

# Public Document Pack

**Democratic Services Section  
Legal and Civic Services Department  
Belfast City Council  
City Hall  
Belfast  
BT1 5GS**



**Belfast  
City Council**

15th January, 2025

## **HYBRID MEETING OF THE CLIMATE AND CITY RESILIENCE COMMITTEE**

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

As previously notified to you, I enclose a copy of the presentation for the following item to be considered at the meeting to be held on Thursday, 16th January, 2025 at 5.15pm.

Yours faithfully,

John Walsh

Chief Executive

### **AGENDA:**

#### **2. Presentation**

- (a) Sustainable Tourism Initiatives in Belfast - Visit Belfast (Pages 1 - 14)

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# Belfast's sustainable tourism journey

Page 1



visit  
Belfast



Belfast  
City Council

Agenda Item 2a

# Visit Belfast

## Core 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, and enabling Belfast to become a more sustainable place to visit, meet and live in.’

Short Breaks  
Business Events

**500**

Private sector  
partners

Cruise  
Visitor Servicing

**60%-40%**

Public-private  
sector funding

£424m  
Environmental / Social  
Impact

**30:1**

Return on  
Investment





# Strategic Context

- 2019 - BCC declares a climate emergency
- 2020- BCC Resilience Strategy & Climate Plan
- 'Sustainable Tourism' transformation project - VB&BCC
- Transition from DMO to DMMO
- Central to 21-24 VB Strategy - Rebuilding City Tourism



# Global Destination Sustainability Index (GDS)



77 indicators that evaluate destinations across four key areas



20 Questions

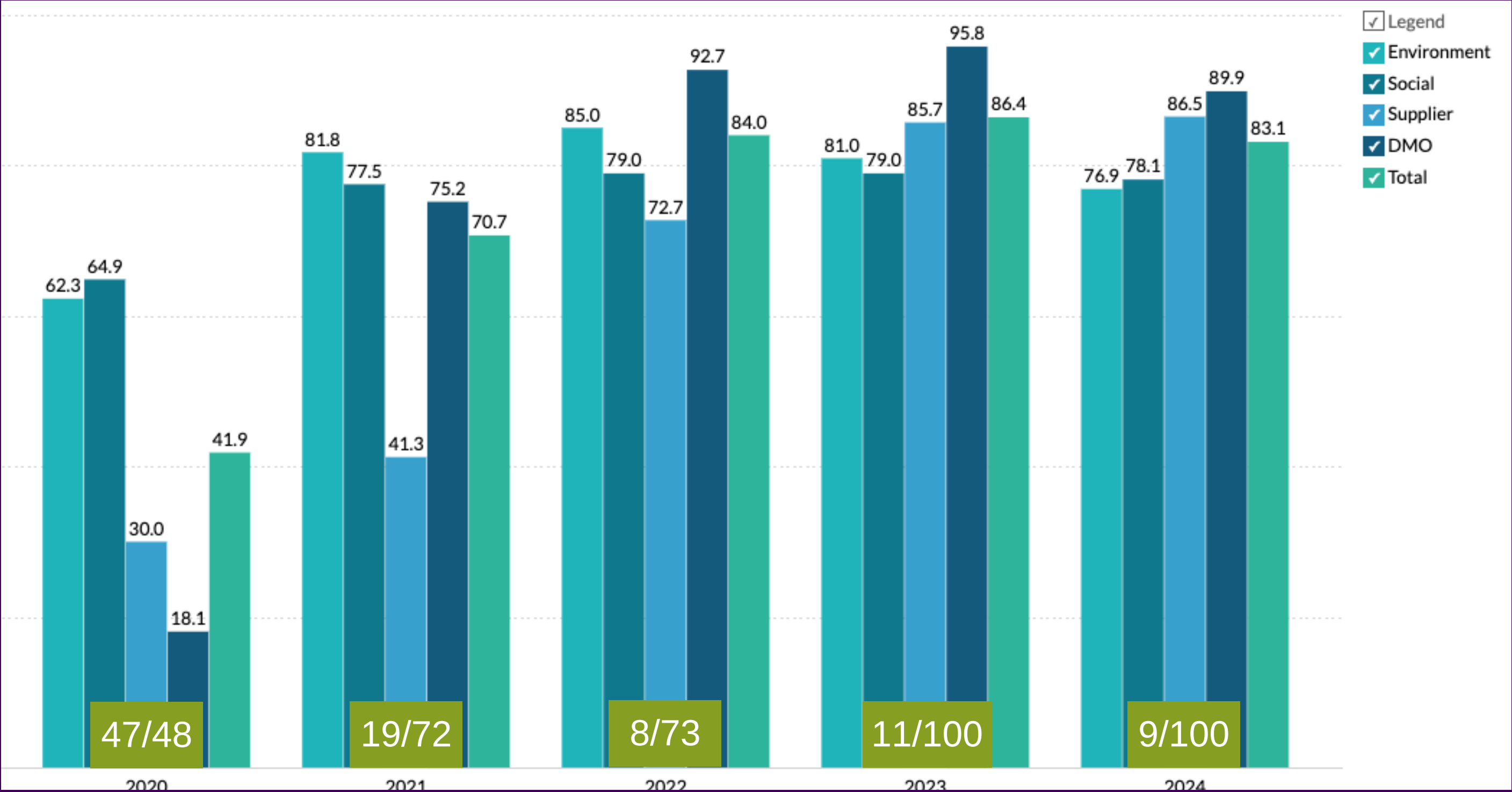
12 Questions

16 Questions

29 Questions



# Belfast - 5 year performance



From second last to 9th / 100

Global Innovation Award Winner 2022



**Belfast**  
**TOP 10**  
**SUSTAINABLE**  
**DESTINATION**  
**in the world**



GLOBAL  
DESTINATION  
SUSTAINABILITY  
INDEX



# Taking Action

## Our Organisation

- Strategy & business plan
- Sustainability policy
- S&I Manager & team
- KPIs & Annual impact report
- Green Tourism Gold Certification
- BITC Bronze Award
- VB Carbon footprint
- Triple bottom line approach





# Taking Action

## Our Industry

- 2021 - BCC and VB Green Tourism Programme
- 76% of Belfast hotel bedrooms sustainability certified
- ICC Belfast - first green meetings venue on island of Ireland
- 20 venues certified
- 2025 Industry survey on sustainability





# Taking Action

## Our City

- Annual GDS Assessment
- BCC - Inclusive tourism programme
- New Neighbourhood tourism focus
- Belfast tourism carbon footprint measurement
- VB Resident sentiment survey

**92%**

Residents believe  
tourism is beneficial for  
Belfast

**93%**

Tourism allows people to  
learn about Belfast's  
culture & history

**87%**

Tourism helps to create a  
more vibrant Belfast with  
more things to see and do

**91%**

Tourism supports local businesses  
such as bars, restaurants and  
attractions to remain open

**84%**

Residents interested in  
taking part in more  
tourism activities





# Taking Action

## Our visitors and clients

- Sustainable choices - green stays to active travel
- Cruise sustainability plan
- Cruise community fund
- Events sustainability framework
- Carbon measurement of business events
- Sustainable Belfast experiences and itineraries for tour operators
- Impact and legacy guide launched
- 1400 volunteer hours







£72,000 raised for food banks and homeless charities in Belfast  
Equivalent to 59,426 meals funded





Belfast Reusable Cup Launch - UK & Ireland first multi-venue pilot  
2million single use plastic cups annually / 40 tons plastic waste





1,000 students participating in educational outreach and schools programmes from incoming conferences to Belfast



# Thank You & Questions

Page 14



visit  
Belfast



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