

A photograph of two turkeys in a grassy field. The turkey in the foreground is a male, showing its dark feathers and a large, red, fleshy wattle. The turkey in the background is a female, with a smaller red wattle and a white patch on its chest. The background is a soft-focus green field.

R A B Y

Spring 2023

Forestry | Land Management | Farming | Buildings | Development | Leisure & Tourism

R A B Y



Forestry



Spotlight

Spring has bounced back

Spring has swiftly sprung itself upon us and we have seen new growth emerge across the Estates.

Forestry is cyclical by its nature, and we are nearing the end of the planting season, during which the opportunity has been taken to re-establish the woodland areas where felling has taken place over the last 12 months.

The beneficial aspects trees provide to Raby Estates are vast, many of which include: encompassing landscape such as our woodland and parkland, ecology, timber production and the general well-being of visitors. By the end of the current planting season, at least 24 species of trees and shrubs will have been planted in the forestry and biodiversity areas established by the Estate.

Most of these are planted as two-year-old transplants, which are between 20 and 60cm in height, offering strong, vigorous growth in the early years and robust establishment within the woodlands. A selection of larger oak trees have been safely planted on the parkland around Raby Castle. These new additions will coincide with the current growing stock and replace those damaged in the storms of last year.





In times when the influences of climate change are all too apparent, care has been taken to select trees with a provenance that is suited to current site conditions and to offer the best potential to adapt to the fluctuations in weather that may be encountered decades into the future.

Unlike agricultural crops, trees take many years to reach maturity, often covering several generations. During this time, careful tending and management of the woods are required to allow the best trees to develop. Recent thinning works undertaken by the Forestry Team and local contractors have seen an improvement in stands of oak and mixed hardwoods that are nearly 80 years old, leaving more space for the remaining trees to continue their growth towards quality timber for generations to come.

Scrub clearing as part of the thinning process has allowed more light to reach the forest floor, which should see much improved natural regeneration and development of the ground flora associated with the woodland.

As we go into the spring, an extensive programme of works awaits the Forestry and Estates Maintenance team, including maintenance of the newly planted trees and continuation of forest harvesting, to produce timber and fuelwood for local markets. In addition to tending the forest areas, upkeep of the Estate infrastructure remains a priority with significant sections of stone walling to be undertaken by the Estates Maintenance team this spring and over the summer period; a task that requires a high level of skill and diligence to restore some of the features that frame the landscape around the Park and wider Estate.

Geoff Turnbull, Head Forester

A dense field of wildflowers in shades of purple, pink, yellow, and white. The flowers are scattered throughout the frame, creating a vibrant and textured background. The colors are bright and saturated, with green foliage visible between the blooms.

R A B Y

Margaret
Bradshaw

Spotlight

Teesdale Transformed

Dr Margaret Bradshaw's new book, "Teesdale's Special Flora", which can now be purchased at Raby Castle's Stables Shop, was launched at a joyous event at High Force Hotel on 3rd March.

Margaret welcomed around 80 friends and well-wishers from far and wide, telling them that the book had been a long time in gestation since being suggested in 2013 by senior botanists from the Nature Conservancy Council, following a workshop in Teesdale. The book distils Margaret's unique knowledge of the flora of Teesdale (one of Britain's top five botanical hot spots) accumulated over 70 years of work and study into a hugely informative and beautifully illustrated volume. Margaret is now 97 years old, and still going strong!



Lord Barnard, who hosted on this occasion was the first of a small number of speakers. This included Martin Walters, son of Max, to whom the book is dedicated, with childhood memories of Margaret and a book, 'Ant and Bee', and Rob Still of PUP Wild Guides, the publisher. There was also Mogs Cousins, who read a message on behalf of Jill Sutcliffe, who had 'coerced' Margaret into writing the book and greatly assisted in its production, Chris Gibson, who edited the species descriptions and script-read, and Pat Doody, an early research assistant of Margaret's who recalled the shock of the Teesdale climate after being used to lazing on Brighton beach. When recording on Widdybank Fell with Margaret, he was also asked "If he was really grumbling or just muttering" as his fingers turned white with cold.



Dr Margaret Bradshaw

Finally, Margaret spoke of the Teesdale Special Flora Trust that she founded in 2017, to provide data on the locations and status of the special flora, in order to encourage and support Natural England to be more active in conserving the rare flora and other special plants. She also hoped to raise public awareness of, and concern about, the substantial decline in their populations. Like most charitable Trusts, the TSF Trust is constantly in need of money to sustain its work. In 2020 it received a large award from the Green Recovery Fund for a project which finishes this June – but the work goes on. Funds are urgently needed to employ a professional botanist to survey more species-rich areas, and to raise awareness of the unique assemblage of plants, through local schools and amongst the people of the Dale and visitors.

Margaret ended by saying,

"This unique assemblage of plant species is our heritage - yours and mine. Despite trying hard, I have failed to stop their decline; now it is up to you. Please support the Teesdale Special Flora Trust and buy my book "Teesdale's Special Flora"; join the Upper Teesdale Botany Group, go on guided walks, or become a volunteer. But please act to help preserve these Teesdale treasures – some of which can be found nowhere else."

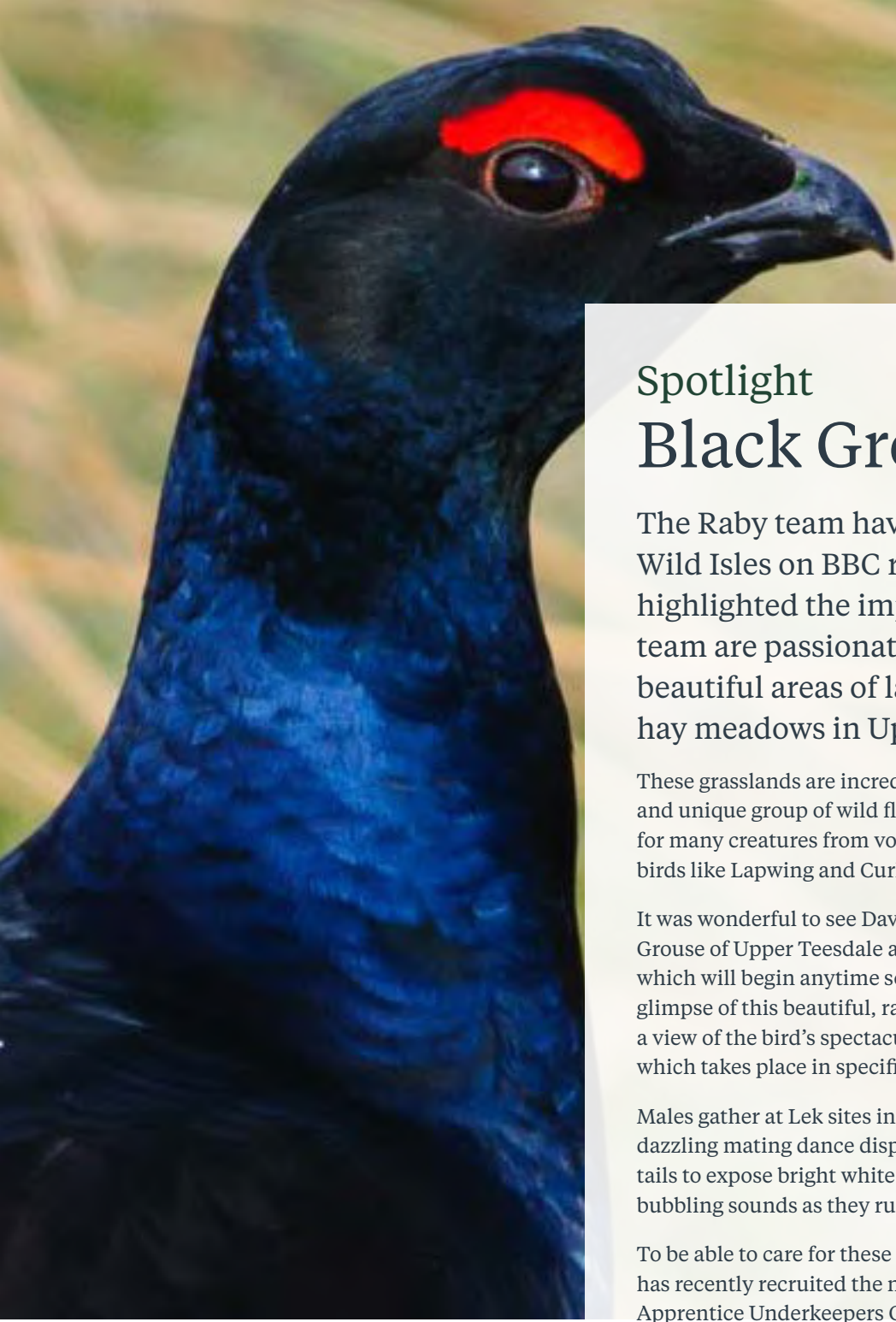
To donate to the TSF Trust
www.teesdalespecialflora.co.uk

Teesdale's Special Flora is now available to purchase in The Stables Shop at Raby Castle.

An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. In the foreground, a dirt road curves through a field of tall, dry grass. A dark-colored car is driving on the road. The middle ground features a large, flat, brownish field, possibly a plowed field or a dry pond. In the background, there is a dense line of green trees under a clear blue sky.

RABY

Land Management



Spotlight Black Grouse Lek

The Raby team have been enjoying watching Wild Isles on BBC recently. Episode 3 highlighted the importance of grasslands. Our team are passionate about conserving these beautiful areas of land including the upland hay meadows in Upper Teesdale.

These grasslands are incredibly important, as they support the rich and unique group of wild flowers and grasses, which provide food for many creatures from voles to insects and attract ground nesting birds like Lapwing and Curlews.

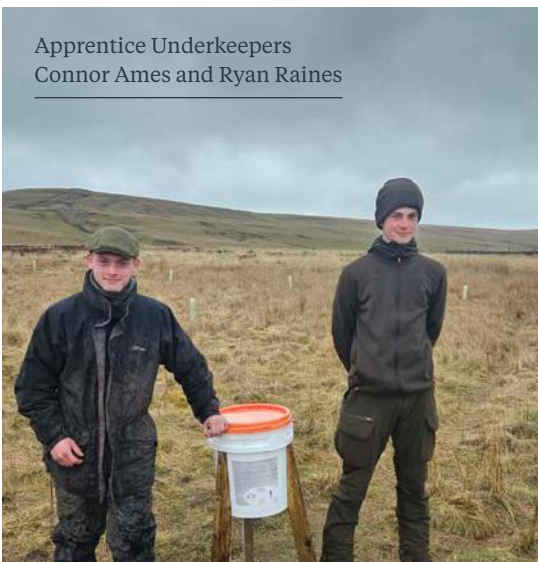
It was wonderful to see David Attenborough feature the Black Grouse of Upper Teesdale and particularly the famous “Lek”, which will begin anytime soon. Spring is the best time to catch a glimpse of this beautiful, rare bird, and very early risers may catch a view of the bird’s spectacular courtship display known as the Lek, which takes place in specific areas of the Upper Teesdale estate.

Males gather at Lek sites in the moorland grasslands to put on dazzling mating dance displays. They fan out and raise their long tails to expose bright white feathers beneath, and make curious bubbling sounds as they rush, jump and strut at one another.

To be able to care for these special areas and habitats, Raby has recently recruited the next generation of custodians, with Apprentice Underkeepers Connor Ames and Ryan Raines, who are proving to be a real asset to the department. Both passionate and enthusiastic about their roles, they continue to learn and support with heather management, black grouse habitats, pest and predator control and overall conservation projects in the scenic moorlands on the estate. The apprenticeships allow both traditional skills and modern techniques to be enhanced, benefiting future generations to come.

In celebration of these special birds and their habitats, The High Force Hotel are running a special event from 24th-25th April. Guests can enjoy an exclusive package: a night’s stay at the idyllic rural retreat of High Force Hotel, followed by an early start for an excursion with Raby Estates’ Head Gamekeeper to see the Lek and the beautiful landscape. After watching the birds’ fascinating performance, they will head back to the High Force Hotel to enjoy open fires, tweed armchairs and a hearty, locally sourced breakfast.

Apprentice Underkeepers
Connor Ames and Ryan Raines



A young brown and white cow is the central focus, grazing in a lush green field. The cow has a white body with large brown patches. In the background, several other cows are visible, some lying down and some standing, creating a sense of a busy farm. The lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day.

R A B Y

Farming

Durham Spotlight New Life on Home Farm

The spirit of Easter is in full swing here at Home Farm. New life is persisting through the previous darker months. After a harsh winter of snow and rainfall on the arable land, the sheep are now back at Raby Home Farm and giving birth to next year's lamb.

The angus herd and longhorn herd are currently both calving, and we are seeing young additions arriving to our fields. The direct drilled arable crops are looking well and the early drilled spring barley has emerged.

Philip Vickers, Farm Manager



Well-Trained Grazers

Farmers at Raby Home Farm have recently been impressed by their flock of well-trained grazers. The flock have successfully played their part at aiding the sustainable crop production at Raby.

Philip Vickers mentions, "We grazed a block of oilseed rape that was suffering with pest damage with positive results." Philip then goes on to mention the process of how this occurred. "We must have well trained sheep, first they ate the weeds, then the companion crop before eating the infested leaves, killing the pest".

The grazing of the damaged wheat has reduced the rate of disease spread amongst the continuing blocks.



Award-Winning

Philip Vickers recently won **Farm Manager of the Year at the Northern Farmer Awards**. It is fantastic to see recognition for our hard-working farming team focusing on a regenerative farming approach.

R A B Y



Buildings

Updates

Gainford Hall

Gainford Hall has been a project in the spotlight for the maintenance team for quite some time now.

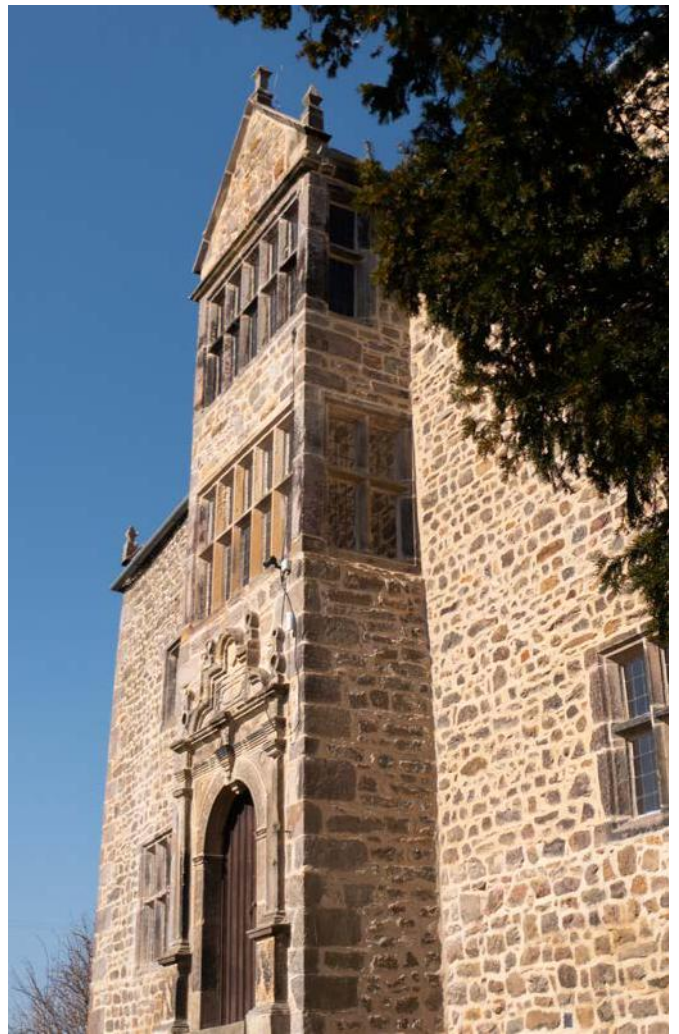
As the recent developments here are unveiling, we have received updates from Building Manager Phillip Dent on the current progress.

The image on the top right depicts the original plaster frieze situated in the main hall which is carefully and intricately being repaired by a heritage plaster restorer.

Phillip goes on to inform us of the modern building attributes which have been added to ensure the energy levels at Gainford are efficient. The maintenance team have installed under floor heating to the ground floor of the property and re-laid the stone flags. Alongside improving the heating system beneath the original stone floor, the team have also installed shutters on many of the windows to improve the thermal loss which occurs during the colder months.

The works are due to be completed late spring / early summer and will be available to let on a residential tenancy.

To find out more information on Raby Property and Letting please visit www.raby.co.uk/what-we-do/property





Continuing projects in the works

Ash Hill has recently returned to Raby Estates portfolio and is in need of full refurbishment. The property is only located a stones throw away from High Force Hotel and Waterfall and is situated on a popular route for ramblers.

Project Manager Karl Hankey reports that the property itself has no mains electricity. This raises challenges to progress, so it is imperative that Karl works alongside NPG to install this. Once this has been installed work can advance which will include a full organisation of the house and the land around it.

Karl states: “The property will have 3 bedrooms, large kitchen, large utility room and sitting room. The works will be fully compliant to current regulations and will include an A rated boiler, underfloor heating to the ground floor as well as new windows and doors.”

The work is scheduled to be completed late 2023, early 2024 depending on local weather conditions. Once completed, the property will become an impressive part of Raby Estates residential let portfolio.

Karl Hankey, Project Manager

Hilton Hall

Final amendments to Hilton Hall were completed late of 2022 and the property is now occupied. The work was completed in-keeping with the architecture of the Grade II* building and is a stunning example of the work being completed by the projects team.

To subscribe to the Raby Newsletter visit www.raby.co.uk





RABY

Shropshire



Recent Refurbishments

The Raby Shropshire Team have several exciting projects currently on the go and are pleased to team up with Visit Telford & the Totally Telford publication (which reaches out to 85,000 homes) who will be helping to promote them.

The Wrekin, Shropshire's iconic hill, and most popular landmark in and around Telford, is enjoyed by many different groups throughout the local communities. The project with Visit Telford aims to recognise the Wrekin as a sustainable tourism destination and for the Wrekin to become a globally important site, alongside the neighbouring Ironbridge Gorge UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Set within the Shropshire Hills AONB, the site is designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument at the summit due to the Iron Age Hill Fort, a special area for conservation, and a site of special scientific interest across the forest area. It is hoped that through forging sustainable transport links, utilising Telford's green infrastructure, and strengthening connections with local people through improvements to access, the Wrekin can be further enjoyed.



Thriving Rural Pub

The Horseshoes Inn, a Country Pub & Grill was recently purchased by Raby Estates, Shropshire in 2020.

The pub underwent a basic refurbishment prior to being let to The Grill Pub Co who then, during Covid lockdown, undertook a complete makeover, transforming the space into a vibrant and now thriving rural pub.

A recent article in the Shropshire Star newspaper stated that “One of the things that the management of the Grill Pub Co has managed to achieve is keeping the traditional pub look, whilst also making it ‘Instagrammable’.” This has been done with a combination of vibrant décor, adding touches like LED lighting, and installing large plants, giving the venue a fantastic look that fits in with different generations. On top of serving top class food and drink, the pub also welcomes dog owners as they usually attract walkers descending their climb from The Wrekin.



Cottages On The Mend

Wood Green with its iconic ‘Garden on the Corner’ came back into our hands towards the back end of last year, following the departure of long-standing tenants, Mr & Mrs Harris who have both moved to a residential care home together.

The 3 bedroomed detached property has been fully refurbished and made as energy efficient as possible in the process. The property should be ready for its new family to move in around Easter time.

Bluebell House also came back in hand towards the back end of last year and is the next property in line to undergo a full refurbishment soon after 1, Wood Green is complete. Bluebell House comprises a spacious 4 bedroomed detached property with an existing range of outbuildings and approx. 7 acres of grass paddocks. We are hoping to obtain planning permission to convert the existing cow shed into a separate 2 bedroomed dwelling, providing additional living accommodation. It is hoped that the property will be ready to re-let in Autumn 2023.

Charlotte Marrison, Shropshire Land Agent



RABY

The
Rising

Tremendous Walled Garden Remodelling

The first stage of a remarkable redesign of Raby's historic Walled Garden is nearing completion, which will see the launch of a magnificent, grass amphitheatre this summer.

A very special element of the Estate's ambitious development programme known as 'The Rising', is the remodelled Walled Garden, which has been carefully crafted by Lady Barnard, working closely with a world-renowned garden designer Luciano Giubbilei. The grass amphitheatre, the first of its kind in the north of England, is set in the lower part of the East Garden, enabling future visitors to gaze up at the spectacular sight of the castle on the horizon. This wonderfully unique space will be used for a host of summer activities, including plays and musical events, as well as providing visitors with a beautiful garden for quiet contemplation.

Work began in the Walled Garden in 2022, which is situated just a stone's throw from 14th century Raby Castle, home to the Vane family since 1626.

The new design for the East Garden sees evergreen-bordered herbaceous beds at the north of the garden, set amongst interconnected paths, leading visitors to the natural amphitheatre. The sculptural yew hedge, which has sat at the heart of the historic Walled Garden since the 19th century, was the main consideration during the design process, with great sensitivity shown to its importance in the landscape.

"The sense of past played such an important part in our design decisions when we embarked on this journey", says Luciano.

"There is so much history that came before us at Raby, and we needed to decide how to move forward with a design that embodied the atmosphere, enabling visitors to seamlessly move from space to space, but at all times, honouring the iconic shadow of Raby Castle in the background."



Lady Barnard and Garden Designer Luciano Giubbilei



Over the last year, the work within the East Garden includes the creation of the tiered amphitheatre, the planting of borders and the construction and establishing of beds. Evergreens and topiary have been introduced to reflect the balance of formality and informality within the structure of the garden, with *Taxus* hedging and *Osmanthus* cloud-pruned plants installed across the East Garden to create flow and mirror the form of the historical yew hedge.

“*Taxus* domes have been planted to delineate the edges of the amphitheatre steps”, says Tim Marshall, Raby Head Gardener. “But it will be the flood of soft muted colours in the herbaceous beds and the dense, structural green of the yew hedges that will draw the eye.”

“The completion of the East Garden will be an exciting milestone for The Rising development”, says Lady Barnard. “At the outset of this project, we had in mind something extraordinary, which would showcase both the formality and natural beauty embedded in this historic landscape.

We wanted something unique to Raby and with the addition of the amphitheatre, as a gathering space amongst the colourful planting, we hope that in time, the Walled Garden will be a beautiful place for the local community and visitors to enjoy all year round.”

Work is also underway in the Formal and West Garden. Local contractor Trevor Atkinson is preparing the foundations for the central rill in the Formal Garden, which will create a succinct and flowing line of water from the top of the garden to the South Walk gates, drawing visitors’ eyes onward and up towards the castle. Over the next six months, planting and hard landscaping will continue throughout the Formal and West Gardens, with the opening of the completed Walled Garden to the public planned in 2024.

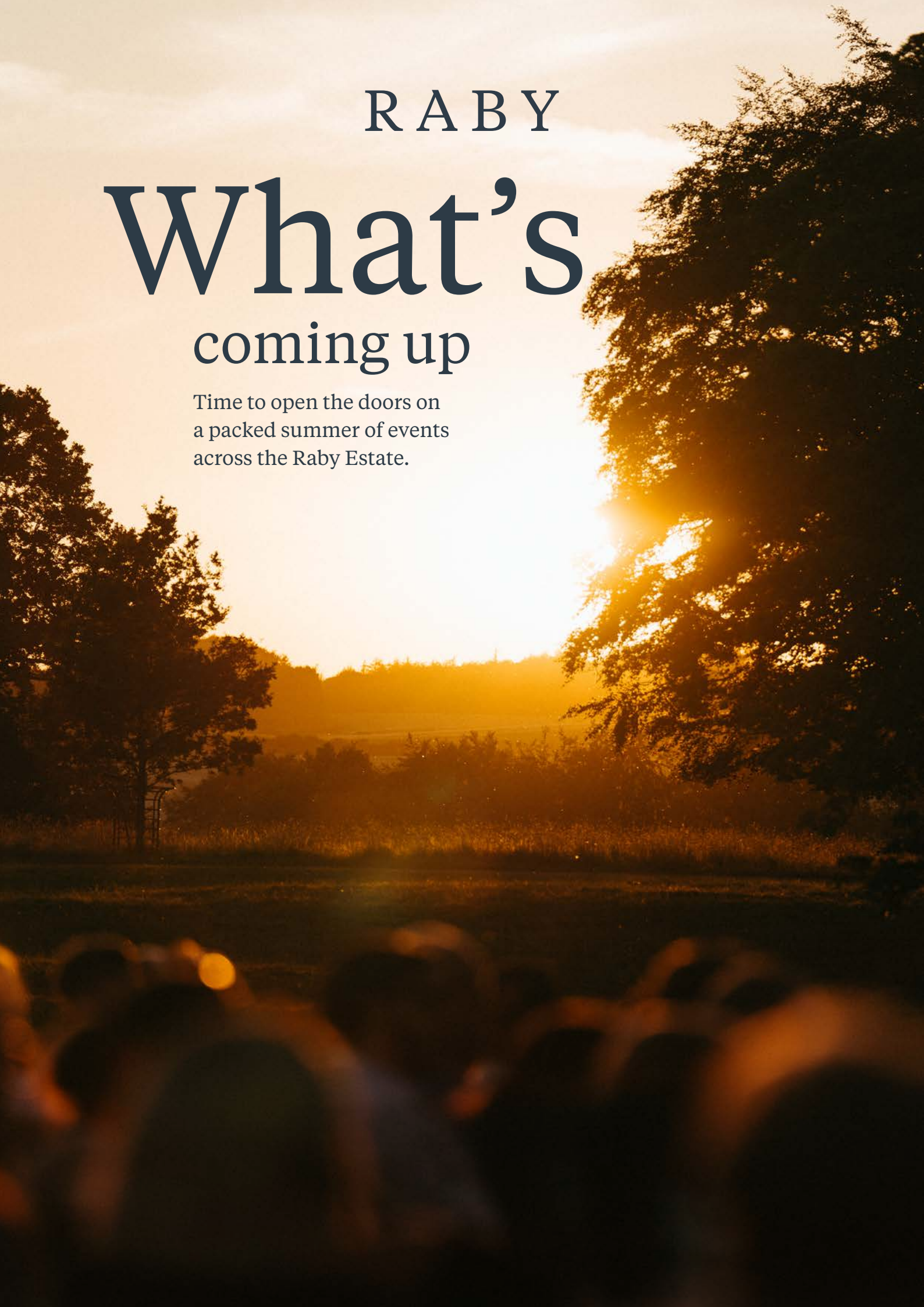
For the lucky few, there will be the opportunity to sneak a peek at the Walled Garden’s progress ahead of the formal opening to the public. From early summer, Raby Castle members will be invited to tour the completed East Garden, as the planting begins to establish.



R A B Y

What's coming up

Time to open the doors on
a packed summer of events
across the Raby Estate.



Leisure & Tourism

Upcoming Events



Easter Trail
High Force Waterfall
1st – 16th April



Easter Egg Hunt
in The Plotters' Forest
Raby Castle
1st – 16th April



Bunny Hop Trail in the Deer Park
Raby Castle
1st – 16th April

Hot Cross Bun Workshop
Raby Castle
7th April



**Sold
Out**



Easter Afternoon Tea
High Force Hotel
9th April



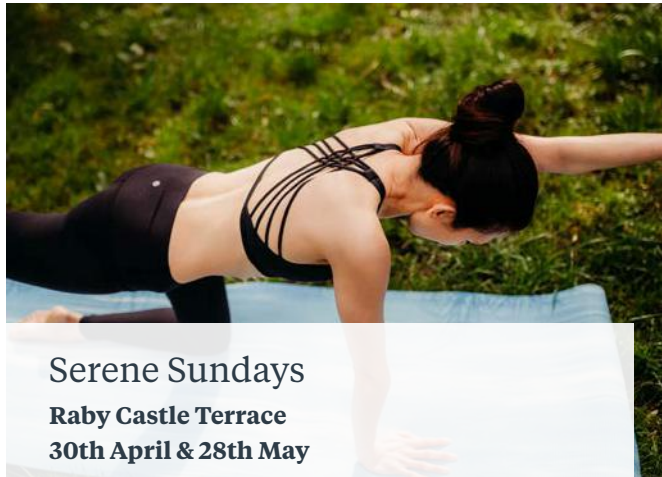
Children's Wildlife Walk
Deer Park, Raby Castle
13th April



Black Grouse Lek Stay
High Force Hotel
24th – 25th April



Behind The Scenes Tour
Raby Castle
23rd, 29th & 30th April



Serene Sundays
Raby Castle Terrace
30th April & 28th May



Bluebell Walk
Raby Castle
13th & 14th May



Royal Coronation Celebrations
 Glimpse of Coronations Past
 Special Tour: Raby and the
 Royal Family
 Royal Afternoon Tea
 Spotlight on the Archives:
 Raby's Royal Connections
Raby Castle
1st May – 4th June



Summer Seasonal Market
Raby Castle
20th & 21st May



**The Raby Races with Teesdale
 Athletics Club**
Raby Castle
28th May

R A B Y

A warm
Welcome

We are delighted to introduce some new members to the team at Raby.

Raby Estates

New Faces and Fond Farewells



Here at Raby, we have had the privilege to work with a variety of talented individuals, each of whom have brought something unique to the fold. We offer our team the opportunity to work in remarkable locations, from the rugged landscape of Upper Teesdale to the smooth plains of Shropshire.

We have opened our doors to a number of new team members over the start of the year. As our recent developments on The Rising are expanding, we are constantly looking at how we can grow our team at Raby.



The Rising has recently greeted talented additions to the workforce. We would like to warmly welcome two new Skilled Labourers & Joiners, Stacey Seddon, and Ben Glendenning. Stacey and Ben will play an important role in ensuring the quality of our Rising development is of impeccable standard across each project they face. Nick Pearson has also joined the team as Traffic Marshall replacing Aidan Armstrong who will be moving to the Garden team. Matthew Whale has also joined the gardening team at Selaby Hall.

Durham Buildings Team have recruited Painter and Decorator Derek Harmison and Lewis Cooper as a Joiner.

The Forestry Team have welcomed new Forestry and Estate Maintenance Supervisor, Benjamin Riley. Benjamin will oversee the upkeep of our woodlands and land to ensure that these areas are kept to their remarkable quality.



We are also delighted to introduce to you two new Apprentice Underkeepers. Connor Ames and Ryan Raine will be assisting in the conservation around Raby Estate.

Over to Shropshire now, and our team down in Telford have welcomed two new members of staff. Sue Blacker has joined as Property Administrator, Sue has the important role of being the friendly voice to our Property Portfolio down in Shropshire.

New addition Jamie Warner has offered his skills as a Joiner and Repair Works Supervisor in Shropshire. Jamie will oversee maintaining a high quality of standard in the foreseeing repairs across our Shropshire properties.

At High Force, we have welcomed Carol Gallois as a Visitor Welcome Host and Jonathon Craggs as the new Chef, alongside Rebecca Stobart as a General Assistant.

Raby Castle are joined by, Matthew Turnbull, Stephen Hazell, Yoly Marshall, Benjamin Turner, Bethany Turner, Eadie Lickrish, Judith Heckley, Rachel Moore and Sonia McCabe-Baxter supporting in the Food and Beverage Team.

It saddens us to say farewell to members of our team who wish to move on, we wish them the best of luck for the future.

We would like to wish Andy Gibson, Holly Gambles, Aidan Braithwaite and Lisa Bowmen the best of luck for the future. We have appreciated the exceptional work they have achieved in assisting with keeping Raby Castle, High Force and the full Estate, a bright and vibrant place to work.



RABY

WELCOME
TO
HIGH FORCE
HOTEL & WATERFALL

Careers
at Raby Estate

Raby Estates

Join our team

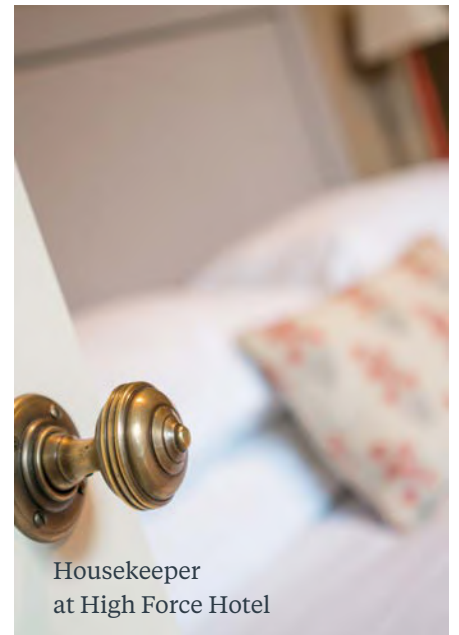
At Raby we offer you the opportunity to work in extraordinary locations in an exciting environment where no two days are the same. By joining our team you'll not only be part of an ambitious team but also a family of talented and like-minded individuals.



Bar and Restaurant Supervisor
at High Force Hotel



Food and Beverage Assistant
at High Force Hotel



Housekeeper
at High Force Hotel



Kiosk Assistant
at High Force Hotel & Waterfall



Bartender
at High Force Hotel

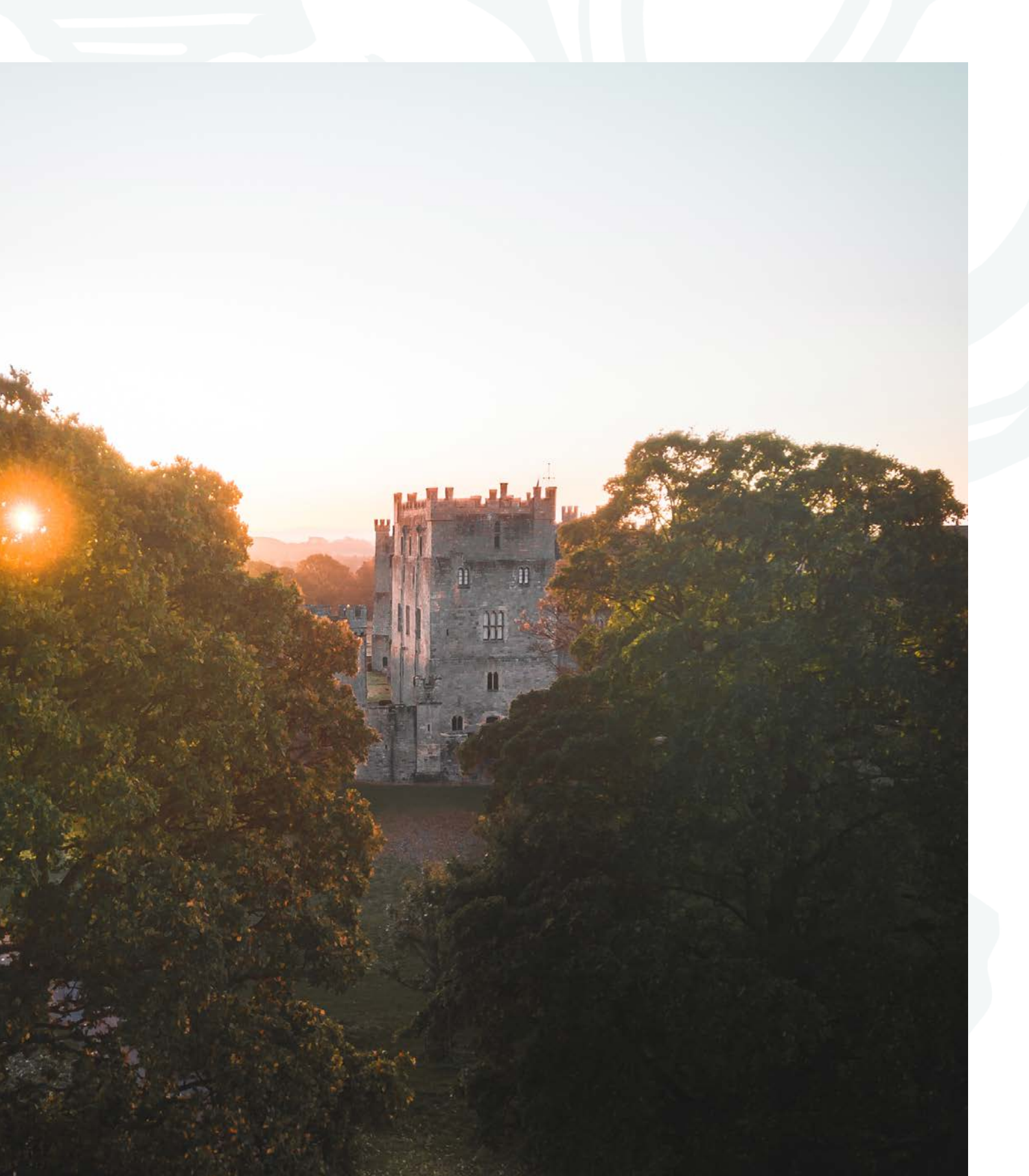


Kitchen Porter
at High Force Hotel

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