

# Sustainable Travel Ireland Audit report

## Audit report

### Slieve Elva B&B

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#### Auditing Context

Sustainable Travel Ireland certification assures tourists that your business is committed to sustainable practices. It means your business has at a minimum met the minimum global requirements set out by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC). Our internationally recognised certification standard is the only set of criteria used in Ireland that are recognised by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC). This certification guarantees a balance between a business, the society it operates in and the environment we all depend on.

Sustainable Travel Ireland certification uses external auditors to determine certification results. This allows for clear transparency within our process.

#### Audit Details

**Name of Business:** Slieve Elva B & B

**Auditor:** Sorcha O'Brien

**Date of Audit:** 05<sup>th</sup> May 2023

**Scope of Certification:** To independently examine, check and assess Slieve Elva B & B's compliance against the Sustainable Travel Ireland standard.

**Persons met /Consulted:** Kris and Ireen Claes – Slieve Elva B & B, Jarleth O'Dwyer, the Burren Eco-Tourism Network, and Caroline XX, the Burren Smokehouse

**Location of business for Audit:** Kilmoon , Lisdoonvarna, V95TX62

**Contact Email:** info@slieveelva.com

**Contact phone:** 0657074318

## Agenda:

Date of onsite audit at Slieve Elva B&B

8am – Meeting with Burren Eco-Tourism Network

10am – 10.30am: Introductions with Kris and Ireen Claes

10.30am – 12pm: Audit discussion

12pm - 1pm: Tour of B & B and grounds

1pm – 1.30pm Closing meeting of Onsite Audit

1.30pm -2.30pm: Meeting with local supplier \_The Burren Smokehouse

## Assessment Overview

Section Title	Total Number of criteria	Mandatory Criteria	Total number of mandatory criteria met	Non-mandatory Criteria	Max points available for non-mandatory criteria	non-mandatory points achieved
Company engagement	8	6	6	2	15	11
EMS	33	29	29	4	19	10
Responsible Marketing	4	4	4	0	0	0
Procurement	7	1	1	6	23	22
Customer experience and education	14	3	2	11	42	33
Biodiversity	19	2	2	17	51	45
community support and stakeholder engagement	18	2	2	16	48	46

Total	103	47	47	56	198	167
Bronze Certification range	Silver certification range	Gold certification range				
All mandatory criteria + 77-117 points from non mandatory	All mandatory criteria + 118-157 points from non mandatory	All mandatory criteria + 158-198 points from non mandatory				
Desk audit date of completion	April 2023					
Auditor	Sorcha O'Brien					
Audit date (onsite)	5th April 2023					
Audit agenda (onsite)	See above					
Location/s visited	Slieve Elva B & B and the Burren Smokehouse					
Persons met / consulted	Kris and Ireene (Slieve Elva B & B), Jarleth O'Dwyer (Burren Eco Tourism) Caroline (The Burren Smokehouse)					
Auditor recommendations and conclusions	Gold Certification					

## Auditor Recommendations and Conclusion

### Overall Impression

After conducting a comprehensive desk audit, an onsite audit was conducted at Slieve Elva. The onsite audit encompassed interviews, observations at the business site, as well as interviews with a supplier to the business and a local network in which the business actively participates. This multi-faceted approach allowed for a thorough assessment and provided an exceptionally positive impression of Slieve Elva's exceptional commitment to sustainability.

During the onsite interviews and spots checks, the statements made online and/or verbally were confirmed. Indeed, additional information was provided to support how ingrained sustainability is within the business. It was apparent that Slieve Elva, is a business deeply committed to sustainability, and has implemented various initiatives to promote environmental responsibility. They utilise brewery grain for bread production and repurpose apple cores. Furthermore, the installation of solar panels, bio-gas facilities, an ozone generator on the washing machine and an organic pond, exemplify their dedication to sustainable practices. They actively support other members of the Burren Ecotourism Network and have received visits from educational institutions. They also promote local guides and tours and collect guests from public transport and promoting e-bikes.

As part of their commitment to sustainability, Slieve Elva actively engage with the Burren Ecotourism Network, local suppliers e.g., the Burren Smokehouse and have participated in various training courses and funding applications through the Burren Bio Trust. These efforts align with the geopark label, focusing on preserving local heritage and wildlife. They have also engaged in the HospitableMe program with the aim of providing an inclusive, respectful welcome to all customers and guests, no matter their identity.

During the meetings with the Burren Ecotourism Network and the Burren Smokehouse, Slieve Elva's sustainability was portrayed in a very positive light. The Burren Ecotourism Network went so far as to state that Slieve Elva showcased themselves as a shining light in the industry. They have demonstrated their commitment to sustainable practices by adopting the Code of Practice passionately, actively participating in various initiatives, supporting spring cleans, and even involving the Scouts in these efforts. They consistently volunteer, serving as a positive example to other volunteers. They share their experiences with others, allowing small businesses to see what can be achieved through local support in terms of sustainability and environmental practices. To which end, Kris from Slieve Elva now mentor's other businesses in the Burren Ecotourism network on sustainable practices.

As outlined above their sustainability commitment extends beyond their own business, and this was recognised when they won an award for their exceptional achievements in 2022 Geopark Code of Practice awards.

### **Additional Remarks**

To maximize their impact, Slieve Elva should maintain a comprehensive record of all visits from educational institutions, organisations, and businesses on site. This record, organised on a spreadsheet, would effectively document their engagements, and provide a valuable resource for showcasing their sustainable practices to inspire others.

In addition, instead of solely seeking students/interns to assist with the day-to-day operations of their B&B, Slieve Elva should offer students the opportunity to actively participate in the biodiversity work being conducted on their premises. By involving students/interns in these on-site initiatives, Slieve Elva can provide them with valuable hands-on experience and contribute to their understanding and appreciation of environmental conservation.

### **Auditor Recommendations**

As the auditor overseeing the certification process, I am pleased to confirm that Slieve Elva has successfully attained the esteemed Gold Level in this certification. This remarkable accomplishment serves as a testament to the organisation's unwavering dedication in meeting and exceeding the stipulated criteria, while upholding the highest standards.