



MASTERPIECE

KUDOS

GRANTCHESTER



GRANTCHESTER RETURNS TO ITV THIS APRIL



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GRANTCHESTER SERIES 3



James Norton and Robson Green return as the unlikely 1950s crime fighting duo, Vicar Sidney Chambers and Police Inspector Geordie Keating, in the third series of Grantchester, produced by Kudos. The six-part series is based on The Grantchester Mysteries by James Runcie.

Tessa Peake-Jones is back as Sidney's sharp tongued housekeeper Mrs Maguire who keeps the vicar in check; Morven Christie reprises her role as Sidney's forbidden lover Amanda; Al Weaver returns as the timid curate Leonard Finch; Kacey Ainsworth is back as Geordie's long suffering wife Cathy, Lorne MacFadyen puts his police helmet back on to play DC Phil Wilkinson and Seline Hizli returns as the feisty police secretary Margaret. And of course it wouldn't be Grantchester without the return of the gorgeous black Labrador Dickens.

In the third series of Grantchester new Archdeacon Gabriel Atubo (Gary Beadle) reminds Sidney that as a clergyman he must put duty above his own needs and lead by example. Given the strength of his feelings for Amanda, is this something that Sidney can do?

On the face of it, Geordie is still happily married to Cathy. But there continues to be an undeniable spark between himself and Margaret.

Leonard was left heartbroken after Daniel (Oliver Dimsdale) left him for another man, but in this series he appears to put this behind him and find romantic happiness with someone else. But will those around him allow him this happiness?

Mrs Maguire's friendship with dashing Jack (Nick Brimble) develops, but can anyone ever replace her late husband Ronnie?

The heart of the show remains the friendship between Sidney and Geordie. As they solve crimes in Grantchester, Cambridge and beyond, they each deal with personal crises at home, and once again their unique and unlikely friendship is put to the test.

Peter Davison will guest star in the series as Geoff Towler, the village solicitor, captain of the cricket team and a man who rules his family with a rod of iron. Further cast includes Charlie Higson, Lorraine Ashbourne, Adrian Bower, Susannah Harker, Charlie Dale and Holly Aird.

Grantchester achieved strong ratings for its second series, averaging 6.4 million viewers across the series/ a 25% share of viewing, with the peak episode attracting 7.1 million viewers/a 27% share of viewing.

The lead writer is Daisy Coulam (*EastEnders*, *Death In Paradise*), who was responsible for adapting the first and second series of Grantchester. John Jackson (*Being Human*, *In The Flesh*), Oliver Frampton (*Life of Crime*, *Fleming*) and Jess Williams (*Inspector George Gently*, *Call The Midwife*) also write for the third series.

Grantchester is produced by Kudos, and executive produced by Kudos' chief executive Diederick Santer (*Cutting It*, *EastEnders*) and the series is produced by Emma Kingsman-Lloyd (*DCI Banks*, *Lip Service*), both of whom were responsible for series one and two of Grantchester. Daisy Coulam is an executive producer and James Runcie associate producer. Rebecca Eaton will executive produce on behalf of PBS/MASTERPIECE.

Grantchester is directed by Tim Fywell (*Happy Valley*, *Masters of Sex*), Rebecca Gatward (*EastEnders*, *Casualty*) and Rob Evans (*Mr Selfridge*, *New Tricks*).

The series was filmed in Grantchester, Cambridge and London.

Grantchester is a Kudos and MASTERPIECE co-production for ITV and Endemol Shine International hold the international distribution rights.

JAMES NORTON IS SIDNEY CHAMBERS



Q: How does it feel when the first Grantchester script of a new series arrives?

“It is a bit of a homecoming for me every time. I get little teasers from writer Daisy Coulam, producer Emma Kingsman-Lloyd and executive producer Diederick Santer because we’re friends now. So when I know it’s being written I start to try and sneakily get some glimmers. Then when it arrives it’s lovely. Grantchester is always beautifully balanced between being familiar and welcoming, both for us and the audience, and having that sense of nostalgia and affection. But also it always has that bite in the stories.

“As soon as you get the script it’s a complete page turner and I can’t wait to see what happens next. Not least with each episode but also what they do beautifully is maintain that over-arching narrative between Sidney and Geordie (Robson Green).

“Then the next question is, ‘Who’s going to play all the guest roles?’ We’ve got some incredible casting directors who fill each of the roles with such high calibre actors. That’s always another great moment when we find out who’s playing who. I love it.”

Q: Is this new series slightly darker?

“If you described Grantchester to someone and they hadn’t seen it, they might assume it simply has that cosy, nostalgic, crime story feel. But as anyone who has seen the show knows it is so much more. It has so many more layers and is so much

richer, deeper and darker than that.

“What brings the darkness is partly to do with the way they don’t shy away from the issues of the time. We did an episode, for example, about the death penalty and homosexuality being illegal in the 1950s, along with various other themes of the period.

“The further we get to know the characters and the further we go into the series the darkness starts to revolve around their lives and the choices they make. It is darker but that’s partly because we know and love these people so much. Then the choices they make which hurt other people feel so much more painful. I think it’s partly darker because we as a cast and the audience are more invested and know these people as friends. So when people you’re close to trip up or hurt other people it feels so much worse.

“Series three is a very personal series. It’s perhaps less about the period, what defined the 50s in comparison to now, and is much more about the inner turmoil and personal journey of Sidney and Geordie. It’s about guilt and conflict. The conflict between love and duty. It is shocking and it is dark but in a slightly different more personal way.”

Q: Where are Sidney and Amanda (Morven Christie) when we return?

“We last saw them in the Christmas special. We join Sidney and Amanda four months later and they are living in denial. Amanda’s baby is called Grace and, as we know, Amanda is no longer with her husband Guy (Tom Austen).

“Sidney has very clearly become this father figure with Amanda living separate to him in a little cottage in the village near the church. They are, in a way, living like teenagers. Stealing kisses behind the church and sneaking out for jazz nights with Mrs Maguire (Tessa Peake-Jones) babysitting Grace. It’s playful and fun.

“But they are resisting or denying the impending decision: If Amanda divorces Guy she can’t marry Sidney and she can’t have a relationship with Sidney unless he leaves the church. So it sets up this duty versus love conflict.

“At the beginning that whole conflict is very much held at arm’s length. Sidney and Amanda are having a great time. Which is quite nice because we’ve seen so much strife between Amanda and Sidney. It was really lovely to have a bit of fun with Morven, go dancing, listen to some jazz and act as if we are loved-up teenagers.”

Q: Sidney and Amanda move on the dance floor to the ‘new’ sound of rock ‘n roll. How was that to film?

“This is 1955, the year before Elvis made his national television debut in America. The soundtrack to Grantchester is really important with Sidney’s love of jazz and Sidney Bechet. But this is also the time rock ‘n roll arrived.

“We had a great choreographer on set who taught Morven and I some early rock ‘n roll moves. Which was great. I loved it. We tried to encapsulate the feel and spirit of

that time. It's a slightly different place to where we've seen them in the past. And it sets up what they have to lose. They are in love and able to express that up to a point."

Q: Baby Grace is played by twins. How was it acting with them?

"Our twins were wonderful. One of them was slightly better behaved than the other so we gravitated to that one! It was a bit like having Dickens on set. When you have babies of three or four months old on set, everyone just turns into these mushy gooey messes. Those little girls were literally handed around a crew of 100 people and didn't seem to bat an eyelid.

"It always feel like a family on Grantchester. It's no secret that Grantchester is a very happy set and one of the reasons why we get so many great actors on each episode is because it's an enjoyable place to be. So when you've got children around that sense of family and fun is added to. The days when we had the twins and then Dickens bouncing around our heels, it did feel like the Grantchester family was complete."

Q: Episode two features a village cricket match. Was much acting required when you were batting?

"At the end of filming for the first series we had a cast and crew versus Grantchester villagers cricket match. I don't think I'd played since then. My cricket during filming for this series was even ropier than it was back then.

"Although I'm reassured by the fact I'm always a little bit better than Robson Green who is just completely rubbish at cricket. I think I took less takes to make contact with the ball than he did. Sidney hits a boundary for four in the script. That was achieved with a couple of kind camera angles and probably one or two flukily-hit shots which luckily were caught on camera.

"I really enjoyed it. We were filming a little later in the year for this series, filming into the autumn and winter. We wrapped the whole series on the 23rd of December. But we filmed the cricket scenes for episode two in an amazing Indian Summer. We were so lucky with absolutely sweltering heat. So there was no trick of the camera there. We were having a lovely couple of days in the sun knocking around a cricket ball."

Q: Grantchester's cricket captain is played by Peter Davison. What was it like working with him?

"Peter is one of those actors who has such a great acting history. Someone I've admired for years. But what's so wonderful is you would never know. He's just a lovely, down to earth man. To have the opportunity to work with him was great."

Q: Gary Beadle plays new Archdeacon Gabriel Atubo. How does his arrival impact on Sidney?

“When you have this duty versus love conundrum, the duty part very much is manifested in the church. At the end of series two with the Archdeacon being sent away in disgrace, it started to lay the seeds of Sidney’s doubts in the actual church. Archdeacon Gabriel arrives and is really charismatic. He provides this older brother-type mentor, father figure in Sidney’s life. He gives really wise words of advice when Sidney is struggling. But it’s not enough. It’s not just Sidney’s love of Amanda which is eating away at him, it’s also his doubts within the institution of the church.

“The courts and justice system were put on trial in series two. In series three it’s the church itself that’s put on trial. Gary Beadle and I have very fiery theological debates within the script in some great scenes. Then we’d be standing outside having a cup of tea in our costumes talking about something really mundane afterwards. He’s a great actor and plays that role beautifully.”

Q: You posted a photo online of a huge Grantchester tattoo on your back when the series three clapperboard reached ‘Slate 500’. What was all that about?

“Some people thought I actually got a tattoo and that I was obsessed with the series. I love Grantchester but that would be a bold tattoo to have on my back! We have an amazing camera clapperboard guy called Laurence. And every time we got to 100, 200, 300 slates etc, he would make the slate an occasion. They would get more and more elaborate and ornate.

“The 500 slate in the final block of filming came as we were filming in a Romani community and lots of tattoos were being worn. So he got me in early that day to make the 500th slate into a temporary tattoo. Then when we got to it I took off my shirt and someone took immense pleasure in slapping my back, which was representing the clapperboard. He didn’t tell me it would take about two weeks to get off. It’s really hard to scrub your back. But it was a lot of fun. Again, it just goes to show the spirit of Grantchester. That sense of everyone having a bit of fun.”

Q: Do you get a lot of Grantchester fans watching filming?

“This is my first experience of this type of returning drama. I’ve never done the third series of anything. We have a very loyal fan base. People who fall for the show and fall for it hard. It’s lovely because they know everything about it and they have relationships with the characters. They know more than us often about the world of the show. So they come to watch filming, especially when we’re in Grantchester itself, and they are just incredibly happy to be there. We also get attention when we’re filming in the centre of Cambridge. We’re lucky to have such a loyal fan base.

“For three years Robson and I have been trying to persuade the producers to have some Interpol story so Sidney and Geordie have to go down to Tuscany to rescue some wayward vicar or something. But they’re not having any of it, sadly.”

Q: You get a lot of attention from both the public and media. How do you keep your feet on the ground?

"I'm very lucky to have family who are really supportive. My dad is a regular extra on Grantchester. He usually does a day as various people. But we've never been able to persuade my mum. Until now. She is in series three of Grantchester with my dad as guests at a policeman's ball. She was slightly terrified at how much she looked like my granny when she got the proper perm on and everything. They're amazing. They come to set and support me. But they're also very wise and grounded themselves. My family and friends make life feel normal.

"It's also the people you work with. The crew and production team and rest of the cast are great. Robson Green has banked more TV hours in the UK than mostly anyone else. And yet he's one of the most grounded, loyal, feet on the ground people I know. He always has a word for everyone. So unjudgemental and inclusive.

"I've been lucky to be surrounded by great family who don't allow my feet to leave the ground, but if they do I get firmly slapped back down. And similarly with people I work with, like Robson. I look and learn from people like him. He was bombarded one day with fans and I said, 'How do you deal with this?' And he said, 'These people are the reason you are able to go on these amazing journeys and play these roles. They enable that career. So it's a contract. You give them time because they give you this career.' It was a wise moment and I banked it. He's a good man."

ROBSON GREEN IS INSPECTOR GEORDIE KEATING



How does it feel returning to film a new series of Grantchester?

“When the first script of a new series arrives you know it’s going to be quality because it’s written by Daisy Coulam. Then you want to find out how the journey is going to further develop with the various relationships on screen. Has it still got those likeable ingredients? Does it still have those dramatic arcs within each relationship that the audience care about? And like any script you get, because you see yourself in it, you think, ‘Where is it going to take my character? Is there a development?’ Not surprisingly there was.

“Grantchester is so refreshing. It develops in a way the audience will care about, want to follow and leave them wanting more. Which is essentially what you want with a long running series. When I get a script now I go, ‘Will I enjoy making this?’ And you’re 10 pages in and you go, ‘Yes I will.’”

Q: How is Geordie’s marriage to Cathy (Kacey Ainsworth)?

“Geordie is paralysed with the burden of guilt and obligation and has an overwhelming sense of routine. He feels the relationship is stale and redundant. But he’s looking at the wrong aspects of the relationship.

“Geordie begins a campaign that sets out to destroy everything that is precious in his private life. Looking at the public face of Geordie, everything he has seems to be bright, rosy and healthy. But there’s an undercurrent of something deeply uncomfortable. He begins to destroy the one thing he holds dear, which is his family.

And seeks approval of his behaviour from Sidney.

“The overriding arc of the whole series is that both Sidney and Geordie have crisis of self. They try to advise one another on how to deal with this. But they both very quickly realise they’re not qualified to give that advice. It’s love versus duty, loyalty versus love, which are very powerful emotions and issues to play. One minute we’re dealing with betrayal, another with abandonment. But at the heart of it all is love.”

Q: What’s are Sidney’s thoughts on Geordie’s predicament?

“Sidney tries to give Geordie advice. And Geordie says to Sidney, ‘How can you give me advice? You are going out with a married woman who has a child with another man? And you’re standing there giving me advice?’ While Sidney points out Geordie has a wife and four beautiful children. Geordie, in a way, seeks forgiveness throughout the whole series. But not from God.”

Q: Geordie and Sidney form a batting partnership during a village cricket match. Was that easy for you to film?

“The script only allowed me to score four runs. But it had a century written all over it! It was a quintessentially English scene. It’s 1955, we’re in the Grantchester Meadows, all in our whites playing cricket.

“However I play cricket with a confidence that is wholly unwarranted. I was rubbish at school. The ball is too hard. I played in the cast and crew versus Grantchester villagers match at the end of filming for series one and was out for four.

“It just takes me back. I had terrible reminders of how bad I was at sport in school. I was a really good runner but I was never good at cricket and hopeless at football. I was described as a delinquent kicking about a pig’s bladder when I was playing football.

“And I was so paranoid when playing rugby. When they went into a scrum I used to think they were talking about me. So nothing has changed on the sporting frontier. But it was a lovely scenario to film. Beautifully directed by Tim Fywell.

“The Grantchester cricket captain Geoff Towler is played by Peter Davison. I also managed to have a lot of scenes with Emma Davies, who plays Rosie Towler, and she made me realise why I continue to do this job. Reminded me of why I’m involved in this industry. She is a tour de force when it comes to acting. Storytelling can be a very powerful thing. It was just beautiful to be alongside her performance in episode two.”

Q: Is storytelling even more important in today’s world?

“I think it’s important to see things from other people’s points of view. Storytelling can change the way we think about the world we live in. But more importantly it makes us think about ourselves and the way we behave. We have a duty to remind the world that we are all one.”

Q: What was it like working with Peter Davison?

“Growing up with All Creatures Great and Small, he was a very important fixture in our family home in Dudley, Northumberland. So I was a huge fan. The experience and joy of working with someone like Peter really helps when you’re in front of the lens. He was a dream to work with.”

Q: Geordie is not a fan of jazz or the ‘new’ sound of rock ‘n’ roll. Is there an artist or band in real life you would travel a long way to see?

“I used to be a huge fan of The Flying Pickets. I would travel from Newcastle to watch them play in Islington and follow them on tour. I loved what they had to say and the way they did it. That ‘a capella’ format.

“The last big concert I went to was the Rolling Stones. I used to be a huge heavy metal fan and I’d travel the country to see Motorhead, Rainbow and bands like that. The last concert I went to in Newcastle, which is probably the best concert I’ve been to just for spectacle, quality and coming away with a life-affirming sense of well-being, was Dolly Parton. She was sensational. But now I sit and listen at home on the radio. I live in Northumberland and go walking on the hills.

“When I sung many years ago, Jerome and I were on Top of the Pops and someone came into our dressing room to say hello and sat and chatted with us for two hours. I only realised 20 minutes into the conversation that it was Cat Stevens / Yusuf. Eventually I asked, ‘What’s your link with the music industry?’ He said, ‘I wrote the song Boyzone are singing.’ And I suddenly put two and two together and went, ‘Oh my God it’s Cat Stevens!’”

Q: Do you get much attention from fans during Grantchester filming?

“The public has welcomed Grantchester with open arms. We have a really loyal fan base. Especially for James Norton, of course. Who wouldn’t want a vicar like Sidney Chambers? We get crowds, especially when we film in Grantchester itself. There’s crowds every day there. They don’t pose a problem. They’re very obliging and welcoming. While the locals within the village we use as supporting artistes. It’s been well received and rightly so. The writing is great, the storytelling is wonderful, with a great production team and cast.”

Q: You were still filming on your birthday last December. How did you celebrate?

“We had a fireworks display. James did the food and I did the fireworks. Fireworks is one of my guilty pleasures. So I threw a fireworks display to music of the movies. It started with Superman, then Flash Gordon, The Magnificent Seven, Prokofiev’s Romeo and Juliet. It was wonderful. It was after we had filmed for the day and about 200 locals turned out in the village. We got permission to set a Category 5 display up. Everybody left with smiles on their faces.”

Q: Some think an actor's life is all bright lights and glamour. Were there any moments during this series that summed up how far from the truth that can be?

"There was one night where we were doing an exhumation scene. It was raining and it was freezing. And it was taking an eternity. Not only were we fed up and the production team fed up but also members of the public were fed up. So much so that about half a mile away, this guy shouted out of his window, 'Turn off your lighting and go home!' With added bad language. We just fell about laughing and couldn't continue.

"But other than that, our executive producer Diederick Santer calls Grantchester his happy place. And it's true. I'm working with James Norton, Morven Christie, Kacey Ainsworth, Tessa Peake-Jones, Al Weaver and Lorne MacFadyen. It's a joy."

Q: How do you reflect on the relationship between Georgie and Sidney in series three?

"I think this new series is the best one yet. At the heart is that loving relationship between Sidney and Georgie. For Georgie, Sidney is the son he never had and for Sidney, Georgie is the friend he never had. It's the shorthand that you can't quantify that really works. It's the way they interact and relate to each other that sometimes isn't necessarily in the script. It's just implicit in the performance. James is so relaxed and charismatic in front of the lens, he makes it so easy.

"We knew we worked well together immediately from the start of series one. And if you combine that with good writing and a good production team, you're on to a winner. A vicar and a detective works because it's rooted in a dark truth. On the surface it's quintessentially English, beautiful, tranquil, idyllic, pristine. But there's this undercurrent of something deeply uncomfortable. Whether it be racism, bigotry or whatever. The darkness that existed and the denial people lived in in the 50s."

Q: Aside from paying the bills, what has being an actor given you in life?

"It's given me stability. I'm doing something I love. That's what acting has given me. Storytelling is everything to me. It always has been from when I went to see Bedknobs and Broomsticks when I was that little kid with my mother. I've never shied away from the fact it's all about the wonder of storytelling."

Morven Christie is Amanda Kendall



At the end of the Christmas special, Amanda had her baby. When we return with series 3, how old is the baby and how is Amanda taking to motherhood?

When we start series 3, baby Grace is about four months old and Amanda is living in a little cottage in the village, so she's part of the Grantchester community now. She is really taking to motherhood and I think it's a great joy for her. Given the challenges of being a single woman in a community like that in the 50's and raising a child by herself, I think she's really positive about it and really embraced it - she seems to be having a lovely time.

What's happening with Sidney and Amanda?

Well they obviously are facing a quite complicated situation because Amanda is still looking to divorce Guy, that marriage is over as far as she is concerned. It's not any less complicated now she's not with Guy because obviously in the 50s a divorced woman was a very taboo thing. It's a big issue and for a vicar to try and be in a relationship with a divorced woman is fraught with issues. They have a lot of challenges to face but they really love each other.

I think the stories throughout this series are about how much duty is going to get in the way and people's opinions and judgements within the community. At the beginning of series 3, I think Amanda gets a shock when she realises quite how difficult officially ending this marriage is going to be and just how much judgement

there is in the community about her situation and about Sidney being involved in that. These challenges go on all through the series.

Is Amanda understanding towards Sidney's predicament?

Absolutely. She knows him very well and she really loves him so I think she is very aware of the difficulties that this relationship was putting him under. In the same way, she is very aware that her number one priority has to be her daughter. Both of them could be deeply affected by her relationship with Sydney. It's a battle between love and duty for both of them. I think she is very understanding and she reaches a point at which that changes because it becomes about whether or not he can consistently be there and whether or not this relationship can be permanent and I think Sidney has always struggled a bit with decisions. Amanda is forced to make some decisions on her own and forces him to make some too.

Does Guy appear this series? Will we be seeing Grace's father?

Yes, Guy (Tom Austen) comes back. I think Amanda has very much wanted Guy to be part of his daughter's life and when we meet them in series 3, they've had no contact and Grace has had no contact with her Dad whatsoever; through his choice not through Amanda's. Early on in the series, he changes his mind about that and wants to be in touch and I think Amanda is afraid of how it is going to go. Although she is really committed to do everything right. They have got to negotiate what they are going to do with their relationship and Guy's with Grace. I think there is a lot more understanding between them individually than there was when they were a couple. They're kind of hearing each other a bit better.

So they are better off apart than together by the sounds of it?

Absolutely. I think their marriage was determined by Amanda's love for her family and needing to do what her Dad wanted her to do. Out of all the options Guy was the best one, if she was going to have to bite the bullet and marry someone that wasn't Sidney. Ultimately she was never in love with Guy and I don't think he was in love with her either. I think this was just two people doing what they were supposed to do and having to live with the consequences.

What about Amanda's relationship with Mrs Maguire? Have they bonded since Mrs Maguire helped her give birth to Grace?

I think so and in quite a big way actually. One of the wonderful things about Mrs Maguire is that she is absolutely committed to her opinions and so that doesn't change. I think she has a lot of respect for Amanda past a certain point and she adores Grace and I think Amanda really depends on her and she is like a surrogate grandmother to Grace and that's a really beautiful thing and it bonds the two of them really well.

Mrs Maguire is very aware of the challenges that this couple have and she has opinions about that too. I just think there is a lot of warmth between her and

Amanda now but she is still a tricky bugger! That's been one of the biggest joys for me this series - having lots of scenes with Tessa and I love Mrs M, she's my favourite character. It's just been a real joy for me to be able to spend time on set with Tessa and I think the relationship between Amanda and Mrs Maguire is beautiful and funny. She's almost like a surrogate mum!

What's it been like filming with baby Grace?

Baby Grace is played by twins. It's been just lovely. I adore them and I am going to really miss them actually. They have grown along the course of the show and that's quite a significant period for a baby as they were four months when we first started and they're seven months old now. They're such lovely fun little girls. I've just had the best time with them. I keep saying, 'their mum doesn't need two, perhaps I could have one!'.

Does it make you broody being around babies day in, day out?

I am always broody, I love babies. The last two jobs I have done, I've spent almost all my time with babies. I just love them.

Grantchester has proved to be really popular. What do you think it is that makes it so special?

I think it's got a lot of warmth and I think the characters are really connectable and the relationships are really real. We are lucky to have a really wonderful cast. James is fantastic, Robson is fantastic, Al is fantastic and Tessa and Kacey. It's just a really special cast. More than anything, the scripts are just lovely and they always have been. It's the perfect show to deal with issues because there is so much love and warmth in it.

Does the Grantchester village feel like a home from home for you now because you go back there a lot for filming?

We do go back a lot. It's funny though, it's changed so much since the first series. No one had the faintest idea what we were doing back then. Everyone was welcoming but we just kind of got on with it. It's very different now - there's crowds of people that turn up and it's a very different environment now but I always love it when we go there because it's the only time when we're all away together as a crew and a cast in the hotel. I think it really comes to life when we're in the village and because we go every block, it makes everything really real and it's such a sweet little place and the people are so lovely.

James is becoming increasingly popular and he's got such a massive female following. Do you find that people are really jealous of you that you get to play his love interest?

Yes. James and I are friends and we work hard trying to make these scenes really real. For me it's quite nice to just get on with my work and not too much attention to be on me, but there are definitely a lot of interesting responses to being his love interest!

Tessa Peake-Jones is Mrs Maguire



What can we expect from the new series of Grantchester?

I think as usual it's got the normal lovely ingredients of a whodunit and it's got the fantastic relationship between Sidney and Geordie, but on top of that it's slightly darker. It investigates new things this time with our regular characters.

The theme is duty and love, which challenges them all in different ways this time. I think each character has that question above them throughout the series, as to what they are going to do, and to an extent Mrs Maguire too as later on she gets challenged with her past as it comes back to slightly haunt her.

Mrs Maguire is meanwhile enjoying the companionship of Jack - there was a hint of that in the last series. I don't know how you would say it with Mrs Maguire, it's certainly not dating. 'Walking out' my mother used to say, but they are seeing each other. At this stage I think it is companionship more than anything but that is developing.

Are we going to know a bit more about Mrs Maguire by the end of the series then?

Yes. You see her interacting with Amanda's baby which is really interesting because she has never had children so you see the development of what she would have been like as a mother or a grandmother – in the family role which I think is very unfamiliar to her. She takes to the baby a lot better than she took to Dickens, so thank God for that! You will see things come up in the series that will challenge her

and little surprises along the way, which is intriguing and has been very lovely to play.

Has her relationship changed with Amanda since the birth of Grace?

I think the Christmas special brought them together out of necessity. Amanda had to rely on Mrs Maguire rather a lot, but also I think when you have gone through something like a birth, it does inevitably bring you closer to somebody, even if you don't know them very well, because it is such a miraculous thing you have witnessed together.

I think also she sees that Amanda is in love with Sidney and she also knows deep down that Sidney is in love with Amanda, but every now and then as much as they get closer because she babysits a lot for the baby, which I think thrills Mrs Maguire, she's also weary that Sidney doesn't become too involved with Amanda. She knows again, it's a duty and love thing and it cannot be for Sidney to be a vicar and to have a life with Amanda. Ultimately, no matter how much she has befriended Amanda, at the heart of Mrs Maguire will be the protection of Sidney, like her own son, and she would fight to the death to make sure the right thing happens for him.

Mrs Maguire seems to soften a bit this series. Do you think that is the influence of Jack?

I think it's partly the influence of Jack but in series one she didn't know Sidney very well, so in a way I think it has taken the two or three years, just as we as an audience are getting to know the characters and like them, she's taken that long to accept these people, particularly Leonard for his funny little ways and also watching Sidney because she doesn't like his drinking and the music he listens to and the girls in the past.

It has taken her a while to really bring Sidney in to her heart, which now of course he is right in the centre as the son she never had. I think Daisy [the writer] has wanted to explore all the characters, showing different layers in them and depth. Mrs Maguire is quite critical and grumpy, so I think she wants to explore what it would be like to see a more vulnerable side to her now and then.

You talked just then about the characters developing and getting to know each other better, is that reflected off-screen as well?

We've got on ever since day one of the first series. It's been an absolute delight. We've always got on so well, all of us and that just continues to grow. As with anything in life, you get to know people more in any job, you're spending a lot of time with them. Obviously unless you dislike them, you're going to get closer and closer and this team is so fantastic, right from Diederick [exec producer] downwards, the crew, all the actors and guests - we all feel that this job is very different to other jobs as there is such care and support for each other. I think we all respect each other as actors and we love the characters that were playing and of course we have a few laughs along the way. We have become very, very close. The thing that's odd

about our profession is you get to know each other and become a family and then you say bye and it might be a year before you see each other again if you're lucky or you might not ever see each other again. Obviously with a series like this, you do, which is great.

What's it been like filming with the babies? As you have the two twin girls playing Grace.

They're absolutely gorgeous, both of them! You can't tell anything between them. They're both incredibly chilled out, they do exactly what is expected of them each time and they don't know it because they were four months old when we first started. They're very easy-going and they obviously since birth have been passed around a lot which I have to say is the best thing I learnt with my kids, it means they don't get clingy! Their parents have been brilliant with them and it just means that whoever picks them up and then has them in the scene, they just sort of sit there very calmly and look at you. It's been a joy. We all fight over who can have them in each scene. They are so gorgeous.

What's it like playing quite a stern character like Mrs Maguire because she is the opposite from you?

I love it because of that! I love any work and any character I do but it's really lovely to have a bit more of stretch and to be playing someone that I have to think a bit more about how she would be, rather than that natural sunny disposition. I love it, I think it's great. Every line Daisy gives you is gold dust, she so knows Mrs Maguire so well. Each script is a joy.

Are people recognising you for this now more than Only Fools and Horses?

It's interesting because when I wear glasses people recognise me as Mrs Maguire, rather than Raquel. It's strange because I don't wear glasses as Mrs Maguire!

You signed up originally for Grantchester in 2014. Did you ever expect to still be here now?

We've been thrilled with the response and so please it's returned. If anything the feedback each series gets better and better and I hope people will say they love this series even more.

You have spent a lot of time in the Grantchester village and in Cambridge, does that feel like a home from home to you now?

It's so lovely to go there. That church in Grantchester is really beautiful but also those regular people that live there and are parishioners in the programme every week are so lovely and welcoming. They follow the storylines and really like taking part and they're very proud of their village, as they should be. They make it a joy, it's really lovely.

Al Weaver is Leonard Finch



In the last series, Leonard had his heart broken by Daniel. Are things looking more positive for him this series?

Things seem more positive but he is put in a predicament where The Archdeacon suggests that maybe it would be good to have a wife and a family and serve the church that way, if he wants to have his own parish and meet someone who can fill that role. This obviously brings up its own problems with the fact he is a gay man and we follow that journey through laughs and through tragedy.

Do you think he struggles to accept who he really is and do you think he could ever be happy with the pressure that is put on him in the 1950s?

That's the big question. He is trying to be as honest as possible but ultimately he has a family with the church, Sidney and Mrs M. Maybe that is worth more than his personal happiness. That's the big struggle with him. I don't feel like he thinks he can truly be happy but his faith is so important to him and he is willing to sacrifice everything else.

Leonard meets a lady this series, can you tell us about her?

He meets a lady called Hilary through Sidney and Geordie. Her father dies and Leonard keeps her company. They bond and become really good friends. They have the same taste in literature and humour, so on the surface it could seem like the perfect relationship, only there is this other underlying thing with him that he can't quite fully commit. He tries though and ultimately it causes problems.

Leonard is caught up in a post office raid. What happens?

Leonard comes to Hilary's rescue when there is a raid in the post office and gets 'pistol-whipped'. He is the hero of that episode and the village take him in to their hearts. This gives him a lot of confidence and takes him on to another journey with Hilary. He tries to convince himself that he can take the relationship further, but the question remains – can he?

What is his relationship with Sidney like this series?

His relationship with Sidney is good because Sidney knows his secret and knows him better than anyone else. Leonard trusts him completely. They're like bickering brothers at times and equally they help each other and be really honest with each other. Leonard can be quite cut-throat with Sidney and Sidney can be the same with him, and not always to a good outcome.

Do you think Leonard and Sidney's relationship is stronger because they have both suffered heartbreak?

Absolutely, they both went through heartbreak and Sidney is trying to get over that and Leonard is trying to get over his. I think that's the good understanding they have because it brings them closer together. Sidney is the first person who has faith in him and has supported him and accepted him truly for who he is. Even Mrs M doesn't quite grasp the concept of Leonard's sexuality, or, if she does, it's not made explicit as she keeps her cards close to her chest. Sidney really lets him open up and helps him to grow, compared to where he was when we started in season one.

What about his relationship with Mrs Maguire, what is that like this series?

They're quite good, it's like mother and son almost, or older sister and younger brother, although it's quite a weird relationship. They laugh and they are very honest with each other and I think that's what's good about the show - you have the crime-solving part but you also have this kitchen-sink family drama happening before your eyes.

We have a big giggle filming the scenes in the vicarage. My favourite stuff is with Tessa and James and we always have a lovely time no matter how serious or whatever it is.

Did you have any difficult scenes to film this time around?

There was nothing ultimately tricky but we play bingo, which was quite funny to film, because I had to trip over the stage four times in a row and drop bingo balls and catch them, which isn't easy!

There was lots of emotional stuff and that was the hardest part really and finding the balance between light and shade.

GRANTCHESTER

SYNOPSIS

Episode One



It's 1955 in Grantchester, local vicar Sidney Chambers [James Norton] meets with the new archdeacon, Gabriel Atubo. Acknowledging that Gabriel's predecessor was dispatched under some controversy and embarrassment, Gabriel questions whether he can rely on Sidney to rebuild trust in the church and lead by example. Sidney reassures him he can be counted on.

Before the night is out, Sidney is on the dance floor with his old flame Amanda Hopkins [Morven Christie]. Whilst they close in for a kiss, Sidney's best friend DI Geordie Keating [Robson Green] sits nearby with wife Cathy [Kacey Ainsworth], the spark a little dimmer in their own relationship.

The next day Sidney accompanies Geordie to The Round Church in Cambridge, where an elderly man, Dr Terrence Atwell, lies dead. Whilst being pestered by church caretaker Mr Harland, Geordie tells Sidney about the victim; Dr Atwell ran a soup kitchen for the homeless. On closer inspection of the body, it appears Dr Atwell died by drowning. But how does a man drown in the middle of a church and is this connected to a series of murders targeting respected figures in the community?

Amanda gets a letter from estranged husband Guy [Tom Austen] saying he wants to see his daughter. Sidney can't contain his frustration; Guy didn't care when Grace was born. He's clearly trying to control Amanda. But Amanda reassures him that she won't let Guy take Grace away.

As Geordie and Sidney get closer to the truth behind the murders, Sidney is forced to confront the conflict between his relationship with Amanda and his calling as a vicar, and the fact that he and Amanda must face Guy, but will it be together or apart?

Episode Two



A village cricket match - Grantchester vs Whittlesford - brings the community together. Sidney and Geordie form a batting partnership and they swat away everything the Whittlesford bowlers can throw at them until Geordie spots Margaret [Seline Hizli] in the crowd and falls foul of a thundering Yorker!

Cricket captain Geoff Towler (*Peter Davison*) is taking the match far more seriously than anyone else. When Grantchester's young Pakistani batsman Zafar Ali arrives and takes to the field, Geoff is quick to side with the Whittlesford team over calls of LBW. Zafar insists it didn't touch him, but Geoff decides to forfeit the match, rather than take his own batsman's word.

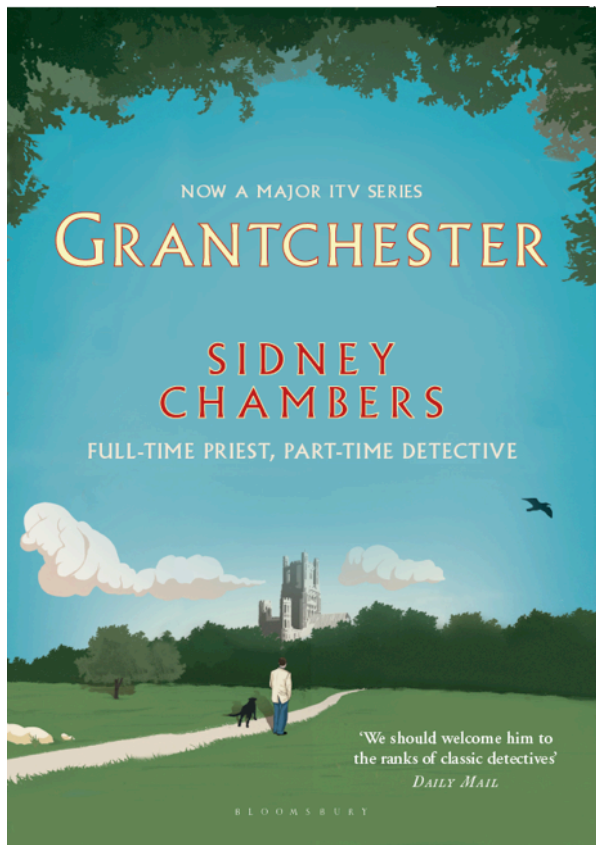
Post-match, cricketers and spectators are enjoying the beer and buffet when one by one the cricketers keel over including Geoff, Geordie and Sidney. It's a case of mass poisoning which leaves Zafar Ali dead.

Once recovered Sidney and Geordie must navigate racial tensions and village power plays to get to the truth. As Sidney and Geordie attempt to untangle the suspects and their love affairs, they come to blows about their own relationships.

Meanwhile, as Leonard tentatively begins the early courtship of fellow villager Hilary, he must fulfil his duty to the church and pay a visit to Amanda, warning her of the consequences of her relationship with Sidney...

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