

# *Heathcote Holiday Cottage*



## **Welcome to Heathcote!**

This guide is intended to help you make your holiday in this unique part of Scotland as enjoyable as possible.

Heathcote is our family home and so that while we are letting it as a holiday home, we will return to live here one day and so please treat it as if it were your own!

Please read this document carefully, please do try to respect our notices and guidelines fully and if you have any concerns or require further information please do not hesitate to call us or call our local house manager. The contact details are at the end of this document.

Thank you and enjoy.

Sarah and Duncan Hynd, Owners.

## **Introduction**

Heathcote is a traditional crofters cottage and steading built over 120 years ago.

The main house and steading have been refurbished and carefully rebuilt over the past 10 years and were largely derelict before then and in a state of disrepair.

The cottage is as eco-friendly as possible, we have our own spring water supply, a septic tank and much of our electricity is supplemented by the many local wind farms. All our glass is heat retaining and the new steading conversion was completed in 2012.

Please do not attempt to enter the old steading and stable buildings as these are off limits and locked. This is the building with the steel roof and is unsafe for children.

Please never smoke in any inside part of the property.

We ask that you vacate the property by 10am and arrive at 3pm on a Saturday.

We provide a meet and greet service and so if you are going to be late or require special assistance please call our house manager in advance.

Our welcome tray includes fresh milk in the fridge and a supply of tea, coffee, sugar and biscuits, please feel free to use these when you arrive and leave for other guests.

When in the new steading please access only via the small side door, if you wish to open the main patio doors, please do so from inside and only open the left one as they can get stiff due to warping in the sun. Please make sure the door is closed properly and the locks set correctly when not in use.

Our manager will give you keys for access and spares are located in the kitchen cupboard such as ones to open the conservatory and front doors. Please return them to here when not in use.

Clean bed linen and towels are provided.

### **Water Supply**

Aberdeenshire council and the Scottish environment agency require us by law to have a UV light, filter and pH meter at the point of entry of the spring water to our property. This is to ensure that the water is safe to use. In the past the spring water would have been sufficiently clean and safe to use but the law now prevents this.

The system above along with the pump to bring water from the well to the holding tank in the house are located in a wooden cabinet by the back door. This system is looked after by Turriff Agri Parts. If there are any problems with this system they will deal with them directly.

The filters and systems are changed and serviced every 6 months.

When water is used in the house, the pump outside will come on to replenish it. The main outside holding tank is at the rear and marked "WATER SUPPLY", do not open this at any time please. The internal tank is located in the loft space on the landing and you will hear the water coming in. This tank is quite small and not large enough to allow for baths (it is about the same size as a bath!) but will allow for hot showers each morning or whenever one is required.

Please do not leave taps running as this will empty the tank and may result in the water system failing.

Please do not use the bath at all unless agreed in advance with the owners.

For additional water safety we have installed a further UV light and filter under the kitchen sink accessed via the cold tap. This is where we would recommend that people clean their teeth but the water from the cold tap in the bathroom is perfectly safe but this is an additional and optional safety feature for your use. Please ensure that the switch under the kitchen sink is ON or this safety feature will not work.

We suggest that for drinking water that you use bottled water from the supermarket.

There is a third thin tap in the kitchen, it is permanently OFF and so please do not attempt to use it at any time.

Sometimes after heavy rain or extended dry periods the spring water can become tainted by a very faint red or brownish colour and this is usually due to iron in the water and is quite normal.

The water pump must always be switched ON during your stay, the plug is by the cupboard in the rear hall, marked "Pump". If this is switched OFF at any time during your stay the water system will fail in a matter of hours.

### **Power Shower**

The shower is new and on occasions will take about 10 seconds to release the water as sometimes it is not used from one week to another and some air can get into the system and so please be patient! Please ensure that the shower curtain is fitted under the glass screen and up to the wall to prevent water escaping under the glass and on to the floor. The flooring is waterproof but it can make a mess if this is not done. The ON/OFF and power isolator for the shower are above the bathroom door, outside.

Please use the shower only at the half moon setting ie 12 o'clock with the dial on no 8/9, this allows for a hot shower and as the water supply is from a spring, please be quick in the shower if possible.

To ensure that you have hot water you will need to press the Water Boost button in the kitchen for half, one or two hours, one hour is fine for 4 people and this rapidly heats the water in the immersion heater located in the downstairs bedroom, This is left on at a switch in there and ticks over, the button in the kitchen over-rides this and heats the water more rapidly when required.

### **Septic tank and soak away**

All waste water drains to the septic tank and so each time you flush the toilet, use the shower or washing machine it impact on this and so please use water sparingly to keep all our systems environmentally friendly.

The tank has been emptied recently and will last another 10 years until next time!

## **Electricity**

The fuse box is located on the stairs, you will need to reset the fuse if one trips out. This can happen if a light bulb blows sometimes. The fuse switches are clearly marked and just need pushing back up. Do not let your children go near a fuse box.

The fuse box in the new steading is shut with a cable tie so that children cannot access it but be aware of it please and do not allow children to remain in the steading or house without supervision.

If there is a power cut you will need to call Scottish Hydro for advice.

There are 2 torches supplied, one upstairs by the fuse box and one downstairs in the kitchen, these are wind up torches and for you to be able to see in the event of a power cut or for emergency exit in the dark. Do not remove these and make sure they are wound up and working during your stay and do not allow children to play with them please.

## **Toilet**

The toilet leads directly to the septic tank and so please do not put ANYTHING down it aside from standard toilet paper, do not use any padded or luxury toilet paper brands, kitchen rolls or wet wipes please.

If the toilet is ever blocked due to too much paper being used, DO NOT REFLUSH as this will flood the bathroom. You need to take a coat hanger located above the cupboard in the rear hall and push or pull the waste and blocked paper from the U bend with the hook and it will clear immediately or call our house manager for attention.

## **Farmland**

The farmland around our cottage is owned by the Seafeld Estate in Cullen and farmed by Ronald Miller, a tenant farmer. His contact number is below if you see any animals in distress, on our property or need to speak to him at all. You may see him in his tractor every now and again. The start of our driveway is shared with him, our private driveway starts at the gates half way up.

Please respect his land and animals and be very careful with letting dogs off leads in this area. His sheep can access our large gated paddock at the rear and so do not be alarmed if they are in there!

## **Pets**

Dogs are allowed at Heathcote but we ask that they are not allowed access to any bedroom or the living room and that they remain downstairs in the conservatory, rear porch and kitchen only in the main house and not in any carpeted areas. They

can sleep in the conservatory please or rear porch and can have access to the new steading but only when supervised.

If your dog messes on the property grounds we ask that you clear this up immediately and dispose of it.

We reserve the right to charge to remove dog mess from the grounds if our gardener has to clear this up during your stay.

### **Garden and Gardening**

Our gardener, Bob Warrall attends to the grounds every Friday from 9 to 2pm weather permitting and his contact details are below if you need to call him.

We have 2 acres, one paddock via the rear gate and a side and front lawn for you to enjoy but please ensure your children and pets keep away from the lawn mower and strimmer when Bob is onsite as these can be dangerous.

### **Rubbish and recycling**

The rubbish bin is located at the end of the drive, please use only black bin bags and dispose of your waste here, collections are on alternate Mondays.

Please also recycle all of your glass bottles, paper, tin cans and plastics in the black box in the rear porch and leave them in the blue bin at the end of the drive. You will also find a recycling centre in Cornhill, Cullen, Keith, Huntly, Portsoy and Banff where you can dispose of these items before leaving if you wish or the bin is full.

### **TV and WIFI**

There are 2 TVs, one located in the new steading which you can connect your DVD and computer games to, the cables for this are located in the trunks.

The TV's have FREESAT boxes with up to 144 channels. You need to press the red button on the TV controller to turn it on and then use the digi-box controllers to ensure that the FREESAT box has either a green light or no light showing, red means it is on standby still.

Then either use the channel buttons or the menu or guide options on the FREESAT remote to watch TV. If the TV says NO SIGNAL this is either due to the FREESAT box still in standby mode or it is warming up and the picture will come on shortly.

In very rare circumstances the strong winds can affect the TV signal in the cottage or move the SAT dish. If so we will need to get an engineer to attend to reset the SAT dish, please do not attempt to do this yourself at any time.

We do not have access to broadband and WIFI in the cottage but the mobile telephone signal is good. Also an iPad or PC for instance with a mobile phone dongle work fine at the Cottage and so internet access for email and websites is possible. (I have O2 and an iPad and iPhone that access the net at the Cottage)

### **Fire hazards**

There is a fire-safety notice on the wall in the kitchen, please read on arrival.

There is a fire blanket for kitchen and fat fires and also an extinguisher for other fires, these are located in the kitchen on the wall.

Do not put clothes on the storage heaters as these will catch fire. A wire frame clothes dryer is provided for this purpose and that can be used in the conservatory.

The Heathcote visitor guide contains an up to date risk assessment, please read on arrival.

### **Heating, Cottage**

There are 3 main storage heaters in the kitchen, lounge and hall. These will be turned on prior to your stay unless it is July and August as they take 24 hours to come to heat.

Please leave them on the 12 O'clock setting below as this is the optimum performance setting for them to be warm all of the time. If you turn the output or input higher, they will simply loose all their heat quickly and go cold right away.

^	^
Output	Input

The small wall heaters in the bedroom and steading are instantaneous and only need to be on for an hour or so to heat the rooms. Please ensure they are not left on over night or for more than an hour at any one time or when you are out as this constitutes a fire-risk as they get very hot quickly.

They each have a thermostat and so will turn off eventually themselves, the red LED ON light does not show on the downstairs bedroom and twin bedroom heaters but they do both work. Setting the dial to no 4 or 5 is the best, we find.

## **Heating, Steading**

There are 4 wall heaters in the new steading but these do not need to be used as the room is warmed by the glass. If they are used, please ensure they are switched OFF after each use please.

## **Washing machine and dishwasher.**

The washing machine can be used but only on request to our house manager. The dryer is for use of our house manager only.

The dishwasher can be used and only on the fast ECO setting, this is the control knob in the 12 o'clock position only. You will need to use your own dishwasher detergent tabs.

A small supply of these are in the cupboard on the hall along with cleaning materials and firelighters. If you need to use these items in an emergency please replenish them.

## **Wood burning stove**

This is available for use should you need to heat the house or lounge.

Outside of July and August, we will leave you a starter basket of kindling and cut logs. Logs larger than this will not burn. You will need to use a fire-lighter to start it. Once alight then add some small peat lumps or very small logs or coal bricks and the fire will start.

It is a multi-fuel stove and so can use Peat, Logs or Smokeless Coal bricks.

NEVER use newspaper or card to light the stove or the room may be smoked out!

There is a basket supplied to store logs and peat/coal etc that can be purchased from Portsoy Ice Cream shop and various Garages locally

The single, lower air-flow control needs to be set to the right and the two air wash controls for the glass need to be half way across.

You need to empty the ash after use but only the next morning as it will be hot and a fire risk.

Just pull out the ashtray by hand, the clinker needs to be set to do this and use as bin bag and the dust pan and brush supplied.

## **What to do when on holiday!**

Our website [www.Heathcotecroft.co.uk](http://www.Heathcotecroft.co.uk) has links to all the local sports and tourist information. If you want to play Golf or go fishing, then two sets of clubs and 3 rods and reels are located in the rear porch for your use. Please look after them and return in the condition you found them.

## **Chairs and benches**

There are 2 pink chairs for outside use stored in the rear porch and they can be left out. There is a bench at the front. In the conservatory there are 2 wicker chairs and 2 white chairs for internal use or if you do take them outside, please return to the conservatory each time as they are not waterproof!

## **Food and drink and other information**

In our opinion, these are some of the best places to go for food and drink;

Fish and Chips; Rockfish in Whitehills (eat-in), Hook Line and Sinker in Portsoy (take away only) and Linda's in Cullen (take away and eat in) , these all use local fresh fish and are excellent.

Meals and breakfast; Boyndie Old School Rooms in Boyndie, near Whitehills, Rockpool in Cullen, Baxter's in Fochabers and Johnston's of Elgin are all very good.

There are good local Co-Op stores in Portsoy and Cullen for all your shopping and the Deli in Cullen is also excellent for local produce and light meals. The nearest major Tesco stores are located in Keith and Huntly and in Huntly there is also a large Asda.

For fresh locally caught wet fish we suggest the internationally renowned Downies in Whitehill and Sutherlands in Portsoy, both specialise locally hot smoked salmon and kippers amongst other favourites.

Inness of Fochabers, Stewarts of Banff and both Forbes Raeburn and Gordon Rhind of Huntly are top quality local butchers.

There are banks and cash machines located in Portsoy, Banff, Keith and Huntly. The nearest Doctors surgery is located in Portsoy.

## **Contact Information**

Owner: Duncan Hynd 07775 614813 Email: [Duncan@dha.co.uk](mailto:Duncan@dha.co.uk)

Local House Manager and cleaner ; Judith Hirsh

[judithhirsch@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:judithhirsch@hotmail.co.uk)

01346 532728 07882 366159

Emergency Plumbers; Hutchesons of Portsoy 01261 842 396

Water Supply and Pumps; Turriff Agri-Parts 01888 563 509

Drains and Septic Tank; A1 Drains 0800 043 5365

Doctors surgery in Portsoy; 01261 842 336

Gardener is Bob Warrall; 07868 203 211

Tenant Farmer is Ronald Miller; 07794 677 221

Scottish Hydro; 0800 300 999 and quote Heathcote AB45 2XL