



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



English Riviera
UNESCO
Global Geopark

English Riviera



English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark

Environmental Policy

2022

www.englishriviergeopark.org.uk

www.globalgeopark.org

www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/earth-sciences/unesco-global-geoparks

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Mission Statement

The English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark is one of Earth’s extraordinary places covering the whole of the unitary authority of Torbay. The Geopark celebrates, conserves, enhances and protects the unique and diverse culture, heritage and environment of this naturally inspiring area. Working with multiple partners it is a driver for education, expansion of the tourism offer, and sympathetic regeneration through sustainable social and economic development. It enriches the lives and supports the development and well-being of the local community. The Geopark aims to reconnect human society at all levels to the local area, to the wider environment and to celebrate how Torbay’s 400 million year long history has shaped every aspect of our lives and our societies, and informs the future.

Background

The need to conserve, protect and enhance the environment and work towards the UNSECO Sustainable Development Goals is fundamental to the English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark (ERUGGp). This policy considers the full range of environment issues including pollution, damage to sites, waste and climate change. The Geopark Management Group formally recognised and declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency in January 2022 and as a result has introduced this Environment Policy.

The Geopark will be working with Torbay Council, other partners and the community to develop a Carbon Neutral Torbay Action Plan through 2021/22. This will accelerate action from 2022 onwards and lay out clear plans to work towards becoming carbon neutral by 2030. For more detail visit [Carbon Neutral Torbay - Initial Action Plan - Torbay Council](#). The Geopark is committed to supporting its partners to develop and reach their targets for climate action by 2030 and ensure all central Geopark work and projects meet climate action requirements.

The Geopark and partner activities will have a range of environmental impacts caused by:

- The amount of waste generated and then disposed of in landfill sites instead of being re-used or recycled.
- The unsustainable use of water

- The inefficient use of energy for heating and power
- The fuel used to power cars travelling to sites by staff or visitors
- The purchasing of products i.e., single use packaging
- The way sites are managed, and the land use/marine-use practices allowed.

The impact of the above are:

- High carbon emission
- A range of harmful pollutants that are deteriorating our local air quality
- Increased a range and number of health-related problems.
- Loss of biodiversity
- Land and sea pollution.

Visitors to the Geopark also have a large environment impact. These impacts are also contributing to the climate and ecological emergency faced. Such environmental impacts arise from how visitors travel to and across the Geopark, what is consumed when here, how waste is disposed of and how visitors behave when on sites i.e. littering, trampling, habitat destruction etc.

Aims

This Policy aims to:

- Enable the Geopark, its partners and visitors to lead by example, reduce environmental impacts, enhance and protect the ecology and naturally inspiring areas which is the ERUGGp.
- Ensure that all staff, partners, and visitors are fully aware of what it means to protect the environment, ecology and geology and the role the Geopark can play in helping tackle climate change locally.
- Empower staff, partners, and visitors to play a vital part in tackling the climate and ecological emergency, locally and how individual actions contributes to the global picture
- Ensure that the ERUGGp supports the UNESCO sustainable development goals

Scope

This policy applies to all Geopark employees, Board Members, and all partner organisations staff. It covers core activities. It also applies to partner activity where behaviour can be influenced through the membership schemes.

All Geopark Partners and Associate Partners are asked to follow and support this policy in order to retain their status as a partner.

Principles

The Geopark and partners will work towards becoming carbon neutral by 2030:

1. Reduce energy and carbon emissions

We will minimise energy use and reduce carbon dioxide emissions arising from the Geopark and partners office bases, required travel and site activity through the introduction of energy efficient measures, renewable and clean energy generation (where possible), staff behavioural initiatives, sustainable methods of transport and carbon offsetting as a last resort.

2. Minimise waste

We will minimise operational waste that arises across the business through waste reduction, reuse, recycling and staff and visitors behavioural change initiatives. Including encouraging the responsible disposal of all waste on land and not at sea. Encourage the recycling through partners and recycling schemes.

3. Reduce pollution, tackle air quality and improve health

We help improve local air quality and cut harmful pollutants and carbon emissions by supporting our visitor and staff/partners to travel to and within the Geopark by healthier and more sustainable modes of travel such as walking, cycling, public transport and ultra-low emission vehicles.

4. Use sustainable resources

We will reduce the environmental impact of our services, projects and programmes through making sustainable choices on the goods and services we procure.

5. Enhance our natural environment

We will enhance the ecological and geological diversity within the Geopark and protect our marine environments. We will also encourage carbon storage such as through tree planting and sea grass initiatives.

6. Climate resilience

We will work to understand the near-term and future risks of climate change for the Geopark to plan for how we will adapt to the challenges of a warmer world.

7. Measure and report our performance

We will report annually on progress through our Geopark Management Plan.

8. Influence and encourage

All partners will be required to sign up to this policy and will be encouraged to produce a specific and detailed Environmental Policy for their own organisation.

The Geopark and Partners will engage with the local community and visitors regarding environmental issues and the Climate and Ecological Emergency

Document Management

This policy will be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every five years. This policy has been approved by the Geopark Management Group.

Partners will be notified of any changes to the policy, and the implications of any such changes.

Date	Version	Reason	Changed by	Review due	Date approved by GMG
January 2022	1.1	New document created	Melanie Border	January 2027	