

A rustic interior scene featuring a wooden desk with a chair, a bookshelf, and a stone wall. The desk is made of dark wood and has several drawers. On the desk, there are two small ceramic containers holding pens and pencils, a blue mug, and a silver teapot. A wooden chair with a curved back is positioned in front of the desk. In the background, a bookshelf is filled with books, and a large orange lamp with a blue and white patterned base is visible. The wall is made of rough, grey stone.

 | **SYKES HOLIDAY COTTAGES**

PROPERTY STANDARDS

OUR GUIDE TO SUCCESSFUL
HOLIDAY LETTING



WELCOME

 | SYKES HOLIDAY COTTAGES



We're here to help you make the most of the holiday home you let. This guide contains practical tips to get started, as well as changeover checklists and advice to ensure it's always presented at its best.

What do guests want from a holiday property? Quite simply, they want a 'home from home'. Most hope for somewhere they can make their own - a warm, comfortable, efficient and clean property where everything works and they feel safe. They'll forgive properties that aren't stylish, since homely touches are friendly. They'll be happy with properties where everything isn't brand new, as long as it's clean and works well and is what they expected. In fact, quaint, old and characterful are often popular, but guests won't forgive inefficiency, omissions in the inventory, failure of equipment caused by lack of maintenance or the feeling that there is indifference to their needs.

Our customers associate Sykes with exceptional quality control. They book through us because we've earned their confidence in

the reliability of the product they're purchasing. Our tick rating and inspection systems, editorial independence and size reassure them any property we let will be good quality, just as we describe it and, if they have difficulties, there will be effective and timely resolution.

We guard our reputation very carefully because the confidence of our customers is our principle asset and, ultimately, the source of the majority of bookings for our owners. Guests who have good experiences overwhelmingly come back for more, and attracting this repeat business is the key to making a financial success of letting your home.

This guide shares our experience of how to let successfully. Letting your holiday home should be enjoyable and we're here to make it so. If you need advice at any stage, whatever the problem, please don't hesitate to call or email us. No query is too trivial and we're delighted to help.

The Sykes Team



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PREPARING YOUR HOLIDAY HOME OUTSIDE



An attractive exterior creates a good first impression. Your property should be well maintained, exterior paintwork should look fresh, paths kept weed free, gates easy to open and close and fences secure.

GARDEN

A well maintained garden or patio in a sunny spot attracts bookings. **Grass** should be cut regularly and **gardening equipment** shut away securely. Always check the garden between lets for **damage** to fences and any debris that might injure someone (like broken glass).

Pay particular attention to outside **lighting**, especially if there are steps to the parking area. Ideally, have an automatic light.

If there are **paths and steps**, they shouldn't be too uneven and not at all slippery (power clean or bleach them regularly). Handrails beside flights of more than two steps are highly recommended.

Provide good quality **outdoor furniture**, preferably wooden: outside chairs (enough for the number the property accommodates) and a table, a parasol or sunshade and perhaps a couple of sun loungers.

Barbecues are always popular, especially the gas variety which is easier to clean than traditional ones. However, do check if your insurance cover permits barbecues, especially if your property is thatched.

Play equipment is appreciated, but it must always be well maintained. A trampoline with safety net, for instance, is a relatively cheap and appreciated addition to flat gardens, but do inform insurers. Outside equipment must be rigorously maintained and checked between lets.

Ponds, however small or shallow, should be netted if possible or otherwise fenced to prevent an unattended small child falling in. If large and unfenced, there should be a life preserver and rope next to the pond, which must be checked before each booking.

Finally, have a look around the garden to identify any **hazards**. Get rid of as many as you can. Those that you can't easily remove, try to minimise. Owners have a duty of care to their guests, and trying to identify and remove hazards from the garden is part of that duty. Securely fence off any areas which are out of bounds and put up a clear notice.

ENTRANCE

You will need a clear **sign** at the entrance to the property so that guests don't have the slightest trouble finding it. Consider winter arrivals in the dark and prepare the property to be welcoming, even then. We recommend **reflectors** either side of the entrance for people arriving at night. Solar powered **garden lights** are also good. These are inexpensive, pretty, welcoming and reassuring and can be used to highlight the route of a path.

PARKING

Somewhere to park off road, preferably within sight of the property, is valued and properties with off-road parking get more bookings. **Garages** are popular, and improve the appeal of your property - failing that, a **reserved space**. If you don't have a reserved space and the parking is 'first come, first served' and crowded, you're likely to get stressed guests. If the parking is in a **public car park**, it's sometimes possible to obtain a weekly, monthly or yearly parking permit which, if offered to guests in advance, will improve bookings. Parking areas should be **well lit**, as should paths from parking areas to front doors, if necessary with a motion sensor light.

PREPARING YOUR HOLIDAY HOME INSIDE



DESIGN

Good design makes properties **more efficient** and, as a result, **more comfortable**. If you're in the early stages of planning renovations or have just purchased a property, **talk to us**. There are subtle differences between desirable design for a holiday home and an ordinary home. For instance, general storage space may not be as important in a holiday home as in a permanent home, but having **plenty of space** to regularly accommodate a houseful will be absolutely essential. Will the house have enough room for its maximum sleeping capacity? Will it be easy for everyone to sit around the dining table? Whilst lots of space is a luxury few of us can afford in our own homes, it is imperative you try to provide it in a holiday home if you are to create one which will delight holidaymakers and ensure long term success.

DECOR

Although it's often the first thing asked about by new owners, we don't think the **colour you paint your walls** is that important, as long as the overall scheme you choose is compatible with the age and character of the building. Strong colours look good in photos and holidaymakers aren't deterred by adventurous decor. In fact, the opposite is often true - after all, most of us would prefer to stay (temporarily) in something with character, rather than a magnolia box, even if it isn't what we would choose in our own home. Always remember to keep some of the paint you use to regularly touch up scuffs and scratches.

Floor coverings should be comfy and warm: plain if you're choosing carpet, well insulated if hard flooring. **Carpets** should be Scotch Guarded and easily cleanable. **Scatter rugs** can protect areas with excessive wear, but make sure they are securely fixed and the edges don't curl. **Kitchen and bathroom floors** should be easily washable.

Comfortable soft furnishings, good quality curtains, solid and attractive furniture, practical floor coverings and interesting (not necessarily expensive) pictures are essential.

LIGHTING

In all rooms this is very important. **Lamps** are needed, as well as ceiling or wall lights. All **light bulbs** should be checked at every changeover and **replacement bulbs** left in the property as part of the standard inventory.

HEATING AND HOT WATER

The property must have excellent heating and hot water systems and not the slightest hint of damp. **Heating systems** need to be up to the job of keeping the property warm through the coldest weather without the need to light a fire or woodburner and heating should be on long enough before guests arrive for the property to be warm.

The heating should be **easy to operate** and **available on demand**. Considerable savings can be made by installing efficient insulation, heating and hot water systems. Even if it's summer and the central heating isn't on, there should be an **electric heater** available (preferably thermostatically controlled).

As well as a timed programme for **hot water**, there should be a boost so holidaymakers can get good quantities of hot water at any time. We suggest you check the temperature of the hot water regularly to make sure it's not too hot (or cool).



ROOMS



HALL

Make sure there's a good **doormat** and somewhere to **store** boots (possibly muddy) and shoes (outside, if necessary, but under cover). Washable solid **floors** (stone, tiles or laminate) are best. Provide **hooks** for coats, preferably above radiators so they'll dry if wet. Finding the **light switches** is especially important in the hall, and the exterior light switch should be obvious too. Make sure **external doors** have good, well oiled **locks** and perhaps a bolt on them (even if there hasn't been a burglary in the village for 50 years, your guests don't know that). If there's room for furniture, this is a good place to leave the **torch** and some spare batteries in a drawer. If possible, have a **mirror** near the door.

LIVING ROOM

There should be **sufficient seating** for the number of people the property can accommodate. People shouldn't have to sit on the floor to watch TV or socialise. Furniture should be comfortable, and the covers clean. Buy sofas and armchairs with replaceable, removable, washable covers – we can recommend suppliers who provide good value, Scotch Guarded furniture.

Open fires and woodburners are loved by holidaymakers, but don't assume people will know how to light them (give instructions). Fires should be laid and enough **fuel** left for the first night. Some owners provide additional logs or coal, but if you prefer not to, then leave information on where to purchase more. If you have your own supply and charge extra for fuel (logs etc), state the price in your information leaflet and provide an honesty box. Please also let us know so we can tell customers before they book. **Fire irons, gloves, an ash bucket** and a **fireguard** should be provided.

A good-sized **TV** is essential (30-32" screen minimum), dependant on size of property, as is a **DVD player** and/or **Blu-ray** if it's not a 'smart' TV. In larger properties, it's best to have at least two or more. **DVD collections** are also hugely appreciated. Like books and games, they help mitigate effects of the English climate. In our experience, they are rarely stolen. Alternatively,

Netflix provides unlimited movies for a modest monthly subscription if you have a 'smart' TV. We always recommend a rainy day box, **Games and jigsaws** are essential, as is an interesting selection of reading. Classic games such as Monopoly, Cluedo, Scrabble and playing cards are enjoyed, but don't forget to check the pieces in games every now and then and replace them when tired. An **iPod dock** is appreciated.

A few up-to-date coffee table **magazines** and **fresh flowers** set off the room nicely.

DINING ROOM

Whether guests eat in a dining room, kitchen or open-plan living area, the **dining area** must comfortably seat the number the house accommodates. Even with very large houses where a **table** to accommodate everyone is impractical, there should be an additional (fold away, for instance) table available so a houseful can eat together. This means having enough **chairs** as well.

Tables should be protected against heat and spillages, preferably with a **waterproof cover** and **heat resistant mats**. Plenty of matching mats and coasters need to be provided, but remember to replace them at the first sign of tattiness.

High chairs must have five-point harnesses and should conform to BS 5799. They should be free-standing and have a detachable table. Don't purchase high chairs that clip on the side of a table.



ROOMS CONTINUED



KITCHEN

Cleanliness is more important in the kitchen than anywhere else in the house. Kitchens and all equipment should be spotless at the start of lets.

All kitchens should have a **full inventory** of utensils and crockery (see pages 11 and 12). Only allow items in the kitchen which look like new! Stained wooden spoons, metal implements which show the slightest hint of rust, glasses with scratches and chipped or cracked crockery should be replaced. Durable, thick-bottomed steel **cookware** is easy to clean and cannot be faulted, but **frying pans** should be non-stick and need to be replaced more regularly than other pans since they're more frequently used.

Surfaces should be water and heat proof and easy to clean (preferably not tiled because grouting gets tatty). If they're not heat proof, make sure you tell people and provide heat protectors.

Reserve a practical amount of storage space for **guests' provisions**.

Good **electrical equipment** is essential, including the biggest **fridge** and **freezer** you can fit in and a **microwave**. A **dishwasher** is valuable, a **washing machine** essential, as is a **tumble drier** or washer-drier if there's nowhere else to dry clothes inside. A **radio** is essential and maybe a small portable TV. **Bins** should be foot-operated, of a good size and in easily accessible

locations. **Instruction manuals** for all electrical equipment should be neatly stored in a folder in an obvious place like a kitchen drawer, or in the welcome folder.

A **fire extinguisher and blanket** are required in the kitchen, wall-mounted between the cooker and the exit. We know this may not look attractive, but they need to be visible in an emergency. If you have gas appliances, a **carbon monoxide detector** is mandatory, sited in accordance with manufacturers' instructions.

It's best not to provide expensive **crockery** or **glassware**. Sensible, practical, easily replaceable and lots of it is the best policy. We recommend plain white crockery because it looks good and is easy to replace.

Provisions: salt, pepper, a few tea bags, instant coffee, sugar, a pint of milk in the fridge, dishwasher tabs, washing powder, washing up liquid, a few bin bags and some spare light bulbs (out of children's reach) are standard provisions and should be in your property for the start of each let. Silver foil, cling film and other non-food cooking items are helpful, but not essential.

All other **food**, even dried goods, left by previous guests should be removed.

BEDROOM

You should aim to 'wow' your guests by providing beautifully made up beds and **pristine linen**. Bedrooms must be **well aired**. Fresh flowers are a good idea, as well as lavender bags or cedar balls in drawers.

Single beds should be 3' wide and robust. 2'6" beds are only suitable for children and we specify the size in our descriptions with an inevitable impact on bookings.

Double beds should be at least 4'6" and bigger if you can fit them in. Double beds should be accessible from both sides.

Zip-link beds give guests useful flexibility in properties with three or more bedrooms, but are not as comfortable as a standard double.



Four-posters are popular, but only if they're substantial, and the room is suitably large.

Where space is tight, **'truckle' beds** can be useful. This is a full-sized single bed which folds away under another. The room can be used as a twin when needed, but is otherwise a single. Care should be taken to ensure the door can still open easily, even when both beds are in use.

We don't regard **sofa beds** as suitable for prolonged use. They add flexibility to sleeping arrangements, but we don't count sofa bed spaces when we advertise the sleeping capacity of a property.

Mattresses should be well sprung, comfortable and always have protectors - the absorbent rather than the waterproof variety - and under-blankets between the protectors and sheets. It's impossible to get mattresses to suit all customers. Choose those that are not too hard or soft and in a mid price range. The standard mattress life is eight years.

Duvets/pillows - synthetic pillows are best for allergy sufferers. Allow two pillows with protectors per person. Duvets with synthetic filling are better than feather, but poor quality synthetic duvets can be horrible, so avoid the cheapest. Summer and winter duvets will be needed, checked at every changeover and cleaned as necessary or replaced. A couple of extra blankets should be provided for each bed for additional warmth.

Bed linen - to keep changeovers easy, we recommend three sets of linen for each bed: one set on the beds, one in the wash and one as a spare. We recommend white as it goes with virtually all decor and is easy to keep clean because it can be washed very hot. It needs to be well ironed.

You shouldn't leave spare linen or towels in the property unless you have a lockable cupboard, or guests may help themselves to your clean supplies between changeovers.

Unless the house is being let at a discount to a small party, all beds must be made up for the guests' arrival, even when the party is smaller than the property's maximum capacity. Guests have paid to use the entire property and can reasonably expect to decide where they sleep.

Clothes hanging space is needed for all bedrooms. Obviously a wardrobe is best, but for very small bedrooms hooks with coat-hangers on the back of doors will suffice. There should be at least four matching wooden or good quality plastic **coat hangers** per person. A **chest of drawers** is also needed, with the drawers lined with paper.

Cots - a proper drop-sided cot appeals to parents of babies. Cots should be robust and the distance between the bars must not exceed 60mm. Mattresses should fit snugly. Cots, mattresses and bumpers must comply with the relevant safety regulations (currently BS EN 716-1 and BS 1877-10). You only need to provide a bottom sheet for cots; parents will bring the bedding. Cots should be dismantled and put away when not required.

Lighting is important in bedrooms. Each bed should have its own bedside light, as well as the main light(s).

Floor coverings in bedrooms and upstairs generally need to take into account that people will walk on them in bare feet. Sisal and other rough floor coverings can be uncomfortable and bare floorboards, cold.



BATHROOM

Cleanliness in bathrooms is vital. Surfaces must gleam, mirrors shine and plug holes be pristine.

Showers have become increasingly popular, but we don't recommend them at the expense of a bath. A cubicle with power-shower and continuously, thermostatically controlled mixer is the best type of shower. Electric showers over baths are better than no shower at all. A rubberised bath mat is sensible if you have a bath-shower. Showers must have good pressure and the temperature mustn't be affected when a tap is turned on elsewhere. Shower curtains attract mould and we recommend a shower door/panel.

We strongly recommend **hard flooring** in bathrooms. Carpet can become mouldy when wet. Tiles, vinyl or laminate are best.

Heated towel rails keep bathrooms warm and cosy. Electric **shaver points** are necessary; they can easily be installed, or an adaptor plug can be purchased, which is also suitable for electric toothbrushes. Small bars of **soap** can be bought very cheaply and are a nice touch. A **bin** with a swing lid is essential in the bathroom.

There needs to be **loo rolls** in all the loos, plus spare rolls beside each loo.

Towels - you should provide at least one fluffy bath sheet and one fluffy hand towel per person.

HELPFUL TIPS



ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES

We recommend you have 'portable appliance testing' (**PAT checks**) carried out by a qualified electrician on an annual basis. This is not a legal requirement, but is strongly recommended and we (and Trading Standards) regard it as the best way to comply with the requirements to provide safe electrical equipment. Get a report from the electrician detailing each piece of equipment tested and remove anything that fails. Appliances less than a year old do not need testing. Always use appropriate fuses in plugs. If you have **multiple plugs**, use a bar extension lead, not a plug-in adaptor, and ensure it's fused and not overloaded. Electric heaters, in particular, can draw a lot of power.

GAS

If you have gas (bottled or mains) in the property, you must have a **gas safety check** carried out annually by an approved gas maintenance firm (Gas Safe registered) and the certificate needs to be on display. This is a legal requirement. You must also buy a **carbon monoxide detector**, which is small, unobtrusive and cheap. Site it according to the manufacturer's instructions and close to the gas appliance and test it regularly.

SMOKE ALARMS

There must be **at least one smoke alarm per floor** for the safety of your property and guests, and we recommend an alarm on **long corridors**. They should be sited horizontally, not vertically, to work properly and hoovered regularly. Guests may disconnect the battery if they set off an alarm, so you should test smoke alarms on each changeover day. When you redecorate, remember to take smoke alarms down as some are adversely effected by paint fumes and may subsequently malfunction.

STAIRGATES

Parents with small children appreciate stairgates. Have enough to fit at bottom and top of each flight of stairs, and provide the removable type which can be easily fitted or removed between lets, depending on the party.

WIFI

Guests value WiFi for work, leisure and communication and **expect it to be provided**. Properties with WiFi get more bookings and we strongly recommend you install it. The **code** should be easy for guests to find.

PHONE

If you have unreliable mobile coverage, we and most guests regard a **landline phone** as essential. It can be a payphone, or an ordinary phone with an honesty box (most owners find they receive more money than the cost of the calls). It must make outgoing **999 calls** for free.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

If you spend time in your holiday home and want to leave your own supplies of food, clothes etc, please **keep them locked away**. Cupboards/drawers with **DIY equipment** must also be locked. Personal pictures, books, ornaments left in situ - the trappings of a home - are quite alright and guests generally like to feel they are in a home rather than a 'holiday unit'. Don't, however, leave anything that you will be distressed to lose or have damaged.

WINDOWS

Windows should be **cleaned regularly**, inside and out, particularly at properties close to the sea. If sills upstairs are low (below 80cm/31½"), windows should have **safety catches** to stop them opening more than a couple of inches (children may fall out). There are products on the market which restrict windows opening far, but a chain and a small karabiner will work if nothing else is available. These limiters must be detachable to allow emergency escape and where windows have **window locks** there should be a key close to the window in case of an emergency.

CURTAINS

Curtains should be **substantial, lined, fully closeable and designed for warmth**. Sunlight streaming through curtains in the morning does not appeal to all guests (especially if they have

thick curtains at home). If you have lightweight bedroom curtains, try to fit a **blackout blind** as well. **Roof lights** (like Velux windows) particularly need blackout blinds.

FIRST AID KIT

As part of your duty of care, we believe it's necessary to provide a first aid kit. We recommend it only contains bandages, plasters, dressings, safety pins, non-alcohol wipes and latex gloves. Avoid creams and ointments, as these can cause allergic reactions. Never include pills or medicine.

INFORMATION FOLDER

The folder should be immediately visible on guests' arrival. It should be **clearly labelled** on the outside and, if you design your own folder, should contain the information listed on page 13.

KEYS

Guests do sometimes lose keys or accidentally take them home. We suggest **huge key rings** and **more than one set** of keys if your property sleeps six or more. If you're not on the spot, please leave a **spare key** with someone and let us know where it's kept (it's best to leave one with your caretaker or a local contact).

REFUSE

Rubbish must be **removed** before guests arrive. Details of when to put rubbish out for collection and any nearby recycling facilities should be included in the information folder. If guests fail to put their rubbish out, you need a contingency plan in place to ensure you can remove it.

DOGS

A large proportion of our customers are dog owners. Permitting pets at your property will substantially increase the number of people who want to book it and allowing pets will maximise your bookings. There are ground rules for bringing pets:

- Guests must always clear up after their pets and remove all trace of the pets having been present before leaving.
 - Pets are not allowed on furniture, in bedrooms or in other places where hygiene would be compromised.
 - Pets must be supervised and under control at all times.
- If you accept pets, do make their owners feel they are genuinely welcome by providing a dog bowl and treats etc.

SWIMMING POOLS

Swimming pools must be surrounded by a **continuous, childproof barrier** with a **lockable gate** or door. **Outdoor pools** should be available at least from the spring bank holiday to the second week of September (inclusive). **Indoor pools** should be available all year round. If pools are heated, they should be at least **80°F (27°C)**.

CLEANLINESS

This hardly needs saying, but for completeness... guests are entitled to expect a clean house and it's imperative that your property is absolutely spotless when guests arrive.

When running a holiday home, you really can't be too fussy. The most rigorous standards must be maintained. In addition to thorough weekly cleans, that also means a thorough **spring clean** every year, including behind the cooker, freezer and wardrobes and deep (steam) cleaning the carpets, mattresses and soft furnishings. Areas to watch (kitchens and bathrooms especially) are: grouting (bleach regularly), bath edges, beams, cobwebs, behind furniture, radiators/night storage heaters, pipe work in bathrooms, under-sink cupboards, cooker hoods, fridge seals, roofs of microwaves, skirting boards and electrical switches (particularly over cookers), to name just a few!

CARETAKERS

Caretakers are very important people. Good ones are hard to find and make holiday home ownership much easier for owners who do not live near their property and it's worth developing a **close working relationship** with your caretaker. They'll not only need to do changeovers, but will also need to be on hand to help resolve occasional but inevitable problems that will arise. Make sure they have **lockable storage space** for spare bedding and cleaning equipment, as well as a **list of plumbers, electricians** and others necessary to organise repairs. When you get to know your caretaker, it's a good idea to give them a **float** and authority to arrange essential maintenance/repairs without reference to you. Most caretakers, in our experience, are highly capable and resolve domestic disasters with aplomb. If you need help to find a caretaker, please contact us.

SEASONAL SPARKLE

Guests arriving during the Christmas period (early December to early January) will expect to see flourishes in keeping with the time of year, so be sure to offer festive decorations that reflect both your tick rating and property size.





RUNNING A HOLIDAY HOME

BEFORE GUESTS ARRIVE

Personal contact is greatly appreciated by guests. Most are acutely aware they are renting someone's home and may appreciate reassurance from you that you're happy they're coming to stay and an opportunity to reassure you they'll look after your home. They might like to hear local knowledge about nearby places you've enjoyed – pubs, restaurants, beaches etc. Holiday lets are most successful when owners treat their customers as paying guests, not 'punters'. Understandably, owners who make personal contact seem to have fewer problems with breakages and how the property is left. They also benefit from more repeat bookings and recommendations.

We have no objection to you contacting, independently, customers who we book into your property. Many owners find making contact adds to the pleasure they get from letting their property.

CONTACT

We ask guests to phone the property owner or a nominated contact a few days before the start of their holiday, but inevitably some forget. If they do, it's good practice to call them to **establish contact**. If you live nearby or on site, it's normal to **introduce yourself** early on during their stay. If you live away, a phone call is appropriate, to make sure they've settled in OK and are happy. Otherwise, it's a case of playing it by ear. Some guests are friendly, some are reserved, but knowing you're available, should they have any difficulties, will be reassuring to all. Guests who have personal contact with an owner or caretaker are also less inclined to post negative reviews.

WELCOMING GUESTS

By the time they reach your property, guests will probably have spent hours travelling. If they haven't been to the property before, they may be apprehensive about what they're going to find. Their needs are simple: they want to find the key where it is supposed to be and walk into a warm, welcoming home with a fresh smell. **They want to feel welcome.**

If you can't greet them in person, you must ensure the key is where it should be – there shouldn't be the slightest struggle to

find it. Coded key safes are a secure option. Except in the height of summer, the outside light should be on – they may be arriving late. Once inside, a card saying 'welcome' is a friendly gesture. If the weather is even a little bit cold, the heating should be on (long enough to be effective). Fires should be laid, ready to light; there should be hot water in the tank, freezers and fridges turned on and ice cubes in the tray. In other words, the house ready to walk into and relax.

Many Sykes owners do much more to welcome guests, with homemade cakes, cream teas, local goodies, mini-hampers, bottles of wine or boxes of chocolates. We hear about these things in the feedback customers return to us, and they delight in the fact that someone took the trouble to lay on even a modest welcome. If only winning people over was always so relatively cheap and easy! It's very good business – owners who welcome guests rarely get complaints and enjoy more repeat bookings.

If you're relying on a caretaker, it can be more difficult, but a simple card and tea tray laid up or a bottle of wine makes a world of difference. Whether you have a quaint little cottage or a grand manor house, a thoughtful welcome will win the admiration of your guests and do wonders for the reputation of your property amongst their friends and acquaintances.

CHANGEOVERS

The standard **arrival time is 3pm** and the standard **departure time is 10am**. The five hours of a changeover can be very busy, especially if guests are late leaving. We recommend you make a checklist (see pages 15 to 17) to ensure everything is covered every week, including the safety issues. If guests don't seem in a hurry to leave and time is pressing on, it's quite alright to politely ask them if you can make a start. This tends to encourage most on their way! Remember, if you have any difficulties, call us and we'll try to help. Similarly, if guests arrive early and you haven't finished, let them leave their luggage and use the loo and then suggest a place they can visit while you finish off. Please remember that your guests will probably have been on the road for a long time, and are likely to be tired. If you can make them happy at this stage it will be a triumph and they often come back later, seemingly different people to the (maybe) bad tempered lot who arrived an hour earlier.

Two week lets – holidaymakers staying for two weeks will need

clean linen and towels (if you provide them) on the normal changeover day after their first week, although it's not necessary for you to make up the beds. It's good practice and considerate to offer a clean on the normal changeover day for two week lets, although not essential.

PROBLEMS

Occasionally, you may have guests who cause you difficulty or whom, for one reason or another, you don't want again. If you have difficulties, **call us**. A senior member of staff is available 24 hours a day/365 days a year for both owner and holidaymaker emergencies. Do not feel alone - you are not. As your booking agents, we want to ensure the arrangements we've made work out well for both you and your guests, and will do our best to help resolve difficulties either of you face.

Sometimes people just seem determined to be upset even when there's nothing obviously wrong. Super-stressed parents with small children, people who have organised a booking for a large party and anyone holidaying at a particularly expensive time of year can all be extra sensitive and may pick up on things that are not absolutely perfect. With these groups, **preparation has to be extra rigorous**, and if you do get a complaint it's worth going the extra mile because, oddly, if it can be satisfactorily resolved, such groups are frequently the most fulsome in their praise. They probably need a good holiday more than most.

But if at the end of a guest's stay you'd prefer not to have another booking from that particular customer, just let us know why and we'll tell them.

FEEDBACK

Happily, the vast majority of customers are absolutely delighted with the properties they book. We ask all our guests to complete a post holiday survey. Almost all have nothing but praise for us, the properties and owners. Where comments are included, they're almost always constructive and intended as helpful feedback. We share all customer feedback in our owner portal which, with their overwhelmingly enthusiastic tone, help generate more bookings.

VISITORS' BOOK

You'll need a visitors' book for guests to read and contribute to. Be generous with the size - **A4 hardback** is good (some guests are effusive). And perhaps also provide a **children's book** as well as an adult's book. One visitors' book at a cottage we let was so full of guests' stories, a BBC journalist who stayed there decided it was a treasure and featured it in a radio programme. At the very least, a visitors' book makes interesting reading, and usually it's an informative, ongoing conversation between guests, listing good things to do and see, places to go and local knowledge.

Check the book between lets. Sometimes guests mention maintenance issues which they don't tell owners or caretakers. You should address any issues and write a reply to show you've

done so. You may wish to provide a separate '**breakages book**' for guests to report any damage.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

Much general law applies to the business of letting private houses for holidays, although there is little specific.

The booking contract

As your agents, we make a contract on your behalf between you and the customer. The contract is for the use of the property, as specified, for a holiday, for the time specified in return for the sum agreed. If either you or the customer fails to fulfill their side of the contract, the other is entitled to sue for damages.

Discrimination

You are not permitted, by law, to turn down bookings or otherwise treat people less favourably on the basis of their race, colour, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, disability or religion. You may turn down bookings on the basis that you think the property is otherwise unsuitable for a certain party makeup or size, or if you believe the property might be put at risk by a specific group. However, the restrictions must apply equally to all people.

The Disability Discrimination Act and Equality Act require you to make 'reasonable' provision for all people to use the property you are letting. In practice, 'reasonable' is not well defined. We suggest you spend some time looking at your property to see if there are things you can do to make it easier for disabled people to use. No one expects you to replace all the steps with ramps, but if you are replacing things or making alterations, you should give consideration to the needs of disabled people.

Health and safety - your responsibilities to your guests

You have a responsibility to provide guests with a safe and well-maintained place to stay. There should not be any 'traps' left where dangers lurk, like loose handrails on stairs, loose floorboards or slippery steps. You must ensure your property complies with the relevant legislation. Always make sure your Public Liability Insurance is up to date. We can put you in touch with insurers who are specialists in the cottage letting market.

Please always remember that the fact we've inspected your property does not mean we agree it complies with all current regulations and you must make yourself aware of these and ensure your property complies. Of course, if we are aware anything is obviously wrong, we will tell you. Always bear in mind that your guests will be unfamiliar with the property and might, on occasion, have a glass of wine or two. Try to look at it with this in mind and also consider what you can do to make it safe for small children.



INVENTORY

This is the bare minimum which Sykes' customers have come to expect and all should be provided. Other items may be added at your discretion.

KITCHEN

Baking sheet
 Baking tin (cake, 8" recommended)
 Bottle opener
 Bread bin
 Bread/chopping boards
 Bread knife
 Bun tin/Yorkshire pudding tin
 Butter dish
 Cake storage tin
 Carving knife and fork
 Casserole dish and lid
 Coasters
 Coffee pot/cafetière
 Colander
 Condiment set
 Cooling rack
 Corkscrew
 Electric kettle
 Electric toaster

Fish slice (plastic if non-stick frying pan)
 Fruit bowl/basket
 Frying pan
 Garlic press
 Grater
 Ice cube tray
 Kitchen scales
 Kitchen scissors
 Knife sharpener
 Ladle
 Lemon squeezer
 Measuring jug (1 litre)
 Meat serving dish
 Milk pan
 Mixing bowls
 Oven glove
 Oven roasting tin
 Pasta pan
 Pie dish
 Place mats and serving mats
 Potato masher
 Potato peeler
 Rolling pin
 Salad bowl & servers
 Saucepan with lid (large)
 Saucepan with lid (medium)
 Saucepan with lid (small)

Sieve
 Spatula
 Steamer
 Slotted spoon
 Tablecloth or oilcloth
 Teapot
 Tea strainer
 Tin opener
 Toast rack
 Tongs
 Tray
 Vegetable dishes (2, preferably lidded)
 Vegetable knife (small)
 Water jug (glass)
 Whisk
 Wooden spoons

Crockery (matching)

Egg cup (1 per person)
 Gravy/sauce boat and stand
 Jug
 Sugar basin

At least 2 per person of:

Mug
 Plate (large)
 Plate (small)



Bowl
Tumbler
Wine glass
Beer glass (1 per person)

Cutlery drawer

Tablespoons (4)

At least 2 per person of:

Teaspoon
Dessert spoon
Table fork
Table knife

Please bear in mind if you provide a dishwasher you will need an ample supply of crockery and cutlery.

CLEANING EQUIPMENT

Broom
Bucket
Cleaning agents
Clothes line/drying facility
Clothes pegs
Dish drying rack
Dish mop/brush
Dishwasher powder/tablets
Duster
Dustpan and brush
Floor mop
Iron and ironing board
Kitchen hand towel
Pot scourer
Refuse container

Tea towels
Vacuum cleaner
Washing-basket
Washing-up bowl
Washing-up liquid

MISCELLANEOUS

Books
Carbon monoxide detector
Coal scuttle/log basket
Door mat
Dustbins
DVDs
Fire blanket
Fire extinguisher
Fire irons including poker, tongs, shovel
Fireguard/fire screen
First aid kit (no tablets)
Flower vases
Games
Logs (for first fire)
Long mirror (preferably in hall or on landing)
Phone book
Radio
Smoke alarms (at least 1 per floor)
Spare light bulbs and batteries
Stairgates
Torch
Visitors' book
Waste bins (non-flammable)

If a sofa bed is provided, please allow storage space for bedding and guests' clothing.

BEDROOMS

Additional blankets/throws (for winter)
Duvets
Coat hangers (4 per person, matching, not wire)
Mattress protectors
Pillows (2 per person)
Pillow protectors
Cot (vertical bars not more than 6cm apart)
Waterproof sheet (cot)
High chair (with harness)

BATHROOMS

Bath mat
Bath towels (1 per person)
Hand towels (1 per person)
Disposal bin (lidded)
Heated towel rail/ring
Loo brush and container
Loo roll holder
Mirror
Shaver point or adapter

Dining areas and living rooms must have sufficient comfortable seating for the maximum the property accommodates.



INFORMATION FOLDER

This is vital to get guests off to a good start and make sure they experience minimal difficulties during their stay. We recommend an A4 ring binder with laminated or plastic sheets to prevent pages getting dog-eared. The folder should be clearly labelled as the information folder and left in a prominent position.

WELCOME

A short introduction and welcome to the property.

VITAL INFORMATION

- Instructions to dial 999 in an emergency
- Address of the property, including postcode
- OS grid reference
- Phone number at the property
- Location of the nearest public phone (even if there is a phone at the property)
- Phone number of the caretaker or person responsible for maintenance
- Sykes' contact details

The nearest (including address and phone number)

- Hospital with A&E department
- Doctor
- Dentist
- Chemist
- Optician

- Vet
- Police station
- Taxi
- Tourist Information Centre

Instructions/manuals for electrical appliances should be either in the information folder or near the appliance in question (in a drawer, for instance).

Any house rules and safety information you need to convey, and a request to inform responsible person of breakages.

Your Fire Risk Assessment should be included as an appendix.

PROPERTY INFORMATION

- Location of the water stop cock
- Location of the main gas tap (if applicable)
- Location of the fuse box (and spare fuses)
- Heating and water controls
- Location of fuel for fires or instructions on where to buy it
- Refuse collection instructions
- Location of spare light bulbs
- Location of torch
- Location of first aid kit
- If the property is on a farm, a map of walking areas is helpful
- Information about the departure time
- Inventory (see pages 11 and 12)
- Information and pictures on history of the house and area

LOCAL INFORMATION

Location and phone numbers for recommended/nearest:

- Post Office
- Bank
- Cashpoint
- Supermarket
- Butcher
- Baker
- Farm shop
- Garage for petrol
- Newsagent
- Takeaways
- Internet café
- Cinema
- Theatre
- Family restaurants
- Formal restaurants
- Pubs serving food (including child-friendly pubs)
- Public swimming pool
- Beaches
- Golf course
- Fishing
- Cycle hire
- Horse riding
- National Trust properties
- Other good places to visit

If there is half-day closing in the local village, this should be mentioned.

- Local bus time table
- Local tide timetable
- Take-away menu
- Map of the area
- Recommended walks – either from the property or starting nearby

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT



These general notes and checklist may help you and/or your caretaker maintain your property and establish a routine for changeovers. All properties are different and some guidance may not apply to yours.

Our marketing creates high expectations amongst customers. We appreciate your help in exceeding those expectations and ensuring that when guests arrive at the property, their inclination is to smile rather than frown.

As an owner or caretaker, you'll be responsible for preparing the property and meeting the reasonable expectations of guests during their stay. You'll need to be patient, understanding and efficient. You'll be on the front line, the point at which the service we have promised is delivered.

There are three main facets of the job: changeovers, 'on-call' and property management.

Changeover is the clean required on turnaround to prepare the property for the next party of guests (as we do a lot of short breaks).

'On-call' means responding to guests' questions, queries and difficulties during their stay.

Property management is the ongoing, long term management of the property, its maintenance and development.

CHANGEOVERS

Effective changeovers rely on good planning and timing. You need a rigorous routine to ensure nothing is missed and there's time to prepare everything properly in the standard five hours between guests leaving and arriving. You should keep a maintenance book or diary for each property in which you note issues that crop up and record the location and regular testing of appliances (like smoke and carbon monoxide detectors). Schedule regular maintenance, like defrosting the fridge or freezer and cleaning windows, in the diary.

There will be times when the property is left untidy, others when it looks like nobody's been there. These eventualities need to be planned for so the best use can be made of the limited time available on a changeover day.

Guests staying for two weeks will expect a mid-stay change of linen and offering to pop in to clean is a nice touch. You'll need to liaise with them to establish a convenient time.

PRE-CHANGEOVER

Check the notes on the Sykes booking confirmation for messages, such as requests for the beds to be made up in a certain way or for an order of groceries to be provided.

Call the booker if you're the primary contact and they have not already contacted you. You should introduce yourself and ensure they're clear about arrival time and where to find the key.



CHANGEOVER CHECKLIST

INITIAL CHECKS

Visitors' book: When you enter the property, the first thing to do is check the visitors' book (and breakages book if there is one) for comments/issues. Guests frequently leave helpful comments that they may not mention to you, even if you meet them.

Initial check: A swift external and internal check of the property may identify issues which will take time to resolve. Here are some we think fall into this category, but there may be more.

Open the windows

- Check window opening and closing
- Check window keys are present in correct place
- Check window restrictors are attached

Switch on all the lights

- Replace blown bulbs

Check oven and hob

- If exceptionally dirty, immediately apply cleaner

Switch on all electrical equipment

- Check dishwasher, washing machine, fridge, freezer, hob, oven, kettle and toaster are all working
- Check WiFi, TVs (check channels), DVDs, satellite are all working

Switch on the heating and hot water

- Check the settings are working
- Check all heating is working

Inspect carpets, rugs and soft furnishings

- If there are stains, address them immediately

Inspect bathrooms

- Flush all toilets and check for fill and flush (not blocked or noisy)
- Check heated towel rails are working
- Check loo seats aren't wobbly
- Check the bathroom fan is working (not noisily)
- Check electric shower is working and the thermostat is functioning

Check beds

- Look for damage or wetness

Check smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors

- Make sure they are still there and batteries are connected! Test and record test in the house maintenance book (replace batteries, if necessary)

Security

- Check door locks/bolts
- If any of these require repair or replacement, action immediately. If not possible, report to Sykes.

Once the initial check is done, continue with the rest of changeover.

GARDEN AND GROUNDS

You should look at the garden and grounds of the property, checking for the following:

- Play equipment isn't damaged
- Perimeter fence isn't damaged
- There are no bottles, broken glass or other debris
- House sign is visible from the road
- Outside lighting is working
- Outside furniture is not damaged or broken
- Paths, patio and steps are swept and not slippery or loose
- Entrances and paths are clear of foliage
- Garden is tidy
- Flower tubs and hanging baskets are watered
- Bins are empty and the rubbish removed
- Furniture is cleaned and arranged neatly
- Barbecue is clean

INSIDE

- **Beds:** Strip the beds. If you launder the sheets (rather than sending them to a laundry), get a load into the washing machine. This tests the machine, saves time laundering them later and allows the beds to air. Check the duvets, pillows and mattress protectors. If they're stained or grubby, replace them.

Open fires/woodburners: If the property has an open fire or woodburner, you might like to deal with this first. They are messy and cleaning them after the rest of the house can lead to your other good work being undone.

- Ash should be removed
- The fire laid and ready to put a match to
- Hoods and woodburners need to look clean on the outside
- Fuel - a starter pack of fuel should be provided with instructions where to find more and instructions on how to operate the woodburner or light the fire
- Fire irons and fire guard should be in place

KITCHEN

- Cobwebs – remove high and low
- Skirting boards – dust
- Windows – dust sills, remove smears and finger marks from panes
- Bins – empty, replace liners and leave clean
- Blinds/curtains – open/close, check and tie back
- Pictures – dust
- Paintwork – remove or touch up marks
- Light fittings – dust
- Light switches – clean
- Kitchen door – dust and wipe down (remove finger marks)
- Oven – ensure grease free, including trays, shelves and hinges
- Hob – remove any food spillages and make grease free
- Microwave – clean thoroughly, remove smears and food spillages and check roof of oven, leave door ajar
- Fridge and freezer – remove any food items, clean thoroughly and make grease free. Refill ice tray. Check seals
- Dishwasher – empty/clean if necessary and check filter, salt and rinse aid levels and run if necessary. Wipe front
- Washing machine – clean powder drawer. Wipe front
- Tumble drier – check fluff filter
- Cupboards – remove any food items left. Wipe inside and out. Rearrange so all items are left neat and tidy
- Crockery, glasses, cups/mugs, cookware – check all are clean. Replace/report any breakages or missing items
- Bread bin/cake tin – empty crumbs
- Cutlery drawer – make sure the cutlery is clean and there's enough
- Kettle – empty of water and remove finger marks
- Toaster – empty tray of any crumbs and wipe over. Remove smear marks
- Work surfaces – thoroughly clean and disinfect
- Tiled surfaces – wipe clean, check grout discolouration (bleach, if necessary) and disinfect
- Sink(s)/drainers – clean and disinfect
- Chrome and stainless steel appliances – polish
- Oven gloves – check and replace if necessary
- Knives – sharpen if necessary
- Fire blanket – check present
- Fire extinguisher – check not discharged and in date
- High chair – set up if necessary (check booking confirmation for babies). Check harness, check cleanliness
- Floor – Hoover, mop (with disinfectant) or sweep as necessary
- Hazards – check for obvious hazards and remove anything broken
- First aid kit – check contents and replace as necessary. Remove any tablets
- Welcome folder – check contents and leave in obvious place
- Housekeeping pack – supply bin bags (5), dishwasher tabs (5), washing machine powder/tabs (5), washing up liquid (at least 100ml), spare light bulbs, new dishcloths (2), paper towel (1 roll), new pan scourer/washing up sponge (1), general cleaner e.g. Cif. Ensure all stored out of reach of children
- Welcome pack – supply minimum welcome pack: welcome card, tea (2 teabags x the number the property sleeps), coffee (at least 5g x the number the property sleeps), fresh milk (at least 50ml x the number the property sleeps), sugar (10g x the number the property sleeps), salt, pepper

- Grocery order – if ordered, perishables in the fridge
- Optional extras (in addition to welcome and housekeeping packs) – wine, cake, biscuits, cream tea. Where possible, provide local products

BATHROOMS / LOOS / SHOWER-ROOMS

- Cobwebs – remove high and low
- Skirting boards – dust
- Windows – dust sills, remove smears and finger marks from panes
- Bins – empty, replace liners and leave clean
- Blinds/curtains – open/close, check and tie back
- Mirrors – clean
- Pictures – dust
- Paintwork – remove or touch up marks
- Light fittings – dust light switches
- Extractor – check working and not noisy
- Bathroom cabinet – check empty and leave clean
- Loo – check flush, clean and disinfect. Polish handles
- Shower – clean (nothing in plug hole), check grout discolouration (bleach if necessary) and disinfect. Polish controls. Check ceiling above shower for mould
- Basin – check plugs attached/clean (nothing in plug hole) and disinfect. Polish taps
- Heated towel rail – dust/wipe and turn off
- Loo brush – check
- Anti-slip mat – clean
- Bath mat – check for cleanliness
- Hand towel – provide a clean one
- Loo roll – supply 1 plus 1 spare
- Disposal bags – supply for nappies and sanitary items
- Toiletries/cleaning agents – remove
- Floor – Hoover, mop (with disinfectant) or sweep as necessary
- Hazards – check for obvious hazards, remove anything broken

BEDROOMS

- Cobwebs – remove high and low
- Skirting boards – dust
- Windows – dust sills, remove smears and finger marks from panes
- Bins – empty, replace liners and leave clean
- Blinds/curtains – open/close, check and tie back
- Mirrors – clean
- Pictures – dust
- Paintwork – remove or touch up marks
- Light fittings – dust
- Light switches – clean
- Beds – check under and behind, check duvets, pillows and mattress protectors and replace/laundry as necessary. Make up (linen should be good quality and ironed)
- Spare blankets – check and replace spare blankets in wardrobe or chest of drawers
- Bedside tables – check drawers and remove anything left behind
- Wardrobes – remove any non-standard coat hangers and replace with wooden ones (4 per person)

- Chests of drawers – check drawers and remove anything left behind
- Towels – supply 1 bath and 1 hand towel per person. Leave in bedroom
- Toiletries – supply soap and shampoo. Leave in bedroom
- Cot – set up, if necessary (check booking confirmation for babies). Check operation, check clean
- Floor – Hoover, mop (with disinfectant) or sweep as necessary
- Hazards – check for obvious hazards, remove anything broken

LIVING ROOM

- Cobwebs – remove high and low
- Skirting boards – dust
- Windows – dust sills, remove smears and finger marks from panes
- Bins – empty, replace liners and leave clean
- Blinds/curtains – open/close, check and tie back
- Mirrors – clean
- Pictures – dust
- Paintwork – remove or touch up marks
- Light fittings – dust
- Light switches – clean
- Sofa and chairs – check covers, check down back and under cushions, remove crumbs/debris, Hoover, plump cushions
- DVDs/CDs/books/toys/games – tidy
- TV, etc. – wipe screen, check batteries in remote controls
- Floor – Hoover, mop (with disinfectant) or sweep, as necessary
- Hazards – check for obvious hazards, remove anything broken

DINING ROOM

- Cobwebs – remove high and low
- Skirting boards – dust
- Windows – dust sills, remove smears and finger marks from panes
- Bins – empty, replace liners and leave clean
- Blinds/curtains – open/close, check and tie back
- Mirrors – clean
- Pictures – dust
- Paintwork – remove or touch up marks
- Light fittings – dust
- Light switches – clean
- Place mats – check cleanliness
- Crockery, cutlery, glasses – check cleanliness
- Table – polish, if appropriate
- Floor – Hoover, mop (with disinfectant) or sweep, as necessary
- Hazards – check for obvious hazards, remove anything broken

HALL / STAIRS / LANDING

- Cobwebs – remove high and low
- Skirting boards – dust
- Windows – dust sills, remove smears and finger marks from panes

- Bins – empty, replace liners and leave clean
- Blinds/curtains – open/close, check and tie back
- Mirrors – clean
- Pictures – dust
- Paintwork – remove or touch up marks
- Light fittings – dust
- Light switches – clean
- Stair spindles – check secure
- Stair carpet – check secure
- Stair handrail – check secure
- Stairgates – check secure
- Post/newspapers/flyers – remove
- Torch – check working and batteries good
- Floor – Hoover, mop (with disinfectant) or sweep, as necessary
- Hazards – check for obvious hazards, remove anything broken

FRONT PORCH AREA

- Front door – check clean, clean handle, opens/closes easily, check locks/bolts work easily (oil, if necessary)
- Outside area – clear of any dropped leaves (especially autumn) and loose rubbish. Sweep under door mat. Shake out mat
- Outside lighting – check lighting is working and leave on for night time arrivals
- Cobwebs – remove high and low
- Floor – mop/sweep, as appropriate

PETS

- Include dog treats in welcome pack
- Map with local dog walks
- It is recommended that the property provide dog-friendly fencing around the garden and all external areas, with no gaps or escape routes for even the smallest dog. If this is not the case, it must be explicit in the property description.
- External tap and hose to clean mud away
- Stair gates if required
- Couch covers
- Bed protectors / covers if required
- Bowls for food and water
- Towels and blankets
- Non-slip mat for food area

FINALLY

- Fresh flowers – a posy from the garden or a few daffodils in spring are perfect
- Deodorise – as necessary
- Vacuum cleaner – empty bag if necessary
- Hot water – turn on
- Heating – turn on if required (will normally be required)
- Oil/gas tank – check level
- Ensure key in key safe or other agreed place as per guests' directions
- Report any maintenance or other issues
- Call guests after they arrive to check all is OK

UNWELCOME VISITORS

Guests don't appreciate pests, so check regularly for their presence and don't allow conditions to develop that attract them in the first place.

Flies – removing debris from the property helps reduce the number of flies. In the autumn, cluster flies can be a problem. Opening windows and cleaning out hinges helps. Sealing windows and cracks is the most effective way to prevent the flies from entering, but cleaning around windows with mild detergent or placing lavender on window sills is said to repel flies too. Fly sprays will blitz them temporarily (but remember to Hoover up corpses).

Fleas – if the property welcomes dogs, schedule regular spray, powder or fumigation anti-flea treatment monthly to ensure fleas are kept in check.

Mice – food left in the house will attract mice. There are lots of effective products available to get rid of them. If you choose traps or poison, guests must be made aware of the location.

REGULAR MAINTENANCE

Spring clean – at the start of every year, a thorough spring clean should be undertaken, including soft furnishings, carpets, curtains, bedding and behind kitchen appliances. At this time, walls and paintwork should be washed down, windows cleaned, drawers re-lined with paper, etc.

Wear and tear – holiday homes get hard wear. Suitcases, a full house, people around all day – all these contribute to a higher rate of wear and tear than in normal domestic properties. Retain tins of paint to touch up scuffs and scratches and keep on top of wear and tear, otherwise it can easily get away from you.

Mattresses – turn regularly.

Fridges – a tub of bicarbonate of soda in the fridge combats smells.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Always be on the lookout for hazards: loose carpets or rugs, for example, broken light switches, slippery steps or wobbly handrails. Guests are unfamiliar with the property and won't compensate for the unexpected that you, through familiarity, might not see as a problem. All hazards should be dealt with immediately and never sign off a changeover with hazards unresolved. If you are unable to resolve a hazard, bar access to that part of the property, pending resolution. If that makes the property unusable, then Sykes Holiday Cottages will deal with the issue. Note hazards in the maintenance book as you find them and the action you take to minimise or eliminate them.

If there's a problem, it should be dealt with immediately. If you can't resolve it, please call Sykes Holiday Cottages.



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