

Hotels

## BURGH ISLAND

**IN ITS 90TH YEAR, BURGH ISLAND HOTEL IS UNDER NEW OWNERSHIP AND IS CELEBRATING ITS SPAN OF TIME ON THE ISLAND WITH A COMPLETE FACELIFT AND 5 STAR RENOVATION PROJECT.**

**T**his includes the upgrade of all public rooms, areas, kitchens and the surrounding gardens and landscapes. Located on the 26-acre private island off the south Devon coast, Burgh Island is popular for its getaway feel and its luxury gorgeous countryside and sea views surrounding it.

Cut off from the mainland by the tide for 12 hours a day, guests and tourists have to make their way across via sea tractor. However, if the tide is low, a golden beach stretches out between the island and the mainland. Peaceful, and unique, the art deco hotel nestles into the landscape of the island as a centre point for the close surrounding area.

The first core focus of the refurbishment has been the public reception areas, The Ballroom, Palm Court Bar and The Nettlefold Restaurant. The Grand Ballroom hosts the hotel's formal and iconic fine dining restaurant, where wearing black tie and evening dress is a must, just as it was in the 1920's. Meanwhile, the Palm Court Bar allows guests to enjoy both pre and post dinner cocktails and drinks. There will also be a new addition to the dining offer at the hotel with the opening of The Nettlefold Restaurant later this year which will use only the finest in local produce with a specialist fish focused menu.

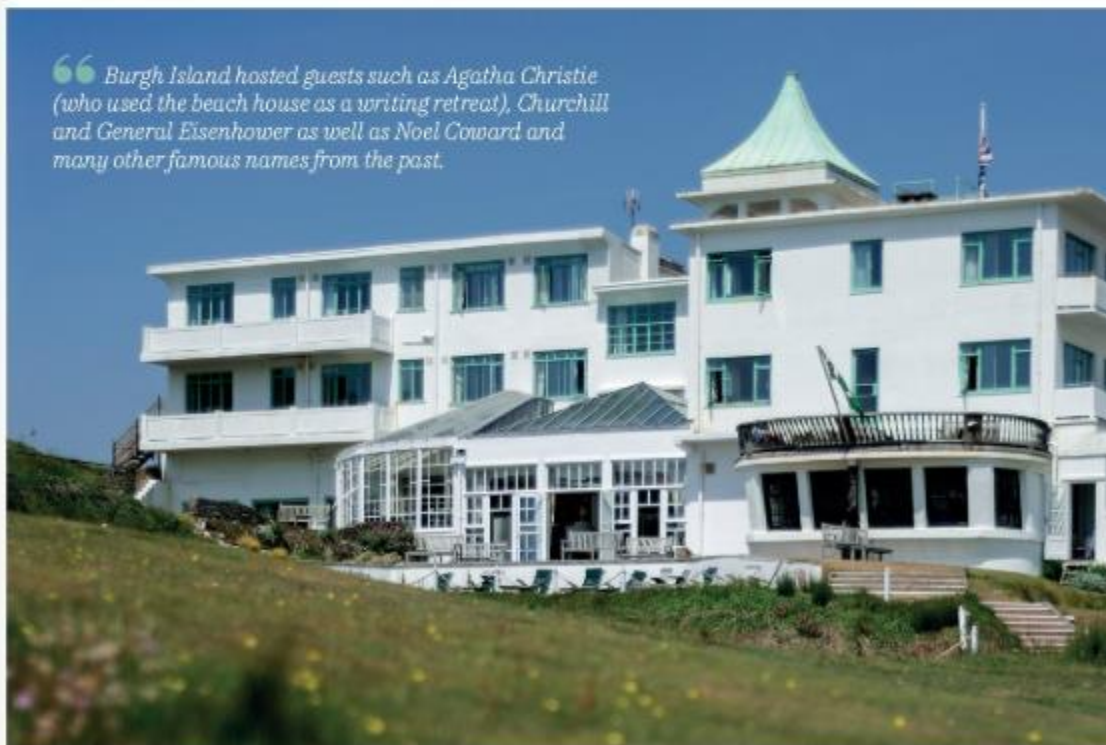
Hospitality investor Duncan Gray, Managing Director and co-

owner of Burgh Island said:

*"I've always been fascinated with Burgh. In 2017 I was asked if I'd be interested in the purchase of a boutique hotel in Devon, after a little digging and when I found out it was Burgh Island – the rest as they say, is now history."*

*"So together, with Giles and Nicky Fuchs (who run a successful service office business in London), the hotel's new main shareholders and a small number of other passionate private investors, we proceeded to purchase the hotel in April 2018. It was previously owned by an Exeter based family for 17 years and, whilst it was clearly in need of a facelift the magic was not difficult to uncover."*

*“Burgh Island hosted guests such as Agatha Christie (who used the beach house as a writing retreat), Churchill and General Eisenhower as well as Noel Coward and many other famous names from the past.”*





"Burgh has unique challenges as we we're on an island with the tides and with sea that surround – the island 12 hours a day it wasn't easy getting contractors and decorators across, in fact everything comes in and out across the beach, it was important to refresh the hotel sympathetically as it's such an art deco masterpiece of which we are simply custodians. Retaining the genre and indeed gently enhancing the hotel, in a way our guests would expect was a challenge. So we hired Sam Kopsch Interiors, who are specialists in art deco interior design to work their magic. »



## In Conversation

An interview with Sam Kopsch, designer of Burgh Island Hotel

### How did you get involved with the project?

"A co-owner of the hotel, Giles Fuchs is a client of mine already so I design many other projects for him."

### What is the new design of the hotel?

"A lot of the previous design has been retained because it's a listed hotel. It's 1920s-30s art deco, so structurally everything has remained in place. We've upgraded some furniture pieces, and made sure what was there already has been carefully retained. It had been neglected and it was in need of some love so it's been more of a cosmetic design as opposed to structural."

"We worked on it in stages. The first of which was the Beach House, which is separate to the hotel building. It's more individual and it isn't art deco. It sits on the rocks right at the foot of the ocean and was lived in by the old owners. We have modernised it and made it more Beach House-esque. It is also one of the few rooms that are dog-friendly so because of this we didn't want to put in furniture like fabric curtains that would dirty quickly due to pets or people coming up off the beach. We put a really nice outdoor shower in for this reason, and a new hot tub and decking."

"We did an upgrade for the Nettlefold restaurant, and in the next phase we've just completed the remainder of the public areas: one other restaurant, the palm bar lounge, and the bedroom. We also did an upgrade on a lot of the back of house stuff so all of the kitchens and three mock up bedrooms. Depending on the feedback, they'll be rolled out across the hotel."

"Before we came to it, the hotel was quite neutral in its colour scheme so we added some colour throughout the hotel, whilst retaining its original style to tie it together. In the Palm Bar we've got colours that reflect the colours of the surrounding landscape outside and the ever-changing colours of the ocean. The Nettlefold restaurant

also contains light blues to tie in with the colours of the landscape, so it's not really colour scheme per se, but we drew on what's around the area around Burgh Island."

### Were there any challenges in the design?

"The timeframe was a challenge; we had six weeks to put it all together. As it's a tidal island getting the materials on and off it within that timeframe was quite tricky, especially when we were dependent on weather. Making sure we were sensitive to what was already in the hotel from a design perspective was another challenge, but it was handled well."

### What has the feedback been like so far?

"It's been positive. With redesigning such an iconic hotel, it was always going to be hard to please everyone. Because everyone that knows it feels like they own it in some way. From staff to the owners, and guests, everyone is very invested in it so that added pressure, but really we just wanted to give the hotel some TLC."

### How important was it for you to be involved in the design of Burgh Island?

"It was a huge challenge, but at the same time I was designing people's bucket lists. A lot of people stay there for a long time, or go there every single year and have been doing so for 25 years. There was a lot of pressure on that and I spent a lot of time researching before I even started designing it. Just getting to know the hotel and its history, has made it something amazing to be involved with, it was very interesting because the Burgh is a very unique hotel. It was really rewarding – it still feels exactly like it should, and it doesn't feel like it's a different space, but rather a space with love. A space with a breath of fresh air breathed into it." ■



## Hotels

“It was important to refresh the hotel sympathetically as it's such an art deco masterpiece of which we are simply custodians. Retaining the genre and indeed gently enhancing the hotel, in a way our guests would expect was a challenge.

“Sam has managed to deliver great results – as our project continues she has meticulously kept the originality – being careful not to turn the feel corporate and has retained the absolutely unique feeling and look that our guests expect and enjoy.”

Originally opened in 1929 by Archie Nettleswood, a film financier from the family who founded Guest, Keen and Nettlesford or GKN as it is known today, Burgh Island hosted guests such as Agatha Christie (who used the beach house as a writing retreat), Churchill and General Eisenhower as well as Noel Coward and many other famous names from the past. The new ownership is providing today, what Archie Nettleswood would have provided for his guests back in 1929.

Refurbishment started in the autumn of last year and is still an ongoing process, with the end result set to be a masterpiece.

A lot of the work has been now completed, all of the public rooms given a facelift and the kitchens have been replaced and brought up to a modern standard.

Duncan continued: “In addition to the refurbishment, we were also very conscious of the fact that we wanted to invest in not only the hotel, and our guests enjoyment of it, but also the local community. We did this by employing 100% of our contractors, builders, decorators and craftsmen, who all live within 25 miles of Burgh Island.”

Since 2003, Burgh Island has been a pioneer in the Green Tourism movement. They were awarded Gold in 2009 and continue to hold the highest level of recognition. In 2007, they received a Gold Award from the Green Apple Organisation for conservation. Burgh Island has always been an adopter of good

environmental practice. Including Water saving, organic produce, energy saving lighting. Burgh goes that bit further in its relationship with the natural environment.

Duncan added: “This project has been a privilege. Having started working on this nearly two years ago sitting here today, it's amazing and quite emotional really to see the fruit of your labour's come to fruition. The amount of hard work that's gone into this by such a wonderful team of people has been quite breath-taking; the first guests post this phase of the refurbishment were a wedding – they were regular guests so it was really exciting to hear their positive comments about what we have achieved so far. We're truly a unique place here. This is a big year for the hotel, and we've got plenty more phases of work planned for it in the upcoming years.” ■

## QUADRANT

Quadrant specialises in innovative flooring for commercial interiors. The four corners of Quadrant's programme are carpet, LVT, woven vinyl and cork – each unique in look, feel and function.

Based in Kent and in operation for 25 years, Quadrant has developed an eye-catching range of innovative flooring products.

Working alongside lead designer Sam Kopsch, the company recently supplied multiple broadloom carpet products for the transformation of Burgh Island Hotel: Glow in shades Gilt, Blush and Intense and Shimmer in shades Moonlit and Pine. Quadrant's versatile, cut pile carpets are becoming increasingly popular in boutique hospitality projects, with durable, soft, silky textures that come in broadloom, planks, and rugs.

Other recent projects for Quadrant include Solium Capital in London, Six Senses Hotel in Portugal and Russells Solicitors in Kent.

James Scully, Managing Director, said: “It's been a pleasure working with Sam Kopsch on yet another project. She has so many ideas for which we always have the solution. Burgh Island is an iconic place to stay and we're delighted that visitors can now enjoy Quadrant's luxurious carpet underfoot, complementing Sam's superb design.

“As a company we take pride in our products and service. We provide innovative flooring products that look good, feel good and are technically excellent. Our eye-catching collection marries modern design and high performance, with outstanding environmental credentials to boot.

“We've been listening to clients and designers since day one, developing practical and lasting solutions to modern demands. Our team is creative, knowledgeable and offers exceptional service.” ■



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