



Born And Bred

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James Bolam and Michael French return in a new series of *Born And Bred* on BBC One



James Bolam and Michael French return as Ormston's father and son doctors in a new series of the hit BBC One drama, *Born And Bred*.

Arthur Gilder (James Bolam) is enjoying having his family around him, especially now that he has moved in with his son, Tom (Michael French), Tom's wife, Deborah (Jenna Russell), and their four children. It's all part of making Arthur feel like he is one of the family and needed but, of course, Arthur just can't resist sticking his oar in from time to time!

Tom and Deborah's eldest child, Helen (Charlotte Salt), is still in love with Eddie (Sam Hudson), the village mechanic, but Eddie has more pressing family issues to deal with. And their other children – Michael (Ross Little), Catherine (Polly Thompson) and baby Philip – are still as much of a handful as ever.

For the Gilders, life seems to be on the up. They now have NHS approval for their surgery and the cottage hospital and live in a beautiful and tranquil Lancashire village surrounded by friends and family.

All the other favourite Ormston residents are back: Linda (Tracey Childs) is the nurse who's married to the village policeman, Len Cosgrove (Peter Gunn). Clive Swift is the vicar, an unconventional man of the cloth, who likes a tippie in *The Signalman's*

Arms where Phyllis (Maggie Steed) is the bold and brassy landlady. Donald Gee is Mr Boynton, the village shopkeeper. Then there's Wilf (John Henshaw), the station-master, who still has a knack for winding up his daughter Jean (Naomi Radcliffe), the rag-and-bone girl.

Jane Tranter, BBC Controller of Drama Commissioning, said: "*Born And Bred* performed extremely well on Sunday nights on BBC One. It was a big hit with viewers, establishing itself very quickly as a firm favourite, in spite of tough competition from ITV. It is what family drama on BBC One is all about and I'm delighted that we are reuniting the same team for the second series, together with such a beautiful location."

The series also features guest stars David Troughton (*Paradise Heights*, *Madame Bovary*), Denise Welch (*Coronation Street*), who returns as Edie McClure, Gwen Taylor (*Barbara*) and Frances de la Tour (*Rising Damp*).

Born And Bred is co-created by Chris Chibnall and Nigel McCery, written by Chris Chibnall and produced by Chris Clough. The directors are Ian Knox, Rob Evans, David Innes Edwards and Dominic Brigstocke and the executive producers are Simon Lewis and Susan Hogg.

Production notes

Set in a picturesque village in the heart of the Ribble Valley in Lancashire, *Born And Bred* encapsulates everything that is typical about Lancashire life in the Fifties. For the villagers of Ormston there's a real feeling of common aspirations: they aren't afraid to work hard, always pulling together when times are hard, but they can share a joke when things are on the up. Everybody knows their neighbours in Ormston and there's never a dull moment.

Producer Chris Clough explains: "I think the Fifties were seen as a safer, friendlier era. But what we've done with *Born And Bred* is to lose some of the traditional aspects of Fifties life, such as the flat cap and Woodbine cigarettes, in favour of a nod to modernity. I think the strengths of *Born And Bred* are its warmth, good humour, the sense of community and, of course, an idyllic setting."

Writer and co-creator Chris Chibnall agrees: "I wanted to create something that you could sit and watch with your whole family, whatever their age. *Born And Bred* is pure escapism, and where we film is one of the most beautiful places in the country."

Although the storyline of *Born And Bred* revolves around the father and son doctor partnership of Arthur and Tom Gilder, played by James Bolam and Michael French, in this series viewers learn much more about the lives and stories of the other characters who live and work in Ormston.

"It's the characters who provide the basis for the storylines," explains Clough. "By using our doctors we are able to enter the lives of the Ormston villagers and share with them the highs and lows, the good times and the bad. This provides a unique mix of humour and drama."

Linda (Tracey Childs) and Len (Peter Gunn) are enjoying married life and are desperate to have a baby, but things don't go smoothly for them.

Clive Swift is the maverick vicar, Rev Brewer, who jumps at every available gambling opportunity, but is skating on thin ice with the Bishop. Phyllis (Maggie Steed) is the landlady at The Signalman's Arms and the eyes and ears of the village. She plays her cards very close to her chest but reveals her more sensitive side when she meets Fred Mills, Eddie's uncle. Helen (Charlotte Salt) is still in love with Eddie (Sam Hudson) but will Eddie ever notice Jean (Naomi Radcliffe)?

Meanwhile, rag-and-bone girl Jean has decided to do more with her life than simply lust after Eddie, so she opts for a new career as a dray woman. Her father, Wilf (John Henshaw), still has a knack for winding the villagers up, particularly when he tries to charge them a toll to re-enter the village – but he gets a shock when his past comes back to haunt him. And Donald Gee is Mr Boynton, the village shopkeeper at the heart of all the village gossip.

"In this series we have much more scope to tell the audience more about the background of the characters," explains Chibnall. "We meet Eddie's Uncle Fred (David Troughton) and Deborah's mother, Dora (Gwen Taylor), arrives in the village. We learn a little more about Mr Boynton, the shopkeeper, and what he enjoys in his spare time, looking after his beloved pigeons!"

"We've got this fantastically talented ensemble cast," enthuses Clough. "All the characters have back-stories and this time we have the space to explore their lives and fill in the gaps."

The Fifties were a time of much change, with the teenage generation emerging for the first time and social changes such as the introduction of the National Health Service. In Ormston, changes are happening slowly. With the surgery and cottage hospital now having NHS approval, Arthur and Tom can run the hospital for the sake of the local people rather than as a profit-making service.

Tom has clear ideas about future plans, which inevitably don't always agree with those of his father, Arthur.

It was also a time when women were gaining a stronger sense of independence. "I think we wanted to spend more time with the female characters this time," says Chibnall. "We wanted to show that there were just the stirrings of ambition in women. I think women were gradually becoming more independent – the feminist movement of the Sixties didn't just spring out of nowhere."

Clough adds: "Coming out of the Second World War, where women had to do a lot of the manual jobs, they are now realising that they can do much more than that. We see this through Jean, in particular, who can see what other women like Linda and Phyllis are doing with their lives, and there's this sense of eternal frustration that she is just the local scrap-girl. I think the Fifties saw the emergence of women and it's the Gilder children that would see the future benefit of this."

James Bolam and Michael French are Drs Arthur and Tom Gilder



James Bolam

James was born and grew up in Sunderland and he studied at the Central School of Speech and Drama in London. He is married to actress Susan Jameson and they have starred together in several productions, including *When The Boat Comes In*. James is best known for playing lovable rogue Terry in *The Likely Lads*, Jack Ford in *When The Boat Comes In* and Trevor in *The Beiderbecke Affair*. More recently James has appeared in *New Tricks* on BBC One.

Arthur Gilder

Arthur has been running the surgery for years but, recently widowed, he missed having his family around him and is delighted that they have now returned to Ormston. Arthur and his son, Tom, now work together. When he's not working he enjoys a tippie with the other villagers in *The Signalman's Arms*. Arthur is as stubborn as his son and is afraid of change.

Michael French

Michael comes from Epping in Essex and he studied at the Mountview Theatre School in North London. He is best known for his roles as David Wicks in *EastEnders* and Nick Jordan in *Holby City*.

Tom Gilder

Tom is married to Deborah (Jenna Russell) and in the first series they moved from Manchester, with their four children, so that Tom could take on the running of the surgery with his father. Tom's best friend is Len (Peter Gunn), who recently married Tom's childhood sweetheart, Linda. Tom is forward-thinking, stubborn and a family man at heart.

When Tom Gilder gave up his job in Manchester to move back to the village in Lancashire where he grew up, he couldn't have envisaged what a dramatic change that would have on his life.

He's persuaded his wife Deborah and their children to move to Ormston, so that he can fulfil his dream to work alongside his father, Arthur (James Bolam), in the village surgery. He's keen to impress his father, but being in partnership causes a fair amount of problems and, as if working together wasn't bad enough, Arthur has now also moved in with his son and can't resist interfering.

"What Arthur wants above everything else is to have his family back in the village," says James Bolam. "He wants his son to come into the practice with him but, at the same time, he doesn't want to stop working."

Relationships between father and son are never the easiest at the best of times, as writer Chris Chibnall explains. "Any father and son working together is going to be a hotbed of conflict and disagreement, and that's true throughout *Born And Bred*. As the series progresses, Tom really starts to wonder whether he can actually work with his father."

Michael French agrees: "That kind of working partnership can change a relationship, and I think Tom has always felt that maybe his father wasn't always there for him when he was growing up; that he spent more time looking after his patients."

Tom tries very hard not to make the same mistakes that he feels his father made and it's a constant battle to find the balance between being a good father and a good doctor. "When he was growing up, Tom always felt that his father favoured his brother Jack. Tom is desperate to please him," adds French.

The two characters couldn't be more different: Arthur is very old-fashioned and Tom is the modernising influence. Michael French describes Tom as "a doer, not a dreamer – he feels he can really make a difference in the village and it is through the NHS that he can really help."

Arthur, however, says James Bolam, is "very good at what he does, but he is steeped in village traditions and old-fashioned ways and is wary of change.

Deep down he knows there's going to be change but, like most older people, he finds it difficult. If you've done something the same way all your life, then to do it another way takes enormous strength. Arthur can be very firm at times but at other times he can be jolly and jokey and have fun with the villagers."

Playing a doctor was clearly something that Michael French relished. "I do like playing doctors as it brings out the more compassionate side of my nature. I like to listen, I like to understand and I like to help people. And it's also great to be able to play a married man in an era where there are such strong values."

Despite their differences, both Arthur and Tom are popular characters in the village of Ormston. "Arthur knows all the villagers really well," says Bolam. "I should think that, if he didn't bring certain local villagers into the world, then he's definitely treated them all at some time or another."

Clive Swift is Reverend Brewer



Clive Swift

Formerly married to writer Margaret Drabble, with whom he has three children – one of whom, Joe, is a presenter on *Gardener's World*. Born in Liverpool, Clive now lives in London. He has a degree in English Literature from Cambridge University and is best known for his role as Richard Bucket in *Keeping Up Appearances*.

Rev Brewer

Despite having lived in the village of Ormston for around 15 years, Brewer has never married, although he certainly likes the girls! He gets on particularly well with Phyllis, Arthur and Mr Boynton but not the Bishop. He's learning to drive but with little success and has a passion for gambling and Armagnac.

"Brewer lives life to the full," explains Swift. "He knows all about the suffering and sadness in the world, and this makes him all the more determined to enjoy life. He likes a drink or two, follows the horses and dabbles in a bit of gambling, even winning a bob or two on occasion! He's never married but he's certainly had a few girlfriends, as he's a bit of a ladies man. But the Bishop seems to know something about Brewer's behaviour which is a cause for concern."

Reverend Brewer has seen a lot of life, so whenever anyone is in trouble or has a problem they go to him.

"Brewer's very sympathetic and wants life to be better for everyone. He would have been born towards the end of the 19th century and would have survived two world wars. He's got lots of memories of the wars and is likely to have served in some capacity."

And he's a popular resident in the village: "I think the character that Brewer is closest to is Mr Boynton, the shopkeeper. They are similar in age, although Boynton is self-educated whereas Brewer would have gone to university. But I think Brewer is sometimes a little bit hard on Wilf, the station-master, and in return Wilf doesn't trust Brewer when they're playing cards!"

"Brewer also has a great deal of respect for Arthur Gilder [played by James Bolam] as they have a lot in common. Arthur's delivered all the children in the village, looked after them when they've been sick and then signed death certificates when people have died. In the same vein, Brewer has christened, married and then buried them."

Working with James Bolam is clearly something that Clive Swift enjoys: "There was one day when we were filming a scene with myself and James. I had watched *Shipman* the night before, in which James Bolam starred as the eponymous serial murdering doctor, and I couldn't believe how different he looked in it. But when I came to work

with James the following day I couldn't stop thinking of him as Harold Shipman.

“Then there was another time when I was getting over a terrible cold and Brewer goes to see Arthur about something other than a medical matter. While there, Arthur comments on how fit and healthy Brewer is, so I had to spend the whole scene concealing the cold!”

In episode one, Brewer has an unusual task in hand when he is called upon to perform an exorcism in the village.

“There's a farmer called Alec Rossendale, who's convinced that there's something strange going on in his house, so Brewer must perform this exorcism with Arthur, Phyllis, Wilf and Len all there as witnesses. It's a very stormy night and things start falling off the walls and doors are slamming. Brewer doesn't believe in ghosts but it all seems very strange, and even he starts to believe that there may actually be a poltergeist in the house.

“I did some research about exorcisms in the Fifties and asked Naomi Radcliffe's father, who is the retired Canon of Manchester Cathedral, about it but he said that there was no set format for exorcisms in those days.”

Since the last series of *Born And Bred*, Swift has been spending much of his time working on radio plays, including *The Right Time* and *The Go-Between* for BBC Radio 4. He's also been teaching poetry at The Actors' Centre, a centre for unemployed actors in London, which Swift also helped to set up.

And when he's not working there's nothing that Swift enjoys more than watching cricket.

“I'm a big cricket fan. I've been bowling ever since I was a young boy. I'm the Honorary President of a group called The Weekenders, which is a weekend cricket team that I set up in the Seventies. I'm involved with Middlesex CCC these days but having been 'born and bred' in Liverpool the team that I support is Lancashire CCC.”

Tracey Childs is Linda Cosgrove



Tracey Childs

Tracey was born in Chiswick, London, studied at The Guildhall and still lives in West London. She was previously married to actor Tony Anholt, who sadly died last year. Tracey is best known for her role as Lynne in *Howards' Way* and also appeared in the Eighties adaptations of *Jane Eyre* and *Sense And Sensibility*. When she's working, Tracey never sits down in her costume: "All your energy gets left in the chair," she laughs.

Linda Cosgrove

Linda has lived in Ormston all her life and recently married Len Cosgrove (Peter Gunn), the village policeman. She works as a nurse at the Gilders' surgery. Linda's patience is tested when she has to deal with the constant bickering between the doctors. Tom was Linda's first love and it caught her by surprise when he decided to move back to Ormston.

Linda is certainly enjoying newly married life with her new husband Len and, as the series begins, they are desperately trying for a baby.

"In the last series, we saw Linda get married, which was all a bit late in the day as I think Linda's had a bit of a past! I don't think that Linda wanted for silk stockings or chocolates during the war, if you know what I mean!" laughs Childs. "But she was very happy to marry Len. To get married that late in life was practically unheard of in the Fifties; she would definitely have been seen as on the shelf.

"And she's loving married life! She loves Len and they've got a mission in this series: to try and have a baby, so they're 'at it' at every available opportunity, but it doesn't all go smoothly. Linda goes for some tests and she has some problems from her past, so who knows what will happen?"

All this hard work trying for a baby is tiring Linda out. While she's working as the surgery nurse, she struggles to find her usual patience when dealing with Arthur and Tom's squabbles.

"Linda's worked at the surgery for about 10 years. She's very good at her job, she knows the villagers very well and they all like her. I think most of the time she's very good at coping with Tom and Arthur and their constant bickering. When she's on top of life she can sort them out, put them in their place and then everything's fine. But when she's feeling a bit fragile, as she regularly is in this series, then she finds it all a bit much."

In episode four, however, Tracey, together with several of the other women in the cast, had a scene to film which caused no end of laughter.

"Deborah discovers an old fertility ceremony and all the women in the village decide to help Linda out as she is having trouble conceiving. We all go up to the forest carrying flowers and lanterns and ribbons to perform the ceremony. But what Deborah hasn't told us is that the ceremony is traditionally performed naked! So all the ladies

there, which included Jean, Helen, Deborah and the Matthews sisters, all strip off and perform the ceremony naked!

“It was really lovely to do a day’s filming with just women. We had the most fantastic day. We were hanging around, waiting for the weather to change, and we started talking about getting our teeth whitened. We found it hilarious that there are so many people out there having botox injections and other beauty treatments, but the most adventurous we get is considering having our teeth whitened and asking what’s for pudding – and all the while, we were just about to go and film a naked scene!”

Since the last series of *Born And Bred*, Tracey’s been busy starring in the Channel 4 soap *Hollyoaks* and also performing in pantomime in theatre in Poole.

“In *Hollyoaks*, I played Patty Cornwell, the bitch from hell who is a real contrast to Northern, warm-hearted Linda, but I had great fun. Patty is the mother of a 22-year-old student called Izzy, which was a bit of a shock at first! It’s extraordinary that in *Born And Bred* I’m trying to have my first baby and in *Hollyoaks* I’m mother to a grown-up daughter who’s at university. Quite a contrast!

“It’s ironic that when I started filming *Hollyoaks* I was 38 and Elize Du-Toit, who plays Izzy, my daughter in the series, was 22. And back in the Eighties when we made *Howards’ Way* I was 22 and Jan Harvey, who played my mother, was 38 – so I now know exactly how Jan must have felt at the time!”

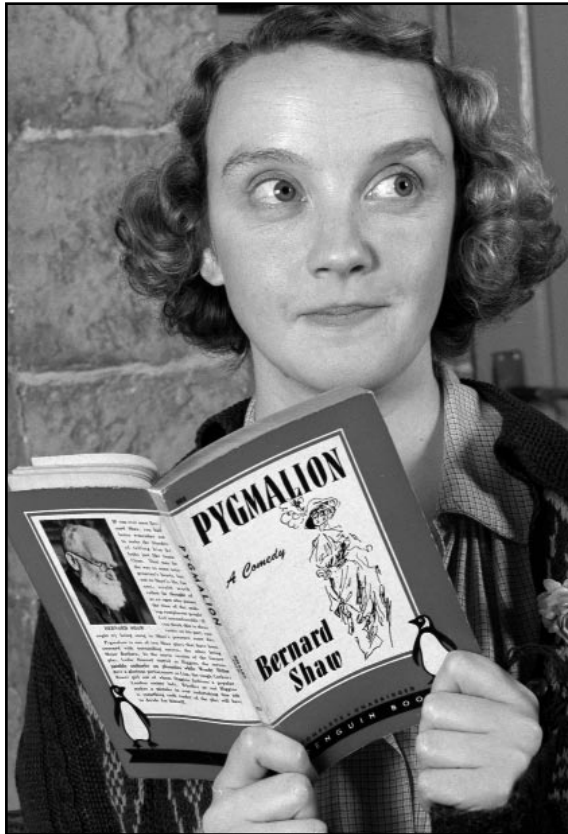
When she’s not performing either on television or in theatre, Tracey does a lot of walking. “I climbed two thirds of the way up Mount Everest a few years ago with a friend of mine. I went to Base Camp which was 17,000 feet. It’s not really a climb, it’s a very hard walk. But from that point on it’s a climb and it’s terrifying. The walk was tough but very manageable. It took about three weeks and I would love to go back one day.

“I do a lot of walking, but it was so frustrating when we were filming the first series in Lancashire. We were surrounded by such stunning countryside and so many of the footpaths were closed because of foot and mouth disease. But now the footpaths have reopened and Peter Gunn, who plays Len in

Born And Bred, has bought me a book on all the best walks up there so I’m really enjoying exploring the area.”

Tracey’s other passion is crosswords. “I love doing crosswords but this is the first TV set that I’ve been on where no one else does the crossword. But at least that means I get to pinch all their papers!” she laughs.

Naomi Radcliffe is Jean Bradshaw



Naomi Radcliffe returns as Jean Bradshaw, the matchmaker who just wants some love of her own, in the new series of *Born And Bred*. “At the end of the first series, having been awarded first prize in the Ormston beauty pageant, it appeared that Jean may finally have found love,” says Radcliffe. “But unfortunately it’s back to square one again at the start of this series. Jean’s unrequited feelings for Eddie remain, although at last it seems that he might be noticing Jean a bit more, which is a start.”

While Jean remains unlucky in love, she has finally plucked up the courage to leave the scrap yard behind her and take on a new job as a dray woman. Radcliffe explains what this involves and the reasons behind Jean’s change of career: “The dray woman is the lady who delivers the beer to the pub. Jean became very down-hearted about her life as a scrap girl. She felt as though she was boring and wasn’t doing enough with her life! By chance, the opportunity to run the dray cart presents itself, and Jean leaps at it. She now gets to use the bigger horse and cart, and she has the chance to drive around lots of villages rather than remain stuck in Ormston. Sadly, my wardrobe remains much the same, however. The dungarees are back, although I do have the chance in this series to wear a couple of fab frocks!”

Naomi Radcliffe

Naomi was born in Oldham and now lives in Manchester with her partner of nine years, Carl Cieka. She trained at the Welsh College of Music and Drama where she met her boyfriend. Naomi is best known for playing Alison Webster in *Coronation Street* and has also appeared in *Queer As Folk* and BBC One’s *Sunburn* with Michelle Collins. More recently she played Twitchy in Michael Winterbottom’s *24 Hour Party People* and alongside Ricky Tomlinson in *Nice Guy Eddie*.

Jean Bradshaw

Jean lives in Ormston with her father Wilf (John Henshaw) who is the station-master at the village station. Jean runs her own scrap yard but wants something more out of life, and in episode two takes over running the dray cart from Eddie’s uncle. She’s in love with Eddie but, despite her best efforts, he just doesn’t seem to notice her.

In spite of Jean’s new job, she remains very much the same old lass at heart. As accident-prone as ever, Jean continues trying her hand at matchmaking, although Radcliffe admits that, unlike her character, she doesn’t even try to get her friends together. “My friends are always asking me to act as a matchmaker, but I’m absolutely rubbish at it. I invariably just make things even worse!”

Radcliffe says that filming *Born And Bred* has provided some of the happiest times of her acting career. “*Born And Bred* has been such a fantastic experience for me, and filming the second series has been even more fun than the first. What’s been extra special about this series is that we had a month off halfway through filming, so we could all go home, relax and catch up on some sleep before heading back to film the final four episodes. I love being on set with all the actors – we’re like a big family now.”

Radcliffe's eyes light up when she talks about the reaction her friends and fellow Mancunians have had to her role in *Born And Bred*. "I live just south of Manchester, and while the first series was being shown on television, everyone was coming up to me and telling me how much they loved the programme. People in the post office, the bank, the bakers – they all congratulated me and said how addicted they were to the programme. I was so pleased that *Born And Bred* had struck such a chord with so many people."

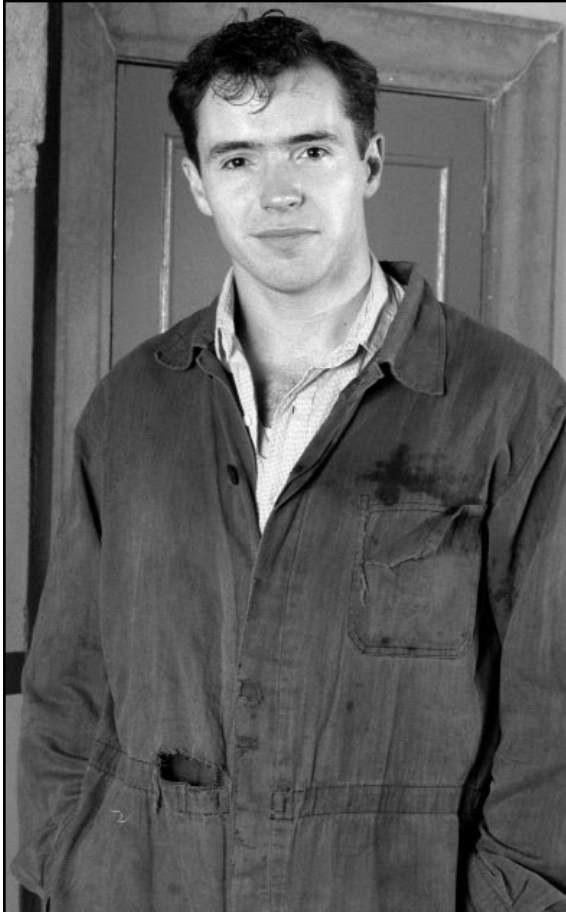
Radcliffe has previously said how much she dislikes being famous, and her views on the subject have certainly not changed. "I never went into acting to become famous. Instead, I always saw acting as a way of conquering my fears. I've always put myself out there and fought to overcome my inhibitions and worries. I don't get nervous – instead, my fear is derived from a desire to fulfil and realise my acting hopes and goals. My dad is a vicar, and he's always said that the Church felt like a vocation. I feel very much the same about acting – it's a calling, and I'd do it for no money at all. Well, almost no money!"

With a successful film, television and radio career under her belt, Radcliffe should nonetheless be well used to fame by now. It was her role as Alison Webster in *Coronation Street* that first catapulted Radcliffe into millions of living rooms up and down the country. She acknowledges the vital lessons which life in *Coronation Street* taught her: "Playing Alison was a big deal. Being in such a huge series and finding myself always subjected to such media interest prepared me for all the attention I've received afterwards. It's made me stronger, that's for sure."

Away from *Born And Bred*, Radcliffe has appeared alongside Steve Coogan in *24 Hour Party People* and Ricky Tomlinson in *Nice Guy Eddie* and has happy memories of both. "I met so many fantastic actors on the set of *24 Hour Party People*. Rob Brydon and Shirley Henderson, in particular, were angels and kept me amused as we sat around waiting for the scenes to be set up. We all had such a giggle. And then, of course, I had the privilege of working with the saintly Ricky Tomlinson. Sadly, I only had one scene with him, but even in that short period of time I learned first-hand what a lovely guy he is."

As though a burgeoning acting career wasn't enough, Radcliffe has also been concentrating on a nine year relationship with Carl. "It's fabulous," Radcliffe says, "and we're very happy. We live such busy lives that I'm not sure when we'll be able to go away together on a proper holiday, but we've been having lots of short breaks away together around the country." As her stock rises ever further and a third series of *Born And Bred* remains a strong likelihood, Naomi might well have to put off that holiday for quite a while yet.

Sam Hudson is Eddie Mills



Sam Hudson

Sam was born in Derby, grew up in Birkenhead and now lives on The Wirral with his fiancée, Natasha Symms, who starred in *Hollyoaks*. He studied at the Birmingham School of Speech and Drama and is best known for playing Ryan Musgrove in *Brookside*.

Eddie Mills

Eddie is the mechanic who runs his own garage in Ormston and knows everything there is to know about cars. He's dating Helen Gilder (Charlotte Salt) but is also being chased by Jean Bradshaw (Naomi Radcliffe). Both his parents died when he was younger and Eddie's closest surviving relative is his Uncle Fred (David Troughton).

"Eddie's moved on a bit this series, he's not the same bumbling idiot that he was. He's a lovely character with a big heart and I think he represents an innocence which is long lost," says Sam Hudson.

In series one audiences knew very little about Eddie's family, but in this series they meet Eddie's closest relative, his Uncle Fred, played by David Troughton. Fred has been diagnosed with leukaemia and wants Eddie to take over his business running the dray cart, but Eddie's main love in life is cars. His garage is doing well so he doesn't want to give it up, but he feels obliged to help his uncle. There seems to be no way out until Jean (Naomi Radcliffe) steps in.

In the last series Eddie didn't seem to notice that rag-and-bone girl Jean was besotted with him – instead he only had eyes for Tom Gilder's daughter, Helen (Charlotte Salt). He finally plucked up the courage to ask Helen out on a date and since then things have moved on.

"Helen seems very serious about the relationship, whereas Eddie is much more relaxed, maybe too relaxed. I think he needs a kick up the pants sometimes. And then there's Jean: Eddie thinks she's lovely but I don't think it's really dawned on him yet that she likes him. He's a bit slow but I think he's starting to notice Jean more and more, so who knows what might happen!"

In real life there's only room for one girl in Hudson's life – he is engaged to actress Natasha Symms. They met while Natasha was playing Kate Patrick in *Hollyoaks* and Hudson was filming *Brookside*; both productions are made by Mersey Television in Liverpool.

"We've been together about four years and we got engaged last year, so we're busy planning the wedding now," says Hudson with a smile. "We've bought a Grade II listed house together in Birkenhead, which we've been renovating for the last couple of years. It's a lovely big old house but we didn't realise quite what we were getting into when we took it on. We're busy furnishing the

house now but you need the right furniture for a place like that; modern furniture looks really out of place. And then we need to landscape the back garden so I'm turning into Alan Titchmarsh!"

But life hasn't always been a bed of roses for Hudson. It took a while before he realised that acting was the career for him. The work didn't come in straight away, however.

"I'd been in bands when I was younger but then decided to become a chartered surveyor, because everyone else was going off and getting proper jobs. But after two years I decided to go after what I felt in my heart and I started doing a bit of amateur dramatics. I knew that was what I really wanted to do. But I was earning good money at the time so it was a difficult decision to make.

"I didn't work for nine months after I left drama school and that was hard. All my friends were buying houses, going out and doing well and I had to ask them to lend me a tenner to put petrol in my car. Then I did *Brookside* and *Grease*, which was my first musical. I did 360 shows in 53 weeks in about 20 different cities, which was tough. Now things couldn't be better and I'm very lucky to be in the position I'm in, it's fantastic!"

So, could Hudson imagine throwing it all away to live in Fifties Ormston?

"No way! If I had to choose a decade to live in then I would plump for the Sixties or Seventies, but without the really bad hair! But the changes happening around that time fascinate me, such as the independence of women and the birth of the teenager.

"When I was younger I lived in a little village called Hookgate, near Shrewsbury, which shares some similarities with Ormston. They both have real characters with interesting stories to tell. There was one man who lived in a house opposite me in Hookgate, who had no heating and just one cold water tap. Both Hookgate and Ormston are little pockets of strange society!"

Denise Welch is Edie McClure (as a guest in episode four)



Denise Welch

Born in Ebchester in County Durham, Denise now lives in Cheshire with her husband, actor Tim Healy, and their two children. She attended schools in Whitley Bay, Newcastle and Consett before studying at the Mountview Theatre School in London. She is perhaps best known for playing Frances, the wife of *Spender* (Jimmy Nail), Marsha Stubbs in three series of *Soldier, Soldier* and Natalie Barnes in *Coronation Street*.

Edie McClure

Edie is married to Don (Paul Bown) and together they have six children, all girls. She lost her seventh child in the first series and this series it is Edie's eldest daughter, Joanne, who is pregnant. Edie's sister is Phyllis (Maggie Steed), landlady at The Signalman's Arms, and Edie works as a cleaner in the pub and the doctors' surgery.

It's been a busy year for Denise Welch, with the lead role in one of BBC One's *Afternoon Plays*, guest roles in *Holby City*, as the mother of nurse Kerri McGrath, and *Where The Heart Is*, as a sufferer of Parkinson's disease and mother of five. Now she's back in Ormston as Edie McClure.

"I've certainly been the mother to plenty of children this year!" laughs Welch. "Edie has six children. She's the sister of Phyllis, who runs the pub, and also cleaner at the hospital and the pub. She's very feisty and she's a bit of a know-it-all, but she has a heart of gold."

When audiences last saw Edie she had just lost the baby boy that she was so desperate for. Despite having six children already, they are all girls and she was desperate to have a boy who could eventually take over the family business. She blames the hospital for what went wrong, but there's not much time to hold grudges as this time it's her daughter Joanne who's expecting a baby.

"Joanne is pregnant and also unmarried, so Edie concocts this story about her daughter having married a man who's away in the RAF. Before the baby is born there are problems. There's a lovely scene in the hospital ward, where Arthur Gilder finds Edie by the bed where she lost her baby. He reassures her that what happened to her won't happen to Joanne.

"I think there's a worry in the village that Edie might alienate her other daughters and try to take over with Joanne's baby. She's very controlling and she thinks that she knows everything there is to know about children."

Joanne, however, is an independent young woman and hates having to lie to everyone in the village about the father of her baby. She turns to her Aunt Phyllis for advice and confides in her that the father of her baby is actually a window cleaner from Sunderland.

"I think as far as Edie is concerned her sister has been a bit of a 'girl' in the past. Therefore Phyllis is

more sympathetic to Joanne because she either has, or certainly could have, found herself in a situation like that herself!”

Since filming *Born And Bred*, Welch has moved on a decade to make a film called *The Jealous God*.

“It’s a low-budget film which is set in the Sixties. It stars Marsha Warren, Jason Merrells from *Cutting It*, Andrew Dennis and Gillian Kearney. That was the main reason for taking the part: it’s such a strong cast and I also get to snog Jason Merrells! I’ve never done a feature film before and I love the Sixties, especially the hair and the music.”

In real life Welch, best known as former *Coronation Street* landlady Natalie Barnes, has no plans to emulate Edie’s brood of children. Along with her husband, actor Tim Healy, Welch is quite happy with her two boys, Matthew and Louis.

“Louis was a wonderful unexpected surprise and I’m delighted to have two healthy children. Both Tim and I have been so busy recently, but we love spending time together as a family. We have a house out in Spain so it’s lovely to get out there; my hatred of the English weather is well known!

“I love my work but I’m finding it harder and harder to be away from home, as I’d really like to spend more time with the children. I really miss them when I’m away filming. Louis is two now and he’s at that age now when he’s really clingy. Fortunately, I’m only ever away for a couple of days at a time.”

And there’s no let-up for Denise and Tim as Tim is off to rejoin that famous band of British brickies to film the new series of *Auf Wiedersehen, Pet*. Meanwhile, Denise is happy with her life and looking forward to the possibility of a third series of *Born And Bred* and the chance to further the Edie and Joanne storyline.

“I’d love the chance to come back and do a third series. It would give us the chance to explore further the jealousy between Edie and Joanne. I was astonished at the response to Edie after the first series; everyone was saying what a brave decision it was to take this part and how different I looked.

It had never even entered my head as I have no vanity as an actress, although I did enjoy the scene at the end of this episode where Edie gets to wear some eye make-up and a little bit of lipstick!”

Born And Bred Episode synopses

Episode One

Len and Linda find a seven-year-old girl, Molly, on the steps of the hospital. Tom decides to take Molly home and let Deborah care for her. There's more to Molly than meets the eye and, when Tom realises the problem, he makes it his mission to find out who she is and where she came from.

In the village, Jean acquires a collection of stuffed animals for her scrap yard. She has a bet with her father, Wilf, as to who can sell the most and they set about furnishing the village.

Meanwhile, Reverend Brewer is asked to complete an exorcism at obstreperous farmer Alec Rossendale's home. He goes along with Arthur, Wilf and Len, but in the process, he succeeds in giving Alec a heart attack. Alec is furious and when he recovers in the hospital, he threatens to have Brewer excommunicated, Len thrown out of the police force, and Arthur struck off! So, in an attempt to teach him a lesson, Brewer returns to the farm and with Arthur, Len, Eddie, Wilf, Jean and Phyllis's help, convinces Alec that he really has exorcised his ex-wife's ghost.

Episode Two

Deborah's mother Dora comes to the village to visit her daughter. She's up to something and when she finally tells Deborah what's going on, Deborah is furious.

Meanwhile, Michael is convinced that there's a monster living in the local reservoir and persuades Eddie and Helen to go monster hunting with him. There does, indeed, seem to be evidence of some beast living there, but when they finally capture the creature, it's not quite what they expected.

Mr Boynton comes to the surgery complaining of a bad cough but Tom is baffled when he can find nothing wrong. It appears that it is Boynton's beloved pigeons that are causing the problem and he faces having them taken away unless Tom can come up with an alternative solution.

And Helen decides to give up secretarial college and starts working in Boynton's shop.

Episode Three

Eddie's Uncle Fred has been diagnosed with leukaemia. With this in mind, Fred decides to do all the things he's always wanted to do in the short time that he has left. He invites Phyllis to take a cruise around the world with him and tries to persuade her by dancing with her in front of all the villagers.

Fred wants Eddie to take on the family business – the dray – but Eddie's heart is set on being a mechanic. Eddie reluctantly agrees until Jean comes to his rescue with a solution.

Meanwhile, Wilf discovers an old by-law which allows him to charge people every time they enter the village and he causes mayhem when he introduces it.

And Michael gives the villagers plenty of problems as he discovers the fun to be had with itching powder.

Episode Four

Phyllis's niece, Joanne, is pregnant but she continues to work at the Ironworks for her father Don. Tom desperately tries to persuade Joanne to rest but can't get a word in edgewise as her mother, Edie, keeps interfering. Edie doesn't trust the doctors after she lost her unborn child at the surgery the year before but, when the baby comes prematurely, there is no time to argue.

With all this going on, Linda learns some disturbing news – that her own chances of having a baby are very slim. Len is devastated and turns to Tom for advice.

The village water supply has also been cut off and Edie suggests they bless the local well in an effort to get the water back. When Deborah researches the idea, she also discovers a fertility ceremony which might help Linda's predicament, so the women of the village go dancing in the woods – naked!

Born And Bred

Cast credits

Principal cast

Dr Arthur Gilder James Bolam
 Dr Tom Gilder Michael French
 Deborah Gilder Jenna Russell
 Rev Brewer Clive Swift
 Phyllis Woolf Maggie Steed
 Linda Cosgrove Tracey Childs
 Len Cosgrove Peter Gunn
 Jean Bradshaw Naomi Radcliffe
 Wilf Bradshaw John Henshaw
 Eddie Mills Samuel Hudson
 Mr Boynton Donald Gee
 Helen Gilder Charlotte Salt
 Michael Gilder Ross Little
 Catherine Gilder Polly Thompson

Episode One

Alec Rossendale Karl Johnson
 Mary Percival Emma Catherwood
 Joe Baxter Robert Finan

Episode Two

Dora Brisley Gwen Taylor

Episode Three

Fred Mills David Troughton

Episode Four

Edie McClure Denise Welch
 Joanne McClure Krysia Pepper
 Don McClure Paul Bown

Episode Five

Hans Gothard Tim Bentinck
 Conor Daniel Brocklebank

Episode Six

Derek Humberton Julian Glover
 Dora Brisley Gwen Taylor
 Aggie Driscoll Mary Woodvine
 Bill Driscoll Sam Hemingway

