

Sustainable Tourism & Conventions Action Plan 2023 - 2025 Reporting 2024-2025



### This plan is a second phase Sustainability Plan for Tourism & Conventions in Glasgow. It sets out key short to medium-term actions which focus on driving and supporting change across the sector.

As the strategic lead for tourism and conventions, Glasgow Life's role is to support our city to adopt a cohesive and balanced approach to managing our destination's visitor economy. We aim to develop the tourism and conventions sector to benefit our citizens, our economy and environment. The actions in the sustainability plan align with our commitment to Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency and the Glasgow Declaration to take Climate Action.

The actions within this plan feed into and directly

- support Strategic Priority 5 (page 20) of the Glasgow 2030 Tourism Strategy
- support Glasgow's Climate Plan
- support the national tourism strategy <u>Scotland Outlook 2030</u>
- align to UN Sustainable Development Goals.

### Rationale

We are committed to implementing a balanced approach with greater focus on shaping positive and environmental impacts alongside economic benefits.

As our industry works hard to renew itself, it is ever more important that we support the sector to adopt more sustainable practices. Strengthening their capacity to be resilient, to respond to customer expectations, and show that tourism can have a positive impact whilst helping to meet net zero ambitions are all key fundamentals.

#### We aim to do this by working through three strategic areas:

Building a Sustainable Tourism Sector	Developing Our Sustainable City Offer	Showcasing Our Sustainable City Destination
Supporting industry to be more sustainable through training, accreditation and signposting to resources.	Working with internal teams and external stakeholders to strengthen our sustainable credentials and adapt our processes to champion green change.	Translating the green conversation to actions which are meaningful, free or low cost. Avoiding use of jargon, celebrating, and promoting successes in the industry.

Glasgow Life has responsibility for key elements of destination management and will continue to work closely with stakeholders, industry, and services as we strengthen our sustainable and inclusive visitor economy.

The table overleaf sets out the priority actions for Tourism and Conventions and how they contribute to the successful delivery of other city sustainability plans.

Aileen Crawford Head of Tourism and Conventions Glasgow Life

### **Building a Sustainable Tourism Sector**

### 1. Accessible, Resilient & Welcoming



OUTLOOK 2030 Our Thriving Places & Our Memorable Experiences Glasgow Climate Action Plan Priority 1 & 2

	<b>Fourism &amp; Conventions Actions</b>	Measure	Timescales	Progress for 2024/25
1.1.	Support businesses to access available funding streams and sign up to green accreditation schemes	<ul><li>70% of city centre hotel rooms to be signed up to a green accreditation scheme by March 2023.</li><li>60% of leisure &amp; business members to have green credentials.</li></ul>	March 2025	<ul> <li>62% of city centre hotel rooms have a 3rd party sustainability accreditation.</li> <li>42% of leisure &amp; business members to have green credentials and online accessibility guides</li> </ul>
1.2.	Implement new contract with AccessAble to ensure 200+ key city and public service venues have up to date online accessibility information guides	Number of accessibility venue audits conducted / renewed Number of new / upgraded online accessibility guides available for Glasgow venues 60% of leisure & business members to have online accessibility guides	March 2024	<ul> <li>Online accessibility guides were reviewed for over 200 Glasgow venues. A total of 10 venues were visited by surveyors to conduct a fuller review of any venue changes including <u>Glasgow</u> <u>Royal Concert Hall</u>, <u>Glasgow BMX</u> <u>Centre</u>, Glasgow Fort, the SEC and <u>OVO Hydro</u>, <u>Hampden Football Stadium</u> and Tour. Visited venue guides now benefit from enhanced 360 imagery. Glasgow Life will continue to partner with AccessAble for 2025-26 to support the provision of online access information for city residents and visitors.</li> </ul>

	Tourism & Conventions Actions	Measure	Timescales	Progress for 2024/25
1.3.	Work with VisitScotland and AccessAble to raise awareness on the importance of accessibility, its business benefit and the training opportunities which are available.	Number of workshops and webinars delivered Number of attendees and participants	June 2024	<ul> <li>Glasgow Life teams hosted another Accessibility workshop for a group of city hotels in February 2025. Working closely with VisitScotland, AccessAble and with guest speaker <u>Pippa Stacey</u>, the session looked at the opportunity and value of the accessible market for overnight stays and services available to develop accessible content online.</li> </ul>
1.4.	Continue to signpost our members to support and funding linked to greener practices e.g., Glasgow Chamber of Commerce 'Step up to Net Zero' scheme, Scottish Enterprise, VisitScotland toolkits, WRAP, Zero Waste Scotland, free toolkits to make your own guides	Inclusion in member comms; e-updates, webinar content, member event speakers, blogs	March 2024	<ul> <li>The <u>Sustainability</u> and <u>Sustainable</u> <u>Business support</u> sections of visitglasgow.org.uk have benefited from further additions.</li> <li>Web traffic for the Sustainability section between April 2024 – March 2025 shows that content was viewed over 1,300 times.</li> <li>A <u>Sustainability webinar</u> was delivered in September and promoted through social channels. A <u>Climate Springboard</u> <u>webinar</u> was also held in January that provided support and information for SMEs. Regular industry comms is shared via updates and online to promote training and resources available.</li> </ul>

-	Tourism & Conventions Actions	Measure	Timescales	Progress for 2024/25
1.5.	Roll out new accessible event planning guides and continue to be a leading conference destination for the medical and life sciences field, by supporting delegates living with certain medical conditions to attend their own UK, European or international conferences in our city.	Number of new guide downloads	March 2025	<ul> <li>Web traffic for the Glasgow Convention section of visitglasgow.org.uk April 2024         <ul> <li>March 2025 shows that Accessibility content received almost 500 views.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
1.6.	Adapt tourism governance structures to be more inclusive and representative	Published changes / forward plans to existing tourism partnership structures.	March 2025	<ul> <li>Changes were introduced in April 2024 to the city's 2 tourism industry groups; <u>Glasgow Tourism Advisory Forum</u> and Glasgow Tourism &amp; Events Network to ensure that they reflect the ambition of the Glasgow 2030 Tourism Strategy.</li> <li>The groups have provided opportunities for international tourism and events students to be members of the groups.</li> </ul>
1.7.	Ensure marketing and imagery in our communication and campaigns is more representative of our city residents	Review marketing toolkit imagery and use in destination comms/campaigns	June 2024	• We continue to develop our <u>accessibility</u> <u>section</u> on visitglasgow.com and worked with <u>Emma Muldoon</u> , a travel and disability blogger, once again to produce new accessible itineraries.
1.8.	Ensure all teams members participate in Equality and Diversity training	Maintain register of completed staff training	March 2024	<ul> <li>In 2024-25 a further 92 EDI training sessions were completed by the Tourism, Conventions, Destination Marketing and Events team.</li> </ul>

 Improve Environmental and Social Impact via our Suppliers / Supported Partners



Glasgow Climate Action Plan Priority 1 & 2

	<b>Fourism &amp; Conventions Actions</b>	Measure	Timescales	Progress for 2024/25
2.1.	Continue to encourage city/partner DMCs and PCOs to create their own sustainability policy, share it publicly, and have it signed by their executive.		ongoing	<ul> <li>93% of our member PCO and DMCs have a sustainability plan that is shared on their website. Agreed a discount to incentivise these businesses to join a 3rd party sustainability accreditation scheme. News and opportunities on sustainability feature in our member communications and events.</li> </ul>
2.2.	Monitor feedback from our conference organisers on their perception of Glasgow as a sustainable and healthy meeting destination.	Through post-event evaluation we aim that 50%+ of all our conferences supporting programmes will have sustainability themes included by the end of 2025	December 2025	<ul> <li>Feedback from organisers in 2024 showed 79.5% had prioritised green activity (it was either deemed essential or one of the top factors considered). Organisers were also asked; "When selecting venues / hotels for your meeting, how essential was sustainability?" 86% indicated it was important to their decision making.</li> <li>44 survey responses for 2024, none back yet for 2025 conferences</li> <li>35 positive responses for Q9 = 79.5%</li> <li>38 positive responses for Q10 = 86%</li> </ul>

<b>Tourism &amp; Conventions Actions</b>	Measure	Timescales	Progress for 2024/25
2.3. Work with event organisers to encourage conference supporting programmes to have sustainability aspects.			<ul> <li>93% of respondents were able to provide examples of some kind of impact).</li> <li>Sustainability and impact are raised and discussed with 100% of conference clients and are discussed both at the bid stage and after a conference has confirmed to Glasgow. Clients are then supported to encourage their conference to be as sustainable as possible.</li> <li>Through partnerships with academic institutions, charities, and event organisers, Glasgow Conference Impact Network facilitated initiatives to ensure conferences in the city leave lasting legacies. Highlights for 2024/25.</li> <li>From 2025 organisers are also asked "Considering Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, can you give any examples of considerations or actions you've taken to ensure your meeting is accessible and welcoming to all?"</li> </ul>

### 3. Glasgow's Food Offer



Glasgow Climate Action Plan Priority 1 & 2

	Tourism & Conventions Actions	Measure	Timescales	Progress for 2024/25
3.1.	Support the promotion of restaurants and venues that offer local, organic and seasonal menus	Inclusion in consumer communications and campaigns	Ongoing	<ul> <li><u>Scottish restaurants</u> in Glasgow where visitors can enjoy locally sourced are promoted regularly. <u>Vegan and</u> <u>vegetarian</u> is promoted throughout the city. Tours in Glasgow showcase <u>Scottish</u> <u>cuisine</u> and encourages visitors to explore the city by foot.</li> <li>New food and drink content has been created and added to visitglasgow. com including top restaurants, Michelin dining and best bakeries. A Food And drink campaign was developed which ran for one month - Visit Glasgow (@ visitglasgow_sco) • Instagram photos and videos across multiple channels including Meta, YouTube, TikTok, Reddit and InVibes.</li> </ul>

-	Tourism & Conventions Actions	Measure	Timescales	Progress for 2024/25
3.2.	Utilise our Food Ambassador role to raise awareness of local issues and respond to the needs of our restaurants		Complete	<ul> <li>The Food Tourism Ambassador role, concluded in late 2023.</li> <li>Glasgow hosted the annual <u>Michelin</u> <u>Awards</u> in February 2025. Visit Glasgow/Glasgow Life and Scotland Food and Drink maximised the opportunity for Glasgow by delivering a bespoke conference for food and drink hospitality businesses and food producers across Scotland. The conference focussed on Scotland's quality, local food and drink suppliers and makers in Glasgow/Scotland.</li> </ul>
3.3.	Promote Food and Drink related support and training opportunities e.g., Hospitality Industry Trust, Food and Drink Scotland to businesses etc. Provide guidance and encourage sustainable food practices e.g., <u>Grounds for Recycling</u>	Inclusion in industry comms; e-updates, blogs and webinars	Ongoing	<ul> <li>Collaborative work with Scotland Food and Drink showcased Glasgow's authentic F&amp;D offer alongside the Michelin Awards.</li> <li>Visitglasgow.org.uk <u>sustainability</u> <u>business support page</u> promotes the city's Sustainable Food Network, Slow Food Glasgow and Too Good 2 Go. We also promote Green Tourism and Green Key which support businesses to adopt more sustainable food practices.</li> <li>We promote Food and Drink related support and training news in our regular member communications and events.</li> </ul>

### **Developing Our Sustainable City Offer**

## 4. Maintaining our City's Sustainable Credentials



**Glasgow Climate Action Plan** Priority 3

<b>Tourism &amp; Conventions Actions</b>	Measure	Timescales	Progress for 2024/25
<b>4.1.</b> Strive to maintain a top 10 position on the Global Destination Sustainability Index (the number of destinations on the index increased by 30% between 22-23).	Glasgow's position on GDS Index for 2023	Annually in October until 2025	<ul> <li>In 2024 Glasgow was ranked <u>12th</u> out of 100 destinations. The Index continues to be increasingly competitive and Glasgow's success at retaining a top 20 position reflects the hard work and dedication of multiple partners and organisations across the city.</li> <li>The GDS Index assesses destinations on their sustainability efforts across four key areas: Destination Management, Supplier (Industry), Social Progress and Environmental Performance. For the Supplier category – Glasgow ranked No. 5!</li> </ul>

-	<b>Tourism &amp; Conventions Actions</b>	Measure	Timescales	Progress for 2024/25
4.2.	Retain additional 3 <sup>rd</sup> party green destination accreditation status e.g., EarthCheck	Retain Earthcheck Bronze status or equivalent accreditation	November 2023	<ul> <li>Glasgow took the decision to step back from Earthcheck accreditation in 2023. After a review, it was agreed that the city's sustainability journey was particularly strengthened by participating in the GDS Index, therefore our focus and resource would bring the greatest positive impact by being applied there.</li> <li>Glasgow Convention Bureau secured a GOLD Green Tourism accreditation.</li> </ul>
4.3.	Retain Glasgow's Sustainable Food Places accreditation	Retain Glasgow's Sustainable Food Places accreditation	ongoing	• Glasgow successfully moved from a Bronze Sustainable Food Places accreditation to Silver in 2023. This reflects the commitment and established food systems in the city which support sustainable and healthy food.
4.4.	Glasgow Convention Bureau (GCB) will continue to be a supporter of the Net Zero Carbon Events Initiative and signatory of the Pledge	Pledge to Net Zero Carbon Events Initiative	ongoing	<ul> <li>Glasgow Convention Bureau continues to be a signatory of the Net Zero Carbon Events Initiative Pledge.</li> </ul>
4.5.	Maintain our commitment to the Glasgow Declaration on Climate Action in Tourism and Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency	Glasgow Declaration on Climate Action in Tourism Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency	ongoing	• We continue to be committed to the Glasgow Declaration on Climate Action in Tourism and Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency (under Glasgow Convention Bureau)

# 5. Responsible Tourism:Extending Visitor Stays



Glasgow Climate Action Plan Priority 3

-	<b>Tourism &amp; Conventions Actions</b>	Measure	Timescales	Progress for 2024/25
5.1.	Work with industry, Destination Management Companies, Glasgow Life Destination Marketing team and partners to promote the city for longer stays, to add Glasgow to their itineraries and develop bookable experiences	Average length of stay for domestic / international leisure visitors and delegates and travel trade. No. of online bookable offers on visitglasgow.com site Baseline target (no of bookable products for Glasgow on OTA's e.g., Expedia, Virgin	June 2025 June 2025 June 2025 March 2024	<ul> <li>The What's On section on <u>visitglasgow</u>. <u>com</u> has been reviewed and is now working with Data Thistle to ensure a more comprehensive range of events are featured.</li> <li>An audit of Get Your Guide in early 2025 shows that 66 Glasgow products feature.</li> </ul>
5.2.	Support industry / ticketing agents / Online Tour Operators to develop online bookable products	Experience Days) Economic impact of city travel trade business		• An Introduction to Travel Trade workshop was hosted in partnership with VisitScotland (October 2024) with 33 attendees.
5.3.	Work with surrounding regions to extend stays and strengthen Glasgow as a base for visitors in Scotland.			<ul> <li>VisitScotland coordinates regular meetings of the Glasgow City Regions Tourism Partners group which has supported collaborative working around data and insights, travel trade and film tourism. Visitglasgow.com has <u>20 things</u> to do near Glasgow article and promotes <u>Mackintosh venues</u> which include the V&amp;A in Dundee and Hillhouse in Helensburgh.</li> </ul>

### 6. Well-Connected and Thriving City



SCOTLAND<br/>OUTLOOK2030Glasgow Climate<br/>Action PlanOur Thriving Places &<br/>Our Memorable ExperiencesPriority 3

	Tourism & Conventions Actions	Measure	Timescales	Progress for 2024/25
6.1.	Identify ongoing partnership opportunities to promote rail travel as part of destination marketing campaign activities. Target core markets for leisure and business visitors.	Enhanced sustainable travel content on visitglasgow.com (consumer) and visitglasgow.org.uk (B2B) sites. No. of conference delegates which use travel pass	March 2024 August 2023	<ul> <li>The destination team ran a domestic campaign with Avanti from December 2024 to March 2025 encouraging people to travel by train to experience our world class events and festivals.</li> <li>A joint campaign with VisitScotland and Sustrans went live in March 2025, showcasing the sites to see in Glasgow and nearby by bike.</li> <li>Colleagues are working on plans for another campaign with Avanti, Calmac and Visit Arran, which will further promote sustainable travel to Glasgow and Arran.</li> </ul>
6.2.	Promote public transport and cycle/ walk as suggested travel options for all tourism activity, events and conferences.			<ul> <li>A new <u>'sustainability hub'</u> has been created on visitglasgow.com which brings together articles on parks and gardens, vegan and veggie, green transport, top 5 cycling routes and local/ sustainable food and drink flagging the sustainable food network. The hub aims to make it easier for our audiences to find more sustainable options.</li> </ul>

<b>Tourism &amp; Conventions Actions</b>	Measure	Timescales	Progress for 2024/25
<b>6.3.</b> Maximise the profile and impact of the UCI Cycling to support activities and assets of active travel partners e.g. OVO Bikes, city cycle routes, cycle repair location points across the city.			• A new <u>'sustainability hub'</u> has been created on visitglasgow.com which includes the city's cycling offer and top 5 cycling routes.

### 7. Resident Engagement



Glasgow Climate Action Plan Priority 1

<b>Tourism &amp; Conventions Actions</b>	Measure	Timescales	Progress for 2024/25
<b>7.1.</b> Ensure citizen engagement is incorporated in any destination large scale project or strategy development		March 2025	• Citizen engagement has been at the heart of the recently developed <u>Glasgow</u> <u>Culture Strategy 24-30 (p.40)</u> and <u>Glasgow Events Strategy 2035 (p.34)</u> and will continue to be an integral part of any project development.
<b>7.2.</b> Share online resident survey to gather views on the city's visitor economy in order to inform 2025-26 action planning			<ul> <li>Glasgow's 2024 Household Survey (p.1 &amp; 3) showed that:</li> <li>90% of respondents strongly/tended to agree that Glasgow was a welcoming place for visitors</li> <li>83% agreed the city was a great place to visit</li> <li>92% agreed that tourism improved the local economy</li> <li>90% liked to see visitors in Glasgow</li> <li>86% would like to see more visitors coming to the city</li> <li>93% were satisfied with the city's museums and galleries offer.</li> <li>UCI Cycling World Championships: 84% of respondents were aware of the event, 74% anticipated it would have a positive effect on Glasgow.</li> </ul>

### 8. Measurement & Evidencing



Glasgow Climate Action Plan Priority 5

	<b>Tourism &amp; Convention Actions</b>	Measure	Timescales	Progress for 2024/25
8.1.	Continue to embed and report using new social / environmental measures e.g. city cycle lane distances, social impacts of conferences, number of event volunteers		March 2024	<ul> <li>The <u>Glasgow 2030 Tourism Strategy</u> incorporates a Tourism Logic Model which illustrates how the strategy will support the city to deliver positive environmental and social outcomes and impact across the sector (p.22- 23). The Strategy references top level KPIs which also reflect greater focus on sustainability performance, resident sentiment and 3rd party green accreditation (p.24).</li> <li>The <u>Glasgow Tourism Action Plan 2024-</u> <u>26</u>, developed to support the delivery of the Strategy, prioritises sustainability and inclusion (p.19 – 22). There are several actions which set out to deliver positive sustainable impact (2.1, 2.5, 2.6, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 5.1, 5.2, 5.5, 5.6, 5.7, 5.8) alongside actions which aim to support inclusive activity (3.4, 5.3, 5.4, 5.6, 5.7, 5.8, 5.11).</li> </ul>

### 8. Measurement & Evidencing



**Glasgow Climate Action Plan** Priority 5

<b>Tourism &amp; Convention Actions</b>	Measure	Timescales	Progress for 2024/25
8.2. Continue to share and learn from visitor economy data e.g., <u>STEAM</u> with partner destinations and agencies to enable greater benchmarking and to minimise seasonality		June 2024	<ul> <li>The most recent STEAM tourism economic impact report for Glasgow relates to 2023. The top-level findings from this report have been shared widely via <u>partners</u> and <u>media</u>, and our own <u>visitglasgow.org.uk website</u>. The detailed report has been presented and shared with our <u>industry groups</u> and stakeholders. The <u>STEAM model</u> has been used to set targets for our Glasgow 2030 Tourism Strategy (p. 21).</li> </ul>

### Showcasing Our Sustainable City Destination

 Comms / Enhancing Wider Sustainable Choices to our Visitors





Our Thriving Places & Our Memorable Experiences

**Glasgow Climate Action Plan** Priority 1, 3, 4 & 5

	Tourism & Convention Actions	Measure	Timescales	Progress for 2024/25
9.1.	Continue to develop itineraries and visitor experiences with sustainable / accessible businesses	Social media posts / blogs / PR releases Member showcase features on social media to highlight member green credentials User numbers to destination website	March 2024	The city promotes <u>accessible day out</u> <u>suggestions</u> via a blog produced by AccessAble and VisitScotland. <u>The</u> <u>Mackintosh itinerary</u> and <u>Discover</u> <u>Scotland itineraries</u> identify those businesses which have 3rd party green accreditation and online accessibility guides.
9.2.	Continue to work with public transport operators to support visitor itineraries			• The Destination Marketing team continue to work with transport operators on targeted <u>campaigns</u> .
9.3.	Increase coverage of positive social impacts, green choices, a welcoming and inclusive city on our websites – to raise awareness, celebrate best practice and to make it easier for businesses to get involved / be inspired.			• The <u>Accessibility section on visitglasgow</u> . com continues to be developed and enhanced.

<b>Tourism &amp; Convention Actions</b>	Measure	Timescales	Progress for 2024/25
			<ul> <li>Via visitglasgow.org.uk, a range of coverage has included World Athletics Indoor Championships Glasgow 2024 and its platinum level recognition with the Athletics for a Better World (ABW) Standard. Our accessibility progress for 2023-24, the green accreditation success of city hotels, the <u>Climate</u> Action for tourism businesses webinar, highlighted the accessibility recognition for city event <u>TRNSMT</u>. It highlighted an <u>MND fundraiser</u>. It promoted a <u>Path to Net Zero webinar</u> with Climate Springboard, and an <u>Accessibility</u> webinar for Hotels with AccessAble and VisitScotland.</li> </ul>
<b>9.4.</b> Continue to promoting Glasgow's plant based, locally and sustainably sourced food and drink offer			• A new ' <u>sustainability hub</u> ' has been created. Same as 6.2
<b>9.5.</b> Continue to develop the Convention Bureau meeting planners toolkit with details on leading sustainable businesses and experiences			<ul> <li>The <u>Meeting Planners toolkit</u> is reviewed on a regular basis and contains support and sustainable ideas for conference organisers.</li> <li>The <u>Go Greener guide</u> has been completely refreshed to support organisers in planning more sustainable events and to connect with local social enterprises, charities and food outlets which utilise sustainable food practices.</li> </ul>

<b>Tourism &amp; Convention Actions</b>	Measure	Timescales	Progress for 2024/25
<b>9.6.</b> Continue to promote green spaces, outdoor activities and volunteering in community parks and gardens to our conference delegates			• The Meeting Planners toolkit continues to promote suggestions for getting <u>active</u> and <u>enjoying sustainable days out</u> .



#### Anna Young

Senior Tourism and Sustainability Manager Glasgow Life - Tourism <u>anna.young@glasgowlife.org.uk</u> Tel. <u>07551 270 816</u>