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# Woburn Forest construction, ecological and recruitment update (October 2013)

With a matter of months until the new Center Parcs, Woburn Forest, opens, there is lots of activity on the Village. The buildings and forest are looking

good, recruitment is well underway and we are already receiving deliveries to the site in preparation for the spring.

During October, the buildings have really taken shape...

The Subtropical Swimming Paradise front is being glazed with the pools inside being constructed and the shape of the Wild Water Rapids can already be seen snaking through the area in front of the building. The rest of the Village Square is now water-tight with windows and doors fitted during September and October. The lake and stream in this area isn't yet full but preparations have been made for these and the bunds behind the Village Square have been seeded with a green carpet of grass and flowers appearing already.

The almost full lake is already buzzing with wildlife and The Pancake House and The Plaza are also water-tight with the exteriors complete. A week ago, construction workers could be seen on the roof of The Plaza spreading the green compost and crushed brick before the hydro seeding takes place creating a beautiful green roof.

All lodge wall panels have been constructed with roofing almost complete. The first lodge was completed in September and all lodge panels (made not far away in Potton) have been delivered. Many of the lodges are now complete but it will be a few months until they are all completely finished. Furnishings are delivered and installed closer to opening.

The Housekeeping building, Cycle Centre and Arrivals Lodge have now been handed over to Center Parcs from the contractors. This marks a fantastic milestone in the build; it means opening isn't far away!

The forest is really starting to flourish...

Ian Buck, our Ground Services Manager has been taking care of the forest since 2012 and before then we had undertaken an Ecological Survey so we knew what wildlife lived at Woburn Forest. Ian has been protecting the wildlife that has been on the site since before construction began and he is now seeing the fruits of his labour. Only 12% of the forest was removed when construction began and since then 20,000 local species of trees and bushes have been planted on the site. Badger sets have been protected and the lizards have been moved to a safe area off-site until construction is complete. Now, birds, squirrels and deer can be seen at Woburn Forest, even before construction is complete. Contractors recently saw a deer wander past, just feet away from some of the lodges! It seems wildlife are already making this their home.

Recruitment is also well underway...

We now have a team of 139 people (89% within 15 miles of Woburn Forest), 63 people have started their new roles with others to follow. Some of those

who have started are actually now based at Woburn Forest. There are still more than 1,200 people to recruit but this will be complete by February 2014.

Training and inductions started on the 17th September and have been running ever since. We have also had a presence at local recruitment events to stimulate more interest in the local area around Woburn Forest.

### **Contact information**

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### Notes to Editors

1. Center Parcs has five Villages across the UK; Sherwood Forest in Nottinghamshire, Elveden Forest in Suffolk, Longleat Forest in Wiltshire, Whinfell Forest in Cumbria and Woburn Forest in Bedfordshire which opened to guests on 6 June 2014
2. As the leader in the UK short break holiday market, Center Parcs regularly achieves average annual occupancy in excess of 97%
3. Center Parcs offers weekend, (Friday to Monday) or midweek (Monday to Friday) breaks and welcomes over 1.7 million guests each year, with 96% of guests expressing an intention to return
4. The Center Parcs concept is to provide a range of high quality accommodation, shops, restaurants and exceptional leisure facilities, carefully nestled amongst 400 acres of protected forest environment
5. This concept originated in Holland in 1967, with the first UK Center Parcs opening in 1987. Center Parcs is now a separate entity in the UK, owned by The Blackstone Group
6. Center Parcs has been awarded the following accolades since 2008: the Green Business Award for Biodiversity Protection, Visit Britain 5 Star Rating, Hospitality Assured, Biodiversity Benchmark - Land Management, Carbon Trust Standard, Good Spa Guide Award, ISO14001, Investors in People
7. Center Parcs has recently been announced '[Best Family Holiday Provider](#)' in the Tommy's Awards for the eleventh year in a row

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