

Holiday park owners seek more investment opportunities

LAKE DISTRICT HOLIDAY PARK SEEKS MORE PARK OPPORTUNITIES AS BUYING FOR INVESTMENT TREND CONTINUES APACE

As the trend for holiday home ownership as an investment opportunity continues, a privately owned Lake District park is predicting its best ever year, and is actively seeking to buy more parks all over the UK.

Jimmy Stewart has owned and run Brigham Holiday Park at Cockermouth, on the edge of the National Park, for the past five years, assisted by his wife Esther, and daughter, Rebecca. In that time, he has built the park up to a five star standard, become a member of the BH&HPA (a top industry body promoting excellence in the UK park industry), Cumbria Tourism, and spent an estimated £1.5 million on new landscaping, infrastructure and stock at the park.

Owners at Brigham, which is just thirteen miles from Keswick, are easily able to charge up to £600 per week in rental peak season, providing them with a valuable second income.



Jimmy said : “We’ve seen a massive explosion in the holiday home as investment trend certainly since we took ownership of

this park in 2014, but it's really been since 2016 that it has taken off to a new level, with savings being worth very little in the bank, and a couple of really good domestic summers and autumns boosting the staycation sector."

"We offer a year round season at Brigham, as many holiday parks now do – the time of being closed during the winter is well and truly over for many parks. We also now offer turnkey properties that are of a much higher standard than ever before, fully furnished and equipped. We put our faith into three main industry leading manufacturers, ABI, Willerby, and Carnaby, as we believe their product to be the best for our market," added Jimmy.

"And because of our location – which is just outside the main Lake District area, but you are talking about a short drive of around twenty minute, we can charge a good bit less for the same models that buyers would find at parks actually in the Lake District – up to 50% less, which is quite considerable if you are perhaps considering buying more than one, as some of our owners have now done."

Rebecca Stewart believes that price has never been more important in this sector: "As ever, it can be a question of how much investors want to pay, and our prices are from a very affordable £29,999 – in my opinion, a pretty much unbeatable price point. This year we have more models on the park than ever before, and are embarking on a new PR and marketing campaign to promote the investment side. We've beefed up our website to fully explain the concept and what second income it can amount to. We keep it nice and simple with all rentals, changeover, and maintenance handled by our in house team on the park, which has a full time warden too, along with gated entry."

"We certainly don't want to be complacent," she added, "you could argue that Brexit uncertainty has done us a favour with older people nearing retirement wanting to put their money

into something tangible that gives a return. This is indeed true but even if things change in the next few years, a holiday home is a fantastic lifestyle choice and our owners have a fully contracted lease of fifteen years here, which can easily be extended. This is longer than the industry regular. Our rates on the park are very affordable too.”



Brigham Holiday Park has recently become a sponsor of Keswick Golf Course, and is able to give every new buyer of a holiday home in 2019 fifteen rounds of golf for two over their first year of ownership.

Jimmy continued : “It’s a stunning scenic course. We wanted to look at some local sponsorship, highlighting the many leisure opportunities here in the area. Golf as ever is a big draw, and we now have a fantastic relationship with Keswick Golf Course – it’s just an extra incentive and thank you to those who buy with us this year.”

Summarising the current opportunities and challenges for park owners in this sector, Jimmy Stewart finished by saying: “Competition in the sector has become rife, with park owners clamouring to acquire new parks as they come onto the market.

It's very much a seller's market at the moment, and I would welcome anyone getting in touch who has a park to sell. We do want to acquire more parks in the right locations, as we have investment ready to make in them, to quickly bring them up to a higher standard. Many owners prefer to buy at a family run park rather than the big chains. We take great pride in the park, and are bringing many years of experience to bear."



A spokesman for BH&HPA said: "The boom in staycations over recent times has been helped by some amazing summers like last year's – and many couples and families have found that a holiday in this country can be a far superior experience to going abroad, and often a lot less stressful!

"Not surprisingly, a growing number of people are making a long-term commitment to taking holidays in Britain by buying a caravan holiday home or lodge on a park. It means they can enjoy short breaks and longer stays right throughout the four seasons without the need to book ahead, and will find all their home-from-home comforts waiting for them.

"Areas such as the Lake District are great to visit all year round, and a park-based holiday home can cost much less than a brick-built property. Even better, there will be no garden care or house maintenance to get in the way of your enjoyment, and the running costs can be driven down substantially if the owners choose to let their holiday home out when they have no need of it."

For further details on Brigham Holiday Park at Cockermouth, North Cumbria please call Jimmy Stewart on 01900 827 884, or check out the website at www.brighamholidaypark.co.uk.

