



COST MANAGEMENT SUPPORTS

ENERGY

COST MANAGEMENT TOOLKIT

Immediate steps to reduce energy costs

- ✓ Access quick wins to cut energy spend
- ✓ Adopt simple ways to reduce waste
- ✓ Take control of your energy uses



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Message from Fáilte Ireland's CEO



Energy has become one of the most significant and unpredictable costs for tourism and hospitality businesses. As prices continue to fluctuate, managing energy spend is now a critical part of protecting margins and maintaining performance.

At Fáilte Ireland, we recognise the impact this is having on businesses and teams across the sector. While energy prices may be outside your control, there are practical steps

within your day-to-day operations that can make a meaningful difference over time.

Small, consistent actions, from how energy is used across your business to how equipment is managed and monitored, can help reduce waste and improve control. Building visibility of your energy use, introducing simple routines and maintaining consistency across your team can all support better outcomes while maintaining a high-quality customer experience.

This **Energy Cost Management Toolkit** is part of our new **Cost Management Supports**, designed to help busy teams focus on what matters most. It provides clear, practical steps you can apply at your own pace to better manage and reduce your energy costs.

If you would like more tailored support, our **Cost Management Clinics** offer one-to-one, free and confidential guidance with experienced advisors to help you explore opportunities within your own business.

We're here to support you with practical steps that make a difference, helping you strengthen your business and move forward with confidence.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading 'Caroline Bocquel'.

Caroline Bocquel
CEO Fáilte Ireland



The reality check for energy costs

Rising energy costs are squeezing profit margins for tourism and hospitality businesses. Many businesses are already feeling the impact through reduced profitability, even where sales remain strong. The most effective response is not to wait, but to take control of what can be managed day-to-day.

Businesses that do not act, risk gradual margin erosion that becomes harder to recover over time.

THE OPPORTUNITY FOR ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Substantial savings often exist in your business waiting to be realised by low cost operational and behaviour changes. You can quickly reduce energy costs by tightening current practices and implementing a small number of focused, no- or low-cost actions. This Energy Management toolkit focuses on 10 key areas where simple, practical actions can have the greatest impact on your business.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

This toolkit combines a short checklist and more detailed advice across ten core areas that impact energy cost management. The checklist at the start of each section is designed as a quick-reference action plan for businesses aiming to cut energy costs. Work through each action step-by-step, checking off each item as you complete it.

By focusing on these 10 core areas, businesses can take simple, practical steps to reduce waste, improve buying decisions, tighten controls and strengthen overall profitability. Keep the checklist visible, involve your team and review it regularly to support ongoing progress.

Energy Cost Management Checklist

1 ENERGY TARIFFS & SUPPLIER CONTRACTS Pay the right price for energy 	
 ACTION	 CHECK
Review current electricity, gas and fuel tariffs	
Check contract end dates (avoid rollover rates)	
Compare supplier rates or use an energy broker	
Check bills for penalties (Maximum Import Capacity (MIC) breaches, excess wattless)	
Negotiate or switch supplier where possible	

Priority action

Check that you are on the best energy rates. When contracts end, compare your current deal to other suppliers' offers – either contact providers directly or through an energy broker. Do not allow contracts to roll over at default rates.

TIME TO COMPLETE: 5–15 minutes per supplier to gather recent bills and use a comparison website; additional time if you decide to call suppliers or brokers to negotiate.

KEY INFO NEEDED: Your latest energy bills (showing usage and unit rates), current contract end dates, check for any penalties on your bill (MIC breaches and Excess Wattless can often lead to waste).

POTENTIAL SAVING: Switching suppliers or negotiating via a broker can reduce your energy costs by roughly 10–20% (energy tariffs can jump by up to 25% after an initial contract period).

RESOURCES: Use price comparison tools to check current market rates and consult the regulator's site ([CRU.ie](https://www.cru.ie)) for a full list of licensed energy suppliers.





2

ENERGY AUDITS & SUPPORTS

Know where your energy is going



 ACTION	 CHECK
Check eligibility for SEAI Energy Audit Voucher	
Apply for the €2,000 SSEA energy audit	
Agree audit scope (include no- & low-cost actions)	
Confirm timeline for audit and report delivery	
Review recommended actions and priorities	

Priority action

Schedule a high-quality energy audit of your premises to identify tailored cost-saving measures. SMEs can avail of the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland's €2,000 Energy Audit Voucher which often covers all the audit cost. Before choosing an auditor, have a clear discussion about what is included. The scope should include no cost and low-cost actions. Agree a timeline for the audit and report before appointing the auditor.

TIME TO COMPLETE: 5 minutes to check eligibility and apply for the SEAI voucher online. A few hours on-site for the auditor to conduct the audit.

KEY INFO NEEDED: CRO number, energy spend > €10k/year to qualify.

POTENTIAL BENEFIT: A professional audit will pinpoint no cost, low cost and bigger upgrades, typically

finding immediate savings opportunities. It also provides an action plan with estimated costs and payback for upgrades.

RESOURCES: Check the SEAI website's "Energy Audits for SMEs" page [here](#).

3

MEASUREMENT & PERFORMANCE TRACKING

Measure to manage



 ACTION	 CHECK
Gather recent energy bills and meter data	
Establish an energy baseline	
Track simple KPIs (e.g. kWh per guest night / m ²)	
Set realistic reduction targets	
Review performance monthly	

Priority action

Establishing a clear approach to measurement is essential for ongoing cost management. Record your baseline by collecting utility bills and note usage patterns over recent months. Define specific targets for energy reduction that are ambitious yet realistic. Identify relevant KPIs, such as kWh use per guest night, per square foot, or per meal served, normalise and compare performance over time and across the business.

TIME TO COMPLETE: 30 minutes. Gather recent utility data and set up a basic spreadsheet tracking KPIs. Ongoing: 5–10 minutes per month to update figures and review progress.

KEY INFO NEEDED: Access to utility bills, meter readings, and operational data (such as occupancy rates or production volumes). Decide which KPIs are most meaningful for your business, these should align with your main energy drivers.

POTENTIAL BENEFIT: Regular measurement and tracking make it easy to spot anomalies, verify savings from changes and show progress. When KPIs are visible, everyone can see the impact of energy-saving actions driving momentum and supporting continuous improvement.

RESOURCES: Use spreadsheets to track usage and KPIs. For more guidance, refer to SEAI's "Monitoring & Targeting" resources.



4

MAJOR ENERGY USERS & OPERATING HOURS

Reduce run-time, not comfort



ACTION	CHECK
List main energy-using equipment	
Reduce operating hours where possible	
Switch off equipment during non-peak hours	
Use timers and occupancy controls	
Introduce clear startup and shutdown procedures	

Priority action

List the primary energy users in your business. Examine each for opportunities to cut back run-time or settings without impacting customer experience. Turn certain equipment off or to a lower eco setting during non-peak hours. Ensure equipment is turned off after hours and investigate occupancy controls for lighting. Reducing daily operating hours of high-consumption devices can trim costs significantly. Make as much use of night rate electricity tariffs as you can.

TIME TO COMPLETE: 30 minutes to review your facility's equipment and schedules and adjust timers or settings. Document capture in SOPs for all staff and shifts.

KEY INFO NEEDED: Knowledge of your equipment and controls (e.g. timer settings, thermostat controls, kitchen closing procedures). Involve staff who understand daily routines, they can point out what runs continuously or gets left on.

POTENTIAL SAVING: Energy cutbacks of 5–10% are common from operational improvements. A staff "switch-off" routine can cut overall energy consumption by about 10%.

RESOURCES: Fáilte Ireland's Energy Management Guide [here](#) suggests reviewing how every large device is used and for how long. Engage your team with this process. Assign responsibility for end-of-day shutdowns to specific team members. Use simple checklists for opening/closing procedures.





5

WATER & HOT WATER USE

Cut water, cut energy



 ACTION	 CHECK
Identify highest water-use areas	
Install low-flow taps and showerheads	
Fix leaks promptly	
Review hot water temperatures (not too high)	
Reduce unnecessary hot water use	

Priority action

Cutting water waste in your business will also reduce your energy costs. Install low-flow fittings or flow restrictors on faucets and showers, these are often fitted in minutes and immediately cut water use by 20–75% without compromising function. Reducing water consumption not only lowers your water bill, but also decreases the energy used for pumping and heating.

TIME TO COMPLETE: 1 hour to fit a few basic devices like tap aerators or efficient showerheads (a plumber can do this quickly, or maintenance staff if it's a simple screw-on replacement).

KEY INFO NEEDED: Identify where water is used most in your operations (e.g. guest bathrooms, kitchen). Check your hot water system settings – ensure temperatures aren't higher than necessary for hygiene (while still meeting safety standards).

POTENTIAL SAVING: A modern low-flow showerhead can maintain pressure while using up to 40% less water, which in turn means 40% less energy needed to heat that water.

RESOURCES: Refer to Fáilte Ireland's Water Management guide [here](#) – it provides suggestions on reducing water use and hence lowering your water bill. [Irish Water's](#) conservation tips, also provide quick fixes



6

HEATING AND COOLING CONTROLS

Heat only what's needed



 ACTION	 CHECK
Introduce heating and cooling setbacks	
Lower temperatures during unoccupied periods	
Set seasonal temperature standards	
Ensure no heating or AC runs in empty spaces	
Review settings at seasonal changeovers	

Priority action

Introduce heating 'setbacks' by setting your thermostats or Building Management System (BMS) to automatically lower temperatures during off-peak times (overnight or when areas are unoccupied) and then resume comfortable settings before occupancy. Similarly, establish seasonal Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for heating and cooling. By tailoring settings to your schedule and the seasons, you avoid heating or cooling more than needed.

TIME TO COMPLETE: 10 minutes to adjust programmable thermostats or timers for the season, plus occasional 5-minute checks to confirm settings are holding. (Initial setup might take ~30 minutes if you're unfamiliar with the controls – refer to manuals or ask your technician if needed.)

KEY INFO NEEDED: The typical occupancy schedule of different areas (when heating/cooling can be reduced) and the optimal comfort temperature for your space in each season.

POTENTIAL SAVING: Significant heating cost savings with minimal effort. Avoid heating in empty spaces. Drop your building's temperature by 1°C during a setback period could cut heating fuel usage by a substantial percentage (5–10%). One recommendation

is to ensure no heating or AC runs when rooms are unused. Use of night setbacks on heating can reduce heating costs by around 8% for each degree of setback over an 8-hour period.

RESOURCES: Verify thermostats and HVAC controls are correctly set for both weekdays and weekends and adjust the timing seasonally. If you have a BMS, use its scheduling features for seasonal profiles. For guidance, see the *Heating & Cooling Systems* section of the Fáilte Ireland's Energy Management Guide [here](#) which lists key heating optimisation actions. Ensure you have a documented SOP, so staff know the target temperatures for summer vs winter and who is responsible for adjustments.

7

TEAM BEHAVIOURS & ROUTINES

People drive savings



 ACTION	 CHECK
Brief staff on energy cost priorities	
Assign responsibility for switch-off routines	
Use simple opening and closing checklists	
Reinforce good energy habits regularly	

Priority action

Involve staff on energy cost priorities. The biggest day-to-day savings often come from consistent team behaviours. When everyone understands what to switch off, when to switch it off, and why it matters, waste drops quickly (especially out of hours). Keep it practical: explain which areas drive the bill (e.g. heating, kitchen extraction, refrigeration) and the 3–5 behaviours you want every shift to follow. Make switch-off accountable by naming a role/person per shift.

TIME TO COMPLETE: 30–45 minutes to agree expectations and focus areas; ongoing 5 minutes per week to reinforce.

KEY INFO NEEDED: Top "always-on" items, typical opening/closing times, and the main waste points (e.g. lights left on, extraction fans, standby equipment).

POTENTIAL SAVING: Typically supports 2–10% reduction through consistent behaviour (often more where awareness is currently low).

RESOURCES: A simple "what to switch off" list by area; staff noticeboard / team reminders; quick briefing notes for new starters.



8

BUILD YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Learn faster together



 ACTION	 CHECK
Attend Fáilte Ireland Cost Management Clinics	
Bring questions or energy data to your Clinic	
Register your interest in Fáilte Ireland's Climate Action Programme	
Connect with similar local businesses	
Share energy-saving actions and results	

Priority action

Sign up to Fáilte Ireland's Cost Management Clinics [here](#) for deeper insight into energy and cost savings. These sessions go beyond the basics, providing detailed explanations, and Q&A opportunities with experts. If you feel you need more information or customised advice after implementing the basics, attending a clinic can help "fill in the gaps" without overwhelming you in the initial stages.

TIME TO COMPLETE: 5 minutes to sign up. The clinics typically last 1 hour.

KEY INFO NEEDED: No preparation needed beyond indicating your energy cost challenge and then coming along with your questions or specifics you want to discuss. You will need to bring along your energy bills and a recent energy report if you have it.

POTENTIAL SAVING: Personalised advice and networking. These clinics can highlight additional cost-saving ideas (beyond this checklist) and connect

you with professionals or peers who have tackled similar issues. They are designed not to "*blind you with details*" but to answer targeted questions. For example, if you're curious about deeper technical options or financing, a clinic could guide you to the right solutions and further supports.

RESOURCES: Look out for announcements of Fáilte Ireland's cost reduction or energy efficiency workshops (often advertised via email or on the Fáilte Ireland industry website).





Priority action

Register your interest in Fáilte Ireland's Climate Action Programme [here](#). The benefit of joining the programme is your business will have the opportunity to reduce operating costs, improve energy and water efficiency, reduce waste, increase competitiveness and lower environmental impact.

Collaborate with similar businesses. Don't tackle energy savings alone – partner with a similar business to share experiences, tips, and even resources. Peers can compare notes on what's working and hold each other accountable on action items. Pair up with a nearby B&B, hotel, or attraction to jointly go through this checklist, then check in weekly on progress.

TIME TO COMPLETE: 10 minutes to reach out to a peer (phone or email) and propose working together on energy-saving actions. Ongoing: short monthly meetups or calls to exchange progress and ideas.

KEY INFO NEEDED: Contact a fellow business owner or join industry forums to find interested peers. Outline a few common goals so your collaboration has focus.

POTENTIAL BENEFIT: Peer collaboration can make energy saving easier and more motivating. You're likely to find quick wins by learning from each other's successes and mistakes.



9

ADVANCED MONITORING (LARGER USERS)

Spot waste quickly



ACTION	CHECK
Assess suitability for energy monitoring systems	
Install sub-metering on major equipment	
Use alerts to catch abnormal usage	
Review data regularly and act fast	

Priority action

If your annual energy spend is over €50k, investing in an energy monitoring system can lead to energy savings of 10 – 15%. This might include installing submeters on major equipment or high-use areas. Such systems go beyond monthly manual checks by alerting you to issues in real time, with detailed monitoring you can find *when* and *where* energy is wasted and take targeted action.

TIME TO COMPLETE: 1–2 hours to consult with an energy service provider on suitable monitoring solutions for your site. Installation time typically less than 1 day to complete. Once set up, checking the dashboard or reports might only take a few minutes a day.

KEY INFO NEEDED: Your current energy breakdown (if known) – e.g. how much of your usage is electricity vs gas, and any known big energy draws. Decide what

you want to monitor in more detail, also consider if you want automated alerts.

POTENTIAL BENEFIT: Precision and big savings for big users. Monitoring systems often help identify well over 5% savings by uncovering hidden issues.

RESOURCES: Consult SEAI's advice on **Monitoring & Targeting** for large businesses, which covers different tools and systems available.

10

OPERATIONAL AWARENESS

Look at the full picture



 ACTION	 CHECK
Review energy costs alongside labour & food	
Identify where energy is being wasted	
Prioritise low-cost, quick-payback actions	
Use available grants and supports	
Watch for energy price changes and risks	

Priority action

Operational awareness is about looking at the full picture of how your business runs and where money is being made or lost. Review energy costs alongside labour and food costs to understand how operating decisions (opening hours, prep schedules, equipment run-times, setpoints and staffing patterns) affect the bill. This makes it easier to identify where energy is being wasted and to prioritise low-cost, quick-payback actions that protect service quality while improving margin.

TIME TO COMPLETE: 45–60 minutes to pull together the last 3–6 months of energy bills and key operational numbers and do a first review. Ongoing: 10 minutes per week (or as part of a manager meeting) to check for exceptions and agree 1–2 priority actions.

KEY INFO NEEDED: Recent electricity/gas bills (and any meter data), opening hours, covers/occupancy, and the main cost KPIs you already track (labour % and food cost %). Note any known “always-on” loads and where shutdowns or setpoints vary by shift.

POTENTIAL BENEFIT: Better prioritisation and faster action. This approach typically reveals a shortlist of no/low-cost actions that can deliver 2–5% savings quickly (and helps prevent costs creeping back up after initial improvements).

RESOURCES: Use the KPI approach in Section 3 (e.g. kWh per guest night / per cover / per m²). Create a simple “energy exceptions” log (what ran longer than planned, what was left on, what changed operationally) and review it alongside your labour and food dashboards.



Cost Management Clinics – Energy

Fáilte Ireland also offers **Cost Management Clinics** for businesses seeking **deeper insight** into energy cost savings. These sessions go beyond the basics, providing detailed explanations and Q&A opportunities with experts across each of the 10 focus areas.

If you feel you need more information or customised advice after implementing the basics, attending a clinic can help “fill in the gaps” without overwhelming you in the initial stages.

Apply here



Further supports and resources

- 1 Register your interest in **Fáilte Ireland's Climate Action Programme** [here](#). The benefit of joining the programme is your business will have the opportunity to reduce operating costs, improve energy and water efficiency, reduce waste, increase competitiveness and lower environmental impact.
- 2 **Fáilte Ireland's learniFi Live** offers short, interactive workshops designed to help your business thrive. The workshops generally last for two hours, and the interactive format helps you make the most of your learning experience. Browse the schedule [here](#) to find the right sessions for you and your team.
- 3 Discover Fáilte Ireland's series of guides as part of **Driving Action on Climate Change** in tourism businesses [here](#) including Energy Management Guide [here](#).
- 4 Review grant supports available from **Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland** [here](#) and **Local Enterprise Offices** [here](#) for eligibility criteria and further information.
- 5 SEAI's steps to energy efficiency are linked [here](#). It includes the key steps to help you in your energy efficiency journey.





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