



**Notes from the Online Accommodation Tourism Industry Meeting
Thursday 9 July 2020**

Present

Fiona Errington, VisitWiltshire; Billy Grimes, VisitWiltshire; Tristan Holland, VisitWiltshire; David Weston, B&B Association; Peter Wragg, VisitWiltshire Chairman; Suzanne Coppen, Wyndham Park Lodge; David Lane, Holiday Inn Stonehenge Salisbury; Joy Greathead, Deverill End; Ruth Stevens, Rooms at The Lodge; Jane Howes, Meadowbank House; Caron Cooper, Fosse Farmhouse; Derek Ball, Newhouse Farm; Marian James, Cumberwell Country Cottages; Paula Portier, Rolleston Manor; Fiona Lockyer, Marshwood Farm; John Proctor, Alabare House; Kate Waldron, Park Farm Barn; Michal Cejmer, Grasmere House; Olivia Stapley, Barford Inn; Tracey Cook, The Red Lion; Carole Minto, Victoria Lodge

Welcome

Fiona welcomed everyone to our third Accommodation Industry Meeting since lockdown and introduced our guest speaker, David Weston, Chairman of B&B Association.

David Weston, B&B Association

David began by introducing himself and the [B&B Association](#) as the UK trade association for B&Bs and Guest Houses. You can see their coronavirus page [here](#).

The B&B Association is a member of the Tourism Alliance who have been meeting regularly with DMS and have been lobbying on behalf of the industry. They have helped get the Discretionary Fund for B&B's and to produce the top level guidance for re-opening.

David recommended viewing the more detailed and industry specific guidance from [UK Hospitality](#) and [B&B Association](#).

Pre-Covid Campaigns included calls to ban online booking agents from implementing Rate Parity Clauses and the use of Brandjacking should only be used with express permission from you. You can see me more on Brandjacking [here](#) and watch the BBC South East report on the matter [here](#).

If you are concerned about opening up your personal home to people you can contact guests beforehand to confirm they haven't got symptoms or been in contact with anyone who does. You can also ask them in advance to agree to respect the social distancing and hygiene measures you have in place. You can do this at point of booking and 72/48 hours before arrival. Risk can also be lowered if you are putting the necessary measure and procedures in place.

There is also guidance on what would happen if a guest gets symptoms whilst staying with you. Briefly this is for the guest to get a test, and if positive to return home straight away if at all possible. More details [here](#). You could even invest in a thermometer to check temperatures on arrival.

B&B Association are official partners of both the VisitEngland 'Good to Go' scheme (currently had around 25,000 registrations) and AA Covid Confident Scheme (around 5,000 registrations).

B&B Association have been pressing VisitBritain and Government to put in place marketing communications to get message across that it is safe to stay.

Businesses need to plan check-in and arrival times more carefully than in the past. And allow enough time between check-in and check-out to allow you to do more thorough cleaning.

Out of the many members who have opened already, they have not heard of any problems so far and re-opening seems to have gone smoothly.

If your bookings through booking.com don't include guest's addresses you can contact your account manager and set up the ghost email. This sends a form to your guest which is returned to you once completed. You can also set up that guests have to give their address as part of the booking. Other OTA's have similar systems.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact David directly.

david@bandbassociation.org

VisitWiltshire Update

Support

- VisitWiltshire are currently sending out e-newsletters (minimum fortnightly) that are providing updates on government, tourism industry and local authority activity and their current marketing strategy and calls for content. You can see the latest newsletter [here](#) and if you aren't already subscribed, you can do so [here](#).
- VisitWiltshire has set up an [advice page](#) on the website, which details all the latest Government advice and support available, along with useful information and links from various tourism authorities.
- VisitWiltshire's [Twitter Biz](#) account is also a great place to stay up to date with the latest updates. If you don't follow the account already, please do.
- As the first plans for re-opening are now in place, can partners please check your product pages on the website and let us know of any amends that you'd like to make i.e. any changes to opening times, booking process, change any images, changing content to include safety/reassurance messaging. Please send any changes to [Billy](#) or [Helen](#).
- If you have been awarded the "We're Good to Go" mark, please let us know so we can add it to your product page. It would also be great if you could tweet about it with an image of your certificate and tag @VisitWiltsBiz

VisitBritain Webinars

VisitBritain are releasing a series of webinars drawing on expert insight from within VisitBritain/VisitEngland and across the travel industry, offering practical advice for tourism

businesses and valuable data-led insight from global teams.

<https://www.visitbritain.org/visitengland-business-recovery-webinar-programme>

Latest Announcement from the Chancellor

The Chancellor announced a hugely significant series of measures specifically to support the tourism economy, notably a reduction in VAT from 20% to 5% for the attractions, accommodation and hospitality sectors. The Treasury estimates that the value of this measure alone is worth £4billion, the greatest single financial package of assistance for any part of the economy. You can see the guidance [here](#) and more information on which attractions are eligible [here](#).

The announcement also highlighted;

- A new **Eat Out to Help Out discount scheme, which will** provide a 50% reduction for sit-down from Monday to Wednesday every week throughout August 2020. You can see the latest guidance on this [here](#). You can find out how to register [here](#).
- A bonus scheme for firms to **re-employ furloughed workers**. An employer who brings someone back off furlough, and keeps them in a job until January, will get a £1,000 bonus.
- A new **£2 billion Kickstart Scheme** to create **fully subsidised jobs**. Businesses will be given £2,000 for each new apprentice they hire under the age of 25

Advice for Accommodation Providers

DCMS's Advice to accommodation owners has been updated. The advice provides more guidance for accommodation businesses on what to do if a customer shows symptoms of Coronavirus while staying in the accommodation. Find out [more](#).

Great West Way

- This week Great West Way launched an advertising campaign targeting responsible travellers for the Great West Way®. You can see the press release [here](#). The adverts are being displayed on 4 digital screen sites in London. Promoting planning future trips, getting off the beaten track and the rural landscapes with messaging; 'Don't follow the herd' Be Curious, Be Responsible. The images include Wiltshire with North Wessex Downs and the Kennet & Avon Canal. Full details can be seen at GreatWestWay.co.uk/responsibletravel.
- Monthly consumer newsletters are still being sent out

Recovery Planning

VisitWiltshire are looking at 3 planning windows for recovery

- Immediate window; Easing. May to July –focusing on virtual journeys, social media and plan your visit
- **July to December: Opening. Focus on reassurance and open spaces**
- 2021 - looking ahead will depend how the next few months go
- 2020 Survival - 2021 Recovery - 2022 Growth

- Our content is now moving into recovery stage and we have new messaging around responsible tourism Find Space Find Time - Time to Enjoy Wiltshire
- Our page [Visit Wiltshire Responsibly](#) page includes safety and reassurance messaging and highlights VisitEngland messaging of Good to Go and Know Before you Go. We are repurposing one of our films with this messaging and hope to go live this week or early next week.
- We have a page dedicated to Good to Go. If you have been awarded the "We're Good to Go" mark, please let us know so we can add it to your product page. It would also be great if you could tweet about it with an image of your certificate and tag @VisitWiltsBiz
- We are signposting to open businesses via a series of [blogs](#) we have ones for activities, attractions, places to stay and a shopping safely and responsibly blog.
- We're continuing to run our Monthly consumer newsletters and now using the recovery content.
- Fiona had a call with VisitEngland on their autumn campaign that they are planning to launch before August bank holiday. We will provide more in

What you should be thinking about now;

- Review your web content and find new ways of telling your own business story.
- If you have registered for any of the certification schemes, make it clear and promote it
- Change your T&C's to be more flexible and then people know what you have changed, transparency is key
- Check your product pages on Visit Wiltshire website for content and images. Update us with any operational changes
- Have a list of local businesses you recommend - attractions / restaurant etc. there is an increased focus on local at the moment
- Listicle content is very popular, look at adding in number of 'Top 10s'. Use VisitWiltshire if you like
- If you are looking for new imagery, you can use VisitWiltshire's library. Please contact [Billy](#) for details.
- Work on a new piece of "big content" for your re-opening – needs to reassure visitors and build in flexibility to booking terms, social distancing and hygiene measures. Needs to welcome visitors and be inspirational. Messaging needs to be clear and simple.
- Value / Pricing - is there anything you can include for added value? Encourage direct bookings and offer early bookings incentives. Manage demand
- Check your Google Local search maps are up to date – do you have new opening times or ways to book
- Audiences - Who are you talking to? Who is likely to travel? How can you appeal to the groups who are more likely to visit early on e.g. Families, Intergenerational groups and Millennials
- Need to make sure content is agile. If we go in to local lockdown, it needs to be switched on and off easily. Think about what worked well during lockdown and have it ready if the worst happens.

Update from Businesses

After going around the room for an update from attendees, here are the key points;

- Campsite and Self Catering strong - lots of bookings and interest. Hotels and B&B's slower
- There still some B&Bs not opening up as still worried about guests within their home, concern over what to do if people have had symptoms.
- B&B's that have opened have opened up slowly with one or two rooms
- Bookings have been mainly late leads
- A few businesses said they had bookings for first couple of weeks, and then it's fallen away for a couple of weeks before picking up again slightly in August.
- There has been a variety of approaches to breakfast, some places have managed to run it as usual, and others have adapted a grab and go system, staggered times or have delivered it to rooms.
- Also been a variety in rooms servicing. With some not servicing rooms whilst guests are staying and some providing linen for guests to make their own beds.

Handy tips and advice

A number of attendees shared some useful links and advice to the group;

- You can see whether your guests are from the currently locked down are in Leicester by entering their postcode [here](#).
- [GetButlr](#) is an online system that allows you to add all your menu prices, you can order and pay at the table. They send you tent cards and stickers for the tables with the QR codes.
- You can introduce a tick box on your online booking system asking guests to confirm they do not have COVID symptoms or been in contact with anyone who has tested positive
- There are some free apps available to do on line registration to make it contactless
WhatsApp Business is great