



HOMESTAY SCHEME GUIDANCE NOTES



PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU READ THESE GUIDANCE NOTES CAREFULLY

INTRODUCTION TO HOMESTAY

The Isle of Man Homestay Scheme is designed to supplement the year round registered accommodation during the Isle of Man TT and Manx Grand Prix events.

Please note: The Department has an obligation to ensure all-year-round accommodation is full before launching the Homestay Scheme.

Types of Accommodation

• **Domestic:**

Without needing to carry out fire precautionary work, you may accommodate up to six paying guests, provided that they are not in rooms above the first floor or below ground level. You are strongly advised to ensure that you have smoke alarms fitted throughout your premises and that they are in good working order.

• **Flat or Apartment:**

If you wish to register a flat, the flat and building must comply with the Fire Precautions (Flats) Regulations 1996. The Department of Tourism Inspector will need to see the Letter of Conformity, issued by the Fire Safety Flats Team confirming this prior to registration.

• **Self Catering:**

If you intend to vacate your property for the purposes of Homestay and offer Self Catering facilities, the Department of Tourism & Leisure will contact the Community Fire Safety Department to arrange a free Home Fire Safety Visit prior to registration. The entire property must be let as one occupancy, i.e. the same party in any one period (not as individual rooms). The fire safety precautions must be agreed with the Community Fire Safety Department.

Registration and Insurance

Registration with the Department of Tourism & Leisure is **compulsory** and failure to do so could result in prosecution under the Isle of Man Tourist Act 1975.

The following fees are applicable and cover the cost of Registration & Public Liability Insurance:

£8 for TT Registration only or £11 for TT and Manx Grand Prix Registration.
Please note: There is no registration available for Manx Grand Prix only.

The Department of Tourism & Leisure provides Public Liability Insurance, which provides cover up to a limit of £5 million. The insurance covers the Homestay provider against any liability claim made by a guest for injury occurring in the Homestay accommodation. This insurance cover only applies during the period your property is registered.

PLEASE NOTE: The insurance does not cover you, or your guests, for any damage to your house or contents. It is essential that you notify your household insurer that you will be accommodating paying guests for these periods and extend your cover as applicable. Failure to do so may invalidate your home and contents insurance policies.

Inspections

The Department of Tourism & Leisure will inspect all properties prior to their first registration and regularly thereafter (at least every 2 years). The Inspectors must see bedrooms, bathrooms and breakfast area as they will be set up when guests arrive. Any decorating or renovations must be completed prior to inspections.

The following criteria will apply to your property:

- Bedroom(s) to be **clean and tidy**. They must contain adult size beds and sufficient drawers and hanging space. (Sofa beds and Z beds are acceptable. Bunk beds are only suitable for children).
- Bathroom(s) to be **clean** and sufficient for the number of guests.
- Breakfast area to be **clean**.
- If supplying Self Catering accommodation, bed linen, sufficient cooking utensils and crockery must be provided.

You must comply with these criteria upon initial inspection. The Department reserves the right to refuse a second inspection and to refuse registration.

You will be issued with a certificate confirming that a representative from the Department of Tourism & Leisure has inspected and agreed that your property is suitable for Homestay Accommodation, and will specify the number of guests you may accommodate.

PLEASE NOTE: The certificate must be displayed in your breakfast area for guest information purposes.

Once your property is inspected and registered, we reserve the right to re-inspect it in the weeks prior to either the TT Festival or Manx Grand Prix commencing. We may also visit your property to investigate any complaints raised by guests.

Code of Conduct

The Department of Tourism & Leisure is dedicated to providing a quality service to all visitors. As part of this commitment to quality it is important that you understand that as a Homestay provider you are an ambassador for the Isle of Man.

The Department of Tourism & Leisure's role is as a facilitator to the Homestay Scheme and we cannot be held responsible for non payment by guests. Any necessary action would be the responsibility of the Homestay provider. This action would be through the courts as a civil action and instigated by the Homestay provider. It is advisable that you collect full names and addresses of all guests.

Should the Department of Tourism & Leisure receive a complaint from any visitor in Homestay accommodation, the complaint will be investigated and if found to be valid, the guests will be removed from the premises. Any payment that has been paid to the Homestay provider including deposit must be reimbursed to the Homestay guest by the Homestay provider. No moneys are to be returned by the Department. The Department of Tourism & Leisure also reserves the right to cancel the Homestay registration at that point and insist that any deposits for future bookings are returned (should there be an agreement between the home owner and the guest).

Tenants

If you are a tenant, whether it is a Commissioners property or privately owned, you should ensure that you have permission from the landlord to sublet your household.

Accommodation and Tariff

Tariffs must be adhered to and must not be changed at a later date. At the time of inspection by the Department of Tourism & Leisure, the tariff will be agreed and entered on your Homestay Agreement and signed by the Homestay provider.

Breakfast must be provided in the property if you are staying on the premises. When registering, you must stipulate whether you will be providing a cooked or continental breakfast.

The Department suggests the following rates:

Serviced Accommodation:

- Basic Room: £20 per person per night
 - En-suite: £25 per person per night
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Self Catering:

- Room: £20 - £25 per person per night
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Booking Procedures

Details of all registered properties are available on the Department of Tourism & Leisure's website www.visitisleofman.com. Potential guests will contact you directly to book accommodation. It is your responsibility to take guests' contact details, arrival and departure dates and agree your terms. These should include any additional information relating to your property, i.e. Non Smoking or family pets etc.

It is suggested that you request a deposit to secure the booking of not more than 20% of the total cost. You must not request payment in full prior to arrival. Once the deposit is received, you should acknowledge this to the guest and confirm the booking either by post or email. It is suggested that you let your guests settle in and give them their final bill or invoice the day after their arrival so they can settle their bill at the beginning of their holiday.

When you have received a booking, even if it does not fully fill your available space, please contact the Homestay Officer: Telephone: 686802 or email: homestay@gov.im so that we can update our information. This will prevent you receiving unnecessary telephone calls from other visitors looking for accommodation.

Please Note: Many visitors to the Isle of Man TT arrive on the Island without having arranged accommodation in advance. In this situation, they would usually call at the Isle of Man Welcome Centre located at the Sea Terminal.

Department of Tourism & Leisure officers or employees would then contact registered Homestay properties showing availability. Once the guest has visited the property and agreed the terms of their stay with the Homestay provider, they should make the payment in full.

Accommodation Agents

These agents specialise in helping visitors find accommodation. They act as a booking agent on your behalf and charge the guest a fee for placing them in Homestay accommodation. If you would like to be represented by any of these agents please indicate this to the Department of Tourism inspector during your property inspection. These agents do not form part of the Department of Tourism & Leisure.

Income Tax

Providing accommodation in your home during the TT Festival, as part of the Department of Tourism & Leisure's Homestay Scheme, is exempt from Tax, provided that the gross income received, before expenses, does not exceed £1,500. If however, the amount earned is above £1,500 you would be taxed on the whole amount not the difference. Please note there is no tax exemption for MGP.

Data Protection

Details supplied by you for the purposes of the Homestay Scheme, will be held on computer in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2002.

How to Register

If you have read these guidance notes and would like to register under the Homestay Scheme, you should contact the Homestay Officer on 686802 or email: homestay@gov.im.

The Homestay Officer will arrange a mutually convenient time to inspect your property and complete the necessary paperwork. Inspections are carried out in normal office hours only.

The registration fee of £8.00 or £11.00 is payable upon inspection of your property. Cheques should be made payable to the Isle of Man Government. (The fee is non refundable, even if your accommodation is not used). The Department of Tourism & Leisure reserves the right to refuse any application for registration.

All Year Accommodation

The Isle of Man has a very buoyant Tourist Industry on a year round basis. Many visitors to the Island prefer to stay in small "Bed and Breakfast" accommodation, not necessarily in the centre of Douglas.

If you enjoy providing Homestay accommodation, have you considered operating as a Bed and Breakfast provider and taking visitors at any time of the year?

If you would like more details on how you could achieve this, please contact the Quality and Service Team on 687083 or email: angela.byrne@gov.im

If you would like to register or have any queries please contact us as follows:

Telephone: 686802 or Email: homestay@gov.im

It is an offence under the Tourist Act 1975 if you do not register your home and you are accommodating paying guests.
