

# Why my heart belongs to the Cotswolds

Arguably our most-loved Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and long at the top of tourists' must-visit lists, the allure of the Cotswolds is as strong as ever. Paula Lester meets seven people who are lucky enough to call it home

Main photograph by Mark Williamson

**W**HETHER it's the collection of pleasing, pale-stoned cottages grouped around the triangular village green at Little Barrington, the stone footbridges that span the River Eye in Lower Slaughter or the way the triple-turreted Broadway Tower rises from one of the highest points in the landscape, the Cotswolds is a many-splendoured place.

Celebrated by great writers and poets, such as Hilaire Belloc, who rhapsodised of the Evenlode—'A lonely river all alone/She lingers in the hills and holds/A hundred little towns of stone/Forgotten in the western wolds'—it is, without doubt, one of the most enchanting regions in Britain. Every time I have had the pleasure of visiting the area—covering some 800 square miles in five counties (Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire, Warwickshire, →

**Creating her own set: actress and artist Jemma Powell in her studio with Maggie**





Wiltshire and Worcestershire), which can be traced on a map from Chipping Campden in the north down to the Regency grandeur of Bath in the south—I've pondered why it has remained largely untouched and still draws more than 38 million visitors a year.

I can only guess that its perennial allure is due to the appeal of its many small villages and towns, which were mostly constructed for agricultural or mill workers to live in. The great designer William Morris once called Bibury, home to the much-photographed Arlington Row of 17th-century weavers' cottages that adorn the pages of British passports, 'the most beautiful village in England'. However, there must also be something in the way that the buff-coloured stone—which ranges from buttery to marmalade-orange hues, depending on where it was quarried from the limestone ridge that underpins the area—helps these now sought-after properties to merge into the surrounding, gently undulating landscape that is so good for grazing sheep on. But don't take my word for it—here, seven residents explain why the Cotswolds will always be special to them.

### The artist and actress

WHEN we moved to the Cotswolds, all the space here made me feel as if I could breathe again, so, during lockdown, I started

painting more and more,' discloses Jemma Powell, 43, who relocated from north-west London to a wisteria- and pink rose-clad cottage not far from Chipping Norton in 2016. She is known for large, colourful Ivon Hitchens-inspired evocations of Cotswolds landscapes, blowsy blooms and scenes from her travels to the Ligurian coast, Portofino, Marrakesh and Africa, but, 'although I've gotten into cityscapes, too, the countryside and Nature are a huge source of inspiration to me,' she reveals. 'I began by going out in the garden, picking snowdrops and painting tiny little pictures of flowers that got bigger and bigger.'

Familiar from *Alice in Wonderland*, *Foyle's War* and *The Secret Garden*, the actress-turned-artist and her husband, Jack Savoretti, a husky-voiced Italian musician, were drawn to the area after he played at a series of festivals (including Wilderness at nearby Cornbury Park, *see box*). 'Whenever we came here, he'd say "where is this? I love it", because the stone and the contours remind him of Italy.'

Although Mrs Savoretti grew up in rural East Sussex, she knew the Cotswolds well, as her grandmother was born in Little Tew and she lived close by when at the Oxford School of Drama in Wootton in her early twenties. And so, having tired of London traffic, the couple—who have three children (Connie, 12, Winter, eight, and Celeste, two)

and four dogs—went for it. They were renting a thatched cottage in Great Tew when they heard that their now home might soon be up for sale. 'I showed up with the children, knocked on their door and said: "I gather you might be selling." They said "yes," invited me inside and we became friends. It was as if it was meant to be.'

The 19th-century cottage is little changed from when they bought it—Mrs Savoretti loves the way that the kitchen leads on to her bright studio, which doubles as a dining room. 'I still really love acting, but I feel like art comes more naturally to me,' she muses. 'Also, lockdown was a big turning point for me, because, previously, I'd been quite tentative, but, gradually, I became braver and my paintings got bigger and brighter. I also started understanding colour better, whereas, before, I was using quite sad and muted greys. Eventually, I couldn't contain it and, when we moved here, the painting gates opened. I have to do it every day or I get twitchy. It connects you to the landscape, in that you're present and noticing what's around you.'

The success of Mrs Savoretti's 2022 exhibition—'Searching for Stillness' at Cricket Fine Art, the London gallery that represents her work—led to a project with The Tusk Trust (for which she and her husband are ambassadors) that saw her visit Kenya



Trainer Charlie Longsdon walks with chaser Snow Leopardess at Hull Farm, where he fell in love with the spectacular views



**Eye to the future: Adam Henson brings the joy and heartache of farming to the world**

several times this year to paint pictures for a forthcoming exhibition at Thyme in Southrop (pronounced Suth-er-up). ‘The idea behind the show, which is called “The Golden Thread”, is to trace the link between the conservation work going on in Africa and the migration of birds from Thyme to Kenya, showing why we all have a responsibility to help wildlife through the thread that connects us all,’ she explains. ‘I’ve done some big paintings of the Maasai tribe, as they are a perfect example of a community that lives in harmony with its surroundings. It isn’t down to anybody else—we can all do our bit.’

*‘The Golden Thread’ (a collaboration between The Tusk Trust and Cricket Fine Art) is at Thyme, Southrop, Gloucestershire, November 9–January 2024 (www.jemmapowell.com)*

### The racehorse trainer

**W**E are so spoiled, because we live amid rolling, beautiful countryside,’ enthuses Charlie Longsdon, another longstanding Cotswolds resident, who has been training National Hunt racehorses from his base at Hull Farm near Chipping Norton for the past 12 years. ‘Everywhere you drive between here and Cheltenham and beyond is incredible countryside and that is the home we know and love. We’re so lucky to live in an area like this—I would not want to go anywhere else. No other countryside is so beguiling—every village you drive through is picture-postcard worthy.’

Growing up in Southrop—in a house that is now known as The Lodge and forms, coincidentally, part of the Hibbert family’s

aforementioned Thyme hotel complex—meant that Mr Longsdon’s bucolic childhood revolved around riding: hunting, eventing and activities with the Vale of the White Horse (VWH) branch of the Pony Club. ‘We always knew that we lived in a charming part of the world, a stone’s throw from the likes of Bibury and Burford, but also lovely towns, such as Stow-on-the-Wold and Moreton-in-Marsh. ‘It was the norm for us, but I do look back and appreciate the fun and freedom we enjoyed—it was the best.’

It was this largely equestrian-focused early life—interspersed with rugby and school at Eton—that led to him becoming a racehorse trainer, says Mr Longsdon, 47. ‘I used to get taken racing by my parents and one of my mother’s great friends, who had horses in training with Nigel Twiston-Davies at Naunton, which fuelled my love of the sport.’ After leaving school, Mr Longsdon worked for Mr Twiston-Davies, Kim Bailey and Nicky Henderson before striking out on his own: ‘The only place I wanted to go was back home. It also helped that my wife (with whom Mr Longsdon has three children: Milly, 13, and twins, Harry and Fred, 11) was local—she’s a Chadlington, near Chipping Norton, girl—so that made the decision much easier.’

**‘Everywhere you drive is incredible countryside and that is the home we love’**

For the first three years, Mr Longsdon was based at the Cotswold Stud at Sezincote, near Stow-on-the-Wold, before he was approached by his current landlord, who was looking to diversify his 450-acre farm by converting it into a racing yard. ‘We came to visit and fell in love with the place,’ he recalls. ‘It has such spectacular views over the countryside that it was a no-brainer. Now, we’ve been here for nearly 13 years and trained the best part of 700 winners, so we’ve had a good time. We have 75 stables—which we fill with 60-odd horses—and, when we built our house here 10 years ago, we sited it to make the most of the amazing view across the valley to Great Rollright, the highest village in Oxfordshire.’ *Hull Farm Stables, Stratford Road, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire (01608 645556; www.charlielongsdonracing.com)*

### The farmer and television presenter

**A**S the Cotswolds is landlocked, I love the seaside—the west coast of Scotland, particularly the Inner and Outer Hebrides, →



**The hotel and cookery-school complex Thyme, run by Caryn Hibbert (photographed with Angelica) epitomises the Cotswolds, brimful of human zeal and thriving wildlife**

is breathtaking—but, for me, although it's a bit of a cliché, there is no place like home,' declares the self-proclaimed 'ginger farmer' and BBC *Countryfile* presenter Adam Henson, who lives on a farm near Guiting Power in Gloucestershire that's also home to his Cotswold Farm Park. 'It's because of the beautiful rolling hills, that patchwork countryside, with grassland, arable land and mainly deciduous woodland. Those broadleaf woods and the dry-stone walls, the charming Cotswold villages and the amazing array of animals that are part of our living heritage, from the Cotswold sheep that named the area to the Gloucester cattle and the Gloucestershire Old Spot pigs in our fields at the Farm Park.'

As we wander through the bustling Farm Park—which Mr Henson's father, Joe, established in 1971 to protect rare-breed farm animals—the affable 57 year old is constantly approached by children for selfies, for which he happily obliges, and I learn that there

is a pleasing circularity to his life. Born in Cheltenham, Mr Henson was brought up in the farmhouse his parents took on in 1962. After agricultural college at Seale-Hayne in Devon, Mr Henson travelled the world with his now business partner, Duncan Andrews, before returning to help to run the farm. Today, Mr Henson and his wife, Charlie (with whom he has two children, Ella, 25 and Alfie, 21), live in that same tenanted farmhouse.

It's clear that Mr Henson is rightfully proud of the Farm Park, which he has run in partnership with Mr Andrews since he took over the tenancy in 1999. Together, they manage the 1,600-acre estate, including the Farm Park, which is home to more than 50 breeding flocks and herds of British rare-breed farm animals and welcomes 185,000 visitors a year. 'I'm delighted with what we've got and the brilliant team we have here,' he enthuses. 'I still see my dad everywhere, which is very emotional, because he was my hero and my mentor.'

However, Mr Henson is not only passionate about rare-breed animals and the future of the countryside. He's written several books and his latest, *Christmas on the Farm*, details how farmers look after their livestock during the festivities, the food they produce for our plates and why Christmas can be a time of reflection that isn't always 'jolly'. He's also put his name to a series of podcasts called *Keeping On Track* that aims to highlight the importance of farmers' mental health. The project was prompted by the death by suicide of his friend, Michael Keel, a farmer he met when they both applied to be a *Countryfile* presenter in 2001. 'The statistics are really troubling,' he says. 'I hope people will listen—if we can save one life, it will be worth it.' *Cotswold Farm Park, Guiting Power, Gloucestershire (01451 850307; www.cotswoldfarmpark.co.uk)*. *Christmas on the Farm: Wintry tales from a life spent with animals* is out on October 26 (£22, Little Brown). The 'Keeping on Track' podcast is launched on October 2 (Instagram @keepingontrackpod)

‘The river, the meadows and the wildlife are what took my breath away’

### The hotelier

**F**OR Caryn Hibbert, 63, the founder and creative director of Thyme—a hotel, cookery school and spa—in Southrop, near Lechlade, the Cotswolds abounds with 'proper countryside'. She explains: 'It's blessed with amazing natural beauty, incredible history and it's an exciting place to be now because there are so many people who are respectful of that history, tradition and Nature, but want to make it relevant to the modern world.'

The former London-based obstetrician and gynaecologist moved to the 16th-century manor house 15 years ago, with her husband, Jerry, a retired film director, and their three children (Charlie, 33, chef-director at the hotel's Ox Barn Restaurant, Tom, 31 and Milly, 29, general manager at Thyme). Mrs Hibbert admits that, although she now adores it, she did not immediately fall in love with the Grade II-listed house: 'I worried it was too big'. She was (and still is), however, smitten by the exquisite 150-acre estate, including extensive water meadows, an SSSI, that stretches in front of it. 'The river, the meadows and the wildlife—particularly the birds and the wild orchids—are what took my breath away.'

Indeed, it was Mrs Hibbert's discovery, after years of British Trust for Ornithology →



From Pritt stick to power dressing: designer Jade Holland Cooper at her home, Dowdeswell Court

surveys, that many of the warblers that nest in her water meadows have flown there from sub-Saharan Africa—together with the cuckoo—that led to a novel idea for an art exhibition. ‘I was astonished by the discovery,’ she confesses. ‘That’s why I talked to The Tusk Trust and came up with Jemma Powell’s forthcoming ‘The Golden Thread’ exhibition in our Tithe Barn, to highlight the link between our wild spaces and how the little things we do here can make a difference a long way away.’

Mrs Hibbert and her family—notably her late father, Michael, an engineer—took a similarly assiduous approach when acquiring and restoring the collection of barns and buildings that constitute this most special of hotels, which has developed from the original cookery school. ‘If you want to make life difficult for yourself, find some buildings on the edge of a village in the middle of nowhere,’ she says with a smile. ‘It was important to us and my father, who loved the buildings—particularly the soaring spaces within the Ox Barn, which was once used as a skateboard park—to try not to interfere with the fabric of these traditional agricultural buildings.’

Acknowledging that the Cotswolds is still a vibrant, working place is also important to Mrs Hibbert. ‘There’s a romantic vision that these villages were always tranquil, when they really weren’t. They have always been places of work and Southrop’s pavements would have been 6in deep in mud. This is what has kept them alive and is now making them places that people want to stay and make their lives in. I think we love the Cotswolds because it is never boring. It’s a wonderful mix of culture, art and excitement, as well as quiet and calm. It’s got a lot going for it.’

*Thyme, Southrop, Lechlade, Gloucestershire (01367 850174; www.thyme.co.uk)*

### The fashion designer and entrepreneur

JADE HOLLAND COOPER may have been born and brought up in Suffolk, but the Cotswolds will forever lay claim to her heart, for it was here that she established her eponymous clothing brand, via a teeny 6ft by 6ft stand at Badminton Horse Trials, 15 years ago and where she met and married her husband, Julian Dunkerton. ‘The stand was the size of a Portalo, which meant that, every time a customer came to try on one of our 30 tweed skirts, my friend and I had to stand outside because we couldn’t all fit at the same time,’ Mrs Dunkerton admits. ‘I bought bags and labels that I’d printed out on an A4 printer and Pritt-sticked onto the skirts. I can remember thinking: “This is it then—I’ve got to make this work, because I haven’t got a plan B.”’

It worked—they sold out of skirts on the second day of the trials—and then some, as Mrs Dunkerton, 36, now presides over a £30

million clothing empire, centred on a glitzy boutique at Dunkertons Park just outside Cheltenham, where her husband’s family’s cider is produced. ‘I truly believe that, if you want to achieve something badly enough, you will,’ she emphasises.

As we sit on pristine white sofas in her handsome neo-Classical home, Dowdeswell Court, which she shares with Mr Dunkerton—a fellow entrepreneur, co-founder of the global clothing line Superdry—and their two children, Saphaia, two, and Jamie, nine months, it’s easy to see why this immaculately turned-out woman has been so successful. Beginning with a simple premise—to make country garments more sexy and fitted, through the use of clever British tailoring and quality fabrics, such as Scottish-spun tweed, that she herself would like to wear—Mrs Dunkerton has built a collection of clothing that appeals to a wide age range of women. Indeed, the business is expanding, with a new menswear line being launched next month. She originally came to the Cotswolds at the age of 20 to learn agricultural business management at the Royal Agricultural University, but left early, after going to events such as the Cheltenham Festival and Badminton Horse Trials. ‘I thought there had to be a market for creating clothes that I and others want to wear.’

For such an obviously driven person, it was apposite that Mrs Dunkerton first met Julian, 58—who started his clothing brand in similarly humble beginnings via a market stall in Cheltenham—at the Regency town’s elegant boutique hotel No.131, which they now run together. ‘We’re able to share a passion for working in retail and what that takes,’ notes Mrs Dunkerton.

The businesswoman’s ultimate goal is to design an every-occasion encompassing collection of garments, so she need never wear any other brand, and she is clear that residing in the Cotswolds is a great source of inspiration. ‘The area epitomises everything that Holland Cooper is about, in that it’s very chic, attractive and full of interesting people—I don’t think there’s any better place to have a home than here. We’re also lucky to live 10 minutes from Cheltenham, because it’s such an eclectic town, and I’m very proud to be based in such a beautiful part of the world.’ *Holland Cooper Boutique, Cotswold House, The Barlands, London Road, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham (www.hollandcooper.com). No.131, The Promenade, Cheltenham (01242 822939; www.no131.com)*

### The trail-hunting advocate and former polo player

WHAT makes your heart sing are the rolling hills. Where I live at Somerford Keynes in the Cotswold Water Park area, →

For love of the hounds: BHS managing director Olly Hughes amid the pack at the VWH kennels









**For lighting designer Joanna Mann, her farming background gave her the grit and determination to found her own business**

it's very flat, so you don't get the undulations. However, if you're in the right place in the Cotswolds, you can see for miles,' declares lifelong Cotswolds resident Oliver Hughes. 'My mum's ashes were scattered at Foxcote [the estate where Mr Hughes, 55, grew up near Andoversford, just outside Cheltenham], because she loved it so much. You can't beat the Cotswolds on a beautiful day. The warmth of that honey-coloured stone in the sunshine is wonderful,' he eulogises. 'Then there's the open countryside, the little villages and all the pubs. As well as great schools, a first-class Royal Agricultural University and good rail connections—Kemble to London is very easy—not to mention great sporting opportunities: racing, polo and, if you want it, trail hunting by the bucketful. If you move here, you won't need to leave the Cotswolds.'

After such a glowing review, you might be forgiven for thinking that Mr Hughes works for the local tourist board, but the former three-goal professional polo player and deputy CEO of the Hurlingham Polo Association was last year employed as the managing director of the British Hound Sports Association (BHSA). Based on the Bathurst estate near Daglingworth in Cirencester, the organisation—which comprises the Masters of Foxhounds, Basset Hounds, Deerhounds and Minkhounds Associations, as well as

the Association of Masters of Harriers and Beagles and the Central Committee of Fell Packs—aims to preserve, protect and promote the future of trail hunting and exempt hunting with hounds. 'The BHSA was established in July 2022 to bring all of the UK's 242 hunts under one governing body,' explains Mr Hughes. 'Since then, we've accredited and licensed all the packs.'

Although he enjoyed a very horsey upbringing, riding, hunting and as a member of the Cotswold Hunt branch of the Pony Club—'my mother was fanatical about hunting'—Mr Hughes believes one of the reasons he got the job is because he does not currently hunt ('I want to, but I don't have a suitable horse') and has not, therefore, nailed his colours to the mast of any one pack, but is passionate about preserving the sport and its associated animals: 'It's all about the love of the hounds.'

Married to Vicky, a private caterer—with whom he has two children, Isaac, 22 and Jemima, 20—Mr Hughes loved polo as 'it's an exhilarating sport that everyone can have a go at' and is equally passionate about why trail-hunting devotees should join the newly set up BHSA supporters' club. 'Whereas, previously, membership of hound associations was restricted to the senior hierarchy of hunts, both past and present, the BHSA supporters' club is much more wide ranging,' he observes. 'Run by George Bowyer, it's an opportunity for anyone who supports trail hunting, hounds and the hunting community to share their support for it. We currently →

### All aboard: commuting from the Cotswolds

FROM fat sheep to ancient churches and bucolic villages, the Cotswolds has many draws. However, should these not suffice, it is also just commutable to London, so it is a great base for those who only need to be in the office a few days a week.

James Walker, who runs the Knight Frank office in Cirencester, suggests living close to Kemble station, in the south Cotswolds, which has 'excellent parking and a range of direct trains to Paddington taking from 72 minutes'. He speaks from experience, having for a long time commuted twice a week from Westonbirt—home of the famous Arboretum—via Kemble. Together with his own village, he recommends several other popular locations within easy reach of the station: Shipton Moyne, Long Newton, Cherington, Tarlton, Coates, Rodmarton, Frampton Mansell, Sapper-ton and Ewen in Gloucestershire, as well as Sherston in Wiltshire. 'The M4 is also a good prospect for commuters from

these villages, all of which are only about 15 minutes away.'

Also in the southern Cotswolds, Castle Combe is reasonably close to Chippenham, which is roughly 68 minutes from Paddington. At the opposite end of the area, in north-east Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire, Banbury (51 minutes into London), Oxford (60 minutes), Charlbury (70 minutes) and Kingham (80 minutes) all have good train connections to Paddington. There are plenty of options near these stations, including the ever-sought-after Chipping Norton, and, on the Cotswolds fringes, Burford and Woodstock (all in Oxfordshire). Lara Warburton of Knight Frank also names Bledington, Adlestrop, Broadwell and Icomb (all in Gloucestershire) and Shipton under Wychwood (Oxfordshire) as excellent choices.

At 90 minutes, the journey from Paddington to Moreton-in-Marsh might be better for those who commute more infrequently. The station opens the door to Gloucestershire locations, such as Stow-on-the-Wold, Blockley, Chipping Campden or Bourton-on-the-Hill. *CP*

have about 750–800 members, but we need an awful lot more. If we could get up to 10,000, we'd be able to do some serious good in campaigning for the trail-hunting community. As we're facing a general election next year, we need to be prepared for everything that the results of that may bring.'

*The British Hound Sports Association, Daglingworth, Cirencester, Gloucestershire (www.bhsa.org.uk)*

### The lighting designer

THE Cotswolds is such a diverse area,' enthuses Joanna Mann. 'We're so lucky to be able to enjoy a wide range of wonderful people who have set up businesses here and are not rushing to London all the time—that's the root of why I love it.'

Having been raised as a farmer's daughter—her parents, Charlie and Chipps Mann run an organic enterprise and wedding venue at Oxleaze (*Slowly does it*, May 10), near Lechlade, together with her siblings, Will and Katie—the look of the landscape pulls on her heartstrings, too. "Cots" means sheep and "wolds" is hills and valleys, so there are many beautiful valleys, such as the Evenlode, Windrush and Leach, right here in Southrop where I live. There are so many quintessential little villages, such as Southrop, within

those river valleys, which you can't really see from any direction, because they sit right down within their place. They're akin to many others that were built for farming communities, out of the wind, near the rivers. The architecture and the soft, yellow stone gives a very gentle feel.'

‘Her “soul is in the mud and I really enjoy working between the two” ’

It was no accident, either, that, after training as a lighting designer and working for John Cullen Lighting in London—'it's intuitive, understanding how light and shadow works in a space'—the 42 year old returned to Gloucestershire in 2010 to set up her own firm, Light House Designs, from the farm office at Oxleaze. 'I believe I chose to start my own business because I come from a farming background,' attests Ms Mann. 'I grew up understanding that work and life were intermingled. Also, if you're from farming stock, working late or on weekends doesn't faze you.'

Now, 13 years on, Ms Mann says that, although her business centres on high-end projects—from the restoration of country estates, townhouses and boutique hotels, such as the Old Bank Hotel and Quod Restaurant and Bar in Oxford, to new-builds and chalets—her 'soul is in the mud and I really enjoy working between the two'.

Moving back to her treasured home turf had other life-changing effects, too. She met her husband, Phil Smith—who runs building company Cotswold Property—when he visited her office in search of a lighting designer for a potential client. 'I didn't get the job—but I got a husband!' Ms Mann says with a grin. The couple live in a barn they built on family-owned land in Southrop and have a two-year-old son, Wilbur. Their businesses occupy separate offices on the family farm, which, in the end, is what it all comes back to. 'The landscape is a mixture of Cotswold brash, although good for grazing, but a difficult soil to grow anything on. That's why it's so exciting to see where farming can go when you're not forcing it through fertiliser and you can put the land back to its original use, as my family is doing at Oxleaze.'   
*Light House Designs, Oxleaze Farm, Filkins, Lechlade, Gloucestershire (01367 850069; www.light-housedesigns.com)*

### The lure of the Cotswolds

IN 2012, *The Times* reported that the Cotswolds was home to more A-listers per acre than anywhere else except London (not including those who manage to maintain a low profile). However, what exactly is it that draws the glitterati?

The charm of the region's 'tangled woods and sprawling fields', honeyed-stone houses and pretty inns with centuries-old character endures. Marry this with a surge in excellent gastropubs, private members' clubs (Soho Farmhouse, Estelle Manor, The Club by Bamford), plus easy links to the capital, and therein lies the matrix.

More than 10 years on, the region continues to attract high-profile residents, with Jeremy Clarkson, the Camerons, Alex James, Elisabeth Murdoch and Charlie and Rebekah Brooks forming the backbone of the 'Chipping Norton set' and, further afield, the likes of Kate Moss (*Designer's room*, June 16, 2021), Damien Hirst, Jade Jagger, Jilly Cooper, the Beckhams and Hugh Grant all have homes.

Some believe the Cotswolds could be to London what the Hamptons is to New York. As Helen Kirwan-Taylor declared last year: 'What both places have is great beauty coupled with disproportionate wealth and an obsession with construction.'



Indeed, the past decade has seen a number of large-scale developments, including The Lakes by Yoo in Lechlade—a collaboration between developer John Hitchcox and designer Philippe Starck, which also includes a (Barn)house with interiors designed by Kate Moss, and, most recently, The Gallery at Aynhoe Park near Banbury, reportedly reimagined at a cost of £50 million-plus by Gary Friedman, CEO of US interiors brand, RH.

#### Fashionable festivals

• **Tetbury Music Festival**, Gloucestershire, September 23–October 1 (www.tetburymusicfestival.org)

• **Cheltenham Literature Festival**, Gloucestershire, October 6–15 (www.cheltenhamfestivals.com)

• **Kite Music Festival**, Kirtlington, Oxfordshire, June 7–9, 2024 (www.kitefestival.co.uk)

• **Park Fair**, Great Tew Estate, Oxfordshire, June 21–23, 2024 (www.parkfair.uk)

• **Wilderness**, Cornbury, Oxfordshire, August 1–4, 2024 (www.wildernessfestival.com)

• **Big Festival (above)**, Kingham, Oxfordshire, August 23–25, 2024 (www.thebigfestival.com) AS