



Tourist Accommodation Quality Assured

FÁILTE IRELAND'S WELCOME STANDARD



Description & Meaning

There are many accommodation businesses providing differing types and styles of hospitality in Ireland. Some are well-established, successful accommodation businesses that have never 'quite fitted' with the existing Fáilte Ireland statutory and non-statutory quality schemes. Others are businesses providing great quality in new, distinctive and innovative ways. What the best of these have in common is a desire to provide that unique experience and a true Irish welcome that will ensure that visitors return.

- ✓ The standards have been designed to identify the strengths of these business, without taking away any of the character and style of the individual property.
- ✓ Fáilte Ireland wishes to reach out, embrace and work with these businesses on behalf of their, and Ireland's, existing and future guests.
- ✓ The Welcome Standard provides a new, straightforward way of working with Fáilte Ireland, and a new way of providing reassurance for Ireland's guests.
- ✓ Fáilte Ireland's Welcome Standard businesses are warm, friendly, hospitable and efficient, and provide the welcome that we know that guests expect in Ireland. They have their guests' interests at heart. These businesses are serious about ensuring that their guests' stay in Ireland is going to be one of the best travel choices that they made. Fáilte Ireland recommends these as great places to stay.
- ✓ Fáilte Ireland's Welcome Standard approval involves a short initial assessment from one of our professional assessors. However, the all-important first step involves the business assessing itself. This is to ensure that the owner or manager is confident that the way that they choose to welcome their guests meets expectations.
- ✓ Following an initial application, businesses will be provided with all the information that they need to start preparing for their assessment. The owner or management will then carry out a full Self-Assessment to these standards.
- ✓ The business carries out a Self-Assessment. It is the responsibility of the business to review its procedures, facilities, service standards, ambitions and ideals, and then, ahead of the Assessment Meeting, confirms that it complies with the Code of Ethics and meets the Welcome Standard.
- ✓ Advice and support will be provided by phone or online by our quality team during this period. Once the business is confident that they meet the standards, an assessment visit will be scheduled.
- ✓ The areas addressed have been designed to be comprehensive and are in line with domestic and international guest expectations. They focus on the fundamental guest-orientated aspects of the business.
- ✓ A Fáilte Ireland Code of Ethics underpins the new standards. This identifies practices and procedures that are common to all successful, responsible and sustainable Irish accommodation businesses.



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Description & Meaning *(Continued)*

The Standards

The standards help businesses, and subsequently our assessors, explore the following areas of the customer journey:

General Business Processes

- ✓ This section is designed to identify businesses that take tourism and their guests seriously. They will have procedures in place to ensure guest satisfaction, and are businesses that are likely to be sustainable in the medium to long-term. Areas looked for include evidence of reliable and consistent performance, staff support and means of resolving guest complaints.

- ✓ **Pre-Arrival**
In this section we are looking at customer-facing service and performance. This includes the website, telephone customer service and accuracy of information provided.

- ✓ **Arrival**
Close attention is paid to the care and hospitality provided for guests during arrival and check-in, whether informal or formal in nature. In this section we are identifying friendliness and efficiency at the time of arrival, and evidence that helpful information and advice is offered to make guests as welcome as possible.

- ✓ **During The Visit**
A positive, cheerful attitude, helpfulness, and friendliness are essential. In this section the focus is on courtesy and efficiency. For example, are staff present when guests need them, and are any complaints acknowledged and resolved where possible? If food is provided, then this is also taken into account.

- ✓ **Facilities**
The physical aspects of the property are addressed in this section. The first impression of buildings and surrounds upon arrival, and the maintenance of all buildings seen by guests are addressed. The same applies to the accommodation itself, including décor, furniture and fittings, heating and lighting. Cleanliness is, of course, paramount.

- ✓ **Exit/Departure**
This is where the guest should leave with a good impression of the accommodation and their experience. Areas covered include efficient process in place for check-out, satisfaction checks, friendliness and efficiency.

- ✓ Fáilte Ireland's Welcome Standard identifies the key characteristics of accommodation businesses providing great hospitality across Ireland. This applies to small glamping businesses, new, innovative types of hotel-style accommodation, homestays, farm stays, and much more.

- ✓ The standards are designed, first and foremost, with the guest in mind. They will help businesses identify that they are providing, and will continue to provide, the best of Irish hospitality, whatever the style or type of accommodation.

- ✓ The standards identify only what is already in place in successful accommodation businesses. The Welcome Standard identifies this and helps the business and Ireland confidently promote this to the world.