



All-Party Parliamentary Group for the Visitor Economy

Chairs: Nigel Huddleston MP & Margaret Ritchie MP

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CALL FOR WRITTEN EVIDENCE:

The economic potential of Coastal Communities and the Visitor Economy

Terms of Reference

The All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for the Visitor Economy will conduct an inquiry and produce a report into the common challenges and opportunities facing coastal communities and, the role for the visitor economy in realising the full economic and social potential of those areas.

Coastal communities and their economies face distinctive challenges. They are towns and communities very often on the geographical periphery, at the end of the country's travel infrastructure, and must balance retaining their traditional tourist markets alongside embracing new economic and technological trends.

These communities also traditionally suffer from social and economic deprivation, experiencing high levels of unemployment and a high proportion of poor quality housing. In September 2015, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) published its annual Indices of Deprivation for England. The seaside village of Jaywick near Clacton on Sea, was found to be the country's most deprived area, and half of the 20 most deprived districts in the index have a coastline.

However, the diversity of coastal towns is evident. Towns such as Brighton, with its buoyant and diverse economy, enjoy year round tourism with established and permanent populations, but in contrast many traditional coastal destinations are marked by its physical isolation and relative deprivation.

The British Hospitality Association's most recent report, *Creating Coastal Powerhouses*, says that businesses in seaside towns are more likely to fail - especially if they provide accommodation - and calls on the Government to create Coastal Enterprise Zones to encourage businesses to move to and invest in the coast.

A separate survey, conducted by the owners of Butlin's found that more than half of the British public have not visited the British seaside in the past three years, and 65% believe that the British seaside is run down and in need of investment.

The hospitality and tourism industry forms the foundation of local economies in many coastal communities across the UK. According to BHA/Oxford Economics data one in ten people in coastal areas are now employed in hospitality and tourism. The number of people employed in coastal tourism nationally is broadly comparable to the UK's entire telecommunications industry, and is greater than the aerospace, pharmaceutical or steel industries.

This topic will provide an opportunity to discuss how the Government and the hospitality and tourism industry can support the economic and social development of coastal areas.

Themes:

- Significance of tourism and hospitality to coastal communities
- Coastal Investment
- Infrastructure and Technology
- The economic and social potential of the Visitor Economy

Evidence is invited from all stakeholders across the UK with an interest in the area including businesses, local and other trade associations, representatives of UK, Devolved and Local Governments, Local Enterprise Partnerships, non-government organisations, educational institutions, charities and community groups.

Steering Questions

Respondents may cover issues of interest to their organisations as part of their submission.

1. **Please introduce your organisation/company and outline your interest in the coastal communities' agenda.**

2. **How successful is the Government's current investment strategy for coastal communities?**

The inquiry is looking to investigate the role and successes of current and future economic measures to support these areas, such as the Coastal Communities Fund, Coastal Enterprise Zones and Tourism VAT.

3. **What are the key challenges for coastal communities, in particular for businesses operating in coastal areas?**

The APPG is interested in submissions with reference to:

- Availability of skills and workforce
- Quality of transport connections (private and public transport)
- Quality of broadband connections
- Quality of education
- Promotion of area as a destination
- Investment in housing provision and public realm

4. **What role can the hospitality and tourism industry play in addressing and overcoming these challenges?**

Traditional maritime industries, including those dependent on ports and harbours, have declined or become less labour intensive. How important is the role of the visitor economy as a driver of investment, employment and opportunity?

5. **How do you think central and local government can contribute further to supporting coastal communities?**

6. **With more than one in six people having an 'activity limiting' health problem or disability, how can central and local government improve accessibility to the British seaside?**

- *As a business what steps do you take to ensure accessibility?*
- *What more would you like to see being done? How can this be achieved?*

7. **Optional – Request for case studies: The All Party Group would welcome submissions of case studies on projects and initiatives that have made a significant improvement in the performance of coastal areas as places to live and visit.**

Written submission guidelines and deadline

Please include details of your primary contact for your submission and a brief description of your organisation.

Respondents are asked to limit their submission to no more than 2,000 words.

The deadline for submitting written evidence is at **5.00pm on 30 September 2016** and we would ask that evidence is provided promptly owing to strict deadlines for the oral evidence sessions.

The inquiry will comprise three oral evidence sessions taking place in **October 2016 and November 2016**.

Written evidence should be provided in Word format and sent by e-mail to the BHA who are providing the secretariat for the APPG. Please send all evidence to appg@bha.org.uk. The body of the e-mail or covering letter must include a contact name, telephone number and postal address. The e-mail/covering letter should also make clear if the individual or organisation would be willing to provide oral evidence in parliament.

Please note: *submissions should be original work, not previously published or circulated elsewhere, though previously published work can be referred to in the submission and submitted as supplementary material. Once submitted, your submission becomes the property of the APPG. Unless otherwise stated, the APPG will publish written evidence it receives on its website.*