

Festivals really do make money for the Capital



photo courtesy of Edinburgh Inspiring Capital

For the third consecutive month Edinburgh hotels registered occupancy in excess of 90% in the festival month of August this year – another sign of an improved picture in the city's tourism sector.

Figures released from the LJ Forecaster, operated by tourism research experts Lynn Jones Research Ltd. (LJR), indicate that average occupancy across the city during August was 93% – a 2% increase on August 2009 – as the city swelled to accommodate visitors coming to the city at the height of the summer festivals programme.

The buoyant figures from the LJ Forecaster which reports on the occupancy and revenue performance of over 40 Edinburgh hotels each month showed that hotel revenues also improved on August 2009 with the average room rate across the city increasing from £115.47 to £120.94 – constituting an increase of nearly 5%.

Sean Morgan, LJR's Research Manager, said:

“Since May 2010 we have seen an improving picture in the city for hotels with RevPAR (Revenue Per Available Room or yield) growth from last year.

These August figures confirm that it has been a strong summer period for the city. This time last year we were reporting a continued squeeze on room rates in the city as some hotels adjusted prices downwards in response to the market; now, however, we can see greater optimism which is reflected in

these performance figures.”

Kenneth Wardrop, Chief Executive of Destination Edinburgh Marketing Alliance (DEMA), the city’s promotion body, welcomed the news:

“Edinburgh has enjoyed a terrific summer and fantastic festivals programme, as I’m sure those who have visited over the last few months will agree.

“Despite challenging conditions, this is an optimistic time for the city. The first ever collaborative summer marketing campaign, ‘This Is My Edinburgh’ was launched in June and it’s also been recognised as the ‘Favourite UK City’ and ‘Top 20 City in the World’ by Conde Nast and TripAdvisor.

“New international routes to Edinburgh Airport were also added in August, helping to strengthen Edinburgh’s position as a competitive, global destination for visitors and business. It’s activity such as this that succeeds in bringing increased numbers of visitors to the Capital, contributing crucial value to our local and national economy.”

The Edinburgh LJ Forecaster figures also compiled data on levels of forward bookings for the year ahead beyond August. As at the start of September they showed 75% of rooms across the city were already booked for the month – a traditionally popular month for conference business in the city – which represented a 10% relative increase in future demand compared to last year.