

Low Carbon Lake District Grants Scheme: Case Study

Embleton Spa Hotel

The Challenge:

Embleton Spa Hotel is a family-run hotel, bar and restaurant located between Cockermouth and Keswick. Originally an 18th century farmhouse, the site caters for a range of en-suite rooms, suites and stand-alone apartments.

Reducing the impact of food and drink is one of the key areas where tourism and hospitality businesses can make a big difference to their carbon footprint and the hotel's owners Ali and Jo Dixon wanted to do their bit to help protect the planet. They identified that food composting was an opportunity to avoid having an enormous overflowing bin of kitchen waste and achieve wider environmental and cost benefits at the same time.

As the Dixons already had a food composter at home for natural vegetable waste, they believed they could have a much bigger impact in the workplace by introducing similar measures at the hotel too.

The Solution:

Using greater insulation, 'hot composting' can be done all-year round. It works by locking in heat, increasing the temperature and enabling a greater volume of finished compost to be created compared to traditional 'cold' composting.

Supported by the Lake District Low Carbon Grants Scheme, Embleton Spa Hotel received just over £3,000 to install large scale hot composting. That equates to 60% of the project's total cost.

For the hotel, this means virtually all the hotel's food waste can now be composted in hygienic, fully sealed containers - including high protein foods like meat and cheese. Staff feed in food waste from the kitchen which can't be used in the final dishes, along with leftover scrapings from customers' plates.



As composting is an aerobic process, it also avoids the creation of methane - a powerful greenhouse gas which is generated when food waste is sent to landfill.

The Results:

Within the month, Embleton Spa Hotel was able to start turning waste into compost and had already drastically reduced the amount of food waste being created. According to the CAfS (Cumbria Action for Sustainability) energy saving calculator, hot composting will save 3.54 tonnes CO₂ equivalent per year.

Ali Dixon says, *“The volume of compost being produced even after a few weeks was astounding! The nature of hospitality means that people consume stuff, but there is a balance to be struck and with its fantastic greenery and open spaces, Cumbria is an inspiring place for businesses to try out new sustainable ways of working.*

“Looking ahead, we will use the newly-produced compost to create our own kitchen garden, complete with signage to show customers the full process and get them on board too. This really is a cyclical process, where we want people to understand that food waste can usefully go back into the environment and support the creation of more fresh produce.

“We’re also planning to involve the community and give them free compost for their own gardens and vegetable patches. For us personally, it’s all about making everyone feel they can contribute and help make a positive difference”.

[Find out more about the Low Carbon Lake District Grants Scheme here.](#)

Round 3 is currently open for applications.

Thanks to support from the European Regional Development Fund, the Lake District Foundation is able to offer grants to community groups and small to medium sized businesses based in Cumbria wishing to reduce their Carbon Footprint.

Qualifying groups and businesses will be awarded up to 60% of project costs, and all projects will need to be completed by March 2023. State Aid Rules will apply.

The total size of the grant pot is £600,000 and applications will be reviewed by an independent expert panel. Funding is available to organisations from a range of sectors.

The [Low Carbon Lake District](#) initiative is a comprehensive programme to help tackle climate change in the National Park, working in partnership with local businesses and communities to reduce greenhouse gases and prepare for the impacts of climate change. Led by the **Lake District National Park Authority**, other key partners include the **Lake District Foundation**, the **National Trust**, **South Lakeland District Council** and **Cumbria Tourism**.

Low Carbon Lake District has received funding from the England European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme 2014-2020. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Department for Work and Pensions (and in London the intermediate body Greater London Authority) are the Managing Authorities for European Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund funding through the Growth Programme, funds established by the European Union to help local areas stimulate their economic development. By investing in projects the funds will help to support innovation, businesses, skills and employment to improve local growth and create jobs. For more information visit: <https://www.gov.uk/europeangrowth-funding>.

The Northern Powerhouse is a key aspect of this Government’s approach to addressing the productivity gap in the North and ensuring a stronger, more sustainable economy for all parts of the UK. Alongside over €1.5 billion of European Regional Development Fund support for businesses and communities across the North, the government has awarded £3.4 billion in three rounds of Growth Deals across the Northern Powerhouse.