



Case Study – Green Tourism



Graham and Liz Cuthbert – Palace Farm in Doddington

At Palace Farm Graham and Liz are committed to providing excellent quality hostel accommodation whilst minimising the environmental impact of their activities. A symbol of this commitment is their membership of the Green Tourism Business Scheme. This scheme provides accreditation and encouragement for tourism businesses to reduce the environmental impact of their activities. By encouraging sustainable practices it ensures the continued enjoyment of the environment of England for future generations.

Graham and Liz love the village Doddington that they live in and the Kent Downs and feel it is important to help protect this environment. At Palace Farm they encourage their guests to walk and cycle, to buy local food and to learn more about the countryside and wildlife.

The Cuthberts are continually looking at ways they can improve their business environmentally while at the same time making savings – so far they are saving at least £1,000 a year. They have saved and re-used much of the original building materials, source locally coppiced chestnut for their fences and even the planters around the patio are redundant potato bulk bins. They re-cycle using low power lighting and have solar panels for hot water. They

use a program of monitoring the use of energy to see how they are progressing and they have a wood burner to save on heating with oil in their lounge which is also a hit with the guests.

This focus on green tourism helps Place Farm attract more business and stand out against their competitors “Our guests love it, our success with a gold award from GTBS makes a bold statement to prospective guests, they can see that we pay great attention to small details and it assures them of our overall quality standards”.

Indeed the Cuthberts continue “meeting so many wonderful people, and reading the visitor book is the most satisfying part of what we do. It is so rewarding reading an entry in the visitor book or receiving an email or letter thanking us, but even more rewarding if we get a repeat booking or guests who have been recommended to stay with us.”

And Graham and Liz still have lots of plans for the future. They hope to complete the hostel project phase 2 by converting their granary. They also want to set up a much better nature trail and a nature reserve and look for awards in that sector. Their daughter has just set up a Face Book account for them so they are now looking to get more into modern forms of communications.

As far as they are concerned going green is not an option but a must and their advice to other business is “It is clearly important to do all we can to help towards a better future for us all. Don’t be a dinosaur; the last ones are all extinct!”