

# Eastern Daily Press

SERVING THE COMMUNITY  
SINCE 1870

## Stroke support is crucial and services must be improved

When a sudden health problem strikes, the first thing that is important is the immediate care.

In the shape of our National Health Service, we can say with pride that much of that emergency care is exemplary.

Once the urgency has died down, though, something is arguably just as important, and that is comprehensive aftercare. Without it, a drama can soon revert to a crisis for a patient.

From what is being said by the Stroke Association in the East of England, it seems that such aftercare for Norfolk stroke patients is piecemeal.

If you live in west Norfolk, there appears to be no particular problem: services are held up as an exemplar. And that is very good news.

But much of the rest of the county is covered by services that are simply not good enough.

Sara Betsworth, from the Stroke Association, goes so far as to say that some people are being "dumped" after leaving hospital in the wake of a stroke.

Her follow-up comment that "no one is holding people's hands through the journey" is both heartbreaking and alarming.

It means that people are being left frightened and confused, while their families are enduring a burden far greater than is necessary at a time when they should all be receiving superb support.

This should be a wake-up call to those who ought to care for stroke patients. The people of Norfolk – and by that we mean all of Norfolk – deserve better.

## International students

Our region benefits immeasurably from the thousands of international students who study at the UEA.

They help sustain a great number of jobs, but their biggest impact is harder to quantify – they help make Norwich a more open, global, tolerant and cultured city.

The UEA's vice-chancellor is right to raise concerns over the first fall in non-EU overseas students at UK universities.

Countries such as Australia and Canada are competing vigorously, and attracting the best to our region will become increasingly vital as highly skilled industries like engineering and energy become more and more important to our economy.

Prof Acton says local MPs and business ministers are sympathetic to his case. Now it is time for the Home Office to act and support this vital area.

## Good to see Jack back

Jack Valentine is a name that stirs many fond memories in Norwich and Norfolk: memories of sweet treats and marvellous mystery.

So it is great that the businesses in Norwich Lanes have brought back Jack.

His reappearance – or non-appearance if he is still as stealthy as ever – will give added frisson to a special day, and hopefully boost the coffers of traders.

## READER'S PICTURE OF THE DAY

# iwitness24



■ One of the first visitors to Anne Marks' garden in Waxham, waiting for its breakfast, was this friendly squirrel - there was no way the birds were going to be there first! If you would like to submit a picture for possible publication in the EDP, visit [www.iwitness24.co.uk](http://www.iwitness24.co.uk)

## I'm sorta kinda like explaining the use of these words

Peter  
Trudgill



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■ Young people use more 'downtoner' words than older people says Peter Trudgill.

Oh dear. Readers of the nation's largest selling regional morning daily newspaper seem to be in a bad way, some of them.

First, on the Letters pages, we had the gentleman who was badly afflicted by too many 'wells'. Now we have a lady who is clearly suffering terribly from too many 'likes'.

These correspondents are part of our great Complaint Tradition – but it's interesting to wonder what's making them want to complain in this way. I think, with 'like', that I might know where their dislike comes from.

The words 'like' in "he was like just standing there", and 'well' in "well, I'm not sure", are called discourse particles. These are words which have little meaning, but do have an important function. They're found in all languages. We all use them. Even if you don't use 'like' in this way, I promise you that you do use 'I mean' or 'sort of' or 'you know' or (if you're an academic) 'as it were' – try listening to yourself some time. It's so automatic we don't notice we're doing it.

'Like' has a long history of being used

as a 'downtoner': "he was just standing there, like". This means more or less the same as "he was just sort of standing there". Downtoners have the job of, well, toning down the force of what you are saying. That might be because you're not quite sure about it. Or because you don't want to sound too assertive. Using downtoners is a way of signalling that you're part of the group and that you're not trying to come across as superior. It's a way of showing solidarity.

There are two reasons why older people today are complaining about younger people saying 'like'. One is that, although 'like' has been used as a downtoner in

English for many generations, it's more conspicuous now because it's become more common during our lifetimes; and it's being used in new grammatical contexts – not just at the end of a sentence.

The other is that younger people always use more downtoners than older people. Teenagers tend to be less confident, less assertive, more group-oriented, and more concerned about their friends' reactions than older people. When I was at school, my mother spent several years encouraging me not to say "it was sorta kinda like". I did stop, but I don't think it was because of Mum's kind efforts. It was because I got older.

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The Lord is long-suffering and slow to anger, and abundant in mercy and loving-kindness.  
Numbers 14:18

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