



Groups & Travel Trade Meeting

Tuesday 18 September 2018, 2-4pm
Venue: Lacock

Attendees:

Jo Atkins, Chair – National Trust, Florence Wallace, Fiona Errington - VisitWiltshire, Daryl Jones – Chippenham Town Council, Lorna Matthews-Keel – Salisbury City Guides, Mr Matthews-Keel – Salisbury Chequered History Guides, Sharon Thomas – Corsham, Charlotte Grace – Cricklade House Hotel, Anna Walton – Longleat, Rachel Wheeler – Marlborough College Summer School, Steph Shearing – Bradford on Avon, David Lane – Holiday Inn Salisbury-Stonehenge, Marie Thomas – Salisbury Cathedral, Marianne Cartwright-Hignett – Iford Manor & the Peto Gardens,

Guest Speaker: Peter Stonham – Landor Travel Publications.

Meeting Notes:

1. Welcome, introductions and actions from last meeting

2. How's business

There were a number of Salisbury businesses reporting a decline in visitors. One large attraction reported pre-summer group bookings slowed down leaving them 1.5% behind budget. Others reported good increases in groups for the summer 2018. Forward bookings for Christmas looking good for some. Illustrates the need to focus on events as a way to give visitors more of a reason to visit. Good level of 2019 booking enquiries reported for one accommodation provider and small attraction. A key town reported having coach business 18 months post VisitWiltshire educational fam visits.

3. 'Making the most of your travel trade product offer' presentation by Peter Stonham, Editorial Director, Landor Travel

See presentation for details.

4. Wiltshire's Travel Trade Activity Plan for 2019

Fiona took over chairing this meeting as Jo Atkins had to leave early.

Flo went through the Travel Trade Activity Plan draft document communicating the three levels of investment and associated activity.

a. Exhibitions

The three exhibitions included in the travel trade package for 2019 and agreed by the group include:

- i. Excursions, Alexandra Palace, London – Saturday 26 Jan
- ii. British & Irish Marketplace, London Hilton on Park Lane – Tuesday 29 Jan
- iii. South West Group Travel Show, Longleat – Saturday 16 February

ACTION: In order to ensure we have the correct size stands and businesses booked in for these events please contact Flo to confirm your exhibition requirements for 2019. If you are not a participating member of the travel trade group but would like to attend please also contact Flo.

b. Familiarisation Visits

VisitWiltshire reported on the familiarisation visits that took place in the county this summer. Plus a number of forthcoming familiarisation visits taking place this autumn and spring. Further detail can be found in the activity update. The group mentioned that many of these have had a Salisbury focus. VisitWiltshire flagged that where possible other product would be included as standard or offered as optional. There will be further Wiltshire fam trips in 2019.

c. Advertising 2018/2019

Following the Salisbury incidents earlier this year additional funds have been secure to enable VisitWiltshire to book additional print adverts for Salisbury and Salisbury Christmas. These are detailed in the activity update.

d. Database / Enews

VisitWiltshire reported that post GDPR VisitWiltshire trade database now has approx. 1,500 trade contacts – which are now more engaged than ever before.

e. Printed publications and distribution

The group was informed that the 2019 VisitWiltshire Travel Trade Guide was currently being produced. It will be distributed as per 2018 via TSE database where we have chosen up to a 2/3 hour drive time and selected the different categories of group organisers and tour operators.

ACTION: If you would like to book or upgrade your advert larger than your entitlement please contact Jenny. Please also advise Jenny if you'd like advertorial or an advert.

ACTION: Please advise Flo by 30 September if you have any amendments to the DRAFT Travel Trade Activity Plan 2019 document. If we don't hear anything after this date we will take this as the Travel Trade group agreeing to this action plan.

5. Additional Activity

a. Salisbury

Fiona updated the group about the recent Salisbury recovery activity – see [here](#) for further information.

b. The Great West Way

Flo updated the group about the Great West Way work VisitWiltshire is undertaking.

i. Official Tour Operator programme

We now have 20 Great West Way Official Tour Operators – many of these programmes are already available with many selling more than one itinerary. Check out [Abbey UK and Ireland](#), [Active England](#), [Hotels & More](#), [Crystal Travel & Tours](#), [Special Group Tours](#), [Tenon Tours](#) and [House of Britain](#) plus more coming soon.

ii. Great West Way Travel Trade Marketplace event

The registration platform for buyers and suppliers will be launched very soon. The businesses in the VisitWiltshire travel trade group should book to attend. Save the date 23 November. Ambassadors will be invited to the launch event on 22 November.

iii. International exhibitions opportunities 2018/2019

There are many international events being attended as Great West Way. Stand sharing opportunities are available at World Travel Market, Vakantiebeurs and ITB. Details of these can be found on www.visitwiltshire.co.uk/greatwestway

iv. Ambassador Network

We've had great support from businesses and destinations who have already signed up to the Ambassador Network. There is still time to sign up and take advantage of the launch so please contact Claire if you are interested.

The Great West Way Travel Trade Directory first edition will be available for Flo to take to USA on 13 October. A final edition will be published for the launch event in November. The VisitWiltshire trade group have been included where information has been supplied.

6. Any Other Business

As the Travel Trade group has now been running for 5 years, Fiona asked the group to review the terms of reference and advise any changes. The group initially agreed to quarterly meetings and four meetings a year took place in 2015 and 2016. In 2017 (and 2018) only 3 meetings a year took place. What does the group want?

ACTION: Please feedback to Fiona any changes to the terms of reference and frequency of future meetings.

Flo mentioned that Visit York have good trade section of their website – worth viewing [here](#). Check out the [key partner information sheets](#). Is this something that the Travel Trade Group members would like us to produce to have available on the VisitWiltshire trade website pages?

ACTION: Please feedback to Flo as to whether you would be able to provide content to populate Key Product information sheets for 2019.

Flo also flagged the TEAM Travel Trade Research Study – Stages 1 and 2, Key Learnings which was presented at a recent VisitEngland event. This is has been made available for your perusal.