



What's New for Travel Trade **In 2017 and beyond!**

Shrouded in mystery, steeped in legend, Wiltshire has been a special place for a very long time. Its strong connection with the past makes it the perfect place to enjoy the present. It's ideal for group visits, so let time stand still and enjoy our beautiful ancient landscape.

Each of our charming rural market towns has something unique to offer visitors, with [Malmesbury](#), [Bradford on Avon](#) and [Corsham](#) being ideal for their stylish independent shops. The medieval city of [Salisbury](#) is only 90 minutes from London, easily accessible by train or car, and has a multitude of things to see and do!

The county offers a wide range of accommodation, award-winning restaurants, pubs and cafés plus major attractions, events, arts, culture and entertainment, all at the heart of a Wiltshire experience.

The World Heritage Site of [Stonehenge](#) and [Avebury](#). has a magnetism that has drawn people to it for centuries. English Heritage offer a range of seasonal events and activities throughout the year at [Stonehenge](#), [Wardour Castle](#) and [Old Sarum](#).

[Mompesson House](#) is celebrating its 40th anniversary of the National Trust re-decorating, furnishing and opening Mompesson to visitors from Sat 11 March-Sun 5 November 2017. In 2018, National Trust's [Stourhead](#) estate will be looking at what Stourhead stands for and how the Palladian house and English landscape garden came to be here, in rural Wiltshire.

The magnificent [Salisbury Cathedral & Magna Carta](#) is home to the tallest spire in Britain and the best preserved original 1215 Magna Carta manuscript – is a masterpiece of medieval architecture. For the first time the Cathedral is opening up its 15th Century Library to small groups of up to 12 people. The Library contains over 10,000 books dating as far back as far as 9th century. Visitors will be shown a range of books specially selected to illustrate the variety and importance of this unique collection. Tours start at 14.00 and last approximately 45 minutes and include a delicious cream tea. Tours are subject to availability. £210 per group (max 12) or £22 for individuals.

[Bowood House & Gardens](#) are offering a new group tour for 2017, entitled 'Dr Priestley: The Discovery of Oxygen'. Priestley arrived at Bowood House in 1773 as a librarian and literary companion for the second Earl of Shelburne. Priestley devoted much of his free time to science and experiments. This is a fascinating tour of Bowood House with an insight into Priestley's life and the journey to his identification of oxygen. Package includes tea and coffee on arrival and a tour lasting approximately 60 minutes. Only £20 per person, or £32 per person including a two-course lunch.

[Longleat](#), have developed two new Longleat House tours for groups for 2017. Butlers & Housekeepers Tour will allow you to explore unseen areas, walking in the footsteps of butlers, maids, housekeepers and cooks in years gone by. This 45 minute tour is a supplementary £5 per guest. Scandalous History tour will take visitors through the heart of the House to visit an eye-opening selection of rooms and artefacts associated with compelling and salacious gossip through the ages. This one hour tour is a supplementary £8 per guest.

New specialist tours based at [Sarum College](#) - Explore the English medieval city of Salisbury with an in depth insight into the life of a Cathedral, with a tower tour, the stonemasons and the glaziers, the ministry to tourists, congregation and city, the choir, the arts programme, the cathedral's daily worship and music. These week-long residential tours can be themed to include lectures on 'Digging into the early History'; 'Exploring the History of Spirituality in Britain'; 'Reading the Novels inspired by Salisbury'; or 'Perspectives on church life in the UK'.

[Marlborough College Summer School](#) will be introducing new courses in 2017 including Astronomy, Archaeology, Mindfulness, Wood Carving, Antique Dealing and Wine Appreciation. The new brochure will be available in January when bookings can be made for visitors age 3 – 103, to enjoy over 500 residential courses over 4 weeks next summer from 9th July to 5th August.

Just over the Wiltshire border is [Fleet Air Arm Museum](#), who are planning their 'Recent Conflicts Exhibition' for 2017 and a 'Women's Royal Naval Service Exhibition' for early 2018.

Coming soon...

The Great West Way - a new long distance touring route between London and Bristol, with approximately a quarter of the route in Wiltshire. See the recent press release – [VisitWiltshire secures Discover England Funding to Develop a New Touring Route – The Great West Way](#).

You'll find plenty to keep your group happy in Wiltshire for a day, a weekend or longer! For more ideas and inspiration go to: www.visitwiltshire.co.uk/groups

VisitWiltshire and partners will be attending a number of exhibitions and events in 2017 including the popular Excursions at Alexandra Palace on 28 January; ETOA's British & Irish Marketplace on 24 January; Group Travel Show at Cheltenham Racecourse on 4 February; VisitBritain's Explore GB in Brighton on 2-3 March; and Great for Groups South at Kempton Park Racecourse on 26 April.

VisitWiltshire runs familiarisation visits which are designed to improve buyer product knowledge and give you a taste of what Wiltshire has to offer. These events welcome coach operators, tour operators, group travel organisers and trade press. If you are interested in attending or discussing your travel trade requirements please contact Florence Wallace – flowallace@visitwiltshire.co.uk, 01722 341309.

For 2017 opening times and prices, please visit attraction pages on www.visitwiltshire.co.uk. For great group benefits, coach parking, itineraries and group accommodation please visit www.visitwiltshire.co.uk/groups

Book new group Wiltshire itineraries and packages via the new 'Book a Wiltshire Tour' website page. The new Wiltshire Group Visits and Travel Trade 2017 brochure will be available in December. Please contact Florence Wallace, Travel Trade Manager, flowallace@visitwiltshire.co.uk or tel. 01722 341309 or 07436 588860.

Notes to editors:

About VisitWiltshire

VisitWiltshire is the official Destination Management & Marketing Organisation for Wiltshire representing 600 partners. It is a public/private sector membership organisation with our main funder being Wiltshire Council. VisitWiltshire's priority is to grow the county's Visitor Economy by raising awareness of the destination and generating additional tourism visits and spend. Wiltshire's Visitor Economy currently generates an estimated £1.5billion and supports over 29,000 jobs.

There are a number of tourism businesses in Wiltshire who are keen to attract tour operators, coach operators and group travel organisers. VisitWiltshire works closely with these businesses and supports their trade marketing requirements. The VisitWiltshire travel trade group consists of the following partners, Salisbury, Salisbury Cathedral, Bradford on Avon, Longleat, Bowood House & Gardens, Arundells, English Heritage, National Trust, Wiltshire/Salisbury Museums, McArthurGlen Designer Outlet Swindon, Wadworth Brewery Visitor Centre, Cathedral Hotel, The Stonehenge Inn & Carvery, Alexandra House, Churches Conservation Trust, Marlborough College Summer School, Fleet Air Arm Museum, Wyvern Theatre, Salisbury Contemporary Craft & Heritage Festival, Salisbury & District Value Cars, Best Western Mayfield House Hotel, Discover Wiltshire, Studley Grange Butterfly World & Craft Village, Corsham, Malmesbury, Sarum College, The Bridge Tea Rooms, Iford Manor and Stonehenge Campsite and Glamping Pods.