

## MEMBERS:

- Association of British Professional Conference Organisers
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- Association for Events Management Education
- British Association of Conference Destinations
- British Hospitality Association
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- Events Industry Alliance
- Events Industry Forum
- Hotel Booking Agents Association
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- National Outdoors Events Association
- Northern Ireland Tourist Board
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- VisitBritain
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Mrs Barbara Follett, MP  
Minister for Culture, Creative Industries and Tourism  
House of Commons  
Westminster  
London SW1A 0AA

Thank you for hosting the first National Tourism Summit. I was pleased to participate and delighted that the example of Liverpool's success in staging its major year long festival provides the government and industry with a wonderful opportunity to use other Events to stimulate, not only the visitor economy, but the British economy in general.

I am enclosing a press release which sums up the Partnership's views on this.

As you heard from me at the Summit, I believe the Britain City of Culture should be an annual event and should invite the creation of new events rather than moving existing events from one location to another. Additionally the themes should be linked to regional economic strategies to maximise the economic outputs from staging these showcase festivals.

Joss Croft, Head of Event Marketing at VisitBritain, has already sent to you details of the City Managers Conference to be held in Biarritz in February. I am very keen that we should do something similar in the UK, with government support, to better inform local authority managers of the benefits of planning local event strategies. Again there should be a real push to match these events with local and regional economic business recovery strategies including support for inward trade missions and exports.

Much of the realisation of how Events can stimulate, tourism, creative enterprise and the wider economy comes from your Department's own Creative Industries Strategy, published last March, which said that "Events provide an iconic focus for the visitor economy". That strategy also proposed the initiation of a World Creative Business Conference. Such was the enthusiasm from yesterday's Tourism Summit there were others suggesting competitions for a Britain City of Sport and other world showcase conferences to be held in Britain.

Can I suggest as a follow-up to this enthusiasm that you convene a meeting of representatives of the conference, exhibitions, business, cultural, sporting events and festival sectors to explore how we can make UK events the 21<sup>st</sup> century driver of visitor traffic and the economic and social stimulus for Britain's recovery. The Partnership and VisitBritain will be more than pleased to work with DCMS on such an initiative.

With sincerest good wishes

Michael Hirst OBE  
CHAIRMAN