

8 May 2019



IT'S A BOY!

### ENGLAND'S GREAT WEST WAY – FIT FOR ROYALTY

Mark the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Queen Victoria and the arrival of the Royal Baby with a pilgrimage along the Great West Way, which follows one of the first Great Roads commissioned by the Kings of England.

Nowhere is as quintessentially English or thoroughly royal as the Great West Way - it follows a road commissioned by Charles I and is home to Windsor Castle, Hampton Court Palace, Eton College and Highgrove, so where better to mark the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Queen Victoria (24 May) and the arrival of the new Royal baby boy.

The new touring route has particularly special connections to the royal couples. For Harry and Meghan, it is home not only to Windsor Castle, where they married, but also to Cliveden House, where Meghan got ready for the wedding and spent her last night as a single woman. Kate Middleton, now the Duchess of Cambridge, attended the independent boarding school Marlborough College in Wiltshire.

Here's how to enjoy a royal journey along the route:

- **Windsor Castle** – the world's oldest and largest occupied royal residence was the focus of the British Empire during Queen Victoria's reign and where she spent most of her time. More recently, St George's Chapel, within the grounds of the Castle, was the setting for the Duke and Duchess of Sussex's 2018 wedding. Visitors can tour the State Apartments and Chapel.
- **Hampton Court Palace** – famously home to Henry VIII and all six of his wives – was a royal residence until 1737. Queen Victoria herself opened it to the public in 1838 and its grandeur, grounds, history and riverside setting, make it one of the country's most popular tourist attractions to this day
- **Eton College** – time will tell whether the royal baby will follow in the footsteps of Dad and Uncle William – both went to **Eton College**, walking distance from Windsor Castle and open to visitors on guided tours between May and September.
- **Highgrove** – when the new royal baby, 7<sup>th</sup> in line to the throne, visits his Grandpa (HRH The Prince of Wales to you and me), he will be going to Highgrove, His Royal Highness's private residence. The gardens are open to the public on selected dates throughout the year.
- **SS Great Britain** - Prince Albert launched the ship in Bristol on 19 July 1843, having travelled aboard the Royal Train along the then-newly opened Great Western Railway from London to Bristol (a route you can replicate today, albeit not aboard the Royal Train!). Queen Victoria also boarded the ship when it was docked in London in 1845 and described it as "magnificent." When

visitors today explore Brunel's SS Great Britain, they can dress up in replica Victorian costumes, some of which are inspired by Queen Victoria's dresses.

- **Berkeley Castle** – Henry II gave the Castle to the family in 1153, it has received royal guests ever since: Edward II, Henry VIII, Elizabeth I, the Countess of Wessex and the late Queen Mother have all been to Berkeley Castle. Berkeley Castle is open to visitors from April to October.

Find out more about the Great West Way at [GreatWestWay.co.uk](http://GreatWestWay.co.uk)

**Ends**

**For further information or to arrange a press visit please contact Florence Wallace, Travel Trade & PR Manager, [flowallace@GreatWestWay.co.uk](mailto:flowallace@GreatWestWay.co.uk) Tel: 01722 341309 or 07436 588860.**

Images for **Great West Way** can be downloaded from our Flickr gallery via this link <https://www.flickr.com/gp/129320754@N03/3g1fd7> Photos may be used in print and/or online for the promotion of tourism to the Great West Way and photos used must be credited to [www.GreatWestWay.co.uk](http://www.GreatWestWay.co.uk), unless otherwise stated in the title of the photo. Full terms and conditions can be found [here](#).

**Notes to Editors:**

The Great West Way is one of a number of successful projects to receive funding from the UK Government's £40 million Discover England Fund, administered by VisitEngland. For further information go to [www.discoverenglandfund.org](http://www.discoverenglandfund.org)

For further information, the Story of the Great West Way booklet is available at [www.GreatWestWay.co.uk/storyoftheGreatWestWay](http://www.GreatWestWay.co.uk/storyoftheGreatWestWay)

Great West Way and England's Great West Way are registered trademarks.