



Quality in Tourism

Visit Report

Self-Catering Standard

Greenlands Barn

Earls Colne

★★★★ Self Catering 89%

Gold Award

Visit date: 06 Sep 2016

Visit type: Day

QiT No: 561027

	Score
Exterior	
Appearance of buildings	5
Grounds, gardens and parking	5
Environment and setting	5
	100%
Management Efficiency	
Pre arrival info including brochure	4
Welcome and arrival procedure	5
In unit guest info and personal touches	5
	93%
Public Areas	
Decoration	5
Flooring	5
Furniture, furnishings and fittings	4
Lighting, heating and ventilation	4
Space, comfort and ease of use	4
	88%
Bedrooms	
Decoration	4
Flooring	5
Furniture, furnishings and fittings	4
Lighting, heating and ventilation	4
Mattress, bed bases and headboards	5
Bedding and bed linen	5
Space, comfort and ease of use	3
	85%
Bathrooms and WCs	
Decoration	5
Flooring	5
Fixtures, fittings and sanitary ware	4
Lighting, heating and ventilation	4
Space, comfort and ease of use	3
	84%
Kitchen	
Decoration	4
Flooring	4
Furniture and fittings	4
Lighting, heating and ventilation	5
Kitchen equipment	4
Crockery, cutlery and glassware	4
Kitchenware, pans and utensils	4
Space, comfort and ease of use	5
	85%
Cleanliness	
Living and dining area	5
Bedroom	5
Bathroom	5
Kitchen	5
	100%
	89%

Key Scores and Sectional Consistencies

Overall

89% = Level 5; (87% to 100%)

Cleanliness

100% = Level 5; (90% to 100%)

Public Areas

88% = Level 5; (87% to 100%)

Bedrooms

85% = Level 4; (75% to 86%)

Bathrooms

84% = Level 4; (75% to 86%)

Kitchen

85% = Level 4; (75% to 86%)

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 will be no higher than the level achieved by the overall percentage.
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.

Overview

Greenlands Barn continues to enjoy a Four Star Self Catering rating; the accommodation is well appointed throughout and currently sits in a high position within the achieved banding. The Gold Accolade is retained once again which Mr and Mrs Williams are delighted to hear.

Mr and Mrs Williams are happy with the rating the property secures however commented that bookings have been down this year, as discussed upgrading the web site, introducing short breaks and possibly promoting via an on line agency such as "Holiday Lettings" could be considered.

Units Seen

Greenlands Barn - single unit viewed with Mr and Mrs Williams, owners

Website Feedback

As the current web site is out of date, information was requested on how to improve advertising rather than providing information on the current advertising offered.

As discussed it was felt that the web site is in need of updating, certainly information referring to the B&B which is no longer operated on the site should be removed and the barn only promoted. Thought could be given to investigating "Promote my Place" to assist with compiling a current web site, any new version of the site should be compatible with mobile devices and offer an availability calendar or on line booking tool. Mr and Mrs Williams would prefer a calendar and enquiry form rather than a full on line system to allow them more control over bookings which can be easily achieved through such a site as the one mentioned above. As discussed short breaks are much more popular these days and should be introduced, advertising a tariff for a minimum three day break, 5 days and 7 days is most commonly seen.

Providing more imagery and less text is preferable; guests take little time to read but are attracted by high quality imagery preferably a rolling stock of photographs could be introduced.

A link to Tripadvisor, as discussed the review site only should be considered. The link which can promote the most recent reviews on the property home page is most useful allowing guests to read the information without leaving the site, no reviews are currently available.

The grading logo and award should be displayed to promote the quality offered at a glance, the current logos have been sent to Mr Williams.

Thought could also be given to investigating "Holiday Lettings" a sister company of Tripadvisor, a commission based on line agent who has success in selling self-catering accommodation.

It is understood that the Visit England on line marketing tool kit has been viewed in the past but Mr Williams felt the information was geared around social media which is not an avenue he wishes to explore.

Cleanliness/Housekeeping

Housekeeping is superb throughout. Mr and Mrs Williams personally take care of the cleaning of the property to ensure this high standard is maintained at all times.

The original beams and age of the property create their own issues, spiders enjoy the beams however not a single cobweb was seen on this occasion, in either the lounge or bedroom. The lack of dust also warrants comment which again in an older property can be a constant issue. Furniture is polished, carpets expertly cleaned into edges and corners and behind furniture. The kitchen echoed these standards, cupboards and drawers being neatly arranged and free from debris, not even a crumb to be found in the toaster. The bathroom fittings are buffed to remove water marks, mirrors sparkle and tiled flooring shines.

Public Areas

A well-appointed barn which sports many original features and a character listed internal window. The new two seater sofas and chair which were recently added fit the style and size of the room extremely well. Carpet is beautifully presented and soft furnishings fully complement the overall presentation of the open plan living space.

Lighting is very well considered, the provision of ceiling fans for use in warmer months is also appreciated. It is made clear to guests that the fire is decorative only, the barn offering full central heating which guests are in full control of.

The layout and ambience of the barn will ensure that the guest expectation at this market level is being met.

Bedrooms

Overall the bedroom presents as previously viewed. The bedroom is quite compact however the large fitted wardrobe offers ample storage for the two guests catered for on site.

The bed with deep firm mattress is tastefully dressed with excellent linens and quality bedding, an electric blanket is provided in colder months. Once again decoration, soft furnishings and the quality of the carpet and fittings will meet the guest expectations well.

Bathrooms

The bathroom is being maintained to a high standard offering excellent quality and presentation. Non slip tiled flooring has been repaired since last viewed, the cracked tiles having been replaced.

Very good levels of illumination are noted across all the key areas, spot lighting being very well placed, appropriate heating levels are also noted. Sanitary ware and fittings are of a very good specification, a generously sized shower enclosure with thermostatic shower noted. The room is a good size with consideration having been given to providing storage for guests' personal items.

Kitchen

A large fitted kitchen, well-appointed units, ample work tops, tiled splash backs and a generous provision of well-maintained appliances and white goods meet the guests' needs well. Lighting is very well placed, under unit task lighting being appreciated and extraction ensures cooking odours are eliminated at source. Plentiful supplies of matching quality crockery, cutlery and glassware are noted with ample provided.

Management Efficiency

All guests receive a personal welcome to the accommodation, the owners live on site and are therefore on hand to offer a detailed orientation of the accommodation and provide local information if required.

An extensive welcome pack is provided; guests are also made aware that they are welcome to pick produce from the greenhouse and garden when in season.

The barn is equipped with a comprehensive range of accessories and personal touches, maps, local books and a range of games and novels.

Potential for Improvement

Strong scores are achieved in all areas of the business therefore no specific work is necessary at this time.

As discussed to comply with the recent changes to food legislation a listing of ingredients will need to be presented alongside any home made produce which is offered as part of the welcome pack. Thought could be given to producing an A5 post card which could offer information of the accommodation on the front and the recipe of the product on the reverse - an inexpensive marketing tool which addresses the issue and is likely to be taken away by guests for future reference.

Highlights

Continued investment in the property has once again been ongoing, external decoration has been refreshed and the blown windows replaced, garden furniture has also been replaced this year.

A new suite has been a recent purchase, the two seater sofas fitting well within the space in the lounge.

Towels, linen and bedding are replaced on an ongoing basis; the duvet was also new for this season, along with an upgrade to toiletries.

Plans are in place to refresh decoration internally which it is hoped will take place over the winter months.

Mr and Mrs Williams take very good care of their guests which is documented well in the guest book on site however as discussed these wonderful comments need to be in the public domain which is why Tripadvisor would be useful.

Minimum Entry Requirements

Unit: Greenlands Barn

Standard: Self-Catering

Designator: Self Catering

Rating: Four Star Gold

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.

Visit Report

Your VisitEngland quality assessment report, comprising scores, star rating and commentary reflects the experience of the Quality in Tourism assessor on the day of the visit.

Appeals procedure

If for any reason you wish to appeal against the rating awarded, VisitEngland has an established appeals procedure, which Quality in Tourism operates on its behalf. A fee is payable, which is refunded if the appeal is upheld. Applications should be made within 14 days of receipt of the report. For details please contact Quality in Tourism at qualityintourism@uk.g4s.com or telephone 0845 300 6996. Details can also be found at www.qualityintourism.com.

Additional visits

Visits are generally carried out annually, but if you are aiming for a higher rating or accolade and prefer an earlier visit during the same participation year, this can be arranged for an additional fee. Contact Quality in Tourism for details.

Publishing of reports

This report may, at your discretion, be displayed in its entirety in any printed material or via electronic media.