

# Larach Sithe

**Postal Address** Larach Sithe  
Scallasaig  
Glenelg  
Ross-Shire  
IV40 8LA

## **Regarding Covid**

Things are different since Covid 19. Glenelg is a small discrete community and we would appreciate it if you would remember to apply the social distancing measures that have been recommended by the Scottish Government. The house will have been cleaned thoroughly since the previous guests departed but common sense must apply when using the contents. We would recommend that you use anti bacterial wipes before and after using any of the games, reading materials or other items which are available in the house for general use. We would also recommend using the dishwasher exclusively for cleaning crockery and utensils to ensure proper cleaning (you may wish to bring your own supply of dishwasher tablets).

We would ask that you depart the house by 10am on you last day and please remove all bedding and place in the utility room. This does **not** include mattress or pillow protectors.

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## **On arrival at the house:**

### **Keys:**

One key is provided which operates both the front and rear door locks; it can be found in the key safe at the front door. We would suggest you deposit the key there whenever you leave the house, so all guests in your group can use it.

The combination for your stay is 1302

### **Outdoor footwear:**

We would ask that outdoor shoes are not used inside the house. The floor is wooden and can be damaged and dirtied by outdoor foot wear and we would ask that you remove them at the door. There is a convenient porch just inside the front door for storing them and for hanging outdoor clothing. In particular boots and stiletto heels are likely to cause damage and cause the forfeit of your deposit!

### **Local contact and main key holder:**

In case of emergency you should contact Ruth MacAskill who lives at "Tigh-An-Uillt". This is one of the croft houses before the first gate and not the house in the field that you pass to reach Larach Sithe. To get there you must first go back through the field and exit the gate onto the road where the rubbish bins are situated. Turn to your right and Tigh-An-Uillt is the furthest away house in the row past the barns. She has a phone, spare keys and will be able to contact a local plumber or electrician if required. She has access to the house for laundry purposes so you may see her around the house or working in the garage where the laundry is located.

## **When leaving the house at the end of your stay:**

Departure is by 10.00am on day of departure.

It will help Ruth greatly if you could:

Strip all beds and leave used bedding in the utility room. Do **not** remove mattress protectors or pillow protectors unless soiled.

Leave the house as you would wish to find it.

Remember to take any food away with you and place all rubbish in the green bin.

Put recyclable goods in the blue bin. Details of what can be recycled are on this bin but please remember **no glass is to be put in the Blue Bin.**

Lastly put the keys back in the key safe at the front door.

## **About Larach Sithe:**

The house was built in 2000 by one of the crofters who works the surrounding land. My family bought the house in 2006 and substantial alterations were completed in 2010. The pews which have been installed around the outer walls of the sun-room came from the Beechgrove Church in Aberdeen. Margie's father, The Rev. Thomas Allsop, was one of the last ministers for this church before it was decommissioned in 2005.

The house is on a working croft and there are often sheep, cattle and horses in the fields surrounding the house. This is the reason why pets must be supervised at all times, and why the gate should be kept closed during your stay.

Information relating to certain appliances in the house can be found in a folder in the cupboard above the fridge.

## **Water Supply:**

Water is piped from a nearby stream - a supply that is shared with two neighbouring houses. It is filtered and has UV bacterial treatment but as it is not on the Local Authority Mains Water Supply its quality cannot be guaranteed. To avoid any risk, we would recommend that you drink only either bottled water, which can be bought locally or at the Co-op in Kyle, or that you use water taken from the water filtered by Reverse Osmosis which can be obtained (slowly) from the left hand lever of the kitchen tap. This filter requires high pressure to work and it will stop and then start to bleep if another tap is turned on or a toilet flushed. It will usually reset within a few minutes but if it fails to do so it can be switched off by unplugging it under the unit it sits in.

Chlorinated Mains Water is available from an external tap at the local village hall, and bottles can be refilled there if you wish.

## **Heating:**

On arrival, during the summer months, the heating will not be on. The house is well insulated and heat is retained efficiently, so the central heating is not usually required. It has been pre-set and can be switched to come on briefly during the morning and evening if you feel you need this. To make this alteration you will need to contact Ruth MacAskill.

## **Rubbish:**

Rubbish should be bagged and taken to the green "Wheelie Bin" which is tied to a post opposite the cattle grid which leads to the road through the field that runs to the house. If in doubt as to which is the correct bin to use, ask Ruth MacAskill. The bin is emptied every Wednesday.

The Blue bin is for recycling only. It does **not** take glass but does accept cardboard, plastics, tins and paper.

Additional bins for recycling bottles/glass are available at the entrance to the village football pitch just before The Glenelg Village Hall and also behind the garage at Shiel Bridge.

A **Compost Heap** is located behind the oil tank at the rear of the house.

## Cooker:

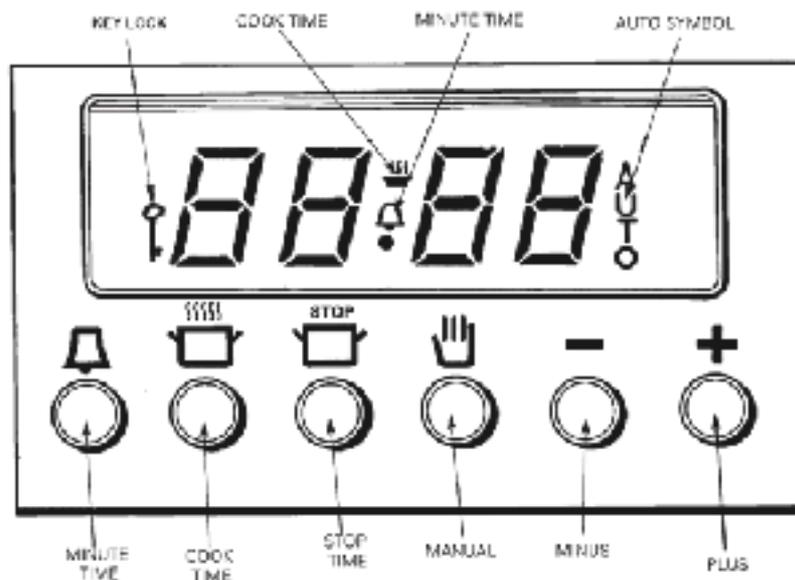
The cooker is a modern AGA with 6 gas burners, and electric grill, fan oven, conventional oven and plate warming ovens. To operate properly the clock on the front panel should be set. The cooker runs on cylinders of Propane gas, which are situated outside the kitchen window. From time to time cylinders have to be switched. When one empties please inform Ruth MacAskill so it can be exchanged for a replacement full bottle. At present not all automatic igniters work so a match may be necessary.

## Setting up the Cooker for use:

If the cooker has been switched off, the control panel will have to be reset. The writing has faded on the cooker so below I have copied a page from the instruction manual to make it easier to reset the panel. The cooker shows a 24 hour clock, and when the power supply is initially switched on, or after an interruption in supply, the clock will show AUTO and 0.00 alternately. If you see this you must reset the time of day:

Press and hold the MINUTE TIMER and COOK TIME buttons at the same time, (the word AUTO flashes and the 0.00 is displayed steadily) press the plus + or minus - buttons until the required time of day is displayed. The time will increase/decrease from 12.00 hours in minute intervals, slowly and then gaining speed. The cooker is now ready for manual use.

### (Key Lock - Cook Time - Minute Time - Auto Symbol)



### (Minute Time - Cook Time - Stop Time - Manual - Minus - Plus)

**Fridge:**

The fridge incorporates a substantial freezer with an automatic ice maker and water chiller. To maintain this supply you must keep the water tank in the right hand door filled with drinking water. If it empties a frustrating air lock can stop it from working properly. There is a small second fridge in the utility room.

**Coffee Machine:**

The filter coffee machine in the kitchen came from my brothers GP Surgery when he retired. It is simple to use: fill the rear reservoir with water, use one filter paper at a time (it is easy to use more than one as they stick together closely), use 6 heaped desert spoons of coffee per filling of water (to the top of the reservoir), switch on the bottom hot plate. Only use the second (upper) hot plate if you have more than one pot of coffee you want to keep warm. Do not put the plastic filter paper holder on to one of the hot plates as it will melt. Yes, I have done this...

**The kitchen Tap:**

The kitchen tap has a Reverse Osmosis water supply attached. The rotating left hand lever supplies a filtered water flow which is free of nearly all contaminants. The flow is poor (very slow) but the water is the purest available in the house and this is the water that we recommend for drinking. See further details under the heading "**Water Supply**" above.

**Washing Machine:**

There is a washing machine situated in the utility room, which you are welcome to use if necessary. There is a pulley for drying (also in the utility room) in addition to external drying lines at the rear of the house.

**Telephone:**

There is no telephone in the house and mobile phone coverage is limited in the area. Reception can be found at the War Memorial in the village.

**Internet:**

There is open internet access from a repeater located in the sunroom. The connection is from a local community based system and the supply is variable and as such we do not guarantee internet access. Having said that, it is usually perfectly acceptable for basic emails and simple downloads. If the Internet fails, it may be worth switching the repeater off and then on again as this usually resets it. The repeater plug is positioned under the Church pew closest to the kitchen. The network is named Daffodil and does not require a password.

## **Wood Burning Stove:**

The wood-burning stove is located in the sunroom but is not usually required in the summer months. It is **not** a model that can burn coal and if this is used it will damage it. We have found that firewood has been difficult to source and we do not guarantee to supply wood for the stove but there is usually a reasonable supply in the wood sheds at the rear of the house.

The stove controls are basic. The two circular vents on the front doors are theoretically to help in lighting the stove but we find that the stove operates best if they are left open i.e. turned fully clockwise. The main vent is located at the bottom right of the stove. It should be opened (slide to the left as you look at it) for lighting, and then adjusted to control the rate of burning. The stove should burn fairly hot and the fan on the top will turn once optimal temperature is reached - do not let the stove get too hot as this will damage it and the rate it burns at can be controlled by sliding the main vent control - to the right to reduce the flow of air and decrease the rate of burning.

Wood for the stove should be taken from the wood shed closest to the house as this is where the driest wood is stored.

## **Toilets and Waste Water:**

All our waste water is collected in a septic tank.

It is not designed for waste disposal and if solids build up in the tank it will eventually become obstructed.

In the kitchen, avoid washing food scraps, coffee grinds, and other food items down the drain. Grease and cooking oils contribute to the layer of scum in the tank and also should not be put down the drain.

The same common-sense approach used in the kitchen should be used in the bathroom. Do not flush plastics, paper towels, facial tissues, tampons, sanitary towels, cigarette ends, dental floss, disposable nappies, condoms, etc. The only things that should be flushed down the toilet are waste-water and toilet paper.

Bleach, disinfectants, and drain and toilet bowl cleaners should also not be used. Vegetable waste should be placed in the compost bin situated behind the oil tank.

## **Paths around the house:**

A reminder that this is a moist part of the world and that the paths around the house tend to get covered by vegetation and can be slippery. In particular, the paving slabs which circle the house need care in wet weather and the steps up to the Sun Room door need particular care.

## **Midges:**

You may already know about Scotland's West Coast Midges. If not, you may be in for a surprise. On warm still summer days they can swarm around the house as they wait for you to exit. In the evenings they are attracted to any light and will enter the house through any open window. This can be a problem if the house gets too warm and you are faced with the dilemma; strip down to underwear or risk opening a window and wandering around in the dark...

## What to do if...

### **There is a leak/burst pipe.**

Shut off water supply immediately. The stop tap is in the corner below the window in the garage. Ruth has the key for the garage. There is another external stop cock in the grass in front of the garage. Barney MacAskill in the house nearest has a stop key for this.

### **You have evidence of mice.**

Catch and remove all mice. There are traps in the garage and you can purchase others at the village shop. If in doubt ask Ruth. She is an expert mouse catcher.

## Useful numbers

Ruth MacAskill (key holder) 01599 522 364

Glenelg Shop 01599 522 221

The shop is small but excellent. The owners are friendly and will try to get anything that you need within reason if you give them time.

Glenelg Inn 01599 522 273

Highly recommended.

2.9 miles from the house.

Food is good but expensive. The Bar is quaint, interesting and usually good fun, however it is not always open or particularly warm in the winter months.

Doctor 01599 522 272

### Other Shops

CO-OP supermarket in Kyle

Pharmacy in Kyle

9-1-4 Outdoor Clothing & Equipment shop situated at Ardelve by Dornie (on way to Kyle past Eilan Donan Castle and over bridge).

### Nearest

Police Station, Kyle.

Petrol at Shiel Bridge, but it is cheaper at Inverinate on the road to Kyle. The best price is actually at the COOP in Broadford where it is subsidised by the Government.

Mobile bank (Royal Bank of Scotland) in Glenelg from 14.00-15.00 approx every Thursday, outside shop. Best to check that this still applies before you go looking for it as times and availability do change.

Cash machine (ATM) in shop, but does charge £1.85 per transaction.

Play Park There is a small children's play park between the Ferry turn off and the village.

Horse Riding Shiel Bridge 01599 511 282

07500962294

Ratagan 01599 511 365

### **Glenelg and Kylerhea Ferry:**

The shortest and most picturesque crossing to Skye 1 5 miles west of Glenelg village. The ferry runs from Easter to October, but times of operation are variable.

## **Plants in the Garden**

### **Front Garden**

Rowan

*Sorbus hyb. Fastigiata*. A hardy tree with dark oval leaves, white flowers in spring and bunches of scarlet fruit in autumn. A traditional tree to have in a Scottish garden as it deters witches. This one should grow to 4m. after 10 years. Check it in 2022.

Copper Beech

*Fagus sylvatica Purpurea*

Antarctic Beech

*Nothofagus antarctica* typically grows 10–25 m (32–80 ft) tall and has a slender trunk with scaly bark. The leaves are simple and alternate, growing 2–4.5 cm long, and often viscid, with a sweetly scented wax. The leaf color is medium green, turning yellow to orange in the fall. The leaves are broadly ovate to triangular, crinkly, rounded at the tips, irregularly and minutely toothed. The flowers are inconspicuous yellow-green catkins. The fruit is a 6 mm, very fragrant 4-valved capsule containing three small nuts.

Red Hawthorn

*Crataegus laevigata Rosea*

Pauls Scarlet. A small round headed tree with double red flowers and red haws in autumn. Should grow to 4m high by 3m wide.

Ash

Flowering Cherry

A sapling pinched from my father's garden in Bo'ness.

Contorted Hazel

### **Rear Garden**

Mixed planting of Red Alder, Silver Birch, Scots Pine & Spruce

Plum tree

*Prunus domestica* "Victoria" on dwarf rootstock "Pixie"

Rowan

Ginko Bilboa

Horse Chestnut

Originally a Bonsai tree which my mother tended for many years. Liberated by my sister who hates to see stunted growth.

## The Sauna.

For those that have expressed an interest:

Barney MacAskill - (one of our close neighbours) is primed to show you the sauna. Simply knock on his door and ask him to show you it. If you decide you would like to use it, he will unlock it, demonstrate it's use and take payment. Here are a few considerations:

It is actually a steam sauna which runs at a lower temperature (60°C) than an ordinary sauna (90°C+) The main difference, however, is that this sauna operates at about 50% humidity as well, so that although it feels extremely hot it is in theory, a gentler type of heat.

It takes about an hour to heat up the Sauna after it is switched on and it is best to keep the water tank about half full for the sauna to work properly. If you overfill the tank, water will spill on to the floor and can cause problems so try to avoid this. The tank is obvious at the rear of the heater and you will have to fill it yourself daily - you can see the level of the water in the top. The two small reservoirs at the front of the heater are for aromatic oils. The reservoirs should be filled with water and a few drops of oil dripped in. Please supply your own choice of oils.

The control panel can be a bit daunting but is (eventually) pretty intuitive. You have to hold (for several seconds) the home and the return icons to switch it on. After you have all finished, if you leave the sauna to it's own devices, it will eventually switch itself off, but you can switch it off yourself to show an SSS icon - this means it is about to go through the shutting down cycle.

Common sense rules apply when using the sauna and anyone using it does so at their own risk. It should not be used by people with medical problems or by minors unless under supervision of an adult. Be careful inside the sauna and do not take anything glass or breakable in to it.

Enjoy.