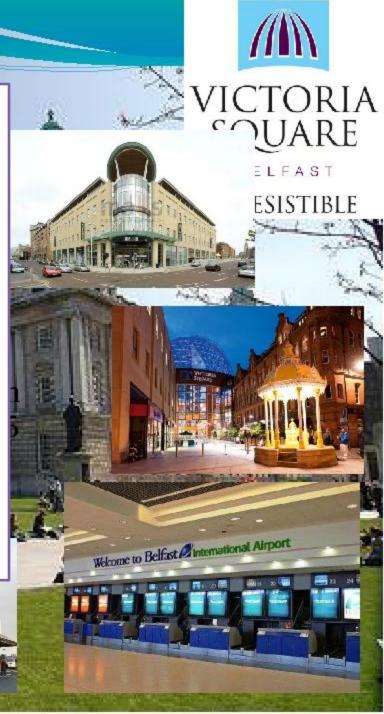


Today, Belfast remains a centre for industry, as well as the arts, higher education and business and is the economic engine of Northern Ireland. Belfast city centre has undergone considerable expansion and regeneration in recent years, notably aroundVictoria Square. Belfast is served by two airports: George Best Belfast City Airport in the city, and Belfast International Airport 15 miles west of the city. Belfast is also a major port, with commercial and industrial docks dominating the Belfast Lough shoreline.

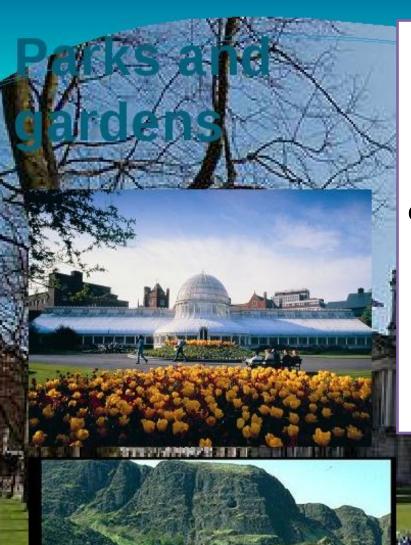




The City Hall was finished in 1906 and was built to reflect Belfast's city status, granted by Queen Victoria in 1888.

The Edwardian architectural style of Belfast City Hall influenced the Victoria Memorial in Calcutta, India. The dome is 173 ft high and figures above the door state "Hibernia encouraging and promoting the Commerce and Arts of the City".





Parks and gardens Sitting at the mouth of the River Lagan where it becomes a deep and sheltered lough, Belfast is surrounded by mountains that create a micro-climate conducive to horticulture. From the Victorian Botanic Gardens in the heart of the city to the heights of Cave Hill Country Park, the great expanse of Lagan Valley Regional Park to Colin Glen, Belfast contains an abundance of parkland and forest parks.



The zoo houses more than 1,200 animals of 140 species including Asian Elephants, Barbary Lions, a White Tigers ,three species of penguin, a family of Western Lowland Gorillas, a troop of Common Chimpanzees, a Red Panda and several species of langur. The zoo also carries out important conservation work and takes part in European and international breeding programmes which help to ensure the survival of many species under threat.





