

Best of Britain & Ireland 2012 Update

Support Grows for BoBI

The Tourism Alliance, Tourism Management Institute and the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions have become the three latest trade bodies to announce their support for Best of Britain & Ireland 2012.

They join the Coach Tourism Council, Confederation of Passenger Transport, European Tour Operators Association, Group Travel Organisers Association, Tourism Society and UKinbound as industry supporters of the tourism flagship trade event of English Tourism Week.

“The support we have garnered from the tourism industry has been superb”, says Best of Britain & Ireland Event Director Sam Warnock, “ All of these organisations have been working closely with us to target both potential exhibitors, and prospective visitors to the show in March 2012. This is a true example of the collective tourism industry working together in partnership to deliver a successful event. We are grateful to all our industry partners in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales for their support.”

Spreading the Word about BoBI

Advertising for Best of Britain & Ireland has been live since September this year in a variety of trade press such as travelGBI, Coach Monthly and Group Travel Organiser magazine. This has been boosted by additional advertising in Coach Tours UK, DestinationUK, Coach Touring , Group Travel Today and the Blueprint Guide to Group Travel.

“Our aim in this first three months of promotion has been to get the message out to potential exhibitors about booking their stand at BoBI '12.” says Sam Warnock, “We are well on track to deliver 300 plus exhibitors for next year, with around 200 already confirmed. The Scotland area has been enlarged for next year and has already sold out as has the Tourism Ireland area, and they have now increased their presence with an additional six booths being made available. The event is selling extremely well.”

“The next phase of our campaign is to target potential visitors with the aim of securing at least 2600 to the show over the two days. Adverts and inserts will be appearing in the trade press from January to encourage pre-show registration.”

Media Partnerships in Action

Attracting over 70 key UK travel journalists to Best of Britain & Ireland 2012 is one of the organisers targets. In addition to the attending trade press, the organisers are working with the British Guild of Travel Writers and the International Travel Writers Alliance to both encourage their members to attend, and to get Best of Britain and Ireland event information out to their respective members.

“These media organisations are extremely important as, through their thousands of members, we can get information of new openings, launches, special events and exhibitions that our exhibitors

have planned for 2012 out to millions of consumers both in the UK and Ireland and to many overseas countries," says Sam Warnock, Event Director at BoBI.

"Encouraging media to attend Best of Britain & Ireland is also extremely important. We are delighted that Virgin Trains have announced that they will be providing a first class press carriage on the morning of the 14 March to bring up to 40 media representatives to BoBI in time for the opening ceremony and to meet exhibitors throughout the day," continued Sam. "Not only does it show Virgin Trains positive support for Best of Britain & Ireland, but will ensure a credible number of London-based press at the event."

Sponsorship Climbs for BoBI

Sponsorship for Best of Britain & Ireland continues to swell with Birmingham Airport announcing their financial support of BoBI's International Hosted Buyers programme, complementing Hilton Hotels' partnership of the Domestic Hosted Buyers itinerary. Over 140 domestic and 100 International Hosted Buyers are targeted to attend the 2012 show.

Hotel Indigo, Birmingham's newest boutique hotel located in the prestigious 'Cube' development behind Mailbox in Birmingham city centre will be accommodating key UK media on the Wednesday night, and selected Domestic Hosted Buyers on the Thursday. Their partner restaurant Marco Pierre White Steakhouse will be hosting the new International Hosted Buyers dinner on the Tuesday, dinner for media on the Wednesday and an event for domestic buyers on the Thursday.

Meanwhile on the evening of day one (Wednesday) all hosted buyers and paying exhibitors will be attending the Travel Trade Networking Reception & Gala Dinner at the Birmingham Hilton Metropole Hotel. Through the association of tourism, marketing & PR representation company made, the drinks reception is being sponsored by theatre production 'We Will Rock You' while the gala dinner and entertainment is being sponsored by 'Disney's The Lion King'.

Gardens in the Spotlight at BoBI '12

In a first for Best of Britain & Ireland, organisers Expo Management have announced a new feature area for BoBi, which will change its focus each year concentrating on a specific theme to attract group visits.

The first feature area for 2012 will be 'Gardens of Britain & Ireland', showcasing the amazing array of fantastic gardens all over the UK and Ireland.

"Up to 17 gardens will have the opportunity of displaying their unique features to our 2600 plus visitors to BoBI next year" says Event Director Sam Warnock. "We want to give the fantastic gardens of Britain and Ireland a dedicated stage on which to display their attractions for group visitors. We are pricing the showcase area at a very affordable level to encourage first-time garden attendees to be present to raise the awareness of how enjoyable visits to gardens can be.

The package will be launched to selected gardens in January."