

Charlie B's Backpackers

Target Sustainability Programme

About the Company

Charlie B's Backpackers is an accommodation provider located in a refurbished historic building in central Christchurch.

Introduction to the Project

Charlie B's Backpackers joined the Christchurch City Council Target Sustainability Programme in 2008. The Target Sustainability Programme supports business to reduce waste and to be energy and water efficient.

Charlie B's Backpacker's objective at the time of joining the programme was to be a more resource efficient business, reduce their waste and energy costs and to promote environmental responsibility to their guests and staff. Charlie B's Backpackers implemented various projects to reduce their waste and improve their energy and water efficiency.

Key Achievements

- Reduced waste sent to landfill by 16%
- Increased co-mingled recycling by 350%
- Increased paper recycling by 13%
- 12% reduction in electricity consumption since 2008
- Reduced heating energy consumption in games room by 34%
- Reduced water consumption by an estimated 658,000 litres per year



Charlie B's Backpackers accommodation building © Copyright

Waste Reduction Initiatives

Charlie B's Backpackers reduced their waste sent to landfill by 0.9 kg/person/guest night. This corresponds to a 16% reduction in waste sent to landfill (based on the number of full skip collections before and after initiatives were implemented). Charlie B's Backpackers implemented the following initiatives to reduce and recycle their waste:

- Established an efficiency team to monitor waste and recycling and to implement waste reduction and recycling projects.
- Installed paper and co-mingled recycling bins on each floor of the building for guests and housekeeping staff.
- Installed a recycling collection station within the kitchen to encourage guests to recycle plastic, glass, metal cans and paper.
- Installed a paper and cardboard recycling bin within the staff office.
- Encouraged guests to be responsible for minimising waste and to recycle their waste by putting up recycling posters and giving an information pack to guests on how to recycle.

- Constructed a composting system within the back garden for organic waste. Collection units for this are located throughout the building.
- Implemented staff work place practices that outline simple waste recycling methods.
- No longer use certain disposable products such as plastic knives and serviettes.



Charlie B's Backpackers kitchen recycling station © Copyright

Energy Efficiency Initiatives

Charlie B's Backpackers reduced their electricity consumption by an average of 0.88 kWh/person/guest night. This corresponds to a 12% reduction in electricity consumption (based on electricity consumption before and after initiatives were implemented). Charlie B's also reduced their heating energy consumption in the games room by 34%. Charlie B's Backpackers implemented the following initiatives to increase their energy efficiency:

- Established an efficiency team to monitor energy use and to implement energy efficiency projects.
- Installed low energy use compact fluorescent light bulbs in 90% of the building. This corresponds to an estimated 4517 kWh saving per year (estimated \$680 per year saving based on an electricity price of 15 cents/kWh).
- Installed a heat pump in the games room and removed the existing wood/coal fire. This has resulted in an estimated 34% saving in heating energy for this room. This corresponds to an estimated \$400 saving in heating costs per year (this was based on the heating value of wood and coal vs heat pump energy rating).
- Implemented a maintenance regime so that heat pumps are maintained at optimal efficiency. This involved regularly cleaning the heat pump air filters.



Recycling bin station which are located on each floor of the building © Copyright

- Placed stickers on light switches and appliances reminding people to switch them off if not in use.
- Implemented staff training and work place practices to encourage staff to minimise unnecessary heating and lighting.
- Implemented a heater replacement scheme whereby any broken old room heaters are replaced with a more energy efficient heater. This programme will result in further energy savings.

Water Efficiency Initiatives

- Established a water leakage detection programme which involves identifying water leaks and repairing them as quickly as possible.
- Installed a low pressure hot water system to increase shower and tap water efficiency. This system is estimated to save approximately 658,000 litres of water per year based on 8

minute showers and typical low pressure system flow rates compared with typical medium pressure systems.

- Installed signs within the shower and bathroom areas reminding guests to reduce water use and turn taps off.
- Irrigated the garden only during the morning or at night to reduce water losses from evaporation.

Summary

Since joining the Target Sustainability Programme, Charlie B's Backpackers has implemented a range of projects that have resulted in a reduction in waste sent to landfill and a reduction in energy and water consumption. These projects have demonstrated to guests that Charlie B's Backpackers is an environmentally responsible business. The business has also reduced its ongoing costs in energy use and waste, demonstrating that

by taking an environmental approach towards business, it is possible to also be cost efficient.

“Through conducting waste, energy and water audits the Target Sustainability Programme has helped us identify areas that we can make improvements on. The programme has also helped to educate our team and made them more aware of our goal, to be operating in a

more sustainable manner”. Sandra Gasson – General Manager

Charlie B's Backpackers future plans are to continue to look for ways to reduce and recycle their waste and to implement further energy and water efficiency projects. These projects include improvements to their current organic collection and further developing their monitoring of waste, energy and water.