

VisitEngland Destination Self-Assessment

Is your destination a sustainable novice, learner or leader? Complete this self-assessment and find out.

How it works

Add together the scores for each of the 18 questions to calculate your total score.

Each question can be scored 0, 1, 2 or 3 and the total score can range from 0 to 54. Your total tells you how far along you are on the sustainability journey.

0-15 points = Sustainability novice

17-30 points = Sustainability learner

33-54 points = Sustainability leader

Once you've got your score, we've included some recommendations and next steps at the end of the assessment.

This self-assessment is part of the Guide to Regenerative Destination Management for Local Visitor Economy Partnerships (LVEPs) and Destination Development Partnerships (DDPs).

This self-assessment is copyrighted and developed by the [Global Destination Sustainability Movement](#). The questions are aligned to the GDS-Index: A performance improvement tool used by over 100 DMOs globally to structure and drive the performance of their destination's sustainability program for events and tourism. For more info contact info@gds.earth.

Complete the self-assessment

Commit

Questions	Possible Answers	Pts
1. Which statement best describes how you manage your sustainability program?	We do not have anyone assigned for sustainability.	0
	We have a person who oversees the sustainability program on top of their regular job.	1
	We have a dedicated sustainability specialist.	2
	We have a dedicated sustainability team headed by a senior sustainability manager.	3
2. Which statement best describes the sustainability commitment(s) your destination has made?	We have made no commitment to sustainable tourism development.	0
	We have committed to sustainable tourism development, but it is mainly internal information, reflected in policies and strategies, but shared and promoted publicly.	1
	We have committed to sustainable tourism development and are sharing and promoting this publicly (e.g. sustainability policy and commitments on destination's website, social media posts).	2
	We have stated our commitment to sustainable development publicly and have signed up to more formal commitments (e.g. Glasgow Declaration on Climate action in Tourism, Net Zero Events, etc.).	3
3. Which statement best describes how your destination sustainability work is funded?	There is no specific funding for destination sustainability work.	0
	There is a small amount of funding which comes from existing budgets but is not necessarily specific to sustainability.	1
	There is a specific budget to fund dedicated sustainability work and resources (e.g. sustainability manager; consultancy advice, participation in certification/ benchmarking programs for the DMO/LVEP, etc.).	2
	There is guaranteed funding from the public (and/or) private sector specifically to improve sustainability in the destination beyond the DMO/LVEP (e.g. funding to pay for suppliers to gain certifications).	3

Assess

Questions	Possible Answers	Pts
4. Which statement best describes your understanding of sustainability initiatives in your destination?	We have not mapped out the initiatives in our destination.	0
	We have conducted some basic research and mapped out the key local government sustainability initiatives in our destination.	1
	We have conducted basic research and mapped out the key local government and tourism supply chain sustainability initiatives in our destination.	2
	We have conducted in-depth research, mapped out and engaged with the key local government, NGO and tourism/events supply chain sustainability initiatives in our destination.	3

Engage

Questions	Possible Answers	Pts
5. Which statement best describes your approach to building capacity about sustainability within your organisation?	We have not organised or promoted any training for the internal team on sustainability.	0
	We provide training on sustainability related topics to our internal team on occasion, but not more than once a year (internal).	1
	We provide regular training on a range of sustainability topics available to our internal team and facilitate engagement and sharing of ideas among the team.	2
	We support our team members proactively to be more sustainable by providing technical support, training and tools specific to different departments and their functions.	3
6. Which statement best describes your approach to building capacity about sustainability across the value chain in your destination?	We have not organised or promoted any training.	0
	We provide training on sustainability and our strategy to our team every year (internal).	1
	We facilitate annual training and the sharing of best practices amongst our destinations' supply chain.	2
	We actively help our supply chain to be more sustainable by providing technical support, training, tools, funding and marketing support.	3

Co-Create

Questions	Possible Answers	Pts
7. Which statement best describes your organisation's level of collaboration for sustainability?	We have not collaborated outside of our organisation for sustainability.	0
	We collaborate with input from industry partners OR the local authority for sustainability initiatives.	1
	We collaborate with input from industry partners and public authorities for sustainability initiatives.	2
	We collaborate with widespread stakeholder consultation, including, but not limited to, residents, partners, public bodies, NGOs, clients, and delegates for sustainability initiatives.	3
8. Which statement best describes your sustainability strategy for your destination?	We do not have a sustainability strategy. (Proceed to Implementation question #10)	0
	We have a basic destination sustainability action plan.	1
	We have a destination sustainability strategy with a vision, goals and an action plan. It's been developed or updated in the last 3 years.	2
	Sustainability goals and actions are fully embedded in the Destination Management Plan and are aligned with the regional agenda and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).	3
9. Which statement best describes the objectives of your strategy?	Not applicable.	0
	Our destination sustainability strategy contains goals and actions that aim to generate positive environmental and economic outcomes.	1
	Our destination sustainability strategy contains goals and actions that aim to generate positive economic, environmental and social outcomes.	2
	Our destination sustainability strategy contains objectives, indicators, targets and an action plan that aim to generate positive social, economic and environmental outcomes.	3

Implement

Questions	Possible Answers	Pts
10. Which statement best describes the sustainable approach for your organisation's office operations?	We do not have a sustainability plan for the office and our internal operations.	0
	We have a sustainability plan for the operations of the office.	1
	We have a sustainability plan for the operations of the office and its events.	2
	We have an advanced sustainability strategy for our organisation and have achieved third-party certification for the DMO/LVEP as an organisation (i.e. Green Tourism, Green Key).	3
11. Which statement best describes the state of sustainability for hotels in your destination?	Don't know.	0
	We actively encourage and work with our hotels to adopt sustainable practices and consider certification.	1
	We have an established destination-wide sustainability program for hotels. This includes training, support to achieve certification, tools, and funding.	2
	More than 40% of our 3 to 5-star hotels are third-party certified for the sustainable management of their operations (i.e. ISO14001, Green Tourism, Green Key).	3
12. Which statement best describes the state of sustainability for visitor attractions in your destination?	Don't know.	0
	We actively encourage and work with our visitor attractions to adopt sustainable practices and consider certification.	1
	We have an established destination-wide sustainability program for visitor attractions. This includes training, support to achieve certification, tools, and funding.	2
	More than 40% of our Top 10 visitor attractions are third-party certified for the sustainable management of their operations (i.e. ISO14001, Green Tourism, Green Key).	3

13. Which statement best describes the state of sustainability for restaurants in your destination?	Don't know.	0
	We actively encourage our restaurants to adopt responsible food practices and reduce their waste.	1
	We have an established destination-wide sustainability program for restaurants and catering companies. This includes training, support to achieve certification, tools, and funding.	2
	More than 40% of our restaurants and catering companies are third-party certified by a relevant certification program (e.g. Green Tourism, Food for Good).	3
14. Which statement best describes the state of sustainability for event venues in your destination?	Don't know.	0
	We actively encourage and work with our venues to adopt sustainable practices and consider implementing sustainability plans.	1
	We have an established destination-wide sustainability program for venues. This includes training, support to achieve certification, tools, and funding.	2
	More than 40% of our key venues are third-party certified for the sustainable management of their operations (i.e. ISO14001, Green Tourism, Green Key).	3
15. Which statement best describes the state of sustainability for transportation in your destination?	Don't know.	0
	We have links on our website to transportation providers in our destination.	1
	We provide comprehensive guides for clients and visitors to access soft mobility options (e.g. scooters, bicycles, public transport, walking).	2
	We encourage low-carbon transport to visitors and clients by providing discounted or free transportation for visitors.	3
16. Which statement best describes the state of accessibility in your destination?	Don't know.	0
	Our destination's venues, accommodation and public transport comply with government regulations for accessibility.	1
	We are actively coordinating with the city and suppliers to create a more accessible visitor experience, providing and signposting to tools and advice.	2
	We actively promote a list of places of interest, transport options, hotels/venues, and activities that enables visitors with accessibility challenges to navigate in the destination.	3

Measure

Questions	Possible Answers	Pts
17. Which statement best describes how you assess the performance and impact of your sustainability strategy?	We don't measure and report on our sustainability performance.	0
	We have developed social, environmental and economic KPIs for our destinations.	1
	We systematically measure, monitor and report our impacts using our social, environmental and economic KPIs.	2
	We have achieved third-party eco-certification for the management of tourism and events across the destination (i.e. EarthCheck, Green Destinations, Biosphere).	3

Storytelling/Marketing

Questions	Possible Answers	Pts
18. Which statement best describes how you market sustainability in your destination?	We do not promote or market the sustainability initiatives of our destination.	0
	We promote sustainability initiatives on our website(s) and social media platforms.	1
	We have a dedicated sustainability section on our website.	2
	We have a sustainability communications strategy. Our website shares our sustainability strategy, performance, supplier information and stories of green best practices.	3

Recommendations and next steps

Score 0-15: sustainability novice

New to sustainability? That's alright, it's good to start somewhere. We suggest:

1. Start by building a sustainability team of inspired people in your key departments in your organisation. Make one of your management team responsible for this.
2. Get them to put together a basic sustainability plan for your organisation.
3. Create a questionnaire for your entire team. Ask them what they think the LVEP should be doing.
4. Research and map out the current sustainability initiatives in the destination.
5. Review the advice and support provided by VisitEngland and build the skills and capacity of your team.

Score: 17-30: sustainability learner

You've got some roots, but there's always room for growth. Refer to the Guide to Regenerative Destination Management to find more information.

Score 33-54: sustainability leader

Well done, it looks like your destination has some deep roots in sustainability! The next step we'd suggest is look at finding ways to get the word out about how well established those roots are. The [VisitEngland Awards for Excellence](#) are a great place to start.