

Living the green dream

The Hyning Estate, one of three finalists in the self-catering category in the 2014 Cumbria Tourism Awards, offers luxury accommodation in an idyllic setting on the edge of the Lake District

WORDS CLAIRE SHERWEN



Occasionally you come across a place which is really special. It's the type of the place where the owners have paid attention to every detail and expended time and energy to ensure guests have a nothing less than perfect stay. The Hyning Estate is one of those places.

Tucked away half-a-mile along a lane just outside Grayrigg, it sits in a natural bowl in the hill side with views towards Kentmere and Longsledale.

The seven self-catering apartments have been sympathetically renovated in local stone and are furnished to an exceptionally high standard.

For Richard and Jan Hinchliffe, The Hyning is a labour of love. They spent years looking for the right property in the right location where they could create a luxury retreat with minimal

impact on the environment. Judging by the praise heaped on The Hyning by happy guests since it opened in March last year, I think they've succeeded.

The Hyning consistently receives five star reviews on TripAdvisor, while comments in the visitor book in our cottage all followed a similar theme: 'Fantastic accommodation', 'great views', 'wonderful hosts', and 'the best place we have ever stayed.'

Originally from Yorkshire, Richard ran his own software development company for almost 25 years until it was sold in 2004. As keen walkers and photographers, the Hinchcliffes had been regular visitors to the Lake District and decided to move to Cumbria, buying a house in Kentmere. They embarked on a three-year search for somewhere they could create a 'green' home with holiday cottages attached.

"We wanted to do

something really worthwhile and fulfilling for ourselves, for other people and the environment," says Richard.

The couple bought The Hyning in August 2009 and began building work a year later. It took three years to renovate the former 17th-century farmstead into seven self-catering units as well as The Byre, an on-site bar/meeting area.

We stayed at The Granary, a bright, airy top floor apartment which lived up to its 5* rating. The spacious open plan living area had Chesterfield sofas, a wood burning stove, and a large window with doors leading to a Juliet balcony and superb views to the Lake District.

The well-equipped oak kitchen included a full Denby dining service, a coffee machine and a juicer. Even the fridge was stocked with essentials including cheese from Low Sizergh Barn, locally

made Damson Gumbo, butter, and a pint of milk from a Lune Valley dairy. It was as if our every need had been anticipated by our hosts.

Outside the landscaped grounds proved the perfect playground for our two young children and we appreciated a (very reasonably priced) glass of wine during Happy Hour in The Byre downstairs.

Although The Hyning is self-catering, meals are available if booked 24 hours in advance. As my parents were visiting from West Cumbria, we booked a Sunday lunch of roast beef followed by apple pie. The Byre was transformed into a restaurant, just for the six of us, and we ate a delicious meal, cooked by Jan.

One of the advantages of The Hyning's location is its handiness for the Lake District, the Yorkshire Dales and the Eden Valley. Kendal is five miles away and the M6 is six miles away at Tebay.



The communal bar area; below: the Old Farmhouse apartment



It took us 25 minutes to drive to Brough, where we explored the castle ruins and ate ice cream from the café next door.

Richard and Jan drew inspiration for The Hyning from the many holidays they had spent in the Lake District. Cleverly hidden pull-down beds and adjoining doors between properties allow them to accommodate larger parties, and the 'Hyning Card' allows guests to pay for food and drink at the end of their stay, rather than reaching for their wallets at the bar.

They are rightly proud of The Hyning's green credentials. Ground source heat pumps power the underfloor heating and hot water; the water supply comes from the property's own bore hole; 20 thermal solar panels, hidden from view by a ha-ha, provide power when the sun shines; and all the rooms are well

insulated, triple glazed and have a ventilation system which provides fresh air at room temperature.

The harnessing of modern technology sits well alongside the traditional materials and original features which were incorporated into the build. Everything is designed to be in keeping with the age of the property, from the inglenook fireplace in the bar to the limestone floors and retained beams.

This combination of the old and the new, along with cosy, high quality accommodation and a thoroughly warm welcome are without doubt the secret to The Hyning's success.

 The Hyning Estate, Grayrigg,
 Kendal, LA8 9BX
www.thehyningestate.com
 Tel: 01539 824900
 Book direct with The Hyning or
 through Premier Cottages
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