

BRITISH TOURISM WEEK 15-21 MARCH 2010

Britain's fifth largest industry – worth £114 billion, 8.2% of Britain's GDP

Supports 2.7 million jobs and over 200,000 SMEs – more jobs than construction or transport

2009, a defining moment: weak pound makes Britain more affordable than ever

4.9 million Britons will consider taking a holiday at home instead of overseas

Overseas visitors contribute round £3 billion a year to the Treasury

22nd February 2010

BRITISH TOURISM BENEFITS EVERYONE, EVERYWHERE AND EVERY DAY

Hadrian's Wall will be lit by beacons from coast to coast, Newcastle to Bowness on Solway, for the first time in its history to launch British Tourism Week – the celebration of Britain's fifth biggest industry. Huge parties are planned in Wallsend and at Carlisle on the night of Saturday 13th March while the following weekend (20th and 21st), to close the Week, all National Trust properties in England and Wales will be free of charge to visit.

Between these two celebratory weekends hundred of events have been organised across Britain to raise the profile of the contribution of tourism to Britain's local, regional and national economies through the campaign 'British Tourism Benefits Everyone, Everywhere, Every day'.

Everyone: We all benefit from British tourism either as taxpayers, citizens or tourists ourselves.

Tourism creates jobs at all skill levels.

Every £50,000 of overseas visitor spending creates a job in the UK.

As a nation we host 32million people from overseas and last year they spent £16billion here.

4 in every £5 spent by tourists in the UK are spent by domestic visitors; we are consumers too.

Tourism employs more than 10% of the entire workforce in 134 constituencies.

And a great place to visit is a great place to live. Every British person benefits from our tourism product; our heritage, our food and drink, our shops and hotels, our attractions

and countryside, our pubs and clubs, our coastline and our sports. We get to live in a country that the world wants to visit.

Everywhere: Tourism is one of the few industries that employs people, creates wealth and sustains local economies in every constituency in the UK.

Tourism sustains urban and rural communities.

Tourism can regenerate entire cities – think of Liverpool Capital of Culture, for example – and instil civic pride.

Every day: This is not a seasonal industry; it is a 24hr, seven day a week, 365 day a year industry.

Tourism is not just leisure breaks; it's corporate events, hospitality, business meetings, exhibitions, sporting events etc.

And we receive a visitor from overseas nearly every second of every day.

MPs and Prospective Parliamentary Candidates will be visiting local tourism businesses, from small B&Bs to hotels and conference centres, stately homes, caravan parks and pubs and restaurants on Friday 19th, Tourism Constituency Day, to see how local businesses benefit local communities.

Bernard Donoghue, Co-Chair of the British Tourism Week said: "Tourism is one of the British Economy's great success stories and this Week gives us an opportunity to celebrate that in every constituency in Britain. With more investment British tourism could do so much more; create new jobs at all skills levels in all parts of the country and reduce our national balance of payments deficit. It has the potential to power us out of recession. Tourism is one of the few industries that employs a vast amount of people and can never be outsourced or off-shored, unlike other sectors such as IT, banking, hedge funds or manufacturing. Tourism is Britain's sustainable industry."

Visit www.britishtourismweek.com for more information on the week of events being organised around the country.

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For further information, please contact Mark Di-Toro, Press Officer on 020 7578 1098 or 07010 392 137

Notes to Editors:

- British Tourism Week (15-21 March 2010) aims to demonstrate the critical value of tourism to the economy of the United Kingdom. www.britishtourismweek.com
- British Tourism Week culminates with the Best of Britain and Ireland travel trade forum and consumer show at London's Olympia from 17-20 March. www.britainandirelandevent.co.uk

- His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales is the Patron of British Tourism Week.
- British Tourism Week is organised by VisitBritain with the support of The Tourism Society, and representation from the following organisations on the Executive Council: The Tourism Alliance; Wales Tourism Alliance; Scottish Tourism Forum; VisitEngland; VisitScotland; Visit Wales; Visit London; the English Regions; British Hospitality Association; ABTA the Travel Association; UKinbound; Local Government Association; Association of Leading Visitor Attractions; Travelodge; Hoseasons; Holiday Cottages Group; British Beer & Pub Association; Coach Tourism Council; Group Travel Organisers Association; Virgin Trains; and Best of Britain & Ireland Events.