



## Great West Way Travel Trade Activity Update

November 2022- March 2023

The following report details trade activity from November 2022 – March 2023:

### Production and Distribution of Collateral

The Great West Way® Travel Trade Directory, launched in June 2022 was widely distributed to over 2,000 key trade contacts via the Great West Way database and third-party databases. To date it has received over 6,400 views. 100 copies were printed and distributed at the Great West Way Marketplace event in November 2022 and at subsequent in-person trade events.

### Great West Way Official Tour Operators

We now have over 100 Official Tour Operators and are continuing our programme of trade engagement throughout 2023. Take a look at the UK and international [Official Tour Operators](#) that we are currently working with and their associated [bookable programmes](#).

The latest new Official Tour Operators include Travel's Easy from Scandinavia, three from USA - Black Tie Travel, Atlantic Tours & Travel and Europe Express; Vololine from Italy, British Tips from South Africa and two from the UK, Helentours Concierge Management and Wilderness England.

We're working with our Official Tour Operator network to help update and influence Great West Way programme development for 2023/2024 not just in terms of product inclusion, but for marketing and distribution initiatives such as brand exposure and future webinars for sales training for staff and agents.

If you are putting together your trade strategies for 2023/2024, we'd suggest you consider targeting those we are already working to ensure your business/destination is included. If you are working with any we have not signed up yet, you may want to discuss how they can broaden their programmes to incorporate other tourism businesses along the Great West Way and put them in touch with [Flo](#).

### Events & Exhibitions

**Great West Way Marketplace** was a huge success, with its virtual meeting day on Wednesday 16 November, a networking day at Ascot Racecourse on Friday 18 November and a series of Discovery Visits for buyers taking place over the weekend of Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 November. Great West Way has received positive feedback from both the buyers and suppliers who attended. You can see our Press Release on the event [here](#).

We're looking at running another hybrid Marketplace event in November 2023. If you are interested in offering your venue to host buyers as part of this event, please get in touch with [Flo](#).

We have represented Ambassadors and Great West Way has exhibited at the following recent travel trade events:

- **Showcase Britain**, London, Thursday 26 January. VisitBritain welcomed more than 120 international travel trade buyers to Britain, for a series of educational fam visits and to align with ETOA's BIM event. We were invited to meet and update them with Great West Way news.
- **Britain & Ireland Marketplace**, London, Friday 27 Jan – ETOA event with 30+ one-to-one meetings with buyers
- **Excursions**, Twickenham, Saturday 28 January. Great West Way attended and met with over 70 domestic tour/coach operators and group travel organisers. Stand sharers included Reading, Thames Rivercruise, Museum of English Rural Life, Wiltshire and Bowood House & Gardens.



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- **VisitBritain Nordics Workshop**, Copenhagen 15-16 February. Great West Way attended a one-day buyer and supplier meeting workshop where we met approximately 15 Scandinavian buyers with a view to develop future Great West Way programmes.
- **Explore GB**, 27 February – 3 March. Great West Way meetings have been scheduled with approximately 20 buyer plus meetings with VisitBritain overseas reps from USA, Italy, Spain, France, Belgium/ Netherlands, Australia/New Zealand and Germany/Austria/Switzerland.

### Familiarisation Visits

As part of the Great West Way Marketplace event we ran 4 x Discovery Visits across the route; Discover Great West Way West (Bath & Bristol); Discover Great West Way East (Windsor & Thames); Discover Great West Way Central 1 (Wiltshire & Gloucestershire); Discover Great West Way Central 2 (Reading & Newbury). They ran from 18 – 20 November 2022 and were designed to be small and informal groups of buyers (4 – 6 pax) with destination leads and with support from Ambassadors.

As part of the Showcase Britain event, there were several VisitBritain familiarisation visits that experienced the Great West Way.

- Canadian hosted buyer educational fam visit to Great West Way (25 Jan – 2 Feb). 14 buyers visited Bombay Sapphire Distillery, Roman Baths, Mary Shelley's House of Frankenstein, Jane Austen Centre and Bristol Packet Boat Trips, Aerospace and they stayed at The Old Bell, Malmesbury where we held a special Great West Way event with a champagne reception and dinner.
- Scandinavian hosted buyer education fam visit (28 Jan) – consisting of 6 buyers visited Windsor where the Great West Way team met up with them for dinner.
- Netherlands/ Belgium (7 pax) and Spain/Italy (14 pax) hosted buyer educational fam visits culminated in Bristol where they found out more about the Great West Way.

### Website Development

We continue to update content on [www.GreatWestWay.co.uk/traveltrade](http://www.GreatWestWay.co.uk/traveltrade) pages for buyers, and we now have 33 Travel Trade specific product pages from Ambassadors – which are highlighted to buyers looking for tourism product to contract. If you haven't already created a FREE travel trade page, then please contact [Flo](#) for the template.

### Digital Trade Communication

The [Great West Way® 2023 Highlights for the Trade](#) newsletter was distributed on 14 February to over 2,000 international and domestic key trade contacts. To date it has had a 40% open rate and 8% click through rate.

Please ensure that your travel trade news is sent through to the Great West Way team for future distribution.

### B2B PR

In the run up to and following our successful Marketplace event, recent press coverage includes:

- Group Travel World – 12 October 2022 – [Great West Way Travel Trade Marketplace 2022](#)
- Business Biscuit – 29 November 2022 - [Great West Way Marketplace Hailed a Huge Success](#)
- UKinbound – 9 December 2022 – [Great West Way Hosts Annual Marketplace Event](#)



## ENGLAND'S GREAT WEST WAY®

Following the VisitBritain Canadian fam trip and digital trade newsletter, we received coverage in Canada's Travel Industry Today publication – [A Bridge not far : Touring and Tips along Britain's Great West Way](#)

### **Travel Trade Business Support**

We have created a new Great West Way [Travel Trade Business Support page](#) in the Ambassador section of our website. This page holds all the latest Connections meeting notes, supporting documents and Travel Trade Tactical Activity Plan, Travel Trade Opportunities as well as links to the previous Travel Trade business support and training sessions.

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