



DUCHY of LANCASTER

Tenant Newsletter - StaffordshireSurvey

Welcome to the third newsletter for the Staffordshire Survey. We are pleased to report that the market has responded warmly to our continued investment in residential properties across the Needwood Estate as we endeavour to establish a high quality standard that is consistent across the portfolio. There is still much to do in order to establish a good level of presentation across the wider estate and we will now be turning our attention to our farms and agricultural buildings. Thank you to all those who take pride in their properties and continue to treat them with the utmost care and respect. We must all play our part in looking after the Duchy inheritance so that these land and property assets can be enjoyed by future generations.

Duchy Standard Transforms Foxholes Farm Cottage



Our latest refurbishment project in Staffordshire has been Foxholes Farm Cottage on Greaves Lane. The property became vacant in December 2016 when a long-standing tenancy came to an end. After taking the property back, the team came up with a scheme that would update it in line with the Duchy design guide and quality specification. The improvement works included an upgrade of the outbuildings adjacent to the house itself as well as the installation of a new kitchen and bathroom.

A purpose-built glass portico was designed to maximise natural light and French doors were installed to the front to allow tenants to take full advantage of the views of the garden and surrounding open countryside. Several would-be tenants came forward while the refurbishment was underway and we are delighted to welcome successful applicants Mr and Mrs Skipper as our new Duchy tenants.



Royal Visit to Needwood

In May last year, we were delighted to welcome Her Majesty The Queen to Her Staffordshire Survey. The Queen last visited the Needwood Estate as part of Her Golden Jubilee celebrations in 2001.

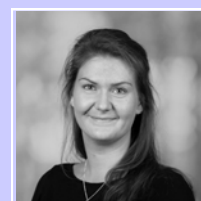
On this visit, The Queen arrived by helicopter at Tatenhill Airfield before travelling to Eland Lodge Equestrian Centre where young riders demonstrated their cross-country jumping and riding skills. The visit culminated in a lunch-time reception hosted by Philip and Kathleen Smith at Lower Castle Hayes Farm. Several of our farming tenants were able to attend the lunch and had an opportunity to meet Her Majesty in person. Sincere thanks to all those who took part and helped with the preparations - particularly our hosts Mike Shelton, John and Veronica Coupland and Philip and Kath Smith. It was a highly enjoyable day for all and a successful and interesting visit.



Your Staffordshire Team and how to contact them



Our new MD for the Staffordshire Survey, Paul Hutchinson, has been involved with the Duchy since 2012, previously acting as MD for our Cheshire and Yorkshire Surveys. In November last year the Duchy took the management of its Lancashire and Yorkshire Surveys in house and Paul took over as MD of our Staffordshire and Cheshire Surveys. Many of you will already have met Paul on his recent tour of the Estate. Naomi Browne continues in the role of Property Manager for the Needwood Estate. Both Paul and Naomi are looking forward to working with you in the year ahead. **Please note that the contact numbers for Paul and Naomi are: 01244 328141 or 07771 776255 (Paul) and 07807 999381 (Naomi).**



Popular Picnic Spot At Jackson's Bank

The Needwood Estate includes 500 acres of ancient woodland. The Duchy is working closely with Natural England and The National Forest to protect this, enhance its biodiversity and encourage public access wherever possible. At Jackson's Bank, 13 new oak tables and benches have recently been installed to create an attractive picnic spot and meeting point in one of England's oldest Royal Forests.





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Local Businesses Choose Upper Linbrook

Two of our existing tenants have taken additional commercial space on the estate in recent months in order to expand their businesses. Lyn Ashworth Ltd, a bespoke wedding dress company run by Sarah Barratt and Rick Atkins was bursting at the seams in their live-work property at Hanbury Grange. In November 2017, they took the opportunity to expand and develop a stylish new boutique shop at Upper Linbrook Farm. Ward Flooring also needed additional space to grow their business. They have taken the adjacent unit at the property, with Simon Ward's wife Jo also basing her interior design business Feathers and Oak, at Upper Linbrook. We wish both enterprises every success in their new premises.



Coming soon... The following properties will soon be available to let on the Staffordshire Survey:



Lower Linbrook Cottage

3 bedroom detached property
3 double bedrooms
2 reception rooms
Large private garden
POA.



18 Pipehayes Lane - Duke of Lancaster Housing Trust

3 bedroom semi-detached property
2 double bedrooms, 1 single
Recently redecorated
Close to local amenities
£600 pcm.

The Duke of Lancaster House Trust has recently purchased 18 Pipehayes Lane in Draycott-in-the-Clay. This property has been redecorated throughout in line with the Duchy design guide and will be available at an affordable rent to a qualifying person who has a connection to the Duchy. For further information on either property, please contact Naomi Browne on 07807 999381.

Protecting Ancient Woodland

The Duchy of Lancaster is partnering with Natural England and the Forestry Commission to protect and improve 500 hectares of woodland on the estate. Over the next five years the Duchy will implement a woodland improvement plan approved under the national Countryside Stewardship scheme. Particular areas of focus will include the restoration of ancient woodland sites to mainly native broadleaf species, thinning of stands, deadwood management, SSSI protection, bracken control, ride management and active squirrel and deer management. The five-year agreement is part of the Duchy's longer term woodland management plan for the next 20 years.



Soil Management



Following the bio-diversity audit carried out across all our estates last year, the Duchy is keen to promote other cross-Survey initiatives that will improve and protect our core natural assets. Soil management, including appropriate drainage, is an integral part of responsible land management. It helps us all to make best use of our land, as well as increasing its productivity and long-term sustainability. We were therefore keen to improve our understanding of common practices employed across the estates. Thank you to the large number of tenants (72%) who responded to our recent Survey questionnaire and helped to inform our thinking. As a next step, we are now planning a series of workshops for those who have shown a particular interest. It is hoped that these workshops will bring our tenants from each of the Surveys together to share knowledge and best practice. Details will follow shortly.

Duchy of Lancaster Benevolent Fund

Just a quick reminder that the Duchy of Lancaster Benevolent Fund exists to support local good causes and community projects linked to the Duchy and its estates. Applications from within the County Palatine should be addressed to the local Lieutenancy office. Applications from elsewhere should be addressed to the Duchy's London office. Previous awards in Staffordshire have been made to Draycott-in-the-Clay Parish Council. For further information on making an application please speak to Property Manager Naomi Browne.



If you have any news, views or stories you would like to see featured in next year's tenant newsletter, please email dgaritty@duchyoflancaster.co.uk. We look forward to hearing from you!