

A WORKS CO. MANUAL · NO. 20

The Airbnb / Holiday-Let Turnaround Works

How to build a recurring short-let turnaround and co-hosting business.

The Works Co. · Trade manuals

Build a recurring income from short-let changeovers and co-hosting — the UK trade manual for 2026

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This is a manual for people who want to build a real business out of turning short-term lets around between guests — the changeover clean, the linen, the restock, the staging, the checks — and then climbing into co-hosting and short-let management for a share of the booking revenue. It is written plainly, in pounds, for the UK in 2026, by people who have actually stood in an empty flat at eleven in the morning with a four o'clock check-in coming.

We will be honest with you about the money, the hours and the tight turnaround window. Every promise in here comes paired with its cost. If, after the first chapter or two, this trade is not for you, we would rather you spent the £47 on a coffee with someone you love than on a manual for a business that was never going to be yours. That is what the refund is for.

How to use this manual

Read it in two passes.

First pass: read it straight through. Do not stop to act. Read all fifteen chapters end to end so you can see the whole shape of the business — how a £35 to £250 changeover clean becomes a recurring contract, how a handful of properties becomes a steady book, and how the cleaning tier feeds the higher-value co-hosting tier at 10 to 20% of booking revenue. You cannot price your first job well if you do not yet understand where it leads.

Second pass: read it with your hands on the tools. Go back chapter by chapter and act. This is where the rest of the bundle earns its place. The manual teaches; the **Toolkit** and the **Prompt Library** do the work alongside you.

You own three things, and they are built to work together:

- **The manual** — the fifteen chapters you are holding. The thinking, the trade, the numbers, the honest costs.
- **The 10-file Toolkit** — a set of ready-made Excel spreadsheets: the self-assessment scorecard, the P&L tracker, the changeover checklist, the pricing calculator and more. When a chapter says "work out your number" or "run the check", the Toolkit is where you do it. Open the matching file and fill it in.

- **The 60-prompt AI Library** — sixty tested prompts for the writing and admin that used to eat a co-host's evenings: host outreach, guest messages, listing copy, review replies, proposals. The chapters point you to the right prompt at the right moment.

The pattern across the bundle is always the same. Read the chapter, fill in the Toolkit file it names, run the prompts it points to. Manual to plan, Toolkit to count, Library to write.

What's in the bundle

- This manual (PDF), fifteen chapters.
- The 10-file Excel Toolkit (see Appendix A for the full index).
- The 60-prompt AI Library, organised by chapter (see Appendix B).

The appendices at the back also carry a UK supplier and resource directory, a glossary of short-let terms, and honest pointers to further reading. Your purchase includes free updates for life: when we revise the manual, the Toolkit or the prompts, you get the new version at no extra cost. Now turn to Chapter 1 and we will show you why a single quiet Monday changeover is worth building a business around.

PART ONE

The Foundations

The Turnaround Opportunity

It is a Monday in late June, ten past eleven in the morning, and Leah is standing in the hallway of a 2-bed flat above a chandlery on the harbourside in Whitby. The last guests have just driven off towards the Abbey. She has until four o'clock, when the next two arrive off the Middlesbrough train. Five hours on the clock. The flat does not look bad. It looks lived-in: two crumpled beds, a fridge with half a pint of milk and an open jar of jam, sand on the bathroom floor, a wine glass with a lipstick mark, bins that need emptying, and a sofa that needs straightening. Nothing dramatic. Just a flat that two people lived in for three nights and have now left for the next two.

Leah strips both beds first and gets the wash on. Then she works room by room, the same order every time, the order on her checklist: kitchen, bathroom, bedrooms, living room, last sweep. She wipes, she restocks, she stages. Fresh linen, hospital corners, a fan of clean towels. She replaces the loo roll, tops up the coffee pods, leaves a little card by the kettle. She photographs every room the way she found it and the way she left it. At ten to three she does a final walk, smelling the air, checking the angle of the cushions, looking for the one thing she would notice as a guest. At three she texts the host: *Done, all good, photos attached, fresh as you like*. The new guests check in at four to a flat that smells of nothing but clean.

For that changeover the host pays her **£80**. By nine that evening the guests have left a five-star review that mentions, by name, how spotless the flat was. At twenty past nine the host messages Leah back. He has two more flats on the same street. Would she take them on as well.

That is the whole business in one Monday. A tight window, a fixed price, a clean flat, a happy guest, and a host who suddenly wants more of your time. This chapter is about why that Monday is worth building a business around, who it suits, who it does not, and how the rest of this manual, the Toolkit and the Prompt Library fit together to get you there.

What the trade actually is

When a short-term let — an Airbnb, a Booking.com flat, a holiday cottage — empties between guests, somebody has to turn it around. Not a casual tidy. A turnaround to hotel standard, against the clock, ready for the next paying stranger. That is the **changeover**, and it is the job.

In one changeover you strip and launder the linen, clean every room to a standard a paying guest will review, restock the consumables and welcome supplies, stage the property so it

photographs and presents well, check for damage, and report any issues to the host. The core service is the **changeover clean plus linen change plus restock plus staging plus checks**. Around it sit the natural add-ons: **linen hire and laundry**, restocking consumables and welcome packs, light maintenance and issue reporting, and key and access handling.

The thing that makes this a business rather than a job is the word **recurring**. A one-off domestic clean earns you once. A short-let changeover earns you every time the guests turn over, and a busy listing turns over **80 to 120 times a year or more**. Win one busy flat and you have not won a clean. You have won a recurring contract that pays out week after week. A handful of those becomes a steady book that fills your diary without you chasing new work every Monday.

Think about what that means against Leah's £80 flat. If that 2-bed turns over a hundred times across a busy year, the changeover work alone is worth eight thousand pounds — from one property, one host, one relationship. Five flats like it and you have the spine of a full-time income before you have added a single extra service or climbed into management. That is why this trade rewards keeping hosts happy over winning new ones. The book compounds. Every property you hold and look after well is income that recurs and a referral waiting to happen, because hosts talk to each other and a reliable turnaround operator is the thing they all want and most cannot find.

Above the cleaning sits the higher tier, and the real money: **co-hosting and short-let management**. Here you stop being paid per clean and start being paid a **percentage of the booking revenue, typically 10 to 20%**. You handle the guest messages, the pricing, the calendar, the listing, the reviews — the whole operation — and the host pays you a slice of everything the property earns. We will come back to that throughout the manual, because it is where part-time cleaners turn into full-time operators with a management business.

COACH MOMENT Do not skim past the word *recurring*. It changes how you should think about every host you meet. When you price a changeover, you are not pricing one afternoon's work. You are quoting the rate for a contract that might fire eighty times this year. That is why a host who likes you is worth far more than a single £80 job suggests, and why your reliability matters more than your hourly rate. You are auditioning for the book, not the clean.

Why now

Short-term letting in the UK is large and still growing. Owners who would once have let on a long tenancy now run flats and cottages as holiday lets, and most of them do not want to clean and manage the things themselves. They are busy, or they live somewhere else, or they own several. Every one of those listings needs turning around between guests, and the supply of reliable, systems-minded people who can do it well, on time, every time, is thin.

A few things make 2026 a good year to start.

- **The income is recurring and the market is busy.** A growing pool of listings, each turning over dozens of times a year, means steady demand for the one thing every host needs and few want to do themselves.
- **The move up into co-hosting is open.** As short lets get more regulated and more competitive, hosts increasingly want someone to run the whole operation for a percentage. The operator who starts with the changeover is first in line for that work.
- **The start cost is low.** You can begin properly for £300 to £1,500 — professional cleaning supplies, a good vacuum, microfibre, a restock system, either owned linen stock or a laundry arrangement, and a car. The real "kit" is your systems, checklists and reliability.
- **AI does the admin you used to dread.** Guest messages, host outreach, listing copy, review replies — the writing that eats a co-host's evenings can now be drafted in seconds. The 60-prompt Library that comes with this manual is built for exactly that, so the management tier is far more reachable for one person than it was even two years ago.

What you can earn

Be honest with yourself about the numbers, because we will be honest with you. The income falls into three brackets, and which one you land in depends on how many properties you carry and whether you climb into management.

Bracket	What it looks like	Indicative revenue (UK, 2026)
Part-time	A few listings, changeovers around other work	£10,000–£25,000/yr
Full-time solo	A steady set of changeovers, you do the cleaning	£25,000–£50,000/yr
Team and/or co-hosting	A cleaning team and a management portfolio	£60,000–£200,000+ revenue

The changeover clean is priced by property size. A studio or 1-bed runs £35–£60, a 2-bed £55–£90 (Leah's £80 flat sits at the top of that band, which is fair for harbourside Whitby in season), a 3-bed £80–£140, and larger or premium properties £140–£250+. Linen hire is an add-on per changeover. Co-hosting, the high-value tier, is **10 to 20% of booking revenue**.

The leap between the brackets is not really about working harder on a clean. It is about two moves: carrying more properties so the recurring book grows, and stepping up into

management so you earn a percentage of the whole operation rather than a flat fee per turnaround. Chapter 7 prices all of this properly, Chapter 9 covers portfolio hosts and co-hosting, and Chapter 12 lays out the full service stack that turns one changeover into several lines of recurring revenue.

MENTOR MOMENT The single biggest mistake new operators make is underpricing the changeover because it "only took a couple of hours". You are not selling two hours. You are selling a hotel-standard turnaround inside a five-hour window with no second chance and someone's review and income riding on it. Price for the standard and the deadline, not the clock. The host who quibbles over a fair changeover rate is rarely the host who later trusts you with a 15% management contract. Pick the customers who value what the work protects.

Who this suits, and who it does not

We would rather you knew now than after you had spent the £47. So here are two honest lists.

This suits you if you are:

- **Fast and exacting under time pressure.** The window is real. Most changeovers happen between a 10–11am checkout and a 3–4pm check-in, often the same day, often clustered on Fridays and weekends. You need to be quick and still hit the standard.
- **Reliable above all.** If you do not turn up, a guest arrives to a dirty flat and the host's rating takes the hit. Hosts forgive almost anything except no-shows.
- **Systems-minded.** The people who do well run the same checklist every time, so the standard does not depend on their mood or memory.
- **Presentable and trustworthy with keys.** You hold access to other people's homes and property. That is a responsibility, not a detail.
- **Good with hosts.** Calm, clear, honest about problems. A host who trusts you sleeps better, and a host who sleeps better gives you more flats.

This is not for you if you are:

- **Slow or unreliable on a tight deadline.** A changeover you finish at half past four is a changeover that failed.
- **Sloppy about the details.** A single hair on a pillow or a smear on a mirror is what the guest photographs and reviews.
- **Unable to handle the weekend clustering.** Saturdays and changeover days are when the work lands. If those are sacred to you, this will chafe.

- **Uncomfortable with being judged.** Every stay is reviewed. Your work is on public display through someone else's rating, all the time.

Chapter 2 turns this into a proper self-assessment with a scorecard in the Toolkit, so you can decide with your eyes open before you spend a penny on supplies.

The recurring model, in one picture

Hold this shape in your head, because the whole manual builds on it.

You start with **changeovers**: a per-turnaround fee, paid every time a property flips, priced by size. Win a few busy listings and you have a **recurring book** — predictable income that arrives without fresh selling each week. Add the **service stack** — linen, welcome packs, light maintenance, deep cleans — and each property pays you more than the clean alone. Then climb into **co-hosting**, where you run the property's whole operation for **10 to 20% of its revenue**, and your income rises with the property's success rather than being capped at a flat fee.

City and business Airbnbs run steadily year-round. Holiday cottages peak in summer and the school holidays. A mix of the two smooths your flow, and the recurring per-changeover model is steadier by nature than chasing one-off cleans. That steadiness is the point. It is what lets you plan, hire, and eventually stop cleaning yourself if you choose to.

How to use this manual, the Toolkit and the Prompt Library

You are holding a bundle, not just a book. Use all three parts together.

- **The manual** is the method, in order. Part One sets the foundations: this opportunity, whether it suits you (Ch2), and setting up legally (Ch3). Part Two is the craft: equipment and linen (Ch4), and the turnaround system and hotel standard (Ch5). Part Three is customers: finding your first hosts (Ch6, the longest and most important chapter), and pricing and packages (Ch7). The later parts take you up into portfolios and co-hosting (Ch9, Ch10), scaling and the service stack (Ch11, Ch12), the 2026 tech stack (Ch13), your first 90 days (Ch14), and where the trade is heading (Ch15).
- **The 10-file Excel Toolkit** turns the method into working documents: the self-assessment scorecard, the accounting starter, the Property and Changeover tracker that runs your book, the Pricing Calculator, the quality standards, the proposal template, and the 90-Day Checklist, among others. When a chapter points you to a Toolkit file, open it and use it. The tracker in particular is the spine of the whole operation.
- **The 60-prompt AI Library** drafts the words. Guest messages, host outreach, listing copy, review replies, the co-hosting proposal — feed the prompt your details and it writes the first draft. This is what makes the management tier reachable for one person.

The bundle is **£47**, with free updates for life and a same-day, no-friction refund if it is not for you — email refunds@theworksco.co.uk, keep the materials. We mean that. We would rather you spent the £47 on a coffee with someone you love than on a manual for a business that wasn't yours.

What success looks like in one year

Picture Leah twelve months on from that June Monday.

She is no longer chasing work. She has eight properties on her recurring book, most of them busy listings turning over through the season, and her Property and Changeover tracker tells her on Sunday night exactly what Monday and the weekend hold. Two of those eight she now co-hosts: she handles the messages, the pricing and the reviews, and takes **15% of what each one earns** rather than a flat changeover fee. Her cleaning income is steady; her management income grows whenever those two flats have a good month. She has trained one other cleaner to her standard for the busiest changeover days, and she is deciding whether to take on a third co-hosting client or hire a second pair of hands.

She did not get there by working miracles. She got there by turning up, every time, to a standard that earned five-star reviews, and by saying yes when a host asked if she would take on two more flats.

The work is real and the deadlines are real. So is the recurring income at the other end of it. The next chapter helps you decide, honestly, whether you are the person to do it. Read it before you buy a single bottle of cleaning spray.

Is This For You?

It is a Wednesday in March, and Conor is standing in a 2-bed cottage on the edge of Keswick with ninety minutes to spare and a list in his hand. The last guests left at half ten. The next ones land at three. The beds are stripped, the washing machine is already turning, and he is on his knees behind the toilet with a microfibre cloth because that is the spot the cleaner before him always missed, and the review that mentioned it cost the host a four-star month.

He is not in a hurry, exactly. He is moving fast because the window is short and he has done this enough times to know where the minutes go. Strip first, laundry on, work top to bottom, room by room, photograph the finish, lock up. By one o'clock the cottage looks like a small hotel. He sends the host two photos and a note: *all done, low on loo roll for next time, I left two spare*. The host replies before he has reached the car. *You're a star. Can you do the flat on Stanger Street as well?*

That is the job. It is fast, it is exacting, and it happens on someone else's clock. The question this chapter answers is whether it is the job for **you** — honestly, before you spend a penny on kit or chase a single host. We would rather you found out now, over a coffee, than three properties in.

What the work actually is

Strip the dishonesty out of it first. This is not a relaxed cleaning round where you set your own pace. A short-term let turns over between guests, often the same day, in the few hours between a 10–11am checkout and a 3–4pm check-in. You clean to a hotel standard, change the linen, restock the consumables, stage the property so it photographs well, check for damage and report anything wrong. Then you do it again at the next one.

The income is **recurring, per changeover**. A busy listing turns over 80 to 120 times a year, sometimes more. So a single property is not a one-off clean — it is a standing contract that pays every time a guest leaves. A handful of properties becomes a steady book. And the bigger money sits one tier up, in **co-hosting and short-let management**, where you handle the guest messages, the pricing, the listing and the whole operation for a percentage of the booking revenue — typically **10–20%**.

Your work is tied directly to the host's income. Guests review every stay. Cleanliness and presentation drive the rating, the rating drives the bookings, and the bookings drive the price the host can charge. When you do the turnaround well, the host earns more. When

you miss the spot behind the toilet, they earn less. That is the whole value of you, and it is why the standards are not optional.

The green lights

Some people are built for this. Read these and be honest about which ones are you, not which ones you would like to be.

You are fast and exacting under time pressure. Not one or the other. A slow perfectionist misses the check-in. A quick bodger gets a bad review. The job needs both at once: hotel-standard work inside a tight window, every time.

You are reliable on changeover days. This is the big one. Changeovers cluster on Fridays, weekends and standard changeover days, and they land whether you slept well or not. If a host books you for a Saturday turnaround and you do not show, a guest arrives at three to a dirty flat and the host's reviews take the hit. Reliability is not a nice-to-have here. It is the product.

You are systems-minded. The operators who last do not rely on memory. They run checklists, they restock from a caddy that is always stocked the same way, they photograph the same shots every time. The window is too short to improvise. If you like a repeatable process and you actually follow it, you will be good at this.

You are presentable and trustworthy with keys. You hold access to other people's homes and sometimes their guests' belongings. Hosts need to trust you with a key, a code or a lockbox, and to know you will treat the place like it is theirs. That trust is worth more than any flyer.

You are good with hosts. Not salesy — steady. A host who is busy or lives two hundred miles away wants to feel that someone competent has it handled. A clear photo and a calm message after each changeover does more to keep the contract than any discount. The best clients are the busy or remote owners who want the whole turnaround taken off their plate, and they stay loyal to the operator who never makes them chase or worry.

You are calm when something goes wrong. A boiler is out, a guest left a mess beyond the normal, the linen delivery is late. The window does not pause for any of it. The operators who keep hosts are the ones who report the problem clearly, suggest the fix, and get the property guest-ready anyway. Panic costs a check-in. Composure keeps a contract.

COACH MOMENT Score yourself one to five on each of those five markers right now, before you read on. Fast-and-exacting. Reliable on the day. Systems-minded. Trustworthy. Good with hosts. Anything you scored a two or below is not a reason to quit — it is the thing to work on first. Toolkit file 01, the Self-

Assessment Scorecard, turns this into a proper checklist you can keep and re-score in ninety days.

The red flags

The same honesty cuts the other way. These are the traits that make the work a grind or a failure, and no amount of wanting it fixes them on its own.

You are slow, or you cannot hold a deadline. If a three-hour window stresses you into freezing, or you tend to run late and shrug it off, this trade will punish you weekly. The checkout-to-check-in clock does not move.

You are sloppy, or "good enough" is your standard. Guests photograph the hair in the plughole and the dust on the skirting and put it in a review with a star rating attached. Good enough is not good enough when a stranger is grading your work in public the next morning.

You cannot handle the Friday and weekend clustering. Changeover days bunch up. If your life cannot flex to a busy Saturday morning with three turnarounds back to back, or if weekends are sacred and immovable, the calendar will fight you constantly.

You are uncomfortable with the standard a review demands. Some people bristle at being held to a hotel standard for what they think of as "just cleaning". If a public five-star expectation feels like someone else's problem, this is the wrong trade. Owning that standard is the job.

You want the income without the standard. Some people like the sound of recurring per-changeover money but balk at the work that earns it. The recurring contract exists precisely because the standard is hard and the window is tight. If you want one without the other, the host will find someone who delivers both, and they will not be slow about it.

None of these makes you a bad person or a bad worker. They make you a bad fit for this particular trade, and that is useful to know on day one rather than month six. The honest truth is that this is deadline-driven, hotel-standard work that affects someone else's livelihood, and the people who thrive in it are the ones who find that pressure motivating rather than crushing.

MENTOR MOMENT The single trait that separates the operators who build a real book from the ones who fade is not speed or even standards — it is reliability on the days nobody wants to work. Anyone can clean a flat well on a quiet Tuesday. The operator a host cannot replace is the one who turns up, calm and ready, on the third Saturday of August when there are four changeovers in the diary and

the linen van is late. If you know in your bones that you are that person, the rest can be taught. If you know you are not, no checklist will save the contract.

The honest reality, in numbers

Let us put figures on it so you know what you are weighing. These are the canonical 2026 UK numbers we use across this manual.

A changeover clean, usually including the linen change, is priced by property size:

Property	Changeover clean
Studio / 1-bed	£35–£60
2-bed	£55–£90
3-bed	£80–£140
Larger / premium	£140–£250+

Conor's 2-bed Keswick cottage sits in the middle of that band. At roughly £80 a changeover and a busy summer calendar, a single property like that can turn over often enough to be worth a few thousand pounds a year on its own — and that is one property, recurring, not a one-off. Build a steady set and the brackets look like this:

- **Part-time**, a few listings: £10,000–£25,000 a year.
- **Full-time solo**, a steady set of changeovers: £25,000–£50,000 a year.
- **With a cleaning team and/or a co-hosting portfolio**: £60,000–£200,000+ in revenue.

The jump to the top bracket is not just more cleaning. It is moving up into co-hosting and management at 10–20% of booking revenue, and eventually employing others to do the changeovers while you run the operation. Chapters 9, 11 and 12 are about that climb. For now, the point is that the start is cheap — £300–£1,500 for supplies, a decent vacuum, microfibre, a restock system, linen sorted, and a car — and the ceiling is genuinely high if reliability and standards hold.

What it is not is easy money sitting still. The income is recurring, which is steadier than one-off cleaning, but every pound of it is earned inside a window, to a standard, on a host's schedule. Holiday lets peak in summer and the school holidays; city and business lets run more steadily year-round. Mix them and the work smooths out. Either way, the busy weeks are genuinely busy.

The self-assessment

Before you read another chapter, do the scorecard properly. Toolkit file 01 is built for exactly this. It walks you through the green-light markers and the red flags, asks you to rate yourself honestly, and gives you a simple read at the end: a clear fit, a fit with one or two things to fix first, or a sign that your time and money are better spent elsewhere.

Be hard on yourself in it. The cost of an honest two out of five in March is a fortnight of practice. The cost of a dishonest four out of five is a tanked review, a lost host and a refund you did not need to give the guest. The scorecard is free, it takes ten minutes, and it is the cheapest decision you will make in this business.

If you come out the other side as a clear fit, good — Chapter 3 gets you set up legally and insured, and the rest of the manual is the system. If you come out as a fix-first, even better, because now you know the one or two things to drill before a host is depending on you.

COACH MOMENT Do not skip the scorecard because you think you already know the answer. The operators who fail rarely fail on talent. They fail because they never honestly tested themselves against the weekend clustering or the public-review standard before the money was on the line. Ten minutes with Toolkit 01 now is worth more than ten guesses later.

If the answer is no

Some readers will reach this point and feel the work is not for them. The window stress, the weekend pull, the public standard — it does not sit right. That is a real and respectable answer, and we would far rather you reached it on page two than after a season of dreading every Saturday.

If that is you, here is our honest offer, the same one we make at the front of every Works Co. manual. The bundle — this manual, the 10-file Excel toolkit and the 60-prompt AI library — is £47, with a same-day, no-friction refund. Email refunds@theworkscs.co.uk, keep the materials, and the money is back the same day. We mean it. We would rather you spent that £47 on a coffee with someone you love than on a manual for a business that was never going to be yours. Updates are free for life either way, so if you ever change your mind, the door is open.

If the answer is yes

If you scored well, if the green lights are mostly you, and if the idea of standing in a cottage with a short window and a clear checklist sounds like a good morning rather than a bad one — then you are in the right trade at the right time. The short-let market is large and growing, the recurring-changeover model is steadier than one-off cleaning, and the climb into co-hosting is real money for those who earn the trust.

Conor did not start sure of any of this. He started with one cottage, a borrowed vacuum and a checklist he printed off. The Stanger Street flat made it two. By the end of his first summer it was a book of properties and a co-hosting offer on the table. None of that came from wanting it. It came from turning up, fast and exacting, on the days that counted.

Next we make it real and legal. Chapter 3 covers setting up the business — sole trader or limited, HMRC, the £90,000 VAT threshold, the insurance you need because you hold the keys to other people's homes, and the host-compliance knowledge that makes you worth more than the cleaner down the road. The decision is made. Now we build the foundation under it.

That was Chapter 1.

The other twenty chapters, the Excel toolkit and the
AI prompt library are in the full bundle.

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