



A Vision for
RABY



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Proud of our Heritage



Welcome to RABY

With its sweeping views and commanding position overlooking Teesdale, Raby Castle has been a landmark of the north for over 700 years. We are proud of our heritage.

Key to the survival of RABY – the Castle and land holdings in County Durham and Shropshire – is the ability to uphold the past whilst embracing the best aspects of the present and future.

This document sets out how we propose to do just that; to look after the land, the landscape, the buildings, the businesses and above all, to support the wonderful and diverse communities that live and work here.

Lord and Lady Barnard

Who is RABY?

What we do

Property

Residential, agricultural and commercial.
Maintenance, improvement and restoration of
buildings in County Durham and Shropshire.
Conservation and care of heritage property.

Land management

Stewardship, conservation and education.

Leisure & Tourism

Landmark visitor attractions and accommodation
in County Durham and Shropshire.
Raby Castle, Park, Gardens and The Plotters' Forest.
High Force Hotel and Waterfall.
The Wrekin and the Summer House.

Farming

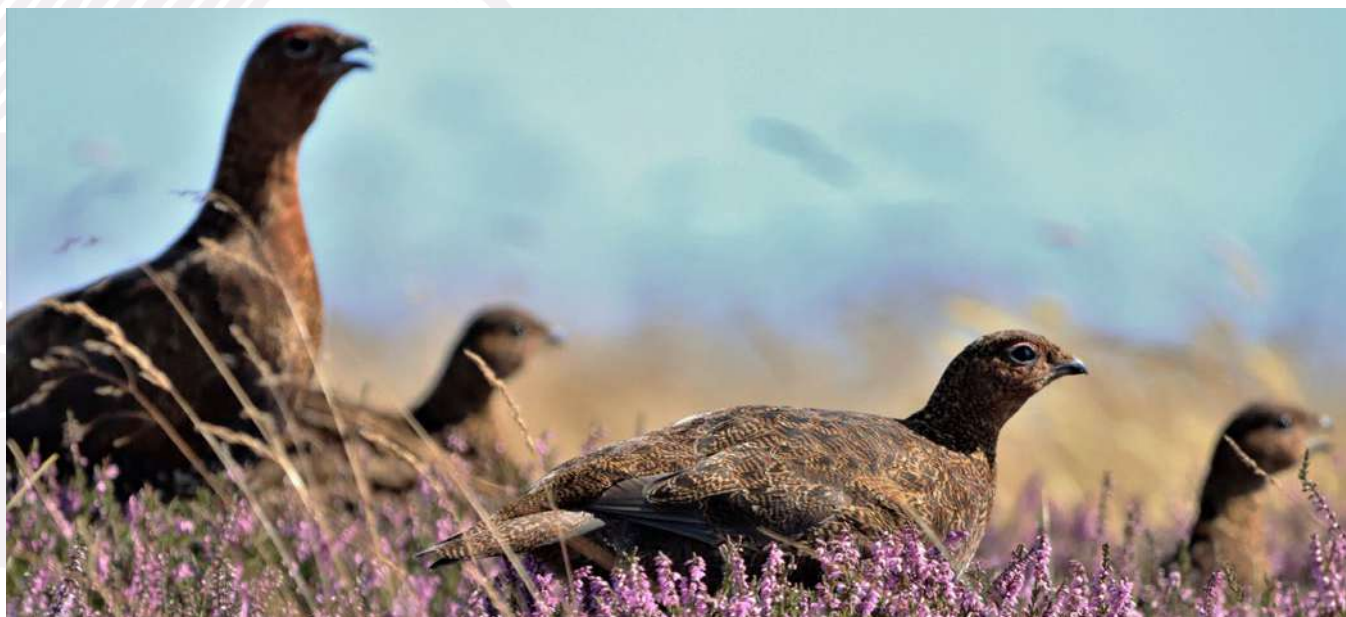
Supporting best farming practices in both arable
and livestock whilst embracing regenerative
farming techniques.

Sporting

A strong history of conservation and
country sports including shooting and fishing.

Forestry

Commercial and amenity woodland, focused on
sustainable harvesting and regeneration management.



Who is RABY? People

106 full-time employees | 49 seasonal employees | 63 volunteers



Duncan Peake
Chief Executive



Claire Jones
Head of Leisure & Tourism



Mark Smales
Chief Financial Officer



Philip Dent
Buildings Manager



Philip Vickers
Raby Home Farm Manager



Joe Robinson
Land Agent - Durham



Charlotte Marrison
Land Agent - Shropshire



Geoff Turnbull
Head Forester

Where do we come from?

From Danes...

The name RABY is thought to derive from early 11th century when the Dane, King Canute sat on the English throne.

'Ra' in Danish means boundary, 'Bi' settlement. It is not clear what kind of dwelling stood here then but, in 1378 the Bishop of Durham granted John, 3rd Baron de Neville – the Lord of Raby at the time – a licence to fortify the building. It was then that Raby Castle was completed much in the form we know today.

From their powerhouse at RABY, the Nevilles were among the most dominant and powerful families in the country and even had direct links to the crown; Cecily Neville (born at Raby Castle in 1415) was the mother of two kings of England, Edward IV and Richard III. This all came to an end in 1569 when Charles Neville took part in the Rising of the North – an attempt to replace Queen Elizabeth on the English throne with her cousin, Mary Queen of Scots. Elizabeth was not amused and while many of his co-conspirators were put to death, Neville was forced to flee into exile. The Neville lands, including Raby Castle, fell into the hands of the Crown.

...to Vanes

It was Henry Vane the Elder, turning his sights north, who bought Raby Castle and its surrounding estate in 1626.

Henry was a courtier of James I and continued under Charles I to become a member of the Privy Council and Secretary of State. His son Henry Vane the Younger was elected Governor of Massachusetts in 1636 before returning to England to become a leading Parliamentarian upholding the rights of parliament first against Charles I and then Oliver Cromwell. A champion of religious freedom, he was nonetheless beheaded by Charles II in 1662.

Fourteen successive generations of this same family have lived at Raby since 1626, the Barony of Barnard conferred upon the Vanes by William and Mary in 1698.

Today, Lord Barnard, the 12th Baron, is the custodian of land holdings and enterprises in County Durham and in Shropshire, the latter having also been in the stewardship of the Vane family since the 18th century. At the heart of RABY is the medieval castle in County Durham, each generation has left its mark and the castle is a rich amalgam of design and taste from across the centuries. It is as impressive today as it was when Turner painted it so atmospherically over two hundred years ago.







Where our focus lies

The Spirit of RABY

The great age and scale of RABY engenders a sense of permanence and stability.

When you walk inside Raby Castle, when you wander from the medieval kitchen to the Barons' Hall, when you look up at the suspended portcullis or peer out over the deer park, you feel a real sense of history and those who have gone before us.

Architects have added their layers over the years – Garrett, Paine, Carr and Burn – but the essence of Raby Castle remains. It is powerful and yet at ease with itself.

This sense of history spans all aspects of RABY.

At High Force, in Upper Teesdale, the water that plunges over the Whin Sill and into the pool below has been doing so for thousands of years.

The rare spring gentian that is found on the moor in the Upper Teesdale Nature Reserve is a member of a plant family that is thought to be 34–56 million years old.

The Wrekin – the famous hill that sits on the edge of the Shropshire estate – is the result of volcanic activity that took place around 600 million years ago.

Across RABY, we are determined to push forward and share our heritage by building on the legacy of our forebears.

Our five-year plan

Six main areas of focus

Amenity & Enjoyment

Charitable, educational, social and sporting events will ensure that all areas of RABY – the parkland, the woodland, the moorland, the upland and the lowland – can be enjoyed by the communities it serves.

Natural Environment

Upland, lowland, moorland and woodland must be preserved, sympathetically managed and where possible enhanced.

Community

We must support our communities and treat our employees and customers with respect.

Core Estate

The nuts and bolts of the Estate – its buildings, its properties, its heritage, its collections – should be looked after.

Family Ownership

The Vanes, have lived here for almost 400 years. For the Estate to continue thriving, it is essential that this tradition is nurtured.

Sustainability

To ensure that RABY endures, the business must be resilient.



Restoration | Renovation | Renewal

Core Estate

If Rome was not built in a day, nor was it restored in one – and a programme of conservation, restoration, repair and upgrading of the extensive RABY property portfolio has been put in place.

Historic buildings such as those at Gainford Hall, Raby Castle and Hilton Hall will be restored or repurposed.

Numerous dilapidated houses and cottages such as Spring Hill, Little Hill or Thompson House are being renovated and let each year. Some non-core properties may be sold.



Where planning policy allows, redundant properties and other sites will be redeveloped.

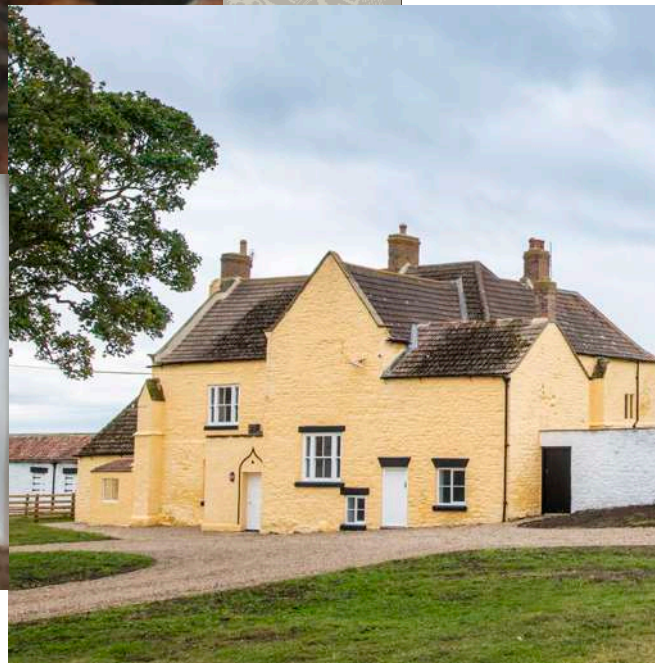
All residential properties are to be reviewed periodically.

The visitor offer at Raby Castle will be enhanced through **investment in an ambitious programme of renovation and improvements** of the site and the Walled Gardens will be re-landscaped, retaining key historic attributes.

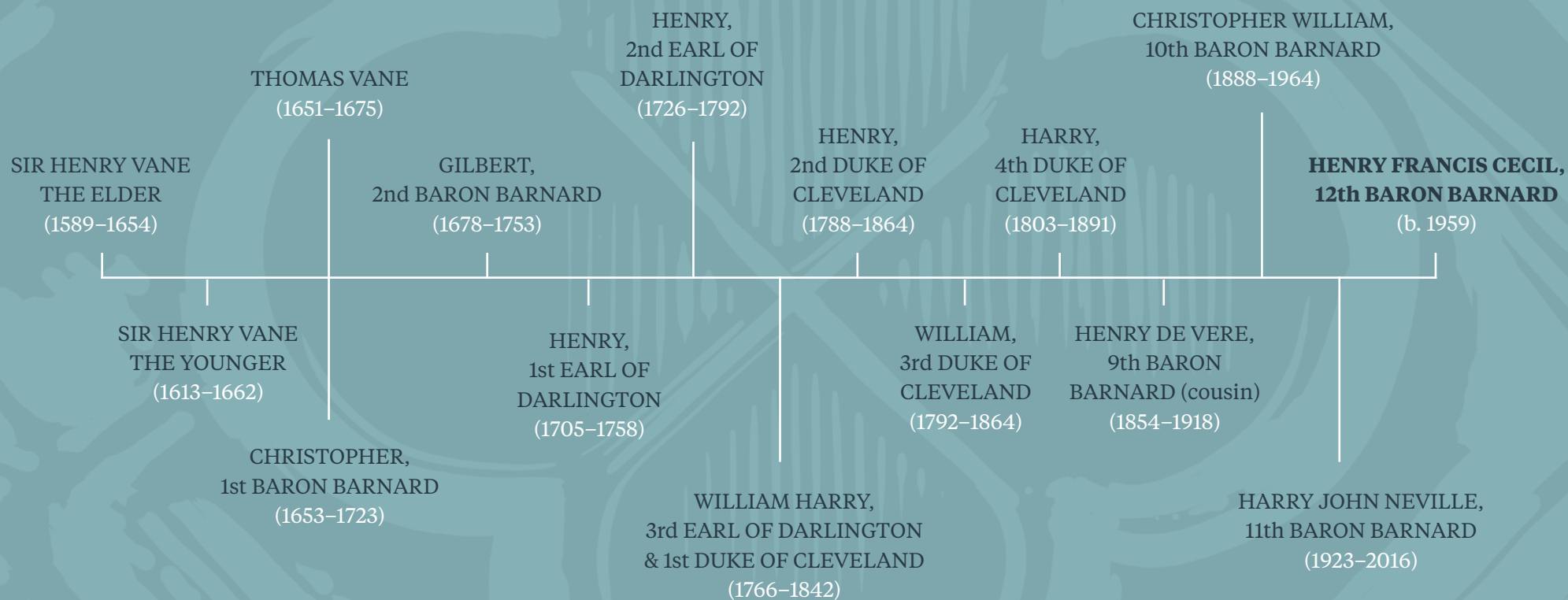
The curatorial team will safeguard and record the historic collections and archive at RABY.

The Hotel and Waterfall attraction at High Force will be improved and developed to attract new audiences.

All of our properties will meet regulatory compliance standards in full.



Vanes of RABY



Tradition | Continuity | Stability

Family Ownership



Despite some ups and downs, not least the unsuccessful attempt to demolish the Castle by 1st Baron Barnard and his wife to spite their son, RABY has managed to rise above it all with the Castle and land holdings passing down the generations more or less intact.

This continuity is key to RABY's survival.

Everything we do at RABY now and in the future is to safeguard it for the enjoyment of future generations. We are only the custodians of RABY.

Raby Castle itself is a living archive of each generation of the family. This will be celebrated in the redevelopment of the Castle site.

The five-year business plan has been created with continuity, investment and growth in mind for the benefit of those who come after us.

Investment | Development | Growth

Sustainability



It is to ensure that history can continue, that RABY can prosper and remain financially viable, that our five-year business plan has been put in place.

Staff management, accounting, cataloguing, and estate management systems have been, or are being, updated.

Equipment – such as farm vehicles – is being renewed.

Communications – wireless and fibre connectivity – are being improved.

Enterprise and new business activity are being encouraged in all areas.

Sensitive and well-designed development is being considered. All new developments will be delivered in a way that supports our local communities and builds on RABY's reputation for quality.

All businesses shall apply consistently high professional standards and offer first rate customer service to support the RABY brand.





3,000 tonnes

of sustainable timber produced from our woodlands each year.



Improving energy efficiency of our homes and reducing carbon by at least 50 tonnes per annum.

Caring for over

2,000

head of livestock across our landholdings.



77 Listed Heritage assets under management.

Multi million-pound investment at Raby Castle to support the County Durham visitor economy.

100,000
visitors to High Force



160 Employees
70 Volunteers

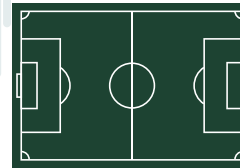
70,000
visitors

Borehole – **60%** of demand for Rising and **40% reduction** in carbon emissions



to open countryside in Shropshire, principally The Wrekin.

134,000 visitors to Raby Castle, Park and Gardens.



Land equivalent to **12,000 football pitches** managed for environmental gain.

Managing our assets for **the health and wellbeing of the community** we operate in with an estimated value of £73m over the next 60 years.



Producing over **10,000 tonnes** of grain on our in-hand farms



Calculating our carbon and environmental impact now to ensure we **contribute to net zero by 2050**.

Managing more than 10 SSSI, SAC and local nature sites which together make up over 40% of our landholding.



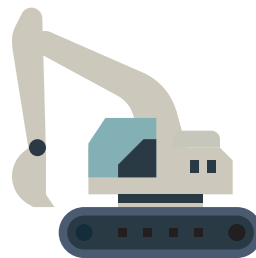
150 new homes

to be provided in Staindrop and Gainford, County Durham.

Providing over **20 community places** including cricket pavilions, schools, village halls, picnic sites.

Adopting renewable energy to feed back into the national grid and woodchip boilers to heat homes.

Over £3m spent in the local economy with local trades each year.



Maintaining 6km of stone wall
in Teesdale.



Training | Relationships | Engagement

Community

A fundamental strand of our business plan is a commitment to greater engagement with our local communities.



Educational programmes, social and charitable events will continue to be supported.

We will strive for **continuous improvement through staff training and staff development programmes.**

Communication with staff across our business should be clear, frequent and concise.

We will continue the tradition of **supporting the younger generation by providing apprenticeships, placements and training programmes.**

New volunteering and work experience opportunities within Raby Castle itself have been created.

External relationships with agencies such as Durham County Council, Visit County Durham, Shropshire Council, Natural England and the Shropshire Hills and North Pennines AONBs will be fostered.

The longhorn cattle and parkland deer are impressive, but **it is people that make a place.** Without people, a place is simply an empty shell.

At RABY this is certainly true. It is the employees, tenants, volunteers, visitors and families associated with RABY that make it special.

Conservation | Carbon Policy | Energy Audit

Natural Environment



RABY's natural resources represent some of our most important assets.

Stewardship of those resources for the benefit of future generations will be a priority.

A full **Carbon and Environmental Audit** has been commissioned.

New greener waste disposal and recycling systems have been initiated.

Regenerative farming techniques to improve soil health and carbon **are being trialled** and introduced.

Thermal performance of our housing stock is being improved.

Green and low carbon energy solutions are being sought and applied in all areas.

A peatland restoration programme is ongoing in Upper Teesdale.



Fun | Events | People

Amenity & Enjoyment

Whilst more will be made of Raby Castle as a visitor attraction, we will also develop a better understanding of our collections and archive.

Infrastructure and appearance will be improved across RABY.

Better communications between RABY and its visitors will be established.

More Castle Tours – including ‘Behind the Scenes Tours’ – will be offered.

There will be a rolling annual pass for visitors to High Force and Raby Castle.

The seasonal calendar of events will be broadened extending its appeal to people of all ages and backgrounds.

RABY’s buildings, collections and landscapes are to be celebrated.



full of
stories



full of
history



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