



## **Groups & Travel Trade Meeting**

**Tuesday 25 November 2025, 2pm**

### **VIRTUAL MEETING LINK**

(link expires 25 March 2026)

## **Meeting Notes**

### **Attendees:**

Florence Wallace, Fiona Errington – VisitWiltshire; Vera Lett – Tour Partner Group; David Lane – BGAM; Lisa Kent - Bowood House & Gardens; Birendra Sangarasekara – The Old Bell Hotel Malmesbury; Charlotte King - McArthurGlen Designer Outlet Swindon; Anna-Karin Hanson - English Heritage; Kate Saykousk & Hannah Paye – Salisbury Cathedral; Sharon Thomas & Harriet Peacock – Corsham; Louisa Reeves – National Trust; Jane Booth – Salisbury Museum; Viviane Rocha – Stones Hotel & Holiday Inn Salisbury Stonehenge; Poppy Broster-Becker – Wiltshire Creative; Amiee Thomas – Longleat; James Sullivan-Tailor – Old Bell Hotel Warminster; Roy Hayward – The Bridge Tea Rooms; Alexis Roxburgh – Cranborne Chase Escapes.

### **1. Welcome, How's business? eg. top line trade visitor figures, forward bookings.**

Large attractions reporting growth of trade visitors coming from OTAs and coach groups. Coach sizes remain steady, with an average of 32 pax. Good response from industry when holding 2025 trade rates into 2026.

### **2. An Inbound Perspective, International Market Requirements & Update from Vera Lett, Group Marketing & ESG Strategy Director, Tour Partner Group**

Please see presentation slides [here](#).

### **3. Is the pattern of group travel changing in your business?**

Flo opened the discussion about changes to group travel and questioned whether businesses are seeing changes such as:

- Smaller group sizes?
- Different types of groups booking e.g. – multi generational etc.
- Booking patterns e.g. booking later / different times of year?
- Spend – spending more/less?
- Interested in different activities – active /less active / product development for different audiences etc.?

**ACTION: Please feedback any changes to groups you have experienced so these can be shared with the group to help more focussed targeting.**

### **4. Review of Recent Trade Activity Discussion**

Flo thanked all Wiltshire trade group suppliers for their support from recent trade events. The following was discussed:

- Wiltshire Familiarisation Visit & Showcase Wiltshire e.g.
  - i. Feedback from Suppliers about overall event – format of fam visit and then showcase, additional buyers attending, fam visits content etc.?
  - ii. Any enquiries/bookings from buyers?
  - iii. Would you support another similar event? / How frequently should we run them?
  - iv. Cost of attending? Interested in hosting?
- Marketplace event e.g. 16 meetings for VisitWiltshire and 21 meetings for Great West Way.
  - i. Feedback from suppliers about virtual / networking meetings – number of meetings, buyer attendees, format of days virtual and networking. Right buyers for you? More or less meetings?
  - ii. Any enquiries/bookings from buyers?
  - iii. Do you plan to attend in 2026? Cost / Host?
- Group Leisure & Travel Show 2025– stand sharers - Stourhead, Longleat, Stonehenge, Old Bell Hotel (Warminster), DoubleTree by Hilton Swindon, Bishopstrow House Hotel, Holiday Inn Salisbury Stonehenge, Waddesdon Manor. Received approx 100 enquiries (50% new contacts).
  - i. Feedback from suppliers attending – overall?
  - ii. Graphics / stand position?
  - iii. Competition / data collection – was this useful? Did you follow up?
  - iv. Do you send out trade newsletters?
  - v. Have you had any enquiries/bookings?
  - vi. Interested in booking GLTS 2026?

**ACTION: Please feed back anything to Flo/Fiona regarding the above events, so we can make recommendations for the future.**

## **5. VisitWiltshire and Great West Way Travel Trade update**

Flo issued the latest [VisitWiltshire Travel Trade Activity Update](#) and highlighted the following:

- Two new Wiltshire trade partners – Welcome Southern Tour and Wagamama in Salisbury
- Excellent Christmas PR
- Successful Wiltshire fam visit and showcase events
- Wiltshire Trade Newsletter being distributed shortly. Great West Way newsletter issued last week.
- Ensure Travel Product pages are up-to-date for 2026

**ACTION: Please continue to supply your New for 2026 content to VisitWiltshire team.**

**ACTION: Please check your travel trade product pages and advise [Katie](#) of any updates to these.**

- New [England's Heritage Cities Travel Trade Guide](#) featuring Salisbury
- New [Great West Way Travel Trade Directory](#)
- Booked events for 2026, include the following Travel Trade Opportunities:
  - **LVEP Benelux, Amsterdam, Wednesday 11 February 2026.** There are opportunities to have additional business/destination representation, at this VisitBritain trade 1:1 meeting event. Cost **£650 + VAT**, which includes distribution of your key trade messaging and 'hot leads' data from the event as well as relevant email introductions and post event report.
  - **ITB Berlin, Germany, Tuesday 3 - Thursday 5 March 2026.** Largest trade fair in the world, to showcase the best of Britain to German and global buyers. There are opportunities to have additional business/destination representation, on the VisitBritain stand. Cost **£795 + VAT**, which includes distribution of your key trade messaging and 'hot leads' from the event as well as relevant email introductions and post event report.
  - **British Tourism & Travel Show, NEC Birmingham, Thursday 19 March 2026.** Domestic trade show for GTOs, coach and tour operators. Stand sharing opportunity for **£1,100 + VAT**

(excluding graphics). Price includes 1m space on the stand, cabinets, plus access to 1 data capture device (to share). Literature distribution for only **£170 + VAT**.

- **Group Leisure & Travel Show, Milton Keynes, Thursday 8 October 2026**. Domestic trade show for GTOs, coach and tour operators. Stand sharing opportunity with **2025 rates being held for 2026, for bookings confirmed before Friday 12 December - only £935 + VAT** (excluding graphics). Costs will increase after this date. Price includes 1m space on the stand, cabinets, plus access to data capture device. Literature distribution for only **£155 + VAT**.

A VisitWiltshire tactical activity timeline and opportunities 2026/2027 will be distributed in the new year, together with details of the Wiltshire trade group renewal from 1 April 2026.

**Connections Meeting** - The next meeting will take place on **Tuesday 17 February at 2pm**. This meeting will include a speaker from VisitBritain Germany with a market update, in addition to an update and opportunities from Great West Way. Please register [here](#) and an activity update and agenda will be issued in due course.

**ACTION: Contact Flo to book any of the above or for any queries consultancy support etc.**

#### 6. VisitWiltshire LVEP Update

David Lane highlighted the recent LVEP meeting and the following:

- Lot of work done by VisitWiltshire team to achieve LVEP status
  - Benefits
    - Visit Wiltshire is nationally recognised as a Destination Management Organisation
    - Has access to specialist support to help sales, marketing and distribution
    - Eligible for inclusions in national and international marketing via Visit England and Visit Britain
    - Boost opportunities for Travel Trade, press and PR
    - Helps to unlock or at least qualify for Government and Visit England grant funded programmes
    - Provides a stronger strategic partnership with both Wiltshire Council and private sector to focus marketing activities
    - Provides access to both national and local data so activities can be measured to understand impact
  - Next steps
    - Funding and scope being agreed with Wiltshire Council for the development of a Destination Management Plan (DMP)
    - DMP to be tendered and most suitable party appointed to develop plan
      - DMP will need input from multiple sources including private sector - your opportunity to have an input
      - Once DMP produced and agreed - plan to be implemented and managed

#### 7. Any Other Business

None

- 8. Next meeting date – Thursday 26 March 2026. Invitation to attend will be sent out in due course.