



MEMO

To:
From: Kerrie Tripp
Date: June 22, 2024
Subject: United Kingdom & Ireland Sales Mission

Discover New England (DNE) hosted a sales mission to the UK and Ireland from June 24 through June 28, 2024, visiting Glasgow, Manchester, Leeds, Belfast, and Dublin. The delegation included Susan Henrique (CT Tourism), Lori Harnois (NH Tourism, DNE Board Chair), Tim Walsh (Discover Newport), Terry McCary (Western CT Tourism District), Nancy Franco (Yale Visitor Center), Kristen Adamo (Go Providence), and Rob Kluin (See Plymouth).

During the mission, the team met with about 60 industry representatives through one-on-one appointments with tour operators and media, multiple training sessions, and five events. DNE also participated in the Media Getaway 2024, where Lori Harnois and Caroline Donaldson-Sinclair conducted 32 one-on-one meetings with media representatives from diverse writing backgrounds. Additionally, DNE sponsored the luncheon for the event, providing Lori Harnois an opportunity to speak about travel to New England. The luncheon was attended by over 100 travel writers, and DNE facilitated the giveaway of two trips to New England, with overnight stays donated by partners and airline tickets provided by Delta.

Key Themes Discussed:

- **Sustainability in travel**
- **Luxury travel:** Emphasizing both luxury accommodations and exclusive activities/adventures.
- **Unique stay opportunities:** Including yurts, treehouses, experiential farms, etc.
- **Outdoor recreation:** Featuring unique opportunities such as wildlife watching (moose and bear), lobster boat trips, and guided adventures.
- **Fly-drive trips**

Planning Needs:

- **Inventory:** There is strong demand for New England, with more accommodations available through receptives, though luxury options remain limited.
- **FIFA:** Operators are discussing housing plans for FIFA, seeking a mix of city and non-city stays.
- **Photos:** A continued need for accessible photos to help tour operators and agents sell New England. DNE emphasized its media portal and encouraged the New England industry to upload rights-free photos for promotion.

The demand for New England remains strong, necessitating ongoing product development and education. The 14, 14-day itineraries on the DNE website were well-received, aiding product managers and agents in creating innovative offerings.

The sales mission was highly successful, especially in Glasgow and Belfast, where DNE had not previously focused. Showcasing New England as a premier destination proved invaluable. There were two articles posted about DNE and the mission directly after we arrived home. It is recommended that DNE continue hosting in-person sales missions in the UK and Ireland.

DNE will share leads with State Partners and Member Partners and conduct appropriate follow-up post-event.

