



# My Bike or Hike Sustainability Policy 2024

This document is reviewed annually



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## 1. Vision/Mission/Company Ethos

The core values at MyBikeorHike are:

- A strong belief in sustainability informs the company mission which is to facilitate an enriching experience of discovery of the locality, for all guests, and to do so in a way that befriends the local community, respects the environment, and pays homage to our forebears who said "take no more than you need, and use all that you take"
- The company vision is to play its part in making tourism sustainable
- MyBikeorHike is aware that its business activities impact upon the environment and is committed to alleviating those negative impacts as it's our mission/vision.

## 2. UN Tourism Definition

MyBikeorHike believes that *sustainable tourism is tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social, and environmental impacts while addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment, and host communities (UNWTO, n.d.)*. Therefore, the aim is to reduce negative effects and increase positive impacts.

## 3. Continuous Improvement

There is a lot to do, and this is just the start, but because it is the start, the aim is to set off on the right footing. This means curating tours and experiences that minimise negative impacts and maximise positive impacts on the local community and the environment. MyBikeorHike therefore seeks to continuously monitor and improve operations towards this goal.

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## 4. Measuring and reducing negative impacts

### 4a. Energy Consumption

- Consumption will be measured and reviewed on a quarterly basis and the aim is to reduce the consumption by 10% by end 2024
- To reduce electricity usage, the following actions are taken:
  - Using a green energy supplier
  - Using a smart meter green energy plan where electricity consumption can be better managed with visibility on how and when electricity is used
  - Ensuring appliances are switched off at night
  - Washing windows regularly
  - Using rechargeable bike lights

### 4b. Water consumption

- The commitment is to *measuring* water consumption every quarter and to do the following to *reduce* consumption:
  - By end 2024, install the following:
    - ▫ water meter
    - ▫ tap aerators
    - ▫ low flow shower head
    - ▫ water saving toilet bag
  - Use a bund which collects water for outdoor washing, such as cleaning bikes, hiking boots, small waste bins, etc
  - Guests are encouraged to bring their own reusable water bottles. For those who forget, reusable water bottles can be sold or rented to guests for a nominal fee.
  - Clean gutters regularly to ensure rainwater is clean and readily available
  - Use local water refill stations for guests to top up their bottles

### 4c. Waste production

- The commitment to *measuring* waste consumption every month and to do the following to *reduce* consumption and increase recycling rates by

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10% by end 2024:

- Use and manage compost bins for all organic waste
- Tours are designed so that the production of waste is minimised, e.g. eating at local business who have their own sustainable waste management operations, or bringing small packed lunches or snacks
- When a tour is booked, guests will receive a message encouraging them to bring their own reusable water bottles, non-plastic wrapped snacks, and reusable containers for bringing waste items with them after the tour to dispose of responsibly
- If guests are not well positioned to do that themselves (e.g. staying in a hotel, travelling onward, etc), containers will be available on all tours to help guests to dispose of waste in the best way

## 5. Ethical purchasing

At MyBikeorHike the commitment is to:

- Buying certified products (e.g. snacks for guests, emergency food, etc)
- Providing self-made products (e.g. scones)
- Working with local businesses who operate sustainably (e.g. lunch stop for Dublin hikes is at a café / restaurant who grow their own vegetables)

## 6. Carbon management and offsetting

The aim is to reduce our carbon footprint by:

- Curating all tours so they can be accessed and experienced using sustainable transport, i.e. on foot, by bike or using public transport
- Promote use of these modes of transport by making guests aware of them and encouraging them to use them
- Purchase carbon credits from a gold standard or ECORA certified offsetting scheme
- Investing incorporating tree planting as part of guided hikes
- Track and monitor modes of transport used, distances travelled and numbers of people transport for the duration of each tour and commuting to and from tours, so polluting modes of transport can be minimized

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- Mybikeorhike is currently looking to find a partner to offset remaining emissions. The aim is to have found our partner by end of 2024.

## 7. Responsible sustainability marketing

While it's not always possible to get things right the first time, there is a commitment to honestly communicating the stage on the journey and identifying improvements. There is a commitment to a policy of openness and transparency in pricing and marketing:

- Booking transaction fees
- In addition to digitally, personally requesting consent prior to using any likeness in online promotional material

## 8. Social responsibility

Support of the local community is achieved through:

- Getting involved in community projects such as doing hikes for heritage week
- Joining community groups
- Working or partnering with local community / family businesses such as the Grand Canal Greenway Bike Hire
- Incorporating visits to community enterprises as part of tours  
Incorporating food and drink stops local businesses
- Organising and guiding hikes and excursions as part of the Gaisce programme for Transition Year Students in a local school
- Working with local and international students through internships so they can learn about Irish culture, improve their language skills and gain some valuable real life work experience such as interacting with customers, developing marketing skills, photography and videography
- All tours include well researched information about the local history and heritage of the localities through which they pass. This helps to create a connection and between guests and the place and the people they meet there
- Ireland has more placenames per area than any other country in the world, and it's language is among the oldest in Europe along with Greek and Latin. Every tour includes stories, information and translations of placenames passed through

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## 9. Supporting Biodiversity

Support and conservation of the Irish biodiversity by:

- Joining a tree planting initiative by end 2024
- Incentivise / reward guests with gifts such as plant a tree
- Consider joining pollinator plan, if applicable
- Build on Leave no Trace Awareness Training

Signed by:

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Business Owner

9<sup>th</sup> July 2024

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Date