

Tourism trends quarterly bulletin

Accommodation Statistics: Peak season 2009

Introduction

This bulletin provides an assessment of accommodation used in the peak season 2009 (July 20th for serviced accommodation and July 18th to September 6th for self catering accommodation/camping sites). The late timing of the bank holiday meant that an usually long period in September was in the peak season; this makes comparisons for early September difficult as, historically, this data usually refers to 2 or 3 days maximum.

This report includes reported use of accommodation by visitors (taken from the ferry research amongst visitors); occupancy levels in serviced accommodation on the Island together with comparisons with the mainland; occupancy levels in self catering accommodation and touring sites. Occupancy data is taken from a survey amongst accommodation providers.

The peak season tourism monitor (published separately) reported a decline in the number of staying visitors and quite a change in the mix of these visitors. Main holidays were up in number but holidays lasting 5+ nights and 1 – 4 nights were down. However, short breaks lasting 1 – 3 nights were static and visits to friends/relatives were up significantly suggesting that people were economising on spend in this holiday season. This report looks at the impact of these changes on accommodation providers.

This peak season was one of contrasting performances: some establishments saw occupancy levels increase significantly, whilst for others there was a considerable decline. Particularly successful were serviced accommodation in Ventnor, large hotels and rented houses/cottages/flats in Sandown and Shanklin.

Type of accommodation used by all staying visitors

During the interview with visitors on board the ferries, staying visitors are asked about the type of accommodation they have used/will use whilst on the Island.

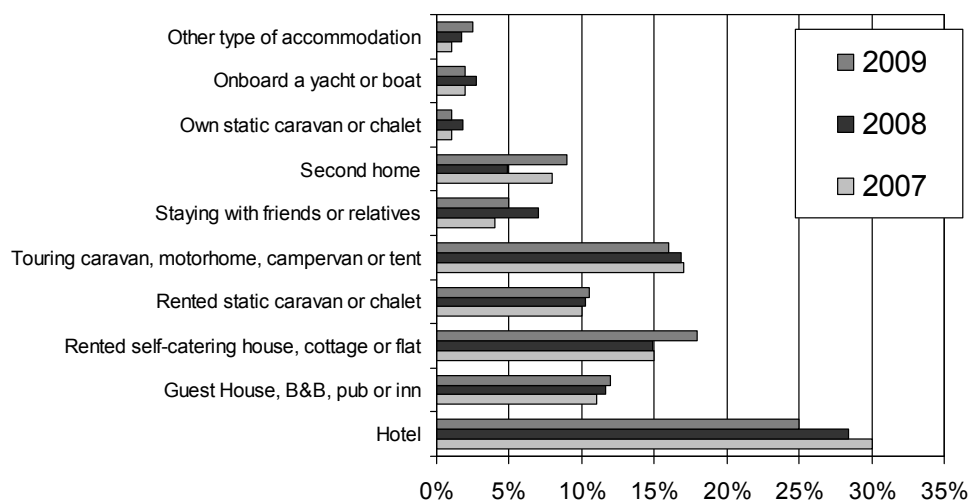
The type of accommodation used varies according to the reason for visiting the Island:

- Visitors to friends/relatives: The vast majority (94%) of those on VFR trips stayed with their friends or relatives and this percentage was up slightly on last year (+3 points); another 4% used hotels or guesthouses/B&B's.
- Business visitors: Almost half of all the business visitors stayed in a hotel (46%) which is an increase on last year. In addition 8% stayed in guesthouses or B&B's, however that is down on recent years. The total using serviced accommodation is therefore 54%. Second homes and homes of friends and relatives were frequently used by those who were on a combined business and leisure trip.
- Holiday/short break visitors: Accommodation used by those on holidays and short breaks this year versus the last three years is shown on the chart overleaf. The split between serviced and self catering accommodation changed slightly this year with slightly more opting for self catering: 63% this year, up from 60% last year. Consequently the percentage choosing serviced accommodation fell by 3 points to 37%.
 - Serviced accommodation: A quarter (25%) of holiday/short break visitors stayed in a hotel and 12% in B&B's or guesthouses. Serviced accommodation was more popular amongst those on short breaks than main holidays (used by 42% vs. 25%). It was also more likely to be used by those on their first visit to the Island (46%) and by those who had not visited for over 5 Years (42%).
 - Self catering accommodation: Within the self catering sector, rented cottages/houses/flats, camping and caravanning on touring sites and rented caravans and chalets accounted for the bulk of the accommodation.

- A quarter of those on a main holiday rented a cottage/house/flat; 22% went camping or caravanning on touring sites and 17% rented static caravans/chalets.
- 14% of short break/holiday visitors used rented cottages/houses/flats, in line with last year and 13% went camping or caravanning on touring sites.
- Use of second homes by those on holidays/short breaks increased several points to 9%.

(N.B. Those staying with friends/relatives stated that the purpose of their visit was a holiday or short break and not primarily to visit their friends/relatives; they may be using a second home belonging to friends/relatives.)

Type of accommodation used in peak season by those on main holidays and short breaks 2009 vs. last two years



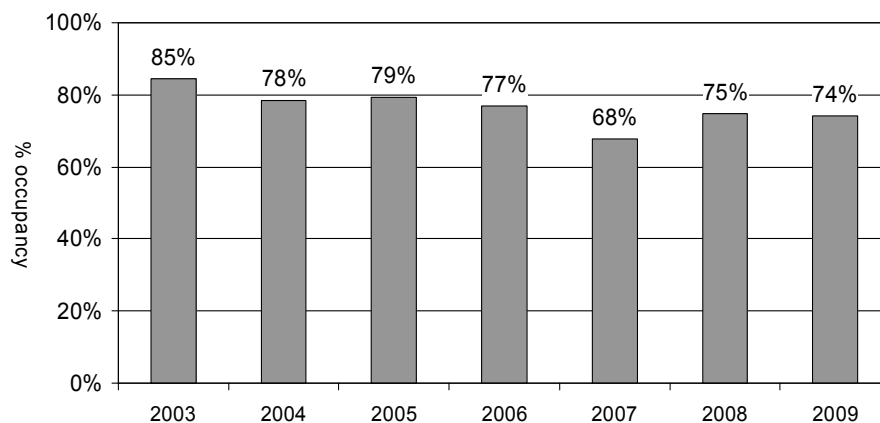
The remainder of this report looks at the occupancy as reported by a sample of hotels, guesthouses/B&B's and the rented self catering sector plus pitch occupancy on touring sites. It is estimated that these sectors make up just over half (52%) of the accommodation used by visitors staying on the Island.

N.B. The number of accommodation providers responding varied across July, August and early September: up to 131 establishments representing a range of types of accommodation and areas on the Island took part.

Room Occupancy in hotels/guesthouses/B&B's

Room occupancy averaged 74% during the peak season which is very similar to last year but up by 6 points on the peak season of 2007. However these averages conceal considerable variations in experience across the Island, with some having a particularly good year (see below).

Isle of Wight hotels/guesthouses/B&B's
Room occupancy: Peak 2009 average vs. previous years



The variation in occupancy across the Island and between types of accommodation is shown in the following tables.

This year there was a marked change in the performance of different areas: this was a very good season for accommodation providers in Ventnor, with room occupancy up by 14 points to 83% making this the best performing area, as it was in 2006. Newport/Ryde/Cowes also improved with room occupancy up by 5 points.

Room occupancy in other areas fell: Sandown dropped 4 points to 80% although it remained one of the better performing areas. Shanklin and West Wight were both down considerably on last year.

Area of Island	Room occupancy 2006	Room occupancy 2007	Room occupancy 2008	Room occupancy 2009
Ventnor	81%	74%	69%	83%
Sandown	77%	77%	84%	80%
Newport/Ryde/Cowes	74%	70%	73%	78%
Shanklin	77%	61%	71%	65%
West Wight	76%	75%	73%	60%

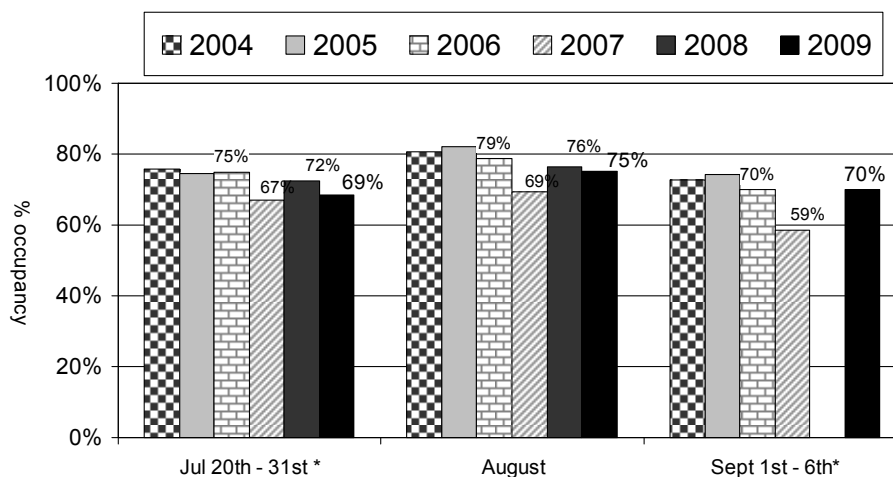
Looking at the size of the establishment, the range of occupancy was even greater than revealed by the analysis of different areas. Larger hotels (26+ rooms) achieved very high occupancy levels at 87% which is an 8 point increase on last year and 15 points ahead of 2007. Smaller hotels performed less well with occupancy dropping by 9 points to 61%. 4 -10 room guesthouses/hotels were level with last year at 67% and B&B's dropped 4 points to 64%.

Large hotels were 26 points ahead of 11 – 25 room hotels.

Size of establishment	Room occupancy 2006	Room occupancy 2007	Room occupancy 2008	Room occupancy 2009
26 or more rooms	81%	72%	79%	87%
11 – 25 rooms	77%	64%	70%	61%
4 – 10 rooms	68%	63%	66%	67%
1 – 3 rooms	68%	66%	68%	64%

Monthly room occupancy was 69% during the second part of July, rising to 75% in August, then down to 70% in the first week of September. These levels were similar to last year.

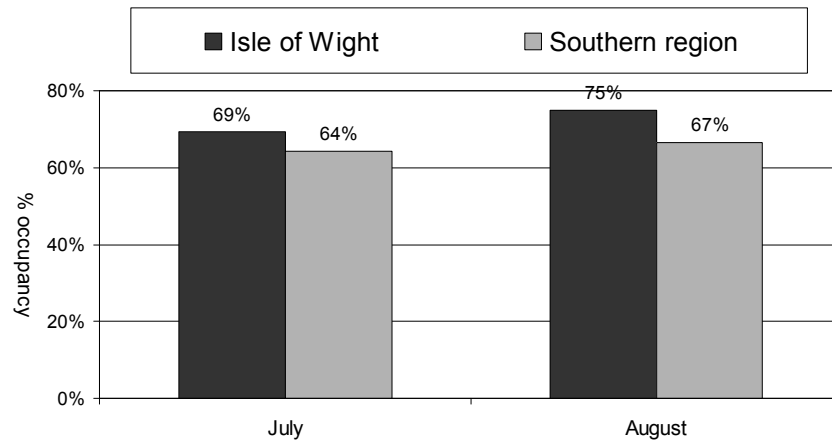
Isle of Wight hotels/guesthouses/B&B's
Room occupancy: Peak 2009 vs. previous years



*Dates included in July and September vary slightly according to peak season timing
Peak season 2008 ended 31st August

The following chart compares monthly room occupancy on the Island with the Southern region. The Island's room occupancy was significantly higher than the region in both July (+5 points) and August (+8 points).

Room occupancy hotels/guesthouses/B&B's
Isle of Wight vs. Southern region Peak 2009

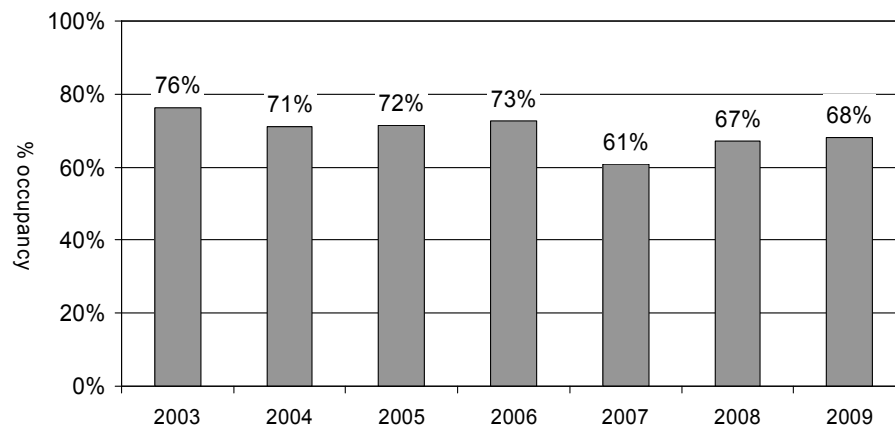


Whole months illustrated

Bedspace Occupancy in hotels/guesthouses/B&B's

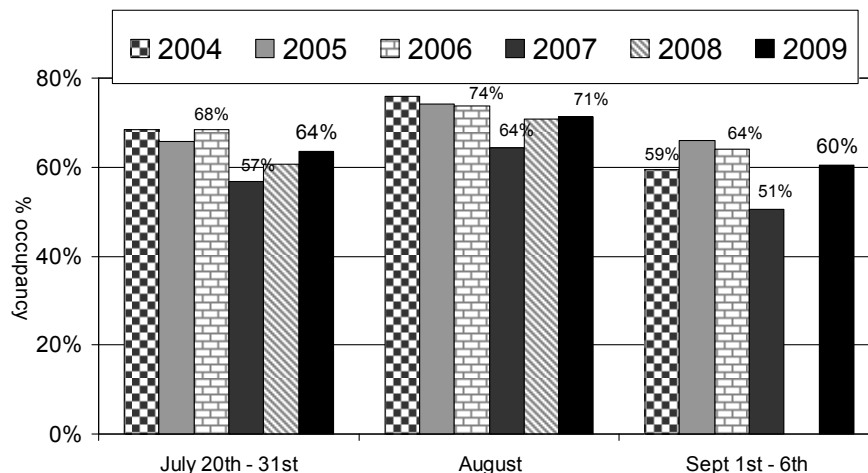
Bedspace occupancy averaged 68% across the peak season which is in line with last year (+1 point). It is above 2007 but remains lower than earlier years.

Isle of Wight hotels/guesthouses/B&B's
Bedspace occupancy: Peak average 2009 vs. previous years



Monthly bedspace occupancy was 64% in the second half of July, up by 3 points on last year. This rose to a high of 71% in August, level with last year, and then reduced to 60% in early September.

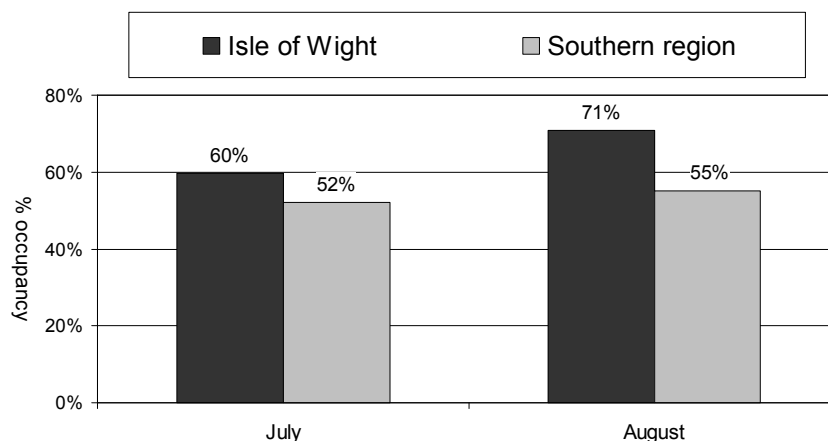
Isle of Wight hotels/guesthouses/B&B's Bedspace occupancy: Peak 2009 vs. previous years



*Dates included in July and September vary slightly according to peak season timing
Peak season 2008 ended 31st August

The Island performed well compared to the region; it outperformed the region on bedspace occupancy - by 8 points in July and by 16 points in August. These significant leads are up on last year and are attributable to the Island attracting a higher proportion of family holidays, more leisure travel and less business travel than the region, which result in larger party sizes.

Bedspace occupancy hotels/guesthouses/B&B's Isle of Wight vs. Southern region Peak 2009



Whole months illustrated

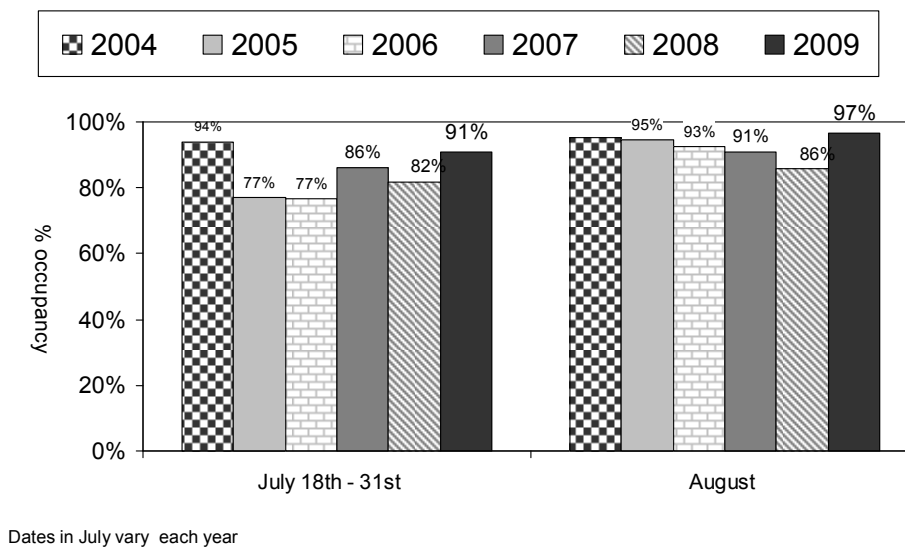
Self catering occupancy

Cottages/houses /flats

Occupancy ranged from 91% in the second part of July up to 97% in August. In early September it dropped to 78%. The figures recorded in July and August were the highest in recent years and exceeded the highest occupancy levels seen in the serviced sector suggesting that this self catering sector performed better during the recession.

All areas of the Island performed well but Shanklin and Sandown were particularly successful with 98% and 96% occupancy versus a period average of 85%.

Isle of Wight self catering occupancy Cottages, flats & houses Peak season 2009 vs. previous years



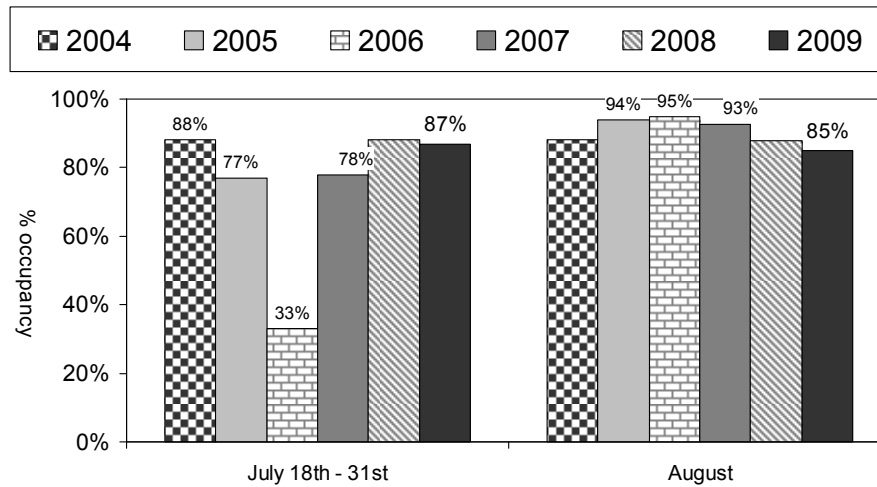
N.B. Historical data is not available separately for September due to this sector operating on weekly lets.

Static chalet/caravan sites

In recent years responses have been very low from static site operators; this year 5 or 6 responded but the historical data shown on the graph is subject to error due as the sample is often 2 or 3 sites. Occupancy on these static caravan/chalet sites averaged 84% across the period; it was 87% in the second half of July, 85% in August and slightly lower at 82% in September.

Reported use of chalet/caravan sites by visitors interviewed on the ferries indicated that use of these sites was similar to last year. (N.B. This does not take account of length of stay.)

Isle of Wight self catering occupancy
 Static caravans and chalets
 Peak season 2009 vs. previous years



N.B. Small sample sizes which create large fluctuations in data
 Dates in July vary slightly each year

N.B. Historical data is not available separately for September due to this sector operating on weekly lets.

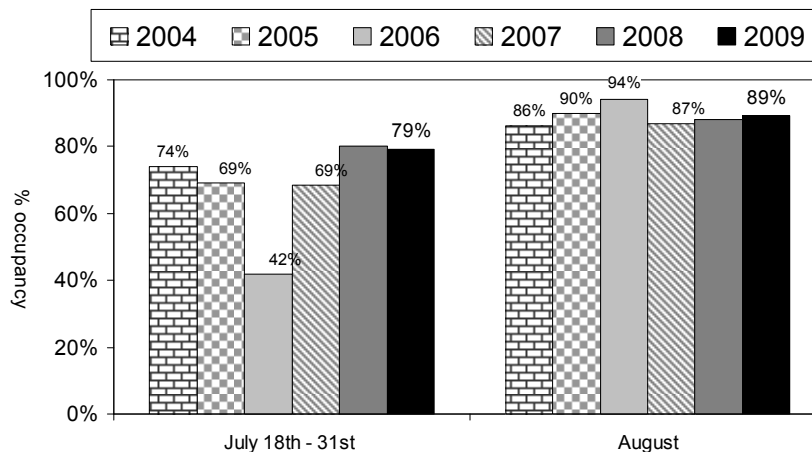
Touring caravan/camping sites

Touring results are based on responses from 3 sites hence the results can only give an indication of likely occupancy levels; these may not be representative of other sites on the Island.

Pitch occupancy was 79% in the latter part of July, level with July last year and up on the previous year when poor weather had affected touring occupancy. Pitch occupancy in August was 89%, level with August over the last two years. In the first few days of September this dropped to just over 50% although shorter evenings mean that camping is far less popular in September.

Reported use of touring sites by visitors interviewed on the ferries showed a slight fall in use of touring sites but does not take account of length of stay.

Isle of Wight self catering occupancy
 Touring caravan and camping sites
 Peak season 2009 vs. previous years



N.B. Small sample sizes which create large fluctuations in data
 Dates in July vary slightly each year