



**Notes from the Wiltshire Association of Visitor Attractions Meeting
Tuesday 23 January 2018 at Castle Combe Circuit**

Present: Anthony Rawlins, Digital Visitor; Bethan Seymour, Bowood; David Edwards, Atwell-Wilson Motor Museum; Ellie Dewdney, Longleat; Graham Smith, Atwell-Wilson Motor Museum; Isla Russell, Stonehenge; James Arnold-Baker, Wilton Windmill; Jenny Butler, VisitWiltshire; Karen Marshallsay, Castle Combe Circuit; Lesley Andrews, Friends of the Garden Trust; Louise Tunnard, The Salisbury Museum; Paris McCreath, Castle Combe Circuit; Pete Waugh, Salisbury Escape Rooms; Peter McNeile, Barbury Races; Rachel Wheeler, Marlborough College Summer School; Naomi Christianson, McArthurGlen Designer Outlet Swindon; Roz Mitchell, Salisbury Cathedral & Magna Carta; Sue Gibbins, Cholderton Charlie's Farm and Bluestone Vineyards; Theresa Hopwood, VisitWiltshire.

Welcome and Thank You: WAVA Chairman, Roz Mitchell, welcomed everyone to the meeting, including the guest speaker, Anthony Rawlins, and thanked Castle Combe Circuit for hosting it.

Introductions and How's Business: Attendees introduced themselves and provided a brief update on 2017 performance and 2018 to date. Overall the picture was mixed. Visitor numbers at some businesses were significantly up – 'stonking' and 'amazing' were two of the words used. Others were more or less static. Some businesses had struggled, finishing 2017 slightly down on the previous year. Poor weather was deemed to be a significant factor in a business's success or otherwise – for outdoor attractions it was a major negative; for indoor ones a positive.

Digital Visitor Presentation: The group was very pleased to welcome to the meeting Anthony Rawlins, Managing Director of Digital Visitor. Anthony's presentation outlined the implications of GDPR (the General Data Protection Regulation) which comes into force in May this year, and the actions that need to be taken in advance of this date in order for businesses to become compliant. His presentation will be added to the partner section of our website shortly.

Update on VisitWiltshire Activity from Jenny Butler and Theresa Hopwood:

- **2018 Visitor Guide, Visitor Map and Travel Trade Guide:** have now been printed and delivered to distributors. Online copies are available to download from the VisitWiltshire website. Bulk supplied can be obtained from VisitWiltshire's distributors – email Jenny to request this.
- **2018 Food and Drink Campaign:** launches February. Activity includes 100,000 copies of a printed Food and Drink Map plus a wide range of digital activity, all of which will drive visitors to the food and drink section of the VisitWiltshire website.
- **2018 City Marketing Campaign:** launched mid-January, positioning Salisbury as the ideal short break destination and driving potential visitors to the Visit Salisbury website. Activity includes a mix of digital, social media and PR.
- **2017 Autumn Marketing Campaign:** ran from mid-September to mid-November. The campaign was very successful with actual performance significantly exceeding original estimates.
- **Online shop:** now up and running. Contact Fiona to sell tickets for your own business on it.
- **VisitWiltshire Website:** received around 70k unique visits in November and 40k in December, with 67% via mobile devices.
- **Social Media:** continues to go from strength to strength. Twitter up 20% on December 2016, Facebook up 31.5% and Instagram up 43.5%.
- **PR:** All businesses are encouraged to upload their events to the VisitWiltshire website using the online [events form](#) as this is where information is sourced for press releases etc. VisitWiltshire is currently keen to receive events relating to February Half Term, Valentine's Day and Easter.

- **Travel Trade:** attended Vakantiebeurs in the Netherlands on 9 January. Will be going to Excursions on 27 January, ITB Berlin in March and Explore GB in Newcastle, also in March.
- **Photo library:** please make the most of this additional resource to promote partner businesses.
- **GWW:** confirmed new appointments, planned activity and launch of the Ambassadors programme
- **Residents Week:** pilot scheme to be launched in Salisbury area during English Tourism Week 17-25 March. Anyone interested in offering free entry or an offer for residents to contact vickyandrews@visitwiltshire.co.uk
- **English Tourism Week:** 17–23 March please add any events using the [Events form](#). For special offers contact [Louisa](#).
- **Training:** details given of upcoming courses on Evaluating Online Marketing, and Photography for Social Media. Details [here](#).
- **Government News:** there is now a new Secretary of State, [Matt Hancock MP](#), at the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Arts, Heritage & Tourism [Michael Ellis MP](#).
- **VisitBritain Update:** VisitBritain's annual forecast indicates 2017 will be a record breaking year in both visitor spending and overseas visits to the UK. Growth is expected to continue into 2018, with a forecast 41.7 million visits and £26.9 billion in visitor spending

Sharing of Market Intelligence: This discussion topic was held over until the April 2018 meeting, as only 4 partners had so far supplied their information. **Background:** At the October 2017 meeting it was agreed that WAVA would begin recording attractions' visitor numbers monthly from April to March each year. For reasons of confidentiality this information would be supplied as % increase or decrease rather than the numbers themselves. To enable identification of trends and year on year comparisons, historical figures from 2015 would be included. External factors such as the weather would be noted to give context where relevant. Data would be top line, combining domestic, overseas, consumer and travel trade visitors. Reporting would be at the quarterly WAVA meetings.

Action: All to email [Jenny](#) if you would like to order bulk supplies of 2018 guides from distributors.

Action: All to contact [Fiona](#) if you are interested in selling tickets via our new online shop.

Action: All to contact [Louisa](#) with details of special offers.

Action: All to complete the [Event Form](#) with any upcoming events.

Action: All to contact [Jenny](#) to request or supply photos for the online photo library.

Action: All to contact [Theresa](#) for key account meetings.

Action: All to email [Jenny](#) with details of visitor numbers as outlined under Sharing of Market Intelligence above.

Action: All to feed back to [Jenny](#) with suggestions for speakers and/or items of interest for inclusion on future meeting agendas.

Action: Roz Mitchell to share information from Visit Bristol conference with the WAVA group.

Dates of Next Meetings

Thursday 26 April 2018 from 2-4pm – Trowbridge Museum

Tuesday 17 July 2018 from 2-4pm – REME Museum, Lyneham

Thursday 11 October 2018 from 2-4pm – Bowood