

Longcover Cottage

Vine Lane, Kyre, TENBURY WELLS, WORCESTERSHIRE, WR15 8RL

Summary

STAR RATING

★★★★

Gold Award

DESIGNATOR

Self-Catering

QUALITY SCORE

87%

VISIT DATE

09 July 2018

VISIT TYPE

Day Assessment

CONTACT

Mrs Ellie Van Straaten Proprietor

Longcover Cottage continues to offer a high standard of comfortable very well maintained accommodation, for which Mrs Van Straaten, the Proprietor is very much to be commended. The Proprietor should also be commended on the continued investment and maintaining of these standards helping ensure that the property sits comfortably at the upper end of the Four Star Self Catering rating band. Sectional Consistency scores also being well met overall at this level. It is also a pleasure to re confirm the Gold Award for another year, reflecting the care and attention afforded by the Proprietors.

It is also understood that the Proprietor feels the current rating and award meet well with the market expectations and business levels catered for; and we wish her and the family all the very best for a successful and prosperous remainder of the summer and beyond.

Quality Rating

How the Overall Quality Rating is Achieved

When VisitEngland assessors visit your property, they will evaluate and give a quality score to all aspects of the accommodation and service.

The total of all these scores establishes an overall percentage score for quality.

Based on this score, establishments will be given an overall quality rating on a scale of One to Five Stars, based on the chart below, as long as all minimum entry requirements for the star rating are met.

1 STAR	2 STAR	3 STAR	4 STAR	5 STAR
34% - 47%	48% - 59%	60% - 74%	75% - 86%	87%-100%

There are five levels of quality ranging from One to Five Stars. To obtain a higher star rating a progressively higher quality and range of services and physical facilities should be provided across all areas with particular emphasis in the following five key areas:

BEDROOMS

1 STAR	2 STAR	3 STAR	4 STAR	5 STAR
34% - 47%	48% - 59%	60% - 74%	75% - 86%	87%-100%

BATHROOMS

1 STAR	2 STAR	3 STAR	4 STAR	5 STAR
34% - 47%	48% - 59%	60% - 74%	75% - 86%	87%-100%

CLEANLINESS

1 STAR	2 STAR	3 STAR	4 STAR	5 STAR
40% - 49%	50% - 64%	65% - 79%	80% - 89%	90%-100%

PUBLIC AREAS

1 STAR	2 STAR	3 STAR	4 STAR	5 STAR
34% - 47%	48% - 59%	60% - 74%	75% - 86%	87%-100%

KITCHENS

1 STAR	2 STAR	3 STAR	4 STAR	5 STAR
34% - 47%	48% - 59%	60% - 74%	75% - 86%	87%-100%

Longcover

87%

4 Star

	SCORE	PERCENTAGE	RATING
Exterior	14	93%	
Building Appearance	4		
Grounds/Gardens/Roadways/Parking	5		
Environment & Setting	5		
Cleanliness	20	100%	5 Star
Bedrooms	5		
Bathrooms	5		
Living/Dining Area	5		
Kitchen	5		
Management & Efficiency	13	86%	
Pre-arrival Information Inc. Brochure	4		
Welcome & Arrival Procedure	5		
In-unit Guest Info & Personal Touches	4		
Public Areas	22	88%	5 Star
Decoration	4		
Flooring	5		
Furniture/Fittings/Furnishings	5		
Lighting/Heating/Ventilation	4		
Space/Comfort/Ease of use	4		
Bedrooms	29	82%	4 Star
Decoration	4		
Flooring	5		
Furniture/Fittings/Furnishings	4		
Lighting/Heating/Ventilation	4		
Beds	4		
Bedding & Bed Linen	5		
Space/Comfort/Ease of use	3		
Bathrooms	21	84%	4 Star
Decoration	4		
Flooring	5		
Fixtures/Fittings/Sanitaryware	4		
Lighting/Heating/Ventilation	4		
Space/Comfort/Ease of use	4		
Kitchen	34	85%	4 Star
Decoration	4		
Flooring	5		
Furniture/Fittings/Furnishings	4		
Lighting/Heating/Ventilation	4		
Electrical/Gas Equipment	4		
Crockery/Cutlery/Glassware	5		
Kitchenware/Pans/Utensils	4		
Space/Comfort/Ease of use	4		

Exterior

A most attractive well presented cottage with many attractive architectural features that add character and charm. The exterior stonework and wood work continues to afford arriving guests a very attractive initial impression. Clear effective signage enhancing locating the property.

Guests also benefiting from wonderful extremely well tended extensive grounds. The Bothy and pond great added features and a great refuge for those who want to "escape" for a little peace! Ample well maintained marking also well provided for. Wonderful views adding to the charm and appeal of the cottage.

A peaceful rural location a short distance from Worcester and ideal for exploring the local area and attractions associated with this.

Cleanliness

On this visit, it was once again quite clear that extremely well practised and regimented cleaning and housekeeping procedures are in place. Exemplary levels of cleanliness were noted with surfaces dust free and obvious attention to upper and lower levels clearly evident for which Mrs Van Straaten and the team are to be congratulated. It was also excellent to see the attention to "hard to get to" areas, particularly beams and behind bedroom furniture. Sparkling chrome and glass in bathroom is a feature as is the attention to the interior of the kitchen units and cupboards. Hard flooring well swept and cleaned to corners and edges. Again, excellent attention in the Living areas affording arriving guests an excellent initial pristine impression.

Management & Efficiency

Very well practised booking and management procedures remain in place with a well presented web site offering relevant information. Majority of bookings being made through various on line forums.

Excellent welcome procedures with a personal welcome afforded arriving guests along with a show round of the cottage. Various food stuffs also being provided. Guests also benefiting from the Proprietors living on site.

A very good range of personal touches and accessories further enhances the overall guest experience. Well presented property information also being of great added benefit for guests. Would encourage adding a "No candles" policy to the information and web site information, as mentioned.

Public Areas

The Open plan living areas continue to present very well, decorated and furnished very much in keeping with the nature and age of the surrounds. Various beams and exposed stone work brick fire places being particular features and adding to the character of the areas. The parquet and solid wood flooring remain in excellent condition with attractive use of rugs softening appearance and comfort under foot.

Excellent provision of leather easy seating along with occasional items in place. The solid dining table and well matched seating also to a very high standard and in keeping with the surrounds. Ample lighting with guests also benefiting from a log burner further enhancing guest comfort and ambience particularly during cooler months.

Bedrooms

The bedrooms again continue to present very well with well applied paint work in very good decorative order along with various beams adding further interest and character. Wood furniture all to a very good standard and offering ample storage and hanging space. Wood flooring continues to again be in excellent condition in all areas. The beds and mattresses offer very good comfort and support along with excellent high quality crisp well matched linen. Throws further enhancing initial impressions.

Bathrooms

The partially tiled downstairs Family bathroom is again very well appointed with grouting and paint work all in very good decorative order. Sanitary ware and fittings appear to be in excellent order with both a separate roll top bath and separate shower provided offering guests a variety of bathing options. Hard flooring and grouting remains in excellent condition and well sealed and practical for the areas. Well positioned lighting enhances use of facilities. Well considered areas allowing for access and use with guests benefiting from a separate loo.

Kitchen

Incorporated in the open plan living areas, the kitchen has again been very well considered and appointed. Attractive use of tiled splash backs are in place along with the high quality Parquet flooring. Wooden units and work tops all in very good condition offering ample storage and work space. Excellent standard of appliances and white goods in place. Guests benefiting from both an Aga and separate electric cooker. Ample well positioned recessed lighting in the main body of the room with ample natural light and ventilation also provided.

Ample provision of a high quality well matched crockery, glassware and cutlery. The Wedgewood a particularly high standard. Very good provision of cookware and utensils also being in place.

Units Seen

Just the one property, Longcover Cottage advertised and let and seen on this visit. I was kindly accompanied by Mrs Van Straaten, the Proprietor.

Website Feedback

When entering Self Catering holiday cottages in Tenbury Wells on Google, the property web site appears on the first page. When searching for www.a-country-break.co.uk, the property web site appeared top of the first page. The property also listed on a number of other sites.

The Google search was conducted using a laptop.

A very well presented web site that continues to be both informative and easy to navigate with very good use of information reflecting the style of accommodation on offer and number of sleepers accommodated. Adding a picture of the bathroom would perhaps also be useful.

Although it is good to see that the rating and award logos are displayed, these will please need updating to show VisitEngland rather than EnjoyEngland.com. WiFi promotion is also a great additional potential marketing tool. Provision of contact details at the top of the home page make it easier for guests to access. Use of social media sites might also be something to think about for the future helping to broaden web exposure. Good to see that tariffs are provided, although terms and conditions would also be useful. The provision of an availability checker might also be something to think about for the future. Bookings being made direct with the owners or through other on line forums.

Very good information on local attractions and places of interest of great added benefit for potential guests. Very good provision of map of further benefit to new guests.

Having the web site mobile app friendly is also of great further benefit to potential guests, particularly those on the road.

VisitEngland now strongly recommend updating the Access Statement to the new Accessibility Guides format. There is no strict timetable for moving over, allowing you to make the switch within a convenient time frame. For more information and template see:

<https://www.visitbritain.org/writing-accessibility-guide>.

Potential for Improvement

It was quite clear on the day that Mrs Van Straaten continues to be well on top of the business and for which she is very much to be commended. It was therefore felt that there was no real need for any major suggestions, just to continue maintaining current standards to help ensure that market expectations continue to be met at this level. This clearly being the case and again for which a great deal of credit should be given.

As mentioned, for the future, might though consider providing USB charger sockets; and as and when required Smart televisions. Items that appear to be becoming more prevalent in this day and age.

Highlights

An extremely well maintained rural cottage with ongoing investment helping ensure that standards continue to be maintained at this level.

An abundance of various architectural features adding to the charm of the cottage.

Views and the gardens also highlights of the property and sure to be appreciated by guests.

As well as ongoing redecoration further investment has included:

A new table lamp in the sitting room enhancing both ambience and practicality.

The new Coalport porcelain houses adding interest.

The replacing of bed linen and towels on a rolling basis also helping ensure that quality perceptions continue to be maintained.

The new chest of drawers in the downstairs bedroom of great added benefit to guests.

Special mention should once again be made of the high standards of housekeeping and cleanliness seen on the day. A real credit to all concerned.

Minimum Entry Requirements

For a rating to be awarded by VisitEngland, a property must meet all Minimum Entry Requirements and any additional requirements appropriate for the star rating level.

Name	Longcover
Standard	Self-Catering
Designator	Cottage
Rating	4 Star Gold Award

At the time of our visit, all of the Minimum Entry Requirements and Additional requirements/Key Requirements were provided.

Specialities (optional)

These have not been awarded or assessed.

Useful Numbers

Customer Services 01256 491111 VisitEnglandAssessmentServices@theAA.com

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VisitEngland Inspection Appeals Procedure

Proprietors who wish to appeal against the results of a VisitEngland assessment carried out at their establishment must follow the procedure outlined below:

1. Any appeal must be made in writing to VisitEngland Assessment Services within 21 days of the original report being received.
2. The Appeal should detail the main reason for the appeal.
3. Should the appeal be about the level of star rating proprietors should ensure that their establishment meets all the necessary minimum requirements outlined in the Quality Standards booklet (a PDF or hard copy may be requested from Customer Services).
4. Appeals will be formally acknowledged within 7 working days of receipt of the appeal together with a form to organise an appeal visit on a day basis.
5. The appeal visit will be subject to a non-refundable fee which will not be organised until full payment had been received.
6. Once the application and fee is received, an appeal visit from a member of the senior assessor team will take place within 4-6 weeks of receipt (Subject to the establishment's availability).
7. The findings of the appeal visit will be fed back in the normal way of both discussions and a report following the visit.
8. The outcome of this report will supersede the previous visit and will be final.

Appeal Visit Fees (non-refundable) are available on request from Customer Services.