



DUCHY of LANCASTER

Tenant Newsletter - Lancashire Survey

Welcome to the 2024 edition of our newsletter for tenants across the Lancashire Survey. We hope that you will find this a useful and informative read, and an opportunity to learn more about members of the wider Duchy family and community. Recent years have proved challenging for many, with first the Covid-19 pandemic and attendant lockdowns, then the extreme weather brought about as a result of climate change and now ongoing concerns around the spiralling cost of essentials such as food, fuel and fertiliser. However, by working together and supporting each other, we believe that can continue to make positive progress in critical areas such as our physical and mental health, emotional wellbeing and personal productivity.

HIS MAJESTY THE KING, DUKE OF LANCASTER



In September 2022, on His accession to the throne, His Majesty King Charles III also became Duke of Lancaster. As a lifelong advocate of environmental sustainability and caring for the land, the Duke is not only hugely knowledgeable about the theory of sustainability, but also has practical, first-hand experience of regenerative farming methodologies. He believes wholeheartedly that we have a duty of care both towards both the preservation of the planet and to the generations of people who will succeed us.

In June last year, on His first estate visit since the coronation, His Majesty met a number of His Duchy farming tenants from across The Duchy's Yorkshire estates. During the visit, He toured a number of farms and explored the surrounding woodland.



The Duke takes an active interest in the lives of His Duchy tenants and receives regular reports of your activities, ambitions and achievements. Many of you will remember His Majesty's visit to Whitewell in 2017 while He was still The Prince of Wales and will be delighted to hear that He continues to care passionately about the environment. As Duke of Lancaster, He continues to encourage His tenants to introduce sustainable farming practices in order to protect and improve the land for the long-term benefit of us all.

Hedge Restoration in Whitewell



We continue on our sustainability journey and, as part of this process, have been auditing our woodlands and hedgerows across the rural estates to identify any gaps. The Whitewell Estate was our initial area of focus, where we worked with the team responsible for administering the Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) scheme in the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Once we had a draft plan we could share with our tenants, we invited them to put forward any additional suggestions, which resulted in three more hedgerows being added to the project scope. Our tenants then worked with us to cut back branches and prepare the ground in preparation for planting. All the new hedgerows have now been planted, using a mix of hawthorn, hazel, holly, dog rose, crab apple, honeysuckle and guelder rose.



As many of you know, Nathan Thompson CVO, has decided to stand down as CEO of the Duchy of Lancaster after 11 years at the helm. Nathan will hand over the reins to Alastair Martin, CVO in July 2024. Alastair is extremely knowledgeable, having served as Secretary and Keeper of the Records for the Duchy of Cornwall since 2013. In 2023, he joined the Duchy Council and currently chairs our Rural Committee. He is looking forward to meeting you all!





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Meet the Team:

Our Senior Estates Surveyor Lydia Richards leads on the management of our Lancashire Survey, supported by Robert Noblet-Stone, Dara Hunter Blair and of course our Head of Rural Mark Coombs and the wider Duchy team based at Lancaster Castle, Lydia is familiar with the Estates and will already be known to many of you. Please contact Lydia, Rob or Dara if you have any queries or concerns regarding your tenancy or your property.



The Duchy Farming Family: Making Farming More Sustainable



As part of our ongoing drive to encourage knowledge-sharing and awareness of regenerative farming methodologies, we are organising a series of 'A Pie and A Pint' nights across our estates. These evenings are designed to provide tenants with a relaxed and convivial atmosphere where they spend an evening among friends and listen to some first-hand experience from invited speakers on subjects relevant to their business.

We have also introduced a regular email group 'The Duchy Farming Family' and invited our farmers to submit any suggestions on topics they would like to see included. We continue to offer membership of the BASE UK information network free of charge and a couple of our farming tenants, such as Janet and Andrew Smalley at Wood End Farm, have partnered with organisations such as Pastures for Life (Pfli) and Linking Environment and Farming (LEAF) to co-host events of mutual interest on their farms. This is all part of sharing both knowledge and first-hand experience of the practicalities of adopting more sustainable farming models.

One of our organic farmers, John Alpe from New Laund Farm, has also been spreading the message of the challenges faced by today's farmers far and wide, appearing on BBC North West and representing both the Duchy and the NFU at an event at 10 Downing Street (pictured right).



Re-Purposing Redundant Stone-Built Barns As Homes For Local Families



Banton's Farm Barns on the Wyreside Estate have been sympathetically restored, rebuilt and refurbished to create three new, individually designed and energy-efficient homes for local families. In accordance with our sustainable design guide, these new homes have been built using local materials and benefit from heating and hot water



systems fed by ground source heat pumps. They also include natural wool carpeting and underlay throughout, as well as marmoleum, a floor covering created out of natural raw materials. Swift boxes have been built into the exterior walls and bat and bird boxes installed in surrounding woodland. A native mixed hedgerow, interspersed with trees, has been planted along the drive and each of the houses has access to an EV charging point. All three units have been certified 'B' in terms of their energy performance rating (EPC) and were let within weeks of completion, showing that demand for high quality homes in rural settings remains high in this area.

If you have a local good cause that you think deserves additional financial support, please consider making an application to the Duchy of Lancaster Benevolent Fund. You will find an application form on our website and your Duchy team can help and advise.