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UK ANNOUNCES FIRST BRITISH TOURISM WEEK TO DRIVE FUTURE SUCCESS

The UK's tourism industry has announced the creation of its first British Tourism Week from 12 to 18 March 2007. The week of inter-related events will raise national and international awareness of the size, value and importance of Britain's £74 billion visitor economy.

Organisers expect British Tourism Week to highlight the contribution made by businesses from every part of the UK's tourism industry, large and small, public and commercial in maximising future opportunities such as the Olympic Games. It will galvanise the commitment of organisations and individuals to further improve and develop the industry.

Tom Wright, VisitBritain chief executive, said: "If Britain is to continue to rival its competitors around the world and be ready to welcome the world in the build up to 2012 and beyond, we must work together to lay the foundations that will help ensure the future growth and prosperity of our visitor economy. British Tourism Week will, by bringing together businesses and their employees from every sector, help redefine both the image and the reality of British tourism in the important years ahead."

Unveiled at UKinbound's Parliamentary Reception this evening (6 June 2006), British Tourism Week is organised by VisitBritain and UKinbound, working with Reed Travel Exhibitions and with the support of the Tourism Alliance and the Tourism Society.

Speaking at the Parliamentary Reception, UKinbound chief executive Stephen Dowd said: "Tourism's importance to the UK's economy is often unappreciated, despite continued growth and record numbers of visitors. Our industry suffers when we fail to recognise that every business contributes to a greater whole. Together, during British Tourism Week, we hope to change the perception that the different sectors – from transport and tour operators to accommodation providers, travel agencies and attractions – operate independently."

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The week of major events will focus on two national events: VisitBritain's British Travel Trade Fair (13-14 March 2007) and UKinbound's 30th Anniversary Convention (14-15 March 2007). Both will be held in Birmingham and will be the centrepiece for other national, regional and local events.

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For further comment, please contact:

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Notes to Editors

- Named the World's Leading Tourist and Convention Bureau at the 2005 World Travel Awards, VisitBritain promotes Britain as a world-class tourist destination and develops England's visitor economy. It has offices and 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 new representatives in Bangalore and Mumbai.
- UKinbound is a trade association founded in 1977 to represent the commercial interests of companies deriving a substantial part of their income from the provision of tourism services for overseas visitors to the UK. Further information about UKinbound can be viewed at www.ukinbound.org