



Travel Trade Activity Update

October 2023 – January 2024

The following report details Wiltshire travel trade activity from October 2023 – January 2024.

Wiltshire Travel Trade Group 2023/2024

The Wiltshire Travel Trade group for 2023/2024 now consists of 27 tourism businesses and Wiltshire towns. The latest addition is Stourhead House & Garden. We're delighted to have this opportunity to help position Stourhead House & Gardens as an excellent trade proposition.

Please familiarise yourselves with the [VisitWiltshire trade group benefits 2023/2024](#) to ensure you have made the most out of your investment.

The [Wiltshire Travel Trade Group Benefits 2024/2025](#) has now been drafted to be discussed and agreed with the Wiltshire travel trade group. The [2024/2025 Wiltshire Travel Trade Opportunities](#) has also been reviewed and distributed.

In addition to the Wiltshire Travel Trade Group, we are now offering travel trade marketing & distributing services and have had some success in a number of Wiltshire based businesses investing in our services. Swindon Village Hotel is supporting trade activity and Woolley Grange Hotel and Stourhead are being represented at Britain & Ireland Marketplace.

Productions & Distribution of Collateral

The [It's Time for Wiltshire Travel Trade Guide](#) has received over 7,000 views since launch in May 2023. We will shortly be working on the 2024 guide and all members of the VisitWiltshire travel trade group will be featured with an advert and inclusion in editorial. Please review this year's guide and advise any 'Highlights', 'Specialist Tours', 'itinerary ideas', 'special events/exhibitions/festivals' or changes to your business that you would like amended. We will also reach out to request adverts in due course.

Wiltshire familiarisation visit 10 – 12 October 2023

The 2 night/2 day Wiltshire Familiarisation Visit, which took place in partnership with [Greatdays Travel Group](#) in October 2023 was attended by 14 domestic group travel organisers, coach and tour operators. 13 completed feedback surveys were received and results showed the following:

- When asked to rate whether the itinerary lived up to their expectations, all respondents rated 9 or 10 (with 10 being excellent overall).
- Top rated attractions included Longleat (97.7%), REME (88.5%), Salisbury Cathedral (79.2%), STEAM Museum (76.9%), Bowood House & Gardens (71.5%) and Studley Grange (70%).
- Top rated accommodation included DoubleTree by Hilton Swindon (82.3%), Legacy Rose & Crown (76.7%), Holiday Inn Salisbury Stonehenge (70%), and The Stones Hotel (64.4%).
- The Bridge Tea rooms was highly rated (87.7%) and Bradford on Avon Town (75.4%).
- Evaluation indicates that this fam trip has already generated over £80,000 in short-term visitor spend for Wiltshire.

Digital Trade Communication & Databases

We distributed a trade newsletter '[It's Time for Wiltshire in 2024](#)' on 14 December 2024 to 1,561 subscribers. This was sent using the new Brevo distribution platform and it received an open rate of 26% and a click through rate of 2.5%.

Events & Exhibitions

The following events/exhibitions where Wiltshire/Salisbury have been highlighted to buyers include:

Group Leisure & Travel Show, Milton Keynes on 5 October. There was a large presence on our Wiltshire/Great West Way stand at this key domestic travel trade exhibition. Partners included English Heritage, Longleat, Cheddar Gorge, DoubleTree by Hilton Swindon, The Old Bell Hotel, Warminster, Corsham and Holiday Inn Salisbury-Stonehenge. It was an excellent show for data capture with 123 GTOs, coach and tour operator contacts obtained, of which 52% were new contacts and added to the database.

Great West Way Travel Trade Marketplace, 15 & 17 November. Wiltshire's participation in Great West Way Marketplace event was really successful. Wiltshire had its own appointment schedule and all buyers received Wiltshire information in their follow up. Thanks to Longleat's support 50 leisure travel trade buyers were exposed to Wiltshire destinations and tourism businesses and new programmes have already been produced as a result.

AIG and Showcase Britain, London, Thursday 25 January. VisitWiltshire was invited to attend the AIG (America Interest Group) networking brunch with USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand buyers. This was followed by VisitBritain's Showcase Britain networking evening with 120+ buyers from all VisitBritain international markets. There was a lot of interest in Wiltshire and England's Great West Way.

Britain & Ireland Marketplace, London, Friday 26 January. VisitWiltshire represented Woolley Grange Hotel & Stourhead at this buyer: supplier meeting event. There were over 120 additional buyers at this event, brought over by VisitBritain. 33 buyer meetings took place covering many international markets.

Excursions, Wembley Stadium on Sat 27 January. Wiltshire stand sharers include Bowood, Longleat, Stourhead, DoubleTree by Hilton Swindon, and The Old Bell Hotel, Warminster and literature distribution for Corsham. There were over 80 contacts received from this domestic audience.

A new programme of [2024/2025 Exhibition and Event Travel Trade Opportunities](#) are now available book. Please contact [Flo](#) if you are interested.

England's Heritage Cities - Salisbury

ETM North American Marketplace, 29 February (online). VisitWiltshire will be attending this ETOA buyer: supplier meeting event highlighting Salisbury as part of England's Heritage Cities and its trade product offer, to in-market North American buyers.

We continue to promote Salisbury as part of our programme of trade activity for England's Heritage Cities. The [England's Heritage City Travel Trade Guide](#) has been distributed to over 2,000 key trade contacts.

We're working with GT Experiences on a number of England's Heritage Cities Travel Agent Training Webinars which are due to take place in March. Salisbury Cathedral and Stonehenge are being included to highlight Salisbury and its trade focussed offer to the North American market. We are also planning a North American agent fam visit to a selected number of cities, including Salisbury.

Great West Way Travel Trade Activity

Following the launch and distribution of our 5th edition of the [Great West Way Travel Trade Directory](#) in September 2023, this extensive guide has had almost 3,000 views.

We're working in partnership with VisitBritain to attend a **Scandinavia Mission** in Gothenburg and Stockholm, 20-22 March 2024. Great West Way will attend the RK Travel TUR meeting event plus have other additional buyer meetings and we're also looking to arrange a Scandinavian trade fam visit in the autumn. Representation opportunity is available for Ambassadors.

The next **Great West Way Connections group meeting** will take place on Wednesday 27 March 2024. Following securing a number of new programmes in Scandinavia - this meeting will focus on the Scandinavian/Nordic market with a VisitBritain in-market update. We will also be discussing our new 2024/2025 Great West Way Tactical Activity Plan, and highlighting our Travel Trade Opportunities for 2024/2025 at this meeting. Register your interest to attend [HERE](#).

Official Tour Operators – We now have over 110 Official Tour Operators with new programmes from **RK Travel Group (Scandinavia)**- [Great West Way - All of England on a string](#), **Helloworld Travel / Viva Holidays – (Australia/New Zealand)** [England's Great West Way Self Drive](#) and **Quattro Passi / Unique Born** [Sulle Tracce Di Jane Austen](#) (In the Footsteps of Jane Austen).

Check out all the UK and international [Official Tour Operators](#) that we are currently working with and their associated [bookable programmes](#).

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.