

Green Tourism launches Green Meetings Standard for event venues

The world's leading sustainable certification programme, Green Tourism, is giving event venues the tools that they need for a sustainable recovery from the pandemic with the launch today of its Green Meetings Standard.

Hotels, conference centres, and other venues for meetings and events can apply for the accreditation to measure their performance against three pillars of caring for people, places, and our planet.

Independent assessors will examine criteria, which are aligned to the United Nations Sustainability Goals, ranging from energy, water, and waste through to catering, procurement, and travel, as well as awareness, communication, and community involvement.

The [Green Meetings Standard](#) has been designed in response to requests from the industry to help venues prove they are taking their environmental responsibilities seriously, especially in the run-up to the United Nations' COP26 climate change conference in Glasgow in November.



Edinburgh International Conference Centre. Photo: © 2021, Martin P. McAdam www.martinmcadam.com

The Edinburgh International Conference Centre (EICC) has

become the first venue to achieve the Green Meetings seal of approval.

The new initiative builds on Green Tourism's existing meetings and event venues criteria, which was developed in 2001.

Those criteria have been used to help more than 700 venues achieve accreditation, including Central Hall Westminster, the EICC, Manchester International Conference Centre, Olympia London, and the QE2 Centre.

Green Tourism was founded in 1997 and has grown to include more than 2,500 members spread across 22 countries and the Edinburgh-based organisation has carried out more than 15,000 assessments for its widely-recognised gold, silver, and bronze awards.

Andrea Nicholas, Chief Executive of Green Tourism, said: "Our new Green Meetings standard gives meetings and event venues the tools they need for sustainable growth as they recover from the pandemic.

"These new standards have been created in response to demand from the industry, with more and more event organisers wanting reassurance that the venues they pick meet the highest international environmental standards.

"This new brand is built on the back of our 25 years of experience, and incorporates examples of best practice from businesses throughout the world.

"As well as assessment, the scheme also gives support to venues so that they can improve their performance continuously and demonstrate the ways in which they are meeting the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

"It was inspiring to see and hear so many examples during World Environment Day on Saturday of how venues are caring for the planet, and we're proud to be playing our part too with

the launch of our new Green Meetings standard.”





Edinburgh International Conference Centre (right image © Malcolm Cochrane Photography)

Green Tourism worked with the EICC to develop its original criteria for conference centres back in 2001, and the venue became the first to achieve the organisation's accreditation.

Aaron McKeen, Sustainability Champion at the EICC, said: "Caring for the environment and our people is one of our core values at the conference centre.

"Event organisers are asking more and more questions about the environmental credentials of our facilities and our services and so it's essential that we can demonstrate that we take sustainability very seriously, and support them in their ambitions to host more sustainable meetings.

"The independent assessments that are carried out as part of the accreditation is one of the key attractions of Green Tourism's work because it gives the EICC the external validation of the work we do day in, day out to be a responsible business working towards net zero in the years ahead.

“Holding the Green Tourism Gold Award has always been a source of pride for the EICC and by becoming the first venue in the UK to meet the Green Meetings standard is testament to our commitments in this area.”

Rory Archibald, Head of Associations & Sectors at VisitScotland Business Events, added: “Hosting conferences, meetings, and other business events is an essential part of Scotland’s economy and drive for positive social transformation, and so the introduction of the Green Meetings standard will be a great boost to the business event industry.