



## PRESS RELEASE

- Britain's fifth largest industry - worth £85 billion - contributes 3.4% of the nation's GVA -
- employs 2.1 million people - 7.7% of the workforce - more jobs than construction or transport -
- generated over £15 billion in export earnings in 2006 -
- domestic and overseas visitors pay over £14 billion in tax, paying for 30,000 nurses -

26 July 2007

### **HRH THE PRINCE OF WALES CONFIRMED AS PATRON OF SECOND BRITISH TOURISM WEEK**

HRH The Prince of Wales has confirmed that he will once again be the Patron of British Tourism Week to be held from 10 to 18 March 2008.

Welcoming the announcement, Stephen Dowd, chairman of British Tourism Week, says: "His Royal Highness' participation in British Tourism Week will help us raise even greater awareness of tourism experiences in this country. His interests in many of the quintessential elements that constitute Britain's tourism brand make The Prince the perfect ambassador."

British Tourism Week '08 marks the start of a year in which Britain prepares for the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games, taking the torch from Beijing ahead of the four-year Cultural Olympiad.

Inter-related events will raise national and international awareness of the size, value and importance of Britain's £85 billion visitor economy, highlighting the contribution made by businesses large and small, public and commercial. It galvanises the commitment of organisations and individuals to further improve and develop the industry. Once again VisitBritain's British Travel Trade Fair (11-12 March 2008) will be the centrepiece for other national, regional and local events.

**More...**

Tom Wright, VisitBritain chief executive, says: "The Prince of Wales' support is further evidence of the critical importance of tourism to the UK economy and of our royal heritage to the tourism industry. His Royal Highness has consistently supported our industry over many years and has been an influential ambassador at home and abroad."

2007's inaugural British Tourism Week included over 50 events across the country, demonstrating tourism's vital contribution to the UK's economy.

Nearly 300 national politicians took part in events during the week and visited tourism businesses in their constituencies. Westminster MPs signed a pledge card backing British Tourism Week in Parliament and more than 60 MPs signed an Early Day Motion in the House of Commons recognising the value of tourism. An exhibition of photography submitted by MPs and Welsh Assembly Members was held at the Britain and London Visitor Centre.

Stephen Dowd continues: "Tourism's importance to the UK's economy can often be overlooked and our industry suffers when we fail to recognise that every business contributes to a greater whole. Together, during British Tourism Week, we can change the perception that the different sectors – from transport and tour operators to accommodation providers, travel agencies and attractions – operate independently."

British Tourism Week is organised by VisitBritain and UKinbound with the support of the Tourism Alliance, Tourism Society, ABTA the Travel Association and Britain's national and regional tourist boards.

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For further comment, please contact:

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#### Notes to Editors

- British Tourism Week (10-18 March 2008) 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
- Named the World's Leading Tourist and Convention Bureau at the 2005 World Travel Awards, VisitBritain promotes Britain as a world-class tourist destination and develops England's visitor economy with a network throughout 36 countries and the UK
- UKinbound is a trade association founded in 1977 to represent the commercial interests of companies deriving a substantial part of their income from the provision of tourism services for overseas visitors to the UK. [www.ukinbound.org](http://www.ukinbound.org)