

Wales a popular choice with day visitors in 2017

Figures published today show that Wales is continuing to attract more day visitors as the number of day trippers to Wales increases in addition to the amount of money they spend during their visit.

Tuesday 09 May 2017

In the 12 months ending March 2017, there were 104.6 million tourism day visits to Wales, with an associated spend of £4,346 million, this is an increase of more than 24% compared to the previous 12 months, while the amount spent has increased by 35%.

Commenting on the recent figures, the Economy Secretary, Ken Skates said:

“In what is an extremely competitive market place, tourism in Wales is in a strong position. We’ve had two record breaking years and our aim is to sustain growth. It’s therefore great news that our day visit figures are showing an increase in 2017. We are working hard to sustain these levels of success through continued investment in marketing and product development.

“Campaign work continues to convert interest and opportunities arising from the weak pound into bookings for the summer. A boost to the Visit Wales budget means that there is £26.3m available to invest in marketing and product development this year enabling us to pull together a more ambitious programme than ever before for 2017.”

More information: [Great Britain Day Visits Survey](#).

[May 2017](#)

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Report on Wales' future landscapes published

The Group was established to explore the recommendations of the Marsden Report into the future of Wales' designated landscapes, which provided 69 recommendations, the range and scope of which were considerable.

The [report](#) says designated landscapes should be the leaders of the sustainable management of natural resources in their areas and emphasises the importance of joint-working to achieve this.

It recommends the Welsh Government, Natural Resources Wales and all designated landscapes provide assistance and support to other landscape managers across Wales, including landowners, farmers and the wider rural community, on issues such as biodiversity, access and protection, in order for the whole society to benefit fully from our landscapes.

The report acknowledges the challenges the UK's exit from the EU poses, with so much of Wales' environmental legislation tied into EU laws and the uncertainty over future funding for agriculture, at a time when action is needed to build the resilience of our eco-systems. It concludes that genuine partnership is needed to ensure the best outcome for Wales.

Lord Dafydd Elis-Thomas said:

“From the start the main feature of the working group was partnership, including everyone from national park authorities and areas of outstanding natural beauty, from agricultural and tourism businesses, voluntary organisations and trusts contributing equally to the discussions.

“The basic principle guiding our work is seeing and understanding the role of designated landscapes not as separate excluded areas, but as a distinctive part which could contribute to good practise for the rest of our country's landscape.”

The Welsh Government will now look at whether legislation needs to be changed to support the recommendations of the report. This includes looking at whether greater weight should be given to the importance of these areas and their ecosystems in decision making and whether governance arrangements should evolve to reflect local circumstances, rather than the current one-size-fits-all system.

The Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs, Lesley Griffiths said:

“Wales’ landscape is a huge part of our identity and an important national asset. It attracts tourism, outdoor recreation and local employment. It delivers benefits to our health and well-being and has been identified as having huge potential for developing greener energy solutions.

“This is why it is so important we are making the most of our iconic landscape. There is much we can learn from each other as we navigate our way towards a future outside of the EU.

“I thank the group for their work on this report. The next step is to deliver against the ambition, not in isolation, but together as part of the collaborative approach.”

[Carl Sargeant marks two years of the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence \(Wales\) Act](#)

The Act aims to improve prevention, protection and support for people affected by violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

Since the legislation came into force, achievements include the appointment of the first National Adviser for Violence against Women, Gender-based Violence, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence and the publication of a National strategy. The anniversary coincides with the re-launch of the Welsh Government’s Cross the Line campaign which tackles the subject of emotional abuse from a partner.

Carl Sargeant said he wants to continue to work collectively with organisations to protect and support victims.

Carl Sargeant said:

“We continue to make progress in implementing measures to prevent Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence. As well as appointing the first National Adviser and the National Strategy we have published the National Training Framework which will help professionals to deal with disclosures of abuse and ensure consistent training is available for specialist professionals.

“A pilot of “Ask and Act” – which requires professionals like Health visitors and Housing Officers to identify symptoms of abuse and to ask clients if they are being abused – has also launched in

two early adopter sites with a view to further rollout later this year. In addition to these initiatives, some of the work we have done has focused on children and young people to ensure they know how to recognise the symptoms of unhealthy relationships.

“We recognise there are still areas to progress and we will continue to build on the foundations which have already been made to create a stronger, more resilient sector to support individuals and families who are either at risk, or are struggling with the consequences of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.”

Train / Work / Live in Wales: international nursing recruitment campaign launches as nursing bursary is extended

The campaign starts as Health Secretary Vaughan Gething has announced that NHS Bursaries for eligible student nurses, midwives and allied health professionals will continue to be available in Wales in 2018/19.

The bursary will be based upon individuals committing in advance to taking up the opportunity to work in Wales, post qualification, for a period of two years.

The Health Secretary met with a group of registered nurses today at the Keir Hardie University Health Park to talk about their experiences of working in Wales.

The recruitment campaign forms part of the Welsh Government commitment to take action to attract and train more nurses, GPs and other health professionals across Wales. It follows the successful recent GP recruitment campaign, which saw a 16% increase in GP training places filled.

The international campaign will target newly qualified and experienced registered nurses, as well as those who may be considering returning to the profession. The Train, Work, Live campaign will be represented at the RCN Congress in Liverpool from May 13 -17.

It is supported with a single telephone point of contact for all enquiries and online through the www.trainworklive.wales website. People interested in working in Wales can ring: 01443 848 576 for more details.

Health Secretary Vaughan Gething said:

“In Wales, we are committed to investing in supporting the training and development of nurses, midwives and other professionals working in our NHS.

“We can offer flexible working arrangements and support for nurses and we are the first country in Europe to introduce a nurse staffing levels law.

“Wales is a great place to train, work and live; we value the professional judgement of nurses and we want to get that message out to attract more nurses to come experience what we have to offer.

“I’m pleased to announce the bursary will continue to be available to those who commit in advance to work in Wales, post qualification, for two years.

We’re taking positive action to attract more health professionals across the country and investing in education and training are key to developing our workforce.”

Professor Jean White said:

“The Welsh Government has significantly increased investment in nurse education with more nurses educated annually now than at any time since devolution”

“There are opportunities to learn on the job with continuing professional development that supports nursing revalidation requirements.

“We are committed to investing in education, in the right staffing levels, and in the professional development of our nurses. Wales has a lot to offer, from our fantastic coastline, mountains, to our towns and cities, and I want to encourage nurses to consider Wales as a place to train, work and live.”

[Consultation on the Regulatory Reform](#)

of Registered Social Landlords

Reform has become necessary because the Office for National Statistics (ONS) reclassified RSLs as public market producers in a recent review. This means that any private sector market borrowings taken out by the newly reclassified public sector RSLs will score against Welsh Government's capital budget. The Welsh Government's borrowing powers, which come into force in 2018/19, have a set limit which would not provide enough capacity to accommodate RSLs' current annual borrowing requirement.

The review identified central and local government controls which led the ONS to conclude RSLs should be reclassified. These are mainly powers set out in the Housing Act 1996, and provisions inserted by the Housing (Wales) Measure 2011. The [consultation](#) is therefore proposing regulatory reform of RSLs to remove or amend the relevant powers so that the ONS would be able to consider reclassifying RSLs in Wales to the Private Non-Financial Corporations sector, thus restoring their borrowing abilities.

The Communities Secretary said:

"RSLs play a vital role in helping us to meeting our target of 20,000 new affordable homes and they, in turn, require the sector to continue to have the freedom to use private sector borrowing to supplement the Welsh Government's social housing grant funding and other funding programmes.

"This reclassification would mean fewer new affordable homes and limited options for the Welsh Government to maximise the positive contributions RSLs make to the communities in which they work including significant local employment and economic benefits. It would also result in uncertainty for funders who have made long term commitments to funding an independent RSL sector.

"Unless we take action which would enable ONS to reverse the reclassification and return RSLs to the private sector, our plans to address the shortage of affordable homes in Wales will be severely compromised."