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Press Release

Tourism Alliance Launches New Policies to Grow the Value of Tourism in Britain.

At its Annual General Meeting held today at the InterContinental Hotel, Westminster, the Tourism Alliance, the industry's umbrella group representing some 50 organisations, set out its policies to grow the £134bn sector of the economy.

The new policies fall into six core categories:

1. **Improve International Competitiveness** includes work to achieve more accessible visas, lower levels of Air Passenger Duty and VAT, increased airport capacity and more support in winning bids for international events to be held in Britain.
2. **Grow Domestic tourism** makes the case for re-examination of baseline funding for tourism development and promotion, as well as proposing that the domestic facing tourism related agencies in Arts, Culture, Sport and Heritage work more closely with VisitEngland to develop a co-ordinated programme for promoting domestic tourism.
3. **Lift the Burden on Business** includes calls for progress on the long overdue deregulation proposals made by the Tourism Taskforce eighteen months ago and proposes revisions to the Package Travel Directive and a voice for tourism, alongside other commercial sectors, in campaigning for a more progressive and less costly business environment.
4. **Co-ordinate for Growth** urges government support and resource to ensure a functioning tourism network in England and proposes a Tourism Industry Growth Council. This would provide a solution to the lack of joined-up government and would be set the task of establishing a growth strategy for the industry to be embedded into wider Government policy.
5. **Improve Quality and Skills**, deals with quality assessment schemes, tax incentives for investment in training and development, especially for small businesses and business improvement allowances

6. **Increase Sustainability**, covers good planning practices for tourism related development, the introduction of daylight saving and incentives for all-weather facilities.

Michael Hirst, Outgoing Chairman of the Alliance in reporting on a year when the sectors grew by 6.9% and provided a third of all new jobs in the economy said, “Not every year can be filled with iconic events such as the Queen’s Jubilee, Olympics and Paralympics. These new policies are designed to secure even greater growth, more jobs, and new businesses to add to the 249,000 already in the sector. They will generate new investment and exports through attracting overseas visitors too”. “The industry is ready to deliver its part in growth. Government must now urgently address a range of key issues that are acting as a barrier to that growth”.

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For further information, please contact:

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Notes to Editors

- The Tourism Alliance is the Voice of the UK Tourism Industry. It was established in 2001 with the support of the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport and comprises almost 50 Tourism Industry Associations that together represent 200,000 businesses of all sizes throughout the UK.
- The purpose of the Tourism Alliance is to identify and develop policies and strategies to raise standards and promote quality within the industry and work with and lobby government on key issues relevant to the growth and development of tourism.
- Tourism is the sixth largest industry in Britain. It generates £134bn p.a. for the UK economy (8.9% of GDP) and directly supports 2.7m jobs (9% of the total workforce) and is the UK’s third largest export earner.
- For further details on the Tourism Alliance and its policy objectives, visit the website, www.tourismalliance.com

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