

LEANER & GREENER

Guide to Waste Management

How to minimise waste,
lower emissions and reduce
costs in your tourism business

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PART 1: CLIMATE, CARBON AND COSTS

1.1 What does 'Going Green' mean?

'Going Green' is a common term to describe the process of reducing carbon emissions caused directly or indirectly by your business.

'Going Green' means taking intentional action to reduce the carbon emissions of your business, mainly by managing energy, waste, water and transport more responsibly and more efficiently.

'Going Green' means being proactive and:

- a) taking control of your use of energy and water, and setting targets to reduce the amounts you use
- b) taking responsibility for waste and setting targets to reduce the amount of waste generated in your business
- c) taking the actions that will make sure you reach those targets
- d) monitoring and measuring performance and impacts

'Going Green' is a legislative requirement. In June 2019, the UK became the first major economy to commit to a one hundred per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. The Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 has re-affirmed Northern Ireland's commitment to this target. To meet it, every business sector will have to massively reduce its carbon footprint. See Part 3 of this guide for more information on carbon footprint and carbon emissions.

Waste Management actions contribute to the following UN Sustainable Development Goals:



1.2 Leaner & Greener Waste Management

Systematically eliminating, minimising and managing waste will reduce the running costs of your business (making you leaner) and will also reduce carbon emissions from your business (making you greener). It is a win-win situation – it is good for business and it is good for the environment.

1.3 Understanding Carbon Emissions

What is a Business Carbon Footprint?

“A Carbon Footprint measures the total GreenHouse Gas (GHG) emissions caused directly and indirectly by your business.”
(Carbon Trust)

Why is it good to know your Business Carbon Footprint?

“It will help you understand what your key emission sources are and what opportunities you have to reduce them. It gives you an initial benchmark against which you can measure progress.”
(Carbon Trust)

Know your Scopes

Internationally, greenhouse gas emissions are categorised as either Scope 1, Scope 2 or Scope 3.

The following table explains what is included in each of these categories and also summarises the key actions you can take to reduce each one.

You will note that Waste Management contributes to reducing Scope 3 emissions.

What are Scope 1 Emissions?	How can you reduce them in your business?
Emissions your business produces directly e.g., through burning fossil fuels such as gas and oil to run your heating system.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Train staff to use energy and equipment more efficiently 2. Invest in more energy-efficient equipment 3. Use less energy that is derived from fossil fuels – replace fossil fuels with renewable alternatives
What are Scope 2 Emissions?	How can you reduce them in your business?
Emissions your business produces indirectly e.g., when you buy electricity which is produced by burning fossil fuel.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Switch to a certified green electricity supplier 2. Switch to your own renewable energy sources
What are Scope 3 Emissions?	How can you reduce them in your business?
Emissions not directly owned or controlled by your business, but that your business is indirectly responsible for e.g., through the products you buy from suppliers or through the transport of staff and visitors to your premises.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Minimise food waste and general waste 2. Conserve water 3. Source more supplies locally 4. Enable staff and guests to travel sustainably 5. Upgrade insulation in your building

PART 2: A LEANER & GREENER ROADMAP

2.1 A process for managing waste, saving money and reducing carbon emissions in your business

The single most important determinant of successful Leaner & Greener Strategy is the commitment and leadership of the business owners and senior managers. Only senior management can make this topic a strategic business priority. Only senior management can create the conditions for change to happen.

The diagram below shows a good approach to waste management. You will see that it is the same cycle that would apply to the management of any process or system within your business.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Where are you now? | This is your Starting Point. |
| 2. Where do you want to get to? | This is your Target. |
| 3. How will you get there? | This is your Action Plan. |
| 4. How will you keep track of progress? | Use our Waste Volume & Costs Template in the Leaner and Greener Waste Workbook to help you measure and monitor. |
| 5. How will you keep everyone informed? | Schedule times for review and reporting within your business. |



2.2 Best practice step-by-step approach to managing waste

	Action	Top Tips
1	<p>Appoint a Green Champion or Green Team</p>	<p>Appointing a Green Champion or a Green Team is the very first step in reducing waste and costs. In a small business, one person may be responsible for this – a Green Champion. In a larger business, it is wise to bring a team of people together – a Green Team.</p> <p>They must have both the responsibility and authority to drive your cost-saving and carbon-saving ambitions. Team members may also need training, meetings, resources and above all time to lead through the rest of the steps below.</p>
2	<p>Gather data on Annual Waste Volumes (kg) and Waste Costs (£) in your business</p> <p>(Log this data in the Waste Use & Costs template – see Section 4.1)</p>	<p>The very first job of your Green Champion or Green Team is to establish your Starting Point i.e. find out how much waste, in kg, that your business generated in the last year and how much that waste cost (£). You can get this information by reviewing your waste collection bills for the previous year.</p>
3	<p>Establish your benchmark against which you will measure future performance</p> <p>(Enter your Benchmark Measure in the Waste Use & Costs template – see Section 4.1)</p>	<p>Benchmarking allows you to track waste volumes and costs over time. It allows you track your own performance and also to compare your business against others. When you have worked out your annual costs and waste volumes, you can establish kg and cost per person/per metre/per cover/per room/per ticket – whichever benchmark is the most relevant for your business and that you can track consistently over time.</p> <p>Tip: Make note of how you calculate your benchmark so that you and other team members calculate it in the same way each time. This is the only way to ensure you have comparable data.</p>
4	<p>Conduct a Waste Audit:</p> <p>(Find handy tables and some tips in Sections 4.2 and 4.3. You will also find these in the Leaner and Greener Waste Workbook)</p>	<p>You need to understand where waste is generated in your business and how waste is handled in your business. A Waste Audit will help you do this. There are 3 elements in the Waste Audit:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Inspect all bins and the bin collection area ii. Walk around your business and observe the impact of staff and customer behaviour iii. If relevant, conduct a Food Waste Survey
5	<p>Analyse data and develop your Waste Action Plan (See Section 4.4)</p>	<p>By this stage, you will have great information on where waste is generated in your business, how it is handled, and how much it costs. You can now determine the best ways to eliminate and reduce waste without impacting on the visitor experience or business processes. The plan should include immediate and short-term actions as well as medium to long-term ones. It is important to set goals that are specific and measurable. Be clear on who is responsible for each action and the deadline by which it is to be complete.</p>

PART 3: THE WASTE HIERARCHY

3.1 Understanding the Waste Hierarchy

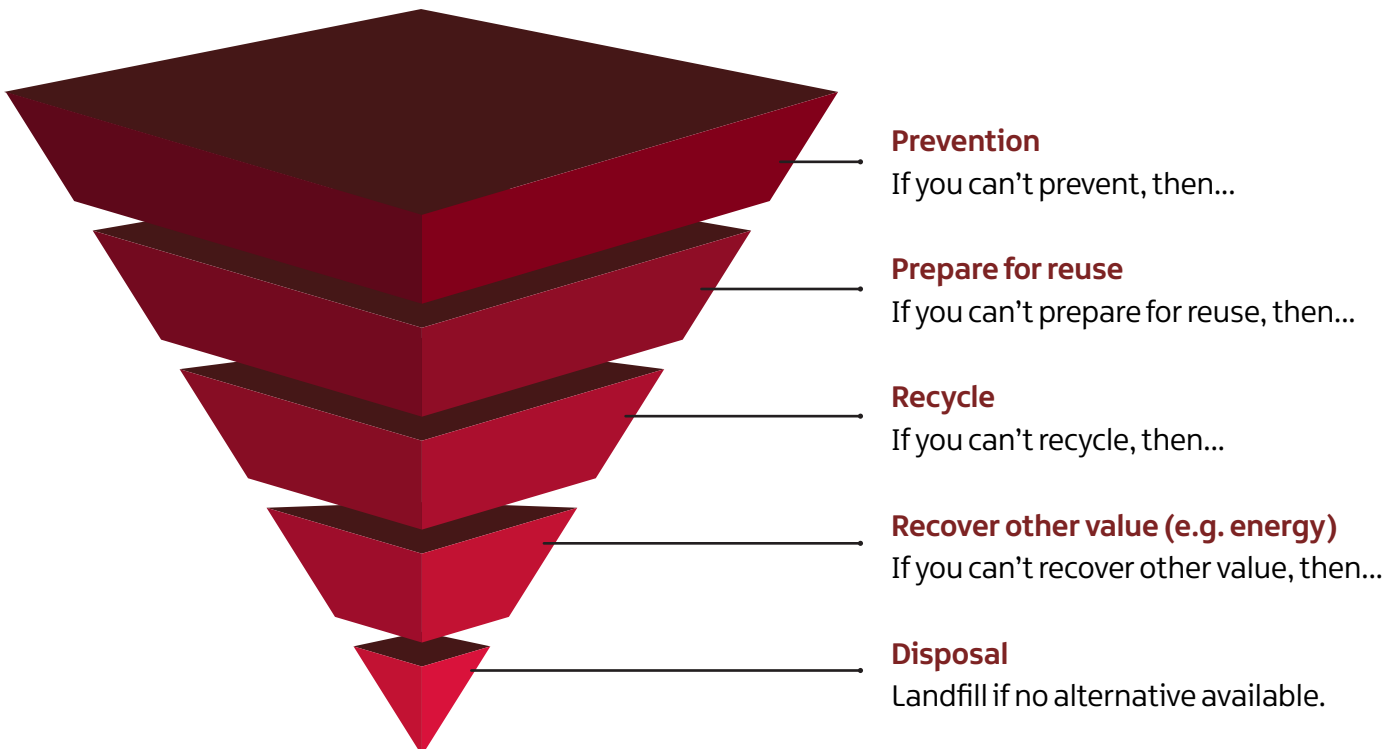
The Waste Hierarchy ranks waste management options according to what is best for the environment. It gives top priority to preventing waste in the first place.

When waste is created, it gives priority to preparing it for re-use, then recycling, then recovery, and last of all disposal (e.g. landfill or incineration without energy recovery).

Source: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/doe/waste-guidance-applying-waste-hierarchy-2015.pdf>

The Waste Hierarchy: Businesses are expected to take all reasonable steps to apply the Waste Hierarchy to the management of waste.

The goal is to minimise the amount of waste your business sends to landfill through implementing prevention, reduction and recycling strategies.



Source: <https://www.netregs.org.uk/environmental-topics/waste/duty-of-care-your-waste-responsibilities/new-waste-duties-for-businesses-in-northern-ireland/>

3.2 Applying the Waste Hierarchy

As a last resort, materials that cannot be re-used, recycled or re-purposed must be landfilled and incinerated. Waste in landfill continues to cause carbon emissions and also generates air, soil, water, noise and odour pollution. Use these 4 strategies to minimise waste to landfill from your business:

1. REFUSE WASTE COMING IN TO YOUR BUSINESS

- Refuse unnecessary product packaging
- Request re-usable or returnable containers
- Buy in bulk
- Eliminate single-use packaging e.g. sauces and condiments

2. REDUCE WASTE IN YOUR OWN OPERATIONS

For each item of waste that ends up in your bin, ask:

- How essential is this item in delivering our product or service?
- Are there alternatives we haven't thought of before?

3. RE-USE AND RE-PURPOSE

- Repair or refurbish old items or spare parts
- Donate items no longer in use
- If you provide food, consider participating in <https://toogoodtogo.co.uk>

4. RE-CYCLE

- Commit to a formal recycling programme
- Provide segregated bins that are convenient to access
- Display easy-to-understand labels on each bin (use images rather than words)
- Train staff on waste segregation guidelines
- Compost food waste where possible

TOP TIP: ENGAGE STAFF

- Invest in communication, training and monitoring
- Brainstorm with your staff how your Top 5 waste items can be eliminated, reduced, re-used or recycled
- Recognise and reward great suggestions and the impact of staff actions on waste volumes and costs

FOOD WASTE AS A PRIORITY

It has been reported that Food Waste contributes one sixth of all global emissions. Food waste is also highly costly to your business. You must account for not just the collection cost, but also the cost of purchase, delivery, refrigeration, preparation and service.

Some priority actions are:

- Inspect food bins regularly to identify foods where excess quantities have been purchased, which goes off too quickly or that is most often not eaten by guests.
- Implement an effective stock rotation system that reduces spoilage
- Review portion sizes
- Find creative ways to use food trimmings
- Set up a composting programme

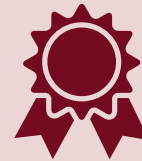
Four reasons why measuring and monitoring your waste management progress is important:

1



Your ability to report accurately and memorably on your successes in reducing waste depends on how well you keep track of your key numbers.

2



To apply for independent certification, you must provide data on the amount of waste generated in your business and be able to demonstrate improvements as a result of actions you take.

3



To apply for and win green awards, you must provide evidence of improvements. Your data is that evidence.

4



Sharing data with your staff makes the Waste Management Project meaningful and transparent.

When the data reveals the impact of actions on the consumption and cost figures, your team will be motivated and inspired to continue with the journey.

PART 4: USEFUL TEMPLATES FROM THE LEANER & GREENER WASTE WORKBOOK

4.1 Waste Volume and Costs Template

Benchmark Measure:						
LANDFILL BY WEIGHT						
LAST YEAR						
2022 Total Landfill kg						
2022 Total Landfill Cost						
2022 cost/kg	#DIV/0!					
	Total KG	Total Cost	Cost/kg	Benchmark KG	Benchmark Cost	Comments
January			#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	
February			#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	
March			#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	
April			#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	
May			#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	
June			#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	
July			#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	
August			#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	
September			#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	
October			#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	
November			#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	
December			#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	
TOTAL	0	0.00				

What is this template for?

Use this template to note your 2022 waste baseline and benchmark and then to measure and monitor on a monthly basis going forward.

Why should you use it?

This template helps you get clear on how much waste is generated in your business and how much that waste costs. It allows you to monitor waste volumes and costs year-on-year and month-on-month.

How do you fill it out?

You only need to complete the cells shaded in green:

You must complete a separate table for each of landfill waste, recycling waste and food waste.

2022 Total m3

Get this data from your 2022 bills

2022 Total Cost

Get this data from your 2022 bills.

Benchmark Measure

Insert a unit of activity against which you will benchmark e.g., number of customers/covers/tickets/transactions/rooms/square metres. Select the benchmark activity that is most appropriate for your business. This allows you to work out how much waste is generated per customer, per ticket, per transaction, per room, per square metre.

Volume kg

Insert the volume of landfill waste in kg. Get this data on your monthly bill.

Comments

Note anything that happened in this month that may have affected the amount of waste generated. This will be useful when comparing year-on-year.

4.2 Bin Audit Table

Bin Audit Table			
Week Period	Location	Most Disposed Item	Potential Solution
23.01.2023-30.01.2023	Bedroom	Takeaway Flyers	Laminate flyers with sticker asking guests not to throw away
etc...			

What is this template for?

Use this table to note your observations during a Bin Audit.

Tips

- Set aside time to walk around your business and focus exclusively on bins.
- Look into each bin and empty onto the floor where necessary.
- Note what is the most disposed item in each bin.
- Simply write down what you observe and where you believe improvements could be made.
- Use this table to collate data from all areas of your business. You will quickly see the priority items for attention.
- Try not to blame or judge – during the audit phase, you are just gathering information.



4.3 Walkaround Waste Audit Template

Walkaround Waste Audit		
Area	What I notice	What could improve here
Dining Room	We are using single serve butter and jam portions	Switch to dished butter and jam
Toilet Areas		
Kitchen		
Bedrooms		
Garden		
Waste Collection Area	3 bins are ready for collection but none of the 3 is full	Remove one bin
etc...		

What is this template for?

Use this table to note your observations during a during a Walkaround Waste Audit.

Tips

- Set aside time to walk around your business and focus exclusively on waste that is being generated.
- Just observe how things are done in your business on a day-to-day basis.
- Ask yourself ‘Where are we generating waste unnecessarily?’
- Consider where changes in materials or standard practice could lead to significant savings.
- Simply write down what you observe and where you believe improvements could be made.
- Try not to blame or judge – during the audit phase, you are just gathering information.



4.4 Waste Reduction Action Plan Template

Waste Reduction Action Plan				
No.	Action	Responsibility	Deadline	Notes
1	<i>Do a complete bin inspection throughout the building</i>	<i>Green Team Leader</i>	<i>15.02.2023</i>	<i>Use the Bin Audit Table to record</i>

What is this template for?

This template allows you to document a practical Action Plan to reduce waste and reduce costs.

Why should you use it?

This creates a single document where all actions that you can commit to are listed. It establishes priorities and responsibilities within the team, as well as timelines for action.

How do you fill it out?

Action: State the action you will take

Responsibility: Clearly identify who is responsible for delivering on this action.

Deadline: Set a specific date when this action is targeted for completion.

Notes: Add any information here that is relevant to the particular action e.g., additional resources required.
(The first line is filled in as an example)



PART 5: SUPPORTS

Tourism NI

Growing Greener Experiences Together

<https://www.tourismni.com/business-guidance/business-support/sustainability/>

Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA)

Waste and Resources Legislation Guidelines

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/topics/waste/waste-guidance>

Waste Hierarchy Guidance

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/waste-hierarchy-guidance>

Invest Northern Ireland

Waste Minimisation – Efficient Management for Cost Savings, A Guide for Businesses in Northern Ireland

<https://www.investni.com/sites/default/files/documents/static/library/invest-ni/documents/waste-minimisation-efficient-management-for-cost-savings.pdf>

NetRegs

Environmental Guidance for your Business in Northern Ireland and Scotland

<https://www.netregs.org.uk>

Carbon Trust

A Guide to Carbon Footprinting for your Business

<https://www.carbontrust.com/resources/a-guide-carbon-footprinting-for-businesses>

Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful

Carbon Literacy Programme

<https://keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.etinu.net/cgi-bin/generic?instanceID=73>

Business in the Community

Responsible Business and Strategy

<https://www.bitc.org.uk/responsible-business-and-strategy/>