

VISITLANARKSHIRE BUSINESS SUPPORT
SUSTAINABILITY RESOURCE GUIDES

Food & Drink

How to raise your sustainable
food & drink standards to
benefit your business



VisitLanarkshire.com

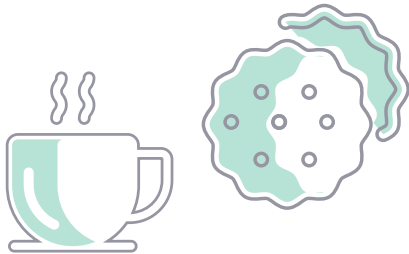
Green
Tourism



About this guide

If food and drink is part of your offering – which it is for most businesses across Lanarkshire’s tourism sector – adopting sustainable practices and standards can deliver economic advantages. Not to mention sustainable practices being better for our planet.

This guide explores how you can raise your sustainable food and drink standards, focusing on five key areas.



Five ways being sustainable benefits your business

1. It attracts visitors

Lanarkshire has a proud history of providing some of the finest sustainable ingredients for Scotland's kitchens and dining tables. Today it remains a major force in Scotland's food and drink industry from beef to breweries, dairies to distilleries, powered by provenance and passion. With more and more tourists seeking out locally sourced food, leverage Lanarkshire's rich local pickings to attract foodies from far and wide. Find out more from the [Lanarkshire Larder](#).

2. It appeals to customers

Sustainable food and drink of course does not necessarily mean vegan or plant-based (in Lanarkshire, we're immensely proud of our dairy produce, for example) but with nearly half the UK consumers leaning towards plant-based and sustainable choices, by introducing more plant-based options you'll be catering to a growing and significant, market.¹

¹ 'Consumers move to healthier, plant-based foods while cutting meat consumption' - Food Manufacturer, 2022

3. It supports the local economy

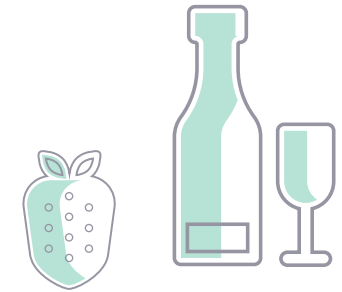
Sourcing locally brings bottom-line benefits but by supporting other businesses, it benefits Lanarkshire's tourism sector, and the region, providing employment and fostering wealth creation and retention. Local sourcing reduces food miles – and so, your business's carbon footprint. You could consider an accreditation scheme that highlights your use of local produce such as VisitScotland's [Taste Our Best](#).

4. It saves costs through waste reduction

Tourism businesses can cut down food waste – and costs through measures such as portion control (see below), composting, and donating excess food are all effective strategies for cutting down food waste – and the associated management expenses. Notably, wasted food incurs significant industry costs annually. Get further advice from organisations such as [Zero Waste Scotland](#) and [Guardians of Grub](#).

5. It enhances brand reputation

Not all our region's tourism businesses offering food and drink can say that their sourcing is sustainable, that they support local suppliers, or that they uphold the highest sustainability standards throughout their operations. Here lies the opportunity to differentiate your business by standing out from the crowd by wearing your sustainability commitment on your sleeve, which will build your business's reputation with customers and peers across the sector.



Six ways to be more sustainable

1. Think local, fresh, and seasonal

Where possible, obtain ingredients locally, which means you reduce emissions, reduce your carbon footprint, and save on 'food miles.' Support farmers and other local producers while benefiting from fresher and tastier ingredients, with which your chef could even curate a special seasonal local menu.

2. Fight food waste

To combat food waste, implement strategies such as portion control, avoiding overstock, proper stock rotation, and offering shorter menus. Encourage diners to order in advance, offer take-home 'doggy bags', and donate excess food to local charities. Audit what comes back on plates to inform more efficient buying and weigh your food waste as a benchmark for reduction.

3. Offer plant-based options

Respond to the increasing trend for plant-based diets and the associated demand for plant-based options when eating out, so experiment by enhancing your menu choices with good quality, locally sourced seasonal vegetables. Plant-based generally means more sustainable than meat-based alternatives – and local, seasonal produce can be cheaper to source as it incurs lower transport costs.

4. Embrace organic

Choose organic options (involving no harmful pesticides or artificial fertilisers) for a more sustainable, more health-conscious approach – one which supports the increasing number of Lanarkshire farmers who are switching to regenerative and agro-ecological farming methods which not only produce great products but are better for the land.

5. Use reusable packaging

Reduce waste (and costs) by opting for reusable packaging such as glass jars, metal tins, and cloth bags. Additionally, encourage customers to bring their own reusable containers – which today is standard practice for more and more people.

6. Provide training

Explore training opportunities – both for you and – if you have them – your kitchen staff to upskill on how to address food waste. Organisations like Zero Waste Scotland offer initiatives that help businesses assess and manage food waste.

