



Sustainability at Jinny's Tea Rooms, Bakery and Cottage Accommodation

WHERE- Leitrim, Ireland FIND OUT MORE - www.jinnys.ie and [McGuire's Red Door Cottages](#)

Business in Numbers

Year established: 2003

Number of businesses: 3 – Tea Rooms, Bakery and Cottage Accommodation

Employees: 11 inc part time and seasonal

Energy as a % of costs: Approx 6.3% of total costs

Local Sourcing Ratio: 40% within 50 km.

About Jinnys

Jinny's is a family run business in Drumshanbo, Co. Leitrim, overlooking the Shannon Blueway boardwalk, with three connected parts: a bakery, tea rooms and food truck, and cottage accommodation. The tearooms serve light bites with an emphasis on wholesome, local ingredients, and a focused menu that suits busy service. The bakery produces bakes for national retailers and on-site customers. McGuire's Red Door Cottages were built onsite in 1975 – read more [About – McGuire's Red Door Cottages](#)

How is sustainability visible in daily operations?

For Jinny's, sustainability shows up in day-to-day operations in ways guests can see and staff can repeat.

- **Local and seasonal sourcing in the tearoom:** they position the menu around wholesome, local ingredients and locally sourced produce.
- **On site growing:** salads, veg, and fruit grown on site through their kitchen garden, then used in the tearoom offering.
- **Food waste loop into food production:** composting of peelings and other organic waste, with the compost used to nourish the salads and veg they grow for the tearooms.
- **Energy efficiency actions:** moved lighting and fittings to LEDs as part of their sustainability improvements.
- **Lower impact packaging moves:** shifting the packaging for their mixes to recyclable material, linked to retailer requirements and waste reduction.
- **Structured support for improvement:** upskilling the team via participation in the Local Enterprise Office Green for Micro programme, focused on resource efficiency, understanding carbon footprint, and implementing an environmental management system.

"EcoSmart, for us, means making sustainability part of the routine. It is how we buy, how we prep, how we reduce waste, and how we keep improving week by week."

What is the role of local sourcing?

Local sourcing is one of the most practical sustainability levers we have. It means we keep spend closer to home, build relationships with people we can actually pick up the phone to, and reduce how far ingredients travel to reach the plate.

It also makes day to day operations easier. When we know our suppliers, we can plan around what is in season, adjust quickly when demand changes, and reduce waste from over ordering or short shelf-life stock.

And it gives us real proof for our sustainability story. We name who we buy from, show what is local on the menu, and are able to explain the difference it makes for the guest and for the local economy.

How does community involvement support sustainability?

Building on local sourcing, we see sustainability as something you do with the people around you. We are part of the [Taste Leitrim - Sustainable Food Trail of Restaurants](#) which has been a great way to connect with other local food businesses in a way visitors can actually see and follow, in a low carbon high adventure way.



We prioritise and really benefit from :

- Collaborating with other businesses for ingredients, cross promotion, shared deliveries, and shared learning
- Supporting local events and community days that bring footfall without heavy advertising spend
- Keeping value in the county by prioritising local suppliers where possible.

What tools support energy and waste tracking?

Tools for us are kept simple but effective. Our tracking goes deeper than “we looked at the bill” to “we can see what is driving the bill, and what change reduced it”. Over the years we have refined the tools we use for tracking energy, water, and waste. They work for us and the size and nature of our operation.

- **Energy:** use smart meter plus a simple equipment log to spot peaks, baseload, and faults, supported by a basic maintenance checklist.
- **Water:** regular meter reads by time block to detect leaks. Review of high use routines, then tighten dishwashing (prerinse habits, run when full, rinse spray guns) and cleaning practices.
- **Waste and food waste:** track waste by stream (general, recycling, glass, organics, oil) and consistently monitor food waste to target prevention.
- **Make it easy:** we use a spreadsheet dashboard fed by bills, meter reads, POS and stock data, and waste contractor reports.
- **Good practice:** work on one improvement action each month, so progress is measurable and we continue to improve.

How is food waste monitored or reduced?

Food waste is low for us because we run an integrated model across the tearoom, bakery, and accommodation, so we can plan production tightly and use ingredients efficiently.

- In the tearoom, we keep the menu focused: one key special per day, one soup and one main dish, alongside a tight menu of favourites. That reduces over production and keeps prep predictable.
- The bakery and tearooms compost unavoidable organic waste, fruit and vegetable peelings, eggshells, and similar kitchen scraps, along with grass cuttings
- That compost becomes a practical loop in our operations as we grow the vegetables for our salads, turning what would be waste into an input for onsite food production.



For us, local sourcing is one of the most practical sustainability levers we have. Our local sourcing ratio of 40% within 50 km for the Tea Rooms means spend stays in the area and ingredients travel less distance to reach us.



What data is informing key decisions?

Key decisions are guided by a small set of data we can act on quickly:

- We use our retail **POS system** to track daily covers, peak times, and the sales mix, so we can plan staffing, prep, and cooking without over producing.
- We watch **sell outs and leftovers** each day and adjust portioning and the daily special accordingly.
- We use **accommodation bookings and occupancy** to forecast demand, to plan ahead and make marketing decisions.
- For our retail bread mixes, we learn from **retailer data systems** from SuperValu, Tesco, and Aldi, which show demand patterns and performance by store and period, guiding production planning, packaging, and product improvements.
- We keep an eye on **customer feedback and reviews** on platforms like Tripadvisor, especially repeated comments and questions, and we use those to fine tune our messaging.

How is digital used to grow and promote the business?

- **Website as the hub:** We use our website www.jinnys.ie to present the full offer in one place, bakery, tearooms, contact, plus a strong local destination story around Drumshanbo.
- **Online sales and gifting:** The website routes customers into online purchasing, including bread mixes and gift vouchers, which supports revenue beyond footfall at the tearoom.
- **Retail and credibility signals:** Third party profiles and updates on the website and social channels reinforce our brand story and product range, for example SuperValu Food Academy content.
- **Social for live updates and product appetite:** Instagram and Facebook are used for operational updates and product led content, for example the Minny Jinny food truck messages and tearoom updates.
- **Listings and discovery networks:** Taste Leitrim works as a discoverability channel, with direct links, and a clear sustainability section that helps tell the story in plain language. Tripadvisor supports reputation and visitor planning.

How is social media shaping customer relationships? Use of AI?

Social media plays a practical role in how we build and maintain customer relationships. We use **Facebook** to stay connected with our core customer base. With **7.8K followers**, we share day to day updates such as opening information, daily activities, menu selections, and awards, and we respond to messages and questions quickly to keep that relationship warm and direct.

We use **Instagram** to reach a younger audience in a more visual way. With **3,000 plus followers**, we focus on image led storytelling that shows the food, the setting, and what is new, helping customers feel connected even when they are not on site.

Use of AI: We do not rely heavily on AI at the moment. It is an area in which we need to build competencies.

How is sustainability communicated to customers?

Sustainability is communicated and a strong sense of place, rather than general claims. The example in the picture below of an Instagram post on our waste to worth approach.

- **Seasonal food is shown in real time:** Instagram posts like the picture below link composting to ingredients to place and seasonality,
- **Natural and wholesome positioning is reinforced through what we share:** the focus stays on real food, simple ingredients, and how things are produced, which supports trust.
- **We use “clean label”** in our communications as summarises our values of avoiding artificial colours, artificial flavours, certain preservatives, or long lists of technical ingredient names.
- **Consistent tone across channels:** sustainability appears as part of everyday updates, what is growing, what is baking, what is in season, which reinforces the brand promise and helps the business stand out.
- **We make sustainability easy to see and share:** our posts give customers simple, repeatable details, its very accessible and tangible.



jinnysbakery.tearooms
Jinny's Bakery & Tearooms



jinnysbakery.tearooms It's Saturday morning again, the weeks are flying in.
We have lovely iceberg lettuce and curly cabbage for sale today.

It's been a amazing year for garden, we have grown enough salad for the past 3 months to keep Jinnys kitchen supplied. We used 3 different varieties, cos, lola rosa and frissee

Pop in later for some mm of our freshly baked sourdough bread.

Thanks for all the support during this busy summer and big thanks to all our amazing staff for keeping the show on the road. Our reviews speak for themselves!

See you all later.



Describe your leadership style? What principles guide your daily decisions?

Running this business as a husband-and-wife team means all decisions we make are focused on ensuring the business built to last. It's a family thing is our tagline, and it is real. Three generations are involved in the business, so decisions stay close to the day to day, we protect what matters, quality, consistency, and a good name in the community. Our purpose is rooted in family, place, and food we can stand over, and our sustainability storytelling reflects that, real people, real routines, real suppliers, and real seasons.

An example of how you have led through adversity

Looking back, adversity pushed us to innovate. It made us more dynamic, quicker to adapt, and more confident in testing new products, new channels, and new ways of serving customers. During COVID we had to move fast and stay flexible. Our accommodation business was grounded, and lockdown closed the tearoom trade overnight. We responded by developing ready to eat meals, expanded the Jinny's Bread Mixes range with new products and built revenue by extending retail routes. We strengthened our online presence, and kept customers informed through social updates. We worked closely with local agencies and supports, and we took part in training programmes that helped us sharpen pricing, packaging, and production planning.

We also see increasing storms and extreme weather as a real operational challenge. When weather disrupts power, footfall, deliveries, and opening days, we have to switch gears quickly. That is why backup power and greater self sufficiency matter. It protects food safety, refrigeration, and service continuity, and it allows us to keep trading, communicate clearly with customers, and reduce disruption when outages happen. It is very much our new reality, and we have to prepare for more environmental uncertainty.

What's next for your brand or sustainability goals?

Next for us is to formalise what we already do and become more resilient in day-to-day operations. Some priorities..

- **Formalise our proof on digital channels:** one clear Sustainability and ESG page on the website, with approved wording, proof points, photos, and a short annual update we can reuse across Google, listings, and staff replies.
- **Packaging and retail improvements:** continue improving packaging choices for our retail bread mixes.
- **Resilience and self sufficiency:** invest in practical measures that protect food safety and service continuity during storms, including backup power and stronger contingency routines for outages and delivery disruption
- **Place based storytelling:** deepen work with Taste Leitrim, the Sustainable Food Trail, and Food Hub tenants so local collaboration, shared learning, and joint visibility stay central to the brand
- **Certification:** review and make a plan for sustainability certification that suits our scale and adds real value

How will you connect with the next generation of customers

Our four children play an active role in the business, so staying connected to younger customers is part of everyday life for us, it comes naturally through what they see, what they like, and what they hear from their own friends. To connect with the next generation, we will keep the focus on what matters to them: real food, simple Ingredients and transparency about how things are made. We will strengthen our social media. We will also keep building local links through collaborations with schools and youth groups and practical food education that connects place, food, and sustainability.



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