



visit  
**BRISTOL**



Bristol International Balloon Fiesta - Credit: Paul Box

Aardman X Cabot Circus - Uprest Street Art: Visit Bristol

## Case Study | Visit Bristol

# Built for Good: How Visit Bristol's New Site Reflects a Destination and its Values

**Sometimes a website is just a website, but sometimes – just sometimes – it's something more.**

When long-standing Simpleview client Visit West – the Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) that represents both the Bath and Bristol regions – sought to create a new site for Visit Bristol, it was clear that any new digital presence needed to not only reflect Bristol as a destination, but as a place with a unique outlook and a certain set of values.

In one sense, this is a story of time and transformation; yet in another, this collaboration is a tale of something else: of how Simpleview's powerful functionality was used to create a new website for Visit Bristol – one that not only offers an authentic picture of this unique destination, but a platform that's truly in harmony with Bristol and all it holds dear.

### Balancing ethos with practicality

The previous iteration of Visit Bristol's website had been in existence since 2015. In 2024, the team at Visit West – which manages the Visit Bristol website – began the task of creating a new site for Bristol. The challenge would be to build a platform that was technically fresh and robust, but also in keeping with Bristol's long-held emphasis on accessibility and sustainability.

Considering that latter point in particular, Laura Valentine, Digital Marketing Manager at Visit West, reminds us that sustainability in Bristol – which was recognised as the first European Green Capital back in 2015 – has always been an ethos that is deeply ingrained in the city and its wider community.



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**LAURA VALENTINE**  
Digital Marketing Manager  
Visit West





## Putting concepts into context

Yet in this instance, Laura states that sustainability specifically meant incorporating the concept of digital sustainability into the build of this new platform. Putting this into context, she explains, “digital sustainability is the practice of using digital in a way that minimises environmental impact.” This means reducing the energy and carbon generated via data centres each time data is downloaded.

“When we download data onto our digital devices, that uses energy ... so if you can reduce the amount of data or number of requests on a page, that will in turn reduce the carbon used when you compress data or transmit data,” she says.

As a destination, Laura emphasises that sustainability “should run through every vein” of Bristol’s operations. With this thought in mind, it makes sense that Bristol would seek to incorporate this ethos into the build of its new platform, effortlessly minimising the carbon footprints of individual visitors to its site.

Alongside this, Laura also adds that it was important that accessibility – a value that is actively developed and promoted within Bristol – also featured within the build and final design of any new platform.





Cycle the City Clifton Suspension Bridge View + Visit Bristol



## From open-minded collaboration to the power of the CMS: How Simpleview brought Bristol's new site to life

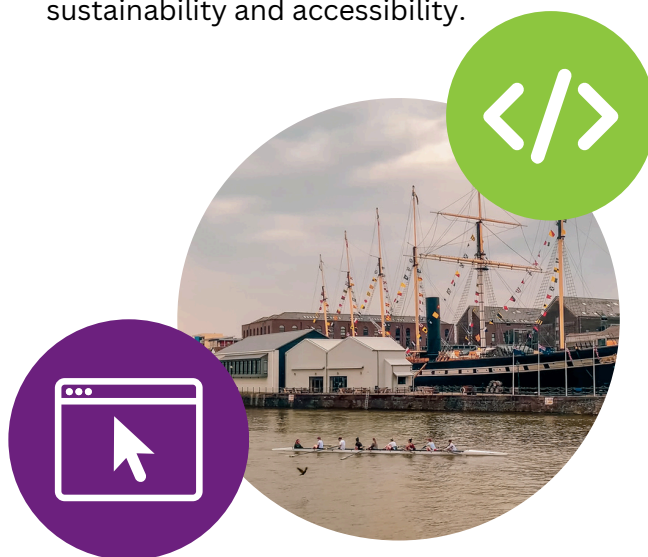
Speaking of the collaboration between Visit West and Simpleview, Laura explained that – prior to this project – the concept of digital sustainability hadn't been widely deployed in other projects. However, she adds that, once the brief was given, the team at Simpleview “were really open to learning about it.”

During this process, Visit West and Simpleview collaborated to consider how this new site – one that used smaller font weights, smaller imagery, and carefully placed video content – would create not just a fresh new visitor platform, but feed directly into Bristol's overall emphasis on sustainability.

By considering issues like lazy loading and scrolling imagery as well as Cumulative Layout Shift (CLS) and the economical use of JavaScript, technical refinements were deployed at every aspect of this build, each with a view to taking digital sustainability from concept to practice.

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As Laura acknowledges, the former Visit Bristol site was so large and well-established that these kinds of considerations were paramount when shifting from old platform to new. By working hand in hand with their dedicated account manager – and with the wider Simpleview development and SEO teams – Visit West was able to move forward to build a new site for Bristol, one that truly exemplifies Bristol's dedication to both sustainability and accessibility.





Balloon Flying over Bristol Harbourside - Credit: Paul Box



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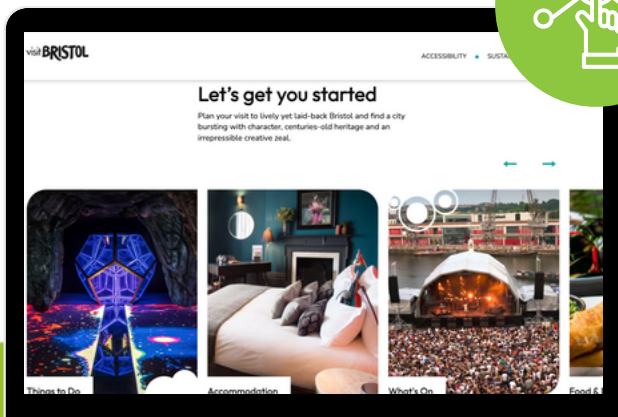


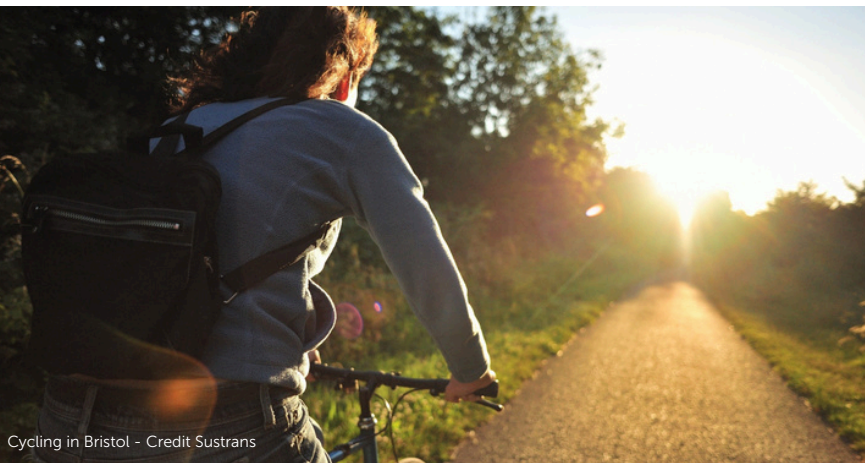
## A true reflection of **SUCCESS**

Backed by the power of the Simpleview CMS, Visit Bristol’s new site went live in May 2024. Commenting on her overall experience of this collaborative effort, Laura says, “the processes that Simpleview have in place are great ... I think just having those really clear processes and those relationships with people is what helped it go smoothly.”

And as for the site itself? “It really does reflect Bristol,” says Laura, explaining that the design of the site – which features the sparing use of striking, contrasting colours along with quirky graphics and icons – is intentional, a technical point that ensures it is visually accessible to all. Alongside this, the site also features distinct tabs for both its sustainable and accessible facilities, a point that empowers visitors to experience Bristol via the very values it holds dear. Finally, while its embedded scrolling features guarantee a mobile-first design, the site also works well for desktop users.

Yet, reflecting as it does a one-of-a-kind place, **the dynamic use of imagery plays a major role in Visit Bristol’s new site.** “We’re not a rural location; we don’t have those beautiful vistas as some destinations do. And so, I think it’s really good how we’ve got different ways to display all of the myriad of things that we have in Bristol in the way that the site is designed,” says Laura.





Cycling in Bristol - Credit Sustrans



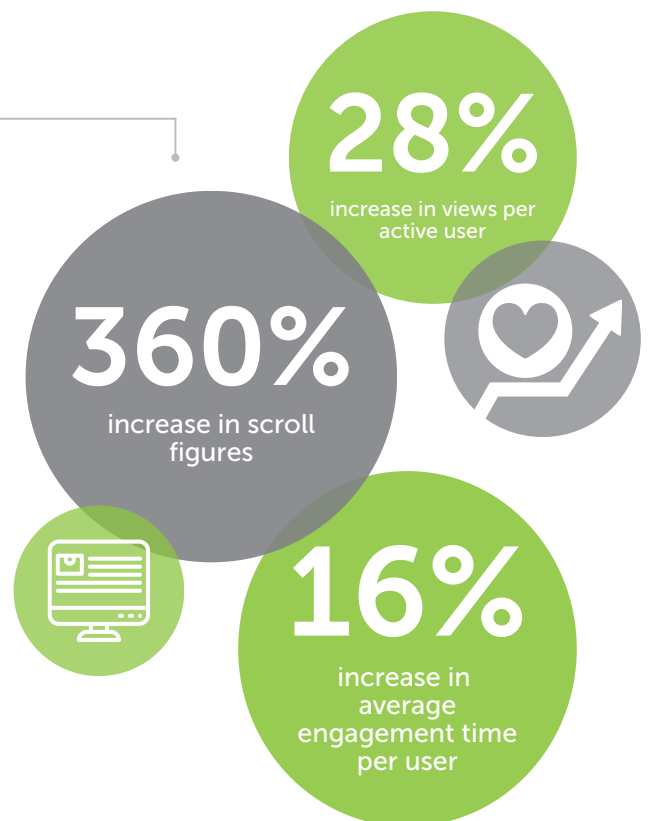
Credit: Visit Bristol

## The RESULTS

She also adds that this new site has been “revolutionary” in bringing greater efficiency to the organisation’s wider operations, enabling back-end users to tag items in the CMS and to easily search for imagery. In addition, Laura explains **this new platform has enabled Visit Bristol to thoughtfully monetise its operations in a way that doesn’t jar with the values of the very destination it represents.**

In terms of overall statistics, Laura notes, “The thing we're really seeing a difference in is the engagement on the website. **The scroll figures, for example, are up 360%. I think that shows how people are interacting and staying and really engaging with the website ... they're really reading and looking at the content.**”

For her, this not only speaks to a change in how users are interacting with the new Visit Bristol site but serves as a testament to the true power of the Simpleview CMS. From Laura’s perspective, it has “opened up so many more possibilities, particularly with how we present the content that we have.”



For Laura and her team, all of this is proof that Visit Bristol’s new site is a success. But ever true to itself, for Bristol, a successful future is one that rests upon its principles. Sustainability and accessibility – two values that have long been cherished within Bristol – feature heavily in that future plan, explains Laura.

But ultimately, she says, “We want our region and our city to be a welcoming and inclusive place to visit.” **And now, with this thoughtfully created site, Visit Bristol has a platform that truly reflects this city and, most importantly, its values.**