

Cleaning Guidelines – Covid-19

This document is designed to provide owners, property management contractors, and cleaning suppliers with guidelines and references on cleaning holiday properties between each guest booking to minimise the risk of transmission of Covid-19. This document is intended as guidance only and does not reflect a minimum level of requirement.

Introduction

Cleanliness is incredibly important and plays a key part in the health and safety, satisfaction, and overall experience of a guest's holiday. Now more than ever, it is critical to reduce the risk of spreading infection.

Summary of key recommendations:

- Use personal protective equipment for cleaning and maintenance
- Use effective disinfectants
- Consider various methods of cleaning
- Implement contactless key collection
- Limit contact with guests where possible
- Provide guests with easy to follow instructions in the property on what to do on check out
- Create a cleaning checklist for cleaners to follow
- Provide a cleaning standards document to give transparency to the next guests
- Provide property information packs via email or through an online facility where possible
- Consider check in/check out times to accommodate additional cleaning and allow for extra time if required
- Ensure staff and contractors adhere to social distancing measures

Step 1 - Preparation

For guests

1. Provide details in the property about what you would like the guests to do when they checkout (a laminated document in the bedrooms and kitchen). Think about:
 - a. The laundry - do you want them to strip the beds? Does that include the mattress and pillow protectors? Where should they put the sheets?
 - b. The dishwasher - should the guests fill the dishwasher? Should they turn it on?
 - c. Rubbish - how should they dispose of this safely and where?
2. If you currently offer a Meet and Greet service, we recommend that you install a key safe to reduce the contact with guests
3. Consider providing extra supplies for your guests to use, over and above what would normally be expected, to ensure guests are able to keep to a high standard of cleanliness. Items such as disinfectant, disposable gloves, new cloths, disposable wipes, paper towels and hand sanitiser
4. We recommend providing property information via email or on an online facility. If this isn't possible, property folders and information packs should be stored in wipeable plastic folders or laminated and cleaned between guests
5. Fire evacuation advice should be laminated and visible on the wall
6. Advising guests that you have taken extra steps to clean the property and provide additional protection is important to reassure them during their stay

For you or your changeover provider

1. Ensure that the property is ventilated prior to cleaning where possible and safe to do so
2. Open all the internal doors at the start of the clean, when you finish sanitising and dressing a room, close the door and disinfect the doorknob
3. We recommend that government guidelines are followed regarding PPE for cleaners, housekeepers and contractors. We advise that you or your cleaning staff, wear items such as disposable gloves, aprons and masks
4. Anyone cleaning a property should be supplied with hand sanitiser and should wash hands and change gloves before resetting the property

For the property

1. Remove all unnecessary items and ornaments that could be regularly touched and declutter where possible e.g. books, games, DVD's
2. If you require more time to complete a deeper clean between bookings, you may need to consider amending check in and check out times. These can be amended through the Owner Portal. Please note that from our experience it can cause problems with guests, if the check in time is any later than 5pm (especially for those with young children)

Step 2 - Cleaning, Disinfecting and Sanitising

Cleaning products

Most common household disinfectants, as well as cleaning solutions with diluted household bleach or at least 70% alcohol, are believed to be effective against Covid-19. Use the appropriate product and ensure it's left on the surface for the required time to kill the virus. Look for products showing EN 14675 or EN 14476 and follow the manufacturer's guidelines.

Extra time and attention

Additional attention should be given to items and areas which receive high or frequent use, such as:

1. Doorknobs (inside and out), doorframes, light switches (including lamps), blinds, stair bannisters, keys, and window handles
2. Remote controls, thermostats, books & toys, games and highchairs
3. Appliances such as ovens, fridge freezers, toasters, kettles, irons, hair dryers and vacuum cleaners
4. Toilets, taps, sinks, shower heads, faucet handles, shampoo and soap dispensers
5. Bins should be emptied and cleaned inside and out (pay special attention to lids). Outdoor bin lids should also be disinfected
6. Umbrellas, mops, dustpans & brushes and brooms
7. Outside areas such as garden furniture, barbeques, play areas, sheds, garages, shared entrances and key safes

Extra Covid cleaning options:

There are several extra methods that may be appropriate to efficiently and effectively reduce the risk of Covid-19. They can be used in addition to standard cleaning if you feel necessary.

1. Steam cleaning creates high pressure, high temperature, dry steam which ensures that any surface can be cleaned effectively using water
2. ULV (ultra low volume) Fogging is a mobile disinfectant cleaning machine. This is generally used in addition to manual cleaning disinfectant
3. Atmospheric Mists and sprays can be used to diffuse enclosed spaces, killing viruses, destroying bacteria, and eliminating bad odours with minimal effort

Bedding, linen and laundry

1. We recommend you bag the linen and remove from the property before cleaning
2. Gloves should be worn to remove the linen
3. Once the dirty linen has been handled, gloves should be removed, disposed of, hands washed and fresh clean gloves used before putting the clean linen on the bed
4. The same applies to towels, bath mats, tea towels, oven gloves and any other removable linen items
5. Do not shake dirty laundry, this minimises the possibility of dispersing Covid-19 through the air
6. It's ideal if pillow and mattress protectors are laundered between changeovers, if this is not possible consider using an appropriate sanitiser spray or aerosol on the bedding before resetting the laundry
7. All guests should be advised what to do with the linen on checking out (see note in section 1). It is recommended that you ask guests to strip the beds prior to departing the property and place the linen and towels in the laundry bin. However, if you or your cleaning company prefer to do this ensure whoever is stripping the beds wears full PPE and changes this before remaking
8. We recommend leaving a washable or wipeable laundry bin in the property if you advise your guests to strip the beds

Step 3 - After the changeover

Final check and clean

9. We recommend that all cleaning cloths, mops, and towels should be changed, disposed of, or laundered appropriately between each clean
10. Empty and clean the Hoover after every clean, and clean any other tools that have been used
11. We recommend that waste of any kind should be placed in a plastic bag, tied, and removed from the property and disposed of in an external bin. Waste should not be left outside of a bin and should be disposed of accordingly prior to a new guest arriving
12. You should follow government or council guidelines regarding the disposal of hazardous waste
13. All PPE should be appropriately disposed of after leaving the property and should not be reused
14. The last thing to do would be to wipe down the keysafe on the way out of the property

Other recommendations

Hot tubs, pools or spas

There is currently no evidence that the virus that causes Covid-19 can be spread to people through the water in pools, hot tubs, spas, or water play areas. Proper operation and maintenance (including disinfection with chlorine and bromine) of these facilities should deactivate Covid-19 in the water.

- It is recommended that owners and suppliers follow BISHTA Guidelines which can be found at www.bishta.co.uk regarding change over of hot tubs
- It is not recommended for hot tubs, pools or spas to be shared between guests staying in other properties

Emergency maintenance

To limit contact, we recommend that maintenance during a guest's stay is kept to only essential maintenance.

If a contractor must attend the property, we advise that they wear essential disposable PPE, and dispose of it appropriately. Social distancing should always be maintained.

Legionella

As it is likely that your property has been unoccupied during the coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak, water system stagnation can occur due to lack of use, increasing the risks of Legionnaires' disease. It is essential that water systems are reused before a guest's arrival. Each tap (including showers) should be opened and left to run through for at least 5 minutes and all toilets flushed.

Useful references

Public Health England Coronavirus (Covid-19): <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Social distancing to make your workplace COVID-secure: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/social-distancing/index.htm>

A guide to Legionella: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/legionella-risks-during-coronavirus-outbreak.htm>

Government Guidance to cleaning in a non-healthcare setting: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

Accreditation, advice, and support: <https://www.qualityintourism.com/>

Disclaimer

Sykes Holiday Cottages does not take responsibility for the cleanliness of a property. We encourage all our property owners to review this guidance and consult the references provided to create a cleaning plan which is relevant to their individual property.