



House of Commons  
Culture, Media and Sport  
Committee

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**Tourism: Government  
Response to the  
Committee's Sixth  
Report of Session  
2014–15**

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**First Special Report of Session 2015–  
16**

*Ordered by the House of Commons  
to be printed 21 July 2015*

## The Culture, Media and Sport Committee

The Culture, Media and Sport Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration and policy of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and its associated public bodies.

### Current membership

[Jesse Norman MP](#) (Conservative, Hereford and South Herefordshire) (Chair)

[Nigel Adams MP](#) (Conservative, Selby and Ainsty)

[Andrew Bingham MP](#) (Conservative, High Peak)

[Damian Collins MP](#) (Conservative, Folkestone and Hythe)

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[Christian Matheson MP](#) (Labour, City of Chester)

[Jason McCartney MP](#) (Conservative, Colne Valley)

[John Nicolson MP](#) (Scottish National Party, East Dunbartonshire)

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### Powers

The committee is one of the departmental select committees, the powers of which are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No 152. These are available on the internet via [www.parliament.uk](http://www.parliament.uk).

### Publication

The Reports and evidence of the Committee are published by The Stationery Office by Order of the House. All publications of the Committee (including press notices) are on the internet at [www.parliament.uk/cmscom](http://www.parliament.uk/cmscom). A list of Reports of the Committee in the present Parliament is at the back of this volume.

All the evidence relating to this Report can be found on the Committee's website.

### Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are Elizabeth Flood (Clerk), Kevin Candy (Inquiry Manager), Hannah Wentworth (Senior Committee Assistant), Keely Bishop (Committee Assistant) and Jessica Bridges-Palmer (Media Officer).

### Contacts

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# First Special Report

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On 26 March 2015, the Culture, Media and Sport Committee published its Sixth Report of Session 2014-15, *Tourism*. The Government responded to this Report on 16 July 2015. On 21 July 2015 the Committee agreed to publish the Response, which is appended below.

## Government response

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The Government is pleased to have the opportunity to respond to the conclusions and recommendations of the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee's Report on Tourism.<sup>1</sup>

Our response recognises the fundamental importance of the tourism sector in delivering jobs and growth in all parts of the UK. This is reflected by the latest Office for National Statistics estimate (26 June 2015) that the direct contribution of the tourism sector to the economy in 2014 was almost £60 billion<sup>2</sup>—up a fifth since 2010, meaning it now accounts for almost 4% of the total economy.

We are committed to further growing this industry, and spreading the benefits of its growth across the country, by encouraging more visitors to travel beyond the capital. In light of the Select Committee report, we are publishing a five point plan setting out how we will achieve this.

### Promoting Tourism

*1. Funding for the GREAT Campaign should continue for a period that is sufficiently long to give certainty to the industry. While all campaigns necessarily have a limited lifetime, the GREAT Campaign shows every sign of adapting to maintain its originality and vitality. (Paragraph 9)*

The GREAT Campaign is adapting to maintain its originality and vitality. Equally, the consistent nature of the brand is proving to be a valuable asset for differentiating the UK as well as increasing its attractiveness to target audiences.

We agree, therefore, that funding for the GREAT Campaign should continue, as set out in our election manifesto. The details of funding will be subject to the forthcoming Spending Review, and detail on funding post 2015/16 will be confirmed once that process is complete.

The campaign has already generated more than £1.2bn of additional economic benefit for the UK and is on track to deliver at least a further £500m by 2020. Over 370 businesses and high-profile individuals have supported the campaign, contributing £68m in cash and kind and thousands of smaller businesses have benefited from the campaign. The GREAT brand itself is therefore an increasingly valuable asset for the UK and is currently independently valued at £158 million, set to rise to £1.7 billion in 5 years.<sup>3</sup>

### Tourism landscape

*2. We are concerned that, while the LEPs undergo their period of evolution, valuable ground is being lost in promoting tourism and securing all the necessary improvements to enable destinations to regain a competitive edge. The abolition of the Regional Development*

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<sup>1</sup> For ease of reference, the Committee's recommendations are printed in italics below.

<sup>2</sup> The Economic Importance of Tourism: UK Tourism Satellite Account 2012, 2014 Nowcast. ONS.

<sup>3</sup> NAO Report: <http://nao.org.uk/report/exploiting-the-uk-brand-overseas/>

*Agencies without putting in place adequate arrangements for tourism promotion was a mistake. (Paragraph 15)*

*3. We support the Government's conclusion that there should be a clearer delineation in the roles of VisitBritain and VisitEngland, with the two agencies focusing respectively on international and domestic marketing and promotion. (Paragraph 24)*

*4. VisitBritain will continue to need adequate funding if it is to compete on the international stage to attract more visitors to the UK. The disparity between Visit England's funding and that of VisitScotland and also Visit Wales is pronounced. With sufficient resources, we believe VisitEngland is well placed to move more decisively into the organisational vacuum left by the abolition of the Regional Development Agencies and the Regional Tourist Boards. We also believe there is scope for the Government to better coordinate the variety of funding sources it has established. (Paragraph 31)*

*5. We believe there is scope for further cooperation between VisitBritain and all four organisations charged with promoting different parts of the United Kingdom. It is in everyone's interest that both domestic and international visitors gain a positive experience from everything our country has to offer tourists, be it culture, countryside, cities or sport. (Paragraph 37)*

It has been made clear to Government by the industry, and through the Select Committee's inquiry that the fragmentation of the tourism landscape, coupled with a variety of funding sources, hampers the effective co-ordination of tourism offers and their promotion.

Some LEPs, working in partnership with their destination organisations, are demonstrating what can be achieved with vision and co-ordinated action. Cumbria, for example, has placed the visitor economy as a key plank of the Cumbria plan, and invested around £2 million of their Local Growth Deal in improving the local transport infrastructure to help tourists. Other LEPs may wish to draw on these experiences, in areas where tourism is a local priority for growth.

This Government wants to see more LEPs and destinations blazing this trail delivering jobs and growth for communities in all parts of the country.

We are establishing a Ministerial Group on Tourism to co-ordinate action across Government, and together we will be exploring how we can incentivise the development of GREAT offers throughout England, to complement those available in Wales and Scotland.

Tourism is a devolved matter, but a number of policy levers—from connectivity to aspects of the regulatory framework—are reserved. We will therefore be inviting tourism Ministers from Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland to attend these meetings, where relevant. This will allow us to work more closely together to strengthen our collective offer to overseas visitors—particularly those from long-haul destinations.

To inform the operation of that Ministerial group, we have expanded the membership of the tourism council, and will be seeking their expert input on the issues that we need to be working together to address.

The Triennial Review of VisitBritain and VisitEngland recommended that VisitBritain have responsibility for the promotion of England and Britain overseas, enabling

VisitEngland to focus on supporting the development of world-class tourism offers in England.

This is being demonstrated through the two funds that VisitEngland is administering to grow tourism in the North and South West regions. The process is showing how funding can galvanise LEPs and destination organisations to come together to identify what will be of interest in their area to different international markets, and to aggregate those offers into a range of accessible itineraries and experiences, which VisitBritain, working with VisitEngland, can then promote overseas.

Looking forward, we would like to see a wider range of partners engaging on this agenda, from rail operators to skills councils to accommodation providers, to consider how they can work in concert to drive the continual development and improvement of our tourism offer, in line with rising consumer expectations.

The potential to grow tourism is huge. International tourism arrivals passed 1 billion for the first time in 2012 and they are set to reach 1.4 billion by 2020.<sup>4</sup> However, if we are to capitalise on the increasing demand for exploration and unique experiences, we have to constantly renew our offer and think creatively about how we promote it, particularly in the digital space.

The strength of the British offer is in its diversity. It is vital that we are working in partnership, with colleagues in the nations and regions to showcase the full range of experiences that visitors can enjoy, and that we are doing so cost-effectively.

The budgets of VisitBritain and VisitEngland will be determined as part of the Spending review, with the Scottish and Welsh Governments setting the budgets of VisitScotland and VisitWales shortly after.

In light of those budgets, and in line with the recommendation made in the Triennial review of VisitEngland and VisitBritain, we will be engaging with our colleagues on appropriate targets for increasing the number of international visitors to Britain's shores, visitor spend, and geographical spread.

The Triennial Review made clear that VisitBritain should work closely with all of the Visit organisations representing the UK to deliver those targets.

## Getting Here

*6. We encourage the Government to establish joint biometric processing centres with other European countries. (Paragraph 40)*

We agree with this recommendation. The use of biometric data helps us to strengthen control of our borders, confirming identity and giving us greater assurance around the background of those who want to come here. We must ensure a migration system that commands public confidence, serves our economic interest, and protects the UK from immigration abuse.

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<sup>4</sup> UNWTO Tourism Highlights 2015. <http://www.e-unwto.org/doi/pdf/10.18111/9789284416899>

While border security remains our primary concern, we remain committed to make it easier for genuine applicants to visit the UK. Therefore we are continuing to seek further alignment of UK and Schengen processes. Last year we commenced a pilot project in China that enables a joint UK/Schengen visa application to be submitted. This pilot was successful.

The UK and Belgian governments announced on 19 June a new pilot scheme to further streamline the visa application process for Chinese visitors to the UK, Belgium and the wider Schengen area. Under the new UK-Belgium service, Chinese customers will be able to submit visa applications for both countries during a single visit to a UK visa application centre (VAC).

We are committed to ensuring that our visa services are world-class to ensure that our borders are protected and that Britain remains open for business. We will therefore continue work to identify new opportunities to establish further joint biometric processing centres with other European countries.

*7. The Government should do more to make the cost of UK visas competitive, for example by moving towards the issue to bona fide tourists of more multiple entry, long term visas. (Paragraph 43)*

The Manifesto made clear that “we will simplify and speed up visa issuance for tourists”.

We regularly review the fees for our visa services to ensure they provide value for money to applicants; any changes to these must be approved by Parliament. We aim to ensure that the cost and range of visa services that the UK offers remains competitive in comparison to other visa markets, for example a UK visit visa allows for multiple entry and is valid for six months. In comparison a visit visa for Schengen offers only a standard single entry and is only valid for three months. We have a diverse range of visa options on offer, with two, five and 10 year long term visas available for customers who need to travel frequently. We are not complacent on the subject of visitor visas and will continue to review our arrangements, especially in key visitor markets, to ensure we identify opportunities to enhance services for applicants.

*8. We recommend that Border Force staffing levels are maintained at levels that can meet the demand posed by what we hope will be increasing numbers of tourists. Training of Border Force staff should always factor in the need to provide a welcoming reception to genuine tourists. (Paragraph 47)*

Visitors to the UK also want to know that our Border is safe and secure. Border Force's number one priority is, and will remain, the safety and security of that Border. They also recognise that officers at the Border have an important role to facilitate the legitimate travel of the vast majority of passengers, who should be dealt with in a courteous and welcoming manner. This Government will not be complacent about the passenger experience at the UK Border and we continuously review customer insights to see where further progress can be made.

Staffing levels at the Border are under regular review to ensure that Border Force can fulfil its twin remits of law enforcement and helping legitimate passengers to enter the UK efficiently. To this end, and to enhance visitors' experience at ports of entry, we have

invested in e Passport Gates to allow large numbers of passengers to enter the UK speedily and securely.

*9. An inquiry as broadly drawn as ours cannot consider the relative merits of the cases put forward by Heathrow and Gatwick. We do believe, though, that the Government should respond quickly and decisively to the Howard Davies review once it has reached its conclusions. (Paragraph 51)*

*10. The Government should review what more can be done to promote regional airports, both as a means of making more use of existing capacity and in terms of encouraging more visitors to the regions. (Paragraph 55)*

We recognise that the issue of aviation capacity is important for the economic growth of the UK. It is a vital issue that requires long term thinking and consensus building. Now that it has been published, we will review the Airports Commission's full analysis and then decide how and when to respond to any recommendations the Commission has made.

The Government is making significant investment in regional connectivity projects that will increase rail, air and road capacity to make it easier for tourists to travel around the UK.

This Government is currently supporting two regional routes that fulfil a public service obligation: the Dundee-London Stansted route, which has carried over 17,000 in the first ten months. We are also encouraging people to travel into the South West via the Newquay-London Gatwick route. This service carried nearly 74,000 passengers in the first ten months of operation, with an average load factor of 70%. Cornwall Council estimates that the route results in 83,500 tourist trips to the region pa.

## **Tourism in the UK**

*11. Major cultural and sporting events have an important role to play in promoting London and the rest of the UK to the outside world, as the Grand Départ of the Tour de France from Yorkshire and the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow demonstrated. Even greater attention needs to be paid to ensuring that they leave a lasting legacy, not least in terms of the tourism economy. (Paragraph 62)*

The Government agrees with the Committee's conclusion that major cultural and sporting events have an important role to play in promoting London and the rest of the UK to the outside world. Building on the legacy of London 2012 and other major events staged across the UK since then, including the Tour de France Grand Depart, Rugby League World Cup and the Glasgow Commonwealth Games. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport's Gold Framework published in March 2015, sets out how the Department and UK Sport jointly work, under a single framework, to provide support to a range of major sporting events at the UK level. This highlights the importance of such events in raising the national and international profile of host towns, cities and regions, in securing a lasting tourism legacy and delivering a sustained boost to the local and national tourism economy.

The Rugby World Cup 2015, the third largest sporting event in the world, is taking place across England (with games in Cardiff) this autumn. It will be the next chapter in a long list

of major sporting events the UK has hosted since the 2012 Games and will continue to put a major spotlight on Britain's wonderful tourism offer.

The UK City of Culture programme, run by DCMS and inspired by Liverpool's time as European Capital of Culture in 2008, has shown the importance of major cultural events to promoting the UK. These national cultural events spread over a year, help host cities to attract more visitors, bring communities together, raise the profile of culture in the city, and promote new partnerships and collaborations.

Over 1 million people visited Derry-Londonderry during the City of Culture year.<sup>5</sup> And it is estimated that being the UK City of Culture 2017 will deliver a £60 million boost to Hull's local economy in 2017 alone.<sup>6</sup>

This Government is also committed to supporting and strengthening the UK's high-potential Business Visits and Events industry. We have published a joint Government and Industry strategy that has been widely welcomed by the sector, and are now beginning to implement the recommendations to help increase the UK's ability to attract and retain business visitors.

*12. We agree with the Minister that the Coastal Communities Fund should continue. However, we would welcome a review to consider whether any successor fund is needed and, if so, whether such a successor should have a more focused approach, targeting key destinations in a way that might then benefit neighbouring communities. (Paragraph 66)*

Coastal Communities are an important part of the UK's tourism offer, and Government is committed to supporting them to unlock barriers to their growth and development and strengthen their appeal as places that people want to live and work in, and visit.

The Coastal Communities Fund has held three bidding rounds since it started in 2012 and there is a commitment to continue to fund projects already approved until the end of 2016-17. The Government has committed to extend the fund until 2020-21, with a budget of at least £90m as part of the wider agenda for local growth, rebalancing the economy and increasing productivity. Precise funding arrangements will be examined as part of the Spending Review, to see if changes are needed so it continues to deliver successful outcomes in coastal and seaside towns. The issues raised by the Committee could be considered as part of this review.

In addition to the Coastal Communities Fund, DCLG has invited applications from coastal areas to establish Coastal Community Teams. Under this programme, coastal areas are encouraged to establish local partnerships, including the local authority, community and business groups, to work together to produce a plan for the economic development for their area. We are encouraging these local partnerships to involve neighbouring communities as appropriate where this engagement will help to bring local economic benefits and support growth and jobs over a wider area.

*13. We welcome the start made by the National Coastal Tourism Academy in identifying and promulgating best practice. However, an extension of its funding is needed if it is to*

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.derrycity.gov.uk/DerryCitySite/files/76/76901904-60cb-41bb-b7ef-783443bc21d8.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.hullcc.gov.uk/portal/page?\\_pageid=221,674011&\\_dad=portal&\\_schema=PORTAL&p\\_id=5163](http://www.hullcc.gov.uk/portal/page?_pageid=221,674011&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL&p_id=5163)

*become a truly national resource for the benefit of seaside resorts throughout England and the rest of the UK. (Paragraph 71)*

This Government will continue to work on a national scale to help coastal towns and communities to thrive, supporting their development and sharing best practice by engaging with businesses and destinations around the coast.

We agree that the National Coastal Tourism Academy (NCTA), supported by a £2 million grant from the Coastal Communities Fund, has made a good start and is already delivering valuable outcomes in terms of spreading learning and best practice in promoting coastal tourism.

At the request of the Academy, the Government has recently agreed to an extension of the project's Coastal Communities Fund grant funding period to the end of December 2016. This has enabled the project to unlock an additional £100,000 of co-funding from other sources which will help to deliver additional outcomes to promote coastal tourism.

## **Taxes**

*14. We recommend that the Government analyses the impact of APD on the United Kingdom's tourism industry and takes the findings into account when reviewing this in the future. Developments in Scotland and Wales should be monitored for their impact on England. (Paragraph 79)*

*15. We recommend that the Government thoroughly assesses the merits of the claims of the Cut Tourism VAT Campaign by performing its own modelling work and publishes the results of this. The costs and benefits of reducing VAT on all tourism services, together and in isolation, should be assessed so the Treasury decision-making is fully and transparently informed. (Paragraph 83)*

*16. We commend the Minister's decision to engage with the tourism industry on the subject of VAT. This should be the start of a thorough analysis of the scope for cutting VAT on a variety of tourism services, in tandem or separately. If the case for reduced VAT on at least some tourism services is as strong as the evidence we received suggests, then the Sport and Tourism Minister should bring all the influence she can to bear on HM Treasury's policy development. (Paragraph 86)*

*17. We further recommend that the Government conducts a broad, public review and consultation on tourism taxes, including VAT and APD. Where the evidence leads, and practicalities allow, these taxes should be lowered to benefit both tourism and the wider economy. (Paragraph 87)*

*18. We urge whichever Government is in office after the General Election to take full account of the needs of the tourism industry when reviewing business rates. (Paragraph 89)*

This Government believes in backing competitive industry and creating the conditions for businesses to grow and the economy to thrive. The Treasury keeps all taxes under review and considers them in the round. This means carefully considering their impact on industries such as tourism, as well as their contribution to the public finances and the efforts of the Government to reduce the deficit.

The changes to APD that were announced in the 2014 Budget have cut the costs of flying from the UK—whether it's UK citizens wishing to holiday abroad, or foreign tourists flying home. APD makes an important contribution to public finances, but we hold all taxes under review. At Summer Budget 2015, the Government published a discussion paper on options to support regional airports in England from the potential impacts of APD devolution to Scotland and Wales.

The Government has thoroughly assessed the case for reducing VAT on tourism. The Cut Tourism VAT Campaign have discussed their modelling with HM Treasury, who have concluded that the evidence in support of their campaign does not justify a reduction in VAT at this time of fiscal constraint.

We understand that ratepayers in the tourism industry, like many others, want to see a business rates system that is fit for purpose in a 21st century economy. Budget 2015 launched a wide-ranging review of business rates and the government is now considering the responses to the review, including those received from the tourism industry.

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport will continue to discuss these issues with HM Treasury.

## Regulation and Competition

19. *VisitEngland should ensure that comprehensible and relevant information is provided to tourism businesses, not only online but in public libraries too.*

VisitEngland provide a significant amount of business information and advice through their online business information hub; via various printed guides; and through face to face meetings and events around the country.

VisitEngland also work to highlight consumer and market trends; analyse international competitors and identify areas of opportunity that offer maximum growth potential for English tourism. They are the industry's primary source of market intelligence on the English visitor economy with 324,176 visits to their business website each year; and over a decade of trend data and market insight available free of charge to inform business decisions and investment plans.

Providing public libraries with information that is of interest only to an industry audience would not be cost effective given the current provision and given the vast majority of library visitors are not those involved in the business of tourism development. Therefore information is available online via libraries for those visiting for business research purposes.

20. *Too many regulations are ill-fitted to the world of small businesses that characterise much of the tourism industry. The Government should take forward with greater speed the recommendations of the Penrose report, updated as necessary. (Paragraph 101)*

21. *Furthermore, the Government needs to remain vigilant in relation to European legislation that could impact on the tourism industry, and to fully factor in the industry's needs during negotiations with our European partners. (Paragraph 102)*

The Queen's Speech made clear that this Government will continue to make progress on our commitment to cutting red tape.

In the last Government, we cut the cost of regulation on UK business by some £10 billion, and we are determined to go further, helping to establish the right conditions to grow the tourism industry. Since the Tourism Regulation Taskforce proposals were published, significant progress has been made, particularly in key areas such as planning and visas. In some cases, it was not possible to take forward recommendations as they were either contrary to Government policy, would have required changes to an EU Directive, or were no longer accurate.

As tourism is a dynamic sector, with new business models emerging all the time, however, it is right that we keep our regulatory framework under review to ensure that common sense prevails and we miss no opportunities to protect and grow the tourism sector.

We will use the twin opportunities presented by the Emerging Industry Action Group<sup>7</sup> and the Cutting Red Tape programme to encourage businesses to submit ideas for unnecessary or burdensome pieces of red tape. We will examine how regulations are enforced and communicated and remove or reform them if they are no longer fit for purpose.

The previous Government published an independent review that recommended how the UK can become the global centre for the sharing economy which is already worth over £500 million for the UK and could be worth up to £9 billion a year by 2025. It strongly encouraged proportionate application of regulation to this sector and we will work across the industry to make sure that the enforcement of regulation is proportionate, and light touch as possible.

We will also continue to monitor developments emanating from the EU that impact on the UK tourism sector, liaising with practitioner bodies as appropriate, and responding to ensure that proposals add value to practices already taking place across the country, and do not add unnecessary burdens on tourism businesses.

*22. In view of the potential benefits, not least to the tourism industry, of daylight saving time, we recommend that the Government commissions a rigorous cost-benefit analysis, including the research needed to properly inform this. (Paragraph 106)*

Government understands that there are powerful arguments on both sides of the debate on the permanent introduction of Daylight Saving Time across the UK. Given the huge potential scope and consequences that any changes could have on many aspects of life in the UK, an exceptionally wide ranging cost benefit analysis would need to be performed to inform a decision. In view of the concerns of many, including the Scottish Government, we will weigh up the Committee's recommendation against other research priorities.

*23. The benefits of the accommodation grading scheme will be maximised if it is used, at least in part, as a vehicle for providing business advice to tourist accommodation. (Paragraph 110)*

This Government agrees that provision of good advice for all businesses is important in enabling them to remain competitive and to grow. In addition to VisitEngland's online business advice hub which is targeted at tourism businesses, there is a raft of advice and

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<sup>7</sup> Published as part of HM Government's Productivity Plan in July 2015

support available from Government, including the National Business Support Helpline, which provides free help and support for both starting up and growing a business and provides access to a team of specialist advisors for more complex issues. The GREATbusiness.gov.uk website also brings all available help and support in one place.

By providing advice to English tourism businesses through the current Quality Assurance Scheme, VisitEngland has created over a two year period, additional business investment of £105 million. This investment generated additional annual business revenue of almost £39 million and direct GVA (economic) impact of £18.6m<sup>8</sup> for businesses engaging with VisitEngland's Quality Assessment scheme. The Triennial Review recommended that the scheme be reviewed, and the role of the business support element will be taken into account as part of this process.

## Skills and Training

*24. There is a need for training arrangements and apprenticeships to better recognise some of the features that make many tourism businesses unique. These features include seasonality, scale and uncertainty in customer demand. (Paragraph 114)*

*25. The Government should also do more to inform tourism businesses of the opportunities and funding that exist to train people, particularly young people, for the world of work. (Paragraph 115)*

We agree that there is a need for training arrangements and apprenticeships in the tourism sector that better reflect its unique needs and we are investigating this. People 1st, the Sector Skills Council for the tourism and hospitality sector, has been conducting a survey on behalf of the Tourism Council to find out what can be done to help more businesses, especially SMEs, benefit from Apprenticeships. This will help establish whether there is an appetite for an Apprenticeship Training Agency (ATA) in the sector, as this will only succeed if it carries employer support.

This Government understands the value of putting young people into work and is committed to creating three million new apprenticeships. How a sector is perceived can be a factor in how attractive young people view its potential as a career opportunity. That is why through the Tourism Council, a social media campaign focussed on young people to challenge negative perceptions of careers in tourism was delivered.

Government will continue to work with tourism specialists VisitEngland to identify how the guidance already provided for SMEs can be more effectively disseminated. It will also continue to promote tourism apprenticeships and look to strengthen its relationships with LEPs as another means of doing this.

*26. We do not believe the work of professional tourist guides has the widespread recognition it deserves. We believe they should be represented on the Tourism Industry Council, where they would be in a better position both to promote their profession and to share the insights regular contact with tourists provide them with. (Paragraph 118)*

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<sup>8</sup> VE Quality Assurance Study, prepared by TNS & Optimal Economics. September 2012

Membership of the Tourism Council should be representative of the sector, and on that basis a representative for the professional tourist guides would be a welcome addition to this advisory group, providing a strong business voice and direct on-the-ground insights.

### **Tourism Matters**

*27. We believe tourism should have a more visible profile in, and be more vigorously promoted by, its sponsoring Department. (Paragraph 121)*

This Government recognises tourism's contribution to the economy and its potential to be developed further as an engine of growth. Tourism will always cut across a number of Ministerial briefs and must take account of planning and coastal policy, transport, the rural economy, visas , and the impact of taxes on the sector, amongst many others.

We are establishing a Ministerial group to coordinate this activity, putting tourism at the heart of Government. We will continue to work across Whitehall, with our Arms-Length Bodies and with business to ensure that the tourism industry is protected and promoted and fully considered when policy is being formulated and decisions made.