

The Tavistock Group Travel Audit and Report 2022.

Tavistock Heritage Trust

Conducted in the months of April, May and June 2022 by Steve Reed Tourism Ltd.



steve reed tourism
SUPPORTING THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

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Executive Summary.

The businesses and organisations visited and/or consulted with regard to the Tavistock Group Travel Audit activity have largely confirmed that they are in favour and supportive of any coach and group travel focus for the area.

Although Tavistock offers some challenges to tour planners with regards to a breadth and choice of services and factors that help make for a sustainable group travel product, these are not insurmountable. A key consideration is the degree of national visibility that Tavistock holds for the UK travel trade. Reaching their radar would be a core goal. These challenges are typical of what is in effect a UK rural tourism offering but in no way distract from the construction of a coherent, joined up and compelling proposition – the means by which Tavistock and its businesses can benefit over the years from that approach.

There exists a number of accommodation providers who already have experience of targeting and looking after groups of all types. These are not what you would call *large* hotels as the biggest has around 30 rooms, but overall the hotel stock around the wider area too has potential to take different types of groups and at different rates. One or two hotels [mainly country house type hotels] however do not see groups as a priority and prefer for example to maintain their focus on other sectors of the tourism market.

Attractions too, some on the periphery and hinterland of Tavistock itself, are generally well versed with the value and worth of groups as a key part of their customer profile.

Similarly the hospitality sector, especially within the market town of Tavistock itself, provides for a number of activities essential to the existence of a valid group travel profile – not least specialist and independent shops coupled to a great variety of cafes, restaurants and assorted eateries.

Tavistock also provides for the basic needs of all towns wishing to attract coaches. These include a variety of toilets; well placed directional signage and of equal importance; a free coach park centrally positioned. The re-emergence of a tourist information hub and visitor office – right in the heart of the town's attractions – is a key bonus for groups and tourists generally.

The town and its environs possess a tourism offering based in the main upon its rich heritage and this is important in any future touristic planning. Many visitors after all are keen to know the history of the places and the stories of the people who helped make Tavistock an obvious base, hub and centre for their Devon adventures.

The Tavistock Group Travel Audit and Report 2022.

Conducted by Steve Reed Tourism Ltd, UK group travel specialists working in conjunction with local Tavistock tourism businesses and organisations. Commissioned by the Tavistock Heritage Trust and in liaison with Jo Butler, General Manager of Visit South Devon and Discover Dartmouth.

The methodology included the following:

- Inspection visits to sites in and around the World Heritage Gateway of Tavistock in Devon. Several of these could be characterised as *heritage* attractions.
- Face to face meetings with a number of key players and certain of the sites.
- Visits to a mixture of accommodation providers.
- Visits to a variety of attractions and tourism providers. These included retail, hospitality and activity-based providers.
- Telephone and desk work to supplement the information gathered during the sites visits. Also included are the views of actual coach and tour operators.



Key Objectives of the Group Travel Audit Visits and Report.

The activity was conducted in the understanding that the findings would provide useful information of the preparedness and fit of the Tavistock tourism sector to enable the following:

To understand the key organisations, public or private sector, best suited to develop and maintain a strong and sustainable group travel offer for Tavistock.

To shine a light on a cross section and representative sample of tourism businesses and organisations with regards specifically to the group travel and coach party tourism industry. In effect a snapshot of Tavistock from a tourism and group travel perspective.

To ascertain the positive practices and opportunities demonstrated by the respondents to the Group Travel Audit in respect of moving forward.

To use these findings to suggest realistic and deliverable actions to help achieve an improved group travel offer for Tavistock based upon its assets for groups and its tourism USPS.

List of Businesses Visited/Consulted:

- Lewtrenchard Manor. Met GM Duncan Murray.
- Buckland Abbey. Met Sarah [a custodian of NT].
- The Garden House. Met Kerry Gibbons [admissions and sales].
- Tamar Trails. Met Duty Manager Hal Gambles.
- Tavistock Guildhall, TIC. Met Richard Rundell Centre Manager.
- The Bedford Hotel. Spoke to Mike Coombes and met Dylan the Duty Manager.
- Morwellham Quay.
- The Horn of Plenty Hotel.
- Queens Hotel.
- Tavistock Inn.
- The Two Bridges Hotel. Met Natalie in Reception.
- Tavistock Town Hall.
- Tavistock Museum.
- Pannier Market/Butchers Hall.

Individual Visits to the Businesses by Steve Reed Tourism [SRT].



These are described in the order that SRT visited or spoke to the sites in question.

Lewtrenchard Manor Hotel.

The owner and GM of the hotel – Duncan Murray - explained to me that although the hotel had previously hosted groups, these in the main had been for the purposes of a meal-stop or a gathering – not for accommodation purposes. The hotel is a high quality Country House Hotel and commands rates not usually seen with regards to many groups staying in hotels. Their main customers would be leisure guests, families and couples. The hotel has 13 rooms.



Comments:

This hotel does not see groups as being a key feature of their promotional activity. It may well have a role to play in terms of providing meal stops, lunches and get-togethers for certain types of groups – such as walking groups; Probus; NT membership and so on but this does not look to be a priority.

The Two Bridges Hotel.



One half of the two hotel grouping [the other being the Bedford in Tavistock], this delightful hotel is located in the heart of the Dartmoor National Park.

This is a perfectly positioned hotel that is ideal for groups visiting the area yet wish to be based in Dartmoor itself. The hotel's 32 rooms and plentiful covers in the restaurant allow for the accommodation of groups – either for overnight stays and meals or for meal stops during tours of the area.

During my brief visit I spoke to Natalie on the reception. There seems to be plenty of room for visiting coaches – for parking - as long as they don't just turn up unannounced. We visited during the preparation for a wedding and as you'd expect there were lots of cars and activity at that time. Another feature of the hotel is that it offers plenty of lounge space which is important for groups. It does not have a lift. The hotel would also charge a single room supplement although this is nowadays commonplace.

Comments: This hotel – due to its prime location and number of bedrooms and facilities – it is sure to be popular with groups. The lack of a lift may deter one or two groups although it does offer accessible rooms and ground floor rooms.

The Garden House.



The Garden House is a most remarkable and surprising garden attraction. One that we know would be greatly popular with groups, many of whom are on the lookout for gardens they haven't yet visited or wish to enjoy it at certain times of the year. Kerry who works at the Garden House was very helpful and mentioned that indeed the site was already popular with groups. In fact, one of the groups we ourselves work with – Hanson Travel of Yorkshire – visited shortly after my fact-finding visit. The site also offers a café that can accommodate

groups and there are also toilets available. It recommends a dwell time of approximately 2 hours.

The Garden House also offers tours for groups of various sizes. These are often conducted by the Head Gardener. Currently at time of writing [May 2022] the charge is £11.00 per person. Coaches can and do park on-site at the attraction. A parking place is generally cordoned off before arrival for a pre-booked coach. The Garden House is built upon a slope but wheelchair users will find that most parts of the garden are accessible. Groups of 15 or more are welcome and tour leaders gain free admission and there is a meal voucher for the coach driver. Groups must pre-book their visits.

Comments:

The Garden House is a quality attraction for groups. Even though there are steps in places and it can be quite hilly, most groups would overcome this as the attraction is potentially a must-visit for coaches. They're an important component of a group travel focus.



Tamar Trails Centre.



I met Duty Manager Hal Gambles when visiting Tamar Trails. The site itself is dedicated to providing a service for cyclists, walkers, and on horseback. There are an abundance of different and fascinating trails which are free to use and open all year round. In the Centre itself there are trail maps and other literature – as well as a small café and lounge area. The attraction affords great views over the Tamar Valley and the trails [six in all] cover the many aspects of interest including history, heritage and the natural environment. The facility is not what you would describe as a group attraction as manoeuvring and parking a full size coach could present problems. But when I was there the large [paid] car park did have one or two mini buses. From what I could see Tamar Trails is at the epicentre of a network of high quality trails and it would be popular to certain smaller, perhaps more specialised types of groups.

Comments:

Tamar Trails would be of interest to school and educational groups as well as to team building and corporate hospitality groups. The activity choices they offer are in fact becoming more mainstream for certain sectors of group travel that are open to new and different experiences. And in this respect I am suggesting history and heritage orientated groups; GTOS such as U3AS and also employment associations which by their nature often provide for a younger demographic.

The Bedford Hotel.



I met Dylan Mulford GM of the Bedford Hotel and also spoke to the Marketing Manager Mike Coombes.

The Bedford Hotel is in a perfect location in town and occupies a key site in the centre of Tavistock. With 31 rooms and a proven track record of hosting many groups and coach trips

over the years, the Bedford is well placed to be a prominent player in terms of attracting new and additional customers to the area.

The hotel offers group rates, generates repeat business from coach operators and its facilities include a large restaurant, lounge spaces and its own on-site coach parking area.

The hotel is very near to Tavistock's attraction; museum; retail and hospitality offerings including the newly relocated and central tourist information facility; Guildhall; Town Hall and Pannier Market/Butcher's Hall. It's also nearby Tavistock's coach park.

Comments:

The Bedford Hotel is well versed in terms of handling groups of different types and is already popular with both coach and tour operators and GTOS. This, coupled to its location in the centre of Tavistock makes the hotel a key component of any future joined up group offering for the town. The fact that they are also able to offer – if pre-booked – on-site parking for a coach is a useful asset and USP not always offered by comparative heritage towns. The hotel has in-house specialists in fielding enquiries/bookings about events and groups. They also know and can advise as to the overall tourism offer in both the town and within the immediate hinterland.



Buckland Abbey – National Trust.



We have taken groups to countless NT sites all over the country these last two decades and this particular attraction does not disappoint. One of the custodians at the Abbey, Sarah, was very helpful especially with regards to group visits.

The site does have all of the facilities that you expect of a National Trust property. These include well-maintained footpaths; plenty of signage; a high quality shop; an excellent café with plenty of covers for groups as well as plenty of toilets.

The coach parking area is uphill from Buckland Abbey [part of the car park] so coach passengers like other customers will have a steep hill to negotiate – although the site does possess a buggy service for those who perhaps find inclines too much.

As well as the array of historic buildings including the iconic Abbey and Great Barn, the attraction offers beautifully maintained gardens. Groups can pre-book a tour of the site which currently at time of writing [May 2022] would be £15.00 per group. Group rates apply for groups of 15 or more. Pre-booking is advisable and it might be possible that a member of the team at Buckley can if available *meet and greet* the passengers on the coach on arrival as a means of introduction.

Comments:

Buckland Abbey is an essential part of any Tavistock focused group travel promotion. They offer a high quality and consistent service all year round and many tour planners have confidence in what the National Trust can provide for groups of all types. And from a heritage perspective, Buckley Abbey truly compliments and reinforces the already strong collection of heritage and historical pull factors that Tavistock can utilise to build up a sustainable group customer base.



There is not a lot the National Trust could actually do in order to improve their attractiveness to groups now that the COVID hiatus period is hopefully over and their sites are open to groups again.



The Tavistock Guildhall Heritage Centre.



Richard Rundell is the Centre Manager based in the Visitor Information Centre [VIC] and during my visit he provided a wealth of information about the cluster of attractions and visitor facilities in the very core of Tavistock. In fact the site is designated as the Guildhall Gateway Centre and was formerly a courtroom and had police cells.

This part of Tavistock comprises a hub for visitors of all types including coach parties and groups. The newly relocated visitor facility in particular serves as an orientation and information point where coach passengers can find out what there is to see and do. As well as a retail offering in the VIC itself. Next door visitors will find an array of attractions – most of them free – such as the Tavistock Museum in the Guildhall Square.

It is here that you discover about Tavistock and its role as the Eastern Gateway to the Cornwall and West Devon Mining World Heritage Site. The significance of the World Heritage designation is one that acts as a foundation for the on-going development of the local and regional tourism economy. Next door are the superb markets, both indoors and outdoors, including the historic Butcher's Hall building which at times houses themed markets. The first market groups may see however would be the famous Pannier Market which, when I visited, was bustling along with the rest of the town. Another aspect of Tavistock which was plain to see was the variety of specialist shopping and meal stops on offer – all easily accessible and providing a great opportunity for visiting groups.

This area is easy to locate as its right opposite the historic and fascinating St. Eustachious parish church. The coach park is signposted and is a part of the Bedford Carpark which offers a small number of parking bays to accommodate various sizes of mini buses and coaches as well as buses. When I was there the coach parking was busy as was the whole

carpark. Public toilets are also provided right opposite the coach parking area. This is only five minutes or so easy walk from the Guildhall Gateway hub area and the main shopping and markets. A coach drop off/pick up area was also pointed out to me which was just beside the parish church.



Comments:

The existence of this cluster of businesses, attractions and visitor facilities – all in one clearly defined area and near to the coach parking – could be a key factor in the future success of Tavistock in generating long term and observable groups and coaches. These are customers who would not be swayed by bad weather or other factors – they're probably intending to visit Tavistock come what may as that would be a part of their tour itinerary. It's also somewhere to go if it's a rainy day as it offers lots of covered and indoor opportunities for coach passengers.

Having already achieved much and gone so far in establishing the central core facilities such as the Visitor Information Centre for example, it would be advantageous to reinforce the opportunity that this provides by creating 'Coach Stop Tavistock'.* See recommendations section.



The National Park Visitor Centre Princetown.

This is certainly the flagship National Park facility and is a very useful orientation point for tour planners and coach passengers when visiting Dartmoor. We met Amanda and Bert at the Princetown Centre and they provided a great deal of information about group visits to Dartmoor including local moorland guides; brewery tours; walks; coach parking and also advised access roads into and exiting Dartmoor for larger coaches. All of which the average tour planner may require. The Centre itself helps paint a picture of the overall touristic offering that the area has – including the Hound of the Baskervilles and Conan Doyle.

The staff at the Centre can also offer a service to help plan tour itineraries to the area with suggestions of places to see and visit for groups. This underlines the crucial role that Dartmoor – as an iconic destination – has to play in the success of Tavistock as a group and coach travel town.



Recommendations to Develop Tavistock Group Offering.



On the basis of this report, and after the visits and liaison with some of the sites and businesses involved, as well as looking at experience elsewhere in the UK, here are a number of, in our view, deliverable actions that are not purely dependent upon the existence of monetary resources. And these come about as one of the factors Tavistock has to contend with is its apparent lack of visibility to the UK travel trade. These ideas are listed here in a suggested order of delivery.

Form a small and informal **Group Travel Working Group**. This would be comprised of a small number of businesses representing the sectors of accommodation, attractions and hospitality. But they must be organisations that understand groups and already have a track record of attracting groups. A mixture of private and public sector bodies might be best.

The group should agree and pull together a new or enhanced simple **group offering** – perhaps benchmarking against similar heritage towns around the country. **A group coordinator** should be nominated to help bring things together and liaise with partners.

As Tavistock does possess many of the characteristics and assets that would be essential to a successful coach stop product, it then makes sense to consider a group's sub brand for Tavistock purely aiming at coaches and groups such as **Coach Stop Tavistock**. This would reinforce and more clearly define the tourism offering and help to generate awareness amongst coach drivers; tour leaders; coach operators and group travel organisers. There are many market towns that have similar qualities as Tavistock but not many give coaches the priority they deserve bearing in mind their potential role in protecting and creating employment and wealth locally.

Launch Coach Stop Tavistock to the travel trade. In order to get the ball rolling - that is to help encourage local partners, begin to generate actual enquiries and bookings, produce appropriate marketing materials - the process would be greatly enhanced by letting the travel trade and the trade media [magazines for example] know about what effectively would become a new kid on the block in terms of group and coach travel. Here are links to some examples:

https://www.route-one.net/news/coach_day_plans_for_upton_upon_severn/

<https://malvernobserver.co.uk/news/upton-upon-severn-set-to-become-attraction-for-tour-operators/>

<http://www.coachtoursuk.com/hidden-gem-welcomes-coaches-upton-upon-severn-malvern-hills-await-groups/>

<https://www.lancashiretelegraph.co.uk/news/12944427.roll-roll-best-blackburn-tour-proves-big-hit/>

There are many different ways to arrange a launch and this illustrates one way – the key factor is not just the launch but mainly the ability to maintain the group travel focus, to maintain interest amongst key partners and be communicative with the travel trade. This is a way forward and for groups you have to start somewhere.

Put together a **'Meet and Greet' service** for pre-booked coaches and groups. Dependent on human resources but a sure way to encourage tourism spend and activity around the town and for partners. This would normally be the role of the TIC within the town.

Put together in conjunction with the Group Working body a simple and deliverable **plan of action** covering initially a three year thirty six month period. The plan is basically how you will deliver your new group offer, the route to market and also how you might resource it.

The sort of simple and direct actions that could for example be in this plan could be all or some of the following factors [some of which Tavistock already do]:

- Commence work in creating a **groups database** which will be the basis of all group activities over the years – a role for the **Groups Coordinator** perhaps.
- **Enhance the group section on the Visit Tavistock website** and make it more obvious to find.
- Identify local events of interest to groups and arrange a compelling **Group Buyer Educational event** to showcase your new offering. Most destinations do this but the key thing is to target actual and active buyers. This is the quickest and most effective way to start generate bookings -as long as the product is all in place. The set piece could also include a **'Meet the Tour Buyer' workshop** of the type already seen in places such as Plymouth and Torbay.
- Work with the main accommodation and attractions to put together a monthly **Single Operator Fam Visit** whereby individual tour companies [typically a couple] are invited to come to Tavistock to enjoy a one or two night complimentary stay whilst enjoying aspects of the local tourism offer such as Buckland Abbey, Garden House, Morwellham Quay etc. This would include a business meeting on the last day and would usually guarantee that company's commitment towards developing tour products based upon your offering.
- Promote the existence of **Tavistock Heritage Trails and Walks** – in fact the whole range of activities that exist within and around Tavistock. **Tour guides** are an integral aspect of any group travel destination offering.

- Develop further the existing suggested **itineraries** that Tavistock has for tourists. These are great ways to join up a tourism product and to help direct business to your partners.
- **Collaborate with your regional Devon and indeed Cornwall tourism partners** to produce group itineraries, joint promotions, shared events and marketing opportunities – they would include **Visit Plymouth and Devon's Top Attractions**.
- **Work out your best and most VFM route to market** in order to both raise awareness and generate group enquiries for Tavistock. These factors could include fairs [showcases]; travel trade shows and workshops; targeted advertising; mailshots and email broadcasts; production of dedicated pieces of print aimed at generating group visits and also for use during Meet and Greet introductions for coaches arriving in town.
- Look to create – perhaps in year two – a dedicated **Tavistock Group Card**, an incentive promotion focused upon coach drivers, tour leaders and coach passengers. This would serve to incentivise these important players much in the way that the refreshments for a coach driver idea can work – although on a much more structured level. The card could be the difference between a tour planner choosing Tavistock as opposed to a rival destination.

A View from the Coach Industry. The Importance of Being Coach Friendly

The Confederation of Passenger Transport – CPT – is broken into regions across the UK and seeks to promote the interests of its coach operator and associate members. It also tries to encourage attractions and destinations to develop sustainable and considered facilities for coaches, drivers and passengers and they are always keen to help inform the direction particular sites and destinations may choose with regards to coach travel. It's very important for Tavistock to be regarded as 'coach friendly'.

Here is a telling statement made as the industry, like the rest of the UK, is emerging from the COVID crisis – taken from their coach strategy:

'Coach facilities and access are a priority for locations that are expected to receive a large volume of visitors.

Alongside operators committing to best practice when visiting attractions and places, the **provision of coach facilities must be a central part of the planning process** in places likely to have large numbers of visitors.'

<file:///C:/Users/stephen/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/IE/4YP9WUMD/coach-strategy-bitesize-briefing.pdf>



Views from Tour Operators:

Tina Felstead. Sales and Product Manager, Action Tours.

'I know Tavistock quite well and love it, but I have no doubt that part of the issue may be that many people don't. The further issue may be dependent on where people are staying and how accessible it is to their location. I would love to be able to base people in Tavistock for a stay but have never felt there was the room for a group. I would love to know about possible accommodation.

In my last role we did write Tavistock in as a visit from Plymouth and also Torquay. I think it has not been on people's radar **and it is lack of knowledge that may be the town's biggest barrier.** I love the Pannier Market and think this is its biggest selling point for groups, so have only ever tried to visit when I think a market of some sort is on. It is a great stop before a trip to Dartmoor and ideal for a cream tea – my understanding being that it is the 'home of the cream tea'. I don't personally feel that a guided tour is needed, but if it was something quirky (dressed up or a particular angle) then it might be a nice touch before a cream tea.

I don't need to tell you the key things that help – I am sure you can drop easily in the centre but coach parking and facilities along with plenty of shops and things to do for

people to browse are important. My belief is it is about getting the word out and if there are hotels that will take groups, I'd love a contact. Devon and Cornwall are so hard to contract these days and this spans the two nicely.'

Marion Owen, Proprietor Marion Owen Travel

'We love Tavistock and have stayed there once. **Have tried to return several times but hotel a bit awkward when it comes to groups.**

Would have loved to have used it as a base for a tour as such a lovely town to look around between visits out. Love the Pannier Market too.'

Mike Scutt, Viewfinder Coaches [Oakhampton]. Mike is a local operator who also runs tours all over the UK and at times to the continent. Here are his thoughts and suggestions about Tavistock along with suggestions of good places to visit. As he deals mainly with a Devon customer-base he may be looking at Tavistock from a different and perhaps day excursion point of view as hotel stays in the area would not be feasible. But as he's very experienced, his views are valuable although in context he operates at the budget end of coach travel.

'Tavistock coach drop off at the Bedford Hotel or opposite. Park in the main car park (6 bays) entrance opposite the Bus Station.

Tuesday seems a popular day to visit. Some coaches come from Exmouth via the A30 then return over Dartmoor.

Attractions

Princetown and Dartmoor.

Buckland Abbey.

The Garden House.

Morwellham Quay.

Dingles Fairground Museum.

Cotehele House. Coaches have to be careful only one way in and very narrow in places.

Launceston Steam Railway.

Lydford Gorge (for the fit ones!)

Roadford Lake can be a good coffee stop.

The Tamar Valley line between Plymouth and Gunnislake is scenic.

Only one hotel at Tavistock, The Bedford, very few coaches stay there, have heard mixed reports locally. Better off staying at Plymouth.'

Travel Trade Media

One of the tools used by destinations to help generate awareness about their coach and group offerings would be working with the best magazines. That would be for digital platforms and printed publications

Covid has seen increased attrition amongst many publications around the country with only a few still remaining that can be relied upon to get your message over to tour planners. Advertisers can now get deals that would not have been possible a few years ago. Advertising is not *the* most effective tool but sometimes it's the only way that many destinations and tourism businesses know of to get groups.

There are many other at least equally effective factors which we outline in this report but advertising along with associated advertorial do of course have a role. **Here are two magazines that in our view are trustworthy, deliver what they say and are open towards working constructively and to budget.** They cover the two main sectors, coach operators and group travel organisers [GTOS] – although there are lots of crossovers between the two:

Group Travel World magazine focus mainly on tour organisers who either plan day excursions or overnight stays [holidays]. GTOS represent a huge and amorphous sector covering a vast array of interests, specialities and themes. This magazine also hosts the nationwide club for GTOS entitled Travel World Association – TWA. **Helen Millbank is the Editor of Group Travel World [GTW] magazine.**

The logo for Group Travel World features the word "Group" in a smaller, orange, sans-serif font positioned above the word "Travel". "Travel" and "World" are written in a large, blue, cursive script font. The "T" in "Travel" is particularly large and stylized, overlapping with the "W" in "World".

Here's an example of the editorial coverage <https://www.grouptourismworld.com/explore-the-english-riviera/>

Coach Tours UK magazine does as it says on the tin and is read by both the trade [the operators themselves] and by the attractions and destinations that want their business. It's

not really concerned with the nitty gritty of coaches such as vehicle types, more about where coaches are going on their tours. **Matt Ingles is the Editor**, here is what he has said:



Coach Tours in the UK booming

‘Following the recent pandemic and national restrictions, coach day trips and short breaks in the UK is on the up, with coach operators reporting increased demand as more and more friends, families, and groups look to the UK market for a break. The revival of the coach market has been heartening to see, and Coach Tours UK magazine is the go to resource for coach tour operators when planning and booking day trips and short break itineraries.

Launched into the coach market in September 1990, the magazine is produced for, and mailed out exclusively to a unique list of named bus and coach tour operators within the UK and Southern Ireland – reaching on average 97% of all bus and coach operators every month in print.

Coach Tours UK can help Visit Tavistock to promote the destination directly to the decision makers within each coach company, the people using the magazine to plan and book and with the potential to bring regular coach bookings into town. We can place Tavistock onto the desks of the people you need to reach. Offering a wide range of print advertising options and rates – all of which can be supported with editorial and images, direct mail, and digital marketing.’

Contact Details: Matthew Inglis – Commercial Editor

Tel: 01733 363480

Email: Editor@coachtoursuk.com

Website: www.coachtoursuk.com

Here’s an example of their editorial coverage too: <http://www.coachtoursuk.com/devon-city-features-new-coach-trip-movie/>

Digital Only Platforms for Tour Planners.

There also exists a number of digital-only platforms that currently do not produce publications but provide a service to tour planners. These are active within social media and the wider travel trade, here are two examples



www.coachbuddy.org.uk;

Groups Buddy features information about attractions and destinations which specifically want to attract visits from UK-based groups. The website: www.groupsbuddy.org.uk is a great platform for highlighting your business.

Groups Buddy also has a very active Facebook Group:

www.facebook.com/groups/newmeridian where attractions, destinations and GTOs share information, news and advice about 'all things groups'

For more information, contact Tony Henthorn tonyhenthorn@icloud.com 07590 750128.

<https://wewantgroups.com/>



'WeWantGroups.com combines world-class design features and presentation, expert reporting on Travel Trade news, along with extensive information on events, venues, days out, weekend experiences, where to go, what to see and where to stay. Our mission is to give inspiration, advice and the know-how on how to turn your group dreams into reality!

Here is an example of their coverage: <https://wewantgroups.com/coin-coal-cheers-a-wewantgroups-com-review/>

Example of Questions to Businesses.

Good day. I am Steve Reed from Steve Reed Tourism Ltd and I'm conducting a short survey on group travel on behalf of Tavistock Heritage Trust with local tourism businesses.

Date..... Name of organisation..... Contact name/role.....

Do you take groups? YES/NO

Are they coach parties? YES/NO

If you haven't had groups would you wish to have them visit you? YES/NO

Do you actively target groups and/or coach parties? YES/NO
Details.

Do you have a single point of contact to be able to handle group enquiries? YES/NO
Details.

Do you have you a lower admission charge for groups? YES/NO.
Details.

Do you have you a dedicated coach parking area on-site or nearby?' YES/NO
Details.

Do you have you a café or restaurant suitable for groups to use? YES/NO
Details.

Do you have you a shop or retail offer that groups can use? YES/NO.

With regards to the shop, do you offer coach drivers or tour guides any incentives to encourage them to bring their groups to you? YES/NO.
Details.

If appropriate, do you offer a guided tour and/or meet & greet service to groups when they visit your attraction? YES/NO
Details.

Which of the following groups does your business/operation feel comfortable in targeting?

School groups/educational

GTOS and private groups - Probus Clubs, U3As, Social groups etc.

Coach and operators - with fully inclusive tours

Inbound groups (overseas visitors)

Other [please state]

In your view, what does Tavistock offer to groups of visitors?

Details.

What is your view on coach parking and/or coach drop off and pick up in Tavistock? Details.

Hotel Only Questions.

If you already receive groups for either accommodation or meal stops, how do they hear about you?

Details.

Do they book directly with you or through an agent?

Details.

Does your hotel offer a similar menu choice to groups as to other customers?' YES/NO

Details.

How many bedrooms have you?

Details.

Do you offer tour planners a special group rate to book your hotel? YES/NO.

Details.

Would you consider that your hotel is suitable for groups with regards to ease of access?

YES/NO.

Details.

Are there any times of the year when you would particularly welcome group visits to your hotel? YES/NO

Details.

Do you have you a dedicated coach parking area on-site or nearby?' YES/NO

Details.

Acknowledgments