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 media release

### **City of Stoke-on-Trent set for bumper year**

A major international ceramics festival, two of the biggest anniversaries of the year, new attractions, and a movie portraying its historic association with Northern Soul are all set to raise the City of Stoke-on-Trent's profile during the course of 2009.

Full details are now available on the new-look website [www.visitstoke.co.uk](http://www.visitstoke.co.uk), and in two recently launched publications: the new *Days Out in Stoke-on-Trent*, and *2009 Visitor's Guide to Stoke-on-Trent*.

Affectionately known world-wide as "The Potteries", Stoke-on-Trent not only offers its visitors some of the biggest and best known visitor attractions in Britain, such as The Trentham Estate and nearby Alton Towers, but also some of the biggest names in fine-china manufacturing in the world.

The new *Days Out in Stoke-on-Trent* guide for 2009, for example, continues to focus on the value-for-money shopping which can be enjoyed in the many factory shops found throughout The Potteries. Famous names still trip off the tongue, with some of the big-name pottery manufacturers offering fascinating behind-the-scenes factory tours as well as a selection of fine china in their 'seconds' shops. Emma Bridgewater, for example, being the latest example of this – having just started to offer factory tours from the start of the year.

More than 27 factory shops, ceramic attractions, museums and pottery cafés are featured in the new pocket-sized booklet, which also contains details of a host of other 'non-ceramic' attractions, including Aerial Extreme, Go Ape, Shugborough and Ford Green Hall.

At the end of 2008, Wedgwood opened its new £10m purpose-built Museum – a stylish building which, for the first time in the company's 250 year history saw its entire collection and archive go on display under the same roof. And, despite the difficult economic climate, Stoke-on-Trent is still planning to mark the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of a business created by Josiah Wedgwood on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1759.

Stoke-on-Trent also has close links to the Darwin family, and will be joining-in the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Charles Darwin's birth. And while an observation wheel is the latest attraction on offer at Trentham, movie and dance fans are set for a treat with the launch this Autumn of the movie *Northern Soul*, filmed largely in Stoke-on-Trent.

The city will also be hosting one of the leading events of its kind in the UK, when it stages the 2009 British Ceramics Biennial Festival, from October 3<sup>rd</sup> to December 13<sup>th</sup>.

Copies of the *Days Out In Stoke-on-Trent* guide can be obtained free of charge by contacting Stoke-on-Trent Tourist Information Centre, Victoria Hall, Cultural Quarter, Stoke-on-Trent City Centre, ST1 3AD. (T: 01782-236000. E: [stoke.tic@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:stoke.tic@stoke.gov.uk)).

The *2009 Visitor's Guide to Stoke-on-Trent* – with full accommodation listing – is aimed at helping the short-break visitor to get the most from their time in the area. And further information can now be found at [www.visitstoke.co.uk](http://www.visitstoke.co.uk).

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**For further information, and images, please contact:**

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