

London Borough of Brent

# GREEN BUSINESS GUIDES

# HOSPITALITY



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# INTRODUCTION

## Starting your sustainability journey doesn't need to be complicated!

**Brent Council has created this simple toolkit to share our top tips for going green.**

The Covid-19 crisis has had a huge impact on the hospitality sector. As businesses start to recover, there is an opportunity to embrace a 'new normal' that is better for the planet and good for business.

Considering the environment as your business recovers from Covid-19 can help:

- Save money, through cutting down your energy and water bills
- Attract new customers, who want to fight climate change
- Create new opportunities for innovation, through offering new products and services

In the long-term, being 'greener' will help future-proof your business against increasing environmental laws and regulations. It will also protect you against some of the results of the climate emergency, such as water shortages and more extreme weather conditions. Take action now to minimise the negative impact on your business and help the fight against climate change.

**We've pulled together our top tips across five key areas:**



The words and phrases that are used to talk about climate can be confusing! That's why we've also put together a glossary of key terms at the end of the toolkit.

### What is Brent Council doing?

In July 2019, Brent Council declared a climate and ecological emergency and committed to achieving carbon neutrality by 2030. Brent's [Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy](#) sets out our proposed priorities and a pathway to carbon zero.

Some of the core objectives within our strategy are built around supporting the transition to a low-carbon, circular economy model, and supporting our businesses to go green and reduce the carbon footprint of their operations.



# KEY ACTIONS TO HELP YOUR BUSINESS



# REDUCING ENERGY USE

**Saving energy is one of the simplest ways to increase your profits.**


## DID YOU KNOW?

A business can usually save around 10% on their energy bill through simple measures, and up to 25% with long-term changes. See [carbontrust.com](https://www.carbontrust.com) 

Reducing your energy use saves you money on your bills, and with rising energy prices, this is more important than ever. Improving the energy efficiency of your business can make it a more comfortable place for customers and staff, for example by keeping buildings warmer in the winter.

Reducing your energy use is also good for the environment. Energy is typically created by burning fossil fuels. This releases greenhouse gases into the air, contributing to global warming. Burning fossil fuels also causes poor air quality and can contribute to water pollution.

## 10 SIMPLE TIPS

Try these simple tips from the **Carbon Trust**  to cut your business' energy use

### HEATING, COOLING AND VENTILATION

- 1 Keep in the heat**  
Keep windows and doors closed as much as possible when heating is on. Close curtains and blinds at the end of the day.
- 2 Maintain boilers and pipework**  
A regularly serviced boiler can save 5% on annual heating costs.
- 3 Go natural**  
Take advantage of natural airflow through windows and doors to save on cooling and ventilation costs like air conditioning.

### LIGHTING

- 4 Switch off policy**  
Have a 'switch off' policy to encourage staff to switch lights and other equipment off when not in use. You could use stickers above light switches as a reminder.
- 5 Install light sensors**  
Sensors can achieve savings of up to 50%. They are especially useful in toilets, storerooms and back of house areas.
- 6 Switch to LEDs**  
LED lights are highly energy efficient and can save a lot of money. It is usually possible to switch to LEDs without changing the light fitting.

### EQUIPMENT

- 7 Avoid equipment misuse**  
Avoid misuse of kitchen equipment, such as keeping fridge doors open and running dishwashers at half-loads.
- 8 Purchase efficient equipment**  
More efficient appliances save energy and money. For example, equipment that automatically switches off can save 5% on energy costs.
- 9 Efficient fridges**  
Fridges that are not properly maintained will gradually use more energy. Energy consumption of refrigeration equipment can be reduced by 2-4% if the cooling temperature is safely increased by one degree.
- 10 Maintain kitchen ventilation**  
Regular cleaning of ventilation units and extractor hoods can increase efficiency by 25%.

Read more at the Carbon Trust's **Hospitality Sector Energy Saving Guide** 

# REDUCING ENERGY USE (CONTINUED)

## TOP TIPS

### Monitor your energy use

Keeping a close eye on your energy bills will help you understand your progress and set targets to reduce your energy use.

### Set targets

Set realistic targets that can be easily measured, and give each one a deadline. For example, you might decide you want to reduce energy use by 30% over six months.

### Get staff involved

Make sure that everyone understands how and why to save energy. According to the [Carbon Trust](#) raising awareness amongst kitchen staff and providing energy management training can reduce catering energy use by up to 30%.

## GO FURTHER

### Green deliveries

If you offer a delivery service, you could switch to an environmentally friendly option, like cargo bikes or electric vans. This could also save your business money if you operate within the [Ultra Low Emissions Zone \(ULEZ\)](#).

### Switch to renewable energy

Renewable energy is created from a natural source that can quickly be replenished, such as wind or sunlight. The [Carbon Trust's Renewable Energy Guide](#) outlines the benefits of using renewable energy sources, including lower energy bills, improved reputation, and the possibility of selling electricity back to the grid at a premium.

### Encourage active travel

Many of your business's carbon emissions won't come from your equipment and operations, but from more indirect uses of energy. One example of this is the emissions created when staff travel to and from work.

You can reduce these emissions by encouraging staff to walk, cycle, or jog to work, rather than driving. Encouraging active travel can also increase productivity, lower employee sick days, improve staff retention and reduce car parking issues.

Transport for London's [active travel toolkit](#) provides practical tools to enable staff to choose active travel options to and from work.

### Free tools and resources

The [Hospitality Sector Energy Saving Guide](#) from the Carbon Trust focuses on low and no-cost measures with quick payback, across areas including heating and hot water, lighting, leisure and fitness, and catering.

The [Hotel Carbon Measurement Initiative](#) from the Sustainable Hospitality Alliance allows hotels to calculate their carbon footprint, benchmark their performance and set measurable targets.

The [Hotel Footprinting Guide](#) from the Sustainable Hospitality Alliance allows hotels to search carbon emissions and energy for hotels around the world, and generate carbon footprint reports.

# REDUCING WATER USE


**Saving water saves money, especially if you use a water meter.**

If you reduce the amount of hot water used, you can also save money on your energy bill. Saving water can also help your business comply with current and future environmental legislation.

Saving water is also good for the environment. Water treatment facilities produce high amounts of carbon emissions, and transporting water around the country requires a lot of energy. Climate change and population growth are leading to hotter summers and drier winters. This means that there is increasing pressure on our water supplies, and that we are at risk of droughts. Taking action now can help make sure there's enough water to go around.



## DID YOU KNOW?

Businesses can typically save around 30% of their water costs through simple and inexpensive measures. See [water-plus.co.uk](http://water-plus.co.uk) 

## 6 SIMPLE TIPS

Here are a few simple ways to save water in your business

### 1 Check for leaks

Undetected leaks in pipes can cost your business thousands each year. Check your water meter when no water is being used. If the index is still moving, you may have a leak.

### 2 Efficient taps

Don't leave taps to drip! In most cases, dripping taps are cheap and easy to fix, and can save a large amount of water.

Tap aerators screw onto a tap, mixing air into the flow and reducing the amount of water by 50%, without reducing water pressure. They only cost around £5 per tap and are easy to fit.

Fitting taps with push button or motion sensors can reduce water use by 20% and pay back within a year through savings on water bills.

### 3 Save flushes

Using a water saving device (or Cistern Displacement Device) on toilets can save up to three litres per flush. Passive infrared (PIR) flush control on urinals will pay for itself through reduced water bills.

### 4 Lag your pipes


Lagging is insulation for pipes, and it's easy and cheap to fit. This will protect them against freezing, leaking or bursting, which can waste large amounts of water.

### 5 Upgrade equipment

Upgrading equipment that use lots of water, such as dishwashers and ice machines, to more efficient models can help make big savings. Look out for equipment with an AA+ efficiency rating, as these will be the cheapest to run.

### 6 Wash up efficiently

Make sure to fill dishwashers to the maximum. If washing up by hand, fill one sink with wash water and a second with rinse water instead of using running water.

Read more at the [Water Plus online water saving guide](http://Water Plus online water saving guide) 

# REDUCING WATER USE (CONTINUED)



## TOP TIPS

### Monitor your water use

Comparing your water bills will enable you to track progress and set targets to reduce water use.

### Set targets

Set realistic targets that can be easily measured, and give each one a deadline. For example, you might decide you want to reduce water use by 30% over six months.

### Identify key opportunities

Try walking around the building and write down all the opportunities you spot to make water savings. Use these opportunities to create a plan for reducing your water use.

### Get staff involved

Make sure staff are aware of why saving water is important and how they can help make a difference.

### Talk to your water company

Your water supplier may be able to help you save water through advice or free water saving devices.

Some suppliers offer audits to see how efficient your water use is, and some may even offer a personalised water management package to help you be as efficient as possible.

If you don't already have one, asking your supplier to install a water meter can help you save money and water.

### Free tools and resources

[Waterwise](#) provides free advice for businesses looking to save water, save money and help the environment.

The [Water Stewardship for Hotel Companies guide](#) from the Sustainable Hospitality Alliance recommends six steps every hotel should take to better manage their impact on water.






# REDUCING FOOD WASTE

Reducing food waste is a great way to save your business money.

Cutting down on how much you buy and reducing waste disposal costs are both big money savers.


Reducing food waste is not only good for business, but also helps tackle climate change. When we waste food, we waste all the energy and water it takes to grow, harvest, transport and package it.

## DID YOU KNOW?

The amount of food and drink wasted in the UK in 2018 that could have been eaten would fill eight Wembley stadiums. See [wrap.org.uk](http://wrap.org.uk) 

If food goes to the landfill and rots, it releases methane, a powerful greenhouse gas, which contributes to global warming.

## 5 SIMPLE TIPS

Try these simple tips from [Guardians of Grub](#)  to reduce your food waste


### 1 Smart ordering

Check your stock and purchase only what you need. Buy smaller portions of fresh produce, and order more often. Hold daily chef meetings to review what's being thrown away each day and adjust orders accordingly.

### 3 Smart menu

Explore ways of using the same ingredients for different dishes. Be creative by using leftover ingredients and offcuts. Use cooking methods that make the most of each part of your ingredients.

### 5 Redistribute

Anything that can't be sold but is still safe to eat could be sold or donated. The Food and Drink Surplus Network from [WRAP](#)  (The Waste and Resources Action Programme) helps you find organisations that will redistribute surplus food.


### 2 Savvy storage


Store newer items at the back of storage to ensure older items are used first.

### 4 Right portion sizes

Offer portion size and side dish options as well as takeaway 'doggy boxes'.

### Free tools and resources

The [Food Waste Reduction Roadmap Toolkit](#)  from WRAP outlines how to 'target, measure and act' on food waste.

Join WRAP's campaign against food waste, [Guardians of Grub](#) , for access to resources including a 'quick start guide' to reducing food waste, as well as a food-tracking calculator.



# REDUCING PLASTIC WASTE

**Reducing plastic waste is one of the biggest ways your business can fight climate change, and it makes financial sense too.**

From April 2022, there will be a new [plastic packaging tax](#), which will apply to all packaging that does not contain at least 30% recycled plastic. Alternatives to plastic are often re-usable, meaning you buy less and save money. Reducing plastic is also popular with customers, helps you build a good reputation, and reduces your waste disposal costs.

Most plastics are made from fossil fuels, meaning producing plastic contributes towards global warming. Many of the plastic items used in the hospitality sector are designed to be used only once, and then thrown away, creating huge amounts of waste. Plastic can take hundreds or even thousands of years to break down, so the environmental damage is long lasting.

## DID YOU KNOW?

The world produces about 300 million tonnes of plastic waste every year – nearly the weight of the entire human population. See [unep.org](https://www.unep.org)



## Get started by taking action in the following areas:

### 1 Reduce unnecessary plastic

Use as little plastic as possible whilst ensuring produce is protected and there is no impact on food waste.

List all the plastic your business currently uses, and try to identify where you could swap this out for a more sustainable option, or remove it altogether.

In particular, try to avoid [problem plastics](#), which are single-use, unnecessary and can't be recycled. For example, disposable plastic cutlery, polystyrene packaging, plastic straws and stirrers, and disposable plastic plates and bowls should all be avoided when possible.

### 2 Offer reusable packaging

For example, encourage customers to purchase re-usable items like takeaway drinks cups. This creates a new revenue stream whilst also cutting waste. Why not offer a discount to customers who bring their own re-usable items, via [BuyBrent](#), the local rewards app?

### 3 Choose recyclable packaging

Recycling waste is often cheaper than general waste disposal. Brent Council offers a business waste collection service which is provided by our partner [Veolia](#).



# REDUCING PLASTIC WASTE (CONTINUED)



## TOP TIPS

There are some simple switches you can make to reduce plastic waste in your business

Instead of...	Try...
Plastic straws	Paper or re-usable metal straws
Plastic supplier packaging	Re-usable boxes or crates
Plastic takeaway cutlery	Wooden takeaway cutlery
Plastic takeaway cups	Re-fillable or biodegradable cups
Plastic bags	Re-usable or biodegradable bags
Sauce/condiment sachets	Re-fillable sauce bottles

## GO FURTHER

### Talk to your suppliers

Request that suppliers use less plastic packaging, and use recycled and recyclable materials when possible.

### Encourage customers to recycle

Make sure you have clearly labelled recycling bins for customers to use. You could use posters to explain why recycling is important for the planet.

[Recycle Now](#) have free resources for organisations looking to promote recycling.

### Free tools and resources

The [UK Plastics Pact](#) brings together businesses to tackle plastic waste.

The [Single-use plastic factsheet](#) from the Sustainable Hospitality Alliance explores how hotels can reduce plastic waste.

The [Compostable plastic packaging guidance](#) from WRAP provides clarifications around using compostable packaging.

[Plastic Free July](#) offers resources to help businesses go plastic free.

# PURCHASING RESPONSIBLY

Everything you buy has an environmental impact. This means your purchasing decisions are a powerful tool for change.

Buying sustainable products and services is often cheaper, helps improve reputation, and can help get ahead of legal requirements. The bigger the demand for environmentally sustainable products and services, the bigger the market for these will grow, resulting in more options and reduced costs.



## 6 SIMPLE TIPS

Here are some ways you can make sure you are using your money more responsibly, whilst keeping costs to a minimum

**1 Source locally**  
Buying from local suppliers is often cheaper, reduces transport costs and emissions, and supports other local businesses.

**2 Use seasonal ingredients**  
Food that's in season is usually cheaper, fresher and reduces transport costs and emissions. [Eat the Seasons](#) outlines which produce is in season at different points of the year.

**3 Buy less meat and dairy**  
Meat and dairy production accounts for 14.5% of global greenhouse gas emissions. See the [Tackling Climate Change Through Livestock report](#) by The Food and Agriculture Organization. Vegetarian and vegan options are growing in popularity, and ingredients are usually cheaper, than meat and dairy alternatives, meaning a bigger profit margin.

**4 Buy second-hand**  
For items like furniture and decor, this is usually cheaper and reduces waste.

**5 Choose durable and efficient products**  
The cheapest option is not always the best, and can lead to greater costs and waste further down the line. For example, less energy-efficient kitchen equipment may be cheap, but will drive up energy bills.

**6 Minimise waste**  
Only buy what you need. Regularly review orders to correct any over-orders. Choose products with minimal packaging, and where any packaging can be easily re-used or recycled.

# PURCHASING RESPONSIBLY (CONTINUED)

## GO FURTHER

### Ask your suppliers about their environmental credentials

Try to only buy from businesses that have sustainable practices. Watch out for 'greenwashing', where suppliers may claim to be 'eco-friendly', but are unable to back up claims with evidence.

### Look out for these certifications that mark food as more sustainable and/or ethical



#### Red Tractor

This logo is found on British food and drink products that have been responsibly sourced, safely produced, and comes from crops and animals that have been well cared for



#### RSPCA Assured

This logo recognises a high level of animal welfare



#### Linking Environment and Farming (LEAF) Marque

This logo recognises more sustainably farmed products



#### Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)

The MSC blue label can be found on wild fish and seafood from fisheries that are more sustainable



#### Rainforest Alliance Certification

This logo shows that farmers and companies are making their products more sustainable



#### Fairtrade Mark

This logo shows that the product has been fairly produced and traded. It also means that the product is fully traceable from farm to shelf



#### Soil Association Organic Standards

This logo shows that food and drink meets the EU and UK standards on organic products

### Free tools and resources

Julie's Bicycle's [Sustainable Procurement Guide](#) offers practical advice on buying with environmental sustainability in mind.

The [One Planet Plate](#) project from the Sustainable Restaurant Association serves as a guideline to chefs to serve planet-friendly food.

The [SU-EATABLE LIFE](#) project aims to reduce carbon emissions related to food choices.

# NEXT STEPS

## Not sure where to go next on your sustainability journey? Why not...

### 1 Set a goal

The Government is calling on businesses of all sizes to commit to cutting carbon emissions in half by 2030 and reaching 'net zero' emissions by 2050. The [SME Climate Hub](#) provides a one-stop-shop to making a climate commitment and accessing tools and resources to help you on your journey.

### 2 Write a plan

Make a checklist of all the changes you need to make in order to achieve your end goal. From there, you can assign each action a deadline and a member of staff responsible for achieving it. Use your plan to track progress and celebrate success.

### 3 Get involved

We all need to work together in order to reach Brent's goal of carbon neutrality by 2030.

The [Brent Environmental Network](#) is a network of local residents, businesses, community groups and schools. As part of the network, you will receive a monthly newsletter packed with ideas and practical tips for reducing your environmental impact, as well as inspiring stories from local people who are taking on the climate emergency.

### 4 Get in touch

Did this toolkit help your business make sustainable changes? [Get in touch](#) to let us know how for the chance to feature in our newsletters or on our social media.



# GLOSSARY

**Air quality**

A measure of how clean or polluted the air is.

**Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>)**

A gas in the Earth's atmosphere. It occurs naturally, and is also created by human activities such as burning fossil fuels. It is the main greenhouse gas produced by human activity.

**Carbon footprint**

The amount of carbon dioxide produced by an individual or organisation in a given amount of time, or the amount of carbon dioxide produced during the manufacture of a product.

**Carbon neutral**

A process where there is no overall release of carbon dioxide, because the amount of carbon dioxide produced is the same as the amount taken out of the atmosphere.

**Circular economy**

A circular economy is an economic model that involves sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing and recycling existing materials and products as long as possible, to extend the life cycle of products and reduce waste.

**Climate change**

A pattern of change affecting global or regional climate caused by both natural processes and human activity.

**Climate emergency**

A situation in which urgent action is required to reduce or halt climate change and avoid potentially irreversible environmental damage resulting from it.

**Fossil fuels**

Natural resources, such as coal, oil and natural gas, containing hydrocarbons. These fuels are formed in the Earth over millions of years and produce carbon dioxide when burnt.

**Global warming**

The steady rise in global average temperature in recent decades, which scientists believe is largely caused by man-made greenhouse gas emissions.

**Greenhouse gases (GHGs)**

Natural and industrial gases that trap heat from the earth and warm the surface.

**Renewable energy**

Energy created from sources that can be replenished in a short period of time. The five sources used most often are biomass (such as wood and biogas), the movement of water, geothermal (heat from within the Earth), wind, and solar.

Published by Brent Council  
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