

Travel – eco retreat on Royal Deeside

SIX MORE BOTHIES TO OPEN IN SPRING 2022

Following a bumper year for staycations, during which the business picked up an Enterprise Award – Cairngorm Bothies expands.

Following a bumper staycation season where getting “back to nature” was at the fore for many holidaymakers, a green tourism brand based deep in the heart of ancient woodland in the Cairngorm National Park, has announced that it’s bringing more of its unique self catering bothies to the marketplace.



Cairngorm Bothies, deep in the Blelack Woods, debuted six “off road and off grid” woodland bothies in the summer of 2020, after which it added another six to the portfolio in 2021.

This innovative “off grid” holiday park may well have been the very first of its kind in Scotland.

Using a local Aboyne based Architect, together with an Aboyne based builder, and a Scottish manufacturer based in Dumbarton, Cairngorm Bothies will create another six Bothies, making up its portfolio to twelve in 2022. It then hopes to debut another six in 2023.

The business, run by Dr Gordon Drummond, who recently picked up an Unlocking Ambition Entrepreneurial Award from Scottish Enterprise, also has a sister company called Cairngorm Lodges. Offering five, individual, architecturally designed timber lodges for let in more accessible parts of the forest, staying in a Cairngorm lodge still means that holidaymakers can holiday with a lower carbon footprint. Cairngorm Lodges feature organic fair-trade bed linen and towels, low energy lightbulbs, and green household products. Heating in the properties, which includes Red Squirrel Lodge, Capercaillie Lodge, which overlooks a lochan, and Woodcutter Cabin, is achieved with radiators powered by wood burning stoves.



The Cairngorm Bothies experience is even more “off grid”, with the properties set deeper into the woodland with no wifi connection, so that holidaymakers can really switch off from the everyday world. Solar panels generate power, with the stored energy driving a water pump to purify water. Wood burning stoves, supplied with logs from the estate, perform a multitude of tasks, from heating the main living areas, to heating a water circuit for towel rails, providing hot water for washing, and powering a cooking range, complete with oven.



“We are delighted to be expanding the Bothy Park again and will open our next six for April 2022, with work being carried out over the winter, weather permitting. As they are deep in the forest, we have to transport all the materials to the site, but as we are using a local builder, he knows the area well,” said Gordon Drummond.

“Those who have stayed in the Bothies over the past two seasons have said what a special experience it was, giving them a flavour of the considerations of sustainable living, integrated into nature, whilst in the spectacular setting of an ancient woodland.”

“They are for those who want to enjoy and experience a remote setting. We deliberately site them as far from tie in points to existing infrastructure, such as phone, water and electric.”

“You can explore and roam within the mature woodlands on what

is an historic Scottish Highland estate, but please respect your surroundings” added Gordon “Needless to say, both the Bothies and Lodges are dog friendly.”

“I will be delighted if we end up with eighteen Bothies in total by 2023, as that is a good sized development which has grown year on year, subject to demand,” said Gordon.

Having been selected as one of a number of innovative “green” businesses from all over Scotland to win the Unlocking Ambition prize, Gordon has received a cash grant, and is benefiting from specialist mentoring over the next eight months, to help him achieve further growth in the marketplace.

“I feel I will really benefit from the specialist mentoring which taps into some really skilled and collaborative sources,” said Gordon. “I’m also looking at new income streams for the business, specifically a new facility in which to host weddings and corporate team building events which I also hope will come on stream in 2022. We want to cater for both domestic and corporate customers, but we’ll also remain unique and independent, certainly not like a chain resort in any way.”

“Staycations will remain strong for the next few years I think, and we continue to benefit from contracting out our reservations department to The Accommodation Trading Company,” said Gordon. This specialist firm works with all types of Hospitality Businesses to run dedicated reservations departments, organise corporate restructuring, and provide other services to boost efficiency and turnover.

“Accommodation Services handle all bookings, including marketing & promoting the Lodges and Bothies. It’s freed up valuable time to be spent on other tasks, such as focusing on the supplementary offerings such as the wedding venue and corporate events centre.”

“I know that I can add these additional Bothies and Accommodation Services will have them booked out for me in no time, at no effort to myself.”

For further details on Cairngorm Lodges & Bothies, please check

out www.cairngormlodges.com and www.cairngormbothies.com.

Call 01339 289103, and email bookings@cairngormlodges.com for booking enquiries.

Further details on The Accommodation Services Trading Company at www.astc.business

Details on the Unlocking Ambition initiative at <https://www.unlockingambition.scot>

