



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

VISIT WALES

**Sustainable Tourism
& Accreditation**

Ceri Turner



Sustainable Tourism in Wales



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- **Sustainable Tourism Framework** launched in 2007
- The framework sets out Visit Wales' key sustainable challenges as follows:
 - Promoting local prosperity
 - Supporting community well being and involvement
 - Minimising tourism's environmental impact
 - Protecting and giving value to natural heritage and culture
- **Sustainable Tourism Forum (STF)** and task and finish groups
- **Sustainable Tourism Action Plan 2008- 2012**
- WG Sustainable Development strategy –
 - **One Wales: One Planet** : *Wales to be recognised internationally as a leading sustainable tourism destination*



Achievements to date



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- In 2011, **Port Eynon** was voted the Best British Beach by Cadbury Flake 99 Great British Beach Awards, beating competition from around the UK.
- The National Geographic Traveller magazine rated **Cardiff** as one of the world's top 10 summer destinations for 2011. The city was ranked the sixth best alternative hotspot.
- In 2011, **Tenby** has been named Wales' top beach and the 5th best in the UK by users of the international travel website, Tripadvisor.
- In 2010, the National Geographic National Geographic Traveller magazine rated the **Pembrokeshire Coast** as joint 2nd best coastal destination in the world!
- In 2009 November / December edition of National Geographic Traveller Magazine, **Wales** was ranked 7th among 133 destinations in the 6th annual survey of destination authenticity and stewardship.
- In 2011, 41 beaches and 5 marinas achieved the international prestigious Blue Flag Awards
- In 2011, 46 beaches were also awarded the highest water quality Green Coast Award ensuring that beaches are clean, safe and well-managed.



Sustainable Tourism Partnerships



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- **Partnership management and programme development**
 - Sustainable Tourism Forum for Wales
 - Coastal Tourism Steering Group
 - Green Sea Partnership
 - Sustainable Transport and Tourism Committee,
 - Wildlife Tourism Task & Finish Group
 - Environmental Management Partnership (with the 3 National Parks)
 - UK Sustainable Tourism Group
 - Environment for Growth National Strategic Steering Group
 - National Strategic Monitoring and Evaluation Group for EU Tourism projects
 - Cultural Tourism Partnership

EU Projects – Visit Wales



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- **The National Trust centre of excellence - Aberdaron**
- **Pembrokeshire coastal centre of excellence**
- **Swansea Bay centre of excellence**
- **North Wales Cycling Centre of Excellence – Denbighshire**
- **The Eryri Centre of Excellence project – Gwynedd.**
- **The One Historic Garden Centre of Excellence**
- **The Neath Port Talbot cycling centre of excellence.**



Business Engagment

- The development and management of industry communications, off/online support tools/ materials and workshops in relation to sustainable tourism:
 - Sustainable Tourism Online Toolkit – Testing and assessment
 - Accreditation and Validation
 - Case studies, factsheets, quality grading guides
 - National Park Sustainable Development Workshops
 - Keep It Real – Marketing Sustainability Guide
 - Website Development
 - DMWales/Social Media (Wildlife)

Online guidance



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- Visit Wales has a section on our industry website dedicated to sustainable tourism

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/tourism/development/sustainable>

On this section we have information including;

- Sustainability and grading guidance leaflets
- Keep it Real – guidance on how to market and communicate your sustainability credentials
- New online toolkit and self assessment www.dmwales.com (currently not live) This is being tested in partnership with National Parks



Keep it Real



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Real case studies

Tell your customers something they want to hear



Gliffaes Country House Hotel (Brecon Beacons) communicates their sustainability message in a traditional, rather dry way. None of their customers have ever commented on their sustainability messages, so Gliffaes owner James Suter gives them little importance. What is missing is engaging customers.

They currently say: "In January 2008 we insulated the space above the bedroom ceilings with over 400m² of sheep's wool insulation."

We propose: "Our sheep will keep you warm at night. For there are more than 400m² of our own sheep's wool insulating the bedrooms' ceiling. Sleep tight."

Equally, now they say: "We now compost all our food waste in a large commercial food composter that helps accelerate the compost process and in doing so diverts about 12-15 tonnes of waste per annum from landfill to our gardens."

And we propose: "We are often asked how we manage to look after our gardens so well all year round – the secret is over 12 tonnes of food going through our state of the art commercial composter each year."



Sustainable Tourism Online Toolkit



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The new Sustainable Business Toolkit is an online and interactive tool designed to help and support tourism businesses to improve the sustainability of their business.

The toolkit:

- Provides advice and guidance
- Enables businesses to assess the current performance of their business in a number of key areas.
- Produces a bespoke action plan.
- Addresses not only environmental issues. It is hosted on www.dmwales.com

Sustainable Tourism Online Toolkit



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Chapter 1: Reduce your utility bills and carbon footprint

- ▶ [Reducing your energy consumption](#)
- ▶ [Reducing your water consumption](#)
- ▶ [Reducing your petrol/diesel consumption](#)
- ▶ [Ask are you ready for renewable energy?](#)
- ▶ [Your renewable energy options](#)
- ▶ [Chapter 2: How to reduce and manage your waste](#)
- ▶ [Chapter 3: Staying on the right side of the law](#)
- ▶ [Chapter 4: Sourcing locally and using sustainable transport](#)
- ▶ [Chapter 5: Your community and enhancing local wildlife](#)
- ▶ [Chapter 6: Green accreditation and award schemes](#)
- ▶ [Chapter 7: Communicating your sustainability message](#)
- ▶ [Chapter 8: Organising sustainable events and festivals](#)
- ▶ [Chapter 9: Where to go for advice and support](#)

Chapter 1: Reduce your utility bills and carbon footprint

Reducing energy and water consumption will not only cut your bills for electricity, gas, and fuel, but will also have the environmental benefits of reducing your contribution to climate change through CO2 emissions and help to conserve natural resources.

This chapter will guide you through the journey to becoming a low carbon business, use our simple, speedy guide below and click on the links for more detailed information, or go straight to our online assessment to find out how you are doing now, and receive advice on further action you can take.

There are four key stages in the journey to becoming a low carbon business;

• **Monitoring:** The only way to find out how and when you use energy and water is to read your meters regularly. Use our monitoring toolkit to take you through the process step by step and to provide you with template recording sheets.

[Monitoring Toolkit \(pdf\)](#)

• **Understanding your consumption:** Analyse your monitoring data to provide you with the knowledge to understand and manage your future consumption; to compare your performance with others and to set targets for improvements and savings

[Analyse your data](#)

• **Take steps to reduce your energy consumption:** introduce improvement measures such as low energy lighting, or water saving devices confident that you now have the knowledge necessary to plan energy saving measures appropriate for your business and to calculate the payback times of any investment.

[Reducing your energy consumption](#)
[Reducing your water consumption](#)
[Reducing your petrol/diesel consumption](#)

[Biodigester se
plant](#)
[Ground sourc](#)
[Good use of v](#)
[Reducing you](#)
[footprint](#)
[How they ext](#)
[air](#)

Self Asses

Chapter 1 - [I](#)
Chapter 2 - [H](#)
Chapter 3 - [H](#)
Chapter 4 - [H](#)
Chapter 5 - [H](#)
Chapter 6 - [H](#)
Chapter 7 - [H](#)
Chapter 8 - [H](#)
Chapter 9 - [N](#)

User login

Username:

Password:

[Log in](#)

[Create new a](#)
[Request new](#)

Sustainable Tourism Online Toolkit



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The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window. The address bar displays <http://ekoconnections.com/visitwales/node/13/results/13>. The page title is "How to reduce your utility bills and your carbon footprint | visitwales - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by Welsh Assembl".

The main content area shows a quiz result for a user named "natalie". The quiz title is "How to reduce your utility bills and your carbon footprint". The user has scored 4 out of 37 possible points, with a total score of 13%. The question is: "Are you reading your Electricity/Gas meter and recording consumption of heating oil / LPG (where applicable)?" The user's response is "Monthly or Weekly", which is marked as correct with a green checkmark. The feedback states: "Informative - Good management of energy could save up to 20% of costs for a business. You need to monitor your energy usage to understand the level and pattern of your energy consumption. Then you will be able to identify possible problems that waste energy (and money); assess the progress and performance of any energy saving initiatives, and provide a baseline to set targets against." The actions listed are: (iii) Use Key Performance Indicators (KPI) such as energy use per guest/ covered/bed night to set improvement targets; (iv) Monitor overnight to identify unnecessary usage; (v) Use simple electricity smart meters to sub monitor parts of your processes and. The user's selected answer "Monthly or Weekly" is also marked as correct with a green checkmark. Other options include "Infrequently or just record off bills" and "No", both of which are marked as incorrect with red X's.

The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows several open applications: Start, Internet, 4 Microsof..., ERNEST, Presentations, Hay ST Ove..., Document1..., and How to red... The system clock shows 17:23.

Sustainable Accreditation



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- To make significant steps towards greening your business and gain recognition for doing so, consider a certification or accreditation scheme.
- A business receives certification when it has achieved a certain level of sustainability. Once awarded, it can be used for marketing and promotional purposes.
- Over the past few years, a number of certification schemes specifically tailored for the tourism industry have become available to tourism businesses across Ireland and the UK.

Sustainable Validation – UK approach



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- Visit England, Visit Wales and Northern Ireland Tourist Board and Fáilte Ireland have developed a single **validation** system
- to endorse the quality of operations and criteria of sustainable tourism certification programmes operating in and across these countries.
- Increased awareness of sustainability by consumers and media means that there is a danger of 'Greenwash' . Validation prevents this.

Accreditation Schemes



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- The Green Tourism Business Scheme is the most popular validated schemes with approx 100 businesses in Wales.

[Green Tourism Business Scheme](#)

- Other validated schemes include:
- [BS8901 certified by SGS](#)
- [Peak District Environmental Quality Mark](#)
[Sustainable Travel International - STEP](#)



Non validated schemes:

- [Green Dragon® environmental standard](#)
- [David Bellamy](#)

Available Schemes



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- **The Green Tourism Business Scheme**

2,400 accredited. Businesses that meet the standard for a GTBS award, receive a Bronze, Silver, or Gold award based on their level of achievement

- **Sustainable Travel International – STEP**

Relatively new to Wales, Sustainable Tourism Eco-certification Programme (STEP) is the certification programme from Sustainable Travel International. STI has a number of programmes for businesses but STEP is the only certification scheme that's validated

- **BS8901 – certified by SGS**

BS8901 is the British Standard which has been developed specifically for the events industry with a purpose of helping the industry to operate in a more sustainable manner

Non validated schemes available



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The Green Dragon Environmental Standard

Operates in Wales only – available to all different sectors not just tourism. Stepped system which starts at level 2 for tourism and can go up to Level 5.

David Bellamy Award

David Bellamy – suited to caravan parks and campsites With over 600 awarded parks in Britain, the David Bellamy Conservation Award is the largest sustainability certification programme catering for camping and caravanning parks in the world.

Making your decision



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- Research those schemes available
- Ask the right questions e.g.
 - Is it appropriate for the size of your business?
 - How much support will you receive to help you?
 - How much room is there for improvement year on year?

Visit Wales



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- VW website -green search functionality is planned as part of review of the website
- Proper Holidays campaign reflects an authentic holiday experience in Wales, which fits with sustainable businesses
- The PR team can help promote and publicise your business in a variety of different ways productnews@wales.gsi.gov.uk
- Businesses operating in a sustainable way and particularly those accredited are eligible for awards/best practice case studies

Visit Wales Sustainable Tourism Programme of Work 2012/2013



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- Continue support and collaborate with partnerships and networks
- Develop and extend existing programmes on waste and recycling, transport, wildlife and energy management
- Continue to develop communication tools and materials for businesses to use
- Continue to develop seminars/workshops to offer further support
- Continue to explore ways to improve marketing incentives for 'Green businesses'

In Summary



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- Visit Wales has a wide Sustainable tourism work programme
- We have developed support and guidance to businesses at introductory levels through our guidance and online tools and support on being more sustainable
- For those businesses who want to go further, green accreditation is an option
- Validation is a single system developed at a National level to ensure all schemes operate to a consistent standard
- Once you have decided which scheme suits your business needs and been accredited then you should receive help and marketing incentives from the scheme operators and also recognition from Visit Wales and Visit Britain.

Questions?



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Visit Wales

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