

Corporate Social Responsibility

At Cranmer Country Cottages we believe in the need to develop sustainable lifestyles and green tourism to address climate change.

We are committed to providing good quality and environmentally friendly holiday accommodation. In reducing the environmental impact of our activities and adopting responsible business practices we are sustaining the natural environment for the benefit of future generations.

We bought Home Farm and its outbuildings in 1998 with a view to restoring the former barns to a high quality tourism business. The neglected group of Victorian farm buildings offered an ideal business opportunity but required imagination, dedication and considerable financial investment. Over the past 10 years we have restored all of the buildings using traditional local materials and local craftsmen, breathing new life into the abandoned farm and reuniting the buildings with their original 175 acres of surrounding farmland. Our objective was to create a business concerned with local heritage and to promote our location in line with today's sustainable tourism requirements, restoring part of Norfolk's heritage past and sustaining its future as a green tourism holiday destination.

We hope our guests will enjoy discovering this wonderful location with its diverse and unspoilt landscape, abundant wild life and distinct local produce.

Product mission

To create a high quality sustainable self-catering holiday destination while minimising the impact of our business activities on the environment. Our continuing ethos relies upon the sensitive conservation and enhancement of Home Farm and its surrounding environs. This wonderful natural location offers space to breathe and a place for restoration and relaxation. The development of our on-going Green Tourism Business Strategy will significantly reduce our carbon footprint. We ask our guests to assist us by adopting considerate use of energy during their stay as we seek to preserve this special place for the enjoyment of future generations.

Environmental Impact

We work to reduce our environmental impact through on-going investment in sustainable energy sources in order to cut carbon emissions. Our three new eco barns use 100% energy produced on-site making them carbon neutral in output. We have measures in place for careful monitoring of energy and water use and waste reduction. As a business we believe in ethical and local sourcing of foods, toiletries and services. We promote responsible tourism practices; encouraging our guests to explore Norfolk's natural environment through walking and cycling, bird watching, and visiting local nature reserves. We provide a large expanse of land for children to play outside in the open and encourage healthy exercise through swimming and tennis on site. We have a number of local natural therapists who deliver health and well-being services. We support the local community Hawk & Owl Trust nature reserve in Sculthorpe. We look to enhance and preserve local wildlife by designating areas of our farmland into the entry level Stewardship Scheme with a view to extending this to the higher level scheme. We have an on-going hedge and tree planting programme to safeguard wildlife corridors and offset carbon emissions.

Economic mission

To operate the company on a sustainable financial basis of profitable growth increasing value for our stakeholders and safeguarding jobs for local people.

Impact on society

Targeted marketing and year round business contributes to tourism spend and employment in local shops, pubs restaurants and attractions. Promotion of local crafts and products through our website and guest information folders encourages guest spend in speciality and small shops. Private hire timeslots for our swimming pool allows local people to benefit from the facility on their doorstep for recreation and health and well-being.

People

We offer a high level of personal service at Cranmer Country Cottages and treat all stakeholders with respect, including guests, staff, local people, suppliers and colleagues. We hope to engage all in our ethos through providing information, training and communication as we continue to work and develop sustainable policies.

Our current Green Business strategy includes:

- ❖ Good quality carbon neutral accommodation in our three recently converted Victorian barns
- ❖ Producing as much of our own energy as possible from fossil/carbon-free sources
- ❖ Encouraging carbon saving measures within our business practices
- ❖ Engaging and training our employees in line with our company's green ethos
- ❖ Sourcing good quality local products and services where we can
- ❖ Monitoring water consumption and reducing waste. Recycling our water through the farms natural drainage system and the installation of a borehole to supply our business use.
- ❖ Providing on-site recycling for waste materials and facilities for the composting of organic kitchen waste through a local service partner
- ❖ Replacing ageing white goods with energy efficient appliances and recycling furniture and other goods through our local Red Cross Centre and Norfolk Freegle
- ❖ Managing the farm land surrounding us and extending Countryside Stewardship Schemes
- ❖ Implementing a continuous carbon offset programme of native tree and hedge planting of 12000 young trees around our farmland and gardens over the past 10 years
- ❖ Planting of an apple orchard at Home Farm - old varieties of Norfolk apples are made available to guests
- ❖ Sponsorship of our local community nature reserve at Sculthorpe Moor –part of the Hawk and Owl Trust
- ❖ Encouraging guest's participation in our sustainable efforts through our website, guest information folders and notice boards
- ❖ Revisiting our Green objectives through regular reappraisals of our Green Action Plan as part of our company briefings
- ❖ We have joined the Green Tourism Business Scheme as an indicator of our sustainable practices with our aims set at a Gold Award

Details

- ❖ Installation of 20KW wind turbine
- ❖ Use of green electricity supplier Ecotricity for imported power when needed
- ❖ 40KW solar panels on south facing slate roofs
- ❖ 16kw heat pump with in-ground installation 80 meters below ground
- ❖ Installation of energy saving under-floor heating in new cottages
- ❖ Argon filled glazing installed in the new cottages to minimise heat loss
- ❖ Very high levels of insulation in all barn conversions and new build Garden House
- ❖ Energy saving lighting systems and light bulbs in all cottages
- ❖ Exterior lighting set on PIR system reducing light pollution at night
- ❖ Thermostats on all central heating systems & independent energy efficient gas boilers in existing cottages
- ❖ Installation of 80m borehole and UV water treatment system
- ❖ Installation of irrigation system fed by our borehole to water tubs & hanging baskets – timed to irrigate early morning and evening
- ❖ Installation of a wood-chip fuelled biomass boiler to replace fossil fuel heating system
- ❖ Communal laundry provides energy efficient gas powered tumble driers at a nominal charge – monies go towards our on-going tree planting programme
- ❖ Toilets are fitted with flush restricting devices to reduce water consumption
- ❖ New larger cottages are supplied with energy efficient washing machines and line drying facilities
- ❖ Swallow cottage Rayburn converted from oil to electricity with instant switch on and off. Now powered by the wind turbine.
- ❖ Composting facilities in place
- ❖ Recycling and waste management – glass, metal, plastic, paper, card, batteries, print cartridges and lamps

- ❖ All timber to F.S.C. sources and where possible locally grown e.g. oak cladding and structural timber
- ❖ Recycling of building materials i.e. bricks, slates and timber and use of lime free mortar as original buildings
- ❖ Swimming pool water and air temperature heated by Calorex heat exchange unit – maximising energy use
- ❖ South facing solar panels heat pool water in summer and supplement heating throughout the year
- ❖ Pool water treated with UV and salt chlorination system reducing the amount of chlorine in the pool water and reducing the amount of chlorine pumped out as waste on to the land
- ❖ Guests are supplied with eco-friendly cleaning and washing supplies.
- ❖ Locally sourced welcome hampers and fair trade tea and coffee
- ❖ Recycled chlorine free paper toilet rolls. Bio cleaning products reducing dispensing of harmful surfactants into water course
- ❖ Reuse of waste paper for photocopying and note pads
- ❖ Employment of local people and supporting other local businesses bringing wealth and employment into our local area
- ❖ Staff share lifts to work
- ❖ Local purchasing and promotion of the local farm shop in Walsingham, local cake maker for welcome pack, local bakery and local pubs and restaurants

Measured aims and objectives

- ❖ Cranmer Country Cottages will continue to measure its impact on the environment and set targets for ongoing improvement
- ❖ Monthly measuring of energy use
- ❖ Quarterly measuring of swimming pool energy usage
- ❖ Weekly measuring of waste and recycling

Achievements

- ❖ Converted two existing cottages – Swallow and Woodpecker heating systems using alternative green energy sources i.e.: 2nd ground source heat pump and solar.
- ❖ Extend the recycling services available for guest use
- ❖ Reduction in office waste – move to greener online booking procedure
- ❖ Train staff on what can and should be recycled and how to minimise waste
- ❖ Set up staff green suggestion scheme
- ❖ Upgrade land management from entry level stewardship scheme to Higher Level Stewardship Scheme with further tree and hedge planting and protection for wildlife
- ❖ Communicate green ethos and outputs to visitors. Provide Green notice board in the games room to record nature & wildlife sightings. Created a Green file for guest's information relating to our business philosophy and the local area

Future Plans

- ❖ Provide guest access to nature walks around the farm
- ❖ Education access for local schools
- ❖ Cultivation of wildflower meadow available to guests
- ❖ Advice through DEFRA re assessing natural wild life habitats and how to protect them
- ❖ Cranmer Country Cottages will encourage the adoption of green principles from all of its suppliers
- ❖ Revisit our action plan periodically as we strive to make constant improvements to our green business efforts

Revised September 2013

Lynne & John Johnson

