



VisitEngland™



BED AND BREAKFAST

VisitEngland's Quality Standards for Bed and Breakfast



Welcome to the VisitEngland Quality Standards for Bed and Breakfast

At VisitEngland, we're passionate about raising England's profile, increasing the volume and value of tourism, and developing England's visitor economy by working with organisations of all sizes and specialities. These quality standards will help you become part of this mission.

A VisitEngland star rating or accreditation gives potential customers a label they can trust. Highlighting your dedication to quality shows that your business has been independently verified by the national tourism agency as offering a consistently high standard of service.

Over the years, our Quality Standards have evolved to keep pace with consumer expectations, and we've worked hard to ensure our ratings and awards are accurate, consistent and reliable. We also work closely with accommodation providers to ensure our standards are straightforward and realistic. This document is the result of an independently chaired Quality Advisory Board which included key stakeholders from across the hospitality industry, that was convened in 2023 to modernise and simplify the standards.

Our Quality Standards are the building blocks that form the basis of what our assessors will be looking for when they visit you. By reading and applying these criteria carefully, you can be confident that your establishment will meet the high industry standards required to become recognised by VisitEngland. And remember, the assessment is not only of the physical product, but also of the experience that your establishment provides. It's not just a box-ticking exercise. We focus on the quality of what you offer, and not on what you don't offer.

We look forward to working with and promoting your property.

– VisitEngland

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The Farrier

Quality is the key

VisitEngland understands that quality is the key to success within the modern hospitality industry. In order for the bed and breakfast sector to be successful both nationally and internationally, it is important that quality standards are set high and continue to improve.

Our commitment to you

Our professional assessors will work with you in order to maximise the potential of your business. As a member of the VisitEngland bed and breakfast scheme you will receive an overnight mystery assessment visit in the first year. From year two, you will receive either a day visit or an overnight visit, depending on your star rating. An overnight visit will be scheduled at least every third year. The visit will look at all aspects of your customer facing business from the initial booking to check out. Each visit will be followed by a full verbal debrief and a detailed written management report. Both of these tools are designed to help you to improve your business.

Quality across the star ratings

Our assessors will quality grade each aspect of your business to five levels, based on customer expectations of quality and current standards seen across the sector. The assessment is objective and judgements will not be made about any aspect of your business based on style or personal taste. The aim is to add quality without taking away any of the character and style of the property.

Service and hospitality

A smile, a warm and genuine welcome and a willingness to please and serve customers is a common requirement and achievable across all star ratings. Seamless and efficient service requires thought and planning. A small bed and breakfast business can rely on the natural friendliness and hospitality of the owners, whilst a large business will require a team of well-trained staff and this can present a different challenge.

Bedrooms and bathrooms

Whatever the style or concept of the bedrooms and bathrooms, both quality and comfort is what guests and our assessors will be looking for, specifically:

- The quality and comfort of the bed.
- The quality of the bed linen.
- Attractive, well co-ordinated décor and soft furnishings.
- The quality of bathroom fittings, of towels and toiletries.
- Ease of use, being well designed without necessarily being large and spacious.
- Those extra touches that make the rooms more welcoming.

Cleanliness

Cleanliness is of paramount importance to all customers at all levels. It is expected that all properties will be clean throughout.

Hints and tips

- Be objective and self-critical when thinking about quality. Do not over promise. Do not be tempted to claim you offer luxury on your website unless the facilities you are selling are truly luxurious. Customers travel with expectations. It is better to exceed these rather than not to live up to them.
- Be a customer at your own business. Take time to use your own website, sleep in your own bedrooms and eat your own breakfast in order to experience what you are offering.
- Your website is the first contact most customers will have with you. Make sure it is up to date, easy to use and engaging.
- Good quality photographs are the best way to show off your business. Modern smartphone cameras are often up to the task, and online tutorials are widely available.
- If you have the time for social media, it's a great way to engage with potential guests.



Quality

How do we measure quality?

During your visit, your assessor will make quality judgements across all areas of your customer facing business. When the scores are totalled you will have an overall percentage score that will place you within one of the three star rating bands. However, in order to confirm a particular star rating, the scores awarded within each of the five key areas also need to fall within that band or higher. In this way we, and you, can be confident that the business is offering a consistent level of service at the star rating awarded.

These key areas are:

- Cleanliness
- Bedrooms
- Bathrooms
- Hospitality and Friendliness
- Breakfast

Quality Assessors are trained to award scores against national benchmarks in an objective and consistent manner.

Scores

For each area included in the assessment, the assessor will decide whether to award a score of

- **1 mark** – Poor
- **2 marks** – Disappointing
- **3 marks** – Good
- **4 marks** – Very Good
- **5 marks** – Excellent

After your visit you will receive a detailed written report on the customer experience with individual scores for each criteria. Positive aspects of your business will be outlined as well as areas for improvement. This will give you a benchmark for maintaining the quality of your services and facilities and will help you to prioritise and plan future developments to increase standards and boost your bottom line.

Determining a Star rating

A property will need to satisfy three elements to reach a particular star rating:

- All relevant requirements must be met (detailed later in this booklet)
- The overall percentage score for quality must reach the appropriate banding (see below)
- The relevant standard of quality in the five critical areas:
 - Cleanliness
 - Bedrooms
 - Bathrooms
 - Hospitality and Friendliness
 - Breakfast

The star rating level across all of these five areas must be consistent in order to achieve a particular star rating. The remaining four areas are: exterior, public areas, dining room and restaurants and service and efficiency.

Overall quality bands

	THREE STAR	FOUR STAR	FIVE STAR
Overall	55%-69%	70%-84%	85%-100%
Cleanliness	65%	75%	90%
Bedrooms	55%	70%	85%
Bathrooms	55%	70%	85%
Hospitality and Friendliness	65%	75%	90%
Breakfast	55%	70%	85%

Dispensations

Dispensations for certain individual requirements within the VisitEngland Quality Standards may be given as long as all the remaining requirements and quality levels for that rating are met or exceeded. This flexibility will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Any exceptions will need a proportional increase in quality in other areas to compensate for the area where an exception is sought.

Sub-categories

All establishments will be positioned in one of the following descriptive sub-categories. These have been developed to help consumers understand more clearly the different types of property available.

Establishments in each of these sub-categories need to fulfil all requirements detailed in this booklet.

Bed and Breakfast

A Bed and Breakfast is a type of accommodation where guests stay in private rooms within a residential property, such as a house or farmhouse, and are typically provided with breakfast as part of their stay. Bed and Breakfasts offer a more personalised and often cosier experience compared to traditional hotels. They are known for their homely atmosphere and are usually run by hosts who interact closely with guests to create a welcoming environment. Guests can expect a comfortable room and a morning meal, which is often homemade and served in a communal dining area.

Inn

An Inn provides accommodation for guests and tends to emphasise a more charming and intimate experience, often with a focus on local character and hospitality. Although similar to hotels, Inns are often smaller and more intimate and they typically have fewer rooms or guest suites. Many inns offer dining facilities, such as a restaurant where guests can enjoy meals and drinks.

Restaurant with Rooms

A restaurant with rooms combines the pleasures of fine dining with the convenience of onsite accommodation, making it an attractive choice for guests seeking a memorable culinary and hospitality experience.

These establishments usually specialise in serving quality meals, often with a focus on local or regional cuisine. The restaurant is usually a prominent feature of the establishment. In addition to the restaurant, they offer rooms or suites for guests who want to stay overnight. These rooms can vary in size and amenities but are often comfortable and well-appointed.

Accolades

VisitEngland's Gold and Silver Awards

VisitEngland's unique Gold and Silver awards are given in recognition of exceptional quality. These awards help customers find those special places where the owner and staff go the extra mile, whatever the size, style or star rating of the business.

In order to achieve an award, you will need to demonstrate consistent levels of high quality in the five key areas identified by consumers as very important:

- Cleanliness
- Bedrooms
- Bathrooms
- Hospitality and Friendliness
- Breakfast

Eligibility for an award is triggered by the property's overall score meeting a minimum level, plus a minimum score in each of the critical areas listed above.

Nominations for an award are given with the written assessment report, but Gold awards require confirmation by the Quality Assessment Area Manager and may involve a second 'mystery visit'. The assessment report will show the scores in all areas, so owners can check how close they are to achieving an award and can ask the assessor's advice about the key improvements required to aim for a Silver or Gold award.

A Gold or Silver award can give a significant marketing advantage. The logos can be displayed on websites and in other forms of advertising. Certificates are provided for display within the property and exterior signage is also available.

VisitEngland's Breakfast Award

As part of the overnight assessment, the assessor will score the breakfast served based on the following criteria:

- Choice and range of dishes offered
- Presentation
- Food quality and culinary skills
- Service and hospitality

The assessor will confirm during the assessment debrief if you have achieved the award, based on the marks scored.

The Breakfast award logo can be used on websites and in other forms of advertising. Certificates are provided for display within the property and exterior signage is also available.

VisitEngland's Assessors

All of our Assessors are hospitality professionals and each has a proven background in the industry. More importantly, our assessors now spend their working lives as professional guests. They experience best practice in all areas and are able to pass that knowledge on to you for the benefit of your business. They are your eyes and ears for the duration of their visit. They will assess the quality of your business honestly, but always with the objective of helping you to improve your operation. Make use of your assessor.

Your assessor is there to help your business succeed, so make use of their knowledge and expertise:

- Their aim is to maximise the quality potential of your business, whilst allowing the character and uniqueness of your business to shine through.
- They are an industry professional with extensive knowledge of the bed and breakfast sector, and they are there to share all of that knowledge with you, so be sure to ask plenty of questions.
- Stay in touch. Assessors are happy to answer your questions in between visits. · You might like to arrange an interim visit in order to measure improvements that you have made to your business, especially if you are aiming for a higher rating or a Silver or Gold award at your next assessment. The assessor can help to organise this for you.
- The first time you meet your assessor is likely to be when they arrive at your property for an overnight visit. Even then, they will not reveal their identity until the following morning. This will allow them to experience your service as a customer would and begin to understand your business prior to your meeting after breakfast.
- You might be concerned that you have not yet provided or understood all of the requirements of the assessment scheme. Do not worry, your assessor will discuss this with you and allow you time to add any items or services that might be missing.
- Beyond that, the assessment is about help and advice. The style and character of your property are what make it unique. Your assessor is there to enhance that, not to change it.
- Your assessment in the second year is likely to be a day visit. If you believe you have a good chance of achieving a higher rating, or a Gold, Silver or Breakfast award, you can request an overnight visit.



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Sustainability

Sustainability is becoming a business basic

To meet growing expectations from consumers and address our twin challenges of climate change and nature loss, it is increasingly essential that your operations are run as sustainably as possible. Many organisations and businesses are going further than just preventing more damage being caused, and are aiming to have a positive impact on people and places, by implementing regenerative tourism practices. Both sustainable and regenerative tourism make business sense. See the VisitEngland Business Advice Hub for more details: visitengland.org/businessadvice

Getting started

The crucial thing is to take steps to start doing something: think measure, monitor, reduce. Look to measure how much gas, electricity, water and waste is used each month, monitor this to identify patterns and track where efficiencies could be made, and then use this information to implement changes and reduce consumption. This not only helps our environment but will also save you money.

Taking things further

If you have gone beyond the basics and are already taking these and other steps to be more sustainable, you may wish to demonstrate this to the growing number of consumers factoring environmental and/or social criteria into their buying decision by joining one of the sustainable tourism certification schemes that exist in England. See the VisitEngland Business Advice Hub for more information on how to choose the certification that's right for you: visitengland.org/businessadvice

Sustainability – easy wins

PEOPLE:

- Think local to keep money in the community. Welcome packs or hospitality trays can include local produce (or Fair-Trade items, which benefit communities in developing countries). Make use of airtight containers rather than providing things individually wrapped. Waste plastic can cause litter and impact health.
- Display the work of local artists or photographers depicting local scenes and historical and heritage related images – it all adds to a visitor's enhanced sense of place
- Make it easy for customers to do the right thing. For example including public transport options for getting to your property in promotional and booking information makes it easier to leave the car at home.

PLACE:

- Better insulation and greater use of thermostatically controlled and zoned heating will save on energy use.
- Food waste is a major contributor to climate change. Weigh your food waste for a week and see where you could make changes to cut this down.
- Examine your stock order history and review the single-use plastic items your business consumes. How many are just ordered from habit? Can you eliminate any items by doing things differently?

PARTNERSHIP

- Partner with other organisations looking to improve the local environment and support communities. For example, could you team up with a local college to provide work experience, or if you have space, can you work with a local wildlife trust to install bird or bat boxes.
- Consider creating a sustainability policy, setting out the environmental and sustainable management actions taken by your business. The VisitEngland Business Advice Hub has resources to help get you started. Ensure any staff are fully briefed on your sustainability policy and can articulate your progress to customers.

PROFIT

- Make best use of local tourist information in your properties promotional literature, on the website and in any visitor information located in the accommodation. Or consider an online information system, such as 'Touch Stay'.
- Adding charging points for electric vehicles can help attract EV drivers to your business. See the VisitEngland Business Advice Hub for information on the grants available to support this.

Visit the VisitEngland Business Advice Hub for more information on all aspects of sustainability.



Accessibility

Improving your accessibility – A valuable market

Many people have accessibility requirements including disabled people, such as those with hearing and visual impairments, wheelchair users, older and less mobile people and people with pushchairs. The accessible tourism market is worth around £14.6bn to tourism businesses in England and is growing due to an ageing population.

By making some small adjustments to your facilities, providing information on your accessibility and understanding the needs of disabled people, your business will appeal to a wider range of visitors and attract more business. Demand for accessible accommodation outstrips the current supply. Find out how other tourism businesses are benefitting from this loyal market at visitengland.org/access

Legal obligations

Tourism businesses have obligations under The Equality Act 2010, which replaced the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005 (DDA) on 1 October 2010. Tourism providers should treat everyone accessing their goods, facilities or services fairly, regardless of their sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, or age (this applies to those aged 18 or above), and guard against making assumptions about the characteristics of individuals.

The Equality Act 2010 requires that service providers must think ahead and take steps to address barriers that impede disabled people. Providers should not wait until a disabled person experiences difficulties using a service, as this may make it too late to make the necessary adjustment.

- Make 'reasonable' changes to the way things are done – such as changing practices, policies or procedures where disabled people would be at a 'substantial disadvantage' for example, amend a 'no dogs' policy.
- Make 'reasonable' changes to the built environment – such as making changes to the structure of a building to improve access, for example, altering or removing a physical feature.
- Provide auxiliary aids and services – such as providing information in an accessible format, an induction loop for customers with hearing aids.

A service provider cannot legally justify failing to provide a reasonable adjustment. The only question is whether the adjustment is a 'reasonable' one to make. What is 'reasonable' will depend on a number of circumstances, including the cost of an adjustment, potential benefit it may bring to other customers, the resources an organisation has and how practical the changes are.

We can help

VisitEngland provides tourism businesses with a range of free guidance and resources to help increase engagement with the valuable accessible tourism market in the Accessible and Inclusive Tourism Toolkit for Businesses. Go to visitengland.org/access

It is important to provide information on the accessibility of your facilities and services and this is a requirement for all scheme participants.

You can provide details of your venue's key accessibility features on your website and supply this information for inclusion on your RatedTrips.com venue listing by completing a new questionnaire produced by VisitEngland (anticipated available from summer 2024).

Today's guests also want detailed and factual descriptions of venue accessibility, in the form of an Accessibility Guide, to empower them to make personal choices.

Participants can book and pay for a Detailed Access Guide with AccessAble to provide robust accessibility information on your venue. To learn more and book either a Guided or On Site Assessment, go to visitengland.youraccessibilityguide.co.uk (not a requirement of scheme participation).



Statutory obligations

- **Public Liability Insurance:** while not a statutory requirement, it is a requirement for participation in this scheme. Proprietors may be asked to provide evidence that Public Liability Insurance cover is being maintained and that the requirements are being fulfilled.
- **Accessibility information:** whilst not a statutory requirement specifically, it is a requirement for participation in this scheme. Provide details of your venue's key accessibility features on your website and supply this information for inclusion on your RatedTrips.com venue listing by completing a new questionnaire produced by VisitEngland (anticipated available from summer 2024).

Fulfilment of all relevant statutory obligations including but not restricted to:

- **Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 Amended 2023:** comply with this order, supply evidence that a written fire risk assessment has been carried out.
- **Portable Appliance Testing (PAT):** electrical appliances should be subject to service and testing in accordance with guidance from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).
- **EICR:** an electrical installation condition report (EICR) on your property will ensure the overall safety of the electrical components of your building. Professionals must perform this essential inspection at least once every five years.

- **Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998:** to comply with regulations to ensure all fittings are maintained and annual gas safety inspections are carried out by a Gas Safe engineer, and certificate is issued and displayed in the accommodation.
- **Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (regulations 2022):** comply with these regulations.
- **Food safety/hygiene:** register with the local Environmental Health department.
- **Health and safety:** operate safely with due regard to health and safety legislation.
- **Bunk Bed Regulations:** bunk beds sold in the UK must conform to the current safety regulations.
- **British Standards:** this applies to items such as cots, high chairs and play pens.
- **Blind cord legislation:** according to the BS EN 13120 regulations, your blinds must have no accessible cords. If they do, they must be fitted with appropriate child safety devices.
- **Planning:** comply with local planning regulations.
- **Licensing:** comply with all local licensing regulations.
- **Hotel Proprietors Act 1956:** comply with this act.
- **Data Protection Act/General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) as of May 2018:** comply with this act/these regulations.
- **The Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008:** comply with these regulations by describing accurately in any advertisement, brochure, or other printed or electronic media, the facilities and services provided.
- **Food Allergy and Intolerance:** in the UK, food businesses must inform guests if they use any of the 14 allergens as ingredients in the food and drink they provide on menus or verbally.
- **Natasha's Law:** where food is freshly prepared, then packaged and displayed before being sold, it must have a label listing full ingredients and highlight any of the 14 major allergens it contains.
- **PCI compliance:** the standards of the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS). The standard contains a set of requirements designed to increase data security and protect merchants and customers when taking and making payments by debit or credit card.
- **Single use plastics:** an extension on the ban for customers including plates, trays, cutlery, bowls, balloon sticks and polystyrene boxes for ready to consume food items.
- **Equality Act 2010:** comply with this act. Welcome all guests courteously and without discrimination in relation to sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, age (this applies to those aged 18 or above). Make 'reasonable' adjustments to improve services for disabled customers.

For more information about your legal obligations as a tourism business owner in England, visit the Pink Book Online at visitengland.org/pinkbookonline. The Pink Book gives clear guidance and practical information on the legislation that affects you, including licences, health and safety, employment and taxation



Standards

Hospitality and services

General - Hospitality

Three Star

- Guests should be greeted and acknowledged in a friendly, efficient and courteous manner throughout their stay. Staff should have a helpful attitude. All enquiries, requests and reservations, correspondence and complaints from visitors should be dealt with promptly and politely. All staff should demonstrate a positive attitude and willingness to help. Management should ensure there are ample staff numbers to provide a prompt, courteous and efficient service.

Four Star

- Very good social skills and anticipation of individual guest's needs should be evident. The ability to personalise the guest experience is encouraged.

Five Star

- Excellent social skills and anticipation of individual guest's needs to create unique and memorable experiences.
- Service and efficiency of an exceptional standard without detriment to other service areas at any time delivered by the team.

Booking and pre-arrival information

Three Star –

- You should describe fairly to all guests and prospective guests the amenities, facilities and services that your establishment provides – in any advertisement, brochure or any other printed or electronic media used.
- You should make clear to guests exactly what is included in the prices you quote for accommodation, meals and refreshments. You must include service charges, taxes and other surcharges. Legally, you should not exceed the price you agree at the time of booking. You should explain in detail any charges for additional services or available facilities and cancellation terms, if applicable. If a deposit is required, you need to tell guests when they book and explain how it will be taken and whether or not it is refundable if they cancel.
- When you are taking a booking you should describe in detail any in-house policies, for example, no smoking or vaping policy, payment methods, access restrictions
- If prospective guests ask to see the accommodation before they book, you must show them.
- You must tell all prospective visitors about any major refurbishment work that might affect their stay.
- Where relevant, ascertain dietary requirements (vegetarian, vegan, Coeliac, nut allergy, etc).

Four Star

- Competent and efficient booking procedure with directions offered.
- Written confirmation provided on request, by email or text

Five Star

- Prompt answering of phone or where there is an answering machine a very prompt follow-up will be the norm.
- Bookings handled in a professional manner that makes the guest feel welcome and gives confidence that details have been accurately recorded.
- Confirmation letter and directions sent by email or text.
- Explanation of accommodation and bedroom facilities.
- Appropriate use of guest's name.

Guest arrival, welcome and access

Three Star

- The proprietor or staff should be on-duty during the main arrival and departure periods and during meal times. It is acceptable that the entrance may be locked and the guest may have to ring or knock for access.
- Registration of all guests on arrival.
- Once guests have registered, they should have access to the establishment and to their bedrooms at all times unless they were previously told about any restrictions. A key or security code may be given for the main entrance.
- You should provide service that is appropriate to the style of accommodation, and deal promptly with all enquiries, requests, reservations, correspondence and complaints from guests.
- There must be an effective means for guests to call for the attention of the proprietor or staff, who need to be available at all reasonable times (as above). If the proprietor or staff are temporarily off-site or live away from the property, guests must be provided with a means to call for personal assistance 24 hours a day, without the need to use their own mobile phone. If mobile phone coverage is poor or non-existent, proprietors should be able to provide a reliable alternative. Operators (or their designated representative) must be available to attend promptly in case of emergency.
- A positive and friendly attitude from cleanly attired proprietor and staff.
- Good first and last impressions with a welcoming smile.

Four Star

- Attentive, more personalised service with very good levels of customer care such as use of guest's name.
- Proactive approach to guests with effort made at social interaction and conversation.
- Guests made to feel very much at home with a warm cheerful welcome on arrival.
- Escort to the bedrooms and indication given of public areas.
- Offer made of luggage assistance.

Five Star

- Guests personally greeted on arrival.
- Awareness and anticipation of individual guest's needs with nothing being too much trouble.
- An offer of additional services such as fresh milk, information on the locality and recommendations for eating out, etc.
- Guests shown to rooms with luggage assistance. Explanation of accommodation and bedroom facilities.
- Appropriate use of guest's name. Offer of refreshment on arrival.
- Excellent first and last impressions.

Dinner (where served) and general services

Three Star

- Prompt response to requests for additional services such as iron and ironing board, fresh milk, etc.
- In larger establishments, all requests and any contact with reception or bars efficiently handled in a timely and professional manner.
- Where an evening meal is not served, help is provided, on request, to find a place to eat/ drink.
- Where an evening meal is served, verbal or written explanation of dinner dishes is available.
- Good food and drink knowledge.
- A well-paced meal service.

Four Star

- A willingness to provide additional services such as providing fresh milk on request or on the tea tray.
- Spontaneous offer of help in finding a place to eat or drink.
- A high standard of food and drink knowledge.
- More attentive service such as offering bread and water, prompt table clearing and satisfaction checks.

Five Star

- Where an evening meal is not served, detailed information and/or menus about local dining options should be provided.
- Proactive offer of additional services, for example, warming and lighting a bedroom in winter before a guest arrives. Efficient service with high levels of technical skills and anticipation of guests' needs.
- Comprehensive descriptions of dishes available and good judgement in timing when serving the different courses.
- Proprietors and staff should be able to provide guests with advice on menu and wine list (where provided).

Breakfast

Three Star

- Breakfast buffet items kept topped up.
- Verbal or written explanation of available breakfast choices.
- Good product knowledge.
- A well-paced meal service.
- In smaller establishments, pre-ordering of breakfast items to avoid waste is acceptable.

Four Star

- A high standard of food knowledge. More attentive service, for example, the offer of hot drinks and toast.
- Prompt table clearing and satisfaction checks.

Five Star

- Clean and well-presented menus.
- Efficient service with high levels of technical skills and anticipation of guests' needs.
- Comprehensive descriptions of dishes available and good judgement in timing of serving the different courses.
- Highly attentive service with the offer of fresh hot drinks, etc.

Guest departure

Three Star

- Efficient procedures for handling guest departure.
- Accurate bill prepared in advance of guests' departure.

Four Star

- Prompt attention when summoned.
- Proprietors and staff well versed in all methods of payment where appropriate.
- Exchange of pleasantries upon departure.

Five Star

- Awareness that departing guests are ready to pay, and proprietors or staff should make themselves available.
- Bill correct in all details and clearly presented and explained.
- Guests asked if they enjoyed their stay.
- Offer of assistance with luggage, and offer of directions to next destination.

Food

Breakfast menu and range of dishes

Three Star

- All food must be properly cooked and carefully prepared and presented.
- A good range of hot and cold items, together with a choice of good quality accompaniments. Examples include preserves, ground and decaffeinated coffee, teas, butters and spreads. A set menu can be acceptable.
- Where applicable guests offered a choice of how their eggs are cooked to include fried, poached, boiled and scrambled.
- Pre-orders are acceptable subject to prior notice given.

Four Star

- A menu detailing the full breakfast range should be provided.
- A superior range and wider variety of hot and cold items.

Five Star

- A menu, presented to the highest standard, detailing the full breakfast range should be provided.
- A comprehensive range of excellent quality hot and cold dishes. Examples might include freshly squeezed juices, a variety of fresh fruits ripe and in season, cold meats and cheeses, free range eggs, local specialities, a fish option, a range of bakery items and pastries, special dietary produce and a comprehensive range of appetising hot items.

Dinner provision, menu and range of dishes

Three Star

- All food must be properly cooked and carefully prepared and presented.
- If requested at the time of booking there must be at least one vegetarian option available.
- Every effort should be made to ascertain dietary requirements.
- Meals must be prepared with a good level of care.
- Menus should offer well-presented food freshly cooked from good quality ingredients. There should be evidence of some fresh ingredients being used.
- Particular attention should be paid to food quality rather than simply offering an extensive choice.

Four Star

- Obvious use of fresh ingredients cooked with a high level of care and attention to detail.

Five Star

- Excellent cooking with an emphasis on fresh, seasonal ingredients, cooked with skill.
- Strong emphasis on consistent food quality.
- Obvious care and attention to detail and appearance with attractive garnishes and decorations as appropriate, making the food look appetising.

Bedrooms

Size and spaciousness

Three Star

- All bedrooms should have sufficient space for guests to move easily around the room. Bedrooms that are smaller than the following sizes are unlikely to meet the minimum requirements
- **Single** 5.6sq m (60sq ft)
- **Double** 8.4sq m (90sq ft)
- **Twin** 10.2sq m (110sq ft)
- When we assess bedroom size an account is taken of the usable space available around furniture and fittings. For a higher quality rating, rooms will be expected to be spacious.
- The ceiling height for the major part of the room needs to be sufficient for a person of 6ft to move around without stooping. Sloping eaves and ceilings are acceptable as long as they do not restrict guests' movement to an unacceptable degree.
- It should be possible to fully open doors and drawers without having to move other furniture.
- Rooms for family occupation need to be significantly larger.
Note: Where there is access to only one side of a double bed, a maximum rating of Three Stars can be awarded and guests must be made aware at time of making the booking

Four Star

- Well-planned layout of furniture to maximise use of the free space.
- Rooms could be smaller, but considered planning means free space is just as usable.
- Very good access to both sides of a double bed.
- One chair per guest possibly provided.
- Spare and accessible sockets that are well placed for all uses.
- Minimal noise.

Five Star

- A spacious, well planned room with furniture in suitable convenient places to allow a high degree of comfort. Area available for luggage storage without cluttering the room and obstructing access.
- Easy and convenient use of facilities, for example, use of surfaces without moving tea tray or TV (where provided), access to power points, etc.
- Comfortable easy chairs.
- Appropriate levels of flat, clear surface to suit the market, for example, establishments attracting business people may need to provide working space.
- Generous access to both sides of a double bed.
- No intrusive noise.

Quality and condition

Three Star

- Co-ordinated interior decoration.
- Well-finished, good quality wall coverings and paint work.
- Wall and ceiling coverings, well applied.
- Use of pictures etc where appropriate, particularly on plain walls

Four Star

- Very good standard of decoration with use of high quality pictures and prints where applicable.
- Some effort made to hide surface-mounted pipes and wires.

Five Star

- Excellent interior design, with high attention to detail.
- Thoughtful coordination of patterns, colours and textures.
- High quality wall coverings with professional finish to all aspects of decoration.
- Attractive use of pictures, prints and other decorative relief.

Furniture, furnishings and fittings

Three Star

- Each bedroom should have good quality, well co-ordinated furniture, in a sound and usable condition.
- There should be a bedside table, cabinet or shelf for each bed although twin beds may share and 75cm (2ft 6ins) bunk beds are exempt.
- Size and amount of furnishings in proportion to the space available.
- Well-positioned lights giving good levels of illumination with good quality light fittings with appropriate shades.
- A dressing table, writing desk, small table or equivalent, with a mirror adjacent.
- A chair or a stool.
- If a lounge is not available, a comfortable easy chair should be provided in the bedroom for guests to use whilst reading, etc. (Dispensations may be available for individual rooms, where lack of space precludes this).
- A wardrobe or clothes hanging space.
- An alcove with a rail is acceptable but coat stands, hooks on walls or behind doors are not. Wire hangers are not acceptable.
- Adequate drawer or shelf space. The drawers should run freely.

- Opaque lined curtains, blinds or shutters on all windows, including glass panels to doors, fanlights and skylight windows so that guests have privacy and can exclude any light from outside the room.

Note: Where bedrooms are located on the ground floor, you should consider providing additional privacy with a net curtain or blind.

Four Star

- Higher quality furniture, furnishings and fittings. Not necessarily new, but furniture still offering substantial comfort.
- Full curtains, possibly with additional embellishments such as tiebacks.

Five Star

- Excellent quality, modern reproduction or antique furniture.
- Some excellent antique furniture may show signs of distress which does not detract from its excellence (depending on the degree of deterioration).
- A more extensive range of furniture offering a greater degree of comfort and higher quality, including at least two comfortable chairs.
- Excellent co-ordination of soft furnishings of high intrinsic quality with additional features such as scatter cushions.
- Curtains denoting a degree of luxury with good use of pelmets and tiebacks, ample drape and width. Curtains to be fully lined so as to retain heat and keep out light.
- Excellent quality light fittings of various types. Shades add to overall theme of the decoration.
- Heating fittings such as radiators should be in excellent condition and may be disguised by painting or radiator covers.

Flooring

Three Star

- Well-fitted, good quality flooring in sound condition and comfortable underfoot.
- Wooden floors in good condition.
- Some underlay for carpeting.

Four Star

- High quality flooring, but not necessarily new and may show signs of wear. May also be of more moderate quality but still be in pristine condition.
- Normally professionally fitted.

Five Star

- Professionally fitted, high quality carpeting, (for example, high percentage wool content, in excellent condition) with substantial underlay.
- Polished floorboards or high quality laminate.

Beds and bedding: quality and provision

Three Star

Minimum bed sizes:

- **Single** 190 × 90cm (6ft 3ins x 3ft) Beds of 183 × 75 cm (6ft x 2ft 6ins) will only be acceptable for children and can only be used as part of a family room.
- **Double** 190 × 137cm (6ft 3ins x 4ft 6ins) Beds of 190 × 122 cm (6ft 3ins x 4ft) will be acceptable for single occupancy only.
- Rooms with bunk beds only are not acceptable for adult use.
- All mattresses should be comfortable and have mattress protectors. They should have a sprung interior or be made of foam or similar. Plastic or rubber mattress protectors are not acceptable except when used for small children.
- All beds and mattresses should be of sound condition with a secure headboard or equivalent
- All beds should be made daily.
- All should be of good quality and comfortable; a firm mattress and sound base.
- Bed frames may be of older style, but in good condition.
- All bedding should be well presented; clean, freshly laundered, co-ordinated and in sufficient quantity, according to the season and the needs of guests. As a guide each bed should have either: a) two sheets, two blankets and a bedspread or b) a duvet with duvet cover and one or two sheets.
- There should be two pillows in individual pillowcases per person.
- If feather pillows or duvets are provided, a non-allergenic alternative should be available on request.
- All bed linen (sheets, pillow cases and duvet covers etc) should be fresh for each new guest. It should be changed at least once in every week for staying guests (guests to be advised if more regular).
- Spare blankets and pillows should be available on request. For best practice, we suggest that you also use pillow protectors and that any spare pillows and bedding are clean, fresh and preferably wrapped.

Note: 100% man-made fibre sheets are not acceptable.

Four Star

- Very good firm/deep mattresses and sound bases.
- Headboards offer a degree of comfort.
- Very good quality linen co-ordinated with bedding and decoration theme. Possibly a choice of pillows, for example, hollow fibre or feather.
- The presentation of some styles of bed may benefit from the presence of a valance.

Five Star

- Excellent quality bed, for example, sprung mattress and high quality base.
- Clean headboard offering a high degree of comfort.
- Co-ordinated and crisply laundered linen changed at least every two days. A choice of bedding available, for example, thickly quilted or similar quality bedspreads and blankets, or duvets with appropriate tog rating.
- Beds and bedding all of a high quality and coordinated with bedroom decor and other soft furnishings.
- High standard of overall presentation.
- Appropriate use of valances.

Lighting, heating and ventilation

Windows and Ventilation

- Every bedroom must have at least one opening window with clear glass to provide natural light and adequate ventilation. Rooms without windows are generally not acceptable. Dispensations may be available for specific rooms, but only if air conditioning is installed. If windows are sealed, a Local Planning Authority approved ventilation system should be provided.
- Windows should be well-fitted, easy to open and close and must be able to remain open.
- Security fittings must be installed on all bedroom windows where, when open, access could be gained from outside – for example, patio or French doors, ground floor windows and windows overlooking fire escapes.
- An effort should be made to insulate against external noise.
- A pole should be provided for opening high 'Velux' style or skylight windows, where these are the only opening windows.

Heating

- There should be adequate in-room heating provided; effective levels of heating providing overall uniform temperature with properly fitted, thermostatically controlled heating.
- Additional heating should be available on request.
- Properly fitted automatic heating which may be thermostatically controlled.
- Individual thermostatically controlled heating. Some older storage heaters might not meet this requirement.
- Fans for guests' comfort available on request in hot weather.

Lighting

Three Star

- Bedrooms should be well lit and there should be adequate natural light.
- The control switch for the main lights should be near the door.
- There should be adequate bedside lighting controllable from each bed and from each side of a double bed. It is acceptable for twin beds to share a centrally situated light. 75cms (2ft 6ins) bunk beds are exempt from providing a light.

Four Star

- Very good levels of light with easy access to controls. Different types of lighting may be used for practical or aesthetic reasons, for example, halogen downlights, standard lamps or picture lights.

Five Star

- Variety of quality lights, well-positioned and effective for all purposes, for example, reading and at the dressing table.
- Controllable lighting, giving variable levels of light as appropriate. This may include a main bedroom light controlled by door and bed.

Bedroom accessories

Three Star

- These are NOT requirements but, if they are provided, their quality, range, presentation and ease of use will be taken into account in the assessment. Examples include: ingredients and equipment for making hot drinks, digital TV, Bluetooth speakers, WiFi access, hairdryer, in-room information, telephone, fruit, sweets, complimentary bottled water, fresh flowers or plants, reading material, clothes brushes, mending kits, biscuits/cakes, hot water bottles, fridge, tissues, etc.

Four Star

- A substantial range of very good quality accessories.

Five Star

- Excellent range of high quality accessories.

Beverage-making facilities

Three and Four Star

- Tea/coffee-making facilities available and accessible 24 hours either in bedrooms or in public areas. Self-service or vending options in public areas are acceptable. Self-service ingredients for making hot drinks should be kept wrapped or in lidded containers. Bedroom kettles should not have to be operated at floor level.
- Fresh milk should be available on request.

Five Star

- In-room facilities, where provided, of an excellent standard, for example, chinaware, choice of hot drinks including a range of speciality teas, fresh milk and freshly ground coffee.
- May feature bespoke coffee machines in room.

General connectivity and telephones (where available)

Three Star

- Bedroom telephone optional.
- Where not provided, a means of communication with staff in the event of an emergency must be provided, and advertised in the bedroom.
- Telephones, where provided, should display the establishment's telephone number together with the bedroom extension or telephone number.
- Telephones, where provided, should have instructions on how to use any additional services such as telephone message service and room-to room calls.
- Where telephones are provided, a rate card should be displayed in bedrooms illustrating typical charges for local, long-distance, international, internet, use of phone cards and connection to mobile phones. Sample call charges required.
- In addition, an explanation of what constitutes a local and long-distance call should be given as well as a clear explanation of peak and off peak times.
- Free WiFi and/or internet connection available in all bedrooms and public areas where connectivity allows. A conscious effort to strengthen any weak spots should be evident.

Four Star

- An effective means of internal communication could be provided.

Five Star

- High Speed Broadband available to guests, where connectivity allows.

In-room entertainment

Three Star

- Digital TV with remote control available in bedrooms.
- All available channels properly tuned in.
- Televisions in bedrooms can be safely mounted on a wall bracket. Ease of viewing and safety taken into account when positioning television.

Four Star

- Televisions with more generously-sized screens.
- Guests able to watch TV in comfort from both a chair and the bed.

Five Star

- Adoption of the latest innovation in entertainment technologies expected for example, smart TVs.

Miscellaneous

- A means of securing bedroom doors from inside and out, and a key should be available. Note: Those properties which may be older or are architecturally listed properties maybe awarded a dispensation if bedroom doors do not allow for the fitting of a lock. Guests need to be advised of this during the time of booking and a strong box or a lockable and secure facility needs to be provided within the bedroom.
- A non-flammable waste paper container to be provided.
- A drinking tumbler per guest. This should be glass or a wrapped disposable.
- Sufficient, conveniently situated, power sockets to allow for the safe use of all electrical equipment provided.
- Printed advice on how to obtain emergency assistance at night. This needs to be clearly displayed somewhere within the bedroom.
- Iron and ironing board available on request and advertised in the bedroom.
- Early morning calls available on request or an alarm clock provided.
- As a matter of best practice, all establishments are encouraged to display clear fire instructions where appropriate.

Bathrooms

General (including space and ease of use)

Three Star

- Hot water at all reasonable times.
- At least one bath or shower room with washbasin for every six guests.
- At least one WC for every six guests, separate from bath or shower room. When an establishment has four or fewer bed spaces for paying guests, it is acceptable for a bath or shower room to be combined with a washbasin and WC.
- If there are any guest bedrooms without washbasins, there should be a hand washbasin in the WC.
- Sufficient space to allow easy access to the facilities and WC.

Four Star

- Well-planned layout of sanitary ware and fittings to maximise convenience and ease of use.
- Very good provision of shelf space for guests' toiletries, etc

Five Star

- Ample space to allow easy access to the facilities.
- Plenty of provision for laying out toiletries, shaving equipment and hanging up clothes. Convenient layout.
- Minimal noise from plumbing.

Provision of en suite, private and shared facilities

Three Star

At least 50% of bedrooms should have an en suite or private bath/shower facility.

Four and Five Star

- To achieve a Four or Five Star Rating, all bedrooms will be en suite or a private bath/shower facility.

What is an en suite?

An en suite facility consists of a bath or shower, WC and washbasin in a separate room, connected to a bedroom and entered directly from it. The WC must always be in its own properly ventilated room. If the shower cubicle is situated in the bedroom then additional ventilation should be added to take account of this. It is acceptable for the washbasin and shower to be in the bedroom, as long as the WC is contained in a room of its own, within the bedroom. Accommodation with shower cubicles sited in the bedrooms are unlikely to achieve a high quality rating. If the bath or shower cubicle is located in the bedroom, guests must be told when they book. This should not be described as en suite facilities.

What is a private facility?

A private bathroom is one in which the bath or shower, WC and perhaps a washbasin are allocated for the sole use of the occupants of one particular bedroom. The bathroom should be on the same floor and be reasonably close to the bedroom. It should be lockable with a key provided. Access to the bath and/or shower rooms from the bedrooms through a lounge, dining room, etc is not acceptable.

What is a shared facility?

A shared facility is one that may be shared by the occupants of more than one bedroom. Access to the bath and/or shower rooms from the bedrooms through a lounge, dining room etc is not acceptable.

Guest toilets (shared)

- Access to guest toilets from a bedroom through a lounge, dining room, etc is not acceptable.

Decoration

Three Star

- Well-finished, good quality wall coverings and paint work.
- Wall and ceiling coverings well applied.

Four Star

- Very good standard of decoration, possibly recently re-decorated but not of highest quality. Or excellent quality with some slight ageing.
- Some effort made to hide surface-mounted pipes and wires.

Five Star

- Excellent interior design, with considerable attention to detail and everything in pristine condition.
- Professional finish to all aspects of decoration with high quality decor and tiling. Sealant and grouting immaculate.
- Attractive use of pictures, prints and other decorative relief, where appropriate

Fixtures and fittings for all bath/shower rooms (en suite, private and shared)

Three Star

- Bath or Shower. If a shower is provided a screen or curtain should be provided, unless designed in such a way that this is not required.
- Fresh soap provided for each new guest. If liquid soap dispensers are used, you need to pay particular attention to their cleanliness and hygiene.
- A covered bin or open bin with sanitary disposal bags.
- An internal lock/bolt. Separate private bathrooms need a lock and key so that the guest has sole use and can confidently leave their belongings in bathroom.
Note: An internal lock is not needed for en suite doors.
- Opaque window curtains or blinds for privacy and comfort.
- A hook for clothes.
- A non-slip bath mat should be available on request when shower trays and baths are not non-slip.
- A towel rail or equivalent. A radiator is not acceptable, but a towel ring or a hanging rack on a radiator is.
- A clean bathmat for each new let.
- An electric razor point or adapter available within easy reach of the mirror. This may be located in a bedroom or bathroom.
- Hot water for bathing should be available at all reasonable times.

Four Star

- Good sized bath and washbasin. Shower screen or high quality shower curtain.
- Very good quality bath and shower trays – probably ceramic/ enamel or composite.
- Generally high quality fittings throughout with only slight wear.
- All sanitary ware in good order, no cracks, crazing or dull finishes.
- High quality taps and showers with strong and refreshing flow of water that is easy to control.

Five Star

- High quality, solid, well-made fittings in excellent order, all in matching style.
- Sturdy cast iron or steel and enamel bath. High quality shower cubicles or screens.
- Power showers or high quality fittings which are responsive, thermostatically controlled and easy to use.
- Plenty of hot water at all times.
- Generous amount of towel rail space.
- Heated towel rail, or towel rail fitted above radiator.

Flooring

Three Star

- Well-fitted, good quality flooring in sound condition and comfortable under foot.
- Wooden floors in good condition.
- Some underlay for carpeting.
- An extractor fan for adequate ventilation, or a window that opens.

Four Star

- High quality flooring, but not necessarily new and may show signs of wear. Or more moderate quality but in pristine condition.
- Normally professionally fitted.

Five Star

- Professionally fitted, high quality carpeting, tiles, vinyl or laminate.
- Polished floorboards or high quality laminate with rugs. Where the flooring is tiled, grouting and sealant.

Lighting, heating and ventilation

Three Star

- Well-positioned lights giving good levels of illumination particularly by the mirror.
- Comfortable heating levels, appropriate to the room size and providing overall uniform temperature.
- Adequate heating. All bathrooms with an external window must have heating.
- All bathrooms need to be well lit by a covered light.

Four Star

- Very good levels of light especially over or next to the mirror.
- Different types of lighting possibly used for practical or aesthetic reasons, for example, halogen down lighters.
- Properly fitted, automatic, thermostatically controlled heating.

Five Star

- Well-positioned, good quality lights giving good levels of illumination for various purposes, for example, shaving, applying make-up etc. Responsive, thermostatically controlled, automatic heating.
- Heating source possibly a heated towel rail or under floor heating.
- Where there is a window, an extractor fan as well as the window.

Towels and toiletries: quality, range and presentation

Three Star

- A good range of good quality absorbent towels.
- Towels changed at least every three days except where, as part of an environmental policy, guests agree to a less frequent change.
- Good quality toilet paper and a range of quality toiletries including wrapped soap, shampoo, etc. Large bottles of proprietary brands are acceptable but should be kept topped up.

Four Star

- High quality, soft and fluffy towels, smelling clean and fresh.
- Face cloth may be included.
- Toiletries of a higher quality with better packaging and presentation - perhaps all part of the same range.

Five Star

- Greater range of quality towels, for example, bath sheets, bathrobes and flannels.
- Towels changed every two days, except where, as part of an environmental policy, guests agree to a less frequent change.
- Luxury toilet paper and a very good range of well presented, quality toiletries, for example, high quality soap, shampoo, shower gel, conditioner, tissues, cotton wool balls, cotton buds, etc.

Public areas including dining room or restaurant: quality and condition

General

- There should be a dining room or breakfast area available unless meals are only served in bedrooms, in which case guests need to be told of this when they book and this should be highlighted on property website and on third party websites.

- Where televisions are not provided in the bedrooms, there should be access to a lounge that has comfortable easy seating and a colour television at no extra charge. If you have a Peace and Quiet policy that is clearly advertised in your brochure and on your website and guests should be advised at the time of booking. A dispensation may then be made at the discretion of the assessing body.
- A payphone should be provided or guests should, on request, be able to make or receive phone calls on the proprietor's own telephone. A charge may be made for this facility.
- Corridors and stairs should be in good repair and free from obstruction.
- The levels of lighting in all public areas should be adequate for safety and comfort. Stairways and landings should also have sufficient light at night. All public areas should have an adequate level of heating.

Decoration

Three Star

- Coordinated interior decoration.
- Well-finished, good quality wall coverings and paint work.
- Wall and ceiling coverings well applied.
- Use of pictures, etc where appropriate, particularly on plain walls.

Four Star

- Very good standard of decoration with use of high quality pictures and prints where applicable.
- Some effort made to hide surface-mounted pipes and wires.

Five Star

- Excellent interior design, with high attention to detail. Thoughtful coordination of patterns, colours and textures.
- High quality wall coverings with professional finish to all aspects of decoration.
- Attractive use of pictures, prints and other decorative relief.

Furniture, furnishings and fittings

Three Star

- Good quality, functional furniture in a sound condition.
- Range of good quality sofas and/or armchairs in lounges.
- Good quality light fittings with appropriate shades.
- Substantial, lined curtains with good use of coordination.
- Some personal touches for example, books, magazines, local historical information, etc available in lounges.

Four Star

- High quality furniture, furnishings and fittings – not necessarily new, but still offering substantial comfort. Or good quality furniture in excellent, new condition.
- Light fittings varied and of very good quality and condition.
- Curtains to be full and may have additional embellishments such as tie backs.

Five Star

- All furniture in excellent quality and condition. This could be modern, reproduction or antique furniture.
- A more extensive range of furniture offering a greater choice of seating.
- Excellent coordination of soft furnishings of high intrinsic quality with additional features such as scatter cushions.
- Curtains denoting a degree of luxury with good use of pelmets and tie backs, ample drape and width. Curtains to be fully lined so as to retain heat and keep out light.
- Excellent quality light fittings of various types. Shades add to overall theme of the decoration.
- Heating fittings such as radiators should be in excellent condition and may be disguised by painting.

Flooring

Three Star

- Well-fitted, good quality flooring in sound condition and comfortable underfoot.
- Wooden, stone and tiled floors in good condition.
- Some underlay for carpeting.

Four Star

- High quality flooring, possibly not new and showing signs of wear. Or more moderate quality but in pristine condition. Normally professionally fitted.

Five Star

- Professionally fitted, high quality carpeting, for example, high percentage wool content, in excellent condition with substantial underlay.
- Polished floorboards or high quality laminate, etc with rugs.

Lighting and heating: quality provision**Three Star**

- Well-positioned lights giving good levels of illumination.
- Ample natural light.
- Effective levels of heating providing overall uniform temperature.
- Properly fitted, thermostatically controlled heating.

Four Star

- Very good levels of light with easy access to controls. Different types of lighting may be used for practical, aesthetic or ambience reasons, for example, halogen downlighters, standard lamps or picture lights.
- Properly fitted, automatic heating which is possibly thermostatically controlled.

Five Star

- Variety of types of lighting giving good levels of illumination for all practical purposes such as reading menu and wine list in bars etc.
- A positive effort made to ensure that heating meets the guests' needs. Likely to be automatic, thermostatically controlled heating. Some older storage heaters may not meet this requirement. Backup source for heat for very cold weather, which may include open fires where appropriate, or coal/gas/log effect fires.

Table appointment: quality and condition**Three Star**

- Well-laid tables with matching cutlery and crockery.
- Good quality paper napkins.
- Menus, where provided, clean and well presented.

Four Star

- Very good quality of crockery, cutlery and glassware. Cloth or high quality paper napkins and tablemats and/or tablecloth.
- Flowers or other appropriate decoration on tables.

Five Star

- Table appointment of the highest standard, quality accessories and glassware.
- High quality cloths and napkins or well-presented wood tables with mats.
- Table enhancements of high quality, for example, candles or fresh flowers as appropriate.
- Attractively presented menus using clear, informative layout and helpful descriptions.

Comfort and ease of use

Three Star

- Good layout and adequate circulation space to allow staff and customers to pass without inconvenience.
- Appropriate table and chair heights. Practical, comfortable chairs.

Four Star

- Well-planned layout of furniture to maximise use of free space.

Five Star

- A spacious, well-planned room with furniture in suitable, convenient places.
- High degree of comfort, well-spaced chairs, spacious tables.
- Table and seating arrangements show that the comfort of guests has been fully considered.

Lifts

- There is no requirement to provide these, but we will take into account the quality, presentation and their ease of use where provided.

External areas

Buildings appearance and condition

Three Star

- Well-maintained property and outbuildings. Some natural weathering may be present.
- Attractive use of window boxes, hanging baskets and tubs where appropriate.
- Where displayed, signs have been maintained in good condition.

Four Star

- Very good maintenance of stonework and paintwork, although some natural weathering is acceptable.
- Some additional external features to enhance the appearance. This includes window boxes, especially in properties without a garden.

Five Star

- Excellent standards of external maintenance including outbuildings and signs, allowing for the age of the building.
- Fresh, well-maintained paintwork in a new building. No unsightly staining and stonework in older buildings.
- Addition of features such as flower tubs and window boxes where appropriate.
- Attractive architectural features and decorations.
- Well illuminated and clearly signed.

Grounds, garden and frontage

Three Star

- Well-maintained and tidy grounds, driveways, footpaths, etc.
- Attractive overall appearance.
- Effective lighting and signage where required, for example, long driveway.
- Easy access. Well maintained surface.

Four Star

- Dustbin area not visible and preferably screened.
- High standards of maintenance in the garden. Generally tidy flowerbeds, pathways and hedges with all trees and shrubs well-tended.
- Evidence of some attention to detail, for example, well-surfaced, pot hole free driveways, colourful borders and wide level pathways.

Five Star

- Attractively maintained, well-tended borders or shrubs, tidy pathways and edges, lawns in good condition and well-cut, hedges trimmed and an overall attempt to maintain an attractive appearance throughout the year.
- Good attention to detail, including landscaping, driveways, the provision of garden furniture or architectural features, for example, gazebo, pergola, summerhouse, etc.
- Excellent, well positioned lighting and signage.

Car parking (where provided)

Three Star

- Good, easy access with signage as appropriate.
- Adequate lighting.
- A more structured approach to parking for establishments who receive non-residents.
- Where applicable and appropriate to the market, bike stores and EV charging stations to be available.

Four Star

- Clear definition of parking area or spaces. Signage prevents confusion for guests on arrival. This may be informal.

Five Star

- Ample car parking spaces, clearly signed.
- Good, well-positioned lighting.
- Consideration given to the security of the guests' cars.
- Paths and steps well-lit at night.

Annexes

- If you are offering guests accommodation in an unconnected annexe or with separate external access, you must tell them when they are booking. You must also advise them if there is any change to a booking that involves an annexe or separate external access.
- You should also tell them where the annexe is. Paths or passageways to the annexe must be in good condition, well surfaced and adequately lit.

Code of conduct

All Quality Scheme participants must agree to comply with the following VisitEngland code of conduct:

Prior to booking:

- To describe accurately in any advertisement, brochure, or other printed or electronic media, the facilities and services provided.
- To make clear to guests in print, in electronic media and on the telephone exactly what is included in all prices quoted for accommodation, including taxes and any other surcharges. Details of charges for additional services/facilities should also be made clear, for example breakfast, leisure etc.
- To anticipate the needs of disabled guests and make reasonable adjustments to improve the premises and business practices.
- To allow guests to view the accommodation prior to booking if requested.

At the time of booking:

- To clearly describe the cancellation policy to guests, such as by telephone, fax, internet/ email as well as in any printed information given to guests.
- To adhere to and not to exceed prices quoted at the time of booking for accommodation and other services.
- To make clear to guests if the accommodation offered is in an unconnected annexe or similar, and to indicate the location of such accommodation and any difference in comfort and/or amenities from accommodation in the establishment.

On arrival:

- To welcome all guests courteously and without discrimination in relation to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (Equality Act 2010).

During the stay:

- To maintain standards of guest care, cleanliness and service appropriate to the type of establishment.
- To deal promptly and courteously with all enquiries, requests, bookings and correspondence from guests.
- To ensure complaint handling procedures are in place and that complaints received are investigated promptly and courteously and that the outcome is communicated to the guest.

On departure:

- To give each guest, on request, details of payments due and a receipt, if required/ requested.

General:

- To ensure the accommodation is prepared for the arrival of guests at all times when the establishment is advertised as open.
- To advise guests, at any time prior to their stay, if there are any changes in what has been booked.
- To have a complaints handling procedure in place to deal promptly and fairly with all guest complaints.
- To hold current public liability insurance and to comply with all relevant statutory obligations including legislation applicable to fire, health and safety, planning and food safety.
- To allow VisitEngland representatives reasonable access to the establishment, on request, to confirm that the Code of Conduct is being observed or in order to investigate any complaint of a serious nature notified to them.
- When a business is sold or ceases to trade, every effort should be made to inform VisitEngland.



VisitEngland™

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