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Welsh Government

STATISTICS, DOCUMENT

# Domestic GB Tourism Statistics (day trips in Wales): July to September 2023

Data on day trips by British residents to destinations throughout Britain for July to September 2023.

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# Introduction

The statistics in this release are based on a new combined online survey that replaces the separate Great Britain Tourism Survey and Great Britain Day Visits Survey that ran until the end of 2019. Further information is provided in the methodology and quality section of this publication on changes to the survey that limit comparability with the [published estimates for 2019](#) and previous years, for further information see the section on [comparability and coherence](#).

This is the first release of the main estimates for the volume and value of domestic day trips taken by British residents in Wales and Great Britain from July to September 2023. This report also includes estimates covering the period January to September 2023. The report includes estimates and details of day trips taken in Wales, and in Great Britain for comparative purposes.

There are two main measures for day trips reported in this publication.

## 3 hours or more leisure day trips

These are trips by adults and accompanied children that lasted for 3 or more hours, including travel time, to undertake one or more eligible leisure activities.

## Tourism day trips

These are a subset of 3 hours or more leisure day visits and to qualify as a tourism day trip they must meet the additional criteria of being undertaken less often than once a week and must include a visit to a place outside of the local authority where the trip started.

Further information is provided in the section on definitions.

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These statistics are used to monitor domestic tourism demand and measure the contribution and impact of domestic tourism on the visitor economy. A key purpose of these statistics is to uncover insights into market trends over time. Estimates of **domestic day trips to Wales from 2021 onwards** have been published and are comparable with the results in this release. Changes in expenditure should be considered in light of increased costs, as these estimates have not been adjusted for inflation.

These statistics are labelled as 'experimental' to enable testing and further modification to meet user needs. Further information on this is available on the **Office for National Statistics website**. We are keen to check that the new tourism statistics meet user needs and invite you to provide feedback on the information in this output at **[tourismresearch@gov.wales](mailto:tourismresearch@gov.wales)**.

Detailed results for England and Scotland are being published by **VisitEngland** and **VisitScotland**.

## Main points

### Wales trips

- Between July and September 2023, Great Britain (GB) residents took 41.10 million leisure day trips lasting 3 hours or more in Wales with £1.17 billion spent during these trips.
- 35% of leisure day trips taken in Wales were tourism day trips, with 14.39 million trips taken from July to September 2023, with an associated spend of £510 million.
- From January to September, GB residents took 127.47 million leisure day trips lasting 3 hours or more in Wales with £3.92 billion spent during these trips.
- 34% of leisure day trips taken in Wales were tourism day trips with 43.25

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million tourism day trips taken in the first nine months of 2023, with an associated spend of £1.81 billion.

- From January to September 2023, approximately 6% of GB leisure day trips of 3 hours or more and 5% of tourism day trips included a visit in Wales. During the same period, the share of total GB spend was 5% for both leisure day trips of 3 hours or more and tourism day trips.
- Compared to the same period in 2022, the volume of leisure day trips of 3 hours or more taken in Wales from January to September 2023 was 8% lower, whilst the volume of tourism day trips taken was 7% lower.
- The average expenditure on leisure day trips of 3 hours or more was £31 compared to £42 for tourism day trips taken in Wales.

## Great Britain trips

- Between July and September 2023, Great Britain (GB) residents took 774.22 million leisure day trips lasting 3 hours or more in GB with £27.32 billion spent during these trips.
- 40% of leisure day trips taken in GB were tourism day trips with 310.74 million tourism day trips taken between July and September 2023, with an associated spend of £13.36 billion.
- From January to September 2023, GB residents took 2.21 billion leisure day trips lasting 3 hours or more in GB with £78.00 billion spent during these trips.
- 38% of leisure day trips taken in GB were tourism day trips with 844.75 million tourism day trips taken during the first nine months of 2023, with an associated spend of £35.75 billion.
- Compared to the same period in 2022, the volume of leisure day trips of 3 hours or more taken in GB from January to September was 8% higher, whilst the volume of tourism day trips was 9% higher.
- The average expenditure on leisure day trips of 3 hours or more was £35 compared to £42 for tourism day trips taken in GB.

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# Trips and spend to GB nations

**Table 1: Total volume of 3 hours or more leisure day trips and spend to Great Britain and Wales, January to September 2023 [Note 1]**

3 Hours or More Leisure Day trips	Great Britain	England	Scotland	Wales
<b>Trips (millions)</b>	2210.61	1887.08	227.33	127.47
<b>% Great Britain trips</b>	100%	85%	10%	6%
<b>Spend (£ millions)</b>	£78,004	£67,088	£6,999	£3,916
<b>% Great Britain spend</b>	100%	86%	9%	5%

Source: Great Britain Day Visits Survey (GBDVS), January to September 2023

[Note 1] Percentages do not sum to 100% as some leisure day trips included visits to more than one nation.

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**Table 2: Total volume of tourism day trips and spend to Great Britain and Wales, January to September 2023**  
**[Note 1]**

Tourism day trips	Great Britain	England	Scotland	Wales
<b>Trips (millions)</b>	844.75	739.26	72.93	43.25
<b>% Great Britain trips</b>	100%	88%	9%	5%
<b>Spend (£ millions)</b>	£35,750	£31,102	£2,837	£1,810
<b>% Great Britain spend</b>	100%	87%	8%	5%

Source: Great Britain Day Visits Survey (GBDVS), January to September 2023

[Note 1] Percentages do not sum to 100% as some tourism day trips included visits to more than one nation.

From January to September 2023, there were 2.21 billion leisure day trips of 3 hours or more taken in GB by British residents with a total expenditure of £78.00 billion. During the same period there were 127.47 million leisure day trips of 3 hours or more taken in Wales with a total expenditure of £3.92 billion. Approximately 6% of all leisure day trips of 3 hours or more by British residents were taken in Wales, compared to 85% taken in England and 10% taken in Scotland. The share of total spend in Wales was 5%.

There were 844.75 million tourism day trips taken in GB by British residents in the first nine months of 2023, with a total expenditure of £35.75 billion. During the same period there were 43.25 million tourism day trips taken in Wales with a spend of £1.81 billion. Tourism day trips accounted for 34% of leisure day trips

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of 3 hours or more taken in Wales and 46% of expenditure.

**Table 3: Average spend for day trips taken in Great Britain and Wales, January to September 2023**

<b>3 Hours or More Leisure Day trips</b>	<b>Great Britain</b>	<b>Wales</b>
<b>Spend per trip</b>	£35	£31

<b>Tourism Day trips</b>	<b>Great Britain</b>	<b>Wales</b>
<b>Spend per trip</b>	£42	£42

Source: Great Britain Day Visits Survey (GBDVS), January to September 2023

The average expenditure on both leisure day trips of 3 hours or more taken in Wales is slightly lower than GB with an average spend per trip of £31, whereas average spend for tourism day trips is £42, both for trips taken in GB and in Wales. Notably, there is a higher average spend on tourism day trips than leisure day trips of 3 hours or more taken in GB and in Wales.

Average expenditure on leisure day trips of 3 hours or more taken in Wales from January to September 2023 was higher than during the same period in 2022, which saw an average spend of £29 per trip for leisure day trips of 3 hours or more taken in Wales. Similarly, average expenditure on tourism day trips taken in Wales was higher during the first nine months of 2023, compared to the first nine months of 2022, when the average spend per trip for tourism day trips taken in Wales was £36. Changes in expenditure should be considered in light of increased costs, as these estimates have not been adjusted for inflation.

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# Activities undertaken

**Table 4: Volume of 3 hours or more leisure day trips taken in Great Britain and Wales by main activity undertaken in millions, January to September 2023**

Main activity undertaken	Great Britain trips	Wales trips
Visited friends or relatives	753.32	40.79
Food and drink, a night out or speciality shopping	292.45	16.12
Took part in sports or outdoor leisure activities	207.94	14.03
Took part in hobbies and interests	240.61	13.61
Went sightseeing and exploring areas	127.90	10.93
Attended a special event or celebration	145.31	8.89
Went to a visitor attraction	201.80	8.52
Attended an organised public event	98.64	6.32
Went to an arts, cultural or entertainment experience	55.85	2.55
Took part in a health or wellbeing experience	29.96	2.06

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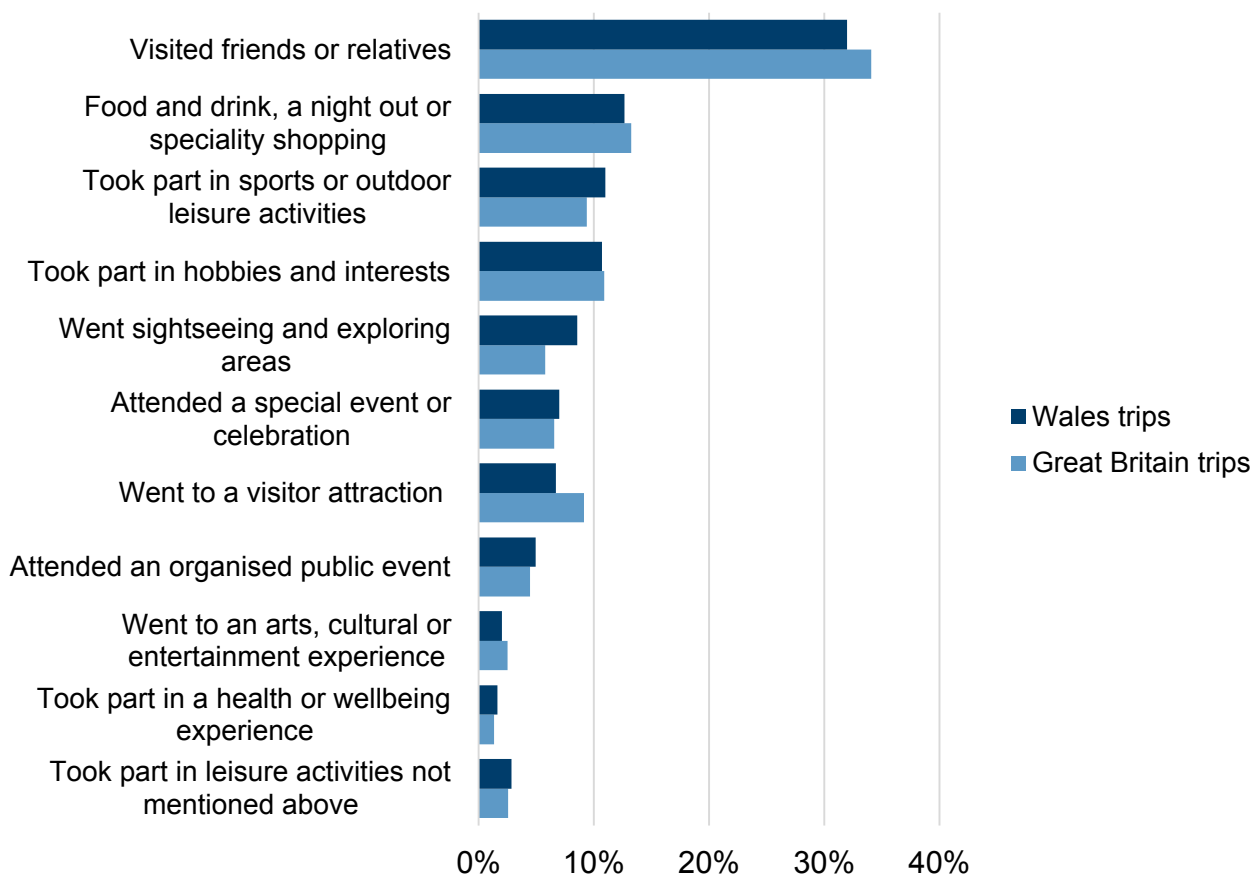
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Main activity undertaken	Great Britain trips	Wales trips
Took part in leisure activities not mentioned above	56.82	3.65

Source: Great Britain Day Visits Survey (GBDVS), January to September 2023

**Figure 1: Proportion of 3 hours or more leisure day trips in Great Britain and Wales by main activity undertaken, January to September 2023**



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Description of Figure 1: A clustered bar chart showing that visiting friends or relatives was the most frequent main activity undertaken on leisure day trips of 3 hours or more in GB and Wales.

Source: Great Britain Day Visits Survey (GBDVS), January to September 2023

Visiting friends and relatives comprised 32% of trips taken in Wales and 34% of trips taken in GB. Food and drink, a night out or speciality shopping was the second most popular main activity undertaken on leisure day trips of 3 hours or more in GB and Wales, with 13% of trips taken in Wales featuring this as their main activity. Taking part in sports or outdoor leisure activities was the next most popular main activity for Wales, undertaken on 11% of trips taken in Wales, whereas taking part in hobbies and interests was the third most popular activity for GB trips.

During the period January to September 2023, there have been decreases in the volumes of trips taken in Wales for food and drink, a night out or speciality shopping (by 19%), visiting friends and relatives (by 14%), and going to a visitor attraction (by 36%), compared to the same period in 2022. This is contrast to GB, where the volumes of trips taken for these purposes increased during the period January to September 2023, compared to the same period in 2022.

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# Trip trends for GB and Wales

**Table 5: Total volume of 3 hours or more leisure day trips and spend to Great Britain by quarter of visit, January to September 2023**

Quarter of visit	Great Britain trips (millions)	Great Britain spend (£ millions)
January to March	676.42	£24,852
April to June	759.97	£25,836
July to September	774.22	£27,316

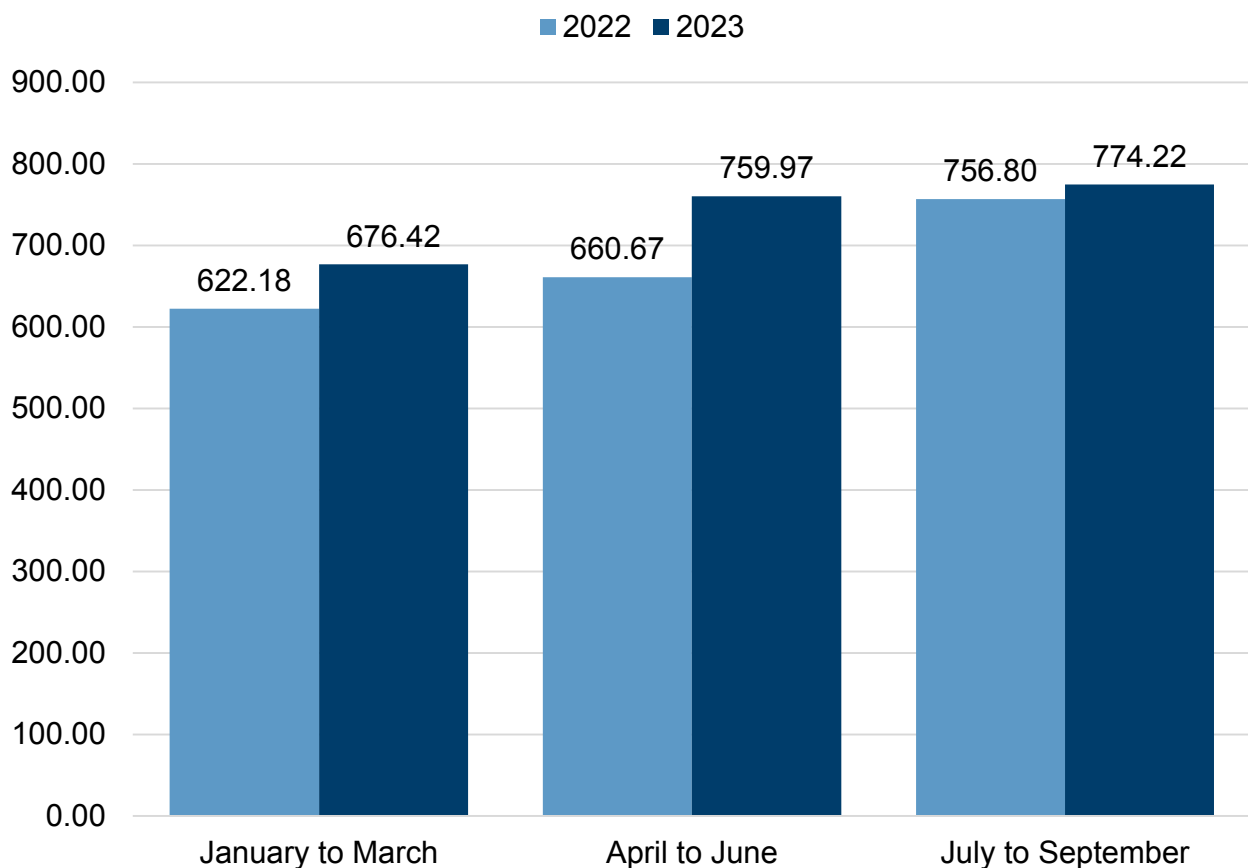
Source: Great Britain Day Visits Survey (GBDVS), January to September 2023

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**Figure 2: Volume of 3 hours or more leisure day trips to Great Britain by quarter of visit in millions, January to September, 2022 and 2023**



Description of Figure 2: A column chart showing that from January to September 2023, quarterly volumes of leisure day visits of 3 hours or more taken in GB each quarter were higher than during the same period in 2022.

Source: Great Britain Day Visits Survey (GBDVS), January to September 2022 and 2023

The volume of leisure day visits lasting 3 hours or more taken in GB during the third quarter of 2023 was 2% higher compared to the third quarter of 2022, while

expenditure was 5% higher. Trip volumes for the period January to September 2023 were 8% higher than during the same period in 2022, and expenditure was 12% higher. Trip volumes and expenditure for the third quarter of 2023 were the highest to date in 2023. However, when comparing quarterly figures across 2022 and 2023, increases in volume and value were higher in the first and second quarters of 2023, compared to the third quarter of 2023.

## **Table 6: Total volume of 3 hours or more leisure day trips and spend to Wales by quarter of visit, January to September 2023**

<b>Quarter of visit</b>	<b>Wales trips (millions)</b>	<b>Wales spend (£ millions)</b>
January to March	43.47	£1,232
April to June	42.90	£1,515
July to September	41.10	£1,170

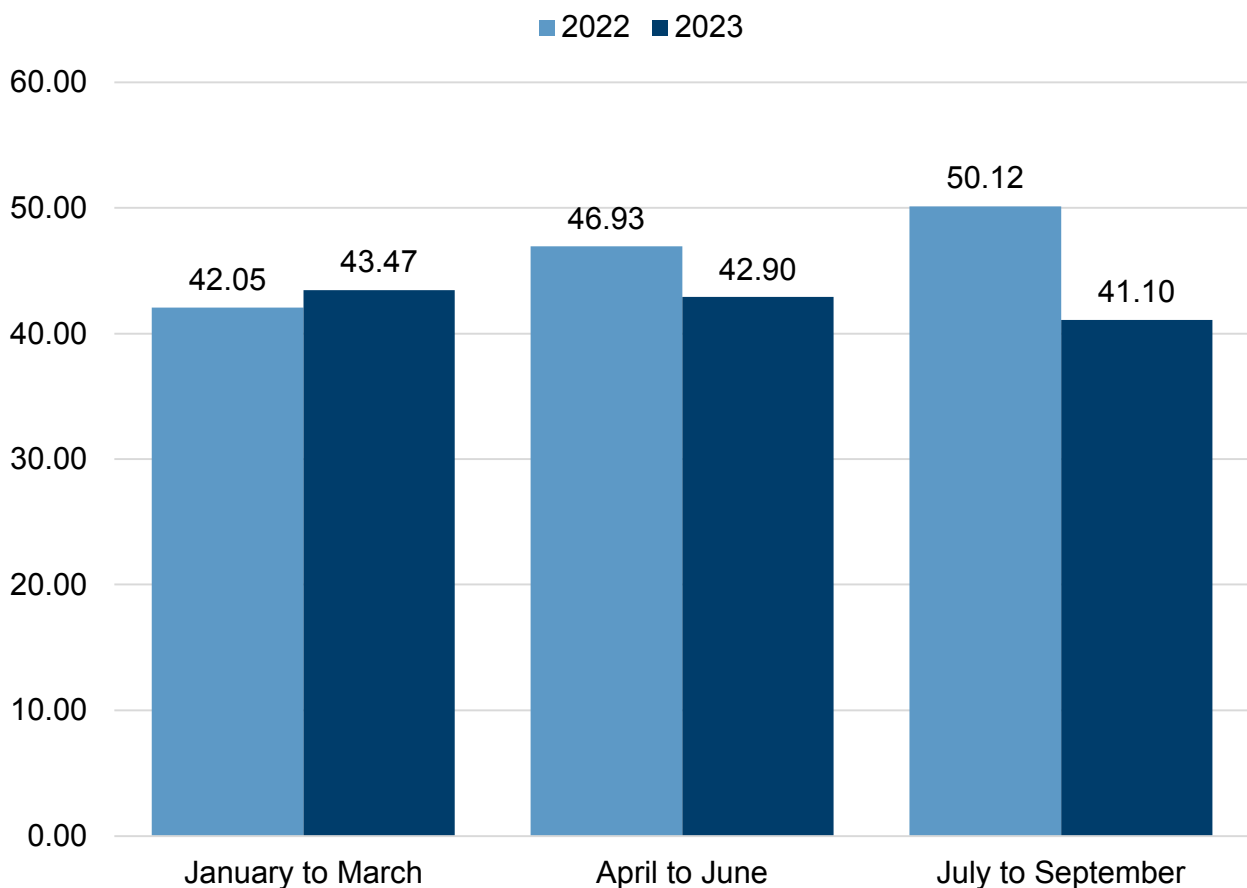
Source: Great Britain Day Visits Survey (GBDVS), January to September 2023

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**Figure 3: Volume of 3 hours or more leisure day trips to Wales by quarter of visit in millions, January to September, 2022 and 2023**



Description of Figure 3: A column chart showing that although the volume of leisure day visits of 3 hours or more taken in Wales from January to March was higher in 2023 compared to 2022, quarterly volumes during the April to June and July to September periods were lower in 2023 compared to 2022.

Source: Great Britain Day Visits Survey (GBDVS), January to September 2022 and 2023

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The volume of leisure day visits of 3 hours or more taken in Wales during the third quarter of 2023 was 18% lower compared to the third quarter of 2022, while expenditure was 23% lower. However, trip volumes for the period January to September 2023 were 8% lower than during the same period in 2022, and expenditure was 1% lower. Trip volumes and expenditure for the third quarter of 2023 were lower than the first and second quarter of the year. Consecutive decreases in quarterly trip volumes across 2023 are the reverse of the quarterly pattern in 2022, where quarterly trip volumes rose from the first quarter of 2022 to the third quarter. The quarterly trend in 2023 for Wales also contrasts with quarterly trip volumes in 2023 across GB as a whole (see Figure 2).

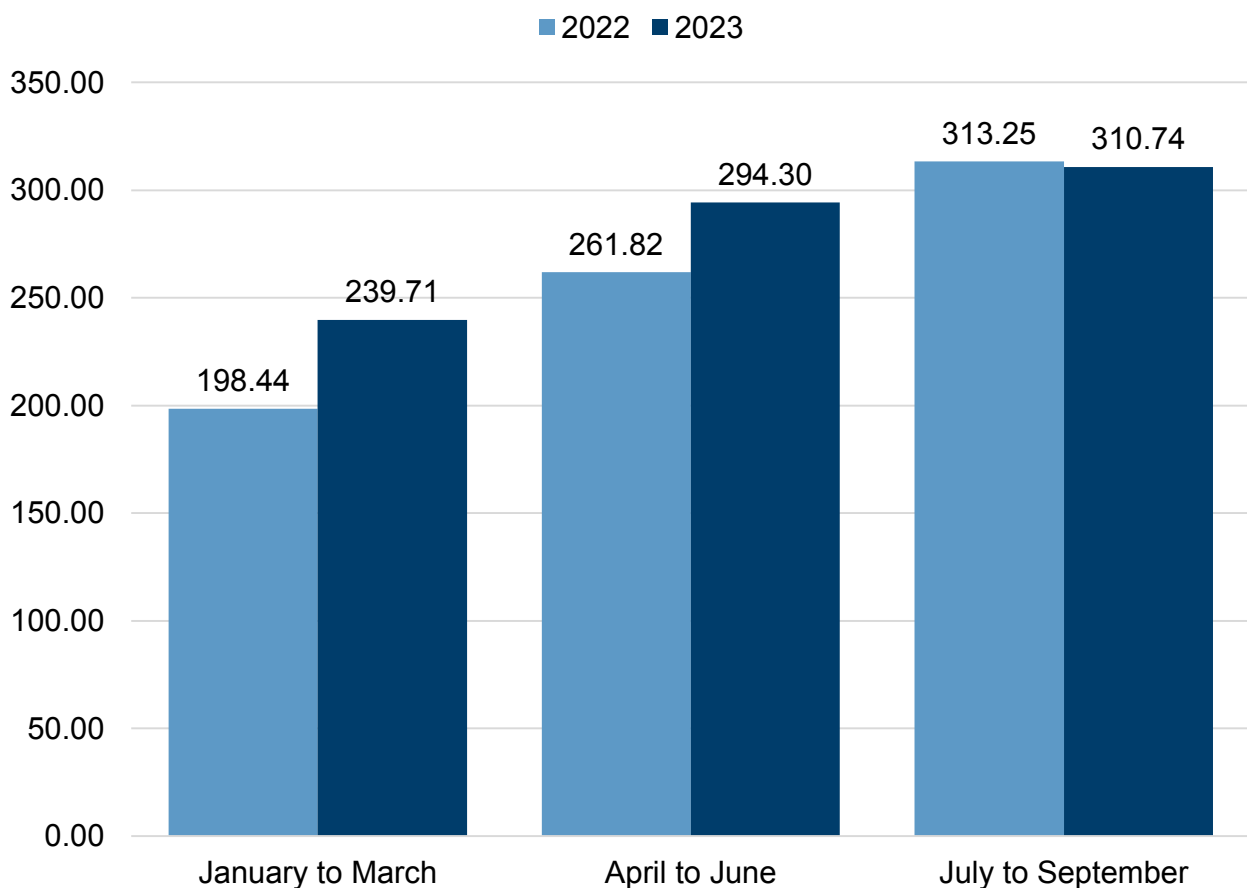
**Table 7: Total volume of tourism day trips and spend to Great Britain by quarter of visit, January to September 2023**

Quarter of visit	Great Britain trips (millions)	Great Britain spend (£ millions)
January to March	239.71	£10,417
April to June	294.30	£11,970
July to September	310.74	£13,363

Source: Great Britain Day Visits Survey (GBDVS), January to September 2023



**Figure 4: Volume of tourism day trips to Great Britain by quarter of visit in millions, January to September, 2022 and 2023**



Description of Figure 4: A column chart showing that, during the first and second quarters of 2023, quarterly volumes of tourism day trips taken in GB in 2023 were higher compared to 2022, whereas during the third quarter, the volume of tourism day trips taken was slightly lower in 2023, compared to 2022.

Source: Great Britain Day Visits Survey (GBDVS), January to September 2022 and 2023

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The volume of tourism day trips taken in GB during the third quarter of 2023 were 1% lower compared to the third quarter of 2022, while expenditure was 8% higher. However, trip volumes for the period January to September 2023 were 9% higher than during the same period in 2022, and expenditure was 10% higher. Trip volumes and expenditure during the third quarter of 2023 were the highest to date in 2023.

## **Table 8: Total volume of tourism day trips and spend to Wales by quarter of visit, January to September 2023**

<b>Quarter of visit</b>	<b>Wales trips (millions)</b>	<b>Wales spend (£ millions)</b>
<b>January to March</b>	11.03	£465
<b>April to June</b>	17.83	£835
<b>July to September</b>	14.39	£510

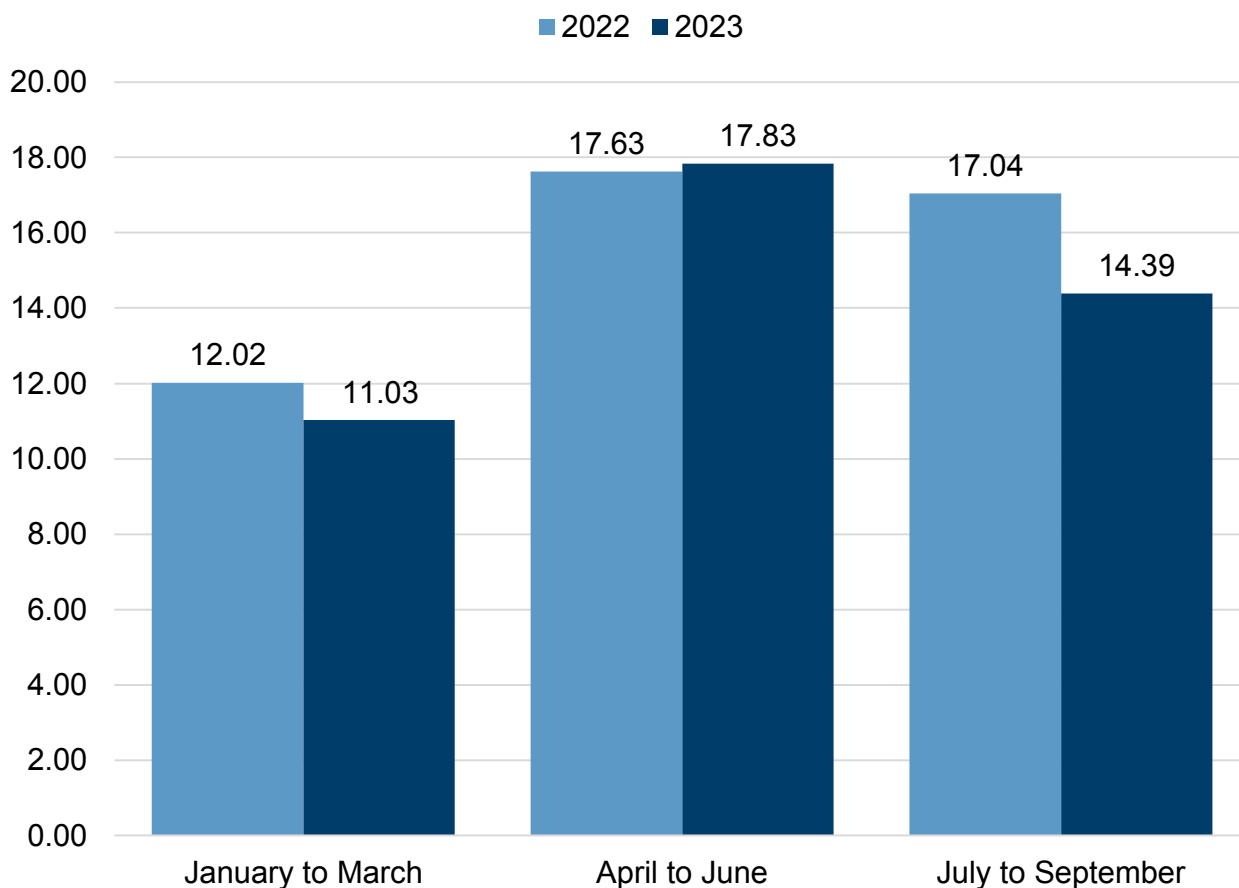
Source: Great Britain Day Visits Survey (GBDVS), January to September 2023

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**Figure 5: Volume of tourism day trips to Wales by quarter of visit in millions, January to September, 2022 and 2023**



Description of Figure 5: A column chart showing that although the volume of tourism day visits taken in Wales was higher in April to June 2023 compared to the same period in 2022, the volumes of visits taken during the periods January to March and July to September 2023 were lower, compared to the same periods in 2022.

Source: Great Britain Day Visits Survey (GBDVS), January to September 2022 and 2023

The volume of tourism day trips taken in Wales during the third quarter of 2023 was 16% lower compared to the third quarter of 2022, while expenditure was 11% lower. However, trip volumes for the period January to September were 7% lower compared to the same period in 2022, while expenditure was 6% higher. Trip volumes and expenditure during the third quarter of 2023 were lower than the second quarter, but higher than the first quarter of the year. The emerging trend of lower trip volumes to Wales in 2023 contrasts with trip volumes across GB as a whole, which have increased during the period January to September 2023, compared to the same period in 2022 (see Figure 4).

## Quality and methodology information

### Definitions

There are two main measures for day trips used in this report.

#### 3 Hours or More Leisure Day Trips

Trips by adults and accompanied children that lasted for 3 or more hours, including travel time, to undertake one or more eligible leisure activities. All overnight trips are excluded as are day trips from a holiday accommodation base.

#### Tourism Day Trips

These are a subset of 3 hours or more leisure day visits and to qualify as tourism day trips, they must meet the additional criteria of being undertaken less often than once a week and they must include a visit to a place outside of the local authority where the trip started. The requirement to travel to a different

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local authority covers most activities with the exception of trips where the main activity is watching live sports events, going to visitor attractions or going to public events, which qualify as tourism day visits even if they are undertaken within the same local authority.

## Eligible Leisure Activities

- Visited friends or relatives
- Went to a visitor attraction, such as a historic house, theme park, or museum
- Took part in sports or outdoor leisure activities
- Went sightseeing and exploring areas
- Took part in hobbies and interests
- Took part in a health or wellbeing experience
- Attended a special event or celebration (such as a wedding or birthday)
- Attended an organised public event (such as an exhibition or live sport)
- Went to an arts, cultural or entertainment experience (such as a museum)
- Food and drink, a night out or speciality shopping
- Took part in leisure activities not mentioned above

## Other definitions used in this publication

### Volume

An estimate of what the grossed-up number of day trips undertaken by the population would be if the survey sample is representative of the whole GB population. The reported volume of trips is an estimate of trips by individuals, so that a travel party of two people would count as two individual trips.

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## Value

An estimate of what the total expenditure on day trips by the population would be if the survey sample is representative of the whole GB population.

These definitions and the associated qualifying criteria have been revised as part of the new combined GBTS/GBDVS survey to align with agreed international standards. These changes impact comparability between the published domestic day trips estimates for 2023 with those published for 2019 and previous years.

## Methodology

In 2019, Visit Wales, VisitScotland and VisitEngland undertook a review of the requirements and methods for producing the official GB domestic tourist statistics, to future-proof the data collection methods, whilst maintaining the reliability and robustness of the information reported. As a result, substantial changes were introduced as part of a new combined online survey collecting data on both domestic overnight trips as well as domestic day trips.

The sample for the new combined online survey is a non-probability-based design sourced from 4 ESOMAR accredited online panel providers and includes quotas for key demographic variables to make the overall sample as representative as possible of GB population. The target annual sample size for the survey of overnight visitors is 35,000 completed interviews. Fieldwork for the new survey started in England and Wales in July 2023 and the number of interviews achieved for the period July to September 2023 is 8,359 interviews for GB residents including 889 interviews with Welsh residents. Not every person who is interviewed will have taken an eligible day trip and so the base sizes of eligible trips taken used for trip estimation are lower than the number of interviews.

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## Base sizes: 3 hours or more leisure day trips

Country visited	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023	Quarter 3 total
Great Britain	2,466	2,866	2,124	7,456
Wales	240	259	216	715

## Base sizes: tourism day trips

Country visited	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023	Quarter 3 total
Great Britain	978	1,149	785	2,912
Wales	82	81	67	230

Further base sizes will be provided for 2023 in the GBDVS Background Quality Report 2023, which will be published in 2024.

As part of the survey changes, a revised weighting scheme has been introduced to improve efficiency, whilst making the results as representative as possible of the GB population. However, the use of a non-probability online sample limits the extent to which the survey responses are truly representative of the full GB

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population, a limitation of similar online sample surveys. The new weighting scheme uses the National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC) mapped to approximate social grade for the purpose of quotas and weighting to the GB population. The change to using NS-SEC as the population statistics source will impact the estimation and reporting of trips compared to the previous reporting of social grade used for GBDVS in 2019 and previous years. We have introduced a new question in the survey during 2023 that captures household income that will be used to analyse and report on trips taken by different household income bands from 2023 onwards.

Further details of the changes to survey method, sample design, estimation approaches and the effects of applied caps will be made available in the GBDVS Background Quality Report 2023. Further information is also available in the [GBDVS Background Quality Report 2022](#).

## Comparability and coherence

Statistics for GB day trips have been collected in a broadly similar way since 2011. However, the changes in survey methodology introduced in 2021, together with the interruption in data collection due to COVID-19, means that results published from April 2021 onwards are not directly comparable with data published for 2019 and previous years.

The estimates of volume from 2021 onwards included trips by GB adults and accompanying children, whereas the published day trip volumes for 2019 and previous years were estimates of adult trips only.

As part of the survey, respondents are asked about any day trips they have taken in the 7 days prior to their date of interview (reference period). Trip and expenditure estimates are reported for individual calendar months as well as for quarterly and annual periods. As the interview reference periods do not exactly correspond with calendar months an adjustment is made using a 'seasonal

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smoothing factor' to improve monthly comparisons within and between years. The monthly estimates are subject to limitations on sample size and seasonal fluctuations in trip taking across the year. The monthly pattern of visits in 2021 will have also been influenced by any **COVID-19 restrictions** in place limiting travel at different times of the year, as well as by public confidence undertaking different leisure activities. Users are advised to be aware of these limitations when making monthly or quarterly comparisons.

## Accuracy

The statistics produced from the Great Britain Day Visits Survey in 2019 and previous years have been designated as official statistics, which provides reassurance to users that the statistics are produced to the very highest professional standards of trustworthiness, quality and value, set out in the **Code of Practice for Statistics (Office for National Statistics)**. Due to the changes in methodology and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the survey results for 2021, 2022 and 2023 have been labelled as '**experimental statistics**' (**Office for National Statistics**). The new survey and statistics have undergone a comprehensive programme of quality assurance including piloting of the survey, analysis of changes to the trip definitions, testing the impact of the new weighting scheme and a review of caps and imputation rules. Changes to the survey methodology and estimation have taken account of a review and advice provided by the Methodology Advisory Service of the Office for National Statistics.

As the statistics are produced using a non-probability online survey method, they are subject to the limitations and potential sources of bias and error associated with such surveys. These include:

- coverage error due to part of the GB population not having online access
- sampling error by using a sample to measure the behaviour of the full GB population

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- sample bias by including differences between people with online access and who are online panel members compared to those who are not
- measurement error due to respondents entering incorrect values
- non-response error including survey refusals and drop-outs and the availability of 'don't know' and 'prefer not to say' options

The GBDVS data is weighted to correct for any imperfections in the achieved sample that might lead to bias and to rectify any differences between the sample and the target GB population. The survey uses a mix of accredited online panels to mitigate for possible panel specific biases, and the mix of panels is kept consistent over time. Demographic quotas are used to align the sample with the GB population. The survey script and data processing include bespoke checks to verify the accuracy of responses. Imputation is used to cover missing data and caps are used to minimise the impact of extreme values that are entered. It is not possible to measure standard sample errors due to the non-probability sample being used, but base sizes are reported for eligible trip takers and users are advised to consider and be cautious of small base sizes, particularly for monthly data and lower-level geographies, when drawing inferences from the statistics.

Further details of quality assurance and trip base sizes for 2023 will be provided in the GBDVS Background Quality Report 2023. Further information is also available in the [GBDVS Background Quality Report 2022](#).

## Relevance

These statistics are used both within and outside the Welsh Government to monitor domestic tourism demand and measure the contribution and impact of domestic tourism on the visitor economy. A key purpose of these statistics is to uncover insights into market trends over time. The estimates released for 2021 will provide insights on the impact of COVID-19 on visitor levels and provide a baseline to measure performance across subsequent years.

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As far as possible, the new combined GBTS and GBDVS survey provides consistency with previous information collected, but new questions capture enhanced information on activities undertaken and responder profiles including protected characteristics. It is envisaged that this additional information will be of value for the various users of the survey. The current questionnaire is included in the [GBDVS 2022 Background Quality Report](#).

The survey sponsors are planning to engage with the priority users of the statistics to check the new survey information meets their needs and we encourage users of the statistics to provide feedback on the data and this output at [tourismresearch@gov.wales](mailto:tourismresearch@gov.wales).

## Timeliness and punctuality

All outputs adhere to the Code of Practice by pre-announcing the date of publication through the upcoming calendar. Furthermore, should the need arise to postpone an output this would follow the [statement on revisions, errors and postponements](#). We aim to publish data as soon as possible after the relevant research time period. Disruption to the new combined GBTS and GBDVS survey due to COVID-19 and comprehensive testing and quality assuring of the new statistics have resulted in the reporting of statistics for 2021, 2022 and 2023 being later than normal. Results for Wales will be published on a quarterly basis, to ensure estimates are supported by robust trip base sizes. Specific publication timings will be notified on the Welsh Government website, but the aim is to publish quarterly statistics for Wales approximately 9 to 10 weeks after the end of each quarter.

## Further information

### [Estimates for domestic day trips in Wales from April to June 2023](#)

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[Estimates for domestic day trips in Wales from January to March 2023](#)

[Estimates for domestic day trips in Wales in 2022](#)

[A summary of changes made to the GBDVS survey in 2021 compared to 2019 and previous years](#)

[Estimates for domestic day trips in England are available from VisitEngland](#)

[Estimates for domestic day trips in Scotland are available from VisitScotland](#)

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