



Brighton & Hove Holiday Rental Association

Best Practice Guidelines for Large Group Holiday Rentals
(Sleeping 10 or more)

A successful large group holiday rental will need to show specific consideration of 4 key areas which have potential to cause issue in some neighbourhoods. Noise, Rubbish Removal, Parking & Fire Risk.

From the initial preparation of your holiday rental through to the ongoing management (pre & post guest arrival), these 4 areas should be at the centre of your policies and decision making.

For large group holiday rentals sleeping 10 or more guests we recommend the following best practice guidelines:

Key Issues to Consider

1. Noise
2. Rubbish Removal
3. Parking
4. Fire Risk

Preparing Your Holiday Rental

Choosing the right property

Large group holiday rentals are best suited to a city centre location. Properties located on a quiet mews or cul-de-sac have the potential in some cases to cause disruption to neighbours. Rural areas with neighbours in the immediate vicinity e.g. terraced properties are considered inappropriate locations for large group holiday rentals.

A well-managed and sound proofed holiday rental should pose no greater issue to the neighbourhood than any other property.

Garden

Where neighbours' properties are within close proximity to the holiday rental, the use of outside space should be discouraged as much as possible.

- Remove all garden furniture
- Do not promote the outside space as a feature in the property listings.
- Remove any element that will encourage garden use e.g. bbq's, hot tubs, seating, evening lighting etc.
- For some properties it may be necessary to restrict use of the garden to certain hours e.g. the garden is not to be used after 9pm, guests may be asked to smoke in a more suitable location at night etc. *See sign example attached.*
- If your neighbours report repeated issues with noise from night time use of your outside space, consider permanently locking the door (fire regs permitting). An emergency key box can be wall-mounted next to the door.

Noise Reduction

- Ensure any doors which have the potential to be slammed and cause disturbance are fitted with silencers or door closers. In particular consider a door closer for the front door.
- If your holiday rental suffers from poor noise insulation, sound proof the main living and dining room walls.
- In problem cases, install CCTV & sound recording equipment to the front of the building to act as a noise deterrent and to be able to substantiate any deposit claims for breaking the noise policy.
- Limit the number, location and quality of the music systems in the property.
- Avoid karaoke machines or consoles such as wii fit, xbox kinnect etc
- If refurbishing a property consider moving the main communal room (i.e. lounge) to the basement away from your neighbours lounge or bedrooms.

Out of hours contact / Security Patrol

Provide your neighbour with your details or details of your property management company and an out of hours contact number in the event of noise complaints or anti-social behaviour.

[Sussex Security Patrol](#) provide a night time mobile patrol for many large group holiday rentals in Brighton and act as an excellent deterrent for anti-social behaviour. In addition they provide a 24/7 call out for excessive noise and anti-social behaviour. All operatives are CRB checked, uniformed, with head-cams, licensed and fully insured.

Guest Access

- Where possible install keyless access allowing guest entry without knocking or ringing etc. E.g. [Yale Keyless Digital Lock](#)
- Where keyless entry is not possible ensure there is one set of keys per couple staying at the property.
- Where possible install a keysafe outside of the property which holds an emergency set of keys, ensuring the guests have been provided with the keycode.
- Remove door knockers to the front door.
- Ensure the doorbell can be heard throughout the entire property and ensure it is mains powered.

- If you employ the services of a night patrol or security service ensure they have a key copy and your guests are provided with their details.

Organised Activities in your property

If you promote property based activities to your guests e.g. life drawing, private chef, beauty therapies etc ensure that you have provided the activity providers with written restrictions of what is not permitted in the property e.g. no activities in the garden, activities should be finished by Xpm etc. Providers who do not comply with your property restrictions should not be promoted.

Health, Safety & Fire Regulations

Fire:

All holiday let properties rented out to paying guests must comply with the [Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005 \(The Order\)](#). As owner of the property The Order considers you, the landlord, to be the 'responsible person' and as such it is your legal responsibility to ensure that your property complies with The Order. You must:

- Carry out a fire risk assessment
- If necessary, improve your fire safety measures
- Keep the risks, and your fire safety measures, under review

We strongly recommend that the Fire Risk Assessment is carried out by a qualified professional who will advise you on any measures needed to ensure your holiday rental meets suggested guidelines.

Please refer to the Government's [Fire Risk Assessment sleeping accommodation guide](#) and '[Do you have paying guests?](#)' leaflet for further information.

Gas Safety:

All holiday let owners renting out their property to guests are legally bound to:

- Maintain and service all gas related equipment and flues
- Have a gas safety check conducted every 12 months by a Gas Safe Registered Engineer
- Keep a record of the safety check and display it in the property. (we suggest in the guest welcome pack)

Electrics:

There is currently no legal requirement for holiday let properties to have PAT tested appliances. [See PAT Testing](#)

The law states that it is the owner's responsibility to ensure that all appliances are safe to use. As part of your Fire Risk Assessment conducting an annual PAT test is a good way to ensure this.

Furniture & Fire Safety

The 'Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 (as amended)' set fire resistance standards for [upholstered furniture](#) in domestic use (new and second-hand). Holiday rentals are regarded as constituting domestic use and, therefore, are covered by the Regulations.

The regulations do not apply to goods made before 1950 and the materials used to re-upholster them.

All furniture (new and second-hand) in holiday rentals that are covered by the Regulations must comply with certain safety tests. These are very broadly as follows.

- Upholstered furniture must pass a prescribed cigarette resistance test.
- Cover fabric, whether for use in permanent or loose covers, will normally have to pass a match resistance test.
- Filling materials for all furniture must pass ignitability tests as specified in the regulations.
- All new upholstered furniture (except mattresses and bedding) and loose and stretch covers for furniture must carry a permanent label detailing compliance with fire safety requirements. Always look for these labels before buying any upholstered furniture for your property.

See [Visit England Fire Safety of Furniture and Furnishings](#) for more information.

Insurances

All holiday rentals should have the following insurances

- Contents: Specific holiday let contents insurance. Ensure your policy contains accidental damage cover and legal protection which will allow you to make any personal claims against the guest which are not covered by the policy e.g. damage by pets.
- Buildings Insurance: Inform your buildings insurance provider that the property is rented as a holiday rental. Often no additional premium is involved. If your provider does not offer holiday rental buildings insurance approach a specialist provider.
- Public Liability Insurance

A specialist holiday home insurance provider such as <http://www.insuranceforholidayhomes.co.uk/> will provide specialist cover and is far more competitive in price to high street insurance companies.

Council Tax or Business Rates?

Self-catering holiday lets of all sizes in England are assessed for rateable value if they are available for letting for 140 days or more per financial year.

The Valuation Office Agency states 'If the property was available for letting throughout the year but the operator makes a conscious decision to only accept bookings for a total of 139 days (or less), then the property will not be subject to a rating assessment but will be allocated a council tax band.

Where the operator does not make a decision to limit the total period for which bookings will be accepted, the property will be liable for a rating assessment, regardless of whether actual lettings fail to exceed the 139-day limit in any given year.'

Visit the [VOA website](#) for more information.

At present properties may benefit from the government's [Small Business Rate Relief](#) which offers up to 100% discount.

Rubbish Removal

Bin bags left outside of a holiday rental will attract seagulls and foxes and may result in bags being split and rubbish spread throughout the street.

The [Controlled Waste \(England and Wales\) Regulations 2012](#) states that holiday rentals qualifying for business rates (available to rent for 140 days or more) and subsequently classified as being 'self-catering accommodation' should use a commercial waste service for the removal of rubbish.

Even if you do not qualify for business rates you may wish to consider a private waste company to remove your rubbish each Monday immediately following your weekend booking. A list of commercial waste contractors can be found on the [Council's Business Recycling and Refuse Page](#).

Ensure that you have enough recycling bins at your property.

Managing Your Holiday Rental: Pre-Arrival

Accurate Advertising

Be clear in the advert listing that the property is located in a residential area and that the property is rented as sleeping accommodation and is not to be used as a venue.

Booking Confirmation Email

As part of the booking confirmation email include a paragraph which reiterates the property location, that the property is sleeping accommodation and not a party venue, stating noise policy, and any property specific restrictions e.g. garden curfew, no external decorations, smoking restrictions etc. Guests then have time to cancel the booking if they are unhappy with the basic 'rules' of the property. *See attached example.*

Guest Terms & Conditions

Each time you communicate with your guests via email, attach a copy of your Guest Terms. Detail the rules and policies of your holiday rental making clear any potential cause for deposit deductions.

Property Information Pack

Shortly before the booking starts you may wish to email your guest a property A-Z or Information Pack which will allow them time to learn about the property before arrival. If so this is the ideal opportunity to include:

- Noise Policy
- Rubbish Removal & Recycling
- Parking instructions (with diagrams if necessary) & details of public transport.
- Any property specific restrictions
- Highlighting any possible causes for deposit deductions

Booking Criteria & Restrictions

- **Duration:** For some properties it may be useful to restrict weekend bookings to a 2 night stay Fri – Sun. This will help restrict any potential disturbance to neighbours during the working week.

- **Age:** If the booking request is for a predominantly younger group with one of the guests aged under 18, in line with the equality act 2010 you are able to refuse the booking.
- **Restricting age groups & all male groups:** Under the Equality Act 2010 'objective justification' is a clause which in some cases may allow you to refuse bookings on the grounds of age or sex where you have 'good reason' which is objective and backed by hard evidence.

Avoiding disturbance and noise in a certain area does seem to fall under the 'social and community' factors for consideration towards Objective Justification but to be able to objectively prove this with hard evidence may be tricky and could potentially leave you open to be challenged in the court. The home office does seem to suggest that it might be possible to refuse to rent properties to certain age groups in certain areas but only if you can show evidence of problems that you have experienced with that age group in the recent past or where other accommodation providers have experienced problems. In theory this could also be extended to all male groups. Objective justification does seem to provide a grey area to work within but it is important as a holiday let owner that if you do wish to restrict bookings to certain age groups / sexes that although unlikely, you are aware that you may be open to prosecution and compensation claims.

Managing Your Holiday Rental: Post Arrival

Post arrival there are 4 means of communicating policies & information:

1. Property A-Z / Information Pack.
2. Check-out 'check list' displayed clearly on the back of the front door.
3. Signs addressing property-specific issues displayed in the holiday rental e.g. rubbish removal, parking diagram, security patrol etc
4. Guest meet and greet. If you offer a meet and greet service use this opportunity to communicate important policies in person at the time of the guest arrival.

Specifics to include in all of your communications:

Parking

If you have private parking which could be confused with neighbours parking, ensure that the appropriate space is clearly marked. By the exit to the property display laminated/framed information on location of space and highlight any parking restrictions.

In your communications post arrival and in the property A-Z include details of parking options close to your property, as well as detail public transport options. www.Parkopedia.co.uk highlights car parks and paid street parking in your area.

Rubbish Removal

Include detailed rubbish removal and recycling instructions in you're A-Z and on the check-out list. If you experience repeated issues with rubbish, display clear instructions directly above the bin with a detailed map of the nearest communal street bin or commercial waste instructions if applicable.

Noise

Garden Sign: Displayed on garden/patio door stating any restrictions of use e.g. time restrictions and providing information for alternative night time smoking arrangements. *See attached example.*

Noise Policy Sign / Security Patrol Sign: Display clearly in the property your noise policy and any potential deposit deduction penalties. Make clear that your neighbours have an emergency number to contact and deductions will be made if they call. If you employ the services of a Security Patrol provide the details of the company and how often they visit the property and any deduction penalties should they be called out. *See attached example.*

Fire

The fire evacuation policy must be displayed in the property and in the property A-Z (which may also be emailed to guests prior to arrival).