



Coimbra Group 40th Anniversary Climate Symposium

24th – 26th March 2025



Welcome Pack



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01 About Durham University



World Top 100
ranked joint
89th in the QS
World
University
Rankings 2025

22nd in the
QS World
University
Rankings for
Sustainability
2025

Over 330
undergraduate
and
postgraduate
courses

17 colleges
in our
distinctive
collegiate
system

01 About Durham University

Durham University is a globally outstanding centre of teaching and research based in historic Durham City in the UK.

We are a collegiate university committed to inspiring our people to do outstanding things at Durham and in the world.

We conduct transformative research that improves lives globally and we are ranked as a world top 100 university with an international reputation in research and education (QS World University Rankings 2025).

We are a member of the Russell Group of leading research-intensive UK universities and we are consistently ranked as a top 10 university in national league tables (Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide, Guardian University Guide and The Complete University Guide).

For more information about Durham University visit: www.durham.ac.uk/about/



02 The Climate Symposium



Climate change is the defining crisis of our time. No part of our world is immune from its devastating consequences and it's happening even more quickly than we feared. At a time when some countries are rescinding on Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) the need for bold, collective action is now more urgent than ever.

With this message in mind, Durham University is committed to hosting a Symposium that will deliver a long-lasting legacy through the Durham Declaration, which will shape both the Coimbra Group's and the wider sector's response to climate change, including through the upcoming UNFCCC COP30 Climate Conference, thereby enhancing further Coimbra Group's international influence.

We look forward to bringing together Coimbra Group university leaders to meaningfully debate the key roles that Universities play as Innovators, as Educators, as Partners and as Investors. We will strive to foster further collaboration within Coimbra Group and to explore how we, as universities, have opportunities for working together with businesses, governments and international organisations. We also look forward to welcoming two winning teams of students from the Universities of Iași and Bergen who competed in the 'Eyes of the Future' serious game, developed by Utrecht University, earlier this month.

Through the Symposium, we want to demonstrate and harness the power of universities acting collectively, and we intend to establish a lasting dialogue on achieving transformative change for climate, nature, planetary health and society, that will continue on from the symposium and reach beyond the Coimbra Group network. Together, we must develop new ways of thinking, to empower our students - who are, after all the next generation of changemakers - to shape a brighter future for people and the planet.



Professor Karen O'Brien

Vice-Chancellor and Warden of Durham University

03 A Note from the Symposium Organising Committee

The organising committee of the symposium was chaired by [Professor Charlotte Clarke](#), the University's Associate Pro-Vice Chancellor for Health, and by [Professor Daniel Donoghue](#), who serves as the Treasurer of the Coimbra Group Executive Board. Together with [Professor Harriet Bulkeley](#) and [Professor Petra Minnerop](#), the team developed the programme with Durham University's international office team, led by Emma Moore, in collaboration with the [Coimbra Group Secretariat](#).

The team's composition reflects some of the wide-ranging expertise of Durham University in the area of climate change, biodiversity, and sustainability. Harriet Bulkeley from Durham's highly ranked geography department is a leading expert on the politics and governance of environmental issues and holds a joint appointment at the Copernicus Institute of Sustainable Development at Utrecht University. She currently serves as a member of the ERC Scientific Council. Charlotte Clarke is the Director of the [Wolfson Research Institute for Health and Wellbeing](#), one of the University's interdisciplinary institutes focused on health and wellbeing research and she leads the University's health strategy, which includes a focus on planetary health. Daniel Donoghue is a professor in the Geography and co-Director of the Institute for Data Science and works on applications of remote sensing technology in the fields of forestry, ecology, and land use change. As a member of the Coimbra Group Executive Board and Social Science & Humanities Working Group, respectively, Daniel and Charlotte have long-established close relations within the Coimbra Group network. Petra Minnerop from Durham Law School works at the intersection of international law and science in the context of sustainability and climate change. She chairs the [University's UN SDG Group](#) and is the founding Director of the [Centre for Sustainable Development Law and Policy](#) where she leads with colleagues from Biosciences, Computer Science and Durham Business School on the [Just Transitions to a Net Zero World \(JusTNOW\)](#) initiative. Emma Moore is an International Partnerships Manager (European partnerships and networks), and is Durham's Coimbra Group Institutional Coordinator.

Across the University, the [Durham Energy Institute](#), the [Institute for Hazard, Risk and Resilience](#), the [DurhamARCTIC](#) Institute and the Centre for Sustainable Development Law and Policy are key pillars of our research in support of sustainability.

The University has invested significantly in sustainability through the Strategic Research Fund. Around £18 million over four years will support four ground-breaking projects on Soil and the Microbiome ([SMART SOIL](#)), Just Transitions to a Net Zero World (JusTNOW), Responsible Space Innovation ([SPARC](#)) and Heritage research ([HERITAGE 360](#)).

04 The Durham Declaration

The Durham Declaration defines a framework of seven principles for Coimbra Group Universities to address climate change and loss of nature through research, education and policy engagement.

Coimbra Group universities have already created important and positive outcomes as innovators, educators, partners and investors, we recognise that so much more can be done by working together on climate change and sustainability.

The signatories of the Durham Declaration commit to support and promote cooperation among members and partners across a wide range of climate change and sustainability initiatives. The Declaration will be launched at the Coimbra Group Symposium on Climate Change and Sustainability held at University of Durham in March 2025 and it represents the start of a series of initiatives and actions where CG universities will work together and share best practices.



05 Useful Resources

Frontier research for transformative change

The European Research Council (ERC) has released a report highlighting over 300 projects, representing an investment of €653 million, that address the critical global challenges of biodiversity loss, climate change, pollution, and widening social disparities resulting from them.

These ERC-funded projects explore why existing technological and social solutions to these challenges are not more widely adopted. They focus on identifying barriers to overcome and the enabling factors that can help accelerate transformative change.

[You can read the report here](#)

A Green Deal roadmap for universities

The wide-ranging ambitions of the European Green Deal provide a policy framework to integrate the scientific, educational, and institutional dimensions of universities' contribution to the green transition.

This transition entails varying degrees of relevance and urgency for internal optimisation and external interventions, as well as different levels of involvement and coordination depending on the target groups. Many institutions are already reflecting and acting strategically on some or all of these issues, but not all are well positioned to act equally swiftly or in the same way.

[You can read the policy framework here](#)

Decarbonisation and Beyond

This literature review provides short summaries of recent scientific articles discussing the challenges of 'greening research'. While science has played a fundamental role in understanding climate change, today's most pressing societal challenge, research organisations and activities are also called to 'greening' themselves, reducing their environmental footprint and promoting more sustainable practices.

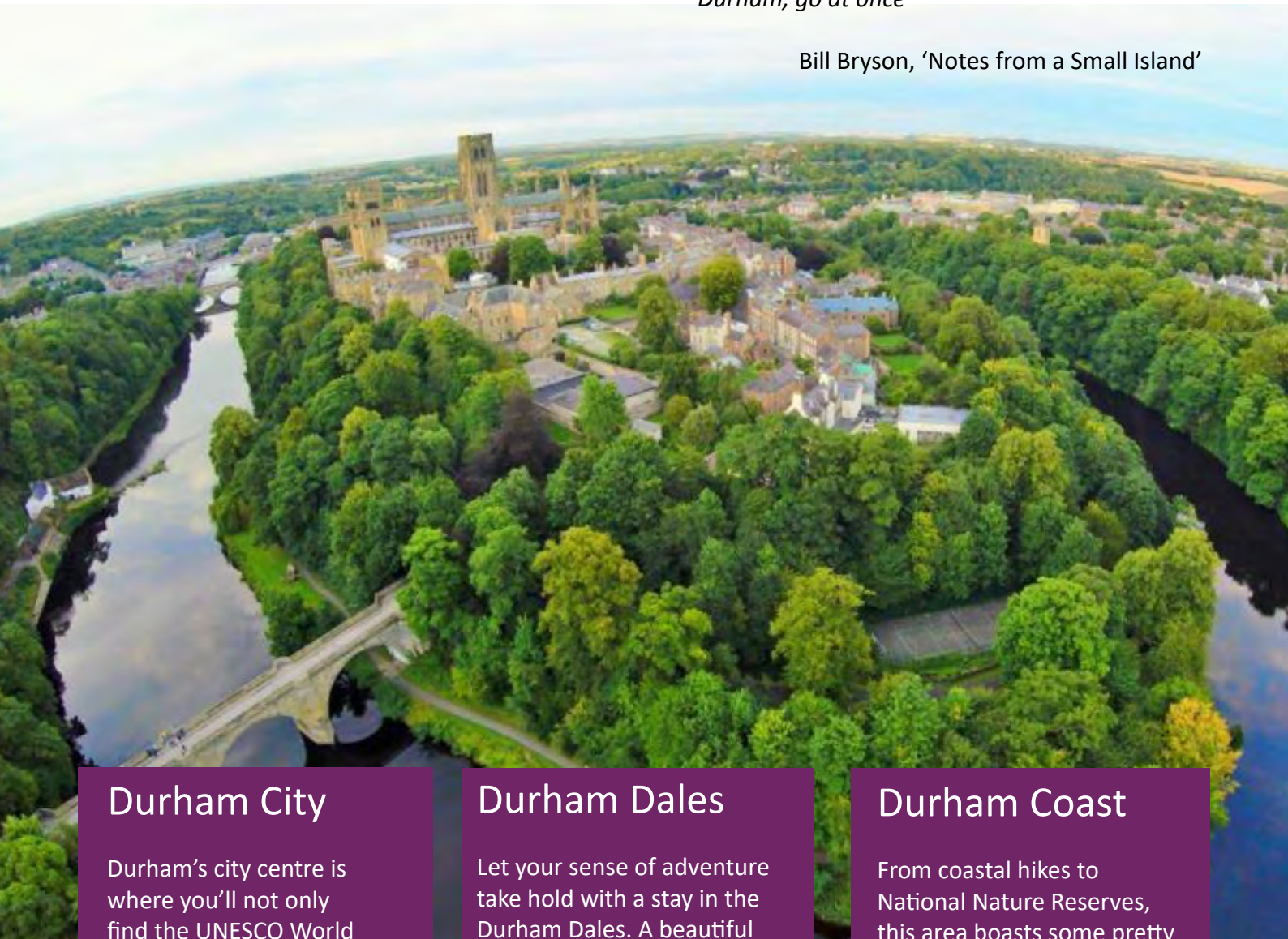
[You can read the literature review here.](#)



06 Durham; the City and Region

*“Why, it’s wonderful – a perfect little city ...
let me say it now: if you have never been to
Durham, go at once”*

Bill Bryson, ‘Notes from a Small Island’



Durham City

Durham’s city centre is where you’ll not only find the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Durham Cathedral and Castle, but also cultural art spaces, indie boutiques and coffee shops

Durham Dales

Let your sense of adventure take hold with a stay in the Durham Dales. A beautiful blend of tranquil landscapes and high adrenaline activities, explore everything from the moors, hills and valleys to flowing rivers and historic towns.

Durham Coast

From coastal hikes to National Nature Reserves, this area boasts some pretty serious scenery and flora. Follow the 8.5 mile (14 kilometre) coastal path for unmissable moments beside the North Sea. Hunker down for the night in an eco-coastal pod, or choose a luxury stay.

07 Getting to Durham

Getting to Durham by train

A number of train operators offer direct and regular routes to Durham Railway Station, including London and Edinburgh. Durham is around 3 hours from London, just over 3 hours from Birmingham, 2½ hours from Manchester, 1½ hours from Edinburgh and 45 minutes from York.

A taxi will take you from the station to any part of Durham city in about 5 minutes and you can walk to the city centre in 10 minutes. The Radisson Blu Hotel is a short walk from Durham train station.



Getting to Durham by air

Durham is located 40km to the south of [Newcastle International Airport](#) and 40km to the north of [Teesside International Airport](#). Both have regular domestic and international flights, but please bear in mind that pre-booked taxis are recommended if arriving into Teesside airport late at night, or early in the morning.

If arriving into Newcastle airport, it is possible to take the Metro to Newcastle's Central Station, followed by train to Durham – [see guidance here](#). Alternatively, taxis are available 24/7 at Newcastle airport; the drive to Durham will take on average 40 – 50 minutes, depending on time of day.



08 Getting Around

Walking is the easiest way to get around in the city centre. Most sights and university buildings are located within walking distance from your hotel. Please note that Durham is a small but hilly city. Parts of the historic city centre are cobbled, so comfortable footwear is recommended. Please note that the Castle, a UNESCO world heritage site and venue for the symposium dinner, is not fully accessible. Please contact the coordination team if you would like to discuss mobility needs or access requirements:

coimbragroup@durham.ac.uk

The Symposium venue is the Durham University Business School Waterside Building.





09 Places to stay

Radisson Blu Hotel, Durham

This is our recommended hotel for delegates
[Reservations](#)



Alternative Accommodation

Hotel Indigo, Durham

[Reservations](#)



Delta Hotels Durham Royal County

[Reservations](#)



10 Activities

Durham UNESCO World Heritage Site

Durham Cathedral was built between the late 11th to early 12th centuries to house the shrines of the Venerable Bede and St Cuthbert. Durham Castle was built by the Normans to protect the English borders from Scottish invaders. Together, Durham Cathedral and Durham Castle form one of the greatest monuments of the Norman Conquest of Britain. Indeed, Durham Cathedral is one of the finest examples of Norman architecture in the whole of Europe. The Castle and Cathedral also reflect the fascinating political history of Durham and the unique status of the Prince Bishops of Durham. These religious leaders also held significant secular power, and governed a virtually autonomous state that formed a buffer between England and Scotland from the late 11th century until 1603.



University Special Collections

Lying at the heart of the World Heritage Site between the Castle and the Cathedral, Palace Green Library and its collections have, since the middle of the 17th century, represented the best of humanity's thirst for knowledge and understanding. Durham University's archives and special collections include over 70,000 books published before 1850, medieval manuscripts, maps, prints and photographs. Cosin's Library is open and free to the public



Botanic Garden

Durham University's 10-hectare [award winning](#) Botanic Garden is set amongst beautiful mature woodlands on the southern outskirts of Durham city. We have plant collections from around the world, including China, Japan, North America, South Africa, New Zealand and Chile, as well as a woodland garden, alpine garden and bamboo grove.



The Auckland Project

The Auckland Project is a unique collection of visitor attractions in and around Bishop Auckland. From priceless paintings to historic archives, the collections at The Auckland Project help to tell the remarkable story of Bishop Auckland. You can explore the collections when you visit The Auckland Project, with many unique objects on display across their venues including Auckland Palace, the Faith Museum, the Spanish Gallery and the Mining Art Gallery.



Ushaw College

Established initially as a Catholic Seminary (known as Ushaw College/ St Cuthbert's College, Ushaw) founded in 1808 from the former English Catholic College at Douai in France, it was purpose-built in its beautiful setting four miles from the City of Durham. Lose yourself in our grounds, be amazed by beautiful buildings and marvel at centuries of art, history and heritage.



Bowes Museum

A magnificent French style public museum which was created by the philanthropists Joséphine and John Bowes. Enjoy some of the UK's best examples of European fine and decorative arts with galleries spread across three floors dedicated to paintings, furniture, fashion and textiles, ceramics, silver and metals, sculpture and more. Don't miss the Silver Swan – one of the world's finest examples of an 18th Century moving mechanical device.



Beamish Museum

Beamish is a world-famous open-air museum which brings the history of North East England to life during the 1820s, 1900s, 1940s and 1950s. Visitors to the museum meet costumed folk and discover fascinating stories of everyday life in the region through time. The museum is open Wednesday – Sunday.



11 Places to eat

Flat White Kitchen

Coffee shop & baked goods

40 Saddler St, Durham DH1 3NU



Cafédral

Coffee shop, lunch options

1 First Floor Owengate House, Durham, DH1 3HB



Riverview Kitchen Durham

British cuisine

20 Silver Street, Durham, DH1 3RB



The Rabbit Hole

Cantonese cuisine

17 Hallgarth Street, Durham, DH1 3AT



Isla

Brunch, sharing plates and Sunday roasts

53 North Road, Durham, DH1 4SF

The Cellar Door

Fine dining

41 Saddler Street, Durham, DH1 3NU



12 Helpful Information

For questions regarding the Symposium please contact
coimbragroup@durham.ac.uk or +44 78 279 09410

Share your experience of the Climate Symposium using **#CGClimateSymposium** and **#DurhamDeclaration**

Durham University

LinkedIn - @durham-university
BlueSky - @durham-university.bsky.social
X - @durham_uni

Coimbra Group

LinkedIn - @coimbragroup
BlueSky - @coimbragroup.bsky.social
X - @CoimbraGroup

WIFI

Durham uses Eduroam, which is an international network with hundreds of member institutions. Alternatively, you can access Durham University wi-fi in any of our buildings across Durham via TheCloud. Instructions as follows:

- Enable wifi and select 'TheCloud@Durham' from the available network list.
- Open your internet browser—'TheCloud' landing page will appear. Click 'Get Online'.
- You will then see the service selection screen, and need to select 'TheCloud Wi-Fi'.
- Login with an existing 'TheCloud' account, or click on the 'Create Account' button to register.
- Once logged in or registered you will be able to access the internet using 'TheCloud@Durham'.

Medical Help

- Call 999 if someone is seriously ill or injured and their life is at risk.
- Call NHS 111 if you urgently need medical help or advice but it's not a life-threatening situation.
- National Emergency Number for Police, Ambulance, Fire Brigade – 999
- Nearest hospital: University Hospital of North Durham: North Rd, Durham DH1 5TW

UK Entry Requirements

Please check the [UK government webpage](#) for information relating to entry requirements from your country. For future trips, please note that from 2 April 2025, EU, EEA and Swiss citizens (except Irish citizens) will need an electronic travel authorisation (ETA) to travel to the UK



Enjoy your stay

