

Wight BID Report – End of Year 2 - 1st May 2023 to 31st October 2023

THEME ONE: Attracting Visitors for Life £466,000

Marketing the Isle of Wight off Island with an aim to attract visitors for life. The Isle of Wight was positioned across several digital and print platforms during this period, based on a wide reaching and interest-based audience.

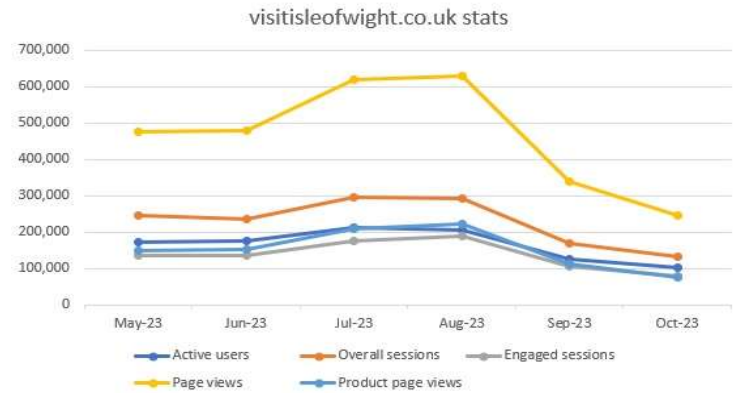
Placements included Sainsburys Magazine online; Muddy Stiletto's, The Guardian Travel Guide, Primary Times, Going Out Magazine, Tiny Travelship, The Mirror online, Sussex, Hampshire & Dorset Life Magazine, Charitable Traveller and BBC Countryfile, as well as organic social media, social media ads and Google display and search ads.

Key marketing themes for this 6-month period have included: 2023 Year of the Coast, Dog friendly ideas, May Half-Term, Summer Holidays, History & Heritage, Nature & Wildlife, Camping & Glamping, Great outdoors (Walking & Cycling), Food & Drink, Autumn getaways, and Day Trips with the messaging focused around the "Say Yes" theme. Straplines included: "Say Yes to paradise", "Say Yes to a trip overseas, no passport required", "Fancy getting lunch? Say Yes to the Isle of Wight" and "Say Yes to a pawsome day out".

A key campaign during this period included an Expedia & Hotels.com campaign pushing Summer breaks, which resulted in 328 room bookings, a total of £37.1k gross bookings. This gave the campaign a 6.2 return on ad spend.

During Summer 2023 two content photoshoots were conducted. One focused around active seniors (over 55s) and the other was a lifestyle couples shoot. Imagery and videography were captured for both shoots which will be utilised throughout the Book Now for 2024 campaign and into the Spring/Summer 2024 months.

Since June 2023 the transition from RON to bespoke digital run using Google Search, Display, Remarketing and YouTube was made. This reduces ad wastage considerably, effectively ensuring the quality of digital traffic both being exposed to the Island and reaching the website showcasing all the fantastic things the Island offers. Marked improvements have already been seen, delivering 5,789,588 impressions, 170,274 clicks to the VIOW website and a reduced bounce rate by almost 25% since activation, proving that the activity is generating the maximum quality return for the ongoing investment. It is planned to continue to use this strategy over the coming months utilising the far greater targeting facilities already showing to deliver return.



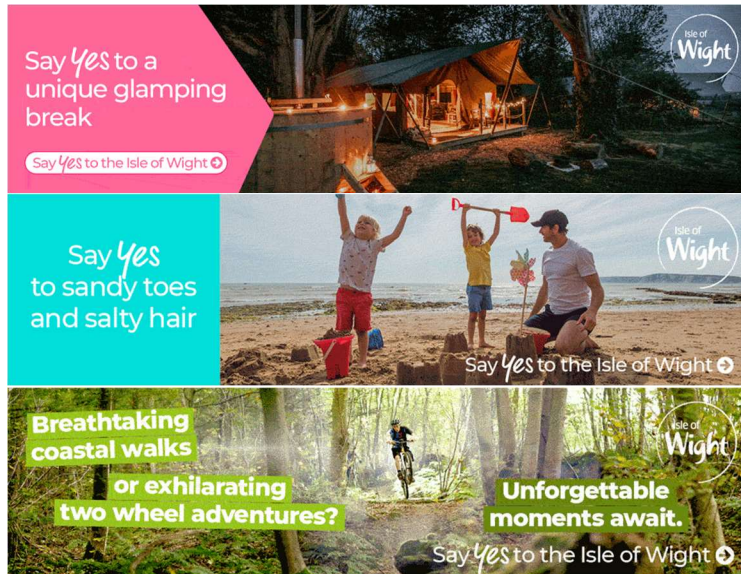
visitisleofwight.co.uk: - VIOW continue to operate, search engine optimise, develop and maintain the top-ranking Island tourism consumer website. Between the 1st May 2023 and 31st October 2023 the website had **987,290 active users** (1,672,871 in total this BID year) plus **1,366,096 overall sessions** (2,247,469 in total this BID year), 816,480 engaged sessions (1,288,708 in total this BID year), (2nd 59.6% average engagement rate and **2,783,959 page views** (4,591,751 in total this BID year). Product web pages have had **923,102 page views** (1,418,345 in total this BID year) on the website; that includes levy payer and voluntary contributor pages as well as all events and other product pages.

Visitor e-newsletters: - VIOW send the visitor e-newsletter programme to a list of over 35,400 subscribers. Between May 2023 and October 2023, 23 e-newsletters have been sent with an average open rate of 32.3% and an average click through rate of 1.7%. (44 sent in total for this BID year)

Social Media Activity: - The social media accounts grew from 1 May 2023 to 31 October 2023 with 24,422,458 accounts reached (non-unique accounts), 298,865 engagements and 68,011 link clicks on Facebook. Instagram saw 13,355,975 reached, 129,104 likes and 3,563 comments. Twitter saw 791,200 impressions, 50,655 likes and 2,036 retweets.

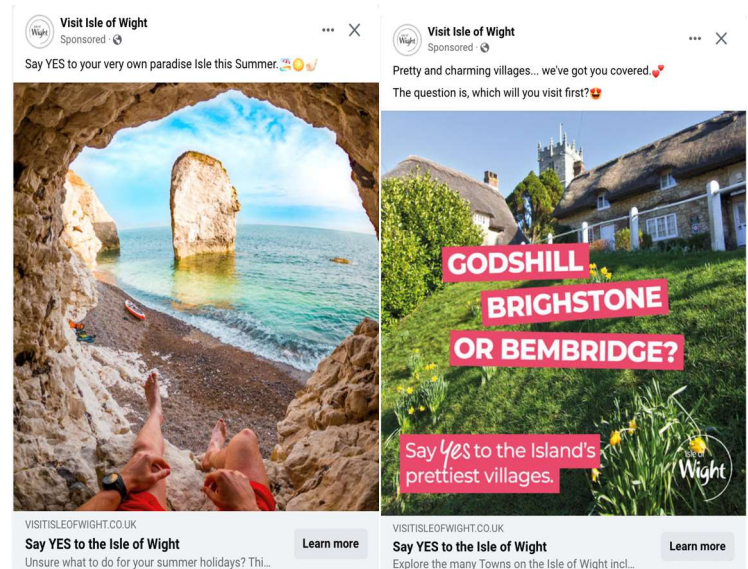
During this period, VIOW hosted and collaborated with several influencers who shared their Isle of Wight experiences. Some of which shared their high-quality footage which was used to create reels and promotional content which was shared organically and across the digital advertising campaigns. VIOW continued to share informative blogs and reels, highlighted Island events, shared photography from the two summer photoshoots, worked with local businesses on advertising their products and services, attended events and captured content, launched competitions, covered key dates including Year of the Coast, British Tomato Fortnight and World Cocktail Day. VIOW also maximised reach through activations such as BBC Radio 1's Giant DJ Hunt, where a digital advertising campaign was launched alongside the event.

This period saw a number of digital adverts promoted across both Facebook and Instagram including: IW Walking Festival, May Half Term, Brittany Ferries campaign, Year of the Coast, Summer, Day Trips, Cycling, BBC Radio 1 Campaign (Giant DJ Hunt activation), food and drink, towns and villages, outdoor activities, autumn, dog-friendly things to do, Glamping/camping, October half term, walking, Halloween, stargazing and Christmas. A new retargeting strategy was introduced which has seen a large increase in reach, reaching just under 20 million accounts across Facebook and Instagram.



PR and Travel Media

Over the last 6 months, VIOW have attended online meetings with Visit England, TSE and Tourism Alliance and represented the Island at public functions. Working with local businesses and using images and information only available as a result of the Wight BID, this has helped to generate over 100 (172 in total this BID year) press articles and worked with national TV productions CH5, ITV and BBC. In the last 6 months VIOW have helped to generate in excess of £13 million pounds worth of broadcast coverage (over £17 million in total this BID year), print and online editorial coverage locally, nationally and internationally.





THEME TWO: Delivering the Experience - £60,300

Walking festival: - In May, the IOW Walking Festival was awarded the 'Made on the Isle of Wight' title, at the Isle of Wight Chamber of Commerce. The festival has also been announced as a finalist in the Red Funnel Awards and the Beautiful South Awards – both resulting in a gold, silver or bronze award.

The Spring IOW Walking Festival took place between 13 – 21 May, with 86 walks. 1,094 registered walkers, with 453 joining from the mainland UK and 4 international visitors.

The Autumn IOW Walking Festival took place between the 7 and 15 October. The event welcomed over 1,025 people, including 369 from mainland UK, 42 from Europe and 19 from Canada & USA

THEME THREE: Working Together & BID Administration - £43,400

Communications to the industry: - The PR and Travel Media office has sent 26 (52 in total for this BID year) industry newsletters to Wight BID Levy payers and Voluntary Contributors via email (avg. one per week), highlighting opportunities and potential issues to local businesses, as well as celebrating successes – the open-up rate averages approx. 53% (national average approximately 17%).

The BID Administrator is employed to monitor and update the Wight BID Levy payer database. They are the Visit Isle of Wight point of contact for enquiries, appeals and setting up Levy payer web pages. They also deal with other Wight BID administration including managing Visit Isle of Wight's role in all the operating processes with their collection agency.

The Financial Controller is employed to manage expenditure and income receipts, make electronic payments and record all Wight BID financial activities over the course of the BID. Financial records and management accounts are scrutinised quarterly by the Finance & Remuneration sub-committee.

Accessibility Support: - To promote primarily to the accessible travel market, VIOW are currently developing a fully accessible on-line visitor guide for the Island to showcase the Island's businesses and their ability to fulfil the needs of accessible travellers, in addition to this, developments are underway to support an accessible beach and to promote the island through accessibility forums such as Euan's Guide.

LVEP Accreditation: - Visit Isle of Wight has been accredited by VisitEngland / DCMS (Department of Culture Media & Sport) as one of only 26 LVEP's (Local Visitor Economy Partnership) in England and are seen as a high performing and impactful organisation. This accreditation ensures that Visit Isle of Wight are at the centre of national Visitor Economy policy making and will be the central organisation for delivery of the key elements of the Government's Levelling up policies including Accessibility, Sustainability and Skills.



Income and Expenditure	
Income	
BID Levy Income	£562,000
Expenditure (for this period)	
Theme One -	£466,000
Theme Two -	£60,300
Theme Three -	£43,400
Theme Four -	£9,000
Research -	£29,600
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £46,300 carried over from Year 1 	

Event Support: - Wight BID allocates support funding for events in the form of "seed funding" to support primarily out of season events that will attract visitors from off-island so that the season can be extended with economic impact being felt, during this full annual period funds have been allocated to the Sandown Sprint, the Isle of Wight Story Telling Festival, Cowes Fringe, Atlantic Rowing Challenge, West Wight Sports centre for their running events, Island 7's event, The Great Wight Bite, Harp on Wight and Pride. These events will continue to market and promote the Island off-island. This events fund will continue to support eligible events throughout the year during the period of Wight BID.

Exhibition Partnership:

The Exhibition Partnership continues to promote the Island as a destination to consumers and the travel trade market. During this period the team represented the Island at the Isle of Wight Royal County Show, New Forest Show (alongside Wightlink) and the Group Leisure and Travel (GLT) Show. At an awards ceremony before the GLT Show, the team collected an Award for the Best UK Destination for Group Travel.

Team members took part in a national training session called Taking England to the World training hosted by VisitEngland.

THEME FOUR: Sustainability - £9,000

The Isle of Wight Green Tourism Award has seen a steady increase in recipients. In total 17 businesses have been Awarded a Bronze, Silver or Gold Award. Businesses with a Gold award have been using the discount codes to give to their customers offering £1 bus travel for a group of up to 5 people to promote sustainable travel.

A new sustainability section on the website has been created showcasing sustainable stays, green travel, eco-friendly activities, local produce and much more. www.visitisleofwight.co.uk/explore/eco-friendly-and-sustainable. Alongside this, VIOW launched a new online mapping feature highlighting walking, cycling and running routes. 24 maps we're launched in the first phase of the project and had 11,837 pageviews in the first 3 months with 285 maps downloaded.

Our Sustainable Travel, Trade and Exhibitions Manager, Amy, continues to sit on the Tourism Management Institute (TMI) Sustainability working group and recently presented at its annual convention. She has also showcased the Island and shared sustainability case studies with Visit England and Tourism Southeast.

RESEARCH: - £29,600

Since the recommencement post pandemic of the quarterly research activity, there are now 5 full quarterly periods of research to understand. Currently the figures are showing an overall slight decrease in visitor numbers, but that the visitor spend metrics, both for day visits and staying visitors are higher, thus having a more positive impact on the visitor economy. The research whilst informing visitor impact is also underpins the decision-making process for future marketing activities with specific location and demographic data. The research continues to be arguably the most robust piece of visitor research in the UK and is certainly value for money.



Wight BID Opportunities

As part of the Wight BID, Levy payers are entitled to a standard web page on the Visit Isle of Wight website, www.visitisleofwight.co.uk. Please contact the Wight BID Administrator for further details: email amanda@visitwight.org or call 01983 554954.

If you're wondering what opportunities there are to get YOUR business seen by a wider audience, or tips and advice from industry professionals, send us your email address to receive our industry newsletter. It arrives in your mailbox weekly with news and information that could help your business grow even more... email amanda@visitwight.org. Also head over to VisitWightPro.com for tourism industry news and information.

In order for Visit Isle of Wight to avoid unnecessary costs which could be better used to continue to market the Isle of Wight off-Island, please send a contact email address to bid@visitwight.org so we can send future BID reports and information via email, which saves on printing and postage costs.