

INCREASING SUSTAINABILITY AWARENESS



Green
Tourism

Pilgrim Way Near Markinch | VisitScotland / Damian Shields

About this guide

Raising awareness about sustainability is not only good for people, places, and our planet, but it's also good for your business. This guide shows you how to raise awareness of how you are raising the sustainability standard – and encourage others to follow your 'green' lead.

Why is it important?

Raising awareness of your business's commitment to sustainability standards has many benefits, from attracting customers to improving your reputation – and possibly reducing costs. For example, according to the Department of Energy & Climate Change, the average SME business could reduce energy costs by up to 25% through energy efficiency measures and behavioural change.¹



Pittenweem Harbour | VisitScotland / Kenny Lam

¹ Research to Assess the Barriers and Drivers to Energy Efficiency in Small and Medium Sized Enterprises. Department of Energy and Climate Change, 2014

Six ways to increase awareness

1. Engage your staff

Your staff can make a big impact on the sustainability performance of your business – if they understand best practices – and the reasons for practicing them. Source sustainability training for your staff and make it part of your staff inductions. Encourage employee engagement by assigning a green champion or create a 'green team' to drive your sustainable initiatives and projects and identify new green ideas and solutions.

2. Make a green action plan

A 'green action plan' is a working document that monitors your business's progress on implementing sustainability objectives and hitting your goals. Share it with your whole team so you all have mutual targets and objectives.

3. Develop your green purchasing policy

What goods and services you buy, whom you buy them from, and how you use them, reflects your values. Make your green procurement policy public to show that you have an eco-friendly process for selecting suppliers and services – use our handy Supplier [Screening Template](#) and [Procurement Checklist](#).

4. Source specialist advice

Source specialist sustainability advice and training to keep your business up to date with legislation, technology, and improvement opportunities. You can get free advice through government agencies such as Wrap, SEPA, IEMA, Zero Waste Scotland, the Carbon Trust, and the Energy Saving Trust.

5. Communicate with your customers

Raise awareness of sustainability measures and standards with your customers by creating a responsible customer – or guest – charter. Display it on your premises or in a welcome pack with tips on what guests can do to help you reach your sustainability goals.

6. Promote sustainability in your community

Get involved in your local community to spread the sustainability word. Support local causes and social and environmental charities by fund-raising or donating prizes, staff time or meeting space in your venue – great for motivating staff and promoting your business.

Six top tips for getting started

1. Establish a baseline

Review each area of your business to identify your environmental impacts. Where can you avoid or reduce waste? How do your products and services impact the environment?

How can you improve use of energy, water, and raw material. Take the [Green Tourism GreenCheck](#) quiz to help you find your baseline.

2. Create an action plan or programme of activities

From the review identify where you need to improve on your sustainability performance. Give priority to legislative requirements, followed by areas that have a high cost/high environmental impact, low implementation cost/quick implementation time.

3. Declare your commitment to sustainability

Publicly declare your commitment to becoming a more sustainable organisation by developing a sustainability policy. Display it online and in your business. Download the [Sustainability Template](#) and see our [Communication guide](#) for tips and advice.

4. Be honest and transparent

There's nothing wrong with saying that you're not perfect (yet!) or that you have just started your journey – it's better to avoid 'greenwashing'. A recent study found that nearly a third of consumers expect most environmental claims from businesses and brands to be "slightly exaggerated" – and 71% assume that most claims are probably not checked by an independent party.²

5. Share your achievements

Use social media platforms, your website, and internal communications for regular, positive messaging to keep momentum and maintain interest.

6. Work with others

Share ideas, initiatives, and best practice with your stakeholders to find innovative solutions to environmental problems. We can't improve sustainability awareness if we keep our knowledge to ourselves!



FIFE COUNCIL: <https://industry.welcometofife.com/>

GREEN TOURISM: <https://www.green-tourism.com/>



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² '7 in 10 Brits don't believe environmental claims by businesses are credible'. Edie, 2022