



Canterbury District B&B and Self Catering Advice Sheet

Please read the following information:

If you have further queries, however, please do not hesitate to contact Caroline Cooper, Tourism Manager at Canterbury City Council, Military Road, Canterbury, CT1 1YW
Phone: 01227 862 571. Fax: 01227 764 922. E-mail:
caroline.cooper@canterbury.gov.uk

1. Planning Consent

Call the Contact Centre at Canterbury City Council to check if you require planning permission for change of use. This can depend on the overall number of rooms available for use by visitors and the number of rooms that will remain as part of your home. You may also need advertisement consent if you intend having any sign outside the property. A small vacancy/no vacancy sign in the inside of a front window would not normally require advertisement consent. Please contact Canterbury City Council Contact Centre: 01227 862 178.

2. Building Regulations

Any change of use to a guesthouse or formation of self-catering accommodation will need a Building Regulation application to be submitted to the Council, issues that you will need to consider in this include fire precautions and sound insulation. Please contact Building Control: 01227 862 513.

3. Fire Safety

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
Fire Risk Assessment

The responsible person must make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to which relevant persons are exposed, identifying the general fire precautions needed to comply with the requirements and prohibitions imposed on them by or under this Order. Please contact Canterbury Fire Safety Officer on 01227 825 530 for further information.

4. Food Hygiene

If you let rooms in your home and provide breakfast or other meals you will need to register as a food business. If you are thinking of starting up a new business or providing food for the first time please talk to the staff of the Commercial Health Section.

Staff of the Commercial Health section:

- Visit and inspect businesses provide food to give advice and check compliance with food safety legislation. The frequency of inspection depends on what you are doing and the rating you are given will decide on how often we visit.
- Investigate complaints about food and poor hygiene practices in Canterbury district;
- Provide food hygiene training and advice to food handlers.

Canterbury City Council Commercial Health: 01227 862 222

Food@canterbury.gov.uk Website: www.canterbury.gov.uk (search 'starting up')

5. Smoke free Legislation

All bed and breakfast establishments now must be smoke free. This will include temporary arrangements. You can designate guest bedrooms as available for smokers, but other enclosed parts of the property will have to be smoke free. The garden will be an exception. You will have to display a designated 'no smoking' sign at the guest entrances.

For further advice visit www.smokefreeactiongroup.org.uk or to sign up and receive free 'no smoking' signs visit www.smokefreeengland.co.uk

For further queries please contact the Smokefree advice section at Canterbury City Council via e-mail sfaq@canterbury.gov.uk

6. Health and Safety at Work.

In running a Bed and Breakfast, your home will become a workplace. Although you may not employ anyone, you will have a duty under Health and Safety legislation, for the safety of your guests whilst they are on your premises.

The key areas to think about are:

- a) Safe access and egress at your home.
- b) Safety of the electrical system and any electrical appliances you may provide for the guests' use.
- c) Make sure that furnishings, particularly the bed, are fit for purpose.
- d) Try to keep beds away from windows with low sills. If this is unavoidable, make sure that the glazing is toughened. If children are being accommodated, restrict the opening of any window.
- e) Remove risks that might cause your guests to slip, trip or fall.
- f) If your pets – e.g. dogs – are aggressive to visitors you will need to take sensible precautions.
- g) Ensure that your guests are shown how to leave the premises in the event on an emergency.

For further advice, contact the Commercial Health Team at Canterbury City council and ask for the Health and Safety Team. Canterbury City Council Commercial Health Team: 01227 862 222.

7. Private Sector Housing

The Private Sector Housing team recommend minimum standards for fire safety, amenities and repair in rented accommodation.

Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). This is the new system for assessing housing conditions to identify potential risks to health and safety from deficiencies found in dwellings and used by the Private Sector Housing Team when inspecting properties. If accommodation is being occupied as an individual's main residence, then you should contact Private Sector Housing to obtain advice on the recommended standards. All rented accommodation must have an annual gas safety check completed by a CORGI gas engineer. Please contact Private Sector Housing: 01227 862 240.

8. Valuation and Business Rates

Contact the Valuation Office Agency to ascertain whether you will be subject to business rates. Valuation Officer: 01303 852 900. Website: www.voa.gov.uk

9. Accommodation Quality Assessment

Hotel, guest accommodation and self catering proprietors can choose to have their establishment assessed by one of the two national organisations, in order to receive a star rating. Visitbritain (Quality in Tourism) and the AA offer this service. For this you will need to complete an **assessment application form** and pay a fee (dependent on the size of your establishment). An assessor will then visit your property to establish the number of stars you are eligible for. Please note that all hotels and guest accommodation establishments advertised within the Canterbury Guide must have been assessed by one of these two organisations. Further advice on Accommodation Quality Assessments can be obtained from the Kent Tourism Quality Programme adviser. **Your grading must be renewed annually.**

AA Hotel Services: 01256 - 844 455
Visit Britain (Quality in Tourism): 0845 300 6996

10. National Accessibility Scheme

The National Accessible Standards, provided by the National Accessibility Scheme (NAS), will give you the confidence to promote your facilities to people with disabilities. The ratings identify your establishment to prospective disabled guests as one that has been assessed and approved to a national standard. Attaining a rating and using it in your marketing will improve your business considerably and show you other benefits afforded by members of the scheme. Standards for serviced and self-catering accommodation cover three types of impairment: mobility, hearing and visual. An NAS information pack will guide you towards the increased accessibility soon to be a requirement of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and will demonstrate that the spirit of DDA has been embraced.

For more information visit: www.tourismtrade.org.uk/trade/advisory Visit Britain (Quality in Tourism): 0845 300 6996

For grading criteria visit: www.visitbritain.org/uk/industry

11. Visit Canterbury Partnership Scheme

This brand new initiative enables you to benefit from the full range of promotional activities undertaken by the city council's tourism arm, Visit Canterbury. Members include Accommodation providers as well as attractions, shops, restaurants, workshop providers and language schools, in fact, the scheme is open to any business that has a link to the visitor economy.

With over 1 million unique users to www.canterbury.co.uk in the past 12 months, there is an excellent opportunity to maximise coverage for your business.

In addition, becoming a Visit Canterbury partner enables you to attend networking events, receive our industry newsletter and even rack your literature at the Visitor information Centre which receives half a million visitors each year, along with many more benefits. Contact the Tourism Marketing officer for more information, or see the downloadable forms at www.canterbury.co.uk

12. Visitor Centre

Visit the **Visitor Centre** in Canterbury. The staff deal with visitors face-to-face and over the telephone and via our website (www.canterbury.co.uk). Copies of the Holiday Guide are available in here, as well as being mailed out to enquirers. Canterbury Visitor Centre: 01227 378 100.

14. Tourism, South East

Tourism South East is a regional division of Visit Britain [formerly English Tourism Council] and carries out tourism and marketing for West and East Sussex, Surrey and Kent. Contact them to receive a **database application form**. By completing this form you agree to abide by Tourism South East Code of Conduct. Tourism South East keeps a database for information purposes. There is also a list of useful leaflets and books published by Tourism South East – ‘Starting up a B&B Business’ is one. Contact them for a full list of publications. Tourism SouthEast at Eastleigh 02380 625 400.

Last updated: November 2011

The information published on these pages is given in good faith on the basis of information submitted to Canterbury City Council. Canterbury City Council cannot guarantee the accuracy of the information and accepts no responsibility for any error or misrepresentation. All liability for loss, disappointment, negligence or other damage caused by the reliance on the information contained in this publication, or in the event of the bankruptcy or liquidation of any company, individual or firm mentioned, or in the event of any company, individual or firm ceasing to trade, is hereby excluded.

u05bbcan.doc