

THE SECOND TOURISM SUMMIT, 6 MARCH 2001

REPORT ON THE CONCLUSIONS

Paper by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport

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Summary

1. This report outlines the conclusions reached at the second Tourism Summit, held on 6 March 2001 at the DCMS in London.

Background

2. The Tourism Summit was the second annual meeting of Government Ministers to review progress in achieving the aims of the Government's tourism strategy, *Tomorrow's Tourism*, published in February 1999. The first Summit, held in March 2000, had agreed a long list of actions to be carried out by Government Departments across Whitehall. The second Summit discussed progress on these and other matters and also considered the key issue of the regeneration of our seaside resorts.
3. Commitments arising from Summit 2001 are summarised at Annex 3 of this report. Annex 4 summarises general progress in achieving the 15 key action points of *Tomorrow's Tourism*.

Agenda and papers

4. Annexes 1 and 2 contain the agenda for Summit 2001 and those taking part. The following reports were presented to the Summit and are available on the DCMS website at <http://www.culture.gov.uk> -
 - the Government report on actions agreed at the first Tourism Summit on 1 March 2000;
 - the English Tourism Council (ETC) report on progress by the tourism industry, regional tourist boards and other agencies; and
 - the British Tourist Authority (BTA) report on inbound tourism.
8. In addition, the following published reports were referred to in discussion and are available from the sources shown below -
 - *First impressions - a survey of the services and facilities at Britain's main ports-of-entry*

(available from the BTA, Thames Tower, Black's Road, London W6 9EL)

- *Enabling success - policies for inbound tourism* (available from the BTA)
- *Sea changes - creating world-class resorts in England* (available from the ETC, Thames Tower, Black's Road, London W6 9EL)
- *Perspectives on English Tourism* (available from the ETC).

Introduction (Chris Smith)

6. Chris Smith welcomed attendees, outlined the agenda and set the scene for the discussions. Tourism remained a hugely important industry, but 2000 had seen an overall static picture in visitor numbers and spending. The reasons were various -
 - the Millennium celebrations had not attracted as many extra visitors as expected;
 - the weakness of the Euro had affected our main market in continental Europe;
 - poor publicity over the fuel crisis, rail disruption and flooding had deterred visitors;
 - media treatment of the Dome had also affected visitor numbers.
7. Nevertheless, there had been much positive news too -
 - foreign visitor figures were above 25 million for the fifth year running;
 - US visitors were up 5%;
 - London and the major cities were doing very good business;
 - the domestic short breaks market continued to grow.
8. Finally, the Summit was invited to consider the impact of the Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak on rural tourism businesses and what advice to offer.

Review of year's work on tourism issues (chaired by Chris Smith)

Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (Elliot Morley)

9. Elliot Morley reported on measures to bring the Foot and Mouth outbreak under control. The next week or so would be crucial to see whether numbers of new cases would level off and start to come down. People had been very good about avoiding contact with livestock. MAFF was well aware of the problems for tourism in the approach to Easter. It was essential to contain and eradicate the disease and to have an adequate clear period (at least 30 days) before scaling down controls.
10. Bob Cotton described the difficulties for small tourism businesses whose cashflow is hit by the restrictions. Elliott Morley agreed to stress the need for understanding to the banks. Mike German said he would be writing to the banks in Wales. Alan Britten endorsed the difficulties for tourism and advised the need for a recovery plan once the outbreak is over. ETC was already consulting the industry on the form of such a plan.
11. Ministers agreed that the Foot and Mouth outbreak is causing real difficulty and hardship for tourism businesses in the countryside in some areas and that policy on tackling the outbreak, including the guidance to be issued, should continue to be sensitive to and take account of the wider economic impacts. Control measures would be reviewed once the picture had become clearer. Meanwhile Ministers noted the advice to be posted on the DCMS website on visiting the countryside for tourism, sport or recreation.

12. On other matters, Elliot Morley referred to -

- the launch of the England Rural Development Programme (ERDP) in October. This includes the Rural Enterprise Scheme, which could provide financial support for tourism projects. Several tourism-based applications were being considered.
- continuing to work with the Countryside Agency and tourism bodies to promote local foods.

Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (Beverley Hughes)

13. Beverley Hughes emphasised again, as at the first Summit, that DETR takes the needs of the tourism industry very seriously. This was demonstrated by the good progress made with the Department's objectives during the year -

- the review of the implementation of the guidance on signing to tourist attractions, agreed at Summit 2000, had found that, in general, the arrangements are working satisfactorily, but there is scope for improvement in some areas. For instance, there is widespread concern about the implications, especially for trunk road signing, of local authorities having different tourist signing policies, particularly in adjacent areas. There should be consistency of signs on both the local and trunk road networks. Revised guidance is now being prepared for the focus groups to comment on and should be published for public consultation before the summer. The new guidance will aim to improve liaison between local authorities and the Highways Agency over applications for additional signs for trunk roads. The process should be complete by November.
- the Spending Review has provided almost £23bn over the next three years to improve transport. £8.4bn over the next 5 years will enable English local authorities to implement their local transport plans. Of this £4.4bn will be available for public transport, including 28 major projects, £3bn for maintaining local highways, and up to £1bn for investment in major road schemes. In addition, an increase of 40% in funding for rural bus services will benefit tourist areas. The latest awards in the Rural Bus Challenge scheme announced in February included up to £800,000 for development of a rural smartcard project in Cumbria..
- the new, transport information system *Traveline* has now been switched on region by region throughout the country. It provides national public transport information on a single telephone number (0870 6082608); timetables to timing-point level (ie to every bus stop listed in the published timetables); and information on bus, coach, tram, underground, train, ferry and metro services.
- Government will be working in partnership with a wide range of other organisations to deliver plans for a much more ambitious service called *Transport Direct*. This will give routes, timetables and real time information for all forms of public transport, and will enable the user to buy a ticket.
- the joint project, with Transport 2000, on promoting alternatives to the car for leisure travel has three strands -
 - a pilot scheme to develop a model for promoting alternatives to the car in a tourist area has been set up in East Sussex;
 - Harewood House near Leeds was selected to develop a model visitor travel plan for a specific leisure facility and a plan has been prepared; and
 - a good practice guide will be published shortly to show how it can be made more attractive for people to reduce their reliance on the car for day trips and for longer holidays.

- *Waterways for Tomorrow*, published in June 2000, included the contribution that waterways can make to the promotion of tourism, leisure and recreation. DETR is holding a conference later this month in Birmingham to discuss how the ideas in the paper can be developed and taken forward.
- 2000 had the best ever results by a considerable margin for the main mandatory standards in the Bathing Water Directive. 95% compliance in England was a big improvement on the 1999 figure of 90%. This is still just below the EU average of 96% compliance, but DETR is determined to continue the real progress made. Many more beaches should aim for the prestigious Blue Flag award. In response to a suggestion from Sir Ron Watson, Beverley Hughes agreed to consider the scope for linking bathing water and beach cleanliness standards (though the Directive deals only with bathing water).
- the results of a research project on planning for leisure and tourism were published on DETR's website www.detr.gov.uk/whatsnew.htm on 5 March. Amongst other things, the report looks at the extent to which planning authorities have developed policies for tourism; current trends in tourism, such as demand for budget hotels; where the main impacts of tourism are felt; and how some impacts may best be ameliorated. Views are invited from interested parties, to promote a structured debate on the findings of the research and inform the next steps. This will include consulting on whether and in what way planning guidance on tourism might be updated.
- the Rural White Paper announced £37m of funding to revitalise England's small rural or coastal towns. Many of the towns now being considered for these funds are the small resorts which were once such a distinctive part of the English holiday scene but are now all too often in a rather sad state. In addition, the English Tourism Council and the Countryside Agency will produce a joint rural tourism strategy shortly to provide a clear focus for national, regional and local action.
- the Urban White Paper recognised that vibrant and thriving towns and cities are essential for tourism, which will in turn contribute to the local economy. Most tourism takes place in urban areas but it is not evenly spread. Measures to improve urban destinations include the promotion of good design in new developments and improvements to the quality of urban centres, including historic buildings, parks and open spaces.

Department for Education and Employment (Tessa Blackstone)

14. Tessa Blackstone referred to work to invest in and raise standards in further education, which is vital to business, including tourism. On 1 April the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) would replace TECs and the FEFC. It would operate through 47 local arms, with 40% of members from business, including tourism. The LSC would work closely with NTOs, including those covering tourism sectors. In addition, £45m is being invested to strengthen the NTO system and reduce the number of NTOs.
15. Chris Smith noted that skills development is crucial to tourism's success. Tessa Blackstone agreed with the need to identify and meet skills shortages, for which she would appreciate feedback from DCMS and the industry. Funds would also be available for higher education to develop vocational degrees which could be helpful to people in work (eg to study part-time). Prototypes would be launched in the autumn. There would be an opportunity for the industry to work with universities to develop a sectoral degree.
16. Bob Cotton praised DfEE's work in the hospitality area. About 20 local LSCs have appointed members from tourism and hospitality, including four chairs.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Patricia Scotland)

17. Patricia Scotland reported on the following -

- successful introduction in October 2000 of visas which also confer leave to enter the UK, including multi-entry visas. Entry Clearance Officers have been given training in the Human Rights Act. Total of 1.4 million applications for non-settlement visas, including tourist visas, received; 93% accepted
- Panel 2000 has been succeeded by the Britain Abroad Task Force, involving FCO, British Council, BTA, DCMS, DfEE, the devolved administrations, the Design Council and BTI. The Task Force will develop a strategy to project the contemporary UK.
- the UK portal website bringing together information on the UK for all purposes (eg visiting, investing) will be on-line from October 2001.
- sustainable tourism is a possible issue for the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development, an opportunity for the UK industry to show how it can contribute to the aims of sustainable development. Alan Britten noted the ETC's interest, as the champion of sustainable tourism in England.

Home Office (Mike O'Brien)

18. Mike O'Brien reported on the following -

- reaction to the White Paper *Time for Reform: Proposals for the Modernisation of our Licensing Laws* had been positive, but some people had expressed reservations (eg concerns about noise in central London). The police were happy with the new proposals, which would help to reduce crime and disorder. The aim now was to produce a simple, streamlined new system with more freedom to operators to choose their opening hours, balanced by provisions to allow local objections on grounds of public nuisance. This would be incorporated in a new Bill as soon as Parliamentary time allows.
- the Deregulation Order permitting Sunday dancing had come into effect, but a separate Order extending Sunday drinking hours where entertainment takes place had been held up by House of Lords objections. Changes to meet these objections had been introduced and the Order was now expected to go through [*Note: this Order became law on 19 March*]. A third Order would be introduced to deregulate restaurant opening hours.
- the Gambling Review Body chaired by Sir Alan Budd was expected to report in June. There was scope for substantial deregulation, while ensuring the industry remains crime-free. While there was no guarantee of the outcome, there would be public discussion and legislation was anticipated in due course.
- continuing progress on easing UK entry procedures for tourists, particularly groups.

19. Simon Ward asked whether the new Regulatory Reform Bill would speed up the deregulation process in future. Mike O'Brien replied that the Home Secretary preferred to use primary legislation to implement *Time for Reform*, but Regulatory Reform Orders could be used to reform fire safety law.

20. Sir Ron Watson raised the need for public transport to be available for people leaving pubs and clubs late at night, to minimise the risk of street disorder. Yet public transport services could be withdrawn if not economic. Would it be possible to make it easier for LPTAs to subsidise such services? Mike O'Brien agreed to discuss this point with DETR. He expected that, outside central London, most places would still close around 11pm.

Department of Trade and Industry (Alan Johnson)

21. Alan Johnson updated the Summit on the first year's work of the Small Business Service (SBS)

in supporting and promoting small businesses -

- the SBS had launched the *Think Small First* strategy and forged good links with DCMS and the tourism sector. The SBS Business Link Gateway would be launched on 1 April to simplify small businesses' access to available funding and other assistance. Regionally, the RDAs - 7 of which have identified tourism as a priority area - will use Business Links to deliver services. The SBS would also forge links with the new LSCs.
- the recent Knowledge Economy White Paper had announced a further £30 million for the *UK online* for business campaign to promote e-commerce among small businesses, in addition to the extra £10 million already provided this year.
- the SBS now scrutinises all regulatory proposals from Departments for their likely impact on small businesses. SBS Chief Executive David Irwin is a member of the Ministerial Panel on Deregulation. All Regulatory Impact Assessments must include a small business "litmus test".

22. Alan Johnson added that DTI would shortly announce the outcome of a bid from the hospitality industry to support a best practice forum that would strengthen the industry's competitiveness through improving management skills and business procedures [*Note: the bid was subsequently successful and £1.26 million will be available for this over the next four years*]. This was the first such bid from a non-DTI sponsored sector and the first from a service sector.

HM Treasury (Helen John)

23. Helen John was deputising for Stephen Timms, who was unable to attend because of urgent Budget business. While she could not comment on matters that might prejudice the forthcoming Budget announcement, she noted that the Treasury recognised the importance of the tourism industry to the national economy and the need for the industry to be well regulated.

National Assembly for Wales (Mike German)

24. Mike German reported that Welsh tourism had suffered because of poor weather and the weakness of the Euro. Wales received 8% of UK domestic visitors, but only 2-4% of overseas visitors, so there was a need to invest in overseas marketing. Wales would also be moving towards a more strategic system of regional tourism partnerships and a web-based destination management system. A statutory accommodation registration scheme was being considered as a possibility to improve quality. Tourism presently accounted for 7% of Wales' GDP and the Assembly wants this to grow.

Northern Ireland Executive (Bruce Robinson)

25. Bruce Robinson reported that tourism was doing well in Northern Ireland, largely through attracting all-Ireland visitors. Challenges lay in the fragmentation of the industry and the need for better training. Tourism Ireland Ltd, an all-Ireland tourism marketing company, was up and running and planned a major launch for the autumn.

English Tourism Council (Alan Britten)

26. Alan Britten introduced the ETC's report on English domestic tourism. One of the ETC's main responsibilities was research, which had produced the recent report *Perspectives on English Tourism*. This showed generally good growth over the past ten years, but UK residents' spending overseas had grown faster. Net tourism expenditure had worsened from a surplus of £2.1 billion in 1996 to a deficit of £4.5 billion in 1999. Domestic tourism must become more competitive, based on better quality assets and greater ease in buying them. Four priority areas are -

- **information technology** - an integrated national information and ticketing system for travel, entry etc
- **quality** - increased take up of quality assurance schemes, especially in accommodation
- **resorts** - regeneration to be discussed below
- **transport** - reduce cost and improve reliability

27. *Perspectives* also reviews several areas where Government policies impact on tourism and where there are opportunities for joint working with ETC.

British Tourist Authority (David Quarmby)

28. David Quarmby introduced the BTA's report on inbound tourism to Britain. Business tourism in 2000 had continued strongly, but leisure tourism had fallen. Overall inbound tourism in 2000 had been flat and the UK's share of international tourism receipts was down. The main reason was the sterling exchange rate. A 1% increase in the rate against a currency basket reduces tourism receipts by 1.3% within 12 months. Given this, performance had been quite good, helped by the Millennium. Even so, the exchange rate should not hide the need for British tourism to provide better quality and value for money. Another priority was to improve bookability online.
29. The BTA's *Britain Assessment* benchmarking exercise had produced *First Impressions*, on which a special presentation would follow. The British Tourism Development Committee had also produced *Enabling Success*, an assessment of where Government can help the tourism industry. Copies were provided for Ministers to take away and consider.

Resort regeneration (chaired by Chris Smith)

30. Chris Smith opened the discussion by saying that many traditional seaside resorts need to reinvent themselves to meet the structural changes that have affected their business. The Summit provided an opportunity to clarify how numerous existing policy and funding initiatives could combine to help this process and how to maximise their benefit to resorts. The ETC had just published its report on the way forward.
31. Alan Britten summarised the findings of the ETC report *Sea changes*, which relied heavily on the work of the ETC's Resorts Task Force -
- resorts have seen a long decline since the 1970s - this decline was now threatening to spiral downwards
 - however, it is not too late - resorts still account for 30% of domestic tourism spend and still have marketable assets
 - refurbishing resorts is not enough - they need to think fundamentally about their future.
32. Resorts should adopt a holistic approach, developing a local plan in the light of supply and demand-side research and gaining the involvement of all relevant parties before seeking funding. There had been success stories, all of which had needed a specific hook for their plans. RDA support was very important and RDAs might wish to consider appointing a resort champion.
33. Beverley Hughes referred to DETR work in three relevant areas -
- **regeneration** - the Single Regeneration Budget had been reconfigured to better identify pockets of deprivation, eg in coastal areas

- **transport** - more resources were being allocated to improve access to resorts
 - **strategic mechanisms** - 7 out of 9 RDAs already identified tourism as a priority sector, including resorts. Also encouraging local strategic partnerships to integrate planning and local funding packages.
34. Elliot Morley said there should be opportunities to use the Structural Funds to benefit resorts, eg the £5 million Fisheries Fund could enhance the tourism attraction of fishing ports. The Leader + programme aimed to support experimental local strategies developed by local action groups. Resorts might also benefit from Stewardship programmes (eg on coastal footpaths) and coast defence funding.
35. Sir Ron Watson welcomed the Resorts Task Force report and endorsed the points concerning local authorities. He agreed that for some resorts regeneration may not be possible. He noted that a vast range of funding mechanisms exists, but with differing criteria. Local authorities do their best to link them, but better co-ordination or integration of funds would help.
36. In conclusion, Ministers agreed that resort regeneration remained a high priority for tourism. They would therefore work to ensure that seaside resorts gain the maximum benefit from joined-up Government policies and access to funding, including Lottery funding.

Better regulation (chaired by Janet Anderson)

37. Janet Anderson reported on continuing work on better regulation since the Better Regulation Task Force's report on hotels and restaurants in June 2000 and the Government's response in September 2000. Much reform was underway across Government, as shown in earlier sessions at the Summit, but the industry was impatient to see the results in effect. So she was leading a new industry group, which first met in February, to keep up the pressure for reform. The group would keep a close eye on current reviews, to make sure they keep to timetable and take full account of the hotel and restaurant industry's concerns.
38. Simon Ward, a member of both the BRTF and the new monitoring group, commended the group as a model for following up Task Force reports. He suggested planning and fire safety laws as priorities for reform.
39. Bob Cotton, also a member of the monitoring group, added the need for proposed new legislation to be intelligible and allow sufficient time to comply. Industry was still waiting for promised guidance on the Climate Change Levy.
40. In conclusion, Ministers agreed to continue to work for better regulation in tourism and to co-operate with the monitoring group on hotels and restaurants.

***First Impressions* - presentation by British Tourist Authority (David Quarmby)**

41. David Quarmby introduced *First Impressions*, the first element of the BTA's *Britain Assessment*. It reported the results of a 2000 survey (a repeat of a 1986 survey) of visitor reception at airports and some seaports. The findings showed some improvements since 1986.....
- the Immigration Service is more friendly and business-like
 - better ambience and better quality design in airports
 - better use of dead time (eg awaiting baggage)
 - more transport integration (eg Manchester Airport)
 - better information and signage

42.and some areas still to be tackled.....
- arrival hall condition and facilities often last to be refurbished
 - some problems with onward travel. Lack of co-ordination or consistency (eg on buying tickets on trains). No inter-operability of tickets
 - information provision
 - poor customer service by contractors, cleaners, baggage handlers
 - advertisements encroaching on information signs.
43. Overseas comparisons found some ports no better or worse than in the UK (eg Charles de Gaulle Airport, Gare du Nord), but others are much better, especially for integrated transport links (eg Schiphol and Copenhagen Airports).
44. The report's recommendations would be taken forward by a new working group of industry representatives and Government officials, chaired by Veronica Palmer, which would meet for the first time on 7 March.

Conclusions (Chris Smith)

45. Chris Smith thanked colleagues for their valuable contributions and noted the considerable achievements since Summit 2000. The annual Tourism Summit had demonstrated its worth in concentrating minds on the needs of tourism. Much important work remained to be done, for example on signage, planning, visitor reception, better regulation and resorts. Ministers would meet again in a year to review progress. Meanwhile, officials would meet more regularly in parallel to keep up the momentum.

AGENDA FOR TOURISM SUMMIT TUESDAY 6 MARCH 2001

1. Welcome and introduction
2. Review of year's work on tourism issues
3. Resort regeneration
4. Better regulation
5. *First Impressions*: presentation by BTA
6. Conclusions

SUMMIT PARTICIPANTS

Chris Smith MP, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport
Janet Anderson MP, Minister for Tourism, Film and Broadcasting
Beverley Hughes MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions
Elliot Morley MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Fisheries and the Countryside, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
Alan Johnson MP, Minister for Competitiveness, Department of Trade and Industry
Mike O'Brien MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office
Patricia Scotland QC, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Tessa Blackstone, Minister of State, Department for Education and Employment
Mike German AM, National Assembly for Wales
Bruce Robinson, Northern Ireland Executive
Helen John, HM Treasury
Alan Britten, Chairman, English Tourism Council
David Quarmbay, Chairman, British Tourist Authority
Sir Ron Watson, Chairman of Tourism Executive, Local Government Association
Bob Cotton, Chief **Executive**, British Hospitality Association
Simon Ward, Better Regulation Task Force

Also attending

Brian Leonard, Simon Broadley, Stuart May and Graham Collins, Department for Culture, Media and Sport
John Battersby, HM Treasury
Steve Webb, Wales Tourist Board

TOURISM SUMMIT, 6 MARCH 2001 - SUMMARY OF COMMITMENTS

- **All Government Departments** attending the Summit agreed :-
 - to continue to work to progress the actions agreed at the first Tourism Summit in March 2000 and to continue to take tourism interests and the impact on tourism into account when devising and developing policies;
 - to continue to work for better regulation and to co-operate with the Monitoring Group set up by the Minister for Tourism to follow up the Better Regulation Task Force review of regulation affecting hotels and restaurants;
 - to ensure that seaside resorts gain the maximum benefit from joined-up Government policies and access to funding, including Lottery funding;
 - that the Foot and Mouth outbreak is causing real difficulty and hardship for tourism businesses in the countryside in some areas and that policy on tackling the outbreak, including the guidance to be issued, should continue to be sensitive to and take account of the wider economic impacts.
- **The Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR)** announced the next phase of their review of guidance on signs to tourist attractions and facilities in England. Focus groups are planned for April to feed into draft revised guidance to be issued for public consultation in May. New guidance would be published at the end of the year.
- The results of a research project on planning for leisure and tourism were published on **the DETR's** website www.detr.gov.uk/whatsnew.htm on 5 March. The report looks at the extent to which planning authorities have developed policies for tourism; current trends in tourism, such as demand for budget hotels; where the main impacts of tourism are felt; and how some impacts may best be ameliorated. Views are invited from interested parties, to promote a structured debate on the findings of the research and inform the next steps. This will include consulting on whether and in what way planning guidance on tourism might be updated.
- **The DETR** would also consider the scope for linking bathing water and beach cleanliness standards.
- **The Department for Education and Employment** would be providing extra funds to strengthen the system of National Training Organisations and to support new vocational degrees; and would be encouraging closer working between the NTOs and the new local Learning and Skills Councils.
- **The Foreign and Commonwealth Office** would be continuing to look at the scope for making the visa service more efficient, including to ensure that athletes and other visitors to the Commonwealth Games in 2002 are given a welcoming first impression of the UK from visa operations.
- The Britain Abroad Task Force would develop a strategy for projecting the contemporary UK. The UK portal website showcasing UK information for all purposes would be on-line from October 2001.
- **The Home Office** reported on progress with the licencing review. The response to the White Paper had been good, though some had reservations, eg over public nuisance issues. The aim was to provide a simple, streamlined new system with more freedom to operators to choose their opening hours. This would be incorporated in a new Bill as soon as Parliamentary time allows.

- Meanwhile **the Home Office** had modified the draft Deregulation Order on Sunday drinking hours to gain acceptance from the House of Lords (*which was subsequently given*).
- **The Home Office** would discuss with **the DETR** the scope to make it easier for LPTAs to subsidise late-night public transport services for people leaving pubs and clubs which choose to extend their opening hours.
- The Gambling Review Body is expected to report in June. **The Home Office** saw scope for substantial deregulation, while ensuring the industry remains crime-free. There would be public discussion and anticipated legislation in due course.
- **The Home Office** were also considering using Regulatory Reform Orders to reform fire safety law.
- **The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)** would shortly announce the outcome of a bid from the hospitality industry to support a best practice forum that would strengthen the industry's competitiveness through improving management skills and business procedures (*the bid was subsequently successful and £1.26 million will be available for this over the next four years*).
- **The Small Business Service's** Business Link Gateway would shortly be launched to simplify small businesses' access to available funding and other assistance (*the gateway was subsequently launched in April, containing a website which became accessible to small firms from 8 June and a contact centre which launched in April and is open 6 days a week*). On regulation the SBS now scrutinises all proposals. All Departments must consider the likely impact of proposals on small firms as part of the mandatory Regulatory Impact Assessment.
- **The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)** would shortly fund a scoping study to identify the benefits of extending to hotels the joint **DETR/DTI** *Envirowise* programme on environmental best practice.
- **The DCMS** announced a new working group of industry representatives and Government officials to take forward recommendations in the BTA's report *First Impressions* on the reception of overseas visitors.

TOURISM STRATEGY

15 Action Points

ACTION	PROGRESS
<p>* a blueprint for the sustainable development of tourism to safeguard our countryside, heritage and culture for future generations</p>	<p>ETC Action Plan and set of National Statistical Indicators published in April 2001. ETC 'one stop shop' web-site www.wisegrowth.org.uk went live in October 2000. Rural and Urban White Papers published in November 2000. ETC/CA Rural Tourism Strategy published in May 2001.</p>
<p>* initiatives to widen access to tourism for the 40% of people who do not take a long holiday</p>	<p>ETC research into holiday non participation has found that only 14% of adults do not take any holiday, for a wide variety of reasons. They will continue to publicise what is available and to develop new products for untapped markets. In November 2000 ETC published "Accessible Britain 2000/01", a practical travel guide for people with disabilities. They are currently developing a website to promote access within the tourism industry.</p>
<p>* more money for a more focussed and aggressive overseas promotion programme to bring in more overseas visitors</p>	<p>The Government granted the BTA an extra £5 million over the period 1999-2000 to 2001-2002 and confirmed funding at the higher level for the period 2001-02 to 2003-04. The BTA now has a target to increase from £27 in 1998-99 to £30 in 2000-01 its return on investment of each £1 of grant-in-aid.</p>
<p>* new Internet systems to deliver more worldwide tourist bookings for Britain and to provide information on attractions and travel options</p>	<p>The BTA is on course to launch 40 new websites - for countries where it is active or has an information service. 30 are already live. Some RTBs now have IT strategies and most regional websites now link to national product databases. Pilot project launched in Cumbria in May 2000. to integrate transport and accommodation data</p>
<p>* new computerised booking and information systems to make it easier for people to book accommodation and travel</p>	<p>The ETC is promoting <i>Impact Through IT</i> - guidelines for tourism organisations on the use of destination management systems. ETC is also working to secure compatibility of data between different systems. BTA's <i>VisitBritain</i> website now offers on line booking or e-mail enquiry facilities for some hotels and some local pilot schemes are underway</p>
<p>* a major careers festival and image campaign to raise the profile and promote the image of careers in the hospitality industry</p>	<p>Second Careers Festival held 2-8 October 2000. Over 700 organisations participated in the festival hosting over 1,000 events, reaching over 150,000 people. 3rd Festival planned for October 2001.</p>
<p>* a hospitality industry programme to sign up 500 employers to work towards Investors in People standard to help raise the quality of training in the industry</p>	<p>The Hospitality Training Foundation led a successful Sector Challenge campaign to sign up 100 hospitality SMEs to Investors in People. 2300 hospitality organisations have signed up to Investors in People by 24 December 2000.</p>

ACTION	PROGRESS
<p>* a new strategic national body for England to provide leadership to the English tourism industry</p>	<p>The English Tourism Council(ETC) was launched in July 1999 with a far more strategic remit, focussing mainly on research, quality issues, best practice and advocating sustainable tourism to the industry. It has reconstituted the industry Tourism Forum; set up Task Forces to report early in 2001 on key issues like: transport, sustainable tourism and resort regeneration (reported 27 February); introduced new outcome focussed funding agreements with the Regional Tourist Boards; introduced an England brand; and made progress on other issues including these Action Points.</p>
<p>* a new grading scheme for all hotels and guest houses to give holiday makers and business travellers consistent quality they can rely on</p>	<p>The ETC, together with the AA and the RAC, launched the new quality standards to consumers on 13 September 1999. The number of establishments participating in the scheme is now over 50% and continues to increase. The ETC has also launched grading schemes for caravan parks and self-catering accommodation, as well as a scheme called ‘Stepping Stones’ to help raise standards in areas with lower quality accommodation.</p>
<p>* new targets for hotel development in London and a further £4.5 million for marketing to exploit its potential as a premier location for business travellers and holiday makers and as a gateway to Britain</p>	<p>Having agreed to a further £1.5 million for the overseas promotion of London for 2001/02 the Government will have fulfilled the commitment to invest £4.5 million for the period 1999-2000 to 2001-02. Hotel targets are on schedule. The GLA took over responsibility for the promotion of tourism in London from April 2001.</p>
<p>* more integrated promotion of our wonderful cultural, heritage and countryside attractions to enable visitors to enjoy the full range of what Britain has to offer</p>	<p>More integration taking place in regional & local destination marketing , and new BTA promotions will help meet this objective. RTBs supporting work on regional & local cultural strategies. BTA coordinates UK Culture and Tourism Group to share experiences and good practice in cultural tourism</p>
<p>* the development of innovative niche markets, such as film tourism and sports tourism, to unlock the full potential of Britain’s unique cultural and natural heritage</p>	<p>ETC has completed research on potential niche markets, and will be working on market development strategies for the best markets identified. BTA Movie map was launched in July 1999. “<i>Green Britain</i>” map launched in September 1999. BTA launched the sports tourism strategy in January 2000. Gardens map launched November 2000.</p>

ACTION	PROGRESS
<p>* encouraging the regeneration of traditional resorts to allow leisure and business visitors to enjoy high-quality amenities and services</p>	<p>The Government has reflected the needs of resort areas in the new Objective 2 Structural Fund and Assisted Areas maps and also in Single Regeneration Budget awards. Those resorts suffering from the worst deprivation are in a position to benefit from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and those in the poorest regions now have access to Objective 1 money. During her Seaside 2000 tour, Janet Anderson announced that Lottery grant distributors would be encouraged to find ways of improving the current low take-up in resort areas. The ETC is undertaking research, including on best practice; its report on resort regeneration was published on 27 February 2001 and recommended ways in which national, regional and local Government or agencies can help resorts to develop sensible, effective regeneration plans.</p>
<p>* more central government support for the regions to give each part of the country better resources to develop their own identity and strengths</p>	<p>Creation of ETC freed more money to go to RTBs. ETC introduced a new RTB funding system based on regions submitting bids; this allows allocations to be based on merit.</p>
<p>* a high profile annual Tourism Summit bringing together industry and government to monitor progress, plan future action and keep all sides working in partnership towards the same objectives</p>	<p>Held on 1 March 2000. Second Summit held on 6 March 2001.</p>