

ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT FOR DOVE HOUSE and SWALLOWS

If only we could turn the clock back and rebuild Dove House and Swallows, we would certainly do it very differently than even 8 years ago!! Now we find ourselves trying to do what we can in a relatively new house to conserve energy, reduce wastage and generally be much greener in our outlook.

Every year over 800 people pass through Dove House and Swallows. We hope that you will appreciate the things we are trying to do and feel able to support us in them.

SOME OF THE THINGS WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DO:

- We have put bags in all the loo cisterns to conserve the use of water when flushing.
- We have showers in all but one bathroom to encourage people not to have too many baths.
- We do not have dripping taps!
- We have efficient double glazing, draught free doors and good loft insulation.
- We are changing to low energy bulbs in all possible lights.
- We are using recycled paper for all our office needs.
- We are using Ecover cleaning products as much as possible.
- We are recycling as much as possible at the present time, and have installed green cones for all food waste, although these are proving less successful in the colder months. (see recycling notes)
- We use local labour for all our building and ongoing maintenance, and local materials (bricks, flint and wood) as much as possible for the original conversion.

THINGS YOU CAN HELP US WITH:

- Try to use as little water as possible.
- Recycling as requested on the enclosed information.
- Turning lights off when not using them.
- Use the eco cycle on the dishwasher.
- Wash clothes at 30 c.
- Turning the televisions off rather than leaving them on standby.
- Having showers rather than baths when possible.
- Turning the heating down on the individual controls when you are too hot rather than just opening lots of doors and windows.
- Buy products with less packaging to dispose of.
- Leave no litter and respect the Country Code (copy in this file).
- Try to use alternatives to the car if at all possible, or chose more local things to do rather than travelling great distances. Stay here for the day and enjoy Dove House and the farmland around it. Bring your bikes and cycle many of the Dorset cycle paths.
- Buy local food and use local services wherever possible to support the local community that you are amongst.

ON THE FARM:

We are working within the Higher Level Scheme on the farm which is a DEFRA funded environmental scheme which aims to 'restore and maintain wildlife and environmental features particular to our farm.'

We have planted and restored over 3km of hedges.

Restored and maintained 48 hectares of woodland.

Established 72 bat boxes and 2 barn owl boxes within the woodland.

Planted a mixture of hardwood natives and there is an ongoing scheme for management and replacement.

We have taken fields out of arable production to maintain roman archaeological features such as the 'long barrow' (see notes at back)

We have created 6m buffer strips around all our arable fields with a wide range of benefits such as creating new habitat for small mammals, invertebrates and birds.

We have also sown enhanced wild bird seed mix plots to encourage winter feeding for birds such as corn bunting, sky lark and grey partridge.

The field beyond Dove House is lightly grazed to protect the many native flowers and grasses that grow on it in the summer.

The Downland is managed with minimal fertilizer and pesticide application, and in some cases none at all. In the woods hazel is coppiced in the autumn for spa making (used in thatching industry).

We have fallow and roe deer (and occasionally sikha) on the farm and have a management programmed to control the numbers and protect the woodland.

IF YOU ARE A NATURE LOVER:

We have supplied a book on wild birds and flowers in Dove House and Swallows for you to use if these things interest you. Also a pair of binoculars are in the sitting room (Swallows) if you wish to observe birds and wildlife while you are here. Please ensure they are left in the case where you found them and do not take them away from the property. There is information on local nature reserves for birds and wildlife in this file and on our website.

FOR THE FUTURE:

We hope to build a better area for rubbish over the next 18months. We have sourced some environmentally friendly complimentary bathroom products at last and will have them available shortly. Obviously we are working within a business and many things can only be done at the time of replacement etc, but our thinking is definitely changing, all thoughts gratefully received.