



ENGLAND'S GREAT WEST WAY®

Great West Way Connections

Virtual Meeting Tuesday 25 June 2024, 3pm

Meeting Notes

[View the Virtual Connections Meeting Recording](#)

1. Welcome and introductions from new Chairperson

David Andrews, welcomed our new Chairperson Sarah-Jayne Beasley from Blenheim.

2. What will Tourism Policy look like under a Labour Government?

SJ welcomed and introduced Richard Toomer from the Tourism Alliance and Emily Wallace from Inflect Partners.

Emily gave a political overview and presented '[What will Tourism policy look like under a Labour Government?](#)'.

Richard Toomer's slides can be seen [here](#). He talked about the following:

1. The need for a new cross-Government tourism plan
2. Policy opportunities and threats for tourism with a Labour Government
 - a. Opportunities e.g. borders, EU-UK relations; business engagement
 - b. Threats e.g. intersection of communities and tourism; lack of commitments in the manifesto;
 - c. Things which could go either way – regional and local devolution; youth mobility
3. Tourism Alliance policy agenda – [Realising the Potential](#) – a manifesto for tourism in the next parliament.

On 13 June 2024 Tourism Alliance issued a weekly update newsletter to members that detailed the three major party manifestos with relevant highlights for tourism. This can be seen [here](#).

This session was followed by a Q & A.

3. Great West Way Travel Trade Update

Please take a look at the [Great West Way Activity Update April – June 2024](#).

Please note the following points with actions:

Travel Trade Directory - We are in the process of updating the digital [Great West Way Travel Trade Directory](#). This is the main resource being used by 111+ 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 a produced as a digital page-turner publication for distribution later this summer.

New itineraries include:

- 5 days - **Follow in the Footsteps of Jane Austen**
- 8 days+ -**Explore England's Heritage Cities as you travel along the GWW**
- 4 days - **Exploring Beyond: A Delightful Detour to Oxford**
- 4 days – **Glorious Gardens along the Great West Way**

ACTION: Please check your listing in the current directory and advise any amends. There are still opportunities for advertising with prices from £365+VAT ¼ page – please see [Advertising spec](#) and book before the end of June 2024. Editorial opportunities also available.

Solus newsletters – RHS Garden Wisley has recently worked with Great West Way to enable us to distribute a solus newsletter to our database of 2,000+ buyers.

ACTION: There is the opportunity to have your business/destination showcased to our database – please advise Flo if you wish to book and schedule a solus trade newsletter for £280+VAT.

a) Priorities for 2024/2025

Great West Way are continuing the trade engagement programme targeting buyers from multiple markets, to influence and help to develop and market new Great West Way itineraries.

- We now have 111 Official Tour Operators – who are committed to developing and distributing Great West Way programmes. The latest Official Tour Operator to sign up was [Evaneos](#) who are a large French tour operator looking to sell a new Great West Way programme for 2025. They are also working with a UK based DMC called Highpoint Holidays, who we are also engaged with to assist with the development of this new itinerary. Check out the complete list of [Official Tour Operators](#) and their associated [Bookable Programmes](#) online.
- **Self-drive bespoke trade fam visits** – Great West Way have reviewed how we can deliver a more flexible solution for trade fam visits 2024/2025. We are planning to offer a new bespoke self-drive itinerary development service for Official Tour Operators. We will encourage the trade to look at the [Travel Trade Directory](#) and view the additional trade information on Ambassadors travel trade pages at www.GreatWestWay.co.uk/traveltrade

We will issue a fam visit enquiry form and ask buyers to complete and return so we capture all the information about what they require and how/when and to whom, they are planning to sell it. We can then create bespoke self-drive itinerary for them and liaise with Ambassadors accordingly. 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 destinations.

ACTION: We will assume attractions/activities are happy to offer 2 comp tickets. Please take a look at your trade product page or request one if you haven't already got one – they are free for Ambassadors. Let Flo know if you do not want to participate or if you want to create a new bespoke offer for buyers such as discounted/comp accommodation and/or food and drink incentives?

b) Forthcoming Opportunities

The following events/exhibitions are now available for Ambassadors to book/register an interest – please contact [Flo](#):

- [Group Leisure & Travel Show, Milton Keynes 3 October](#). Domestic trade show for GTOs, coach and tour operators. We now have 10 stand sharers which include Wiltshire, Stourhead, Longleat, Cheddar Gorge, Woolley Grange Hotel, English Heritage, Old Bell Warminster, Studley Grange, Blenheim Palace and Waddesdon Manor. **We have only 1 space remaining** 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. We are offering a representation opportunity for attractions and accommodation providers who are interested in attracting this market for a cost of **£250+VAT**. Confirmed representation includes Stourhead and Mary Shelley's House of Frankenstein.
- **[Britain & Ireland Marketplace](#), Friday 24 January 2025, London.** This event is organised by ETOA in partnership with UKinbound and VisitBritain. VisitWiltshire are offering trade group partners a representation opportunity at this buyer: supplier meeting event. **Costs from £285+VAT**
- **[Excursions Show](#), Wembley Stadium, 1 February 2025.** Domestic trade show for GTOs, coach and tour operators. Stand share opportunity **£870+VAT** (excluding graphics). Minimum of 4 stand sharers required. Please register your interest before the end of July to ensure we get the early bird rate.
- **[British Tourism & Travel Show](#), NEC Birmingham, 19 & 20 March 2025.** Domestic trade show for GTOs, coach and tour operators. 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.
- **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. We may attend this and offer representation to a number of relevant businesses. Please register your interest with Flo. Further info including pricing etc to follow.

In addition, there is a new Dutch opportunity. **Please Contact [Fiona](#) before 31 July if you are interested.**

- Great West Way has a new opportunity targeting the Dutch market. Working in collaboration with one of our Official Tour Operators - House of Britain, Great West Way Ambassadors have the opportunity to be featured in the [Great Britain magazine](#). Promote your business to the Netherlands market by inclusion in a 6-page Great West Way feature in Great Britain Magazine – **October 2024**. This subscription travel magazine publication is distributed to 17,500 Dutch consumers age 50+ and will also be sold in retail outlets. It is the only printed publication in the Netherlands promoting Great Britain. House of Britain will include their Great West Way itineraries as a call to action to enable customers to book and be contracted. There is the opportunity to secure editorial inclusion for your business or destination, at a cost of between **£195-£300**.

c) Great West Way Marketplace

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. Plus bespoke self-drive familiarisation visits for buyers. Costs and registration information will be released in July.

4. Any Other Business / Date of Next meeting

AOB – None

Date of Next Meeting – Tuesday 1 October 2024

APPENDIX – List of attendees:

Eva	Ambler-Thomas	Aerospace Bristol
Ann	Arthey	Annie's Just Jane
Victoria	Annett	Bath Bus Company Ltd
Jenny	Low	Berkeley Castle
Dominic	Hare	Blenheim Palace
Sarah-Jayne	Beasley	Blenheim Palace
Kate	del Nevo	Bodleian Libraries
Hazel	PARKER	Box Parish Council
varian	tye	Box Parish Council. Wiltshire
carla	brooks	Brooks Hotels ltd
Lucy	Grier	Brunel's SS Great Britain
Ali	Robinson	Calne Town Council
Richard	Perry	Castle Combe circuit
Laura	Hilton	Clifton Suspension Bridge Trust
Keith	Seward	Compass Video
Charlotte	Phillips	Corsham Town Council
Sharon	Thomas	Corsham Town Council/Visit Corsham
Robin	Wiltshire	De Vere Tortworth Court
Jane	Thomas	English Heritage
Anna-Karin	Hanson	English Heritage - Stonehenge
Gaius	Wyncoll	Exclusive Collection
Megan	Cave	Exclusive Collection - The Manor House
David	Andrews	Great West Way
Flo	Wallace	Great West Way
Fiona	Errington	Great West Way / VisitWiltshire
Nicola	Smith	GuestHouse Hotels
Caroline	King	Hampton by Hilton Bath City
David	Vella	Hilton Reading
Ann	Wilson	Historic Royal Palaces
Stella	Coulthurst	Hungerford Town Council
Julian	Mitra	In & Beyond Bath
William	Davy	In & Beyond Bath
Sarah	Moon	In & Beyond Bath
Emily	Wallace	Inflect Partners
Anna	Walton	Longleat and Cheddar Gorge and Caves
Janet	White	Ludgershall Town Council
Owen	White	Ludgershall Town Council
Lesley	Crawford-Price	Malmesbury Town Council
Chris	Harris	Mary Shelley's House of Frankenstein
Vicki	Smith	Mary Shelley's House of Frankenstein
paul	clarke	Mercure White Hart Hotel
Elaine	Falconer	Milford Hall Hotel
Jo	Atkins	National Trust
Nancy	Lawson	Overtown Manor Bed and Breakfast and small meeting

Justine	Rayner	Pennyhill Park
Susie	Brew	Pewsey Vale Tourism Partnership
Stephen	Fox	Ralph Trustees (Woolley)
Rebecca	West	Roman Baths
Lindsey	Burnett	Royal Berkshire- Exclusive Collection
Julia	White	Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead
Kimberley	Laing	Royal Collection Trust
Marcia	Clement	Royal Horticultural Society
Hannah	Paye	Salisbury Cathedral
Vicky	Goodwright	Salisbury Information Centre
Richard	Barker	South Western Railway
Daniel	King	Stonehenge Inn
Philip	Niemand	Stourhead
Charlotte	Toop	Stourhead - National Trust
Julia	Stewart	Studley Grange
Kim	Hallett	The Bodleian Libraries
Robert	Hues	The Farm at Avebury
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Andrea	MacMillan	The Old Bell Hotel, Malmesbury
James	Sullivan-Tailyour	The Old Bell Inn, Warminster
Fiona	Hobson	The Tutti Pole
		The White Hart Inn
Richard	Toomer	Tourism Alliance
Rob	Boreham-Fish	University of Reading - Venue Reading & Venue Henley
Kim	Downing	Village Hotels
Lisa	Rowbotham	Visit Britain
Dan	Mills	Visit West
Angela	Ivey	VisitRichmond
Katie	Brown	VisitWiltshire and Great West Way
Claire	Brown	Wessex Museums
trish	fairbeard	YMCA Brunel Group