# Tourism trends quarterly bulletin
## Accommodation Statistics: Winter 2006

### Introduction

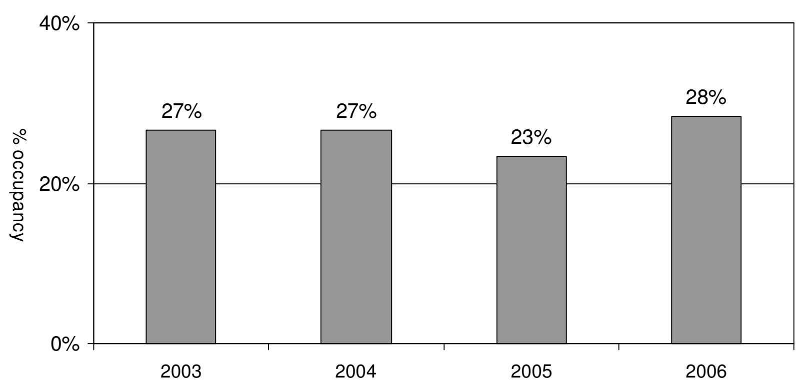
This bulletin provides the visitor statistics relating to accommodation on the Island and completes the tourism monitor for the pre-Easter period from January 1st to March 26th for serviced accommodation and up to 24th for self catering accommodation.

The visitor statistics bulletin (published separately) highlighted an increase in the number of staying leisure visitors but a decline in staying business visitors. The serviced accommodation sector has seen an increase in occupancy levels and this sector performed particularly well during February.

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

Room occupancy averaged 28% over the period. This is up 5 points from the winter period last year but at a similar level to the previous two years.

Isle of Wight hotels/guesthouses/B&B's
Room occupancy: Q1 2006 average vs. previous years



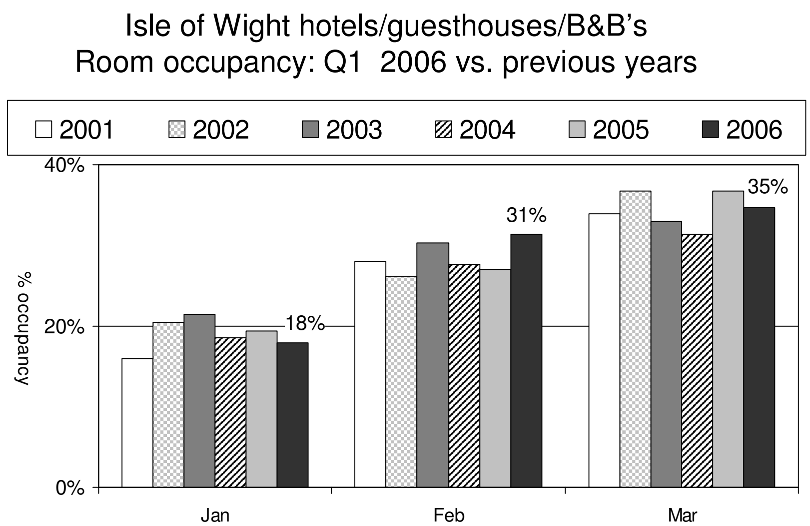

Across the quarter Newport/Ryde/Cowes achieved higher levels than other areas on the Island.

| Area of Island | Room occupancy |
|---|---|
| Newport/Ryde/Cowes | 44% |
| West Wight | 32% |
| Shanklin | 30% |
| Ventnor | 25% |
| Sandown | 23% |

Larger establishments achieved the highest levels of occupancy, averaging 33% over the whole period.

Monthly room occupancy ranged from 18% in January to 35% in March (1-26th). February was particularly good with room occupancy of 31%.

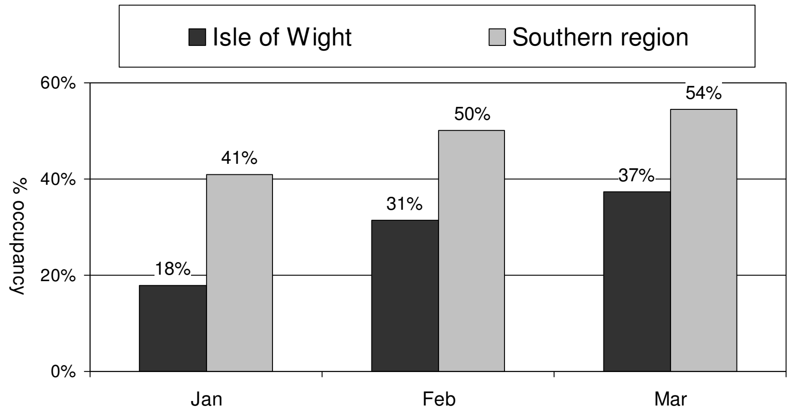
Looking at monthly performance over time: January occupancy was a little below the last two years; February was up on the last two years and at the highest level seen for this month; March was down slightly on last year but above the previous two years.




March data is for 1st – 26th 2006

A comparison with the Southern region shows that average room occupancy was significantly below the region across the whole period, which is the norm at this time of year. The decline in business visitors to the Island has already been noted and in the winter period these are an important source of custom for the serviced sector. In addition, at this time of year tourists are more likely to visit towns and cities than rural/seaside destinations making this is a relatively quiet time for the Island.

Room occupancy hotels/guesthouses/B&B's
Isle of Wight vs. Southern region Q1 2006

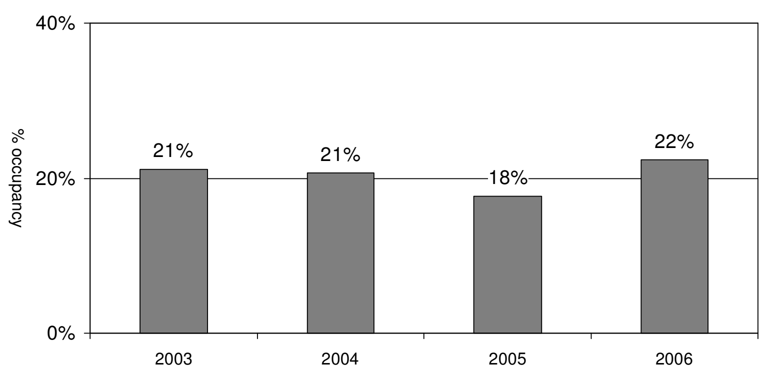



March data is for the whole month

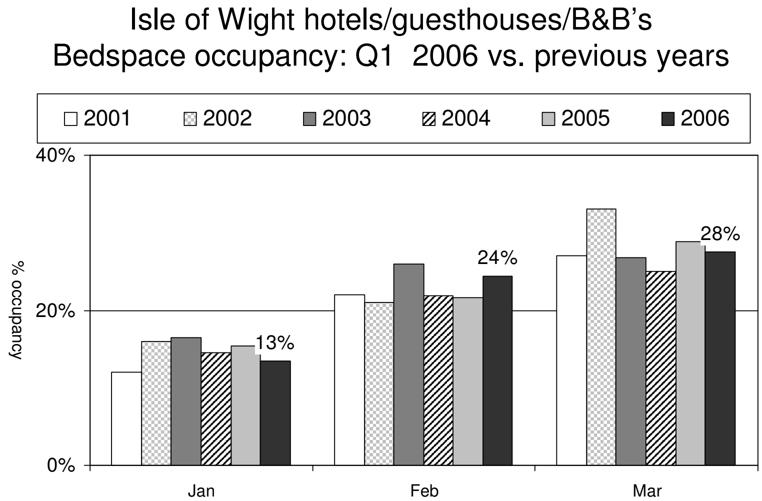
<u>Bedspace Occupancy in hotels/guesthouses/B&B's</u>

Bedspace occupancy averaged just under 22% over the winter period. As with room occupancy this is an improvement on last year (+4 points).

Isle of Wight hotels/guesthouses/B&B's
Bedspace occupancy: Q1 2006 average vs. previous years

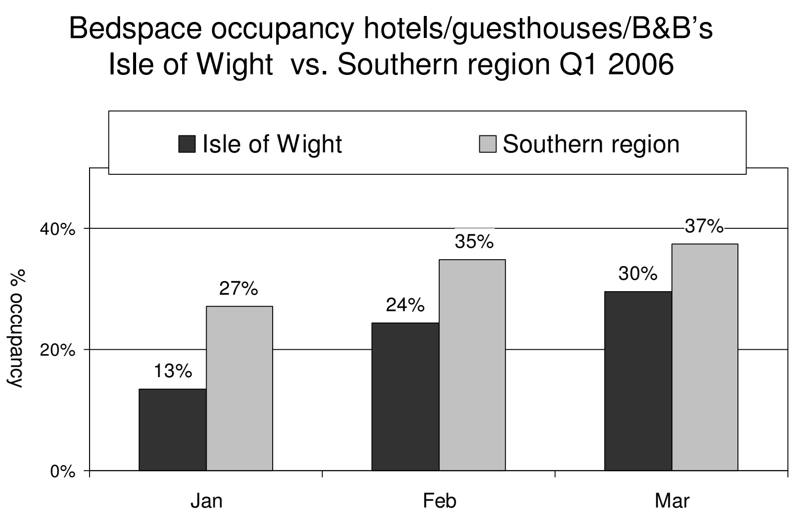


Taking individual months, bedspace occupancy ranged from 13% in January up to 28% in March. Comparisons versus recent years are very similar to that seen in room occupancy.




March data is for $1^{st}$ – $26^{th}$ 2006

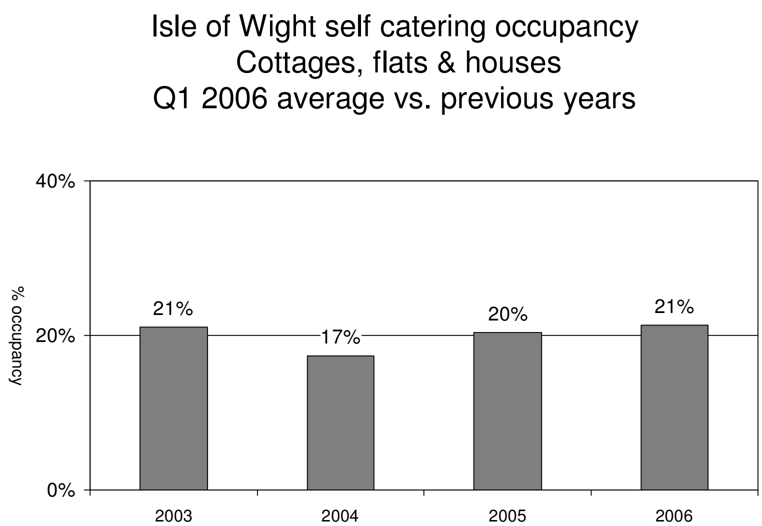
Versus the Southern region, average room occupancy on the Island was well below the region's average, but the difference in bedspace occupancy was not as pronounced as that for room occupancy, showing that the Island benefits from larger party sizes.




March data is for the whole month

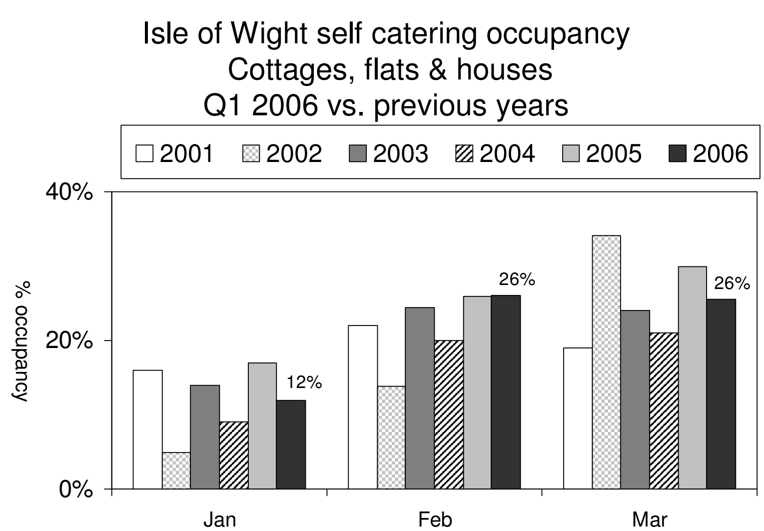
Occupancy in self catering cottages, houses and flats

Occupancy in cottages, flats and houses averaged 21% over the whole period. This is on a par with last year (20%) but up 4 points on 2004.




Over the years there has been considerable fluctuation in self catering occupancy, particularly in January and February when about a third of establishments were closed.

Looking at each month: occupancy in January was 12%, which is below last year; in February it rose to 26% which is level with last year and at the highest level recorded for this month. In March occupancy remained at 26% which is significantly down on last year but similar to the previous two years.



Occupancy in self catering chalets and static caravans

Seven chalet/caravan parks responded to the occupancy survey but only 4 were open during January and February and 5 in March hence there is insufficient information to draw any conclusions on occupancy levels over the winter period in this sector.

Occupancy on touring sites

None of the touring sites taking part in this survey were open in this period.