

**NEWS RELEASE
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Tourism South East's Group Travel Fairs, next milestone....Hampshire

Tourism South East's popular series of Group Travel Fairs for 2010 will be coming to Hampshire later this month with its next exhibition taking place at Milestones Living History Museum in Basingstoke on Saturday 20 February.

The event will also see the launch of the Year of the Museum, a campaign which will be aiming to produce an extra 1 million visitors to south east museums across the year with a targeted campaign aimed at the residents of the Greater London area and visitors from across the channel.

The show will be the second of three travel trade events taking place across South East England following a successful opening exhibition at Hall Place and Gardens in Bexley, Kent on 6 February which saw over 300 visitors from leading travel organisations arranging trips for groups from 10 to 600 people. Every year more than 273 million tourist and leisure trips are made by coach in the UK and last year it is estimated that Coach travel injected £2.35 billion into the UK economy.

Elaine Pearce, Travel Trade Manger and show organiser at Tourism South East said, 'we have been very pleased at the success of the first fair, and glad to see such a positive attendance. There was very much a buzz around the venue throughout the show with positive feedback received by visitors and exhibitors, a performance we are looking forward to repeating in Hampshire.' Head of Marketing at Tourism South East, Karen Roebuck, commented 'I am pleased to see the fairs continuing to be such a valuable opportunity for businesses and group travel organisers within the tourism industry to meet each other face to face and discuss their needs directly.'

Following the Milestones event, the event series will conclude with its final fair at the River & Rowing Museum in Henley, Oxfordshire on 6 March. This fair will be opened by the Mayor of Henley and will also offer visitors the opportunity to part take in a complimentary ½ hour river boat tour being provided by Hobbs of Henley.

**For further information about the Group Travel Fairs 2010, please contact the Group Travel team on 023 8062 5409 or email Elaine Pearce, epearce@tourismse.com
Register to attend online at www.grouptravelfairs.co.uk**

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Note to Editors:

Tourism South East's Group Travel Fairs offer the perfect opportunity for group travel organisers to obtain a wide range of information for their future itineraries and tours; including family attractions, accommodation, destinations, refreshment stops, stately homes, tour operators and steam railways. Visitors will be spoilt for choice with over 40 exhibitors at each event from the South East region available to discuss requirements, suggest new and exciting ideas, plus help plan tours.

Tourism South East is a not-for-profit company and is the official tourist board for the region, covering Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, East Sussex, Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, Kent, Oxfordshire, Surrey and West Sussex.

Tourism South East receives core funding from SEEDA, and is active in a range of programmes to support the tourism sector in the South East region, which is the second largest outside of London and is worth in excess of £12bn p.a. to the regional economy (7% of regional GVA), and supports over 300,000 jobs.