

# Visit Belfast Sustainability Policy

The importance of tourism to the city economy and Belfast to the regional visitor economy cannot be underestimated. Twenty-five years of tourism growth has welcomed millions of visitors to the city and been a catalyst for the regeneration of Belfast. It has established hundreds of new enterprises for our economy, thousands of jobs for our residents and created opportunities for our communities and neighbourhoods. Tourism has played an important part in enriching the culture, vibrancy of the city and the quality of life for all the people who call Belfast home.

With the launch of Belfast's first resilience strategy and climate plan, the city has set an ambitious goal 'to transition to an inclusive, zero emissions economy in a generation.' The plan sets out thirty transformational programmes to future-proof our city for generations to come, a commitment to inclusive and sustainable growth and a plan to make Belfast climate resilient.

As the city's Destination Marketing and Management Company, Visit Belfast continues to play a critical role in supporting Belfast's ambition through leading delivery of sustainable tourism in partnership with Belfast City Council and our industry.

## Visit Belfast

Visit Belfast's 'New Horizon's strategy 2024-2027' and 2024-5 business plan is focussed on enhancing our efforts to:

- **Grow** the visitor economy in the Belfast city region in an inclusive and sustainable way
- **Position** the Belfast city region as a front of mind destination for leisure visits, business events and days out;
- **Enhance** the experience for visitors by showcasing Belfast city region as a diverse and welcoming destination with a unique neighbourhood offer and;
- **Sustain** its approach to championing sustainability, pioneering powerful impactful initiatives, inspiring sustainable choices amongst visitors and clients – and telling Belfast's sustainability story.

This is reflected in our renewed purpose:

***"To create and service visitors for Belfast and Northern Ireland in order to generate economic benefit and inclusive growth, creating jobs and prosperity for the city region, enabling Belfast to become a more sustainable place to visit, meet and live in."***



# visitBelfast

## Our Commitments

*Our ten commitments are aligned to eight of the 17 UN sustainable goals*

### 1 Reduce the environmental impact of our business



### 2 Build sustainability capacity within Visit Belfast and empower our employees



### 3 Support and improve employee health and wellbeing



### 4 Responsibly source goods and services



### 5 Champion sustainability within our industry – encouraging collaboration, catalysing innovation, reducing the carbon footprint of the sector and increasing social impact.



### 6 Promote sustainable choices and experiences and positively influence the actions of visitors



### 7 Work with our B2B clients (event organisers, tour operators and cruise lines) to make sustainable business easy



### 8 Generate and manage year-round visitors to Belfast in a way which is sensitive to the environment and communities



### 9 Maximise the social and economic impacts of Visit Belfast's activities – to deliver sustainable and inclusive growth



### 10 Promote and develop Belfast as an accessible, inclusive and welcoming destination for all



# Management, Delivery and Performance

We will ensure delivery on our commitments through the following process:

- Adopt a triple bottom line approach, incorporating social, environmental and economic KPIs into our strategy and business plan.
- Measure the estimated carbon footprint of tourism in Belfast
- Measure the estimated carbon footprint of Visit Belfast
- Agreeing an annual sustainable action plan as a key part of Visit Belfast's business planning process with agreed deliverables with regular progress reports provided to the operational committee.
- Develop sustainability capacity across Visit Belfast to support delivery of the annual action plan and delivery on policy commitments
- Ensuring that all employees understand the policy, receive sustainability training as part of their role within Visit Belfast and are encouraged to be champions of sustainability across the organisation
- Publishing our sustainability policy on our website and communicating it with all key stakeholders, industry, clients, suppliers and residents. Visit Belfast also publishes an annual impact report on progress against the policy.
- Reviewing and updating our policy annually to ensure continuous improvement of our sustainability efforts
- Participate in the annual Global Destination Sustainability Index to measure sustainability performance at a destination level (environment, supplier, destination management and society)
- Maintain Visit Belfast's Gold Green Tourism accreditation.

On behalf of Visit Belfast:



Gerry Lennon  
Chief Executive, Visit Belfast  
June 2021



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