

Speech: Michael Ellis welcomes Visit Britain's annual report

Thank you to Steve and Sally for inviting me this morning and to Judith for that warm welcome. I was sorry to hear that Steve can't be with us today – do please pass on my regards to him, Sally.

And thank you all for coming. It is great to see so many of you here, representing our wide ranging tourism sector.

One of the best parts of my job is being able to travel across the country, and having the opportunity to meet the businesses delivering tourism on the front line. And those meetings have helped me to understand the incredible opportunities you have, as well as the big challenges you face, and reflect on what I can do to help.

In fact, in the last two months alone I've visited the Jubilee Lido in Penzance, the Titanic museum in Belfast and the Royal Military Tattoo in Edinburgh, to name but a few places, and have been thoroughly amazed and taken aback by the dedication and passion which you all demonstrate every day. So thank you for everything you do. Your work provides people with a welcome to Britain, it increases people's understanding of our history and our culture, and – while doing so – it helps to create jobs and growth as well.

Indeed tourism in the UK continues to go from strength to strength, welcoming record numbers of international visitors who are contributing the highest ever amount of money to our economy. Last year that was over 39m visitors spending nearly £25bn! This is in no small part down to the sterling efforts – no pun intended – of the dedicated individuals here in the room.

And I'd like to use my time with you this morning to look back and reflect on what all of you, working collaboratively with VisitBritain and VisitEngland, have helped to achieve in this past year.

There are many areas that I could draw attention to, but I'd like to focus on four this morning.

First I want to talk about business events. This year has seen a significant emphasis on this area for both Government and VB, collaborating with partners to build on our existing capability and encouraging more events to come to the UK. Events such as MeetGB and workshops aimed at helping destinations market themselves have been well received.

This remains a huge priority for me and one where I remain a very active advocate.

Second. The Discover England Fund continues to grow from strength to strength.

I've been fortunate enough to visit some of these projects in the past year; the Brilliant Science project led by Marketing Cheshire, the Majestic Waterways project led by Marketing Birmingham, and I look forward to being part of the launch event for the Great West Way at the end of November!

These projects are great examples of building supply through the delivery of improved tourism products and I am so pleased that the hard work that everyone has put into these projects is starting to deliver strong results.

Third. There is also some excellent ongoing work on expanding our sector for all members of society to enjoy.

Making the tourism industry more accessible can only be a positive thing and the work VisitEngland has carried out by promoting accessible businesses with the Inclusive Tourism awards and working with the National Autistic Society to launch the Welcoming Autistic People guide are brilliant markers for progress in our sector.

Another place I've visited over the summer is Eureka, the National Children's Museum in Halifax, which is a former VE Gold Award winner for Access. And it was superb to see how making an attraction as open and accessible as possible – to as many people as possible – can have a huge impact on experience of visitors.

In fact, I would fully encourage every business here to have a look at how you can open up your business, or those you represent, to more people and share your talent with more of the world.

The fourth – and final – area I'd like to talk about is the huge amount of work that VisitBritain and VisitEngland have carried out on the proposed Tourism Sector Deal.

As you will know, the sector, under the able guidance of Steve Ridgway and VisitBritain, put together an ambitious sector deal proposal which seeks to further strengthen our industry.

Now, I want to stress that this has been an incredibly valuable process.

The proposals set out in the Sector Deal – collated by VisitBritain, working with all parts of the British Tourism industry – are forward thinking and ambitious, and at DCMS we continue to assess what we can do to help deliver some of the ideas.

What I cannot do this morning is confirm whether or not Tourism will get a Sector Deal. A number of industries came forward with proposals, and colleagues across Government will enter into negotiations with those industries they feel best answer the questions set out in the Industrial Strategy.

What I can do though, is guarantee that me and my officials are fully versed in all the ideas you have collated and put forward. And where we think those ideas are workable, where we think they can help to boost productivity in this hugely important sector, we will work with you over the next year to

deliver them.

We have had a good year, no doubt. But we need to make sure we continue to work together to ensure there are better years to come.

So thank you once again for all the hard work that all of you put in, day in, day out to make Great Britain's tourism sector truly GREAT.

And I look forward to continuing to work with you, to make it even GREATER.

[News story: Defence Minister calls on 'unsung heroes' to help military respond to new threats](#)

Opening the Ministry of Defence's LOGNET conference on military logistics, he said the UK would need the industry to stay ahead of the game for the country to retain its ability to respond quickly to threats from the likes of extreme terrorists and rogue states.

Today's event, the fifth of its kind, brought together 250 leading industry and military figures from the defence logistics community. New technologies from 14 companies and departments were showcased including autonomous resupply robots and pioneering logistics software.

Defence Minister Stuart Andrew said:

Our world-class Armed Forces are able to rapidly respond to unpredictable threats like terrorists and rogue states, and even humanitarian disasters like the recent tsunami in Indonesia.

We've got to move quickly when crisis strikes, and the logisticians are the unsung heroes behind those on the frontline, ensuring everything runs smoothly so they are there and ready to respond. This conference brings together some of the brightest minds in the sector as we look to spur them on to ensure we remain a world-leading military.

The UK is currently running around 30 logistics operations worldwide, with 15,000 people in the UK, in Africa, and in South East Asia delivering humanitarian aid and disaster relief as well as taking part in major Operations and Exercises. Just last week the MOD deployed an A400M transport aircraft and a team of military experts to Indonesia to help with the aftermath of the earthquake tsunami.

The Armed Forces are continually put through their paces in huge exercises such as the recently launched Saif Sareea in Oman to identify logistical best practice and uncover challenges faced on the modern battlefield. This ensures UK logistics systems are tested in the toughest of operational environments. These exercises help inform and steer the agenda for LOGNET events.

Defence Minister Stuart Andrew opens the LOGNET conference. Crown copyright.

Main areas of interest in the fifth LOGNET conference included:

- Defence's innovation agenda
- Autonomy and robotics
- Accelerating logistic innovation
- Routes to market
- Modernising defence support

LOGNET is the MOD's support engagement and future development event for the defence support network. It is designed to improve the understanding of UK defence's support requirements, pursue knowledge of developments in academic and commercial capability, whilst reinforcing partnerships through continued engagement. Its outcome is to assist defence in arguing the case for the UK to maintain a credible, highly capable and value for money support capability.

Also speaking at LOGNET was the Vice Chief of the Defence Staff, General Sir Gordon Messenger who focussed on the importance of logistics support to our Armed Forces and how it ensures the UK maintains its military edge over adversaries.

General Sir Gordon Messenger said:

The ability to meet any threat in the shortest amount of time with the necessary volume of personnel and military hardware is critical to our deterrent posture. This can only be achieved with robust and proven logistics support. LOGNET helps build crucial closer links between academia, industry and defence which ensures our Armed Forces have the support network they need.

[Press release: Justice Secretary publishes plans to stabilise Bedford prison](#)

- reduction in the prison's population
- greater resource from safety experts to prevent violence

- additional security measures to stop the drugs fuelling assaults entering the prison

The Justice Secretary today (9 October 2018) published an action plan to stabilise HMP Bedford following an Urgent Notification by the prisons inspectorate.

Ministers set up the Urgent Notification system last year to ensure that immediate action could be taken to rectify serious issues identified by inspectors.

Senior experienced prison officers will be deployed to the landings from other establishments to reintroduce a stricter regime and mentor new members of staff. Extra training will reinforce these efforts, ensuring newer officers know the best way of resolving conflict, commanding the respect of prisoners and motivating them to attend work and education classes.

The Prison Service has transferred a further 56 offenders out of the prison, on top of the 20 moved out since May, to ease pressure on staff and allow the full refurbishment of one wing.

Experts from the national safety team, including experienced prison staff, are already in place to increase understanding of the root causes of violence and take action to prevent it.

More perimeter patrols, new windows with grilles and increased searches on staff will stem the flow of drugs entering the establishment, and staff will be working much closer with the police to disrupt the drugs trade into the prison. A programme of treatment and recovery for inmates with an existing drug dependency will also be developed.

Justice Secretary David Gauke said:

We placed Bedford into special measures in May before the inspection because we knew it was facing problems. Since then we've made efforts to alleviate these and today I'm outlining further work to improve conditions.

Additional experienced officers will be brought in, we've reduced the number of prisoners and are providing special training for newer members of staff – all of which will ensure order is restored and maintained in the long-term.

I am confident that greater security will stem the flow of drugs, which is fuelling violence, and allow staff to properly focus on creating a culture of work and learning that will help turn prisoners' lives around.

The action plan published today also outlines:

- Extra managers for the Care and Separation Unit to improve processes and

staff leadership so that the unit operates safely and properly.

- Extra training for officers on better supporting vulnerable prisoners and a review of early days support – a time when we know that prisoners can be particularly susceptible to self-harm and suicide.
- The prison will become a national pilot site for the Clean and Decent Project, which will see experts come in to the establishment to teach prisoners the best way of keeping their cells clean and tidy, reducing the prevalence of vermin and improving conditions.

The Secretary of State's full [action plan](#) also sets out how Bedford's progress will be regularly reviewed over the coming year.

The final inspection report for HMP Bedford will be published by HM Chief Inspector later this year.

Speech: Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons: 89th Session of the Executive Council

Thank you Madame Chair and welcome Director General to your first meeting of the Executive Council in your new role.

I want right at the outset to pay tribute to the assistance provided by the Technical Secretariat over the summer in response to the Amesbury incident. Their work was swift, meticulous, and fully in accordance with the assistance provisions set out in the Convention.

I am also very grateful to the Technical Secretariat for briefing all States Parties on 13 September about their findings. Their independent analysis confirmed the conclusions of United Kingdom's scientific experts; that the toxic chemical was a military-grade nerve agent of the type known as Novichok. This was the same nerve agent that was used in the attack on the Skripals in March, and in this instance, resulted in the death of Dawn Sturgess, and the severe injury of Charlie Rowley.

On 5 September I updated the Director-General on developments with the independent UK police investigation, specifically that the police had set out detailed evidence culminating in charges of attempted murder, and the use and possession of a chemical weapon, being brought against two agents of the Russian state. We will continue our efforts to bring them to justice. Meanwhile Russia has sought to obfuscate through increasingly desperate fabrication.

Madame Chair,

It is unlikely to be a coincidence that around the time that the OPCW was analysing substances from the Salisbury attack and starting investigations into chemical weapons use in Douma the offices of the OPCW, where we are sitting today, were targeted by a hostile cyber operation carried out by the Russian military intelligence service, the GRU. I pay tribute to the Dutch intelligence security services, working in partnership with the UK, for moving so swiftly to disrupt the operation and help safeguard this organisation and all of its confidential information. The GRU agents planned onward travel to Switzerland and one of the OPCW's Designated Laboratories. This aggressive act demonstrated contempt for the OPCW and its work to eradicate chemical weapons, as well as complete disregard for international norms and the institutions which help to keep all of our citizens safe. We must protect them.

Tragically the threat of CW use still looms large, particularly in Syria, where thousands have been killed and injured since 2012. The UK welcomes the Government of Turkey's successful efforts to prevent a reckless military offensive in north-west Syria. We call on Russia and Iran, as Astana Guarantors alongside Turkey, to ensure that this ceasefire is fully respected.

We remain concerned at the potential for chemical weapons use by the Syrian regime in the event of any future military action. Despite Syria's obligation under the Chemical Weapons Convention to stop using chemical weapons, the OPCW-UN JIM has found the Syrian regime responsible for four chemical weapons attacks. The Declaration Assessment Team, after more than four years of patient and persistent work, continues to find gaps, inconsistencies and discrepancies in Syria's Declaration.

It is time to take forward vital attribution work where the Fact Finding Mechanism has identified chemical weapons use in Syria. Attributing responsibility for these repugnant acts will help deter further chemical weapons attacks. We are grateful for the DG's report of 4 October on implementation of the Decision taken at the special conference of states parties in June. We welcome the news that the OPCW has signed a Memorandum on information sharing with the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism, as the Director General has just told us. We also look forward to seeing the DG's proposals for progressing paragraphs 18, 20 and 21 of the June Decision.

Madame Chair, the Chemical Weapons Convention membership took a big step forward in June when we came together to condemn chemical weapons use and show our support for the Convention. Our focus now must be on implementing the measures agreed.

That brings me to the ongoing budget negotiations.

Whilst the UK favours budget discipline across the international system, we also recognise that where we face new threats we must ensure that the institutions which combat them are funded to do their job. That is why we support an increase to the OPCW's regular budget and have already pledged an additional £1 million to help the OPCW with implementation of the June

Decision. The funds will include support for the development of the new OPCW Laboratory and enhancement of the network of Designated Laboratories. It is also clear that the OPCW must take the threat of hostile cyber-attacks very seriously, this will have some budget implications.

The upcoming Review Conference provides an opportunity to reflect on the last five years of the work of this organisation and set direction for the next five years. We must face up to the reality that our hard-won gains against the scourge of chemical weapons are being challenged like never before. We must stand together against chemical weapons use, and we must ensure that the OPCW and our new Director-General have the tools they need to face the next five years.

Thank you.

[Speech: Margot James' speech to launch the BFI Screen Business Report](#)

Good morning. Thank you to Amanda and the BFI for inviting me here today to the launch of the Screen Business report. And it is great to be here at Warner Bros, home of so much great screen entertainment, for it.

It is a pleasure to see so many of you here representing all screen sectors from games and VFX to film and TV. As the Minister for Digital and the Creative Industries, I'm certain that such connectedness between our screen sectors is the future.

It is exciting to see such comprehensive analysis of the impact of creative business on the UK economy. To pick out a few highlights:

Over £3 billion total production spend in 2016, with high end TV spend doubling to almost £900 million in just three years; and the video games sector attracting £1.75 billion of corporate investment since the introduction of the Video Games Tax Relief.

The report goes beyond these impressive headline figures to detail just how well the sector delivers benefits across the UK's nations and regions, as my colleague the Chancellor notes in his foreword.

Over £850 million invested in national infrastructure and facilities: so yes, we have the legendary James Bond and Harry Potter franchises resident at Pinewood and Leavesden, but there's a whole new wave of high-end TV and UK indies shooting across the country: Game of Thrones in Northern Ireland, The Levelling in Somerset, Outlander in Scotland, Doctor Who in Wales, God's Own Country in Yorkshire.

And with over £390 million invested through video game tax relief in 2016, the UK's trailblazing video game development clusters such as Edinburgh, Dundee, Leamington Spa and Guildford are flourishing.

The UK provides a truly national screen offer.

The report also highlights the importance not just of place but of people: how the government's tax reliefs have enabled the creation of almost 140,000 Full Time Equivalent jobs in 2016, and highly productive ones at that.

This, coupled with the government's and industry's efforts in advancing skills pipelines, from the work of the National Film and TV School and the newly rebranded ScreenSkills, to the BFI's £19 million Future Film Skills Strategy and Lucasfilm's fantastic Star Wars trainee scheme, are ensuring that a broad and representative new generation of screen professionals is on the march.

Screen Business shows how, over the past decade, the UK has capitalized on its traditional strengths – ongoing government support, our skilled crews and excellent facilities – while taking advantage of new opportunities such as the incredible growth in demand for content, screen tourism – worth almost £900 million in 2016 – and our world-class visual effects.

It is this innovation, this confidence to be daring with new stories, new technologies, new ways of engaging audiences, that I advocate for proudly as Minister for Digital and the Creative Industries.

And government is driving this progress in partnership with industry: from the Industrial Strategy's Sector Deal to the forthcoming launch of the Contestable Fund which has been designed to stimulate the provision and plurality of innovative, original UK content.

Now, more than ever, such confidence will benefit us as we embrace a post-Brexit world. We will continue to be an outward facing, open, and internationally respected nation. And it is reports like these and examples like Shepperton Studios, investing £500m to create one of the largest studios in the world, that give us, Global Britain, the evidence we need to continue to drive growth, enhance our competitiveness and further support the UK's creative ambition, the diverse results of which are enjoyed by audiences globally.

I am grateful to everyone who has contributed to this piece of work which tells such an important story about the UK screen sectors – many of you are here today, thank you.

I am going to hand over to Harriet now, so it remains for me to thank you all again for this positive and insightful piece of work.