

BRITISH TOURISM WEEK 23-29 MARCH 2009

- Britain's fifth largest industry – worth £114 billion – 8.2% of the nation's economy –
- Supports 2.7 million jobs and over 200,000 SMEs – more jobs than construction or transport
- 2009, a defining moment: weak pound makes Britain more affordable than ever –
- 4.9 million Britons will consider taking a holiday at home instead of overseas –

16 March 2009

STILL TIME TO SHOW THAT YOUR BUSINESS SUPPORTS BRITISH TOURISM WEEK

With only a week to go until British Tourism Week, public sector and commercial tourism businesses – accommodation providers and attractions, Tourist Information Centres and tour operators, travel agents, regions and destinations – are being urged to show their support by displaying a poster on their premises. Thousands of copies of the poster are being distributed through tourism trade publications and can be downloaded from the website, www.britishtourismweek.com, for display front-of-house and behind-the-scenes.

For the first time this year, the poster features photos of the winners of a competition to find the 'faces' of British Tourism Week. They come from attractions like Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, the Imperial War Museum, Canterbury Cathedral, Penshurst Place and Cogges Manor Farm Museum, ferry operator Wightlink, the National Trust, a Brighton hotel and the manager of two tourist information centres in Burnham-on-Sea and Cheddar Gorge. Their staffs' photos sit alongside the year's winners of the Outstanding Customer Service award from Scotland, Wales and England's regions in a poster that will be seen in tourism businesses around the country.

Already the tourism trade media is helping the industry get prepared to raise the profile of a £114 billion visitor economy and draw national awareness to its critical importance and the contribution it makes local economies and millions of livelihoods.

David Curtis-Brignell, co-chairman of British Tourism Week's multi-sector steering committee and past chairman of the Tourism Society, says: "I hope every business will take this opportunity to remind their customers and colleagues of the importance of tourism to this country. 2.7 million people depending on tourism for their jobs and livelihoods and British Tourism Week helps us highlight and celebrate their commitment to helping millions of British and international visitors enjoy holiday and business trips in this country."

The third annual event takes place from 23 to 29 March this year and, with the support of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, aims to galvanise organisations and individuals to take pride in being part of the nation's fifth

biggest industry. Already some 120 events are listed on the website and organisers hope that every region and destination will organise something to help businesses or raise awareness of tourism experiences among consumers.

Visit www.britishtourismweek.com for more information on the week of events being organised around the country.

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For further information, please contact Elliott Frisby, Press and PR on 020 8563 3035 or 07951 996241

Notes to Editors

- British Tourism Week (23-29 March 2009) has been established to demonstrate the critical value of tourism to the economy of the United Kingdom. Through a week of events throughout the UK it will:
 - Increase awareness of the success and importance of the tourism industry
 - Raise quality standards
 - Promote training and professionalism
 - Improve competitiveness of the UK tourism industry
 - Support the preparations for hosting the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games
- British Tourism Week culminates with the Best of Britain and Ireland trade and consumer event at London's Excel from 26-29 March. www.britainandirelandevent.co.uk
- British Tourism Week is organised by VisitBritain and UKInbound with the support of the Tourism Alliance, Tourism Society, ABTA the Travel Association, VisitScotland, Visit Wales, Visit London and Britain's regional tourist boards.