



PRESS RELEASE

Embargoed until Wednesday 5 March

York takes business tourism message to the capital50 International and London event buyers attend 'York Minster to Westminster' showcase at the Houses of Parliament

Hosted by Visit York and supported by York MPs Hugh Bayley and Julian Sturdy, a record turnout of conference and event buyers, including representatives from prestigious associations and institutions for example: **The Green Party, Barratt Homes, The Royal Society of Medicine, The Institute for Small Business and Entrepreneurship** and **CIPFA (the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy)** attended the VisitYork4Meetings 'York Minster to Westminster' Showcase for business tourism today (Weds 5th March).

This pioneering event supported by East Coast, now in its second year, is the brainchild of Visit York and part of its strategy to increase business events to the city. As part of the Showcase, which profiled York's diverse range of conference, event venues and suppliers, six German buyers flew in to London in conjunction with **Visit England**. These key buyers from high profile companies across Germany will also visit York this week on a familiarisation visit to see the city for themselves.

New venues exhibiting at the showcase this year included **The Jorvik Group**, who manage JORVIK Viking Centre, the medieval Barley Hall and archaeology based attraction, DIG. Other venues participating for the first time included the 4* **Hotel Du Vin & Bistro** and **Hilton York**. **In total twenty of York's top venues met with the buyers to discuss bookings for future events and conferences.**

The VisitYork4Meetings showcase, which was first piloted in 2013, has been organised to demonstrate York's excellent business tourism product face-to-face with individuals with direct conference and strong event purchasing power.

Speakers included **The Rt Hon. the Lord Shutt of Greetland OBE**, as well as **Jane, Lady Gibson**, chairman of Visit York.

Delegates began the day at The Houses of Parliament for networking, afternoon tea, speeches and a behind-the-scenes tour, before moving on to the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre for a York venue showcase and buyer appointments.

Kate McMullen, Head of Visit York said:

“York Minster to Westminster is a great example of the kind of innovative work that Visit York is known for. It’s not only innovative, it produces great results. By taking our business tourism offer to the capital, we aim to produce a cohesive, measurable result for the city in terms of future conference bookings.”

Louisa Greenbaum, Conferences Co-ordinator for The Green Party said:

“Great idea to bring the venues to the organisers... I achieved in one afternoon what would normally have taken two days of valuable working time. Great to hear about the innovative venues in York, and we are definitely now considering York as a destination. “

Last year’s event was attended by 60 event buyers including the Liberal Democrats Head of Conferences and Events who confirmed their Spring Conference in York, which takes place this weekend (7 – 9 March). It is the first time in the Party’s history that it has held its annual conference in York and it is expected that around 1400 delegates will be in the city for the three-day event in March, contributing well over £600,000 to the local economy.

The York Minster to Westminster 2014 event is a key part of Visit York’s business tourism strategy, in partnership with Visit England. The full list of venues and services attending York Minster to Westminster is:

[Best Western Monkbar Hotel](#)

[Cedar Court Grand Hotel](#)

[Hilton Hotel, York](#)

[Holiday Inn, York](#)

[Hotel du Vin & Bistro York](#)

Mercure York Fairfield Manor

[Middlethorpe Hall & Spa](#)
[National Railway Museum](#)
[Novotel York](#)
[Saville Audio Visual York](#)

The Jorvik Group

[The Merchant Adventurers' Hall](#)

[The Park Inn by Radisson, York](#)

[R & B Group](#)

[The Royal York Hotel](#)

The University of York – York Conferences

Tulip Inn (Burn Hall)

York Marriot Hotel

York Racecourse

York St John University

-Ends-

Notes to Editors:

- **VisitYork4Meetings** – the business tourism arm of Visit York representing over a hundred 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 Visit England and Welcome to Yorkshire.
- **VisitYork4Meetings** has an unrivalled knowledge of conference venues in York and the surrounding area. The teams 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.
- York, in 2012, had an estimated 20,000 business events attended by nearly 1.1 million business event visitors. They accounted for an estimated spend of £160.4m in venues and the local destination.

For a free image bank visit www.visityorkimages.co.uk

For further information please contact:

Jane Verity – Bonner and Hindley

Email: jane@bonnerandhindley.co.uk

Phone: 0113 243 4713

Mobile: 07854 759 480

Laura Freer – Business Tourism Manager, Visit York
Email: lf@visityork.org
Direct Line: 01904 554453
Mobile: 07891 320486

Kay Hyde – Head of PR & Communications, Visit York
Email: kh@visityork.org
Direct Line: 01904 554451
Mobile: 07961 828092