

What's in store at barn?

In recent years diversification has become part of rural life with many farmers having to use their ingenuity and adaptability to create new enterprises that support their agricultural endeavours. At North Weston Farm, near Thame, this is evident in the impressive adaptation of an old barn...

The Gurneys have farmed at North Weston since the 1960s and are now in their 3rd generation there. Located just off the A418 Thame to Oxford road, on the lane to Shabbington, and run by Richard and Angela Gurney and their son Henry, North Weston Farm mixes beef and arable production and up until 2013 ran a dairy herd.

The building in which the dairy cows were milked and housed is no longer needed and has undergone a complete refurbishment to create a brand new self-storage facility. A team of local contractors took six months to convert the barn into a clean, dry and secure Barn Store facility that now offers a variety of storage options.

Barn Store is available for both home and business use and offers 24 hour access. The facility has a range of storage units from 40sqft up to 320 sqft. It is secure with a hi-tech security system and CCTV.

“Our most popular units so far are actually the smaller 40 and 60 sqft units,” says Richard, “its amazing how much you can actually fit into those units. Prospective customers are welcome to come down and have a look, it's easier to judge what you might need when you can actually see inside the units.

“Customers can drive right into the building if they wish and unload items under cover, which is especially useful when the weather is awful. The lighting is automatic and the whole facility is kept clean and dry, so loading and unloading your items is very straight forward.

“Unlike many storage facilities we offer genuine 24/7 access, all year round with your own electronic key fob, so it's ideal for businesses that need access out of normal



Inside the barn storage units range from 40ft² to 320ft²



Henry, Angela and Richard Gurney

working hours. Barn Store combines the latest technology with a personal customer service - we live on site so are always there to help. The facility is very accessible and customers seem to enjoy coming to the farm and seeing the countryside, which is far more relaxing than fighting your way into a busy urban facility.

“Welcoming storage customers into the same building I was milking cows in, only a few years ago, feels strange, but I am really

enjoying it, especially meeting all the different people that come here now.”

“Its great to be using the building for something completely new,” says Henry. “The barn lends itself perfectly to self-storage. The fact that my grandfather built it originally and we have now given it a new lease of life is quite special. I am sure he would be proud if he could see it today.

“One of the biggest challenges was actually getting the storage units into the building, the longest unit being 40ft. Thankfully we had someone far better at driving the JCB than me that day!”

“Our competitive rates are completely transparent and detailed on our website. We provide storage for as long or as short a period as required - our focus is on giving costumers complete flexibility, be it hours of access or length of stay and you can switch to a larger or smaller unit as your circumstances change. We already have a number of businesses storing with us. Putting items into storage can be far more cost effective than having them take up valuable office or industrial space.”

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The Barn Store - you can open the shutters and drive right in to load/unload if you wish