



Travel Trade Activity Update

February - May 2023

The following report details Wiltshire travel trade activity from February – May 2023.

Wiltshire Travel Trade Group 2023/2024

The Wiltshire Travel Trade group for 2023/2024 consists of 25 tourism businesses and Wiltshire towns. Many of these can be seen with their travel trade product page at www.visitwiltshire.co.uk/groups.

The Wiltshire Travel Trade Group Chaired by David Lane have approved the [Wiltshire Travel Trade Activity Plan 2023/24](#).

Productions & Distribution of Collateral

The new digital Wiltshire Travel Trade Guide has been produced and distributed to over 2,266 key trade domestic and international contacts. The new guide can be seen at www.visitwiltshire.co.uk/travel-trade-guide. The press release can be seen [here](#) and the newsletter [here](#).

Press coverage on 17 May 2023 includes Swindon Link, [VisitWiltshire Launches New Travel Trade Guide](#) and UKinbound, [VisitWiltshire Launches New Travel Trade Guide](#). It was also picked up by the International Travel Writers Alliance and featured in their June edition of Always Traveller.

Digital Trade Communication & Databases

As part of their investment into the Wiltshire Travel Trade Group, we worked with Bowood House & Gardens to develop and distribute a solus newsletter called [New Woodland Garden Tours at Bowood House & Gardens](#). This was distributed to 2,108 key trade contacts on 10 February. It received a 43% open rate and 2.1% click through rate, with most clicks going through directly to Bowood's website 'plan your visit groups page' and groups brochure.

A [Time for Wiltshire in 2023](#) trade newsletter was distributed to 2,206 key trade contacts on 3 April 2023. This included all the 2023/2024 Wiltshire Travel Trade group partners and received a 34% open rate and 6.8% click through rate.

The [New Wiltshire Travel Trade Guide](#) trade newsletter was distributed to 2,266 key trade contacts on 10 May 2023. This received a 41% open rate and 8.3% click through rate.

Following a clean-up of the database, we now have 2,227 subscribers which include segments such as group travel organisers, coach operators, UK tour operators/wholesalers, trade press and international trade.

If you're interested in a solus digital newsletter please contact [Flo](#) to discuss and schedule.

Awards

Wiltshire has been shortlisted as a Group Leisure & Travel Awards Finalist 2023. We're encouraging the industry to vote for Wiltshire as the Best UK Destination at www.groupleisureandtravel.com/awards/vote. Voting closes on 2 July and the winner will be announced at the Group Leisure & Travel Awards dinner on 4 October.

Please share this link and ask your colleagues to vote for Wiltshire to win Best UK Destination.

Events & Exhibitions

The exhibitions and events that have been attended from Jan to May include:

- **Britain & Ireland Marketplace**, London, Friday 27 Jan – ETOA event. Wiltshire was represented with 30+ one-to-one meetings with buyers
- **Excursions**, Twickenham, Saturday 28 January. Wiltshire attended and met with over 70 domestic tour/coach operators and group travel organisers. Stand sharers included Bowood House & Gardens and others as part of the wider Great West Way offer.
- **Showcase Britain**, Jan/Feb. VisitBritain welcomed more than 120 international travel trade buyers to Britain, for a series of educational fam visits. We were invited to meet and update them with news from our destinations at an event in London. In addition, there were 13 buyers from the VisitBritain Canadian fam trip that visited Wiltshire on the Great West Way. We influenced the programme, secured accommodation at the Old Bell Hotel, Malmesbury and arranged a champagne reception to maximise networking for the Malmesbury town team and other stakeholders. We also attended and networked with the 6 buyers from the Scandinavian fam trip.
- **Explore GB**, 27 February – 3 March. Wiltshire was represented at this virtual event with approximately 20+ buyer meetings and VisitBritain overseas reps from USA, Italy, Spain, France, Belgium/ Netherlands, Australia/New Zealand and Germany/Austria/Switzerland
- **Coach Tourism Association Networking event** – 13 March. This event took place at Hampton by Hilton Bath and we were invited along to informally network with 10-15 domestic group organisers, coach and tour operators.
- **ETM North American Marketplace** – 21 March. We met with approx. 16 buyers at this virtual ETOA event.

Forthcoming events/exhibitions include:

- **Group Leisure & Travel Show**, Milton Keynes 5 October. Wiltshire will be exhibiting on a Great West Way stand and confirmed stand sharers include English Heritage, Longleat, Reading, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and Ascot Racecourse. Literature Distribution is also being offered for representation to those who are unable to make it.

There are opportunities to attend or be represented at World Travel Market and Destination Britain North America. Contact Flo if this is of interest. Plus Great West Way Marketplace will be back this autumn 2023 – further details below.

Win a Weekend Break to Wiltshire Competition Results

You may recall that we ran a 'Win a Weekend Break to Wiltshire' competition as part of our Wiltshire trade group promotional campaign autumn/ winter 2022/2023. You can view the details here - <https://mailchi.mp/visitwiltshire/win-a-weekend-break-to-wiltshire>

We had 484 entries of which 228 added a Company name and 185 opted in to receive further information. There were 98 new trade contacts added to the database.

We randomly picked one winner and two runners up from the 228 trade contacts.

England Originals

As the travel trade marketing agency for England's Historic Cities, we have been able to promote Salisbury and surrounding areas for the last four years. We have secured another year of investment from England's Heritage Cities for travel trade engagement services and continue to roll out a programme of tactical travel trade activity to benefit Salisbury.

Great West Way Travel Trade Activity

Great West Way Connections group met in March and you can see the activity update, meeting notes and presentations from this meeting [here](#).

The Great West Way Travel Trade Directory is being reviewed and updated and by offsetting the advertising income we are aiming to cover costs and/or generate a small surplus income. Travel Trade advertising rates spec and rates can be seen [here](#).

Great West Way Marketplace event is being planned as a virtual one-to-one event, plus networking day and Discovery Visits. Due to take place autumn 2023. We have designed the event plan around obtaining sponsorship for every element and we're finalising details on securing a venue for the networking day - further details to follow soon!

Official Tour Operators – We now have 100+ Official Tour Operators and are continuing our programme of trade engagement throughout 2023. Take a look at the UK and international [Official Tour Operators](#) that we are currently working we currently have approx. 80+ [bookable programmes](#). The latest new Official Tour Operators include Black Tie Travel from North America and SNP Natuurreizen from Netherlands and Travel's Easy from Scandinavia. The latest programme from SNP Natuurreizen is [Cycling along England's Great West Way](#)

Great West Way Webinars – we are rolling out a virtual webinar programme to North American agents in partnership with GT Experiences. These are taking place on 7, 13 and 21 June with a range of tourism suppliers who are attending live and/or pre-recorded interviews, plus showcasing their tourism offer via as-live video. If you'd like to find out more and how you can get involved contact [Flo](#).

There are a range of Great West Way [Travel Trade Opportunities](#) available.

If you have any queries or would like to get involved in the Travel Trade activity for Wiltshire and/or Great West Way please contact [Flo](#) to discuss.