



Stargazers Welcome Scheme

The Isle of Man has long been known for having dark night skies, a valued attribute of the rural character and tranquility of the Island. On a clear night the sky of the Isle of Man is simply stunning as many astronomical sights can be seen through the naked eye with even more seen through a telescope or binoculars. The Island has an incredible 26 dark sky discovery sites and the Stargazers Welcome Scheme is a way of marketing your property to take full advantage of this fact. This scheme has been developed to help promote the Island to a new type of visitor and to ensure that their particular needs are met at participating venues.

Visitor accommodation businesses wishing to take part in the scheme must meet the following criteria:

Core criteria

Facilities and Services:

- Late evening access for visitors returning from stargazing.
 - A torch should be available for use by the visitors on request.
 - Portable folding chairs and/or a picnic blanket with waterproof backing should be available on request.
 - Binoculars should be available for use by the visitors on request.
 - An area should be available for drying outdoor clothing and footwear at an ambient temperature so clothes can dry overnight.
 - Boot scrapers should be available at main doors and/or access to facilities with a water supply for cleaning boots and outdoor clothing.
 - Suitable first aid kit to be provided.
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Information Provision:

The following information should be displayed at a central easily accessible information point:

- Details of nearest doctor, dentist, hospital, and duty chemist and vets (if pets accepted).
- Maps and books available for reference on stargazing in the Isle of Man, providing details of the 26 dark sky discovery sites and local astronomy organisations.
- Information on public transport or contact details to be provided.
- Information on attractions and events and/or visitor information centre number and directions.

- Details of nearest bank/cash machine, public telephone, post office, post box and outdoor equipment shops.
- Details displayed for rescue services, including Coastguard and stating 999 phone number.
- Details displayed of the Countryside Code (www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk or 0845 100 3298).
- Daily and weekly Met Office information (or similar) should be available as well as travel and road information.
- Details of restaurants and pubs offering food.
- Information on other businesses participating in the Stargazers Welcome Scheme.
- If group bookings are taken, information should be available for groups on storage facilities, dining facilities/options, group registration and pre arrival information.

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Additional criteria for serviced accommodation

Must provide all core criteria, plus the following:

- Hot or cold drinks should be available on arrival.
 - You should be able to offer a late night snack and filled flask if requested.
 - Information on location and opening times of nearest late-opening eating establishments (and directions), if meals are not provided.
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Additional criteria for self-catering/hostel accommodation

Must provide all core criteria, plus the following should be provided in the unit:

- Flasks and cups.
 - Information (and directions) on the location and opening times of the nearest shops and late-opening eating establishments.
 - If your property is not located in a named town or village, the Ordnance Survey co-ordinates should be made available.
 - Clothes washing facilities or information regarding the location and opening hours of nearest laundrette facility.
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Food Arrangements:

- In self-catering accommodation provision should be made for the pre-ordering of basic grocery items prior to arrival for guests without a car.
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If you would like your property to be part of the Stargazers Welcome Scheme and you believe you meet the above criteria please contact the Quality & Service Team on 01624 685965 or email nikki.salmon@gov.im. Your Independent Quality Assessor will verify that your property meets the criteria when they carry out the annual grading visit.

