

Greetham Retreat CL
is a haven for nature



MISSING LINCS?

As he bids a fond farewell to these pages after nearly two decades, **John Bateman** explains why the Wolds region has so much to offer

IT WAS 20 years ago that, on impulse, I sat at my trusty, bungalow-sized typewriter (remember them?) and tapped out a CL feature for the Club's *En Route* magazine.

Little did I realise that both magazine and my small contribution would evolve into monthly productions that would send me wandering Britain's highways and byways for two decades, seeking out mini-sites of character. Now it's time for change. Completion of a book and a

telly-writing challenge are tugging my sleeve and you, dear caravanners, deserve a break – a fresh look at the CL scene which I am sure will benefit you all.

There have been enormous changes over the past couple of decades. It is true that there aren't as many CLs as there used to be, behaviour has slipped a bit, too, and some members mourn the demise of the basic, bargain-price site with no frills.

It is also unwise to set off these days without making an advanced booking – something at one time we didn't even consider as we stuffed the children and the dog into the car and headed for remote locations where we would frequently turn out to be the only occupants.

But, boy, how CLs have improved! Electrics, showers, toilets, laundry facilities, TV boosters, Wi-Fi,

Happy camper – Andrew Scott from Doncaster was delighted with both welcome and standards at Hunger Hill CL

hardstandings – you can have the lot if you want, and if my jottings have encouraged just a few more of you to sample the CL network, then I'm content.

A couple of open-all-year CLs out on middle-England's eastern flank, both owned by Club members, recently served as graphic illustrations of just how far removed new sites are from the old 'bucket and chuck-it' days.

It is always pleasing to visit CLs where hospitable owners have added commitment, expertise and financial bravery to a vision and made a little dream come true. Greetham Retreat CL, near the Lincolnshire market town of Horncastle, is such a place.

Retired police officer Rob Folwell and his wife Jeanette have spent the past few years developing four of their five acres into a quality holiday complex. A beautifully-converted former barn now houses five self-contained units, plus



Ordnance Survey
Landranger Maps 121, 122



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Hunger Hill CL – a touch of class in the country



Pond alongside Hunger Hill CL

INFORMATION

SITES

Details of Greetham Retreat CL can be found on p85 of the February 2011 issue of *The Caravan Club Magazine*. For information on Hunger Hill CL, see p420 of the *Sites Directory & Handbook 2011/12*. To book, see caravanclub.co.uk/searchandbook.

TOURISM

■ **Visit Lincolnshire** – call 01522 550603 or see visitlincolnshire.com

ATTRACTIONS

- **Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty** – call 01507 609740 or see lincswolds.org.uk
- **Lincoln Castle** – call 01522 511068 or see lincolnshire.gov.uk
- **Snipe Dales Country Park and Nature Reserve, Spilsby** – call 01507 526667 or see lincstrust.org.uk/reserves
- **Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway** – call 01472 604657 or see cleethorpescoastlightrailway.co.uk
- **The Seal Sanctuary, Mablethorpe** – call 01507 473346 or see thesealsanctuary.co.uk
- **Old Bolingbroke** – historic village and 13th-century castle ruins
- **Fishing Heritage Centre, Grimsby** – call 01472 323345 or see nelincs.gov.uk (closed Mondays)



Bolingbroke Castle ruins

laundry, shower and toilet facilities for the CL which sits 100m away. The one-acre pitching area is spread across a gentle slope and offers views of undulating hills and woodland, typical of the county's Wolds countryside.

There is good, all-weather roadway access to five generous hardstandings, plus a summer-option grass pitch. There are 16A electrics and Rob and Jeanette ensured that the site's design incorporated a Club-standard service area.

Horncastle, the city of Lincoln, the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight Visitors Centre, coastal towns and the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty are on the doorstep but I guess you won't be going far, for a while at least, as the grounds include a newly-planted woodland area, wildflower meadow, pond and meandering mown paths.

With 650 new trees reaching for the skies, in addition to mature copses around the boundaries, already abundant wildlife is prospering, and kestrels swiftly spotted the labour-saving benefits of the Retreat's nesting boxes.

Listed under the coastal resort of Cleethorpes in the North East Lincolnshire section of the *Sites Directory* is another high-standard CL, this one the latest development of a family farming enterprise.

Hunger Hill CL forms part of the Vergette family's Lindens Farm, where three generations have expanded the original seed merchant operation into what is now a 500-acre arable farm. A very attractive couple of acres are devoted to the new CL, where Peter and Sally, aided by daughter Claire and

partner Vinny, have put their caravanning experience to good use.

There is a ¾-acre pitching area, with hardstandings, hook-ups (10A), Wi-Fi access, information centre and, again, a Club-quality service area.

The level plot is skilfully designed, featuring shrubs, flowers, newly-planted trees and grass banks. Pitches are backed by sheltering woodland, criss-crossed by paths that are a visual treat and ideal for dog walks. Seats, on site and in the woods, make relaxation almost compulsory.

Alongside the site's far boundary is a pond and pitches enjoy an open outlook across arable land. For anyone interested in agricultural life or simply a stroll with a theme, Sally has developed farm walks offering seasonal information on what is in and above the ground.

Both these sites offer an almost irresistible message to 'relax and enjoy' and, with that, I make my departure. To those of you who have followed me round the CL network, my thanks for your company and loyalty. Farewell and happy caravanning! ■

DID YOU KNOW?
Horncastle was once the venue for one of the world's largest horse fairs



Hundreds of new trees have been planted at Greetham Retreat CL