



Quality in Tourism

## Visit Report

### Self-Catering Standard

### **Deansbiggin Barn**

Kearstwick, Kirkby Lonsdale.

★★★★★

### **Self Catering**

Cyclists Welcome, Walkers Welcome, Welcome Pets!, Families Welcome

**Assessor:** Paul Robson

**Visit date:** 29 May 2009

**Visit type:** Day

**QiT No:** 587870

# Executive Summary

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## Summary

Under the British Common Standard for Self Catering Underley Estate Self Catering Cottages (Deansbiggin Barn, Scar Brow Cottage, Deerhouse, Bluebell, Old Laundry, Tosca Cottage and Underley Grange) all achieve a FIVE Star rating.

Part of the Standard is that all critical areas of the property; cleanliness, living areas, bedrooms, bathrooms and kitchen must each achieve a grade commensurate with the overall rating.

Following this assessment the establishment meets these requirements, enabling the rating indicated above to be confirmed.

## Physical areas

Underley Estate Self Catering Cottages are situated in the heart of stunning surroundings of Underley Estate and enjoy many acres of peaceful and tranquil surroundings which guests can access and enjoy.

The exterior of all cottages are presented to a very high standard indeed with many offering hot tubs, all garden areas offer a secure environment for guests, their children and pets. All units have an attractive garden area with quality seating and barbecue to dine alfresco when weather permits. Car parking is amply provided for each unit also.

Public areas in all units are maintained to a very high standard and furnished appropriately with stunning quality bespoke pieces fully in keeping with the individual styling in each cottage, all are very spacious even the Grange which sleeps up to 16 guests.

Bedrooms vary in style throughout the cottages from very modern, contemporary such as The Old Laundry to traditional such as the Grange, all are in very high quality condition and are well maintained. Furniture is period style in many areas and of excellent quality presentation however suggest the melamine pieces that remain in Scar Brow Cottage be replaced with higher quality options to mirror all other areas as discussed.

Bathroom offer ample space for all guests needs with no restrictions of barriers, decor and flooring is presented to an excellent standard throughout, sanitary ware is bespoke in presentation and offers very high visual perceptions.

Kitchen areas also offer very good manoeuvrability and are furnished to a very high standard indeed with thoughtful application, each unit is well stocked with ample cutlery, glassware and crockery, each unit also has an excellent range of kitchen appliances, utensils and pan ware meeting all guests needs.

## Management efficiency and cleanliness

All units are professionally managed by the Estate with all pre-arrival, brochure and web site information presented to an excellent standard as seen and extremely well presented in quality folders with Estate logo.

Cleanliness levels are presented in all areas to an excellent standard and should be commended for achieving such high standards.

## Fire risk assessment

In line with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, which came into force in October 2006, a copy of the Fire Risk Assessment for the premises was seen by the assessor. The assessor is not able to comment on the content of the assessment.

## Minimum Entry Requirements

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- Group:** Underley Estate Self Catering Cottages.  
(Bluebell, Deansbiggin Barn, Deer House, Old Laundry, Scar Brow Cottage, Tosca Cottage, Underley Grange)
- Standard:** Self-Catering
- Designator:** Self Catering
- Rating:** Five Star
- Specialities:** Cyclists Welcome, Walkers Welcome, Welcome Pets!, Families Welcome

To be recognised within the VisitBritain Quality Assessment Scheme a property must meet all "Minimum Entry Requirements". Also any "Additional Requirements" or "Key Requirements" needed at the designated level must be provided. Quality standards also need to meet the minimum level in all areas of the operation.

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

The term 'Progressing' is used to indicate that the establishment is working towards providing the missing items, facilities or services listed.

## General Feedback (All Units/Groups)

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### **Families Welcome**

All units meeting Families Welcome at inspection.

### **Walkers Welcome**

All units meeting Walkers Welcome criteria at inspection.

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All units meeting Walkers Welcome criteria at inspection.

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All units meeting Walkers Welcome criteria at inspection.

### **Cyclists Welcome**

All units meeting Cyclists Welcome criteria at inspection.

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All units meeting Cyclists Welcome criteria at inspection.

### **Welcome Pets!**

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## **Quality Scores**

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This section of the report contains information with regard to the quality grading awarded to the property. The quality indicator terms used are to express the different levels of quality.

Your assessor might also have added observations, suggestions or advice. These are suggestions only and can be acted upon or disregarded.

It is hoped that the information contained within this report will provide a valuable management tool and assist in the maintaining, developing or improving of quality standards in the future.

**Unit / Group:** Underley Estate Self Catering Cottages.

	<b>Score (%)</b>	<b>Level</b>
<b>Overall</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>5</b>
Cleanliness	100	5
Bedroom	88	5
Bathroom	92	5
Kitchen	87	5
Public Areas	92	5

## Visit Report

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**Unit / Group:** Underley Estate Self Catering Cottages.

### General Requirements (A - Common Standards Reference)

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#### Two additional items to be provided

Tumble Dryer	Yes
Hi-Fi	Yes
Video Recorder	Yes
DVD Player	Yes

### Exterior (1 - Common Standards Reference)

**Very Good (86%)**

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#### Appearance of buildings

**Very Good**

Appearance of buildings and signage	Very Good	All units are attractively presented with clear signage on each, buildings are well maintained and all elevations fully sympathetic to the location and environment.
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#### Grounds, gardens, roadways and car parking

**Very Good**

Grounds, gardens and garden furniture	Excellent	Properties located on the Underley Estates offering acres of stunning grounds accessible to all occupants, each unit has its own frontage or garden area, many have hot tubs and all have quality sturdy garden furniture for guests to dine alfresco.
Car parking surface, signage and illumination	Very Good	Each unit has ample car parking relevant to its occupancy, surfaces are well maintained with even accessibility to all units.

#### Environment and Setting

**Excellent**

First impression on arrival	Excellent	Access to all units is attained through Underley Estates grounds creating an excellent first impression for arriving guests with acres of stunning land with manicured presentation and fantastic views from each unit.
Environment	Excellent	All units offer a peaceful and tranquil environment which guests can relax with privacy.

**Management Efficiency (3 - Common Standards Reference)****Very Good (86%)****Pre-arrival information including brochure****Excellent**

Pre-arrival information including brochure

Excellent

Extremely well presented pre-arrival brochure with excellent format, all pre-arrival procedures maintained to an excellent standard meeting all guests needs.

**Welcome and arrival procedure****Very Good**

Welcome and arrival procedure

Very Good

Personal welcome extended to all arriving guests with local food pack provided including start up breakfast items, wine and fresh flowers.

**In-unit guest information and personal touches****Very Good**

In-unit guest information and personal touches

Very Good

Units contain very useful information packs, tourist information and many homely touches such as books and games.

**Public Areas (4 - Common Standards Reference)****Excellent (92%)****Decoration****Very Good**

Decoration in lounge and dining areas

Very Good

Consistent levels of decor in all units and freshly painted, co-ordinated wall coverings are very well maintained and picture relief adds interest in all units.

Decoration in other areas e.g. corridors, stairs

Very Good

All areas remain scuff free and of very good first impression.

**Flooring****Excellent**

Flooring

Excellent

Carpeted areas remain in excellent condition, some areas have oak flooring and others Karndean style all of excellent quality presentation.

**Furniture, furnishings and fittings****Excellent**

Furniture, furnishings and fittings

Excellent

Many bespoke style period pieces of excellent quality especially in Underley Grange.

**Lighting, heating and ventilation****Excellent**

Provision and controllability of heating and ventilation

Excellent

Easily controllable by guests offering an excellent flexibility.

Position and controllability of lighting

Very Good

Illumination levels are very good ensuring safety.

**Space, comfort and ease of use****Very Good**

Space, comfort and ease of use

Very Good

Overall spacial aspects in all units vary although all offer very good manoeuvrability, even Underley Grange which accommodates 16 people, units such as the Old Laundry offers excellent space for two guests.

**Bedrooms (5 - Common Standards Reference)****Excellent (88%)**

<b>Decorations</b>		<b>Very Good</b>
Decorations	Very Good	Practical decor maintained in all units to a very high standard and extremely well co-ordinated to the soft furnishings.
<b>Flooring</b>		<b>Excellent</b>
Flooring	Excellent	Carpeting is of the highest possible quality in all cottages and very well maintained.
<b>Furniture, furnishings and fittings</b>		<b>Excellent</b>
Furniture	Very Good	Many pieces of very high quality and offering ample storage for all guests needs, suggest melamine furniture in Scar Brow Cottage to be replaced to mirror quality elsewhere as discussed.
Furnishings and fittings	Excellent	Extremely luxurious curtains in all units of excellent quality presentation as discussed.
<b>Lighting, heating and ventilation</b>		<b>Very Good</b>
Position and controllability of lighting	Very Good	All bedrooms allow very good levels of usable illumination with flexibility.
Provision and controllability of heating and ventilation	Very Good	Easily controllable provisions including thermostatic flexibility.
<b>Beds</b>		<b>Very Good</b>
Mattress, bed bases and headboards	Very Good	Sturdy beds in all rooms with many period style or bespoke sleigh beds offering very good first impression, pocket sprung mattresses offer suitable levels of support and comfort for guests.
<b>Bedding and bed linen</b>		<b>Excellent</b>
Bedding and bed linen	Excellent	Well dressed beds with excellent quality presentation cotton bedding, scatter cushions and runners adding to the first impression.
<b>Space, comfort and ease of use</b>		<b>Very Good</b>
Space, comfort and ease of use	Very Good	All bedrooms are well spaced offering overall very good accessibility.

**Bathrooms and WCs (6 - Common Standards Reference)****Excellent (92%)**

<b>Decoration</b>		<b>Excellent</b>
Decoration	Excellent	Fully tiled or Respotex style boarding fitted to an excellent standard in all areas, grouting and sealant all in pristine condition.
<b>Flooring</b>		<b>Excellent</b>
Flooring	Excellent	Mixed style flooring in units all present to an excellent standard.
<b>Fixtures, fittings and sanitary ware</b>		<b>Excellent</b>
Fixtures, fittings and sanitary ware (lights, taps, shelving etc)	Excellent	Many bespoke pieces of excellent quality and presentation.
<b>Lighting, heating and ventilation</b>		<b>Very Good</b>
Position and controllability of lighting	Excellent	Spot lighting offers excellent usability and safety for guests.
Provision and controllability of heating	Very Good	Heated towel rails in all areas offering very good comfort levels.
Ventilation	Very Good	Forced extraction appears effective in all areas.
<b>Space, comfort and ease of use</b>		<b>Very Good</b>
Space, comfort and ease of use	Very Good	Bathrooms overall offer very good manoeuverability and accessibility.

**Kitchen (7 - Common Standards Reference)****Excellent (87%)****Decoration****Very Good**

Decoration Very Good Practical decor in all kitchens with appropriately tiled splash backs and freshly painted presentation.

**Flooring****Excellent**

Flooring Excellent Mix of Karndean and original oak flooring throughout units with all options presenting to an excellent standard and very appropriate.

**Furniture, fixtures and fittings****Excellent**

Furniture and fitted units including handles and light fittings Excellent Fitted oak units in many units of excellent quality presentation, other areas with bespoke style contemporary effect of equal quality presentation and in keeping with the individual styles.

**Lighting, heating and ventilation****Excellent**

Position and controllability of lighting Excellent Spot lighting with under counter options offering very usable facilities.

Provision and controllability of heating and ventilation Very Good

**Electrical and gas equipment****Very Good**

Kitchen equipment, cookers, fridges etc Very Good Fitted integral pieces of very good quality and offering suitable usability.

**Crockery, cutlery and glassware****Very Good**

Crockery, cutlery and glassware Very Good All pieces as per inventory requirements and of very good standard presentation.

**Kitchenware, pans and utensils****Very Good**

Kitchenware, pots, pans and utensils Very Good Robust selection in all units of semi professional standard and very well co-ordinated.

**Space, comfort and ease of use****Very Good**

Space, comfort and ease of use Very Good Overall spacial aspects are very good in all units.

**Additional Facilities (8 - Common Standards Reference)****Excellent (90%)****Laundry****Very Good**

Laundry equipment and presentation Very Good Laundry areas present very well in all units and offer very usable space for guests to dry outdoor clothing.

**Recreation****Excellent**

Recreation / leisure facilities Excellent Extremely spacious games room in Underley Grange with full size snooker table and other bar room entertainment offerings.

**Cleanliness (2 - Common Standards Reference)****Excellent (100%)****Living and dining areas****Excellent**

Living and dining areas

Excellent

All areas of properties demonstrates excellent levels of cleanliness perception with attention to detail, all rooms offer pristine cleanliness levels and should be commended.

**Bedroom****Excellent**

Bedrooms

Excellent

**Bathroom****Excellent**

Bath and shower rooms

Excellent

**Kitchen****Excellent**

Kitchen areas

Excellent

*Notes for Proprietors / Managers*

*The copy of our Visit Report provides information on our assessment of your accommodation and services. The form may be amended from time to time if we discover that this information can be presented in ways that are more helpful. When making quality assessments the assessor is assessing each aspect against the standards of excellence established by VisitBritain. Assessors are trained to ignore their own personal preferences and prejudices when making these assessments. This report is provided in confidence and its contents may not be displayed in any printed material or via electronic media, or indeed quoted verbally. This restriction also applies to any verbal comment made by the assessor at the time of the visit.*

**PLEASE NOTE**

*The observations in the Visit Report are intended to be helpful by drawing particular points to your attention. There is no implication that it was these aspects alone that influenced the overall assessment, or that, if they are acted upon, a higher overall grade would be necessarily achieved. Should a proprietor/manager disagree with the grade given, there is an Appeal Procedure, details of which are available from Quality in Tourism (QualityInTourism@GSLGlobal.com, Tel 0845 300 6996). A separate charge is made for an appeal assessment.*