



Ross Bay Retreat & Overdale Cottage

A qualified assessor for Green Tourism undertook a Green Check for the above named site. This is a summary of the activities being undertaken on site in relation to the Green Tourism criteria. This Green Check report is a statement on the performance of the business as a sustainable tourism operation.

Current Award Status		Silver - (Version V)	
Achieved on Ver V Criteria	66%	Level of Award Version V	SILVER

Green Tourism Promotional Statement

Ross Bay Retreat & Overdale Cottage is off to a great start, securing the SILVER level of award at first assessment. The owners are clearly very knowledgeable about sustainability issues and have incorporated this into the cottages, while running the farm sustainably as well. The bigger impacts are all under control due to the biomass heating, efficient appliances LED lighting in most areas. The local area with lots of walks and attractions are promoted well (Cream O Galloway) encouraging guests to explore locally. There has been effort made to create lots of wildlife habitats with wildflower planted and a big hotel created - this is complemented with a nature diary and spotting books.

Green Tourism Opportunities

While scoring well there are still some green initiatives to consider in future. Keep telling your green story more, using the Green Tourism logo and plaque and perhaps getting involved in some of the campaigns in the area. Dumfries and Galloway have the Eco Deco waste system but should be improving on this. Ensure to have some up to date waste information for guests to let them know why the system appears to be different in the area. Keep greening the supply chain aiming for more eco cleaning products as well as 100% recycled paper items. Further recommendations have been made throughout the audit report, which should be read in conjunction with the criteria document. Additional supporting information can be found in the members area on the Green Tourism website.

	Indicators	Score	%	
Management	5	19	76%	GOOD
Marketing And Communication	7	18	51%	FAIR
Social Responsibility & Equality	5	13	52%	FAIR
Energy Saving	9	33	73%	VERY GOOD
Water Issues	8	25	63%	GOOD
Purchasing	3	9	60%	FAIR
Waste Minimisation	6	21	70%	GOOD
Travel & Transport	2	8	80%	VERY GOOD
Nature & Culture	5	20	80%	VERY GOOD
Innovation	0	0		
	50	166		

FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTIONS		
Ref	Criteria opportunities	Comment
1.02	Green Policy OR Statement	Very nice biodiversity page on the website. Could develop more focusing on the cottages. E.g. http://www.merlin-farm-cottages-cornwall.co.uk/green-policy
1.03	Establishing a green action plan	Lots of ideas going forward. Could use this report as the basis for an action plan which you can develop over time. Keep a log of actions completed, persons responsible, timescales etc.
1.14	Monitoring Energy Use	One meter for all farm. Could look at trends. Could do some analysis of trends. This could allow targets for reduction to be set. There are simple spreadsheets on GT members area.
1.15	Monitoring Water Use	Water costs are always on the increase. Could record consumption every month or so and use this as a starting point for further reductions.
1.16	Monitoring Waste & Recycling	Could keep a tally of waste and recycle produced by the business and/or visitors. This could be a starting point for further landfill reductions and cost savings.
2.01	Green profile & use of Green Tourism logo	Ensure to show your green commitment on your webpage and have the plaque on display onsite.
2.02	Promotion of local food/craft retailers and delivery options	Website has good info on places to eat. For a good example see: http://www.cottageinthedaes.co.uk/holiday-cottages/14/Shopping%20&%20Markets
2.03	Provision of public transport information on website	Could have clear links to local and national transport providers e.g. http://www.traveline.info to allow guests to make an informed choice of how they arrive but also to plan car free or minimal car use days out in the area during their stay.
2.04	Display Information	Blog articles. Some good info on progress so far. Ensure to tell your green story with details of how you have greened the property, local green news and events. This can help raise awareness but also may be an opportunity for press articles.
2.05	Social media linked to Green Tourism	Nice blog articles on green. Could promote more green ideas/actions/stories linking with Green Tourism on your social media sites. Consider getting involved in some of the Green Tourism campaigns for 2019 and 2020. Use #livegreen, #greentourism, and #GreenTourismGold, Green TourismSilver or #GreenTourismBronze.
2.07	Creating a Responsible Visitor Charter	You could give your visitors some suggestions of how to be green in the area. To create your own see the example document e.g. http://www.goldenjubileehotel.com/hotel/info/social-responsibility/gjch-visitor-charter/ or https://www.stayatcohort.co.uk/responsible-visitor-charter/

3.01	Local social community projects	Supported school netball team and Borgue primary school. Swim club - worth logging your community activities in your green evidence file for next time.
3.03	Visitor Payback (Visitor Giving) initiatives	Consider a visitor payback e.g. £1 per booking towards a local social or environmental projects e.g. Air Ambulance. Wildlife Trust etc. For ideas see https://www.lakedistrictfoundation.org/get-started/ or https://greenmotion.com/green-heart-donation
3.04	International sustainable/responsible projects	Look into international links perhaps twinning some toilets e.g. http://www.toilettwinning.org/
3.08	Fairly traded food & drink	Out of Eden. More Fair Trade or Rainforest Alliance branded items for guests could be a good awareness raising feature.
3.10	Information in an accessible format	Suggest developing a full access statement for guests with disabilities. For ideas see: https://cambridgeholidaycottages.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Fullers-hill-Cottages-Access-Statement.pdf or https://www.disabledgo.com/access-guide/university-of-glasgow/kelvin-hall . To create your own see: https://www.accessibilityguides.org/
4.01	Efficient fridges and freezers	All bought post 2014. When you need to replace any equipment look for at least A++ rated or commercial equivalent
4.06	LED Lighting	2 new properties have LED. Other ones are getting changed over. Could change more bulbs to LEDs. Aim for 100% LED coverage in next few years.
4.07	External lighting with suitable controls	Consider LED alternatives. This can work well with timers and motion controllers.
4.19	Photovoltaic and micro hydro systems	Solar panels going live soon. Check next time.
5.01	Showers	Could test flow rate. Aim for around 7lpm per shower. This will be a water saving but also heating saving. For ideas see www.savemoneycutcarbon.com
5.02	Basin and sink taps	Could test flow rate. Restrictors or aerator fittings can reduce flow considerably. Aim for around 5 litres per minute per tap.
5.09	Rainwater and grey water harvesting	Some water butts could help reduce main water usage but also act as an awareness raising tool for visitors.
5.12	Phosphate-free soaps, detergents and bleaches	Some eco cleaners. Some standard - CIF, Dettol etc. Should aim for all cleaning products to be completely phosphate and chlorine free. Could trial several 'eco' brands e.g. Delphis Eco.
6.05	Paper products in housekeeping	Pure Soft. Consider 100% recycled paper.

6.06	Drinking water from the destination	No bottled water for guests. If the tap water is excellent could make a feature out of this and there being no need to buy bottled water - just refill your bottle from the tap.
6.19	Sustainable timber (hardwoods)	Keep details if you are using any sustainable timber.
6.20	Green energy tariffs	Scottish power. Look for a green electricity tariff where 100% of the electricity comes from renewables. See GT members area of the website for more details. Ecotricity and Good Energy are very popular.
7.02-7.06	reduce, reuse, recycle	Keep aware of the waste hierarchy and look for other ways to reduce and reuse as much as possible.
7.04	Recycled plastic purchase/plastic reuse and recycling	Eco Deco system. Try to reduce as much single use plastics from the business as possible. Could also link with social media campaigns and Green Tourism. Solway recycling.
7.10	Kitchen waste composting	Could look at a Green Cone or Green Johanna onsite. Ensure everyone is aware of what can/cannot be composted.
8.01	Promotion of car free activities	Could develop some specific car free itineraries for days out without car (or minimal) linking walks, cycle routes with attractions and public transport in the area. For ideas see: http://www.bosinver.co.uk/green-bosinver/50-things-to-do-without-a-car or http://www.gorgeviewcottage.co.uk/some-car-free-ideas.html
8.04	Information on walking, cycling and other travel activities	In cottages there is path . 40 walks. Could look to personalise walking and cycling information further with routes starting from the property taking into account nature and culture on the way. Could grade easy, medium, hard for guests.
8.05	Cycle storage & cycle hire	Bike hire in Kirkcudbright. Could mention any secure storage and repair kit on your website.
8.09	Electric car charging point	The introduction of an electric vehicle charging station could be looked into or promoted.
9.01	Natural and cultural heritage initiatives	Consider joining a conservation organization e.g. RSPB or WWT or having an animal mascot for your business - this could be useful for any promotional work you do
9.09	Significant tree planting or conservation	Have done some in past. Planning for more. Keep a log of these.
9.13	Dark skies as part of a package/product	Dark sky tourism is becoming more popular in the UK. Could promote any events but also have binoculars/telescope, star charts etc. For ideas see http://www.staybeacons.com/activities/star-gazing/