

The World of Personal Number Plates

# Regtransfers

Issue 38

the  
inbetweeners'  
James Buckley





# The Phonebox Millionaire

Stephen Fear's story is an old-fashioned success story: the kind of inspirational example one might use to motivate young people. In fact, Fear is living proof that neither social disadvantage nor age and inexperience need be obstacles to success.

Now a multimillionaire, Stephen Fear was just 15 years old when he embarked upon his business enterprise. A chance encounter with an article in the *Financial Times* prompted him to make a telephone call to an American cleaning product manufacturer. That call, made from a red phonebox on the council estate where he lived, was the first step towards establishing his own commercial oven cleaning business. It was

also the origin of the nickname he acquired some time later, The Phonebox Millionaire.

That tale of Stephen's early foray into business has entered into the canon of entrepreneurial legend, along with Victor Kiam's being so impressed by an electric shaver that he bought the company, and Jobs and Wozniak building early Apple computers in a garage. However, the anecdote does prompt one question: what was a 15 year-old boy from a Bristol council estate doing reading the *FT*?

"I always read anything I could get my hands on, so it was

natural that I would read the papers I was delivering on my paper round. I have been an avid reader of the *FT* and *The Economist* since I was 12 years old because the standard of journalism on both is outstanding. I also used to speed read most of the other papers in my bag, including the *Daily Mirror*, *The Sketch*, the *Daily Mail* and the *Express*. An unusual one was the *Morning Star* which is the socialist newspaper. I always felt it important to be informed in a balanced way







and, thanks to my mother teaching me speed reading techniques at a very young age, I am able to process information quickly.”

A few years later, Stephen sold the cleaning business that had grown from that initial phonebox deal. The profit he made from that sale enabled him to invest in property. Subsequent success in that sector provided opportunities to diversify and expand. The result of that growth is Fear Group, an international organisation of which Stephen Fear

is chairman. The business, run by Stephen and his son, Leon, has interests in multiple markets and sectors ranging from green technology, hotels, residential care and manufacturing, spanning the UK, Europe, North America and Asia Pacific.

The acquisition of such a broad portfolio must have involved some deep thinking. The association with green technologies suggests that perhaps Fear Group’s activities are not driven by profit alone.

“Our business decisions are based on balancing commerciality with ethics. We consider whether society will benefit, as well as ourselves. If the two match, we move forward to the proof of concept stage.”

Social issues occupy a significant part of Stephen Fear’s attentions. He is patron of Emmaus, a charity that seeks to reduce homelessness by providing not only accommodation, but also employment. Furthermore, the charity recycles large quantities of furniture and household items that it sells in its retail outlets, thus making a significant contribution to reducing landfill.

“I had lunch with HM The Queen and HRH Prince Philip during Her Majesty’s Jubilee Year and afterwards I met Dr Richard Pendlebury who was CEO of Emmaus at the time. I knew that Terry Waite, the former envoy to The Archbishop of Canterbury, was president of the charity and, of course, that The Duchess of Cornwall was Royal Patron. Richard and I got on well immediately and through the evolving friendship he asked me to be a patron. Homelessness is an issue close to my heart so I readily accepted. Emmaus is a wonderful charity which helps homeless people to help themselves.”

Through nature, nurture or both, Stephen’s son Leon has inherited his father’s flair for business. Another early starter, Leon’s first business venture was buying and selling mountain bikes and bike parts while he

was still at school. At weekends he would go out with his father to view plots of land that were being considered for purchase. This seeded an interest in the property side of things and, at the age of 19, Leon joined the family business. Initially working in construction, Leon later worked in property management and development. He now oversees the group’s property interests. Like Stephen, Leon regularly writes business articles for magazines and newspapers.

Another interest common to both father and son is personal car registrations. Stephen’s Mercedes SL500 AMG Sport bears his 831 SF number plate, while Leon’s Mercedes AMG C63 displays 45 LF.

“I have always loved cars,” says Leon, “so I decided to buy 45 LF, almost 12 years ago for the BMW M3 that I bought a month after my 21st birthday, just having concluded a successful property deal. My mum and step mum also have personal number plates.

“Our experience with Regtransfers has been one of knowledgeable, quick and professional service with excellent communication; very easy to deal with.”

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



# The Law Boss







Asons Solicitors of Bolton has launched a corporate immigration division as part of their long-term vision to diversify and expand. Regtransfers customer Naveed Ahmed has been appointed as head of the new department. Naveed will build this arm of the business, working on projects such as assisting the transfer of high-profile personnel who need to relocate from overseas to new roles in the UK and helping high net-worth entrepreneurs bring their business ideas to Britain. The business will focus particularly on clients from Asia and the Middle East.

Naveed graduated with an LLB (Hons) law degree from Manchester and completed his legal practice course at the prestigious Oxford Institute of Legal Practice where he graduated with distinction. He asserts that the key to his success is to “think big and to achieve bigger”.

Naveed told us that owning an exclusive and perfectly appropriate registration plate is all part and parcel of his chosen career as a high-flying lawyer. He has proudly displayed his striking LAW 805S number plate on an impressive array of sports cars and classic cars over the years. He has a long standing relationship with Regtransfers, having previously purchased L4 WSX from the company, and has described Regtransfers as, “far and beyond the best in the business”.

On his ownership of LAW 805S, Naveed said, “In the business world, exclusive private number plates are becoming increasingly synonymous with high-flying individuals who have accomplished well beyond conventional industry standards. As well as being great investments, a good registration mark signifies a great sense of individuality which sets you apart from the rest. I am now often referred to by family, friends and clients as The Law Boss.”

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





## “Well, why not?”

Nigel Bain from Arbroath in Angus, Scotland served with the 4th Royal Tank Regiment back in 1974 and says that he is now the envy of all who served with him.

“I have cashed in my pension early so decided to spoil myself for a change,” says

Nigel. “Well, why not? You only live once,” he concludes.

“When you have served in the Army it’s like a second family,” he tells us, “so that’s why the plate is special to me. I see the plates as an investment for the future,” he says, “as well as being special to myself.”



We in the Regtransfers editorial office like to think that we have a finger firmly on the cultural pulse of the nation, that our little group is a valid and representative sample of the population. If that is, indeed, the case then the British viewing public, like our office, is split in two by the award-winning E4 sitcom *The Inbetweeners*. There is a faction that finds the show hilarious; there is a slightly smaller faction that considers it crass and idiotic. Interestingly, the latter faction appears to be made up of people who have formed their opinion without actually having watched the show.

For those of you who find themselves in the second group - the group that has never viewed *The Inbetweeners* - perhaps a summary might be helpful. The sitcom features four young men, comprehensive school pupils. The comedy derives from their general misadventures and their tragic lack of romantic and sexual fulfillment. The necessary dramatic conflict and tension are supplied by teachers, bullies and hormones. Your humble scribe should, in the interests of full disclosure, confess that he had never seen an episode of *The Inbetweeners* before researching this article. He had prejudged it, as outlined above, to be crass and idiotic. Having watched it, he was forced to revise his opinion and, grudgingly, to add "funny" to that list of adjectives.

The show ran for three seasons and, by the time it ended, *The Inbetweeners* was consistently attracting more than 3.5 million viewers, making it the most watched show on E4. It also generated two successful spin-off movies, *The Inbetweeners Movie* and *The Inbetweeners 2*.

One of the stars of the series and the movies is James Buckley who played Jay Cartwright. Jay was possibly the crudest and least respectable of the four main characters and no doubt that is largely why he was so popular with viewers. Regtransfers caught up with James at the premises of Yiannimize, a company specialising in vehicle wrapping, customisation and conversion. Since Yianni Charalambous and his team carried out extensive work on James's car (of which more later), the Enfield HQ has exerted something of a hypnotic influence on Buckley.



## the inbetweeners' James Buckley

"I love coming here," he says. "I'm going to find an excuse to keep coming back. In fact, I'm probably going to break my car on purpose just for an excuse to come back. Every time you come here there's something exciting happening, there's a cool car or something. If you like cars I'd suggest just coming here to have a little nose around. He will suck you in, tell you all the stuff he can do - which is literally anything. If you want anything done to

inside and out and between them, they've worked pretty much every job in comedy. They both had cushy jobs at Channel 4: Iain Morris was one of the youngest comedy commissioners ever and he had that job at

"They'd worked on shows before. Iain started out as a runner for Baddiel and Skinner on their *Fantasy Football League* TV show back in the 1990s. Then they worked on the *11 O'Clock Show* and worked with Ricky Gervais on a show called *Meet Ricky Gervais* before he did *The Office*. So they sort of worked their way up from making cups of tea to doing just about every job in TV comedy. They were from a really good pedigree, knew exactly what they needed to do to make a good comedy and just went for it."

The show created by Beesley and Morris turned out to be the perfect vehicle to take James's own career to the next level.

"I started in West End shows, in musicals and things, which was fun. It was a hobby really, just something I enjoyed doing. I never, ever thought that it would become a career but for some reason I was just lucky to be involved in something or other from the age of 11. My school were very good about it. I think they could tell that I would probably benefit more from going on film sets and doing that rather than being in a maths class. That was amazing really. You probably wouldn't get away with it nowadays but I did have to have quite a lot of time off from school. "Once I left school I just carried on doing it. I thought, *Why not? Why can't I just do this for a living? People do, don't they? There are professional actors.* Then I started to move more into comedy: I did a sitcom with Johnny Vaughan; I did the last series of a comedy drama called *Teachers* on Channel 4 and then I auditioned for *The Inbetweeners*, which obviously was the one that really took off. That was great. If *The Inbetweeners* hadn't come along I'd still be auditioning and trying to find a break.

"I was 19 when it first came out and I was in the pilot as well, which was the year before that so I was 18. It's been about nine years of my life."

"Obviously we've been on this little journey together. We were all just pretty much starting out in one way or another when we first did *The Inbetweeners*. I think when you go through something like that together I think you'll always be pretty close. We're very much like siblings. Whenever we meet up we just click back into that gear and just carry on. If we haven't seen each other for six or seven weeks or whatever, we still just pick up right where we left off. We're always

a car then Yianni will do it. It makes you go, 'Yeah, I want that!'. That's how it works."

Generous praise for the abilities of those around him seems to be a James Buckley trait. When we get on to the subject of *The Inbetweeners*, the show that brought him significant fame, his respect for those who worked on the show is evident.

"Most of the writing is down to the two guys Iain Morris and Damon Beesley, who are both sort of geniuses. They know comedy

the age of about 28 or something, which was amazing. They both quit their jobs and started a production company at a time when the economy was melting down and no one was starting companies. They really took a chance and I think it's very commendable that they did that, that they had the guts to do it because they believed in something.





in touch. We have email threads that are like four years old but which we just keep going. It's really just us taking the p\*\*\* out of each other, in-jokes and the like. If we weren't so close and weren't such good friends then I think *The Inbetweeners* would probably have stopped after one or two series. I don't think it would have worked because we wouldn't have wanted to carry on."

As well as enjoying the company of his co-stars, James has become fond of his character. He admits that there is probably quite a bit of James in the character of Jay, and quite a bit of Jay in James. These aspects manifest when the four *Inbetweeners* lads get together.

"Oh, yeah. We definitely revert to that kind of childish, teenage thing. I think every guy does. If you get a group of guys together and they're on their own... It doesn't matter how old - they could be in a pub, they could be at school, they could be at work - they'll behave in the same way they have since they were 13. Playing Jay is great for someone like that. You get to say things and behave in the most outrageous way. There's stuff I wouldn't dream of saying in real life. And also when people sort of know you as the character it gives you a bit of license to behave like that in real life."

But now *The Inbetweeners* is over: the last series was indeed the last series and *The Inbetweeners 2* the last movie. While that show has dominated James's career for most of his working life, his immersion in comedy goes much deeper and he seems to have no trouble recognising the direction in which he now wishes to move. Although he made a horror movie, *Pyramid*, that was released in 2014, comedy remains James's primary focus.

"As well as *Inbetweeners*, I did the spin-off from *Only Fools and Horses*, a prequel called *Rock and Chips*, and it was an amazing opportunity. Playing such an iconic character [a young Del Boy Trotter] was a dream come true, you know. I really relished that challenge and totally enjoyed it, loved doing it.

"At the moment I'm writing a sitcom for the guys who made *The Inbetweeners*. I'm also writing a film. I'm probably going to spend the next year of my life at home, writing. That really suits me right now. I can take the time to do whatever I want. With the writing, I can do it at home with my kids.

"I'd never really considered writing before. It's only been the last year or so that I started getting these ideas that I thought were funny and that people would like. Also, I'm getting more and more cynical as I get older and there's a lot of comedy at the moment that I don't find particularly funny or very good. That was sort of what spurred me on - not because I thought that I could do better than that, but more because I thought, *Well, if they get away with writing this stuff then I can probably write a terrible sitcom too!* That was it really. If other people can bring out any old crap then I can do that too. That gave me a little bit of confidence to give it a go.

**"If we weren't so close and weren't such good friends then I think *The Inbetweeners* would probably have stopped after one or two series."**

"It's one of those things I'd like to get better at as well. What's difficult is actually getting a chance to get better. You see, I think sitcoms especially need more than one series. They need a first series to find their feet, where some things might not work. That happens so you make changes and then you come back and the next series is better. I think that people were more patient years ago and they gave sitcoms more time. Take *Blackadder* for example. I love *Blackadder* and it's one of my favourite series. The first series I thought was great but there was a lot of stuff that didn't work. For the second series they completely changed the Edmund Blackadder character into something amazing. Then there were the following two series that we would never have seen if *Blackadder* had stopped because of what didn't work in the first series. If *Blackadder's* first series had been made these days I think the TV network would have said that there was a lot wrong with it and wouldn't have bothered going on. You really need to give things a bit of time like that. That's what E4 did right with *The Inbetweeners* because not many people watched the first series

but then it sort of spread through word of mouth. They repeated it and loads more people watched the repeat than watched it when it first came out. It was just a case of giving *The Inbetweeners* that second chance to show that there would be interest, that it could be funny and that people would like it. Obviously it went on to make two huge British comedy films. I think it's always right to give things a chance and that's all I'll be asking for."

James is clearly confident that he has the necessary experience and contextual frames of reference to make his writing work.

"Between us, me and the other boys, we seem to have this sort of encyclopedic knowledge of the history of British comedy. It's just a passion, you know, like people who love football and know all the crazy stats about football and about who scored what in the 1972 FA Cup final. Well we have similar knowledge about British sitcoms. A lot of American as well, come to think of it."

James is far from sanguine about the current state of British comedy and much of his inspiration is drawn from the previous generation.

"Steve Coogan is my hero; he's just amazing. Not just in comedy, I think he's generally an amazing actor and performer. But then there's also Ricky Gervais and Stephen Merchant. *The Office* was a very, very important sitcom for all of us in *The Inbetweeners*. It came out, I think, when I was in my last year at school and I was at a real formative age, you know, and it changed comedy. When *The Office* came out it moved comedy up a notch. That seemed to trickle down then to a lot of the other comedies around that time and a lot of those were really great as well. But it's been a long time since *The Office* and I think that British comedy has sort of gone the other way now and there isn't that really great sitcom out at the moment, I don't think."

Who knows? The show that Buckley is currently writing may just be that next, really great sitcom. Time will tell.

Interview: Angela Banh

Story: Rick Cadger

Location photography: Stan Thompson



Of course, no Regtransfers celebrity story would be complete without a car and a number plate. Happily, James Buckley's car really is something special.

James is a Mini enthusiast but he wanted something more than just an old Mini with all its limitations, or a new Mini with its

n o n -

traditional vibe. What he wanted just wasn't available so James found a suitable old-style vehicle to act as a foundation for his vision, then took it to Enfield-based customisation specialist Yiannimize. When we visited James to deliver his new personal number plates, we met him at the Yiannimize workshop where James and custom car wizard Yianni told us all about the unique Mini.

"It was a huge job," James admits. "I turned up at Yianni's earlier this year with an old envelope that had a sketch that I drew on it. There was a long list of all these things I'd dreamt up. Basically, what Yianni has built for me is the car I've wanted since I was 17 years old. It's a dream come true, it really is. He took this very badly drawn sketch and

dashboard of a Range Rover, and somehow he's put that into a Mini! It's got all the sort of mod cons and comforts you get from a luxury car and Yianni's managed to fit it all into this tiny space. I think that was the biggest challenge really, wasn't it?"

Yianni laughs. "Yeah, it was very difficult. When James turned up and we had the meeting we were like, 'Ok, so we're used to doing Vianos, Rolls-Royces, big cars,' and he's like, 'I want to have state of the art stuff in this Mini.' We went, 'Great, but where are we supposed to put everything?' In the end, we literally built a whole new dashboard to fit everything in. We did all up-to-date buttons and different handles. Outside we painted everything, redid it and basically brought the whole thing back to life. To see it now you'd think it was a 2013 or 2014 custom Mini but with the old school, *Italian Job* feel, the old shape. Everything's up to date now: it's got iPod, it's got Bluetooth, it's got DAB, it's got CD, DVD. Everything is in this car now but it still looks classic."

"I've had new Minis as well," James says. "I just love Minis, especially the old, classic style. When I saw it after it had all been finished I was absolutely speechless. I had no words good enough to describe it. It's been in my head for the last decade, that car. Like I was saying to Yianni, I don't want to sound overly dramatic but what they do here is make dreams come true. That's what they do for people. I love coming here."

Recollections vary regarding exactly how long this epic restoration and customisation job actually took.

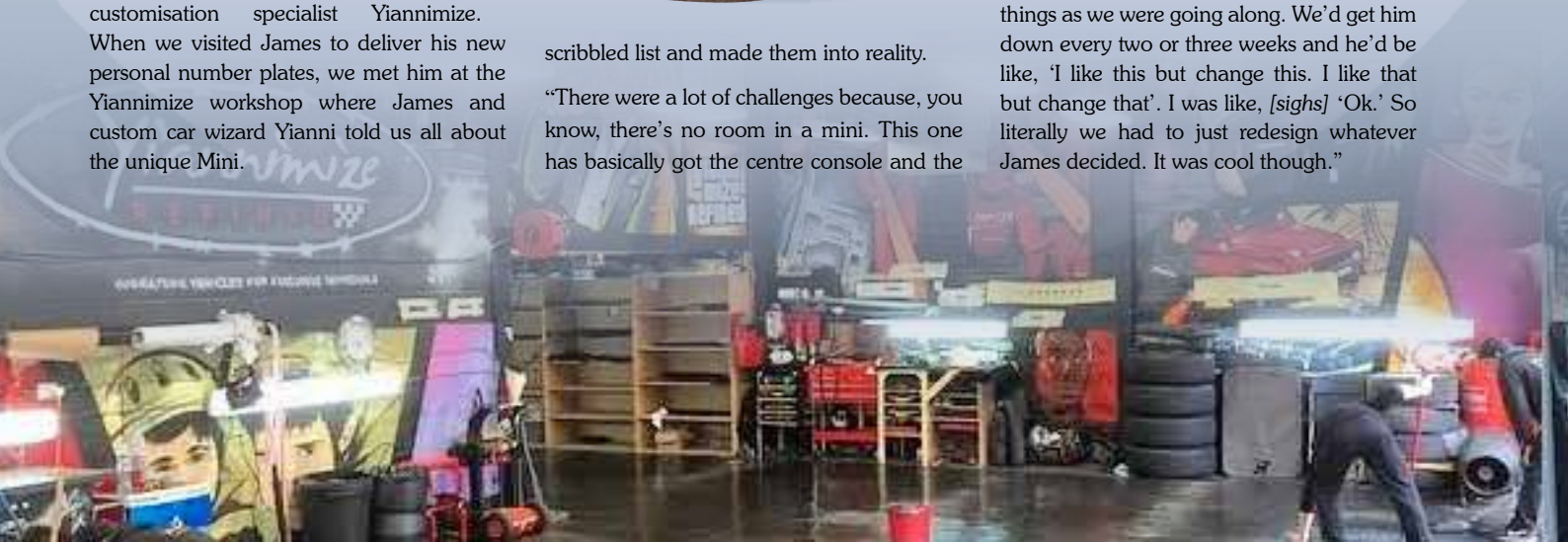
"It took... I think it was three months, maybe four months," says Yianni.

James, on the other hand, suggests, "I think it was more like six."

"No way was it that long!" Yianni pauses, running through the project timeline in his head. "Barry was away. Barry is my main custom builder and he was away for like three to four weeks in Cyprus, so literally that build came to a stop while I was waiting for my main guy but... Well, yeah, I suppose it could have been five months, maybe. But then, to be fair, James was changing things as we were going along. We'd get him down every two or three weeks and he'd be like, 'I like this but change this. I like that but change that'. I was like, [sighs] 'Ok.' So literally we had to just redesign whatever James decided. It was cool though."

scribbled list and made them into reality.

"There were a lot of challenges because, you know, there's no room in a mini. This one has basically got the centre console and the







When the Regtransfers team visited Yianni's HQ on a previous occasion, James's car was just an empty metal shell.

"Oh, do you remember that?" asks Yianni. "It had no doors, no interior, no wheels, it had *nothing*."

"A lot of the work was preparation," James recalls..

"And wiring," adds Yianni. "Wiring takes a long time. Barry did probably two weeks of wiring. The amount of wires in that car is unreal. You can't see because obviously they're hidden but... yeah."

"There's little things that you take for granted every day," James enthuses, "but if you're a Mini owner you think they're amazing - like central locking, electric windows, stuff like that. These are luxuries that you don't normally have in an old Mini. It's all fantastic. It's absolutely brilliant. Oh, and speakers in the front. Usually in a Mini you have two speakers in the parcel shelf, rattling about. I've got a sub in the boot."

"It sounds like a disco," says Yianni. "It is *loud*. It's amazing."

"So," says James, "the whole shell is completely soundproofed, because Minis are dead noisy as well. It's nice and quiet in the car and you can really hear whatever you're listening to. I listen to a lot of podcasts and a lot of stand-up audio podcasts, so it's

really good to be able to hear spoken word in a Mini."

How did the projects come about initially?

"Well, my wife gave me permission to go out and do it," James says with a smile. "I sort of mentioned it to her, that I really wanted to do this. I'd been saying it for years and years and years. I found a Mini online that I thought would work and then I sent a tweet out asking if anybody knew someone who could do what I wanted for my car. I had about 50 replies telling me to go and see Yianni, and Yianni himself tweeted me saying to bring it round for him to have a look. That was on a Friday and I was literally there on the Monday"

"Yeah," adds Yianni, "and the Monday was a bank holiday and I was supposed to be shut! I'd only opened because I had a few people coming down, and then James turns up."

Despite the tongue-in-cheek grumble, Yianni is really not complaining. "Listen," he says earnestly, "we do work with Ferraris, Lambos, Bentleys, all day long. *This* was a fun project. Even Barry was like, 'Now *this* is going to be interesting'. We can do Range Rovers, we can do Vianos, we do them all day long and it's our bread and butter. This was different.

"When we'd finished the car we had to take it to a Mini specialist because we needed something checked: an issue with one of the lights, I think it was. Well, obviously we're not Mini people so we took it to this specialist. Anyway, when we got there, like *everyone* came out of this Mini specialist place and they're all like, 'Oh, my god. It's just the best Mini.' And these are Mini *fanatics*. These

people are on all the groups... All they know is Minis. They've come out, they've looked at this Mini and they're like, 'It's the best Mini we've ever seen. We can't believe you've done it and you're not Mini people.' So, yeah, it was crazy."

"Because I've got kids I need another car too," says James. "I've got a really nice Range Rover and it's all kitted out as well, and that's a lovely car, but that [*indicating the Mini*] actually turns heads and people come up and say 'Love your car,' and I'm like, 'Thank you!' It's kind of a real spectacle."

Oddly, to us, even though he owns the ultimate, unique Mini, James had never really considered purchasing a private number plate until he's spoken to Regtransfers.

"No, I'd never really thought about it. Although I have a plate on my Range Rover that says 'MOD', but that's a bit boring."

The plate we delivered to James was CL11 NGE. Regular viewers of *The Inbetweeners* will immediately see why James would choose that. To the uninitiated we extend our apologies for declining to explain in a family-safe magazine, and respectfully suggest that they do a little research. It really won't take long.

"Yeah, there was one stand-out number that I thought I had to grasp, which obviously was CL11 NGE. I couldn't say no to that. It's more wacky and unusual than the one on the Range Rover, and obviously it fits in well with *The Inbetweeners*. The childish person inside me - the Jay inside me, I guess - just fell in love with it."

[www.jamesbuckle.co](http://www.jamesbuckle.co)







Tristan Rich  
Mid Glamorgan



## A lot of bottle

I collect old bottles and discovered some that originated from the Lacon brewery in Great Yarmouth. I had a large collection of their beer bottles which are now part of the company's museum and visitors' centre in Great Yarmouth. I am still known locally as 'the Lacon's Man' so I just had to have the plate.

Graham A Hodgkinson  
Suffolk



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







## Splitting the Difference

Whilst it might be convenient to have your first name as the front number plate and your family name as the back, it's just not allowed.

So, Aila Peacock has come up with an ingenious solution. She has cleverly split her name over two separate vehicles.

Aila, from Bournemouth in Dorset has the number 41 LA on her Toyota and PEA 606K on her motor bike.

"I have always been interested in registration numbers," says Aila, "and, as a teenager, I used to spot and 'collect' registrations with the letters K, KD

and KF from Liverpool, where I grew up. My father was amused but uncertain about this interest. I occasionally see a number and know that I first saw it over 50 years ago!"



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## Barking Mad

Jan Linch is, by her own admission, mad about dogs - any shape, size or breed, but people really thought she was 'barking' when she ordered her first personal number plate, J100 DOG.

"The reason I purchased it was because it suited both my business, as well as my hobby of dog agility," says Jan. "When my car is parked up anywhere in public, I quite often see people pointing and commenting on it, having a little chuckle at the same time. I think my number plate

compliments my hobby as well as my business in quite a humorous way."

As a Canine Ultrasound Technician, Jan's job involves travelling to different parts of Kent and Sussex, visiting top breeders, as well as ordinary dog owners. "It's a very satisfying job," she says, "and especially rewarding when you can see tiny little puppies moving on the ultrasound screen."

Jan has kept Border Collies for over thirty years and has recently started to breed them. "At the moment I have two females called, Sophie and Bonnie," she says. "My

love, and hobby of dog agility began in August 2012, when my husband Ian and I watched an agility competition at a steam rally show. Despite the fact that it was raining hard, and we got absolutely soaked, we watched the show for several hours. We were both fascinated by it, and thought how much fun we could have with our dogs if we could learn how to compete.

"Within weeks of that event I had joined our local dog agility training club, where I took Sophie for weekly lessons. Within eight months I was ready for my first competition weekend. I still remember how nervous I was! The adrenaline was the only thing that got me round the course over that weekend! However, Sophie and I came away with four first places!

"It was at this point that I purchased a complete competition set of dog agility equipment and placed it in a field on our farm. It wasn't long before our friends, neighbours and acquaintances began to bring their mixture of dogs for a bit of fun, and before long, I found myself with quite a large group of enthusiastic dog owners ready to learn dog agility!

"I wasn't even qualified to teach, and I'm still not, but it hasn't stopped people coming along to learn, socialise, and have some fun, and that's what dog agility is all about - having fun. And so, 'Frittenden Dog Agility' was born!"



### What's the story?

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

## On a Roll

I am a sole trader of the company Roll-tech Services. We are a shot blasting and surface preparation company operating throughout the south-east. Our current portfolio includes the complete restoration of the ornate wrought iron railing at Margate sea front and a complete restoration of the entire railings at Chatham Barracks for the MOD. We have also completed basement restorations in Knightsbridge, London (including Elle Macpherson's home).

I was fortunate enough to look on your website just before the '11' plates came out and RO11 TEC appeared as available at a very reasonable price. I was delighted, but as the company was just starting out I had to wait a little before I could purchase a newer van to be able to put the RO11 TEC plate onto it.

I regularly receive positive comments from both my customers and the general public. Once, in a traffic jam, another driver got out of his car just to tell me what a fantastic number plate I had.

After a meeting with my bank manager, he wrote to me telling me what a great



advertisement the number plate was and how he had told everyone how unique it was, which of course it is.

**Richard Homewood**  
Kent

[www.roll-techservices.co.uk](http://www.roll-techservices.co.uk)



# Two's company



Pete Dalton has owned PKD 97 for over 40 years, so he is no stranger to personal number plates. His company, Ocean Bounty, are seafood merchants. “We bring seafood in from all over the world, and then sell it on to hotels, restaurants and fish and chip shops etc,” says Pete.

The company's Ford Ranger displays 2000 OB and they have GY02 OBL on their pick up truck. “We think that personalised plates are a novel way of promoting the business,” he adds. “They get you noticed.”



Paul Bridge (left) with his team

The marketing opportunities afforded by personal number plates are also recognised by Paul Bridge of Panel Fab, who are associated with Ocean Bounty and share the same offices in Grimsby, South Humberside.

Paul's company, which fits cold stores, white walling and hygienic panels nationwide, has six vans, three of which are pictured below, and all with personalised plates.









# Sentimental value



Gary Bostock's interest in number plates all started with his parents, Tony and Linda Bostock, who had the registration TLB 4. "I've always been looking for one for myself," says Gary, "and when GAZ 25 came up at an affordable price, I was very happy."

The 25 represents Gary's birthday of 25th May but the plate was relegated to his quad bike when GAZ 5 came along. This registration included his month of birth. "Also," he adds, "we're a family of five, so it's perfect."

Gary, a builder and plasterer from Mansfield in Nottinghamshire, also owns the highly appropriate J4 JOB, which his father bought for him for his works van. However, when his parents sadly passed away, he decided to change it for the TLB 4 plate which had been left to him.

"It's more more than just a few letters and a number to me," Gary insists, "it has great sentimental value. All four plates have different meanings and values to me," he reflects, "but TLB 4 is the one I relate to the most, because it's been in the family for nearly 40 years and, if it wasn't for my dad, I may not have the interest in number plates that I do now."





# Making Memories

The registration AAS 790 was a birthday present to Alicia Anne-Marie Sykes, a dental nurse from Wickford in Essex, from her parents. The letters AAS are clearly Alicia's initials, but the number has a special significance.

"790 is an 'angel number' which represents love and protection, good fortune and generosity through spiritual enlightenment," says Alicia. "These numbers were chosen to represent my auntie Katie who passed away. I was very close to her and I call her my guardian angel because she was like a second mother to me and my brothers. This makes my number plate very personal and sentimental to me."

It was coming up to Alicia's birthday and her dad asked her if she would like

Western numerology can be traced back to the Greek philosopher and mathematician Pythagoras and it is from this system that people have created Angel Numbers, which some believe represent messages from a higher power.







a private plate. She was intrigued but had no idea what to choose. Knowing that a good private plate would be expensive, she didn't look much further into it. Alicia had previously searched the internet for her initials 'AS' but found none that really appealed.

"I had a huge party for my 21st at a club in Billericay, Essex with all my family and friends," she recalls, "and when it came to midnight my father bought the place to a standstill, gave an amazing speech and presented me with a large gift wrapped parcel, I opened it and screamed with excitement. I had my own private number plate!"

Everyone asked about the significance of the registration and Alicia's mother explained the 'angel numbers'.

"She told me that she cried when she came across the plate," says Alicia. "Having two older brothers, I've always been spoilt, but I really do love my number plate. It's personal to me and definitely gives my lovely little limited edition Corsa an edge!"

Alicia believes in treating yourself to all those lovely things you enjoy, "unless, of course, you're lucky enough to have them for your 21st birthday!"

The cute little dog in the photo is Alicia's 'baby' Oscar. "He puts a smile on my face and makes me happy everyday so he had to be in in the photo with me. He may be 11 years old but he's still a beautiful young pup to me.

"Cherish the lovely things you have in life," Alicia recommends, "and make memories."

Background illustration:  
The Guardian Angel by Franceschini, Marcantonio



# Social Media GALLERY

Here is a selection of some great number plates that have been spotted by our followers. To see more pictures, follow us on Facebook, Twitter and now Instagram.

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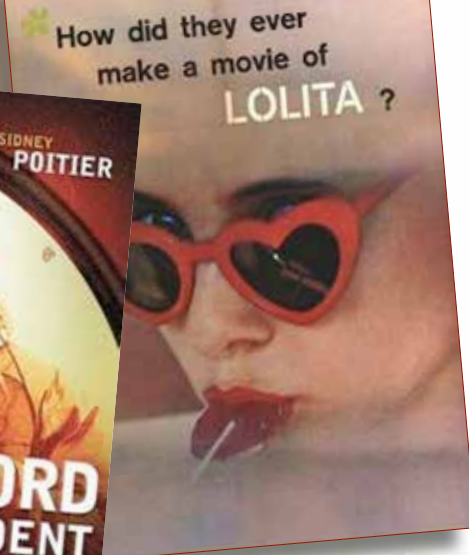
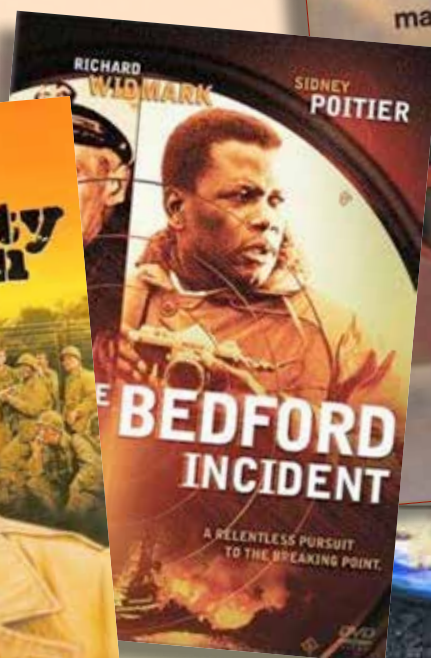








Colin as Seth Sawyer in *The Dirty Dozen*



## 1966 and All That

Former movie actor Colin Maitland was born in Birmingham, UK but grew up in North America. His parents were a good, old-fashioned song and dance team, so going into show business seemed perfectly natural to Colin. He first began acting on Canadian radio at the age of eight in a

Canadian radio soap, somewhat similar to *The Archers*.

When his family moved to Detroit, Colin's career also made an important move, into television. Later, the Maitlands returned to the UK where Colin appeared in many well-known TV comedies and dramas of the 1960s and 70s: *Dixon of Dock*

*Green*, *Play of the Week*, *Bootsie and*

*Snudge*, and *Steptoe and Son*. His

film career also began to blossom

when he worked for Stanley Kubrick

in *Lolita*, and Carl Foreman in *The*

*Victors*. "Small parts, usually," he

admits, "but I earned a living."

Colin's big break came in 1966,

when he landed the part of Seth

Sawyer, one of *The Dirty Dozen*.

"Albeit, the least known of them by

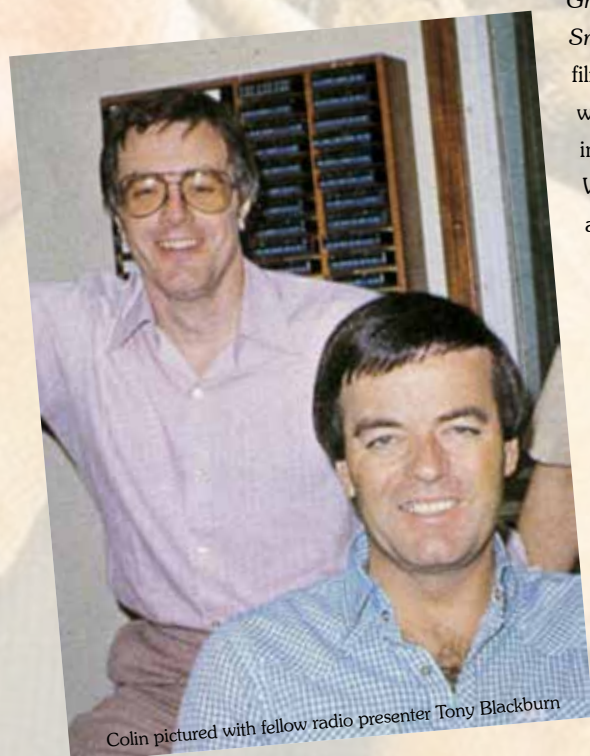
far," he admits. "That was released

in 1967 but it was filmed in 1966,

hence the choice of my number

plate, 1966 CM."

"After *Dirty Dozen*, I did some deep thinking and realised I was a quite awful actor with no



Colin pictured with fellow radio presenter Tony Blackburn





detectable talent, so I reinvented myself as a journalist, first in print and later on radio." Colin spent many happy years with BBC World Service Sport and now works freelance.

"I was always a car 'nut'," says Colin. "I'd buy a car, keep it for a week or so then sell it on - and always at a loss!" For many

years he kept a faithful record of every car he had owned, but says that he gave up after it reached 450. "That was 20 years ago, so heaven knows how many there've been altogether. I'm a reformed person now, or so I tell my wife Amanda [*daughter*

*of the late Claire Rayner*]. "I only have two cars, the Audi and an old Citroen Acadiane; those will do... for now."





## A model plate

Hossein Zolfi, from Birmingham, works as a fashion model and is registered on the Models Direct international model database, one of Europe's leading multimedia agencies.

Hossein, pictured here with his girlfriend, Monika, clearly uses his great registration to good effect in promoting his career.



## Baby Boomers

Having an unusual surname, Stephan Boome never really expected to be able to find a personal number plate. But, in 1996, he came upon S80 OME. It was a unique opportunity which could not be missed and so he purchased it.

It took him a further 16 years, however, to actually display it on a car. In the meantime, other members of the family upstaged him:

Stephan's father, Dave, and brother, Gary were thrilled at the prospect of having their own versions of this convenient number plate combination. Unfortunately, they were unable to find D or G prefixes, but did secure the M80 OME for Stephan's mother, Margaret in 1988.

Next to join the club was Gary and Stephan's sister, Vicki, with V80 OME.

Gary's then acquired R80 OME for his girlfriend, Rachel. He insists that it wasn't a proposal of marriage but, three years later it was registered to her car, which Gary proudly drove to the church on their wedding day.

Dave finally purchased his plate D80 OME when it became available for sale.

Finally, in 2007, Gary became the last family member to succumb when G80 OME finally became available.



David

Vicki

Stephan

Gary

Rachel

Margaret





I have been interested in private plates for some time and always thought of owning one. Some years ago I saw an advertisement for L3 MHL, which fit my initials perfectly as Martyn Hugh Leedham and also my birthday is the 13th, so this is a perfect combination.

I work in the telecoms industry and in my spare time I am a member of the Bluebird Supporters Club, as I have been interested in speed records for some years. In particular the records of Malcolm and his son Donald Campbell.

I have produced a series of bookmarks and other merchandise under the name of MHL Bookmarks, featuring the images of artist and friend Arthur Benjamins. These are mainly of the records of my hero Donald Campbell and his jet powered boat Bluebird K7 in which he set seven world water speed records in the 1950s and 60s.

I hope to expand the range to include other British record breakers in the near future. My ultimate number plate would be K7 MHL.

**Martyn Leedham**  
Staffordshire

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

# mail



**What's the story?**

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

## Road to Recovery

XRoads Recovery is a family business providing professional support for people who want to recover from drugs, alcohol, and mental health problems. It is run by family and friends whom, between them, have a proven track record of over 100 years experience within the drug and alcohol sector.

Company Director, Keith Loughran is a military veteran and is in recovery himself. He is a fully qualified and experienced psychiatric social worker, councillor, and therapist.





# Regwise newsletter

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## Auction Round-Up

Some impressive prices were paid at two public auctions of number plates held at the end of 2015.

Top of the list was 458 SA. The reference to the Ferrari model pushed the value of the plate to a whopping £129,680. Similar associations boosted the values of both 488 S (£76,544) and 250 GT (£64,880).

Similarly, there was eager bidding for the 'Porsche plate' 911 RSR, which went for £46,736, closely followed by a seasonal WH15 KEY which attracted a respectable £43,496.

Over the past few years, a string of 'O' registrations have been released for the first time and offered at auction. This time round, it was the turn of 50 O, which cost its lucky new owner £89,504 and 1000 O, which raised £38,960.

The events, at The Stratford Manor Hotel and The Cheltenham Chase Hotel, also



yielded some other excellent results, including 84 BU (£26,648), 11 UCY (£22,112) and BR15 TOL (£20,168).

*All prices include fees and taxes.*

We should perhaps be grateful that things didn't develop into the alarming scenes witnessed at a similar overseas sale:

The Chinese number plate ED 999 was the centre of rather more attention than it warranted when two rival bidding factions came to blows over its sale at auction.

Although the registration was highly desirable because of the cultural significance of the number nine, securing the plate soon became more a matter of

prestige between feuding families. The progress of the bid proved too frustrating for the two parties and, eventually, things descended into an ugly brawl.

Perhaps quite rightly, the organisers of the sale in Huzhou, Zhejiang province, decided to immediately withdraw the sale, so neither side were able to claim the prize.

There is, of course, a UK plate with the registration ED 999, originally issued by Warrington County Borough Council at the beginning of the last century. Let's hope no similar kerfuffle ensues should it ever come up for sale here.



## Dallas Plate

A licence plate with a rather unfortunate association has sold for \$100,000 in the USA.

The registration GG 300 was the number of the limousine carrying President John F Kennedy at the time of his assassination in Dallas, Texas on 22 November 1963.

The plates were discarded in a rubbish bin when the vehicle was eventually refitted, but Willard Hess retrieved them and kept them on a bookcase at home. When he died, his daughter, Jane Walker, inherited them and kept them in a kitchen drawer.

"I was aware of their significance," said Ms Walker, who offered the plates for auction. "On occasion, I would take them out and show to friends."

Of course, the price paid is simply for the metal plates as historical artefacts and would not entitle them to be legally assigned to any vehicle. It is possible that someone owns the rights to the actual registration. Similarly, there would have been a UK version of GG 300 [issued by Glasgow Borough Council in the early 1930s] which, in this instance, shares a common letter and number format.

## Oh no, you don't!

The thankless task of the government censors continued with the monitoring of the latest number plate release.

The '16' series plates afford ample opportunities to concoct words and phrases from the characters because the number '16' can easily be viewed as letters.

Consequently, BU16 SHT was one of the first to be spotted by the custodians of our moral welfare and duly removed before it

could be sold. Similarly - and please cover your ears if you are likely to be offended - DA16 GER, FA16 OTS, and EM16 RNT are among a whole raft of combinations considered too much for our delicate sensibilities.

It's a fine line, of course. Also out are CR16 PLE, BU16 ERY and OR16 ASM, although it's too late to stop OR61 ASM, which slipped through the net in 2001 and which is currently available from Regtransfers.







## Barking Mad

Jan Linch is, by her own admission, mad about dogs - any shape, size or breed, but people really thought she was 'barking' when she ordered her first personal number plate, J100 DOG.

"The reason I purchased it was because it suited both my business, as well as my hobby of dog agility," says Jan. "When my car is parked up anywhere in public, I quite often see people pointing and commenting on it, having a little chuckle at the same time. I think my number plate

compliments my hobby as well as my business in quite a humorous way."

As a Canine Ultrasound Technician, Jan's job involves travelling to different parts of Kent and Sussex, visiting top breeders, as well as ordinary dog owners. "It's a very satisfying job," she says, "and especially rewarding when you can see tiny little puppies moving on the ultrasound screen."

Jan has kept Border Collies for over thirty years and has recently started to breed them. "At the moment I have two females called, Sophie and Bonnie," she says. "My

love, and hobby of dog agility began in August 2012, when my husband Ian and I watched an agility competition at a steam rally show. Despite the fact that it was raining hard, and we got absolutely soaked, we watched the show for several hours. We were both fascinated by it, and thought how much fun we could have with our dogs if we could learn how to compete.

"Within weeks of that event I had joined our local dog agility training club, where I took Sophie for weekly lessons. Within eight months I was ready for my first competition weekend. I still remember how nervous I was! The adrenaline was the only thing that got me round the course over that weekend! However, Sophie and I came away with four first places!

"It was at this point that I purchased a complete competition set of dog agility equipment and placed it in a field on our farm. It wasn't long before our friends, neighbours and acquaintances began to bring their mixture of dogs for a bit of fun, and before long, I found myself with quite a large group of enthusiastic dog owners ready to learn dog agility!

"I wasn't even qualified to teach, and I'm still not, but it hasn't stopped people coming along to learn, socialise, and have some fun, and that's what dog agility is all about - having fun. And so, 'Frittenden Dog Agility' was born!"



### What's the story?

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

## On a Roll

I am a sole trader of the company Roll-tech Services. We are a shot blasting and surface preparation company operating throughout the south-east. Our current portfolio includes the complete restoration of the ornate wrought iron railing at Margate sea front and a complete restoration of the entire railings at Chatham Barracks for the MOD. We have also completed basement restorations in Knightsbridge, London (including Elle Macpherson's home).

I was fortunate enough to look on your website just before the '11' plates came out and RO11 TEC appeared as available at a very reasonable price. I was delighted, but as the company was just starting out I had to wait a little before I could purchase a newer van to be able to put the RO11 TEC plate onto it.

I regularly receive positive comments from both my customers and the general public. Once, in a traffic jam, another driver got out of his car just to tell me what a fantastic number plate I had.

After a meeting with my bank manager, he wrote to me telling me what a great



advertisement the number plate was and how he had told everyone how unique it was, which of course it is.

**Richard Homewood**  
Kent

[www.roll-techservices.co.uk](http://www.roll-techservices.co.uk)



The World of Personal Number Plates Issue 38

# Regtransfers



the  
inbetweeners'  
James Buckley