

March 2009

Travel Trade Marvel at Meath

Travel Trade Focused Visit a Success Meath to feature strongly in '09 Programmes

Seeing first hand the range and quality of tourism product on offer has catapulted County Meath to the very top of the Irish Tours Operators (ITOA) programmes for 2009 and beyond.

This is the resounding view of those companies who last week undertook an intensive 2-day educational to the County. Abbey Tours, Ovation, Scancoming and Premier Travel were among those represented on the trip. The ITOA are responsible for handling over 465,000 passengers each year, and have relationships with over 4,000 overseas tour operators and others in the incentive, events and conference sectors.

The high profile visit was co-ordinated by *Meet In Meath* – the co-operative business tourism initiative from Meath Tourism, 12 partner Hotels and Meath County Council.

Taking place last week, it was the first time a visit by the travel trade on this scale has been organised. The quality of the companies on this trip was exceptional, portraying a real and genuine interest in County Meath and the attendees were blown away by both the product and professionalism of those involved.

The 2-day event encapsulated a highly informative and innovative itinerary, including site visits to over 12 tourism products with a *Meet & Greet* at the Ashbourne Marriott Hotel and a farewell reception at City North Hotel; lunches at Dunboyne Castle Hotel & Spa and Bettystown Court Hotel; site visits to the Cusack Hotel's flagship property the Knightsbrook Hotel and also the Newgrange Hotel; overnight at **Trim Castle Hotel**; dinner at the Franzini O'Briens followed by traditional night of Irish music and drinks hosted by Lenehans pub in Trim. The Station House Hotel, the Headfort Arms Hotel, Moyvalley Hotel & Golf Resort Fairyhouse Food & Wine School, Solstice Arts Centre and Battle of the Boyne site were also highlighted.

Speaking after the event, Eileen O'Donoghue of Premier Travel said "In our business, quick and easy access to information is the key to bringing business to a region and the opportunity to see first-hand the product in Meath is invaluable. Blessed with an unrivalled natural heritage, an enviable location and wonderful bedroom stock, *Meet In Meath* has its finger on the pulse with this direct and innovative approach to selling the County. Meath now competes with the more traditional business tourism destinations and Premier Travel has already sought quotations from product providers following the trip'.

With over 1300 3* and 4* hotel bedrooms, Meath now has a wonderful stock of both large conference hotels & smaller boutique family run hotels, catering for all segments of business tourism from the large association conferences to a company team building or incentive event.

Meet In Meath was launched by Meath Tourism in Autumn 2007, having identified the need for a highly focused initiative to aggressively promote Meath as a business tourism destination.

For further information on the partner hotels and services offered by *Meet In Meath* see www.meetinmeath.com or call 046 9097060.