Isle of Wight Tourism
Activity monitor

Tourism year
2004/2005

108.115

Caveat

All estimates contained in this report are based on research survey samples. Every effort has been made to produce accurate estimates but these are subject to statistical error. No warranty can be given as to the accuracy of information provided by interviewees.

All data is collected, processed and stored by an independent third party. All findings are based upon aggregated data and individual establishments' information remains confidential and is not disclosed. Original data will be destroyed.

This research is designed to provide estimates of visitors in a defined period. It is not within the scope of the current research to measure the number of visitors to a specific event which occurs within that defined period.

Some data included in this report is provisional data as this is written before final data has been released. Some historical data has been readjusted since previous reports were issued to improve accuracy of comparisons.

Terminology

Within this report the following definitions are used:

- passenger crossing: a one way trip either to or from the Isle of Wight
- visit or trip: a visit or trip is assumed to involve two crossings, one to the Island and one from the Island
- visitor: a visitor is assumed to make one visit or trip. Where one person makes two or more trips, they are counted as separate visitors
- domestic visit or visitor: a visit made by a UK resident.

Reporting periods

At the close of 1999, it was decided to use a new reporting year running from early September through to the end of the peak season. This means that businesses will now receive a full year report in November to aid their planning for the following year's business. This is referred to as the Tourism Year. The reporting periods for the tourism year 2004/2005 are:

- first quarter: post summer peak to end of calendar year: 6/9/2004 - 31/12/2004
- second quarter: January to two weeks before Easter: 1/1/2005 – 20/3/2005
- third quarter: two weeks before Easter to the summer peak: 21/3/2005-17/7/2005
- fourth quarter: the summer peak season : 18/7/2005 - 4/9/2005.

Contents

1. Introduction and overview

This report provides commentary on the Isle of Wight tourist industry for period from 6th September 2004 to 4th September 2005. Comparisons are made with previous years. (Easter fell extremely early this year, which meant that the Easter bank holidays were before the clocks changed to BST.)

The last year has seen some major events which had a negative impact on tourism. At an international level the Asian Tsunami on 26th December devastated the region around Indonesia, an area which usually attracts a significant volume of international tourists. The London bombings on July 7th plus the attempted repeat attack later that month had an immediate impact on tourism in London and the UK and reminded people of the Madrid bombings in 2004. The death of the Pope in April had no long term major effect but did attract a huge influx of tourists to Rome for a few days.

On a more positive note, there was excellent international coverage of the UK during the royal wedding in April and in the run up to the 2012 Olympic bid in July.

When looking back at previous years, events which have affected tourism include the war in Iraq, the Madrid bombs in spring 2004, the outbreak of SARS in Asia in late 2002, the 9/11 attack in New York in 2001; the foot and mouth outbreak which halted travel to the British countryside in spring 2001; the petrol crisis in autumn 2000, impacted significantly on domestic tourism and the millennium celebrations which boosted tourism and travel.

International Passenger Survey* data for the 12 months to August 2005 reveals that overseas residents trips to the UK rose by 10% from 26.9 million to 29.7 million visits. The biggest increase was in visits from Western Europeans whose visits were up 10% at just over 19 million visits. Visits by North Americans declined by 1%, which may be due to a combination of the terrorist threat to London and the exchange rates. Certainly the UK is an expensive destination for North Americans at present as the pound continues to be strong against the dollar .

The same survey shows that visits abroad made by UK residents rose by 4% during the 12 months to August 2005 to reach 65.6 million. Travel to North America and other areas outside Western Europe grew faster than travel to Europe.

Facilitating travel to and from international destinations, the budget airlines continue to expand their operations with year on year growth far greater than the total market. Their offers of low fares are encouraging the taking of short breaks but make domestic short breaks appear comparatively expensive.

The economic backdrop to the last five years has been that of a stable economy with low unemployment, low inflation and low interest rates, this has encouraged consumer borrowing and consumer debt has continued to grow.

Turning to the Isle of Wight, there has been a strong schedule of events this year: the now well established Walking Festival was in May, followed by the very successful Nokia Music Festival in June. Later that month the Trafalgar 200 celebration was a big nautical event in Portsmouth and the Solent.

During the tourism year of 2003/2004 there were 2.64 million visits to the Isle of Wight, arriving by ferry. This is an increase of 2% on last year and is the fourth year that visits have increased. The value of these visits is estimated to be just over £350 million.

There were over one million holidays/short breaks taken on the Island. Total staying visits for all reasons exceeded 1.5 million with an estimated value of £315 million. In addition there were over 1.1 million day visits worth an estimated £37 million.

Looking ahead, it is expected that the volume of visitors will increase again next year and this could bring around 50,000 more visitors. However the length of time spent on the Island may continue to decrease.

* The IPS is a sample survey carried out by the Office for National Statistics. Around 250,000 interviews are carried out per year representing 0.2% of all travellers as they enter or leave the UK.

2. Summary of key changes in 2004/2005 tourism year

Specific changes observed this year include:

- 2.64 million visitors arrived by ferry which is 2% up on 2003/2004 and 4.7% above the number recorded in 2000/2001. This growth is attributable to:
  - an increase in domestic visitors rather than overseas visitors: these declined this year, returning to the level seen in 2002/2003
  - a significant increase in domestic staying visits: there were just under one and a half million staying visits, the highest number recorded and an increase of 7% versus 2003/2004.
- These extra staying visitors have increased the demand for bednights in commercial accommodation but not by the same scale due to the shorter trip length plus a different mix of visitors. It is estimated that 5.4 million bednights were needed (domestic and overseas demand combined) which is an increase of 3% versus last year.
- There has been a significant increase in the number of (domestic) short breaks/short leisure stays (1 – 4 nights). There were over 650,000 this year, an increase of 22% versus last year. This growth in short stays was achieved outside of the peak season.
- An increase also was seen in the number of (domestic) longer holidays taken on the Island. Holidays lasting 5+ night have increased by 16% versus last year and by 4% versus the previous year. However the length of these trips has shortened considerably from an average of 8.2 nights last year to 7.6 nights this year. The increase in demand for bednights arising from these 5+ night holidays has therefore increased by only 7%.
- Occupancy in the self catering sector varied by type of accommodation. Cottages/flats/houses and static chalet sites generally had a disappointing year although, for both, August was a very good month. Conversely touring sites had improved occupancy levels, particularly in May, June and August. This was in addition to those who camped at the Nokia music festival.
- New data looking at the type of accommodation used by visitors reveals some interesting facts and helps to explain why the serviced accommodation and self catering sectors do not always benefit from increases in the number of staying visitors. Second homes were used by 8% of those on a holiday/short break. Also additional accommodation was provided at key events, such as the Nokia music festival and Bestival, which would not be included in the occupancy survey.
- Occupancy in the serviced accommodation on the Isle of Wight was much higher than the whole of the TSE region for the important trading months from May to August. At other times it fell below the region's average.
- In the month of August space available to let in the self catering sector is limited: there is 5% of houses/cottages/flats and 6% of static chalets. This increases in the serviced sector, for example to 14% of larger hotels (26+ rooms) and 28% of small hotels/guesthouses (4-10 rooms).
- It is estimated that the Island attracted 150,000 new or lapsed day visitors and 350,000 new or lapsed staying visitors.
- Almost 450,000 people visited the Tourist Information Centres, an increase of 3% versus last year. This was the third successive year these visitor figures have increased.
- Visits to attractions with an entrance fee were up by 3% versus last year. In total 32% of leisure visitors went to such an attraction. This rises to 45% visiting an attraction when free attractions are included. New and lapsed leisure visitors to the Island are much more likely to visit an attraction (66%) whereas only a third of regular leisure visitors do so.

3. Weather on the Isle of Wight

Continuous recording and reporting of weather is provided by Medina Valley Centre, Newport. Temperature, sunshine hours and rainfall can be compared with the long term average (1969 – 2000) to show whether the current weather is typical for the time of year.

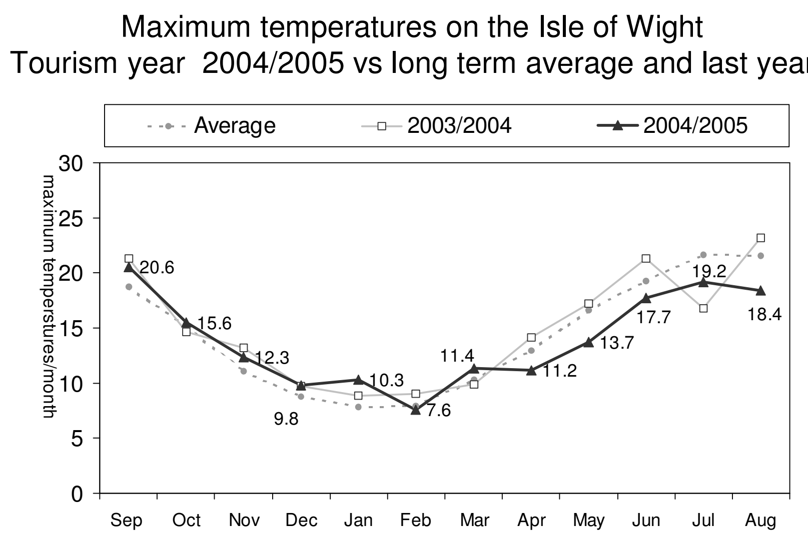
The following charts show weather for the current year together with last year and the long term average. There is no sunshine data available for November and December due to technical problems with the recording of this.

The tourism year ended with a fairly mixed summer so it is perhaps surprising to see that, overall, this was a fairly dry year but with less sunshine than the norm.

3.1 Maximum temperatures

From September through to March temperatures were very much in line with the long term average and with last year. However from April onwards, hence for the key periods for tourism, average temperatures were consistently 2 – 3 degrees cooler than expected for the time of year.

From April to June and August temperatures were below 2004.

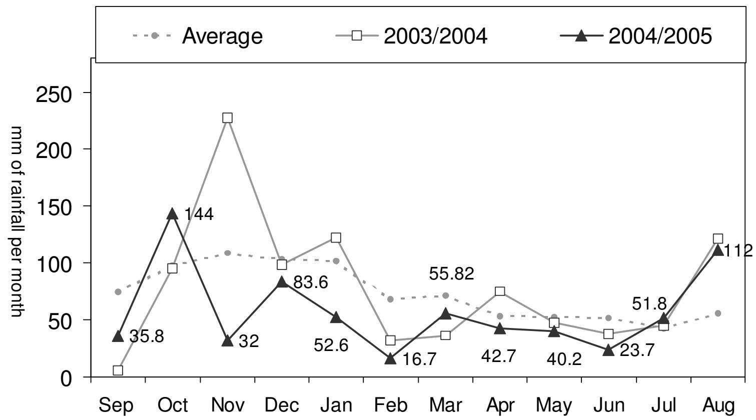


3.2 Rainfall

Overall this was a fairly dry year. Total rainfall for the year was just under 700 mm, which was around 20% less than the annual average.

Rainfall exceeded the average during three months only, however these included July and August. In August rainfall was double the average although still below the extremely wet August of 2004.

Rainfall on the Isle of Wight
Tourism year 2004/2005 vs long term average and last year

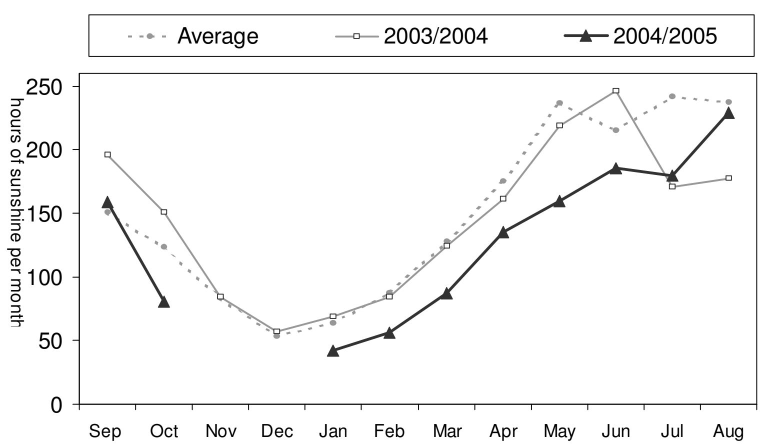


3.3 Sunshine hours

Despite the dry weather and reasonable temperatures, sunshine hours were consistently below the average and by the end of the year were about 20% down on the long term average. (Excluding Nov/Dec from calculations.)

There was also less sunshine than last year every month except August.

Sunshine on the Isle of Wight
Tourism year 2004/2005 vs long term average and last year



No sunshine data available for Nov/Dec due to technical problems

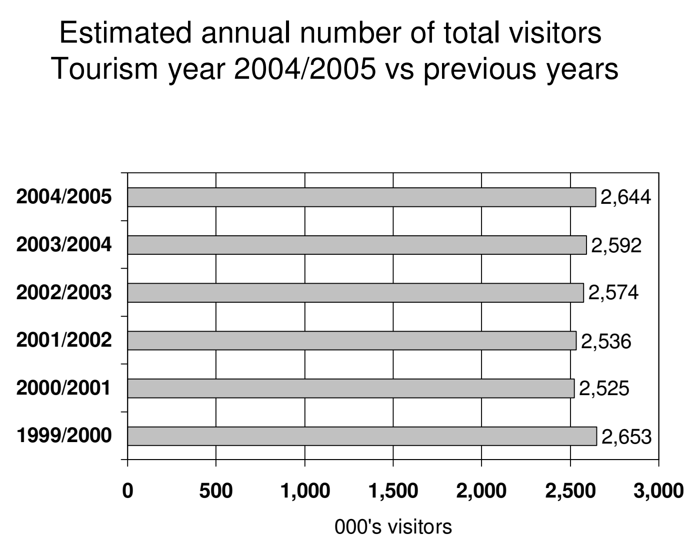
4. Visits to the Isle of Wight

4.1 Estimated visitor numbers

In the 12 month period ending early September 2005, over 2.6 million visits were made to the Isle of Wight (by ferry). These include both domestic and overseas visitors to the Island. The data in this report excludes visitors arriving by yacht due to the lack of data available over recent years however it is planned that arrivals by yacht will be included in future reports.

The number of visits this year has increased by an estimated 2% versus the previous tourism year (2003/04) and is up 2.7% on the 2003/04 year.

There has been a long term upwards trend in the number of visits over the past 4 years and visitor numbers are now 4.7 % above the number in 2000/2001. This is shown in the chart below.

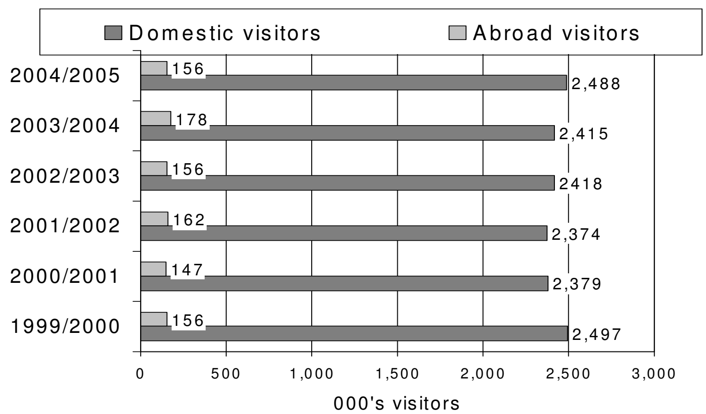


Slight adjustments have been made to historical data to improve accuracy of comparisons

Domestic residents made the majority of visits (94%): only a small percentage (6%) travel to the Island from abroad, as shown on the chart below.

This shows that the growth in total visits is attributable to increases in domestic residents coming to the Island; visits by domestic residents increased by 3% this year vs. 2003/04 and 2002/03. The estimated number of visits originating from abroad* has fluctuated over recent years: this year there were approximately 156,000, which is 12% down on last year but on a level with the previous year. (Visits by residents abroad are discussed in more detail in see section 4.5, page 25.)

Estimated annual number of domestic and abroad visitors
Tourism year 2004/2005 vs previous years



*Estimated visitor numbers from abroad are based on small samples which will cause some fluctuation in the numbers.

4.2 Domestic visitors' type of trip

This section deals with the domestic market only; trips originating abroad are discussed in section 4.5.

Visitor trips can be divided into day visits and staying visits. The proportion of each trip type varies considerably in each season, but across the whole year 55 - 60% of all domestic visits are staying visits. This proportion has remained relatively static over the last few years although this year the proportion of staying trips increased slightly.

The relative balance between day and staying visits benefits the Island economy.

	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
Day visitors	46%	46%	45%	45%	44%	41%
Staying visitors	54%	54%	55%	55%	56%	59%

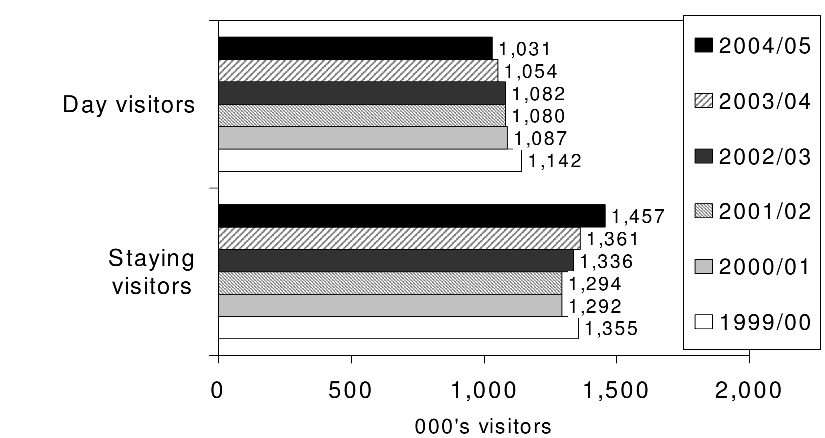
The following chart shows the actual number of day and staying domestic visitors over time.

There has been a slight but gradual decline in the number of domestic day trip visits over recent years; these now stand at an estimated 1.03 million visits. The decline versus last year is only 2% but domestic day visits are almost 10% down since 1999/2000.

Whilst there is a need to halt the decline in day trips, these have been more than replaced with staying trips which are themselves more lucrative for the Island's economy. In fact, almost 80% of the total tourism revenue for the Island is derived from these domestic staying visits (See section 6).

The upward trend in the number of staying visits, seen in recent years, continues and this year domestic staying visits reached 1.46 million which is up by 7% on 2003/04 and up 9% on 2002/03. This is the highest number recorded since the survey began in 1999/2000.

Estimated annual number of domestic staying and day visitors
Tourism year 2004/2005 vs previous years



4.2.1 Domestic day visits

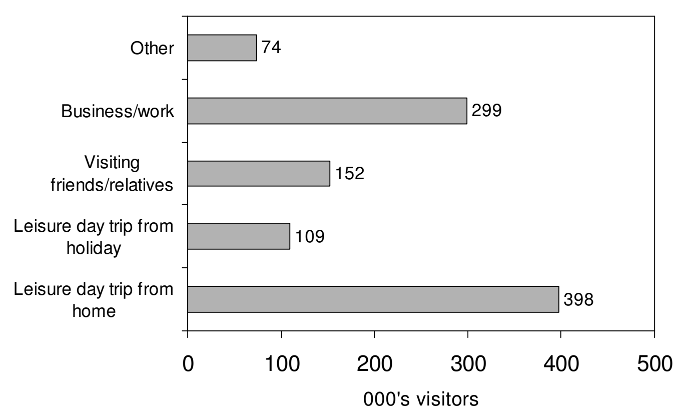
4.2.1.1 Domestic day visitors' type of trip

Further analysis of the domestic day visits shows the purpose of the trip. The chart below provides an estimate of the number of each type of day trip.

Over the course of the year there were in excess of half a million leisure day trips (507,000), making this the most significant reason for visiting on a day trip. The vast majority of these (79%) were day trips starting from home, the remainder being trips made by people whilst on holiday in the mainland area around the ports.

Almost 300,000 business trips were made to the Island (pure businesses plus combined business and leisure trips) and visits to friends/ relatives generated 152,000 day trips.

Purpose of day trips amongst domestic visitors
Tourism year 2004/2005

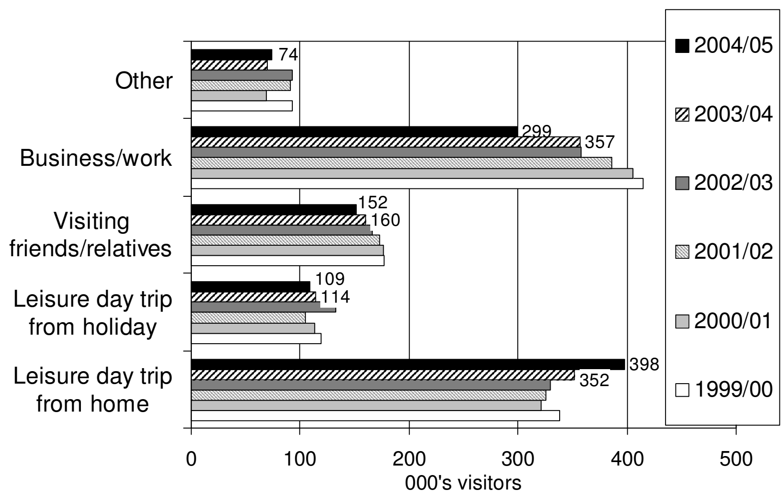


The following chart illustrates how the day trip picture has changed over recent years. The two significant changes are:

- the increasing importance of leisure day trips which start from home. These are up 18% since the start of the survey;
- the decrease in business travel: this has declined by over a quarter since the start of the survey.

The number of visits to friends and relatives has also declined very slightly each year: VFR trips are now 14% fewer than 1999/2000.

Purpose of day trips amongst domestic visitors
Tourism year 2004/2005 vs previous years



4.2.1.2 Profile of domestic day visitors

The profile of visitors to the Island is biased towards adult only groups of visitors: 83% of day visitor groups comprised just adults and adult only groups dominated all day visitor types.

This is a slight decrease versus previous years which is due to more groups with families visiting on leisure day trips.

	Adult only groups				Adult and children groups			
	2001/ 2002	2002/ 2003	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005	2001/ 2002	2002/ 2003	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005
All day visitor groups	85%	87%	86%	83%	15%	13%	14%	17%
Leisure day visitor (from home)	73%	78%	76%	68%	27%	22%	24%	32%
Leisure day visitor (whilst on holiday)	70%	75%	70%	69%	30%	25%	30%	31%
Visiting friends/relatives	80%	82%	80%	80%	20%	18%	20%	20%
Business or business/ leisure combined	99%	99%	98%	98%	1%	1%	2%	2%

4.2.1.3 Domestic day visitors' origin

The most important counties in terms of origin of day visitors to the Isle of Wight are shown on the table below. 2004/2005 is shown together with previous years. Percentage of day visits originating from each county is given to allow comparisons over time.

In line with previous years, Hampshire remains the most important source of day trippers with over half originating from this county. In terms of numbers Hampshire produces around 540,000 day visitors.

Other key counties are Surrey, which accounted for 7% of visitors, West Sussex and Dorset which both generated 6% of the day visits this year. Greater London followed with 5% of trips; this represents a slight decline in importance for Greater London especially versus 2001/2002 when 8% of visitors came from there.

There has been little change in the trips originating from other counties.

000's trips County	Est'd % of visits 1999/ 2000	Est'd % of visits 2000/ 2001	Est'd % of visits 2001/ 2002	Est'd % of visits 2002/ 2003	Est'd % of visits 2003/ 2004	Est'd % of visits 2004/ 2005
Hampshire	50%	52%	51%	51%	51%	52%
Surrey	5%	6%	5%	6%	6%	7%
West Sussex	6%	5%	6%	5%	7%	6%
Dorset	7%	6%	5%	6%	6%	6%
Greater London	7%	6%	8%	6%	6%	5%
Berkshire	2%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Kent	2%	2%	1%	3%	2%	3%
Wiltshire	2%	2%	3%	2%	3%	2%
East Sussex	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Somerset (inc. Bristol)	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%

4.2.2 Domestic staying visits

4.2.2.1 Domestic staying visitors' type of trip

Domestic staying visits reached an estimated 1.46 million this year which is the highest number recorded since the survey began in 1999/2000. These visits increased by 7% versus 2003/2004 and were 9% up on 2002/2003. Looking back to the start of the survey in 1999/2000 domestic staying trips have increased by an estimated 7.5%.

The estimated number of each type of staying trip is shown in the following chart.

Short and long holidays exceeded one million for the first time (1024,000) making these the most important reason for visiting the Island.

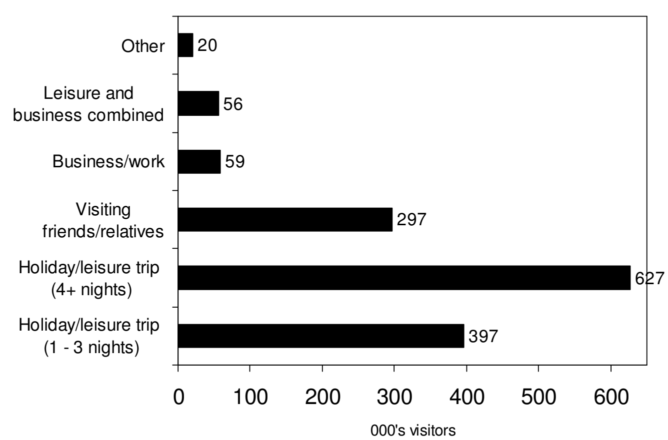
Over 60% of these holidays (627,000) were long stay holidays (4+ nights); short breaks (1 – 3 nights) added almost 400,000 more holidays.

Almost 300,000 trips were made to visit to see friends/relatives which is one fifth of domestic staying trips. This is the number of trips for which the primary purpose is VFR. There are other categories of visitors who stay with friends and relatives taking the total who see friends and relatives closer to a third of all domestic trips.

Staying business trips and business trips combined with leisure exceeded 100,000 visits.

A small proportion fall into the unspecified other category which includes house hunting, educational visits, sports events, religious events, funerals amongst a range of other reasons.

Purpose of staying trips amongst domestic visitors
Tourism year 2004/2005



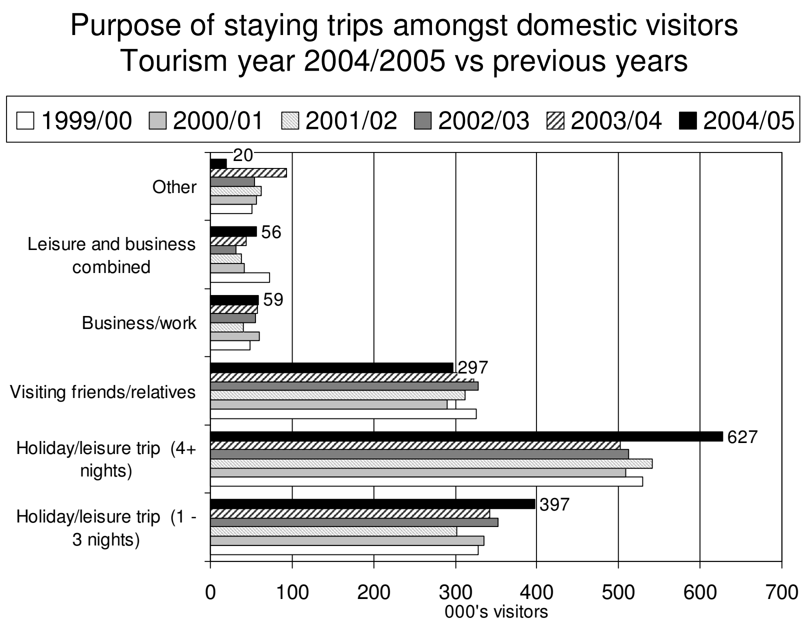
Changes in the types of staying trips made over time are shown on the following chart.

This year there has been a dramatic increase in the numbers of holidays and staying leisure trips, both of which have reached their highest level since the survey started. The ratio between short and long holidays remains similar.

- holidays of 1-3 nights have increased by 16% versus last year and 13% versus 2002/2003;
- holidays of 4+ nights have increased by 25% versus last year and 22% versus 2002/2003.

Visits to friends and relatives travel, which have fluctuated a little over time but this year were down by 8% versus last year.

Business trips and trips which are combined with leisure are relatively insignificant but have increased slightly this year versus recent years.



4.2.2.2 Domestic staying visitors' length of stay

The average length of stay was 4.2 nights which, is down slightly versus recent years and continues the long term trend towards shorter trips, as shown below.

The key influence on the shorter overall trip length is the reduction in the overall length of 4+ nights holidays/leisure trips. This was at a high of 7.1 nights in 2001/2002 but has steadily fallen to the current 6.2 nights.

VFR trips have also shortened slightly although there has been more fluctuation in the length of these.

There has been very little change in the estimated length of short breaks (1-3 night holidays/leisure trips).

	Average length (nights)					
Type of domestic trip	1999/ 2000	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002	2002/ 2003	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005
Short breaks: 1 – 3 nights	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.3
Longer holiday: 4+ nights	6.9	7.0	7.1	6.9	6.7	6.2
Visiting friends/relatives	3.6	3.4	3.3	3.3	3.5	3.1
Business*	3.9	4.9	3.9	3.2	3.2	3.8
<u>All domestic staying trips</u>	<u>4.8</u>	<u>4.5</u>	<u>4.6</u>	<u>4.5</u>	<u>4.4</u>	<u>4.2</u>

* Caution: small base size

The length of short stay and longer holidays taken can also be analysed as 1 - 4 nights and 5+ nights which better reflects the pricing systems operated by the ferry companies.

Isle of Wight Tourism has targeted short breaks, particularly in the off peak seasons, over recent years and there has been a strong increase in the volume of short breaks (1 – 4 nights) to the Island. Since the start of the survey these have increased by 30% and increases have been achieved every year since 2002/2003. This year there were 659,000 which is 22% up on last year and 29% up on 2002/2003.

Since 2000/2001 the number of longer holidays (5+ nights) has been declining however this downward trend was halted this year when an estimated 365,000 such trips were made. This represents a 16% increase versus last year and 4% above 1999/2000.

	1999/ 2000	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002	2002/ 2003	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005
Length of holiday	000's trips					
1 – 4 night holiday	505	467	474	509	542	659
5+ night holiday	352	377	368	350	314	365

4.2.2.3 Demand for bednights

The demand for bednights from domestic visitors is estimated at just over 6.1 million nights. After allowing for the proportion of these that would not be taken in commercial accommodation (i.e. trips to visit friends and relatives), the demand for bednights in commercial accommodation arising from domestic visitors was almost 5.2 million bednights.

An estimate of where this demand originates is shown in the following table.

This shows the importance of holidays for accommodation providers. Those on longer holidays (5+ nights) stayed an estimated 2.8 million nights and short breaks (1-4 nights) almost two million nights.

Type of trip	Number of domestic bednights (millions)
4+ night holiday	3.9
5+ night holiday	2.8
Short stay (1 – 3 nights)	0.9
Short stay (1 – 4 nights)	1.9
Visiting friends/relatives	0.9
Business or leisure & business combined	0.4

An additional 420,000 bednights were needed for visitors from abroad, of which, it is estimated, 265,000 would have been taken in commercial accommodation.

Demand for bednights (domestic) over time is shown below. After a period of fairly constant demand over the last three years, demand for commercial accommodation has risen slightly.

Millions of domestic bednights	1999/ 2000	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002	2002/ 2003	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005
Estimated bednights in commercial accommodation	5.3	4.8	5.0	4.9	5.0	5.2

4.2.2.4 Types of accommodation used

Staying visitors are asked about the type of accommodation they have or will use. This enables us to look at the relative position of the serviced and self catering sectors. It also brings new types of accommodation into the research, for example yachts and second homes which are not included in the occupancy survey. Comparative annual data is not available at present.

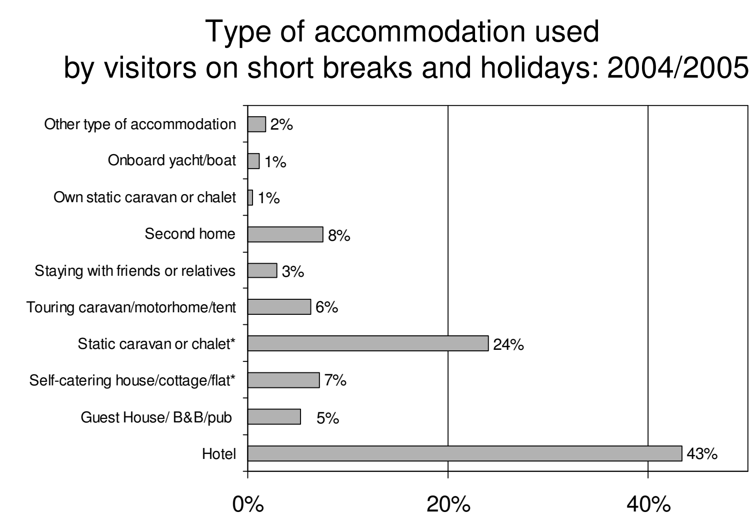
Almost all (97%) of those visiting friends/relatives stay with their host. The accommodation used by those on holidays/short breaks and those on business trips (business only and business/leisure combined) is detailed below.

Visitors on holidays/short breaks

Amongst those on short breaks/holidays, use of hotels is high with over two fifths choosing to stay in a hotel. Static caravans/chalets are the second most used type, accommodating almost a quarter of these visitors.

All other types of accommodation are mentioned by less than 10% of those on holidays/short breaks. Use of second homes is at a similar level to rented houses/cottages/flats yet these are normally outside all the assessments of accommodation used.

Touring sites (which includes caravans, motor homes and tents) are used by 6% and B&B's/guesthouses by 5%.



* Rented accommodation

Use of hotels is higher amongst adult only groups than those with children; families have an increased tendency to use rented houses/cottages/flats and touring sites. Use of second homes is slightly higher amongst those with children.

Visitors on business/combined business/leisure trips

Almost half the business visitors used hotels, but there was a range of other accommodation used including guesthouses/B&B's, rented houses/cottages/flats, homes of friends/relatives and second homes.

Combining the type of accommodation used (taken from the visitor research conducted on the ferries) with the length of stay provides information on the varying lengths of stay in different types of accommodation.

This provides a different and perhaps more complete picture of demand for accommodation than is available from the occupancy survey as it includes use of second homes, privately owned caravans, homes of friends and relatives and yachts. These account for 15% of the accommodation used by staying visitors but taking length of stay into account shows that these account for a much larger proportion of bednights.

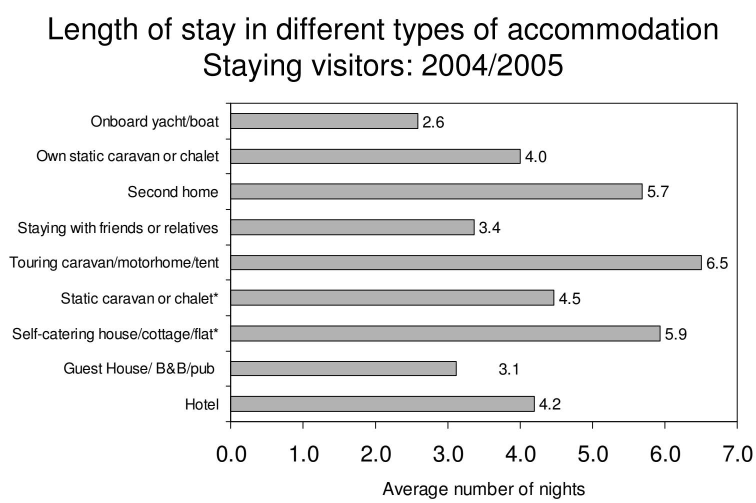
This helps to explain why, at times, there is a reported increase in demand for accommodation in the visitor research which has not been experienced by accommodation providers in the serviced and rented self catering sectors.

The average length of stay in different types of accommodation is shown in the following chart.

Touring sites followed by rented houses/flats/cottages and second homes have the longest average stays showing their importance for main holidays. Static sites have a shorter average length of stay than both touring sites and houses/flats/cottages.

Hotels and particularly guesthouses/B&B's attract more of the short stay visitors.

Trips to visit friends/relatives tend to be short stays.



* Rented accommodation

N.B. The occupancy survey includes hotels, guesthouses, B&B's, rented houses, cottages and flats, rented static chalet and caravan sites and touring caravan and camping sites.

4.2.2.5 Profile of domestic staying visitors

The Isle of Wight has an image of being a family holiday destination but, looking at the whole year, visitor group composition shows a strong bias towards adult visitors as shown below.

This data has remained constant over time with only one fifth of staying visitors being in groups with adults and children.

The one group where the proportion travelling with children increases is those on holidays/short breaks but it still remains less than a quarter of visiting groups.

	Adult only groups					Adult and children groups				
	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002	2002/ 2003	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002	2002/ 2003	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005
All staying visitor groups	81%	79%	79%	80%	80%	19%	21%	21%	20%	20%
Holiday /leisure trip	77%	74%	73%	75%	77%	23%	26%	27%	25%	23%
Visiting friends/ relatives	83%	83%	83%	83%	82%	17%	17%	17%	17%	18%
Business or business/ leisure combined	99%	99%	98%	97%	96%	1%	1%	2%	3%	4%

4.2.2.6 Domestic staying visitors' origin

The following chart shows the counties which produced at least 2% of staying visits.

Unlike day visitors, who tend to be concentrated around the mainland ports, staying visits travel to the Island from a much wider spread of areas. Hampshire remains the most important county but instead of producing more than half the visitors, as for day trips, only 15% come from that county.

Distance from the port remains a strong influence on likelihood to make a staying trip plus density of population. Hence Hampshire is closely followed by Greater London, then Surrey, Kent, Essex and West Sussex.

Smaller proportions do travel from across the UK.

Last year it was noted that Greater London may be declining in importance and the data this year shows that there has been no recovery in the proportion originating from London.

County	Est'd % of visits 1999/ 2000 000's	Est'd % of visits 2000/ 2001 000's	Est'd % of visits 2001/ 2002 000's	Est'd % of visits 2002/ 2003 000's	Est'd % of visits 2003/ 2004 000's	Est'd % of visits 2004/ 2005 000's
Hampshire	16%	15%	13%	15%	16%	15%
Greater London	15%	14%	14%	13%	12%	12%
Surrey	7%	8%	8%	8%	7%	8%
Kent	5%	5%	6%	5%	5%	6%
Essex	4%	4%	4%	5%	6%	5%
West Sussex	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%
Berkshire	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Somerset (inc. Bristol)	3%	3%	3%	2%	3%	3%
Dorset	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%
East Sussex	2%	3%	3%	3%	2%	3%
Herts	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%	3%
Yorks (total)	4%	3%	4%	4%	3%	2%
Wales	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%
West Mids.	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%	2%
Bucks	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Lancashire	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%
Oxfordshire	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%

4.3 Repeat versus first time visitors

Leisure visitors are asked whether they have visited the Island before and, if so, the timing of their last visit. This is the second year this data has been collected.

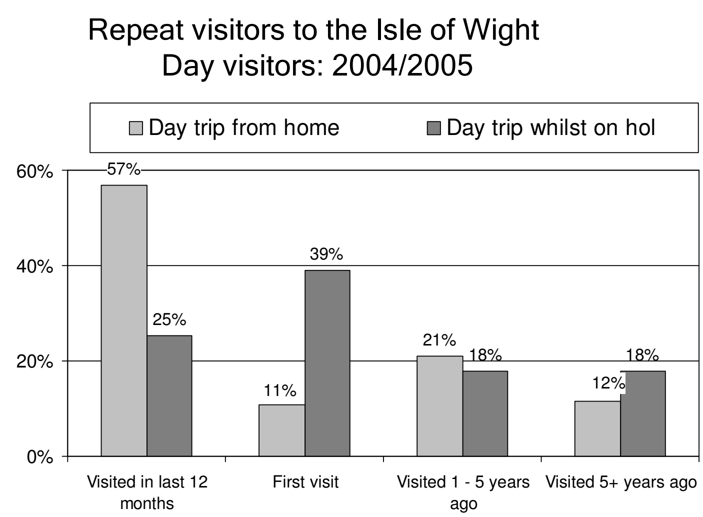
Those who are visiting friend and relatives tend to be regular visitors: over 80% have visited more than once in the last 12 months. In addition their propensity to visit is unlikely to be influenced by Isle of Wight Tourism marketing activity. The following sections therefore focus on visitors taking leisure day trips, short breaks and longer holidays.

4.3.1 Leisure day visitors

Visitors who come to the Isle of Wight for a leisure day trip *whilst holidaying nearby on the mainland* are a prime market to convert to future short break or main holiday visitors because these people are already choosing to holiday in the region. 75% of this group had not visited the Island in the last 12 months and 39% were on their first trip to the Isle of Wight.

Conversely those travelling *from home* for a day trip are likely to be regular visitors. It has already been noted that these people are likely to live nearby (Hampshire plus Surrey, West Sussex, Dorset and Greater London).

Only 11% of this group were on their first trip to the Island and 12% returned after a break of 5+ years. However, because of the volume of these visits, these do translate into considerable numbers of new/lapsed visitors.



Estimated number of new and lapsed visitors	Day trip from home	Day trip whilst on holiday
	90	60

Since last year there has been no significant change in the proportions of new, lapsed and repeat visitors.

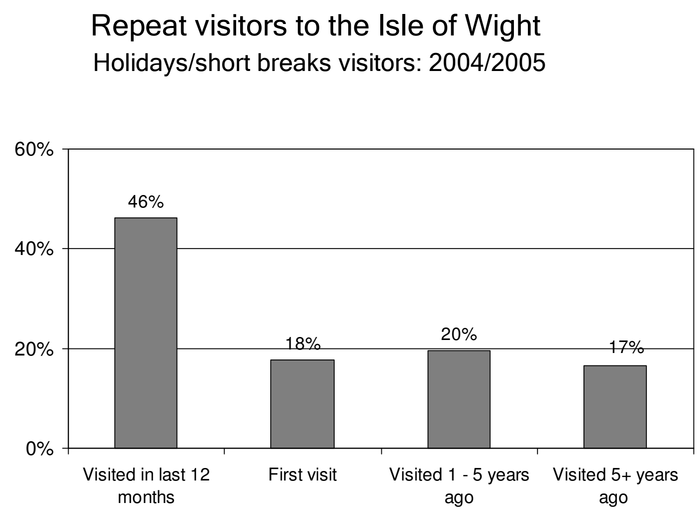
4.3.2 Short break and holiday visitors

Repeat versus new visitors on short breaks and longer holidays is illustrated below. Again this does not include those visiting friends/relatives.

Over half (54%) of those on a short break or main holiday were new or lapsed visitors showing that the Island has succeeded in refreshing its visitor base.

18% were on their first visit and 17% returned after a period of 5 or more years.

The large proportion (46%) of regular visitors indicate that there is a high degree of satisfaction with the Isle of Wight as a holiday destination.



It is estimated that there were 180,000 new visitors who were on holidays or short breaks plus another 170,000 lapsed visitors making a total of 350,000 visitors.

Comparisons with last year show no significant changes in the proportions of new/lapsed visitors to the Island.

Estimated numbers of:	Short break/main holiday
New visitors	180
Lapsed visitors (5+ years)	170

Analysis of type of accommodation used shows that these new visitors to the Island are most likely to stay in a hotel which makes them valuable visitors to attract.

4.4 Purpose of business trips

There were 447 thousand business trips this year. This continues the long term decline in trips which has occurred every year except last year. This is a 5% fall versus last year but only a 2% fall versus two years ago.

000's trips	1999/ 2000	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002	2002/ 2003	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005
All trips	572	523	496	457	473	447
Domestic trips	535	507	464	444	459	414
Overseas trips*	37	16	32	13	14	33

*N.B. Base for overseas estimates is very small

Business trips are dominated by domestic day trips: these make up two thirds (67%) of the total.

Past research has quantified the importance of the tourist industry in terms of generating business travel to the Isle of Wight. This showed that around a quarter of day trips and a third of staying business trips were due to business visitors working in the tourism/retailing/catering sector: This data is not being updated now as there was little variation in these figures over a long period of time.

4.5 Overseas visitors

An estimated 156,000 overseas visitors went to the Island last year. These were roughly half staying trips and half day trips.

The table below provides an estimate of the reasons for visiting.

	Trips 000's*
Leisure day trip	59
Holiday	28
• 1 - 3 nights	17
• 4+ nights	11
VFR:	33
• Staying	29
• Day trip	4
Business:	34
• Staying	18
• Day trip	16

*N.B. Small sample sizes of overseas visitors.

The estimated volume of overseas visitors has fluctuated over the course of this survey, which is due in part to the small numbers of overseas visitors within the survey.

Last year overseas visitors reached their highest level in the five year period: this year numbers of overseas visitors have fallen back to the level seen in 2002/2003.

	1999/ 2000	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002	2002/ 2003	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005
Visitors 000's*	156	147	162	155	178	156

*N.B. Small sample sizes of overseas visitors can cause fluctuations in data.

The country of origin is shown on the following chart. These estimates are based on small samples and so are subject to fluctuations and error, however they provide an indication of the key countries. Countries generating 3% or more of overseas visitors are shown; there is a long list of other countries generating much smaller numbers.

Over the long term there are few significant changes.

The USA is the most important source of overseas visitors as it has been every year except that following the 9/11 attack. 16% of visitors came from USA plus 4% from Canada.

France is the second most important in terms of volume in line with the last two years. Germany, Spain and the Netherlands are other important European countries, generating 8%, 5% and 4% respectively.

9% came from Australia plus 3% from New Zealand, which is at a similar level to last year.

Origin of overseas visitors						
000's visits Country	Est'd % of visits 1999/ 2000	Est'd % of visits 2000/ 2001	Est'd % of visits 2001/ 2002	Est'd % of visits 2002/ 2003	Est'd % of visits 2003/ 2004	Est'd % of visits 2004/ 2005
USA	18%	14%	10%	19%	14%	16%
France	7%	6%	7%	13%	10%	12%
Australia	6%	9%	8%	8%	8%	9%
Germany	9%	7%	14%	9%	10%	8%
Spain	3%	2%	5%	5%	4%	5%
Eire	2%	4%	3%	5%	5%	4%
Netherlands	8%	4%	7%	6%	5%	4%
Canada	5%	5%	3%	6%	6%	4%
South Africa	5%	4%	7%	3%	3%	4%
New Zealand	4%	5%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Denmark	1%	5%	1%	*	3%	1.5%
Italy	3%	9%	5%	3%	2%	3%
Japan	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%	3%
China	*	*	1%	1%	1%	3%

* Less than 1%

(N.B. Sample sizes for these estimates are small so these figures should be treated with caution.)

4.6 Mode of transport

In late April 2005 additional questions were added to the visitor survey to look at mode of travel to the mainland ports, on board the ferries and around the Island. This data can be used to look at demand for public transport services and road usage.

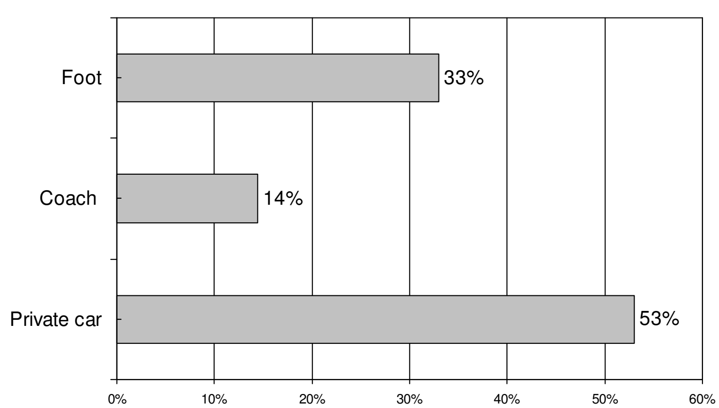
N.B. Full year data is not available at present. Mode of travel on board is based on peak season data only, mode of travel to the mainland port and on the Island is based on statistics from late April to early September 2005.

4.6.1 Mode of travel on board the ferry

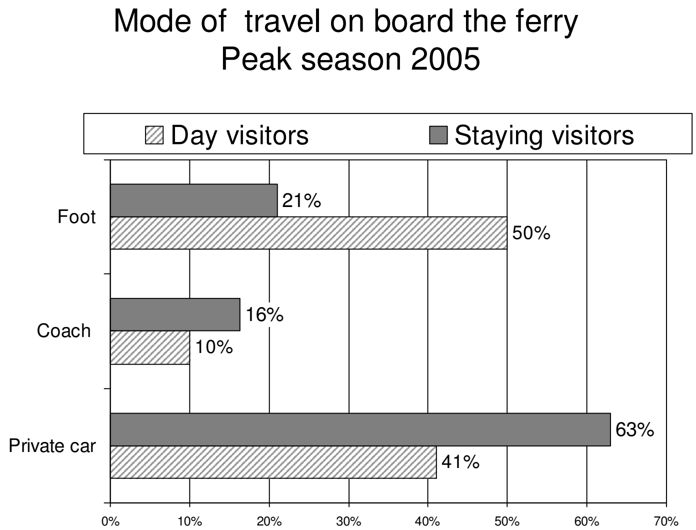
The split between car accompanied, coach accompanied and foot passengers on board the ferries is available for the peak season only.

In this 7 week season it is estimated that just over half (53%) the ferry passengers travel by car and a third travel as foot passengers. At this time of year only 14% travel by coach.

Mode of travel on board the ferry
Peak season 2005



There are some differences between staying and day visitors. Staying visitors are much more likely to travel by car (63%) than as foot passengers (21%). Conversely day visitors are more likely to travel on foot (50%) whilst only 41% visit with a car.

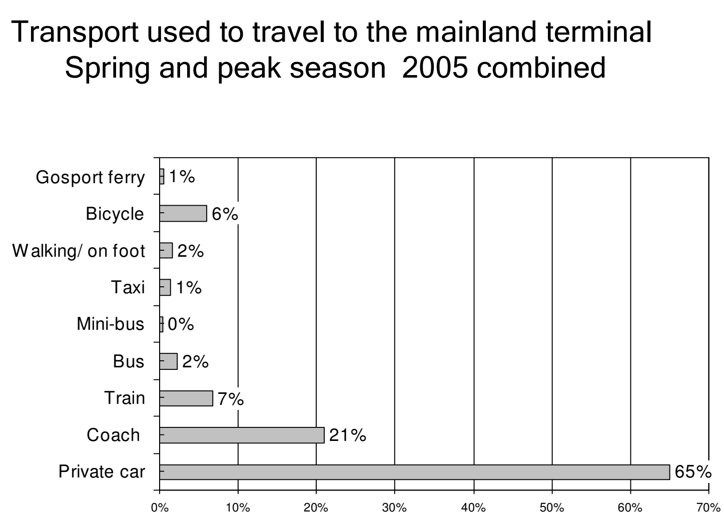


The number of coaches recorded travelling to the Island in the year was 24,771 which is 1% down on last year. (N.B. Numbers of coach passengers are not available.)

4.6.2 Mode of travel to the mainland terminal

The vast majority of visitors travel by road to the mainland terminal and the private car dominates (65%). 21% arrive by coach plus 2% by bus and 6% by bike. Only 7% travel by train to the mainland terminal.

There is very little difference in the mode of travel to the port used by between day and staying visitors.



N.B. It is assumed that anyone travelling with their own car on the ferry uses that as their main mode of transport to the port. Likewise, those travelling with a coach on the ferry are assumed to travel by coach to the port.

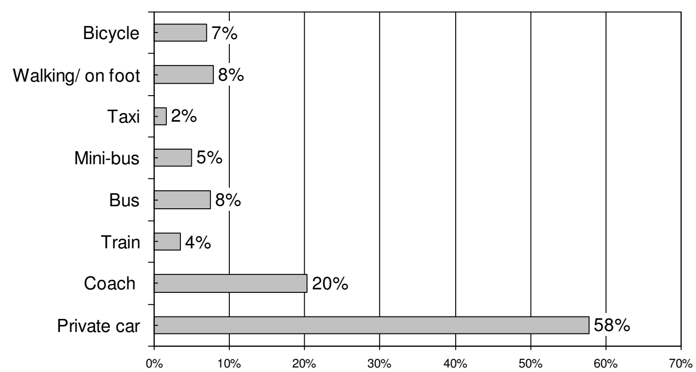
4.6.3 Mode of travel around the Isle of Wight

On the Island, the private car and coach are the two most important modes of travel. 8% use the Island bus service which is more than when travelling to the mainland terminals. Use of the Island train services is at half this level.

Walking and cycling are used by many more once on the Island than when travelling to the mainland terminals.

Walking and use of the Island bus/train services are all higher amongst day visitors than staying visitors.

Transport used to travel around the Island
Spring and peak season 2005 combined



N.B. It is assumed that anyone travelling with their own car on the ferry uses that as their main mode of transport around the Island. Likewise, those travelling with a coach on the ferry are assumed to travel by coach on the Island.

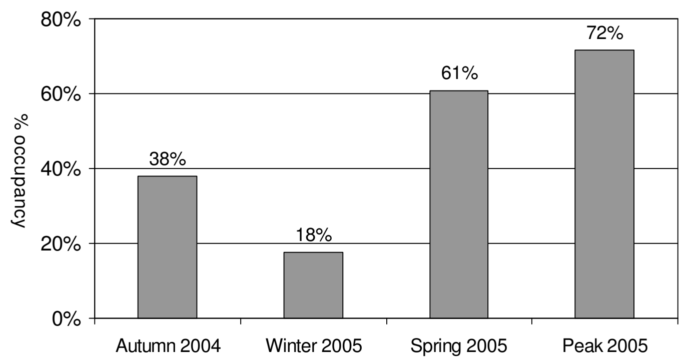
5. Demand for accommodation on the Isle of Wight

5.1 Hotels, Guesthouses and Bed & Breakfast occupancy

5.1.1 Bedspace occupancy

Bedspace occupancy in all types of serviced accommodation is shown below. Occupancy ranged from a low point of 18%, experienced during the winter period, up to 72% in the peak season.

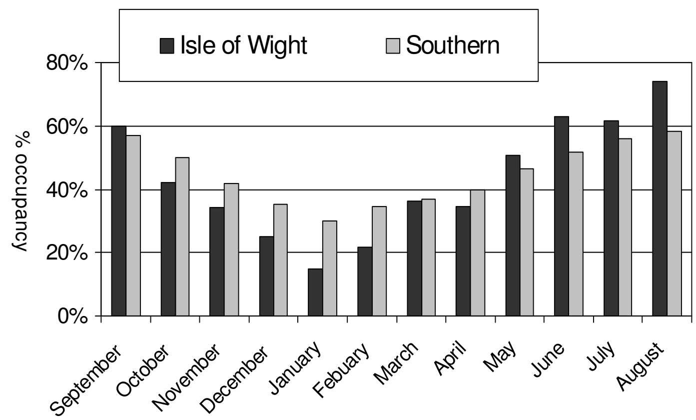
Isle of Wight hotels/guesthouses/B&B's
Bedspace occupancy 2004/2005



To put this into context, bed occupancy on the Isle of Wight can be compared to the whole Southern (TSE) region. The Isle of Wight exceeded the region by a couple of points in September and for the whole of the key trading period from May to August. The lead over the region reached a maximum of 16 points in August.

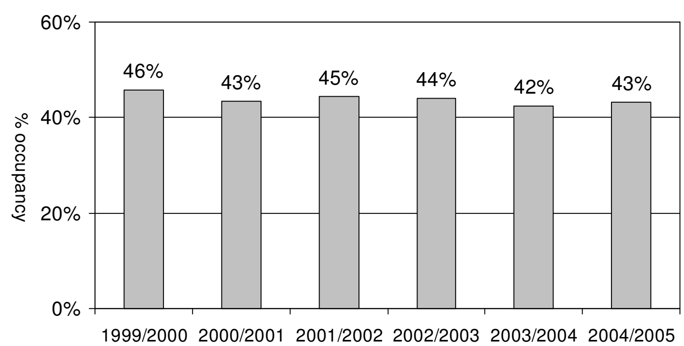
During the late autumn, winter and spring (October – April) occupancy fell below the region's average. This difference was greatest in January when the region exceeded the Isle of Wight by 15 points, showing the importance of business trafiic.

Isle of Wight hotels/guesthouses/B&B's
Bedspace occupancy 2004/2005
Isle of Wight vs Southern region



The average bedspace occupancy across the whole year was 43%, which is at a similar level to previous years, as shown below.

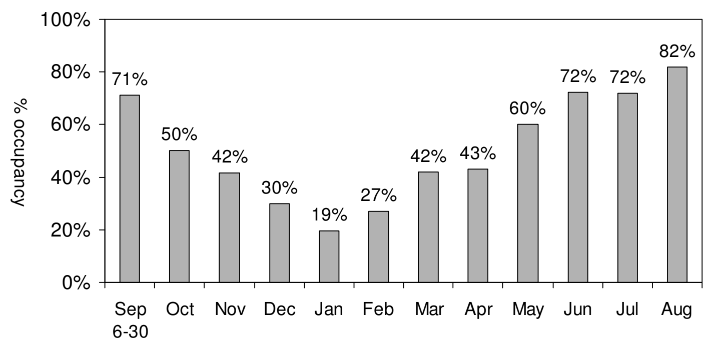
Isle of Wight hotels/guesthouses/B&B's
Bed space occupancy 2004/2005 vs previous years



5.1.2 Room occupancy

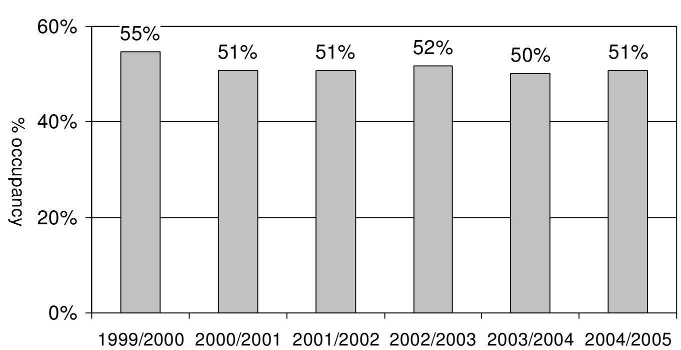
The year started at 71% in September then dropped quite rapidly through the autumn to a low point in January of 19%. It then climbed every month up to reach a high of 82% in the key month of August.

Isle of Wight hotels/guesthouses/B&B's
Room occupancy in 2004/2005



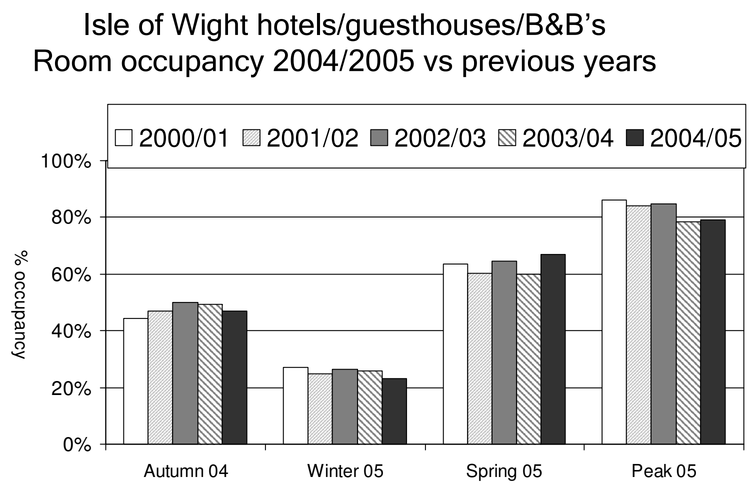
In line with bedspace occupancy, the average room occupancy across the year remained at a similar level to recent years (51%), however this is 4 points below 1999/2000.

Isle of Wight hotels/guesthouses/B&B's
Room occupancy 2004/2005 vs previous years



Looking in more detail at the trend over time, it can be seen that the spring period is the only time when room occupancy increased. During this period it gained 7 points.

Autumn and winter saw very small falls but occupancy remained at a similar level to recent years. In the peak season last year room occupancy fell by 7 points and this year there was no recovery from this low point.



Larger establishments consistently outperform all other hotels/guesthouses and B&B's. These achieved much higher room occupancy levels: in spring these were 14 points ahead of 11 – 25 room hotels and B&B's and 25 points ahead of 4 – 10 room establishments. Even in the peak season these large hotels had a much better occupancy than others, especially versus those with 4 – 10 rooms.

The 4 – 10 room establishments usually have the lowest level of room occupancy.

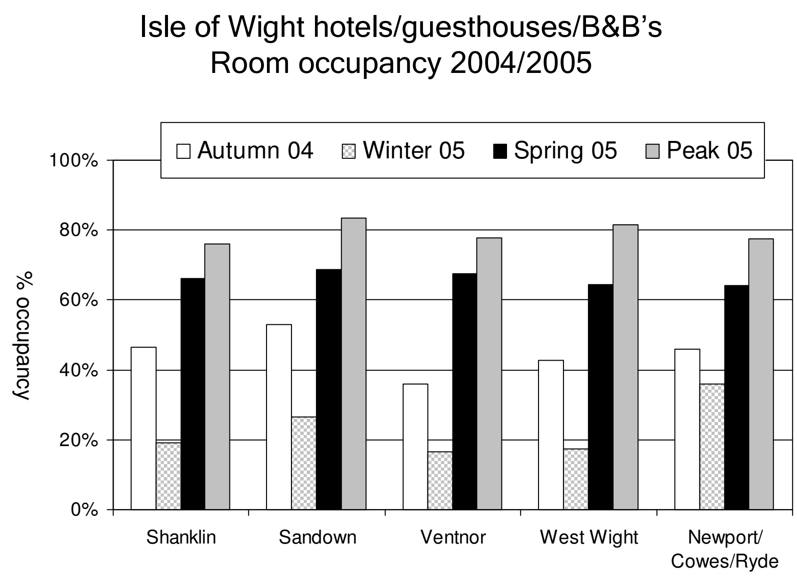
Room occupancy	1 – 3 rooms	4 – 10 rooms	11 – 25 rooms	26+ rooms
Autumn 04	34%	27%	45%	56%
Winter 05	17%	14%	23%	31%
Spring 05	61%	50%	61%	75%
Peak 05	77%	67%	76%	85%

As usual there were variations in room occupancy between areas:

- Sandown performed slightly better than other areas in the autumn and in the peak season when occupancy reached 83%;

- West Wight also had a good peak season with 82% occupancy;

- Occupancy in Ventnor was low in autumn and winter but recovered in spring.



5.1.3 Length of stay in serviced accommodation

Average length of stay in hotels/guesthouses and B&B's ranged from 2.5 nights in January/February to 4.3 nights in August.

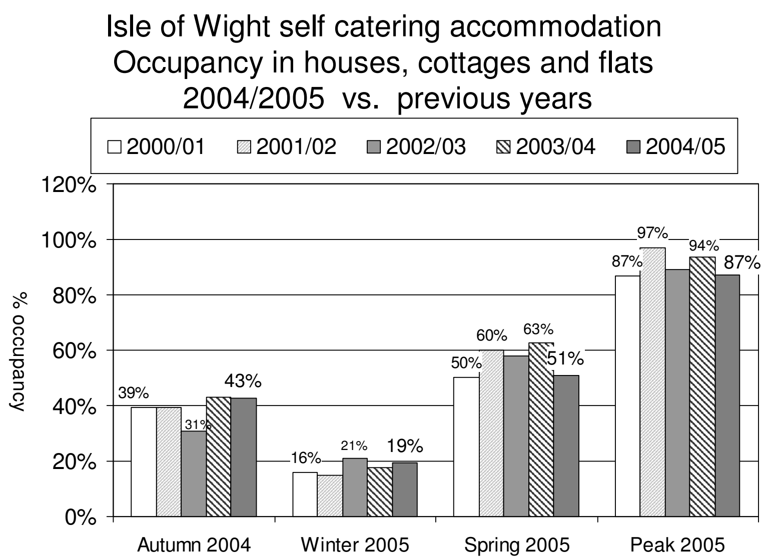
This varied considerably according to the size of establishment with the largest hotels (26+ rooms) consistently attracted the longer stay visitors. Guests at these hotels stayed an average of 4.9 nights in the peak whereas guests at B&B's stayed an average of 2.6 nights.

5.2 Self catering cottages and houses

This section covers occupancy in rented/cottages/houses and flats but does not include use of second homes which may be rented out for some of the year.

Occupancy in self catering units (many of which are smaller operators with one or two units) was at its lowest point in winter (19%) rising up to a high in the peak season of 87%. However in the month of August alone it reached 95%.

Looking at performance over time, after a good start in the autumn when occupancy was at a similarly high level to last year, this sector has had a disappointing year. In the important trading periods of spring and summer occupancy fell below last year by 12 points and 7 points respectively. In the summer this was due particularly to low occupancy in the second half of July. August occupancy was on a par with recent years.



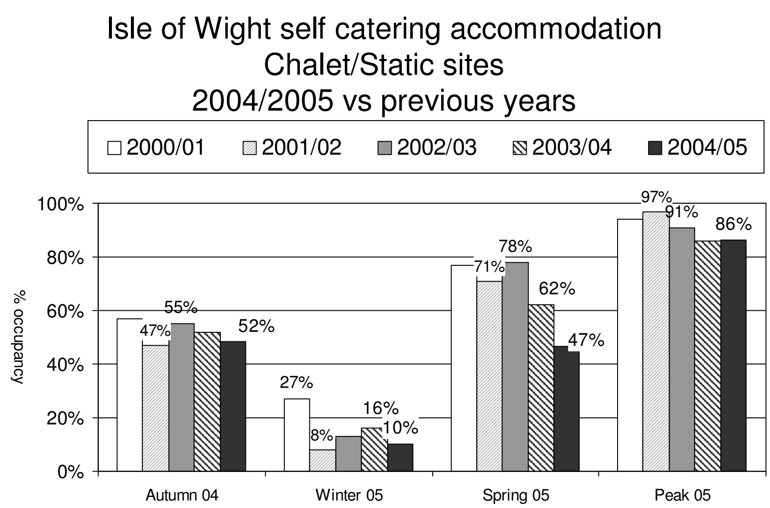
5.3 Static sites

N.B. This data does not include privately owned static caravans, which may be rented out.

Occupancy on static chalet sites ranged from a low point of 10% in the winter to a high of 86% in the peak season.

The year started reasonably well with occupancy just below last year. However winter and spring occupancy figures were well below last year; spring was at the lowest level recorded over the last 5 years and 15 points below last year.

Occupancy in the peak period was level with last year although down on recent years. As seen in the houses/cottages/flats, this was due to a poor July; August was much better with 94% occupancy, which is 6 points ahead of August last year.

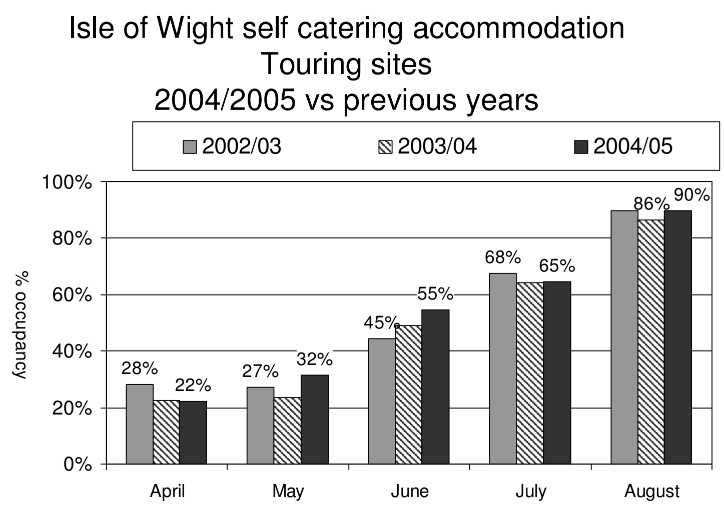


5.4 Camping/touring sites

Data is based on responses from 5 or 6 sites this year hence results can only be used as an indication of performance in this sector. The chart shows the pitch occupancy for the important months for these sites, when most are open.

Pitch occupancy started at 22% in April, rising gradually each month up to 90% in August.

Looking at the performance over time, this seems to have has been an excellent year for touring/camping sites. Pitch occupancy improved versus the last two years every month from May to August. May, the month of the Nokia music festival and the walking festival, was particularly good with an 8 point increase. (This data does not include the music festival campsite and so is in addition to that trade). A 6 point rises was seen in June and a 4 point rise in August.



5.5 Peak season capacities

The Island is at its busiest in August . The table below shows the available capacity during this month. This data illustrates that there little room for expansion of the market for rented self catering accommodation but there is more availability in the serviced sector, especially in the smaller units.

	Self catering accommodation			Serviced accommodation			
	Cottages/ flats/ houses	Static chalets sites	Touring sites	1-3 room	4 - 10 room	10 - 25 room	26+ room
Available space	5%	6%	10%	20%	28%	19%	14%

6. Value of tourism

Tourism on the Isle of Wight is now estimated to be worth £352 million for the tourism year 2004/2005.

The importance of staying trips is highlighted by their contribution to tourism revenue. These generated almost 90% of the total annual revenue which equates to £315 million (domestic and overseas visitors' spending combined).

Day trips generated an additional estimated £37 million in tourism revenue.

Looking at the split in revenue by UK versus overseas visitors shows that:

- Spending on trips made by UK residents is estimated at £309 million during the year. This is made up of £275 million from domestic staying visitors plus £34 million by domestic residents visiting on day trips;

- Spending by overseas residents is estimated to have reached £43 million, primarily from staying trips (£40 million).

	£Millions
Staying trips	
All domestic staying trips	£275
All overseas staying trips	£40
All staying trips (domestic and overseas)	£315
Day trips	
All domestic day trips	£34
All overseas day trips	£3
All day trips (domestic and overseas)	£37

Before inflation is added into the figures, it is estimated that the value of tourism has increased by 5% versus 2003/2004. This is all attributable to the increase in staying visits and, in particular, the number of short breaks and longer holidays seen this year.

Spend derived from day trips has increased only by the rate of inflation.

N.B. 2003/2004 value of tourism has been readjusted to better reflect the length of stay of holidays/short breaks.

Caveat

Value estimations are calculated using estimates of numbers of trips together with estimates of expenditure. No new survey data was commissioned for this work hence all data is the best available data taken from existing surveys. Values should therefore be treated as approximate estimations. No responsibility can be taken for any error in these figures.

7. Attractions

In order to ensure that some relevant statistics are made available for visits to attractions, leisure visitors returning from the Isle of Wight are asked whether they visited a free or paid for attraction during their visit.

It should be noted that this methodology may under represent visits to attractions because it relies upon recall of visits on the return journey home. (N.B. Historically, attempts were made to collect more accurate data from the attractions but insufficient attractions participated in this survey.)

Over 45% of all leisure visitors visited an Island attraction (free and/or with admission fee combined).

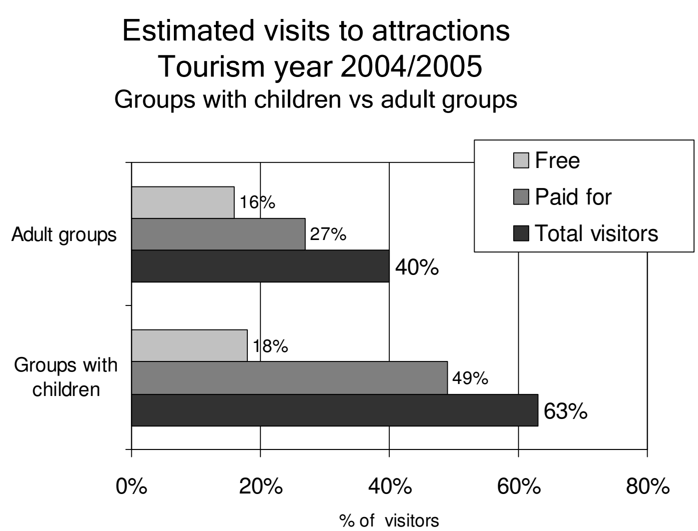
The table below shows visits to attractions by different groups.

52% of staying visitors went to an attraction and this rises to 67% amongst those on holidays and short breaks. Attractions charging an entrance fee were much more likely to be visited.

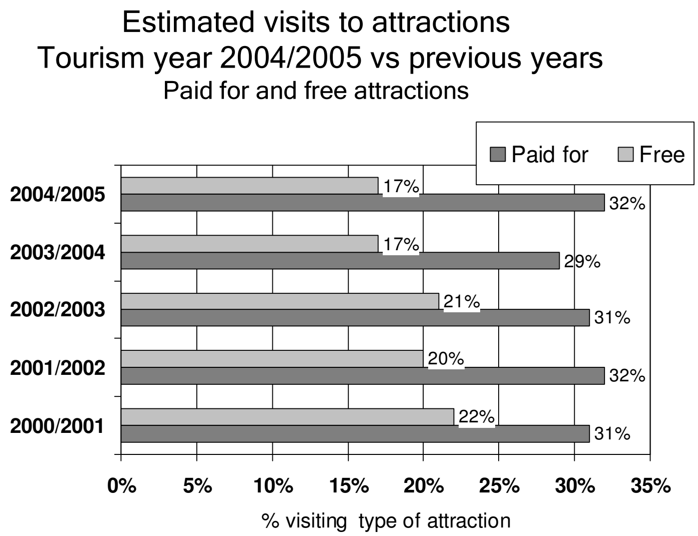
A third of day trippers went to an attraction and a similar proportion visited paid for and free attractions.

	Day visitors All	Staying visitors All	Staying visitors On holiday or short break
Visit to any attraction	33%	52%	67%
Visit a free attraction	15%	17%	20%
Visit a paid for attraction	18%	40%	53%

Visits to attractions are much more prevalent when are children present: 63% of groups with children visited an attraction versus 40% of adult only groups. Those with children are also more likely to go to paid for rather than free attractions, as illustrated below.



The trend in visits to attractions is shown below. There has been a slight decline in visits to free attractions whereas visits to paid for attractions have fluctuated around the same sort of level over recent years.



Propensity to visit attractions is highest amongst new visitors and those who have not visited for 5 or more years. Whilst these might be key target groups for attractions they represent a limited market (estimated at 350,000 on holiday or short breaks in the year plus 150,000 on leisure day trips - see section 4.3).

Attractions need to ensure that their outlet appeals to the more regular visitor who are a larger group of visitors to the Island. It is estimated that around half a million visitors/short break visitors and 250,000 day trip visitors have visited at least twice in the last 12 months. In addition there are the vast majority of VFR visitors.

	New visitor	Visited before 5+ years ago	Visited before 2- 5 years ago	Visited before in last 12 months
% visited any attraction	65%	66%	55%	33%

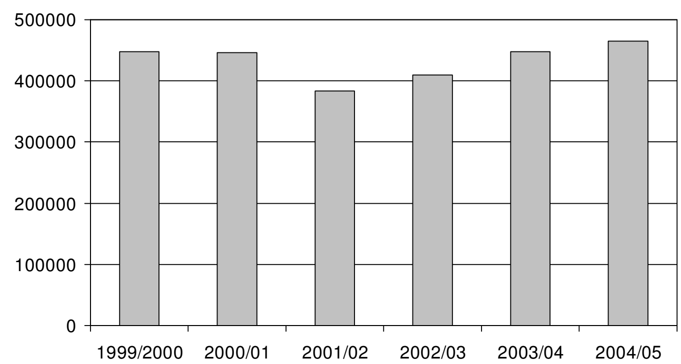
8. Isle of Wight Tourism activity levels

8.1 Tourist Information Centres

There were 465,000 visitors at the Island's Tourist Information Centres this year. This is an increase of 3% versus last year and continues the upward trend in visitor numbers since the low point of 2001/2002.

Average spend at the TIC's was £7.45 which is up from £5.69 last year. Sales of concert tickets have helped to boost the average spend.

Annual number of visitors to the Isle of Wight offices TIC



*N.B. The method of recording visitor numbers has changed and is now monitored automatically, thereby improving the accuracy of the data. This may have affected year on year comparisons.

8.2 Website visits

There were 547,000 visits to the Isle of Wight Tourism website www.islandbreaks.co.uk during the year to end of August 2005, this is 2% above the number of visitors last year and 11% up on the previous year.

8.3 Brochure requests

There were 164,560 brochure enquiries this year. This is the second year enquiries have increased following a period of declining numbers of requests.

2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004	2004/2005
167,000	134,470	137,661	164,560

A sample of people requesting guides were interviewed to determine the success of the guide in converting enquiries to bookings. This work was conducted by Isle of Wight Tourism staff who operate the accommodation booking line.

This showed a high conversion rate: 52% had booked a holiday after receiving a copy of the 2005 guide (versus 51% in 2004).

Despatch of guides was also monitored and this revealed that 89% (146,102 guides) received their copy of the guide, as requested; 91% were received in 2004.