

By Deborah Stone

COUNCIL tax premiums on second homes have seen owners selling up in some of the country's best-loved beauty spots, but it's not a problem for owners at holiday parks. That's because, for the moment at least, holiday park lodges are still legally defined as caravans – and there's no stamp duty to pay either.

Even luxurious properties featuring ensuite bathrooms, kitchen islands, hot tubs and roof terraces are exempt, including those at Dylan Coastal Resorts in Laugharne, South Wales, which overlooks the beautiful River Tâf estuary.

"It's a big selling point," says sales manager Owain Thomas. "The stamp duty is attractive right from the start but the ongoing benefits of no council tax is huge."

Modular-built luxury lodges are for sale as a lifestyle purchase for sole use by owners, their family and friends; as a sublet purchase for year-round rental, or as a lifestyle and sublet combination – meaning owners can rent it out when it's free.

The sub-letting programme is organised by the resort's owners, Luxury Lodges, for a 30 per cent fee with a minimum guaranteed rental profit in the first two years of up to £112,266 net, depending on the lodge's size and availability.

"After that, nothing changes except it's not guaranteed," explains Owain. "Also, there's no service charge for the first two years."

Prices start at £345,000 for a two-bedroom property and from £375,000 to £650,000 for a three-bedroom unit on a 100-year lease (residences.luxurylodges.com), including a furniture package to ensure all rental lodges offer the same holiday-let experience.

A luxury lodge is the business



SELLING POINT: Properties at Dylan Thomas Coastal Resort enjoy beautiful estuary views

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From the third year there's an annual service charge of £9,000 to £10,000 plus VAT. This pays for security, grounds maintenance, wifi and housekeeping for rental homes.

It also covers the exceptional facilities at Milk Wood House, which features floor-to-ceiling windows with views over the estuary from the large infinity pool and adjoining gym. There are more panoramic views from Milk Wood Bar and Kitchen, where breakfast, lunch and dinner is served daily.

Use of the gym and pool with its sauna, steam room and thermal pool is free for owners, and there are state-of-the-art spa rooms for paid-for treatments. There's also a new yoga studio near Milk Wood House.

Fifteen phase two lodges are still for sale and work starts on the final phase of 30 new lodges this autumn at the top of the site, with talk of a farm food shop and café bar to come.

Dylan Thomas Coastal Resort opened in 2021 on land previously known as Laugharne Park, a caravan and cabin site, and its lodges are built to PS3632 standard – the highest spec for this type of property.

It's just a few minutes from the water's-edge home and writing shed of poet Dylan Thomas, hence the name, and a 10-minute walk from the ruined castle that dominates Laugharne.

The ever-changing Tâf estuary view was an inspiration to Dylan Thomas and is one of the resort's major selling points, although the chance to own a holiday home without having to pay double – or even triple – council tax is equally attractive.