

OUR BENCH HOLIDAY COTTAGES

- PLEASE READ



Welcome to Our Bench Holiday Cottages - we have put together this A-Z guide of useful information, which we hope will help you enjoy your stay, we are also happy to answer any questions.

Our Bench was established in 2001, many guests have enjoyed staying here and over that time we have collected information about the local facilities, attractions, and general information that we feel useful. For the most up to date information please visit our website: www.ourbench.co.uk.

- Discover Lymington – ideas for places to visit, playgrounds, nearest changing places, places to eat and more - <http://www.ourbench.co.uk/Lymington.html>
- Ideas of places to visit and activities around the New Forest – including accessible bikes, gardens to visit, popular tourist attractions with links to their accessible policies <http://www.ourbench.co.uk/AccessibleNewForest.html>
- Ideas for day trips outside the New Forest National Park, including boat trips, visits to the Isle of Wight, the zoo and city centre shopping - <http://www.ourbench.co.uk/AccessibleDayTrips.html>
- A growing gallery of New Forest photos with even more ideas of places to visit – <http://www.ourbench.co.uk/PhotoGallery.html>
- Wheelchair walks - as well as the print out suggestions on the shelf in the black folder, there are a variety of walks on our website with routes to follow on your mobile phone. <http://www.ourbench.co.uk/Blog/WheelchairWalks.html>
- 14 days of activities and places to visit in the local area – with their exact location, so you can discover some of our favourite places - <http://www.ourbench.co.uk/Blog/AccessibleWeek.html>

OUR A-Z Guide of Useful Information – please take a moment to read.

Arrival

We ask that you let us know that you have arrived, we will try and pop in and say hello, to welcome you and to answer any questions in person – just send us a text. If it is a little cold, we have had the windows open and have been airing the cottage up until 3pm / or when we sent the arrival text.

Bedroom

- The beds are electric, please do not allow children or vulnerable adults to play with the controls as it could damage the equipment. Please do not move the beds – they are very heavy and you could damage them.
- The height adjustable profiling bed has bed rails attached for safety. These can be removed at your own risk.
- 2 blankets are provided as standard in the wardrobe. If you require an additional blanket please let us know.
- The master bedroom now has a freeview television with remote, please make sure you leave the remote in the bedroom ready for the next guests.

Birds

Please feel free to top up the bird feeders and the bird bath as we are encouraging wildlife and let us know what you spot. Additional bird food is available in the green shed near the rubbish bins (Little Bench/Bench Cottage) or in the garage (Garden Bench). Please do not put out meat, slices of bread etc on the lawn as this encourages vermin.

We love hearing details of what you have spotted on our Facebook page.

BBQ

There is a BBQ in the green shed – under the external stairs (Little Bench and Bench Cottage) and in the garage (Garden Bench) – you are welcome to use it – please ensure that it is cleaned after use and if you use our BBQ coals, please put a donation in the box so that we can replace them for the next guests. If you are using the shared garden at Little Bench / Bench Cottage - please ensure it does not pose a risk to other guests.

Book Direct

If you have booked through a third party and through our website – please take our website details or email us and request to join our mail list. Our book direct customers always get the best price available.

Breakages

Accidents happen, please clear them up and let us know if something breaks, so that we can replace it and ensure that the next guests have access to the full facilities. If you spill or have fluid leakage accidents during your stay – please let us know asap. This can pose a risk to the incoming guests – we need your help to reduce the risk, by keeping us informed and all our guests safe.

We can deep clean the carpets etc to ensure they remain fresh, clean and odour free, and would prefer to do this as soon as we can after an incident.

All guests have a duty of care towards fixtures and fittings.

CCTV

There are several cameras around the outside of the cottages – these are triggered by movement and record 10 secs of coverage within the camera's range during the hours of 11pm to 7am, , this is purely for security. We can activate these remotely in the case of a noise complaint by our neighbours etc the footage is saved to a cloud and automatically deleted after 30 days unless we become aware of a concern.

Departure - When you depart

Departure time is by 10am on your departure day and we will require access from that time – we really appreciate it if you are able to leave earlier that you do so, as changeover day is very busy.

We ask that you leave the cottage as you would like to find it, if you can wipe down all surfaces on departure to reduce the risks for ourselves, in addition to our standard terms. We will then clean the cottage thoroughly. This includes cleaning kitchens and bathrooms, vacuuming and floor washing as well as cleaning and tidying any shared spaces.

If you have logged into any accounts on the television in the lounge (Netflix, YouTube, Amazon etc.) – make sure you log out as the next guests will have access to anything you leave logged in. This is your responsibility, and we are not liable for any accounts you leave logged in and we are unable to deactivate them once new guests have arrived.

We ask that you send us a text on departure - to 0775 1064167 - letting us know that you have vacated the property, we ask that you turn the heating down low, and open all the small windows that are not visible from the road, then lock up and leave your key in the key safe. This is to ensure the property is aired fully before the next set of guests.

If you become ill or anyone in your party does with suspected Covid-19 or any other sickness bug within 48 hours of your departure, it is your duty of care to let us know, as soon as possible. Please leave the cottage clean and tidy and return the key to the key safe. (Refer to the information about Covid contaminated waste – page 7)

Dogs

Garden Bench has a secure garden and is the preferred property to take dogs. Legally we take registered dogs in Bench Cottage and Little Bench too. Please note that we do not allow dogs or any of our furniture or to be left in the property unsupervised, and there is direct access to the road from the front doors of all cottages.

We encourage you to clean up after your animal at the earliest convenience and we provide bags for all booked in dogs. There is an outside hose and watering can clean down the area.

As owners we may be on the premises to do maintenance or cleaning – we have a Border Collie – Sparky, who we sometimes have with us, he is great with children and adults and loves to play ball – if this is a concern for you, then please let us know.

Events and special offers in the area during your stay

There are often lots of events on in the New Forest – we regularly share details on our Facebook page – anything from festivals to pub quiz's, fete's and discount vouchers: <https://www.facebook.com/OurBenchSelfCatering>

Electric Vehicle Charging Points

The electrical wiring to your holiday cottage is **not** suitable for charging an electric car – even with a “Granny changing cable” – so we request that no electric vehicles are plugged in. You could cause a fire risk, or knock out electricity to the neighbouring properties who rely on electricity for essential needs, such as hoisting, oxygen etc.

There are electrical charging points in the New Forest - the nearest 2 are in Barfields car park (SO41 9BS) and Bath Road Car Park (SO41 3SE) – these are fast charge devices – the first is in the centre of Lymington so you can walk into town and pick up some shopping or a coffee whilst you charge, and the second is down near the marina –you can enjoy a short stroll along the sea wall. You can find more details here: <https://www.zap-map.com/live/>

Facemasks

If you would like us (the owners) to wear a facemask whilst talking to you then please let us know – we are happy to wear one on request.

Fire

- In case of a fire, please call the Fire Service on 999 and get out.
- Notify the immediate neighbours (Little Bench & Bench Cottage)
- Please contact us as soon as you can. Please assemble on the road waiting for the services to arrive.
- To reduce the risk, please do not light candles in the cottage.
- There is a fire extinguisher and a fire blanket in the cottage – please inform us these have been used.

First Aid / Medical Emergency

- 🚑 Ambulance – call 999
- 🚑 NHS 111 service can help if you have an urgent medical problem and you're not sure what to do – they can connect you with a nurse, emergency GP, pharmacist, advise on medication and offer self-care advice including Covid-19 symptoms or medical concerns. Call 111
- 🚑 Doctors, nearest surgery is Chawton House Surgery, SO41 9ND you will need to register as a temporary resident – their number is 01590 672953
- 🚑 Nearest Hospitals – Lymington (SO41 8QD) – Minor Injuries and day time only. Southampton General (SO16 6YD) and Bournemouth Hospital (BH7 7DW) both have large A&E departments.
- 🚑 Pharmacy – Pennington Pharmacy and Mobility Shop (SO41 8ED) – 01590 673745
- 🚑 There is a standard first aid box in the kitchen cupboard – this is sealed – if used please leave unsealed and complete the medical book enclosed in the box – so we can replace the components used.

Garden

We encourage you to enjoy the garden, please be considerate of your neighbours. Please be alert in shared areas to the needs of others. There is maximum of eight people on the premises per cottage, but any Government guidance overalls this.

Garden Bench has a private secure garden – please be aware the side gate can be bolted at the top if you need extra security. A garden umbrella, pegs for the washing line, BBQ and a few beach toys can be found in the garage. There are cushions for the hanging egg chair– please do not leave them out overnight or in the rain.

Little Bench and Bench Cottage have a shared garden space - access from either side of the properties. There is garden furniture to the front and rear of the property, which you are welcome to move round – but please be aware of social distancing with the neighbouring cottage. There are a few toys and a sun umbrella in the green shed.

Little Bench and Bench Cottage also have access to the open space opposite the green shed, there is a wooden swing seat, vegetable and wild flower garden being created. This is in use at times, so please vacate if there are other users. Children must be supervised in this area. Please do not park on the gravel, access is required at all times – but you are welcome to use it as a turning space.

Heating

The gas central heating comes on automatically. It is controlled by thermostat which you are welcome to adjust. There are a couple of blankets in the wardrobe if you need an extra layer – we can provide one per guest on request. All the cottages warm quickly – and we ask you to be mindful of the environment and turn the heating down whilst the windows are open. An additional fan heater is available in the kitchen cupboard. Please do not leave this on unattended.

Garden Bench has a log burner – please ensure that you only use this in a safe manor – the wood / matches / firelighters are in the garage along with a fire rug which must be placed on the carpet in front of the wood burner when lit – to prevent damage to the carpet. This then is a potential trip hazard. Please ensure all vents are closed if you leave the property unattended. Please clean out the fire after use – cold ash can be placed in the compost bin.

Hot Water

The combination boiler provides instant hot water. This can be hot – so please use with caution and supervise any vulnerable guests.

Hoists / Electric Beds

- The hoists are limited to 130kg as per our access statement – you need to provide your own sling and ensure you have the appropriate training to lift and manage a person. The hoists needs to be returned to the location you find it on arrival – as that helps ensure they are charged ready for use for the next guests.
- The emergency instructions are in the kitchen cupboard and you should always familiarise yourself with these before using the hoist in case you need to use them.
- The electric beds – each cottage has a combination of height adjustable and head and foot riser beds. There are essential aids and not toys, please ensure they are treated as such and nothing should be put between the mattress and the bed base that may restrict movement. If the electrics are not required – please unplug them fully for your piece of mind.

Kitchen

- The digital radio – Radio Solent and Wave FM are the local stations.
- Microwave, oven, dishwasher and washing machine are available to use.
- Tumble drier – Garden Bench has one in the garage, Little Bench and Bench Cottage share a tumble drier in the green shed. A donation towards use is appreciated.

- The washing line is available to use, pegs can be located near the tumble drier.
- A range of cleaning products and anti-viral sprays are provided in the kitchen cupboard. Please use them as instructed on the labels.
- An Iron and Ironing board can be provided on request.

Local Treats and Products

- Lymington Times – Local paper, printed every Friday and contains events in the forthcoming week, details of local restaurants etc.
- New Forest Ice Cream – Made in Lymington and it is often available in local restaurants. A great place to get some is Rosie Lea House near Brockenhurst.
- New Forest Sausages – handmade at the butchers in Sway (SO41 6AA) – you can often purchase local venison from there too.
- New Forest Cider – Made in Burley (BH24 4ED) – you can buy direct, they also do country wines and handmade pottery.
- New Forest Beer – Made in Ringwood (BH24 3AP) available in many local pubs and is also available direct.
- Probably the best doughnuts in the New Forest – visit the Bakehouse in Brockenhurst (SO42 7RB) – perfect for fresh bread, pastries and doughnuts for a picnic in the New Forest. The Coastal Bakery in Milford on Sea (SO41 0QF) do a lovely lardy cake, and I would recommend them too.
- Vibrant Forest Brewery – a microbrewery on the waterside at Hardly (SO45 3AE) offering beer that is unfiltered, unpasteurised and suitable for Vegans
- Shallowmead (SO41 8PA) is our nearest farm shop – in a local garden centre, they offer a variety of local produce from Gin and local beers, ready meals, to milk, dried goods, local refreshments and more. Ferndene Farm Shop (BH25 5SY) – lovely farm shop with fresh baked goods, fruit and vegetables, great butchery selection, and fresh flowers and plants.
- Forest Wyrd is just one of the local Gin's available - <https://wyrdsprits.com>, there is also Conker Gin made in Dorset, Mermaid Gin from the Isle of Wight, and Winchester Gin – check out the Solent Wine Cellar (SO41 9ND) -
- New Forest Fish and Shellfish is the best local fish shop (BH25 5QU) the shop owners Dad is regularly catching fish in the Solent, via their facebook page they offer a Tuesday night set meal take away – different every week - <https://www.facebook.com/NewForestFishAndShellfish> - and it is usually lovely!

Lounge / Dining Room

- Electric Riser Recliner Chair - Please do not place this close to the walls as it will damage the motor and the chair back if you operate it in a confined space. If you are new to riser chairs, it is recommended you raise the chair to the height required before you sit down and lower it gently. The chair is on wheels – please only move it when vacant.
- The dining table is gate legged and has chairs hidden inside. Please ensure the gate leg is fully extended before use. Please leave the chairs out if you have used them during your stay.

Parking

- Garden Bench – please park on the widest part of the driveway in front of the house. Additional vehicles should be parked on the road. Parking close to the property prevents emergency service access if required, so please only park on the wide section of drive – if you need side access for a ramp – you may need to park on the road to facilitate this. There are no parking restrictions.
- Little Bench and Bench Cottage – there is one bay per cottage, please leave room for vehicles to turn and emergency access. Further vehicles must be parked on the road. The gravel gateway opposite is in constant use – access is always required.
- There are no parking restrictions in the road, please do not obstruct gateways or the pavement – and be aware that the road is on a bus route – with the bus stopping outside.

Photography

If you take photos of yourself on holiday or discover a favourite location and would recommend it to others during your stay then we would love you to share it with us so we can share it on to other visitors and you could inspire them to try something new. Just send us an email (enquiries@ourbench.co.uk, send it to our Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/OurBenchSelfCatering/> and we will share your news.

We have access to an accessible photography studio and offer the guests the opportunity to have a family photo taken, there is details of this on our website – if you are interested during your stay, send us a text and we will see what can be arranged at short notice.

Pub, Restaurant, Cafe nearby?

- There are numerous pubs and restaurants in the Lymington area – some of our favourites are listed on our website. These all have accessible toilets – there may be others.
- Discover these pubs: The White Hart (SO41 8DF), The Ship (SO41 3AY), The Mayflower (SO41 3QD), The Royal Oak (SO41 0LA), Six Bells (SO41 9ND) and The Gun Inn (SO42 7UF)
- Discover these cafes amongst others: Mabels Café at Shallowmead Nursery (SO41 8PA), The Noisy Lobster at Avon Beach (BH23 4AN) and the Lookout at Lepe Beach (SO41 0TP)
- Advance bookings are recommended on all bookings especially if you require accessible seating, some are very popular.

Scooter and Wheelchair Charging Points

Little Bench and Bench Cottage has a charging point in the green shed, and an outside socket on the side of the garage you are welcome to use.

Garden Bench has a socket available inside the garage, if you are able to leave your scooter outside.

Both cottages have access to a hose, you are welcome to use it to clean off your wheels if you got muddy on a forest walk.

Please do not take bicycles into the cottages – it is safe to securely lock them outside.

Security

When going out please ensure you lock and secure the cottage. You are reminded not to leave any animals or children unattended. You are welcome to take the key with you or leave it in the lock box.

Shop – where's the nearest?

- Tesco Express (SO41 8GN) is about 2 minutes away by car – it is almost as quick to walk. They have a bakery for morning croissants and the paper, fresh produce and household essentials. Opposite there is a One Stop and post office which also stocks essentials and just a bit further along South Street is our local chemist. They are indicated on the map.
- Supermarkets include Waitrose (SO41 9GF), M&S Simply Food (SO41 9NA), Tesco Metro (SO41 9AP), all of which have off street parking available and are around Lymington High Street. Slightly further afield – Tesco superstore (BH25 6BP), Aldi (BH25 5WB), Lidl (BH25 6PR), Morrisons (BH25 6HY)
- We are happy to accept a supermarket delivery between 11 and 1pm on the Friday you arrive if agreed before hand – we ask you check in case we are off site for any reason.

Smoking

All our cottages and grounds are no smoking cottage and garden, please refrain from smoking, this includes electronic cigarettes. We have a zero-tolerance policy on this.

Specialist Equipment

We have a range of specialist equipment available and hope to have provided what you requested for your stay. Any problems please let us know. You are using the equipment at your own risk, we service it regularly including LOLER checks with an external company – but we need to know as soon as possible if something has been damaged as it may be essential for other guests. Emergency instructions for the hoist are provided in the kitchen cupboard.

Suncream / moisturiser

Please do not use products that contain P20, the active ingredients of Oxybenzone, Octanoate and Avobenzone cause yellow staining on our bed linen once they are laundered – this includes suncream and some moisturizers as it stains out white linen when they become in contact with our laundry services, and means that the sheets have to be disposed of, and you may forfeit your cleaning retainer.

Takeaway

There is a fish and chip shop in Pennington Village opposite Tesco.

There are 4 more takeaways at Fox Pond, South Street (SO41 8DW) including: Fish & Chips, Chinese, Thai and Indian. There are further choices in Lymington including Dominos Pizza who deliver. There are a selection of menu's in the leaflet area.

Taxi's

There are a number of local taxi firms, but only a limited number of wheelchair accessible taxi's locally – there numbers do offer that facility, but they do need to be booked in advance as limited availability.

- Pennington Based Taxi - Brian - 01590 674764 or 07850 126844
- Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Service - 0771 8907898 or 07781 907898
- Ian Pain - 0742 8380877

Television

The television in the lounge is a smart TV with a google interface including a range of entertainment apps. It has "Chromecast" which enables you to cast music, videos and photos from your own device onto the TV – the chrome cast you are looking for has the same name as the cottage.

There is a variety of entertainment apps – (including Netflix and Amazon) if you choose to input your user name and password – please remember to log out at the end of your stay – or remotely – as any following guests will have access to your accounts.

Waste / Rubbish (see poster above dustbins)

Little Bench and Bench Cottage – the bins are next to the green shed on the drive, behind the outside staircase.
Garden Bench – the bins are behind the garage.

- The green bin / clear sack – takes paper, car, tins, cans, aerosols, and plastic bottles
- The black crate – takes glass and jars.
- The compost bin – for fruit and vegetable peelings, dead flowers, empty eggshells, tea bags. *No cooked food.*
- The black bin / black sack – general household waste, plastic pots and trays, cartoons, foil.
Bucket – Tassimo Coffee pods – these can be left in the bucket and we will send them off for recycling.
- Health care waste – (yellow waste) Infectious waste and sharps (waste that may cause harm to others) - we are sadly not registered for this and waste must be taken home. A definition could be found here: <https://www.newforest.gov.uk/article/983/Healthcare-waste-collection> - Offensive waste (*used incontinence products, sanitary items, disposable nappies, catheter bags, stoma bags, syringes, tubing, PEG or stomach-feeding equipment etc*) can be disposed of in general waste – black bag – BUT IT MUST BE BAGGED before putting in the sack.

Wet Room / Shower Room

- The floor can become wet and slippery – we encourage you to use the “mop” to reduce any slipping risk.
- The wash basin can be lowered and raised as required. This must only be done when the sink is empty. Lift the lever, press your hands on the hand guide and then lock back into position.
- The combination boiler provides instant hot water. This can be hot – so please use with caution, and supervise any vulnerable guests.
- Towels are not to be taken out of the property.

WIFI

We have a secure WIFI connection, we can not guarantee it is available at all times and we ask you to be considerate about what you download. Please select “OurBench” and input the security code H4ppyHolid4ys - It is a rural connection and with more home working in the area, speeds may be limited.

Wood burner (Garden Bench)

- The wood basket, gloves and firelighters can found in the garage. Please place the fire rug in front of the wood burner before lighting to protect the carpet.
- You will find matches in the cupboard above the cooker.
- Please use the wood burner with caution – burning wood can fall out, be prepared to prevent this.
- The stove gets hot – please be wary around vulnerable adults and children. If you choose to light the wood burner, please ensure all vents are closed upon leaving the property.
- The ash needs emptying daily and should be placed in the compost bin when cold.

Any problems, concerns or questions – call or text us on: 0775 1064167

In an emergency, if the above is not available please try: 0777 985 2372 or 0787 0341640