

Lottery money should be just the start for charities

For the past 140 years the EDP has proudly stood in the corner of its readers, doing its best to represent their views, support them and support this fine region.

And today we are proud to be able to continue this work by handing out a share of £250,000 of lottery cash to 14 worthy organisations.

The windfalls – ranging from £10,000 to more than £26,000 – should make a real difference to each of those to benefit.

They will pay for a range of improvements, from better equipment to improved transport to lifesaving tools.

Among those to benefit will be bereaved children, people with disabilities and the elderly.

The hand-outs come at a time when charities are having to cope with decreasing donations from a public hit hard by the recession – and smaller hand-outs from local and national government bodies.

The money couldn't be more needed.

Yet it's not all about financial support. As this paper has often reported, organisations such as these are finding it harder to recruit members of the public willing to give their time to help them out.

The number of people willing to go above and beyond without reward and often without praise is dwindling.

It is our hope, therefore, that by galvanising the public to vote in such a way we have encouraged others to get involved where they can.

Even if it is only a small few hours – it can still make a big difference.

We've set the ball rolling, now it's over to you.

Games must be saved

Norfolk's Village Games has been a fantastic success story for the county.

Last year alone 16,000 people took part, from some 181 villages. Not only does it help to improve community spirit, it's a positive way to encourage people to be more active.

Quite simply, there are no good reasons for it to come to an end. But, as is all too often the case, here lies a decision made because of money, and the project finds itself threatened as its funding from Sport England is due to come to an end.

Granted, every organisation is constrained financially in the current climate – but it seems woefully short-sighted that such a worthwhile project could be no more.

Let's just hope someone steps in to help – or the powers that be see sense.

Happy birthday to mall

It's not just the joy of shopping that Norwich's Castle Mall has brought to the county.

Over the past 20 years thousands of jobs have relied upon it and millions of pounds will have been pumped into Norfolk's economy due to its existence.

This paper, therefore, wishes the shopping centre a happy 20th birthday. Here's to at least two decades more of success.



Be humbled by God's power so that when the right time comes he will honour you.

1 Peter 5:6



tlcnorwich.com

READER'S PICTURE OF THE DAY



■ A great place for a treetop view. This horse is looking out over Thetford Forest. Picture by Eve Stoneburgh. If you would like to submit a picture for possible publication in the EDP, visit www.iwitness24.co.uk

Clue to impressive performance lies in the upbringing

Peter Trudgill



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Perhaps you saw the recent BBC drama series, *The Fall*, set in Belfast. It won't have been to everyone's taste – it was about a serial murderer. But I enjoyed it, and I was especially impressed by the leading actress, Gillian Anderson.

Many people know her from the American TV series *The X-Files*, where she played the FBI agent Scully. The remarkable thing about her performance in *The Fall*, though, was that she played the part of an Englishwoman, detective Stella Gibson. And she had an absolutely impeccable English accent. You couldn't hear anything at all to indicate she was American – and as a linguist, I was listening very hard for clues. Even the most brilliant of actors, Meryl Streep for instance, however good they are at imitating a particular accent, usually give the game away through small phonetic details. But not Gillian. Many people do switch from one accent to another for various reasons, but they very rarely do it so perfectly. How could she manage it?

Apparently her English accent is entirely genuine. She grew up in England and went to school here. Then, when she



■ *The Fall* – serial killer Paul Spector (Jamie Dornan), left, and DSI Stella Gibson (Gillian Anderson).

was eleven, her American parents took her to live in America, where she also acquired a perfectly genuine American accent. That number – eleven – was crucial. Much older, and she would never have acquired the American accent so perfectly. Much younger, and she would have totally lost her English accent. As it was, she ended up being completely bilingual or, rather, bi-accentual. On YouTube you can see an interview with an American woman called Gillian Anderson by Jay Leno, and another interview by Michael Parkinson of a Gillian Anderson who is obviously English.

Human beings are genetically programmed to learn perfectly any

language they are sufficiently exposed to – up to the age of about eight. Equally, they are likely to forget the language completely if exposure stops around that age. From eight onwards, this innate ability gradually tails off until it disappears completely by about 14 – it's a rare person who can learn a language perfectly after that age. Gillian at eleven was probably at exactly the right age to have a brain flexible enough to acquire a new language variety, but mature enough not to lose an old one. If you want your children to have a Norfolk accent, as I'm sure you do, keep them in the county until they're at least eleven. And whatever you do, don't send them away to boarding school.