

CLIMATE ACTION
FOCUS AREAS



ECOTOURISM
POLICY



VISITOR
ENGAGEMENT



CARBON NEUTRAL
HOLIDAY

CASE STUDY

CLIFDEN ECO BEACH

ABOUT US

Clifden Eco Beach Camping and Caravanning Park is nestled in the sand dunes along Connemara's Wild Atlantic Way coastline, and provides a semi-wild, eco camping adventure to guests. In 2013, it became Ireland's first eco certified carbon neutral accommodation provider. The business is a gold-certified member of Sustainable Travel Ireland and is carbon-neutral certified by South Pole Global.

“ We wanted to engage with eco-conscious travellers and, from the outset, our aim was to be able to offer them the opportunity of a carbon neutral holiday in a place of exceptional natural beauty. ”

Tatjana and Kris Acton, Clifden Eco Beach
Camping and Carvanning Park



Providing eco holidays

GETTING STARTED

"This land was the first registered organic farm in Connemara. It's a registered geo-site and is also a Natura 2000¹ site. Ecotourism was really the only way forward for us. We wanted to engage with conscious travellers and, from the outset, our aim was to be

able to offer them the opportunity of a carbon neutral holiday in a place of exceptional natural beauty."

Tatjana and Kris Acton, Clifden Eco Beach Camping and Caravanning Park



CLIFDEN ECO BEACH AND CARAVANNING PARK, CO GALWAY

In other areas...

As it is a seasonal park, central heating is not provided. A 96% efficiency oil burner is used to heat water.



However, it is an objective of the ecobeach to decommission this system and replace with an alternative AAA rated heat pump and PV array. Hot water is managed by offering water at a minimum but effective temperature through the use of eco programmes and a thermostatic mixing valve. Water is sourced from under the dunes and is naturally filtered through the sand before arriving at the pump station where it is treated through ion exchange, particle filtration and UV sterilization. The water provided at the park is free of chlorine and THMs (trihalomethanes). To control consumption, guests are informed of water conservation, push buttons are installed at sinks and in showers with timed metering and toilets are low consumption with dual flush buttons. Adjustable flow rate valves to regulate the amount of water used have been installed at different outlets.



CLIFDEN ECO BEACH AND CARAVANNING PARK, CO GALWAY

ECOTOURISM POLICY

The business has a comprehensive Ecotourism Policy which is detailed on their website [Ecotourism Policy – Clifden Eco Beach](#). It covers eight main areas:

- 1 Environmentally Sustainable Practices (energy, water, waste, transport, wastewater treatment)

- 2 Natural Area Focus
- 3 Interpretation and Education
- 4 Contributing to Conservation
- 5 Benefitting Local Communities
- 6 Visitor Satisfaction
- 7 Responsible Marketing
- 8 Cultural Respect and Awareness



ENGAGING VISITORS

As well as working behind-the-scenes, Kris and Tatjana actively and intentionally engage visitors in their ecotourism practices.

- ✓ guests are advised of their 'no single use plastic' policy (in place since 2014) in advance, and are requested to bring water in sustainable, re-usable containers only

- ✓ sustainable travel is encouraged through providing advance transport information as well as offering pick-up and drop-off via electric vehicle at the local bus station and local towns
- ✓ each guest receives a site tour on arrival where they learn how they can help protect

- the area e.g. through proper waste separation and use of equipment
- ✓ guests are encouraged to engage with nature through taking part in beach clean-up and beach maintenance, helping the business to fulfil its commitment to maintaining 1.5km of coastline



CLIFDEN ECO BEACH AND CARAVANNING PARK, CO GALWAY

¹ Natura 2000 is a network of protected areas covering Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats.



A CARBON NEUTRAL HOLIDAY

The policy of the business is to reduce its emissions as much as possible and as funds allow, and then to offset any emissions which cannot be tackled in any other way. Working with South Pole Global, a leading provider of voluntary data offsetting measures, data from meters and invoices is used to calculate overall

carbon emissions per year. The business then buys the equivalent carbon quota to support the Kariba forest protection project in Zimbabwe. Guests also have the option to offset their own travel to and from the site and, in this way, the visitor has the opportunity of a fully carbon neutral holiday on a protected nature site.



SKY ROAD, CLIFDEN,
CO GALWAY



CLIFDEN ECO BEACH
AND CARAVANNING
PARK, CO GALWAY

Top Tip

"For us, working through an independent certification process encouraged us to do things we had been thinking about but might have been a little nervous to act on. We avail of the training for members which ensures we can keep upskilling ourselves. The ongoing auditing process means all our claims are independently verified. We believe that an independently verified certification is essential if you want to be taken seriously by the international eco visitor."

Tatjana and Kris Acton,
Clifden EcoBeach Camping
and Caravanning Park

About climate action

This case study is part of Fáilte Ireland's suite of climate action business supports, helping tourism and hospitality businesses on their climate action journey.

Find out more at [Climate action \(Failteireland.ie\)](https://www.climateaction.ie)