

VISITLANARKSHIRE BUSINESS SUPPORT
SUSTAINABILITY RESOURCE GUIDES

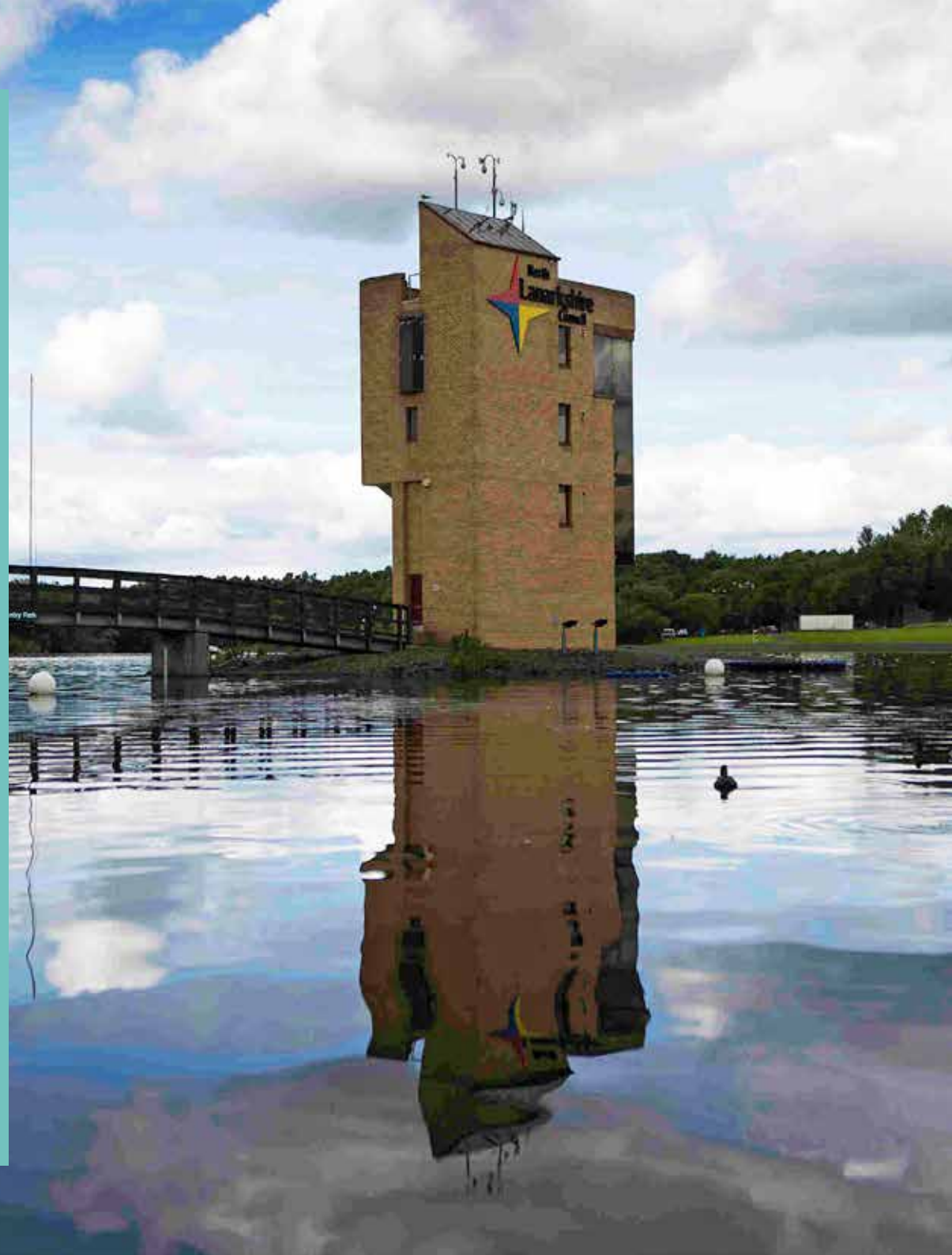
Waste management

How to manage waste better
for people, places, and planet
– and your tourism business



[VisitLanarkshire.com](https://www.visitlanarkshire.com)

Green
Tourism



About this guide

In 2019, tourism in the UK generated nearly 24 million tonnes of waste, including food and myriad materials from plastic to paper.¹

This is not only bad for our environment, but also for business. In this guide, we look at the operational, economic, and environmental benefits of better waste management – and offer some tips on how tourism businesses can manage waste in ways that are better for people, places, and our planet.



¹ UK Tourism Waste & Litter Statistics

Five reasons why waste management matters to your business

1. Environmental impact

Every year, 1.3 million tonnes of packaging and 0.66 million tonnes of other ‘non-food’ wastes including items such as disposable kitchen paper and newspapers are discarded by the UK’s hospitality sector. That adds up to a significant environmental impact. Better waste management can reduce the amount of greenhouse gas emissions linked to the collection, transportation, and ultimate disposal whether through incineration or landfill.

2. Environmental compliance

Complying with the [Waste \(Scotland\) Regulations \(2014\)](#) ensures that your business avoids legal issues, fines, and potential damage to its reputation.

3. Social Responsibility

Taking responsibility for your business’ waste stream will help to limit the amount of materials ending up in landfill and therefore passing on problems to future generations to deal with. It will also help reduce demand for new virgin materials thereby alleviating pressure on vulnerable ecosystems.

4. Costs

Wasted food alone costs the UK's hospitality industry £3.2 billion a year – that's an average of £10k per business.² Well-organised waste reduction and disposal and recycling programs and processes covering everything from food to fittings contribute to overall operational efficiency – and can create cost savings.

5. Reputation

An increasing proportion of tourists favour businesses with sustainable credentials. According to Booking.com's 2023 Sustainable Travel Report, 43% of tourists are willing to pay extra to stay at an accommodation with a sustainable certification such as **Green Tourism**, which is aligned with UN sustainability goals – including waste.³ Tourism businesses that can evidence such credentials have a competitive advantage in this market – and are more likely to attract responsible and mindful tourists.



² WRAP Hospitality and Food Service

³ Booking.com 2023 Sustainable Travel Report

Six ways to manage waste more sustainably

1. Responsibility

The first step to managing waste more sustainably is awareness of the issue – followed by taking responsibility for it. If you have the capacity within your business, assign a person or set up a group dedicated to addressing your waste issues.

2. Prevention

Waste prevention is defined as the measures taken before a product becomes waste, whether through careful procurement, recycling, reusing, or repurposing. Careful attention to sustainable procurement reduces the need for new purchases in the first place. If possible, choose recycled, repurposed, and repairable equipment and appliances in alignment with the [UK Government's 'right to repair' regulations](#) which will extend product lifespans. Recycle yourself by donating items to charity.

3. Monitoring

Monitoring waste requires defining where the waste is being generated to be able to then look at how it can be reduced. Record the amount and type of waste is generated by each area of your business (it helps to use clear bin bags for easy visibility) and measure it by weight – or record waste contractor uplifts. Also, how much waste is generated by visitors? For example, if you serve food and drink, monitor what is coming back on plates and adjust your serving sizes.

4. Planning

Make waste reduction plan with targets and timescales. Review your plan periodically and iterate your approach if it's not achieving results.



5. Reduction (products)

If it applies to your business, avoid small-volume containers and single-use sachets of condiments, soaps, toiletries, and cleaning products, and use refillable pump dispensers, to reduce your plastic waste. Recycle single bars of soap through companies like [Clean Conscience](#).

6. Reduction (food)

Planning is key to avoiding food waste, e.g. stock, storage, attention to use-by dates, portion control, and using pre-ordering. Get great tips from [Guardians of Grub](#).

By implementing these strategies, you'll be surprised just how significantly you can reduce waste in your business – and your life – and so, saving money and resources, and contributing to a cleaner, more sustainable future for all.