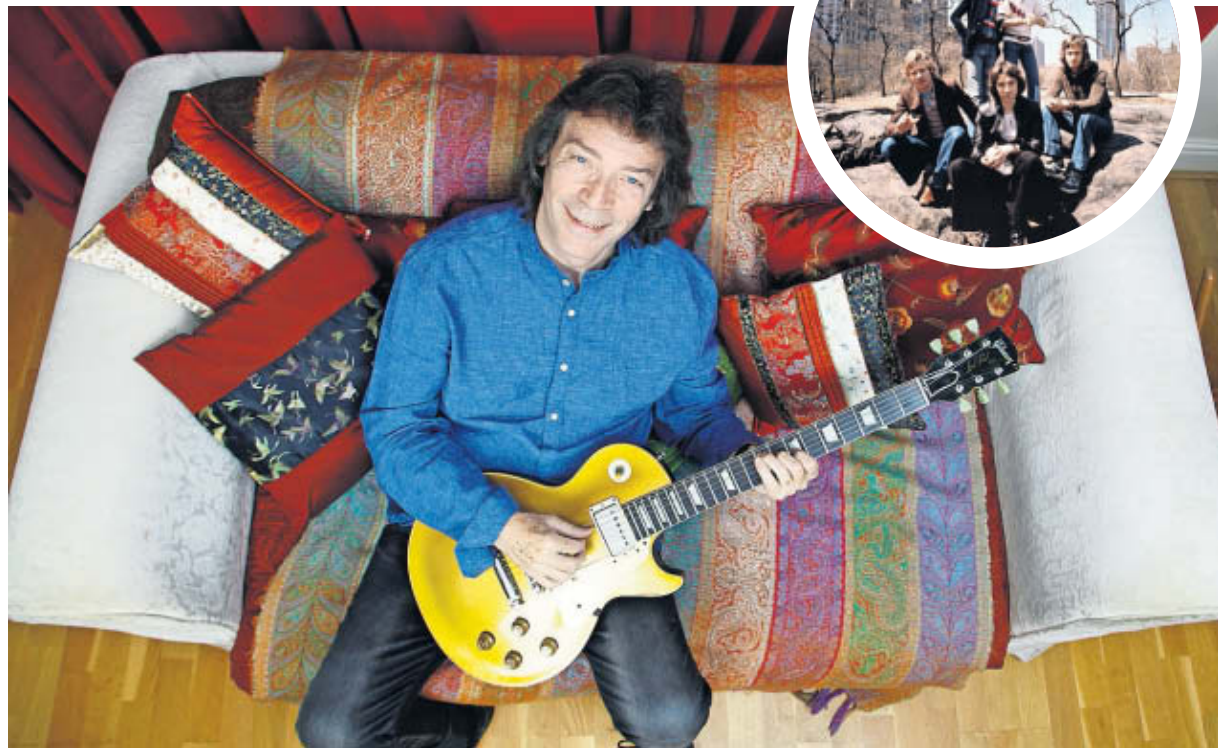


## Home



## TIME AND SPACE THE WAY WE LIVE NOW

# STEVE HACKETT

### The Genesis guitarist on hiding his gold discs, and his recording 'man cave'

**I** spend a lot of time touring, and will be on the road for about six months this year, playing in Europe, North America and the UK. So when I'm living out of a suitcase for so long, it's always nice to return to my house in Teddington, southwest London, with my wife, Jo. I love touring but I also like battenning down the hatches back home and relaxing on my own sofa.

#### Where did you grow up?

I spent my childhood on the Churchill Gardens estate in Pimlico. It was started during the Attlee government in 1946. The flats were opposite Battersea Power Station, which supplied the power for much of London at that time. Our hot water and underfloor heating was provided by waste water pumped through a tunnel under the Thames. I used to admire the power station from my bedroom window; silhouetted against the night sky, the smoke belching out – it was an incredible sight. But I think the pollution helps explain why I and the other local kids always had coughs and colds.

#### What was the first home you bought?

A three-storey townhouse with bay windows in Holland Park, which I got in 1977. I was there for four or five years before moving to Twickenham, an area I already knew, having seen bands like the Stones and Yardbirds play live on Eel Pie Island in my youth. The only downside to living in Holland Park was that a developer regularly smashed the windows of a neighbour – a sitting tenant, an old lady – he was trying to force out. I'd sometimes be woken at night after one of his thugs broke a window at 3am.

#### Describe your present home.

A modern three-floor semi-detached house on the Teddington/Twickenham border. I built an extra floor at the top, which is home to my music room/studio. Although sometimes I'll utilise the whole house if I'm practising or recording to see what the acoustics are like, and there will be leads everywhere. Luckily my wife is very understanding.

#### What do you like about the area?

Bushy Park and Richmond Park are on my doorstep, so nature is never far away – but central London is within easy reach too. Another bonus: the Thames is a 15-minute walk away. I grew up next to the river and still love living close to the famous waterway.

#### Don't all rock stars dream of owning a house in the country?

Jo and I have talked about moving out of

London some day so that we have more space, and that's still on the cards. But we'd have to spend a lot of time looking around to find the right place, and my touring schedule is just too full-on. My focus now is very much on the tour ahead – it's great to still be so busy at this stage in my life.

#### Do you have any mementos from your Genesis days?

I've got a whole bunch of gold discs from my Genesis and solo career, but I don't keep them on the wall – I've fought shy of that kind of thing. They're in boxes.

#### Favourite room?

Probably my music room/studio – and man cave – where I've recorded my last few solo albums. It's so much easier to record in a home studio now because the equipment is miniaturised. Jo and I have just written a song together called *Natalia* to show our solidarity with the people of Ukraine. The room is also where I keep my guitar pedal board – a must for a progressive guitarist – which creates a fair bit of noise. Thankfully none of the neighbours have complained about my music-making. I'm able to create screaming guitar sounds at a very low level!

Interview by York Membery

Steve Hackett brings his *Genesis Revisited Foxtrot at Fifty + Hackett Highlights* tour to the UK for 25 dates in September and October. [myticket.co.uk](http://myticket.co.uk), [hackettsongs.com](http://hackettsongs.com)



From top: Genesis in 1976; Hackett at his Teddington house; Hackett aged five; Battersea Power Station, which was opposite his childhood home

## HOME HELP

### AM I RESPONSIBLE FOR THE LEFT OR RIGHT FENCE IN MY GARDEN?

**Q** Our fence was blown down in Storm Eunice. I

lost the fence on the left, but my neighbours are refusing to contribute to its replacement, saying owners are always responsible for the left-hand side (me) not the right-hand side (the neighbours)!

**In fact, when we bought our mid-terrace house a decade ago, the previous owners stated on the property information form that they were responsible for both left and right sides. But my solicitor found no evidence for this in the deeds, and said we should split any repair costs with our neighbours. We think 50-50 is fair. Can you advise?**  
*Emily, Cambridge*

**A** There is no general rule about whether you are responsible for the boundary on the left or right hand side of your property. Unless there is an express obligation to erect or maintain a fence contained within the title deeds, the general rule is that neither neighbour is obliged to contribute towards the cost of a new boundary fence. Even if the title deeds confirm that the fence is your responsibility, this does not necessarily mean that you are obliged to erect or maintain the fence; there would need to be a positive covenant in the title deeds that expressly says so. To get a definitive answer,

you would need the property's original conveyance document from when the land was sold for the first time. This document could date back centuries and is not generally held by the Land Registry, so is often impossible to track down.

A red line on the title plan held by the Land Registry gives an indication of the property's boundary, but documents of title rarely contain sufficient descriptions to enable one to establish the precise boundary position. As fences are narrow, it is difficult to ascertain whether a fence sits on the land of one owner or another. If the fence sits on your land, it belongs to you and you would have the right to maintain/replace it, but you couldn't insist that your neighbour shares the cost. If the fence sits on your neighbour's land, you would not have a right to maintain/replace it or force your neighbour to do so. If it is not clear who is responsible for the fence, the pragmatic approach is to attempt to reach an agreement with your neighbour to share the costs. If they still refuse, your options would be to either leave the boundary unfenced, replace the fence yourself or build a new fence on your side of the boundary. It would therefore be best to try to reach an amicable agreement with your neighbour.

*Nicholas Vaughan, partner, Withers residential property team, withersworldwide.com*

Send questions to [homehelp@sunday-times.co.uk](mailto:homehelp@sunday-times.co.uk). Advice given without responsibility

## READERS' CLINIC

### HOW DO I PEEL A KIWI WITHOUT WASTING THE FLESH?

**B Hume, London**

Don't peel it, cut the top off and eat it like a boiled egg – scoop the flesh out.

**Liz Cooper, Gloucestershire**

Don't peel. Cut in half, then use a teaspoon to scoop out flesh. It comes away cleanly.

**Jennifer Taylor, Oxfordshire**

Peel from end to end with small, sharp knife. Or to eat yourself, cut in half and use a grapefruit spoon with serrated edge.

**G Ellew**

Try the iTimo kiwi cutter, a wire dome (£2.99, [amazon.co.uk](http://amazon.co.uk)). Cut kiwi in half, stick in the wire

dome, twist, extract the flesh.

**S Haber, London**

Use a potato peeler. Remove hard bits at each end with pointy tip, then peel with blade.

**Margaret Atkins, Leicestershire**

#### FUTURE QUESTION

Our front door opens onto the pavement. How do I prevent dogs from defecating on our doorstep and urinating on the ceramic pots? They are always accompanied by their owners as well.

Send tips and questions to [homehelp@sunday-times.co.uk](mailto:homehelp@sunday-times.co.uk). Advice given without responsibility