



## Being a Greener Camping Club Certificated Site



### Introduction

The Greener Camping Club is an exempted camping organisation that was set up with the aim of providing a greener, more environmentally-friendly style of camping experience in west Wales. It achieves this through its small but steadily growing network of Certificated Campsites.

The Greener Camping Club holds exemption licenses issued by Welsh Government and Natural England. These enable the Club to certificate campsites that comply with the legislation and meet or exceed the Club's environmental and quality criteria.

The process of Certification is itself, relatively straightforward. Whether you are an existing campsite - perhaps certificated to another camping organisation, a farm looking to diversify and supplement your income, or a landowner hoping to create a sustainable lifestyle business, the Greener Camping Club may be able to help.

### What does Certification enable me to do?

Certification enables you to operate your campsite legally, without going to the trouble, expense and possible refusal of planning permission. Planning Authorities and National Parks are guided in their planning decisions by their relevant development plans that are in place. These will very often result in the denial of planning permission for a new campsite.

The exempted camping legislation states that Certificated campsites are permitted to operate throughout the year (though very few actually do). They can accommodate a maximum five caravans or motorhomes and up to 10 tents. This can include glamping structures such as yurts, safari tents and tipis. As far as the Greener Camping Club is concerned, the maximum number of units is entirely dependent on the amount of land available and the facilities provided (showers, loos etc).

Certification does not entitle you to build a facilities block for showers, toilets and washing up. For this you will need planning permission - or change of use for a pre-existing building, such as a barn or other suitable outbuilding.

Importantly, everyone who stays at a Certificated Site must be a member of the Club. In practical terms this translates to at least one person in each occupied unit must be a member. Certificates are valid for 12 months and are renewed annually - assuming the campsite continues to abide by the terms and conditions of the Club.

## **Is my land suitable for camping?**

Once we have spoken with you, established where you are located and what your hopes and aspirations are, we can give a fair idea of suitability. Safe vehicle access, a potable water supply, a means of coping with toilet waste, recycling methods and a commitment to maintaining or improving the environment, are among our many requirements.

## **What are the benefits of becoming a Greener Camping Club Certificated Site**

- The ability to operate your campsite legally, without the need for planning permission.
- Exposure to hundreds of Greener Camping Club members, who appreciate our quiet, eco-friendly campsites and are prepared to pay a little bit more for this exclusivity.
- Inclusion on the Club's website, with referrals and enquires fed directly to you (there is no 'middleman' and we don't take commission on the bookings you secure).
- Technical advice, marketing support and the sharing of best practice.
- Much needed help for the environment, in the form of our Carbon Offset Scheme, whereby a tree is planted for every member who joins the Club, as well as grants for wildlife habitat improvements.
- Annual Site Owners' meeting - a forum to share information, ideas and help develop the Club so that it gets better for the Members and Site Owners.
- As the Club grows, use its purchasing power to save money, improve services for our Members and help the environment.

## **Can I advertise my campsite elsewhere?**

Yes, we encourage third party advertising and promotion of your campsite. Cool Camping, UK Campsite, Go Glamping are all good places to start. We want to 'spread the word' - all we insist upon is that the Club logo and a short paragraph of explanatory text must be prominent on your website.

## **Can I be Certificated to more than one camping organisation?**

The Greener Camping Club does not permit certification to another camping organisation.

## **What are the costs and what do I get for my money?**

There are two scales of fees, dependent upon whether you are applying as an existing Certificated Site (CS) or as a new site (or a site that has been operating under the '28-day rule').

**For an existing CS, the total joining fee is a flat £150. This is payable once we are ready to issue your Certificate.**

For a new site (or a site that has been operating under the 28-day rule), the joining fee is £395. This reflects the additional work involved. Of this, the site visit, report and recommendations is £195, payable before we visit. The balance of £200 is payable once we are ready to issue your Certificate.

Both the above include your first year membership fee.

The annual renewal fee is £100, payable in March when we issue your new Certificate.

**In return you get:**

- An annual Exemption Certificate to enable you to operate your campsite legally.
- Advice, consultation and recommendations about how to set up or improve your campsite offering.
- A Club sign to display at the entrance to your campsite.
- Club Rules to display on your campsite noticeboard.
- Inclusion on the Club website and as a result, significant numbers of availability enquiries.
- Complimentary membership of the Club for as long as you are a CS.
- Participation in the Club's Carbon Offset Scheme - providing you with trees to plant on your land, or elsewhere with our agreement.
- The satisfaction and reward of being part of an exclusive network of premium, environmentally-friendly campsites in west Wales.

## **How do I apply?**

We have a five stage process - details of which are below.

## **How long does the process take?**

For an existing CS - and assuming the campsite meets or exceeds our criteria, re-certification can be achieved in as little as two weeks.

For a new site the process can take six to eight weeks.

In either case, if we make a conditional offer - ie. acceptance, subject to certain items being agreed, added, changed etc., the timescale is then in your hands. From May until September there maybe extended lead times because our personnel are themselves proprietors of campsites.

## **What is the process?**

### **1. Initial assessment**

We will generally start with a chat on the phone - and then if you are ready, we'll run through our initial assessment questionnaire. This enables us to get a snapshot of your site and its suitability. If your site passes this test and you would like to proceed, we will arrange an appointment to conduct the initial site inspection and consultation. At this point you will be invoiced for the first stage payment.

## **2. Site inspection**

The site inspection will be undertaken by one or two of our Site Inspection Officers. These are highly experienced and knowledgeable campsite proprietors and officers of the Greener Camping Club. They will walk the land with you to assess its location, landscape, vehicle access, flora, fauna and natural habitats as well as opportunities for wildlife. Proximity to neighbours, roads, noise and light pollution are also assessed. They will inspect your existing facilities and discuss planned facilities and features.

They answer questions about the planning and development of your business. Advice on pricing and potential revenues from various set up scenarios can also be provided if required.

They will identify with you who your affected neighbours are and request names and addresses. In most circumstances, we have found it very helpful to have an informal discussion about your proposals beforehand with neighbours.

Typically the site inspection and meeting will last two hours. There is a lot to discuss and much valuable information will be shared with you.

Following the site inspection, you will receive a brief report, outlining the opportunities of the site, along with details of any changes or improvements that need to be made to meet the Club's criteria.

If, following receipt of the report you do not wish to proceed - or if for specified reasons we cannot go forward with your application, then no further payment is required.

## **3. Local Authority and neighbour correspondence**

### **For new sites**

We now open the correspondence with the planning department of your Local Authority or National Park, detailing the proposal and stating the Club's intention to issue an Exemption Certificate. We invite their comments and will consider their views and concerns - if any. In rare circumstances the planning department may have a strong and valid reason that cannot be resolved - and as a result we may halt the application.

Simultaneously, we will write to your near neighbours, detailing the proposal and inviting their comments. If for whatever reason there are strong objections from your neighbours, we encourage you to speak with them. The Greener Camping Club does not wish to divide communities and unless agreement can be reached we may decide to halt the application.

All parties are given 28 days to respond. The vast majority of Greener Camping Club applications are acceptable to planning departments and close neighbours. We will however, allow up to six months for negotiation if required. We will draw the procedure to a close if it is any more protracted.

### **For existing CS's**

**In the case of existing CS's, re-certificating to the Greener Camping Club is very straightforward. We simply write to the relevant planning department informing them of the change. We also inform the Welsh Government department concerned.**

### **4. Conditional offer**

Assuming the planning department and close neighbours have no objection to your plans - and the Club is happy with your site and set up, we will send you a conditional offer. Subject to the conditions set out in the offer letter you will soon be up and running. The conditions typically include the number of units (tents, glamping structures, caravans) you are restricted to - and the completion of agreed works.

### **5. Inspection, final requirements and Exemption Certificate**

If another site visit is required to inspect completed works, or to confirm that other specific conditions have been met, we will arrange it at this time (existing CS's generally do not require this).

### **You will also be required to:**

1. Read and understand the Member Joining Procedure.
2. Add an explanatory paragraph of text and the Greener Camping Club logo to the homepage or booking page of your website.
3. Email us a copy of your Public Liability Insurance
4. Pay the second instalment of the joining fee.

### **Welcome to the Greener Camping Club!**

We will send you your current year Exemption Certificate and a lovely Greener Camping Club sign to put at your entrance.

Continuous support and networking is provided through the Club's closed group Facebook page. Your campsite will be specially featured on the Greener Camping Club website and posted on our public Facebook page. Your site will also get a mention in the next Greener Camping Club email newsletter that goes out to hundreds of members four times a year.

Finally, Greener Camping Club personnel are here to provide help and advice on any aspect of your camping enterprise.

Want to apply? Go to the Greener Camping Club website:  
[www.greenercamping.org/contact-form-cs](http://www.greenercamping.org/contact-form-cs)

### **The Greener Camping Club Team**