

Clues from the Listener Crossword Dinner 2025

The table quiz specified that four individuals — W, X, Y and Z — were to be identified from the answers, and that dinnergoers (some of whom were ‘attending’ via Zoom) were to submit a cryptic clue (one per table) to Z. Z was duly revealed as JOHN GREEN, recently retired after over 38 years’ much valued work as checker, marker and statistician for the Listener puzzle. He also set Listener puzzles as Trev. Clues were judged by John Henderson, editor of the Inquisitor puzzle, setter as Enigmatist, Nimrod, Elgar and Io, and winner of the Ascot Gold Cup for the highest-rated Listener puzzle of 2024.

Here are the clues, with brief explanations. Bear in mind that:

- ‘john’, ‘head’ and ‘can’ are American words for what they also call a ‘washroom’ and we call a ‘toilet’, ‘loo’, ‘bog’, ‘lavatory’ etc
- * in the explanation indicates an anagram
- < in the explanation indicates that letters are reversed.

Rank	Table no.	Clue	Explanation
1	8	Can my knight capture rook, checking king?	(JOHN + GEE + N) around R (=king)
2	7	Head info gathering god	JOHN + GEN around RE
3	4	Can sage define me?	JOHN + GREEN
—	1	WC Fields could be such an awkward beggar at times	JOHN + GREEN
—	2	Master statistician can have environmental credibility?	JOHN + GREEN
—	3	Magic marker can shade	JOHN + GREEN
—	5	Magic marker can colour	JOHN + GREEN
—	6	Can Trev’s boundless, cracking knowledge identify our hero?	JOHN + (T)RE(v) in GEN (=knowledge)
—	9	Listener legend can supply endless energy	JOHN + ENERG(y)*
—	11	One absent from meet around hotel — statistician ultimately picking up prize somewhere in the country	((JOIN - I) around H) around GREE
—	12	Man of letters can not golf in retirement	JOHN + (NE’ER + G)<
—	13	Magic marker can finally appreciate the Listener, relaxing in retirement — it begins now!	JOHN + ((appreciat)E (th)E (Listene)R (relaxin)G)< + N(ow)
—	14	Beloved one, extremely Herculean, ne’er wrong checking grids primarily	(JO + H(erculea)N + NE’ER*) around G(rids)
—	15	Albanian coming from toilet showing signs of nausea	JOHN + GREEN (who lives in St Albans)
—	onliners	Gents or ladies regularly aggrieved with ultimate decision from him?	JOHN + (a)G(g)R(i)E(v)E(d) + (decisio)N
—	Ross & Alison Campion	American can long for an outgoing personality. (Thank you!)	JOHN + GREEN