

**Appointment Brief**

# **Chief Executive Go To Places Ltd**



**GO TO PLACES**

**Bringing People Together to Make Places Thrive**





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# Introduction

Go To Places delivers high quality, research-driven destination management to support places and communities.

The business was founded in 2015 by the Visit Kent team to leverage our experience and expertise as a leading Destination Management Organisation. GTP works successfully with local authorities, destination management organisations and tourism businesses to provide innovative, effective and sustainable destination management services, tourism campaigns and other products to help local visitor economies grow. Services include offering expertise on funding bids, helping tourism and leisure businesses to better understand their market and audience and sharing effective marketing campaigns.

In addition to managing and operating the Visit Herts and Visit Kent visitor economy contracts for many years, GTP is also the appointed LVEP for both counties, delivering strategic Destination Management Plans with the support of highly engaged strategic advisory boards. Working with public and private sector businesses and organisations, GTP targets UK and overseas markets to raise the profile of both counties as premier destinations, improving quality and skills within the industry, and growing investment in tourism.

2025 sees the launch of GTP leading both the governance of the organisation, and the strategic vision, with a new business plan outlining our exciting goals for the future. Building on our expertise and strong partnerships, we are planning on significant growth and expansion as we widen the scope and geography of our activities, and continue to build our commercial focus and innovative approach. As a not-for-profit organisation, sustainability and social values will be key themes of what we do.

For further information please visit the Go To Places website ([www.gotoplaces.co.uk](http://www.gotoplaces.co.uk)), Visit Kent ([www.visitkent.co.uk](http://www.visitkent.co.uk)) and Visit Herts ([www.visitherts.co.uk](http://www.visitherts.co.uk))



# The Role

Deirdre Wells OBE, the current CEO, has led the business for the last seven years. She has been responsible for driving the strategy and developed a strong business model that is able to deliver against varied funding streams with significantly reduced dependency on traditional income sources.

Under her leadership, the entrepreneurial and commercial approach of the business enabled it to successfully navigate the pandemic and the challenges of the new funding and political landscape.

Deirdre has embedded a strong healthy working culture during her time at GTP, and developed a highly engaged and talented team, which is the key strength of the business. The successful candidate will need to demonstrate an understanding of the importance of a values-led company culture.

Deirdre will be stepping down in the summer, and the GTP Board, led by Doug Bannister, CEO of the Port of Dover, is looking to recruit a dynamic successor to take the business forward as it enters a new chapter of its growth, harnessing and growing new revenue streams and expanding its market influence.

This is an exciting opportunity for someone with energy and passion for the industry to lead our amazing team to drive forward the transformation, innovation and long-term sustainability of the business.

The successful candidate will lead the delivery of the new GTP business plan, positioning GTP as a national thought leader and leveraging its collaborative way of working. Commercial ambition will be balanced with the ability to work effectively across the private and public sectors and deliver the strategic Destination Management Plans which drive the economic growth in the places we support, such as Kent and Herts.



# The Role

## The Board Seeks:

- A skilled professional able to maintain and grow local and national strategic partnerships to deliver fruitful commercial contracts, bids and work programmes that lead to destination development and success.
- An excellent communicator, commercial and confident sales strategist with the skills to spot opportunity and convert it into viable and fundable plans.
- A thorough understanding of national tourism structures, the drivers for change and an enthusiastic advocate of supporting the strongest through partnerships of purpose that disseminate success downward.
- An entrepreneurial and opportunity-focused individual, who can assess risk and return and create strategies that weed out the marginal and develop those with potential, wherever that potential might provide benefit – either for investors or the organisation.
- A natural networker capable of operating at the most senior level but also able to recognise the value of the smallest players in our industry and their capacity to add diversity to the GB product and significantly enhance its appeal.
- An individual who is an advocate for digital transformation and data-led decision making, to ensure the organisation remains at the forefront of industry trends and continues to support destinations with cutting edge insights.
- A thought leader who can actively reinforce GTP's role as a key voice in the UK visitor economy, engaging with all local and national stakeholders to shape the future of the sector.
- Someone with a strong track record in financial oversight and experience of diverse and fluctuating income streams.
- An inspirational leader, who will actively develop and mentor the team, and continue to promote and build on the healthy working environment.
- A champion for the sector, with media experience and the ability to lobby effectively for the industry at a national level.



# The Person

- Excellent entrepreneurial/sales skills and the ability to assess commercial and marketing opportunities leading to growth in the business and the sector
- Excellent leadership and people management skills and the ability to lead a high performing culture in a relatively small organisation
- An excellent understanding of public funding streams and capable of driving and building compelling partnership funding bids
- A demonstrable experience of working with both public and private sector – local, regional and national
- An innovator and champion of digital approaches
- An excellent knowledge of the UK tourism industry – supply side and demand side
- Excellent communicator
- Positive ‘can do’ attitude and resilient style
- Politically aware and emotionally intelligent

# Terms of Appointment

- This is a hybrid role based in Canterbury, with travel to London, Hertfordshire and elsewhere in the UK, and occasionally overseas
- This is a senior role and the salary will be competitive



# How to Apply

To apply, please submit a detailed cover letter demonstrating how you meet the requirements of the role, along with your current CV, to [Alison.Hughes@gotoplaces.co.uk](mailto:Alison.Hughes@gotoplaces.co.uk)

**Closing Date : Friday 21 March 2025**

