

Media Release

*“ British Tourism Week brings boost to Tourism in Eden “*

Media Photo / Interview Opportunities

**Monday 24<sup>th</sup> March – Eden Tourism Officers crew Ullswater Steamer**

**10.45am – 11am Glenridding Pier**

Tourism Officers prepare steamer for public cruise

**11.10am – 12.10pm Cruise onboard Ullswater Steamer**

Media invited to join cruise to Pooley Bridge and follow Tourism Officers working onboard

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**Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March - Tourism Question Time & Eden Food Showcase with The Right Hon David Maclean MP & Felicity Goodey OBE – Chair of Northwest Regional Development Agency’s Tourism Forum**

**10am Hutton in Forest**

Chairman of Question Time ( Felicity Goodey OBE ) & David Maclean MP launch Question Time & Taste of Eden Showcase

**10.30am to 11.30am Hutton in Forest**

Media invited to film / photograph Tourism Question Time

Information for Media

This week a range of special events have been held throughout the Eden District as part of British Week 2009 to highlight how important the area’s tourism industry is to the local economy.

British Tourism Week takes place between 23<sup>rd</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> March 2009. His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales is patron of British Tourism Week and his involvement has helped raise the profile of the tourism industry across Britain, an industry that is worth £86 billion pounds to this country.

The national week was organised by VisitBritain with the support of The Tourism Alliance, The Tourism Society, the UK’s regional and national tourist boards and representatives of the industry.

On Monday, Eden District Council's tourism team spent the day with Ullswater Steamers and experienced a working day in the life of one of the Ullswater Steamer crew. The day involved a whole range of interesting activities from preparing the boats for public service, welcoming customers onboard and crewing the boat as it cruised between Glenridding and Pooley Bridge.

Mark Horton, General Manager, said " *Today has been a real eye opener for Eden District Council's Tourism Team. They have been able to see how fun and exciting it is to work with visitors at one of the area's most popular tourist attractions. Jobs in tourism are never dull and there are lots of opportunities for people to work in this industry not just in the Eden area but all over Cumbria.* " In Eden, tourism supports nearly 3,000 full time equivalent jobs ranging from accommodation and transport operators to visitor services.

Tuesday saw Eden District Council host a special workshop for accommodation providers in partnership with Cumbria Tourism. The workshop held at Eden District Council's Town Hall was attended by a large number of establishments that are signed up to national quality grading schemes and explained the latest developments of the county's accommodation room availability system. This internet driven system is managed by Cumbria Tourism in partnership with the county's local authorities. People attending the workshop were shown how the latest version ( DMS Guestlink V3 ) works and the additional facilities it offers establishments to manage room availability. This information can not only be seen by people using the internet in this country and overseas but by staff at Tourist Information Centres around the UK.

Eden District Council hosted the week's flagship event on Friday in the historic surroundings of Hutton in the Forest. Felicity Goodey OBE ( Chair of North West Development Agency's Tourism Forum ) chaired Question Time at which an invited audience of representatives from the region's tourism and business community asked many topical and searching questions about the future of tourism. Responding to the questions were the Tourism Question Time panel that included The Right Hon. David Maclean MP, Ian Stephens – Chief Executive of Cumbria Tourism, Jim Walker – Chief Executive of Ullswater Steamers & Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway and Kevin Douglas – Chief Executive of Eden District Council.

The invited audience were also given the unique opportunity to sample some of the very best of Eden food. Food producers including Applegarth Foods, Burbush Piemakers, Cranstons, Country Fare UK, Country Puddings, Deer-n-Dexter and Little Salkeld Watermill showcased their products at the Tourism Question Time event and gave the audience the opportunity to sample food produced in the area. The Eden Valley is home to a wide variety of high quality food businesses who all strive to provide the very best, locally sourced products. In recent years " food tourism " has become an important part of Eden's tourism economy. Food Tourism is valued at just over £26 million and helps attract a large number of people into to area.

Charles Thornton, who organised all the events on behalf of Eden District Council, is delighted at how the local tourism industry has supported this national initiative. " Tourism is very important to the Eden Valley contributing £149 million pounds a year into the local economy. The range of events run during British Tourism Week 2009 in Eden has highlighted the sheer diversity of businesses that work in tourism and the terrific contribution they all make."

## Notes to Editors

Tourism Statistics on Eden Valley are based on the findings of the latest STEAM Report published in April 2008

British Tourism Week website: [www.britishtourismweek.com](http://www.britishtourismweek.com)