



ENGLAND'S GREAT WEST WAY®

Great West Way Travel Trade Activity Update

October 2024 – February 2025

The following report details trade activity from October 2024 – February 2025:

Travel Trade Activity Plan 2025/2026

We have recently reviewed our [Great West Way Travel Trade Tactical Activity Plan for 2025/2026](#) and the [2025 Travel Trade Opportunities](#). This will enhance visibility of Ambassador tourism businesses and destinations to the trade via our trade activity and relationships. It includes exhibition and event opportunities and inclusion in communication and resources such as our Travel Trade Directory.

Production and Distribution of Collateral

The new 6th edition of the digital [Great West Way Travel Trade Directory](#) was launched at Marketplace 2024. This is the main resource being used by 120+ Official Tour Operators and has a targeted digital distribution via Great West Way and third-party databases to domestic and international key trade contacts. This directory and the new itineraries continue to be distributed throughout the year at trade events, exhibitions and digitally in follow up emails and communications with the trade.

We have also secured support for promoting the Travel Trade Directory from VisitBritain's USA team as they have added it to their new [TravPro training portal](#) which gives good additional reach to VB's target travel advisors and travel agents.

Digital Trade Communications

[Great West Way Launches New Travel Trade Directory](#) trade newsletter was distributed on 21 October 2024 to 2,118 subscribers. This received a 46.8% open rate and 18.6% click through rate.

A couple of solus emails were sent out during this period including [Explore 600 years of history in the stunning Bodleian Libraries](#) on 4 November 2024. This was distributed to 3,231 UK and domestic tour operators, wholesalers, agents, trade press and group travel organisers etc.

A [Jane Austen 250](#) newsletter was distributed on 21 January to 2,148 trade buyers. This received a 39.7% open rate and 3.7% click through rate.

Events & Exhibitions

Great West Way has attended and represented Ambassadors at the following recent travel trade events:

Group Leisure & Travel Show, 3 October 2024

Great West Way exhibited at the [Group Leisure & Travel Show](#) in Milton Keynes. It was a super day, with 10 stand sharers – Waddesdon Manor, English Heritage, Blenheim Palace, Longleat, Cheddar Gorge & Caves, Old Bell Hotel Warminster, Studley Grange Garden & Leisure Park, VisitWiltshire, Stourhead and Woolley Grange Hotel. We spoke to 100+ group travel organisers, coach and tour operators, promoting the new Great West Way itineraries, including Jane Austen 250. Plus we were interviewed by Simon Calder for his Travel Podcast – which can be heard [here](#).

British Educational Travel Association (BETA) [Youth & Student Travel Summit](#), Bristol, 8 October 2024

This event consisted of one-to-one meetings with hosted buyers, panel discussions and networking opportunities. We represented Stourhead, Mary Shelley's House of Frankenstein and the Stonehenge Hostel at Cholderton. We also hosted 3 USA/Canadian buyers on a Great West Way fam trip following the event.



Great West Way Marketplace 22 & 24 October 2024

Thanks to all the Ambassadors who attended this year's Great West Way Marketplace event especially Blenheim Palace who hosted the networking event. It was a huge success with over 120+ attendees and in excess of 2,000 meetings. The press release can be seen [here](#).

Britain & Ireland Marketplace, London, Friday 24 January 2025

Great West Way attended the Britain & Ireland Marketplace event in London. This 1:1 meeting event was organised by ETOA and ran in partnership with VisitBritain who supported UK visits from 120 travel trade buyers. We met with 30+ key trade buyers, highlighting Jane Austen 250 and Stourhead House & Gardens. Many of these tour operators plan to develop new or review existing Great West Way programmes for sale 2025 and 2026.

Forthcoming missions and events

Great West Way will be representing Ambassadors and attending the following events:

- [British Tourism & Travel Show](#), NEC Birmingham, 19 & 20 March 2025. Domestic trade show for GTOs, coach and tour operators. We have a 4m x 2m stand booked with stand sharers confirmed as Bodleian Libraries, Stourhead and Blenheim Palace. If you would like to join our Great West Way stand the cost is £1,000+VAT (excluding graphics) for the two days. Or literature distribution for only £170 + VAT.
- [Group Leisure & Travel Show in Milton Keynes](#), 2 October 2025. Domestic trade show for GTOs, coach and tour operators. If you would like to join our stand the cost is £935+VAT (excluding graphics). Literature distribution for £155 + VAT.

Trade Engagement

This is a busy time for trade engagement with numerous conversations and correspondence with buyers about developing new programmes or reviewing existing ones. Many of the successes we're having with tour operators now are from conversations that started 2-3 years ago.

We have been rolling out a programme of trade activity delivering Great West Way webinars to a number of our UK based DMC contacts and their sales teams, focussing on our new itineraries and giving them ideas for new itinerary development. So far, we have delivered in-person webinars to over 50+ people from JAC Travel, Angela Shanley Associates and Tour Partner Group.

New Great West Way Bookable Programmes

Belgium tour operator, Beautiful Britain have put together a series of new [Great West Way Journeys through Southern England from London to Bristol](#) including, 5-day trip with your own car, 8-day trip in the Footsteps of Jane Austen, [5-day Great West Way Train Journey](#), [Explore the Cities & Nature of the Great West Way by train](#) and 8-day Cycle Tour from London, Bristol or Bath. You can see their [promotional Flyer](#) too.

Australia/New Zealand Helloworld Travel and Viva Holidays have now launched their new England's Great West Way Packages and are selling 2025 programmes including [5-day England's Great West Way](#) and [England's Great West Way Self Drive](#) and [England's Great West Way \(agent site\)](#)

Reiseburo Luttje Torn from Germany has launched a new 14 night programme - [England's Golden Mean - The Great West Way](#) and produced an [England & der Great West Way video](#)



ENGLAND'S GREAT WEST WAY®



Tailor-made tours and destination
management
UK and Europe

NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER

Follow in the footsteps of Jane Austen



2025 marks the 250th anniversary of the birth of Jane Austen, one of England's greatest novelists, so it's the perfect time to explore the places she lived and the locations that inspired her work. Great West Way®, a popular touring route between London and Bristol, has put together a wonderful new itinerary to celebrate this landmark occasion.

[Jane Austen 250th Anniversary Tours](#)

In addition we are working on a Discovery Visit for an Italian Official Tour Operator - [Agape Viaggi](#) for a visit in May. If you'd like to support this fam visit, we are looking for accommodation accessible by train, in Reading, Bath, Bradford on Avon and Salisbury between 24 – 28 May.

Janet Redler Travel promoted our new Jane Austen itinerary in their November 2024 client/agent newsletter

Great West Way Official Tour Operators

We now have 120+ [Official Tour Operators](#) – who are committed to developing and distributing Great West Way programmes. Most recent sign up includes [Southern Tour](#) – a Salisbury based local ground handler.

Strategic Activity and Business Support

We've been working closely with a number of tourism businesses to support their travel trade strategic activity. This has included email introductions to buyers and writing new trade resources in preparation for the busy sales season. Please get in touch if you'd like to schedule a meeting to discuss our travel trade business support and how we can help you and your tourism business target the trade.

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