



**Belfast
Harbour**
Strategy
2025-29

Advance
Regional
Prosperity



Transforming to Advance Regional Prosperity

Chair's Foreword

Belfast Harbour is more than a thriving Trust Port – it is the engine of Northern Ireland's economy and a gateway to its future. We handle 70% of NI's seaborne trade and 25% of seaborne trade for the entire island of Ireland. We serve Belfast and all sub-regions in NI by facilitating the steady flow of trade and goods. This strategy is our bold vision for the next five years and beyond.

By investing £313 million, we will build on our strengths as the region's leading port and a vital economic hub. We will continue our pioneering efforts to diversify and decarbonise. In doing so, we will help reimagine and regenerate the city and advance regional prosperity.

We have delivered positive change for almost 180 years. But the past decade has been particularly transformative, as we invested more than £374 million in capital projects. This ensured the port could play its essential role, while the estate evolved as an innovative and expanding economic force.

Our investment created jobs, strengthened supply chains, and raised sustainability standards. It also attracted major foreign investors to the city. We have boosted sectors from net zero tech to tourism and the creative industries. We are also delivering an iconic waterfront in City Quays and Titanic Quarter. This will leave a lasting legacy for the people of Belfast and beyond.

Our 2025-29 strategy aims to continue this transformation, to develop Belfast Harbour and boost prosperity for all of NI. This five-year strategy is aligned to the draft Programme for Government, Belfast's Local Development Plan and to the Belfast Agenda. It is also guided by our Board's vision, and by the expertise of our team at Belfast Harbour.

In this strategy, we commit to our largest single investment project to date – a £90 million deepwater quay. This new facility will accommodate some of the world's largest cruise vessels. At present, Belfast Harbour welcomes over 300,000 cruise visitors each year, who add an estimated £20-25 million to the local economy. Attracting larger vessels and more visitors will boost the positive economic impact that cruise tourism brings to the region.

With the new deepwater quay, we also have the potential to expand our capacity as the only port on the island with offshore wind capabilities. However, for this to happen, we will need to source additional funding to further develop this new quay. When this second phase of work is complete, we will be able to facilitate the assembly and installation of next-generation floating offshore turbines. This will strengthen our role as a key enabler for higher capacity offshore wind farms. This strategic move aligns us with the growing demand for clean energy as Northern Ireland, Great Britain and Ireland strive to meet their net zero targets. Belfast Harbour will be at the forefront of the clean energy transition.

When complete, we expect this development will drive strong growth in our offshore wind and cruise tourism businesses. The extra revenues will help fund projects in the transformative Belfast Harbour 2050 Masterplan. Due for publication in 2025, this will set out our long-term spatial plans for the port and estate.

We have long and valued relationships with our port customers, and we are dedicated to providing them with first-rate services and facilities. We listen carefully to their feedback – and so as part of this strategy, we will invest £208 million in improvements for a more resilient and competitive port.

This will include the delivery of new cranes, and planning, designing and consenting the rebuild of Stormont Wharf. This investment also covers clean tech initiatives, autonomous vehicles and new sustainable warehouses. In the term of this strategy, we will also complete the decarbonisation of our operations across the port and estate.

Our ambition extends beyond the development of the port. We will also continue our visionary plan to regenerate the waterfront, investing more than £100 million. By 2029, we aim to deliver 325 new homes and to have started the process of developing over 3,000 additional homes.

This also includes £60 million to develop City Quays 5 – a significant regeneration project for the waterfront. It will include Grade A offices, ground floor retail, an exhibition area, and a rooftop hospitality venue. Meanwhile, in 2025, we will open City Quays Gardens, a new green space for all to enjoy.

We will lead discussions on improving transport links and explore ways to harness Artificial Intelligence (AI) for competitiveness and growth. We will also collaborate with stakeholders to help improve the water quality in Belfast Lough. As we pursue these goals, we will prioritise the health and safety of those who work here, while increasing the diversity of our own team.

Our people are the key to achieving our strategic goals. It is through their professionalism and networks that we will deliver the targets in this document. We can secure Belfast Harbour's future success through ongoing training and development. We will nurture the innovation of our people and build on their technical capabilities.

Throughout everything we do, safety is always our priority - we are committed to the highest safety standards. They protect our employees, customers, visitors, and the port and estate community. We will continue to proactively build a positive safety culture. We will do this by constantly reviewing and updating our protocols, systems, and training. We want Belfast Harbour to be among the safest places to work, live and visit.

So that we can achieve all of the goals in this strategy, we need the ability to increase our borrowing in a prudent way. This will allow us to maximise the truly positive impact we have on the economy. From enabling offshore wind to building an iconic waterfront with vibrant neighbourhoods, we will be able to do more. To achieve this, we need to see a change in our accounting classification, as this will allow us to invest further for future generations.

All NI Trust Ports - Belfast Harbour, Coleraine Harbour, Foyle Port and Warrenpoint Harbour - and our respective councils will gain from this change. It will further enhance our collective work to make the most of City and Growth Deals that already benefit Belfast, Causeway Coast, Newry, Mourne and Down, and the North West.

We want to do more because making a difference is in our DNA. As a Trust Port, we reinvest every penny of our post-tax profits back into the business and the community, ensuring long-term value for the region.

As we embark on this exciting agenda for transformation, I want to thank my colleagues on the Belfast Harbour Commissioners' Board. Their vision informed this strategy, and I look forward to continuing to work with them as we help shape our region's future.

Dr Theresa Donaldson

Chair of Belfast Harbour Commissioners





Delivering Opportunity

Chief Executive's Foreword

At Belfast Harbour, our vision is to be a gateway to opportunity. Over the next five years, our goal is to develop the port and estate - to drive regional prosperity, so that everyone benefits. This strategy will see us optimise our strengths, innovate for growth, and invest in new opportunities.

Our strategy will then be followed by the Belfast Harbour 2050 Masterplan, which outlines our longer-term plans. During 2025, we will also work with Ulster University and other independent experts to measure our contribution to the local economy and to society. We plan to improve this measure year-on-year.

Our values will guide us in everything we do: **People-Focused, Open, Responsible, and Trustworthy**. Our strategy is targeted, but not fixed: we will adapt to new opportunities and challenges as they arise. Where we have set goals, we will track and transparently publish our progress.

Our strategy will help the NI Executive and Belfast City Council tackle key issues. We can support the supply of housing, respond to climate change and help grow a more sustainable and globally connected economy. Our strategy reflects their ambition for the city and region. It also addresses the needs of our customers, tenants, and communities. We aim to make Belfast Harbour a leader in seizing new opportunities and creating solutions.

Our strategic objectives will work together to deliver one overarching benefit: to **advance regional prosperity**.

Our Investment Plans

Over the term of this strategy we will invest £313 million in the port and estate. This investment will be entirely self-funded. More than two-thirds of this spend will be invested in the port, reflecting the importance of this facility to the local economy.

Port Investment 2025-29

New deepwater quay	£90m
Port Maintenance, Repairs and Upgrades	£60m
Port Development and Infrastructure	£58m

Port Subtotal **£208m**

Estate Investment 2025-29

City Quays 5	£60m
Estate Infrastructure and Refurbishment	£29.5m
Facilities, Storage and Distribution	£15.5m

Estate Subtotal **£105m**

Total Investment 2025-29 **£313m**

This investment programme will not require any borrowing, which is a credit to the success of our long-term financial strategy. While this spending will deplete our cash reserves, it is an essential investment that will deliver returns for port users and the wider community. However, we have the capability and potential to do much more if constraints on our borrowing are lifted.

These investment plans are designed to deliver five strategic goals over the next five years:





Enable Economic Growth

Economic growth is the central goal of our strategy. We aim to enhance regional prosperity with our assets and actions. We plan to expand trade, cruise tourism, offshore wind, screen, and clean tech. We also want to expand our business development activity to find more opportunities. To achieve this, we must unlock our borrowing capacity. This is vital for funding larger, sustainable projects and diversifying revenue. As we grow, we will ensure that benefits reach the community through partnerships and support.

Our targets for this goal

- Invest £313m in port (£208m) and estate (£105m) by end 2029.
- As part of this, complete the new, dual-purpose £90m deepwater quay in 2027/28.
- Deliver £200m to local economy thanks to new productions in Belfast Harbour Studios by end 2029.



Develop & Improve Your Port

Belfast Harbour handles 70% of the region's seaborne trade. This role is vital for daily life, ensuring access to essential goods and services. We will invest £208 million to modernise our facilities and to boost our capabilities. We will also build logistics facilities that set new standards for sustainability, safety, and flexibility. The result will be a stronger and more resilient port for our customers.

Our targets for this goal

- Deliver new, sustainably-powered cranes starting in 2025.
- Complete planning, designing and consenting phases for the rebuild of Stormont Wharf by end 2029.
- Roll out private 5G networks and automation projects in 2025.
- Complete port autonomy projects with tenants by end 2027.



Create Vibrant Places to Live & Work

We are transforming Belfast Harbour Estate, which covers one-fifth of the city. Our goal is to create vibrant, sustainable, and inclusive new communities. Our new neighbourhoods will have quality homes, modern offices, and lively recreation areas. By investing more than £100 million, we will make real progress on creating safe, thriving places that enhance wellbeing.

Our targets for this goal

- Deliver £60m City Quays 5 development by end 2029.
- By end 2029, deliver 325 new homes in the City Quays 4 development, and begin developing over 3,000 additional homes.
- Complete a collaborative research project on successful neighbourhoods in 2025.



Innovate for a Better Tomorrow

We will create a better, sustainable future, through our work and by developing Belfast Harbour Estate. We will create innovation clusters in offshore wind, green tech, cyber security, and advanced manufacturing. We will also use our location and infrastructure to attract manufacturers who want to leverage NI's unique dual market access.

Our targets for this goal

- Deploy the Harlander autonomous vehicle project by end 2029.
- Launch pilot innovation clusters for clean tech and net zero by end 2027.





Accelerate to Net Zero

Our commitment to an economy with a neutral carbon impact underpins all our goals. A key part of this is our ambition for a new facility for the assembly and installation of offshore wind turbines. This will greatly increase our current capacity, helping us to become a leading hub for offshore wind and boosting local supply chains. Ultimately, it will also support NI and its neighbours to meet their clean energy targets. However, making this a reality is dependent on new funding streams. In addition, we are aiming to be net zero in our own operations by end 2030. We will achieve this by cutting emissions and investing in renewables and low-carbon fuels.

Our targets for this goal

- Complete the new, dual-purpose £90m deepwater quay in 2027/28.
- Complete the stage-two development of the deepwater quay in 2030, subject to further funding. This will allow for the assembly of next-generation offshore wind turbines.

Our expert team at Belfast Harbour has a clear track record of delivery. We are invested in what we do and committed to making a difference. To ensure this strategy delivers, we will continue to work closely with our stakeholders. Together we will help create a sustainable, prosperous future for everyone in the region.

Joe O'Neill

Chief Executive, Belfast Harbour

Our strategy for 2025-29 supports our vision to be a gateway to opportunity for Northern Ireland.

Our purpose for the next five years is to develop Belfast Harbour to **advance regional prosperity**.

We pursue these goals to help deliver the ambitions of the NI Executive, Belfast City Council, our customers and our stakeholders.

As we do so, we will encourage growth, sustainability, and community wellbeing.





Enable Economic Growth

We will continue to use our assets, our role, and our expertise to drive regional economic growth. This will enhance prosperity. Over the next five years, we plan to invest £313 million in strengthening the port and diversifying the estate. This includes a landmark £90 million investment in a new deepwater quay on the Co. Down side of the lough. This facility will allow us to host more cruise visitors and to welcome some of the largest cruise ships in the world. With additional works, it will also enable us to facilitate the deployment of next-generation floating offshore wind farms.

Strategic Vision and Ambition

Our strategy is informed by the region's needs and our vital economic role. Throughout our history, we have reinvested all our profits into the port and estate. We do not pay dividends because we do not have any shareholders. This has revolutionised the port and its surroundings. It has also supported skills development and boosted local growth. Our approach has created jobs, attracted investment, and improved the quality of life in Belfast. In the next five years, we plan to make significant new investments, which will, in turn, support local businesses and grow supply chains.

Unlocking Potential Through Reclassification

As a Trust Port, Belfast Harbour is currently classified as a public corporation for accounting purposes. This restricts our ability to borrow, as any debt we take on impacts the balance sheet of the Department for Infrastructure (DfI). This is despite the fact that our borrowing is privately funded.

Because of this, we limit our borrowing to minimise the impact on public sector infrastructure budgets. But this prevents us from financing larger projects that could deliver greater benefits. It is also an unnecessary constraint for the DfI.

To meet our ambitious goals, we need the Office of National Statistics (ONS) to change how they classify Belfast Harbour and the other NI Trust Ports. Purely for their accounting models, we are asking to be classified as private corporations.

This change would revert Belfast Harbour to the accounting classification we held 20 years ago. It would allow us to prudently borrow more, and so drive greater economic growth. Importantly, this technical change would not alter our governance or our Trust Port status.

Enabling the ONS to change our status would bring us in line with several other ports in the UK. This includes the Scottish Trust Ports and several Trust Ports in England that have already been reclassified. Changing our classification would put us on an equal footing, increasing our ability to compete. Crucially, once reclassified we would still reinvest all post-tax profits for the public good.

We are grateful to the Infrastructure Minister for starting a public consultation on this issue. We hope for a successful outcome to this, and to the legislative process then required to change our classification.



Building a Brighter Future

Increasing our borrowing capacity is not just about flexibility. It is about unlocking the potential that we can deliver. These are just some of the projects we could pursue if our accounting status was changed:

Additional Logistics Warehousing Opportunities (see page 29)

Using our reserves, this strategy commits to invest £24 million in a new, sustainable logistics facility. There is growing demand for these services, so more will be needed. Once reclassified, we can become a regional logistics hub for our customers. This will support their growth and the wider economy.

City Quays 4 (see page 36)

We already have planning consent for this project. This would see 256 high quality, sustainable build-to-rent apartments, plus 69 affordable homes in Sailortown. Without additional borrowing, we can't self-develop this project. These are much-needed homes, so we will find a way to deliver them. Our preference is for reclassification, but if this does not happen, we will investigate other funding models.

Additional Residential Opportunities (see page 40)

We are stewards of a large land bank, and have a history of meeting public need. We also have expertise in urban regeneration projects. By 2029, if reclassified, we will have started the process of developing over 3,000 further homes.

Decarbonisation (see page 50)

We are on track to be the first net zero port on these islands - but we can do more. If reclassified, we could enhance and accelerate the move to clean energy across the port and estate, including expanding our solar PV network. We could also pilot and eventually roll out renewable shore power for vessels using our berths.

Achievements Despite Constraints

Despite borrowing limitations, our investments to date have had a significant regional impact. We have invested £100 million in Belfast Harbour Studios, which has boosted the region's screen and creative industries.

Working with Northern Ireland Screen, we have attracted major productions, including from Netflix and Universal. This has generated around £200 million for the local economy in recent years.

In 2024, we expanded the site by adding a further 103,000 square feet of studio space, including 41,000 sq ft of sound stages. This makes Belfast Harbour Studios one of the largest production sites in the UK and Ireland. In partnership with Ulster University, we also host Studio Ulster - a world-class virtual production facility.

These projects show our diversification is a success that benefits the region. Reclassification would allow us to pursue more projects like our studios, to foster greater opportunities for NI.

Diversification and New Income Streams

We are guardians of 20% of all land in Belfast. This makes us well-placed to explore new development opportunities.

We will invest in port operations and high-sustainability logistics warehouses. We will also continue our transformative regeneration work in the estate, including the City Quays 5 development.

This strategy will make us more resilient and adaptable, helping us benefit the city and region and meet our customers' future needs.



Enable Economic Growth

Facts & Figures Economic Benefits

300,000 cruise visitors annually, contributing an estimated **£20-25 million** to the NI economy each year

Busiest cruise transit port in the UK & Ireland

£200 million Belfast Harbour Studios' estimated contribution to the local economy in recent years

Cruise tourism boosts prosperity, and as the UK and Ireland's busiest cruise transit port, we will invest a further £90 million in a new deepwater quay. This will accommodate the largest cruise ships and support future offshore wind developments.

We have already invested £100 million in Belfast Harbour Studios, helping big productions to boost the region's economy. Recent expansions and the Studio Ulster partnership highlight our success in this new area of operations.

Our Targets for this Goal

Deepwater Quay

Begin construction in 2025, with completion of the project in 2027/28.

Belfast Harbour Studios

In collaboration with Northern Ireland Screen, we aim to secure new productions. Our ambition is for these to deliver £200 million for the local economy over the next five years.





Develop & Improve Your Port

Belfast Harbour is committed to remaining as the port of choice for the region and a leading port on these islands. To do this we will invest £208 million in improving and maintaining your port. Our goal is to meet the changing needs of customers and tenants while keeping safety at the core of our operations. Our 2025-2029 strategy includes facility upgrades, new cranes, and digital transformation. We will also develop cutting-edge, sustainable logistics facilities. These will meet global decarbonisation goals, giving port users new greener options to manage and distribute cargo. This strategy outlines our development goals over the next five years. Our Belfast Harbour 2050 Masterplan, due to be published in 2025, will then guide the long-term development of the port and estate.

Focus on People and Safety

At Belfast Harbour, we recognise that our people are at the core of our success. Our 2025 People Strategy will ensure a diverse, inclusive workforce to reflect the broader community. This includes a goal of 50% female representation in leadership roles by the end of 2029. We also support flexible work, disability inclusion, and nurturing future leaders. We aim to create an environment where everyone can thrive.

Equally, we are committed to maintaining the highest standards in health and safety, embedding it into everything we do. Our Health and Safety Strategy seeks to innovate on our already robust practice. It uses Internet of Things (IoT) monitoring and AI-powered risk management tools. We will improve our Safety Culture Index and maintain our ISO 45001 certification, a global standard for health and safety at work. These efforts show our strong commitment to a bright, safe, inclusive future for Belfast Harbour, starting from within.

Infrastructure and Equipment Investments

We will spend £38 million to maintain port operations as part of the £208 million we are investing in port improvements. This will include delivery of new sustainably-powered cranes starting in 2025, in response to feedback from our valued customers. These new cranes will boost efficiency and reduce environmental impact. Our commitment to continuous improvement drives our goal to develop and enhance Belfast Harbour. This is why we regularly carry out customer surveys to learn what works well, and what needs refinement. This then informs our investment in infrastructure, which is vital to our competitive edge.

We also aim to roll out new tech, like automated cargo systems, and to explore renewable shore power for vessels. We will also invest in improving and restoring aging infrastructure. This includes the planning, designing and consenting phases for the rebuild of Stormont Wharf and refurbishing our Milewater facilities.

Developing Sustainable Logistics Facilities

There is high and growing demand for sustainable, top-quality logistics facilities. We are well placed to meet this need. We offer a unique and strategic location near the port's container and ferry terminals, and the opportunity to access NI's dual market status.

We recently completed the region's first BREEAM Excellent logistics warehouse. BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) is an independent certification system. It measures a building's environmental impact by assessing its design, construction, and operation. We plan to follow this warehouse project by further raising the bar for sustainable logistics facilities.

We will invest £24 million in new warehouses, powered by renewable energy, including rooftop solar panels. They will have state-of-the-art cladding to provide the best thermal and structural performance. These new facilities will have digitised energy management systems and lower embodied carbon. They will attract businesses focused on sustainability and efficiency.

We will stay ahead of new sustainability standards and embrace advancements in clean energy. We will adapt our approach to meet changing customer needs over time. This futureproofing ensures our facilities offering will remain effective and sustainable.

To become a regional logistics hub, we need to see the completion of government infrastructure projects to improve access to the wider area. This includes transport projects like the York Street Interchange and the Strategic Transport Masterplan for Queen's Island.

Our longer-term goal is to develop the estate as one of the leading logistics hubs on these islands. This development will only be possible if we are reclassified to allow us to responsibly borrow more.

Masterplanning for Long-Term Success

The Belfast Harbour 2050 Masterplan will guide our development for the next 25 years and will be our roadmap for the future. Our draft Masterplan, developed with stakeholders, reflects their feedback. It will ensure our growth aligns with customer and community needs. Due for consultation and publishing in 2025, the final Masterplan will outline several key projects. These include rebuilding Stormont Wharf, adding port capacity, new logistics hubs, and a thriving waterfront with eco-friendly homes and businesses. The Masterplan will also explore strategic channel deepening in the port to accept larger vessels. Finally, it will consider optimising our berths and how best to use the land we manage.

Digital Transformation

Embracing digital tech is vital for boosting Belfast Harbour's efficiency. We are creating a data architecture that uses IoT for real-time monitoring and AI-powered analysis to optimise operations. This digital shift will provide smarter services. They will include predictive market analytics, automated cargo handling, and intelligent video for inspections and threat detection. They will also enable remote operation of cranes and hoppers. This will improve the customer experience and boost our status as a leader in digital port operations.





Develop & Improve Your Port

Facts & Figures

Operational Investments

70%+ of the region's imports & exports transit through Belfast Harbour

£208 million Investment in port maintenance, development and next generation infrastructure

Belfast Harbour is vital to the regional economy, handling most of NI's seaborne trade. Investing in clean tech and infrastructure will mean an even more resilient and competitive port. We will invest in automation, private 5G, and sustainably-powered cranes – offering carbon neutral solutions to our customers and tenants.

Our Targets for this Goal

Infrastructure Investments

Deliver new, sustainably-powered cranes starting in 2025. Complete key projects, including the new deepwater quay by 2027/28 and refurbishment of Milewater facilities by 2028. Conclude the planning, designing and consenting phases for the rebuild of Stormont Wharf by end 2029.

Digital Transformation

Roll out private 5G networks and automation projects in 2025. Complete Port Autonomy Projects with tenants by end 2027.





Create Vibrant Places to Live & Work

At Belfast Harbour our primary focus is on our role as a port. At the same time, we also aim to make the estate a great place to work, live, visit and invest in. To achieve this, we will invest £105 million during the course of this strategy. This will support the creation of thriving waterfront neighbourhoods that are inclusive and welcoming to all. These will have sustainable and eco-friendly spaces, new homes, workplaces, and green areas. We will achieve this with modern designs while respecting and acknowledging our unique heritage. We know the city needs more housing, including affordable homes. So, we are aiming to invest substantially in new residential property over the course of this strategy. We are optimistic that our request to reclassify - and so expand our ability to responsibly borrow - will facilitate this ambition. Government-led delivery of enabling infrastructure is also needed to achieve this goal.

Transforming Belfast Harbour into a Vibrant Urban Destination

We are continuing to transform the estate into a lively urban space, complete with homes, shops, and parks. These mixed-use neighbourhoods with high-quality landscaping will provide new housing including affordable homes. They will also have modern offices and neighbourhood retail options. This development will revitalise brownfield areas.

Our five-year strategy is designed to help the city thrive and grow. We will collaborate and engage with Belfast City Council to support its Local Development Plan and the Belfast Agenda.

Building New Homes

We aim to do more than build structures: we want to create a thriving, inclusive community that supports Belfast's future growth. We support the Belfast Agenda's goal of 3,500 new homes in the Harbour Estate, including in Titanic Quarter, by 2035. With a young, growing population, and as a thriving university city, we recognise the need for a diverse residential portfolio. This will include owner-occupied homes, build-to-rent, affordable homes, and live/workspaces for professionals. We will also develop student accommodation as well as later living options. By end 2029, we aim to deliver 325 new homes - including 69 affordable homes - in the City Quays 4 development. We will also have started the process of developing another 3,000 or more. However, to achieve this we need government to deliver key solutions - like wastewater and transport. To achieve our aims for this sustainable development we will engage the community, respect heritage and improve connectivity.

Sustainable Development

Social responsibility and sustainable development are central to our regeneration plans. By considering sustainability in our plans, we can show how the built environment supports the energy transition. We will do this by using low carbon heat sources and reducing embodied carbon. This ambition shapes our plans to invest £60 million in the City Quays 5 development. This will deliver mixed use space, including Grade A offices. We hope this will be the first BREEAM Outstanding office development in the region.

We will keep working to reduce our environmental impact and to boost social and economic benefits. This includes requiring contractors to sign up to Buy Social. This initiative provides employment opportunities and apprenticeships. Finally, our new neighbourhoods will be inclusive, accessible places. They will benefit everyone in the community.

Enhancing Connectivity and Heritage

Strengthening connectivity between Belfast Harbour Estate and the rest of the city is key to our redevelopment plans. We are improving links to the city centre and public transport. We are also developing paths to encourage walking and cycling. This will better connect Belfast Harbour to Titanic Quarter, Odyssey and the wider city. It will also allow for seamless movement and more active travel. To unlock the full potential of the areas, we need to see the delivery of the Department for Infrastructure's York Street Interchange and the Strategic Transport Masterplan for Queen's Island. These are essential for access and growth in Belfast Harbour Estate.



We want to preserve the rich heritage of the Belfast Harbour estate in our development plans. We will blend its industrial past with modern designs to create a unique sense of place. The reclassification of our accounting status would allow us to fully realise our ambition to create flourishing new neighbourhoods. Finally, we support the vision of the Waterfront Task Group for a waterfront corridor that connects the harbour to the city. This includes a proposed new bridge for walking and cycling across the inner harbour.

Community Engagement and Support

Engaging with the community is essential to our development approach. We know successful projects need local support. So, we will talk with residents, nearby communities, businesses, and stakeholders. We will listen to their aspirations and concerns to ensure our plans align with their needs. This includes supporting local businesses and community initiatives. We already contribute 1% of our profits to help such projects, which has seen us deliver annual grants totalling an average of £350,000 in recent years. Our aim is to create spaces and facilitate activities that improve life around Belfast Harbour Estate.

Community Policing in Belfast Harbour

Creating, managing and maintaining safe spaces is a priority for Belfast Harbour. Our Harbour Police play a crucial role in maintaining safety across the estate, and they go beyond traditional policing. They engage with the community to ensure the safety and wellbeing of residents, port users and tenants, as well as visitors. Working closely with the PSNI, their efforts help keep Belfast Harbour a safe, secure and welcoming environment.



Create Vibrant Places to Live & Work

Facts & Figures New Homes for Belfast

Investing to
deliver **325** new
homes by 2029

3,500+ extra
homes by 2035

**Our plans include
affordable homes**

These goals depend
on being able to
borrow more, on our
development partners,
on planning consents,
and on government
delivered infrastructure.

Belfast Harbour can provide quality, sustainable and affordable homes. There is a growing population and an increasing demand for housing. The Belfast Harbour Estate is near the city centre. It either hosts, or is close to, centres of learning and major employers and it offers easy access to key amenities.

Our Targets for this Goal

Urban Transformation

Integrate our Placemaking Strategy into developments. By end 2029, deliver 325 new homes in the City Quays 4 development. This is part of a broader aim to create 3,500+ homes by 2035 across our estate. By end 2029, we will also deliver the City Quays 5 development, including office, leisure, retail and amenity spaces.

Research on Successful Neighbourhoods

In 2025, we will collaborate with stakeholders to research what makes successful neighbourhoods. We will work with the NI Housing Executive, Belfast City Council, private sector developers and local groups. We will use these findings to inform how we develop new communities.





Innovate for a Better Tomorrow

At Belfast Harbour, innovation is a key aspect of our future vision. The estate is already home to groundbreaking firms like Artemis, Catagen and Ionic Technologies. Our strategy aims to build on this, as we know that clean tech offers new opportunity. It can further transform the organisation and create new revenue streams. To support this goal, we will boost our business development work in 2025-29. We will collaborate with start-ups, established firms and universities. We will also partner with government and industry, including Innovation City Belfast. Together, we will create digital and clean energy solutions for the maritime and transport sector. This will allow us to stay ahead in a fast-changing world.



Supporting Clean Technology and Net Zero Innovation Clusters

Clean technology is vital to meet our decarbonisation targets. It is also essential for the global maritime sector. We will build on the region's success in Research & Development (R&D) and digital innovation. Our strong, connected ecosystem can be an enabler and a catalyst for others.

To deliver this, we will create a business development plan for the estate. This will generate innovation clusters with diverse partnerships in key sectors. These will include offshore wind and other forms of green energy, sustainable fuels, advanced manufacturing, and cyber security.

Our long-term plan is to create a net zero Innovation Park with Titanic Quarter Limited. This aims to attract businesses focused on decarbonisation. It will also designate Belfast Harbour as a regional and global hub for clean tech.

Collaborating with Innovation Partners

Our strategy hinges on partnerships with technology firms, universities, and research institutions. Working together, we aim to develop new, tailored digital solutions for our port operations. We will use AI tools, data analytics, and the IoT to boost our efficiency and to manage our use of resources. This will create smarter, connected systems for cargo handling, energy management, and other key tasks. These innovations will boost our competitiveness. They will also support the emissions goals of the wider maritime and transport sectors.

Investing in Digital Transformation

Digital transformation is central to our innovation strategy. New tech investments will make our operations faster and more transparent. They will also improve our response to customers. Our advanced data systems will provide real-time insights to our port operations. This will help us optimise resources and reduce waste.

We are also exploring more automation, such as remote cargo handling and autonomous vehicles. These will further enhance our efficiency and so reduce costs. Together, these initiatives will prepare Belfast Harbour for global trade in the next 100 years. In addition, as the steward of the wider estate, we can become a test area for digital innovation beyond our port operations.

Autonomous Vehicles for Public Transport – The Harlander

This service will connect key locations, including Titanic Quarter railway halt and Queen's Road. The project will deploy two autonomous shuttles in a partnership with BT and Horiba MIRA. The shuttles will bring residents, visitors, and employees to sites like Titanic Belfast and Catalyst. This initiative responds to the rising demand for public transport in the wider estate area. It also aligns with Belfast's Innovation District aims and supports the Department for Infrastructure's transport goals. Finally, this project marks Belfast Harbour as a leader in sustainable, autonomous travel.



Innovate for a Better Tomorrow

Facts & Figures Clean Tech Dividend

£1 trillion

Projected value of the clean energy transition to UK businesses

300,000 jobs

New, sustainable UK jobs predicted from decarbonisation

£60-170 billion

Estimated export value of UK low carbon economy to 2030

Our strategy aims to make Belfast Harbour a leader in the clean energy transition, both regionally and globally. Belfast Harbour Estate already hosts cutting-edge firms which are pioneering new technologies. Our long-term plan is to create a net zero Innovation Park with Titanic Quarter Limited. This will attract businesses focused on decarbonisation. This initiative signifies Belfast Harbour as a global hub for clean tech, benefiting the city and the wider region.

Our Targets for this Goal

Clean Tech & Net Zero

By end 2027, we will launch pilot projects. These will create innovation clusters in clean energy and sustainable manufacturing.

Autonomous Vehicles

By end 2029, deploy the Harlander Autonomous Vehicle project across Belfast Harbour Estate.





Accelerate to Net Zero

Belfast Harbour is a leader in green infrastructure for NI and beyond. Achieving carbon neutrality is not just a goal but a guiding principle influencing all our actions. We are on track to become the first net zero port operator on these islands. Perhaps, most significantly, our investments in offshore wind infrastructure will benefit the region. They will put us at the forefront of the clean energy transition.

Pioneering Offshore Wind Infrastructure

We will play our part in delivering a low carbon economy for the region and our neighbours through our pioneering offshore wind work. Our location gives us a natural advantage: we are within 200km of at least 30 Gigawatts (GW) of potential new wind farms – enough to power around 20 million homes. To capitalise on this, we have already invested £53 million in the UK's first purpose-built offshore wind turbine assembly and installation terminal. This is also the only such facility on the island of Ireland. During the term of this strategy, we aim to expand our capacity and enhance our reputation as a key hub for offshore wind. This will facilitate growth in the renewable energy sector and in local supply chains.

Preparing for the Next Wave of Renewable Energy

The electricity grid is changing; interconnection, storage and policy is driving the need for more and more clean energy. We are preparing for a big shift in the energy transition as these islands work towards their 2030 targets and beyond. To support and enable this, we will invest £90 million in a new deepwater quay. Initially, this facility is planned to support the cruise tourism sector.

However, it is also a step towards the infrastructure we need to enable the assembly and installation of floating offshore wind farms. To be fully operational, we will need to make further investments and additional enhancements. Completing these will depend on our ability to borrow beyond current constraints or through third party funding. Ultimately, our expanded offshore wind offering will create jobs and attract investment. More fundamentally, it will allow NI and its neighbours to meet their climate targets.

Setting a Course for Sustainability

Belfast Harbour is dedicated to sustainability as we move towards decarbonisation. This includes reducing emissions, boosting energy efficiency, and cutting waste. We are aiming to be net zero in our direct operations by end 2030, and we expect to achieve this ahead of schedule. We will continue to use proven and innovative methods to cut our carbon footprint. This includes using renewable energy and improving our buildings' energy performance. We also promote sustainable practices throughout our maritime and landside operations. We will work with suppliers who share our environmental values. This will set a standard for decarbonisation in the maritime industry's supply chain.





Enhancing Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity

Belfast Harbour will improve green infrastructure and biodiversity in the area. This includes our City Quays Gardens, which are One Planet Living accredited. The upcoming City Quays 5 development will deliver mixed use space, including Grade A offices, which we hope will be the first BREEAM Outstanding offices in the region. We are adding green spaces and sustainable designs to our projects. These include green roofs and rain gardens. They will create environments that support people and nature. We are committed to biodiversity. This includes protecting natural habitats in our waters. Our green initiatives will help create a sustainable, healthy environment for future generations.

Collaboration and Community Engagement

Lowering our carbon output requires collaboration and community engagement. We already partner with our stakeholders on environmental initiatives. These include local authorities, voluntary and community organisations, and businesses. We will also join regional forums, support education, and fund projects to raise awareness of the environment. Our work with the NI Executive and Belfast City Council links our decarbonisation goals to broader strategies. This will boost our climate action efforts. Finally, we are committed to transparency. We will report on our progress regularly and engage with stakeholders for their feedback and insights.

Investing in Innovation for a Sustainable Future

Innovation powers our sustainability strategy, as we invest in new technologies to achieve our goals. We want to continue our journey of environmental stewardship. This will see us expand our use of hydrotreated vegetable oils, and other low carbon fuels for our boats, and machinery.

We also aim to introduce smart energy systems and to apply circular economy principles. This will all help to cut waste and improve resource use. We also want Belfast Harbour Estate to become a hub for innovative, sustainable industries. This includes businesses in clean tech, renewable energy, and other environmental sectors. These efforts will collectively help our goals for a greener future. They also support the region's economic and environmental aims.

A Commitment to a Greener Tomorrow

Belfast Harbour's journey to balance our emissions is more than cutting carbon. It is about driving positive change for NI. As an example, we will help our customers on their own net zero journeys by exploring renewable shore power solutions across the port. We are committed to carbon neutrality, innovation, and collaboration. We will build on the success of our blue carbon projects, like our native oyster programme with Ulster Wildlife Trust. We will also continue to transform our operations to support a shift to a greener, sustainable future for all.



Accelerate to Net Zero

Facts & Figures Offshore Wind Energy

66% of the UK's offshore wind capacity delivered between 2013 and 2018 was installed via Belfast Harbour

1GW of offshore wind energy aimed for by NI Executive from 2030

43-50 GW of offshore wind energy targeted by UK Government by 2030

20 GW of offshore wind energy targeted by Irish Government by 2040

Belfast Harbour is uniquely placed to support the offshore wind industry. There are 30 offshore wind farms planned within a 200 km range of Belfast Harbour, with a projected capacity of more than 30 GW. We are the first UK port with a purpose-built offshore wind terminal. This is also the only such terminal on the island of Ireland. Our £90 million investment in a new deepwater quay will help us enable the next generation of floating offshore wind farms. With our expertise and infrastructure, we can help NI and its neighbours to meet their offshore wind targets.

Our Targets for this Goal

Deepwater Quay

Begin construction in 2025, with completion of the new deepwater quay in 2027/28. Complete the stage-two development of the deepwater quay in 2030. This will allow for the assembly of next-generation offshore wind turbines. This goal depends on expanding our borrowing capacity or on third-party funding.

Sustainability

Continue investment in port decarbonisation projects, aiming to be net zero in our own operations by end 2030.



Shaping the Future

For nearly two centuries, Belfast Harbour has driven the region's prosperity. More recently, we have led the shift to a net zero economy, boosted the screen industry, and pioneered regeneration. Looking ahead, our 2025-29 strategy is bold - and it lays the foundation for a transformative 2050 Masterplan. By 2050, the waterfront will be a vibrant, inclusive district. It will be a connected part of a thriving port city, comparable to Copenhagen or Seattle.

Belfast Harbour will be a global hub for innovation and sustainability. It will be a flourishing regional port and globally recognised as a leading clean tech and green energy hub. Our strategic goals will deliver lasting value to the city and region.

To bring this vision to life we will continue to work with partners, customers, and port users. We need your engagement, your support and to collaborate with you. Let's work together to ensure Belfast Harbour is a cornerstone of shared prosperity and pride for generations to come.

Join us in shaping a brighter future for all.





Belfast Harbour

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