Yellowhammer

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Photos: AONB Unit.
Except:
G. Megson: Yellowhammer.
M. Hunter: Small tortoiseshell, Peacock butterfly.
Castle Howard Estate: Aberdeen Angus, Arable farming, Atlas Fountain.
Whitfield Benson: Welburn (front cover), Temple of the Four Winds.

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HISTORY AND HABITATS

Three circular walks starting from

Welburn

Castle Howard
YORK

Howardian Hills
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Welburn School work day, 2005

East Moor Banks

Welburn is a linear village. It was part of a joint parish with Bulmer until the 19th Century when it gained its own church and cemetery. Consecrated in 1865, the spire and tower-topped **Church of St. John the Evangelist** was mostly funded by the late Earl of Carlisle. The pews are made of oak and several of the stained glass windows are memorials to the Howard family.

Dial House, on the main street, is on the site of the former poorhouse or workhouse. The workhouse ran as a business, taking in paupers from other parishes. Traditional features in Welburn include the red phone box that stands on the main street.

Welburn Village Hall is situated on the same lane as the church. It was completed in 2007 and uses sustainable technology to light and heat it. The village obtained a grant towards the cost of an air-source heatpump and sunpipes from the AONB Sustainable Development Fund (SDF). As well as reducing running costs, these features will decrease the amount of fossil fuels being burnt when the building is in use. The hall is equipped for use by residential groups and a toilet is available for use by the public (locked at night).

Richard Spruce (1817-1893) was one of the most accomplished botanists and explorers of the Victorian era. He travelled extensively in South America, sending specimens of more than 7,000 plants back to England, many of which were new to science. He gathered seeds of the quinine-producing cinchona tree from the slopes of the Andes – these were used by the Empire in India as a source of this anti-malarial drug. Born in Ganthorpe, his family moved to Welburn in 1841. When not abroad he spent much of his adult life in Welburn, occasionally deputising for his father as the teacher at Welburn School.

The main building of **Welburn School** was built in 1841 and it opened as a boys school in that year. Today both boys and girls travel from Welburn and the outlying villages and farmsteads to attend the school. With the support of the Howardian Hills AONB SDF, the children and teachers have worked hard to create an organic kitchen garden and a wildlife area. As well as providing an educational resource these features have added greatly to the biodiversity value of the grounds.

Atlas Fountain, Castle Howard

The Howard family have lived at **Castle Howard** for three centuries. Today Castle Howard is a modern working Estate of 10,000 acres. More than 6,000 acres of the Estate are given over to agriculture. Environmental stewardship is at the heart of the wider management of the Estate and includes schemes for regeneration of hedgerows. Forestry is also an important activity, with nearly 2,000 acres of woodland (divided equally between coniferous and deciduous plantings) which are managed for commercial timber production, amenity and wildlife value. In April 2006, Castle Howard was given UKWAS accreditation: the UK Woodland Assurance Scheme (UKWAS) recognises forests and woodlands which are managed to the highest standards.

There are almost 200 buildings and monuments across the Estate – a major programme of restoration work is dedicated to preserving these unique structures. **The Pyramid** was built in 1728 to a design by Hawksmoor. Inside is a colossal bust of Lord William Howard, the Tudor founder of the Carlisle branch of the Howard family. Standing 90 feet into the air and supported by 20 pillars, the **Mausoleum** has been the final resting place of the Howard family from the 18th Century to the present day.

Ray Wood stands on the site of an ancient woodland – over the past 300 years it has gone through many transformations. By 1720 the wood was filled with statues, cascades, fountains and pavilions, but all of these features disappeared by the middle of the 18th Century. All that remains today is the Reservoir at the top of the hill, which was rebuilt in 1850 to supply both of Nesfield's Fountains. In the 1940s the wood was clear felled, but twenty years later re-planting began under the guidance of award-winning plantsman James Russell. Almost 800 varieties of rhododendron, providing an impressive array of colour during May and June, were planted. There are glades of pieris, wild roses, rare magnolias, viburnums, maples and rowans, creating year-round interest with a diversity of flower, autumn colour and fruit.

Welburn Mill was recorded in the Domesday Survey; it has since become known as Todd Mill. Both Todd Mill and Todd Wood, in which it is situated, gained their names from the Todd family, who operated the mill in the 18th and 19th Centuries. In the 19th Century some of the machinery in the by now disused mill was restored to pump water to the village of Welburn.

A First World War prison camp was situated to the north of Welburn on Water Lane, where the bridleway enters the woods at the base of East Moor Banks.

Bluebells

The Four Faces monument

Peacock butterfly

The Country Code

When walking in the Howardian Hills AONB please remember The Country Code:

- Be safe – plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals and take your litter home
- Keep dogs on a lead or under close control
- Consider other people

Please also take care not to disturb stock and to follow the waymarking, map and directions as you pass through farmyards and settlements.

Maps

These routes can be found on:

OS Explorer 300, The Howardian Hills and Malton
OS Landranger 100, Malton and Pickering

You are advised to use an OS map alongside this leaflet when following the walk routes and to carry a compass.

Welburn is at grid reference SE721680.

The Village

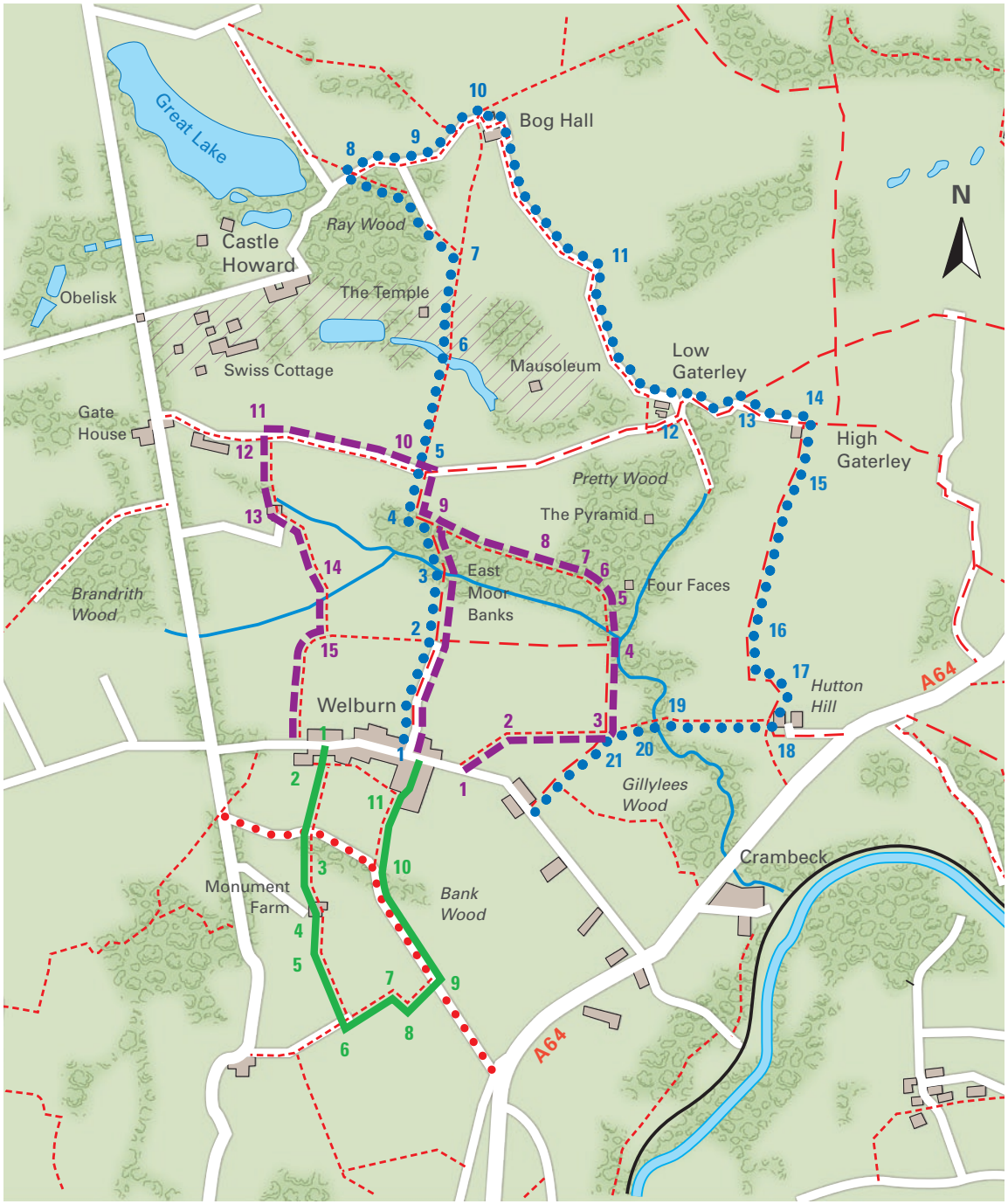
Welburn has a public house (serving food), village shop and café and car service centre. Bed and Breakfast accommodation is available in Welburn and the Village Hall is equipped for residential groups. Castle Howard offers a farm shop, giftshops, bookshop, courtyard café and plant centre with café (no entry charge to access these areas). More information about Castle Howard and the Estate is available from outlets in The Courtyard.

Getting to Welburn

By car: Welburn lies close to the A64. Limited free car parking is available close to the Church and additional street parking is available in the village. Please avoid causing inconvenience to residents when parking.

By bus: Routes to Welburn and Castle Howard run from Malton and York. Times available on 01653 692556 (or from www.yorkshirecoastliner.co.uk) and on 0870 6082608 (or from www.yorkshiretravel.net). Castle Howard also lies on Moors Bus Route 9. Timetables are available on-line (www.moors.uk.net/moorsbus) and from the North York Moors National Park Authority office and visitor centres.

By train: The nearest stations are in York, Malton and Thirsk. Some services link in with the above buses.



KEY

- Purple Route
- Blue Route
- Green Route
- Public Footpath
- Public Bridleway
- Other route with public access

The footpath through Pretty Wood is used when following the Purple Route. The wood is a SINC. It contains three types of oak: pedunculate, native hybrid and Turkey. The ground flora is dominated by a carpet of bluebells in April and May.

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PURPLE ROUTE

Grade: Moderate
Distance: 5.5km (3.5 miles) with an option to shorten to 3.5km (2 miles)
Terrain: Farmland and woodland paths and tracks.
Some short ascents and descents.
Can be muddy and slippery in places.
Walking boots recommended.

1. Leave Welburn in an easterly direction. Approximately 60m after passing the last stone bungalow on the left go through the handgate in the hedge. Bear in a north-easterly direction to walk diagonally across the field. In the distance to your left are the coniferous plantations and deciduous woodlands of the Castle Howard Estate.

2. Keep the hedge to your right hand side and walk along this field boundary towards a fingerpost sign. From this sign head up the slight rise in front of you towards the next fingerpost sign.

3. Follow a wooden post and rail fence. After 25m you reach, and follow, another wooden fingerpost sign signalling a bridleway 'Coneysthorpe 2½ miles' (The Centenary Way). Go through the wooden fieldgate and, keeping the mature mixed hedge to your right, walk along the field margin. Skylarks can often be heard overhead; try to spot them rising over the field.

4. Pass through the wooden handgate and descend into Todd Wood. Orange tip, peacock and small tortoiseshell butterflies can all be seen along this woodland edge. The large black bracket fungus Fomes fomentarius (Hoof fungus) can be seen on the silver birch trees to your right. Approximately 150m after entering the trees cross a small stream; you are now in Pretty Wood Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). Pretty Wood has been classified as a SINC in recognition of its biodiversity value. The wood contains pedunculate, native hybrid and Turkey oak, with patches of sycamore and hazel. Almost immediately you reach a wooden fingerpost sign; continue straight ahead towards Coneysthorpe.

5. Go over the stile next to a wooden fieldgate and continue to follow the footpath waymark discs as you ascend the slope. Carpets of bluebells can be seen flowering in May. The rattling or hard clicking warning call of wrens can be heard from patches of bramble in this oak-dominated woodland.

6. On reaching the top of the rise, before turning left along the Centenary Way, visit the Four Faces Monument to your right, partially obscured from view by trees. Designed by Nicholas Hawksmoor, the monument was restored between 1997 and 2003.

7. The woodland to the left of The Centenary Way is East Moor Banks; initially it is dominated by a mix of native broadleaved species. As you progress it becomes plantation; firstly of sycamore and then larch and spruce.

8. To your right, through the first opening in the trees and across the open field, you can see a white dome on the horizon. This is the roof of the Mausoleum.

9. This wooden fingerpost sign marks your decision point. Either turn left (Welburn) to shorten the walk, or bear right along the bridleway in the direction of Coneysthorpe to complete the full route. Proceed through the wooden gate and along the track to the fingerpost sign.

10. Here, at the crossing of paths, we leave the Blue Route and continue along the tarmac road towards Bulmer. As you walk along the road look right to see Ray Wood, Castle Howard and the landscaped gardens and parklands. Contrast these with the woods and farmland of the Estate. Listen for skylarks and keep an eye out for buzzards.

11. As you draw level with Castle Howard take the left turn onto a footpath signposted 'Welburn 1 mile'. As you walk in a southerly direction look to the left and you see the Derwent Gorge with the rise beyond of the Yorkshire Wolds. Descend on this path towards Welburn; on your right hand side you pass a semi-derelict turret at the end of a section of the Mock Fortifications that extend from the Gatehouse. The Mock Fortifications, (designed by Vanburgh and begun c.1720), recall the medieval walls of York, Chester (Vanbrugh's hometown) and Rome. Note the cross-shaped window openings.

12. On passing the turret continue downhill, heading directly towards Moorhouses Farm. Moorhouses was formerly a hamlet containing 12 or 13 dwellings, including a row of thatched cottages. Pass through a kissing gate at the corner of the wood, then walk straight across the field to the second kissing gate.

13. At this gate bear left to pass through another one into the corner of the farmyard. Follow the waymarking and after 15m leave the farmyard through a fourth kissing gate. Having exited the farmyard keep the hedge immediately to your right hand side as you walk in an easterly direction. Pass through a fifth kissing gate and then a wooden fieldgate. Carry on, keeping the hedge to your right. The hedgerow species include hazel, blackthorn, hawthorn, apple, ash, holly and elder.

14. Leave this field through a kissing gate, cross a small stream and emerge into an open field. Immediately turn right to follow the footpath alongside a hedgerow. After 100m the hedgerow to your right takes a right hand turn; you leave it at this point and continue straight on towards the fingerpost sign.

15. At this fingerpost, whilst Welburn lies slightly to your left, you turn right as indicated on the sign. Follow this crossfield track through a gap in the hedgerow and turn left as indicated on the waymarker on the far side of the hedgerow boundary. Keep the solid hawthorn hedge to your left hand side and continue along the grassy track; pass to the right of a collection of sheds and barns and emerge onto the main street of Welburn. Turning left along the road brings you back to the centre of the village.

BLUE ROUTE

Grade: Moderate/Hard
Distance: 10km (6 miles)
Terrain: Farmland and woodland paths and tracks.
Some short ascents and descents.
Can be muddy and slippery in places.
Walking boots recommended.

1. Leave Welburn along Water Lane and after a short distance pick up the bridleway signposted 'Coneysthorpe'.

2. At the crossing of rights of way continue straight ahead.

3. Enter the plantation on East Moor Banks through a wooden bridlegate then cross the footbridge and follow the path. Keep with the track as it widens out, climbing to the top of the bank. This area is carpeted with bluebells in the spring. Deciduous tree species include beech, oak, birch and sycamore.

4. As you leave the woodland continue straight ahead through the wooden gate and along the track. Ahead you can see the Mausoleum.

5. At the wooden fingerpost sign continue towards Coneysthorpe over the stone bridge. On a bright day you can see the golden dome of Castle Howard. The Temple of The Four Winds comes into sight to your left as you approach the bridge.

6. After the bridge follow the footpath over the brow of the hill. Aberdeen Angus cattle graze this field. The rise and fall of the land to your right is evidence of rigg-and-furrow farming in the past. Descend towards a fenced wet boggy area and a fingerpost sign.

7. At the sign turn left towards Ray Wood. It is a short walk to the corner of the wall. Blue tits nest in holes in its lime mortar and feed in the moss on top of it. Go through the handgate next to the white gate, onto the track between two pieces of woodland. Immediately take the grassy track which forks to the left; it soon turns into a footpath. In the warmer months brimstone butterflies feed on bramble and nettle under the mature oak trees. Noctule bats roost in mature trees on this part of the Estate.

8. On reaching the wooden fingerpost you turn right along the stone track, towards Bog Hall. In contrast to the mature oaks you can see modern forestry plantations on the bank to the north; here trees are commercially grown for harvest.

9. Walk through the grass field. Cross a small stream then go straight ahead along the track towards Bog Hall.

10. Just before reaching Bog Hall there is a meeting of four rights of way. Here you turn right, towards 'Gaterley 1 mile'; following the waymarking through the buildings at Bog Hall. On leaving the buildings you can see the Temple of the Four Winds again on the hillside. Follow Centenary Way signage and keep the dense hedge to your left until the next area of woodland is reached.

11. Cross a small stream and continue along the stone track towards Gaterley; look out for the black pheasants. Follow to the right over another small stream and the Mausoleum can be seen. A Centenary Way signpost guides you along the track. Approach Low Gaterley between two lengths of wooden fencing. Just before the buildings the fingerpost directs you to the right (along the Centenary Way). Continue along this track, pass between the coniferous trees and after no more than 100m you reach a three-way signpost at which you turn left along the bridleway towards Easthorpe.

12. Follow this track as it takes a sharp left and then turns right just before the buildings, signed 'High Gaterley Farm'. Continue along the stone track, through Ready Wood. The woodland ends to your left as you continue winding your way uphill on the track. Ahead you can see a fingerpost sign on the brow of the hill; this is your next destination.

13. At the signpost continue along the stone track, signposted 'A64 1¾ miles The Huttons'. Yellowhammers can often be heard calling from the hedgerows in the area.

14. Turn right, 'Hutton Hill A64, bridleway', through a farm gate. Keep the hedge immediately to your left as you descend this field.

15. Cross through the two gates and progress directly across this open field towards the gap in the hedge opposite; a distance of approximately 150m. Cross the small stream in this hedgerow on a wooden footbridge and continue straight ahead across a large arable field.

16. Pass through the hedge and follow the waymarker on the post that takes you straight ahead to the next field boundary. On reaching this boundary follow the track to the left on the near side of the hedge.

17. Halfway along this boundary, immediately after a large gap in the hedge, go through a bridlegate to enter a smaller field. Cross this field diagonally, towards the buildings of Hutton Hill. Enter the yard of Hutton Hill via the bridlegate and turn diagonally to your right.

18. The fingerpost sign directs you out of the yard along the track to 'Welburn 1 mile' and 'Chanting Hill ½ mile.' Through the metal gate follow the footpath marker straight ahead, along the track between two hedges. When the track ends walk along the field edge, keeping the hedge to your right. The purple flower under this hedgerow, flowering in May and June, is meadow cranesbill. Cinnabar moth caterpillars feed on the yellow-flowered ragwort in the summer.

19. Enter Todd Wood through a bridlegate at the corner of the field. Turn left, then the path descends to take you over a small stone bridge, ahead you can see the remains of Todd Mill.

20. Pass the Mill and ascend the slope beyond. Towards the top of the rise go through the wooden gate in the boundary and emerge into open grassland. Proceed to the second fingerpost then bear left.

21. Pick up the end of the stone track and proceed along, following signs to 'Chestnut Avenue'. On reaching the road turn right along the footpath to return to Welburn.

GREEN ROUTE

Grade: Easy
Distance: 3.5km (2 miles)
Terrain: Farmland paths and tracks.
A gradual ascent and descent.
Strong shoes or boots recommended.

1. Leave the main street on the footpath under a black metal archway, signed 'Welburn Primary School' and 'Public Footpath'. Ignore the entrance gate to the school and continue straight ahead, following the public footpath. At the corner of the wooden fencing, where a public footpath joins from the left, you carry on straight ahead up the hill and through a gap in the hedge.

2. Continue uphill on the crossfield path towards Bank Wood. Follow the public footpath signs through the wood.

3. Leave the wood through a wooden handgate. Follow to the left hand side of the hedgerow that stretches out ahead of you, towards Monument Farm. Please follow the waymarker discs as you walk through the farmyard.

4. Leave the farmyard and walk along the field-edge path for approximately 20m then go through the gate to your left, following the footpath signs. Walk diagonally across the field you have just entered in a south-easterly direction, towards the church spire, to reach the gate halfway along the far boundary.

5. Having gone through the gate follow the fenceline that stretches out ahead of you, towards the church in the distance and a three-way fingerpost sign.

6. At this sign turn left, keeping the fence to your right. After 250m your path intersects with a hedgerow; at this field-corner turn right following the footpath waymarking through a wooden handgate.

7. Now pick up the right hand side of this boundary hedgerow, dropping slightly downhill alongside the field margin. Look out for the dead trees standing in this boundary. Dead trees provide invertebrate habitat and the gnarled holes where branches once grew are ideal nesting sites for birds.

8. After 50m turn left through the hedge you have been walking alongside, following the footpath waymarker on the gatepost. Walk along the right hand bank of the small stream in an easterly direction. After 120m the stream disappears under a track.

9. Turn left onto the stone-surfaced track and follow it to Bank Wood, away from the A64.

10. Emerge out of the woods through the stone pillars known as White Gates. Ahead of you Castle Howard nestles in a magnificent Howardian Hills panorama. This view would have greeted people as they arrived along the track from Castle Howard Station in Queen Victoria's day (the station house remains at Grid Ref. SE736667). Beyond the spire of Welburn Church, you can also see the Mausoleum on the hill and to the north-west the Mock Fortifications. The intended impression was that of an outstanding Estate landscape seated in beautiful countryside. Go through the Gates, following the signs to 'Welburn'; keep to the left hand side of the field boundary as you walk downhill.

11. Pass through the opening in the stone wall, an extension of the boundary of Welburn Church. The lane ahead of you brings you back into the village, past the recently constructed Village Hall.

Greater stitchwort is most commonly found growing in woods, under hedgerows and on banks, track sides and road verges. The white flowers have five deeply cut petals and are 18-30mm in diameter.

Small tortoiseshell are one of the most colourful butterflies found in the UK. The forewing has a white spot close to its tip and both fore and hind wing are bordered with blue spots. The caterpillars feed on nettles.

The Temple of the Four Winds is a pavilion that stands at the south-east corner of Ray Wood. Designed in 1724 by Vanbrugh and originally known as the Temple of Diana, it was modelled in part on the 16th Century Villa Rotonda in Vicenza.

Welburn Village Hall was constructed using many recycled materials. It is heated by an air-source heat pump and sunpipes are used to bring light into the building.

Arable farming is integral to this part of the Howardian Hills AONB. Many farms in this area (arable, stock and mixed) have enrolled into Environmental Stewardship Schemes. These encourage features that enhance biodiversity value such as; wider field margins, skylark plots, taller and thicker hedgerows and scrubby woodland edges.

Castle Howard has a herd of **Aberdeen Angus**; they can sometimes be seen grazing close to the Mausoleum. Aberdeen Angus are recognised as a Rare Breed. The meat from these animals is sold at the Estate's Farm Shop.