

# LOW COST & NO COST MEASURES TO REDUCE FOOD THROWN AWAY

## BACKGROUND

The Dragon Hotel, part of Macdonald Hotels & Resorts, is a 4 star, 106 bedroom hotel in Swansea city centre, South Wales.

### ? TIP

Use the tracking sheets and calculator tool in the “Guardians of Grub” starter pack to help you reduce food thrown away and save money on running costs!

## SUMMARY

The hotel took part in a pilot to reduce food thrown away.

By the end of the 6 month pilot, the hotel had reduced costs by £3,000 through simple no or low cost measures including:

- Better menu design;
- Offering customers choices on side dishes; and
- Introducing food waste recycling collection.

These actions, together with investment in stock control systems, are now saving about £15,000 per year.

THE HOTEL HAS ALSO  
**BEEN ABLE TO REDUCE**  
ITS PERISHABLE FOOD  
PURCHASING COSTS BY

 **25%**

The Brasserie at The Dragon Hotel



## CASE STUDY

*“We knew we should do something but thought that changing anything would result in additional cost to the business. At first I couldn’t believe that we’d be able to save money but now that we can see the savings everyone is keen to do their bit and make it work even better. The staff have been great in taking on board new ways of doing things.”*

**Cath Garcia, General Manager**



[GuardiansofGrub.com](http://GuardiansofGrub.com)

## REDUCING FOOD COSTS

A review identified that over 19 tonnes of food was being thrown away each year at the hotel, accounting for 41% of all waste generated. This was being macerated and disposed of to sewer. Following the review, the hotel started measuring food thrown away.

This information helped identify a number of solutions to reduce this, including:

- Standard meals were being provided with set vegetables that some customers may not always want. Customers are now given choices such as salad to replace potatoes or other vegetables;
- ‘Light’ options were introduced on meetings and events menus such as soup and sandwich options, improving customer choice and reducing the potential for food being thrown away;
- Menus were redesigned across different areas of service (such as restaurant vs banqueting) to allow sharing of ingredients, reducing the likelihood of them being thrown away.

For example, green beans are now used in a wide range of menu items;

- A daily ‘special’ is offered on the main menu providing customer choice whilst using surplus perishable ingredients; and
- Providing a ‘chef’s choice’ menu for functions at a lower price than the standard function menu to use up surplus stock.

*“We hadn’t realised how much food was being wasted. Within days it was all sorted out and now we can see what is being wasted. We’ve already reduced our perishable food purchasing costs by 25% through better menu design.”*

Steve Williams, Head Chef



## OVERALL IMPACT

The hotel has benefited in a wide variety of ways from the measures taken including:

- Introduction of a stock control system leading to reduction in food costs of 4% overall;
- Better menu design leading to perishable food purchasing costs down by 25%; and
- 19 tonnes per year of food thrown away segregated and recycled.

Check out our free resources at [www.guardiansofgrub.com](http://www.guardiansofgrub.com) including a quickstart guide, tracking sheets and calculator. You can also contact us at [GuardiansofGrub@wrap.org.uk](mailto:GuardiansofGrub@wrap.org.uk)



“Guardians of Grub” has been developed by WRAP under the [Courtauld Commitment 2025](#). We would like to thank [Love Food Hate Waste New South Wales](#) and [FoodSave London](#) for their permission to reproduce material.

While we have tried to make sure this case study is accurate, we cannot accept responsibility or be held legally responsible for any loss or damage arising out of or in connection with this information being inaccurate, incomplete or misleading. This material is copyrighted. You can copy it free of charge as long as the material is accurate and not used in a misleading context. You must identify the source of the material and acknowledge our copyright. You must not use material to endorse or suggest we have endorsed a commercial product or service. For more details please see our terms and conditions on our website at [www.wrap.org.uk](http://www.wrap.org.uk)