



17th February 2021

The Great Sussex Way is “a lifeline” for local businesses

The Great Sussex Way (GSW), Chichester District’s new-look tourism board is working to protect and grow the local visitor economy both in the short and long term. The GSW held its first business seminar to support the industry through Covid-19.

The new CEO, Danielle Dunfield, has arranged a programme of events to help businesses access support on offer. The first of these events was supported by the Chichester District Council who were on hand to run through available support schemes and how they can be applied for. Following the success of the event, another is planned with Visit England where national grants and schemes will be talked through.

After the seminar, Gwendolyn Van Paasschen, from **Denmans Garden** said, “The Great Sussex Way team, through their Zoom calls and encouragement have been a lifeline to us over the past nine months. They are a sensational group and have made all the difference, for which I will forever be grateful. I am, perhaps, their biggest fan.”

Longer-term, The Great Sussex Way, that has evolved from Visit Chichester, is developing a series of sector-specific, and district-wide events and promotions to help the visitor economy bounce back once Covid restrictions have been lifted. This will be hugely beneficial as this year’s forecasts for the UK visitor economy, although up from 2020, are expected to be well below the pre-Covid levels. Data from the UK’s leading tourist boards expect to welcome just a fifth of international visitors and domestic spending to reach two-thirds of 2019 levels.

To ensure businesses benefit from the support on offer, The Great Sussex Way is offering FREE membership to local businesses who are being encouraged to sign up.

Danielle Dunfield said, “Visitor confidence will take time to recover and competition for custom is heating up. Our mission at the Great Sussex Way is to ensure we pull ahead and promote everything our area has to offer. We have some brilliant businesses, who are already working collaboratively to ensure we reopen ahead of the game. I encourage every business, small and large, to sign up and join our efforts.”

For membership information and to sign up visit www.thegreatsussexway.org/memberships

ENDS

For further information please contact Helen Broom press@tgsow.org

Notes to Editors

2021 Forecast: - Visit Britain in partnership with Visit England and Welcome to Great Britain. Briefing Feb21

- *Inbound Tourism: 11.7 million visits, up 21% on 2020 but only 29% of the 2019 level; and £6.6 billion to be spent by inbound tourists, up 16% on 2020 but only 23% of the 2019 level.*
- *Domestic Tourism: £61.7bn in domestic tourism spending in 2021; this is up 79% compared to 2020 but still only 67% of the level of spending seen in 2019.*

This forecast was conducted before the new variant; it will be updated in due course once the Government roadmap is published.

The Great Sussex Way's business membership offers businesses the chance to:

- *Benefit from advertising and marketing campaigns actively promoting the area to visitors*
- *Benefit from a listing on The Great Sussex Way website offering visibility to businesses*
- *Collaborate with other like-minded businesses*
- *Share content on The Great Sussex Way's social media channels*