



Spring LIVING

A Barnsley Chronicle publication

MARCH 2025

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SIMON'S LIFE IN THE
SPOTLIGHT**

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Welcome to Spring Living

WE ARE back – revamped and refreshed and in many ways that is like Spring itself.

You know the season has turned when the daffodils start emerging from the ground and you're not absolutely freezing when you get into the car in the morning.

I for one am glad to see the back of winter for another year.

This season's magazine has grown and contains a wide variety of features.

Reporter Jack Tolson has spoken to a real-life rock-star in Simon Spence and learned all about his long-time in the music industry.

He gives a fascinating insight into showbusiness and I can't believe all the big stars he has mixed with over the year.

We also have our entertainment guide so you can plan exactly what you're going to be up to in the coming weeks – there's plenty of choice for everybody!

We also take a look at some of the women who have been doing our town proud – that's on Page 31.

For people who want to get fit but don't want to go solo – then there is a perfect introductory guide for working out as a team.

It's also time to get into the garden and do some serious work.

We have all the tips and suggestions as to how you can make your garden look its best ahead of the summer.

Josh Timlin has revved a big engine once again.

Our resident motoring expert has been testing out the Skywell BE11.

We will be back in the summer months with another bumper edition.

You can get in touch about features and advertising by giving us a call on 734400 or through emailing: bcsales3@barnsley-chronicle.co.uk

Vorian Shaw



Also in the magazine...

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Meet the dedicated running man



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Look who's coming... Our entertainment guide



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Author takes a look back at historic crime story



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Dance school’s fundraiser

A STRUGGLING dance school is hosting a charity gala next week to help repair damage they sustained when their building’s roof collapsed.

In December, Nova Arts College – based on Peel Parade in the town centre – suffered damage following weeks of storms and bad weather.

The damage, which has caused leaks throughout the building, threatened the non-profit college’s future, however leadership and students have come together to find a solution.

On Sunday April 6 in the Metrodome, seven dance acts from across the county will join for the Nova Arts Gala as they raise funds to help repair the damage, improve the building’s facilities and support other dance schools in the area. As well as acts, the group will be hosting dance workshops throughout the day that people can get involved in.

Anastasia Carver, of the college, said: “The event will feature mesmerising live performances and provide a fantastic networking opportunity for dance schools and dancers from across the region to celebrate incredible talent, foster connections within the dance community, and raise funds for both the Nova Arts funding project and the wider dance community in the area.

“Together, we can make a lasting impact on our community through the transformative power of the arts and develop to continue on creating shows and events like this in the future.”



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TOURS

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7 - 11 Apr	St Annes – Monterey Beach Hotel	£332
7 - 11 Apr	Weymouth – Berkeley Hotel	£337
14 - 18 Apr	Paignton – Queens Hotel	£380
16 - 20 Apr	Porthcawl – Seabank Hotel	£347
16 - 20 Apr	Scarborough – Cumberland Hotel	£330
18 - 21 Apr	Llandudno – Four Oaks Hotel	£305
19 - 23 Apr	Blackpool – Queens Hotel	£315
19 - 23 Apr	Exmouth – Cavendish Hotel	£356
20 - 26 Apr	Cromer – Hotel De Paris	£448
20 - 26 Apr	Isle of Wight – Shanklin Hotel	£500
20 - 21 Apr	London – Waldorf Astoria Hotel	£227



DATES	HOTEL	PRICE
21 - 25 Apr	Blackpool – Ruskin Hotel	£377
21 - 25 Apr	Torquay – Derwent Hotel	£348
21 - 25 Apr	Weymouth – Crown Hotel	£404
21 - 25 Apr	Great Yarmouth – Hotel Nelson	£315
27 Apr - 2 May	Weston Super Mare – Sandringham Hotel	£355
28 Apr - 2 May	Ironbridge & Severn Valley – Mercure Telford Hotel	£555
28 Apr - 2 May	Paignton – Torbay Court Hotel	£364
28 Apr - 2 May	Southport – Royal Clifton Hotel	£344
30 Apr - 4 May	Scottish Borders & Holy Isle	£497

TOURS (continued)

DATES	HOTEL	PRICE
1 - 5 May	Little Boats & Trains of Norfolk – Mercure Norwich	£575
3 - 7 May	Waterways of Scotland – Leapark Hotel	£497
4 - 10 May	Dunoon – Selborne Hotel	£440
5 - 8 May	Bournemouth – Royal Bath Hotel	£334
5 - 8 May	Newcastle's Living History & Heritage Tour – Copthorne Hotel	£514
12 - 18 May	Lewis & Skye Hebridean Highlights	£945

EXCURSIONS / SHOWS

DATES	HOTEL	PRICE
Tue 20 May	NYMR – Pickering to Whitby	£39pp
Sat 24 May	Emmerdale Village Tour	£55pp
Sun 15 Jun	Harry Potter Studios	£95 Ad £85 Child
Sat 21 Jun	Coronation Street Tour	£55pp
Sun 22 Jun	Duxford Air Show	£80 Ad £35 Child
Wed 9 Jul	Great Yorkshire Show	£50pp
Sun 3 Aug	Buckingham Palace	£70 Ad £57 Child
Thur 29 Aug	Harry Potter Studios	£95 Ad £85 Child
Sat 6 Sep	Calamity Jane	£73pp
Sat 6 Sep	Emmerdale Village Tour	£55pp
Sun 7 Sep	Concorde Tour & Lunch	£53pp



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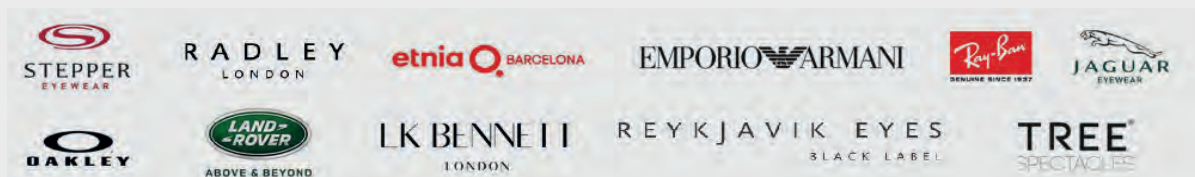
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NESTLED in the heart of Barnsley, The Academy Theatre Birdwell stands as a testament to the enduring power of the arts in our community.

This intimate venue, cherished by locals and visitors alike, is more than just a theatre; it is a hub of creativity and expression that enriches the cultural fabric of our town.

For decades, The Academy Theatre has showcased a diverse array of performances, including gripping dramas, mesmerising musicals, lively comedy shows, and engaging community events.

With its welcoming atmosphere and commitment to high-quality productions, the theatre plays a crucial role in bringing the community together and fostering a shared appreciation for the performing arts.

One of the theatre's standout features is its dedication to nurturing local talent.

By providing a platform for aspiring actors, writers, and directors, The Academy Theatre encourages creativity and collaboration among residents.

Workshops and community productions not only hone skills but also empower individuals to express themselves and build lasting connections with others who share their passion for the arts.

The impact of The Academy Theatre extends beyond the stage – it serves as an educational resource, offering programs for schools and young people to engage with the arts in meaningful ways.

By introducing the next generation to theatrical experiences, the theatre inspires creativity and critical thinking, equipping young minds with valuable skills that transcend the arts.

In addition to its role in supporting local talent and education, the theatre has become a vital economic contributor to Barnsley.

By attracting visitors from surrounding towns and cities, it boosts local businesses, from restaurants to shops, and creates jobs, ensuring a vibrant and sustainable community.

The ripple effects of a thriving arts scene are felt throughout the town, making it an integral part of Barnsley's identity.



As we look to the future, The Academy Theatre Birdwell faces challenges, as many venues do, in adapting to changing audience expectations and the rise of digital entertainment.

However, its commitment to innovation and community engagement ensures that it will continue to be a relevant and beloved destination for years to come.

In celebrating The Academy Theatre Birdwell, we celebrate the spirit of Barnsley itself – a community that values creativity, supports the arts, and recognises the power of connection.

As audiences fill its seats and artists take to its stage, the theatre remains a beacon of cultural vitality, reminding us all of the importance of art in our lives.

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Why Ian's passion has run on and on...

WHAT is it about Saturday mornings?

The thought of lazing in bed for those fortunate enough not having to work weekends, the smell of coffee, scrambled eggs, bacon sizzling in the frying pan oozing through the house, relaxing reading the newspaper, or ferreting out your football boots or your woollen scarf and bobble hat ready for the match this afternoon, depending on whether you are playing or watching.

For me Saturday morning for the past fourteen years has meant pulling on my shorts, sliding into my running vest, double knotting the laces of my trainers, and heading to Locke Park for Parkrun, a 5km run as the name suggests in the park.

It's a little before 9am on a perishingly cold, some would say nithering, February morning.

The run director is briefing the runners about the course, three laps in an anti-clockwise direction, and not having sole use of the park, the usual quips about there being a defibrillator available but 'we won't be needing it today', ten per cent off with your barcode at the cafe, show our appreciation for the volunteers who make Parkrun possible each week, and a shout out for any milestones.

Today is a significant one for me – my 600th Barnsley Parkrun: that's 1,800 laps of Locke Park, over 1,800 miles; running in a straight line that would take me as far south as the boundless sands of the Sahara Desert, in an easterly direction into the heart of snowbound Russia far beyond the walls of the Kremlin, travelling north further than the Arctic Circle, the achingly desolate icy wastes of Greenland beckon, west, splashed down somewhere in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean.

What choice is there but to keep going?

That's the eternal beauty of running, it's a gift to yourself that keeps on giving, with very little cost involved: some basic kit, a pair of running shoes and a bit of effort.

Nothing clears your mind of clutter better than a run, releases endorphins, those feel good chemicals that brighten the darkest days, gives you a sense of achievement, completing something you have started no matter how long it takes you, whether you choose to walk, jog or run: Parkrun is inclusive. No one gets left behind.

Royston man Ian Neville put on his running shoes following the inception of Barnsley Parkrun at Locke Park 14 years ago – and he hasn't looked back. Had he ran in a straight line, he'd have gone as south as the Sahara Desert and as far east as Russia. He writes about his experience of waking up and heading out every Saturday morning, whatever the weather.



Running away: Ian Neville.



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The joy of running is you have unwittingly joined a community where making friends is as easy as placing one foot in front of the other.

Many of the originals from those early days at Barnsley Parkrun in 2011, instigated by Alan Mills and the Friends of Locke Park, are still running, closing in on their own personal goals, you're only measuring your performance against your own expectations.

Then there's the added joy of being outdoors doing something active, watching the town awaken as it sheds its duvet of mist as you climb to the high point in front of the tower, feeling the fierce Baltic air rush into your lungs, a constant reminder what it is to be alive, and snowdrops bowing their shaven heads under the shelter of oak and ash, hinting at lengthening days, the promise of spring.

My claim to fame is I got a runner pregnant once.

I won't reveal the young lady's name but it was while I was volunteering as a tail walker.

Don't let your imagination run away with you.

The job of tail walker entails making sure no one gets left behind.

The lady in question informed me she had been trying to get pregnant but without much luck.

Her doctor encouraged her to lose weight so she took up running.

As we ran and chatted she breathlessly told me she'd never run a mile without stopping before.

Neither did she run one mile without stopping that Saturday morning: she ran three, and a little bit extra for good measure.

She did the same the next week, and the next, alas without me by her side.

A few months later word got round that the young lady was with child.

I can't say it was all down to me, but with a few words of encouragement and helpful pacing it shows you can achieve your goals if you're brave enough to take the first step.

And it is always the first step that is the hardest to overcome.

So if you fancy Parkrun, give it go, you never know how far it will take you, and you'll make friends for life along the way.

Got to run now, 3, 2, 1, go!



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CHAS

The game is far from over...

FOR one group of local gamers the 90s never quite ended as they have managed to turn one of their favourite childhood pastimes into a nationwide community of like-minded individuals who connect in person regularly.

Much has been said about the growing feelings of isolation felt by many in the modern world.

While we're all constantly connected by social media, loneliness has become an epidemic, especially as people still struggle with the aftermath of rolling Covid lockdowns that kept people trapped in their own homes for years.

That's what makes a group like LanOps so interesting, as they ignore many of the luxuries and accessibility options provided by modern technology to embrace more old-school approaches to video games.

The group has become famous for their sell-out LAN parties, which see people gather together in one building for a weekend, bringing their computers and directly plugging into the same server to play together.

This nationwide affair all started here in Barnsley, when founder Thornton Phillis was only 13 years old.

"I'd been attending LAN parties for a while, but they were over in Doncaster and I lived in Ardsley," he said.

"Basically at the time I wanted to get my mates to join in, but none of them wanted to travel through to Doncaster.

"So I started doing those, we were all 13 or 14 years

old and there were only about five or six of us.

"Fast forward to college and I started doing full-week-end events – it just snowballed from there."

While Thornton admits the events started out of necessity – as the technology to play games together online didn't exist at the time – the reason it has sustained is the 'community more than anything'.

"It's a holiday for some basically," he added.

"If people want they can come and treat it as a bit of a getaway."

The group are now also planning to begin tabletop sessions in Barnsley, bringing players together to enjoy board games.

Thousands have got involved with the community group, bringing together their interests and personal lives to benefit one another.

Trustee Ashley Dawson explains: "Gaming's not isolating, but it is at the same time.

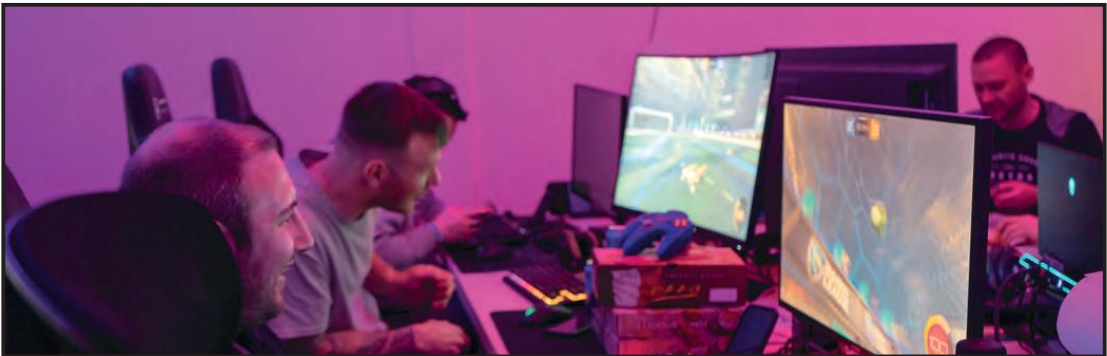
"You can be talking to people online but physically you're on your own, so we help people escape that.

"When we were younger it helped us meet new people, develop professionally and develop socially.

"People would help each other out with things like their CV.

"But then there's more practical things – recently I needed a strimmer for my garden so I asked someone in the community and they helped me out.

"It goes beyond the games."



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When **Simon Andrew Spence** left Barnsley for Morecambe aged ten, few could have imagined the glittering career he would have in the music industry. From writing superstar Pete Doherty's autobiography to performing live on TV with his 'prank rock' band, he's done it all. Chronicle chief reporter **Jack Tolson** spoke with the 55-year-old about his career, what makes him tick and what's next in his extraordinary life.



Rock n roll lifestyle is a far cry from Simon's humble start

ANDREW grew up in Wilthorpe and like many from Barnsley, he says the town has shaped him into who he is today.

He attended Wilthorpe Primary School and has fond memories of spending time in the town centre and Tinker's Pond.

He's a man who has lived across the country, who has travelled the world – but it's Barnsley where he feels at home.

He said: "I've got so many fond memories of Barnsley.

"I've lived in London for ten years and Manchester for 20 years since, but whenever I think of home it's Barnsley that springs to mind.

"I think Barnsley is the greatest place on earth – I tell everyone that it is.

"Living in Manchester they call it the Republic of Manchester, but whenever you tell someone that you're from Barnsley they give you their full respect."

His grandad – who he says helped raise him – was a train driver and it's the memories of him sounding his horn while heading over Wilthorpe that have stood the test of time.

"Tinker's Pond is where my grandad lived," he said.

"It was my grandparents who brought me up.

"I remember he used to go past the house and he used to beep the horn – it's those memories that live with me."

Coming from a real working class background, it's fair to say that not even Simon could have imagined the career he would have.

But his fashion sense, music taste and love for the industry all came from his time in the town.

"When people think of Barnsley they think of slag heaps and people throwing bricks at football matches," Simon added.

"But 90 per cent of the town is just so beautiful.

"I was so lucky that I was able to be brought up there.

"We would always hang out at the Barnsley Boys Club.

"There was Barnsley Market – anything you wanted for your clothing you could get it there.

"I remember loads of great soul music upstairs.

"These are defining memories.

"I'm just so proud to be from Barnsley."

SEARCH FOR HIS DAD

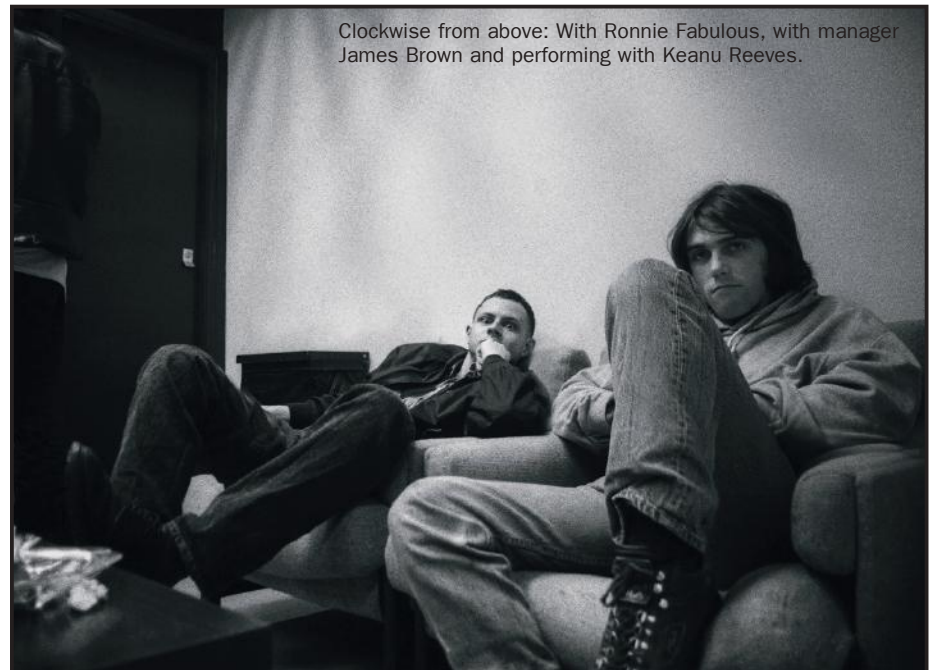
Despite doing so much with his life, there's still somewhat of a hole due to his relationship with his birth father.

He was adopted by his step-dad – his mum's partner – as a youngster but has always longed for reuniting with his 'real' dad.

"I've got no photos of me and my real dad, he was called Terry Spence," he said.

"I do have one of myself on his motorbike but he left when I was three.

14 SPRING LIVING



Clockwise from above: With Ronnie Fabulous, with manager James Brown and performing with Keanu Reeves.



"I remember that he turned up to my adoption red-eyed.

"Whether that means he was either drunk or on drugs I don't know.

"He had a motorbike repair shop and his best mate had a scooter repair shop.

"That's all I really know about him."

He's still hoping to reunite with his dad – and he feels that his style and music taste came from his dad's love for rock bands.

"I know for a fact that he was a biker and somehow he was associated with the rock band Saxon.

"I'm not sure if he's still alive but I'm sure

that there will be someone who knows something.

"I'd just love to know more about him."

When he was adopted, he took his step-dad's surname 'Duffield'.

But despite his love for Simon – and he has strong memories of him taking him to Oakwell to watch the Reds – he knew he needed to change his surname back.

Though it's for a cooler reason than you'd think.

"It was in 1999 when I decided to change my name back to Spence," he said.

"My initials were SAD – Simon Andrew

Duffield – and I really didn't like that all that much.

"I much prefer SAS – Simon Andrew Spence.

"I'd just love to know more about him – dead or alive."

Simon left the town aged ten and moved to Morecambe after his step-dad found a new job at the local council.

It was a bit of a culture shock for him, and he says his new town was behind the times – and it was a few years before they caught up with the trend-setters in Barnsley.

He added: "My step-dad worked at Barnsley Town Hall and my dear mum worked in the betting shop.

"He got a job at Lancaster and Morecambe Council as the assistant town clerk so that's where we moved.

"They were just so behind us.

"It was two or three years before they eventually caught up with Barnsley."

He admits himself he wasn't the easiest to teach at school – and he found it hard to get into university.

Thankfully his journey took him to London – and subsequently the start of his fascinating career.

"My favourite subject at school was making your teacher have a nervous breakdown," he joked.

"I was very good at it. I failed all of my A-levels terribly. North London Polytechnic was the only place that would take me.

"I worked their for the university magazine and I knew that I wanted to be a music journalist since I was 15."

He went onto work at the NME by simply 'knocking on the door and asking for a job' – a task the youth of today simply won't be able to fathom.

But it worked.

"I had my eye on the NME," he said.

"The Stone Roses had just happened and I had adopted that style.

"I was a 19, 20-year-old northerner who said I'd like to cover them.

"They just opened the door straight away.

"It was just too easy."

Simon's done it all – and that includes performing in a band which made headlines across the country, and almost secured a £1m contract.

It was at the NME where he became a founding member of the band Fabulous – also known as 'Baggy'.

He was joined by Martyn Goodacre, Robert Hodges, Russell Underwood and Ronnie Flynn.

But it was really just a joke for Simon.

He said: "The band was just full of NME journalists.

"We got loads of coverage – probably down to us being in the industry – and we thought that we were going to get a £1m.

"We signed for Heavenly Records and we were supposed to be the next big thing."

Legendary music producer Peter Waterman took a fancy to the band – but it was at this point that everything started to spiral out of control.

They performed on his show, The Hitman and Her, and were due to have their album produced by Kyle Minogue – but it didn't quite go to plan.

"When Pete Waterman signed our band he said that we didn't need to make the music.

"That was a good thing because we were a joke.

"We just used to break everything and scream but it seemed to work.

"Kyle Minogue was going to produce our album.

"We were on TV and it was disastrous.

"He dropped us straight away.

"When you're told that you're the greatest thing in music then it's difficult to go back into the office again."

It was always going to be a struggle to go back to being a music journalist after hitting the heights of stardom with his band.

But it's that experience that's allowed him to get where he is today.

He feels that having lived the experience of a rock star in the early 1990s, he's able to connect with some of the biggest stars on the planet in ways others can't.

And he got his big break back in the business after meeting with former Rolling Stones manager and producer Andrew Loog Oldham.

He said: "Luckily enough people did have my back and one of those people was the Rolling Stones manager.

"I met with Andrew everywhere – in Colombia, Argentina, London.

"He was like a father figure to me and he's been quoted saying I was like the son he never wanted.

"It all went from there.

"It's just been books, books, books.

"I've never been back on stage.

"I got a glimpse of what it was like to be in that situation.

"Girls are literally just leaping at you."

His two books with Andrew Loog Oldham, Stoned and 2Stoned, are some of his best-known works, but he has also authored books on iconic music acts Happy Mondays, the Stone Roses, Bay City Rollers, and Small Faces singer Steve Marriott in addition to writing for The Face, The New York Times, Mojo, and Record Collector magazine.

But it's his book with Pete Doherty of The Libertines, 'A Likely Lad', that he's perhaps most proud of.

"When I worked with Pete he was the first person who I'd written for who was younger than me," he said.

"That was a different experience.

"Pete often teased me about Fabulous.

"All of the crazy stuff that I did, Pete was able to be more open with me because of what an idiot he had been.

"He was a complete idiot at times, but he wasn't a total idiot.

"I was very pleased with the way that book went.

"It was another lucky break.

"It's not easy to keep getting people to work."

And after working with some of the biggest publishers in the world, Simon said in late 2023 he finally wanted to be given a fair share of the pie.

His latest book, 'Feeling Supersonic: From Madchester to Britpop', has been published by his own company BackstageBooks with fashion designer Anthony Donnelly – and it's already a huge success.

He said: "I did a book about The Stone Roses with Penguin and I get about £400 for every 10,000 books sold.

"It sold 250,000 books – so that didn't seem a lot.

"If I sell 10,000 Oasis books then it's fair to say that I'll make a lot more than that.

"We decided to reverse that.

"We've released five books so far and the Oasis one is the latest."

The idea of the book came about after the pair heard about the band's reunion.

"Anthony is very connected in Manchester so he knew that Oasis were going to reform before everybody else," he added.

"We wanted to be one of the first books out since the reform.

"We got an exclusive interview with Noel Gallagher and that tailed it off brilliantly.

"The official Oasis photographer, Jill Furmanovsky, let us use her photos and it's turned out a treat.

"It sold out in five days and now we're selling more copies."

His life has had many ups and downs but he credits his success to Barnsley – and he's determined to come back to the town on a more regular basis.

"As I'm getting older I'm becoming more and more interested in Barnsley," he said.

"I'd love to do something in the town.

"If you look back at the history of what what I've done.

"It's quite wild.

"It's a little crazy.

"That's what I'm like."

Whatever Simon does next is bound to be a huge success – that's just how he goes through life.

No matter what, he'll live on as perhaps Barnsley's best ever export from the industry.



With his band Fabulous.
Below: With Pete Doherty.





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Wentworth Woodhouse's secrets coming to surface...

MORE and more secrets are being uncovered at the ever-elusive Wentworth Woodhouse – with staff now preparing to break down some of the biggest myths and mysteries as part of a new tour.

Being the largest house in England, with more than 300 rooms in total built over the course of three centuries, it makes sense that the enormous stately home still hides plenty of untold stories within its walls.

That's why over the course of 2024, a ten-strong team of researchers pored over documents, ledgers and articles in the Rotherham and Sheffield Archives to find out more about the property and its many residents.

Their intensive work managed to bust long-held myths – like whether Russian ballet star Anna Pavlova really did dance for King George and Queen Mary in the Grade-I listed building – while revealing details that had been lost to time.

Researchers have found details of the great effort and expense gone to when the second Marquess of Rockingham hosted a ball for George, the Prince of Wales, in 1789 – according to a letter from an attendee, 8,250 oil lamps illuminated the Marble Saloon.

But perhaps their most touching find is the story of how the household rushed to organise a wartime wedding in just two days for the 7th Earl Fitzwilliam's daughter, Lady Elfrida, when her fiancé unexpectedly got leave from the Front in 1918. He arrived at the house on Friday March 22 and the wedding, which

had been planned for April, was held on the Sunday.

There was no time to send invitations, the tables were decorated with white rhododendrons from the gardens and white orchids from the greenhouses, and the wedding cake was decorated with guns and a cannon.

Now, through the Top to Bottom tour which launched in January, the team of volunteer sleuths will be sharing more details of these stories, revealing all they've uncovered.

Victoria Ryves, Wentworth Woodhouse Trust's head of culture and engagement, said: "Our researchers have unearthed a huge amount of information about Wentworth Woodhouse's past life.

"In its heyday it was one of the most important houses in England, yet there is so much we don't know about what happened here.

"Ongoing research helps us understand more about the mansion and find stories that connect visitors with local history.

"Our new tours are packed with this new information.

There are lots of surprises – such as the expensive mattress the 7th Earl had to order from London for the bed King George and Mary would be sleeping in.

"We shatter a few myths, too.

"The Marquess's rumoured fishpond was probably just a water purification tank and Anna Pavlova's ballet slippers never graced our marble floor.

"It was another Russian ballerina, Lydia Kyasht, who danced for the King and Queen."



House tour guides Vale Hale, Jo Owen and David Allott in Wentworth Woodhouse's cellars.

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Entertainment for everyone over the coming months...

AN assortment of entertaining events for all the family will be coming to Barnsley over the next few months.

A Pulitzer Prize and Tony award-winning play will be coming to the Lamproom in early April. 'Doubt – A Parable' follows a young progressive priest in 1960s' America whose actions and conduct are scrutinised by more traditional members of his congregation. The play will run from April 1 to 5.

But for those looking for a less challenging trip the Civic has you covered, as they host 'Teach Rex' – a show that features life-like dinosaurs to teach children about the anatomy of the gigantic creatures who once roamed the planet. Shows will take place across the day on April 10.

Starting on the same day, Barnsley's International Market will return for 2025, featuring an array of food

stalls and vendors who will fill out the Glass Works. Those interested in tasting cuisine from across the globe can head into town every day from Thursday April 10 to Sunday April 13.

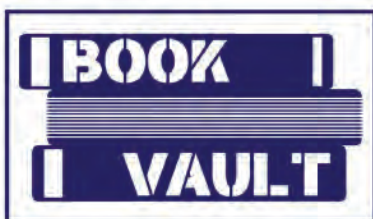
Beloved northern musician and X Factor sensation Lucy Spraggan will be coming to town once again in April.

She performed at Cawthorne's Underneath the Stars festival last year to a packed out crowd, and it seems things will be no different at her upcoming show at Birdwell Venue on April 25 which has already sold out.

Looking further ahead, a famed South Yorkshire talent will be returning to his home county in May for 'An Audience with Brian Blessed'. The Blackadder star will be hosting and sharing captivating anecdotes from throughout his career at the Lamproom on May 6 and 7.



Teach Rex.



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You can also visit our dedicated Children's area, a space to discover worlds of magic and wonder. Lots of books for all ages, jigsaws, and Orchard Toys - educational puzzles and games. New items coming soon! We also have World Book Day books while they last.

SIGNED BOOKS!

Milly Johnson will be in store on Saturday 29 March, 10am - noon. Milly will be signing her new book, Same Time Next Week. If you miss out, fear not! We will have signed copies with free gifts from Milly in store while stocks last.

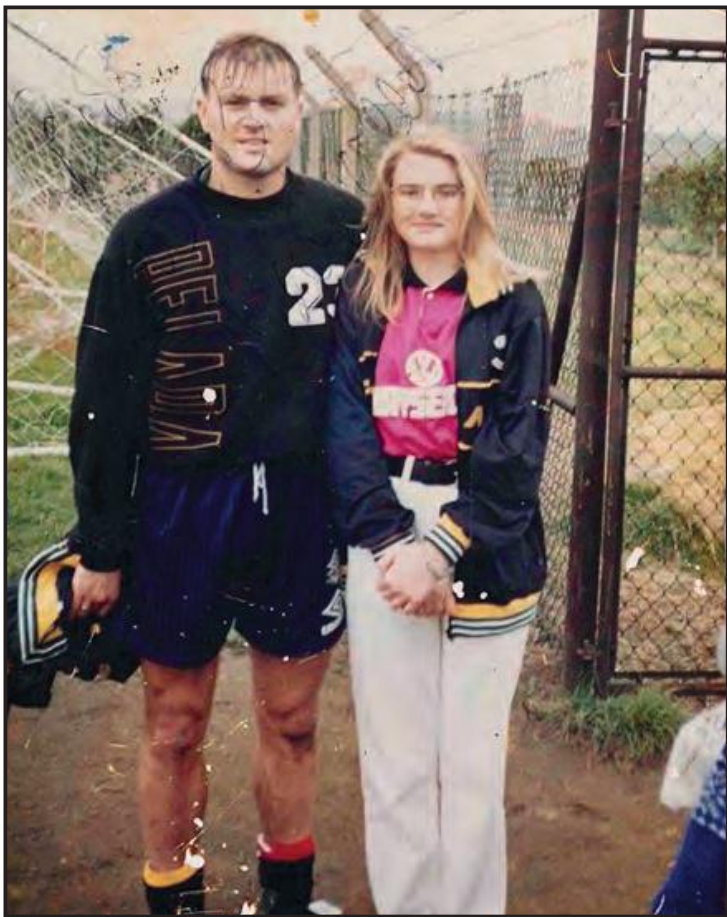
We have lots of signed books and exclusive editions from Jojo Moyes, Frances Quinn, Jessie Burton, Samantha Shannon, T J Klune and R F Kuang. More arriving all the time! Follow us on socials or visit to see what you can find.

LOCAL PUBLICATIONS

As well as well-known local writers, we have a range of local interest books. This includes a broad range of Pen and Sword books on local heritage and history. We also stock the Memories of Barnsley quarterly magazine, with the final issue new in store. We would like to thank those involved for this valuable resource.

You can also order from us, whether new, forthcoming or hard to find titles. To order and pre-order books, for store collection, post or local delivery, please contact us!

We are at 7 Market Street, Barnsley. Follow us on Facebook and Instagram @TheBookVault07, on Bluesky, call 01226 281945 or speak to us in store.



Left: Lyndsey Smith with Neil Redfearn and inset: Frank Lampard playing at Oakwell.

Memorabilia dig will help out new Reds' project

BARNLEY fans are being encouraged to dig out any old photos and memorabilia of the club for a special project.

Barnley FC: The People's Visual History is a project supported by the Fan Advisory Board, Parliament and the football club.

Fans are being asked to take part in the project by showing what it means to support the club.

Renowned photographer and football artist Julian Germain is hoping to add the memories to a digital archive so it can be preserved for future generations.

It will also be placed in a book, which is due to be published in November. Julian said: "Perhaps you were one of the 6,000 Tykes fans at Anfield during the famous 5th round FA Cup win in 1909, and maybe you managed to take a few snaps?"

"Or you were amongst the delirious promotion celebrations in 1997 after Clint Marcelle clinched the points against Bradford?"

"Or did you cut your teeth as a Barnley fan enduring the seven-year stretch in the old fourth division when Oakwell crowds were often below 4,000?"

"Or, it could just be you or your mum or grandad, proudly wearing a replica shirt and waving a banner or scarf in the back garden, simply because you love Barnley Football Club.

"Fans have memories and stories and they often hold onto objects and items – all kinds of things – that in some way connect them to those experiences and to their sense of belonging to their team."

For more information or to get involved, contact bfc@peoplesvisualhistory.com.



Oakwell, 9th August 1997. First game in the Prem. Anonymous photo loaned by Danny Parker. From the project *Barnley FC: The People's Visual History*



Barnley Chronicle reporter Selwyn Dunford's photo album from the 1961-62 season. Loaned by Barnley Museums. From the project *Barnley FC: The People's Visual History*

MY TEAM 1916-17				
1st DIVISION	2nd DIVISION	3rd DIVISION	4th DIVISION	Football League & 5th League Tables 1973-74
1. LIVERPOOL	1. LUTON	1. OLDHAM	1. BARNLEY	1. LIVERPOOL
2. MANCHESTER UNITED	2. SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY	2. SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY	2. SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY	2. MANCHESTER UNITED
3. CHELSEA	3. CHELSEA	3. CHELSEA	3. CHELSEA	3. CHELSEA
4. ARSENAL	4. ARSENAL	4. ARSENAL	4. ARSENAL	4. ARSENAL
5. WEST HAM UNITED	5. WEST HAM UNITED	5. WEST HAM UNITED	5. WEST HAM UNITED	5. WEST HAM UNITED
6. BURNLEY	6. BURNLEY	6. BURNLEY	6. BURNLEY	6. BURNLEY
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Writer had to dig deep for story

PC ALFRED Austwick, who was murdered in 1886 in Dodworth, is buried 40 miles away with his younger brother, Henry, in the graveyard at St Mary's Church in South Milford.

Yet their graves offer little insight into the tragic circumstances of their deaths. For years, I walked past their graves, unaware of the story behind them. Occasionally, flowers caught my eye – subtle reminders that these young men still held meaning for someone, long after their passing.

It also suggested that someone knew more about the events surrounding their deaths, but how much did they truly know?

How had two brothers, both young men, met their untimely ends? And how reliable was the information circulating about them? My years at the BBC taught me the importance of fact-checking and precision when writing about true events.

I stumbled upon the shocking story of Alfred's murder when researching the fate of two World War One soldiers from Lumbly.

I discovered that Alfred's brother Henry had died five years before him, in a farming accident, crushed by a horse and cart against a wall.

Then, on the night of July 31, 1886, Alfred, a 30-year-old police constable, was shot and killed in the line of duty by James Murphy, a coal miner and occasional poacher, in Dodworth.

As I delved into the digitised British Newspaper Archive, I discovered that the tragedy – initially gripping the local community – had become a national sensation, played out like a dramatic saga with members of the public often coming forward with misleading information, distracting the enquiry and the investigation.

Over the course of a year, I pieced together the unfolding events as reported in the press, including the Barnsley Chronicle. The language, writing style, and detail of the reports – and the insightful contributions of some journalists – fascinated me. I also uncovered court records from the trial, and discovered that James Berry, the executioner, had written a book titled *My Experiences as an Executioner*, dedicating a chapter to Murphy's case. Berry was both bemused and intrigued by Murphy's character. Additionally, I examined online records such as census returns and parish documents. I discovered that, in 1871, five years after her husband's death, Sarah had six children – the youngest just five years old, though the press reported that she had only five children. How had that happened?

Through these sources, I gained a deeper understanding of religion's role in people's lives, the lack of welfare support for both the victim's and murderer's families, and the crucial reliance on community fundraising. I also learned about the close-knit nature of the community, where the local joiner doubled as the undertaker, the surgeon was called to attend to the dying Alfred, and the school-teacher, shoemaker, and other townsfolk served as jurors during the inquest.

The reports sometimes leaned toward sentimentality, especially when detailing the return of Austwick's body to his birthplace. His funeral was covered in great detail, offering a vivid glimpse into Victorian mourning customs for a local hero:

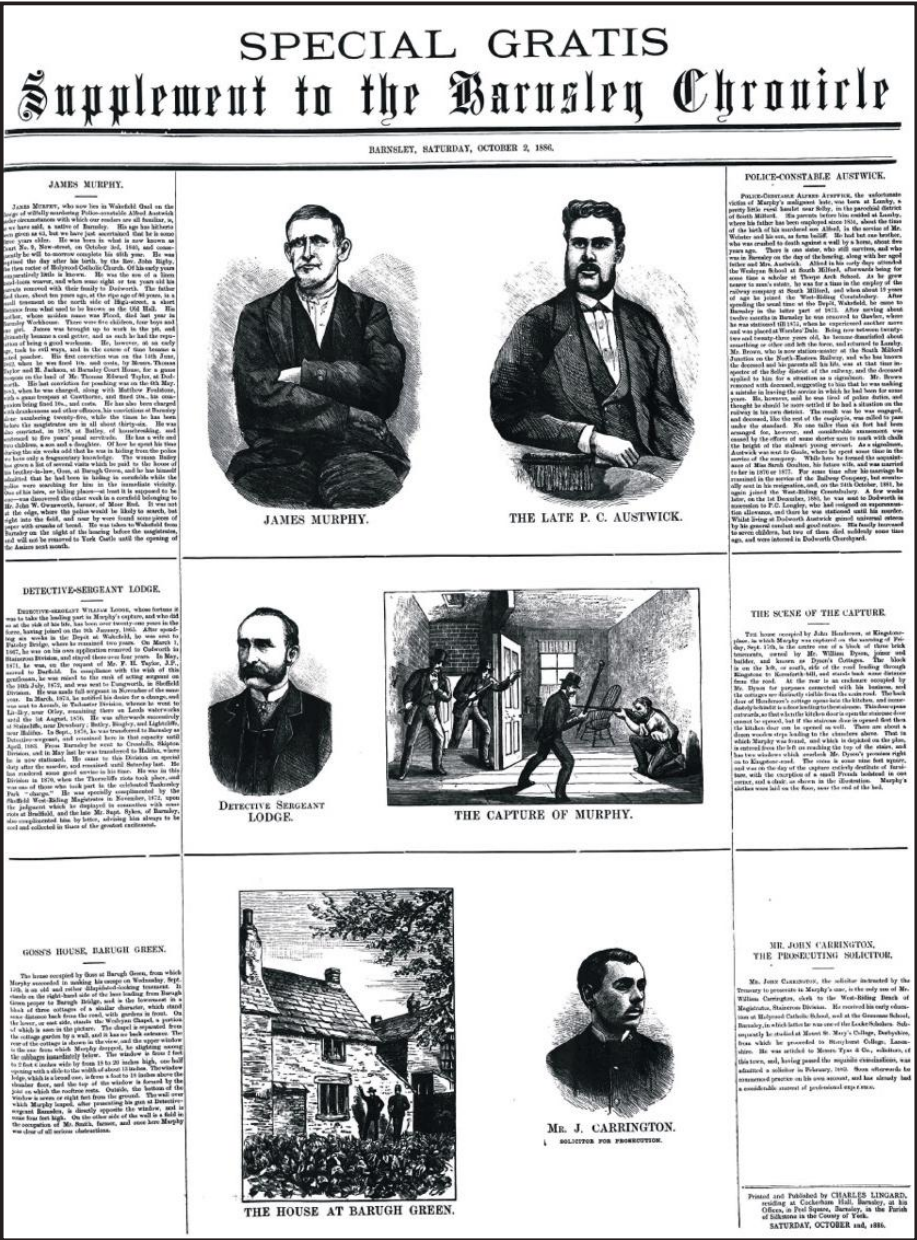
"As the train drew into the station at Milford Junction, many people thronged the platforms and everyone seemed to be deeply moved by the melancholy incident which had drawn them there.

"When the train stopped a most affecting scene was witnessed.

"Mrs. Austwick, on seeing her father and other relatives, seemed to be utterly prostrated and gave way to her unbounded grief and sorrow. She fell into the arms of her father and borne up by her sisters, gave vent to her

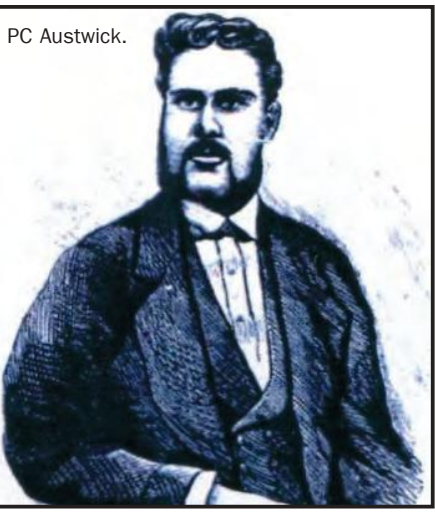
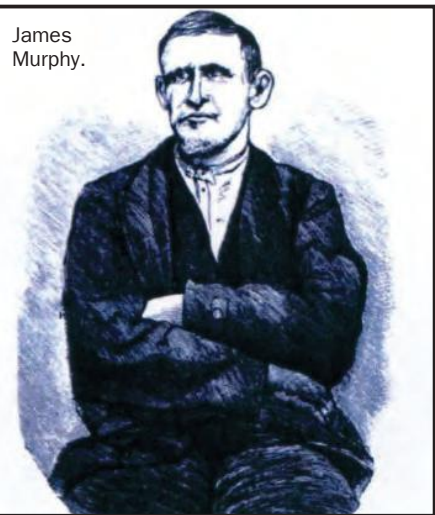
24 SPRING LIVING

When author **Hilary Robinson** came across a true crime story that gripped the nation she found that she had little to write, for it was all written for her in the press. But her training as a journalist meant the detail still needed to be checked and cross referenced – fake news is not a modern phenomenon.



hitherto restrained feelings. "The carriage containing the corpse was detached from the train by which it had travelled. "About a dozen police officers from the Selby division awaited. They were under the command of Supt Boshier and Inspector Grey, of Selby. The coffin was removed from the carriage by six Barnsley police officers who bore it to a farmer's wagon kindly lent by Mr Geo Webster of Lumbly. "Ten spring carts belonging to farmers, butchers, grocers and other tradesmen, all sent free of charge, were quickly filled by the widow, her children and relatives. A procession of considerable length, headed by Supt Boshier and his men was formed and the cortege wended its way to South Milford. "The time it took for the procession to reach the pretty country village had been greatly augmented for the villagers turned out en masse to pay their last tribute to one who was so well known and highly respected. Arriving at the crossroads leading to the church, opposite the Swan Inn, the coffin was taken from the dray and was borne on the shoulders of

the Barnsley and Selby officers, alternately, to the church." Through firsthand accounts in the digital archive, I learned more about James Murphy, who, literate and articulate, accepted his fate with resignation as he faced the death penalty. His final letter home to his wife, written just before his execution, read: "Dear Wife, I write these lines hoping to find you all well, as it leaves me at present, but on Monday I shall meet my death and then I know the grand secret there is no mercy for me so I must die and I hope you will altogether give me a prayer and I will meet my fate as brave as I can. Dear Wife, you will think of the next world and our meeting for you will not be here forever, so farewell, Dear Wife and farewell dear children too, farewell dear brothers and relations for all this life we all must part. May the Lord have mercy on you all. James Murphy." After the book was published, a local resident reached out, revealing that Austwick's wife – who had remarried a widower – was his step-great-grandmother. It was he who had placed fresh flowers on the grave. But here's



where fact-checking is crucial – he had always believed that Austwick was shot in Lumbly. However, the press had been correct in reporting that Sarah had five living children at the time of her husband's death, but it became apparent that she was also two months pregnant with her sixth child. Despite relying on established facts, careful addition of accurate details revealed a deeper, more complex narrative, one that highlighted the human cost of the tragedy, impacting not just two men but their families and the community as a whole.

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Day Trips

Date	Trip	Adult	Sen/Ch
APRIL 2025			
Wed 2nd	Kendal & Ambleside ♦	£21.00	£20.00
Fri 4th	Whitby	£17.00	£16.00
Sat 5th	Black Country Living Museum ♦	£41.00*	£40.00*
Sat 5th	Skegness	£19.00	£18.00
Sun 6th	Blackpool	£17.00	£16.00
Sun 6th	Scarborough	£17.00	£16.00
Mon 7th	Conkers ♦	£27.00*	£26.00*
Mon 7th	Bridlington	£17.00	£16.00
Tues 8th	Hull ♦	£17.00	£16.00
Tues 8th	The Deep ♦	£17.00	£16.00
Tues 8th	Whitby	£17.00	£16.00
Wed 9th	Blackpool	£17.00	£16.00
Wed 9th	Mablethorpe	£17.00	£16.00
Thurs 10th	Knowsley Safari Park ♦	£29.00*	£28.00*
Thurs 10th	Scarborough	£17.00	£16.00
Fri 11th	Chester	£17.00	£16.00
Fri 11th	Chester Zoo	£17.00	£16.00
Sat 12th	Alton Towers ♦	£20.00	£19.00
Sat 12th	Stratford-upon-Avon ♦	£21.00	£20.00
Sun 13th	Bridlington	£17.00	£16.00
Mon 14th	Bakewell Market & Matlock	£18.00	£17.00
Mon 14th	Whitby	£17.00	£16.00
Tues 15th	Scarborough	£17.00	£16.00
Tues 15th	Blackpool	£17.00	£16.00
Wed 16th	Bridlington	£17.00	£16.00
Wed 16th	Skegness	£19.00	£18.00
Wed 16th	York	£17.00	£16.00
Wed 16th	Eden Camp	£17.00	£16.00
Thurs 17th	Liverpool	£17.00	£16.00
Fri 18th	Whitby via Helmsley – Good Friday	£20.00	£19.00
Sat 19th	Twycross Zoo ♦	£33.00*	£32.00*
Sat 19th	Cleethorpes	£17.00	£16.00
Sat 19th	Royal Leamington Spa & Warwick	£20.00	£19.00
Sun 20th	Scarborough	£17.00	£16.00
Mon 21st	Blackpool – Bank Holiday	£19.00	£18.00
Tues 22nd	Lincoln ♦	£17.00	£16.00
Wed 23rd	Bury Market	£17.00	£16.00
Thurs 24th	York	£17.00	£16.00
Thurs 24th	York McArthur Glen Designer Outlet	£17.00	£16.00
Fri 25th	Harrogate Flower Show ♦	£40.00*	£39.00*
Sat 26th	Whitby Goth Weekend	£19.00	£18.00
Sun 27th	Whitby Goth Weekend	£19.00	£18.00
Sun 27th	Beamish Museum ♦	£20.00	£19.00
Sun 27th	Durham ♦	£20.00	£19.00

Date	Trip	Adult	Sen/Ch
MAY 2025			
Sat 3rd	Llandudno Victorian Extravaganza	£19.00	£18.00
Sun 4th	Skegness	£19.00	£18.00
Sun 4th	Birmingham / World's Biggest Primark ♦	£21.00	£20.00
Mon 5th	Blackpool – Bank Holiday	£19.00	£18.00
Sat 10th	Spalding Flower Parade	£19.00	£18.00
Sun 11th	Melton Mowbray 1940's Weekend ♦	£19.00	£18.00
Tues 13th	Gainsborough Market & Lincoln	£17.00	£16.00
Wed 14th	Kendal & Windermere Cruise ♦	£33.00*	£32.00*
Fri 16th	Cleethorpes	£17.00	£16.00
Sat 17th	Whitby Fish & Ship Festival	£19.00	£18.00
Sat 17th	Haworth 1940's Weekend ♦	£19.00	£18.00
Sun 18th	Bridlington – Kite Festival	£17.00	£16.00
Sun 18th	Morecambe – Vintage Vehicle Show	£17.00	£16.00
Tues 20th	Chorley Market & Oswaldthistle Mills	£17.00	£16.00
Wed 21st	Chester	£17.00	£16.00
Wed 21st	Chester Zoo	£17.00	£16.00
Fri 23rd	Skegness	£19.00	£18.00
Sat 24th	Malton Food Festival	£17.00	£16.00
Sat 24th	Yorkshire Wildlife Park ♦	£37.00*	£36.00*
Sat 24th	Bridlington	£17.00	£16.00
Sun 25th	Scarborough	£17.00	£16.00
Mon 26th	Blackpool – Bank Holiday	£19.00	£18.00
Tues 27th	Cleethorpes	£17.00	£16.00
Tues 27th	Liverpool	£17.00	£16.00
Wed 28th	Bridlington	£17.00	£16.00
Thurs 29th	Cleveland Coast & Country	£21.00	£20.00
Fri 30th	Whitby via Goathland	£18.00	£17.00
Sat 31st	Southport Food & Drink Festival	£17.00	£16.00
Sat 31st	Southport	£17.00	£16.00
Sat 31st	Bury Market	£17.00	£16.00
JUNE 2025			
Sun 1st	Skegness	£19.00	£18.00
Mon 2nd	Beaumaris & Anglesey	£19.00	£18.00
Wed 4th	Chatsworth House ♦	£46.00*	£45.00*
Sat 7th	Himalayan Gardens & Sculpture Park & Ripon ♦	£31.00*	£30.00*
Sat 7th	Scarborough	£17.00	£16.00
Sun 8th	York	£17.00	£16.00
Sun 8th	Eden Camp	£17.00	£16.00
Sat 14th	Blackpool	£17.00	£16.00
Sun 15th	Skegness	£19.00	£18.00
Sun 15th	Knowsley Safari Park ♦	£29.00*	£28.00*
Thurs 19th	Cleethorpes	£17.00	£16.00

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BIRDWELL – Working Mens Club • **WORSBOROUGH** – Ship Inn Vernon Road
BARNSELY INTERCHANGE – Stand 23 / 24 (See ♦ key below)

Date	Trip	Adult	Sen/Ch
JUNE 2025			
Sat 21st	Bridlington	£21.00	£20.00
Sat 21st	Llandudno	£17.00	£16.00
Sun 22nd	Mablethorpe	£41.00*	£40.00*
Mon 23rd	Pickering, Thornton Le Dal & Whitby	£19.00	£18.00
		£17.00	£16.00
Sat 28th	Scarborough Armed Forces Day	£17.00	£16.00
Sat 28th	Blackpool Armed Forces Day	£27.00*	£26.00*
Sun 29th	Cleethorpes Armed Forces Day	£17.00	£16.00
Sun 29th	Arley Hall Garden Festival – 30th Celebration ♦	£37.00*	£36.00*
AUGUST 2025			
Mon 11th	Blackpool Hot Ice Show	£37.00*	£36.00*
Thurs 21st	York Races Ladies Day	£19.00	£18.00

Holidays & Short Breaks 2025

Date	Tour	Days	Price
APRIL 2025			
7th - 11th	Llandudno	5	£319.00
14th - 18th	Skegness	5	£399.00
18th - 20th	Mystery Weekend	3	£209.00
21st - 25th	Folkstone	5	£229.00
25th - 28th	Sidmouth Spring Getaway	4	£369.00
27th - 28th May	Derbyshire Spring Colours	2	£99.00
27th - 1st May	Northumbria, Coastlines & Holy Island	5	£549.00
30th - 4th May	Cromer	5	£419.00
MAY 2025			
5th - 9th	Perthshire	5	£389.00
6th - 10th	Luxury North Wales Rails & Sails	5	£649.00
7th - 11th	Great Yarmouth & Norfolk Coastline EarlySummer Colours	5	£469.00
9th - 13th	Isle of Man	5	£569.00
11th - 12th	Lake District & Yorkshire Dales	2	£149.00
12th - 16th	Torquay	5	£399.00
19th - 23rd	Sand Bay Holiday Village	5	£399.00
21st - 23rd	Liverpool	3	£189.00

Date	Tour	Days	Price
MAY 2025			
26th - 30th	Blackpool	5	£399.00
30th - 2nd June	Chester & North Wales	4	£379.00
JUNE 2025			
2nd - 6th	Llandudno	5	£369.00
2nd - 6th	Cream of the Cotswolds	5	£599.00
5th - 9th	Hampshire & Home Counties Delights	5	£599.00
9th - 13th	Royal Retreats Scone Glamis	5	£599.00
12th - 15th	Buxton	4	£389.00
14th - 18th	Criccieth	5	£589.00
16th - 20th	Hampshire & Isle of Wight	5	£649.00
16th - 20th	Skegness	5	£499.00
23rd - 27th	Paignton	5	£449.00
27th - 29th	Southport	3	£199.00
27th - 30th	Weymouth	4	£359.00
29th - 2nd July	Warwickshire	4	£179.00
30th - 4th July	Tenby & South Wales	5	£659.00
JULY 2025			
5th - 9th	Bognor Regis	5	£499.00
7th - 11th	St. Anne's	5	£399.00
7th - 11th	Perthshire	5	£469.00
11th - 14th	Morecambe	4	£359.00
13th - 18th	Torquay	6	£599.00
19th - 26th	Llandudno	8	£569.00
20th - 24th	North East Explorer	5	£519.00
25th - 27th	Edinburgh	3	£199.00
AUGUST 2025			
3rd - 4th	Black Country Living Museum	2	£179.00
3rd - 9th	Fort William	7	£659.00
4th - 8th	St. Mawes, Cornwall	5	£659.00
4th - 8th	Isle of Wight	5	£659.00
7th - 11th	Isle of Man	5	£689.00
10th - 12th	Liverpool	3	£169.00
10th - 15th	Bournemouth & Dorset	6	£529.00
13th - 17th	Ilfracombe	5	£449.00
15th - 18th	Edinburgh Tattoo	4	£429.00

* Includes Admission ♦ Barnsley Interchange only



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Shaws

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FISH & CHIPS

WINDING BACK THE CLOCK...

An interview with Dave Shaw and Mike Shaw:



Dave Shaw, originally from Lundwood, had a favourite chippy growing up and wanted to own one that was as good. So he opened his shop on Station Road, Dodworth, on the 29th of October 1979. He borrowed money from his family to buy the business. Previously, he had worked at Dodworth pit and been in the Royal Navy, where he had served with Duncan Bannatyne. They were both a little wild and ended up in military prison. When he opened the shop, money was tight, and the till float was borrowed from Mike, his young son's piggy bank. Dave's dad, Bob, came and helped every week until one Saturday morning, while preparing the potatoes, he chopped the end of his finger off in the chipper machine.

When the miners' strike happened, only five years into owning the shop, Dave thought that would be the end of the business, but he survived. He supported the miners where he could; if they were regulars and struggling, Dave would give some a free meal. He always made sure some food was left over and went to the picket line with food for them, most nights at Dodworth for a year. The same happened when the firemen went on strike. He used to take his Daughter Helen with him to deliver food to the fire man top. Dave has always tried to give back to the community where he could, often supporting local schools, Barnsley Hospice, Barnsley Riding for the Disabled, and taking food for homeless people. Those things still carry on today.

He grew the business with help from Mick Wood, a fellow fish fryer who supplied him with the best-quality fish from Whitby and kept in touch with local suppliers for potatoes. We have used Fox Farm potatoes from Oxspring for 30 years. We have tried to keep things local where we can.

Dave's opening price used to be 19p for fish and chips; but don't forget, wages were only £1.50 an hour back then, too!

In 2015, changes were made.

Dave was ready to semi retire so his son Mike took over the family business but not before, together they decided to move premise from Station Road to Barnsley Road in Dodworth and undertook a full renovation of the shop formally known as Gate Fisheries. Mike has carried on in his father foot steps, always buying the best quality ingredients from local farms and only a hand full of trusted trawlers as well as supporting community projects. Much more focus is now on the environment, so we have invested many projects to be green and responsibly sourced ingredients, especially fish is very important to ensure we leave future generations a health industry and as such Shaws fish and chips became one of the first in the country to be awarded the MSC sustainability certification for their efforts. Mike jokes that Dave still pops in several times a week and samples the food for quality control in his words! Non of what we have achieved would have been possible without the hard work and dedication of our amazing team, many of whom have worked for Shaws for decades. We would also like to thank our wonderful customers who have stuck with us through thick and thin.



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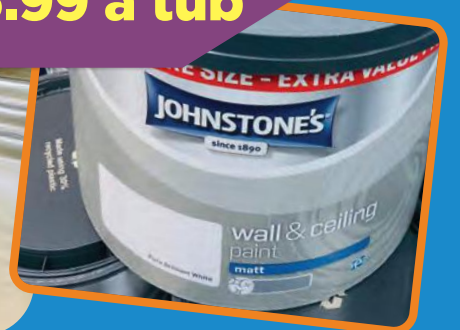
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CIVIC OCCASION:
New CEO Dan
Winder and staff
from the Civic
take a bow.
Pictures:
Shaun Colborn.
PD093937



Civic's new chief executive is energised over leading historic building's future

BARNSELY Civic's new chief executive is excited to take on the challenges of modernising the historic landmark and lead the theatre through its 150th anniversary.

Pretty much everyone in Barnsley has a memory tied with the Civic, whether it's an unforgettable gig, a work night out, or even meeting that special someone.

It's been a town centre icon for more than a century, though it's safe to say not every part of that journey has been easy.

Half of the building remained locked up for 25 years as owners waited on funding to renovate and preserve the historic Eldon Street entrance.

Combined with the plights facing all theatres – as interest and funding in live arts dwindles, swallowed up by social media and streaming alternatives – it's safe to say that the future of the site was far from certain.

Yet newly-appointed chief executive Dan Winder hasn't let these daunting prospects faze him, as he comes to Barnsley with a breadth of experience in the arts, having previously served as CEO and artistic director of Stanley Arts in South London.

"I grew up in Bolton, and while it's not exactly the same as Barnsley there are definitely parallels," he told the Chronicle.

"I feel quite at home here in a strange way, it reminds me of the kind of communities I grew up in.

"So that's been nice, but there's also challenges – whenever you take on a big building like this that's important to people in the community then you're going to face challenges.

"Lots of people care about this building and the positive thing is that everyone from the leader of the council to people walking in off the street have a story to tell about the Civic.

"Of course there are challenges, but that's half the battle already done because people care about it."

Following the restoration of the Eldon Street entrance, Dan and the Civic team are hoping to move away from exclusively working on traditional theatre, as they turn the landmark



into an arts centre that provides a variety of experiences and opportunities.

They've already introduced a new community space, where people are free to enjoy the warmth and take part in arts and crafts, and are now starting to run yoga and wellbeing groups.

In Dan's terms, this is an attempt to 'diversify' the business, and help the Civic stand out in an increasingly competitive arts world.

He added: "What's special about arts centres, and I feel like I'm stating the obvious, is that they're in real life.

"So you need to look for things that people can only do in person, and for me that's about experiences.

"That's things that you can get immersed in and feel like you're part of the event, you're not just sitting there passively.

"We're doing more where you're coming in and taking part rather than something that

you just watch or consume."

And it seems that he'll have lots of support in his ambitions, with the staff encouraged to pitch in their own ideas on how operations can be brought forward.

Elaine Price, the chair of trustees, said: "Dan's got a great team behind him – the staff across the Civic are brilliant.

"They're really enthusiastic about the things that matter, which is art, community and outreach.

"I know there's been some really odd ideas, but one of the things that Dan has brought is that no one feels like they're not allowed to make a suggestion.

"There's a lot of blue sky thinking and Dan's encouraging people to think about what can be done to solve some of these problems.

"The staff are really on board with him and he's demonstrated solid leadership since he started with us."



Celebrating the town's inspiring women

THERE are so many inspirational women in Barnsley that need recognition.

March is Women's History Month and so what better way of celebrating their achievements than shouting it from the rooftops.

Dorothy Hyman

The daughter of a miner, Dorothy was one of the fastest women on the planet in her teens and early 20s.

A silver medal at the 1958 European Championships in Stockholm kicked off a career which included a world record in the 4x100 metre relay at the Commonwealth Games that year, and silver and bronze medals in the 100m and 200m at the Rome Olympics two years later.

European Championships gold, silver and bronze followed, as did two golds and a silver at the Commonwealth Games, with a bronze in the 4x100 metre relay at the 1964 Tokyo Olympics her final major international success. She also won BBC Sports Personality of the Year in 1963 and is an England Athletics Hall of Fame member.

Upon returning from Stockholm and Tokyo, Dorothy was chosen to meet the Queen, but it's her Cudworth homecoming in 1960 she remembers more fondly as the village held a huge parade in her honour.

Katherine Kelly

The 45-year-old shot to stardom in 2006 with her portrayal of Becky McDonald in the ITV soap Coronation Street.

She stayed in Weatherfield until 2012 and became one of the nation's most loved characters. During her time there, she received multiple awards, including the British Soap Award for Best Actress in 2009, and the NTA for Best Serial Drama Performance in 2012.

After leaving the soap, Katherine has gone on to have a stellar career.

Her CV boasts huge shows such as Happy Valley, Mr Selfridge, Mr Bates vs the Post



Office, The Crow Girl – and she is currently filming for a new show called In Flight.

Katherine's links to Barnsley are still strong, with her father John Kelly the founder of the Lamproom Theatre. She was also handed the Freedom of the Borough at a special ceremony in 2022 – and she certainly deserved it.

Katherine Sciver-Brunt

Just like her namesake, Katherine was also awarded Freedom of the Borough in 2022.

The former Dodworth fast bowler called time on a glittering career in 2023 having achieved everything in cricket. She took more than 250 wickets in an England shirt, across three formats, and turned out for her country on 267 occasions.

Sciver-Brunt also won the Ashes four times, most notably in 2004 when England ended a 42-year wait against the Aussies. She played for Yorkshire for 15 years and in Australia.

She also won a Proud of Barnsley award in 2018 while one of her biggest achievements was receiving a well-deserved OBE last year.

Rita Britton

Rita, a former 'Yorkshire Woman of the Year', put Barnsley on the fashion map with her internationally famous, cutting-edge, haute couture store, Pollyanna, which is known and



respected from New York to Milan.

Rita had been given £500 to start her business up and running. She was the first woman to own and have a shop outside of London which stocked not only one type of brand. Rita's store 'Pollyanna' stocked garments by designers such as Ozzie Clark and Mary Quant.

Her original Pollyanna store, on Market Hill, stocked high-end labels before it closed in 2014 after 50 years' trading.

Selina Wray

The Barnsley-born doctor may be one of the lesser-known names on this list, but there's no doubting her importance.

Professor Wray uses cutting-edge techniques with stem cells to unravel the causes of dementia, a condition for which there is currently no cure.

Selina, who grew up on St George's Road in Barnsley, went to Longcar and then Holgate School before attending Barnsley College.

Previously, Professor Wray was a winner of Alzheimer's Research UK's 2018 David Hague Early Career Investigator of the Year and was voted Red Magazine's Pioneer of the Year.

The work she is doing is nothing short of inspirational and she is a credit to Barnsley.



*B.M.&C.
Howard*

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FROM THE ARCHIVES: These pictures are from the Barnsley Six race held in August 1979.

The race began from the Town Hall at 12.45pm and was a big celebration of running with the Chronicle Cup Boys' Race also held and the Paul Sykes Organisation Youth Race. Running in Barnsley is just re-emerging with the Barnsley 10k introduced last year.

This race attracted runners from across the country and spectators gathered in the town centre.

The president of the organisers, Barnsley Road Runners Club's Bob Midwood wrote in the programme notes: "Once more I am pleased to see so many familiar names on the entry list for the famous Barnsley Six."

"Only one chap can win, so it is right to presume that the rest of you come back to Barnsley because you enjoy our welcome and hospitality."

"We are now the capital town of South Yorkshire and the honour is most appropriate."

The race had begun in 1974 with Steve Kenyon a three times winner and former Olympian Ray Smedley won in 1979.



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Now is the time to get on top of big changes

APRIL is a dynamic month for gardeners, a period of rapid growth and increasing warmth, albeit with the ever-present threat of late frosts.

It's a time to sow, plant, and nurture and that way you can lay the foundations for a vibrant summer garden.

Here are the top tips for the month's schedule:

Sowing and Planting

Vegetables

Direct sow hardy vegetables like carrots, beetroot, radishes, and lettuce.

Start sowing peas and broad beans if you haven't already.

Plant out second early potatoes, and earth up those that are already showing shoots.

For tender vegetables like tomatoes, peppers, and courgettes, continue sowing indoors or in a heated greenhouse.

Flowers

Sow hardy annuals like poppies, cornflowers, and calendula directly into the ground.

Plant out summer-flowering bulbs like gladioli and lilies.

Continue sowing half-hardy annuals indoors or in a greenhouse.

Plant out hardy perennial plants.

Protecting Against Frost

Keep a close eye on the weather forecast and be prepared to protect tender plants with fleece or cloches if frost is predicted.

If you've already planted out tender seedlings, ensure they are adequately protected.

Remember that frost can still occur during April, so it is better to be safe than sorry.

General Garden Maintenance

Weeding

Weeds are growing rapidly, so regular weeding is crucial. Hoeing on dry, sunny days is an effective way to control them.

Mulching around plants helps to suppress weeds and retain moisture.

Lawn Care

Start mowing your lawn regularly, but keep the blades set high initially.

If needed, apply a spring lawn feed.

Aerate compacted lawns with a garden fork or aerator.

Pruning

Prune spring-flowering shrubs after they have finished blooming.

Cut back established perennial plants that are showing new growth.

Deadhead spring bulbs as they fade.

Feeding

Apply a general-purpose fertiliser to established plants to encourage healthy growth.

Feed fruit trees and bushes with a balanced fertiliser.

Pest Control

Keep an eye out for common pests like aphids and slugs.

Use organic pest control methods where possible.

Check for signs of vine weevil damage.

Soil Preparation

If you haven't already, prepare vegetable beds and borders by digging in compost or well-rotted manure.

Ensure the soil is warm and workable before sowing or planting.

If your soil is heavy clay, incorporate grit to improve drainage.

Greenhouse and Cold Frame Tasks

Ventilate greenhouses and cold frames on warm days to prevent overheating.

Continue pricking out seedlings and potting on young plants.

Water seedlings regularly, but avoid over-watering.

Harden off tender plants gradually before planting them outdoors.



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Bong Joon-ho gives us a sci-fi, comedy thriller

At the movies, with Finn Smith

MICKEY 17 might not be what people expect from Bong Joon-ho following his outstanding Oscar win with Parasite – yet it's a powerful reminder of his unique creative vision.

Following Robert Pattinson's Mickey – a down on his luck worker who's up to his eyes in debt and hopes to find freedom aboard a colony spaceship, only to end up stuck in eternal torture – the film is far from your typical award season affair.

Part sci-fi, part comedy and entirely political, Bong Joon-ho's latest outing resembles more of his older work like Snowpiercer and Okja than the Best Picture-winning Parasite.

It's strange, with a complicated sci-fi premise about death and rebirth at the core of the drama – where Mikey can be 'printed' out again and again after his death – but quickly eases the audience into this horrifying vision of humanity's future.

Robert Pattinson, as always, is a delight to watch and his odd accent and perfect comedic timing make what would otherwise be a dour affair entertaining.

Countless scenes revolve around him experiencing gory deaths, vomiting blood or having his skin covered in sores from inhaling deadly viruses, and yet Pattinson's performance can make these graphic events humorous.

But that doesn't mean the film skips on the drama, far from it – when it needs to, the score and performances come together to create truly impactful moments. While some of Mickey's deaths are played for laughs, others let you wallow in his truly depressing life, where he's forced to die repeatedly so those in power can profit.

And who is in charge? None other than Mark Ruffalo with a bizarre performance that blends Donald Trump, Elon Musk and enormous fake teeth for a bare-faced look at unregulated corporate greed.

His smarmy performance as the ship's captain is infectious, as his character's inflated ego consumes the screen and leaves you excited to see his downfall.

At his side is Toni Collette, who just like Ruffalo can make even the most ludicrous pieces of dialogue work.

Even in this minimal role as first lady of the ship she makes her presence known and by the end feels even more sinister than her blatantly corrupt husband.

This isn't a film for everyone, I'm sure that many would see it as outlandish and find that its message of unity fails to land.

But for me, this is exactly the kind of film that I love, a 118 million dollar wild swing by a generational talent, supported by a stellar cast – I've not even had a chance to mention the wonderful Naomi Ackie and Steven Yeun.

If this is at all something you're interested in, I'd make sure to check it out on the big screen.



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Find a friend and get fitter together...

GETTING fit with a friend can be a fantastic way to stay motivated and make exercise more enjoyable.

If you and a mate have struggled to find the right healthy hobby, here are a few suggestions you might find helpful.

Shared Outdoor Activities
Hiking or Trail Walking

Explore local parks, trails, or nature reserves. Hiking provides a great cardiovascular workout while also allowing you to enjoy the outdoors.

You can set goals together, like reaching a specific viewpoint or completing a certain distance.

Cycling

Go for bike rides in your neighbourhood or on designated bike paths.

Cycling is a low-impact exercise that's excellent for building leg strength and endurance.

You can challenge each other to increase your speed or distance over time.

Team Sports and Activities

Tennis or Badminton

These sports provide a fun and competitive way to get a full-body workout. They improve hand-eye coordination, agility and cardiovascular fitness.

You can play casual games or join a local league.

Fitness Classes and Gym Workouts

Group Fitness Classes

Attend group fitness classes together, such as Zumba, yoga, or spin classes.

These classes provide structured workouts and a motivating atmosphere.

Trying new classes together can keep things interesting.

Gym Workouts

Work out together at the gym, whether it's lifting weights, using cardio machines, or doing bodyweight exercises.

You can motivate each other to push harder and stay consistent.

Having a workout buddy can also make the gym experience less intimidating.

Running or Jogging

Start a running or jogging routine together.

Start with smaller distances, and gradually increase your distance over time.

This is a great way to improve fitness.

Having a running buddy helps with accountability.

Active Games and Recreation

Playing Active Games

Engage in active games like frisbee, soccer, or basketball.

These games provide a fun and less structured way to get exercise.

They can also help improve coordination and agility.

Dance workouts

Put on some music, and dance!

This can be done at home, and is a fun way to burn calories.

By engaging in these activities with a friend, you'll not only improve your physical fitness but also strengthen your bond and make exercise a more enjoyable experience.



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REVIEW BY JOSH TIMLIN

The sky's the limit for new release

MY seven-year-old lad's a chip off the old block.

In seemingly no time at all he's become familiar with most car manufacturers, their spec sheets and – mainly for a young boy – the power they produce.

While he's entranced by the glamour of Lamborghinis and Ferraris, strangely he's become a big fan of electric cars given their instant, neck-jolting speed.

However, his usual questioning on which car I was reviewing was met with a baffled look recently when I brought something completely new home, the Skywell BE11.

Skywell emerged in China in 2017 as a joint venture between one of the world's largest consumer electronics groups, Skyworth, and electric bus maker Nanjing Golden Dragon but its crack at the fiercely-contested EV market is well worth a closer look.

It simply has to be good, too, given it's heading into the £40,000 segment to battle against the likes of the Ford Mustang Mach-E, Skoda Enyaq and Nissan Ariya – all very accomplished cars.

Refreshingly, the BE11 range is very simple, because there's only one trim level – you don't get swept up by confusing spec levels or nonsensical, typically-EV hyperbole.

All you have to choose between is a

72kWh, BYD-sourced unit or the larger 86kWh alternative, which gives an estimated 304-mile range.

Looks-wise, it's pretty similar to most Chinese cars – it follows the similar recipe of having boxy headlights and a smoothed-off front end and while some could say it's a tad uninspiring as a result, it is inoffensive and you get the impression that Skywell's design team have erred on the side of caution to appeal to more people.

However, the 19-inch wheels, the full-width rear LED light bar, illuminated brand lettering and the brilliant, standard-fit panoramic sunroof are all major plus points.

Inside is much more promising and it feels premium; the steering wheel looks great, the seats are supremely comfortable and are improved by brightly-coloured stitching and piping and that panoramic sunroof – usually an expensive option with other marques – helps create a light, airy feel.

As usual, most of the Skywell's key functions are buried in its 12.8-inch touchscreen and although it takes some getting used to, it quickly becomes easy to use. The graphics are perhaps a weak point but it's perfectly admissible.

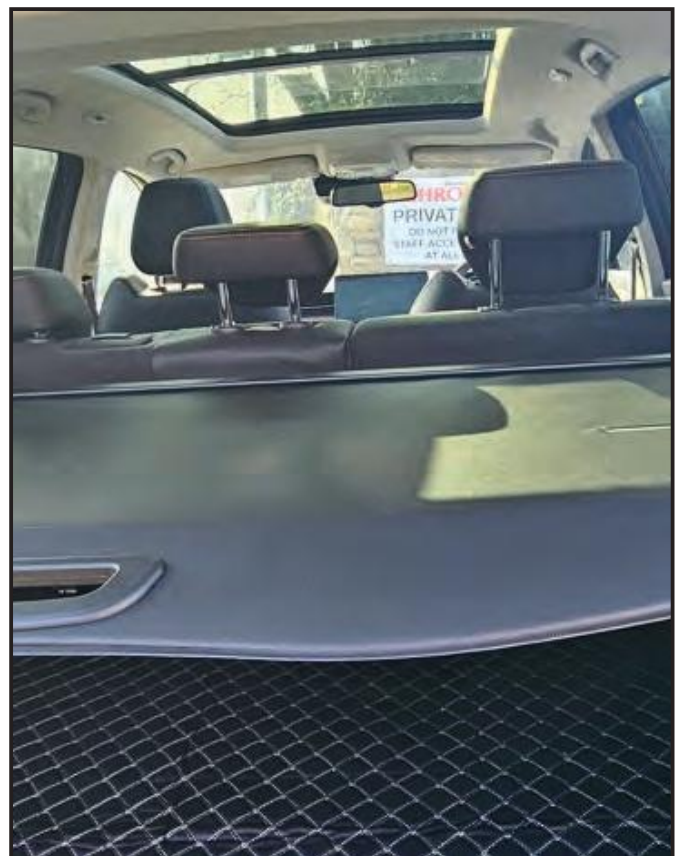
Select 'D' and the BE11 whirrs into life. Its steering is feather-light, making

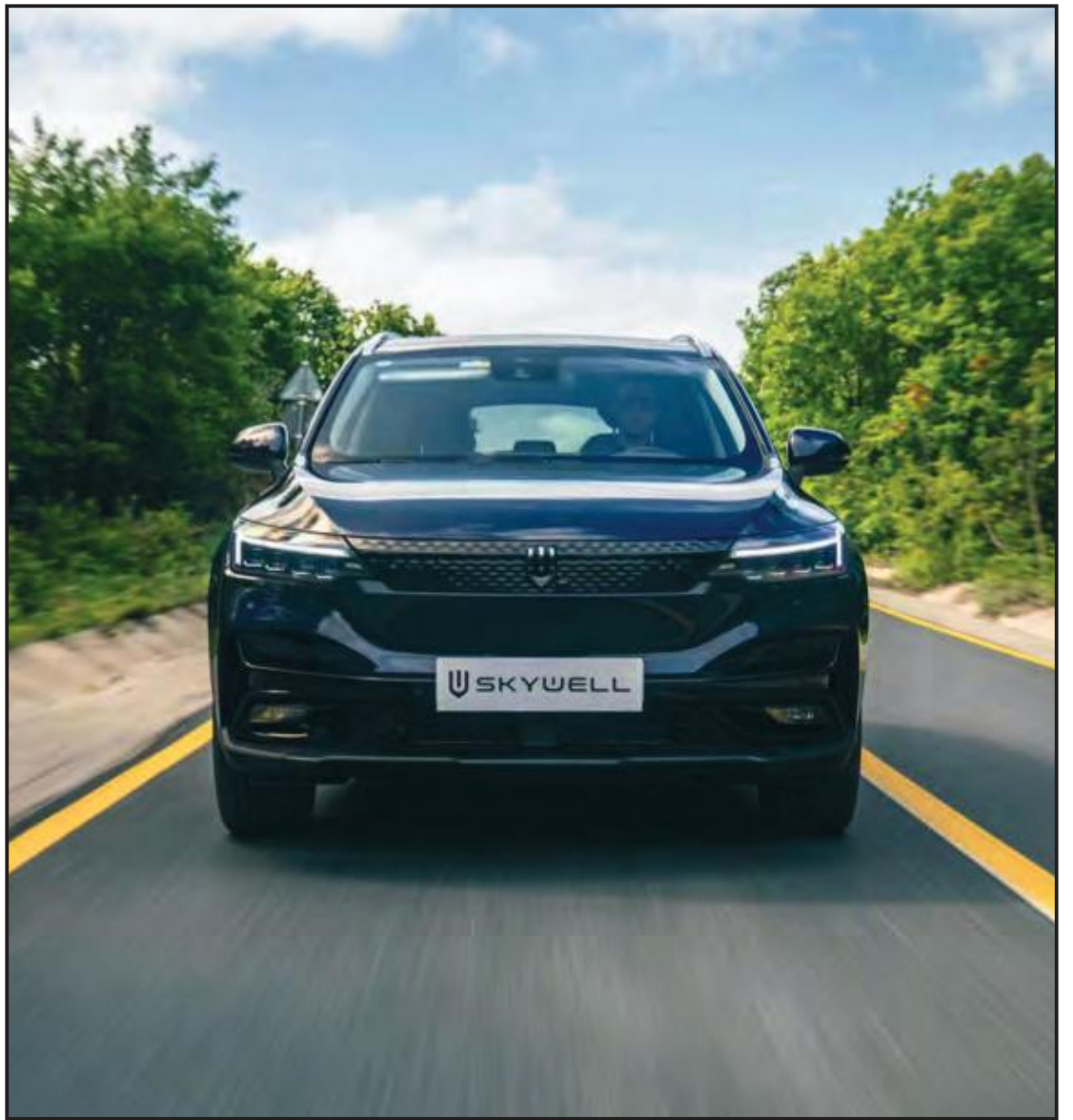
it great for manoeuvring, but the trade-off of opting for such a system is a lack of feel through the steering wheel. However, given it's going to spend its life doing family chores instead of charging down countryside lanes, it will appeal to many.

The motor powers the front wheels, making 201bhp and 236lb ft of torque. It's enough for a 0-62mph time of 9.6 seconds and a top speed of 93mph – not especially headline-grabbing in the way we've become accustomed to with EVs – but it's enough and as ever, that 201bhp is delivered instantly so it feels much quicker as a result.

How it delivers its power does take some getting used to, though, as at first it's difficult to modulate the throttle just so. Stamp on the accelerator and the front wheels will be overwhelmed, but I think a key reason for this is Skywell's decision to use tyres from a little-known brand called 'Giti'. Despite them being new and having covered just a handful of miles, their tendency to wheelspin suggests they're not up to the job and the lack of traction does need addressing.

It's not perfect, the BE11, but it's new, it's different and it's interesting. It's well worth a look and, given it's the very first car to come from the brand, it's a good crack and will no doubt propel Skywell on to hitting big sales.







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