

Notes from the Tours & Experiences sector meeting

Thursday 8th July 2021

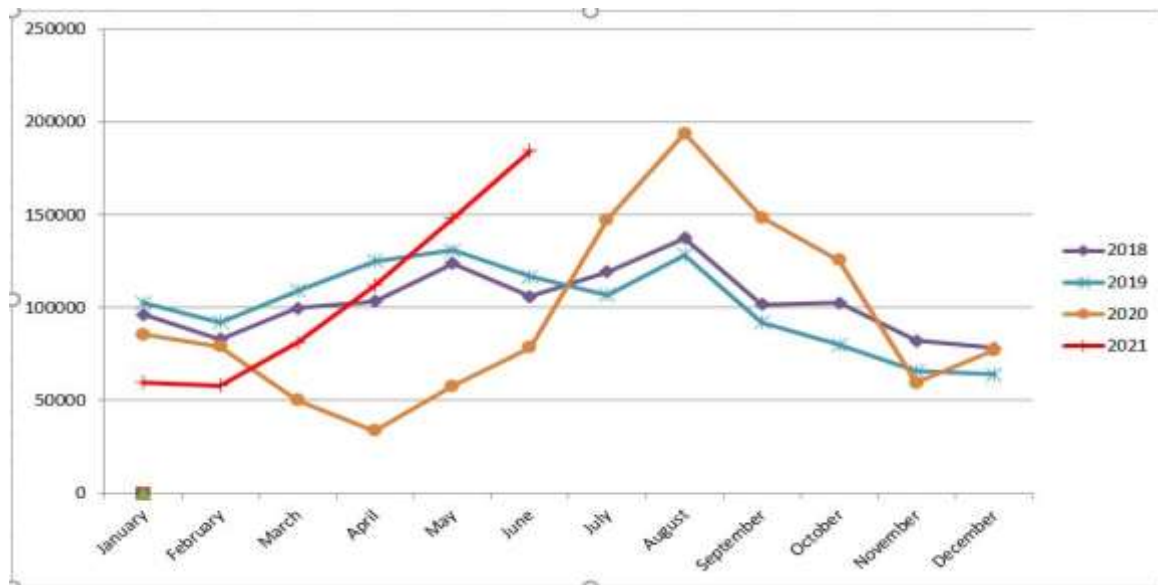
Key findings/comments from attendees:

- Tours & Coach industry been devastated and it is now a slow burn in getting enquiries for most. Variation in booking patterns with most getting a trickle and enquiries up and down with no consistency to help plan ahead.
- Everyone is very nervous and not sure of the impact of removing masks / placing responsibility on customers.
- Overseas bookings all cancelled or postponed until 2022 & this is the main core market
- Different type of visitor now being seen in the Cotswolds area which places a different feel on the area – most felt wanted the overseas visitors back.
- Events – uncertainty over what is happening is causing late bookings & anxious period to see how it works out. Eg breakeven, profitable Many events postponed until September & October meaning there may be too many events to choose from in this period.
- Staffing – while as tour businesses small & run by each person – time can be a factor still on juggling enquiries but also now seeing knock on effect where restaurants cannot provide services previously did.
- Film tourism locations can help with Bridgerton effect in Bath proving really strong with domestic market
- Still interest from USA market so hopeful for longer term future if we can hang in!

Updates from Cotswolds Tourism

Google analytics for the Cotswolds.com website clearly demonstrate the effects of the pandemic: lockdowns indicated by huge drops in interest, the approaching end of each lockdown a renewed surge of interest. The first six months of 2021 show unique visitors down just over 7% on 2019 but this masks

huge differences: January to February down 30% or more but the busiest June ever 58% up on 2019!



Within the overall numbers there are also huge differences between different sectors:

- Self-catering – up **90%**
- Gardens – up **88%**
- Food & drink – up **69%**
- Camping/Glamping – up **50%**
- Activities – up **41%**
- Family fun – up **46%**
- Hotels – up **14%**
- Shopping – down **20%**
- Historic houses – down **35%**
- B&Bs – down **36%**
- Tours – down **37%**
- Museums – down **40%**

We will look to do a travel trade newsletter at the end of the summer to tour operator database, so if you have any new tour experiences please send an appealing image, website link and short piece of text to cotswoldstourism@cotswold.gov.uk stating trade newsletter content.

Membership currently free until September 2021 and currently looking at what happens then.

Keep up to date via our **B2B social media channels**: Twitter @cotstourismbiz; Facebook www.facebook.com/groups/851272778718986; Linked-in www.linkedin.com/company/cotswoldstourism

Number of resources now available for you to use – **Training modules** – short bite size videos to help you www.cotswolds.com/training **Digital guides** to highlight to visitors when booking along with our website www.cotswolds.com/partnership/digital-guides **Printed versions** of the Cotswolds browser now in stock and can be picked up from visitor information centres (phone first to check they have stock).

T-Stats & data Really good input from the tours sector to [Tstats](https://www.cotswolds.com/tstats) – please enter 0 for months closed and in notes state Covid restrictions. If you are not yet signed up please contact us at cotswoldstourism@cotswold.gov.uk or review www.cotswolds.com/tstats

We have sent out a [survey link](#) to help South West Tourism Research Company's work compiling our annual economic impact study. This data is used by LEPs, local authorities and businesses so your input is valuable.

Keep an eye on **consumer sentiment** with www.visitbritain.org/covid-19-consumer-sentiment-tracker and VisitEngland's **business advice hub** www.visitbritain.org/business-advice

Visit England are running a domestic campaign Escape the Everyday www.visitbritain.org/be-part-our-domestic-marketing-campaign-escape-everyday and we are running Escape to the Cotswolds. Funded by our successful bid to the DMO recovery marketing fund, this entirely digital campaign is linked to bookable experiences in the Cotswolds www.cotswolds.com/escape.

DCMS launched a [tourism recovery plan](#) recently.

Being bookable on Cotswolds.com Our website is now fully connected to Visit England's TXGB platform & several other polling channels including Free to Book, Supercontrol & Eviivo. Several B&Bs now link up to TXGB to be bookable and we are starting to see bookings come through. For more information on **TXGB** www.txgb.co.uk/ & polling options or get in touch with Sally Graff