

Local HEROES

After a tough two years, bricks and mortar boutiques need our support.

But the good news is, these neighbourhood stores are looking better than ever. From the fashion editors' secret Brighton haunt to the cult interiors shop in Northumberland, some of the country's best retail experiences are not where you'd expect...

Words
Ellie Pithers

Lifestyle

Aume, Glasgow

All is soothing and bright in Glasgow's Aume (pronounced like "home"), a whitewashed Scandi-influenced sanctuary owned by Amber Boyd. Stock up on walnut vases and marble plates, marvel at Moroccan cactus-silk cushions and douse yourself in DS & Durga's reassuringly niche small-batch perfumes that have come all the way from Brooklyn. Follow @aume.co.uk on Instagram for seasonal in-store pop-ups — one slated for April will feature emerging UK-based artists. **707 Pollokshaws Road, Strathbungo, Glasgow G41 2AA; aume.co.uk**



CUTTER BROOKS



Alice Levine, radio and TV presenter and podcaster
AG Hendy & Co, Hastings

"On visits to my friend in Hastings there is always a pilgrimage to AG Hendy. When I first saw the old-fashioned frontage and a glimpse of the milk glass pendants through the window I mistook it for a museum. In a way I suppose it is — it's the labour of love of food writer and photographer Alastair Hendy, who spent three years restoring the late-Georgian building, then curating the very covetable homewares. The changing window displays alone are worth a visit. Aesthetically pleasing, practical items is the brief. You'll come out with half a dozen bistro glasses and a saucepan that is too beautiful to use, all wrapped up in brown paper and string." **36 High Street, Hastings TN34 3ER; aghendy.com**

Choosing Keeping, London WC2

Calling all stationery addicts. From Italian woodblock-printed wrapping paper to Japanese watercolour sets, Bakelite tortoiseshell desk trinkets (so chic) to calligraphy dip pens, the gently retro Choosing Keeping shop in Covent Garden is the place for those longing for that "freshly sharpened pencil" feeling. "It's an Aladdin's cave of exquisite knick-knacks," says the Glassette co-founder and TV presenter Laura Jackson. **21 Tower Street, London WC2; choosingkeeping.com**

Country & Eastern, Norwich

Housed inside a magnificent grade II listed Victorian rollerskating rink since 1993, the South Asia Collection museum is a sight to behold. The next best thing? The museum shop, Country & Eastern, which stocks a remarkable selection of reasonably priced print tablecloths, napkins, duvet covers and other beautifully made homewares from family-run workshops all over South Asia. "Hidden gem" doesn't even begin to describe it. **The Old Skating Rink, 34-36 Bethel Street, Norwich NR2 1NR; countryandeastern.thesouthasiacollection.co.uk**

Cutter Brooks, Stow-on-the-Wold

Thanks to the owner Amanda Brooks's superlative taste (she is the former fashion director of Barneys New York after all), Cutter Brooks has become the Cotswolds destination for homeware that's a cut above. The designer Faye Toogood concurs: "I seem to find everything, from the perfect check tea towels to Murano glassware, and antique textiles to pieces she has commissioned from local craftspeople, including gilt leaf sconces." Bedding is being launched this month. Prepare to be seduced. **The Square, Stow-on-the-Wold, Gloucestershire GL54 1AB; cutterbrooks.com**

Cwt Tatws, Towyn

Combine a trip to the beautiful northern coast of the Llyn peninsula with a snoop around Cwt Tatws, a homeware store housed in a farm building and run by Daloni Owen, a TV presenter and local mum of five. With an eclectic mix of items from more than 30 Welsh makers as well as more far-flung delights — Afghan cushions, vegan boots by the Portuguese company Lemon Jelly, Hackney-made cashmere socks — there's sometimes also the odd (unexpected) mirrored disco ball to pique your interest. **Towyn, Tudweiliog, Gwynedd LL53 8PD; cwt-tatws.co.uk**



CHOOSING KEEPING

Getty Images



DAR LEONE

Dar Leone, London N1

Colour, print and imagination infuse this Islington shop, owned by the Sierra Leonean-American Isatu Funna. From the energising cushions in reworked West African designs to the decorative hibiscus-print trays (made in the UK and inspired by the garden in Freetown, Sierra Leone, where she grew up), the shop is full of lovingly chosen items you won't see elsewhere. The ultimate highlight? The Yoruba chairs covered in cloth embroidered with glass beads in Nigeria. **42 Cross Street, London N1; dar-leone.com**

Domestic Science, Tetbury, Nailsworth and Stow-on-the-Wold

Original and offbeat are Domestic Science's calling cards. The owner Libs Lewis now presides over three outposts in the Cotswolds and has a fan base who come for the vintage-linen cushions, quilts, Maileg toy animals and Dueple socks. Savannah Miller is a fan: "They support artisanal projects all over the world — far from just woven baskets. Quite frankly I would like to move in." And if you can't visit in person (or, er, bed down), the online orders come beautifully wrapped. **53 Long Street, Tetbury, Gloucestershire GL8 8AA; Days Mill, 3 Old Market, Nailsworth GL6 0DU; 7a Talbot Court, Stow-on-the-Wold GL54 1BQ; domesticsciencehome.co.uk**



Duro Olowu, fashion designer
Tenderbooks, London WC2

"There is one bookshop, Tenderbooks, that I really love and visit often. The owner is a young woman called Tamsin Clark, who sells an always beautifully curated selection of new and hard-to-find fashion, art and design books, as well as rare and out-of-print ones. The cool small space also hosts exhibitions by young or rarely seen avant-garde artists." **6 Cecil Court, London WC2; tenderbooks.co.uk**

PRIOR



Hare & Wilde, Malton
If you get off on handmade horsehair-bristle brushes and old-school rattan rug beaters, you're going to love Hare & Wilde. Founded by Will and Laura Mellor, the shop prioritises natural, well-made products in neutral hues. As well as household cleaning goods, there are excellent kilim rugs and jute runners (Will previously worked in his family's rug business), gorgeous rattan baskets, washed linen cushions and hand-thrown ceramics. **4 Market Street, Malton, North Yorkshire YO17 7LY; hareandwilde.co.uk**

Prior, Bristol
With two stores in Bristol its owner, Beck Prior, is spreading her not-for-profit gospel, supporting more than 150 sustainable lifestyle brands and artists. She practises what she preaches: a maker herself, Prior invites artists and designers to fill out a transparency form before she will consider stocking their work. The jewellery is fair-mined and ethically made, the textiles are largely dyed with natural pigments, and the skincare is organic. **Unit 10, Philadelphia Street, Quakers Friars, Bristol BS1 3BZ; 58 West Street, St Philip's, Old Market, Bristol BS2 0BL; priorshop.uk**



Nam, Bath
The owner Sharan Kaur's atmospheric (and tiny) shop in Bath, with its plaster-pink walls and rotating selection of antiques and trinkets, is endlessly enticing. Choose from personalised Murano glasses, dreamy made-to-order wire lamps in the shape of ships or a simple batch of beeswax taper candles. And if you miss out on a treasure, Kaur also does personal sourcing. **22c New Bond Street, Bath BA1 1BA; @namstore_bath**

No 56/Makers, Penzance
Founded by Carole Elsworth (she has a background in fashion design and previously ran a small artisan bakery), the original No 56 store in Penzance extols the virtues of natural materials. But it's Elsworth's latest store that has caught our eye: No 56/Makers, a short walk away, which spotlights her clothing label Handworked alongside other crafty exemplars. Think handmade willow baskets in unusual shapes from the Worcestershire-based maker Hopewood Baskets, alongside vessels created from locally felled cherry wood in nearby Newlyn by Nick Henshall. **12 Parade Street, Penzance TR18 4BU; no56makers.com**

Studio Arva, London N1
Design obsessives, set your style compass to north London's Studio Arva. Founded during lockdown by Abisola Omole, who works as a set designer, events planner and interior stylist, the chic studio space now sells her expert edit of antique furniture, decorative objects and the odd heavyweight coffee table book. With travertine console and dining tables and those squidgy sofas, it's an interiors go-to for the Instagram generation. **Appointment only, £50 for 30 minutes; 7 Wenlock Road, London N1; studioarva.co.uk**



Michelle Ogundehin, TV presenter and former editor-in-chief of Elle Decoration UK
Unlimited, Brighton

"Unlimited is a beautifully curated design shop and gallery for graphic-inspired objects for the home, textiles and art, with an emphasis on independent makers and thinkers in my home town of Brighton. It's run by husband-and-wife team Patrick, who looks after the graphics, and Sara, in charge of the gallery and interiors. Located right on the seafront, it's a veritable treasure trove of genuinely interesting up-and-coming to established artists and designers, most of whom are also the couple's friends. Super-reasonably priced for such lovely work too, so great for self-gifting as well as unique treats for those you love." **100-102 King's Road Arches, Lower Promenade, Brighton BN1 2FN; unlimitedshop.co.uk**

Getty Images, Dan Birch, Ben Andries

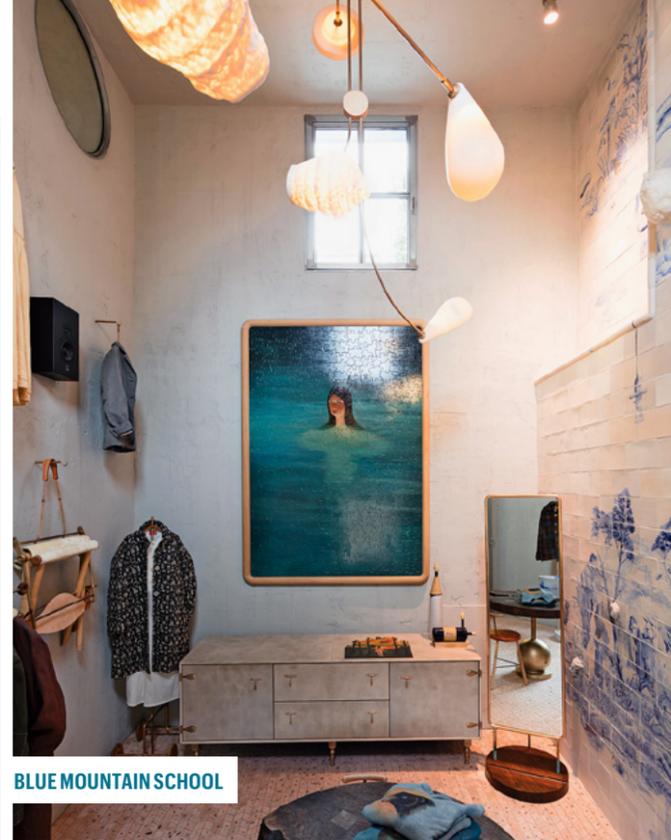
Re, Corbridge
Vintage lovers can spend hours poring over the ever-changing stashes of 1970s marbled plant pots and job lots of 18th-century pressed-glass butter dishes at Re, a converted workshop behind a filling station in Corbridge. Meanwhile craft lovers will fall for too-pretty-to-use brooms and Bhutanese check blankets. It's an eclectic mix, lovingly curated by Simon Young and Jenny Vaughan; throws, blankets and cushions all woven, printed and manufactured in the UK are set to be launched this year. **Bishops Yard, Main Street, Corbridge, Northumberland NE45 5LA; re-foundobjects.com**

Deadstock, Manchester
Manchester's Deadstock, located in the city's Northern Quarter, is a hipster paradise for classically designed objects — think fluffy Siberian slippers, charcoal incense sticks and quirkily coloured Turkish plastic crates. If you're looking for a perfect gift, make the pilgrimage; besides, who doesn't need a botanical paperweight for their home office? **48 Edge Street, Manchester M4 1HN; bindlestore.com**

Idaho, Altrincham and Sale
Head to Altrincham's revamped market hall and wander the side streets — Idaho is just one of the independent businesses propping up in Cheshire's new shopping mecca. Shelves are stocked with Hay's much-Instagrammed stripy candles and beautiful hand-illustrated stationery. Also check out the new Sale branch for more quirky buys. **56 Greenwood Street, Altrincham WA14 1RZ; 17 Stanley Square, Sale M33 7WZ; idahoshop.co.uk**

Fashion

Casely-Hayford, London W1
"The environment within the boutique is warm and inviting. The team are incredibly attentive and have great knowledge about style and fit," says the former Royal Ballet soloist, actor and model Eric Underwood of Casely-Hayford, the suiting mecca located a stone's throw from Chiltern Firehouse. The stylish store, by interior designer Sophie Ashby (who also happens to be married to the owner, Charlie Casely-Hayford), is the perfect foil to the brand's classic yet cool tailoring; the curated collection of artwork is also available to buy, as is the antique furniture. Downstairs a mustard yellow changing room, inspired by the living room of Casely-Hayford's parents, adjoins the made-to-measure atelier for both men and women. "It's a truly bespoke experience." Underwood adds. **3 Chiltern Street, London W1; casely-hayford.com**



BLUE MOUNTAIN SCHOOL

Blue Mountain School, London E2
"It's an experience that's designed to slow you down," says the art and interiors curator Hikari Yokoyama approvingly of Blue Mountain School, a six-storey hub in Shoreditch that houses a boutique, an exhibition space, a library and a restaurant. "At the boutique, Hostem, they have such a clear point of view, but there is always something surprising, whether hand-dyed indigo leather boots by Atelier Bâba or a piece of furniture from New York design studio BDDW." **9 Chance Street, London E2; bluemountain.school**

32 the Guild, Northampton
Zoie Walker knows a good shoe when she sees one. The former footwear designer founded 32 the Guild in 2013, and the shelves of this smart little store in Northampton's Cultural Quarter are filled with vegan Veja trainers, See by Chloé hiking boots and Isabel Marant Étoile loafers. The clothes are similarly smile-inducing: Walker favours a pared-back palette involving Scandi brands and pops of baby-pink cashmere by Bella Freud. **32 Guildhall Road, Northampton NN1 1EW; 32theguild.com**

The Bureau, Belfast
Does a cavernous warehouse filled with funky-meets-functional menswear sound like your kind of place? Earmark the Bureau, where you'll find Japanese craftsmanship and British and American workwear: the offer currently includes Tricker's shoes and Norbit by Hiroshi Nozawa quilted jackets with a slightly out-there print depicting elk and pine trees. **B2 Portview, 310 Newtownards Road, Belfast BT4 1HE; thebureaubelfast.com**

Bowns, Cambridge
A Cambridge institution, Bowns occupies a pretty spot under the eaves of a 16th-century terrace opposite Magdalene College. It opened its doors more than 20 years ago, and the owner, Rosalind Bown, continues to serve her loyal clientele with timeless classics: Max Mara jumper dresses, Margaret Howell shirts and Rupert Sanderson pumps. But it's also worth coming here if you have a "do". The staff are unfailingly helpful and can point you in the direction of, say, a racy Vivienne Westwood number. **24-25 Magdalene Street, Cambridge CB3 0AF; bowncambridge.com**



JAGO

Born, Eastbourne

There's a gentle outdoorsy vibe to the brand selection at Born: witness the table of Barbour hiking boots and Bellroy backpacks in the Eastbourne shop, curated by owner Simon Porter. That said, there's a healthy streetwear injection too — Porter used to run the sneaker store Footpatrol and Fly, a concept clothing shop on the Kings Road in Chelsea that sold Supreme back in the late 1990s when it was a rare commodity. Look out for Deus ex Machina collabs and Flower Mountain trainers you won't see everywhere.

2 Grove Road, Eastbourne BN21 4TJ; bornstore.co.uk

Envoy of Belfast

"Surprise and delight!" says Buffy Reid, the & Daughter co-founder and designer, of Envoy of Belfast. It's run by two lovely sisters, Ruth Spence and Joanna McCreery, whose "selection is never obvious, so you can always discover something new", Reid adds. The niche Japanese brand Kapital sits alongside Simone Rocha, while Comme des Garçons ballerina flats mingle with knits by the up-and-coming Antwerp-based label Girls of Dust. The jewellery is also ace.

4 Wellington Street, Belfast BT1 6HT; envoyofbelfast.com

Kafka Mercantile, Aberdeen

Specialist brands with well-made wares loom large on the Kafka Mercantile brand list — see Japanese hatmaker Cableami, US backpack maker Epperson Mountaineering and Italian knitwear experts GRP Firenze. If you're seeking menswear wardrobe stalwarts that will last, make this your Scottish port of call.

5 Alford Place, Aberdeen AB10 1YD; kafkamercantile.com

Jago, Tenby and Narberth

Husband-and-wife team Kate and Dewi Davies have been heading up Jago in Pembrokeshire since 1983. Now with two shops (recognisable by their blue paint jobs and yellow front doors), they stock smart homeware and go-anywhere clothes with a streetwise edge. In the basket: Saucony retro running shoes, Carhartt denim and Colourful Standard beanies.

Tudor Square, Tenby, Pembrokeshire SA70 7AJ; 44 High Street, Narberth SA67 7AS; jagotenby.co.uk

Epitome, Edinburgh

"Thoughtful shopping" is the Epitome founder Lisa Taylor's mantra, so it follows that the brand mix at her Edinburgh store is considered and concise. A knitwear specialist with her own line, Cameron Taylor, she opened Epitome in 2012 in a double-fronted, high-ceilinged building in New Town. Today, cappuccino-coloured Toujours trench coats can be found next to cult Japanese label Subu's padded slippers (they're this year's answer to the furry Birkenstock).

35 Dundas Street, Edinburgh EH3 6QQ; epitomeofedinburgh.com

Jane Davidson, Edinburgh

When Jane Davidson opened her eponymous Edinburgh shop in 1969, she stocked Ossie Clark and Jean Muir. Now her daughter, Sarah Murray, runs the show, having grown up on the shopfloor (as a teenager she was put behind the till so the customers didn't clock her Dr Martens). Today the still stylish racks are filled with the Vampire's Wife and Huishan Zhang evening dresses, J Brand jeans, Chinti & Parker cardigans and Sleeper feathered pyjama sets.

52 Thistle Street, Edinburgh EH2 1EN; janedavidson.co.uk

Triads, Middlesbrough

Bossing the Middlesbrough scene since 1988, Triads stocks womenswear in one of its two shops as well as online. But it's the menswear edit that stands out: Snow Peak, Maharishi, Aries, Carhartt WIP and Stone Island all feature on its list of brands. Even better: it offers complimentary alterations.

Triads I, 54-56 Albert Road, Middlesbrough TS1 1QD; Triads II & Triads Ladies, 182 Linthorpe Road, Middlesbrough TS1 3RF; triads.co.uk

Philip Browne, Norwich

"You buy the ticket, you take the ride" is Philip Browne's mantra, borrowed of course from Hunter S Thompson. Having celebrated 35 years as a Norwich fixture last November, Browne intends to carry on for another 35, now aided in part by his two sons, Samuel and George. The PB USP? The shop blends humour with high fashion — think Dries Van Noten and Maison Margiela arranged in cheeky window displays. Drop in for a good story and a hearty helping of Billionaire Boys Club.

3 Guildhall Hill, Norwich NR2 1JH; philipbrownemenswear.co.uk

Not Just Another Store, London EC2

Tucked down a side street in east London, Joel Adebayo's light-filled Not Just Another Store plays host to jewellery-making workshops and candlelit dinners just as often as it welcomes customers looking for jeans by LA-based label Re/Done and beaded bags by Nigerian brand Lu by Lu. For 2022, Adebayo, a proponent of experiential retail, has organised a line-up that includes an 18-course Japanese omakase "chef's table" experience planned with Chris Restrepo of Kurisu Omakase, the Brixton sushi pop-up restaurant, as well as natural-wine tastings and cocktail masterclasses.

8 New Inn Street, London EC2; notjustanotherstore.com



MOUKI MOU

The Hambledon, Winchester

Adopting the concept of a "kind of department store but just selling the good stuff" has worked out wonderfully for this Winchester-based boutique. Founded in 1999 by Victoria Suffield, the Hambledon has mushroomed up, down and sideways, filling Norman-era cellars and Tudor back rooms with expertly edited menswear, womenswear and childrenswear, plus books, stationery, beauty and homewares. Warning: you can lose hours in here browsing the Sea dresses, Ren face creams and adorable acrylic egg spoons in pearlescent tones.

10 the Square, Winchester SO23 9ES; thehambledon.com

W2, Glasgow

David Mullane, the owner, knows his stuff, having previously been merchandise director of the seminal Glasgow store the Warehouse, which brought avant-garde designers such as Ann Demeulemeester to Scotland. (He also jokes that he was the first to serve bottled water — Perrier, Badoit, Sanpellegrino — in a shop in Glasgow.) His concept store operates out of a former cowshed and stocks cult labels such as Comme des Garçons, Norse Projects and SNS Herning, and boasts a clientele of cultural arbiters (including Turner prizewinners). One word: gem.

10 Ruthven Lane, Glasgow G12 9BG; w2store.co.uk

Mouki Mou, London W1

A favourite with discerning fashion editors, Marylebone-based Mouki Mou stocks polished pieces that inevitably invite the question: "Where did you get that?" Quality is king here: owner Maria Lemos is a fashion sales veteran. Mackintosh coats, Lemaire shirting, Legres boots and Hum jewellery are high points. But it's the less well-known names such as owner Gabriella Kiss and the Italian minimalist label Album di Famiglia that will keep you coming back.

29 Chiltern Street, London W1; moukimou.com

Sancho's, Exeter

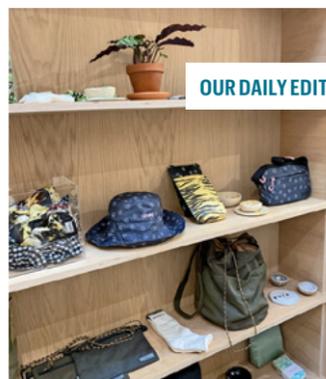
Kalkidan Legesse, founder of Sancho's, is on an eco mission. But that doesn't overshadow her antiracism advocacy and diversity goals: in addition to sustainable and ethical labels being prioritised at her Exeter shop, 30 per cent of its budget is allocated to labels that are black-owned and size-inclusive. Girlfriend Collective, People Tree and Komodo are the headline names, but the store also stocks left-field gifts such as seeds for edible flowers.

117 Fore Street, Exeter EX4 3JQ; sanchosshop.com

Our Daily Edit, Brighton

Brighton's Snow Peak fleecetouting, Kickers high-top-wearing, LF Markey denim coat-flaunting crowd source their looks from Our Daily Edit. Inspired by emerging labels from San Francisco, Ella Wells and Marc Lewis set up shop in 2014. Today their store is a hotspot for under-the-radar brands, from Licia Florio, which makes nontoxic vegan nail polish, to Portuguese Flannel, a fourth-generation shirtmaker.

23 Ship Street, Brighton BN1 1AD; ourdailyedit.com



OUR DAILY EDIT



ASHWELL & CO

Vintage/second-hand

Ashwell & Co, Bristol

Brides-to-be seeking a vintage gown should book in at Ashwell & Co pronto. Founders Kate and Will Ashwell boast a curated edit of more than 100 wedding dresses from the 1920s through to the 1990s at any one time — plus they're in great condition and ripe for transformation and alteration at the hands of the in-house seamstress. There are also vintage goodies for everyday wear and on Fridays and Saturdays the shop doubles up as a tearoom, serving afternoon tea with homemade scones. "Kate and Will love what they do and it shows," says Yvonne Telford, the designer behind Kemi Telford. Next month a second site is due to open in Newport.

32 Alma Vale Road, Clifton, Bristol BS8 2HY; ashwellandco.com



Alfies Antique Market, London NW8

"Alfies Antique Market is a must-visit vintage emporium. I can happily spend a few hours looking at the mid-century accessories and furniture and I always end up being seduced by something."

13-25 Church Street, London NW8; alfiesantiques.com



NOT JUST ANOTHER STORE

Getty Images, Ruby Walker



POSITIVE RETAIL

Karen Vintage Boutique, London W10

A fashion editor's first port of call for a party outfit? Karen Vintage Boutique. The Portobello Road stalwart has clothed the likes of Alexa Chung and Jenna Coleman in its unique dresses. Looking for a floor-length silk kimono or metallic pussy-bow blouse? Stop by, chat to owner Karen Scott and you'll be wafting round in a vintage 1930s slip with an ostrich-feather cape in no time. **293 Portobello Road, London W10; karenvintageboutique.business.site**



Pearl Lowe, fashion and textiles designer

Hawk & Dove, Hastings

"Hawk & Dove is one of my favourite shops. I discovered it when we moved to the East Sussex coast last year. It has everything from handpicked vintage pieces, knitwear, slipdresses and tableware. It has such a unique selection. A real gem! The owner, Jade, has a great eye for truly special pieces." **39 High Street, Hastings TN34 3ER; hawkanddove.co.uk**

Positive Retail, Ramsgate

Preloved, second-hand, resale — whatever you want to call it, Positive Retail is doing a roaring trade in Ramsgate. It was founded by seasoned retailers Anna Woods and Dani Nutter and sells everything from a modish Marni coat for £200 to an Isabel Marant party top for £125. Jane Shepherdson, chair of the fashion rental platform My Wardrobe HQ, recently bought a pair of unworn Acne Studios boots here for a very fair price. "This is no ordinary preloved store — it's perfectly curated," she says. "Send them clothes you no longer wear and they will sell them for you too!" **26 Addington Street, Ramsgate CT11 9JJ; positive-retail.com**



Vick Hope, TV and radio presenter
Oxfam, Bridge Street, Cambridge

"I spent three years living in Cambridge for uni and found it to have the best charity shops I've ever experienced!" the TV and radio presenter Vick Hope enthuses. Her top destinations? Burleigh Street, home to outposts of the Red Cross, British Heart Foundation and RSPCA. Locals in the know also say Oxfam's Bridge Street outpost is a hit for numerous second-hand treasures — past finds include a fabulous 1970s mother-of-pearl collar necklace for £2 and a sequined jacket trimmed with pearls for £10. **Oxfam, 34-35 Bridge Street, Cambridge CB2 1UW; oxfam.org.uk**

HAWK & DOVE



WOLF & GYPSY

Wolf & Gypsy Vintage, Brighton

This place comes up trumps pretty much every time, whether you're seeking a vintage Courrèges minidress (for £80) or a comfortable (brand new) Baserange kaftan. It's all merchandised neatly (there's no mad rummage to find the good stuff, thanks to the shop's spacious layout) and edited cleverly to blend second-hand styles with new stock from eco-conscious labels — founder Laura Pollard has hit on a winning formula. **30 Sydney Street, Brighton BN1 4EP; wolfgandgypsyvintage.co.uk**



Patrick Grant, fashion designer and judge on BBC1's The Great British Sewing Bee
W Armstrong & Son, Edinburgh

"W Armstrong & Son has rather amazingly been in business since 1840. I've been shopping there — originally at the old store in the Cowgate — since the 1980s. Today they have three shops in the town centre, my favourite being the one in the beautiful Grassmarket, which has everything from rare old military and amazing 1980s pieces to high-kitsch 1970s treasures." **81-83 Grassmarket, Edinburgh EH1 2HJ; 14 Teviot Place, Edinburgh EH1 2QZ; 64-66 Clerk Street, Edinburgh EH8 9JB; armstrongsvintage.co.uk**

Childrenswear

Acorn & Pip, Slaithwaite

Coffee, cake and a children's play area make Acorn & Pip a haven for stressed-out parents. The brainchild of Lucy Estherby, a former teacher and mother of three, the café/shop hybrid (her husband, Tim, manages the team and oversees the café) was launched in 2016 (initially online), with a focus on sustainable and organic childrenswear, toys and gifts for mothers. A newly opened shoe department with everything from pre-walkers to school shoes is particularly well stocked and will be expanding this year. **6-7 Carr Lane, Slaithwaite, West Yorkshire HD7 5AN; acornandpip.com**



ACORN & PIP

Trapeze Kids, Sheffield

Sparkly star hair slides, a full range of Little People, Big Dreams books and Omy's magic felt-tip pens — there's lots for pocket-money pouches to get excited about at Sheffield's Trapeze Kids. And for the credit-card-holding parents, the childrenswear labels on offer are pleasingly wholesome, featuring Organic Zoo's fair trade and ethically made clothing and print pieces from Barcelona-based brand Bobo Choses. **308 Sharrow Vale Road, Sheffield S11 8ZL; trapezekids.com**



SMALL FOLK

Hop of Hackney, London E5

A Lilliputian family-orientated lifestyle shop founded by Derick Johnson, Hop of Hackney stocks particularly good togs for little ones by brands including the German label Engel and British company Sleepy Doe, as well as a plethora of puzzles and wooden toys to offset screen time. Also excellent: the stationery and card selection. **68 Chatsworth Road, London E5; hopofhackney.com**

Small Folk, Totnes

Mother-of-two Anna Liddle opened Small Folk in 2018 after a search on the high street for ethically made, sustainable shoes for her little ones proved fruitless. Now she stocks sustainable clothing, shoes and toys by brands such as Pigeon Organics, MarMar Copenhagen and Petit Nord. **76 High Street, Totnes TQ9 5SN; small-folk.co.uk**



TRAPEZE KIDS

Little Mashers, St Leonards-on-Sea

The seaside town of St Leonards-on-Sea has a band of brilliant independent shopkeepers, but Little Mashers takes the prize for childrenswear. Aiming to fire up kids' imaginations, its clothing-customisation kits are particularly entertaining, and the in-store craft hub — chock-full of beads, stickers, paints and paper — will make even the sulkiest Saturday afternoons a bit brighter. Bonus points for the glow-in-the-dark sweatshirts, which come with small pen-lights for drawing on new designs. **25 Kings Road, St Leonards-on-Sea TN37 6DU; littlemashers.com**

Not found your favourite? Join the conversation online at thetimes.co.uk