

Sustainability Policy

The Lake District boasts an invaluable asset in its pristine environment, untouched by pollution. Its exceptional and diverse wildlife further enhances this treasure, making the Lake District one of the few remaining sanctuaries of unspoiled wilderness on our planet - a distinction underscored by its designation as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

At Low Birker Farm, we embrace our duty to uphold environmental stewardship. We are steadfast in our commitment to adopt and promote best practices that minimise our ecological footprint in all aspects of our operations.

We continuously explore innovative strategies to preserve and safeguard natural resources, reduce waste of raw materials and energy, all while delivering consistent, high-quality experiences to our guests.

We ensure that our sustainability ethos is transparently communicated to our customers and guests, empowering them to actively participate in our collective efforts toward environmental conservation.

Energy Conservation

- Underfloor heating in most areas downstairs in Low Birker Farm Guesthouse.
- Radiators/convector heaters in rooms are controlled by a digital thermostat allowing guests to accurately regulate their own room temperature
- Multi fuel burning stove in Low Birker Farm Guesthouse which is energy neutral. The wood used is collected from our private estate
- Use of energy saving bulbs [where possible]
- Encourage a 'switch-off' policy with staff and guests
- Ensure room temperatures are turned down when there are no guests
- Wood fuel is also considered a sustainable fuel that creates significant social and environment benefits. Biomass boilers are also extremely efficient and produce less atmospheric pollutants
- Purchasing energy efficient appliances which save energy.

Reducing Waste Recycle/Re-Use

- Use environmentally friendly cleaning materials [where possible]
- Encourage guests to only put on wash loads when the unit is full
- Use phosphate-free dishwasher tablets and powder - the phosphates are added to soften water and it kills algae, fish and pollutes the lake
- All water provided to our properties is fresh off the fellside from a natural spring - we are not on mains supply - our water is very soft and has a beautiful fresh taste.
- All waste is sorted and recycled by our collection company
- All wood for the wood burning stove is sourced from fallen branches off our estate

Water Consumption

- Use of half-flush toilets
- Good maintenance - mending leaking taps

Water Treatment

- No chemicals are used, all fell water to the properties is treated by ultra-violet light
- The most up-to-date and environmentally friendly sewage and waste water treatment system

Responsible Purchasing

- In line with our Social Value Policy we aim to use as much local labour and expertise as possible
- In line with our Social Value Policy we aim to purchase goods/provisions from the local area [where possible] thereby supporting local businesses, local communities and retaining money within the local economic cycle - bridging the gap between growth and poverty
- In line with our Social Value Policy using local social enterprises where possible
- Use Fair Trade, Organic and Rainforest Alliance certified products where possible
- We aim to increase our responsible purchasing methods to include sourcing products and services from suppliers that maintain ethical practices

Guest Contribution

- Encourage guests to car-share and not arrive in individual vehicles
- Encourage guests to buy and use eco-friendly dishwasher, washing and other products which will not enter and pollute Lake District National Park.
- Encourage guests to purchase food and other items locally, rather than using large supermarkets. This reduces transport miles and support the local economy
- Encourage guests to use the Ravenglass – Eskdale Steamers [rather than personal car] for all local walks and access to villages around the lake
- Encourage guests to reuse towels and bathrobes
- Encourage guests not to place hygiene products down the toilet and to use the bins provided

To follow a code of conduct

1. Always ask permission before entering private land
2. Keep to paths wherever possible
3. Always close gates
4. Do not drop litter - take your rubbish home with you
5. Do not disfigure rocks or buildings
6. Do not touch or feed any wildlife or livestock
7. Always give animals the right of way
8. Always keep dogs on leads

9. Try to prevent disturbance to wild animals
10. Many plants are protected and should not be picked or trampled upon. Wildflowers are there for all the enjoy
11. Guests with dogs - when away from public and popular pathways the recommended way to deal with dog 'poo' is to find a stick and flick it off the path into the undergrowth, or to kick it out of the way with your boot. It will quickly decompose naturally. If you use a doggy-poo bag because you are in a popular area, then please carry it with you until you find a bin - there is nothing worse than seeing discarded poo-bags in the countryside
12. Dogs on leads - even the best behaved dogs can chase-off unexpectedly when they see sheep running. Chased sheep can abort their lambs; and farmers suffer regular sheep mortality and mauling from dogs. Be safe, not sorry.

Social Value Policy

Here at Low Birker Farm, in line with our 'responsible purchasing policy' above, we are committed to delivering positive social value for the local area and region always seeking to employ local people, support training and apprenticeships, support social enterprises, support local business and the local community. We endeavour to increase our responsible purchasing methods to include sourcing products and services from suppliers that maintain ethical practices.