

Forest Holidays' sites are going green!

AS part of our commitment to improving our 'green' status, all of Forest Holidays sites have been graded within the Green Tourism Business Scheme.

We are pleased to announce that two of our sites, Holmsley and Postern Hill, achieved a silver award, with nine sites achieving bronze awards and eight a 'Going Green' status.

Given the stringent measures needed to attain any grading within the Green Tourism Business Scheme the results are really encouraging at all sites, and the gradings will also act as a starting block for future improvements.

Every Forest Holidays site is aiming to improve their Green Tourism Business Scheme grading by at least one place at the next assessment. Each site has been sent a report which outlines what they are doing well and also improvements that could be implemented to increase the current grade. The 'Green Team' from both head office and sites are continuing to work hard to ensure that recommendations made during the assessments are put into place where possible.

The sites have been graded as follows:

SITE	GTBS Award Level
HOLMSLEY	Silver
POSTERN HILL	Silver
CHRISTCHURCH/BRACELANDS/WOODLANDS	Bronze
GLENMORE	Bronze
THORPE	Bronze
COBLELAND	Bronze
KELDY	Bronze
HOLLANDS WOOD	Bronze
SPIERS HOUSE	Bronze
BEDDGELERT	Bronze
DEERPARK	Bronze
ALDRIDGE	Going Green
ARDGARTAN	Going Green
ASHURST	Going Green
CASHEL	Going Green
DENNY AND MATLEY WOOD	Going Green
OCKNELL AND LONGBEECH	Going Green
SETTHORNS	Going Green
STRATHYRE	Going Green

The Green Tourism Business Scheme aims to promote sustainable tourism that takes into account the needs of the environment, local residents, businesses and visitors. Areas such as energy and water efficiency, waste management and biodiversity are assessed by a qualified grading advisor to determine the level of the award achieved.

The Forest Guardian would like to thank both the Forest Holidays team and our customers for helping us to become 'greener' every year – keep up the good work!

Here are a few of the things our sites are doing to 'go green'

- ▶▶ Having a 'green champion' on site.
- ▶▶ Encouraging visitors to: ▶ Turn off taps ▶ Turn off lights when a building isn't in use ▶ Recycle their waste.
- ▶▶ Displaying local public transport information on notice boards.
- ▶▶ Making the site more wildlife friendly by having: ▶ Bird boxes ▶ Bat boxes ▶ Ladybird towers, etc.

COBLELAND GOING FOR GOLD AGAIN!

The team at our Cobleland site are gearing up to keep their Gold David Bellamy award. Amongst their plans are to install another water butt, extend the Butterfly garden and install more Bat and Bird boxes whilst also introducing squirrel feeders around the site. The Rangers for Cobleland, Will and Nikki already have one by their

pitch and are enjoying the rare sighted Red Squirrels using it daily. Nikki has also put together a news letter for Cobleland and Strathyre with lots of local information, wildlife news and plant information. Well done to all the team at Cobleland and we're all keeping our fingers crossed that Gold David Bellamy Award will be yours again!



Hollands Wood Gets the Message Across!

MANY thanks to Ben, Louvain and the team at Hollands Wood for sending in a great selection of photos of the work and initiatives they are doing at Hollands Wood. Here's a small selection to share with you. If you've got any photos to share with us, send them in!



Spider House



Conservation Journal

Forest Activities



Bee Hive



Birds of the New Forest



Recycling

SPIERS HOUSE Campsite and more recently Cropton Cabins have long been committed to ecological issues and are always striving to find new ways to improve their green credentials.

The solar panels on the roof of the toilet blocks are used to decrease the impact on the boilers for heating water for the showers. The boilers have a thermostat which picks up the temperature that the solar panels have heated to. This is then topped up by the gas water.

In high summer, the panels account for most of the water heating on the site, however, the solar panels actually operate on daylight so will still pick up energy on a cloudy day.

Rain water is harvested from all of the buildings around Reception and recycled to provide a free and environmentally friendly alternative to mains water. This is used to flush the toilets and urinals in the shower blocks.

The cleaning products used in the toilets and shower blocks are from the

Green Credentials at Spiers House Campsite and Cropton Cabin

'Ecolab' range which are kinder to the environment than standard chemical toilet cleaners. The on-site laundry machines are set to 40° in order to save power.

Recycling of paper, card, tin and plastics are now done locally by Yorwaste and blue bins have been placed around the site to encourage good habits from our guests where recycling is concerned.

Todd's waste disposal sort and recycle all other waste centrally for us. This is a key area for us as it is something that our guests can really get involved with and make a positive contribution to the ecology of their surroundings.

We try to source products locally wherever possible and endeavour to obtain goods to be sold in the retail outlet from local small businesses and suppliers.

The idea is to minimise mileage on products sold in the shop and cut the carbon footprint of the site.

Trees have been and are being re-planted around the site in order to re-forest some of the more developed areas and keep the balance of natural woodland intact.

Cropton Cabins all use energy saving light bulbs and have electricity cut off mechanisms to enable us to effectively 'turn off' the cabin when it is unoccupied. We also use energy saving light bulbs in all the fittings to reduce energy consumption massively.

The insulation on the cabins is designed around the current regulations to effectively retain heat within the cabin itself and save energy accordingly.

New Forest Recycling Initiative

THIS year we have targeted the New Forest sites with a new recycling system where our aims are to recycle 20% of the waste disposed of by our customers.

In recent years we have received numerous comments from customers regarding the lack of recycling services at our New Forest sites, this year we are challenging them to segregate their wastes and help us go green. In 2007 we recycled less than 1% of the waste generated in the Forest, in 2008 this increased to just under 7% so the challenge is not an easy one.

In order to try and achieve these goals Managed Waste Solutions have appointed a new contractor, Greenstar, to provide the recycling services at all sites. Greenstar were selected due to their proven track record in providing mixed recycling collections, as it was felt that a mixed recycling service would be easier for customers to use and there would be a lesser risk of contamination in the

containers. Following on from customer comments in 2008 we also felt it was important to have recycling containers located all around the sites and not just in one place, these containers also had to be "customer friendly" so that they could be opened by all customers including children.

The installation of clearly identified mixed recycling 1100 litre containers for glass, cardboard, paper, plastics and cans commenced at the start of this season.

To encourage as much recycling as possible one-third of the general waste containers were replaced with recycling containers and these numbers will be reviewed throughout the year.

Initial feedback from customers is positive as they can now clearly identify which containers are for recycling, this

is also reflected in the recycling figures achieved so far this year:-

April 2009 – **19.44%** (2008 – Under 1%)

May 2009 – **19.68%** (2008 – 3.2%)

The new services have not been without teething problems as our customers start to use the new containers, the biggest issue is still contamination of the recycling containers and we are working with Managed Waste Solutions to create more signage to encourage the correct use of the services provided.

We have an aim to decrease the amount of waste sent to landfill on a year by year basis, only by working with suppliers, staff and by listening to customers' feedback will we be able to achieve this.

Customer comments are reported back to Managed Waste Solutions so that future services can be tailored to meet their requirements and deliver to their expectations of an environmentally responsible company.

Deerpark's 'Illegitimate' Find

MARTIN SUMMERS, Deerpark's Ranger in residence has been managing the grounds for wildlife at the Deerpark site by surveying them botanically, then managing them sympathetically; this results in much bramble clearance and also uncovers some interesting and rare wildlife species to share with our customers.

Deerpark is home to a rare and showy flower, if unfortunately named – 'Bastard Balm'. The site has also become home to Canada Geese who have successfully nested on the lower pond after clearing the sides and removing cut. Clearing the bank between the stream and leat has not only made the duck race easy to follow but also allowed light in for greater diversity of wildlife. Rhododendrons have been cleared from the outfall area as they shade out other species as well as casting a 'chemical shadow'.



Canadian Goose

Also is a classic old water meadow plant 'Greater Burnet' coming into flower, this would have been common in Victorian powder mills. Martin is now trying to proliferate it by marking out as not to be cut, it is in a handful of locations at present.

Martin is keen to promote awareness of these species on his botany walks, pointing them out, their history and also medicinal uses.



Greater Burnet



Bastard Balm

Forest Holidays is constantly working to improve our 'green' status, both on our sites and at our head office...