

DURHAM, TEES VALLEY AND NORTH YORKSHIRE

# Living

SEPTEMBER 2008

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COMPLIMENTARY

## GOING TO THE WALL

Following in Hadrian's footsteps

## A LITTLE SLICE OF PARADISE

Small is beautiful in a mini-mansion

## SHEEP AND CHEERFUL

Gorgeous fashions without cruelty

## WIN A FANTASTIC MAKEOVER

New looks for free in our competition

## HEART OF THE DALE

Swanning about in Barnard Castle



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DURHAM, TEES VALLEY AND NORTH YORKSHIRE

# Living

SEPTEMBER 2008



THE credit crunch, a downturn in the property market, rising fuel and food bills... it's all too easy to get fed up right now. But, hopefully, we can help to dispel some of the gloom with brilliant and stylish ideas for you and your home.

The stores seem to be going all-out to give us sassy styles at affordable prices, and we preview some of the latest. We meet a fashion designer who is not only giving us beautiful knits and tweeds, but also saving endangered sheep in the process.

If you are trying to sell your home or even thinking about it, we have pages of ideas to increase its value. We also visit an inspiring barn conversion on a tiny scale.

In our wonderful region, we don't have to travel far to see interesting and beautiful places, so this month, we lift our spirits with visits to Hadrian's Wall, Sedgefield and Barnard Castle.

*Sue* (sue.fox@nne.co.uk)



Beret, £15, gilet, £79, from the Marks & Spencer autumn and winter collection

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The lucky winner of our competition for Yorkshire Tea treats from Taylors of Harrogate is:  
**Mrs S Hay,**  
of Barningham, near Richmond  
Turn to Page 6 for a chance of winning a House of Fraser makeover and to Page 85 to win Education Takeaway goodies

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FROM LEFT:  
Red Herring paisley print tunic dress, £30, Betty Jackson Black sheepskin gilet, £300, both Debenhams  
Checked coat, £80, patent and elastic court, £60, both from Dorothy Perkins  
Leather jacket, £150, paisley top, £50, jeans, £45, boots, £60, all from Oasis

# Fall for COLOUR



As summer whistles by, the stores are already preparing for the colder weather. And with such great collections, ranging from warm browns and neutrals peppered with cayenne, deep pink and turmeric shades – and prices held to reasonable levels – there's plenty to warm to

**FROM LEFT:**

Prom dress in pink and black dogtooth, £45, Therapy, black tights, £17, Wolford, both at House of Fraser

A-line tartan rib-sleeve coat, £69.99, black multi-zip jeans £39.99, grey ribbed socks, £4.99, all River Island

Biker jacket, £40, tartan mini, £18, T-shirt, £16, striped tights, £8, tartan ankle boots, £25, all New Look

# Win a fantastic autumn makeover

**Y**OUR local House of Fraser stores in Middlesbrough and Darlington (Binns) are offering readers of Living Magazine a fantastic opportunity to ensure they have the perfect look this autumn.

The autumn/winter collection at House of Fraser will certainly grab the attention of those with a sense of style as new collections from Linea, Untold and Episode mirror the very best of contemporary French chic. Elsewhere, there's a Thirties Bohemian touch with simple dresses in rose prints and painted-effect florals, and there's a return to nature in new lines inspired by an elemental look and colour, a consistent theme in many of the more traditional garment finishes.

Accessories are key, with the bag taking centre stage. Add luxurious hand-knit scarves, berets and vintage-inspired square silks and you've got the perfect capsule wardrobe for the colder months.

It's also important to consider a winter beauty regime well ahead, allowing time for the skin to be properly prepared for the colder months ahead. Products from ranges such as Re-Nutriv by Estee Lauder help it stay stronger, softer and glowing.

Readers of Living have the opportunity to win a fantastic autumn/winter look this month from House of Fraser. One lucky winner will have a makeover with one of House of Fraser's expert cosmetic consultants, plus a fantastic fashionable hairstyle by the in-store Regis hair salon. On top of all that, £200 of House of Fraser gift vouchers are up for grabs to spend on the latest clothing lines, ensuring you step into autumn with style.

## HOW TO ENTER

To stand a chance of winning this great prize, all you have to do is tell us which decade this season's Bohemian look mirrors at House of Fraser stores. Answers on a postcard or the back of an envelope, to House of Fraser Competition, Living Magazine, Priestgate, Darlington, DL1 1NF. Phone: simply call 0901-151-0203 and leave your details when prompted. Text entries: send your text to 80360 starting with HOFRASER leave a space and then your answer, name and contact details. The closing date is Saturday, September 27, and usual Newsquest competition rules apply.

■ Calls cost 50p per call from BT landlines. Calls from mobiles and some other networks may cost more. Texts cost 50p plus your normal operator text charge. Telephone and text voting lines open September 1, 2008 and close September 27, 2008 at 23.59pm. Service provided by Newsquest Media Group.

**HOUSE OF FRASER**

Left: Taupe jacket, £299, roll-neck dress, £69, both Episode

Below: Untold shoulder tote, £169; black tiered dress, £69, also Untold

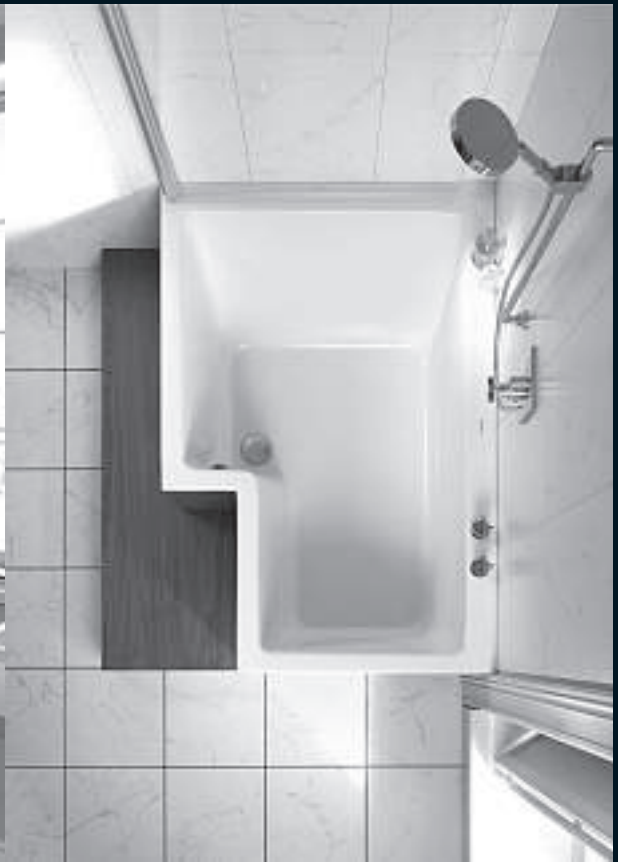


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# Sheep and CHEERFUL

An ethical label making knits and tweeds from endangered sheep headed for slaughter is becoming increasingly popular with fashionistas. **JULIA BREEN** meets the woman behind Izzy Lane designs



Right, designer Isobel Davies, creator of the Izzy Lane label. This page and opposite, some of her designs. To buy or to view Izzy Lane clothes, visit the website, [izzy lane.com](http://izzylane.com)

**L**OOKING down towards Richmond, the castle is bathed in gold, the rooftops of the houses glitter in the sunlight. Far beyond, on the horizon, is the hazy outline of the North York Moors.

Izzy Davies, in snazzy faux snakeskin platform shoes, is leaning over a white metal gate. But she isn't looking at the astonishing view. She's gazing at some of the 600 sheep she has saved from slaughter over the past 18 months.

Izzy became a vegetarian at the age of 17,

when she moved to London. Before that, she says, she didn't even know about vegetarianism. As soon as she found out, she realised she was one. And she hasn't eaten meat since.

She spent time in London and France, singing and songwriting, before setting up an organic vegetable scheme. Five years ago, "finally having enough" of London after 24 years, she moved to Richmond, North Yorkshire.

Farmaround still operates in London, but she launched it in Yorkshire when she moved to the North. In 2002, she saved her first four sheep from slaughter – and the idea of the Izzy Lane clothing label was born.

"I couldn't bear the fact that farmers who kept sheep were burning their wool. And I wanted to get past this argument that sheep would not exist if we didn't eat them," she says.

Most of the wool we use in the UK is imported, mainly from Australia and New Zealand. And, as the centuries-old UK textile industry was in severe decline, Izzy decided to do something about it. Her label uses wool from sheep that may have been slaughtered simply for being male, too small, too old, missing a pregnancy or being a bit lame.

"Some of these sheep look like RSPCA cases," she says. "But they're not, they're just old. We're not used to seeing old sheep in the fields because they're slaughtered by the time they reach old age."

Izzy's flock of Wensleydale and Shetland sheep has grown hugely, partly because she can't say no to saving an animal from slaughter, and partly because of a bit of an error last year. The male sheep are always castrated before being put in with the ewes –



but last year, Izzy missed one. This year, some of her ewes produced dozens of lambs, sired by a very happy ram.

"It's a bit of a responsibility, having this many sheep," says Izzy. "Some of them live until they are about 20 or more. The vet bills are enormous."

Izzy's collection was featured in London Fashion Week last year and has loyal vegetarian followers such as model Lily Cole. But her loyalty to the last vestiges of the British textile industry has not been enough to save it.

Last year, she informs me mournfully, the last worsted spinner in Britain closed, and the last dye house in Bradford, which she loyally used. Her weavers, an ancient mill in Selkirk, which uses Victorian machinery, informed her in June it would have to shut – and she is looking at a way of purchasing the mill. All the knits are also hand-made.

It's an expensive way to run a fashion label, meaning the clothes cost upwards of £150. But, says Izzy, they're classic designs and they'll last 20 years or more.

"I think we've become this ridiculous, throwaway society," she says. "Everyone has ten times more clothes in their wardrobes than they did in the Sixties, and we just don't need them all. You buy an item and you might wear it once, and then never again. And the way it's produced is horrendous."

She refers to a recent Panorama programme which exposed throwaway fashion shop Primark as using child labour.

And she's adamant that a potential recession won't turn people back towards cheap clothing. Instead, she thinks they're more likely to make one-off, quality purchases that will last.

"Buying from us means that you are saving sheep and supporting British industry," she says. "People have got so used to cheap clothes, and cheap food, but it's not necessarily a good thing."

Izzy Lane knitwear is made with the fleece of the endangered Wensleydale sheep, and the dresses, skirts and jackets are made from the super-fine fleece of the rare and primitive Shetland sheep, used undyed. The cashmere comes from Scottish Border goats rather than being imported from Asia.

Her autumn/winter collection, designed by Izzy and some young British designers, is out now. It features chunky knits, earthy colours, and some men's cardigans – which, she says, are also perfect for women to slouch about in. The collection also features wraparound pencil skirts in tweed, high platform sandals and gorgeous handbags.



Models in Izzy Lane designs, pictured at the Great Yorkshire Show, with Wensleydale sheep from Mark Elliot's farm, near Knaresborough

Picture by DOUG JACKSON

*I think we've become this ridiculous, throwaway society. You buy an item and you might wear it once, and then never again*

Living my style



# Reigning BEAUTY

Laura Azevedo is Miss Durham and was a contestant in this year's Miss England competition, which she hopes to win next year. The 19-year-old business administrator talks to **JENNY LAUE** about what inspires her style

### Describe your look

When I go out on a night, I like to be glamorous, so I have a lot of occasion wear. I like to make an effort and I love dresses, especially cocktail dresses. I also love bright colours and to be matching, co-ordinated and I like to try out new things.

### What's your favourite item of clothing?

Again, it's dresses. I have got loads – too many, I think. Dresses are really easy because you've got yourself an outfit in one go. With skirts or trousers, you've always got to find a matching top, but with dresses all you need is your accessories.

### What's been your worst buy?

I think that would be some linen trousers I bought from New Look. I've never worn them because they have a really high waist, and because linen gets bigger the more you wear it, the trousers just didn't look right on me. Normally when I go shopping I look round all the shops to see what I like and then I go back again to see if I still like it. I don't like to waste my money.

### What are your favourite shops?

I love Topshop and I quite like Warehouse. I would say they're my main two shops because I know I'll always find something there.

### What is the most expensive item in your wardrobe?

I've never bought anything really extravagant, I'm not old enough. Maybe when I earn more money...





Laura Azevedo shows off her style choices

Pictures by Andy Lamb

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*I've never bought anything really extravagant, I'm not old enough. Maybe when I earn more money . . .*



**What's your favourite beauty product?**

I love blusher. I never used to wear it, but one time I went to have a makeover with Mac at a department store and the girl there introduced me to blusher. All their products are quite good, really. They are easy to use and last all day.

**Do you have any beauty tips?**

Moisturise.

**Which celebrity's style do you admire?**

I don't really model myself on any celebrity. I look in magazines for what's new and trendy. If I had to name someone, though, it would be Victoria Beckham. She does wear too much black, but when she gets it right she really goes for it.

*Ivy House*  
Clothing for Men Women & Children

## Living beauty



Selena Blain, above right, and the Cocoon beauty salon

# THE FACE fixers

**DEBORAH JOHNSON** decides to face her skincare fears by trying a new facial

**A**S someone who barely has the inclination to take their make-up off before bedtime – let alone cleanse, tone and moisturise morning and night – my skin was not in the best of states.

I suffer from a dry and sensitive complexion, and if I use any product that doesn't completely agree with my skin it can almost instantly break out in an unsightly combination of redness and pimples. As a result, I've used the same types of products since I was a teenager.

I've only ever had one facial before – which made my skin itchy and flaky for at least a week afterwards – so I must admit I was slightly apprehensive about my treatment at Cocoon Health and Beauty in Darlington.

But as soon as I stepped inside the stylish salon in Coniscliffe Road, owner Selena Blain gave me a full explanation of the products that would be used – all Dermalogica – and helped

me fill in a thorough questionnaire to ensure any issues with my skin were addressed.

The Cocoon Signature Facial includes massage techniques from around the world, including Balinese, Thai and Swedish – a theme common to all the salon's treatments.

On a wonderfully comfortable and relaxing treatment bed, I was given a step-by-step explanation of what was happening by therapist Laura, who had clearly read my questionnaire very thoroughly and tailored the products to my requirements.

Laura spent several minutes studying my complexion, deciding which areas to concentrate upon, and a Dermalogica Face Mapping treatment – a revolutionary form of skin analysis – revealed I had a lot of blockages beneath my skin and dehydration.

I was given a deep cleansing treatment to start the 90-minute procedure, followed by exfoliation, to help strip away the impurities.

A chest, neck and shoulder massage

followed, while my skin tingled warmly from the treatments. A serum and mask were then applied to my face to complete the deep cleansing procedure and I enjoyed a scalp massage while the products did their work.

The facial ended with moisturisers being applied, a cooling sensation to contrast the heat-based treatments I'd been given so far. My skin felt really cleansed and fresh.

As I left the salon, I caught sight of myself in a mirror and was surprised at my glowing complexion and how fresh my skin looked without any make-up.

Now I've decided to follow a careful beauty routine, and must admit to seeing a noticeable difference in my skin, and with a greater knowledge of my skin type from the Cocoon consultation, I have also found a new enthusiasm for trying different products.

☐ Cocoon, 24 Coniscliffe Road, Darlington. Tel: 01325-467700



# BROWNS

---

## HAIRDRESSING

### BACK TO BUSINESS



Jonny Brown & Romy Thorpe (artistic director) welcome Leanne (left) back to the Market Place salon after her maternity leave.

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PAUL MITCHELL

TIGI

## Living in Barnard Castle

Teesdale, in the south-west of County Durham, is often referred to as one of Britain's best-kept secrets. **KEITH PROUD** enjoys a visit to Barnard Castle, the town at its hub

The area known as Amen Corner, as seen from the Butter Market in Barnard Castle

Picture by CHRIS BOOTH

# HEART of the dale

**A**T the heart of Teesdale, guardian of the dale and the villages which rely on it in so many ways, the ancient market town of Barnard Castle stands on the east bank of the rushing River Tees.

With its distinctive and attractive stone-built architecture and broad main streets dating from the 17th to the 19th Century, the town has long been a gathering place for a variety of activities.

There is a supermarket with an extensive car park and throughout the town a good selection of specialist shops. The cafes and restaurants offer variety at sensible prices and the town is well-known for its antique shops.

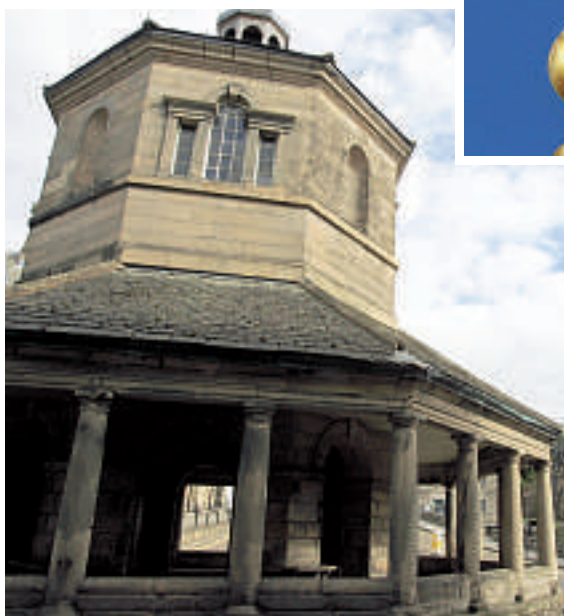
There are farmers' and general markets as well as Barnard Castle and Teesdale Farmers' Auction Mart, which holds specialist sales of breeding sheep and cattle throughout the autumn, fortnightly store cattle sales on

Tuesdays and prime sheep sales every Wednesday.

At the top of The Bank stands the Butter Market, built in 1747 by resident Thomas Breaks. In its time, it has acted as a town hall, a court, the jail and a market for butter traders. Sharp-eyed visitors will notice that its weather vane is perforated by two bullet holes, reputedly created when a soldier and a gamekeeper once used it as a target to find out which of them was the better shot. ►



The Butter Market and above, its weather vane sporting bullet holes after it was used for target practice



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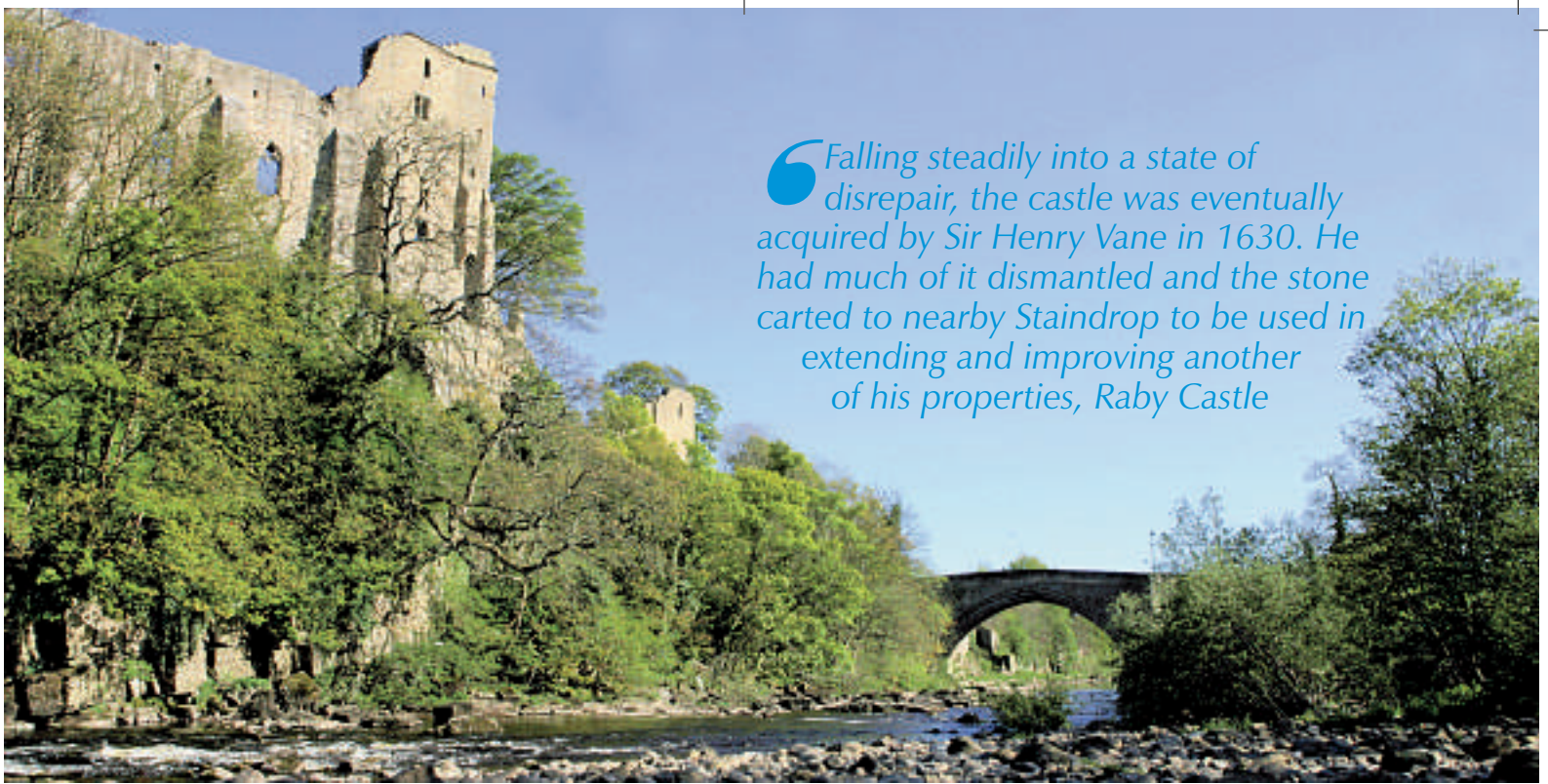
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“Falling steadily into a state of disrepair, the castle was eventually acquired by Sir Henry Vane in 1630. He had much of it dismantled and the stone carted to nearby Staindrop to be used in extending and improving another of his properties, Raby Castle

◀ Near the Butter Market stands the King’s Head Hotel, where the author Charles Dickens stayed briefly while he was researching material about some notoriously bad local boarding schools for his novel *Nicholas Nickleby*.

His Barnard Castle visit also gave him the idea for a weekly periodical which he called *Master Humphrey’s Clock*, a name he borrowed from Thomas Humphreys, the owner of a clockmaker’s shop at the top of The Bank. The magazine, which ran from April 1840 until December 1841, contained short stories and the early parts of *The Old Curiosity Shop* and *Barnaby Rudge*, both of which Dickens converted into novels.

Although there have been pre-Norman archaeological finds around the area, the real reason for the town’s founding was the now-ruined castle on The Scar. Rebuilt by Bernard Balliol, one of the most powerful men in England between 1126 and the 1150s, the castle, on seven acres of land and originally built of wood, overlooks a strategically-important crossing point of the Tees.

The most important preserved parts of the remains are those of the Great Hall and the Round Tower. When the travel writer and historian Walter White visited the castle ruins in the 1860s during his *Month in Yorkshire*, he found there: “a bearded hermit, a man of middle age, a subject for curiosity. So far as I could make him out, he appeared to be half misanthropist, half misogynist.

“He quarrelled with the world about 18 years ago and, without asking leave, took possession of a vault and a wall cavity at the foot of the great round tower and has lived there ever since, supporting himself by the

donations of visitors and the sale of rustic furniture which he makes with his own hands.

“His room in the wall is fitted with specimens of his skill and it serves as a trap for you have to pass through it to ascend the tower. I heard later in the day that he had been crossed in love.”

From the Balliols, Barnard Castle fell into the hands of the Beauchamps and then the Nevilles and was once owned by King Richard III. Falling steadily into a state of disrepair, it was eventually acquired by Sir Henry Vane in 1630. He had much of it dismantled and the stone carted to nearby Staindrop to be used in extending and improving another of his properties, Raby Castle, which, with its extensive herds of deer and other attractions, is well worth a visit.

Down The Bank from the Butter Market is Blagraves House, said to be the oldest house in the town, 15th Century in origin, and now a restaurant. Once used as a museum, the property is named after the Blgrave family who lived here in the 17th Century, a crested first-floor ceiling carrying the date 1672 and the initials WIB.

In 1484, the property had been given by Richard III to Joan Forest, wife of the Richard Forest who, with John Dighton, was involved in the disappearance, possibly murder, of the two princes in the Tower of London.

By the time of Elizabeth I, the property was an inn called *The Boar’s Head* and the vaulted cellars once housed a brewery as well as, it has been suggested, giving access to the proverbial secret tunnel, in this case leading to the castle or, less likely, to nearby Eggleston Abbey on the south bank of the River Tees.

In October 1648, Oliver Cromwell stayed



Top, the ruined castle dominates the area. Above, flowers in the town centre

here as he travelled to Richmond in North Yorkshire. In June 1725, towards the end of the reign of George I, Michael and Mary Coates, who were weavers, sold Blagraves House to a fishmonger, William Tomlinson.

Two other highly-regarded people associated with Barnard Castle are the 18th Century attorney and antiquarian William Hutchinson and Henry Witham, of nearby Lartington. Having spent time as a distinguished geologist in Edinburgh, Witham returned to Teesdale in 1832 and founded the Barnard Castle Mechanics’ Institute. ▶

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Following his death in 1844, the Witham Hall was built in his memory by public subscription to house the Mechanics Institute and another of Witham's initiatives, the Dispensary Society.

One of Barnard Castle's greatest treasures is the imposing and strikingly beautiful Bowes Museum. Standing in its own extensive and beautifully manicured grounds, this museum looks for all the world like a magnificent 18th Century French chateau.

First-time visitors never fail to be anything less than stunned by the vista it presents, appearing to be of the wrong era and in the wrong place. Its story is fascinating.

John Bowes, the illegitimate son of John Bowes, 10th Earl of Strathmore, was born on June 19, 1811 in Chelsea. Young John was eventually able to inherit

the Streatlam Estate in Teesdale and Gibside near Newcastle. In 1832, 1835, 1837 and 1841 he was elected Member of Parliament for South Durham.

On his Gibside lands, he founded the Marley Hill Coal Company, renamed in 1847 John Bowes and Partners, after which time it became one of the most important coal providers in the land.

Bowes was interested in horse-racing and, working with the Streatlam stud he had inherited from his father, he bred four Derby winners. He was also a great Francophile, visiting Paris on a number of occasions before settling there in 1847 and buying the Theatre of Varieties for £15,000.

He owned a house in the fashionable Rue de Berlin and a chateau overlooking the River Seine. He had met the actress and painter Josephine Benoitte Coffin-Chevallier, at his theatre and married her in 1852.

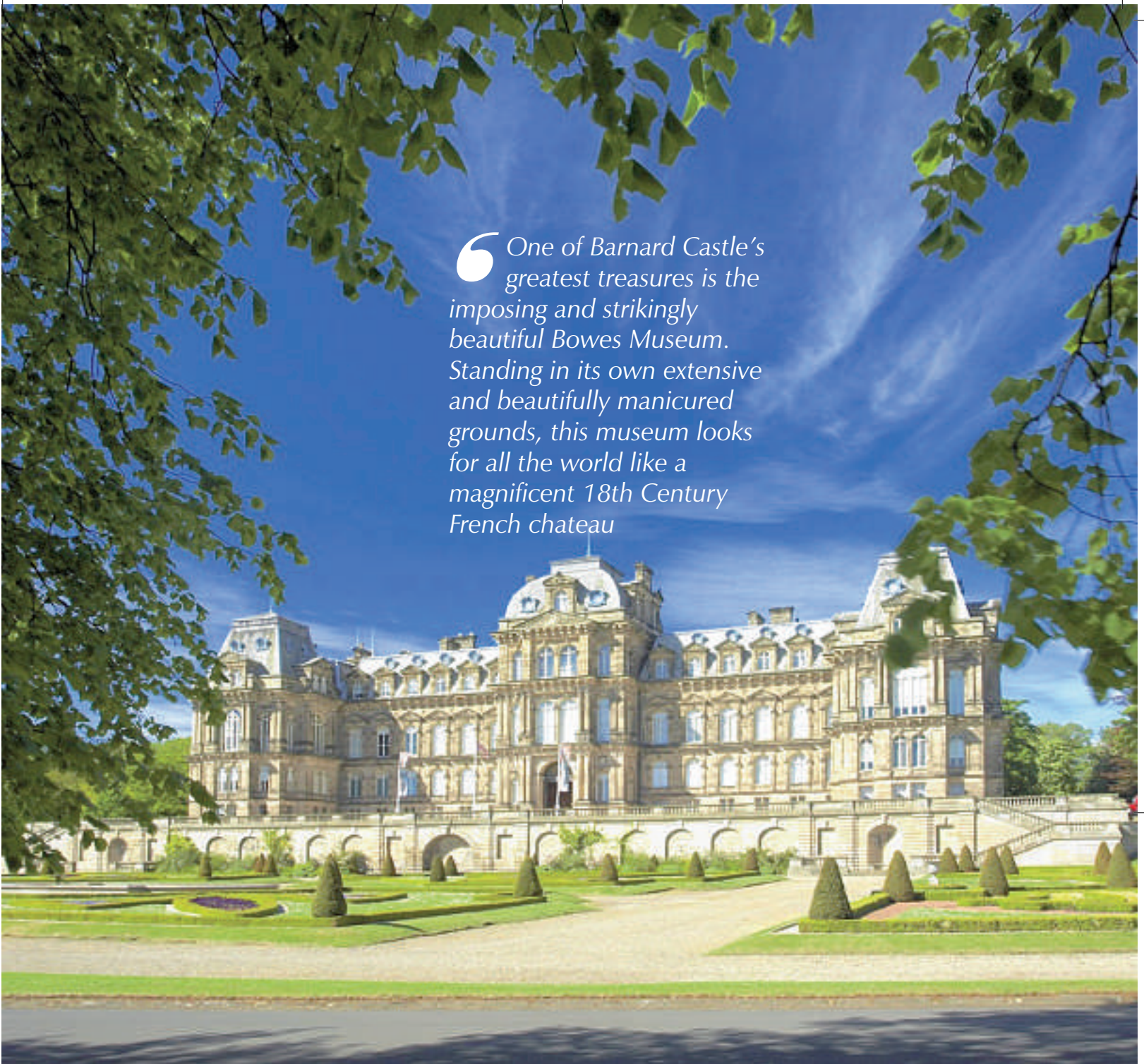
When the couple returned to Teesdale, they took back with them the many works of art they had been steadily collecting, with a view to starting a museum. This they eventually did in Barnard Castle in 1869, Josephine laying the foundation stone of the grand new building.

Created in the French Renaissance style, it was not completed until more than a decade later. Designed by the French architect Jules Pellechet and Newcastle's John Edward Watson, the Bowes Museum, its stone quarried at Streatlam, was the first building in England conceived and built in metric rather than the usual imperial measurements.

When Bowes died at Streatlam Castle in 1885, his body was buried at Gibside beside that of Josephine who had died in 1874. The museum was completed by trustees and opened to the public in 1892. During its first year of operation, although the



“One of Barnard Castle’s greatest treasures is the imposing and strikingly beautiful Bowes Museum. Standing in its own extensive and beautifully manicured grounds, this museum looks for all the world like a magnificent 18th Century French chateau



The Bowes Museum, above, and its gardens, left, were created in the French Renaissance style. Below, its priceless Silver Swan

Darlington and Barnard Castle Railway had been opened in 1856, before motorised transport was common, the museum had an amazing 63,000 visitors.

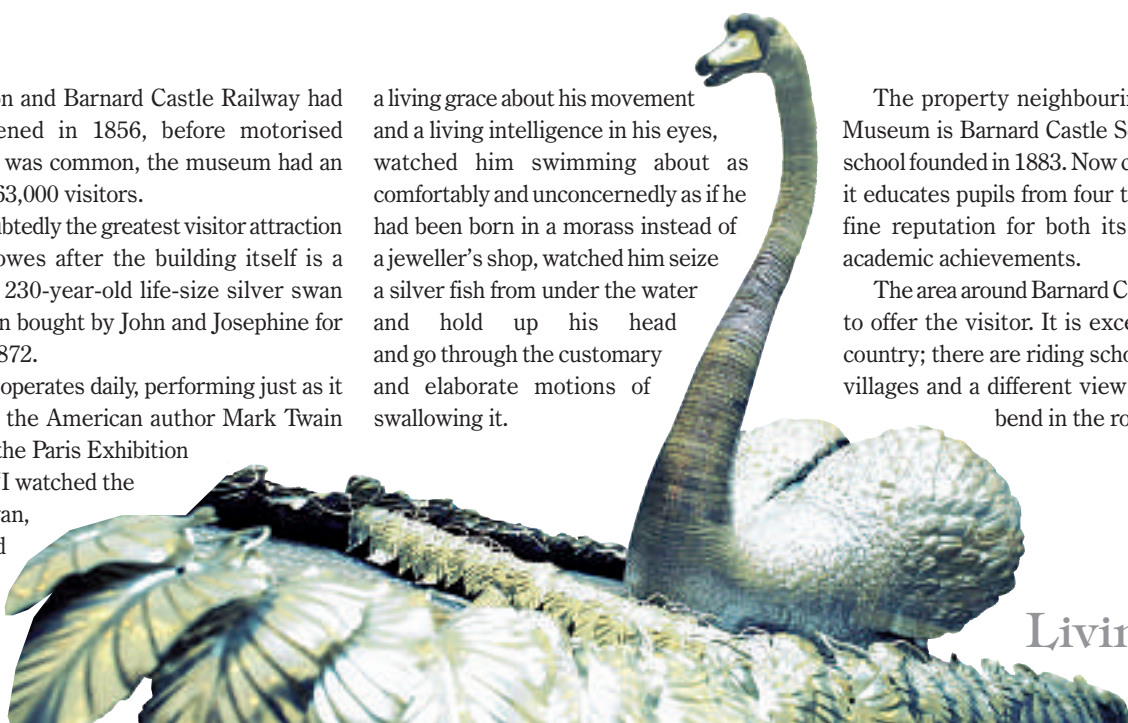
Undoubtedly the greatest visitor attraction at the Bowes after the building itself is a priceless 230-year-old life-size silver swan automaton bought by John and Josephine for £200 in 1872.

It still operates daily, performing just as it did when the American author Mark Twain saw it at the Paris Exhibition of 1867: “I watched the Silver Swan, which had

a living grace about his movement and a living intelligence in his eyes, watched him swimming about as comfortably and unconcernedly as if he had been born in a morass instead of a jeweller’s shop, watched him seize a silver fish from under the water and hold up his head and go through the customary and elaborate motions of swallowing it.

The property neighbouring the Bowes Museum is Barnard Castle School, a public school founded in 1883. Now co-educational, it educates pupils from four to 18 and has a fine reputation for both its sporting and academic achievements.

The area around Barnard Castle has much to offer the visitor. It is excellent walking country; there are riding schools, attractive villages and a different view around every bend in the road.



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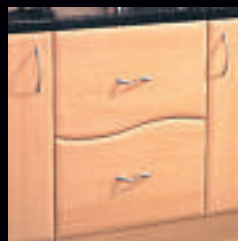
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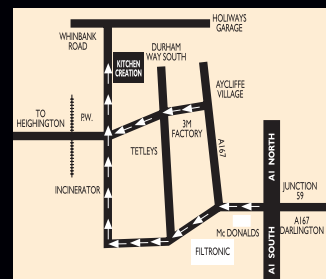


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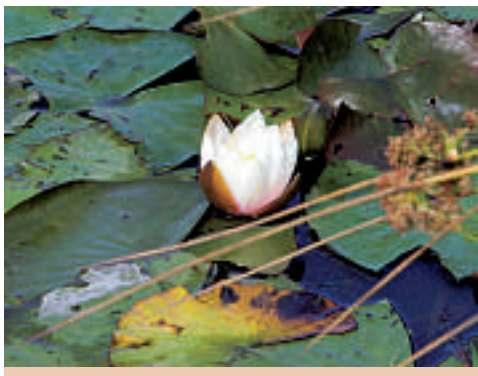


## Living through the keyhole

Clare Moss-Clelland  
at the stable door of  
her little home,  
sweet home

Pictures by SARAH  
NICHOLSON

It's small, it's beautiful, and the Moss-Clellands are very content to cosy up in their newly converted mini mansion. **JENNY LAUE** takes the two-minute tour



# A little slice of PARADISE

IT'S a bit like playing at houses, or going camping, but Holmebeck is actually somebody's real home. The tiny, converted, one-up-one-down former hay barn, which could well be Britain's smallest lived-in house, belongs to Clare Moss-Clelland and her husband Sean, who live there with their dog, Oscar.

They bought the barn and the surrounding land from Clare's parents and, due to flash floods and other unforeseen setbacks, it has taken until now for their bijou barn to be completed.

"The building and land used to belong to my parents and about four years ago we bought it from them. Originally, they were

going to convert the barn, but they had the chance to buy another farm and so we decided to do it ourselves," says Clare.

If you think Holmebeck is small now, think again: it started life as a much smaller hay barn which housed farm animals below with hay stored above.

"So we dug down," says Clare. "My husband thought it was too small to live in, but a friend of ours had done something similar and when we saw that it could be done, we took that as a bit of inspiration."

As any aspiring DIYer will tell you, getting any kind of building project off the ground is easy enough on paper; in reality, it is much more difficult, especially when

councils and their planning departments get involved.

This was the case for Clare and Sean, who found out very soon that they were required to comply with quite a few conditions before they could be granted permission from Richmondshire District Council, in North Yorkshire, to change the building's use.

"The planning department was actually quite strict with us," says Clare. "We had to have the windows made specially, not only because we wanted to let in as much light as possible but also because, for some reason, they have to open to the inside rather than the outside. We weren't even allowed to have the waste pipe from the bathroom ►



When space is at a premium, a lot of thought needs to go into storage solutions

◀ on the outside. That had to go inside too,” she says, pointing to the discreet boxed-in pipe in one corner of the kitchen.

The council planning officers might have been strict, but the Moss-Clennells made firm friends with the planning regulations department, which was impressed with the couple’s diligent approach to the barn’s conversion.

“We are planning to apply for a little extension which we can use as a separate living room, because it’s not so nice coming in from the outside straight into the kitchen and we’re hoping that the council will treat it favourably because they’ve seen what a good job we’ve done so far,” says Clare.

The barn is finished to a very high standard, inside and out. There is not a single cracked ceiling, or piece of peeling paint, or buckled paving slab or stray weed to be seen.

The couple have kept the interior neutral to give the rooms a sense of space and an airier feel. The main living space, which is also the kitchen and dining area, is furnished with an L-shaped sofa, which has storage space underneath.

The fitted kitchen has a country cottage feel to it and the appliances are hidden behind cupboard doors. Even the stylish Belfast sink seems to have been chosen because it’s deep rather than wide, giving Clare and Sean plenty of worktop space.

Saving space – or rather creating more space – was a major concern for the couple and it’s behind every design decision they’ve



made. The under-sofa storage, the fold-up dining chairs and table and the under-floor heating were just the beginning.

Upstairs, every nook and cranny has been utilised for storage. On top of the stairs there is a built-in clothes cupboard, the bathroom has storage underneath the sink and the dead space between the shower cubicle and the sloping roof houses shelves as well as the linen basket.

“When we were doing up the barn, we had a look at some caravans to see how to save space and that really helped us,” says Clare.

In the only bedroom, a decent-sized double with a high ceiling and again painted in neutral colours, the Ikea wardrobe is less deep than normal wardrobes. It takes up one whole wall and above it there are three big overhead lockers, similar those in planes. They’re big enough to hold sports equipment, such as snowboards and boots. The only things they haven’t been able to fit into their tiny haven are the washing machine and dryer, which are in the garden shed across the yard.

“I’ve got to be really ruthless when it comes to space,” says Clare. “Every summer, I’ve got to sort out all my winter clothes, pack them up and store them away.” And when they finally moved into their barn, the only item of furniture they took from their old house is the chest of drawers in the bedroom.

One last feature of the bedroom, which has to be mentioned, is the shower button. This is a palm-sized, blue-lit button which can ▶

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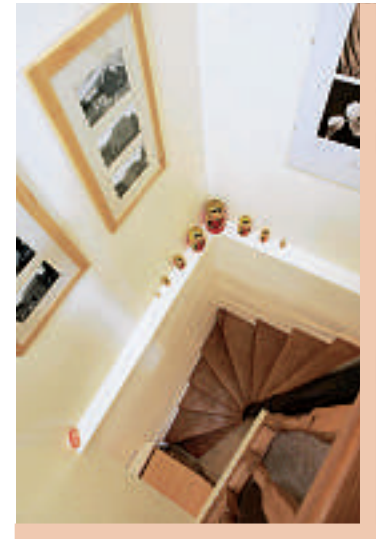
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*“When we were doing up the barn, we had a look at some caravans to see how to save space and that really helped us*



be activated without getting out of bed and which switches on the shower next door. When the blue light starts flashing, it tells the snoozer that the water in the shower has heated up enough to get straight under. Ingenious.

Space wasn't the only thing the Moss-Clellennells wanted to save on. As with any other young couple, money was an issue, but both were lucky enough to have a large circle of relatives and friends who could help out with the rendering, the electrics and the landscaping. Converting Holmebeck was a real family affair.

One of the biggest worries was the staircase to the upper rooms, which, by

necessity, had to be a spiral staircase. “Initially, we were quoted something like £1,000 for a staircase but ours is a lucky find, which we bought on eBay for £200. We went down to Portsmouth to pick it up from this couple who had taken it out of their attic. It fitted like a glove.”

Outside, the barn is surrounded by a sizeable plot of land. Anyone coming up the neat gravel drive will immediately notice the serene pond, with its little jetty, beautiful water lilies and koi carp.

A favourite playground for Oscar, I am told, and right next to it is a decked barbecue area with garden chairs and table, where the couple sit on balmy summer evenings,

watching the fish in the pond and enjoying the surrounding countryside.

“We have both always lived in the country,” says Clare. “We love the outdoors and when we moved here we had this sense of freedom because of the countryside. Sean was saying that he wouldn't swap this house for a palace.”

Clare and Sean have clearly put a lot of effort into making their home as nice as possible from the inside and outside.

Yes, Holmebeck might be tiny, but because there is no clutter, it doesn't feel confined – and anyway, who needs a palace if you've got acres of land for your front room?

# The move to IMPROVE

About 13 per cent of homeowners are planning to sell their property in the next 12 months – despite the housing market downturn – so this is the ideal time to bring added value with improvements.

**GABRIELLE FAGAN** reports



Above and below, lofts and stairs by Truss Loft Conversions

**I**F you're looking around your house, with an accompanying pounding head and churning stomach, you've probably got a property hangover.

These symptoms are hardly surprising in the current market, with tumbling house prices and one major forecaster predicting values falling by up to 35 per cent over the next two years.

If that wasn't a big enough headache, rising mortgage costs and more properties for sale than buyers – a ratio at the moment of about 15 homes for every one buyer – are adding to the pain.

So most people are opting to sit tight and improve. That can mean anything from large projects – the most popular are lofts and extensions – through to smaller ways to make a home look great, and boost their spirits without punishing their pockets.

A recent survey of estate agents by lender GE Money found that simply redecorating all the bedrooms or a living room adds at least £4,000 (2.6 per cent) value and that doesn't include the feel-good factor of having rooms you'll enjoy.

Fashionista Lulu Guinness is a decorating enthusiast and recommends wallpapering or painting just one wall to turn it in an instant "feature".

Annie Deakin, editor of the magazine for the online interiors site mydeco.com, says: "We discovered that even the tiny details can make a difference. Sir Terence Conran recommended flooding a room with as ►



## Lofty ideals

WHAT can you do if space in your house is becoming an issue? Maybe your children need a bigger room, you might be starting to work from home or you'd love an extra bathroom. Extending outwards is not possible for many people and can also be a very expensive option.

So what else is there? Well, if you have a loft space, basement or garage that is not being used to its full potential at the moment, the answer could be closer than you think.

Not only could converting an unused space create the room you so badly need, but look on it as an investment, too. A well-designed, well-executed loft, basement or garage conversion will not only add square footage, but could also add thousands to the value of your property.

Realising the potential of under-used space in your home can give you room to breathe. Think about the difference an extra bedroom and bathroom could make or how a home office could change your life or a playroom would leave the rest of your home tidy.

A spokesman for Truss Loft Conversions says: "We find that many people think their property isn't suitable for a conversion. But with a little help from people like us, specialists in this field, you may well be surprised to see the potential that you have under your roof."

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**CASH FACTS:**

People who put in a new kitchen are likely to see the price of their property rise by nearly five per cent, while installing central heating could add 3.4 per cent, and new windows or a new bathroom could boost its valuation by three per cent.



A gorgeous kitchen is a great selling point for your home but, well worth considering, it also gives you a feel-good factor. Above and left, kitchens created by Dean Hunter Kitchens. For more inspired ideas, visit [deanhunter.co.uk](http://deanhunter.co.uk), call 01388-606051, or email [sales@dean.hunter.co.uk](mailto:sales@dean.hunter.co.uk)

We've got expert advice on shrewd ways to make the most of your home, without breaking the bank:

**WINNING WAYS WITH COLOUR**

**B** AFFLED by the dizzying amount of styles and trends around? The last thing you want to do is waste money by redecorating only to find that in a few months the style or colour is out of fashion and your rooms look out of date.

It's even more important to get it right if you're trying to sell, as indulging your personal passion for fluorescent pink is fine – but don't expect other people to pay for it!

Probably the safest and most chic choice for decor is monochrome. Sainsbury's head of design, Simon Stevens, says: "We all thought monochrome was going to be a fad, but now we believe it's going to endure for the foreseeable future, definitely through next year."

Fionnuala Johnston, design manager for B&Q, compares a monochrome decor scheme to the wardrobe classic, the

◀ with as much natural light as possible to transform it, while supermodel Erin O'Connor's interior designer, Suzy Hoodless, believes the best quick fix is arrangements of flowers and plants.

Textile designer Celia Birtwell apparently snaps up new cushions whenever she wants to update a room, and TV presenter Kirstie Allsopp plumps for a new toaster and kettle to smarten a kitchen and matching fluffy towels for bathroom appeal. Ceramacist Sophie Conran says cleaning windows yourself instantly brightens rooms and doesn't cost a penny.

Deakin suggests using designer techniques to inspire DIY projects. "Furniture designer Bryonie Porter, for instance, sells wallpaper-covered furniture. If you can't afford one of her coveted pieces you could try wallpapering your own table or cupboard. Flair and imagination makes even small-budget changes more effective," she says.

Those efforts could pay dividends, according to Miles Shipside, of property website Rightmove, who says: "Homes with an immaculate finish are still popular if priced realistically. Badly-presented homes have to be really modestly priced to sell, and first impressions really count."

So instead of just sitting around feeling battered by the current rough ride on property's rollercoaster, you could fight back.

Rise to the challenge and make your home a sanctuary where you can shelter from the chill winds of economic uncertainty, and also ensure your most valuable asset isn't jaded and drab if you do decide to sell.



A good quality shower is an absolute must and this enclosure, the Freedom Colossus, by Roman Collections, of Aycliffe, County Durham, precisely replaces a traditional bath, with a low-level tray, or straight to the floor. Call 01325-311318 or visit [roman-showers.com](http://roman-showers.com)

LBD – little black dress. “It’s a great basic which can be dressed up with metallics, warmed with soft colours or made dramatic with punchy contrasts like red. Just varying your accessories – throws, lampshades and cushions – from time to time can instantly freshen the scheme.”

Other trend-savvy colour choices are greens – nature’s palette stays strong – with grass green and sage green the leading shades. Soft blues, such as duck egg and teal (the latter will probably stay the course longer), combine brilliantly with chocolate and soft browns.

Experiment with a new look without risk with mydeco.com’s room planning tool, which allows users to upload an image of their room and try out combinations of wallpaper and paint (as well as checking out flooring, furnishings, furniture and accessories).

## BARGAINS TO BOAST ABOUT

IT’S not just smart to have a nose for a bargain in these cash-strapped times. Now it pays to be open about it too, even brag about your thrifty purchase. Research by TK Maxx reveals that, for seven out of ten people, a compliment about a smart buy is enough to trigger a boast about how little we paid for it.

Get clued up on good hunting grounds for bargains, such as auctions, car boot sales and charity shops. Useful sites include antiques-atlas.com, a guide to antique fairs and shops; auctionhammer.co.uk, which lists auctions; charityshops.org.uk; and carbootjunction.com, a directory of regular and one-off boot sales.

Mydeco.com features 600 retailers and offers exclusive discounts of up to 24 per cent off named brands. Also, try homesandbargains.co.uk, which is a guide to quality or luxury buys at discounted prices.

## SCOURING THE STORES

DAVE ALVES, buying director of HomeSense, a division of TK Maxx, advises looking for a “hero” piece. “These are unusual or eye-catching pieces that literally can transform the look of a room,” he says.

“Contrast is the key here. If your style’s vintage or traditional, look for one piece of contemporary furniture that will stand out and give the ‘wow’ factor. Similarly, if you’ve got a modern room, add something oozing character and age, like a period-style chair.”

He also recommends mirrors hung in a group or “fill one wall with a large, ornate or black-framed mirror to give a boudoir feel”. Accessorise with style. “African tribal is still a strong trend but look for more contemporary items in polished black wood and gold leaf finish,” he adds.



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Picture by DOUG JACKSON

**A**T one time, not so long ago, wearing glasses was uncool, geeky, and deeply unfashionable. For many, it was a reason to be less confident about their appearance. For others, it was deeply embarrassing.

As a 13-year-old schoolgirl, I remember being so upset when I was prescribed glasses I threw a tantrum in the optician's surgery. "I do not need glasses," I protested, eyeing the rows of horrible specs lining the walls with horror in my heart. I once even tried to

memorise the vision chart in an attempt to prove I was not short-sighted – yes, I really was that desperate.

Needless to say, my efforts to convince myself and others I had perfect eyesight failed. I would squint to the point of closing my eyes rather than admit to anyone I needed glasses, only revealing my dreaded eyewear – fleetingly at that – when I was sitting at the back of the class and could barely see the blackboard, let alone what was written on it. Imagine if any of the boys saw me wearing my big, round glasses with violet metallic frames

– oh the shame. "Men never make passes at girls who wear glasses" was the well-known phrase that haunted my nightmares.

How the tables have turned. Now, wearing glasses is almost the epitome of cool. The more daring the specs, the better.

Barely a decade ago, famous spec wearers included Timmy Mallett and Elton John, who both helped to popularise the belief that glasses were fairly vile and for exhibitionists. Now, many celebrities are wearing them.

Among the celebrities who are proud to wear glasses, to name but a few, are Kirsten

# THE EYES have it

Within the last decade, perceptions of wearing glasses have changed dramatically. **DEBORAH JOHNSON** looks at how it is now the height of fashion to be loud and proud about sporting specs, and considers the options for those with less than perfect sight

Dunst, Cheryl Cole, stylists Gok Wan and Nicky Hambleton Jones, comedian Alan Carr and musicians Anastacia and Dave Stewart.

And while I never thought I'd ever say the same, I too now subscribe to that way of thinking. Glasses, as well as being a necessity and helping to improve and protect the health of the eyes, are a statement, a reflection of mood and personality.

I have two pairs, one with bold burgundy jewel-encrusted frames for when I am feeling confident and even slightly daring, and the other rimless for when I am feeling more ►

*I once even tried to memorise the vision chart in an attempt to prove I was not short-sighted*



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◀ sober and reserved. Howard Bainbridge, director at Cooper and Leatherbarrow opticians, in Darlington, has noticed a definite change in opinions of eyewear.

“Eye fashion has seen a big movement over the past few years in particular, and now people are very eye fashion conscious. People are very aware of what is going on with different styles and trends, and there is now a massive choice. Colours and styles are key in choosing a pair of glasses.

“Even the children’s range has seen a massive change,” he says, presenting an array of funky, plastic-framed glasses which, had they been around 15 years ago, would have changed my teenage reluctance to wearing specs.

“In my experience, despite all of these guides that tell you which glasses to wear for certain face shapes, the only way you can really decide is to try them on. I would never try to change someone’s mind about which ones to pick.

“If they come in wanting black frames, they’re unlikely to dramatically change from that – but I do try to advise. Your glasses become a part of you, so it’s important you make the right choice.” ▶



Celebrity specs and shades, from top left, Julie Walters, Dave Stewart, Anastacia, Gok Wan and Cheryl Cole

## THIS SEASON'S TRENDS

Steve Raine, sales manager for Gucci in the North of England, tells Living how several key trends are emerging this season:

- ❑ **Broad sides** – ‘Although the arms aren’t massive like you might see with sunglasses, there’s a definite leaning away from very thin sides.’
- ❑ **Retro styles** – ‘These are very big. With Gucci, they are using their traditional logo and retro

Gucci writing a lot this season.’

- ❑ **Colours** – ‘All kinds of colours are in – from the traditional warm shades of brown, gunmetal grey and golds, to the more adventurous reds, pinks and greens. Don’t be afraid of colour.’
- ❑ **Bling** – ‘This is very big, particularly along the sides of glasses this season. Lots of Swarovski crystal is being used.’



Go bling with Valentino's frames

## SHAPING UP

- ❑ **Round face** – Angular shapes can break up the roundness of your features, and wider lenses can help widen the face.
- ❑ **Heart-shaped** – Round or angular glasses can be worn as your face is a composite of both these shapes.
- ❑ **Oval** – A well-balanced face shape usually looks good in either round or angular glasses.
- ❑ **Square** – Rounded or oval shape glasses help to soften an angular jawline, but square glasses are not suitable.
- ❑ **Oblong** – Avoid small or narrow square-shaped glasses, but wider frames are better than narrow frames to break up the length of the face.

Colours and styles are key in choosing a pair of glasses. Even the children’s range has seen a massive change

Howard Bainbridge, director at Cooper and Leatherbarrow, Darlington

## I've been framed...



Valentino specs – maybe



A hint of green – possibly



My own frames – comfy



Deborah Johnson tries some frames and, as far as this Gucci pair are concerned, the answer is – definitely

AS a keen reader of every style or fashion guide going, I consider myself quite knowledgeable about the type of glasses I should go for.

I've got quite a square face so spent hours choosing my last specs, ensuring I chose a rounded frame shape to soften my angular jaw. It's not a theory Howard Bainbridge, director of Cooper and Leatherbarrow, in Darlington, subscribes to. He believes the only way to tell if a pair of glasses suit you is to try them on.

"Although you say you look for glasses to suit your face shape, I think your most obvious features are your big eyes and blonde hair, and that's what you should be looking to emphasise," he says.

I choose a pair of deep red Valentino glasses with Swarovski crystal sides, which I consider to be very 'me'. Howard disagrees.

"They are the wrong colour for you and the shape doesn't really suit. And, if I dare say it, they make you look a lot older."

Needless to say, they were discarded in

seconds, mainly due to that last comment.

After a few more attempts at finding the perfect frame, Howard steps in, and suggests a pair of green Gucci specs. Having always believed green frames were something of a comedy choice, I thought I would try them on for a giggle. But I was surprised to find they actually suited me rather well.

"They are much better. The frame shape is soft and the colour goes really well with your hair and skin-tone. They look really good, and also bring out your eye colour," says Howard, nodding with approval.

Having seen my subscription to the style guides dispelled in a matter of seconds, I now agree with Howard that trying on glasses is the only way to make an informed decision.

As well as discovering colours or styles you may never have considered before, the right choice of specs – as I found – could even save several years being added to your age. Something definitely not to be sniffed at.

◀ For those who refuse to be converted to become dedicated spectacle wearers, there are other options.

Contact lenses have been in existence for many years – indeed, their origin is said to be traceable to Leonardo da Vinci's Codex of the Eye thesis in 1508 – but have become commercially readily available since the Sixties.

The original type of the lense – in hard perspex – has since evolved and the vast range now includes oxygen permeable lenses, which can be changed on a daily or monthly basis, enabling continuous wear. Lenses even come in a range of colours, so wearers can have corneas in shades including violet, pink, or more conventional blue, green or hazel.

An increasingly popular alternative is laser eye surgery, which is used by thousands of people across the UK each year to dramatically decrease, or even remove, their reliance on corrective eyewear.

Through the procedure, a laser is used to permanently change the shape of the cornea, the clear covering over the coloured iris, and the lens, which is just behind the pupil of the eye, to correct both long and short sight.

Although laser eye surgery is fast-becoming the accepted alternative to glasses, with high-profile advertising and numerous celebrity endorsements, its risks are well-documented, although experts acknowledge they are slim.

Dry eyes, headaches, blurred vision and even temporary blindness are all concerns frequently cited, but statistics show they affect only a small minority of patients – about one in 1,000.

David Gartry, a consultant ophthalmologist at Moorfields Eye Hospital, in London, helped to draw up Royal College of Ophthalmologist' guidelines on who should carry out laser eye surgery, which say that only doctors with specialist training should perform the procedure.

He advises those thinking of having laser eye surgery not to be afraid to ask questions, no matter how trivial the concerns.

"This is a situation where patients are responding to adverts, or even incentives," he says.

"Patients should be asking the sort of questions they would ask if they were having, say, a hernia operation. What are the complication rates? What will happen if something goes wrong?" ▶



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Right, pretty in pink with a stylish collection of children's frames from Whiz Kids



## THE HEALTHY OPTIONS

◀ But as well as glasses being a fashion choice, wearing spectacles is also vital to many to preserve and improve the health of their eyes – something that is too often taken for granted.

Research has shown that eyes need exercise, rest and nutrition to function at their best, and that regular trips should be made to the optician to ensure they are functioning at their best.

That particularly applies to the growing number of people who use computers for regular and prolonged periods, many of whom may suffer from tired eyes, discomfort or headaches. Many experts believe there could be a link between continuous visual display unit (VDU) use and permanent eye damage, although there is no official evidence to support that.

Nevertheless, under regulations from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE),

employers of regular VDU users are legally obliged to provide a free eye test and to pay for a basic pair of glasses specifically for screen work, to ensure the visual health of their workforce is preserved.

Ray Hutchings, of Specsavers opticians, says there are plenty of measures that computer users can take to prevent serious eye problems.

“The more natural daylight there is, the better,” he advises. “If the artificial lighting is too bright, have it adjusted, and if it is poor, change your workstation or use a desk lamp.

“Tilt your screen downwards to eliminate glare from the overhead lighting and adjust your monitor so that it is neither too dim nor too bright. Don't strain to see a tiny font on the screen when you can work in bigger characters.”

Mr Hutchings also recommends using an anti-glare screen, or having your spectacle lenses coated with an anti-glare finish.

“For VDU use, spectacles designed to help you to see material 18 to 20in away are ideal. These can be a separate pair to your normal reading glasses,” he says.

“When at your screen, take a few minutes break from the screen once an hour to look around and refocus the eyes. Remember to blink regularly and every 20 minutes or so, look up from your screen and focus on something about 20ft away for 20 seconds.”

As well as following recommendations over computer use to maximise eye performance, nutrition can also play a vital role.

Dr Wendy Doyle, of the British Dietetic Association, says several key vitamins can make a definite difference.

“Vitamin A is essential in forming the retinal pigments responsible for vision. It is plentiful in raw carrots, red peppers and other orange fruit and vegetables. Other active sources include liver, kidney, margarine, egg yolks dark green vegetables and fish liver oils,” she says.

“Diets high in the other antioxidants – vitamins C, E and carotene – also found in brightly coloured fruit and vegetables also help and zinc, vitamin B2 and iron play a role.”

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“The more natural daylight there is, the better. If the artificial lighting is too bright, have it adjusted, and if it is poor, change your workstation or use a desk lamp

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## Living in Sedgefield

Mention Sedgefield anywhere in the country and you are likely to hear Tony Blair's name in response. But the picturesque County Durham village has much more to offer than the name it gave to the former Prime Minister's constituency, as **CATHERINE PRIESTLEY** discovers



Above and right, the picturesque centre of Sedgefield

Left, the statue of Neptune in Hardwick Park

Pictures by SARAH NICHOLSON

# Hidden TREASURES

**T**RUNDLING along the A689 as I have done many times before, I allow myself to be pulled towards one of Sedgefield's greatest attractions.

I usually glance up at the brown tourism signs for Hardwick Park, wonder how it is looking these days, then drive past because I have somewhere else to be.

But making time to visit the 18th Century

Georgian park is a rewarding experience. This sleeping beauty was reawakened five years ago when Durham County Council started a multi-million pound restoration project.

The estate was bought in 1748 by wealthy Tyneside merchant John Burdon, who set about transforming it with the help of some of the finest designers and craftsmen.

But from the mid-19th Century, the garden

fell into a state of gradual decline, and until the recent restoration its magic was forgotten. Once overgrown and run down, follies created by Burdon's acclaimed architect James Paine are being rebuilt.

Around every twist in the footpath is another treasure. Carefully positioned focal points guide your eyes from one captivating view to another. As John Fitzpatrick, secretary of the Friends of Hardwick Park, ►



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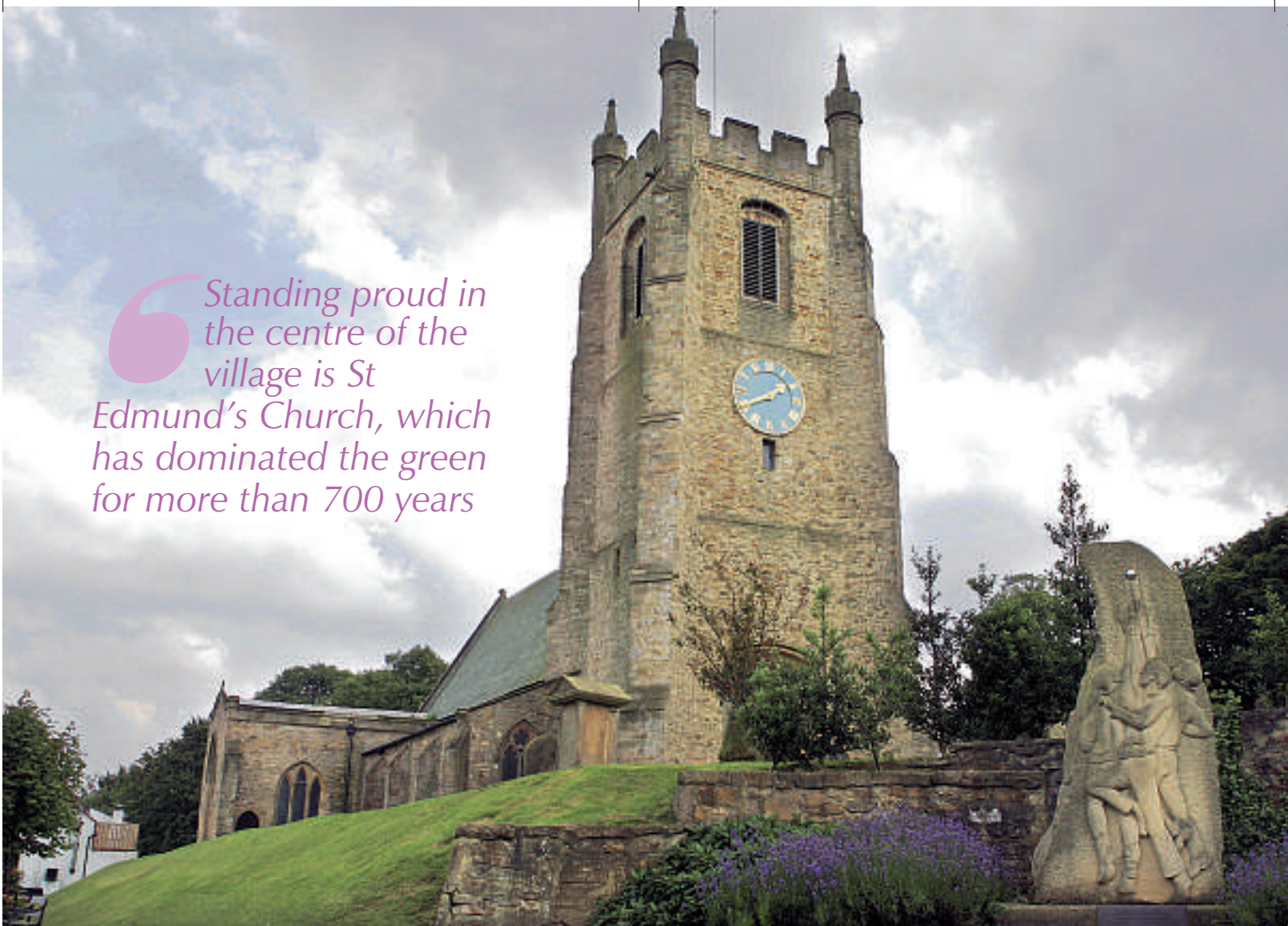
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Standing proud in the centre of the village is St Edmund's Church, which has dominated the green for more than 700 years



◀ which has been involved in much of the restoration scheme, puts it: "It was created on the surprise principle – as you leave one area you are greeted with another wonderful view.

"Local people who use it are very proud of the park and visitor numbers from outside the area are increasing markedly. It is a place of tranquillity and it will improve further when a boardwalk and bathhouse are reinstated."

But Sedgefield is not just about leisurely strolls around Hardwick Park as a high-paced attraction on the opposite side of the village proves.

Horsereading has taken place at Sedgefield since the 18th Century. The present day steeplechase course dates from the 19th Century and its 19 race days every year attract thousands of punters.

Most races are on a Tuesday afternoon and attract gates of about 1,500 to 2,000, but undoubtedly the biggest date on the racecourse's calendar is Boxing Day.

This is when villagers and visitors flock to its traditional festive fixture.



From top, St Edmund's Church and the statue marking the ball game, a walk on the green and racing at Sedgefield

Cassandra Jackson, marketing executive of the course, said: "Most people in the village are supportive of the racecourse and see it as a valuable attraction. We try to work with other attractions across County Durham to support the tourism industry and it is important to us to support local charities and businesses.

"The racecourse is much more than just 19 race days a year. We have special events like the Miss Durham contest, Christmas parties, and we held a midnight walk in aid of the Butterwick Hospice. We're also becoming more of a family attraction – we recently installed a £33,000 purpose-built play park for children."

In the village centre, I'm back on foot again and following a heritage trail that leads the visitor around some of the village's historic landmarks. And there are many.

Standing proud in the centre of the village is St Edmund's Church, which has dominated the green for more than 700 years.

Nearby, a carved stone statue of three lads stretching up to the heavens to catch a ▶

◀ ball tells the tale of one of the village's more unusual historic attractions.

Every Shrove Tuesday, the village battens down the hatches before burly residents recreate a traditional ball game said to have begun with warring tribes who chased the head of an enemy around the streets instead of a ball.

Behind the church sits Ceddesfeld Hall, a former rectory that is now home to an active community association. It is the hall's pretty grounds that provide the setting for a popular local folk story about "the pickled parson".

According to legend, he died many centuries ago, a week before his parishioners were due to pay their annual rent. The parson's canny widow pickled his body in salt, sat him in his favourite armchair and popped his pipe in his mouth. The parishioners were fooled by her plan and duly handed over their money.

The following day, with her pockets full of money, she announced tearfully that her husband had died. The pickled parson was so outraged that his ghost is still said to haunt the old rectory in protest.

So to pickling of another variety. For a village of 5,000 and at a time when the days of the traditional English pub are said to be

numbered, Sedgefield supports a number of popular hostleries.

The Crosshill Hotel sits on the village green and around it you will find The Nags Head, The Golden Lion, The Black Lion and The Hope Inn. The Hardwick Arms Hotel used to be Sedgefield's main coaching inn and if you wander through its arch you get a glimpse of the past.

Stone blocks set on both sides kept coach

wheels away from the walls and former stables have been converted into houses.

Two establishments that have earned a sound reputation for their food are Ministers and The Dun Cow Inn, which both became accustomed to serving up a pint or a meal to Tony Blair when he was Prime Minister.

Tony and Cherie Blair dined many times at Ministers, which recently became an Indian restaurant and is earning a good ▶



Left, Ministers was a favourite with former Prime Minister Tony Blair. Below, the Dun Cow Inn, where he took George Bush during the US president's visit to the town



Sedgefield's brilliant flower displays have won the Northumbria in Bloom competition for 11 consecutive years



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Above, the Crosshill Hotel has a commanding view of the green. Below, enjoying refreshments and a chat outside Number Four Tea Shop

*This gem is steeped in history, full of charm and has a surprising amount for visitors to enjoy*



◀ reputation since spicing up the local dining options.

Then there was the day the President of the US, George Bush, dropped in on Sedgefield. The Blairs took the Bushes to the Dun Cow for fish and chips and, since then, hundreds of customers have streamed through the doors, perused the extensive blackboard menus and then opted to have the same as the president.

That day – Friday, November 21, 2003 – is marked with a simple plaque outside the pub and proprietor Geoff Rayner says that one day he will make a collage about it. But right now he's busy being a pub landlord.

Mr Rayner says: "I've been here 30-odd years now and the intention has always been to simply look after people. The quality of the food has to be a priority, equally the service people receive, cleanliness and comfort.

"We have a fantastic core team of staff, with some excellent students and – although it sounds cheesy – we have wonderful customers. It is they who really create an atmosphere.

"I'd like to think that whether it is Tony Blair, George Bush, French prime minister Lionel Jospin or someone from across the street, we'd provide the same respect and service. I love being part of the village. We are very much part of Sedgefield."

And as a customer you really feel that.

The sepia photographs on the wall could have come straight from a pub memorabilia catalogue, but a closer look reveals they capture village life through the years.

Looking at one of the pictures, Mr Rayner says: "This one here, a 1903 Sunday school treat – two ladies came in the other day and named all but a couple of the people."

So after taking time to discover what Sedgefield has to offer I found that this gem is steeped in history, full of charm and has a surprising amount for visitors to enjoy.



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**B**ATHED in sunlight, Hadrian's Wall snakes across the green meadow. Against the golden glow of the sky, the Roman monument stands proudly, as it has done for the past 1,900 years. Far from being a battlefield, it appears the picture-perfect place to spend an idyllic day.

Months later, covered in snow, it barely stands out amid the whitened territory around it, with only the trees emerging from the ground to break up the bleak terrain. Cold and daunting, the wall takes on an entirely different aura.

Harrogate-based photographer Derry Brabbs says this is one of the main reasons for his passion for Hadrian's Wall. Whether captured in rain or snow, sunlight or darkness, different views of the iconic structure constantly take you by surprise.

"It never looks the same two days in a row. On a dull, overcast day, it can be seen in its cold, bleak and isolated splendour. On other days it's bathed in sunlight and resembles almost a kind of rockery stretching across the breadth of the country," he says.

"I have spent many days over many seasons, in the most awful and most beautiful of weathers, photographing the wall, and I know there is always a new picture or interpretation to be found. I always imagine I will be showing my pictures to someone who has never visited it before, so I want to capture the scenery and the atmosphere."

*"The first time I saw Hadrian's Wall was when I was working on a book on the Pennine Way with Alf Wainwright"*

Derry first photographed Hadrian's Wall more than 20 years ago, and began a love affair that he believes will last for many years to come.

Since that time, the photographer and author has returned to the 72-mile long Roman legacy scores of times. His pictures have now been brought together in a book simply titled Hadrian's Wall.

Of all his work throughout a career spanning almost 30 years – during which time he has produced collaborations with Alf Wight (James Herriot) and Alfred Wainwright – Derry regards his latest as probably his most satisfying.

"The first time I saw Hadrian's Wall was when I was working on a book on the Pennine Way with Alf Wainwright in 1985. I had little idea of how awesome the three-dimensional version would be. I remember being totally overwhelmed," says Derry, who is renowned internationally for his heritage and landscape photography.

"I don't think you can really appreciate its magnitude and how much of an achievement it was for the Romans to create it until you spend time getting to know it. It was a spine-tingling and somewhat humbling experience to stand alone on one of the wall's highest vantage points, touching blocks of stone that were originally slotted into place by 2nd Century soldiers.

"I became so fascinated with its beauty that I wanted to know more about its history. I have done research so I can understand it in more detail. You come to realise it is a reflection of the sheer might and power of the Roman Empire."

Hadrian's Wall has occupied its position since about 122 AD, when the Roman Emperor commissioned the structure to be built from the Solway Firth in Cumbria to the banks of the River Tyne in Newcastle.

Now a World Heritage Site and one of the UK's most visited and best-loved landmarks, it was, at one time, in danger of falling into disrepair. Historians credit the fact it did not largely to John Clayton, who dedicated himself to the preservation of the wall in the 1830s.

To stop people stealing stone or wilfully destroying it and to avoid the fortification falling into a state of ►



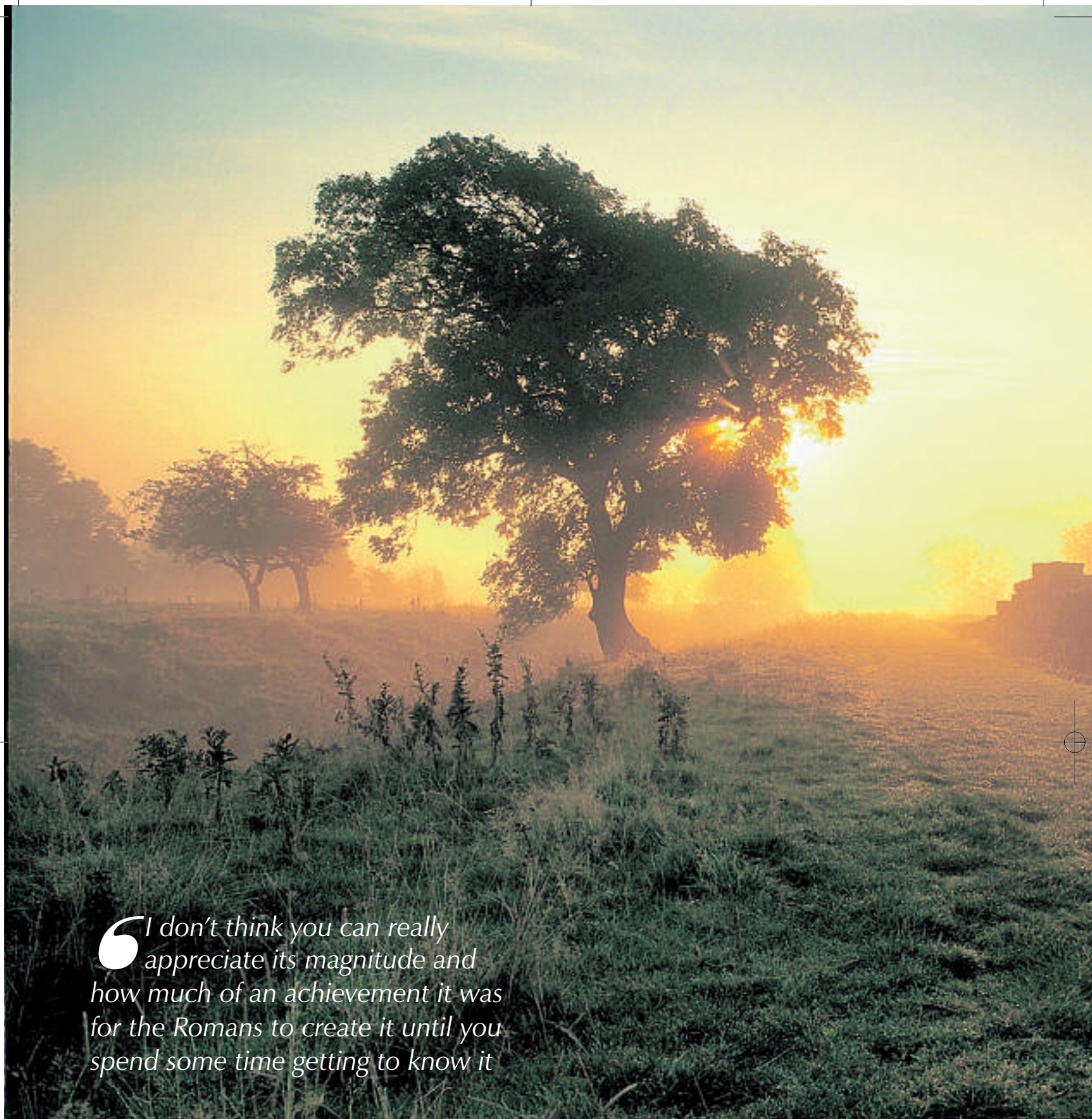
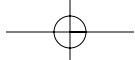
A modern statue of the Emperor Hadrian

Right: the impressive remains of Milecastle 39, also known as Castle Nick

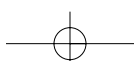
# Going to THE WALL

Hadrian's Wall is one of the jewels in the North-East's crown, and attracts visitors from around the world. **DEBORAH JOHNSON** meets photographer Derry Brabbs, whose passion for the iconic monument has led him to compile one of the most thorough visual records of the monument ever produced





*“I don't think you can really appreciate its magnitude and how much of an achievement it was for the Romans to create it until you spend some time getting to know it*





◀ disrepair, he bought a 12-mile stretch of land surrounding the wall to help with its preservation. Owning land between Brunton and Cawfields forts, he maintained the sites en route – including Housesteads and Vindolanda – and cultivated the farmland around it, pouring the money he made back into maintenance of the wall.

“I’ve come to realise that a lot of the reason we see as much of the wall as we do today is because of John Clayton,” says Derry. “He has helped to ensure this amazing feat on our

doorsteps can be appreciated by people in generations to come. He stopped the rot that had set in and helped ensure we still have something to be truly in awe of.

“I know I find it one of the most inspirational places I have ever visited. This is a wonderful part of England and something of which the North-East can be particularly proud.”

▣ **Pictures from Hadrian’s Wall by Derry Brabbs (Frances Lincoln, £14.99)**

▣ Clockwise from main picture: Sunrise at Black Carts; a 3rd Century relief portraying Venus; a temple in Benwell; bi-lingual signs in English and Latin at Wallsend Metro station; an English Heritage re-enactment; sandals being made in the Roman style

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The official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) are Focus 1.6 Urban 32.5 (8.7), Extra Urban 51.4 (5.5), Combined 42.2 (6.7). The official CO2 emissions are 159g/km.

#Finance subject to status. Guarantees/Indemnities may be required. Freepost Ford Credit. Typical 4.9% APR available on FordOptions on selected models only. Retail customers only. Subject to availability. Model shown is All-New Focus Titanium 1.6 (100 PS) 5dr with Sports Pack. On the road price £16,800. †1 years Manufacturers Warranty and no fee customer option of 2 years extended warranty. This offer supersedes any previously advertised offers/discounts. Car not necessarily as illustrated. Offer ends 30th September 2008. E&OE.

The latest Focus is the quietest yet – and with a steering wheel trimmed in soft leather and plenty of room in the front, everything about this class leader spells comfort, reports Motoring Editor **NIGEL BURTON**

# In soft FOCUS

## FORD FOCUS ZETEC

**T**HE Focus Zetec is the latest version of Ford's much-lauded family hatchback. Although there is a strong family resemblance, not one body panel has been carried over from the pre-facelift model.

Beneath the metalwork, though, it is the same nimble-footed hatchback we've all come to know and love. Ford says its engineers knew they had a good driver's car. Wisely, they decided: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it."

Instead, the development budget went into new ways of improving refinement and interior quality. So the old dashboard has been replaced by a variation on the one used in the Mondeo, and Sony stereos abound across the range.

The changes have worked. This Focus is the quietest yet. The old 1.6-litre Zetec could be vocal at a brisk motorway pace. Sitting inside the new one, there is no

need to raise your voice to be heard over tyre noise and road roar.

The 1.6 is nippy, but you will need to explore further up the range if you want explosive performance. Steep hills required a change down or two.

The steering wheel is nice and chunky, though. It is trimmed with soft leather for extra grip, too. Behind it and just below the indicator stalk is a massive remote command "pod" with switches for the audio volume and station seek modes.

Information from the on-board fuel computer is accessed via a small flick switch that is on the indicator stalk. The right-hand wiper stalk controls err... the wipers and that's it.

I liked the smaller clocks for fuel and temperature. The liquid crystal information display glows with a soothing orange at night.

There is plenty of room in the front, and the seats have generous forwards/backwards adjustment.

Storage is good. The fascia has a small pop-up oddments tray and the glove compartment has enough room for some sandwiches. The lid has a double cup-holder. There are two further cup holders behind the gearshift and a 12v accessory outlet.

There is a bit less headroom in the back because the roof slopes gently, but everyone gets a proper three-point safety belt.

The Focus scored a full five-star rating for occupant protection in the European NCAP crash test, but a less impressive two stars for pedestrian safety. So it is better to be on the inside looking out than the outside looking in if you have a prang.

But if you want the best driver's car in this class then look no further. A Focus has been the class leader for a decade and nothing has changed.

This version is the best yet — making things even more difficult for rivals scrambling to keep up.



# PATRICK opens new branch



Advertiser's announcement

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**P**ATRICK OF DURHAM, the successful family-run Vauxhall dealership which has been a familiar fixture in Pity Me, County Durham, for many years, has opened a new branch in Durham City, at the former Volvo site, in Alma Place, Gilesgate.

It's an exciting development for a company which prides itself on its long-standing association with Vauxhall – one of the top two motor manufacturers in the UK – along with its commitment to the highest levels of service, advice and value for money, be it through servicing, maintenance and repairs, parts and accessories or a range of flexible finance packages.

The expansion means that Patrick of Durham can offer motorists from Durham City and areas to the south the same blend of product and service excellence which their northern neighbours have enjoyed for so long.



With a new-car showroom boasting the full Vauxhall range, including the all-new Agila, as well as a large selection of Network Q used vehicles, all of which come with the 12-month Network Q warranty, finding the right vehicle for you and your requirements is an absolute doddle.

The same goes for disabled customers who receive a disability living allowance. As a Premier Motability dealer, Patrick of Durham offers a wide Vauxhall range at no or low deposits, together with all the

help and advice you need on choosing and running the vehicle.

For a great line-up of opening offers, whatever your motoring needs, visit the new branch in Alma Place, Gilesgate. Alternatively, and if you can wait that long, go along to the official opening event from Thursday, August 28, to Sunday, August 31, when a Vauxhall representative will be on hand to help, advise and surprise you even further with some fabulous opening deals on a vast choice of new cars.

For more information about Patrick Vauxhall, call 0191-384-0066 or take a look at the new company website, on [patrick-vauxhall.co.uk](http://patrick-vauxhall.co.uk)





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**Official Government Test Environmental Data - Fuel Consumption Figures mpg (litre/100km): New Agila Design 1.2i 16v: Urban 40.9 (6.9), Extra-urban 60.1 (4.7), Combined 51.4 (5.5), CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions 131 g/km.**

Model shown may have optional extras available at an extra cost. 2 Years 0% Finance available on New Agila Design models. Minimum deposit of 50% required. Finance by GMAC UK plc subject to status, applicants must be 18 or over. Available at participating retailers only. Offers apply to eligible new vehicles ordered or registered between 02.07.08 and 02.10.08, subject to availability, and are available to private individuals, Vauxhall Partners, and small businesses 1-24 (purchase only). All other sales categories are excluded. Offers may not apply to all retailer stocks. UK supplied vehicles only. (Vaux51391)

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## SEEK AND you will find

**A**s a self-confessed car lover, I used to hate it when, while driving with my foot down, I'd come up behind someone in a camper van.

It was the classic tortoise and hare scenario. Me impatient to get somewhere, the camper-vanners in no rush to get anywhere.

That was until recently when I found myself on the other side, so to speak. Asked to try out life in a camper van for a weekend, I must admit I faced the challenge with a degree of trepidation.

I didn't let on to Gill Hodgson, owner of Richmond-based Seekers Motorhome Hire – motto Where Will Your Dreams Take You Tonight? – but I think she must have known, given the in-depth and incredibly helpful tour she gave me of our chosen vehicle.

Everything from the optimum speed to drive at, to how to ensure there was enough water onboard, to cleaning out the toilet were covered in her briefing. "We have people who have driven all the way to Italy," she said. That was reassuring, especially as I was only going as far as Cleethorpes.

Fears largely allayed, and with my wife and two children strapped into their seats, I felt confident enough to hit the road. Although I took it easy to start with, I was surprised at how easy the Chausson Welcome was to handle.

The diesel engine, and the wind created by the angular shape of the vehicle, meant there was more noise inside the cabin than in a car. However, all three of my passengers had dropped off to sleep

long before we reached our comfort break.

There was plenty of cubby space in the van for all our possessions. The addition of a lock-up garage beneath the kids' bunk beds – accessible from outside – meant we could take the eldest's bike without having to leave it exposed on a carry rack or have it cluttering up the inside.

A safe, buried beneath the vehicle floor, also secured our most important possessions.

With four of us in the galley at the same time, there were occasions when space was at a premium, but after a while we got used to living in such close proximity.

Retiring was not the easiest exercise I've ever undertaken. The fact the bed is located above the driver's cab being the cause of this. Having climbed a vertical ladder, we had to then negotiate our way onto the bed itself, trying not to bang our heads on the roof. Once there, though, we soon drifted off.

As is often the case, I was given the worst job of the weekend – emptying the toilet, but even that was a breeze thanks to the convenient storage container and the instructions Gill had given me before we left.

All too soon it was time to leave. Having not expected to enjoy my time, I was pleasantly surprised at how it had turned out.

On the journey back, a number of fellow campers flashed their lights at me, making way when I needed to pull into the inside lane. It appeared they had accepted me into their fold and ensured I had gone from motorhome hater to a true

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SEEKERS Motorhome Hire was established in 2005 and provides the hire of motorhomes ranging from two to six berths.

"We try very hard to cater for the individual needs of the customer," said proprietor Gill Hodgson. "Over the years, we have had various requests and different reasons for hiring our motorhomes. One was a two-week hire for a honeymoon so the motorhome was decked out with confetti, chocolates and champagne.

"Several times people have hired a motorhome as a surprise holiday for loved ones or given for special birthdays. We even had one time when we were asked to fill the motorhome with several helium-filled balloons. Other people just ask for extra bedding, deck chairs or picnic tables. Whatever the need, we will try to provide it.

"Some people want to enjoy a holiday with their dog so some of our motorhomes are used for customers with pets, while others are kept for those who do not wish to travel in a motorhome that may have had an animal in it."

People have taken Seekers' motorhomes all over Europe and have travelled as far as Italy and Spain, with one even going up to the Arctic Circle in Norway.

"They have been used for accommodation at motorsport and golfing events or island hopping in Scotland," said Gill.

"We also have customers who have travelled to us from as far away as New Zealand, Tasmania, Australia and South Africa and we have happily collected them from the local airport or train station."

Cost of hire ranges from £70 to £112 per night, depending on the size of motorhome hired and the time of year. The minimum hire is three nights. The price includes fully comprehensive insurance for the UK, Ireland and the Continent and the mileage is unlimited. All the motorhomes are fully kitted for use so customers need only bring clothes, towels and personal items.

Full instruction is given for the use of the motorhome and its appliances and this can be as detailed or as brief as is required.

□ All information can be found on the website [seekersmotorhomes.co.uk](http://seekersmotorhomes.co.uk). Any questions can be sent to [enquiries@seekersmotorhomes.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@seekersmotorhomes.co.uk) or by telephoning 0845-3243-181 or 07955-171-291.

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## Living food



Tony Jackson with ale lover Fender

**MIKE AMOS** is impressed by a landlord who has pulled off a clever balancing act

**H**UNTON is a largely stone-built village a few miles south of Catterick Garrison in North Yorkshire. There's a school, village hall, Methodist chapel and shop-cum-post office which, like a lot more, is for sale.

A few years back, it also had two pubs. The New Inn closed in 2002; a couple of years later the then-owner also proposed to turn the Countryman's into a private house. Hunton was aghast, even contacted the Prince of Wales who, somewhat improbably, had put himself at the centre of the Pub is the Hub campaign. The cuttings are still framed on the wall, alongside some signed Man City shirts.

Relieved, it was bought in August last year by Tony Jackson, who'd been in the pharmaceutical trade.

We'd twice previously tried to book dinner, once in midweek when the restaurant was full – generally, though not infallibly, a good sign – and once when it was closed because the chef was on holiday. That's an honest approach too, though it may not say much for the boy named sous.

This was Saturday evening, busy but not chocker. Among Mr Jackson's successes appears to be that the convivial, open-fired bar remains chiefly a haven for locals and for those who just want a drink. It's a hard balancing act, and there are many who've hanged themselves with the rope.

Four real ales included Fender's Fav-



## Pub that's **THE HUB**

ourite, brewed by Dalesman outside Harrogate and named after Tony's yellow labrador who is very partial to a drop of good beer.

The dog, in turn, is named after the familiar guitar. "If I get another, I'm calling it Gibson," said Tony.

They'd put us on just about the only island table in the room, close to the whirring, stirring, seldom-erring kitchen and with a similar effect to sitting next to the vestibule on a crowded train to London.

Reasonably priced, the carte is especially strong on sauces – orange marmalade with the duck breast, port and rosemary with the slow braised lamb, prawn, sherry, tomato and cream to accompany the pork medallions.

The Boss began with grilled goats' cheese topped with beetroot, apple – they've delicious apples – and roasted pine nuts, a successful combination. I had proper black pudding, and more apple, grilled in a great lake of grain mustard sauce. They believe in heating their plates around here, the blast like someone opening an oven door as they approached.

The lady followed with a firm and fresh lemon sole served with a light chilli dressing

and lime and coriander sauce. Sea bass, monkfish and salmon steak were also in the fish section. Vegetables were simple, unadulterated, fine.

Goodness knows why, but I ordered the hoi sin duck stir-fry and, goodness knows why, but it worked – gently spiced, nicely flavoured, moreish.

The puddings topped everything. We ordered the chef's selection for two, said on the menu to be for the indecisive or the very hungry. Take your pick.

It offered five or six smaller portions of things like chocolate torte, pavlova, honey creme brulee and, best of all, a sensational lemon cheesecake.

With a couple of drinks either side, the bill was about £60. It was all very enjoyable.

□ **The Countryman's Inn, Hunton, near Bedale, 01677-450554. Open Wednesday-Sunday lunch and dinner – two-course lunch £7.75. "Early bird" two-course dinner (£9.95) available all evening Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday and between 6-7pm on Friday and Saturday. Best to book. Wheelchair ramps at the front.**



**T**HE list of chef Andrew Pern's achievements is exhaustive. Aged 26, he took on a run-down village pub in North Yorkshire and went on to turn it into an internationally renowned, Michelin-starred restaurant.

The father-of-four also bought and transformed the corner shop across the road from the Star Inn, now known as the "Harrods of Harome". He also runs a luxurious hotel, B&B and holiday cottages in the village and has opened a high class butcher-cum-deli nearby which sells, among other things, his own range of sauces and chutneys.

Pern – whose latest venture is a cookery book which has just had a rave review in the *New York Times* – has made such an impact on the picturesque village of Harome and the surrounding area that the locals call it "Pernshire".

Not bad for an Esk Valley farmer's son who left school with just one O-level.

When I arrange to meet him, it emerges he doesn't have a mobile phone. He doesn't know how to send an email or work a computer. He doesn't have a credit card. He can't even drive a car. It's not what you expect from the head of a multi-million pound business empire.

But it soon becomes clear that this very lack of technical knowledge and commercial sophistication is the secret of his success. Pern doesn't waste time analysing business plans or drawing up balance sheets. He works by instinct. It is his passion for food that drives him. And everything else falls into place after that.

He still works every shift in the kitchen, a relentless 90 hours a week. "I have never been busier. But I still enjoy it. It is great. Cooking is a way of life to me. I do it for the love of it," he says.

He enjoys unconventional bartering and trading, like a true Yorkshire farmer, pointing to the Highland cattle he keeps on the Star's



four acres – alongside his own chickens, pygmy goats and saddleback pigs – which he received as payment from a local woman for catering for her son's 21st birthday party.

It may have appeared utter madness for Pern and his wife Jacqui to take on the empty, decrepit 14th Century thatched Star Inn 12 years ago, but he was confident it would work. Back in 1996, the Star was knee-high in weeds and overrun with mice, there was beer still in the barrels, cigarette butts in the ashtrays and a freezer full of food crawling with maggots.

"I didn't think it was a risk. I know how to cook," says Pern. "All it needed was good, old-

fashioned hard work. We had £5,000 and it went in an afternoon. Luckily, we had a good bank manager who gave us a hand."

Similarly, when he decided, against the advice of experienced publishers, to go it alone and produce his own 400-page cookery book, luxuriously bound in chocolate brown suede, it appeared to be an impulsive gamble.

But Pern, who says he left school assuming he must be "a bit thick" has, once again, proved everyone wrong. Big publishers had been chasing him to do a book with them for years. "But when I found out what profit they take, I thought I'd be better doing it myself," he says.

When he left school with just one O-level Andrew Pern thought he must be 'a bit thick'. Now, he is one of the North's most celebrated chefs, head of a multi-million pound business empire and author of a new cookery book that is wowing the critics. **RUTH CAMPBELL** reports



He has learnt that the greatest pleasure in life is doing what people say you can't do.

The book, *Black Pudding and Foie Gras* – named after his best-selling signature dish – won five stars out of five in the New York Times review and sold 1,300 copies in the first three weeks. He is now taking about 90 orders a day, many from buyers in the US and Australia. "It's the world's best promotional brochure," he laughs.

Like his renowned rustic starter, finished with finesse, the book is a potent mix of basic and luxury. So expensively produced, with lavish photography and arty design, it looks like a sophisticated, cosmopolitan dish. But the words are simple, down-to-earth Yorkshire, and all the more tasty for it.

Pern writes as he would talk to you, sitting at the bar in the Star, discussing the seasons and local Yorkshire grown produce, as well as his recipes, introducing us to his suppliers and a host of local characters as he goes. Along the way, we also learn about his life.

It's quite a story. Brought up in a farming family, his love of food and passion for good quality, local, seasonal ingredients was nurtured in the farmhouse kitchen at Sleights on the edge of the North York Moors, where everyone gathered to enjoy meals together.

He remembers shooting rabbits, gathering eggs and eating locally shot pheasant and lobster and crab from the North Sea. ►

**OPPOSITE PAGE:**

Father-of-four Andrew Pern with his wife Jacqui and children

**ABOVE:**

Preparing mussels in the kitchen, where the top chef uses mostly local ingredients

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Pern's produce: the range of tantalising goodies at the shop

◀ “The North York Moors was an idyllic place to live and learn about nature’s larder. Without ever being conscious of it, the food you were eating was teaching you about the seasons,” he says.

On family holidays abroad, the young Andrew was introduced to dishes like paella, lasagne and moussaka. “I was inspired by the fish markets in Spain and the smorgasbord in Norway,” he says. His mother, a gifted cook, produced lots of adventurous dishes at home.

But family life changed dramatically when Andrew was nine and his mother was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, aged just 38. “She kept losing her balance, falling over. It took a long time to diagnose.”

At first, they lived off his dad’s fry-ups and stodgy Fray Bentos pies but then Andrew, the youngest, was asked to help his mother in the kitchen. He found an old Robert Carrier cookery book and was inspired. “I liked being in the warm kitchen while the others worked outside. I had an instinct for cooking, I knew what went with what.”

At nine years old, he was making woodcock terrine and pheasant with apples. “I would have a go at anything,” he says. Even now, where some restaurants fly in exotic foodstuffs from far-flung destinations, Pern is more likely to pick elderflowers or nettles and blackberries from the local hedgerows and wild garlic from nearby woods.

When he plucks his own herbs, vegetables and fruit from his exquisite kitchen garden behind the pub, it takes him back to his



childhood. “You go out at 6pm to pick herbs and you are using them ten minutes later, there is nothing fresher.”

He was extremely happy at Fyling Hall school, near Robin Hood’s Bay where, he says, he played rugby five days a week and did no work. After Scarborough Catering College, he decided he wanted to cook for a living, which surprised some members of his family who expected him to join the Army. “They asked if I was a ‘poof’,” he laughs. “But they have all been really supportive.”

As part of the course, he was sent on a placement to a family-run inn at Fontainebleau, which inspired him. “I discovered the idea of cooking that reflects the best produce of the region and the season.”

He was to bring what he learnt in France back home, anglicising French dishes as he put together classic combinations of local ingredients, what he describes as the ‘rich man, poor man’ element of his unique brand of cookery.

Pern met and married his wife, Jacqui, when they worked together at the Milburn Arms hotel in Rosedale Abbey, before they went on to buy the Star Inn. “I have never wanted to work anywhere else but Yorkshire,” he says.

Theirs was the second pub in Britain to get a Michelin star and there are expectations that Pern, described by Michel Roux as “one of the best young chefs in our industry” could soon be the first to get two stars.

Meanwhile, he has ambitions to open another restaurant on the coast. The couple are also building a £500,000 kitchen, dining room and terrace extension at the Star, complete with bespoke £82,000 cooker. “You always need something to aim for,” he says.

It amuses him that a couple of the other boys who sat at the back of the class with him and failed most of their exams at Fyling Hall school went on to become millionaires, running their own successful businesses.

“We had commonsense,” he says. “And my school days stood me in good stead. The day in, day out playing rugby, packing down in the scrum, hot steaming and sweating, is not dissimilar to the 8 o’clock service in the restaurant on a Saturday night.”

❑ **Black Pudding and Foie Gras, £35, available from**

[www.blackpuddingandfoiegras.co.uk](http://www.blackpuddingandfoiegras.co.uk),

❑ **The Star Inn, Harome, near Helmsley, North Yorkshire YO62 5JE, tel: 01439-770397; The Corner Shop, tel: 01439-770082**

## Grilled black pudding with pan-fried foie gras

### Pickering watercress, apple and vanilla chutney, salad of Pickering watercress and scrumpy reduction

The Star's No 1 bestseller. This dish is easily the most popular, remaining on the menu for at least the last nine years. It has been eaten by lords, ladies, famous actors, famous foodies, famous artists (aka Caine, Ronay and Hockney) as well as the locals alike. Very much a 'rich man, poor man' dish. Using the North country staple of black pudding with the luxurious pan-fried foie gras, teamed with the apples and peppery Pickering watercress.

#### INGREDIENTS (Serves 1)

10g of washed and trimmed watercress  
Salt and pepper  
Knob of butter  
Apple and Vanilla Chutney  
Sprigs of thyme for garnish  
2 slices black pudding  
1 slice caramelised apple

1 decent slice of duck or goose foie gras  
Scrumpy Reduction – made with apple juice and a splash of cider vinegar  
A dash of vinaigrette

#### METHOD

Place five small piles of apple chutney at intervals around the plate; garnish each pile with a sprig of herb.

In the centre of the plate dress a few seasoned leaves to form a little salad. Drizzle the reduction around the side of the plate.

Lightly brush the slices of black pudding with melted butter and grill for three to four minutes. Whilst this is cooking heat a frying pan and pan-fry the foie gras for 1½ minutes each side.

When cooked, stack alternatively; black pudding, foie gras, black pudding. Top with the slice of caramelised apple.

Serve immediately.

#### Apple and Vanilla Chutney

##### INGREDIENTS

1 kilo Granny Smith apples with skin,  
½-1cm diced  
3 medium shallots, finely diced  
200ml cider vinegar (or white wine, if you wish)  
1 fresh vanilla pod – split and de-seeded  
400g caster sugar  
Pinch of salt

#### METHOD

Place everything into an ample-sized thick-bottomed pan and reduce down until thickened and starting to caramelize. Cool down and tub up ready for using. Keep in a cool place.

**NB** Place the vanilla pod into the pan with everything else to maximise the flavour.





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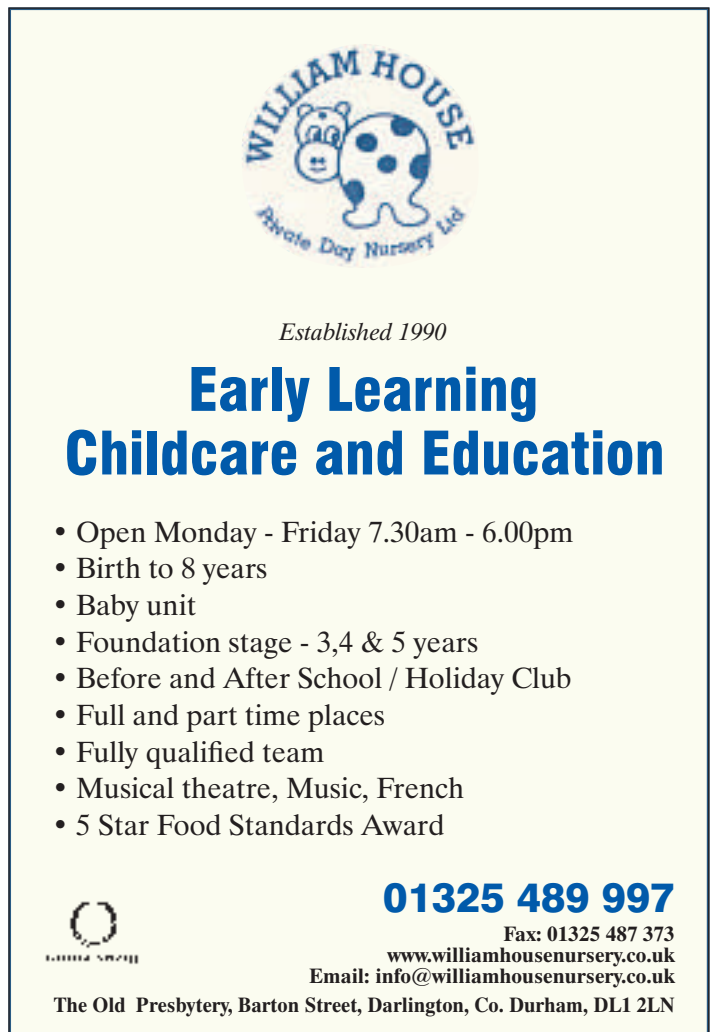
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Living on stage

# A JOSEPH dream come true

Craig Chalmers is signed up until next year as Joseph on tour as Pharaoh of British theatre Bill Kenwright snapped up the former TV hopeful, who talks to **VIV HARDWICK**

**C**RAIG Chalmers finds himself in the weirdest of situations. One minute he is rejected by the public as the headliner for Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat and next he is the star attraction of the touring version with a range of other TV Josephs in the cast – including runner-up Keith Jack.

“It’s a unique situation and not something that people have heard of before. I feel that it’s been a big success and we’ve been incredibly busy with this being the number one UK tour. It helps me develop as a man and a performer,” he says about playing

Newcastle’s Theatre Royal, Darlington’s Civic Theatre and Scarborough’s Futurist, having already played at the Sunderland Empire.

But how did Chalmers come to terms with being rejected so publicly – didn’t it make him want to tell the producers to stick Joseph’s coat where the sun doesn’t shine rather than retain dreams of winning the role?

“I’m not as volatile as that,” he says. “I reached the last seven, which was a lot further than thousands of others. I was obviously disappointed I didn’t win it. I was very open to what came next.”

He says there was never a time when he

felt forlorn and rejected watching Lee Mead win the West End role of Joseph.

“Fortunately, there wasn’t a week I wasn’t involved until the semi-final stage. Then we were all back for the final as well. It wasn’t so bad, but I did have a week where I was wondering.”

Amazingly, having won the tour role, he was also asked to put together an album, Dream On, which made the charts. From no future on stage, he went to singing in eight shows a week and racing to a recording studio on his one day off.

“There was a period of two months when I didn’t get a single day off. This was the stage



show every week and, then, on a Sunday I'd travel to London to record part of the album. I was quite knocked out by then.

"I was really pleased when the album charted, because it's so hard to get into the charts these days. We're following up with a single, so it is still happening for me. I've had a lot of great opportunities to do many things over the past 18 months."

It was hardly a surprise to discover I was chatting to the hard-working singer on a day off enforced by a virus which was taking him to the doctor for a check-up.

How did he react to finding himself cast ahead of Keith Jack, Chris Barton and ►

Craig Chalmers in the lead role of Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, which is touring the region

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#### Mains

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honey roast vegetables,  
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Pan-fried chicken breast, black olive  
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Salmon & cod fishcakes, wilted  
spinach, chive beurre blanc

Asparagus & wild mushroom  
risotto, Parmesan shavings

All main courses are served with seasonal  
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◀ Antony Hansen, which meant that he was one of four Josephs in the same show?

"I suppose I'm always going to be stuck with this tag of being a Joseph, but I don't want to be stuck with it forever. But I'm happy with the label because it's part of me. I've got other things I want to do as well.

"There wasn't a problem (between the four of them), Keith had the other lead part (as narrator), and I think that suited him better. I don't think he was a conventional Joseph really, but he had a great voice and the part suited his voice, so it all worked out really," explains the 25-year-old from Edinburgh, who once sang with a male strip troupe called G-Force and boyband No Reason.

He is aware of Joseph's enduring popularity with theatre-goers and knows that this is a role which could finance his career for many years. "I'm contracted until January, so I

presume that's the finish and I'm planning a holiday in February. I'm going to need that after 18 months on tour and up to ten shows a week.

"I'd like to work in television, presenting or acting, because I think that's something I've always wanted to do," he says. "Half the battle here is that a lot of people know your face, but you know as well as I do how unpredictable this business is."

Chalmers thinks his hard-working attitude and looks probably swung the tour role in his favour, but surprisingly says his dream of being Joseph in the West End is probably at an end.

"I think that's something that's not likely to happen now. When Lee goes I think they'll have a different show in. I've been in touch with Lee many times and met up a couple of times and I've stayed close to the others," he says, revealing that once a bunch of guys get together, even in the heat of TV competition, they become mates.

"Of course I was aware it was a competition, but there didn't seem a point in falling out," says Chalmers who has lost a stone

and a half to ensure he looks good in the loincloth on stage.

The other fascination for observers is that singers from the TV Nancy hunt are now feeding into the Joseph tour. So are reality TV shows becoming the treadmill for tour hopefuls?

"The shows go out on a national scale, so it does open doors for you if you're lucky enough to be chosen for the finals," he says, admitting that the best part of living the dream as Joseph is gaining his own fan base.

#### ON TOUR:

Newcastle Theatre Royal, Sep 1-3, 08448-112121

Darlington Civic, Nov 3-8, 01325-486555

Scarborough Futurist, Dec 8-20, 01723-374-500



"I suppose I'm  
always going to  
be stuck with this tag  
of being a Joseph

## BOOKS

### THE OTHER QUEEN by Philippa Gregory HarperCollins, £18.99

A DRAMATIC novel of passion, politics and betrayal from the author of *The Other Boleyn Girl*, in which Mary, Queen of Scots, fights to regain her kingdom. Mary has been forced to take refuge in an England that is ruled by her cousin Elizabeth, but England, precarious in its Protestant state, set against the mighty powers of Spain, France and Rome, doesn't need a charismatic Catholic figurehead at large.

So Elizabeth's chief advisor, Cecil, devises a plan in which Mary will live under guard with his trusted accomplice, Bess of Hardwick. Bess is a self-made woman, a shrewd survivor, newly married to her fourth and most distinguished husband, the Earl of Shrewsbury. But what marriage can withstand the charms of Mary? Or the threat of rebellion that she always carries?

With her characteristic combination of superb storytelling and authentic historical background, Philippa Gregory, who lives in Stokesley, brings to life this period of great change in her final novel in the Tudor series.

**ALSO RECOMMENDED: *When Will There Be Good News?* by Kate Atkinson (Doubleday, £17.99)** YORK writer Atkinson's wonderfully fluid and engaging writing style is only one element that makes this novel superb. The plot is like watching a fantastic detective story, where you genuinely care about and sympathise with the four main characters as their stories and lives intertwine with each other. Each of them is very different, but events tie them together and reveal subtle similarities along the way.

Patricia Allen



## THEATRE

### AN HONORARY YORKSHIREMAN Badapple Theatre, September 5-21

AFTER relocating to rural North Yorkshire, Badapple Theatre have relaunched their company on the national touring circuit with an exciting new production by award-winning director Alice Bartlett, titled *An Honorary Yorkshireman*. It's an upbeat, charming, touching and funny play based on the life and adventures of the celebrated local character, James Herriot, and the first time the *All Creatures Great and Small* stories have been staged.

The new play by Kate Bramley focuses on the early years in the career of Herriot, known to millions from film and TV adaptations of the books by Alf Wight, as the young vet finds his professional feet and adopts, and is adopted by, his new spiritual home, in the rural splendour of North Yorkshire. The show premiered to huge acclaim at local village hall venues earlier this year.

■ **An Honorary Yorkshireman stars Phil Yarrow, theatre and TV actor from Northumberland, and tours from September 5 to 21. Full tour details at [badapple.freeserve.co.uk](http://badapple.freeserve.co.uk)**

## Hot tickets and hot reads this month



George Melly by Maggi Hambling

## ART

### NEWCASTLE/GATESHEAD ARTS FAIR, SAGE September 11-14,

THE value of contemporary art heading for the North-East for the region's second annual Newcastle/Gateshead Arts Fair is estimated to be £1m-plus, as our passion for owning original art promises to overshadow the credit crunch.

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The Baltic will also run seminars on how to collect art and explain the merits of arts fairs in

the run-up to the event. There will also be a Baltic exhibition opening two days before the fair gets under way.

There will be a wide range of art, including some from Baghdad, street art and Cohesion glassmakers from Sunderland, and an emerging artists' section curated by galleries such as mima (Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art), where the region's newest talent will be given the chance to meet buyers.

"It will be possible for people to buy something from around £100 because we have photographers coming in with limited edition prints, up to Maggi Hambling, who is one of the leading UK artists," says Balman.

■ **For more information and tickets, visit [ngartfair.com](http://ngartfair.com) or call 0191-241-4523**

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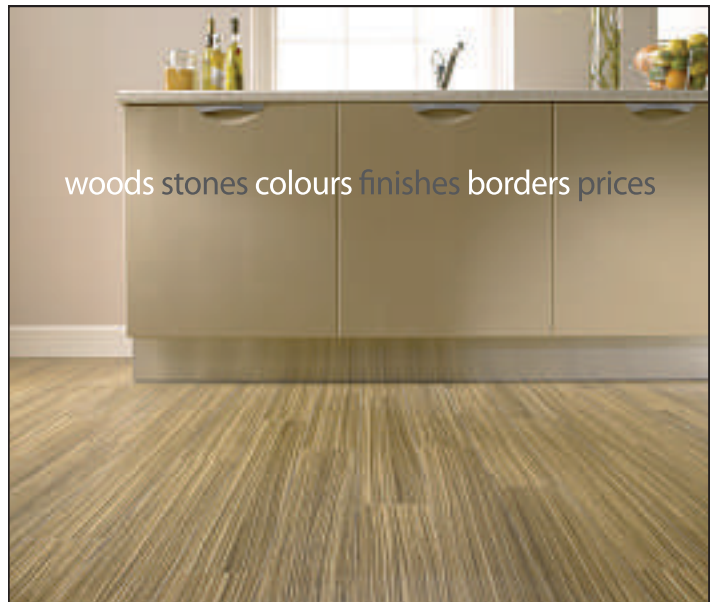
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## Social diary



Left to right: Amy Bain; Lizzie Mothersill, Becky Airey, Sarah Caven and Rebecca Dickinson; Luke Kelly and Harriet Honess



Far left: Anne Holmes, Alison and Vivian Johnson, Pauline and Shirley Lee  
 Left: Jonnie Longmoore, Matthew Lister, Rhys Thomas, John Dawson, Doug Shaw, Sam Covins, Jose Hopkins, James Stronach, William Brown, Kyle Boosens, Alex Jones



# Barney BASH

STUDENTS turned to glamour and glitz as they celebrated the end of their school days. Upper sixth students at Barnard Castle School joined staff and parents for a ball and buffet in a giant marquee. All concerns about exam grades and leaving home for university were put aside for the evening as they danced the night away to a live band.

Men wore black tie, while the ladies opted for glamorous ball gowns, as the move away from casual attire continues apace. "I much prefer glamorous," said student Hazel Oakes, who hopes one day to follow in the footsteps of design guru and Barney old boy Giles Deacon and work in the fashion industry. "Everyone likes to feel as if they are famous for one night."

The evening also included a raffle to raise more funds for this year's joint rugby and hockey tour to Australia.



Above: Hazel Oakes and Kathrin Iddon; Matthew Lister



Left: Josh, Anne and Ian Waldin

Far left: Emma Honess

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## Social diary



Stacey Goodrum, Simon Howard, Lucy Wright and Lauren Collinson



Stacey Lambert and Katie Roberts. Ball committee: Tamsin White, Sacha Thompson, Pippa Smith, Sarah Breckon; back row, Sophie Stockhill, Sarah Harker, Charlotte Jackson, Hannah Matthews, Emily Shaw, Hayley Brodie, Helen Mason



Amy Goddard, Sophie Green, Helen Lucas, Steph Edwards and Abbie Lawrence; back row, Nicole Beckwith, Alex Cooke, Emma Wood, Ross Meikle



Izzy Allen, Tamsin White, Steph Wilkinson, Laura Blake, Emily Ramsay, Daisy Hebblethwaite, Jo Adams, Kate Smith, Charlotte Murphy and Sacha Thompson



Claire Pratt, Courtnie Gibson, Stacey Robinson, Eric Wardle and Josh Hannam

## Northallerton COLLEGE

SIXTH-FORMERS from Northallerton College celebrated in style as they marked the official end of their school days. The teenagers headed to Redworth Hall, near Heighington, for the annual leavers' ball resplendent in gowns and black tie.



Stephanie Johnstone, Samantha Ingham, Joanne Shillito, back row, Rosie Simpson, Amy Swales, Jasmine Court, Charlotte Newgill, Laura Old, Emma Ritchie



Dan Hannah, Anna McCosh, Sara Tillyer-Smith, James Raper, Chris Allan



Louise Taylor, Jennifer Whitfield, Rachael Mackley and Charlie Butterwick

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## Social diary



Tim Powner, King Sturge; Andrew Carphin, Sanderson Weatherall; Matthew McIntosh, MJM Commercial; Simon Hill, King Sturge



Rob Trevor, Development Director, Helios Properties; Barrie Whight, Development Director Helios Properties; Ross Dixon, Helios Properties

## Teeing off at WYNYARD

MORE than 50 national and regional property agents attended an event to celebrate the successful completion of one of the latest schemes to be constructed at the 700-acre Wynyard Park mixed-use development.

The occasion, hosted by international property development company Helios Properties plc, was to mark the unveiling of a new high-specification industrial unit scheme called Tees Valley One Twenty (TV120). Guests were given tours of the industrial units and treated to a special golf theme as one of the development's eight units was transformed into a miniature crazy golf course.



Above: Jonathan Simpson, Sanderson Weatherall; Karen Shorten, storeys:ssp. Far left: James Devany, Sanderson Weatherall; Adam Haley, Naylors



Steve Forbes, Dodds Brown; Andy Thompson, storeys:ssp; Matt Johnson, Development Manager, Wynyard Park



David Salkeld, MD Wynyard Park and HeliosCity; Tim Catterall, Sanderson Weatherall; Andy Wright, Sales Director, Wynyard Park



Tom Bailey, GVA Grimley; Jonathan Chapman, Smith Cole Wright; Jonathan Mair, Smith Cole Wright; Freddie Murray, Atis Real



Caroline Powell on Lenamore

TOP riders from the UK and abroad came to the region for one of the country's most important equestrian events.

The Aske Horse Trials, near Richmond, run twice a year and have been going for more than ten years.

New Zealander and Olympian Caroline Powell was among the big winners in the June event. She won the Open Intermediate section with her horse, Lenamore, and was second in the

## ASKE horse trials

same class with Mac Macdonald.

Andrew Spalding, one of the organisers, said: "The success behind the horse trials is the support we get from the Aske estate, the Marquis of Zetland and his son, Lord Ronaldshea. They are very, very supportive."

The next Aske Horse Trials will be on September 27 and 28.



Jennifer Tweddall on Manor Red, in Pre-Novice section H



Vicki Scott and David Ewart, both of Pelton, Chester le Street, were married at The Marriott Hotel, MetroCentre, Gateshead  
Picture: Dean's Photographic Studios of Birtley



Right, Hayley Merrideth and Jonathan Liddle were married at Cleesby Church

Picture: Simkiss Photography, Darlington

# Wedding ALBUM



Jodie Pickering and Martin Simpson were married at Judges Hotel, Yarm  
Picture: Simkiss Photography, Darlington



Lisa Lloyd and John Nattrass, both of South Stanley, Durham, were married at South Causey Inn, Stanley  
Picture: Tim Hulley of TPHotography



Left, Becki Shaw and Mike Hogarth were married at St Andrew's, Newton Aycliffe

Right, Eseyoma Sodje and Alistair Waugh were married at St Peter's Church, Croft

Pictures: Simkiss Photography, Darlington





Joanne Elizabeth Sargeant and David John McNiven, both of Darlington, were married at St Andrew's Church, Darlington  
Picture: Stan Seaton, Visual Photography



Lynsey Earnshaw and Mark Fanning, both of Darlington, were married at Hardwick Hall Hotel, Sedgfield  
Picture: Gary Walsh Photography of Norton

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Karen Taylor, of Barley Mow, and Mark Armstrong, of Birtley, were married St St Joseph's Church, Birtley  
Picture: Dean's Photographic Studios of Birtley



Ingrid Booth and Paul Davidson, both of Bishop Auckland, were married in St Lucia



Samantha Claire Wade, of Heighington, and Jim Denis Leen, of Southall, Middlesex, were married at St Michael's Church, Heighington

Picture: Studio 2000



Melissa Jane Weldrake and Christopher Martin, both of Hemlington, Middlesbrough, were married at St Mary's Church, Nunthorpe

Picture: Neesam's Photography, Guisborough

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*Lisa and Charlie-Grace aged 2*

### **Lisa Raby, mum of one, is a team leader at the Student Loans company in Darlington.**

“Working full-time and being a mum can be very stressful but the Student Loans Company ethos of family-friendly working really helps. If I need to pick up my daughter or attend nursery events flexible working means that isn’t a problem. A lot of working mums I know often have a problem juggling their responsibilities but the SLC really understands. It makes me feel much happier about working knowing that my employer recognises I sometimes have family priorities.

“The way of life at the SLC can best be described as friendly, energetic, open and informal. The environment at the new offices at Lingfield Point is fantastic. Coming to work every day is a pleasure not a chore and the surroundings and facilities at Memphis make me feel really valued as an employee.

“Work-life balance may be a buzz word for some organisations but at the SLC it is a reality.”

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## Living education

Ann Williams-Maughan and her daughter, Shannon, with some of Education Takeaway's products



With the new academic year upon us, one North-East mother has set up a business to help make learning fun for children and their parents.

**DEBORAH JOHNSON** finds out more about Education Takeaway

# LEARNING for fun

**T**HE new school term is greeted with a mixed reaction in most families. Welcomed by parents, after a six weeks of entertaining the children, but dreaded by the youngsters, who feel that their holidays never last long enough.

Back to the awful early mornings and wearing their uniform, the return to the formality of learning only increases pupils' pain.

But education need not be something to be feared, according to the founder of a new online business which aims to help make learning fun – even outside of school hours – with a range of games, books and puzzles.

Ann Williams-Maughan created Education Takeaway based on her own daughter's quest for stimulating forms of learning. She now sells a range of products for five to 11-year-olds from suppliers such as Jolly Phonics, Orchard Toys and Oxford Reading Tree.

"When my daughter first started school, she came home with a 'story sack' which contained a book and a few props to go with it. She once had a story about a hungry caterpillar, and was given a caterpillar toy and game as well," says Ann, from Bishop Auckland, County Durham.

"I noticed how much more interested in

### WIN A JOLLY PHONICS PACK

**LIVING has joined forces with Education Takeaway to offer one family a Jolly Phonics learning pack worth £65.**

**To stand a chance of winning, just tell us the age range of children catered for by Education Takeaway products.**

**Answers on a postcard or envelope, with your name, address and telephone number, to be received by the end of September, to Education Takeaway, Living Magazine, Features, The Northern Echo, Priestgate, Darlington DL1 1NF.**

the book they made her, and it was nice for me to be able to share the learning experience. She was really upset when the story sack had to go back to school, and I realised how much it had caught her imagination."

Ann decided to find toys and educational games from around the country that she could promote to other parents, and encourage them to offer them to their children.

As this was six years ago – Ann's daughter is now 11 – use of the internet was fairly

restricted, so she sometimes found it difficult to source products.

"I started to order from catalogues, and showed them to my friends who loved them, and wanted them for their own children. It snowballed from there really.

"It was all done on quite an informal scale, where I ordered the products and acted as an 'agent' to customers in the local area, until I set up Education Takeaway as a business.

"It's growing steadily. I go into schools and talk to parents to promote what we sell, as it promotes such a good style of learning. It gives the whole family the chance to get involved with their children's education, and them learning how to spell, how to do maths using games, flash cards, and puzzles.

"But most importantly, it gives children the chance to learn vital skills in an easy, fun way.

"It's definitely a new take on education so, hopefully, learning will no longer be seen as something bad and boring."

Readers qualify for a ten per cent discount when ordering from Education Takeaway – enter the word **Living** in the promotional code box when making payment. For more information log onto [educationtakeaway.com](http://educationtakeaway.com)



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We offer a free no obligation initial consultancy service. We undertake pre-planning enquiries and operate a no sale, no fee policy on the sale of land and residential development opportunities.

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We offer a very individual agency service, promoting the availability of development sites throughout our region, in the northeast and Yorkshire, with or without planning permission.

You may own a pub, or business premises, where the land may be worth considerably more with an alternative planning permission for residential or retail development. This may allow you to accelerate your retirement plans or relocate your business to more cost-effective premises.

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Furthermore, Wisemove are also introducers of land and development opportunities to regional and national housebuilders, with more than 100 major developers registered with us who are eager to compete with one another for the right site.

There is now greater demand than ever before for land suitable for budget hotel and retail outlets and we can also assist in this regard.

Wisemove offer a free consultancy service to those who believe they have something similar to the requirements listed above. There is absolutely no obligation to our initial visit and we undertake free pre-planning enquiries. We do not charge a fee in the event of your land not selling.

Over the years, Wisemove have become synonymous with land sales and conversion opportunities. In the 12 months to 31 July 2008, Wisemove were involved in the sale of 56 self build plots and 14 major development schemes, including the 99 plot scheme to Miller in Norton, formerly the Harpers Garden Centre, the 120 plot scheme in South Moor to Gladedale, a 39 plot scheme to Miller in Crook and considerable sales to Persimmon in Castleford and Wild Bennett Homes in Wakefield.

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## Check before you rent





George Wimpey

# Devonshire Court

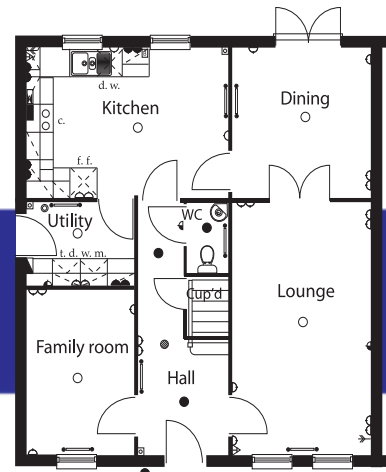
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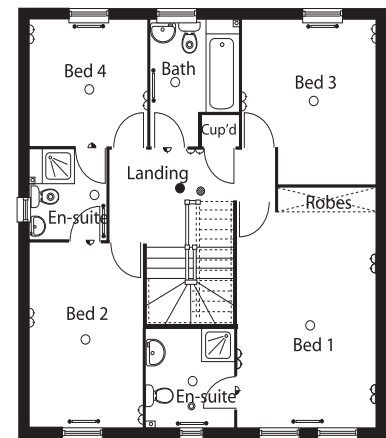
**Plot 25**

## Reserve

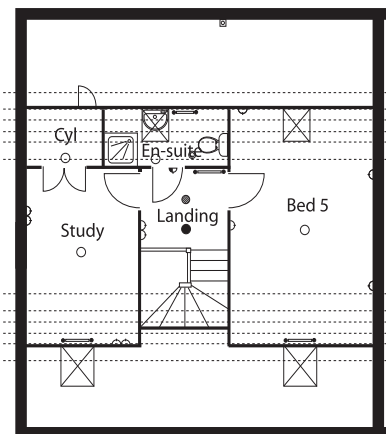
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ground floor



first floor



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\* Part exchange applies to selected properties only and Bryant Homes normal terms and conditions apply. Prices correct at time of going to print. Computer generated images are indicative of typical homes by Bryant Homes.



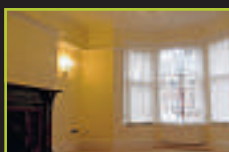
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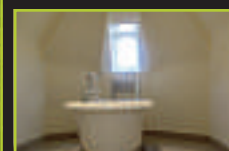
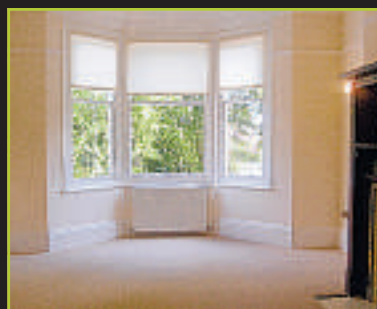


### flat 1, ravensthrope, southend place

elegant two bedroom ground floor apartment enjoying a range of features including period architrave, original cornices, chandelier-style lighting, coved ceilings and double glazed sash window. comprises hallway with open plan lounge having victorian fireplace and fitted gas fire, kitchen with fully integrated appliances including hob and oven, fridge freezer, dishwasher and wash/dryer. the master and 2nd bedroom have original period fireplace with fitted gas fire. the master benefits adjoining dressing room and en-suite double shower cubicle, principal bathroom benefits from quality three piece suite and under-floor heating. there is added advantage of having a cellar which would be ideal as a storage area or wine store.

darlington

£219,950

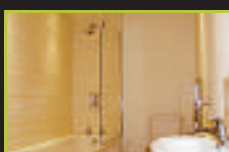


### flat 2, ravensthrope, southend place

an extremely spacious three bedroom maisonette style apartment, raised views over parkland to front. original period features including periodic skirting/architrave, original cornices, chandelier-style lighting, original fireplace and double glazed sash windows. to first floor is lounge with impressive views. original fireplace with authentic electric fire, wall and ceiling lights. full integral quality fitted kitchen having original fireplace. built in appliances including electric hob and oven. to the second floor three bedrooms as well as the principal bathroom and cloakroom. master bedroom has large dressing room and en-suite shower room with underfloor heating. the further two bedrooms both have original fireplace.

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£199,950

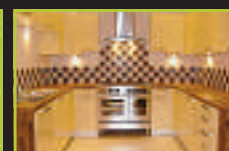


### flat 3, ravensthrope, southend place

a stylish two bedroom first floor apartment which benefits from all the original features including architrave and cornices, chandelier style lighting and original sash windows. the lounge provides a good sized living space and has an original marble fireplace with authentic electric fire. there is a fully integrated separate kitchen having a range of appliances including built-in hob and oven, fridge and freezer, dishwasher and wash dryer. the master bedroom has an original tiled fireplace and access to the principal bathroom. the principal bathroom enjoys an air bath with over head shower, heated chrome towel rail and under floor heating. there is also a separate cloakroom and wc.

darlington

£189,950



### flat 4, ravensthrope, southend place

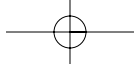
a neat and quirky two bedroom apartment with the advantage of being situated alone within a courtyard. the apartment has solid oak floors and cornices to the lounge and double glazed sash windows. the lounge has a plaster marble feature fireplace. to the kitchen there is a quality fitted kitchen with integrated appliances including fridge freezer, dishwasher and washer dryer having a gas range hob and oven and integrated appliances. the master bedroom provides access to the principal bathroom with air bath, heated chrome towel rail, tiled flooring and upper-floor heating. the second bedroom has its own en-suite as well as walk in wardrobes

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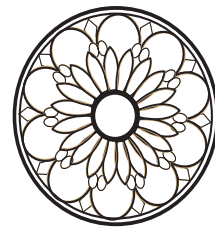
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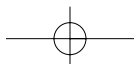


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The property consists of:

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- A very spacious and well designed living area
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- Large farmhouse style kitchen with ample dining for eight people and hand crafted kitchen units
- Utility room with Belfast sink
- Attractive spindle staircase with exposed brick and timber
- All upstairs bedrooms benefit from original exposed brick and beams
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A well presented and attractive six bedroom detached property well suited to family life. Spacious living accommodation comprises: Hall, living room, dining room, WC, living kitchen, utility, conservatory, master bedroom with ensuite, 3 bedrooms to first floor, family bathroom and second floor attic bedrooms. To the rear there is a lawned garden with views across open fields, decked seating area, separate garage, timber storage sheds and drive providing off-street parking for several cars.

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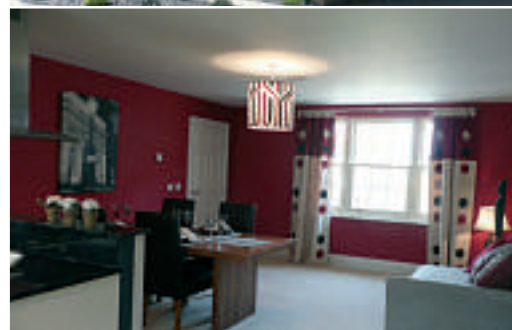
All photos are of the show home

## Number 1, The Pines Sowerby, near Thirsk

A superb 5 bedroom, 3 storey newly built detached family house on this select development. It includes a designer kitchen with granite worktops, stylish sanitary ware, underfloor heating and a built in entertainment system as well as a landscaped garden and garage.

**Price: £440,000**

Also available, the last 3 remaining 3 bedroom townhouses with fitted kitchen with appliances, gas fired central heating, stylish sanitary ware and the built in entertainment system, these houses are **priced at £225,000**



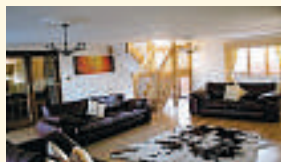
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## GLEBE FARM COTTAGE, ELTON, STOCKTON ON TEES, CLEVELAND



**Glebe Farm Cottage is a magnificent luxuriously appointed five bedroom detached dormer bungalow which stands on a large fully enclosed plot with views over open farmland. Elton is a desirable village location on the outskirts of Stockton on Tees and properties here are always in demand.**

Extending to approximately 4,000 sq ft this is an individually designed executive style home which can only be appreciated fully by an internal inspection.

The family-sized accommodation is extremely versatile in its layout particularly for a family whose individual members require space and privacy. There are two bedrooms on the ground floor, one of which is currently used as a study. The other three bedrooms are on the first floor. The master bedroom has its own staircase with access from the living room, a luxury en suite bathroom/w.c. and an inter-connecting door to bedroom 2, which also has a luxury en suite bathroom/w.c. and its own staircase to the ground floor. Bedroom 3 has a separate staircase on the ground floor and the benefit of an en suite shower room/w.c. with a white suite.

On the ground floor there are three reception rooms, a luxury kitchen and fitted utility room/. A particular feature of the property is the fantastic games room which measures approximately 24'x16' with an 8'x4' solid oak snooker table which is included in the sale. This room would make a great conservatory or garden room, if required.

The property has the benefit of gas central heating, Sherwood oak uPVC double glazed windows and doors and a security alarm system.

All of the fitted TV systems, including a large screen projector TV in one of the bedrooms are included in the sale. Presented in immaculate decorative order with quality fixtures and fittings throughout. All of the quality fitted carpets and floor coverings are included in the sale. All quality fitted curtains are also included. To the ground floor all internal doors are solid oak with Vali Vali handles.

Elton is located just off the A66 dual carriageway, which gives quick access to Stockton (3 miles), Darlington (9 miles) and Middlesbrough (5 miles). Regular bus services run through the village to Stockton and Darlington. Durham Tees Valley International Airport is a short distance away and a good network of roads provide easy access to the surrounding residential and commercial areas. The A66 connects with the A1(M) motorway north and south. Darlington Main Line Railway Station has direct trains to London Kings Cross and Edinburgh.

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## Living My North

Alastair Brownlee has been known as the Voice of Middlesbrough Football Club for more than 25 years. He commentates on every Middlesbrough match, home and away, for BBC Radio Tees, and also hosts a football discussion show on weekday evenings between 6pm and 8pm. He tells **SCOTT WILSON** what he likes best about the region

### Favourite pub/wine bar

Commentating on football it is best to keep a clear head, but on a Sunday evening I like to catch up with my friends at the Wine Bar, in Stonehouse Street, Middlesbrough, where we chat about the Boro and try not to finish last in the pop quiz.

### Favourite shop

I do most of my shopping for clothes at Next, but I do enjoy going into Borders at Teesside Retail Park, browsing through the sports books and grabbing a coffee.

### Favourite restaurant

When we have a family celebration we either head for Sassaris, in Linthorpe Road, or Al Fornos, in Southfield Road.

### Favourite Walk

We have a black labrador pup called Benjamin and the family enjoy parking close to Captain Cook's monument, at Great Ayton, and then walking to Glebe Cottage, Kildale. Glebe Cottage serves the best scones in the world.

Signs of the times – Alastair Brownlee, back, with fellow presenter Bernie Slaven and their book, *The Road to Eindhoven*



### Favourite Landmark

It has to be the Transporter Bridge, a Teesside icon known worldwide.

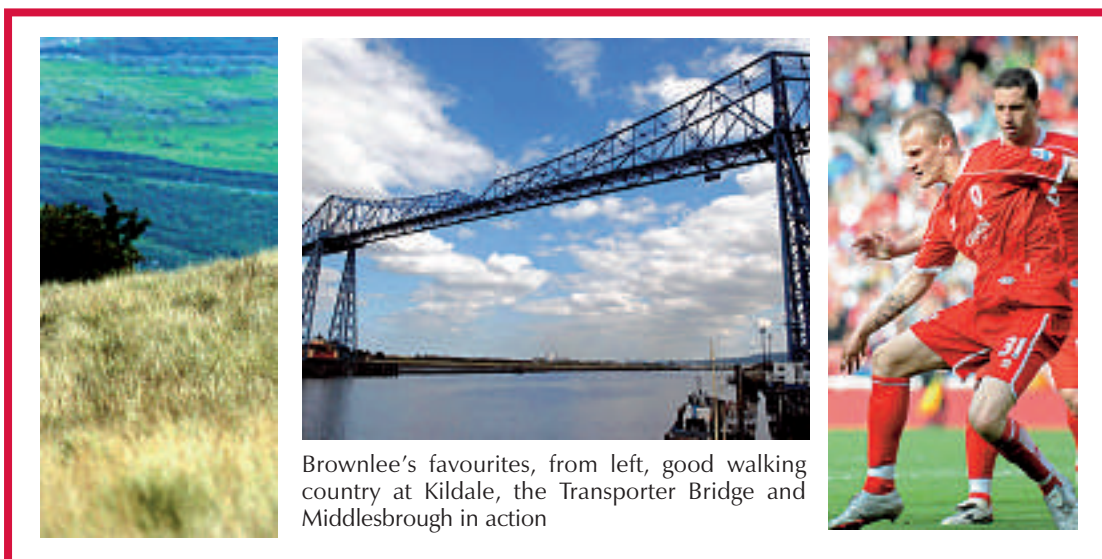
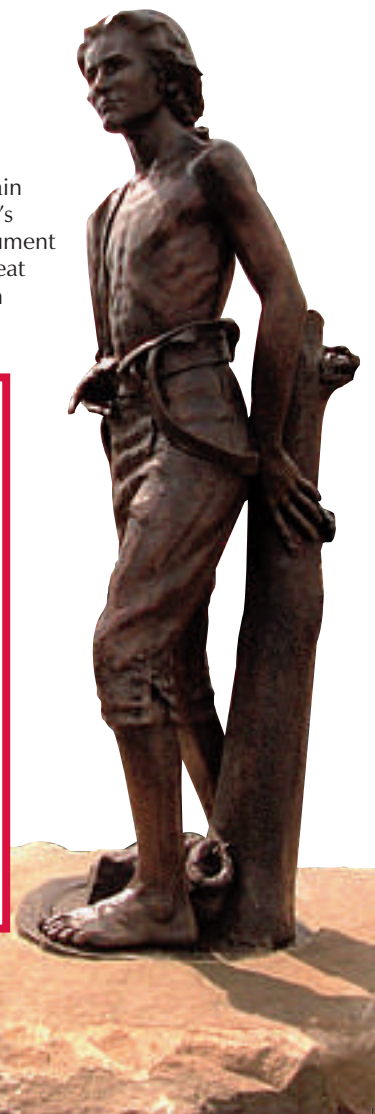
### Favourite Day Out

At the Riverside Stadium, commentating for BBC Tees on a great win for the Boro

### The best thing about the North

It is simply home and I could not imagine living anywhere else.

Captain Cook's monument at Great Ayton



Brownlee's favourites, from left, good walking country at Kildale, the Transporter Bridge and Middlesbrough in action

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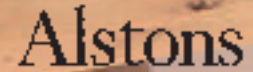
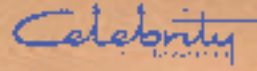
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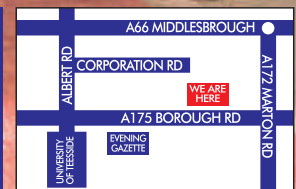


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