



■ The modern country set complete with riding boots, horse whip and a dog-shaped handbag. Gallyons at the Mercedes-Benz of Norwich Retailers Show at OPEN.



■ Retro tracksuits for men. Elements at the Mercedes-Benz of Norwich Retailers Show at OPEN.

Getting the look for spring and

It's surprising how many people in Norfolk do not know how diverse the shopping experience is here. Quite a few people I know only come to Norwich to visit into Chapelfield, with many never even stepping outside the shopping centre.

There is nothing wrong with this of course – into Chapelfield is home to some of the biggest brands in fashion and retail – but, if you don't shop anywhere else you are missing a trick.

Norwich Fashion Week (NFW) brings together high street brands, independent boutiques and designers and makers in Norfolk so that you can see the variety of style that we have right here in our fine county.

With the Mercedes-Benz of Norwich Retailers Show launching the week last Thursday, to the Dipple and Conway Hair Show on Friday night and The Vintage Show sponsored by Zaks American

Diners last night, we have already seen that when it comes to what to wear anything goes.

Trends on the catwalk at the Mercedes-Benz of Norwich Retailers Show included: monochrome, bright colours (red being a particularly popular hue), chevron stripes, head to toe white (in a particularly stunning set by independent boutique Ginger), 70s fringing and prints, sports luxe, underwear worn as outerwear and oversized jewellery, which was made especially for the NFW catwalk by Norfolk jewellery designer Stoned and Hammered based on Elm Hill.

And this was just for women. Menswear raised quite a few eyebrows with blazers complete with pocket squares worn with beach shorts and flip flops from House of Fraser at intu Chapelfield, blazers worn with shorts and light scarves from Jarrold, the return of the Fila tracksuit from Elements, and the wearing no socks or socks (the brighter the better) causing much debate.

There were also a lot of models wearing glasses on the catwalk this year, largely down to the fact that Dipple and Conway opticians are this year's eyewear sponsors for NFW.

Styles included cats eye shapes,

Norwich Fashion Week is only part way through and already we are seeing some strong looks for spring and summer, says fashion editor **EMMA HARROWING**

wayfarer styles and oversized sunglasses, with bright coloured frames adhering to this season's love of bright colours (a particular favourite of mine was a pair of glasses with half tortoiseshell and bright red frames).

Hair and make-up too reflected the new season's trends with two make-up looks from the make-up team at Jarrold creating a rather space age metallic lips, eyes and iridescent skin, and a flawless look with a pop of bright red on the lips.

The Gallery Haircutters created three hairstyles for the catwalk, a long messy ponytail style and two looks involving braids.

Talk about NFW to anyone outside dear Norfolk and many baulk at the fact that Norfolk even has style, let alone enough to warrant having a fashion week.

A general consensus is that us country folk wear nothing but tweed, wellies and flat caps in the

wilds that make up Norfolk.

And judging by the catwalk, we still love our country attire, as Gallyons showcased hunting, fishing and walking gear for men and women, complete with wellies, riding boots, a dog shaped handbag and even a horse whip.

It goes to prove that here in Norfolk we are not afraid to mix up our styles, create new trends and have no boundaries when it comes to fashion.

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■ **Norwich Fashion Week continues until this Thursday with The Designers Show sponsored by Canaries Official and Hippodrome Great Yarmouth tomorrow, The Design and Enterprise Day on Wednesday and Fashion Excess the finale show of NFW 2016 taking place on Thursday. For tickets and more information on all the other events taking place this week visit www.norwichfashion.co.uk**



■ Stripes and chevrons... John Lewis at the Mercedes-Benz of Norwich Retailers Show.



■ Above and below, Monochrome with a splash of red. House of Fraser and Aluna J at the Mercedes-Benz of Norwich Retailers Show at OPEN. Pictures: SIMON FINLAY

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Opportunist rooks could be my secret walnut thieves

Last month I wrote about the walnut tree planted many years ago in this garden and the fact that we have not been able to harvest a single nut from it because of the attentions of squirrels. It appears that reader John Juby has a similar problem, but it is not squirrels which are the main culprits but mostly rooks.

It seems that the rooks are visiting the tree each year, very probably before the nuts are really fit to harvest, and each year those visits are becoming earlier and earlier.

Rooks can make excellent pets, are extremely intelligent and are also very much misunderstood. They are quite large, have a harsh cry, and country people would say that they brought bad luck. If they suddenly appeared in large numbers it was interpreted in some counties as a sign of an imminent death.

However if they suddenly disappear from an area that, too, is most unlucky.

It is widely believed in East Anglia that rooks can tell if a tree is about to fall so they will not nest in it.

This family has rather mixed feelings as, for the last three years rooks have visited the garden early in the morning, have inspected the trees, cawed loudly and left.

Rooks are opportunists. They can often be seen inspecting the contents of litter bins on the sides of the roads and are not above scavenging on road kills. Their natural diet is largely insects, grubs and seeds including corn which means their attentions are not welcomed by farmers.

This liking for freshly-sown corn gave rise to the task of rook scarer, often carried out by children. Because it was not always easy to tell the difference between rooks and crows the 'scarecrows' once so common in the countryside should actually have been known as 'scarerooks.'

Thankfully the sadly flapping carcasses of rooks once placed on posts round a field are rarely seen now.

However I was once assured by a gamekeeper that if a dead rook was placed with its feet in the air on a field other rooks would never land there.

summer at city Fashion Week



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