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NEWS RELEASE

## VisitYork4Meetings secures Liberal Democrats 2014 Spring Conference for York

**VisitYork4Meetings**, the conference arm of **Visit York**, is delighted to announce that York has been selected to host the **2014 Liberal Democrats Spring Conference**. A major coup for the city's business tourism sector, this three day conference will be held in March 2014 at the York Barbican Centre with the Novotel Hotel as the party conference headquarters for the duration of the event.

Previously held in Liverpool, Glasgow and Brighton, it is the first time in the party's history that they have held their annual conference in York.

Over 1000 delegates are expected to attend and Visit York estimates the economic value to the city at over £600,000.

**Laura Freer**, Business Tourism Manager for VisitYork4Meetings, said:

"We are delighted to have secured this bid to bring the Liberal Democrat's conference to York. It represents a fantastic opportunity to showcase the city's venues to an influential audience. Political conferences attract a vast amount of media interest, and York will benefit from this exposure. Already recognised as one of the UK's top leisure destinations, this conference will help put York on the map for business events."

**Nick Clegg**, Deputy Prime Minister and Leader of the Liberal Democrats, said:

"I'm delighted that the Liberal Democrat Spring Conference will be held in York for the first time next year. We're helping to create new jobs all around the country and York is not only a beautiful city, but it's also a great place to do business. I'm sure all our delegates will enjoy a great conference and a great stay in York."

Jane, Lady Gibson Chairman of Visit York said, "In 2013 Visit York launched a major new offensive to put York on the map for business events. Winning this bid demonstrates how far we have come and we will continue to punch above our weight to ensure events and conference organisers see York as one of the most attractive cities in the UK in which to do business."

Business tourism in York generates £150.9 million annual income for the city, with over 20,000 meetings, conferences and events taking place in York annually. Business tourism is worth over £36 billion per annum to the national economy. Business visitors spend on average £131 per day – 72% more than the amount spent by leisure visitors on a daily basis, while visitors to UK exhibitions from overseas spend 193% more per day than leisure visitors.

The confirmation of the Spring conference follows VisitYork4Meeting's innovative '**York Minster to Westminster**' showcase, held at the Houses of Parliament in March. The showcase attended by the Liberal Democrats events manager promoted York's business tourism venues and services to UK and international conference organisers.

'York Minster to Westminster' was part of Visit York's business tourism strategy, which involves a range of UK and international business tourism marketing initiatives. Forthcoming activity will include further development of the Conference Ambassador Programme, a series national and international exhibitions, a further showcase event and sales days promoting York as one of the UK's top city destinations for conferences and events.

**-Ends-**

### **Notes to Editors:**

- **Visit York** is the official business tourism body for York, representing over fifty quality conference venues. Its aim is to firmly establish York and its surrounding area as a leading business tourism destination and to increase the value of business tourism to York. Visit York is supported by the City of York Council, has a private sector membership of over seven hundred businesses and works with Welcome to Yorkshire and Visit England.
- **Visit York 4 Meetings** has an unrivalled knowledge of conference venues in York and the surrounding area. The team offer a FREE service to include assisting conference organisers with venue placement, delegate accommodation bookings, and partner programme options.
- York is easily accessible from all parts of the UK, less than 2 hours from London and Manchester, 3 hours from Scotland, 2.5 hours from Birmingham by rail and within easy reach of 5 international airports.
- York is unique in offering a diverse range of conference venues from the 1400 seated Barbican Centre to the Chapter House of York Minster.
- Business tourism in York generates a total of £150.9 million annual income for the city

For a free image bank visit [www.visitorkimages.co.uk](http://www.visitorkimages.co.uk)

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