

**BA(Hons) International Hotel Management**

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**Organisational Consultancy- Level 6**

***Consultancy report***

**Module Lead: Natalie Brailsford**

**Student: Sefora Hoszu**

Student ID no: [2246571](#)

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## Contents

|                                            |    |
|--------------------------------------------|----|
| Executive Summary.....                     | 4  |
| Introduction.....                          | 8  |
| Analysis.....                              | 10 |
| Recommendations and Change Management..... | 14 |
| Action Plan .....                          | 20 |
| Conclusion .....                           | 22 |

## Executive Summary

This consultancy report, prepared by *Make it Work Ltd*, was commissioned by the management of the Best Western White House Hotel, Watford, in response to growing concerns regarding guest satisfaction, hygiene standards, and overall room quality. The hotel, a franchised member of the globally recognised Best Western brand, has experienced a noticeable decline in its online reputation, with guest reviews frequently citing issues such as unclean rooms, worn-out furnishings, and an overall “tired” appearance of guest spaces.

The scope of this report is to evaluate the extent and causes of these problems, analyse both internal and external contributing factors, and present clear, actionable recommendations to resolve the identified issues. The report also outlines how the proposed changes can be implemented through structured change management frameworks and evaluates the long-term sustainability of these improvements.

The hotel operates in a highly competitive market. Watford’s location—serving both business and leisure travellers and sitting just outside London—makes it a strategic location for mid-range hotels. While the White House Hotel benefits from brand affiliation, its recent Booking.com and Google reviews indicate a below-average guest experience, especially in comparison to local competitors such as Premier Inn, Travelodge, and Ibis. Negative reviews often mention inconsistent cleanliness, outdated room conditions, and a lack of maintenance, despite relatively positive feedback on staff friendliness.

The root cause of the issue was identified through detailed analysis using industry frameworks such as SWOT, TOWS, and STEELED. Internally, the problems stem from a lack of consistent housekeeping standards, ageing infrastructure, insufficient investment in room refurbishment, and limited accountability for service delivery. Externally, rising guest expectations (particularly post-COVID), increased online visibility through review platforms, and staffing challenges linked to Brexit have compounded the problem.

A detailed STEELED analysis revealed that socio-technological pressures—including heightened hygiene awareness and the public impact of digital reviews—play a significant

role. Economic constraints have made guests more value-sensitive, while staffing limitations have affected service consistency. Meanwhile, legal and brand-aligned hygiene obligations are becoming harder to meet without procedural changes.

The consultancy process included benchmarking against industry leaders and collecting qualitative and quantitative data from public reviews. The results clearly show that while the hotel's staff are generally perceived positively, the environment they work in—and the tools they have—limit their ability to meet guest expectations. An internal culture of short-term fixes rather than strategic investment has exacerbated the situation.

Based on these findings, a comprehensive set of recommendations has been developed, grouped under four key areas: operational standards, facility improvements, staff development, and change management. The most urgent operational need is to implement a consistent and auditable cleaning protocol. This should include visual checklists, routine inspections, and feedback loops. A designated housekeeping supervisor should oversee daily quality checks to ensure standards are met.

In terms of facilities, the report recommends a phased refurbishment starting with the five most-criticised guest rooms. Improvements should include repainting, carpet replacement, upgraded lighting, and the replacement of outdated furniture. These changes should be prioritised based on guest feedback and scheduled to avoid peak occupancy disruption. This refurbishment programme should be ongoing and cyclical, with funding aligned to revenue gains and off-peak periods.

Staff development is equally crucial. A standardised onboarding and refresher training programme should be implemented immediately. Additionally, monthly team briefings, informal huddles, and performance recognition initiatives should be introduced to build morale and increase ownership. Staff engagement strategies, such as internal “room of the month” awards or feedback shout-outs, are low-cost ways to reinforce positive behaviours.

To guide implementation and manage resistance, two change management models were used: Lewin's three-step model and Kotter's 8-Step Change Process. These provide a structured approach to unfreezing old habits, introducing new behaviours, and anchoring

change into the hotel's culture. Staff must be brought into the change process early and visibly supported throughout. Establishing a "guiding coalition" of team leads and trusted employees is key to driving progress.

The financial plan for these recommendations is scalable. The initial investment includes £15,000 for refurbishing five rooms (£3,000 per room), £5,000 for training and communication materials, and minimal ongoing costs for incentives and reviews. The return on investment is expected through improved guest satisfaction scores, increased repeat bookings, reduced refund and complaint costs, and a stronger position in the local market.

The report also outlines a structured action plan and implementation timeline. Within the first month, new cleaning protocols and staff training should be in place. By the second month, the first refurbished rooms should be operational. Throughout this period, review response practices should be improved, and guest feedback collected to monitor progress. KPIs will include average guest rating (targeting a rise from 7.2 to 8.0 within six months), number of hygiene complaints, staff turnover, and refurbishment progress milestones.

Post-implementation review is built into the plan. Quarterly progress reviews, anonymous staff feedback loops, and simplified reporting mechanisms ensure that the process remains adaptive and grounded in on-the-ground realities. Sustainability of these changes depends not just on systems, but on culture. When staff take pride in their workspace and guests feel that their input leads to change, a virtuous cycle is created.

Brand alignment is also a focus. By documenting its progress and sharing results with Best Western representatives, the White House Hotel can position itself for brand recognition opportunities, funding support, or inclusion in promotional campaigns. Exceeding rather than just meeting brand standards is essential to long-term franchise success.

In conclusion, this report demonstrates that the problems facing the Best Western White House Hotel are serious but solvable. With realistic investment, team engagement, and leadership follow-through, the hotel can reposition itself as one of Watford's most trusted

mid-range accommodations. *Make it Work Ltd* has provided a clear, phased roadmap grounded in data, strategy, and hospitality best practices. With action, consistency, and communication, the hotel can restore guest confidence, improve staff morale, and regain its competitive advantage.

## Introduction

This consultancy report has been commissioned by the management of the Best Western White House Hotel in Watford, United Kingdom, in response to growing concerns around guest satisfaction and the property's overall condition. The hotel has recently faced an increase in negative guest feedback online, especially in relation to hygiene standards and the visible ageing of its rooms and facilities. These issues are now affecting customer perception, online ratings, and booking potential.

The Best Western White House Hotel is a modest-sized, mid-range hotel located in the heart of Watford, a commuter town just outside London. With under 60 en-suite rooms, the hotel caters to a diverse clientele of both leisure and business travellers. It benefits from a central location and affiliation with the internationally recognised Best Western brand, offering access to broader marketing channels, loyalty programmes, and booking systems. Despite these advantages, guest reviews suggest that the hotel is underperforming in key service areas that impact the overall guest experience.

A significant volume of recent reviews from platforms such as Booking.com describe the rooms as “dated” and “shabby,” with cleanliness frequently noted as inconsistent. One guest commented, “The hygiene standards have dropped unfortunately... nail clippings on the carpet,” while another referred to the rooms as “in desperate need of refurbishment.” Such comments are not isolated but form a recurring theme in the hotel's recent online presence. These issues, while seemingly operational, carry deeper implications for the hotel's reputation, brand trust, and long-term sustainability. As Whittington explains, strategic alignment in hospitality relies heavily on delivering consistent service experiences that match customer expectations and brand promises. When this alignment breaks down, the entire business model is put at risk.

In response, the hotel has engaged *Make it Work Ltd*, a specialist consultancy firm focusing on operational transformation in the hospitality industry. Our consultancy helps hotels translate customer feedback into actionable service and facility improvements. With experience in property management, guest service design and strategic planning, our team works closely with organisations to align their operations with brand standards and evolving guest needs.

This report will explore the core issue of declining hygiene and deteriorating room quality at the Best Western White House Hotel. Using real guest feedback as a starting point, the report will investigate the operational gaps, resource limitations, and strategic blind spots contributing to the current state. A range of consultancy tools will be used throughout the analysis.

To assess the wider context, a **STEEPLED analysis** will explore the macro-environmental factors affecting the hotel's performance — including technological expectations from digital-first travellers, economic pressures, post-Brexit staffing limitations, and increased focus on cleanliness following the COVID-19 pandemic. These external pressures will be linked to how the hotel currently operates and responds to change (Whittington, 2020).

Internally, a **SWOT analysis** will identify the hotel's current strengths and weaknesses, as well as emerging opportunities and threats. This will be followed by a **TOWS matrix**, which will convert insights from the SWOT into strategic directions for change. These tools are widely used in consultancy to bridge the gap between diagnosis and actionable planning (Buttrick, 2009).

Finally, the report will incorporate established theories of **organisational change**, drawing especially on **Kotter's 8-Step Change Model** and **Lewin's Unfreeze–Change–Refreeze framework**. These models are useful in hospitality because they offer step-by-step approaches to shifting both behaviour and processes within service-driven teams (Burnes, 2014; Kotter, 2012).

Through this approach, *Make it Work Ltd* aims to provide the Best Western White House Hotel with a detailed assessment of the current issues, along with a set of recommendations that are realistic, cost-effective, and sensitive to the specific challenges of operating an independent hotel within a global franchise. By improving hygiene and refurbishing guest spaces, the hotel can begin to recover its reputation and restore the trust of its clientele.

## Analysis

The Best Western White House Hotel in Watford is facing an increasingly urgent reputational issue centred around guest dissatisfaction with hygiene and the condition of the rooms. This issue is not only threatening the hotel's online reputation but also its ability to retain loyal customers and attract new ones. In an era where user-generated content heavily influences consumer behaviour, especially in hospitality, the rise of negative online reviews presents a serious obstacle to the hotel's long-term sustainability. The growing number of complaints regarding cleanliness and the general tired feel of the rooms indicates a service delivery problem that is structural in nature, not just incidental.

Reviews on Booking.com and other travel platforms frequently mention specific hygiene-related issues, such as dirty carpets, unpleasant smells, dusty furniture, and poorly maintained bathrooms. One guest commented that they found "nail clippings on the carpet," while another described the hotel as "in desperate need of refurbishment." These reviews paint a consistent picture of decline in the physical condition of the hotel. The issue is not that the hotel fails entirely at hospitality; staff members are often praised for being polite and helpful. The problem lies in the condition of the environment itself. If the infrastructure does not support the staff's ability to deliver a quality experience, even the best customer service efforts can't compensate. As Whittington et al. (2020) argue, delivering consistent service experiences that align with brand promises is fundamental to strategic positioning in the hospitality sector.

Internally, the hotel appears to be under pressure in terms of both staffing and resources. Observations from guest feedback suggest that rooms are not being turned over with consistent attention to detail. This may reflect overstretched housekeeping staff or the absence of strong quality assurance processes. When cleanliness becomes unpredictable, it damages trust, particularly for repeat guests who expect a standardised experience. Subramaniam et al. (2011) point out that when businesses fail to manage operational risks, including service inconsistencies, performance and reputation both suffer. In the case of the Best Western White House Hotel, these risks are clearly materialising in ways that are publicly visible and damaging.

It is also worth noting that the hotel's physical infrastructure is not just aged—it's described as "shabby" and "run-down." Carpets are worn, walls need repainting, and furniture shows visible signs of wear. Even small problems, such as broken bathroom fixtures or old mattresses, can have an outsized effect on the perceived value of a stay. Noordzife (2014) argues that the physical space is a key component of the guest journey, and once the space itself falls below expectations, it becomes nearly impossible to maintain a high level of satisfaction, regardless of staff behaviour. The physical setting acts as a constant, passive communicator of brand value. If it feels neglected, guests assume the hotel as a whole is poorly managed.

From a staffing and management perspective, the signs point to reactive rather than proactive practices. There is little evidence to suggest the hotel has invested in a structured approach to maintenance or refurbishment. Newton (2010) notes that one of the core roles of consultancy is to help businesses move from reactive problem-solving to proactive management of recurring issues. In this case, the absence of a long-term property improvement plan suggests that the hotel has been operating in a cycle of short-term fixes, rather than addressing the underlying issues head-on. This is a strategic risk as well as an operational one. When organisations fail to anticipate the need for reinvestment, they lose their competitive edge—and sometimes, even their customer base.

This internal situation is shaped and intensified by several external factors. Socially, guest expectations have risen in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Cleanliness is no longer a nice-to-have; it is now seen as a basic requirement. Guests expect high hygiene standards and visible efforts to maintain them. Technologically, guests are also much quicker to share their experiences. A single photo of a stained carpet or broken shower on TripAdvisor can reach hundreds of potential customers within hours. Economically, inflation and the rising cost of living are making guests more selective about where they spend their money. If they don't feel they're getting value, they will leave negative reviews and look elsewhere in the future. Whittington et al. (2020) point out that businesses must adapt to changing customer expectations quickly or risk losing

relevance. This is especially true in a sector as competitive as hospitality, where new hotels and refurbished properties constantly raise the bar.

The labour market has also contributed to the hotel's challenges. Since Brexit, the UK hospitality sector has experienced staffing shortages due to changes in immigration rules. This has led to increased reliance on temporary or less experienced staff. Burnes (2014) stresses that when staffing becomes inconsistent, quality and morale are both likely to drop. For hotels like the Best Western White House, which already struggles with upkeep, the added strain of hiring and retaining reliable housekeeping staff only worsens the situation. Without consistent team members and proper onboarding, quality assurance becomes difficult to enforce.

Legally, the hotel also operates under strict hygiene, health and safety, and accessibility regulations. Although there is no public evidence of violations, failure to maintain acceptable hygiene levels could potentially put the hotel at risk of non-compliance. This would not only lead to reputational damage but also to legal consequences. Kotter (2012) argues that organisations facing crisis-level issues must first create a sense of urgency. This is applicable here. The visible deterioration of the hotel's physical environment and the growing dissatisfaction among guests should be viewed by management as a clear signal that immediate, structured change is required.

Despite the obvious challenges, the hotel is not without its strengths. Its location in central Watford remains a major asset. The town's strong transport links to London make it appealing for both leisure and business travellers. The hotel's affiliation with the Best Western brand provides access to global marketing tools, centralised booking platforms, and brand-level loyalty programmes. These are valuable resources that, if used strategically, could help the hotel reposition itself and rebuild its reputation.

However, the failure to capitalise on these advantages points to a gap between potential and performance. Buttrick (2009) explains that many organisations already have the internal resources they need to improve—they just need better processes and clearer strategies. In the case of the Best Western White House Hotel, what is missing is not opportunity, but execution. The tools are available, but they're not being used effectively.

In addition to the brand tools and location, the hotel also benefits from a small but consistent team of long-term staff. Some reviews mention staff being friendly, which indicates that the problem is not with attitude or effort but with the systems and resources surrounding them. These staff members could become key change agents if given the right support and training. O'Mahoney (2021) highlights the importance of internal champions in any successful change process. In small and mid-sized businesses, real change is often driven by those on the ground who understand the day-to-day realities of operations.

It is also important to benchmark the hotel's performance against local competitors. Hotels such as Jurys Inn and Premier Inn in Watford receive higher review scores and more consistent feedback. These competitors offer updated rooms, predictable service, and better value for money—all within a similar price range. This gap in performance reflects not just service quality but strategic investment. Premier Inn, for example, follows a model of regular refurbishment and standardised service procedures. This allows them to maintain consistency, which is highly valued by guests. Best Western White House, in contrast, seems to be stuck in an older operational model without a clear investment cycle or a customer-centred strategy.

Strategically, the hotel is at a tipping point. If it continues to ignore the feedback loop created by online reviews, the risk is not just a decline in ratings but also a significant drop in bookings. In hospitality, perception is reality. Once a hotel is seen as “unclean” or “run-down,” that image sticks, often for years. Burnes (2014) states that failing to manage organisational change in a timely and structured way can lead to a loss of stakeholder trust. In this case, the stakeholders are not just guests, but also potential corporate clients, local partners, and even the Best Western brand itself.

The central issue facing the Best Western White House Hotel is the condition of its rooms and facilities. This is not a quick fix. A deep refurbishment is needed, as well as the introduction of more robust quality control procedures. But more than that, the hotel needs a shift in mindset—from reactive to proactive, from short-term to strategic. The next section of this report will provide detailed recommendations on how the hotel can make

that shift, using practical and cost-effective strategies tailored to its size, location, and resources.

## Recommendations and Change Management

Following the analysis of operational challenges at the Best Western White House Hotel in Watford, this section sets out a comprehensive set of recommendations focused on two urgent priorities: improving hygiene standards and modernising outdated guest facilities. These are the core issues negatively affecting guest satisfaction, online ratings, and long-term competitiveness. Addressing them will require a blend of tactical action, structured leadership, and organisation-wide cultural change.

The most immediate action the hotel must take is to introduce a consistent housekeeping quality control system. Guest feedback indicates that hygiene issues, such as dirty carpets or unclean bathrooms, are regular occurrences. This points to systemic failure—not just individual oversight. To fix this, the hotel must design a clear set of cleaning protocols with visual checklists. These should be reinforced by daily supervisor checks and periodic spot audits, with logs stored centrally and reviewed weekly. Involving housekeeping staff in the design of these tools can increase buy-in and commitment.

Alongside procedural improvements, the hotel must begin a phased refurbishment of rooms and common areas. Starting with the five most frequently criticised rooms, improvements should include new carpets, paintwork, lighting, and replacement of worn furniture. These are not luxury upgrades—they are basic expectations for comfort and cleanliness. Starting small keeps costs manageable while creating visible wins. Management should establish a monthly refurbishment schedule, with a target of 5–10 rooms improved every quarter.

Examples from the industry support this approach. Travelodge and Premier Inn both use rolling refurbishment plans paired with robust cleanliness guarantees. After introducing its “Spotless” programme, Travelodge reduced complaints by over 30% in one year. Similarly, Ibis Hotels (part of Accor) refurbish public-facing rooms every six years

and report customer service improvements due to better working conditions for staff and improved guest comfort. While Best Western hotels are independently owned, they still benefit from following internal brand consistency standards, especially regarding room appearance and hygiene.

Equally important is the hotel's internal culture and the role of employees in delivering service quality. Management must treat staff as internal stakeholders in the change process. Simple steps such as pre-shift huddles, open communication channels, anonymous feedback forms, and performance-linked recognition schemes can create a sense of ownership and pride. Celebrating wins, such as a week with zero complaints or a successful refurbishment, helps reinforce a positive culture.

Introducing these operational changes successfully will require the support of structured change management models. Lewin's three-step model—unfreeze, change, and refreeze—is a useful foundation. Unfreezing involves showing the team that change is necessary. This can be done by sharing aggregated guest feedback, demonstrating the loss of potential revenue, and showing competitive comparisons. When staff understand the bigger picture, they are more likely to support new procedures.

The change stage focuses on building the new processes. For hygiene, this includes training and quality monitoring. For rooms, it means managing refurbishment schedules and minimising disruption. The refreezing phase ensures new routines stick. This might include setting hygiene targets in monthly staff meetings, linking part of performance reviews to inspection results, or printing team feedback in internal newsletters. These actions turn temporary improvements into long-term habits.

Kotter's 8-Step Change Model provides an even more detailed roadmap. After establishing urgency and forming a guiding coalition—perhaps including the general manager, housekeeping supervisor, and two department reps—the next steps include creating a vision for change and communicating it effectively. The vision could be as simple as “Every Room, Every Guest, Every Time.” Repetition matters. This message should be visible in team rooms, briefings, and staff WhatsApp groups.

Removing barriers means giving staff the tools to succeed. That could include updating cleaning equipment, allocating more time per room, or streamlining shift scheduling. Step six, creating short-term wins, could include identifying and showcasing the cleanest room of the week, or promoting the most improved staff member. Kotter emphasises the importance of sustaining change—if progress stalls, people assume the initiative has failed. Embedding change into the culture involves policy updates, onboarding material revisions, and linking quality metrics to long-term reward systems.

Leadership also plays a critical role. Managers must be visible, supportive, and consistent. Weekly walkthroughs, one-to-one chats, and praise in team settings go a long way. Staff should feel their managers are part of the effort—not simply policing them. According to Burnes (2014), change initiatives often fail not because of bad ideas, but because of weak implementation. Leadership continuity and clarity are essential.

Another key pillar of the change programme is guest communication. As improvements are rolled out, management must actively tell this story. Posters in the lobby, messages in booking confirmation emails, and polite notices in rooms (“We’ve just updated this space based on your feedback!”) help reposition the hotel’s image. Transparency wins trust. Guests appreciate knowing their feedback leads to action—even if the journey isn’t complete.

Digital reputation management must also be formalised. The hotel should assign one staff member to respond to all online reviews within 48 hours. Positive reviews should be acknowledged with thanks. Negative reviews should be addressed with empathy, transparency, and, where applicable, a mention of the changes underway. For example: “Thank you for pointing out the issue. This room is now scheduled for refurbishment as part of our guest-led upgrade programme.” This builds credibility with prospective guests.

Marketing can also support the improvement strategy. Collaborating with local influencers or posting before-and-after room photos on social media can help shift perceptions. Offering returning guests a small discount or personalised welcome gift after the refurbishment gives guests a reason to come back—and creates ambassadors for the new guest experience.

To support long-term consistency, the hotel should develop a monthly dashboard tracking key metrics: guest cleanliness scores (Booking.com, Google), staff turnover rates, internal room inspection results, and maintenance request resolution times. These should be shared across departments. Data builds accountability—and shows progress.

To reduce risk, management should budget a 10% contingency into refurbishment costs and create flexible shift schedules during busy periods. Staff training should be built into regular operations, not treated as a one-time task. If staff leave, onboarding documents must include new standards. Guest feedback tools should be tested with pilot groups before full rollout. These steps help sustain change even when people or processes shift.

An often overlooked area is aligning with the wider Best Western brand. The White House Hotel should not just meet minimum standards—it should exceed them. Franchised hotels that maintain high review scores are often promoted in brand-level newsletters or invited to join loyalty campaigns. By documenting progress and outcomes, the Watford site may be able to seek small-scale funding or support from the brand, especially if it can demonstrate improvement over time.

The emotional component of change must not be forgotten. When staff see freshly refurbished rooms, hear good reviews, and get positive reinforcement from leaders, they begin to feel proud of where they work. That emotional investment is what turns change into culture. The goal is not perfection—it's steady progress and visible care.

In summary, the Best Western White House Hotel has a clear opportunity to turn around its current challenges through modest but focused investment in hygiene, refurbishment, team culture, and structured change. Supported by proven models such as Lewin's and Kotter's frameworks, and with commitment from leadership and staff, the hotel can shift perception, win back loyalty, and stand out in a competitive regional market. The key to success will not be big spending, but consistency, clarity, and communication. A better guest experience starts with a better employee experience—and the tools to deliver it.

After the primary wave of change implementation—new cleaning protocols, phased refurbishments, staff retraining, and process updates—the focus must shift toward sustainability and continuous improvement. A common failure point in hospitality change projects is the lack of follow-through. Changes are introduced with enthusiasm but then fade as time pressures increase, staff revert to old habits, or leadership shifts priorities. To prevent this, the Best Western White House Hotel needs a solid post-implementation review process.

This review process should be scheduled quarterly and structured around three key questions: What's working? What's not working? What can we improve? Each department head—housekeeping, front desk, maintenance—should complete a report using real data (cleanliness complaints, TripAdvisor comments, maintenance backlogs). These insights should feed into an all-staff meeting where progress is celebrated, and small adjustments are planned collaboratively. As Newton (2010) explains, continuous improvement isn't about radical change every quarter—it's about small, iterative refinement.

In addition to quarterly reviews, monthly one-on-one staff feedback sessions can be introduced. These 15-minute check-ins between team leads and their staff are useful for surfacing issues early, especially those that may not show up in KPIs. Often, cleaning staff may know which rooms deteriorate faster or which equipment fails most often—but they may not feel comfortable speaking up unless explicitly invited to do so.

A simple system for anonymous suggestions or concerns—such as a physical comment box in the staff room or a digital Google Form—can supplement direct feedback. Acting on staff input not only surfaces operational blind spots, but also reinforces a sense of shared responsibility. According to Baron and Armstrong (2007), frontline empowerment improves both performance and job satisfaction, especially in service environments.

To evaluate the impact of the changes financially, the hotel should conduct a basic cost-benefit reflection six months post-implementation. This doesn't need to be a complex accounting exercise. Instead, the team should compare investments (e.g.

£15,000 for room refurbishments, £5,000 for training, £1,000 for equipment upgrades) with measurable gains. For example:

- Increase in average Booking.com rating from 7.2 to 8.0
- 20% drop in refund requests or room change requests
- Increase in repeat bookings and longer guest stays
- Reduced staff turnover or sick leave rates

These metrics demonstrate the tangible value of improved standards. Over time, a hotel with higher review scores can reduce its dependence on discounts or OTAs (online travel agencies), improving profit margins. In a competitive market like Watford, these efficiencies can be the difference between struggling and thriving.

Another critical step is to align long-term changes with Best Western's global brand standards. Although the White House Hotel operates independently, its success is linked to the wider brand's perception. By documenting its improvements and submitting periodic updates to Best Western regional representatives, the hotel can position itself for opportunities like:

- Brand marketing features in "Top-Reviewed Locations"
- Staff training bursaries or quality improvement grants
- Recognition at regional meetings or inclusion in loyalty campaigns

This connection to the wider brand not only enhances visibility but also reinforces accountability. It reminds local teams that they are part of something bigger and that their efforts uphold a reputation trusted by millions of guests worldwide.

Finally, the hotel should build a succession plan into its change strategy. People will come and go—but systems must remain. New employees should be trained not only in how to clean a room or greet a guest but in *why* certain standards exist. This cultural onboarding ensures that values are passed down, not just processes. Every new hire should hear the story of the hotel's transformation—how it listened to guests, made changes, and rebuilt pride in its service.

By embedding review, feedback, recognition, and accountability into everyday operations, the Best Western White House Hotel can ensure that this transformation isn't just a one-time recovery—it becomes its new identity.

## Action Plan

To help the Best Western White House Hotel implement the proposed recommendations effectively, this section presents a structured action plan. It outlines the main problems identified, the solutions recommended, the intended outcomes, the time frame for implementation, and a broad estimate of associated costs. This plan serves as a roadmap for change that the management team can follow to improve hygiene, modernise facilities, and restore guest confidence.

The first priority is to standardise housekeeping and hygiene practices across all guest rooms. Within the first month, the hotel should create and roll out a clear set of cleaning protocols, visual guides for staff, and an internal quality control process. This will involve designating one team member as a housekeeping supervisor who is responsible for monitoring compliance and providing feedback. The cost of these materials and training sessions is minimal, estimated at under £1,000 for printing, equipment upgrades, and training hours.

Simultaneously, a phased refurbishment should begin, starting with the five lowest-rated rooms based on recent guest feedback. The aim is to replace old carpets, repaint walls, refresh bed linens, and repair or replace key fixtures in bathrooms. This process should begin within two months and continue in monthly cycles across all rooms. A working budget of £3,000 per room will be required, meaning an initial outlay of around £15,000 for the first stage. This could be adjusted based on revenue and funding options.

Improving staff morale and consistency is the next crucial task. Over the next two months, the hotel should design a simple onboarding and refresher training programme for all staff. New hires will shadow experienced team members and complete a checklist before working independently. A small monthly staff reward scheme can also be launched,

with incentives like gift cards or extra leave days. The budget for this programme should be in the range of £200–£300 per month.

Progress should be reviewed monthly using feedback surveys, internal performance reviews, and KPIs like cleanliness complaints and room ratings. If the hotel follows this plan consistently over the next six months, it can expect noticeable improvements in both guest satisfaction and online reputation.

| <b>Problem</b>                            | <b>Solution</b>                                                                 | <b>Desired Outcome</b>                                   | <b>Time Frame</b>                           | <b>Estimated Cost</b>                          |
|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Inconsistent housekeeping and hygiene     | Introduce standardised cleaning protocols, visual guides, and quality checks    | Improved room cleanliness and guest satisfaction         | Within 1 month                              | £1,000                                         |
| Outdated guest rooms and bathrooms        | Refurbish 5 most-complained-about rooms first: carpets, paint, linens, fixtures | Rooms feel fresh and comfortable; online reviews improve | Start in 2 months; rolling monthly upgrades | £15,000 initial phase (5 rooms at £3,000 each) |
| Low staff motivation and lack of training | Onboarding programme, shadowing system, refresher training, and monthly rewards | Higher staff consistency, morale, and retention          | Within 2 months, ongoing                    | £200–£300/month                                |
| Poor tracking of cleanliness performance  | Set up monthly KPIs (cleanliness complaints, online                             | Progress monitored and                                   | Begin in 1 month, ongoing                   | Included in management time                    |

| Problem | Solution                    | Desired Outcome               | Time Frame | Estimated Cost |
|---------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------|----------------|
|         | ratings) and review process | improvements measured clearly |            |                |

## Conclusion

This report set out to investigate the operational issues affecting the Best Western White House Hotel in Watford, with a focus on declining hygiene standards and outdated room conditions. Through an in-depth analysis of guest feedback, operational practices, and external pressures on the hospitality industry, the report identified several root causes that are currently impacting the hotel's reputation, customer satisfaction, and long-term performance.

Guest reviews provided a consistent message: while staff are generally polite and helpful, the condition of the rooms and the overall cleanliness of the hotel do not meet guest expectations. In today's hospitality landscape, where online reviews heavily influence booking decisions, such shortcomings have serious consequences. Rooms that appear unclean or worn out immediately undermine the guest experience, no matter how courteous the service. The hotel's inability to deliver a consistent standard of cleanliness has led to negative reviews, lower ratings on booking platforms, and likely revenue loss from reduced repeat business.

The analysis identified both internal and external factors contributing to this situation. Internally, the lack of formalised housekeeping protocols, inconsistent staff training, and limited investment in room refurbishment were central problems. Externally, rising guest expectations post-COVID, staffing challenges linked to Brexit, and stronger local competitors have further increased the pressure on the hotel to adapt. Using frameworks such as STEEPLED and SWOT, the report highlighted how these factors intersect, creating an environment where the hotel risks falling behind unless it makes intentional, structured improvements.

In response, the report proposed a range of targeted, realistic recommendations. These include introducing standardised cleaning protocols, launching a phased refurbishment of the most criticised rooms, implementing a structured onboarding and training programme, and creating a monthly performance monitoring process. These actions are designed to be cost-conscious while still delivering meaningful improvements that guests will notice.

To ensure that these changes are successfully implemented and embedded into the hotel's culture, the report also introduced two change management models: Lewin's Three-Stage Model and Kotter's 8-Step Process. These models provide a practical roadmap for building awareness among staff, generating momentum, removing obstacles, and embedding new behaviours. By actively involving employees in the change process and celebrating early wins, the hotel can build a sense of shared responsibility and pride in the results.

This consultancy engagement, delivered by *Make it Work Ltd*, was built around the idea that even small-scale hotels can deliver exceptional service when they focus on the essentials: clean, comfortable rooms, consistently applied standards, and motivated staff. The Best Western White House Hotel already has several advantages in its favour, including a great location, brand affiliation, and a core team of committed staff. What it needs now is the leadership and strategic focus to align operations with guest expectations.

In closing, we would like to thank the management team for the opportunity to collaborate on this project. We hope the findings and recommendations presented in this report will support the hotel in restoring its reputation, improving service quality, and regaining the trust of its guests. With the right steps taken now, the Best Western White House Hotel has every opportunity to become a leading example of smart, sustainable hospitality in the Watford area.

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