

# Better Business Tourism in Britain

*Some of the initiatives and current examples of best practice in support of a competitive, high quality and more profitable business tourism sector in Britain*

**“The exhibition and conference sectors make a vital contribution to the United Kingdom economy in the current highly competitive European and international events market - the industry must capitalise on this.”**

Nigel Griffiths MP,  
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for  
Construction, Small Business and Enterprise,  
Department of Trade and Industry

**“Business tourism is a strong and vibrant sector. It is important not only for the expenditure generated through visitors but also through the multi-million pound deals that are struck at business events and the potential to win more business for Britain.”**

Rt Hon Richard Caborn MP,  
Minister For Sport and Tourism, Department of  
Culture, Media and Sport

**£25.00**

BUSINESS TOURISM PARTNERSHIP

leading the way

[www.businesstourismpartnership.com](http://www.businesstourismpartnership.com)

# CONTENTS

	<b>PAGE</b>
<b>FOREWORD</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Sections</b>	
<b>1. BUSINESS TOURISM - AN ECONOMIC OVERVIEW</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. INCREASING THE TRADE POTENTIAL OF BUSINESS EVENTS AND IMPROVING BRITAIN'S POSITION AS A STAGE FOR INTERNATIONAL EVENTS</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3. IMPROVING THE PROMOTION AND SUPPORT FOR BRITAIN'S BUSINESS TOURISM</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>4. RAISING STANDARDS AND COMPETITIVENESS</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>5. PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>6. BUSINESS TOURISM PARTNERSHIP</b>	<b>24</b>

This report has been compiled by Tony Rogers (of the British Association of Conference Destinations and the Association of British Professional Conference Organisers) on behalf of the Business Tourism Partnership, and includes contributions from many Partnership members.

## FOREWORD

### LEADING TO A BETTER WAY

Over the last five years the Business Tourism Partnership has set out to lead the way in supporting a competitive, high quality and more profitable business tourism sector in Britain. As a consequence, there has been a growing recognition of the sector's important contribution to the UK economy.

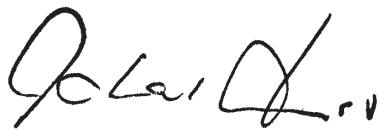
This is best characterised by the levels of trade transacted, and the quality and volume of information sharing, during conferences, exhibitions, outdoor events, incentive travel programmes, corporate hospitality/events and individual business trips, the value of which is estimated to exceed £100 billion per annum to the UK. This is augmented by business visit expenditures, estimated to be in the region of £18 billion, as business travellers discover and enjoy the attraction of Britain as a world-class tourism destination.

For these reasons the sector deserves the fullest national and regional support and it is now heartening to see both central government and regional agencies reviewing the role business tourism can play within economic development strategies.

Meanwhile the industry is undertaking many new initiatives which improve the quality of its services, enable a more competitive product to be offered and sharpen Britain's ability to win new business.

I am delighted to be able to share some of these best practices with you and encourage you to get in touch with the various contacts noted in this publication for more information about the activities which have been highlighted.

I hope you will find the ideas and initiatives worthwhile in the context of improving your own business. I also hope that, through the sharing of these best practices, we can help Britain's business tourism to become even better.



Michael Hirst  
Chairman  
Business Tourism Partnership

July 2004

## Section 1

### BUSINESS TOURISM: AN ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

Business tourism is a sector of the wider tourism industry. It encompasses the following individual segments:

1. **conferences and meetings** - with an estimated value to the UK economy of £7.7 billion in 2003 according to the British Conference Market Trends Survey 2004
2. **exhibitions and trade fairs** - estimated to be worth £2.04 billion annually. Exhibitions are the fifth largest marketing medium attracting 11% of media expenditure in the UK. This figure does not include the value of business transacted at exhibitions. In 2003 the total of exhibition visitors grew by 2% to an estimated 8.7 million. The numbers of international visitors represented 10% of all visitors, and showed an increase on 2002. International exhibitors made up 15% of all exhibitors
3. **incentive travel** - 1996 research, the latest available, estimated the inbound incentive travel market to be worth £165 million annually. The value of the UK outbound incentive travel market was estimated to be worth almost £132 million in 2003, according to Meetings & Incentive Travel magazine's 'Trends and Spends Survey'
4. **corporate events** - estimates value this segment at between £700 million and £1 billion annually
5. **outdoor events** - estimated value of at least £1 billion annually
6. **business (or individual corporate) travel**. No reliable estimates of this segment exist, although Business Tourism Leads The Way suggested that it was worth upwards of £6 billion per annum in 1998.

Segments 1-5 in the list above are also referred to collectively as 'discretionary business tourism', in part because the organisers of such events can use their own discretion in deciding where they take place. By country, discretionary business tourism is estimated to be worth annually:

- £10 billion to England
- £1.125 billion to Scotland
- £343 million to Wales
- £104 million to Northern Ireland (this figure includes all business tourism, both discretionary and non-discretionary)

Over the past ten years, there has been a 53% growth in all business trips, exceeding the overall tourism growth rate. In its totality, the sector generates 28% of all overseas visitors and 29% of inbound tourism earnings for the UK, according to the International Passenger Survey 2003, published by the Office for National Statistics. The conference and incentive travel segments are predicted to grow at a faster rate than any other tourism sector up to 2010. VisitBritain forecasts that revenues from international business tourism could account for up to 45% of total international tourism income by 2010.

Total trade receipts influenced by attendance at business events are estimated to be in excess of £100 billion. Yet business tourism in the UK competes for international business with many well-established destinations and venues in Europe. In the near future, there will also be severe competition from the huge investments being made in high calibre facilities throughout Asia. The massive programme of capital investment is reinforced by generously-funded travel incentives for key event participants. One role for the Business Tourism Partnership is to urge British Government, destination marketing organisations and private sector specialists to prepare for this new, even more challenging global marketplace.

## KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF BUSINESS TOURISM

Principal characteristics of business tourism include the following:

- it is at the high quality, high yield end of the tourism spectrum
- business tourism is year-round, peaking in Spring and Autumn but still with high levels of activity in the Summer and Winter months, thus sustaining permanent, full-time employment. It is estimated that the sector nationally employs around 530,000 people both directly and indirectly
- it complements the leisure tourism sector, relying on much of the same physical infrastructure, and bringing business to destinations such as seaside resorts which would otherwise be dependent upon a relatively short Summer season for their economic health and prosperity
- investments in business tourism facilities lead to the regeneration of urban and inner city areas, as evidenced by cities such as Birmingham, Belfast, Cardiff, Glasgow and Manchester
- many of the investments in a destination's infrastructure designed primarily for the business tourist (hotels, transport and communications facilities, restaurants, attractions and amenities, even conference auditoria) provide benefits which can also be enjoyed by the leisure tourist and the indigenous population
- it is resilient, being much less affected by economic downturns or by disasters such as the Foot and Mouth Epidemic than leisure tourism and other sectors of the national economy
- business tourism stimulates future inward investment as business people see the attractions of a destination while travelling on business or to attend a conference, exhibition or incentive, and then return to establish business operations there. They can also become unpaid 'ambassadors' for a destination by communicating to colleagues and others their positive impressions and favourable experiences
- the higher quality of personal service demanded by the business tourist requires more labour-intensive service suppliers, which in turn translates into higher levels of job creation. For example, 68% of all tourism jobs in Harrogate are created and sustained by business tourism (principally conferences and exhibitions), only 32% by leisure tourism. Around 22,000 jobs in the West Midlands are sustained by the NEC Group of venues (National Exhibition Centre, International Convention Centre, Symphony Hall, and the National Indoor Arena). The Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre (Glasgow) directly supported over 3,300 jobs in Glasgow and in other regions of Scotland in 2001
- research (Conference Delegate Expenditure Survey 1998) suggests that approximately 40% of business travellers will return with their families as leisure visitors to destinations they have enjoyed visiting on business
- business tourism is sustainable, offering higher added value with fewer negative environmental impacts than mass leisure tourism. Furthermore, conference and incentive visitors are together as a group, so that it is possible to inform and educate them about the local community in which their event is being held in order to maximise the enjoyment of their stay but also to minimise any disruption and possible inconvenience to the local resident population. It is very much harder to manage, in the same way, the impact of individual leisure travellers on a destination.

Specific examples of the economic impact of business tourism on destinations and venues are given in the case studies on Harrogate, The International Centre, Telford, Llandudno and Aberdeen.

#### **CASE STUDY - HARROGATE**

The direct economic impact of business tourism to the Harrogate District is estimated at £144.1m for 2002 (compared with £142.1m in 2001) with higher figures expected for 2003. Total visitor spend (business and leisure) is estimated at £199.7m for 2002, clearly revealing the importance of business tourism to the area. Some 346,600 business visitors attended events in Harrogate in 2002 - split between 189,900 attending conferences and conferences with an exhibition and 156,700 attending trade fairs.

For further information contact **Stuart Mackay** on (tel) 01423 500500 or by email on: [sales@harrogateinternationalcentre.co.uk](mailto:sales@harrogateinternationalcentre.co.uk)

---

#### **CASE STUDY - THE INTERNATIONAL CENTRE, TELFORD**

Adopting a five-year schedule, The International Centre, Telford (TIC) has booked 104 national events and 69 local events in 2003-4: 28% of these are exhibitions and 72% conferences, delivering 622,000 business visitors. Eighteen months into the five-year programme, 186,760 delegates had visited Telford. On this basis, events at The International Centre will bring £71 million into the local economy by 2007. This means that, for every £1 profit made by the Centre, £78 is delivered into the economy. TIC employs 162 staff and will create another 92 jobs directly plus 236 indirectly.

For further information contact **Shaun Ormrod** by email on [shaun@ticuk.com](mailto:shaun@ticuk.com)

---

#### **CASE STUDY - LLANDUDNO**

Llandudno was successful in winning the 2004 annual conference of the British Medical Association, after several years of seeking to attract the event. The conference took place in June and attracted 500 delegates generating an economic impact of £300,000 to the town. It also had significant benefits in raising the profile of Llandudno and North Wales as a business tourism destination.

For further information contact **George Brookes** on (tel) 01492 574577 or by email: [george.brookes@conwy.gov.uk](mailto:george.brookes@conwy.gov.uk)

---

#### **CASE STUDY - ABERDEEN**

Aberdeen is well recognised as the "Energy Capital of Europe", and the recent £18m refurbishment and expansion of the Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre has enabled the city to capitalise on its wealth of expertise in this field by attracting a number of prestigious forthcoming "energy related" conferences. These include:

- 2004 All Energy Opportunities Conference & Exhibition
- 2004 Littoral Annual Conference - 250 delegates
- 2004 Remote Sensing and Photogrammetry Society -150 delegates
- 2005 World Renewable Energy Conference - 700 delegates
- 2005 International Council for Exploration of the Sea - 550 delegates
- 2005 Offshore Europe Conference & Exhibition (held in Aberdeen every second year) (25,000 delegates/visitors in one week)
- 2007 OCEANS - 800 delegates

Estimated economic value for the North East of Scotland from the above conferences alone is around £18 million.

For further information contact **Jacky Selway** at Aberdeen & Grampian Convention Bureau on 01224 2888815 or by email: [jselway@agtb.org](mailto:jselway@agtb.org)

## Section 2

# INCREASING THE TRADE POTENTIAL OF BUSINESS EVENTS AND IMPROVING BRITAIN'S POSITION AS A STAGE FOR INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

Business events are the catalyst for major economic benefits to the areas in which they are held, as well as providing the context within which billions of pounds of trade are transacted, much of which is export-related.

A prime example of economic benefit generated by a single event is the International Textile Machinery Exhibition (ITMA), held at the NEC, Birmingham in October 2003. ITMA has been assessed by consultants, KPMG, as delivering:

- Additional visitor spending in the West Midlands of £85 million
- Total UK spending estimated at £110 million
- Support for the equivalent of 1,500 jobs in the region
- 47% of its visitors through Birmingham International Airport
- 45% of visitors reporting that they were 'likely' to return and bring friends/family to Birmingham in the future
- 25% of visitors reporting that they would spend time visiting other regions of the UK
- £25 million expenditure on accommodation (mainly hotels)
- £24 million expenditure on food and drink.

Further information on ITMA is available by email from **John Cole** at the NEC: [john.cole@necgroup.co.uk](mailto:john.cole@necgroup.co.uk)

Examples of the trade benefits of business events are manifold, as exemplified by the following:

- The 'Ideal Home Show', held at Earls Court, London, attracted 426,528 visitors in 2002. The estimated total spend by visitors at the show was £147 million or £345 per visitor. The estimated total spend expected to be made after the show but as a direct result of the visit to the show was £2.1 billion or £4,929 per visitor
- The 'Spring Fair Birmingham', held at the NEC, is estimated to generate orders in the region of £1.5 billion, much of which is export-related
- There are two International Boat Shows held in the UK each year, one in London and the other in Southampton, attracting a total of almost 300,000 visitors. The combined total expenditures at the shows exceeds £2 billion
- Independent research undertaken at 'World Travel Market 2003', the international tourism industry showcase held at ExCel in London's Docklands, found that the value of orders per exhibitor averaged £872,000. There were 700 main stand holders at the show accounting for 5,000 overseas exhibitors and 264 UK and Ireland exhibitors.

Some further examples of best practice initiatives designed to increase the trade potential of business events and enhance Britain's position as a stage for such events include:

## Initiatives with UKTI

Several **Exhibition Venues Association (EVA)** members work closely with **UK Trade and Investment (UKTI)** on best practice initiatives. As an example of this, Stoneleigh Park supports UK export through its work with the International Agriculture and Technology Centre (IATC) and activities during the Royal Agricultural Society of England's (RASE) flagship event, the Royal Show. Set up in 2003 and as an association between DEFRA, UKTI, AWM and the RASE, the IATC aims to support and increase UK agricultural product and knowledge transfer to foreign partners. Attracting representatives from 100 countries and ministerial delegations from over two hundred nations, the Royal Show's involvement with UKTI is through the dozens of Inward Missions attracted each year to its international village and Global Partnerships Initiative pavilion. The pavilion attracts over 70 UK businesses aiming to enter the international market, in 2003 generating over 1,500 business leads during the show's four days.

Further information from:

- a) UKTI - **Jamie Cribb** by 'phone: 020 7215 4595 or by email to [jamie.cribb@uktradeinvest.gov.uk](mailto:jamie.cribb@uktradeinvest.gov.uk)
- b) EVA - 01670 818801 or by email to: [info@exhibitionvenues.com](mailto:info@exhibitionvenues.com)

Discussions are ongoing between the **Business Tourism Partnership** and **UKTI** about closer collaboration. Opportunities include:

- The dissemination of more information on UK events to overseas missions, encouraging their involvement in order to secure more events for the UK
- Ensuring that UKTI sector heads are fully informed of the benefits of conferences, exhibitions, incentive travel and corporate events/hospitality, working to optimise export opportunities through such events
- Mapping the current range of support schemes available to promote trade events, participation and attendance
- Enhancement of the UK Trade Fairs Information website: [www.trade.uktradeinvest.gov.uk](http://www.trade.uktradeinvest.gov.uk)
- Collaborating with International Trade Directors at a regional level
- Maximising the utilisation of event management expertise held by professional UK companies. Many of the best global companies in the areas of conference management, exhibition planning and incentive group operating are UK-based.

## The International Commercial Centre at the NEC, Birmingham

International exhibitions can foster long-term commercial links between overseas customers and British companies. They are fertile ground for inward investment. They attract British Consulate representatives from around the world. Trade fairs can also give small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) a cost-effective entrée into exporting.

At the NEC, Birmingham a new office in the concourse, known as The International Commercial Centre, has been established as a focal point. The Centre has been created by:

- UK Trade & Investment
- Advantage West Midlands
- Locate in Birmingham
- Birmingham Chamber of Commerce and Industry

A dedicated team now works alongside the organisers at each exhibition and develops initiatives for future events, including more Inward Missions.

Further information from: [john.cole@necgroup.co.uk](mailto:john.cole@necgroup.co.uk)



## VisitScotland's Partnership with Scottish Development International

**VisitScotland Business Tourism Unit** has strengthened its partnership with **Scottish Development International (SDI)** to target the overseas business community. Investment or trading links make SDI's clientèle a prime target for meetings and incentive travel to Scotland. Initiatives include:- tapping into SDI's network of overseas offices to spread awareness of Scotland's facilities for the business group travel market through specially-created marketing collateral

- business tourism features in their client newsletters
- plans for joint corporate events in key markets
- marketing to Scottish branches of overseas multinationals, and to Scottish companies with business interests overseas
- reciprocal website links

Further information from **Caroline Packman** at VisitScotland Business Tourism Unit on 0131 343 1608 or by email: [caroline.packman@visitscotland.com](mailto:caroline.packman@visitscotland.com)

### CASE STUDY: EXHIBITION SECTOR REGIONAL TRAINING EVENTS

The **Association of Exhibition Organisers' (aeo)** and the **Exhibition Venues Association's (EVA) SME** roadshow project consists of a series of regional training events which demonstrate the value of face-to-face communications through a mixture of quality presentations, visual displays and educational handouts. The training programme is being promoted by direct mail activity coupled with approaches to Business Links, Chambers of Commerce, and similar agencies. The project seeks to educate SME businesses on the value of exhibitions as a marketing and sales medium i.e. as an opportunity for direct sales, as an environment where products can be launched, existing customers met, research conducted, brand and product awareness raised and new contacts made. The events, which are of half-day duration, also provide attendees with a valuable networking opportunity. The programme receives long-term funding support from the **Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)**.

Further information from aeo (tel: 01442 873331; email: [info@aeo.org.uk](mailto:info@aeo.org.uk)) and EVA (tel: 01670 818801; email: [info@exhibitionvenues.com](mailto:info@exhibitionvenues.com)).

### CASE STUDY: EUROPEAN RESPIRATORY SOCIETY CONFERENCE

The largest medical conference ever to take place in Scotland convenes in Glasgow Autumn 2004. The 14th Annual Congress of the European Respiratory Society is expected to attract 15,000 delegates to the Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre from 4 - 8 September 2004. A combination of Glasgow's purpose-built convention centre, rapid expansion of the city's accommodation stock and close proximity to an international airport were among the factors that secured this prestigious win. As is increasingly the case, however, the involvement of a local ambassador was a deciding factor with Professor William McNee, Professor of Respiratory & Environmental Medicine at the University of Edinburgh, and Dr. Robin Stevenson of Glasgow Royal Infirmary spearheading the bid. Just under half of all convention sales made by Greater Glasgow & Clyde Valley Tourist Board's Business Tourism Unit are now attributed to the Glasgow Conference Ambassador Programme.

For further information contact **Molly Doheny** at Greater Glasgow and Clyde Valley Convention Bureau on 0141 566 4030 or by email [molly.doheny@seeglasgow](mailto:molly.doheny@seeglasgow)

## Section 3

# IMPROVING THE PROMOTION AND SUPPORT FOR BRITAIN'S BUSINESS TOURISM

Increasing Britain's success in both retaining and attracting business tourism is dependent on a number of factors. One of these is the skill with which Britain is marketed domestically and internationally, often combined with the scale and professionalism of the support available from the industry itself. This section traces some of the latest initiatives, at national, regional and local levels.

## VisitBritain

VisitBritain's international business tourism strategy has one overarching aim, namely to win new international business events for the country. Achieving and maintaining a high profile for the destination is a key factor in attaining this goal. To this end, VisitBritain produces an annual guide for international meetings and incentive organisers and books and manages the British presence at leading international business events such as 'IMEX' and 'EIBTM'.

Supported by marketing collateral and PR and on-line resources provided centrally, VisitBritain's overseas business tourism specialists focus largely on targeting best prospects in the corporate meeting and incentive sectors in their respective markets, while the London-based Business Tourism Department targets international associations and works with the exhibition industry.

VisitBritain also provides a range of marketing opportunities for tourist boards, convention bureaux, unique venues, hotels and destination management companies (DMCs), who can participate in a range of exhibitions, sales missions and other marketing initiatives aimed at bringing together UK suppliers and international buyers.

Increasingly VisitBritain works with other British interests such as UK Trade and Investment and British-European Chambers of Commerce to ensure that trade and (business) tourism are considered natural bedfellows. In 2004 VisitBritain will be paying particular attention to emerging markets such as China, Russia and India - assessing the potential for outbound group business tourism from these countries.

Further information from **Jeremy Brinkworth** at VisitBritain on 020 8563 3251 or by email: [jeremy.brinkworth@visitbritain.org](mailto:jeremy.brinkworth@visitbritain.org)

## England Marketing

The overarching 'Enjoy England' marketing strategy launched by VisitBritain in 2003 included as one of its strategic intentions: "To encourage and promote England as a quality domestic tourism product for the business market, including the evaluation of the potential for an England Convention Bureau".

On the basis of the high priority given to business tourism by respondents in the original strategic consultation, VisitBritain commissioned further research amongst the business tourism industry in Britain. The consultation exercise undertaken in 2003 revealed a deep desire for England to have a stronger voice in business tourism marketing, commensurate with current visitor numbers.

Respondents to the consultation ranked their preferred activity areas as: marketing England overseas; strategic leadership and lobbying of Central Government; research and market intelligence; and marketing England within the UK.

The strategy recommends intervention on three levels:

- winning more international/inbound business for England
- convincing British companies currently placing events overseas to consider England
- adding value to the domestic market through information provision to the client and national level intervention, when appropriate.

The first year business plan includes the creation of a meetEngland website, PR activity and a new, inspirational guide to meeting in England.

Further information from **Sarah Mayfield** at VisitBritain on 020 8563 3386 or by email: [sarah.mayfield@visitbritain.org](mailto:sarah.mayfield@visitbritain.org)

## Team Wales Approach

With many of the large events attracted to Wales, a Team Wales approach is adopted, where the Welsh Assembly, Wales Tourist Board (WTB), other major organisations such as public sector bodies, local authorities and private companies come together to help fund, assess the benefits and assist with the management of the events themselves. This approach has worked well in the case of very large events such as the Wales Rally GB, Rugby World Cup, Ryder Cup, European Summit and the City of Culture bid. WTB also works closely with the Welsh Development Agency (WDA) in attracting key conferences that relate to those industry sectors that the WDA is targeting for inward investment. The WDA, with its outreach posts in overseas countries, will identify an opportunity to hold a specific sector's annual congress in Wales. An example of this was the aerospace MRO conference held in Cardiff in 2003, which was supported by WTB.

Further information by email from: [business-tourism@tourism.wales.gov.uk](mailto:business-tourism@tourism.wales.gov.uk)

## VisitScotland's Ambitions for Tourism

Tourism in Scotland is currently worth £4.5 billion per annum, of which around 25% is accounted for by business tourism. In recognition of its potential for growth, VisitScotland has set itself and the private sector the challenge of increasing tourism revenue to Scotland by 50% by 2015. An ad hoc Ministerial Group leading a review of the Scottish tourism industry reported on its deliberations in March 2004 with the following conclusions:

- VisitScotland will receive an additional £20m funding over 3 years.  
Most of this will go on marketing Scotland in the UK and overseas to help attract more visitors to Scotland. Money will also be spent on promoting and strengthening QA schemes
- The private sector will be encouraged to match public sector support and contribute to joint marketing activities
- Area Tourist Boards and VisitScotland will form an integrated network. 14 regional tourism "hubs" will be created and integrated with VisitScotland to facilitate a flexible, streamlined support service
- There will be a customer-led approach to local services, with membership fees being phased out and tourism businesses having the ability to buy the specific support services they need from their local support network. The new hubs will link with the growing number of private sector tourism action groups across Scotland.

These initiatives demonstrate a commitment on the part of the Scottish Executive to grow all sectors of Scotland's tourism industry and will equip Scotland to meet the challenges of today's tourism marketplace. This year VisitScotland's Business Tourism Unit benefited from a 50% increase in its marketing budget and this announcement will enable continued investment in this high growth, high yield sector.

Further information from **Caroline Packman** at VisitScotland Business Tourism Unit on 0131 343 1608 or by email: [caroline.packman@visitscotland.com](mailto:caroline.packman@visitscotland.com)

## Northern Ireland Conference Support Programme

The International Fund for Ireland's Conference Support Programme is a pilot scheme initiated and administered by the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB). The scheme is designed to enhance Northern Ireland's ability to attract well established, large scale and high profile conferences and maximise the direct and indirect media, promotional and economic opportunities these conferences present. There are eight specific objectives for the Programme, which include raising the profile of Northern Ireland as a leading international conference destination in the UK; consolidating existing investment in Northern Ireland hotel and conference infrastructure; increasing the contribution of business tourism to the Northern Ireland economy; and changing the international perceptions of Northern Ireland. Large scale conferences that meet set criteria can apply for funding to cover some of their costs, especially those which relate to: venue costs; pre- and post-conference tours demonstrating regional spread across Northern Ireland; accompanying partner programmes which should have a regional spread; and pre-conference marketing costs to ensure maximum delegate attendance.

Further details from **Joanne Taylor** at NITB: tel: 028 9031 5513; email: [j.taylor@nitb.com](mailto:j.taylor@nitb.com)

## Regional Developments

While new regional structures are still evolving across all four countries of the UK, some examples of good practice already exist.

- In London, the business visitor market is currently worth around £3 billion a year. The **London Development Agency** has established a Mayoral Commission to investigate the feasibility of building a major international convention centre for the capital. The former London Tourist Board has been restructured and rebranded as Visit London, with substantially increased funding. A Business Tourism Advisory Group was set up in late 2003, to advise and support Visit London on the promotion of the sector. Funding has been identified for new research into emerging markets, and a sales manager has been appointed to focus on the North American market from a base in New York. A civic pride and civic hospitality initiative has also been launched. Website: [www.lda.gov.uk](http://www.lda.gov.uk)
- In the West Midlands, the regional development agency, **Advantage West Midlands**, has funded a number of projects overseen by a public/private sector Business Visitor Economy Group, designed to create better understanding of the potential of business tourism in the region and to deliver more business tourism activity. Projects supported have included research, event marketing, new website development, and publications. Business tourism is one of five 'themes' on which a new visitor economy strategy is based. Website: [www.advantagewm.co.uk](http://www.advantagewm.co.uk)
- In the East Midlands Nottingham has been identified as a key business tourism location. **East Midlands Tourism** is working on its business tourism plans. Website: [www.emda.org.uk](http://www.emda.org.uk)
- **South West Tourism** is preparing a business tourism strategy (having not previously been active in this sector) which will recognise the region's core propositions and tailor these for appropriate business tourism segments. Raising awareness of the region as a business tourism destination will be a crucial part of the strategy. Website: [www.southwestrda.org.uk](http://www.southwestrda.org.uk)
- **Yorkshire Forward** and the **Yorkshire Tourist Board** commissioned consultants to carry out an in-depth study of the business tourism sector with a view to identifying the most effective marketing and product development strategies for the region. The study includes a demand analysis, supplier audit, analysis of existing and potential facilities, overview of principal competitors, analysis of booking and distribution channels, recommendations for future priorities and further research. Website: [www.yorkshire-forward.com](http://www.yorkshire-forward.com)
- In North West England, five destination management organisations (DMOs) were established in April 2004 to promote each 'sub-region' and the wider region to the business and leisure tourism sectors, and to manage the development of their tourism product in a coherent and integrated way. It is anticipated that one DMO will assume lead status for business tourism, and will operate a conference bidding unit with a regional function. Initiatives are being co-ordinated by the **North West Development Agency**. Website: [www.nwda.co.uk](http://www.nwda.co.uk)
- **One North East**, the regional development agency for North East England, recognises the importance of business tourism to the region but equally that the existing destination bureaux are well placed to be the lead deliverers. One North East is likely to establish a regional delivery structure which will include business tourism but at a strategic, coordinating level. One North East has also taken the lead on a feasibility study for a regional convention centre, with Newcastle identified as the most suitable location for this. Website: [www.onenortheast.co.uk](http://www.onenortheast.co.uk)
- **Tourism South East (TSE)** is undertaking a major review of business tourism and the role which TSE can play in supporting the sector on a regional basis. As part of the review, it has been decided to wind down the 'Conference and Meetings Direct' operation in the north west of the region. Website: [www.seeda.co.uk](http://www.seeda.co.uk)

- In the East of England region, the **East of England Tourist Board** and the **East of England Development Agency** (EEDA) commissioned a consultant to report on the potential for business tourism in the region. The main conclusion from this has been that much of the marketing for conferences and meetings should take place at the local destination level but that there is a regional role in raising the profile of the East of England as a meetings destination, capitalising on good access, airports and a sense of space. There is an opportunity to build on the East of England 'Space for Ideas' brand for the business tourism sector as the markets and aims are complementary. Website: [www.eeda.org.uk](http://www.eeda.org.uk)
- In Wales similar regional changes are taking place, administered via four regional tourism partnerships.

### **Venuemasters' Marketing Audit**

**Venuemasters** offers a marketing audit advisory and support service to its member venues. Venues interested in this service complete a questionnaire providing information under headings covering: market research, marketing strategy, marketing plan (with separate sections for product, price, promotion and placement), and database management. The completed questionnaire is submitted to Venuemasters' executive office for their comments and feedback. The objective is to assist venues in examining their operations, benchmark against the competition and identify any areas for improvement. Further details: [info@venuemasters.co.uk](mailto:info@venuemasters.co.uk)

### **Business Extenders**

The economic impact of business tourism goes far beyond what business visitors spend on attending meetings, conferences, exhibitions and incentive programmes. There is considerable additional income to be earned through:

1. Extending visits to the destination in order to enjoy the cultural/shopping/sightseeing attractions of the area
2. Accompanying guests who engage in leisure tourism activities, often through an organised "guest or partner programme"
3. Networking events as part of a social and recreational programme
4. Return visits, estimated to be as high as 40%, with spouses, families and friends for holidays and short breaks, as well as encouraging others to do so.

Further information on business extenders is available on the Business Tourism Partnership website: [www.businesstourismpartnership.com](http://www.businesstourismpartnership.com)

## WINNING BUSINESS FOR BRITAIN

The following case studies give examples of how specific business events are being won for Britain.

### **CASE STUDY: COMPETITIVE EDGE FOR INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE BIDS**

VisitBritain provides bid-winning support for British conference bids. It does this by assisting conference organising committees with free and impartial destination advice, introductions to convention service providers and documentation on how best to approach the bidding process.

For conferences of 1,000 or more participants, where there is an internationally competitive bidding process, VisitBritain will seek letters from Government for inclusion in bid documentation. There may also be opportunities for bid receptions for the selection committee at the British Embassy or High Commission in the city in which the bid decision is being made.

Further information by email from **Jeremy Brinkworth** at VisitBritain: [jeremy.brinkworth@visitbritain.org](mailto:jeremy.brinkworth@visitbritain.org)

### **CASE STUDY: MANCHESTER'S 'CONFERENCE AMBASSADOR PROGRAMME'**

The Manchester Conference Ambassador Programme is a partnership initiative between Marketing Manchester Visitor and Convention Bureau (MMCVB), the four universities of Greater Manchester and the professional, medical and academic communities across the city.

The aim of the programme is to attract national and international professional association conferences to the city, by identifying an academic who is a locally-based member of an association and offering this person free assistance to bid for and host the meeting in Manchester. MMCVB also carries out local research in the universities, collaborates with the university conference offices, and key faculty research and development staff to inform academics of the free support available.

The programme relies heavily on research to identify potential associations which hold regular meetings. This is mainly done via the Internet, Union of International Associations (UIA) data and ICCA data (International Congress and Convention Association). Once a meeting has been identified, further research is carried out to identify a Manchester-based academic to approach, with a view to bidding for the conference.

Hosting a national or international conference requires substantial resources and specialist knowledge of conference organisation. As many Ambassadors are very high profile in their field, they tend to have extremely heavy workloads. It is often the initial assistance provided by MMCVB that gets the project off the ground and acts as a catalyst in the decision to bid.

MMCVB's support is free and includes the following:

- preparing the bid document and any supporting materials
- supporting bid presentations
- hosting selection committee visits to the city
- identifying and booking the most suitable meeting venue
- helping with social programme arrangements e.g. dinners, receptions, partner programmes
- operating a delegate hotel booking service
- providing Manchester 'copy', imagery etc. to help promote the destination to potential delegates.

The programme was established in 1999 and to date has attracted 14,354 delegates and generated £11.7 million in economic benefit to the city. There are currently 10 conference decisions pending, representing a further 7,615 delegates and £7.5 million in economic benefit.

Further details are available from **Jo Glenton** at MMCVB by email: [jo.glenton@marketing-manchester.co.uk](mailto:jo.glenton@marketing-manchester.co.uk)

## CASE STUDY

### The International Confederation of Midwives, 2008

In many respects this is a classic case study for business tourism leading to a successful bid.

It began with desk research by the International Association Sales Executive of Greater Glasgow & Clyde Valley Tourist Board's Convention Bureau (GG&CVTBCB), researching through databases such as that of the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA), to identify those large medical conferences that had not been held in the UK for a number of years. These were matched with conference subject matters where the UK had expertise and a strong UK association in place. This research brought up the International Confederation of Midwives, among others.

The GG&CVTBCB's Ambassador Executive then set about identifying through local research a potential Ambassador. The ideal candidate was found at Glasgow University: Professor of Midwifery, Edith Hillan. Professor Hillan was a member of the Royal College of Midwives Executive Board and a leading academic in this field. The Manager of the Convention Bureau and Ambassador Executive then met Professor Hillan and outlined the support that the Bureau and city would give to the Royal College should they be persuaded to put forward a bid.

The Manager and International Association Executive next travelled to The Hague where the head office of the International Confederation of Midwives is based and met the Secretary General. They went to assess the likelihood of a UK bid being successful and to find out as much as possible about both the international association and the bid procedure so that they could report back to their local Ambassador with valuable market intelligence. Professor Hillan duly presented to the Executive Council and it was agreed that the Royal College would bid with Glasgow as the chosen UK destination.

The Bureau worked with the Royal College and the proposed venue - the Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre - to produce the bid presentation, which was to be given by Dame Karlene Davis: the General Secretary of the Royal College. The bid was to take place in Vienna in 2002 and the competing destinations were Montreal and Buenos Aires.

In preparation for the bid and despite the six years' lead time, GG&CVTBCB had to work closely with their local accommodation and transportation suppliers to put together a bid package that would satisfy the needs of the midwives and their professional conference organiser, Congrex Holdings.

2002 was the centenary of the Royal College. Working with support from their colleagues at VisitBritain and VisitScotland, GG&CVTBCB were able to lay on a reception in Vienna prior to the bid which was hosted by the British Ambassador. For the bid presentation itself, a short video was produced in which the Prime Minister spoke encouraging delegates to vote for Glasgow. The presentation was preceded by a piper piping delegates into the auditorium, giving an immediate flavour of Scotland. Glasgow was successful and looks forward to welcoming the Midwives in 2008.

Further details from **Molly Doheny** at Greater Glasgow & Clyde Valley Convention Bureau on 0141 566 4030 or by email: [molly.doheny@seeglasgow.com](mailto:molly.doheny@seeglasgow.com)

## CASE STUDY

### **MPI European Conference**

In March 2004 Edinburgh hosted the 2004 Meeting Professionals International (MPI) European Professional Education Conference (PEC). MPI provides one of the leading educational and networking resources in the international meetings industry. The conference brought together over 500 of Europe's elite meeting planners who had total buying power in the region of £500 million. Therefore, if just 1 percent of delegates were to book conferences in Edinburgh as a result of attending MPI PEC-Europe, there would be a direct benefit to the city of £5 million, with potential spin-offs for Scotland and the UK as a whole. The attendance was the highest ever recorded for this event, 20 percent more than the previous record when the conference was held in Paris in 2001.

Close partnership working between the public and private sectors formed the basis of the successful bid and organisation of this conference. The Host Committee comprised representatives of Edinburgh Convention Bureau, Edinburgh & Lothians Tourist Board, Edinburgh International Conference Centre, Edinburgh Principal Hotels Association, VisitScotland Business Tourism Unit, Historic Scotland, Meeting Makers, VisitBritain, the City of Edinburgh Council and MPI itself.

Further information from **Sue Stuart** at Edinburgh Convention Bureau on 0131 473 3600 or by email: **[s.stuart@eltb.org](mailto:s.stuart@eltb.org)**



## Section 4

### RAISING STANDARDS AND COMPETITIVENESS

There is a wide range of education, training and quality programmes in existence, all of which have, as one of their underlying objectives, the aim of raising standards and enhancing the competitiveness of individual companies and of the industry as a whole. The following examples give a flavour of the diversity and content of current programmes.

#### ICCA UK & Ireland Chapter Debates

**ICCA UK & Ireland Chapter** Summer and Winter debates are part of a series of continuing seminars and debates focusing on specific and current themes of interest to the international meetings industry and are open to Chapter members and other selected meetings professionals by invitation. The theme for the Summer 2004 debate, held in London, was 'Maximising Delegate Expenditure', while the Winter 2003 debate took place in Newcastle Gateshead and focused on the impact and legacy of bidding for major events.

Further information from: [jeremy.brinkworth@visitbritain.org](mailto:jeremy.brinkworth@visitbritain.org)

#### Welcome Business Host Scheme

The **Wales Tourist Board's** 'Welcome Business Host Scheme' has been specifically developed for the tourism industry and is co-ordinated by the Business Support Unit of WTB. The Scheme is offered to all venues participating in the Business Class Scheme (see Case Study). The training programme is focused on meeting the needs of the business market and improving customer care facilities and the quality of service given to business guests.

Further information by email from: [business-tourism@tourism.wales.gov.uk](mailto:business-tourism@tourism.wales.gov.uk)

#### WTB Database Management (DMS)

The Wales Tourist Board has a highly developed destination management system which provides comprehensive information on the product in Wales and the ability to book any product or type of holiday online. This is also supported by the VisitWales call centre which not only provides a booking and enquiry service but additional support services to the industry in Wales.

Further information by email from: [business-tourism@tourism.wales.gov.uk](mailto:business-tourism@tourism.wales.gov.uk)

#### Best Practice Forum

The Best Practice Forum is a strategic alliance of key industry associations and partners, established in 2001. Its aim is to encourage small and micro-size businesses in the tourism, hospitality and leisure industry to introduce new ideas and innovation by adopting or adapting best practice - so raising quality, productivity and competitiveness to 'world class' levels ([www.bestpracticeforum.org](http://www.bestpracticeforum.org)).

Further information from the British Hospitality Association: 020 7404 7744 or by email to [bob.cotton@bha.org.uk](mailto:bob.cotton@bha.org.uk) and from the Meetings Industry Association: 01386 751137 or by email to [mia@meetings.org](mailto:mia@meetings.org)

## Careers Fair

In October 2003, as part of 'National Meetings Week', the **Association for Conferences and Events** (ACE) held the first Careers Fair for the conference and event industry in London. The Fair was designed as a conference industry awareness day for students at university or college. It was also open to those already at work who were considering a possible career change. The Fair provided opportunities for visitors to learn about the different types of careers available within the conference and events sector. It was preceded by a seminar on 'Getting Started'. Approximately 250 people visited the Fair, and the second Fair is being planned for 4 October 2004, again as part of 'National Meetings Week'. It is also hoped to repeat the Fair in the north of England in the future. In May 2004 ACE held a seminar 'So You Want to be a Conference Organiser' for a group of aspiring conference organisers. This was the first of a series of seminars planned to assist beginners and those with some experience in the conference and event industry.

Further information from ACE: 01480 457595 or by email: [ace@martex.co.uk](mailto:ace@martex.co.uk)

## Creating Accessible Events

The **Association of British Professional Conference Organisers** is contributing to an initiative spearheaded by the Disability Rights Commission, and supported by Tourism for All, to provide best practice guidance for conference organisers and conference venues on how to make events fully accessible and compliant with the legislation embodied in the Disability Discrimination Act, which comes into force in October 2004. The initiative will lead to the publication of guidance notes in hard copy and web-based formats, due by early Autumn 2004. A series of roadshows is also being developed to take the message about the importance of creating fully accessible events around Britain.

Further information from the Disability Rights Commission ([www.drc-gb.org](http://www.drc-gb.org)), Tourism for All ([www.tourismforall.info](http://www.tourismforall.info)) (Tourism for All advice line: tel 08451 249974), and ABPCO tel: 0121 212 1400 or by email to [information@abpc.org](mailto:information@abpc.org)

## First National Business Tourism Conference

The First National Business Tourism Conference, entitled 'Developing Competitiveness in the UK', was held in London in November 2003. The conference was developed and organised by Index Communications Meeting Services, with endorsement from the Business Tourism Partnership. The opening address was given by HRH the Duke of York, and the conference included a number of plenary presentations, panel discussions, and workshops elaborating the overall theme. The Second National Conference on Business Tourism in the UK, 'Inform, Inspire, Enable: Creating Direction, Managing Change', is scheduled to take place in Nottingham on 15-16 November 2004. Further details: [www.businesstourismuk.com](http://www.businesstourismuk.com)

## Exhibition Marketing Benchmarking Project

Exhibition organisers spend millions of pounds each year marketing their shows. In order to measure and benchmark their individual marketing proficiency, twelve organisers met under an **Association of Exhibition Organisers** (aeo) umbrella to scrutinise a range of costs, including marketing, sales, operations and overheads. As a result of this innovative collaboration, participating organiser companies have been able to identify ways of improving efficiency and saving money. Organisers are able to compare their own costs with industry averages using an extensive set of variables. This benchmarking project, carried out independently by a leading inter-firm comparison company, took over six months to complete.

Further information from aeo: 01442 873331 or by email: [info@aeo.org.uk](mailto:info@aeo.org.uk)

## Hospitality Assured Meetings

Hospitality Assured Meetings (HA-M) is the professional standard for service excellence championed by the **Meetings Industry Association** (mia) and the Hotel and Catering International Management Association (HCIMA), and is endorsed by the British Quality Foundation and the Quality Scotland Foundation. It focuses on the customer experience within the meetings environment and provides the conference organiser/delegate with an assurance that their needs and expectations will be met by the venue. The process undertaken to assess an organisation's achievement of the HA-M standard is a rigorous one, combining external assessments with customer evaluations. For the customer, it presents the opportunity for them to do business with a meetings venue where the service experience is guaranteed. More globally, for the meetings industry as a whole, the standard provides a solid platform on which to further raise standards across the entire sector. For venues and service providers, HA-M accreditation gives them a competitive advantage that can make a significant difference in this highly competitive market.

Further information from MIA: 01386 751137 or by email: [mia@meetings.org](mailto:mia@meetings.org)

## Scottish Enterprise Business Tourism Conference 2003

In November 2003 Scottish Enterprise held the first national Business Tourism Conference for Scotland's industry, which was attended by 200 delegates from the various strands of this sector. With the theme "Exceeding the Expectations of the Conference & Meetings Market", this high profile event was developed in partnership with **VisitScotland Business Tourism Unit**, the area convention bureaux, and the private sector. Speakers included best practice examples from NH Hotels, Somerset House, Edinburgh International Conference Centre and the Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre. A customer perspective was provided by keynote speaker Karlitz & Company, a New York-based international event management company. Follow-up evaluation showed that 77% of delegates felt the conference will make an impact on the way they and their business work; whilst 86% shared the messages with colleagues on return to the workplace. A second conference is planned for 23 November 2004.

For further information contact **Stella Callaghan** on 0141 566 4031 or by email [stella.callaghan@seeglasgow.com](mailto:stella.callaghan@seeglasgow.com)

## Scottish Enterprise Short Courses for the Business Tourism sector

Following on from their successful Business Tourism Conference in November 2003, Scottish Enterprise currently offer a range of short courses to raise standards of professionalism within the business tourism sector. These practical training workshops offer an opportunity to network and share good practice. Topics include:

- Meetings & Events Sales for Increased Profit
- The Successful Showround - The Successful Booking
- Event Management: Maximising Your Venue.

Around 140 delegates have attended this series of courses, from a variety of venues including academic venues, hotels, unusual venues and conference centres. Further topics are planned for 2004/2005.

For further information contact **Stella Callaghan** on 0141 566 4031 or by email [stella.callaghan@seeglasgow.com](mailto:stella.callaghan@seeglasgow.com)

## CASE STUDY ON QUALITY: WTB BUSINESS CLASS SCHEME

In 2003 the **Wales Tourist Board** launched the new Business Class accreditation scheme which seeks to inspect and award venues with either a Platinum, Gold or Silver grading for either their meeting rooms and/or business class bedrooms. Meeting venues in Wales are as diverse as the country itself. Be it a large conference venue or a more intimate meeting room in a country house hotel, the new scheme aims to inform the potential business traveller or conference organiser what standards of business meeting facility or bedroom accommodation a venue can provide. To date 75 venues have been awarded the business class accreditation. It is WTB's policy that all meeting venues/hotels which have received capital funding/grants for new developments or upgrading of their establishment must participate in the Business Class Scheme.

Further information by email from: [business-tourism@tourism.wales.gov.uk](mailto:business-tourism@tourism.wales.gov.uk)

---

## CASE STUDY ON IMPROVING STANDARDS AND COMPETITIVENESS: TENDERING GUIDELINES

The **Association of British Professional Conference Organisers** (ABPCO) has published guidelines for clients who are seeking to outsource their events to a professional conference organiser (PCO). Entitled 'Guidance on Tendering for Conference and Exhibition Support Services', the specialist documentation sets out the practical steps involved in selecting and appointing a PCO, in order to ensure the best return on both the time and costs invested in this process. The guidelines cover the drafting of a briefing document, the methodology for shortlisting and then contacting a limited number of PCOs, information on the likely content of tenders received, procedures for interviewing and selecting the most appropriate PCO, and advice on the provision of feedback to unsuccessful candidates. The guidelines are one of a series of specialist documentation designed to enhance professionalism in the meetings and events sector, and can be accessed online at [www.abpco.org](http://www.abpco.org). ABPCO is working on other guidance notes including a set on health and safety aspects of conference management.

For further information contact ABPCO on 0121 212 1400 or by email: [information@abpco.org](mailto:information@abpco.org)

---

## CASE STUDY ON IMPROVING STANDARDS: THE 'SEXI' INITIATIVE

The **Association of Exhibition Organisers** (aeo) and the **Exhibition Venues Association** (EVA) have given great impetus to the 'Sustainable Exhibition Industry Initiative' (SEXI). The SEXI project was originally launched in 2002 to focus on the reduction of waste within the exhibition sector, and to encourage the adoption and development of "green" credentials by both venues and organisers. Innovations already introduced as a result of SEXI cover many more aspects than simply reducing the amount of waste generated and sent to landfill sites. The large exhibition venues are striving to make closer contact with their customers on the waste management challenge, but this is a complex task and some aspects can only be changed when waste-contractor contracts are due for renewal. But real progress is being achieved.

In Harrogate, for example, the International Centre (HIC) has introduced training programmes for front line staff, covering such issues as waste reduction, recycling and offering free advice to exhibition contractors and exhibitors. The Centre has also teamed up with a local waste management company, to explore re-cycling of waste. As a result, the volume of waste has been reduced and the Centre claims that now 95% is sent for re-cycling. A large amount of cardboard and paper is compacted on-site and then sent to Scotland for use in the manufacture of plasterboards. In November 2003 HIC received an accreditation award from The Institute of Energy for achievements in Energy Efficiency. The award recognises the excellent work undertaken by HIC staff in reducing energy consumption and the introduction of energy efficient systems.

In Birmingham, the NEC has a huge waste management operation - and a big communications task in working with over 100 different organisers each year and 40,000 exhibiting companies. Contracts between venue and organisers have been rewritten to give real incentive for organisers to manage their hall tenancies more efficiently, with regard to waste. Encouragement is being given to organisers to feature more strongly the rules of best-practice in their manuals for exhibitors. There is also a big awareness and education task with visitors to minimise the dumping of literature.

Doncaster Exhibition & Conference Centre has also committed to the principles of SEXI with an on-going programme of waste reduction, recycling and energy-saving. As well as training for its own staff, the Centre offers advice to organisers, exhibitors and contractors to help reduce waste, conserve energy resources and make the whole operation more eco-friendly.

The Centre has invested in a waste compaction unit and works closely with Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council to cut generation of non-recyclable waste and increase the proportion of waste that goes for recycling.

Further information from:

a) aeo by phone to 01442 873331 or by email: [info@aeo.org.uk](mailto:info@aeo.org.uk)

b) EVA by phone to 01670 818801 or by email to: [info@exhibitionvenues.com](mailto:info@exhibitionvenues.com)

## Section 5

# PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

This section takes a look at a number of initiatives which have a particular relevance to the future development of the business tourism sector, in areas such as research, innovation and creativity, and product investment.

## A. RESEARCH

### UK Associations Research

The **British Association of Conference Destinations** manages an ongoing research programme (begun in 2001) which monitors the conference activity and buying behaviour of all the major UK associations. Over 3000 associations have been profiled and their meetings information is stored in a database for easy retrieval. The research enables key trends within the association conference sector to be monitored, and also assists destinations and venues to tailor their marketing and communications according to the associations' own requirements.

Further information from BACD by phone 0121 212 1400 or by email to: [info@bacd.org.uk](mailto:info@bacd.org.uk)

### VisitScotland Research Projects

VisitScotland's Business Tourism Unit (VSBTU) views the gathering and dissemination of market research as one of its key priorities, firstly to guide its own resource allocation to ensure maximum return on investment, and secondly to enable it to advise the private sector on market trends and emerging opportunities. Two major research projects are currently underway:

- Brand Development Research

One of the first tasks of the BTU upon its creation in May 2003 was to begin work on developing a "brand" for Scotland's business tourism. In order to refine Scotland's competitive positioning in business tourism and develop appropriate marketing propositions for the association, corporate and incentive sectors, a series of workshops was held with area convention bureaux and the private sector. The output from these, together with key messages and associated visual imagery, is now being validated among potential buyers in each sector. The intention is that through securing buy-in from the private sector and intermediaries, Scotland can be marketed in a consistent, compelling way for maximum impact.

- Bid Conversion Research

To support the work of the area convention bureaux, research has been commissioned by the BTU among International Associations to determine the key success factors in winning bids, and to establish ways in which Scotland's competitiveness could be enhanced.

Further information on both of the above from **Caroline Packman** at VisitScotland Business Tourism Unit on 0131 343 1608 or by email: [caroline.packman@visitscotland.com](mailto:caroline.packman@visitscotland.com)

## B. INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY

### Development of New Technology Capabilities

Some **Exhibition Venues Association** (EVA) members are already in the high-tech vanguard adopting systems and equipment dedicated to making life easier for organisers and contractors and giving show visitors crucial value-added visitor experiences. Along with other principal venues, Harrogate International Centre continues to adopt and utilise new technology as part of the evolution of its communications systems: booking diaries, an interactive website, a cyber café and CAD facilities are all used on-site alongside accommodation booking services.

A new NEC service - IntelligeNECe - makes heavy use of the latest cutting-edge technologies. The service helps exhibitors to enhance their stand presence and brings together features such as telephony, broadband internet access, video conferencing, e-mail and live web demonstrations. All these are made possible via one of Europe's most sophisticated fibre optic networks.

Further information from EVA by phone 01670 818801 or by email: [info@exhibitionvenues.com](mailto:info@exhibitionvenues.com)

### Enquiry Referral Software

The **British Association of Conference Destinations**, along with almost half of its 80 member conference bureaux (to date), now use a standard software program to disseminate business leads and enquiries to the venues they represent. Known as 'Chaser', the program (developed by Velvet Software Ltd) automatically distributes enquiries to the venues that match client criteria. It also provides a co-ordinated response to the client, generates management data and reports, and aggregates the economic value of business being handled by the bureaux. Many other bureaux are interested in purchasing the 'Chaser' system and this will in due course offer the potential for a fully integrated referral system across the 80 destinations and 3000 conference venues represented by BACD. It will also provide a methodology for calculating in a more consistent way than hitherto the value of meetings business being handled by the UK's conference bureaux and desks.

Further information from BACD by phone 0121 212 1400 or by email to: [info@bacd.org.uk](mailto:info@bacd.org.uk)

## C. PRODUCT INVESTMENT

Investment by the UK's leading exhibition and conference venues, in new and improved facilities and services, continues at an increasing pace as global competition becomes ever more intense. The following examples highlight the scale of investment in respect of the larger, mostly purpose-built venues and facilities. Similar levels of investment are also taking place among hotels, academic venues, and many of the unique venues around the UK.

- The Mayor of London has established a Commission to investigate the feasibility of developing a major **International Convention Centre for London**, either as a new facility or as an extension to an existing centre. It is anticipated that the Commission will publish its recommendations in 2005
- **Harrogate International Centre** is developing new meeting rooms/breakout space above the Exhibition Halls with completion anticipated by early 2005. This follows building of the new Hall M, new entrance to Hall A, installation of air conditioning, creation of a new linkway building and major investments in new banqueting kitchens and additional catering outlets
- **Stoneleigh Park**, near Coventry, has drawn up plans for additional purpose-built exhibition space complemented by modern attractive conference and meeting rooms. The existing facilities are to be upgraded and complemented by a multi-purpose arena with permanent seating for up to 10,000 and capable of hosting exhibitions, concerts, equine events, an ice rink, sports pitches, and stage spectaculars

- **Bournemouth International Centre** has embarked on an £18 million expansion, redevelopment and refurbishment scheme. This includes the addition of an extra 1500 sqm of flexible multi-purpose space, accommodating up to 3,500 extra people; expansion of the main Windsor Hall to provide seating for 4,300 people; a further 1000 sqm of meeting/breakout rooms; and refurbishment of the foyer, catering areas, bars and front of house facilities. The redevelopment is expected to create over 1,300 extra jobs and an economic benefit of £21 million a year
- Investments in **Doncaster** include the new Finningley International Airport which is due to open in Spring 2005, and the Town Moor Development - a £55 million transformation of Doncaster Racecourse & Exhibition Centre to provide better facilities for horse racing, a new golf clubhouse, a 200-bed four-star hotel and a new purpose-built conference & exhibition centre. Work on this starts in late 2005
- The **Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre (SECC)** in Glasgow has announced a £350 million development programme. Named QD2 because it marks the second redevelopment of Queen's Dock, the plans aim to transform the SECC's 64-acre site into a complete exhibition, conference and entertainments complex. ([www.QD2.co.uk](http://www.QD2.co.uk))
- **The Sage, Gateshead** is a new £70 million music and conference centre located on the south bank of the River Tyne catering for 1700 delegates, due to open Winter 2004-5
- **Blackpool's** ambitious plans to transform itself into a casino resort destination include the construction of a new convention centre and convention hotels, forming part of a £1.5 billion resort regeneration programme
- **The North Wales Conference Centre, Llandudno** is planning (subject to final funding approval) an enhancement of its public and back-of-house space, some additional conference rooms, and a 16/18,000 square metre clear span arena/exhibition venue. The work is scheduled for completion by January 2007, and will cost £10.5 million
- **ExCel** in London's Docklands is to invest £2.5 million re-developing its Conference Centre, increasing space by 50% to accommodate up to 1200 people. Further conference facility developments are planned for 2005 and 2006
- **The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre** in Westminster is undergoing a £5 million refurbishment programme, including its foyer area and air conditioning system - due for completion in 2005
- **The Coventry Arena** is under construction at a cost of £60 million, on a site adjacent to the M6 motorway. Due for completion in August 2005, the facilities include a state-of-the-art 32,000 all-seater stadium (which will be the home of Coventry City Football Club), 6,000 square metres of exhibition and concert hall space, 3,000 square metres of conference and banqueting space, 70 hotel rooms and a major casino resort
- **The Villa Marina** on the Isle of Man re-opened in April 2004 following a £15 million re-development and refurbishment. The Villa Marina is the largest venue on the island and can accommodate up to 1500 people for a conference
- Construction of the new **Perth Concert Hall** is due for completion in Autumn 2005, bringing a purpose-built concert and conference facility to the city, capable of seating 1200 people. The building will cost £18 million
- In the Scottish Highlands, the re-development of the Aviemore Highland Resort is due for completion in July 2004, and includes the **Aviemore Highland Conference Centre** with an auditorium offering raked seating for up to 650 people. There will also be a 1000 square metre exhibition hall, a ballroom and a leisure complex.



## Section 6

# BUSINESS TOURISM PARTNERSHIP (BTP)

## BTP MISSION

The mission of the Business Tourism Partnership (BTP) is:

'To lead the way in supporting a competitive, high quality and more profitable business tourism sector in Britain'.

## FUTURE DIRECTION OF THE BUSINESS TOURISM PARTNERSHIP

Discussions took place in April 2004 among members of the BTP about the Partnership's future strategic direction. Agreement was reached that the key areas on which the Partnership should focus were as follows:

### **a. Lobby for greater funding and resources for business tourism promotion**

This would be through encouraging greater government allocation of funds to its tourism and trade agencies for overseas and domestic activity. The Partnership would support VisitScotland and the Wales Tourist Board in their endeavours with their respective legislatures, including Scottish Enterprise and the Welsh Development Agency

### **b. Co-ordination of research activity and information sharing**

Suggested areas for involvement:

- Identify and map best available research in each sector
- Provide a template for future research projects
- Ensure relevant information was sought in sector research to assist an holistic approach to business tourism
- Pulling together economic impact studies

### **c. Direct Representation on the Sector Skills Council & Best Practice Forum**

The Partnership should promote industry-relevant education programmes, courses and training

### **d. Encourage higher standards and competitiveness**

The Partnership should encourage members to adopt progressive codes of conduct for their members and share best practices including better use of technology, innovative business practices and creative business events

### **e. Scope investment activity**

The Partnership should monitor and collate investment information.

## **BTP MEMBERSHIP**

Membership of the Business Tourism Partnership (as at July 2004) comprised:

### **Association for Conferences and Events**

Riverside House, High Street, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE29 3SG

**T:** 01480-457595; **F:** 01480-412863; **E:** ace@martex.co.uk; **W:** www.martex.co.uk/ace

*The Association for Conferences and Events (ACE) acts as an information centre and forum for member organisations involved in the organising, marketing, accommodation and servicing of events. ACE also organises training courses on aspects of event planning and management.*

### **Association of British Professional Conference Organisers**

6th Floor, Charles House, 148-149 Great Charles Street, Birmingham, B3 3HT

**T:** 0121-212-1400; **F:** 0121 212 3131; **E:** information@abpc.org **W:** www.abpc.org

*The Association of British Professional Conference Organisers (ABPCO) provides marketing, networking, education and representation services for its members, and is the only association in the UK whose membership comprises exclusively Professional Conference Organisers.*

### **Association of Exhibition Organisers**

113 High Street, Berkhamsted, Herts, HP4 2DJ

**T:** 01442-873331; **F:** 01442-875551; **E:** info@aeo.org.uk; **W:** www.aeo.org.uk

*The aeo (Association of Exhibition Organisers) is the trade body representing exhibition organisers in the UK and internationally. It has over 200 members, and is an independent association predominantly funded by member subscriptions. Its mission is to increase the significance of exhibitions within the marketing mix and to satisfy the needs of exhibitors/visitors.*

### **British Association of Conference Destinations**

6th Floor Charles House, 148-149 Great Charles Street, Birmingham, B3 3HT

**T:** 0121-212-1400; **F:** 0121-212-3131; **E:** info@bacd.org.uk; **W:** www.bacd.org.uk

*The British Association of Conference Destinations (BACD) seeks to support and market the supply side of the British conference industry. Activities include collaborative marketing with members, publications, databases, research, education and training, and representation.*

### **British Hospitality Association**

Queen's House, 55-56 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, WC2A 3BH

**T:** 020 7404 7744; **F:** 020 7404 7799; **E:** bob.cotton@bha.org.uk **W:** www.bha-online.org.uk

*The British Hospitality Association (BHA) represents the hotel, restaurant and catering industry, which has a total turnover of some £60 billion. Members range from major groups to individually-owned businesses and employ around 400,000 people.*

### **British Incoming Tour Operators Association**

14 Leicester Place, London, WC2H 7BZ

**T:** 020 7734 9569; **F:** 020 7287 3217; **E:** mailbox@bitoa.co.uk; **W:** www.bitoa.co.uk

*The British Incoming Tour Operators' Association (BITOA) is the official trade body representing Britain's tourism industry. Members include tour operators, hoteliers, attractions, heritage sites and national and regional tourist boards.*

### **Business Tourism Scotland**

c/o Mike Closier, Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre, Glasgow G3 8YW

**T:** 0141 248 3000; **F:** 0141 226 3423; **E:** Mike.closier@secc.co.uk

*Business Tourism Scotland (BTS) is a membership body for companies and organisations working in the sector in Scotland. Activities include an annual conference, networking, and lobbying to create a greater awareness of business tourism across Scotland.*

### **Exhibition Venues Association**

15 Keeble Court, Fairmeadows, North Seaton, Northumberland NE63 9SF

**T:** 01670 818801; **F:** 01670 854445; **E:** info@exhibitionvenues.com;

**W:** www.exhibitionvenues.com

*The Exhibition Venues Association (EVA) represents the leading exhibition venues in the UK and Ireland. Activities include lobbying, marketing and information sharing.*

### **Incentive Travel and Meetings Association**

26-28 Station Road, Redhill, Surrey RH1 1PD

**T:** 01737 779928; **F:** 01737 779749; **E:** info@itma-online.org; **W:** www.itma-online.org

*The Incentive Travel and Meetings Association (ITMA) is the representative body for those organisations specialising in the provision of motivational travel programmes and corporate events.*

### **International Congress and Convention Association (UK & Ireland Chapter)**

Jeremy Brinkworth, Acting Chair, Business Tourism Department, VisitBritain, Thames Tower, Black's Road, London W6 9EL

**T:** 020 8563 3033; **F:** 020 8563 3257; **E:** Jeremy.brinkworth@visitbritain.org

*The International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) provides an international network for meetings professionals (members include PCOs, venues/destinations, airlines and travel agents). It maintains a database of international association and corporate events.*

### **Meeting Professionals International - UK Chapter**

C/o Gary England, Barbican Centre, Silk Street, London EC2Y 8DS

**T:** 020 7382 7043; **F:** 020 7382 7237; **E:** conference@barbican.org.uk **W:** www.mpiuk.org

*Meeting Professionals International (MPI) ([www.mpiweb.org](http://www.mpiweb.org)) is the largest association for the meeting profession in the world with 18,000 members in 66 chapters and affiliates. MPI UK is the largest chapter outside North America and offers professional development, networking and increased business opportunities through a regional programme nationwide.*

### **Meetings Industry Association**

Deer Park, Woollas Hall, Eckington, Worcestershire, WR10 3DN

**T:** 01386 751137; **F:** 01386 751327; **E:** mia@meetings.org; **W:** www.meetings.org

*The Meetings Industry Association (MIA) provides training opportunities in response to the needs of its members to help improve business performance, and is pioneering 'Hospitality Assured Meetings'. Has almost 700 members from the supply side of British conference industry. Supports industry research and lobbying, and provides joint marketing opportunities for its members.*

### **National Outdoor Events Association**

7 Hamilton Way, Wallington, Surrey, SM6 9NJ

**T:** 020 8669 8121; **F:** 020 8647 1128; **E:** Secretary@noea.org.uk **W:** www.noea.org.uk

*The National Outdoor Events Association (NOEA) is the forum for the world of outdoor events representing local authorities, show organisers, promoters, event management companies, venue owners, charities, suppliers of equipment and services together with entertainment agencies, consultants and practitioners in general.*

### **Northern Ireland Tourist Board**

Northern Ireland Conference Bureau, St Anne's Court, 59 North Street, Belfast BT1 1NB

**T:** 028 9023 1221; **F:** 028 9031 5544; **E:** nicb@nitb.com; **W:** www.convention-nireland.com

### **Venuemasters**

The Workstation, 15 Paternoster Row, Sheffield, S1 2BX

**T:** 0114 249 3090; **F:** 0114 249 3091; **E:** info@venuemasters.co.uk; **W:** www.venuemasters.co.uk

*Venuemasters promotes the facilities available to event organisers at 100 universities and colleges located throughout the UK. Organisers can use the company's Free Enquiry Service to check availability and other details and discover how 'finding the right venue is academic'.*

### **VisitBritain**

Business Tourism Department, Thames Tower, Black's Road, Hammersmith, London W6 9EL

**T:** 020 8563 3251; **F:** 020 8563 3257; **E:** jeremy.brinkworth@visitbritain.org;

**W:** www.visitbritain.com

*VisitBritain is the national tourist office of the UK, responsible for promoting the UK as a leisure and business tourism destination to overseas markets. A dedicated Business Tourism Department operates from London and there are specialist Business Tourism personnel in eight regional 'hubs' around the world.*

### **Visit London Business and Conventions**

2 More London Riverside, London, SE1 2RR

**T:** 020 7234 5800; **F:** 020 7378 6525 **E:** dhornby@visitlondon.com

**W:** www.visitlondon.com/business

*Visit London Business and Conventions is the statutory body charged with the promotion of London as a business tourism destination.*

### **VisitScotland Business Tourism Unit**

23 Ravelston Terrace, Edinburgh EH4 3TP

**T:** 0131 343 1608; **F:** 0131 343 1844; **E:** business tourism@visitscotland.com

**W:** www.conventionscotland.com

*The Business Tourism Unit of VisitScotland promotes Scotland as an attractive destination for conferences, meetings and incentive travel. SCB also operates an enquiry service, produces guides to help the conference and incentive planner, and organises familiarisation trips for qualified buyers.*

### **Wales Tourist Board**

Business Tourism Unit, Brunel House, 2 Fitzalan Road, Cardiff CF24 0UY

**T:** 029 2047 5237; **F:** 029 2047 5321; **E:** business-tourism@tourism.wales.gov.uk;

**W:** www.meetings.visitwales.com and www.incentives.visitwales.com

*The Wales Tourist Board provides a wide range of services to the meetings and incentives markets, including the handling of enquiries, promotion of venues, production of marketing collateral, marketing campaigns and participation in business events within the UK and overseas.*

## **Supporting Organisations**

The following organisations contribute to, and support the work of, the Partnership although they do not qualify as Full members:

### **Department for Culture, Media & Sport**

Tourism Division, 2-4 Cockspur Street, London SW1Y 5DH

**T:** 020 7211 6040; **F:** 020 7211 6319; **E:** karen.harvey@culture.gsi.gov.uk

### **Department for Transport**

Transport Strategy & Review Division, Great Minster House, 76 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DR

**T:** 020 7944 2557; **E:** caroline.wood@dft.gsi.gov.uk

### **Department of Trade & Industry**

Head of Business, Retailing & Consumer Services, 151 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1W 9SS

**T:** 020 7215 4153; **F:** 020 7215 2975; **E:** Lesley.Forsdike@dti.gsi.gov.uk; **W:** www.dti.gov.uk



## **THE BUSINESS TOURISM PARTNERSHIP**

**Association for Conferences and Events**

**Association of British Professional Conference Organisers**

**Association of Exhibition Organisers**

**British Association of Conference Destinations**

**British Hospitality Association**

**British Incoming Tour Operators Association**

**Business Tourism Scotland**

**Exhibition Venues Association**

**Incentive Travel and Meetings Association**

**International Congress and Convention Association (UK & Ireland Chapter)**

**Meeting Professionals International - UK Chapter**

**Meetings Industry Association**

**National Outdoor Events Association**

**Northern Ireland Tourist Board**

**Venuemasters**

**VisitBritain**

**Visit London Business and Conventions**

**VisitScotland Business Tourism Unit**

**Wales Tourist Board**

## **SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS**

**Department for Culture, Media & Sport**

**Department for Transport**

**Department of Trade & Industry**

The Partnership has as its members the leading trade associations and government agencies with an interest in the sector. It exists to lead the way in supporting a competitive, high quality and more profitable business tourism sector in Britain.

**BUSINESS TOURISM PARTNERSHIP**

leading the way

[www.businesstourismpartnership.com](http://www.businesstourismpartnership.com)

**c/o VisitBritain**

**Thames Tower**

**Black's Road**

**London W6 9EL**

**Tel: 020 8563 3253**

**Fax: 020 8563 3257**

**Email: [btp@visitbritain.org](mailto:btp@visitbritain.org)**