

If you wish to use your property as any type of visitor accommodation, is it a legal requirement under Isle of Man legislation that you are registered with Visit Isle of Man. Please find highlighted below the process which you will be required to follow if you do choose to offer **Hostel** visitor accommodation:

1. ENSURE YOU MEET THE MINIMUM ENTRY REQUIREMENTS AND ORGANISE TOURISM TEAM VISIT

- It is essential for all Hostel accommodation tourism properties to meet ALL minimum standards for this type of accommodation. The 'Minimum Entry Requirements' can be found in the **Quality Standards** booklet and we advise you to read through these pages as mandatory.
- If you wish to achieve a specific star rating guidance for this can be found in the 'Quality Guidance' section of the Hostel Quality Standards booklet.
- A visit to the property must be arranged with a member of the Visit Isle of Man team to ensure all 'Standards' have been met. We will look to assess it against the Quality Standards, so it is recommended that you read these carefully. We will also be able to use this time to answer any questions you may have about marketing, promotion and operation of your new business.

2. READ ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTS

- It is advisable to read the '**Fire Safety Guidance for Tourist Accommodation**' to ensure that there is nothing to prevent registration of the property (for example a layout that is considered inherently unsafe or does not meet fire regulations).
- **Quality Standards - Hostels:** These apply to all hostels on the island and are the same as the UK and Channel Islands. This assists in operating a consistent scheme and good quality standards. Your property will be required to meet the 'minimum standard' prior to registration with the Department.

3. PLANNING

- Firstly, you need to establish what is the lawful use of the property planning terms 'use'. If there is no planning approval for tourist accommodation and the property was not originally built for use as a hotel, guest house or other form of tourist accommodation, you may well need planning approval for this. To find out whether you need to apply for a planning change of use please contact the Planning team on **01624 685950** or email **planning@gov.im**

4. BUILDING CONTROL

- All Hostels require a Building Regulation Application in order to authorise the property to operate as a tourist premises. If your property has a Gas Fire and/or a Multi Fuel appliance e.g. wood burners, you will be required to produce a certificate of worthiness. You will also need to have a working carbon monoxide detector installed. Further information can be found online at **www.gov.im/categories/planning-and-building-control/building-control/installation-of-wood-burning-stoves-solid-fuel-burning-appliances**
- Building control will also check aspects of Fire Safety (including exits), it should be noted that any additional recommendations made by Building Control in regards to fire safety that are not acted upon may result in your application for registration as tourist premises being refused.
For further information please contact Building Control on **01624 686446** or email **buildingcontrol@gov.im**
- If your property is in Douglas please contact Douglas Borough Council Building Control on **01624 696375** or **bcontrol@douglas.gov.im**, if your property is located in Onchan please contact Onchan District Commissioners Building Control on **01624 675564**.

It is strongly advised that you contact the planning department and Building Control before progressing any plans or building works.

5. FIRE SAFETY

- We will need to check that the property meets current Fire Safety requirements and you will be asked to complete a **Fire Safety Risk Assessment** document prior to registration. All properties must supply suitable fire equipment. We advise you to read the Fire Guidance for Tourist Accommodation to understand what is required. If the Visit Isle of Man team have any concerns regarding the safety of the property, a referral to Building Control and/or the Fire Safety Officers will be made. It should be noted that any additional recommendations made by the Fire Safety Team that are not acted upon may result in your application for registration as tourist premises being refused.
- If you are intending on operating rooms above the first floor you may require a fire certificate or sign off from a Fire Safety Officer. You can apply for a fire certificate here: **<https://www.gov.im/categories/home-and-neighbourhood/emergency-services/fire-and-rescue-service/business-fire-safety/>**

6. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH VISIT

- The property will need to be inspected by an Isle of Man Environmental Health Officer, and the kitchen registered as a food business. You can contact the team directly on **01624 685894** or register online at **<https://www.gov.im/categories/business-and-industries/food-business-register>**

7. INSURANCE

- Prior to registration we will also need to see confirmation that you have Public Liability Insurance cover in place. The minimum cover required is £2,000,000; however we recommend that you take advice from your insurance company on the most appropriate cover for your individual property.

8. ACCESS STATEMENT

- Before you register, we also require an Access Statement to be in place for the property – many people feel daunted by this but please do not worry! This is a simple, clear and honest account of the facilities of your premises. It helps to inform the visitor and help them decide whether they are able to visit your establishment. This will help you to meet your legal obligations under the 2017 Equality Act. Guidelines and tips on how to write your statement can be found at **<https://www.visitisleofman.com/trade/registration-schemes/access-statement-guidance>**

9. REGISTRATION

- Once we have received written confirmation of the above items, we will then be able to register the property with Visit Isle of Man, Department for Enterprise. This registration is a legal requirement under the Tourist Act 1975. Prior to registration, we would require the property to be finished as it would be for a visitor – complete with furnishings and fittings – and we will look to assess it against the Quality Standards, so it is recommended that you read these carefully. If a member of the team has visited the property earlier in the process, it may be required for them to come and see the property again prior to registration to ensure all minimum standards have been met.
- A registration form will be sent to you via email. (If you require a hard copy, please let the team know). You are required to complete this form and return along with the relevant registration fee (£25 per year for Hostel Accommodation). Please note: registration of visitor accommodation is an annual requirement and you will be required to re-register by February 11th each year.
- Once you have received confirmation that your form and payment has been received by the Department, you are authorised to begin advertising and trading.

WHAT NEXT ...?

WELCOME SCHEMES AND NAS RATINGS

You may also choose to join our **Welcome schemes** at this point, and for your property to be assessed under the **National Accessibility Scheme** if applicable. Both of these schemes work to champion your accommodation to visitors looking for specific requirements which they look for when selecting accommodation. Please note there are additional costs associated with each scheme, contact the team for more information.

REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE

Once the property is officially registered with the Department you can start trading – you will be issued a registration certificate which should be displayed in the property.

STAR GRADING AND ACCOLADES

You will be classed as 'Rating Pending' until we can arrange an independent assessor to officially grade your property - this is where your star grading comes from. The Assessor will arrange a visit to your property every 2 years, which will either be a day or overnight visit. Following the visit the Assessors will prepare a report, which will be sent directly to you via email, and to the Visit Isle of Man Team. Upon receipt of this report, the Visit Isle of Man Team will arrange for your official rating and accolade plaques to be sent to you, which are to be displayed on the outside of your property. We will also send you the digital files so you can display your accolades across your online advertising.

To find out more information on ratings and accolades, see www.visitisleofman.com/trade/registration-schemes/ratings-accolades or visit our trade site.

ADVERTISING ON WWW.VISITISLEOFMAN.COM

Upon registering with the Department, the Visit Isle of Man Team will arrange for a profile to be created for your property. You will receive log in details to access your account to enable you to have full control over your property profile. Here, you will be able to add descriptions, opening seasons, prices, images, and also link in your social media accounts. The advertising of your property on the **visitisleofman** website is included in your accommodation registration; there is no fee required to advertise on the website.

ONLINE BOOKING OPTIONS FOR WWW.VISITISLEOFMAN.COM

If you would like to offer online booking for your property, there are details of the options available to you at www.visitisleofman.com/trade/businesshub/website-support/online-booking. Social media is a useful tool and fast becoming a necessity for even the smallest of businesses.

We advise you to have a good look at other businesses, both locally and further afield, for ideas. The use of imagery is very useful in helping customers choose their accommodation – we recommend taking high quality external and internal images of your property.

KEEP UP-TO-DATE WITH ISLE OF MAN TOURISM INDUSTRY AND EVENTS

Once you are operating, our **trade site** can prove a valuable resource for ongoing information, changes and events in the Tourism and Travel industry. There are a number of useful areas including our **FAQ section**, and Business Hub.

Sign up to the monthly trade newsletter for industry updates, upcoming industry events and recent press coverage. Sign up here: <https://www.visitisleofman.com/trade/itineraries-and-resources/enewsletter-updates/sign-up>

TOURISM GRANTS AND ASSISTANCE

The Department offers a range of schemes providing support for tourism businesses and those in the broader visitor economy. See www.visitisleofman.com/trade/business-hub/business-support-schemes for an overview of the available schemes. If you would like to discuss any of the schemes, and your potential eligibility please contact the Enterprise Support Team on **01624 687333** or email enterprisesupport@gov.im

STAY IN TOUCH WITH THE VISIT ISLE OF MAN TEAM

If you have any questions or queries during the process or once you are registered, please do not hesitate to contact the Tourism Team; we are here to help and we would be delighted to assist you. You can find all the team on the 'Meet the Team' section of the trade site: <https://www.visitisleofman.com/trade/contacts/meet-the-team>

This may seem daunting but we are here to help. If you have any questions or concerns after reading through the process please do not hesitate to contact the Business Development team who will be more than happy to assist.

Email: tourismquality@gov.im
Telephone: +44 (0) 1624 695700