



Our Promise To Visitors

The National Code of Practice for Visitor Attractions

For the purpose of the charter a visitor attraction is defined as:

“A permanently established excursion destination, a primary purpose of which is to allow public access for entertainment, interest or education and can include places of worship; rather than being primarily a retail outlet or a venue for sporting, theatrical, or film performances. It must be open to the public, for published periods of the year, and should be capable of attracting day visitors or tourists, as well as local residents.”

www.visitengland.org

The owner and management undertake:

1. To provide in promotional materials, an accurate description of the amenities, facilities and services of the Attraction.
2. To indicate on all such promotional materials any requirements for pre-booking, and any significant restrictions on entry.
3. To welcome all visitors courteously and without discrimination in relation to gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or belief. To respect the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 by making 'reasonable' adjustments to improve service for disabled people and make available an Access Statement describing the accessibility aspects of a visit to the Attraction.
4. To describe accurately and display clearly:
 - a) Any charges for entry including service charges and taxes where applicable and any additional charges for individual attractions or special exhibitions
 - b) Dates and hours of operation, both opening and closing.
5. To provide in promotional materials for visitor enquiries; a postal address, an e-mail address, a telephone number and a website address from which the detailed information specified in 1, 2, 3 and 4 can be obtained.
6. To hold a current public liability insurance policy or comparable Government indemnity, and to comply with all applicable planning, health, safety, fire and other statutory requirements and regulations.
7. To provide signage and orientation information as appropriate to the Attraction, to assist visitors in understanding and enjoying the Attraction.
8. To consider the needs of visitors for whom English is not their first language and as appropriate to the Attraction, to make arrangements that enable them to be adequately informed to enjoy their visit.
9. To manage the Attraction in such a way as to ensure visitor safety, comfort and service, by sustaining a high standard of maintenance, customer care, courtesy and cleanliness.
10. To ensure that all staff who meet visitors can provide information and guidance about the Attraction, and are readily distinguishable as staff, whether employees or volunteers.

11. To have regard to the need to manage and operate the Attraction in a sustainable way.
12. To provide, as appropriate to the nature, scale and location of the Attraction; coach, car, motor-cycle and bicycle parking, adequate toilets, and catering facilities. If any of these requirements cannot be made available on site, to provide information at appropriate points on where they can be found locally.
13. To deal promptly and courteously with all enquiries, requests, reservations, correspondence and comments from visitors and try to resolve any complaints on site at the time of the visit.
14. To provide a facility on site for comments to be recorded and to advise clearly the name and contact details (address, telephone and e-mail) of the person to whom comments by visitors should be addressed.
15. To display prominently the National Code of Practice Certificate.

Further explanation of the points of the National Code of Practice can be found on the VisitEngland website under Business Development.

All visitor attractions are encouraged to fully utilise the VAQAS business support tool. The Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme is managed by VisitEngland and provides an annual visit by an independent assessor followed by a detailed report. Information on how to join the VAQAS scheme can be found on the VisitEngland website under Business Development.

Current participants of VAQAS need not apply for the National Code of Practice as VAQAS provides automatic sign up to the Code.

Withdrawal of Registered Status & Appeals Procedure

Where VisitEngland has reason to believe that a Registered Visitor Attraction may not be conforming to the requirements of the National Code of Practice, it will notify the proprietor, in writing, of the reason. A copy of the letter will also be sent to the appropriate tourism authority and industry sector association (where applicable).

If no satisfactory answer is received from the proprietor within 14 days, VisitEngland may, at its own discretion, elect to remove the Registered status of the attraction. In such cases, VisitEngland will notify the proprietor of its intention (again copying the tourism authority and industry sector association). The proprietor will have the right to appeal against the decision, provided the appeal is submitted to VisitEngland, in writing, within 14 days of receipt of such notification.

Consideration of an appeal will be subject to the payment of an Appeal Fee of £150, payable to VisitEngland. The purpose of the Appeal Fee is to defray the costs that might be incurred in visiting the attraction. The fee will be refunded in the event of the appeal being upheld.

Where an appeal is made, an Appeals Panel will be formed consisting of:

- A VisitEngland representative
- A representative of the relevant tourism authority
- Two representatives of visitor attractions within the same region, one of whom may be replaced by a representative of the relevant industry sector association.

The Appeals Panel will meet as soon as is practicable, but in any event, no longer than 28 days after the submission of the appeal.

The Apellant, or his/her representative will be invited to a meeting of the Panel.

After hearing the evidence, the Panel may, at its discretion, decide to visit the attraction before arriving at its decision. In such cases, the proprietor or his/her representative, will be invited to accompany the visit.

The recommendation of the Appeals Panel will be notified to VisitEngland and the Apellant in writing. VisitEngland's decision, based on the recommendation of the Appeals Panel, will be final.

During the period of the appeal, the attraction's eligibility to participate in national and local tourist board promotions will not be suspended.

Where the Registered status of an attraction has been withdrawn, it may re-apply to VisitEngland to be Registered again after one year. Applicants seeking to be re-Registered will be required to pay a fee of £150. Registered status will not be restored until the attraction has been inspected by VisitEngland and has been found to conform to the requirements of the National Code of Practice¹.