



VisitBritain/VisitEngland activity boosts economy by £673 million, as agency sets out plans to grow value of tourism

VisitBritain

VisitEngland

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Visitors spent £673 million across Britain as a result of activity by national tourism agency VisitBritain/VisitEngland, latest figures show.

The agency reported the figures, which cover its activity from April 2021 to June 2022, as it was set to bring industry leaders together at its annual review event on 22 March highlighting its plans to support the industry and grow the visitor economy.

Its annual review event 'Driving change and building value,' held during [English Tourism Week](#) and just over a year since the lifting of COVID-related travel restrictions, is also shining the spotlight on tourism's importance to the economy.

It comes as VisitBritain's latest inbound [tourism forecast](#) shows continued strong recovery in overseas visitor spending. It estimates £29.5 billion will be spent by international visitors in the UK this year, up 4% on 2019. It estimates 35.1 million inbound visits, 86% of 2019 levels. Domestically, the agency's latest research shows that more than a third of Brits are more likely to choose a UK trip in the next six months compared to pre-pandemic.

British Tourist Authority Chairman Nick de Bois said:

“Almost a year to the day since travel restrictions were lifted marks a timely opportunity to bring industry together and acknowledge the incredible resilience and innovation of tourism businesses across the country, as we emerge from what must surely be the most challenging period the sector has ever faced.

“With spring upon us it is also timely to shine the spotlight on Britain’s outstanding visitor offer, the industry’s economic importance and tourism’s ability to drive growth for the British economy.”

Mr de Bois said VisitBritain’s priority was to continue to build back visitor spending, competing hard in markets seeing strong recovery and driving urgency to book a trip to Britain today.

The agency has just launched multi-million pound [GREAT Britain marketing campaigns](#) in the USA, its largest and most valuable market, Canada, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and European markets.

With spending by Americans in Britain already up 40% on 2019, VisitBritain was harnessing this growth investing in, alongside its GREAT campaign, separate campaigns in the [USA with British Airways](#) and a pilot cooperative marketing programme with industry, converting the interest to visit into bookings.

In Europe and the GCC its campaign, ‘[Spilling the Tea on Great Britain](#),’ is using a play on Britain’s love of tea, through destination images and short films, to tell a fresh and exciting story about the experiences on offer, showing visitors that ‘whatever your cup of tea, we’ve got it.’

All eyes are on Britain this year with the [Coronation](#) and Liverpool hosting the [Eurovision Song Contest](#), on behalf of Ukraine, and VisitBritain’s campaigns are harnessing these major events and the valuable opportunities to promote Britain globally as a visitor destination.

VisitBritain has also continued its work with the travel trade to make sure Britain’s tourism offer is sold internationally. As well as leisure travel, it is supporting the business events industry to recover and rebuild, enabling destinations to win international conferences and exhibitions.

Mr de Bois said there were also fresh challenges faced by the sector.

“As businesses rebuild they now also face increasing costs and long-standing workforce shortages that have been exacerbated by the pandemic.

“Working with the Government and industry we are determined to play our part in rebuilding a more resilient, sustainable and accessible visitor economy, equipped to withstand these and future challenges.”

An important step towards this and a priority for VisitEngland was implementing the [UK Government’s response](#) to the [de Bois Review of Destination Management Organisations](#), tackling the fragmentation in England’s tourism landscape including the recently launched [programme](#) to create a national portfolio of Local Visitor Economy Partnerships to support and grow the visitor economy.

VisitEngland also continues its support to small businesses, the backbone of the industry, to build their skills to grow their businesses from guidance and tools on its [Business Advice Hub](#) to the ‘[Taking England to the World](#)’ trade programme. It is also championing a sustainable tourism strategy for England, working to harness the industry’s collective impact.

Tourism is usually worth more than £127 billion to the economy, one of its largest service exports and a major part of British trade, supporting hundreds of thousands of small businesses and entrepreneurs and employing more than three million people across the UK.