

VisitWiltshire Group & Travel Trade Meeting

Group Travel Insights – Keeley Rodgers
Editor of Group Leisure & Travel Magazine



Group
Leisure & Travel

Group travel organiser research: Reader Survey

- Our 'Restarting Group Trips & Holidays' survey ran online between 19th March and 30th April and asked group travel organisers their thoughts about restarting activities, their confidence levels and the types of trips they plan to run this year and next.
- What type of groups did our respondents represent?
 - 15% organised for a social club.
 - 14% for a special interest group.
 - 12% for a retirement club/association.
 - 13% for a U3A group.

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Results were published in the May/June edition



Survey results:

restarting trips, vaccine confidence and what you have missed about group travel

What did we find out from our latest survey?

The past year has highlighted how strong our relationship is with readers – a relationship we truly value. We are very grateful for all the positive feedback we have received following our efforts to continue delivering content that informs, inspires and entertains, through the magazine, website and newsletter.

We wanted to build on that relationship and get more thoughts and views from group travel organisers so we could ensure we continue to create the type of content you value and enjoy. Our survey last summer provided an understanding as to how the pandemic had affected you and, more generally, how far ahead you normally book different types of trips and holidays.

Our latest survey was titled *Restarting Group Trips & Holidays* and it ran online from 19th March to 30th April. Its focus was to get 67% to share their thoughts about when they hope to restart their activities, to understand their confidence levels, and the types of trips they plan to run this year and next.

It was only open to group travel organisers and nearly 250 took part.

What type of groups did our respondents represent? Well, the most popular were 13% organised for a social club, 14% for a special interest group, 12% for a retirement club / association, and 13% for a USA group.

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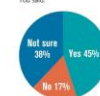
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Survey

But most importantly, what did you tell us?

We asked: do you feel confident about resuming your group trips this year?

You said:



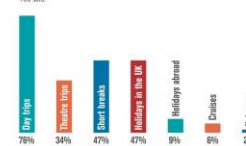
We asked: when do you hope to resume taking your group on trips this year?

You said:



We asked: what type of trips do you hope to resume this year? (Respondents could choose all that applied)

You said:



GLT Show feedback

You told us your views on group travel exhibitions as part of the survey – see page 7 to find out what the consensus was.

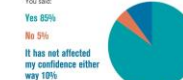
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Survey

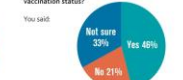
We asked: are you more confident about going on trips following on from the vaccination programme?

You said:



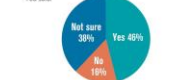
We asked: will you be asking those travelling with you for proof of their vaccination status?

You said:



We asked: will you be requiring group members to be fully vaccinated before travelling with you?

You said:



We asked: where do you get ideas, advice and contacts to help you organise your group trips and holidays? (and to choose all that apply)

You said:



We asked: what can coach companies, tour operators and attractions offer to reassure you when booking trips and holidays?

You said:

We got a range of answers to this question, including 'flexible cancellation terms', 'all Covid safety measures in place', and 'hand sanitizers, daily disinfectant, vaccinated drivers'.

Your answers included: 'engaging with people and enjoying heritage-rich', 'seeing all my friends and discovering new places', and 'live concerts and live theatre fine dining experiences'.

More detail from these answers and from the survey will be published online soon. Keep an eye on our weekly newsletter and on social media.



You have missed seeing all your friends and discovering new places.

Thank you to everyone who took part. We really value your feedback and contributions.

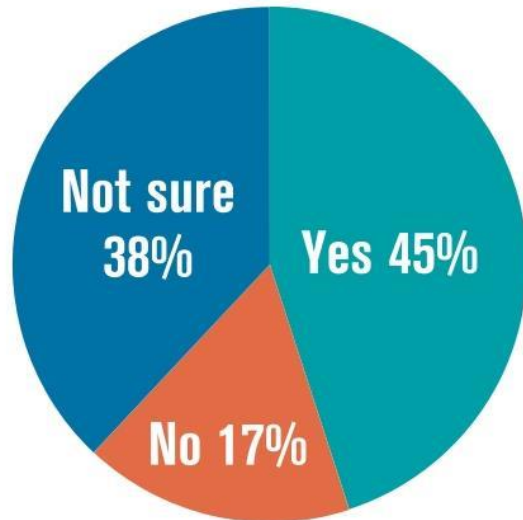
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What did we find out from the survey?

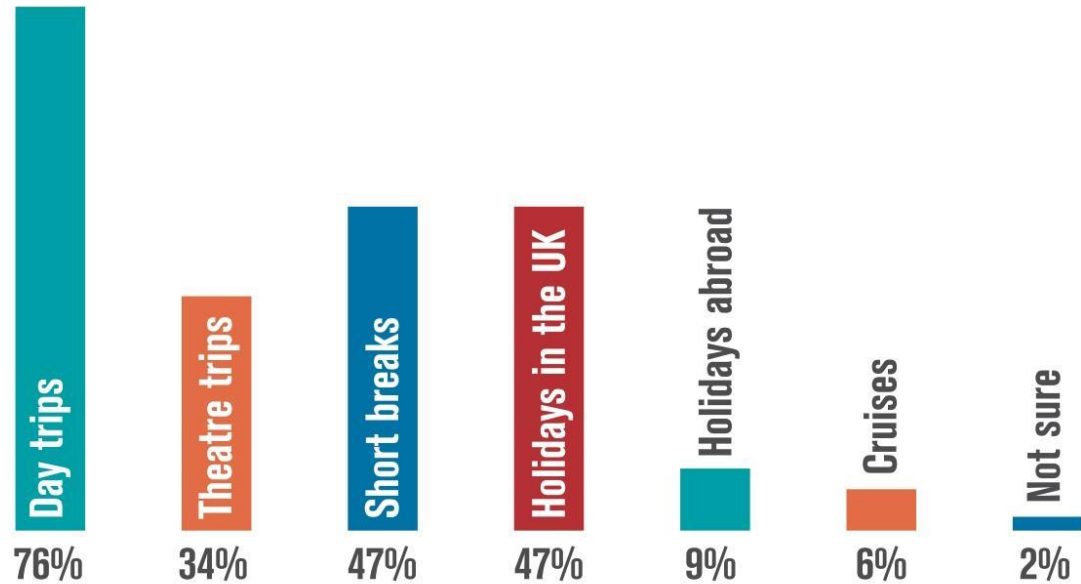
We asked: do you feel confident about resuming your group trips this year?

You said:



We asked: what type of trips do you hope to resume this year?
(Respondents could choose all that applied)

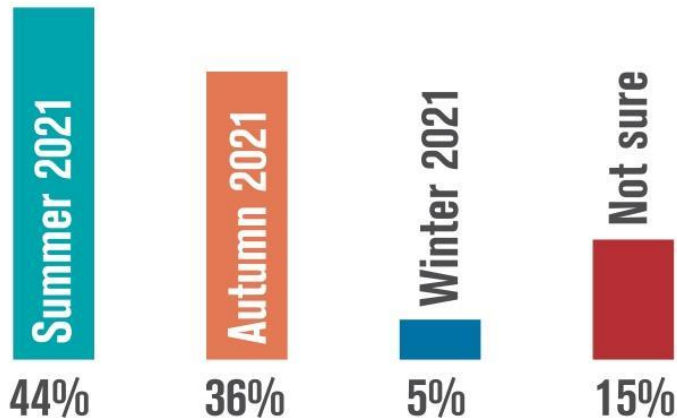
You said:



Timescale and feelings from GTOs

We asked: when do you hope to resume taking your group on trips this year?

You said:



- The majority are raring to go having missed out on travel for such a long time.
- Social aspect, missing friends and colleagues.
- Enjoying more quality time together – memorable experiences.

Hopes for the future of group travel as restrictions ease

- Rise of the 'staycation' with GTOs wanting to explore more of the UK and choosing domestic over overseas travel.
- Wanting more from trips – discovering new places.
- Pent-up demand.
- Vaccination programme has boosted travel confidence.

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Welcoming groups back in the right way



- Reassurance is key for group travel organisers.
- Attractions, hotels and tour operators publicising the measures and guarantees they have in place.
- Rebuilding confidence.
- Groups contact.

“Money back guarantee if we can’t go on the advice of the Government.”

“Keep clients safe with good social distancing and sanitising.”

“Keeping prices as low as possible from 2020.”

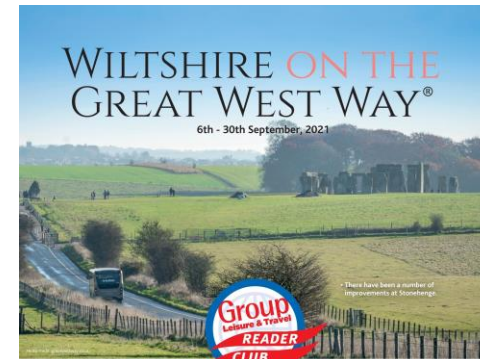
Comments from GTOs



- “I have been very impressed with the way venues have dealt with cleanliness since the start of the pandemic.”
- The travel industry is showing renewed positivity with offers and innovations – I hope it remains the new normal.”

Collaboration is key

- Important role DMOS like Visit Wiltshire and Great West Way play in group travel.
- September Reader Club Offer.
- Great response so far.
- GTOs are desperate to get back out there again!



You're invited to explore Wiltshire on the Great West Way, an exciting new touring route, as part of this Reader Club opportunity.

This is a familiarisation visit with a difference – instead of the more traditional trip, you have the chance to apply for a date to visit under your own steam between 6th and 30th September (excluding weekends) this year.

It's a self-drive trip for you and a guest to enjoy with the idea of bringing back your group for a future visit. You'll receive free entry to a number of attractions across the historic county of Wiltshire, part of the Great West Way, a new touring route. At one end is London, with its royal sights and rich cultural heritage; at the other, elegant Bath and Bristol. Wiltshire makes up around a quarter of the route with lush landscapes, characterful villages and relaxing riverside towns.

Accommodation is provided at the Holiday Inn Salisbury-Stonehenge Hotel. Tickets to Stonehenge are part of the fun visit and the heritage attraction offers visitors a free audio guide app to download with extra content as you can

delve deeper into the history of this ancient site. You will also receive complimentary entry to nearby Old Sarum where you can search more than 2,000 years of history and find out how the Romans, Normans and Saxons all left their mark on the impressive landscape.

In the nearby city of Salisbury, admission is included to the magnificent Salisbury Cathedral – which marked its 800th anniversary last year. There is plenty to see, from Britain's tallest spire weighing an impressive 6,500 tonnes to what is thought to be the world's oldest working mechanical clock. You can opt to explore the nearby Salisbury Museum which houses one of Europe's most extensive collections of Stonehenge and prehistoric artefacts, as well as an important costume and textile display.

Elsewhere is Hired Manor Gardens in Bradford on Avon. Created by Edwardian designer Harold Peto, the Grade I listed gardens also starred in the feature drama film The Secret Garden, featuring Colin Firth.

You can visit the Wiltshire Museum in Devizes which is home to what is thought to be the largest collection of Early Bronze Age gold on display in England, as well as 500 Stonehenge period objects.

Other attractions offering free entry are: the REME Museum in Lynton (Closed Mondays) which shares the story of the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers; Bewood House & Gardens in Calne; home to the Marquis and Marchioness of Lansdowne; Merchant's House in Marlborough, a fascinating High Street building with an incredible history; and the STEAM Museum of the Great Western Way in Swindon, which tells the story of the people who built, operated and travelled on the railway.

Additional, suggested places to explore for pre-booked tours, appointments or special offers include:

- **Bradford on Avon** (pre-booked tour).
- **The Bridge Tea Rooms** in Bradford on Avon: they are offering a special buy one, get one free offer on their Princess of India Afternoon Tea.
- **Corham** (pre-booked tour).
- **Marlborough College** (pre-booked appointment to find out about Summer School).

More information

All bookings are subject to Covid restrictions at the time of visit.

Attraction entrance tickets are valid for two people and are subject to availability along with standard visitor entry terms and conditions.

Transport and daytime food and drink is not included.



Find out more by viewing the supplier travel trade pages in VisitWiltshire's new Travel Trade Guide, www.visitwiltshire.co.uk/groups and to find out more about the Great West Way visit www.GreatWestWay.co.uk/traveltrade

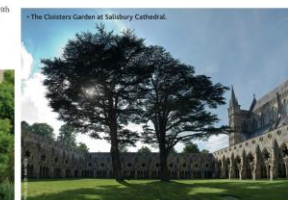
Reader Club trip dates: between 6th and 30th September 2021

Apply online for this Reader Club trip at www.visitwiltshire.co.uk/groups for more information call Harry Rogers on 01908 819023

Application deadline: Friday 25th June, 2021.

This familiarisation trip costs £60 per person based on two people sharing (£110 per room for single occupancy) and includes:

- **Entry (for two) to the attractions mentioned, you can choose which you would like to visit.**
- **Overnight accommodation at the Holiday Inn Salisbury-Stonehenge including a welcome drink, breakfast and two course dinner for two.**



• The Cloniers Garden at Salisbury Cathedral.

How Reader Club works

Our trips and tours provide group travel organisations with the chance to familiarise themselves with venues, attractions and destinations they feel may be of interest and suitable for their group. It's a 'try before you buy' scenario, but please only join us if this is a viable option for your group.

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Any
questions?

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