



017/14

news release

1 March 2014

£2 million puts boots on the ground to help tourism businesses affected by floods

March marketing campaign ahead of Easter will promote areas to tourists from home and abroad

Tourism businesses affected by the floods – from bed and breakfasts and hotels to local attractions – will get help from a new £2 million support fund, Culture Secretary Maria Miller announced today.

The investment will put experts on the ground in hit areas to give practical advice and support to tourism businesses. This will include helping them to communicate effectively with their customers online, give advice on what business support measures are available and how to access them and marketing their businesses so that tourists know what is still on offer.

The advice sessions for tourism businesses in flood affected areas will be hosted by VisitEngland and run throughout March. VisitEngland has also launched an online toolkit at <http://www.visitengland.org/flood-response/index.aspx> offering advice to help businesses affected return to trading as soon as possible.

A dedicated marketing campaign from VisitEngland to help promote affected areas to domestic tourists in the run-up to Easter and beyond will also be launched in March.

The package follows an emergency meeting held by Minister for Tourism Helen Grant in Whitehall with tourism chiefs. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has been working closely with VisitEngland and VisitBritain to have the plans in action in flood hit communities.

A promotional push abroad to reassure overseas tourists that Britain is open for business is also being planned by VisitBritain in the coming weeks.

Culture Secretary, Maria Miller said:

"We want to help all those tourism businesses that have been affected by the horrendous floods get back on their feet as quickly as possible. Experts will be put on the ground to help small businesses with practical advice and communications while a bespoke Easter marketing will bring people back to the areas hit."

VisitEngland chief executive James Berresford said:

"We welcome this additional funding from Government to support the tourism industry. Our first priority is to ensure businesses have immediate support through an online toolkit and people on the ground to provide advice and guidance. Our message to customers is 'Business as usual'. Despite many areas having been affected by bad weather and some travel disruption, the tourism infrastructure is largely unaffected. Perception is everything and a new marketing campaign launched in March will support our efforts to reassure visitors that England remains a beautiful and exciting destination to visit this spring and summer."

VisitBritain chief executive Sandie Dawe said:

'International tourism is worth around £1.5 billion to the economies of south west England and Wales. We are already getting out the message that it is a great time to travel to Britain and will be intensifying that activity over the coming months. We have launched a global £2 million digital ad ' Sounds of Great Britain' and a £2 million tv ad campaign with Expedia in America. This month we will launch a joint campaign with Brittany Ferries focused on the south west region , followed by delivering PR support to the flooded areas worth £10 million and bring forward a £1 million campaign to promote the countryside.'

Chief Secretary to the Treasury Danny Alexander said:

"The new support we have announced today will help flood hit communities across the country get back on their feet. In the run-up to the Easter holidays this extra funding will help maximise what local areas can offer to visitors and holidaymakers. We remain committed to supporting households and businesses affected by the recent floods and will continue working with them over the coming months".

Notes to Editors:

1. A practical guide for tourism businesses responding to the extreme weather can be found on the VisitEngland website - <http://www.visitengland.org/flood-response/index.aspx>
2. In addition, on 17 February the Prime Minister announced a new £10 million business support scheme to help flood affected businesses get back on their feet, including a Government Business Support Helpline - <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-floods-10-million-support-scheme-for-flood-affected-businesses>

Press Enquiries: 020 7211 6971 / 6263

Public Enquiries: 020 7211 6000

Out of hours telephone pager no: 07699 751153

www.gov.uk/dcms [flickr http://www.flickr.com/photos/thedcms](http://www.flickr.com/photos/thedcms)

<http://twitter.com/dcms> [YouTube http://www.youtube.com/user/dcms](http://www.youtube.com/user/dcms)



For more news from DCMS, why not sign up for our fortnightly newsletter, *the review*?

Scan this QR code or visit <http://bit.ly/sccBxD>