



Groups & Travel Trade Meeting Tuesday 7 September 2021, 2- 3.00pm

This meeting is available to download and view from Zoom - [Meeting recording](#); Access Password: RN92?g1r Please note this recording will automatically be deleted on 1 October 2021.

Attendees:

Florence Wallace, Fiona Errington, David Lane – BGAM – Holiday Inn Salisbury-Stonehenge (Chair)
Antony Amos, UKinbound; Belinda Richardson – Marlborough; Nikki Rowe - Vintage Classics; Rick Henderson - REME Museum; Jen Edmondson - Bowood House & Gardens; Anna Walton – Longleat; Rachel Wheeler - Marlborough College Summer School; Tori Ackling - The Angel Hotel Chippenham

Meeting Notes:

1. Welcome, introductions and actions from last meeting

Actions from last meeting were confirmed as done or ongoing and featured in the relevant sections below.

2. UKinbound update by Antony Amos

Please see the presentation slides [here](#).

For any questions please contact Antony Amos, Head of Business Development and Membership anthonyamos@ukinbound.org

3. How's business? eg. top line trade visitor figures, forward bookings and COVID impacts etc.

There were updates from a number of key attendees including Longleat, REME Museum, the town of Marlborough, accommodation providers Holiday Inn – Salisbury Stonehenge, Caboose and the Angel Hotel plus Mad Max Tours and Vintage Classics.

The general overview is looking more positive with more trade enquiries and bookings coming through but with a changing tourism landscape, many are operating ad hoc strategies.

It is currently busier with domestic business this year with a few coach companies starting to return.

Staff shortages continue to be a problem for most – particularly accommodation sector. Guest expectations are high. Good level of enquires coming in for 2022 (even some from USA).

Some businesses reported that people are looking to book earlier for next year and others are rescheduling business into 2022.

Marlborough and Corsham both stated that they have seen an increase in visitors to the towns over the summer and Corsham reported (via email) that they had a couple of coach groups in July.

4. VisitWiltshire and Great West Way Travel Trade Update

Prior to the meeting the [Wiltshire Travel Trade Activity Update](#) was distributed and this should be referenced for a full update covering the period from May to August 2021.

The group were reminded that group organisers and buyers were being welcomed to the Wiltshire on the Great West Way fam visit this month.

The Great West Way Activity Update can now be seen [here](#).

There is a new 40-page [Great West Way Guide for Groups](#) supplement that has been produced and is being featured in the September edition of Group Travel Today Magazine. [Group Travel Today](#) helps UK-based group organisers source, plan and book their day trips, short breaks, and long-haul tours. They represent over 190,000 members. The magazine circulation is 5,000 and is also available online.

There has been specific focus on domestic trade marketing with the development of new B2C [Book a Package Trip](#) packages from our Official Tour Operator partners.

Wiltshire has featured in the ongoing product sales training and trade engagement programme. The most recent being Jac Travel presentation in August. Some buyers have been more receptive for training this summer whilst staff are still furloughed. Virtual sales training will continue to be a focus so please look out for emails regarding these opportunities.

Our new Great West Way Travel Trade Training Programme is currently being finalised and further details will be released soon. There will be 8 sessions and will include information on how to work with both domestic and international travel trade starting at a very basic level. It will also include VisitEngland's Taking England To The World, plus we will have an expert panel of suppliers and a number of external speakers covering a range of topics such as sustainability, research etc.

There was a discussion regarding the timing for a Marketplace event, based on the fact that many international markets are not yet open, short booking lead times, uncertainty and different to a 'normal' year. It is not being planned between now and December but is a serious consideration for Jan – March 2022.

ACTION: Please register your interest to attend Marketplace by emailing Flo, so she can keep you posted.

5. Travel Trade Tactical Activity Plan - Priorities for Discussion:

- Advertising campaign
- Familiarisation visits
- Events and Exhibitions

We have pulled together a [Wiltshire strategic tactical activity plan timeline](#) and will continue to keep this updated and communicate relevant opportunities.

Advertising

We are looking at our advertising strategy and recommend that we pull together a plan for digital advertising to the domestic over 65+ year old audience and to target our Facebook groups, to roll out October onwards. Investors and pan Wiltshire product will automatically be included. The campaign will drive visitors to Wiltshire website (www.visitwiltshire.co.uk/groups). Recommendations from the last campaign highlighted that we should implement an enquiry form and consider google display advertising in addition to Facebook. We have a small budget for this and we are asking for a contribution of £400 plus VAT from businesses/destinations for inclusion.

ACTION: Please contact Fiona if you would like to be included in this campaign.

ACTION: Flo has researched a few special interest groups for future targeting and these can be viewed on this [Google Doc](#). Please take a look at this document and add any other

Facebook groups that you have engagement with and believe they may be worth Wiltshire targeting.

Fam Visits

Flo highlighted the current Wiltshire self-drive familiarisation visit that is in place this month and asked the group for feedback on this.

Initial supplier feedback seemed to indicate that these are working well, with more flexibility, ability to pay each GTO more attention. Initial GTO feedback stated that individuals were not rushed and they were able to see the places that are of interest. Our recommendation is to consider repeating this format if feedback is positive. A feedback form will be sent out to all GTO's for comment.

ACTION: Please can suppliers' feedback to Flo any positive or negative comments regarding these fam visits with a particular preference of running self-drive or group fam visits in the future.

Exhibitions & Events

Bowood House & Gardens and Marlborough have confirmed their stand sharing with Wiltshire and Great West Way at Excursions on 22 January 2022, Twickenham Stadium.

ACTION: If you are interested in attending Excursions on 22 January, Twickenham Stadium. Only £500 per supplier business/town which includes graphic board. Contact Flo by 30 September to book.

ACTION: Please contact Flo if you are interested in stand sharing at any other 2021/2022 exhibitions eg:

- **British Tourism & Travel Show – 22 & 23 September NEC Birmingham**
- **Group Leisure & Travel – 7 October Milton Keynes**
- **World Travel Market – 1-3 November (Excel London) and 8 & 9 November online**
- **Vakantiebeurs, Netherlands – 13 – 16 January 2022 (consumer and trade)**
- **ITB, Berlin – 9 – 13 March 2022 (consumer and trade)**

6. Any Other Business

Flo is keen to put a Christmas enewsletter out to trade but more content is required.

ACTION: Please email Flo with details of your Christmas trade product offer asap.

There will be a New for 2022 trade enewsletter distributed Nov/Dec – content required.

ACTION: Please email Flo with details of any 'New for 2022' content eg. New openings, bookable products and experiences, events, tours, anniversaries, film/tv tie ins etc.

We will be reviewing the travel trade website pages shortly and all extra travel trade product pages will need to be updated with 2022 prices and information.

ACTION: Travel Trade Group members please take a look at your product page [here](#) (scroll down to find) and advise your amends to Flo who will action accordingly.

Don't forget the Great West Way Travel Trade Connections meeting is being held on 21 September, 2pm. It will include travel trade training information and the agenda can be seen [here](#).

7. Date of next meeting

Thursday 13 January, 2pm – 3pm