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Outdoor activities and Domestic Tourism

Outdoor activities trips

In the following report we have focused on domestic trips involving outdoor activities, defined as those where respondents said that they took part in at least one of the following activities during their overnight or day trip:

Long walk, hike or ramble (minimum of 2 miles\ 1 hour)

Watched wildlife, bird watching

Taking part in outdoor sports - football, rugby, hockey, cricket, athletics, etc.

Informal sport (e.g. cricket, rounders, football, skateboarding)

Golf

Short walk\ stroll - up to 2 miles\ 1 hour

Centre based walking (i.e. around a city\town centre)

Organised adventure sports (whitewater rafting\sphering\canyoning\gorge walking)

Sailing\yachting

Canal\boating trips

Other watersports - motorised

Other watersports - non-motorised (canoeing, kayaking, windsurfing, surfing, body boarding)

Fishing - sea angling

Fishing - coarse fishing (still water\pike & perch)

Fishing - game fishing (river\salmon)

Horse riding, pony trekking

Field sports - hunting, shooting etc

Running, jogging, orienteering

Motorsports

Snow sports (e.g. skiing, snowboarding)

Cycling - on a road\surfaced path

Mountainbiking

Value to Domestic Tourism in England

In 2015, there were 36.4 million domestic overnight trips in England which involved outdoor activities, 35% of the total, with spending of nearly £8.1 billion (41% of all spending on domestic overnight trips). Also, there were 96 million day visits which involved outdoor activities, 7% of all tourism day visits in England, with an associated spending of over £2.1 billion.

These are trips where this activity was undertaken at least once. A single trip can involve multiple activities and so this activity was not necessarily the main purpose.

The spend figures outlined in this topic paper relate to spending that took place during trips where visitors took part in outdoor activities. However, this is not the spending attributable to outdoor activities. Spend attributable (that is, motivated by) to the following activities is estimated at:

- £370M for golf among domestic visitors
- £1.5Bn for long walks/ hikes / rambles among domestic visitors
- £218M for fishing among domestic visitors
- £261M for watersports among domestic visitors
- £421M for cycling/ mountainbiking among domestic visitors
- £307M for watching wildlife/bird watching among domestic visitors

For more information, please see our "Value of Activities" research: <https://www.visitbritain.org/visitor-activities>



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	Total England	outdoor activities trips	outdoor activities trips (as % of total)
Domestic Overnight Trips			
Trips (millions)	102.73	36.36	35%
Spend (£ millions)	19,571	8,096	41%
Day Visits			
Trips (millions)	1,298	96	7%
Spend (£ millions)	46,422	22104	5%

Trip Type

Overnight Travel

More than half of trips involving outdoor activities were taken on holiday (56% such trips taken), with visits to friends and relatives (VFR) trips accounting for another 36% of trips.

	Total England	% of trips taken by all trip takers	outdoor activities	% of trips involving outdoor activities
All Overnight Trips (millions)	102.73	100%	36.36	100%
All Holidays	43.72	43%	20.36	56%
1-3 night holidays	29.18	28%	11.87	33%
4+ night holidays	14.55	14%	8.49	24%
Visiting Friends and Relatives	40.55	39%	13.26	36%
Business Travel	13.87	14%	1.55	4%

Outdoor Activities on Holiday Trips

Holidays involving outdoor activities tend to be slightly longer breaks than the average, typically lasting just under 4 days.

Average spend on this type of break is higher than the average (£274 vs £245) while average spend per day is slightly lower than the national average (£69 vs £73).

Domestic Holidays	Total England	outdoor activities trips
Average spend per trip	£245	£274
Average spend per night	£73	£69
Average trip length (nights)	3.35	3.97

The main destination type for outdoor activities on holidays is the seaside (36%), followed by the countryside (28%). The South West accounts for 29% of those domestic holidays. These holidays have a wide appeal with holiday makers as the age profile of holiday makers partaking in outdoor activities is similar to the overall average.



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These holidays are slightly less likely to be taken by public transport (12% vs 17% of all trips), and these trips are slightly more likely to be booked online (55% vs 53% of all holidays), with a slightly longer booking lead time (36% more than two months in advance, compared to 33% on average).

	% of trips taken by all trip takers	% of trips involving outdoor activities
Age		
16-34	24%	21%
35-54	42%	45%
55+	34%	34%
Accommodation used		
Serviced rented	48%	40%
Self-catering rented	33%	42%
<i>Camping / Caravanning</i>	23%	27%
<i>Other self-catering rented</i>	14%	19%
Region visited		
West Midlands	7%	6%
East of England	8%	9%
East Midlands	8%	8%
London	9%	6%
North West	15%	16%
North East	3%	3%
South East	14%	13%
South West	25%	29%
Yorkshire & the Humber	12%	12%
Destination Type		
Seaside	31%	36%
Large city/ large town	30%	21%
Small town	17%	19%
Countryside/ village	24%	28%
Transport used		
Public transport	17%	12%
Car	79%	82%



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	% of trips taken by all trip takers	% of trips involving outdoor activities
When booked		
More than six months before trip	7%	9%
Between 2 and 6 months before trip	26%	27%
About a month before trip	13%	14%
2-3 weeks before trip	12%	12%
In the week before trip	12%	11%
Same day / after setting off on trip	1%	0%
How booked		
Booked online	53%	55%
<i>On a laptop or desktop PC</i>	35%	36%
<i>On a smartphone</i>	5%	5%
<i>On a tablet</i>	10%	11%

Trends

Over the last 5 years the number of domestic holiday trips involving outdoor activities has remain relatively unchanged year on year.

Number of domestic holidays Millions	Total England	Trips involving outdoor activities
2011	46.16	20.47
2012	45.99	19.99
2013	44.93	20.90
2014	40.74	19.46
2015	43.72	20.36
Annual average growth 2011-2015	-1%	0%