



**Visit Cork Sustainability Policy**  
**(2023-2030)**

## Contents

Mission Statement.....	3
Policy Principles .....	4
Policy Alignment .....	4
Visit Cork Sustainability Policy: Actions and Targets.....	5
Team and Culture.....	5
Procurement .....	7
Certifications / Reporting Frameworks.....	7
Stakeholder Engagement.....	9
Communications.....	10
The Regenerative Event Checklist.....	12
Review Schedule.....	13

## Mission Statement

***Visit Cork aims to be the best Destination Marketing Organisation in Ireland, working with our partners in tourism to have Cork recognised as a leader in social, environmental, and economic sustainability for both business and leisure tourism.***

Sustainable tourism is defined by the UN Environment Program and UN World Tourism Organization as *“tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities.”*

Visit Cork acknowledges its responsibility as Cork’s official tourism body to encourage, develop and establish sustainable practices in its own operations and across the Cork tourism sector.

This **Visit Cork Sustainability Policy (2023-2030)** outlines the principles and commitments to sustainability across the organisation’s operations. In tandem with the **Visit Cork Sustainability Strategy (2023-2030)**, they provide a vision and an action plan for Visit Cork in driving the sustainability agenda throughout the tourism sector in Cork.

The **Visit Cork Sustainability Policy** and **Visit Cork Sustainability Strategy** have been developed by working closely with local stakeholders, including industry representatives, local government agencies and citizens. They are evolving documents that set out both short-term actions and a long-term vision for the organisation. These documents will be reviewed and updated regularly to ensure that Visit Cork, on behalf of the tourism sector in Cork, is striving for excellence across the social, environmental and economic indicators, and producing more sustainable outcomes for our region.

This **Visit Cork Sustainability Policy** highlights the principles and commitments to sustainability specifically across the organisation’s operations, including: Team and Culture; Procurement; Certifications/Reporting Frameworks; Stakeholder Engagement and Communications.

The **Visit Cork Sustainability Strategy** reiterates these elements as part of the Governance section, as well as including further detail with additional targets and indicators across the three pillars of Environmental, Social and Economic Sustainability.

## Policy Principles

1. **Care:** this policy is created and implemented with care for the various elements of the Cork tourism industry and of the Cork region as a whole.
2. **Commitment:** this policy is created and implemented with a commitment to continue improving and developing Cork's Tourism offering.
3. **Cooperation:** this policy is created and implemented through cooperation with Visit Cork's various stakeholders and the wider tourism industry.
4. **Courage:** this policy is created and implemented with courage to challenge the current way of doing things and creativity as to how they can be improved.

## Policy Alignment

The Visit Cork Sustainability Policy aligns with the goals and ambitions of the following:

- Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028
- Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028
- Cork City Council Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024
- Cork County Council Climate Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024
- Cork City Local Economic and Community Plan 2023-2029 (currently being developed)
- Cork County Local Economic and Community Plan 2023-2029 (currently being developed)

In addition, the Visit Cork Sustainability Policy and Strategy aim to align with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with a particular focus on the following SDGs:



## Visit Cork Sustainability Policy: Actions and Targets

Objective	Indicator	Annual Action Plan 2023	Targets							GDSI	SDGs	
			2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030			
Team and Culture												
Build a culture of sustainability within Visit Cork.	Visit Cork team is familiar with the organisation's sustainability strategy and policies and contributes to their ongoing implementation and development.	Include sustainability as a recurring item on staff meeting agenda.									DM-12 DM-13	SDG11
		Conduct a quarterly review of sustainability targets with Visit Cork team.										
		Conduct an annual review of this strategy involving the input of all Visit Cork staff.										
	Visit Cork staff receive annual sustainability training.	All staff to attend relevant training and briefings (minimum 1 per year/per person), including GDSI updates, local agency and third-party events and training programmes. Training may focus on social, environmental or economic sustainability.									DM-13	SDG11

	New staff onboarding process includes information and explanation of Visit Cork sustainability policy and strategy.	New employees to receive briefing on Visit Cork sustainability goals, and all new staff are informed of their role in achieving the goals of this strategy, with sustainability discussion and training through onboarding and orientation.									
	Visit Cork Board support and input into sustainability strategy.	Annual review of sustainability strategy and policy with Visit Cork board.								DM-12	SDG11
		Sustainability a fixed item on the Visit Cork Board meeting agenda at each meeting.									
	Additional resources committed to driving sustainability for Visit Cork by hiring a full-time sustainability resource by 2025.	Hire a part-time resource to support and drive the ongoing delivery of sustainability targets for Visit Cork.								DM-8	SDG8 SDG11
	Measure and reduce annual carbon footprint of Visit Cork staff.	Work with consultant to begin measuring and tracking annual carbon footprint of Visit Cork staff in order to establish baselines.							Remove carbon to offset carbon footprint .	DM-8	SDG13



	Reduce packaging waste.	Ask suppliers how they minimise packaging as part of our sustainability policy.									
	Eliminate any single-use plastics.										
	Reduce water use by only using dishwasher when full.										
	Motion sensors on all lights.										
	Timers on heating/radiators to be in use only when in the office.										
	Reduce set-point of heating to 20 degrees Celsius.										
	Reduce paper usage – monitor number of printed pages via printer.	Establish baseline from printer report for 2022 in order to set future targets.									
	All Visit Cork events to be benchmarked against the Regenerative Event Checklist	Start to benchmark our events against the Regenerative Event Checklist and look for continuous improvements from our suppliers.							All tourism events in Cork to fulfil these criteria.	DM-20	SDG8 SDG11 SDG12



Stakeholder Engagement

<p>Evolve the Visit Cork sustainability strategy through widespread stakeholder consultation.</p>	<p>Annual survey issued to industry and other stakeholders (including hotels, venues, agencies, visitors, event attendees, clients, local authorities, local community, and citizens).</p>	<p>Begin to track sustainability indicators in the region and gather feedback on how Visit Cork could support sustainability actions in the local industry.</p>	<p>Identify a tool and/or method of gathering NPS and other feedback from visitors.</p>	<p>Implement a collective method of gathering feedback from visitors, used across the tourism industry and make Net Promoter Score a collective KPI for tourism stakeholders.</p>	<p>NPS of 50 or more</p>	<p>Increase NPS by 0.5 points annually.</p>	<p>Increase NPS by 0.5 points annually.</p>	<p>Increase NPS by 0.5 points annually.</p>	<p>Steady NPS or 52+ year on year</p>	<p>DM-1 DM-6</p>	<p>SDG11</p>
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------	---------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------	----------------------	--------------



	Quarterly newsletter dedicated to sustainability news.	Quarterly newsletter dedicated to sustainability news.										
Ensure that Pure Cork and CCB websites are both highlighting and prioritising the theme of sustainability.	Improved prominence and visibility of sustainability themes, including sustainable tourism providers, events, activities and best practices. for suppliers, clients, and visitors on Pure Cork and CCB websites.	Update Pure Cork and CCB websites to enhance sustainability sections.									DM-20	
	Sustainability information about key suppliers (i.e., hotels, venues, agencies, restaurants) including any sustainability certificates and credentials are highlighted on Pure Cork and CCB websites.	Update Pure Cork and CCB websites to improve visibility of sustainability sections.			All suppliers should be searchable on Pure Cork and CCB websites according to sustainability criteria.							
	Growth in number of best practices promoted through Visit Cork channels.	Upload 4 new best practices to CCB/Pure Cork website.	1 per quarter	1 per month		2 per month						

## The Regenerative Event Checklist

Cork Convention Bureau will distribute this checklist as part of all conference and event bids. This checklist will also be distributed to all event venues and event organisers, as a best practice.

We will begin to benchmark all our own events and all MICE events against this list.

By 2030 we aim for all tourism events in Cork to fulfil these criteria.

1. Reduce, reuse and recycle conference materials
2. Donate leftover food and material to local charities
3. Go digital, using electronic signage and event apps
4. Use sustainable promotional products
5. Offset your emissions with regenerative projects
6. Choose a venue which is accessible to all
7. Choose a venue with sustainable transport access and bicycle facilities
8. Choose a venue that sources clean energy
9. Choose local, sustainable event suppliers
10. Choose sustainable food, sourced locally
11. Choose a venue and suppliers that are committed to DEI
12. Choose a venue and suppliers that are committed to supporting their local community
13. Communicate with attendees and ask them to participate in achieving a sustainable event
14. Educate exhibitors on best practices
15. Leave a positive legacy in the local community (through employment, education, fundraising, volunteering initiatives)
16. Measure your impact and be transparent in sharing sustainability credentials publicly

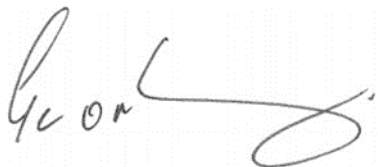
## Review Schedule

This policy has been developed with support and consultation with Visit Cork's industry partners and stakeholders. This includes the board of Visit Cork, Cork City Council, Cork County Council, Fáilte Ireland, Cork Chamber, Cork Airport, Irish Hotels Federation (Cork branch), and other relevant industry stakeholders. This policy will be an evolving document and will be reviewed annually.

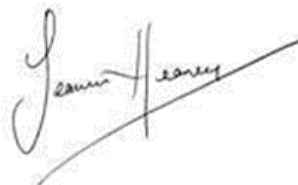
These industry partners/stakeholders have agreed to assist Visit Cork in achieving the goals of this strategy, which will be implemented by the Visit Cork sustainability team containing:

- Seamus Heaney – Head of Visit Cork
- Evelyn O'Sullivan – Manager of Cork Convention Bureau
- Anne Cahill - Trade Liaison

Approved on behalf of Visit Cork by:



Gerard O'Mahoney (Chairman, Visit Cork)



Seamus Heaney (Head of Visit Cork)

<b>Adopted:</b>	25/05/23
<b>Contact:</b>	Seamus Heaney
<b>Amended/Reviewed:</b>	25/05/23
<b>Version/Reviewed by:</b>	V2 reviewed by Visit Cork Board
<b>Next Formal Policy Review:</b>	December 2023
<b>Formal Review of Policy by:</b>	Visit Cork Board