

Tourism Intelligence Update – January 2019

January is historically a “quiet” month for the tourism business with lower footfall into the city centre and visitors not spending as much money on travel. The attractions saw a very small increase in visits, with 87 more visitors to the big attractions compared to January 2018. However, during the weekend of the Resident’s Festival (26 to 27 January 2019) many of the attractions which are usually closed for the winter months, opened their doors to residents and visitors – contributing to a 10% increase in visitors to the small attractions (15,774 in Jan ’19 vs 14,339 in Jan ’18).

A new metric was introduced from January 2019 into the research dashboard for the hotels – Number of Room Nights Sold – that allows us to make more accurate evaluation of the number of guests staying in the city’s hotel sector and to make better predictions for the future. With overall footfall numbers being on par with January 2018 and the increase in number of rooms’ available (over 200 new rooms since this time last year) the occupancy and number of nights sold are slightly down year on year (7% and 5% accordingly). Average room rates remained the same as this time last year, at £91.58.

The new Visit York website continues to deliver positive growth in the analytics, with sessions up by a huge 81% vs January 2018. However, it is fair to take into account that from January 2018 to the new website launch in April 2018 the website wasn’t updated, and the work to draw more traffic to it was put on hold. In particular in January, the Residents’ Festival and Ice Trail pages drew people to use to the site.

City centre footfall is 3% lower than this time last year, as well as customer numbers through the Visit York Information Centre are 1% down when compared with January 2018.

Summary of tourism performance indicators for January 2019:

- 56.0% of hotel rooms occupied
- £91.58 average hotel room rate
- 57,840 hotel room nights sold
- 174,063 visits to attractions
- 1,311 visits to attractions using a York Pass
- 149,377 sessions on www.visitYork.org (including on the mobile site)
- 18,551 customers through the Visit York Information Centre

Visit England’s Annual Survey of Visits to Attractions:

VisitEngland have just launched the Annual Survey of Visits to Visitor Attractions, with invitations sent out from the end of February. We’d strongly encourage all attractions to take part as it is the only source of data for benchmarking destination and attraction performance across the country, and so is equally useful to both attractions and to local DMO’s. The study generates large amounts

of publicity in both the national and regional press, and is classified as an official statistic, providing insights into the performance of the attractions sector in England.

Attractions should start to receive invitations to take part in the near future, if you haven't already received one. All participating attractions will receive their own copy of the report, allowing you to benchmark with many other attractions across England. Last year, more than 1,500 attractions participated. If you think you haven't received a copy of the survey, or have any other questions about taking part, please contact annualattractionssurvey@visitengland.org

To find out any more about our Research and Insights or to discuss your specific tourism intelligence queries, contact Make It York's Senior Research and Insight Executive, Zoe Rawson Email: zoe.rawson@makeityork.com