# UK hotels rise to the challenge of sustainability in travel



As the emphasis on sustainability in travel grows, hotels across the UK are increasingly adapting their operations to meet the expectations of conscientious travellers. A recent study shows that 84 per cent of travellers regard sustainable travel as important, prompting a shift in the hospitality industry towards more responsible practices. To credentialise these efforts, some hotels have achieved B Corp certification, a mark granted by B Lab, a global non-profit organisation that assesses companies based on their social and environmental performance.

B Corp status requires businesses to complete a rigorous assessment across five categories: governance, workers, community, environment, and customers. As outlined by James Ghaffari, director of growth and product at B Corp, businesses must "meet high standards of social and environmental performance in the way they operate." This requires a focus on stakeholders beyond just shareholders, reinforcing the principle that economic growth can coexist with positive social and environmental impact.

However, securing B Corp certification is no simple task. Hotels must gather comprehensive data, achieving a minimum of 80 points to qualify, and reapply for the accreditation every three years. Among the hotels that have attained this status in the UK are prominent names like The Pig Group and Bingham Riverhouse. The Pig, known for its sustainable practices and farm-to-table dining options, has incorporated numerous initiatives that promote local sourcing and community involvement. Kate Harvey, the group's sustainability manager, highlights their successful volunteering programme, stating that employees logged over 2,000 hours of community service last year.

Mollie's Motel, another B Corp-certified establishment, embraces a similar ethos. Trudi Parr, head of people and development, pointed out that the certification challenges them to maintain accountability and progress within a sector often viewed as transient. The same sentiment extends to Bingham Riverhouse, which recently gained its B Corp status. Head chef Vannessa Marx emphasises that this accreditation should be seen as a "compass" for future development rather than the final goal.

Despite the influx of sustainability initiatives, observers have voiced concerns regarding the integrity of some organisations granted B Corp certification. Critiques have surfaced, questioning the practices of companies like Nespresso and BrewDog, whose B Corp statuses have come under scrutiny for misalignment with the movement's core values. As a result, the B Corp framework is set to undertake its most significant revamp, a process expected to evolve over the next few years, aiming to bolster the uniformity and clarity of the standards required for certification.

The environmental impact of the hotel industry is substantial, with high rates of energy consumption noted, particularly given that 86 per cent of UK hotel stays last only one to two nights. This has led to increased scrutiny of hotels' sustainability claims, with the term "greenwashing" originating from practices deemed misleading in promoting environmental efforts.

While some hotels, such as the room2 Chiswick, integrate sustainable design elements, including energy-efficient systems and locally sourced materials, the overall challenge remains. Inconsistent standards across various sustainability certifications contribute to confusion among consumers regarding what constitutes genuine commitment to sustainable practices.

In light of the ongoing evolution of the B Corp movement and the hotel industry's adaptation to sustainability challenges, guests are encouraged to scrutinise hotels’ sustainability claims openly. Direct inquiries can provide insight into a hotel's genuine efforts, beyond the certification logos.

As sustainability becomes an increasingly vital aspect of hospitality, the onus lies on both travellers and businesses alike to navigate this complex landscape thoughtfully, acknowledging both the progress made and the work still to be done.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.independent.co.uk/travel/sustainable-travel/sustainability-b-corp-hotels-uk-b2700697.html> - This article supports the claim that hotels in the UK are achieving B Corp certification, highlighting examples like The Pig Group and Bingham Riverhouse, and discusses the rigorous assessment process required for this status.
* <https://www.ukhospitality.org.uk/work/sustainability-guide/> - This guide from UKHospitality emphasizes the importance of sustainability in the hospitality sector, aligning with the article's mention of the industry's shift towards more responsible practices.
* <https://www.hotelmanagement-network.com/news/zeal-hotels-opening-in-2025/> - This article highlights Zeal Hotels' efforts towards sustainability, particularly with the upcoming net zero carbon hotel, which aligns with the industry's broader trend towards environmental responsibility.
* <https://smartwatermagazine.com/blogs/steve-harding/why-embracing-sustainable-water-use-2025-a-win-win-hospitality-industry> - This piece discusses the importance of water sustainability in the hospitality industry, emphasizing the need for hotels to adopt environmentally friendly practices, which supports the article's focus on sustainability.
* <https://www.bcorporation.net/en> - The official B Corp website provides detailed information on the certification process and requirements, supporting the article's explanation of how hotels achieve B Corp status.