

News Release

Immediate

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TOURISM CONTRIBUTES £1.25 BILLION TO LEICESTER AND LEICESTERSHIRE ECONOMY

Major research shows steady increase in total economic impact of tourism and tourism numbers to the city and county

New figures have shown that the visitor economy in Leicester and Leicestershire has grown to almost £1.25 billion.

The major study, conducted during 2007, also shows an increase in the number of jobs supported by the tourism sector at just over 19,600 - an increase of over three per cent from the findings of 2006. The number of 'overnight' visitors to Leicester and Leicestershire has also risen by 4.3 per cent - standing now at just under 1.5 million.

The research, commissioned by *emda's* tourism arm, East Midlands Tourism and conducted by Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor (STEAM), is the third major study into the economic impact of tourism at regional and county/city level and provides the most comprehensive review of the value, volume and economic impact of tourism in the East Midlands to date.

Key findings:

- Total economic impact of tourism rose by one per cent to £1.246 billion
- Total number of jobs supported by the tourism industry rose by three per cent to 19,602 (FTEs*)
- Total number of tourists rose by one per cent to 31.738 million
- Number of visitors staying overnight in serviced and non-serviced accommodation rose by 4.3 per cent to 1.492 million
- Total economic impact of visitors staying overnight now stands at £254.1 million

Martin Peters, Chief Executive of Leicester Shire Promotions, commented: "We are delighted with these strong performance figures for the local visitor economy in 2007. In our ongoing tourism development work across the city and county, we have a particular focus on increasing the quality of

the visitor experience and growing overnight visitor stays so these figures are testament to the success of this particular strategy.

“Despite the current economic challenges for business and visitors, we have many good reasons to remain optimistic that tourism will continue to make a significant contribution to the local economy. Amongst these are the hugely successful arrival of the new Highcross Leicester retail and leisure development in the city, the forthcoming opening of the new Curve theatre, the further emergence of The National Forest in the county, the major investment at Donington Park ahead of the 2010 British Grand Prix, developments around 2012 and the Special Olympics being held in Leicester in 2009,” continued Martin.

Notes to editors:

The research has been undertaken by Global Tourism Solutions (UK) Ltd which owns and operates the Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor (STEAM), which approaches the measurement of tourism at a local level from the supply side (i.e. accommodation, attractions). STEAM quantifies the local economic impact of tourism, from both stay and day visitors.

*Full time equivalents (FTEs) - this includes people involved in seasonal and part time work, with figures worked out to the equivalent full time value.

About Leicester Shire Promotions:

Leicester Shire Promotions is a private, not-for-profit company formed in July 2003 as a partnership between Leicester City Council, Leicestershire County Council and the Leicester Shire Economic Partnership. The company is the Destination Management Organisation (DMO) responsible for promoting Leicester and Leicestershire to visitors and investors, based on a coordinated place marketing strategy that focuses on destination leadership and coordination, attracting investors and visitors, services for investors and visitors, and services for the tourism industry. For more information, please visit www.goleicestershire.com

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