

TOURISM SUMMIT, 1 MARCH 2000**SUMMARY OF ACTION POINTS****All Departments will -**

- set up a more formal network of official level contacts (provisionally called the Tourism and Hospitality Contact Group) to ensure close working on policies affecting tourism. Network members will represent the full range of Departmental interests in support of Ministers (if necessary, requiring more than one official per Department to take part);
- consider the report of the Better Regulation Task Force, to be published early in the summer, on the cumulative impact of regulation and enforcement on the hotel and restaurant sector and how to improve co-ordination of regulation and enforcement in this area;
- hold a further Summit in a year's time to monitor progress and decide on further action.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food will -

- ensure that funds available to tourism projects under the Rural Enterprise Scheme are allocated with a knowledge of the regional tourism market;
- develop a project to encourage greater links between local food producers and the tourism industry.

The Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions will -

- launch a pilot internet site in Cumbria offering visitors public transport information linked to local attractions and consider the lessons for possible extension nationwide;
- review implementation of the 1995 guidance to local authorities and the Highways Agency on signing for tourist attractions and facilities in England;
- publish soon a research report into the effects of planning on tourism and launch a wide debate on the findings;
- launch a pilot project on car-free leisure and prepare a good practice guide;
- ensure proper coverage of tourism in the forthcoming Rural and Urban White Papers;
- provide more money over the next three years to improve public transport, including more through-ticketing, better information and better facilities at interchanges, which will boost tourism;
- continue to focus on regeneration of coastal resorts, through the Single Regeneration Budget, working with the ETC Resorts Task Force and improving bathing water quality;
- provide funds to improve inland waterways and exploit their potential for leisure and tourism-related use.

The Department for Education and Employment will -

- work closely with the hospitality industry to customise New Deal provision to the needs of

- the industry, challenge perceptions about the industry and address skill shortages, and provide practical support for the second Hospitality Careers Festival in October;
- ensure greater coherence in delivering post-16 learning and training opportunities for the tourism industry through setting up the Learning and Skills Council next year;
- continue to support National Training Organisations in hospitality and tourism, including the Hospitality Training Foundation's training initiative for micro-businesses.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office will -

- review regularly overseas visa sections to ensure they are as welcoming and user-friendly as possible;
- work with the British Tourist Authority and other bodies (including the Department for Trade and Industry) to provide a single channel of information about the UK to persons abroad.

The Home Office will -

- publish a White Paper proposing to modernise liquor and public entertainment licensing law (including the "two-in-a-bar rule"), allowing more consumer choice and increasing attractiveness to visitors;
- decide on the outcome of consultations to deregulate Sunday Dancing and restaurant opening;
- launch a review of gambling law which will take account of the desirability of maximising the economic benefits to the UK; and meanwhile consider any scope for interim deregulation;
- work with the tourist industry to ease entry procedures for genuine visitors, such as some tourist groups; and consider the need for "welcome" training for immigration officials;
- consider the scope for streamlining and improving the effectiveness of fire legislation affecting hotels and restaurants;
- discuss with interested bodies how to exploit the tourism potential of the UK's ethnic and cultural diversity.

The Department of Trade and Industry will -

- ensure the new Small Business Service is truly customer focused and attuned to the needs of small tourism businesses, including micro-businesses;
- encourage the tourism industry to make full use of the Information Society Initiative to promote uptake of e-commerce amongst small firms, including using the network of ISI advice centres and marketing the ISI/InterForum e-commerce awards to the industry;
- work closely with the tourism and hospitality industry under the Industry Forum Adaptation Scheme to develop a new benchmarking project to exchange information on good industry practice.

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport will -

- with the Department of Trade and Industry discuss with relevant bodies implementation of the recommendations of the Tourism Consumer Group on improving price transparency in hotels; and in particular will consult on proposals to modernise the Tourism (Sleeping

Accommodation Price Display) Order 1977;

- support the English Tourism Council, the AA and the RAC in bringing more properties within the voluntary inspection schemes to secure accommodation quality;
- provide funds under round 2 of the Invest to Save Budget for a pilot project to help small tourism businesses to use new technology to communicate with central and local government and each other;
- report on the outcome of the Summit to the Tourism Forum on 18 April and publish a report, subject to consulting other Departments.

Department for Culture, Media and Sport

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