

Geopark Code of Practice for Sustainable Tourism

Self Assessment Tool

This self-assessment tool contains a checklist which enables you to get a sense of how your business currently performs in relation to the Geopark Code of Practice for Sustainable Tourism (The Code).

In the following checklist there are 60 statements relating to a total of 60 measures (or actions) required by the Code.

- Tick 'Yes' if the statement is true for your business.
- Tick 'No' if the statement is not true for your business.

Filters

- You will notice some filters on certain questions.
- **Skip any filtered statement that is not relevant** to your business i.e. if you do not provide an outdoor activity as part of your visitor experience; skip any statement with the filter 'for outdoor activity providers'.

Essential Measures

- There are a number of '**Essential Measures**' highlighted in blue. There are 14 for Outdoor Activity Providers and 12 for all others. These are measures that **must** be taken by any business who wishes to engage with the Code and the Burren Ecotourism Network.
- **N.B.** If you are currently ticking 'No' for any of these statements, you must address those measures before you are eligible to make a Code of Practice submission.

Calculating your performance

- When you have completed all statements, calculate your total number of 'Yes' and total number of 'No'. Add these two figures together to get the overall number of measures that apply to your business.
- Calculate the % of statements that you can currently say a confident 'Yes' to. This percentage is your indicative performance in relation to the Code. Performance is divided into 5 bands as follows:

Red	25% or less
Amber	26%-50%
Green Level 2	51%-75%
Green Level 1	76%-90%
Geopark Emerald Award	91% or higher

Remember

- You will be asked to provide evidence of performance against each measure when it comes to making your Code Submission.

Principle 1 Working Together

We collaborate with all stakeholders to collectively develop the Geopark as a sustainable tourism destination.

		Yes	No
1.1.1	Our business is a fully-paid up member or partner of the Burren Ecotourism Network (the B.E.N.).		
1.1.2	We have adopted and implemented the Geopark Code of Practice for Sustainable Tourism and can provide evidence of same.		
1.2.1	We participated in 1 or more B.E.N. Networking & Referrals event in the last year.		
1.3.1	A representative of our business is an active member of at least one sub-group, committee or project team in the B.E.N..		

Principle 2 A Cared-for Landscape

We actively participate in conserving our natural and cultural heritage.

		Yes	No
2.1.1	At least one person in our business has completed Leave No Trace training in the last 5 years.		
2.1.2	Leave No Trace principles are promoted on our website and through appropriate displays and documents.		
2.2.1	Outdoor Activity Providers only: We promote the Leave No Trace principles verbally during our outdoor activity.		
2.2.2	Outdoor Activity Providers only: We observe the Leave No Trace principles at all times during our outdoor activity.		
2.3.1	Our business participated in at least two of the annual B.E.N. conservation and advocacy activities (i.e. Adopt-a-Hedgerow, Meitheal and/or Burren Food Fayre) in the last year.		

Principle 3 A Well-understood Heritage

We offer quality information and interpretation to communicate our stories and the unique character of our place to guests.

		Yes	No
3.1.1	We ensure that we are well informed on the unique character of the Geopark region. We participate in at least one relevant training, networking or educational event per year that helps keep us updated and informed.		
3.1.2	Providers with Staff only: We provide training and resources to relevant team members (and/or enable them to participate in external events) that enhance their knowledge of the region and their confidence in engaging with visitors.		
3.2.1	We give our visitors relevant and accurate interpretive information about the Geopark before they visit.		
3.2.2	We give our visitors relevant and accurate interpretive information about the Geopark during their visit.		
3.2.3	This information covers our natural heritage.		
3.2.4	This information covers our cultural heritage.		
3.2.5	This information covers our built heritage.		
3.2.6	Information is designed and presented with the needs of the widest possible audience in mind, considering factors such as age, ability and mobility.		
3.3.1	Outdoor Activity Providers only: Our outdoor visitor experience includes local stories and cultural and heritage references.		
3.3.2	Outdoor Activity Providers only: Our outdoor visitor experience includes good quality information on Burren geology, archaeology, botany and agricultural history.		

Principle 4 Vibrant Communities

We work to ensure that tourism makes a positive social contribution so that it benefits our community as well as our guests. We aim to make our services available to the widest possible audience.

Yes No

4.1.1	Our business supported and contributed to at least one community project or event last year.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.2.1	We have reviewed our written communications (print material, signs and website) to ensure they observe the principles of Universal Access and are easily understood by all groups.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.2.2	We review our verbal communication practices to ensure we are easily understood by all groups.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.2.3	We have reviewed our access to premises/activities/transport to ensure they enable as many diverse groups of people as possible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.2.4	Providers with Staff only: We have communicated the principles of Universal Access to our team members.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.2.5	Providers with Staff only: We have trained appropriate team members in dealing with people with disabilities, older people and others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Principle 5 Strengthened livelihoods

We contribute to the local economy by maintaining and supporting local employment, by sourcing services and produce locally wherever possible, and by engaging with other businesses in promoting our region as a sustainable tourism destination.

Yes No

5.1.1	Our business provides employment in our region.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.1.2	Our business supports employment in our region by buying produce and services from local providers, producers and retailers where possible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.1.3	Our business provides information on local businesses, products, services, attractions and activities to guests through our website or displayed information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.2.1	The B.E.N. logo is displayed on our website.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.2.2	There is information about the B.E.N. on our website.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.2.3	The Burren & Cliffs of Moher Geopark destination logo is on our website.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.2.4	There is up-to-date information on The Burren & Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark on our website.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.2.5	We provide up-to-date content for www.burren.ie.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.2.6	We actively contribute to at least two of the activities that make up the B.E.N. marketing strategy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Principle 6A Sustainable Environmental Management – Policy & Planning

We are guided by our Environmental Policy and we work to an Environmental Action Plan, which includes actions and targets for improvement that are reviewed annually.

Yes No

6.1.1	We have a documented Environmental Policy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.1.2	Our Environmental Policy includes objectives.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.1.3	Our Environmental Policy is on our website.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.1.4	Providers with premises only: Our Environmental Policy is displayed in our premises.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.1.5	Providers with Staff only: We have communicated our Environmental Policy to team members.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.2.1	As part of this submission process, we will create or update our Environmental Action Plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.2.2	Our Environmental Action Plan includes (or will include) actions for improvement across the Code of Practice principles.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.2.3	These actions are (or will be) specific, evidence-based, realistic and time-bound.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6.2.4	We commit to reviewing our progress against the actions and targets in our Environmental Action Plan periodically (at least annually and more frequently where possible or appropriate).		
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Principle 6B Sustainable Environmental Management – Use of Resources

We have effective systems for monitoring and adequately managing our waste, water, wastewater, energy, travel impact and purchases.

		Yes	No
6.3.1	We give our visitors information regarding sustainable transportation options before they visit us e.g. on our website or in emails.		
6.3.2	We give our visitors information regarding sustainable transportation options during their visit to us e.g. in information leaflets, guest books, noticeboards.		
6.3.3	Providers with Staff only: We ensure our team members are aware of the sustainable transportation options and are able to communicate them to guests.		
6.3.4	We make our visitors aware of opportunities to offset their carbon footprint.		
6.4.1	We monitor and periodically review the percentage of our business purchases which are locally-sourced, fair-trade, organic, recycled and/or eco-friendly.		
6.4.2	Based on this review, we set SMART targets to optimise the amount of locally-grown, locally-sourced, fair-trade, organic, recycled and eco-friendly products that our business purchases annually.		
6.5.1	Providers with premises only: We measure and record the amount of energy consumed in our business each year.		
6.5.2	Providers with premises only: We review our energy consumption each year and set SMART targets for improvement in our Environmental Action Plan.		
6.5.3	Providers with premises only: We measure and record the amount of water consumed in our business each year.		
6.5.4	Providers with premises only: We review our water consumption each year and set SMART targets for improvement in our Environmental Action Plan.		
6.5.5	Providers with premises only: We record the amount of waste generated in our business each year.		
6.5.6	Providers with premises only: We review the amount of waste generated and set SMART targets for improvement in our Environmental Action Plan.		
6.5.7	Providers with premises only: We have a wastewater management and maintenance schedule.		
6.6.1	Transport Providers only: We measure and record the amount of fuel used in our business and periodically review.		
6.6.2	Transport Providers only: FILTER (<i>business which providers transport for visitors</i>) We monitor and record our emissions.		
6.6.3	Transport Providers only: FILTER (<i>business which providers transport for visitors</i>) We set SMART targets for improvement of our vehicle efficiency in our Environmental Action Plan.		
6.6.4	Transport Providers only: FILTER (<i>business which providers transport for visitors</i>) We review our vehicle efficiency targets periodically, and at least annually.		

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Indicative Performance Bands

Red Zone	25% or less	Thank you for getting involved in the Code. In order to be considered as having engaged with the spirit of the Code, you must adopt at least 25% of the overall measures. If you adopt all Essential Measures highlighted in blue above (14 for outdoor activity providers and 12 for all others), you will meet this minimum requirement. Once you've done that, you can start moving on your journey.
Amber Zone	26%-50%	Well done, you're getting ready to move onwards on your journey of continuous improvement towards sustainability. You've put in the place the essential framework for progress. The focus now is on ensuring you have an Environmental Action Plan that will bring you into Green Level 1 for next year.
Green Level 2	51%-75%	You have adopted more than half of the Code of Practice measures and are progressing well on the journey of continuous improvement. Your Environmental Action Plan will challenge you to implement further measures and move your business onwards to the Green Level 2.
Green Level 1	76%-90%	You have adopted the majority of the Code of Practice measures. You can be proud of the progress you've made and the contribution you make to the B.E.N., the local community and the wider region. You work hard to minimise the environmental impacts of your business and you also engage with others to communicate and protect our natural and cultural heritage.
Geopark Emerald Award	91% or higher	You are an exemplary sustainable tourism business and can showcase good and best practice across many aspects of the sustainable tourism journey. You have implemented nearly all Code of Practice measures and have most likely exceeded the requirements of many aspects of the Code. Yet you continuously strive for further improvement. You can inspire others.