

Media Outlet: *The Daily Express*

Date: 03.01.13

Circulation: 508,458

DAILY EXPRESS

THE WORLD'S GREATEST NEWSPAPER

BE HAPPY

5 THINGS I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT

Actress and *Strictly* star **FIONA FULLERTON**, 57, lives in Gloucestershire with her husband Neil Shackell, also 57, who works in IT. They have two children, James, 24, and Lucy, 18

1 MY CHILDREN

I got married for the first time when I was only 19 and when that marriage fell apart a few years later I was single for the next 14 years.

During that time I was incredibly busy with my acting career (Fiona starred as a KGB agent in the 1985 Bond film *A View To A Kill*) and I had an enormous amount of fun.

But when I hit my 30s I felt something quite fundamental was missing from my life. Up until that point I had never thought of myself as particularly maternal but suddenly my biological clock went into overdrive.

I was fortunate enough to become reacquainted with my now husband Neil, an old friend of the family.

We fell head over heels in love and I embraced being a wife and mother with gusto. I turned my back on acting and set up a property business which I ran from home so I could always be there to pick up the children from school.

It was a decision I never regretted as I loved being a hands-on mum. My children still mean the world to me.

I think they are a bit stunned by all the attention I've had recently from appearing on *Strictly Come Dancing*. After all, they never knew me as an entertainer. To them I'm just mum.

2 EARL GREY

I never drink coffee but I must get through five or six cups of Earl Grey tea per day. I am not remotely bothered by the whole fanfare of brewing leaves in a teapot. But I am particular about how my tea is made: the bag must be lightly squeezed before adding the tiniest dash of skimmed milk. In fact I am so fussy Neil is the only person I trust enough to make me a cup of tea.

3 FAMILY DVDS

A couple of years ago I had all our family footage put on to three DVDs and they are by far my most treasured possessions. We have just about everything on those discs, including all the children's birthday parties and countless Christmas celebrations. On a winter's evening Lucy and I often crack open some wine and sit watching one of the DVDs. We laugh until we cry.

4 NIVEA

I am innately lazy. I have always loathed the gym and I hate dieting so over the years I just allowed myself to become frumpier, grumpier

and lumpier.

Then last year I suddenly decided I wanted to feel fitter and following advice from a friend I eliminated wheat from my diet. The impact was amazing as I lost about 2st without doing much else. One thing

I have always been rather meticulous about is my skincare routine which I have stuck to since I was young.

I have very dry skin which I need to look after but I've never been one for wasting money on pricey potions.

Instead I have used Nivea cream all my adult life and I swear by it.

5 LAUGHTER

When I was younger I was much more serious and reserved but over the years I have learned the power of smiling.

I have also developed a childlike sense of humour which fortunately the rest of my family share too.

The other day Lucy and I were in the supermarket when I decided to

hide from her.

I probably looked ridiculous, a middle-aged woman chuckling away as she crouched in the aisle.

But by the time she found me we were weak with laughter and it made me smile for the rest of the day.

● *Fiona Fullerton is an ambassador for tradesmen search site ratedpeople.com. Her latest book *Dear Fiona* is available now (£19.99, Waterside Press)*

Interview by LUCY BENYON



Picture: REX FEATURES

KEEPING MUM: Strictly star Fiona Fullerton