

# Successful summer for Wales' tourism industry

The Tourism Industry Barometer shows that 42% of businesses surveyed have had more visitors than last year, while 39% reported a similar level. Food venues are doing particularly well with more than half (54%) feeding more people in 2017 than they did last year. In addition 50% of attractions and activity operators are seeing more visitors with 46% of those reporting an increase saying their own marketing has lifted their numbers. The survey also showed that businesses report more UK visitors – 39% of operators have noticed more British people enjoying their holidays and short breaks in Wales.

Following a strong year, expectations are running high for 2018. About half of respondents expect more visitors next year, and a further 45% expect the same level.

During a visit to the National Botanic Garden, the Tourism Minister, Dafydd Elis-Thomas, heard how, in line with these figures, the Garden has also had a very successful year – seeing almost a 25% increase in their visitors in 2017.

The Tourism Minister said:

“I’m delighted to take on the Tourism portfolio at a time when indications are very positive for 2017. In coming to the role I do not underestimate the extremely competitive market place we operate in but tourism in Wales is in a strong position, and these figures give a positive snapshot of how the industry has been performing. It’s great news that the Garden has also had a great year and hearing of the plans for future growth is further testimony to the confidence of the industry.”

Director of the National Botanic Garden, Huw Francis, said:

“If the present is anything to go by, the future of the National Botanic Garden looks very bright. The team here have been working very hard at broadening the Garden’s appeal and new developments are proving a big hit with local people and tourists alike.”

“With help from Welsh Government, we’ve invested in a new play park, a hay bale maze, water zorbing and a brand new tropical Butterfly House, the development of which created a huge amount of interest.

“This year, we’ve teamed up with award-winning Pembrokeshire Falconry to create the British Bird of Prey Centre which has helped with the further increase in footfall with daily flying displays of

amazing native birds of prey. And there's more to come. The target is for 10% year-on-year increases in visitors over the next five years."