

**This week**

*we recommend you..*

**1 Make...**

**Our lovely fish dish.**  
Craig Millar's pan-fried cod, chorizo and borlotti bean stew. Page 6/7.

**2 Buy...**

**A peplum dress like Carol Vorderman has worn.**  
We may not have the former Countdown co-host's maths brain, but with our clever buys you can steal her style. See page 10/11.



**3 Get ready..**

**For Scotland to catch One Direction fever.**  
The hottest boyband on the planet are at Glasgow's SECC on Tuesday and Wednesday.

**4 Taste...**

**Beer**  
The best beer Scotland's brewers have to offer is at Februaryfest 2013, which takes place at the Clachaig Inn, Glencoe. Call 01855 811252.

**5 Listen to...**

**Call the Midwife - The Album.**  
Enjoy the music from the series with 61 tracks, including Elvis, Andy Williams and our own Laura Main.

**6 Book...**

**A place on a Global run**  
Try out for the 2013 Global Energy Inverness Half Marathon, 5K Team Attack and 5K Fun Run in Inverness. [www.invernesshalfmarathon.co.uk](http://www.invernesshalfmarathon.co.uk)

**7 Go see...**

**A classic**  
Abigail's Party in Edinburgh from Monday. Mike Leigh's classic comedy comes to the King's Theatre with ex-EastEnder Hannah Waterman.

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Libby McArthur



# Don't take away these women's only lifeline

The horrific story involving Oscar Pistorius has focused attention on domestic violence at a time when already over-stretched support services in this country face funding cuts – and one former victim says it's playing a dangerous game

**You don't need to get a bullet through you before you can talk about guns.**

Working as a drama worker for Woman's Aid in my early 20s, and touring various productions where I had either directed or played the part of a battered wife, I had to think a lot about these issues.

So the news that funds are being cut to an already over-stretched support service seems to me like a dangerous strategy.

Two women a week are killed in Britain as a result of domestic violence, and yet there has been a 28 per cent funding cut in these services, affecting one in five support centres. Every day, 300 women are being turned away.

Nicki Norman, of Women's Aid, said cutting domestic violence funding was a "false economy" when domestic murders cost the government £1 million.

Mandy Wood wants to use her son Jahmene Douglas's X Factor fame to highlight this important issue.

As a victim of horrific abuse herself, she says simply: "You are going to get more deaths."

An ex-alcoholic friend of mine once told me the battered wife and the drunk have a lot in common.

In the first stages of the abuse, your family and friends can help; in the second, you need to get some help from the professionals. There is no third stage.

Barring a miracle, you die or someone else dies at your hands.

Women's Aid tells us that "leaving" is the most dangerous time. I now understand that the victim is less likely to leave the situation the worse it gets, and that is why it is so vital that those who find the courage to ask for help must not be turned away.

Good news for the women of the city: the Glasgow Women's Library has been relocated to its first permanent home in the old Bridgeton Library building.

Founder member, Adele Patrick, said: "This is an amazing community that has struggled through a lot and is getting a vision of what the future could be, with the Commonwealth Games."



**The victim is less likely to leave the situation the worse it gets, which is why it's vital that women are not turned away**

**ABUSE...** Too many women are turned away when they seek help

Of course, as we've seen from the desperately sad events unfolding in South Africa, athleticism and being part of a community that doesn't look like it's struggling is no safeguard against the horror of domestic violence.

Ironically, Oscar Pistorius was given the line in a Nike advert: "I am the bullet in the chamber." Looks like this particular bullet might be lodging in his new chambers for some time to come.

## The future could leave us in a spin

Visiting the People's Palace museum in Glasgow, I showed the nephew the single tub washing machine that my poor wee mammy had to use for eight of us.

I suggested there would be a museum in the future full of stuff that the wee ones in his life would scoff at. Downstairs in the café, we imagined what would be on display.

A Monopoly set with the old flat iron there instead of the new cat. We laughed at glasses being hooked behind our ears and balanced on our noses. He said there would be Harry Hill specs. I said, "yeah, like Joe 90". He said, "Who?"

We agreed we would like to see bull fighting, battery hens and abattoirs but not movie theatres. He piped up, "I know – soap". "You wish," I replied. He went on to explain that by then they'll have showers like a car wash, where after the soap comes the rinse. "I can't wait," said I.

## Learning some of the hard facts of life

The bathing buddies got on to the subject of when softness just isn't de-rigueur.

On a visit to the grandparents, one of their sons came for a cuddle after Grandad had been too strict.

She told her son it was because his Grandad loved him. At this the boy turned to Gaga and asked: "Gaga does Grandad ever get hard on you?"

Turning a page in her book, she sighed and said: "There was a time..."

Another was delighted with the Marilyn Munro box set she'd bought "cheap as chips" from the Barras.

When she joined her hubby in bed that night he asked what film she'd watched.

"Knee-a-gara," she replied.

Without looking up from his book he said: "Next time you're there you could get me some of that Vee-a-gara."

