

THRINGS MEETS...

Richard Jordan-Baker, Estates Director at Broadlands.



Rachel Brooks from Thrings speaks with Richard Jordan-Baker.

Broadlands is a 4,500-acre estate and country house near Romsey which is owned by the Mountbatten family. Director of Estates, Richard Jordan-Baker, explains to Rachel Brooks of Thrings how he sustains this historic property and landscape whilst managing it as a modern, successful property business.

Richard, I'm aware you have a wide-ranging role...

Yes, I am ultimately responsible for everything that happens on the estate. We have 130 residential properties, more than 50 commercial properties, just under a thousand acres of woodland and, of course, the house and its contents. My job is to ensure we get the very best out of everybody involved – whether they are staff, contractors or advisors – for the benefit of the estate.

What's the best thing about what you do?

It is a cliché but every day really is different. In the nine years I've been doing the job, I can't recall two days ever having been the same. It is the sheer variety that the job offers and the huge range of things that I have to do and am

involved in. I'm also fortunate to manage a team of 25 staff who are dedicated and passionate about Broadlands.



Has the role changed over the years?

Without question. Over the past few years, I've been heavily involved in a number of significant projects aimed at enhancing the estate and its assets. The biggest of these was the complex four-year re-servicing project of the main house. Another has been overseeing the addition of a crematorium that now provides a wonderful facility for local families. Broadlands is an historic estate, but my role is perpetually evolving as there are always new things happening.

What's your biggest challenge?

We look to use relevant modern techniques to manage the estate whilst respecting its traditions and history. We have long-term plans as our aim is for the estate to be here forever. I am running an ever-changing and fast-growing property business, which like any organisation, needs to evolve. If it doesn't, it will die. This philosophy provides interesting and varied challenges.

What's your favourite time of year?

Spring time. One of my hobbies is growing vegetables so spring is when I'm full of enthusiasm, looking at seed catalogues and thinking about what to grow. I might also add that Broadlands looks magnificent in the spring.

What about life outside of Broadlands?

Mine is not a 9 – 5 job. I spend what little spare time I have in the garden, playing my bass guitar and looking after my four kunekune pigs. Music is a huge passion, and as well as playing I enjoy going to gigs and concerts. It's also important to support local businesses so I try to venture to the Three Tuns and La Parisienne in Romsey when I can. Both are perfect places to eat and unwind.

Is there a particular memory that stands out during your nine years in the job?

In 2016 Lady Mountbatten's daughter, Alexandra, was married in Romsey Abbey and the reception was held at Broadlands. It wasn't a very big wedding but it was very complex because the guests included members of our Royal Family and other European royal families. It involved a huge amount of work and liaison with the Hampshire Constabulary and the Metropolitan Police to ensure the safety of the guests. It was probably the most stressful day of my entire life but it was a great success, so the months of preparation and planning were all worthwhile.