

BURGHLEY HOUSE



by Lucy Williams

Standing as one of Britain's best-preserved Elizabethan stately homes is Burghley House, found on the outskirts of Stamford, just a thirty-four minute-drive from Grantham. The house as it stands is renowned for its distinctive Elizabethan architecture, authentic Tudor interiors, and for hosting the acclaimed Defender Burghley Horse Trials each September. To this day, it remains widely regarded as one of England's greatest Elizabethan houses with its exceptional architecture, grand parklands and family history, stretching all the way back to the Tudor era.

The house was initially commissioned by William Cecil, 1st Baron Burghley, with construction beginning in 1555 and finally completed in 1587. It was built to stand primarily as a Prodigy house, meant to flaunt the wealth and status of a family, as well as to service the Crown, Elizabeth I and her large retinue, as they travelled for their annual royal progress. This is why, and expectedly seen in the location of the Burghley estate just off the A1, many Prodigy houses were built close to main roads. The house is, of course, renowned for its distinctive and dramatic Elizabethan architecture, alongside its magnificent state rooms that

span over four centuries; including fine collections of art and the painted ceilings of the Heaven room by the Italian artist Antonio Verrio. Verrio served the Crown for over a thirty-year period, and whose baroque-style ceiling murals are what famously also cover the Audience Chamber at Windsor Castle. The surrounding parkland of the estate, including the Rose Garden, Sculpture Garden and extensive deer park, were all redesigned in the 18th century and remain among the estate's defining features. For visiting, the house offers visitors to view its famed state rooms alongside daily entrance into the gardens and parkland. The house is a most

notable attraction for its family-oriented activities, its use in numerous productions such as *The Crown*, and for hosting the famed Burghley Horse Trials; a three-day event attracting riders from across the globe alongside tens of thousands of spectators. This year, the trials are taking place from September 3rd-6th, marking the sixty-fifth anniversary of the event. From this, it can be evidently seen that Burghley House stands as not only a notable historical home, but one that represents the importance of family lineage, art and architecture, and how deeply history and intent is tied into creating such an estate.