

Sunday Trading Team
Consumer & Competition Policy
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
1 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0ET

September 2015

Consultation on devolving Sunday trading rules

Tourism Alliance Submission

1. Introduction

The Tourism Alliance was established in 2001 as the voice of the UK tourism industry. It comprises 55 tourism industry associations that together represent some 200,000 business of all sizes throughout the UK. The Tourism Alliance's mandate is to work with Government on issues relevant to the growth and development of tourism and its contribution to the economy. It is therefore responding to this discussion paper in that capacity. A list of member organisations is included as Appendix 1.

2. Tourism and the UK Economy

Tourism is one of the UK's largest industries with residents and overseas visitors taking around 1.7bn trips and spending £127bn (9% of GDP) annually. This expenditure creates employment for 3.1m people (9.6% of the UK's workforce).

More importantly, however, the tourism industry has been one of the main drivers of growth in the UK economy since the 2008 recession with recent research by the Office for National Statistics finding that the industry had:

- Provided growth at a faster rate than most other industries
- Provided additional Employment at almost twice the rate of other industries
- Increased export earnings by 26.5% to £24bn pa since 2008

While tourism the UK is based in the country's heritage, culture and landscape, shopping comprises a significant proportion the tourism experience and tourism expenditure. Overall, retail shopping accounts for at least £15bn pa in tourism expenditure and supports just under 300,000 jobs.

However, unlike normal retail shopping, tourism related retail expenditure is much more focused in when and where it occurs. For example, around two

thirds of domestic tourism trips take place over weekends while over 80% of daytrips to tourism destinations take place on weekends. It is therefore important that retailers in tourism destinations are open when visitors are in these locations and, as such, this consultation is particularly welcomed by the tourism industry as a means of enhancing the UK's tourism experience.

The ability of devolved Sunday Trading Rules to significantly boost local economies is especially relevant to the large number of destinations throughout the UK where tourism already comprises over 20% of the local economy. Often, in these locations, while small shops are able to regulate their hours in accordance with visitor patterns, this option is not available to the large key shops in the destination which influence overall visitor behaviour.

However, it must also be recognised that allowing further Sunday Trading could be detrimental to tourism businesses in some destinations as it could take visitors away from tourism attractions and this could impact on the viability of the very businesses that attract visitors to the destination in the first place.

Therefore, because of the ability of Sunday trading to both increase and decrease tourism depending on local circumstances, the Tourism Alliance is supportive of the Government's plan to devolve the Sunday Trading Rules so that decisions can be made at the local level in response to local circumstances.

3. Options for Devolving Sunday Trading Rules

Of the two options we would advocate that this devolvement be to elected mayors where these are in place and to local authorities in all other situations. This approach would mean that all destinations are able to benefit from this initiative and not just the main metropolitan areas. This is particularly important for two main reasons:

- There are strong domestic tourism flows from large urban centres to smaller coastal and rural destinations and these locations would miss-out on the benefits if this power was just devolved to local leaders through devolution deals
- The Government's new Five Point Plan for Tourism, which was recently launched by the Prime Minister, sets the goal of spreading the benefits of tourism growth across the country. This can best be achieved through devolving this power to Local Authorities.

There is one other issue that we would like taken into account in the consideration of how these proposals will be implemented. We recognise that there will be concerns from retailers in areas where a very high proportion of customers are locals that opening for longer on Sundays will simply increase costs without increasing revenue.

Therefore, we believe that a balance needs to be found between tourism-related areas where there would be considerable benefits to the local

business community and non-tourism areas where the benefits are not so well defined. To resolve this we suggest that local business groups should have to apply to the Local Authority for a relaxation of the Sunday Trading Rules rather than Local Authorities dictating where the rules should apply.

Such a mechanism would satisfy both tourism and non-tourism destinations by making local businesses the decision-maker in this process and give them the flexibility to open where they think it will deliver benefits and not open where doing so would simply increase business costs.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposal. If you would like any further details on the size or value of the tourism economy or any of the issues raised in this submission, then we would welcome meeting with the Review Team.

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Appendix 1 Tourism Alliance Members

ABTA - The Travel Association
Airport Operators Association
ALMR
ALVA
ANTOR
Association for Tourism in Higher Education
BACTA
BALPPA
Bed & Breakfast Association
British Beer & Pub Association
British Destinations
British Educational Travel Association
British Holiday & Home Parks Association
British Hospitality Association
British Marine Federation
Business Visits & Events Partnership
Camping & Caravanning Club
Churches Visitor and Tourism Association
Confederation of Passenger Transport
Country Land and Business Association
Cumbria Tourism
EASCO
English UK
European Holiday Home Association
European Tour Operators Association
Experience Nottinghamshire
Family Holiday Association
Farm Stay UK
Group Travel Business Forum
Heritage Railway Association
Historic Houses Association
Historic Royal Palaces
Institute of Tourist Guiding
Liverpool City Region LEP
Marketing Manchester
National Caravan Council
National Trust
New Forest Destination Partnership
Outdoor Industries Association
Premier Cottages
Resort Development Organisation
South West Tourism Alliance
The Caravan Club
The Tourism Alliance Brighton and Hove
The Tourism Society
Tourism For All
Tourism South East
UKInbound
Visit Cornwall
Visit Kent
Visit Wiltshire
Welcome to Yorkshire
Wyndham Worldwide

Observers

Local Government Association
VisitBritain
VisitEngland

