

## Writing Your Sustainability Story

To achieve guest buy-in and support for reducing energy consumption, it's important to demonstrate that your commitment to Sustainability on the Isles of Scilly is ambitious, linked to a bigger story (e.g. the Smart Energy Islands Project) and not tokenistic. Everyone staying in guest houses and hotels has seen the notice about reusing towels (which is important, but not the limit), but it can be all too easy to be cynical about 'doing your bit'.

### What's your sustainability story?

Can you tell a story about your service that demonstrates what you care about, and how you put that care into action? This guidance helps you to fill in the template provided. It needn't take long. Why not start by spending ten minutes answering the questions using the prompt below, discussing your answers with colleagues, and show it to others to get some feedback.

If you have one story that stands out, one idea that you put into action, use it! (see the honey bees story in links below). We also suggest framing the story in the local context, making it as specific as possible: local people and the local environment. Use pictures of your property / food / solar panels. The more humorous the better!

We have added some suggested text to the template, but do change and personalise those sections too if you want to.

#### 1. Start with your vision and motivations

- Why you're interested in sustainability, your vision and motivations.
- E.g – *"As a business we are motivated by [e.g. our grandparent's resilience building this business up / the thought of the Isles of Scilly being a leading light in sustainability tourism / preserving this piece of paradise]. Our vision is to play an active part in securing a sustainable future for the islands."*

#### 2. Say what you've already done

- Be authentic, and true to your own values. Make it clear you're on a learning journey, along with everyone else. Some sustainability experts suggest that a bit of humble pie goes a long way.
- Mention that you are working with other businesses, residents and services to achieve a 5% reduction in energy consumption by 2020
- E.g *"So far we've already started installing solar electric panels, we have added draught proofing or / and have cut our energy consumption by XX%."*

#### 3. Say what you plan to do

Reference the information in your energy report, or other ways you are engaging in the Smart Energy Islands programme, or what you are doing to reduce waste, water use or increase use local products.

E.g *"Our next steps are (e.g). to reduce waste by xx% this year, and to be 100% renewable by 20XX/ to source a third of our raw ingredients from the Isles of Scilly and the South west of England."*

#### 4. Invite your guest's / customer's buy-in and feedback, and make it easy and straightforward for them to do so. We have put some suggestions on the template for you, but you can also add more, particularly if there are relevant actions suggested on your energy report.

- **Thank them** for taking the time to read, and anything they do to contribute. You could ask for their feedback, or other ideas.

### Links for further reading (about 3-5 mins each)

- <https://www.usgbc.org/articles/sound-bites-telling-your-sustainability-story>
- <https://www.greenbiz.com/article/7-easy-steps-telling-your-sustainability-story>
- <http://greenblue.org/telling-the-story-of-sustainability/>
- <https://www.2degreesnetwork.com/groups/2degrees-community/resources/5-tips-telling-your-business-sustainability-story/>