

Starting an Accommodation Business in the Cotswolds



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

The
Cotswolds

Contents and Checklist

The checklist is for accommodation providers in the Cotswolds to give a brief outline of the legislation involved and the services available when setting up a new accommodation business in the Cotswolds. For detailed information, contact the indicated authority.

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Regulations & Legislation

This section looks at the legal requirements of setting up an accommodation business.

✓ Planning Permission & Building Regulations

If you are planning to start up an accommodation business or converting or extending your current premises, you should contact our Planning Services Department for their advice on Planning Permission

You may need permissions for any building work that needs to be carried out, or for a 'change of use' of your premises (ie. from domestic to business use), but this will depend on the amount of rooms you propose to use.

Issues that will be taken into consideration include such things as car parking facilities and effects on the local community and neighbours.

Planning Department
Cotswold District Council
Trinity Road
Cirencester
Glos
GL7 1PX
Tel: 01285 623000
www.cotswold.gov.uk
planning@cotswold.gov.uk

✓ Health & Safety

As the person with control over the premises, you have responsibility for the physical safety of every person who comes onto those premises.

You will have a 'duty of care' to guests and must make sure that your premises are reasonably safe for the purpose for which guests are invited to use them. For example, you must make sure that floors are not slippery, passageways are clear, furniture is secure and guests are familiarised with emergency procedures.

You will also be responsible for the health and safety of your employees, whether you have one or one hundred. You must ensure that they are supplied with adequate equipment and working conditions.

For further practical advice, contact our Environmental Services department.

Cotswold District Council
Public Protection
Trinity Road
Cirencester
Glos
GL7 1PX
Tel: 01285 623000
www.cotswold.gov.uk
foodandsafetymail@cotswold.gov.uk

✓ Food & Drink

If you are to supply food to your guests, you must comply with the requirements of the Food Safety Act 1990 regarding for example, temperature, food hygiene and labelling.

Your establishment will need to be registered with Cotswold District Council. This is free, and done by filling in a simple form.

For further information and advice, please contact the Environmental Services department.

NB Cotswold District Council organises Health and Hygiene courses for local businesses. If you would like more information, please contact Environmental Services.

Cotswold District Council
Public Protection
Trinity Road
Cirencester
Glos
GL7 1PX
Tel: 01285 623000
www.cotswold.gov.uk
foodandsafetymail@cotswold.gov.uk

✓ Fire Safety

In Autumn 2006 a new law – the Regulatory reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 – came into force, replacing fire certificates and 78 other pieces of legislation.

The new law affects all forms of sleeping accommodation and includes everything in the guest accommodation scheme not previously covered, notably establishments sleeping one to six guests. In relation to self-catering properties; it does not affect single private dwellings, but does apply to a block of flats. This means that single properties remain unaffected while a house converted to holiday flats will need to comply.

This law states that operators must take responsibility for fire safety themselves, so all accommodation operators will have to carry out a fire safety risk assessment. In smaller and simple premises the operator can probably do their own assessment but in large, complex premises a trained professional is more likely to be needed. Preventative or protective measures required following the risk assessment must be installed and maintained.

Fire officers will carry out spot checks and whoever performed the risk assessment is liable for anything found to be incorrect or if anything goes wrong. Magistrates will be able to impose fines of £5,000 for each offence, while a Crown Court can impose unlimited fines and up to two years in jail. From Autumn 2006, Quality in Tourism assessors can also ask to see your risk assessment.

Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service
Fire Service HQ
Waterwells Drive
Quedgeley
Glos
GL2 2AX
Tel: 01452 753333

www.glosfire.gov.uk/
fire@glosfire.gov.uk

✓ Signage

The display of all outdoor signs is governed by the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992. These regulations concern lighting, height etc and can be very complicated. We would therefore advise you to seek the advice of our Planning Department before commissioning signs for your premises.

If your property is a listed building, you may need consent for any sign to be put up on your building.

Planning Department
Cotswold District Council
Trinity Road
Cirencester
Glos
GL7 1PX
Tel: 01285 623000
www.cotswold.gov.uk
planning@cotswold.gov.uk

Environment Department
Gloucestershire County Council
Shire Hall
Gloucester
GL1 2TH
Tel: 01452 426280
www.gloucestershire.gov.uk

✓ Television

If you have TV sets in guest rooms or properties, you need to apply for a Hotel and Mobile Units Television Licence.

TV Licensing Centre
Tel: 0300 790 6131
www.tvlicensing.co.uk

✓ Insurance

You need to ensure that you have adequate insurance cover. Most household policies will not cover the use of your premises for business purposes, your liability to employees and guests, or any damage caused by guests.

Some insurance companies offer special packages for accommodation providers including Public Liability Insurance, Employers Liability Insurance and property and contents insurance.

To find out what cover you will need and costs, contact your insurance company.

✓ Disabled Facilities

The Equality Act 2010 aims to protect disabled people and prevent disability discrimination. It replaces all previous anti-discrimination laws, like the Disabled Discrimination Act, with a single Act.

Tourism businesses should familiarise themselves with their obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

Access to Services

Disabled visitors must be treated in the same way as other guests, and have the same opportunities (within reason). This means that they should not be offered a service or product below that of your other guests. To accommodate disabled visitors, you may need to make some **reasonable** adjustments. This means that you may need to change some of your policies and procedures, consider alternative access points (eg French windows, side doors), provide large print menus and price guides or change the layout of your rooms.

Please note – any changes made should be **within reason**. If you have a small B & B, you would not be expected to provide the same service and equipment for the disabled as a large hotel.

For more advice or to find out if you need to make any adjustments, please contact one of the suggested organisations.

If you would like recognition of your facilities, you may think about joining the National Accessible Scheme (NAS). The NAS identifies how accessible accommodation is to people who may have difficulty in walking, use a wheelchair, or have a sensory impairment. The ratings are split into three categories for mobility impaired people, blind or visually impaired people and deaf or hearing impaired people.

To find out more, contact VisitEngland.

Equality Act 2010
Tel: 0207 035 4848 –
Equality Advisory Support Service
Tel: 0808 800 0082
www.equalities.gov.uk

Tourism for All
(umbrella organisation for all
accessible tourism)
Tel: 0845 124 9971
www.tourismforall.co.uk

The South West Tourism Alliance
www.swtourismalliance.org.uk

VisitEngland
www.visitengland.org

✓ The Pink Booklet

The notes on this checklist are for guidance only and are by no means comprehensive. For more detailed information regarding legislation 'The Pink Booklet' is available from VisitBritain.

<http://www.visitengland.org/busdev/bussupport/legislation/pinkbook.aspx>

Visit England Head Office number is 020 7578 1400
VisitBritain Publishing
for pink book request email feedback@visitengland.org
www.visitengland.org

✓ Data Protection

The Data Protection Act is concerned with protecting people's privacy. If you hold personal information you must ensure that:

- The information is gained fairly and lawfully
 - Guests are informed of the information you intend to keep and why
 - Personal information is not kept without that persons consent
 - Information is kept up to date and relevant
 - The information is used only for the purpose for which it was collected
 - The information is kept only for as long as is necessary for that purpose
 - You have explicit consent if you wish to pass the information to a third party
 - If you are asked by a person for their personal information to be erased from your records, you do so
 - Any guest can see the personal information you hold about them if they wish to
- Remember – The Data Protection Act also applies to those records kept about your staff.

Note: If you keep personal information for purposes other than marketing, advertising, staff administration or accounting, you may need to register with the Data Protection Commissioner. To find out more, contact them directly.

The Office of the Information Commissioner
Tel: 08456 306060
www.ico.gov.uk

✓ Display of Charges

It is a criminal offence to mislead guests about the prices charged in your establishment.

To avoid this, it is suggested that you:

- Display prices prominently eg In the reception area, on the door
- Include all essential extra costs in the charge eg VAT and Service charge and state the amounts
- State any optional extra charges as clearly as other prices
- Do as much as possible to ensure that any changes in prices are made on all leaflets, publications and websites

For further information, contact the Trading Standards department at Gloucestershire County Council

Gloucestershire County Council - Trading Standards
Hillfield House
Denmark Road
Gloucester
GL1 3LD
Tel: 01452 426201
e: tradstds@gloucestershire.gov.uk
www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/glos

✓ **Registration of Guests**

To comply with the Immigration (Hotel Records) Order, you must keep a register of all guests that stay in your establishment.

You must record -

For all guests on arrival:

- Full name and nationality of all guests over the age of 16

For all non-British, Irish or Commonwealth guests on arrival:

- Passport number and place of issue (or another ID document showing nationality)

For all non-British, Irish or Commonwealth guests on departure:

- Details of your next destination (including address if known)

Quality Assurance

✓ Inspections

Having an inspection and receiving a grading is an ideal way to assure prospective guests of the high quality of your establishment.

You can choose to either be inspected or to agree to the ten point Cotswolds Tourism Accommodation Quality Charter to be able to market your establishment through Tourist Information Centres, Visit Britain and tourism websites such as Cotswolds.com, local authority websites and the Cotswold Visitor Guide.

You can choose to be inspected by AA (not self-catering properties) or Quality in Tourism (who carry out inspections on behalf of VisitBritain) or a combination of the two.

Each organisation charges a different fee. To find these out and to arrange for your quality standard assessment, please contact the organisations directly.

Cotswolds Local Assessment Scheme

Providers of accommodation that are currently ungraded can apply for an assessment. A local assessor will inspect properties against a standard, indicating they are clean, comfortable and fit for purpose.

The Cotswolds Tourism Local Assessment Scheme is a **stepping stone towards the National Quality Assurance Standards**. It is delivered in partnership with participating in the national scheme, they will be demonstrating their commitment to quality improvements. If you would like to go with this scheme then please contact Quality in Tourism stating that you would like to go ahead with the Cotswolds Local Assessment Scheme.

Cotswolds Tourism Accommodation Quality Charter

We recognise that accreditation might not be relevant for everybody. However we do believe that customers have a right to expect high levels of service when they visit The Cotswolds and we want to support and promote the quality businesses in the region. The Cotswolds Tourism Accommodation Quality Charter is for all non-accredited businesses to sign when they join membership of Cotswolds Tourism. When you purchase advertising for your accommodation on www.cotswolds.com and related websites; in our print publications; work with the area's Visitor Information Centres and in our tourism marketing campaigns, we ask that you agree to the 10 point charter.

Quality in Tourism
Tel: 0845 300 6996
e: qualityintourism@uk.g4s.com
www.qualityintourism.com

AA Hotel Services
14th Floor, Fanum House
Basing View
Basingstoke
RG21 4EA
Tel: 01256 844455
e: hotelservicescustomersupport@theAA.com
www.theaa.com

Quality in Tourism
Tel: 0845 300 6996
e: qualityintourism@uk.g4s.com
State Cotswolds Local Assessment Scheme

Contact Cotswolds Tourism
Tel 01285 623000
E: cotswoldstourism@cotswold.gov.uk

www.cotswolds.com/membership

Sustainable Tourism

✓ Going Green

There are several good reasons why going green is a better way to operate as a tourism business: increased efficiency, reduced waste, added appeal and added value.

Businesses that can demonstrate a commitment to green and sustainable practices could subscribe to the Green Tourism Business Scheme (GTBS) to achieve a bronze, silver or gold accreditation. For further information about GTBS visit: www.green-business.co.uk *Sustainable Tourism for Dummies* is a book in the Dummies series of easy to use guidance by Wiley publishers designed to help tourism businesses of all sizes to be more

The Green Tourism Business Scheme
Green Business UK
4 Atholl Place
Perth
PH1 5ND
Tel: 0845 863 0770
e: gtbs@green-business.co.uk

sustainable. View a copy of the publication on line at:
www.visitengland.org/busdev/bussupport/sustainability/forummies.aspx

www.green-business.co.uk

Services for your business in the Cotswolds

✓ Visitor Information Centres (VICs or TICs)

There are Visitor Information Services in Bourton-on-the-Water, Chipping Campden, Cirencester, Moreton-in-Marsh [Stow-on-the-Wold](#) and Tetbury, all of which offer a range of services to the public to help your business.

Friendly experienced staff can answer many of your queries about tourism in the Cotswolds and other areas of the country – events, attractions, travel, publications, marketing opportunities and community facilities.

All the VIC's are official partner Enjoy England centres. Providing that your business has received a quality rating all the VICs make direct bookings for your establishment over the 'phone or email and over the counter for those clients calling in at short notice, for which a 10% commission is taken at the time of the booking.

For more details about the services VICs can offer your business, please call any of these Information Centres.

A full list of contact details can be found in the Cotswold Visitor Guide.

Bourton-on-the-Water Visitor Information Centre
Tel: 01451 820211
E: bourtonvic@btconnect.com

Chipping Campden Visitor Information Centre
Tel: 01386 841206
E: info@campdenonline.org

Cirencester Visitor Information Centre
Tel: 01285 654180
E: cirencestervic@slm-ltd.co.uk

Moreton-in-Marsh Visitor Information Centre
Tel: 01608 650881
E: moreton@cotswold.gov.uk

Stow on the Wold Information Centre
Tel 01451 830341
E: stowi@hotmail.co.uk

Tetbury Tourist Information Centre
Tel: 01666 503552
Email: tourism@tetbury.org

✓ Cotswold Visitor Guide

The main publication produced annually by Cotswold District Council in conjunction with Stroud District Council, Tewkesbury Borough Council, Cheltenham Borough Council and City of Gloucester Council under the banner of the Cotswolds Tourism Partnership to promote all accommodation, attractions, events and travel information.

In an easy to read A4 full colour brochure, the guide contains essential information about where to stay, and what to see and do in the Cotswolds.

Circulation is c60 - 70,000 annually, and it is sent in response to the many enquiries we receive from both domestic and overseas visitors following targeted marketing campaigns. It is distributed nationally to the Visitor/Tourist Information network and is used by all the Cotswold Visitor Information Centres when booking accommodation for visitors.

To discuss advertising in the Cotswold Visitor Guide and other marketing initiatives and prices, please contact the tourism department at Cotswold District Council

Cotswold Tourism
Cotswold District Council
Trinity Road
Cirencester
Glos
GL7 1PX
Tel: 01285 623000
Email: tourism@cotswold.gov.uk
www.cotswold.gov.uk

Tourism Initiatives in Gloucestershire

Cotswold Tourism at Cotswold District Council aim to increase the number of staying visitors to the area as well as managing visitor numbers at peak times and encouraging 'off-peak' visiting.

Some initiatives that could affect your business are:

- ✓ Cotswolds Tourism
- ✓ Cotswold Asia Partnership

✓ Cotswolds Tourism – Destination Management Organisation

Cotswold District Council is represented on the board of this partnership, formed to present one body for tourism in Gloucestershire and The Cotswolds, benefiting from joint marketing, and simplifying contacts for the trade.

Cotswolds Tourism is a membership organisation. Benefits include access to relevant training courses, having the opportunity to be promoted on www.cotswolds.com, (to include a weblink) and special rates for advertising in selected print. Further details can be found on www.cotswolds.com/site/membership

Cotswolds Tourism
Cotswold District Council Trintiy Road
Cirencester Glos GL7 1PX
Tel: 01285 623000
cotswoldstourism@cotswold.gov.uk

✓ Cotswold Asia Partnership

Led by Cotswolds Tourism, this partnership aims to market 'The Cotswolds' to the Japanese & Chinese market.

With quality brochures and a dual language website, the initiative is proving very successful in encouraging Japanese visitors to visit the area.

To find out about advertising your establishment with Cotswold Asia, please contact Cotswolds Tourism.

Cotswolds Tourism
Cotswold District Council
Trintiy Road Cirencester
Glos GL7 1PX
Tel: 01285 623000
cotswoldstourism@cotswold.gov.uk

Other Organisations

✓ VisitBritain

VisitBritain is the organisation responsible for marketing the whole of the UK as a tourist destination to domestic and overseas visitors.

They have a comprehensive website, designed to help you to reach potential visitors by providing advice, marketing opportunities and market intelligence.

For further information on national marketing opportunities, or other opportunities for your business, please contact VisitBritain direct.

VisitBritain
1 Palace Street
London
SW1E 5HE
Tel: 0207 578 1000
E: Industry.relations@visitbritain.org
www.visitbritain.com