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latest hospitality news

The Chestnut Group acquires The Westleton Crown and The Ship at Dunwich from Agellus Hotels

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The Chestnut Group has added The Westleton Crown and The Ship at Dunwich to its family of country, and now coastal inns.

The Chestnut Group was set up in 2012 and is the vision of Suffolk born and bred Philip Turner, who left his career in the City to champion hospitality in East Anglia.

Turner said, "It's long been our view that the region is vastly underestimated as a destination for eating and staying despite boasting an amazing land and seascape, rich history and culture, incredible fresh produce and a wealth of sporting experiences and activities.

"At Chestnut our ethos is to embrace all the great elements that make up the area. Our job is to act as hosts and simply open the door to the wonderful array of experiences and ingredients that we have on our doorstep.

With properties near Cambridge, Newmarket, Sudbury and in Bury St Edmunds it was a natural progression for us to look to coast so we can truly encompass all aspects of East Anglia."

The Ship at Dunwich is a relaxed Suffolk country pub with 16 en-suite rooms located in an historic coastal village. It was once a haunt for smugglers and is now a quiet, idyllic village surrounded by nature reserves, heathland, beach and the ruins of Dunwich monastery.

The pub bar serves real ales and delicious seasonal food with the restaurant serving breakfast, lunch and dinner. The rooms are cosy and comfortable, some of which have views across the sea or marshes. There is also a lovely big garden with fruit trees and the beach just a stone's throw away.

The Westleton Crown is a traditional Suffolk coaching inn with plenty of old-world character set in a peaceful village. It has a great pub bar, a lovely light-filled restaurant, which opens onto a terraced garden, a cosy sitting room and 34 en-suite bedrooms and of course dogs are welcome too. It serves hearty breakfasts, lunch and dinner can be as relaxed or formal as you like, while a delicious traditional afternoon tea is also served.

Turner added, "We very much look forward to further getting to know the local community and all the nuances of each area. Our job is to bring out the best of each site and the surrounding area."

The two sites were acquired from Agellus Hotels.

Mark Harrod, owner of Agellus Hotels, commented "We are extremely proud of all we have achieved with The Ship at Dunwich and The Westleton Crown, and now we have decided to hand the ownership over to The Chestnut Group, who very much share the same vision for the region. We look forward to working closely with them in the transition period to ensure the best outcome for our colleagues and guests.

Looking to the near future, it is our plan at Agellus to use the sale of these inns to allow for further development of our properties on the Norfolk coast and Tuddenham Mill in Suffolk."

The Chestnut Group's family of inns includes The Packhorse Inn in Moulton near Newmarket, The Rupert Brooke in Grantchester on the outskirts of Cambridge, The Northgate in Bury St Edmunds, The Black Lion in Long Melford and The Blackbirds in Woodditton, which is currently under construction.

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