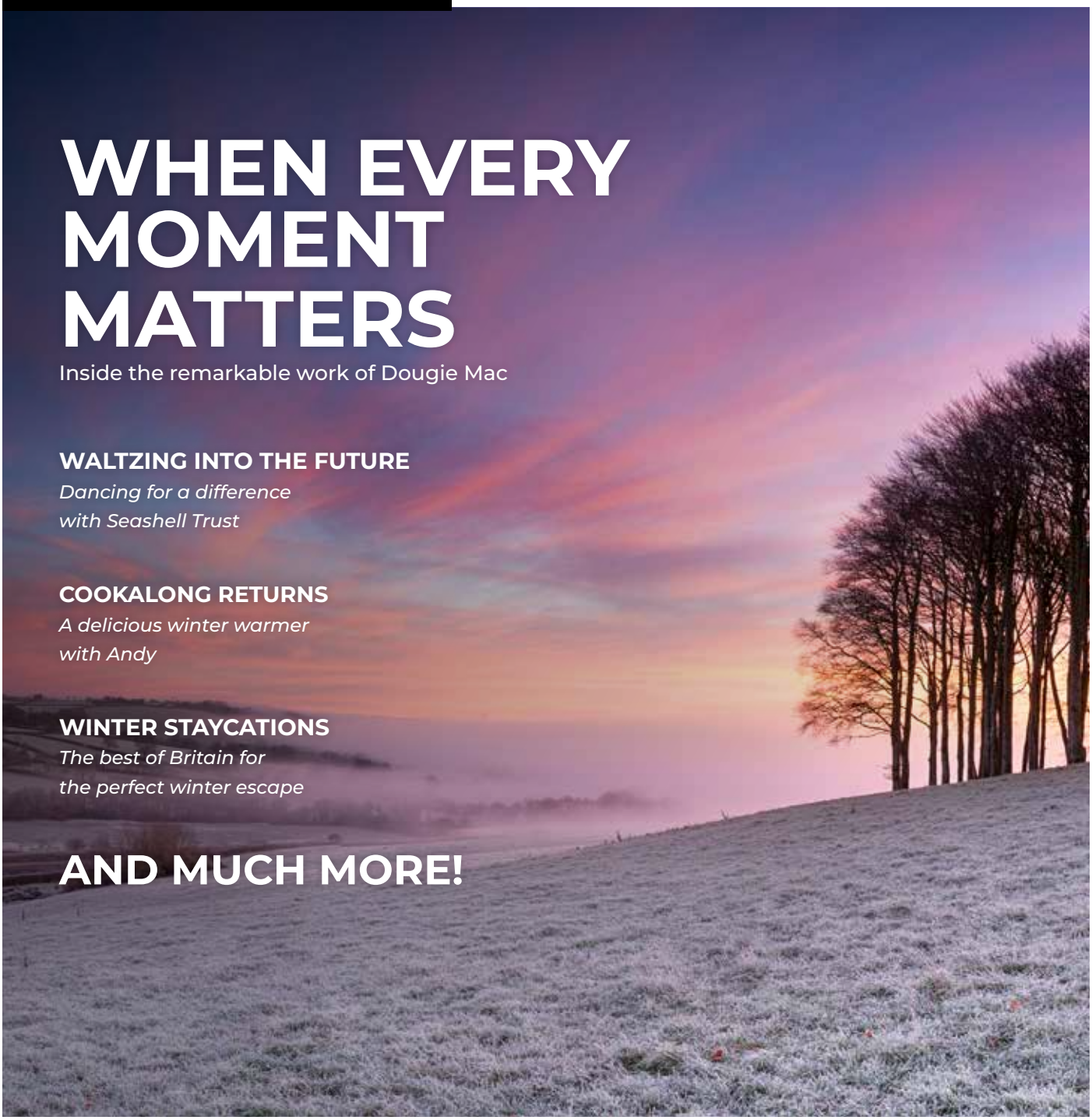
ISSUE 7 **2026**

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FRANKLYN MAGAZINE

FOR WHAT MATTERS

CELEBRATING THE BEST THINGS IN LIFE



WHEN EVERY MOMENT MATTERS

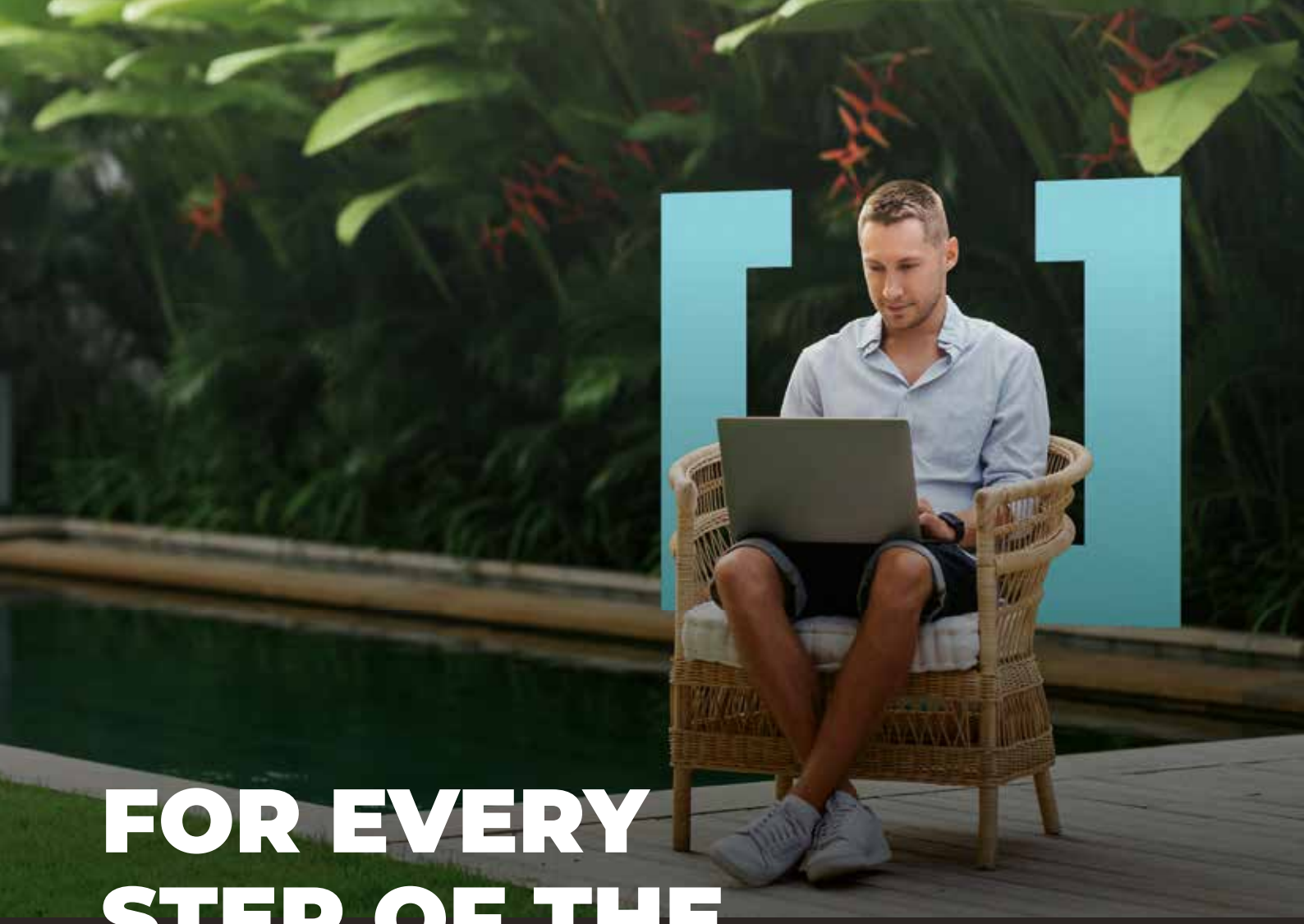
Inside the remarkable work of Dougie Mac

WALTZING INTO THE FUTURE
Dancing for a difference with Seashell Trust

COOKALONG RETURNS
A delicious winter warmer with Andy

WINTER STAYCATIONS
The best of Britain for the perfect winter escape

AND MUCH MORE!



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SJP Approved 05/11/2026

For What Matters

Issue 7: 2026

Hello

One of the things I enjoy most about putting this magazine together is the opportunity to hear the stories of people connected with Franklyn. Clients, colleagues, business owners and charity partners all bring something different, and this edition is full of people whose commitment, generosity and enthusiasm deserve to be shared.

Our conversation with David Webster, Chief Executive of Dougie Mac, is a particularly moving example. Hearing about the lengths his team goes to for patients and their families brings home why fundraising matters. Following our Summer Swing pledge, it is wonderful to explore the care that support will help make possible.

There is plenty of generosity in our client community too. In this issue, good friend and long-standing Franklyn client John Illingworth takes us behind the scenes of his Strictly Seashell experience. Having tackled some extraordinary challenges over the years, John found that stepping onto a ballroom floor could still test his nerves. His story is funny, personal and a lovely reminder of what can happen when you give something new a go.

We also look back on an incredible Summer Swing at The Belfry, which raised more than £200,000 for charity, and our annual Franklyn Football Match, celebrating our special relationship with Stoke City and supporting the brilliant work of its Community Foundation. To everyone who played, attended, donated or helped behind the scenes: thank you. These occasions depend on you.

We also consider a theme that comes up regularly in conversations with clients: keeping a long-term perspective when the headlines make that difficult. Good advice should help you make informed decisions, keep your plans flexible as life changes and give you someone to talk things through with when the outlook feels uncertain.

With autumn and winter ahead, there is room for a little seasonal enjoyment too. Janemarie shares her ideas for making Christmas gifts feel personal, while Allan and I return to the kitchen to whip up a special pudding for anyone with a sweet tooth! I can confirm that sampling it was one of the less demanding assignments for this edition.

And looking further ahead - we have a very, very special announcement about next year's Summer Swing. We're returning once again to the amazing Belfry for the highlight of our year next summer, and I can't wait to share what we have in store. You'll find more inside, book your place early!

Thank you for being part of Franklyn. I hope you enjoy the magazine, and I look forward to catching up with many of you over the coming months.



Andrew Chatterton
CEO, Franklyn

Andy

Get social and keep in touch with what matters

CONTENTS

06

What's On

Cheshire and Manchester have plenty to tempt us out of the house.

12

Franklyn Summer Swing returned

An unforgettable day of golf, entertainment and fundraising with The Moonwalk Masters.



18

When every Moment Matters

A conversation with David Webster, Chief Executive, Dougie Mac.

26

Community Impact

Supporting local communities.

28

Cheshire 100

CCF making a lasting difference through local partnerships.

34

Back at the bet365

Franklyn Football Match raises record £8,000



38

Time, Not Timing

Investment Markets explained

42

Client Story

Interview with John Illingworth about his Strictly Seashell experience.



52

Franklyn Future Talent

An interview with 17-year-old racing driver Jake Critchley from Congleton

56

LANX

A conversation with Marco Vaghetti, Founder and Chief Brand Officer of LANX

62

Winter Lifestyle

The latest therapies and easy at-home practices to help you navigate your way through winter.



66

Elevate your gifting game

Christmas wrapping with a little imagination, a little recycling and a lot of love

72

Winter Staycations

Six beautiful British destinations



80

Cookalong with Andrew and Allan Andrew Chatterton and chef Allan Jones guide you through a proper winter warmer



86

Fitness with Franklyn

Why strength training matters at every age

90

Luxury living in exclusive properties

Stephenson Browne's top properties.



96

Community Updates

The latest projects, partnerships and causes we're proud to support.

98

Franklyn Fox

One for the kids, no adults allowed!



As autumn turns to winter, Cheshire and Manchester have plenty to tempt us out of the house.



Ross Mahon / Shutterstock.com

WHAT'S ON

From crisp autumn days and spectacular light trails to Christmas markets, festive concerts and a mansion transformed for the season, here are a few dates for the diary.

LANTERNS & LIGHT

13 November 2026 –
3 January 2027

One of Cheshire's most popular festive traditions returns to Chester Zoo with a new route, immersive light installations and more interactive animal puppets. Expect glowing tunnels, fire gardens, laser-lit trees, fairground rides and plenty of festive food and drink along the way.

There are also selected quiet sessions and, new for 2026, adult-only evenings on 19 November and 8 December.

Location
Chester Zoo, Upton-by-Chester,
Chester, CH2 1LH

Book your tickets:

CHRISTMAS AT TATTON PARK

15 November onwards

Christmas takes over Tatton Park again this year with three different ways to get into the festive spirit. The Mansion is transformed for Around the World in 80 Days, with rooms inspired by destinations from India to Japan, while Yuletide in the Gardens brings storytelling, music, fire and an illuminated trail to the grounds. Younger visitors can also meet Father Christmas and his elves at the Farm on selected dates.

The Mansion runs from 21 November to 31 December, Yuletide in the Gardens from 15 November to 23 December, and Father Christmas at the Farm from 21 November to Christmas Eve.

Location
Tatton Park, Knutsford,
Cheshire, WA16 6QN

Find out more:



MANCHESTER CHRISTMAS MARKETS

6 November – 22 December

Manchester's Christmas Markets return with more than 210 stalls across ten city-centre locations, bringing together independent traders, gifts, international food and plenty of mulled wine.

Albert Square will once again sit at the heart of the celebrations, while both Albert Square and Cathedral Gardens will continue trading beyond the main market dates until 3 January 2027.

Location

Albert Square Manchester,
Greater Manchester M2 5PE

For more information:



CHESTER CHRISTMAS MARKET

18 November – 22 December

Around 80 traders will fill the area around Chester Town Hall and the Cathedral as the city's Christmas Market returns for more than a month.

Combine the wooden chalets, independent gifts and festive food with a wander through Chester's historic Rows and you have a very good excuse for a winter day out.

Location

Town Hall Square, Northgate Street ,
Chester , Cheshire, CH1 2HQ

For more information:



KNUTSFORD CHRISTMAS MARKET

5–6 December

Closer to home, Knutsford's two-day Christmas Market will bring more than 120 traders per day into the town centre, with local food and drink, gifts, crafts and live entertainment.

For 2026 the market and Christmas lights switch-on are separate occasions, with the lights being switched on earlier on 21 November.

Location

Princess Street, Silk Mill Street and the central section of King Street, Knutsford

Find out more:

CHRISTMAS CRACKER WITH THE HALLÉ

18 December

For something a little more traditional, the Hallé brings its Christmas Cracker to The Bridgewater Hall. The orchestra will be joined by two singers and two choirs for an evening of festive favourites, from Winter Wonderland and Santa Claus is Coming to Town to Carol of the Bells.

A suitably grand way to begin the final countdown to Christmas.

Location

The Bridgewater Hall
Lower Mosley Street, Manchester, M1 5HA

Buy your tickets:



Euan Cherry / Shutterstock.com





AND ONE FOR THE RUNNERS...

7-8 November | 6 December

If Christmas indulgence needs to be earned, Tatton Park has you covered. The Tatton 5K and 10K takes place on 7 November, followed by the Tatton Half Marathon on 8 November. There is also the rather more festive Yule Yomp, a 10K trail race on 6 December where fancy dress is very much part of the occasion.

Location
Tatton Park, Knutsford,
Cheshire, WA16 6QN

Explore all running event races:


L.A.B. GOLF



THE FRANKLYN SUMMER SWING returned with The Moonwalk Masters

Franklyn's Summer Swing returned to The Belfry for another unforgettable day of golf, entertainment and fundraising. With a Moonwalk Masters theme, plenty of surprises and more than £200,000 raised for charity, the 2026 event proved to be one of the biggest yet.

There are golf days, and then there is the Franklyn Summer Swing.

This year we took over the iconic Brabazon Course at The Belfry. The Summer Swing 2026 brought together clients, friends, professional connections and supporters for a day that has become one of the highlights of the Franklyn calendar.

This year's theme was Moonwalk Masters, and while the golf remained fiercely competitive, it was never going to be the only entertainment on offer. After a day on one of Britain's most famous courses, guests swapped the fairways for an evening of dinner, entertainment, prize giving and fundraising, complete with a Michael Jackson tribute act and a live auction.

As ever, though, behind all the fun was a much more important purpose.



A record of giving

The generosity of everyone in the room helped raise more than £200,000 for charity, taking Franklyn's cumulative fundraising for the St. James's Place Charitable Foundation to more than £2.2 million.

It is a milestone everyone at Franklyn is enormously proud of, but the numbers only tell part of the story. One of the most memorable moments of the evening came when Lisa and Gemma from the Dougie Mac spoke about the hospice and the work its teams carry out every day for patients and families across the local community.

The Dougie Mac was chosen as the event's pledge charity, with £60,000 pledged to the hospice during the evening. With generous match funding from St. James's Place, that contribution will fund two hospice nurses for an entire year.

It is a wonderfully tangible example of what an evening like the Summer Swing can achieve. Long after the final putt has dropped and the last guest has left the dancefloor, the money raised continues to make a difference to people and families when they need it most.

You can read more about the remarkable work of the Dougie Mac, and the people behind it, in our dedicated feature in this edition.

More than a golf day

The Summer Swing has always been about bringing people together. Clients who have known Franklyn for years share a course with newer faces, friends become competitors for the afternoon, professional relationships become personal ones and, by the evening, everyone is gathered together for the same reason.

That spirit continued through the auction and fundraising, with guests bidding, donating and supporting the causes at the heart of the event.

Of course, no Franklyn golf day would be complete without a healthy amount of competition along the way. The Brabazon has tested some of the greatest names in golf over the years and, for one day at least, a few members of the Franklyn family were able to imagine themselves among them. We will leave it to those who were there to decide how convincing that comparison really was.

A partnership that makes a difference

A special thank you goes to St. James's Place, headline sponsor of Summer Swing 2026.

Their support went significantly further than sponsorship alone. St. James's Place matched every pound raised on the night, increasing the impact of the generosity shown by guests



and helping even more funding reach the St. James's Place Charitable Foundation and The Dougie Mac.

That combination of guests, clients, sponsors, partners and charities is what has allowed Summer Swing to grow into something far greater than the golf day it began as.

More than £2.2 million raised for the St. James's Place Charitable Foundation is an extraordinary landmark. Yet perhaps the best measure of the Summer Swing 2026 is much simpler: two nurses will be funded for an entire year at the Dougie Mac because of what happened in that room.

Thank you to our sponsors

The Summer Swing simply wouldn't be possible without the incredible support of the businesses and individuals who get behind the event each year.

We would like to say a huge thank you to all of our 2026 sponsors and partners for helping us make the Summer Swing "Moonwalk Masters" such a memorable occasion. Your generosity, whether through sponsorship, taking a team, joining us for the evening, donating prizes or supporting the fundraising on the night, played an important part in helping us raise more than £200,000 for charity.

A special thank you to our Headline Sponsor, St. James's Place, whose support went even further by matching every pound raised on the night, significantly increasing the impact of everyone's generosity.

To every sponsor, partner and supporter who helped make Summer Swing 2026 possible: thank you.

St James's Place

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A day on the green.
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Golf Teams, Gala Packages and Corporate Sponsorship details will be announced soon. Don't miss the opportunity. Be the first to hear more by registering your interest at **franklynevents@sjpp.co.uk**
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FEATURE ARTICLE

SUPPORTING GREAT CAUSES

When every moment **matters**

A conversation with **David Webster**, Chief Executive, Dougie Mac



For thousands of people across Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire, Dougie Mac is a name associated with care at the most difficult of times. But spend an hour in the company of Chief Executive David Webster and a much richer picture emerges.

This is a story about specialist care, certainly, but it is also about families, dignity, community and the extraordinary lengths people will go to when somebody's time becomes precious.

Following Franklyn's £60,000 Summer Swing pledge, we sat down with David to discover what modern hospice care really looks like, what surprised him when he first walked through the doors almost a decade ago, and why he believes one of its greatest achievements can sometimes be allowing a family to become a family again.



> **“You look after the person,** not the condition. **”**

David's route to Dougie Mac was not an obvious one. He had spent his career in financial services, including 12 years with Bradford & Bingley and 14 years leading Hanley Economic Building Society, before joining the hospice at the age of 57. He arrived with decades of experience running organisations, managing people and dealing with the financial realities of business, but admits there was plenty about hospice care he simply did not understand.

What surprised him most was how different the reality was from the perception.

"The lengths we go to for families surprised me," David tells us. "It's about the person. You look after the person, not the condition."

He begins giving examples. A patient wants to watch a World Cup match at two o'clock in the morning, so the team makes sure they can watch it. There have been weddings, family reunions and parties, including an Ibiza-themed party. On another occasion, a horse was brought into reception. Yes, you read that correctly.

"One of the patients had asked if she could see her horse for the last time," David explains. "So they brought the horse in, and sure enough, this fairly large four-legged animal was standing in my reception. It was incredible to see."

There was also, he remembers with a smile, the practical matter of "the buckets that were required to follow it around".

It is funny, but the reason the horse was there is anything but frivolous. Somebody approaching the end of their life wanted to see an animal they loved one final time, and the people caring for them found a way to make it happen.

For David, that story captures something fundamental about Dougie Mac.

Giving families precious time back

The more David talks about Dougie Mac, the more apparent it becomes that the patient is only one part of the story. Serious illness changes the lives of everyone around that person, too, and often changes the nature of their relationships.

A husband becomes responsible for his wife's medication and personal care. A daughter begins arranging appointments for her father. Partners who have spent decades together can suddenly find that one has become the other's full-time carer.

David sees one of Dougie Mac's most important roles as changing that relationship back, even if only for a while.

"Families become carers," he says. "What we try to do is give them some time back, so they can become a husband, a wife, a son or a daughter again."



It is one of the simplest things he says during our conversation, and perhaps the one that best explains the purpose of hospice care.

That might mean a husband being able to sit with his wife without constantly thinking about medication or what he needs to do next. It might allow a daughter to talk to her dad as her dad rather than spend the visit organising his care. Sometimes it simply gives a family confidence that somebody with the right expertise is there and understands what is happening.

The support can begin before somebody dies and continue afterwards. David talks about pre-bereavement counselling, helping people prepare for a loss they know is coming, as well as the support available following a death. Dougie Mac's wellbeing services and groups also provide people with a place to meet others who understand what they are experiencing, particularly those who might otherwise become isolated.



For David, these services are not separate from the clinical care. They are part of understanding the person and their family. Knowing somebody's diagnosis is one thing. Knowing what matters to them is another.

The people who make it possible

Perhaps inevitably, David keeps returning to the people who provide that care.

Dougie Mac has more than 500 members of staff and around 850 volunteers, and David speaks about them with the admiration of somebody who understands that no strategy, building or fundraising target means very much without the right people behind it.

His own philosophy as Chief Executive is characteristically straightforward.

> "If I look after my staff, they'll look after our patients."

For David, that is not simply a management philosophy. Hospice staff regularly walk into situations that are clinically complex and emotionally difficult. They meet frightened patients, exhausted families and people trying to process news that has changed their lives. The quality of the care those families receive depends upon the people delivering it having the skills, resilience and support to do that work properly.

"The people here are extraordinary," he says. "You have to look after them."

The scale of Dougie Mac's volunteer community is equally striking. Around 850 people give their time to the hospice, supporting its shops, fundraising and wider operation. For an organisation so dependent upon its local community, those volunteers are not an addition to the organisation. They are part of how it works.

David is clearly proud of what his teams achieve, but he is also realistic about one of the greatest challenges facing hospice care.



“The talent pool in palliative nursing is shallow,” he says. “That’s a challenge for us. These are very specialist people, and we have to attract them, develop them and look after them.”

It explains why his belief that caring for staff ultimately means caring for patients carries such weight. Dougie Mac can only provide the deeply personal care David describes if the people providing it feel equally supported.

The cost of doing good - a £24 million responsibility

David’s previous life in financial services becomes particularly relevant when the conversation turns to the economics of running Dougie Mac.

The hospice costs around £24 million a year to operate, with approximately £21 million of that needing to be generated through its community, shops, fundraising and supporters. David reels off the different income streams with the ease of somebody who lives with the numbers every day.

“We’ve got 21 shops, and they generate around £7 million. Legacies are around £4 million. Our lottery is about £1.5 million, individual giving is about £1.5 million, and then you’ve got events, businesses and all the other fundraising.”

Behind those numbers is a formidable annual challenge. The hospice cannot raise the money once and consider the job done. The requirement begins again every year.

“We’ve got a £24 million cost base,” David says. “That financial sustainability is probably the biggest challenge. You’ve got to keep raising that money every year.”

And the scale of the service that money supports is substantial. Dougie Mac cares for around 2,000 people in the community and approximately 500 patients through its adult inpatient services over the course of a year, alongside support for their families.

For a Chief Executive with a financial services background, there is an interesting balance between the commercial discipline required to run an organisation of this size and the intensely human purpose behind every financial decision. The hospice has to be sustainable because thousands of people depend on it.

David is particularly keen for businesses to understand the part they can play, although his invitation is refreshingly uncomplicated. “Come and have a coffee,” he says. “Come and see what we do.”

He is not suggesting every business arrives with a large cheque. Some might fundraise, others could volunteer, provide professional expertise or encourage their teams to get involved. What matters first, he says, is understanding what happens there.

> “There are lots of different ways businesses can help.”

For David, the strongest relationships begin when people see what their support actually makes possible.

Two nurses for an entire year

For Franklyn, that connection between fundraising and care became particularly powerful at this year's Summer Swing at The Belfry.

During the evening, Lisa and Gemma from the Dougie Mac spoke about the hospice and the families it supports, helping guests understand the reality behind the cause they were being asked to support. By the end of the night, £60,000 had been pledged to Dougie Mac, with the support and match funding associated with the event meaning that the contribution will fund two hospice nurses for an entire year.

On paper, £60,000 is a fundraising figure. Listening to David talk about what those nurses actually do gives it a very different meaning.

Over the course of that year, they will enter homes where families may be frightened, exhausted or unsure what happens next. They will provide specialist care and manage symptoms, but they will also answer questions, offer reassurance, and get to know the people they support.

They may make it possible for somebody to remain at home, recognise that a husband who has been caring for his wife around the clock needs support, or have the conversation that helps a frightened family understand what is happening.

"When our people go in, the family can become the family again," David says. "That's really important."

Seen in those terms, two nurses for an entire year means far more than two salaries. It means thousands of hours in which somebody with the right expertise is there to carry some of the responsibility a family has been shouldering. For everyone at Franklyn, the £60,000 pledge feels far more tangible than any fundraising total ever could.

Why palliative care is so important

As our conversation turns to the future of palliative and end-of-life care, David raises a wider issue that he believes deserves far more attention: how that care is funded in the first place.

He draws an interesting comparison with the beginning of life. When a baby is born, an established system of maternity care surrounds the mother and child. At the other end of life,



David argues, there is nowhere near the same level of funding available for the specialist care people may need.

The consequence is that organisations such as Dougie Mac remain heavily dependent upon charitable support to provide care that thousands of people and families rely upon. For David, the debate about how we care for people approaching the end of their lives, therefore, needs to begin with a much bigger conversation about the availability and funding of good palliative care.

“There is a real conversation happening about the importance of a dignified end of life, but if we are going to talk about assisted dying, surely we should first be talking about assisted living for people at the end of their life?”

It is a subject on which opinions differ strongly, but David’s point is rooted in what he sees every day: the difference specialist palliative care can make to the experience of somebody approaching the end of their life.

> “What amazed me when I first joined was the lengths Dougie Mac would go to for their patients. One patient had asked if she could see her horse for the last time. So they brought the horse to the hospice, and sure enough, this very large four-legged animal was standing in reception. It was incredible to see. That really brought home to me what this place is about: understanding what matters to somebody and doing everything you can to make it possible.”
>
> David Webster,
> Chief Executive, Dougie Mac

He believes there remains a widespread misunderstanding about what hospices actually do. Palliative care is not simply about somebody’s final hours or days. For David, it is about the life somebody still has, managing symptoms, supporting their family and helping them continue doing the things that matter for as long as possible.

It is why the stories he tells are so often about apparently ordinary things. Football. A party. A wedding. A favourite animal. Time with family. “If somebody wants to do something and we can make it happen, we’ll try and make it happen,” he says. “That’s the lengths we’ll go to for families.”

A patient remains the same person they were before their diagnosis. They still have relationships, preferences, humour, memories and things they want to do.

“You look after the person, not the condition.” In that context, what David describes as “assisted living” at the end of life is not an abstract idea. It is the practical work of helping somebody live as well as possible for as long as possible, while giving the people around them the support to share that time.

Looking ahead

After almost a decade at Dougie Mac, there is little sense that David regards the organisation’s job as finished.

“We’ve got a growth agenda over the next two or three years,” he says, although he is quick to explain that growth does not simply mean getting bigger or spreading the organisation across a larger geographical area.

“There’s lots to do deep without going too wide.” The emphasis is on understanding where need is changing and where Dougie Mac can have a greater impact within the communities it already serves.

One area is dementia. Another is the transition from children’s to adult services for young

people with complex conditions. Dougie Mac begins supporting young adults from age 19 and, according to David, is one of only five hospices in England that provide this kind of transitional support.

For families who may have relied on specialist children's services for years, reaching adulthood can create an abrupt change in the support available. David wants Dougie Mac to play a greater role in helping families navigate that transition.

> "We're looking at where the need is. What can we do more of? Where can we make more of a difference?"

Alongside that ambition sit the two challenges David repeatedly returns to: financial sustainability and people. Raising around £24 million every year requires an extraordinary and continuing relationship with the community, while the shortage of specialist palliative-care professionals means Dougie Mac must think carefully about how it attracts, develops and retains the people upon whom its services depend.

His financial services background means David is not sentimental about those realities. An organisation cannot fulfil its purpose if it is not financially secure, and ambition has to be matched by the ability to fund and staff it. But after almost ten years at Dougie Mac, his definition of success is clearly about much more than a balance sheet.

Ultimately, it comes back to the people Dougie Mac supports and the time they have together. As David puts it:

"You look after the person, not the condition."

It is a simple philosophy, but one that seems to run through everything at Dougie Mac: the specialist care, the extraordinary lengths staff will go to for a patient, the support given to families and the community that raises millions of pounds every year to make it possible.

Because when every moment matters, helping somebody make the most of those moments matters too.

SUPPORT DOUGIE MAC

Dougie Mac relies on the support of its community to continue providing specialist care to local people and their families.

David's invitation to businesses is simple: come and have a coffee, meet the people behind the hospice and understand what your support could make possible.

Individuals and businesses can help through fundraising, volunteering, donations, corporate partnerships, events, professional support and the hospice's shops and lottery.

Visit **dougiemac.org.uk** to find out more.



COMMUNITY**IMPACT**

£90,000 FOR ACCESS SPORT

Franklyn has also successfully referred Access Sport to the St. James's Place Charitable Foundation, resulting in a £90,000 grant over three years.

The funding will support Access Sport's Changing Places London project, which is focused on transforming disabled young people's lives through community sport.

Access Sport works to ensure more children and young people can benefit from inclusive community sport, removing barriers to participation and creating opportunities for people who might otherwise find it difficult to access them.

The £90,000 award will provide three years of support for the Changing Places London project, giving the charity valuable longer-term funding to continue its work with disabled young people and the communities around them.



A LITTLE HELP **FOR THE BIG TOP**

Closer to home, Franklyn has also helped Congleton-based Circus Starr secure a £1,000 grant through the St. James's Place Charitable Foundation.

Circus Starr creates accessible and inclusive circus experiences for children and families who may find mainstream events difficult to attend, including children with additional needs, disabilities or families facing challenging circumstances.

The £1,000 award might be smaller than some of the grants Franklyn has helped charities access, but its impact is no less meaningful. It will support



Circus Starr in continuing to create opportunities for children and families to enjoy the excitement and magic of live performance in an environment designed to welcome them.

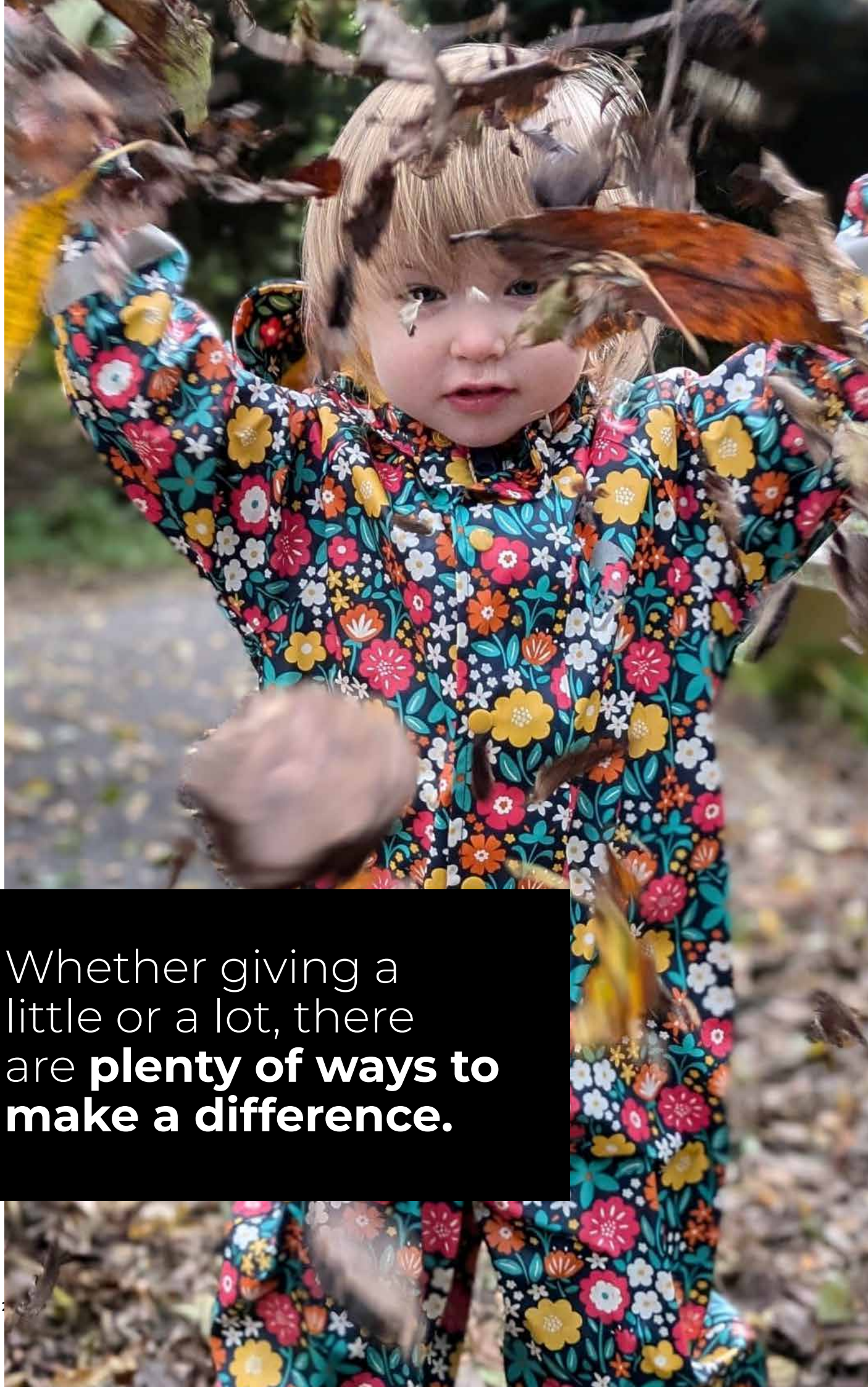
HELPING GOOD CAUSES GO FURTHER

The Access Sport and Circus Starr are very different organisations, but the grants demonstrate another way Franklyn can support the causes its team and community care about.

Through its relationship with the St. James's Place Charitable Foundation, Franklyn can refer eligible charities for consideration for grant funding. In 2026 alone, those referrals have resulted in £151,000 of funding for charitable projects and services.

For Access Sport, it means three years of funding towards a project creating more opportunities for disabled young people through community sport. And for Circus Starr, it means helping more children and families experience something designed specifically to include them.

Different causes, different communities and different amounts, but the same objective: helping good organisations do more of what they do best.



Whether giving a little or a lot, there are **plenty of ways to make a difference.**



MAKING A DIFFERENCE ON OUR DOORSTEP:

Cheshire Community Foundation

Behind Cheshire's reputation for prosperity are communities facing real challenges. Through local knowledge, generous supporters and grassroots partnerships, CCF is helping make a lasting difference.

Cheshire is often associated with beautiful countryside, thriving businesses and affluent communities. Yet behind that familiar picture is another reality.

Across the county, individuals and families face poverty, isolation, mental health challenges and barriers to opportunity. Significant deprivation exists alongside considerable wealth, sometimes just a short distance away.

It is this contrast that makes the work of CCF so important.

The Foundation connects generous individuals, families and businesses with local charities supporting those who need it most. By combining an understanding of community needs with charitable giving, it helps funding reach projects that might otherwise struggle to attract attention.

Since its inception in 2012, **CCF has invested more than £17 million in local communities,** supporting organisations making a difference across Cheshire and Warrington.

Understanding the need behind the numbers

As one of 47 community foundations across the UK, CCF directs funding towards five key areas: tackling poverty and disadvantage; building resilient communities; supporting mental health and wellbeing; improving education, training and employment opportunities; and raising awareness of climate change.

These priorities reflect challenges including the cost of living and the lasting effects of the pandemic, particularly among young people.







But understanding where support is needed involves more than identifying broad issues.

The Foundation researches local needs, assesses grant applications and carries out due diligence, helping donors support organisations where their contributions can have a meaningful impact.

Our conversation highlighted how easy it can be to overlook the challenges faced by some communities. CCF brings awareness to these challenges, connecting supporters with local causes where their contributions can make a real difference.

Championing grassroots charities

Some of the most valuable work happening across Cheshire is delivered by organisations that few people outside their immediate communities have heard of.

These grassroots charities are often led by small teams, dedicated volunteers or individuals inspired by their own experiences.

Unlike larger charities, they may not have dedicated fundraising teams, marketing budgets or the time to build relationships with potential donors. Their attention is focused on supporting people.

CCF helps bridge that gap, identifying effective local organisations and connecting them with individuals and businesses who want to make a difference.

It gives smaller charities access to opportunities that might otherwise remain out of reach, while helping donors feel confident that their support is reaching communities where it is needed.

Small moments, life-changing outcomes

Although the Foundation has invested millions of pounds, its team believes the most meaningful measures of success are often found in individual stories.

One particularly heartwarming example came from a telephone befriending service run by Snow Angels, where a young student and an older gentleman formed a meaningful connection through their weekly conversations. As his confidence grew, he found himself inspired to get out and about more, looking forward to sharing his experiences during their next call. It was a simple but powerful reminder of how human connection can enrich lives on both sides.

Another story centred on a retired piano teacher whose husband was living with dementia.





Through a social group run by OPAL Services, she reconnected with music, shared her talents and raised funds for the very organisation that had helped her, rediscovering a sense of purpose.

The Foundation also spoke about a young man with additional needs who began volunteering at Hayrack Church Farm. The opportunity helped him develop confidence, contribute his skills and discover work he enjoyed. His volunteering eventually led to paid employment. For the Foundation, the significance went beyond securing a job. It was about independence, removing the barriers to being an active contributor to their community.

These stories demonstrate why personal experiences matter just as much as funding figures. Statistics can show the scale of an organisation's work, but they cannot always capture someone's renewed confidence or sense of belonging.

Building stronger communities

The Foundation also supports projects that bring communities closer together and make a positive difference to everyday life. In Crewe, funding helped residents improve neglected alleyways, while a local social dance group gave older people the chance to build friendships and connections. These examples show how even small community projects can create meaningful, lasting relationships and a greater sense of belonging.

The power of giving together

For CCF, local giving is not limited to large donations. One way to get involved is through **Cheshire 100**, a network of individuals, families and businesses who contribute towards the Foundation's running costs.

Whether giving a little or a lot, there are plenty of ways to make a difference. Through **Cheshire 100**, individuals, families and businesses can contribute £1,000 annually or £100 a month, with opportunities to meet fellow supporters twice a year and learn more about the local charities benefiting from their generosity. These contributions help sustain the research, relationships and grant-making processes that enable the Foundation to support grassroots organisations.

For those looking to give a smaller amount, **Love Cheshire** offers another way to get involved, with donations starting from just £5 a month. Together, these initiatives show how contributions of all sizes can help make a meaningful difference across Cheshire.

And those smaller donations can have a significant collective impact.

It's often the smaller contributions coming together that make something special possible. For example, if a local charity needs £2,500 to bring a project to life and £2,000 has already been pledged, the generosity of people giving a little each month could provide that final £500.








STORYTELLER
Freddie and the Fairy

It's a lovely reminder that every contribution matters.

It demonstrates how modest contributions can sometimes make the difference between a project proceeding or being unable to move forward.

While some challenges require substantial investment, others can be addressed through relatively small grants that deliver meaningful results.

Franklyn's connection to the Foundation

Franklyn's relationship with the Foundation began through a mutual introduction, which led to meetings with Andy and Charlotte and a growing understanding of the organisation's work.

That relationship developed further when Andy and Charlotte joined Cheshire 100, helping support the Foundation's wider activities.

Franklyn's involvement also extended to **Thriving Families**, a programme supporting families facing difficulties across Cheshire. In September 2026, Franklyn joined the Foundation at Chester Racecourse in support of the programme, strengthening their shared commitment to local communities.

Connections have continued to grow through local events, shared experiences and a genuine passion for supporting the community. These relationships reflect the importance of coming together, building lasting friendships and working towards a shared goal of making a positive difference to the lives of people across Cheshire.

A community where everyone has a part to play

When asked what gave the Foundation's team the greatest hope, the answer was simple: people.

The generous donors who choose to give, the volunteers and charities who consistently go above and beyond, and the individuals whose lives change when they receive the right support.

The conversation also brought an important reminder that anyone can find themselves needing help. Circumstances can change unexpectedly, and the challenges facing others may be closer to home than we realise.

With more than £17 million invested in local communities since it began, CCF demonstrates what collective generosity can achieve.

Yet behind that figure are individual moments: a telephone call that eases loneliness, a volunteering opportunity that becomes a career, a neighbourhood transformed or a social gathering that leads to a lifelong relationship.

For Franklyn, supporting the Foundation is an opportunity to help create more of those moments.

Because making a difference locally is not always about the size of a donation. It is about recognising a need, making a connection and helping people build stronger futures, together.

BACK AT THE BET365

The Franklyn Football Match returned to the bet365 Stadium in May, bringing Stoke City legends, supporters and the local community together for an afternoon of football that raised a record-breaking £8,000 for the Stoke City Foundation.

There are not many opportunities to pull on your boots and walk out onto the same pitch as some of Stoke City's most familiar names. The annual Franklyn Football Match provides exactly that, although whether everyone involved still had the legs for a full 90 minutes is perhaps another matter.

Held at the bet365 Stadium on Tuesday 26 May, this year's match welcomed back a formidable collection of former Stoke City favourites, including **Erik Pieters, Liam Lawrence, Carl Dickinson, Hitman Heaney and Lou Macari.**

More than **200 supporters** watched from the Franklyn Stand as the teams took to the pitch, but while there was plenty of competition once the whistle blew, the real purpose of the afternoon was raising money for an important local cause.




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A record result

This year's match raised **more than £8,000 for the Stoke City Foundation**, the largest fundraising total since the event began.

The Foundation uses the power of sport to support children, young people, people with disabilities and communities across Staffordshire. Its programmes encourage physical activity, support health and wellbeing and help people understand the lifelong benefits of a healthier lifestyle.

As **Platinum Partners of Stoke City FC**, Franklyn has developed a close relationship with the club, and the annual football match has become another opportunity to use that partnership to make a positive difference beyond the pitch.

Every penny raised from this year's event will go directly towards supporting the Foundation and its work throughout the local community.

> "The Football Match is always a brilliant day and it means a lot to us to be able to bring the Franklyn and Stoke City communities together for such a good cause. Raising a record £8,000 for the Stoke City Foundation made this year even more special. A massive thank you to everyone who played, came along and supported us, and particularly to PMS for continuing to get behind the event year after year. We genuinely couldn't do it without that support.
>
> Andrew Chatterton,
> Franklyn CEO



From the players brave enough to lace up their boots to the sponsors, supporters and everyone working behind the scenes, the afternoon demonstrated what can happen when the Franklyn and Stoke City communities come together.

And with £8,000 raised, 200 supporters in the stands and a few Stoke City legends back where they belong, the final score was arguably the least important result of the day!



A huge thank you to our sponsor, PMS

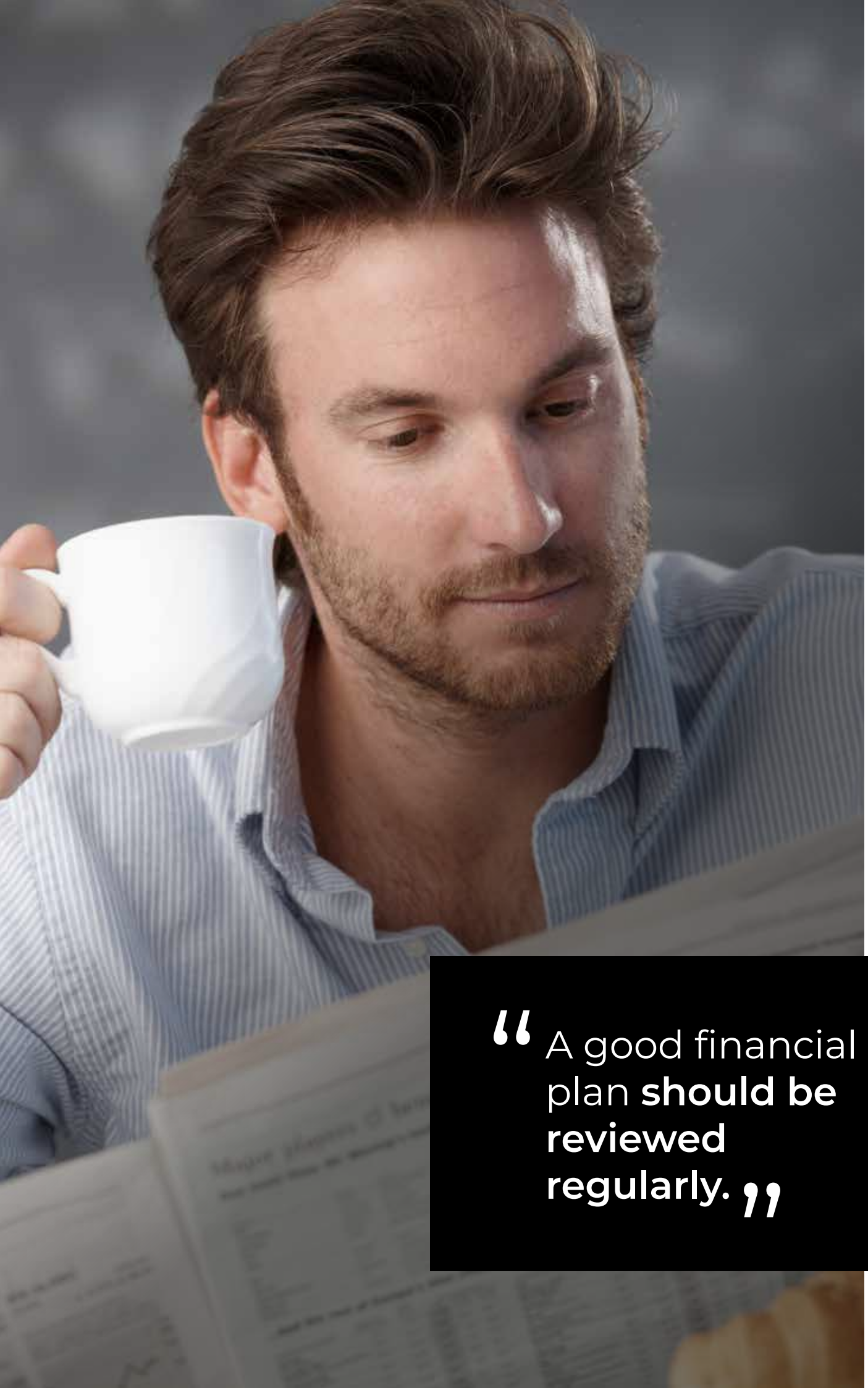
The event was once again proudly sponsored by **Property Maintenance Services (PMS)**, whose continued support year after year has played a key role in helping the Franklyn Football Match grow into the fantastic event it is today.

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"To play with the players you have watched week in week out while growing up is a dream come true and then to see them wearing your branding across their chest is beyond words. I'm genuinely so proud to sponsor this amazing Franklyn event. The event is an amazing day with massive rewards for fans and the Stoke City Foundation. I'd like to extend a warm thank you to the person who introduced me to this event, Mr Ben Dyer. Thank you, my friend.

Dan Ayres, Managing Director, Property Maintenance Services

Find out more about PMS by visiting www.pmsstoke.co.uk



> “A good financial plan **should be reviewed regularly.**”

INVESTMENT MARKETS EXPLAINED

Time, Not Timing

With a new Prime Minister, more volatility and a new Autumn Budget to consider - there is rarely a shortage of reasons to worry about investment markets. Elections, interest rates, inflation, geopolitical tensions, economic forecasts and breaking news can all create periods when investors understandably wonder whether they should do something.

When markets are rising, it can feel tempting to wait for a better opportunity to invest. When they are falling, the instinct can be to get out and return when things feel safer.

The problem is that when it comes to long-term investing, feeling comfortable and making the right investment decision are not necessarily the same thing.

Markets constantly absorb new information, expectations and changing sentiment. They do not wait for the outlook to become clear before they move, which is why some of the strongest days for investment markets can arrive unexpectedly and sometimes during periods when the news around us remains decidedly gloomy.

For long-term investors, that creates an important distinction between spending time in the market and trying to time it.

The cost of missing the best days

The temptation to move investments when uncertainty increases is understandable. If markets have fallen, selling can feel like protecting what remains. If difficult economic news is expected, waiting until everything becomes clearer can feel sensible.

The problem is that successfully timing the market requires getting two decisions right: when to get out and when to get back in.

The second can be even harder than the first.

Some of the strongest days in investment markets have historically occurred close to some of the worst. An investor who sells during a period of volatility may therefore avoid further falls, but they also risk missing the recovery when it arrives.

And markets can move quickly. By the time the economic news feels better, investment markets may already have responded.

This is why a relatively small number of missed days can have such a significant effect on long-term returns. Nobody knows in advance which days will ultimately prove to be the most important, so attempting to avoid every downturn can inadvertently mean missing some of the strongest periods of recovery too.

Past performance is not a guide to future performance, but history provides a useful reminder of just how difficult market timing can be.

Of course, remaining invested also means experiencing periods when markets fall, sometimes significantly. Recoveries are never guaranteed, and investments may take considerable time to regain their value, if they do so at all. The decision to remain invested should therefore reflect an individual's circumstances, attitude to risk and ability to withstand potential losses.

Headlines are not a financial plan

There will always be something happening in the world that appears capable of changing the outlook for investors.

At different times it might be an election, a change in interest rates, conflict overseas, inflation, recession fears or simply a particularly dramatic week in the markets. Each can create a strong feeling that action needs to be taken.

But a long-term financial plan should be built around your circumstances, objectives and the time over which you expect to need your money, not around the news cycle.

That does not mean ignoring what is happening in the world. Changes to economic conditions, legislation or an individual's own circumstances can all provide good reasons to review a financial plan.

The important distinction is between considered planning and prediction.

One is based on what has actually changed and what that means for you. The other requires correctly predicting what economies and investment markets are going to do next.

Why time matters

One of the great advantages available to a long-term investor is time.

Investment returns can generate further returns, creating the compounding effect that becomes increasingly significant over longer periods. Regular investing can also mean buying investments at different prices through different market conditions rather than attempting to identify the perfect moment to invest.

Neither removes risk. Investments can fall as well as rise and there will inevitably be periods when remaining invested feels uncomfortable.

But volatility is part of investing. The objective of a properly constructed long-term financial plan is not to predict and avoid every market fall. It is to create an approach appropriate to your circumstances, capacity for risk and objectives, then review that plan as your life and the world around you change.

For someone approaching retirement or expecting to need capital in the near future, that may mean holding a very different mix of assets from somebody investing for another 20 or

"The real value of advice is having somebody alongside you throughout the journey. Markets will rise and fall, circumstances will change and there will always be periods of uncertainty. Our job is to understand what our clients want to achieve, build a plan around those ambitions and make sure it remains flexible enough to adapt as life changes."

ANDREW CHATTERTON,
CEO, FRANKLYN

"A financial plan should never be something you create once and put in a drawer. Life changes, priorities change and markets change, so the plan needs to evolve too. Regular reviews give us the opportunity to keep adapting it around the client, while making sure the long-term objectives remain at the heart of every decision."

LIS ALEXANDER,
CHARTERED FINANCIAL PLANNER,
FRANKLYN

30 years. This is where individual advice becomes particularly important.

The principle remains the same: investment decisions should begin with what the money is for and when it will be needed.

Staying focused on the plan

Remaining invested does not mean doing nothing.

A good financial plan should be reviewed regularly. Circumstances change, priorities evolve and what was appropriate five or ten years ago may not necessarily be appropriate today.

The role of ongoing advice is to make sure the plan continues to reflect those changes while providing perspective during periods when markets become uncomfortable.

There will always be another election, interest-rate decision, geopolitical event or alarming headline capable of making investors question whether now is the right time to be invested.

Nobody can remove that uncertainty.

What a long-term financial plan can do is provide a framework for dealing with it, so decisions are driven by your objectives rather than the emotion of the moment.

Because when it comes to investing, predicting the perfect moment can be extraordinarily difficult.

Giving your investments sufficient time may ultimately matter far more.

Financial advice cannot remove market uncertainty or guarantee investment performance. However, regular reviews can help ensure that investment decisions continue to reflect a client's changing circumstances, financial objectives and capacity for risk.

"Some of the most valuable conversations we have with clients happen when markets are turbulent. It's natural to feel nervous when headlines are negative, but that's when having an adviser who understands you and your long-term plan can really matter. Sometimes our role is as much about coaching clients through those periods and helping them stay focused on why the plan was created in the first place as it is about the investments themselves."

LIAM DANAHER,
WEALTH MANAGER, FRANKLYN



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The information in this article does not constitute financial advice and should not be relied upon as a recommendation for any particular investment or course of action. Individual circumstances vary and appropriate financial advice should be sought before making financial decisions.

INTERVIEW WITH
John Illingworth

Long-standing Franklyn client, John Illingworth, tells us about his amazing experience taking part in Strictly Seashell. We sat down with John, his professional dance partner Natalie Goodier from Cadman's Dance Centre and Dianne Gill, Head of Fundraising at Seashell Trust, to talk about an incredible night, the work behind the scenes and the remarkable charity at the heart of it all.

> "**The wait before you actually start feels like an eternity.** I felt myself starting to shake. I can only remember that happening once before, ever, and that was when I was competing for England in horse riding. **It's the waiting for your time to go.**"

John Illingworth has climbed mountains, trekked in the Arctic and travelled to some of the most remote parts of the world in support of charity. He has even represented England in endurance horse riding. Yet ask him about the moments that have genuinely made him nervous and one of them happened beneath the lights of a ballroom.

"I'm not really someone who gets nervous," John tells us. "Pretty much anything, I'm normally fine. But when I was waiting to go onto that dance floor, I could actually feel myself starting to shake."

The occasion was Strictly Seashell, the annual fundraising event in support of Seashell Trust, the Cheadle Hulme-based charity supporting disabled children and young adults with complex needs. Each year, novice dancers are paired with professional partners and embark on months of training before taking to the floor in front of hundreds of guests.

For someone who has conquered the business world, endured extreme environments and faced some fairly intimidating wildlife, learning to dance might not sound like the most daunting challenge on John's list. But as he was about to discover, it would push him outside his comfort zone in an entirely different way.

Learning to dance

John's previous dance experience was, by his own admission, fairly limited.

"Just disco dancing really," he laughs.
His preparation didn't begin quite as planned either. Illness delayed the start of his training by



around six weeks, leaving him and Natalie with less time than expected to prepare for the big night.

Natalie has been dancing since she was two, competed in ballroom and Latin and has been taking part in charity Strictly events since 2013, including three for Seashell. She remembers her first meeting with John particularly well.

“He was a complete beginner and totally starting from scratch,” she says. “But he was dead friendly, really approachable and up for the challenge, which is the main thing. He was dead keen to give anything that I threw at him a go and, probably the most important thing, he was up for having a laugh.”

There was plenty of that along the way. “There were times where we’d do a step and we’d just both fall about laughing because he’d absolutely messed it up royally,” Natalie remembers. “But he was such a great student.”
The dance they had chosen did not make the challenge any easier. John and Natalie were taking on the Viennese waltz, a fast, technically demanding dance with considerable rotation. For a complete beginner, there was an enormous amount to absorb in a relatively short period.

“I’d never done Viennese waltz in a charity event before,” Natalie admits. “When I was told that’s what was suggested that we do, I was like, ‘Really? Are you sure?’”

“With somebody like John, who has never done any dancing like that, you’ve got to think about the technique, the dance steps, the musicality, the timing. And not only that, you’ve then got to pair that with the nerves and dancing in front of however many people are there. So there’s a lot to think about.”

Once he was able to begin, however, John embraced the experience. Rehearsals became a regular fixture and something he genuinely looked forward to.

“I absolutely loved it,” he says. “Every session was a challenge and in between I never stopped thinking about the routine, I even found myself rehearsing steps whilst walking the dogs.”

Natalie could tell.

“After every lesson, we’d dance the routine and video it, so you could see John progressing from week to week,” she says. “I could tell that he was quite clearly practising, which turns out he was, walking his dogs practising. We weren’t coming in and having to recap what we did last time. It was just straight away picking it back up again from where we left off.”

Eventually, there was a point when Natalie realised the hours of practice had paid off and John was no longer simply remembering a sequence of steps.

“The point where I could feel John was just dancing the Viennese waltz and not really concentrating and thinking about what he was doing, he was just dancing, that’s when I thought, ‘Yes, he’s got it. He’s got it.’”

The commitment to Strictly extends far beyond learning the routine. As Dianne explains, there are launch events, filming, photography, fundraising, social occasions, costumes and styling along the way. Over those months, a group of people from very different walks of life gradually become part of the same shared experience.

“We began the event in 2018 and after a few years off during Covid we have really gathered momentum and last year’s event was honestly the best ever. These guys are from all walks of life and they literally got on like a house on fire,” Dianne says. “It became this really amazing community. We are actually welcoming them all back next spring to open the show!”

For the 2026 event, the theme was musicals, with the dancers invited to suggest music that meant something to them. For John, that decision brought an unexpectedly personal dimension to the experience.



A very personal choice

John chose music from The Sound of Music, something forever associated in his mind with his late mother.

“My mother had dementia, and in the last couple of years of her life she would listen to The Sound of Music all the time,” he explains. “She had it on repeat throughout the day for about the last couple of years of her life. I knew the music inside out, it just reminded me of her.”

What had started as another charity challenge now carried a deeper meaning. By the time the event arrived, John and Natalie had spent weeks working together, the routine had become familiar and the music itself carried memories of someone very important to him.

Then there was nothing left to do but wait for their turn.

“The wait before you actually start feels like an eternity,” John remembers. “I felt myself starting to shake. I can only remember that happening once before, ever, and that was when I was competing for England in horse riding. It’s the waiting for your time to go.”

Natalie later offered an explanation that stayed with him: you only get nervous about things you really care about.

John was also surprised to discover that his professional partner had been feeling the pressure herself.

“You don’t think about them getting nervous because she’s done it all her life,” he says. “But she was nervous as well.”

Natalie remembers those final moments vividly.

“I always get nervous when I’m stood waiting to go on. That’s the bit where the nerves kick in,” she says. “But I think nerves are such a good thing because it just shows you care, doesn’t it?”

For Natalie, this particular performance carried an added responsibility because of everything that sat behind it.







"It's such a big thing. You're doing something completely out of your comfort zone in front of so many people and for such an amazing cause. You just want to do the best that you can do and raise as much money as possible."

Showtime

Once the music began, there was no longer any time to think about nerves.

"It was just showtime," John says. "I know if I'm excited I tend to get ahead of the music, and I know for a fact I started off ahead of it!"

In the moment, he was so focused on Natalie and the routine that much of what was happening around him simply disappeared. It was only afterwards, watching the performance back, that he realised how enthusiastically the room had been behind him.

"You can hear everyone shouting, 'Come on, John!' I didn't hear any of that. When you're actually there, you're completely in it."
Natalie did notice the slightly enthusiastic start, but what impressed her was the way John responded to it.

"John did so well. He was a little bit ahead, but what he didn't do is he didn't crumble and let it impact the rest of the dance," she says. "Even though there was that little wobble at the beginning, which happens, it's live, there are loads and loads of people there, you've never danced in front of that many people, I'm so proud of him for pulling it back."

"That just goes to show the amount of work that he put in, because he was able to think, 'Right, I'm a little bit out here, but I know what I'm doing next and I know where I'm supposed to be.' He rectified it really quickly."

For Natalie, the performance was the culmination of a transformation she had watched happen lesson by lesson.

"To see the improvement that he'd made, from when he first came, to hardly being able to do the first couple of steps of the waltz, to smashing





that whole routine, was just incredible. And in such a short space of time as well."

Among those watching was Franklyn CEO Andy Chatterton, who has known John for many years.

"Watching John take to the floor was absolutely mind-blowing. I've known him for seven years and was genuinely blown away by the performance. The whole night was simply incredible and Franklyn was so pleased to support it.

We were especially proud of John. Having known him for so many years, I've seen first-hand his incredible support for charities and the commitment he gives to them. It genuinely means the world to him, and I think everyone in the room could see that on the night."

The dancing eventually finished, but the celebrations didn't. The group had become particularly close during the build-up and John



remembers the party continuing well into the early hours.

“It was like one great big party,” he says. “We were still downstairs celebrating at about four in the morning.”

For Dianne, that sense of enjoyment and togetherness is an important part of Strictly. “We want everyone to go out and have a really good time and enjoy the experience,” she says. “We want them to love every minute of it.”

Natalie felt the same sense of camaraderie among the contestants.

“It was just so full of support and love for one another and excitement, but with a mixture of nerves as well,” she says. “Everybody was willing each other to do well and really supporting each other. The contestants in this event just got so close and were rooting for each other.”

But beneath all the dancing, glamour and celebration sits the reason everyone was there in the first place.

The charity at the heart of it all

Based in Cheadle Hulme, Seashell Trust supports disabled children and young adults with complex needs, providing specialist education, residential care, health services and family support. Its school, college and residential services bring together teachers, carers and other professionals, including occupational therapists, physiotherapists and speech and language teams, with support shaped around the individual needs of each young person.

Although Seashell has deep roots in the North West, its reach is considerably wider. Families travel from across the country to access its specialist expertise.

“We’re local, but I call us a national charity,” Dianne explains. “For some young people, Seashell is the only place that has what they need.”

Perhaps the most powerful example Dianne gives is communication. Some of the young people Seashell supports communicate using signs or pictures, others through specialist communication technology, while those with multiple sensory impairments may use tactile methods. Finding the right way for one young person to express themselves can take extraordinary levels of expertise, patience and care.

“Most of our students are one-to-one. The communication strategies that are put in place are different for each of them,” Dianne explains. “When you find that way for somebody to communicate, whether that is sign language, pictures, a device or something tactile, it can completely change things for the family.”

Sometimes that breakthrough can be profound.

“Our families may never have been told, ‘I love you’ by their child,” Dianne says. “Then we find a way of communicating that.”



For families, a breakthrough like that can be life-changing. It might be expressing a choice, communicating a need or sharing an emotion for the first time. Behind those moments are teams Dianne describes with obvious admiration.

> "The teams that work with our students are outstanding," she says. "They're outstanding people. It's a real vocation."

Seeing where the money goes

For Natalie, the importance of the fundraising became even more tangible after Strictly. A few months after the event, she visited Seashell with John and some of their fellow contestants and saw the charity's work for herself.

"I'm very proud to have been part of the event and to raise so much money for Seashell, which, having gone round Seashell, is just the most incredible place," she says. "When I went to see Seashell, I was like, 'Oh my God.' You just don't realise what that money is going to. And just to see it, I was like, 'Wow.'"

Her reaction when the final Strictly fundraising figure was revealed had been much the same.

"When they announced on the night how much we'd raised, my jaw hit the floor. It's insane, isn't it? But fantastic for Seashell. Just amazing."

The 2026 event raised £458,607, an extraordinary contribution for an organisation that needs to raise £2 million every year to help fund its services and the additional opportunities it provides for the young people and families it supports.

Making more possible

Seashell's work extends far beyond the classroom. Some young people live within specialist residential accommodation on its campus, while therapy, communication support, health and wellbeing and opportunities to develop greater independence are woven into everyday life.

While statutory funding contributes towards education and care, Dianne explains that much of what allows Seashell to go further depends upon charitable support.

"Education and care are funded by local authorities, but that's it," she says. "Everything else, the facilities, maintaining those facilities, assistive technology, health and wellbeing,

physical activity, those are things we have to fundraise for and we have to raise £2 million per year to provide our services."

This is where Strictly Seashell becomes much more than an entertaining night out. Funds are generated through the dancers' own fundraising, sponsorship, table sales, silent and live auctions and a special pledge, where guests are introduced to a particular aspect of Seashell's work and invited to help make it possible.
The generosity in the room continued to build throughout the evening, creating an atmosphere Dianne says is difficult to describe until you experience it.

"There's a real sense that everybody is there for the same reason," she says. "People understand what their support can mean to the young people and families at Seashell, and you really feel that connection in the room. We managed to raise £458,607 from the event, which is a staggering amount of money that will do so much good."

The money matters enormously, but so does the awareness created by the dancers themselves. Each participant introduces Seashell to their own circle of friends, family, colleagues and clients, creating relationships with the charity that can continue long after the music stops.

SEASHELL TRUST AT A GLANCE

Seashell Trust was originally established in Salford in 1823 as a school for Deaf children, initially supporting eight girls and six boys.

The name Seashell Trust was chosen to honour the organisation's roots. The conch shell is similar in shape to the cochlea, or inner ear.

Today, Seashell supports disabled children and young adults with the most complex needs, providing specialist education, care and health services.

Approximately 130 students attend Seashell's school and college each year. However, through its facilities, professional expertise, family support and wider range of services, the charity benefits more than 8,000 people each year.

Education and care: Seashell's specialist school, college and residential services provide highly individual education and support for young people aged four to 25.

Specialist expertise: Teachers and carers work alongside other professionals, including occupational therapists, physiotherapists and speech and language teams.

Communication and independence: Seashell helps young people find ways to communicate, develop skills, build confidence and achieve greater independence.

A national reach: Although based in the North West, Seashell supports young people and families from across the country.

Opening opportunities: Last year, 15% of Seashell's college leavers went into some form of employment, around four times higher than the national average for people with a learning disability in a job.

Why fundraising matters: Seashell needs to raise £2 million every year. Charitable support helps fund specialist facilities, assistive technology, health and wellbeing activities, family support and wider opportunities beyond statutory education and care provision.







Why John keeps saying yes

For John, Strictly is part of a much longer commitment to supporting charities. Rather than continually returning to friends, family and colleagues for sponsorship, he tries to choose one significant challenge at a time and give it his full attention.

“I like to try and do one charity event a year,” he explains. “I rotate them because if you do one now and then another one three months later, you’re asking the same people again. By leaving some space, it makes it more successful when you do it.”

Those challenges have taken him around the world.

“I’ve been to the Arctic twice and done an Arctic trek. I’ve done Antarctica, Kilimanjaro and Mount Meru.”

John’s support for good causes has also gone beyond taking on fundraising challenges. His philanthropy has included practical support, including previously funding a minibus, reflecting a wider commitment to helping charities in ways that can make a lasting difference.

It was on Mount Meru that John encountered a situation that provides a rather wonderful comparison with his Strictly experience. Needing to visit the bathroom during the night, he opened the door of the mountain hut and discovered three Cape buffalo standing outside.

“One ran off and the other two just stood looking at me,” he recalls. “I thought, ‘Well, I’ll hold it.’ And I shut the door, waited for 10 minutes then opened it again, they were still there staring straight at me! Fortunately there was another exit I could quietly use.”

Which raises the obvious question: what was more frightening, finding himself face-to-face with Cape buffalo in the middle of the night or standing beside Natalie waiting for the music to begin?



John laughs.

“The buffalo didn’t make me shake.”

It is a wonderfully understated answer, but one that perhaps captures the experience perfectly. John has spent years deliberately challenging himself to support causes he cares about. Strictly required no altitude or wild animals, but it asked him to do something completely unfamiliar, trust his dance partner and walk into the middle of a crowded room to perform.

And it appears the experience has left a lasting impression. John has continued his lessons with Natalie since Strictly and has already moved on to his next challenge.

“He has kept it going,” Natalie laughs. “We’re on the tango now.”

For Natalie, seeing somebody make that journey from complete beginner to dancer is one of the reasons she continues to take part in events like Strictly Seashell.

“It’s so rewarding because not only have you got the raising money for the charity side of things, you’ve got seeing a non-dancer, in six weeks, eight weeks, become a dancer,” she says. “It’s a really lovely thing to be part of.”

More importantly, behind the challenge was a cause worth doing it for. Strictly gave John an experience he will never forget, gave Franklyn an evening that made us immensely proud of a long-standing client and friend, and helped more people discover the extraordinary work Seashell carries out every day.

Sometimes stepping outside your comfort zone doesn’t require travelling to the other side of the world. Sometimes you simply have to waltz out of it.

SUPPORT SEASHELL TRUST

Seashell Trust needs to raise £2 million every year to continue providing the specialist facilities, expertise, family support and wider opportunities that make such a difference to the children and young adults it supports.

To find out more about Seashell Trust, make a donation, fundraise, volunteer or discover corporate and philanthropic ways to support its work, visit **seashelltrust.org.uk**



CELEBRATING **THE NEXT GENERATION** OF LOCAL TALENT

Across Cheshire and Staffordshire, there are remarkable young people pursuing their ambitions, developing their talents and achieving extraordinary things. From sport and the arts to business and beyond, our region is home to a new generation with exciting futures ahead.

Through Franklyn Futures, we want to shine a spotlight on these individuals, share their stories and celebrate the dedication, determination and hard work behind their achievements. It's also an opportunity to raise awareness of emerging local talent and encourage our community to get behind the next generation.

We begin with 17-year-old racing driver Jake Critchley from Congleton, whose impressive debut season in motorsport is already turning heads. With big ambitions and a promising career ahead, Jake is a fantastic example of the young talent we're proud to champion.

Chasing **the Dream**

FRANKLYN Future Talent

At just 17, Congleton racing driver Jake Critchley is already making his mark in motorsport. After turning what was supposed to be a one-off race into an impressive first season, he tells us about podiums, pressure, balancing racing with college and his ambition to take the next step.

Most teenagers have enough to contend with balancing college, friends and deciding what they might want to do next. For 17-year-old Jake Critchley, add race weekends, Friday testing, hours on a simulator and Air Cadets.

It is a busy life, but that suits him perfectly. "I'm someone who has to be busy all the time, otherwise I get bored," says Jake. "So yes, it's busy, but I would rather be busy than bored."

This year has been Jake's first season racing cars competitively in the MSVR Focus Cup. Remarkably, the original plan wasn't to contest a full season at all. Jake and his family intended to enter the opening round at Donington Park, gain some experience and see how things went.

"We actually only planned to be in the championship for round one," he explains. "But I was competitive and we enjoyed it so much that we went on to do Snetterton and Oulton. By that time I was leading the Rookie standings, so we decided to commit to the whole season."

From karting to cars

Jake's fascination with motorsport began almost from birth. His dad tells him that, at only a few weeks old, he would sit watching NASCAR on television. Growing up, trips to watch the British Touring Car Championship at Oulton Park and visits to car shows turned that fascination into something more serious.

His own journey behind the wheel began with a taster session at TeamSport in Stoke. After being told he had a natural ability, Jake spent two years competing in the British Indoor Karting Championship and even set the track record at his home circuit.

Rather than follow the conventional route into outdoor karting, Jake and his family decided to go straight into cars. He gained his race licence at just 15 and tested Junior Saloon and Fiesta Junior cars at Donington Park, Mallory Park and Oulton Park before discovering the Focus Cup.

His goal for that first race was simple: "I just wanted to bring the car home safely, learn the car and see how high up the order I could get." The results quickly suggested he might be capable of much more.

A season nobody expected

The breakthrough came at Snetterton. Racing there for the first time, Jake finished third overall and secured his first podium.



“I mainly remember being shocked that I actually managed to get third,” he says. “I never expected in a million years that I would be where I was and where I am now.”

That result remains his favourite moment of the season and helped turn a one-race experiment into a full championship campaign. Winning the Rookie title would now be a significant milestone.

“It would mean so much,”

he says. “It would prove to myself that I can race cars at a decent level, but it would also make a statement to win the Rookie title in my first ever season of car racing.”

There is plenty happening away from the podium too. Race weekends often begin on Thursday evening, followed by Friday testing, qualifying and racing across Saturday and Sunday. Jake is frequently arriving at circuits he has never driven before, so the first sessions are spent learning the track before experimenting with his driving and the car’s set-up.

Then, on Monday, it is back to college.

Life at 100mph

“Balancing racing and college is extremely hard,” Jake admits. “Sometimes I have to take the Friday off. On top of all that I’m also in the Air Cadets, so my schedule is even busier.”

Jake is equally fascinated by the parts of motorsport spectators rarely see: the preparation, concentration and split-second decisions taking place inside the car.

“There are so many things people don’t see,” he says. “You have the pressure to act quickly if something happens. You have a split second to make a choice and one wrong choice could see you in the wall or even on your roof.”

His most nerve-racking experience so far was a brake failure during testing at Oulton Park. Yet when he isn’t at a circuit, Jake is often back behind a virtual wheel, using his simulator to prepare for the next race.

He has also developed his own pre-race soundtrack. Lost Frequencies’ *Where Are You Now* and Gerry Rafferty’s *Baker Street* are his two regular choices before arriving at the circuit.

Looking to the next grid

Jake is realistic about how difficult it is to become a professional racing driver, but his ambitions are high. The British Touring Car Championship, British GT and GT World Challenge Europe are all places he would one day love to compete.

“To be professional is the dream, as hard as it is”

he says.

For 2027, his ideal next step would be either the MINI Challenge Trophy or Ginetta GT Academy. Making that progression, however, will depend heavily on attracting commercial support.

Motorsport is expensive and Jake is quick to acknowledge the sacrifices his family has already made. “Things like holidays and even free time have all had to be sacrificed, which I’m so grateful to my parents for,” he says.

His ambition is eventually to build a network of sponsors and partners around his racing, rather than relying on one major backer.

“I always say every little helps,” Jake explains. “Anything and everything can make a change in motorsport. It can help me go into bigger championships or help with better equipment. It all adds up.”

Backed by Cheshire

For Jake, there would be something particularly special about building that support close to home.

“I think local backing is one of the most important things you can have in motorsport,” he says. “Not just people in Congleton, but people and companies in Cheshire. It all helps to add to the community.”
“To my knowledge Congleton has never had a racing driver, so to be the first would be amazing. Local backing would make it even better. It makes you think the people back home believe in you.”

For now, the focus remains on finishing a season that wasn’t originally supposed to happen at all. A few months ago, Jake arrived at Donington simply hoping to bring the car home safely. One race became another, the results began to arrive and a teenager embarking on his first season in cars suddenly found himself fighting at the sharp end of a championship.

Where it leads is impossible to know, but at 17 Jake has plenty of road ahead of him. His dream circuit is Le Mans, his ambition is to race professionally and his immediate goal is simply to keep moving forward.

And somewhere before the next race, *Baker Street* will start playing, Jake will climb into the car and get ready to do it all again.

Follow Jake’s progress on Instagram **@jakecritchleyracing32**

HOT OFF THE PRESS!

Since sitting down with Jake for our interview, we’re delighted to report that he has been crowned 2026 Focus Cup Rookie Champion, securing the title at Brands Hatch!

At just 17, Jake was the youngest rookie competing in an open-age championship, racing predominantly against adult drivers. It’s a remarkable achievement in his debut season and a fantastic start to what promises to be an exciting motorsport career.

Congratulations, Jake, from everyone at Franklyn!





A conversation with
Marco Vaghetti,
Founder and Chief
Brand Officer of ***LANX***

LANX: A NORTHERN BRAND ***FINDING ITS FEET***

Interview by Franklyn Magazine

From its Lancashire roots to a growing presence across British retail and rugby, LANX has built a footwear brand that feels distinctly Northern - proud of its heritage, but never constrained by it.

What began with a more traditional collection of formal footwear has evolved into a much broader proposition, spanning everything from trainers and everyday boots to waterproof outdoor styles. Eight years in, LANX has grown to a team of around 60, with ambitions to take the brand much further still.

At the heart of it all is a clear sense of identity. Lancashire is quite literally in the LANX name, while British manufacturing, local relationships and a refreshingly relaxed approach have helped the business carve out its own place in a crowded footwear market. Along the way, rugby has become an important part of the story too, with relationships stretching from Sale Sharks to some of the biggest clubs and organisations in the sport.

We sat down with founder and Chief Brand Officer Marco Vaghetti to talk about where LANX came from, the risks that helped shape the business and why, despite its growth, keeping hold of that close-knit culture matters more than ever.

Marco, let's go back to the beginning. Where did the idea for LANX come from?

I got a job working for another footwear company in the Rossendale Valley. There was such a rich history of shoe manufacturing in the area, and researching that heritage really got me hooked on footwear.

Driving past the old mills and seeing people who were still working in the industry sparked a real interest for me. That was really where it all began.

What did you want LANX to stand for when you first launched?

From day one, it was about making the best shoes we could, with quality at the forefront.

When we started, we had a much more formal, city-style product and our original line was "from the boardroom to the bar." As LANX grew, though, the brand naturally evolved with us.

We're based in the Ribble Valley countryside and over time we've become more rugged and outdoorsy. It's less about that formal business feel and much more representative of who we are and where we are now.

Lancashire is obviously a huge part of the brand. How important is that Northern identity?

It's a massive part of LANX - it's in the name.

We work with local people, we manufacture here in Lancashire and we're proud of where we come from. We enjoy being able to tell those stories through the brand.

I think when people buy LANX, there's a feeling that they're buying a little piece of Lancashire too.

Footwear is an incredibly competitive market. What did you want to do differently?

I saw an opportunity to do something that felt less old-school.

There are lots of traditional footwear brands with incredible heritage, but we wanted LANX to feel more modern in the way we spoke, the way we photographed the products and the way we portrayed the brand.

It wasn't about losing that sense of quality or craftsmanship. We just wanted to have a bit more fun with it and make the whole thing feel more relaxed and accessible.

The range has expanded significantly since those early days. What does LANX look like today?

We now have six distinct footwear collections, alongside accessories, so the range covers quite a lot.

There's still formal footwear for weddings, work and occasions, but we've also moved into more casual styles, trainers and outdoor footwear, including our 365 Vibram waterproof collection.

Our trainers are manufactured in the UK too, including through our partnership with Walsh in Bolton, so British manufacturing continues to be an important part of what we do.

Where do the ideas for new products come from?

Quite often, they come from a genuine need. The 365 Vibram collection is a good example. We were going to British summer events like the Lancashire Show and Yorkshire Show and dealing with the reality of muddy conditions. We needed footwear that could actually cope with that environment.

That became the starting point for developing the collection.







"We're *ambitious.*"



Some of those moves must have felt like quite a risk at the time?

Definitely. Both the Vibram collection and moving into sneakers were calculated risks.

We launched the sneaker collection in 2020, right at the start of COVID, which obviously wasn't exactly straightforward timing! But those decisions ultimately paid off and those categories have become a massive part of the business.

Eight years in, how big has LANX become?

We're now a team of around 60 and the business turns over around £11–12 million.

When you think back to where we started - with a small, predominantly formal footwear collection - there's been a huge amount of change.

A big part of that growth has come from being prepared to take those calculated risks, whether that was moving into outdoor footwear, launching trainers or developing our partnerships within rugby.

Rugby has become a big part of the LANX story. How did that relationship begin?

It actually started when LANX was only about a month old.







We had a stall at Altrincham Market and Steve Diamond, who was the Sale Sharks coach at the time, came over and asked us about providing shoes for the team.

That relationship grew from there. Over the last eight years we've gone on to work with clubs including Leicester, Gloucester, Harlequins and Bath, as well as the Wales Rugby Union. Will Greenwood, the former England international, is also a LANX brand ambassador.

And that connection with Sale is also where LANX and Franklyn's worlds cross over?

Yes. We'd been aware of Franklyn through that shared Sale Sharks connection.

We've both been around that environment and Will Greenwood has also been keen to bring the two businesses closer together.

As the business continues to grow, what are you determined not to lose?

The close-knit feeling.

Of course, we have to run a profitable business and keep a close eye on the numbers, particularly as we get bigger. But I don't want LANX to suddenly feel corporate because we've grown.
We've got around 60 people now, but we still want it to feel like a tight-knit group. We have monthly staff socials and try to keep that relaxed, family atmosphere. That's really important to us.

So what does the next chapter look like?

We're ambitious.

Over the next five to ten years, we want to expand our newly launched Axis collection, move into clothing and open around ten additional retail stores across the UK.

Those would build on the stores we already have in Lancashire and Manchester's Northern Quarter and give more people the opportunity to experience LANX in person.

Finally, someone is reading Franklyn Magazine and has never owned a pair of LANX. Where should they start?

I'd say have a look at Axis. It's our latest collection and the Chelsea boot has been designed as a real everyday boot - something you can wear on the school run, to the rugby, to the pub or wherever you're heading.

But I'd actually say don't just shop online. Come and see us in the Northern Quarter, or Whalley. You can visit the shop and see the shoes being made. That's the best way to experience LANX.





The Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy chambers at Breathe Vitality

THE GREATEST INVESTMENT YOU WILL EVER MAKE IS... *IN YOURSELF.*

We all know how debilitating stress can be and that looking after yourself inside and out is the key to helping manage our ever-increasingly busy lives and being present for the people we love.

I want to give you some recommendations on some of the latest therapies as well as easy at-home practices to help you not only navigate your way through winter but through your life. I had the following experiences at Breathe Vitality, www.breathevitality.co.uk, in Macclesfield, which is an excellent hub of wellness that features private therapy rooms in the heart of Cheshire.

The Ark Experience

£50 for one session

As a Sound Therapist, I understand the importance and impact that frequency and sound vibration can have in the body, so when I was asked if I would like to sample The Ark for 30 minutes, I jumped at the chance.

The Ark is a quartz-coated cylindrical wellness chamber that uses specific sound frequencies and biofeedback technology to regulate your nervous system. First, you have readings taken to assess your heart rate, tension, stress levels, energy levels and biological age, etc. Then you lie down inside the chamber for a set period of time whilst the frequencies, which are amplified by the quartz, bathe your mind and body to help ease stored stress and tension. Afterwards, your stats are taken again and you can see the difference in the before and after results. I certainly felt calmer and slightly more energised. There were marked

improvements in my stats too. There are other Ark locations in County Kerry, Ashton-under-Lyne and Manchester city centre.

Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy

£99 for 60 minutes

This is targeted oxygen support in a pressurised environment which allows your body to absorb higher levels of oxygen to improve cellular function. There are many papers and studies supporting the benefits of this therapy for illnesses like dementia, Parkinson's, arthritis and depression, as well as general overall wellbeing and sports recovery. I have had HBOT several times before over the years and can't recommend it enough, although I have never been in such a comfortable and relaxing chamber. It houses two reclining chairs, so you can go in with a friend if they wish to book the experience as well, and a screen for entertainment as well as individual oxygen masks. The sensation is similar to an aircraft when it reaches altitude, so your ears may 'pop', but all the time you are breathing in oxygen-rich air. I used this hour to close my eyes and relax, focusing on my breath and enjoying the time away from my phone. There are cumulative effects with Oxygen Therapy, and so booking one of Breathe Vitality's packages may be really beneficial. There are a few to choose from, with a Session Pass like '5 Sessions' for £470.25 (which can be taken over 12 months).

Light Therapy,

from £50, 10–20 mins

A professional-grade Light Therapy Bed that has been developed by clinical experts to deliver red, infrared and blue wavelengths at 'optimal nanometres to penetrate deep into the body', which can reduce inflammation, stimulate natural cellular healing and boost energy. The cylindrical hinged bed has 3,840 super LED bulbs to deliver even coverage of light therapy. Red Light Therapy is extremely popular and now you can buy lots of 'at-home' beauty devices, but their effectiveness can be questionable as some simply don't have strong enough wavelengths to make any real difference. You really need between 630 nm and 660 nm red light to make a difference to the skin: this bed has 660 nm, which reaches the dermis and helps to boost collagen production.

Far-infrared waves at 880 nm help with deeper penetration to the muscles, fascia and joints as well as post-workout recovery.

Blue light waves of 480 nm can help with mood and Seasonal Affective Disorder.

This really is a great standard of Light Therapy Bed and a package of sessions is a must for anyone who suffers the winter blues. If you are thinking of buying any of the 'at-home' light therapy beauty devices or red light mats, check to see if the levels of the red, infrared and blue lights will actually make a difference before you buy.

Cryotherapy

£50 for 20 minutes

A short but mighty therapy!

I stepped into a special booth in just my shorts, special gloves, socks and footwear, and I was exposed to extremely cold air for 3 mins, with music of your choice blasting out in the booth with you. The intense exposure encourages endorphins whilst the Ibiza anthem tracks encouraged some moves!

Afterwards, you step out and feel energised and invigorated. I know a lot of people who enjoy cold-water swimming, which I don't as I can't swim, so this is my version... and I love it!

As with all therapies- consistency is key so to really make a difference in how you feel then look at either their packages or membership . But if you're curious and want to try all of them then do what I did and book **the Breathe Experience - £149 (for one person to try all of these therapies) or take a friend/partner for £249 in total.**
Call 01625324431 or email
hello@breathevitality.co.uk



Armand Beasley

Celebrity makeup artist, actor, presenter, beauty expert and columnist.
www.armandinternationalltd.com



TAKE 5

AT-HOME TIPS FOR FEELING GOOD:

1 Start the day the right way

Upon waking up, take 3 deep breaths, in for 4 counts and out for 6.

2 Stretch!

Sit on the bed and stretch your arms up, then lie back and stretch your whole body.

3 Sky before screen

Avoid your mobile for as long as possible and take a look outside. Even on the dark winter mornings, your eyes can adjust to see and notice things.

4 Heart Coherence

At the end of the day, when you're in bed, close your eyes, put your hand on your heart and take a deep breath into your heart and think of something that you're grateful for, and exhale slowly through pursed lips. Repeat another two times with two different thoughts of gratitude.

5 Sleep hygiene

A healthy amount of good-quality sleep is really important. A cool room temperature with adequate ventilation. A pillow that supports your neck with a silk-style pillowcase as it's kinder to your face. No mobile devices in the room... if you use it as an alarm clock, buy an alarm clock. Try and reduce the devices and radiation that you have in your bedroom: no TV, no router, no phones, etc.

PRO Body Glow BY Armand Beasley



£29.99
85g

THE BEST INNOVATIVE BODY CARE AWARD WINNER 2025

BEST BEAUTY + WELLNESS BALM I BEST MENS BALM

Pro Body Glow is the multi award winning 100% natural highshine nourishing multipurpose balm which was created by renowned makeup artist Armand Beasley and ethical beauty brand, Buzzbalm. The non greasy formula gives a beautiful gleam to the skin as well as nourishing the driest of skins. Great for men and women as a handy multitasker whether you choose to use it on your lips, cheekbones, legs, décolletage or all over.

Have you got it glowing on?

★★★★★

"Love it, magic in a tin! It's easy to apply and gives that amazing glow without being glittery or feeling greasy! I've been complimented on my skin several times while I have worn this."
- Lfsc, United Kingdom

★★★★★

"Gorgeous, versatile product - Started off using it as a highlighter for nights out and hols and now it's my go-to-moisturiser. Also lasts a while as you only need to use a small amount!"
-Jane B, United Kingdom

probodyglow.co.uk

ELEVATE YOUR **GIFTING GAME**

CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

Hello I'm Janemarie, your personal shopper



If you're looking for a bespoke and confidential service that can cater to all your needs, look no further than Urban Angels London. Established in 2004 by London-based entrepreneur, Janemarie Mazoudier, Urban Angels is a luxury concierge service that offers a wide range of services, including gift sourcing, gift wrapping, interior projects, and corporate and private events.

Founder, Janemarie, started her career in the music industry, where she had the privilege of working with some of the world's most talented artists. When she returned from maternity leave, she began helping some of these artists with their shopping needs, party plans, and event organisation. The rest, as they say, is history.

Today, Urban Angels is a well-established outfit that prides itself on its ability to come up with creative ideas and source all kinds of gifts, wrap them beautifully, and deliver them on your behalf anywhere in the world. Whether you're looking for a unique gift for a loved one, need help organising a fairytale event, or want to spruce up your home or office, and in need of a project manager, Urban Angels has got you covered.

For further information about Urban Angels please visit: **urbanangelslondon.com or contact Janemarie at j@urbanangelslondon.com Tel. 07711 433034**

The Art of Giving

CHRISTMAS WRAPPING WITH A LITTLE IMAGINATION, A LITTLE RECYCLING AND A LOT OF LOVE

For me, the wrapping has always been part of the present. I've been sourcing and wrapping gifts for clients for many years, and I still love that moment when an ordinary box disappears beneath beautiful paper, ribbon and a few carefully chosen finishing touches. There's something rather wonderful about receiving a present that someone has taken the time to make look special.

But beautiful gift wrapping doesn't have to mean buying rolls of expensive new paper, matching ribbons and elaborate decorations. Some of my favourite parcels have been created from things I already had, or things that might otherwise have been thrown away.

Christmas is the perfect time to rummage through cupboards, drawers and boxes and see what you can reinvent.

Look at what you already have

I'm a great believer in recycling and reusing, particularly at Christmas when we generate so much waste.

Brown paper is one of my staples. It's inexpensive, recyclable and a wonderful blank canvas. Add beautiful ribbon and it suddenly looks incredibly chic. Tie it with string and a sprig of rosemary or pine and it becomes rustic and natural. You can stamp it, paint it, draw on it or personalise it with someone's name.

Newspaper can look fabulous too. Choose pages with interesting typography or black-and-white print and finish with velvet ribbon, raffia or string. Maps, sheet music, children's drawings and leftover wallpaper can all make wonderful alternatives to conventional wrapping paper.

And start saving things now. Beautiful ribbons from presents you've received, interesting pieces of cord, old Christmas cracker decorations and little embellishments can all go into a box ready to be rediscovered next Christmas.



Give Christmas cards another life

Before recycling last year's Christmas cards, look at the fronts.

A lovely robin, star, Father Christmas, piece of typography or winter scene can simply be cut out, punched with a small hole and threaded with ribbon or string to make a gift tag.

Make rectangles, circles or stars, or simply cut around the image itself. It costs nothing, gives something another life and often looks far more interesting than a packet of matching shop-bought labels.

Colour code Christmas

If you're wrapping several presents for each person, one of my favourite tricks is to give everyone their own colour.

You could use green paper for one person and red for another, or keep the paper consistent and colour-code the ribbons instead.

Choose colours that work beautifully together and suddenly the presents beneath the tree look coordinated rather than chaotic. More importantly, you instantly know who each parcel belongs to.
If one person's gifts are always tied with green velvet ribbon and another's with red and white stripes, you don't even need a tag on every present. One beautiful personalised tag on their main gift can be enough.



Raid the jewellery box

Vintage jewellery can be wonderful for Christmas wrapping.

An old brooch, a single earring that's lost its partner, a little charm or an inexpensive string of beads can completely transform a parcel. Thread it through the ribbon or attach it to the bow and suddenly the wrapping becomes part of the gift.

I particularly love doing this when the jewellery itself has a story. It gives the present another layer of personality.

Obviously, I wouldn't attach Granny's priceless diamond brooch to something that's going to be left beneath the tree with the dog, but you get the idea!

Think beyond paper

Old silk scarves are another favourite.

Fabric wrapping can look incredibly luxurious and there's no waste at all. A vintage silk scarf tied around a box is beautiful, and the scarf itself becomes an additional present.

Look at remnants of fabric too. Linen, velvet, tartan and even an old piece of beautiful curtain fabric can work.

Don't worry if the edges aren't absolutely perfect. Sometimes a slightly undone, relaxed finish is much more charming than something that looks as though it's come straight from a department store.

Make it personal

Personalisation doesn't need to be complicated.

Print someone's name repeatedly onto plain paper, use alphabet stamps or stickers, or simply write directly onto the parcel with a good pen.

If you have children, get them involved. Give them brown paper with white, gold or red paint and let them make stars, spots, Christmas trees or simple brush marks.

It doesn't need to be perfect.
That's precisely the point.

A piece of wrapping paper hand-painted by a child for a grandparent is far more memorable than another roll of expensive Christmas paper.





Bring the outside in

Some of the loveliest finishing touches are either free or cost next to nothing.

A little cutting of pine, eucalyptus, rosemary, thyme or bay tucked beneath a ribbon looks beautiful and smells wonderful. Pinecones and cinnamon sticks work beautifully too.

And dried orange slices are one of my absolute favourites. They bring gorgeous natural colour to a simple parcel, particularly against brown paper, and they're incredibly easy to make yourself.

Slice oranges thinly, gently blot away the excess juice and dry them slowly in a low oven until they've lost their moisture, turning them occasionally. Once thoroughly dried, thread them with string, attach them to ribbon or simply tuck one beneath a bow.

But don't decide to do this on Christmas Eve. Start making them now.

Any leftovers can even be added to your Christmas tree.

As with all embellishments, don't overdo it. You don't need a miniature forest attached to every present. One dried orange slice, one beautiful piece of greenery or one old decoration is often enough.

Knowing when to stop is one of the secrets of good wrapping.

Measure twice, cut once

One of the biggest mistakes people make is using far too much paper.

Before cutting, place your box on the paper and bring the paper around it. You need enough to overlap neatly, but not so much that you're wrestling with great folds of excess paper at each end.

At the sides, the paper should come a little over halfway up the depth of the box. Too much creates bulky ends; too little leaves you desperately trying to hide a gap with ribbon.

Take 30 seconds to measure before you cut. It saves paper, makes wrapping easier and gives you a much neater finish.





And always crease your edges. Run your fingers firmly along the corners of the box. It's a tiny detail that immediately makes a parcel look professionally wrapped.

The finishing touch

Ribbon is where you can really have fun.

I keep ribbon throughout the year: velvet, grosgrain, satin, stripes, baker's twine and beautiful pieces salvaged from previous gifts all find their way into my ribbon box.

For a classic bow, leave yourself enough ribbon. Cross it around the box, pull it firmly so it sits neatly against the paper and tie your bow without twisting it.

Then spend a moment adjusting it. Pull the loops until they're even and trim the tails on an angle or into a little V. Don't be frightened to undo it and start again. A good bow rarely happens by accident.

Equally, not every present needs an enormous bow. Sometimes a simple piece of velvet ribbon tied around a brown-paper parcel is all it needs.

Make wrapping part of Christmas

My biggest piece of advice is simple: don't leave it all until Christmas Eve.

Put some music on, pour yourself something you like, clear a table and make an evening of it.

Get everything out before you start: paper, scissors, tape, ribbon, string, recycled Christmas-card tags, greenery and your box of saved treasures. Once you can see everything together, ideas begin to happen.

Most importantly, don't become obsessed with perfection.

A slightly wonky hand-painted star, a tag made from an old Christmas card, a vintage brooch, a piece of ribbon you've saved for years or a dried orange slice you've made yourself gives a present personality.

At Christmas, we spend so much time thinking about what to give that sometimes we forget about how we give it.







For me, the anticipation begins before the present is opened.

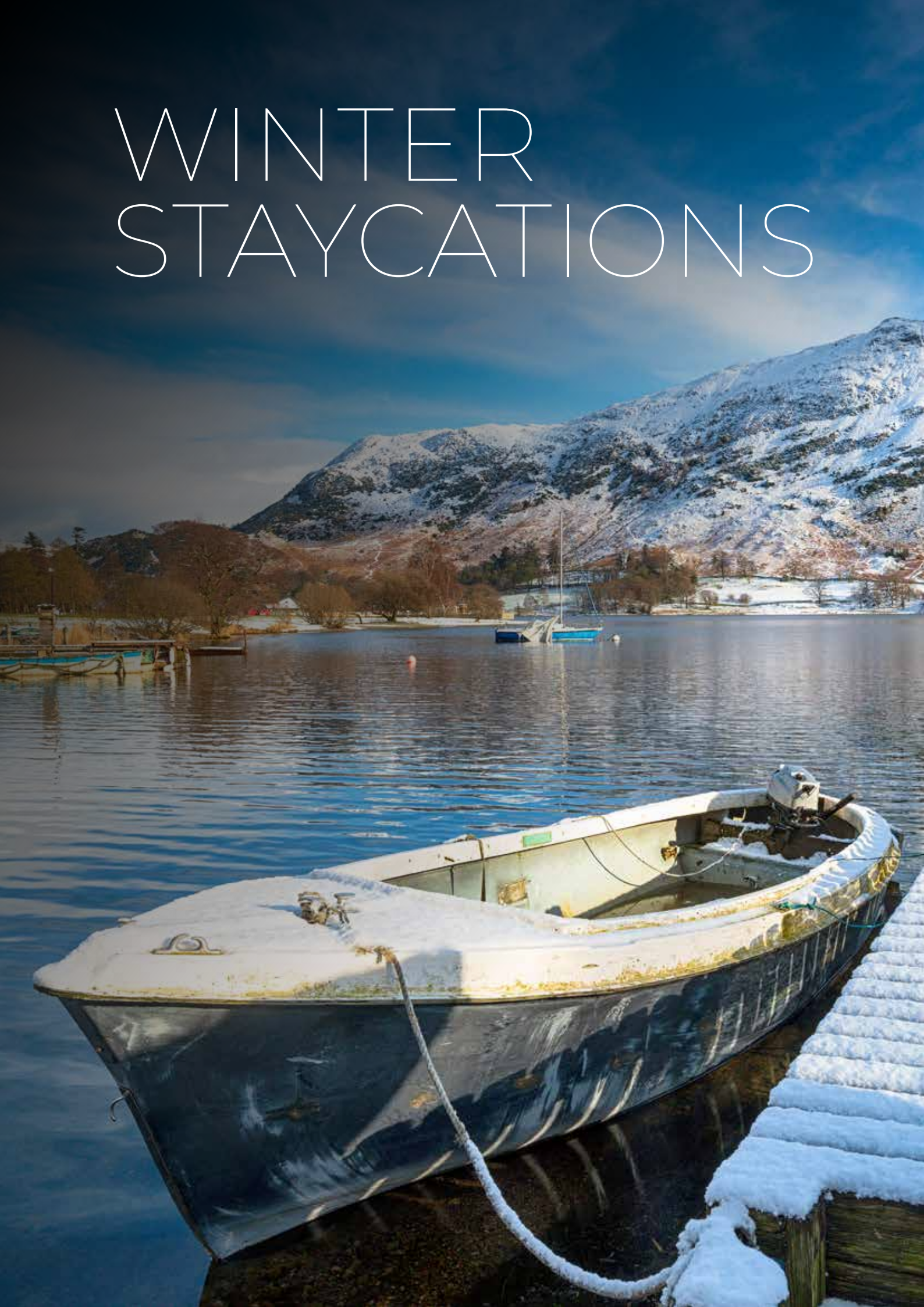
A beautifully wrapped parcel says:

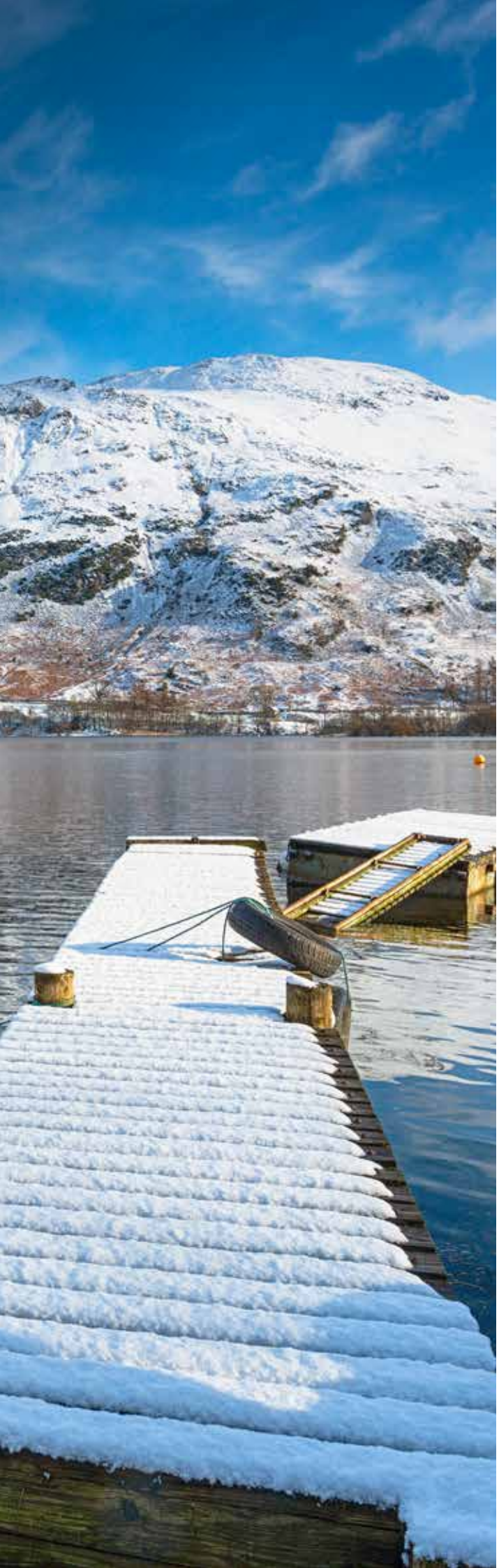
I thought about you.
I took my time.
I wanted this to feel special.

And really, that is the art of giving.

All gift wrapping photography by Urban Angels London. A gift wrapping service is available throughout the year.

WINTER STAYCATIONS





Six beautiful British destinations for brisk winter walks, memorable experiences and cosy evenings.

There is something rather wonderful about getting away in winter. The summer crowds have disappeared, the countryside takes on a completely different character and there is a certain satisfaction in returning from a long walk to a roaring fire, a good glass of red and the prospect of an excellent dinner.

While we might traditionally associate holidays with sunshine and warmer climates, some of Britain's most beautiful destinations arguably come into their own during the colder months. Mist rising from a lake, frost covering the hills, deserted beaches and historic villages glowing with Christmas lights all offer a different kind of escape.

And the best part? There's no airport, no luggage allowance and, depending on where you choose, you could be checking into somewhere rather special within a couple of hours of leaving home.

We've selected six specific destinations that offer the perfect combination of outdoor adventure, memorable experiences and somewhere lovely to retreat to when the temperature drops.



01 GLENRIDDING, THE LAKE DISTRICT

Lakeside walks beneath the mountains

Tucked beneath the dramatic slopes of Helvellyn, at the southern end of Ullswater, Glenridding is one of the Lake District's most beautiful villages and a particularly lovely place to escape during winter.

While some of the region's better-known destinations remain busy throughout the year, Glenridding has a quieter, more intimate atmosphere. The surrounding mountains rise steeply above the village, the lake stretches north towards Pooley Bridge and the changing winter light creates some extraordinary views.

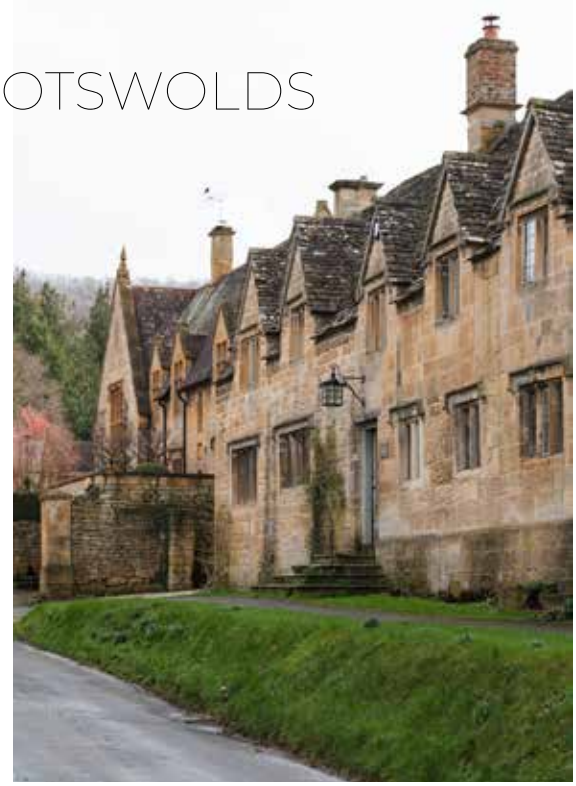
One of the best ways to experience the area is to follow the Ullswater Way towards Aira Force, where a spectacular waterfall tumbles through ancient woodland. The route offers beautiful lakeside scenery, although winter conditions can make sections muddy and slippery.

For something different, take a trip aboard an Ullswater Steamer. These traditional passenger boats have been part of life on the lake for generations, and seeing the surrounding mountains from the water is a wonderful experience, particularly when the higher fells are dusted with snow.

Glenridding is also home to some beautiful places to stay. A lakeside hotel provides the perfect base, with mountain views, afternoon tea and the prospect of a long dinner after a day exploring.

The winter experience: A walk to Aira Force, a cruise across Ullswater and an evening overlooking the lake.

02 BROADWAY, THE COTSWOLDS



Honey-coloured cottages and country-house charm

Often described as one of the prettiest villages in England, Broadway looks as though it was designed specifically for a romantic winter weekend.

Its wide, historic High Street is lined with honey-coloured stone buildings, independent boutiques, art galleries, antique shops and traditional coaching inns. When the Christmas decorations appear and the lights begin to glow in the early evening, the village becomes particularly atmospheric.

For those who enjoy walking, the climb to Broadway Tower is a must. Standing high above the village on the Cotswold escarpment, this distinctive 18th-century folly offers remarkable views across the surrounding countryside. On a clear winter morning, the landscape can stretch for miles, with frost-covered fields and distant hills creating a beautiful backdrop.

Back in the village, there is plenty to occupy a leisurely afternoon. Browse the galleries, explore the independent shops or settle into one of Broadway's historic inns for lunch.

The village has an excellent selection of boutique hotels and restaurants, making it an ideal destination for anyone who prefers their winter walks to end somewhere with excellent food, comfortable surroundings and a roaring fire.

The winter experience: A crisp morning walk to Broadway Tower, followed by an afternoon exploring the village and dinner in a traditional Cotswold inn.





Betofoto / Shutterstock.com



03 BAMBURGH, NORTHUMBERLAND

For a winter escape with a little more drama, Bamburgh is difficult to beat.

This beautiful coastal village is dominated by one of Britain's most impressive castles, perched high above an enormous stretch of golden sand. During the summer, Bamburgh attracts visitors from across the country, but winter brings a completely different atmosphere.

The beach can feel almost deserted, with waves crashing against the shoreline and the magnificent castle providing a spectacular backdrop. Wrap up warmly and take a long walk along the sands, enjoying the extraordinary sense of space that makes this coastline so special.

Bamburgh Castle itself is well worth exploring, with its grand interiors, fascinating history and commanding views across the North Sea.

Nearby, the village offers traditional pubs, independent shops and welcoming places to escape the cold.

For a particularly memorable experience, venture inland towards Northumberland National Park and Kielder, where some of England's darkest skies provide exceptional opportunities for stargazing. On a clear winter evening, a visit to Kielder Observatory can reveal a night sky rarely seen from our towns and cities.

Back on the coast, a beautiful country inn or secluded cottage makes the perfect retreat, especially with a seafood supper and a good bottle of wine waiting at the end of the day.

The winter experience: A windswept walk beneath Bamburgh Castle, followed by an evening of stargazing beneath Northumberland's famously dark skies.

04 GRASSINGTON, THE YORKSHIRE DALES

Cobbled streets, winter walks and traditional Yorkshire hospitality

Nestled in the heart of Wharfedale, Grassington is a beautiful stone-built village that captures everything people love about the Yorkshire Dales.

Its cobbled market square, narrow streets and traditional shops give it a wonderfully timeless quality, while the surrounding countryside offers some of the region's finest walking.

During winter, the village becomes especially atmospheric. Frost settles across the fields, mist drifts through the valley and the surrounding hills provide a dramatic backdrop to the historic buildings.

One of the loveliest walks begins in the village and follows the River Wharfe towards Linton Falls, where the water tumbles over a series of limestone steps. The route is relatively short, making it ideal for a relaxed morning before returning to Grassington for lunch.

Fans of television drama may recognise the village as the fictional Darrowby in All Creatures Great and Small, with its picturesque streets providing the setting for the popular series.

Grassington also has a wonderful festive tradition, with its Dickensian celebrations bringing Victorian costumes, music and seasonal entertainment to the village on selected dates in December.

For accommodation, look for a traditional Yorkshire inn or a cosy cottage within walking distance of the square. After a day exploring the Dales, there are few better places to spend an evening than beside a roaring fire with a hearty meal and a glass of something warming.

The winter experience: A walk to Linton Falls, an afternoon exploring Grassington's historic streets and a traditional Yorkshire dinner beside the fire.



05 AVIEMORE, THE SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS

Snow-covered forests and a proper winter adventure

If you're looking for a winter escape that feels like a genuine adventure, Aviemore offers something quite extraordinary.

Situated in the Cairngorms National Park, this Highland village is surrounded by ancient forests, mountain scenery and beautiful lochs. During the colder months, the landscape can take on an almost Alpine appearance, with snow-covered peaks rising above the trees.

Aviemore is one of Britain's best-known winter sports destinations, with skiing and snowboarding available in the surrounding mountains when conditions allow. But you don't need to be a skier to enjoy the area.

The nearby Rothiemurchus Estate offers wonderful opportunities to explore the ancient Caledonian pine forests. A walk around Loch an Eilein is particularly memorable, with its ruined island castle, peaceful woodland and beautiful reflections across the water.

For something genuinely unusual, visit the Cairngorm Reindeer Herd, Britain's only free-ranging reindeer herd. Guided visits offer the opportunity to see these remarkable animals in their Highland surroundings, although access and activities depend on weather conditions.

Aviemore also has a growing selection of beautiful Highland lodges, boutique accommodation and country-house hotels. After a day in the fresh mountain air, the appeal of a comfortable retreat, a good Scottish whisky and a long dinner is difficult to resist.

The winter experience: A walk around Loch an Eilein, a visit to the Cairngorm reindeer and an evening in a secluded Highland lodge.





06 BATH, SOMERSET

Georgian elegance, thermal waters and winter indulgence

Not every winter escape needs hiking boots and muddy footpaths. Sometimes the perfect break involves beautiful architecture, excellent restaurants, a little shopping and plenty of opportunities to relax.

Bath delivers all of this in considerable style.

The city's elegant Georgian streets are particularly atmospheric during the colder months, when the honey-coloured buildings glow beneath the winter light and the independent shops, cafés and restaurants offer welcome retreats from the cold.

A walk through the Royal Crescent, past Bath Abbey and along the River Avon provides a wonderful introduction to the city. History lovers can explore the Roman Baths, while those seeking something more indulgent can enjoy the city's famous thermal waters.

The rooftop pool at Thermae Bath Spa is a particularly memorable experience, allowing visitors to relax in naturally warm mineral-rich water while looking out across the surrounding rooftops. There is something wonderfully decadent about enjoying an outdoor pool in the middle of winter, particularly when the air is crisp and the water is steaming.

Bath is also a wonderful destination for a winter evening. Its restaurants, cocktail bars and boutique hotels make it an ideal choice for a romantic weekend or a few days away with friends.

And if you visit during the festive season, the city's Christmas celebrations add another layer of atmosphere to an already beautiful setting.

The winter experience: A morning exploring Bath's Georgian streets, an afternoon in the rooftop thermal pool and cocktails followed by dinner in one of the city's elegant restaurants.



CaryM / Shutterstock.com

THE JOY OF STAYING CLOSER TO HOME

Perhaps the greatest appeal of a winter staycation is its simplicity. You don't need to travel halfway around the world to experience somewhere extraordinary, and a few days away can feel every bit as restorative as a longer holiday.

Winter also encourages a different pace of travel. There is less pressure to fill every hour, more opportunity to enjoy the places you visit and something particularly satisfying about embracing the outdoors before retreating somewhere warm.

Whether it's a luxury lakeside hotel, a secluded Highland lodge, a cosy country cottage or a beautiful city hotel, the secret to a memorable winter break is often finding the right balance between adventure and relaxation.

So pack a warm coat, a good pair of walking boots and perhaps a book you've been meaning to read.

Some of Britain's best holidays are waiting just beyond your doorstep.





COOKALONG
with Andrew & Allan

As the nights draw in, Andy is back in the kitchen with a proper winter warmer. This time it's a rich, indulgent sticky toffee pudding, served with plenty of warm toffee sauce and, if you're feeling particularly decadent, a generous scoop of vanilla ice cream.

There are certain dishes that seem made for this time of year. When it's cold and dark outside, salads can wait. What you really want is something warm, comforting and preferably covered in toffee sauce.

For this edition of **Cook with Andy**, that means sticky toffee pudding. A wonderfully soft date sponge, rich with dark brown sugar, golden syrup and black treacle, finished with a simple homemade toffee sauce.

And before anyone questions whether this quite fits with Andy's usual commitment to health and fitness, he has an answer ready.

> **"A world-class athlete like myself doesn't often indulge in sweet treats, but I have to say this was one amazing pudding!"**
>
> **Andy**

The other good news is that it is surprisingly straightforward to make. Both the sponge and sauce can be prepared in advance, and the sponge can even be frozen, so you can do the work beforehand and simply warm everything through when you're ready to serve.

STICKY TOFFEE

Serves 6-8

For the pudding:

- 75g soft butter
- 175g dark brown demerara sugar
- 200g self-raising flour, plus extra for dusting
- 1 tbsp golden syrup
- 2 tbsp black treacle
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 200g pitted dried dates
- 1 tbsp bicarbonate of soda

For the toffee sauce:

- 100g sugar
- 100g butter
- 200ml double cream

Let's get cooking

Preheat the oven to 200°C / 400°F / Gas Mark 6.

Thoroughly grease a 23cm tin with 25g of the butter, then dust the inside lightly with flour.

Using a food mixer, blend the remaining butter and dark brown sugar together.

Slowly add the golden syrup, black treacle, eggs and vanilla extract and continue mixing.

Turn the mixer down to a slow speed and gradually add the flour.

Once everything is combined, turn off the mixer.

Place the dates in a saucepan with 300ml of water and bring to the boil.

Purée the dates and water, then add the bicarbonate of soda.

While the mixture is still hot, quickly add it to the cake mixture and combine.

Pour into the prepared tin and bake for 40–45 minutes, until the top is just firm to the touch.

Remove from the oven, allow to cool, then turn out of the tin and cut into squares.

Proper **British comfort** on a spoon.

PUDDING

Andy's **TIP**

The sponge and sauce can both be made in advance, and the sponge freezes well too. Prepare everything ahead of time and you have an impressive winter dessert ready to go with very little last-minute effort.

The all-important sauce

Melt the butter and sugar together in a small saucepan, add the double cream and bring to the boil.

Simmer for a few minutes until the sauce reaches the consistency you like.

When you're ready to serve, reheat the sponge in the microwave or warm it for around five minutes at 180°C / 350°F / Gas Mark 4.

Place onto a plate and spoon over plenty of warm toffee sauce.

A scoop of vanilla ice cream is optional, although after making it this far, it seems a shame not to.




The method, step by step.
FRANKLYN
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A la Carte At Home

Allan is a distinguished private chef renowned for his exceptional talent in crafting bespoke menus using first-class ingredients. With a strong emphasis on allowing flavours to shine in their natural state, Allan's cooking style is both refined and innovative. Having operated his own private catering company for five years, he has honed his skills in creating unforgettable dining experiences for his clients. Allan's expertise in sauces and his dedication to culinary artistry set him apart, delivering exquisite dishes that leave a lasting impression. His rich experience includes working with legendary chef Macro Pierre White and cooking for esteemed celebrities such as Gordon Ramsay, royalty and musicians.

www.facebook.com/alacarteathome


Fitness
should fit
in your life

STRONG FOR LIFE

WHY STRENGTH TRAINING MATTERS AT EVERY AGE

I've worked in fitness for a long time and one thing I've changed my mind on over the years is what being "fit" actually means.

When we're younger, it's easy to associate fitness with how we look. Losing a bit of weight, getting leaner, building muscle or getting ready for a holiday.

These things still matter to people, of course. But I think there's a much better reason to train.

Being strong makes life better.

I don't just mean being able to lift a heavier weight in the gym. I mean having a body that allows you to do the things you enjoy doing and, hopefully, keeps allowing you to do them for a very long time.

Playing football or padel. Skiing. Walking in the Peaks. Running around with your children. Getting through a busy week at work without feeling completely wiped out.

That's the sort of fitness we're interested in at FITISM.

So how much training do we actually need?

Probably less than most people think.

I see people fall into the same trap all the time. They decide they're going to 'get fit', go from doing very little to trying to train five or six times a week, overhaul their diet at the same time and inevitably find it impossible to sustain.

Then they think they've failed.

I'd much rather see someone strength train three times a week consistently for the next three years than train six times a week for the next three weeks. For most busy adults, three good strength sessions a week is a brilliant foundation. Walk plenty. Eat reasonably well. Get enough protein. Try to sleep properly. Don't worry when life occasionally gets in the way.

It's not particularly revolutionary, but it works.

Strength matters more than you might realise

Strength training still has an image problem. Mention lifting weights and some people immediately picture bodybuilding, huge weights and intimidating gyms.

That's not what good strength training needs to look like.

The vast majority of people we coach aren't trying to become competitive athletes. They're people with careers, children, holidays, meals out and busy lives. They want to feel fitter, look better and have more energy, but they don't want fitness to take over their lives.

Nor should it.

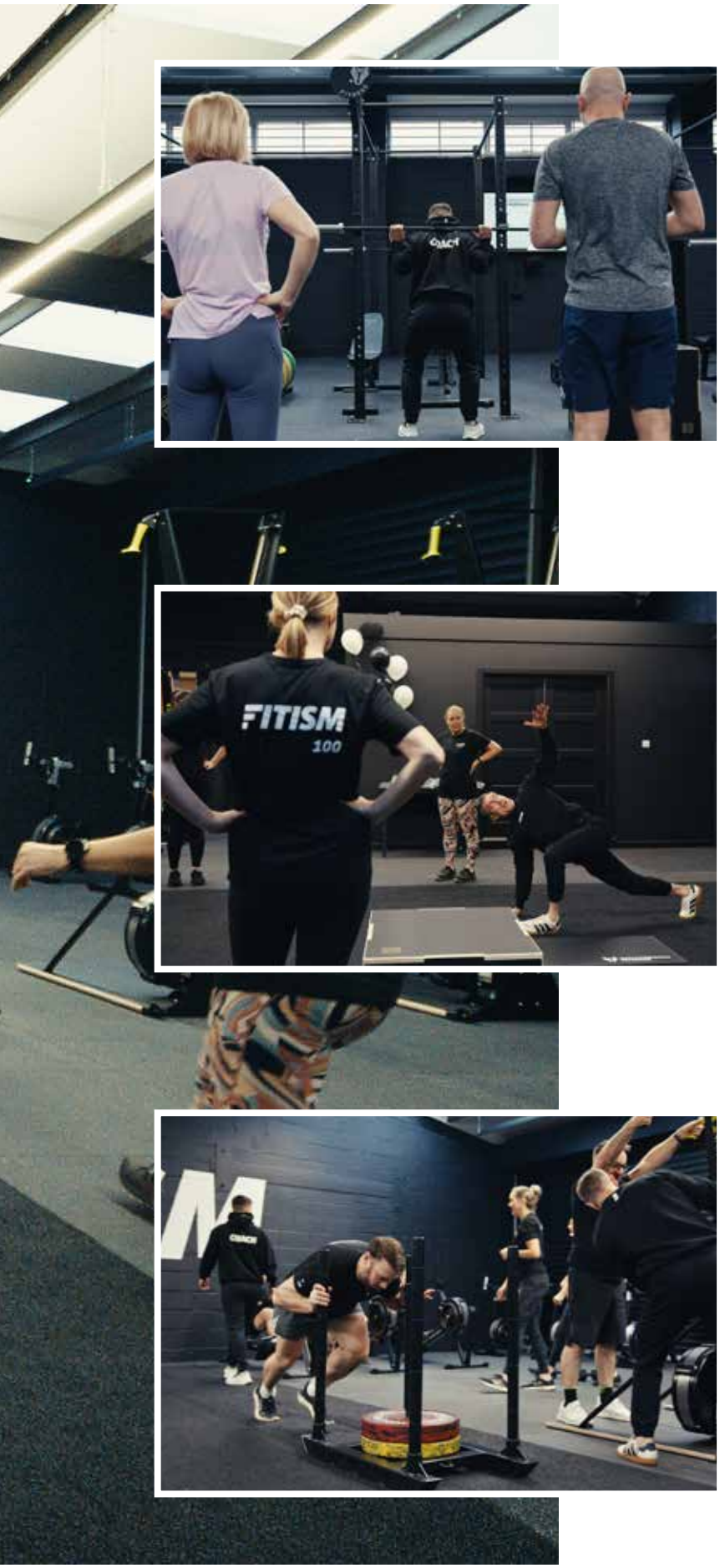
We want someone to notice that they're stronger when they're skiing. That carrying their children feels easier. That they can play five-a-side without their body falling apart. Or simply that something they used to find difficult no longer feels difficult. Those little moments are a pretty good measure of whether your training is working.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Matt Kay is CEO and Co-Founder of FITISM, a small group personal training business with gyms across Cheshire and Derbyshire. FITISM's newest location is opening in Hale, helping more people become stronger, fitter and more confident through expert coaching and intelligent training.

www.fitism.co.uk/gyms



There's also a Longer-term reason to think about strength.

We naturally become more conscious of our health as we get older, but I don't think we should wait until we're 50 or 60 to start thinking about it. If you're in your 30s or 40s, you're not training for old age. You're building and maintaining the physical capacity that you want to take with you into the next few decades.

That's a very different mindset.

Fitness should fit your life

This idea has influenced a lot of what we've built at FITISM. Our philosophy is Fitness That Feels Good, and for me that means fitness should add something to your life rather than constantly demand something from it.

You shouldn't feel guilty because you missed a workout. You shouldn't need to give up meals out. And you definitely don't need to make fitness your entire personality. Train hard when you're there. Do it consistently. Look after yourself reasonably well outside the gym. Then go and enjoy your life.

If I could get someone to think differently about one thing, it would probably be this: Don't just train because you want to look better in three months. Think about what you want your body to still allow you to do in ten or twenty years. Then start building that body now.

Because the real value of being stronger isn't what you can do inside a gym. It's everything it allows you to do outside of one.



LUXURY LIVING IN **EXCLUSIVE PROPERTIES**

Discover this editions top picks with

STEPHENSON BROWNE



Leycroft Drive
Alsager, Cheshire, ST7

5 3 2

£860,000 Offers Over

This impressive, executive five double bedroom family home sits on a small gated development of five properties, a few minutes' walk from Alsager centre. Built in 2022 by 'Simon Clutton Homes' with energy efficiency in mind.

This home has seen just one owner, and has been beautifully decorated with modern, sleek style throughout. The property comprises a cosy lounge, a stunning large open-plan kitchen/dining/living area with contemporary 'shaker' style kitchen, and twin bi-folding doors to the rear. There is also a principal bedroom with dressing room, en-suite shower room on the ground floor, and access to the garden.

The property has a driveway to the front, providing off-road parking.





For more information:
01270 883 130
alsager@stephensonbrowne.co.uk



Holmshaw Lane, Haslington, Crewe, Cheshire, CW1

5 3 3

£750,000 Offers In The Region Of





An impressive detached family home, enjoying a semi-rural location in the popular village of Haslington, while remaining within walking distance of local amenities.

The property provides generous living space, complemented by a double garage and ample driveway parking. The home combines style and practicality, featuring LVT flooring and a spacious double-aspect living room.

The newly installed kitchen is fitted with integrated appliances, while a separate utility room provides additional space.

The dining area provides a connection from kitchen to garden, opening directly onto a patio, creating an ideal space to enjoy the gardens.

For more information:
01270 763 200
sandbach@stephensonbrowne.co.uk



New Parc House, Park Road, Silverdale, Newcastle-Under-Lyme, ST5

£635,000

4 5 3

New Parc House, located on Park Road in the highly desirable area of Silverdale, is a detached dormer bungalow, fully renovated to an outstanding standard, offering a superb blend of luxury living and eco-efficient features.



The heart of the home is an open-plan kitchen, dining, and living space, featuring extensive storage, a large central island with seating, and high-spec integrated appliances.

Throughout the home, vinyl wood-effect flooring is complemented by underfloor heating. The property is highly energy efficient with 14 solar panels, a ground source heating system, and a private water borehole with treatment system, helping reduce running costs. The low-maintenance grounds include attractive open field views to the rear.



For more information:
01782 625 734
newcastle@stephensonbrowne.co.uk



5 3 3





Oakmont Close, Congleton, CW12

£675,000 Offers Over

An exceptional detached family home, occupying a superb position on one of Mossley's most desirable residential developments. Built by Seddon Homes in 2009, this property enjoys a private setting surrounded by mature greenery.

Beautifully maintained by the current owners, the property is presented in true turnkey condition, offering spacious accommodation enhanced by high-specification fixtures and fittings.

Designed with modern family living in mind, the ground floor offers a versatile layout including a dedicated home office, a separate family room and a lounge with views over the garden. Forming the focal point of the home is the open-plan dining kitchen, ideal for everyday family life.

For more information:
01260 545 600
congleton@stephensonbrowne.co.uk



Crewe Road, Crewe, CW1

£325,000

2 1 2

Rose Tree Cottage is a charming period semi-detached home, located within the Crewe Green Conservation area with beautifully maintained gardens backing directly onto open fields. It is ideal for buyers seeking a character property they can make their own over time.

The accommodation comprises two spacious reception rooms, offering flexible living. The well-maintained kitchen is fully functional and ready for everyday use. The family bathroom is generously appointed with both a bath and a separate shower, providing practicality for modern family living.
A substantial detached outbuilding provides additional storage space. The mature gardens, with established trees and an abundance of wildlife, offer a peaceful setting to enjoy the countryside.





For more information:
01270 252 545
crewe@stephensonbrowne.co.uk

FRANKLYN
COMMUNITY UPDATES

From long-standing partnerships with some of the region's biggest sporting organisations to helping charities access vital funding, Franklyn's work in the community continues to grow. Here are some of the latest projects, partnerships and causes we're proud to support.

THREE MORE YEARS WITH SALE SHARKS

Franklyn has renewed its partnership with Sale Sharks for a further three years, continuing a relationship that first began in 2020.

The new agreement will see Franklyn remain part of the Sharks family while expanding the partnership to include Sale Sharks Women from the 2026/27 season. Franklyn branding will continue to feature across the club, alongside matchday activity and opportunities to bring clients, colleagues and the wider Franklyn community closer to the action.

For Andy Chatterton, the longevity of the relationship is particularly important. What began as a commercial partnership has developed into a genuine connection between two organisations with strong roots in the North West and a shared interest in supporting their communities.

The new three-year agreement means there is plenty more to come, both on and off the pitch.





FRANKLYN TAKES OVER **MATCHDAY**

The Sale Sharks partnership was on full display on 29 March when Franklyn took over matchday for Sale's clash with Bath.

Alongside Franklyn branding around the ground, supporters had the chance to take part in a kicking competition, while the day also provided an opportunity to spend time with some very familiar faces from the Sharks squad, including Tom and Ben Curry.

Former Sale Sharks player Will Cliff, now part of the Franklyn team, was also on hand as the worlds of rugby and Franklyn came together for the day.

The takeover is part of Franklyn's wider ambition for its sporting partnerships to be about more than simply putting a logo around a stadium, creating experiences that clients, families and supporters can genuinely enjoy.





NO ADULTS ALLOWED!

FIND THE 10 HIDDEN OBJECTS

Can you spot all 10? Look closely... some are really well hidden!



☐  ☐  ☐  ☐  ☐  ☐  ☐  ☐  ☐  ☐ 

ODD ONE OUT

Four pictures, one odd one out! There's one object in each row that doesn't fit.

Can you find them?







Can you design **Franklyn Fox's** Christmas jumper?

GET CREATIVE FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN A SMYTHS TOYS VOUCHER AND A CHOCOLATE HAMPER!



Franklyn Fox needs a little help getting ready for Christmas! Can you design him a wonderful Christmas jumper?

HERE'S HOW TO JOIN THE FUN:

1. Scan to download your Franklyn Fox picture.
2. Colour in and design his Christmas jumper.
3. Share on social media and tag Franklyn.
4. Upload a photo of your masterpiece to enter.

Scan here to join the festive fun!

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SJP Approved 20/10/2026