



Recognised Contributor Badge - Terms of Reference

Congratulations! You can be proud to display your Recognised Contributor Badge as a business that is part of a county that has achieved a Sustainable Destination Certification committed to well-managed tourism. When communicating the badge, be open and honest about what it represents: it reflects that you have an up-to-date third party business sustainability certification and as such, highlights your contribution as a business to Clare's sustainability journey.

Background and Purpose of the Badge

The Recognised Contributor Badge originates from the long-standing sustainable tourism model of the Burren Ecotourism Network and the Burren & Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark Code of Practice. This model has now been carefully adapted for county-wide recognition as part of Clare's Sustainable Destination Certification by recognising those who adopt the Code of Practice but also other sustainability certifications around the county. The purpose of the badge is to:

- Celebrate and support Clare businesses taking **verified** (third-party certification) steps towards environmental, social, cultural and economic sustainability.
- Respond to **growing visitor demand** for genuine sustainable experiences, helping Clare remain competitive in an evolving tourism market. This will be through a range of actions such as sustainability-focused messaging; development of sustainable itineraries, highlighting local food, low-impact travel options, community experiences and nature-based activities by establishing a list of verified sustainable experiences suitable for tour operators looking to promote visits without greenwashing.
- Support a **county-wide approach to sustainability** by linking business actions directly with Clare's wider sustainable destination certification efforts, ensuring that business-level progress contributes to destination certification.

Eligibility and Responsibilities of Recognised Contributors Badge Holders

Businesses are eligible to use the Recognised Contributor Badge when they have a verified participation in a recognised third-party certifications, such as:

1. The Code of Practice for Sustainable Tourism, or a:

2. Recognised third-party certification (e.g. Green Hospitality, B-Corp, Origin Green etc.)

- All sectors with a tourism connection may apply, including accommodation providers, visitor attractions, activity and experience providers, food service businesses, food and craft producers, retail with a visitor focus, and transport operators.
- Badge holders agree to keep their sustainability certification up to date and use the Recognised Contributor Badge only in the context of the terms of reference.
- Please note this recognition does *not* constitute third-party certification by Clare County Council but highlights your verified participation in recognised third party certifications.

Examples of text you can use alongside the Recognised Contributor Badge:

- *"By adopting the Code of Practice/ Origin Green/ Green Hospitality/ B-Corp etc., I am proud to contribute to Clare's Sustainable Destination Certification by managing my resources and playing my part in protecting Clare's environment, communities, economy and heritage"*
- *"I'm proud to display the Recognised Contributor Badge and to have my own business practices verified through Code of Practice/ Origin Green/ Green Hospitality/ B-Corp etc."*

Duration & Renewal

The Recognised Contributor Badge are issued on a **two-year** cycle.

- Businesses last assessed for the Code of Practice in 2024 are valid until the end of April 2026.
- Businesses that complete a successful Code submission in **February 2026** will be given an updated badge valid to **April 2028**.
- If a business *does not* take part in the 2026 Code of Practice submission, their badge will remain valid only until April 2026.
- Businesses using another third-party certification must keep their certification active for the full duration of the two-year cycle. If the third-party certification lapses at any time, the Recognised Contributor Badge automatically becomes invalid until renewed evidence of certification is provided.

Use of Data

Businesses consent to their business name being used in promotional and marketing materials related to the Sustainable Destination Certification, including the listing of Recognised Contributors on Visit Clare.ie or larger tourism marketing initiatives e.g. through Tourism Ireland

*Please be aware that the Recognised Contributor Badge will **evolve** and **adapt** in line with future EU and National regulations such as the EU Unfair Commercial Practices Directive (2019/2161, 27 November 2019). As a result, the Destination Green Team and Clare County Council will review, adapt and update the recognition system to ensure continued compliance, accuracy and integrity in all public communications.*

On behalf of Clare's Destination Green Team, thank you for your leadership and commitment to sustainable tourism. Your contribution has played a key role in Clare becoming the first destination in Ireland and the UK to achieve Sustainable Destination Certification.

Fiona McKenna

Sustainable Destination Development Officer, Clare County Council

