

inbox

Following the success of the AA Hospitality Awards (see page 4-7), we have dedicated our letters section to some of the comments we received from our delighted winners and guests...

Dear AA Hotel Services,

Thank you for my invitation to the Hospitality Awards last night. A thoroughly enjoyable evening. Thank you for the '20 years of 5 AA Rosettes Award'.

Philip Newman-Hall, Le Manoir

Dear AA Hotel Services,

I just wanted to thank you for your kind invitation to last night's AA Hospitality Awards. I had a wonderful time and thoroughly enjoyed the evening. To be invited to such a prestigious event was a huge privilege and one which will last long in the memory for many reasons, not least the wonderful hospitality from you all.

Andrew Batchelor, Lancaster London

Dear AA Hotel Services,

Thank you so much for inviting me last night, it was a most enjoyable evening and we had an interesting table. I thought that the food was superb and would have been more than acceptable in a restaurant rather in a very large function!

Jeremy Willcock, The George Hotel

Dear AA Hotel Services,

Many thanks for allowing me to attend this year's AA awards. The whole event ran beautifully and we enjoyed an excellent dinner in great company. For me, of course, it was especially gratifying to see our members rewarded - Bodysgallen Hall and The Torridon winning Hotel of the Year for Wales and Scotland respectively and The Pass at South Lodge gaining 4 rosettes.

Peter Hancock CEO, Pride of Britain Hotels

Dear AA Hotel Services,

I wanted to write to you now to convey our huge appreciation and sincere thanks for such an enjoyable evening. On behalf of everyone at Bodysgallen it was such a magnificent honour to accept the award, and to be awarded AA Wales Hotel of the Year 2012/13. It really was a marvellous occasion, and the pride that I have for all the team here in being awarded such a prestigious accolade from the AA is indescribable. We are so grateful to receive this honour, and everyone here is thrilled - the words of congratulations that we have received following the announcement on Monday have been wonderful.

Matthew A C Johnson FIH MI,
Director and General Manager Bodysgallen Hall & Spa
Winner: Hotel of the Year Wales

Get intouch...

Hotel Services Customer Support

All establishment enquiries, including inspections, reports, ratings, signage, training and consultancy.

01256 844455 Fax: 01256 491647

HotelServicesCustomerSupport@theAA.com

Hotel Services Accounts

All financial and payment enquiries.

01256 491740

Advertising Sales

Adding photographs to guide listings, advertising in the guides.

01256 491546

contactadvertisingsales@theAA.com

Lifestyle Guides

For information on your guide listing and establishment questionnaires.

LifestyleGuides@theAA.com

Hotel Services Marketing

Logo requests, on and offline promotional opportunities, award event enquiries.

01256 494974

emma.davis@theAA.com

intouch Newsletter

Submitting articles/letters for the members' newsletter.

01256 494974

Intouch@theAA.com

Expedia

Online room reservations service

0203 450 9581

joinexpedia.com

AA Hospitality Awards

www.AAHospitalityAwards.com

01256 494974

awards@theAA.com

AA Routeplanner

Incorporate the popular AA Routeplanner into your website.

01256 493696

beacon Purchasing

Join the UK's largest purchasing consortium for the hospitality industry.

01904 695588

new@beaconpurchasing.co.uk

SK Chase

Gift vouchers for your hotel

0870 609 4513

enquiries@skchase.com

eviivo

Real-time room booking service for hotels and guest accommodation.

0800 422 0088

enquiries@eviivo.com

AA Hotel Services

14th Floor, Fanum House,
Basing View, Basingstoke,
Hants, RG21 4EA.

www.theAA.com/travel

www.AAHotels.com

Follow us on twitter!

Follow us on @AAHotels and @AAHospitality for regular updates on newest additions to the scheme, hospitality news content, interesting stories from our establishments, updates on the Awards events and much more!



intouch

issue29 autumn2012

SUPPORTING YOUR BUSINESS

AA HOSPITALITY AWARDS 2012

PLUS...

NEW CHANGES TO THE GUEST ACCOMMODATION QUALITY STANDARDS

PROFILING THE AA 2 ROSETTE AWARDED HOTEL OAKLEY COURT

GET THE LATEST NEWS AND OFFERS FROM THE AA

Hotel Services



inside...

Welcome

Held on Monday 24 September, the AA Hospitality Awards 2012 were a resounding success. Attended by world-renowned chefs, prominent hoteliers and restaurateurs, hospitality gurus and key industry media. The event, hosted by Kate Silverton and entertainment from glamorous string quartet Siren saw the great and good of the country's hospitality industry come together to celebrate not only the amazing achievements of the individuals and establishments receiving recognition for outstanding excellence in their field, but also 20 years of the iconic AA Restaurant Guide, the event truly was an evening to remember! The awards at London Hilton on Park Lane saw 23 establishments and individuals receiving recognition for outstanding excellence in their field. Guests were treated to a magnificent gourmet meal created by four AA Rosette-awarded chef Jason Atherton in conjunction with the Hilton Park Lane kitchen team. The award event also saw the launch of the 2013 AA Lifestyle Guides. Turn to pages 4 to 7 for photos of the evening and a full review.

On page 9 we profile the two rosette Victorian gothic mansion, Oakley Court Hotel. Find out about the WorldHost customer service training and the AA open training courses on page 10, we also feature a great range of offers and promotions from our sponsors and partners on pages 12 to 14 and find out top tips for housekeeping on page 15.

As ever, we're delighted to receive letters and questions. Intouch is your forum for communicating with the AA Hotel Services community so send us a letter or drop us an email at intouch@theAA.com.

Best wishes

The Marketing Team

Contact Details

AA Hotel Services, 14th Floor, Fanum House,
Basing View, Basingstoke. RG21 4EA

General Enquiries: 01256 844455

Fax: 01256 491647

Email: intouch@theAA.com

Inside... 2

A brief introduction to this issue's highlights

Informed... 3

News and offers from the AA

AA Hospitality Awards 2012 review 4

Winners and photos from our celebratory black tie event

Profile on chef 8

This edition profiles William Drabble

Spotlight 9

Profiling the two rosette Victorian gothic mansion, Oakley Court Hotel

WorldHost customer service training 10

Opportunity for Hotel Services members to improve their rating with the WorldHost customer service training

AA Open Training Courses in 2013 10

AA Hotel Services offers a range of training and Consultancy courses

Guest Accommodation Quality Standards 11

Find out the changes to the common standards

beacon 12

Let beacon benefit your business

AA Business Insurance 12

Get covered with AA Business Insurance

Caterer.com 13

See the latest Hospitality Employer Index report

Villeroy & Boch 14

Find out about the range of tableware collections they offer

Don't get stuck in the snow this winter 14

Be prepared with AA's range of winter essentials for your car

Top tips for housekeeping 15

Inbox... 16

News and offers from the AA

Get intouch... 16

Latest contact details for AA Hotel Services

informed...



2013 Lifestyle guides

The 2013 editions of the AA Hotel Guide, Restaurant Guide, B&B Guide and Pub Guide are now available at all good bookshops nationwide or online at theAA.com/shop. These annually updated guides include detailed information about AA star rated accommodation and restaurants with Rosettes throughout Britain and Ireland, and selected pubs in England, Scotland and Wales. The guides feature directions, prices, room numbers and contact information as well as detailed descriptions of the establishment to help you choose somewhere to stay or eat.

Guinness World Record Breaker!



The Feathers Hotel in Woodstock, Oxfordshire, officially has the largest collection of gin in the world!

It was Gin o'clock at the Feathers Hotel in Woodstock, Oxfordshire, on Friday 1 June 2012 as the hotel became a record breaker for having the largest collection of gin in the world.

An adjudicator from Guinness World Records began counting the 162 different varieties of gin the hotel bar stocks at 3pm. Guests packed the hotel to watch the counting process, which took around 45 minutes before the adjudicator announced the attempt had been successful.

The Feathers was then presented with its official Guinness World Record certificate.

Jeremy Duplessis, General Manager at the Feathers Hotel, said: "It's absolutely fantastic to be crowned a Guinness World Record breaker. We have been building on the collection for the last three years and have picked up gins from all corners of the world, so it's great to have our efforts rewarded."

Rosette plates and Red Star certificates

By now all establishments will have received where applicable their Red Star certificate and Rosette plate for 2012-2013.

Please direct any queries regarding your Rosette plate or Red Star certificate to HotelServicesCustomerSupport@theAA.com or call **01256 844455**.



Notable Wine List

Congratulations to those establishments that recently received a notable wine list certificate. If you wish to obtain a logo for use of your website or marketing material please contact AA Hotel Services on **01256 844455** or email HotelServicesCustomerSupport@theAA.com



New window stickers for 2013

You have recently been sent the new 2013 window stickers, featuring the cover of the 2013 Guides or Rosette/s and highlighting the link to the AA.com and the mobile applications.



AA HOSPITALITY AWARDS 2012

Congratulations to the winners and finalists of the AA Hospitality Awards.

The UK's hospitality industry came together on Monday 24 September to recognise the best of the best at the AA Hospitality Awards 2012. The awards ceremony saw some of the top hoteliers in the country mingle with the best pub landlords, hospitality gurus and world renowned chefs. The awards, hosted by Kate Silverton at the London Hilton on Park Lane, saw 23 establishments and individuals receiving recognition for outstanding excellence in their field, including a Lifetime Achievement award for Antonio Carluccio OBE and the AA's Chefs' Chef Award for Pierre Koffmann.

The AA Hospitality Awards bring together some of the most influential people within the hospitality industry to recognise the outstanding accomplishments of high achieving AA establishments and individuals. Winners are selected in recognition of excellence and success within their chosen category, having shown a significant improvement in the preceding 12 - 18 months and proving their dedication to raising industry standards and enhancing both their guest and diner experiences.

Guests were treated to a magnificent gourmet meal created by four AA Rosette awarded chef Jason Atherton in conjunction with the Hilton Park Lane kitchen team, and were entertained from the glamorous string quartet Siren.

"Thank you to all our sponsors, who helped make the event the huge success it was"



AA Pub of the Year for England
The Black Swan, Ravenstonedale



AA Pub of the Year for Scotland
West Brewery, Glasgow



AA Pub of the Year for Wales
The Inn at Penallt, Monmouth



AA Chefs' Chef Award
Pierre Koffmann

The Award Winners...

AA Pub of the Year

The winners of this prestigious award stand out as truly excellent all-round pubs or inns. They successfully combine the provision of enjoyable food, comfortable accommodation, a great pub atmosphere, and a warm welcome with a high standard of management. **The Black Swan** located in Ravenstonedale scooped the award for **England** with their good array of local real ales along with good honest cooking utilising local seasonal ingredients, while in **Scotland** the title went to **West Brewery** in Glasgow, who use traditional laws and cutting edge technology to create a range of beers that are becoming increasingly popular. In **Wales** the award went to the beautifully restored **Inn at Penallt** in Monmouth, this one AA Rosette awarded restaurant prepares dishes using great quality ingredients.

AA Wine Awards

Sponsored by T&W Wines



This award recognises an outstanding contribution to promoting wine understanding and appreciation. Nominees are judged on the quality of their wine list and their ability to inspire customers to make wider and more adventurous choices in selecting wines. With a remarkable wine list, sporting over 1,600 bins **L'Etranger**, London was the winner for **England & Overall**. In **Scotland**, Edinburgh, **Castle Terrace Restaurant**, was awarded for their inspiring selection of over 250 wines, embracing new and old world wines, while **The Felin Fach Griffin** in Brecon won the award for **Wales** with their well chosen list and quality choices.

AA Restaurant of the Year

London Restaurant of the Year
sponsored by Food & Travel Magazine



Each year the AA independently inspects hundreds of restaurants across the British Isles. This award recognises restaurants that provide cuisine of truly excellent standards, as well as demonstrating innovation and ambience and providing a high standard of hospitality. In **England** the title went to **The Church Green British Grill** located in Lymm, with two AA Rosettes this restaurant serves classical British cuisine. **Rogano** in Glasgow won the award for **Scotland**, specialising in the finest fish and seafood from Scottish waters. The Award for **Wales** was presented to **Sosban** in Llanelli, with two AA Rosettes their ethos is 'no pomp or fuss; drink, eat and be merry'. **Dinner by Heston Blumenthal** won the award for **London**, they have taken inspiration from historic British gastronomy and have created some incredibly gratifying food.

AA Hospitality Awards 2012 Winners:



AA Wine Award for England
L'Etranger, London



AA Wine Award for Scotland
Castle Terrace Restaurant, Edinburgh



AA Wine Award for Wales & Overall
The Felin Fach Griffin, Brecon



AA Restaurant of the Year for England
The Church Green British Grill, Lymm



AA Restaurant of the Year for Scotland
Rogano, Glasgow

AA Hospitality Awards 2012 Winners:



AA Restaurant of the Year for Wales
Sosban, Llanelli



AA Restaurant of the Year for London
Dinner by Heston Blumenthal



AA Small Hotel Group of the Year
Cotswold Inns & Hotels



AA Hotel Group of the Year
Hand Picked Hotels



AA Eco Hotel of the Year
The Green House, Bournemouth

AA Chef's Chef of the Year

Sponsored by Caterer.com

Also recognised for their culinary achievements was AA Chefs' Chef of the Year **Pierre Koffmann**. Acknowledged by his peers for his flair and enthusiasm, excellence and innovation within the restaurant industry. His cooking is undeniably refined; classical yet humble, with provincial French touches grounding the skilful elegance of the food.

AA Small Hotel Group of the Year

Sponsored by beacon

The AA Small Hotel of the Year award, sponsored by beacon recognises the consistent dedication and development of a small hotel group in terms of improvement to service and operational standards. Eligible groups are assessed on quality of food and accommodation and efforts made to improve the overall guest experience. The title this year went to **Cotswold Inns & Hotels**, this Collection encapsulates everything that is so loved about the Cotswolds; stunning old-English villages, beautifully architected Cotswold stone buildings and breathtaking views of unspoilt countryside - all underpinned by a rich tapestry of history.

AA Hotel Group of the Year

Sponsored by D-ENERGi

A hugely prestigious award presented in recognition of the hotel group that has a proven track record of striving to ensure the very best levels of service, food and accommodation across the range of properties. Attention to detail is imperative and a committed and structured approach to future development is essential. The award was received by **Hand Picked Hotels**, with a portfolio of 17 properties boasts a unique collection of architecturally stunning and exquisitely refurbished country house hotels set in beautifully maintained grounds, offering the highest standards of cuisine and service, making each guest's stay a memorable one.

AA Eco Hotel and Eco Hotel Group of the Year

Sponsored by British Gas Business

Now in its third year, The Eco Hotel of the Year award was awarded to the **The Green House** in Bournemouth, this award recognises a clear commitment to sustainability, demonstrated through good practice and policy to make a positive contribution to reducing impact on the environment. This hotel is committed to the environment which goes beyond just energy efficient lighting and takes the environmental impact of every decision into account. The Eco Hotel Group of the Year was awarded to **Macdonald Hotels & Resorts** for recognising that environmental sustainability is of the utmost importance to

all of its customers, team members, local communities and investors and believes it has a responsibility to minimise its impact on the local and wider environment.

AA Hotel of the Year

London Hotel of the Year sponsored by AA Business Insurance

Introduced in 1992, this award is the AA's ultimate accolade for hotels in the UK. It is awarded to hotels that are recognised as being outstanding examples in their particular market. From the small family-run hotel to the most ambitious commercial ventures, hotels of every size and style are potential winners.

Lime Wood received the title for **England**, based in Lyndhurst; this delightful property has a true country house offering excellent cooking with their three AA Rosette awarded restaurant. In **Scotland** the title went to **The Torridon**, this is truly a special place located in Torridon, encompasses all that is true Scottish hospitality in an elegant and peaceful country house backdrop which has a modern contemporary twist and memorable cooking. The AA Hotel of the Year for **Wales** was received by **Bodysgallen Hall & Spa**, this spectacular property is located to the south of Llandudno and sits in over 200 acres of beautiful parklands and gardens. In **London** the title went to the **Four Seasons Hotel London at Park Lane**. This iconic hotel is Park Lane at its finest; following an impressive refurbishment, incorporating renowned artwork and stylish design, there has been a re-birth at this historic hotel.

AA Lifetime Achievement Award

The AA Lifetime Achievement Award recognises professionals within the hospitality industry who have committed their lives to the pursuit of perfection within their discipline. Winners of this award are to be congratulated for making significant fundamental contributions to the industry which have had a notable impact, and must have demonstrated a lifetime commitment to progress in their field. This year, the title went to **Antonio Carluccio OBE**, a truly inspiring gentleman who continues to make a significant contribution to the industry through his various roles and commitments. Antonio is well deserving of this prestigious award.



AA Lifetime Achievement Award
Antonio Carluccio, OBE

AA Hospitality Awards 2012 Winners:



AA Eco Hotel Group of the Year
Macdonald Hotels & Resorts



AA Hotel of the Year for England
Lime Wood, Lyndhurst



AA Hotel of the Year for Scotland
The Torridon, Torridon



AA Hotel of the Year for Wales
Bodysgallen Hall & Spa, South of Llandudno



AA Hotel of the Year for London
Four Seasons Hotel, Park Lane

What did our finalists have to say about the event?
See inbox on page 16...



This edition of intouch profiles **William Drabble**
Executive Chef at Seven Park
Place William Drabble, London



How did you get where you are now?

Like most young boys from Liverpool my first ambition in life was to play for Liverpool ... but when I was 8 and my family moved to Norfolk, we were surrounded by farm land for miles and my passion for food and ingredients probably began there.

I had the opportunity to work in some of the UK's most influential kitchens and to learn from great chefs. I received my first coveted Michelin star at Michael's Nook Country House Hotel in Grasmere, when I was 26 and I retained it until now. It took passion, dedication, hard work and a fabulous team!

Who is your greatest inspiration?

Over the years you are influenced by so many people and events that it is difficult to narrow it down to one person or situation. I would definitely say that Martin Jermy (my college lecturer) was a big influence in that he helped me get my first job after college and has been a great guide and sounding board throughout my career. I am still in touch with him now and he came and saw me a few weeks ago with someone he was trying to help on their way even though he is now in his 70's.



What are your top tips for an aspiring chef?

Come to work with me...

If you weren't a chef, what career would you have chosen?

Probably a football player. Luckily it did not happen as I would be living under a bridge by now.

What has been your greatest career achievement to date?

Being able to retain a Michelin star for more than ten years and achieving 4 AA rosettes for the first time this year.

What is your favourite ingredient?

To be honest I don't really have a favourite ingredient, I just love the change of the seasons and see what they bring; cherries, peaches, strawberries in the summer, game from the 12th of August onwards, fantastic fish and shellfish from all over our coastline, samphire from Norfolk, girolles from Scotland, asparagus, fantastic apples and pears, fresh elderflower and lemon verbena etc there is so much to keep you busy thinking of new dishes.

What would be your 'last supper'?

Pierre Koffmann's Pig Trotter

Where do you eat on your night off?

I love spending time with my family and cooking with my daughter. Once again, it is my kitchen where I spend time on a night off.



Spotlight

This issue, intouch profiles the Two Rosette, Four Star Victorian gothic mansion, located in Windsor overlooking the River Thames.

From the moment you arrive at Oakley Court, you are treated as a treasured guest and feel completely at home. Set in 37 acres, with manicured lawns down to the River Thames, the hotel is steeped in history. Sumptuous architecture and breathtaking river views create a picturesque setting.

Built in 1859, Oakley Court was used during WW2 by the French Resistance. From 1955 it became an ideal setting for films, including St. Trinians, The Rocky Horror Show and Dracula. In 1979 conversion began with architectural restoration wherever possible. After £5m investment Oakley Court opened in 1981 as a hotel. 118 bedrooms include 10 luxurious suites, many with river views.

In July The Dining Room was awarded 2 AA Rosettes - a huge achievement for head chef, Michael Mealey and testimony to the hotel's culinary expertise. Modern British cuisine using the best local, seasonal ingredients and impeccable service make Oakley Court a memorable place to dine.

2012 has been monumental with the Jubilee, London Olympics and associated celebrations. Oakley Court proudly hosted the highly successful Team GB Rowing and Canoe Sprint Teams.

Finalists in the Large Hotel category 2012/2013 Beautiful South Tourism Awards



The athletes were inspirational, winning Team GB's FIRST gold medal of 2012 and bringing a staggering 29 medals back to Oakley Court. With events the following day, the team couldn't attend the Opening Ceremony but instead were treated to a "Best of British" dinner at the hotel - a fitting way to start two weeks of supreme effort and winning performance.

The Escape opened on November 1st with highly qualified therapists expertly trained to deliver indulgent treatments in tranquil surroundings. Its signature treatment is a luxurious body wrap with exfoliation then envelopment in luxuriant creams.

Extensive leisure facilities at The Oakley Court include an indoor swimming pool, whirlpool spa, sauna and steam room, gymnasium, two tennis courts and a nine hole par 3 golf course. In summer al fresco dining on the riverside terrace, boat hire and croquet complete the quintessentially English picture.

With all this to offer, it's perhaps no surprise that recent awards include Tripadvisor's Certificate of Excellence 2012 - a testament to overall guest satisfaction.

Richard Smith, General Manager, commented "What a year! Everyone has been involved in 2012's successes, from our Jubilee Party, to the award of 2 AA Rosettes and the remarkable hospitality we provided Team GB's Rowing and Canoe Sprint Teams. Our rooms performance has significantly outperformed our competitor set - a team success from every department."

Finally, with excellent transport links, The Oakley Court can be considered one of the finest locations in the surrounding area - a truly inspirational venue.

For more on Oakley Court Hotel visit www.principal-hayley.com/theoakleycourt

Photography by David Griffen, courtesy of Great British Chefs.

AA HOTEL SERVICES MEMBERS TO WARM UP THEIR WELCOME WITH

AA Hotel Services members who want to improve their percentage (%) merit score will be offered WorldHost customer service training for their staff from January 2013, as part of a new partnership between AA Hotel Services and the People 1st Training Company.

WorldHost has been used to train over a million people worldwide - including thousands of volunteers and local ambassadors at the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, who were applauded for their fantastic welcome by tourists.

The programme covers all the most important elements of welcoming customers for frontline staff - including making a great first impression, how to listen to customers effectively and communication techniques.

The People 1st Training Company is

currently training AA trainers to deliver the WorldHost programme. It will then be made available to Hotel Services members via the AA's already extensive range of consultancy and training.

Sharon Glancy, managing director of the People 1st Training Company, says: "This summer's Olympics demonstrated what a fantastic impact offering a warm welcome can have on visitors - we want to build on this momentum and help businesses reap the benefits of providing a great service".

"We're delighted that AA Hotel Services has chosen WorldHost as its customer service training solution. Its licensed trainers will be able to help members who want to boost their welcome and ratings by delivering real improvements."

For more information about WorldHost customer service training, visit www.worldhost.uk.com



AA Hotel Services members can find out more about both open courses and for individual establishments by contacting; Martin Jeffery, martin.jeffery@theAA.com or by calling **01256 493442**. Further details about our training and consultancy packages can be found at www.AAHotels.com

Keep up to date on twitter [@AAHotels](https://twitter.com/AAHotels)



AA OPEN TRAINING COURSES IN 2013

These interactive day courses provide the perfect opportunity for attendees to increase their knowledge of the AA Rosette scheme and improve their understanding of the criteria by which the AA assesses quality.

The fee for either the Rosette Academy or Food & Beverage Workshop is £170 +VAT. If delegates book both the fee is £285 +VAT. Dates available are shown below:

Rosette Academy

Ideal for chefs, food and beverage managers and general managers, this course features a range of modules which demonstrate and provide advice on a host of topics including industry best practice, increasing your revenue, menu terminology, seasonality and locality, flavour and blind tastings.

Food & Beverage Workshop

The Food and Beverage Workshop is suitable for all levels of the front of house team, from Room Service to Breakfast; we discuss best practise and relate this to the AA Star rating process. Detail is focused towards hospitality aspects, how the customer chooses, the dining experience and food service styles.

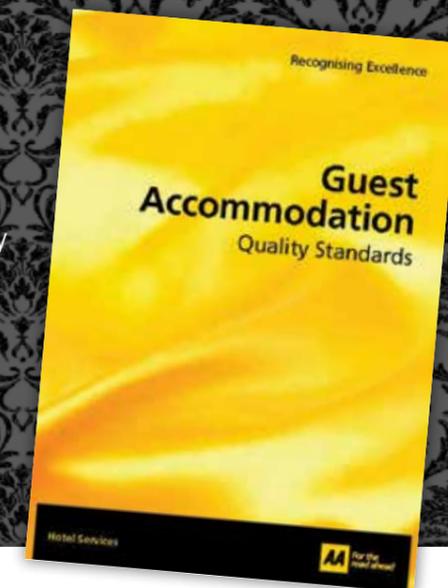
Courses are run on back to back days in the following locations:

Scotland - March
London - April
Birmingham - May
Newcastle - September
Bristol - October
London - November

BOOK TODAY
Contact Martin Jeffery on **01256 493442** or email martin.jeffery@theAA.com
Visit AAhotels.com for information on our full range of training courses and consultancy services.

CHANGES TO COMMON STANDARDS

The AA, along with the other national inspecting bodies, has recently completed a review of the standards for the Guest Accommodation inspection scheme. Changes to the Hotel grading scheme have also recently been introduced. The update in the Guest Accommodation scheme reflects changes to legislation, such as smoking in public places, demographic changes, such as guest's expectations to do with bath and shower ratios, and use of mobile telephones.



Key Changes

The most important key change is the need for Sectional Consistency. In line with the other national inspecting bodies, AA inspections will now need to experience a consistent level in five key areas (Hospitality, Cleanliness, Bedrooms, Bathrooms and Food). In the past, the scheme has had a degree of flexibility to allow some of these areas to be slightly below the star rating level. This change may necessitate some establishments having to focus on their offering and proprietors may need to increase or improve the standards they provide for their guests.

Additionally, some of the quality assessment areas have had an increase to the level of quality that the customer expects.

Proprietors should understand, that increases to quality levels, as well as the implementation of Sectional Constituency, has come from the general public, who have contributed to the review.

Importantly, there has also been a fundamental change, in that the key areas now need to meet, or exceed the rating of the establishment. This is referred to as Sectional Consistency, and your report in the next year or so, may mention this requirement in relation to your establishments Star Rating. Importantly, your AA inspector will help and advise you when you next have your annual visit from The AA.

When will these new standards be implemented?

Standards are being implemented gradually for existing members, with an aim for full compliance by 2014. Properties that are new to the inspection process will be assessed under the new standards with immediate effect. Guidance and support will be given from the AA Team, assisting you in achieving aspirations and enhancing quality. Failure to comply could result in re-classification.



How can I get more information?

Download the new Guest Accommodation common Standards at www.AAhotels.com

Honest advice. Insightful analysis. Clear savings.



Times are tough...

We're all under pressure to cut costs, maximise efficiencies and get the most from every pound we spend. So do you ever wonder if you're paying too much for the goods and services you buy? Are you sure that you're getting the most value out of the money you spend?

Need some advice?

As your purchasing partner beacon will save you time and money by streamlining purchasing and securing the best deals from over 150 suppliers. Managing over £115 million in purchasing every year for more than 2,000 businesses in hospitality, leisure and healthcare we take time to understand your operations, provide expert guidance and tools, and deliver savings, business-wide.

To arrange a no cost, no commitment audit of your purchasing please call

01904 695588

or visit www.beaconpurchasing.co.uk

Or to join one of our webinars to see the benefits of e-procurement, please email

all@beaconpurchasing.co.uk



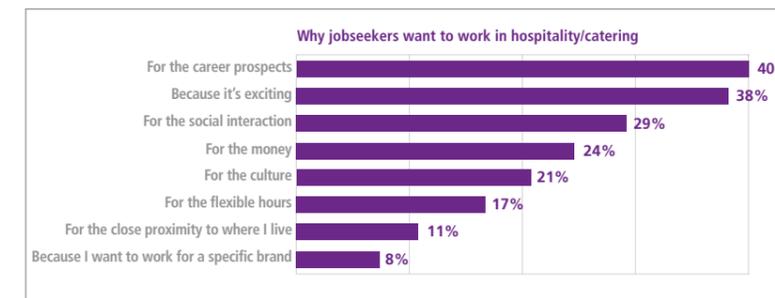
Restaurants set the pace for growth & talent acquisition

by Caterer.com



The latest Hospitality Employment Index report (Q2 2012) from Caterer.com and People 1st features the restaurant sector and the perspective of recruitment in hospitality and trends for the remainder of 2012.

Quarter two of 2012 suggests that hospitality is more buoyant than many other areas in service industries who experienced a smaller decrease of 0.1 percent¹. In comparison to this quarter last year there was a drop of eight percent in new job ads posted, however, applications in Q2 in 2012 are up by more than a third (34 percent) on Q2 2011 and over one half (54 percent) on 2010. This suggests the appeal of working in hospitality is slowly growing. This is identified in the below graph on, 'Why jobseekers want to work in hospitality/catering':



Source: Caterer.com, User Profile Survey 2012

With the interest growing for the reasons stated above, the industry must now deliver this experience to new employees to secure their engagement for a long-term career. Philippe Rossiter, Chief Executive, Institute of Hospitality said:

"The trick, of course, is to provide those who do make a start in our sector with such a positive experience that they will never want to leave."

The focus on restaurants in this report presents that this sector is setting the pace for expansion and attracting talent. Industry feedback also suggests that brand/chain restaurants in particular continue to thrive and many companies continue to grow.

"We are advertising more positions due to our growth and our competitors are doing the same."

Marcus Weedon, Senior Recruitment Manager, Carluccio's Limited

Disconcertingly managerial roles in the restaurant industry have fallen in every area, with catering management positions taking the lead with a fall of 45 percent in the same quarter year on year. The attraction to this area has always been tough, yet this needs to be monitored to ensure the right talent is acquired going forward.

Chefs have also seen a decrease in applications and so the supply of skilled chefs could also be in further decline. Holding onto talent in these areas has never been more important, especially with the growth of the restaurant sector.

The report suggests that generation Y (18-34 year olds) are ahead in restaurant usage and eat out twice as often as 35-54 year olds and three times as often as those aged 55 and over. This is likely to be due to this group having the most disposable income with less mortgage ties or living at home and having a more carefree approach to what they spend their money on. The restaurant sector has been quick off the mark to engage with this emerging audience and brands, and are undoubtedly getting ahead in terms of online media, branding, informal dining and building long-term relationships with this group.

"The emergence of this generation will play an important part on the industry and operators must now adapt their online communications, branding and even type of dining to appeal to those that are going to continue to spend money with them. It also opens up a new talent pool that is yet to be fully tapped into and yet to be engaged with. Now is the time to up our game as an industry and bring a long-term solution to recruitment."
Ian Burke, Director of Caterer.com.

For further insight on quarter two of 2012 download your FREE copy of the Hospitality Employment Index report at:
www.caterer.com/HEI



Competitive insurance for the Hospitality Industry

**NEW
GET A
QUOTE
ONLINE**

get a quote online at
www.aabusinessinsurance.co.uk
or call us on
0800 294 4818

As part of the AA Business Insurance package, we can offer a wide variety of covers including:

- Buildings and contents including frozen foods, wines and spirits
- Generous seasonal increases in stock cover
- Public liability
- Employers liability
- Loss of licence
- Business Interruption
- Money with personal accident and assault benefits
- Live entertainment cover
- For hotels and guesthouses, we can also offer cover for guests effects

In addition, we can offer

- Highly competitive rates
- Ability to pay in instalments
- Quick quotes over the phone
- Instant cover
- Friendly and highly experienced team of advisors



¹<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10613201>

Creating Hospitality

ASIA FINE ART

Premium Bone Porcelain



Villeroy & Boch Hotel & Restaurant
267 Merton Road, London, SW18 5JS
Tel.: 020-8875-6011
E-mail: hotel@villeroy-boch.co.uk
www.tabletalkatvilleroyandboch.com
www.villeroy-boch.com/en/gb/hotel-restaurant.html



DON'T GET STUCK IN THE SNOW THIS WINTER

Be prepared with the AA's range of winter essentials for your car

Visit theAA.com/shop to make sure you are fully prepared for those snowy days and frosty nights to come.

We have a complete range of accessories from snow & ice grips, snow shovels and travel blankets, to booster cables torches and tow-ropes. We also have a complete range of handy and compact kits, in convenient carry cases to keep in your car.

Don't forget that AA recognised establishments receive **10% off** purchases* plus free standard delivery at theAA.com/shop Simply enter the promotional code **HGA12** when prompted at the basket.

*Discount excludes Klarner and Winger products and cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer.



TOP TIPS for HOUSEKEEPING

From inspectors and attendees from the housekeeping course



"Research has shown that the state of the bedroom is the single most important factor in deciding a guest's future return to a hotel. Like all businesses, the success of a hotel depends upon its loyal, repeat guests, so housekeeping is at the very heart of the establishment."

Rudi Plaut CBE,
Chairman of Northmace & Hendon Limited

1. Cleaning windows - Use horizontal stokes one side and vertical on the other, so you know which side your streaks are on.
2. When using furniture polish, spray on the cloth not on the surface.
3. Be wary of using hot water on stains, heat can set the stain rather than remove it.
4. Sticky drawers - run a candle along the runner or side of the drawer.
5. Sweet smelling vacuum - pop a fabric sheet or cotton wool ball with essential oil on and place next to the filter.
6. When cleaning radiators put some fabric softener in the water and the radiator will have a pleasant odour.
7. A pair of comfy shoes.
8. A mix of lemon and salt is good for hard water build up.
9. Never mix chemicals.
10. Always work in a clockwise or anticlockwise direction - working from top to bottom (work in a systematic order).
11. Remember you last impression is the guests first impression - make it a memorable one.
12. Use a damp rag for carpet edge.

HOW DO THE AA AND THE CUSTOMER ASSESS CLEANLINESS?

- As inspectors we not only assess housekeeping, but also look at service, hospitality, bedrooms, bathrooms, public areas, dining room, exterior and food. Using a quality score of 1-5, we mark from poor to excellent.
- Cleanliness is of paramount importance to the customer - particularly those items which come into direct contact with the guests.
- Cleanliness is not expected to vary between star classification levels.
- All rooms should be cleaned daily to ensure an excellent standard of cleaning.

KEY AREAS OF CLEANLINESS

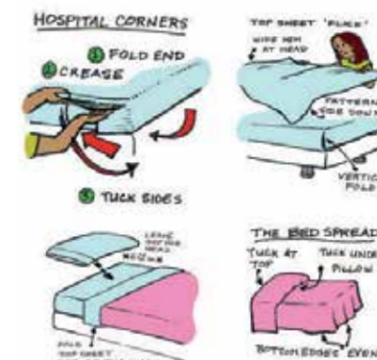
- **Contact areas of high importance.**
- **Smell** - The room should smell fresh and be well aired
- **Touch** - Squeaky clean surfaces
- **Sound** - Creaky floor boards, dripping taps, noisy bathroom fans
- **Sight** - Presentation

SOME HOUSEKEEPING BUG BEARS

- Dirty bathroom pull cords
- Dusty bathroom vents
- Dirty bathroom glasses
- Soap scumb in soap dishes
- Food/drink stains on walls
- Hairs on bathroom floor/ carpets
- Discoloured sealant/grouting
- Wire coat hangers (*these are not acceptable under the scheme*)
- Out of date literature (*as inspectors we always read to check timings/ names.....*)

BED MAKING

We often come across a lot of ill made beds. Good hospital corners are key to a well made bed.



We offer **full and half day housekeeping workshops**, for more information contact **01256 493442** or email martin.jeffery@theAA.com