

The Holkham Gazette

Transforming Longlands for the future

BY DAVID HORTON-FAWKES, ESTATES DIRECTOR

The £2million renovation of Longlands and the creation of 9,000square feet of modern office accommodation in one of Holkham's most significant buildings is the estate's boldest investment for many years. This project is the first phase in the transformation of the former home farm that will once again become the commercial heart of the estate. Our ambition is to develop the entire site into contemporary high quality accommodation, providing office facilities to businesses setting up in, or relocating to Norfolk. Longlands is becoming a centre of innovation and endeavour, set within the security and tranquility of the walled park, less than three miles from the most beautiful beach in England.

The first phase has seen the former cart sheds and part of the sawmill converted for the internationally renowned jewellery designer, Monica Vinader. More than forty of her staff have moved into the new offices and Longlands is now the headquarters of this dynamic Norfolk business, which has outlets worldwide, as well as a major online presence.

The next phase will entail the relocation of the estate's workshops and the conversion of more cartsheds at the western end of the site. The project will continue in phases until the entire 50,000 square feet is once again occupied and buzzing with activity.

The listed buildings at Longlands have been a major challenge for the estate since the scale of modern farm machinery rendered them redundant. We have considered various options but we have always looked for a commercial use that will create jobs. This project has been inspired by work at Broughton Hall in Yorkshire which has been carried out with flair, but which blends seamlessly with the Grade I listed mansion and historic park. Broughton, however, has the great benefit of being close to the commercial towns of Skipton, Bradford and Leeds, whereas at Holkham, 180 degrees of our catchment area is the sea. Only 900,000 people live within 90 minutes drive of Holkham and about the same number take their



holidays in the region. These statistics present big challenges for businesses and employers in north Norfolk. At Chatsworth in Derbyshire, over seven million people live within an hour's drive of the estate – the main reason why 450,000 people visit Chatsworth each year and only 50,000 visit Holkham.

The conversion of the buildings at Longlands has been a massive undertaking which has involved the construction of a new electricity substation and a new access road. The offices have been built to the highest modern standards but the listed buildings have retained their charm and identity. We have had fantastic support from North Norfolk District Council, which has gone out of its way to help us meet Monica Vinader's deadlines, and from county councillor Dr Marie Strong. The site now has access to a 100MB broadband connection and underfloor heating is provided by a ground source heat pump system. The work was carried out by local builder Robsons and supervised by Plandescil under the direction of Johanna Tennant and the Holkham property department, headed by James Bracey. There have been many sleepless nights and we are immensely grateful to

the long-suffering residents of Longlands, but the work has been delivered on budget and on time.

Before committing to the first phase of work we commissioned research to assess the potential of the commercial sector and the results were sobering. Despite the long-awaited arrival of broadband and the much anticipated move towards home working, the prospects for north Norfolk are not encouraging. Tourism is the fastest growing sector but most jobs are seasonal and relatively low paid. Commercial development is likely to come from hi-tech agricultural businesses and those servicing the off-shore wind sector but beyond this the prospects for growth are constrained by the limited transport infrastructure and a lack of skilled labour. However, we believe that by building facilities of the highest quality in a setting that is unequalled, we will attract employers to this idyllic corner of England and thereby create jobs for people living in our community and restore Longlands to its former glory.

If you are interested in taking commercial space at Longlands please contact estates surveyor James Bracey.

Wintering birds at Holkham

BY SARAH HENDERSON, NATURE RESERVE MANAGER

The sights and sounds of Pink-footed geese are a familiar feature of the skies around us during the winter but there are many other birds that spend the winter months at Holkham National Nature Reserve.

By their very nature grazing marshes are wet and they are at their very wettest during the winter months when high rainfall helps raise the water levels of the ditches and fill the scapes, rills and depressions to create areas of standing water which attract a wide range of ducks, geese and waders from thousands of miles away.

Wigeon are an attractive and interesting duck to watch and can often be seen grazing on the fields next to Lady Anne's Drive. Having flown from Iceland, Scandinavia and Russia, as many as 8,000 can be found across the reserve during the winter. Teal are the smallest British duck and they are agile fliers that are easily disturbed, so you need good

binoculars to appreciate the beautiful markings of the male. Teal are not as plentiful as Wigeon but in good years around 2,000 can be counted on the reserve.

Amongst the many waders found on the grazing marshes, the Curlew easily stands out due to its size and distinctive long curved bill. They are also found on the saltmarshes and the cry of the Curlew is one

of the most atmospheric sounds along our coast.

In addition to these spectacular flocks of large numbers of birds there are numerous other birds that visit in the winter. Flocks of Snow Bunting can often be seen feeding along the shoreline. The Snow Bunting breed in the Arctic so they enjoy the milder weather of the north Norfolk coast in winter!



Teal are some of the visitors to the Holkham National Nature Reserve each winter





Poul is proud to be 'Farmer of the Year'



Picture © Matthew Usher/Eastern Daily Press

Poul Hovesen moved to the UK from his native Denmark in 1987 to take on the role of farms and estate manager at Salle Farms Company, just north of Norwich. In 2012 he also took up the position of director of farming for the Holkham Farming Company. The culmination of all he has done for both estates resulted in him winning not just one award, but two. The most prestigious is to have been voted 'Farmer of the Year 2014' in the Farmers Weekly annual awards. But the other accolade from Farmers Weekly, 'Arable Farmer of the Year 2014', brings its own satisfaction for a man who is passionate about all aspects of farming. His focus has seen increasing yields, to involving young people in the industry, to caring for the land, the soil, crops and to building a sustainable farming strategy on both estates using leading modern farming technology.

At Holkham, as a result of his introduction of a six-year crop rotation, yields have never been higher. Oilseed rape, winter wheat, sugar beet, winter wheat/spring barley, potatoes then winter barley/winter wheat make up the cropping cycle. Using the land like this improves soil structure and spreads the harvest workload so that people and machines work more effectively.

Poul is also interested in agricultural research. He works with the Environment Agency and scientists from the University of East Anglia on avoiding pollution to local water courses and using cover crops such as oilseed radish to cut down on the use of fertilisers and to hold nutrients naturally in the soil to be used by subsequent crops.

He also champions wildlife, making sure that field margins are left uncut for animals, birds and insects to flourish, as well as planting hedges for protection and encouraging native plant species to grow and seed.

Holkham doesn't stand still

Poul's success is particularly relevant for Holkham, given its history of farming innovation from Coke of Norfolk in the late eighteenth century onwards. The estate's contribution to farming will be recognised in a new exhibition to be staged in a wing of the former Bygones Museum, as part of the redesign of the two courtyards and the buildings adjoining them that will take place throughout 2015. The exhibition

will be the focal point of Holkham's education programme, showing how the land is linked to food production and exploring nutrition and cookery, which is increasingly relevant to young people.

The educational objectives of the new exhibition are 'establishing and maintaining an exhibition centre at

Holkham for educational purposes, with particular reference to the achievements and influence of the agricultural reformers, Coke of Norfolk and 'Turnip' Townshend of Raynham. Also the provision of facilities for the demonstration and study of agricultural evolution with special emphasis on East Anglia.'

Holkham was the crucible of the agricultural revolution and the four-course rotation, and there can be no story which is more relevant to Norfolk and Holkham. The redevelopment work will last for 15 months, providing a fantastic new visitor experience to include a larger gift shop, café and restaurant, an exhibition and a new, much-needed, indoor events venue designed to rival anything found in any other stately home in the country.

While building work is underway, the hall will be open at its normal opening times but temporary facilities will be used in 2015 for ticketing, the café and the gift shop.

"Poul Hovesen is an inspiring leader for farming in so many ways. He's developing his own young team to run every farming operation so that he can deliver the highest standards. His business insight, environment awareness and uptake of science are delivering a genuinely sustainable operation on a vast scale. His modest, but authoritative, character is influencing farming, and the wider industry, for the good of everyone."

The judges' citation

Biogas goes into the grid at Egmere

In a first for East Anglia, anaerobic digestion developer Future Biogas has successfully connected its biogas-to-grid project, 'Egmere Energy', to the national gas network at Egmere, just outside Wells-next-the-Sea.

The gas is made from locally sourced biomass feedstock and has the potential to fuel over 2,500 homes in winter and up to 40,000 homes in summer. The anaerobic digestion plant takes in locally grown break crops like maize and whole crop rye, sourced from nearby farms as well as from Holkham. Break crops can help farmers secure better yields from the food crops that follow them, by restoring soil fertility, reducing disease and pest pressure and reducing the need for expensive crop protection products. The anaerobic digestion process also produces a natural, odourless fertiliser called digestate which contains all the nutrient benefits held in the original crop. This can be applied to land to aid in the reduction of artificial fertiliser use.

The majority of the biogas produced is upgraded to biomethane and injected into the National Grid gas network. The remaining biogas is combusted through a CHP engine, producing electricity which is supplied to Holkham Farming Company's workshop and office, directly off-setting a significant proportion of fossil-fuel electricity import. Excess electricity is exported to the National Grid. This project is supported under government commitments to source 15% of the UK's energy demand from renewable energy sources by 2020.

Pedal Norfolk cycling festival

Over the bank holiday weekend, 2nd to 4th May, Pedal Norfolk once again returns to the Holkham Estate for a three-day cycling festival. Throughout the weekend you can camp within the grounds, offering you a unique opportunity to enjoy the Park's natural setting. There are rides of all distances for all levels of cyclists. For those looking for a challenge, there will be 20 and 50 mile signposted, fully supported routes each day.

For the sportive riders looking to test their winter training, there will be 100 mile routes on Saturday and Sunday, plus a tough 50 mile hilly route on Monday.

Last year the numbers of cyclists and visitors that attended more than doubled from the previous year and numbers are expected to double again as the event's reputation spreads.

While cyclists experience amazing rides, the festival has a wealth of entertainment and activities, trade and food stands to ensure that all visitors have a memorable weekend.

Once again Emma Pooley, Olympic and Commonwealth Games Medallist and world Duathlon Champion, will be joining us and is planning to ride the full 250 miles. She'll also take part in an evening question and answer session.

Tickets are on sale now from www.pedalnorfolk.co.uk so book your place and start planning your family's fantastic bank holiday weekend with Pedal Norfolk.





A glimpse behind the scenes of the estate

A fascinating exhibition of photographs which records a year in the life of the estate will be the main exhibition at Holkham in 2015.

The exhibition, entitled 'Behind Closed Doors: A Year in the Life of a Working Estate', features the work of renowned Magnum photographer Chris Steele-Perkins who exhibits regularly worldwide. The unique photographic record of the estate is the subject of Steele-Perkins's tenth book, launched in November 2014, entitled *A Place in the Country*.

Over a period of 12 months Chris visited Holkham regularly. His behind-the-scenes style has produced a series of charismatic photographs. These range from informal photos of Viscount and Viscountess Coke with their young family to the gamekeepers on shoot days dressed in their famous bowler hats and the team of gardeners as they work throughout the seasons. The housekeeping team cleaning and caring for the many rooms and the colour and vibrancy of the seasonal functions and events are also portrayed.

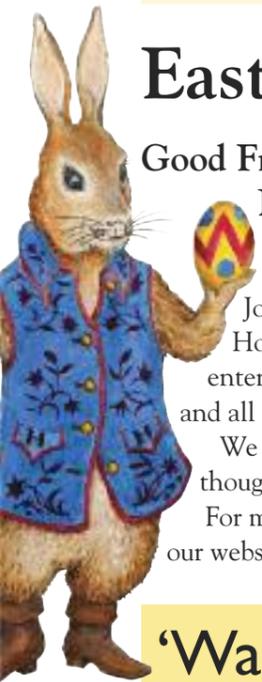
A selection of key photographs will form the basis of the 2015 exhibition and will provide visitors with a glimpse behind the scenes of what goes into running a large estate in the 21st century. The exhibition will demonstrate that

past and present can and do sit side-by-side. For while Coke of Norfolk – famed for his part in the agricultural revolution – looks down on visitors from a magnificent painting by Gainsborough in one of the state rooms of the hall, outside Coke's drive to improve agriculture continues with a large scale, modern farming operation using the latest machines and new techniques.

It will also show that while the historic fabric of the estate is carefully maintained, new diversification projects, such as The Victoria and Pinewoods Holiday Park, are all part of the Holkham mix. Each generation has a responsibility to preserve and pass on the heritage of the estate. Equally it is important that they make their own mark with new ideas and new ways of running the extensive business which Holkham is today.

The exhibition will be open to visitors during the opening hours for Holkham Hall which are 29th March to 31st October 2015 on Sundays, Mondays and Thursdays plus Good Friday and Easter Saturday (3rd and 4th April) from 12noon to 4pm.

Full details of admission prices and other visitor information can be found at www.holkham.co.uk



Easter fun for all at Holkham

Good Friday 3rd April to Easter Monday 6th April
Holkham Hall open 12noon to 4pm daily
Walled Gardens open 10am to 5pm daily

Join us for our Easter Eggstravaganza on 3rd to 6th April, when Holkham will go hopping mad! Easter bunnies will be on hand to entertain you with competitions, Easter egg hunts, quizzes, creative crafts and all manner of Easter 'egg-citement' suitable for everyone from 0 to 90!

We are still hatching our plans, but with Easter falling early this year, we thought you'd like to get the date in your diary.

For more information and to book online for a 10% discount, please visit our website at www.holkham.co.uk

'Walking Women' welcomes you

Do you love walking but don't like to venture too far alone? Would you like to be sociable while enjoying the spectacular Holkham estate? If so, come and join Holkham's monthly walks. They take place on the first Tuesday of each month, starting at 10am.

- 3rd February – Wells
- 3rd March – Wells
- 7th April – Wells
- 5th May – Holkham Park

All walks are free of charge and each walk lasts approximately 1.5 hours. Well behaved and sociable dogs on leads are welcome to join in.

For the Wells walks meet at the Beach Café. For the Holkham walks meet outside the ticket office in Holkham park. Please note that parking charges apply.

For further information please contact Holkham ticket office on 01328 713111.

New chamber music programme

Enjoy chamber music and opera at its finest in the perfect setting of the Marble Hall at Holkham.

The new season of chamber music at Holkham offers music lovers a renowned selection of composers and artists to enjoy.

Saturday 25th April at 7pm

Laura Samuel: violin, Simon Rowland-Jones: viola, Alasdair Tait: cello, Carole Presland: piano.

Saturday 23rd May at 7pm

Christian Blackshaw, piano.

Saturday 6th June at 7pm

Cavaleri Quartet – Martyn Jackson:

violin, Ciaran McCabe: violin, Ann Belby: viola, Rowena Calvert: cello.

Friday 23rd October at 7pm

Elizabeth Watts, soprano and Julius Drake, piano.

Sunday 15th November at 3pm

Doric String Quartet and pre-concert talk.

All the information you need to purchase tickets is available on the Holkham website: www.holkham.co.uk

Holkham Country Fair returns

Holkham Country Fair will be held on Saturday 25th and Sunday 26th July 2015.

There will be lots for all the family to enjoy, such as trade stands for good shopping, traditional country crafts and pursuits and the fine food village for trying and buying local produce. Plus the excitement of the grand ring with a spectacular stampede from Gulliver's Carnival, the stirring sound of a military band, have-a-go experiences for everyone from experts to novices and the Dog and Duck Show, children's activities, and birds of prey. For more information visit www.holkhamcountryfair.co.uk





Q and A with Iain Wolfe

Iain Wolfe joined Holkham in July last year as visitor operations manager. His brief is to oversee all things visitor-orientated: events, retail, ticket sales, education, car parking and lavatories. Time to find out more about him...

FAMILY – He is married to Michelle who works at Alderman Peel High School in Wells-next-the-Sea as head of music and drama.

PETS – Iain and Michelle have a yellow Labrador called Suvi who has a ‘racing stripe’ – a darker strip of fur – down the centre of her nose.

FAVOURITE CHILDHOOD MEMORY – Holidays on the Norfolk coast, doing all the things this coast is known for – crabbing, sailing, walking on the beaches. These memories played a large part in the decision Iain made to relocate here.

BEST JOB – Iain studied food and retail management at the ‘College of Cakes’, better known as University College of Birmingham. He has worked since he was 16; various part-time jobs when younger, then after university he worked for Tesco, then Safeway, M&S and Waitrose, before making a big change in careers and moving to Mercedes to sell cars. Another career change followed and he moved up to Norfolk to work for the National Trust at Blakeney for four years before joining Holkham.

WORST JOB – Without a doubt, any job that necessitates night shifts.

MOST EMBARRASSING MOMENT – His rugby team initiation at university. He would only say that it involved a packed student bar, a pint of

beer or several and rather fewer clothes than he’s used to wearing. He refused to go into further detail!

MOST SATISFACTION – Iain derives a lot of personal satisfaction from the 1979 military lightweight Land Rover he is rebuilding, having bought it as a rusty heap from a friend in 2004. He also rated getting married in Blakeney church as very special.

MOST FAMOUS PERSON MET – Ex-England rugby captain Lawrence Dallaglio who, Iain says, is smaller in real life than he appears on the rugby pitch!

He also almost met Sir Richard Branson at the BAFTA awards one year who shook hands and said, “Can’t stop, got to go to the loo”.

BEST PERSONALITY TRAIT – Iain says he’s very approachable and adaptable – he can turn his hand to most things, which will be an advantage in a job that covers so many roles.

INTERESTS – His Land Rover, sailing, wake boarding, enjoying this beautiful coast and walking the dog with Michelle.



Best doggone place to be!



We are delighted to announce that the Beach Café has been voted the winner of the best Café/Restaurant category in the nationwide competition run by the Kennel Club’s Be Dog Friendly Awards 2014. A double-delight too as Wells-next-the-Sea beach won the best beach award. The awards recognise businesses and places to visit that go that extra mile for our canine comrades and are based solely on public votes. Thank you to everyone who voted for us.



Car park season tickets

Now available – we offer a combined annual pass costing £120 that includes parking at Lady Anne’s Drive and Beach Road, Wells, all year round, as well as parking in Holkham park during the annual summer opening season. This price includes unlimited standard admission to the hall for up to two adults and three children from 29th March to 31st October 2015. The income we receive from our car parking is used to maintain the parts of Holkham that are accessible to visitors.

To apply for a season ticket you can download an application form from www.holkham.co.uk or give the estate office a call on 01328 710227.

PRIZE DRAW

Win a season ticket worth £120!

To enter email your name, address and telephone number to gazette@holkham.co.uk, mentioning the season ticket prize draw, or complete this form and post to: Season Ticket Prize Draw, Marketing Department, Holkham Estate Office, Wells-next-the-Sea, Norfolk NR23 1AB.

Closing date Saturday 31st January, 2015.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

EMAIL.....

PHONE.....

We would like to keep you informed of events and offers at Holkham by email. Please tick this box if you do not wish to receive communications from us.

Only one entry per household. For full terms and conditions and Holkham’s privacy policy, see www.holkham.co.uk/html/newsletter.html

You are invited to our sneak preview for local residents

Come to a sneak preview of Holkham Hall on Saturday 28th March as we prepare to open to the public for our 2015 season on Sunday 29th March.

You will also get a chance to have a look round our new photographic exhibition for 2015, ‘Behind Closed Doors – a year in the life of a working estate’.

If you live in one of our neighbouring areas – Wells-next-the-Sea, New Holkham, Holkham village, Quarles, Egmere, Warham, Wighton, Burnham Market, Burnham Thorpe, Burnham Norton, Burnham Overy Town and Staithe – you are warmly invited to join us.

Simply cut out this voucher and bring it with you for free entry. The hall will be open from 12noon to 4pm. Enter through the north gates (off the A149 at

The Victoria) and you will be directed to the main visitor entrance by staff. We look forward to seeing you.

Entry for
2 adults and up to 3 children to Holkham Hall
for the Preview Day for local residents on
Saturday 28th March 2015

CUT OUT THIS VOUCHER AND BRING IT WITH YOU

VALID ONLY ON 28TH MARCH 2015 • NO PHOTOCOPIED VOUCHERS ACCEPTED