



**ENGLISH
TOURISM WEEK**

**25-31 May
2020**



An annual celebration of English tourism, English Tourism Week highlights the importance, value and vast contribution of the sector makes to the UK economy. We are honoured to have the patronage of HRH The Prince of Wales. This year marks the first “virtual” English Tourism Week and will take place from 25 to 31 May.

Tourism is one of England’s largest and most valuable industries

- English tourism directly employ more than 2.6m people and generate over £106 billion a year for the British economy.
- English destinations are also a huge draw for overseas visits – in the first nine months of 2019 there were a record 12.6 million visits to English regions outside London. International visitors spent £6.25 billion across England’s regions during this period.
- Domestic tourism in England is also driving growth and supporting jobs. In the first 11 months of 2019 there were 43 million domestic holiday trips in England, with these holidaymakers spending over £10 billion in the same period
- Tourism delivers economic growth in every city, local authority, and region, benefitting local communities and the wider economy.

The work of VisitEngland

- **VisitEngland offers support to businesses wanting to build their international customer base.** VisitEngland has launched a ‘Taking England to the World’ toolkit to help businesses in England to sell products and services internationally. The toolkit has received 6,300 downloads, while our business advice hub saw 19,800 unique page views.
- **Tourism Exchange Great Britain (TXGB)** is our online business-to-business platform which connects tourism suppliers to global distributors. It enables UK tourism SMEs to promote their products to an international audience, and offers distributors real-time access to a wider range of accommodation and attractions.
- **The £40m Discover England Fund (DEF) supports the development of world class bookable products** through grants to projects, which join up geographies or themes, and integrate technological and transport solutions. The fund has supported over 60 projects and created 700 new bookable products, including the National Parks Experience Collection, Gardens and Gourmets, Brilliant Science, and England’s Seafood Coast. An additional £5.45m in funding was secured for the project in 2019 to continue its work for a further year.
- **Campaigns such as #MyMicrogap, help to promote domestic travel.** VisitEngland launched a major domestic campaign in October 2018, focussed on encouraging young people to holiday at home. Statistics show that 16-to-34 year olds took almost 900k fewer holidays at home last year compared to five years ago. The £2.5m domestic campaign, ‘Join the World - #MyMicrogap’ promotes ‘microgapping’, a short break that offers gap year style experiences.

Impact of COVID-19 on the tourism industry

- **Inbound:** VisitBritain/VisitEngland have modelled a central scenario for inbound tourism to the UK in 2020 which, as of mid-April, is for a decline of 54% in visits to 17.8m and 55% in spend to £11.6bn. This would represent a loss vs the pre-COVID forecast of 21.9m visits and £15.1bn spend.
- **Domestic:** We have also run a domestic impact model for 2020. As of mid-April we have forecast a central scenario of £69.5bn in domestic tourism spend in Britain in 2020, down 24% on 2019 when spending by domestic tourists in Britain was £91.6bn. This comprises £16.7bn from overnight tourism (down 32% on the £24.7bn seen in 2019) and £52.8bn from day trips (down 21% compared to £67.0bn). This represents a loss

of £22.1bn (£7.9bn from overnights and £14.1bn from day trips) – greater than the loss from inbound tourism in absolute value terms, although lower in percentage terms.

- These forecast were made in mid-April. As this is a fast-moving situation we will be reviewing regularly and in light of recent developments we consider these to be optimistic.

VisitBritain/VisitEngland Activity during COVID-19

- **Business Communication:** Since 27th January VisitBritain has been providing daily communication to industry and DMOs, sharing situation updates, and Government Advice. Additional 'manage a crisis' section created on VisitEngland's Business Advice Hub.
- **Show Your Love for Great Britain:** During the outbreak, we have carefully formed 'in crisis messaging' for our consumer channels, with new content that shares inspirational content linked to popular British culture to combat feelings of concern, frustration and boredom. The content includes recipes, playlists, film and TV trivia.
- **Government Advisory:** Feeding industry concerns to Government, creation of modelling to predict economic impact, and ongoing policy work and advice. Working in rapid consultation with the tourism industry, we have submitted a paper to the Cabinet Office with proposals to help the sector recover from the impact of COVID 19. Read the full paper and recommendations on our website: www.visitbritain.org/helping-tourism-industry-recover-covid-19
- **Recovery:** We are working with Government and destinations to develop a recovery campaign to support jobs and the economy. There is an expectation that the domestic tourism market will be the first to return, however our current funding model prioritises international marketing.
- **Support English Destinations:** VisitEngland is administering a £1.3m emergency fund to support local tourism organisations throughout the coronavirus outbreak. Under the scheme, destinations will be able to receive up to £2,500 per month for two members of non-furloughed staff who provide crucial business support services and up to £5,000 to cover operating costs.
- **New industry standards:** We are in discussions with government and industry on plans that include businesses completing a free online assessment to check they are taking the necessary steps to adhere to the official Government guidelines and be provided with a quality mark they could use and a certificate that recognises they have gone through the process.

The English tourism sector is rising to the challenge and taking its responsibilities seriously.

The tourism sector is currently one of the hardest-hit by the outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) with hotels, pub, restaurants and attractions closing, and hospitality jobs already being lost. The English tourism sector is rising to the challenge and taking its responsibilities seriously.

- **Stay at home:** VisitEngland, along with other destinations have been putting out the message to consumers to enjoy England from the comfort of their own homes through our social media campaigns.
- **Supporting communities:** Restaurants and cafes are converting themselves into takeaways and shops to service the needs of their communities under quarantine.
- **NHS Nightingale:** Event venues such as the ExCel Centre, the Birmingham NEC, Manchester Central Convention Complex, and the Harrogate Convention Centre have been transformed into NHS Nightingale Hospital
- **Holidays for Heroes - NHS discounts and offers for key workers:** In the spirit of Colonel Tom Moore, to say thank you, VisitEngland has been working with restaurants, visitor attractions, hotels and retailers around the country to create giveaways, offers, freebies and discounts for NHS staff, as well as a selection of incentives for other key workers to enjoy once it's safe to do so.

Tourism will be an important part of any recovery

- **Tourism will be one of the main drivers of any economic recovery after the COVID-19 crisis:** After the 2008 Financial Crisis Inbound tourism revenue grew faster than both the economy and the service sector as a whole between 2010 and 2013. Tourism can also quickly create jobs. A third of all new UK jobs created between 2010 and 2012 were in tourism.
- **The UK has experience of delivering recovery campaigns following** geopolitical events and natural disasters. Following terrible floods in the North of England in the winter of 2015/16, VisitEngland joined government partners including the Cabinet Office and DEFRA to showcase the world-leading attractions and stunning countryside in the North of England with a £1m #lovethenorth campaign.
- **Future ambitions:** Whilst our immediate concern is for public health and that businesses and employees are supported, we are ambitious about the future of tourism and the role it can play, not just in recovery, but in levelling up the UK's economy and promoting prosperity. Our new five-year strategy sets out our agenda, which builds on tourism's record of success and delivers against an ambitious growth target for Britain - to attract 49 million visits by 2025 spending £35 billion.