

In Brief

Scrapping of 2014 council elections to be discussed

HULL: A decision on whether it is possible to scrap this year's city council elections could be made next week. Scrutiny councillors at Hull City Council are due to hear from town clerk Ian Anderson over the legal issues surrounding such a move. The idea of scrapping the annual election to select about one-third of the councillors on the authority has been mooted as a way of making a one-off saving of about £121,000. An alternative would be to switch to a system of all-out elections held every four years, which is favoured by East Riding Council. Hull's current system features elections every year with no election in the fourth year of the cycle.

In a report for next week's meeting, Mr Anderson says the rules only allow for a full council vote on the issue after the authority's annual meeting, which is normally held after an election.

Plans for housing project

EAST HULL: Proposals to convert a former social club into new housing have been submitted for planning approval. The scheme earmarked for the former Belmont Club in New Bridge Road also includes two neighbouring properties in Rosmead Street. If given the go-ahead, the new development would include five three-bedroom properties following the partial demolition of an existing building and the construction of two-storey extensions at the site.

Ideas for dock property

HULL: City councillors representing the Drypool ward have been asked to come up with ideas for the future use of the old Winding House on Victoria Dock. The last remaining original dockside building in the area had been earmarked as a possible community centre, but a funding bid to get the project off the ground proved unsuccessful. The council's property contractor NPS is advertising the building on a potential 99-year leasehold deal.

Free help to lose weight

HULL: Free 12-week weight-loss courses are starting this month for women in the city. Hull City Council is running the free courses at a number of venues, including the Guildhall, Costello Stadium and Craven Park Stadium. Anyone with a Hull postcode is eligible to join in the YourShape programme, which follows a 12-week structure delivered by nutrition and physical activity experts. It focuses on integrating exercise into people's daily routine, either at home or outdoors, and also learning about nutrition for weight control. To enrol for free, call 01482 224545.

Team is nation's best

EAST YORKS: Specialist health workers have been named as part of the country's best cancer team. The Teenage and Young Adult Cancer Service (Yorkshire and Humber) was named as Quality in Care's Cancer Team of the Year. The judge's decision was based on the team's work to improve clinical outcomes for patients and make a measurable difference to their lives. The service is delivered by Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust and Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust at Castle Hill Hospital in Cottingham.

Julie Watson, clinical nurse specialist for teenagers and young adults with cancer, said: "The treatment of cancer in this age group is quite specialist work, so in some cases young people do have to travel to Leeds for parts of their treatment. "Having a facility in East Yorkshire, however, means we can offer at least part of this care locally, closer to young people's homes, families and friends, which are all vital in getting them through their treatment and back on the road to recovery."

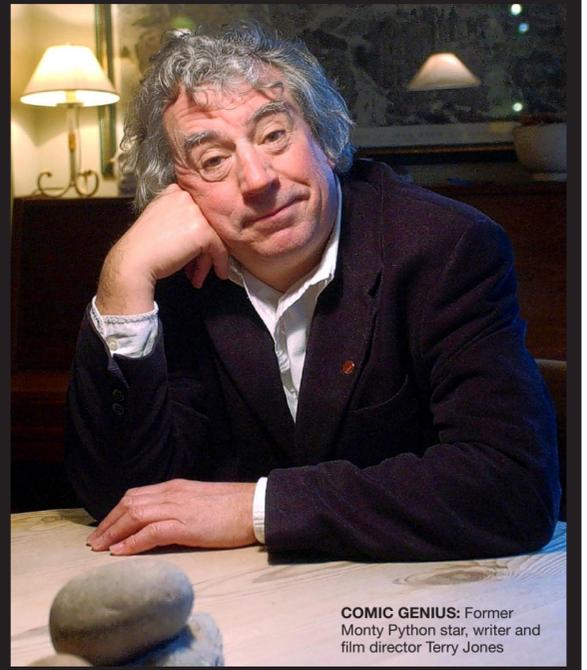
YMCA of the Year award

EAST YORKS: YMCA Humber, which serves both sides of the estuary, has been named YMCA of the Year. The service was honoured at an awards ceremony in London.

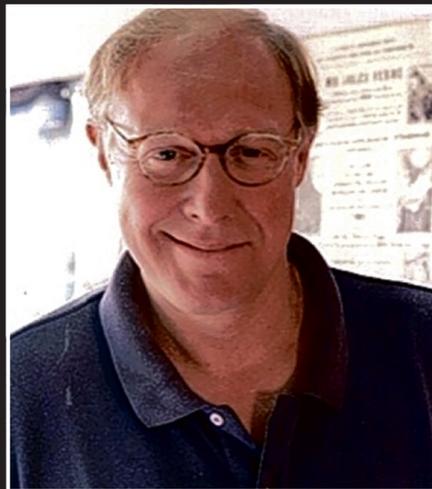
Hull to Hollywood: how a fun-loving city boy made the leap to working with film greats



JOINT PROJECT: Simon Pegg, pictured in Hot Fuzz, is working with screenwriter Gavin Scott, who was born in Hull.



COMIC GENIUS: Former Monty Python star, writer and film director Terry Jones



EXCITING TIME: Hull-born Hollywood screenwriter Gavin Scott.

BACK THEN: Below, Gavin Scott's family in 1961, outside their Summergangs Road home in Hull. From left, Gus, mum Doris, Fiona and Gavin. Below right, a report about Gavin's radio debut.



THERE has always been an adventurousness to Gavin Scott, the Hull-born Hollywood screenwriter.

As a child he dug a tunnel under the fence at his Summergangs Road home in east Hull to make a shortcut into East Park. "As kids, we would roam the city," Gavin said. "We weren't held in like children today, we explored all of it."

That sense of freedom has typified his life.

As a teenager he spent a year in the Borneo jungle, teaching English to a tribe of head-hunters, no less, and is now, decades on, an established writer in Los Angeles.

The 63-year-old's latest project has seen him working with Terry Jones, of Monty Python fame, on the comic sci-fi film Absolutely Anything.

Set to start production in March, the film will star Simon Pegg as a teacher granted supernatural powers, the ability to do "absolutely anything", after an alien visitation.

The comedy ponders whether his new-found gifts can be used for good or ill.

"It was an idea that Terry had and got me to help shape up," said Gavin, speaking to the Mail from his Santa Monica home.

"The character of the teacher is that classic person who dreams of great

Hull-born Hollywood screenwriter Gavin Scott is working with Monty Python star Terry Jones on his latest film. **Will Ramsey** finds out more

things but never gets round to them. He is someone we can all identify with." Gavin's friendship with Terry began more than 20 years ago, when they met through the George Lucas TV series The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles.

A former journalist, Gavin was working on Channel 4 News when he decided to pursue script-writing full-time. Taking what he recalls as "a deep breath", Gavin quit his job and, through his agent, landed the chance to work with Lucas.

Gavin joined a team of writers at the director's palatial Skywalker Ranch, a sprawling estate near to San Francisco, to work on the series.

Following the early life of Indiana Jones, a gung-ho archaeologist, Terry was one of the directors drafted in to work on the series.

"He liked the script and we got on from the beginning," said Gavin.

"We've been pals ever since."

The script for Absolutely Anything

As kids, we would roam the city. We weren't held in like children today, we explored all of it

Gavin Scott

has been shaped via e-mail, Skype and a few meetings each year between the friends.

When Terry is visiting America, he will stay with Gavin and his family, who have lived in California since 1993.

"We have been working on it for years," said Gavin. "It has been a labour of love. Because we enjoy working together, it has been fun."

"It is about human ability to change the world, which is an interesting theme, but are we wise enough to handle that power?"

"Because Terry is a comic genius, it is incredibly funny."

The film will feature the voices of three of the other Pythons, Michael Palin, Terry Gilliam and John Cleese, as the extraterrestrial visitors.

When filming begins, Gavin will be on the set in case any last-minute rewrites are required and pen a daily blog, something he was asked to do by

Gavin's artistic interests are shared by his family.

His brother, Gus M Scott, is a Vienna-based artist and his sister, Fiona Maxwell, runs the British Film Institute's film digitisation programme, which is restoring Britain's film heritage.

The three siblings grew up in Summergangs Road, leaving in 1961 for New Zealand, after Duncan, Gavin's father, was made redundant from his job at Waddington's glove factory.

"It was a blow, but they said 'Let's go to New Zealand and start a new life'," said Gavin, who was 11 at the time of the move.

"It was very bold of them - both were in their 40s, with three children."

"They did not know what it was going to be like but thought it would be better for us."

The family settled in Hawkes Bay, a region on New Zealand's North Island, where Gavin, as reported in the Mail on October 13, 1961, had his first taste of broadcasting.

Having got himself involved in New Zealand Broadcasting Service's Children's Hour, he co-starred in a 13-part radio serial, The Wishing Ring.

Later, having completed his degree in New Zealand, he returned to England to work as a print journalist and then as television news reporter and documentary maker.

Gavin's dad died in 1974. His mum, Doris, remains in New Zealand, where she worked as a primary school principal.

Last year, at the age of 92, Doris published her first novel, Tales Of Waipuna Bay, online.

Doris lives in a remote valley, where she generates her own electricity and collects rainwater off the roof.

"She is the wise woman of the valley, who dispenses her wisdom," said Gavin. "She is as sharp as a tack and knows everything that is going on."

Gavin, a former pupil of Cavendish Primary School, has fond memories of Hull, where he has an aunt, Audrey Newell.

He recalls the joke shop in the Hepworth Arcade, which he made a pleasurable visit to on his return to England in the 1970s, and the freedom of his childhood life.

"We explored anywhere we wanted. I remember the waterfall into the pond at East Park, where we would try to catch tiddlers, and I remember the motorboats there and Bonfire Night," he said. "I have very happy memories of it all."



PYTHONS: From left, Michael Palin, Eric Idle, Terry Jones, Terry Gilliam and John Cleese.

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