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Lack of dry January leaves £1m hole in York hotel bookings

Figures from Best Western Great Britain show how badly impacted some tourist hotspots have been by the recent flooding, with York hotel business down £1million in January alone.

Occupancy in the city – parts of which were flooded over the Christmas and New Year period – was down 12.6% for the month and revenue was down 11.5% - equating to £947,115 in lost business. This combined with cancellation of forward bookings as a result of the floods means the financial impact of the flood has cost York hotels over £1million* alone, without taking into account lost revenue from impacted businesses such as restaurants, cafes, pubs and visitor attractions.

The Government launched a PR campaign last week to get more people to stay in the flood hit areas, but Rob Payne, Chief Executive of Best Western Great Britain which has its Head Office in York, doesn't believe it is enough.

He said: "The hospitality industry needs more support from the Government. Mr Cameron frequently takes advantage of lower Tourism VAT rates in Portugal and Spain every time he holidays there, but he won't cut Tourism VAT in Britain to allow us to compete with those destinations.

"£1million loss in a month is a lot to recover, so I'd like to invite Mr Cameron and Mr Osborne to lead by example and to commit to holidaying in the north of England this year too, helping those people, places and businesses that badly need support. Best Western hotels would be happy to host them, we have over 60 in the north of England and an award-winning call centre in York waiting to take their call [pictured]."

The Best Western Great Britain call centre was awarded the best European Customer Service Experience Team of the Year 2015 at the ICMR European Call Centre awards. The team are encouraged to have conversations with callers not follow scripts and to build relationships. They have been so successful that they own fan club of guests as a result.

Best Western GB is the largest collection of independently owned hotels in Great Britain with over 270 properties. This year marks the 70th anniversary of the birth of Best Western globally.

* data provided by STR Global and Best Western Great Britain. Period covered 27 December 2015 to 31 January 2016 compared to same period last year.

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Images attached: Members of the award-winning Best Western Great Britain call centre in York, waiting for David Cameron to call.

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Press Release



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Editors' notes:

Best Western GB is the largest collection of **independently owned** and **family run** hotels in Great Britain. Our 270+ properties have over **42,000 years of history** between them and hundreds of stories to share too. From the **oldest purpose built hotel in Europe**, the hotel with the **best room-with-a-view in the world** and the hotel which hosted the **honeymoon of Hollywood royalty, Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor**.

For more details about Best Western GB properties visit www.bestwestern.co.uk or to hear more Best Western GB stories and to arrange a press trip, with or without your dog, please contact the Communications Team.