

### Vicky McClure MBE

In 2018, actor Vicky – who tragically lost her grandmother to dementia in 2015 – embarked on a deeply personal journey where she set out to discover the true extent of music’s power in combatting dementia. And from there, Our Dementia Choir was born. The *Line of Duty* star has opened a conversation surrounding the disease, which affects 850,000 people across the UK, resulting in reducing stigma and prompting sufferers to seek help. Since then, the choir, which is based in Vicky’s home town of Nottingham, has starred in two documentaries alongside performing at the National Television Awards and Splendour Festival. Meanwhile Vicky, 40, was awarded an MBE in the King’s Birthday Honours for her services to drama and charity. We can’t wait to see what the choir does next.



# women to watch

As we head into a new year, woman&home takes a look at the stars set to achieve big things in 2024

*Line of Duty* star Vicky McClure has been awarded an MBE for her part in raising awareness in dementia through music



### Figen Murray OBE

Figen is the mother of Martyn Hett, who was killed in the Manchester Arena terrorist attack in 2017. Losing a child is an unbearable pain but Figen, 61, was determined to make a change following the incident. She is in talks with the government, who are working on the finer details of ‘Martyn’s Law’, which is in the process of becoming legislation. The law aims to place a duty on qualifying public premises or events to take steps to reduce the threat of terrorism to the public. Let’s hope this comes to fruition in 2024.

### Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe

In April 2016, Nazanin was returning back to the UK after visiting her parents in Iran with her daughter, when she was detained for allegedly plotting to overthrow the Iranian government. After six years in prison, multiple hunger strikes, endless campaigns and political debate, she was finally returned home in March 2022. Nazanin, 45, and her husband, Richard, are now set to explain what really happened during her incarceration in their book, *A Yard of Sky*, which tells the story that united the nation to bring a mother home. † *A Yard of Sky: A Story of Love, Resistance and Hope* (Penguin) will be published in September 2024.



### Heather Jackson and Sam Simister

Determined to improve the experience of menopause for women, friends Heather (pictured far left) and Sam (left) co-founded GenM. Partnered with 70 brands including Boots, Royal Mail, Next, M&S and Co-op, GenM is helping brands better cater for menopausal customers and employees, with menopause-friendly products, services, signposting, workplace policies and marketing campaigns. GenM recently launched the M-Tick, the world’s first recognisable menopause-friendly symbol. Similar to the vegan V or gluten-free labelling, the M-Tick aims to make it easy for consumers to find suitable products, providing them with a wealth of choice to take control of their menopause. We are excited to see what this dynamic duo will achieve next! >>





**Sophie Morgan (right) is lobbying the airline industry to take disabled people seriously through her Rights on Flights campaign**



### Sophie Morgan

At just 18 years old, Sophie was left paralysed following a car accident. Left unable to walk, Sophie could have given up, but instead, she used the incident as her motivation to make change. Having turned tragedy into triumph, the now 38 year old is a well-known TV presenter, podcaster and disability campaigner. Following British Airways damaging her wheelchair in February 2023, Sophie teamed up with MP Marion Fellows, creating the Right on Flights campaign, lobbying the airline industry to start taking disabled people seriously. So far, the campaign has taken the TV presenter to Number 10 and the White House, but something tells us this is just the beginning of her journey.

### Jessica Hepburn

A self-confessed unlikely athlete, in her mid forties, and after a succession of grief and challenging experiences (she sadly underwent 11 unsuccessful rounds of IVF and suffered several miscarriages), Jessica found herself turning to exercise in an attempt to haul herself out of, and heal, her heartbreak. She has since become one of the world's most extraordinary endurance athletes. She is the first woman on the planet to have completed the Sea, Street, Summit Challenge – swim the English Channel, run a road marathon and summit Mount Everest – alongside becoming one of the UK's leading voices on fertility and family. In her book, *Save Me From the Waves*, Jessica shares her journey from heartache through to completing extraordinary physical challenges. **Save Me From the Waves** (Aurum) will be published on 7 March 2024.

### Rosie Jones

Comedian Rosie started her career as a writer for panel shows, but went on to appear as a guest on shows such as *The Last Leg*, *8 Out of 10 Cats* and *QI*. Well-loved for incorporating her cerebral palsy into her comedic style, Rosie, 33, has also performed at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, and attended the 2020 Summer Paralympics in Tokyo as a reporter for *The Last Leg*. And after writing a series of children's books, Rosie has her first non-fiction novel, *Moving On Up*, coming out in June. Described as a 'reassuring guide for children facing big change', we're sure this book will help children who are struggling.



PHOTOS: ARIANA IONASCU, ROBIN MORRIS, PHOTOS: BRETT COKE, CLAIRE BALLARD, GEMMA, GETTY, SHUTTERSTOCK



### Team GB

In July, Great Britain's best female athletes will jet off to Paris for the return of the Olympic Games. Following their success at Tokyo 2020 – 14 of the 22 gold medals Team GB took home were won by women and Team GB came fourth overall – we're expecting big things. The ladies are no doubt working tirelessly, training for qualifiers and the Games themselves, but if we've learnt anything from the Ladies, we know that they'll give it their all and make our nation proud. We can't wait to see which superstars will be flying the flag for Great Britain.

The Games will conclude on 11 August, but the excitement won't end there, as our incredible Paralympic sportswomen gear up to showcase their talent and determination as they battle it out to win medals. We'll be with you every step of the way, ladies.

**Women's Aid CEO Farah Nazeer is spearheading a manifesto to prioritise domestic abuse**



### Farah Nazeer

As the CEO of Women's Aid, we have nothing but admiration and respect for Farah, 46. The campaigner and political activist has fought and won many campaigns on women's rights, including human trafficking and tackling violence against women. And now the charity, which works to end domestic abuse against women and children, has released Women's Aid's General Election 2024. It's a whole-system response manifesto, which calls for politicians to commit to the national prioritisation of domestic abuse. Great work!