

UK Visitor Attractions 2000

It is estimated that there are 6,800 visitor attractions in the UK, which in 2000 attracted 413 million visits, resulting in revenue of £1.4 billion and providing employment for 130,000.

Major visitor attractions 2000 and the 10 most visited attractions in the UK by category:

Historic houses & castles, other historic buildings, gardens, leisure & theme parks, museums and galleries, cathedrals & churches, country parks, steam railways, workplaces, farms, wildlife attractions & zoos and visitor centres.

Sector structure and visits in 2000

The following analysis is based on attractions responding to the Survey of Visits to Visitor Attractions 2000. Information from attractions which responded in previous years but not in 2000 has not been included this year.

Distribution by Country

	Attractions	Visits
	%	%
England	70	81
Northern Ireland	5	3
Scotland	20	13
Wales	6	3
UK	100	100

Seventy per cent of UK attractions are in England. With a higher proportion of large attractions than elsewhere in the UK, England attracts 81% of all visits. Across the sector overall the average number of visits per attractions in the UK in 2000 was around 82,000.

Distribution by English Regional Tourist Board

Region	Attractions	Visits
	%	%
England	70	81
Cumbria	2	2
Northumbria	4	3
North West	4	9
Yorkshire	6	7
Heart of England	16	14
East of England	9	7
London	5	19
South West	10	7
Southern	5	6
South East England	8	7

London received the majority of visits recorded in the survey in 2000 (19%) although it represents only 5% of sample attractions. The Heart of England and the North West are the next two regions to have received most recorded visits to visitor attraction in 2000.

▷ Sector Structure and Visits by Attraction Category 2000

	Attractions	Visits
	%	%
Cathedrals & Churches	4	5
Country Parks	5	16
Farms	3	2
Gardens	6	4
Historic Houses & Castles	21	11
Other Historic Properties	6	2
Leisure & Theme Parks	2	11
Museums & Art Galleries	29	23
Steam Railways	2	1
Visitor Centres	7	5
Wildlife Attractions & Zoos	5	6
Workplaces	5	2
Other	6	11
Total	100	100

In terms of the number of attractions, museums and art galleries and historic houses and castles represented 50% of the total. However, they secured only one third of all reported visits, a reflection of the large number of small sites.

In contrast, country parks and leisure and theme parks, which tend to attract far greater numbers, account for larger shares of visits (16% and 11%) than their share of attractions (5% and 2%).

Leisure and theme parks secured the highest maximum number of visits for the year. The lowest numbers of visits were among steam railways, workplaces and farms.

▷ Visits to Attractions by Category and Regional Tourist Board 2000

	Historic	Gardens	Museums &	Wildlife	Other	All
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Cumbria	16.7	0.5	8.8	9.3	64.7	100
Northumbria	19.3	1.8	29.7	1.6	47.7	100
North West	9.8	0.6	17.0	7.9	64.7	100
Yorkshire	22.6	1.9	25.8	3.9	45.8	100
Heart of	16.5	3.3	14.7	5.7	59.8	100
East of	17.6	2.4	10.4	9.3	60.3	100
London	14.7	3.9	49.2	3.4	28.8	100
South West	32.8	5.6	11.9	10.1	39.6	100
Southern	28.4	5.8	12.0	7.9	45.9	100
South East	24.8	10.4	8.6	7.4	48.8	100
England	19.1	3.8	23.2	6.2	47.6	100

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Notes: Total Historic Properties includes cathedrals & churches, historic houses & castles and other historic buildings. Other attractions includes country parks, farms, leisure & theme parks, steam railways, visitor centres, workplaces and other attractions.

Admission Charges

In 2000, the average adult admission charge was £3.37. The average reported adult admission charge was highest among the leisure and theme park category, and lowest among country parks (£2.28), both of which attract substantial proportions of visits.

▶ Average Adult Admission Charge for Paid Attractions 2000

Category	Average Adult Admission Charges
Cathedrals & Churches	£2.59
Country Parks	£2.28
Farms	£3.22
Gardens	£3.15
Historic Houses & Castles	£3.64
Other Historic Properties	£2.37
Leisure & Theme Parks	£6.42
Museums & Art Galleries	£2.74
Steam Railways	£5.42
Visitor Centres	£3.01
Wildlife Attractions & Zoos	£4.62
Workplaces	£2.98
Other	£4.44
UK	£3.37

Origin of Visitors

An estimated 14% of visits to UK attractions were made by overseas visitors. Overseas visitors accounted for a higher proportion of visits to attractions in Scotland (24%) and Northern Ireland (20%) than in England (14%) or Wales (8%).

▶ Origin of Visitors

	Overseas Residents	UK Residents
	%	%
Cumbria	7	93

Southern	18	82
South East	14	86
England	14	86
Northern Ireland*	20	80
Scotland	24	76
Wales	8	92
United Kingdom	14	86

Notes: * Visitors from the Republic of Ireland are included in overseas.

Children

Thirty-two per cent of visits to attractions in the UK are estimated to have been made by children. Northern Ireland reported the highest percentage with 36% of all visits made by children while Scotland recorded the lowest at 20%.

▶ Proportion of Adult and Child Visits by Country

Country	Adults	Children
	%	%
England	67	32
Northern Ireland	64	36
Scotland	80	20
Wales	67	33
UK	67	32

Dwell Time

Leisure and Theme Parks are the attractions with the greatest dwell time at just under five hours on average. Cathedrals and Churches record the lowest dwell time with visitors spending around an hour on average.

▶ Average Dwell Time by Attraction Category

Category	Average Dwell Time
	Minutes
Cathedrals & churches	62
Country Parks	133
Farms	151
Gardens	152
Historic Houses & Castles	149
Other Historic Properties	98
Leisure & Theme Parks	298
Museums & Art Galleries	106
Steam Railways	110
Visitor Centres	99
Wildlife Attractions & Zoos	213
Workplaces	67

Workplaces	67
Other	216
UK	155

Revenue

An estimated £1.4 billion gross revenue was generated by attractions in 2000. Around half of gross revenue came from admissions or donations, 31% from retailing, 16% from catering and 5% from other revenue sources.

Ownership

58% of all attractions are privately owned (including charitable trusts, universities and religious organisations); 22% by local authorities, 5% by Government

Employment

The National Tourist Boards estimate that there were around 130,000 paid jobs (full- or part time) and 85,000 volunteers working in the attractions sector in 2000.