

OUR GREEN STORY SO FAR – CRANMER COUNTRY COTTAGES

From the very beginning in developing our Cranmer Country Cottages holiday business, we set out to create a high-quality sustainable self-catering accommodation business. whilst working with nature, engaging with our local community and preserving this special environment for the long-term enjoyment of future generations.

Green Tourism

For over 24 years we have been looking at the way we do things in terms of creating a more planet friendly business approach. We joined the Green Tourism Scheme in 2009 and have held the prestigious gold award since 2010. We care about our natural environment as much as we care for our guests, and working with nature has always been a priority. Being green is at the heart of everything we do and is central to our ongoing business development.

During our tenure at Home Farm Cranmer, we have restored and repurposed a former Norfolk homestead whilst retaining its original regional local distinctiveness. We reconnected the farm buildings with 175 acres of the original surrounding farmland in 2009. Since 2010, the farmland has been sustainably managed with participation in Agri-environment schemes.

The former dairy barns have been developed into a thriving year-round holiday business, welcoming families of all ages. Natural grounds and recreation areas, surround the properties, great places for our guests to discover wildlife in a wonderful natural environment.

Several of our properties have been designed to be especially suitable for guests with restricted mobility. Our indoor pool is open all year round and has been specially designed with easy access for less agile people and is ideal for rehabilitation and gentle exercise.

Our Green Ethos

We aim to return more than we take from the surrounding environment. We do this by constantly reviewing our practices, managing waste whatever

it is; from energy and water to plastic and glass, and by recycling reusing and renewing where we can. Our indoor pool is sanitised using salt which is better for people and the environment. Water is reused and recycled by our sustainable drainage system, designed to manage flood water and channel surface rainwater from our roofs and courtyards back into the ground and the aquifer from where we draw our water.

Carbon Footprint

We have worked hard to reduce the carbon footprint of a guest stay, by creating our Eco Barns which opened to guests in 2009. The three Eco Barns were developed specifically to offer low-carbon and planet friendly accommodation. The properties have the capacity to utilise approximately 80% of their energy from green sources produced onsite at Home Farm. In choosing to invest over £25,000 in renewable technologies, we have delivered over 3759 MWh of energy used for heat, light and power in 14 years! This has proved to be better for our business and for the planet. In the process we have reduced our reliance on fossil fuels by a reduction of 19,000 litres of oil to 2000 litres stored in our emergency tank, and a reduction of , approximately 15,000 litres of LPG to an annual amount of approximately 1,130 litres, used principally for cooking and in the laundry. Quite an achievement for a small rural accommodation business. The green technologies installed onsite include a 20kW wind turbine, 10kW photovoltaic solar panels, 18 kW thermal solar panels, 16 kW ground source heat-pump and a 10kw biomass boiler, which burns locally produced sustainable woodchip travelling only a distance of 8 miles from where it is grown.

We worked with Groundwork East to conduct a carbon audit for our business. The carbon footprint report demonstrated that with thoughtful forward planning and making the right environmental choices; we have managed to expand our business whilst reducing the carbon footprint of a guest stay. The carbon footprint of a single guest night stay had been reduced by over 85% compared to the carbon generated by a single guest night stay in 2008. We are now looking at what else we can do to achieve carbon neutrality in the coming years. Most recently we installed 2 EV charging points to enable guests to reduce their carbon footprint whilst exploring our local area, with the convenience of recharging their cars in our rural location.

Nature

Along the way, we have also revived the surrounding farmland and increased biodiversity by diversifying the range of habitats and planting over 2.5 miles of native hedges and over 250 trees. In managing our small farm sustainably, we have created outdoor wildlife friendly spaces for our guests to enjoy; welcoming back many of the declining farm bird species who were absent from the farmland and gardens when we first arrived. We are fond of the Owls which have continued to roost in our storage sheds and are keen supporters of our local Hawk and Owl Trust community reserve at Sculthorpe Moor where we keep track of an owl box we sponsor.

Community

We are open 364 days a year which has helped to secure full time and part time jobs. We work with local suppliers and many of our craftsmen and contractors have worked with us since the start. We continue to support local charities and help raise awareness through our social media activities. Our pool is available for use by our local community and has been used for swimming lessons, low-impact aerobic exercise and recuperation.

More than just a homestay.....

Our guests can enjoy a relaxing stay knowing that we are working together to minimise the environmental impact of a luxury holiday without compromising on quality or the comforts of a home from home stay where nature and tourism coexist.

We know that we can never take anything for granted and the challenge to make the planet a safer and better place for future generations to enjoy means continuous review of how we conduct our business and look after our environment.

Lynne Johnson 20/08/2023