

This access statement does not contain personal opinions as to our suitability for those with access needs, but aims to accurately describe the facilities and services that we offer all our guests/visitors.

## **Access Statement for Sowerberry**

### **Introduction**

Sowerberry is one of three holiday cottages located in a secluded corner of Alston, a charming historic little town in the heart of the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Alston is built on a hill so nowhere in the town is totally flat but the approach to the cottages is on a gradual slope. The centre of the town is a steep cobbled hill and the approach to our cottages is via narrow streets surfaced with pavements.

Sowerberry is one of our two new-build cottages. Nearly ten years ago the site was used during the filming of Oliver Twist, being the site where he was introduced to Sowerberry, the undertaker. At that time the site was just a piece of waste land, but Sowerberry now stands here, constructed on old foundations, possibly of Mediaeval origin, discovered during the building project. This house is an “upside-down” house: The bedrooms which are on the ground floor are traditionally furnished. An open staircase leads from the hall to the totally open plan, spacious living area upstairs. Here you will find a stylish well equipped kitchen, modern dining area, and a living room with French windows leading out onto a pleasant balcony with views towards the churchyard and the nearby fells....just the place for a relaxing holiday

Our cottages are located in a secluded corner of Alston and our visitors appreciate the peace and quiet and the lovely country walks you can do from the cottages but at the same time like having all the convenience of shops and places to eat within 5 minutes walk of our cottages.

We look forward to welcoming you. If you have any queries or require any assistance please phone 01434 382975 or email [enquiries@holidaycottagesalston.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@holidaycottagesalston.co.uk).

## **Pre-Arrival**

- When you book one of our cottages you will be sent directions of how to find us.
- You can also look on our website <http://www.holidaycottagesalston.co.uk/location.php> where there is a link to a Google map.
- The nearest railway station is in Penrith, approximately 20 miles away.
- If you require an accessible taxi, or information about bus services, we suggest you contact our "Local Links" Information Centre Tel: 01434 382444
- We may be able to collect you if you are arriving at a station or airport but there is a local taxi service run by Richard Bainbridge, tel: 01434 381386
- The centre of the town is a steep cobbled hill and the approach to our cottages is via narrow streets surfaced with pavements.
- It is possible to hire a shopmobility power assisted wheelchair from the "Local Links" Information Centre situated in the Town Hall.
- We can organise shopping to be delivered if required.

## **Key Collection, Welcome and Car Parking**

- The three holiday cottages are part of a development of four architect designed cottages which blend together old and new development. The owners live in one of the cottages (called "Pigeons" and with Visit Britain and reception sign at entrance) and they will normally be on hand to welcome visitors and give them a familiarisation tour of the cottages , give them the key and help them to get parked if they need any assistance.
- If the owners are not available they will try and organise another person to provide a welcome service. Very occasionally this may not be possible in which case the alternative arrangements will be clearly given with contact telephone nos. for key collection and a welcome note will hopefully provide the guest with essential information.
- One parking space per cottage is available and due to the topography of the site the parking space for Millstream is on a slope with a flagged surface, and a step down on the

driver's side. There is a gentle slope upwards to the cottage with approx. 4m of pavements to cross to get to the front door.

### **Entrance to Property**

- Entrance to Sowerberry is gained via a step of 90mm (3.5 inches) and threshold of 40mm (1.5 inches) and through the door which has a clear opening of 745mm (29.3 inches).
- There is an external light over the door and a pendant light in the Entrance Lobby. There is a level Hallway with doors leading to the Bathroom, Two bedrooms and stairs to first floor. There is a matwell with an integral doormat and a separate 5mm thick woven doormat with non slip backing.

### **Halls, Stairs, Landings, Passageways**

- The Entrance Lobby leads into the Hallway, which has a ceramic tiled floor. with no rugs in situ.
- The staircase has semi open treads and is stained to match the oak furniture in the bedrooms.
- There are twelve steps from the Hallway to the first floor, the staircase is a 'dogleg' staircase with three 'kitewinders' at each corner.
- The clear width of the staircase at its narrowest point is 760mm (30 inches)

### **Sitting Room/Lounge**

- The Living Room / Dining Area and Kitchen are all situated on the first floor level and form a continuous complementary open plan format.
- The Living Room furniture includes a two person sofa and a three person sofa at right angles around the coffee table. There are two rattan armchairs and an 'ottoman'. There are three pendant lights and a standard lamp. The natural wood floor is complemented by a deep pile rug under the coffee table and off white walls.
- Patio doors to balcony.

### **Dining Room**

- The Dining Room is situated between the open plan Living Room and the Kitchen.
- Wooden banisters separate this area from the stairwell.

- There is space around the dining table for a wheelchair, however the wheelchair would have to be carried upstairs.
- There are two pendant lights above the dining table. There are six upright dining chairs without arms

### **Kitchen**

- The open plan Kitchen is accessible from the Dining Area and the top of the stairwell, without obstacle.
- The worktops are 940mm (37 inches) above floor level.
- The oven hob is 950mm high (37.4 inches), the bottom of the oven is 200mm (7.8 inches) and the top of the oven is 560mm (22 inches) above floor level.
- There is a microwave at 940mm (37 inches) high, sitting on top of the worktop.
- There is a fridge with highest shelf at a maximum height of 710mm (27.9 inches)(adjustable to 560mm (22 inches)) and the lowest drawer at 300mm (11.8 inches).
- The freezer has drawers, the highest handle height being 715mm (28.1 inches), the lowest 380mm (14.9 inches).

### **Bedrooms and Sleeping Areas**

- There are two ground floor bedrooms at this cottage.
- Bedroom One has a King size bed accessed via a clear door opening of 725mm (28.5 inches) The maximum space next to the bed is 1162mm (45.7 inches) if the bed is moved to one side. The height from floor to top of mattress is 670mm (26.3 inches). The clear space under the bed is 390mm (15.3 inches).
- Lighting - there are ceiling spots over the bedhead and dressing table and bedside lamps on the dressing tables and two pendant lights at then centre of the room.
- The walls are painted a pale pink contrasting with a natural light oakm wood floor. There are two rugs on either side of the bed. There is a wardrobe with hanging space at two levels (not adjustable), also drawers and a cupboard
- Bedroom Two has a double bed and a single bed, accessed through a clear door opening of 725mm (28.5 inches). There is a space of 1220mm (48 inches) beside the single bed and constricted space at the side of the double bed.

- The height to the top of the single bed mattress is 610mm (24 inches)) and there is a clear space of 320mm (12.6 inches) under the bed.

### **Bathrooms, Shower-rooms and Toilets**

- There is level access from both bedrooms to the Bathroom.
- There is an over bath shower.
- The height of the wc from the floor to the seat is 430mm (16.9 inches)
- The washbasin is 820mm (32.3 inches) high. There is a clear space of approx. 330mm (12.9 inches) deep from edge of basin apart from outlet pipe.
- The bath and basin both have lever taps.
- There are no grab rails in the Bathroom.
- The Bathroom is very well lit with three ceiling spotlights and two fluorescent shaving lights over the mirror.
- The floor is finished in dusky pink ceramic floor tiles. There are travertine limestone panels to the bath and windowsill with matching porcelain wall tiles and off white / dusky pink painted walls. Skirting boards and door frames are dark stained oak and door is grey / blue.

### **Garden**

- There is a private patio area to the rear of the property, accessed via a level paved path. The decked patio overlooks decorative potted plants and troughs and has space for a folding wooden table and garden chairs and matching parasol.

### **Additional Information**

- Dogs are not permitted at this cottage.
- There is a minor injuries unit at Alston Cottage Hospital. Telephone 01434 381214
- Internet access is available at the local Information Centre
- Other local places of interest are a ceramics gallery, cane workshop, Just Glass and other specialist shops, The Hub, local transport museum, South Tyne Railway and Killhope North of England lead Mining Centre

## **Future Plans**

- We are planning to improve our website, so any comments on accessibility will be welcome

## **Contact Information**

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Telephone: 01434 382975

Email: [enquiries@holidaycottagesalston.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@holidaycottagesalston.co.uk)

Website: [www.holidaycottagesalston.co.uk](http://www.holidaycottagesalston.co.uk) or  
[www.artapartments.co.uk](http://www.artapartments.co.uk) (links to same  
website)

Hours Of Operation: 10am - 8pm but 24 hour for emergencies

Local Equipment Hire: 01434 382444