

Press release

July 2013

Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade



Wiltshire's undiscovered gems

As the skies clear and the warm weather rolls in, now is the perfect time to explore Wiltshire – one of the country's most picturesque and quintessentially English counties. Within easy reach of the M4 and lying just outside the Cotswolds 'Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty', are the historic towns of Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade, and VisitWiltshire recommends them as the perfect base from which to explore the county this summer.

Dating back to AD 681 when it was a Saxon settlement known as Wodeton, [Royal Wootton Bassett](#) is a bright and vibrant town with a strong sense of community. Since being granted its 'Royal' prefix in 2011, it has continued to build on its traditional values, and offers visitors an open, welcoming atmosphere. With a high street overlooked by the iconic black and white Town Hall, you'll find an award-winning butcher and a range of independent shops

[Cricklade](#), meanwhile, is the first town on the River Thames and the southern gateway to the Cotswold Water Park. Built as a defence against the Danes it is the best preserved example of a Saxon new town, with a layout that follows the pattern of ancient burgrave plots and over a hundred listed buildings; a Heritage Trail around the town explains key features using a series of interpretation boards. The town is also known for its fantastic floral displays, and in 2011 was awarded the RHS Champion of Champions. North Meadow on the edge of the town is one of the finest examples of a lowland hay meadow with a variety of wild flowers.

Visitors to the area should be sure to check out the new Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Towns and Villages driving trail – a great way to explore both towns and the ten surrounding communities. Visitors can pick up their copy of the driving trail guide locally, online from the [VisitWiltshire website](#) or via the new VisitWiltshire mobile app.

The area is also home to [STEAM](#), the Museum of the Great Western Railway; a fantastic range of high street and designer brands at the [Swindon Designer Outlet](#); and [Rein and Shine](#), a new riding school which offers high quality, professional and friendly horse riding services for all the family – not to mention the elegant home and sprawling grounds at [Lydiard House and Park](#); a tropical day out at [Studley Grange Butterfly World and Craft Village](#); and the Thames Path, an iconic trail that follows England's most famous river 184 miles from its source in the Cotswolds towards London.

Upcoming events in the region include the [Tockenham Village Fair](#) on 20 July, [WOMAD Festival](#) from 25 to 28 July, Cricklade Show on 26 August and the [Swindon Mela](#) on 14 September.

The area also boasts a number of accommodation options including:

- [The Red Lion](#), dating back to the early 1600's and with many historic features playing a part in creating the perfect British pub atmosphere. Double rooms at this four AA-star inn start from £75 per night including breakfast
- Set in two acres of mature grounds and surrounded by open countryside [Marsh Farm Hotel](#) offers a combination of country house charm, modern amenities and traditional service. Rooms start from £65 per night including breakfast
- Originally a traditional coaching inn set in the heart of Royal Wootton Bassett, [The Angel](#) is now a privately owned hotel providing luxurious accommodation, superb banqueting facilities, a traditional bar and delicious, locally sourced food. Rooms start from £75 per night including breakfast
- [Hook Farm Cottages](#) comprises of four stunning self-catering cottages expertly converted from original farm buildings, situated on a working dairy farm. Each cottage offers impressive views of rolling countryside, and prices start from £285 per unit per week

NOTE TO PRESS – PRESS TRIP SUGGESTION

If you would be interested in an overnight stay in Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade, we would love to host you on a dinner, B&B basis; we can also help create a two day itinerary if needed. If you are interested please contact Callum or Sophy as below.

ENDS

Images of attractions and events are available on request.

For further information please contact:

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VisitWiltshire

VisitWiltshire Ltd was established in August 2011 and is the official Tourist Board for Wiltshire. It is a private sector membership organisation representing over 500 members. VisitWiltshire's priority is to grow the county's Visitor Economy by raising awareness of the destination and generating additional tourism visits and spend. Wiltshire's Visitor Economy currently generates an estimated £1billion and supports over 21,000 jobs.

Note to editors

The new Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Towns and Villages driving trail was produced by VisitWiltshire, the Royal Wootton Bassett Chamber of Commerce and Cricklade Business Association, with support from the Area Board.

Visitors can also find brochures and more information from Royal Wootton Bassett at <http://www.woottonbassett.gov.uk/tourism> and Cricklade at www.cricklade-tc.gov.uk