, it may be more difficult to detect. If a piece is being sold as made earlier than the 18th Century and it has circular saw marks, it is certainly a fake. The circular saw was not used until after 1800.

## TEA AND COFFEE POTS

If you are collecting coffee, tea or chocolate pots, check the point where the handle joins the body to make sure it is secure, examine the hinge on the lid – make sure it's not weak or restored. Make sure the spout isn't split, and breathe on the finial and around the spout and hinges – this helps to show up repairs.

## CLOCKS

The value of a clock depends on its maker, the movement, the case and its condition. Plain carriage clocks are available from about £200, and a late 19th Century long-case from about £800.

## ART DECO

Many less valuable art deco figures were made from a bronze spelter (zinc alloy) base combined with ivory, a simulated ivory usually made from plastic. To identify spelter, scratch the metal underneath. A yellow colour means it is made from bronze, while a silver tone shows it is spelter and far less valuable.

## TOYS

If you are thinking of beginning a collection of toys, there is a huge variety to choose from. Prices depend upon the maker, the rarity of the toy and the condition. Repainting will always reduce the value of a toy, so consider it carefully, even if the toy is in poor condition.

## RUGS

Rugs and carpets fall into two main groups: serious collectors' rugs, and decorative rugs. Older rugs – more than 100 years old – are mainly of interest to the specialist collector. Recently-made rugs and carpets are chiefly of interest to the buyer of decorative items.

## POTTERY

If you are just beginning a pottery collection, wares produced during the 19th Century could be a good starting point. During this period, the Staffordshire area produced vast numbers of inexpensive household and decorative objects, which at the time cost a few shillings or less. These are still abundantly available and, although collectable, have remained relatively inexpensive.

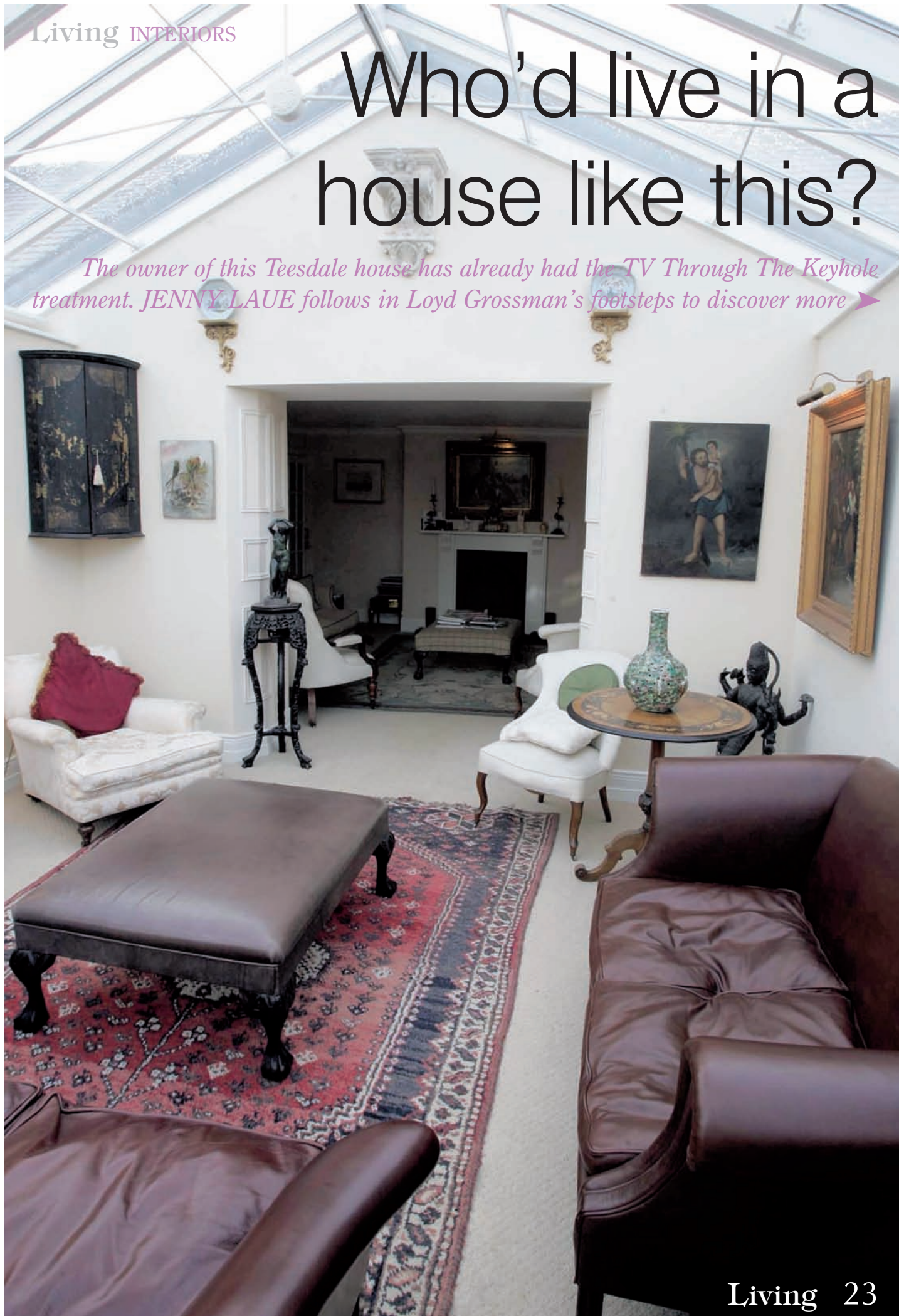
## GLASS

Colourful glass of the 19th Century is also increasingly popular with collectors. Many new glass-making techniques were introduced at that time and colours became increasingly varied. Cameo glass and overlay glass are two of the most attractive types to look out for.

Living INTERIORS

# Who'd live in a house like this?

*The owner of this Teesdale house has already had the TV Through The Keyhole treatment. JENNY LAUE follows in Loyd Grossman's footsteps to discover more ▶*





TV antiques expert David Harper, pictured top with dog Button, has transformed this former byre, above, into a stylish family home

Pictures by  
**CHRIS BOOTH**

**W**HAT kind of house would you expect a former antiques dealer to live in? A big old, draughty pile of stones, with dark colours and every corner stuffed with antique furniture, perhaps?

In the case of TV personality David Harper, nothing could be further from the truth. The Teesdale home he shares with wife Wendy, daughter Henrietta, and Button the dog, is a comfortable, converted cow byre. Not at all draughty or stuffy, it is all natural light, neutral colours and cosy furniture.

But it wasn't always like this. When the Harpers moved into the byre eight years ago, it was more or less a shell. "It was like a long thing, like a caravan, with room after room after room," remembers David. "When you convert an 18th Century barn, there is so much work involved, like drainage and electricity. We were lucky, though, because this had partly been converted; the electric was already in and the roof had been done, but that was about it.

"We lived in a skip for a long time," says Wendy. "We even had some of the cow stalls left in the bedrooms. We had to do all the cosmetic work, like hanging doors, the light switches, skirting boards, everything."

They loved doing all the decorating, though, David assures me. "And what's also great about it is the fantastic location. It's practical for the A1, Barnard Castle and Darlington, and it has some land and a paddock for the horses. In fact, since we bought this house I've got really into gardening. We've had to put every single plant in ourselves and it's been a bit of a revelation. I love it."

But even with all the decorating done, the Harpers haven't stopped. The latest home improvement is a new extension to the back of the house, a kind of entrance vestibule – "somewhere to take off your wellies when you come in" – which was finished only two days before my visit.

Despite being long and thin and having no upstairs, the cottage provides ample space for a family of three, a dog and any guests. It has three bedrooms, two bathrooms, a guest loo and a large conservatory.

The conservatory was added two years ago. By knocking through a wall and extending into the garden, the couple have doubled the size of their living room. With its huge French doors and glass roof, it is a great place to sit and chat and enjoy some of the great sculptures, ceramics and paintings David has picked up over the years on his travels for TV shows such as *The One Show*, *Bargain Hunt* and *Put Your Money Where Your Mouth Is*.

There are also squashy leather sofas, a large upholstered stool instead of a coffee table and one or two comfy chairs in which to recline and watch the nights draw in.

The connection with the front room is smooth, helped by the natural carpet laid throughout the house. This room has a really cosy feel to it, too. Particularly eye-catching are the marquetry display cabinet and the circular gold-leaf mirror above the cream sofa.

But there's something missing – a television – which is strange considering it's the medium in which David earns his living.

The couple have a portable set which they rig up in the kitchen if they want to watch anything. ►

# individuality from the floorboard up

We offer all types of flooring  
& associated products:

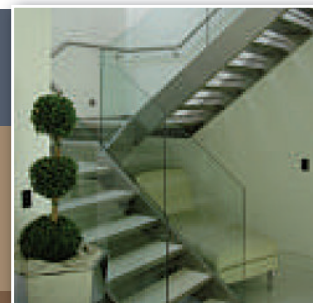
- Glass
- Polished concrete
- Resin
- Laminates
- Hard & softwood planks
- Carpeting & rugs
- Natural stone & slate
- Rubber



Our premium quality engineered & solid wood flooring can transform floors into a timeless, classy or a modern, trendy feel.

Our carpets & rugs are custom designed & manufactured in the UK from 100% New Zealand wool & are available in any colour, size, shape or design.

We buy worldwide and where possible from sustainable sources.



**T:01845 522597**

Mill House Thornton Le Street Thirst

[www.floorsetc.co.uk](http://www.floorsetc.co.uk) [www.lifestylesetc.co.uk](http://www.lifestylesetc.co.uk)



**The Sliding Wardrobe Collection From Bedroom Image**



*Luxury fitted bedroom furniture*

**SHOWROOM**  
**Barton Street, Darlington**  
 (next to Darlington Timber)

**01325 362 879**

Showroom also at **MIDDLESBROUGH**  
 01642 823 003

Showroom also at **WASHINGTON**  
 0191 417 9174

[www.bedroomimage.co.uk](http://www.bedroomimage.co.uk)

**Aiding independence in daily life**

[www.adapt-ability.co.uk](http://www.adapt-ability.co.uk)

**Adapt-ABILITY**

up to **44%\* OFF**  
**Riser / Recliner Chairs**  
 (while stocks last)




**Selected Aquatec Bath Lifts**  
**20%\* OFF**

\*Discount is off MRP (Manufacturers Recommended Price)

- ▲ HOME DELIVERY SERVICE
- ▲ FREE HOME DEMONSTRATIONS
- ▲ WHEELCHAIR SERVICE & INSURANCE
- ▲ NEBULISERS supplied & serviced

Showroom:  
 M. Whitfield Ltd., Sanderson Street, Coxhoe  
 City of Durham, DH6 4DF

**Freephone 0800 0925092**

**'RELAX IN STYLE AND COMFORT'**



**The Washington. 3 seater and 2 chairs.**  
**2 1/2 seater and 2 seater also available.**  
**10% off, and free arm throws, and scatter cushions.**

81 Newgate Street, Bishop Auckland  
 Co. Durham, DL14 7EN • Tel. 01388 450 939  
 Email: [nickblackett@btconnect.com](mailto:nickblackett@btconnect.com)  
 Open Mon to Sat 10am-6pm • Opposite Woolworths

*Blacketts*  
 furniture store

TRADITIONAL DESIGN . . . LOCALLY MANUFACTURED



The study is housed in another extension and is a charming, higgledy-piggledy mixture of old furniture and new office equipment. The computer, for instance, sits on an old-fashioned, dark wood desk and chair, and the grey metal filing cabinet stands happily next to a chest of drawers from an auction room. David's trophy for winning the Ready, Steady, Cook challenge and the golden Through the Keyhole key, with which all guests of the show are presented, take pride of place.

But the heart of the house, according to the couple, is the kitchen – and it is immediately clear why. It is big, bright and warm. The walls are painted a neutral cream, as are the country-style kitchen cupboards, which have plain wooden knobs.

The reclaimed oak wood floorboards add an element of warmth to the space, with left-over planks used as worktops. The 200-year-old dining table in the middle of the kitchen seats up to eight people comfortably, yet there is enough room to fit in a

double cooking range, a sideboard and an elegant, three-seater sofa, which is upholstered in a classic, light-blue, stripy fabric.

David's love for furniture and sculpture clearly shines through in all the cottage's rooms and I wonder if the couple have had to compromise a great deal over the decor. "Lucky, not too much," laughs Wendy, "though if David had his way, we would have much more furniture."

What is nice about their converted barn is that it is a real family home. Yes, the couple have furnished it with some exquisite pieces, but they don't seem to be too precious about them and they have succeeded in infusing their little cow byre with real cottagey character.

■ **Put Your Money Where Your Mouth Is will be back in the new year. David also writes a regular column for *Period House* magazine and is an antique expert contributor for *The Times* newspaper.** [davidharper-tv.co.uk](http://davidharper-tv.co.uk)

The antiques David Harper has picked up en route fit well into the lovely family home. The kitchen, above, is the heart of the home. The conservatory, below, brings lots of light into the former farm buildings





A staircase leads up from the bedroom to a mezzanine bathroom with stunning views over the Tyne

# The hotel you want to take home

*The Hotel Du Vin hotel group has become well known for having the kind of decor you want to take home with you.*

**JENNY LAUE**  
*samples their latest outlet in Newcastle*

**S**OME hotels are clean and comfortable. Some impress with their opulence and style, but even then, it's usually nice to get home and cosy up again.

And then there's the Hotel Du Vin chain. It's clean and comfortable and stylish, but when you throw yourself on the huge bed and look around, it feels like home, only nicer.

The mixture of old and new furniture, the muted colours, the superb bathrooms, the feature wallpapers. It's modern, yet timeless, and if the rooms had kitchens, you'd probably be quite happy to move in permanently.

Now the well-known boutique hotel chain has opened a hotel on the Quayside in Newcastle. The company has a reputation for taking on industrial spaces, like old warehouses or breweries, and transforming them into an oasis of contemporary calm and this one is no different.

Newcastle Hotel du Vin – former home to the Tyne-Tees Steam Shipping Company, as the sign above the main door says – offers guests 42 en-suite rooms and suites, fine dining in the bistro, a room just for wine-tasting, a pretty alfresco seating area with a maritime feel and a cigar shack heated by an open fire. ►



Leave it to us...



...because we pride ourselves on quality and reliability, we're still going strong after 20 years and 30,000 installations!

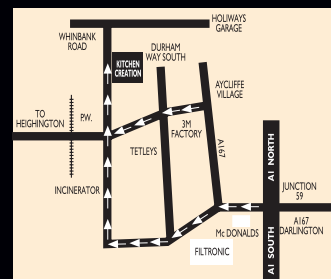


# Kitchen & Bedroom Creation

Unit B1, Whinbank Park, Whinbank Road, Newton Aycliffe.  
Ring sales hotline for immediate appointment Tel: 01325 319022

Open Mon - Fri 10am-5pm  
Saturday 9.30am - 4pm

[www.kitchencreation.co.uk](http://www.kitchencreation.co.uk)





Hotel Du Vin &  
Bistro  
Allan House,  
City Road,  
Newcastle, NE1 2BE  
Tel: 0191-229-2200

The suite we stayed in for the night, the Mouton-Rothschild, is on the third floor and what immediately captures the attention is the enormous 12ft arched window with breathtaking views across the river towards the Baltic, the Millennium Bridge and the twinkling lights of Gateshead.

The room is designed in the hotel's trademark contemporary style. There are the usual neutral colours, soft down-lighters and quality soft furnishings, but they combine with the exposed brickwork and steel joists to make the most of the building's industrial heritage.

It also features a large bed with beautifully crisp Egyptian cotton sheets, a plasma TV on a swivel base, to face either the bed or the comfy L-shaped sofa, surround sound speakers, a fully stocked minibar, as well as Internet access, air conditioning and an iPod station. Then there is the mezzanine bathroom, which hovers above the bed and shares the same spectacular views over the river.

As with all Hotel du Vin branches, the bathroom is just divine. The walk-in monsoon shower has a shower head the size of a dinner plate, the floorboards are stained a

lovely, warm chocolate brown, all the metal bits are gleaming chrome and the free-standing, roll-top bath is positioned so that you can enjoy the city views while wallowing in hot water.

Downstairs for dinner, we were seated along a long row of French doors which open up to a pretty U-shaped courtyard and cigar shack in the summer. Staff were friendly, polite and efficient, something we had already noticed while checking in, in record time.

The Bistro's menu offers simple but delectable dishes with a distinctly European twist. We enjoyed rib-eye steak with chips, and braised lamb with spinach and goats' cheese puree, plus a bottle of wine from the Bistro's extensive wine list. But the highlight of the meal was my pudding – an apple tart in the guise of an artwork. Actually too nice to eat, but I made short work of it nonetheless.

I had heard a lot of things in praise of Hotel du Vin – a colleague even spent her wedding night at the Harrogate outlet.

The new Hotel du Vin on Newcastle Quayside is a great addition to this thriving city of the North.



## WIN A LUXURY MINI-SPA BREAK AT HEADLAM HALL



**A**FTER the long weeks of winter, it's time to treat yourself to some pampering. The new Headlam Spa, at Headlam Hall, near Gainford, is a true country spa experience, with rustic warmth and earthy ambience.

There are stunning views, delightful gardens and authentic spa therapies, all contributing to the tranquil atmosphere in which you can relax and unwind.

The exclusive membership can enjoy the atmospheric swimming pool, outdoor hydrotherapy spa pool and thermal zone, as well as exercise classes in the studio and access to the latest range of Technogym cardiovascular and resistance equipment.

Spa therapies are also open to non-members by appointment, with a selection of massages, wraps and facials and general grooming essentials.

The hotel itself enjoys an excellent reputation both locally and nationally as a top-class functions and wedding venue. The character and charm of the Jacobean hall, combined with its beautiful walled gardens, are a major attraction.

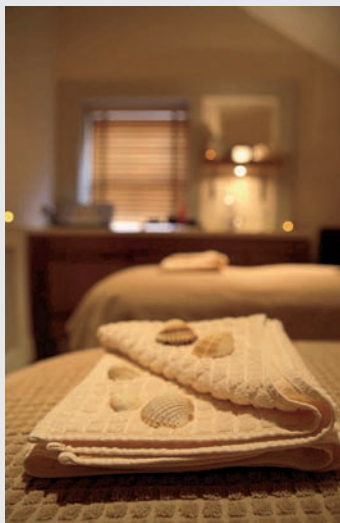
And as a family owned and run business, Headlam Hall has a core philosophy of offering a highly individual and personal service to all of its customers.


Living magazine has teamed up with Headlam Hall to offer one reader the chance to win a mini-break for two. The prize includes accommodation in a deluxe double/twin room, a tasty English breakfast made with locally sourced produce, either a relaxing hot stone massage or a quick cleanse aromatherapy facial and full use of the superb spa facilities during your stay. Available Sunday to Thursday until March 31, 2009.

### HOW TO ENTER




To stand a chance of winning, just tell us which era Headlam Hall was built in. Answers to Headlam Hall Competition, Living Magazine, The Northern Echo, Priestgate, Darlington DL1 1NF. The closing date is Monday, February 23, and usual Newsquest competition rules apply. Available Sunday to Thursday until 31/03/09.

More information at [headlamhall.co.uk](http://headlamhall.co.uk) or call 01325-730691.






**BESPOKE JOINERY**

Designers, Manufacturers & Installers of  
Quality Traditional & Contemporary  
Architectural Joinery

---

Moor Park, Moor Road, Leyburn, North Yorkshire DL8 5LA  
t: 01969 623020 f: 01969 625497  
e: [info@bikercontracts.co.uk](mailto:info@bikercontracts.co.uk) w: [www.bikercontracts.co.uk](http://www.bikercontracts.co.uk)  
Call 01969 623020 for a free brochure and quotation



## Old Mill Furniture

**Solid Hardwoods**      **Individually made**  
**Bespoke service**      **Family business**







Balk, Thirsk, North Yorkshire YO7 2AH  
Tel: 01845 597227 [www.theoldmill.co.uk](http://www.theoldmill.co.uk)  
Open Mon - Sat 9am - 5pm  
Other times by arrangement



# Belson Homes Ltd

**FOR ALL YOUR CONSTRUCTION NEEDS:-**

- DESIGN TO CONSTRUCTION
- ESTIMATING SERVICES
- PROJECT MANAGEMENT
- QUALITY SURVEYING
- ALL TYPES OF CONSTRUCTION COVERED

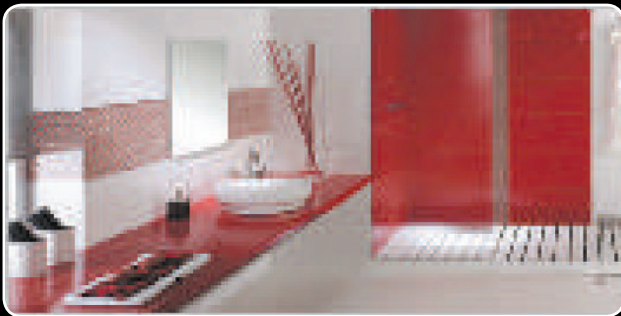
enquires to [belsonhomes@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:belsonhomes@hotmail.co.uk)  
or Contact Dean Wilson

**(07971050086) 07974191257**



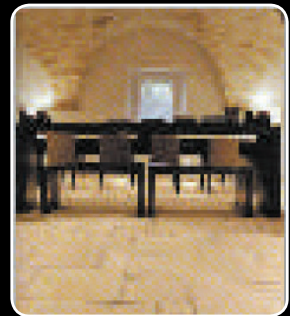
## DIRECT TILE IMPORTERS

**Direct** for choice  
**Direct** for quality  
**Direct** savings to you



New natural stone  
showroom open!

Travertine, Limestone  
State, Marble and  
much more!



## DIRECT TILE IMPORTERS

Coton Moor, York - 01904 692973 | Westborough, Scarborough - 01723 372334

Standard Way, Northallerton - 01609 783522 | [www.directtile.co.uk](http://www.directtile.co.uk) | [info@directtile.co.uk](mailto:info@directtile.co.uk)

Bathroom, Kitchen, Wall & Floor Tiles | Grout | Adhesive | Tools | Professional Advice | Trade Welcome

# BURTS

CARPETS & FLOORS



## Suppliers of Inspirational flooring for 64 Years!



At Burts we have an extensive range of stylish flooring available, from sumptuous carpets for bedrooms to contemporary laminates for living rooms.

We can take care of the whole process from free estimating to professional fitting service.

Remember 'don't buy any flooring until you have asked us for a price!'

Burts Carpets & Floors, Oakwood House,  
Eastmount Road, Darlington, DL1 1LA.

tel: 01325 466470 visit: [www.burts.co.uk](http://www.burts.co.uk)

A WORLD OF FLOORING AT YOUR FEET

Living VALENTINES



Per Una kimono, £29.50, blush print padded bra, £14.  
Sizes: 32A-40D. Briefs, £6. From M&S

# Love lace



**LEFT:**  
Olivia balcony  
bra, £32, and  
briefs, £18,  
from Fantasie



Valentine's Day is on its way and there's one traditional gift that's always welcome chaps. Give our undie drawers a boost and buy us something pink and slinky to replace all those fading frillies



**LEFT:**

Kara underwire bra, £19, and shorts, £15, from Fantasie. Stockists: 01536-760-282

**CENTRE:**

Per Una bra, £16  
Sizes: 32A-40D  
Embroidered  
Brazilian briefs, £6.  
From M&S



CLEVELAND  
ORTHODONTICS

exclusive

Straight teeth for a confident smile



Contact us to discuss our range of modern white and invisible braces with a member of our specialist team.

32 Baker Street Middlesbrough Cleveland TS1 2LH

Telephone: 01642 243 080

[www.clevelandorthodontics.co.uk](http://www.clevelandorthodontics.co.uk)



British Orthodontic Society Member



live the dream... ..let the dream become reality

# TALL TREES

Quite simply one of the finest hotel, entertainment and leisure complex in Europe

## WEDDING EXHIBITION

Sunday 15th February, 1pm - 5pm  
• Free Admission

### Tall Trees Hotel

Green Lane, Yarm, Cleveland [www.talltrees.co.uk](http://www.talltrees.co.uk)  
T: 01642 786786 or 01642 387100  
email: [hotel@talltrees.co.uk](mailto:hotel@talltrees.co.uk)

**Closing The Gap Between Vision And Reality**



**SEE FOR YOURSELF**



**Alexander**  
Optometrists

152 High Street, Northallerton, DL7 8JX 01609 760606

[www.alexanderoptometrists.co.uk](http://www.alexanderoptometrists.co.uk)

*For all your Hair Extension needs*

**Specialists in Human hair extensions with 14 years experience and 24 years hairdressing experience.**

**SEASONAL SPECIAL OFFERS**

- Full head of Standard Bonded From **£220**
- **15% off** full Racocon product range throughout February
- In Salon Service

Full range of Extensions available

- Full Range of natural, vibrant, crazy colours
- Racocon Micro Wefts
- Synthetic
- Racocon Standard and Euro Human Hair
- Cuticle Hair
- Standard Wefts
- Mobile Service covering the North East



## Strictly Extensions

Gort Place, Gilesgate, Durham, DH1 1EY

**FREE CONSULTATION Tel: 07813 306 122**

cooking in   
**the new eating out**

cook at home with a River Swale organic vegbox  
spend less money on your shopping  
spend more time with your family

boxes from £8.35 - free delivery

call us on

**0845 367 1155**



or visit

[www.riverswale.co.uk](http://www.riverswale.co.uk)



River Swale *our farm vegetables organic on your table*



## Living VALENTINES

Susan Allan was a soldier in the Royal Logistics Corps until family commitments forced a change of career. Now she's carving a niche for herself in corset design and fitting, says **JULIA BREEN** ▶

### NIGHTS IN BLACK SATIN

Dita von Teese-style corset by Susan Allan, below left with a selection of her slinky outfits

# You sexy thing!



## Living VALENTINES

IT'S a big promise. No cabbage soup diet or flimsy meal replacement bars, no running marathons or sweaty aerobics classes. Just four inches off your waist, instantly. Get fitted for one of Susan Allan's corsets and this is what she promises.

Susan's business, Chique Corsets, has been running for three years from her York home. She not only sells her own designs, and others including corsets from well-known label Velda Lauder – who has celebrity clients including Charlotte Church and Courtney Love – but also offers a fitting and a made-to-measure service.

But rather than selling corsets as underwear, hers are outerwear, either for wearing to glamorous occasions or as more casual wear, with jeans. Very sexy. Just perfect for Valentine's Day.

"Most people think of the restrictive Victorian or Edwardian corsets, which you can still get, but they are very rare. They are far more comfortable fashion items now," she says. "I do retail over the website, but I prefer people to come and get a proper fitting with me. A corset is a fashion investment."

Susan also does corset-based wedding dresses and prom gowns. "We design the corset with two skirts, one for the wedding and one for the evening, or for wearing after the wedding if you want to wear the corset again," she says.

Susan says corsets have become more popular in recent years because they have been worn by trend-setters such as Victoria Beckham. But she believes in using real women to advertise her corsets – her model on the home page of her website is size 14-16 with a 30-inch waist – showing just how flattering the garment is.

Susan also runs a personal styling and wardrobe makeover business, Urban Rock Chique. She says: "So many people wear clothes that are wrong for them. I can advise them on what will suit them and what works on what body shapes. I have experience as a stylist on professional photo shoots so I can do the same with individuals."

"I also work with a beautician and hairdresser offering styling parties. We will go to someone's house before a big night out and help style all the girls and do their hair and make-up."

■ Corsets start at £125. Visit [chique-corsetry.co.uk](http://chique-corsetry.co.uk). For Susan's personal styling, personal shopper and wardrobe makeover business, visit [urbanrockchique.co.uk](http://urbanrockchique.co.uk).

**ON PARADE**  
Sexy army-style corset by former soldier Susan Allan. Above, a softer wedding-style corset



*Corsets have become more popular in recent years after being seen on trend-setters such as Victoria Beckham*

# Words: the way to the heart

*“To fear love is to fear life, and those who fear life are already three parts dead*

**Bertrand Russell, British author, mathematician and philosopher (1872-1970)**

*“The meeting of two personalities is like the contact of two chemical substances: if there is any reaction, both are transformed*

**Carl Jung, Swiss psychologist (1875-1961)**

*“To love and be loved is to feel the sun from both sides*

**David Viscott, American psychiatrist, author, businessman, and media personality (1938-1996)**

*“There is no remedy for love but to love more*

**Henry David Thoreau, US author (1817-1862)**

*“Passion makes the world go round. Love just makes it a safer place*

**Ice T, US rapper and actor**

*“Love is an act of endless forgiveness, a tender look which becomes a habit*

**Peter Ustinov, English actor and author (1921-2004)**

*“Before I met my husband, I'd never fallen in love, though I'd stepped in it a few times*

**Rita Rudner, US comedian**

*“Love is an irresistible desire to be irresistibly desired*

**Robert Frost, US poet (1874-1963)**

*“Life's greatest happiness is to be convinced we are loved*

**Victor Hugo, French dramatist, novelist and poet (1802-1885)**

*“All you need is love*

**John Lennon (1940-80) and Paul McCartney**

# PANDORA

UNFORGETTABLE MOMENTS



## OUR PANDORA STOCKISTS

**PANDORA  
CONCEPT STORE  
4 CAPTAIN COOK SQUARE  
MIDDLESBROUGH  
01642 249 547**

## eVe

Recently opened

**1 B SIDGATE ELDON SQUARE  
(MONUMENT ENTRANCE)  
NEWCASTLE  
0191 261 9205**

## THE SILVER SHOP

**23 POST HOUSE WYND  
DARLINGTON 01325 464 175**

## BRAMWELLS JEWELLERS

**28 HIGH STREET  
DURHAM 0191 384 5793**

## Living VALENTINES



♥ HOW romantic to gaze down on the magnificent scenery of the Yorkshire Dales as it gently drifts by. Local features you may have seen a hundred times before are revealed anew from this unfamiliar vantage point. Whether skimming through the treetops or high in the clouds, it's an experience you will never forget. Once the balloon is packed away, a glass of bubbly is served and a commemorative certificate is presented to each passenger. **Airborne Adventures. Tel: 01756-730166; email: ballooning@airborne.co.uk**

### Show your love on Valentine's Day with one of these fantastic treats

♥ BRING a smile to her face with a romantic Rose Tree Basket... from £14 to £35 depending on the amount of roses (choose from 11 to 33 stems) by Au Nom De La Rose. Order line 020-7589-0776 or [aunomdelarose.co.uk](http://aunomdelarose.co.uk).



♥ IF your partner has a sweet tooth, a treat from Angie Townsend's kitchen wouldn't go amiss. Angie runs The Tiny Cake Company, making everything from traditional butterflies, miniature Victoria sponges and small and gooey chocolate cakes to foreign fancies such as Blueberry and Lemon Friends, Madelines or little Greek honey and almond crescents. A great way to anyone's heart. [AngieTownsend@toucansurf.com](mailto:AngieTownsend@toucansurf.com)



♥ THESE stunning pieces of jewellery were made by Helen Rennison and Sue Ley, otherwise known as Heart and Soul. The two women, who are based in Richmond, started off selling their hand-made pieces to friends but found the response was phenomenal. They use amber, gold, rose quartz, jasper, jade, tiger-eye... and each piece has a heart in it somewhere. Necklaces sell from £60, bracelets from around £30. Tel: 01325-718336; [heartandsoul.design.co.uk](http://heartandsoul.design.co.uk)



♥ WHERE better to book in for a romantic meal than Valentine's Restaurant in Barnard Castle? The menu is full of mouthwatering treats: stuffed field mushrooms with bacon and mozzarella, drizzled with a rosemary-scented olive oil; salmon fillet with a sweet chilli glaze; crispy duck breast with orange, marmalade and whisky; ginger and lemon cheesecake... You'll love it! Tel: 01833-637146.



*Simply seductive...*



*...It's our love affair*

# BROWNS

---

## HAIRDRESSING

THE NORTH'S FAVOURITE HAIRDRESSERS

184 Front Street,  
 Chester-le-Street  
 Co. Durham  
 (0191) 388 2003  
 (0191) 388 3231

15-16 Front Street,  
 Framwellgate Moor  
 Durham  
 (0191) 384 3889  
 (0191) 386 5544

15 North Burns,  
 Chester-le-Street  
 Co. Durham  
 (0191) 388 2865  
 (0191) 387 3506

[www.brownshair.com](http://www.brownshair.com)

TIGI®

ghd

PAUL MITCHELL  
PROFESSIONAL SALON PRODUCTS

L'ORÉAL  
PARIS  
PROFESSIONNEL

LIVING IN YARM



# The charms of Yarm

## A RIVERSIDE WALK

**A**N excellent destination for anyone who likes a leisurely riverside walk is the essentially Georgian town of Yarm, on the Tees, nine meandering miles upstream, but only four south by road, from Stockton.

Just how long there has been a settlement on the peninsula on which Yarm stands is not known. It is mentioned in the Norman Domesday Book of 1086, but the site must have attracted much earlier occupation. Yarm's strategic and commercial importance stemmed from the fact that it is almost completely surrounded by the river which has brought it, through the ages, both fortune and disaster – fortune from its maritime trade and disaster from its occasional but devastating floods, the land on which the town stands being very low-lying.

Its heyday as one of the most important ports and shipbuilding centres in Britain was from the 12th Century to the beginning of the 19th Century when, for most of that time, it offered

the lowest bridging point across the Tees between County Durham and North York-shire.

Most visitors today find it totally inconceivable that this quaint and attractive inland town, so far from the sea, once traded thousands of tons of goods annually with London, Scotland and Europe. Although almost all of the port facilities and tall warehouses have long-since disappeared, it is still possible, preferably during dry weather, to walk the riverbanks, along part of which they once stood, on a tarmac path.

**A** GOOD starting point for an easy circular riverside walk lasting about an hour and taking in much of Yarm's history is the early 18th Century town hall, with its weather vane of 1710, in the middle of the wide main street with its predominantly three-storey Georgian and Victorian buildings in a myriad of architectural styles, its diversity of shops and its assorted historic hosteleries.

From the town hall, the route is along the lane at the side of Strickland and Holt's emporium as far as the new brick wall which helps to keep the Tees at



It's quite difficult now to believe that merchant ships once sailed into Yarm. **KEITH PROUD** takes a walk down by the river which has brought the town both fortune and disaster

The viaduct, which was finished in 1849

bay. The old warehouses which once stood here are no more, and bordering the riverside access road are attractive new brick-built flats and apartments with views across the Tees.

At the end of the lane, a left turn leads the walker along the riverside to Yarm's redbrick Methodist Church, said to have been one of John Wesley's favourites. An octagonal brick building, described by Wesley as 'by far the most elegant in England', it was built in 1763 and visited a year later and several times afterwards by Wesley himself. Enlarged in 1815, it was restored again in 1873 and has been altered several times since.

Further along the path, on the right, through one of the new floodgates, is a short modern jetty beside which the river often attracts a considerable number of geese, ducks and swans forever looking for titbits from passing pedestrians. Across the river, near the Blue Bell Inn, there once stood a shipyard which built vessels for the Yarm and Cleveland Trading Company.

As the path continues, with further steel flood gates to its right, Yarm's famous stone road bridge comes into view, the walker's route passing under its landside arch, which has an impressive echo ►

# YARM STUDIO

photography at its best



Now Open at the **Old Fire Station**, Yarm

Portraiture, Weddings,  
Commercial & Events.



Tel: 01642 654557

[www.yarmstudio.com](http://www.yarmstudio.com)

Yarm Studio, The Old Fire Station, 31 Bridge Street, Yarm, TS15 9BY

# SILVERDALE

of Bedale

*jewellery to inspire . . .  
. . . gifts to admire*



*Silver, Gold, Titanium, Steel*

**Recycle broken and unwanted gold jewellery**

Turn old into new with our New Year Gold Recycling Offer of 50% more than cash value when spent in store. Please phone us for more details.

**3 North End, Bedale** (by the market cross) T: **01677 427222**

Open 9.30am to 5.30pm Monday to Saturday

# Walkergate

DURHAM



## The exclusive city centre destination

A great selection of stylish bars and family restaurants offer worldwide cuisine, as well as a 24 hour 500 space secure car park, *'there is something for everyone'*



[www.walkergate-durham.co.uk](http://www.walkergate-durham.co.uk)

OPEN FROM 9AM TILL LATE - ADJACENT TO THE GALA THEATRE



Rowers take a break from their exertions

Having travelled by rowing boat from Stockton to Yarm in the 1890s, Michael Heavisides wrote of the old stone bridge under which he had passed:

“This structure was built about the year 1400 by Walter Skirlaw, Bishop of Durham. The Bishop’s Bridge consists of five arches. Formerly, tolls were collected for crossing it and it was closed for traffic from midnight on Saturday to midnight on Sunday.

“During Sunday nights, the coal carts drew up in large numbers, waiting for the opening and many lively scenes occurred in the strife to secure the best positions. When the barrier was withdrawn, the collection of horses and donkeys in wagons, carts, etc rushed off at their best speed for the coalfields of Durham, as those arriving first were first served. The bridge has now been free for many years.”

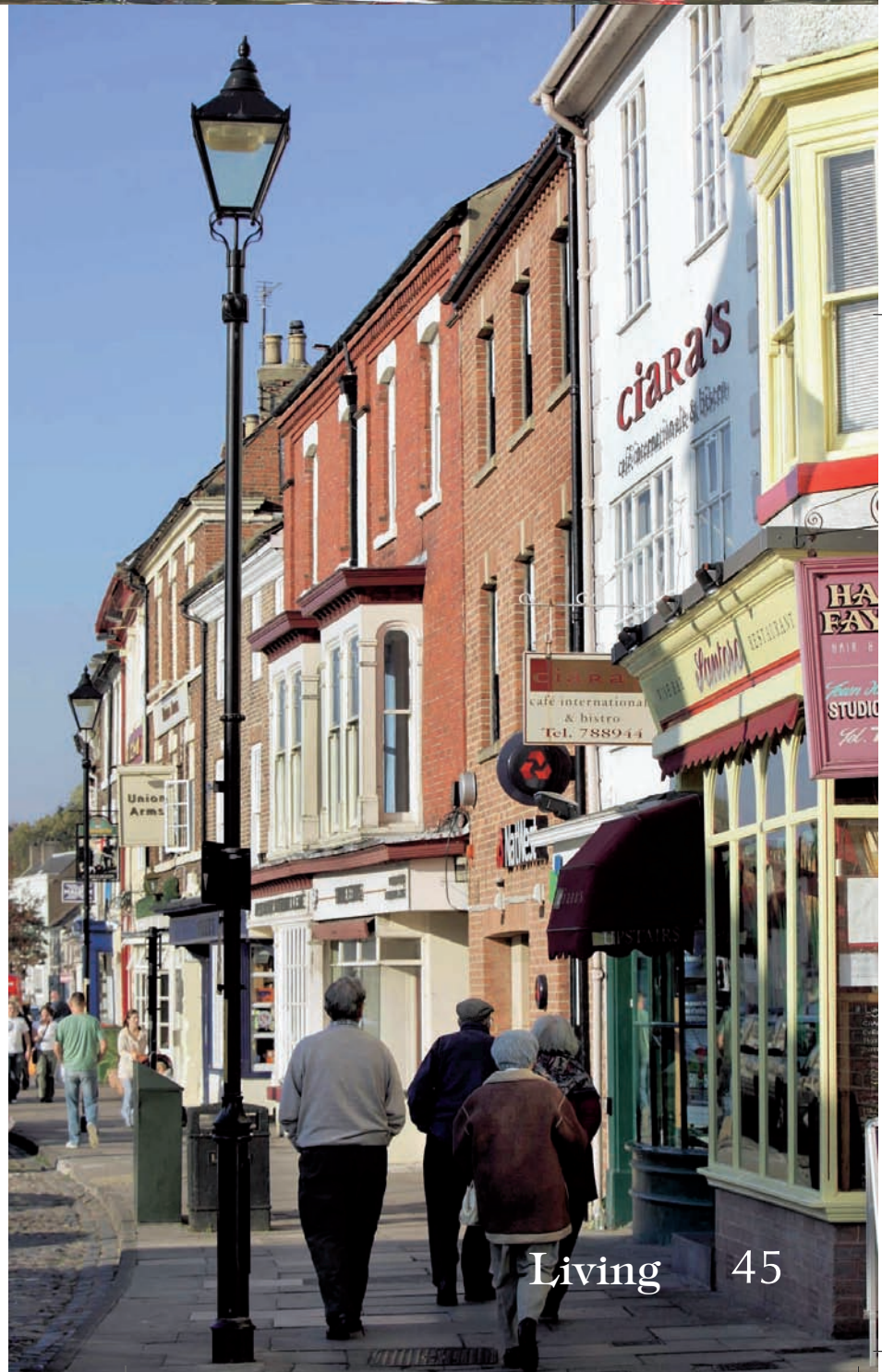
Heavisides continued with the story of the bridge by explaining that, in 1803, it was considered to be too narrow for the traffic of the time and that its users asked the authorities on both sides of the Tees to undertake improvements. The sum of £8,000 was made available but not for Skirlaw’s bridge to be widened.

“On the 3rd of September of the same year, the foundation stone of an iron bridge was laid, consisting of one arch 189 feet in length and 27 feet in width, the structure to be finished in two years. The iron arch rested on two abutments of masonry, alongside and to the east of the existing bridge.

“The work was eventually completed but during the night of January 12, 1806, the whole fabric, which weighed 250 tons, fell in. Fortunately, the old bridge was still intact and it was at once decided to widen it. This was speedily carried out.”

The old bridge had been altered some 150 years earlier during the English Civil War. Heavisides tells the tale. “In the year 1643 was fought what has been called the Battle of Yarm. At that time, the town ►

The town is well known for its shopping facilities



**J.M. HORLEY****Property maintenance  
& home improvements**

- Professional & reliable service
  - Kitchen specialist
  - Worktop replacement
- Plumbing & Bathrooms
  - Tiling & Flooring
  - Joinery & Plastering
- Insurance work undertaken



Call for a free, no obligation, fixed price quotation

**01325 251180 or 07810 880148**

Glenfield Road, Darlington

## The Beeches Nursing and Care Home



We have vacancies for Residential and Nursing Care.

The Beeches is located at the edge of Kelloe Village on 3.5 Acres of peaceful Country Setting 80% of which is purpose built.

The home is dedicated to providing Residents with the Highest Standard of Holistic Care in a personal and friendly atmosphere where privacy, dignity and independence are respected. Care is provided by skilled staff.

All 31 beds are single and 26 ensuite facilities.

Hairdressing is provided with regular activities and entertainment.

We also offer short-term respite care through the year. You are welcome to visit us for coffee to discuss all aspects of available care.

**Please phone the Manager or Deputy  
Manager on 0191 3773004**





was garrisoned by some hundreds of the Parliamentary troops to guard the bridge and debar any force attempting to cross into Yorkshire."

The Roundheads failed to hold the bridge against the king's forces and it was eventually taken by the Earl of Newcastle. The round-topped arch on the Durham side of Yarm Bridge replaced an earlier drawbridge. Walkers passing under the bridge can easily see where its parapet has been repaired numerous times over the years, as a result of it having been hit by road traffic.

Not far upstream from Skirlaw's bridge is one of the North's greatest pieces of Victorian engineering. Heavisides wrote: "The viaduct is a magnificent structure. It was finished in 1849 and consists of 42 arches."

The plaque on the structure says 43. It was not opened to traffic until May 1852.

"Its length is 750 yards, quantity of bricks used 7,500,000, span of each of the two large stone arches across the river 67 feet and the cost of construction was £44,500."

Continuing the walk around the river, which is half complete on reaching the viaduct, the tarmac path runs beside the walls of some riverside houses, almost all with their dull red floodgates. On most days there are anglers to be seen, seemingly deep in thought, and a few yards past the old parish church, its tower easily seen, a spur from the path leads into West Street. Access can then be gained to the churchyard of St Mary Magdalene where the original Yarm Grammar School, founded by Thomas Conyers in 1590, stood until it was demolished in 1884.

As for the church itself, its origins, like those of the town, are unknown. Saxon stonework has been found and a 12th Century stone church here was damaged by fire in 1728. It is not known whether there was Christian activity on the site in early Saxon times, but the probability that there was is high, especially given its site, like Escomb near Bishop Auckland, so close to the river. A rebuilt church was finished on the site in 1730 although ►



**ABOVE:** the plaque on the structure, which explains that seven million bricks were used in its construction

**LEFT:** High Church Wynd, in the shadow of the viaduct

## Ready for a weight loss programme with a difference?

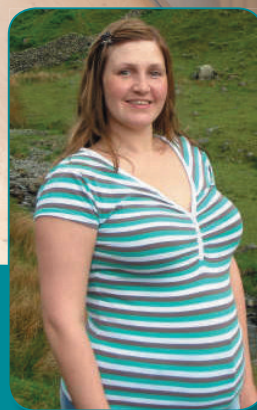
### You're ready for LighterLife

LighterLife is a weight-loss programme with a difference. In fact, we've been helping people to lose weight for over 12 years.

At LighterLife you work in small groups with people just like you, to change the way you think about food.

#### How it works:

- Fast weight loss using soups, shakes and bars
- Then we help you get back to enjoying normal food
- FREE ongoing support so you can keep the weight off



Now available if you're **1 stone** or more overweight\*

**Susan Hampton**

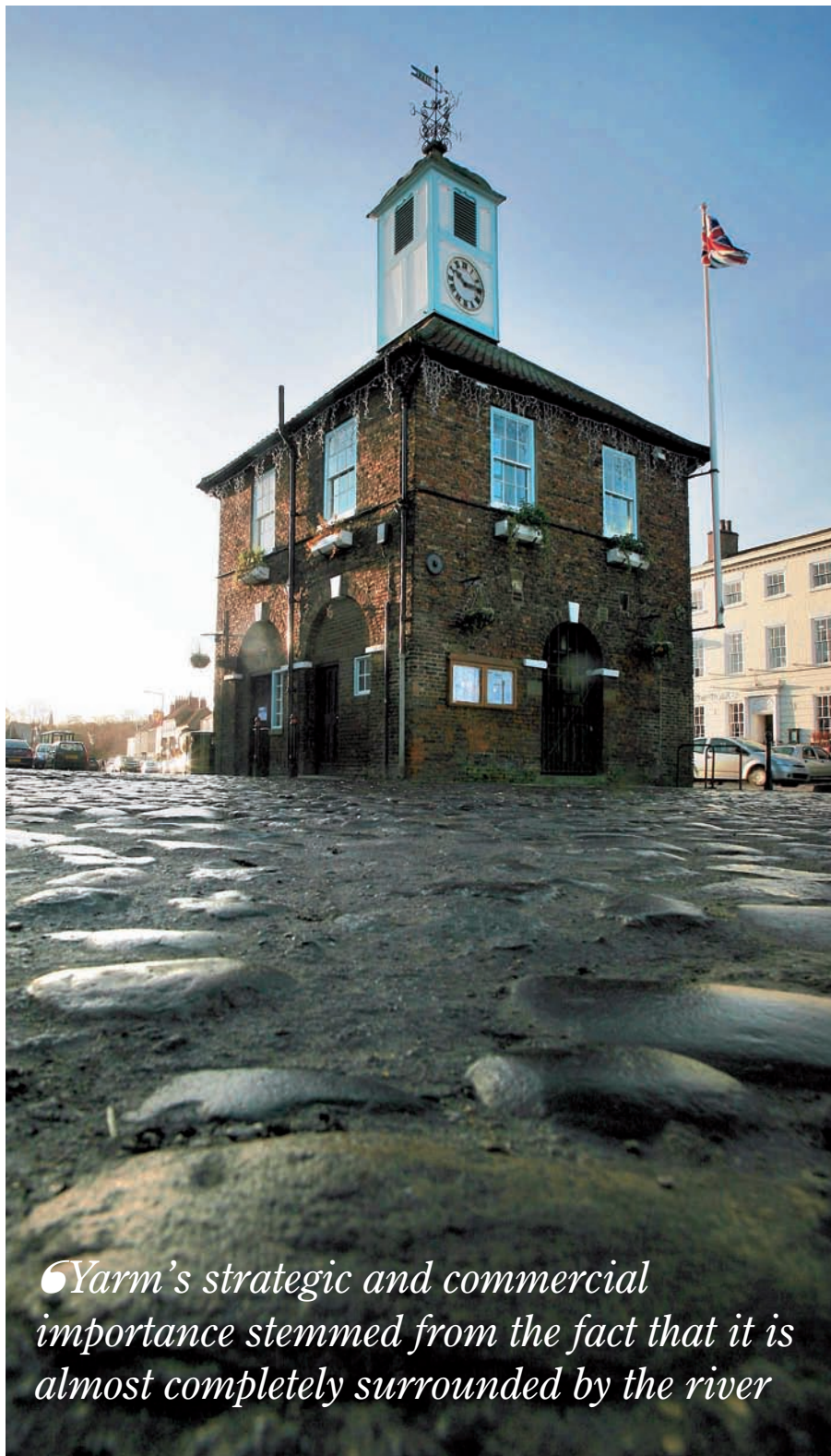
Newton Aycliffe

**01325 328826**

[www.lighterlife.com/susanhampton](http://www.lighterlife.com/susanhampton)

**LighterLife**  
Life in balance

\*BMI of 25 or above



*Yarm's strategic and commercial importance stemmed from the fact that it is almost completely surrounded by the river*

The view across the cobbles to the clocktower

parts of the original tower, the west wall and much other stonework were incorporated into it. Internal restoration was undertaken in 1878 and again in 1920.

Diagonally across West Street from the church stands the fascinating Hope House, once considered to be the oldest house in Yarm. That distinction has subsequently passed to Tom Brown's house, a former pub, at the bridge end of the main street.

The exterior of Hope House shows that it has often been altered or repaired and part of the building, possibly the oldest section, was removed to allow the building of the viaduct, in whose shadow the premises now survive.

From Hope House, High Church Wynd, one of the town's many thoroughfares, leads back to the main street and the town hall. An earlier toll booth, whose bell had been added in 1690, was removed for the building of the new red-brick structure, which housed a courtroom in its upper storey. The simple iron clock is kept company in the tower by the old toll booth bell.

The outer walls of the town hall record something of the devastation caused to the place by the flooding of the River Tees, the most dreadful of which happened in 1753, 1771 and 1881.

In 1771, the town was saved from an even worse tragedy by the timely intervention of the Reverend Mr Bramwell of nearby Hurworth who saw that the Tees was rising very quickly there and sent a messenger rushing to Yarm to advise of the imminent danger to its people and property. Given about an hour's warning, many people who would almost certainly have died were able to remove themselves from the deluge although homes and possessions were not so fortunate.

The Tees around Yarm was for the most part the town's protector, but it must have seemed at times to be the lair of a sleeping Kraken which was every now and then stirred from its long slumber.



## Growing success

FEBRUARY is traditionally the time to start thinking about your garden. But if you haven't got the first idea how to go about it, help is at hand at Wilkinsons Landscapes, Eaglescliffe, near Stockton, a family business with years of expertise. Whether it is changing garden layouts, choosing plant schemes or laying a drive, a team of dedicated specialists will see any project through from concept to completion.

In addition to the landscape services, the company also has a plant centre on site, which opens six days a week from 8.30am to 4.30pm.

*Wilkinsons Landscapes, East Brocks Farm, Eaglescliffe, Stockton, TS16 0QH, tel 01642-790409, wilkinsonslandscapes.co.uk*

# THE PERFECT VENUE TO ENJOY YOUR SPECIAL DAY



Hallgarth Manor is a three star traditional English country house hotel situated just over three miles from the historic city of Durham in the North East of England.

Part of a former 16th century residential estate, the hotel has been discreetly modernised but still retains many of its original features which add atmosphere, luxury and charm to the bar, lounge and restaurant areas. It is surrounded by 4 acres of grounds and gardens and offers peaceful seclusion and tranquillity.

All 23 of Hallgarth's comfortable bedrooms are situated on the upper two floors of the hotel and each is decorated in an attractive and traditional, but individual style whilst maintaining the rustic charm you would expect to find in such a historical building.

Renowned for its excellent food, comfort, friendliness and value for money, Hallgarth has a relaxed home-from-home atmosphere and provides the ideal solution for that extra special occasion offering everything you need to help make your wedding day go as smoothly as possible.

From the first enquiry you will be made to feel calm and relaxed in the knowledge that you are being supported by people who have a vast experience in organising such events, at a

wedding venue which has been extremely popular with couples for many years. Hallgarth Manor is licensed for the performance of civil weddings and partnerships and so can quite literally provide a full wedding service if required. However, should you only wish us to host your wedding reception, this is not a problem.

Our well appointed **Cathedral Suite**, with its own private entrance, can cater for up to 240 guests and offers tremendous flexibility with regards to layout and catering.

As an alternative, there is also the opportunity to hire the **Elemore Suite**. With its superb garden views and elevated light and airy conservatory area it has proved extremely popular for smaller, more intimate parties.

And for those ever important wedding photographs, the Hallgarth's gardens provide the ideal backdrop.

To arrange an appointment to view the facilities and discuss your requirements, you can contact us on 0191 372 1188 or simply call in to the hotel there's always someone on hand to help you.



NORTH EAST HOSPITALITY AT ITS BEST



# HALLGARTH MANOR

COUNTRY HOTEL & RESTAURANT

Pittington, Durham DH6 1AB Telephone: 0191 372 1188 Fax: 0191 372 1249  
Email: sales@hallgarthmanorhotel.com | www.hallgarthmanorhotel.com

What makes England what it is? A new book celebrates the beautiful, varied and often intriguing qualities that set the country apart from the rest of the world ►



# *England's glories*



## SALTBURN PIER

Paul Gaythorpe

*“The iron trestles of Saltburn Pier stride out triumphantly to meet the inhospitable waves of the North Sea. This pier is the most northerly example of its kind in Britain and shows just how well an industrial structure can survive against the elements*

## DEER PARKS

Kate Adie

*“For many people, a deer will never be anything more than an image of Bambi in a picture book. But the chance to catch sight of the real thing is worth it*



A red deer stag during the rutting season by Helen Dixon



Haystacks, Seamer, North Yorkshire by Paul Gaythorpe

## RURAL SENSIBILITY

Richard Benson

*“I think it is easy to forget the powerful sensuality of the English countryside and the impression it can make on us*

EVERYONE has their own idea of what best represents England. To some, it's warm beer and cricket. To others, it's corner shops and castles. But it was the creaking sign outside a pub door that beat red post boxes, deer parks and church spires in a poll of England's number one icon.

Icons: A Portrait of England is a two-year, £1m cultural project funded by the government which invited the public to nominate the things they cherish most about England. The Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) asked celebrities to choose the things they think most represent England, then asked people to vote online for their favourite icons. The pictorial pub sign nominated by author Sebastian Faulks won 15 per cent of the vote, followed by red post boxes and canal boating. Other icons included stiles, cattle grids and corner shops.

Mr Faulks, the author of *Birdsong* and the latest James Bond novel, celebrated the imagination of pub signs that include *The Struggling Monkey* or *The Quiet Woman*, as well as the more traditional *King's Head*.

“People who think of England as a practical country with little flair for the visual would never have imagined that its lanes and roads would be regularly punctuated by what look like cards from a wooden tarot pack – optical extravagances, creakily offering delight, escape and risk. But it is so; and sometimes we hardly see the strangest things by which we are surrounded,” he said. However, at a time when 36 pubs per week nationally are closing their doors, their future is uncertain.

Icons of England includes a full introduction from CPRE President and Durham University Chancellor Bill Bryson and contributors include Kate Adie, David Dimbleby, Griff Rhys-Jones, Ralph Fiennes, Richard Mabey, Prunella Scales and Simon Jenkins.

“There is much to celebrate about our wonder-



## EPHEMERAL BEAUTY

Spider's web in morning dew by Charlie Waite



## LIGHTHOUSES

Helen Dixon

*“Lighthouses have been used to aid navigation for more than 2,000 years. Seafarers depend upon this beacon of light for protecting them from the power of the sea and nature's elements. They add character to the coast and are a real achievement of modern engineering*



ful countryside and I would urge everyone with a love of that countryside to forget for a moment about the credit crunch, or similarly weighty subjects, and help us to celebrate what makes this island a unique and special place to live," says Bryson.

As part of his contribution Alan Titchmarsh recounts the walks he used to take as a child along the banks of the River Wharfe in search of wildlife.

An extract from the book reads: "In my childhood in the Yorkshire Dales, Mum and I often went off in search of wildflowers. I have some pressed flat in a rough album, their names added in a spidery scrawl courtesy of nine-year-old fingers. Each one is a memory of a moment in the summer of 1958 when they were plucked from Middleton Woods or the bank of the River Wharfe. Fifty years on, they are a stirring reminder of a time when life was beginning to reveal its riches, its complexities and its heartbreaks."

Writer Peter Marren chooses chalk horses, such as the Kilburn White Horse in North Yorkshire; photographer Paul Gaythorpe chooses Saltburn Pier; singer Bryan Ferry chooses Penshaw Monument; photographer Derry Brabbs chooses Hadrian's Wall; and geographer Dr Richard Muir chooses Nidderdale and its history.

The CPRE campaigns on a variety of countryside issues ranging from roadside signs and light pollution to a loss of character in rural areas and increasing road networks. The organisation hopes the new book will help solidify in people's minds what it is that sets England's countryside and historic monuments apart from the rest of the world.

■ **Icons of England (Think Books, £20)**



## WINDMILLS

Tom Mackie

*Windmills and windpumps have played an integral part in English heritage over the centuries*



## CROP CIRCLES

Lucy Pringle

*As yet, no one has got the bottom of this intriguingly artistic phenomenon. Could it be they are all man-made – by mathematical professors perhaps?*

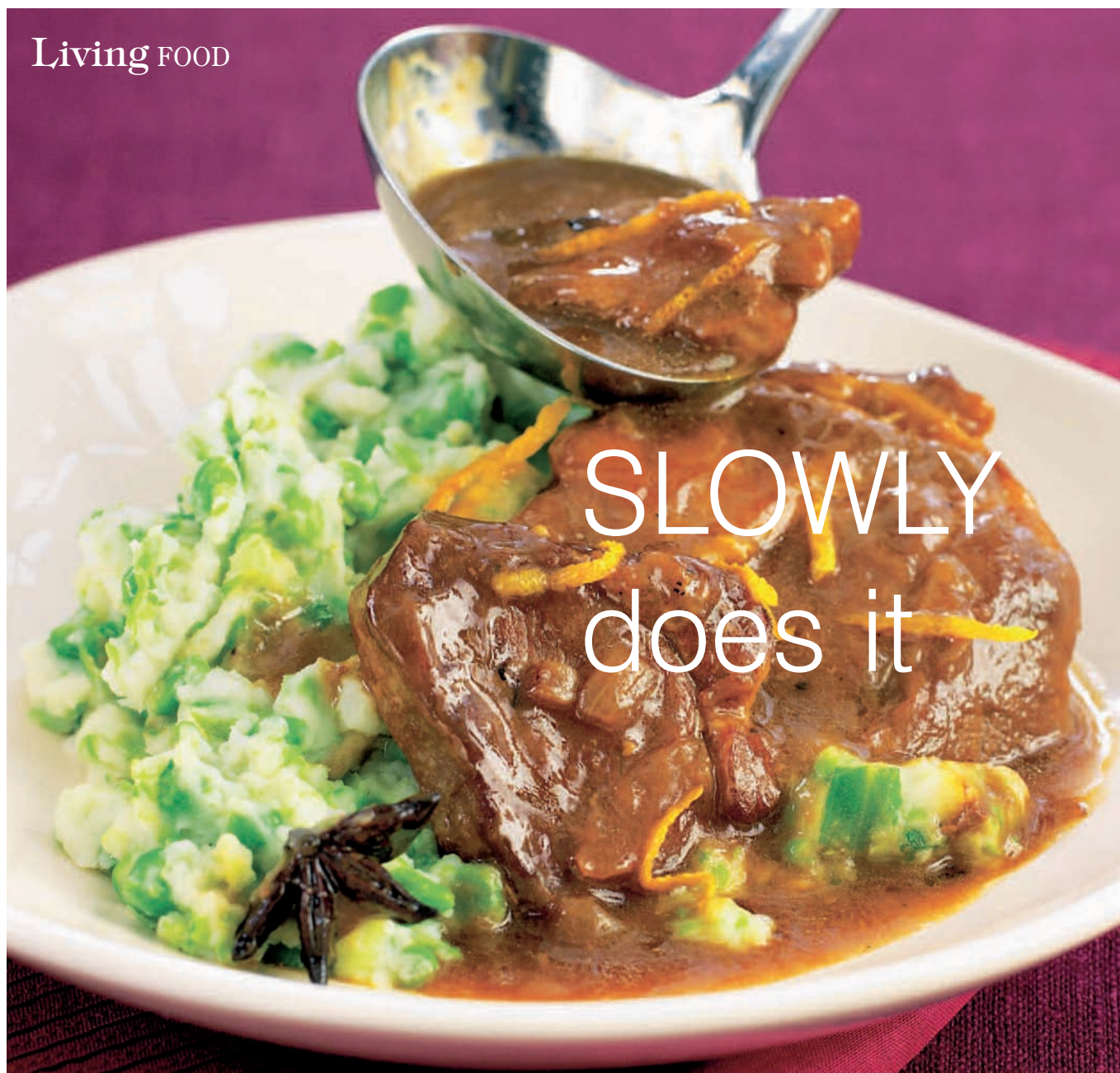


## HADRIAN'S WALL

Derry Brabbs

*I had little idea of just how awesome the three-dimensional version would be*

Living FOOD

SLOWLY  
does it

**SPICY:** Pork, orange and star anise casserole

**R**USH, rush, rush... If you get home from work and spend ten minutes staring despondently in the cupboards before throwing some bread in the toaster or ripping the top off a ready meal, you need to slow down.

In fact, what you really need is a slow cooker.

These humble kitchen devices have made something of a comeback recently as time-poor people recognise their value. And Sara Lewis, author of a new book devoted to the charms of the slow cooker, is in no doubt of their worth.

"A slow cooker is ideal for families because the supper can be put on in the morning, after the children have gone to school, so that a warm, tasty meal is ready in the late afternoon or early evening, when you and the children are most tired," she says.

"If you work unsocial hours you can put on a meal before you go to work, so that a meal is waiting when the rest of the family get home. Retired people can leave their supper to cook while they spend the day engaged in more rewarding activities.

"When microwave ovens first became widely available, they captured everyone's imagination as the answer

to our busy lives. But the reality is that food cooked in a microwave is often tasteless and lacking in colour, and most of us now use our microwave ovens for little more than defrosting and reheating foods."

For many though, it's not just the thought of the hot meal waiting for them that's attractive, but the bonus of saving money.

"Slow cookers use about the same amount of electricity as an electric lightbulb, so they are cheap to run," Lewis says. "Moreover, the long slow cooking transforms even the toughest cheapest cuts of meat into dishes that melt in the mouth, and the meat quite literally falls off the bone. Inexpensive dried beans, lentils and split peas also cook beautifully in tasty spiced or tomato sauces. Just remember to soak the beans and peas and boil them first."

Lewis dismisses any notion that slow cookers are just for casseroles and stews – explaining that you can also cook steam puddings, baked custards, pates, terrines, party punches, hot toddies, fondues, preserves, chutneys and even stocks in them.

But there's no denying they are fantastic at stews – try your hand at this Asian-inspired pork casserole then treat yourself to a luscious steam pud. ►

*If you're short of time but don't want to splash out on convenience foods, the new generation of slow cookers could be the answer, says Gabrielle Fagan*

## Pork, Orange and Star Anise Casserole

This is a great everyday casserole, which avoids being ordinary by adding a hint of oriental spice and mellow-tasting plum sauce. It's delicious served with mashed potatoes mixed with green vegetables.

### SERVES 4

Preparation time: 20 minutes

Cooking time: 8-10 hours

Cooking temperature: low

Slow cooker size: standard

1tbsp sunflower oil  
 4 pork shoulder steaks or boneless spare rib chops, about 700g (1lb 7oz), each cut into three  
 1 onion, chopped  
 2tbsp plain flour  
 450ml (¾ pint) chicken stock  
 grated rind and juice of an orange  
 3tbsp plum sauce  
 2tbsp soy sauce  
 3-4 whole star anise  
 1 fresh or dried red chilli, halved (optional)  
 salt and pepper  
 grated orange rind, to garnish

Serve with mashed potatoes mixed with steamed green vegetables, such as peas and cabbage

**PREHEAT** the slow cooker if necessary – see manufacturer's instructions. Heat the oil in a large frying pan, add the pieces of pork and fry over a high heat until browned on both sides. Lift the pork out of the pan with a slotted spoon and transfer to a plate.

Add the onion to the pan and fry, stirring, for five minutes or until lightly browned. Stir in the flour, then mix in the stock, orange rind and juice, plum sauce, soy sauce, star anise and chilli, if using. Season with salt and pepper and bring to the boil, stirring.

Transfer the pork to the slow cooker pot and pour the sauce over it. Cover and cook on low for 8-10 hours. Serve with mashed potatoes mixed with steamed green vegetables and garnish with grated orange rind.

### TIPS

★ Warn diners not to eat the star anise.

★ If you don't have any star anise, use a cinnamon stick, broken in half.

★ If you like garlic, add two cloves, finely chopped, just after frying the onions.



# A little taste of over there over here

Come and visit our fully refurbished luxury deli on the ground floor.

Here at Café Continental we believe in a relaxed and comfortable environment, with friendly and helpful staff. We offer a large range of tea, coffee, smoothies and milk shakes to compliment our fantastic menu and daily specials.

You're guaranteed to find something to satisfy your appetite, whether you just want a sandwich or a massive full English breakfast. We also have an exciting selection of fresh homemade desserts that are available all day everyday.

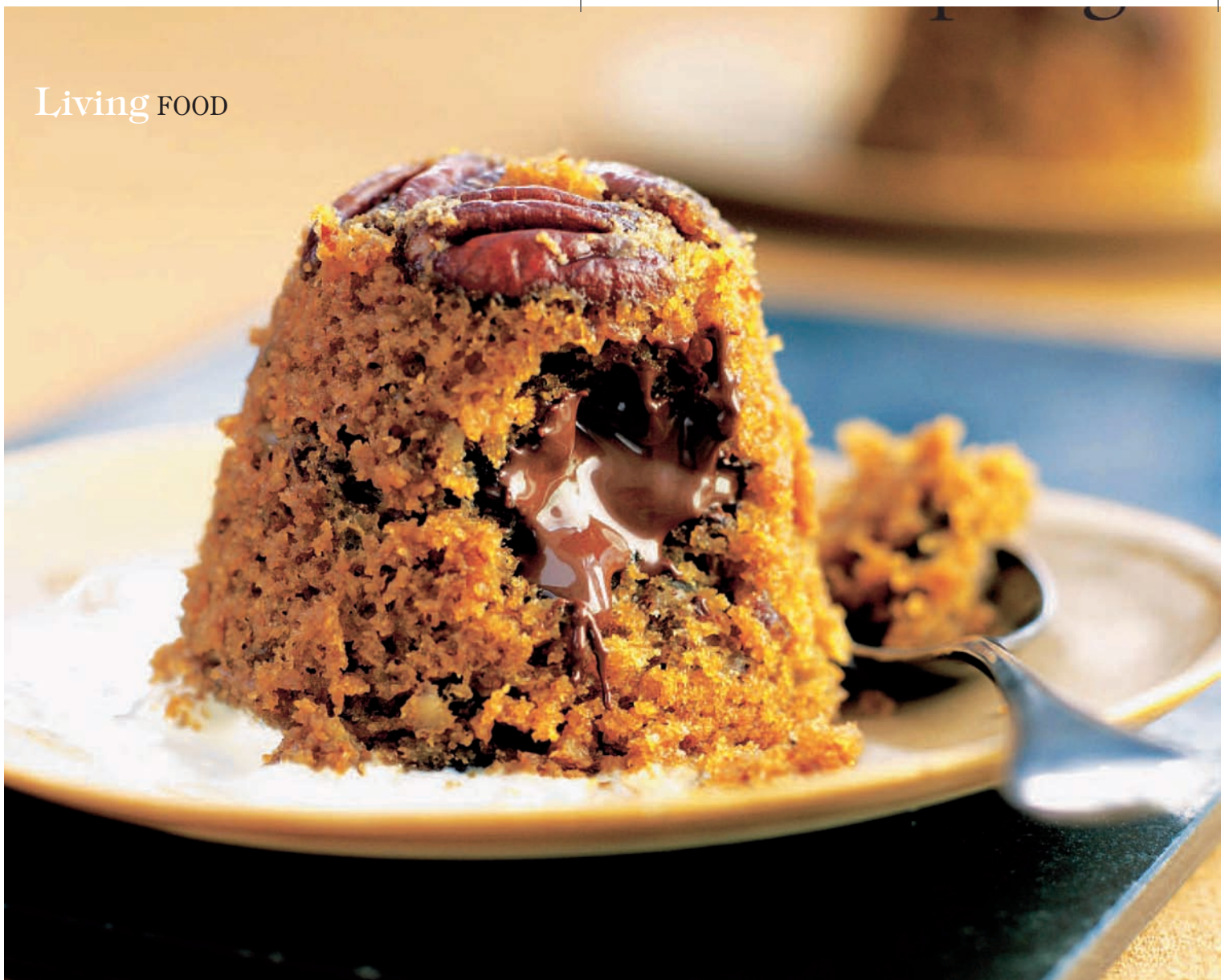


- Luxury deli available on the ground floor
- Seating for all, from couples to large groups
- Families welcome
- Bar, alcoholic beverages served with meals all day
- All major credit cards accepted



Opening hours:  
 Monday - Saturday 9am - 6pm Sunday 9am - 5pm  
 Continental deli café 87a Elvet Bridge, Durham DH1 3AG  
 Tel: 0191 3860000

## Living FOOD



## Mini Coffee Sponge Puds with Coffee Liqueur

**SERVES 4**

Preparation time: 30 minutes

Cooking time: 2-2½ hours

Cooking temperature: high

Slow cooker size: standard

100g (3½oz) butter, plus extra for greasing

50g (2oz) pecan nuts

2tsp instant coffee

3tsp boiling water

100g (3½oz) soft light muscovado sugar

2 eggs, beaten

125g (4oz) self-raising flour

40g (1½oz) dark chocolate

Serve with 4tbsp double cream and 4tbsp coffee cream liqueur

**PREHEAT** the slow cooker if necessary – see manufacturer's instructions. Lightly butter four metal moulds, each with a capacity of 200ml (7fl oz), and line the bases with circles of greaseproof paper. Arrange three pecan nuts in the base of each mould, then break the remaining nuts into pieces with your fingertips. Put the coffee in a cup and stir

in the measured boiling water until dissolved.

Put the butter and sugar in a bowl and cream them together with a wooden spoon until light and fluffy. Gradually mix in alternate spoonfuls of beaten egg and flour until both have been added.

Stir in the broken nuts and the dissolved coffee, then spoon half the mixture into the buttered moulds. Cut the chocolate into four pieces and press a piece into each mould. Cover with the remaining coffee mixture and smooth the tops.

Cover each pudding with a piece of buttered foil and transfer the puddings to the slow cooker. Pour boiling water into the pot so that it comes halfway up the sides of the moulds, cover and cook on high for 2-2½ hours or until the tops spring back when pressed with a fingertip.

Turn out the puddings into shallow bowls, remove the lining paper and spoon the cream and liqueur around the bases.

### TIP

★ For a double choc pud, replace one tablespoon flour with one tablespoon cocoa powder and omit the dissolved coffee.

**Ultimate Slowcooker by Sara Lewis (Hamlyn, £9.99)**

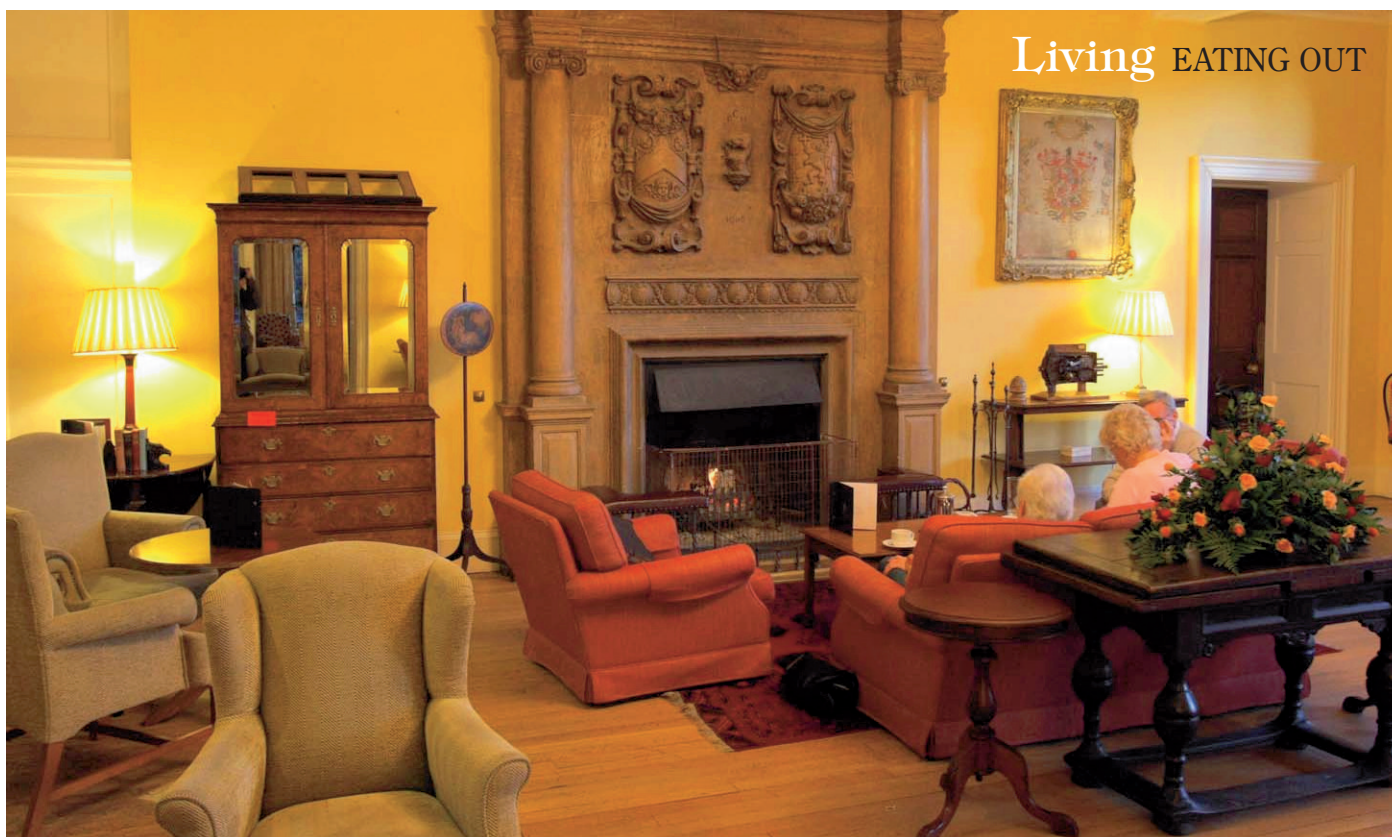


IF these recipes have whetted your appetite for slow cooking but you've yet to install one in your kitchen, Lakeland have a couple of excellent options.

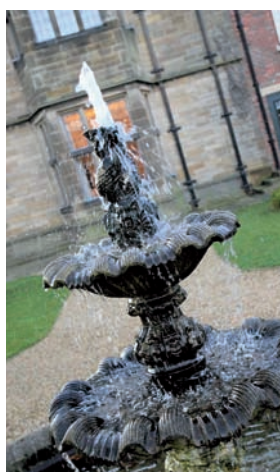
Small households will love the Two-Portion Mini Slow Cooker, £19.56, which holds 1.5 litres. The dishwasher safe ceramic pot can be removed for easy serving and fridge storage.

If you're feeding a crowd, invest in the 4.5 litre capacity Prestige Family Slow Cooker, £39.14. This slow cooker has three settings: LOW for simmering and slow cooking; HIGH for faster cooking; and AUTO, which regulates temperature automatically. The dishwasher-safe oval ceramic pot easily accommodates a large joint and vegetables, and has a glass lid so you can keep an eye on proceedings.

■ Available from Lakeland stores nationwide, or phone 01539-488-100.



## Living EATING OUT



### *Sunday lunch at Gisborough Hall is advertised as traditional. Mike Amos goes along to find out if it does what it says on the label*

**M**AYBE it was the dead cactus in the corner of the register office, or that the office itself was housed in the sort of building more usually commandeered as the staff room of some inner-city secondary modern, which convinced the lady of this house that our wedding was unlikely to make the centre pages of Hello! It didn't even make a paragraph in The Northern Echo.

Weddings these days are altogether more elaborate affairs, and consequently a great deal more expensive.

The last time we'd tried to take lunch at Gisborough Hall, indeed, all concerned seemed so sacklessly head over heels with the happy couple that all other customers were ignored.

Finally, a young man, by no means the best man, stuck his head over the bar to announce that the chef was "very busy" and that, in any case, they stopped serving at 2pm. The protest that it was still just 20 past one fell upon deaf ears – but all that was five years ago. This time we'd booked Sunday lunch, described on the board outside as "traditional".

As its name suggests but its spelling may not, Gisborough Hall is just outside Guisborough, in east Cleveland.

Lord Gisborough, the 81-year-old third Baron, not only lives nearby but was at one time said periodically to play the grand piano there. In the Second World War it was an old people's home; in 2002, it re-opened as a 71-bedroom hotel after an £8m facelift.

Though a sign at the bottom of the drive indicated a wedding, they appeared to have been stood up.

It's imposing, undoubtedly, though we were disappointed that the handsome fireplaces remained unwarmed.

The register office bride (circa 1978) wondered if

they'd mind, in the circumstances, if we took a few logs back home in the boot.

The beer range was chilling, too. In the absence of anything cask conditioned, and in the presence of Worthington Creamflow, we ordered a bottle of Newcastle Brown. It was £3.95. The Boss's gin and tonic was £5.80. She asked for tap water thereafter, and was cheerfully given it.

A main course was £9.50, three-course Sunday lunch with coffee and truffles £18.95. Before anyone suppose that we had been led still further down the bridal path it should be stressed that we considered it not only to be good value but exactly what it said on the label. It was properly traditional.

The restaurant was lovely, a seat by the rose garden (and by the radiator), proper napiery, attentive service. The "vegetable broth" was almost disconcertingly red, a sort of mini-strone, but otherwise fine. Good bread. The Boss, Mrs Spratt, equally enjoyed her gravadlax.

Main courses embraced three roasts, sea bass and a vegetarian option with baked eggs and other things forgotten. The pork was thick and succulent – a meaty cut, with little risk of stating the obvious – sourced from Manor House Farm, which, presumably, is nearby. The vegetables were simple, carefully cooked, plentiful. The sea bass came with saute potatoes, braised fennel and a saffron cream sauce. "Delicious," said Mrs Spratt.

She finished with creme brulee and biscotti, the old man with a lovely vanilla cheesecake with plum compote and a wholly indiscernible "mulled wine sauce" and – as befits the master of the house – with three of the four truffles.

As together we remarked on the recent pearl anniversary of the showdown at Dead Cactus Gulch, we'd happily do it all again.

Gisborough Hall Hotel  
Whitby Lane, Guisborough,  
TS14 6PT  
[www.macdonaldhotels.co.uk/gisborough](http://www.macdonaldhotels.co.uk/gisborough)  
Tel: 01287-634533

# The cupcake queen



*Cupcakes are not just delicious... in these gloomy times they could well be inspirational. Sharon Griffiths meets a woman of many parts who is baking her way to a new future*



Angie Townsend with some of her cakes

ANGIE Townsend's kitchen is overflowing with flour and sprinkles and an awful lot of chocolate. Two months ago, she launched herself in a new business – The Tiny Cake Company.

It does exactly what it says on the cake box.

Angie makes tiny cakes – everything from traditional butterflies, miniature Victoria sponges, small and gooey chocolate cakes to foreign fancies such as blueberry and lemon friends, madeleines or little Greek honey and almond crescents.

Yet really, Angie is a gardener. Or a writer. Or a natural healer. Or a film maker. Or a teacher. Or an artist... She is constantly re-inventing herself, dusting herself down and starting again. And constantly successful.

At a time when none of us is guaranteed a job for life, Angie Townsend is a great example of the joy of new directions.

Originally from Gloucestershire, she was an art teacher at Richmond School and then became interested in natural healing, “back in the days when it was still considered really bizarre”.

She did well, featuring in a Tyne Tees documentary, but after some years found it increasingly draining – “especially as I worked from home and I suddenly wanted my privacy, wanted my house back”.

She decided she needed a new direction and took to gardening instead. “I have a large garden that I had gradually rescued from wilderness. It was open in aid of the Red Cross and I got known,” she says.

Redesigning the garden took years of hard physical work, as well as inspiration. Friends and neighbours started asking her advice and help.

That led to work as a gardener – “at one time I was doing 14 gardens” – as well as a garden designer and

## Easy Peasy Cupcakes

MAKES 12

Preparation time less than 30 mins

Cooking time ten to 30 mins

### Ingredients

2 large eggs, cracked open

1 tsp vanilla essence

125g/4oz caster sugar

125g/4oz soft margarine

125g/4oz self-raising flour

To decorate (optional)

tubes of writing icing

marshmallows, white and coloured

food colouring, for icing

coloured sweets

### Method

1. Heat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas 4.

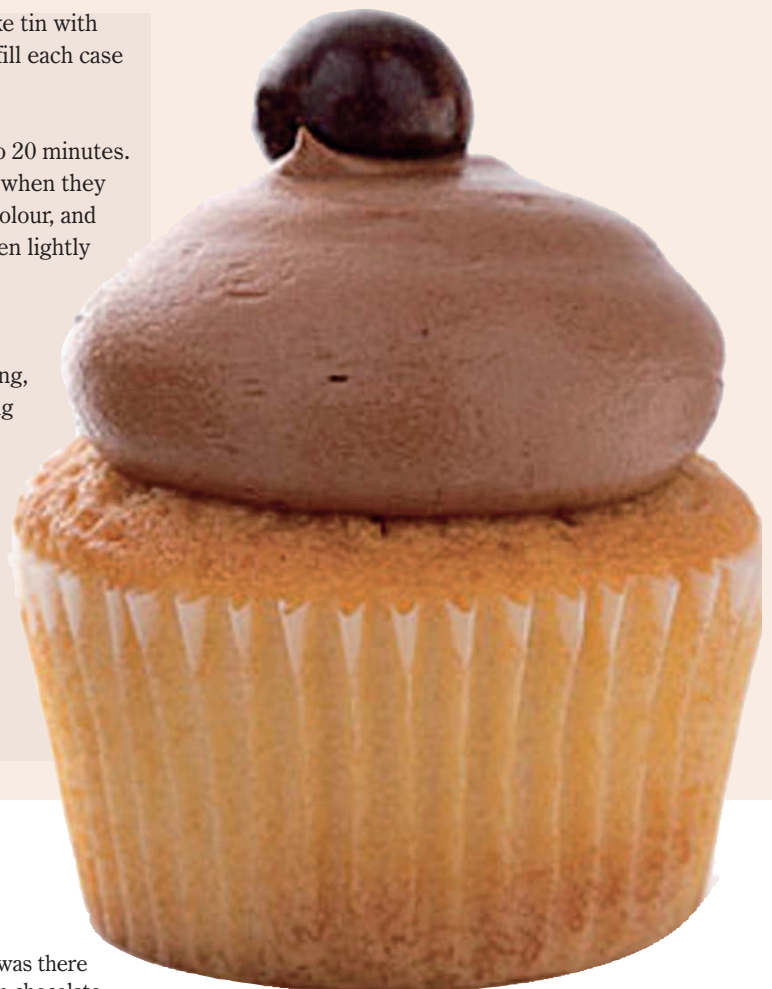
Put all the ingredients in a bowl and beat them together until the mixture is smooth and slightly lighter in colour.

2. Line a bun tin or cupcake tin with paper cake cases and half-fill each case with the cake mixture.

3. Cook the cakes for 18 to 20 minutes. You can tell they are done when they have risen, are golden in colour, and spring back into shape when lightly pressed.

4. The cupcakes can be decorated using a basic icing, plus marshmallows, writing icing, food colouring and coloured sweets. You can even make a cupcake farm with animals such as sheep, piglets and dogs.

**From Children's First Cookbook by Annabel Karmel (Dorling Kindersley, £6.99)**



writer. She made a film about her garden and had a business selling plants. Then Angie's health failed and her hips packed up. Any heavy physical work was suddenly out of the question. "So it was bye bye gardening," she says.

And at the age of 54, yet again, she had to start from scratch.

"Of course I miss the garden, especially the nurturing of things but, luckily, I've always had a positive attitude. I come from a family of farmers and miners in the Forest of Dean.

"They constantly had to re-invent themselves and get on with things. If something bad happens, you can't just sit there feeling sorry for yourself. You have to get on and do something new."

It is, she admits, not easy to give up something you've enjoyed, and launch yourself out into something completely unknown. "It's like stepping out into a void. You've no real idea of what you're getting into, of how you will cope.

"But you have to try it, don't you?" You also, she says, have to work out what your strengths are. When she had to start thinking of a new career just at a time in life when many people are contemplating easing down to retirement, Angie's thoughts turned to cakes.

"Whenever I had open days in my garden, I used to do all the baking for the teas. I had lots of nice comments about my cakes and I thought, well I enjoy baking, there's something I could do.

"I enjoy being creative. You have to know where your strengths are. The common thing running through everything I've done is making the most of my creative streak."

So now, she spends at least two days a week baking hundreds and hundreds of cup cakes. She has already built up a regular clientele and a host of special orders. "Each week, I like to do a mix of old favourites – especially those tiny Victoria sponges – and something new."

The day I was there she was big on chocolate – little cakes topped with dark chocolate mixed with cream and fudge icing or milk chocolate truffle and brandy. They are, of course, deliciously wicked. But they're only small, so it's easy to treat yourself with a clear conscience. A small indulgence, just what we need.

Some of the cakes are decorated with little white chocolate hearts and flowers. Angie makes all of those as well.

Or you can try mini cheesecakes. Or the blueberry and lemon friands – made with almond, egg white and icing sugar and incredibly popular in Australia and Europe – "and, soon, I hope just as popular here".

Angie is happy experimenting at the moment – "I'm working on some lovely coloured ideas now – pretty pastels and bright rainbows". While business builds up, cakes take over the house and partner Mark gets roped in to do the washing up.

All seems to be going well. The cake is definitely iced. But she still misses working in her garden.

"I do, of course, I do. I had already made a lot of it easier to cope with and I can supervise if Mark or someone does the heavy work for me. Or I can just potter a bit if the weather is fine," says Angie.

"But I can't do what I did and there's no point worrying about it. Now I have moved on."

The cupcake guide to reinvention.

Sounds sweet. Tastes good.

■ **The Tiny Cake Company is at Richmond, North Yorkshire, indoor market on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays. Tiny cakes for any occasion.**

*AngieTownsend@toucansurf.com*

## SUNDAY CARVERY

2 Courses for £10<sup>50</sup>

*Choice of traditional roasts, fish or vegetarian option. Open every day for lunch and Dinner.*

Brand new à la Carte Menu now available in the Restaurant

**Steak Night Every Friday Night**

£9.95 per person - Booking required

*Tucked away in the heart of Wensleydale...*

*Please contact us for details 01969 667255*



**SIMONSTONE HALL**

COUNTRY HOUSE HOTEL

[www.simonstonehall.co.uk](http://www.simonstonehall.co.uk)



# Ambleside

## In the heart of the English Lake District



- Free use of the local leisure club (Low Wood)
- Pets welcome but we are limited in the rooms availability
- Tennis court, mini-golf available next door
- Lake District Golf courses in Windermere and Kendal
- 2 minutes walk to the centre of Ambleside
- 5 minutes walk to the Lake Windermere steamer departure jetty at Waterhead pier

### Facilities:

- Free car park on site
- Free pick up from Windermere railway station (when possible)
- Colour TV and DVD players in the rooms
- Internet access point from reception
- Wet clothes and shoes drying facilities in our boiler room.

[www.ambleside-lodge.com](http://www.ambleside-lodge.com) | 015394 31681

## The Carlbury Arms Piercebridge



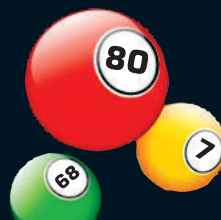
**Lunch from 12:00pm - 3:00pm Wed - Sat**  
**Dinner from 6:30pm - 9:00pm Mon - Sat**  
**Sunday Lunch 12:00pm - 3:00pm**



**DL2 3SJ Reservations: 01325  
374286**

## Hippodrome Bingo

- ★ Fantastic Gifts on Stamper Cards
- ★ FREE Draws Gifts Games
- ★ Brilliant Atmosphere
- ★ Excellent Value for Money
- ★ Guaranteed Prize Money
- ★ Linked Cashline Bingo Games
- ★ Best Value Cashline & Prize Bingo Around



**Link Games played**  
Every Afternoon and Evening

**Saturday Evening**

Link 2 pages for up to £2000

National Game played every afternoon and every evening except Saturday

**FREE ADMISSION EVERY MORNING SESSION**

### FREE MEMBERSHIP

Either call in to the Club, telephone with your details, apply online at [www.fruitbingo.com](http://www.fruitbingo.com)

Railway Street, Bishop Auckland

**Tel (01388) 602121 Fax (01388) 450445**

### OPENING TIMES

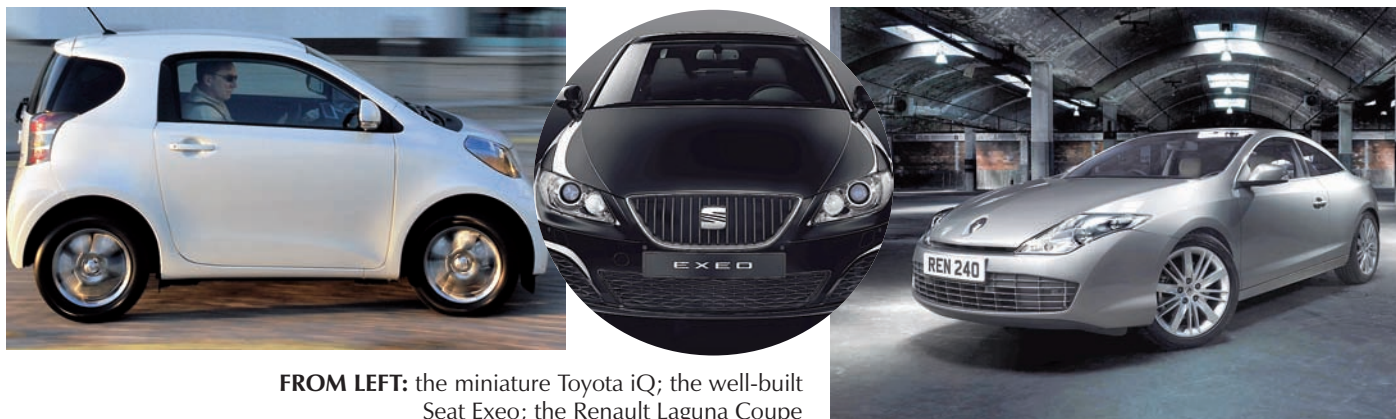
Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat Morning / Afternoon **Doors Open 10.15am**  
Every Evening **Doors Open 5.15pm**

**Play online now at [www.fruitbingo.com](http://www.fruitbingo.com)**



DURHAM, TEES VALLEY AND NORTH YORKSHIRE

# Living MOTORS



FROM LEFT: the miniature Toyota iQ; the well-built Seat Exeo; the Renault Laguna Coupe

## Faces of the future

Down with the downturn – car manufacturers may be cutting back but there are still scores of great new models to look forward to this year. Thanks to record spending a couple of years ago, all the major manufacturers have new cars on the way in 2009. And the good news is, there's never been a better time to drive a hard bargain, says Motoring Editor **NIGEL BURTON**

### SMALL CAR

**Toyota iQ:** The dinky little iQ puts the “toy” in Toyota. It is absolutely tiny. Japanese bosses reckon the car takes up barely any more space in traffic than a bicycle. Yet it still seats four people (albeit one of the seats is only fit for small children) and has a useable boot.

The reason for this apparent conjuring trick is that Toyota's engineers have examined every aspect of their new baby and redesigned key parts. The fuel tank sits beneath the floor and the differential has been crafted to free up more space in the engine bay. The iQ will cost more than some larger cars, but it undoubtedly points the way to cars of the future and will hold on to its value.

### HYBRID 4X4

**Lexus RX:** When the new RX off-roader arrives in the summer, it will only come with a hybrid petrol-electric propulsion system.

Toyota's decision has strengthened rumours that its posh brand is about to become hybrid-only across the entire range as a means of differentiating it from BMW, Mercedes and new arrival Infiniti.

Although the RX looks very similar to the outgoing car, every panel is different. As you would expect, it has a roomier cabin and a bigger boot. New for this car is a recovery system which recycles hot exhaust gases to heat the engine, allowing the RX to switch over to electric power sooner.

### SPORTS CAR

**Nissan 370Z:** Another car that looks similar to the model it is due to replace, the 370Z is

an evolution of the very successful 350Z.

There's a larger V-6 engine and more power for even better performance, though. Build quality is also substantially improved, although the annoying cross brace in the boot still inhibits your ability to stuff it full of suitcases, shopping bags or golf clubs.

### COUPE

**Renault Laguna Coupe:** Is it just me or does the Laguna Coupe look like a Honda Prelude? From behind, it has the sleek hips of an Aston Martin – and that's undoubtedly a good thing in a market segment where looks are so important.

But the face looks like the last-of-the-line Honda coupe, and that's a car which died out a decade ago. So maybe no one (other than me) will notice. And that's undoubtedly a good thing for Renault.

The two-door is shorter than the Laguna hatchback, but its track (the distance between the front wheels) is wider. Four-wheel steer makes a comeback (something else it shares with the late Prelude) and standard equipment is uniformly high across the range.

### SUPERSPORTS

**Lotus Evora:** Lotus hasn't had a genuine supercar since it pulled the plug on the Esprit four years ago.

The Evora puts the Norfolk-based manufacturer right back in the mix alongside Ferrari, Porsche and Lamborghini. About 2,000 Evoras will be built every year. They will be powered by a 3.5-litre V6, good for the neck-end of 300 bhp – enough to power the lightweight coupe to more than 170 mph.

### SMALL MPV

**Citroen C3 Picasso:** It's amazing to think that Citroen's sister company Peugeot still hasn't got a single MPV in its range. What have the designers been up to while Citroen's people knocked out people carriers big and small?

This C3-based MPV is aimed at young families looking for something that's cool and practical. Looks-wise, it hits the nail on the head, looking trendy in a way the competing Skoda Roomster failed to manage.

Based on the next generation C3 (also due to arrive this year), Citroen bosses reckon the Picasso will offer class-leading interior space as well as a new stop/start engine capable of up to 70 mpg. What's not to like about that?

### LARGE SALOON

**Seat Exeo:** A year ago, you would have paid big money to get behind the wheel of a Seat Exeo. Why? Because back then it wore an Audi badge that said A4.

Yes, that's right, this new Seat is nothing of the kind. When Audi stopped making the last generation A4, Seat's engineers dismantled the production line and shipped it to Spain. At the same time its engineers were fiddling with suspension setting and power steering valves to give their version a different feel.

And the company's stylists were twiddling their thumbs by the looks of the Exeo. Apart from a corporate Seat grille and a few tweaks to the behind, this car looks the same as an old A4. However, the Exeo is just as well built and good to drive as the Audi ever was – and that can only be good thing for Seat owners looking for something a bit posher than a Toledo.

# Vauxhall Insignia

**A New Name  
for a New Era.**



**Test drive** the new Insignia at Sherwoods Vauxhall and you will enter a whole new world of refinement and culture. Beautifully engineered to produce a symphony when you turn the key, exquisitely sculptured to turn heads with a host of electronic innovations combined to produce a masterpiece of motoring pleasure.

With its dynamic design and innovative technology throughout, from the saloon and hatchback to the energetic elegance of the new sports tourer, new Insignia takes Vauxhalls design language to the next dimension.

The all new Insignia, it's the new name on a totally new car from Vauxhall and it's available to test drive at Sherwoods today!



# Sherwoods

Chesnut Street, Darlington, Co. Durham **Tel: 01325 466155**

Concorde Way, Preston Farm, Stockton-on-Tees **Tel: 01642 633333**

Standard Way, Northallerton, North Yorkshire **Tel: 01609 773770**

[www.sherwoods-vauxhall.co.uk](http://www.sherwoods-vauxhall.co.uk)



**VAUXHALL**

# Durham 4 Wheel Drive....



... are a family business offering a professional friendly service. All work carried out by factory trained technicians, all having a wealth of experience working with Land Rovers and other

## Service & Repair

- Full diagnostic facility for early / latest models
- Air conditioning service
- Latest tyre and balancing
- Performance upgrades
- Free Winter / Summer checks
- Excellent business / fleet rates
- 12,000 mile / 12 month guarantee on work / part

## Off Road Preparation

- In-house fabrication service
- Suspension upgrades
- Safety upgrades, roll cages, seats and harnesses

## Vehicle Styling

- Recovery equipment
- Wheel and tyre packages
- Performance exhaust systems
- Engine power upgrades
- Exterior and interior enhancement

## Parts & Accessories

- Comprehensive stock of genuine, quality parts
- Accessories from leading manufacturers
- Mail order available nationwide
- Performance and off road tyres

[www.durham4wheeldrive.com](http://www.durham4wheeldrive.com)



Independent Land Rover & 4x4 Specialists

**Durham 4 Wheel Drive**  
Unit 2 Bowburn North Industrial Estate  
Durham DH6 5PF

Tel: 0191 377 2887  
Fax: 0191 377 8344

Email: [info@durham4wheeldrive.com](mailto:info@durham4wheeldrive.com)



■ Your local Ford dealer since 1917 ■

# funky friendly and fantastic

## The All-New FordKa



from only £7828



### The All-New FordKa

The original Ka caused quite a stir when it first appeared on roads - and the ALL-New Ka is no exception. Ford's kinetic design philosophy has already got glowing reviews from the motoring press. Funky, friendly and fantastic to drive, the ALL-New Ka sets a new standard for small cars.

tune in, chill out and call for a test drive

# Jennings

■ [www.jenningsford.co.uk](http://www.jenningsford.co.uk) ■

 **Motability**  
The leading UK scheme for disabled people

OPEN HOURS: Mon- Fri 9am-7pm, Sat 9am-5pm, Sun 10.30am-4pm.  
Branches also at: Gateshead, Sunderland and South Shields.

**STOCKTON**, Yarm Road.  
Tel: 0845 020 5849 Local call rate.

**MIDDLESBROUGH**, Cargo Fleet Lane.  
Tel: 0845 020 5850 Local call rate.

The official fuel consumption figures for the ALL-New Ka range are Urban 44.8 (6.3) - 54.3 (5.2), Extra Urban 64.2 (4.4) - 76.4 (3.7), Combined 55.4 (5.1) - 67.3 (4.2). The official CO2 emissions are 100 - 99g/km. Starting price of £7828 for New FordKa 1.2 Studio. Retail customers only. Subject to availability. This offer supersedes any previously advertised offers / discounts. Motability scheme available on selected models in the Ford range. Car not necessarily as illustrated. Terms and conditions apply. Offer ends 31st January 2009. E&OE.

# The Italian connection



The original KA was a surprise success – so much so that it outlived every other model in Ford's range.

**NIGEL BURTON** wonders whether the new one will be so lucky

## FORD KA

**C**ARS these days tend to rotate on a six-year model cycle. Not so the original KA. Despite sharing much of its chassis DNA with an even older Fiesta, and an engine designed more than 30 years earlier, the KA was a huge success. Buyers who loved its perky no-nonsense attitude were prepared to overlook the lethargic performance and the grim interior which looked as though it had been fashioned from plastic egg boxes. The original KA was much more than the sum of its parts.

The new KA shares nothing in common with its much admired predecessor, mostly because it is based on the platform of the Fiat Panda.

To save development cash, Ford and Fiat combined their resources to create a new breed of small city cars. So far, the project has given birth to the Panda, the Fiat 500 and the new KA.

A co-development deal gave Ford's engineers ac-

cess to an up-to-date chassis, but caused problems for the company's designers. The need to adhere to the Panda's chassis dimensions meant they couldn't pen a KA that stuck closely to the looks of the original.

The new one looks sharp and stylish, but even its kindest critics couldn't claim the design is as distinctive as its predecessor. In fact, to my eyes at least, from some angles there's more than a hint of the latest three-door Vauxhall Corsa.

Does the Fiat link dilute the KA's fun factor? Fords are driver's cars, Fiats generally aren't. Neither the Panda, nor the 500 are noted for their manners, particularly around town, where the harsh suspension tends to crash over potholes that a Fiesta would smoothen. The KA is better than its Italian siblings, but not as good as the Fiesta.

Ford's engineers have made big changes to the Panda chassis, adding a new rear anti-roll bar, stiffening the front and swapping out the suspension bushes for their own recipe. I suspect the latter is the reason for the KA's improved ride. Stiction caused by poorly calibrated bushes is normally the chief culprit when a car's suspension fails to absorb bumps properly.

The first KA offered just the one engine; the new version has a choice of petrol or diesel.

The petrol is the same plucky 1.2 from the Panda. It has the same power as the old 1.3 but sips less petrol and coughs out fewer exhaust fumes. The 119 g/km of CO2 qualifies for a £35 road tax bill.

In petrol guise the KA just about manages 100 mph and makes 62 mph in 13.1 seconds. It keeps up with traffic in town perfectly well.

The diesel has similar performance, allied to near 60mpg economy.

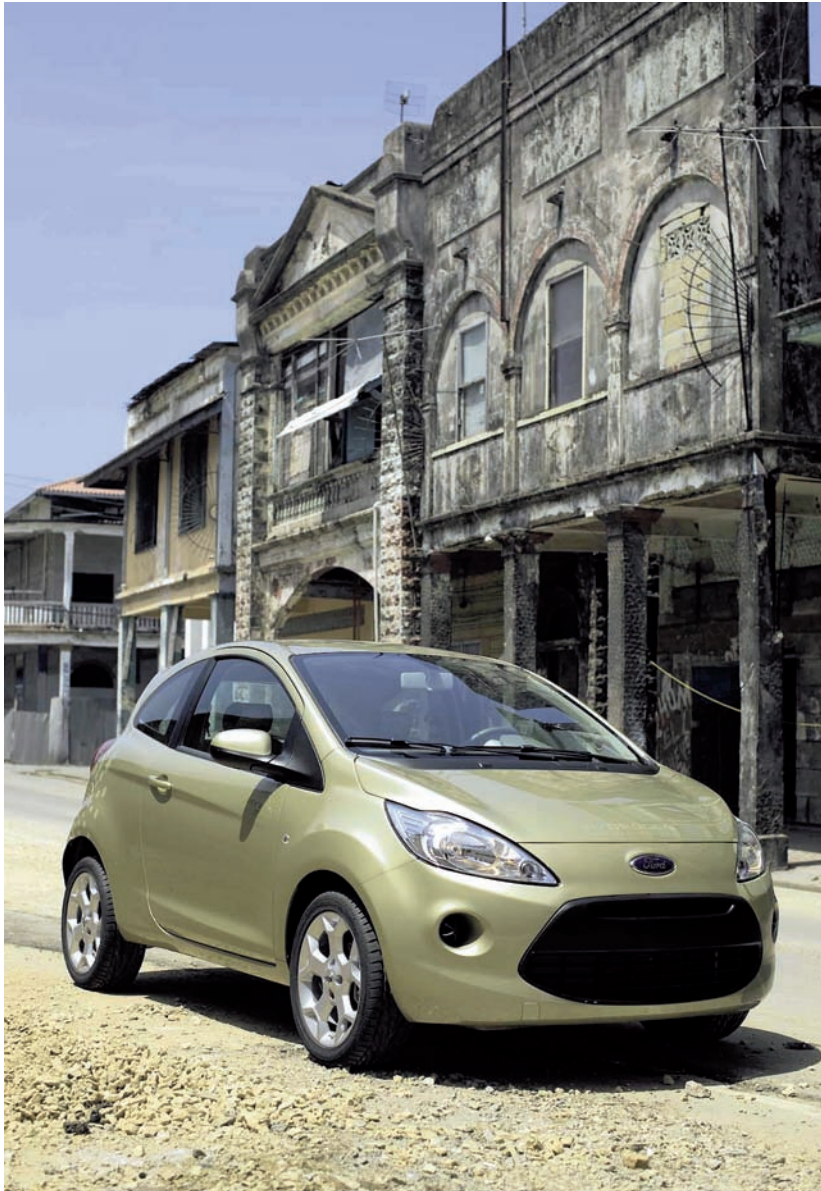
Four trims are available: the £7,995 Studio (CD player, dual airbags and anti-lock brakes but not air-con); the £8,495 Style (electric windows and locks, body colour handles); the air-conditioned Style Plus at £8,995; and the £9,495 Zetec which features cold air, 15-inch alloys, remote locking and front foglights.

If you want a diesel, you have no choice – it's only available in up-market Zetec trim.

The old car was a well packaged runabout and there's not much difference in the new one. Safety equipment has been much improved, though. Whereas the air bags on the original felt like an after-thought the new KA has been designed with excellent safety features in mind from the start.

The cabin is nicer but there are still a few hard plastics to remind you that the KA is a cheap motor, although comparing old with new is a bit like swapping a cubic zirconium ring for the Hope Diamond.

The first KA sired a sports version and the pretty cabriolet. Ford is remaining tight-lipped about the chances of any niche variants but a KA with a hot Fiat Abarth engine would be something very special indeed.







# Ringling the changes

Daihatsu's Sirion looks likely to be lording it over the competition, says Motoring Editor **Nigel Burton**

## DAIHATSU SIRION

**D**ID you know that Daihatsu's Sirion supermini is named after a river in *The Lord of the Rings*?

The original Sirion was a bit over the top for European tastes, with its lashings of fake chrome, peculiar headlights and tall ungainly stance.

So Daihatsu went back to the drawing board and co-developed a new supermini with help from its parent company, Toyota. That's why, beneath the skin, the Sirion shares a lot in common with the award-winning Yaris (and the new Subaru Justy).

If the Sirion can successfully marry the Yaris's quality with Daihatsu's aggressive pricing then it could be on to a winner.

The Sirion is clearly good value. You can have one for just £8,320 – that's about 25 per cent cheaper than most of the mainstream competition when taking into account its generous equipment levels. Refreshed for last year, with a reworked 1.3-litre engine and improved quality, the Sirion scores well on space and pace for a supermini.

Inside, the seats are fairly basic but they remain comfortable, even after several hours behind the wheel. A bit more side support would be most welcome, though.

The radio/CD unit is a bespoke job with large, simple to operate controls, and the sound and quality of the radio reception is surprisingly good.

Lots of consideration has gone into the design of the interior; there are four drinks holders in the front and two in the back. Daihatsu customers are obviously a thirsty bunch.

Beneath the glove compartment, there is a deep oddments area, which is perfect for maps and bags of boiled sweets. The central area of the fascia also has a small shelf for change or CDs and a cubby for items better off concealed from prying eyes.

The rear seat backs can be adjusted for extra

comfort or more luggage space. Should you need to boost the boot, it is a simple matter to fold the seats down. The rear seat bases lift up with one tug of a catch to nestle against the front seats, and the backs fall into place.

Electric windows, power-assisted steering and alloy wheels are standard on higher models. Air conditioning is a doddle to adjust thanks to three big old-fashioned rotary dials.

The Sirion's suspension is predictably soft. It is fine in town but bounces about on fast roads, despite twin anti-roll bars.

The electric power steering is fingertip light. It is also at its best in town, where the tight turning circle is a boon.

The 1,300cc engine has plenty of go and should achieve more than 45 mpg.

Daihatsu deliberately crash-tested Sirions against much bigger cars to ensure it was safe in real life as well as "on paper". The body was subjected to the world's most rigorous crash testing regime, including full-on frontal and side impacts at 55 km/h and a frontal offset collision at 64 km/h. Careful attention was paid to the bonnet and bumpers, with the aim of reducing injuries to pedestrians.

So there's not a lot wrong with the Sirion. It looks a lot better than the model it replaces, has a roomy cabin, costs pennies to run and shouldn't let you down.

### SPEC CHECK:

**Power:** 87PS

**Max speed:** 106 mph

**0-60 mph:** 10.9 seconds

**Combined mpg:** 48.7 mpg

**For convenience:** Rear parking sensors, alloy wheels, electric power steering, rear wash/wipe with delay, radio/CD

**For safety:** Anti-lock brakes, driver and passenger airbags, driver's seat height adjustment



# Mr Clutch Autocentres

-  **Clutches**
-  **M.O.T**
-  **Servicing**
-  **Brakes**
-  **Gearboxes**
-  **Exhausts**
-  **Tyres**
-  **Cambelts**
-  **Repairs**

## SPECIAL OFFER

# MoTs

only **£25**

**Durham Autocentre  
Now Open!**

Book Now on **0191 386 6812**

Dragon Lane, Dragonville Industrial Park,  
Durham, DH1 2XW

**Free brake, clutch  
& gearbox checks.**

Visit [www.mrclutch.com](http://www.mrclutch.com)  
for more **special offers!**

## NISSAN AUTHORISED REPAIR CENTRE

ALL SERVICING,  
MOT'S & WARRANTY WORK  
UNDERTAKEN BY  
FULLY QUALIFIED  
NISSAN TECHNICIANS




Richmond Motor Services  
Fairfield Way Gallowfields Trading Estate.  
Richmond, North Yorkshire DL10 4TB  
**01748 850888**



SHIFT\_expectations

## Quality Used Cars

Servicing, Tyres & Exhausts, MoT Testing

# CATTERICK SERVICE STATION



Tel **01748 811 233**  
[www.catterickservicestation.co.uk](http://www.catterickservicestation.co.uk)

High Street, Catterick, Richmond, North Yorkshire, DL10 7LD

# EARN UP TO £36,000<sup>PA</sup> GROSS

## GUARANTEED POSITION

### JOB SECURITY?

NEVER BE MADE  
REDUNDANT . . .  
BE YOUR OWN BOSS



**TRAIN NOW PAY LATER!**

**INSTRUCTOR TRAINING CENTRE**

## Become a Driving Instructor...

A NEW CAREER FOR **2009** WITH THE **NORTH EAST'S NO1** LOCAL INSTRUCTOR TRAINING CENTRE

# 08000 52 53 42

[www.theclearwaygroup.com](http://www.theclearwaygroup.com)



# Miles More Deals

WHEN BUYING A NEW CAR YOU CAN CHOOSE

## 0% FINANCE / NIL DEPOSIT

OR

## FREE INSURANCE

on selected models

Plus we will give you a full tank of fuel with every car purchased on production of this advertisement.

RIPON BUSINESS PARK,  
DALLAMRES LANE, RIPON  
**01765 690590**  
OPEN 7 DAYS  
Motability

## BATCHELORS

RIPON

When we're closed, we're open  
visit our website @ [www.batchelorsripon.co.uk](http://www.batchelorsripon.co.uk)




MAIN DEALERS FOR VAUXHALL • SUZUKI • FIAT • SKODA • ISUZU • PROTON • THROUGHOUT NORTH YORKSHIRE  
This advert replaces all previously advertised offers. Finance subject to status. Insurance offer subject to age restrictions and status.

**NorthEastern 4x4**

**Independent Land Rover Specialists**

Having your Land Rover / Range Rover serviced at North Eastern 4x4 will not invalidate your 3 years manufacturer's warranty

**Free 25 Point Winter Check**

- Parts • Servicing • Repairs
- Diagnostics • ATA Approved Technicians

ATA Approved • Specialising in the full Land Rover range including Range Rover, Range Rover Sport and Discovery 3

All modern common rail diesel engines catered for

One of the North East's main suppliers of BRITPART quality components exclusively for Land Rover

Collection and delivery service

**01642 606001**

Ross Road, Portrack Lane  
Stockton-on-Tees TS18 2NH

Visit our website: [www.northeastern4x4.co.uk](http://www.northeastern4x4.co.uk)




**Autobar**  
Bosch Car Service Centre

**Interim Service £70.00**  
♦ WITH MOT

**Major Service £119.00**  
♦ WITH MOT

Or fixed price service includes recommended service parts +VAT (Not included long life oil)

Brakes  Suspension  Tyres  Diagnostics  Recovery  Timing Belts

**MOT £39.00**  
FREE RE-TEST

The Bosch Car Network now works to a O.F.T. Approved Code of Practice

FREE LOCAL COLLECTION & DELIVERY - COURTESY CAR AVAILABLE BOOK EARLY

Unit 22, Stella Gill Industrial Estate, Chester-le-Street DH2 2RG

Telephone: 0191 3880110

**MD Vehicle Services**

- All Bodywork Repairs
- Insurance Estimates and Accident Repairs
- MOT Preparation and Repair inc Welding
- Car-o-liner Jig System • Servicing
- Exhausts • Brakes • Batteries • Tyres
- 24 Hour Vehicle Collection & Recovery

**1 Heron Court, Mary Street, Oxbridge, STOCKTON**

**T: 01642 633688**  
**M: 07887 666652**

**FAST**  
FIAT AUTO SPECIALIST TEAM



Main Dealer Diagnostic Software  
Our service does not invalidate Manufacturers' Warranties

Service & Repair Centre for all makes of Fiat and Alfa Romeo cars  
Car Accessories and Parts  
MoT's

**01642 617775 07830 217765**  
[www.fiatalfaspecialist.co.uk](http://www.fiatalfaspecialist.co.uk)

Unit 3, Romax Units, Ross Road, Portrack, Stockton on Tees TS18 2NH (behind Romax)

Your local Ford dealer since 1917

**Value service £99**  
from only



Treat your car for less at **JenningsFord**

**Jennings Ford**  
[www.jenningsford.co.uk](http://www.jenningsford.co.uk)

**STOCKTON, Yarm Road.**  
Tel: 0845 020 5849 Local call rate

**MIDDLESBROUGH, Cargo Fleet Lane.**  
Tel: 0845 020 5850

OPEN HOURS: Monday - Friday 8.30am - 5pm, Saturday 8.30am - 12 noon, Sunday Closed.  
Branches also at: Gateshead, Sunderland and South Shields.

Applicable to all Ford vehicles over 3 years old. Offer is subject to availability and can not be used in conjunction with any other offers. Jennings Sales Management retains the right to withdraw this promotion at any time. Terms and conditions apply. Pictures for illustration purposes only. Offer ends 27th February 2009.

**vic young**

**MoT £39.00**

**LEVEL 1 SERVICE £70**

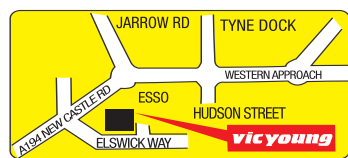
**LEVEL 2 SERVICE £120**

**LEVEL 3 SERVICE £170**

**NISSAN PEUGEOT RENAULT ROVER FORD VAUXHALL FIAT CITROEN**

**vic young**

**vic young**  
NEW CASTLE ROAD SOUTH SHILDS NE34 9QE  
Telephone (0191) 427 1566



# The circus COMES TO TOWN

The circus which brings the impossible to life makes its debut visit to the North-East this month. Viv Hardwick talks to Cirque Du Soleil boss, Richard Dagenais, about one of the greatest shows on earth

**O**VER four days this month, the North-East will experience for the first time the death-defying excitement and beauty of Cirque Du Soleil's show Quidam.

The visit to the MetroRadio Arena at Newcastle is a break from the big top sites where the world famous Canadian-based circus once looked for its audiences.

"The big top is limited to where we can camp. We decided to look for an arena setting as it allowed us so many more possibilities of where we could go," says senior artistic director Richard Dagenais. "Over the 25 years of Cirque Du Soleil's existence we have been able to touch the world and we still find that we need to look for places where we've never been before."

Quidam (pronounced key-dam, and Latin for

"anonymous passer-by") is the story of a young girl's adventures in an alternative universe, told by than 50 performers from 14 countries. Eight million people across the globe have enjoyed the eye-popping mix of balancing acts, juggling, acrobatics and comedic genius.

"Maintaining the standard falls on different shoulders around the world," says Dagenais. "My main responsibility is to make sure that the integrity of the creative concept continues and is respected and that the level of acrobatics and art is maintained.

"Some of our people have been there from the very beginning in 1984 and they are there because they love it and they've raised their families and their children have been born on tour. There is a school for them ►



*Celebrate Burns nights...*

...enjoy a Traditional 3 course dinner and the sound of the bagpipes with our very own Piper

**Saturday 24 January**

**7:00pm -11:00pm** Tickets only



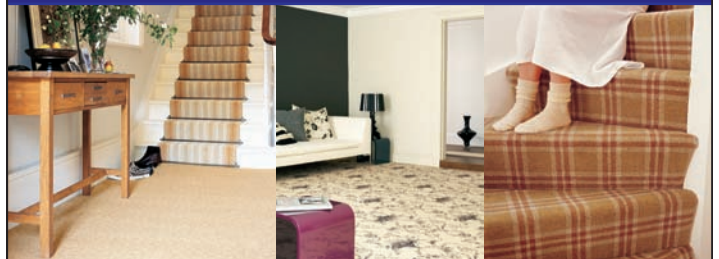
**THE ABBEY INN**

BOOK YOUR TABLE NOW CALL:

**01347 868204**

Byland, Nr Coxwold, N.Yorks YO61 4BD. [www.bylandabbeyinn.com](http://www.bylandabbeyinn.com)

**SALE  
NOW ON  
BUY NOW PAY  
SUMMER 2009**



- QUALITY BRANDED CARPETS
- VINYL FLOORING
- KARNDUAN
- LAMINATE FLOORING
- RUGS

**0% INTEREST FREE  
CREDIT AVAILABLE**

\*Subject to status. Licensed Credit Broker written details on request

**DURHAM CARPET CENTRE**

17/18 FREDERICK STREET SOUTH,  
MEADOWFIELD, DURHAM DH7 8LZ  
TEL: 0191 378 0948 FAX: 0191 378 2602



# A little taste of over there over here

Come and visit our fully refurbished luxury deli on the ground floor.

Here at Café Continental we believe in a relaxed and comfortable environment, with friendly and helpful staff. We offer a large range of tea, coffee, smoothies and milk shakes to compliment our fantastic menu and daily specials.

You're guaranteed to find something to satisfy your appetite, whether you just want a sandwich or a massive full English breakfast. We also have an exiting selection of fresh homemade desserts that are available all day everyday.



- Luxury deli available on the ground floor
- Seating for all, from couples to large groups
- Families welcome
- Bar, alcoholic beverages served with meals all day
- All major credit cards accepted



Opening hours:  
Monday - Saturday 9am - 6pm Sunday 9am - 5pm  
Continental deli café 87a Elvet Bridge, Durham DH1 3AG  
Tel: 0191 3860000

## EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

### Sing-A-Long-A-Hairspray Gala Theatre, Durham

**Tuesday, March 3**



FROM the producers of the hugely successful Sing-A-Long-A-Sound-Of-Music comes another chance to belt out some of your favourites with the stars. Based on the John Travolta film of the smash-hit stage show, this is a wild, noisy and fun-filled ride. Dance in the aisles, boo Velma, be amazed at Travolta's fat suit. There are on-screen lyrics so everyone can join in, and although fancy

dress is not obligatory, it does put the finishing touches to the evening.

Rating PG, 7.30pm. Box office: 0191-332-4041; [galadurham.co.uk](http://galadurham.co.uk)

### International Magic Festival

**The Customs House**

**Wednesday, March 11-Sunday, March 15**

NOW in its sixth year, the International Magic Festival returns with a stellar line-up of magicians, comedians, illusionists and mind-readers. There will also be a family magic extravaganza, two international gala shows and a three-day magic convention.

The Customs House, Mill Dam, South Shields NE33 1ES. Box office: 0191-454-1234; email: [mail@customshouse.co.uk](mailto:mail@customshouse.co.uk)

### Any Questions?

**The Georgian Theatre Royal, Richmond  
Friday, February 13**

BBC Radio 4's Any Questions? is the network's leading forum for lively topical debate and the longest running live panel discussion in Britain, having reached its 60th anniversary in the autumn. Now you can join in the debate when programme chairman Jonathan Dimbleby and his panellists take their seats at The Georgian Theatre in Richmond.

Tickets are free and the audience should arrive between 6.45pm and 7.15pm to submit their questions. No more than two tickets per person. Box office: 01748-825252.



*“A lot of our people always wanted to run away with the circus”*

so that the youngsters can complete their education and go on to university. It's a great life, but it's a real team effort.”

Early performances of Quidam attracted critical comment because the acts didn't follow the traditional path of circus at that time. “We wanted to do something different and challenge our audiences as well,” says Dagenais.

In addition to the 50 performers who will bring aerial acts, contortions, rope-jumps and a balancing duo, and 250 costumes to Tyneside, there are singers, musicians and clowns, plus several traditional circus performers.

“We travel together and usually lodge at the same place and we try to organise our life as a community,” says Dagenais. With the big top we needed to be self-sufficient and we created our own electricity, air conditioning units, our own kitchens and cooks, our own school facilities and a support staff to ensure that all the travel and lodging are taken care of. With the arena, other people will take care of the site and there will be technicians to help us set up, but we still have to think of everything so that all the artists have to worry about is performing. Everything else has to be taken care of.”

With a show like Quidam, it's vital the performers' razor-sharp skills are not threatened by unfamiliar surroundings. “During the day we will have rehearsals to get used to the space and the lighting and the artists will train acrobatically backstage before the show each day to

make sure that they are fit enough,” says Dagenais. “We also have two physiotherapists to take care of them and a nutritionist who will help plan the menus with the kitchen in Newcastle because our shows are so physically demanding that the atmosphere is like a mini-Olympics. There is always an element of danger but we prefer it to be danger of the safe variety.”

Dagenais feels that the message of Quidam is about people following their dreams and aspirations and wanting to communicate with the outside world.

“We do this by exploring through the eyes of a young girl who is being ignored by her parents and her anger produces the world of Quidam. It's a subject that a lot of us can identify with. We are all unique and we want to show our individuality,” he says. “In the last decade we've had tremendous advances in technology with the Internet which has the aim of making the world smaller and bringing us together, but, in essence, also has the effect of isolating people. So the storyline is even more appropriate today.”

The starring role of Zoe is currently shared by Canadian teenagers Ella Bangs and Dalyane Dumas. “Every day people contact us. We have close to 1,200 performers with Cirque and 3,500 work for us in total,” says Dagenais. “A lot of them are on tour because they always wanted to run away with the circus. It's an amazing adventure.”

### Cirque Du Soleil Quidam

MetroRadio Arena,  
Newcastle, from  
Thursday, March 12 to  
Sunday, March 15  
(seven shows in all).  
Thurs 8pm, Fri & Sat  
4pm & 8pm,  
Sun 1pm & 5pm.  
Tickets: from £50  
**Credit card booking  
and information**  
0844-493-6666

## Living SOCIAL

Rima Berry,  
Liz Lawson,  
Colin Bailey,  
Jennifer  
Fawcett and  
Helen  
Dalton



Marion and  
Howard St  
Quinton  
with Rita  
Cloughton



Emma Watson, Louise Snow and Lyndsey Snow



Helen Birbeck and the  
Reverend Kenneth Campbell



Keith Wright and Nigel  
Hammond

# MASKED ball

THE Wensleydale Creamery was packed for the charity ball organised by the Business Association (Wensleydale), in aid of the Yorkshire Air Ambulance and community projects.

There was a masquerade theme and the hall was decked in Venetian style. A photographer took portraits of guests and donated ten per cent of sales to the chosen charity. A total of £1,376 was raised through ticket sales, an auction of prizes and a tombola.

The speaker, Katy Cropper, entertained with tales of her life and promises of a new tongue-in-cheek book, *Four Weddings and a Cropper*.

After a four-course meal, guests danced the evening away to local band Sounds Familiar, led by James Spensley, with John Raine, Howard St Quinton and Colin Bailey.



Margaret Eden, James Spensley and  
Brenda Richardson



Audrey and Clifford Bailey



Ben Dalton and  
Helen Dalton



Tracey Crawford, Bob Smith and Chris Ward



Jennifer and Alan Fawcett with Janet Fairburn and Alan Singleton



Sue Foster, Liz Lawson, Andrea Cooper and Richard Bateson



Peter and Jane Taplin with Angela Lee and Harry Balderston



Glynne Edgerton, Nichola Brayshay and Pauline Morris

*Desirable Dresses...  
Elegant Eveningwear...*



**New Range of Prom 2009 Dresses in Stock.**

Wide range of designer evening wear including:

- Prom Dresses
- Cocktail Dresses
- Special Occasions
- Corporate & Cruisewear
- Jewellery & Accessories

**BELLE**  
Evening Wear



114 Ground Floor  
Gilesgate  
County Durham  
DH1 1QG  
Tel: 0191 370 9978

[www.belleeveningwear.co.uk](http://www.belleeveningwear.co.uk)

AN APPOINTED

**dermalogica<sup>®</sup>**

SKIN CARE CENTRE



We believe you deserve to explore your total wellbeing. Escape with us to restore your natural beauty from within. Our qualified therapists will show you how.

**URBAN SPA RETREAT**

Tel: 01748 823888  
[www.urban-spa-retreat.co.uk](http://www.urban-spa-retreat.co.uk)

2 Rosemary Lane, Richmond, North Yorkshire DL10 4DP

**Gift Vouchers Available**

# DO YOU NEED A 1st CLASS NURSERY FOR YOUR CHILD?

...for 3/5 year olds from January 2009!  
Call for details

**Freshly cooked healthy food every day.**

**Separate sleep room for restful sleep.**

**EYFS government approved framework and funded nursery education.**

**Very experienced manager and specially selected staff.**

**Owner (and mother of 3 under 5) on site every day.**

**Ofsted**  
Awarded 2 outstanding Ofsteds in 2008

**Clever Clogs Nursery**  
For more information contact Andrea/Phillippa  
**T: 0191 384 3610 M: 07881 867906**  
**www.cclogs.com**

New Ferens Park, Belmont Business Park, Durham DH1 1GG  
3 minutes off the A1, just off the A690 into Durham - next to Soccarena

woods stones colours finishes borders prices

**Amico FLOORING**

New ranges now available. For more information call:

**Rowland May LIMITED**  
Carpet & Flooring Specialists

Visit our Showroom: 91 West Auckland Road, Darlington Tel: 01325 467297  
Contract enquiries welcome. Free planning and quotations. Easy Parking

woods stones colours finishes borders prices

# Come and find out ... ...what the 'buzz' is all about!

The New Eastbourne Church of England Academy - Opening September 2009

**Eastbourne**  
Church of England Academy

Moving to a new secondary school in September?

- Unsure about your choice?
- Looking for a refreshing alternative?

Then come and see what we have to offer.

Please call anytime to make an appointment

Eastbourne Church of England Academy  
The Fairway  
Darlington  
DL1 1ET

T: 01325 267300  
F: 01325 267301  
E: info@eastbourneceacademy.org.uk  
W: www.eastbourne-ce-academy.org.uk



Above: Isobel and Dave Wylie



Right: Ian and Margaret Underwood



Eric and Margaret Colling



Pauline Peart and Joan Lowes

# Caledonian DINNER DANCE

THE Durham and District Caledonian Society held its annual dinner dance at the Three Tuns Hotel in the city. Founded in 1950, the society has a flourishing membership and more than 90 guests attended the evening.

Officially welcoming the guests before pre-dinner drinks was the group's president, David Wylie, who originally hails from Orkney. Guests of honour were the Mayor and Mayoress of Durham, Councillor Grenville Holland and Mrs Olive Holland.

Following a three-course meal, those attending took to the floor to dance to Scottish music provided by the The Robert Whitehead Trio.



David and Pat Storer



Kenny and Maureen Dempster



Neil and Michaela Griffin



Bill and Maisy Dunlop



Above:  
Derek and  
Anne  
Dickson



Jim and Irene Milburn

Elizabeth  
and Henry  
McEwen  
and Joan  
Livingstone



Right:  
Linda



Ian Proudlock and  
Dr Joan Rogers

*At Mount Vale Care Home, we can offer you and your loved one complete peace of mind through personalised care.*

## One amazing home



Here, we believe that with the right level of care – in homely, friendly and relaxed environments – we can offer your loved one the opportunity to develop a happier and more fulfilling future.

By investing time in our staff – through career development at the Barchester Academy – we can offer you loyalty, dedication and stability in the care that we provide.

Located in the beautiful town of Northallerton, we are within easy access of the North Yorkshire Dales, Moors, Cleveland and the historic city of York.

We provide first-class 24-hour care for people requiring general nursing, respite and day care and specialist care for people experiencing a dementia.

For further information please feel free to visit us at anytime, we look forward to welcoming you into our home.

**Mount Vale Care Home**  
Yafforth Road,  
Northallerton DL7 8UE  
Tel: 01609 775 444



[www.barchester.com](http://www.barchester.com)



Simon Williamson, Paul Terry, Katie Duncan, President of Richmond Motor Club Nathan Stones, Anne Stones and Paul Astwood

# CLUB'S

## dinner dance



Jo McMahon and Mark Doughty

MORE than 100 members of the Richmond Motor Club attended the club's annual dinner and presentation night. Guests at the event, held at the Jersey Farm Hotel, near Barnard Castle, included Yorkshire Centre president of Auto Cycle Union Dennis Pitts and his wife Marylyn.

The evening, which included a drinks reception, a three-course dinner and dancing, was organised by the club's social secretary Ann Stones. A raffle raised more than £300 for the two air ambulance services, the Yorkshire Air Ambulance and the Great North Air Ambulance.

Pictures: Debbie Allen



Yorkshire Centre President of Auto Cycle Union Dennis Pitts and Marylyn Pitts



Paul Lundberg, Sharon Atkinson, Michael Atkinson and Jill Lundberg



Mike and Jacqui Smith



Chris Dale and Ann Russell



Carol and David Coates with Tony and Sharon Hayward



Joanna Willis with Gary and Julie Clement



David Peacock, Richmond Motor Club secretary Rhona Peacock with John and Rhoda Fraser



David Watson, Laura Cannell with Barry and Vera Watson



Cynthia and Michael Ryde with Andrew Kearton and Lesley Knevitt



Malcolm Reynolds, Kim and Peter Bainbridge and Jill Reynolds with Andrew Barningham and Diane Midgley

Life changing orthodontics giving you the confidence to smile



**f falchion**  
ORTHODONTICS.COM  
Dudley Road, Darlington DL1 4GG  
Tel 01325 381540

think kitchens...



think **CHRIS COUSIN**  
I · N · T · E · R · I · O · R · S

kitchens ♦ bedrooms ♦ bathrooms

- ♦ DESIGNED TO YOUR SPECIFICATION & BUDGET.
- ♦ FREE PLANNING & DESIGN.
- ♦ NO SALESMEN - FAMILY OWNED.
- ♦ MANUFACTURES OF QUALITY CABINETS.
- ♦ QUALITY INSTALLATION SERVICE.
- ♦ TRADE WORK & SUPPLY ONLY ALSO AVAILABLE.

Visit our factory/showroom: Unit 1b, Park Road Ind. Estate, Consett

t: 01207 505940 m: 07957 225780

[www.chriscousininteriors.co.uk](http://www.chriscousininteriors.co.uk)

## Living SOCIAL



Left: Collette and Julian Clamp

Right: Dawn and Shaun Walker  
Far right: Kathleen and Richard Iceton



# ACCOUNTANTS'

## charity auction

MORE than 200 people helped a firm of Barnard Castle accountants raise more than £6,000 for a cancer charity.

Clients and friends of Butler and Gee Accountants attended the evening at the Morritt Arms Hotel, in Greta Bridge, which raised £6,260 for the Teesdale branch of Cancer Research UK. Guests enjoyed a four-course meal and dancing to a live band – the Darlington-based soul band The Soulutions – and a disco.

An auction, with lots such as a signed Middlesbrough football shirt and a ride in a Ferrari, contributed £1,940 to the final total.

Chris Butler, one of the directors of Butler and Gee, said: "It was the first time we've held an event such as this and we were very happy with how it went. Everybody got in the spirit and we had some very positive feedback.

"All of the tickets were sold out and we have already provisionally booked a similar event for the same time next year."



Darren and Sara Gee



Kath and Ian Harris



Gordon and Alex Thomson with Lyn and David Metcalfe



Astley and Miriam Fenwick, Stephen and Carol Saddington, Keith and Doreen Parkinson



Gerald and Brenda Thwaites with Audrey and Roy Siswick



Rob and Angela Wilkinson, Bill and Julia Simpson, Kevin and Judith Brown



Chris and Alison Butler with Darren and Sara Gee



Jon and Alyson Swift with Susan and Stephen



Anna and Helen Burton with Kelsey Anderson



Stan and Patricia Chape with Sharon and Graham Walker



Katherine and Craig Hutchinson with Jennifer Phillips and Andrew Haslam



**BANNATYNE  
HOTEL**  
AND *Maxine's* BAR & RESTAURANT  
DARLINGTON

*your special day*

**This stunning Grade II listed town house with character, style and warmth from the moment you step through the front door, can be yours exclusively for your special day.**

We only ever hold one wedding at a time so you can be assured of attentive professional service from a team dedicated to making your day truly unique.

Our Wilbur Suite provides the ideal backdrop; bright, spacious and elegant, perfect for your civil ceremony, wedding reception and evening celebration, while the gardens make the perfect location for your wedding photographs and guarantee great memories for you to treasure.

**Relax and let Bannatyne Hotel make your wedding day, one perfect day.**

**Visit our Wedding Fayre on Sunday 22nd February 2009**

please contact us to request a brochure on **01325 365858**

Bannatyne Hotel and Maxine's Bar & Restaurant, Southend Avenue, Darlington, DL3 7HZ

Email: [enquiries@hotelbannatyne.com](mailto:enquiries@hotelbannatyne.com) or visit: [www.bannatyne.co.uk](http://www.bannatyne.co.uk)

# Create canvas art prints from your own photos!

Printed and stretched on specialist canvas material, whether it's a treasured family portrait, wedding day, favourite holiday snap or your beloved pet your picture will look as good for a lifetime as on the day it was taken.

**100% Satisfaction guaranteed**  
**PopArt**  
Satisfaction guaranteed

Email your image to [info@thepopartstudio.co.uk](mailto:info@thepopartstudio.co.uk) and we will send you FREE image proofs of your canvases with various print effects and prices before you buy.

The Pop Art Studio also offer excellent original hand-painted art pieces and commissioned canvases to order. Choose from our quality gallery selection or request a canvas design of your own.

Ideal for Birthday's Anniversaries & special occasions!

**THE PopArt STUDIO**  
FREEPHONE 0800 0857 577

Take a closer look at [www.popartstudio.co.uk](http://www.popartstudio.co.uk)

## Living SOCIAL



Andrew Gray and Rebecca Baxter



Rachael Homer and Karen O'Brien



Julian and Gill Capell



June Beaumont and Steven Hewitt



Stephen, June, Laura and Edward Hoyland

# DREAM WEDDING

**DISCOVER HOW WE CAN MAKE YOUR DREAM WEDDING A REALITY AT GISBOROUGH HALL**

Gisborough Hall is a magnificent Victorian 4-star country retreat set on the boundary of the North Yorkshire Moors, and is the ideal setting for any wedding. With a grand sweeping driveway, stunning views and beautifully landscaped gardens you couldn't ask for a more perfect backdrop to your special day.

Its 71 elegant rooms retain their original character and the bride and groom can enjoy complimentary wedding-night accommodation in one of our beautifully furnished four-poster suites.

You and your guests can also experience the culinary excellence of Gisborough Hall, which boasts an AA Rosette awarded restaurant and is considered one of the most exclusividing locations in the North East.

**Wedding Open Evening - Thursday, 19th February, 6.00pm-8.00pm**  
A great opportunity to see the Magnificent Madoc Suite

**AA Hotel Group of the Year Winner 2007-8**

[www.MacdonaldHotels.co.uk/Gisborough](http://www.MacdonaldHotels.co.uk/Gisborough)  
Phone: 0844 879 9149  
Gisborough Hall, Whitby Lane, Guisborough, North Yorkshire TS14 6PT



Malcolm and Sue Sollitt with Alistair Radcliffe and Roberta Black



Pete Gibson, Gillian and Charles Gill and Councillor Gareth Dadd



Stacy Gospel, Abigail Homer-McGie and Jackie Garrett



Lawrence and Catherine Monaghan

John and Lisa Ptolomey with Samantha Lawry and John Cockburn



Steve Falconer, Victoria Stapleton, Justine and Mark Johnson



Paul and Kath Evans



Steve Askins and Lynsey Hook

# Thirsk Clock FUNDRAISER

A POPULAR youth project in Thirsk has raised £700 with a winter ball to help boost its work.

Thirsk Clock held the fundraising black-tie event at the Watermill, in Carlton Miniott, recently. The youth scheme, based in Thirsk market place, provides a meeting place, support and advice to teenagers.

The ball attracted over 50 people, including Clock supporters, who enjoyed a four-course meal and disco. There were party games and a raffle, with prizes donated by local businesses, plus a champagne reception.

Abigail Homer-McGhie, manager of Thirsk Clock, said: "It was an excellent night and everyone enjoyed it.

"We didn't know how much money we would raise but it proved to be a huge success for Thirsk Clock."



*Weddings*  
in the north east

## Wedding Extravaganza

Darlington's newest and biggest wedding fair at **The Dolphin Centre, Darlington** On Sunday 1st February 2009

11am to 4pm

### Bridal Fashion Shows

Programme of events running throughout the day

Over 60 quality exhibitors

One of the largest wedding events in the North East

Refreshments available

Look around Darlington's Register Office

Entrance fee £2

Visit our website  
[www.weddingsinthenortheast.co.uk](http://www.weddingsinthenortheast.co.uk)



## Living TRAVEL



# Scilly walks

*They're only 28 miles off the coast of Cornwall, but light years away from the hustle and bustle of the mainland. Jenny Needham falls for the old-fashioned charm of the Scillies*



**HEAVEN:** A bedroom at Hell Bay Hotel, Bryher, and top – true blue – Tresco from the air

**S**ILLY really, to be so seduced by a photograph. Particularly in these days of altered images, where you can't really believe what you see any more. The sea can be made bluer, the grass greener, unsightly building works can be 'disappeared', all at the touch of a Photoshop button.

Nevertheless, it was an aerial photograph of the Scillies that persuaded me to choose it for my 50th birthday treat, a photograph that smacked more of the Caribbean than a small archipelago just 28 miles off the Cornish coast.

Azure seas. White sands. Deserted coves. Empty roads. Tropical vegetation.... Could it really live up to expectations?

It could, and it did. And I loved it.

The short boat trip from St Mary's to Tresco took us back in time. No cars, no light pollution, no crime. It was beautiful and tranquil and a lovely place to rest for a while.

It remains a fact that it's not the easiest place to get to: from the North-East, in particular, it's probably easier and quicker to head for the Med. To get to the Scillies you either have to drive miles and miles to the South West to catch a ferry, or head southwards and fly. We took a little Skybus prop plane from Bristol, where we had spent the previous night at the lovely Hotel du Vin. By road to Bristol took five hours, the flight to St Mary's by

Skybus a chilly and loo-less hour and ten minutes with just five other passengers. It was fun, though.

Straight away we noticed that the islanders, as well as being very friendly, seem to be imbued with some kind of telepathic connection.

All our transfers, from plane to boat, from boat to hotel, from island to island and back to the airport, ran like clockwork. Someone always appeared right on cue to pick up our suitcases and point us in the right direction, and we never had to wait around for more than a couple of minutes.

Our first boat trip was across a glinting bay from St Mary's, the biggest island, to Tresco, where we were picked up by tractor and tourist trailer and towed off to the Island Hotel. Round every corner were jaw-dropping views. There really were white sands, empty little coves, and, thanks to the warming effects of the Gulf Stream, tropical plants and flower-filled hedgerows.

The Island Hotel lives a little in its own time-warped and the communal upstairs areas could do with some updating, but it's charming, the staff are friendly, the food excellent, and the location and gardens simply stunning. By September, the bucket and spade brigade had departed to be replaced by an older clientele, many of them there to visit the world famous Abbey Gardens, which flourish despite the Atlantic gales and are known as "Kew with the roof off".

### VIEW FROM THE TERRACE:

The Island  
Hotel, Tresco

Settled by Augustus Smith 160 years ago, Tresco is still owned and managed by his descendants on a long lease from the Duchy of Cornwall. The current proprietor is Robert Dorrien-Smith, who inherited the lease in his twenties in 1973.

The island's future was uncertain then, but in 1978, the family sold the first timeshare cottages and they were an immediate success.

Today's version is the newly opened Flying Boat Club at New Grimsby, a quiet, secluded and relaxing environment that can be enjoyed by timeshare owners and anyone renting a Tresco holiday cottage. The manager is young father-of-two Wayne Shaw, who tells me he had a choice between jobs in Tresco and Sheffield. No choice really: this must be a wonderful place to bring up children.

The Flying Boat Club has a very convivial bar with terrace; fresh, local food; an indoor swimming pool (which Wayne says came in very useful this summer: though generally somewhat warmer, the Scillies do still share some weather with us!); spa and gym; and hard tennis courts.

You do soon find yourself living a very outdoorsy life on the Scillies.

The air is so fresh, lichen thrive everywhere; there are no cars on the road and we cycled everywhere – less mobile visitors can rent golf buggy-style vehicles – dropping into little bays for a rest and a read. It all felt very unhurried.

After two days on Tresco, the exotic one of the five inhabited islands, we transferred to her much more unruly brother, Bryher. Where succulents and tropical plants abounded on Tresco, here huge granite boulders held sway. The island is just a mile long, a quarter of a mile wide. It has 74 residents, the smallest community in the Scillies, and the next stop west is America. Here there are no bikes, and only a couple of vehicles: the accepted mode of transport is Shanks's Pony.

Despite the fact that life here is more Spartan than on Tresco, the hotel is a haven, proof that you can find heaven in Hell Bay. There's a pool, fitness suite, spa, play area and par-3 golf, a pretty courtyard, giant chess. The dining room is quite lovely and the food top quality.

It's a stylish and contemporary island retreat, with chalky blue and cream interiors. All suites are named after local gigs (pilot boats), all have private sitting areas and luxury bathrooms. It wasn't big, it wasn't opulent, but I think my husband said it all. "This has got to be the nicest hotel room I've ever stayed in," he lazily intoned, as gin in hand, he gazed out over the balcony to the rocky outcrops that have proved the undoing of so many sailors over the centuries, and on – next stop America....



## TRAVEL FACTS

### The Island Hotel, Tresco

01720-422883  
[islandhotel.co.uk](http://islandhotel.co.uk)

### Hell Bay, Bryher

01720-422947  
[hellbay.co.uk](http://hellbay.co.uk)

### Tresco Holiday Cottages

01720-422849  
[tresco.co.uk/stay/cottages](http://tresco.co.uk/stay/cottages)

### Isles of Scilly Tourist Information

01720-424031;  
[simplyscilly.co.uk](http://simplyscilly.co.uk)

### Isles of Scilly Travel (Skybus and Scillonian III)

0845-7105555

**PERFECT  
PEACE:**  
Timeshares  
on Tresco

*“Azure seas. White sands. Deserted coves.  
Empty roads. Tropical vegetation....  
Could it really live up to expectations?”*



# Westpark

Estate Agents | Letting Agents | Mortgage Brokers

**QUALITY**  
properties urgently  
required in all areas



**WE'LL GET  
YOU MOVING!!**

# new year, new agents

**sales 01325 484448**  
**lettings 01325 484454**

Westpark welcomes old and new clients to their brand new office on Duke Street. With many years experience of residential sales, lettings and the financial services industry, the staff at Westpark offer a professional and friendly approach to all their clients.

Are you unhappy with your current agent? Are the fees too high?  
Are service standards slipping?  
Have there been too many unfulfilled promises?

*take advantage of our  
unique benefits*

**CALL NOW**  
**sales 01325 484448**  
**lettings 01325 484454**

- Tailor-made Packages Available
- Free Newspaper Advertising
- Free Advertising on our website
- Free Advertising on Rightmove (which attracts over 5 million house movers every month!)
- Free Sale or To Let Board



29 West Auckland Road, Darlington DL3 9EL . 39 Duke Street, Darlington DL3 7RX  
email: [lettings@westparkestateagents.co.uk](mailto:lettings@westparkestateagents.co.uk) [www.westparkestateagents.co.uk](http://www.westparkestateagents.co.uk)

Mortgage advice provided by Westpark Financial Services Limited.

DURHAM, TEES VALLEY AND NORTH YORKSHIRE

# Living PROPERTY

## New Year, new office for Westpark

**T**HE next 12 months looks to be an exciting time for Westpark as they open their second office in a prime town centre location – Duke Street, in Darlington. Due to unprecedented levels of business on the rental side, the company decided it was important to provide more high street presence for the growing number of tenants and landlords. The new office also creates greater exposure for property sales in a challenging and difficult market place.

The highly motivated team have more than 85 years combined experience in property sales, lettings and financial services, which will no doubt prove invaluable in the present economic climate. Most of the team experienced the last downturn in the market during the early 1990s, so are better placed than some to advise on present market conditions.

Westpark will continue to provide a friendly professional service to all their clients, old and new, and look forward to welcoming new vendors, purchasers, tenants and landlords to their new office. Clients can be confident in using an agent with a wealth of experience in every aspect of residential property, whether selling, renting or arranging finance. All of the staff gained their knowledge by working for large corporate companies and are able to use their professional training to provide a friendly, more personal service.

The lettings side of the business has full membership of The Association of Residential Letting Agents, ARLA. Membership is achieved only by agents who demonstrate that they have a thorough knowledge of their profession and that they conduct their business according to current best management practice.

With its policy of developing and maintaining the highest possible standards, ARLA is seen as a benchmark for professionalism that both landlords and tenants can have confidence in. This provides its members with a unique marketing advantage in an industry where standards vary significantly and where clients should choose who to use with great care.

Residential sales have grown from strength to strength over the last five years and Westpark prides itself on its high levels of customer service, which result in much of the business coming from referrals from satisfied customers. With a recent change of management and strong links to an independent mortgage broker, the business is also well placed to give financial solutions to buyers in a challenging market. With properties marketed via offices in Duke Street



ADVERTISER'S ANNOUNCEMENT

and Cockerton Village providing large window displays for properties, their own website, rightmove and other internet marketing, Westpark believe there is no other agent better situated to market your property in Darlington and get you moving in 2009.

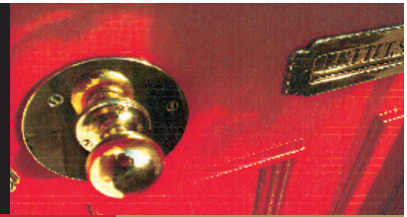
Mortgage and Insurance advice is provided by referral to Westpark Financial Services limited.

■ Westpark, 39 Duke Street,  
Darlington DL3 9EL

**EXPANDING:**  
Paul Dummett and  
Carol Chandler  
outside the new  
office in Duke Street

# roseberry newhouse

Yarm Office 01642 792488 • Stokesley Office 01642 711111



## Grey Towers Hall, Nunthorpe Guide Price: £474,950

This luxury two bedroom ground floor apartment is situated in the magnificent Grade 2 listed Gothic Hall set in approximately nine acres of grounds / woodlands and lake. The hall was restored to its former glory and converted into 12 apartments in 2005 by Country & Metropolitan with a grand entrance hall leading to the apartment which offers a superbly presented interior combining character and contemporary. The apartment benefits from sealed double glazed tall sash windows, electric

central heating to radiators, CAT 5 wiring, video entry system and monitored alarm system. The accommodation briefly comprises: Entrance hall, living room with original panelled ceiling, dining kitchen with integrated appliances and dining / living space, master suite with dressing area and ensuite, bedroom two and bathroom with free standing 'rain bath'. The apartment has a private garden maintained by the groundsman and allocated parking for two cars.



View more quality homes on line at  
[www.roseberry-newhouse.co.uk](http://www.roseberry-newhouse.co.uk)

# venture

## PROPERTIES

sales  
lettings  
mortgages

darlington



**sandringham court**  
very well presented modern apartment. quality living accommodation and benefits from having a garage, stylish modern kitchen with integrated appliances, good sized living room, two bedrooms, bath/wc.

darlington



**salutation road**  
a mature style 3 bedroom semi detached house. the accommodation comprises hall, lounge, dining room, kitchen/breakfast room, 3 bedrooms, bathroom/wc. off street parking and rear garden.

darlington



**barnes road**  
beautifully presented, 3 bedroom extended, spacious semi detached. lounge, family room and garden room. well stocked gardens to front and rear, garage. must be viewed. no chain.

darlington



**clarendon house**  
fully furnished, modern 2 bedroom 2nd floor apartment. accommodation comprises hall, lounge, kitchen, 2 bedrooms, bathroom/wc. communal grounds. gas central heating and double glazing.

darlington



**regal drive**  
spacious 3 bedroom family home. comprises hall, lounge, dining room, kitchen, 3 bedrooms, bathroom/wc. gardens, driveway and garage. gas central heating and double glazing.

# success

Since opening our store just under a year ago, we have had vast success in selling and renting.

We are currently looking for many similar properties to sell or rent.

For a free valuation, please call us today on

**01325 363858**

darlington



**brinkburn avenue**  
good size 3 bedroom semi detached house. comprising hall, lounge, dining room, kitchen, 3 bedrooms, shower room, gardens, parking and garage. gas central heating, double glazing.

middleton st george



**alexandria drive**  
a two bedroom semi detached house with lounge, dining kitchen, conservatory to the rear, gardens to the front and rear with off-street parking leading to single garage. unfurnished.



L-R: Jonathan O'Connor, Vanessa Winn, Catherine Lathan, Diane Scollick, Carl Jenkinson (Director), Andrea Alport, Lesley Ainslie, Michael O'Connor (Director).

newton aycliffe



**tamarind close**  
immaculately presented 4 bedroom detached house in sought after location. benefits from gardens to front and rear, garage and off street parking, conservatory to rear. gas central heating, double glazing.

darlington



**milbank crescent**  
recently renovated four bedroom semi detached bungalow. extended to rear with kitchen/breakfast room. gas central heating and double glazing. gardens to front, side and rear and single garage. no chain.

newton aycliffe



**cowdray close**  
rare opportunity to rent this well presented two bedroomed detached bungalow. benefits from gardens front and rear, garage and off street parking and good size rooms throughout. long term basis only.

darlington



**whitebridge drive**  
large four bedroom detached house on the ashbrook estate in the whinfield area. living and dining room, master bedroom with en-suite, gardens front and rear and garage. viewing is highly recommended.

darlington



**downing court**  
modern 4 bedroom detached house. lounge, separate dining room, kitchen, utility room, master bedroom en-suite. gardens to front and rear and side parking. gas central heating, double glazed.

45 duke street  
darlington  
county durham  
dl3 7sh

**01325 363858**  
[www.venturepropertiesuk.com](http://www.venturepropertiesuk.com)  
[enquiries@venturepropertiesuk.com](mailto:enquiries@venturepropertiesuk.com)

no sale no fee  
open 7 days a week  
pro-active sales and  
lettings teams



# eclipse



Eclipse is a specialist department from McOwan & Co – designed to provide a bespoke marketing strategy to owners of individual homes, creating an unrivalled approach to selling – unique to this region.

From our sumptuous office we guarantee to market your property to the widest possible audience, complemented by the London Office in Pall Mall, targeting local, national and international buyers. We have invested heavily in the internet, maximising your exposure through Rightmove, Propertyfinder, Globrix, Home Sale, The London Office and other partnered sites as well as via [www.eclipsehomes.co.uk](http://www.eclipsehomes.co.uk)

Our aim is to provide a highly individual service, combining cutting edge technology with a thorough understanding of the property market, ensuring that our clients are provided with the most effective method for marketing their homes.

Potential purchasers are also offered the services of our Buyers' Lounge – a relaxed and informative way of searching for their dream home with expert property consultants on hand to provide a whole range of advice.

If you would like to discuss how we may be of help to you, then please do not hesitate to contact me personally on 0844 800 3604.



**Stephen B. McOwan**  
BSc (Est Man) FNAEA  
Managing Director

Redwell Court, Barnard Castle DL12 8BN

**0844 800 3604**

[contact@eclipsehomes.co.uk](mailto:contact@eclipsehomes.co.uk)

London Office - 62 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5HZ

**020 7839 0888**

[www.eclipsehomes.co.uk](http://www.eclipsehomes.co.uk)

**M** **McOWAN & CO**

Successfully Selling Property in County Durham and North Yorkshire

# North Yorkshire's Largest Independent Estate Agent

Selling Houses  
Since 1871

**0.75%**  
plus VAT\*

Sales commission on  
all new instructions  
**DURING JANUARY  
AND FEBRUARY**

Call  
**01845 574574**  
2 Finkle Street, Thirsk YO7 1DA

[www.stephensons4property.co.uk](http://www.stephensons4property.co.uk)

\*Conditions Apply



# Stephensons



Estate Agents Chartered Surveyors Auctioneers

# urbanbase

SALES & LETTINGS

## we need your property

Due to the current property climate, properties in Durham are renting fast.  
Due to our pro-active approach we need more properties for tenants ready to rent NOW.  
Please contact us to discuss how we can assist to make your investment work.

# rent rent rent

...urban base are in the heart of the city, capturing the market.

# 0845 6431186

# www.urban-base.com



## Don't let your property stand empty...

If you have property to let contact



We will

- Find the right tenants for your property
- Maximise your rental income
- Minimise gaps between tenancies

email: [info@riselettings.com](mailto:info@riselettings.com)  
[www.riselettings.com](http://www.riselettings.com)

# 0191 388 1210



Barratt in Stella-Blaydon-on-Tyne

Grand Opening  
**New sales arena  
 and 3 showhomes**  
 Saturday 31st January at Riverside Crescent



**HOME TO SELL?**  
 We have a selection of  
 3, 4 & 5 bedroom homes  
 available with  
 part exchange and  
 a mortgage subsidy of  
 up to £325 per month  
 until 2011.

Light  
 refreshments  
 available

**FIRST TIME BUYER?**  
 2 bed apartments from under  
 £90,000 thanks to 'Dream Start'

Calling all first-time buyers or people without a home to sell -  
 Buy your dream home now for only 75% of its purchase price with the  
 fantastic Barratt Dream Start scheme. But hurry, limited period offer.

**Remember – the best deals always go first!**



Riverside Crescent, Stella-Blaydon-On-Tyne, NE21 4SA  
 A development of 2, 3, 4 & 5 bed homes. Sales office & Showhomes open Thurs to Mon 10am to 5pm  
**Call: 0191 499 0719**  
**Text: 'barratt151' to 84840**  
 General enquiries call 0845 60 49 345  
[www.barratthomes.co.uk/riversidecrescent](http://www.barratthomes.co.uk/riversidecrescent)



**Also building at MELBURY** - Brunton Lane, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 5RF. Tel: 0191 217 1509



Part  
 Exchange  
 available  
 plus...

**Plot 273  
 Burgess  
 5 bedroom home**  
 Was £423,000  
**Now £319,995**

**£330 a month Mortgage subsidy until 2011**



Part  
 Exchange  
 available  
 plus...

**Plot 182  
 Bewick  
 5 bed detached home**  
 Was £439,000  
**Now £369,995**

**£400 a month Mortgage subsidy until 2011**

Any promoted Barratt Homes offer is subject to contract, status, selected plots and developments only, subject to availability and cannot be used in conjunction with any other Barratt Homes offer. Prices and details are correct at time of going to press. Images are typical of Barratt Homes. Dream Start offer is only available on selected properties priced up to £250,000. A £500 Dream Start commitment fee is payable at reservation stage but is fully refundable on legal completion. Subject to status and Barratt terms and conditions, including exchange of contracts within 28 days and legal completion by the specified date. Written details available on request. Barratt Homes cannot give you any financial advice. YOUR HOME MAY BE REPOSSESSED IF YOU DO NOT KEEP UP REPAYMENTS ON YOUR MORTGAGE. Typical example: Purchase a property at £150,000, 75% is payable at time of purchase. If the property is sold or transferred for £160,000 then 25% (40,000) is payable to Barratt. If the property is sold or transferred for £140,000 then 25% (£35,000) is payable to Barratt.

Living TOP TIPS

# Ground rules

Here's what the experts predict will be big in the gardening world in the spring and summer, says **Hannah Stephenson**

**Joe Swift, garden designer, author and regular on BBC2's Gardeners' World:**

IT'S a case of back to basics, looking for texture and foliage combinations and then complementing those with loose seasonal colour in a naturalistic way, but not all-out colour overload. Alien-looking exotics are definitely out."

Swift predicts that less concrete will be used, replaced by more porous materials which let the water back into the water table. "The popular 'grow your own' approach to fruit and veg will certainly continue. Allotments will be harder to find than ever but I think we'll see communities getting together in imaginative ways to grow on any spare or neglected pieces of land."

**Adam Pasco, editor of BBC Gardeners' World magazine:**

CREATING attractive gardens with an emphasis on their wildlife value is just one way individuals can make a difference," he says, adding that composting and recycling will be big on the agenda, while environmental concerns are driving many new product developments.

"Rainwater harvesting systems can be installed under patios and grey water filters are available to allow bath water to be re-used rather than poured down the drain."



**Award-winning garden designer Chris Beardshaw, pictured above, presenter of BBC1's Wild About Your Garden:**

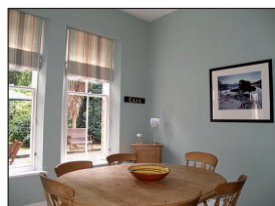
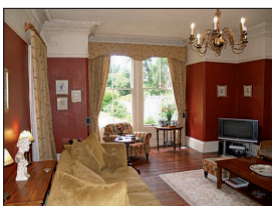
I THINK we will see an increase in more wildlife friendly and environmentally-conscious gardens. It has been a growing interest over the last few years as people realise the importance of our gardens not just as a pleasure space for us humans but as a resource in which to grow our own food, and to create feeding stations and habitats for our friendly wildlife, many of whom are seriously threatened.

"I believe it is possible to create a garden that suits our needs as well as the needs of our residing or visiting creatures, while also being a beautiful retreat."



## SMITHSGORE

### 183 Woodland Road, Darlington, Co. Durham



**A substantial Semi-Detached Victorian Residence occupying a good position in the sought after West End of Darlington**

183 Woodland Road comprises the major portion of a substantial Victorian residence built for the well known Pease family of Darlington.

The property occupies a little known position set back off Woodland Road within attractive landscaped grounds offering spacious and highly appointed accommodation full of charm and character.

The property has been improved over the years and retains many period features including the deep skirting boards, decorative coving and period fireplaces with sash windows throughout.

The accommodation briefly comprises: Three fine Reception Rooms, Utility and Cloaks and Breakfast Kitchen. To the first floor there are five good sized Bedrooms - one with en-suite facilities and a Family Bathroom.

The property is set within generous gardens, the front set to lawn with fine shrubs and trees, dominated by a scots pine, the rear having an extensive parking area, patios, decking area and four back to back garages.

**£560,000**

Contact the selling agents, Smiths Gore on

**01325 462966**

[smithsgore.co.uk](http://smithsgore.co.uk)



# ClassifiedLiving




**Cat Litter Delivered to Your Door**  
**FROM 1 BAG TO BULK DELIVERIES**  
 Cat owners, Vets, Catteries, Cat Breeders -  
 wide range of litter available  
**ALL AREAS COVERED**  
 Visit our website  
[www.catlitterdirect.co.uk](http://www.catlitterdirect.co.uk)

**PARK TAXIS**  
 BOOK NOW FOR VALENTINES  
 EXECUTIVE HIRE AND WEDDINGS CATERED FOR  
**TEL 0191 3731578 OR 0780 1186220**

**SCOTT WALKER**  
**PLUMBING & HEATING SERVICES**  
 • Plumbing, Heating & Gas Installation • Combi  
 Boilers supplied & fitted • Bathroom Suite  
 supplied & fitted • Landlord Safety Certificates  
 issued • All plumbing work undertaken  
**01325 257072 or 07979 237200**



**WHITLEY ELECTRICAL**  
 • Full or part rewires • Fuse board replacements  
 • Garden security lighting  
 • Landord electrical safety inspections  
 • Intruder alarms installed & maintained  
**01325 487 609 /**  
**07955 890 078**  
 info@whitleyelectrical.co.uk



This classification is brought to you by  
**SCOTT MEMORIALS OF DISTINCTION**  

 For brochure & prices **Free phone**  
**0800 163630**

**Hunting Tower Lodges**  

 ✓ 10 Lodges in Perth ✓ Beautiful surroundings  
 ✓ Ideal for walking ✓ Very quiet site  
**01738 582444** [www.huntingtower-lodges.com](http://www.huntingtower-lodges.com)

**Sooty's**  
**Electric Chimney Sweep**  
 QUICK AND CLEAN  
**01388 834084**  
 Mobile 07752 870248  
 S. Watson  
 195 Toft Hill Bishop Auckland  
 Co Durham DL14 0JD

**MCARDLES SOLICITORS**  
 Basic rights at work, unfair/wrongful dismissal, redundancy,  
 discrimination, harassment & bullying  
**NO WIN NO FEE** **Tel. 01325 482299**

**D. McKay Electrician**  
 for all your electrical needs  
 Call David on  
**01748 831438 or 07834 665392**  
 part P reg. all work Gtd

**CAIRNGORMS**  
**Very Comfortable Cottage Sleeps 7+**  
 Fully equipped, linen provided and centrally heated. We also have disabled facilities  
**Vacancies in October Short breaks from £20pp per day**  
**01479 831357**  
 \*\*\*\*STB Rated  
 HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

**'An affordable option to help you furnish your home'**  
**FREE** collection of your re-usable furniture in the Darlington Area  
 Come and visit our furniture re-use project for items that you may require.  
 Unit 10 and 11, Borough Road Industrial Estate, Darlington  
**01325 357379**

**Swallow holiday Cottages**  
**Long Lees Farm**  
**Tel: 01947 603790**  
**Visit: [www.swallowcottages.co.uk](http://www.swallowcottages.co.uk)**  
**Email: [jillian@swallowcottages.co.uk](mailto:jillian@swallowcottages.co.uk)**



**PREMIER Plumbing and Heating**  
 All aspects of Heating and Plumbing covered  
 Corgi Registered, WRAS Approved  
 Boilers • Gas Installations • Bathrooms • Showers  
 New Builds No Call Out Charge • Free Estimates  
 NO JOB TOO SMALL  
**Contact Andrew Pratt 07901 580713 / 01388 604137**

**Transform your home**  
 with quality  
 made-to-measure blinds  
  
**Tel: 0800 542 7591**  
[www.a1blindsltd.co.uk](http://www.a1blindsltd.co.uk)



Amidst the beautiful Deveron Valley lies the  
 ancient Forglan Estate.  
 The secluded stone cottages blend into the  
 peaceful countryside, each with its own lawn  
 area and unique character.  
**Forglan is an ideally situated base for**  
**experiencing the**  
**North East of Scotland**  
**Contact Carole 01888 535004**  
**Forglan Country Cottages Aberdeenshire**

[www.forglen.co.uk](http://www.forglen.co.uk)

**PETS WELCOME**  
 Weekly lets from only £229



Sage, Greggs, Nissan, P&G, Siemens, Orange, Maersk and Nike. Some of the world's biggest business names are thriving in North East England offering great career opportunities.

*Passionate people. Passionate places.*  
north east  
england

*Passionate* about business  
www.northeastengland.co.uk

# A region that leaves

'Passionate people. Passionate places' is the campaign to promote North East England as a great place to live, work, study, visit and invest. The campaign's current phase focuses on the region as a prime location for business, with a network of ambassadors spreading the word, telling the world just how innovative and diversified North East England's economy is: how, for example, hundreds of start-ups and rapidly expanding companies, as well as some of the world's biggest business names, are thriving in the region and offering great career opportunities

*Increasingly, when I talk about the region, people are starting to say that they hear a lot about the great things happening up here*



Simon Pearson, of Pearsons Digital, Recruitment and Marketing

**S**IMON PEARSON left school at the age of 16 and believes people underestimate the wealth of career opportunities available in the region.

"There are careers, not just for school leavers and graduates but all the way up the ladder," he says.

Simon started Pearsons Digital, Recruitment and Marketing Agency, in Middlesbrough, 22 years ago. It now employs more than 60 people with offices in Newcastle, Middlesbrough and Leeds, and has recently re-launched its long-established online recruitment website, sector1.net, now carrying North East jobs and careers across all sectors.

Areas such as the off-shore sector and the process industry have head offices based here, and the region's legal firms and accountants are getting bigger – providing more opportunities in the North East.

"I think some old stereotypes about the North East might still exist but it is actually full of fantastic people running professional

businesses. Some London-based competitors said I was crazy to start my own business in an industrial town like Middlesbrough.

"But they were wrong. We're a very successful business and they now see us as quite formidable opponents. I set up Pearsons and we're now aiming to be the number one recruitment, marketing and digital communications company, and we'll do it all from the North East."

*Despite his own success and the positive changes across the region in recent years, Simon says there's still a need for the 'Passionate people. Passionate places' campaign.*

"Perceptions are changing but we still need to do more to convince people about the fantastic opportunities to be had here."

"I'm a Middlesbrough lad born and bred and now, when I talk about the region, I can talk about successful UK plcs, cutting edge biotech

*Find out more about your future in North East England:*

North East England's cities and towns lie within easy reach of the region's world famous coast and countryside. Great for work/life balance.

*Passionate people. Passionate places.*  
north east  
england

# its mark on the world

In North East England you can pursue a **dynamic career** but know that opportunities to unwind are only **moments away**

**Globally well connected**, the region has excellent transport links as well as some of the **UK's lowest commuting times**

**Golden beaches**, forest trails, lakes, moors and a national park create limitless opportunities for **relaxation and adventure**

With its many theatres, galleries, venues and creative institutions, North East England is a hotbed for **cultural talent and entertainment**

**Wide choice of excellent housing**  
Five buzzing universities as well as some of the UK's **top-ranked hospitals**

## NORTH EAST ENGLAND BUSINESS FACTS

**ENERGETIC REGION:** North East England is home to leading edge research in wind and solar power, coordinated by the New and Renewable Energy Centre (NaREC), in Blyth, a major player helping the UK to achieve its ambitious renewable energy targets.

**RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT:** Europe's largest R&D facility is the Wilton International complex in Teesside, where advanced technologies and pioneering products are driving the future of the process and chemical sector.

**SUPPORT FOR EXPANSION:** North East England has a long history of delivering successful international business expansions including Japanese market leader Nissan and US energy giant Clipper Windpower.

**A MAGNET FOR TALENT:** The five major universities – Durham, Newcastle, Northumbria, Sunderland and Teesside – have a combined total of more than 50 departments rated 5 or 5\* in the most recent research assessment exercise.

**ATTRACTIVE TO BUSINESS:** More than 500 leading international companies, including 40 per cent of Dow Jones-listed businesses, have operations in North East England.

**CUTTING EDGE:** The region has the highest number of digital media and animation start ups outside London.

**HIGH PRODUCTIVITY:** The region produces one in five cars built in the UK.

**EXPORT LINKS:** Teesport is one of the UK's three busiest ports with 6,000 ship arrivals each year, handling 50 million tonnes of cargo.

**EXCELLENT QUALITY OF LIFE:** The region was named "The most exciting, beautiful and friendly region in the whole of England" in the Lonely Planet BlueList 2008.

**CONNECTED FOR BUSINESS:** North East England has some of the lowest commuting times in the country and with excellent transport links is well connected to the rest of the world.

**INWARD INVESTMENT:** In 2007, the region secured 66 inward investment projects, creating 2,000 new jobs and putting the North East among the top five performing regions for foreign direct investment.

**FUTURE FOCUS:** North East England has a £700m biotechnology industry which is set to grow by 40 per cent over the coming years.

firms, a world-class process sector and more.

"Increasingly, when I talk about the region, people are starting to say that they hear a lot about the great things happening up here.

"I don't care whether you are starting a business or growing a business, you need to talk to people who can give you a different view of what you're doing and the North East provides that type of support better than anywhere. It's much more of a collaborative, supportive business community here and people are always happy to say 'come and have a coffee and a chat'. That's the best sort of advice you can get."

"There's a huge amount of opportunity and, because the North East has been through difficult times, we are in a better and stronger state now. We really have a joined up approach.

*"If I had my time again, there are things I would do differently because we all make mistakes, but I would still start my business in the North East because, despite the current economic climate, there are still firms looking to recruit staff and there are fantastic opportunities out there for people."*

## Living MY NORTH

Middlesbrough goalkeeper

# Ross Turnbull

ROSS Turnbull, 23, has forced his way into the Premier League scene this season after years of making a name for himself as a key member of Middlesbrough Football Club's successful academy system. Born in Bishop Auckland, he was brought up in Newton Aycliffe, County Durham, and he has recently moved to live in Durham with his partner, Nicola, and their newborn baby, Maisy

### Favourite pub

It's got to be the Duke of Wellington on the outskirts of Durham City. We quite regularly have a pop in because it is just on the way out to Chester-le-Street, which is where Nicola is originally from. It's got great pub food and we quite like to have a go at the quiz on a Monday night.

### Favourite restaurant

I like my Italian food and I enjoy my pasta. The restaurant we have found to be up there with the best, if not *the* best, is La Spaghettata, in Durham City centre. It's situated on the road up towards the cathedral and every time we go in we are made to feel very welcome. It has friendly staff and you couldn't meet a nicer man than the owner, Fabio. It's quite cheap, but the quality of the food is top-notch. There is also a great selection of desserts and I would recommend the chocolate fudge cake with ice cream.

### Favourite walk

In the summer I enjoy a walk by the River Wear in Durham, eating an ice cream. It's also the perfect place to enjoy a quiet picnic on the river bank. On a night, the walk up to the cathedral in Durham is beautiful. It is a perfect sight when it's lit up.

### Favourite shop

I tend to head to the MetroCentre to do most of my shopping. It's easily the best shopping centre in the North-East. There is lots of variety and I spend most of my time buying baby clothes in shops such as Next and Pumpkin Patch. How things change.

### Favourite day out

There are loads of decent places to go with the family in the region but I think that probably the best of the lot is Beamish Museum. There is so much to do and that makes for a great family day out. There is obviously loads of history to everything you see there, but it's just nice to be able to go on the trams, look at the farms and the mines. We will no doubt be there again when the weather brightens up.



Ross Turnbull loves County Durham, especially the Riverside Stadium, Beamish Museum and being down by the water's edge at Durham, below



### Favourite game for Newton Aycliffe Youth

There are loads of matches that I can remember playing when I was younger for Newton Aycliffe Youth. But there is one in particular at Marton Hall Drive that sticks in the mind. They were top of the league and we were drawing 0-0. I had to make lots of saves and was nominated man of the match by their manager. I must have only been about 13.

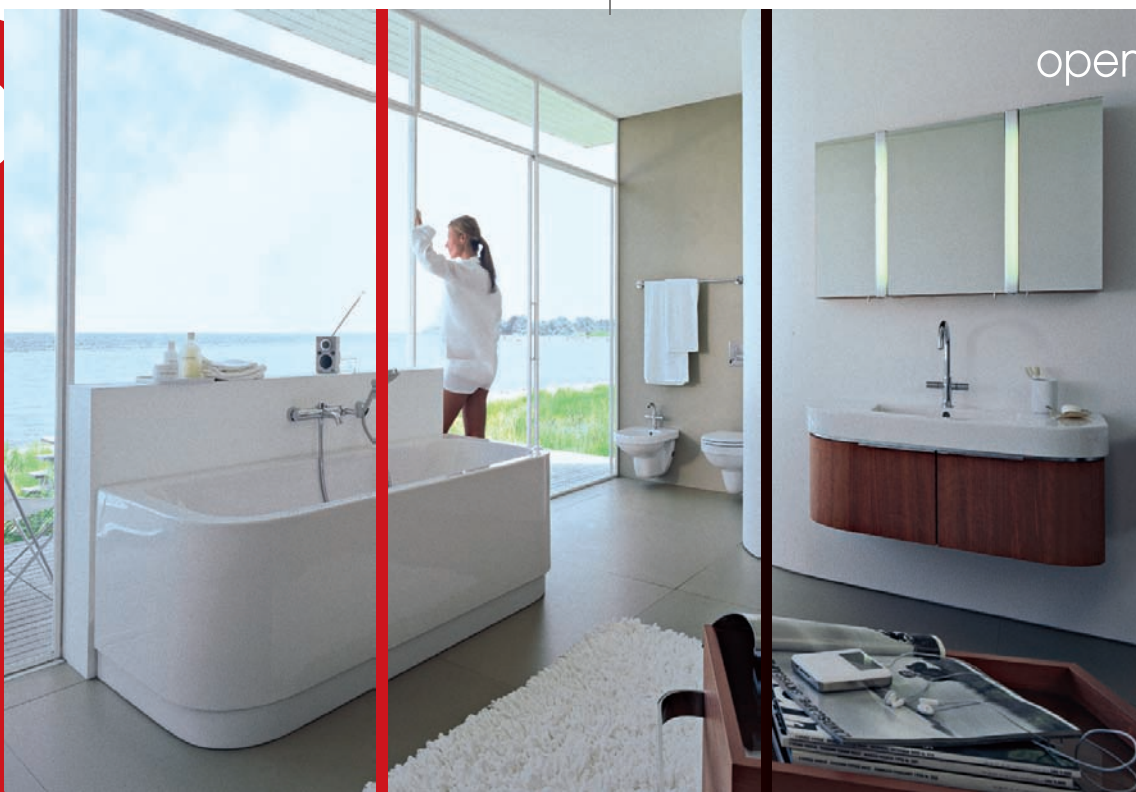
### Favourite ground/school played at in the North-East

It's fantastic for me to be playing at such great grounds around the country as the Riverside Stadium. But if there is one ground that I remember fondly from my childhood it is at Mainsforth Cricket Club. I played lots of cup finals during my school days there – winning and losing a fair few. It was also the ground where we played our home district matches for Bishop Auckland and that was where I was spotted by Middlesbrough chief scout Ron Bone.

### What I like most about the North-East

It is probably the most predictable thing to say, but it would have to be that the people are really friendly and everyone tries to be easy going and approachable. There are also loads of nice places to visit. I know I said my favourite was Beamish but there are many, many more, including the Riverside Stadium.





open **sundays** too

# bathrooms

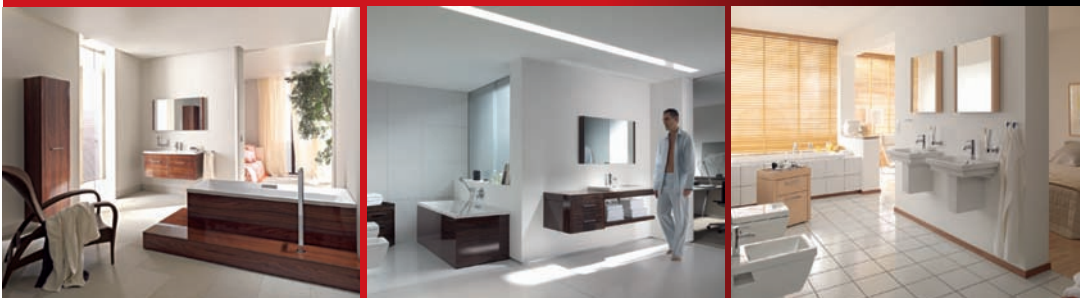
beautiful bathrooms

incredible **savings**

making your

house...  
**your** home

**SALES**  
the  
**EDGE**



01642**243403**

North Ormesby Road • Middlesbrough TS4 2AP



# HH HairHaus

## Hair & Beauty

### Free under 10's Trim

with selected stylists with ladies full price cut and blow dry. Please ring for further details - available throughout the year.

### 25% Off all hair services

Valued over £20 With selected stylists.

### 25% off all beauty treatments

Valued over £10.

### Valentines Package

Decleor facial with luxury paraffin wax  
manicure and pedicure treatment

£35.00 ( usually £67.00)

Eyesh extensions, airbase  
make-up, mini manacure

£24.00 ( usually £33.00)

All offers end February 28th 2009. The above are not to be used in conjunction with any other offers.

## Face of Hair Haus 2009/2010

#### What you will win

- £500 Cash.
- Professional Photo Shoot.
- Being the Retained Model for all Hair Haus.  
Hair Exhibitions & Shows
- Modelling for all Hair Haus Publicity & Advertising.

Check out our website for entry  
form and competition details

9-11 Cockton Hill Road, Bishop Auckland,  
Co. Durham DL14 6EN  
T: 01388 600024 F: 01388 600027  
Website: [www.hairhaus.ltd.uk](http://www.hairhaus.ltd.uk) Email: [salon@hairhaus.ltd.uk](mailto:salon@hairhaus.ltd.uk)



See our website for all our hair & beauty offers.

Register online at [www.hairhaus.ltd.uk](http://www.hairhaus.ltd.uk) for the chance to win £100 worth of hair & beauty services.