



**South West of England**  
Regional Development Agency

Mr Robert Syms MP  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

7 April 2010

Dear Robert

### **South West RDA funding for tourism promotion in Poole**

I am writing to you with reference to your recent parliamentary question (PQ320486) to Rt Hon Margaret Hodge, Minister of State for Culture, Media and Sport, "To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how much funding has been allocated to the promotion of tourism (a) in Poole and (b) nationally in each year since 1997."

In her answer, the Minister explained that responsibility for tourism in the regions was taken over by the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) in 2003, and that she had therefore asked me to write to you directly about tourism investments in Poole and the South West.

Tourism is a vital part of the South West economy, and this region attracts the greatest regional market share in domestic trips. In 2007 visitors spent £9.3 billion in the region (including day and staying visitor spend on accommodation, food and drink, travel and transport, attractions, entertainment and retail, Source: Value of Tourism, South West Tourism), demonstrating tourism's importance as a contributor to the South West economy.

Since the South West RDA took on strategic responsibility for tourism in 2003, we have pursued a strategy of attracting higher spending visitors, raising the region's profile and contributing to the creation of a critical mass of cultural attractions. Between 2002 and 2009 the Agency invested nearly £80m on tourism and cultural attractions and infrastructure across the region.

The South West RDA has also invested in tourism quality, marketing, skills and research, principally through South West Tourism. Our expenditure on these activities in 2009/10 was over £2.5 million, including support for Destination Management Organisations / Partnerships and £750,000 investment in the regional image campaign (which was match funded by partners to raise the total value to over £1 million) to maintain the region's market share of the tourism industry. Poole has featured alongside other South West destinations in these marketing campaigns.

Sterling House  
Dix's Field  
Exeter  
Devon  
EX1 1QA

Telephone +44 (0) 1392 214747  
Facsimile +44 (0) 1392 214848  
[www.southwestrda.org.uk](http://www.southwestrda.org.uk)

The promotion of Poole as a specific destination is the responsibility of Poole Tourism, the Destination Management Organisation for the area.

Since 1997 the amounts spent on tourism promotion by Poole Tourism are as follows:

Financial Year	Investment made
1997/98	£216,000
1998/99	£202,000
1999/00	£202,000
2000/01	£317,000
2001/02	£337,550
2002/03	£335,950
2003/04	£352,377
2004/05	£426,459
2005/06	£434,421
2006/07	£479,009
2007/08	£494,741
2008/09	£470,708
2009/10	£471,451 (Budget figure as not reached year end yet)

*Note: figures supplied by Poole Tourism. Should you have any further queries regarding these figures please contact Graham Richardson, Head of Tourism for Poole ([G.Richardson@pooletourism.com](mailto:G.Richardson@pooletourism.com)).*

In addition to our specific investments in the region's tourism offer, the South West RDA has helped to improve Poole's image as a great destination by, for example, investing almost £10m in the Twin Sails Bridge at Poole Harbour, an employment-led regeneration scheme that aims to deliver thousands of new jobs. We have also invested £1.4m to help free up a site next to Sunseeker in Poole to help the company expand, creating 500 jobs. These types of activities are critical to the vibrant, international feel of any major tourist destination.

The positive impact of the South West RDA investment in the Weymouth and Portland Sailing Academy, Osprey Quay and the ongoing support for the Dorset 2012 Games Legacy Manager will benefit the whole of Dorset as a destination, and in our role as coordinator of the region's 2012 Games legacy we work to ensure that the potential benefits of the Games are experienced across the region.

If you require further information about the South West RDA regional marketing campaign then please contact Tim Stubbings, Corporate Marketing Manager ([tim.stubbings@southwestrda.org.uk](mailto:tim.stubbings@southwestrda.org.uk)) and for our investment in South West Tourism please contact Julia Stuckey, Culture, Tourism and 2012 Manager ([julia.stuckey@southwestrda.org.uk](mailto:julia.stuckey@southwestrda.org.uk)) at the South West RDA.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane Henderson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Jane Henderson  
**Chief Executive**