



MANIFESTO FOR GROWTH

WINE  GB



WineGB represents, leads, and supports the sustainable growth of the Great British wine sector

English and Welsh wines are innovative, internationally recognised as a standard for the highest quality, and growing at pace. The producer teams are passionate with a vision, ambition, and a desire to curate the next world wine market.

- We are the fastest growing agricultural sector in the UK.¹
- The 2023 harvest was the largest ever, and indicative of where the industry will be regularly cropping in five years' time (while at the same time we anticipate a further 40% increase in planting of vines)²
- When the 2023 harvest came in, there were significant infrastructure constraints, which meant that we couldn't maximise the value from all of our grapes.
- We must act now to ensure that the right investments occur, opportunities are taken, and regulatory blocks removed to support this new sustainable industry which delivers high quality jobs and drives local markets.

We want to work in partnership

- Our businesses are investing.
- WineGB is supporting.
- We need the future Government to take action to ensure:



Fairer
business



Better
environment



Value
British

English and Welsh wines - growth in statistics



900+
Vineyards



200+
Wineries



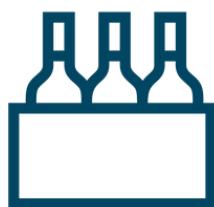
4200
hectares of
vines



+75%
5 year growth
in plantings

2023 Harvest

Largest yield ever



20-22
million bottles



30,000
total tonnes

Previous best yield



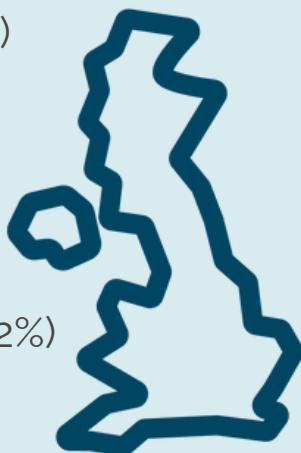
+60%

2018

from **13.1** million
bottles

Most Planted UK Counties

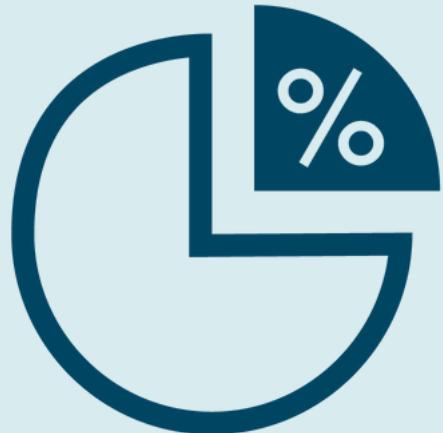
1. **Kent** (26%)
2. **West Sussex** (15%)
3. **East Sussex** (13%)
4. **Hampshire** (13%)
5. **Essex** (8%)
6. **Surrey** (3%)
7. **Gloucestershire** (2%)
8. **Devon** (2%)
9. **Dorset** (2%)
10. **Suffolk** (2%)



2/3
Sparkling



1/3
Still



Fairer business

Fairer business will lead to accelerated growth for the English and Welsh wine sector.

Our member businesses are investing in their workforce, their production infrastructure, marketing, and distribution of their quality products to drive growth of the sector. Through WineGB, we are creating frameworks, increasing skills development opportunities, and raising awareness of our member's products. Working with Government we can better support growth across three core areas:

- **UK domestic market**
- **Tourism**
- **Exports**



Supporting Growth – UK domestic market



57% of UK wines sold locally through winery websites and cellar doors



30%+ sales growth

English and Welsh wine is the fastest growing agricultural sector in the UK. Sales in 2021 were 9.3 million bottles (+31% on 2020) and we continue to grow³. The challenge for us is to own more of our home market and make English and Welsh wine the 'go to' drink for British wine consumers. The sector needs the active support of the next government to enable it to challenge third country still and sparkling wine rivals and take domestic market share from them. The next government needs to support, not undermine, its own wine industry and produce.

The next Government should:

- address the **competitive disadvantages** that English and Welsh wine faces in terms of **domestic regulation and production costs**
- introduce a **fairer tax regime** and **reverse unworkable changes to the wine Excise Duty system**
- **reduce duty for wine** as the UK is one of the very few wine-producing countries in Europe that levies excise on home-grown and produced products
- **reform Small Producer Relief (SPR)** by raising the threshold to a level that English and Welsh wine can naturally achieve so that small British producers can actually use the scheme, just like their beer and cider counterparts.

Supporting Growth – Tourism



300+ vineyards & wineries open to visitors



Over 1m visitors per year



International visitors account for <10%

Wine tourism is a significant part of our industry accounting for a quarter of total income on average⁴. Wine tourism increases a producer's commercial viability, visibility of their wines, wider public awareness, and embeds their vineyard and business in the local community.

It acts as a multiplier effect for a vineyard's locality as it can draw tourists there who then stay on site or nearby. Over 40% of visitors to the UK could be interested in a visit to a vineyard⁵ meaning a potential market of over 16 million people⁶. Tourism grows awareness of our wine products for domestic and overseas consumers and the experience often drives sales of our high-quality produce.

The next Government should:

- introduce a **cellar door duty relief scheme** for British wine producers modelled on a similar Australian scheme
- **reduce VAT rates** for tourism
- **restore tax-free shopping** for visitors to the UK
- enable vineyards to **put ecology at the heart of their tourism offering**
- provide **more domestic education and promotion** through VisitEngland, Local Visitor Economy Partnerships (LVEPs), Destination Management Organisations (DMO), proposed Destination Development Partnerships (DDPs), and other vehicles to encourage local / regional tourism within the UK.

Supporting Growth – Export



**Exports nearly doubled
4% to 7% (2021 vs 2022)**



**Sold in
30 markets**



**80%+ sparkling wine
of total exports**

Exports of English and Welsh wine continue to grow, going from 4% in 2021 to 7% in 2022. Our key markets in Scandinavia show the way. There you can see category aisles of English and Welsh wine in shops with up to 60 brands allowing for significant consumer choice. We are present in more and more markets making business happen at the large trade shows and by working in partnership at UK embassies. However, we need to be doing much more of this work and extend the partnerships with the Department for Business and Trade and the GREAT Campaign as no new wine region has successfully established itself in the export market without significant state support. We have to level the playing field to enable English and Welsh wine to compete.

The next Government should:

- **showcase English and Welsh wine** in 20-30 **capital and major cities** across the globe
- help English and Welsh producers with **improved grant funding, export financing, and the organising of physical distribution** in conjunction with overseas events
- **improve trade access** to our nearest and closest markets in Europe
- **extend the unquestionable soft power of gastro-diplomacy** across the UK's Embassy network and all public bodies
- assist exporters with the collation and publication of **accurate and up-to-date export data**.



Better Environment

A better environment for farming will lead to accelerated growth for the English and Welsh wine sector.

Our members are building sustainable, locally integrated, and ecologically friendly businesses. Through WineGB, we are helping our members scale up sustainable thinking in their decision-making processes. We are helping our members on their environmental journey with sustainability strategies, understanding of environmental impacts, and offering the tools to set meaningful targets and track progress year on year. Working with Government, we can better support growth which is sustainable, works with the environment, and improves our workforce, ensuring a knowledgeable, diverse skills set powering up the countryside.



Growing Sustainably

As an industry that is so deeply connected with the countryside and rural environment, we are extremely aware of the impact and the variabilities caused by of climate change. We have created the [Sustainable Wines of Great Britain](#), an independent audited certification programme to support vineyards and wineries demonstrate their sustainability. As stewards of the land, we want to collaborate closely with the next Government to address the challenges we all face.

The next Government should:

- **ensure that viticulture is not forgotten** and is explicitly referenced so it is able to gain access to sustainability related financial assistance / grants just like other agricultural sectors
- **enable vineyards to put ecology at the heart of their commercials**, including tourism offering, as they are increasingly seen as biodiverse, wildlife havens which can and should be leveraged
- continue to **pause the Deposit Return Scheme until it is ready** and suitable for purpose and increase and improve kerbside recycling to ensure consistency across the whole of the UK
- **introduce more consistency into the English and Welsh planning system**. In a three step approach:
 - 1 - we need the **right policies and frameworks** that allow our wineries and cellar doors to be built
 - 2 - **better educated planning teams** who value business in the countryside
 - 3 - **properly staffed and resourced** local planning teams to add pace to decision making
- **prioritise investing in improving local infrastructure** (transport, energy, water, wi-fi and communications) across England and Wales.

Growing Our People

People are at the heart of every English and Welsh wine business and we have data and models which suggest that the sector will grow from the 2,300 people employed today to an estimated 30,000 by 2040⁸. As a sector with close to a 50:50 gender split, we are conscious that we need to support the widest group of people in these skilled jobs. Vineyards employ more people than conventional farming and bring a wide array of skills, including roles for chemists, engineers, computer technicians, winemakers, viticulturists, marketers, hospitality and tourism specialists, as well as adjacent support services including IT, legal, finance, and business management.

The next Government should:

- on an annual basis continue the recently announced £1.5 million 'Future Winemakers' Scheme' so that it becomes a regular education and training support
- enhance cooperation and coordination between Government, local Councils, education providers, and the wine sector to identify the specialist needs required to equip English and Welsh wine sector workers of the future
- Explicitly recognise winemaking, viticulturists and those with vineyard expertise in the visa system so that English and Welsh wine businesses can try to access overseas talent as we look to train and build it domestically
- ensure better access to seasonal labour and help with spiralling costs for vineyard work.





Value British

The next Government should be using every opportunity to protect, support, and promote English, Welsh, and British wine. This means actively supporting British wine's growth, including consumer knowledge of our products, both at home and abroad. There are competitive disadvantages that domestic wine faces in regulation, excise duty applied, and production costs which European and other foreign competitors do not have to contend with. These hindrances put our members and their premium products on the back foot, competing against wine imports from mature markets into a UK wine market estimated to be worth £10 billion in 2022⁹.

The UK's Government needs to value indigenous British products, such as English and Welsh wine, and actively work with us to make it world leading and world beating.



Growth through sensible regulations

Over the course of 2023 and 2024, there have been changes to wine regulations which will extend consumer and producer choice, but do not radically help the English and Welsh wine sector. The most significant proposed changes to impact our sector are the third phase of the Better Wine Regulations, which has just gone to consultation.

The next Government should:

- **tighten up labelling rules** so that only genuine English and Welsh wines, produced using UK sourced grapes, can describe themselves as English, Welsh, or British wine
- **resist proposals** that would favour third country wine dumping and allow bulk wine to be transformed, sweetened, or carbonated in the UK as they **will undermine our sector** (both on the shelves and in the production process)
- **recognise and protect** the high-quality products we make using the **'Traditional Method'** of producing **sparkling wine** and as our sector grows, increasingly **the 'Charmat' method**
- ensure that **any changes to wine regulations in the UK do not mislead consumers**. This means that the grapes' origin is referenced on the label; UK and British symbols, flags and references cannot be used in any circumstances; and that the UK production does not appear as part of the branding and description of the product.



References

1 National Statistics, Agricultural Land Use in England
September 2022

2 WineGB Industry Report 2023

3 WineGB Industry Report 2023

Page 3 figures WineGB Industry Report 2023 and WineGB Harvest Report 2023, The Big One

4 WineGB Industry Report 2023

5 VisitBritain 2019

6 ONS figures show that overseas visitors to the UK increased to 38 million in 2023 (up from 31.2 million the previous year) spending an estimated £31.1 billion.

7 WineGB Industry Report 2023

8 WineGB Looking to the Future Report 2018

9 New funding to uncork future winemaking talent, Government Press Release, 16 April, 2024



Further questions – follow-up with
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WINE GB

