



Visit
Wales

Tourism Case Study – Snowdonia

Coed Cae B&B

“Green Accommodation” Collection

Major Themes – Renewable Energy, Promoting Sustainability

Achievements

- Green Snowdonia Tourism Awards 2009 – Promoting Sustainability
- Visit Wales 4* Guesthouse

Accommodation Details

- 3 double bedrooms with ensuite or private bathrooms

Owner Details

Jacky and Graham O’Hanlon – Proprietors,
Coed Cae B&B, Taicynhaeaf, Dolgellau, Gwynedd, Wales, LL40 2TU

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**A solution shared is
a problem halved –
sharing experiences
of sustainable tourism.**



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

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Background

Coed Cae Bed and Breakfast run by Graham and Jacky O’Hanlon is set in two acres of woodland overlooking the beautiful Mawddach estuary in the southern reaches of the Snowdonia National Park, North Wales.

Coed Cae has three guest bedrooms, each with en-suite or private bathrooms and a large first-floor balconied guest lounge. There is secure storage for bikes, and space to allow wet kit to dry.

As well as accommodation Jacky and Graham offer mountain bike training and guided rides, and have written a number of guidebooks looking at local, industrial and natural history of the Mawddach estuary.

Success Stories

Green Energy

Jacky and Graham have installed a state-of-the-art, Atmos 25, log-fuelled boiler and huge insulated Akvaterm accumulator tank containing 1500 litres of water, which acts as a heat store that can be added to or drawn upon, much like a rechargeable battery. The system supplies central heating and hot water demands to the B&B. Domestic hot water is pre-heated using solar panels and topped up using the accumulator tank. Retrofitting a renewable energy system to an old property can be tricky – and the new Coed Cae boiler was state-of-the-art technology. A local company, from Dolgellau, was commissioned to install the system and whilst it wasn’t a straightforward process, the fact that the company was nearby made it easier to iron out the problems and get it running effectively.

‘Whilst there have been a few ‘challenges’ along the way, it has been a very enjoyable project, all things considered. I’d offer two bits of advice to anyone considering something similar: 1) Embrace the concept of the ‘dynamic design’ process. When working with an old property, the end result is unlikely to look exactly like the one you first sketched out. 2) Start building your log pile now! Seasoning wood takes a year or more, and when you measure out the amount you will need for a year, it’s a pretty big stack.’ **Graham O’Hanlon, proprietor.**



Wood is sourced from local forestry plantations, and via effective management of their own small woodland. Graham has even researched and developed techniques for converting small brash from felling and pruning activity, autumn leaves, sawdust from logging activity, general garden refuse and household paper waste into briquettes to fuel the woodburners – nothing goes to waste at Coed Cae! The house has been insulated to exceed current building standards, and the heating is regulated on a room by room basis depending on occupancy.

Waste Management

Water run-off is collected in a butt for use on the garden, to grow vegetables. Garden refuse is composted in two large purpose built chambers, and is used to slowly improve the poor quality soil, thus cutting down on the need for proprietary composts.

In addition Coed Cae has put in place a comprehensive recycling system and has a policy of not providing bottled water. All food waste is either composted or fed to the chickens.

Local Food

Coed Cae offers evening meals and packed lunches as well as B&B. Their priorities for food sourcing are to provide local, Welsh, British, fair-trade produce. They keep chickens and grow much of their own fruit and vegetables. They offer and promote local producers and encourage their guests to visit the local farmers markets and butchers in Dolgellau and Barmouth.

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Spreading the Word

Jacky and Graham have a chatty and informative website which provides information enabling others to learn from their experiences. Its friendly style reassures visitors as to the warm, informal hospitality on offer at Coed Cae. For those who want to know more about biomass boilers then Graham's account of their journey to renewable energy heating is there to both entertain and educate! Sharing experiences of installing new technology will hopefully help others to undertake similar projects and avoid some of their pitfalls.

Coed Cae deliver luxurious accommodation and good food in a relaxed atmosphere in a sustainable fashion – all delivered with a sense of humour!



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