

Killary Adventure Group Sustainability Plan

July 2023

The sustainability plan for Killary Adventure Group (KAG) has been designed to identify and project the aims and objectives of the company and how KAG hope to achieve their continued protection of the natural environment and reduction in power usage. KAG has been working towards being as sustainable as possible since being founded, with the addition of a grass roof in 2000, a wind turbine in 2002, and many other efforts throughout the years since.

In today's day and age, talking about net zero and the timeframe until you are carbon neutral is very stylish. The aim for KAG is not to be trendy, or to set unrealistic goals, but is to achieve the goal of being fossil fuel free on our energy usage by 2026. KAG feels this is a more realistic and sustainable way to minimise our impact on the Earth.

Making the Sustainability Plan available for public viewing provides KAG the opportunity to be transparent with what efforts have made so far, and what is projected for the future with regards to minimising our environmental impact and sustainability. KAG's aims to update this Plan every 6 months (biannual December and June) and will be used to inform the Company Environmental Policy.

This document details four progressions of the Sustainability Plan, and encompasses all aspects of KAG, namely:

- Killary Adventure Co. Accommodation and Activities
- Killary Lodge Accommodation
- Connemara Adventure Tours (CAT) Cycling Tours
- Gaelforce Events

Part 1 Current Achievements

Throughout its years, KAG has taken a holistic view of the entirety of the businesses from the ground up, to identify where sustainable and environmentally friendly changes can be implemented within the constraints of running a successful business in an economically deprived area.

Detailed below, KAG identifies numerous aspects where the business has already been able to implement sustainable changes.

- Established a program in 1990 to fight against the Rhododendron infestation and its destruction of biodiversity. This is continued today.
- A green roof was designed and installed onto the main adventure centre building in 2000.
- One 6kw Proven wind turbine installed (initially in 2002, struck by lightning in 2017 and reestablished in 2018, still powering today)

- The removal of 'white plague' sheep that were destroying the biodiversity of the estate.
- Installation of a 200kw wood burner in December 2012 – this was removed in 2022 due to ...
- Prioritising the use of environmentally friendly cleaning products since 2014.
- An on-site composter was installed in 2015 that takes all the centre's food waste.
- An electric Golf Buggy was purchased in 2016 to use around the estate – this was then sold in 2020 due to the issues encountered with the time taken to service it in the Connemara area.
- A Polytunnel was built in 2017 to utilise compost made in the on-site composter and grow greens on site.
- Established a tree-planting regime in 2018 to achieve a minimum of 200 trees per annum. This is continued today.
- An 8kw solar panel with battery was installed for the workshops in 2019.
- 32kw of solar panels were installed in August 2022.
- The installation of water to water heat pumps in winter 2022 to provide hot water and heating in the main building on site.
- All bins in bedrooms on site do not have plastic bags in them, with youths being required to separate their waste on departure into the main recyclable and non-recyclable bins in the reception foyer.
- A 2km nature walking track around the site.
- The installation of water restrictors on all showers and taps. This has been shown to not only reduce the water usage, but also reduce the electricity used to pump and heat the water.
- Construction of our latest shed out of hemp blocks and thus helping to reduce our reliance on high pollution building products.
- Composting toilets installed on the walking trail (as per Sligo and other areas) in July 2023.

Part 2 Planning Stages

As per KAG's values, we are constantly looking into new ways to become a more sustainable and environmentally friendly business. In line with this, the below identifies numerous ideas that are being explored or have been implemented within the business as a trial. We also provide transparency with what ideas have not been suited to our business and therefore are not continued.

- Research into an electric boat engine and the potential to add into our fleet. With current findings, the weight of the battery is too much, causing the boat to be unable to hold both the battery and passengers.
- Finding ways to reduce vehicle fleet emissions while at the same time needing to be able to tow trailers over large distances around the country. Electric vans are not at this capacity yet.
- Biomass heater was implemented for experimentation in 2012 – as the labour time was extensive (2 people for 2 days) to prepare the wood, it was not feasible to continue.
- Reduction of single-use plastics through contacting suppliers and requesting the change. Where suppliers cannot facilitate the requests, new suppliers were researched and engaged.

- Recycling and reusing old building materials, as well as experimenting with new methods of building such as hemp blocks.
- Reduction of food waste by trying to utilise as much of the food product as possible.

Part 3 Future Plans

KAG has identified new ideas that will be explored throughout the next year:

- Education of staff about what KAG is endeavouring to achieve with the hope to create a culture where everyone is part of the journey.
- Explore the potential to have a manager of Cultural Change within the organisation. KAG continues to inspire cultural change however recognise the need to be reaching out to individuals working and visiting to make sure they understand what KAG are trying to do and why.
- Explore a Green Fund to experiment on new technologies each year. This will take the shape of an innovation prize for any employee who brings forward an idea that gets implemented and helps KAG be more sustainable.
- Continuing our tree-planting scheme at the rate of 200 trees per annum.
- Potential to build more buildings out of hemp blocks following the experiment of our latest build. New buildings are one of the largest users of materials and non-recyclable goods so KAG will continue to experiment with new and sustainable materials.
- Installation of a hydro power system for Killary Lodge, Green Shed and private houses located on the Estate. An expert appraisal has been completed for these.
- Installation of push taps in public toilets to reduce the water usage.
- Willow coppice to dry out the land and provide firewood long-term.
- Explore the potential of installing a larger composting system to take all waste from the estate, plus be able to educate other local businesses on the idea.

Part 4 Reassessing and On-going Efforts

As becoming more sustainable and environmentally friendly is an ongoing process for a business, KAG identifies the following that will be focused on this year:

- Be constantly monitoring new technologies to see if there are new products that could be implemented.
- Attempt to turn all events into zero waste events as much as possible.
- Conduct an energy audit in December 2023 to gain definitive values on energy usage and how much the solar and wind turbine impact these values.
- Engage all suppliers to enable minimisation of waste streams. Find alternative suppliers that can support this if current ones cannot assist.
- Reuse rather than recycle if possible.
- Standing environmental prize for staff who bring new ideas that get implemented.

Commitments in 2023

- Maintain 50% of our land as biodiverse areas for bees and birds.
- Reduce food waste by 50% using 2023 as a baseline.
- Research becoming energy neutral as a business is. All our power supplied onsite.
- Plant a minimum of 200 trees per annum.
- Invest in innovative sustainable products.
- Keep sustainability at the core of our business.

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