Introduction

The Scotland Visitor Survey was conducted by Progressive Partnership on behalf of VisitScotland to enhance understanding of visitor behaviour and experience in Scotland. In total, 11,573 visitors were interviewed in Scotland between March and October 2023, with 3,011 responding to an online survey on their return home.

Overall, 160 overnight visitors to Shetland completed the online survey. The results shown below are based on these visitors to Shetland.

Profile of overnight visitors to Shetland

67% Domestic visitors
21% Scotland (residents)
46% Rest of UK

33% International visitors
15% Europe
18% Long haul including:
11%: North America
7%: Australasia

Average number in travel party: 2.3
Children (under 16) in party: 7%

Life Stage
Pre-nesters 9%
Families 7%
Older Independents 46%
Retirement Age 38%

Profile of trip

Shetland visitors stayed on average:
11.8 nights in total in Scotland including
7.0 nights in Shetland

65% of visitors to Shetland toured around Scotland, staying in two or more places

First time visitor: 14%
Repeat visitor: 86%

Average proportion of first-time visitors to Scotland: 25% (Scotland-wide sample)

Examples of Type of Trip

A trip of a lifetime: 8%
A special holiday/short break: 13%
Regional Factsheet: Shetland

Reasons for choosing Scotland

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Top ten reasons for choosing Scotland</th>
<th>Shetland sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The scenery and landscape</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The history and culture</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Outdoor activities available</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Visiting friends or family</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Scotland’s people</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>A particular experience found in Scotland</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>A Scottish attraction</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>My or my family’s Scottish ancestry</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>An event or festival</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Scotland’s food and drink</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All visitors to Shetland (stage 2 online survey) 160

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Top ten reasons for choosing Scotland</th>
<th>Scotland-wide sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The scenery and landscape</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The history and culture</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Outdoor activities available</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Visiting friends or family</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>A Scottish attraction</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>My or my family’s Scottish ancestry</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>It’s easy to get to or close to home</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>An event or festival</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All visitors to Scotland (stage 2 online survey) 3,011

Type of accommodation used in Shetland

42% stayed in serviced accommodation

22% Hotel, motel, inn
22% Guest house, B&B
6% Hostel

Base: Stage 2 online survey Shetland visitors (priority region) 144

62% stayed in non-serviced accommodation

44% Self-catering/commercial non-serviced rentals
14% Camping, caravan, motorhome
12% Friend’s or relative’s home

Note: serviced and non-serviced adds to more than 100% due to some people staying in more than one accommodation type.

Satisfaction with accommodation in Shetland

Satisfaction with... (Scored out of 10)

Overall welcome provided to you

Average 8.67
64% 9 or 10 out of 10

The knowledge of staff/host (at accommodation) about things to do in the area

Average 8.34
50% 9 or 10 out of 10

The value for money of accommodation

Average 7.90
32% 9 or 10 out of 10

Scotland-wide sample - 62% (9 or 10 out of 10)
Scotland-wide sample – 53% (9 or 10 out of 10)
Scotland-wide sample – 42% (9 or 10 out of 10)

Base: Stage 2 online survey Shetland visitors in paid for accommodation excl. n/a 123-151
Attractions and activities undertaken in Shetland

Top 5 attractions or activities undertaken/visited in Shetland

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Attraction and activity undertaken in Shetland</th>
<th>Shetland sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A museum or art gallery</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>A visitor or heritage centre</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>An archaeological site</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Hill walk, mountaineering, hike or ramble</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Watching wildlife, bird watching</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Took part in activities/attractors in Shetland 143

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Attraction and activity undertaken in Scotland</th>
<th>Scotland-wide sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A castle or fort</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Viewed architecture and buildings</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>A museum or art gallery</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>A historic house, palace, stately home</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Shopping</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Took part in activities/attractors in Scotland 3,011

Satisfaction with attractions in Shetland

Satisfaction with... (Scored out of 10)

Knowledge and passion of the staff at attractions: Average 8.84 (63% 9 or 10 out of 10)

Quality of experience at attractions: Average 8.69 (54% 9 or 10 out of 10)

Value for money of paid for attractions: Average 8.61 (53% 9 or 10 out of 10)

Scotland-wide sample - 64% (9 or 10 out of 10)
Scotland-wide sample - 57% (9 or 10 out of 10)
Scotland-wide sample - 47% (9 or 10 out of 10)

Base: Stage 2 online survey Took part in activities/attractors in Shetland excl. n/a 132-137

Food and drink experiences in Shetland

30% took part in food and/or drink experiences in Shetland

Key food and drink experiences included:
- 13% visited a farm shop/farmers market
- 8% visited a fine dining restaurant
- 3% visited a food or drink event or festival
- 2% undertook a food or drink activity e.g. cookery class

Base: Stage 2 online survey Took part in activities/attractors in Shetland 143
Satisfaction with food and drink experiences in Shetland

**Satisfaction with……. (Scored out of 10)**

- **The service provided by staff**
  - Average 8.15
  - Scotland-wide sample – 55%
  - 44% 9 or 10 out of 10

- **The quality of food and drink available**
  - Average 7.82
  - Scotland-wide sample – 48%
  - 31% 9 or 10 out of 10

- **The availability of local produce when eating out**
  - Average 7.31
  - Scotland-wide sample – 37%
  - 29% 9 or 10 out of 10

- **The value for money of eating out**
  - Average 7.25
  - Scotland-wide sample – 32%
  - 22% 9 or 10 out of 10

*Base: Stage 2 online survey Shetland visitors excl. n/a 146-155*

**Overall experience and likelihood to recommend Shetland**

- **Positive rating of holiday/short break experience**
  - 78% Shetland
  - 71% for Scotland overall (Scotland-wide sample)

- **Likelihood to recommend as a holiday/short break destination**
  - 80% Shetland
  - 82% for Scotland overall (Scotland-wide sample)

*Base: Stage 2 online survey Shetland visitors (priority region) 144*

**Disclaimer:**

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Appendix – Interpreting the results

- The Scotland Visitor Survey should not be viewed in isolation.
- The survey collates views on a wide range of topics to understand visitor attitudes and behaviours.
- This data supplements data on tourism in Scotland which is gathered by the annual statistical surveys undertaken at a national level by;
  - The Great Britain Tourism Survey (GBTS) which estimates the volume and value of domestic tourism - from within Scotland and the rest of Great Britain
  - The International Passenger Survey (IPS) which provides details of tourism from abroad
- The Scotland Visitor Survey is undertaken during spring, summer and autumn seasons only, based on a need to gather visitor views in an efficient manner. This means the results reflect the views of those visiting Scotland between March and October 2023 only.
- The sample comprises leisure overnight visitors only, and as such the following are excluded: visitors on a day trip from home, those on a business trip, cruise ship visitors.
- The base size varies across questions. Visitors could have stayed in multiple locations, therefore the questionnaire was designed to ask specific questions about accommodation and satisfaction with their experience overall in up to two priority regions. Where the base size of 160 is used this includes all visitors who stayed in Shetland during their trip. Where the base size is 144 this shows results for the visitors who were allocated Shetland as their priority region.
- Figures may not always add to 100% as this may be due to rounding within the data analysis or where respondents have answered more than one category.
- Both face-to-face and online data were weighted to reflect the profile of visitors measured by the GBTS and the IPS.
- The Scotland Visitor Survey does not provide data on how many visits are made to Scotland or a specific region.
- Browse our Scotland Visitor Survey page on visitscotland.org for more information on this survey.

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If you require any of this information in an alternative format please let us know.