



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

STATISTICS

Domestic GB Tourism Statistics (day trips in Wales): April to December 2021 (revised)

Data on day trips by British residents to destinations throughout Britain for 2021.

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Introduction

This is a revised release of the main estimates for the volume and value of domestic day trips taken by British residents in Wales and Great Britain in 2021. The statistics published in this release cover the period from the start of April to the end of December 2021. Data is not available for January to March 2021, due to coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions on travel during this period. 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](#).

Detailed results for England and Scotland are being published by [VisitEngland](#) and [VisitScotland](#).

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. Changes in survey methodology introduced in 2021, together with the interruption in data collection due to COVID-19, mean that results published in this release are not directly comparable with data published for 2019 and previous years. Please refer to the section on [comparability and coherence](#).

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.

These estimates have been revised because a number of individual trips were identified as having a disproportionate impact upon the total estimated volume of trips and spend for Wales and Great Britain. Caps for volume of trips and spend have now been applied to mitigate the disproportionate impact of these trips upon estimates. The introduction of the caps has slightly reduced estimates throughout this release. Where data in a table or chart has been revised, this is noted in the title of the table or chart.

Main points

Wales trips

- Between April and December 2021, Great Britain (GB) residents took 123.3 million leisure day trips lasting 3 hours or more in Wales with £3.16 billion spent during these trips.
- 30% of leisure day trips taken in Wales were tourism day trips with 37.4 million tourism day trips taken between April and December 2021 with an associated spend of £1.33 billion.

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- Approximately 7% of all GB leisure day trips of 3 hours or more and 6% of tourism day trips included a visit in Wales, whilst the share of total GB spend was slightly lower at 6% for leisure day trips of 3 hours or more and 5% for tourism day trips.
- There was a gradual increase in tourism day trips taken in Wales from April onwards. Trips volumes and expenditure were highest in July to September.
- The average expenditure on leisure day trips of 3 hours or more was £26 compared to £36 for tourism day trips taken in Wales.

Great Britain trips

- Between April and December 2021, GB residents took 1,794 million leisure day trips lasting 3 hours or more in GB with £55.4 billion spent during these trips.
- 35% of leisure day trips taken in GB were tourism day trips with 623.6 million tourism day trips taken between April and December 2021, with an associated spend of £24.9 billion.
- 87% of tourism day trips taken in GB included a visit in England, 9% included a visit in Scotland and 6% included a visit in Wales.
- There was a gradual increase in tourism day trips taken in GB from April 2021 onwards with a peak volume of 246.7 million trips taken in the third quarter (July to September 2021).
- The average expenditure on leisure day trips of 3 hours or more was £31 compared to £40 for tourism day trips taken in GB.

Trips and spend to GB nations, 2021

Table 1: Total volume of 3 hours or more leisure day trips and spend to the nations of Great Britain (April to December 2021, revised) [Note 1]

| 3 hours or more leisure day trips | Great Britain | England | Scotland | Wales |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|---------|----------|--------|
| Trips (millions) | 1793.6 | 1513.5 | 192.8 | 123.3 |
| % Great Britain trips | 100% | 84% | 11% | 7% |
| Spend (£millions) | £55,398 | £46,554 | £5,688 | £3,156 |
| % Great Britain spend | 100% | 84% | 10% | 6% |

Source: Great Britain Day Visits Survey (GBDVS), April to December 2021

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

Table 2: Total volume of tourism day trips and spend to the nations of Great Britain (April to December 2021, revised) [Note 1]

| Tourism day trips | Great Britain | England | Scotland | Wales |
|-------------------------|---------------|---------|----------|-------|
| Trips (millions) | 623.6 | 545.5 | 55.1 | 37.4 |

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| | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------|---------|--------|--------|
| % Great Britain trips | 100% | 87% | 9% | 6% |
| Spend (£millions) | £24,941 | £21,188 | £2,420 | £1,333 |
| % Great Britain spend | 100% | 85% | 10% | 5% |

Source: Great Britain Day Visits Survey, April to December 2021

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

In the period from the start of April to the end of December 2021, there were 1,794 million leisure day trips of 3 hours or more taken in GB by British residents with a total expenditure of £55.4 billion. During the same period there were 123.3 million leisure day trips of 3 hours or more taken in Wales with a total expenditure of £3.16 billion. Approximately 7% of all leisure day trips of 3 hours or more by British residents were taken in Wales, compared to 84% taken in England and 11% taken in Scotland. The share of total spend in Wales was lower at 6% due to a lower average spend on trips taken in Wales.

There were 623.6 million tourism day trips taken in GB by British residents from April to December 2021 with a total expenditure of £24.9 billion. During the same period there were 37.4 million tourism day trips taken in Wales with a spend of £1.33 billion. Tourism day trips accounted for 30% of leisure day trips of 3 hours or more taken in Wales and 42% of expenditure.

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Characteristics of GB and Wales trips

Table 3: Average spend for day trips taken in Great Britain and Wales (April to December 2021, revised)

| 3 hours or more leisure day trips | Great Britain | Wales |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|-------|
| Spend per trip | £31 | £26 |
| Tourism day trips | Great Britain | Wales |
| Spend per trip | £40 | £36 |

Source: Great Britain Day Visits Survey, April to December 2021

The average expenditure on both leisure day trips of 3 hours or more and tourism day trips taken in Wales is lower than GB with an average spend per trip of £26 and £36 respectively. 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.

There was an average party size of 2.9 adults and children on tourism day trips taken in Wales between April and December 2021 with 20% of trips taken by solo travellers, 41% by 2 people and 39% by travel parties of 3 or more people.

Table 4: Volume of 3 hours or more leisure day trips taken in Great Britain and Wales by main activity undertaken in millions (April to December 2021, revised)

| Main activity undertaken | Great Britain trips | Wales trips |
|---|---------------------|-------------|
| Visited friends or relatives | 676.6 | 44.4 |
| Food and drink, a night out or speciality shopping | 230.5 | 15.7 |
| Took part in sports or outdoor leisure activities | 192.8 | 14.5 |
| Took part in hobbies and interests | 177.2 | 13.6 |
| Went sightseeing and exploring areas | 116.9 | 11.7 |
| Went to a visitor attraction | 144.7 | 9.6 |
| Attended a special event or celebration | 93.3 | 6.8 |
| Attended an organised public event | 64.2 | 2.1 |
| Went to an arts, cultural or entertainment experience | 29.9 | 1.4 |
| Took part in a health or wellbeing experience | 22.4 | 1.3 |
| Took part in leisure activities not mentioned above | 45.0 | 2.4 |

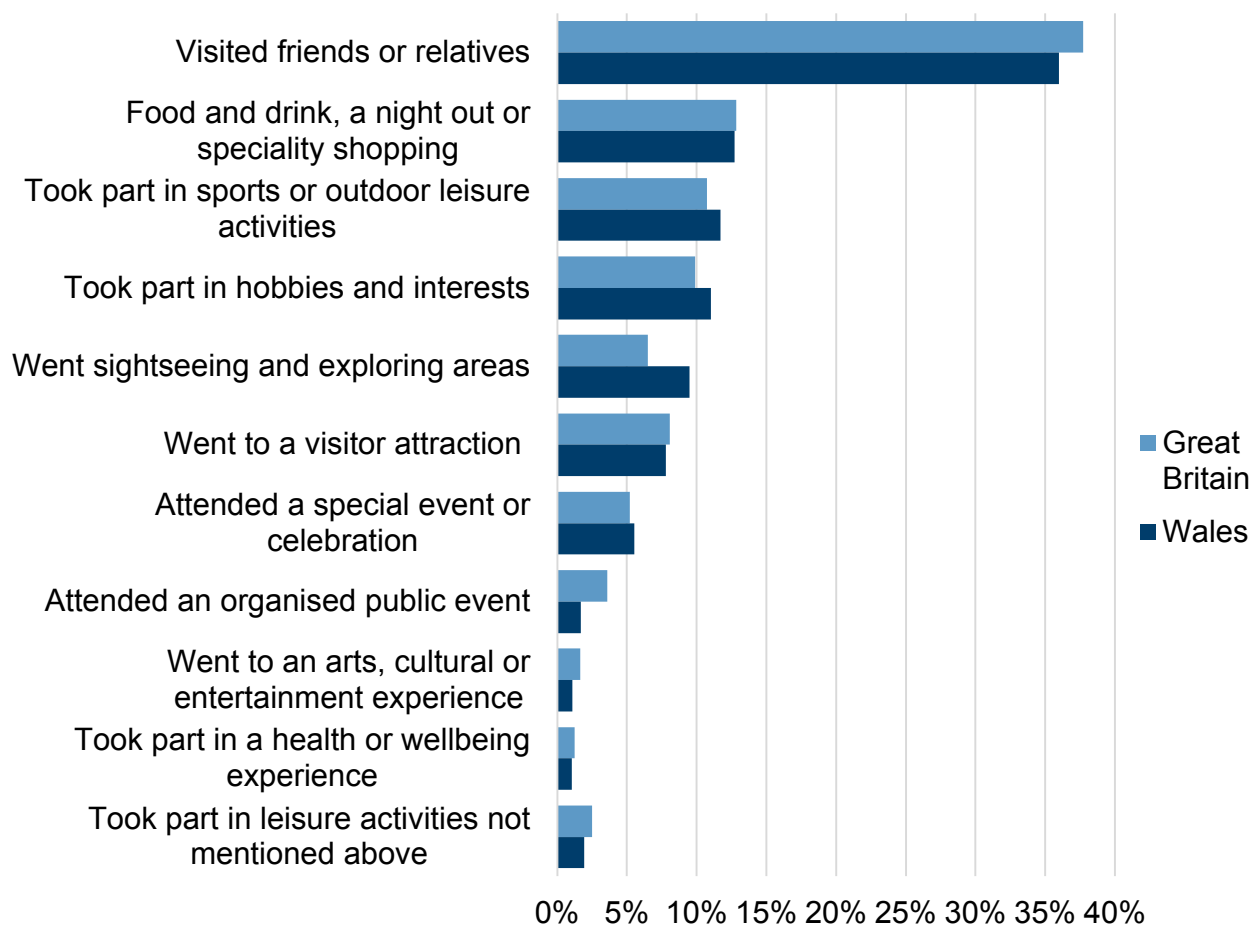
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Source: Great Britain Day Visits Survey, April to December 2021

Figure 1: Proportion of 3 hours or more leisure day trips in Great Britain and Wales by main activity undertaken, April to December 2021 (revised)



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, April to December 2021

Visiting friends and relatives comprised 36% of trips taken in Wales and 38% 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, followed by taking part in sports or outdoor leisure activities.

Table 5: Volume of tourism day trips in Great Britain and Wales by main activity undertaken in millions (April to December 2021, revised) [Note 1]

| Main activity undertaken | Great Britain trips | Wales trips |
|--|---------------------|-------------|
| Visited friends or relatives | 195.6 | 9.7 |
| Went sightseeing and exploring areas | 58.6 | 5.8 |
| Food and drink, a night out or speciality shopping | 79.0 | 5.3 |
| Went to a visitor attraction | 101.5 | 4.2 |
| Took part in sports or outdoor leisure activities | 44.7 | 4.0 |
| Took part in hobbies and interests | 30.2 | 2.8 |
| Attended a special event or celebration | 36.2 | 2.3 |
| Attended an organised public event | 41.6 | 1.7 |
| Went to an arts, cultural or entertainment | 15.9 | 0.5 |

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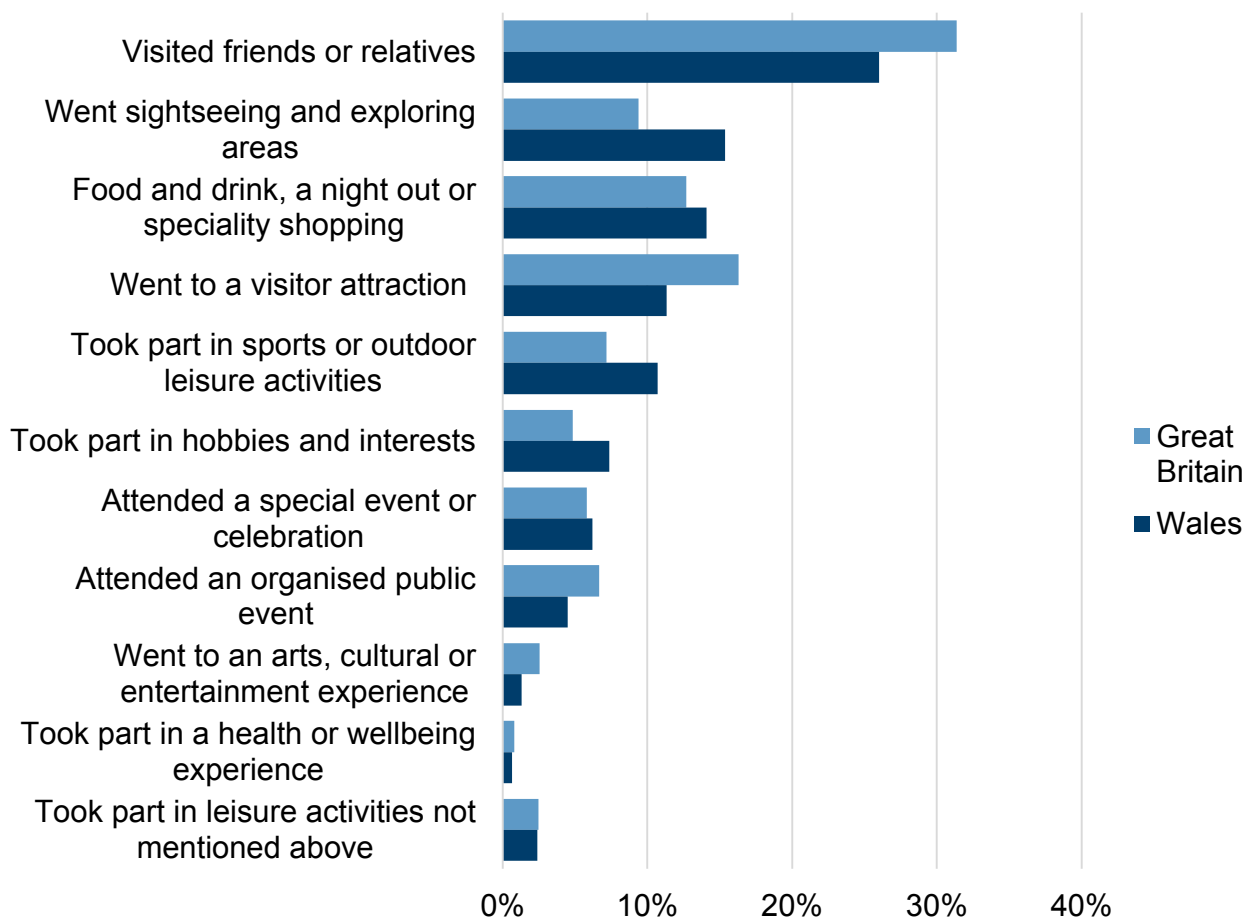
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| Main activity undertaken | Great Britain trips | Wales trips |
|--|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| experience | | |
| Took part in a health or wellbeing experience | 5.1 | 0.2 |
| Took part in leisure activities not mentioned above | 15.3 | 0.9 |

Source: Great Britain Day Visits Survey, April to December 2021

Note 1] Low base sizes for 'Took part in a health or wellbeing experience', 'Took part in leisure activities not mentioned above', and 'Went to an arts, cultural or entertainment experience' - data should be treated with caution.

Figure 2: Proportion of tourism day trips in Great Britain and Wales by main activity undertaken, April to December 2021 (revised)



Description of Figure 2: A clustered bar chart showing that visiting friends or relatives was the most frequent main activity undertaken on tourism day trips in GB and Wales.

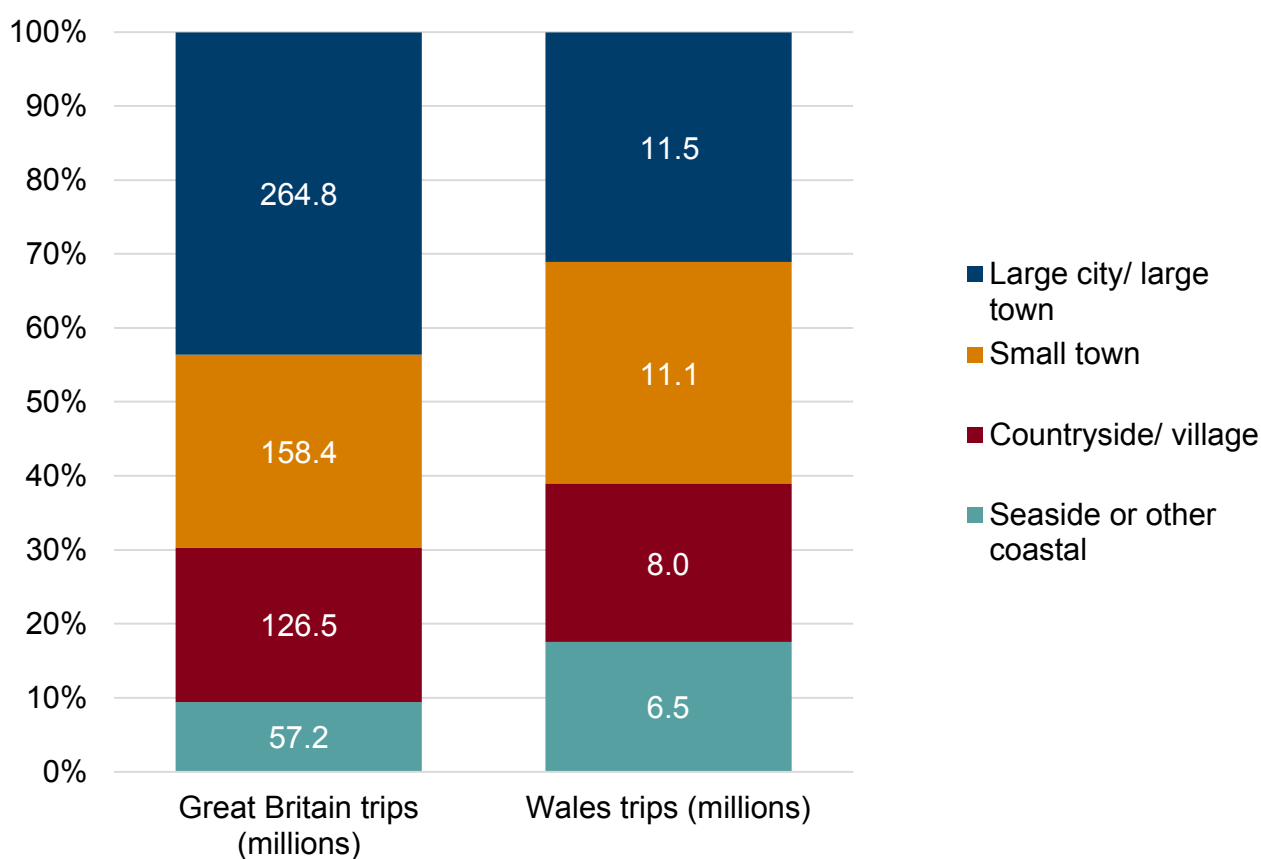
Source: Great Britain Day Visits Survey, April to December 2021

Visiting friends and relatives comprised 26% of trips taken in Wales and 31% of all GB trips. Sightseeing and exploring was the second most popular activity undertaken in Wales, whereas visiting an attraction was the second most popular activity undertaken in GB. Food and drink, a night out or speciality shopping was the third most popular main activity undertaken on tourism day trips in GB and Wales.

The rest of this release will focus on the characteristics of tourism day visits. To qualify as a tourism day visit, 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.

Detailed characteristics of GB and Wales tourism day trips

Figure 3: Volume and proportion of tourism day trips in Great Britain and Wales by main location, April to December 2021 (revised) [Note 1]



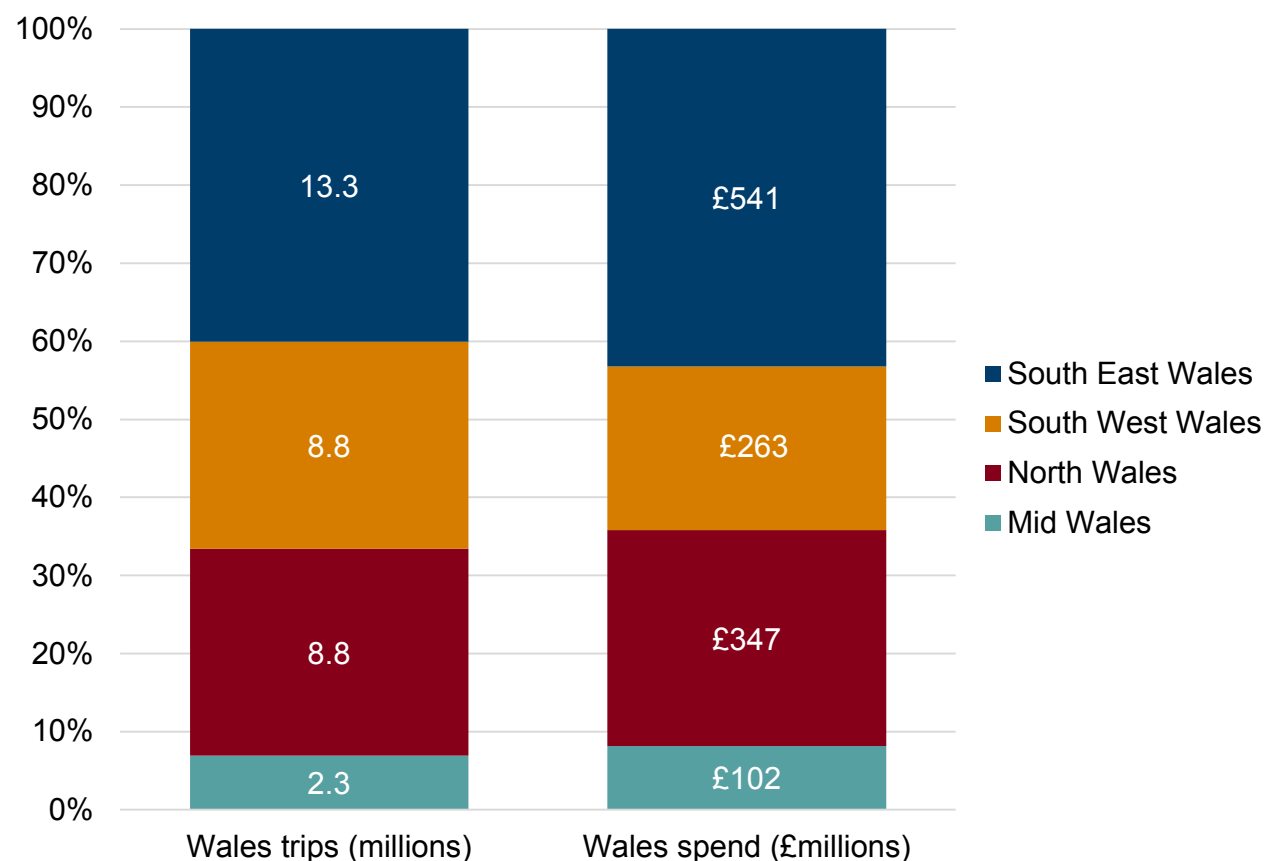
Description of Figure 3: A stacked column chart showing that trips to large cities/ large towns made up the largest proportion of GB trips and Wales trips.

Source: Great Britain Day Visits Survey, April to December 2021

[Note 1] The numbers within the coloured segments are the number of tourism day trips taken to each main location in millions. For instance, from April to December 2021, there were 11.1 million tourism day trips to small towns taken in Wales.

Just over 6 in 10 tourism day trips taken in Wales were to urban destinations. However, a higher proportion of tourism trips taken in Wales were to the seaside and coastal areas and small towns, but a lower proportion were taken to large city and towns, compared to the whole of GB. The average spend per trip was notably higher for tourism day trips taken in large cities and towns in Wales (£51) compared to an average of £36 across all types of destination in Wales.

Figure 4: Volume and proportion of tourism day trips and spend where a region of Wales is main place of visit, April to December 2021 (revised) [Note 1] [Note 2]



Description of Figure 4: A stacked column chart showing that among the Welsh regions, South East Wales received the most trips and the highest spending from GB residents.

Source: Great Britain Day Visits Survey, April to December 2021

[Note 1] Low base size for Mid Wales, data should be treated with caution.

[Note 2] The numbers within the coloured segments are the number of tourism day trips taken in Wales in millions, and the amount spent on tourism day trips taken in Wales in millions of pounds, for each region of Wales. For instance, from April to December 2021, there were 2.3 million tourism day trips to Mid Wales.

Tourism day trips taken in Wales may be to a region of Wales, or an area outside of Wales, as the main destination for the day trip. South East Wales was the main destination for 36% of tourism day trips taken in Wales. South West Wales and North Wales were both the main destination for 24% of tourism day trips taken in Wales, whereas Mid Wales was the main destination for 6% of trips taken. This pattern will be influenced by the relative population sizes of the regions of Wales. Around 11% of day trips taken in Wales had a main place of visit outside of Wales.

Profile of visitors taking tourism day trips in Wales

Table 6: Volume of tourism day trips and total expenditure in Wales by nation of residence of visitors (April to December 2021, revised) [Note 1]

| | Trips (millions) | Spend (£millions) | % of Wales trips |
|----------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| England | 17.5 | £673 | 47% |
| Scotland | 0.3 | £6 | 1% |
| Wales | 19.6 | £651 | 52% |

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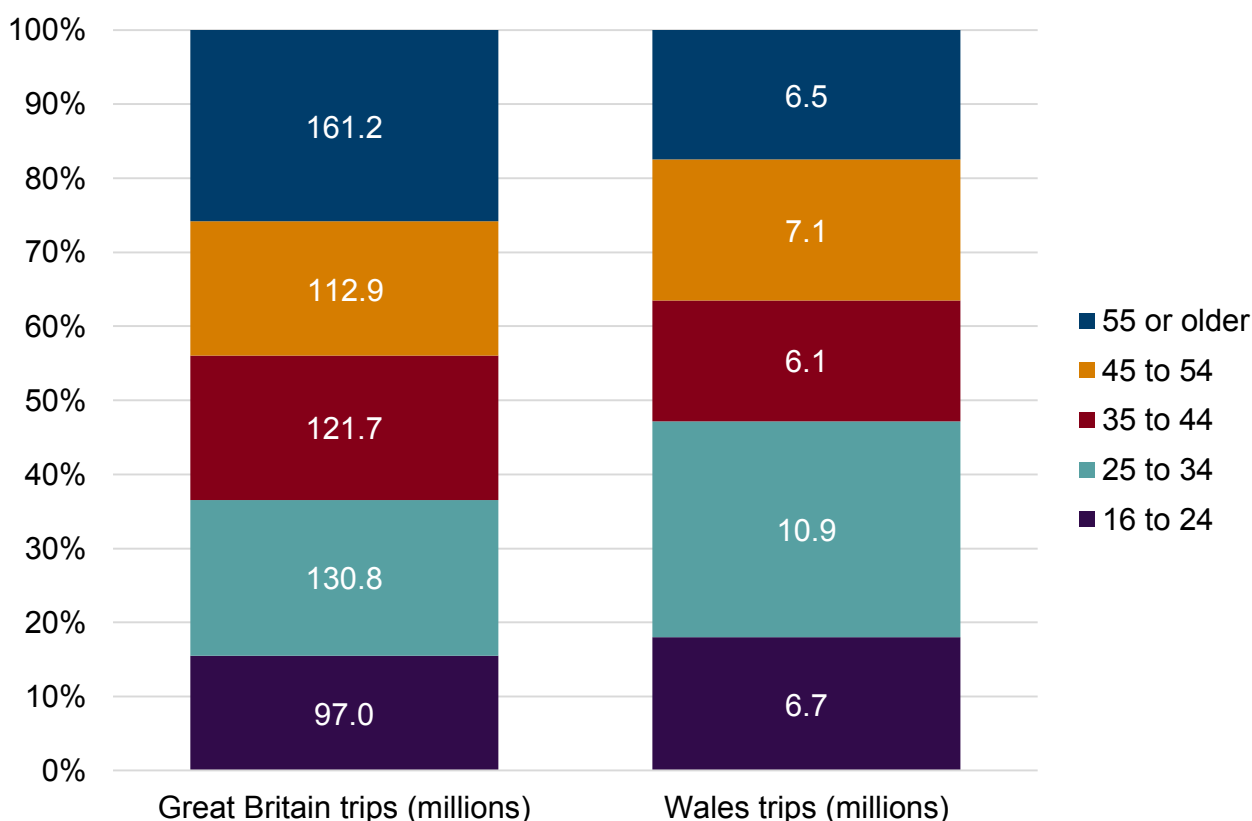
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Source: Great Britain Day Visits Survey, April to December 2021

[Note 1] Low base size for Scotland, data should be treated with caution.

Residents of Wales generated just over half of all tourism day trips taken in Wales, with residents of England generating most of the remaining trips. Just under half of the total expenditure on tourism day trips taken in Wales was by residents of Wales.

Figure 5: Volume and proportion of tourism day trips in Great Britain and Wales by age group, April to December 2021 (revised) [Note 1]



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Description of Figure 5: A stacked column chart showing that visitors aged 55 years or older were the largest age group among tourism day visitors to GB, while in Wales, 25-34 year olds were the largest age group.

Source: Great Britain Day Visits Survey, April to December 2021

[Note 1] The numbers within the coloured segments are the number of tourism day trips taken by each age group in millions. For instance, from April to December 2021, visitors aged 55 or older took 6.5 million tourism day trips to Wales.

Visitors from the age group 55 years or older made up a higher proportion of visitors to GB than to Wales, while visitors aged 16 to 34 made up higher proportion of visitors to Wales than to GB.

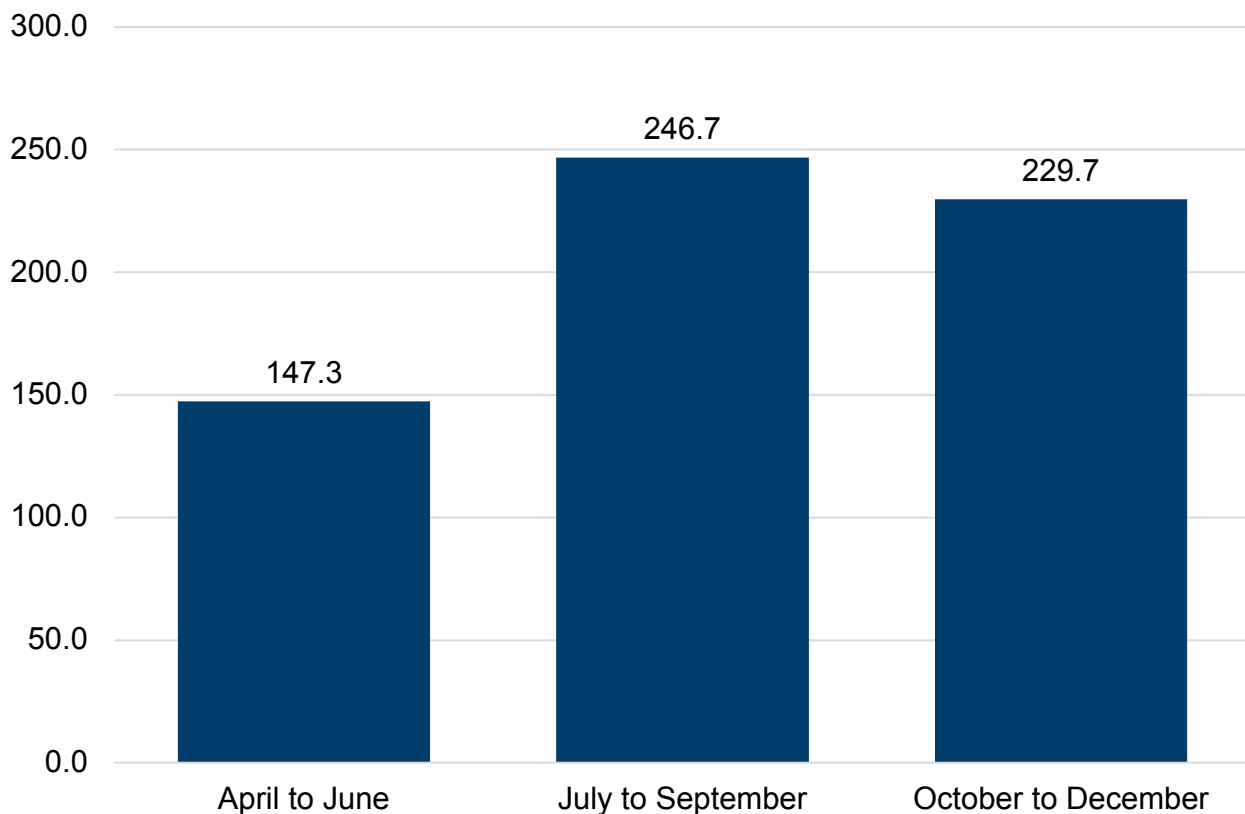
Table 7: Volume of tourism day trips and expenditure in Great Britain by quarter of visit (April to December 2021, revised)

| | Great Britain trips (millions) | Great Britain spend (£millions) |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| April to June | 147.3 | £4,309 |
| July to September | 246.7 | £10,254 |
| October to December | 229.7 | £10,379 |

Source: Great Britain Day Visits Survey, April to December 2021

Figure 6: Volume of tourism day trips in millions in Great

Britain by quarter of visit, April to December 2021 (revised)



Description of Figure 6: A column chart showing that there was a gradual increase in tourism day trips taken in GB from April to June 2021 onwards, with the volume of tourism day trips rising to its highest level during the period July to September.

Source: Great Britain Day Visits Survey, April to December 2021

Just under 250 million trips were taken during the July to September period. Expenditure was highest for the final quarter of October to December 2021, with an expenditure of £10.4 billion on GB tourism day visits, more than twice the

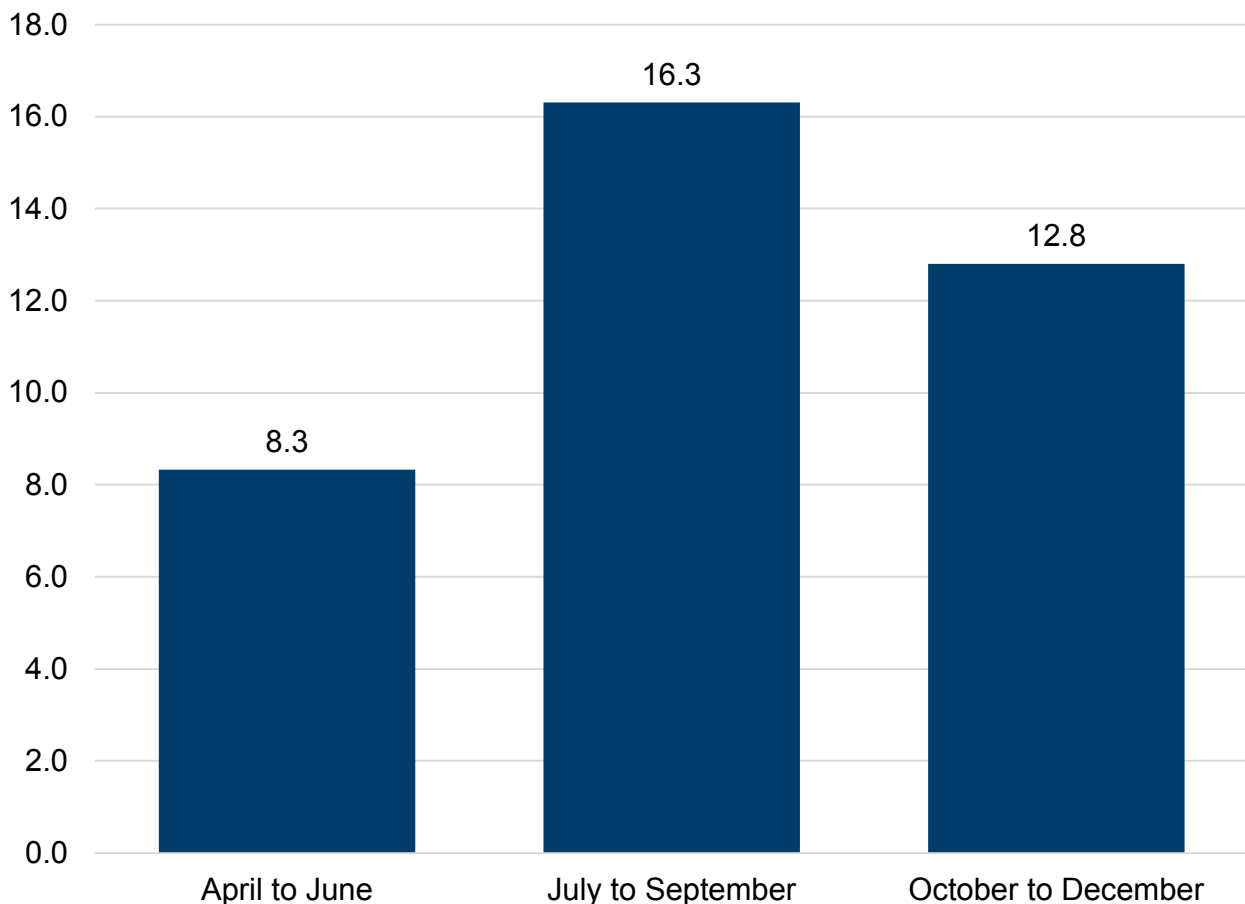
level of expenditure in April to June.

Table 8: Volume of tourism day trips and expenditure in Wales by quarter of visit (April to December 2021, revised)

| | Wales trips (millions) | Wales spend (£millions) |
|---------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| April to June | 8.3 | £273 |
| July to September | 16.3 | £540 |
| October to December | 12.8 | £520 |

Source: Great Britain Day Visits Survey, April to December 2021

Figure 7: Volume of tourism day trips in millions in Wales by quarter of visit 2021, April to December 2021 (revised)



Description of Figure 7: A column chart showing that there was a gradual increase in tourism day trips taken in Wales from April to June onwards, and trip volumes were highest in July to September.

Source: Great Britain Day Visits Survey, April to December 2021

16.3 million tourism day trips were taken during the July to September period, generating £540 million in expenditure.

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 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.

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- 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.

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 Great Britain Tourism Survey (GBTS)/GBDVS to align with agreed international standards. These changes impact comparability between the published domestic day trips estimates for 2021 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 April 2021 and the number of interviews achieved for the period April to December 2021 is 29,226 interviews for GB residents including 4,343 interviews with Welsh residents. Not every person who is interviewed will have taken an eligible day trip and so the base sizes used for trip estimation are lower than the number of interviews. Base sizes are published in the [Great Britain Day Visits background quality report 2021](#).

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 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 are planning to introduce 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 are available in the [Great Britain Day Visits background quality report 2021](#).

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 for 2021 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 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 GBDVS 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 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
- 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. Further caps were applied for this revised release, to mitigate the impact of individual trips that were identified as having a disproportionate impact upon the estimated volume of trips and spend. 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 are provided in the [Great Britain Day Visits background quality report 2021](#).

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.

As far as possible, the new combined GBTS and GBDVS 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 [Great Britain Day Visits background quality report 2021](#).

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.

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 due to COVID-19 and comprehensive testing and quality assuring of the new statistics have resulted in the reporting of 2021 statistics to be later than normal. It is anticipated that future 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

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

[Great Britain Day Visits background quality report 2021](#)

[Estimates for domestic overnight tourism in England are available from VisitEngland](#)

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Estimates for domestic overnight tourism in Scotland are available from VisitScotland

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