



GREEN TOURISM CERTIFIED

Certification Criteria

Self Catering

Applicable business sectors

Self-catering properties not covered under the Holiday Parks or Micro Holiday Parks scopes

September 2026

31 criteria across 10 modules

Criteria at a Glance

The criteria below apply to businesses certified under the Self Catering scope. Each criterion sets out its intent, the compliance requirements, the indicators an auditor will look for, and how verification and non-conformities are assessed.

Module	Criteria
Module 1: Travel & Transport Sustainable Travel & Transport	TT1 Promotion and Facilitation of Sustainable Public Transport TT2 Sustainable Business and Staff Travel Management TT3 Electric and Low-Emission Vehicle Support
Module 2: Energy & Water Energy & Water Management	EW1 Building, Systems and Thermal Energy Performance EW2 Swimming Pools and Spas Energy Efficiency EW3 Water Conservation and Efficiency EW4 Water Quality and Wastewater Control EW5 Hand Soap and Customer Toiletries EW6 Renewable-Energy Integration and Low-Carbon Transition
Module 3: Waste Materials & Waste Management	WA1 Single-Use Elimination WA3 Application of the Waste Hierarchy: Avoid, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle
Module 4: Nature Biodiversity	NA1 Native Planting and Landscape Management NA2 Habitat Creation and Wildlife Protection
Module 5: Wellbeing Equality, Training & Wellbeing	WB3 Accessibility Information and Customer Experience
Module 6: Community Community & Charitable Engagement	CM1 Support for Local Social Projects CM2 Participation in Community Environmental Projects
Module 7: Visitor Experience Destination, Culture & Visitor Experience	VE1 Cultural Heritage and Destination Identity VE2 Promotion and Support of Local Events and Festivals VE3 Authentic and Local Experiences VE4 Sustainable Tours and Activity Operations
Module 8: Policy & Communication Policy, Communication & Stakeholder Engagement	PC1 Sustainability Policy and Public Statement Commitment PC2 Transparent Communication of Sustainability Performance PC3 Customer Feedback and Stakeholder Engagement
Module 9: Monitoring Resource, Waste & Carbon Monitoring	MO1 Monitoring of Energy Use MO2 Monitoring of Water Consumption MO3 Monitoring and Management of Waste Streams MO4 Monitoring of Carbon Emissions MO5 Carbon Management and Reduction Planning
Module 10: Operations Procurement & Operations Management	OP1 Green Action Plan Implementation and Monitoring OP3 Preventive Maintenance and Specialist Technical Advice OP5 Cleaning, Laundry and Low-Impact Chemical Systems

Module 1: Travel & Transport

Sustainable Travel & Transport

TT1 Promotion and Facilitation of Sustainable Public Transport

Criterion Intent	The organisation shall actively promote the use of public transport options to and within its destination. Information provided to customers shall be accurate, accessible, and designed to reduce dependence on private vehicles. The organisation shall support sustainable mobility as part of its contribution to local environmental quality and community well-being.
Compliance Requirements	TT1/1 Provide clear, current public transport information (routes, schedules, ticketing, connections) across website, booking materials and on-site points. TT1/2 Collaborate with local transport providers/tourism offices to ensure accuracy and promote integrated or shared ticketing. TT1/3 Actively encourage customer use of public transport through communication, staff training or incentives, and review/update information at least annually.
Indicators	• Up-to-date transport information available across multiple communication channels. • Partnership evidence with local or regional transport operators. • Customer or staff incentives supporting public transport use. • Customer feedback confirming awareness and usage of sustainable travel options. • Records of annual review or update of public transport content.
Verification & Non-Conformity	Verification shall include inspection of online and physical communication materials, evidence of collaboration with transport operators, and staff interviews. A minor non-conformity is raised when public transport information exists but is incomplete or outdated. A major non-conformity is raised when transport information is inaccurate or unavailable to customers. A critical non-conformity is raised when the organisation provides misleading information or discourages public transport use.

TT2 Sustainable Business and Staff Travel Management

Criterion Intent	The organisation shall manage and monitor business-related and staff travel to minimise environmental impact, reduce emissions, and promote cost efficiency. Policies and systems shall prioritise low-carbon travel options and encourage behavioural change among staff and management.
Compliance Requirements	TT2/1 Maintain a business travel policy and log all business trips (transport mode, distance, purpose). TT2/2 Promote alternatives to travel and low-carbon options (video-conferencing, car-sharing, cycle-to-work, transport passes) for business journeys and staff commuting. TT2/3 Conduct annual analysis of travel-related carbon emissions and set progressive reduction targets.

Indicators	• Approved business and staff travel policy available and implemented. • Recorded travel data maintained and reviewed annually. • Evidence of participation in sustainable mobility or car-sharing initiatives. • Annual travel emissions summary and reduction targets documented. • Communication materials promoting sustainable commuting to staff.
Verification & Non-Conformity	Verification shall include review of the travel policy, journey logs, emission data, and internal communications. Interviews with management and staff shall confirm awareness and participation. A minor non-conformity is raised when travel is monitored but data are not analysed. A major non-conformity is raised when no policy or monitoring system is in place. A critical non-conformity is raised when staff travel creates measurable environmental harm without mitigation or control.

TT3 Electric and Low-Emission Vehicle Support

Criterion Intent	The organisation shall actively promote and support the use of electric, hybrid, and other low-emission vehicles by customers, staff, and suppliers. Where possible, it shall provide infrastructure or partnerships to facilitate access to electric charging and clean mobility solutions.
Compliance Requirements	TT3/1 Provide information on nearby EV charging or install on-site chargers where feasible. TT3/2 Give preference to low- or zero-emission vehicles in the organisation's own fleet or transport contracts. TT3/3 Encourage staff and suppliers to use electric or hybrid vehicles through incentive schemes or operational policies.
Indicators	• Presence or promotion of EV charging facilities. • Procurement or lease contracts specifying low-emission vehicles. • Evidence of supplier or staff engagement in clean mobility programmes. • Maintenance and inspection records for charging infrastructure. • Communication and customer feedback referencing EV accessibility.
Verification & Non-Conformity	Verification shall include inspection of EV facilities, review of procurement records, and interviews with relevant staff. A minor non-conformity is raised when information about EV availability exists but onsite infrastructure is unmaintained or unclear. A major non-conformity is raised when commitments to EV or low-emission mobility are stated but unsupported by evidence. A critical non-conformity is raised when the organisation obstructs or misrepresents clean mobility options.

Module 2: Energy & Water

Energy & Water Management

EW1 Building, Systems and Thermal Energy Performance

Criterion Intent	The organisation shall ensure that building fabric, lighting, heating, and hot-water systems are designed, operated, and maintained to achieve high levels of thermal and energy performance. This shall minimise energy loss, optimise system efficiency, and ensure safe and comfortable conditions while reducing operational costs and energy demand.
Compliance Requirements	EW1/1 Lighting, heating and hot-water systems shall use energy-efficient technologies with functional, zonal, sensor-based or time controls appropriate to their use. EW1/2 Building fabric, pipework and thermal storage shall be adequately insulated and maintained, with heating/hot-water systems operating within optimised, compliant temperature ranges. EW1/3 Documented evidence shall demonstrate recent maintenance, efficiency checks or performance improvements.
Indicators	• Lighting and plant inventories showing efficient technologies in use. • Evidence of insulation in building fabric, pipework, and storage vessels. • Operational controls (timers, thermostats, sensors) observed or documented. • Maintenance or service records confirming efficiency and safety checks.
Verification & Non-Conformity	Verification shall include on-site inspection of building fabric, plant rooms, lighting systems, and controls, supported by review of maintenance and efficiency documentation. A minor non-conformity arises where systems are efficient but controls or records are incomplete. A major non-conformity arises where inefficiencies or heat losses are evident and unmanaged. A critical non-conformity arises where system deficiencies cause excessive energy loss, safety risks, or regulatory non-compliance.

EW2 Swimming Pools and Spas Energy Efficiency

Only applicable to businesses that have these facilities

Criterion Intent	Where swimming pools, spas, saunas, or similar facilities exist, the organisation shall ensure they are operated with optimal energy efficiency through temperature control, heat recovery, and operational discipline.
Compliance Requirements	EW2/1 Pool-water temperature shall not exceed 1°C above ambient air temperature, and pool covers shall be used whenever the facility is not in operation. EW2/2 Sauna and steam equipment shall use timers or automated controls to limit operating hours. EW2/3 Heat-recovery or renewable-energy systems shall be installed where feasible. EW2/4 Staff shall be trained on energy-efficient operation of pool and spa equipment.

Indicators	- Recorded temperature logs demonstrating control compliance. - Existence and condition of pool covers. - Evidence of timers or sensors on heating systems. - Training records on pool-energy efficiency.
Verification & Non-Conformity	Verification shall include inspection of temperature-control systems, observation of operational practices, and review of energy-use data specific to pools and spas. A minor non-conformity arises if operational controls exist but are inconsistently applied. A major non-conformity arises where equipment runs continuously or inefficiently. A critical non-conformity arises if no efficiency measures or controls are implemented despite high-energy usage.

EW3 Water Conservation and Efficiency

Criterion Intent	The organisation shall implement effective measures to conserve water through efficient equipment, staff awareness, and operational practices that reduce unnecessary consumption while maintaining service quality.
Compliance Requirements	EW3/1 Water-efficient fixtures (dual-flush toilets, aerators, low-flow taps) shall be installed and regularly inspected to ensure they remain functional. EW3/2 Procedures shall prevent water waste during housekeeping, cleaning and maintenance, supported by staff guidance on water-saving practices. EW3/3 Customers shall be informed and encouraged to participate in water-saving initiatives.
Indicators	- Inventory of water-efficient fixtures and fittings. - Staff training materials and evidence of implementation. - Customer communication materials (e.g. signage, digital information). - Inspection or maintenance records verifying system functionality.
Verification & Non-Conformity	Verification shall include visual inspection of equipment, review of purchase and maintenance records, and confirmation of communication materials. A minor non-conformity arises when conservation measures are implemented but not monitored. A major non-conformity arises when equipment or behavioural measures are largely absent. A critical non-conformity arises when excessive water use is evident with no mitigation or action plan in place.

EW4 Water Quality and Wastewater Control

Criterion Intent	The organisation shall ensure that all wastewater and drainage systems operate effectively and do not cause environmental harm. Appropriate controls shall prevent discharge of fats, oils, plastics, or harmful substances into wastewater systems.
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Compliance Requirements	EW4/1 Wastewater shall be discharged only to approved, compliant systems, with oils, fats and hazardous liquids collected and managed by authorised contractors. EW4/2 Systems and procedures shall prevent disposal of harmful materials via toilets, sinks or drains, supported by staff/customer information discouraging inappropriate disposal. EW4/3 Drainage systems and treatment equipment shall be regularly inspected to ensure functionality.
Indicators	• Grease traps and filtration systems in place and maintained. • Documentation of licensed waste and effluent contractors. • Signage or internal communication discouraging harmful disposal. • Records of periodic inspection or cleaning of drainage systems.
Verification & Non-Conformity	Verification shall include inspection of wastewater discharge points, review of contractor documentation, and interviews with staff. A minor non-conformity arises where systems exist but inspection records are incomplete. A major non-conformity arises where inappropriate disposal practices occur or controls are insufficient. A critical non-conformity arises if wastewater discharge causes environmental harm or breaches regulatory requirements.

EW5 Hand Soap and Customer Toiletries

Criterion Intent	The organisation shall procure and provide hand soaps and customer-toiletry products that minimise environmental impact, protect human health, and comply with the latest European and UK restrictions on chemical ingredients. Products shall be free from parabens, intentionally added microplastics, and other restricted synthetic additives, while prioritising natural or organic formulations and responsible sourcing. Packaging shall favour refillable, recyclable, or compostable solutions to support a circular approach to amenities management.
Compliance Requirements	EW5/1 All hand-soap and toiletry formulations shall be verified as free from intentionally added microplastics in accordance with EU and UK REACH restrictions. EW5/2 Products shall be paraben-free, avoid unnecessary synthetic fragrances/colourants, and any palm-oil derivatives shall be RSPO-certified or demonstrably sustainable. EW5/3 Customer amenities shall employ refillable or bulk-dispensing systems wherever compatible with hygiene requirements.
Indicators	• Ingredient or safety-data documentation confirming products contain no intentionally added microplastics (e.g. polyethylene, PTFE, PMMA, nylon, or similar). • Supplier declarations or laboratory verification supporting compliance with REACH (EU and UK). • Procurement records evidencing selection of organic, paraben-free, RSPO-certified products. • Installed refillable-dispenser systems in customer rooms and public area/customer-facing areas • Internal review or supplier-audit reports verifying ingredient compliance and continual improvement.

Verification & Non-Conformity	Verification shall include inspection of customer amenities, review of supplier ingredient lists and compliance declarations, and confirmation of refillable or bulk-dispensing systems. A minor non-conformity arises when product compliance statements are outdated or missing for limited items. A major non-conformity arises when microplastic-containing or non-sustainable products remain in use without an approved substitution plan. A critical non-conformity arises when prohibited microplastic ingredients (as defined under REACH 2023/2055 or UK REACH) are present in current product lines or when suppliers fail to disclose ingredient composition.
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EW6 Renewable-Energy Integration and Low-Carbon Transition

Criterion Intent	The organisation shall progressively transition its energy supply towards renewable or verified low-carbon sources, maximising on-site generation and certified green procurement. This transition shall form part of the Carbon Management Plan and be demonstrable through metering, supplier certification, contractual documentation, and financial performance assessment, enabling transparent evaluation of environmental benefit and economic return.
Compliance Requirements	EW6/1 At least 50% of energy consumed shall originate from renewable sources by 2030 (or equivalent target), with on-site renewable systems installed where feasible. EW6/2 Energy-supply contracts shall specify renewable tariffs and guarantees of origin. EW6/3 Maintenance/performance records and periodic investment feasibility reviews shall demonstrate sustained output and support ROI/business-case decisions.
Indicators	• Energy-supply contracts confirming renewable tariffs and certification. • On-site generation data, inverter logs, and performance records. • CAPEX and OPEX documentation supporting ROI and payback calculations. • Annual reporting summarising energy mix, financial performance, and risk reduction.
Verification & Non-Conformity	Verification shall include examination of energy contracts, renewable-system inspections, generation data, and financial records supporting investment decisions. A minor non-conformity arises where renewable sourcing exists, but performance or financial verification is incomplete. A major non-conformity arises where renewable commitments lack contractual, metering, or financial evidence. A critical non-conformity arises where fossil-fuel dependency increases contrary to declared carbon-reduction and energy-security objectives.

Module 3: Waste

Materials & Waste Management

WA1 Single-Use Elimination

Criterion Intent	The organisation shall implement an integrated approach to waste reduction that combines elimination of single-use items with behavioural controls for staff and customers. This approach shall reduce waste generation at source, support circular-economy objectives, and prevent reliance on disposal-based solutions through active engagement, procurement controls, and measurable performance outcomes.
Compliance Requirements	WA1/1 An inventory shall identify single-use items and key waste-generating behaviours, with reusable/refillable/recyclable alternatives and procurement controls restricting unnecessary packaging. WA1/2 Staff and customers shall receive clear guidance on waste-reduction practices, correct disposal and participation expectations. WA1/3 Waste-reduction outcomes shall be monitored annually, including volume reduction and cost/efficiency benefits.
Indicators	• Documented inventory of single-use items and replacement actions. • Procurement policies or contracts addressing packaging and reusability. • Training records and visible customer-facing waste-reduction communications. • Waste data or financial records demonstrating reduction outcomes.
Verification & Non-Conformity	Verification shall include review of procurement records, staff training evidence, waste data, and on-site observation of operational and customer-facing areas. A minor non-conformity arises where initiatives exist but lack measurable outcomes. A major non-conformity arises where single-use reliance persists without control or engagement. A critical non-conformity arises where waste practices contradict stated sustainability commitments or create operational risk.

WA3 Application of the Waste Hierarchy: Avoid, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Criterion Intent	The organisation shall demonstrate active implementation of the waste-hierarchy principle — prioritising avoidance, reduction, reuse, and recycling before any disposal. Waste prevention shall be embedded in procurement, operational planning, and staff practices to minimise environmental impact and cost. The approach shall combine quantitative targets (tonnes reduced or recycled) with qualitative initiatives that drive behavioural change and continuous improvement.
Compliance Requirements	WA3/1 Procurement procedures shall prioritise reusable or recyclable materials and minimise unnecessary packaging. WA3/2 Departments shall maintain procedures for reusing internal materials, with recyclable waste sorted at source into clearly labelled, consistent containers. WA3/3 Staff shall receive periodic training on waste-hierarchy principles and segregation protocols. WA3/4 Waste-reduction achievements and key metrics shall be communicated internally at least annually.

Indicators	• Documented procurement policy reflecting waste-hierarchy priorities. • Visual confirmation of effective segregation systems in operational areas. • Records of staff training attendance and materials used. • Quantified evidence of waste-reduction progress compared with baseline year.
Verification & Non-Conformity	Verification shall include site inspections, interviews with staff, and review of procurement documentation. A minor non-conformity arises where hierarchy principles are applied inconsistently or only partially documented. A major non-conformity arises where recyclable materials are disposed of as general waste. A critical non-conformity arises where no separation or policy exists, or waste management causes environmental harm.

Module 4: Nature

Biodiversity

NA1 Native Planting and Landscape Management

Only applicable if the business has grounds

Criterion Intent	The organisation shall enhance and protect biodiversity through native planting, landscape design, and maintenance practices that restore ecological balance and support pollinators, wildlife, and local flora. Landscaping decisions shall prioritise indigenous species, reduce chemical dependency, and integrate nature-based solutions into the built environment.
Compliance Requirements	NA1/1 A landscaping/biodiversity plan shall identify native species and suitable habitats for local conditions. NA1/2 Maintenance shall be scheduled to support biodiversity cycles, with chemical pesticides, herbicides and fertilisers minimised or replaced with safe alternatives. NA1/3 Unused or underdeveloped areas shall be evaluated for rewilding, pollinator planting or ecological enhancement. NA1/4 The organisation shall collaborate with local biodiversity/community groups to monitor and report ecological improvement.
Indicators	• Documented biodiversity or landscaping plan available. • Records of native species planted and maintained. • Evidence of reduced chemical use and sustainable maintenance. • Photos or monitoring reports demonstrating habitat development. • Staff or community engagement in biodiversity initiatives.
Verification & Non-Conformity	Verification shall include review of planting plans, chemical usage logs, and site inspections. A minor non-conformity is raised when planting supports biodiversity but lacks documentation. A major non-conformity is raised when non-native or invasive species are introduced. A critical non-conformity is raised when practices cause significant ecological damage or pollution.

NA2 Habitat Creation and Wildlife Protection

Only applicable if the business has grounds

Criterion Intent	The organisation shall create, protect, and maintain habitats that support native fauna and flora, ensuring safe refuges for wildlife and minimising disturbance to natural ecosystems. Measures shall align with local conservation priorities and contribute to ecological connectivity across the property and its surroundings.
Compliance Requirements	NA2/1 Wildlife-friendly features (nesting boxes, bee hotels, log piles, ponds) shall be established where space allows. NA2/2 Lighting systems shall be managed to avoid disturbance to nocturnal species. NA2/3 Construction, maintenance and landscaping works shall include biodiversity risk assessments. NA2/4 A no-harm policy for wildlife shall be implemented, avoiding feeding or habitat interference.

Indicators	• Inventory of installed wildlife-supporting features. • Lighting and construction guidelines referencing biodiversity protection. • Monitoring reports or wildlife observation logs. • Training or awareness materials for staff on biodiversity protection. • Partnerships or collaboration with conservation or wildlife NGOs.
Verification & Non-Conformity	Verification shall include review of habitat inventories, photographs, and risk assessments. A minor non-conformity is raised when wildlife features exist but are unmonitored. A major non-conformity is raised when maintenance or construction activities cause habitat loss. A critical non-conformity is raised when wildlife is harmed through negligence or unapproved intervention.

Module 5: Wellbeing

Equality, Training & Wellbeing

WB3 Accessibility Information and Customer Experience

Criterion Intent	The organisation shall ensure that accessibility information is available, accurate, and up to date, enabling customers with diverse needs to make informed decisions and access facilities safely and comfortably.
Compliance Requirements	WB3/1 A clear Accessibility Guide (physical access, adapted rooms, parking, restrooms, assistance) shall be prepared, available online and at reception, and regularly updated. WB3/2 Staff shall be trained to assist customers with disabilities respectfully and appropriately. WB3/3 Feedback from customers with access requirements shall be reviewed and acted upon.
Indicators	• Accessibility Guide available online and on-site. • Training records on accessibility awareness. • Customer feedback logs specific to accessibility. • Documentation of updates or improvements to accessible facilities.
Verification & Non-Conformity	Verification includes review of the Accessibility Guide, staff interviews, and customer feedback records. A minor non-conformity arises where information exists but is outdated or incomplete. A major non-conformity arises where accessibility is claimed but not supported by infrastructure or staff readiness. A critical non-conformity arises where accessibility needs are ignored, leading to discrimination or safety risks.

Module 6: Community

Community & Charitable Engagement

CM1 Support for Local Social Projects

Criterion Intent	The organisation shall actively participate in or support social projects that benefit the local community and contribute to social cohesion, education, or cultural development.
Compliance Requirements	CM1/1 Community needs or social causes relevant to the local context shall be identified, with support provided through financial contributions, volunteering, in-kind donations or resources, conducted ethically and transparently. CM1/2 Documentation of community projects shall be maintained, including beneficiaries, frequency and impact achieved. CM1/3 Staff involvement in community initiatives shall be encouraged and recognised internally.
Indicators	- Records of contributions, sponsorships, or volunteer initiatives. - Evidence of ongoing partnerships with local organisations or schools. - Documented examples of community projects and their social outcomes. - Communication materials highlighting local engagement.
Verification & Non-Conformity	Verification includes reviewing community project records, photographs, partnership documentation, and conducting staff interviews. A minor non-conformity arises where community engagement is irregular or undocumented. A major non-conformity arises where community participation is claimed but unsupported by evidence. A critical non-conformity arises where community relationships are damaged or where activities cause reputational or social harm.

CM2 Participation in Community Environmental Projects

Criterion Intent	The organisation shall participate in or support community-led environmental initiatives that improve the local environment, enhance biodiversity, or raise awareness of sustainability issues.
Compliance Requirements	CM2/1 The organisation shall identify and support at least one local or regional environmental project annually. CM2/2 Participation shall be documented, including the nature of the contribution and measurable outcomes. CM2/3 The organisation shall promote these actions to customers and encourage participation or awareness. CM2/4 Environmental support activities shall align with the sustainability policy and respect local environmental regulations.
Indicators	- Documented evidence of participation in local or national environmental campaigns. - Photographic or written reports demonstrating involvement and results. - Customer or staff participation records. - Communication demonstrating transparency of the businesses local environmental contribution.

Verification & Non-Conformity	Verification includes inspection of campaign documentation, communication materials, and project reports. A minor non-conformity arises where participation is claimed but not regularly maintained. A major non-conformity arises where environmental actions are isolated or lack measurable results. A critical non-conformity arises where the hotel contributes to local environmental degradation or misrepresents its contribution.
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Module 7: Visitor Experience

Destination, Culture & Visitor Experience

VE1 Cultural Heritage and Destination Identity

Criterion Intent	The organisation shall promote, respect, and protect the cultural heritage and identity of its destination, ensuring customers experience authentic engagement with local culture. Interpretation materials, events, and partnerships shall be factually accurate, inclusive, and respectful, supporting the conservation of tangible and intangible cultural assets.
Compliance Requirements	VE1/1 Accurate, verifiable information on local history, traditions and cultural sites shall be provided, with any use of local imagery, names or heritage themes in branding conducted with permission and acknowledgment. VE1/2 Partnerships shall exist with recognised cultural institutions or community bodies, and staff shall be trained to communicate cultural awareness accurately. VE1/3 Information provided to customers shall encourage respectful visitation and support the economic and social value of heritage assets.
Indicators	• Culturally themed materials are accurate, inclusive, and properly sourced. • Partnerships or collaborations with local heritage bodies are documented. • Cultural messages appear consistently across customer communications and marketing. • Staff demonstrate awareness of cultural sensitivity principles.
Verification & Non-Conformity	Verification shall include inspection of promotional materials, partnership evidence, and staff interviews. Observations shall confirm that heritage content is accurate, culturally appropriate, and acknowledged. A minor non-conformity is raised when information exists but lacks verification or cultural review. A major non-conformity is raised when local heritage is referenced without consultation or attribution. A critical non-conformity is raised when the organisation misrepresents, exploits, or damages cultural identity.

VE2 Promotion and Support of Local Events and Festivals

Criterion Intent	The organisation shall actively promote, participate in, or support local events and festivals that contribute to the cultural, social, or environmental sustainability of the destination. Event promotion shall prioritise inclusivity, authenticity, and community benefit.
Compliance Requirements	VE2/1 An updated calendar of relevant local events and festivals shall be maintained and communicated to customers through digital and physical channels. VE2/2 Partnerships shall exist with event organisers or local tourism bodies, and any hosted/sponsored events shall integrate environmental good practice and local supplier participation. VE2/3 The organisation shall periodically evaluate the relevance and community benefit of the events it promotes or supports.

Indicators	• Calendar of local events displayed and maintained. • Collaboration agreements with event organisers available. • Evidence of environmental or social initiatives linked to events. • Customer information channels display verified event details.
Verification & Non-Conformity	Verification shall include review of event promotion materials, online listings, and participation evidence. Interviews shall confirm staff awareness of event partnerships. A minor non-conformity is raised when event information exists but lacks annual review. A major non-conformity is raised when events are promoted without verification or consultation. A critical non-conformity is raised when no local engagement or event promotion is demonstrated.

VE3 Authentic and Local Experiences

Criterion Intent	The organisation shall facilitate customer access to authentic, locally rooted experiences that reflect the social, cultural, and environmental characteristics of the destination while demonstrably contributing to local economic value creation. Experiences and itineraries shall be designed and promoted in a way that supports local livelihoods, sustains small businesses and independent operators, and enhances customers' understanding of place identity, heritage, and community context.
Compliance Requirements	VE3/1 The organisation shall identify and promote local experiences, attractions and cultural activities delivered by local or locally based operators. VE3/2 Itineraries, maps or digital guides shall prioritise experiences that encourage customer spending within the local economy. VE3/3 Partnerships shall exist with local guides, artisans, producers or service providers to ensure fair compensation and sustained local economic participation. VE3/4 Customer feedback and, where feasible, partner input shall be collected and reviewed to evaluate quality, authenticity and local value.
Indicators	• Verified database of authentic local experiences delivered by local or locally based providers. • Published itineraries or guides demonstrating inclusion of independent or community-linked experiences. • Evidence of partnerships, agreements, or recurring collaboration with local operators. • Records of customer participation and satisfaction feedback referencing authenticity or local engagement. • Documented evidence that promoted experiences contribute to local economic and/or social value.

Verification & Non-Conformity	Verification shall include review of experience listings, partner credentials, promotional content, and evidence of local collaboration. Interviews with staff or partners may be conducted to confirm authenticity and economic linkage. A minor non-conformity is raised where experiences are promoted without documented verification of authenticity or local linkage. A major non-conformity is raised where experiences provide no demonstrable local economic or community benefit or misrepresent local culture. A critical non-conformity is raised where experiences cause harm to the local community, culture, or environment through negligence, disregard or ignorance of local, national and international laws, regulations, approved codes of practice or similar.
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VE4 Sustainable Tours and Activity Operations

Only applicable if the business offers tours or activities

Criterion Intent	The organisation shall manage, and where applicable facilitate tours and activities that are environmentally responsible, and socially considerate. All tours or activities operated or delivered by the organisation shall be designed and managed to minimise environmental impacts, protect biodiversity and cultural heritage, support local communities, and deliver safe, educational, and high-quality customer experiences.
Compliance Requirements	VE4/1 Maintain an inventory of tours/activities with environmental and social impacts assessed and considered. VE4/2 Plan and manage tours/activities to minimise negative impacts on biodiversity, habitats, cultural sites and communities. VE4/3 Review performance through monitoring, staff input or customer feedback, and implement improvements where risks are identified.
Indicators	• Documented and publicly accessible information promoting low-carbon and sustainable tours or activities. • Maintained inventory of tours and activities with evidence of impact consideration. • Evidence of collaboration with responsible and licensed local operators. • Records demonstrating relevant training or briefing of staff, guides, or partners. • Documented review of feedback or performance with recorded improvement actions.
Verification & Non-Conformity	Verification shall include review of promotional materials, tour or activity inventories, impact assessments, partnership documentation, and feedback or review records. On-site observation of activity management practices may be conducted where applicable. A minor non-conformity is raised where sustainable activities are promoted but lack structured review or documented impact consideration. A major non-conformity is raised where tours or activities result in measurable environmental or social harm, or where management controls are absent. A critical non-conformity is raised where unsafe, environmentally damaging, or non-compliant activities are operated or delivered.

Module 8: Policy & Communication

Policy, Communication & Stakeholder Engagement

PC1 Sustainability Policy and Public Statement Commitment

Criterion Intent	The organisation shall maintain both a formally approved Sustainability Policy and a publicly available Sustainability Statement, each serving a distinct and complementary purpose. The Sustainability Policy shall function as a binding governance and management control instrument, defining mandatory commitments, accountability, and operational expectations. The Sustainability Statement shall function as a communication document, transparently explaining the organisation's sustainability intent, priorities, and approach to staff, customers, and external stakeholders. Together, these documents shall ensure effective sustainability governance, regulatory compliance, auditability, and credible external communication.
Compliance Requirements	PC1/1 The Sustainability Policy shall be an internal governance document, approved and signed by top management, communicated to staff, and made available to external stakeholders upon request. PC1/2 The Sustainability Statement shall be a separate, publicly available document, approved and signed by top management. PC1/3 The Statement shall accurately reflect the commitments defined in the Policy and shall not exceed or contradict them. PC1/4 Both documents shall be reviewed following significant operational, legal or organisational changes.
Indicators	• A formally approved and signed Sustainability Policy clearly identified as an internal governance document, and available at least upon request. • A separately titled Sustainability Statement publicly available via the website or customer-facing channels. • Consistency between the Sustainability Policy and the Sustainability Statement, with no contradictory or exaggerated claims. • Documented review dates or version control demonstrating periodic or trigger-based updates.
Verification & Non-Conformity	Verification shall include examination of the Sustainability Policy and Sustainability Statement, confirmation of top-management approval signatures, review of publication channels, and assessment of alignment between internal commitments and public claims. Interviews may be used to confirm staff awareness of the Policy and the purpose of the Statement. A minor non-conformity is raised where both documents exist but are not clearly differentiated, or where review dates are outdated. A major non-conformity is raised where either the Sustainability Policy or the Sustainability Statement is missing, unsigned by top management, or inconsistent with actual operational practice. A critical non-conformity is raised where public Sustainability Statements materially misrepresent commitments, substitute marketing claims for governance controls, or contradict documented policies or observed practices.

PC2 Transparent Communication of Sustainability Performance

Criterion Intent	The organisation shall communicate sustainability information in a transparent, factual, and evidence-based manner. All claims and achievements must be supported by verifiable data and be consistent with operational performance.
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Compliance Requirements	PC2/1 At least one formal sustainability communication (report, newsletter, digital media or web content) shall be produced. PC2/2 Communications shall distinguish verified data from aspirational targets, and marketing/promotional material shall accurately represent achievements without exaggeration. PC2/3 Internal communication mechanisms shall ensure employees are informed of sustainability objectives and results. PC2/4 Public communications shall include contact information for further enquiry or verification.
Indicators	• Annual sustainability report or equivalent communication produced. • Evidence of data traceability to measurable sources. • Alignment between operational data and external messages. • Internal communication records demonstrating regular updates to staff.
Verification & Non-Conformity	Verification shall include review of published materials, digital communication, and staff awareness. A minor non-conformity arises where information is outdated or not periodically updated. A major non-conformity arises where unverified or inconsistent claims are identified. A critical non-conformity arises when misleading or false sustainability claims are intentionally made (greenwashing).

PC3 Customer Feedback and Stakeholder Engagement

Criterion Intent	The organisation shall maintain effective systems for collecting, analysing, and responding to customer and stakeholder feedback relating to sustainability performance. Feedback shall inform continual improvement and influence management decisions.
Compliance Requirements	PC3/1 Feedback systems shall include sustainability-specific questions, be reviewed regularly, and inform improvement actions. PC3/2 The organisation shall acknowledge and respond to relevant sustainability feedback or complaints, with stakeholder engagement (staff, community, suppliers) documented where applicable. PC3/3 Evidence shall demonstrate that engagement outcomes contribute to measurable improvements.
Indicators	• Structured feedback mechanisms in operation (surveys, reviews, digital forms). • Records showing regular analysis of sustainability-related feedback. • Documented actions or decisions resulting from stakeholder input. • Evidence of communication back to stakeholders regarding implemented changes.
Verification & Non-Conformity	Verification shall include examination of feedback forms, records of stakeholder communication, and corresponding corrective actions. A minor non-conformity arises where sustainability feedback is collected but not analysed. A major non-conformity arises where no structured feedback process exists. A critical non-conformity arises where legitimate sustainability concerns are ignored or suppressed.

Module 9: Monitoring

Resource, Waste & Carbon Monitoring

MO1 Monitoring of Energy Use

Criterion Intent	The organisation shall implement a systematic approach for monitoring and analysing all energy consumption within its operations to enable demonstrable cost control, tariff optimisation, operational efficiency, and continuous reduction of environmental impact.
Compliance Requirements	MO1/1 Energy consumption shall be recorded at defined intervals and consolidated/compared against baselines or targets to identify cost trends, abnormal usage and tariff inefficiencies. MO1/2 Energy data shall be analysed to detect anomalies or losses, with performance and cost trends reviewed by management to inform operational, tariff or investment decisions. MO1/3 Identified energy-saving or tariff-optimisation opportunities shall be documented and prioritised based on potential savings and feasibility.
Indicators	• Metering data, utility bills, or monitoring system outputs showing regular tracking. • Baselines, targets, or benchmarks linked to cost and consumption. • Evidence of tariff review, optimisation, or supplier comparison. • Records of identified savings opportunities or implemented actions.
Verification & Non-Conformity	Verification shall include review of energy records, utility invoices, tariff information, and analysis outputs to confirm active cost and performance management. A minor non-conformity is raised where energy monitoring exists, but cost or tariff analysis is limited. A major non-conformity is raised where monitoring data are incomplete or not used for cost control or decision-making. A critical non-conformity is raised where energy data or cost information is falsified or unavailable for verification.

MO2 Monitoring of Water Consumption

Criterion Intent	The organisation shall monitor, record, and analyse water consumption across its operations to enable early leak detection, prevent unnecessary water and energy costs, and support efficient resource and cost management.
Compliance Requirements	MO2/1 Water consumption shall be recorded at intervals sufficient to identify abnormal usage, and compared against baselines to detect inefficiencies with cost implications. MO2/2 Identified anomalies or leaks shall be investigated promptly, with results and corrective actions reviewed by management. MO2/3 Water-reduction targets shall be documented and reviewed with reference to consumption and cost savings.
Indicators	• Meter readings, bills, or sub-meter data showing regular monitoring. • Baselines or benchmarks linked to expected water and cost performance. • Records of detected leaks, corrective actions, and avoided costs. • Management review notes referencing water-related cost control.

Verification & Non-Conformity	Verification shall include examination of water records, utility invoices, leak reports, and evidence of corrective actions taken to prevent unnecessary expenditure. A minor non-conformity is raised where monitoring exists, but leak-related cost impacts are not assessed. A major non-conformity is raised where monitoring is inconsistent or fails to trigger corrective action. A critical non-conformity is raised where water consumption is unmonitored, or data are unreliable or falsified.
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MO3 Monitoring and Management of Waste Streams

Criterion Intent	The organisation shall establish and maintain a structured system for monitoring and managing all waste streams produced within its operations. This system shall quantify the types and volumes of waste generated, ensure legal compliance in storage and disposal, and support continual reduction of total waste intensity per operational unit (e.g. per night or occupied room). The waste-monitoring process shall be integrated into the organisation's environmental management framework, linking recorded data to action plans, improvement targets, and disposal costs. Monitoring shall cover, as a minimum, general waste, recyclables, food, organic, hazardous, and contractor-managed waste.
Compliance Requirements	MO3/1 Waste volumes shall be recorded by stream and disposal route to enable cost control and identification of avoidable landfill or contamination charges. MO3/2 Only licensed waste contractors shall be used, with waste-monitoring results used to review bin sizing, collection frequency and contractor pricing. MO3/3 Management shall periodically review waste data to identify cost-saving and waste-reduction opportunities.
Indicators	• Waste records linked to invoices showing volumes, frequency, and cost per stream. • Evidence of contract review, renegotiation, or service adjustment based on waste data. • Licensed contractor documentation and disposal route confirmation. • Management review notes referencing cost optimisation or avoided penalties.
Verification & Non-Conformity	Verification shall include review of waste invoices, contractor agreements, monitoring records, and evidence of contract optimisation actions. A minor non-conformity is raised where waste is monitored but not used for contract or cost optimisation. A major non-conformity is raised where waste streams are not differentiated, leading to uncontrolled costs. A critical non-conformity is raised where unlicensed contractors are used or illegal disposal occurs.

MO4 Monitoring of Carbon Emissions

Criterion Intent	The organisation shall establish and maintain a structured system for measuring, recording, and analysing all direct and indirect carbon emissions arising from its operations. This shall include Scope 1 (fuel and onsite combustion), Scope 2 (electricity and purchased energy), and relevant Scope 3 (waste, water, travel, and procurement) categories. The organisation shall enable transparent reporting, year-on-year performance comparisons, and the assessment of financial exposure linked to greenhouse gas emissions. The monitoring process shall enable transparent reporting, performance benchmarking, and continuous reduction of total greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions.
Compliance Requirements	MO4/1 Carbon emissions shall be calculated using recognised emission factors, converting energy, fuel and activity data to CO₂-equivalent values. MO4/2 Baseline and annual carbon data shall be maintained to support performance benchmarking and long-term planning. MO4/3 Significant emission sources shall be identified and reviewed to prioritise cost-effective reduction opportunities. MO4/4 A documented procedure shall define how carbon data are collected, verified and used for reporting and risk assessment.
Indicators	- Carbon inventory covering Scope 1, Scope 2, and relevant Scope 3 emissions. - Documented emission factors and calculation methodology. - Year-on-year comparison demonstrating trend analysis. - Evidence of management review referencing financial or regulatory risk.
Verification & Non-Conformity	Verification shall include examination of source data, calculation methodology, emission factors, and reporting records. A minor non-conformity is raised where emissions are calculated but not benchmarked or reviewed. A major non-conformity is raised where significant emission sources are excluded or miscalculated. A critical non-conformity is raised where no carbon-monitoring system exists or data are unreliable.

MO5 Carbon Management and Reduction Planning

Criterion Intent	The organisation shall operate a documented Carbon Management Plan (CMP) defining measurable reduction targets, assigned responsibilities, and timelines consistent with national or corporate net-zero objectives. The CMP shall integrate energy, waste, transport, and procurement actions under a unified decarbonisation strategy, including investment prioritisation.
Compliance Requirements	MO5/1 A formal Carbon Management Plan shall specify baseline year, emission boundaries and reduction targets (% CO₂e), identifying specific measures to achieve them. MO5/2 Senior management shall review progress at least annually and allocate resources for implementation. MO5/3 Carbon-reduction achievements shall be reported transparently to stakeholders and staff. MO5/4 Offsetting measures, where used, shall complement but not replace direct reductions and must be verified to recognised standards.

Indicators	• Approved CMP signed by senior management. • Evidence of annual progress reports showing achieved reductions. • Meeting minutes demonstrating resource allocation and follow-up. • Records of verified offsets, if applicable.
Verification & Non-Conformity	Verification shall include examination of the CMP, associated data, and management-review records. A minor non-conformity arises when the CMP exists but lacks an annual review. A major non-conformity arises when no active plan or assigned responsibilities exist. A critical non-conformity arises when public claims of reduction are unsupported by evidence or contradict actual emissions.

Module 10: Operations

Procurement & Operations Management

OP1 Green Action Plan Implementation and Monitoring

Criterion Intent	The organisation shall maintain and implement a Green or Sustainability Action Plan that translates the policy into measurable targets, timelines, and responsibilities. The plan shall be a living document demonstrating accountability, progress tracking, and continual improvement.
Compliance Requirements	OP1/1 The Action Plan shall outline clear objectives for resource efficiency, carbon reduction, waste management and social engagement, with performance indicators and baseline comparisons. OP1/2 Responsibilities and timelines shall be assigned to specific team members or departments. OP1/3 Progress shall be reviewed quarterly and presented to management for follow-up. OP1/4 Evidence of improvements achieved and corrective actions implemented shall be maintained.
Indicators	- Updated Green Action Plan with measurable KPIs and named responsibilities. - Meeting records demonstrating quarterly review and management oversight. - Evidence of improvements (e.g., reduced energy, waste, or water use). - Documentation linking feedback and data analysis to action adjustments.
Verification & Non-Conformity	Verification shall include review of the action plan, performance metrics, and progress reports. A minor non-conformity arises where the plan exists but lacks review or assigned responsibilities. A major non-conformity arises where objectives are absent or results are not monitored. A critical non-conformity arises where no sustainability plan is established or maintained.

OP3 Preventive Maintenance and Specialist Technical Advice

Criterion Intent	The organisation shall maintain a documented preventive maintenance regime to ensure that all equipment and building systems operate safely, efficiently, and in compliance with environmental standards.
Compliance Requirements	OP3/1 A preventive maintenance schedule shall cover all major systems (heating, cooling, lighting, water, kitchen equipment), following manufacturer recommendations. OP3/2 Records shall demonstrate completion of planned maintenance, safety/efficiency checks and corrective actions. OP3/3 Results and recommendations from external specialists shall be integrated into improvement actions.
Indicators	- Maintenance records, service reports, and schedules available. - Documentation of periodic inspections and follow-up actions. - Evidence of implemented improvements based on expert advice.

Verification & Non-Conformity	Verification includes inspection of maintenance logs, contractor records, and documentation of professional assessments. A minor non-conformity arises where maintenance is conducted but not recorded or reviewed. A major non-conformity arises when maintenance is reactive-only or lacks preventive planning. A critical non-conformity arises where unsafe or unmaintained equipment poses operational or environmental risks.
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OP5 Cleaning, Laundry and Low-Impact Chemical Systems

Criterion Intent	The organisation shall ensure that all cleaning and laundry operations use low-impact chemical systems that minimise environmental pollution, prevent the release of microplastics and microfibres, protect staff and customers, and comply with applicable European and UK chemical-safety legislation. Cleaning and laundry processes shall be managed as a single controlled system, covering product selection, dosing, storage, wastewater protection, and supplier assurance, in order to reduce fragmentation, duplication, and chemical risk across operations.
Compliance Requirements	OP5/1 All cleaning and laundry chemicals shall be inventoried, labelled and supported by current Safety Data Sheets and supplier declarations, confirming compliance with EU/UK REACH restrictions on microplastics. OP5/2 Only eco-certified, biodegradable, phosphate-free, chlorine-free and microplastic-free products shall be used. OP5/3 Automated dosing systems and, where applicable, microfibre-capture or filtration devices shall be implemented to limit chemical and fibre discharge. OP5/4 Staff and contractors shall be trained and monitored to ensure correct chemical use, dosing, storage and wastewater protection.
Indicators	• Consolidated chemical and detergent inventory with SDS and supplier declarations. • Evidence of compliance with EU and UK REACH microplastic restrictions. • Eco-label certifications for cleaning and laundry products. • Records of dosing systems, filtration devices, and maintenance checks. • Training logs and contractor compliance documentation.
Verification & Non-Conformity	Verification shall include inspection of chemical-storage areas, laundry facilities, supplier documentation, and observation of operational practices. A minor non-conformity arises where documentation is incomplete but products appear compliant. A major non-conformity arises where uncertified or unverified products are in use. A critical non-conformity arises where restricted substances, microplastics, or unsafe handling practices are identified.