

The World of Personal Number Plates Issue 25

# Regtransfers

.co.uk



**Phil Tufnell**





# Get **visible**



**M**ike Welch founded Blackcircles.com back in 2001 as a quick, easy and affordable way for motorists to buy new tyres. Customers simply order their tyres online and book fitting at a local centre of their choice, on a date that suits them. A simple idea that has proved very popular with drivers.

"I was fed up with watching high street retailers charging their customers extortionate prices, and I spotted what I believed to be a gap in the market. By selling tyres online and gathering together a network of independent garages and fitting centres, I could save money on overheads. By passing this saving onto the customers, Blackcircles.com has been able to sell tyres at 40% off the prices of the old, corporate tyre retailers."

As far as Mike is concerned, his business model means that everybody wins. Obviously he makes a profit, the motorist saves money... But what about the garages and tyre centres? Mike says that Black Circles actually generates custom for them.

"We send business back to the independent market, helping to sustain many garages that might have struggled to keep afloat otherwise."

What worked for tyres looks set to transform other areas of automotive maintenance.

"Most recently I expanded the company to include car servicing. Using that same successful business model. I believe we can take the car servicing industry by storm. When booking their car service through us customers are, on average, able to save 60% off the prices quoted by the main dealers.

"Like most entrepreneurs, I'm always looking at new areas to branch out into, and at present Blackcircles.com has a number of other irons in the fire. I'm confident that it will not be long until I reach my goal of turning Blackcircles.com into a one-stop shop for all a motorists' needs."

***"It sets a tone of confidence and professionalism right from the start."***

All, perhaps, except for personal registrations! Nevertheless, Mike Welch is certainly a believer in the value of good quality number plates.

"I think that when you buy a high performance car, buying a personalised number plate is the next natural step. It adds an extra touch of class to the whole look and feel of the car.

I attend a lot of meetings all around the country and when you pull up to an important meeting with a good car and your own personalised number plates, it sets a tone of confidence and professionalism right from the start. To be a successful entrepreneur you also need to get visible, I think having a personalised plate helps to achieve this.

"Being a busy man, when I set out to buy my new number plates I wanted to find a company that made purchasing them as stress-free as possible. I found that Regtransfers couldn't have been more helpful. I was very impressed with the whole quick and easy process."



**BLACKCIRCLES.COM**  
*motoring for less*

# mail



## What's the story? Send us YOUR photos

Do you have an interesting story to tell concerning your choice of personal number plate? If so, we would love to include it on our website and in a future issue of this magazine.

Please provide as much information as you can. Any interesting or amusing anecdotes regarding your choice of registration, your line of work, or about yourself in general, will help to expand the feature. We would also be pleased to learn of any personal or business venture you may wish to promote. But don't worry too much about the text, we can construct the piece around whatever material you provide.

Remember, good photographs will help to enhance your story, especially if they feature yourself, or perhaps friends and family, along with your vehicle and registration. Try to achieve a well-lit and interesting or unusual composition and save the images at the highest possible resolution.

Please send your story and photographs by email to [editorial@regtransfers.co.uk](mailto:editorial@regtransfers.co.uk) or by post to:

**The Editor**  
**The World of Personal Number Plates**  
**Registration Transfers Ltd**  
**139 High Street South**  
**Dunstable**  
**Bedfordshire LU6 3SS**

We look forward to hearing from you!

Please note: All image submissions, however they are sent to us, are subject to our submission terms and conditions which are available at [www.regtransfers.co.uk/main/terms.asp](http://www.regtransfers.co.uk/main/terms.asp)



## Much loved pets

Pictured above are my two cars and my three pugs, who are the reason I chose the number plates. I purchased **0003 PUG** first as I have three pugs and the number plate was perfect for me. I then decided to buy a second car and wanted private number plates for that car as well, so I contacted your company and to my great delight **0004 PUG** was available. As it was the consecutive number to the one I already had, I bought that one as well.

I am very pleased indeed with my plates and would like to thank your salesperson Adam

Agar for all his help with the purchase of **0004 PUG**.

Chelsey, the smaller of the black pugs is my assistance dog and the fawn pug Eve is my retired assistance dog. Zoe my other black pug has never been my assistance dog but she is a much loved pet, as of course are the other two.

**Jane Bryder**

## A dream fulfilled

I was looking around for number plate to replace my first number plate **J1 MDH** which I sold through Regtransfers.

It was to go on my Jaguar X-Type, of which I am now on my third!

Originally, I was after **J3 MDH**, but settled for **J300 MDH** instead.

It means a lot to have a personalised number plate. I have always wanted one so I have fulfilled a dream in my life.

Thank you very to your staff for all their help and for a fast and efficient service. I would definitely recommend you to friends and family.

**James Harkins**



## Essex

Since a young lad, I have always been interested in registration numbers. So, when purchasing my first new car through Fords, where my father had worked as a test driver, I asked if they had any Essex SGN numbers. They said they had a whole block including **SGN 1L**, which was put on my new Capri 2000 GT.

As a keen footballer, I was with West Ham as a Colt, playing alongside Harry Rednapp. Unfortunately I was not good enough to sign professionally, but West Ham have always been in my heart. That's why I waited for a long time for it to appear.

Thinking that there would be a lot of interest when **WE57 HAM** was released, I purchased **WE87 HAM** six months before for a reasonable amount. When **WE57 HAM** went to auction, I was out bid by another fan and wealthier businessman to the tune of £57,500.

**S G Neale**





## Former glory

As a DJ, I have been driving vans for many years. First a Bedford 12cwt followed, in 1972, by a Thames 15cwt, a Transit MkI for the next 17 years, a brand new Transit MkIII and, currently, a brand new Mercedes Sprinter.

I got **A16 OFF** from Regtransfers to go with my new van, which cost £23k (automatic, alloy wheels, nudge bar, colour co-ordinated, sunroof etc.).

I decided to treat myself to **60 FFY**, which cost three and a half times the cost of the car, a Mazda 626.

I also have a 1962 Triumph Tiger Cub T20 which I acquired in 1968 but was off the road for 30 years until my friend, Bob Beagley, and I restored it to its former glory.

We take it to bike shows in the van, or 'trailer it' with his bike and mine, and tow it with the car."

**Alan Goff**



## Marvellous

I was delighted to put **L300 LMR** on my car. For years my husband has had **300 CLR** which are his initials although some people think it is Chris and Lorna Robinson.

I have been displaying **6709 CR** which are his initials and therefore to find a very similar number plate to his is marvellous.

The process of buying through Regtransfers has been excellent.

**Lorna Robinson**



## Organic

This is my second private registration purchase. It's for a very special motorcycle that I have lavished time and money on over the last three years.

Bikes are not like cars. They are very organic in how they connect you to your environment and much more exciting, so in my opinion worthy of special treatment. The special registration is just the icing on the cake.

K is for Kenny, 90 because it's a 90 degree V-Twin, and DUC for Ducati. It looks great on the bike.

Thanks hugely for a very quick turnaround and polite service.

**Kenneth Mitchell**





# Phil Tufnell



## The *Purrfect* Plate

**S**ome people seem to dominate TV. You get a strong impression that they are following you, for whenever you switch on your set, or change channels, there they are. Obviously these people aren't *really* stalking you, but certain celebrities do seem to go through a kind of flavour-of-the-month transformation that renders them irresistible to programme makers. For some the phenomenon is short-lived. For others, Sir Terry Wogan for example, the status becomes permanent. And then you get your slow-burners: your stealth celebrities. These are the people who rise to a level of popularity and prominence, but rather than over-exposing and burning out, they play it cool and just keep popping up in different contexts for years and years, enjoying periodic boosts in profile but without wearing out their welcome. Phil Tufnell is one of those masters of 'popping up'.

The Regtransfers team met with Phil at his Surrey home when we delivered his new personal registration, **BE57 CAT**.

Tufnell's first taste of fame was delivered by his cricketing career: a career that attracted a fair amount of controversy. Tufnell's talent as a spin bowler was undeniable. When he was on form he was great to watch, but there were times when the pressure seemed to throw him off his stride. He acquired a reputation for being inconsistent. The root of the problem seemed to be an incompatibility between Phil's sometimes irascible personality and the emotionally testing territory that comes with a slow delivery style. Frustration would occasionally manifest itself in the form of on-pitch loss of temper. As Richard Williams once commented in *The Independent*: "It is Phil Tufnell's cruel fate to bring a choleric temperament to a phlegmatic role".

Tufnell had his fiery side and could drive management bonkers, but he was a popular player who had plenty of friends in the dressing room and plenty of fans in the crowd. The controversy that seemed to follow him off the field made absorbing

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reading for the public, but Phil's nonconformity did not always endear him to cricket's authority figures. Tales of drink, rumours of drugs and reports of the occasional physical altercation were in a tradition already established by other stars of the game, but it was a tradition that drew criticism from many quarters.

## ***"I never set out to be a professional cricketer. It was really just a bit of luck."***

Tufnell explained, "I never set out to be a professional cricketer. It was really just a bit of luck. I really enjoyed it. You got to play sport, you were out in the sunshine with all your mates. As I got a little bit older, I started thinking, *Hold on a minute, I'm doing quite well here!* I think it's quite a nice way of doing it. You get to play the game and enjoy it. Enjoying your success and your team's success and then things develop from there. And then someone gives you a call and says you might have a chance of playing for England.

"I was lucky. The other way, when people feel forever driven to do something, I think people can put too much pressure on themselves."

In 2003 Tufnell announced his retirement from professional cricket. That same year he appeared in the second series of ITV's reality show *I'm a Celebrity... Get Me Out of Here!* Once again, Phil's behaviour provoked a mixed reaction. While his mild but cheeky flirting with a married lady contestant raised eyebrows, he proved amazingly popular with the public and was voted the eventual winner of the series.

"My agent gave me a call and said we'd been approached to do the jungle. By that time, the England stuff had gone a little bit. I was getting slightly older and looking at a bit of a transitional period. I was still playing for Middlesex, and playing very well, but I thought to myself that I couldn't keep playing cricket all my life. I decided that we might as well have a little look at the jungle and see what happened. It was very similar to how I got into the cricket really: didn't give it much thought and just thought that it sounded like a good challenge. Although I was looking out for something else to do, I never had any thought of going in there to then try and start a career in telly, or anything like that."

But a career in telly happened nevertheless. That jungle-born momentum was maintained by Phil's three-series period as a team captain on the BBC's cult

sport/comedy panel game *They Think It's All Over* and, from that point onward, he regularly turned up in assorted broadcast roles including sports commentary and the kind of light-hearted, mass appeal appearances for which he is probably best known: *Sport Relief*, *All Star Mr & Mrs* and currently as a team captain on *A Question of Sport* and as a regular reporter on *The One Show*.

One notable highlight was his prematurely curtailed stint as a contestant on the Beeb's *Strictly Come Dancing*. After a creditable performance over several weeks Phil was eventually voted off, but it was universally accepted that he had been put at a significant disadvantage by a nasty knee injury that he sustained during the course of the series. Judge Len Goodman spoke up at the time to say how sorry he was that Phil had not been able to stay in the show.

"It was tough and a bit scary," says Phil. "The dancing was a little out of my comfort zone, so to speak. So, anyway, I threw myself at that and then really enjoyed it. I had a good time doing it, and I did quite well until I injured my knee. That was a shame, and kind of held me back. It was very scary the first couple of times, you know, going out there and dancing in front of everyone with tight trousers and a pink shirt on. That was a little bit nerve-wracking. But really it was great."

## ***"Personal plates are a bit of fun aren't they?"***

Phil is possibly best known as 'Tuffers' these days, but over the years he has worked his way through a selection of nicknames. At one point he was known as 'Two Sugars' because of his fondness for a nice cup of tea. His new personal registration reflects another of his famous aliases.

"Well it's The Cat of course. I've always been known as The Cat or Tuffers, but certainly in the cricket world it was The Cat because I was always having a snooze."

We had wondered if the nickname might be a reference to cat-like agility on the field, but Phil soon lays that misconception to rest.

"I think that might be a bit ironic - I wasn't particularly the best fielder! But no... Out all night, sleep all day, nine lives. I've got a little tattoo of a cat on my shoulder as well, and I've got two cats, as you've seen. I've got the big Persian and a little rescue one as well. We're quite a cat family. So when you mentioned it, I thought *perfect!* Absolutely perfect."

Phil's interest in number plates predates his acquisition of his Best Cat registration.

"Yes, I had one a long time ago with 'Tuf' on it. It was **TUF** something or other: I can't remember the actual numbers.

"I know a couple of people who have them, a couple of the cricket guys. Graham Gooch had one, I think, with **BAT** because he was a batsman; and a few of the guys have got plates reflecting the number of hundreds they've got, or the amount of wickets they took, or something else to do with the cricket and things they are involved in.

"But, yeah, I've always had a bit of an interest. You know, you're driving along and you see the old number plates on the cars, and you have a bit of a laugh sometimes. Muck about making them up in your head, down the pub, that sort of thing. Personal plates are a bit of fun aren't they?"

We couldn't agree more.

Interview: Angela Banh  
Story: Rick Cadger  
Photography: Stan Thompson

## **Phil's Phact Phile**

<i>Full name</i>	Philip Clive Roderick Tufnell
<i>Born</i>	29 April 1966 Barnet, London
<i>Nickname</i>	Tuffers, The Cat, Two Sugars
<i>Batting style</i>	Right-handed
<i>Bowling style</i>	Slow left arm orthodox
<i>Role</i>	Bowler, commentator, author
<b>International information</b>	
<i>National side</i>	England
<i>Test debut</i>	26 December 1990 v Australia
<i>Last Test</i>	23 August 2001 v Australia
<i>ODI debut</i>	7 December 1990 v New Zealand
<i>Last ODI</i>	20 February 1997 v New Zealand

### **Domestic team information**

<i>Years</i>	<i>Team</i>
1986 – 2002	Middlesex
1990	MCC

### **Career statistics**

<i>Competition</i>	Test	ODI	FC	LA
<i>Matches</i>	42	20	316	93
<i>Runs scored</i>	153	15	2066	125
<i>Batting average</i>	5.10	15.00	9.69	8.92
<i>100s/50s</i>	0/0	0/0	0/1	0/0
<i>Top score</i>	22*	5*	67*	18
<i>Balls bowled</i>	11288	1020	76934	4663
<i>Wickets</i>	121	19	1057	103
<i>Bowling average</i>	37.68	36.78	29.35	32.30
<i>5 wickets in innings</i>	5	0	53	1
<i>10 wickets in match</i>	2	n/a	6	n/a
<i>Best bowling</i>	7/47	4/22	8/29	5/28
<i>Catches/stumps</i>	12/–	4/–	106/–	17/–

\* Not out

Source: CricInfo, 3 January 2008









# Fantastic Fireworks

## 25 years of **WOW!**

A man called the Fantastic Fireworks office last year asking who owned the car he had seen outside with the registration plate **5 NOV**. When told it was Jon Culverhouse, managing director of the company, the man said he'd been following the car down the M1 and had looked up the plate on the internet. He was so impressed by the registration and how appropriate it was for the company that he booked a firework display there and then.

"I've lost count of the number of times that people stop and point out the number plate," says Jon. "Sometimes they come up and ask if it's my birthday. A fit of the giggles always follows when I tell them I run a fireworks company."

This is a special year for Fantastic Fireworks as they celebrate 25 years in the business. For nearly half of those years, Jon has had his **5 NOV** number plate. It's been on a Peugeot, a Mercedes and now the sleek new Audi A5 convertible where, Jon says, its lean good looks match the car perfectly.

"When I first had the idea to see if **5 NOV** existed as a number plate I was certain it would be owned by a collector of similar plates, such as **JUL 4** and **DEC 25**. I had mentally prepared myself to have to pay up to £20,000 to own it. I phoned Regtransfers and, to my amazement, not

only was the plate available but I could have it for a lot less. Needless to say, I snapped up the offer and have never regretted it. It has featured in countless photos, the national press and even on the *Men and Motors* TV channel. I can't think of a more effective or appropriate ad for the company."

Jon founded Fantastic Fireworks in the Hertfordshire village of Redbourn in the mid-1980s. Today Fantastic Fireworks are one of the longest established companies in the UK pyrotechnics industry, putting on more than 300 professional displays annually, while their network of shops supply the busy Bonfire Night market with domestic fireworks. Further afield, Fantastic Fireworks have been setting firework fashion from St Petersburg to St Albans. In 2007, Jon and his company helped the City of Liverpool celebrate its 800th birthday with Europe's largest display of the year, and in 2008 were official firework supplier for the city's year as European Capital of Culture. Fantastic Fireworks also has an impressive list of celebrity parties on its CV, including Sir Philip Green's 55th birthday in the Maldives and footballer Thierry Henry's wedding.

Every year dozens of prospective pyrotechnicians take Fantastic Fireworks' professional training course, adding to the 150-strong

team who front their busy Bonfire Night programme.

Several charities, projects and individuals have benefited from the company's success, as Fantastic Fireworks donates funds to a variety of causes, including tree-planting in Harpenden, fund-raising for Keech Hospice Care in Luton, a local football team and several schools.

In the field of competitions, Fantastic Fireworks was first winner of the British Fireworks Championship in 1997 and has also competed at San Sebastian, Cannes, La Baule, Plymouth and Southport.

Jon says, "Our aim is to surprise and delight audiences across the country. We source the latest and most exciting fireworks from the leading manufacturers and pride ourselves on bringing the 'WOW! Factor' to every show."

[www.fantasticfireworks.co.uk](http://www.fantasticfireworks.co.uk) (displays)

[www.fantasticfireworks.biz](http://www.fantasticfireworks.biz) (shop)





# Marketing on a **Plate**

A papal visit doesn't happen every year, so when it was announced that Pope Benedict XVI would visit the UK during 2010, Irish bookmakers **Paddy Power** decided that there must be a marketing angle to be found. Sure enough, the company managed to create a fair bit of media interest with their spoof Popemobile: a meticulous replica of the vehicle that transports the pontiff between appointments.

A lot of research and a thorough makeover later, Paddy Power's very own version of the iconic holy roller took to the streets, sporting a great number plate from Regtransfers.

Paddy Power spokesman Roberto Coladangelo told Regtransfers: "To create a fun media story to celebrate the Pope's visit, we decided to create an identical Popemobile to the one used by Pope Benedict XVI. We would then take the Popemobile to places the Pope may not be visiting on the official tour and give as many people as possible the opportunity to see the car up close."

Paddy Power's researchers decided to use a Mercedes ML, the most popular model for recent Popemobiles. During the conversion from normal ML to Popemobile, staff pored over countless images from the internet to help ensure that they achieved the most convincing replica possible. One of the most important aspects, other than the large glass cabin, was the personalised

number plate, **SCV 1**. The letters 'SCV' represent Stato della Citta del Vaticano (Italian for 'Vatican City'). Paddy Power secured a brilliant number plate to fit to their popemobile: **P1 SCV**!

"We used Regtransfers because you were both the best price and the fastest to deal with in order to have the plate ready for the stunt," said Roberto.

As part of the project, Paddy Power filmed a tongue-in-cheek *Pope My Ride* video to show the change from the standard 4x4 to a car fit for a pope. (Search *Pope my Ride* on YouTube to watch the video.)

"We took our Popemobile to the streets across the UK, starting in Edinburgh," said Roberto. "The reaction of the public was fantastic, with people stopping for photos and videos on their phones. The reaction was so good that we created a website [www.popewatch.org](http://www.popewatch.org) for people to upload their photos and share sightings of any Popemobiles! The best sighting won a very holy iPad."

"We took the car to a few interesting locations that the real Holy Father might have missed during his visit, including a McDonald's drive through, Celtic Football Club, The Houses of Parliament, Buckingham Palace, the London Eye and, of course, we finished up with a drag race at Santa Pod!"

## Paddy Power



The Paddy Power Popemobile secured media coverage and created extensive buzz on social networking sites. The *Pope My Ride* video had attracted around 150,000 views within a couple of days.

The whole exercise was accepted by the public in the spirit in which it had been conceived: a bit of harmless fun to celebrate a once-in-a-lifetime event. In years to come, when people tell their children about the Pope's historic visit, we wonder how many of them will also have a funny story about the Paddy Power Popemobile!



[www.paddypower.com](http://www.paddypower.com)





# RT Team **Spotlight**

**T**hrough this series of articles, we hope to enable our readers to get to know Regtransfers a little better. In each issue, we feature different members of our team and, gradually, you'll become able to put names to faces.

With 60 full-time advisors, Regtransfers can boast the most comprehensive sales service in the industry.

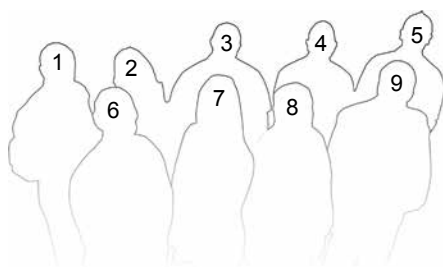
But it's quality as well as quantity that counts and all sales enquiries are handled efficiently by people who are not only eager

to help you find your perfect number plate, but also who know the market and know number plates.

In this issue, we feature managers, **Lisa Keenan** and **Martin Wightwick** and their team.



Photography: Stan Thompson



**1. Russell Day** (4yrs)

"My family, sports, food, reading, cricket, cooking and sunny days at the beach" are Russ's 'likes' and 'rudeness' his principal 'dislike'. 'Favourite colour?' "Is this for *Heat* magazine?" he enquires.

**2. Sue Wyatt** (7yrs)

Surrogate mum to the younger team members, Sue is one of the company's most experienced sales people. Full of life and known as the practical joker of the team.

**3. Graham Hilton** (2yrs)

The easy-going, witty 'lad' of the gang. Graham is an ex-butcher who is now 'carving out' [sorry! - Ed.] a career in the personal plates industry

**5. Will Robinson** (6yrs)

Nothing gives Will more pleasure than getting a call from a satisfied client. He enjoys finding the right plate for a client's budget and gets lots of repeat customers because he is such a personable guy.

**5. Ben Monks** (3yrs)

A solid performer who will always point you in the right direction for help. Ben is a loyal 'gooner' who recently fulfilled his ambition of scoring a goal at The Emirates stadium, and he has the pictures to prove it.

**6. Elliott Rolfe**

'New boy', Elliott, majored in psychology and philosophy, so his creative and resourceful approach means customers are never left without the perfect plate. A keen blues pianist and martial arts enthusiast.

**7. Lisa Keenan** Manager (6yrs)

After managing her own team, Lisa joined forces with Martin's staff to form the current 'superteam'. She has a passion for travel, good food and life in general.

**8. Martin 'Buzz' Wightwick** Manager (8yrs)

Buzz has had an array of previous jobs including playing the drums in various bands and, of course, starring in the film *Toy Story*. He is still addicted to number plates after all these years.

**9. Raz Shah**

Newest member, Raz, comes from a car sales background. A highly motivated individual, he is also a gifted comic who hates to see an unhappy face.

*Other team members not pictured:*

**Alfie Moon** (1yr)

Alfie values professionalism and customer satisfaction, always going the extra mile for his customers and building long lasting relationships. His passion for number plates is fuelled by his own personal collection.

**Craig 'The Baby Maker' Alderman** (1yr)

"Having a laugh, a rough and tumble with my kids and enjoying life in general" are Craig's 'likes'. But he doesn't care for "bad weather and brussels sprouts!"



# Plate it again, **Sam**



**S**am Watkins began his working career as an architect, but then moved into property management and has run his own company for the last 25 years.

His love of cars began almost 30 years ago when, as a struggling architect, he bought his first Lotus. It was a 1971 Elan S4 drophead coupe. Sam bought it in a half-restored state (which was the only reason he was able to afford it at the time!) and it took a year to put it all back together.

Whilst Sam has been interested in private registrations for quite some time, it wasn't until about a year ago that he actually bought his first one.

"I had a Porsche 911, which I'd bought from new four years before and happened to be browsing through the Regtransfers website when I spotted **911 SAM**. I knew instantly that I just had to have it!"

Once the plate was on the car, he received so many comments about how good it

looked, that he felt he just had to get something for his Bentley and Lotus.

"I was born in the third week of March (the third month, of course) so when I found that **3 SAM** and **33 SAM** were both available, I decided to go for it!"

"I was actually in the process of trading in my 911 for a new Lamborghini at that time, so when I was informed by your sales advisor, Mike Ward, that, by pure coincidence, the plate **333 SAM** had just become available, I had no choice but to buy that one too!"

"He made sure everything went through as quickly and smoothly as he possibly could, and, as you can see from the photos, the final result is quite dramatic."

Sam's only regret is that he can't drive all three at the same time. Now, that would really turn a few heads.

**911 SAM** is currently available exclusively through [www.regtransfers.co.uk](http://www.regtransfers.co.uk)



**What's the story?**  
Send **YOUR** photos  
to [editorial@regtransfers.co.uk](mailto:editorial@regtransfers.co.uk)





# What's all the fuss?



**W**hen Mr Stig decided he wanted to sell his prized personalised number plate, he went straight to Regtransfers.co.uk. Mr Stig, a thoroughly competent, yet shy driver (as he insists on keeping his helmet on), explained to us how he enjoyed the admiring glances he received whilst out in his car. "I bought the registration **AST 1G** a while ago and thought it was perfect," says Mr Stig. "I couldn't understand the commotion

though. Everywhere I went people were pointing at my number plate and getting really excited. Once, I was going along the M25 and was passed by a car carrying a young boy in the passenger seat. When he noticed the number plate, his eyes nearly popped out of his head and you could clearly see him mouthing loudly, 'It's a Stig, it's a Stig!' I'm sure he couldn't wait to get back home to tell all his mates. I'm delighted people enjoy it so much."

Mr A Stig also owns some other great plates, including **DEL 30Y**, and another bought for a friend, which he has decided to sell as well. The registration is **US10 WWW** which he thinks would look great on any performance car. **US10 WWW** is for sale with Regtransfers for £9795. Both are great registrations, but here at Regtransfers our favourite is **AST 1G**.



Mr Stig concludes "Some say it's the best driver's plate on the market. Some say that I would be foolish to let this one go. All I know is it's called 'A Stig!'"







## The X-Factor

**H**edley Brookes is involved in a company called Isis Therapy Training, which provides nationwide training in holistic therapies.

His daughter is the owner and is very impressed with the new **X1 HGB** plate. She is now considering purchasing a plate that will help promote her company.

"I chose the number plate because I thought the X1 was a good combination to be associated with the HGB," says Hedley.

"In my view X1 looks better than, for example, G1 or Y1. Not sure why but it is something about the letter X. Ideally I would have liked **HGB 1** but that would have been financially out of my league. So it was a case of getting the best mark possible within my budget and I consider **X1 HGB** to be ideal.

**Hedley Brookes**

[www.isistherapytraining.com](http://www.isistherapytraining.com)



**What's the story?**

Send **YOUR** photos  
to [editorial@regtransfers.co.uk](mailto:editorial@regtransfers.co.uk)

**emco**  
innovative machine tools



**J**im Wilson's company, Emco, is the world's number one supplier of 3-D scanners, machine tools, 3-D printers and laser cutters for education.

Clearly aware of the commercial advantages of personal number plates as marketing tools, Jim has the registration **3 MCO** on his S-Class Mercedes and **E3 MCO** on the company van.

And it doesn't stop at work - Jim's endorsement of cherished registrations also extends to the choice of **JAN 3R** for his wife, Jan's, Honda Jazz.

[www.emco.co.uk](http://www.emco.co.uk)





## Gardiner's World

The ideal gift!



**T**ony Gardiner, from Cambridgeshire, bought **765 KMG** as a birthday present to his wife, Katrina Michelle Gardiner, some years ago and it has been on a Mercedes CLK, Honda CRV as well as the X-type Jaguar.

**79 TG** was purchased as a result of a personalised email campaign by Regtransfers last year.

"We recently celebrated the 50th birthday of one of my oldest and closest friends, Nigel Rogers," says Tony, "and decided that the perfect birthday present would be a cherished number plate.

"His business specialises in emergency electrical work in his home town of Middlesbrough. He is also a keen supporter and season ticket holder at Middlesbrough

football club so, when my wife and I saw **N999 MFC** for sale, we thought it was perfect.

"The MFC obviously stands for Middlesbrough Football Club and not Miserable something or other which other friends suggested!

"We spent the weekend of his birthday in the Lake District laughing, eating and drinking, but when we presented the plates and certificate to



him he shed a tear, even though he is 19 stone and about six foot four!

**N999 MFC** is the third plate the Gardiners have bought through Regtransfers and they consider that it makes a thoughtful, unique and ideal birthday present.

"It is so easy to do," says Tony, "and the staff at Regtransfers have been a delight to deal with."

## Idol

**T**hirteen years after the tragic death of The Princess of Wales, affection for the 'People's Princess' shows no sign of waning. Stephen Buston is not alone in his admiration for Diana, 'The Queen of Hearts', and has a number plate which succinctly expresses his feelings.

**D11 DOL** adorns Stephen's Range Rover 4.6 HSE as a clear indication of who he considers to be his 'idol'.

**D11 DOL** is currently available exclusively through Regtransfers.co.uk. For more details, please call 01582 967777.



**What's the story?**

Send **YOUR** photos  
to [editorial@regtransfers.co.uk](mailto:editorial@regtransfers.co.uk)





### ***“Regtransfers were the natural choice”***

**F**or as long as he can remember, **John Christian Vessey** has been fascinated by wordplay, slogans and cars. “Regtransfers, therefore, were the natural choice when searching for a personalised plate,” he says, “and it didn’t take long before I hit upon **M12 JCV**

(‘Mr JCV’) as a birthday present to myself.” Quicker than he was expecting, the deal was done, the plates were delivered and the relevant documentation issued. “First class all the way,” John concludes. “A thousand thanks to all the staff, especially your sales advisor, Shane.”



### ***“Private plates really make a nice car stand out from the crowd.”***

**A**ndy Jackson has been interested in private registrations ever since he bought his first ‘Jackson’ plate, **J44 XXN**, when he was in college

Ever since then, he has always been on the lookout for a really good ‘Andy’ plate, but knew they would be much more expensive. Some years later, Andy received a text from Regtransfers to say that **444 NDY** was

available, and he instantly recognised it as the plate he’d been looking for.

“I put in an offer and Regtransfers took care of the rest,” he says. “Needless to say, it now sits proudly on my current car, and I think it looks fantastic.”

There has always been another registration that Andy has his eye on, **J444 XXN**. Being almost identical to his first plate,

he thought they would make a great duo of ‘Jackson’ plates. So, he took the opportunity to purchase that one as well, and now has the start of a small collection. “Private plates really make a nice car stand out from the crowd, make them individual to the owner, and are a great investment for the future too,” says Andy. “I’m sure I’ll have **444 NDY** on many cars to come, as I don’t see how I can find a better one for the same price.”



# registration **forum**

**John Harrison**, one of the country's leading authorities on the British registration system, editor of *1903 and all that* and Archivist and Adviser to the Registration Numbers Club answers readers' queries.

Please email your questions to: [forum@regtransfers.co.uk](mailto:forum@regtransfers.co.uk) or by post them to: **Registration Forum, 139 High Street South, Dunstable LU6 3SS**

**Q** I see on your website, there are registration numbers for sale which would seem never to have been issued.

I was brought up in Bristol and I see you have numbers such as 65 AE & 80 HT for sale, AE and HT being Bristol codes.

I remember in 1957, when Bristol went from YHY 999 to 1 AAE. Numbers followed by two letters were never issued there.

Have these Bristol registration numbers that never were, been 'manufactured' as a cash generating scheme by the DVLA?

**A** When local authorities started using reversed combinations, i.e. with numbers ahead of letters, in the 1950s and 1960s, some started by using two-letter combinations and some, like Bristol, started by issuing three-letter combinations.

You are correct that Bristol never issued two-letter combinations. When year letters were introduced, there were many numbers which were never issued and left unused.

Some of these, like 65 AE and 80 HT, have been sold at DVLA auctions which have been held regularly since 1989.

**Q** Under the current registration system, the first letter identifies the area of issue of the mark and is usually mnemonic, e.g. a plate commencing with 'A' is from (East) Anglia, 'B' Birmingham, etc, but the letter K does not have a mnemonic. Do you know why this is?

**A** Originally 'K' indicated a registration issued by the Luton or Northampton DVLA Local Offices, but Luton has now been closed. The reason that 'K' does not have a mnemonic is simply that, when the system was devised, nobody could think of one.

**Q** I would really like the registration D16 ASW but am told I cannot apply for it until 2016. But I saw D12 ASW the other day and it's not 2012 yet. Please help as I am very confused.

**A** D16 ASW has been released and sold. The only way you could get it is to find the owner and negotiate a deal which would be like trying to find a needle in a haystack.

There are, however seven other D-ASW combinations still available, if you could accept one with a different number to 16.

The comment about the number not being available till 2016 relates to the current-style system mark, Dx16 ASW where x can be any letter (except I or Z), rather than D16 ASW.

**Q** I am selling a classic car to someone in America. But it has an attractive number which is quite valuable and I do not want to lose it. I need to export the car soon. Can you help?

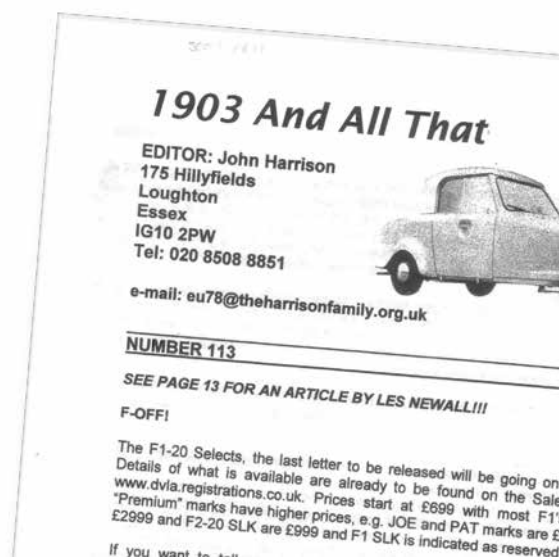
**A** If a vehicle is permanently exported, the rights to its registration are lost. You must therefore transfer the number to another vehicle or put it onto a retention certificate before exporting the car.

## 1903 And All That

John Harrison's newsletter, *1903 And All That*, deals with all aspects of vehicle registrations. It is published quarterly and costs just £6 a year.

If you are interested in subscribing and wish to receive a sample copy, simply send a large 76p stamped addressed envelope to:

**John Harrison, 175 Hillyfields, Loughton, Essex IG10 2PW**



## Looking Good

There are thousands of registrations which do not represent names, words or necessarily common initials.



But, they simply *look* good.

For example, those sporting equal groups of two letters and two numbers ('2x2s' and '3x3s') or three of each, present an attractive symmetry and simplicity.

### 2x2s

45 AY	£5,995	FW 3I	£8,995	25 NE	£5,995
36 BK	£5,995	22 FY	£4,995	6I NJ	£5,995
BT II	£24,995	8I GA	£5,995	74 PA	£6,995
76 CA	£6,995	GL II	£39,995	94 PK	£9,995
62 CE	£5,995	87 GT	£9,995	SH 22	£24,995
CT 4I	£12,495	20 HE	£5,995	62 SN	£5,995
76 DW	£11,995	HJ 32	£7,995	VG 48	£8,995
I3 EA	£14,995	HL II	£19,995	35 WD	£4,995
EF 24	£8,995	94 JM	£10,995	60 WG	£6,995
EJ I2	£9,995	62 KE	£5,995	48 WS	£5,995
86 ER	£5,995	3I KV	£5,995	35 WT	£5,995
70 FB	£6,995	LL 79	£9,995	3I XJ	£7,995
75 FC	£5,995	65 LN	£5,995	70 YB	£5,995
35 FP	£4,995	82 LP	£5,995	II YD	£9,995
36 FR	£7,995	62 LR	£5,995	YR 45	£7,995

### 3x3s

ABG 999	£3,995	3I0 EKH	£1,995	LKA 875	£2,495
755 ABY	£2,995	379 ELU	£1,995	MNE 900	£2,995
AEF 926	£2,995	GCK 640	£1,995	NCM 429	£1,995
5I9 AJN	£1,995	666 GLP	£3,995	ONF II2E	£2,995
394 BBJ	£1,995	HKT 298	£1,995	PEG 364	£2,495
BBJ 778	£1,995	660 HWP	£1,995	RBD 8I2	£2,495
455 BCR	£1,995	JAZ 600	£2,995	RDN 200	£2,995
BDJ 403	£2,495	JBW 727	£2,995	333 RDT	£3,295
BEG 27I	£1,995	444 JRT	£3,995	REP 8I5	£2,495
685 BMM	£1,995	JUX 844	£1,495	RFF 279	£1,995
907 CLA	£2,495	KAZ I56	£2,995	TWN 504	£1,995
I8I CRE	£2,295	I70 KMP	£2,495	VIW I23	£2,995
333 DBH	£3,495	KOT 333	£2,995	II3 WMF	£2,495
DFL 756	£1,995	KST 57I	£1,995	306 WTG	£2,495
III DPR	£5,995	LEO 455	£2,995	WWL 479	£2,495



## Social Networking through Number Plates

The recent highly-publicised launch of a new social networking site has caused considerable interest and debate. Bump.com is a US online facility based around the simple idea that number plates, being unique, can form 'usernames'. Basic marketing psychology invites users to 'claim' rather than 'register' their number plates as a starting point. Critics may point to the lack of identity validation, but the same could be levelled at any conventional email account.

Appealing to perhaps the lowest common denominator, examples of the benefits tend to focus upon the 'dating' aspects. Backed-up by some rather cheesy YouTube footage, it is suggested that you can note the vehicle number of someone you have taken a fancy to and contact them through the Bump site.

However, many less predatory motives are also supported, ranging from the ability to send helpful messages like, "You have left your lights on," to the possibilities presented by forums and observations of others' driving skills.

The chief criticism of the scheme is that it all hangs on the assumption that sufficient numbers of motorists will take up the invitation to join in. But this in itself is not necessarily a failing. After all, the telephone was not viable until someone invented another one.

Naturally, the motive behind all this is a commercial one. Once you have harvested a large number of registration numbers and their associated email address you have a valuable database. Bump intends to take this a stage further by utilising Automatic Number Plate Recognition [ANPR] cameras to monitor its members. So, for instance, retail outlets such as fast-food restaurants will be able to record visits by regular customers and be able to use the information to target their email advertising.

There would clearly seem to be some mileage in such use of number plates for social networking but, so far, similar schemes over here have met with little success. The latest rather crass example is [www.ratethatdriver.co.uk](http://www.ratethatdriver.co.uk) which, as its name implies, is likely to attract posts which err on the critical, if not downright abusive, rather than the complimentary.

For those with a genuine interest in number plates and who wish to join other like-minded souls, perhaps the best option is the splendid number plates club site at [www.numberplates.com](http://www.numberplates.com), which hosts vast amounts of fascinating plate-related information.

## Tax Disks Go in Australian Licensing Laws Update

Tax disks will be consigned to history in a major shake-up of the South Australian vehicle registration practices which comes into force next summer.

Gail Gago, Minister for Government Enterprise, announced the new plans which will involve hand-held computers, portable

finger print scanning equipment and a network of ANPR cameras.

The scheme is likely to cost Aussie taxpayers over \$100 million and will mean the end of the traditional windscreen disks similar to those which UK motorists know and love.

The state of Western Australia was first to trial the new measures and the transition appears to have gone well, giving impetus to the spread of the initiative to the rest of the country.

Road fund licence validity will now be monitored by a combination of ANPR and portable units employed by police officers and traffic wardens. An internet facility will enable motorists to check their status online and there will also be a telephone hotline number.

It is estimated that the move will save more than \$5.6 million in postage, production and processing over the next three years alone

## Time's Up for Mr Magoo

A long overdue change to the law regarding drivers' eyesight will come into force early in 2011. The legislation, which was passed by the European Union Parliament back in 2006, follows a refreshingly objective approach to the problem.

Up until now, the only form of examination required to test the vision of potential licence holders has been the almost laughably crude and unscientific road-side test, where the candidate is asked to read a number plate from an estimated distance.

Incredibly, since everyone is aware how eyesight changes with age, no further verification has been required until the grand old age of 70 years.

Under the new arrangements, the onus will be on the driver and his or her optician to ensure that vision irregularities are addressed by spectacles, contact lenses or laser correction at least every 15 years [five years for commercial drivers]. In much the same way as a doctor can effectively ban someone from driving on medical grounds, the humble optometrist appears set to take on an equal role.

This would, effectively, mean compulsory eyesight testing for all drivers - a situation that has never been proposed on general health grounds. It is envisaged that evidence of a recent eye examination will become a requirement of the licence application process.

It is likely, however, to remain just as difficult to monitor the wearing of prescribed lenses. An alarming survey of Welsh motorists concluded that just 10% of those with glasses chose to wear them behind the wheel.

## Guilty until Proved Innocent

We are all too familiar with the steady growth of surveillance technology. Our movements are constantly monitored by both recorded and 'real-time' Closed-circuit Television, Automatic Number-Plate Recognition cameras and 'Speed



Cameras'.

You may not, however, be aware of the difference between the two number plate-recognition systems. The standard speed camera has been around for many years and is a fairly basic device. An electronic sensor works out the speed of a passing vehicle and, if excessive, triggers the camera to take a simple flash photograph. We have probably all seen this happen and wondered who the culprit was.

The image is processed and can be produced as evidence in a dispute. Interestingly, of course, the photograph is likely - although not intended - to reveal the images of the vehicle's occupants as well.

ANPR, on the other hand, is based on an entirely different principle. For a start, it uses infra-red light source, rather than a conventional flash, which relies on the reflective properties of the plate itself to enhance the image.

But the essential difference is that it records every registration it sees in a rather crude 'guilty until proved innocent' manner. ANPR only works with multiple cameras. A second device logs each number again and a computer works out the average speed of each vehicle.

Many will be pleased to hear that council 'belt-tightening' has seen the abandonment of speed cameras in some areas - Swindon switched its off last April and Oxford may follow suit after a £600,000 funding shortfall. But ANPR seems certain to remain as it is a far more cost effective option.

## No Change for Irish Plates

The Irish motor industry is calling for a change to the country's vehicle registration plate system. They claim that, at present, it is too easy to date a vehicle and this is reducing the 'shelf-life' of new cars.

At one time people scarcely cared what car they bought provided it boasted a new plate. But economic and sociological changes mean that whilst sales are concentrated around the three months following a new issue, many people are now wary of too obviously displaying the age of their vehicles.

According to Eddie Murphy, the managing director of Ford Ireland, "Our current system is easy to understand and is a big driver of sales. However, if there is a bad start to the

> > >



year, it means that the State's revenue will have no chance to recover, as sales in the second half are so low. It is a high-risk system."

Mr Murphy also points to the back-log of National Car Tests (the equivalent of our 'MOT') because they relate strictly to the anniversary of the first registration date. This concern is shared by Applus, the private company responsible for conducting the annual examinations.

The government, however, is in no hurry to change the current arrangements, which have been in force for the past 23 years and the Garda are believed to favour the present ease of identification.

### Two New Spy Camera Schemes Adopt Contrasting Approaches

Bedford Borough Council is to introduce a controversial fund-raising scheme based around fleecing parents dropping-off and picking-up children from local schools.

A mobile ANPR camera will snap the registration numbers of vehicles caught even just stopping [note, not parking] on double yellow lines or zig-zag road markings in the school vicinity.

Councillor Charles Roydon justifies the £100,000 cost of the exercise with the

predictable quote, "There may be some people who think it is an infringement of civil liberties but law abiding drivers have nothing to worry about."

However, in common with similar initiatives nationwide, the seemingly responsible intentions are soured by the council's admission that the plan would be 'self-financing'. In other words, they do not, in fact, want to deter the offenders since this would cut off the revenue generated by fines.

Meanwhile, over at the Dartford River Crossing, the ANPR camera may be put to a less contentious and altogether more sensible use. Many people will be familiar with the appalling bottlenecks at toll booths, where armies of staff are employed to collect thousand of small payments.

Exactly how the scheme will be implemented remains to be seen, but it seems likely that it will follow the London Congestion Charge model, where ANPR cameras are used to monitor tolls paid either in advance or during a reasonable period after entering the restricted zone.

### Australian Plate Makes The Grade

Australian auctioneers, Shannons, raised the impressive equivalent of £460,000 at their latest event held in Melbourne.

80% of the lots on offer were sold and included ten Victorian [the state, not the monarch!] 'Heritage' enamelled plates featuring five much sought-after three-digit registrations: These included '599' - alluding to the Ferrari 599 GTB Fiorano V12 - attracted £54,000 and '412' - possibly relevant to the driver of a 1980s Ferrari Grand Tourer - raised £37,000.

By comparison, some earlier and usually more desirable marks, such as '329' and '773', did not fare quite as well as pundits had predicted, with winning bids of £32,000 and £29,000 respectively.

Among the other top sellers were some examples of the strange configurations peculiar to Australian system, such as '1.777' which closed at £13,000, '80.000' at £11,000 and '20.999' going for £9000.

The catalogue also included 13 classic motorcycles and many items of automobilia, including enamel garage signs and original petrol pumps.

The £54,000 price tag on the registration '599' is the highest we have heard of in the Australian market and earns a place in the table of top-selling registrations world-wide.

As a footnote to the recent Australian general election campaign, it was noted that Tony Abbott, the rival to incumbent Welsh-born Prime Minister, Julia Gillard, had a registration with the prefix 'ZZZ' on his campaign vehicle.

### Harrogate Auction Witnesses Big Plate Sales

Amun Bains from Birmingham is only 11 years old and won't be able drive for while yet, but that didn't stop her father, Harbhajan, from buying her a personal number plate. Harbhajan's winning bid of £26,479 secured the registration 99 A in the latest DVLA auction at Rudding Park Hotel, Harrogate.

Although set aside for his daughter, the number presently forms part of an impressive collection of personalised registrations which Harbhajan has amassed. These include 5 P, H 85 and 4 HS.

"From the moment Amun was born in 1999 I have wanted to get a number plate for her," he says. "It's more than I wanted to pay, but she is worth it."

Elsewhere in the three-day event, which is expected to have raised £3m for the treasury, a beast of a number, ABE 45T set its new owner back £8,038. B16 ONE certainly lived up to its name with a price tag of £12,838. G60 RGE fetched £15,238 and one particular boss was happy to pay £8,543 for ONE 805S.

However, as expected, the star-billing went to 10 O. Sales of earlier examples from the 'O' series plates have ranged from £63k for 3 O to £210k for the elusive 1 O. This time round, 10 O raised a very respectable £92,920.

The next public event will be held at Ardencote Manor Hotel and Country Club, Warwickshire between the 1st and 3rd of December.

[All prices inclusive of fees and taxes.]

## Mr Grimsdale!



**W**e were all saddened by the recent death of comedy legend, Sir Norman Wisdom, at the grand old age of 95. But his name will always live on in the form of a very distinctive and famous number plate.

Sir Norman loved cars and famously owned a 1987 Rolls-Royce Silver Spirit, a Jaguar S-Type and a 1956 R-type Bentley Continental.

Having sold the Bentley in 1981, Norman was delighted to be reunited with it by the researchers for Carlton Television's *Pulling Power* programme as a surprise to celebrate his knighthood. He eventually parted with the car for second time

claiming that it had become "a little too sporty" for him. The truth is that his age and failing health forced him to abandon driving in 1985.

Sir Norman also loved number plates and is known to have owned both **NW 1** and **1 NW**, the latter of which has found a proud new owner in Neil Warwick. Director of Warwick's Menswear of Northampton, Neil's collection also includes **JW 65**, **OW33**, **WCW 2**, **1 DNW** and **NW 230**.

**1 NW** was issued in 1958 by Leeds County Borough Council. Rumour has it that the reverse plate **NW 1** currently resides on an Aston Martin somewhere.





I am an osteopath with two human clinics, one in Manchester and one in Derbyshire. However half my practice these days is with horses as these play a huge part in my life.

I am based in Derbyshire but travel all over the country with my equine work treating everything from someone's beloved old horse to racing horses and eventing horses worth hundreds of thousands of pounds. Horses of whatever age respond remarkably well to osteopathy. The oldest I've treated was in his forties and the youngest was an 8 week old Hanovarian foal. Very cute!

My partner, Lynda, and I have three horses Finn, Gracie and Cassie. Finn belonged to a patient of mine and was going to be shot as

## Straight from the horse's mouth

he went lame on them. I said I'd have him and these days he is absolutely fine though he is very cheeky. One of his favourite tricks is pulling out electric fence posts with his teeth. Finn and Gracie are good friends and we recently introduced Cassie who was saved from the meat market by a friend of ours. She is doing really well under the guiding eye of Finn and Gracie and the healing relationship of the herd. We are great believers in the healing power of the herd and are currently on the look out for a bigger place to lease to create a healing centre where damaged horses can come for a while to get themselves back on track in the company of other horses. We also plan on developing this into a place where counselling is offered to people as well, using the relationship of human and equine as a basis for recuperation. So if someone out there has something suitable please do get in touch!



**What's the story?**  
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## Takeaway

Andy Pringis owns three fast-food outlets in the Midlands. When he found **KEB 4B**, Andy thought, "I just had to have it to advertise my businesses."

## Art for art's sake

**A**lan Richard Turner from Felixtowe in Suffolk has sported personal registrations on many different cars over the years, but it was not until he acquired his first ART plate that he found what he really wanted.

He bought **95 ART** eleven years ago, to grace his limited edition Honda Integra Type-R with a hand-built engine.

"When I moved out of Central London recently, I was at last able to expand my collection of specialist cars," says Alan.

"Regtransfers were most helpful in the purchase of **4 ART** for my Porsche Carrera Cabriolet, and again worked the wonders when **99 ART** became available for my new Mini Cooper."

To date, Alan's collection adds up to 99 (95 plus 4), so what will be next? "Well, I am sure I will be able to rely on Regtransfers to come up with the magic when the time is right, says Alan. "Thanks for a speedy and great result."

**What's the story?**  
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