

Alex Licence enjoys a weekend chilling out at Swiland Mill

Swiland Mill has been renovated with love and the owners, a father and son team, are not only passionate about the building they've transformed but also about ensuring guests have a fantastic stay in it. Originally one of the largest post mills in Suffolk, Swiland Mill was built around 1800 and recorded on Greenwood's county map of 1825. The Mill served the county well and has a rich heritage but the real story now is the incredible balancing act the owners have

achieved between preserving the industrial roots of the Mill whilst offering visitors modernity and comfort.

It is touching to see this workhorse of a building being given a new lease of life and a proper role in the 21st century. Having had a stylish and sympathetic makeover, with the original windows and exterior remaining intact, the Mill certainly looks the part for its new existence; nevertheless, it still clearly depicts the hallmarks of its previous life and continues to stand as an ambassador for local heritage.

Now five star accommodation in the form of three apartments – namely the Granary (sleeps four), Lucam (sleeps six) and the Mylen (sleeps four) – the building's legacy has been respected during the renovation process. All the apartments boast generous proportions and an impressive offering of creature comforts.

Definitely a romantic retreat for couples or great fun for groups of friends – all three apartments can be hired in a group booking for larger parties – the Mill's accommodation has also been created with families in mind. Games, books and child-friendly facilities are in evidence along with availability of cots and



The attractively renovated Swiland Mill, now three self-catering apartments. Left; a view of the stylishly decorated interior



A thoroughly modern mill

monitors, for example. While there are lovely places to eat nearby – the Moon & Mushroom in Swiland offers good pub grub and is very welcoming – it's also reassuring to know that the kitchen is well equipped, offering a home from home in which to easily manage holiday catering.

The attention to detail throughout the development is impressive. So many needs are addressed: cyclists and walkers have access to a proper outhouse in which to store their bikes, boots and outerwear; those looking to relax can make use of the hot tub and a barbecue is available in each of the apartments' private gardens for long summer evenings. Looking after the environment and sustainability are issues that matter to the owners and guests are provided with all the facilities they need to recycle, in an unobtrusive way. Low energy bulbs as well as smart switches – that ensure televisions and the like are turned off rather than left on standby – are in place throughout. It's easy to get caught up in

discussing the notable list of features and the flexibility that the Swiland Mill accommodation offers but it's important to also give an insight of what it's like to actually stay there. My husband and I stayed in the Mylen and we found it quiet and cosy with a lovely family-run atmosphere. We enjoyed the range of mod cons including drench showers, excellent cooking facilities and the home cinema. Everything was easy from parking, checking in and getting the heating levels perfect, to accessing information about the local area and returning the keys.

The comments in the visitors' book were also all extremely positive so obviously we were not the only ones who had enjoyed our stay. By the end of our two-day break, we did feel like we'd had a luxurious weekend away and were both well rested. We would certainly return to Swiland Mill and have already recommended it to friends and family.

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