

Environmental Statement

At Hidelow House Cottages we are trying to maintain a balance between helping the environment and community in which we live and providing guests with the highest quality self catering holidays possible. This can be seen by the various awards that we have won since 2004:



- Green Tourism Business GOLD award in 2008
- The Heart of England Sustainable Tourism GOLD Award in 2009 and
- Nominated for the EnjoyEngland National Sustainable Tourism Award in 2010.

Some key areas in which we have invested, in order to minimise our environmental footprint are:

- Two non-chemical bio plants, receiving sewage waste and discharging clean water.
- Water conservation – all toilets in The Farmhouse use surface (rain) water collected and stored underground.
- Maximum efficiency condensing boilers in most cottages, combined with thermostatic valves on all radiators and under floor heating in The Farmhouse to minimise energy use.
- Insulation and double glazing to higher than building regulation standards.
- Low energy light bulbs.
- No chemicals on site, all cleaning done with ecological cleaners and miracle cloths.
- As much recycled and local materials used as possible in the restoration of the original buildings: timber, recycled bricks and oak beams etc from the original barns.
- All new building designed and built in harmony with the environment.
- Local labour used for the construction and ongoing maintenance of the buildings and gardens.
- Efficient Recycling scheme with dedicated recycling area.
- Composting of all green and cooked food waste.
- Acting on advice from Herefordshire Nature Trust, we have undertaken a number of wildlife-friendly improvements e.g. Coppice, hedge-management, wildflower and planting schemes.
- We have created a wildlife pond, using a network of underground pipes to channel surface (rain) water.
- Community Transport policy: we have formed a partnership with the local Scout Group to purchase a 'People Carrier', available as Guests' transport with charitable donations to cover costs.
- On-site Shop selling basic food and drink items to reduce the need for guests to travel elsewhere for them.
- We provide a good model of practice for our guests (leading by example).
- We explain in our cottages how you can help.

How you can help

We can work together to make less impact on our surroundings; we ask our guests to do the following:

- Take part in our Carbon Offset Scheme
- Use all the recycling facilities. **Please Reduce, Re-use and Recycle.**
- In The Farmhouse, please help conserve water by not flushing toilets unnecessarily.
- Don't turn up the heating and open windows - this is really wasteful; when you go out please turn down heating, turn off all lights and close all windows.
- Please turn off all lights when you go out and only keep essential lights on at night. PLEASE THINK – For example: do you really need the kitchen lights on when you are asleep?
- Follow the instructions regarding the bio plants - chemicals obstruct the natural cleaning cycle.
- Use only the ecological cleaning products we supply.
- Buy local food and services whilst you are here to help the local community that you came to visit.
- Buy products with less packaging to dispose of.
- Leave no litter and respect the Country Code. Copies in this folder.
- Sadly we have little public transport, however we have lovely walks using the footpaths locally, so why not leave the car behind for a day, take a picnic and explore the immediate, beautiful countryside.
- Take only photographs, leave only footprints.

What do we do?

- We develop our business in as sustainable manner as possible.
- We buy local food and produce whenever we can.
- We use only local produce in our Freezer meals.
- We recycle all our rubbish, both organic and inorganic.
- We keep the heat down in the main house. We use energy saving lamps wherever possible.
- We use logs from trees on our land and from that of our neighbours.
- We use bio-digesters to process sewage waste, leaving only clean water.
- We don't use chemicals.
- We use micro fibre cloths for cleaning.
- We monitor and manage our energy use.
- We encourage wildlife and biodiversity.
- We have an ethical buying policy and minimise purchases from countries with poor human rights and companies that do not behave in a fair and reasonable manner.
- We sell only locally made and Fair Trade products in our Shop.