

Welcome to your cottage! Please make yourselves at home!

We hope you will find everything you need for your comfort, cooking needs and entertainment in Glencoldon Cottage. Your enjoyment of your holiday is our top priority, so, if there is anything that is not explained in the next few pages, or there is a fault with anything that will affect your stay, please do not hesitate to contact Derek by phone or email.

07968 177394 (if delayed response, please try 07938 423734)

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Emergency Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Fire ➤ Police ➤ Ambulance 	999
For Fire Safety	Smoke detectors and alarms are fully maintained to current standards / regulations. Please familiarise yourselves with the window safety catches! Out windows is an important potential escape route. These are tricky to operate first time (see Page 8).
In the Event of Fire	Please evacuate the cottage! If possible, close all doors as you leave. Alert the Fire Brigade as above. Please also phone 07968 177394.
Fire Fighting (In the event of a small fire)	If it is possible to tackle a small fire without risk of injury, please find: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Fire Blanket – in <u>kitchen</u>, at end of wall shelf ➤ Fire extinguisher – 1 in <u>kitchen</u> + 1 in <u>hall</u>
Water (Burst pipe, leak damage, etc.)	Please turn off at the mains entry to the cottage. This is signposted on the left side of bathroom cupboard (for urgent water shut-off, please ignore notice in here to keep out due to solar / electric controls!). Then please call 07968 177394, and we will get sorted.
Medical Help (closest – 6 miles) <p style="text-align: center;">Or</p> NHS24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Full Accident + Emergency - Raigmore Hospital, Old Perth Rd, Inverness IV2 3UJ ➤ Minor injuries - Badenoch and Strathspey Community Hospital in Aviemore (Mon–Fri 0800-1800 ONLY) Cairnview Road, Silverglades, Aviemore, PH22 1AJ ➤ Non-urgent GP help - Aviemore Medical Practice is based in Badenoch and Strathspey Community Hospital - 01479 810258 www.aviemoremedical.co.uk <p>Online: www.nhs24.com / dial: 111</p>

QUICK GUIDE INFORMATION

Wifi Password	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Network name: BTHub6-W392 Glencoldon ➤ Password: Glencoldon64 (Or dYnUCyU6G74M, as on back of router)
First Aid Kit	There a basic first aid kit on the top shelf of the far cupboard in the king size bedroom (includes Tick removal tools if ever required – see garden section for more info on ticks).
Recycling / Landfill Bins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Blue (recyclable waste) or Green (non-recyclable) at the gate – no need to put the bins out, the contractors will fetch whichever bin due on any given week. ➤ Please drop your glass at the recycling point - edge of village (towards Aviemore)
Local Shops / Daily Essentials	The Post Office / village shop sells far more than just essentials and bakes early every morning, so there is a range of fresh bread, rolls, croissants, pastries, etc. It stocks some fresh local produce, from fruit and vegetables to dairy products. It also stocks vegetarian protein options (eg. tofu, Quorn). Mon-Sat: open 7am - 6pm, Sun: 9am – 2pm. Although the road is a pleasant 10-15 min walk, you can also take the forest route from the back gate (find the well-trodden path 20-30m from gate) - 1 st thing in the morning there is an especially good chance of seeing deer, squirrels, even capercaillie!

Housekeeping / maintenance	You will have a full supply of clean towels and linen for your stay. However, we realise that accidents do happen, so please call Derek (07968 177394) if you need additional items.
Tourist Information	Grampian Road (the main road), Aviemore, 200m from the train station.
Appliance User Guides	We have provided tips below but full manuals in cabinet under the TV if required.

DEPARTURE Time	Please plan to leave before 10.00am on departure day to ensure we can provide a clean cottage for our next guests. Thanks!
Amazon Fire TV Stick	If you have used the fire stick, on your own Amazon account, please remember to log out .
Chargers Etc.!	Please remember all your luggage and belongings, especially your chargers!
Linen / Keys / Damage	<p>It would be very much appreciated, and also help us ensure the cottage is as welcoming for the next guests, if you could please:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Strip your beds ➤ Clean out stove and empty ash collection box ➤ Take all food and drink etc with you ➤ Empty kitchen bins to either landfill or recycling bins at gate ➤ Generally, leave the cottage as close as possible to how clean you found it ➤ Lock on way out + leave the 2 sets of keys (1 in cottage, 1 in key safe) ➤ Let us know of any faults, breakages or areas of damage we should be aware of ➤ Drop glass bottles, jars, etc. at recycling point on edge of village towards Aviemore. <p>Thanks very much for your help with that!</p>

We are sure you will work most of it out for yourselves, but we have provided some further information below on all cottage systems and appliances, so you won't have to spend time wading through user guides. **There are a few health and safety considerations highlighted too.**



As we are Gold Award members of the *Green Tourism Business Scheme* (www.green-tourism.com), you may find some of the information on heating systems, waste, etc. quite detailed. This is to try to continually improve, whilst avoiding any compromise on the quality and comfort of your stay at Glencoldon Cottage. We hope you will find it easy to embrace our sustainability ethos whilst staying in an area of such outstanding natural beauty.

You may also see other ways we can reduce our impact or improve the experience for future guests. We much appreciate all improvement ideas and any other feedback (good or not). We are always really grateful too if our guests can provide a brief review from the email Freetobook, Trip Advisor or Google will send you. Thanks very much for your help with that!

Wishing you the most enjoyable and memorable stay in Strathspey!

For those who might want to find out a wee bit more about how we are able to offer you a “greener” stay.....

In addition to experiencing some of the benefits of all the “eco” features built into the actual fabric of the cottage itself, including solar hot water and electricity, much of the furniture and all appliances, we hope guests may also leave with positive impressions of the “consumables” we purchase and make available too (some also used for their anti-allergy properties too; eg. bedding). For example, you may be like the cleaning products we provide, or perhaps even the recycled loo roll! We subscribe to sustainable product databases and do our own research.

So, we have added an **Appendix** to this guide with a list of products we purchase because we think they are currently the most sustainable / low-carbon available in our circumstances. Buy these at home too, and perhaps we will all have started to make a real collective difference! If you wish to drill down even further, please feel free to get into the numbers on our resource use, waste generation and carbon footprint, through our “**About Us**” page on the website. We’re making progress.....

FURTHER INFORMATION

ENERGY SYSTEM

We have managed to reduce heating and electricity carbon emissions by 66% from pre-2017 renovation levels to 2021 (please see website if you are interested in details of this). Following phase 2 of our sustainable energy upgrade in March 2022, we are reducing emissions even further on pre-2017 baseline, perhaps even reaching our “net-zero” on Scope 1+2 emissions in the next couple of years (depending on how much solar electricity we use / export to the grid).

To achieve this, the overall system needs various technologies to work together, perhaps making it a wee bit more complex than the average domestic heating and electricity system. **However, it will all work seamlessly without guests needing to do anything**, but the occupants of the cottage can influence how well the technologies work together to optimise our carbon emissions reduction:

- **Solar Thermal** – all day this system will transfer heat directly from roof collectors to the hot water in tank
- **Solar PV** – all day the roof solar panels will generate electricity which:
 - will be used immediately in the cottage if there is electricity demand from an appliance / device
 - will be stored for later use, if there is no immediate demand
- **Biomass burning stove** – local sustainable wood fuel is available, so, in this case, for Glencoldon Cottage, burning biomass is a low-carbon option, and is perhaps the most pleasant way to warm the space
- **Electric boiler** – provides heating and hot water not fully provided by sun or wood stove, preferentially using stored sun-generated electricity before taking any electricity from national grid (which itself is increasingly decarbonised in Scotland)
- **Electric Vehicle (EV) Charger** – preferentially uses sun-generated electricity, directly or stored, before taking any electricity from national grid.

(If you are interested in these technologies, Derek is more than happy to discuss. There are reasons for selecting this combination as the best, in our situation, for minimising carbon emissions into the future [our Net-Zero / carbon emissions targets and plans can be accessed from [“About Us”](#) pages. All alternative systems, like heat pumps and biomass boilers, were fully considered too.]

Electricity / Power + EV Charging

- In the unlikely event of a power cut, there is torch in the hall. Please remember you may have left something on when the power went off (eg. the oven)!
- Trip switches can be found in the small cupboard at the end of the work top in the kitchen (behind microwave), if any of these have tripped for any reason (please call if any ongoing problem).
- Feel free to use the EV charger – please see separate [EV charging guide](#).

Central Heating

Your comfort is a top priority. Many guests are out much of the day, so the heating system is set to automatically ensure peak warmth from early in the morning to mid-morning (starts 6.00am) and from 4.00pm into the evenings. Our 3rd Gen Nest learning thermostat is smart enough to know what the outside temp + weather is like and will make adjustments to quickly get to set temperatures or maintain warmth.

However, we realise you may need additional heat during the day if you are in at certain times of the year. But, **please don't change** the schedules!

In providing you with a number of options to maintain cottage warmth, we would ask that, where possible, you help us reduce our carbon footprint by using lower carbon heat sources first (so, maximise solar and wood heat + minimise grid electricity use).

The preferred order would be:

- **Passive solar gain** – exceptional levels of insulation (loft, underfloor + walls) and very high performance windows can often be enough (thankfully the sun shines more often in the Highlands than the myths would have us believe! Even in winter you will find the rooms heat quickly when the sun is out!)
- **Wood burning stove** – some days the sun just isn't going to shine!! Operated well, the stove can heat most of the cottage and, obviously, is great to sit in front of on chilly days or after an exhilarating day out! Help yourself to the wood in the store to keep your perfect temperature.

To get the maximum enjoyment and benefit from the stove heat, and not overheat, we would suggest turning off the 2 central heating radiators in living area when you are using it (the rest of the house will still be heated by central heating). See below, if you need more guidance to light and operate stove.

- **+1°C on boiler** – if extra heat is needed, please use the Nest Thermostat in the **bedroom corridor**. It allows you to turn the dial clockwise, until the displayed temperature is above the current temperature (as below). The display will go orange (from black if heating currently off) and you will feel heat in radiators within 5 mins.



As insulation is now so good in the cottage, it is easy to overshoot + overheat! So, **+1 or 2°C at a time**, is probably best.

Hot Water

For our Green Award, we didn't want to limit the flow of the shower as we believe a hot shower, with a reasonable flow, is a deserved reward after a day out in the sometimes chilly Highlands! Instead, to reduce our carbon footprint, and maintain a hot water supply for all, please feel free to take the 4 minute challenge! (Rotate the timer 180° and go!).

We have solar panels that generate hot water in addition to those that generate electricity. The set schedule and system itself is set up to ensure hot water is available at all times of the day, but, as with heating, there is a best way to run it.

- If possible / convenient, **shower in the evening or early in the morning** – the maximum benefit from the solar thermal panels can be gained this way. They will collect heat all day even in dull or cold weather.
- **Boost** – if needed, the options on the Nest Thermostat in the **bedroom corridor** allow for boosting (see diagram above). Having pressed in the thermostat, rotate clockwise through the options to the "water drop", press in again. You will be asked how long you wish to boost for – choose 1 hr (usually enough), push in again to start.

Just to help, it may also be useful for you to know that:

- In early evening, the boiler will heat any water that has not been fully heated by the solar thermal system (using solar PV stored electricity when available). It will continue to heat water, as hot water is used, all evening.
- As a rough guide, if 6 people were to shower one after the other, you would have around 35-40 mins (6 mins / person) before the hot water cylinder would be completely drained of hot water. Beware of the shower hogs!

(If any issues at all, **please contact Derek on 07968 177394** – everything can be adjusted remotely by mobile!)

WATER SYSTEM

Winter temperatures in the area can drop below -20°C! If you suspect a pipe is frozen, please telephone the owners (as above). However, the cottage is now so well insulated that this is highly unlikely.

If there is a burst pipe, or any other flooding or leakage problem, please turn the water off at the **main stopcock in the cupboard in the bathroom** (signposted and labelled), and call 07968 177394. Thanks!

RECYCLING + WASTE

For those who have stayed with us before:

- **There is now no need to put either blue** (recyclable waste) or **green** (non-recyclable) bins at edge of road. The contractors will fetch whichever bin due from just inside the garden gate
- **Glass should still be dropped off at the local recycling point where possible** - edge of village (direction of Aviemore, Carrbridge, A9)
- **We have a full food waste system in operation now.**

Please see details of what is recyclable (on bins and back of this guide). Thanks for your help with this key green action!

We have made recycling your waste as convenient as possible, but there are some **factors in the Highlands of Scotland that are likely to make recycling slightly different from what you do at home!**

Please take home any **batteries or electronic waste**. It is likely that your home region has more sustainable options set up to deal with these.

Food Waste

Until 2022, we had to advise guests that their food waste had to go into the landfill waste bin, as uplifts from certain rural areas, including Boat of Garten, were unavailable. Food waste is a problem in the Highlands due to the large distances transport needs to travel to collect relatively small quantities of waste. So, avoidance is always the best option!

- Avoid over-purchase.
- Take home what will last the journey – please don't think you're doing us a favour by leaving food, drink, etc.
- Get creative with leftovers and items passed "Best Before" - many can be reused for other purposes; eg. bread for croutons or crumb coatings.

But, recognising there is often unavoidable or unintended waste, we now have the solutions and your help would be much appreciated! **Please see the full guidance on options on side of fridge in kitchen.**

The best option for certain food waste is to deal with it here on site. As we have a large wild garden, within which we are working to diversify the range of habitats and plants, therefore, encouraging greater biodiversity, we have set up a food waste composting system for guests to help deliver some top quality fertiliser! This will help boost plants in any areas we're working on and also help fix carbon in the soil.

Thanks for your help with this – you'll notice the results in the thriving garden!

BEDROOMS

Please do not go into loft space accessed from bedroom corridor **for any reason** as, with the level of insulation now in place, walkways are not visible. Serious injury is likely!

You may notice that bedroom wall lights are quite low for people who may be sitting up reading in bed. This was not intentional (a renovation oversight!) and is partly due to the deeper mattresses we purchased for comfort. However, although not ideal, this is not a safety issue as these lights are very low power LEDs and will not get hot!

SITTING ROOM

Wood Burning Stove

This highly efficient stove can heat the whole living area (and almost the whole cottage if used to full potential). We realise there is a knack to it though! To get the maximum enjoyment and benefit from the heat from the stove, and not overheat, we suggest turning off the 2 radiators in the living area (in the afternoon / evening; although you may want them to come on first thing in the morning in colder months!).

Please try the following tips to get it started and up to temperature quickly (if you want more professional instructions try the [Burn Right](#) website):

- Scrunched paper first*
- A handful of kindling (dry collected kindling is in the **metal container** behind the wood store)
- Ensure air flow to stove is fully open (lever at bottom to RIGHT and circular vent fully open – see photo)
- Light paper with match
- Leave door open 1 cm
- Once kindling burning well, add a few smaller pieces of wood (some provided in **brown bin** beside kindling)
- Leave door open 1cm
- Once these smaller pieces burning well put 2 larger logs in
- Leave door open 1cm
- Once larger logs burning well, add another log and shut door (circular vent fully open will maximise heat).

(If there are children in the cottage, **please ensure you use the guard** provided as the outside of the stove can reach 300+°C! Stove handles and loading logs can get very hot too, so please use the fire glove).



(*we used to leave old newspapers, but few people buy and leave these anymore. Any paper will do, but please don't be tempted to burn plastic to get it lit! This smells bad for days! But, we realise lighting the stove can be tricky for those with no experience of using one. We don't want anyone to be left without a fire, so for those experiencing difficulty, we have left "natural" firelighters under kitchen sink – please use these rather than any old-style kerosene-based ones).

It may take 20+ mins to feel the full heat of the stove as both the fire and surrounding cast iron get up to heat. Once you have got perhaps 3 larger logs burning well, the stove heats the room much quicker with the stove door fully closed. Heat output can be controlled by the circular vent. However, we all like to sit in front of real flames sometimes. If you do this with door fully open, you will notice that the flames will die down after a while. To re-invigorate the fire at any time, as long as there are some glowing embers, add wood and shut door with vents fully open.

Once the room is up to temperature, you can:

- Reduce air flow to stove (ie. circular vent), which will maintain fire, but at lower heat
- Ease off adding logs
- Allow heat to drift through to bedrooms, by opening door to corridor.

Please do this rather than opening the windows! Thanks! **Please call** if you still have problems at this point and we will talk you through it.... We very much want you to enjoy the benefits of a real fire and plentiful local (low-carbon) fuel.

When you need to empty the ash collection tray (in compartment just below the fire chamber), you can do so into the green landfill bin. However, a better option, for those who fancy a wee wander, is to empty it at the base of either of the 2 large Noble Fir trees towards the back fence of the property as these are in fairly nutrient-poor soil – Thanks!

Smart TV

Operation very much like any other Smart TV. However, please note that due to remote location:

- For normal terrestrial TV, the signal needs boosted (ie. both plugs must be in socket, and ON)
- Some channels may not be accessible.

With the use of Wifi and/or Amazon Firestick, a huge range of entertainment can be accessed on the TV (see below).

Fire Stick / iPlayer / Movies etc.

Wifi and Amazon Firestick will need to be on to get IPlayer, Netflix, etc. Please log in with your own Amazon account details (or create account if you don't have one) to gain access to all options.

- Using TV remote control, press "source", then "HDMI-CEC Firestick"
- Using Firestick remote control:
 - Register with user ID + password if already have an Amazon account, OR create new account
 - Will be asked to visit www.amazon.co.uk/code and put in code on screen
 - Go to "home"
 - Use circle control to get iPlayer
- Before leaving, use Firestick control to deregister / logout (to avoid following guests being able to mistakenly access movies on your account – charged to yourself).

Cambridge Audio One

This allows you to access music / media from:

- Digital radio (toggle through pre-loaded stations)
- Your own phone (once wireless Bluetooth connection made – **Note:** first time, bluetooth button is not obvious! - near bottom left!). You should get message on unit – "bluetooth pairing", then, hopefully, a connection. Then you can access your own music, Spotify, etc.
- CDs + USBs.

Please note - the remote control unfortunately stopped working, was not able to be fixed and Cambridge are apparently unable to provide replacements anymore. So, our apologies, operation is not as intuitive as it once was with remote – selections can now be made using menu buttons and options scrolled using the large dial – PDF instructions [here](#).

KITCHEN

Fridge / Freezer

- Please do not adjust the temperatures
- Please empty and take all food / drink on departure (food waste is not easily dealt with in Highlands). Thanks!

Washing Machine (main switch under sink [right])

If you need to use the washing machine, please refer to the user manual to choose the right programme for your needs. We have provided washing liquid that does the job, but is much less harmful to the local water environment.

There is a washing line outside, to the side of the wood shed, when weather allows; and an indoor hanging rack in the bedroom cupboard.

Dishwasher (main switch under sink [left])

Salt is not required due to soft water in Highlands (even if it asks!). The machine defaults to eco mode, which seems to wash fine, but it does take 3+ hours. We have provided dish-washing tablets that do the job, but is much less harmful to the local water environment. Where possible, please only wash full loads. Thanks!

(Note: there is a tray at the top of the dishwasher for cutlery – easy to miss! Took us a few days to work it out!).

Kettle

Please note that the kettle is slightly different to most in order to reduce energy, emissions and time.

Induction Hob

This works in a similar way to a normal electric hob. But, if you are using an induction hob for first time, please note:

- All rings operate from the touch pad area with heating power from 1-9 adjusted with the + or – buttons
- 9 will boil liquids very quickly – Beware! On 9, soups or other thicker liquids will very quickly start to spurt contents everywhere if ignored for even a few seconds (we found this out the hard way!).

Oven

There are a variety of modes to choose, from grill to oven, fan-assisted or not, chosen with the different symbols. We have found the following tips might help you get it right first time:

- Once you have selected the correct mode, a temperature will be displayed. If you want to adjust the temperature, press the “thermometer” (image) button, then adjust temperature using the ring
- **Don’t forget** to hit the “arrow” (image) button on the far right of panel to start!
- Grill mode needs **door closed** and takes some time to heat up, then grills very quickly (have been caught out by this many times already!).

GENERAL – IN COTTAGE

- Please don’t smoke inside. There are a number of places you can smoke in a bit of shelter even when raining. Please use ashtrays provided, and take extra care with cigarette ends (see “Fires” below)
- Window catches are fitted to avoid damage to the windows on very windy days. Please feel free to open them much further (except on windy days!). The catches are released using the green lever, whilst gently pulling the window towards you. It can be awkward getting this to work the first time! **Please be careful of fingers!** As in essential emergency information above, **climbing out the window is an important potential escape route, so please take time when you arrive to ensure everyone can work these in a hurry! Thanks!**



General Cleaning

We obviously don’t expect that you will be doing much cleaning during your holiday, apart from end of stay clean-up, but when you do, please use the cleaning products provided, as unlike some (eg. chlorine-based bleaches), these will not pass through the local treatment works into the River Spey.

THE WILD GARDEN

Driveway

This is steep and can be a challenge for some, especially hazardous with rain, snow or ice! Please be careful! When slippery, the alternative less steep grass path can be used to walk to the front gate and the public road (accessed at side of house). **If using the sledges on the driveway when snowy (sledges in shed), it can be a great track, but please make sure no traffic coming!**

For safety at night, there is a driveway light – lights by motion-detection (but **needs porch light to be in ON** position).

Fires

Please do not be tempted to light a fire anywhere in the garden any time. In addition to being in a National Park, the cottage is very close to Special Protected Areas for Capercaillie, Red Squirrels, etc. (in the forest behind the cottage). The heather / undergrowth areas and forest floor can get surprisingly dry, not just in summer, and the consequences of a forest fire for the wildlife and community would obviously be severe.

Barbeque + Picnic Table / Parasol

There is a charcoal barbeque in the shed for guest use. We have recently made the “all weather” area, with table + parasol / umbrella, so that guests have more opportunity to sit or eat out (when the midgies and horizontal rain allow!).

We have tried to make the area a wee bit immersed in the wild garden, with a good view to the forest and bird tables, but also close enough to the lawn / parking area that the barbeque can safely be used reasonably close to the table.

- **Please don't be tempted to use the bbq up at the table** (see “Fires” above) and be very careful where you use it on either the lawn or parking area, considering where the wind might blow any sparks. Thanks!
- There may or may not be charcoal left from previous users, but please feel free to use what is there (we will not generally provide charcoal, but we would recommend buying FSC-certified charcoal where possible – a variety have been stocked in the village store in the past).
- The barbeque grate is small enough to fit in the bottom tray of the dishwasher - please use that so the barbeque is clean for the next guests. Thanks!

We hope the parasol will survive Highland weather and make it possible to sit under its shelter, much closer to nature, even when it's drizzling. However a couple of things would hugely improve its chances of survival:

- **Please make sure the parasol “clicks” into place** when it is erected, and the **bolt is tightened**, otherwise it is much more easily moved by the wind, and could potentially cause injury.
- Given the weather can change extremely quickly in the Highlands, **please take down the parasol when not in use** (and not used in high winds). Thanks!

Bicycles

We very much welcome groups of cyclists (we have a [webpage](#) with detailed info). We have provided a secure bike shelter. **Please note that the shelter is at the bottom of the driveway for safety reasons - it is very steep! Particularly for children**, it looks like [and was 😊!] such fun to freewheel down out on to the road! However, **there is now real danger** as the road is not as traffic-free as the 1970s! We would recommend that you leave bicycles at the shelter (peace of mind for parents and guardians too!). Being the Speyside Way, the road itself is very safe to cycle for all!

Gates

Part of the beauty of the wild garden is that children can roam and play in an exciting, but safe, environment without parents / guardians having to worry too much about them / keep too close an eye. So, if you have concerns that they may venture out of open front gates, feel free to close - we have put a child-proof catch on the top of gates.

Badminton / Volleyball Net + Football Goalposts

The net is in the shed, with a variety of other garden sport / game equipment, and has been set up to ensure the minimum hassle for guests. There is a fairly narrow deep hole for each pole half way up the lawn on each side. The net is pulled tight using the hooks (on poles), lines and pegs. Please take it back down again before you leave, as some guests may not want anything to obscure their view of the garden / wildlife. Feel free to use the goalposts to the side of the garage too.

Pests – Midgies and Ticks

Midgies, we can probably all agree, are amongst some of the most annoying insects on the planet! You never get used to them even if you live in the Highlands!! However, luckily, the eastern Highlands is not as favourable a habitat for this scourge as the western Highlands and Islands. What's more, Glencoldon Cottage sits at the top of a hill well away from boggy patches and often with a bit of a breeze. Ultimately, they will do you no harm, but we have left an emergency supply of deterrent on the top shelf of the far cupboard in the king size bedroom!

Ticks, however, can carry the extremely unpleasant Lyme Disease. These are not such a problem in the garden (less passing animals, no livestock), but please be aware that any area may have Ticks. It is advisable to check yourselves, particularly if you've been going through undergrowth, heather etc. **We have provided special Tick removal tools in the First Aid Kit**, as it is important not to leave any parts in the bite. (Further information online [here](#)).

Mushrooms

At certain times of year, especially autumn, there are many species of mushroom showing throughout the garden. Some of these can be a spectacular colour and quite tempting to check out more closely if you're young and inquisitive – **some are poisonous!** Please just be aware of that if young children are exploring the wild garden.

Other Garden Hazards

Apart from all the usual hazards from garden play (like from trips, tree climbing, etc.), the only other hazard we would like you to be aware of is in the **area close to the back of the garage where there is a steep embankment**. We have marked it with posts, but in summer, it is not so easy to see that there is a gap, between the bank and garage wall, full of undergrowth, which someone could fall into. Not vertical or a big fall, but might give someone a bit of a shock! Please just be aware of that.

OUT & ABOUT

TRAVEL

For a rural Highland location, public transport links and options are very good for Boat of Garten. Travel information, including public transport options is provided on our website [here](#), where there are links to local bus, steam train, rail timetables, etc.

However, timetables change quite frequently, so best to plan your journeys near your arrival date. From personal experience, some bus services are so different weekdays / weekends, school weeks / school holidays, tourism high / low season, you might find it easier to use the travelinescotland.com Journey Planner.

CYCLING

Please see our dedicated web page, [here](#), for all information about the area's great cycling opportunities.

ACTIVITIES & ATTRACTIONS

Between the Visit Cairngorms website (<http://visitcairngorms.com>) and the Boat of Garten website (<http://www.boatofgarten.com>) there is more useful information than could ever be contained in this Guide.

RESPONSIBLE ACCESS

All national and local organisations want people to be able to enjoy the Cairngorms National Park, but in a way that does not affect others or the environment. As a Cairngorms enterprise, we have been involved in recent consultations to find ways to help people understand responsible enjoyment of the Park. Visit Cairngorms, [here](#), has more detail, but essentially the 3 most important responsibilities are:

- Take responsibility for your own actions
- Respect the interests of other people
- Care for the environment.

There is also a [Scotland-wide access code](#), which we would encourage all guests to check out and follow.

LOCAL PRODUCE

General Groceries	<p><i>The Post Office / Village Shop</i> This sells far more than just essentials and bakes early every morning, so there is a range of fresh bread, rolls, pastries, etc. It stocks some fresh local produce, from fruit and vegetables to dairy products. It also stocks vegetarian and vegan protein options (eg. tofu, Quorn).</p>	Boat of Garten Village Shop
Fishmonger	<p><i>Pro Fish</i>, Aviemore. Much of Scotland's amazing seafood bypasses Scotland and ends up in Europe, but this shop intercepts the best and most sustainable from our Atlantic coastlines.</p>	http://profishservices.co.uk
Brewery	<p><i>Cairngorm Brewery</i>, Aviemore Quality brews in the heart of the Cairngorms with visitor / tasting centre.</p>	https://www.cairngormbrewery.com

Appendix – Eco-Products in the Cottage

Not trying to sell you anything! Just a wee bit of information for those guests who do ask about some of the eco-products we provide in the cottage.



As we are Gold Award members of the *Green Tourism Business Scheme* (www.greentourism.com) we are committed to continually reducing our carbon footprint and improving our overall environmental / sustainability performance, including what we buy.

In 2018, we “built in” many resource efficiency, low-carbon and other sustainable features into the actual fabric of the cottage itself, including all the appliances and much of the furniture too. Please see our “[About Us](#)” webpage for more detail of the measures and solutions we implemented in that renovation / upgrade. The information below is about the products we have needed to buy since for cottage maintenance or for guest use.

We hope guests may leave with positive impressions of some of the “consumables” we make available (some are also purchased for their health / anti-allergy properties too; eg. bedding). So, to follow are some of the products we purchase because we think they are currently the most sustainable / low-carbon available. Buy these at home too, and, together, we have all really started to make a difference!

Our Research + Decision-Making

Some products improve, some may slip back against their competition, and new better products come on to the market. So, to keep up-to-date and ensure we always use the most sustainable products we can find (without excess additional transport), we also subscribe to [Ethical Consumer](#). Well worth a look if you want to “vote” with your money and make your purchasing choices across a huge range of products easier!



Due to our remote location, we must factor transport emissions into all purchasing, obviously preferring local, but also considering bulk / multiple item purchasing to minimise / avoid remote deliveries.

Cleaning, Dishwashing, Clothes Washing Powders and Liquids

Whatever we put down the drains at Glencoldon Cottage will end up about a mile downstream in the River Spey. There are quite a number of different brands claiming various environmental benefits for their products, but we chose *Bio-D* products because they came out top in the sustainability assessments done by *Ethical Consumer*.



Materials used are plant derived, from renewable resources and are 100% hypoallergenic. Packaging is all recycled and recyclable, and the company encourages refills. We buy in bulk and refill ourselves.

So, it is great to discover that all these Bio-D products seem to be just as effective as their less friendly equivalents, but with a minimised impact on the River.

Hand Washing

We provide Bio-D liquid for hand washing too for the reasons above, but also because the Lime and Aloe Vera smells really fresh! Made purely from natural products it is apparently good for your hands too! We bulk buy, refilling the soap dispensers, so we don't generate plastic waste (+ reuse the bulk containers).

Dish Clothes + Brushes

Many cloths used for cleaning are made with micro-fibre material, which is essentially plastic. We are starting to realise this breaks down, shedding plastic into waterways and oceans. The plastic remnants have been shown to get ingested by other organisms, which are potentially food for other animals, fish, birds, etc. So, these plastics become part of the food web of ecosystems.



We're finding that these natural cellulose fibre cloths are really durable and highly absorbent. When past their useful life they go into our composting bin, then back to providing nutrients to plants when we use our compost!

We've decided to use these Ecoliving FSC, plastic-free dish brushes with replaceable heads and natural bristles. The spent heads don't present any disposal issues at end-of-life. And they do the job!

Bedding, Sheets, Pillow Cases Etc.

In 2018, we kitted out all beds with high quality natural fibre based linen, purchased through a supplier that delivers "carbon neutral". To prevent anyone with allergies potentially being affected by certain mattress or duvet fillings, we purchased [Allergon Anti Allergy](#) Waterproof Mattress and Pillow Protectors too. We continued to use the same suppliers as we've had to expand the stock of all items for Covid-19, to allow for more rotating and "rest" periods.

Outdoor Furniture

Almost all the wood you can see inside and outside the cottage was sourced from local timber and the 2 large outdoor benches were not only grown locally, but also built a ½ mile down the road in the village. We may well have gone for the same option if the craftsman responsible hadn't moved away from the area.

However, with unsustainable plastic use and waste continually in the news, "circular economy" frequently highlighted as a critical climate solution, and a 30 year guarantee, we decided to help boost the 100% recycled plastic furniture company, *Recycled Furniture*, when we were creating the outdoor seating area this summer (2021).



Not yet in a position to recommend their tables based on their durability (ask me in 20-30 years!), but ours is sturdy and blends into the surroundings nicely. Time will tell.....

Wood Preservatives

We have spent a good few hours trying to get hold of the most eco-friendly plant-based oils to preserve balcony decking and the benches (without this also being transported miles to the Highlands!). We have found a local supplier of OSMO products, a company that seems to be considered a leader in using plant-based oils.

Waste + Recycling Bags



We use Vegware [plant-based compostable](#) bin liners, direct from the company based in Edinburgh.

Energy / Fuel Supplies

The cottage has been running on [Good Energy](#) electricity for more than 10 years. We use a local firewood producer, [Tomatin Firewood](#), which supplies at correct moisture levels to minimise carbon emissions and maximise heat output.

Fossil fuel use on-site was completely phased out in March 2022, and the cottage is now powered by a combination of sun, local biomass and grid electricity (in that order), which may allow us to hit “net-zero” on our Scope 1+2 emissions.

Last, Butt Not Least

We go to some lengths to access bulk recycled toilet paper, with home compostable packaging. Only the best! Number 2 just wouldn't do! We like to think we go the extra mile for our guests.....

