

MEMBERSHIP

- Association of British Professional Conference Organisers
- Association for Conferences and Events
- Association for Events Management Education
- Conference Centres of Excellence
- Department for Culture, Media & Sport
- Eventia
- European Federation of Professional Conference Organisers
- Events Industry Alliance
- Events Industry Forum
- Hotel Booking Agents Association
- International Congress & Convention Association
- International Special Events Society
- Meet England
- Meetings Industry Association
- Meetings Professionals International
- National Outdoors Events Association
- Northern Ireland Tourist Board
- Site Global
- UK Inbound
- UK Trade & Investment
- VisitBritain
- Visit London
- VisitScotland
- Visit Wales

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Business Visits & Events Partnership

LEADING THE WAY FOR BRITAIN'S EVENTS

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Happy Birthday Business Visits and Events Partnership – Let's Celebrate Events

2010 marks the 10th anniversary of the Business Visits & Events Partnership, the umbrella organisation that brings together the leading trade associations and government agencies, to support a more competitive, high quality and more profitable events sector in Britain.

The Partnership was originally created in 2000 as the Business Tourism Partnership, to provide government with a cohesive and independent voice on matters and policies that impact conferences, meetings, exhibitions, trade fairs, outdoor events, incentive travel, corporate hospitality, cultural, sporting and leisure events.

During its 10 years existence, the Events Sector has grown to a value of over £22 billion in terms of its contribution to tourism and in excess of £100 billion in terms of trade transacted at exhibitions. Its' worth in revitalising the visitor economy and growing individual destinations through employment creation, regeneration and new investment is now beginning to be fully recognised by local, regional and national government.

Michael Hirst, Chairman of the Partnership since its inception says, "During its first decade of existence the Partnership has worked closely with VisitBritain to optimise its support for the sector. This has led to a purposeful relationship with VisitBritain's Business Visits and Events Department and strong support for EventBritain".

"Good working relationships exist with the business tourism agencies for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, all of whom are members of the Partnership. A similar relationship is now developing with VisitEngland, as it evolves its Event sector policies and activities".

"There are ongoing briefings to tourism and trade Ministers, government departments and agencies which include lobbying for fairer fiscal and taxation measures, better regulation and more support for bids for international events. The Partnership is a leading member of the Tourism Alliance and takes an active role with the Alliance on government policy consultations".

The Partnership has sponsored three National Conferences on business tourism. Publications by the Partnership have included a comprehensive briefing on the value, volume, scope, and characteristics of each constituent event sector, outlining key issues and trends. A revised briefing is currently in preparation.

The Partnership has also prepared papers on new industry initiatives, best practices, skills, qualifications careers and business extenders and supported focussed research by its members.

Much of this information can be found on The Partnership's website, www.businessvisitsandeventspartnership.com, which also contains up-to-date information on news, research and publications and its diary of events is being built to provide the most comprehensive calendar of industry activity.

There's even been the success of getting Events and Exhibitions recognised as part of the Creative Industries, a sector into which government is giving much extra attention and support.

www.businessvisitsandeventspartnership.com

Looking ahead to the next 10 years, the Partnership is forging close links with the leisure, cultural and sporting events sector. Many venues and organisers span both business and leisure event activity and in many cases there are common skills and shared concerns between business and leisure events.

Michael Hirst commented, "It makes good sense to represent a broader events sector, especially given the heightened awareness emanating from hosting of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympics Games from which Events are likely to be the main beneficiary".

And there's plenty to do to keep the momentum of recognising the contribution events make to the national economy and its social well-being.

Some of the key areas where Members of the Partnership will be focussing over the next decade are:

- Raising the profile of Live Events.
- Lobby for greater funding, resources and bid support for event promotion.
- Better regulation and reducing the regulatory burden
- Research co-ordination and information sharing
- Development and implementation of a skills strategy, review of qualifications and establishment of a continuing professional development programme.
- The encouragement of higher quality standards and greater competitiveness.
- More informed research on value, competitiveness and buyer motivation.
- The publication of new Health & Safety guidelines for Events
- The establishment of an All Parliamentary Group for Events at Westminster

Michael Hirst adds that, "Britain's world-class events are an undoubted opportunity to showcase 21st century Britain to a generation of travellers and business people in an increasingly competitive international market. They represent an unequalled opportunity to show off our creative and organisational talent and generate business for Britain's industry".

"If the representative trade and professional organisations for Britain's Event Industry continue to work together in partnership over the next decade, then the Industry will benefit more greatly from being a significant driver of national regional and local economic performance, of physical and social regeneration and of cultural and business development".

"The Business Visits & Events Partnership is there to ensure this opportunity will not be missed".

Details of the Partnership

- The Partnership was created as a result of an initiative in 1997 by the Secretary of State for National Heritage, Virginia Bottomley who agreed to include business tourism for the first time in the Conservative government's tourism strategy.
- A group of industry leaders compiled a report, "Business Tourism Leads The Way", which recommended the establishment of a unified cross industry and government agency body to represent the views of the business tourism sector.

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- The Secretary of State for National Heritage, Chris Smith and the Minister for Tourism Janet Anderson of the incoming Labour Government agreed to endorse these proposals and the Business Tourism Partnership was formally established in January 2000.
- In 2007 the Partnership changed its name to the Business Visits & Events Partnership to enable inclusion of organisations representing leisure, cultural, sporting events and festivals.
- Membership is open to all representative trade and professional bodies in the Events sector. There are currently 22 supporting members. The membership fee is currently £500 per annum and is used for administration, research and publications.
- The secretariat is provided by VisitBritain. Michael Hirst OBE, a tourism, leisure and hospitality consultant and former Chairman & Chief Executive of Hilton International has been honorary Chairman since its inception.
- The Partnership meets in general session 3 times a year. There are working groups on specialist issues.