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Transport and Domestic Tourism

Introduction

In 2013, 25% of households in England did not have a car, 43% had one car and 32% had two or more cars¹. In 2014, in 76% of domestic overnight trips in England, car was the main form of transport used – 74% were by personal car, and 2% by hire car. 65% of day trips were by car – 64% by a personal car, and 1% by hire car.

Public transport was used in 20% of overnight trips and 23% of day trips. The majority of these trips are by train – 15% of overnight trips and 10% of day trips. Regular bus services are used in 8% of day trips, but only 2% of overnight trips. Plane is the main form of transport in 2% of overnight trips, but under 1% of day trips. Organised coach tours are used in 2% of overnight trips and 1% of day trips.

Value to Domestic Tourism in England

In 2014, there were 70 million domestic overnight trips to England where car was the transport used for the longest part of the journey, and almost 880 million day trips using a car, with spending on those trips of £13 billion and almost £29 billion respectively. There were almost 19 million overnight trips where public transport was the main form of transport, and just over 300 million day trips, worth £4.4 billion and £12.4 billion.

Though 20% of overnight trips and 23% of day visits to England are by public transport, they represent a higher proportion of spending on trips at 24% and 27% respectively.

	Total England	Public Transport trips	Public Transport trips (as % of total)	Car trips	Car trips (as % of total)
Domestic Overnight Trips					
Trips (millions)	92.61	18.98	20%	70.07	76%
Spend (£ millions)	18,085	4,381	24%	13,071	72%
Day Visits					
Trips (millions)	1,345	303.5	23%	875.8	65%
Spend (£ millions)	45,101	12,354	27%	28,918	64%

¹ Office for National Statistics, National Travel Survey 2013, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/342160/nts2013-01.pdf



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Trip Type

Overnight Travel

A lower proportion of trips by public transport are holidays (35% compared to 44% of all trips and 46% by car), and a higher proportion are business trips (23% vs. 15% of all trips and 12% by car). Two in five of all trips, those by public transport and those by car are visits to friends and relatives.

	Total England	% of trips taken by all trip takers	Public Transport trips	% of Public Transport trips taken	Car trips	% of Car trips taken
All Overnight Trips (millions)	92.61	100%	18.98	100%	70.07	100%
All Holidays	40.74	44%	6.58	35%	32.35	46%
1-3 night holidays	26.47	29%	4.63	24%	20.8	30%
4+ night holidays	14.27	15%	1.96	10%	11.55	16%
Visiting Friends and Relatives	35.91	39%	7.44	39%	27.82	40%
Business Travel	13.55	15%	4.36	23%	8.29	12%

Day Trips

Although a similar proportion of overnight trips by public or personal transport are for visits to friends and relatives, a much larger proportion of day trips taken by car are for VFR (27%) than trips by public transport (18%).

All types of day visit activities are done in higher volumes by car than public transport. However, perhaps unsurprisingly, a higher proportion of trips by public transport are nights out (11% compared to 8% of all trips), going out for entertainment (9% vs. 7%) and public events (4% vs. 3%). However, the same does not apply for going out for a meal, which is lower in proportion for public transport than other types of transport (8% vs. 10% both overall and by car). Special shopping for items not regularly bought is a higher proportion by public transport than on average (9% vs. 6%), perhaps reflecting the urban nature of these trips.

Day trips for personal events (4% vs. 2%) and outdoor activities (7% vs. 5%) are a higher proportion of trips by car than by public transport (see table overleaf).



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	Total England	% of trips taken by all trip takers	Public Transport trips	% of Public Transport trips taken	Car trips	% of Car trips taken
All Day Trips, millions (selected activities)	1,345	100%	303.5	100%	875.8	100%
Visiting friends or family	313	23%	53.4	18%	233.3	27%
Going out for a meal	131	10%	25.7	8%	91.6	10%
Going on a night out	113	8%	34.1	11%	45.3	5%
Undertaking outdoor activities	109	8%	13.9	5%	63.5	7%
Special shopping	84	6%	26.8	9%	62.4	7%
Going out for entertainment	95	7%	27.2	9%	51.7	6%
Special personal events	40	3%	5.9	2%	32.9	4%
Special public events	42	3%	12.6	4%	21.2	2%

Holidays by transport used

Holidays taken by public transport are shorter on average than those taken by car (2.92 vs. 3.44). However, with a higher average spend per night (£100 vs. £70), average spending on trips by public transport is almost £300, higher than the average spend on trips taken by car (£240).

Domestic Holidays	Total England	Public Transport trips	Car trips
Average spend per trip	£247	£293	£240
Average spend per night	£73	£100	£70
Average trip length (nights)	3.37	2.92	3.44

A higher proportion of trips using public transport are in London than the average (31%), while a lower proportion are in the South West (15% vs. 23%). Over half of trips made by public transport are to a large city or town (56%). However, in terms of the region the trip traveller comes from, there is little difference for both public transport and car transport to the national profile.

Perhaps unsurprisingly given that public transport is mostly used as transport on holidays to cities, serviced accommodation is used on the majority of these trips (71%).



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There are some distinct differences in the demographic profiles of those using public transport vs. cars for holidays. Two in five of those using public transport are aged over 55 (41%), while a similar proportion taking holidays in a car are aged 35-54 (44%). Those using public transport are more likely to be in the C1 or DE social grades, while those using a car are more likely to be in the more affluent AB social grade. Only one in five of those using public transport have children in their household (19%), while two in five of those using a car have kids (40%).

Those using public transport on holiday are more likely to engage in history and heritage, cultural, entertainment activities and visit attractions, while those using a car are more likely to engage in outdoor activities or visit a beach.

	% of trips taken by all trip takers	% of Public Transport trips taken	% of Car trips taken
Region visited			
West Midlands	7%	8%	6%
East of England	9%	5%	10%
East Midlands	7%	3%	8%
London	8%	31%	4%
North West	17%	15%	17%
North East	4%	3%	4%
South East	15%	13%	15%
South West	23%	15%	25%
Yorkshire & the Humber	12%	9%	12%
Destination Type			
Seaside	32%	25%	33%
Large city/ large town	31%	56%	26%
Small town	19%	12%	20%
Countryside/ village	23%	8%	25%
Accommodation used			
Serviced rented	50%	71%	46%
Self-catering rented	37%	9%	42%
<i>Camping / Caravanning</i>	23%	6%	25%
<i>Other self-catering rented</i>	14%	3%	17%



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Cont.	% of trips taken by all trip takers	% of Public Transport trips taken	% of Car trips taken
When booked			
More than six months before trip	7%	5%	6%
Between 2 and 6 months before trip	26%	30%	26%
About a month before trip	12%	15%	12%
2-3 weeks before trip	13%	13%	13%
In the week before trip	13%	13%	13%
Same day / after setting off on trip	1%	1%	1%
How booked			
Booked online	54%	55%	55%
<i>On a laptop or desktop PC</i>	40%	43%	40%
<i>On a smartphone</i>	3%	2%	3%
<i>On a tablet</i>	8%	6%	9%
Age groups			
16-34	23%	29%	22%
35-54	42%	30%	44%
55+	35%	41%	33%
Social grade			
AB	39%	33%	41%
C1	28%	32%	28%
C2	19%	17%	19%
DE	13%	18%	12%
Children in household	36%	19%	40%



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Cont.	% of trips taken by all trip takers	% of Public Transport trips taken	% of Car trips taken
Region of origin			
North East	6%	7%	5%
Yorks & Humberside	13%	12%	13%
East Midlands	9%	7%	9%
East of England	9%	5%	10%
London	7%	9%	7%
South East (excluding London)	15%	13%	16%
South West	11%	9%	11%
West Midlands	10%	9%	10%
North West	13%	14%	12%
Scotland	3%	8%	3%
Wales	5%	6%	4%
Activities undertaken			
History & heritage	23%	28%	22%
Arts, culture & entertainment	15%	28%	12%
Visitor Attractions	33%	36%	33%
Parks and Gardens	14%	12%	14%
Events, festivals and exhibitions	11%	12%	10%
Outdoor activities (including long walks)	27%	7%	29%
Outdoor activities (excluding long walks)	14%	16%	15%
Visited beach	20%	10%	22%
Special shopping	7%	8%	7%
Live sport	3%	3%	3%
Special personal event	3%	3%	3%



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Trends

While trips taken by car have grown by average 1% per year since 2008, trips by public transport have increased at a greater rate, by on average 2% per year.

Number of domestic holidays Millions	Total England	Public Transport trips	Car trips
2008	39.75	6.07	30.99
2009	47.01	6.15	37.70
2010	43.54	5.94	34.98
2011	46.16	6.05	36.61
2012	45.99	6.98	35.92
2013	44.93	6.44	35.06
2014	40.74	6.58	32.35
Annual average growth 2008-2014	1%	2%	1%