



## **Groups & Travel Trade Meeting**

**Tuesday 21 May 2019, 2-4pm  
Venue: Corsham Town Hall**

### **Attendees:**

Florence Wallace, Fiona Errington – VisitWiltshire; Daryl Jones – Chippenham Town Council; Rick Henderson – REME Museum; Sharon Thomas – Corsham; Laurence Davies – Oldbury Tours; David Lane – Holiday Inn Salisbury-Stonehenge; Anna Walton – Longleat & Cheddar Gorge; Marie Thomas – Salisbury Cathedral; Julie Forster – Iford Manor Gardens; Stephanie Shearing – Bradford on Avon; Rachel Wheeler – Marlborough College Summer School; Steve Retford and Steve – Sally Narrowboats.

### **Meeting Notes:**

- 1. Welcome, introductions and actions from last meeting**
- 2. How's business**

Most people reported that their trade visits were either on a par with same period previous year or up on last year. Salisbury attraction reported that groups held up well... considering everything! Many people also mentioned that forward bookings are looking good /on target with last year. Although some reported cancellations. It was mentioned that towns are struggling to monitor groups and are trying to encourage them to pre book. Events still key to use as a hook for groups to visit at key times of the year. A number of people reported seeing more social groups coming through. Plus good PR and film crews all help!

- 3. Wiltshire Trade Marketing Activity 2019**

Flo went through the Travel Trade Activity Update document – now with added Coveragebook links.

- 4. Great West Way Update**

Fiona/ Flo updated the group about the Great West Way:

- Recent Marketing activity has included forthcoming press visits from Germany and Netherlands, Rough Guide to the Great West Way and the Travel Magazine. GWR Discoverer pass is now available – launched to media on 5 June.
- [55 Official Tour Operators](http://www.greatwestway.co.uk/traveltrade/bookable-product) – Final programmes are available online at [www.greatwestway.co.uk/traveltrade/bookable-product](http://www.greatwestway.co.uk/traveltrade/bookable-product), others are still work in progress. Its worth people checking these out with a view for individuals to target these buyers accordingly. The Great West Way Official Tour Operator scheme has opened doors for Flo to be able to talk to DMC's / tour operators about Wiltshire product. Travel Trade group partners/investors and sponsors should make Flo aware of any tour operators they are interested in, so these can be added to the target list.
- Great West Way Marketplace event. This has been confirmed for Friday 22 November for the one-to-one networking day (plus Fam visits for buyers over the weekend). It is likely this

event will take place at the Windsor/Thames end of the route. Further details will be released shortly.

- There are now 225 Ambassadors signed up – many for three years – see full list [here](#).

## 5. VisitBritain /VisitEngland Update

Flo/Fiona updated the group about the new initiatives by VisitBritain. These include the following:

- **Tourism Exchange Great Britain** – New business to business platform to help tourism suppliers connect directly to a range of distributors with a global reach. VisitBritain/VisitEngland /VisitWiltshire are the enablers to the industry. Distributors take a commission payment from the gross price (t's & c's are set by the individual distributors). Allows access across all categories of tourism operators, including accommodation, restaurants, tours, events and attractions. Online set up via booking system for live availability or for those without booking system this provides a solution. There will be comprehensive reporting / data analytics capability. 24/7 helpdesk in place to assist with supplier queries and functionality to allow VB/VE to integrate the supplier products into global marketing campaigns.

This was discussed and there were concerns raised about additional costs relating to API connections with businesses own Channel Management Systems / Booking systems.

Further to this meeting VisitWiltshire is awaiting a Q & A document from VisitBritain regarding the role out of this project.

- **Travel Trade Training** – After previously launching the [Taking England to the World - An Inbound Tourism Toolkit](#), VisitBritain / VisitEngland are now rolling out the Taking England to the World trade education programme. This will incorporate practical real-life insight from consumers and trade. It consists of up to 11 modules which combined with strong content and teaching with a learning approach as its focus. It will be a full day training programmes with accompanying tools to take away. Modules include Meet the Markets; Obstacles to Market; Defining your Product Offering; The Travel Distribution System; Pricing your Product; Building Powerful Relationships; Opportunities Abroad; Google Business Visibility.
- **Google Digital Garage**– To provide individuals with training on key digital skills for their business, their careers, or just to grow their confidence online. One-to-one personal mentoring sessions and/or Masterclass seminars. Interactive learning through bite-size content from Google experts. Over 50 modules of content and a customised learning plan for each user.

The VisitBritain presentation delivered at Explore GB – May 2019 can be seen [here](#).

## 6. Travel Trade Strategy 2020 – Moving Forward

Discussion about the existing Travel Trade Activity Plan and how the group would like to move forward.

**ACTION: Please can everyone review the current [2019 Travel Trade Activity Plan](#) and feed back any comments for changes for 2020 and beyond. Please reply to Flo by Friday 14 June.**

Anna from Longleat exhibited at BTTS this year and said that she received 21 new enquiries, so would be interested in attending again. Flo communicated that there is a separate events and exhibitions document for people to consider the events they would like to attend 2019/2020. This can be found [here](#).

**ACTION: Please can everyone take a look at the event/exhibition document and register your interested to attend. Please reply to Flo by Friday 14 June.**

## 7. Any Other Business

None