

Visit Belfast Sustainability Policy

The importance of tourism to the city economy and Belfast to the regional visitor economy cannot be underestimated. Twenty 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 recognises that it has an important role to play in supporting Belfast's ambition. In partnership with Belfast City Council, we have committed to the development of a sustainable tourism plan as one of the resilience strategy transformational programmes. It is within this context that Visit Belfast is launching its first sustainability policy.

Visit Belfast – a renewed sense of purpose

Visit Belfast's three-year recovery plan Rebuilding City Tourism 2021-24 sets out a new direction of travel, illustrating a step change in our approach to our marketing and visitor servicing activity, and the generation and measurement of tourism success for the betterment of our businesses, our employees, our residents, our city and its ecosystem.

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."



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Our Commitments

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

1 Reduce the environmental impact of our business and look for better, greener and more sustainable ways of working



2 Build sustainability capacity within Visit Belfast and empower our employees



3 Support and improve employee health and wellbeing



4 Procure goods and services more sustainably



5 Champion sustainability within our industry – encouraging collaboration, catalysing innovation and improvement



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:

- Agreeing an annual sustainable action plan as a key part of Visit Belfast's business planning process with agreed targets and KPIs, to be approved by the Board with performance reports at least twice annually on progress.
- Establishing a sustainability team within Visit Belfast to support delivery of the sustainable 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.
- Reviewing and updating our policy regularly to ensure continuous improvement of our sustainability efforts. Next update due September 2023
- Participate in the annual Global Destination Sustainability Index to measure sustainability performance at a destination level (environment, supplier, destination management and society).
- Complete the Green Tourism Accreditation process which measures sustainability performance at an organisation level (Visit Belfast).

On behalf of Visit Belfast:



Gerry Lennon
Chief Executive, Visit Belfast
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