

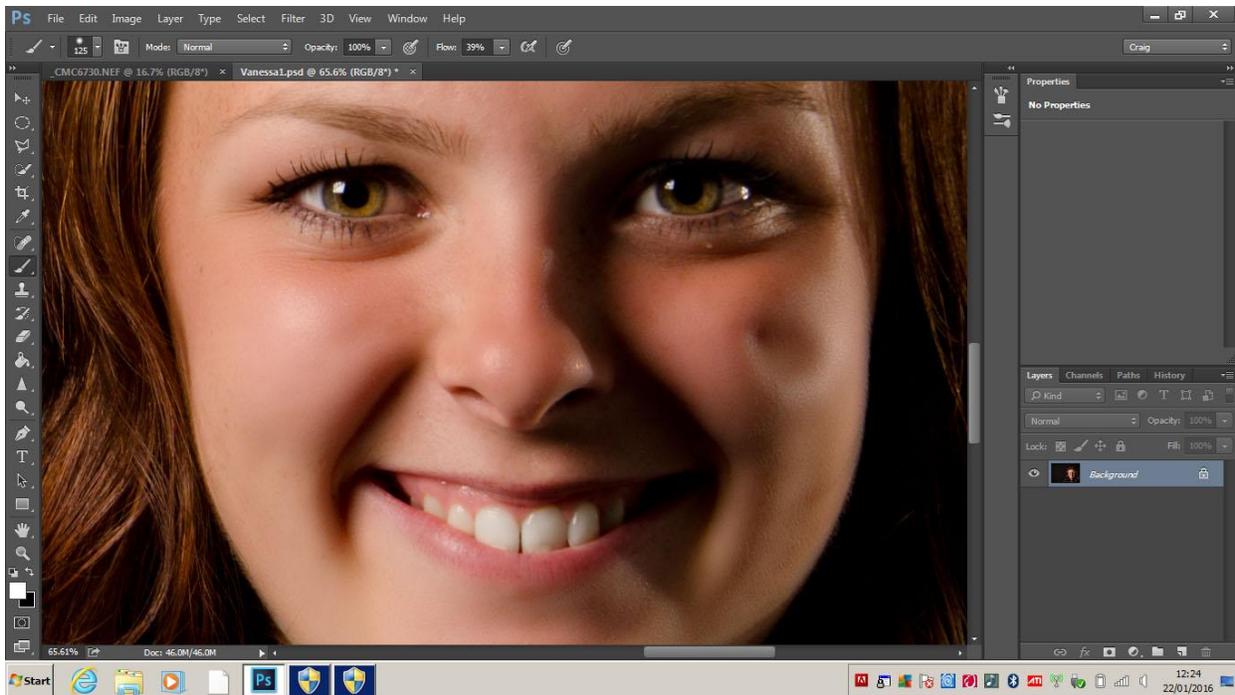
Changing Hair Colour - Updated

This handout shows some of the techniques which can be used to alter hair colour. It can get a bit complicated at times and I'd say it is more of an advanced technique. Although these are extreme examples taking auburn hair to black and blonde, the technique can be used to *subtly* change or enhance hair colour or just to give it extra 'shine'. It will show you how to mask, make selections from the mask, copy masks and use the 'Blend if' option if you are feeling adventurous!

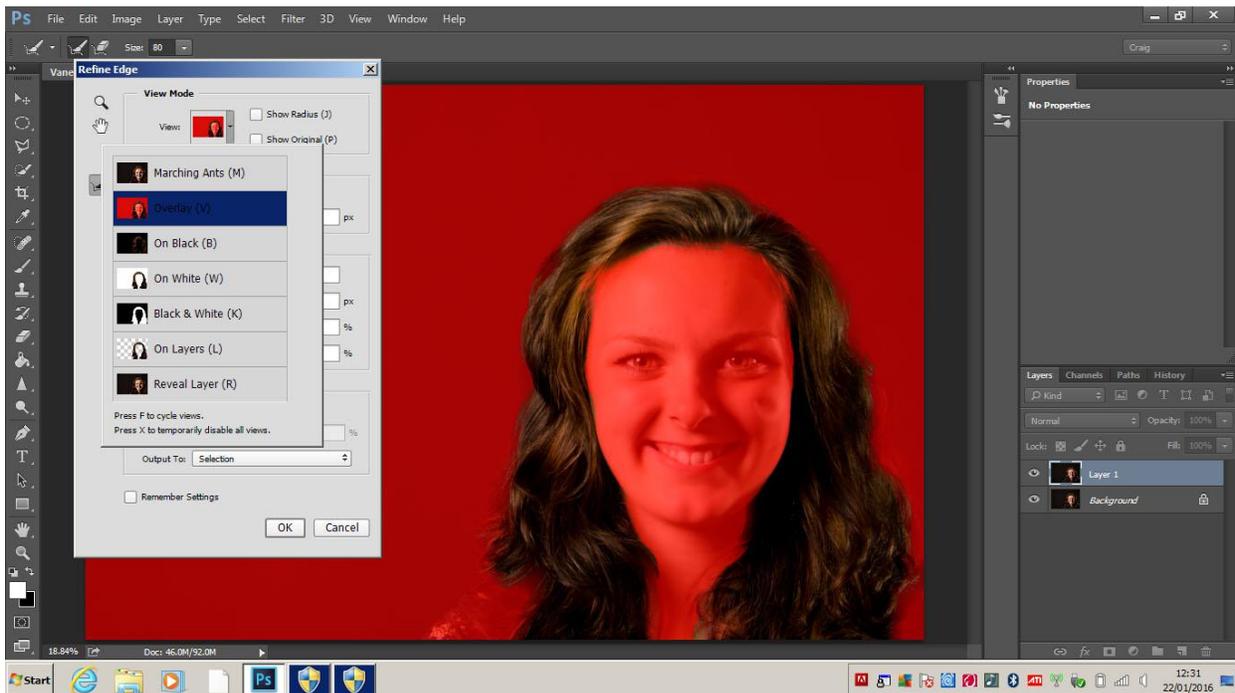
Open your start image (Vanessa.jpg)



Before we make a selection of the hair it is worth using the clone tool to remove any 'fly-away' hairs and tidy up the image. I also removed a few little spots on the skin, brightened the eyes and whitened the teeth slightly before using the 'Inverted High Pass' method to smooth the skin, but retain most of the detail. These techniques are available in previous handouts. I then flattened the image ready to work on the hair.



Make a copy of the background layer (Cntl+J) then choose the quick selection tool. Make a selection of the hair and use the Refine Edge option to add to/subtract from the selection using smart radius and the refine radius tool (brush) - also in a previous handout. Don't worry if we miss parts at this stage as we can refine the mask as we go along. Keep the hair selected.

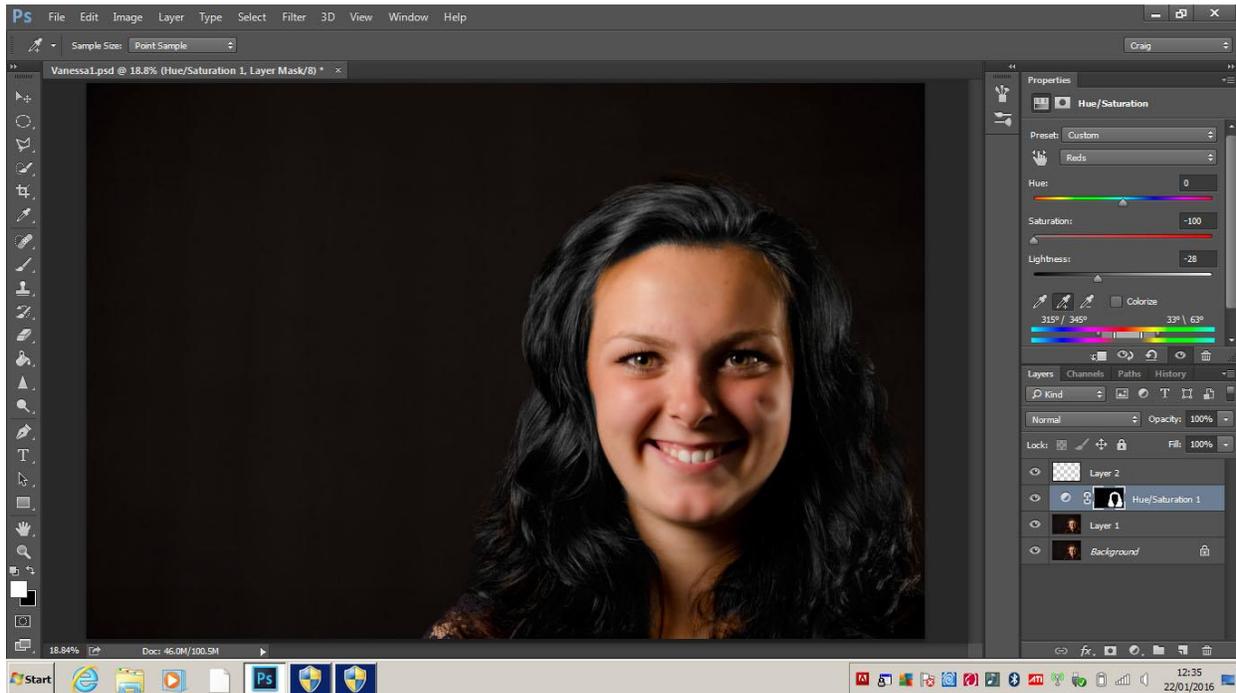


Black Hair - This is a 2 stage process, first we remove the colour then we darken or lighten using a curves layer.

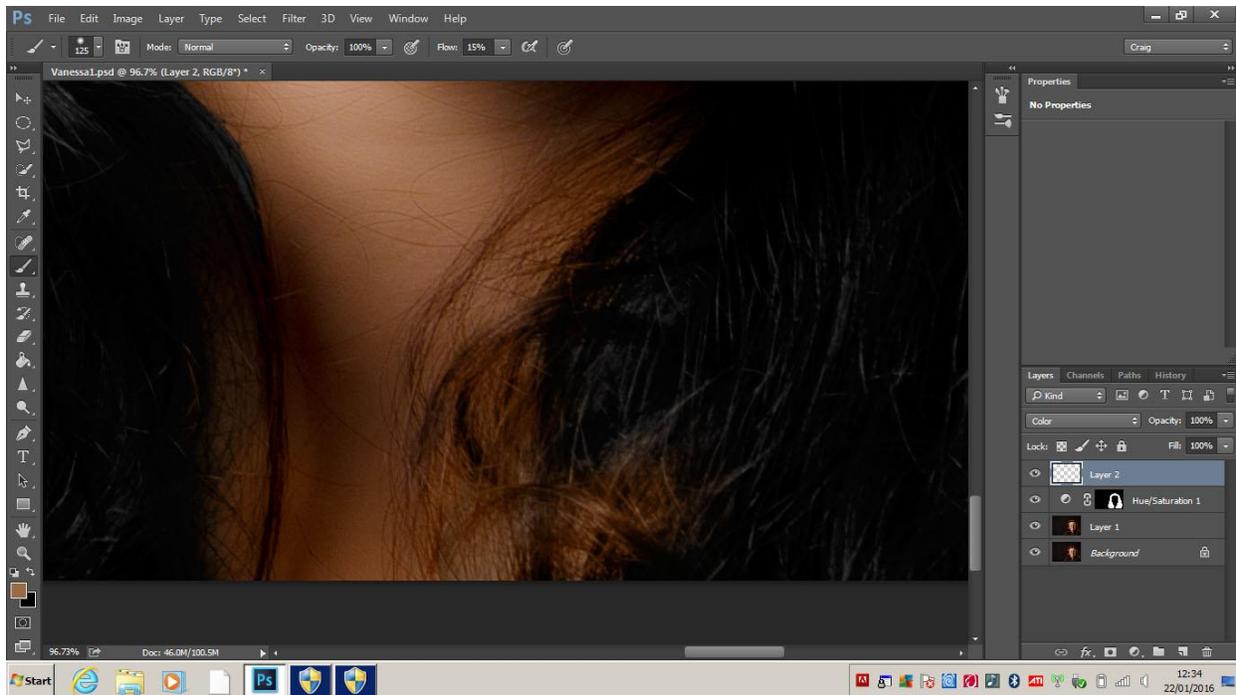
Make a Hue/Saturation/Lightness adjustment layer and select Reds. Drop the saturation to 0. Use the +eyedropper to include any bits of the hair we missed. If we hadn't made a selection of the hair the whole image would now look monochrome. Use the lightness slider to darken the hair.

Tidy up the mask by painting with white and black on reduced opacity on the bits we haven't selected the first time round. Now use a Curves adjustment layer and drag downwards to darken (dragging upwards will make the hair more grey!)

Now, to fix the bit where the hair partially covers the neck make a new layer.

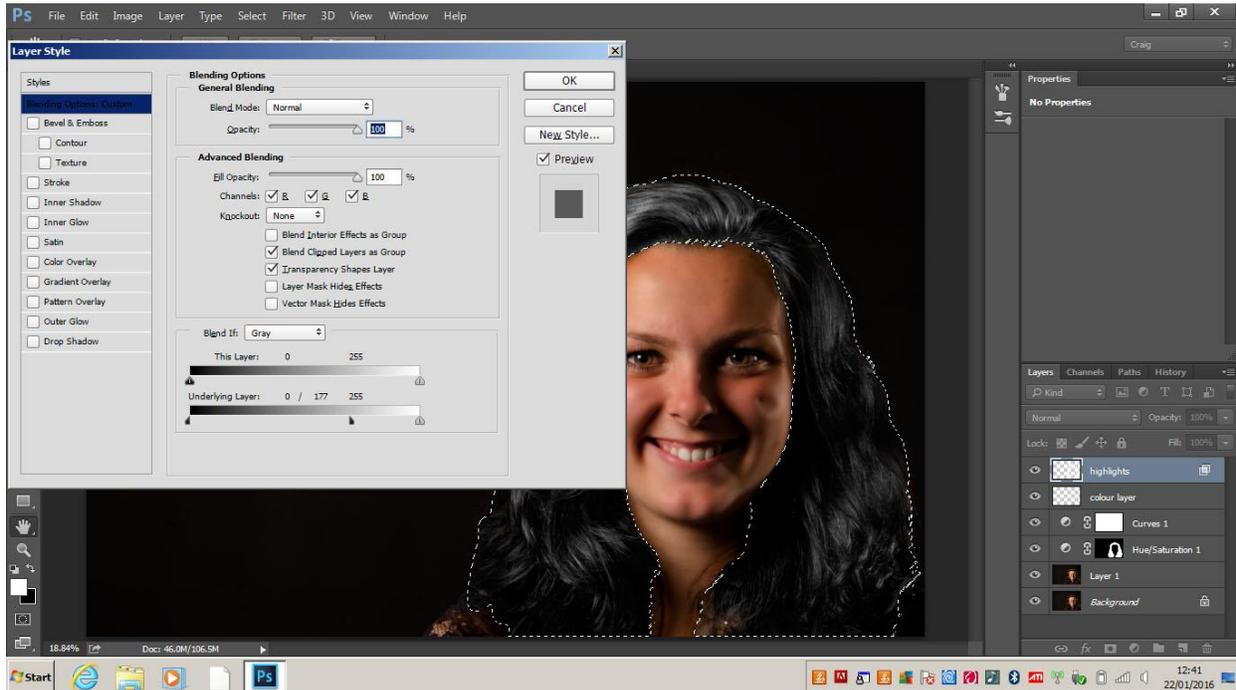


Change the blending mode to Color and paint with a skintone-coloured Brush (select the colour by using the Alt key and clicking on a part of the skin in the image with the brush tool selected).



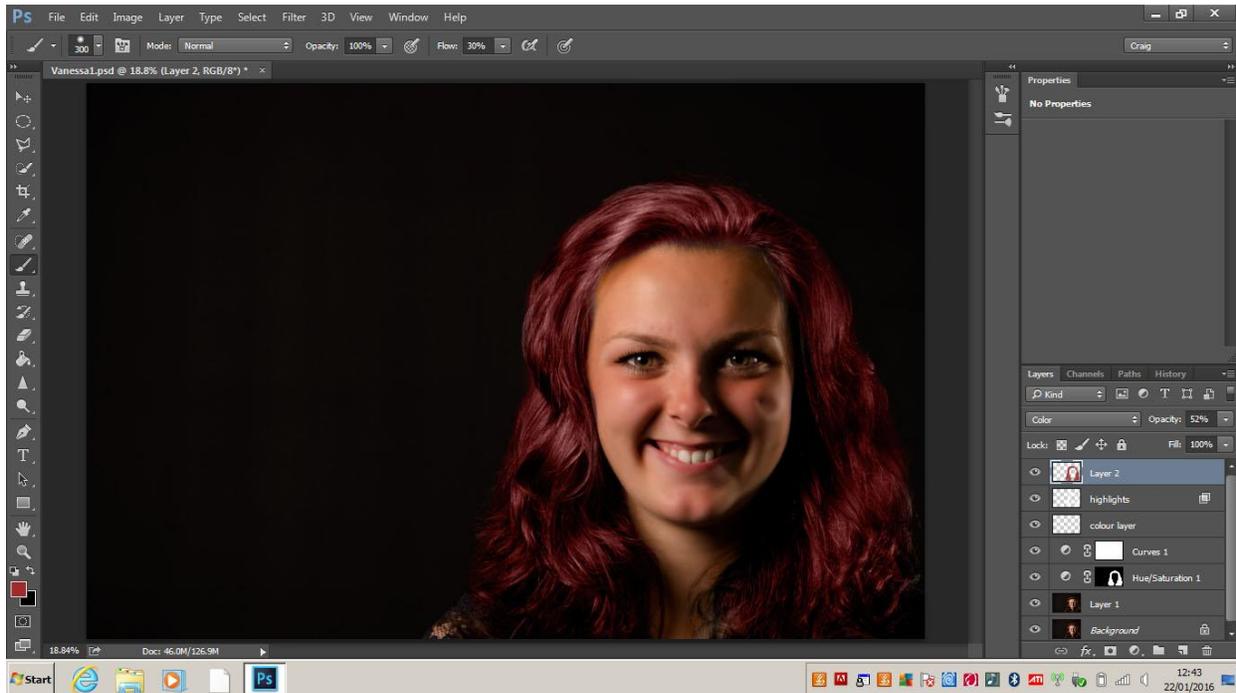
Here's a technique to return some of the highlights and shine. Cntl+click on the mask to make it into a selection then make a new blank layer. Paint with a white brush on areas of the hair which have highlights.

Double click on this layer and, while holding down Alt move the 'Blend if' slider at the bottom to the right. The little triangle will divide into 2 parts. Move until you get the desired amount of highlights.



NB. Now is a good time to add a colour if you require. Cntl+click again on the mask and make a new layer. Paint with your colour (red, blue or even green works well on some images) and change the

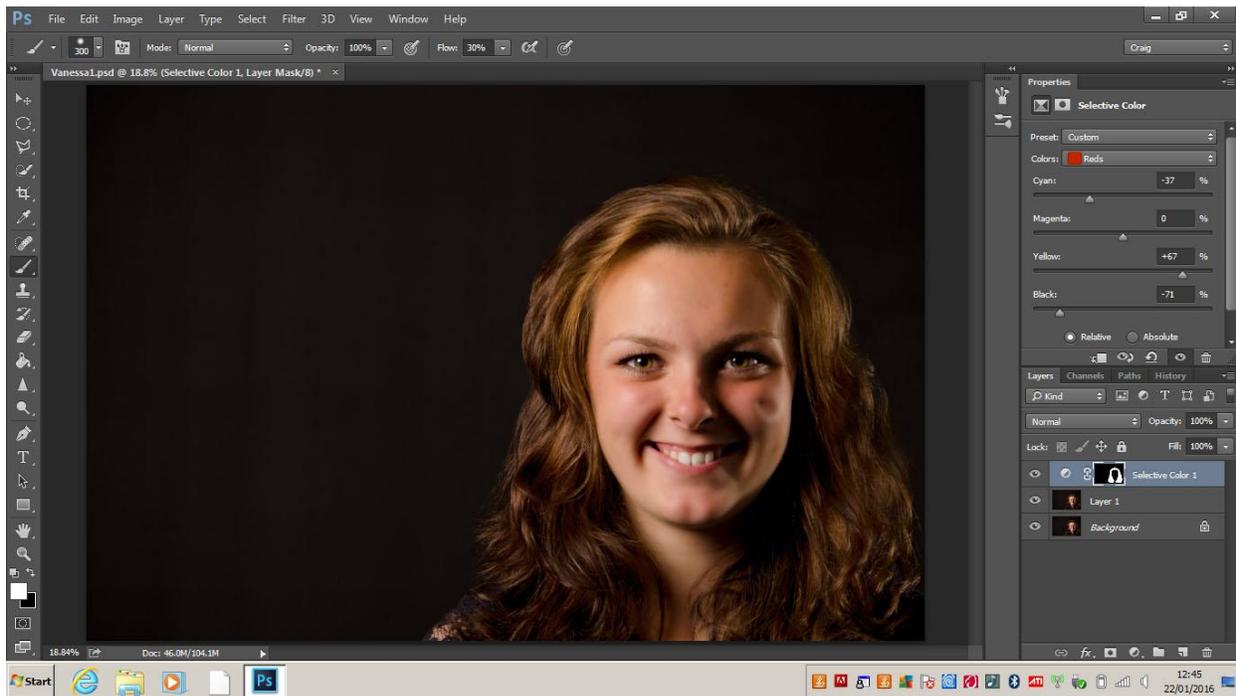
blending mode to Overlay or Color and fade the opacity to suit.



TIP: As we have spent a lot of time refining the mask it is always a good idea to Save the Selection (Select>Save selection.) Then we can Load Selection when we want to re-apply it to the same image.

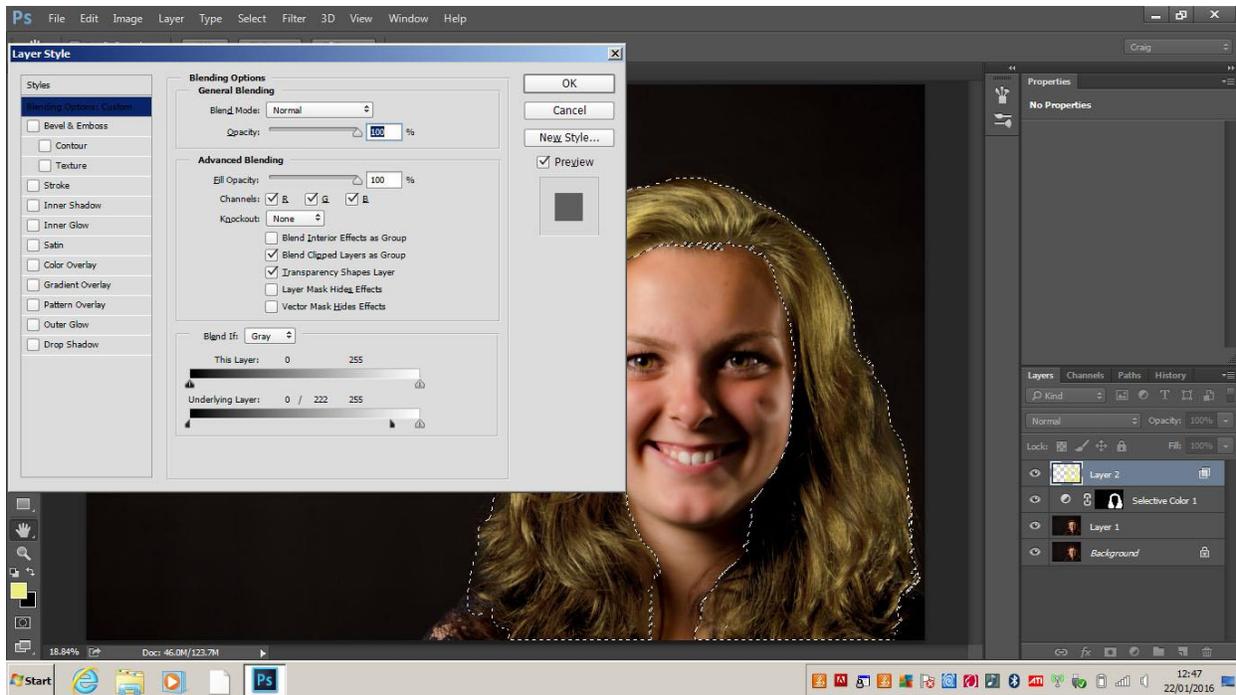
Blonde hair – this is the trickiest colour to look natural. Photoshop can only do so much – sometimes it saves a lot of hassle just getting the model to wear a wig!

Anyway, ‘Load Selection’ of the hair and make a new Selective Color adjustment layer. Move the Blacks to the left and the Yellow to the right to lighten and add yellow.



Select the hair again (Ctrl+click on the mask). Make a New layer and choose the brush tool and paint a light yellow colour. NB. If we forget to make a selection on the new layer before painting yellow we can still apply the mask by Alt+clicking on the mask and dragging it to the new layer.

Change the Blending mode to Screen and double click on the layer. Use the ‘Blend if’ option as before.

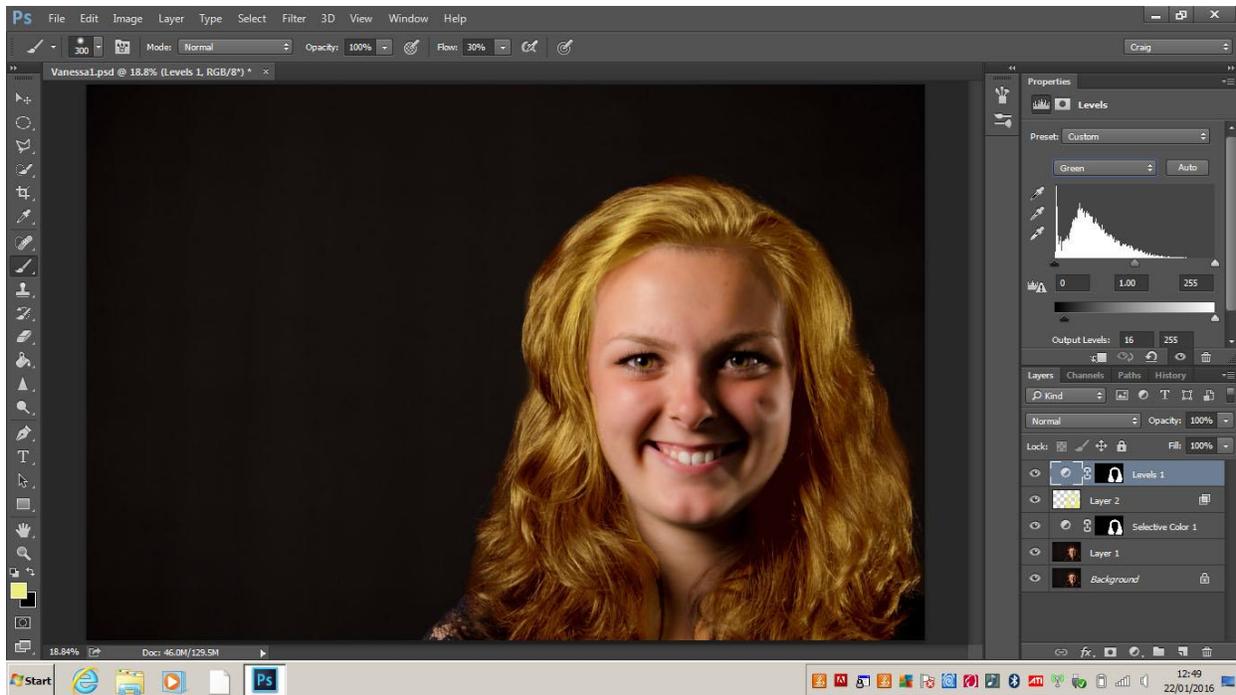


This works well for the highlights, but sometimes we need to brighten up the darker parts too.

Cntl+click on the mask to make a selection of the hair and make a new Levels adjustment layer.

Choose Red from the dropdown and move the Output slider (the black to white bar underneath the histogram) to the right.

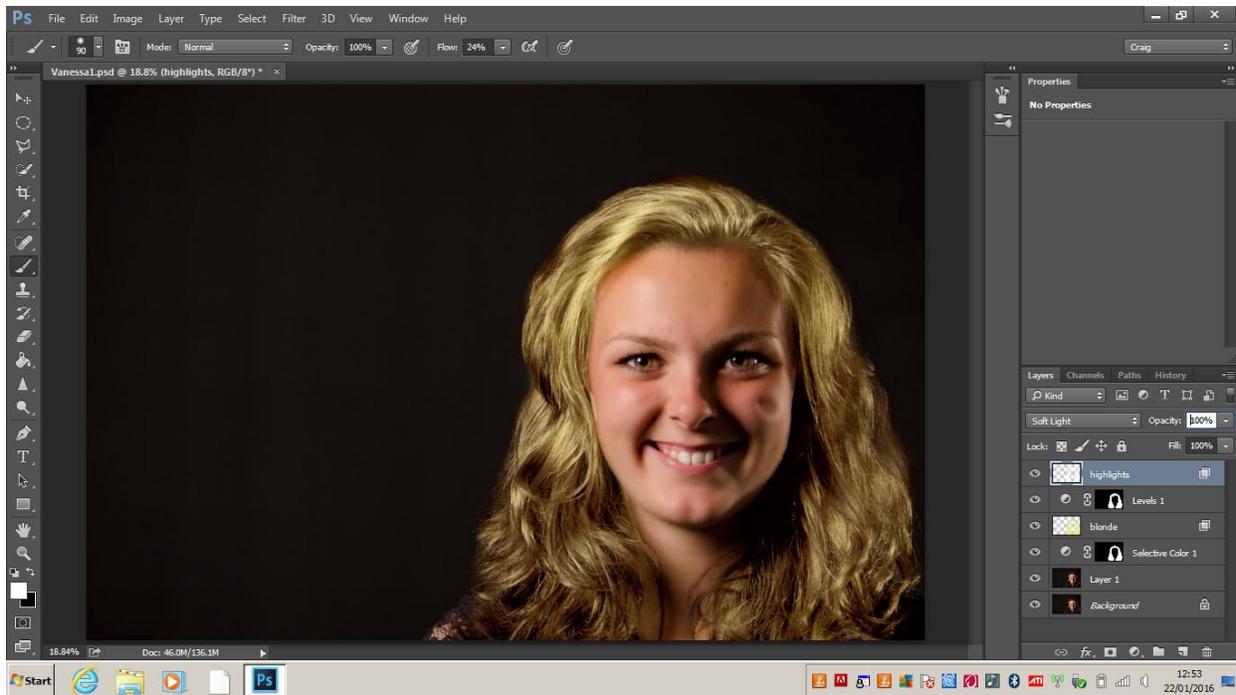
Now, do the same for the Green output channel.



Go back to RGB and bring the black point in on the histogram (move to the right) to return some of the colour.

Drop the opacity as required.

You can use the same technique we did for adding highlights to black hair –i.e. make a new layer and make a selection of the hair (Cntl+click on mask). Paint with white where the highlights will be. Double click on the layer and use the Alt key with the 'Blend if'. Some times this works best by changing the blending mode to Soft Light or Overlay and reducing the opacity.



If the colour looks a little bit green at this stage it is easy to fix by using a Hue/Sat adjustment layer on the selected hair. Remember – it should look natural!

Done!