



Sustainability **fact sheet**

Sustainability in the historic environment

Managing our historic places so that we think about the impact of visitors and encourage more sustainable visiting, means we can look after the historic environment now and for the future.



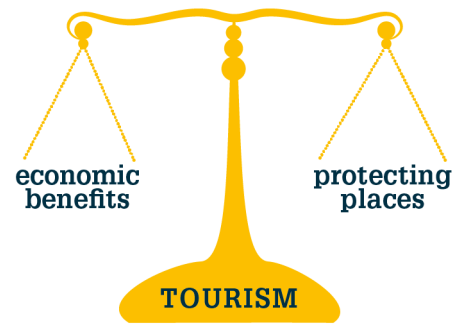
Projections onto Edinburgh Castle as part of the Scottish Government's campaign to tackle the climate emergency

What does sustainability mean?

Sustainability is where we meet our own needs without having a negative impact on how future generations meet theirs. To do this, we need to think carefully about how we live our lives and the choices we make, especially about the products we use e.g. preserving non-renewable resources for the future.

What is sustainable tourism?

The historic properties Historic Environment Scotland (HES) look after are also tourist attractions and we want to make sure that they are run in a sustainable way. This means striking a balance between the economic benefits of tourism (valuing the importance of these places to Scotland's society and history) and protecting them from harm (so that future generations can visit them). We call this sustainable tourism.



What is responsible tourism?

Responsible tourism is considering the wider impact your visit could have on the place you're going to see, as well as the world. At HES, we consider how tourism impacts on local communities and take their views into account. We are committed to a responsible tourism model.



How are we working towards sustainability?

We set out sustainability targets in our climate action plans and produce a sustainability report to let people know which targets have been met and which still have to be achieved.

These are some of the commitments we have made:

Energy and carbon management

- Eliminate gas heating in all properties and staff workplaces by 2032 and install low-energy heating and lighting systems
- Reduce water consumption
- Complete energy audits at all properties and improve data recording and technology
- Achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2045



Castle facts

Edinburgh Castle has 27 buildings and is the largest energy user of all our properties. Its energy use is equivalent to 280 typical households.



In 2005, HES installed solar panels at **Crichton Castle** in Midlothian, replacing the petrol generators that used to provide the electricity. The panels were upgraded in early 2019 and convert 22% of the solar energy that hits them into usable power. It means visitors can now enjoy a greener visit to this tower house from the 1300s.

Above: Edinburgh Castle
Left: Solar panels, Crichton Castle

Sustainable procurement

- All goods/services to meet sustainable development objectives by 2025 with 80% having social and community benefits e.g. ethically sourced/ supporting work opportunities for those with disabilities
- Work with businesses who have a social and environmental purpose



Circular economy

- Improve waste removal monitoring and processes
- Implement a litter prevention action plan to reduce waste
- Reduce food waste and food miles and use natural resources e.g. orchards and gardens
- Research the environmental benefits of using local traditional materials for conservation
- Reuse, repair and maintain historic and traditional buildings



Biodiversity and landscapes

- Conserve and increase biodiversity through targeted action for key species and habitats
- Increase partnership working with other organisations to increase biodiversity
- Increase understanding and awareness through communication and engagement



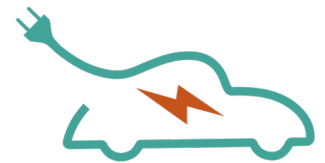
Sustainable tourism

- Investigate the full impact of tourism on the historic environment
- Work with partners to reduce negative impacts of tourism and increase visitor awareness
- Reduce food waste from catering by 33% by 2025
- Source 60% of food and drink from Scottish suppliers



Sustainable travel

- Reduce vehicle use by 30% by 2025
- Use only electric vehicles by 2025
- Reduce visitor vehicles by providing alternative transport e.g. cycling
- Replace some car parking spaces with natural habitat



Climate impacts and adaptation

- Provide training sessions and materials for all staff
- Research and development into climate change and using citizen science initiatives to allow the public to contribute
- Raise awareness about and communicate the effects of climate change impacts
- Create training placements within the climate change department.



Find out more in the **climate change fact sheet**.

How can historic sites be managed sustainably?

We have introduced practical initiatives at our historic sites and workplaces to make them more sustainable. At many of them we are trying to support sustainable tourism by:



Find out more



[What is sustainable tourism?](#)
YouTube (3m 57s)



[Sustainability at the Engine Shed](#)
YouTube (1m 43s)



[Green Tourism Awards](#)
HES website



[Litter Prevention Action Plan](#)
HES website



[Sustainable and responsible tourism in Scotland](#)
VisitScotland website



[Charity for Scotland's environment](#)
Keep Scotland Beautiful website