

The Farmhouse at Redcoats

Anglian Country Inns, Fox Barn, Willian, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY, Hertfordshire, SG6 2AE

Summary

STAR RATING



DESIGNATOR

Hotel

MERIT SCORE

82%

CULINARY EXCELLENCE



RESTAURANT NAME

The Conservatory Restaurant

DATE OF INSPECTION

18 July 2019

TYPE

Overnight Inspection

INSPECTOR

Rebecca Johnson

rebecca.johnson@theaa.com

CONTACT

Miss Charli Castell

Restaurant Manager

It was a pleasure to meet with Charli for this very first inspection to The Farmhouse at Redcoats, to ascertain an official star rating under AA Quality Standards. Overall a very enjoyable stay which has achieved a Four Star Grading and Merit Score of 82% - Well done all. Hospitality was positive at all points, with a strong hosting presence observed at dinner. Service delivery equally positive with an attentive and proactive approach by all the team. Annexe bedrooms and bathrooms impress for their style and interior. Main house bedrooms have many of the original period features, although bathrooms here are slightly dated in comparison. However as discussed, these are next in line for refurbishment. Housekeeping was carried out with excellent attention to detail and the team are commended for their efforts to ensure presentation of the accommodation is memorable one. Dining on all occasions was very enjoyable, with a number of memorable aspects, securing Two AA Rosettes for Culinary Excellence - well done team!

Your Star Rating

How the Star Rating is Achieved

Your star rating is reached by assessment of three elements:

- Overall Quality
- Critical Areas (the six Critical Areas of Quality, which are of particular importance - Cleanliness, Hospitality, Service, Bedrooms, Bathrooms and Food)
- Your provision of services & facilities. You must provide all the services and facilities for Hotel minimum entry (one star) and additionally any services and facilities required for your target star rating. These are all listed in the Quality Standards booklet. All three elements must achieve their required star rating.

OVERALL QUALITY

4

CRITICAL AREAS

4

SERVICES & FACILITIES

4

FINAL STAR RATING

4

AA Merit Score

The AA recognises around 4000 hotels across Britain & Ireland. The AA Merit Score provides consumers with a means of comparing hotels within the same star rating. This score is out of 100. The AA Merit Score is shown beside hotel entries in the AA Hotel Guide and on the AA web site www.theaa.com.

The AA Merit Score is based on the Star Rating Score. The reason for having the Merit Score (unique to The AA) is to be able to compare quality both nationally and locally, between hotels that share the same star rating.

AA MERIT SCORE

82%

Overall Quality

How the Overall Quality Rating is Achieved

The minimum overall quality score for your target star rating must be met. We assess 58 aspects of your hotel (under nine area headings) and score each aspect from 1 to 5 (1 being acceptable; 5 being excellent). The total of these 58 scores is then converted into an overall percentage. This percentage must fall into the band for your target star rating. Note - the overall percentage is based on the total score and is not an average of the area percentages.

1 STAR	2 STAR	3 STAR	4 STAR	5 STAR
30% - 46%	47% - 54%	55% - 69%	70% - 84%	85%+

Additionally, six of the "Assessment Areas" are considered "Critical" and the most significant in terms of guest expectation. These are Cleanliness, Hospitality, Service, Bedrooms, Bathrooms and Food. All of the six Critical Areas must reach the standard required for your Star rating and must fall into the relevant band for your target star rating.

Quality Assessment Areas

AREA	MAX SCORE	YOUR SCORE	PERCENTAGE	CRITICAL AREAS
Hospitality	40	32	80%	4
Service	45	36	80%	4
Cleanliness	25	21	84%	4
Food	20	17	85%	5
Bedroom	35	28	80%	4
Bathroom	30	25	83%	4
Public Areas	30	25	83%	
Exterior	15	12	80%	
Restaurant	30	24	80%	
Total	270	220	81%	

Quality Comparison

STAR RATING	MERIT SCORE	COUNTRY AVERAGE	UK AVERAGE
4	82%	80%	80%

Quality Assessment Details

Hospitality

The team were very friendly, providing a warm and relaxed environment for guests. The food and beverage team in the afternoon were all smiling and friendly, building a good rapport with guests. Definite hosting presence observed a dinner, led by Charli. Naturally jolly breakfast, with good level of conversation from Carol.

Service

Service interactions were focused and generally attentive throughout the stay; Same day telephone reservation was well handled overall, efficient taking of guest details, prompt email confirmation. Perhaps a little more detail could be given to differentiate room type. What does the guest get for extra money? Dinner reservation secured. Positive arrival procedures included an accurate pre-populated registration form, directional orientation of guest areas, luggage assistance offered, escort to the room was a personalised touch. Could consider offering fresh milk? Proactive service experienced on both afternoon and evening lounge/bar tests. Pre-dinner drink noted presentation of menus, with daily changing specials advised; evident menu knowledge - confident recommendations and descriptions. Smooth transition to the restaurant where an attentive, well paced service was observed; good upselling here too. Breakfast impressed for full guidance of buffet items provided in The Old Kitchen, prompt order take and removal of empties, replenishments of hot drinks offered. The final invoice was accurately prepared and explained, final payment processed quickly, no undue delays.

Cleanliness

Very good standards of housekeeping service and cleanliness. Room occupied had been well prepared for arrival, well maintained wooden floor, dust free surfaces, clean within drawers and harder to reach areas (behind bed/furniture). Bathroom had a fresh and 'unused' atmosphere, sparkling surfaces, towels well laundered and smartly presented. Well presented guest corridors; clean and fresh smelling throughout. Externally clean and tidy. Bar and conservatory, also positively clean, glassware, crockery and cutlery all spotless. However, noted some debris on couch in the afternoon - ensure these are de-crumbed and cushions plumped for a better impression.

Food

Afternoon "open" style smoked salmon sandwich was delicious; carefully presented, excellent flavoured salmon, delicate accompaniments. A real emphasis on locally sourced and seasonal produce. Plenty of home grown produce from the on-site vegetable garden - this should definitely be celebrated more! Bees also kept and homemade honey features where possible. The quality of dishes and accuracy of cooking at dinner met with expectations for 2 Rosettes. The kitchen team are to be congratulated for what was an enjoyable meal overall. The breakfast starter buffet together with the menu offers a very good range of quality items, which cater for all tastes and requirements.

Bedroom

Occupied bedroom (25), was quite compact in terms of sizing at the aspired Four Star grading. However style, decor and quality of fixtures and fittings compensate. The open plan hanging facility acceptable. Ample accessible power points in situ, with provision of USB points very much in keeping with current trends. Bold feature wall paper, with coordinated soft furnishings and accessories adds to impressions. Bed attractively dressed, pillows and mattress deeply comfortable. Skylight blind was a little tricky to manage and a privacy blind for the second window is necessary (given ground floor location) for guest comfort.

Bathroom

Bathroom quality is a little mixed; main house suites slightly more dated in terms of style, however in good order nonetheless. Advised these are next in line for refurbishments. Annexe ensuite (including occupied room) more modern in terms of design. Quality tiling in place, grouting appeared fresh. All amenities were in good working order with hot water instantly drawn and drainage working efficiently; good pressure from both taps and shower. Generous range of higher-end toiletries, in conjunction with fluffy towelling. However there is scope to extend further; shower caps, bathrobes for example, disposable slippers could also be considered given the wooden flooring.

Public Areas

Public areas within the main farmhouse are split into several snug areas of the bar, The Old Kitchen, and two further private dining rooms; The Oak Room and Victorian Room, all were very welcoming and packed full of well-maintained period features, along with a notable style of decor, enhancing the character of the property. The Cowshed Bar & Lounge across the courtyard is most impressive, currently a popular destination for private functions.

Exterior

Wonderful surroundings where the barns have been well restored. External paving all in good order for guest safety, bedding was in full seasonal mode along with a contrasting modern feel further enhanced by lighting during the hours of darkness. Ample gravel car parking, ideal for property when at maximum capacity.

Restaurant

Lots of character within the conservatory restaurant. Décor is well matched to the style, as are the accessories; very homely and welcoming, pleasant atmosphere present at dinner and breakfast. Tables of varying sizes, well spaced and well positioned for guest comfort, all appointed with good quality cutlery, glassware and cloth napkins.

Quality Summary

TIME OF RESERVATION

12:00

DATE OF RESERVATION

18 July 2019

ROOM OCCUPIED

25

ROOMS INSPECTED

A range seen, barn & farmhouse

Food Quality

STARTER

Poached lobster tail, lobster claw bonbon, mango, coriander, chilli, avocado. Lobster meat accurately poached, ensuring sweetness, and good tender texture. Bonbon, golden crisp coated, although filling a tad wet, sea-fresh aroma and pleasant flavour nonetheless. Accompaniments were well proportioned, providing a good balance of sweetness and subtle spice. A naturally colourful dish, which added to the appeal.

MAIN COURSE

Roasted barbary duck breast, potato rosti, king oyster mushroom, pickled kohlrabi, mushroom ketchup, charcoal roasted hispi cabbage. The quality of the duck was excellent, it had been competently, evenly cooked, well rendered fat, impressively pink finish and full of natural juices to enhance. Home grown kohlrabi, pickled, wafer-thin disc, pleasant hit of flavour. Carefully distributed spots of mushroom ketchup, even layout to ensure balanced layered flavour. Potato rosti, bite sized pieces, golden crunch. Glossy and flavoursome jus to bring the dish together

DESSERT

Dark chocolate delice, passionfruit, yogurt sorbet, feuillantine biscuit. Rich, indulgent delice, smooth, silky texture, glossy sheen to enhance the appearance. Naturally tart passionfruit, bold and fruity, provided a good contrast to the chocolate, with a creamy yogurt sorbet to balance the two. Biscuit crumbs for added texture.

Suggestions for Improvements

*A little more detail of bedrooms at the reservation stage; what to guests get for the extra money? Potential to upsell higher end rooms.

*Privacy blinds within ground floor bedrooms.

*Could consider disposable slippers especially within non-carpetted bedrooms? Shower caps? Vanity kits?

Provision of Services & Facilities

You must provide all the services and facilities for Hotel minimum entry (one Star) and additionally any services and facilities required for your target star rating. These are listed below in the same order as the Quality Standards booklet.

There are certain services and facilities, which are deemed "Key" (marked with the  symbol in the table below), and these are the most significant in terms of guest expectation. The absence of any of these may delay confirmation of your star rating. In the details below these are marked in bold.

There are other services and facilities, which are deemed "Additional", and these are less significant in terms of guest expectation. A commitment to address these will generally allow confirmation of your star rating.

OVERALL STANDARDS

Statutory Obligations

Meet 

- 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 and that the requirements are being fulfilled.
- Fulfilment of all relevant statutory obligations including but not restricted to:
- Fire risk assessment: to comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005; supply evidence that a fire risk assessment has been carried out annually
- Food safety/hygiene: register with the local Environmental Health department
- Health and safety: operate safely with due regard to health and safety legislation
- Planning: comply with local planning regulations
- Licensing: comply with all local licensing regulations
- Hotel Proprietors Act: comply with this act
- Data Protection Act / GDPR: comply with this act / these regulations
- The Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008: comply with these regulations by describing accurately in any advertisement, brochure, or other printed or electronic media, the facilities and services provided
- Equality Act 2010: comply with this act. Welcome all guests courteously and without discrimination in relation to gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or belief. Make 'reasonable' adjustments to improve services for disabled customers. Produce an Accessibility Guide – information on the accessibility of your facilities and services.



Safety & Security

Meet

- Proprietor and/or staff to be on site and on call to resident guests 24-hours a day. Printed instructions, provided in the bedrooms, for summoning assistance during an emergency at night. If the proprietor lives away from the hotel, it is expected that a member of management or staff sleep on site and that their night-time contact details are clearly advertised in every bedroom.
- A high degree of general safety and security, including information on evacuation procedures in the event of an emergency, to be advertised in every bedroom. Multilingual emergency procedure notices or use of symbols/diagrams clearly displayed in every bedroom.
- Particular attention given to the safety and security of guests and their belongings in car parks, ground floor and annexe bedrooms including external paths and walkways.
- Once registered guests should have access to the hotel at all times.
- In the interests of safety, guests to be escorted to bedrooms if requested.
- The hotel entrance should be clearly identifiable and the doorway illuminated when it is dark. Adequate levels of lighting for safety and comfort in all public areas, including sufficient light on stairways and landings at night.
- A telephone accessible 24 hours a day, unless direct dial telephones provided in each bedroom.
- Adequate measures for the security of guests and their property. Means of securing bedroom doors from inside and out, and a key or key card provided. The issuing of a bedroom key to guests and charging of items to account always done discreetly to ensure guest security.
- Security fittings installed on any window which could be left open and access gained from outside, e.g. windows near fire escapes.



Maintenance

Meet

- Buildings, their fixtures, furnishings, fittings, exterior and interior décor maintained in a sound, clean condition and fit for the purpose intended.
- All electrical and gas equipment in good working order and regularly serviced to ensure guests' safety.
- Monitoring procedure in place for reporting of broken/damaged items in guests' bedrooms.



Cleanliness

Meet

- A high standard of cleanliness maintained throughout the property.
- As the cleanliness of hotels at every star grade is of paramount importance to the consumer, the highest standards of cleanliness are not expected to vary between star gradings.
- Particular attention should be given to bathrooms, shower rooms and toilets especially items involving direct contact with guests, including: Bedding, linen and towels, baths, showers, washbasins and WCs, flooring and seating, crockery, cutlery and glassware.
- Bathrooms and shower rooms clean and fresh smelling. Particular attention paid to WCs, plug-holes, shower curtains, mirrors and extractor fans.
- All walls, ceilings, pipes, ledges, equipment and fittings, which are beyond reach from floor level, cleaned on a regular basis. All flat surfaces, equipment and furniture free from dust, dirt, grease and marks.

HOSPITALITY & SERVICE



General

Meet

- Guests should be greeted and acknowledged in a friendly, efficient and courteous manner throughout their stay. Staff should have a helpful attitude.
- A relatively straightforward range of services offered – often provided by the proprietor and family/staff.
- All enquiries, requests and reservations, correspondence and complaints from visitors dealt with promptly and politely.
- Every effort made to take account of individual guest's needs.
- The style of the hotel may dictate how staff dress – from formal uniforms to informal and casual outfits.
- Service, efficiency and technical skills of a very good standard.
- All staff demonstrate a positive attitude and willingness to help.
- Very good social skills and anticipation of individual guest's needs evident. The ability to personalise the guest experience encouraged.



Reservations/Prices/Billing

Meet

- There should be a simple and efficient booking service that includes the following: Prospective visitors told clearly what is included in the prices quoted for accommodation, meals and refreshments, including service charge, taxes and other surcharges. Ability to make a prompt and effective reservation during the day and evening.
- Communication with prospective guests, whether verbal or written, should be prompt, efficient, professional and helpful. A good first impression is critical at all grades.
- The price agreed at the time of booking must not be exceeded.
- All agreed prices must include service charges, taxes and other surcharges where applicable.
- Every endeavour should be made to advise guests in advance about the hotel location, any car parking restrictions and the location of their room if it is in an annexe.
- Other information which may impact on the guests' stay, e.g. smoking policy, refurbishment work in progress, planned functions/events etc. provided. Where house policy dictates that certain facilities need to be pre-booked, e.g. spa treatments, dinner etc., these should also be mentioned at the time of booking.
- Where no or limited meal service is provided this should be made clear at the time of booking and on your website to avoid disappointment.
- Full details of the hotel's cancellation policy. Information about charging credit cards for cancellation or changes to the booking is particularly important.
- Information about deposits if required, including details of how the deposit is taken and whether or not it is refundable on cancellation.
- Clear explanation of charges for additional services or available facilities including cancellation terms.
- Information about any unacceptable types of payment, e.g. credit cards etc.
- Confirmation provided on request by hotel (not only from third party booking site) by e-mail, text or letter.
- Prospective guests left confident that their booking was recorded accurately.
- As a minimum, name, address, and/or contact telephone number recorded at the time of booking.
- All bookings handled in a friendly and courteous manner, even if there is no dedicated reservations department.
- Provide each guest with printed or clearly written details of payment due and a receipt on request.
- Presentation of accounts ensuring that purchases are clearly detailed.
- The VAT element of the account (where applicable) should be clearly identified.
- Guests should be able to charge all account services to one main account.
- Confirmation provided by email/text or letter from hotel (not only from third party booking site).



Reception & Luggage Handling

Meet

- As reception is likely to be the guests' first and last point of contact with a hotel, special attention should be given to providing a high standard of customer care.
- Direct guest contact given priority over other reception duties.
- Guests clearly directed to their room and given a brief explanation of location of hotel facilities.
- Once registered, resident guests have access to the hotel at all times. Proprietor and/or staff to be on site and on call to resident guests 24-hours a day.
- It is acceptable for a front door key or security code to be issued.
- Guests informed of meal times, bar opening times etc.
- Secure short term luggage storage.
- Laundry and possibly dry cleaning service provided and advertised with prices.
- Newspapers can be ordered and delivered to guests' bedrooms.
Reception services available at least between 7am and 11pm
Assistance with luggage offered on arrival and advertised for departure.
Consideration for 24 hour reception where there is a market need.



Other Reception/Concierge/Housekeeping Services

Meet

- Iron and ironing board available.
- Appropriate tourist, travel and/or local information available suitable to market needs.
- Well-presented travel and/or local information such as details of visitor attractions, taxi firms, banks, churches, railway stations etc. available in bedrooms.
- Laundry and possibly dry cleaning service provided and advertised with prices.
- Newspapers can be ordered and delivered to guests' bedrooms.

DINING



General

Meet

- Guests informed when they book if dinner is not available. This must be clearly highlighted on the website.
 - Provision is made for a variety of dietary requirements.
 - Where dinner is served in a restaurant which is separate to the hotel or contracted out, the hotel guests must be informed at the time of booking.
 - There is a facility for guests to charge meals and drinks to their hotel account.
 - Individual tables available for each guest or party.
-



Meal Service Staff

Meet

- Sufficient staff to ensure prompt service at all meals served.
 - Unobtrusive, polite and courteous staff providing an very good standard of customer care and demonstrating very good levels of food, beverage and wine product knowledge and service skills.
 - Staff demonstrate proactive service, anticipating customer requirements.
-



Breakfast Provision

Meet

- A cooked and/or continental breakfast provided.
 - Appropriate breakfast times where there is a specific market need, e.g. city centre hotels, airport hotels and rural hotels.
 - Breakfast price on display when a room-only rate option is available.
 - The price of any breakfast items carrying an additional charge clearly advertised.
 - Self-service buffet style is acceptable. However, buffets should be replenished on a regular basis. Where provided, buffets laid out and operated in a practical and customer friendly manner.
 - A cooked and continental breakfast provided in a designated eating area on the premises and advertised as such.
 - Table service advertised and available on request.
-



Breakfast Menu & Range of Dishes

Meet

- A good range of hot and cold items, together with a choice of good quality accompaniments. Examples include preserves, ground and decaffeinated coffee, teas, butters and spreads.
 - Guests offered a choice of how their eggs are cooked to include fried, poached, boiled and scrambled.
 - A menu detailing the full breakfast range provided.
 - A superior range of hot and cold items.
-



Dinner Provision

Meet

- Dinner served at specific times according to market need and clearly advertised.
 - Where dinner is not provided this must be clearly communicated to the guest. Hotel should provide further information as to alternative options.
 - A self-service operation e.g. carvery or buffet-style, is acceptable.
-



Dinner Menu & Range of Dishes

Meet

- A choice of substantial hot and cold dishes.
 - Quality written menus with prices clearly displayed.
-



Alcoholic Drink Services/Licences/Wine Service

Meet

- A current residential liquor licence or equivalent.
 - Staff demonstrate good knowledge of drinks, including wines and spirits.
 - A very good range of drinks offered.
 - An informative and detailed wine list.
-

-  **Light Refreshments/Snacks/Lunch/Afternoon Tea** **Meet** 
- Light refreshments of at least hot and cold drinks and sandwiches available to residents and their guests in the public areas during service times. This service is to be clearly advertised.
 - Guests able to order and be served at their table.
-

-  **Room Service Provision** **Meet** 
- Room service should be provided and delivered to the room where there is a market need during service hours (including breakfast and dinner). In addition It is acceptable to have a central area where guests can help themselves to a range of food and drink (i.e self service pantry)
-

BEDROOM

-  **Bedroom Provision** **Meet** 
- Minimum of five letting bedrooms.
-

-  **Size and Spaciousness** **Meet** 
- All bedrooms with a higher degree of spaciousness, allowing ample ease of use for guests and considerably exceeding the minimum entry requirements.
 - When we assess bedroom size we take into account the usable space available around furniture and fittings.
 - It should be possible to fully open doors and drawers without having to move other furniture.
 - Rooms for family occupation need to be significantly larger.
 - Easy and convenient use of facilities, e.g. use of surfaces without moving tea tray or TV, access to power points etc.
-

-  **Suites** **Meet** 
- Not required.
-

-  **Bed Size & Access** **Meet** 
- Minimum bed sizes, including sofa beds and bunks, as follows: Single: 190cm x 90cm/6ft 3ins x 3ft Double: 190cm x 137cm/6ft 3ins x 4ft 6ins (122cm/4ft beds to be designated as singles).
 - All children's beds to be full adult size. Single: 190cm x 90cm/6ft 3ins x 3ft.
 - Sofa beds are not acceptable as permanent bed spaces but where provided as temporary beds, must meet the bed size requirements for permanent beds.
 - Bunk beds (permanent bed spaces) are acceptable for child use only. When bunk beds are used, guests must be told when they make the booking. N.B. Bunk beds should have a minimum 75cm/30ins clear space between the mattress of the bottom bed and the underside of the top bed. (Bunk bed regulations 1997).
 - All beds including supplementary beds (such as z-beds, sofa beds etc) to be of acceptable quality and in good condition. They should have a sound base and sprung interior, foam or similar quality, modern, comfortable mattress.
 - Secure headboard or equivalent on all permanent beds.
 - Access to both sides of beds for double occupancy.
 - A choice of larger sized beds.
-

-  **Bedding Requirements** **Meet** 
- Bedding and bed linen provided suitable for the season. Additional bedding available on request.
 - Sufficient quantity of linen provided for each guest.
 - All beds made daily. Bed linen changed at least once in every week and for each new guest.
 - Where feather duvets or pillows are used, a non-allergenic alternative to be available on request.
 - A mattress protector provided for each bed. Plastic or rubber mattress protectors are not acceptable except for children's beds.
-

Heating & Temperature Control

Meet 

- Individually controlled thermostatic heating operable 24-hours.
-

Lighting

Meet 

- Lighting specifically provided to illuminate the writing desk/dressing table.
 - Lighting specifically for the lobby area, wardrobe area, dining area and easy seating.
 - Two bedside lights in a twin-bedded room.
 - Room lighting controllable from the bedside.
-

Windows & Window Coverings

Meet 

- At least one window that can be opened safely to provide good levels of direct natural light and ventilation. Air conditioning or mechanical air ventilation provided where windows cannot be opened.
 - Windows well fitted, easy to shut and open and remain open. A pole provided to open any Velux-style windows or skylights.
 - Rooms without windows are acceptable, but must have air-conditioning and pass all building regulations. The lack of window needs to be clearly communicated to the guest before booking.
 - Security fittings installed on all bedroom windows where, when open, access could be gained from outside, e.g. patio doors and windows near fire escapes.
 - It is acceptable for a bedroom to overlook a large internal atrium. The bedroom should be air-conditioned and naturally illuminated.
 - Opaque curtains, blinds or shutters provided on all windows including glass panels to doors, fanlights and skylight windows so that guests have privacy and can exclude any light from outside the room. All window coverings to be properly fitted or hung.
 - Curtains should be reasonably substantial – with or without lining. Curtains large enough to draw easily and completely across the width and height of the window.
 - In ground floor bedrooms additional privacy provided by means of a net curtain or blind.
-

Flooring

Meet 

- All flooring, carpets, rugs, hard wood flooring etc. properly fitted and of an expected quality and condition.
-

Furniture: Tables/Mirrors/Clothes Storage

Meet 

- Writing table or equivalent such as substantial flat surface or desk providing sufficient free space for practical use with mirror adjacent.
 - Lighting appropriate for use. Conveniently positioned power sockets at desk height.
 - A bedside table or equivalent provided for each person. Twin beds may share a bedside table.
 - Wardrobe or clothes hanging space.
 - Sufficient good quality hangers (not wire).
 - Dedicated area for unpacking luggage.
 - At least two mirrors in the bedroom, one of which must be full-length mirror and one at the dressing table area.
-

Furniture: Seating

Meet 

- Double/Twin – one substantial easy chair with another chair positioned at the writing desk.
-

Beverage Making Facilities

Meet 

- A wider range of hot drinks and snacks likely to be provided, e.g. choice of teas, biscuits, and other drinks such as hot chocolate.
 - Tea/coffee making facilities to be provided in the room
-



In-Room Information

Meet

- Hotel services and facilities advertised in all bedrooms possibly in a folder of room information or via in-room technology. This should include the following where applicable:
- How to summon assistance in a night-time emergency.
- Multilingual instructions or diagram for fire evacuation. Consideration given to providing multi-lingual information materials where relevant to the customer base.
- Meal times and menus including rooms service menu where provided.
- Details on connecting to the WiFi.
- Local tourist information or a reference to where this is available within the establishment to be included within the room information.
- How to use TV, radio and other technology in the room.
- Iron and ironing board advertised as available (if not already provided in the bedroom).
- Where Apps are available for service elements such as ordering of newspapers or additional items, such as rooms service,
- A more comprehensive guest directory.
- Where technology allows, the guest directory likely to be shown on the room TV or a portable device (i.e. a tablet), including examples of the local visitor attractions, recommended nearby restaurants and public transport information.



In-Room Entertainment

Meet

- Digital TV available in bedrooms.
- All available channels properly tuned in.
- Televisions in bedrooms can be safely mounted on a wall bracket. Ease of viewing and safety taken into account when positioning television.
- TV remote control provided.
- Guests able to watch TV in comfort from both a chair and the bed.
- Televisions with generously-sized screens – greater than 61cm/24ins.



General Connectivity & Telephones

Meet

- An effective means of internal communication should be provided.
- Telephones to display the hotel telephone number together with the bedroom extension or telephone number.
- Instructions on how to use any additional services such as telephone message service and room-to-room calls.
- Rate card displayed in bedrooms illustrating typical charges for local, long-distance, international, internet, use of phone cards and connection to mobile phones. Sample call charges required.
- In addition, an explanation of what constitutes a local and long-distance call should be given as well as a clear explanation of peak and off peak times.
- Free WiFi and/or internet connection available in all bedrooms and public areas where connectivity allows. A conscious effort to strengthen any weak spots should be evident.



Miscellaneous

Meet

- A drinking tumbler per guest, in clear glass, or scratchless plastic.
- Sufficient and conveniently situated power sockets allowing for the safe use of all electrical equipment provided. Power adapters acceptable, but not overloaded.
- Easily accessible plug sockets to also include continental sockets or adapters, along with USB sockets
- A superior quality hairdryer.

BATHROOM



Size & Spaciousness

Meet

- All rooms should have sufficient space for guests' comfort and ease of use. Guests should be able to move easily around the room.
- When we assess the size of the bath, shower and WC rooms, we take into account the usable space available around furniture and fittings. For a higher quality grade, rooms will be expected to afford a higher provision of free space together with more generously-sized equipment, i.e. larger bath, shower and basin.

Provision of Ensuite

Meet 

- All bedrooms to have en suite bathrooms or shower room. All en suites with WC and thermostatically controlled showers, either separate or over the bath.
-

Equipment

Meet 

- All en suite bathrooms or shower rooms equipped with:
 - A mirror with good lighting situated above or adjacent to the washbasin.
 - Storage, with space for guests' own toiletries.
 - Soap and soap dish (can be pump action dispenser).
 - Hook for clothes.
 - Non-slip surface or mat for use in baths or showers to be available on request.
 - Towel rail or equivalent sufficient for the number of guests in the room.
 - Conveniently located electric shaver point, with voltage indicated or adaptor.
 - Toilet paper and holder plus spare toilet paper.
 - A lidded sanitary disposal bin and sanitary bags.
 - Windows fitted with curtains, blinds or shutters to ensure privacy.
-

Lighting/Heating/Ventilation

Meet 

- Suitable covered lighting.
 - Suitable heating. N.B. All bathrooms with an external window require dedicated heating. A heated towel rail is acceptable.
 - Suitable ventilation and extraction (window or extractor fan).
 - A heated towel rail or equivalent (A means of providing guests with additional dry towels on request)
-

Towels & Toiletries

Meet 

- A very good range of towels & toiletries.
-

PUBLIC AREAS

Reception Areas & Lobby

Meet 

- Dedicated reception area with desk, counter or table, unless alternative, well-managed procedures in place to check in guests in lounge or in guest bedroom.
 - Greater amount of space and comfort (including seating) for arriving and departing guests.
-

Bar/Lounge/Sitting Areas

Meet 

- A bar or lounge with comfortable seating for resident guests accessible throughout the day and evening.
 - Suitable seating layout and range of furniture appropriate for meeting the market needs of certain hotels, e.g. hotels where business meetings take place or where refreshments are offered in the lounge.
-

Other Public Areas/Corridors/Stairs

Meet 

- Corridors and stairs in good repair and free from obstruction.
 - Adequately lit 24-hours.
 - Particular attention given to the maintenance of door handles, numbers, brassware and glass panels.
 - Clear, directional signage to bedrooms and reception (where needed).
 - Corridors normally wide and spacious.
-



Lifts

Meet

- A lift is required when there is a guest bedroom more than two floors higher or lower than the ground floor, e.g. on the third floor.
-



Communication

Meet

- A telephone accessible 24-hours a day unless direct dial in-room facilities are provided (payphones, house phones or mobile handsets).
 - Free WiFi available in public areas for the use of email checking and light internet browsing. Charges are acceptable for downloading of music, films and other heavy internet usage.
-



Public Area WCs

Meet

- Where open to non-residents: A toilet facility conveniently situated to cater for public areas, all toilets well maintained, regularly cleaned, checked and adequately ventilated.
 - The following facilities provided as a minimum: washbasin with soap, handdrying facilities, covered light, mirror, hook on door, lidded sanitary bin and bags, toilet roll holder with toilet paper.
 - More generous provision of toilets.
-

EXTERNAL AREAS



External Areas

Meet

- All areas to be maintained in sound condition and must be fit for the purpose intended (External areas include the appearance of the building, grounds and gardens, pathways, drives and any car parking).
-

ANNEXES



Annexes

Meet

- Where a hotel has an annexe, the facilities provided will be taken into account when determining the overall grade of the hotel.
 - Annexe accommodation may be situated in a separate unit or units within the hotel grounds or within easy walking distance of the main building. Paths or passageways to the annexe must be in good condition, well surfaced and adequately lit.
-

Useful Numbers

Customer Support

All establishment enquiries, including inspections, reports, ratings, signage, training and consultancy, logo requests

01256 844455

AAHotelServices@aamediagroup.co.uk

Hotel Services Marketing

On and offline promotional opportunities, award event enquires

01256 338373

awards@theAA.com

Advertising Sales

Adding photographs to guide listings, advertising in the guides

01256 338355

advertisingsales@theAA.com

Online Establishment Details

Change your on-line information on TheAA.com; add a photograph

01256 844455

AAHotelServices@aamediagroup.co.uk

Hotel Services Accounts

All financial and payment enquiries

01733 207324

AACreditControl@aamediagroup.co.uk

Twitter

@AAHospitality and @TheAA_Lifestyle



The AA Quality Scheme provides your business with the resources it needs to develop and succeed, and are proud to have been recognising excellence for 110 years.

The well-established and nationally recognised AA Star and Rosette ratings give your business an independent national quality marque from one of the UK's most trusted brands.

In addition to our expert industry support and guidance we are proud to be able to offer you a range of exclusive scheme and partner benefits.

AA Inspection Appeals Procedure

Proprietors of either AA Recognised Hotels or Guest Accommodation who wish to appeal against the results of an AA inspection carried out at their establishment must follow the procedure outlined below:

1. Any appeal must be made in writing to AA Hotel Services within 21 days of the original report being received.
2. The Appeal should detail the main reason for the appeal i.e. The level of rating, merit score for hotels or level of AA award recommended.
3. Should the appeal be about the level of star rating proprietors should ensure that their establishment meets all the necessary minimum requirements outlined in the AA Quality Standards booklet.
4. Appeals will be formally acknowledged within 7 working days of receipt of the appeal together with a form to organize an appeal visit on an overnight basis.
5. The appeal visit will be subject to a non-refundable fee as detailed below which would not be organised until full payment had been received.
6. Once the application and fee is received, an appeal visit from a member of the senior inspection team will take place within 4-6 weeks of receipt (Subject to the establishment's availability).
7. The findings of the appeal visit will be fed back in the normal way of both discussions after check-out and a report following the visit.
8. The outcome of this report will supersede the previous visit and will be final.

Appeal Visit Fees (Non Refundable)

Guest Accommodation	£200 +VAT, expenses of the actual visit refunded upon departure
Hotels 1 – 3 Star	£500 +VAT, expenses of the actual visit refunded upon departure
4 Star	£600 +VAT, expenses of the actual visit refunded upon departure
5 Star	£700 +VAT, expenses of the actual visit refunded upon departure