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## **NEW WEBSITE ENCOURAGES INDUSTRY TO GET INVOLVED IN FIRST BRITISH TOURISM WEEK**

With seven weeks to go until the first British Tourism Week (12-18 March 2007), a new website, [www.britishtourismweek.com](http://www.britishtourismweek.com), has launched as organisers encourage the industry to get involved by supporting existing events or planning their own.

Stephen Dowd, chairman of the British Tourism Week executive council and chief executive of inbound tourism trade body UKinbound, says: "The launch of the British Tourism Week website is a rallying call to businesses and their employees from every part of the UK's tourism industry, large and small, public and commercial."

As well as testimonials from national and regional tourist boards, the Tourism Alliance, the Association of British Travel Agents, the Tourism Society and Reed Travel Exhibitions, [www.britishtourismweek.com](http://www.britishtourismweek.com) offers the facility to upload a message of support for the Week and its goals.

In addition to three national events that are the centrepiece of British Tourism Week, the calendar now includes the first London International Film Tourism Conference, the involvement of the business tourism sector, a photographic exhibition of Britain's countryside and coastline at the.gallery@oxo, the SHINE Awards for Women in Travel, Tourism and Hospitality and a Regional Tourism Council and Members Conference in the South East of England.

Stephen continues: "If we are to draw national and international attention to the size, value and importance of Britain's £74 billion visitor economy, we must gain the support of transport and tour operators, travel agents and tourist boards, attractions and accommodation providers throughout the country."

The three national events at the centre of British Tourism Week are VisitBritain's British Travel Trade Fair (13-14 March 2007), UKinbound's 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention (14-15 March 2007) and the Tourism Alliance Parliamentary Reception (12 March 2007).

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#### Notes to editors

- VisitBritain is responsible for promoting Britain as a world class tourist destination and for developing England's visitor economy. It has representatives in 36 countries around the world and, in the last three years, has expanded into China, throughout Eastern Europe and Southeast Asia, and increased its presence in India with representatives in Bangalore and Mumbai.
- In 2005, there were 30 million visitors to Britain, 8% up on 2004. They spent £14.2 billion in the UK: a 9% increase on 2004.
- VisitBritain's international website, [www.visitbritain.com](http://www.visitbritain.com), was awarded World's Leading Tourism Authority Internet Site for the third year in a row at the 2006 World Travel Awards by more than 200,000 travel and tourism professionals. With information provided in 26 different languages, every year over 12 million visits are made by international consumers to the 46 websites that make up visitbritain.com. VisitBritain plans to increase this to 25 million by 2009.
- An archive of media releases, information on VisitBritain's marketing activities, print quality, free-to-download images and more details about the work of VisitBritain in promoting Britain as a destination, can be found on VisitBritain's online press centre, [www.visitbritain.com/presscentre](http://www.visitbritain.com/presscentre)

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