

## **Buying a Holiday Lodge at High Lodge Leisure Limited**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **Buying and Selling**

##### **Is buying a leisure lodge a good investment, what will the resale value be?**

While providing you with somewhere to escape to when you wish, the purchase of a leisure lodge can also represent a sound financial investment, particularly if you are happy to sublet your lodge for others to holiday in it when you are not using it. Many parks welcome and even manage the rental arrangements for their lodge owners and some even operate schemes where they guarantee the minimum income, subject of course to the agreed availability of the lodge for rental.

As with any home, the resale value will be dependent on a combination of the state of the property and the desirability of its location.

Lodge values tend to closely follow the trend of the conventional property market increasing in value in the same way as a well-kept conventional second home. The area, location specific plot and the quality and design of the lodge all contribute to this equation in exactly the same way as conventional property, but additionally the remaining number of years under the licence to keep the lodge on the park will be an important factor in exactly the same way as leasehold property.

There are many reasons to choose to invest in a leisure lodge however for the majority of people it is the contribution owning a lodge can make to a quality lifestyle that cements the decision.

Buying a leisure lodge gives you the opportunity to take regular, luxurious breaks in a location of your choice with the people of your choice.

##### **What is the first thing I need to check about the holiday lodge park?**

If you choose to buy a lodge on a leisure park we always recommend that you buy a home on a licensed holiday park.

When buying a lodge on a licensed holiday park, the owner of the development has to ensure the operation of the park follows the detailed conditions laid down in the license.

If you site a leisure lodge on a park or plot of land that is not licensed or does not have local authority consent, you could be forced to leave or remove the lodge.

It is in your own interests, and to safeguard the value of your lodge investment, to ensure that your chosen park has an appropriate local authority license for holiday use.

The license should be on display and clearly state the opening times of the park. Many holiday parks open for 10, 11 or even 12 months of the year, but some do have set seasons from March through to October.

### **How does the buying process differ from buying a traditional bricks and mortar property?**

The legalities of acquiring your leisure lodge are not complex and you do not need to employ a solicitor to handle the formalities, unless you want to for peace of mind.

A Code of Practice for Selling and Siting Holiday Homes is also available and provides all the information that helps both you and the leisure park operator understand the law relating to buying and owning a leisure lodge.

Developed by industry trade associations, the Code of Practice recognises that both the holiday home owner and park owner share a common aim - a well-run holiday park where the benefits of a leisure lodge can be enjoyed and the purchase of a holiday home is secure for the future.

Once you have chosen your leisure lodge and plot you will have to sign a written agreement with the leisure park operator. The written agreement is a legal contract between you and the park owner.

The written agreement should specify your fundamental rights, including minimum length of tenure and the right to re-sell to a third party.

### **How would I resell my lodge if I needed to?**

You are entitled to sell your leisure lodge either privately, through an estate agent or to the park owner.

Before you sell your leisure lodge and assign your agreement you must notify the park owner of your intention and the price required. You must also keep the park owner informed of all negotiations as they must give their consent to any prospective purchaser of a lodge. However, consent cannot be unreasonably withheld.

In order to ensure the ongoing maintenance of the park, and to keep pitch fees as low as possible, the park owner is entitled to a transfer fee of up to 15% of the purchase price of your lodge when the agreement is re-assigned to a new purchaser. Many parks however charge a smaller transfer fee than this maximum and you should establish their policy at the time of purchase.

This is due to the fact that the amenities and the location of the park contribute to the resale value. This commission also ensures the park remains a viable investment for both the park owner and their residents.

### **What are the costs involved in the buying and selling of a leisure lodge?**

If you are buying a lodge on a park rather than on your own land you will actually purchase your home from the park operator, not directly from the lodge

manufacturer. The retail price of your home can be substantially more than the manufacturer's ex works price. The actual cost will be dependent on the quality and geographical location of the park, the size and location of the plot and the costs of transportation and installation on site.

When buying a new leisure lodge you will not need to enlist the services of an estate agent, nor is it necessary to take legal advice as the contract is standardised within a written agreement and defines the rights and obligations of both the park operator and the leisure lodge owner.

Costs that you should consider when purchasing a home are:

- Solicitors fees should you choose to take legal advice before signing the written agreement
- Paying for a survey if you are purchasing an older, used lodge

Costs that you should consider when selling a lodge are:

- A transfer fee of up to 15% of the purchase price of your lodge is payable to the park owner on sale of your property. This is due to the fact that the amenities and location of the park contribute to the resale value. This commission also ensures the park remains a viable investment for both the park owner and their residents.
- Fees payable should you use an estate agent to sell your leisure lodge through

You should also consider the following ongoing living costs:

- You will need to pay a weekly, monthly or annual pitch fee to rent the land on which your home is sited
- Utility bills

### **Are mortgages or loans available for the purchase of leisure lodges?**

If you are unable to fund the purchase of your luxury holiday lodge completely, specialist finance companies can offer loans specifically for the purchase of leisure lodges in the UK.

Leisure lodge loans are available as both fixed rate and variable rate schemes with repayment periods of up to 15 years.

### **What is the significance of a licensed park and how do I know whether a particular park is licensed?**

Buying a leisure lodge on a licensed park, gives you reassurance that the operation of the park follows the detailed conditions laid down by the local authority for holiday use.

A license for holiday use ensures the development meets necessary guidelines in regards to park maintenance, health and safety, capacity restrictions, supply of utilities etc.

To find out whether a particular park is licensed, it is best to contact the relevant local authority.

### **Are lodges always sold with all the furniture and soft furnishings?**

All of our leisure lodges include furniture and soft furnishings as standard, although you can deduct these should you wish to use your existing furniture or source specific items yourself.

Omar Homes lodge interiors are designed to the highest specification and can be chosen to suit your personal tastes.

### **Owning and running a leisure lodge**

#### **How are costs from the utility companies dealt with?**

When buying a leisure lodge you will have to budget for an annual pitch fee.

The relevant park operator will be able to clarify what is included within the annual pitch fee, however, you may be charged for some additional services including gas, oil, electricity, water and sewage.

#### **Are the provisions for building and contents insurance identical to bricks and mortar?**

You will have invested a lot into your leisure lodge and it is important that you insure your property as you would with a traditional bricks and mortar home. There are specialist companies who offer insurance specifically for leisure lodges and we can help point you in the direction of those insurance companies who understand your property.

It is important to note that the cover provided for holiday homes is not the same as that for residential park homes when it comes to providing 'alternative accommodation.'

For holiday homes, the insurance cover reflects the fact that the customer's permanent home is not the park. The cover does not extend to providing temporary re-housing in the event of damage to the holiday home.

#### **Are lodges subject to council tax?**

You do not have to pay council tax for a leisure lodge. However, the accommodation is subject to business rates, which are covered within the annual pitch fee.

#### **Can I have guests, friends and family to stay?**

Guests, friends and family are welcome to stay at your leisure lodge; however, each park will have its own guidelines about allowing visitors onto the site.

In most circumstances it is best to liaise with the park owners as regards any restrictions that may be placed on visitors.

### **Can I give friends the use of my lodge when I am not there?**

If you have given permission, then more often than not friends can use your leisure lodge. However, each park will have its own guidelines on allowing visitors onto the site.

In each case we would recommend you speak with the park operator regards the accepted use of your leisure lodge.

### **Can I sublet my lodge?**

While some parks prohibit the sublet of a leisure lodge, others encourage it, and in some cases even handle the business on your behalf for a fee.

If you are keen to sublet your holiday home, discuss the option during the purchase process.

### **Holiday lodge park lifestyle**

#### **What ongoing expenses are associated with park living and how do they work?**

To cover the upkeep and maintenance of the park's shared amenities and facilities operators charge an annual pitch fee.

Pitch fees vary up and down the country depending on the location of the park, the size and position of the designated plot within the park and the facilities offered on-site.

#### **What legislative protection do leisure lodge owners have?**

Leisure lodge owners have legislative protection under the Code of Practice for Selling and Siting Holiday Caravans, which sets out industry-approved 'minimum standards' for the services provided by park owners for the sale of lodges.

#### **What kind of people buy a leisure lodge?**

Leisure lodges are becoming increasingly popular as a home from home, a place to escape to for a weekend, a two week holiday or longer.

People from all walks of life enjoy the leisure lodge lifestyle, from families, young couples or grandparents who want a base to enjoy with grandchildren, to those wishing to ease themselves into enjoying retirement.

### **Technical**

### **What is the difference between a lodge and a caravan?**

An Omar Homes leisure lodge is very different from a caravan, as it is built to a residential park home standard and therefore suitable for comfortable year round use.

A leisure lodge offers you the home comforts you would expect from a bricks and mortar home such as central heating, double glazed windows and facilities for telephone lines and cable TV.

Purchasing an Omar Homes leisure lodge means investing in a striking combination of high build quality, highly specified fixtures and fittings, Aspirational designs and a personal level of customer service. Omar Homes experienced team of designers uses their skills and creative eye to take full advantage of every square foot, creating an inspiring living space.

### **How energy efficient are lodges?**

Particular attention is paid to achieving a high level of insulation in all Omar Homes lodges for sale– often with each model having an equal or superior value to cavity wall buildings. This keeps heat loss from the lodge and future energy bills to a minimum.

Omar Homes is pleased to work to specific requirements for super-insulating if required. We can also incorporate renewable solutions such as solar water heating and triple glazing to attain even higher environmental standards than those which new bricks and mortar properties are currently being built to.

### **What guarantees do leisure lodges come with?**

All new Omar Homes leisure lodges are covered by the Gold Shield 10 years warranty scheme so as long as the park has registered as a Gold Shield park. This is a useful point to check when selecting your park. Purchasing a Gold Shield lodge means you are covered for the cost of remedial work that may be required in the unlikely event of an inherent defect in the load bearing structure of your new leisure lodge – over a ten year period from the date the lodge was first purchased. In addition, in the first year, you are covered for defects in components or substandard workmanship.

Omar Homes will also pass on all manufacturers' guarantees on bought in furniture, fittings and appliances. We have also successfully negotiated higher periods of guarantee than those available in the high street on some of our purchased appliances.

All guarantees, operating instructions and maintenance requirements are clearly presented in our home owner pack which is provided to the new lodge owner and which also contains all useful contacts regarding warranties.

### **What maintenance is required?**

One of the overwhelming benefits of purchasing a leisure lodge is that unlike traditional properties, little maintenance is required.

Leisure lodges are designed for easy maintenance. The careful choice of modern materials, intelligent design and construction techniques, combined with the single storey layout, means owners are unlikely to be faced with sudden high repair bills to their lodge that are a common feature of bricks and mortar properties.

### **How do I go about replacing things when they do eventually wear out?**

Most components and appliances in your leisure lodge are standard items that can be easily replaced and which are readily available in the local high street and DIY stores. As part of our commitment to ongoing customer service Omar Homes will also help to source any replacements required if necessary.

### **How is a lodge constructed?**

A leisure lodge is essentially a well insulated timber structure built on a steel framed floor.

Today's leisure lodges from Omar Homes are all built in compliance with British Standard 3632 and incorporate many of the same materials as bricks and mortar properties e.g. upvc windows and doors, timber studwork, wall and floor boarding and high performance, dense insulation.

Omar Homes lodges are constructed under carefully controlled workshop conditions, before being thoroughly checked and transported to the holiday park. We work closely with you and your chosen park to ensure the process runs smoothly.

Once at the park the lodge is sited on a concrete base before being connected to all mains services. If you have chosen a furnished lodge, all furnishings will be put in place for you as specified. All you have to do is move in.

### **How long are lodges designed to last?**

Many lodges, properly maintained, will last approximately 50 years. With a focus on longevity and using the latest modern technology Omar Homes properties are designed to last with the right care and attention..

With a new lodge little maintenance is required in its first 10 years, unless the exterior cladding requires more frequent coating or staining.

Older leisure lodges will require more maintenance. We would recommend that anyone purchasing an older lodge, especially one more than 10 years old has a full survey of the property carried out before buying it.

### **What external finishes are lodges available in?**

With a Omar Homes leisure lodge there is a wide variety of attractive and low maintenance exterior claddings to choose from. These range from untreated natural



timbers like cedar and larch which require no maintenance regime, through to proprietary systems like Cape Cod, canexel weather boarding and the traditional timber log lap.

### **Can I see how the homes are made in the factory?**

We gladly offer customers the opportunity to see where their lodge is manufactured and welcome visitors by appointment to our factory in Brandon, Suffolk .

### **What is the heating system?**

Omar Homes leisure lodges are manufactured complete with a condenser combi boiler heating system.

Our lodges can incorporate our wood burning fires, under floor heating and solar enhanced water heating systems.

### **Who do I contact if I have any technical questions?**

If you have any technical questions regarding your holiday lodge, please do call or email us and we will be happy to address your enquiry:

227 London Road, Brandon, Suffolk, IP27 0NE

Tel: 01842 810673

Fax: 01842 814328

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