

MEMBERS:

- Association of British Professional Conference Organisers
- Association for Conferences and Events
- Association for Events Management Education
- British Association of Conference Destinations
- British Hospitality Association
- Conference Centres of Excellence
- Department for Culture, Media & Sport
- Eventia
- Events Industry Alliance
- Events Industry Forum
- Hotel Booking Agents Association
- International Congress & Convention Association
- Meetings Industry Association
- Meetings Professionals International
- National Outdoors Events Association
- Northern Ireland Tourist Board
- UK Trade & Investment
- Venue Masters
- VisitBritain
- Visit London
- VisitScotland
- Visit Wales

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PRESS RELEASE

EVENTS TO BE A MAJOR PART OF THE GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT FOR TOURISM

Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, Secretary of State Andy Burnham, and Tourism and Creative Industries Minister Barbara Follett all join in the call for more events for Britain.

Learning the lessons of regeneration, investment, employment and substantial boost to the visitor economy from Liverpool's City Of Culture festival was a main theme at the Government's first National Tourism Summit held in Liverpool on the 8th January 2009.

Announcing the British City of Culture competition to spread the benefits across many more cities, Ministers pointed to the 3.5 million first time visitors to Liverpool, the £176 million of additional local economy spend and £280 million of additional publicity from Liverpool's staging of the year long Event.

In welcoming the new initiative, Michael Hirst, Chairman of the Business Visits & Events Partnership said, "The Partnership has long campaigned that Events are a key part of driving visitor traffic. In the current challenging economic times their tactical use to fill destination capacities must not be under-estimated".

"From 2011, The Government proposes a major cultural City event every four years. I see no reason why these could not be staged annually given the economic benefits and instead of the suggestion of merely moving existing events from one City to another, new events should be created to increase interest and visitor numbers".

The Partnership is also calling for a series of government sponsored seminars to better inform local authority managers on the benefits to be gained from staging in local destinations business, cultural, sporting events and festivals.

The CMS Select Committee Report recently concluded that, "major events can provide short term economic benefits together with the opportunity for a lasting legacy" and the Government's Creative Strategy declared that "Events provide an iconic focus for the visitor economy"..

It equally believes that there needs to be a matching of event programming around the Country with regional economic strategies as part of a business revival programme with commensurate exhibitions, trade fairs and conferences and more support for inward trade missions.

Business visits and events represent a creative and dynamic generate £22 billion in visitor expenditures. Estimates indicate that around 450 major events take place in the UK annually contributing more than £1 billion to the creative economy.

ENDS

For further information, please contact Michael Hirst, Chairman, Business Visits and Events Partnership

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Note to editors:

- **The Business Visits and Events Partnership's** aim is to lead the way in supporting a competitive, high quality and more profitable business visits and events sector in Britain. The Partnership seeks to provide a cohesive industry voice and will work with VisitBritain and other government departments and agencies to influence and develop policies and practices favourable to the growth of tourism, trade and creative enterprise from business visits and events.
- The **Business Visits and Events Partnership** has the support of the leading trade organisations and government agencies with an interest in conferences, meetings, exhibitions, trade fairs, incentive travel, corporate hospitality, and business, sporting, cultural and festival events.
- Business travel is worth **over £22 billion** in terms of its wider economic impact through associated visitor expenditure on travel, entertainment, shopping, pre and post conference tours etc.) In addition the value of business transacted at trade events is estimated to generate in excess of **£100 billion** a year.
- The 2007 IPS figures for inbound business visits and spend indicated a over **8.8 million visitors spending £4.5 billion**.
- Business visits in 2008 generated 109% more spending in real terms than in 1979 (leisure increase 18%).
- **The sector generates 27% of all overseas visitors and 28% of inbound tourism earnings.**
- Business visits and events create high quality, year round employment opportunities accounting for some **530,000 jobs** directly and indirectly.
- **Around 80 million people attend 1.5 million** conferences and meetings annually.
- **Business visitors spend on average £126 per day** – nearly 78% more than the daily rate of that spent by the leisure traveller, with attendees at exhibitions spending 150% more than the leisure traveller.
- **450 major Events take place in the UK annually contributing more than £1 billion**
- For further information on Business Visits and Events, please refer to the website: www.businessvisitsandeventspartnership.com