

Responsible Hospitality Guide

Simple actions hospitality staff can take to support people and the environment.

If you are working for a Travelife Certified property, or a property that is currently in the process of becoming certified, then you can be proud that you work for an organisation that must achieve 100% compliance with one of the toughest accommodation sustainability standards in the world.

We verify this compliance through a full site audit of each property every 2 years and have found that organisations that have the most success with sustainability are the ones that have the full support of their staff and guests, all of whom are willing to make small changes and take simple actions that collectively result in meaningful impacts on the local area and the people who live there.

In this guide we have suggested some of those small changes and simple actions that you can take. If you have any more ideas about how your workplace can be more sustainable, then be sure to provide that feedback to your employer.

Supporting your community

Respecting people: It is important that people in your community feel the benefits of tourism, and that they are important to your organisation. You can help by treating local people with the same level of respect and courtesy that you give to guests. Please do not take any photos or videos of people without their permission, especially if you intend to post these online. Remember that parents or legal guardians must give permission for children.

Protecting important cultural or historical sites: These sites could be buildings or locations involving history, culture, religion or science. They could also be areas considered sacred by indigenous peoples. It is important that you are aware of these sites in your community, and how to protect and respect them when you visit. Not only are they important to people in your area, but they could also be part of the reason why tourists visit in the first place.

Protecting the local way of life: Tourism can provide important economic and social benefits to people, but only if it does not negatively affect their safety, customs, traditions or way of life. You can help by following any guidelines given to you about how to keep people in your community safe, especially the most vulnerable. Also, if you are not already familiar with all of the customs and traditions in the area, then we encourage you to spend time learning about them so that you know how to respect them.

Protecting vulnerable people: Travelife Certified properties must provide you with regular training about how to identify and report signs of child exploitation or abuse. We also encourage you to follow any guidelines you are given about how to identify and report the signs that adults are being trafficked, abused or exploited.

Protecting & supporting the environment

Waste: There is a lot of waste generated in the hospitality sector and you may not realise that in addition to harming biodiversity, waste is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. You can help to reduce these by following the guidelines given to you about how to properly handle waste at work, particularly when it comes to recycling.

Food: Around 30% of all food produced globally is never eaten yet food production produces 30% of all of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. You can help by following any guidelines you are given about how to prevent food waste. If composting is available then be sure to use it properly as this can reduce the greenhouse emissions from food waste by over 90%.

Heating & cooling: Whenever we open a door to a space where the temperature is regulated, such as a heated office, air-conditioned guest room, fridge or oven, air from the inside escapes and air from

the outside comes inside. This means that equipment like fridges, freezers, ovens and air-conditioners have to work hard to regulate the temperature again and the longer a door or window is left open, the more energy is used to regulate the temperature. You can make a big difference by taking a moment to close doors to any of these spaces.

Monitoring room temperatures: You can help to reduce emissions from heating and cooling systems by not adjusting thermostats more than is necessary, turning off fans when they are not needed and remembering to turn the air-conditioning off whenever you have doors or windows open (unless this happens automatically).

Using equipment efficiently: An important part of reducing emissions and pollution is being sure that appliances and other equipment are operated correctly and are switched off when not in use unless there is a health and safety reason why they need to be kept running.

Conserving water: This is a precious resource and there are always greenhouse gas emissions created from the sourcing and disposal of water. You can help by remembering to never leave water running when it is not immediately being used and by making use of any low-flush options on toilets.

Commuting: If you drive yourself to work, you can help ease congestion, pollution, parking problems and emissions by looking at more efficient options such as ridesharing or using public transport if it is available and safe to do so.

Protecting natural areas: There could be sensitive or important natural areas in your location, such as rivers, lakes, beaches, reefs, forests, grasslands, sand dunes or wetlands. These areas might contain important ecosystems that help to protect your location from things like fires and floods. They may also help to remove carbon from the atmosphere, support wildlife and, in many cases, support people by providing things like fresh water and food. You can help to protect these areas by following any guidelines given to you about things like how to safely use any chemicals that might cause harm, such as those found in fuels, oils or cleaning products, and how to properly manage waste. When you visit these areas please make sure you follow any rules that are in place to help protect them.

Protecting wildlife: Even though this can be a fun and unique experience, feeding or petting wildlife, including birds and fish, can be very harmful to them. It can mean they are eating food that is not good for them, are being exposed to viruses and bacteria they cannot cope with or are simply becoming too reliant on or trusting of people.