



UK Holiday Parks & Campsites Support for the Climate Challenge

The Climate Challenge

Rising temperatures and more frequent extreme weather events, such as storms and floods, pose threats to the infrastructure of holiday parks and campsites. The sector is committed to supporting this challenge, however, the investment needed to reduce energy usage and other emissions can often prove prohibitive, with renewable energy installation and other major infrastructure improvement needed.

Investment in Infrastructure

Findings from 'Pitching the Value' 2024 Economic Benefit Report¹ found that 85% of surveyed operators said their expenditure had increased over the last five years due to rising costs, which decreases the amount of revenue available for investment in other developments. Where capital investments had been made, many of these were in utility developments. This included installing solar panels, upgrading gas/water/electricity supply, improving electric hook up and connections, renewable energy projects and water treatments.

However, the study highlights the gulf in the type of operator able to afford such changes. For example, only 11% of small, medium, or large holiday parks and campsites (6-250 pitches) had electric vehicle charging points compared to 53% of very large holiday parks and campsites (251+ pitches). A similar effect can be seen with solar panels, only 11% of small, medium, and large holiday parks and campsites had these installed, compared to 39% of very large parks and campsites. Similarly, heat pumps are used by just 3% of small, medium and large holiday parks and campsites and 14% of very large ones.

Stakeholders participating in the research saw 'green and environmental tourism' as a real opportunity for the sector to not only reduce costs but attract staycation holiday makers on the lookout for more environmentally friendly getaways. However, they also recognise the cost of redevelopment and innovation as a potential barrier.

¹ This report can be found at www.ukcca.org.uk

² [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/60c239a8e90e074397d8c8b0/Tourism Recovery Plan_Web Accessible .pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/60c239a8e90e074397d8c8b0/Tourism_Recovery_Plan_Web_Accessible_.pdf)



Environmental and Conservation Activities

The UK government wants to see a growing, dynamic, and sustainable tourism sector reaching its full potential and driving growth in every nation and region of the UK². Holiday park and campsite operators are often uniquely positioned to support a range of environmental and conservation activities given the amount of green space they are responsible for. In fact, the Study shows that 65% had a carbon reduction plan. The most frequently cited environmental initiatives included:

- **recycling** – including educating and encouraging visitors to follow on-site procedures
- **water conservation** – through water harvesting and composting toilets
- **support for local wildlife** – including a range of conservation projects such as planting trees, maintaining wildflower meadows, and engagement in sites of special scientific interest
- **award participation** – including the David Bellamy award and Green Tourism award
- **sustainable accommodation** – including upcycling of materials
- **restricted vehicle movement** – no car policy or car-free zones

Comments from holiday park/campsite operators include:

"100% green electricity provided. We are also maintaining a wildflower meadow and hundreds of meters of traditional Devon hedgerow."

"We have recycling points on-site, solar field supplying 1/3 of our electricity, and water harvesting. Green Tourism Gold, Living Wage accredited employer. EV for site use and cargo bike for cleaning team."

"We have wildflowers, solar powered lights, native trees, recycling and encourage low energy modes of travel."

"Recycling on-site, solar hot water, planned EV charger and wild hedgerows."

frontline

curious · committed · smart · proactive

Putting their green credentials into action

Lake District Holiday Park commended 'Hero of Net Zero' for fight against climate change

A family-operated holiday park based in Ullswater in the Lake District, gained praise at the COP26 climate change conference for its efforts in the fight against global warming. The holiday park received high commendation for its carbon-neutral initiatives, which included a commitment to nature preservation through the creation of wildflower meadows and the planting of native trees. Additionally, the park constructed energy-efficient accommodation that generates surplus energy, and established a zero-waste shop.

Rewilding Project

A holiday park in Devon, offering pitches for tents, camping, motorhomes, and a variety of glamping options, has earned the prestigious Environment and Sustainability Award at the Western Morning News Business Awards for its environmental initiatives, including various rewilding projects.

The holiday park enhanced its natural surroundings by planting extensive woodlands, wildlife-friendly hedges, wildflower zones, and on-site bug and bee hotels. To create wildlife corridors across the site, additional hedges, shrubs, and trees have been planted, bringing nature to the doorstep of visitors. This intervention has led to the flourishing of wild deer, buzzards, butterflies, hedgehogs, and various migrating birds.

Pioneering Sustainable Energy Solutions for Net-Zero

An Ambleside holiday park has recently opened a cutting-edge office complex designed for complete energy self-sufficiency. The two-storey complex uses a bank of high-efficiency solar panels on the roof, capable of generating up to 14 kWh per day, even during overcast winter days. The innovative building not only powers its own operations, from air-conditioning to espresso machines, but also produces surplus energy, contributing to the park's broader sustainability objectives.

The holiday park is approaching its goal of making all its buildings self-sufficient in energy, with additional solar panels being introduced across the park. The vision is to achieve carbon neutrality within two years, offering guests the opportunity to enjoy entirely green holidays.

