

GETAWAY

Water, water everywhere!



Enjoy lakeside views at Hoburne Cotswold

Hoburne's outdoor pool



Hoburne's indoor pool



ADRIAN CAFFERY discovers a Happy Land with the Bow Wow factor



Play area in Happy Land, Ashton Keynes



Walkies in Bow Wow in South Cerney

THERE can be few more appropriately named streets than the two we came across on our weekend away – Happy Land and Bow Wow.

The former, in the Wiltshire village of Ashton Keynes, overlooks a playground where our two children spent a (for want of a better word) happy half hour.

The latter is a pretty, quiet lane between a river and stream in the Gloucestershire village of South Cerney – which we found to be very popular with dog walkers.

Despite being in different counties, the two settlements are only a couple of miles apart, and the two streets are typical of the charm that this part of the country exudes.

Both villages lie within Cotswold Water Park, an area of 150 lakes created from former quarries, split into eastern and western sections that are seven miles apart.

CWP is a paradise for water sports enthusiasts and thrill seekers, offering everything from water skiing, canoeing and paddle

boarding, to windsurfing, sailing and kayaking.

On dry land there's a high ropes course, off-road driving, shooting, golf, horse riding, paintballing, bush craft, a man-made beach and miles of cycle paths.

We enjoyed a short break at Hoburne Cotswold.

Set around four lakes, it lies in the middle of the western section of CWP, between the aforementioned South Cerney and Ashton Keynes, 13 miles south of Cirencester.

There are about 450 caravans and lodges at Hoburne Cotswold, many with lake views, and, despite our visit coinciding with the Easter school holidays, the park never seemed busy.

It was easy finding a table close to the stage for the evening children's entertainment featuring Sammy Seahorse, Larry Lobster, Tommy Turtle and the pirate Captain Smuggles.

And there was barely ever a queue for the snaking water flume (suitable for all ages) at the indoor pool

complex, which also features a sauna, steam room and gym.

Other ways to keep the kids busy at Hoburne include playgrounds, soft play, crazy golf, tennis, archery, pedalos, kayaks, a nature trail and a daytime entertainment programme.

For the summer season, there's a nice outdoor pool with views from the sun loungers across the largest lake.

Grown-ups can cast a rod in the well-stocked lakes and watch live acts after the kids' shows have finished. There are two on-site restaurants, too.

Our toasty, top of the range 'Platinum' three-bedroom caravan came with the luxury of free wi-fi.

I've stayed in many caravans, but this possibly topped the lot. Everything seemed very solidly built and it had a nice layout with sliding doors opening onto wrap around decking.

The shower was much bigger and better than you'll find in most homes (certainly mine), the L-shaped sofa comfortably seated six and there was a smaller version around the dining table.

But with so much to see and do within Cotswold Water Park we were never likely to spend much time in the caravan, where we?

THINGS TO DO

■ **ASHTON KEYNES** reputedly has more bridges across the Thames than London. A walk along the infant river's banks, up to the pretty village's ancient church, is a nice way to spend a sunny afternoon.

■ **COTSWOLD SCULPTURE PARK** features dozens of contemporary and abstract pieces displayed in a tranquil woodland setting. Visitors are greeted by a car balancing atop a tower of engine parts, pictured.

■ **JENNIE'S KITCHEN** is a homely café close to Hoburne Cotswold which specialises in vegan, vegetarian and gluten-free delights. Grab an outdoor table to enjoy the beautiful gardens.



■ **NEIGH BRIDGE COUNTRY PARK** is good for children. The lovely circular walk around a lake features a natural obstacle course and there's a play area once you've completed the circuit.



■ Another circular walk around a lake starts from the **GATEWAY CENTRE** (the CWP visitor centre). Slightly longer, your reward for completing it is a cream tea overlooking the still waters.

NEED TO KNOW

■ **ADRIAN CAFFERY** and family were guests of Hoburne Cotswold, which is part of the 106-year-old Hoburne group of eight holiday parks in the south and south-west of England. As an example of prices, a four-night break this week costs from £239.20 (reduced from £299) for a family of four in a Standard two-bed caravan. To book visit hoburne.com or call **01425 689329**.

■ If you're interested in becoming an owner, holiday homes are available from £29,995. Hoburne's letting service includes marketing, bookings, housekeeping and maintenance, key handling, check in and customer care. Caravans/lodges can be let for just a few weeks or for the whole 48-week season. Call **01425 282367** or visit hoburne.com/ownership

