

LONDON
DEVELOPMENT
AGENCY

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RESERVED
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16 October 2009

Dear *Dee*

London Tourism Action Plan 2009-2013

Thank you for your letter of 28th September with your comments on the London Tourism Action Plan 2009-2013.

When developing the Action Plan we tried to capture the views of as many tourism industry individuals and bodies as possible. We consulted with 69 organisations, had 80 written responses to the draft, conducted twelve interviews with key individuals and held a workshop which was attended by over 50 people from a range of tourist related organisations. We were pleased to also have the opportunity consult with you and your EDCST Committee members and other guests on the draft plan on 20th May 2009.

The key actions listed within the Strategic Priorities cover the four years of the Action Plan. How these will be taken forward is detailed later in the document. The final version of the Plan was not completed until July by which time the actions for year one of the Plan were either underway or had been agreed. The document therefore reflects this activity.

We did review the actions that you advised were vague and made amendments where we could to be more specific. You highlighted two specific examples: "Build the business case for investment by hotels and attractions in accessible facilities" to which we have added "and publicise best practice". We are currently working on this with DCMS and plan to publish the case studies this financial year once our research is complete. The other action you mentioned was "Continue to improve brand awareness of London's visitor destination brand". We retained this as we do measure awareness of the Visit London brand as stated in the Measures of Success section of the Action Plan.

With regard to the specific issues you do not believe we addressed in the final version of the Action Plan, I will address your comments in turn:

This matter is being handled by:
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MAYOR OF LONDON

Visitor Oyster Cards. Visit London features Oyster prominently on visitlondon.com as the easiest and most cost-effective way of getting around London. This includes a section on the benefits of using Oyster and links for London's key inbound markets to buy visitor Oyster cards online.

Oyster cards can also now be pre-purchased by **Visit London** on behalf of clients with groups of more than 50 delegates. This means conference delegates can receive Oyster cards before travelling to London. The LDA and Visit London will continue to look at ways to raise awareness of Visitor Oyster Cards and make them more accessible including discussions with Transport for London.

Domestic Tourism. One of the three activities under Market Development (1.1) is "continue to promote London to core leisure and business markets (North America, Europe and UK) to maintain and grow market share". The focus of this year has been those markets that provide rapid economic return to the city in line with the Mayor's Economic Recovery Action Plan. International markets may deliver higher per days spend, but do not book and visit with the immediacy of the domestic market. Visit London has therefore used the research mentioned in the Action Plan and which you have highlighted to target particular sectors of the UK market to ensure a high return on its tactical UK campaigns this year. Visit London identified and has successfully targeted significant loyalists and fans of London in the 55 yrs+ age bracket and pre-family that are motivated to visit when presented with stimulating, enabling, enhancing and self-justifying activity. Visit London's primary target market for the next 12 months will continue to be the empty nester market (55yrs+ adults) and pre-family.

Campaigns will run to coincide with key planning and booking periods – namely autumn through to early summer. Market conditions and the potential impact of swine-flu will indicate if domestic marketing should be switched to London facing activity. At present, higher returns can be gained from domestic visitors who are more likely to stay overnight than from the Londoners market. Visit London's domestic spend in 2009/10 is planned to be £1.4m

London Living Wage. Taking our lead from the Mayor, we support the principle of a London living wage but have no specific plans on this issue.

Transit passengers. We had discussions with BAA who approached a number of airlines and tour operators to establish interest in providing packages for transit passengers. Only one airline was happy to pursue the idea and it was linked with an interested tour operator to discuss the viability of encouraging more transit passengers to leave the airport and visit London for the day or on a

stop-over. We are awaiting an update on progress from BAA and will inform you of same.

Convention Centre. The LDA does continue to support an international convention centre for London. However as the achievement of this is dependent on public sector funding, which has not been secured, we are not putting resource into this in the current financial year. We have supported the extension of Excel and will be promoting this and other private sector venues through Visit London.

Accessibility. The LDA, working in partnership with the GLA's City Operations Programme, has commissioned a detailed scoping study of the key current issues and concerns regarding London's accessibility in the run up to the 2012 Games. The draft report and recommendations are due in December and should be published in January. We removed the particular action you refer to pending the results and recommendations of the new study (shown in the Action Plan as 3.2 "Undertake further research in to the requirements of disabled visitors").

The published London Tourism Action Plan 2009 – 2013 contains details of our achievements since 2006 and we will report annually against our measures of success going forward. We will also review the Action Plan annually and set the actions for the following year to reflect the changing economic climate and the industry's priorities subject to the availability of budget.

We would welcome the opportunity to have further discussions regarding where you believe the focus should be for 2010/11.

Yours sincerely, *& regards*

Sarah Ebanja

Sarah Ebanja
Deputy Chief Executive & Group Director Jobs, Skills & Youth

cc: Peter Rogers, Harvey McGrath