

press release

Southport (UK) awarded world's friendliest group tourism destination

UK resort of Southport wins the IRU City Trophy 2011, as the world's most friendly city for group tourism, whose transport policy doubled the number of visiting tourist coaches over the past ten years.

smart move, a
joint industry
campaign to
increase the use
of buses and
coaches and
achieve
sustainable
mobility
for all

Geneva – [Southport](#), England's classic resort was today awarded the [IRU City Trophy 2011](#) by an international jury* for its long term business friendly and customer oriented policies, which have led to almost doubling the number of visiting tourist coaches (from 2883 to 5252) between 2000-2010.

The excellence of Southport's services offered to coach drivers, weighed in the jury's decision. The city provides quality parking facilities, assistance and accommodation, meet-and-greet services and information for drivers and tourists.

Cllr Mike Booth, Sefton Council's Cabinet Member for Leisure, Culture & Tourism, said "we have been working closely with the travel trade for ten years now and it's wonderful that all the hard work undertaken by our tourism team has been recognised with this international award. The economic impact of coach visits to Southport cannot be underestimated and for many hotels and retailers it is a substantial part of their business."

IRU Vice President, Graham Smith, emphasised: "This Global IRU award is meant to showcase and promote cities, such as Southport, that effectively implement policies favourable for group tourism by coach and invest in appropriate facilities to improve access for coaches and their customers. By encouraging group tourism by coach, such policies reduce congestion and pollution, while boosting local income from tourism. Together with our partners from the global travel industry, we will make sure that travel organisers promote such excellent destinations to their customers across the globe."

The IRU City Trophy is awarded biennially. It acknowledges and rewards municipal authorities across the world that implement exemplary proactive policies favouring sustainable group tourism by coach.

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Read more about: [Smart Move](#) campaign

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* **Members of the IRU City Trophy 2011 international jury** are: Marcus Hammerström (Stockholm's Visitors Bureau), Dieter-Lebrecht Koch (Member of the European Parliament), Matthias Mohaupt (Head of Traffic Planning, Dresden), Nick Greenfield (Head of Group Tourism, European Association of Tour Organisers, ETOA), Rodrigo Corrêa (World Tourism Organisation, UNWTO), Dan Luca (Manager, EurActiv), Yves Mannaerts (Managing Director, Bus and Coach Federation, FBAA, Belgium), Dieter Hardt-Stremayr (CEO, Graz Tourism and City Marketing & President, European Cities Marketing, ECM), Vladimir Florea (President, Association of International Road Transport Operators, AITA, Moldova)



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