

Self Catering Accommodation



Minimum Standards

Property Safety & Legal Liabilities

You have a duty of care to ensure that the property you are letting out is safe.

Please refer to the Quality North Lincolnshire Application Form for details of legal and safety liabilities and responsibilities.

Fire Risk Assessment

- To comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 you must supply evidence that a Fire Risk Assessment has been carried out annually. For guidance refer to www.visitengland.org/fire

Public Liability

- Proprietors will be asked to provide evidence that Public Liability Cover is being maintained. Cover of £5m is advised.

Landlord Gas Safe Certificate

- An annual landlord's gas certificate is required if you have gas in your property.

Carbon Monoxide Detectors

- You must provide a carbon monoxide detector in every room where gas, oil or wood is burned. A detector should always be placed in a kitchen unless all appliances are electric. Also in rooms where central heating boilers are housed.

Smoke Detectors

- There must be a minimum of one well positioned smoke detector per property. Your risk assessment will determine whether these should be linked/hard wired.

Fire Blanket

- A fire blanket must be easily accessible in the kitchen. This should be between the cooker and the door, and wall mounted. Storage in a cupboard or over the cooker is not acceptable.

Maintenance

- All electrical and gas or oil fire equipment must meet all relevant statutory obligations, be safely maintained, in good working order and serviced regularly, as appropriate.
- Fixtures, furnishings, floor coverings and fittings must also meet all relevant statutory obligations, particularly in relation to fire safety. These must be maintained in a sound, clean condition and be for the purpose intended.

Accessibility Guide

- It is important to provide information on the accessibility of your facilities and services. This can be achieved by producing an Accessibility Guide (an improved format that replaces Access Statements), which is a requirement for all scheme members. To produce and publish an Accessibility Guide go to <https://www.visitbritain.org/writing-accessibility-guide>

Exterior

- There must be a clearly visible sign or house name and an identifiable entrance.
- The front door and any potentially hazardous paths or steps from parking area, must be illuminated at night.
- There needs to be arrangements for car parking near the property.
- Buildings must be adequately maintained.
- Gardens and exterior areas that are part of the unit need to be maintained in a good order.
- Where gardens are available, garden furniture should be provided.
- Refuse bins and storage areas should be tidy and well positioned.
- If you have garden ponds, these must be fenced if you take children.

Cleanliness

- Cleanliness is of paramount importance to guests, so a high standard of cleanliness must be maintained throughout the property. Particular attention must be given to kitchens, bathrooms, shower rooms, toilets and items involving direct contact with guests, such as bedding, linen, towels, baths, showers, washbasins, WC's, flooring, seating, crockery, cutlery, glassware, kitchen utensils and equipment.
- It is the proprietor's responsibility to ensure that all properties are cleaned throughout before each new let, irrespective of whether the guests have cleaned it prior to departure. Any broken or damaged items should be replaced.

Bookings and Prices

- You must make clear to guests exactly what is included in the price quoted for the property including service charges, taxes and other surcharges e.g. electricity, fuel, towels, cots. Where VAT is applicable, all prices should be shown inclusive of VAT at standard rate.
- Full details of the accommodation, including sleeping arrangements and bathrooms, should be provided online or in printed form. Where sleeping accommodation is provided in addition to the bedroom accommodation, for example by means of bed settees, wall beds, or "Z" beds, the type, size and number of bed spaces should be clearly indicated.
- Details of any in-house policies must be communicated at the time of booking and be clearly stated on the website, for example smoking policy and pet policy. If requested, guests should be able to see the property before booking, however it is understood that if the property is occupied this may not be possible.
- A website or printed information is required, preferably including a floor plan.
- Arrangements for access must be communicated pre-arrival.
- Prior to booking, prospective guests should be made aware of charges for additional services or facilities available. This must include cancellation terms and breakage deposits.
- Prices quoted at time of booking cannot be increased following booking confirmation.
- Guests should be provided with details of payments due and provided with a receipt if requested.
- The receipt should be clearly presented and well laid out, showing VAT where applicable.
- The following information must be available to guests prior to/at time of booking
 - Car parking arrangements near unit
 - Arrangements for pets
 - Distance of unit from nearest shop(s) etc.
 - A map and/or directions provided showing the location of the unit

Provision of Guest Information

- If the proprietor is not resident on the premises, his/her name, address and telephone number or that of his/her agent, who must have a set of keys, must be prominently displayed.
- There must be prominently displayed details of how to summon the assistance of emergency services to be provided e.g. doctor, dentist, location of nearest payphone, nearest Accident & Emergency department and vets (if pets accepted).
- All units must be provided with suitable refuse disposal arrangements by the Local Authority. Dustbins, where provided, must have lids. The arrangements for refuse collection must be prominently displayed.
- Occupiers must be provided with a key to the entrance of their unit, and where applicable a key giving access to other buildings and any other relevant facilities.

Kitchen

- All kitchens must have suitable floor finishes or coverings. Consideration should be given to the suitability of floor coverings for hygiene and housekeeping reasons.
- Kitchens must be adequately lit and lights must have shades or be suitably protected.
- There should be an opening window or ventilation system. Opaque curtains, shutters or blinds on external glass doors and windows.
- Sufficient amounts of crockery, glassware and cutlery should be provided for the amount of guests. See suggested inventory, but as a minimum, tumblers and wine glasses should be provided.
- Sufficient cooking equipment and utensils should be provided.
- Where a dishwasher is provided, crockery, cutlery and utensils should be dishwasher safe. Extra crockery should also be provided, so the dishwasher does not have to be operated between meal times for smaller numbers of guests.
- Sufficient storage space for crockery, cutlery, kitchen and cleaning equipment must be provided.
- There must be storage space suitable for food.
- Adequate means of heating must be available at all times which will, in most cases, mean heating provided in the kitchen, if large or separate.
- A sink equipped with a draining board, dish drying rack, hot water and cold drinking water supply must be provided.
- There must be a covered waste disposal bin with liner.
- There must be an oven, at least two shelves, a grill and at least four boiling rings that can be used simultaneously with the oven or grill. If only two guests are accommodated, then two boiling rings plus oven and grill must be provided. For any larger numbers are accommodated in one unit, additional cooking facilities should be provided. A microwave is an acceptable alternative to one boiling ring. A combination microwave (oven, grill, and microwave) is acceptable as a grill or oven, provided that a three-ring hob is also available separately.
- A microwave oven must be provided, with microwavable cookware or compatible crockery.
- Ovens and microwaves must be clean and in sound condition and functioning properly.
- A refrigerator with an ice making compartment (unless a freezer is also provided) is required. Larder fridges are not acceptable if no freezer is provided.
- There must be at least one hygienic work surface.
- A vacuum cleaner must be provided in each unit, unless a daily cleaning service is provided.

Bathrooms

- All units must have at least one bathroom and WC for every eight guests.
- The bathroom should be equipped with a bath or shower, bathmat, towel rail, shelf or flat surface and wash basin.
- Where no bath is available this must be clearly advertised.
- The washbasin in the main bathroom should have a minimal internal size of 36cm x 24cm/14" x 9". Although a standard size wash basin is always recommended where space allows, additional basins offered in en-suites or separate WC's could be of smaller dimensions.
- There should be a mirror above or adjacent to the washbasin.
- A shaver point should be available, preferably adjacent to a bathroom mirror with a light. An adapter elsewhere in the unit is an acceptable alternative, providing it can be used close to a mirror.
- Where the base of the bath or shower is not anti-slip then a non-slip mat must be available.
- A soap dish must be provided in showers.
- A means to provide hot water must be available at all times.
- All units must have at least one WC equipped with a full toilet roll and holder, toilet brush and disposal bin with sanitary bags or a lidded bin with liner.
- All windows must have opaque curtains, blinds or shutters. Glass doors to bathrooms and WCs must also have opaque curtains or blinds.
- A lock or bolt must be provided on all bathroom/WC doors, including en-suites.
- All bathrooms/WCs must have suitable floor coverings for safety reasons, with consideration also given to the suitability for hygiene and housekeeping reasons.
- Heating must be provided in all bathrooms where there is an external window. A heated towel rail is acceptable.
- Where a bathroom is accessed via another bedroom (not including en-suites), these units must be advertised as only suitable for family occupation and details clearly stated.

Bedrooms

- Bedrooms must have suitable floor coverings.
- Bedrooms must be adequately lit and lights must have shades, unless decorative.
- Means of heating must be available at all times which will, in most cases, mean heating to be provided in each bedroom.
- All bedrooms to have at least one window opening directly on to open air, with opaque curtains, blinds or shutters.
- Where blinds are used and they have looped cords, or cords could form a loop, they should be made safe. Safety devices are available to keep the cord or chain securely tidied away.
- There should be reasonable free space around beds, doors and drawers.
- There should be a bedside table/shelf and light for each permanent bed, including bunkbeds. Twin beds may share a table and light. A shelf should only be provided for bunkbeds, where it is safe to do so.
- In each unit there should be a dressing table or equivalent with mirror, a wardrobe and adequate drawer space. Shelf space is an acceptable alternative to drawers.
- There should be sufficient hangers per person. At least 6 per guest is suggested. Wire hangers are not acceptable.
- A non-flammable waste bin must be provided.
- A hairdryer should be provided.
- Where a bedroom is accessed via another bedroom, then this must be clearly advertised.

Beds and Bedding

- Minimum bed sizes are: Single – 183cm x 776cm/6' x 2'6". Double – 183cm x 120cm/6'x4".
- Beds of 183cm x 75cm/6' x 2" will only be acceptable for children and can only be used as part of a family room.
- There should be at least one bed for adults, which is not a bunk bed.
- All mattresses must be sprung or foam and in a sound clean condition.
- A headboard (or equivalent) should be provided for all permanent beds.
- Bedding should be of good quality and condition. Sheets should be poly-cotton or cotton.
- As a guide each bed should have either:
 - two sheets, two blankets and a bedspread or
 - a duvet with duvet cover and one or two sheets.
- If duvets are provided, alternative bedding should be available on request.
- It is advisable that two pillows in individual pillowcases are provided per person.
- If feather pillows or duvets are provided, a non-allergenic alternative should be available on request.
- Mattress protectors and pillow protectors to be used on all beds. Plastic or rubber mattress protectors are not acceptable for normal use. Where a rubber cover is provided for children, it should be as an optional extra in addition to the normal mattress protector.
- All bedding should be clean and in sufficient quantity, according to the season and needs of guests. Spare blankets and pillows should be available on request.
- All bed linen (sheets, pillowcases and duvet covers) should be fresh for all new occupants and weekly changes offered during the letting period Spare bedding should be available on request.
- Where linen is provided, it should be changed for all new occupants and weekly changes offered during the letting period. Spare linen and bedding should be available on request.

Public Areas

- The dining table and settings must cater for the maximum number of guests.
- Easy chair and/or sofa seats provided should be sufficient for the maximum number of guests.
- A TV must be provided at no extra charge.
- Non-flammable waste paper bins must be provided in living areas.
- Where there is sleeping accommodation in living areas, there must be adequate storage for bedding and guest's clothes.
- Adequate means of heating must be available at all times which will mean heating will be provided in living areas.
- All living areas must have at least one window opening directly onto the open air.
- All exterior windows in living areas should be fitted with opaque curtains, blinds or shutters. Glass doors also require covering where the lounge is used for sleeping or where lack of privacy could be an issue.
- All living areas, including stairways and landings must be adequately lit and lights must have shades, unless bulbs are decorative.
- There must be some form of emergency lighting available, e.g. torch or night lights. Candles are not acceptable for safety reasons.
- An adequate number of power sockets must be provided.
- Where there is a functional open fireplace, a fireguard, poker, hearth brush, tongs, shovel, fuel container and ashes bucket must be provided.