

Useful Information for Sussex by the Sea Visitor Accommodation Providers

This guide is intended to give a brief run down of what to do and who to contact if you are intending to offer accommodation to paying guests and also wish to take advantage of:

- **A FREE advertising listing** under the relevant category at: www.sussexbythesea.com with a brand new look!
- Further advertising opportunities, <http://www.sussexbythesea.com/advertising>
- Referrals and bookings from the Littlehampton Look and Sea **Visitor Information Centre** plus, potentially, networked Tourist Information Centres (TICs) throughout the U.K. and listings available at our Visitor Information Points at Arundel and Bognor Regis
- The opportunity to advertise in the **OFFICIAL annual Holiday Pocket Guide 'Sussex by the Sea'** (*subject to deadlines and availability*)

The team at Sussex by the Sea work closely with the official regional and national Tourist Boards:-

Tourism Southeast: www.visitsoutheastengland.com

Visit England: www.enjoyengland.com

Visit Britain: www.visitbritain.com

Sussex destination partners: www.lovesussex.com

sharing data and participating in joint promotional campaigns

Quality Assurance

Arun District Council / (“Sussex by the Sea”), in common with most Local Authorities, require all accommodation advertisers to be nationally assessed or accredited under either or both of the schemes operated by the following:

VisitEngland  agency “**Quality in Tourism**” assess Self-catering, Caravan sites, Holiday villages & Serviced accommodation as well as Attractions.

Please contact: Tel: **0845 300 6996** Fax: 01386 854319

e.mail: qualityintourism@gslglobal.com
<http://www.qualityintourism.co.uk>

Security House, Alexandra Way, Ashchurch, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire, GL20 8NB



AA Hotel Services assess Hotels, Serviced Accommodation & Caravan / Campsites

Please contact: Tel: **01256 844455** e.mail: customer.services@theAA.com
http://www.theaa.com/getaway/hotels/hotel_aa_recognition.html

15th Floor Fanum House, Basing View, Basingstoke, Hants RG21 4EA

Both the above organisations work to the same criteria. However, each has its own presentation & marketing benefits, so we suggest that you contact both organisations and decide which will be best for your business.

Visit the websites to see the latest list of all the benefits.

Both organisations will charge businesses a joining fee and an annual participation fee which will need to be kept up to date to ensure continued participation.

As a guide: the price for participation in these schemes starts at around £300, depending on the number of bed spaces you will be offering, and the price you intend to charge your guests

Tip: The Quality in Tourism website noted above, has a handy fees calculator which you can use, with no commitment.

The Quality Assurance Process

Ask **Quality in Tourism** or **the AA** to send you full details of applying for assessment of your Hotel, Guest Accommodation (B&B etc), self-catering or caravan establishment. When you’ve received these, look through the criteria, compare the organisations’ rates and services and make a decision suitable for your business. If you decide to go ahead, you might like to arrange a **pre – assessment visit** (there is an extra fee for this) with your chosen organisation. An assessor will call by appointment and you will have the opportunity to put to him or her any queries you may have relating to providing facilities to obtain the best possible grading.

Complete the assessment application forms and send with your payment for the appropriate amount to your selected organisation. If you have alterations or decorating to do and will not be ready for a little while, you can ask for the assessment *after* a particular date.

There will be a few weeks from when you apply until the assessor can carry out his / her visit, but if you are ready to start receiving guests, we can promote your business straight away as “Rating Applied For” and change this to the appropriate rating, once the Assessor has confirmed your Quality Assurance Rating.

Unless you have a self-catering property or caravan park, when the assessor obviously has to make an appointment to view, you will not be told when this person will visit.

He or she will make a booking by telephone for an overnight stay and will not declare identity until you have received payment for accommodation and food in the morning. The assessor will ask you to spend some time ‘walking the course’ and discuss how well you have done. You will probably be told the grading you have attained, subject to the assessor’s report being confirmed by head office.

Within a month of the visit they should send you a detailed assessment.



We recognise that signing up for the full Quality Star Rated scheme, as described above, might be a big financial commitment, particularly for the smaller start up business.

So from 2012, we have been working with the national tourist board, “Visit England” to offer a **Sussex by the Sea Visitor Accommodation Approved Scheme** for visitor accommodation providers to participate in, if for any reason you are not able to go for the full “Star Rated” schemes as described above.

This will involve a visit from an experienced Quality Assessor from Visit England, who will ensure that your property is at the very least “Legal, Safe and Clean” and will be a more cost effective way of being accredited, particularly useful for the smaller, one room type of properties.

Participation in this scheme will enable your business to be listed with www.sussexbythesea.com although of course you will not have the benefit of being able to show the 1 – 5 Stars for quality that other businesses show.

If you are interested in this, please see <http://www.sussexbythesea.com/local-assessment-scheme> or contact sussexbythesea@arun.gov.uk

Keeping up with relevant legislation

“Accommodation Know How” <http://www.accommodationknowhow.co.uk> is a ‘one stop’ shop for all things you will need to consider if you are thinking of or already operating, an accommodation business. This is in addition to The Pink Booklet. *A **FREE annual subscription** to the Pink Booklet online is now included as one of the many benefits of joining the **Visit England Star Rated Quality Assurance Scheme**. This is a widely respected online resource, which provides straightforward information and advice to help you unravel the legislation and regulations that affect your business.*

Subscribers to this website also have access to **in depth professional knowledge of legislation** relating to both serviced and self-catering accommodation.

- Access 24-7 to up-to-date information, whenever you need help
- Regular updates whenever legislation changes
- E-mail alerts informing you of updates to legislation and other areas of the site
- Informative news and features

A very useful publication **Legislation for Tourist Accommodation** is available as an added extra. It contains all the legislative guidance from the website and is a useful optional extra if you need guidance when not online.

Enquiries about this service should be directed to: VisitBritain, PO Box 6009, Thatcham, Berkshire RG19 4TT
Tel: 01635 588897 Fax: 01635 868594 Email: vb@cirodata.com

Two publications are also available from VisitBritain

“**How to Run Quality Self-Catering Accommodation**” and “**How to Run Quality B&B Accommodation**”

These can be ordered through the above website.

You may already have your own website, but **Quality Assessment** gives the opportunity for participation on www.sussexbythesea.com and the advantage of higher **Search Engine Optimisation listings** (e.g. Google etc), plus the opportunity to participate in regional and national campaigns. All listings created under these schemes include live links to your own email and website.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The following is meant as a guide only and is neither exhaustive nor in any specific order.

Accommodation providers have a legal obligation to ensure that various statutory requirements are complied with. Please contact the organisations listed for specific, current information.

There are a number of legal requirements, **e.g. public liability insurance, National Non Domestic Rates (NDR), gas, electric and furniture safety** etc. which you should go into at this stage. (Even if you wish only to start offering simple B&B in your home or to equip an existing building as a holiday cottage, you may need 'change of use' planning permission)

Please see the following Legal Requirement notes :

General legal advice is available at <http://www.accommodationknowhow.co.uk>

Fire Precautions

In October 2006 new fire safety laws came into force making businesses directly responsible for the safety of all premises users. As a result, fire certificates have been abolished in favour of risk assessments to be completed by a designated 'responsible person'.

These laws affect every type of tourism business including self-catering and smaller B&Bs who were previously exempt from requiring a fire certificate.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.accommodationknowhow.co.uk>

Planning & Building Control

It may also be the case that building control authorities specify certain **fire safety measures** when a house changes from private, domestic use to use as an 'hotel or boarding-house'. Premises must have all necessary planning consents under the Town and Country Planning Acts.

For advice, contact your local Planning Authority e.g. Arun District Council:

telephone: 01903 737756

www.arun.gov.uk/planning e.mail: planning@arun.gov.uk

Any alterations, extensions and installation of certain fittings must be carried out in accordance with Building Regulations.

For advice, contact your local Planning Authority e.g. Arun District Council:

telephone: 01903 737756

www.arun.gov.uk/buildingcontrol e.mail: bldg.con@arun.gov.uk

Insurance

Each establishment is required to hold adequate Public Liability Insurance and ensure that all other aspects of insurance are covered, including, where appropriate, Employers' Liability.

Your own insurance company/broker will advise on this, or there are links to specialist insurance companies at <http://www.accommodationknowhow.co.uk>

Business Rates (National Non Domestic Rates - NNDR)

Some Bed and Breakfast establishments are exempt from NNDR if they cater for 6 persons or fewer and if the B&B is no more than a subsidiary use of a property. Self-catering accommodation can be exempt from rates if it is available for up to 140 days each year. For advice, contact your local Council Tax Authority e.g. Arun District Council: telephone: 01903 737500 and ask for the Revenues Team

www.arun.gov.uk email: revenues.benefits@arun.gov.uk

General advice is also available at <http://www.accommodationknowhow.co.uk>

Other useful contacts: Worthing Valuation Office, Westmoreland House, Strand Parade, Goring by Sea, Worthing, West Sussex BN12 6EA

Tel: 01903 707900 Fax: 01903 707959

www.voa.gov.uk/

Gas, Electricity and Furniture Safety

There are a number of regulations relating to the above, particularly in self-catering premises.

For advice, contact your local Environmental Health department e.g. Arun District Council: telephone: 01903 737826

www.arun.gov.uk/environmentalhealth e.mail: environmental.health@arun.gov.uk

General advice is available at <http://www.accommodationknowhow.co.uk>

Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1992

These Regulations place responsibilities on all employers for their employees and others who may be affected by the work activities on their premises. The self-employed also come within the scope of the regulations. These reinforce existing health and safety legislation with overall emphasis on effective health and safety management, with employers being made responsible for assessing risk and installing the appropriate safety measures.

For advice, contact your local Environmental Health department e.g. Arun District Council: telephone: 01903 737826

www.arun.gov.uk/environmentalhealth e.mail: environmental.health@arun.gov.uk

Food Safety Act 1990 and Associated Regulations

If you supply food to guests you must comply with the provisions of the above Act and regulations made under it. Virtually all accommodation businesses which serve food and drink of any kind must register with their local authority by completing a simple form. This is free. Even if your establishment is exempt from registration, you are still subject to the other provisions of the Act.

General advice is available at <http://www.accommodationknowhow.co.uk>

Liquor Licence

Information about applying for a licence to sell alcoholic drinks can be obtained from your local **Clerk to the Justices**.

New businesses must register with Environmental Health 28 days before they open for business. Changes of proprietor and the nature of a food business must also be notified to the registration authorities.

We would encourage ALL serviced accommodation proprietors to obtain a Food Handling Hygiene Certificate (*details again from Environmental Health*).

For advice, contact your local Environmental Health department e.g. Arun District Council: telephone: 01903 737826

www.arun.gov.uk/environmentalhealth e.mail: environmental.health@arun.gov.uk

An excellent booklet called 'Industry Guide to Good Hygiene Practice: Catering Guide' is produced by Chadwick House Group and is available by ringing 0207 827 5882 or fax. 0207 827 5830, or through booksellers.

Keeping a Register of Guests

Under the Immigration (Hotel Records) Order 1972 and its 1982 amendment all premises where sleeping accommodation is provided for reward are required to keep a record of all guests over the age of 16.

Price Display Orders

These relate to ensuring prices, rates etc. comply with The Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 <http://www.berr.gov.uk/whatwedo/consumers/buying-selling/CPRs/page52554.html>

Data Protection Act 1984. Useful information can be found <http://www.accommodationknowhow.co.uk>

The Disability Discrimination Act (which affects all providers of goods and services and has been enforceable from October 2004) - full details from the **DDA Helpline 08457 622633** <http://www.accommodationknowhow.co.uk>

For further **tourism business disability advice**, please contact: **Tourism for All UK** This is a national registered charity which provides:-Expertise and support to the tourism and hospitality sector to provide accessible services for all.

Information for people with disabilities and older people in relation to accessible accommodation and other tourism services, a network for organisations and individuals who wish to support our objectives.

Tourism for All, The Hawkins Suite, Enham Place, Enham Alamein, Andover SP11 6JS
Information - Tel: 0845 124 9971, Minicom: 0845 124 9976,
<http://www.tourismforall.co.uk/>

Arun District Council Tourism Team / Sussex by the Sea cannot be held responsible for the content of external websites nor information given by external organisations.

Other Useful Information

Further useful information and links for all tourism businesses is available at:
<http://www.sussexbythesea.com/tourism-business-centre>

The Arun Business Partnership is here to help all businesses in the Arun District, new and not so new, to network, and do business together. Regular “Getting to Know You” events and the annual Arun Business Awards are just some of the benefits of being a member of this organisation. And it’s free to join!

For more information visit <http://www.arunbusinesspartnership.co.uk/> or
telephone Miriam Nicholls 01903 737845 email: Miriam.nicholls@arun.gov.uk

Tourism Signage

If you wish to put up an accommodation sign where it can be seen by potential guests please check with your local Planning Department in case there is some restriction on that.

For information on Brown Tourist Signs contact:

West Sussex County Council (Highways) Tel: 01243 642105

Email: highwaysandtransporthq@westsussex.gov.uk

Or the Highways Agency www.highways.gov.uk/business/2147.aspx

General Advice

A subscription to **Bed & Breakfast News** may prove useful to you, with lots of interesting relevant articles, plus industry specific advertisers which might prove useful to you.

Visit www.bandbnews.co.uk email bedandbreakfastnews@yahoo.co.uk
Telephone: 01606 784524

Visitor Information Services

As a local business, both you and your guests should use the [Sussex by the Sea website](#) for **things to do, where to stay** and **what's on** across the area. And, should you have any questions, the Sussex by the Sea tourism team is only an **email** away.

The three visitor information points (VIPs) at **Arundel Museum**, the **Bognor Regis Observer Office** and **Littlehampton Look and Sea Visitor Centre** hold copies of the free **Sussex by the Sea Visitor Guide** containing ideas for things to see and do, town maps and contact details for attractions, events and accommodation providers and more. If you would like to have supplies of this publication for your guests please email sussexbythsea@arun.gov.uk

Tourism Touchscreens – A large screen is attached to the Bognor Regis VIP so that you can view the latest visitor information from the **Sussex by the Sea website** at any time day or night. In Arundel, smaller **tourism touchscreens** are located in local businesses for the same purpose plus the **Arundel visitor information website** too.

Work with Sussex by the Sea

For the latest information and marketing opportunities see <http://www.sussexbythesea.com/advertising>

Organising an event? See helpful advice and enter the details for free publicity on the “What’s On” database on www.arun.gov.uk home page and supply posters to the VIPs as listed above

Local business information www.arunbusinesspartnership.co.uk and <http://www.sussexbythesea.com/tourism-business-centre> have lots to share

Join us on Social Media: facebook.com/sussexbythesea & twitter.com/sussexbythesea1

Contact us at sussexbythesea@arun.gov.uk

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Tourism Development Officer & Arun District Tourism Data Steward
Arun District Council - Economic & Cultural Development
Arun Civic Centre, Maltravers Road ,Littlehampton, West Sussex BN17 5LF
Telephone: 01903 737859
Mobile: 07733 125 674 (Office Hours) Email: margaret.murphy@arun.gov.uk



Sussex Destination Partners