



Travel Trade Activity Update **1 February 2024 – 13 June 2024**

The following report details Wiltshire travel trade activity from 1 February – 13 June 2024.

Wiltshire Travel Trade Group 2023/2024

The Wiltshire travel trade group currently consists of 23 tourism businesses and destinations. These are now split into two levels of investment with Bowood, Longleat, English Heritage, Stourhead, McArthurGlen Designer Outlet Swindon and the Old Bell in Warminster at Sponsor level. Our newest member is the Merchant's House in Marlborough, and we are delighted that they have now re-joined so we can highlight their offer to the trade.

Please do take a look at all the travel trade partners at www.visitwiltshire.co.uk/groups. Scroll down to see the travel trade page listings and if you need any updates or additional trade information added to your listing please get in touch.

Productions & Distribution of Collateral

The new [It's Time for Wiltshire Travel Trade Guide](#) has now been produced and is available online for group travel organisers and operators to use to help plan their visits / itineraries to Wiltshire. This has been distributed to the VisitWiltshire travel trade database.

Thank you to all those who contributed content and adverts etc. We know this publication is well received and we will continue to promote it digitally throughout the year.

Award Recognition & PR

VisitWiltshire is delighted to report that Wiltshire has been nominated as a finalist in the Group Leisure & Travel Awards in the Best UK Destination category. Congratulations to Longleat who also has been shortlisted in the Best Historic Attraction category and Stonehenge in the Best UK Attraction category. You can see all the finalists [here](#)

Additionally, Flo Wallace has been nominated for Group Leisure & Travel Excellence Award in recognition of her outstanding contribution to Group Travel Organisers and the wider leisure and tourism travel trade industry. Find out more about the excellence awards at groupleisureandtravel.com/excellence.

VisitWiltshire issued a press release [Double Delight as VisitWiltshire Nominated Twice in National Group Travel Awards](#). The winners will be announced at the awards ceremony on 27 June in London.

In addition to PR coverage in the Group Leisure & Travel Magazine, it was also picked up by regional press including [Swindon Link](#), [Gazette & Herald](#), [Wiltshire Times](#), [Swindon Advertiser](#) and on Yahoo.com with a total reach over 5.5m.

Digital Trade Communication & Databases

We distributed a trade newsletter [It's Time for Wiltshire Travel Trade Guide](#) on 23 May 2024 to 2,330 subscribers. This received an open rate of 47.7% and a click through rate of 2.5%.

We also campaigned to domestic GTOs and tour operators to secure votes for the awards we've been shortlisted for. Two additional newsletters were distributed - [Vote for Wiltshire to Win Best UK Destination](#) and [Vote for Flo to Win Group Leisure & Travel Excellence Award](#) – both received excellent open rates and click through rates so fingers crossed!

Bespoke solus trade newsletters have also been distributed to buyers. These include [Longleat Trade News in 2024](#) in February to 2,451 trade contacts and in March, [Latest News from Bowood House & Gardens](#) was sent to 2,387 trade contacts. If you'd like to have your product featured in a solus trade newsletter and distributed to our database, please get in touch.

Wiltshire Self-Drive Familiarisation Visit

We have reviewed how we can deliver Wiltshire familiarisation visits for 2024/2025 and are planning to offer a new bespoke self-drive itinerary development service for eligible trade businesses & GTOs.

We will encourage the trade to look at the [It's Time for Wiltshire Travel Trade Guide](#) and our [Wiltshire Travel Trade Partners](#) to see Travel Trade information listings. Then view the [Wiltshire Familiarisation Passport Offers](#) before completing the [Wiltshire fam visit enquiry form](#).

We are making it clear that complementary entry is at the discretion of the attraction and usually provided for 2 adults only. Visits will be scheduled for standard opening dates and times. We'll encourage meet & greet/show rounds for accommodation providers and towns. Please can all trade group partners check you are happy with the terms and conditions on the offer document and/or advise any amends?

VisitWiltshire will receive the completed forms and liaise with buyers, pulling together itineraries and/or putting them in touch with suppliers directly. We may give buyers access to the [VisitWiltshire Familiarisation Passport](#) (password protected) so please make sure your front of house teams are familiar with this.

Forthcoming Events & Exhibition Opportunities

Following a busy start to the year attending events, we're now planning our Wiltshire/Great West Way calendar of events for autumn 2024 and spring 2025. These could include:

Group Leisure & Travel Show, Milton Keynes 3 October. We now have 9 stand sharers with many Wiltshire based businesses including Stourhead, Longleat, Woolley Grange Hotel, English Heritage and Old Bell, Warminster. We can expand further so please let me know asap if you want to book a space on our stand for only **£890 + VAT** (excluding graphics) or book literature distribution for only **£150 + VAT**.

British Educational Travel Association (BETA) Youth & Student Travel Summit, Bristol, 8 October. The event consists of one-to-one meetings with hosted buyers, panel discussions and networking opportunities. VisitWiltshire is offering a representation opportunity for attractions and accommodation providers who are interested in attracting this market for a cost of **£250+VAT**.

Excursions Show, Wembley Stadium, 1 February 2025. Stand share opportunity **£870+VAT** (excluding graphics). Minimum of 4 stand sharers required. Please register your interest before end of July.

British Tourism & Travel Show, NEC Birmingham, 19 & 20 March 2025. Stand share opportunity **£925+VAT** (excluding graphics). Minimum of 4 stand sharers required. The fee will include 1m space on Wiltshire/Great West Way stand for the two days.

England's Heritage Cities - Salisbury

We continue to promote Salisbury as part of our programme of trade activity for England's Heritage Cities. In March/April, we delivered a series of three England's Heritage Cities webinars for GT Experiences and their North American agents. One of these focussed on Salisbury and featured Salisbury Cathedral and Stonehenge.

We will shortly be updating the [England's Heritage City Travel Trade Guide](#) so if any additional Salisbury based businesses are interested in being featured in the next edition please get in touch.

Great West Way Travel Trade Activity

Attended Events

In partnership with VisitBritain, Great West Way attended a bespoke **Scandinavian Mission Event**, in Gothenburg and Stockholm, 20-22 March 2024. The RK Travel Group's annual trade event was attended by over 120 tour and coach operators who were looking for interesting ideas for new programmes for 2025 and beyond. RK Travel Group launched their new Great West Way itinerary and there was great interest from many tour/coach operator customers to programmes to this region.

In addition to the RK event we secured meetings with Rolfs Travel Group, Classic World and Temaresor. Buyers showed particular interest in a number of themes such as literature/arts/ film and tv; vineyards/breweries/distilleries; Stately homes and gardens and England's Waterways. We represented a number of businesses including Blenheim Palace, English Heritage's Stonehenge, In & Beyond Bath, Thames Rivercruise and Kennet Horse Boat Company.

New Event Opportunities

Great West Way Marketplace – SAVE THE DATES. Tuesday 22 October – virtual one-to-one meeting day. **Thursday 24 October** – in-person networking event at Blenheim Palace. Further details will be released in due course.

North American Sales Mission - Great West Way are investigating an opportunity to attend a North American Sales Mission in Autumn 2024 or Jan 2025. This sales mission would run over 4 days taking place in New York and Toronto. It will include scheduled office-based meetings with existing and new tour operator/agent key contacts as well as networking receptions in both cities. Great West Way would offer representation for this. If you are interested, please contact Flo.

Trade Directory

Great West Way are currently updating the [Great West Way Travel Trade Directory](#) to the 6th edition. This is the main resource being used by 110+ Official Tour Operators and has a targeted digital distribution via Great West Way and third-party databases of domestic and international key trade contacts. This Travel Trade Directory has received over 8,580 views online and a new full colour A4 guide will be produced as a digital page-turner publication for distribution later this year.

There are still opportunities to advertise. Prices from **£365+VAT** ¼ page – please see [Advertising spec](#) and **book before end of June**. Editorial opportunities also available.

Connections

The next **Great West Way Connections group meeting** will take place on Tuesday 25 June, 3pm. Our new Chairperson Sarah-Jayne Beasley from Blenheim Palace will be welcoming Richard Toomer from the [Tourism Alliance](#) and Emily Wallace from [Inflect Partners](#) to talk about what tourism policy may look like under a Labour Government. Register to attend [HERE](#) or get in touch.

Trade Engagement & Business Support

There is an ongoing trade engagement programme to continue to influence UK and international buyers to package and sell our region. We now have 111 Great West Way [Official Tour Operators](#) that we are currently working with and their associated [bookable programmes](#). If you are interested in targeting any of these buyers please get in touch with Flo.

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.