

VisitEngland ™

Pubs

Quality Standard





THE SHIPWRIGHTS ARMS

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Introduction

VisitEngland and the British Beer & Pub Association have come together to offer an assessment scheme to the pub industry in England. The aim of the scheme is to help pubs thrive, by offering help, advice, quality benchmarking and a valuable marketing tool, in the form of the VisitEngland quality accreditation marque. VisitEngland understands that quality is the key to success within the modern hospitality and tourism industry. Pubs need to compete within an increasing competitive commercial environment and many need to broaden their offering and their appeal if they are to survive. VisitEngland can not only help you to promote your business, but can provide objective feedback and offer solutions that will help to give your business that competitive edge. Our assessor team recognise and experience 'best practice' in all sectors of the pub industry and will share this by offering practical and cost effective solutions.

1

Minimum Standards



The VisitEngland Pub Quality Scheme is a quality based assessment and the accreditation reflects the customer experience and the quality of the product and services offered by the pub and its staff. The assessment is underpinned by VisitEngland's Code of Conduct, a commitment to which is a requirement of participation in the scheme. This ensures that all pubs are operating to the minimum standards.

VisitEngland's Code of Conduct can be found at the end of this booklet. This explains the criteria that needs to be met by every pub taking part in the quality scheme.

Statutory Obligations

These obligations will vary from business to business, dependent on the nature and scope of the pub. All pubs need to have adequate public liability insurance or comparable government indemnities, and in addition comply with all applicable planning, health, safety and fire regulations.

- **Public Liability Insurance:** whilst 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.
- **Fire Risk Assessment:** to comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and, if requested, supply evidence that a Fire Risk Assessment has been carried out annually. For guidance refer to www.visitengland.com/fire.
- **Food Safety/Hygiene:** register with the local Environmental Health department.
- **Health & Safety:** operate safely with due regard to health and safety legislation and with evidence of consideration for the safety of customers and security of customers' property.
- **Planning:** comply with all local planning regulations.
- **Licensing:** comply with all local licensing regulations.
- **Equality Act 2010:** comply with this Act. Welcome all customers courteously and without discrimination in relation to gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or belief. Make 'reasonable' adjustments to improve service for disabled customers. Produce an Access Statement – a description of facilities and services offered, specifically in relation to accessibility, to inform people with access needs. For guidance and a free tool, refer to www.visitengland.com/accessstatements.
- **Welcome assistance dogs (legal obligation).** Read VisitEngland's 'Take the lead' booklet online at www.visitengland.com/access.

Good Practice: Sustainability

- Consider drafting and promoting an environmental management policy, setting out the environmental and sustainable management actions taken by you for your business.
- Join a green tourism scheme.
- Join or set up a voluntary visitor payback / gifting scheme where a business collects and donates funds to a local charity.



BAR SNACKS

BAR SNACKS are available for purchase from the bar. Prices are as follows:

Item	Price
Bar Snacks (10 items)	£10.00
Bar Snacks (20 items)	£20.00
Bar Snacks (30 items)	£30.00

For further information, please contact the bar manager.

2

Quality is the Key

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 Pub assessment scheme you will receive a regular visit. This visit will assess all aspects of your pub and its service in order to award the accreditation and provide you and your team with detailed feedback on how further improvements might be made.

Assessment visits will be unannounced and aim to test as many of the services offered by the pub as possible. A full review of the pub's online presence will be undertaken prior to the assessment visit to see how your pub might be perceived from its own website and customer review sites. Feedback will be offered, along with advice on how this area of the operation might be improved and optimised to increase business.

A verbal debrief will be offered with an appropriate member of staff immediately following the assessment visit in order to provide instant feedback. If this is not convenient, then a telephone debrief can be arranged. The verbal debrief is always followed up with a detailed written report.

Your assessor will be interested in finding out a little more about your business during the debrief. Are you as busy as you would like to be? Do you have quieter periods that you would like to promote? Is your average spend increasing as you would like? This information will allow your assessor to take a more focused approach and to offer suggestions that might benefit your business.

Hints & Tips

The Assessment Process

- The assessment process is about help and advice. The style and character of your pub is what makes it unique. Your assessor is there to enhance that, not change it.
- Ask your assessor questions, lots of questions! Our assessors visit pubs and restaurants of all styles across England and they are willing to offer help and advice. They are also looking to identify and spread best practice within the industry.
- Stay in touch. Assessors are happy to answer questions in between assessment visits.

Awards

Special Awards

- VisitEngland will award annually a small number of accolades for pubs that offer exceptional customer service and hospitality. Assessors will nominate individual pubs where they were particularly impressed by the warmth of the welcome and staff that went the extra mile to make customers feel special.

Quality Assessment

Our assessors will grade each aspect of your pub, based on customer expectations of quality and best practice at pubs and restaurants throughout England. The assessment is objective and judgement will not be made on any aspect of your pub based on personal taste.

The aim of the assessor is to behave as a critical friend, viewing your business through the eyes of potential customers, as well as observing how existing customers are enjoying their visit to the pub.

What is Quality?

Whatever the location, type or style of your pub, your customer will have certain expectations based on your website, online reviews and word of mouth. Every pub can offer a quality service. Will your customers' expectations be met?

Your assessor will be looking at areas such as those highlighted on page 11 with a critical eye, but always with the intention of helping you improve your business.





First Impressions

- The first impression of the outside of your pub will encourage or deter a potential new customer.
- Signage, lighting, menu boards and parking will all play a part in attracting new customers. It is an important part of the business to get right.

The Welcome

- The all-important welcome.
- Do staff welcome new customers with the same warmth as regulars?
- Even at a busy bar, a quick look across and smile of acknowledgement from staff can make a customer feel welcome.

Good Practice: Accessibility

- If there are steps to enter can a ramp (permanent or portable) or alternative level entrance be provided?

Service

- Whatever the style and scope of the service, be it a 'wet-led' pub or gastro food operation, the service needs to be as good as it can be.
- Your assessor will be looking at service skills, efficiency and knowledge, as well as the hospitality provided by the team.
- For example, do your food service staff have good menu knowledge? Do bar staff have a good understanding and knowledge of drinks on offer?
- Do staff have an awareness of customers with special needs and are they confident in being able to assist?

Cleanliness

- High standards of cleanliness are essential. A customer will not want to eat in a pub if the toilets or bar areas are not kept clean.

Food and Drink

- Pubs offer a wide range of food and drink. Some have a good variety of ales and fewer wines, for others it might be the opposite. Food will range from pubs offering a basic and wholesome menu to the highest quality gastro pub experience.
- Does the food match the market being targeted?
- Can the quality of ingredients or quality of cooking be improved?
- Are customers leaving any food on their plates? Could this be avoided and, if so, how? Do your staff ask the question?
- Your assessor will test all aspects and offer a professional opinion and advice and help to spread best industry practice.

First impressions

- Create a poor first impression and that potential new customer might never walk through your door.
- You might have spent a great deal of time and effort on the interior of the pub, but how does the outside look?
- Peeling paintwork, untidy signage and dead flowers in pots and baskets can create the perception of a management that do not care.
- Is the car park well maintained and well lit? Will new customers want to leave their cars there?
- Is the garden and all of its furniture tidy and well maintained?
- Are empty crates and barrels screened?

Cleanliness

- Cleanliness is always of the utmost importance.
- A dirty toilet might turn a potential diner away. Monitor cleanliness in toilets throughout the day, not just prior to opening.
- Remember to keep all areas clean and tidy, not just the customer areas. The area behind the bar is a working area, but customers will be able to see the beer pumps, coffee machine and shelving etc.
- Do not forget the car park, garden and frontage, no matter the weather or time of year. Make sure cigarette butts are not left lying in entrance and garden areas.

3

How do we Measure Quality?

During the assessment visit, your assessor will make quality judgements across all aspects of your customer facing business and will award a score from 0-5 for each element.

0 = unacceptable

1 = poor

2 = disappointing

3 = good

4 = very good

5 = excellent

At the end of the visit the assessor can calculate a percentage score for the overall pub operation and for each section. In order to achieve a VisitEngland accreditation the overall percentage score has to reach 60% or above. Additionally, the 5 key sectional scores must also reach 60%.

These 5 key areas are:

- The Pub
- Food and Drink
- Toilets
- Staff – Hospitality and Service
- Cleanliness and Presentation

By requiring a minimum score in each of the key sections, VisitEngland and your customers can be sure that the pub offers a consistent level of quality throughout. Achieving a VisitEngland accreditation is something to be very proud of.

We understand that not all pubs will provide all of the services listed opposite. Where this is the case, the relevant scoring areas will be removed from the assessment process with no detrimental effect on the overall outcome.

Assessment Example

In the assessment example opposite, Pub X meets the percentage score requirements in order to be accredited. Accreditation requires a minimum overall score of 60% and a minimum of 60% for each of the key sections. These scores are met, but in one of the sections the scores are borderline, which would be a concern as they might fall below the required level at the next visit, if action was not taken.

The scores in the example opposite show that the weaker area is in the Staff section, in particular drink and menu knowledge, and the efficiency of food service. The assessor will detail the reasons for this at the verbal debrief and in the written report, with suggestions as to how the weaker aspects might be improved. Advice will be offered across all sections about how the overall percentage score might be improved.

	Marks awarded (out of 5)		
Pre-Arrival			
On-Line Presence	4		
Subtotal	4	31/45 = 69%	Pass
The Pub			
First Impressions – Exterior	3		
Garden	4		
First Impressions and Ambience – Interior	4		
Decoration and Flooring	4		
Furniture and Fittings – interior customer areas	3		
The Bar	4		
Lighting, Temperature and Ventilation	4		
Communication of food offering	2		
Customer space, comfort and ease of use	3		
Extra facilities (indoor facilities – for example, skittle alley)	N/A		
Subtotal	31	31/45 = 69%	Pass
Food and Drink			
Food Menu – range, content and information	4		
Food – as described on menu	5		
Food – look and presentation	4		
Food – quality and taste	4		
Drinks – range and choice	4		
Drinks – quality and taste	5		
Subtotal	26	26/30 = 87%	Pass
Toilets			
Provision, Location and Accessibility	4		
Decoration and Maintenance	4		
Fixtures and Fittings	4		
Subtotal	12	12/15 = 80%	Pass
Staff – Hospitality and Service			
Initial Greeting on Arrival	3		
Bar Staff – Appearance	4		
Food Service Staff – Appearance	4		
Bar Service – Knowledge of Drinks	2		
Bar Service – Efficiency	4		
Bar Service – Hospitality	3		
Food Service – Menu knowledge	2		
Food Service – Efficiency	2		
Food Service – Hospitality	3		
Other (any other staff encountered)	3		
Subtotal	30	30/50 = 60%	Pass but borderline
Cleanliness and Presentation			
All Exterior Areas	4		
Bar – Customer Areas	4		
Bar – Staff Areas	4		
Dining Room (if separate to bar)	3		
Cutlery, Crockery, Glassware	5		
Toilets	5		
Extra Facilities	NA		
Subtotal	25	25/30 = 83%	Pass
Total	128	128/175 = 73%	Pass





4

Quality Assessment: What will your assessor be looking at?

Hints & Tips

Get online

- Spend time and effort to ensure that you have a good and positive image online.
- Some new customers might simply want a postcode and directions in order to find you, so ensure that you have a good 'Contact Us' page on your website.
- Do the photographs on your site create an accurate picture of your pub? Are they up to date and appealing?
- If you serve food then customers will want to see a menu with prices. Is the menu presentation attractive? Are you keeping up with any food promotions with regular updates on the website?
- What do your customers think about you? Find out by reading review sites such as TripAdvisor. Engage with TripAdvisor by replying to both positive and negative reviews. Remember that you can turn a negative into a positive. Your assessor can help with this.
- If you choose to use social media, then commit to it and update it regularly.

Here we look in more detail at what your assessor will be taking into consideration when awarding each score that goes towards making up the overall total.

The information below is designed to give the pub owner or manager an indication of what areas the assessors will be looking at when carrying out an assessment visit, in order to assist in preparation for the visit. It is important to note that all assessments are carried out within the context of the individual pub being assessed. Expectations will be very different between a large family pub and a small gastro pub, for example. However, the principles of customer service, good food and drink, and cleanliness remain the same throughout.

PRE-ARRIVAL

This score is for the accuracy and clarity of information on the website and any social media sites.

- The assessor will try different searches to see how easy the website is to find. When they have found it, they will spend time testing all functions of the site.
- The assessor will read customer reviews and feedback on prominent review sites and look at any linked content to social media sites. By reviewing customer review sites the assessor might be able to offer valuable business advice based on customer perceptions of the pub. Also, the assessor can advise on how review sites can be effectively managed by the owner/manager.
- Information provided on the website will be used to plan the visit. The assessor will use any directions provided and might plan a visit to coincide with a particular promotion or event.
- The assessor will re-visit the website following the assessment. Did the pub deliver what the website promised?
- The assessor will look for an Access Statement – a description of facilities and services offered, specifically in relation to accessibility, to inform people with access needs. Is it easy to find on the website? A free tool with a template for pubs is available:
www.visitengland.org/accessstatements.

THE PUB

First Impressions – Exterior

- The assessor will look at all aspects of the exterior of the pub.
- Is car park signage in good condition and easy to see?
Is the parking area well maintained, with a good surface, perhaps with marked bays? Are there designated accessible parking spaces?
- Are the parking areas kept tidy? Are any bins or crates screened?
- Is the decoration and signage all in good condition?
- If there are hanging baskets and other planters, are they well-tended and looking good?
- Are menus, boards or promotions outside the pub in good condition, up-to-date and likely to attract new customers?
- Overall, what message does your exterior give potential customers?
- Are paths kept clear of obstacles such as A-frames, debris, moss, ice and fallen leaves and have firm well-maintained surfaces?

Garden

- If a garden or any other outside area is provided for guests for eating or drinking, the assessor will look at it.
- The score awarded will take into account the time of the year and weather at the time of the assessment visit.
- All aspects of the outside space will be assessed, including the general maintenance, furniture, lighting and heating, if provided.

Good Practice: Sustainability

- For gardens and the exterior of the pub, consider the use of materials which are in keeping with the local environment and physical characteristics of the local geography, geology and age of the buildings.

First Impressions and Ambience – Interior

- This is about the all-important first impression of the pub; the initial feel and look of the pub. Are customers likely to be happy or disappointed?
- Is there music and does this enhance or hinder? Consider customers with hearing loss.

Decoration and Flooring

- The assessor will look at all aspects of the decoration within the pub in all of the customer areas; paintwork to walls and doors, use of pictures and other decorative objects.
- The assessor will also look at the condition of the flooring, particularly in the high usage areas.

Good Practice: Sustainability

- Use could be made of local artists' work, prints and / or photographs depicting local scenes, historical or heritage related images. It all adds to a visitor's enhanced sense of place.

Good Practice: Accessibility

- Consider having the door frames a contrasting colour to the wall and avoid high gloss finishes to assist visually impaired customers.
- On each step or change of level, provide a nosing strip that contrasts in colour to the floor.



Furniture and Fittings

- This includes all dining furniture provided for customers.
- Food display cabinets should be well maintained.
- Cutlery and condiment stations should be in good condition.

The Bar

- This covers all areas of the service area and includes the bar counter, beer pumps, shelving, display cabinets and fridges, coffee machines etc.
What is the general condition and level of maintenance within this area?
- Is the stock well presented?
- Are staff able to offer help to those requiring assistance carrying drinks?

Good Practice: Accessibility

- Is there a section of the bar accessible to people of short stature and wheelchair users?

Lighting, Temperature and Ventilation

- This includes lighting throughout the pub. Different establishments will use light to help create different atmospheres and styles, but is the lighting system well maintained and does it work? For example, do guests have sufficient light to read menus?
- Is the room temperature comfortable for customers?
- Is the pub well-ventilated?

Good Practice: Sustainability

- Consider checking windows for draughts to ensure that heat is not lost.
- Use energy saving light bulbs to reduce your energy bills. It might also be possible to make greater use of natural light in some areas.
- Improved insulation will save on energy use.

Communication of the Food Offering

- For pubs offering food, this section looks at how the pub sets out its food offering to customers. Are menus easy to find and easy to read? Are menus and blackboards up-to-date? Can blackboards be seen from all or most areas of the pub?
- Are special offers or themed food nights well advertised and promoted within the pub?

Good Practice: Sustainability

- Menus highlighting local specialities can really help differentiate your offering from that of your competitors, so highlight the connection with local producers wherever possible. Incorporate a little description of where ingredients are sourced, who the producer is and why you have chosen them.
- Where possible, source food and drink products locally. Build up relationships with local producers and traders.
- Staff should be fully briefed on the source, characteristics and significance of local food and drink products.

Good Practice: Accessibility

- Is a large print version of the menu available in a clear font (minimum font size 16pt)?





Space, Comfort and Ease of Use

- The assessor will look at the space for customers within the pub.
Is there clear freedom of movement for visitors with pushchairs and wheelchair users?
- Is best use made of the space in order to provide comfortable drinking and dining areas?

Good Practice: Accessibility

- Are tables stable and provide support for people rising from their chairs?
- Is there a selection of chairs, some with arm rests to help people rise from their chairs?
- Ensure crockery contrasts with table surface to assist visually impaired customers.
- Are doors as easy to open as possible? Think about fixing open heavy or stiff internal doors.

Extra Facilities

- Some pubs will offer facilities that are in addition to the bar and dining areas. These might include skittle alleys or children's areas, etc.
The assessor will take all aspects of these extra facilities into account in this section.

FOOD AND DRINK

Food Menu – Range, Content and Information

- This mark is for the range and content of the menu and not the quality of the food.
- The assessor will look at the range and balance of the menu, including any specials. Is it offering a good range of fish, meat, vegetarian options and special diets that will appeal to a wide range of customers?
- Where appropriate, is there a children's menu?
- How are dishes described and how is food allergen information provided?
- Recommendations for drinks and accompaniments could also be included within the menu.

Food – As Described on Menu

- The assessor will order and sample dishes from the menu and will also be observing the food served to other customers.
- Is the food served as described on the menu? Are you 'underselling', or does it bear little resemblance to its description?

Look and Presentation of Food

- Customers eat with their eyes, in particular when looking at food being served before placing an order of their own.
- Does the food look fresh and appetising?
- Is it likely to entice customers to order?

Quality and Taste of Food

- When testing the food, the assessor will look at the quality of ingredients, freshness of food, cooking skills and flavours.
- This will also be done within the context of the style of the food offered. Expectations will be higher at those pubs that set out to offer the full gastro pub experience.

Hints & Tips

Promote Local Food and Drink

- If you buy and use local produce then let your customers know about it.
- Be sure that when buying local produce that the quality is good.
- Many visitors to a new area will want to sample local food and drink and will actively seek it out.
- Don't forget to promote local produce on your website, outside and inside the building.
- Perhaps specialise in local cheeses, sausages or ciders, for example.

Hints & Tips

Safety

- A wide range of health and safety legislation applies to the pub industry. Are you up-to-date and fully compliant?
- Are you aware of the rules that apply to your pub?
- Do you have an up-to-date fire risk assessment for the building?
- Do food handlers receive training and appropriate supervision?
- Do you carry out regular health and safety audits?
- How do you provide food allergen information?
- Be sure to cover yourself with a good public liability insurance policy.
- If you have any concerns, ask your assessor to point you in the right direction.

Choice of Drinks

- Different styles of pubs will offer a different range of drinks. Some will be more real ale orientated and others might carry a more extensive wine list. Whatever the style of the operation, is a good stock carried?
- Is the full range of ales available at the time of assessment?
- Is there a good range of sprits for upselling, where possible?
- Are good balanced wine lists provided by pubs with a strong food offering?

Quality and Taste of Drinks

- Are drinks kept and served in peak condition?
- Are drinks served at the correct temperature?
- Are there any endorsements of the quality from other organisations such as Cask Marque?

TOILETS

The quality of toilets and range of facilities is an important element of the customer experience, particularly for customers with accessibility needs or customers with young children.

Provision and Accessibility

- The assessor will look at the toilets in terms of numbers for the size of the pub and accessibility for customers with extra access needs.
- Is a designated accessible toilet available? Is it kept clear and ready for use and does it have appropriate support rails?
- The assessor will also look at the layout and usability of the facilities.

Decoration and Maintenance

- This part of the assessment looks at decoration and maintenance in all areas of the toilet facilities.
- Is the paintwork looking fresh and well maintained?
- Are tiles and grout in good condition?
- Is the quality of any designated accessible toilets comparable to that of standard WCs or is it a poor relation?

Fixtures and Fittings

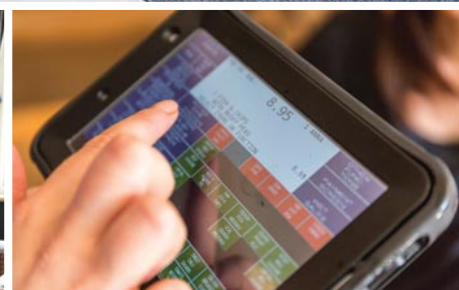
- This mark is specifically for the quality and condition of the fixtures and fittings. Older fittings in very good condition will score as well as more recently fitted toilet facilities.
- The assessor will be looking at toilets, washbasins, door locks, hand dryers etc. What is the quality and condition of these items and are they in good working order?

Hints & Tips

Toilets

- Your toilets are as important as any other part of your business. It is often said that customers will judge an eating establishment by the quality of its toilets.
- Cleanliness is paramount. Guests expect clean toilets.
- Do not forget about the toilets all day. It might be busy in all areas of the pub, but a few minutes ensuring that the toilets are in good order and are well stocked with products is going to be time well spent.





STAFF

Initial Greeting on Arrival

- The initial greeting is all-important. The assessor will give staff the opportunity to provide this initial element of hospitality.
- Are new customers greeted warmly or do they receive a less warm welcome than the regulars?
- At a busy bar, do staff make the effort to offer a simple and reassuring acknowledgement of a new customer waiting to be seated or served?
- Offer guests a choice of seating location to suit them.

Good Practice: Accessibility

- Specific training is available on how to welcome all types of guests e.g. VisitEngland/DisabledGo online training, Welcome All and World Host Customers with Disabilities. Consider staff learning to communicate in basic British Sign Language (BSL)

Bar Staff – Appearance

- There is no set expectation of how staff should be dressed, but the assessor will observe a number of aspects of staff appearance, including personal hygiene and grooming.
- Are staff readily recognisable?
- If some kind of uniform is worn, are all staff wearing it and are uniforms in good condition?

Food Service Staff – Appearance

- This section will be assessed in the same way as for bar staff if there are separate staff for food service.

Bar Staff – Knowledge of Drinks

- The assessor will test the bar staff on their knowledge of drinks by asking simple questions that are appropriate to the style of the pub.
- Questions might be about the range of wines, spirits or beers.

Bar Staff – Efficiency

- The assessor will look at a number of factors in this area of the assessment.
- Is the bar well prepared for service or do staff need to leave the bar in search of lemon, lime and ice etc.?
- Are there sufficient staff at the bar to cope with customer demand?
- Do staff have the skills to serve all kinds of drinks correctly and to offer the appropriate accompaniments?

Bar Staff – Hospitality

- Bar staff might be well trained and efficient with the service of drinks, but are they carrying out their task with a smile and friendly customer focus?
- Can staff assist those who might find it difficult to get to the bar by serving at tables?

Hints & Tips

Welcome

- Hospitality and friendliness should come naturally to any pub landlord, but do staff have that natural ability to welcome guests or are they just too busy?
- Are all of your customers greeted with a word of welcome and a smile?
- Are staff trained to acknowledge customers who arrive during busy periods?
- Consider putting simple training in place to ensure a consistent and warm welcome for all customers.
- Do your staff look out for customers who might need extra assistance, e.g. someone to read the menu out loud to them or help them to a seat?

Hints & Tips

Staff Training

- Invest sufficient time in staff training.
- Does the staff member taking the food order understand the menu and how dishes are prepared?
- Can bar staff recommend wines or answer questions about different types of gin or whiskey?
- Staff turnover in the industry might be high, but a little time spent on training can go a long way towards customer satisfaction and return trade.

Food Service – Menu Knowledge

- Do staff have good knowledge of the menu, including any ‘specials’? This will include dedicated food service staff and staff taking orders at the bar.
- Can they describe dishes accurately?
- Are they aware of the ingredients used in the dishes, and whether they are locally sourced? Do they understand the cooking and preparation processes involved? (i.e. is the pie ‘made from scratch’ on the premises?)
- Can they recommend drinks and accompaniments suitable for the dishes ordered?

Good Practice: Accessibility

- Are staff prepared to read the menu aloud if requested by customers with a visual impairment?

Food Service – Efficiency

- How efficient is the food service?
- Is food served in a timely manner?
- Are customers made aware of how the food service works? For example, do they need to find and collect their own cutlery?
- Are customers informed, prior to ordering, when advertised dishes are no longer on the menu, or when only one portion remains?

Food Service – Hospitality

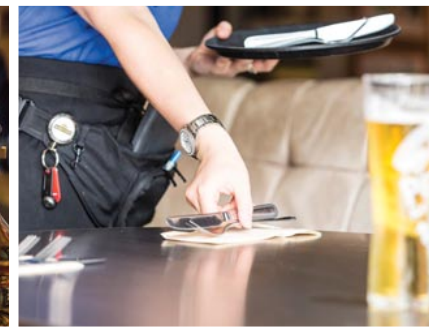
- As with bar service, is the food service carried out with a smile?
- Are food staff engaging in conversation with customers?

Other

- The service and hospitality of any other staff encountered will be assessed here.

“Such amazing service and a lovely bunch of staff, I would recommend booking as it can get rather busy but they will happily serve you food without a table a bring it to you wherever you decide to eat!! great food lovely portions and amazing atmosphere!! An all round great place to eat and drink!! ”

TripAdvisor review



CLEANLINESS AND PRESENTATION

This section includes a detailed assessment of the cleanliness throughout the pub, from the car park to all customer facing areas of the pub. A high standard of cleanliness needs to be maintained at all times across all areas.

All External Areas

- Is the car park, garden and frontage of the pub kept litter free?
- Are cigarette butts regularly removed from smoking areas and entrances?
- Are windows, menu boards and signs all clean?

Bar – Customer Areas

- Are carpets and other floor coverings clean?
- Are tables cleared and cleaned regularly?
- Is dusting carried out regularly?

Bar – Staff Areas

- Are shelves, chilled display cabinets and bottles clean and dust free?
- Are beer pumps clean and polished?
- Is the floor kept clean?

Dining Room – If Separate to Bar

- Any dedicated dining area will be assessed in the same way as Bar – Customer areas.

Cutlery, Crockery and Glassware

- Are drinks served in spotlessly clean glasses?
- Are the glasses on display clean and smear free?
- Is crockery clean and polished?
- Is cutlery and any cutlery and condiment station kept clean and tidy?

Toilets

- The assessor will observe and comment on all aspects of cleanliness within the toilets, both at the beginning and end of the visit.
- Do they smell clean and fresh?
- Are toilets and urinals clean?
- Is the floor clean?
- Are taps and mirrors polished?

Extra Facilities

- If any extra facilities are provided then the assessor will observe and comment on the cleanliness.

Good Practice: Sustainability

- Consider using low impact and chlorine-free cleaning products, such as microfibre cloths that reduce the amount of cleaning liquid required.



5

Sustainability: Doing Business Even Better

Green tourism and sustainability practices in your business are one and the same thing; it's all about taking small steps that enable you to do business even better, not differently. Small changes will not only save money, improve employee relations, enhance profitability and provide a richer experience for customers, but over time you will also improve your business' impact on the local economy, community and environment. 'Going green' does not have to be a chore and is just as applicable to businesses in a city centre as a rural location.

VisitEngland can help

VisitEngland is committed to promoting the adoption of sustainability practices among all tourism businesses. For further information on how to enhance your business to be more sustainable, including case studies on the benefits of adopting sustainable practices, please visit www.visitengland.org/green.

Sustainable tourism certification

If your business is already a successful sustainable business and you wish to demonstrate this to new or existing customers, you may wish to join one of the certification schemes that exist in England. These schemes are not operated by VisitEngland, but by independent organisations which have been verified to ensure they are offering a rigorous and well-founded sustainable certification scheme that will allow you to confidently promote your green credentials. Visit www.visitengland.org/green for more information.

Throughout this standards booklet, suggestions are included on how you can improve the sustainable performance of your business. These are not compulsory but are recommended if you wish to make a positive impact on your business and also save money.

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Making Your Pub Accessible For All

Pubs can present a range of challenges for disabled people and others with access needs. In response to this, many operators have been making improvements to their accessibility over recent years to ensure they can safely and warmly welcome disabled people.

They have been doing this by not only providing for wheelchair users wherever possible, but also for those with a hearing loss or sight loss, older visitors, people with a hidden disability or individuals with a learning disability. After all, almost 1 in 5 people in England are disabled in some way.

Disabled people and their companions spend over £3bn on overnight trips in England each year. When you add day visits, the 'Purple Pound' contributes £12.1bn to tourism businesses in England, and this is likely to be boosted further by an ageing population.

One key element of meeting the needs of this vast audience is by providing accurate information in advance that will enable disabled people, their families, friends and carers to decide whether or not to visit you. This is typically provided in the form of an Access Guide (an improved format that replaces Access Statements). To produce and publish an Accessibility Guide go to: www.visitengland.org/accessibilityguides.

Another is by making sure that if you have your own website it is easy to use for all customers, including the facility to change font sizes etc.

VisitEngland has produced some helpful guidance on how to meet the needs of disabled and older visitors, and how to attract this lucrative market at www.visitengland.org/access.

Legal Obligations

All businesses have obligations under the Equality Act 2010. This legislation requires businesses to anticipate and provide for disabled people and others with 'protected characteristics'. (see VisitEngland's Pink Book)

By making reasonable adjustments to your information provision, staff training and physical accessibility, including alternative arrangements where necessary, you will not only be helping to meet your obligations, but will be making your pub more accessible to all.

Hints & Tips

- For more tips on providing access for all in pubs read the British Beer & Pub Association's Open Welcome booklet: <http://www.beerandpub.com/industry-briefings/accessibility-in-pubs>

Code of Conduct and Conditions for Participation

Code of Conduct

The operator/manager is required to undertake and observe the 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 provide information on the suitability of the premises for guests of various ages, particularly the elderly and the very young;
- 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 i.e. 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 gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or belief.

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 give due consideration to the requirements of guests with special needs, and to make suitable provision where applicable;
- 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 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 conform that the Code of Conduct is being observed or in order to investigate any complaint of a serious nature notified to them.

Conditions for Participation

All establishments participating in the VisitEngland national quality assessment schemes are required to:

- Meet or exceed the VisitEngland minimum entry requirements for a rating in the relevant accommodation sector;
- Observe the VisitEngland Code of Conduct;
- Be assessed annually, and in the event of complaints, by authorised representatives of VisitEngland;
- Pay an annual participation fee and agree that the annual participation fee, however payable, whether made in one payment or by direct debit, is non-refundable by VisitEngland, and relates to and is payable for the VisitEngland national quality assessment scheme participation, services and benefits that you and your establishment receive throughout the applicable participation year. The VisitEngland national quality assessment scheme participation will automatically renew on 1 April each participation year and an invoice for the participation fee will be despatched accordingly, unless VisitEngland receives at least 28 days' notice in writing from you that you no longer wish to participate in the VisitEngland national quality

assessment scheme before the 1 April of the new participation year. VisitEngland shall be entitled to charge you interest on any overdue sum from the date when payment is due until the date of actual payment (as well as before judgment) at a rate per annum of 4% above the base rate from time to time of Barclay's Bank Plc. Such interest shall accrue from day to day and shall be paid subject to any withholding tax;

- You give permission to VisitEngland or its representatives to enter your establishment site at any time to take and create photographs of your establishment. The copyright and all other intellectual property rights, title and interest in and in respect of such photographs shall vest in VisitEngland;
- On termination of participation, howsoever caused, you shall immediately, and no later than within 28 days, at your own expense, remove all references to the VisitEngland rating from websites promoting your establishment and from all other media channels utilised by you to promote your establishment and remove all signs displaying the VisitEngland logo from your establishment site and return to VisitEngland's signs manufacturer Alpen Signs, Central House, Marlow Road, Leicester LE3 2BQ. If, after 28 days following termination of the VisitEngland recognition for your establishment, you have not complied with its obligations to removal of signage, you shall allow the employees, agents or representatives of VisitEngland such access as they require to your establishment site to remove all signs displaying the VisitEngland logo displayed on your establishment. You shall pay to VisitEngland all costs and expenses thereby incurred;
- Any participant disqualified from the VisitEngland national quality assessment schemes for whatever reason will not be allowed to re-join for a minimum period of one year from the date of disqualification. Re-application at an earlier stage may be considered by VisitEngland where it is felt special circumstances apply. In all cases, acceptance of re-application will be at the sole discretion of VisitEngland. Application to re-join the scheme will always incur an additional fee. If disqualification was on the basis of quality or the level of complaints, then it must be demonstrated that the areas of concern have been addressed. This may be done in the form of an advisory visit by a VisitEngland representative, for which an additional charge is likely to be made.

Anti-Corruption & Anti-Bribery

- You shall not, and shall procure that your directors, employees, agents, representatives, contractors or sub-contractors shall not engage in any activity, practice or conduct which would constitute an offence under any anti-bribery and anti-corruption laws, regulations and codes, including but not limited to the Bribery Act 2010, as may be amended or replaced from time to time.
- You shall have in place adequate procedures designed to prevent any person working for or engaged by you or any other third party in any way connected to this agreement, from engaging in any activity, practice or conduct which would infringe any anti-bribery and anti-corruption laws, regulations and codes, including but not limited to the Bribery Act 2010, as may be amended or replaced from time to time.
- Breach of this Clause shall entitle VisitEngland to terminate this agreement by written notice with immediate effect.

Change of Ownership

When an accommodation business is sold or the method of operation changed e.g. contracted out, and the new owner does not continue participation in the VisitEngland national quality assessment scheme, the existing rating cannot be transferred. If a property is sold as a going concern, for continued use to accommodate guests and details of the new owners are provided to VisitEngland, the rating may be continued under the following circumstances:

- The current (outgoing) owners have made all payments due to date for the current participation year. If payment is made by Direct Debit this should remain active until the change of ownership process is completed.
- The current (outgoing) owners provide forwarding details for themselves along with full contact details for the new (incoming) owners to VisitEngland's appointed assessment contractor.
- The current (outgoing) owners provide the expected completion/transfer date to VisitEngland's appointed assessment contractor.
- The new (incoming) owners apply and pay for participation in the VisitEngland national quality assessment scheme within 28 days of the completion/transfer date.

If all these criteria are met then the current (outgoing) owners may be entitled to a pro-rata refund for any complete remaining months paid for in the current participation year.