

Press release

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‘A New Era’ for Highclere Castle, familiar to millions as ‘The Real Downton Abbey’

The Earl and Countess of Carnarvon appoint Strutt & Parker to assist in managing their world-famous estate

With ‘*Downton Abbey: A New Era*’ set to hit the big screen this spring, so a new era is coming to the real-life Downton Abbey, Highclere Castle. The owners, Lord and Lady Carnarvon, have appointed Strutt & Parker as managing agents for this internationally significant estate with a mandate to embrace new technology and entrepreneurial thinking, whilst placing brilliant fundamentals at the core of decision making and in doing so protecting and enhancing the history and heritage that defines this iconic place.

Highclere Castle has been the ancestral home of the Carnarvon family for over 300 years. As custodians of Highclere, Lord and Lady Carnarvon are passionate about ensuring the estate and wider brand thrives. Through dedication, they are successfully promoting the estate on an international stage, and cementing its position in the global consciousness, ensuring it remains a must-visit destination while also remaining a family home with a strong sense of tradition.

The team at Highclere is astutely leveraging the success on both the small and big screen, welcoming thousands of visitors a year, hosting themed tours, receptions, board meetings, event weekends, as well as historic tours of the estate. Highclere also has its own award-winning gin brand, which is in the UK, USA and Canada, in addition to planting a vineyard four years ago.

Lady Carnarvon regularly shares an insight into the joys and challenges of life as custodian of the castle via a host of digital platforms, seminars and books. Her blog, weekly podcast and Instagram account are hugely popular.

Lord and Lady Carnarvon say: “Downton Abbey has made Highclere Castle a much-loved family home for which we are both incredibly grateful. Highclere is not just a building – it is about a community and one that is keen to reach out to, share with and welcome many visitors from around

the world. With exciting plans such as the launch of 'Friends at Highclere', we value expert advice and discussion in progressing these diverse projects and plans."

"In many ways, Lord and Lady Carnarvon typify the modern estate owner, focusing on concepts such as reputation, brand and marketing, in tandem with fostering a strong sense of tradition and custodianship for the house and grounds they so clearly love," **says Edward Lattimer of Strutt & Parker.**

"The late 1920s, when the last Downton film was set, was a time of huge change for country estates and indeed across society generally. Almost a century on, we're entering another new era, where landowners are being challenged to consider how they can take their estates forward while delivering on the green agenda and supporting local communities.

"Running an estate like Highclere successfully involves steering a careful path which balances commercial considerations with its role as a family home. It involves finding new sources of income and managing multi-stranded, interdependent revenue streams to secure the long-term viability of the land and property they steward."

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About Strutt & Parker

Strutt & Parker is one of the largest and most successful property consultancies in the UK with a network of over 50 offices across the country. Established in 1885, the business provides professional support on all matters relating to residential and rural land and property including investment, development and planning, estate agency and professional consultancy. With a dedicated, forward thinking team offering expert knowledge and sound, professional advice, we can ensure that businesses, farmers, landowners, house-buyers and international investors can make their assets perform to their best ability.

In 2017 Strutt & Parker was acquired by **BNP Paribas Real Estate**, one of the leading international real estate providers, which offers its clients a comprehensive range of services that span the entire real estate lifecycle: Property Development, Transaction, Consulting, Valuation, Property Management and Investment Management. With 5,000 employees, BNP Paribas Real Estate as a one stop shop company, supports owners, leaseholders, investors and communities thanks to its local expertise across 30 countries (through its facilities and its Alliance network) in Europe, the Middle-East and Asia. BNP Paribas Real Estate is a part of the BNP Paribas Group, a global leader in financial services.