

VISITBRITAIN.ORG

Annual review 2024/25

Behind the scenes: driving
regional growth through the
visitor economy

SEE THE REPORT





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Chair's foreword

The past year has demonstrated the power of major events to put Britain in the spotlight.

“Growth is the word of the moment. With such emphasis on economic growth by the Government, it has become the yardstick against which every policy announcement is measured. Nurturing the growth also has important implications for our communities, creating new opportunities and fuelling prosperity.

Tourism and the visitor economy have long been an engine of growth. Over the past ten years annual inbound visitor spend in Britain has increased to over £9 billion. This is investment being spent on our high streets, in our hospitality establishments and in our cultural institutions. It is investment that is creating jobs, shaping places and exerting soft power.

Whilst tourism and the visitor economy were not called out specifically in the Government's industrial strategy, I believe there is a strong case to position it as a foundational sector that should be considered in the bigger picture for our economy. The visitor economy is powerful, both in its ability to underpin the identified priority sectors and 'fill the gaps' by driving investment and growth into every area of Britain – rural, seaside towns or vibrant cities.

VisitBritain forecasts that international visitors will spend £34.6 billion in the UK economy in 2025.

What is perhaps more impressive is the visitor economy's potential. We continue to expect growth in the sector, around 6% year on year, but I believe we could be more ambitious if given the right support on key policy levers. Backing tourism and the visitor economy makes economic sense - unlike major infrastructure projects, which take years to see a return on investment, tourism can provide in-year returns that are well distributed to ensure the nations and regions feel the benefit.

Despite the positive projections however, we are losing market share to our European competitors, who are making significant investments in their tourist boards. If inbound tourism to the UK was to grow at the same pace as forecasts are currently indicating for Western Europe, the industry would be worth an additional £4.4 billion per year by 2030 to the UK economy.

That potential can be unleashed. Together with the private sector, local tourism partners and Government, VisitBritain will continue to put rocket boosters under Britain's tourism offer – competing on the world stage to deliver economic prosperity to incredible destinations across England, Scotland and Wales.

In the past the visitor economy has been perceived as fragmented, owing to the distribution of SMEs in the sector, but I believe that this diversity is in fact a strength of ours.

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) calculates that there are more than 327,000 SMEs in the tourism sector, making up 56% of all businesses in DCMS sectors and 12% of the total registered UK businesses. While numerous, each of these businesses is naturally aligned in ambition – to provide a warm welcome to visitors and showcase the best of our great nation and its destinations. When we prioritise tourism, we invest in these small business owners, their employees and our high streets.

I invite the Government to recognise how tourism can also be used to target investment and growth in specific areas of our economy. Seaside and coastal communities for example, which for many years have served as the lifeblood of our domestic tourism offer, could be reinvigorated with investment in their regeneration and promotion. This process has already begun with Government's investment in local infrastructure, which can be capitalised to develop new tourism product and experiences to sell to domestic holidaymakers.

I would like to close with a reflection on the last few years, beyond the reporting period of this document, for this is to be my last Annual Report and Accounts as Chair of the BTA. I joined the VisitEngland Advisory Board as Chair in 2020, a challenging time for everyone in our sector, and have worked alongside members of both boards to steer VisitBritain and VisitEngland through the pandemic, the recovery period and now into a period of sector growth.

Nick de Bois CBE

Chair of the British
Tourist Authority



Nick de Bois CBE Image: VisitBritain/Kevin Moran Photography

Visit Birmingham and West Midlands



ZipWorld/Nick Mizen



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During this time, I have been lucky enough to lead an independent review of Destination Management Organisations, and oversee the recommendations be implemented to create the network of high performing LVEPs (Local Visitor Economy Partnerships) we see today. I believe this new structure will provide the sector with a strong foundation to enable the benefits of tourism to be captured by every region.

Meeting and collaborating face-to-face is by far the most effective way to drive outcomes, so I have also been proud to represent the BTA on the world stage, ensuring we play a role in Government set-piece investment events in the Middle East and Asia, and leading trade delegations to sell Britain in our biggest markets, including India, the US and China.

My tenure has seen several international marketing campaigns, of which ‘Starring GREAT Britain’ has been a

highlight. The campaign is an example of tourism’s ability to cut across sectors, Britain’s creative assets to attract the world to visit Britain. This campaign platform is here for the long term, and I look forward to seeing how it develops.

Finally, I would like to recognise the teams that make all this activity happen, from the Board and executive team to VisitBritain/VisitEngland colleagues based across Britain and around the world. Their passion and ambition for our sector is clear to see and has made my time as Chair all the more enjoyable. In particular, my thanks go to Patricia Yates, who as CEO has ensured that the organisation has moved from strength to strength, and Lady Victoria Borwick for her chairmanship of the VisitEngland Advisory Board which is an essential body for ensuring English tourism is represented within our strategies.”



CEO's statement



Patricia Yates

VisitBritain/VisitEngland

Chief Executive

“I’m proud to say we remain a high performing Government body, driving an additional £562 million into the UK economy in 2024/25. I believe that our blockbuster new international marketing campaign, ‘Starring GREAT Britain’, will give us the potential to achieve even more.”

Kickstarting economic growth

Upon entering Government, the Prime Minister set out clear ambitions to ‘go for growth’, promoting higher living standards, economic stability, and creating wealth and opportunity for all.

As the national tourist board and an arm’s length body of DCMS, VisitBritain/VisitEngland is tasked with delivering on these ambitions, particularly the mission to kickstart economic growth, and ensuring every nation and region feels the benefit of this activity. We will ensure that this growth is also regenerative, telling an inclusive national story and delivering good jobs and opportunities for all.

I’m proud to say we remain a high performing Government body, driving an additional £562 million into the UK economy in 2024/25. I believe that our blockbuster new international marketing campaign, ‘Starring GREAT Britain’, will give us the potential to achieve even more.

We welcome the ambition set by the former Tourism Minister Sir Chris Bryant in challenging the sector to reach 50 million annual international visitors by 2030. VisitBritain/VisitEngland will continue to play a central role in achieving this ambition, taking learnings from our activity to focus in on those aspects that best drive growth and align with the Government’s broader growth plans as outlined in the ‘Plan for Change’.



Ensuring every nation and region realises its full potential

VisitBritain’s marketing activity is specifically targeted to drive growth right across the nations and regions of Britain with 60% of the additional value generated by VisitBritain benefitting destinations outside of London, compared to the International Passenger Survey (IPS) benchmark of 46%.

‘Starring GREAT Britain’, launched in January 2025, seizes on screen tourism trends to promote destinations from across our nations and regions. The sheer variety of locations associated with iconic productions, from Bridgerton in Bath to Bond in the Scottish Highlands, gives us increased scope to highlight Britain as the real star of the show and continue to drive inward investment that will benefit local communities.

With 78% of inbound visitors booking through intermediaries, VisitBritain works with the travel trade to ensure the nations and regions are sold in international markets. In January, we brought 120 buyers from 17 markets to see destinations and product across Britain as part of our flagship Showcase Britain event. The educational visits enabled buyers from markets including China, India, the US and Australia to experience new product across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The Government’s focus on English devolution has provided an opportunity to shape tourism’s role under these newly empowered structures. The VisitEngland team and I have had the pleasure of



meeting with several of the Mayors, encouraging them to recognise the importance of the visitor economy in achieving their local growth plans – particularly in creating jobs, place-making, and supporting their high streets. Some Mayors are already putting this recognition into action, by sponsoring or working closely with their LVEPs and Destination Development Partnerships (DDPs).

Deliver growth by working in partnership with businesses

Our work with the travel trade goes beyond bringing buyers to Britain, VisitBritain has continued to support businesses and LVEPs through trade missions to key markets. In November 2024, dozens of tourism businesses attended Destination Britain Middle East and Asia. Export activity such as this has supported an additional 4,456 business leads to UK suppliers – contributing to travel and tourism being the UK's third largest service export.

VisitBritain has maintained strong partnerships with the private sector, working with global brands to drive demand and convert inspiration into bookings. Ahead of the Paris Olympics our Partnership with TripAdvisor saw those arriving at Gare du Nord greeted with a high impact campaign

showcasing the best of British destinations. The North East of England and Manchester benefitted from VisitBritain's Gateway Fund which saw the regions promoted in Germany and the US respectively via partnerships with DFDS Ferries and Aer Lingus. VisitBritain was also delighted to support Liverpool City Region in their sponsorship of the Bordeaux Wine Festival to inspire French visitors to explore Liverpool's incredible food, drink and cultural offering. This work with partners has generated over £12 million in cash and in-kind activity to amplify our reach and drive bookings.

As we launched Starring GREAT Britain, a global partnership with Expedia Group put regional destinations in the North East of England, Scotland and Wales in the spotlight to drive bookings. The 'GOT THE SHOT' series paired British film and TV locations with Expedia Group's global reach to inspire visitors in Australia, France, Germany and the US to book a trip to Britain right now.

Meanwhile, VisitBritain have been working to support those sectors identified in the industrial strategy, using our grant programme to help attract and scale business events in key sectors such as life sciences, clean energy, digital technology, and the creative industries. The Business Events Growth Programme (from April 2018 to March 2024) has supported 91 business events across 18 cities in Britain. Meanwhile, VisitEngland's business events arm, MeetEngland, is delivering a targeted international activity programme, connecting English destinations with global buyers, generating more than 440 new business event enquiries in the last 18 months.

VisitEngland's Business Advice Hub also goes from strength to strength, enabling the more than 300,000 small and micro businesses in our sector to become more sustainable, stay on the right side of regulations, and adapt to offer more accessible product for visitors.

Drive innovation, investment and the adoption of technology to seize the opportunities of a future economy, from AI to net zero

As CEO I've placed a lot of emphasis on ensuring VisitBritain/VisitEngland is fit for the future, using technology to improve our competitive position as well as seizing on its ability to provide efficiencies. The organisation's transformation project is now transitioning into a Digital, Data and Technology Strategy. This will enable our organisation to maximise the use of our data and digital tools to promote a thriving and forward-thinking tourism industry. Projects include the development of platforms that can provide real-time and predictive insights, making use of technology, such as conversational AI, where our industry partners can easily interact with our research and data whenever they need. In addition, the creation of a 'tourism data fabric' means VisitBritain will be able to address strategic data gaps in our sector, unearth new and novel insights faster and have the ability reach new audiences by harnessing the collective power of our advanced digital estate. Taken together, we accelerate our ambition of better, simpler and faster, data-driven decision making.

New technologies are being used in our marketing activity. We've previously made use of machine learning to seize on gamification trends, whilst 'Starring GREAT Britain' has used innovative technology such as geo-location targeting to retarget individuals who have seen our out-of-home advertising with digital ads on their mobile devices.

'Starring GREAT Britain' is also a good example of how VisitBritain is supporting sectors from across the UK economy. The campaign uses Britain's thriving film and TV productions as a hook to showcase destinations, inviting the world to visit the real star of the show – Britain! The industrial strategy called out the creative industries as a priority sector, and this campaign shows how tourism and film can work together to tell an inclusive narrative and drive additional spend in local communities.

Help people get a job, stay in work and progress in their careers, with good employment opportunities across England, Scotland and Wales

Tourism is a fantastic sector to work in, with so many varied roles and responsibilities. It's a sector that can be someone's first job, a lifelong career or a gateway to support those returning to work. There are opportunities to upskill and create a fulfilling career regardless of a person's background or location.

As the tourist board, it is our duty to support the sector to thrive by driving demand so that the thousands of businesses across the visitor economy can continue to offer these career opportunities.

Locally, VisitEngland is working across Government to connect the LVEP network with skills teams within the Department of Work and Pensions, identifying opportunities for people to begin, or return to, careers within the tourism and hospitality sector.

VisitBritain/VisitEngland itself has been recognised as a great place to work. As part of their annual survey, the Sunday Times selected the organisation as one of the Best Places to Work for 2025 and we were also recognised by WORKL as one of the UK's 'World's Happiest Workplaces'. We are all extremely proud of these achievements. Our passion for tourism and supporting tourism businesses across the UK is unwavering and this award is a testament to our collective efforts in creating an inclusive, supportive and thriving workplace where everyone feels valued and inspired to excel.

Looking ahead

The themes mapped out in the Government's 'Plan for Change' will continue to guide our activity. I remain committed to championing tourism as a growth sector that creates opportunities for all, with VisitBritain/VisitEngland working in broad ranging partnerships to support the sector and break down barriers to growth.

I am thankful for the support of the Board, my directors and the entire VisitBritain/ VisitEngland team, who I know are also committed to this ambition. I'd also like to recognise the guidance offered by Nick de Bois, Chair of the BTA, and Lady Victoria Borwick, Chair of the VisitEngland Advisory Board. Their leadership has enabled the respective to ensure the continued improvement and success of the organisation.



VisitBritain/Nemorin



VisitBritain/Laura Nurse

Our impact



VisitBritain's activities contributed an additional
£562 million
to the UK economy in 2024/25



Results show that 60% of this
estimated additional spend
£336 million
was in destinations out of London



Starring GREAT Britain generated
£217 million
additional visitor spend from
January 2025 to June 2025



For every £1 invested in the
Starring GREAT Britain campaign,
visitors spent an additional
£20 in
Britain



VisitBritain generated
over £12 million
in cash and in-kind revenue with partners
in 2024/25 to amplify our reach



From April 2024 to September
2025, 93 events have been
secured, contributing an estimated
£26.5 million
in delegate spend to the English visitor economy



VisitBritain's Business Events Growth
Programme has achieved from 2018 to 2024
£60.6 million
in direct economic return to the UK economy with
91 business events support across 18 cities in Britain

Growing international visitor value

Working in partnership to deliver GREAT Britain campaigns

Lights, Camera, Action! With 9 out of 10 potential visitors keen to explore film and TV locations on a trip to the UK, we harnessed this international appeal to promote destinations across Britain. Launched in January 2025, our screen tourism campaign, Starring GREAT Britain, used British film and TV as the hook to drive visits and spend across the nations and regions of Britain.

The campaign kicked off with a blockbuster-inspired film directed by Academy Award-winning British director Tom Hooper, showcasing Britain’s destinations as the real star of the show. Created in collaboration with international studios Disney, Netflix, Paramount Pictures, Sony Pictures Entertainment, STUDIOCANAL, Universal Pictures, Warner Bros. and Discovery, the film features iconic film and TV moments from Mission: Impossible to Bridget Jones; Spiderman to Succession; House of the Dragon to Harry Potter; Paddington to Fast & Furious and more.

Curated, high impact advertising featured across the UK’s largest and most valuable inbound visitor markets including Australia, the GCC countries, France, Germany and the US. For every £1 we invested in our Starring GREAT Britain campaign, we generated £20 in additional visitor spending

in 2024/25 – our most successful campaign since Covid. It has captured the imagination of consumers and industry alike.

With the backing of 50 Ambassadors and High Commissioners and the tourism industry, the campaign has been amplified with messages of support, curated itineraries and inspiring content encouraging visitors to explore our nations and regions.

Partnerships remain at the heart of our work. In 2024/25 we joined forces with global brands - such as Expedia, British Airways, Hotelbeds, Wego – along with film studios and the tourism industry to maximise impact. These collaborations generated over £12 million in cash and in-kind, amplifying our reach and driving bookings across Britain.

As part of our Starring GREAT Britain campaign, we partnered with Expedia Group to launch ‘GOT THE SHOT’, inspiring travel from Australia, France, Germany and the US. The campaign featured a cinematic three-part series directed by BAFTA-winner Chris Faith, spotlighting the North East of England, Scotland and Wales.

Building on this regional focus, the North East and North West of England benefitted from our GREAT Gateway Innovation Fund, which promoted the areas in Germany and the US through partnerships with DFDS Ferries and Aer Lingus. These campaigns led to increased bookings and longer stays, boosting visitor spend in both regions.





Earlier in the year, we delivered phase two of the 'See Things Differently' GREAT campaign across France, Germany and the GCC, showcasing Britain's vibrant destinations and warm welcome. Partners included British Airways in the US with the humorous 'Ask Britain Anything' campaign, while our partnership with Wego in the GCC targeted high-value travellers and drove seasonal bookings.

During the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games, as part of the GREAT Britain's 'Audacious Kingdom' campaign, we captured global attention driving 44% awareness and 37% intent to visit Britain. Britain's food, drink, and cultural offer took centre stage at the International Bordeaux Wine Festival, where Liverpool's musical talent and top British chefs delivered an unforgettable showcase.

Our always-on digital and media activity continued to inspire global travel to Britain. In 2024/25, visitbritain.com attracted 1.35 million quality visitors, while social media content reached over 140 million people worldwide. PR efforts secured 3,145 articles featuring Britain, with 60% highlighting nations and regions beyond London and 99% reinforcing Britain's welcoming and exciting appeal.



Our Starring GREAT Britain campaign won Gold at the Polaris Awards

in the category of 'best use of TV and or cinema advertising in a campaign created for a governmental organisation involving a series of different executions'. The Polaris awards celebrate the best in global public sector and political marketing.



For every £1 invested in the Starring GREAT Britain campaign, visitors spent an additional £20 in Britain



The Starring GREAT Britain campaign is estimated to have generated £217 million in additional spending by international visitors from its launch in January to June 2025



VisitBritain generated over £12 million in cash and in-kind revenue with partners in 2024/25 to amplify our reach



Our partnership with Wego in the GCC saw booking value up 26% and hotel bookings up 69% for Britain compared to the same period in 2023.



1.35 million quality visitors to visitbritain.com



140 million global reach via social media



3,145 articles featured Britain worldwide: 60% highlighted regional destinations, 99% reinforced Britain's welcoming and exciting image



Engaging with international travel trade

Growing sales and driving growth

With 78% of inbound visitors booking through intermediaries, our global team worked directly with the travel trade in 21 key markets to ensure Britain's destinations were sold internationally. In 2024/25 our programme generated just under £100 million for the UK economy, driving visitor spend across the nations and regions, supporting jobs and benefitting communities.

British tourism suppliers from across England, Scotland and Wales joined our trade missions and events to forge new relationships and get new products and destinations in tour operator programmes. Events held in Australia, India, Brazil, Germany and France connected British destinations, attractions and hotels with influential buyers to meet, share latest tourism product and contract new business.

Our Showcase Britain event welcomed 120 international travel trade professionals to Britain for a full programme of updates, meetings and targeted educational visits. Tailored itineraries across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland allowed buyers to experience destinations firsthand to broaden travel itineraries, adding new locations to tours and packages and driving visitor spend into regional economies. For example, following an educational trip to York and Edinburgh, Brazilian operator, New Age, added 37 hotels to their portfolio, benefiting local economies in Yorkshire, West Midlands, North West, South West, South East of England and Scotland.



Our Destination Britain events returned, with our Middle East and Asia event bringing together British suppliers with key buyers from the GCC, India, Japan and South Korea. One-to-one meetings and presentations generated new bookings and visits to Britain from valuable markets. Across our 2024/25 B2B missions and events, 4,456 business leads were generated for UK suppliers. Of the trade engagement that resulted in new British itineraries or tours, 64% featured destinations outside London, spreading the benefits of visitor spend across the nations and regions and supporting local businesses and jobs.

Our Destination Britain Americas event in September 2025 connected British businesses with influential buyers and media from the US, Canada and Brazil. Led by our CEO Patricia Yates, the flagship trade mission saw hundreds of delegates take part in 1,200+ meetings, seminars, workshops and networking opportunities to forge new relationships, deepen product knowledge and create fresh itineraries.





In 2024/25 VisitBritain's work with the travel trade brought in circa **£100 million to the UK economy**



4,456 business leads generated for British suppliers attending our trade events (2024/25)



Of the travel trade engagement that resulted in new British itineraries or tours, **64% of new itineraries or tours featured destinations outside London**



More than **120 buyers experienced** the UK's nations and regions firsthand on educational trips

“VisitBritain invited us on a familiarisation trip to the West Midlands. Since discovering the region, we developed a six day / five night tour exploring Birmingham, Stratford-upon-Avon, Dudley and other areas en route.”

Anke Schön, Senior Product Manager GB, Behringer Touristik (German tour operator)



Leading English tourism

Supporting regenerative growth and driving regional prosperity

VisitEngland continues to lead and enable the sustainable growth of England's visitor economy across the regions. Through the ongoing rollout of the Local Visitor Economy Partnerships (LVEPs) structure, we have transformed the destination management landscape to support and grow local visitor economies. These strategic and high-performing Destination Management Organisations deliver robust destination management, aligned with regional growth priorities. In 2024/25 we supported 34 LVEPs to develop growth plans tailored to their local priorities, opportunities and challenges.

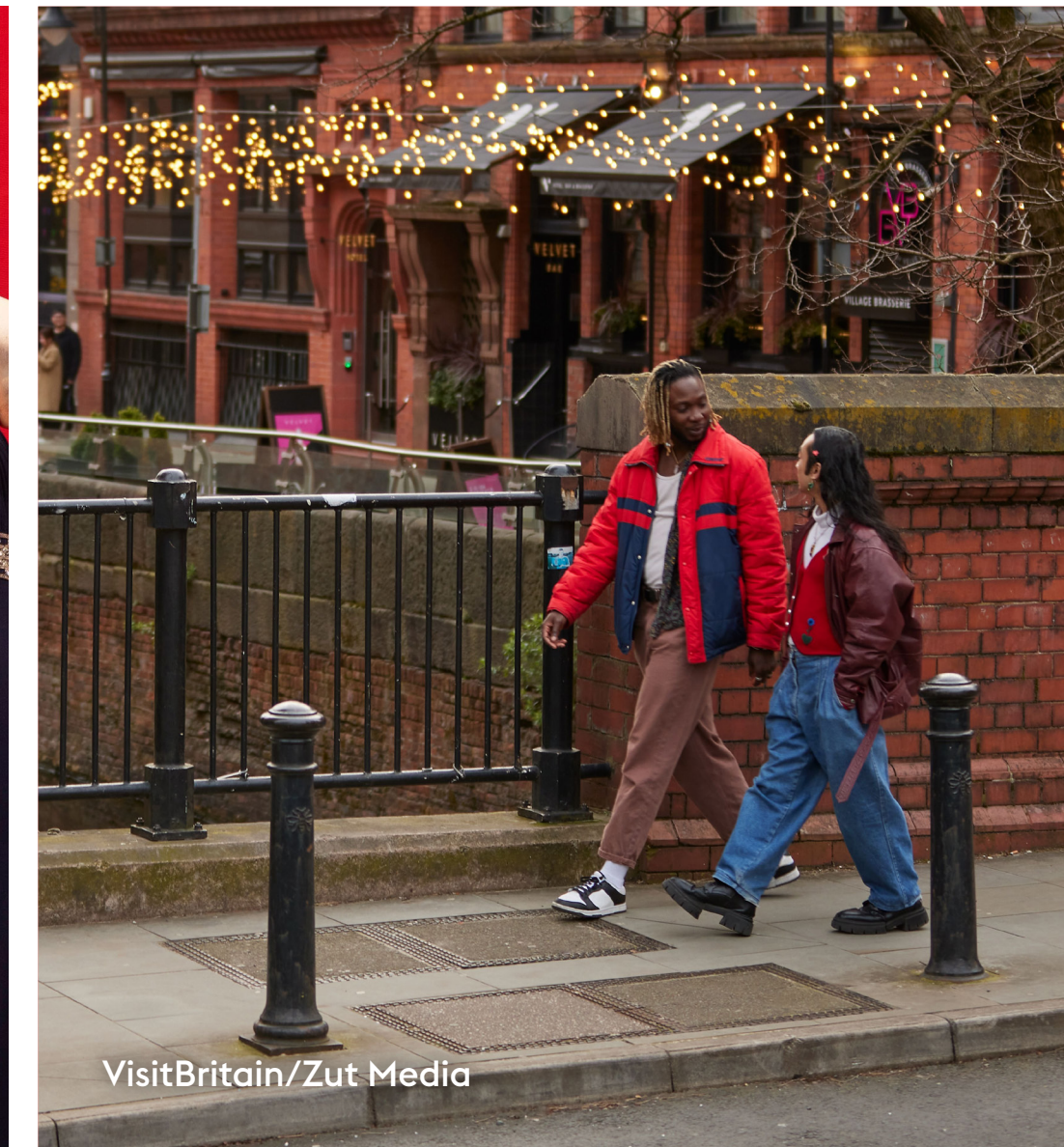
Over the year, our CEO, Chair of the VisitEngland Advisory Board and England Director met 10 Mayors to highlight the visitor economy's role in achieving their local growth objectives, particularly in job creation, place-making and high streets revitalisation. Our work with LVEPs has fostered strong relationships with their Combined Authorities and elevated the importance of the visitor economy in Local Growth Plans. As a result, several Mayors have begun sponsoring or collaborating closely with their LVEPs and Destination Development Partnerships (DDPs).

To support more informed destination and business decision making, we have led a data and research programme working closely with LVEPs to provide deeper insights at a local authority and LVEP level. This initiative has made several data sources available at a more granular level - including the Great British Tourism Survey (GBTS), International Passenger Survey, short term lets data and card spending data - reducing the need for LVEPs to commission independent research. It has also led to the development of a standardised approach to visitor research, enabling benchmarking and a more cohesive national picture. LVEPs can now build bespoke dashboards and combine data sources to uncover fresh insights.

Our Regional Development Leads, located in England's regions work closely with LVEPs to help them access a full suite of tools, support, training and expertise across priority areas for growth such as destination management, insights, accessibility, sustainability, international readiness, marketing and business support.



VisitBritain/
Kevin Moran Photography



VisitBritain/Zut Media



VisitBritain/Kevin Moran

Leading English tourism

We continue to work with LVEPs to upskill businesses through targeted training and resources. Leading the accessible and inclusive tourism agenda, we have supported over 35 LVEPs through our Accessibility Support Programme, helping regions identify, enhance, and promote their inclusive tourism offer.

New online courses in 2025 have launched through our VisitEngland Academy, including Taking England to the World, Taking England's Wine Tourism to the World, GCC Welcome, accessibility training and our LGBTQIA+ course.

To enable and lead a regenerative visitor economy, we launched our online Regenerative Tourism Guide in 2025, offering specialist resources for destination leaders and practical guidance for micro, small and medium enterprises.

We continued to support England's Core Cities—Manchester, Liverpool, Bristol, Birmingham, Sheffield, Leeds and Newcastle—in the Global Destinations Sustainability Index (GDS-Index). This internationally recognised benchmark helps destinations improve their sustainability performance: in 2025 Manchester moved up 24 places in the GDS-Index to be ranked 35 out of 81 destinations.

We continue to drive excellence across England's visitor economy. Through our Quality Scheme, delivered by the AA, over 3,000 tourism businesses received one-to-one support, recommendations and feedback to improve their welcome and grow their offer. Our VisitEngland Awards for Excellence, built on local competitions, recognised businesses setting the benchmark for quality—boosting their media exposure, industry connections and growth potential.

In 2024/2025 our always-on marketing activity championed regional England breaks to a domestic audience, with our social media content reaching an audience of 12.6 million - a 2.5 million increase year-on-year, consumer PR coverage in top national target media generating 286 million opportunities to see (OTS) and a new website launch for visitengland.com spotlighting the regions through 104 new itineraries. A dedicated North East of England influencer campaign in collaboration with the DDP helped generate awareness amongst our target pre-nester audience with a campaign reach of 3.86 million.



Working with Destination Development Partnerships

The Destination Development Partnerships (DDPs) in the North East of England and West Midlands have grown in 2024/25, delivering a programme of activity to unlock the potential of the regions' visitor economies. The DDPs work in partnership with both VisitEngland and VisitBritain.

In 2024/25 VisitEngland supported the North East of England and the West Midlands DDPs with international readiness through travel trade training with a focus on quality in these regions through the Visitor Ready entry level quality scheme for businesses. Both regions featured in VisitEngland's always-on activity on owned and earned channels and a domestic influencers campaign focused on building awareness of the product featured on the North East DDP's New Adventures platform. At a strategic level, VisitEngland has also worked with both DDPs and their LVEPs to build growth plans, upweighting support on important programmes such as accessibility and regenerative tourism.

VisitBritain's support for the North East of England delivered international visibility and commercial impact. The West Midlands had a dedicated VICE episode on Birmingham and major campaigns with Expedia and inclusion in Starring GREAT Britain reached hundreds of millions of consumers across the US, Australia, and Europe. Press and influencer visits from 11 markets, alongside extensive PR coverage, helped position the region as a must-visit destination. Trade engagement was equally strong, with bespoke events, fam trips, and partnerships like Hotelbeds driving bookings across the region. The North East was one of the three regions to have a dedicated video in the Expedia 'Got the Shot' campaign; it was also included in the Middle East's Wego campaign with the North East creative winning a 2024 GCC Smarties and achieving over 100 million impressions. The destination features heavily throughout the Starring GREAT Britain campaign, with Northumberland included in the hero film and in the US Sunset Boulevard four-week takeover. In 2024/25 seven travel trade trips from priority markets went to the region, growing itineraries and driving growth. Press and influencer visits resulted in extensive PR coverage with over 184 press articles across global markets.



34 LVEPs supported to develop tailored growth plans



Over **35 LVEPs** have completed our **LVEP Accessibility Support Programme**, helping regions identify, enhance and promote their accessible tourism offer



7 Core Cities supported in the Global Destinations Sustainability Index



3,000+ businesses received 1:1 support via VisitEngland's Quality Scheme

“Since winning a VisitEngland Awards for Excellence Gold award for Business Events Venue, our business events bookings have increased, not just the amount of enquiries but the yield, which means our commercial revenue can be put back into our charity and allow us to be freely open for all throughout the year”

Neill Martin-Hoare, Head of Events, National Memorial Arboretum



Boosting business events

Promoting England as a premium destination for business events

The Business Events sector is a significant contributor to England's economy, with international delegates spending 38% more versus all other inbound visit types. We have delivered impactful platforms that enabled English cities to connect with international meetings, incentive buyers and international associations whose focus aligns with UK Government priority sectors - such as medical, life and social sciences, technology, clean energy and the creative industries. These connections have generated valuable opportunities to secure new business events.

Under the MeetEngland brand, and alongside English partners, we showcased England's business events offer at IBTM World, IMEX Frankfurt and IMEX America. In 2024, we hosted 50 destination partners, facilitated over 500 client appointments and organised six additional activations with 65 international clients. Our on-territory missions and sales calls spanned Germany, Switzerland, France, Belgium, the US, Canada and India. We also supported four educational trips to English cities for international clients. At our Mission North America in March 2025, four English destinations and convention bureaus joined us, attending Northstar's Successful Meeting University workshop followed by a client event in New York City.

In July 2025, our annual European trade mission visited Geneva, Paris and Brussels, connecting five English destinations with convention bureaus, international associations and professional congresses in priority sectors, such as medical, life and social sciences, professional and business services, conservation and clean energy, advanced manufacturing and the creative industries. Each event was hosted at the local Embassy or Residence and formally welcomed by the territory's Ambassador.

Since April 2024, our efforts have generated 442 new business event enquiries to English destinations and suppliers, worth an estimated £334.5 million in potential delegate spend. From April 2024 to September 2025, 93 events have been secured, contributing an estimated £26.5 million in delegate spend to the visitor economy.

Following the launch of a dedicated section of our industry website aimed at international business events buyers, we developed our new creative direction entitled 'MeetEngland. Meet The Unexpected', designed to shine a spotlight on England's diverse business events offering. England's product was further amplified through industry partnerships with platforms such as CVENT and the European Society of Association Executives. In September 2025 we launched the city destination spotlight to showcase England's leading business event destinations.



“The team at MeetEngland are an indispensable extension of our own team when operating internationally. The strategic platform they provide at major trade shows and on targeted sales missions in our key markets, such as North America and Europe, is vital for showcasing Manchester's strengths. This supportive and strategic approach has been instrumental in securing significant wins for the city, generating over £250 million in new business opportunities and helping us to confirm approximately £20 million worth of conferences and events over the last three years.”

Laura Mason, Head of Business Tourism, Marketing Manchester

Boosting business events

Growing business events to Britain

The Business events sector contributes £33.6 billion to the UK economy. Our work to support and grow this valuable part of the visitor economy continues with the Business Events Growth Programme, a grant fund supporting destinations to bid for international congresses and helping organisations attract more international delegates to confirmed events in priority business sectors.

From April 2018 to March 2024, the VisitBritain Business Events Growth Programme resulted in £60.6 million in direct return to the UK economy, supporting 91 business events across 18 cities in England, Scotland and Wales. For every £1 invested in the programme, the UK economy saw a return of £35. From April 2024 to September 2025, a further 62 potential or confirmed events have been supported across 13 cities.

We published our Business Events Delegate Spend research report in May 2025, providing valuable insights into domestic and international delegate spending. The research shows a 75% increase in business event spend since 2017, driven by longer stays, particularly among international delegates, as well as year-on-year inflationary growth.

In February 2025, we hosted our second Association Conference at ICC Wales, in partnership with MeetEngland, Meet in Wales and VisitScotland Business Events. Under the theme ‘Bid for Today, Bid for Tomorrow’, the event brought together 75 industry professionals for networking and discussions on the international bidding landscape. It generated six new bid opportunities for attending destinations, with 11 of 13 participating associations expressing intent to book British destinations.

In November 2024, we launched the Business Events Impactful Framework following two years of capacity building through the Shape the Future of Events educational series. The Framework helps destinations to define, measure and communicate positive impacts from business events in alignment with organisational missions. The series won joint Gold at the Meeting & Incentive Travel Awards 2024.

“The support we received via the VisitBritain Business Events Growth programme was instrumental in the success of Glasgow’s bid to host a prestigious medical congress in 2030. This critical support sets us apart from the competition whilst at the same time clearly demonstrates the UK’s strong support of business events ... At a time when the market is so incredibly competitive, the Business Events Growth Programme is crucial to UK cities, giving them a competitive advantage which allows them to deliver social and economic impact for years to come”

Campbell Arnott - Senior International Business Development Manager – Glasgow Convention Bureau



£35 return for every £1 invested in VisitBritain Business Events Growth Programme



£60.6 million direct return from VisitBritain Business Events Growth Programme across 18 British cities (2018–2024)



An **estimated £334.5 million** in potential delegate spend in England from 442 event enquiries



An **estimated £26.5 million** in delegate spend in England from 93 secured events



500+ client appointments facilitated at major trade shows during 2024 under the MeetEngland brand



Being the independent voice for Tourism

Trusted partner of Government and industry to drive growth

As the trusted source of tourism insights, we have strengthened our data on domestic and inbound tourism – to be more timely and granular at a national, regional and local level. New interactive dashboards on visitbritain.org enable users to explore and interrogate our extensive datasets directly. In 2024/25 we launched card spending insights, enabling us to track spending by product and service.

In May 2025 we published new research on the cultural and social impacts that tourism has on local communities across the UK. The report found that 79% of Britons felt more positive after travelling domestically, with tourism contributing to higher levels of community pride, wellbeing and social cohesion for host residents.

Collaboration with partners across Government and industry is central to our mission. Our leadership team continues to champion tourism, both in the UK and on the global stage. Chair of the BTA Board, Nick de Bois CBE, visited Japan ahead of the Osaka Expo to strengthen Japan and UK ties, while CEO Patricia Yates promoted Britain's tourism offer in China.

Tourism plays a vital role in soft power diplomacy - visitors to Britain are 16% more likely to invest in our products and businesses. In May 2024, we led a tourism delegation to the GREAT Futures trade expo in Saudi Arabia, increasing engagement with the Saudi travel trade. We also joined Culture Secretary Lisa Nandy at the GREAT Tourism and Culture reception in New Delhi, India, reinforcing tourism's diplomatic value.

Through VisitBritain's international network, we partnered with embassies



and consulates around the world to host events attended by government, influential travel industry stakeholders, commercial partners, airlines, media and influencers. We supported the Government's global roll out of Electronic Travel Authorisations (ETA) by amplifying key messages to industry and consumers in our active markets.

Domestically, our CEO, Patricia Yates, contributed to the Government and industry-led Visitor Economy Advisory Council, identifying opportunities and addressing barriers for growth. Working with Government departments, we contributed to the Tourism Minister's Visitor Economy Growth strategy, advising on regional spread and international demand building. The Chair of the VisitEngland Advisory Board, Victoria Borwick

and VisitEngland senior leadership team engaged with Mayors, LVEPs, DDPs and stakeholders to discuss regional priorities and tourism's role in job creation, local business support and place-making.

Our collaboration with the national tourism boards continues and our Strategic Partner Framework clarifies our priorities along with those of VisitEngland, VisitScotland, VisitWales, Tourism Northern Ireland and London & Partners. This ensures efficient collaboration towards our shared mission to support a sustainable visitor economy.

To showcase tourism's ability to deliver fast growth, we hosted Parliamentary events in 2024 and 2025, bringing together MPs with their LVEPs and our senior team. At the 2025 event, 66 MPs and 3 three peers



learned more about tourism’s impact on the UK and their constituencies, as well as our latest campaigns and projects shaping England’s visitor economy.

Our annual English Tourism Week campaign continued to celebrate the sector’s economic value and engage MPs, ministers and the media. In 2025, our Tourism Superstar search saw a record-breaking 18,000+ votes, honouring the dedication of tourism employees and volunteers.

We bring together senior government representatives, industry and tourism bodies to discuss challenges and opportunities for the industry, working closely with UKinbound, UK Hospitality, European Tour Operators Association, Tourism Alliance and others. In the Business Events sector, we engage with key stakeholders including UK Events, International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA), Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA) and the Strategic Alliance of National Convention Bureaus of Europe.

With strong imagery and video essential for selling Britain and its diverse destinations and experiences, our Digital Asset Management System (DAM) supports the sector with thousands of images and videos, free to use for media, industry and international trade to promote Britain and England as a destination. Being a trusted source for tourism information, our website, social media and newsletters continued to deliver guidance, data and opportunities for the travel industry. Research reports from our industry website have been downloaded over 95,000 times in 2024/25, while over 30,000 British tourism professionals subscribe to our industry newsletter for the latest news and insights.



9,000 image and video assets used by tourism industry - £2.4 million equivalent value (2024/25)



88 MPs engaged in English Tourism Week 2025



66 MPs and 3 Peers attended 2025 Parliamentary tourism event



18,000+ votes cast in Tourism Superstar – highest ever



95,000+ research report downloads from VisitBritain.org (2024/25)



30,000+ industry newsletter subscribers from across UK industry

Delivering operational excellence

Driving innovation and supporting organisational outcomes

In the third and final year of our transformation programme, 'Building Our Future', we embraced technology and completed key projects to enhance our efficiency and competitiveness for the future. We achieved Cyber Essentials certification, strengthening our defences against common cyber threats and providing greater protection to our systems.

As our transformation programme concluded, our commitment to innovation continues through the development of our Digital, Data and Technology strategy. Led by internal team members, our Innovation Forum and AI council is actively exploring safe adoption of emerging technologies to accelerate progress and smarter ways of working.

Data remains integral to decision-making both internally and for external stakeholders. Our enhanced business intelligence tool Viewpoint now provides faster, layered insights, saving time. We have been measuring the time this tool has saved to an average of 40 hours a month to process some of our larger datasets. For example, analysing quality visits to our websites now takes just 30 minutes, down from 4 hours.

We have adopted new platforms to improve performance, including a new online learning management system - the VisitEngland Academy offering comprehensive training for LVEPs.

We also launched a new consumer website VisitEngland.com, featuring curated itineraries that showcase LVEPs' top tourism experiences and cater to visitors with accessibility needs.

In 2025, we were recognised as a great place to work. The Sunday Times named VisitBritain/VisitEngland as one of the Best Places to Work for the second year in a row. WorkL ranked us among the World's Happiest Workplaces, with a 91% staff happiness rating. Our flexible location working policy 'Locate for Your Day' was shortlisted in the Civil Service's 2024 Smarter Working Awards for 'Outstanding Smarter Working Leadership', a testament to an inclusive, supportive and forward-thinking workplace culture.



Named one of the Sunday Times **Best Places to Work** (2025, second year running)



Recognised by WorkL as one of the **World's Happiest Workplaces** with a 91% staff happiness rating



Cyber Essentials certification achieved for enhanced cybersecurity



40 hours/month saved by staff using our Viewpoint platform for data analysis

Awards

VisitBritain/VisitEngland named as one of the **Sunday Times Best Places to Work 2024 and 2025**, powered by WorkL

VisitBritain/VisitEngland recognised by WorkL as one of the **‘World’s Happiest Workplaces’** 2025, with a staff happiness rating of 91%

VisitBritain **awarded gold at the 2025 Polaris Awards for Best use of TV and/or cinema advertising in a campaign** created for a governmental organisation involving a series of different executions for ‘Starring GREAT Britain’ campaign

VisitBritain’s ‘Starring GREAT Britain’ campaign launch film **shortlisted in the 2025 Clio Awards**

VisitBritain awarded **Best Marketing by a Tourism Board, International** by TravelAge West 2024 Wave Awards

VisitBritain Business Events **awarded Gold for the Positive Impact and Event Legacy Award** at the Meeting & Incentive Travel Awards 2024

Visit Britain **awarded Best Tourism Board for Experiential Travel Award** at the 2024 India Travel Awards

VisitBritain **awarded gold at the 2024 Polaris Awards** for Gamification for its ‘Fake (Br)it Till You Make It’ North American campaign

VistiBritain **awarded in two categories at the 2025 MM Smarties Awards**, Dubai for ‘Spill the Tea’ campaign, in partnership with Wego, **Silver in AI-Powered Audience Engagement and Bronze in Innovative Use of AI in Advertising**

VisitBritain awarded bronze at The Gerety Awards in the “Humour Cut (Integrated)” category for its ‘Fake (Br)it Till You Make It’ North American campaign

VisitBritain **shortlisted in Brand Communications** by the Marketing Society 2025 Awards

VisitBritain **finalist at the Shorty Awards** for the most effective and creative use of social media or digital in travel and tourism, for the ‘Fake (Br)it Till You Make It’ North American campaign

Awards

VisitBritain **nominated in the European Excellence Awards** for 'Event & Experiential Marketing' for the "Fake (Br)it Til You Make It" North American campaign

VisitEngland **finalist at the TravMedia UK Awards** for 'In-House PR Team of the Year'

VisitEngland **shortlisted for the Shaw Trust Disability 'Power 100' 2024** for its work on changing attitudes and improving access to improve disabled people's lives

VisitEngland's Ross Calladine **finalist in The Diversity Trailblazer Award at the Travel Industry Awards 2024 (TTG Media)**. Ross was also named an Accessibility Change-Making Champions of 2025 by TravelAbility and extended in the role of Disability and Access Ambassador for Tourism by UK Government until January 2026





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