

Discuss the role of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in promoting sustainability within the hospitality industry. Evaluate key areas where CSR initiatives can have the most significant impact on sustainability practices in hospitality. Explore the challenges and opportunities associated with implementing good CSR policies.

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Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is when a business is expected to make some positive contribution to the community while engaged in its operations. This involves but is not limited to, practises that take on more than profit maximisation, looking at social, environmental, and economic impacts. CSR is paramount in hospitality industry to promote sustainability by promoting business practises, which are responsible and declining negative environmental impacts of business and increasing community welfare. There are some key areas such as reducing carbon emissions, how much waste is to be handled, water and energy conservation and lastly supporting the local community (Jones et al., 2017). CSR is voluntary actions taken by companies to ensure their financial, social and environmental impact. Corporate social responsibility policies usually cover a wide spectrum of areas, such as labour practises, environmental stewardship, sourcing ethically, and being in the community. The importance of CSR has increased in the hospitality industry to satisfy various stakeholders demanding more business transparency and responsibility. Within hospitality, sustainability is defined as 'the minimization of the environmental footprint of operations whilst contributing to the well-being of local communities and economies' (Font et al., 2012). This essay is based on an analysis concerning how the London Marriott Hotel Grosvenor Square has incorporated CSR practises that facilitate sustainability within its business practices and assess the problems encountered and opportunities which these practises propose for the local and global environment.

As in many large hotel chains, Corporate social responsibility initiatives are implemented by the London Marriott Hotel Grosvenor Square to integrate sustainable practises into daily operations; such as sourcing eco-friendly products and promoting ethical labour practises. The benefits of CSR in hospitality include building a hotel's brand image and contributing to global sustainability goals (Sheldon & Park, 2011). While these practise the industry needs to consistently implement, CSR presents incredible opportunities for industry partners to enhance sustainability through innovation, collaboration and long-term environmental strategies (Legrand, 2016). Eventually, CSR encourages a balanced lifestyle in which the hospitality industry can develop itself protecting resources and supporting local communities. Marriott International, the parent company of the London Marriott Hotel Grosvenor Square, has a robust commitment to CSR, guided by its Serve 360: As part of its Doing Good in Every Direction programme. This initiative focuses on four key areas: Helping disadvantaged or marginalised communities (Marriott International, 2021). These pillars are intended to support global sustainability goals, in particular, the goals connected with environmental protection, poverty alleviation and social equity. These CSR policies are localised and adapted to fit the hotel's operations and the local community in London at the London Marriott Hotel Grosvenor Square. Various social initiatives, reduction of its carbon footprint, minimization of waste and support to local businesses and the community welfare are the other areas on which the hotel concentrates.

Environmental sustainability is an important core component of the London Marriott Hotel Grosvenor Square's CSR policy. The hotel has put into place many different steps to reduce its carbon emissions and the hotel has integrated energy efficient technology as well as renewable energy sources. Another example is that the hotel has replaced all lighting within its premises with LED and has installed smart thermostats to reduce energy consumption (Tang & Zhou, 2020). In addition, the hotel is making water-saving technologies, like low-flow faucets and toilets to conserve water considering that London occasionally faces water scarcity. The hotel participates in Marriott International's global food waste reduction initiative – pledges to reduce food waste by 50% by 2025 (Marriott International, 2021). Local charities, in partnership with The London Marriott Hotel Grosvenor Square, have arranged for surplus food to be donated, which has the excellent by-product of addressing both environmental and social concerns (Jones et al., 2017). While this cuts down on the waste that goes into landfills and directly helps the local community by feeding people in need, it does so equally as well as commercial restaurants. The hotel is sourcing sustainably. By 2025, Marriott International aims to source 95% of its top ten priority ingredients from sustainable sources. According to this, London Marriott Hotel Grosvenor Square sources local, organic, and fair-trade products for its restaurants and catering services, decreasing the carbon footprint of long-haul transportation and supporting local businesses (Marriott International, 2021).

A second major part of the London Marriott Hotel Grosvenor Square CSR policy is its commitment to local communities. A notable programme is Marriott's working together with local schools to hold hospitality career workshops and internships for young people to get work experience and improve their skills (Zhang et al., 2015). Moreover, the hotel is engaged in Marriott's initiative of offering job opportunities to people with low incomes (refugees). This is part of a larger goal to give communities a solid opportunity for employment and career development. Despite making great efforts to implement CSR into its business procedures the London Marriott Hotel Grosvenor Square has faced challenges as well. Cost is one of the leading challenges in the implementation of sustainable technologies and practices. For instance, replacing standard lighting with systems that are energy efficient (e.g. LED bulbs) and installing smart thermostats come at a high initial cost which can only be affordable during times of economic uncertainty (Henderson, 2015). One of the challenges is harmonising guest satisfaction with sustainability. In a luxury hotel setting, guests want a certain level of comfort and convenience, often at the expense of the hotel's sustainability goals. For example, this refers to guests perceiving the installation of water-saving technologies in a hotel as a reduction in service quality, even though the hotel could take that step, which could then lead to guest dissatisfaction (Jones et al, 2017).

It has however faced regulatory challenges as well. Alberto Perez is a freelance writer for the UKG contributor network (Bonilla-Priego, 2011). Even though these regulations are in place to nudge businesses towards decreasing their environmental impact, they are hard to navigate and come with financial compliance costs (Tang & Zhou, 2020). Assessment of energy usage at hotels has to be undertaken regularly and steps have to be taken towards energy usage efficiency improvement, which is a cumbersome and time-consuming affair. Both the local and wider environment CSR initiatives implemented by the London Marriott Hotel Grosvenor Square have been beneficial. The reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in London is achieved with the hotel's focus on reducing its carbon emissions and energy consumption (Holcomb, 2017). All of this brings us in line with the city's larger sustainability goals: as one example, the Mayor of London's Environment Strategy seeks to create a zero-carbon city by 2050 (Mayor of London, 2018). Besides rewarding the environment, the hotel's efforts toward sustainable sourcing and backing local businesses have induced the local economy. The hotel has prioritised local suppliers to reduce its carbon footprint and help kick-start local businesses in the area. The success of local businesses within a district creates a ripple effect in which the economic well-being of a district becomes uprooted from its local origin (Zhang et al., 2015). On a global level, Marriott International's broader sustainability goals also benefit from the hotel's CSR practises, for instance, a commitment for the company to reduce its carbon intensity by 30% by 2025 (Serra-Cantalops, 2016). The achievement of these targets and the promulgation of sustainable business practises by the hospitality industry rely heavily on the efforts of individual hotels such as the London Marriott Hotel Grosvenor Square (Roxas & Chadee, 2012).

The few legislative measures by the UK government on the implementation of CSR practices in the hospitality industry have an impact. The Climate Change Act 2008 is one of the key pieces of legislation that legally binds the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (Climate Change Act 2008, 2008). In France, this legislation is in place to encourage businesses, such as hotels, to take steps to reduce their carbon footprint; this has spurred the adoption of energy-efficient technologies and sustainable business practices by the hospitality industry (Font et al., 2012).

This is on top of the Energy Savings Opportunity Scheme (ESOS), a UK program that requires major organisations to conduct energy assessments. (ESOS, 2014). In the scheme, businesses have to look at how much energy they use and find out where they can save energy. This legislation affects London Marriott Hotel Grosvenor Square being a part of a large hotel international chain; therefore, the hotel is required by the legislation to make regular energy audits and implement improvements to enhance energy efficiency (Jones et al., 2017). Likewise, the UK government has brought rules on waste management, including the Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011.

These regulations force businesses to take responsible care of their waste (as much as possible): reducing, reusing, and recycling. To comply with this legislation, the London Marriott Hotel Grosvenor Square has integrated practices of reducing food waste and recycling. Although the implementation of CSR practices can be challenging, there are real opportunities for the London Marriott Hotel Grosvenor Square to improve its business performance through the creation of sustainability efforts. Demand for sustainable tourism is one of the key opportunities. More consumers increasingly choose environmentally friendly and socially responsible businesses, which allows a hotel to set itself apart in the market through the airing of CSR initiatives and practises of sustainability (Grosbois, 2011).

The hotel has an opportunity to extend its social responsibility programmes to the local community. Additionally, technological advances create new ways for the hotel to become more sustainable. For instance, the hotel's energy consumption can be cut even further and overall efficiency further increased by the adoption of smart building technologies, for example, automated energy management systems. Besides being environmentally sustainable, these technologies also help the hotel to achieve cost savings in the long run (Tang & Zhou, 2020). London Marriott Hotel Grosvenor Square has integrated CSR into its business activities and has improved sustainability in its business by working on Environmental stewardship, community engagement and ethical sourcing. Though executing these practices is not easy for the hotel both financially and regulatory aspects, there are obvious upsides to the local and bigger environment. The hotel's CSR initiatives help to achieve global sustainability goals, decrease the hotel's environmental footprint, and help the local community (Enz, 2012). In the future, the hotel can keep going and grow more CSR efforts through usage of new technologies and expanding its community engagement program. In order to lead by example, the London Marriott Hotel Grosvenor Square will continue to commit its efforts to CSR as a step towards supporting sustainability in the hospitality industry (Bohdanowicz & Zientara, 2011).

The London Marriott Hotel Grosvenor Square has successfully integrated CSR into its operations. There are elements of environmental sustainability CSR, social responsibility CSR and ethical sourcing in the operations of the London Marriott Hotel. This includes initiatives: reducing carbon emissions, minimising waste, and minimization of energy and water use through advanced technologies. The creation of jobs for the local community, charity work and support of local suppliers show that the hotel also participates in the broader social responsibility goals. The challenges faced by the hotel are the financial costs of implementing sustainable practises, balancing eco-friendly practises with the guest's expectations and satisfying the regulatory requirements such as the Climate Change Act and ESOS (European Commission, 2011). While these challenges exist, the positive environmental impacts and local economic benefits, as

well as the long-term sustainability efforts of the hotel are sufficient reasons to justify the creation. Exploiting the present progression of green innovation, embracing broad system association, and accommodating expanding requests of maintainable tourism at the hotel is sure to open doors. All in all, the CSR activities of the London Marriott Hotel Grosvenor Square advance global as well as local sustainability and make the hotel take a leading role in hospitality in regard to responsibility.

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