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Welcome to Eastern Airways, Europe’s Gold Award-winning regional airline

In this the Spring issue of our in-flight magazine Eastern Airways’ cabin attendant Kimberly Lewis explains why hers is simply the best job she could wish for.

In the following pages, Kevin Pilley shares with readers the joys of Llangoed Hall, which counts Visit Wales Gold and Sunday Times Country House Hotel of the Year among a litany of awards.

We visit award-winning Ballathie House Hotel, where Stan Abbott dips a metaphorical toe into the salmon waters of the River Tay. There’s the chance for readers to visit the hotel for themselves and have a go at clay-pigeon shooting and archery.

We take a whistle-stop tour round Hartlepool, where the port’s favourite preserved sailing ship is looking forward to a bright new future. Still beside the sea, Tina Ediss meets the doyen of Southampton restaurateurs, Steve Hughes, while our celebrity interviewee is Norfolk’s Olivia Colman, the troubled detective in ITV’s Broadchurch drama.

Adam Jacot shares more of his curious observations on language, while life gets sticky at the World Marmalade Awards and Harry Pearson fears he’s entering his “dadage”.

Our Essential Guide this issue does its best to get behind the meaning of “Green Belt” and highlights the best of Green Belts near Eastern Airways destinations, while Lynne Greenwood finds an impressive home on the market at Swanland, near Hull, in our property feature. There’s architecture of a different sort to be discovered at a Norfolk school, which features in a book on the careers of some successful women last century.

We hope you enjoy your flight with Eastern Airways – do take your magazine away with you for family and friends to enjoy.

THE EASTERN TEAM
You are probably reading this at 10,000 metres. The fuel that’s keeping you up here may have come from 3,000 metres under the earth’s surface. Everyone responsible for this technologic achievement, from roughneck to captain, from well to engine, has to perform to their professional limit. Tomorrow’s oil engineers are today at Maersk Training in Aberdeen, sitting in simulators, similar in concept to the one your pilot trained on. There, in a unique environment, they mix routine with crisis to ensure that they take safety right down into the core of the earth.

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Searching for salmon on the River Tay

ENERGY EXTRA

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT
ENERGY EXTRA

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Bristow’s European Business Unit (EBU) covers our oil and gas and search and rescue (SAR) operations across Norway and the UK. With more than 1,000 employees and over 60 aircraft, we operate the North Sea’s youngest fleet and are Bristow’s largest Business Unit.

As our operations expand with new contract wins, we have an ongoing requirement for a number of key positions.

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It was working on check-in at Newcastle Airport that first gave Kimberly, now 23, the flying bug – and introduced her to Eastern Airways.

“I have always wanted to fly and, previously, I worked with Swissport for four years and checked in Eastern Airways flights a couple of times,” she said. “The passengers were really nice and so I looked at the website and was attracted by how professional it all looked. I decided I wanted to fly but other airlines didn’t appeal to me.”

So Kimberly attended the airline’s Humberside headquarters for an interview early last summer and was invited in August to begin her training in September. Having studied Airline and Airport Operations at Newcastle College, it was the break she’d been hoping for.

“There were eight of us training together, beginning with classroom training, then going on board an aircraft in the hangar and doing role plays on different emergency procedures; practising the drills; learning to use the trolley; learning how to complete all the paperwork. We had a look at the flight simulator too, to appreciate how the flight deck works.”

After her three-week initial training, which also included Crew Resource Management (CRM) to ensure cabin attendants work safely and effectively with the flight deck, it was time to take to the sky, where she completed 20 sectors, mostly under the watchful eye of trainer Lindsay Maitland who had been responsible for her three weeks of ground school.

“I really enjoy my job: in the beginning it was a little daunting but obviously now I am in the flow of things,” said Kimberly.

Since her initial training, Kimberly is subject to a “line check” and spot checks at regular intervals and an annual refresher course, also including CRM. She mostly flies from Newcastle on Eastern Airways’ Jetstream 41 aircraft, to Aberdeen, Cardiff and Birmingham.

“You get to know the passengers on a weekly basis, especially on Mondays and Fridays when the regulars are going home. You get to know what drinks they like and their preferred snacks.”

A typical day’s work might begin with a six o’clock reporting time, meaning an early start from her home in western Gateshead, where she lives with her mother and sister, 20 minutes’ drive from the airport.

“After security, you meet your flight crew in the crew room, where you check how many passengers you’ve got, print off your paperwork, handover form and passenger manifest and prepare your papers for the day ahead.

“Then you have a brief with the flight crew, who will talk through the weather, anticipated flight time and any risk of turbulence. The flight crew discuss safety questions and check that you are happy with everything prior to the flight.

“We arrive at the aircraft about 30 minutes before departure. You do your security and equipment checks and check all catering is on board.
“You check the expiry date on all the equipment – fire extinguishers and whether the seal has been opened, and the same with the smoke hood, which you have to put on if you have to use the extinguisher.

“You check the toilets and that the megaphone works and that the life jacket is in date; check the trolley and that everything is in the right order in the seat pockets – safety card, timetable, Eastern Airways Magazine and Spectator, and sick bag.

“Once you have done all your checks and searches you give the flight crew the ‘cabin checks complete’ signal, and once they are ready, then we are ready for our passengers.”

The flight itself has its own routine: check that passengers by a safety exit are happy to be there; make the Welcome PA; give the seat map to the flight deck. Then the captain will give a welcome from the flight deck and the safety briefing begins.

With the cabin confirmed secure, it’s time to make a service announcement and serve sweets. After take-off it’s time for the first service of drinks and snacks.

“By that time you are probably 20 minutes from landing so you go through the cabin with sweets again and offer hot towels. Then you tidy up your galley and check all passengers’ seat belts are fastened, and by that time it’s ten minutes to landing.”

Landing signals further announcements to welcome passengers to their destination and then give instructions about collecting hand baggage when the aircraft is on stand and the engines are winding down. Once the passengers are gone, it’s time to recheck the cabin and prepare a handover sheet for the next crew, if leaving the aircraft.

A split shift day might see Kimberly report at 0920 to take the 1000 to Aberdeen, then take an airport break or sometimes a charter flight or scheduled service from Aberdeen to Stornoway. Occasionally she will “night stop” and work from a different Eastern Airways base, such as Leeds Bradford.

“All the flight crew are really nice: I obviously didn’t know what to expect but everyone makes you feel at ease and I couldn’t be working with a better group of people.”

Kimberly’s longer term ambition is become a line trainer and possibly to move to the airline’s Saab or Embraer fleets.

For now, however, she says: “I always recommend it to my friends: I love it and really enjoy going to work because it just doesn’t feel like work!”

“All the flight crew are really nice: I obviously didn’t know what to expect but everyone makes you feel at ease and I couldn’t be working with a better group of people.”

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“ALL THE FLIGHT CREW ARE REALLY NICE: I OBVIOUSLY DIDN’T KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT BUT EVERYONE MAKES YOU FEEL AT EASE AND I COULDN’T BE WORKING WITH A BETTER GROUP OF PEOPLE.”
NEWS FROM EASTERN AIRWAYS DESTINATIONS

With figures revealing that almost half of people visiting Scotland want to try local food, a new ebook by VisitScotland is hoping to encourage visitors to undertake a culinary tour of the country.

A Taste of Scotland’s Foodie Trails combines details of Scotland’s food trails with information about relevant local businesses and interesting facts about each product. The ten trails include The Outer Hebrides Food and Drink Trail, covering the Isle of Lewis in the north, right down to Barra in the south and the Aberdeen City and Shire Food and Drink Trail, which highlights the area’s fresh fish and world-famous Aberdeen Angus beef.

The free online guide is part of VisitScotland’s Year of Food and Drink 2015, a 12-month celebration of Scotland’s natural larder and special dining experiences.

Recent figures estimate Scotland’s food and drink tourism industry is worth £2.5 million per day to the economy, with the food and drink industry as a whole worth almost £14bn a year.

www.visitscotland.com/about/food-drink/food-trails

A former quarry in County Durham is the setting for ITV’s latest big bucks small-screen mega-drama.

The limestone quarry, at Eastgate, in Weardale, was part of the Lafarge cement works, which closed in 2002. It had been destined to become a multi-million pound “energy village” but plans foundered when a government grant was withdrawn as part of national cuts.

Now Durham County Council has given the green light to ITV to build a film set, which will provide locations for filming the new Beowulf drama for five years.

The production team will build a mead hall, 20 houses, a forge and walkways and jetties around a lake in the quarry, as the main location for the series. Internal shots at the Mead Hall will be filmed off-site, while other locations are in Northumberland.

Construction work should be completed in the middle of this year, with filming expected to take place about 12 days each month, from March to October yearly. The first series of the drama, based on the epic poem by an anonymous Anglo-Saxon poet, will air next January.

The full poem survives in a manuscript known as the Nowell Codex, now in the British Library, and dating from between the eighth and early 11th century. In it, Beowulf, a hero of the Geats, in what is now Sweden, comes to the aid of Hroðgar, king of the Danes, whose mead hall has been under attack by a monster known as Grendel. After Beowulf slays him, Grendel’s mother attacks the hall and is then also defeated. Victorious, Beowulf goes home to Geatland and later becomes king of the Geats.

Although the structures are required to be removed after filming is complete, it is anticipated that the location will become a tourism draw in the meantime. Northern Film Media, the regional media and creative development agency, estimates the project will also generate spending of £25,000 per day during filming and local companies are already reaping the benefits.

The venture will be by no means the first to bring Beowulf to the screen. The most recent Hollywood interpretation came out in 2007 and starred Ray Winstone, Anthony Hopkins, John Malkovich and Angelina Jolie among others. It scores a decent 71 per cent from the critics on the Rotten tomatoes website, but gets a less enthusiastic 51 per cent from audiences.

See Stepping up the heat in our Energy Extra supplement

See A feast in store in Aberdeen, page 41

EASTERN AIRWAYS MAGAZINE ISSUE 50
The winner of our Hart’s Hotel competition was Steven Jones, from Newcastle; the winner of our Leeds DoubleTree by Hilton competition was Sandra Scrimgeour, from Forres.
It’s official - Newcastle is the UK’s favourite city break

Readers of the Guardian voted the city Number One in the newspaper’s annual Travel Awards for 2014, beating Bath and Edinburgh into second and third places respectively.

Sarah Stewart, Chief Executive at destination marketing agency NewcastleGateshead Initiative was delighted. “This is a fantastic result,” she said. “This title helps to reinforce NewcastleGateshead’s growing reputation as a leading city break and demonstrates its ability to punch above its weight.

“The mix of vibrant cultural and sporting venues and events, excellent shopping facilities, wide choice of restaurants, bars and hotels and our beautiful quayside and cityscape make this an attractive and enjoyable place to visit for business or pleasure.”

Among recent plaudits for the city and its hinterland, Pulitzer prize-winning author Jane Smiley commended Grey Street’s “graceful elegance and blend of old and new”. Grey Street is regarded as perhaps the finest Georgian street in England but the American writer also praised the region’s “lost-in-time peacefulness”, telling readers that “four days of exploration and admiration was shading into love”.

Eastern Airways Magazine columnist Harry Pearson, who lives in nearby Hexham and comes originally from Middlesbrough, commented in The Guardian on the city’s success: “Newcastle’s atmosphere of almost pathological friendliness and good humour stems from one simple thing: all Geordies believe themselves blessed to have been born here. Thiers is the boisterous self-confidence of a chosen people.”

More than 19 million people now visit Newcastle and Gateshead annually.

Other winners in the Guardian poll included Venice in the Overseas City category (followed by Tokyo and Singapore); Iceland in the favourite European Country category (followed by Malta and Czech Republic). Japan was the Favourite Long-Haul Country, followed by Botswana and New Zealand.

Richard row goes on

King Richard III could never have guessed how much feuding would still be going on more than 500 years after his death. The newest rows have blown up since his hastily buried remains were discovered beneath a car park in Leicester. That story was told in Eastern Airways Magazine by Philippa Langley, who led the near eight-year project to find his grave.

People in Yorkshire claiming descent from Richard launched a legal challenge to plans for his remains to be buried in Leicester Cathedral, rather than York Minster. That challenge was thrown out of court, but a new row then broke out over plans for Richard’s remains to lie in a box at Leicester University prior to his reburial this March. An online petition was launched, backed by Langley and others, calling for his remains to be moved to a coffin in a Roman Catholic chapel of rest. This would be in line, she says, with the conditions under which the archaeological dig that discovered him took place.

The petition was aiming to attract 5,000 signatories and the outcome was awaited as we went to press.
Individuals working in different countries around the world – and commonly in offshore waters – often fail to consider that they may need to declare their overseas income in the UK. Even if a tax return is submitted in the foreign country and foreign tax is paid, then a tax return may also need to be prepared in the UK and any further taxes paid.

The main factor to consider is whether you are resident in the UK, which is covered in more detail below.

**ARE YOU UK RESIDENT?**

Until April 6, 2013, the UK did not have statutory rules to determine your residence status. To address this, the statutory residence test (SRT) was introduced and took effect from the start of the 2013/14 tax year.

The SRT has defined the rules to determine whether you are UK resident, using matter-of-fact tests. For starters, if you are present in the UK for at least 183 days per year, you are automatically resident in the UK. However, there are other factors to consider. For example, even if you are working offshore for seven months on, five months off (ie, spending fewer than 183 days in the UK), if your only or main home is in the UK, you are likely still to be considered as UK resident.

Other factors include where your family is located, whether you have spent more than 90 days in the UK in either of the previous two tax years, or if you work “sufficient” hours in the UK.

If you are UK-resident, a tax return will need to be submitted in the UK and any taxes paid. Tax relief is usually given for any taxes already paid in other countries so, declaring foreign income in the UK may not necessarily be costly. It may broadly be limited to any differential between the two countries’ tax rates.

If you were resident in the UK for previous years and did not declare your income, you will need to make a disclosure to HMRC. There are various ways to do this, but the most beneficial route is going through an “amnesty”. This could be the Liechtenstein Disclosure Facility, or the Isle of Man Disclosure Facility, among others. Such amnesties have beneficial terms, such as reduced penalties.

Our client works on an oil platform in Greenland and has done since 1995. He has also worked in various other offshore waters, such as Denmark and Norway, for shorter periods of time.

He recently realised that the advice he had been given with regards to his tax affairs had been incorrect. As he spends more than 183 days in the UK, he is classed as UK-resident (even under the old rules) and therefore needs to submit self-assessment returns covering his worldwide income.

When he came to us for advice, we quickly realised that the Liechtenstein Disclosure Facility was the best route for him. It meant that the timeframe was limited to the tax years 1999/2000 onwards, and penalties were restricted to ten per cent for the majority of the disclosure period.

We have now reached a settlement with HMRC and the final liability was agreed to be just 6.5 per cent of the total income earned offshore.

HMRC’s use of IT and information sharing is extensive and has allowed HMRC to identify tax issues that it may have previously stumbled across rather than proactively identified. Anyone with a concern should seek appropriate professional advice, making a proactive disclosure where appropriate, possibly via one of the current “amnesties”. In an age of greater international transparency, is adopting an ostrich posture the best strategy?

Our Tax Investigations team at Grant Thornton can assist you if you are unsure about your residence status and if necessary, help you to reach a fair and reasonable settlement with HMRC.

Call Grant Summers, Partner, on 0161 953 6425 or email grant.summers@uk.gt.com or Andy Maxfield in Leeds on 0113 200 1621 for a free, no obligation and confidential discussion.
Bristow launches new UK civilian Search and Rescue service

Bristow Helicopters Ltd has launched the UK’s new Search and Rescue (SAR) helicopter service on behalf of HM Coastguard. The event was marked in a ceremony held at the new SAR base at Humberside Airport.

The UK company was awarded the ten-year contract by the Department for Transport in March 2013. It will deliver the service from ten bases, strategically located close to areas of high SAR incident rates.

These bases go live in a phased approach from April 1, 2015, with the first to open being at Humberside and Inverness.

Bristow crews will deliver the UK SAR helicopter service with state-of-the-art helicopters, equipped with the latest search and rescue technology including night vision, mission management and increased on-board medical capabilities.

HISTORIC DAY

The launch ceremony at Humberside Airport was attended by the Rt Hon John Hayes MP, Minister of State at the Department for Transport, Sir Alan Massey, Chief Executive of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, representatives from the military and other search and rescue organisations that will work with the new service, and a host of invited guests instrumental in preparing the new service.

John Hayes said: “As the Minister responsible for Her Majesty’s Coastguard, I am delighted to be in Humberside on this historic day when we are on the cusp of launching this new state-of-the-art helicopter service.

“Although I would clearly rather everyone avoid the circumstances in which a search and rescue helicopter rescue is needed, I very much look forward to hearing about the professionalism and commitment that resides in all that work here and which will surely save lives from April 1.”

Sir Alan Massey Maritime and Coastguard Agency Chief Executive said: “I am hugely proud that HM Coastguard has been entrusted with the UK’s search and rescue helicopter service. For us this is a continuation of the high-quality service that we have been providing in selected areas of the UK for the last 30 years.

“The RAF and Royal Navy have set the bar incredibly high, and I would like to thank them for their service and recognise the outstanding work they have done both inland and on the coast over many decades. We will take their legacy forward with the utmost pride and care”.

Samantha Willenbacher, Director of UK Search and Rescue at Bristow Helicopters Ltd, said: “It is an honour to have been chosen to deliver this vital service across the UK. We know this is a service that people rely on in times of great need and we are committed to continuing the great work of the military.

“I would like to thank all of those here in Humberside and around the UK who are supporting us in our preparations for the service going live.”

The company’s aircraft and crews have been at the Humberside base since the beginning of January, making preparations for the service going live. The company has also worked with local enterprises during the base construction.

The base is led by Chief Pilot Captain Liz Forsyth, Bristow’s first female UK SAR chief pilot. Captain Forsyth began her flying career with the Royal Air Force, serving as a SAR Commander at RAF Lossiemouth, Scotland, then as an instructor and Pilot Flight Commander at the SAR Training Unit at RAF Valley in Wales. On leaving the RAF, she became a civilian SAR Commander, then Line Training Captain, based at Stornoway.

She said: “I would like to thank the local community for making us so welcome and Humberside Airport for their continued support. It has been a pleasure to work closely with RAF Leconfield whose support has been invaluable in ensuring a smooth transfer of personnel and vital knowledge.”

GOING LIVE

The UK SAR bases at Caernarfon and Kent go live on July 1, followed by St Athan on October 1. Prestwick and Newquay will become operational on January 1, 2016 and the remaining three bases at Lee-on-Solent, Sumburgh and Stornoway will follow in 2017.

www.bristowsar.com
In recent years, entrepreneur Steve Hughes has become pretty much synonymous with the burgeoning restaurant scene in Southampton. Tina Ediss visited him to find out what makes him tick…

It’s early afternoon and staff at Southampton’s Grand Café are busy repositioning the animal skin seats, velvety stripped chairs and cool tables to suit the requirements of the evening clientele.

Constantly evolving and changing to suit customer needs is the philosophy of Delicious Dining, the South’s largest independently owned and family-run hospitality group, which operates a range of bars, hotels and restaurants in Hampshire, Wiltshire and Dorset.

I’ve come to see Managing Director Steve Hughes who’s been in the hospitality industry since he was 13, when his dad bought a hotel in Torquay.

“For the first summer the family lived in a shed in the hotel garden,” he recalls. “It was called a chalet but it was a shed – we didn’t even have an inside toilet. I grew up helping out in the hotel.”

The family moved again four years later when his dad bought a country house hotel on the Isle of Wight. Steve went to catering college on the island but left after a year to be head-waiter in the hotel restaurant.

When his dad moved again, 19-year old Steve worked as a salesman for Yellow Pages for seven years. He became the youngest salesman to come in on budget, the youngest district sales manager and the youngest office manager.

Ready for a change, Steve bought Simon’s Wine Bar, in Southampton, using his savings, which were matched equally by finance from his dad and his Uncle Alan.

“We had a lot of very regular, loyal customers and a good lunch-time clientele of local businessmen,” Steve tells me. “It introduced me to a lot of influential people.”

Simon’s was very popular and so trendy that a film company used the interior to shoot a series based on American-style diner, Mustang Sally’s, which was very successful, then selling it to move on to other projects and businesses.

Delicious Dining’s current Southampton portfolio is impressive and varies from fine-dining at the award-winning Ennios Al Porto, an Italian restaurant with ten boutique bedrooms, to the newly-opened Shrimp and Burger, which is a finalist in this year’s National Burger Awards.

Grand Café Bar, Bistro and Restaurant was once the Wedgewood Ballroom of the elegant South Western Hotel, which dates from 1865. Photos of rich and famous guests now adorn the wall. Many of the Titanic’s first-class passengers stayed here the night before they sailed to disaster.

“Grand Café had been derelict for years so we created this from nothing,” says Steve proudly. “This is the original floor, the Queen Mother danced on this floor.”

It’s a big stylish space with gracefully arched windows, elaborate décor and eclectic, quirky furniture.

Other outlets include Yuzu Lounge Bar, Puccini’s Trattoria and Banana Wharf Restaurant and Bar in Ocean Village (also at Port Hamble and Poole Quay).

For Steve, family is very important and he really appreciates the help his dad Tony gave him in the early years.

“I am very proud of what my dad has achieved,” Says Steve. “My grandparents lived in council houses and my dad broke out of that. He had a secure job with a big company where he was very successful. He and my mum took a big decision to leave that behind, with three small boys, and borrow money to buy the hotel in Torquay. He worked long hours, seven days a week.”

Steve’s Operations Director is his brother Jamie – who is married to
Annaliese, head of marketing for the group – while brother Simon has two hotels, one in Salisbury and one in Emsworth.

Financially, 2014 was a strong year for Delicious Dining, with a turnover of £15million. Over the past two years it has recorded growth of more than 12 per cent, which Steve puts down to the company’s ability to offer customers a wide choice and evolve when the market dictates. It now employs 300 people.

“We’ve created a lot of businesses from scratch,” says Steve. “Success is not all about me. I am very much aware that you’ve got to surround yourself with clever people to be able to keep progressing – people who know more about certain aspects than I do. I have operating partners who work with me; they have a share in the business so they put all their energy into it.”

“There’s lots of new growth and development in Southampton. The new Cultural Quarter being developed around Guildhall Square will include an art gallery and a theatrical space. Delicious Dining has taken a new unit there for a tapas bar, Tapas Barcelona. It is also looking to build on its boutique hotel offering.

Now 53, Steve is very driven, always wanting to expand, evolve and move forward, but wouldn’t he like to slow down a bit?

“No,” he replies without hesitation. “That would be so boring.”
I worked as a researcher for the first series of QI, the BBC programme, hosted by Stephen Fry. I picked up a weighty Albanian dictionary to discover that they have no fewer than 27 words for eyebrow and the same number for different types of moustache.

What a wonderful treasure trove of cultural examples, I thought, lay in the dictionaries of the world’s languages. And so, in due course, I turned my attention to the amazing collection of glossaries of county dialects amassed with monastic zeal by the Victorian lexicographers.

Just as in that era they collected the rocks, butterflies and ancient antiquities that now fill our museums, so predominantly between 1850 and 1880 they went around and collected examples of local dialect from every county in England and even some specific industrial communities, such as the mining villages of Yorkshire and Durham.

I learnt much about the English character as expressed through its language. One of the more interesting aspects of English is the love of identifying action and sound through semi-onomatopoeic phrases – these jolly, affectionate and inventive expressions are known in the linguistics community as Reduplicative Rhyming Compounds.

The following examples make them self-explanatory: nibby-gibby (Cornish 1854) for touch and go; winky-pinky (Yorkshire) a nursery word for sleepy; hockerty-cockerty (Scottish 1742) with one leg on each shoulder; inchy-pinchy (Warwickshire) the boy’s game of progressive leapfrog; fidge-fadge (Yorkshire) a motion between walking and trotting; boris-noris (Dorset) careless, reckless, happy-go-lucky; hozzy nozzy (Rutland) not quite drunk and most rustically: wiffle-waffle (Northamptonshire) to what one’s scythes together.

Shropshire is the most exuberant of all with: aunty-praunty (Ellesmere) high-spirited, proud; bang-swang (Clee Hills) without thought, or headlong; hobby-hoy – a youth between boyhood and manhood; holus-bolus – impulsively; without deliberation; cobble-nobble – to rap on the head with the knuckles and perhaps most charmingly of all apple-scopple (Clun) to scramble for sweetmeats as children do.

The country’s light-hearted humour is also inventively demonstrated through rhyming slang, and not just famously among the Cockneys of East London. Mostly it simply rhymes but sometimes the expressions take it further with the meaning carried across: borrow and beg (late 19C) an egg (the term enjoyed a fresh lease of life during the World War Two food-rationing period); give and take for cake (no cake can be eaten that has not been given – if only by a shopkeeper – and taken. Cake also means money – a “cake of notes”: that too needs to be given and taken); army and navy (early 20C) action attest: stick one’s spoon in the wall (1800s); go west (Cockney); go trumpet-cleaning (late 19C: the trumpeter being the angel Gabriel); drop one’s leaf (c1820) or take the everlasting knock (1889), although perhaps the most poetic is to faint away in this vale of tears (Brompton Cemetery, London 1896).

Other topics of semi-taboo expression, or means of reducing fate being tempted, involve the evil of the Devil who is thus better known provincially as author of evil, black gentleman, fallen angel, old scratch, old split-foot and the noseless one. Just in the North East of England he’s been Cloydie, Awd Horney, Scrat, Auld Nick and the Bad Man, while Yorkshire has had him as Dicky Devilin; Gloucestershire: Miffy; and Suffolk: Jack-a-Dells.

And likewise the sinister or underhand notions (originating from the Latin word, sinister, for left) of left-handed people have been variously described as molly-dukered, corrie-fisted and skerry-handit (Scotland); car-handed, cack-handed and cowie-handed (North East England); kay-fisted, kibbo, key-pawed, high-ammered, caggy-ont (Lancashire): cuddy-witter (Northumbria, where a cuddy is a donkey); kay-neeaved or dolly-posh (Yorkshire); kegy (East Midlands) and Marlborough-handed (Wiltshire). Oldest of all is awk (1440), an old English word which means “with or from the left hand” and thus the wrong way, backhanded, perverse or clumsy (hence awkward).

On more omnipresent themes, in scouring these dialects, there are all sorts of characters from the Midlands, such as jaisy, a polite and effeminate man; the Yorkshire stridewallops, a tall and awkward woman; or the dardledumduke (Yorkshire 1893), a person without energy. The English language historically has never been short of slurs for the stupid and colourfully describes them as a clumperton (mid 16th century), a dull-pickle or a foopoodle (late 17th century) or a goostrum noodle (Cornish 1871).

Adam Jacot de Boinod worked on the first series of QI and is the author of The Meaning of Tingo, published by Penguin Press, and creator of the iPhone App Tinga, a quiz on interesting words.
“HOW MANY BORROW AND BEGS, DO YOU RECKON, IN THE OLD GIVE AND TAKE ...?”
At Llangoed Hall I slept like a Queen. And ended up smelling and shod like one too.

The definitive luxury country house hotel in the Wye valley – nestled amid the Black Mountains, near Brecon – has hosted the Clintons, the Clooneys and Prince Charles. There is a thank you letter from him hanging in the Grand Hall – alongside one from John Major.

The eminent are never far away: they are around every corner. I spent a lot of time in the shower with a famous Cornishman. When I was out of it I was surrounded, in the oak-panelled library and along the pillared gallery of the classic Jacobean-style manor, by “true modern dandies and bold women who knew how to go their own way”. Although they were oblivious to it.

Every step around Llangoed Hall (Holy Meeting Place) is a step into history. Back to civilisation.

Step inside the shower or your bath and you meet William Penhaligon, the Cornish court barber of Queen Victoria, who in 1902 invented
Blenheim Bouquet toilet water for the Duke of Marlborough. And was rewarded by being made “The manufacturer of toilet requisites” by Royal Appointment.

For discerning dandies.

The royal family has issued more than 850 royal warrants. There is a royal chimney sweep and even a royally endorsed maker of “corsetry, lingerie and intimates”.

When you go for a walk by the river at Llangoed you choose your “by Her Majesty’s Appointment” footwear from a selection of Hunter wellies, as worn by monarchs. The bedding in the hotel is the same as that used on the Crown Estates. The pillowcases are filled with feathers from ducks resident at Sandringham, the baths and toilet cisterns are by Chadder and Co, the china tea sets by Caverswall, the bathrobes by Mitre, the retro radios by Roberts, the carpets, Brintons, and the stationery – only the very best – by Smythson, of Bond Street.

You are treated like royalty at Llangoed Hall.

The eggs are supplied by Mrs Miggins. Head gardener Steve Heath will introduce you to a very important member of staff: the chief Black Rock and her egghouse team of bantams and ducks, who are responsible for the pastries, omelettes and soufflés. And your boiled, poached or fried egg at breakfast. They supply head chef Nick Brodie.

Llangoed is one of few places where you dine with a pig’s head looking over your shoulder. It’s a crayon drawing by Belgium-born Anglo-Welsh artist, virtuoso engraver and pupil of William Morris, Sir Frank Brangwyn.


It is rather unsettling to tuck into canapés delivered by the charming white-gloved Hungarian restaurant manager, Norbert, while being watched by John’s daughter Poppet, a pig and “an intimate but objective depiction of a female nude”.

The hotel is a very popular wedding and honeymoon venue. Honeymooners return frequently. The couples are transported in a Rolls Royce given to the Queen Mother on
the birth of Elizabeth, Princess of York (now Queen Elizabeth).

Says Managing Director Calum Milne, a relative of AA, creator of Winnie the Pooh, “What’s good enough for the Queen should be good enough for anyone!”

The new owners have invested in refurbishing what its former owner Sir Bernard Ashley wanted to be “A country home from home”. Janet in the dining room tells a story about how Sir Bernard (who died in 2009) asked his butler to bring his shotgun. He promptly shot the TV when Arthur Scargill appeared. Calum says: “We won’t see his like again.”

An engineer and pilot (model trains are on window ledges and Airfix Spitfires hang from ceilings), the former Fusilier and Gurkha officer married Laura Mountney in 1949, having met her in a London youth club. Laura was born in Dowlais, Merthyr Tydfil, the daughter of a civil servant. While a Royal Navy wren, she started doodling designs for headscarves, napkins, tablemats and tea towels. The couple set up a printing press and the ultimate cottage industry – Laura Ashley fabrics – was born in 1953.

This year marks the 90th anniversary of Laura Ashley’s birth and the 30th of her death. The Ashley family moved to Wales in 1961. Originally located in the social club in Carno, Montgomeryshire, where they are both buried, the factory moved to the village’s railway station.

In 1966, Laura produced her first dress. In 1974 she opened shops in Paris and San Francisco. At the time of her death the company had 220 shops in 12 countries. Her first shop, at 35 Maengwyn Road, Machynlleth, is still open for business.

The suites in the 23-room hotel, which stands in 17 acres of Powys countryside, are named after the Ashley family homes: Rhydoldog, in Machynlleth, Paultons, in Brussels, Treveraux, the family château, in Picardie, and Lyford, in the Bahamas.

In a simple frame along the corridor from the Paultons master deluxe suite is the first item Laura Ashley designed – a striped apron from 1950. Room 7 is a tribute to her flock. Over the fireplace in the hotel’s drawing room is a motto of former owners, the Christy clan, Sic Viresco (Thus do I Flourish).

The Hall was probably the seat of the first Welsh parliament, back in 560AD. It was an episcopal grange, owned by a prominent hatter. And once, in the Regency days of the Hellfire Club, it was lost in a game of cards.

In 1912 it was redesigned by Clough Williams-Ellis before he created the quirky Italianate Welsh coastal village of Portmeirion, setting of The Prisoner. Work on Llangoed’s “majestic chimneypiece outlines” was completed in 1919. Sir Bernard Ashley bought it in 1987 and turned it into a hotel in 1990.

Llangoed is ideally and idyllically placed to visit the Brecon Beacons National Park and the Elan Valley, where Barnes Wallis tested his bouncing bombs before the 1943 Dambusters raid. As well as Llandrinod Wells (where August sees a Victorian Festival and exhibitions of “things old time”), Hay-on-Wye (its celebrated literary festival is held in May), Brecon (Augst jazz festival) and the Royal Welsh Showgrounds, at Builth Wells, where you can watch the pony sales and bid at auction for your very own speckled faced breeding ewe. Wales’s only whisky distillery, Penderyn, isn’t far away either.

But Llangoed is the place to stay. Under chandeliers you enjoy petit fours with infusions, beetroot macaron canapés, artisanal cheeses with quince paste, homemade scones, Bara Brith (Welsh speckled or mottled currant bread), elderflower champagne, Llangoed hen truffled eggs and Miss Milligan’s signature and very bespoke egg and watercress finger sandwiches.

All that chintz, all that high life and sophistication, the four-poster beds and classy valances, the crystalware, the complimentary sherry in a decanter in your room, the Drambuie in your porridge, the Camden Town group and Slade School on the walls, the gouache and gum arabic, the thin wash, the aquatints on wove paper, the renowned bohemians, Scottish colourists, the masters of “blottesque” and the Glasgow Boys.

And all the royal warrants. And the Laura Ashley connection. Llangoed Hall is enough to drive a sane person Paisley. And monarchist, to boot.

www.llangoedhall.com

Eastern Airways flies to Cardiff from Newcastle and Aberdeen
BOOK REVIEW: HER BRILLIANT CAREER by Rachel Cooke

SMASHING THE GLASS CEILING

Icons of the so-called Brutalist post-war architectural movement have been falling like flies in recent years – Owen Luder’s “Get Carter” car park in Gateshead and Portsmouth’s Tricorn Centre, to name but two.

But one of the British architects at the centre of the movement, inspired by Le Corbusier, is celebrated in a new book that looks at the lives of ten women who bucked the trend by achieving significant careers during the 1950s.

Alison Smithson’s story is told by the Observer writer, Rachel Cooke, in Her Brilliant Career, published by Virago.

A brutalist development in Tower Hamlets remains unloved and may yet be knocked down but one of her earlier works, Smithdon School, at Hunstanton, Norfolk, is one of the most celebrated buildings of the Modernist period still surviving in Britain today. Most importantly, 60 years on, it continues to perform its original function efficiently, even if the school itself found itself in Special Measures a few years ago.

Alison Smithson (née Gill) was born in South Shields and studied architecture at what was then the University of Durham, in Newcastle, where her tutor was Gordon Ryder, who helped design Peterlee New Town and founded an architectural practice in Newcastle, which is still at work today.

Her architectural partner was her husband and fellow Modernist, Peter Smithson, from Stockton-on-Tees.

Hunstanton School, as it was originally known, was their first big commission after they won a competition to replace the old school, destroyed in the War.

“It took four long years to build what is now known as Smithdon High School,” writes Cooke. “And when the scaffolding finally came down, there was the most tremendous fuss. Local people hated it. They worried that passers-by would be able to see up the skirts of female students and there were concerns – these admittedly more well-founded – about how cold the building, a veritable greenhouse, would be in winter, and how hot in summer.”

In fact, the lower window panels were changed for opaque black ones in the 1980s, to the consternation of architectural purists, to address the huge temperature differences in the building.

But the building – now very much part of the landscape – was loved by the architectural press and is now Grade II* listed. The celebrated architectural commentator, Nikolaus Pevsner, called the school “the paramount example among the innumerable interesting post-war schools of England of a rigidly formal, symmetrical layout”. Cooke suggests that “for a Modernist masterpiece, it is surprisingly dinky” but goes on to praise many of its features, not least the water tank that sits atop a tall tower in a way that is reminiscent of the pitheads of the Smithsons’ youth.

The Smithsons went on to abandon light and airy for the chunky concrete lump forms of Brutalism and this journey is described in Her Brilliant Career. It’s an extremely readable book, which taps into much of what has been written in the past year about the earlier Suffragette movement. It explodes many myths about the role of women in an age when their place was largely believed to be in the home. Alison Smithson and all the other subjects are now dead, but Cooke brings them very much to life.
Born in Norwich, where she was educated at the city’s High School for Girls and Gresham’s School, in nearby Holt, Olivia Colman got her acting break with Cambridge Footlights. Her successful career in TV, radio and big screen comedy has latterly been eclipsed by the success of Broadchurch, in which she plays the detective wife of the murder-accused in the hugely successful ITV drama. Colman was recently commissioned to star in a comedy pilot, Flowers, for Channel 4, but when our interviewer John Preston meets her for coffee he finds the Bafta-winning actress presents a surprising contrast to her on-screen personas…
I’m not really a crier in real life. I’m not a dramatic person, you see...
I’m actually a very happy person.

You what?” I ask.

“I got really angry,” she says, lifting her chin. “I walked over and took a photo of his car. The man backed straight into another neighbour’s fence and then sped off. I suppose I do get more attention now, but normally it’s only when something is on telly. After it’s over, they realise I’m quite boring and move on.”

You can get a pretty good idea of just how busy Colman is these days by the fact that she had no idea which of her two new television dramas she made first. “I know it was warm when we shot The 7.39... But hold on, it was warm too when we shot The Thirteenth Tale,” she says, referring to a BBC Two adaptation of Diane Setterfield’s ghost story in which she stars opposite Vanessa Redgrave. “Um, sorry, I can’t remember.”

One thing she’s sure of is that she’d never previously worked with Redgrave. “I was so nervous on the first day of rehearsals that I didn’t say a thing. I just kept thinking, ‘What if she doesn’t like me?’ Also, I was very aware that I was the underdog, and when someone is that high up the ladder it seems only polite to shut up. But she couldn’t have been more supportive.”

It wasn’t always like this. Once, not so long ago, you could have found Colman on her knees in a Cambridge bed and breakfast cleaning toilets. Typically, she did this with a song in her heart. Indeed, the memory of it makes her break into another beaming smile.

“It was my favourite job – honestly, I loved it. I used to cook breakfast for the guests, and then I’d clean the lavatories.”

She’d wound up in Cambridge after a childhood spent in Norfolk, where her father was a surveyor and her mother a nurse. “We moved around a lot because my parents did up houses. But that was great because I got to choose a new bedroom every couple of years.”

I bet she was regarded as “A Good Sort” at school, I say. “Oh God, I suppose I was. I was always quite confident – and happy – even if I wasn’t particularly academic.” And what about boys? Was she popular with them? Immediately she turns very red. “Oh dear, I’m blushing, aren’t I? How embarrassing. Well, I wasn’t the one they’d look at first at a party, but I could certainly make them laugh.”

When Colman was 16 she starred in a school production of The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie and all at once everything changed. “I’d never been very good at anything at school – I’d certainly never been better than anyone else. Afterwards
Along the way, her now husband decided that he wanted to be a writer instead, but Colman stuck doggedly at acting. “There was never a big-bang moment, just a very slow sizzle. But after a while I felt I could put ‘actor’ on my passport and not feel like a fraud. Also, I think if you’re not a complete pain in the backside, people will invite you back.”

For years she hung around in the shadows, often with her friends Mitchell and Webb, and also on radio, where she did a clutch of Radio 4 comedies. Slowly, though, she emerged – or sidled – into the light. She had a memorably disastrous marriage to David Mitchell in Peep Show and went quietly bonkers as an overworked mother-of-four in Green Wing. Then she starred in Tyrannosaur, Paddy Considine’s first feature, as an apparently wholesome charity shop worker with a dark secret. “Things did change quite a lot after that. I think possibly people realised that I could do more than I’d done before,” she says and promptly turns red again. “That sounds very immodest, doesn’t it?”

She immediately went on to play Carol Thatcher in The Iron Lady – Meryl Streep called her “divinely gifted” when she picked up a Bafta as best actress. Reminded of this, she turns redder still. “Frankly, I was astonished she even remembered my name.”

Ever since, people have tended to treat Colman as if she’s some sort of acting guru – an idea she’s keen to scotch. “To be honest, I don’t think that much about acting. If you’re genuine and you’re reacting truthfully to what’s being said, you don’t have to do any more. You’re still acting, but really it’s just honesty.”

Perhaps because she’s so good at conveying pain, Colman frequently finds misfortune heaped on her shoulders – she always seems to be the long-suffering wife, never the smouldering seductress. “I suppose I have played a lot of put-upon women, but it’s never bothered me. They’ve never been weak – they’ve always got steel in them. Mind you, one day I’d like to play an absolute bitch.”

With two young children – born in 2005 and 2007 – she tries to spend as much time as possible at home. That said, she spent four months doing the second series of Broadchurch.

Last year she was in the feel-good romantic comedy, Cuban Fury, in which she starred opposite Nick Frost. “They made me look really good – mainly because someone else was doing most of the dancing. It turned out that I could only do three spins before I felt really sick. Even so, I loved doing it.”

And this, I think, is the key to Olivia Colman – she really is an unusually happy person who just happens to be brilliant at being unhappy when the occasion demands. “I do think I’m someone who appreciates what I’ve got when I’ve got it – and that’s probably a good thing.”

The bill arrives. I reach for it, but she gets there first. Then she does something that no one I’ve interviewed has ever done, something that says a lot about the person she is: she insists on paying.
Residents of Swanland, not far from the northern end of the Humber Bridge, were not surprised when their village received the accolade of Best Commuter Town in the most recent Family Hotspots Report.

The report, published by Family Investments, identified the highest-scoring postcodes within easy reach of major cities. And the picturesque East Yorkshire village, dominated by its pond – sadly no longer home to any swans – and seven miles from the centre of Hull, came out top of the pile.

Swanland is close to the A63, leading to the M62 and the motorway network. Humberside Airport is less than 30 minutes away across the bridge, and King’s Cross two and a half hours on a direct train from nearby Brough.

Families are attracted by its primary school’s excellent results, a vibrant community spirit and low crime rate in a village, which supports a pub, Post Office, doctor’s surgery, chemist’s and convenience store. The tennis and bowls club and playing field ensure lots of outdoor activities.

Debbie Limb, director of Matthew Limb estate agents, which specialises in villages west of Hull, says that Kemp Road and Tranby Lane are Swanland’s equivalent of Monopoly’s Mayfair and Park Lane.

Both boast several million pound-plus properties, some replacing smaller, older houses demolished by new buyers with ambitious architects. Many, like River Grange, on the market at £2,995,000, have views of the river estuary, the Humber Bridge and north Lincolnshire.

“But because Swanland has a lot to offer everyone, many buyers move within the village as their needs change,” she says.

Young professionals are attracted by apartments in the converted Georgian mansion, Swanland Hall, with a communal swimming pool, where one-beds start at around £120,000 rising to £250,000 for two-beds.

Family homes on the market include a three-bedroom cottage at £199,950 and modern four and five-bedroom detached homes from £389,000 to £430,000. Retirement apartments in Haldenby Court start with one-bedroom flats at £170,000 rising to £250,000 for two bedrooms.

The latest report sparked an increase in enquiries, says Debbie Limb. “All the villages along the A63 corridor follow a similar pattern, showing increased activity last year with people driven mainly by career moves or education choices for their children.”

The Boardwalk, Kemp Road, Swanland. Described as “classical, colonial style”, the six-bedroom individual home has more than 6,500 sq ft of living accommodation, including a 60ft long open-plan living/dining/kitchen area. If you prefer privacy, you can close the doors in the formal lounge, study and office. Leisure choices are the second floor cinema room or the outdoor heated swimming pool, with nearby hot tub and barbecue area, overlooked by the rear balcony accessed from the gallery landing.

On sale from Fine & Country department of Beercock, Wiles & Wick, price £1,200,000.

www.beercocks.com
PROPERTUNITIES

We present a round-up of some of the more unusual opportunities for buyers near airports served by Eastern Airways. The information presented in this feature was correct at the time of going to press. However, property is put up for sale because it is... for sale! For this reason some properties featured may no longer be on the market later in the shelf-life of this issue of the magazine...

LIVE LIKE A LORD
A rare opportunity to buy a Grade II listed mansion on the western edge of Newcastle – if you’ve got £1.5 million burning a hole in your pocket. Formerly owned by the Duke of Northumberland and the birthplace of Ann Potter, mother of the famous inventor and industrialist Lord Armstrong, Walbottle Hall is a magnificent eight-bedroom Grade II listed property set in more than an acre of grounds. The East Wing, a part-stone, part-brick manor house, is believed to have been built in the 1700s, while the West Wing, an adjoining stone-built castellated tower in the Scottish Baronial style, was added in 1897.
Strutt and Parker, Morpeth
www.struttandparker.com

CITY CENTRE GEM
Tucked away in the heart of Southampton, this four-storey house on Holt Road is a very special modern home, described by the agent as “a masterpiece of contemporary open living”. The four-bedroom house has a detached office-studio. But for those who work in the city or commute, it’s just a ten-minute walk to the station. The house, which has never before been on the open market and is now for sale at £675,000, also boasts extensive grounds, including a hidden patio.
www.pearsons.com

ANOTHER NEW YORK
Fancy moving to New York? The one in Lincolnshire, that is. The Old Wesleyan Chapel is unconverted and has full detailed planning permission to convert to one or two homes. It’s for sale at £155,000 or can be purchased together with the adjacent and already converted Old Sunday School. Contact the vendor by email: stokesmichael@rocketmail.com

LOFTY LIFESTYLE IN BIRMINGHAM
This two-bedroom duplex apartment, in one of the original loft developments on Grosvenor Street West, takes its quirky, industrial style from exposed brickwork, glass briquette and solid girders – and fittingly is at the heart of the city’s canal basin, once an industrial hub. With a balcony overlooking the canal, the Sherborne Lofts apartment, with concierge and underground parking space, is close to Brindleyplace, one of the city’s main business and leisure hubs. It is just a five-minute walk from Five Ways station and less than ten from New Street.
www.jameslaurenceuk.com

VIEWS OVER CARDIFF BAY
Brynhill started life as a farmhouse in the 1930s and is now a superb, modern home with almost 7,000 sq ft of accommodation, including a multi-purpose suite flexibly designed to become a fitness centre, granny flat or guest accommodation. What has not changed is the location on an elevated ridge near the village of Lisvane, a 15-minute commuter train ride from Cardiff city centre. The current architect-owner has designed the living space and all four bedrooms to take full advantage of the outstanding views of Cardiff Bay and across the city to the Severn Estuary. Brynhill is priced at £1,750,000.
www.savills.co.uk
I only live 20 miles from Hartlepool, but the last time I spent any significant length of time there was back in 2010, when the port hosted the Tall Ships.

The reason for this 2015 visit, on a sunny but chilly day in January, was to get up close to the town’s own Tall Ship, HMS Trincomalee, which recently became part of the National Museum of the Royal Navy. Beautifully restored, and welcoming visitors since 2001, she is the central feature of Hartlepool’s Maritime Experience and, as we go to press, there are plans for her setting at the reconstructed historic Jackson Quay to be more fully integrated with the national museum.

Named after a port in what was then Ceylon, the frigate HMS Trincomalee was built of teak in India because of the shortage of oak by that time in England. She was launched in 1817 and sailed to Portsmouth, where she was promptly mothballed as part of a reduction in naval strength at the end of the Napoleonic wars.

Her first naval commission only came in 1847, since when she enjoyed tours of duty in the Caribbean, The Gulf of St Lawrence, the Crimea, and the Pacific, before becoming a training vessel in Sunderland, West Hartlepool and Southampton.

In 1897 she was rescued from the breaker’s yard and renamed TS (training ship) Foudroyant. After being requisitioned during World War II, she was eventually fully retired in 1986, signalling the start of a long mission to restore her to something like her original state just after Nelson’s days.

Hartlepool was selected for Trincomalee’s new life on the strength of the impressive restoration of HMS Warrior, which began in 1979, the Royal Navy’s first ironclad currently on display in Portsmouth.

The prelude to a visit to the restored vessel – 65 per cent of whose timbers are still the original teak – is to learn more about her life and times by visiting the well orchestrated displays in the buildings of the reconstructed port.

Richard Davison regularly dons captain’s uniform to bring the post-Napoleonic experience truly to life and proves he has an answer to all questions nautical. The more hardy (in the non-Nelsonian sense) among us rise to the challenge of climbing the ship’s rigging to the crow’s nest from where, I am reliably informed, you can see all the way to Whitley Bay, in the north, and Boulby Head cliffs, to the south.

Richard is at his most knowledgeable when asked about the ship’s armory of cannons, the firing of which has bequeathed to us the term “loose...
cannon”, being one that has broken away from its rope moorings and careened dangerously backwards across the deck. We learn about the “powder monkeys” whose job it was to ferry explosive charges to each gun as required.

This in turn prompts reflection on Hartlepool’s most famous story: the hanging of the monkey. For those few who don’t know it, Hartlepool’s principal claim to fame is as the place where an unfortunate primate had been washed ashore from a wrecked vessel during the Napoleonic wars and, thinking he was a French spy, the townsfolk tried him for espionage, found him guilty and hanged him.

It’s an apocryphal tale of which the townsfolk are quite proud. But what if the “monkey” had actually been a powder monkey?

Richard and his colleagues demonstrate the firing of canons (with only wadding for ammunition) and muskets, without live shot. And thus we learn the origin of another English phrase, “a flash in the pan”, deriving from when the tinder charge in the musket ignites in the “pan” without firing the main explosive load.

Adjacent to the historic quay and accessed via the quayside buildings is the Museum of Hartlepool, where one of the displays recalls the day a hundred years ago when Hartlepool (and Scarborough) came under attack from German warships. This is an excellent curtain-raiser to the next stop on our tour: the restored gun battery on the old fortified Headland area of the town.

When I was a young boy growing up in North East England, we used to talk about “British” West Hartlepool. Hartlepool was, until 1967 two separate towns – the “new” town of West Hartlepool that grew up around the docks and railways in the mid-19th century, and the much older settlement on the Headland. There is even evidence that the Headland was once a complete island, though probably long before it became an important early Northumbrian Christian site with a monastery dedicated to St Aidan and later, St Hilda.

Old Hartlepool had a reputation in the region as being beyond even the reach of the Empire, hence the addition of the “British” prefix to differentiate West Hartlepool from its neighbour. Both the late Jimmy Edwards and Tony Hancock are credited with the popularisation of this name, which, as I had to point out to one of our party, carries no racial overtones.

Today the Headland is looking increasingly attractive, with its fine Victorian terraces and restored defensive walls. The Grade I listed Church of St Hilda, on the site of the original monastery, has a visitor centre, telling the story of Old Hartlepool. The Headland Story Trail is illustrated by 18 information boards. You can even do a selfie beside that celebrated Hartlepudlian, the Daily Mirror’s Andy Capp.

Our own specific destination was the restored Heugh Battery, which – in the confusion of fog – was unable to respond swiftly to the deadly German bombardment of 1915. This historic gun emplacement...
was falling to rack and ruin on my last visit so it was a real pleasure to see the product of a real community-led renovation project.

Duty Director Joe Foster proudly tells the story of the restoration and the building of a collection of guns of all shapes and sizes, transforming the site into a real attraction and educational venue.

You can sit on the old anti-aircraft guns and spin the handles to raise and lower the barrel, or see the extensive collection of machine guns and other weapons of war. All disabled, I hasten to add.

Also worth a visit is the town’s art gallery, in a converted church whose 100ft clock tower may provide a less scary way to see the town than climbing the rigging of HMS Trincomalee, and the resort of Seaton Carew, with its art deco railway station. Seaton Carew is blessed with fine beaches and an ancient submerged forest. It is also where the fraudster John Darwin staged his death in a canoe before being photographed in Panama with his wife and later convicted, giving rise to the alternative moniker of Seaton Canoe. There’s another well-established colony in Kirkby Stephen, in Cumbria.

We saw no parakeets on this visit, as it was by this time very nearly dark. But there was a lot of ivy, just like that in our own garden! Sadly, subsequent research established that “our own” garden visitor was in fact most likely an orange-winged Amazon parrot. We do hope he survived the winter or returned to his owner’s home. The Hartlepool parrots, on the other hand, are very real: more so than either the monkey or Andy Capp.

www.hms-trincomalee.co.uk
www.heughbattery.com

Ward Jackson Park, in a leafy suburb in the west of the town. Our interest in Hartlepool’s colony of ring-necked parakeets was prompted by the arrival in our garden at Durham of a similar green parrot, which was feeding on the ivy in our tall trees. A little research established the Hartlepool colony of these colourful birds (descended from escapees) as the most northerly in the UK, although there have been odd sightings in Newcastle and Edinburgh, too. There’s another well-established colony in Kirkby Stephen, in Cumbria.

We stayed in the beautifully appointed Frances Anne room, whose en suite facilities sit in a self-contained “pod”, which does not compromise the essential architectural qualities of the room. It offers views over the extensive lake, home to a huge number of geese.

The hotel spa does not boast a pool but it has the most attentive staff and two illuminated hot tubs, from whose warming waters we gazed out over the fresh covering of snow.

This is a wonderfully informal hotel, retaining many of the qualities of a family home alongside the grandeur of the lavishly decorated dining room and the intimacy of the sitting room, lined with bookcases and warmed by two lovely log fires.

Wynyard also boasts a 700-seater marquee, while an ambitiously elaborate rose garden and visitor centre are due for completion in August. With good access to all of Teesside, County Durham and Tyneside it can also be the ideal place to wind down after a hard day’s business.

www.wynyardhall.co.uk
Stan Abbott visits the World Marmalade Awards at Dalemain in Cumbria – which this year had a record number of entries thanks, no doubt, to a certain little marmalade-loving bear from Peru...
It’s a little more than ten years since Jane Hasell-McCosh was first struck by the idea that making marmalade was a metaphor for community and caring.

Jane, who is “lady of the manor” at the historic Dalemain estate, near Penrith, wanted to do her bit to help a local charity, Hospice at Home, which provides palliative care at home for people near the end of their lives.

And so, in 2005, were born the world’s first Marmalade Awards. From small beginnings, the Marmalade Awards have grown astonishingly, with more than 2,600 jars of marmalade – from amateur and artisan producers all over the world – arriving for judgement in this year’s event.

With the Paddington Bear movie already reported to have stimulated previously moribund sales of this most British of preserves, thanks to the ursine Peruvian’s liking for marmalade sandwiches, this year’s event was a record-breaker.

Food historian Ivan Day, who lives locally, is just one of many people who’ve become part of the vast infrastructure that delivers the awards each year and he’s got the measure of things across a decade. “The thing that appeals to me is that it’s total madness – two days of total lunacy!”

I’m inclined to agree, as we trudge through the mud in a blizzard from the temporary car park at Dalemain, home to 11 generations of Hasells. Dalemain’s impressive Georgian frontage conceals an older medieval heritage and the old cobbled courtyard to the rear of the house is today replete with stalls selling country goods that seem to have more in common with a point-to-point than a “jamboree”.

But it’s well-controlled lunacy: and lunacy in support of not just one, but three good causes, the other two being Action Medical Research and Marie Curie Scotland. With entry fees all going to charity, Hospice at Home Carlisle and North Cumbria had received £150,000 before this year’s event.
With Fortnum and Mason, Aga, Laithwaite’s and the Worshipful Company of Fruiterers among sponsors and supporters (not to mention Mackays, the marmalade people), you might be forgiven for wondering if marmalade-making is the preserve of the entitled.

But the spoons on evidence today – as we enter the hallowed portals of the event itself – are far from silver: rather, little plastic ones by the thousand, at the ready for 3,000 visitors to sample some of the jars of lovingly-made marmalade, which have filled just about every flat space in the medieval hall and the marquee, a new addition this year. But remember: “no double-dipping”! Marmalade-making may be a great leveller but a line is wisely drawn at sharing our germs with all and sundry.

The air hangs heavy with the bitter-sweet of the preserves and the piles of Seville oranges awaiting their sticky afterlife – and with a palpable sense of warmth and joie de vivre. Jane and her marmalady works for charity are clearly the stuff of legend and her personal warmth seems to seep down through the army of wellie-clad helpers who ensure that, amid the lunacy, a jam-packed schedule of talks and demonstrations runs like clockwork.

“Jane is the warmest-hearted person you could ever meet,” says Ivan. “It was a stroke of genius to come up with a theme that suited the bleak days of January and February. The first run was a very small event and none of us could remember it very well and then the idea came through to repeat it.”

But Jane didn’t feel she was qualified to judge the qualities of the growing number of entries that began to come not just from enthusiastic amateurs, but also from artisan producers for whom a prize might spell commercial success.

Step forward the redoubtable ladies of Penrith Women’s Institute, Doreen Cameron and Eileen Wilson, who tirelessly award points to every single entry and produce neatly completed score sheets that are posted out to provide feedback from the experts. The artisan entries are judged by a panel comprising big names in food writing, TV and hospitality.

The focus at the event is very much on the Seville orange – renowned for its “just right” bitterness and chunky peel, but in season for just a few weeks each winter – and its citrus cousins. But Ivan’s food historian pedigree encourages a more catholic view as to what makes a marmalade and he shares the sticky story in a fascinating lecture and a marquee display that includes quince pastes and a knobbly citrus fruit called citron.

“For me it doesn’t need to have any citrus fruit in it at all and we even have two recipes from the Roman occupation, made with English fruits.

“I’m very interested in the history of food in general but in particular confectionery, or anything to do with sugar. Originally ‘marmalade’ could be made from a combination of various fruits and the first ones were made from quince, which is ‘marmello’ in Portuguese.

“We started making it with oranges in the 18th and 19th century and Britain became synonymous with preserves. So the name ‘marmalade’ found its way into English and it was made with a fruit we couldn’t grow here and sugar from cane grown in the Caribbean. Just like we got tea from China and turned it into the British institution of teatime.”

Marmalade, of course, is more of a breakfast institution than a teatime one: except for one famous bear from darkest Peru.
I ask the awards’ inscrutable PR, Lou Lou Graham, who it is inside the giant Paddington who is making his presence felt at the festival. “Well, Paddington, of course!” she says without a hint of irony.

Well, she and the team do have a lot to thank Paddington for. “We had 2,600 entries this year, which is more than ever before and I think Paddington definitely helped. The film has brought marmalade to children who hadn’t tried it before. At the same time, every year more chefs and food writers get behind the idea of using marmalade, not just on toast but for cooking with.”

Lou Lou talks more about how the care that people take with packing and presenting their entries reflects the charitable aims of the event. Indeed an entry from the Scottish service veterans’ charity, Gardening Leave, lifted the Double Gold in the Armed Forces entry category this year.

“The entries sometimes arrive with the sweetest things, such as family histories – people are very proud of their recipes. But the awards are about community: bringing people together and bringing people to this part of the world and supporting local people.”

Indeed, not only do the entries arrive from all over the world (even service personnel in Afghanistan), but so do the guests, as evidenced by transatlantic accents and the young man from Anjou, France, who tells me about his jam-making. Marmalade, however, is one of those curiously British things that French people tend not to understand.

The awards may be in the best possible taste and a spirit of fairness, but that’s not to say that competition isn’t intense.

After all, the best confections will be on the shelves of Fortnum and Mason for a year. And nor do the guests, as evidenced by transatlantic accents and the young man from Anjou, France, who tells me about his jam-making. Marmalade, however, is one of those curiously British things that French people tend not to understand.

The awards may be in the best possible taste and a spirit of fairness, but that’s not to say that competition isn’t intense.

I leave feeling uplifted and eager to come up with new recipes to challenge the judges next year. Jane’s words are ringing in my ears. “Every entry is treated properly, with care. And that reflects what’s important with palliative care. When people are dying they should be treated properly, Marmalade-making is a metaphor for people and life.”

Dalemain Mansion and Gardens are about 90 minutes’ drive from either Newcastle or Durham Tees Valley airports and are normally open from the end of March to the end of October, Sunday to Thursday. The Marmalade Awards are held in late February.

www.dalemain.com
www.dalemainmarmaladeawards.co.uk

When I started in journalism we were supposed to be neutral observers and even the use of the “I-word” was frowned upon. The advent of the internet and “citizen journalism” is just one of the things that’s changed all that, so in the spirit of the “new journalism” I ransacked my shelves for a jar of marmalade that might fit into one of the 15 amateur categories at the “Marmalade Oscars”. I settled in the end for a sweet orange marmalade with rhubarb and ginger, which I’d made last summer.

I entered it in the special Tenth Anniversary category for marmalade with interesting additions. As my entry was simply taken off the shelf, rather than honed to the exacting competition requirements, I expected little. So, imagine my delight when I found that Jar 1987 had earned a Certificate of Merit and was just one point short of a Bronze Award. I scored two out of two for appearance, three out of five for colour, four out of six for consistency texture and quality, and five out of seven for flavour and aroma, making 14 out of a possible 20. “An interesting marmalade,” said the judges.

In the words of a film star who’s much less cuddly than Paddington: “I’ll be back!”

I take my plastic spoons and tuck into some of the professional and amateur offerings. “Mmmm, lime with vodka and tonic! Chocolate orange! Champagne! Christmas pud! Bathtub gin!”

Unclaimed entries will be offered by Dalemain to visitors in return for charity donations. Any that are left will provide a treat for Dalemain’s bees. Lucky bees, say I!

With 15 amateur categories alone, I’ll bring you highlights only of this year’s winners, with Double Gold homemade awards for Catie Gladstone’s rich and smooth Hamilton Honey Marmalade in the Stirring of the Clans category – alongside the Gardening Leave Army Veteran’s Charity Marmalade. Both winners will be offered the opportunity to have their marmalades stocked in Fortnum & Mason.

Four of the Gold homemade winners hail from Scotland, two from Japan, one from New York and seven from England. The Political Marmalade award goes to Lord Henley, of Cumbria.

Four Artisan producers win Double Gold and will also have their recipes stocked in Fortnum & Mason. Winning features include Amontillado sherry and lemon and mochito.

Wemyss House B & B, in Bayfield, proudly take home the Hotel, B & Restaurant Double Gold, adding to Scottish glory at the awards.

I leave feeling uplifted and eager to come up with new recipes to challenge the judges next year. Jane’s words are ringing in my ears. “Every entry is treated properly, with care. And that reflects what’s important with palliative care. When people are dying they should be treated properly, Marmalade-making is a metaphor for people and life.”

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www.dalemain.com
www.dalemainmarmaladeawards.co.uk
CATCHING UP WITH SALMON

Stan Abbott tries his hand at fishing for salmon on the River Tay and finds out more about the current trials and tribulations of this king of the Scottish river.
George McInnes has never really looked back since the day his luck changed. In an afternoon he went from unlucky ex-pro footballer to angler with the Midas touch. The good luck that saw him land half a dozen fine salmon one afternoon more than 50 years ago introduced him to the joys of fishing on the Tay – and later opened the door to nearly a quarter of a century of messing about in boats and on the banks of Scotland’s finest salmon river. I was privileged to spend half a day in the company of George, a ghillie on the estate, which is attached to Ballathie Country House Hotel, on the banks of the River Tay, a few miles north of Perth. “I came here for six weeks in 1992 because they were short of a ghillie and 23 years later I am still here,” says George. “It was always my hobby so it’s nice to be doing a job you get paid for that’s your hobby as well.”

It’s not that he didn’t enjoy being a footballer, graduating to professional at Aberdeen after being Highland League top scorer with Inverness Clachnacuddin. It’s just that he suffered three (“or was it four”) broken legs in his short career, before moving on to a free to then Southern League Oxford United – where he suffered another broken ankle. He went back to Scotland and joined the police. “My biggest regret is perhaps that I didn’t take the chance I had to go to Chelsea, but Aberdeen was so much closer to home,” he says wistfully as we drift lazily on the Tay, three lines trailing into the chill February waters. “Perhaps my football career would have turned out differently.”

It sounds rather like the proverbial “one that got away”, I reflect. For my part I’m here to gain no more than a short introduction to the sport of angling. There’s a programme on Radio 4 called I’ve Never Seen Star Wars, in which celebrity guests try out activities, which – usually out of prejudice – they’ve never tried before. In my own version of the show I tried golf a while ago, and – more recently – paid to hone my golfing skills and rather enjoyed it. Previously both golf and angling had belonged in my box labelled Life’s-Too-Short-For. Could angling join golf outside that box?

Well, let’s begin by setting the scene… Salmon fishing on UK rivers is not enjoying the best of health at the moment, although the juries (of which there seem to be many) are out on just why that’s the case. And my own outing is at a time when the waters are arguably at their coldest and any salmon are either somewhat exhausted fish that spawned last year or, less likely, the very vanguard of this year’s ocean returnees.

You’ll get the idea then that I may be preparing you for disappointment so, to avoid the suspense, I’ll tell you that I do indeed catch a 7lb salmon. I also enjoy a very vigorous, if partial, debate about conservation and some paradoxes inherent in the same.

It’s impossible to write about fishing for the king of the Scottish river without at least acknowledging that the tales for which anglers are famed are presently less about the one that got away and more about the one that never came. Scottish salmon stocks may have declined by as much as 80 per cent over the last 45 years. Such is the concern that this year has seen a ban on taking salmon from the Tay up to the end of March, and there is talk of a total ban or a system of tags that would effectively require each fishery to purchase a quota that would limit the numbers that could be landed.

However exceptional a line-caught salmon may taste, however, this is not the primary purpose of the sport, George and fellow ghillie Garry McErlain tell me as we leave the shore. “Only about 20 per cent of the salmon caught at Ballathie are killed,” says George. Today we are “harling”, a Norse word that describes a method of fishing peculiar to the Tay, in part because of the river’s sheer size. The Tay is the UK’s largest river by volume of water, equivalent to the combined might of the Thames and Severn or the Dee, Tweed and Spey.

George takes the tiller, Garry the prow and I sit in the middle. We cast three lines and one is propped on either side of the boat and the third from the stern. We are using spinning rods, which are about 12ft long, compared with 16 or 17ft for a fly rod.

“Spinning”, I learn, covers the deployment of a variety of different lures and George opens his “war-chest” to show me a few, and to put me straight on a couple of fundamental points. I had assumed that all these lures, like flies, were designed to trick the fish into thinking there was a tasty meal to be had.

Not so. In fact, the salmon hates having its personal space invaded and when it attacks the lure (or the fly) it is actually reacting to the presence of an unwanted intruder. Furthermore, salmon don’t actually even eat while in fresh water, so even a fly would be of no interest. They do all their eating at sea – mainly krill, giving them their distinctive pink flesh. Having piled on the pounds they will live off their fat reserves for as long as they stay in the river before and after spawning.

The shorter rod and line can deploy a spoon-shaped metal lure, which attracts the fish by reflecting light or a variety of others, many of them from Rapala and having the appearance of a brightly coloured fish.

There is no prospect of casting a fly today and wading into the waters in the archetypal “angler at play” manner, and not just because the water is not much above freezing. The fly will come into their own when the fish start to return in numbers. They do this in Spring, Summer and Autumn, depending on where their feeding grounds are, some being as far away as Greenland.

Garry points the boat upstream and holds the power so as to just permit it to zig-zag backwards with the current. After a while there’s a jerk on one of the lines. “That’s yours,” says Garry. “Wind the line in to take up the slack.”

GEORGE McINNES:
“A GOOD FISHERMAN IS SOMEONE WHO CAN ‘READ’ THE WATER AT ALL DIFFERENT LEVELS...”
I was a guest of Ballathie Country House Hotel, which is about two hours’ drive from Aberdeen Airport. The hotel is one of those rare places where you end up thinking: “I could actually live here.” It fits, snug as a glove, its rooms a comfortable mix of tradition and modern facilities, such as WiFi in all areas, including the log fire lounges.

Dining overlooking the lawns and the river is courtesy of head chef Scott Scorer and we found both the food and the service close to faultless. I will mention only some highlights: the black pudding amuse-bouche in a crust with mulled wine chutney; the curried cauliflower soup; the hake with mussels; the chicken liver parfait with pistachio crumb and candied walnut.

Besides fishing, we joined gamekeeper Gordon Clone to shoot clays and try our hand at archery. I will say only that we did better with bows and arrows and that Gordon has the patience of a saint!

www.ballathiehousehotel.com

I do as bidden, letting the clutch on line slip as the fish pulls and then winding it closer as it goes slack. “Now bring it in towards the boat.” After a couple of minutes Garry is able to slip the net beneath my seven-pounder, lift it from the water and slip the hook out.

If I discount the roach and stickleback I fished out of streams as a kid, and the cod and whiting casually hauled on board seagoing boats in Arctic waters, it is my first ever catch – even if the ghillies did the work, really.

What makes a good angler? “A good fisherman is someone who can ‘read’ the water at all different levels,” says George. “If you are only up here once a year, you’ll need a retentive memory. I have fished here all my life and I can read the river like a book.”

Now there are some that catch fish but aren’t at all popular with anglers... “There could be two or three thousand seals in the Tay estuary at Dundee. Not only do they eat a lot of fish, but they will take a bite out of several fish and just discard them.”

At numbers two and three of the ghillies’ hate list are the goosander and the cormorant. They can legally kill 12 goosanders a year, but say this is neither here nor there. Beavers – although not “officially” present here – are, for a variety of reasons, another creature that curries little favour with the ghillie.

George takes a call from a couple of ghillies from the next reach and it’s the signal to take lunch at one of Ballathie’s riverside lodges. Garry warns me: “You get 40 ghillies round a table and you get 40 different opinions.” He is wrong: you only need four ghillies to generate 40 opinions, but I’ll try to distil the essence of their wide-ranging banter.

* If there is one person in the world who knows about the lifestyle of the salmon and how best to conserve it, it is an Icelander called Orri Vigfusson, founder of the North Atlantic Salmon Fund. He advocates a move to a universal catch-and-release policy to permit stocks to rebuild.

* The netting of salmon, which continues on some estuaries, for example at Montrose, continues to pose a threat to stocks.

* The use of hatcheries to restock rivers should be extended. Scientists don’t like this as they say it compromises the genetic purity of salmon in each river. The ghillies reject this, pointing to the success of the reintroduction of salmon on the Tyne, now England’s best salmon river.

* The clubbing of seal cubs in Arctic Canada years ago has created a lasting legacy in whose context it is close to impossible to control seal numbers.

* Scientists would do well to sit round the table with ghillies, whose knowledge of fisheries is, by definition, infinitely wider.

I’m wondering how much it would cost for a day’s fishing on the Tay. Ballathie sells timeshares on its waters (there’s one for sale through Savill’s right now) and, in the peak salmon season of September and October, it will probably cost about £500 per rod per day.

Ballathie House has built an impressive trophy cabinet, whose contents include Independent Hotel of the Year in the 2014 Catering in Scotland Excellence Awards, two best UK Cheeseboard awards, and shortlist and finalist placings in the Scottish Thistle – the tourism Oscars – and Perthshire Chamber of Commerce awards. It was named Best Country House Wedding Venue in the 2012 Scottish tourism Oscars.

Our prize includes two nights’ bed and breakfast for two, plus dinner on one night. It also includes the chance for winners to try their hand at clay pigeon shooting and archery in the safe hands of the Ballathie Estate’s gamekeeper, Gordon Clone.

Complimentary flights to and from Aberdeen with Eastern Airways are included, if required, while a Europcar hire car is available to whizz the winner from Aberdeen Airport.

Ballathie House has been the country house retreat for generations of guests and prides itself on its long history of looking after them – a tradition it is delighted to be continuing as a four-star luxury hotel with a 2AA rosette award-winning fine dining restaurant.

Royalty and leading lights have been entertained in the hotel and on its extensive estate and country sport lovers can enjoy Ballathie as their Perthshire base for golf, fishing, stalking, shooting, cycling and many other activities. The hotel’s secluded setting makes it popular with conference organisers and meeting planners.

To enter our exclusive competition, just answer the following question: What award did Ballathie House win in the 2014 Catering in Scotland Excellence Awards?

The first correct entry drawn at random will win two nights’ bed and breakfast for two people, with dinner (excluding drinks) on one night. Also included are Eastern Airways flights to and from Aberdeen if required. Eastern Airways car hire partner will provide a car for the duration of the winner’s stay so you’ll be able to explore the splendours of Royal Deeside.

Send your answer to competitions@gravity-consulting.com with “Ballathie competition” in the subject field. Please provide name, address and phone number and the flight number and date of your last flight with Eastern Airways. Closing date Friday May 29 2015. Entry implies acceptance of full competition rules at www.gravity-consulting.com/terms.

Prize to be taken by March 31, 2016, subject to availability of accommodation and flights. Public holidays and peak periods (such as Christmas and New Year) may be excluded.

www.ballathiehousehotel.com
www.europcar.com
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THE FLEET

**EMBRAER ERJ145**
- Two aircraft
- Seats 50 passengers
- Two turbofan engines
- Wingspan, 20m (65ft)
- Length 30m (98ft)
- Typical cruising speed, 450 knots, at 35,000ft

**EMBRAER ERJ135**
- Two aircraft
- Seats 37 passengers
- Two turbofan engines
- Wingspan, 20m (65ft)
- Length 26m (86ft)
- Typical cruising speed, 450 knots, at 35,000ft

**JETSTREAM 41**
- Eighteen aircraft
- Seats 29 passengers
- Two turboprop engines
- Wingspan 19m (60ft)
- Length 20m (63ft)
- Typical cruising speed, 280 knots, at 20,000ft

**SAAB 2000**
- Nine aircraft
- Seats 50 passengers
- Two jetprop engines
- Wingspan 24.3m (81ft)
- Length 26.7m (89ft)
- Typical cruising speed, 370 knots, at 28,000ft

Besides the airline’s scheduled service network in the UK and Norway, Eastern Airways also operates domestic services within France, from Lorient, in southern Brittany to France’s second city, Lyon.
After booking your Eastern Airways flight via a travel agent, the airline’s website or in-house reservations call centre, you will have noticed that Eastern Airways uses e-tickets. It was in fact one of the airlines to pioneer ticketless travel over nine years ago.

Queues at check-in are short and the process is swift as is the experience through the security channels. This is possible thanks to a ground-breaking initiative called Fast Track, which is available at Aberdeen, Birmingham, Cardiff, Leeds Bradford, Southampton, East Midlands, Newcastle, and is a dedicated security channel for Eastern Airways passengers to use and avoid busy airport terminal security queues.

With Eastern Airways operating the largest number of scheduled services from Aberdeen, a dedicated business lounge is available for all its customers flying from the airport and is located next to its departure gates. Executive lounge access is also offered at Birmingham, Cardiff, East Midlands, Leeds Bradford, Norwich and Southampton for passengers travelling on fully flexible tickets.

As you board your aircraft you will notice we have a fleet of liveried valet baggage carts for you to place larger items of hand luggage by the aircraft steps. Your hand luggage will be awaiting you on the valet baggage cart at your destination airport.

Once on board, our highly trained cabin attendants offer a friendly and personalised in-flight service including complimentary drinks and branded snacks. On arrival our aircraft allow for quick disembarkation, enabling passengers to make their way swiftly onwards through the terminals.

**OUR AIM IS TO MAKE YOUR TRAVEL AS PLEASANT AN EXPERIENCE AS POSSIBLE. HAVE AN ENJOYABLE TRIP.**

We operate a strict no smoking policy on board all of our aircraft and in all of our lounges. This includes the use of electronic cigarettes or any cigarette substitute device that emits a vapour or has a power source or produces heat and or a light. We do not permit electronic cigarettes to be charged within our lounges. Electronic cigarettes may be carried on board subject to the following conditions:

- Carried on person only
- No refills
- Strictly not permitted for use

**STAMPING OUT DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR**

While the vast majority of passengers flying globally behave impeccably, there is a greater awareness of isolated incidents of disruptive behaviour, also known as “air rage”. While this isn’t a major problem for Eastern Airways, the safety and security of our passengers and crew is our number one priority.

We don’t want our customers to experience any behaviour that makes them feel uncomfortable, or be put in a situation that compromises safety. Disruptive behaviour can include smoking, drunkenness, aggressive behaviour or abusive language towards a customer or a member of crew. Our crews are fully trained to deal with any incident of this type.

Disobeying a command, which is lawful by a crew member, is committing an offence under the UK Air Navigation Order. Offenders who persistently misbehave on a flight will be handed to the appropriate authorities on arrival and may face arrest and a heavy fine or up to two years imprisonment. Severe restrictions will also be placed on their future travel with Eastern Airways.

It must again be stressed that disruptive behaviour is extremely rare, but we do take a zero-tolerance stance towards any behaviour that may endanger our passengers and crew.
ESSENTIAL GOINGS ON…

LINCOLN CASTLE REVEALED

The £22m, four-year restoration of 1,000-year-old Lincoln Castle will be unveiled in April as a new heritage visitor attraction.

On offer will be new wall walks with panoramic views over Lincoln Cathedral and across the historic city, improved access to the atmospheric Victorian prisons (used as a filming location for Downton Abbey and Call the Midwife) while the state-of-the-art underground David P J Ross Magna Carta Vault becomes the new home for Lincoln Cathedral’s 1215 Magna Carta, one of only four still surviving.

The subterranean vault will, for the first time, provide a permanent and dedicated exhibition space for Magna Carta. A double height “wall of words” will show the full text, with key phrases picked out in gold, while an in-the-round cinema brings its history to life.

This year marks the 800th anniversary of the sealing of Magna Carta and Lincoln Castle’s Vault is the only new-build Magna Carta visitor attraction opening this year.

A celebratory programme of events is being planned including Lincolnshire’s Great Exhibition, which will display a nationally important collection of pictures, documents and artefacts with a Lincolnshire connection; and the Eastern Three Choirs Festival, involving Cathedral Choirs of Lincoln, Peterborough and Southwell (June 18-June 21).

www.lincolncastle.com

■ The 63rd Bergen International Festival takes place from May 27 to June 10. Among its 150 concerts and performances are 11 world premieres and 13 premieres of new works of music. The festival makes use of 20 different venues in and around Bergen city centre, including the homes of Edvard Grieg and Ole Bull. Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra celebrates its 250th anniversary with the opening concert Porgy & Bess, BIG Nightmare Music with Igudesmann & Joo and the concert, Nordic prism. In the latter they perform Grieg’s Concerto in A Minor and a commissioned work by Danish composer Per Nørgård. Later that night, these performances will be transmitted through headphones and staged with lights, dancers and video on the lake in the city centre.

■ Discover 600 millions years of Midland history at the Stones and Bones exhibition at the Library of Birmingham (until May 17). It explores what impact historical discoveries have had on the region, culturally and industrially, and what these investigations can tell us about our world today. The exhibition will have a strong family focus with interactive workshops, family events and talks.

■ The world’s number one ranked chess player, Magnus Carlsen, is confirmed for Norway Chess 2015. He will be among ten of the world’s best players participating in the super tournament, which takes place from June 15-26 at Scandic Stavanger Forus, situated between Sandnes and Stavanger.

■ A Roman Weekend at Cardiff Castle (May 16-17) provides a vivid flashback to 2,000 years ago, when the castle was a Roman fort and soldiers lived on site.
Famous cyclists past and present gathered in Bridlington to unveil the route of the first ever Tour de Yorkshire which takes place in May.

The international cycle race, a direct legacy of the 2014 Yorkshire Grand Départ of the Tour de France, takes place in three stages over three days from May 1 to 3.

The first stage on the Friday starts in Bridlington and ends 174km later up the coast in Scarborough. Stage two, on Saturday, also 174km, is one for the sprinters, and begins outside the imposing Selby Abbey, finishing in York. As part of the legacy of the Tour de France to get more women cycling, there will also be a dedicated women’s event on a circuit through York.

The final day, Sunday May 3, will see the peloton make a return to some of the roads raced in the 2014 Yorkshire Grand Départ, only with a twist. Starting in Wakefield, riders will travel south to Barnsley before heading to Holmfirth, where they pick up the Grand Départ route in reverse, and cross what is expected to be a hugely popular finish line in Roundhay Park, Leeds.

The race is organised by Welcome to Yorkshire and Amaury Sport Organisation (ASO), with support from British Cycling and local authorities throughout Yorkshire.

Amateur cyclists can also take part by getting involved in the Tour de Yorkshire Ride, a mass participation bike ride. Organised by Human Race, it will take place before the pro race on the morning of the final day.

www.letour.yorkshire.com
FLY LOCALLY TO NORWAY

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BARE ESSENTIALS: DESTINATIONS

LORIENT

WHERE
About three miles north-west or 15 minutes from the city centre. Approx taxi to centre, €20-25.

VISIT
Gulf of Morbihan; La petite mer de Gâvres lagoon; Belle-île; Île de Groix; Carnac; Quiberon; the Blayet and Scourf valleys.

STAY AT
Hôtel Mercure, Lorient centre; Brit Hotel, Le Kerotel, north-west of the city; Hôtel Léopol, by the port.

SHOP AT
Rue du Port and rue de Liège; quai des Indes and quai de Rohan; FNAC, place Aristide Briand.

EAT AT
Le Moulin Vert, port de Lomene, Ploemeur; Tavarn Ar Roue (both Mainland).

DRINK AT
L’Aphelitryon, 127 rue du Colonel Muller; Le Jardin Gourmand, 46 rue Jules Simon.

SHOP AT
Visit at Galleriet in the city centre; Klevhuset for clothes.

DRINK AT
Holberg Stuen or Zachariasbyrggen, both in Bryggen.

EAT AT
Potetkjelleren, Bellevue Restaurant, Enhjæringen Restaurant.

COMING UP
Bergen City Marathon, Apr 25; Bergen International Festival, various venues, May 27-Jun 10; Nightjazz festival, USF Verftet, May 28-Jun 6.

WHERE
Bergen airport Flesland is approximately 12 miles south-west of the centre of Bergen. The airport is served by airport and scheduled buses, boat and taxi. For car hire see Europcar info on back page.

VISIT
Trolldalen, the home of composer Edvard Grieg. Norway in a Nutshell – a short tour (ideally three days) of some of the dramatic scenery nearby, including the Breathtaking Flam Railway.

STAY AT
Radisson Blu Royal or the mid-market Thon Bergen Brygge, both on the old quayside.

SHOP AT
Shop at Galleriet in the city centre; Klevhuset for clothes.

STAY AT
The Clarion, Myrhegaarden, 127 rue du Colonel Muller; Le Jardin Gourmand, 46 rue Jules Simon.

EAT AT
Dickens; Skagenkaien; Newsman, Skagen 14.

VISIT
Pulpit Rock – a natural rock formation that overlooks the Lysefjord; Norwegian Petroleum Museum, Kjerringholmen, 4001 Stavanger.

STAY AT
The Clarion, Myrhegaarden, 127 rue du Colonel Muller; Le Jardin Gourmand, 46 rue Jules Simon.

EAT AT
Sjøhuset Skagen – specialises in traditional Norwegian food; Tango, Nedre Strandgate.

WHAT’S ON

WHERE
Norway’s fourth largest city lies on the country’s south-west coast. The airport is just nine miles out of town and is served by a regular shuttle bus. For car hire see Europcar info on back page.

VISIT
The Clarion, Myrhegaarden, 127 rue du Colonel Muller; Le Jardin Gourmand, 46 rue Jules Simon.

EAT AT
Sjøhuset Skagen – specialises in traditional Norwegian food; Tango, Nedre Strandgate.

WHAT’S ON
Shetland Folk Festival, Apr 30-May 3; Shetland Nature Festival, Jul 4-10.

WHERE
Eastern Airways operates under contract for the oil industry to both Scatsta and Sumburgh Airports. Scatsta is 24 miles north-west of Lerwick, a few miles from the Sullom Voe oil terminal. Sumburgh is the islands’ commercial airport, located at the southern tip of Mainland, and also 24 miles from Lerwick. For hire car visit www.boltscarhire.co.uk or call 01595 693 636 (note that there are no on-airport facilities at Scatsta).

VISIT
Marel, Lerwick; Muckle Flugga, Unst, the northernmost tip of Britain; Shetland Museum, Lerwick; Jarlshof, Grutness (both Mainland).

STAY AT
Busta House Hotel, Brae; Saxa Vord Resort, Unst; Scalloway Hotel, Central mainland.

SHOP AT
Shetland Fudge, Lerwick, Jamieson & Son Knitwear, Lerwick; Valhalla Brewery, Saxa Vord.

DRINK AT
Mid Brae Inn, Brae; The Lounge Bar, Lerwick; Kilin Bar, Scalloway.

EAT AT
Busta House Hotel, Brae; Monty’s Bistro, Lerwick; Saxa Vord Resort, Unst.

WHAT’S ON
Shetland Folk Festival, Apr 30-May 3; Shetland Nature Festival, Jul 4-10.

SHETLAND

WHERE
Eastern Airways flights to Lyon
Tourist/Local Info +33 (0) 2 97 87 21 50 www.lorient-tourisme.fr

Airport + 33 (0) 2 97 87 21 50
www.visitbergen.com

Airport + 47 67 03 15 55
www.visitbergen.com

Airport + 47 67 03 10 00
www.regionstavanger.com

Sumburgh Airport 01950 460 905
www.hial.co.uk/sumburgh-airport/
Frequent daily charter services to Aberdeen, operated by Eastern Airways for the oil industry.
Tourist/Local Info 01595 693434
visit.shetland.org

Tourist/Local Info +33 (0) 2 847 800
www.lorient-tourisme.fr

Airport + 47 67 03 15 55
www.aviom.ro/en/airport/bergen

Eastern Airways flights to Aberdeen.

Tourist/Local Info +47 51 97 55 55
www.regionstavanger.com

Airport + 47 67 03 15 55
www.aviom.ro/en/airport/stavanger


Tourist/Local Info +47 51 97 55 55
www.regionstavanger.com

Tourist/Local Info 01595 693434
visit.shetland.org

Eastern Airways for the oil industry.
Tourist/Local Info 01595 693434
visit.shetland.org
Drumillar, May 26-27; Comedy, Market St.

WHERE
To the east of the town. Taxis and car hire are available at the airport. No weekend flights.

Car hire: Hebrides; 01851 706 500.

VISIT
Stornoway Fish Smokers, Shell St; Woodlands Centre, Lews Castle grounds; An Lanntair Arts Centre, Kenneth Street, Stornoway.

STAY AT
Hotel Hebrides, Tarbert; Royal Hotel, Cromwell St, Stornoway; Scarista House, west Harris; Auberge Carnish, Ulig.

SHOP AT
Callanish Jewellery, Point St; This 'n That, Cromwell St; Borgh Pottery, Borgh (20 miles).

DRINK AT
Chili Chili cocktail and vodka bar; Era, South Beach; The Carlton Lounge, Francis St. (Both in Stornoway)

EAT AT
Digby Chick, Bank St; Golden Ocean, Cromwell St; Thai, Church St. (All in Stornoway)

WHAT'S ON
Girneanas nan Eilean 2015, annual Islands open exhibition, An Lanntair, Stornoway, until 26th April; Stornoway Half Marathon, Grimersta Estate, Isle of Lewis, May 23.

WHERE
One mile from the centre of Wick, half an hour’s drive from Thurso. Main bus and rail stations are near to Wick centre serving most places in Caithness. Trains to Thurso and Inverness. Post bus operates Thurso-Wick-Airport. Car hire: Durnets offers airport pick-up and drop-off, 01955 602103.

VISIT
Wick Heritage Museum; St Fergus Gallery, Sinclair Terr; Pulteney Distillery, Huddart St.

STAY AT
Ackergill Tower, Wick; Mackays Hotel, Wick; The Brown Trout Hotel, Station Rd, Watten, near Wick.

SHOP AT
John O’Groats (pottery, knitwear); Rotterdam St, Thurso (20 miles).

DRINK AT
Cocktail Bar, Mackay’s Hotel, Wick; the Alexander Bain Wetherspoons, Wick.

EAT AT
Bord de l’Eau, Market St, Wick; Le Bistro, Thurso; Captain’s Galley, Scrabster (22 miles).

WHERE
Seven miles north-west of the city centre, off the A96. Regular buses into the city centre. For car hire see Europcar info back page.

VISIT
Aberdeen Maritime Museum, Shiprow; Tolbooth Museum, Castle St; Rendezvous Gallery, Forest Ave.

STAY AT
Rox Hotel, Market St; Skene House Hotel suites, various locations; Malmaison; Park Inn by Radisson; Raemor House Hotel, Banchory.

SHOP AT
Juniper (gifts, jewellery), Belmont St; Aberdeen Antique Centre, South College St.

DRINK AT
The Monkey House, Union Terr; Pearl Lounge, Dee St; The Globe, North Silver St; The Prince of Wales, St Nicholas Lane.

EAT AT
Prohibition, Langstane Pl; Stage Door Restaurant, North Silver St; Cinnamon, Union St; Manzil, King St; Soul, Union St; The Tipping House, Belmont St.

WHAT’S ON
Spirit of Speyside Whisky Festival, April 30-May-4; Great Grampian Beer Festival, Aberdeen, June 4-6; Taste of Grampian, Thainstone Centre, Inverurie, June 6.

WHERE
Seven miles north-west of the city centre. Metro rail link every few minutes to the city, Gateshead, the coast and Sunderland. Half-hourly bus service. Taxi fare to city, approx £12. For car hire see Europcar info on back page.

VISIT
Great North Museum, Centre for Life, Newcastle; Gateshead Quays for the Baltic and Sage Gateshead.

STAY AT
Sandman Signature, Hotel Indigo, Jesmond Dene House, all Newcastle; Hilton, Gateshead.

SHOP AT
Jules B, Jesmond; Cruise, Princess Square, Newcastle; Van Mildert, MetroCentre and Durham.

DRINK AT
Crown Posada, Side; The Forth, Pink Lane; Bridge Hotel, Castle Garth – all Newcastle.

EAT AT
House of Tides, Quayside; Blackfriars; Caffè Vivo (Live Theatre); Red Mezze, Leazes Park Rd – all Newcastle; Le Raaj, Chester Moor.

WHAT’S ON
Gateshead International Jazz Festival 2015, Sage Gateshead, Apr 10-12; Roman Empire: Power and People, Segedunum Roman Fort, Wallsend, May 30-Sep 13.

WHERE
Roman Empire: Power and People

Airport 0871 882 1121
www.newcastleinternational.co.uk
Eastern Airways flights to Aberdeen, Birmingham, Cardiff, Stavanger. Onward connections to Bergen, Stornoway.
Tourist/Local Info 0191 277 8000 / 0191 478 4222
www.visitnewcastlegateshead.com
WHERE
Five miles east of Darlington and ten miles west of Middlesbrough. Taxi fare to Darlington approx £8. For car hire see Europcar info back page.

VISIT
mima (Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art) Centre Square; Locomotion, the National Railway Museum at Shildon; Hartlepool’s Maritime Experience, Historic Quay.

STAY AT
Rockcliffe Hall, Hurworth on Tees; Holiday Inn, Scotch Corner; Headlam Hall, near Darlington; Crathorne Hall Hotel, Yarm.

SHOP AT
Psyche, Linthorpe Rd, Middlesbrough; The House, Yarm High Street; Leggs, Skinninggate, Darlington.

DRINK AT
George and Dragon, Yarm; Black Bull, Frosterley.

EAT AT
Raby Hunt, Summerhouse; Sardin, Northgate, Darlington; Dun Cow Inn, Sedgefield; The Orangery, Rockcliffe Hall.

WHAT’S ON

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WHERE
Fifteen miles east of Scunthorpe, 20 miles south of Hull, 16 miles west of Grimsby, 30 miles north of Lincoln. Regular bus services to major towns. Barnetby Station three miles from airport with InterCity connections via Doncaster. Approx taxi fare to Hull £26. For car hire see Europcar info, back page.

VISIT
Museums Quarter, Hull; The Deep, Hull; Lincoln Castle and Cathedral; Ferens Art Gallery, Hull.

STAY AT
Forest Pines Hotel, Broughton; Cave Castle Hotel, Brough; Willerby Manor, Willerby; The White Hart, Lincoln.

SHOP AT
Bailgate and Steep Hill area, Lincoln; Henri Beene, Abbeygate, Grimsby.

DRINK AT
The Wig & Mitre, Steep Hill, Lincoln; Ye Olde Black Boy, High St, Hull.

EAT AT
Fig’s Restaurant, Cleethorpes; Brackenborough Hotel & Restaurant, Louth; Winterton Hall, Winterton; Pipe and Glass, South Dalton.

WHAT’S ON

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WHERE
Nine miles north-west of Leeds centre, seven miles from Bradford. Regular Airlink 757 bus from bus and rail stations to terminal. Taxi time 25 mins. For car hire see Europcar info on back page.

VISIT

STAY AT
DoubleTree by Hilton, Leeds; Radisson Blu, The Headrow, Leeds; the New Ellington, Leeds; Dubrovnik boutique hotel, Oak Avenue, Bradford.

SHOP AT
Retro Boutique, Headingley Lane, Leeds; Harvey Nichols, Briggate, Leeds; Victoria Quarter, Leeds.

DRINK AT
Baby Jupiter, York Place, Leeds; Haigys, Lumb Lane, Bradford.

EAT AT
Mumtaz, Clarence Dock, Leeds; Brasserie Blanc, Sovereign St, Leeds.

WHAT’S ON

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WHERE
Twelve miles from both Derby and Nottingham, just off the M1 junction 24. Rail stations Loughborough, Long Eaton, Nottingham and Derby are a short bus/taxi ride from EMA. For car hire see Europcar info on back page.

VISIT
Nottingham Contemporary, Weekday Cross; Creswell Crags, Worksop; QUAD, Cathedral Quarter, Derby.

STAY AT
Radisson Blu at airport; Cathedral Quarter Hotel, St Mary’s Gate, Derby.

SHOP AT
Paul Smith, Low Pavement, Nottingham; The Artisan’s Studio, Arnold, Nottingham.

DRINK AT
Ye Olde Trip to Jerusalem, below Nottingham Castle; The Waterfront, Canal St, Nottingham.

EAT AT
Loch Fyne, King St, Nottingham; Red Hot World buffet and Bar, Corner House, Nottingham.

WHAT’S ON
FORMAT International Photography Festival 2015, Derby Quad and Cinema, Mar 13-Apr 12; Nottinghamshire County Show 2015, Newark Showground, May 9-10; The Gate to Southwell Folk Festival, various venues, Jun 4-7.

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Airport 01325 332811
www.durhamteesvalleyairport.com
Eastern Airways flights to Aberdeen. Onward connections to Bergen, Stavanger, Stornoway, Wick
Tourist/Local Info
01642 729700 / 264957
www.visitmiddlesbrough.com

Airport 0844 887 7747
www.humburserairport.com
Eastern Airways flights to Aberdeen. Onward connections to Bergen, Stavanger, Stornoway, Wick
Tourist/Local Info
01482 486600
www.visithullandeastyorkshire.com

Airport 0113 250 9896
www.leedsbradfordairport.co.uk
Eastern Airways flights to Aberdeen and Southampton. Onward connections to Bergen, Stavanger, Stornoway, Wick
Tourist/Local Info
0113 242 5242
www.visitlincolnshire.com

Airport 0871 919 9000
www.eastmidlandsairport.com
Eastern Airways flights to Aberdeen. Onward connections to Bergen, Stavanger, Stornoway, Wick
Tourist/Local Info
0844 775678
www.visitleeds.co.uk

Airport 0844 788 7747
www.eastmidlandsairport.com
Eastern Airways flights to Aberdeen. Onward connections to Bergen, Stavanger, Stornoway, Wick
Tourist/Local Info
0844 775678
www.visitleeds.co.uk

Airport 0871 919 9000
www.eastmidlandsairport.com
Eastern Airways flights to Aberdeen. Onward connections to Bergen, Stavanger, Stornoway, Wick
Tourist/Local Info
0844 775678
www.visitleeds.co.uk
BIRMINGHAM

WHERE
Six miles east of the city, off Junction 6 of the M42. Connected by free Air-Rail Link monorail system to Birmingham International Station for trains to Birmingham and Coventry. For car hire see Europcar info on back page.

VISIT
Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, (BMAG), Chamberlain Sq; Museum of the Jewellery Quarter, Vyse St, Hockley; Thinktank Birmingham science museum, Millennium Point.

STAY AT
Hotel Indigo, The Cube; Radisson Blu, Holloway Circus, Queensway; Marriott, Hagley Rd; Staying Cool, Rotunda.

SHOP AT
Selfridges (Bullring); Harvey Nichols (Mailbox).

DRINK AT
Bank, Brindley Pl; The Tap and Spile, Gas St.

EAT AT
San Carlo, Temple St; Opus, Cornwall St.

WHAT’S ON
Stones & Bones Exhibition, discovering 600 million years of Midlands history, Library of Birmingham, until May 17; Flatpack, experimental film festival, various venues, Birmingham city centre, Mar 19-29.

Airport 0871 282 7117 www.bhx.co.uk
Eastern Airways flights to Newcastle
Tourist/Local Info 0844 888 3883 www.visitbirmingham.com

CARDIFF

WHERE
Twelve miles west of Cardiff, ten miles from Junction 33 on M4. Rail link, every hour, connects airport to Cardiff Central and Bridgend. For car hire see Europcar info on back page.

VISIT
Cardiff Castle; Cardiff Bay Visitor Centre, Wales Millennium Centre, Cardiff Bay; Norwegian Church Arts Centre, Cardiff Bay; Dr Who Experience, Cardiff Bay.

STAY AT
Peterstone Court, in the Usk Valley; St David’s Hotel & Spa, H汶avanah St, Cardiff Bay.

SHOP AT
St Mary Street for specialist shops; Splott Market (weekends), SE of city centre.

DRINK AT
Pen and Wig, Park Grove; Park Vaults, Park Place.

EAT AT
The Potted Pig, High St; ffresh, Wales Millennium Centre; Purple Poppadom, Cowbridge Rd East.

WHAT’S ON
RHS Flower Show Cardiff, Bute Park, Apr 17-19; Roman Weekend at Cardiff Castle, May 16-17; BBC Cardiff Singer of the World, St David’s Hall, Jun 14-21.

Airport 01446 711111 www.cardiff-airport.com
Eastern Airways flights to Aberdeen, Newcastle. Onward connections to Bergen, Stavanger, Stornoway, Wick
Tourist/Local Info 02920 873573 www.visitcardiff.com www.southernwales.com

NORWICH

WHERE
Three miles north of the city. Hourly bus service into the city centre. Approx taxi fare to Norwich £7. For car hire see Europcar info on back page.

VISIT
Norwich Cathedral, The Close; Norwich Castle, Elm Hill; Sandringham Estate, Norfolk; Norwich Puppet Theatre, Whitefriars, Norwich.

STAY AT
The Maids Head Hotel, Tombland; De Vere Dunston Hall Hotel & Golf Club, Ipswich Rd; Marriott Sprowston Manor Hotel & Country Club; Barnham Broom Hotel & Spa, Honingham Rd; Norfolk Mead Hotel, Cottishall.

SHOP AT
Jarrold’s, London St; Ginger Ladies Wear, Timberhill.

DRINK AT
The Fat Cat, West End St; The Adam & Eve, Bishopgate; The Wine Press, Woburn Court, Guildhall Hill; The Last Wine Bar, St Georges St.

EAT AT
Tatlers, Tombland; Mambo Jambo, Lower Goat Lane; Umberto’s Tra到来ria, Italia, St Benedicts St.

WHAT’S ON

Airport 01603 411923 www.norwichairport.co.uk
Eastern Airways flights to Aberdeen and Leeds Bradford. Onward connections to Bergen, Stavanger, Stornoway, Wick
Tourist/Local Info 01603 213999 www.visitnorwich.co.uk

SOUTHAMPTON

WHERE
Five miles north of city. Parkway Station beside terminal, three trains hourly to Southampton and London Waterloo. Buses hourly to the city. For car hire see Europcar info on back page.

VISIT
SeaCity Museum, Havelock Rd; Tudor House & Garden, Bugle St; Solent Sky, Hall of Aviation, Gilbert Rd South.

STAY AT
The White Star Tavern and Dining Rooms, Oxford St; Grand Harbour Hotel, West Quay Rd; Best Western Chilworth Manor.

SHOP AT
WestQuay Shopping Centre, city centre; Antiques Quarter, Old Northam Rd; The Marlands Shopping Centre, Civic Centre Rd.

DRINK AT
The Cellar, West Marland Rd; The Duke of Wellington, Bugle St; The Pig in the Wall, Western Esplanade.

EAT AT
Olive Tree, Oxford St; SeaCity Museum café, Havelock Road; Coriander Lounge, Below Bar.

WHAT’S ON
Special Exhibition Tour: War Games, SeaCity Museum, April 19; Ocean & Earth Day 2015, National Oceanography Centre, Apr 25; The Isle of Wight Challenge, May 2-3.

Airport 0870 040 0009 www.southamptonairport.com
Eastern Airways flights to Aberdeen and Leeds Bradford. Onward connections to Bergen, Stavanger, Stornoway, Wick
Tourist/Local Info 023 8083 3333 www.discoversouthampton.co.uk
To suggest that opinions are divided about the value, and indeed the very future of Britain’s green belts is to make something of an understatement.

While the greatest debate surrounds Green Belt land in England, there are also Green Belts in Scotland and Wales and nobody sits on the fence in this one, whether it be fences marking lazy boundaries between idyllic rolling fields or fences dividing the gardens of 150,000 new homes that will be built on English Green Belt in the next few years.

In the “green corner” are those who believe Green Belt is our single biggest defence against the onward march of urbanisation, North America-style. They are led by the Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE), which says that some government ministers are giving out signals that the Green Belt is “up for grabs” by developers.

In its report, Green Belts: A Greener Future, CPRE says that, despite some losses: “England’s 14 Green Belts cover nearly 13 per cent of England, significant not only because of their extent, but because they provide a breath of fresh air for 60 per cent of the population – 30 million people – living in the urban areas within Green Belt boundaries.”

The concept has its roots in Ebenezer Howard’s 1898 vision of Garden Cities, providing people with space to enjoy the beauty and tranquillity of the countryside nearby. It evolved in the 1920s, with campaigns seeking a clear physical distinction between town and country.

CPRE argues that Green Belt does work, slowing the rate of development on greenfield sites, pushing developers towards brownfield areas and helping in the management of World Heritage Sites, such as Saltaire, Bradford.

Where development does take place, it tends to be small-scale and low density. Nearly a third of us have visited Green Belt on a day trip and a quarter of us have done so in search of peace and quiet.

In the opposing camp are not just Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne and Planning Minister Nick Bowles, but a range of academics and others who challenge the CPRE position. Even Natural England’s then Chair, Martin Doughty, argued in 2007 for a review of the whole setup, while the Town and Country Planning Association wants a more flexible approach, with “green wedges” and “strategic gaps”.

Some suggest that not only do Green Belts force more development onto open countryside beyond the constraints of the belt (with longer commuting times and urbanisation of rural areas), but they also cause huge development pressures on parkland and other green space within conurbations.

With no particular axe to grind, we take a look at Green Belts close to Eastern Airways destinations, highlighting their best features, as well as specific “threats”. Major urban areas without Green Belts include Teesside, Hull, Leicester, Norwich, and Southampton and Portsmouth.
Scotland

ABERDEEN
Aberdeen’s Green Belt was established in 1958 and is credited with preserving the city’s coastal strip, the two river valleys and backdrop of hills. A change in Scottish planning policy five years ago has meant that the Green Belt has had to be reviewed as part of a new development plan. The long-awaited Western Peripheral Route is likely to form a new boundary to the Green Belt. The jewel in the crown of Aberdeen’s Green Belt is the beach and the green strip separating it from the city – alongside the granite architecture it’s surely the city’s defining characteristic.

Nearest Eastern Airways Airport – Aberdeen

North of England

NORTH EAST ENGLAND
The Green Belt wraps a tight corset around greater Newcastle and Sunderland, with a large extension that has constrained development in the Tyne Valley commuter zone and a further spur that includes a second tight ring round the city of Durham. Newcastle City Council believes the “corset” is laced too tightly and won the release of some land for the building of Newcastle Great Park, home to the Sage software business and low-density executive homes. Sir John Hall wants to create a five-star hotel and build executive homes at Woolsington Hall, near Newcastle Airport. Proposals for opencast mining on the high escarpment at Whittenstall, near Consett, are vehemently opposed. but ambitious Durham County Council plans for development, including thousands of new homes, a business park and new roads, are now in doubt following a damning interim assessor’s report after a long public inquiry. Of the plus side, much of the Green Belt is now attractive forest and woodland, thanks in part to the Great North Forest initiative. The iconic Angel of the North and the magnificent “parthenon” of Penshaw Monument stand guard over the best of the Belt.

Nearest Eastern Airways airport – Newcastle

YORK
The historic city is tightly girdled by its Green Belt, meaning that pressures upon it – given York’s general prosperity – are perhaps inevitable. Consultation on the draft local plan was halted because city council plans for more than 20,000 new homes, many in new Green Belt communities, were deemed not to be based on sound evidence of need. York University, at the edge of the city, also has ambitions to expand into the Green Belt and an out-of-town outlet shopping centre was approved without even a public inquiry. Green Belt highlight is the Knavesmire race course, where a finger of Green Belt extends up the River Ouse towards the city centre from the Bishop’s Palace, at Bishopthorpe.

Nearest Eastern Airways Airport – Leeds Bradford

Midlands

NOTTINGHAM AND DERBY
Plans for 6,500 new homes at Broxtowe, approved by the borough council last year and subject to a possible legal challenge, are the major threat to the Green Belt that rings Nottingham and provides a development buffer between the city and
neighbouring Derby. There are also plans for a major sports development, opencasting and road widening. HS2, should it ever be built, will bring a new station and interchange to the Green Belt. Lord Byron's former home at Newstead Abbey, set in beautiful parkland, is the Green Belt highlight.

Nearby Eastern Airways airport – East Midlands

BURTON-ONTRENT AND SWADLINCOTE
The baby of all Green Belts, these 714 hectares provide a buffer against the merger of the two modest urban areas. The local CPRE fears that proposals to designate Burton-on-Trent as a “sub-regional focus” for development may intensify pressure to permit incursions here.

Nearby Eastern Airways airports – East Midlands and Birmingham

WEST MIDLANDS
The fourth largest Green Belt in England (after London, Yorkshire and the North West), this one primarily rings Birmingham and the Black Country, merging into discreet belts around Coventry and other smaller centres. To the west of Wolverhampton, it extends to the very banks of the River Severn and the World Heritage Site at Ironbridge, all the way down to Worcester and, to the east, as far south as Stratford and the fringes of the Cotswolds. There are plans for business parks near Coventry Airport, as well as major housing developments, notably at Bromsgrove and Warwick. The philanthropic George Cadbury was among those whose generosity enabled the Lickey Hills, ten miles south west of the centre of Birmingham, to become permanent parkland. Today’s country park is an important element of the Green Belt and is visited by 500,000 people a year.

Nearby Eastern Airways airports – East Midlands and Birmingham

OXFORD
Like York’s, Oxford’s is a Green Belt tightly encircling a historic city and it faces similar pressures – exacerbated by the city’s strategic location between Birmingham and London. To raise awareness, the local CPRE has devised a 50-mile circular walk on rights of way within the Green Belt, from which to “explore historic villages and picturesque riversides, and discover new views of Oxford’s dreaming spires”.

Nearby Eastern Airways airport – Birmingham

SOUTHWEST HAMPSHIRE AND SOUTH EAST DORSET
Defenders of the Green Belt concept have contrasted the protection that Bournemouth’s hinterland has enjoyed in comparison with unprotected open countryside near Southampton. The former’s belt-and-braces protection also includes the relatively recently designated New Forest National Park and a number of national nature reserves and other protected habitats. But in an area where money tends to talk quite loud, more than 2,000 new homes could be destined for such picturesque locations as Corfe Mullen, Wimborne, Verwood, Ferndown and West Parley.

Nearby Eastern Airways airport – Southampton

Wales

NEWPORT AND CARDIFF
Wales has only one Green Belt – and it is in reality only a “notional” one, serving as a buffer between Cardiff and Newport. Councillors in the latter have recently called for more formal designation so as to help maintain their own city’s identity and integrity. Cardiff’s local development plan calls for the creation of a second “green belt” to the north of Cardiff, separating it from Caerphilly and the Rhonda. Plaid Cymru has called for Welsh green belt to be legally enshrined, as in England and Scotland.

Nearby Eastern Airways airport – Cardiff

East Anglia and South

CAMBRIDGE
Everything we’ve said about York and Oxford also applies to the Cambridge Green Belt – in spades! This boom city could see 12,500 homes built on its Green Belt, whose highlights include the chalk downland of the Gog Magog Hills, which remind you that it’s not all flat fenland round here!

Nearby Eastern Airways airport – Norwich
As you progress through your 40s it becomes increasingly difficult to resist the steady slide into sounding like your father. The trouble is that everyone seems to be part of a conspiracy to bring it about as swiftly as possible.

Only the other day a friend of mine remarked: “I can’t listen to 5Live any more; it just makes me too angry.” And if it hadn’t been for the fact that I’d immediately rushed off and shut myself in the pantry there is little doubt I would have nodded and growled: “The presenters don’t pronounce their words properly,” or “It’s all the ruddy nicknames that drive me mad.”

One of the surest signs that a man is entering his dadage is when he starts comparing the namby-pamby language of today with the blunt commonsense speech of yesteryear. You know the sort of thing: “Nowadays they call it a coma, in my day we called it bone bloody idle.” I am as reluctant to get into that way of thinking as I am to say: “If you don’t finish your dinner it will be sat there on the table when you come down for breakfast,” or “In those days the policeman would have given them a clip round the ear and sent them on their way.” Nevertheless, I do find myself wondering when self-belief became a synonym for boasting.

Admittedly, my view of what constitutes showing off was forged in the puritanical atmosphere of North Yorkshire in the 1960s. This was an environment in which any child performing moderately well in public was generally greeted with something that sounded like applause, but on closer inspection was revealed to be the noise of dozens of adults cuffing him or her round the ear while barking: “Nobody likes a show off, Sunny Jim.”

My own grandfather was an arch exponent of this approach, greeting any announcement of success with the comment “Be careful you don’t get your head wedged in the door” or “What do you wear for a hat? an umbrella with a peak on it?”. What he’d have made of the contestants on The Apprentice, heaven knows, though I have a feeling the TV screen would not have remained intact for long.

One of my favourite sports stories of all time shows that this attitude is not just confined to England. Along with Tour de France winner Stephen Roche, Sean Kelly is the greatest pro cyclist Ireland has ever produced – he won the Vuelta a España and dozens of one-day classics.

A tough and fiercely private man, Kelly was so laconic that he once famously responded to the questions of a radio interviewer with a series of shrugs, nods and shakes of his head. So dedicated to his trade was Kelly that, when he announced how long he abstained for sex before races, journalists did the maths and concluded that his ten-year marriage to wife Linda must still be unconsummated.

The great man came from the small County Waterford community of Carrick-on-Suir. In 1978 he became the first Irishman since Shay Elliot to win a stage of the Tour De France. His cousin was beside himself with glee at the news and rushed down into the village to tell everyone about it. The first person he met was his uncle. “Uncle! Uncle!” he cried, “Fantastic news! Sean has just won a stage of the Tour de France.” Unmoved, the uncle looked him up and down. “Sure and why wouldn’t he?” he said eventually. “After all, he does nothing else all day but ride that bloody bike.”

Whenever a TV pundit describes something a professional footballer has done as “unbelievable”, I think of Sean Kelly’s uncle and smile.
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Welcome to Energy Extra, your special supplement to Eastern Airways Magazine. Energy Extra brings you news and reviews from across the energy sector, focusing on the offshore scene, but also looking at both renewables and some new, sometimes controversial, energy sources.

Eastern Airways serves no fewer than 14 destinations from Aberdeen, the UK’s energy industry capital. These include the important links with our codeshare partner Widerøe, to Bergen and Stavanger – Norway’s oil industry centre – and the dedicated services from Aberdeen to the Shetland airports of Scatsta and Sumburgh, operated by Eastern Airways on behalf of the oil industry. Our partnership with Emirates also offers fast connections to Dubai and other Middle East energy centres, via Newcastle.

We are delighted to bring you 16 pages of highly pertinent news and features, also appearing as a stand-alone publication, distributed by our partner NOF Energy, the leading business development organisation for companies involved in the UK oil, gas and energy sectors. Our particular focus this time is on the global issues affecting the offshore sector and on geothermal energy.

THE EASTERN AIRWAYS TEAM

An oil industry recruitment consultant has added her voice to calls for changes to the tax regime and improve incentives to encourage exploration.

UK COSTS TOO HIGH – McGregor

Jo McGregor, director of Aberdeen-based specialist recruitment provider McGregor Consultants, says that tax changes in the Budget or even a rise in the oil price would be unlikely to alleviate the major impact caused by the oil price slump, largely because costs in the UK sector are already high.

“The North Sea will inevitably take a major hit in jobs and new investment, however this could be alleviated in the longer term by changes to the tax regime and incentives to encourage exploration drilling,” she said.

“The immediate concern is that ongoing projects are generally going forward at a slower pace and projects which hadn’t reached the implementation stage are being delayed or cancelled,” said Jo.

“Our main area of expertise is drilling, well engineering and completion and lots of projects have been pushed back. For this reason there is not going to be much happening in 2015 because it is just too expensive for the operators to drill just now.

“This is a worldwide problem but it is expensive to drill in the UK so it always gets hit badly. As a result we, as a company, are looking for opportunities for our consultants in projects which don’t cost so much, such as land drilling projects.”

Jo said that there were many new build rigs coming to the market which will join idle ones and in turn reduce rates and hopefully speed up project sanctioning.

“In all business we have to look to the future and the need for oil and gas will inevitably grow with lower prices bringing more demand and eventually a recovery in prices.

“We need to ensure we continue to provide a quality service to oil companies and our consultants so we are in a strong position to grow our business over the long term.”

HARD PRICE TO PAY – Page VII

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HARD PRICE TO PAY – Page VII

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ONE-STOP TRAINING CENTRE FROM AIS

With the focus on more efficient use of resources in the oil and gas industry, one company is offering major savings by offering a streamlined training service.

AIS has invested millions of pounds to create a state-of-the-art 150,000 square-foot offshore training village on North Tyneside. The world-class training on offer includes emergency response, sea survival and wind energy, as well as CompEx electrical, rigging and lifting and more than 90 other courses. AIS has also developed an onsite hotel to provide affordable, high quality accommodation for delegates.

Dave Bowyer, Director of Training, said: “Inevitably cost is becoming a key consideration for oil and gas companies. Our world-class training centre allows people to get all the skills they need in one accessible, affordable location with quality onsite accommodation from just £21 per night.

“Our full bespoke service eliminates the need for employers to juggle bookings and bills for multiple courses, hotels and travel for their workforce as we take care of everything. With AIS Training there’s just one invoice for pick-up at the airport or train station, accommodation, breakfast, lunch and our 90-plus world-class training courses on one site. This saves employers significant time and money – helping them squeeze the maximum out of their training budgets.”

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- HTL, the UK’s largest independent controlled bolting company is continuing to expand with the launch of HTL Group, reflecting the business’s global reach. The new group – headquartered in Cramlington, Northumberland, oversees all the HTL entities namely: Hire Torque Ltd; HTL Hydra-Press Systems Ltd; HTL Benelux bv; HTL Training Services; HTL Worldwide; HTL Asia Pacific. www.htlgroup.com

- Motion Software, the hardware, software and tagging specialist for the oil and gas industry, has brought out a new smartphone for use in hazardous areas in the offshore market. The new Smart-E 01, which is suitable for use in Zone 1 ATEX-compliant areas, is designed for operationally challenging environments, such as the North Sea. www.motionsoftware.co.uk

- Maritime Developments has won contracts worth in the region of £7m. The agreements include the design and manufacture of new technology for field development in the North Sea. The company, which provides back-deck equipment for vessels in the subsea sector of the oil and gas industry, has operations in Peterhead and Aberdeen. maritimedevelopments.com

- An Aberdeen-based business-to-business networking organisation, which aims to increase collaboration in the oil and gas industry, is targeting further growth. Lesley Lewis, owner of Aberdeen Oil and Gas Network (AOAGN), believes that the network – which already boast 100 members, will open doors for companies looking to future development.

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The freefalling oil price has sent a chill wind through the UK’s offshore industry and the city of Aberdeen in particular. Graeme Smith takes the sector’s temperature and offers a more optimistic prognosis …

It is almost a year since the price of Brent crude – a benchmark made up of oil from 15 North Sea fields – peaked at $115 a barrel before going into freefall.

Since then it has dropped to a six-year low of under $50, which has prompted hundreds of job losses, sweeping cuts in the salaries of contractors and predictions of impending doom, with as many as 40,000 oil related jobs said to be at risk over the next five years.

The oil and gas industry provides jobs for about 450,000 people across the country with exploration and extraction of oil and gas on the UK Continental Shelf accounting for all but 100,000 of these.

More than 30,000 are employed directly by oil and gas companies and their major contractors, and more than 200,000 in the wider supply chain. A further 100,000 jobs are supported by the spending of this workforce.

The industry provides work right across the UK but nowhere is a buoyant oil and gas industry more important than in the north-east of Scotland, where it is estimated that 105,500 direct and supply chain jobs are based.

The region has driven the UK economy throughout the economic downturn of the last five years, with Aberdeen second only to the City of London for Gross Value Added per head of population.

The companies which have announced job losses so far include BP, Talisman Sinopec, Chevron, Conoco Phillips, Shell and Schlumberger, with several others indicating that they too will be reducing numbers.

A number of firms, including Wood Group, Apache and BG, have implemented a freeze or cut in pay.

In a controversial move, which is meeting significant opposition, some companies are looking at changing the offshore shift pattern from two weeks on followed by two or three weeks off, to three weeks on and three weeks off, a move which it is estimated could cut costs by up to 15 per cent. >>
Award-winning well-engineering recruitment consultancy McGregor Consultants is all about the people, whether it be the personalised approach it takes to the significant number of clients and consultants it has around the globe, or its team of 12 employees, all individually chosen for their expertise and fit.

The Aberdeen-based company was set up in 2006 by Directors Jo McGregor and Angie McGregor, who have a proven track record and unrivalled contacts built up over more than 20 years working in the international oil and gas industry. In just seven years, they have established a reputation as one of Aberdeen’s leading providers of recruitment services for the global upstream sector, specialising in matching the very best people to high level drilling, subsea, completions and HSE positions worldwide.

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So is the end in sight for North Sea oil and gas? Has the exploration halted for good? Will the majors move out and will the infrastructure, which is essential to the recovery of up to 24 billion barrels of oil that remain beneath the North Sea – more than half the quantity that has already been brought to the surface – be lost for ever?

There is absolutely no doubt that the situation is serious but every cloud has a silver lining, even those which appear as black as the one hanging over the UK sector just now. But even it will blow over eventually.

The oil price will recover, even though no-one can predict when that might happen, but neither that nor tax changes alone will solve the problems.

Operators have viewed the fiscal regime as unpredictable, unnecessarily complex and too burdensome and have been calling for rapid action to prevent some pulling out of the UK continental shelf – action which in the long term would have a major impact on the tax take of the Treasury.

Costs have soared by 45 per cent over the past three years while, over the same period, production has fallen by 40 per cent.

When the decision-makers are considering investment, areas like West Africa, Brazil, the Far East and even other parts of Europe all look more attractive than the North Sea.

Part of the blame for that can be laid at the door of successive governments, which have continually squeezed an industry that has paid £316 billion in corporate taxes since 1970.

The industry itself, whether or not the oil price had collapsed, would have had to significantly reduce costs and improve efficiency. The fall has accelerated that action but is likely to lead, albeit after some pain, to a more sustainable industry.

Only time will tell if the tax changes being introduced by the Government will be enough to build confidence in the North Sea industry and will, as Sir Ian Wood has indicated is vital, “make operators sit up and take notice” as they ponder their budgets.

He believes prices will recover significantly within 18 months and the challenge is to ensure operators remain committed to the province until they do.

Some companies may be forced into mergers and service companies are going to feel the pinch. Rig rates are falling and drilling, which accounts for more than a third of development costs, is likely to be a primary target.

Having learned from the mistakes of previous slumps it seems probable that operators will be more inclined to retain those with the skills to capitalise when the oil price does rebound.

However, it may mean significant changes to the current contracting model. While employees throughout the UK generally seek to secure staff jobs rather than contract positions, it has been markedly different for many years in north-east Scotland.

As a result of a long-running skills shortage, and safe in the knowledge that if their contract with one company ends they could move straight to another, engineers have preferred to remain self-employed, attracting ever increasing day rates and additional perks to retain them.

A recent survey by Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce signalled a change, revealing that half of operators reported a reduction in contract staff during last year and almost two thirds expect a further reduction this year.

Malcolm Webb, Chief Executive of Oil & Gas UK, said that in spite of the generally gloomy picture there was good news – it is known what action is required to implement recovery.

“I believe both government and industry have turned a page and are in agreement on the priorities for action,” he said. “I also detect a constructive cross-party consensus around this. I am increasingly confident that the turnaround can and will happen, though time is of the essence.

“There are three obvious and immediate areas for action. These are regulatory reform, fiscal reform and an unwavering focus on improving the efficiency and reducing the cost of operations.”

THE INDUSTRY ITSELF, WHETHER OR NOT THE OIL PRICE HAD COLLAPSED, WOULD HAVE HAD TO SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCE COSTS AND IMPROVE EFFICIENCY.
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STEPPING UP THE HEAT

Although the UK does not have the geothermal resources found in the most volcanically active areas of the world, granite deposits, coupled with increases in temperature below the earth’s surface, are making UK geothermal projects viable. Jonathan Jones looks at the state of play in the UK’s geothermal energy sector …

Heat from the Earth is considered to be limitless, with its use only restricted by technology, and of course, the associated costs of reaching and utilising it.

The correct term for this heat from the Earth is “geothermal energy” and it is regarded as a clean, renewable resource, capable of providing energy for a variety of applications across the world.

In recent years, this source of energy has become easier to reach, and more cost-effective to utilise, even in poorer countries, particularly on the African continent.

Although tell-tale signs, such as the hot springs and geysers found in the most volcanically active countries, are the obvious indications of geothermal activity – and usually the first places such resources are utilised – the heat of the Earth is available everywhere.

According to the United States-based Geothermal Energy Association: “The heat continuously flowing from the Earth’s interior, which travels primarily by conduction, is estimated to be equivalent to 42 million megawatts (MW) of power, and is expected to remain so for billions of years to come.”

There is no doubt that the UK does not have the deep geothermal resources of other countries. However, according
to Jon Busby, Team Leader for Renewables, Energy Storage and Clean Coal at the British Geological Survey (BGS), and leader of BGS geothermal research, a plentiful heat resource is available via shallow geothermal ground source heat pumps, shallow aquifers and deep saline aquifers.

Ground source heat pumps tap the relatively constant heat of the Earth, stored in the upper 10-15 metres of ground, and use it as a source of heat and hot water to help reduce domestic heating bills. According to the World Energy Council, there are currently between 3,000 and 5,000 ground source heat pump installed in the UK every year. The main driver for this is believed to be the fact that, when connected to the UK power grid, they offer significant reductions in carbon emissions, in comparison to traditional methods of heat delivery.

Aquifer-based systems use heat stored in groundwater in sandstone areas of the UK, primarily in East Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, Worcester and Wessex.

The UK has lagged behind the rest of the world in utilising this so-called “free energy”. It didn’t even feature on a list, published in 2012, of 24 countries with energy online from installed geothermal energy plants. The United States was top of the list with 3,187MW installed, and Thailand at the bottom, with just 0.3MW. In Europe, Italy (883MW), Iceland (661MW), Turkey (93MW), Russia (82MW), Portugal (29MW), France (16MW), Germany (7MW), and Austria (1MW) were all on the list.

However, according to The World Energy Council, the largest increase in the use of geothermal energy resources since 2008 has indeed been in the UK.

While the UK may still be slowly catching up in the utilisation of geothermal energy, in contrast it leads the way in the development of other alternative energy sources, in particular utility scale solar power schemes, adding 443MW in 2013, bringing the total to 647MW across 112 projects.

And the UK was third, behind Germany and Spain, for its wind power capacity, contributing 8.4 GigaWatts of power.

As the cost of the technology needed to reach deeper heat deposits falls, so it is expected to become more cost-effective for UK-based geothermal companies to tap into these resources, and develop their interests in the sector.

Already a geothermal scheme in Southampton is providing more than 30,000MW hours of heat and 4,000MW hours of electricity per year. It is also helping the city to reduce its CO2 emissions by 10,000 tonnes per year.

The Southampton District Energy Scheme (SDES), was launched almost 30 years ago in 1986, and was, at that time, the first in the UK. It currently serves more than 20 major customers in Southampton city centre, with circulating water pumped around the city through 11km of insulated service pipes.

Customers of the scheme, operated by Cofely District Energy, working in partnership with Southampton City Council, currently include the BBC’s television studios, Royal South Hampshire Hospital, the council’s civic centre, hotels, one of Europe’s largest shopping centres, and more than 1,000 residential buildings.

In the South West, meanwhile, more than 20 sites have been identified as suitable for deep geothermal power, most of these located in Cornwall.

Despite the fact that the UK doesn’t feature in the league table of top geothermal nations, Cornwall is already internationally recognised for its deep geothermal potential.

In 2013, consulting firm Atkins Ltd, was commissioned by the UK Government to assess the potential for deep geothermal power generation in the UK.

The resulting report suggested that Cornwall’s geothermal potential, based on existing heat demand, was approximately 100 MW of electricity,
which it claims could increase considerably as the sector matures.

There are currently two deep geothermal projects with planning permission in Cornwall, both of which are ready to come on stream, with the required investment.

However, such projects aren’t replicated across the UK. At the other end of the country, in County Durham and Northumberland, plans to access geothermal energy have had mixed results.

In Newcastle, a research project was launched in 2011 to investigate the geothermal potential of the Science Central site in the heart of the city.

Previous research by Newcastle University exploring the geology of the land suggested the city was built on Fell Sandstone and linked to a proven geothermal source in the Pennines.

Drilling 1,820m the team was proven right and they recorded a temperature of 73°C, demonstrating a viable geothermal source and some of the hottest geothermal waters in the UK.

At the particular location where the research borehole was drilled – an eight-inch hole on a site the size of 18 football pitches – the flow rate of the water wasn’t high enough to exploit as an energy source. However, the geothermal gradient and saline water indicate Newcastle is situated above a potential geothermal source and this will assist other commercial ventures looking to engage in geothermal exploration activity in the region.

In County Durham, extensive survey work was carried out in Weardale, with a view to creating an “energy village” at the former Lafarge works, at Eastgate. Although a geothermal energy scheme was deemed viable, plans foundered when the Government withdrew a £1 million grant as part of national cuts. See “Former quarry site to become home for new TV drama”, on page 9 of the main magazine.

On the other side of the Pennines, The British Geological Survey (BGS) has identified the Cheshire Basin, near Crewe, as one of six major deep geothermal resources in the UK.

An initial trial site has been identified near Leighton, Crewe, and it is estimated that there are approximately 100 Gigawatt hours a year of heat demand from public and private sector customers within a two-mile radius.

Cheshire East Council is already committed to tackling energy poverty, as well as reducing carbon emissions, and sees geothermal energy as part of the solution.

In Scotland, water from abandoned mine workings has been identified as a source of geothermal energy and has been assessed by the BGS for its potential to provide heating for a scheme in Glasgow.

Glasgow City Council has gone so far as to include plans for geothermal energy in its local development plan, stating: “Should ground source heat prove an attractive proposition, the council will bring forward new policy to ensure its potential is utilised, and to address any issues relating to design and environmental impacts.”

In addition, the leader of the council, Councillor Gordon Matheson, said: “We want developers and local communities to come forward in the future with projects which could use this new source of heating and help ensure that everyone in Glasgow is able to benefit from the new green energy revolution.”

In fact the development of viable district heating networks is expected to be instrumental in the success of other deep geothermal projects over the coming years.

Such networks have been slower to develop in the UK, than in other European countries, according to BritGeothermal, a research partnership between the British Geological Survey, and the universities of Durham, Newcastle and Glasgow.

Despite all the positives associated with the long-term development of geothermal energy in the UK, any grand plans to develop these and other alternative energy sources could depend on the public’s perception of just how safe and reliable the technology is. The take-up of geothermal energy is currently constrained by the unfamiliarity of this type of technology.

In a consultation paper, Underground Drilling Access, published by the Department of Energy & Climate Change, in September 2014, the Department set out the Government position on the development of indigenous energy sources in a safe and sustainable manner, and sought the views of interested parties.

The paper claimed that deep geothermal energy could hold potential for adding to the UK’s energy resources, and “helping to improve energy security, create jobs and meet carbon targets”.

Despite this, a staggering 99 per cent of respondents to the document were opposed to government plans to legislate to allow drilling to access gas, oil and geothermal resources below 300 metres.

However, it is believed by BritGeothermal that, as larger geothermal plants are constructed, and the technology becomes more familiar and regarded as safe, geothermal will provide the base load energy for high tech industries with large demands for power, and will also provide direct heat for end users.

This in turn will lead to demand for trained engineers and scientists, supporting the development of the technology, which – in the long-term – could lead to the development of a centre of excellence for geothermal in the UK, and cement the UK’s place in the league table of producers and users of geothermal energy.

“CORNWALL’S GEOTHERMAL POTENTIAL, BASED ON EXISTING HEAT DEMAND, WAS APPROXIMATELY 100 MW OF ELECTRICITY, WHICH COULD INCREASE CONSIDERABLY AS THE SECTOR MATURES.”
Even before the recent oil price shock, the industry was being buffeted by events beyond its control.

It had been enjoying boom years and the North Sea saw an all-time record investment in 2013 of £13.5bn.

But, even as the good times rolled, tanks were rolling in Eastern Europe. In February of 2014 a political and constitutional crisis in the Ukraine saw its president fleeing the country and the subsequent occupation of the Crimea by pro-Russian forces. In March, the Crimea became part of Russia, a move not recognised by the EU or the US. That, and continued Russian support for separatist rebels in the rest of the Ukraine and the shooting down of Malaysian Airlines Flight 17 led to the imposition of sanctions.

The EU and UK made it a criminal offence to deal with funds and economic resources of designated persons and entities and there are currently 141 individuals and 23 companies designated under EU sanctions relating to Russia and Ukraine.

Further sanctions were imposed on particular types of business. Those most relevant to the oil and gas industry prohibit the provision of drilling, well-testing and logging, and completion services for deep-water or arctic oil exploration and production, and shale oil projects in Russia. The provision of specialised floating vessels for use in deep water or arctic oil exploration and production is also prohibited.

Most of the automated control systems and communications equipment in the oil industry today come from the US and Japan but companies such as Royal Dutch Shell brought advanced technology, equipment, expertise and investment to Russia’s oil and gas industry. Shell has said it would continue working in Russia despite sanctions, although some of its projects may be affected and new investment has been put on hold.

Obviously, this does not come at a good time for the UK’s offshore industry.

Trevor Barton, executive director of the Russo-British Chamber of Commerce, RBCC, says: “Sanctions generally, along with the falling oil price and rouble devaluation are obviously having a fairly major impact on the UK, Russia, trade and investment.”

SMD, a Newcastle engineering company which specialises in the design and manufacture of remotely operated vehicle systems to function on the sea bed, works primarily for the offshore industry in oil fields all over the world and one fifth – perhaps £20m annually – of that market is in Russia.

However, the sanctions have put a stop to that and significant projects that were in the pipeline have now had to be put on hold.
SMD is fortunate in that it has diverse export markets and can look for business elsewhere, although sanctions will inevitably act as a brake on its growth.

Chief Executive Andrew Hodgson emphasises that he supports the government’s sanctions stance but points to the “hard impact” it is having.

He says: “We had a significant pipeline of opportunities we had been working on for a long time and they just stopped. We’ve seen growth in other sectors to accommodate it so it’s not taking us backwards, but it’s cost growth.”

However, there are other offshore supply chain businesses that are in a worse position.

Hodgson is on record as saying: “I can’t quote who they are, but I’ve been speaking to some of the large players in our sector who provide other equipment, and it’s having a significant hit on their business.”

Others are similarly cautious in giving their views.

The RBCC’s Barton says: “Sanctions are clearly having an effect on business but the RBCC does not give views on politics. We understand and respect the right of governments to take decisions on the ways in which they relate to each other.”

It is particularly galling for the UK offshore industry that it is hurting them more than the Russians.

Sergei Pravosudov, Director of Russia’s National Energy Institute, writing for media brand Sputnik, has argued that the ban on the export of technology to Russia won’t be able to halt the development of Russian natural gas and offshore oil extraction projects, as Russian companies are already well-versed in import substitution.

He points out that Russian companies like Vyksunsky Metalworks, Tchelyabinsky Pipe Plant, Volzhsky Pipe Works and Izhorsky Pipe Works are the ones supplying Gazprom with heavy-gauge pipes. Russian factories are now capable of producing not just pipes, but the high-quality steel that many industrial sectors require.

He says: “If these sanctions had been imposed on Russia a few years ago, the impact would’ve been quite considerable. Now, however, the sanctions will neither be able to affect Russian natural gas and offshore oil extraction projects, nor will they stop it from drilling for shale oil. The worst that could happen is a slight delay before these projects start operating at peak capacity.”

So, is the West cutting off its nose to spite its face?

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