

Guidelines for sustainable business practices

Why a toolkit?

The Causeway Coast and Glens area has become an EU Charter partner; this demonstrates the determination of the area's stakeholders to work on more sustainable tourism. In order to achieve this aim, CCGHT offers these guidelines and hope that we will work together for more sustainability.

These guidelines will assist you if you are certain that sustainable tourism could have positive effects on your business (B&B, restaurant, leisure activity ...), but you think it is too complicated and you do not know how to start, or you already have done some actions to become more sustainable and you are looking to go further.

This toolkit can help you to improve your practices, to implement environmental management systems and to move up the sustainability ladder. You will find more information on how your carbon footprint could be decreased (waste, water and energy wastage, and some advices about your purchases). Also, it can show you how to support your local area, the Causeway Coast and Glens, by promoting special qualities of wildlife, landscape and cultural heritage. Thus, it will be possible to work together (with all the stakeholders on the area) by adopting a socioeconomic and cultural approach to tourism development.

Short reminder on sustainable tourism and the benefits for the tourism businesses

Sustainable tourism, in its purest sense, is an industry which attempts to make a low impact on the environment and local culture, while helping to generate income, employment and being part of rural development. It is responsible tourism which is both ecologically and culturally sensitive. It is about caring for the places we love to visit and protecting them for future generations.

Greening your business could help you to:

- Save money and reduce energy and water wastage,
- Minimise the negative impact of tourism development in a fragile environment,
- Provide a positive message of the business with a new potential marketing,
- Improve the quality of your visitor's experience,
- Improve your relationship with the local community by supporting it.

Reduce your footprint:

Tourism activities have direct impacts on the environment, and you can mitigate them by small daily acts in your business management. Do not forget these small changes can lead to big differences and never doubt that a small group of thoughtful people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

Become environmentally friendly, do your bit for the environment and give the opportunity to staff and visitors to be involved in and take care of your local area.

You will be able to find more information on how to save energy, save water, reduce waste, buy greener, involve staff and visitors, travel wisely and market greener.

Support your local area:

You live in an area with a rich environment and heritage which make it famous, why not take part in its conservation and promotion. Become active in your area and enjoy the benefits. By being active in your area, you will be able to provide better advice to your customers and give them the opportunity to have a great

and unique experience in your region. And by doing this you can also help the growth in local production and traditions.

- Helping to maintain and create jobs in your area;
- Sustain local services and facilities;
- Stimulate companies and support investments in environmental management.
- Growth in local production and traditions
- Enjoy where you live.

You can have a quick look at NITB's advice: [Help for Businesses](#)

If you want to examine the efficiency of your actions and report your progresses, the best way is to assess your initial consumptions and to monitor them through the implementation stage by using baseline data on energy, water and waste.

For more efficiency you can organise your actions through a **green strategy** and an **action plan**.

if you have already produced a strategy and action plan you may want to consider the next step: an eco accreditation such as - GTBS, Sustainable Tourism Education Programme (STEP) or EU charter.

Save energy

Tourism businesses spend a fortune on energy bills every year, and these costs cut into your profits. Simple steps can be implemented to save money dramatically. More importantly, saving energy will reduce environmental damage and CO2 emissions.

Your first action will be to reduce your consumption by changing your behaviour. Very simple acts can reduce your energy consumption and save money on your bills. This will not cost you anything, because you're only changing your behaviour. The cheapest energy is the one that's not consumed.

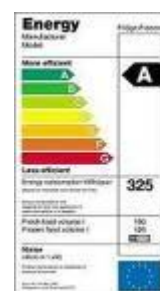
Work for everyone in your business (you, your staff and your visitors) and be involved in these following acts:

- Turn devices and lights off if not in use
- Set the right temperature
- Carefully position appliances so they do not block any heat sources
- Avoid standby mode
- Make the most of the natural light
- Keep doors and windows closed when heating or cooling
- Prefer to use cold water rather than hot water to save energy whenever it is possible
- Encourage your staff and visitor to take part in your actions.



Next you can reduce your consumption by having more efficient appliances for your business such as low energy light bulbs or in doing some insulation work and install double glazing. This may seem like an expensive option to implement, but the system would pay for itself within an estimated few years.

- Install low energy light bulbs, they consume less electricity and have a longer usable life.
- Use lighting timers (not needed if everybody remembers to turn off the light if not used)
- Use light sensitive systems (if a room is well lit by natural light, no electrical lighting may be required – can also be used in outdoors)



and movement detectors for lighting

- Look out for energy labels that provide information about energy consumption and performance and aim to buy 'A'-rated appliances, which mean more efficiently.
- Install High efficiency boiler
- Insulate roof, insulate hot water tank
- Install double glazing and sufficient window sealing

When you have reduced your energy consumption in your business, switching to renewable energy sources could be the next step. You can install your very own source of renewable energy to become more self sufficient or even switch your energy provider to one that is greener.

- Install solar water heating or solar panels. Grants are available.
- Use a sustainable energy supplier, there are several in UK, you can compare the prices.

You can find **further advice via the following websites (resources)**

[Better Tourism \(Visit England\)](#) : The tools on Better Tourism have been designed with an English Stakeholder in mind but all tourism businesses in UK are free the site (some resources may only be relevant in England). The website includes a useful tool to develop your own action plan (assess your business and then get an action plan proposition), visitor charter, green policy and a great resource zone. (Requires login which is free and quick)

[Energy Saving Trust](#) : This public sector site contains all kinds of information on reducing energy usage, insulation and purchasing energy efficient products with a well explanation of the possible grants and discounts. New advice services will be available in April 2012. Energy saving tips (Top ten, for kids, in the kitchen, bedroom, ...) and a [Home Energy Check](#)

[NI direct government services](#) : government services which provide energy efficiency tips (and also about saving water in your garden, water and energy efficiency in your home, reducing waste, greener shopping and products...)

<http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/index/information-and-services/property-and-housing/energy-wise.htm>

<http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/index/information-and-services/environment-and-greener-living.htm>

[Carbon Trust](#) : provides guidance to implement energy reduction projects and funding information through their Energy Efficiency Financing. You can find a lot of tools, guides and reports to download such as *Creating an awareness campaign, An introduction to energy management, Green your business and Energy management self-assessment tools* (excel document).

[Power NI](#) : energy provider with explanations of the various renewable energy sources (offers grants for solar PV and commercial solar water heating) and a Home energy check.

[Green energy supply](#) : Provides Transparency and Clarity on Green Electricity Tariffs and different suppliers.

[ECA Scheme](#) - The Enhanced Capital Allowances (ECA) Scheme allows businesses to gain tax cuts and an 'enhanced' 100% capital allowance on qualifying investments in equipment in the first tax year.

Save water and reduce pollution

Despite the rainy weather, water in the UK is not as abundant as you may think and it costs a lot to treat the wastewater.

In summer we need more water, both fresh and drinking because of the warm weather and the number of tourists. There is competition for the uses between wildlife, agriculture, tourism, which can increase the price of drinking water. The coast line is very sensitive and polluted water can affect it and its wildlife.

It is the role of each of us to take care of water, by reducing our consumption and decrease water pollution. There are easy steps involving simple changes in your behaviour that you can do to begin:

- Check for leaks frequently and report them to your water supplier
- Use plants that require less water,
- Turn off the water while soaping hands
- Wash on full loads
- Use a broom not a hose to clean driveways and walkways



When buying appliances check the energy efficiency of the product. This will reduce your water consumption and will be more cost effective. In addition, this will help to reduce water pollution by rejecting less water, often less contaminated.

- Use ecological cleaning products,
- Buy and use water savers, (put faucet aerators on sink faucets)
- Consider installing dual flush capacity toilets to allow for a full or half flush, depending on what is needed.
- Use taps aerators and aerators in your shower head which mix air with the water to produce the same force of flow.
- Install flow restrictors (valves in the taps) to reduce the volume of water
- Install a water butt to recover rainwater, and then use in your garden.



You can find **further advice on these followings websites (resources)**

[Energy Saving Trust](#) : provides water-saving advice and links, recommends water-saving products
They also have created a [water energy calculator](#)

[Northern Ireland Environment Agency](#) : The agency that looks after water quality in Northern Ireland

[Waterwise](#) : They are the leading authority on water efficiency in the UK. Their web site provides advice and tips on how to save water and save money. They also provide a [Water Calculator](#).

Reduce waste: reusing, reducing, recycling

Waste management affects all of us continually; reducing waste is a key part of any green strategy. The easiest way to reduce our waste is to tackle it at its source, in our behaviour, and our purchasing.

It needs to be managed wisely: Rethink, Reduce, Reuse and Recycle waste as much as possible. This not only helps to save the environment, but also saves your business money (it costs your business money to collect all your waste. The more waste you reduce, the more you save.)

In a region, where there is a strong summer peak in tourism activities waste management requires special attention. Both, tourists and businesses have a role to play to keep the environment clean and follow an effective waste management regime.



Reduce your waste by changing your practices and those of your staff:

- Monitor your stock control and ensure that you do not order excess material.
- Only buy the food quantity you require,
- Compost your organic waste, and try to avoid food waste.
- Print green; avoid unnecessary printing costs; only print documents when necessary, Avoid using colour ink when possible.
- Print on both sides (duplex setting),
- Use recycled paper to print and old paper as a draft
- Minimize disposable products, (carafe of water instead of bottle of water)
- Operate strict recycling methods and ensure that all staff understand: which bins are used for which material, label or colour code bins to ensure this
- Put your waste (packaging, cigarette butt ...) in a bin. Follow the Leave no Trace principles. www.leavenotraceireland.org
- Encourage your staff and visitor to pay attention to their waste.



Change your purchasing behaviour:

- Use refillable products such as ink cartridges and cleaning products.
- Buy rechargeable batteries.
- Try to repair instead of buying new.
- Buy recycled and recyclable products.
- Buy in bulk, cutting down on both cost and packaging.



You can find **further advice on these following websites (resources)**

[Rethink waste NI](#) : tips, actions to Reduce, Reuse, Recycle waste. Downloadable information available.

[WRAP, Envirowise](#) : delivers free, independent advice to UK businesses. This assistance enables companies to increase profitability and reduce environmental impact and waste management.

[Recycle Now](#) : gives detailed, information on what can be recycled and how, and where to buy recycled products.

[Love food hate waste](#) : provides advice to reduce food waste.

[North West Region Waste Management Group](#) : Management council group in Coleraine, Ballymoney, Moyle ... have a look on your council website to discover more information about the collection day, etc.

Buy greener

By being a tourism business you are a consumer, therefore you have purchasing power. By your purchasing behaviour, you can modify (at your level) in a positive way your local economy and more generally the global market.

Changing your purchasing behaviour does not necessarily mean buying more expensive items, but it can, because it is your choice to pay more for something you think fair and worth it.

Customers – green issues are high on customers' minds. They expect businesses to take a visible, responsible approach to the environment as standard.



Aim to purchase sustainable and ethically sourced products and materials, as this will not only benefit your business, but will be good for the environment.

In the Causeway Coast and Glens area there is a rich diversity of local craft and food and possibilities to buy green product for your business, why not try them?

How to buy more responsibly

- Offer your visitors quality products.
- Look for labels on products before buying, there are several which guarantee that these products are organic, fair, local, energy efficient, ...as Fairtrade, European ecolabel, European organic logo or energy efficient rating
- Buy fruits and vegetables in season; avoid the transportation and the products which are grown in greenhouses (these may use a lot of energy and pesticides)
- Provide or promote vegetarian food (need less energy to be produce).
- Buy in bulk to avoid heavy packaging, thus reducing your waste
- Buy from the local producers to support your local area hence reducing transportation costs. The quality of the produce is often better and you can be sure that you are paying a fair price for the goods. It can also help to preserve our green space and farmland landscape.
- Buy organic products in order to avoid pesticides, pollution and to take care of your health.
- Avoid disposable products, to reduce the waste
- Buy recycled paper for your office or paper from Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) or PEFC (Program for Endorsement of Forest Certification Scheme)

You can find **further advice on the followings websites (resources)**

[European ecolabel](#) : this logo assures that the products which carry it are environmental friendly.

[Fair-Trade Mark](#) : works in poorer farming communities and aims to ensure sustainable development through trade agreements which are equitable and fair. For information on products and suppliers check it out.

[NI Good Food](#) : taste of Ulster “provides a single promotional voice for Northern Ireland's food and drink”, creates events to promote NI's food and drink, provides help to find local producers.



[Naturally North Coast](#) : “encourages the use of the local produce and promotes local producers who offer an exceptional range of goods on the north coast of Northern Ireland”, provides information about traditional recipes and local producers in the north coast.



[Ulster Farmers' Union](#) : regroup farmers who want to work for sustainable agriculture, they have produced a [food seasonality calendar](#)

[Energy Saving Trust](#) : Look for the Energy Saving Trust recommended label to find products that will save energy in your home. These products have to meet strict energy performance criteria, so you know you are getting the best for your money.

Involve staff and visitors

This is the key to make your actions really efficient, involving your staff and visitors will help you to reduce your carbon footprint. Inform them of what you do for the environment, and encourage them to follow you, they will feel a sense of achievement by “doing their bit” to help the environment.

Involving your staff in your green policy can help in management, as it can act as a key motivator for your staff.

In the Causeway Coast and Glens area, tourists are looking for beautiful scenery and green landscapes. They would be happy to do their bit to preserve it, protect it and enhance it for future generations. They will be grateful that you look after it. Holidays can be the perfect time to change behaviors.

- Write in partnership with your staff one green policy and make it accessible to all staff and visitors.
- Invite nominations for a Green Champion.
- Write a visitor charter to explain and invite them to “do their bit” for the environment (and to help you)
- Display polite notices to remind staff and visitors to follow your ‘green policy’.
- Provide visual aids to explain what they can do. Give some examples (prevent energy wastage, water wastage, provide accurate public transport information, information about local producers and outdoor activities)
- Facilitate feedback and suggestions from staff and visitor by making available one suggestion box.
- Put up the NITB’s posters “think green” and “green travel code”.

You can find **further advice on the followings websites (resources)**

[Awarenessideas](#) : website which sells awareness posters and can give you ideas about communication and visual aids.



CCGHT green policy and action plan.

[Better-tourism](#) the website provides help to create your green policy and visitor charter

Do you need help to source a slogan which will motivate your staff and visitors without making them guilty <http://www.energychange.info/slogan-competition>

Travel wisely:

Transport is an important part of the CO2 emission for the tourism industry, and the “visitor’s carbon footprint” (the way to go and the journeys during the stay). Transport and traffic are a source of stress for a

lot of families and people. Those are good reasons to change and improve your mobility and that of your visitors.

In an area famous for its coastal roads there is an increase in traffic, it is a challenge to introduce alternatives to the car, everybody can take part in this even if you don't provide transport.

- Use public transport and car sharing when you can.
- Use teleconference when possible, plan your activities in the week. Avoid shopping daily...
- Buy local and avoid food transportation.
- Encourage your visitors to travel without a car by offering a pickup service at the bus or train station, and provide public transport information on your website
- Encourage your visitor to discover your region in a different way ... without a car and have a different experience. Take time to watch the environment and meet people on the way. Provide current information about public transport, walking and bike facilities.
- Provide information on the local cycle route and bike hire shops, you can lend local maps of your area (discoverer map series 1:50 000), you can ask your local TIC.
- Provide service for cyclists and walkers (drying room, Bike Park ...) market yourself as cycle friendly.
- Offer information about the walks on your doorstep.

[Sustrans](#) : Organisation working on alternative transports. It looks after the National Cycle Network and provides maps.

[Your TIC](#), they have local maps and leaflets for walking trails for example the "moyle way" or "causeway coast way".

["Fresh air is free"](#) from nurture Lakeland: is a project which helps to promote walks on your doorstep.

[Translink's](#) website and leaflets: provide information about public transport, especially the "rambler bus" program (service between Belfast, Giant's Causeway and Coleraine)

[Causeway Coast and Glens RTP](#): provides tourist information, you can download [Cycling, walking leaflets](#)

Greener marketing:

Tourists are increasingly looking for information on the green aspects of their holiday's choices. Catch a new and growing market ... show what you do (not too much, be careful of green washing) and what they can do with you or around you during their stay.

- Use recycled paper for your leaflets. If you keep the date of your event apart from your poster for your event you can use the same poster next year!
- Use internet when you can instead of printing documentation.
- Create a internet page where you link outdoor activities on your website, public transport, nature conservation organisation ...
- Promote local events, (live music in the local pub, walk with the National Trust ...) and create a calendar.
- Facilitate feedback, involve visitors in your policy and show them you are active.
- Display your policy statement on your website.
- Being accredited and use logo, Green Tourism Business Scheme (GTBS) or Sustainable Tourism Education Programme (STEP) or EU Charter partner.
- Join special tour operator such as greentraveller.co.uk
- Have a look at "Keep it real" (visit England) it's about how to communicate your green policy.
- Visit better tourism from VisitEngland and create your green policy and visitor charter online.

[Visit England](#) : Promotes tourism in England and offers several tools to help tourism businesses. “Keep it real”, toolkit to download about green marketing

“[Better Tourism](#)”, online tools to create your green policy and visitor charter. Requires free register.

[GTBS](#) : Provides all the information you need to be accredited, case studies, the 150 criteria and the information pack (available on request on the GTBS website or CCGHT)

Wildlife and landscape conservation

The Causeway Coast and Glens area contains three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). These designations recognise the rich wildlife and landscape in the area that needs to be preserved.

Nature is what we are famous for and it is arguably what we do in a good way. While farming has helped to shape the land over generations, giving us the traditional patchwork quilt scenery synonymous with postcard Ireland, we take huge pride in the unspoilt natural beauty of our land and seascapes.

Take part in its conservation by sharing your opinion on the management and work with the AONB manager. You will be more credible with your visitors. You will be better equipped to give tourists accurate advice and information.

To achieve this aim you can start by being involved in the AONB network.

Encourage your visitors to respect the Countryside Code and the 7 principles of Leave no Trace Ireland.



Conservation and Your Business

- Contact and work in partnership with the National Trust and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty managers
- Support or take part in conservation projects, contact local associations.
- Provide advice on your favourite place to enjoy the landscape or to see wildlife
- Provide the information on the [7 principles of leave no trace](#)
- Buy local, preserve local agriculture and indeed conserve Green Space & Farmland



Cultural and natural heritage promotion

Your area has a rich wildlife and landscape, but do not forget your historic environment. Indeed, the Causeway Coast and Glens is full of history with cultural, built and natural heritages. These heritages need to be preserved and promoted to be enjoyed by everybody (you, us, your visitors, your children ...) and must not disappear or be damaged or reduced. Be proud of your heritage and encourage your visitors to discover and enjoy it, this will keep it alive and animate.

Cultural, natural heritage and our business

- Know your local area, and be aware of the events in your community.
- Provide accurate public transport information in your area, use Translink website.



- Links on partner's websites, provide information of the different activities, things to do and see in the region.
- Buy local or provide information of the local food, producer, or other businesses' awards. Taste of Ulster and Naturally North Coast can help you.
- Promote your culture and music tradition, local producers and artists.
- Provide local weather conditions and forecasts to your visitors in order to promote outdoor activities.
- Provide information about outdoor activities, the different walks on your doorstep, places and monuments to visit, for instance the best place for a picnic ... as an alternative encourage visitors to discover other areas just as special and authentic as the Giant's Causeway and the Carrick-a-rede Rope Bridge
- Be part of the AONB network and the CCGHT Sustainable Tourism Forum.

You can find **further advice on the followings websites (resources)**

Your local Tourism Information Centre.

[Discover Northern Ireland](#) : Global touristic information on Northern Ireland

[Causeway Coast & Glens RTP](#) : Global touristic and general information on the Causeway Coast and Glens area, map and leaflet to download

[Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust](#) : promotes "environmental management and sustainable development" of the area by coordination of the AONB management forums. All information you need about AONBs, natural and culture heritage and more.

[National Trust Northern Ireland](#) : works "to preserve and protect historic places and spaces", landowner and manager of several places in the Causeway Coast & Glens. You can find events, volunteer program, ...

[Leave no Trace in Ireland](#) : "promoting responsible use of our countryside", have created the 7 principles of leave no trace.

[CoastProject](#) : Provides information about sustainable tourism in England and around the world. Find article, tools, newsletter ... requires login which is free.

[The Department of the Environment NI](#) and its NIEA page (Northern Ireland Environmental Agency): Provides information about the NI environment , protection, planning, built heritage, ...

Work together as a network

The Causeway Coast AONB, the Antrim Coast and Glens AONB and the Binevenagh AONB already benefit from the local tourism industry. The potential for this area to benefit the local economy can be achieved through your move towards a sustainable tourism business. By improving your contribution to the AONBs, your business will be helping to preserve the environment, improve visitors experience and improve your business performance. Therefore, we can see a trend of development, a ripple effect through aiming to become a more sustainable business. By working together with your local community, you can start to see positive changes for your business and the surrounding region.

Working together can mean supporting the local economy, in your day to day purchases (like food) or for your furnishings, and also by promoting local businesses, artists, producers, to your visitors.



By doing this, you will bring something special to your business and your area which could provide financial profits. Who will contribute to the area quality? This includes reciprocal trading – you scratch their back, they will scratch yours, cut down on unnecessary transportation costs and CO2 emissions, foster a local cultural identity, keep traditional craft methods alive.

It is also a way to propose “unique experiences” for the visitors by associating many activities together and create partnerships between professionals; this will make their stay special and unique.

Working together also means working as a network, one of most accessible is your local TIC, so introduce yourself and your activity to your TIC, you also can ask them about other activities and businesses in the area.

Investigate the availability of AONB networks, which help to manage the protected areas. Since CCGHT has been awarded the EU Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Area, a “Sustainable Tourism Forum” has been established which includes all local businesses who are interested in sustainable tourism and who want to work together to improve their tourism offers.



Gants and relevant websites

Information you can find on the NITB website www.nitb.com

- The Carbon Trust – interest free loans are available towards the cost of relevant energy saving energy measures including renewable technologies. Contact www.carbontrust.co.uk/energy or phone the free Carbon Trust helpline on 0800 085 2005 for advice for more information.
- ECA Scheme - The Enhanced Capital Allowances (ECA) Scheme allows businesses to gain tax cuts and an 'enhanced' 100% capital allowance on qualifying investments in equipment in the first tax year. For further information, visit www.eca.gov.uk to check which equipment is eligible on the Energy Technology List (ETL).

[Green Business Grants Northern Ireland](#) : few questions on your situation and then offer you green grants example.

Grants as example

Up to 50% of eligible project costs for enterprises to strengthen their competitiveness, and grow in a way that is compatible with sustainable development. **Programme UK49**

£1,000 and upwards for businesses to help effectively reduce or eliminate carbon emissions, save energy and commercialise low carbon technologies. **Programme UK34**

Information from [Nurture Lakeland website](#)

Carbon Trust Energy Efficiency Financing Scheme

The Carbon Trust and Siemens Financial Services have joined forces to launch the Energy Efficiency Financing Scheme. The scheme is designed to provide flexible financing options to all types of organisations seeking to lower their energy costs and make their operations more efficient.

Funder: Carbon Trust and Siemens

For more information please [click here](#)

Date posted: 28.04.2012

100 per cent ECAs (FYAs) for water-efficient investments

Businesses can claim 100 per cent FYAs on their investment in designated water-efficient plant and machinery. The qualifying technologies and products are specified in the [Water Technology List](#).

Get accredited and become a charter partner

Applying for one of the Green Credential schemes that are available can help give your business a market advantage and the advantages of being part of a network. Customers are increasingly looking out for businesses that are operating in an environmentally responsible manner.

[Green Tourism Business Scheme](#)

What is the process for joining the scheme?

Once you have expressed an interest in joining the scheme you will receive the scheme criteria documents and other information in an Application / Information pack.

(if you prefer you can ask CCGHT to get the information)

You then complete the enclosed Application form and return it to the GTBS office who will invoice you for your membership fees (£70 for the joining fees and from £100 for the annual fees).

A GTBS grading advisor will make an appointment with you and come to your business to assess you against the criteria.

If you have implemented enough measures you will be awarded either a BRONZE, SILVER or GOLD award.

You will receive a plaque, full report and certificate, and relevant advice and information on new technologies, case studies, financial support etc.

I don't know if I am doing enough to get BRONZE – how can I make sure?

Look through the criteria. If you are doing at least three measures in each section and a minimum of 5 measures in total you are likely to be doing enough for BRONZE

If you want to achieve GOLD you should aim for 5-8 measures in each section with a minimum of 60 measures in total but the more measures you have in place the better.

[EU Charter Part II](#)

The Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust achieved the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas in 2011.

The European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas is an award to protect areas that have demonstrated partnership working, developed and implemented a tourism strategy based on the area's special qualities, as well as following a resourced work plan to address sustainability issues.

The Charter approach ensures that organisations, local people and businesses are working together to protect the area, whilst at the same time increasing opportunities for visitors to discover and enjoy its special qualities.

CCGHT is implementing the EU Charter Part II the aim of which is to strengthen links and deepen understanding between protected-area managers and their partners in the business community in and around the area. Through Part II local businesses will be able to gain recognition as **European Charter Businesses**.

At the moment in order to qualify for certification as a European Charter Partner a business will:

Achieve an accreditation scheme: GTBS or STEP

Participate in the sustainable tourism forum

Have relevant quality accreditation

Carry out an environmental strategy and an improvement action plan

What will you get from it?

Marketing advantages on CCGHT website (ccr alive)

Training and event (organise by the forum and the sustainable officer)

Networking and advice from other businesses! (talk with other businesses and develop common and unique product, improve visitor experience)

Useful website

[Nurture Lakeland](#) lots of advices for tourism businesses

[Better Tourism](#) you can create online your action plan, green policy, visitor charter

[Place of sense](#) from Forest of Bowland ... try to provide the same information for your area