

# Les Villages Nature® Paris One Planet Annual Review 2018



**LES VILLAGES NATURE.**  
PARIS



One Planet  
Living®

A framework  
by Bioregional

# Creating a One Planet holiday at Les Villages Nature® Paris

Ben Gill is Bioregional's One Planet Living® Manager and has worked with Les Villages Nature® Paris to create and implement its One Planet Living action plan since 2013.

I visited Les Villages Nature® Paris during its construction, but when I first set foot in it after it opened in September 2017, I was overwhelmed to see its One Planet Living commitments brought to life.

Geothermally heated pools shimmering in the sunlight, paths lined with greenery at every turn, the absence of car noise making the sound of birdsong the star of the show. There's a real sense that nature is thriving, and that guests are connecting with it.

I'm very proud to have been involved in creating this pioneering example of sustainable tourism. Our review of its construction in 2018 showed just how impressive its build was in terms of sustainability, but I feel its real power lies in its commitment to engage people with this sustainability ethos.

## Creating sustainability champions

With sustainable energy and water use already built into the resort, many of Les Villages Nature® Paris' sustainability ambitions now lie squarely in the hands of its staff and guests.

From travel choices to recycling, this is a different challenge compared to creating sustainable infrastructure – it means changing people's habits!

Bioregional's One Planet Annual Review 2018 of Les Villages Nature® Paris' first year of opening concentrates on this challenge, exploring both the staff and guest experience. It will also report on the resort's overall progress towards its operational One Planet Action Plan.

## What is One Planet Living?

One Planet Living is Bioregional's vision of a world where we can live happily within the Earth's resources, and a straightforward framework to achieve this.

	Health and happiness
	Equity and local economy
	Culture and community
	Land and nature
	Sustainable water
	Local and sustainable food
	Travel and transport
	Materials and products
	Zero waste
	Zero carbon energy

*The ten One Planet Living principles*

## Embedding One Planet Living into construction

Les Villages Nature® Paris used One Planet Living throughout a decade of design, planning and construction with impressive results including:

- **100%** of heating and hot water is provided from geothermal energy at Les Villages Nature® Paris and as of 2018 it is connected to Disneyland® Paris as well.
- **97%** of construction waste diverted from landfill.
- Turning an agricultural 'desert' into a thriving habitat with **28,000** new trees and **430,000** shrubs and plants. This provides abundant green space for guests to enjoy, and for wildlife to call home.

# Les Villages Nature® Paris – creating a culture of sustainability

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How are the people who visit and work at this pioneering sustainability resort engaging with its sustainability ambitions?

## What is it like to work at Les Villages Nature® Paris?

Romain Leclerc is in charge of implementing and monitoring the operational One Planet Action Plan. Here he shares his thoughts on working at a place that has sustainability at its heart.

“My role is to engage, challenge and develop our stakeholders and partners on sustainable development and One Planet Living. I was following the development of Les Villages Nature® Paris before it was finished because I was interested in its stance on sustainable development. So as soon as I saw the job advertised, I decided to take my chance and I was lucky to join the adventure.

What’s different here, compared to previous places I’ve worked, is that sustainable development themes are not an option or an extra, they’re part of the DNA of the site.

What I like most about Les Villages Nature® Paris is the involvement of the partners and stakeholders. Unlike in many companies, a large part of the staff are involved and generate lots of ideas. It’s great to feel supported by them.

I didn’t know about One Planet Living before I came to work here. Whereas most companies limit their sustainable development strategies to a few themes, One Planet Living is much broader. This is very important in today’s environment as we need to progress on all these issues, and One Planet Living is about creating an ‘ecosystem’ of strategies.

You have to keep working at it every day, but the best projects are those initiated by our partners.

“

The natural aspect of Les Villages Nature® Paris and its commitment to it is undeniably amazing. This means that even though my work is somewhat removed from nature, I know that I’m making a commitment to the environment.”

Jerome Fouques, computer scientist in the IT department

“

The culture of One Planet Living at Les Villages Nature® Paris allows me to undertake my work as a gardener according to my own convictions – gardening in a way that respects nature and, above all, enables me to share this with the public.”

Sophie Moncorgé, gardener in the ‘Jardin Extraordinaire’ and the vegetable garden



# Les Villages Nature® Paris – creating a culture of sustainability

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## What is it like to visit Les Villages Nature® Paris?

We asked the staff and friends of Bioregional who have visited Les Villages Nature® to share what they loved about the destination, as well as what they think could be improved.

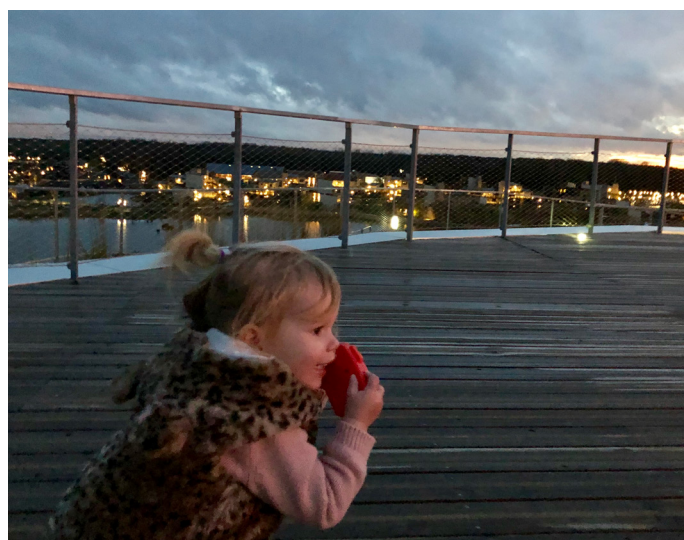
**Alan Penfold and his wife visited Les Villages Nature® Paris in December 2018 with their two-year old daughter.**

“ Les Villages Nature® Paris’ location is great - just a short bus journey from the Eurostar. And it’s the perfect contrast to Euro Disney, providing a naturally calming environment with everything you need on your doorstep.

The Aqualagon was fantastic, neither me or my wife wanted to leave – let alone our daughter. The farm and indoor play area were also a favourite, and the apartments themselves were very impressive.

I’d like to see the One Planet Living principles promoted more. Our daughter was in the nursery one morning and enjoyed it – this could be a good angle to promote sustainability awareness!

We would certainly go back – perhaps in the summer to really benefit from the outdoor activities.



Alan's daughter at the top of the Aqualagon



Ben Gill's kids at Les Villages Nature® Paris

**Ben Gill, One Planet Living Manager at Bioregional, visited in February 2019 with his wife and two children (9 and 11).**

“ What really stood out for us during our stay was how quiet and safe the site felt with no cars and electric transport. We enjoyed walking everywhere – made all the better by plenty of birdsong. It really feels like the resort is committed to creating green spaces that provide habitats for nature, rather than just putting in lawns.

The kids’ activities were also great – especially as we could relax while they went off and entertained themselves. My sons loved the Aqualagon and the forest playground.

The recycling communication could be improved – there wasn’t any more encouragement than in a normal hotel. It could also be interesting to incentivise sustainable behaviour. We came by train but there was no recognition of this even though it’s something Les Villages Nature® Paris wants to encourage.

**Sue Riddlestone, CEO and co-founder of Bioregional, visited Les Villages Nature® Paris in June 2018 with her husband Pooran Desai, her three children and two grandchildren.**

“ I was blown away by how lovely Les Villages Nature® Paris is. We all loved being in nature. We loved the peace of it, seeing and hearing frogs and birds, the flowers, lakes and trees. It was very relaxing – made even more so with no cars.

The Aqualagon and its slides were, of course, a big hit especially as we knew it was all being heated by geothermal energy. We also loved the bowling and went three times! Even though the weather was quite rainy, there was plenty to do that didn't rely on it being sunny.

Having a kitchen in our apartment was ideal – we cooked three meals a day in there and loved the choice of sustainable food at the supermarket. But we would have liked to have been able to compost our vegetable peelings.

We would also have liked to have seen more emphasis on the sustainability features, for example telling the story of the innovative geothermal energy and also how to live a One Planet lifestyle in the apartments.

We've already highly recommended Les Villages Nature® Paris to others, and I think some of our family will be coming back again with friends.

“

Les Villages Nature® Paris provides a naturally calming environment, with everything you need on your doorstep.”

Alan Penfold

Sue Riddlestone and her family at Les Villages Nature® Paris



# Les Villages Nature® Paris' progress towards One Planet Living

From saving carbon to saving nature, Les Villages Nature® Paris is already making serious strides towards achieving its One Planet Living targets.

## Achievements



100% of heat and hot water demand met by geothermal energy – representing a saving of nearly **8,000 tonnes of CO2**.



A **20% saving in water** compared to similar sized Center Parcs resorts.



**19 new species** found onsite, including the long-eared owl and western barn owl.



**100% of staff** trained in One Planet Living. In fact, staff have been heard to say unsustainable actions are 'not Les Villages Nature®'. This is a great success in terms of staff engagement that can be built upon.



Nearly 100% of onsite transport is electric - the onsite bus has done more than **30,000km** in the first year.



Nearly **9,000 guests** have taken part in a sustainability activity – from bee-keeping to food-growing.



# Overall progress

One Planet Living principle	2020 outcomes	
Health and happiness	Staff wellbeing	✓
	Guest and staff safety	✗
	Local stakeholders	✓
Equity and local economy	Support local economy	✓
	Local employment	✓
	Fairtrade	✓
Culture and community	Training of staff in One Planet Living	✓
	Transformational guest experience	✓
	Promote local heritage	✓
Land and nature	Increase site biodiversity	✓✓
	Monitoring programme	✓✓
	Guest engagement	✓
Sustainable water	Manage and reduce water consumption	✓✓
	No impact on water table	tbc
Local and sustainable food	Promote local food	✓
	Offer diverse, healthy and responsible food	✓
Travel and transport	Guest travel	✓
	Staff travel	✓✓
	Onsite transport	✓✓
Materials and products	Sustainable purchasing policy	✓✓
	Prioritise responsibly-sourced products	✓
Zero waste	Waste reduction	✓
	Maximise sorting and recycling of waste	✗
Zero carbon energy	100% renewable energy for heat and electricity	✓✓
	Maximise energy efficiency	✓

Substantially or entirely completed or a high degree of certainty over delivery ✓✓

On track for a long-term target ✓

Substantially incomplete, behind schedule or doubt over delivery ✗

# One Planet Living challenges and recommendations

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As with any new development, there have been challenges in reaching some of Les Villages Nature® Paris' ambitious sustainability targets.

While there are already responses in place, Bioregional has identified that furthering a strong organisational culture of sustainability for staff, guests and suppliers alike is key.

## The challenges

**Recycling and waste management:** Les Villages Nature® Paris' target of a 60% recycling rate is a fair way from being achieved, especially in guest accommodation.

**Travel:** More than 90% of guests and 70% of staff are reaching the site by car.

**Engaging with suppliers and partners:** With a significant number of onsite partners and suppliers, many of Les Villages Nature® Paris' targets will only be achieved with their support. For example, waste management or sustainable sourcing of food.

## Bioregional's recommendations for creating a culture of sustainability

Creating a strong culture of One Planet Living must be driven from the top with sustainability consistently integrated into all job descriptions, day-to-day operations and decision-making.

There are three key ways to support this process, with a range of actions for each.

### 1. Increased staff and supplier engagement

- Tailored guidance and training for staff based on their experience and roles. For example, staff at the Aqualagon could be guided on how to tell the story of the geothermal energy.

- Regular reporting on One Planet Living progress in an engaging way so that staff feel ownership over the sustainability vision, and proud of their organisation's commitment.
- Spreading the message to partners and suppliers by encouraging them to create their own One Planet Action Plans that support the Les Villages Nature® Paris vision.

### 2. Enhanced guest communication

- Telling the sustainability story of Les Villages Nature® Paris through more information in accommodation (especially around recycling and reducing waste) as well as the impressive 'greening' of the site.
- Incentivising 'doing the right thing', for example providing a discount for guests who travel by public transport.
- Increasing sustainability and nature activities. This is already planned in some cases, for example at the kids' club, but several staff interviewed felt that guests expect there to be more 'green' activities available.

### 3. Implementing best practice

- Encouraging a zero-waste culture by eliminating disposable cups at water fountains, seeking low or no packaging food options or bulk buying items that produce high levels of waste.
- Clear roles and responsibilities: A clear structure for the roles and responsibilities for the One Planet Action Plan across internal operations, partners and supply chains is required.



# Contact us

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Groupe

**Pierre & Vacances**  
*CenterParcs*

Created in 1967 in the Netherlands, the Center Parcs concept remains unparalleled in Europe. Center Parcs currently has 24 resorts: six in France, three in Belgium, nine in the Netherlands and six in Germany. Center Parcs is a unique concept that aims to meet the need of families by providing a unique destination to share experiences.

Center Parcs is committed to offering a break from daily life by providing a genuine experience rich in memorable moments through its seven themes: nature, water parks, activities, relaxation and spa, cottages, village centre with shops and restaurants and additional services.

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Bioregional is a social enterprise and registered charity which champions a better, more sustainable way to live. We work with partners to create better places for people to live, work and do business.

We want to see thriving regional economies where we meet more of our needs from local, renewable and waste resources, enabling people to live happy, healthy lives within the natural limits of the planet, leaving space for wildlife and wilderness.

We call this [One Planet Living](#).

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