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Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee

Promoting Britain abroad

Second Report of Session 2022–23

Report, together with formal minutes relating to the Report

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The Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee

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Contents

Summary

Tourism is a cornerstone of the British economy. As one of the most popular destinations in the world, with its heritage, culture and landscape drawing millions of visitors every year, Britain is a global brand. Inbound tourism is the UK's third largest service export, worth 9% of GDP, and is the industry on which 3.2 million jobs and more than 200,000 SMEs depend. But the sector was decimated by the pandemic and now has a long haul back to its previous success, let alone to surpass it. We wanted to examine the barriers to it doing so and identify the support it needs.

We have observed that the global inbound tourism industry is an increasingly competitive one: Britain cannot afford simply to be an attractive place to visit, it must also facilitate people coming here. Improving transport infrastructure, marketing attractions outside of London and amplifying Britain's outstanding cultural assets will all go some way to increasing the numbers of visitors. However, we found that our status as a soft power superpower is increasingly under threat from other countries. If we rely on reputation alone, visitors will go elsewhere.

We also saw that our inbound tourist sector is too reliant on London. Visitors don't know enough about what else there is to see and, even if they do, don't know how to get there. Travelling beyond the capital does not have to be a zero-sum game: London may be the magnet, but it can also be a gateway through which visitors see far more. We want to see a renewed focus on one of the key barriers, namely transport.

Perhaps our most shocking finding of all is the fact that Government policies have not made the industry's job easier, they have made them harder. The Government's original decision to remove tax-free shopping was both short-sighted and incredibly damaging given how much some of our richest visitors spend in the UK. Its short-lived revival–announced in September's fiscal event but then removed in October–only serves to highlight the inadequacy of the Treasury's original analysis of its impact. We did not see any evidence that the Treasury considered the effect that losing these visitors would have on the wider tourism economy. Just as damaging has been the ban on children and young people using identity cards to visit the UK. Many of our coastal resorts rely on income from school visits and English language courses, but many of those who attend do not have passports. Yet again, we have seen the Government make a decision in which no apparent thought has been given to the inbound tourism industry.

We found a worrying lack of money for marketing. Regardless of how the pot is divided up, Britain's international marketing spend is significantly lower than elsewhere. Just as shocking is the fact that our British tourist authority faces incredible hurdles in even spending what it has been given. We want to see a more light-touch relationship between Government and VisitBritain.

Overall, we believe that the Government fails to recognise the value of the inbound tourism industry. If it did, it would not have reduced its marketing spend and made it harder for people to visit and less likely to spend. The industry has spoken loud and clear. We hope that the Government listens.

1 Introduction

1. Britain is a wonderful place to visit. Its heritage, culture and landscape draw millions of visitors from across the world. In 2019, there were 40.9 million inbound visits to the UK, up 1 per cent on 2018 and up 34 per cent on 2009 figures.[1] Pre-pandemic, the UK was the tenth most visited country in the world.[2]

2. The tourism industry makes a major contribution to the economy. Inbound tourism is the UK's third largest service export, supporting 3.2 million jobs and incorporating more than 200,000 SMEs.[3] Domestic and inbound tourism combined contribute approximately £127 billion a year to the UK economy, worth 9% of GDP.[4]

3. While there is much to celebrate, that must be must tempered with UK performance in comparison to competitor countries. Between 2010 and 2020, the UK's tourism sector grew at a slower rate than the world average and its market share declined.[5] France has more than double the number of international visitors than Britain has each year.[6] Britain is also perceived as an expensive country to visit and just 50 per cent of those surveyed by the British tourism authority, VisitBritain, regarded visiting Britain as value for money.[7]

4. Perhaps most worryingly of all is the fact that Britain is recovering more slowly from the pandemic than other destinations. Covid-19 decimated the UK inbound tourism industry. VisitBritain estimates that the loss in inbound tourism spending in 2020 and 2021 combined was £48.6 billion.[8] Total inbound tourism in 2021 was just 18 per cent of the 2019 level and while Greece's summer inbound flight bookings in 2021 were 85 per cent of their 2019 figures, UK bookings were just 14 per cent. The Omicron variant will have since damaged the sector's recovery further: VisitBritain was forced to downgrade its forecasts for 2022, with inbound visits now expected to reach only 52 per cent of 2019 levels. Europe is expected to recover 70 per cent of pre-pandemic travel demand.[9] VisitBritain forecasts that the UK will not return to pre-pandemic levels until 2025.[10]

5. We wanted, in this inquiry, to examine the barriers the industry faces and what support it needs if it is to return to, and surpass, pre-pandemic levels.

Our inquiry

6. We launched our inquiry in November 2021 and received over fifty pieces of written evidence and held five oral evidence sessions. During these sessions we heard from a wide range of groups with a stake in the inbound tourism industry, including VisitBritain, visitor attractions, trade associations, tourism experts, Destination Management Organisations, the airport industry, the film and music industries and the Government's Tourism Minister. We also visited South Korea to gain insights from officials from the

1 VisitBritain PBA0002
2 Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (PBA0004)
3 VisitBritain PBA0002
4 *ibid*
5 Nick de Bois (August 2021), The de Bois Review: an independent review of Destination Management Organisations in England p57. The figures are based on World Bank data.
6 *ibid*
7 VisitBritain PBA0002
8 VisitBritain (21 December 2021), VisitBritain tweet
9 European Travel Commission (7 July 2022), Strong outlook for European tourism recovery
10 VisitBritain PBA0002. The figures are based on research by Oxford Economics.

South Korean government and executives from travel companies and airlines, as well as young people who have worked in Britain as part of the Youth Mobility Scheme.[11] We would like to thank everyone who contributed and gave evidence to this inquiry.

11 Our visit also included meetings related to our `Connected tech: smart or sinister?' and `Reimaging where we live: cultural placemaking and the levelling up agenda' inquiries. Our meeting schedule can be found in the Annex. The Youth Mobility Scheme enables allows 18- to 30-year-olds who meet certain eligibility criteria to live and work in the UK for up to two years.

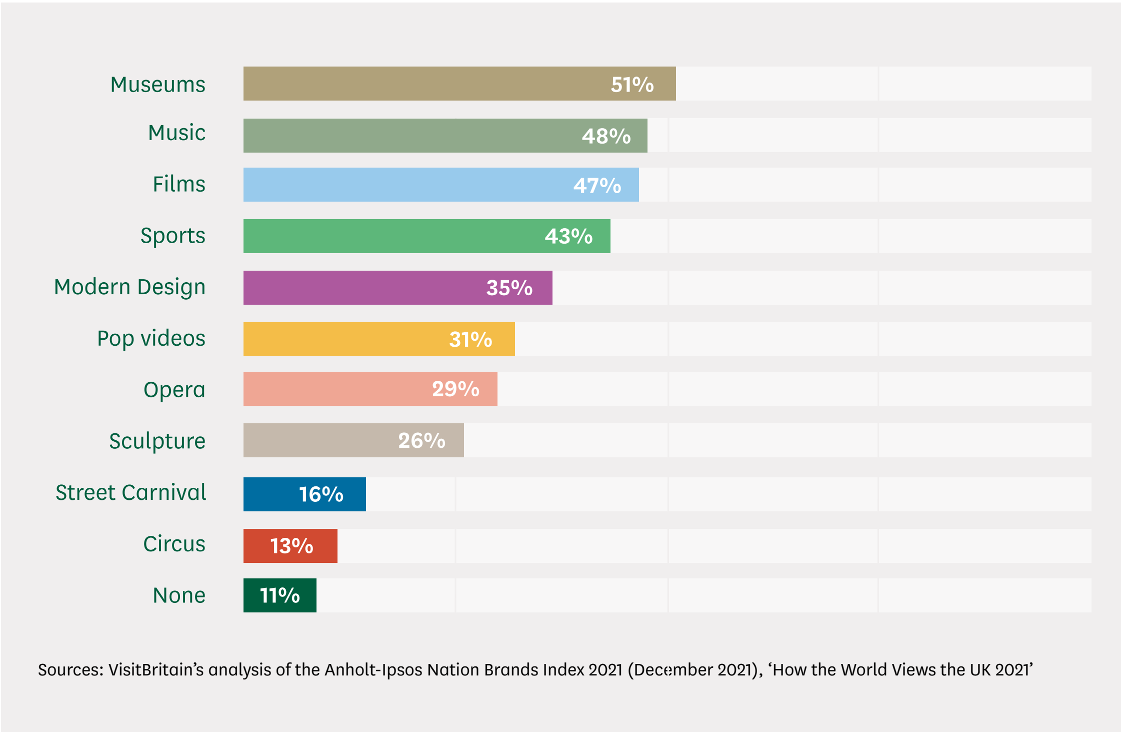
2 Strategy

7. During our inquiry, we heard a consistent message about the increasingly competitive nature of the inbound tourism industry. Britain is a world-class destination, with our heritage, culture and landscapes attracting millions of visitors each year. However, in the course of our inquiry we heard that there is scope to develop the country's appeal further, such as through marketing destinations outside of London, improving transport infrastructure and enhancing the ability of the creative industries to drive Britain's cultural appeal.

Soft power

8. Britain has traditionally appealed to many visitors because of its cultural appeal. The most recent `Soft Power 30' rankings in 2019 reported that, although Britain had lost its first place to France, its art, film, music, and sport continued to hold "enormous global appeal–from Ed Sheeran to Harry Potter and the Premier League–and tourism continues to flourish with its abundance of museums, galleries, and theatres".[12] The 2021 Anholt-Ipsos Nation Brands Index survey, which details how the UK is perceived internationally, found that museums, music and films are strong cultural drivers for the UK.[13]

Cultural products associated with the UK



12 Portland (2019), United Kingdom Soft Power. Portland, the strategic communications agency, measure a country's soft power according to its performance in six indices: Government, Culture, Engagement, Education, Digital and Enterprise.

13 VisitBritain, Foresight 181 (December 2021), Foresight 181. The Anholt-Ipsos Nation Brands Index survey is an annual study of 60,000 consumers around the world, where respondents score 60 nations on a range of attributes including tourism and culture. The survey was conducted between 6th July and 13th August 2021.

9. There is a clear link between soft power and visitor numbers. The British Council, the UK's international body for cultural relations, told us that people's intention to visit a country "generally corresponds to perceptions of the country's arts and cultural institutions; sports teams and events; universities/research and its status as a global power".[14] We heard evidence highlighting examples which have drawn tourists from around the world. Historic Houses told us that Highclere Castle had seen its annual visitor numbers quadruple due to the so-called "Downton Effect", with visitors wanting to see the stately home where the TV series was filmed.[15] Netflix's *Bridgerton* was also filmed in Yorkshire where Screen Yorkshire worked with some of the local visitor attractions to give tourists a sense of the location filming.[16] Martha Lytton-Cobbold, president of Historic Houses, told us that watching a programme like *Downton Abbey* or *The Crown* "puts the seed of the idea to travel forward in the future when you are able to do so, and hopefully then to bring that economic stimulus forward when that opportunity happens".[17]

10. Theatre also draws tourists, with visitors wanting to rewatch a production in the country it originated. Jessica Koravos, president of the Really Useful Group, which produces and licenses the work of Andrew Lloyd Webber, told us that *The Phantom Of The Opera* and *Cats* are the two biggest musicals of all time in terms of global ticket sales, with some of those who had seen productions abroad then coming to see them in the UK.[18] Similarly, music draws fans from across the world. IFPI, which represents the recording industry, told us that Liverpool's Cavern Club, London's Royal Albert Hall alongside a new generation of British superstars, including Adele, Ed Sheeran and Harry Styles, inspired people to visit the UK, attend a concert or festival and experience the locations and culture that "shaped the formative years of the artists they love".[19]

11. However, we also heard how Britain's status as a soft-power superpower was increasingly threatened by competition abroad. The British Council reported that there had been a "significant increase in the physical presence and levels of investment in cultural institutes and soft power activity globally".[20] It argued that there was a "very real risk that complacency could see the UK fall behind, losing the advantages in terms of influence and attraction that have come from its soft power edge over its rivals".[21] Geoff Taylor, chief executive of BPI, the representative body for UK record labels, told us that Britain's music global market share had fallen from 17 per cent in 2015 to 12 per cent in 2021. He highlighted how the South Korean, Canadian and Swiss Governments gave industries business intelligence about potential export markets and helped make connections overseas,[22] and described the UK Government's support for the music industry, the Music Export Growth Scheme, as "unambitious given the scale of the global opportunity".[23]

12. During our visit to South Korea we heard a great deal about its government's support for the Korean Wave, the increasing global interest in Korean culture. We were told that the South Korean government had invested in promoting cultural exports and helped

14 British Council (PBA0046)
15 Historic Houses (PBA0018)
16 Q7 and Q13
17 Q37
18 Q218
19 IFPI - representing the recording industry worldwide (PBA0026)
20 British Council (PBA0046)
21 British Council (PBA0046)
22 Q259
23 Q232. The Music Growth Export Scheme supports UK artists to grow their international profile in overseas markets. BPI (9 August 2022), Latest Round of Music Export Growth Scheme Funding Announced - bpi

SMEs to expand globally. Chaebols (large conglomerates controlled by an individual or family) and other giant companies had been incentivised to invest in cultural production, while the Korean Creative Content Agency, which coordinates the promotion of the Korean content industry both domestically and abroad, had 300 staff and a budget of 480 billion won (£330 million).

13. Some of our witnesses raised the possibility of establishing a Creative Industries Export Office to support the sector in reaching international markets. Jamie Njoku-Goodwin, chief executive of UK Music, told us that the value of an export office would be its cross-government focus, where relevant parties could have a "joined-up conversation and everyone is on the same page".[24] He said that an export office would help both the sector and "UK plc more broadly".[25] However, Mr Taylor warned that any export office would have to be "sufficiently specialist and well-resourced […] If it is just a filling out paper exercise, it will not achieve a huge amount".[26] Overall, he said that his priority was greater funding for the Music Export Growth Scheme: "if there is any money left after funding that scheme properly, an exports office would be an important addition".[27]

14. The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) told us that it was particularly focused on "maximising set piece events" this year, including the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, the Unboxed Festival and the Queen's Baton Relay across the Commonwealth which, it said, would "stoke demand for tourism to the UK".[28] Tourism Minister Nigel Huddleston told us that, for every event that the UK hosted, DCMS asked "what is the international element?".[29] He added that his international counterparts were "jealous of the visual impact and other impacts that Britain has around the world".[30]

15. **Britain's world-leading cultural sector enjoys global attention and contributes enormously to the country's appeal, but the competition is getting stronger. The voice of the cultural sector must be included at a strategic level if it is to fulfil its potential to attract visitors from across the globe. Establishing a Creative Industries Export Office would enable both industry and Government to work together to promote British talent and attract higher numbers of visitors. However, for an export office to succeed it must command industry support, include officials from across government and be sufficiently resourced.**

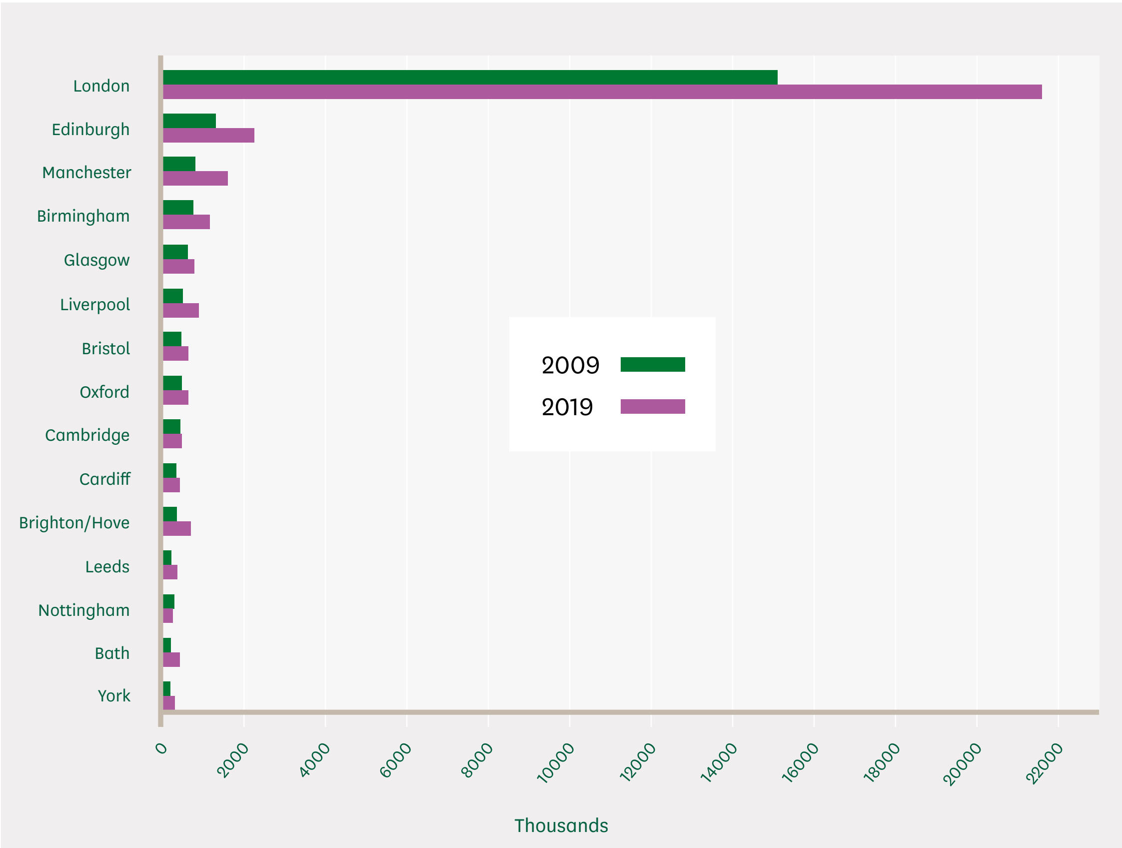
16. ***We recommend that the Government should work with the creative industries at a strategic level and establish a creative industries export office. This should be coordinated by the DCMS but involve officials from all relevant departments, such as the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, the Home Office and the Department for Transport.***

24 Q262
25 *ibid*
26 Q259
27 Q260
28 Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (PBA0004)
29 Q348
30 Q343

Taking tourists beyond the capital

17. Britain's inbound tourism industry is heavily dependent on London. In 2019, the capital received 21.7 million inbound visitors; the next most visited destination, Edinburgh, received just 2.2 million.[31] In a typical year, London receives approximately 52% of all overseas visitors and 54% of their spending.[32]

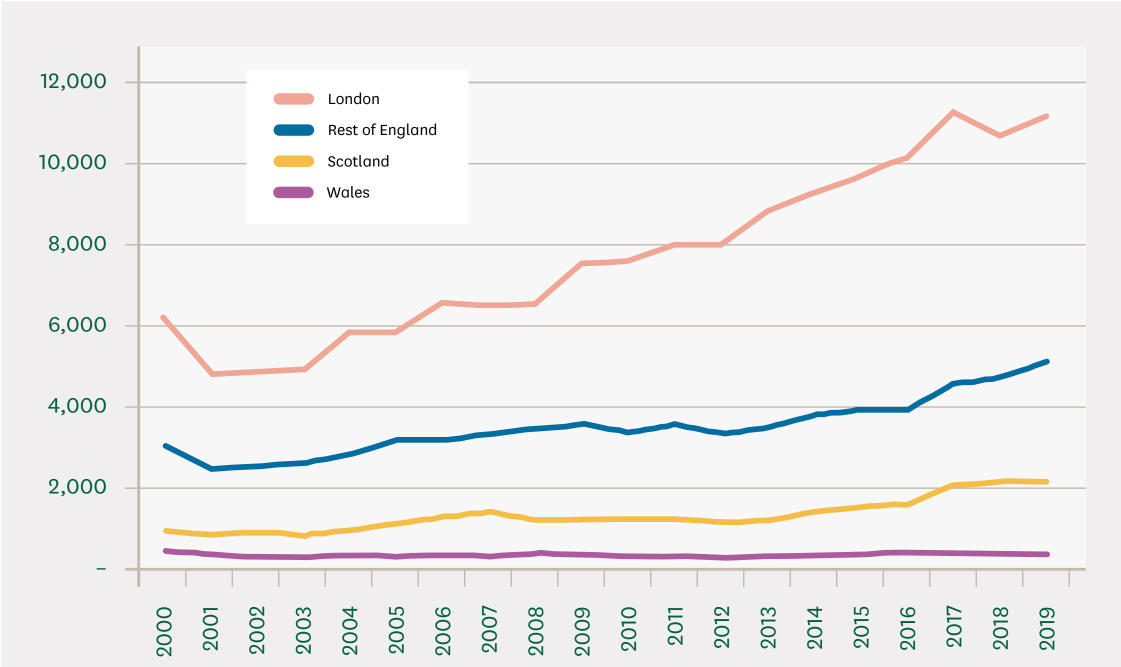
Top Towns for Inbound Overnight Holiday Visits



There has there been little change in the regional spread of inbound holiday visits in the decade prior to the pandemic.

31 VisitBritain Inbound trends by UK town. Accessed 11 August 2022.
32 Q2

Overnight Inbound Holiday Visits by Area (000s)



Source: Association of Leading Visitor Attractions (PBA0009). The graph is based on data from VisitBritain.

18. The Heart of London Business Alliance argued that the scale and importance of the capital's tourism offering meant that London should be "treated differently and receive targeted investment".[33] Some witnesses told us that it was not a case of either/or, arguing that marketing London would benefit the rest of the UK.[34] Patricia Yates, chief executive of VisitBritain, felt that the challenge was to avoid people thinking "'I have been to London so I have seen Britain'[…] We have to use it to get people here but then drive them to explore more".[35] Allen Simpson, managing director of London & Partners, which promotes London internationally, told us that:

> It is quite hard to stop people making their first visit to the UK to London, in the same way that most people when they go to the US will tend to go to New York first. But if you can identify the people who have already made that journey, they have already gone and pointed at Big Ben, and encourage them to make their second journey to the UK to Cumbria or Cornwall or the isles of Scotland, then you can use London as a benefit rather than a disbenefit.[36]

19. Nick Brooks-Sykes, director of tourism at Marketing Manchester, acknowledged that "to a degree we are rivals" but that the country offered visitors a range of experiences.[37] He argued that "in the space of a really quite small island you can do a beach, a city, the countryside. You can see puffins and seals and go to the National Theatre".[38]

33 HOLBA (PBA0036)
34 See, for example, Q174, London First (PBA0007) and HOLBA (PBA0036)
35 Q297
36 Q174
37 Q204
38 *ibid*

20. Some witnesses told us of the barriers preventing visitors from travelling beyond London. Joss Croft, chief executive of the trade association UKInbound, told us that the reason was "primarily because people do not know what there is to do outside London".[39] He argued that "you might have heard of Manchester, but you do not know that there are fantastic things to do on your doorstep in Manchester".[40] Kurt Janson, director of the Tourism Alliance, told us that destinations needed to become brands: he argued that people around the world knew places like Liverpool as a destination but "not what it embraces, what to do there and what kind of experience they are going to have when they get there".[41] He said that developing that brand and then creating the point-to-point travel to make a short visit viable, would take tourists beyond London. The Airport Operators Association (AOA) reported that point-to-point airline routes were successful; when easyJet set up a direct route between Edinburgh and Hamburg, travel between the Hamburg area and Scotland increased tenfold, with 80% of that travel being Germans coming to Scotland.[42] Ralph Lee, chief executive of BBC Studios Productions, told us that programmes like Top Gear, Antiques Roadshow and Countryfile covered every part of the UK[43] and recommended enabling tourists to "join the dots so that travellers and visitors are able to find a number of different locations that are relevant to them and familiar to them through the screen".[44]

21. However, we heard that transport was a major obstacle. The Association of Leading Visitor Attractions felt that there was a need to "convey how easily, and quickly, different destinations can be reached by rail, with cities such as York, Cardiff and Manchester only around two hours from London".[45] Historic Houses highlighted the issue of "the final mile", that final stretch from the closest train station or bus stop to a tourist site that "may not be very far but, with no public transport provision, can dissuade tourists from visiting".[46] Gill Haigh, managing director of Cumbria Tourism, told us that tourism-led bus routes had proved successful: these had been funded some 15 years ago and were now self-sufficient.[47]

22. Tourism Minister Nigel Huddleston told us that he not only wanted to spread tourism across the country but also extend it throughout the year beyond the traditional summer months.[48] He described London as a "global magnet" but argued that "we have to move forward with a London-plus strategy" and highlighted that some of the levelling up funds would be invested in tourism.[49] The first round of the £4.8 billion Levelling Up Fund is focusing on transport, town centre regeneration and maintaining and regenerating cultural and heritage institutions and visitor attractions.[50] The Government is also developing transport initiatives, including the Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail which aims to make it "simpler, easier and more attractive" to travel by train, and England's "Bus Back Better" strategy to deliver better bus services for passengers across England.[51] However,

39 Q141
40 *ibid*
41 *ibid*
42 Airport Operators Association (PBA0032)
43 Q14
44 *ibid*
45 Association of Leading Visitor Attractions (PBA0009)
46 Historic Houses (PBA0018)
47 Q180
48 Q344
49 Q345
50 Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (June 2021), Tourism Recovery Plan para 67
51 *ibid* paras 78–79

the Government has not yet given us the full picture: it has still to give its response to the Hendy Review of Union Connectivity, which recommended improvements to transport links between Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and England.[52] It said it would publish its response "later this year".[53]

23. We also heard that business events such as conferences and trade shows are vital to driving inbound tourism across Britain. Business visitors accounted for 21 per cent of all inbound trips in 2019 and one-third of delegates from outside Europe extended their trips for leisure.[54] Overall, the business events sector contributes more than £31 billion per year to the economy and supports more than 300,000 jobs.[55] Nick de Bois, chair of the VisitEngland Advisory Board, described it as "an important ingredient in any attempt to improve the sector's year-round economic productivity".[56] Bernard Donoghue, director of the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions, told us that "we have often neglected business tourism and events tourism at our peril. A great place to visit for work is a great place to visit to stay and a great place to educate and study".[57]

24. Tourism Minister Nigel Huddleston told us that the Government recognised the importance of business travel, conferences and events and described it as an area in which the UK was "really strong".[58] In its 2021 Tourism Recovery Plan, the Government pledged to "improve the attractiveness of the UK's already strong offer and become the World's Meeting Place".[59] It committed to providing advocacy and financial support to the business events industry and stated that it would "consider the case" for expanding VisitBritain's Business Events Growth Programme, which helps organisations to attract international events.[60] Launched in 2016, the Programme has supported 66 events and bids for international events, awarding more than £1.2 million to date.[61] VisitBritain estimates that, by 2023, those events which were successfully secured with the support of the Programme, could equate to 16,960 delegates with an estimated spend of £24.4 million.[62]

25. However, we note that the DCMS's written evidence to our inquiry, submitted in January 2022, made no reference to any possible expansion of the scheme.[63]

26. **London will always be key to our tourism offer; it is a global brand which attracts millions of visitors each year. But every part of Britain has something to offer and a story to tell. Our evidence tells us that many visitors are unaware of what else there is to see or believe other destinations are too far or too difficult to travel to. Addressing these issues will help drive people beyond the capital. Attracting international**

52 Union Connectivity Review (26 November 2021), Union Connectivity Review
53 Department for Transport (26 May 2022), Union Connectivity Review update
54 Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (PBA0004)
55 *ibid*
56 Nick de Bois (August 2021), The de Bois Review: an independent review of Destination Management Organisations in England para 109
57 Q68
58 Q345
59 Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (June 2021), Tourism Recovery Plan para 114
60 *ibid* para 116
61 VisitBritain, Business Events Growth Programme Overview. Accessed 01 September 2022.
62 VisitBritain, Business Events Growth Programme and Domestic Support Fund highlights. Accessed 01 September 2022.
63 Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (PBA0004)

business events also has clear potential not only to drive tourism across the country but throughout the year, as evidenced by the forecast impact of the events secured with the support of the Business Events Growth Programme.

27. ***VisitBritain should continue its work with tourism providers to identify how best to showcase all regions of the UK, with a particular focus on addressing the travel barriers, both perceived and actual. The Government should expand VisitBritain's Business Events Growth Programme and indicate in its response to our report the level of additional funding and the date by which it will be awarded.***

3 Government policy

28. One aim of our inquiry was to explore Government support for the inbound tourist industry. Perversely, our evidence suggests that Government policy has not made the industry's job easier, it has made it harder.

Retail tourism

29. We heard a significant amount of criticism towards the Government's withdrawal of the VAT Retail Export Scheme.[64] The scheme allowed non-EU visitors to the EU to recover the VAT on purchases they make on the high street. In 2019, while the UK was still a member of the EU, around £0.5 billion in the UK was refunded.[65] Following the UK's departure from the EU, World Trade Organisation rules stipulated that the Government had to either extend VAT free shopping to EU tourists or abolish it for all tourists. It chose to remove VAT free shopping for all tourists.

30. Many submissions argued that the decision to withdraw demonstrated that the Government did not understand the significance of retail in attracting inbound visitors. Paul Barnes, chief executive of the Association of International Retail, told us that retail was "one of the biggest motivators to come here and, without doubt, it is the biggest income generator from international visitors".[66] The New West End Company, which represents more than 600 retail, hospitality, leisure and property companies around the West End, told us that international visitors were responsible, in 2019, for around 50% of all spending in the West End, amounting to over £5 billion. Chinese visitors alone accounted for 32% of all tax-free shopping spend in 2019, despite being just 5% of all non-EU visitors that year.[67]

31. Patricia Yates, chief executive of VisitBritain, estimated that withdrawing from the scheme would lead to 10% to 12% of people in markets like the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and China going to Europe rather than Britain.[68] Value Retail Plc, the owner of the designer-outlet shopping centre Bicester Village, reported that tax-free shopping had "traditionally been a huge draw for high-spend tourists" and argued that reintroducing the VAT Retail Export Scheme should be a "top priority for the Government in ensuring the UK remains a globally competitive tourist destination".[69] Ross Baker, chief commercial officer of Heathrow Plc, told us that the Treasury had assumed that inbound travellers would continue to come and spend "regardless".[70] He said:

64 UK Government (11 December 2020), Revenue and Customs Brief 21 (2020): withdrawal of the VAT Retail Export Scheme and the tax-free shopping concession. The Government withdrew from the scheme on 31 December 2020, Tourists can still receive the tax-free benefit if they ship the goods home.
65 Office for Budget Responsibility (November 2020), Economic and fiscal outlook - November 2020 para A.22
66 Q97
67 New West End Company (PBA0010)
68 Q327 The Gulf Cooperation Council states are Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.
69 Value Retail Plc (PBA0001)
70 Q87

> Those are two fundamentally flawed assumptions. The inbound travellers aren't coming. They won't come; for many of them, this is a primary decision driver. Even if a subset of them do come, they're not going to be spending on retail, because why would they pay 20% more?[71]

32. Paul Barnes, chief executive of the Association of International Retail, argued that extending the Scheme to EU residents would have incentivised 360 million people to visit, with regional airports being the "big winners" as they had flights to and from European destinations.[72] He told us that:

> It is a big marketing ploy to say, "We are the only country in Europe where EU visitors can come and do tax-free shopping." It would have been a huge draw. But instead of taking that Brexit bonus, the Government just threw it away. […] but also allowed British people to go shopping tax free in Europe. That is costing us £250 million a year.[73]

33. Walpole, which represents the UK's luxury brands, reported that marketing campaigns in France, Italy and Spain were encouraging British shoppers to buy there rather than at home.[74] It told us that the British luxury sector supported more than 160,000 sustainable jobs throughout the UK and so any loss in profits or shift in focus away from the UK would "lead to job losses in the UK and a reduction made in investment in people".[75]

34. Some of our evidence also drew attention to the fact that the Government's Tourism Recovery Plan failed to include retail tourism in its strategy to drive inbound visits.[76] The New West End Company described it as a "serious omission".[77] The Fashion Roundtable said that providing support to individual businesses would "not be enough if the visitors and tourists are not given the right incentives to spend".[78] However, the Minister told us that he was in "no doubt as to the importance of shopping" to inbound tourism but that it was "only one element of why people come to the UK".

35. Prior to withdrawing from the VAT Retail Export Scheme, the independent Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) estimated that it would result in a direct Exchequer saving of around £400 million per year, once passenger numbers recover from the impacts of COVID-19. This included an assumption that approximately 20,000 - 30,000 fewer tourists visit Great Britain a year: 0.07% of all visitors to the UK in 2019.[79] However, despite repeated questioning, the minister was unable to tell us what assessment the Treasury had undertaken of the indirect costs of leaving the scheme, such as a reduction in the number of tourists coming here.[80] After the session, we asked the Treasury whether it had undertaken any assessment of the indirect impact, such as a decline in hotel bookings or trips to visitor attractions. Its response made no reference to any such assessment

71 *ibid*
72 Q112
73 *ibid*
74 Walpole (PBA0028)
75 Walpole (PBA0028)
76 Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (June 2021), Tourism Recovery Plan
77 New West End Company (PBA0010)
78 Fashion Roundtable (PBA0040)
79 Information supplied by the DCMS, received 5 September 2022.
80 Qq358–364

having taken place.[81] We also asked whether, following withdrawal from the scheme, an assessment had been made of the actual, rather than forecast impact. Again, the Treasury's response made no reference to any such assessment.[82]

36. Between receipt of this additional Treasury information and the publication of this Report, the Government changed its mind twice. First, in the fiscal event on 23 September, it announced that it would introduce a digital, VAT-free shopping scheme which would be "more effective" than its predecessor. On 17 October, it reversed that decision. In his statement, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Jeremy Hunt, said that this would save £2 billion a year. He failed to reference the Treasury's estimation that the scheme, if implemented, "could stimulate additional retail spending of around £2.0bn to £2.5bn".[83]

37. **The Government's decision to withdraw from the VAT Retail Export Scheme has made Britain less appealing to tourists while increasing the appeal of our European competitors. It has been a spectacular own goal, signalling that the Government does not, despite its protestations to the contrary, recognise the significance of retail to the inbound tourism sector. For a short while, it appeared to have seen sense, committing once again to providing tax-free shopping for inbound visitors. To then reverse this decision, less than a month later with no new financial analysis provided, only serves to demonstrate the paucity of thought associated with these policy changes. By the Treasury's own estimation, the scheme could at the very least have been cost neutral. We agree with the industry that a broader analysis of the indirect benefits of the scheme would demonstrate that its cost would be far outweighed by the revenue it would generate and the increased numbers of tourists coming to the UK.**

38. **We find it astonishing that the Minister and the Treasury were unable to tell us what assessment was made of the impact on the number of tourists coming here, not just in terms of raw visitor numbers but also the indirect benefits of their staying here. We are led to conclude that either the Treasury did not consider this or, if they did, gave little weight to DCMS's warnings of its potential devastating impact on the industry. The Government fixed on its policy without ensuring it had the full facts before doing so. To make such a decision without considering its indirect impact, not just the direct one, is extraordinary and has already harmed the industry on which so much of our economy depends.**

39. ***The Government should publish an assessment of the direct and indirect impact that withdrawing from the VAT Retail Export Scheme will have had on the inbound tourism sector.***

40. ***In all future decisions affecting the inbound tourism sector, the Government should conduct impact assessments not only of the direct consequences of a policy but of the indirect ones as well.***

81 HM Treasury (18 October 2022), https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/112165/html/

82 HM Treasury (PBA0052)

83 Chancellor of the Exchequer (17 October 2022), Economic Update - Hansard - UK Parliament

Home Office policy

41. We were told that two Home Office policies are having a major impact on inbound tourism: banning the use of identity (ID) cards for travel and the cost and bureaucracy involved in applying for visas.

Identity cards

42. Since 1 October 2021, EU, EEA and Swiss national ID cards, which were commonly used by schools and other educational groups visiting the UK, have no longer been accepted as identity documents for European travellers.[84]

43. We heard that this has had a major impact on those businesses relying on educational visits for their income. UKInbound told us that the EU had been the biggest market for educational travel to the UK but that, since the new policy was introduced, "this market has collapsed".[85] Patricia Yates, chief executive of VisitBritain, told us that the scale of the loss could total more than £3 billion and that destinations like Hastings would be "absolutely decimated".[86] The European Tourism Association felt that the requirement had "torpedoed" the UK's appeal as a school trip destination and reported that there were now English-language courses conducted in France which previously ran in the UK.[87] Bernard Donoghue, director of the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions, told us that the Home Office had responded to the Association's concerns by saying that "this is what the British population voted for".[88]

44. We heard that the policy could also have a damaging long-term impact. Nick Brooks-Sykes, director of tourism at Marketing Manchester, warned that children who hadn't visited as a student would not have "that heritage and that history and that connection with the country for the long-term".[89] UK Hospitality told us that the policy change had "made the UK look insular, and the country is failing to capitalise on the opportunity to leave an impression on these children at key stages in their lives".[90]

45. The Tourism Alliance felt that supervised groups of under 18-year-olds should be allowed to enter the UK on a "list of travellers" scheme for a period of up to six weeks to attend English Language Schools and/or visit cultural and historic attractions. It argued that, "while this would require a change to the Government's "passport only" border rules, this is justified as school children represent no risk to UK security and do not disappear into the black economy".[91] Ms Yates called for the Government to allow schools to use a collective ID pass and "to get that decision quickly, because school visits also book up a long time in advance, so frankly we have lost this year".[92] She argued that "getting school visits in, which I cannot see as a huge risk, would be a major boost for the industry which is really suffering at the moment".[93]

84 UK Government, New immigration system: what you need to know Accessed 9 August 2022.
85 UKinbound (PBA0025)
86 Q332
87 ETOA (PBA0041)
88 Q56
89 Q191
90 UKHospitality (PBA0022)
91 Tourism Alliance (PBA0042)
92 Q332
93 Q334

46. Tourism Minister, Nigel Huddleston, told us that the DCMS was having "ongoing conversations" with the Home Office about the issue.[94] He acknowledged the "huge importance both financially and in terms of long-term soft power of having lots of visitors coming here at a young age and, in particular, learning the English language".[95] However, he argued that ID cards were "not a particularly reliable or secure form of identity".[96] He reported that "something like 48% of all dodgy documents seized at the borders are ID cards from EU and Swiss citizens".[97]

47. **The decision to ban ID cards is having a crippling effect on those businesses which rely on inbound visits from children and young people, businesses which are often based in seaside resorts. Any potential risk to security needs to be balanced with common sense: those on organised educational trips are unlikely to attempt to remain illegally.**

48. ***We recommend that the Government should allow children and young people under the age of 18, travelling as part of a supervised educational and/or cultural group visit, to enter the UK on a single group ID card.***

Entry requirements

49. Some of our submissions and witnesses raised concerns about the cost and bureaucracy involved for those inbound visitors who need visas or a visa waiver. Many compared the UK system with that of the Schengen area (those countries in Europe which have abolished internal border controls) and argued that tourists found the UK system more complicated and less cost-effective.

50. In the Schengen Zone, nationals of certain countries are exempt from needing a visa, can stay for up to 90 days in a six-month period, make multiple visits and apply at any time.[98] In the UK, visitors can stay for six months but it is only single entry and applications must be made at least 48 hours in advance.[99] Paul Barnes, chief executive of the Association of International Retail, told us that:

> Britain has always said that we will match the Schengen offer both in terms of the process and the offer of the visa, and we are falling behind on that. It would be a cost-free measure for the Government to say, "We will upgrade our visitor visa system to at least match, if not better, the Schengen system".[100]

51. Patricia Yates, chief executive of VisitBritain, told us that there had been policy decisions made "where you think, `Was there a view of international visitors there?' and decisions not made that would make a difference".[101] For example, America prioritised

94 Q385
95 *ibid*
96 *ibid*
97 Q386
98 Visiting the EU, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein: How long you can stay without a visa - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) and Frequent Asked Question on the Schengen visa-free regime. Accessed 1 August 2022.
99 The UK Electronic Visa Waiver allows visitors from Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates to visit the UK for up to 6 months. UK Government, Get an electronic visa waiver to enter the UK - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). Accessed 1 August 2022.
100 Q84
101 Q315

visitors from China by making its 10-year visa the standard offer, costing $160; the UK's 10-year visa costs more than £800. She also told us that visitor numbers were affected by the length of time it took to process visas, arguing that:

> If you are a travel agent and you have got a choice between Britain, taking 50 days for a decision on visas, and Schengen - "I can get that in a couple of weeks," you will say "Go to Europe because it is a simpler system". It loses us business in those markets. The worry is that once China comes back the situation is going to get worse, not better.[102]

52. The stakeholders we heard from proposed a range of reforms. Value Retail Plc wanted the Government to extend the Electronic Visa Waiver to visitors from East and South East Asia or introduce a 10 year visitor visa for Chinese tourists.[103] The Tourism Alliance proposed reducing the cost of the five-year standard visa but raising the cost of the six-month standard visa. It argued that, as processing a five-year visa cost no more than processing a standard one, the policy would "encourage more return travel to the UK while, at the same time, increasing revenue for the Home Office".[104] The business campaign group London First recommended that the Government should introduce a visa for the families of international students studying in the UK, which would encourage parents to visit their children "multiple times".[105]

53. We also heard of continuing problems that performers are having with touring the EU, which we highlighted in our 2021 report *The Future of UK Music Festivals*.[106] Jessica Koravos, president of the Really Useful Group, told us that it was "easier to come from Asia into the EU than it is to come from the UK into the EU".[107] She said that it was "slightly easier" for a band as the groups were smaller, but that "when you start talking about trying to take a theatrical production through the EU and you talk about 100 people instead of 20 people, it becomes incredibly challenging. The volume of fees involved is enough to make it uneconomic".[108] UK Music reported that the UK's Trade Cooperation Agreement with the EU had made touring the EU, the UK's most important live music market, "increasingly complicated".[109] It argued that there was "a very real risk that as international touring returns the UK will be decentred from European tours, with the attendant loss of jobs and income".[110] BPI, the representative body for UK record labels, wanted the Government to ensure that visa entry requirements and costs enabled touring to "take place as easily as possible–enabling fans to travel, UK artists to perform globally and build fanbases who may in turn come to the UK, and to bring global stars to the UK to perform".[111]

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102 Q330
103 Value Retail Plc (PBA0001)
104 Tourism Alliance (PBA0042)
105 London First (PBA0007)
106 DCMS Committee (29 May 2021), The future of UK music festivals - Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee - House of Commons (parliament.uk)
107 Q256
108 Q233
109 UK Music (PBA0015)
110 *ibid*
111 BPI (PBA0047)

54. The Government has now agreed bilateral arrangements with 20 out of 27 EU Member States, enabling UK musicians and performers to make short-term tours without visas or work permits; however, the rules vary from country to country. It stated that it was "actively engaging" with the remaining Member States.[112]

55. **In an increasingly competitive tourism market, the UK must keep pace with other countries' visa schemes and match, or surpass, those of our competitors. Moreover, the Government's strategy of agreeing bilateral arrangements with EU Member States for performers touring the EU is failing to address the industry's needs. The Government needs to recognise the bureaucratic burden caused by performers having to navigate multiple bilateral schemes for a single visit to the EU.**

56. ***We recommend that the Government should review entry requirements for visitors with a view to ensuring they match or surpass those of our competitors. It should publish the outcome of its review within 12 months.***

57. ***We recommend that the Government should negotiate an agreement with the EU to provide a single-entry document for performers to submit to any EU country they wish to visit.***

112 DCMS (11 October 2021), Visa-free short term touring

4 Resources

58. For the inbound tourism sector to flourish, it needs sufficient staffing and funding. We found that there were considerable problems with both.

Staff shortages

59. We received a range of evidence expressing concern about staffing shortages in the industry. Tourism supports 3.2 million jobs in the UK[113] and, pre-pandemic, the hospitality and tourism workforce overall accounted for 8.4 per cent of total UK employment, providing jobs for women and younger people in particular.[114] However, Kate Nicholls, chief executive of UK Hospitality, told us that one in five workers had not returned after furlough and that the sector had a 10% vacancy rate.[115] Bernard Donoghue, director of the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions, said that it was "incredibly difficult to recruit particularly front of house staff, catering staff and chefs, and people who work in restaurants".[116] He said that the issue was "partly about Brexit, it is partly about Covid, it is partly about losing those staff to other jobs that are better paid".[117] HF Holidays argued that leaving the European Union had impacted recruitment and retention and called for the salary cap, over which a non-UK citizen in certain occupations is eligible for a Skilled Worker Visa, to be reduced.[118]

60. We also heard calls for the Government to do more to promote tourism as a long-term, year-round career. A 2019 report for the DCMS found that jobs in hospitality and tourism were often perceived as "a job before a real job", which helped explain why there was such a high proportion of young people employed in the sector.[119] A T-Level in Catering is due to launch in September 2023[120] and UK Hospitality chief executive Kate Nicholls told us that every year some 10,000 people started apprenticeships in the industry.[121] However, HF Holidays reported that the message that hospitality was a valued career was "not getting across".[122] Bernard Donoghue, director of the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions, argued that the Government should be "encouraging people, while still at school, to think about hospitality and tourism as a lifelong career, not just something to do before you go to university or in the summer vacation".[123]

61. The Government's 2021 Tourism Recovery Plan acknowledged that labour mobility was an important issue in tourism and highlighted a range of work that the Government is doing to meet general skills shortages, including setting up the National Skills Fund and the Lifetime Skills Guarantee, which enables adults aged 24 and over to access around 400 fully funded courses. However, there are no courses specifically dedicated to travel

113 VisitBritain (PBA0002)
114 Economic Insight (June 2019), Hospitality and Tourism workforce landscape p9
115 Q159 and Q144
116 Q16
117 *ibid*
118 HF Holidays (PBA0012). For details of the scheme see Skilled Worker visa: Overview - GOV.UK and Skilled Worker visa: eligible occupations - GOV.UK. Accessed 29 July 2022.
119 Economic Insight (June 2019), Hospitality and Tourism workforce landscape p52
120 UK Government, T Level subjects | T Levels and Browse by interests (apprenticeships.gov.uk). Accessed 29 July 2022.
121 Q138
122 HF Holidays (PBA0012)
123 Q27

and tourism.[124] The Government is also giving a £1,000 cash boost to help employers in England, including in tourism and hospitality, to provide work placements for young people aged 16–24 starting a new traineeship.[125]

62. **Though staffing shortages have been exacerbated by the pandemic, the problems are long-term. The level of vacancies in the tourism and hospitality sectors are directly impacting the quality of our offer, yet both sectors can take a teenager in a holiday job all the way up to management and leadership. There not only needs to be a clear message from Government that careers in hospitality and tourism are viable, long-term and year-round, but also a strategy to fill immediate vacancies. We welcome efforts to create apprenticeships and the new T-Level in Catering in 2023 but believe that more could be done to support business-owners who are short of staff today.**

63. ***We recommend that the Government should introduce a temporary recovery visa for industries where there is clear evidence of labour and skills shortages.***

Funding

64. Much of our evidence drew attention to the level of funding VisitBritain receives. VisitBritain told us that its core budget had fallen 35% since 2010 and, to achieve the Government's goal of returning international value and volume a year earlier than VisitBritain has forecast, it would need a marketing budget of around £200 million.[126] By comparison, its international marketing campaign's media budget for January to April 2022 was £7 million. VisitBritain told us that it was "hugely outspent" by competitors such as the US, France, Spain and Ireland.[127]

65. Much of our evidence drew comparisons with other countries' tourism budgets. The Tourism Alliance reported that Ireland received an additional £33 million for enhanced tourism marketing and product development, Australia a marketing spend of £250 million over the next three years and the USA £185 million for additional tourism marketing.[128] UKInbound told us that rival destinations were "outspending our marketing effort many times over". It argued that a "sustained, heavily invested demand driving activation that allows the UK to stand out next to its competitors is required".[129] Allen Simpson, managing director of London & Partners, which promotes London internationally told us that London's largest ever promotional campaign, running this year, is supported financially by the industry and £9 million of public money, yet New York's equivalent campaign was receiving $30 million and had been able to launch its campaign earlier "because it was easier to get the money".[130] He argued that the sector was "fighting a battle with a hand tied behind our back".[131] The Heart of London Business Alliance told us that

124 Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (June 2021), Tourism Recovery Plan para 96
125 *ibid*
126 VisitBritain (PBA0002). VisitBritain forecasts, based on research from Oxford Economics, that the UK will not return to pre-pandemic levels until 2025. The Government has set a target of 2024. Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (June 2021), Tourism Recovery Plan p4.
127 VisitBritain (PBA0002)
128 Tourism Alliance (PBA0042)
129 UKinbound (PBA0025)
130 Q194
131 *ibid*

prior to the pandemic London was spending "half of what Paris and Berlin were, and less than a tenth of Singapore's spend". It argued that investing in promoting Britain abroad would "reap significant rewards".[132]

66. VisitBritain's pre-pandemic international return on investment (ROI) in 2018–19 was 21:1.[133] Tourism Minister Nigel Huddleston told us that he found VisitBritain's ROI "very compelling, but budgets are tight and there is only so much to go around".[134] He acknowledged to us that inbound tourism budgets were "relatively low" by international standards but argued that marketing spend in the UK was "fragmented", with international marketing carried out by different organisations across the country and individual events having marketing budgets.[135] He told us that there were "lots of programmes other than core spending, and we make sure at DCMS, in particular, that we add these things to every single offering".[136]

67. **The fragmented nature of marketing budgets across the UK, with different sectors and different parts of the country supported by different funds, makes it difficult to quantify the exact amount of Government funding for inbound tourism marketing. However, the minister himself acknowledged that it is low by international standards. Whilst we acknowledge the challenge of the current economic climate on public spending, the Government cannot afford to be complacent: tourists need winning back to Britain and we cannot do it on reputation alone. If Britain wants to compete internationally, VisitBritain's marketing budgets must keep pace with those of our nearest competitors. The cost of this investment will be vastly exceeded by the returns it will generate.**

68. ***The Government should increase VisitBritain's marketing budget to match more closely those of our nearest competitors. VisitBritain should ensure that much of this increase in funding should be ringfenced to promoting regional destinations.***

132 HOLBA (PBA0036)
133 VisitBritain and VisitEngland (16 December 2020), Annual Report and Accounts Year Ended 31 March 2020 p26
134 Q343 and Q344
135 *ibid*
136 Q348

5 Leadership

69. A wide range of organisations oversee inbound tourism in the UK. As tourism is devolved in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, in this first section we focus on leadership in England. We then go on to look at the pan-Britain role played by VisitBritain and, finally, the Government.

Destination Management Organisations in England

70. Individual destinations and regions in England are promoted by Destination Management Organizations (DMOs). In 2021, Nick de Bois, who is Chair of the VisitEngland Advisory Board, conducted a review of the sector and concluded that the DMO landscape was a "complicated patchwork quilt" with an "excessive amount" of geographical overlap and territorial competition. Many DMOs felt that they were not part of a national tourism strategy and were often unheard and unrepresented because of the "fragmented and confusing structures".[137] He told us that:

> If the Government really want us to stay in Division 1 of tourism and enjoy some growth that is below world average, then do nothing. Continue with the policies set back in 2010. If you want to be in the Premier League, then I believe that coherence, collaboration, accountability and reaching our full potential can be met by empowering DMO structures and the DMOs, who are full of some brilliant people.[138]

71. His recommendations, involving a simplified tiered structure and an accreditation system, were well-received by the industry.[139] The National Coastal Tourism Academy described the Review as "clear and comprehensive" and, if implemented, would "support the recovery of the sector".[140] Historic England argued that it could provide an "effective way of supporting growth of heritage tourism across regions or areas, in a way not possible at this time".[141] Gill Haigh, managing director of Cumbria Tourism, told us that the review had "managed to get under the skin of it all and… produce something so clear that we could just say, "Yes, that is right".[142] Nick Brooks-Sykes, director of tourism at Marketing Manchester, told us that he could not think of a report that "sets out a complete restructure of the sector or the support landscape for the sector that has such widespread support".[143] However, he would be concerned "if the review was implemented in part and was not sufficiently resourced to carry out the job".[144]

72. The Government took 11 months to publish its response. Tourism Minister, Nigel Huddleston, told us that this was due partly to the Comprehensive Spending Review and partly to internal business planning at DCMS.[145] The Government accepted some

137 Nick de Bois (August 2021), The de Bois Review: an independent review of Destination Management Organisations in England p5, p11 and p6. Though de Bois is Chair of VisitEngland's advisory board, he acted in an independent capacity when writing the report.
138 Q309
139 Nick de Bois (August 2021), The de Bois Review: an independent review of Destination Management Organisations in England p13
140 National Coastal Tourism Academy (PBA0035)
141 Historic England (PBA0027)
142 Q199
143 Q198
144 Q200
145 Q395

of the Report's recommendations, such as the new accreditation system, and awarded VisitEngland up to £4 million across the 2022–25 Spending Review period to develop this. However, it only committed to a pilot of de Bois' tiering model rather than implementing the model in full as it wanted to be confident that "taxpayer funding will yield a strong return on investment". The pilot will be awarded multi-year core funding, but the Government refused to commit to funding any national rollout, stating that it was "dependant on future funding".[146] Its response also does not quantify the criteria by which the pilot will be judged on the extent of its success.

73. We went back to the Report's author and some of our witnesses to find out their reaction to the Government's response. Mr de Bois described it as "disappointing" that the model would not be immediately rolled out, but he acknowledged the need to ensure value for tax-payer funding. He hoped that, in due course, the scheme would go ahead at national level "with the necessary funding".[147] Ms Haigh, managing director of Cumbria Tourism, also wanted to see a national pilot, arguing that it was "important we use the pilot to harness that collective momentum and work collaboratively to seize the opportunities".[148] Nick Brooks-Sykes, director of tourism at Marketing Manchester, told us that the organisation was:

> disappointed with the small extent of the Government's commitment to support the sector. The whole point of the review was to highlight the lack of resource and the disconnect between national policy and local delivery and to present solutions to make England's tourism sector better equipped to compete on the global stage. This announcement does not fix this.[149]

74. **The de Bois review of Destination Management Organisations (DMO) received widespread support from across the industry and it is unacceptable that the Government took 11 months to respond and in such a half-hearted fashion. The Comprehensive Spending Review and departmental business planning are standard annual events and so the Government should not use these as an excuse for the delay. We can only conclude that restructuring the DMO sector was not a priority, confirming stakeholders' fears that the Government fails to appreciate the urgency of the issue. Now is the time for bold action, yet the Government has failed to commit to any long-term change. We welcome the fact that the Government has accepted some of the report's recommendations, but its response falls short of the changes necessary for Destination Management Organisations to reach their full potential. We acknowledge the fact that the Government must ensure public money is spent wisely but are disappointed that the Government has made no commitment to fund a national scheme should the pilot prove successful, nor published the criteria by which it will be judged.**

75. ***We recommend that the Government should complete the pilot to a swift timescale and commit to implementing the de Bois recommendations in full.***

146 Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, Recommendations for Government (20 July 2022), Government response to the review of Destination Management Organisations in England
147 Email from Nick de Bois, 27 July 2022.
148 Email from Gill Haigh, managing director at Cumbria Tourism, 9 August 2022.
149 Email from Nick Brook-Sykes, director of tourism at Marketing Manchester, 27 July 2022.

VisitBritain

76. The role of VisitBritain, as the national tourism agency, is to raise Britain's profile abroad, increase the volume and value of tourism exports and develop Britain's visitor economy. However, a joint written submission from 20 inbound tour operators and Destination Management Companies (DMCs) reported that VisitBritain was regarded as "remote, [lacking] understanding of sector trade channel requirements and appear focussed purely on digital marketing channels".[150] They argued that:

> Many in the inbound sector believe if there were more inbound trade representation on the Board of VB with a steering group working with senior management with more discussion and joint planning there would be greater efficiencies, a better return on investment made.[151]

77. UKinbound felt that VisitBritain should "increase its cooperative working with the travel industry" and proposed that it should set up a marketing advisory group of representatives from Destination Management Companies to "ensure that marketing messages are aligned and where necessary co-funded".[152] The National Coastal Tourism Academy suggested that "intelligence" from VisitBritain's overseas offices should be made "more widely available to all partners operating in the inbound market".[153]

78. Jamie Njoku-Goodwin, chief executive of UK Music, told us that they had had "little engagement" with VisitBritain, while the engagement it had had with the Government's international brand marketing campaign, GREAT, had largely been "operational and tactical", describing it as "more sharing stats or promotional material than having a proper, in-depth, strategic conversation about what is going on".[154] Geoff Taylor, Chief Executive of BPI, the representative body for UK record labels, reported that VisitBritain had "never reached out to us and it is probably an oversight on our part that we have not reached out to them".[155]

79. We heard that VisitBritain sits on the boards of key industry groups such as UKInbound, which represents the inbound tourism sector, and the Tourism Alliance, which represents the wider tourism industry. Chief executive Patricia Yates told us that she felt that the criticisms from tour operators and DMCs stemmed from "some frustration… that they did not get government funding in London as DMCs did in Scotland".[156] She reported that VisitBritain's budget was "very tight" but felt that the relationship had "improved, both because of closer partnership working and because we were able to find some money from our existing budgets".[157]

150 ECE - European Cultural Experiences Ltd, A C Tours, E Voyages Ltd (PBA0005). Destination Management Companies are those Destination Management Organisations which operate as limited companies.
151 *ibid*
152 UKinbound (PBA0025)
153 National Coastal Tourism Academy (PBA0035)
154 Q221
155 *ibid*
156 Q304
157 *ibid*

80. Regarding the music industry specifically, she reported that VisitBritain had listened to criticism and "stepped up our activity".[158] As a result of the pandemic, the organisation had "not been out and engaging as we would like and as we should as the national board. We used to have really good links on music, and it is something that we need to rebuild. I will take that".[159]

81. **We recognise that the pandemic will have had a significant impact on VisitBritain's engagement with wider industry, while the level of its funding limits its ability to support Destination Management Companies to the extent that both sides would wish. We welcome the progress that VisitBritain has made to address concerns but feel it should also consider the extent to which this engagement should be at a strategic level rather than purely operational.**

Approval process

82. VisitBritain's work is subject to approval from the Government before any campaign can be launched. Firstly, its spending for marketing activities must be approved by the Cabinet Office under the Professional Assurance approval process, known as PASS. The threshold at which PASS approval is required is £100,000.[160] Chief executive Patricia Yates told us that, until this marketing activity spend was agreed, VisitBritain could not spend money in markets other than GREAT. This prevented it carrying out trade missions, public relations activity, bringing people over to Britain and trade engagement until the Cabinet Office had granted approval.[161]

83. This year, the Cabinet Office did not approve VisitBritain's 2022–23 trade marketing activity spend until 28 June, three months into the financial year, and its Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) funding was only confirmed the day before the new financial year.[162] Ms Yates told us that:

> In a year in which we absolutely need to be nimble because America is going great guns at the moment, the Gulf is coming along and we might want to switch spend to that, we do not have that flexibility. We can do it with the money and we have the money allocated, but the PASS process is enormously slowing us down.[163]

84. Secondly, before any campaign can be launched, VisitBritain's marketing materials must be approved by the Director for Campaigns & Marketing at the Cabinet Office and a special advisor at No 10. To date, VisitBritain has not had approval refused but has had on occasion to make adjustments.[164] This happened, for example, with its international *Welcome To Another Side of Britain* campaign, telling the experience of Britain in an unexpected way: VisitBritain had to change the video script in order for it to be approved. Chief executive Patricia Yates said that VisitBritain was told the script should have a "broader range of places represented, which I fully take".[165]

158 *ibid*
159 Q305
160 UK Government Advertising, marketing and communications spend controls. Accessed 5 August 2022.
161 Q273
162 Email from VisitBritain 29 June 2022.
163 Q289
164 Email from VisitBritain (10 June 2022).
165 Q285

85. We heard that there were positive sides to this hands-on approach. Ms Yates said that she found Cabinet Office and No 10 comments were "constructive and I think have made the campaigns better"[166] and argued that it was "always good to get a view from someone who has not been involved in the production and to have challenge, and I would always welcome challenge".[167] However, when asked whether it was a system she agreed with, Ms Yates said that VisitBritain had been set up by statute to give marketing and communications expertise, which "it is recognised that government does not have". She reported that she hoped that VisitBritain could " move towards lighter-touch oversight", though felt that it was the approval for activity spend that was "the real problem factor".[168]

86. Tourism Minister, Nigel Huddleston, told us that "the fine details of how the [CSR funding]could be spent and when it could be spent could only be addressed very late in the stage" due to needing confidence about the best way to spend the money given that the global travel market was in "utter chaos".[169] He acknowledged that sometimes the process "can be slow" but at other times the Cabinet Office responded more swiftly. For example, during lockdown, the Cabinet Office quickly approved repurposing funding away from international marketing to saving Destination Management Organisations.[170]

87. The Minister acknowledged that there was a case for arguing that the £100,000 threshold for PASS approval should be higher but that the right balance needed to be struck with controls on spending public money. He felt that the process "broadly" worked but that whether £100,000 was the right level was the subject of "conversations that we have all the time".[171] He told us that "whether we take a de minimis approach, or what the right level is in terms of requiring central authorisation, is always worth reviewing".[172]

88. Regarding marketing materials approval, the Minister argued that it was "fair and reasonable… to make sure there is consistency. We have certain requirements for certain images, visuals and so on, to keep that consistency and that push out there".[173] He described his conversations with the Cabinet Office communications team as "incredibly professional" and reported that:

> They present images, they explain the logic and market research behind things—why x works and y does not—and they do all these contrasting campaigns. There is a fair bit of effort, sometimes bringing in external expertise when required to help with that. So I am pretty comfortable, but I suppose what we are really talking about is whether there is room for a process improvement and, as with everything in Government, I am sure there is.[174]

89. **We are deeply concerned about how long VisitBritain must wait for confirmation of its Comprehensive Spending Review funding and, particularly, its marketing spend approval. This year's delays in the Professional Assurance approval process meant VisitBritain was unable to undertake critical work in international markets and so**

166 Q282
167 Q286
168 Q288
169 Q352
170 Q351
171 Q353
172 *ibid*
173 Q354
174 *ibid*

damaged the recovery of the inbound tourism sector as a whole. We welcome the fact that the Cabinet Office responded more quickly during lockdown, but this highlights not only the necessity of acting swiftly but also the Cabinet Office's ability to do so. All marketing campaigns generate significant costs and so VisitBritain hits the threshold of £100,000 on most, if not all, of its work. Given that the Government established VisitBritain to promote Britain abroad, it is nonsensical that approval processes are directly limiting its ability to do so. We recognise that £100,000 may be a useful threshold for non-marketing organisations but the nature of VisitBritain's work means that it should have a much higher threshold for its campaign spend.

90. ***We recommend that within the next three months the Government should negotiate with VisitBritain a rise in its PASS approval threshold.***

91. **VisitBritain is an arms' length body yet in practice appears to be grasped close to the chest. VisitBritain knows better than officials at No 10 and the Cabinet Office how best to attract visitors to Britain in an increasingly competitive field. Given VisitBritain's marketing and communications expertise, the requirement for marketing materials approval appears unduly restrictive. Officials' involvement in budget spending is understandable; their control over operational decisions and campaign messaging is not. The Minister himself acknowledged that there is scope for improvement.**

92. ***The Government should use a lighter touch with VisitBritain regarding operational decisions and campaign messaging. Any feedback should be considered as advisory only and given to VisitBritain within one month.***

Central government

93. Several witnesses praised the work of the Minister Nigel Huddleston and DCMS officials[175], but we heard considerable criticism that wider Government did not understand the significance of the tourism sector. Kate Nicholls, chief executive of UK Hospitality, told us that "it gets taken for granted, it is not fully understood, and there is not much joined-up thinking".[176] Allen Simpson, managing director of London & Partners, which promotes London internationally, told us that the issue was cultural and argued that " we have to take tourism more seriously than we do".[177] He said that "we tend to call London a financial services city. It is more accurate to call it a tourism city but we would not see it that way".[178]

94. We also received evidence that wider Government underestimates the competition that Britain faces. VisitBritain argued that the UK must "not be complacent that visitors will naturally return to Britain post-pandemic. Competitor destinations are already spending to ensure they capture the market as borders reopen".[179] The Latin American Travel Association reported that the UK had an "excellent tourism proposition […] but we have to compete against other excellent propositions. We need to dispel the notion that people will come just because we are here, and actually go and find inbound tourism markets".[180] The Pacific Asia Travel Association referred to the pandemic travel restrictions, stating

175 See, for example, Q33, Q62, Q145 and Q307.
176 Q143
177 Q201
178 *ibid*
179 VisitBritain (PBA0002)
180 Latin American Travel Association (PBA0008)

that the "biggest failing of government when considering the rules in place is to view the UK in isolation rather than as a competitor country among the whole". It argued that it was "not a question of whether it is possible to visit the UK, it is whether it is worth the additional effort required versus other comparable countries".[181]

95. Several witnesses pointed out that many of the policies impacting tourism were not controlled by DCMS and so the Tourism Minister needed more powers. The Minister for Tourism is a Parliamentary Under Secretary of State whose remit covers four other areas.[182] Joss Croft, chief executive of UKInbound, told us that tourism "definitely warrants a Minister of State and a specific Minister of State, given the size of the portfolio and the size and value and the importance of the industry".[183] Kurt Janson, director of the Tourism Alliance, told us that DCMS controlled "very few" of the levers and argued that what DCMS needed was "someone who can go across Government departments and who has the power to get other Ministers to come on board and develop a coherent set of policies for developing the tourism industry".[184]

96. Witnesses praised the Government for setting up an inter-ministerial group for tourism, chaired by the DCMS Secretary of State.[185] Nick Brooks-Sykes, director of tourism at Marketing Manchester, described the working group as a "huge step forward".[186] However, Nick de Bois, author of the Destination Management Organisations review, told us that while he was pleased that the working group had been established, "unless you have a Minister who has the clout, the weight and the officials to reach into other Departments, where those policies are, it is not going to be—I believe and history will show—that successful".[187] He told us that the Tourism Minister should be a full Minister of State position and work across multiple departments.[188]

97. The Government rejected the view that there is insufficient appreciation of the importance of the sector, highlighting the extent of support during the pandemic: the Treasury gave more than £37 billion in the form of grants, loans, tax breaks and wage subsidies.[189] However, the Government did acknowledge that departments had "not always worked together with a strategic overview of the visitor economy".[190] The Minister acknowledged to us that there were "significant areas for improvement" in the relationship between Whitehall and the tourism industry.[191] He told us that he himself found it "ironic that we are almost one of the only countries in Europe where tourism is not in the name of a Government Department, despite the fact that it is a huge chunk of the economy".[192] However, he felt that during the pandemic the engagement with other parts of Government on tourism and broader sectors had been "incredibly strong".[193] The

181 Pacific Asia Travel Association UK and Ireland (PBA0003). See also, for example, ATTA (African Travel & Tourism Association) (PBA0006) and Airlines UK (PBA0045).
182 Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, Nigel Huddleston MP. Accessed 27 July 2022.
183 Q145. See also, for example, VisitBritain (PBA0002) and the Latin American Travel Association (PBA0008).
184 Q145
185 Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (June 2021), Tourism Recovery Plan para 126
186 Q215
187 Q315
188 *ibid*
189 Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (20 July 2022), Government response to the independent review of DMOs
190 DCMS (20 July 2022), Government response to the independent review of DMOs
191 Q349
192 Q384
193 *ibid*

inter-ministerial group had met twice when we spoke with the Minister. Mr Huddleston told us that 13 Departments had talked about "the importance of tourism and recognising what we can do to push it. That has not happened before".[194]

98. **The Minister and DCMS officials should feel proud of their hard work supporting the tourism sector through the pandemic and we welcome the establishment of an inter-ministerial working group. However, it can only be effective if all departments recognise the extent to which the economy depends on the sector. Given that so many of the levers which control tourism lie outside of DCMS's control, the industry's ability to reach its full potential depends on the working group ensuring that policy from other departments does not undermine the work that DCMS is trying to achieve. This will require a full-time tourism minister who can work across several departments**

99. ***The Government should make the Tourism Minister a full-time position. We are open-minded as to which department the minister should be placed in, but it is crucial that their views should carry significant weight across all relevant departments, particularly the Home Office, HM Treasury and the Department for Transport.***

194 Q345

Conclusions and recommendations

Strategy

1. Britain's world-leading cultural sector enjoys global attention and contributes enormously to the country's appeal, but the competition is getting stronger. The voice of the cultural sector must be included at a strategic level if it is to fulfil its potential to attract visitors from across the globe. Establishing a Creative Industries Export Office would enable both industry and Government to work together to promote British talent and attract higher numbers of visitors. However, for an export office to succeed it must command industry support, include officials from across government and be sufficiently resourced. (Paragraph 15)

2. *We recommend that the Government should work with the creative industries at a strategic level and establish a creative industries export office. This should be coordinated by the DCMS but involve officials from all relevant departments, such as the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, the Home Office and the Department for Transport.* (Paragraph 16)

3. London will always be key to our tourism offer; it is a global brand which attracts millions of visitors each year. But every part of Britain has something to offer and a story to tell. Our evidence tells us that many visitors are unaware of what else there is to see or believe other destinations are too far or too difficult to travel to. Addressing these issues will help drive people beyond the capital. Attracting international business events also has clear potential not only to drive tourism across the country but throughout the year, as evidenced by the forecast impact of the events secured with the support of the Business Events Growth Programme. (Paragraph 26)

4. *VisitBritain should continue its work with tourism providers to identify how best to showcase all regions of the UK, with a particular focus on addressing the travel barriers, both perceived and actual. The Government should expand VisitBritain's Business Events Growth Programme and indicate in its response to our report the level of additional funding and the date by which it will be awarded.* (Paragraph 27)

Government policy

5. The Government's decision to withdraw from the VAT Retail Export Scheme has made Britain less appealing to tourists while increasing the appeal of our European competitors. It has been a spectacular own goal, signalling that the Government does not, despite its protestations to the contrary, recognise the significance of retail to the inbound tourism sector. For a short while, it appeared to have seen sense, committing once again to providing tax-free shopping for inbound visitors. To then reverse this decision, less than a month later with no new financial analysis provided, only serves to demonstrate the paucity of thought associated with these policy changes. By the Treasury's own estimation, the scheme could at the very least have been cost neutral. We agree with the industry that a broader analysis of the indirect benefits of the scheme would demonstrate that its cost would be far outweighed by the revenue it would generate and the increased numbers of tourists coming to the UK. (Paragraph 37)

6. We find it astonishing that the Minister and the Treasury were unable to tell us what assessment was made of the impact on the number of tourists coming here, not just in terms of raw visitor numbers but also the indirect benefits of their staying here. We are led to conclude that either the Treasury did not consider this or, if they did, gave little weight to DCMS's warnings of its potential devastating impact on the industry. The Government fixed on its policy without ensuring it had the full facts before doing so. To make such a decision without considering its indirect impact, not just the direct one, is extraordinary and has already harmed the industry on which so much of our economy depends. (Paragraph 38)

7. The Government should publish an assessment of the direct and indirect impact that withdrawing from the VAT Retail Export Scheme will have had on the inbound tourism sector. (Paragraph 39)

8. *In all future decisions affecting the inbound tourism sector, the Government should conduct impact assessments not only of the direct consequences of a policy but of the indirect ones as well.* (Paragraph 40)

9. The decision to ban ID cards is having a crippling effect on those businesses which rely on inbound visits from children and young people, businesses which are often based in seaside resorts. Any potential risk to security needs to be balanced with common sense: those on organised educational trips are unlikely to attempt to remain illegally. (Paragraph 47)

10. *We recommend that the Government should allow children and young people under the age of 18, travelling as part of a supervised educational and/or cultural group visit, to enter the UK on a single group ID card.* (Paragraph 48)

11. In an increasingly competitive tourism market, the UK must keep pace with other countries' visa schemes and match, or surpass, those of our competitors. Moreover, the Government's strategy of agreeing bilateral arrangements with EU Member States for performers touring the EU is failing to address the industry's needs. The Government needs to recognise the bureaucratic burden caused by performers having to navigate multiple bilateral schemes for a single visit to the EU. (Paragraph 55)

12. *We recommend that the Government should review entry requirements for visitors with a view to ensuring they match or surpass those of our competitors. It should publish the outcome of its review within 12 months.* (Paragraph 56)

13. *We recommend that the Government should negotiate an agreement with the EU to provide a single-entry document for performers to submit to any EU country they wish to visit.* (Paragraph 57)

Resources

14. Though staffing shortages have been exacerbated by the pandemic, the problems are long-term. The level of vacancies in the tourism and hospitality sectors are directly impacting the quality of our offer, yet both sectors can take a teenager in a holiday job all the way up to management and leadership. There not only needs to be a clear message from Government that careers in hospitality and tourism are viable, long-

term and year-round, but also a strategy to fill immediate vacancies. We welcome efforts to create apprenticeships and the new T-Level in Catering in 2023 but believe that more could be done to support business-owners who are short of staff today. (Paragraph 62)

15. *We recommend that the Government should introduce a temporary recovery visa for industries where there is clear evidence of labour and skills shortages.* (Paragraph 63)

16. The fragmented nature of marketing budgets across the UK, with different sectors and different parts of the country supported by different funds, makes it difficult to quantify the exact amount of Government funding for inbound tourism marketing. However, the minister himself acknowledged that it is low by international standards. Whilst we acknowledge the challenge of the current economic climate on public spending, the Government cannot afford to be complacent: tourists need winning back to Britain and we cannot do it on reputation alone. If Britain wants to compete internationally, VisitBritain's marketing budgets must keep pace with those of our nearest competitors. The cost of this investment will be vastly exceeded by the returns it will generate. (Paragraph 67)

17. *The Government should increase VisitBritain's marketing budget to match more closely those of our nearest competitors. VisitBritain should ensure that much of this increase in funding should be ringfenced to promoting regional destinations.* (Paragraph 68)

Leadership

18. The de Bois review of Destination Management Organisations (DMO) received widespread support from across the industry and it is unacceptable that the Government took 11 months to respond and in such a half-hearted fashion. The Comprehensive Spending Review and departmental business planning are standard annual events and so the Government should not use these as an excuse for the delay. We can only conclude that restructuring the DMO sector was not a priority, confirming stakeholders' fears that the Government fails to appreciate the urgency of the issue. Now is the time for bold action, yet the Government has failed to commit to any long-term change. We welcome the fact that the Government has accepted some of the report's recommendations, but its response falls short of the changes necessary for Destination Management Organisations to reach their full potential. We acknowledge the fact that the Government must ensure public money is spent wisely but are disappointed that the Government has made no commitment to fund a national scheme should the pilot prove successful, nor published the criteria by which it will be judged. (Paragraph 74)

19. *We recommend that the Government should complete the pilot to a swift timescale and commit to implementing the de Bois recommendations in full.* (Paragraph 75)

20. We recognise that the pandemic will have had a significant impact on VisitBritain's engagement with wider industry, while the level of its funding limits its ability to support Destination Management Companies to the extent that both sides would wish. We welcome the progress that VisitBritain has made to address concerns but feel it should also consider the extent to which this engagement should be at a strategic level rather than purely operational. (Paragraph 81)

21. We are deeply concerned about how long VisitBritain must wait for confirmation of its Comprehensive Spending Review funding and, particularly, its marketing spend approval. This year's delays in the Professional Assurance approval process meant VisitBritain was unable to undertake critical work in international markets and so damaged the recovery of the inbound tourism sector as a whole. We welcome the fact that the Cabinet Office responded more quickly during lockdown, but this highlights not only the necessity of acting swiftly but also the Cabinet Office's ability to do so. All marketing campaigns generate significant costs and so VisitBritain hits the threshold of £100,000 on most, if not all, of its work. Given that the Government established VisitBritain to promote Britain abroad, it is nonsensical that approval processes are directly limiting its ability to do so. We recognise that £100,000 may be a useful threshold for non-marketing organisations but the nature of VisitBritain's work means that it should have a much higher threshold for its campaign spend. (Paragraph 89)

22. *We recommend that within the next three months the Government should negotiate with VisitBritain a rise in its PASS approval threshold.* (Paragraph 90)

23. VisitBritain is an arms' length body yet in practice appears to be grasped close to the chest. VisitBritain knows better than officials at No 10 and the Cabinet Office how best to attract visitors to Britain in an increasingly competitive field. Given VisitBritain's marketing and communications expertise, the requirement for marketing materials approval appears unduly restrictive. Officials' involvement in budget spending is understandable; their control over operational decisions and campaign messaging is not. The Minister himself acknowledged that there is scope for improvement. (Paragraph 91)

24. *The Government should use a lighter touch with VisitBritain regarding operational decisions and campaign messaging. Any feedback should be considered as advisory only and given to VisitBritain within one month.* (Paragraph 92)

25. The Minister and DCMS officials should feel proud of their hard work supporting the tourism sector through the pandemic and we welcome the establishment of an inter-ministerial working group. However, it can only be effective if all departments recognise the extent to which the economy depends on the sector. Given that so many of the levers which control tourism lie outside of DCMS's control, the industry's ability to reach its full potential depends on the working group ensuring that policy from other departments does not undermine the work that DCMS is trying to achieve. This will require a full-time tourism minister who can work across several departments (Paragraph 98)

26. *The Government should make the Tourism Minister a full-time position. We are open-minded as to which department the minister should be placed in, but it is crucial that their views should carry significant weight across all relevant departments, particularly the Home Office, HM Treasury and the Department for Transport.* (Paragraph 99)

Annex

MONDAY 23 MAY	
11:00	Intro meeting and visit pre-brief with Deputy Head of Mission (Chargé d'Affaires) Meeting will discuss political context in Korea, particularly following the recent Presidential elections, as well as the UK's objectives in Korea and the role of the Embassy in working to achieve these objectives.
12:00	Working lunch at local restaurant with BE Seoul officials.
14:00	Meeting with MPs, government officials and creative industry representatives Meeting with three MPs of National Assembly Standing Committee for Culture, Sport and Tourism, two government officials from Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (MCST), five creative industry representatives and an academic from Korea Development Institute, a government think tank.
16:00	Meeting with senior members of SM Entertainment and tour of company Meeting with senior members of SM Entertainment to learn 1) the scope of their business, 2) their international collaboration and audience engagement programmes and 3) their future plans related to use of digital technologies. This follows a 15 minutes company tour.
TUESDAY 24 MAY	
09:00	Pre-brief with VisitBritain CEO Patricia Yates
09:35	Roundtable: Beyond London A roundtable discussion with experts from the South Korean outbound travel sector, alongside BE Seoul's Chargé d'Affaires, Nikesh Mehta, and Visit Britain CEO, Patricia Yates. Exam question: why do most South Korean visitors to the UK travel beyond London? What are the barriers that prevent them leaving London and how can we encourage them to explore the rest of the UK?
11:55	Traditional Temple Lunch with Korean Tourism Organisation and tour of temple Discussion on the operations of the Korean Tourism Organisation, and how the promote Korea as a destination for tourism.
13:00	Jogyesa Temple Tour
15:00	Working Holiday Event: Youth Mobility Scheme ROK Ministry of Foreign Affairs will lead this event highlighting the working holiday scheme between ROK and UK. Up to 50 young people who have been granted a visa to come to the UK for up to two years for the working holiday scheme will be in the audience. A former participant in the scheme will discuss their experience visiting Britain and then VisitBritain CEO will give 5 - 10 mins remarks welcoming them to the UK followed by questions.

16:00	Meeting with SK Telecoms (SKT) and tour of SKT T.um exhibit Meeting with SK Telecom to discuss 1) 5&6G, 2) broadband, 3) AI and digital infrastructure, and 4) up and coming tech and tech trends e.g., the metaverse. The meeting will be followed by a one-hour tour of their interactive tech-showcasing exhibit.
WEDNESDAY 24 MAY	
07:00	Tour of DMZ Joint Security Area
13:30	Working lunch with HMA Colin Crooks
15:30	Roundtable discussion with four creatives Roundtable discussion with four creatives to listen to their journey for global success, their insight of how K-style has won global attention and their views on how policy can support creative talents working internationally. This session will be facilitated by Fiona Bae, the author of an upcoming book, Make Break Remix: The Rise of K-style.
19:00	FC Seoul vs Jeju Football
THURSDAY 26 MAY	
08:00	BCCK Breakfast Event British Chamber of Commerce Korea industry event on Korea's Entertainment Industry in 2022: Business Models, Success Stories and Future business Opportunities.
09:35	Intro meeting with the BCCK Executive Director Lucinda Walker
11:00	Meeting with National Assembly MPs [Digital Agenda] Discussion with National Assembly MPs from the Ministry of Science and ICT Committee, and other MPs with an interest on online safety. Agenda will cover 1) the metaverse 2) online safety and 3) protecting human rights online.
14:10	Meeting with Samsung Electronics Vice President Meeting with Samsung Electronics representatives to discuss 5&6G, ORAN, Semiconductors, Samsung's predictions/priorities for upcoming important tech trends, and Samsung's business interests in the UK.
14:40	Guided tour of Samsung Innovation Museum
17:50	Queen's Birthday Party
FRIDAY 27 MAY	
10:00	Meeting with KENAZ Studio and studio tour Meeting with Woojae Lee, CEO of KENAZ to learn 1) the scope of their business and 2) Korean webtoon business, followed by a 20 mins studio tour.
11:00	One-hour meeting with officials from Korea Creative Content Agency (KOCCA)
12:30	Meeting with the CEO of Ocon Studio and company tour Meeting with Ilho Kim, CEO of Ocon Studio to learn 1) the scope of their business, 2) their international collaboration and audience engagement programmes and 3) their future plans related to use of VR/AR technologies. The meeting will be followed by a studio tour.

15:30	Meeting with National Assembly Representatives with an interest in China Discussion topic: Korean foreign policy navigating the US/China rivalry. Korean Parliamentarians will give presentations, followed by a discussion/ Q&A session.
17:30	Wash-up meeting with HMA and DHM

Formal minutes

Tuesday 18 October 2022

Members present:

Julian Knight, in the Chair

Steve Brine

Clive Efford

Julie Elliott

Dr Rupa Huq

John Nicolson

Jane Stevenson

Giles Watling

Draft Report (*Promoting Britain abroad*), proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 99 read and agreed to.

Annex agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Second Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chair make the Report to the House.

Ordered, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No.134.

Adjournment

Adjourned till Tuesday 25 October 2022 at 9.30 am.

Witnesses

The following witnesses gave evidence. Transcripts can be viewed on the inquiry publications page of the Committee's website.

Tuesday 22 February 2022

Caroline Cooper Charles, Chief Executive, Screen Yorkshire; **Bernard Donoghue**, Director, Association of Leading Visitor Attractions; **Ralph Lee**, Chief Executive Officer, BBC Studios Productions; **Martha Lytton-Cobbold**, President, Historic Houses Q1–70

Tuesday 8 March 2022

Ross Baker, Chief Commercial Officer, Heathrow; **Paul Barnes**, Chief Executive, Association of International Retail Q71–134

Joss Croft, Chief Executive, UKinbound; **Kate Nicholls OBE**, Chief Executive, UK Hospitality; **Kurt Janson**, Director, Tourism Alliance Q135–170

Tuesday 29 March 2022

Nick Brooks-Sykes, Director of Tourism, Marketing Manchester; **Gills Haigh**, Managing Director, Cumbria Tourism; **Allen Simpson**, Managing Director, London and Partners Q171–217

Kash Bennett, Managing Director, National Theatre; **Jessica Koravos**, President, Really Useful Group; **Jamie Njoku-Goodwin**, Chief Executive, UK Music; **Geoff Taylor**, Chief Executive, BPI Q218–262

Tuesday 21 June 2022

Patricia Yates, Chief Executive, VisitBritain; **Nick de Bois CBE**, Chair, VisitEngland Advisory Board Q263–341

Tuesday 5 July 2022

Nigel Huddleston MP, Minister for Sport, Tourism, Heritage and Civil Society, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Q342–405

Published written evidence

The following written evidence was received and can be viewed on the inquiry publications page of the Committee's website.

PBA numbers are generated by the evidence processing system and so may not be complete.

1 Ang, Dr Dionysius; Biraglia, Dr Alessandro; and Gerrath, Dr Maximilian (PBA0011)

2 ATTA (African Travel & Tourism Association) (PBA0006)

3 Airbnb (PBA0039)

4 Airlines UK (PBA0045)

5 Airport Operators Association (PBA0032)

6 Association of International Retail (AIR) (PBA0019)

7 Association of Leading Visitor Attractions (PBA0009)

8 Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society (PBA0037)

9 BBC (PBA0029)

10 BPI (PBA0047)

11 British Council (PBA0046)

12 CLIA UK & Ireland (PBA0038)

13 Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre, led by Nesta (PBA0016)

14 Cumbria Tourism (PBA0024)

15 Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (PBA0004)

16 ECE - European Cultural Experiences Ltd; A C Tours; and E Voyages Ltd (PBA0005)

17 ETOA (PBA0041)

18 Fashion Roundtable (PBA0040)

19 Global Blue UK Ltd (PBA0021)

20 HF Holidays (PBA0012)

21 HOLBA (PBA0036)

22 Heathrow Airport Ltd (PBA0033)

23 Historic England (PBA0027)

24 Historic Houses (PBA0051)

25 Historic Houses (PBA0018)

26 HM Treasury (PBA 0052)

27 IFPI - representing the recording industry worldwide (PBA0026)

28 Latin American Travel Association (PBA0008)

29 London & Partners (PBA0020)

30 London First (PBA0007)

31 Manchester Airport Group (PBA0013)

32 Marketing Manchester (PBA0030)

33 Michopoulou, Dr Eleni; Azara, Dr Iride; and Cowling, Professor Marc (PBA0014)

34 National Coastal Tourism Academy (PBA0035)

35 National Museum Directors' Council (PBA0043)

36 National Portrait Gallery (PBA0023)

37 New West End Company (PBA0010)

38 Pacific Asia Travel Association UK and Ireland (PBA0003)

39 Society of London Theatre/UK Theatre (PBA0031)

40 The Heritage Alliance (PBA0034)

41 The National Archives (PBA0044)

42 The Orchard Tea Garden (PBA0050)

43 Tourism Alliance (PBA0042)

44 UK Music (PBA0015)

45 UKHospitality (PBA0022)

46 UKinbound (PBA0049)

47 UKinbound (PBA0025)

48 Value Retail Plc (PBA0001)

49 VisitBritain (PBA0002)

50 Walpole (PBA0028)

51 Welcome to Yorkshire (PBA0048)

List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament

All publications from the Committee are available on the publications page of the Committee's website.

Session 2022–23

Number	Title	Reference
1st	Amending the Online Safety Bill	HC 271
1st Special	Major cultural and sporting events: Government Response to Committee's Ninth Report of Session 2021–22	HC 452
2nd Special	Influencer Culture: Lights, camera, inaction?: ASA System and CMA Responses to the Committee's Twelfth Report of Session 2021–22	HC 610
3rd Special	Influencer Culture: Lights, camera, inaction?: Government Response to the Committee's Twelfth Report of Session 2021–22	HC 687
4th Special	Rt Hon Nadine Dorries MP	HC 801

Session 2021–22

Number	Title	Reference
1st	The future of UK music festivals	HC 49
2nd	Pre-appointment hearing for Information Commissioner	HC 260
3rd	Concussion in sport	HC 46
4th	Sport in our communities	HC 45
5th	Pre-appointment hearing for Information Commissioner	HC 260
6th	Pre-appointment hearing for Chair of the Charity Commission	HC 261
7th	Racism in cricket	HC 1001
8th	The Draft Online Safety Bill and the legal but harmful debate	HC 1039
9th	Major cultural and sporting events	HC 259
10th	Another pre-appointment hearing for Chair of the Charity Commission	HC 1200
11th	Pre-appointment hearing for Chair of Ofcom	HC 48
12th	Influencer culture: Lights, camera, inaction?	HC 258
1st Special Report	The future of public service broadcasting: Government Response to Committee's Sixth Report of Session 2019–21	HC 273

Number	Title	Reference
2nd Special Report	Economics of music streaming: Government and Competition and Markets Authority Responses to Committee's Second Report	HC 719
3rd Special Report	Sport in our communities: Government Response to Committee's Fourth Report	HC 761
4th Special Report	The future of public service broadcasting: Ofcom Response to Committee's Sixth Report of Session 2019–21	HC 832
5th Special	The Draft Online Safety Bill and the legal but harmful debate: Government Response to the Committee's Eighth	HC 1039

Session 2019–21

Number	Title	Reference
1st	The Covid-19 crisis and charities	HC 281
2nd	Misinformation in the COVID-19 Infodemic	HC 234
3rd	Impact of COVID-19 on DCMS sectors: First Report	HC 291
4th	Broadband and the road to 5G	HC 153
5th	Pre-appointment hearing for Chair of the BBC	HC 1119
6th	The future of public service broadcasting	HC 156
1st Special Report	BBC Annual Report and Accounts 2018–19: TV licences for over 75s Government and the BBC's Responses to the Committee's Sixteenth Report of Session 2017–19	HC 98
2nd Special Report	The Covid-19 crisis and charities: Government Response to the Committee's First Report of Session 2019–21	HC 438
3rd Special Report	Impact of Covid-19 on DCMS sectors: First Report: Government Response to Committee's Third Report of Session 2019–21	HC 885
4th Special Report	Misinformation in the COVID-19 Infodemic: Government Response to the Committee's Second Report	HC 894