

## Destination Management System

**UPDATE**

We are pleased to announce that we have now finalized the tender process for the Destination Management System and New Mind will be supplying our system.

New Mind developed their system in 2003 and have established a major share of the market.

A new website is being developed as we speak which will give the Oxfordshire Cotswolds website a fresh new look and feel and we hope to go live with the system as soon as possible.

With the development of the system opens up a new opportunity to accommodation providers to take advantage of online booking and capture customers that have not been able to reach before. Further to this the system also allows for providers to continually update their bed spaces giving real time availability to the potential consumer. All accommodation providers will be given training free of charge on how to update their availability on system whether you choose to use the online booking function or not. A programme of training is currently being developed, however if you are particularly keen on getting involved with the system then please do contact us and let us know and we will endeavor to ensure you are included in the run of training.

Its not just accommodation providers who can take advantage of this system, if you are an event organiser or attraction, we also have the ability to sell tickets for you through the system, please do contact us if you would like more information.

This is a substantial investment from the Council into Tourism and is really moving forward the Oxfordshire Cotswolds as a must see visitor destination.



## Oxfordshire Cotswolds Guide in high demand

This year there has been high demand amongst both the domestic and overseas markets for copies of our guide.

To date over 15,000 copies have been requested by Tourist Information Centres across the country and over 5000 have been requested through our brochure request line as a result of advertising. The overseas market is also booming with high demand from the traditional markets but this year we embarked on trying to tap into the merging markets of the Netherlands and Belgium and demand exceeded supply almost instantly with more guides being shipped out as a result.

## Witney VIC is moving!

After five years in its current location, Witney Visitor Information Centre (VIC) is moving.

At the end of June the VIC will move to the Town Centre Shop on Welch Way. The centre will offer all of its existing services and opening hours have been extended to co-inside with that of the Town Centre Shop during the week and will still be opening on a Saturday.

The VIC will open in its new location on Monday 25 June. Please pop in and visit the centre at its new location and see its new look.

Witney Visitor Information Centre  
3 Welch Way

Witney

Oxon, OX28 6JH

Tel: 01993 775802

Email: [witney.vic@westoxon.gov.uk](mailto:witney.vic@westoxon.gov.uk)

# Accommodation Guide 2008

Work starts soon on the 2008 accommodation guide and entry forms will be coming your way.

The entry to the guide will also include a listing on the Oxfordshire Cotswolds website which will be powered the new Destination Management System and open up a host of new opportunities for businesses. The guide will as always be distributed both to the overseas and domestic markets and this year we are broadening the scope to include attractions and eating out .

If you are an accommodation provider and want to advertise in the guide then you must participate in the Quality Assurance Scheme operate by either Quality in Tourism or the AA. For more information on Quality Assurance visit [www.theaa.com](http://www.theaa.com) or [www.qualityintourism.com](http://www.qualityintourism.com) alternatively you can speak to our expert here at the offices, Diane Blackwell, who will give you all the advice you need.

## Are you well placed to advise guests and visitors?

The Tourism Skills Network Gloucestershire is co-ordinating a series of familiarisation visits to local visitor attractions during 2007. Open to all staff working in hotels, B&Bs, tourist information centres, restaurants and pubs, the visits will involve an afternoon tour/ talk at the attraction.

To book your place(s):  
Email: [samantha.fisher@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:samantha.fisher@gloucestershire.gov.uk)  
Call: 01452 426873

### Forthcoming visits...

6 June	2pm	Batsford Arboretum, Moreton in Marsh
26 June	2pm	Mill Dene Garden, Moreton in Marsh
06 July	2pm	Hidcote Manor Garden, Chipping Campden

# Bedroom Browsing...

The latest edition of the ever popular Oxfordshire Cotswolds Bedroom Browser is now available.

The glossy A4 publication, packed with information on the local area, is available from any of our Visitor Information Centres (Burford, Witney or Woodstock). A small charge of £1 a copy is introduced for large quantities. If you wish to order copies please contact Chris Jackson.

The guide includes information on the Oxfordshire Cotswolds, places to explore and visit, town and village attractions, places to eat and lots more. A must have for every bedroom!

## Gift Aid for Attractions

Attractions registered as charities can now claim back Gift Aid on admission charges.

Previously, only certain attractions, such as historic houses and wildlife centres, could take advantage of the tax-return scheme.

Only donations at least 10% above the standard admission fee will qualify for the new tax relief and gift aid will apply to the full amount. The donation must be made in place of the standard admission but both options must be clearly identifiable

by visitors. Charities that are public free of charge but whose donations are not subject to legislation but can still claim on donations in the normal way.

As with current gift aid, only UK tax-payers are able to claim. Non taxpayers can still claim and receive any additional aid will not apply.

Additional guidance on how to apply and the VAT implications are available direct from HMRC Customs [www.hmrc.gov.uk](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk)

## Smokefree legislation

From 1 July 2007, virtually all indoor workplaces, work vehicles and public spaces in England will be smokefree.

All businesses will be affected including hotels and B&Bs. The new legislation is being introduced to protect employees and members of the public from the harmful effects of second-hand smoke.

Businesses must display 'No Smoking' signs in accordance with the new legislation. (Free signs are available from Smokefree England)

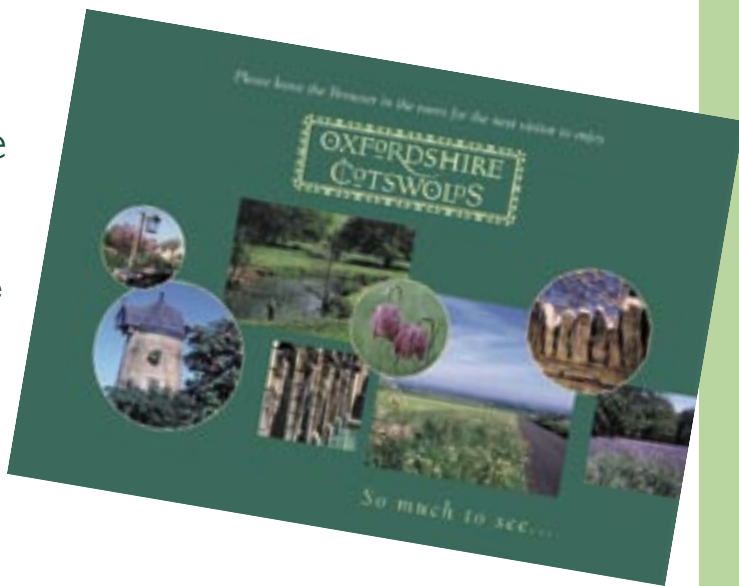
A free advice line 0800 000 000 website, [www.smokefree.gov.uk](http://www.smokefree.gov.uk) are available for businesses and members of the public who want to know more.

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v.uk/charities

The Attractions Gift Aid Liaison Group has released guidance on the national branding of gift aid for attractions and further background information [www.zsl.org/info/gift-aid](http://www.zsl.org/info/gift-aid)

If you have any questions, queries or difficulties regarding Gift Aid and its applications please contact James Blair (023 8062 5499) [jblair@tourismse.com](mailto:jblair@tourismse.com)



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to know more.



If you would like further information, please visit the Council website [www.westoxon.gov.uk/smokefree](http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/smokefree) or contact Community Services on 01993 861060.



## BRIEF Bites

### Access Statements

Now part of quality assessment

From April 2008 all providers of quality-assessed accommodation will need to provide an access statement: this should be a clear and honest written description of current facilities and services offered. To help operators prepare for this, VisitBritain has produced information, guidance and a template. For more information please visit [www.tourismtrade.org.uk/QualityStandards](http://www.tourismtrade.org.uk/QualityStandards) or email [QAD@visitbritain.org](mailto:QAD@visitbritain.org)



### Sub Group Meetings

We re-launched the sub group meetings in February this year and they were well attended. The next round of sub group meetings are in October (see overleaf), this is our chance to update you on the work that we are doing and for you to discuss any issues you may have. If you have anything that you would like to add to the agenda or guest speakers that you think may be useful please do let us know and we will try our best to arrange them. We want you to get the most out of these meetings but we need your input to do this!

### Tourism ExSEllence Awards

Full details and entry forms for the 2007 Tourism ExSEllence Awards are now available from: [www.industry.visitsoutheastengland.com](http://www.industry.visitsoutheastengland.com)  
The Awards look to reward quality, innovation and excellent performance across all sectors of the tourism industry. The closing date for entries is **Friday 20 July 2007**. For more information contact David Rose or Hayley Smith on 023 8062 5464/5502 or [drose@tourismse.com](mailto:drose@tourismse.com) or [hsmith@tourismse.com](mailto:hsmith@tourismse.com)

### WOW the Weekend just got longer!

This year the West Oxfordshire Weekend will have no 'end' - it will be West Oxfordshire Week instead! After feedback from consumers and industry, the weekend of special offers and discounts for local residents will be extended to cover a whole week: 17 to 23 September. Full details will be available in due course. In the meantime, if you have any queries, please contact Chris Jackson.

# Sustainable tourism

## New sustainable research from VisitBritain

Top line findings from new research released at British Travel Trade Fair by VisitBritain show that consumers are willing to pay for sustainable accommodation.

This highlights the importance of environmental issues as VisitBritain moves forward with its marketing activity in the coming year. The research was commissioned to investigate consumers' attitudes toward sustainable tourism and determine the level of needed by VisitBritain and the British tourism industry as a whole.

## Still Greener...

The Oxfordshire Cotswolds welcomes Sue Perry, the new full time Green Tourism Project Officer. Employed by the Cotswold Conservation Board with funding from West Oxfordshire District Council via LEADER+, an EU rural development initiative, Sue has been tasked with expanding and revitalising Green Tourism in the Oxfordshire Cotswolds. Fresh from working with Shropshire Hills AONB, Sue will divide her time between the Conservation Board's offices at Northleach and the district council offices in Witney.

No doubt she will be contacting many of you in the near future but if you would like to discuss the Project or sustainable tourism issues please feel free to get in touch with her direct:

Email: [sue.perry@cotswoldsaonb.org.uk](mailto:sue.perry@cotswoldsaonb.org.uk)

Call: 01451 862037



# DIARY dates

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|-----------------------|---|
| 25 June               | Witney Visitor Information Centre moving to the Town Centre Shop  |
| July/August/September | Accommodation Provider training on using the new Destination Management System  |
| 17 -23 Sept           | West Oxfordshire Week   |
| 2 October             | Attractions & Events Sub Group Meeting - Woodgreen Council Offices, Witney. Tea and coffee available from 1.45pm. Meeting begins 2pm.                               |
| 3 October             | Hotels & Conferencing Sub Group Meeting - Elmfield Council Offices, Witney. Tea and coffee available from 1.45pm. Meeting begins 2pm.                               |
| 4 October             | Bed & Breakfast, Self Catering and camping and Caravanning Sub Group Meeting - Woodgreen Council Offices. Tea and coffee available from 1.45pm. Meeting begins 2pm. |
| 14 November           | Oxfordshire Cotswolds Annual Tourism Forum, Eynsham Hall. Arrive from 6.30pm, begins 7pm.   |

## West Oxfordshire Tourism Team Contacts

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