



# Partnership News

December 2015

Business Visits & Events Partnership



CONNECTING BRITAIN'S EVENTS INDUSTRY

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# Introduction



**It's been a frenetic year for the Industry and the Partnership. The overall value of visitor expenditure from Events held in Britain has risen from £39.1 billion to £42.3 billion as a result of increases in spend at conferences and music festivals and the phenomenal success of the Rugby World Cup. These benefits stretch across the economy and throughout communities and destinations around the entire Country. What's more, business travel has been the fastest growing sector of the visitor economy.**

**There's been success too in gaining political attention to these impressive results. In April the coalition government published its first ever strategy for the sector, aimed at attracting more international events to Britain and growing existing events in line with the Country's priority economic sectors, as well as encouraging greater local authority awareness of how events benefit local areas. In July, as part of the new government's five point plan for tourism, the Prime Minister announced that an Events Industry Board would be established and this is being done presently, under the Chairmanship of Nick de Bois, who so excellently led the All Party Parliamentary Group for Events in the last Parliament. Its first meeting is scheduled for January.**

**The All Party Group has been re-established by James Heappey MP and with his constituency home to Glastonbury and the Royal Bath & West Showground, he knows only too well the importance of events to his constituents.**

**So all is set fair for another strong year in 2016 - strong for business opportunities and strong for political support.**

**A government official said to me that supporting the Events Industry is a no brainer because it ticks all the government's boxes.**

**I hope this holiday season and the New Year will tick all your boxes too!**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Hirst'.

**Michael Hirst OBE  
Chair, Business Visits and Events Partnership**

# Supporting the industry

After an intense period of lobbying and with support from the Partnership, the new All Party Parliamentary Group for Events (APPG) met in Parliament for the first time in October under the Chairmanship of James Heappey, Member of Parliament for Wells.

Mr Heappey said that with both the Glastonbury Festival and the Royal Bath & West Showground in his constituency, he was “acutely aware of the value events bring to the economy”. He also pledged to follow in the footsteps of Nick de Bois as the events industry’s parliamentary champion as his leadership was confirmed.

The group of parliamentarians, made up of members of all parties from both Houses of Parliament, met as part of their Annual General Meeting, which formally establishes the group as an official APPG in Parliament. The remit of the APPG is to ‘represent the UK events industry in Parliament; to highlight the value of the industry, engage with politicians and industry representatives, and to ensure that the UK benefits from the success of large, internationally prominent events’. As part of the AGM, the APPG heard representation from various parts of the events sector, including Chris Skeith from the AEO, Steve Heap, Chairman of the Event Industry Forum and General Secretary of the Association of Festival Organisers and Simon Hughes from EVCOM, both Vice Chairs of the Partnership.

The APPG for Events, has been credited with the events industry establishing far stronger links across both Parliament and Government, as part of the Britain for Events campaign. The APPG AGM was also followed by the annual parliamentary dinner where senior members of the events sector met parliamentarians and senior government officials to discuss issues of interest.

In addition to the work of the APPG, the long awaited Events Industry Board has also been formally announced, under the Chairmanship of former APPG Chair Nick de Bois. The board is expected to hold its first meeting in January 2016.



**James Heappey, MP**



**Nick de Bois**

# BVEP Vice Chair Election

We are delighted to announce that Dr Caroline Jackson and Samme Allen have been successfully elected as Vice Chairs of the BVEP, with effect from the 1st January 2016 for a period of two years, joining both Chris Skeith and Simon Hughes as the four elected Vice Chairs of the Partnership. The BVEP has made great progress in 2015, and we hope to continue this growth with our new team as we look forward to 2016.

Dr Caroline Jackson, Head of Department: Events & Leisure at Bournemouth University and Chair of the Association for Events Management Education (AEME) stated: "It is with great pride that I take up the role of Vice Chair with a mandate to further the importance of education and research in the work of the Partnership. I stood for election because I see great opportunities to bring our multi-faceted creative industry together around subjects such as professionalization, apprenticeships and recognition of the value of information and understanding that research can offer. I believe there is a continuing role to play in ensuring that organisations work collaboratively on educational content, career opportunities, progression and retention of talent within our industry."

Samme Allen, Head of Business Development at the Scottish Exhibition & Conference Centre (SECC) said: "I'm completely thrilled to be chosen by the Partnership to continue the great work that has already been achieved by the organisation. Following a fantastic momentum of progress achieved by the current VC arrangement, I would like to continue this with my appointment. Having played a part in designing the current strategy, I am in a strong position to drive the tactical plan in Partnership with my fellow VC's and I cannot wait to get started. I love what we do, we have real momentum with the EIB and DCMS really taking notice and I want to support the partners and our industry in further sector growth."

The Vice Chairs will play a pivotal role in developing the long terms strategy for the Partnership. They will also be working on a number of key initiatives, all designed to ensure that the UK events industry continues to speak with one voice as it supports the governments Business Visits and Events Strategy and the implementation of the new Events Industry Board. Both of these objectives are designed to ensure that Events continue to be Great in Britain.



**Dr Caroline Jackson**  
Vice Chair, BVEP



**Samme Allen**  
Vice Chair, BVEP

# Britain for Events

The Britain for Events campaign, which is supported and endorsed by the Partnership, held its annual celebration of the UK events industry on 19<sup>th</sup> October at The River Rooms at The Mermaid, in the heart of the City of London.

The reception saw over 150 senior figures from the UK event industry joined by members of parliament, government officials, campaign supporters and members of the Partnership.

Michael Hirst OBE, Chair of the BVEP, said; "This annual event provided the entire events sector with the perfect opportunity to meet and celebrate the significant contribution they make to the UK economy each year in front of MP's and various government officials. We are grateful to The Mermaid for their support in hosting this event."

Britain for Events is preparing to launch its 2016 campaign, which organisers say is set to be the biggest to date



# Diary from Korea

By Samme Allen

*BVEP were invited by the Seoul Convention Bureau to present at their annual conference, to describe the success of the Partnership's initiatives in raising the profile of the Events Industry in Britain and how the Partnership has secured the strong backing from the Government.*

## **The Seoul MICE Forum & BVEP**

**Landing at Incheon reminded me of Chek Lap Kok airport, coming in over water. And what a wonderful airport, it's so easy to navigate and it reportedly one of the best transfer airports in the world. With access to 25% of the population of the world within a 2.5 hour flight, there is a reason for this easy access!**

**The transfer to the city took just over an hour- the bus driver bows before he drives us off! It's a luxury bus and I would recommend saving the expensive taxi and enjoy the experience. It is super organised.**

**I followed up a dinner at the hotel with a walk around the city hall and up to one of the 4 gates of the city. Namdaemun Gate. This is Korea's first National Treasure...the main gate of the fortress and wall that surrounded the city. I felt incredibly safe. There is a real fusion of harmony, cultures and a true sense of being somewhere rather special.**

**The morning was spent on a guided tour of the Dongdaemun Design Plaza - opened in 2014. They pick the expos that suit the building. It was designed by an Iraqi lady. This was followed by a tour of the Gyeongbokgung palace, built in 1835. We got to see the changing of the guard, beautiful colourful soldiers! Lunch was at Min's Club, a traditional mansion/house where we had Korean fusion food. I got to eat bimimbap - yum!**

**We were then left to our own devices so I decided to take a tour of the secret garden at Changdeokgung Palace, a UNESCO world heritage site. This was the back -up palace! The gardens were stunning and designed totally in harmony with nature, the mountain, water (fungshi) and the natural environment. Autumnal colours and Japanese maple trees/acers everywhere.**

**With Laurent Chiron, one of the other international speakers from Viparis, the evening was spent taking a cable car to the N Seoul Tower. 2600m up the mountain, the views of this massive city were incredible.**

**With a population of 10 million, the vast sprawling lights just show how far reaching Seoul is. A further 15 million live on the outskirts. 50% of the South Korean population live here.**

The following day was the Seoul MICE Forum. After a final rehearsal of our BVEP presentation, it was time to attend the lunch with the VIPs of the event and press, followed by meeting the Mayor of Seoul. We joined him for a table talk and press call. It's great that the city Mayor and government already understand the impact of the industry and are championing its growth in Seoul.

The conference then started and my session (I think) was well received. I even got some positive audience reaction due to my rather basic Korean.

We had the panel discussion where the questions I received related to iso20121 and how we are developing this in relation to the Olympics, how we measure impact and ROI in the UK and what advice I would give to Seoul...intense stuff? There is some controversy around a possible integrated resort featuring a casino (to pay for the infrastructure) but clearly there is a desperate need for improved and enlarged facilities here to improve the offering internationally.

Collaboration really is key to all our success and this is something that the industry in Seoul really connected with and will be looking at our further collaborations in the UK industry with interest!



**Samme Allen**  
Vice Chair, BVEP





# Question Time

By Simon Hughes

Hopefully all the partners involved in supporting the BVEP will have been heartened to see the recent news announcing the new APPG line up. Once again the Partnership has been able to deliver tangible results for the industry as a whole, supporting an actively engaged group of MPs to make our voice heard. So far, so good. Yet as with most things this is just the beginning of the story and it will be up to all of us to push forward on this positive development and maximise the value of this conduit into the mother of Parliaments.

The context right now makes this call to action even more urgent. We are just a few weeks away from the announcement of the next comprehensive spending review and although the Chancellor is claiming that so far it's going well, there are plenty of ashen faced civil servants staggering around Whitehall wondering just how they are going to cope and if indeed they'll have a job this time next year. Some departments have already coughed up to set a good example yet, apart from the protected departments, there are some big spending beasts out there facing really challenging choices.

We've had five years of reductions and cuts but still require a significant step change to achieve the fiscal targets required in order to balance the books and reduce the deficit on the agreed timeline. The low level rumbling in the jungle has already started, with private briefings and off the record remarks making the political journalists drool in anticipation of a stand up fight breaking out sometime soon. The c-word is being used constantly - as in cuts of course - yet if you allow your thinking to be shaped entirely by cost savings, stringent efficiencies and radical reductions your view of the world becomes much more limited and restrained.

There is no doubt that all of the hard working MPs that have signed up from across the political spectrum to support the APPG for Events will be dealing with the fallout of the spending review on a daily basis. In their constituency surgeries they will be faced with constant stories of hardship, deprivation and distress caused by fundamental changes to the welfare system, growing demands on the NHS and the social care system, challenges around education. Real people with real problems. Well, we're in that mix too and it is incumbent on all of us to make sure that they also get to hear the good news stories that we can share from our unique perspective of working in a vibrant, multi-faceted and creative business sector that offers positive and rewarding opportunities for growth, development and success.

**So how do we do this? We use the power of our industry and bring to life the benefits of face to face communication with our local MPs. Give them a break from the constant demands of difficult case work and tough questions. Invite them in to see for themselves the business you run, to meet the people you employ and to learn more about the positive benefits you bring to their constituency in terms of employment, training opportunities and economic impact. I know of a couple of event agencies that have done this and it has always been a positive experience. Tell them about the APPG if they are not already a member and give them something positive to focus on.**

**So here's my final question - Will you make the time to do this? Do let us know?**



**Simon Hughes  
Vice Chair, BVEP**

# Partners and contacts

The Business Visits & Events Partnership (BVEP) is an umbrella organisation representing leading trade and professional organisations, government agencies and other significant influencers in the business visits and events sector.

Partners of the BVEP comprise:

- \* **ABPCO - Association of British Professional Conference Organisers**
- \* **ACE - Association for Conferences and Events**
- \* **AEME - Association for Events Management Education**
- \* **Core Cities (represented by Marketing Liverpool)**
- \* **EIA - Events Industry Alliance**
- \* **EIF - Event Industry Forum**
- \* **EMA - Event Marketing Association**
- \* **EVCOM**
- \* **HBAA - Hotel Booking Agents Association**
- \* **ICCA - International Congress & Convention Association**
- \* **ISES UK Chapter**
- \* **London & Partners (formerly Visit London)**
- \* **Meet in Ireland**
- \* **MIA - Meetings Industry Association**
- \* **NITB - Northern Ireland Tourist Board**
- \* **NOEA - National Outdoor Events Association**
- \* **PCMA - Professional Convention Management Association**
- \* **PSA - Production Services Association**
- \* **Site Great Britain**
- \* **Visit Wales**
- \* **VisitEngland**
- \* **VisitScotland Business Events**

Supporting government bodies:

- \***The department for culture, media and sport**
- \***UK Trade & Investment**
- \***VisitBritain**

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