



[www.breaksnorthwales.co.uk](http://www.breaksnorthwales.co.uk)



[www.adventure-northwales.com](http://www.adventure-northwales.com)



[www.golf-northwales.co.uk](http://www.golf-northwales.co.uk)



[www.walkingnorthwales.co.uk](http://www.walkingnorthwales.co.uk)



[www.moviemapnorthwales.co.uk](http://www.moviemapnorthwales.co.uk)



[www.eventsnorthwales.co.uk](http://www.eventsnorthwales.co.uk)



[www.gardensnorthwales.co.uk](http://www.gardensnorthwales.co.uk)



[www.attractionsnorthwales.co.uk](http://www.attractionsnorthwales.co.uk)



[www.walledtowns.co.uk](http://www.walledtowns.co.uk)

# ewelcome

an electronic bulletin from  
**Tourism Partnership North Wales**

## Tourism bites back at the credit crunch

01745 589020

## Tourism bites back at the credit crunch

A tourism organisation is playing a vital role in helping North Wales to bite back at the credit crunch.

Tourism Partnership North Wales revealed that their campaigns had achieved their target of pumping an extra £16.5 million into the regional economy.

The good news is contained in the latest annual review of Tourism Partnership which is responsible for the strategic development of the visitor economy in North Wales.

Regional Strategy Director Dewi Davies believes the importance of tourism to the overall economic health and well-being of North Wales cannot be over-estimated.

It is a £1.8 billion industry that accounts for eight per cent of the region's gross domestic product and employs 39,000 people.

Mr Davies said: "Once again, this year we commissioned a series of effective campaigns to promote the region actively in external markets, drawing on our unique assets in culture, history and the environment.

"The headline news from Tourism Partnership's perspective is that we achieved our target of generating £16.5 million in spending by visitors. For every £1 we spent, our campaigns brought in another £17.80.

"We are particularly proud of this record because we were not immune from the financial pressures affecting Visit Wales.

"In common with other organisations, our budget was reduced by 10 per cent, from £1.444 million to £1.030 million – and we are expecting a further £50,000 reduction in our budget for 2008-09.

"The current reality in the wider economy is a double-edged sword for the visitor economy in North Wales.

"The logic of the downturn dictates that people have less disposable income to spend on foreign holidays.

"One consequence is that holidays closer to home are more affordable and therein lies an opportunity for us here in North Wales.

"Even before the so-called credit crunch, the nature of tourism had changed and it



continues to evolve - and this makes it essential to develop the out-of-season business.

"We have to look at tourism in the round. It is not just a high days and holidays business. We need to develop the shoulder months so that we create a 12 month opportunity.

"It is vital that the different marketing areas of North Wales work in partnership and we all collaborate as a team.

"It is also imperative that the trade and public bodies are in complete concert to ensure mutual benefit.

"If we are clever and use joined up thinking,

our synergy will create a North Wales offer that is greater than the sum of its individual parts.

"I think we are moving in the right direction but we must continue striving to improve the tourism product.

"We want to move the tourism and visitor economy in North Wales forward and there are major challenges facing us.

"We need to have a strategic approach so we can prioritise the right kind of investments because it's a very, very competitive world out there.

"There are more than 2,000 tourism destinations in Europe alone and they are all competing for

the same kind of income as we're hoping to get in North Wales.

"We have some magical, world class natural assets - sweeping mountains, breath-taking scenery and a fabulous coastline, not to mention our unique cultural heritage. We are duty bound to make the most of what we have.

"We need to ensure that the visitor economy benefits the communities in which it is based. Therefore, we must concentrate our efforts on developing the industry in a balanced and sustainable way."



## Smile to beat recession says tourism guru

Tourism operators in North Wales have been told they can beat the worst of the recession by smiling more.

That's the advice of a top tourism expert who addressed the annual meeting of Tourism Partnership North Wales.

Professor John Lennon, right, of the Moffat Centre of Glasgow Caledonian University, one of Europe's leading authorities on tourism, said: "Don't underestimate the value of a smile

"I can forgive a lot for a smile - I'm away from home, all I want is for you to be nice to me.

"It's all about getting closer to customers, trying to understand them and where they're going, building personal relationship within an impersonal world.

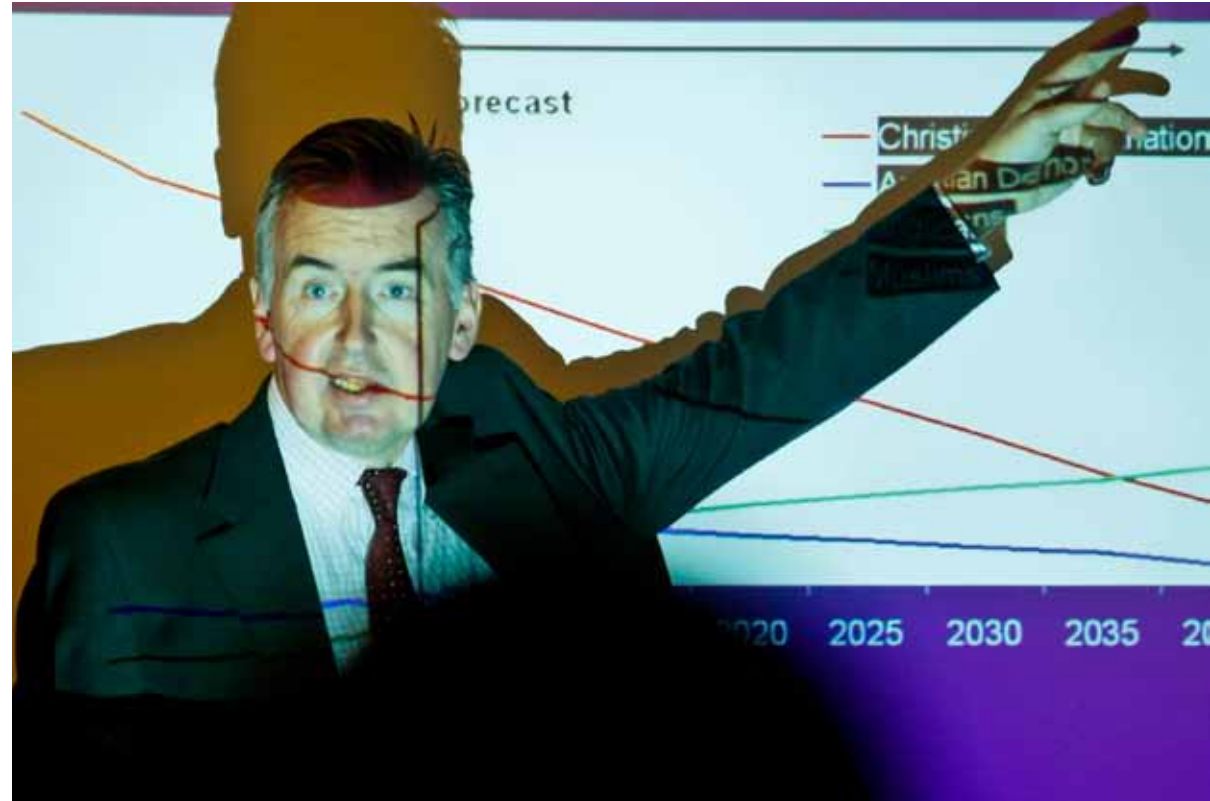
"How do we make it very simple for them to return, what deals can we offer them so that we keep a valued customer coming because after the age of 40 we're creatures of habit.

"So it's about creating authenticity and a sense of place and while Wales is getting better at that it still has work to do."

Professor Lennon, who has been closely involved with Visit Scotland, said that North Wales was better placed than many areas to ride out the recession because of its location.

"In the current climate we're not going to see a growth in tourism, it's all about consolidation.

"The area to look to is in England and in Wales, and there are good opportunities in that domestic UK market, people within one to



three hours drive away and for short breaks rather than the main two-week family holiday.

"We're not going to see big business from the Euro zone or the USA - it's local and the focus has to be on getting them into Wales.

"Five-star self-catering is doing very well in Scotland where the mid-market is struggling so going upmarket is good because in a recession the luxury end prevails."

But Professor Lennon held out little hope of the London Olympics providing a lifeline for tourism in Wales: "The most significant effect of the Olympics is on the Visit Britain budget and that will continue for the next five years

"The best bet might be to try and attract Londoners who are fed up with the disruption and congestion caused by the Olympics - but who last made a profit from the Games?"

He was backed by Jonathan Jones, Director of Tourism and Marketing for Visit Wales who said: "We need to make people more welcome, to make sure they get the most amazing experience when they come here.

"So many people in the industry don't smile when they communicate."

He also stressed the importance of giving visitors a sense of place when they come to Wales and of the importance of the Welsh language in that: "Many people say that English people hate the Welsh language.

"That's not true but we have to use the language as a way of being warm and welcoming to our

visitors and people from abroad are amazed that there's another language here.

"Our Olympics is going to be the 2010 Ryder Cup and we're using that because we won't have it again in our lifetimes.

"Nefyn has become the most photographed golf course in Europe, if not the world – it's the European Palm Springs.

"The First Minister, Rhodri Morgan, was brilliant at the Ryder Cup at Valhalla at stressing that the Ryder Cup was not coming to Britain or England but to Wales."

Tourism Partnership's Regional Strategy Director Dewi Davies said: "While tourism business is

forecast to be down by 10 per cent, North Wales is well positioned to attract visitors from the larger conurbations of England

"The top end of the tourism market has not been affected. People have not let go of their main holiday aspiration.

"Successful destinations must be able to offer arresting visual images allied to the opportunity to sample authentic experiences, simplicity and escape.

"Our key priorities will be to retain existing customers, developing personal relationships in an impersonal world."

