

Press release: The challenges and opportunities for Welsh tourism post EU exit

From dolphin spotting trips along the Ceredigion coastline to adrenaline fuelled mountain bike experiences, UK Government ministers will hear first-hand the crucial contribution the Mid Wales tourism industry brings to the Welsh economy during a visit to Aberystwyth today (26 July).

Supporting Wales' thriving tourism sector will top the agenda at a roundtable meeting hosted by Wales Office Minister Guto Bebb MP and UK Minister for Arts, Heritage and Tourism John Glen MP at Aberystwyth University.

This is the latest in a series of meetings hosted by the UK Government in Wales as Britain prepares to leave the European Union.

The Ministers will gather tourism experts and businesses from across Wales to discuss the opportunities for growing the industry, and to hear their views on ensuring a tourism sector that thrives and develops post Brexit.

Tourism is big business in Wales. In the 12 months ending March 2017, there were 104.6 million day visits to Wales, with an associated spend of £4,346 million.

More than 1 million international visits were made to Wales in 2016 – up 11% on the previous year – which was worth almost £450 million to the economy.

UK Government in Wales Minister Guto Bebb said:

Whilst I already know a lot of the great places to visit in Wales, I always welcome the opportunity to speak to people working in the industry, to hear about the issues they are facing, and opportunities available to them

As we move towards our exit from the European Union, the job of listening and engaging has become even more critical

The UK Government's overriding goal is to make sure that the voices of all sectors from all corners of the UK are heard. That is why we are bringing experts from Wales' tourism sector together for this meeting in Aberystwyth today. We want to give them the platform to discuss the challenges posed by Brexit, but also to hear the great opportunities for growth in business and employment

Wales is regularly highlighted as one of the best places to visit in the world. We are determined not just that it remains so but that we make it even more attractive post EU departure.

Minister for Arts, Heritage and Tourism John Glen said:

Promoting Wales as a must-visit destination and ensuring that all parts of the UK benefit from international tourism is a key government priority. We want visitors from across the world to experience all Wales has to offer from its rich culture and history to its thriving city centres and breathtaking scenery.

International tourism was worth almost £450 million to Wales last year and I want to help the industry grow this number further. Leaving the EU presents opportunities for the tourism sector, and it has been great to hear directly from Welsh businesses on how we can make the most of them to ensure all parts of the UK benefit.

During the visit to Aberystwyth, both Ministers will also mark the £10.5million Heritage Lottery Investment in the restoration of Old College and Mr Bebb will also visit Aberystwyth University's Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences (IBERS)