



Get Open Ready Industry Webinar

Tuesday 25th February 2025

THE
OPEN

148TH ROYAL PORTRUSH

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153RD ROYAL PORTRUSH



Today's session

- **Welcome and Strategic Update**
Siobhan McGuigan, Tourism NI Head of Events
- **Introducing The Open Toolkit + Customer Service & Collaboration**
Carolyn Boyd, Tourism NI Industry Development Manager
- **Welcoming Guests to your accommodation for The 153rd Open**
Advice & tips for Operators on creating a memorable stay
Claire McNaughton, Tourism NI Accommodation Certification Manager
- **Golf Marketing Update**
George Diamondis, Tourism NI Golf Marketing Manager
- **The 153rd Open Toolkit Assets**
Carmel Scott, TBWA
- **Council Activity Update**
Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council – Jonny McCarron
- **Closing Comments & Q&A**



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Welcome and Strategic Update

Siobhan McGuigan
Tourism NI - Head of Events



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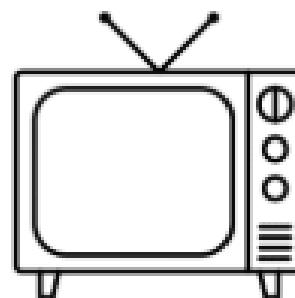
153rd Open Championship



Over 250,000
visitors from across
the world



Increased Sense of
Civic Pride



Broadcast to over 500m
households across 150
countries



Deliver event in the most
sustainable way



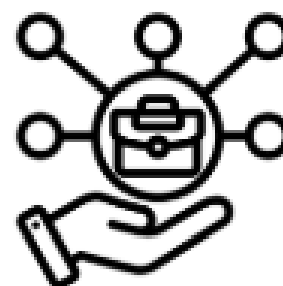
Over £100m
Combined Economic
and Media Value



Increased
reputation of NI as a
destination



Increase golf
tourism year after
the event



Support local
supply chain and
recruitment
opportunities



Encourage people to enjoy
sport outside



nicshr.learninganddevelopment@finance-ni.gov.uk

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Introducing The 153rd Open Toolkit

Carolyn Boyd

Tourism NI – Industry Development Manager



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The 153rd Open / Royal Portrush Golf Club / 13th – 20th July 2025



Are you ready for The Open?

Getting your business ready for The 153rd Open



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THE 153RD OPEN

Northern
Ireland



Embrace a
Giant Spirit

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Tip 3 Customer Service

What can you do to offer an authentic giant welcome that leaves people with fantastic memories?

Northern Ireland's Embrace a Giant Spirit brand is all about unlocking our unique passion and enthusiasm, being warm and generous hosts and going the extra mile to ensure each visitor feels welcome.

Providing excellent customer service is vital to deliver the giant welcome our visitors deserve ensuring they return again and again whilst also improving the reputation of our destination. Everyone involved in The Open is an ambassador for the destination and plays an important role in the overall visitor experience.

Make sure to provide your team and volunteers with the resources necessary to deliver an excellent customer experience, such as the examples in Tip 1.

Other creative ways you can delight your customers include:

- Allowing guests to pre order food deliveries prior to their arrival if using self-catering accommodation.
- Provide your customers with a simple golf related gift.
- We have included some marketing assets in Tip 10 to help you show a "giant welcome" to The 153rd Open and the golf visitors.

Tourism NI will be hosting a number of Get Open Ready Customer Service courses, for more information see [page 27](#).





Ebrington Hotel, Derry City, Co. Londonderry

Tip 4 Working Together & Cross Promotion

Two heads are better than one! Working together, either business to business or as a group/community, can encourage everyone to aim for the same goal.

Collaboration is key

For visitors to The Open, your business is just one element of their overall visitor experience to Northern Ireland. Building networks and collaborating with others can yield far greater results for your business, local community and visitors.

Working in collaboration can not only encourage increased spend in your area and inspire visitors but raise the profile of your business.

Ideas for collaboration:

- Could you offer evening meals/packed lunches for nearby accommodation that cannot offer their own, such as local campsites?
- Get involved and work with your local Chamber of Commerce. For more information, visit [Causeway Chamber](#), [Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce](#), [Londonderry Chamber](#), [Belfast Chamber](#).
- Support your local groups and feedback ideas for possible ways to increase tourism in your area.

Another benefit of collaboration is that it is a low/no cost method of increasing awareness or complementing your business offer. Are there complementary businesses nearby that you can work with to enhance the experience and encourage spectators to spend locally?

For example, can you:

- Offer in-room guest information on things to do or places to eat nearby.
- Share content on social media from other local businesses.
- Add a destination page to your website with local recommendations.
- Include recommendations of things to do in pre-visit communications.
- Provide itineraries for guests that are staying with you. [Tourism Northern Ireland have put together a range of itineraries that you could use](#). You will also find on [page 19-22](#) some marketing assets that you could use to communicate itineraries, visit [northernirelandscontentpool.com](#).



Royal Portrush Golf Club, Portrush

Being Big Hearted - Sign up for Customer Service Training

Being Big Hearted is about being warm, generous and hospitable hosts. The 153rd Open gives us the opportunity to share our local Giant spirit on a global stage.

To ensure we are offering a Giant Welcome, Tourism NI will be hosting a number of Get Open Ready Customer Service courses.

These will be free, one day in duration and fully accredited offering a level 2 qualification.

If you would like to register your interest please visit tourismni.com/getopenready

Get Open Ready Customer Service Training

Upcoming Dates and Locations

Belfast – *Stormont Hotel*

- Wednesday 19th March
- Monday 31st March

Causeway Coast and Glens

- Friday 7th March – *Flowerfield Arts Centre*
- Friday 14th March – *Lodge Hotel, Coleraine*
- Thursday 20th March – *Lodge Hotel, Coleraine*

Derry~Londonderry – *Millennium Forum*

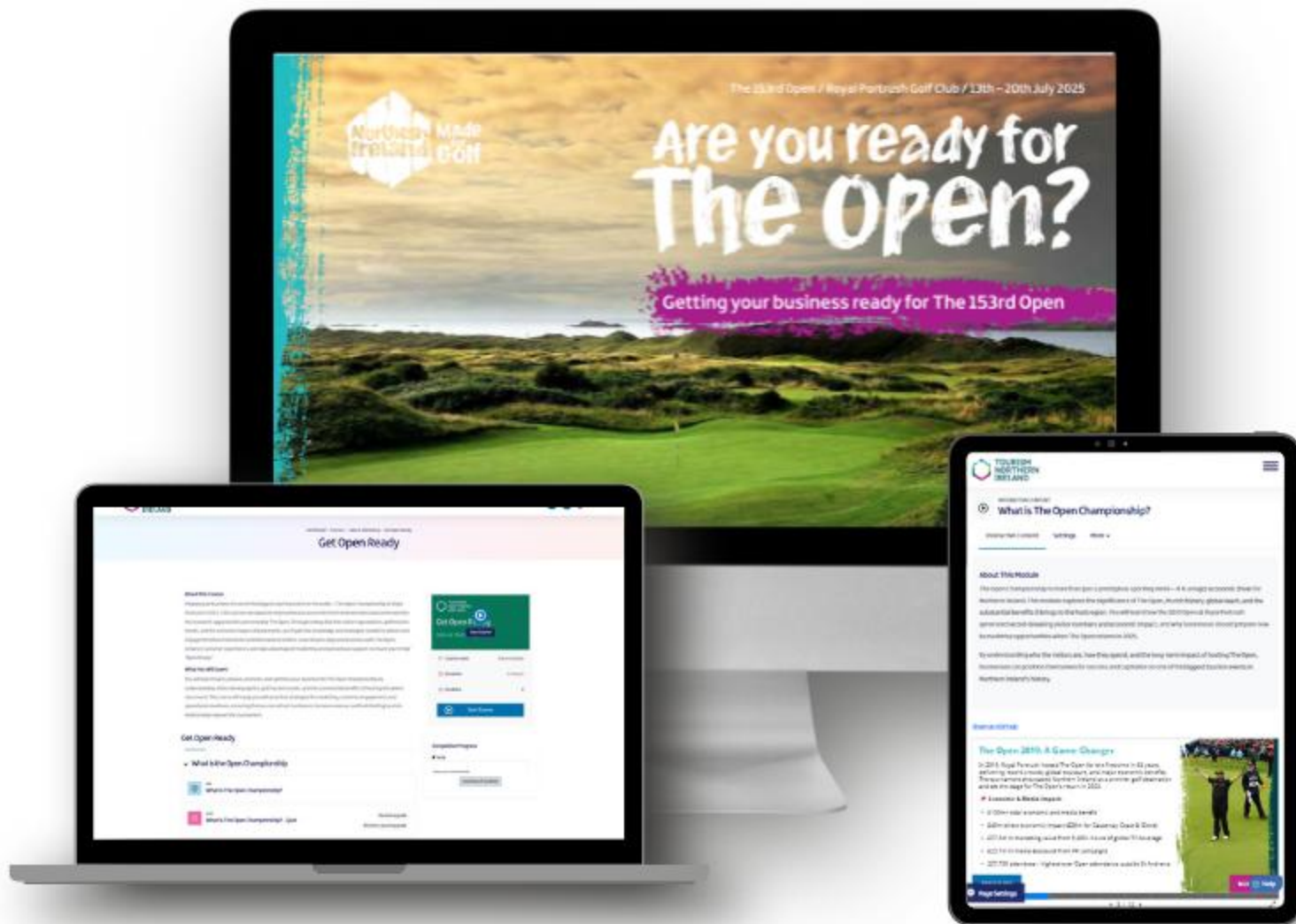
- Thursday 20th March
- Friday 21st March
- Friday 28th March

Register Interest at tourismni.com/getopenready





GET
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Welcoming Guests to Your Accommodation for The 153rd Open

Claire McNaughton

Tourism NI – Accommodation Certification Manager



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The Floating Boathouse,
Co Fermanagh

Topics:

- Certification Legislation
- A 'Giant Welcome' – Pre arrival through to post departure
- Providing a positive guest experience

The Tourism Order (Northern Ireland) 1992

Tourism legislation requires all tourism/visitor accommodation to hold a current Tourism Northern Ireland (NI) certificate.

- 8 Categories of Accommodation
- Inspections take place once every four years

Apply online:

www.tourismni.com/forms

Email:

qa@tourismni.com





The Welcome - Pre-Arrival

You have been a guest one time – learnings & tips!

Build a great relationship with guests from the moment they book. Send key pre-arrival info via WhatsApp, email, text, voice note, or video.

- Check-in times (mention flexibility if possible)
- Key retrieval details (key safe code, letting agent)
- Booking duration and check-out time

Helpful tips:

- Recommend booking restaurants in advance
- Inform about public transport schedules, especially on Weekend/event timetable.



The Welcome – On Arrival

- Offer a multilingual welcome if meeting guests personally
- Ensure key codes are activated and keys are easily retrievable.
- Heating activated
- Lights on (interior/exterior)
- Prepare storage areas for equipment (e.g., golf clubs)
- Provide a welcome basket and personal card/letter showcasing **local or homemade items**

Have event information on hand and printed for easy reference:

- Park and ride/bus stop locations in relation to your property
- Taxi numbers or walking distances
- Details on TV sports package



The Welcome – During Stay

Personalise in-unit information folder & welcome note

- Access key information at ease.

- Use Guest Name
- Wi-Fi
- Emergency Contact Details
- Your phone number

Tailored itinerary:

- Include each day's golf schedule and after-golf events
- Highlight local activities for families/groups to enjoy

Personal recommendations:

- Tailor suggestions to guests' interests (e.g. family activities, outdoor enthusiasts, hidden gems)



Post Departure Feedback:

- **How was your stay?**
- **Collect vital information to inform future decisions.**
- Consider offering incentives for feedback - include a feedback card within welcome basket & offer repeat booking discount/code.
- **Ask your guests to leave online reviews.**

Social Media content opportunity.

Incorporating social media content opportunities into your guest arrival and during their stay can significantly enhance guest engagement and attract new visitors.

- Add to your accommodation marketing collateral
- Golf themed décor - unique backdrops or props.
- Photo area for guests – seek approvals for you to reuse & encourage guests to share on their socials.

#theopen



Golf Marketing Update

George Diamondis
Tourism NI – Golf Marketing Manager



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The Open

Pre-Open

- Construction begins in April 2025
- Over 1,000 contractors will be involved in build
- R&A site visits

The Open Week

- Event Staff – The R&A, TNI
- Corporate Sponsors – Staff & guests
- Spectators
- Players, family & staff

Post-Open

- Final breakdown of the event infrastructure
-





Spectators – Ticketing

Authorised Provider Programme

- Official ticket package providers

The Ballot System

- Open to One Club Members
- All ballot tickets issued by end of September 2024
- Official Resale now open

Ticket+

- Completely sold out

Premium Experiences

- 6 Levels of hospitality between Wednesday - Sunday

COUNTRY	
UK	66%
US	18%
Ireland	4%
Canada	2%
Sweden	2%
Australia	1%
Finland	1%
South Africa	1%



Spectators

Some Considerations

- Most spectators have been allocated tickets in the ballot
- Primary reason for their stay is to attend The Open, however most will include elements away from the event
- Consider long term relationships

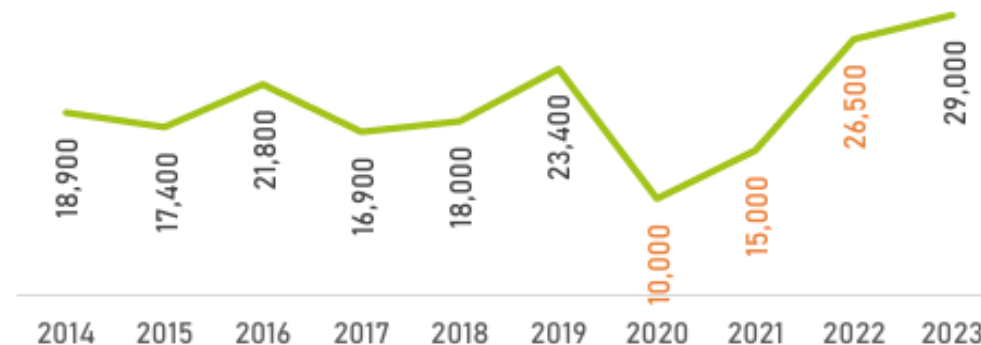
The Golfing Visitor

Highlights

- Achieved a value of over £70m for the first time in 2024
- 29,000 people visited NI with the primary reason to play golf
- Two distinct markets – North America & Everyone Else

- The number of **non-domestic overnight golfers** to Northern Ireland is:

2023 = 29,000
2022 = 26,500
2021 = 15,000
2020 = 10,000
2019 = 23,400
2018 = 18,000
2017 = 16,900
2016 = 21,800
2015 = 17,400
2014 = 18,900





The Golfing Visitor

High value demand is strongest in North American Market

- Demand almost exclusively for links golf - 87% in 2023
- Spend remains high, benefited by USD/GBP exchange rate
- Overall tour operator bookings compared to 2019 are up significantly from 25% to 43%

Growth in GB market is the fastest across all markets

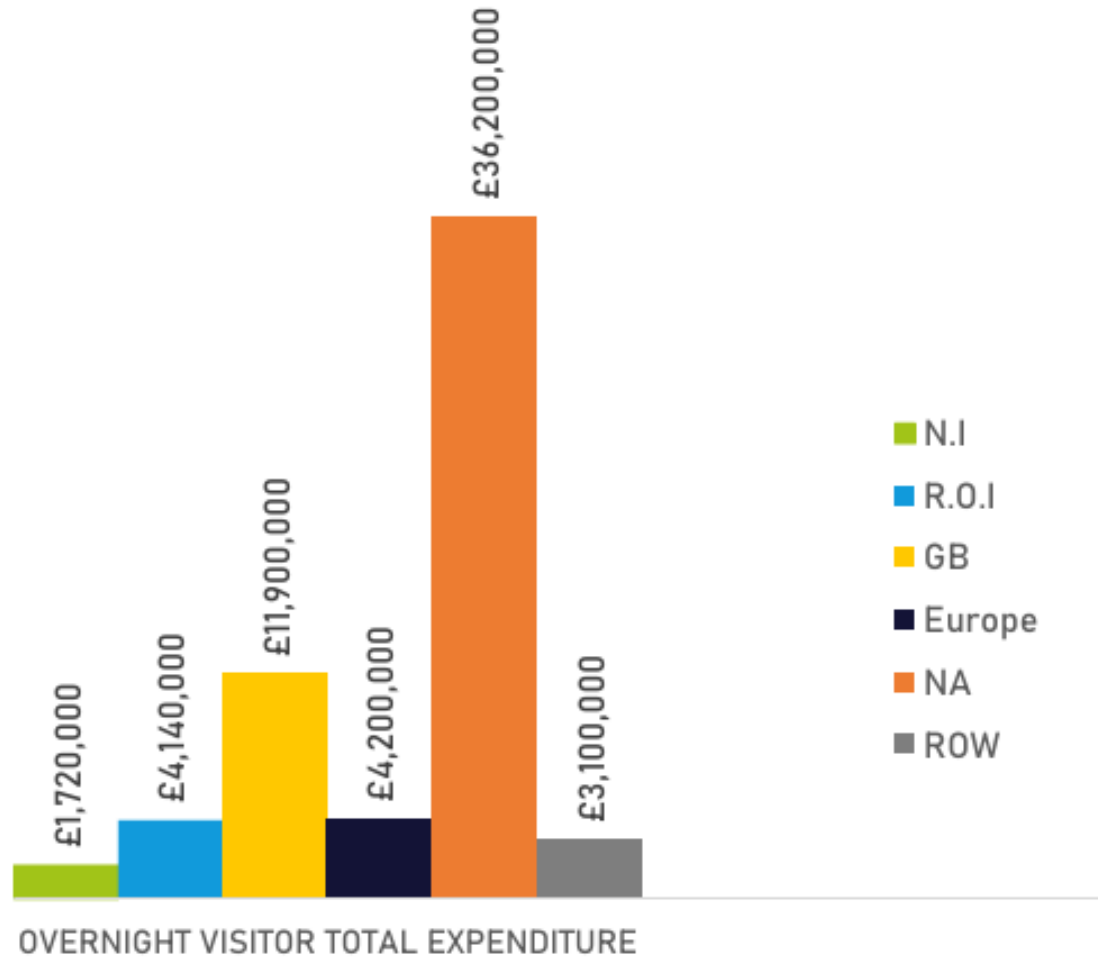
- Focus is on value for money, shoulder season travel
- Highest proportion of visitors were between 40-49 years of age
- Propensity for annual visits – 65% surveyed in 2023 had visited in 2022

ROI & EU Market remains steady following Covid-19

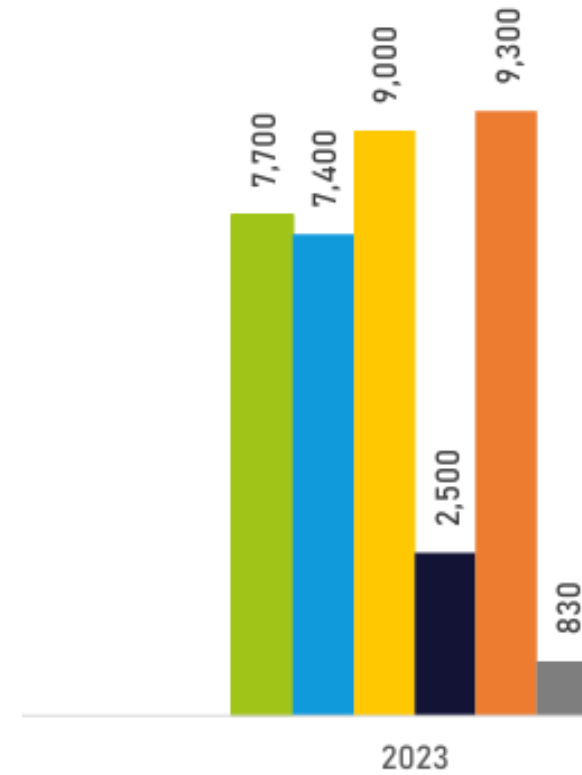
- ROI & EU visitors play more resort golf than other markets
- Preference from both markets is for links golf
- 75% of EU visitors plan their own travel



EXPENDITURE BY COUNTRY



Visitors from ROI have risen from 3,447 in 2019 to 7,421 in 2023





The 153rd Open Toolkit Assets

Carmel Scott

TBWA – Tourism NI Client Marketing Partner



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Marketing Assets

**Northern Ireland is Open ready. Your business is Open ready.
So, let's get ready to tell the world about it.**

We've got plenty of ready-made assets for you to use across your premises and your social media channels. Images and messages that will help you be part of the "Giant Welcome" and will grab golf fans' attention.



How to get involved with The 153rd Open

Create event-themed offers and visitor opportunities

Create special offers, menu items, entertainment, to harness the excitement surrounding The 153rd Open.

Have fun

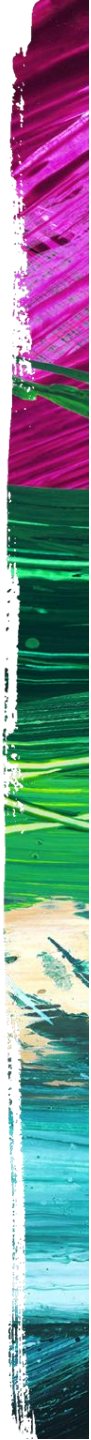
The 153rd Open is the perfect opportunity to embrace golf-themed language and drive anticipation for the competition.

Celebrate the event, in your own way

Showcase Royal Portrush as a world-class golf course and talk about the prestige of The 153rd Open when creating marketing material, menus, experiences and packages.

Inspire visitors

Encourage golf fans to consider local experiences, food and culture **and experience Northern Ireland beyond the competition**. Use event-themed messaging to appeal to golf fans.



Get into the swing of things with golf-focused language

Make the first tee a good one

Visual: First hole at Portrush +
Hotel breakfast with cup of tea main focus

Use to showcase food and
beverage

Get into the swing of things

Visual: Golfer's swing +
People crossing Carrick-a-rede
rope bridge (looks like it's swinging)

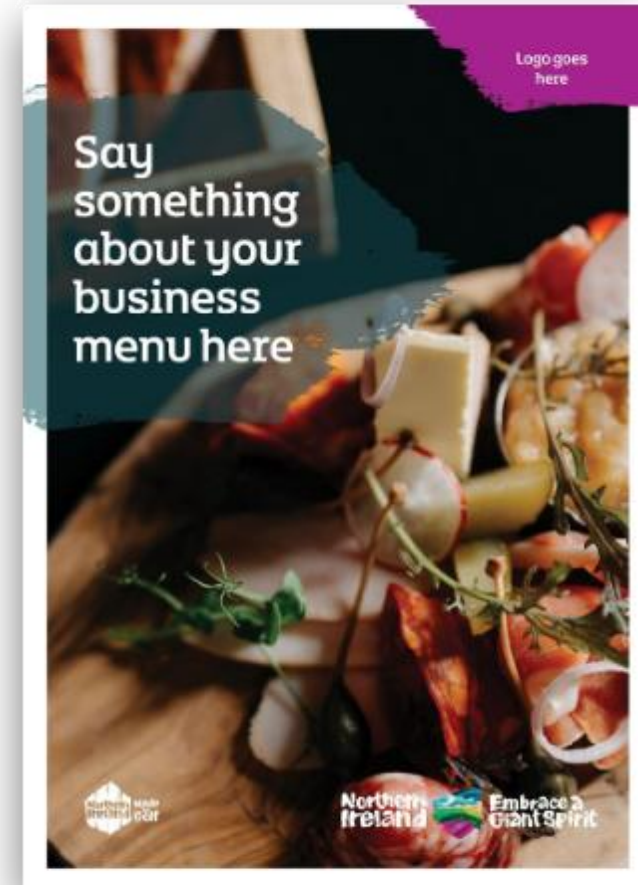
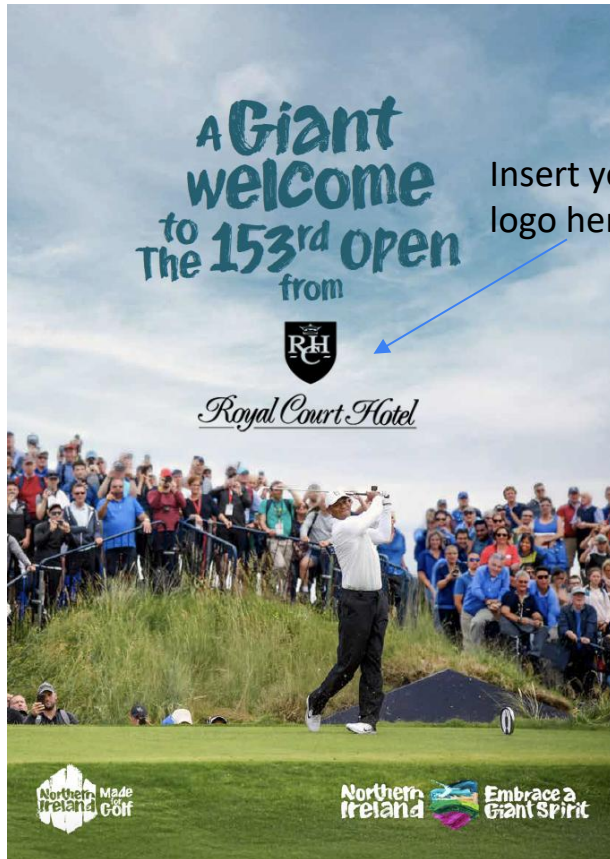
Use to talk about
entertainment, music,
hospitality

Sometimes it's good to spend time in the sand

Visual: Golfer attempting to get out of bunker +
Family enjoying themselves on the beach.

Use to talk about wider
visitor itineraries, beyond
the golf.

POSTER TEMPLATES



These template posters come complete with logos and are almost ready to go. Simply download, add your own messages, logos, and images and you're all set to up your game for The Open.

How to show a "Giant Welcome" to The 153rd Open and our visitors

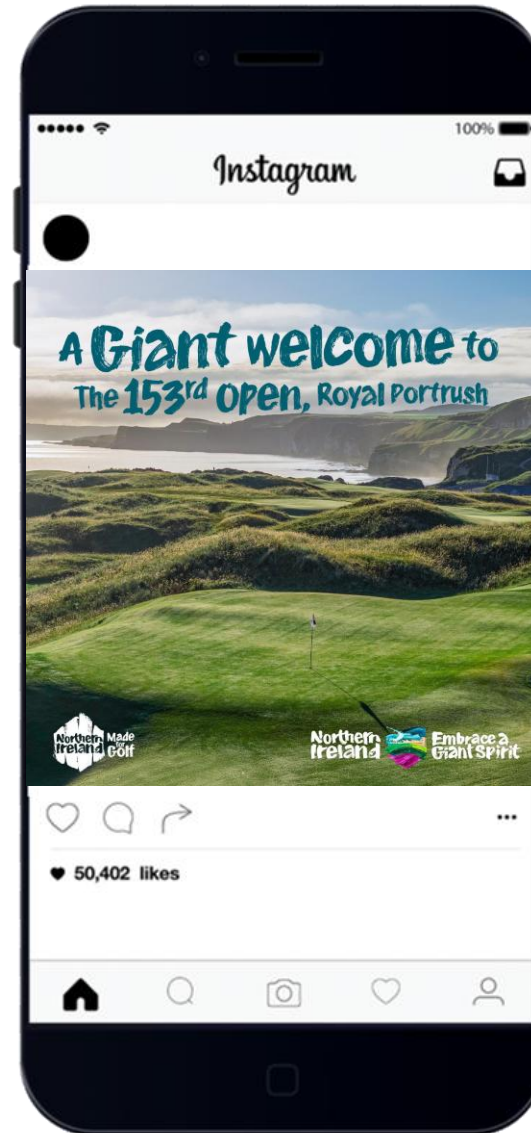
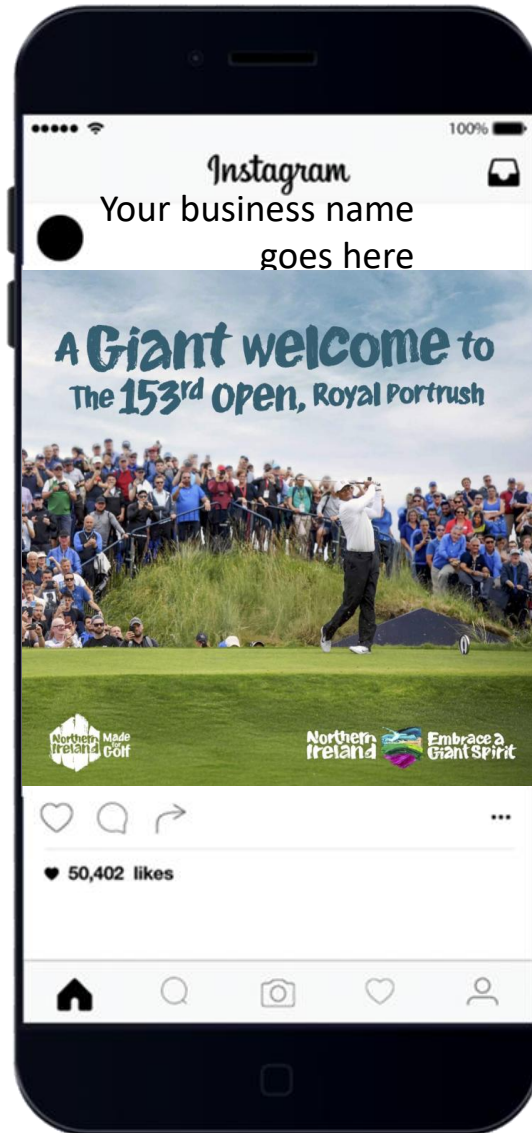


FACEBOOK COVER PHOTO TEMPLATE: A GIANT WELCOME FROM...

Insert your business logo here



You can use them as an opening frame to be followed by content like menus, opening hours, cocktail lists, or as a standalone post.



Including **#nimadeforgolf** ensures your posts are seen by even more golf fans

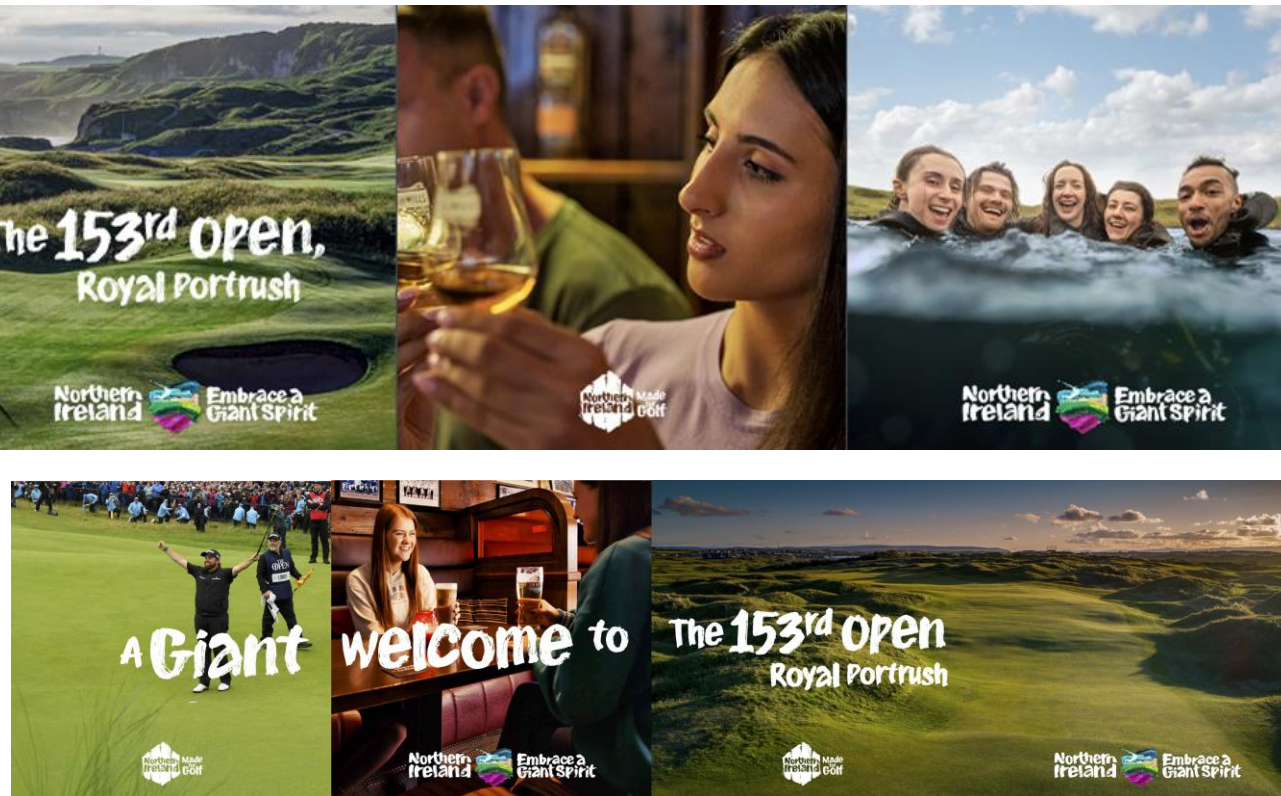
These full-screen formats
are as epic as our
landscapes

You can use them as an
opening frame to be followed
by content like menus, opening
hours, cocktail lists, or as a
standalone post.



CAROUSELS

Carousels help showcase your offering. Tee off with golf to grab attention, then swap out these sample images for your own images to get across what you do best.



CAROUSELS



SOCIAL BADGES

Simply drop any of these ready-made badges onto your own social assets and images.
You could also create mini badges for your staff.



How to show visitors that we are “Open ready”

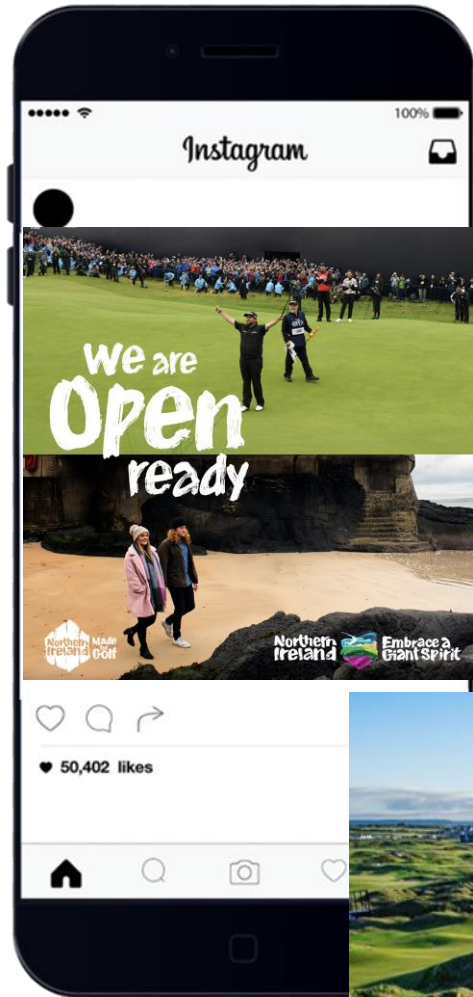


One of the ways we can showcase our giant spirit to potential golf visitors is by telling them "We're Open ready". This demonstrates that our businesses are delighted to welcome golf visitors, and we have made extra efforts to ensure we are ready for their visit.

Simply drop any of these ready-made badges onto your own social assets and images. You could also create mini badges for your staff.



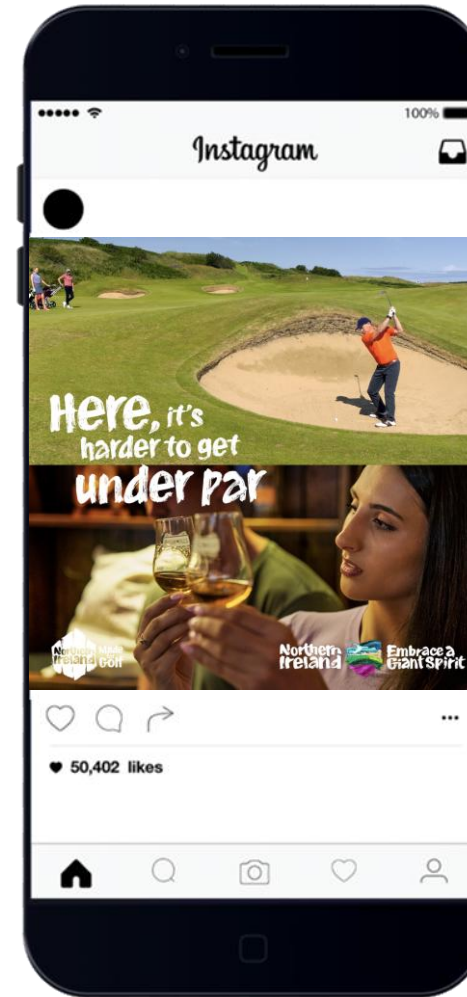
SPLIT SCREEN SOCIAL



As you know, there's so much more to Northern Ireland than golf for our visitors to explore. These social assets tee them up with golf before driving them to so many other rewarding experiences. You should replace the image in the lower half of the screen for one that reflects your own business in a similar way.



SPLIT SCREEN SOCIAL



This is golfing language and references in full swing on social media - delighting golf fans, rewarding further exploration. Use these to inspire your own social content pre and during The Open.

All assets are available for download from the Content Pool. - [ContentPool](#)

The full presentation is available as well as layered files for businesses to use the artwork in their marketing activity.

Questions?

Carmel.scott@tbwa.com – Creative assets

K.wilford@tourismni.com – Access to content pool (Kathy)





Council Activity Update

Jonny McCarron
Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council



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Closing Comments

Siobhan McGuigan
Tourism NI - Head of Events



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Any
Questions?

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Key Useful Links

- To access 'Get Open Ready' Toolkit & regularly updated event details/opportunities visit:
TourismNI.com/The153rdOpen
- To access The 153rd Open Marketing Assets visit:
NorthernIrelandsContentPool.com
- For full details and to register interest for 'Get Open Ready - Big Hearted Customer Service Training' visit:
TourismNI.com/GetOpenReady
- To find out more and sign up for MyTourismNI E-Learning Platform visit:
TourismNI.com/MyTourismNI
- For more information or to apply for Accommodation Certification and our grading schemes visit:
TourismNI.com/forms
- For details on all upcoming Tourism NI Events and webinars visit:
TourismNI.com/TED





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