



ENGLAND'S GREAT WEST WAY®

Great West Way Connections

Virtual Meeting Tuesday 24 October 2023, 3pm

Meeting Notes

[View the Virtual Connections Meeting Recording](#)

ATTENDEES:

Florence Wallace	Great West Way
Katie Brown	Great West Way
Vera Lett	Tour Partner Group
Roisin Donnelly	ETOA
Scott Elliot	VisitBritain
Anna Walton	Longleat
Amiee Thomas	Longleat
Philip Niemand	National Trust
Jo Atkins	National Trust
Isobel Thomas	Hampton By Hilton Bath City
Shane Brennan	Salisbury Cathedral
Marie Thomas	Salisbury Cathedral
Sharon Thomas	Corsham
Anna-Karin Hanson	English Heritage
Aimee Edwards	Cholderton Rare Breeds Farm
Elaine Falconer	Holiday Inn Salisbury Stonehenge / The Stones Hotel
Sarah-Jayne Beasley	Blenheim Palace
Sally Graff	Cotswolds Plus
Kim Downing	Village Hotel Swindon
Lucy Grier	Brunel's SS Great Britain
Karen Roebuck	Visit Thames
David Gardner	First Travel Solutions
Max Rawlinson	Visit West

1. Welcome / Introduction /How's Business

Flo Wallace chaired the meeting as Iain Terry sent apologies - having lost his voice.

How's business highlighted good summer visitor figures although weather affected numbers in July & August. Good demand for forward bookings, particularly for September – lengthening the season. North American market still strong with European visitors still interested. Chinese visitors coming back in smaller groups with a shift to more FIT business. Indian visitors seeing an increase as predicted.

2. Great West Way Travel Trade Update

Please see [Great West Way Activity Update April – September 2023](#).

Priorities for 2024 include a continued focus on building and developing relationships with our Official Tour Operators (currently 109) to generate more Great West Way bookable programmes (approx. 80). Plus a continued commitment to support suppliers businesses and destinations to help target the trade.

Forthcoming opportunities include the following:

Great West Way Marketplace – last chance to book your place at this event on 15 & 17 November. **The appointment preference system opens on 27 October, so make sure you have booked by then so buyers can request appointments with you.** Take a look at who has booked [here](#). There are over 30 tourism buyers confirmed and they want to meet with you. From only £267.97 plus VAT - [BOOK NOW HERE](#).

Britain Ireland and Marketplace, ETOA, Friday 26 January 2024, London. Book direct at www.etoa.org/bim before 17 November with discount code 24VBBIM for discounted rate of £849 plus VAT. If you are interested in this event but unable to afford these rates, please contact [Flo](#) to discuss how we can represent your business/destination.

Excursions, Wembley, Sat 27 January. The Great West Way stand will include stand sharers such as Bowood, Longleat, DoubleTree by Hilton Swindon and The Old Bell Hotel – Warminster. Stand sharing spaces are still available from £735 plus VAT and literature distribution from £130 plus VAT.

British Tourism & Travel Show, (BTTS)NEC, Birmingham, 20-21 March 2024. We can offer Ambassadors stand share space at this two day show from £1,115 plus VAT (min 4 stand sharers required).

Group Leisure & Travel Show 2024 – please register your interest to attend as details tbc.

Destination Britain North American 2024 – please register your interest to attend as details tbc.

ACTION: Please contact [Flo](#) if you'd like to discuss or book any of the above events/exhibitions.

3. Travel Trade Training – An overview of working with the Travel Trade (in preparation for Marketplace) delivered by a range of Industry experts.

This session was hosted by Flo Wallace (with words submitted by Iain Terry - Royal Collection Trust) and included Sarah-Jayne Beasley – Blenheim Palace, Vera Lett- Tour Partner Group, Roisin Donnelly - ETOA and Anna Walton - Longleat. It covered the following:

- Why Target the Trade?
- Understanding Travel Distribution
- A collaborative, strategic, programme of tactical trade activity
- How to make the most of a B2B event and what buyers are looking for
- Great West Way Marketplace
 - Virtual one-to-one meetings
 - In-person networking event
 - Buyer Discovery Visits

You can view the presentation [Travel Trade Training - An Overview of Working with the Travel Trade \(in preparation for Marketplace\)](#).

ACTION: If you're interested in Travel Trade Marketing & Distribution Services, please contact [Flo](#) to discuss how we can help support and grow your travel trade business.

4. VisitBritain's Taking England To The World

Scott Elliot from VisitBritain delivered [Taking England to the World Programme Overview 2023](#).

5. Questions & Answers / Any Other Business

ACTION: Sign up for Marketplace if you haven't already – very good value entry point to start working with the trade.

Isabel from Hampton by Hilton Bath City reported that following attendance at Marketplace 2022, they subsequently received a good level of business. They have rebooked for this year and are keen to collaborate in order to generate more business in the future.