



Quality in Tourism

Visit Report

Guest Accommodation Standard

Greenhead Country House

Fir Tree

★★★★ Guest Accommodation 81%
Breakfast Award

Assessor: Mark Robertson

Visit date: 06 Jul 2011

Visit type: Overnight

QiT No: 77720

Cleanliness (3.2 - Common Standards Reference)	Score
Cleanliness - Public areas	5
Cleanliness - Dining room	5
Cleanliness - Bedroom	4
Cleanliness - Bathroom	4
	90%
Bedrooms (3.6 - Common Standards Reference)	Score
Decoration	4
Furniture, fittings and furnishings	4
Flooring	4
Beds and bedding	4
Lighting, heating and ventilation	4
Bedroom accessories	4
Space, comfort and ease of use	4
	80%
Bathrooms (3.7 - Common Standards Reference)	Score
Decoration	3
Fixtures and fittings	3
Flooring	4
Lighting, heating and ventilation	3
Towels and toiletries	4
Space, comfort and ease of use	4
	70%
Hospitality and Friendliness (3.3 - Common Standards Reference)	Score
Booking and arrival hospitality	5
Dinner and general hospitality	4
Departure hospitality	5
Breakfast hospitality	5
	95%
Food Quality (3.10 - Common Standards Reference)	Score
Breakfast choice and presentation	7
Breakfast food quality	9
	80%
Service and Efficiency (3.4 - Common Standards Reference)	Score
Booking and arrival service	4
Dinner and general service	4
Departure service	4
Breakfast service	4
	80%
Dining Room or Restaurant (3.9 - Common Standards Reference)	Score
Decoration	4
Furniture, fittings and furnishings	4
Flooring	5
Lighting, heating and ventilation	4
Table appointment	4
Space, comfort and ease of use	4
	83%
All Public Areas (3.8 - Common Standards Reference)	Score
Decoration	4
Furniture, fittings and furnishings	4
Flooring	4
Lighting, heating and ventilation	4
Space, comfort and ease of use	4
Stairs, corridors, landings and public WC	4
	80%
Exterior (3.5 - Common Standards Reference)	Score
Buildings	4
Grounds, gardens and frontage	4
Car parking	4
	80%
	81%

Key Scores and Sectional Consistencies

Overall

81% = 4 star; safe (70% to 84%)

Cleanliness

90% = 5 star; low (90% to 100%)

Bedrooms

80% = 4 star; safe (70% to 84%)

Bathrooms

70% = 4 star; low (70% to 84%)

Hospitality

95% = 5 star; safe (90% to 100%)

Breakfast

90% = 5 star; safe (85% to 100%)

In order to achieve a star rating the following elements of the assessment need to be satisfied.

1. All Minimum Entry Requirements must be met. (See Minimum Entry Requirement page in this report for detail)
2. The Star rating awarded will be no higher than the rating achieved in the Overall assessment.
3. Key Area Scores:
All sectional consistency areas must be equal to or higher than the overall rating (No areas to be below the overall)
4. The Star rating will be capped if Key Requirements are not met at each rating level.

Where the Overall score or a Key Area is marked as 'High' this indicates that the score for this area is close to achieving a higher level. Where the Overall score or a Key Area is marked as 'Safe' this indicates that the score for this area sits comfortably within this level. Where the Overall score or a Key Area is marked as 'Low' this indicates that the score in this area is at the lower end of the banding indicating quality improvements are advised to maintain the section at this level.

Overall Score

The property continues to provide a comfortable and well equipped accommodation in a convenient yet peaceful location from which to explore Weardale and the nearby City of Durham. Lots of quality enhancements noted throughout this year including new high quality flooring to the public areas and the majority of the bedrooms. Commendable.

General quality viewed allows for the re-award of the good strong four star rating again this year. Very best wishes are extended for a successful 2011 season at Greenhead Country House.

Rooms Seen

Room 5 occupied by the assessor. All other guest rooms viewed with the proprietor.

Cleanliness

A superior standard of housekeeping evident throughout the property, and with the room allocated presented to a high standard on arrival.

Bedrooms

Spacious guest bedrooms feature a professional decorative finish and quality well dressed and protected beds. Flooring (new) is of a very good quality and affords guest comfort underfoot. Furnishings, as previously noted vary in age and design, but provide the guest with an abundance of storage and hanging space. Luggage racks will be appreciated by the older guests. Seating is comfortable and upholstery is maintained in good order. Curtaining is substantial and assists with light exclusion during the early mornings. Lighting is well placed with bedside lamps at appropriate heights and ceiling units providing good room flood. Critical illumination at the desk / dresser in each room will be appreciated by the business traveller. Ease of use aspects might be further addressed through fitting in-line switches to the bedside lamp cords where presently missing. Heating is fully controllable by the guest. Accessories are provided in line with expectations at this level, and include modern flat screen TV sets to most rooms and a secure wireless internet facility. The well provisioned hospitality tray is stocked with complimentary mineral waters for guest convenience. Consider a quality wrapped biscuit here perhaps ?. In room information has been enhanced and provides the guest with a wealth of information regarding the local area.

Ease of use aspects appear to have been carefully addressed with electrical sockets close to mirrors / bedside lamps within easy reach etc.

Bathrooms

Some lift to the bathrooms this year with new floorings and some new fittings, plus an enhanced range of toiletries for guest use. Toweling stock is of a very good quality and size and was found to be soft and absorbent in use. Comfortable levels of heat and light are maintained, and water pressure was found to be very good with guest enjoying a forceful and easy to control shower.

Hospitality and guest experience

The proprietors adopt a positive approach to guest care at the property with a warm welcome extended on arrival and pleasant conversational manner throughout the stay. A friendly and informal booking procedure provides a good strong first impression, though consider offering to confirm by e-mail in order to provide the guest with some tangible documentation - this could include directions to the property perhaps ?. Prompt greeting on arrival with the guest escorted to the allocated room given direction n breakfast service times. Recommendations are made as to a suitable evening dining venue, and the honesty bar arrangement is highlighted. Please ensure guests are registered in order to meet legal obligations. The practice of offering a welcome hot beverage in the lounge is a very good guest care procedure at Greenhead Country House. Established departure procedures in place with payment well managed and a printed receipt

provided.

Breakfast

Breakfast is served in the good sized dining room around large individual tabling. Appropriate quality tableware in use. Orders promptly recorded for hot beverage and toast. Guests select from a range of cereals and juice plus grapefruit segments at the sideboard. A full grill is served. Consider introducing a simple breakfast menu which would allow guests to select from the full range of breakfast options available - including style of eggs and possibly a wider range of starter options - yoghurts, fresh fruit salad / fresh berries when in season, bakery goods (croissant / rolls etc.). It is understood that local produce is used where possible, and some reference to this fact could be included within the menu detail for guest interest.

(Orange juice, coffee, toast, egg, bacon, hash brown, sausage, tomato); Juice of a good quality standard, toast served crisp and fresh. A wide range of quality preserves are provided also - but please remove lids and check for spoilage as part of the mis en place procedure here. Coffee was found to be robust and flavoursome. Cooked elements served piping hot and well presented - the quality of the sausage and bacon was excellent. A substantial and most enjoyable breakfast experience - service throughout was friendly, attentive and informal.

Highlights

Guests at the property will enjoy spacious and tastefully appointed accommodations, and benefit from an honesty bar facility within the guest lounge. The breakfast operation is well established - substantial content.

The well established proprietors adopt a courteous and professional approach to guest care. Access to Weardale attractions and amenities is very convenient from Greenhead Country House.

Minimum Entry Requirements

Standard: Guest Accommodation

Designator: Guest Accommodation

Rating: Four Star

Specialities:

For a rating to be awarded by VisitEngland a property must meet all:

Minimum Entry Requirements

Key Requirements, as appropriate to the Star level

Any Additional Requirements

At the time of our visit all of the Minimum Entry Requirements and Additional Requirements/Key Requirements were provided.

Notes for Proprietors / Managers

The copy of our Visit Report provides information on our assessment of your accommodation and services. The form may be amended from time to time if we discover that this information can be presented in ways that are more helpful. When making quality assessments the assessor is assessing each aspect against the standards of excellence established by VisitEngland. Assessors are trained to ignore their own personal preferences and prejudices when making these assessments. This report is provided in confidence and its contents may not be displayed in any printed material or via electronic media, or indeed quoted verbally. This restriction also applies to any verbal comment made by the assessor at the time of the visit.

PLEASE NOTE

The observations in the Visit Report are intended to be helpful by drawing particular points to your attention. There is no implication that it was these aspects alone that influenced the overall assessment, or that, if they are acted upon, a higher overall grade would be necessarily achieved. Should a proprietor/manager disagree with the grade given, there is an Appeal Procedure, details of which are available from Quality in Tourism (QualityInTourism@uk.g4s.com, Tel 0845 300 6996). A separate charge is made for an appeal assessment.