

Hello and Welcome

HAPPY NEW YEAR. This bumper edition is packed with information and articles. We welcome your feedback on the newsletter and the next edition will be April.

Interview with Anne Bartlett, Blue Badge Tourist Guide

Tell us about YOU and your business and background

I have lived in Gloucestershire for most of my life. I qualified as a Blue Badge Tour Guide for the Heart of England in 2001 – this is the highest guiding qualification awarded in the UK and is recognised world-wide. After qualifying I set up my company, Tour and Explore, to provide guided sightseeing tours around our stunning locations.

Best Business tips to share with others?

Aim to be the best and aim to give the best service. Careful planning and preparation are key to a successful guided tour. It is also very important to have good relations with business partners and I work very hard to make sure the coach companies, hotels, restaurants and attractions are kept fully informed about my groups and how they can make them feel valued.

What do you enjoy about your business?

I thoroughly enjoy meeting people and showing them around Gloucestershire. I have also done broadcasts on television and radio, as well as writing for magazines, and it is very thrilling to promote our fabulous county to a wider audience.

What was 2012 like for you? – highs and lows

The year was remarkably good considering the difficult economic climate. I met fewer foreign groups, but received more bookings from English groups on day trips and special interest holidays.

Where do you see your new emerging markets coming from?

Sustainable tourism. Luxury group coach travel is greener and it can be great fun travelling as a large party rather than as individuals. Passengers can take advantage of group rates in hotels, attractions and restaurants as well as specially booked guided tours. Sometimes we can even arrange for them to see places not normally open to the general public. Coach



Anne Bartlett Blue Badge Tourist

holidays are especially good for single people and those with mobility problems.

How do you work with your local community and support the local economy

I provide guided walks, talks and tours for local community groups, and I've taken groups of local business people on guided walks around Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury. I've also been invited to lecture to tourism students at Gloucestershire College.

How do you market/publicise your business?

Most bookings come via my website www.tourandexplore.com. I'm listed on the cotswolds.com website and I am often recommended by our Visitor Centres. I have good contacts with tour operators and coach companies but I am always keen to make new connections and work with more businesses.



Cotswolds Tourism | A Partnership