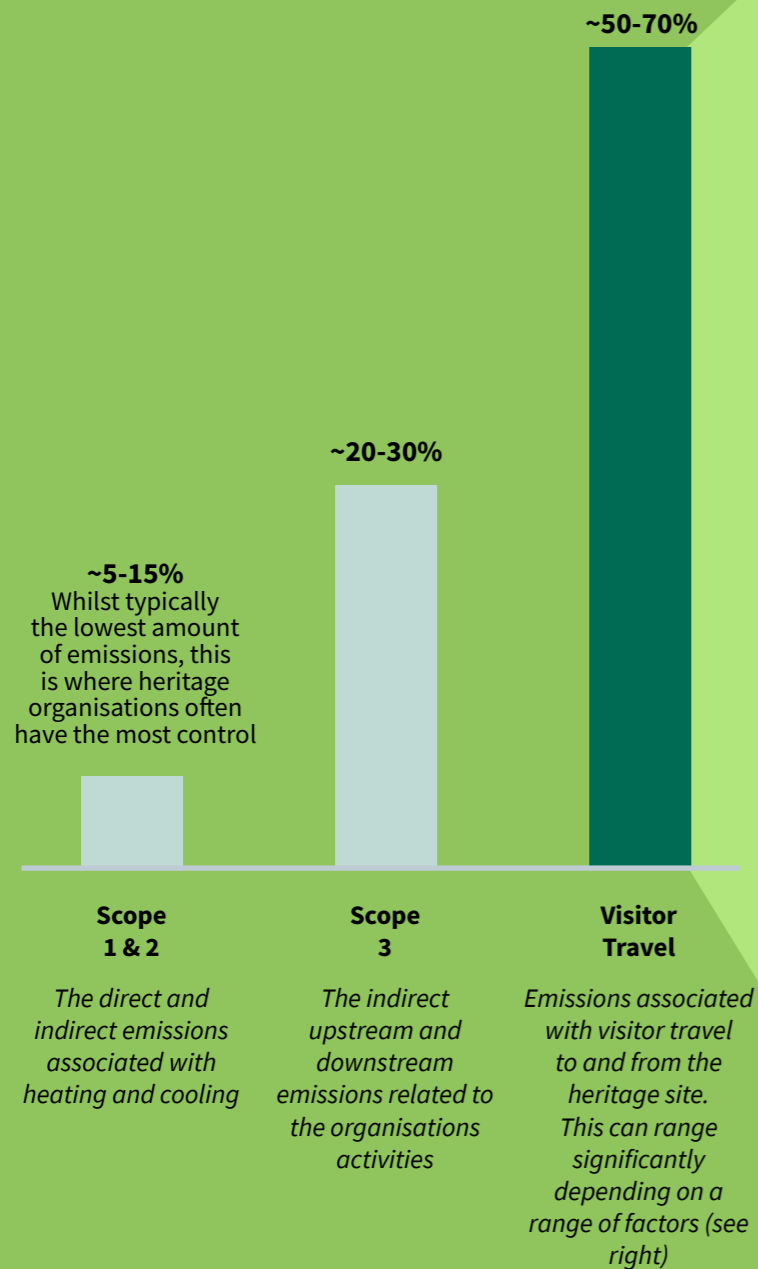# IMPACT OF VISITOR TRAVEL

Context

Across the UK approximately 120 million [1] visits are made every year to heritage sites, and visitor travel can often present a significant proportion of emissions. This is illustrated below, showing the typical breakdown of the carbon footprint for a heritage sector organisation.

120 million visits per year to heritage sites across the UK

Visitor Travel Emissions in Context

Below is an indicative split of carbon emissions across scopes 1, 2 and 3 for a typical Gallery, Library or Museum. Whilst exact figures are likely to range visitor travel is typically the primary source of emissions [2].

~50-70%

~20-30%

~5-15%
Whilst typically the lowest amount of emissions, this is where heritage organisations often have the most control

Scope 1 & 2
The direct and indirect emissions associated with heating and cooling

Scope 3
The indirect upstream and downstream emissions related to the organisations activities

Visitor Travel
Emissions associated with visitor travel to and from the heritage site. This can range significantly depending on a range of factors (see right)

Key Factors that influence Visitor Travel Emission

A Heritage Site Location	B Visitor Origin	C Trip Length	D Mode of Travel	E Number of Visitors
Whether the heritage site is in an urban, semi-rural or rural location often influences accessibility with urban sites typically having better public transport connectivity.	The origin of visitors influences *trip length* to the respective sites and also the transport modes that are available and convenient to take.	The length of the journey often determines the mode of travel. Short distances allow for active modes like walking or cycling, while longer distances, especially international ones, often require flights.	Influences carbon associated with journey (i.e. private vehicle (car) is likely to be higher CO2e/km than train and this in turn is likely to be higher CO2e/km than active forms of travel such as walking or cycling.	More visitors will increase the amount of emissions associated with visitor travel if all other factors are equal.

Opportunities to reduce carbon

Knowing your travel strengths and weaknesses is key. In rural areas, consider shuttle buses or electric vehicle charging points.

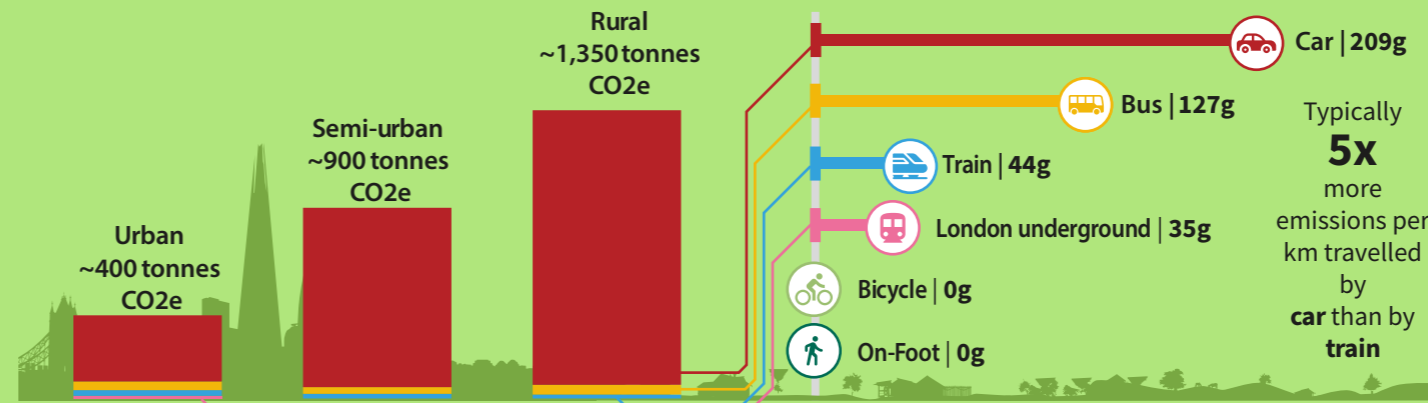*Consider marketing to more local visitors through targeting local populations.*

Encourage visiting multiple attractions during a single trip.

Nudge visitor behaviour through recommending sustainable travel options and working with public transport operators.

Consider opportunities to engage visitors virtually or promoting other attractions in the area so they see more when in the area.

How *heritage site location*, *visitor origin* and *trip length* can influence visitor travel emissions [3]

The chart below provides the current estimated emissions associated with 100,000 visitors to an urban, semi-urban and rural site.

Urban ~400 tonnes CO2e

Semi-urban ~900 tonnes CO2e

Rural ~1,350 tonnes CO2e

How *mode of travel* can influence visitor travel emissions [3]

Car | 209g
Bus | 127g
Train | 44g
London underground | 35g
Bicycle | 0g
On-Foot | 0g

Typically **5x** more emissions per km travelled by **car** than by **train**

References

1. Historic England. (2023) 'The Contribution of the Heritage Sector to the Visitor Economy'. Available at: https://historicengland.org.uk/research/heritage-counts/heritage-and-economy/visitor-economy/ (Accessed: 1-15 March 2024).

2. 3ADAPT. (2024) Galleries Libraries Archives & Museums (GLAM) Carbon Baseline Report.

3. Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DESNZ), Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA). (2023) 'UK Government GHG Conversion Factors for Company Reporting'. Available at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/greenhouse-gas-reporting-conversion-factors-2023 (Accessed: 1-15 March 2024).