



VisitWiltshire Earns National Recognition with Local Visitor Economy Partnership Status

Wiltshire has joined the new national framework of VisitEngland-accredited Local Visitor Economy Partnerships (LVEPs) to champion tourism and destination development across the county.

The successful bid from VisitWiltshire - backed by Wiltshire Council, local towns and over 400 tourism businesses – is a significant achievement for VisitWiltshire and the county's visitor economy, which is already worth £1.5billion per annum, supports 28,000 jobs and contributes 9% of Wiltshire's total GDP.

Official LVEP status is awarded to Destination Organisations like VisitWiltshire, who qualify against a stringent set of quality and performance criteria for destination management and development, tourism marketing and promotion, business support, product development and partnership working.

David Andrews, Chief Executive of VisitWiltshire said:

“We are delighted that VisitWiltshire have secured national LVEP status. This is a major achievement with the potential to unlock new investment, grow tourism spend throughout the year, extend our reach in domestic and international markets, and better support our tourism and hospitality businesses. We're proud to be working with public and private sector Partners to maximise the LVEP benefits for Wiltshire, our businesses and communities.”

The application had to demonstrate a minimum level of core public sector funding support, which was achieved thanks to support from Bradford on Avon, Chippenham, Corsham, Devizes, Malmesbury, Pewsey and Trowbridge. Plus give evidence of wider public sector support, which Wiltshire Council provided by confirming their strategic support for tourism growth and funding of a new countywide Tourism Strategy & Destination Plan.

The creation of LVEPs was part of the UK Government's response to the recommendations of the independent De Bois Review: an independent review of DMOs, to reshape destination management and marketing across England. The national portfolio of strategic and high-performing LVEPs support collaborative working locally and nationally on shared priorities and targets to grow the local visitor economy.

Andrew Stokes, England Director at VisitEngland said:

"The Local Visitor Economy Partnerships programme is transforming the visitor economy in England, supporting its growth in a more inclusive, accessible and sustainable way and I am delighted to welcome VisitWiltshire as the accredited Wiltshire LVEP. VisitWiltshire have consistently been one of England's top-performing DMOs and we expect them to play an important role in the new national LVEP structure."

As part of this new national LVEP portfolio, benefits also include:

- Additional tourism visits and spend for Wiltshire's visitor economy
- Destination inclusion in VisitEngland / VisitBritain marketing activity
- Access to expert advice, dedicated toolkits and training programmes
- Support with product development, distribution, accessibility and sustainability
- Business support services
- Travel trade and Press & PR opportunities and activity
- Support with funding bids and access to ring-fenced Government grant funding

Dawn Wilson, Chair of the Pewsey Vale Tourism Partnership said:

"This is fantastic news for our local businesses. VisitWiltshire have been instrumental in driving additional visits and spend to the Pewsey Vale, and their new LVEP status ensures we'll continue to benefit from national and international promotion. With tourism businesses facing real challenges right now, this accreditation is very welcome, and we're pleased to have been able to support it".

To help maximise LVEP potential, a new Wiltshire LVEP Advisory Board is being established, made up of representatives from VisitWiltshire, Wiltshire Council, town Partners, and tourism businesses from a range of sectors across the county. Anyone interested in joining the Board should contact davidandrews@visitwiltshire.co.uk.

A first task for the Advisory Board will be to work collaboratively with VisitWiltshire, VisitEngland, Wiltshire Council and public and private sector Partners to develop a new Wiltshire Tourism Strategy & Destination Plan.

Editors Notes:

VisitWiltshire is the official Local Visitor Economy Partnership for Wiltshire, representing 400 investing Wiltshire destinations and businesses. It is part of the Great West Way and established as a public/private sector partnership organisation. VisitWiltshire's role includes growing the county's Visitor Economy by raising awareness of the destination and generating additional tourism visits and spend. Wiltshire's Visitor Economy generates an estimated £1.5billion and supports over 28,000 jobs.