

All-inclusive:

A comprehensive energy
management guide for
hospitality businesses

INSPIRED



Institute
of **Hospitality**

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Hospitality businesses create exceptional guest experiences in an increasingly demanding industry landscape of rising costs, evolving environmental regulations and growing compliance requirements.

As the setting of travel and leisure, hospitality is also one of the first sectors to feel the impact of external disruptions, from energy market volatility to public health events and the cost-of-living pressures.

Moreover, hospitality is a people-led industry and therefore particularly sensitive to labour availability, staffing costs and workforce policy changes. Operational expenses continue to rise, including business rates and the anticipated National Living Wage increase are expected to put further pressure on payroll costs.

Powering enjoyment

Offering guest experiences takes power: lights must stay on, appliances running, pools heated, music playing. Utilities are a key business cost after staff – making every opportunity to use energy more efficiently worth pursuing.

But every business is unique in estate and requirements. A hotel complex in central London will have different priorities compared with an independent cinema in a heritage building or a nationwide restaurant chain.

Moreover, the energy market is a complex and fast-moving space – events on the other side of the world can immediately impact gas and electricity prices here in the UK.

For example, geopolitical events and international supply pressures can quickly drive changes in wholesale energy prices.

Choosing the ideal time and strategy to buy energy can be challenging – even for organisations with a dedicated internal resource.

What's more, energy efficiency is a team effort. If you want to install new equipment or make a business case, you must be able to demonstrate the impact of your efforts with hard data.



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In the weeds

All this leaves the hospitality industry juggling various conflicting priorities – while still placing your guests above all else. This is where partnering with a specialist energy adviser can create measurable value for your organisation; reducing administrative burden on your staff, enhancing control of your costs and allowing your team to focus on creating excellent guest experiences.

Saving energy does not equal compromising guest comfort. Monitoring and changing lighting, temperature and air flow with building controls creates a more enjoyable and energy efficient environment while reducing your operating costs.

Where to start?

Comprehensive energy management requires carefully examining every aspect of your usage from procurement to pinpointing faulty equipment.

This is because all aspects of your consumption are interconnected; cutting down your usage and using what you consume more efficiently reduces your costs and associated carbon emissions while delivering ongoing savings.



For instance, you should know exactly how much energy your premises use, so you can start pinpointing wastage, compare your sites and make informed choices about becoming an energy efficient establishment.

So, let's start at the beginning – this guide outlines key actions your hospitality business can take to improve your energy and carbon performance.

Dish it out

Sharing your energy efforts and ambitions on your signage, communications and social media shows guests, staff and investors that you want to offer excellent, enterprising and environmentally conscious experiences.

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How are you procuring electricity and gas?

Energy is one of the most volatile commodity markets in the world. The conditions where electricity and gas are bought can change very quickly; how and when you choose to buy does matter.

Every business will have different priorities when it comes to energy procurement.

For example, do you want to:

- **Free up your internal resources by being less involved in the direct decision-making during your contract,**
- **Or would you rather take advantage of the whole market – even if it means making buying decisions at short notice?**
- **Or perhaps you want to bolster your sustainability ambitions by securing only renewable power?**

This is why every organisation should have a clearly defined energy procurement strategy – tailored to your needs and flexible enough to respond to an ever-changing market.

However, one rule applies to energy buying in all market conditions: Making informed decisions requires thoroughly evaluating the options available to you.

Each procurement option comes with considerations and is dependent on your appetite for risk.

Fixed procurement

With fixed procurement, your unit rates are locked in for the duration of the contract, helping to stabilise a large portion of your energy spend.

This is a popular choice for organisations that aim to minimise exposure to market volatility and gain a high level of budget predictability.

While fixed contracts offer more price certainty, there are different types of fixed products – some with complete budget certainty and some where the supplier reserves the right to pass through increases. Fixed price contracts also include a risk premium to protect suppliers against unforeseen shifts in the wholesale market.

Understanding these factors is key to setting accurate budgets and avoiding unexpected charges during your contract term.

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Flexible procurement

Flexible procurement allows businesses to buy energy in smaller tranches over time – rather than committing to a fixed price for the contract duration.

This approach allows organisations to take advantage of market movements and spread the risk associated with energy price volatility across multiple purchasing points.

While flexible procurement offers greater control and the potential for cost savings, it can be more complex to manage.

Collective purchasing

Collective purchasing allows multiple organisations to pool their energy demand to negotiate more competitive rates as a group.

The combined volume increases their purchasing power – beneficial for smaller businesses that may not have the volume to access to the wholesale market in a standalone agreement.

By being part of a collective, trading decisions are made on behalf of all members in line with a strategy, meaning limited to no control over trading decisions.

Inspired secured ongoing reductions on behalf of Hand Picked Hotels via flexible procurement.

Whilst the main focus was gaining a price advantage in gas and electricity through flexible purchasing, it was also important for us to provide Hand Picked Hotels with a complete energy management solution.

As such, alongside flexible procurement Inspired conducted a retrospective audit of the client's past gas and electricity contracts – recovering circa **£80,000** in overpayments.

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Do you validate your energy bills?

Managing several sites means copious utility invoices, sometimes from numerous suppliers. Errors can happen for many reasons, and scrutinising these bills is essential to make sure you are only paying for what you are using.

But validating your energy bills is repetitive and takes a long time – especially if you have a large or diverse portfolio of buildings.

Moving your bill validation to an energy expert is a perfect example of a service with immediate benefits, as your staff will be free to focus on other business priorities.

Inspired offers a comprehensive bill validation service that inspects invoices for any errors, compares them to ensure your costs reflect your consumption and pursues any refunds on your behalf.

Our software is designed to process large volumes of utility bills promptly and precisely in any electronic format. We perform over 100 individual validation checks on every bill, using tailored tolerances to pinpoint issues.

Our software, processes and validation tolerances are regularly updated to ensure they reflect the latest industry changes. If there are any queries, our aim is to resolve them within one billing cycle to limit their impact on your future invoices.



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Let's upgrade your stay: How to optimise your energy usage

Picture your premises: the lights and heating are on, music is playing, air conditioning is running, appliances whir away. Everything may appear to be running effectively – but could it be running more efficiently?

First, you must know exactly how much power your daily operations require, identify and address any wastage and consider your exact consumption in your forward planning.

Every business is unique in portfolio size, building type and operational requirements – your required solutions to become an energy efficient business will be unique as well.

For instance, is your metering solution up to scratch? Accurate, accessible and timely data helps to build a picture of your consumption across your portfolio.

This data is also needed if you want to realise your energy and carbon reduction targets in the long term.

However, meter data may not provide sufficient detail to pinpoint wastage on large or complex sites. This is where circuit-level monitoring technology can be used to see 'behind' your billed meter and find out what exactly is occurring.

Unnecessary energy consumption can be easily overlooked – a programming error could switch on the heating in an unoccupied guest room.

With a combination of accurate and timely consumption data, effective monitoring and a robust software solution to turn your data into actionable insights, you can set yourself on a trajectory to become an energy efficient establishment.

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Checking in with an energy site audit

Whether you seek to decarbonise or become a more energy efficient business, knowing where to start can sometimes be challenging.

Sometimes you just need to get a clearer picture of how your site uses energy, how carbon intensive your operations are and where you could be making the most cost-effective improvements.

If this is the case, a site auditor can pay you a visit. During an Inspired energy site audit, our experienced engineers visit your site in person to assess your current energy usage and operations and discuss any challenges, goals and priorities you may have.

Our experts would benchmark the site's current electricity and gas (and other fuel) performance and confirm where and how energy is specifically being used on site.

Following the visit, our team produce and present a report containing recommendations on carbon reduction, return on investment, or another preferred metric.

An energy site audit can deliver valuable insights on how your sites can be improved through equipment upgrades, reconfiguration, automation, monitoring and staff training.

Why should you get an energy site audit?

A site audit should help your business to:

- Benchmark your operations against your competition.
- Gain clarity on available cost and carbon reduction opportunities.
- Prioritise saving recommendations and make informed implementation decisions.
- Provide return on investment estimates for all recommendations.



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Keeping track of your use and waste

The best way to reduce your energy costs is to cut down your consumption. To do this you need accurate and fresh usage data – you can't change what you don't measure.

Despite best efforts, unusual consumption can remain undetected for a long time. Let's say lights remain on in an unoccupied storage room. How do you find out something unusual is happening?

For a **fast-food chain**, Inspired's profile alerts uncovered several one-off and recurring technical and behavioural issues – such as broken timers causing equipment to run 24/7 and staff forgetting to switch off equipment at the end of a shift.

Addressing these issues saved the business approximately **290,000 kWh** per year.

A good profile alerts service warns you when unusual excess consumption occurs. Here's how:

- Energy management systems constantly analyse your half-hourly meter feeds and set thresholds to track your site consumption.
- If these thresholds are breached, your chosen partner will send alerts to your site managers with details of how much waste has occurred, its likely causes and what impact this excess will have if left unresolved.

If you want to take a step further, Inspired also offer an interactive service with regular calls to help determine corrective actions.



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Have you heard of circuit-level monitoring?

You may be using energy in so many places across your building that pinpointing any wastage can be tricky.

For example, a hotel may be lighting, heating and powering its pool area, guest rooms, hallways, the reception area, gym, offices and the kitchen – and all these areas have different usage patterns.

For instance, ovens are often preheated overnight, while the hallways will be mostly unoccupied at night time when most guests will be in their rooms.

This means you may need additional solutions beyond metering data to map out your usual consumption patterns to begin to pinpoint where energy is being wasted.

The circuit-level monitoring (CLM) solution is installed behind your billed meter – allowing you to monitor specific circuits within your sites.

Installing CLM generated **54,505 kWh** annual energy savings and **12.26 tCO₂e** annual carbon savings for a **hotel and spa complex**.

Inspired's wireless, non-invasive CLM sensors offer up-to-minute readings and far more detailed visibility of your consumption and carbon emissions than what is available from your metering data. This enhanced visibility empowers your staff to pinpoint any inefficient equipment or operations on site.

CLM is quick to install with minimal disruption to your day-to-day business, allowing you to make better-informed decisions about your energy usage.



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Let's shine the light on LEDs

Inviting lighting is key in any hospitality setting. Whether a cosy lounge or a bright pool area, numerous light sources are usually featured to create the right atmosphere.

LED lighting is the most efficient lighting source available, requiring far less power to produce the same level (lumens) compared to its fluorescent and incandescent predecessors.

In fact:



LED lighting uses **up to 90% less energy** than traditional lighting – which means lower ongoing energy costs.



Despite initial investment, switching to LEDs can soon turn into profit with a **2-3-year** typical payback.



Meanwhile, LEDs have a **10-12 times** greater lifespan than conventional bulbs – meaning fewer bulb switches and less disruption to your daily business.



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Have you heard of lighting controls?

Besides energy efficiency, LED lights can be used with solutions that offer you greater control of your lighting while minimising energy consumption – helping you to create the ideal ambience for the space in question.

If you have office spaces, intelligent lighting can be used to adjust brightness and colour temperature to support focus, creativity and well-being amongst employees – all the while cutting unnecessary consumption.

Do you know about daylight harvesting?

Lighting control systems can automatically balance natural and artificial light, maintaining consistent illumination throughout the day.

Lighting control systems can be retrofitted with minimal disruption to your daily tasks. Although compatible with all types of lighting, LED upgrades are recommended as part of the roll-out to boost efficiency. Automatic lighting controls can also be integrated with a Building Energy Management System (BEMS) or as a standalone wireless lighting control system.

Are you looking for funding?

Our lighting experts can tell you about available incentive schemes, or we can support you through a fully funded solution with no upfront costs.



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Take control with building controls

Comfortable environments are made up of diverse elements – attractive lighting, pleasant temperature and effective air conditioning.

But are you controlling these effectively? Building Energy Management Systems (BEMS) and control automation are essential tools to keep your buildings running as efficiently as possible.

BEMS allows you to monitor and control lighting, temperature, air flow and other aspects of your building, so you can create a more pleasant environment for your guests and staff while saving energy.

Moreover, an efficient BEMS helps you identify any site problems and poorly performing equipment so any interruptions to your daily business are minimised. If you need to create a business case to justify further investment, the required information is available.

All this helps to reduce your operating costs, improve energy efficiency and meet your decarbonisation targets.

Inspired designs and installs customised on-site and regional level BEMS – giving you amplified insight and control of your data. We work with you to pinpoint the most relevant data, and once installed, we optimise and monitor the performance of your system for you.

What is your energy software like?

Once you have all this data coming in, it's time to transform it into insights you can use to cut down your consumption, costs and carbon emissions.

An online platform helps visualise your usage so you can start making informed energy decisions; track your usage, pinpoint any unusual consumption and adjust your daily operations, such as maintenance routines.

Moreover, if you need a business case to justify any energy efficiency ambitions or investing in technology, visualising your data helps calculate potential savings and links energy efficiency to wider business goals.

If you are on the lookout for energy software, Inspired's software solution allows you to track your costs and consumption against target, along with drill-down functionality that lets you interrogate your data with a click of a button.



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Savings on tap: Make the most of your water

Water is an essential part of everyday operations for all hospitality businesses, from cooking to heating and cooling systems to swimming pools, bathrooms and watering the grounds.

Still, water is often seen as less important than electricity and gas in utilities planning. However, how you buy, use and account for your water is vital.

Your water costs have already risen considerably and are set to rise again – with some areas and tariffs more impacted than others.

From 1 April 2026, water wholesale costs are set to rise an average **9%** for small to medium users. If you are a large water user, your portfolio should be reviewed separately for wholesale cost increases as changes to tariff elements vary.

There is also further nuance to business water billing beyond wholesale costs. For example, businesses face more site-specific charges if water is discharged in production or for non-domestic purposes.

Although often overlooked in boardroom conversations, the percentage savings you can gain from water are also

higher than in gas and electricity: this could mean fixing leakages, cutting down wastage or installing water-saving devices such as flow restrictors.

How can I save on water?

- **Tools at your disposal:** There are many straightforward solutions to reduce water usage. For example, tap control switches off the tap after a certain time and low-flow rinsing nozzles use less water when washing dishes.
- **Involve your guests:** Inform your guests how much choosing not to have their linens washed daily saves water and other resources.
- **Water site audit:** Inspired's comprehensive water audit service analyses your historical bills, water network and tariff structures – pinpointing and recovering any overpayments and securing ongoing cost savings.

With all this, water will only continue to gain prominence in energy management. Taking a comprehensive approach to water management now places your business ahead of competitors while demonstrating your dedication towards sustainability and our shared natural resources.

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How can I make waves with my water management?

Procurement

There is a good chance your business is eligible for the open water market – which means you can choose your retailer.

However, few eligible businesses have taken the plunge so far. This could be due to how different water procurement is compared to electricity and gas, which can make the process seem obscure. Yet securing a retail supply contract can carry a wave of benefits.

If you do not qualify for open water market



Local Water Company:
Supplies your water, takes away surface and wastewater.



Your organisation:
You buy your water directly from your local water company – there is no choice.

If you qualify for open water market



Wholesaler:
Your local water company still supplies your water and takes away wastewater.



Retailer:
You will buy water through a retailer that provides your bills and takes meter readings.



Your organisation:
You have a choice!

For example, if your portfolio expands a large geographical area, you may be dealing with multiple water companies. This means several billing streams coming in – creating more arduous administration processes, unnecessary costs and variations on customer service levels.

Securing a contract with one retailer ensures your billing is in one standard format, rather than many potentially confusing variations.

In short, taking advantage of the open water market is a straightforward way to save money and time alike.

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A national water supply contract delivered both tariff savings and vastly improved value and service levels for Malmaison and Hotel du Vin across their UK portfolio of 33 luxury boutique hotels.

Savings have been made through a combination of lower tariffs, consolidated billing and a range of efficiency measures; from energy audits to the installation of automated meter reading (AMR) devices in every hotel.

Monitoring and targeting

Without effective monitoring, leaks and water wastage can go undetected for a long time. You may not even realise there is a problem until your bill arrives.

Effective monitoring solutions can help you track your usage and pinpoint areas of unusually high consumption so any leaks can be spotted and fixed quickly.

For example, if you have half-hourly Automatic Meter Reading (AMR) devices installed, Inspired's profile alert service can warn you whenever your water consumption breaches an agreed threshold.

Our alerts arrive to your designated person directly, providing visibility of wastage and abnormal consumption so your onsite staff can investigate the problem and

promptly spot the cause. If an issue looks serious, our team contacts you to find out whether you need support in identifying the cause.

You will also have sight of the cost implications – the alerts highlight if the leak or wastage continues at that level for a year.

The Water Profile Alerts service has significantly minimised the risk of exceptionally large water bills for Darwin Escapes – a five-star, award-winning UK holiday retreat and resorts provider.

Typical issues identified were:

- **Misuse:**
Due to the nature of their business, water misuse is a regular occurrence, such as taps left running.
- **Technical issues:**
Leaking taps, running toilet cisterns and overflows.
- **Underground leaks:**
Sub-metering has allowed the location of underground leaks to be located quickly.

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Electric vehicle infrastructure – get plugged in

The demand for electric vehicle (EV) charging is growing, which means hospitality establishments must review their available infrastructure for guests and staff to charge their vehicles.

This can seem like a daunting exercise, but it doesn't have to be. Inspired can support you with a scalable solution that meets your needs now and in the future.

We manage the process from initial assessment to equipment installation, site upgrades and meter and supply contracting to ensure there are no surprises along the way. We also offer nationwide coverage to ensure your EV network is fully operational.



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Powerful conversations – let's talk about employee engagement

Hospitality is a labour-intensive industry – more people means high turnover.

Despite this, impactful energy management is still a team effort: management must buy in and your colleagues need to be on board.

Encouraging your colleagues like cleaners and kitchen staff to report faulty equipment, expired light bulbs and leaky toilets allows for quick repairs and minimised wastage.

If you would like support with your employee engagement, Inspired offers tailored staff training on topics such as energy saving actions, building control use and the wider environmental impact of energy consumption.

We can demonstrate how small actions can create big impacts and offer practical suggestions to save energy across all levels of your organisation. For example, this could mean:

- Training on how to operate efficiently and help your colleagues learn more about the comparative effect of different equipment items.
- Training staff to set up appropriate time schedules for equipment and show how to modify schedules when operating conditions change.
- Help your colleagues understand the wider environmental impact of energy consumption within your organisation and highlight their role in propelling shared energy efficiency efforts.



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At your service – how can Inspired help?

An expert energy partner must understand your business, along with the demands of your industry and the surrounding regulatory landscape.

Specialising in assisting large, site-intensive organisations, Inspired supports over 100 hospitality and leisure businesses.

With over 700 specialists spanning risk management, energy accounting, water management and sustainability services, we offer integrated energy solutions to organisations across the UK.

We can support you with all aspects of commercial energy efficiency, from meter replacements to turnkey on-site solutions where we look after everything from technical assessment and installation to ongoing monitoring, service and maintenance.

Whether you seek support in day-to-day utilities management, a bespoke energy procurement strategy or making the most of your water, we have the skills and strength in numbers to turn all your ambitions into reality under the same roof.

If you would like to learn more about how our experts can best support you, please email us at ioh@inspiredplc.co.uk



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How Inspired has helped some of our hospitality clients

Circuit-level monitoring for a hotel and spa complex

A prestigious hospitality establishment with a dedicated focus on environmental stewardship sought to reduce energy usage, carbon emissions and operational expenses.

A pilot project showed significant results, achieving 21% reduction in HVAC spending (ROI <6 months). With the concept proven, we installed additional sensors and supercharged the service.

Easily installed circuit-level monitoring sensors quickly identified opportunities to reduce consumption and increase efficiency.

- Quarterly reviews between the client's Facilities Manager and our energy experts evaluated performance metrics. We shared our insights and advised on site-specific modifications.
- The facilities manager used our user-friendly digital platform to analyse, target and report on their consumption data.
- We supplied and installed additional sensors to the air handling units.

The circuit-level monitoring savings calculation for this client:

- Annual Energy Savings:
54,505 kWh
- Annual Carbon Savings:
12.26 tCO₂e

The full case study is available on [our website](#).

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Supporting The Thurlestone Hotel's environmental and efficiency ambitions

Owned by the Grose family since 1896, The Thurlestone Hotel is the oldest family-run hotel in England. With stunning coastal views across South Devon, this multi-award-winning four-star hotel offers first-class accommodation with luxury spa, golf and leisure facilities.

As a holder of the Green Tourism Gold Award, the hotel owners constantly strive for environmental and efficiency improvements that are sensitive to its stunning surroundings.

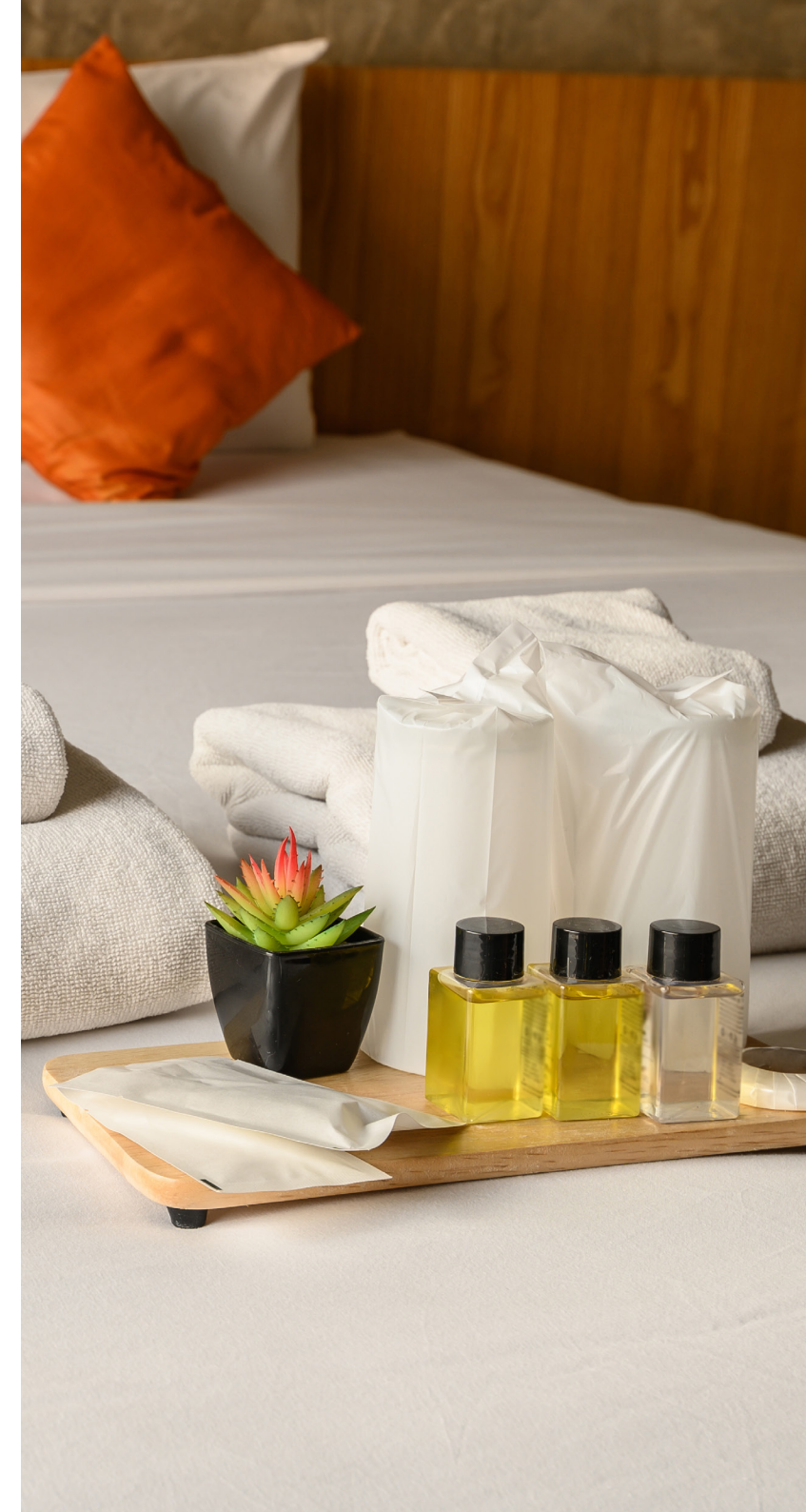
Inspired was selected to conduct an energy review of the entire 19-acre site to assess current capability, waste, efficiency and investment opportunities. However, any solutions had to be turnkey to accommodate the hotel's scheduled shutdown.

Our review flagged several opportunities for the owners to reduce consumption, invest in a more sustainable fuel source, attract Renewable Heating Incentive (RHI) payments and reduce energy bills.

This work resulted in:

- **£8,500** yearly biomass pellet cost savings (in comparison to oil).
- **£7,476.11** in total 1st-year electricity contract savings.
- **£33,000** per year Renewable Heat Incentive payments.

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Energy monitoring and targeting for a multinational fast food chain

Inspired was approached to work with a worldwide restaurant chain, operating over 1,000 stores across 35 countries.

The company had a strong focus on sustainability and energy efficiency – their progressive approach had earned them awards.

Inspired was asked to provide profile alerts and optimisation services to identify abnormal consumption patterns and provide corrective solutions to reduce consumption.

Our software was able to automatically detect unusual patterns of energy consumption in the half-hourly profile data, issuing email alerts so that action could be taken.

We also provided an Energy Desk Service, allowing our staff to actively review the results of the target alerts and to contact sites to follow up.

Information was fed back to energy management staff to help inform portfolio-wide policy and identify sites with recurring issues. Half-hourly data was also used to answer ad-hoc consumption queries from restaurant managers.

This work resulted in:

- **£34k** cost savings per annum.
- **290,000 kWh** annualised savings achieved.
- **413** electricity meters included in the project.

The full case study is available on [our website](#).



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