

THE ENGLEFIELD ESTATE ANNUAL REVIEW

ENGLEFIELD ECHO



SHAPING FUTURES

Supporting our community in a changing world – fit
for the future, while honouring our past

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✠ Cover: Wais Toofan with his children, from left: Suliman, Malina and Halima, in Englefield Village



ENGLEFIELD ESTATE



Always moving forward

This year’s edition of the Echo reflects our commitment across the three estates to being a forward-looking organisation that respects and celebrates our past.

Our move to the new offices at the Estate Yard is a perfect example, demonstrating the way an old industrial building can be restored and repurposed without losing its essential charm and history.

It gives us facilities to meet the needs of the modern workplace but this project is about so much more than just a new office. It is about providing a quality place for people to work and the restoration and regeneration of the wider Estate Yard – one of my favourite parts of the estate. We think this will bring new life to the village of Englefield as well.

I am pleased that the values of the estate are also reflected in how we have welcomed the Toofan family to Englefield. As you will read

in this year’s Echo, Wais Toofan (who was a cadet at Sandhurst with my son, Freddie), his wife, Mujgan and their children escaped from Afghanistan as Kabul fell to the Taliban in 2021. They have made a new life in our community and we are very pleased to have them here.

Every year brings new challenges but the big theme that resonates throughout the pages of this year’s Echo, is the huge amount of highly professional work going on across Englefield, The Benyon Estate in Hackney and at Glenmazeran.

We hope you all enjoy reading about it. ✠

Richard Benyon.

Working together



“
This is part one of a project
to breathe new life into the
Estate Yard as a whole
”

The former sawmill at the Estate Yard is once more the hub of activities at Englefield, with our offices at its heart

Moving house is said to be among the most stressful events anyone can experience. But try moving offices for the first time in half a century whilst combining that with sensitively converting a listed industrial building and upgrading the site-wide infrastructure across the working yard in which it sits - and all without a break in the smooth running of the business?

That's what has just been achieved at the heart of Englefield Village by way of phase one of the Estate Yard project. The Estate Office has moved to the beautiful re-purposed former sawmill alongside improvements to the site-wide access, parking and underground services in readiness for future phases of this important regeneration project.

Working with ADAM Architecture, builders Stonewood and others, the Estate team

has brought the project to fruition and prepared the ground – literally – for the next phase of operations to rejuvenate this important area under the Village Plan for Englefield.

The Estate Yard has gone through many changes over more than two centuries. In the 1830s around 100 people



worked here, involved in all aspects of running the Estate. There were fewer staff by the 1950s and in more recent years, with changes in the nature of the work, fewer people have been based at the Yard.

Estates Director, Edward Crookes said the plans were submitted in 2020 to create a new Estate Office in the former sawmill building but the intention to convert the building and move the Estate Office team had been conceived more than a decade ago.

“In our first discussion with our local planning authority it's fair to say we found them to be initially cautious to our proposals,” he said. As talks went on, however, the situation improved. “I think we successfully conveyed our vision of breathing new life into the sawmill in particular,” Edward added. “This site has been the hub of work on the Estate for centuries – it's just that the nature of work has changed.”

The old Estate Office was in the house formerly occupied by one of Edward's

predecessors, with staff scattered among different rooms. One of the most positive aspects of the move has been gathering the team members under one roof to work together. Staff will now work in an open plan office in the former sawmill, but with access to quiet spaces as required. Edward said: “Being more open plan is going to be helpful...the building is going to help us on our journey to work more sustainably. It's a one team philosophy.”

Every effort has been made to reflect the building's former use with the chimney from the old steam boiler restored and retained. The flywheel adjoining the engine room, along with the gantry and pulley system, have also been retained and incorporated into the design.

A new boardroom has been created on the ground floor with a boardroom table made from oak selected from the Estate by Forestry Manager, Richard Edwards, sawn by Vastern Timber and crafted by Forest to Home specialist furniture maker, both of whom are based in Wiltshire. The sawmill itself has a fascinating history, converting felled trees into timber for use on the

Estate and, during the First World War, making trench boards and coffins.

Duncan Rands, Building Manager stressed that while it was important to retain and celebrate the history of the Estate Yard, the priority was to create a building sympathetic to the past but fit for the future. “The sawmill was not looked at in isolation,” he said.

“This is phase one of a unique project to make the Estate Yard into a rural business hub where we can have some skilled light industrial occupiers, offices and commercial practices, all within this one area, generating income and making this a thriving yard again.”

Edward Crookes added: “Estate wide, it's part of our mission, in addition to running a financially sustainable business, to try to get to net zero and do our best around nature recovery. We could have built a new Estate Office, but by repurposing this building – there is embedded carbon in this building – it is the right thing to re-use it.”

Environmental initiatives include

sheep's wool insulation, double glazing, insulation of the roof spaces and the floors, a heating and ventilation system driven by air source heat pumps and ground mounted solar panels, along with mechanical ventilation and heat recovery. Four electric car charging points have also been installed with another 14 planned in subsequent phases.

Swift boxes, bee bricks, bat refuges, planting to attract pollinators and other measures to benefit wildlife have also been incorporated into the Estate Yard site.

For Site Manager Angelo Moretti of Stonewood Builders, the project has been a challenge – but the building is one he has grown to love.

“Modernising such an old industrial building to a modern building is quite challenging,” he said. “We've had to introduce modern building techniques into an old building and make sure that they gel together in a proper way. I'm very proud of the project... it's become part of me.”

NEW RECRUITS FOR FORESTRY TEAM

The vital work of managing the Englefield Estate woodlands – covering a quarter of Estate land – has been given a boost

We welcomed a new member to the Forestry Team in 2024 with Charlotte Moss joining us on the Royal Forestry Society's Forestry Roots scheme as a trainee forester.

Charlotte, 24, joined us in October and will be training at the Estate for a year. She has a degree in international development but decided after graduating that she wanted to work in a more hands-on role linked to the environment and sustainability.

She admits her path into forestry is unusual but is extremely pleased to have joined the Englefield team and to be learning the skills she will need to make forestry her career.

She said: "It was a bit of an unusual route into forestry for me. After my degree I went off travelling with a friend. I got a summer job in a campsite and met an arborist who told me all about jobs in forestry. I had always been interested, but didn't know how to find a way into the industry."

✂ *Fin Lace, left, and Charlotte Moss with Forester Rob Allen*

Charlotte discovered the Royal Forestry Society's Forestry Roots scheme, which is specially designed to help young people overcome barriers to a forestry role.

"Having done a degree already I wasn't able to get funding for another degree," she said. "That was why I was finding it difficult to get a job in the sector. The Royal Forestry Society traineeship bridges the gap, getting me experience in a forestry team."

When we spoke to Charlotte in October she was just one day into the job, but already loving it!

She hopes to move into a job in forestry and woodland management in the future and believes getting the hands-on experience that comes with a traineeship will stand her in good stead and earn her respect with others in the industry.

When her year-long traineeship comes to an end Charlotte will have gained knowledge and experience to help her find a full-time job in the forestry sector.



✂ *Left: Fin Lace. Below: Charlotte Moss*



Charlotte joins another young forester on the team, Fin Lace, 19, who completed an in-house forestry traineeship in the summer of 2024 and is now a full-time forester.

Fin first came to Englefield's Forestry Team on a work experience placement when he was 16 years old and worked with the team for two summers. He officially started work at 17 and, now 19, he has undertaken various practical and theory courses and gained on the job experience which has led to him becoming an integral part of the Estate's forestry team.

Fin particularly enjoys working with the modern machinery necessary for forestry work – and takes pride in looking after young woodland, especially the thinning and formative pruning, necessary to give young trees the potential to become good quality timber in the future.

He says: "Saplings are planted and cared for in their early years by removing weed competition. If it's needed, when they're older, we prune them to encourage growth and improve timber quality."

"I also really enjoy thinning. In forestry management, you need to make sure that the trees have the best chance at getting sunlight, so essentially, we remove some to give others more space to grow."

Englefield Estate's Forestry Manager Rich Edwards is full of praise for the excellent start Fin and Charlotte have made in their respective roles.

He said: "It is good to see two young and enthusiastic people take an interest in forestry and demonstrate how keen they are to learn the skills necessary to manage our woodlands. We have known Fin for some time through the work experience he did with us and he is a real asset to the team."

"Charlotte comes to us with a real passion for forestry and a determination to learn as much as she can about the role. We're delighted to have them both."

The Estate's Forestry Team manages 3,500 acres of woodland which makes up over one-quarter of the Englefield Estate. With a production cycle of a century or more, the woodlands are managed under a long-term plan which ensures that a sustainable timber crop is harvested, while the woodland also provides habitats for a diverse range of species and is an enjoyable space for walking and horse riding.

The Englefield Estate is committed to training the next generation of foresters and has a long-standing partnership with the Royal Forestry Society. **✂**

A DRAMA for the JET set

Hosting the filming of an airline safety video was a first for the Estate

Persuading passengers to concentrate on the pre-flight safety video is a challenge, as more of us fly more frequently and feel that we have seen it all before.

But British Airways has captured the attention of airline passengers and even persuaded more than a million YouTube viewers who are nowhere near a plane to watch their latest video, which was filmed in the grounds of Englefield House.

The video, entitled *May We Haveth One's Attention*, uses figures inspired by classic TV adaptations of historical fiction, to highlight the importance of paying attention to the safety talk. It was made by London based Uncommon Creative Studio.

Uniformed British Airways staff are shown interrupting the characters in scenes set in different parts of the house and gardens to deliver important safety messaging.

Among the scenes featured is a representation of the famous cinematic moment when a character based on Jane Austen's Mr Darcy emerges from the lake, with Englefield House in the background. The Estate is also transformed into the Scottish Highlands in another scene, using CGI effects. The actual filming took place in the Deer Park.

Some of the most memorable parts of the video captured at Englefield include Jessica, British Airways cabin crew member greeting the Mr Darcy inspired character as he emerges from the water and showing him how to put on a life jacket.

Another member of the BA Cabin Crew, Elisangela Neves Mendes told the Echo: "It was an absolute privilege to have had the opportunity to work with such professional and experienced people on such an impressive set. I was made to feel so welcome and supported by everyone and it's an experience that I will always remember and hope to have again in the future. Englefield Estate was a breathtaking location and to film somewhere that has been used in some of my favourite films such as, *The King's Speech*, *X-Men: First Class* and

✂ Shooting of British Airways' safety film at Englefield House



Great Expectations was a real pinch me moment."

A British Airways spokesperson added. "We have had positive feedback from our customers who have commented on how engaging the safety video is, which makes all the hard work that went into it worthwhile. Our safety videos deliver vital safety information, and we know how popular British dramas are, both in the UK and overseas, that is why we chose this genre to resonate with not just our British customers but our global audience too.

"At British Airways, our colleagues are at

the heart of our business. It's our people that make us who we are, and we want to put them centre stage wherever we can. We were blown away by our colleagues' incredible acting talent and with their help, we've created something really entertaining that celebrates what makes Britain unique."

Peter Carson, Englefield's Events Manager, said hosting the filming of an in-flight safety video was a first for the Estate. "It's fascinating to see the end result," he said. "I think the house and grounds lend themselves perfectly to the theme British Airways were aiming for. It was a pleasure to host them at Englefield." ✂



Once again the Englefield Estate welcomed thousands of music fans this summer for three nights of concerts

Organised by the outdoor music specialists, Heritage Live, from July 19 to July 21. Englefield House provided the perfect backdrop to performances by Madness on the opening night, supported by the Lightning Seeds and the Old Time Sailors. DJ Pete Tong headlined on Saturday bringing his Ibiza Classics show to West Berkshire, with Jules Buckley and the Essential Orchestra. Manchester-based rock group Elbow headlined on Sunday.

Now a regular fixture in the event diary, we look forward to hearing about the line-up in 2025, with the Heritage Live concerts taking place over the weekend of July 19 and 20.

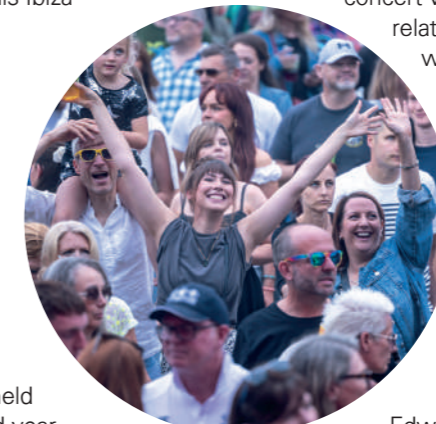
The three nights of music this year were followed on Monday July 22 by Flackstock, a day of music, comedy and dance. The event, held in the grounds of Englefield House for the third year running, commemorates the life of TV presenter Caroline Flack and raises awareness of mental health issues.

Flackstock raises money for Caroline's favourite charities including Choose Love, Mind, Samaritans and the Charlie Waller Trust and the Englefield Estate is happy to provide the venue for this uplifting event. The Estate and its hosting of the summer concerts and

Flackstock, featured in the October issue of the CLA's Land & Business magazine in an article about the importance of finding new and diverse income streams.

Peter Carson, Events Manager, tells the magazine that working with a partner who understands the sensitivities of a heritage estate has been key to the success of the concerts.

"It is important to have continuity when you become a concert venue as you need to develop strong relationships with partners and local residents, who are key in making the events successful," Peter says.



"Heritage Live is very well-established and is aligned with our brand values by providing an experience that people enjoy. The family are extremely enthusiastic about the concerts; they have confidence in the promoter, who respects the landscape and ensures that the event is handled in the best possible way."

Edward Crookes, Estates Director, adds: "The filming and events operation forms an important part of the estate's enterprises in broadening our sources of income; they make a vital contribution to the costs of maintaining the historic fabric of Englefield House, the park and gardens.

"They are hard work for the team, but also great fun and a busy events calendar enriches estate life for those who live and work here." ✂

The PERFECT backdrop

Porsche bring their star cars to Englefield for a stunning show



The stunning backdrop of Englefield House has hosted special events throughout the year, including charity fundraisers, product launches and corporate dinners.

One of the highlights for lovers of classic motoring was the Icons at the Haus event in July when Porsche Retail Group invited their customers to bring their classic Porsche vehicles to Englefield, where they made a stunning display in front of the House.

Some exceptional models from across the decades were on display along with a selection of the most dynamic Porsche vehicles, including electric and hybrid vehicles which reflect Porsche's development towards net carbon neutrality by 2030.

Porsche Retail Group were looking for a large space with an impressive backdrop to hold their annual customer gathering.

Around 700 guests enjoyed food and drink prepared by street food vendors with entertainment provided by local acts. Highlights included vehicles from the very earliest days of Porsche such as the 356, as well as more modern supercars including the full range of GT models.

Englefield's Events Manager, Peter Carson, said: "Many people's first thoughts when it comes to fast cars don't always include sustainability. But Porsche will be offering more than 80% of its vehicles with an electric motor by 2030."

Guests said they really enjoyed seeing the cars set against the parkland and buildings at Englefield. ✂

Bea Carson stars in *Too Much*

As a nine-year old in love with the world of acting and movies, it's useful when your dad manages filming and productions at Englefield House and helps secure you a role in a new TV series being filmed at the Estate.

Beatrice "Bea" Carson, daughter of Englefield's Events Manager, Peter Carson, was cast as an extra in a new Netflix series which is due to air in 2025.

Too Much – a rom-com which follows Jessica Salmon, a workaholic in her mid-thirties who moves to London for a new life after a break-up – was filmed at Englefield House in 2024.

Bea played a flower girl during a wedding scene at St Mark's Church on the Estate.

She said, "My dress was grey with flowers on, and I had a pink cardigan and white tights. I also had to have

my hair curled and I had some lipstick on, which I loved because I don't usually wear make-up."

After hair and make-up, Bea and the other cast members took the minibus from the crowd-base to the church where they filmed for most of the day. "I was sitting at the front of the church for the wedding scene, so I was able to watch the whole thing, talk with the lead actors and see all the different camera positions and lighting throughout the church. It was amazing!

"We were then filmed walking up the aisle and outside the church. My favourite part was throwing the confetti for the family photos and meeting the dog that was part of the story!"

Bea said that if her favourite writer Rick Riordan decides to create a TV adaptation of his Percy Jackson Greek Gods series, then she would love to be considered! ✂



✂ A beacon burns to mark the 80th anniversary of D-Day. The Englefield Estate played its part in helping the allies win the war



The 80th anniversary of D-Day was a chance to honour the Estate's role in wartime

Remembering D-DAY

Englefield's community marked the 80th anniversary of D-Day with a gentle climb to the Top Deer Park, overlooking the Estate, where a beacon was lit to commemorate the events of 6 June 1944. This marked the start of the campaign to re-take Europe from the Nazis and eventually bring the Second World War to a close.

A beacon was lit at dusk to coincide with five beacons being lit along the beaches of Normandy, symbolising 'the light of peace' that emerged out of the darkness of war, to pay tribute to the fallen and to all those who gave so much...

The D-Day landings were the largest seaborne invasion in history, marking the beginning of the liberation of France and western Europe.

The Englefield Estate played its part in helping the allies win the war. Englefield House opened as a Red Cross Auxiliary Hospital in 1940 – a role it fulfilled through to the end of the war.



The House was under the stewardship of Harry and Violet Benyon, great supporters of the Red Cross. Violet Benyon worked for the Red Cross during the First World War and later became county director of Berkshire Red Cross.

During the Second World War, the Long Gallery in Englefield House was converted into a ward for up to 19 convalescent patients who were brought from hospitals in Woolwich in London and Haslar, Gosport. The small rooms at the back of the Gallery were used as treatment rooms and a Doctor's Office.

Patients stayed for around 14 days and during their recovery spent time on the ward and outside strolling through the grounds of Englefield House. Much like they are today, the gardens were a peaceful sanctuary, enveloped by trees and adorned with flower and vegetable beds. ✂

Farms UNDER water

A changing climate, with more heavy and prolonged rain, is creating challenges for the Estate and its tenant farmers. Flooding is becoming a serious problem in low lying areas, as we discovered last winter

Serious flooding affected a number of the Estate's tenant farmers last winter, with several areas of land under water for months.

The wet weather has prompted some tenant farmers to re-think their operations, with some taking land out of production altogether and others changing the way they farm.

Around 60 acres of Duncan Hodge's farm at Padworth was under water for almost six months with a further ten acres of the land they rent at Mortimer flooded for around four months.

Duncan Hodge's son, Angus, said the flooding was the worst he had known on the farm and had left the family unable to use the affected land productively – although the flood waters held on their farm prevented further flooding downstream.

The family is keen to join the Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI), a Government scheme, which includes payments for farmers who hold flood water on their land – acknowledged as providing a benefit to the wider community whose homes might otherwise be inundated.

But Angus said he believed the change of Government in July had delayed their hopes of making the transition from Higher Level Stewardship into SFI. "The annoying thing is we are in Higher Level Stewardship and were told we could switch to the SFI scheme – but the old Government said we had to wait until after the General Election and so far the new Government hasn't done anything about it," he said.



“Measures to help mitigate the impact of flooding are being taken on the Estate”

"If we can go into SFI, it will be better for the farm, environmentally and economically, but at the moment we are stuck."

The land affected at Padworth, alongside the river Kennet, supported a wildflower meadow but is now mainly rushes. Angus said that area of wetter land had been useful in previous years, providing grazing and silage in dry years when other areas of the farm suffered from drought.

"We've been here for 35 years and in the last two or three years the flooding has got worse and worse," he said.

The Hodges operate the last dairy farm on the Englefield Estate, selling the milk from a 200-strong herd to Marks & Spencer. They grow most of their own forage for the cows, producing maize and grass, as well as growing some cereals for sale.


But the bad weather has put close to 8% of their 1,000-acre farm out of action for a large part of the year, forcing a re-think and a move into a farming support system that compensates them for land lost to flooding and acknowledges the benefit of holding water on their land.

The Estate's Head of Rural Property and Land, James Meade, said that although there had been flooding in the area in previous years, the winter of 2024 had been exceptional. "There was particularly bad flooding in 2012-2013 so it would be wrong to say it's not happened before, but by all accounts, this year there was water in places we did not have flooding before. And it is happening more frequently," he said.

In some cases accepting that the climate is changing, with more extreme weather and heavier rain, is seen as a better policy than trying to continue

fighting against ever more challenging conditions, James added. But measures to help reduce the impact of flooding are being taken on the estate, including working with Action for the River Kennet, (ARK) to make the river channel more resilient to heavy rain, through re-profiling, creating more gravel riffles and de-silting. The work also creates more habitat for wildlife – and better access for anglers.

Work to help reduce the Estate's carbon emissions, on the journey to net zero, are also moving ahead at speed, along with initiatives to give a boost to nature recovery.

James said clover mixes, which sequester carbon from the atmosphere, have been sown across 40 acres of the deer park and more woodland has also been planted. More land has been put into the Sustainable Farming Incentive, with further new hedgerow planting. We are avoiding the use of pesticides wherever possible. 

 *Flooded farmland*

“
We’re just hoping the
measures we can take will
alleviate the problem
”



Staying AFLOAT

Chris Webber’s diversified farm business, which includes a number of commercial units let to small businesses, was put in jeopardy last winter (’23-’24) when rising ground water flooded some of the buildings, causing significant damage to plant and equipment.

Chris, who produces hay and haylage for horses on more than 300 hectares at Amners Farm and Green Farm, near Reading, sub-lets buildings around Amners’ farmyard to specialist businesses, including furniture makers, an upholsterer, two engineering companies and a visual artist.

Several of the units were flooded in January after downpours caused the ground waters to rise. Chris said he had never seen the water rise so quickly or to such a height.

“This has started to happen more often,” Chris said. “It was maybe once every 25 years but now it is happening year after year. So much has changed with the landscape and the rainfall is much more intense. It’s a big problem.”

The land Chris farms, producing around 12,000 200 kilo bales of haylage for horses every year, was not badly impacted by the floods, but the buildings and the specialist equipment within them, belonging to his tenants, were inundated with water.

Chris is investing in a tractor-mounted pump with a six-inch diameter pipe to take the water away, if the flooding occurs again – and has dug a new drainage ditch. “When it floods it’s a bit like dealing with a boat with a hole in it – you have to keep pumping to reduce the water level, if you stop the water just starts rising again,” he said.

He said the impact of last year’s floods on him and his tenants was significant, both financially and emotionally. The business units make a significant contribution to the farming enterprise and Chris is anxious to ensure his tenants stay at Amners Farm and he can overcome the flooding problems.

“I don’t want to be holding water here – I want to get it away,” he said. “We’re just hoping the measures we can take will help alleviate the problem in the future, but only time will tell.”

✂ Above: Farmer Chris Webber

Farming traditions are honoured at *ploughing* match

Ploughing matches continue to play an important part in the farming calendar

South Berkshire Agricultural Association’s (SBAA) ploughing matches take place annually – always on the second Tuesday in September. This year the event was hosted at the Estate’s Home Farm, Mayridge Farm.



Fergus Hodge, Secretary of the SBAA said: “The South Berks annual ploughing matches attract local farmers and rurally minded spectators who live in South Berkshire, as well as passionate ploughers and hobbyists from all over the country who tour the UK during the ploughing match season. It’s their love!”

In 2024, 33 ploughers entered one, or some of the five classes, where farmers and expert ploughmen assessed them on the opening and finish of their plough, its uniformity, straightness, firmness and general appearance.

The matches were followed by a lunch and prize giving ceremony which is hosted by SBAA President Richard Benyon and was attended by around 120 people.

✂ Machinery old and new is pressed into service for the ploughing match

Head of Rural Property and Land, James Meade said: “Whilst the Estate’s own farming operation moves to become more regenerative, history and heritage remains important to us. We are pleased to provide land for the SBAA’s ploughing match, meaning members of the rural community can come together to celebrate the art of ploughing - a skill that has been vital to food production for centuries.”



✂ Right: South Berks annual ploughing match

Building a LEGACY

A determination to create a development of which the Estate can be proud is the driving force at Burghfield Common



✂ The finished product at The Brooks

Creating beautiful homes requires careful attention to detail during the planning, design and construction phases.

But keeping those homes and the development on which they sit beautiful for decades to come needs an even greater commitment, to maintain the consistency and quality of the original design.

That special care is evident already at The Brooks, Burghfield Common, a development of 100 homes – 40% of which will be affordable – on land that formerly belonged to the Estate.

With partners ADAM Architecture, homebuilders Croudace and the planning and development team from Savills Reading office, the Englefield Estate is creating properties designed to the highest standards and in keeping with the Estate's principles and ethos.

Estates Director Edward Crookes and the Estate's advisors structured arrangements relating to the delivery of the development when the land was sold. This means Englefield can ensure The Brooks continues to be maintained to those high standards, creating a legacy development that benefits

the homeowners, the Estate and the community more widely.

Other models used by landowners who want to develop land usually involve disposing of a plot with planning permission to the highest bidder and leaving them to build homes on it in whatever way they want.

Alternatively, landowners can put in services such as roads and drainage before inviting developers to create new homes, maintaining ownership of the land until each plot is sold off. However, that leaves the landowner to bear the risks if house prices fall or the property market suffers a severe downturn.

The Englefield Estate took a different

“ This development is a case study showing the importance of quality ”

approach once outline planning permission had been secured at Burghfield Common, selling the land to Croudace, but establishing a detailed contract that ensures the development precisely follows the design created by the Estate and ADAM Architecture and is not compromised in the future.

Croudace was not the highest bidder, but was selected as the right partner to deliver the quality the Estate wanted.

The contract structure, drawn up by Henry Stevens of solicitors Farrer and Co, means the new homeowners are required to maintain those design principles once they have moved in, making The Brooks a true legacy development that will stand the test of time.

Henry said the arrangement had the potential to be used more widely by other estates. “I have spoken to some landowners in the last few years and some of them have in the past sold off land for a standard development and unfortunately regretted what had been built on their doorstep which had not gone down very well locally and was out of keeping with the area,” he said.



✂ Looking across the site as work progresses



✂ Laying foundations



✂ The street scene

“This structure provides landowners with income for their land and means they don't have to compromise on design quality.” He said the legal structure worked for developers and home buyers too, enhancing the quality of the development and providing buyers with the peace of mind that the development would not be allowed to deteriorate over time.

Edward said: “I feel very proud of what we are achieving here. We want to communicate our message to other landowners and encourage them to follow these principles to achieve best outcomes, for themselves and for homeowners too.”

For new residents of The Brooks, where homes have been enthusiastically received, it means they can be confident, thanks to carefully drawn-up covenants, that the beautifully designed development they have bought into will not be compromised through inappropriate alterations or extensions.

Edward and architect Robbie Kerr of ADAM architecture make monthly visits to the Burghfield Common site to check on progress and ensure design principles, right down to the width of mortar between

brickwork and stonework and the style of doorbells, are being adhered to.

Robbie said: “The new Government is prioritising homebuilding but for that to succeed new homes need to be built with quality – if the quality goes then people will fight against the housebuilding policy. This development is a case study to show the importance of quality.”

The Brooks homes incorporate brick and stonework, wooden windows and doors, decorated flashing on bay windows and design details that reflect other domestic buildings on the Englefield Estate, bringing a sense of continuity and quality to this legacy development.

Following close on the heels of The Brooks is another development, Ochre Meadows, at Theale, where Croudace Homes are building 104 dwellings on another former Estate site.

The same principles pioneered at The Brooks at Burghfield are being followed at Theale with sustainability, environmental considerations and design principles that will be maintained into the future, all strictly adhered to. ✂

Homes for people and nature

✂ The Brooks overlooks an area of ancient woodland and is built around a central green. Careful planting throughout the development, including 175 new trees, means it will become a haven for wildlife.

Bird boxes for different native species are being installed, while hedgerows have been enhanced to provide shelter for ground dwelling birds. These hedgerows will also serve as ‘habitat piles’ for local reptiles and amphibians.

To enable basking spots to remain open and accessible, grassland areas sown with wildflowers will be cut back on a regular basis.

For bats, trees with roosting features have been preserved and bat boxes introduced. Bat tubes with integrated wooden perches are to be built into the external walls of homes, while lighting reduction measures have been reviewed and approved by a licensed bat ecologist.

Bee bricks have been installed in walls across the development, providing homes for bees and other insect species, many of which are under threat. ✂



The life AQUATIC



We're starting to see the benefits for nature of the ponds at Mayridge Farm – demonstrating that it is well worth restoring habitats like this to our countryside

Ponds dug in 2023 on the Flats at Mayridge Farm are proving their value to the environment, creating a vital home for insects, farmland birds and plant species that thrive in the marginal zone between land and water.



The rain delayed plans to seed the areas around the ponds, but marginal plants are already starting to colonise the pond edges naturally. David also plans to put some turf down on the margins to protect the liners from animals such as badgers that drink from the ponds.

Education and Environment Officer Dr Liz Mattison, who headed up the project with Head Gamekeeper David Wiggins, said all five ponds were now full, plants were starting to colonise the area around them and the animals were starting to move in.



The Mayridge Ponds project received funding through the Farming in a Protected Landscape (FiPL) programme which covered materials and some labour costs, including David's time.

"It is so nice to see the difference that the ponds are making," Liz told the Echo back in August. "The other day I was down at the ponds and a flock of linnets suddenly arrived at the water's edge. They are a red-listed bird and this initiative is helping them to fight back."

Jemima Sellwood, the Farming in a Protected Landscape Officer for the North Wessex Downs National Landscape, praised the project, which she inspected earlier this year.

The Flats is a particularly dry area which sits in a rain shadow. One of the reasons for digging the ponds is to provide a constant source of water through the driest months for birds and animals.



"The ponds at Englefield have been a huge success story for FiPL supplying a network of new habitat and significantly enhancing the local biodiversity," she said. "The FiPL programme has been delighted to see the successful creation of the ponds."

But the area was far from dry during the wet winter and spring of 2023-24. Liz said: "The ponds filled up really well during the winter. All apart from one, which is groundwater fed, were completely full, just from rainwater. We've not had to put any water in."

The Estate's contribution to the project included giving up the farmland and the time spent on the project by Liz – which adds up to a significant number of hours.

"And we are seeing the colonisation of the ponds with early species. These include water fleas, diving beetles, dragonflies, and use by farmland birds including linnets, goldfinches and sparrows."

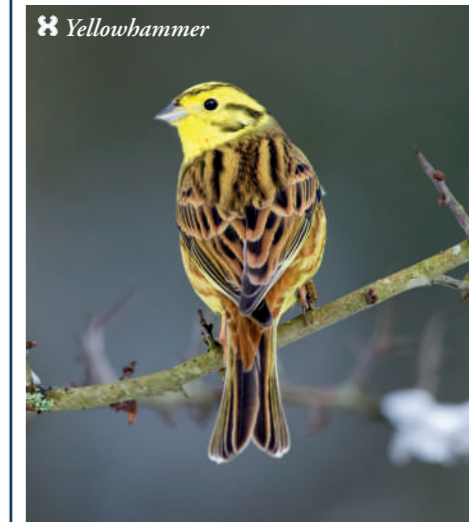
She said: "The ponds and their surrounds will be developing over many years as vegetation grows up, new species arrive and existing species are supported and stay in the area. This was a challenging project, especially because of the complexity of applying for planning permission, but so far it is proving its worth." 



 Education and Environment Officer Dr Liz Mattison with Head Gamekeeper David Wiggins



 Yellowhammer



Survey shows a boost for bird numbers

Farmland and woodland bird numbers are increasing on the Englefield Estate, according to British Trust for Ornithology Breeding Bird Surveys undertaken during May and June over the last three years.

Dr Liz Mattison, our Education and Environment Officer, said the results – which include species considered at risk across the UK – demonstrate the value of managing land on the Estate for the benefit of nature.

"It shows that the agri-environment schemes and woodland management measures are working," she said. "It also shows the buildings, village gardens and the Five-A-Day community garden are providing good habitat for a wide range of species."

The wetland and wood pasture within the deer park, stubbles, margins and nesting areas across farmed land and the trees, shrubs, hedges and traditional buildings throughout Englefield village have all contributed to the increase in the number of bird species since 2013.

Liz said: "Between 2011 and 2013 an average of 30 species were recorded. In 2022-2024 this has increased to an average of 49 species. Of these, Farmland Indicator Species have increased from three to 8 and Woodland Bird Indicator Species from 10 to 16."

"There are a number of birds of conservation concern, commonly referred to as UK Red List species, that >

Species return

< have continued to breed in the survey area, such as house sparrow, greenfinch, house martin and grey partridge. Others are being recorded again after a period of absence such as cuckoo, skylark, starling and swift.

“Of course, these surveys only provide a brief snapshot during the breeding season. Through the Estate’s membership of the Lower Pang and Kennet Farmer Cluster we were very fortunate to have the Berkshire Ornithological Club (BOC) carry out more intensive winter and breeding bird surveys during 2022-23. Their report indicates a resilient breeding population of lapwing, the continued presence of grey partridge and an increase in breeding yellowhammers.

“During the winter on the farm, the BOC also reported a lapwing flock of over 500 birds and flocks of linnet, skylark, starling, redwing and fieldfare, which are all red list species.”

“These are important results considering a national picture in which the number of red list species is increasing, and wild bird indicator scores are decreasing. At Englefield, we are showing that a coordinated effort of sympathetic woodland, farmland and building management does help bird populations.”

The breeding bird survey, carried out under strict BTO criteria, involves recording adult birds by sight or sound in a 1km square area around Cranemore Lake and the Deer Park.

To gather the results two transects are walked across the 1km square in as straight a line as possible and birds recorded either side of that line. Surveys are carried out in May and June. ✂



✂ Grey Partridge

Playing our part for benefit of nature

The Englefield Estate is playing its part in an ambitious project to restore depleted nature, through engagement with the Berkshire and Hampshire Local Nature Recovery Strategies.

Working with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and Hampshire County Council, the responsible authorities for the two counties Local Nature Recovery Strategies, Englefield is helping to identify sites on the Estate with particular importance for biodiversity as part of the process for drawing up local habitat maps.

Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) are being created across England as part of the Environment Act 2021 to map out the action needed to restore nature and meet the Government’s nature targets. Together, they will cover the country in a Nature Recovery Network.

Land designated as part of the strategy contributes to the vital work of restoring depleted nature and improving access to the countryside. It also earns a 15% increase in Biodiversity Net Gain credits which are available to developers who need to offset the impact of new building offsite.

Rosie Street, manager of the Natural Environment Team for the Berkshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy held meetings earlier this year with Englefield Estate director Edward Crookes and Education and Environment Officer, Dr Liz Mattison.

Rosie said the aim was to restore species that were under threat through improving and extending habitats, with the help of landowners and community groups that manage land. Once the initial map is drawn up there will be a public consultation on the strategy early next year (2025). She said: “We’ve been working with lots of landowners across the county and are grateful for their engagement in the project.”



✂ (L-R) Maddie Garner and Rosie Street

“The aim is to restore species that are under threat”

The Englefield Estate, with its varied landscape, including farmland, woodland, rivers and wetlands, is expected to make a valuable contribution to the success of the project and is working with both Berkshire and Hampshire as Estate land straddles the border.

Liz Mattison said: “Edward Crookes and I attended a workshop for landowners and managers in Berkshire and went through a group exercise to say what we thought our priorities were for habitats and species, public access and engagement.”

The Estate has identified land that could be appropriate to include in the strategy, including sections of

the Estate’s chalk streams, woodland, grassland and heathland. Deciding which areas to put on the nature recovery map will mean taking into account not only the potential for restoring species and helping to retain those already there, but balancing those needs against producing food and growing timber.

Drawing up maps has taken many months, with consultations involving the general public, stakeholders and experts. Liz said of the project: “It’s a positive move. It provides a coordinated approach and will help the Estate to understand what its priorities should be when aiming for bigger, better, and more connected wildlife-rich habitats, corridors and stepping stones across Berkshire and Hampshire.

“Englefield Estate is an interesting case in this context as a lot of the land is close to urban fringes and that means there are many different pressures – pressure for housing development, great public access to nature – but also species and habitats that can be negatively impacted by that public access, plus we need to grow food and timber.” ✂

Opportunity to support biodiversity

The Englefield Estate has engaged with a project to designate land for nature-based solutions, with the potential to help businesses that want to invest in boosting biodiversity and improve water quality.

BioCap was set up by Ed Cooper, who has wide experience in the sector, to provide a robust and relevant approach to manage the natural environment, mitigate the impact of climate change and reverse biodiversity decline.

Nature-based solutions to the climate crisis and decline in biodiversity include a wide range of actions, including planting trees, creating wildflower meadows, managing wetlands and maintaining and protecting specialist habitats.

The hope is that businesses, large corporations and pension funds will invest in nature-boosting projects to offset the negative environmental impact of their work and do the right thing for the environment, both locally and globally.

In doing so they may also be able to meet the demands of existing or proposed legislation around boosting biodiversity as well as winning shareholder and customer support for their actions.

So far the Englefield Estate has identified around 5.5 hectares of grassland to the north of the M4 motorway which may be suitable for inclusion in the project. Liz Mattison said the area, made up of two fields, is semi-improved grassland cut off from the rest of the estate by the motorway.

She said the Estate planned to carry out a baseline habitat condition survey on the land in order that improvements in biodiversity can be accurately measured.

Other landowners in West Berkshire along with West Berkshire Council, the North Wessex Downs National Landscape, the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust and the Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership are also involved in the BioCap initiative.

BioCap is assessing what the Thames Valley business community and corporations more widely want from the natural capital market and what projects they would be prepared to invest in. It is also gathering the landowners who can provide the land for those projects to take shape.

Ed Cooper said the marketplace for natural capital is still in its infancy. But he went on: “My view is we need to get on with it – we could wait for ever to iron out all the potential issues but the best way to make this happen is to simply get started.”

Ed believes major corporations, pension fund investors and other businesses are looking for projects in which to invest as a way to offset their impact, as businesses, on the environment and demonstrate to customers and shareholders that they are behaving responsibly.

“Businesses are looking for projects in which to invest as a way to offset their impact”

Some, like house builders and developers, are required by law to produce at least a 10% biodiversity net gain when they build. Others, whose businesses mean they emit a significant amount of carbon, want to offset those emissions through investing in nature. A market in carbon offsetting already exists.

Edward Crookes said: “We already do a significant amount of work on the Estate to care for and enhance the natural world. BioCap offers an opportunity to assess the potential to join with partners and explore the emerging marketplace in natural capital. We are keen to learn more about it and the benefits it can bring.” ✂



✦ *The Toofan Family outside their Englefield home. From left: Omar, Mujgan, Wais (front row) Suliman, Malina and Halima.*

Wais Toofan and his family were caught up in the fall of Kabul and faced a traumatic escape, first to the US and then to the UK. But they have found stability and support here at Englefield Village

The Toofan family, who settled in Englefield in 2022, are very much part of our community with three children at the village school and a fourth due to start nursery shortly.

But they had a dramatic and at times terrifying journey to arrive at the relative peace and tranquillity of the Estate, escaping from their native Afghanistan when Kabul fell to the Taliban in August 2021.

After an arduous and risky journey from Afghanistan to Qatar, on to the United States and finally to Britain, Wais Toofan and his wife Mujgan, are happily settled in Englefield Village with their family in a four-bedroom cottage with a garden.

Their children Halima, eight, Malina, six, and Suliman, five, attend the village school. Omar two, who was born in the UK, will shortly start nursery. Wais' brother Shoib, 18, who lives with them, is studying at Reading College.

Wais said he was so grateful to the Benyon family, the Estate, the Englefield community and his new friends and neighbours for making him and his wife, children and younger brother feel so welcome. "Englefield is a very welcoming place. People treat us with smiley faces and respect," he said.

Wais, now 31, was a captain in the Afghan Army working with the British Ministry of Defence in 2017 when the opportunity arose to spend a year at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, in Berkshire.

He joined the Afghan National Army Officer Academy, (ANAOA) – also known as the Sandhurst in the Sand. After winning an award as the top platoon commander, Wais was selected for training at the real Sandhurst in the UK.

When he arrived in January 2018, he met Richard's son, Freddie Benyon, who was also training to become an Army officer. Wais says: "We were both in the same platoon and on the same corridor."

"When British colleagues went home for long weekends, the foreign soldiers didn't have anywhere to go – but when the holidays came Freddie Benyon asked if I would like to come to his house, if I didn't have a place to go. I was very fortunate; it was very kind of him. I went to Englefield and I met Richard and Zoe and the rest of Freddie's family. Freddie is very friendly; he is very down to earth, and everyone was very kind to me."



✦ *Wais Toofan and Freddie Benyon, met at Sandhurst*



✦ *Wais on the parade ground*

At the end of that year at Sandhurst, Wais returned to Afghanistan, worked in liaison with a US Security firm, Gardaworld Federal Services and was soon supporting US and UK operations in Kabul.

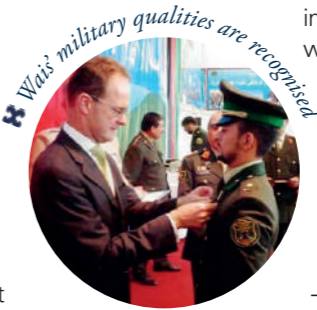
But in August 2021, little more than a month after the withdrawal of the last NATO troops from Afghanistan, a Taliban offensive brought down the Afghan Government. The UK military returned on August 13 to oversee the evacuation of British nationals and eligible Afghans.

The capital, Kabul, fell to the Taliban, there were killings in the street and thousands fled, many not knowing where to go or what to do. The airport, where US and UK military transport planes were flying people out of the country, became a focus for tens of thousands trying to escape the brutal Taliban regime.

Wais hoped to come to Britain and made contact with Freddie Benyon, back in the UK. But in the chaos and with three children and his wife, Mujgan – who was six months pregnant with Omar – to care for, Wais found himself and his family in a line for a US military aircraft and took that option instead.

"We left everything behind," he told the Echo. "All I had was two phones, two water bottles, nappies for my youngest son who was about one-and-a-half at the time and a few chocolates and snacks for the children. I had a government card, but no passport and no other documentation," Wais said.

They flew to Qatar, then on to the US, where Afghan refugees were being offered the opportunity to make a new life. He said: "I talked to Freddie and he said: 'it is your choice – do you want to stay in the US or come to the UK?' I said I didn't know anyone in the US but >



✦ *Wais' military qualities are recognised*



✦ *Wais with colleagues at Sandhurst*

SETTLING *in*



✂ Above: Wais's brother Shoib and Wais, Below from left: Shoib, Wais, Halima, Suliman and Mali

< I did know people in the UK from Sandhurst. Freddie and his dad helped arrange for me to come to the UK."

On October 16 2021, the family flew from Chicago to Heathrow. Temporary stays in Coventry and Telford followed – where the couple's youngest son, was born.

Wais paid special tribute to the help and support he received from Lucinda Knight, a friend of Freddie Benyon. "She helped me during the evacuation from Qatar to America and from America to the UK. She was always sending supportive messages and trying her best to arrange everything," he said.

Once in the UK Wais found a job working as a consultant for a security company based in London but still needed somewhere permanent to live. He went on: "Then Freddie texted me to say there was a cottage at Englefield and would I like to live there?"

"The family are now settled at their new home in Englefield Village. "Wais knows that in Afghanistan his daughters would not be allowed to go to school and is relieved they are getting an education in the UK. "I have no idea what's going to happen next in Afghanistan," Wais said. "I would love to go back at some time if it was safe – but I want my children to finish their education here." ✂



Building barn owl boxes was one of the highlights of Schools Days this year – bringing long-term benefits to local wildlife

Our ever-popular Schools Days took place in July, with local wildlife among the beneficiaries this year.

Children, under guidance from the Englefield Estate team, built owl boxes as part of the two days of activities. The boxes, designed to provide nesting sites for barn owls, have been put up around the Estate in appropriate locations.

Our Education and Environment Officer Dr Liz Mattison said: "With the help of our local Barn Owl Group, places have been identified for the boxes.

"Although they are called barn owls they like large cavities within veteran trees as well as the ledges found in old agricultural buildings. According to the British Trust for Ornithology the species has



✂ Dr Liz Mattison and the Barn Owl Group put up barn owl boxes on the Estate

LEARNING IS FUN!

adapted well to nest boxes, and it is likely that more than 25% of the population now uses them for breeding."

She said the use of owl boxes to encourage the birds to nest and breed had already proved successful on the Estate and the plan is to use the latest boxes, made by the children on Schools Days, to replace some that have worn out as well as others in new locations.

More than 1,500 primary school children from 34 schools in Berkshire and North Hampshire attended this year supported by school staff, Estate colleagues, volunteers and partner organisations.

Schools Days was granted the Sandford Award for Heritage Education in 2023 – a title it holds for five years. It has also been awarded the Quality Badge from the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom which gives schools confidence that the event is well organised and safe for children.

Peter Phillips, a teacher from Park Lane School, Reading, said his pupils who attended all had a great day. In a note to Schools Days organiser Dr Mattison, Mr Phillips wrote: "I just wanted to say a big thank you to all the helpers and organisers for another fantastic Englefield Day.

"All our Year Three children thoroughly enjoyed the day on Wednesday. It was so well organised, interactive and informative. We'd love to come back next year if possible!" ✂



“ All our children thoroughly enjoyed their day – we'd love to come back ”

✂ Children from The Ilsleys Primary School (middle) identify species of wild flowers. Pupils from Beedon Primary School (bottom) learn about animal nutrition.



The ENGINE ROOM of the Estate

A wide range of skills and a can-do attitude are key attributes of our Maintenance Team

Everyone who works on the Englefield Estate has an important role to play, but it's fair to say that the Maintenance Team is the engine room of our buildings and property operations – and often lends a vital hand elsewhere too.

Edward Crookes, Estates Director, said: "We are very fortunate at Englefield to have a Maintenance Team with great skills and, in many cases, extensive experience. Their willingness to help out across the wide range of Estate activities, beyond those an outside observer might consider to be their core roles, is hugely appreciated and we are incredibly grateful to all of them."

Duncan Rands

Duncan Rands joined the Estate in 2015 and is our Building Manager, in charge of the Maintenance Team. He has a broad remit with responsibility for all the Estate's built assets, including Englefield House. Duncan also holds the important role of Health and Safety Coordinator and works with department managers to assist with ensuring compliance across all estate activities. He is a member of Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors.

Duncan said of his team: "The work they do is absolutely essential to the smooth running of the Estate, for our tenants, the staff and the family at Englefield House. But above and beyond all that, they lend a hand when and where they are needed, whether that's at the village fete, on Schools Days, during the summer concerts or the many other activities and events."

"They have a large programme of planned work, maintaining the properties and other infrastructure – but they are always ready to respond to an emergency too. They really are heroes, often going above and beyond."

Luke Wade & Therese Knox

Luke Wade's role is in overseeing the day-to-day running of the team, diligently handling a huge variety of requests, from residents reporting slipped roof tiles, broken down boilers and blocked drains, to calls for assistance in setting up events that take place on the Estate.

Luke, who has been with us for just over six years, works closely with Therese Knox, the Maintenance Team Administrator, who is the first point of contact for all the requests that come into the Estate Yard. Therese, who herself has been in the role for six years, keeps works moving, ensures jobs are completed to time and allocates work to staff and outside labour as required. Luke and Therese have built a really positive and productive working relationship.

The six-strong team on the ground demonstrate a variety of different skills which mean every job that comes up right across the Estate can be competently and swiftly dealt with.

Robin White

Robin White, who has around 16 years of experience with the Estate, is our bricklayer and stonemason and undertakes a range of building tasks, including roofing. Robin, known by all as Rob, initially worked under his father at Englefield and has strong family links to the Estate.

Duncan said: "Rob is exceptionally skilled in stone and brick work and is constantly kept busy with planned and reactive works, whether it is repairing or replacing a patio, rebuilding sections of brick and flint walls or making good around a flue when a boiler has been changed. His attention to detail and quality of work is exceptional."

Roy Rose

Another long-serving member of the team is Roy Rose, a multi-skilled tradesperson with over 26 years' experience with the Estate, who undertakes a wide range of tasks including fencing, drainage, ground works and general repairs.

Duncan said: "Roy is meticulous in his approach and has the highest of standards, never leaving a job half finished." Among his many duties Roy takes responsibility for mowing and strimming the lawns and verges in front of Englefield House and maintaining the grassland in the deer park and polo pitches.

Steve Presland

Steve Presland, who has worked at Englefield for approaching six years specialises in plumbing and has an in depth and valuable knowledge of the Estate's private water supply, although he takes on a range of other jobs too.

Duncan said: "Steve is a reliable member of the team, he has a digger ticket and therefore, working with other team members, is the go-to person for repairs to the private water supply when needed. Steve's knowledge on plumbing and connections to the below ground water system is second to none."



Barry Sharp

Barry Sharp is our carpenter-joiner, based primarily in the joiners' shop in the Estate Yard. He can make pretty much anything in timber, from replacement windows and doors to tables and other pieces of furniture, including formal benches for the gardens at Englefield House.

Barry has worked on the Estate for approaching 15 years and has been joined by two 'newer' (in Estate terms!) members of the team, Shane Sewell and Matt Butler. Duncan said: "Barry is very experienced and is a valuable member of the team. With Matt and Shane on-board, Barry has the opportunity to impart his many years of knowledge to developing the team."

Shane Sewell

Shane, who has been at Englefield for just over 5 years, is a multi-skilled tradesperson and, in Duncan's words, "epitomises the

term 'multi-skilled employee'." Although he has a bias towards carpentry and joinery he can – and does – turn his hand to everything.

Duncan said: "The works Shane completes include window, door and building fabric repairs, basic plumbing, plastering and tiling. Shane will also happily pick up any other task reasonably asked of him."

Matt Butler

Like Shane, Matt Butler, who has been at the Estate for just over 3 years, is a multi-skilled tradesperson but again specialising in carpentry and joinery. He too is always ready to adapt to take on other work with enthusiasm and competence. Duncan said: "Matt makes a valuable contribution to the work of the Maintenance Team. We're really



pleased to have his skills, both as a carpenter-joiner and – when needed – across other disciplines too."

Maintaining the properties and other assets on the Estate is a never-ending task, whether with planned works or the emergencies that arise from time to time. There are also some surprising tasks that they take responsibility for too – from reading the utility meters to the external painting of up to 65 properties a year.

Whatever the task, the Maintenance Team are ready to help. Englefield Estate's staff, residents and visitors all have reason to be grateful for their hard work, skill and dedication. Whatever the season, the day, the weather, the Maintenance Team epitomise the analogy of 'the swan', graceful and calm on the surface, but paddling like mad beneath to keep moving! 🦆

Our team's projects

Different properties across the Estate present strikingly different challenges when it comes to maintenance and refurbishment projects.

The varying age and style of the homes let to our tenants mean a variety of methods must be employed to care for the homes and, where necessary, upgrade them for 21st century living.

Brooks Farm Bungalow, which underwent recent refurbishment, is not a typical Englefield property in terms of age and design, but did present some opportunities to try some approaches to improve the energy performance not widely used on the estate.

Our Assistant Building Surveyor, Steve Forster takes up the story. "It underwent a full refurbishment, including renewal of the drainage, a new kitchen, bathroom, replacement of the windows and complete redecoration," he explained. "A key focus of the works was improvement in energy efficiency, taking the property from an EPC rating of D60 to A95.

"Energy efficiency is a key part to our refurbishment strategy, and Brooks Farm Bungalow was particularly suitable due to the size of the roof and its orientation allowing us to install 18 solar panels on the roof, paired with a battery storage system. This setup allows excess energy generated by the solar panels during the day to be stored for use at night or during cloudy periods.

"The heating system was also changed at the property, replacing an oil-fired boiler with an air source heat pump (ASHP). Air source heat pumps work by extracting heat from the outside air using electricity. This has the benefit of reduced carbon dioxide emissions in comparison to oil heating, aligning with the estate's sustainability goals.

"Additionally, the existing radiators were replaced with an underfloor heating system powered by the ASHP. Each room is equipped with zonal controls, allowing the occupant to efficiently manage heating and direct warmth where it is most needed, with the idea being to improve comfort and energy efficiency which helped to achieve the high energy performance rating."

Our maintenance team and contractors faced very different challenges at Chalk Pit Cottages – two pairs of semi-detached cottages that were re-roofed this autumn after it became clear they were becoming fragile and subject to leaks.

Speaking just before work started, on September 23, our Building Manager Duncan Rands said: "We will be tackling one set of cottages at a time with chimney works first, then we will move onto the stripping of

the roof coverings, removing asbestos elements to the roofing undercloaks, insulating of the roof spaces with access from above, before moving onto the laying of new breathable membranes and fitting of a new, suitable and aesthetically acceptable plain clay roof tile.

"The planning of the works have taken account of the exposure and pitch of the roofs, meaning that the main roofs will have new, clay plain tiles, however, the single storey extensions – typically housing the traditional outbuilding - will have slate coverings, as the pitch of the roofs are too shallow for the clay tile. All guttering will be overhauled and through other, associated works, we will ensure gutters, and the roofs will be accessible in the future for maintenance purposes."

Whenever works are being undertaken a balance must be struck between cost, the availability of materials, the location of the properties and whether they are listed or in a conservation area.

"Having trialled a number of tiles for Chalk Pit Cottages, we have settled on a machine-made clay tile which, it is felt, is sympathetic to the age and vernacular of the cottages typically found on the Estate."

“
Energy efficiency is a key part
to our refurbishment strategy
”

It's not only homes that need looking after. During recent filming and the staging of the summer concerts one of the traditional gated and pillared entrances to the Deer Park suffered some damage from lorries bringing in and removing equipment.

Duncan said: "The works are to be undertaken by A.F. Jones, a very reputable and long-standing stonemason company within the local area.

"A.F. Jones have undertaken extensive works in the past for the Estate and continue to do so. Current works that they are undertaking include repairs to walls, steps and architectural features to the formal gardens, repairs to the principal lodge gates and now these works."

The Portland stone cladding must be removed intact, the supporting core of the wall taken down and rebuilt and the Portland stone refixed. The capping stone and plinth stonework to the base are to be repaired with resin supported stainless steel pin and dowel fixings used to reinstate damaged sections. ❧



❧ *Clockwise from top: Robin White works on the brick and flint wall; Barry Sharp making windows; The refurbished kitchen at Brooks Farm Bungalow; Re-roofing Chalk Pit Cottages*



Poetry in stone

The ancient flint and brick wall around the perimeter of Englefield Village has suffered damage over the years, including being hit a number of times by vehicles on the adjoining A 340 road.

But a slower yet just as damaging threat is now being felt – from the native broadleaved trees, particularly oaks – that were planted decades ago inside the wall.

As the trees have grown the girth of the trunks and the spreading roots have starting to undermine the wall, pushing it upwards and outwards and causing large cracks to appear.

Step forward Maintenance Team stonemason and bricklayer Robin "Rob" White who has spent a great deal of time, over the past year, carefully taking down and rebuilding sections of the wall, using innovative techniques that both protect the wall and preserve the trees.

Building Manager Duncan Rands explains: "Rob has carefully taken the wall down, flint by flint and brick by brick, salvaging and retaining all materials where he has been able.

"He has then formed new footings, amending the shape and footprint of the wall to account for the tree growth and allowing for future growth as well. Rob has, where possible, created feature brick arches over the root area, allowing the roots to continue to grow whilst preventing further damage to the wall and its foundations.

"The wall has been stepped out in design thereby giving the trunk more room and removing the risk of collapse or wall failure through the trunk being in contact with the newly constructed section." ❧





✂ The Findhorn winds through the landscape

The RIVER wild

A major project to improve the riverside habitat at Glenmazeran is underway

The Estate at Glenmazeran is playing an important role in an ambitious nature restoration and climate change mitigation project extending across the watershed of the Findhorn river.

Driven by the need to restore numbers of the endangered wild Atlantic salmon, the Findhorn Watershed Initiative is a collaboration of landowners, conservationists and supporters, led by the Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie Rivers Trust.

Strategy Lead on the project, Elle Adams, said the initiative was focused on improving the habitat for Atlantic salmon which have seen numbers dramatically decline in recent years. The work is also helping nature more widely, mitigating the impact of climate change as well as bringing benefits to the people and communities within the watershed.

The initiative includes tree planting and the encouragement of natural regeneration along the river system, the monitoring of water temperature, critical for the spawning of Atlantic salmon, and responsible management of livestock and deer that graze the rivers' banks.

The aim is to restore a mosaic of nature-rich habitats in a landscape that supports a diversity of wildlife, with cool, clean and wilder rivers shaped by natural processes and more resilient to climate risks. The watershed should also better fulfil its carbon-storing potential.

The Glenmazeran Estate land, around the headwaters of the catchment and upper reaches of the Findhorn, is mostly open moorland. An area of ancient forest, one of the few remaining sites of its kind in the area,

is to be protected from herbivore damage as part of the initiative, through the erection of deer fencing around 26 hectares of remnant woodland.

Over the longer-term new trees will be planted alongside the river to provide shading to keep the water temperatures down as well as boosting insects and leaf drop into the water, on which salmon can feed.

Elle said "The decline in Atlantic salmon numbers is complex and due to a number of factors. We are concentrating on trying to do all we can to improve those factors under our control. We want to create the best river system for the salmon coming back from the sea to spawn and send the young fish back to sea in the best condition possible."

She stressed that although helping to restore salmon numbers was the driving force behind the initiative, there were many other benefits flowing from the work, including mitigating flood risks, improving the environment overall and celebrating the history and traditions of the communities alongside the rivers, through local cultural heritage and other creative activities.

"We want to nurture people's forms of connection with the river and the wider landscape and hopefully deepen their sense of belonging so they want to take better care of it," Elle said.

A performance of Gaelic folk songs celebrating links to the river and the wider landscape took place earlier this year in Tomatin Village Hall, including a song with a particular connection to Glenmazeran, which has been shared with the Estate.

Funding for the project has come from the Scottish Government's Just Transition Fund, the railway company LNER and whisky makers Chivas Brothers, part of the French owned multi-national drinks company, Pernod Ricard, which is committed to environmental initiatives through its "nurturing terroir" programme and which makes Scotch Whisky in the area.



✂ Left: Bob Laughton, director of the Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie Rivers Trust



✂ Right: Strategy Lead on the project, Elle Adams

“The aim is to restore a mosaic of nature-rich habitats in a landscape”

Edward Crookes, Estates Director, who has been working closely with Elle and colleagues over the detail of this long-term commitment by everyone involved said: "the Findhorn Watershed Initiative is an impressive example of emerging green finance markets being used to fund nature recovery projects in a way which is as high-integrity and values led as possible, by delivering benefits to ecosystems and local communities too."

Bob Laughton, director at the Findhorn, Nairn and Lossie Rivers Trust said: "We're delighted with the traction we are experiencing across the Findhorn watershed area from a wide range of landowners and other stakeholders buying into this ambitious vision for local climate resilience and river stewardship, and are grateful to Glenmazeran Estate for demonstrating early leadership in implementing riparian woodland restoration works on the ground."

Murray Wilson, Head Keeper at Glenmazeran, is leading on the ground for the Estate on the project. He said the main work involved allowing tree cover to grow up along the banks of the burn to create, over time, shading which will help lower the water temperature to benefit the salmon.

"We're actually fencing off areas alongside the burn so the vegetation will regenerate. We fence to keep out the deer and the hares which would otherwise browse the young trees and bushes. Once they are established and no longer at risk from the wildlife we can remove the fencing," he said. "The cover, once it is grown, will also provide shade and protection for the wildlife."

Elle, who has a background in encouraging businesses to take corporate responsibility for social and environmental impacts, said the support of Chivas Brothers was significant and included both capital funding and support for project development.

Chivas Brothers have also given their support to the Deveron, Bogie and Isla Rivers Charitable Trust and the Spey Catchment Initiative to help restore the waterways across a total of more than 5,000 square kilometres of the region.

Julie Gallacher, Head of Sustainability & Responsibility at Chivas Brothers, said: "Just as we rely on the rivers, the rivers rely on us. The art of whisky making is a delicate balance, so too is the Scottish landscape in which we craft it. That is why we are proud to launch this partnership with the three River Trusts to protect and build a resilient network of Scottish rivers and riverbanks that support biodiversity for generations to come." ✂

Managing LAND for WILDLIFE'S benefit

The Glenmazeran Estate is taking the first steps towards gaining accreditation under the Wildlife Estates Scotland (WES) scheme, to demonstrate that the way it manages the land brings biodiversity benefits.

It is registering for Level 1 – the entry level – with ambitions to move to Level 2 which will require inspection and accreditation by independent third-party adjudicators who will measure the Estate's land management practices against a number of criteria.

Ross Ewing, Director of Moorland for Scottish Land and Estates, which administers the scheme, said WES is part of a larger Europe-wide initiative to ensure that there are positive outcomes for biodiversity through the way land is managed.

Already 860,000 hectares of estate land in Scotland is registered for WES Level 1 and 350,000 hectares for Level 2. The scheme was launched in 2010 and the first landowners received accreditation by 2013.

Ross said: "WES is starting to mean more as more estates sign up and become accredited. NatureScot, Scotland's nature regulator, now views WES accreditation as evidence that an estate is operating in a way that benefits the environment and improves biodiversity."

He went on: "There is a lot of misconception about estates and landowners, especially among the general public. One of the reasons for signing up to the scheme is to show, through independent accreditation, that estates can



✂ A black grouse

be trusted to operate in a way that benefits biodiversity - whether they are running a grouse moor or a nature reserve."

Estates that have Level 2 accreditation can achieve bronze, silver or gold standard. Ross said it was a reflection of the rigour with which landowners are judged that, so far, no one has reached the gold standard.

He said there were a number of benefits for estates that join the WES scheme including being able to demonstrate to NatureScot a seriousness of purpose in managing land for nature. There is also the prestige that goes with gaining accreditation against a challenging set of criteria and the knowledge that you are doing the right thing to help reverse biodiversity loss, he added.

Ross said: "To be blunt there are environmental NGOs which may be suspicious of some traditional landowners. When they see that an estate has WES accreditation at Level 2 that view changes."

Edward Crookes said: "We are at an early stage in joining the WES scheme but we see significant value for Glenmazeran in not only doing the right thing for biodiversity, but demonstrating, with hard data judged by independent adjudicators, that the way we look after the land brings benefits for the environment." ✂



✂ Extracting a stag the traditional way, by pony

Gamekeepers make the shortlist

Congratulations to our gamekeeping team at Glenmazeran for making the shortlist of the Scottish Game Awards.

The Scottish Game Awards were established earlier this year to highlight the fantastic contribution of sporting estates, game dealers, gamekeepers and ghillies in delivering for people, jobs and nature.

The awards are a collaboration between Scottish Land & Estates (SLE), Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust Scotland and Scotland's Regional Moorland Groups (SRMGs).

The awards were open across four categories. As well as the Gamekeeping Team of the Year the other categories were Game Champion of the Year, Fishing Beat of the Year, and Conservation & Sustainability in Sporting.

The event was held at the Scottish Game Fair in Scone from July 4 to 6, the premier celebration and showcase for country sports and rural management in Scotland.

Although our team – Head Keeper Murray

Wilson and his assistant at the time, Jim Edgar – did not win we were proud to see them on the shortlist. In the letter informing the Estate of their nomination the sponsors said it was a "fantastic recognition of the work being undertaken."

Murray said it was an honour to be recognised for their work. "It's nice that the judges recognised the breadth of our work and the positive impact it has on the conservation of rare species, heather moorlands and benefits it brings to local communities too.

Since the awards Jim Edgar has left Glenmazeran. We thank him for all his hard work and welcome his successor as under keeper, Lee McGibbon, to the role.

The Gamekeeping Team of the Year was judged to be Richard Malseed and Max John of the Auchnafree Estate, Perthshire with Joe McGowan, Robert Brannan and Fraser Walker highly commended. ✂



✂ Underkeeper Lee McGibbon



✂ Working in all weathers on the peat bog

Working hard to restore the peat

Work to restore the environmentally important peatland at Glenmazeran is a long and painstaking process, but the benefits, in locking up carbon as a measure to mitigate climate change are immense.

At Glenmazeran we have been working with contractors McGowan in a phased project coordinated by Dougie Campbell of Strath Caulaidh, who leads the Monadhliath Deer Management Group's Peatland Action project.

Peatland restoration requires a range of techniques but keeping the peat wet is essential to the process to control the emissions of greenhouse gases, especially carbon dioxide.

That requires the blocking of the drainage channels or 'grips' to stop water flowing off the peatlands. This helps the land to

become saturated again and provide an excellent habitat for sphagnum and other plants and wildlife.

Conditions at Glenmazeran can be harsh and the work is intricate, much of it carried out by hand.

Murray Wilson, Head Keeper at Glenmazeran, told the Echo restoring the peat was a long-term project, with some of the most recent work carried out by hand because it was too risky to take heavy machinery onto the very soft ground.

"The people doing the work would rather be driving a digger," he said. "But the ground they were working on was so wet and boggy they would have risked getting stuck. They like to take the digger as far as they can, but it is too risky to go too far and get stuck, so they have to work by hand." ✂



OUR FOOD AND DRINK HEROES

Great places to shop, eat and drink are just some of the things that make The Benyon Estate a brilliant place to live.

And for that we have to thank our talented food tenants, from cafes and delis to restaurants and wine bars.

Here's what some of our food and drink tenants from across De Beauvoir have been up to...

DE BEAUVOIR DELI

The De Beauvoir Deli on Southgate Road was a finalist in two national awards! The Deli, which has been dishing up delicious meals since 2009, as well as selling local artisan produce, was shortlisted in the National Muddy Awards in the category of 'Farm Shop or Deli' alongside five other businesses from across the country.

The awards, in association with Muddy Stilettos, "celebrate and support the most unique and brilliant local businesses".

For the second year running, the Deli was also named as a finalist in the 2024 Speciality & Fine Food Fair Awards, which recognise and celebrate "quality artisan products and inspiring independent retailers".

The Deli was shortlisted in the category of 'Large Independent Retailer of the Year', and the judges praised the Deli's ongoing charity initiatives and its commitment to sustainability.

HECTOR'S

A bottle shop and espresso bar from the morning and an intimate wine bar in the evening, Hector's is a firm favourite with wine lovers in De Beauvoir.

Hector's, on Ardeleigh Road, has been serving the community with high-quality wines since 2021 and has recently been recognised as one of the UK's best wine bottle shops in *The Times* and *Wallpaper*.

The wine bar and shop has been praised for its relaxed atmosphere, selection of top-quality wines and rarer vintages, as well as its tasty appetisers to pair with a glass, or two.

ALBERS

Named after the owner's Jack Russell terrier, Albers Café opened its second premises earlier this year on Englefield Road, adding to its site in De Beauvoir Block.

Albers serves 'unfussy, humble food' on an ever-changing menu in a comfortable,

and friendly environment, which shifts a gear in the evening as the café switches to bistro-style dining.

The café's new opening has been a hit with hungry locals and has been featured in the *Hackney Gazette*, *The Nudge* and *Hotdinner*s!

Well done Albers. Their recommendation: "Try the ham, egg and chips."

SWEET THURSDAY

Sweet Thursday is a Neapolitan style pizzeria and specialist wine shop on Southgate Road, serving delicious pizzas on freshly made dough, and other tasty Italian dishes with a wide selection of wines to choose from. Earlier this year, Sweet Thursday was host to an interview with *The Guardian* and Chris Van Tulleken, a doctor, academic, broadcaster, and author, who was discussing his book *Ultra-Processed People*.

Van Tulleken recommended Sweet Thursday – his local pizza place – as the venue to showcase how proper homemade pizza can be seen as a healthy food option for all the family.

With a selection of authentic dishes to choose from, you won't be disappointed! 🍷

Creating ROOM for nature

Creating room for nature is as important in an urban setting as it is in a rural one

On The Benyon Estate, the Maintenance Team works hard to ensure caring for the environment is always a priority.

Maintenance Manager, Duncan Urquhart, says doing the right thing by the natural world underpins the way The Benyon Estate is cared for. "Our Estate Manager, Edward Benyon, always encourages us to make sure that the gardens and trees on the Estate are well-maintained," Duncan tells the Echo.

"It's good for the wildlife and it makes for a nice environment for the people who live and work here."

Installing 'insect hotels' is one of the latest environmental initiatives that the team has undertaken. "Some call them 'bug hotels' – but I'm not keen to call insects 'bugs'" Duncan says. "Insects are more important than that; many are pollinators and others are a food source for birds and other creatures."

The Benyon Estate orders carefully constructed insect hotels from the National Trust and installs them wherever is appropriate when garden maintenance is being carried out, so long as tenants are agreeable.

The National Trust Apex Insect House has a variety of shelter types and provides habitats for a range of species including lacewings, ladybirds and even some butterflies. Solitary bees also build their nests in the bamboo tubes that form part of the structure.

An important asset on the Estate are its trees. Duncan says whenever one has to be felled, because of disease or it poses a danger to the public, another tree is planted.

Duncan said trees do occasionally have to come down – although this year there have, so far, been no losses. Trees, shrubs and flowers also provide support for nature in the gardens on the Estate.

Birds are the one example of the wildlife that residents



“It makes for a nice environment for the people that live and work here”

and visitors are almost guaranteed to see – thanks, in part, to the work of the Estate's Maintenance Team and the local Hackney Swift Group.

The Estate and the Swift Group work closely together monitoring the at risk species, which makes the annual journey from Africa to breed in more northerly areas and often favours urban environments.

Encouraging insect life in De Beauvoir helps provide the swifts with food, while installing swift boxes encourages them to come back, year-after-year, to the same spot to find somewhere to nest and rear young.

Duncan says whenever possible swift boxes are installed in appropriate areas on Estate buildings when maintenance is being carried out. It can sometimes take several years before swifts adopt the boxes, but they often provide homes for other birds in the meantime.

This year, the Estate helped with the rescue of an immature swift that crash landed in a garden in De Beauvoir. 🦉



🦉 Top: James McEnzie-Rose, Alex Philpott and Duncan Urquhart from the Maintenance Team install a hotel for insects.

🦉 Above: Checking a swift box



TRIBUTE to our friend TERRY

Terry Perkins, one of Englefield Estate's great characters, and a stalwart of the livestock farming community over many decades, died in June this year at the age of 81.

He joined the Estate in May 1970 and helped transform the dairy unit at Mayridge Farm, managing a herd of Guernsey cows for many years, until higher yielding Friesians were introduced.

Terry cared for the Friesians with the same dedication he had shown to the Guernseys until the dairy cows were eventually sold and a new venture, the Englefield Herd of pedigree cows, was established with the Herefords.

This marked a significant change for Terry, but he relished the challenge, entering the best bulls and cows into four or five agricultural shows every year supported by good friends Trevor Allen and Simon Strang, often enjoying success with the judges, and attracting buyers for the herd's calves.

Terry, who was an extremely knowledgeable stockman and a passionate supporter of animal welfare, became chairman of the south of England branch of the Hereford Cattle Breeders Association.

Richard Benyon said: "All of us at Englefield owe Terry so much. This is not just because of his professionalism and work ethic. It is

also because of his commitment to those he worked with and the community where he lived for over 50 years. We miss his geniality and his transparent decency. A wonderful man."

At the memorial service, held at St Mark's church on August 9, Terry's eldest son, Ian, paid a tribute to his father, who was born on an East Devon dairy farm, but moved with his family to Gloucestershire when he was six years old.

It was there, living on a farm in the Cotswolds, where his father worked, that Terry caught the agriculture bug. He came to Mayridge Farm on the Estate as a 27-year-old and quickly established a reputation as an expert stockman who really cared for his animals and with an ability to get the best out of cattle.

Terry was a dedicated family man, married to Dinah for more than 50 years and a father to Ian and Kate, as well as a much-loved grandfather.

He loved the Englefield Estate and its community, always encouraging others to get involved in Estate life. He was a skilful gardener, growing flowers and vegetables at Mayridge Cottages and chairman of the Englefield Flower Show Committee for many years, regularly making the announcements on show days, over the public address system. He was also a



Terry Perkins (right) chats to Simon Strang

supporter of St Mark's church, always ready to help out. Terry also loved a laugh and a joke, enjoyed family holidays in Dorset and later travelled abroad on regular trips with Dinah exploring new places and having new experiences.

He even made brief appearances in film and on TV – taking his place as an extra in the first episode of *The Crown*, filmed on the Englefield Estate, as well as featuring in two local TV news reports, once when a cow gave birth to quads at Mayridge Farm and again in a piece on mad cow disease, which featured – with Terry's picture, milking a cow – in the *New York Times*.

Terry sadly suffered with Alzheimer's disease during the final years of his life and died at Thatcham Court Care Home with Dinah by his side. Donations have been made, in his memory, to Alzheimer's Research. ❧

Our thanks to Simon Strang

The Benyon family has been very grateful to Simon Strang for taking over the care of the Herefords after Terry Perkins' retirement.

Simon's family has been at Wickcroft Farm since the early 1920s. His father and grandfather preceded him as tenants of Wickcroft Farm and when Terry was no longer able to work, Simon took on the care of the Hereford herd, which had been Terry's pride and joy. Simon retired from his farm in March this year and he and his wife, Allison, are moving away.

The Hereford herd has been sold with the majority of the cows – around 25 – being bought by Rushall Farms, in nearby Bradfield. They will, however, continue to be seen on the Estate, as Rushall Farm is to take the summer grazing at Mayridge Farm. The rest of the herd, around 15 cows, have been sold to another farmer out of the area and the young stock was sold at market. ❧

Equine matters

A new occupier of one of the Estate's farms is offering a high-tech solution to equine reproduction, including embryo transfer services that allow top quality sports horses to produce multiple foals while continuing to compete.

Qualified vet, Amber Clutton-Brock, has taken the tenancy at Wickcroft Farm following the retirement of the former farm tenant, Simon Strang, earlier this year. With around 200 acres of grazing land and several large barns, she and her team of around 10 can care for between 100 and 150 surrogate mares.

Her business, Equibreed UK, is a world leader in the field and provides a full range of equine reproduction services, including artificial insemination, embryo transfer, stallion services and stud facilities.

At Equibreed, UK clients who want to breed from their filly or mare can choose either to have an embryo flushed at around eight days and transferred into a surrogate, or have eggs collected and fertilised in a test tube. Sophisticated sperm injection facilities, which increase the chances of success, can also be arranged through partners in Europe.

Being based in West Berkshire, with excellent communication links and strong equine traditions, is a vital part of Amber's business. She provides services for horses of all kinds, apart from thoroughbreds, including polo ponies, eventing horses and other sports horses.

Amber has based Equibreed UK in premises between Padworth and Theale since 2014, but the opportunity to take additional land and buildings on the Englefield Estate at Wickcroft Farm has enabled her to expand the business and provide winter quarters under cover for the mares, when needed.

She stresses the importance of properly caring for the surrogate mares, many of which have had careers as sports horses and can have a new lease of life rearing a foal every couple of years. "We'll often take mares who have had a career doing something else and becoming a surrogate is a good move for them, until they are no longer fertile. Lots of mares stay with us for a long time." ❧



Amber Clutton-Brock with horses at Wickcroft Farm



✂ Lolly Hamlin



✂ Colin Richardson

Welcome

New arrivals to the Estate this year include **Lolly Hamlin**, a graduate surveyor, **Paola D'Elío-Escarpa**, the De Beauvoir Block receptionist. **Christine Painter**, cleaner at Englefield House, started on December 18 2023. **Colin Richardson** joined us in July as caretaker. **Gabriella Karpierz** is the De Beauvoir Town residential lettings and office manager. She joined The Benyon Estate in September.

Lee McGibbon joined the Estate in July this year as underkeeper at Glenmazeran having moved from his home in Braemar with his partner Phoebe. Murray Wilson, our Head Keeper said: "It's a big move for Lee and Phoebe, who have moved into their first house together. Lee is settling into the job really well – he's only 20 and has bags of enthusiasm."

We also congratulate **Fin Lace**, who completed his in-house forestry traineeship and is now a full-time member of the forestry team.

Charlotte Moss also joined the Estate. Her appointment, as a trainee forester, is through the Royal Forestry Society as part of its Forestry Roots programme. (See pages 6 and 7)

A warm welcome to all our new joiners this year.

Farewells

We say goodbye and thanks this year to **Jim Edgar**, underkeeper at Glenmazeran who has returned to a job on the Aberader Estate, where he has worked before and to **Lali Anderson**, the residential lettings manager at The Benyon Estate and **Becky McLoughlin**, who was the De Beauvoir Block receptionist.



✂ Paola D'Elío-Escarpa



✂ Left: Christine Painter
✂ Below: Gabriella Karpierz



We wish all of them the very best for the future and thank them for their work on the Estates. ✂



Congratulations!

Congratulations to **Rosie Riall**, the daughter of Mary Riall, Richard Benyon's sister, who married **Will Eden** on May 25 at All Saints Church, Kington Magna, in Dorset's Blackmore Vale.

Congratulations too to **Harriet Thresh**, our Rural Estate Surveyor, who married **Harry Bate** at St Helen's Church, Sibbertoft, Northamptonshire, on June 29, followed by a reception at Harriet's parents' home.

Edward and Jennifer Benyon had a busy year with two wonderful family weddings both within a couple of months of each other. First was on May 18 when **Charles Benyon** married **Megan Townsend** at St Mark's Church, Englefield and this was followed by a reception at Englefield House Gardens. And then in early July, **Georgia Rose**, Jennifer's daughter married **Russell Warman**. They chose to hold a unique and personal wedding ceremony in the Long Gallery, Englefield House with the reception taking place at Lovegrove. Congratulations to them all.

The very best of luck to our carpenter, **Shane Sewell**, who became engaged in the summer to **Paula Kerins**.



✂ Top left: Charles Benyon and his new wife Megan

✂ Top right: Rosie Riall and new husband Will Eden

✂ Left: Georgia Rose and her new husband Russell.

✂ Below: Harriet Thresh and new husband Harry Bate

✂ Inset: Baby William son of Caroline Jones



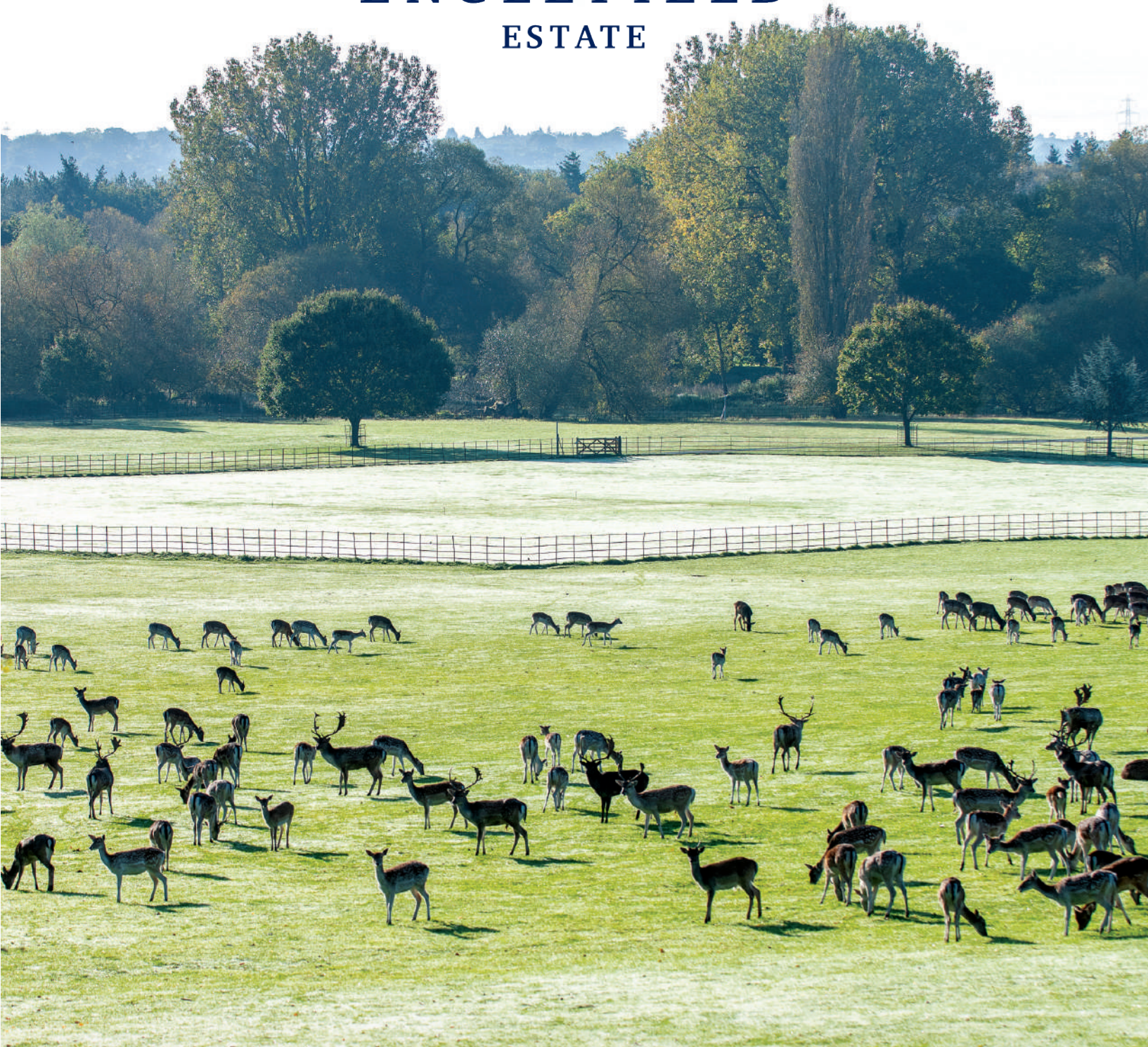
We're delighted to welcome back **Caroline Jones** to the Englefield Gardens team following her maternity leave after the birth of her baby son, **William**. We're pleased that

Emma Pealing, who provided maternity cover for Caroline, will stay on as a permanent member of staff.

Finally, **Richard Benyon** was honoured earlier this year to be appointed as Lord Chamberlain by His Majesty King Charles III. Richard took up the role on November 1 and will oversee the Royal Households on behalf of the King. ✂



ENGLEFIELD ESTATE



2024

This Echo is made possible with the kind help of all staff, family, tenants and friends of the Englefield Estate.
We would like to thank everyone for their contributions.



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