

## Wells Coach Friendly award press release



The City of Wells has achieved the accreditation of 'Coach Friendly City' from the Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT). The accreditation is given to destinations that demonstrate that they have a clear commitment to understanding the needs of the coach, its passengers and driver both in terms of what has and is being achieved together with firm commitments for the future." To date only 30 cities, towns or villages in the UK have met the requirements to gain this accreditation.

The award was given after the 'Visit by Coach' project in Wells has seen two year's work improving all aspects of group travel visits.

CPT SW Regional Manager John Burch said: "I'm delighted that the partnership in the City of Wells have now gone forward and expanded on the Coach Friendly Attraction status for the Bishop's Palace and Cathedral. They have now won Coach Friendly status for the entire city, and demonstrated that the principals can be expanded to really benefit businesses and attractions across an even wider area. Ian Jefferies led the successful bid team who have combined forces to offer coach groups an excellent package at this beautiful Somerset destination. CPT hopes that the work undertaken to achieve the award will result in a growth in coach numbers and indeed, the actual length of coach stays, in the City. CPT will continue to liaise with City of Wells to monitor how coach traffic develops."

Ian Jefferies of Visit by Coach stated "This award is great recognition of two years collaborative working by many groups and individuals within Wells. The accreditation is highly regarded within the industry and will hopefully reinforce the great name Wells has gained in the group travel world. We have already seen a big rise in coach input and hopefully this will improve that further. It is fantastic that the tourism forum in Wells recognised the value of group travel and the huge financial impact it has on a destination and they all should be congratulated on their positive attitude that has now seen this national recognition. The project has grown at a rapid pace and the support of many groups, businesses and the local authorities and not forgetting our amazing voluntary 'meet and greet' team has been impressive and something Wells should be very proud of".

Robert Powell, Chairman, "Wells Chamber of Commerce and Tourism is delighted Wells has been awarded coach friendly status from the Confederation of Passenger Transport. More than two years work has been put in from many groups in the City to improve and enhance the visitor experience and we hope this will enable more people to come and enjoy our beautiful City".

Andrew Webb, Visit Wells, added "Group travel is vital to our visitor economy. Visit Wells, the official visitor information service for the city, is delighted to be working with a growing partnership of volunteers and organisations in Wells to ensure that we welcome coach and bus operators and the visitors that they bring - and provide them with an experience that will ensure that they return again and again. Achieving Coach Friendly Status is a big step in our efforts to work with the Confederation of Passenger Transport and its members to deliver this welcome."

"Many congratulations to everyone in who has worked so hard in Wells on the City's Coach Friendly Status award from the Confederation of Passenger Transport. A huge prize for a great deal of work, but all of it time and money well spent. The Civic Society is pleased to be involved and will continue to support the Visit by Coach project and the growing partnership of organisations and institutions in the City." Chris Winter, Chair, Wells Civic Society.

"Achieving Coach Friendly status for Wells is the result of positive and collaborative working across the city. We are delighted that the Cathedral has been able to positively contribute to this amazing achievement and anticipate that the city as a whole will reap the benefits of all the hard work involved". Lindsay Mann, Head of Marketing and Communications, Wells Cathedral

Rosie Martin, Chief Executive at The Bishop's Palace said, "Gaining Coach Friendly Status is the culmination of two years of hard work towards making it easier for coaches and groups to visit our great City. As a result, we are experiencing more visits by coach than ever before. We are delighted that so many people can access and enjoy medieval Wells in this way."

'Tourism is so necessary to Wells as it generates important income for retailers throughout the City, creates employment and also brings in much needed funds to the Cathedral and Bishops Palace. Wells Independents is proud to be involved with the recruitment and running of the team who 'meet & greet' visitors off the coaches in the Coach Park and the award of Coach Friendly Status from the CPT is a fitting reward for their efforts.' Ross Young, Wells Independents.

Wells City Council Spokesperson "Wells City Council is delighted that the City has been awarded 'Coach-Friendly' status by the Confederation of Passenger Transport. The Council's City and Tourism Forum brings together key community partners in the City of Wells; they have worked together for the last two years, under the guidance of 'Visit by Coach', to improve the visitor experience. The Mayor was present at the final session of the rigorous accreditation process, to demonstrate how the City Council has committed to supporting the sustainability of the

project for the future benefit of this wonderful historic City”.

Tessa Munt, Wells County Councillor, "I'm so pleased that Wells has won Coach-Friendly status. Wells may be England's smallest city, but it has a huge-hearted welcome for our visitors. Having worked in the tourism industry for more than a decade, I know how important it is to encourage passengers *and their drivers* to come to Wells and spend their time and hard-earned money in our beautiful city, making sure they have such a lovely time that they want more, and come back with their friends and families. I contributed to the project as so many other individuals and groups did. We couldn't have achieved this accolade if we hadn't all worked together”.

Wells were also shortlisted in the British Coach Tourism Awards for the second year running in the category of Coach Friendliest Destination.

Anyone wishing to know more about the project or opportunities to get involved can contact Ian on [ian@visitbycoach.com](mailto:ian@visitbycoach.com) or 07903 463700



IMAGE: Ian Jefferies, Visit by Coach, receiving the coach friendly certificate for Wells at the National Tourism and Travel Show from Simon Smith, Confederation of Passenger Transport.