# SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS EVENTS GUIDE



Queenstown
NEW ZEALAND

Wānaka

# WHY HOST A SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS EVENT?

**Queenstown and Wānaka's spectacular landscapes are a big part of what makes the region such a memorable place to host a business event.**

**Hosting an event here is also an opportunity to care for the place that makes the experience possible. By making considered choices, your event can support the people, communities and environment, helping Queenstown and Wānaka thrive for generations to come.**

**This guide offers practical ways to put that into action.**

## WHAT IS A SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS EVENT?

A sustainable event is one that is thoughtfully planned to create positive outcomes for delegates, the organisation behind the event and your host destination, while reducing unnecessary environmental impact along the way.

In Queenstown and Wānaka, many of the choices that create a better delegate experience are also the ones that make your event more sustainable. Choosing accommodation that works well with your programme can reduce transport requirements, local suppliers can simplify logistics, and seasonal catering can showcase the region while reducing waste and carbon emissions. Together, these choices can help create memorable events while leaving a lighter footprint on the environment.

## WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

A more sustainable approach to event planning can reduce unnecessary costs, waste and complexity, while making events simpler and more efficient to deliver. Often, the most sustainable choices are also the most practical.

Sustainability is also an increasing priority for delegates, clients and organisations. Building it into your event from the outset can help meet these expectations, strengthen the overall event experience and create opportunities to share ideas that inspire positive change beyond the event itself.

As you explore the guide, connect with the Queenstown Convention Bureau team or our local event suppliers to discover what's possible for your event.



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# VENUES AND ACCOMMODATION

**Decisions made early in the planning process often have the greatest opportunity to shape the overall impact of an event.**

The venues and accommodation you choose can influence everything from delegate experience and event flow to waste, resource use and operational efficiency.

Choosing the right venue and accommodation is about more than capacity, location and room rates. Many venues and accommodation providers across Queenstown and Wānaka have sustainability initiatives already in place that can support event delivery, from refillable amenities and waste reduction programmes to locally sourced catering, accessibility features and housekeeping opt-out options.

Local operators know their properties best and can often suggest practical solutions and ideas, so don't be afraid to ask.

## QUESTIONS TO ASK

### Your venue and accommodation provider

- What sustainability practices are already in place across your property?
- How are you replacing single-use items in guest rooms, event spaces and catering?
- What waste, recycling and composting systems are available onsite?
- Can delegates opt out of daily housekeeping on multi-night stays?
- Can you offer a locally sourced or seasonal menu?
- Do you have an access guide for delegates with access requirements?
- Are digital, reusable or low-waste options available for signage and styling?

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# TRANSPORT

**Thoughtful transport planning can help create a smoother delegate experience while simplifying event logistics.**

When building your programme, look for opportunities to reduce unnecessary transfers between locations. This could include consolidating airport transfers, using shared shuttles, or scheduling programme elements in a way that minimises back-and-forth travel throughout the day. These small decisions can help reduce costs and transport-related emissions while giving delegates more time to enjoy the destination.

For shorter distances, walking and active transport offer a low-emission way for delegates to experience Queenstown and Wānaka at a slower pace. With spectacular lake and mountain views, scenic trails and vibrant town centres, even a short journey between venues can become part of the destination experience. Where practical, consider incorporating walking into your programme, taking into account delegates' accessibility and mobility needs.

While scenic flights and iconic experiences may still play an important role in your programme, consider balancing these with lower-emission transport choices elsewhere. Supporting local regeneration initiatives is another way your event can make a positive contribution to the region.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Some local operators are already investing in electric transport solutions, including electric buses that can support airport transfers, delegate transport and event programmes. These electric transport options help reduce transport-related emissions while maintaining a high-quality delegate experience.

Talk to your transport providers about their options, or see our Business Events Transport Guide.

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# CATERING AND FOOD WASTE

**Queenstown and Wānaka are home to exceptional local produce, a world-class wine region and a wide range of independent breweries, making it easy to deliver high-quality food and beverage experiences.**

Good catering starts with thoughtful planning. Work with your caterer to confirm guest numbers, plan appropriate portions and avoid over-ordering. This helps manage costs and reduce food waste while delivering a high-quality dining experience for delegates.

Seasonal, locally sourced ingredients are a great way to showcase the region's exceptional food offering, while helping reduce the distance ingredients need to travel. Plant-forward options can also bring variety and creativity to menus.

Look for opportunities to reduce single-use items, including cups, plates, cutlery and takeaway containers.

Speak with your caterer about how surplus food can be managed or redistributed after your event.

With New Zealand's fresh, safe drinking water, refill stations and reusable drinkware offer a simple alternative to single-use bottled water.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Queenstown and Wānaka have local initiatives helping events reduce waste, including reusable plates, cups and cutlery available for hire, food rescue services that redistribute surplus food to the community, and programmes that divert food scraps from landfill.

Talk to the Queenstown Convention Bureau team or your event suppliers to discover what's available locally and how these solutions could work for your event.

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# SUPPLIERS AND MATERIALS

**Working with local suppliers can help reduce freight, minimise unnecessary materials and streamline event delivery.**

With firsthand knowledge of Queenstown and Wānaka's venues, local suppliers can suggest practical solutions tailored to your event.

When planning your event, start conversations early to understand how suppliers approach materials, waste reduction and sustainable delivery. For AV, styling and theming, ask whether elements can be reused, hired or repurposed across multiple events.

Digital solutions such as screens, projection and QR codes can also help reduce printed collateral, while modular signage and reusable styling elements can replace one-off builds.

After the event, consider what happens to materials and whether items can be reused, returned or repurposed rather than discarded.

## QUICK WINS

**Small changes can often have a big impact:**

- Replace printed programmes with QR codes or event apps.
- Use digital screens and projection instead of one-off printed signage where practical.
- Hire styling, furniture and décor rather than purchasing custom items.
- Choose modular signage that can be updated and reused across multiple events.
- Ask suppliers whether materials can be returned, repurposed or reused after the event.

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