

BRITISH TOURISM WEEK 15-21 MARCH 2010

Britain's fifth largest industry – worth £115 billion, 8.9% of Britain's GDP

Supports 2.6 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

Overseas visitors contribute round £3 billion a year to the Treasury

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BRITISH WORKERS FAR TOO BUSY TO TAKE A HOLIDAY**LACK OF BRITISH HOLIDAY ACTIVITY COSTING THE VISITOR ECONOMY DEAR**

Research commissioned on behalf of British Tourism Week has shown that the British worker takes far less holiday than he or she is entitled to which could be costing our visitor economy up to £5 billion a year.

On average Britons in paid employment fail to take, or carry forward, 7 days annual leave each year. By taking a three-day domestic holiday break rather than foregoing so much annual leave the British visitor economy could benefit from an additional £5.1 billion worth of spending each year.

40% of respondents had 'too much to do at work' with 31% 'not getting round to it'. At a time of recession and tightening of purse strings throughout 2009, 15% even suggested that they 'couldn't afford to go away'.

Bernard Donoghue, Co-Chair of British Tourism Week executive council said: "The research shows that in total a staggering 1 in 5 British workers do not take their full holiday entitlement.

"Taking a holiday is good for the British economy, your health and a decent work-life balance."

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For further information, please contact Mark Di-Toro, Press Officer on 020 7578 1098 or 07919 392 137

Notes to Editors:

- We asked a sample of 16-64 year olds in paid employment.
- The figure £5.1billion is based on the average spend per person per night on domestic pure holiday trips taken by UK residents in 2008 (£59), assuming that each holiday lasts for 3 nights, and that each of the 28.8 million UK residents who were in paid employment at the end of 2009 takes such a holiday.

The British Tourism Week campaign 'British Tourism Benefits Everyone, Everywhere, Every day'.

Everyone: We all benefit from British tourism either as taxpayers, citizens or tourists ourselves.

Tourism creates jobs at all skill levels.

Every £50,000 of overseas visitor spending creates a job in the UK.

As a nation we host 32million people from overseas and last year they spent £16billion here.

4 in every £5 spent by tourists in the UK are spent by domestic visitors; we are consumers too.

Tourism employs more than 10% of the entire workforce in 134 constituencies.

And a great place to visit is a great place to live. Every British person benefits from our tourism product; our heritage, our food and drink, our shops and hotels, our attractions and countryside, our pubs and clubs, our coastline and our sports. We get to live in a country that the world wants to visit.

Everywhere: Tourism is one of the few industries that employs people, creates wealth and sustains local economies in every constituency in the UK.

Tourism sustains urban and rural communities.

Tourism can regenerate entire cities – think of Liverpool Capital of Culture, for example – and instil civic pride.

Every day: This is not a seasonal industry; it is a 24hr, seven day a week, 365 day a year industry.

Tourism is not just leisure breaks; it's corporate events, hospitality, business meetings, exhibitions, sporting events etc.

And we receive a visitor from overseas nearly every second of every day.

Four asks of the next Government:

1. Invest in UK tourism to create Jobs

- Tourism creates jobs and career paths at all skills levels, in all parts of the country.
- Tourism investment flows rapidly into the economy and has a rapid pay-back in additional tax revenues and foreign exchange earnings.
- Tourism has available capacity in most of its assets most of the time, This makes tourism an investment with high operating leverage and a high return.

2. Improve the UK's international competitiveness

- Our international competitiveness as a destination is deteriorating.
- The next Government should commit to a comparative review of the competitiveness of the visitor economy.
- The review should be tasked with identifying, costing and calculating the potential economic and societal return from creating a legislative, fiscal and regulatory environment which actively supports growth in the visitor economy.

3. Enhance the UK's tourism industry's sustainability

- Incentivising green capital investment in tourism infrastructure will reinforce performance in this area and enhance the industry's competitiveness.
- Tourism is a sustainable, permanent industry; we, more than most other parts of the economy, are acutely aware of conserving, protecting and presenting our natural assets for the benefit of our citizens and the visitor alike.

4. Improve Cross-Governmental Policymaking

- Many of the key policy issues and levers that directly affect the growth of British tourism do not lie within the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, where the Tourism Minister sits.
 - The next Government should consider tourism in all aspects of policy-making; from visa pricing and processing through transport infrastructure and planning regulations.
 - The Tourism Minister needs to be actively engaged across the key economic departments of state, regardless of the department in which they sit.
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- British Tourism Week (15-21 March 2010) aims to demonstrate the critical value of tourism to the economy of the United Kingdom. www.britishtourismweek.com
 - British Tourism Week culminates with the Best of Britain and Ireland travel trade forum and consumer show at London's Olympia from 17-20 March. www.britainandirelandevent.co.uk
 - His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales is the Patron of British Tourism Week.
 - British Tourism Week is organised by VisitBritain with the support of The Tourism Society, and representation from the following organisations on the Executive Council: The Tourism Alliance; Wales Tourism Alliance; Scottish Tourism Forum; VisitEngland; VisitScotland; Visit Wales; Visit London; the English Regions; British Hospitality Association; ABTA the Travel Association; UKinbound; Local Government Association; Association of Leading Visitor Attractions; Travelodge; Hoseasons; Holiday Cottages Group; British Beer & Pub Association; Coach Tourism Council; Group Travel Organisers Association; Virgin Trains; and Best of Britain & Ireland Events.

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