



A Touch of Ireland's Sustainability Policy 2023

This document will be reviewed every 4 months: Edition Jan-Apr 2023

Mission

A Touch of Ireland is very aware that its business activities impact upon the environment, so commitment to alleviating those negative outcomes is our mission.

As a Destination Management Company, we depend largely on the behaviour and choices of clients and suppliers, but wherever possible we aim to influence both partners by advocating a more engaged attitude towards a sustainable future.

Company Ethos

We believe an important ingredient for success in this business is to treat our suppliers and their staff with respect. We want them to perform beyond the call of duty for your groups and, in doing so, enrich the experience way beyond expectations.

We also enjoy what we do. We like the challenge of the job, and we work hard to make every event an unqualified success, but we don't like high blood pressure or anxiety attacks any more than you do! That's why you should find us approachable and friendly as well as professional.

United Nations World Tourism Organisation

At A Touch of Ireland, we believe that sustainable tourism is tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social, and environmental impacts, whilst addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment, and host communities (UNWTO, n.d.). We therefore aim to reduce our negative impacts and increase our positive effects.

Continuous improvement

We are committed to continuously improving our efforts - At ATOI we are aware of the necessity of reducing, reusing, and recycling. We are also aware of the importance of reducing energy and water consumption / waste. We are learning and we will improve upon where we currently are.

Energy consumption

At present we are not in control of our energy suppliers and consumption as we rent a shared building with other businesses and receive a split electricity and gas bills.

The landlord's current provider has an energy mix of 56% renewable, as at the present date. We are doing our utmost to influence externally the move to a 100% sustainable energy provider.

We have committed by the end of 2023 to be tracking our consumption via monitors.

We have committed during 2023 to migrate from in-house servers to more efficient cloud-hosted data systems.

By 2024, we commit to switch to all-LED lighting.

Water consumption

Water usage for the building is not divided between tenants and therefore we have no statement on consumption so far. As an office with limited water usage, we manage to control our water consumption to the minimum possible.

We will reduce cistern capacity in the bathrooms and investigate other savings measures.

Waste production

We commit to measuring our waste every month and do the following to reduce it:

- 0% of our office general waste goes to landfill.
- We commit to eliminating organic waste from general waste bins.
- We all aim to bring lunch from home (and bring back leftovers to consume later).
- We are very committed to saving paper. We avoid unnecessary printing and we recycle all paper and stationery from redundant files. We purchase FSC-approved recycled paper supplies.

- Conscious of the tragic effects of single use plastic, we have eliminated laminated signage and other event-based plastic uses. We encourage our clients to accept re-usable alternatives.
- We have had the office water supply analysed for purity, to encourage the consumption of tap water over buying water in plastic bottles.

As a DMC we are aware of our potential capacity to influence the choices of suppliers and clients. We try and work with suppliers who are aware and committed to a sustainable approach.

We request and review the sustainability policies of the hotels, venues and restaurants we use.

We encourage our clients to moderate the amount of food ordered at events, conferences and restaurants to limit food waste as much as possible.

For meal bookings, we routinely encourage 2-course options over 3-course ones.

We commit during 2023 to have in place a waste-management procedure for guides and transport partners to enact during events organised by us.

Ethical purchasing

As a small office, we have reached 99% control of our “in-house” purchases. We buy ecological office cleaning products. We buy recycled ink cartridges and paper. When we are asked to organise gifts for clients we endeavour to source Irish products and wrap in 100% recyclable material.

Carbon management

We continuously aim to reduce our carbon emissions. We have already mitigated CO₂ through modifying our way of working and commit to calculating every year our remaining footprint. We will be in a position to calculate our footprint accurately in the second half of 2023. We will strive to refine our calculation methods year on year.

We commit to contracting an offset partner for carbon credits in 2023, to allow us reach carbon neutral status.

We have maintained remote-working hours at Covid levels in order to reduce commuting and its emissions. We encourage staff to use 100% renewable energy providers for their home offices.

Through shortly being able to monitor energy consumption via a sub meter, we will be able to set targets for further reduction.

Responsible sustainability marketing

We are learning about sustainability on a daily basis –as we don't know everything, we therefore commit to communicate honestly where we are on our journey and our improvements. It is unfortunate that there is a lot of so called "greenwashing" around. We don't desire to add to this. We honestly believe in the urgency to act to save this planet and we are aware that we have a lot to learn still and a long way to go but we sincerely intend to implement asap all the measures not yet in place. We are known, to both our clients and suppliers, for our openness and frankness. The covid-19 pandemic has been very challenging for everybody and its effects on tourism has delayed our journey, but we are determined to move faster going forward.

Social responsibility

For many years we have supported a number of local and national Charities. We have regularly donated received gifts to Children Hospitals. We will now work to make this more "official" and select ways to support our local community by engaging with projects and initiatives in areas that might be negatively affected by tourism activities. We encourage our clients to choose activities during their stay that will leave something positive to the areas visited. We also try to encourage clients to spend more time in each area visited and therefore contribute a bit more to the local economy.

Supporting Biodiversity

Individually all of us at ATOI support and conserve the Irish biodiversity by small actions in our gardens / environment. Our office sadly does not have a garden or usable outside space to allow us promote biodiversity in the workplace.

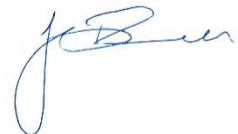
We have pledged our ongoing support to the Wolfgang Reforest Project, a social enterprise looking to repopulate the ancient Tinahely Woods oak forest, which was cut down many years ago.

Signed by:



Sue Uda

Managing Director



Jerry Purcell

Head of Sustainability