

# TIPS FOR ELIMINATING SINGLE-USE PLASTICS

Reducing single-use plastics is a key objective for the Irish hotels sector as part of our commitment to delivering Ireland's [Pledge on Plastic Packaging Waste](#) in association with REPAK. The Irish Hotels Federation (IHF) encourages all hotels and guesthouses to support this initiative and implement a Single-use Plastic Reduction Programme across their business.

This involves reviewing all areas of operations to establish achievable goals and working with suppliers to identify alternative products while maintaining the quality of your guest experience. Throughout the process, it is important to involve employees as much as possible and communicate your sustainability measures positively to customers, many of whom are increasingly aware of the need to reduce plastic waste.

## Your Single-Use Plastic Reduction Plan

We encourage you to consider the following measures, which may be of assistance as a starting point in creating your programme to reduce single-use plastics:

### 1. ASSESS

Carry out a business-wide assessment across all departments to identify and quantify all single-use plastic items.

### 2. TARGET

Set achievable targets to eliminate any unnecessary items. Replace other items where possible with reusable alternatives.

### 3. COMMUNICATE

Communicate and engage with guests and employees to ensure they are aware of and can support the positive steps your business is taking.

### 4. MONITOR

Track and measure progress on a regular basis, trialling alternative products and adapting measures as required.

## Top Tips for Hotels

- **Guestroom toiletries/amenities** – consider using larger, recyclable dispensers/bottles for shampoo & shower gel and replacing items such as cotton buds with compostable alternatives. Consider making single-use toiletries only available on request.
- **Bottled water** – provide water for meeting rooms in refillable glass bottles/carafes. Consider installing water dispensers close to guestrooms for guests to avail of.
- **Plastic cups** – replace single-use cups with reusable hard plastic or glass cups. If required, consider using paper wrapping. Eliminate single-use plastic cups in employee areas.
- **Straws and stirrers** – minimise their use and replace with reusable or compostable (e.g. paper/wooden) alternatives. Consider making single-use items only available on request.
- **Butter, jams and sauces** – use ramekin/ceramic dishes instead of single portion sachets/packages. Ensure appropriate dish/portion size is used to avoid food waste.
- **Take-away coffee** – provide recyclable or compostable cups and consider incentives/discounts for customers who bring their own reusable cup.
- **Coasters** – provide paper (non-plastic) coasters or reusable alternatives for meeting rooms, e.g. coasters made from leather or cork.

# SINGLE-USE PLASTIC REDUCTION PROGRAMME

## ...Top Tips continued

- **Branded pens** – consider replacing with pencils.
- **Hotel carrier bags / gift bags** – consider replacing with reusable or paper-based alternatives.
- **Bin liners** – avoid where not required and consider using compostable alternatives where necessary for food bins.
- **Cleaning products** – consider using refillable flasks/bottles for cleaning materials bought in bulk.
- **Supplier packaging** – engage with suppliers to reduce unnecessary plastic packaging on products and deliveries.
- **Recyclable alternatives** – where it is not possible to eliminate a particular single-use plastic item, ensure it can be readily recycled.

## Communication & Engagement

### Guests/Customers

- Good communication with customers is essential as part of your sustainability programme. Consider how best to ensure your guests are aware of the initiatives you are taking to eliminate single-use plastics throughout your hotel.
- For example, consider including tailored messaging on tent cards in guestrooms and bathrooms, signs in lifts and bar areas as well updates on your website and emails.
- Enhance your overall brand by communicating your achievements and commitment to the environment through your marketing and social media channels.

### Employees

- Ensure all employees are fully on board from the start and aware of the important role they can play in ensuring the programme is a success.
- Consider creating a 'Green Team' to collaborate across departments, drive specific initiatives and identify areas for further improvement.
- Provide training as required and empower employees to act as strong ambassadors when talking to guests about your environmental initiatives.

### Suppliers

- Engage with suppliers to identify the most appropriate products for your business as alternatives to single-use plastics.
- Work with suppliers on an ongoing basis to identify further opportunities to reduce and eliminate unnecessary plastic, including in packaging.