

Ethical Travel – Discussion Group 15 May 2010

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| Jean Nunn-Price (JNP) | Chair – Board representative |
| Sue Reid (SR) | Group General Manager – Travel |
| Sheila Allen (SA) | Board representative |
| Sheridan Hindle (SH) | MSC representative |

1. Introduction

A brief introduction and overview of the agenda was provided. It was confirmed that the aim of the session was to gain members' input in preparing an action plan to develop the ethical message within the Society's Travel business. Supporting documentation had been prepared and circulated prior to the meeting (attached).

2. Definition of Ethical Travel

Members were asked to give their views, in one or two words, on what "Ethical Travel" meant to them. The following comments were noted:

- Carbon
- Gentle footprint
- Sustainability for communities
- Support communities abroad
- Integration of national & community issues
- Efficiency
- Migration
- Capacity to buy rail tickets in branches
- Fresh experiences
- Need
- Coach
- Responsible
- Sustainable
- Positive
- Slow
- Green

It was reported that the Society's Travel group had recently become the first UK business to commit 100% support to the Travel Foundation and all its overseas projects – a key point of difference.

3. UK holidays – train/self-drive/coach/air

1. Views

Members' views were sought and the following points were noted:

- i. Increase offering of holidays for those with disabilities

SR confirmed that the Travel group was currently working with the Co-operative Group on developing the offering of disability holidays. The Co-operative Group had carried out a significant amount of research in this area and were currently reviewing properties to ensure compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act

- ii. Actively promote rail holidays including advertising in rail magazines

SR confirmed that the Travel group were looking at various new suppliers offering rail holidays. In addition, a link to www.thetrainline.com had been added onto the Travel group's website

- iii. Work with other suppliers to offer a package deal to those travelling to their holiday destination by train to include collection from station, tours, availability of public transport in the local area

- iv. Develop links with the Holiday Fellowship

SR confirmed that the Travel group now offered activity holidays organised through another co-operative - HF Holidays

2. Voting

Members were asked to vote on the following question:

Which of the following UK holidays would you like us to promote more of?

| | | |
|----|---------------------|-----|
| 1. | Rail Holidays | 44% |
| 2. | Self-drive Holidays | 20% |
| 3. | Coach Holidays | 32% |
| 4. | Air Holidays | 4% |

4. European holidays – train/self-drive/coach/air

1. Views

Members' views were sought and the following points were noted:

- i. Increase availability of European coach holidays both in terms of length of holiday and choice of destinations

SR confirmed that the Travel group were looking at sourcing additional tour operators

- ii. Extend offering to include tailor-made holidays as offered currently for UK holidays e.g. choice of hotels, theatre bookings, tours

SR confirmed that this facility was currently offered through Attraction World, but it was acknowledged that further promotion was required

- iii. A member reiterated the good work undertaken by the United Nations Association and recommended that members join the association

- iv. Emphasis to be on business travel requirements as well as holidays

- v. Provide customers with information on community events taking place in the locality of their holiday destination

- vi. Eurostar travel – extend offering to include suppliers abroad as UK providers were expensive and offered limited choice of availability

SR confirmed that although price and availability were important factors, protection for customers was equally important

2. Voting

Members were asked to vote on the following question:

Which of the following European holidays would you like us to promote more of?

| | | |
|----|---------------------|-----|
| 1. | Rail Holidays | 46% |
| 2. | Self-drive Holidays | 22% |
| 3. | Coach Holidays | 18% |
| 4. | Air Holidays | 14% |

5. Cruises – UK departure/fly

1. Views

Members views were sought and the following points were noted:

- i. Concern was expressed that this question was too open and further discussion would be required in particular around the matters of employment, economic benefit to destinations and sewage wastage.
- ii. In addition, members were asked for their views on whether the Travel group should not be concentrating on cruises - sixteen members agreed

2. Members were asked to vote on the following question:

Which of the following do you feel is the more ethical?

- | | | |
|----|----------------------|-----|
| 1. | UK departure cruises | 65% |
| 2. | Fly cruises | 35% |

6. Long-haul holidays

1. Views

Members views were sought and the following points were noted:

- i. Concerns expressed regarding the wording of the third question
- ii. Promote co-op to co-op dimension e.g. Olive Co-operative, Swansea Village Co-operative

2. Voting

Do you think we should promote Long Haul Holidays?

- | | | |
|----|---|-----|
| 1. | Yes - it helps local economies and we can support Sustainable Tourism | 56% |
| 2. | No – the environmental costs of travelling are simply too high | 13% |
| 3. | Neutral – people have a right to choose where they holiday | 31% |

7. Conclusion

- Travel update to be provided to members at Half yearly meetings and member groups
- Address all points raised - main focus is on rail, UK cruise and long-haul