



David Gower, Simon Barnes and Bill Oddie at the event.
Picture: BILL SMITH

Tales of cricket and wildlife at city event

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A shared passion for wildlife and sport brought three personalities together for an evening of anecdotes and witticisms in Norwich last night.

Former England cricket captain David Gower was at Blackfriars' Hall to reflect on a lifetime's love of cricket and wildlife as part of a tour to mark the 25th anniversary of the World Land Trust, of which he is a patron.

Sharing the stage with the renowned batsman, and asking the questions, were sport and wildlife journalist Simon Barnes and television presenter Bill Oddie.

All three work closely with the World Land Trust to promote its work across the globe to protect important habitats and wildlife.

Mr Gower, who first developed a love of nature growing up in East Africa, said: "It's lovely to have wildlife on your doorstep, such as in this

"The more difficult challenge is to get people in developing countries to relate to their own wildlife"

Simon Barnes,
sport and wildlife writer

particular part of the world, which I don't know so well.

"But if you are at all concerned about what happens to wildlife in general then in other parts of the world they are running out of time and it never does any harm to let people know about it."

Mr Gower said he used some of his free time on cricket tours to visit nature reserves around the world and that was why he wanted to get involved with the conservation charity.

Speaking before the event, Mr Oddie said the light-

hearted evening was also a chance to "remind people that wildlife people do have other interests" and said he would be particularly keen to quiz Mr Gower about his cricket career.

Mr Barnes, who has written books about sport and wildlife, said he had moved to the Broads in Norfolk so he could enjoy some of the area's wonderful birds.

He said while many people came to Norfolk for its rich wildlife and were keen to protect it, other places around the world were not fortunate.

"The more difficult challenge is to get people in developing countries to relate to their own wildlife," he said. "The World Land Trust works with highly motivated but cash-strapped organisations in developing countries, with fantastic people who love the place and are deeply committed to their wildlife."

→ Have you got a wildlife story to share? Email kim.briscoe@archant.co.uk

Complaints drop at 999 trust

The number of complaints against the region's ambulance service has dropped by almost a third in the space of a year, according to new figures.

Data from the Health and Social Care Information Centre revealed that the East of England Ambulance Service received 798 complaints in 2013/14, compared to 1,177 in 2012/13.

Compliments from patients and their families are on the

up after the trust received 1,389 letters, emails, and calls praising services in 2013/14, compared with 1,193 compliments the previous year.

Anthony Marsh, CEO, said: "We have been working hard to improve our service to patients and this is another encouraging sign that things are getting better.

"As we recruit hundreds of new front-line staff, as well as up-skilling our existing

staff the service and response to patients will continue to improve.

"We welcome comments, and it is pleasing that the number of people thanking us for the service we provided has risen while complaints have fallen.

"This is thanks to the hard work and dedication of our staff, who work exceptionally hard often in the most difficult circumstances."

Lord Mayor to be City Host for day

The Lord Mayor of Norwich is to don a blue tabard as a City Host for the day.

Norwich Business Improvement (BID) City Hosts have been part of the Norwich scene since May 2013 and are quickly becoming an established part of the Norwich experience for visitors and locals alike.

They aim to help visitors by welcoming, guiding and assisting them to gain the

maximum benefit and enjoyment from their visits.

The Lord Mayor of Norwich, councillor Judith Lubbock, was so impressed with the scheme that she will be taking on the role next Tuesday morning.

"I am delighted to be part of the Norwich City Host scheme," she said. "I am passionate about the city and will enjoy the opportunity to 'show off' Norwich to visitors

and residents alike."

Jumara Mulcahy, City Hosts supervisor said it was great the Lord Mayor was supporting the scheme.

Recruitment of City Hosts is ongoing.

→ If you are interested in joining the team and becoming a volunteer, call Norwich BID on 01603 727931. Alternatively, visit www.norwichbid.co.uk

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