



## **Welcome to Welsh Marches at Upper Glyn Farm**

We hope you have a wonderful stay with us.

Your hosts Chris and John Brooks have put together this information pack to help you get the most out of your stay. If there is anything you need to know that hasn't been covered then please ask. You may see John and Chris around the farm but if not, you can call the office number 01291 650761 or John's mobile 07850 758201 or send an email to [enquiries@welshmarches.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@welshmarches.co.uk)

### **The cottages**

We have three cottages on the farm, named after local hills which offer a variety of walks for all abilities. The Sugar Loaf is our three-bedroom cottage; Blorenge and Skirrid have one bedroom each. All rooms are provided with linen and towels.

All three cottages have windows which concertina open onto outside terraces from the lounge. Please be careful of your fingers when closing.

All our cottages are self-catering.

**Games:** You will find a selection of games in the laundry room: Chess and draughts; Snakes and ladders; Scrabble; Monopoly; Twister; Cluedo; Operation; Qi and a jigsaw.

You'll find an inventory of items and instructions on how to use equipment later in this pack.

### **Parking**

We have a dedicated car park for the cottages and parking is free. Please park your vehicle so that others can use the space to park their cars as well.

### **Electric Car Charging**

We are in the process of installing EV car charging points for the cottages. In the meantime, guests with electric cars are welcome to re-charge their batteries using our EV at the farmhouse. Please contact John on 07850 758201 if you would like to do this during your stay.

### **Fire safety**

In the event of fire leave the building immediately and raise the alarm.

The cottages are fitted with a sprinkler system. Only the sprinkler closest to the fire will activate and will spray water directly over the fire.

Each individual sprinkler will activate when it senses a significant heat change. They do not operate in response to smoke, burnt toast, cooking vapours, steam or an activated smoke alarm.

### **Telephone**

You may have difficulty getting a phone signal at Upper Glyn Farm. However, all the cottages have good wi-fi connections so you can use wi-fi calling to make and receive calls through your mobile. On arrival please link to the wifi using the cottage name you are staying in on the list of available networks.

## Television

You can watch your usual Freeview channels and Netflix on the wall mounted TV. Everything is accessed through the internet, so it is important the screen is connected.

### Turn on and tune in

When you first turn on the television using the red power button at the top of the remote control, you may see a message pop up on the screen which asks if you would like to scan for channels. If you are looking to access the channels and Netflix through wi-fi please select 'No' to continue.

### Checking for wi-fi

Next, select the blue button labelled 'APPS'.

In the top right-hand corner of your screen there should be a Wi-Fi symbol in white. If the Wi-Fi symbol is crossed out in red, then you will need to re-connect to the Wi-Fi.

To do this, select the 'MENU' button on your remote control. Next, using the arrows on your remote control, scroll over to the Settings tab on the far right and select it. A new set of options will appear. Now, scroll over to the Network tab and select it using the 'OK' button in the centre of the arrows. A black box on the right of your screen should appear. Now scroll down to highlight 'Wifi Config' and select this option. The black box should have now changed so that all you can see is 'Wifi Auto Search'; select this option. When you select it, the word 'Searching' will appear, please wait. Once it has completed searching, you should see a Wi-Fi spot which is called 'Blorange'; make sure this spot is highlighted and then select it by pressing 'OK'. A separate black box labelled 'Connected!' will appear once it is complete. Now just press 'Exit' on your remote control.

### Exploring apps

To view all the apps available to you, simply press the blue 'APPS' button. A series of tabs will appear on the bottom of the screen, all labelled with different apps that you have access to. You can scroll through these tabs by using the left and right arrows on your remote control. When you find one you would like to access, highlight the app you want, and press 'OK'. Once you have finished in an app, and would like to access a different one, you must first select the 'Exit' button on the remote control, and then select the 'APPS' button. Netflix, Freeview Play and YouTube have dedicated buttons on the remote; if you select either of those apps on the remote control, this will take you directly to the app no matter what else you may be doing on the television.

## Laundry Drying Room

There is a communal Laundry/Drying room situated on the left of the entrance to the yard. We'll provide details of the combination lock.

In there you will find:

- Washing machine
- Iron and Ironing board
- Tumble Dryer
- Boot rack
- Muddy/wets drying rail
- A doggy shower (or bike wash)
- Hand-held vacuum cleaner

We provide washing powder and there is an honesty box for use of the powder.

### **Bins and recycling:**

We are all trying to do our bit for the environment. Monmouthshire Council separates waste for recycling and we'd really appreciate your co-operation in disposing items in the right coloured sacks and bins provided. Please see separate sheet regarding recycling.

### **Food shopping**

We suggest you bring provisions with you but if you need to top up then there is a shop in Devauden village and an excellent farm shop at Newchurch. The nearest convenience store is the Spar in Chepstow.

The small village shop with local produce is a few minutes away. Turn left at the main road from the farm. It's open Mon - Fri 7.30am - 5pm; Saturday 9am - 4pm; Sunday 9am - 12pm

Look up Newchurch farm shop for opening times. They have excellent fruit and veg as well as butter, milk, some meat and cheeses and cakes.

The Spar, which is open early and closes late, is less than 10 minutes away by car. Follow the road to Chepstow, take the third turning at the roundabout outside Chepstow racecourse and the shop is on your right.

In Chepstow itself there is Marks and Spencer food hall behind the bus station; a large Tesco on the Lydney road and a Lidl in Bulwark.

### **Eating**

Chepstow has many choices: Most pubs such as Wetherspoons' "Bell Hangar" do food. "The Three Tuns" by Chepstow Castle is our favourite. They have live music, good beer and cider as well.

You can go Italian at the Stone Rock Pizza on Upper Church Street or the upmarket "Panevino" near the river.

Indian food at the Sitar Balti in Chepstow or we get take-aways from the "Indian Empire" at Crick where you can eat in as well. 15 minutes away.

Chinese at the Red Lantern in Bank Street (the one we use for take-aways) or Shangri-la restaurant

Greek food at Mythos is a late-night venue for a younger crowd.

Fish and chips from Kibby's in Bulwark is the one we use but there are others in Chepstow town.

In the nearby villages you can choose from the Carpenters Arms in Llanishen, The Lion in Trellech, The Clytha Arms near Raglan, The Ostrich at Newland in the Forest of Deam and The Fountain at Trellech Grange.

Further afield if you want gastropub food or better then check out the Walnut Tree near Abergavenny. The Walnut Tree has been a Michelin star attraction in Wales for 40 years.

### **Drinking**

It depends on what you like. If real ale and real pubs are for you then these are our favourites:

Chepstow: Three Tuns or Queens Head (very small micro pub and CAMRA award winner): ten minutes

Trellech Grange: The Fountain (good selection of real ales): ten minutes

Penallt: The Boat – a real favourite on the River Wye. You can get to it walking over a disused railway bridge from Redbrook. Quirky and full of character and characters. 30 minutes

Newland in the Forest of Dean: The Ostrich - love this pub with its flagstone floor and blazing fire. It is a lovely setting next to the Cathedral of the Forest. 35 minutes. For the intrepid you can walk there from the farm in 6 hours as we do every year via the Anchor, Brockweir inn and Boat. Epic!

Llanover: Goose and Cuckoo – hard to find but worth the search. Authentic old-fashioned pub towards Abergavenny and halfway up a mountain. Blissfully basic. 35 minutes

## **The Farm**

Upper Glyn Farm has 40 acres of land on either side of the Glyn valley and a stream at the bottom. We have a small number of sheep (females only) and lots of horses some of which are ours and others that belong to people who have livery here. They visit the farm daily to attend to their animals. They are a friendly bunch so please have a chat if you meet them.

We also have our own ducks and chickens as well as a cocker spaniel called Smudge; a black lurcher called Brudog and Smokey Joe, our cat.

You are welcome to walk around the farm but make sure gates are closed, unless already open, and please be aware of the animals. The sheep will move away from you, but the horses may come to say hello.

**Please don't feed the horses anything.** We are very happy to introduce you to our horses and you can even help us feed them if you wish.

Three of our fields are used for hay. During the growing period please keep to the edges.

From our top fields you have a view over the Severn Estuary.

## **Dogs**

We love dogs here and you are welcome to walk them around the farm. Please make sure your dog is on a lead or under tight control in any fields with animals. If you are unsure, please ask for advice. As you will learn there is plenty of space to walk them off a lead nearby.

Please be aware that horses and sheep will react to a free running dog so please take care when walking in their fields. Sheep will run away and be tempting for a dog to chase but the horses may run towards them and could become aggressive.

We have provided a doggy shower and would very much appreciate it if you could wash and dry your muddy pooch before letting them back into the cottages. Towels are provided.

The shower is situated in the laundry/drying room.

We like to maintain a very high standard of furnishing for our human visitors so request that our doggy visitors do not get on the furniture or go into the bedrooms.

We will have to make a charge if there is extra cleaning of furnishings due to dog hair or mucky paws!

Thank you for your cooperation. We hope you and your dog/s have a wonderful time.

## The immediate surrounding area

If you like a walk, run or cycle then you have chosen a great place to stay. As well as the farm you have options all around. We have provided some suggested routes which are laminated so you can take them with you. Please return when you have used them.

- If you travel down the lane outside the farm to the right, you will come to a footpath after 100m by our neighbours' house. Through this left turn you will enter Cefn Garw Wood where if you are lucky you may see deer and evidence of wild boar. You are free to walk here and let your dog off the lead. It is an area criss-crossed with paths.
- Alternatively, you can pick up the footpath that crosses our land from the lane to the right. Please be aware that a second stile further down the road is a private access into our neighbour's field and should not be used. The public footpath crossing our land takes you down and up the valley over several stiles to a converted chapel. Follow the track (ignoring a path to the left) until you reach a narrow tarmac lane. Turn right down a steep hill and follow the lane until you reach a crossroads. Turn right to walk down to your cottage. Around 2 miles with an uphill section through meadows.
- You also have Chepstow Park Woods on your doorstep: 750 acres of woods with paths and tracks and no roads. From the farm you can walk up the lane to your left up the hill. Right at the crossroads and then carefully! cross the busy main road to a footpath on the other side (to the left). Once in the woods you can go left on a level path or straight ahead up a short but steep incline to access the main tracks. Then explore. Take the laminated sheet and ordnance map provided or ask advice.
- Walk to Tintern: From Chepstow Park Woods you can cross the St Arvans Road and follow woodland paths down to Tintern Abbey on the banks of the River Wye which is the border between England and Wales. It takes about 2 hours. This historic monument is well worth a visit and there is a pub opposite called the Anchor. You can get food and a drink there or walk along the riverbank to the Wild Hare which does excellent food and drink. There is also a nice café on the corner.  
At the far end of Tintern is the Kingstone Brewery, a micro-brewery which makes and sells excellent ales, lager and cider as well as tasty pizzas and salads. Check opening times. They also hire mountain bikes and canoes.
- From Tintern you can walk over to England to explore Offas Dyke. The Devil's Pulpit has spectacular views back to the Abbey.

## Places to visit:

- Devauden village is where Methodist John Wesley preached his first sermon in Wales which sparked the chapel tradition which shaped the country. The event is commemorated in a bust and information panel on the village green.
- Monmouthshire is blessed with castles. Chepstow Castle was the first Norman castle built after 1066 and dominates the lower part of the old port on the edge of the River Wye.
- Chepstow itself is a fortified port with interesting buildings such as the gatehouse. Lower Chepstow has the feel of an ancient maritime hub and the walk along the riverbank, with its pubs and restaurants, is very pleasant. 10 minutes-drive away.
- There are other castles at Caldicot, Usk, Raglan, Abergavenny, Grosmont, Skenfrith and White Castle while further into Wales, Cardiff and Caerphilly Castles are impressive.
- The Cistercian abbey of Tintern is one of the greatest monastic ruins in Wales and is just 4 miles drive away from the farm. There is a wonderful carol service in the ruins in early

December. We love eating in the George Hotel and the village also has an old railway station to visit, vineyard and micro-brewery (Kingstone) where you can hire mountain bikes and canoes.

- Llanthony Abbey is a hidden gem set in a stunning setting in the Black Mountains and there is a very nice pub in the grounds. Highly recommended.
- Monmouth is the county town dripping with history. King Henry V was born here and Admiral Nelson and Rolls of Rolls Royce lived in the town. Visit the Monnow fortified bridge, Shire Hall, Kymin Hill, museum and an old-fashioned cinema. It's about 20 minutes away.
- Big Pit at Blaenavon was a coal mine and one of Britain's leading mining museums. (40 minutes) Go 300 feet underground with a real miner and see what life was like for the thousands of men who worked at the coal face.
- Bristol is 30 minutes away by car. It is a great maritime city with museums, theatres, cinemas, a vibrant music scene, clubs, pubs and restaurants. There are shopping malls at Cribbs Causeway and Broadmead.
- Cardiff is 40 minutes away by car or there is a direct train from Chepstow. The capital city is home to Welsh cultural, commercial, sporting and political life. At its heart is the Victorian Gothic fantasy that is Cardiff Castle. Nearby is the iconic Principality Stadium for Welsh rugby and concerts. The National Museum of Wales is also in the centre while the National Museum of Wales is on the outskirts in St Fagan. The transformed Cardiff Bay is a mecca for bars and eateries.

### **Things to do:**

#### **Walking:**

There are numerous walks from the farm. You can walk to the Fountain pub at Trellech Grange (1.5 hours); to the Anchor at Tintern (2 hours); the Brockweir Inn at Brockweir (2.5 hours); Boat at Penallt (5 hours); Ostrich at Newland (5.5 hours).

Within easy drive you have the Wye Valley area of outstanding natural beauty; Forest of Dean, Black Mountains and Brecon Beacons National Park.

There is a fantastic day walk, for example, from Chepstow on the Lower Wye valley walk to Tintern (2.5 hours) lunch at the Anchor, then cross the bridge to England and return to Chepstow along Offas Dyke with a stop at the Devil's Pulpit with its spectacular view of Tintern Abbey (2.5 miles back). Round off the trip with a drink and some food at the Three Tuns by Chepstow Castle. One of our favourite hikes locally.

Further afield we recommend walks up the Sugar Loaf, Skirrid and Blorengel.

If you are fit and up for a full-day hike we'd recommend the Three Castles walk or climb up to Pen-y-fan, the highest mountain in south Wales.

#### **Guided Walks**

Your hosts are very familiar with the area and are happy to give advice. John is a hill and moorland leader with 40 years-experience of walking and running in the Wye Valley, Brecon Beacons and Black Mountains.

## **Cycling**

The Wye Valley and Monmouthshire are very popular with road cyclists and there are often races in the area. There are cycling loops from the farm for every level of fitness.

Top attraction is the Tumble, 3 miles of harsh rising incline from Abergavenny towards Blaenavon and the first of the Welsh Valleys. The climb up the Blorenge is arduous and sustained but the views are stunning.

At 6km in length and with a 10% incline, the famous climb has featured in many an event over the years including the Tour of Britain and is an integral part of Velothon Wales each year.

Catch the Tour de Gwent in April starting in Caerleon.

## **Off road and mountain biking**

You are spoilt for choice. From the farm enter Chepstow Park Woods for a myriad of tracks and paths including a few specially created by locals. Our woods link into other woodlands either side of the Wye Valley and the Forest of Dean.

**Pedalbikeaway** is one of the UK's premier riding destinations near Coleford in the Forest of Dean. It is about 35 minutes from the Farm. Here you can introduce children to mountain biking, go for a family ride or tackle some of the steepest downhill runs. 11 miles of traffic free trails and they hire bikes.

You can hire a mountain bike at the **Wye Valley Experience** which is based at the Kingstone Brewery in Tintern.

The Black Mountains and Brecon Beacons have a variety of challenging ascents and exhilarating descents with long sweeping ridges in between.

## **Running**

As a former fell runner your host John can advise of many local runs from the farm or within an easy drive.

Chepstow Park Woods provides a network of tracks and paths ideal for off road running.

One of our favourite local runs is across the old Severn Bridge. There is a convenient start near Chepstow, then across the left-hand side to England and back on the other side with breath-taking views in both directions. Time it right and run back to the sunset in the West with the fading light bouncing off the River Severn. You can make it a 10k or a 10-mile loop.

## **Horses**

Chepstow Racecourse is less than ten minutes away by car. There are race meetings most months including the Welsh Grand National in January.

A nearby farm at Howick holds two Point-to-Point race meetings a year.

David Broome Equestrian Centre is at Crick 15 minutes away. Showjumper David Broome, a previous winner of the BBC's Sports personality of the year, holds show jumping and dressage competitions through the year.

There are also equestrian events held every year at Howick and Chepstow.

## **Golf**

The nearest golf is at St Pierre near Chepstow. It has two courses.

Celtic Manor near Newport is set in 2,000 acres of glorious parkland at the gateway to Wales, home of the 2010 Ryder Cup. It boasts three magnificent championship golf courses

## **Family Fun**

Just 15 min away Raglan Farm Park provides fun for all the family whatever the weather. Set in the beautiful rolling countryside of Monmouthshire, Raglan Farm Park has something for everyone. Whether you wish to spend time in the barns, with over 7 play zones for all ages, simply wander around the paddocks and feed the animals, try the zip wires or take a tractor ride.

## **Climbing**

The Wye Valley offers all styles of climbing across a wide range of grades (except the very highest) and is generally on limestone rock. Bouldering is found at Huntsham (conglomerate rock) though some of it is highball.

Symonds Yat, Shorn Cliff and Wyndcliff offer mainly single-pitch traditional routes on unquarried rock. Those at Symonds Yat tend to be shorter and steeper, whilst at Shorn Cliff and Wyndcliff the routes are longer, with many slabby routes. Wintour's Leap has everything from multi-pitch traditional routes across all grades including some sport routes (higher end grades).

Wyndcliff and Woodcroft Quarries provide shorter and lower-grade sport routes in the sun. Ban-y-Gor has been developed into the Wye's best sport climbing crag, with a wide range of grades.

## **Canoe and Kayaking**

Canoeing down the River Wye includes the rapids at Symonds Yat in the Forest of Dean which is a popular tourist destination about half an hour from the farm. The routes include a man-made Grade 2 Rapids.

You can hire Canadian canoe and kayak locally. Wye Valley Experience at Kingstone Brewery, Tintern hires mountain bikes as well. The route from Monmouth to Chepstow takes you down the spectacular lower Wye Valley. The route passes Redbrook (good place to stop for a pub lunch at the Boat Inn) and the picturesque Bigsweir Bridge and Tintern Abbey. After Brockweir the river is tidal. The route is 18 miles and takes most groups around 6 hours in a canoe or kayak.

## **Caving**

Something a bit different can be found at Clearwell Caves which is a working mining museum in the Forest of Dean, where you see caverns worked by iron miners over many centuries. (30 minutes). They also offer semi-caving experiences as an introduction to potholing.

## **Treat yourself and experience the deep relaxation and well-being of Shiatsu**

Shiatsu is a physical therapy that supports and strengthens the body's natural ability to heal and balance itself. It works on the whole person – not just the physical body, but also with the psychological, emotional, and spiritual aspects of being.

Shiatsu originated in Japan from traditional Chinese medicine. It means "finger pressure" in Japanese. In practice, a practitioner uses touch, comfortable pressure, and manipulative techniques to adjust



the body's physical structure and balance its energy flow. It can be a deeply relaxing experience and regular treatments can alleviate stress and illness and maintain health and well-being.

One of your hosts, John Brooks, is a registered practitioner and Fellow of the Shiatsu Society (FRSS) qualifying in 1999.

Please ask John if you wish to learn more and book a session. An Introductory session for guests costs £30 and lasts about an hour. The receiver remains clothed during the treatment.