

Aran Islands Camping & Glamping

Sustainability Policy

What is sustainable tourism?

“Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities” (UNWTO)

At Aran Islands Camping & Glamping we are committed to keeping our business as green as possible. As a new business we are very lucky to have had the options at the time of set-up to make specifically sustainable choices on how our business is run. As we grow overtime we will make sure that every new action is carried out in the most eco-friendly way possible to have the minimum effect possible on our environment.

Here are the ways in which we have adapted in order to make Aran Islands Camping & Glamping as sustainable as possible:

Our Site

- The colour of the glamping units was chosen not to disturb the look of the landscape.
- The glamping units are made of composite and are highly insulated to reduce loss of heat.
- Thermodynamic solar systems - located facing south for maximum sun exposure, providing hot water for the glamping units.
- Laundry - we have an inbuilt laundry, saving on cargo use and unnecessary transport.

Waste

- Inis Mór island has it's very own recycling plant and island residents would have a long history of having a high standard of recycling starting from the home. We recycle all waste that we can which is produced by our business and we have recently created a recycling bank for guests to use during their stay. We inform all of our guests when they arrive about our recycling procedures.
- We aim to reduce the amount of waste we send to landfill, and we plan to do this by informing our visitors of our strict recycling policy at our site and through staff training on sustainability.
- Reduce: Non-recyclable waste is kept to a minimum and is only generated where necessary to satisfy visitor needs. E.g. Bathroom bins etc.
- Reuse: We reuse any materials we can at our site, the majority of furniture, fixtures and some materials used have been upcycled and repurposed for our business.
- Recycle: All waste is separated and recyclables are handled by our local recycling plant.
- We have a compactor on site for plastic waste.
- We are committed to protecting the shoreline from erosion and pollution. As our business is located right by the beach, it is incorporated into our daily work to clean the beach of any waste to protect our environment. .
- Although we do not provide food at our self-catering site and food waste has not yet become an issue for us, as we grow and the need arises we are interested in adding a wormery to our site.
- Some smaller steps we have taken since last year: switched to compostable coffee cups, using eco-friendly materials in our office and creating a second shrubbery on site.

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- Soaps and Shampoo are bought in bulk sizes to reduce plastic waste.

Energy

- We use electric vehicles on our site for daily operations and delivery of goods and services. We currently have 2 electric Tuk-Tuks and an electric van that we use benefiting the business and the community by not using fuel and as a result, reducing the emissions that contribute to climate change and smog, improving public health and reducing ecological damage.
- All of our staff use bicycles for commuting to and from work, which is suitable for our location, and reduces the need for fossil fuel run transport.
- Lighting - we use low energy bulbs throughout our property.
- We use motion sensor lighting in our communal bathrooms.
- When purchasing and replacing electrical equipment, A-rated appliances are sourced.
- Solar energy is used at our site, all of our glamping rooms are equipped with solar panels which provide energy for heating water. In addition to this our shower block in our campsite is powered by a large solar panel.
- Our outdoor lighting is set to a timer which is adjusted with the time of year to reduce both energy consumption and light pollution.
- On request towel and linen change policy - which aims to reduce water and energy consumption, allowing our guests to choose their own balance between staying green and staying clean.
- Minimal post sent - we have an online and reservation system and send the majority of our confirmations and information by email and social media to reduce the amount of paper used and minimising the carbon footprint associated with post transport.
- Guest information and education - we have created a digital online guest directory reducing materials needed for each glamping unit.

Water

- Hot water on site is provided via solar panel energy.
- Toilets are fitted with a short-flush option.
- Water-efficient taps, known as aerators, are used throughout our business which give the feel of a high flow-rate with only half the water.
- Water pipes are regularly inspected and maintained to avoid leaks and wastage.

Goods & Services

- Activities & Recommendations for our Guests - Where possible we will focus on recommending experiences which require human power e.g. walking, hiking, cycling, swimming, trekking, diving, in preference to vehicle-based itineraries.
- Our suppliers should be able to make a fair profit through working with us. We strive to encourage small, community-owned suppliers to be able to work with us and benefit from tourism income. We will encourage and promote the social and environmental responsibility of our suppliers.
- Where possible all our provisions are bought on the Island, thereby reducing the transport footprint of goods and services.
- We are committed to buying Irish and buying local where possible.
- Buildings and rooms built and maintained using high grade and environmentally friendly materials and cleaning products.

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Community

- Aran islands Camping & Glamping is committed to the preservation and sustainability of Inis Mór for local communities and visitors alike, and to facilitating and enabling visitors, staff and suppliers to understand the natural and cultural heritage of the region.
- We are committed to responsible marketing, we use our social media and website primarily to promote our product, but we always make sure that we are highlighting the location as a place of natural beauty, and responsibly within its position on wild atlantic way to attract the right kind of thoughtful tourism to Inis Mór. We are always looking for ways to improve what we already do and are committed to promoting ethical and responsible tourism practices.
- Irish is the first language of the people of Inis Mór, making the island a strong Gaeltacht area which we want to promote.
- We will work within the wider tourism industry to innovate and encourage best responsible tourism practice.
- We are not afraid of innovation – new ideas, new products, new systems.
- We promote and use local shops and produce and services where possible. All guests are always encouraged to utilise the local producers, suppliers, attractions, pubs and restaurants. We work within our region to source staff, traders, suppliers, recommendations to & partnerships with independent local businesses.
- As we develop our business we will also add to the greenery of our environment, last year we created a bird feeding area, bird bath and planted 2 shrubberies. We hope to plant more shrubberies and trees on our site to help provide habitats for local birds and insects.
- Inis Mór is part of Natura 2000- a network of protected areas that offers a haven to Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats.
- We are committed to evaluation, understanding and complying with relevant environmental legislation.
- We have chosen to work with Sustainable Travel Ireland to help us in learning about how we can lessen our impact and improve our knowledge on sustainability.

Carbon Footprint

- This year we plan to join a carbon off-setting scheme to compensate for emissions that we may produce going forward
- We are committed to minimizing our environmental impact, as well as that of our visitors. We are continually looking at ways to improve by measuring our waste, water and energy. We have begun doing this by comparing our energy, waste and water bills on a month to month basis.