

SWOAPG Environmental charter

A commitment from activity and adventure education providers to the sustainable use of the Brecon Beacons National Park and SWOAPG South Wales operating area.

What is the Environmental Charter?

The Environmental charter is a commitment from activity and adventure education providers for the sustainable use of the Brecon Beacons National Park and SWOAPG South Wales operating area. All members of SWOAPG, who have signed up to the Environmental Charter, make a commitment to work with Landowners and Environmental Organisations to keep the Charter relevant and effective in conserving all of the activity sites they use.

Most of the areas we use as providers are privately owned, and the SWOAPG Environmental Charter encourages groups to show respect and consideration for local residents and other users, as well as citizenship, to the activity sites that are visited.

As SWOAPG Members:

- We recognise that use of the natural environment carries with it a responsibility to encourage those in our care to learn something of the countryside's special qualities and the ways in which it can be looked after.
- We make a commitment to good practice for the sustainable use of the countryside.
- We always carry out activities in a manner which maintains good relationships.

As associate members of SWOAPG the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority and Natural Resources Wales recognise that support, care and enthusiasm for the Brecon Beacons National Park and South Wales outdoor recreation venues can be generated by outdoor activities, undertaken within the terms of this Environmental Charter.

BBNPA and NRW will consent with SWOAPG members who have signed up to the Environmental Charter over the managements and policy development on all issues, within the framework of this Charter.

The Environmental Charter

Conservation

We recognise the great potential to foster a commitment to conservation in our clients. The intense and memorable nature of the outdoors experience makes it a powerful tool for the appreciation of the special qualities of the Environmental Charter and SWOAPG operating areas.

We will avoid damage to sites and minimise any disturbance to wildlife, in accordance with codes of conduct and wildlife legislation.

We will encourage our colleagues, clients and students to enjoy and respect the wildlife, landscape and cultural heritage of the SWOAPG operating area.

We know that many sites, plants and animals are protected by law and are fragile or vulnerable to disturbance. We will manage our groups to avoid disturbance.

We will avoid, wherever possible, leaving any new features that have significant impact on the countryside, for example cairns and signs. Where this is necessary for safety reasons we will take into account the current thinking of all interested organisations, including the landowner. Where there is sufficient doubt we will consult with the relevant parties.

We will place any temporary marks or fixings so as to avoid damage or interference with others.

We will observe accepted good practice for the collection of geological and biological specimens.

We will abide to Countryside Access Legislation and local Countryside / Marine Code.

We will show consideration for the local community and other users of the area.

Access

We understand that all land is owned by someone and if using a site we will follow existing access guidelines and/or relevant legislation, as laid down by Welsh Government.

We will secure the agreement of landholders when ever we wish to extend activities into new sites or areas where existing permissions do not exist.

We will respect the guidance of SWOAPG for vulnerable or sensitive sites where there are specific issues or problems

Consideration for others

We will show consideration to landowners, residents and others when driving, parking and setting up equipment, for example keeping lanes, paths and gateways clear.

We will ensure that our activities do not spoil other people's enjoyment, in particular avoiding unreasonable noise and overcrowding.

We will encourage our colleagues, students and clients to understand and respect the needs of the resident community. In particular peoples' safety, property, work and livelihoods.

Development

We are committed to this Charter and will actively encourage our colleagues and other groups to follow these standards.

We will aim to develop resources, tools and information that can be taken on session for the instructors to use as an aid in the field.

We will aim to deliver a range of training and workshop sessions each year facilitated by experts in specific areas such as, flora, fauna and the geological make-up of our activity sites.

We will learn from working in partnership with the BBNPA, NRW, National Trust and any other relevant organisations.

SAFETY

Safety issues are outside the scope of the SWOAPG Environmental Charter. Participants are advised to satisfy themselves that their activity provider is trained and qualified to appropriate standards.

