

line-up



Naomi Newman researched investment options, p18.

She says: 'It's not how much or how

little you have to save, but what you do with it that counts.'



Sarah Roberts-Wray researched owners' verdicts on cars, p28. **She says:** 'Owners of the new Mini

Convertible are smitten. What a way to enjoy the summer sunshine.'

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EDITORIAL



Estate agents need controls

A friend of mine had to turn secret agent to catch out his estate agent. Convinced that no one was coming round to see his flat – despite the agent's claim of 'a lot of interest' – he rigged up a series of signs he'd read about in spy books (hairs across door jambs and so on) to prove no one had been round all day.

Sure enough, despite the agent claiming that two people had viewed it, there was no evidence that anyone had been inside.

Our own investigation into estate agents shows that even the prices in estate agents' windows aren't all they seem. One of our undercover sellers had their house valued at £200,000 by one agent – and £325,000 by another. This isn't incompetence. Some agents give high valuations to win your business, and then suggest a more realistic price once they've locked you into a contract.

The last government agreed to our demands for all estate agents to be members of an independent redress scheme. The election got in the way – but we'll be holding the new government to this promise.

Malcolm

Malcolm Coles, Editor

PHOTOGRAPHY JONNY THOMPSON, EMPICS

IN THE WASH

Hot news and lukewarm responses

GAMES CONSOLES

Unveiled in May: Microsoft's new Xbox, Sony's Playstation 3, and Nintendo's Revolution.

FAMILY MEALS

After years of decline, the number of families sitting down together at mealtimes rose 5 per cent between 2002 and 2004, says Mintel.

192 REMINISCING

The National Audit Office, the government's spending watchdog, has criticised the introduction of competition for directory enquiries.



MOBILE SPAM

Mobile phones will soon be the most important medium for advertisers, says marketing company Omnicom.



WEDDING LISTS

Money is the most popular wedding present, says a Direct Line survey. That's popular with the happy couple, not the guests...



FOOD WASTE

Food accounts for about one third by weight of all British household waste, according to waste handlers Biffa.

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