

# Hazards and Warnings

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## Indoors

**Children must always be accompanied and supervised.**

### Kettle boiling water tap

- One of the taps at the kitchen sink dispenses **boiling water**. Use this carefully. Do NOT test the temperature of the water with your finger! Assume that it is boiling water.
- To operate this tap to obtain boiling water, pull off the red plastic safety cap (if fitted), press the button on top of the handle, and turn tap ‘backwards’ i.e. turn it such that the knob on top moves towards the wall. Replace the red safety cap after use.
- If you are uncomfortable with the presence of a boiling water tap, e.g. if members of your party may not understand the danger, **it can easily be disabled by turning off its electric power**. It is plugged into a socket in the corner cupboard to the right of the sink.

### Trips and falls

- If there is **loose flooring** which has not yet been repaired we will mark it e.g. with hazard tape. Please alert us if you notice any unmarked hazardous flooring, or other hazards.
- **Wet flooring**, due to spills, cleaning, or wet clothing, can make floors slippery. We provide two “wet floor” signs for you to highlight this hazard to other members of your group until it has been cleared.
- Use the coat hooks and shoe racks to reduce the number of trip hazards on the floor.

# Peak District Retreat: Shawbottom Farm

## Outdoors

**Children must always be accompanied and supervised.**

### Landscape

You are welcome to explore our land but you should be aware of some hazards that you may encounter. The property is a working farm, albeit with very low intensity farming, and our land is managed as farmland rather than as recreational land or parkland.

- Much of **the land has trip and fall hazards**, which are mostly obscured by long grass and rushes. The land may be deeply rutted as a result of past earthworks (e.g. mining, building works, and past installation of land drains), with hazards such as boulders, old fencing wire and other debris, animal burrows, and unmarked steep drops.
- **Some parts of the land are very wet and boggy.** The land is designated as SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) which means that we are not allowed to change its character, such as increasing or reducing the drainage, mowing all the rushes, or rearranging boulders.
- We have tried hard to clear the immediate surroundings of the buildings of builders' debris such as broken glass, nails and screws, plastics, but this is still a work in progress and so **we advise against barefoot walking outdoors.**
- **Three streams** pass through our land and have cut **deep, steep ravines** in places, and these are **mostly unfenced**. After heavy rain the water level can rise significantly and the water flow can be very fast and turbulent.
- We have **multiple ponds which are also unfenced.**
- The streams and ponds are **not suitable for jumping, diving, paddling or swimming** – the bases are very uneven. Ponds may have unseen large rocks just below the surface, and sticky mud at other places. (Also, skin oils and soap/detergent residues can damage the ecology of the watercourses.)
- Some of the ponds are created by weirs and you may be tempted to try to walk across the weirs. Please don't. They may be slimy and slippery and you may fall onto the rocks below the weir.
- There is **a dangerous building**, signed as such, adjacent to the ponds about 40m to the north of our buildings. Do not approach it, nor touch or enter it.
- Like many rural properties we have to dispose of our own sewage. Our old septic tank has been replaced with a more modern small sewage treatment plant which is situated about 30m north of our buildings, and is enclosed with a barbed wire fence. It has two plastic lids which are NOT rated as strong enough to be walked on, so please avoid those.
- The farmyard, which is the carparking and building entrance area of the property, is paved with setts (similar to cobbles) which are uneven and irregular in places and could be **a trip hazard** if you do not take care.

# Peak District Retreat: Shawbottom Farm

## Livestock

- Typically we will have 5-6 cattle, together with their calves, on our land from May to September. **Cattle** will generally ignore you but they should not be approached because they **may attack if they feel threatened**. This applies particularly when they have calves – **do not approach calves and do not walk between a calf and its mother**.
- **Cattle may present a hazard to cars**. They may rub against cars and graze the paintwork or damage wing mirrors. For this reason always keep the farmyard gates closed when there are cattle on the land, to protect the parked cars. If the overflow parking area by the side of the track is in use we will endeavour to protect the cars using electric fencing but this is not fully reliable – cattle will sometimes ignore the shock and proceed anyway, or the electrification may fail due to equipment failure or to disturbance of the battery connections by cattle or wildlife.
- If **electric fences** are installed then do not touch them in case they are electrified. A shock from an electric fence is very brief and is designed to be unpleasant but safe.

## Flora and Fauna

In the UK we are fortunate to have very little in the way of dangerous wildlife, but still caution is needed.

- Most of the **larger wildlife** are quite shy and will run away when they see you e.g. the local red deer, badgers, foxes. However, they **may attack you as a form of self-defence if you startle them** by approaching them, or if they suddenly notice that they are close to you.
- **Adders (vipers)** are the only poisonous snake in UK. They are known in this general area (though we have never seen them) but are shy and will likely move away from you. But again, if surprised or if you approach them, then they may attack.
- Because we have deer some people express concern about **deer ticks and Lyme disease**. The Midlands is not considered a high-risk area for Lyme disease, and we have never encountered any ticks while we have been here. Nevertheless, it is easy to take some precautions, such as applying insect repellent to wrists, ankles, neck, and tucking trouser legs into socks when walking in long grass. We do have some tick removal equipment in case you find a tick on you.
- We do see **poisonous fungi such as fly agaric, and death caps** (the most deadly of all mushrooms) which can poison you by touch alone without eating them. Enjoy seeing the fungi but do not pick or even touch them.