



## **Sustainability at the Falls Hotel & Spa**

### **Our Environmental Commitment & Initiatives 2025**

The McCarthy Family have owned and managed the hotel since 1986 and are proud to continue to live and work from a location that has a history spanning more than four and a half centuries. We believe passionately in maintaining the hotel as a successful business welcoming visitors, providing local employment, supporting local food and drink producers.

In March 2021, we were certified as a **carbon neutral property** through the Green Hospitality Programme GREENMark. The certificate states that; *'The hotel has achieved a carbon neutral status for Scope 1 & 2 and other direct emissions through the implementation of a comprehensive carbon reduction programme (Carbon Smart), investment in energy efficiency, the use of renewable energy plus carbon offsets'*. In a five-year period, through our green initiatives, we reduced our carbon emissions by approximately 90%. From the moment you arrive on our 50-acre property, you are reducing your own carbon footprint!

We pride ourselves on implementing sustainable development and strive to become as self-sufficient as we can. The management and all our staff are dedicated to conducting business in a manner that reduces our impact on the environment.

#### ***Our core green principals are:***

*The efficient use of energy, conservation of water, minimisation of waste (especially Food Waste & Single Use Packaging), Prevention of Pollution, Encouraging Guests to be more sustainable, green and responsible procurement, and a deep commitment to installing eco - friendly energy production methods*

Not only are we dedicated to becoming "greener", but we have encouraged all our staff, contractors, and suppliers to become involved also.

## ***Our Targets – to 2026***

Energy Intensity– 25% reduction on 2019 (273kWh per m2) to 205kWh per m2

Water – 250lt per guest

Waste – 730g per sleeper guest – landfill waste

125g per food cover for food waste

Green procurement – 90% of our suppliers will be sustainable, ecofriendly and/or local

We have eliminated single use plastics from the hotel

## ***What have we already Done? Key Actions***

We are certified members of the Green Hospitality Awards programme which is Irelands leading environmental certification programme for tourism and hospitality.

[www.greenhospitality.ie](http://www.greenhospitality.ie)

In 2018 we spent almost €1m on building a hydro-electric turbine powered by the waterfalls themselves. This long-term investment will see the hotel using renewable electricity with c. 80% created onsite. We purchase 100% Green Electricity when the river water levels are too low for the turbine to operate.

Our heating and hot water systems are powered by 100% BioLPG supplied by Calor Gas Combined this means the hotel has reduced its Scope 1 & 2 Carbon Emissions by 100% since 2018.

We have recently installed 90 solar panels on the hotels extensive roof space, which it is hoped will generate electricity in the summer months when the river level may be low.

## ***What are we planning to do?***

To install an Air-to-Water heating system to utilise our hydro turbine to its full potential.

To install a glasshouse on the hotel grounds and plant vegetables and fruit that may be used in the hotel. This will be a replica of a glasshouse that would've been on the property in the early 1900s when it was a private house. The frame is currently being made offsite and its hoped to have it in place by late 2025.

## ***What other Actions have we taken***

*There are many smaller initiatives that, when taken together, means we have become more efficient and sustainable.*

### **Water Management**

We monitor our water consumption to detect for leaks

We have tap aerators installed in all our bedrooms to regulate the amount of water used by guests

Our showers and toilets in the leisure centre are sensor operated

We have push taps in the public toilets in the hotel

The urinals in the gents' toilets are controlled on a sensor to reduce the water consumption

As a result of the above water monitoring measures, we reduced our water consumption per overnight sleeper from 118 litre per sleeper in 2019 to 75 litres per sleeper in 2020.

We aim to reduce this by a further 5% this year.

The hotel monitors its use of chemicals to try to reduce them year on year and where possible, we use eco cleaning products

### **Waste Management**

We refill individual soap & shampoo containers, there are no single use plastics in our bedrooms

In our bathrooms, we use products from the Co Meath based Handmade Soap Company

We have a towel reuse program in each of our bedrooms

We have recycling bins in our guest bedrooms, giving guests the opportunity to recycle their waste

All our hand paper towels, and toilet paper is Lucart Eco Natural recycled paper

We recycle our light bulbs with WEEE Ireland

We have recycling points for batteries at the reception and at the desk in the leisure centre

We do not sell any plastic bottles in our bar

Our takeaway containers are compostable

Our kitchen monitors food waste so we can try to use up food before it goes off

The kitchen also monitors the waste coming back on guests' plates to see how we can reduce this

All our hotel correspondence, including reservation confirmations and invoices are e-mailed to reduce the use of paper

All our waste is collected by authorised operators who have provided us with their permits

We are members of Repak Ireland

Through the above measures, we aim to reduce our waste by 5% this year.

### **Energy Management**

We use 100% renewable electricity, generated primarily from our own hydroelectric turbine, this has reduced our carbon emissions by approximately 80% in a five-year period

We purchase 100% Calor BioLPG fuel, reducing further our carbon emissions.

We use LED bulbs exclusively throughout the hotel

We plan to install an air to water heating system within the next three years to utilise our hydro turbine to its full potential

### **Green Procurement**

We have implemented a green procurement policy that states:

*'The aim of this policy is to make every effort to purchase and contract products and services purchased that align with the Falls Hotels Environmental Commitment to sustainability. All departments with the hotel will strive to purchase environmentally preferable products and services that align with our values and ethos. '*

### **Destination Sustainability (Community, Biodiversity, Transport)**

We are active members of the Burren Ecotourism Network

We are supporters of, and inform our guests of the principles of Leave No Trace

Our coffee and tea is Fairtrade

We regularly partake in community litter pick ups

We have two electric car charging points on site

We have bikes available for guests' use

We have a dedicated wildflower garden on our property

We also have two active beehives

We planted a new orchard in late 2021 and added more trees in 2022 and this past winter (2024) we planted an additional 150 native trees to encourage the red squirrel habitat.



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