

**New Free Coach Route for Visitors to Excursions™ 2012
Alexandra Palace, Saturday 28th January**

A new, free coach route for East of England visitors attending Excursions™ 2012 is being introduced for next year's show, which will be held at Alexandra Palace, North London on Saturday, 28th January. It joins the seven existing and highly popular coach services kindly offered by members of the Confederation of Passenger Transport UK's Coach Marque quality scheme.

The new route will start from Norwich stopping at both Cambridge and Stevenage before arriving at Alexandra Palace. Commenting on the service, joint organiser Elaine Pearce, Travel Trade Manager from Tourism South East said: "We regularly re-assess the regions covered by our free coach service and became aware of a gap in our schedules. This new route is being introduced to meet an existing demand by visitors to Excursions™ and is therefore sure to be well supported."

The eight coaches, which will depart from twenty-four major towns plus six central London main line railway stations, will be scheduled to arrive at Excursions™ from around 11am with departures for the homeward journey at 3.30pm.

For 2012, the first coach will come from the west starting at Swindon and stopping at Newbury, Reading and Slough, while the second will begin in the east from Canterbury travelling to Alexandra Palace via Chatham and Bexley. The third route will depart from Folkestone in the South East of England stopping additionally at Ashford, as well as Maidstone and Swanley.

Other services will set off from Hastings and Portsmouth on the South Coast stopping at Eastbourne, Brighton, Southampton and Basingstoke. Visitors from the east of the capital will also be able to join a route from Ipswich via Colchester, Chelmsford and Romford.

The seventh coach will serve London's main line stations at Waterloo, Charing Cross, Victoria, Paddington, Marylebone and Euston/King's Cross.

Pre-booking Essential

Although the coach travel is free, it is essential to pre-book a seat. Full information including pick-up times and a booking form can be found online at www.excursions.org.uk or call 0845 226 7542. Each vehicle will also carry a Blue Badge Guide to provide interesting facts on the journey.

For visitors making their own way to Excursions™ by train, there will be a free shuttle service provided by Ebdons Tours running from Alexandra Palace main line and Wood Green Underground stations to the exhibition venue. Members of the exhibition team will be at both stations to direct visitors to the coaches; they will be easily recognisable with their 'Excursions' signs.

The free entry exhibition is organised by Tourism South East and Group Travel Organiser magazine, supported by London & Partners. The number of exhibitors is expected to be around 250 with several taking space for the first time. Visitors will include group travel organisers, coach and tour operators, tourist guides, corporate social clubs, school and higher education teachers, youth organisations, language schools and in fact anyone who is involved in arranging away days and short breaks for groups.

Visitors can pre-register online at www.excursions.org.uk or call 023 8062 5472 to request a registration form. Everyone who pre-registers and comes along on the day will be automatically entered into a free prize draw to win one of the many exciting prizes offered by exhibitors. These include a two night dinner B&B break for two with Brook Hotels and a rare opportunity to pull the lever that raises London's famous Tower Bridge. A full list of prizes on offer can be seen on the website.

Organisations interested in exhibiting at Excursions™ 2012 should book online or contact Joanne Channon at Tourism South East on 023 8062 5472; a video of the 2011 show can also be viewed online.

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