

## Cardiff hosts business tourism chiefs

Business tourism leaders were in Cardiff this week (12<sup>th</sup> / 13<sup>th</sup> September) to see what the capital of Wales can offer their industry.

It was the first time the Business Visits and Events Partnership (BVEP) had met in Cardiff in recent years.

Heledd Williams, Head of Business Tourism at Cardiff & Co, the city region's marketing company, told the visitors that Cardiff had increased the number of beds in the city over the last five years and now has more than 8,000.

She said,

"Cardiff is less than two hours from London and has a variety of venues, from the 74,000-seat roofed Millennium Stadium to more traditional hotel and stadium conference facilities. It also boasts the 3<sup>rd</sup> most visited shopping centre in the whole of the UK as well as a range of cultural, sporting and artistic venues only seen in capital cities. Cardiff is much more than a viable destination for Business Tourism including Meetings and Events – those who have seen at first-hand Cardiff's recent transformation recognise it as an ideal destination."

Michael Hirst OBE, chairman of the BV&EP, said they had been impressed by Cardiff. He said: "This is a place you have to visit to understand just what it has to offer. It is compact but has everything you would expect to find in a capital city. It was a great place for our meeting and we found Visit Wales and Cardiff & Co both extremely helpful in arranging the meeting."

He added: "The one thing missing is a dedicated convention centre but the good news is that this is part of the planned Central Business District. This project would make Cardiff the complete destination. We heard how business events are making an increasingly important contribution to growing the City's commercial and community well-being. Cardiff has clearly demonstrated that it has an abundance of great venues, unique facilities and offers a fantastic welcome to business visitors and conference delegates to take advantage of new opportunities. We are also encouraged that several other destinations in Wales are growing their business in conferences and business incentive travel too".

Richard Thomas, managing director of Cardiff & Co, said: "I am glad that BV&EP agree with us. We always maintain that once people see Cardiff they will understand just how attractive it is. The city has a great range of venues and at the Cardiff Convention Bureau we have professionals who can take the pain out of finding the right venue for a particular meeting, convention or event."

ENDS

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Cardiff and Co is the place marketing agency for Cardiff. We promote Cardiff as a great place in which to invest, work, visit, live, meet and study. We aim to be a first choice destination to visit for business and leisure tourism purposes.