

Booking with Exmoor Character Cottages

Frequently Asked Questions December 2020

Can I book with you for dates in 2021?

We are open throughout the year and already have a substantial number of bookings for peak weeks, so don't take too long to book your break or holiday. Festival weeks and Christmas/New Year breaks may also book months and even years in advance, so please enquire and book well in advance for these periods. You can book directly with us at any time, our website is open 24x7, with availability and pricing updated in real time. If you wish to ask for a year not available on our calendar, or to ask any questions before booking, please email Lucy:

info@exmoorcharactercottages.co.uk

Are my bookings protected? About Protected Bookings Scheme 2

While booking holidays has never been simpler, the monumental events of 2020 have taught us all how important it is to read the terms and conditions when booking a holiday! Here at Exmoor Character Cottages, we dislike small print, loopholes, and restrictive booking conditions so we have created our own Protected Bookings Scheme 2 for guests booking directly with us. So, what does this mean to me?

There are just three main terms and conditions relating to this scheme:

1. A no quibble, no charge cancellation policy in the event of official restrictions preventing travel to one of our cottages.
2. A no charge postponement policy in the event that you or your guests are in official self-isolation or in quarantine. We'll do all we can to find you alternative dates for your booking later in the year, although due to seasonality we cannot guarantee the cost for these alternative dates will be the same.
3. A full refund of all payments made for cancellations made up to 48 hours prior to arrival where alternative dates cannot be arranged in the event of official restrictions preventing travel to one of our cottages.

What happens if I wish to cancel my holiday?

If you booked on or after 1st December 2020, all bookings made directly with us (i.e., via the website or over the 'phone) will be protected by our Protected Bookings Guarantee 2. You should notify us immediately by phone or email should you wish to cancel or postpone your booking under this scheme. For cancellations or amendments received within 48 hours of arrival, no refund will be given.

If you booked via an external letting agency such as cottages.com or booking portal such as booking.com, in the first instance, please contact them directly. For bookings made directly with Exmoor Character Cottages, please Lucy: info@exmoorcharactercottages.co.uk

What happens if I wish to cancel my holiday? (For bookings made earlier than 30th November 2020)

If you booked on or after 5th August 2020 until 30th November 2020 and paid your 30% deposit in full upon booking, you may cancel your holiday and obtain a refund from Master Cancel Insurance of all payments made up to 48 hours before arrival.

This is a no quibble refund and you do not need to provide a reason for cancellation. To cancel, you must send us an email from the person who booked the holiday, with your booking information so we can locate the booking. We pass this to Master Cancel as proof of your cancellation, so please include as much information as you can.

If your break was booked between 23rd March 2020 and 4th August 2020, we will do all we can to reschedule your booking until a later date or will refund any payments made in full.

For bookings made prior to 23rd March 2020, please refer to your T&C document or contact your agent, booking portal or for direct bookings, please Lucy: info@exmoorcharactercottages.co.uk

What happens if I become ill with COVID-19 symptoms before our holiday?

- If you fall ill with COVID-19 symptoms, you should first report these to the Government Test & Trace service (T&T).
- Our advice is **not to travel during** a quarantine period, and you will need to notify us accordingly.

- For those who have booked direct with Exmoor Character Cottages only, if you choose not to travel, we will do all we can to move dates or refund all rental fees paid to us by those guests only **when we are in receipt of evidence from T&T.**

For bookings made from 1st December 2020, please notify us immediately via email and 'phone as outlined in 'Protected Bookings Scheme 2' outlined above.

For bookings made on or after 5th August 2020 until 30th November 2020, payments will be covered by Master Cancel Insurance for cancellations up to two full days (48 hours) before arrival.

Guests who have paid their refundable security deposit will have that returned.

If your break was booked between 23rd March 2020 and 4th August 2020, we will do all we can to reschedule your booking until a later date or will refund any payments made in full.

For guests who booked prior to 23rd March 2020, you may choose not to travel and to claim via your holiday insurance. We are happy to provide written evidence of our refund policy to assist your claim.

If you have booked with one of our external letting agents, you need to speak to them about any refunds or transferring dates.

The 'Rule of Six', which came into force from 14th September 2020

Up to a maximum of six people can stay in one of our cottages

You do not need to come from the same household. However, if you are not in the same household, you need to maintain social distancing in the cottages and outside.

Can I travel to Exmoor?

As at 7th December, West Somerset is within Tier 2 restrictions, therefore you may travel to our cottages providing your permanent residence is within a Tier 1 or Tier 2 area. Those resident in Tier 3 or above are advised not to travel. For the latest information, we advise consulting with the HM Government Coronavirus website which provides regularly updated guidance and regulations:
<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Support Bubbles and Christmas Bubbles

If you have formed a support bubble with another household or group prior to 14th September 2020, you may travel and stay with that support bubble - even if it's more than six people.

- **Babies and children** are included in the total number of people that may stay.

Please note that parties arriving or staying from 23rd December 2020 until 27th December 2020 will be subject to the **HM Government Christmas Bubble** guidelines which can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/making-a-christmas-bubble-with-friends-and-family/making-a-christmas-bubble-with-friends-and-family>

Are there any other charges or additional costs when staying at one of your properties?

All electricity, gas, water, linens and towels are included within your rental payment. In order to protect our cottages and the furnishings and fittings, a refundable security deposit of £250 is payable 21 days before arrival and will be refunded within seven days of departure providing no loss or damages are incurred.

Do I need to take out separate holiday insurance?

We always recommend purchasing holiday insurance to cover you for cancellation and other risks arising during your holiday.

What are you doing to protect guests when staying at the cottages?

All guests arriving at one of our cottages from 4th July 2020 have been required to complete a health questionnaire before travelling. We will ask you to agree the contents of the health questionnaire in our usual pre-arrival telephone call.

What will I find when I get to the cottages?

We hope that all our guests will find everything as usual – but with a few added touches to make our cottages even safer.

- We have further enhanced our [hygiene and cleaning regimen](#) to provide for a COVID-secure environment and have exceeded all measures detailed in official guidance.
- We will continue to update our procedures and staff training as new advice is received, and will notify all booked guests via email should anything materially change before arrival.
- We have done our very best to maintain all those special touches you'd expect from each of our cottages. We have removed board games and some superficial items to ensure

compliance with the latest risk management advice. If you have further specific questions, please ask.

- To comply with hygiene best practice, we have also removed tea, coffee, sugar and other condiments. Don't forget to pack those essentials or stop to buy them en-route as we all enjoy a cuppa after a long journey! Don't worry – the cake will still be there on the welcome tray fully wrapped and fresh milk in the fridge ready for you to enjoy!
- All toilet rolls are individually wrapped. We buy eco-friendly 'Who Gives a Crap' and we quarantine unused complete rolls for two weeks to minimise waste. These are wrapped in tissue paper.
- You can contact us at any time, but we'll check in after you've settled in and before departure to ensure you're happy and have everything you need.

Is Exmoor and West Somerset open?

Many local independent stores, shops, pubs, and cafes are open, but many are operating with significantly reduced capacity so you may have to book for lunch, dinner or afternoon tea.

Supermarkets, smaller food stores and delicatessens are open as usual but with social distancing measures in place. Of course, these businesses may close as the coronavirus measures change.

You will need to wear a facemask in all retail establishments and when collecting takeaway food. Many attractions are fully open, albeit with social distancing deployed and with limited capacity or pre-booked entry only. Please enquire directly with the attraction to ensure you have the latest information and follow our social media pages, Exmoor365 or Dunster365 on Facebook for all the latest news. Dunster High Street even has its own live stream which can be found at

www.DiscoverDunster.info

We have teamed up with local delicatessen and farm shops to ensure your food needs are covered during your stay. [Stuart Lowen Farm Shop](#) in Minehead and [The Deli in Dunster](#) will both deliver your pre-ordered groceries to our cottages.

Is the local community welcoming?

By being compliant with all legislation and working closely with our local communities, we're pleased to say that our neighbours are largely welcoming of respectful visitors. To keep our lovely neighbours happy we ask that you and your guests observe the 10pm closure time for our Hot Tubs (in our Minehead properties) in order to maintain night-time peace and quiet in the Higher Town.

Exmoor and West Somerset have been relatively untouched by Coronavirus and many local residents are proud of their compliance with government advice and how visitors to the area have behaved. We have no reason to believe this will change and everyone here knows how important tourism is to the economy.

Can I invite people to sleep overnight or visit us whilst I'm staying at the cottage?

In order to comply with fire regulations and our own insurance policies, we have always asked that you notify us in advance if there are any changes the number of guests staying at the property. Of course, we realise that some guests may have friends and family in the local area and therefore may visit you during your stay. Under the latest Coronavirus guidance, we will require them to scan their NHS Covid-19 app upon arrival and to leave their name and contact details to be held for 21 days following your departure and we request these are left with us when you leave. You will find our QR code on the dining table when you arrive.

What happens if I become ill with COVID-19 symptoms whilst staying with you?

For the wellbeing of our staff, our community and future guests, our clear advice is to prepare to return home immediately, with all your party – but first, please contact us via telephone on: 07817 698366 or 07759 788637

We respectfully request that in these circumstances you do not use the hot tub and try to minimise touchpoints within the cottages. Of course, please also do not use local amenities or facilities. When you return home, you must contact the NHS T&T service and provide the details of your prior locations and contact points. We can assist with providing these details if you wish. In the event of a guest displaying symptoms, we will immediately commence a deep-cleaning procedure using sophisticated anti-viral fogging techniques.

What happens if you become ill with COVID-19 symptoms when you return home?

If it is within 21 days of leaving, you must notify us via email straight away as we may need to provide support to the local T&T service. We will immediately commence a deep-cleaning procedure using sophisticated anti-viral fogging techniques.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Exmoor Character Cottages December 2020