

## Canute Cottages Environmental Policy

[www.canotecottages.co.uk](http://www.canotecottages.co.uk)

01243 572123

The Beale family have had a long term commitment to good environmental practice, since first coming to Cobnor in 1918. Our aim is to conserve and enhance the beauty and the bio-diversity of the wonderful landscape here and to keep working on improving day-to-day practices and policies, towards sustainability and responsible stewardship of resources. We are working at reducing our carbon-footprint and are actively engaging in the fight to halt climate change. We hope to delight, encourage and inspire our visitors in terms of how we care for the environment!

### **Land management**

We are proud of our partnership over many decades with the Chichester Harbour Conservancy, resulting in the planting of over a thousand trees at Cobnor, the restoration of hedgerows and ponds, the creating and maintaining of footpaths, sea-defences, and facilities for wheelchair-users, and the recording of the wildlife in all its forms.

We seek to create a balance between letting people enjoy our cottages, walks and unique sailing facilities (2 youth activities' centres and dinghy park with access to the harbour at all states of tide), and ensuring that Cobnor's quiet and timeless quality is conserved. Thus we resist expansion and commercialisation in all its forms, and restrict cars and motorboats (sailing is one of the "greenest" of sports!).

For the last 16 years we have had farming land entered into Stewardship schemes that promote conservation. This has involved turning arable land back into precious coastal grazing fields (with the help of our Jacob's sheep), to benefit wading birds, ducks etc, as well as hedge-laying and pond restoration. We have also been restoring our woodland, helped by local volunteers, resulting in a wonderful increase in wild flowers, birds and butterflies!

In Summer 2009 we were delighted to be accepted into the new Higher Level Environmental Stewardship scheme, which will take us further on the path of greater bio-diversity and improving habitats.

We have also started an ambitious project to create more habitat for wading birds and water-voles (our most endangered mammal – many live at Cobnor!) as well as inter-tidal habitat (mudflats and salt-marsh), by letting the tide in behind the seabank at Cobnor Point.

### **Recycling and purchasing**

We recycle paper, cartons, cardboard, tins, plastic and glass bottles, plastic bottle tops, plastic bags, coat hangers, foil and batteries, and compost raw food waste for use in the kitchen garden. Water butts are used to recycle rainwater for the garden.

We re-use office paper, plastic bags, farming bags etc and try to keep refuse to a minimum. Stationery, toilet paper, kitchen roll etc is made from recycled paper (100% or as near as we can get to it), and we do most bookings, orders etc by email, to save paper.

We are proud to bank with the Coop (the only bank to have a proper ethical policy).

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### Cleaning

Environmental cleaning products are used wherever possible (mainly Ecover, Delphis Eco, Bio D and “Blue stuff”, but not forgetting vinegar, washing soda etc!), and microfibre cloths reduce the need for cleaning fluids. [www.ecover.com](http://www.ecover.com) [www.biodegradable.biz](http://www.biodegradable.biz) [www.delphiseco.com](http://www.delphiseco.com)

### Use of Energy

Our electricity supplier is Ecotricity, which is committed to generating 100% of its supply from renewables, rather than fossil fuels.

Granary, Cullimers and Viking have “Sun-pipes”, bringing free natural light into windowless bathrooms.

All appliances are “A” or “B” rated for energy efficiency (the one exception is our “C” –rated tumble-drier – most driers are “C” or worse!).

Thermostatic valves on radiators, timers on outside lights, foil behind radiators etc all reduce our energy use. Wherever possible we now have low-energy light bulbs, and we have a programme to replace fittings with low-energy ones.

In winter 09/10 we achieved a comprehensive upgrade of all roof insulation – a big job at the time, but it makes a huge difference!

We have installed Solar thermal for our hot water, Solar PV and now generate our own electricity and replaced our old boilers with efficient new ones in late 2011, early 2012.

### Enjoying nature

Books, maps and guides are provided for bird-watchers, walkers, nature-lovers etc. Birds are encouraged with feeders and nest-boxes, and we have a mini beast and wildlife area.

Nature-watching events held in the AONB are publicised, and we particularly encourage visitors to book on the solar boat trips round the harbour and to use the local ferry.

Barn owls nested in our owl box for the first time in 2007, and thrilled all who saw them! We now have a camera to watch the action inside the box.

### Local food and local transport

A “good eating” file is kept for guests, with details of local restaurants, pubs, shops and market-stalls. Delivery of milk and groceries from local stores is encouraged.

Maps are available with footpaths and cycle paths marked, plus guide-books and info on bike hire.

Timetables and leaflets are provided for the local bus and trains, boat trips and ferries, including water-tours on the solar-powered boat (wheelchair accessible). The joys of the immediate villages, attractions and walks are high-lighted.

And I am more often seen on my bike than in a car round Cobnor!

### Support for Organisations and Campaigns

Canute Cottages is now pioneering a Community Payback Scheme in support of The **Chichester Harbour Trust** [www.chichesterharbourtrust.org.uk](http://www.chichesterharbourtrust.org.uk). The Trust exists to protect the natural beauty and wildlife of the land around the harbour – an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. For each booking taken a nominal contribution of £1 will be added, though guests can opt out if they wish. Canute Cottages will then double the contribution to the Harbour Trust. It is hoped that other businesses

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around the harbour will follow this initiative and further help contribute to keeping this landscape a unique and special place for future generations to enjoy.

Canute Cottages supports the charity **Miracles** [www.miraclesthecharity.org](http://www.miraclesthecharity.org) by providing respite breaks for sick children and their families.

We have sponsored community events and initiatives, including the Duck race, tree-planting, the Educational straw building at Tuppenny Barn Organic Smallholding, plus the exciting purchase of 8 acres of land for the community in 2009 - Maybush Copse.

Some of my roles in the community include contributions to the village website [www.chidhamandhambrook.info](http://www.chidhamandhambrook.info), litter-picking along Chidham Lane, delivering newsletters etc for Church, village and harbour organisations, and coordinating conservation working-parties.

I am a member of Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, Sussex Wildlife Trust, Friends of Cobnor Activities Centre, Oxfam, the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group, and a life member of Friends of Chichester Harbour and Survival International.

I was founder member and chair of the village "Sustainability Network" which is encouraging green initiatives and fighting climate change. I am on the committee of Maybush Copse Friends and am part of the "Go Green" initiative for tourism businesses in the new South Downs National Park.

The community uses Cobnor Estate for village festivals and special events, and I run a variety of guided tours.

I speak and advise on Green Tourism and responsible land-management at local tourism and AONB events.