

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.
- Create a cleaning checklist for cleaners to follow.
- Provide a cleaning standards document to give transparency to an incoming guest.
- 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.

Protective Personal Equipment (PPE)

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, which should be changed between cleans. We also recommend that anyone cleaning a property is supplied with hand sanitiser and ensure hands are washed regularly.

Cleaning, Disinfecting and Sanitising

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 is left on the surface for the required time to kill the virus. Look for products showing EN14675 or EN14476 and follow the manufacturer's guidelines.

We recommend that all cleaning cloths, mops, and towels should be changed, disposed of, or laundered appropriately between each clean.

There are several different methods that may be appropriate to efficiently and effectively reduce the risk of Covid-19.

- Steam cleaning creates high pressure, high temperature, dry steam which ensures that any surface can be cleaned effectively using water.
- ULV (ultra low volume) Fogging is a mobile disinfectant cleaning machine. By using a fogging machine, in addition to manual cleaning disinfectant, the chemical solution is more comprehensively delivered across a wide range of surfaces and materials including textiles, which ensures a higher efficacy of disinfection.
- 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

Taking care to remove dirty linen and ensure all is bagged and removed from the property before cleaning is recommended.

- Gloves should be worn to remove the linen.
- Once the linen has been removed, gloves should be removed, disposed of and fresh clean gloves used before putting the clean linen on the bed.
- The same applies to towels, bath mats, tea towels, oven gloves and any other removable linen items.
- Do not shake dirty laundry, this minimises the possibility of dispersing Covid-19 through the air.
- Pillow and mattress protectors should be laundered between changeovers.
- We recommend leaving a washable or wipeable laundry bin in the property.
- All guests should be advised to strip the beds prior to departing the property and place the linen and towels in the laundry bin.
- The laundry bin should be taken to be laundered or wiped and cleaned using disinfectant.

Disposal of Waste

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.

You should follow government or council guidelines regarding the disposal of hazardous waste.

Key Collection

We recommend that keys are collected using key safes only and not given out in person to support social distancing.

Taking Time

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

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

To make thorough cleaning more efficient, remove all unnecessary items and ornaments that could be regularly touched and declutter where possible.

Windows and doors should be opened during cleaning to allow for ventilation.

Communal areas, such as games rooms and gyms should be closed or cleaned appropriately between use.

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](#).

Reassuring Guests During Their Stay

You may want to 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.

Hand soap should be provided for each sink.

We advise that you do not conduct any cleaning during a guest's stay.

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.

Fire evacuation advice should be laminated and visible on the wall.

Advising guests that you have taken extra steps to clean the property and provide additional protection is important to reassure them during their stay.

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 guidelines:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing>

A guide on how to protect people from coronavirus (Covid-19) in your workplace:

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/assets/docs/talking-with-your-workers.pdf>

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.