

**Across**

- 7 Liberal, say, backing common sense without a sign of hesitation (8)
- 9 Orange lady, possibly American, turned blue? (6)
- 10 Popular Irishman escapes from loyalist disturbance (4)
- 11 Gunner's jacket, perhaps worn over sleeveless cardie (10)
- 12 Person controlling enterprise succeeded following support at home (6)
- 14 Queen provided pieces of inside information about fighter (8)
- 15 Insect trapped in net, I'm returning from the East (7)

- 17 Client's bespoke design (7)
- 20 Amusing, retrograde housing and hotel proprietor... (8)
- 22 ...set resident right following incorrect, discontented grievance (6)
- 23 Lies concocted as if reality? Not I! (5,5)
- 24 Make a copy of Sting brand (4)
- 25 Hospital worker left ears in odd places? (6)
- 26 Dead sailor has buried chests where the sun don't shine! (4,4)

Down

- 1 Gripped about early English lineage (8)
- 2 Regularly consuming beers before match

essentially leads to defeat (4)

- 3 Search with very large groups (6)
- 4 We're told why interrupting siestas upset writer (8)
- 5 Unfortunately, fed up during education with no clear purpose (3-7)
- 6 Raven eerily disguising glossy exterior (6)
- 8 We need help digesting morning and afternoon snack (6)
- 13 Extravagant centrist's claim? (10)
- 16 They might take you for a ride to start with, those scoundrels! (8)
- 18 Charlie is in East Mercia playing cornet accompaniment (3,5)

- 19 Put one's oar in without preparation, initially getting mixed-up (6)
- 21 Top-rated line in River Island, fabulous! (6)
- 22 Cafe with monster eggs reportedly (6)
- 24 International airline has empty seats with low frequency (4)