

State of North East Tourism Fact Sheet

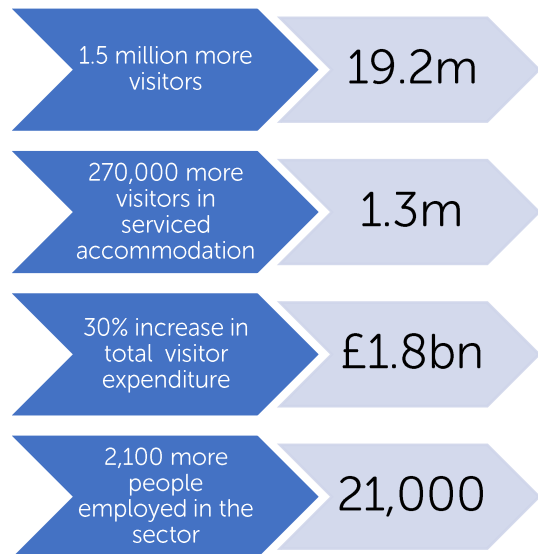
Tourism is the fourth largest sector in the North East and is England's third largest employer. Its worth over £5bn to the economy each year and supports over 63,000* jobs in the region.

In 2019 the region welcomed 73 million visitors – an increase of eight million in the space of five years.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic had a devastating impact on tourism in the UK and worldwide, continuing to affect both the domestic and international sectors, in 2019, tourism was one of England's largest and most valuable industries and will be one of the main drivers of economic recovery.

Newcastle and Gateshead: Pre-Covid (2019)

- In 2019 the city welcomed **19.22 million** visitors, resulting in an economic contribution of **£1.855bn**
- In the last five years we have seen more than £100m of private sector investment in the visitor economy. Between 2014 and 2019 visitor numbers grew by **1.5 million**, revenues increased by **30%** and more than **2,000** more jobs were created in the sector.
- Pre-pandemic the industry supported **21,000** jobs in Newcastle and Gateshead.
- The impact of the Coronavirus pandemic has been felt globally by the tourism and hospitality sector and our city is no different.



North East: Pre-Covid (2019)

Tourism's value to the North East economy (LA7) pre-pandemic:

- The North East welcomed **73 million visitors in 2019**
- Total visitor spend in the North East in 2019 was **£5.058bn**
- The number of people employed in tourism before the pandemic was **50,317**. When indirect employment in the supply chain is considered, this number rises to **63,070**

*LA7 area (Newcastle, Gateshead, South Tyneside, North Tyneside, Sunderland, Durham, and Northumberland).

NewcastleGateshead: 2020

- **7.45 million people** visited NewcastleGateshead in 2020. This was down by 61% on the previous year
- Visitors spent 8.46m days in NewcastleGateshead in 2020, down by 62% compared to 2019
- In 2020 visitor expenditure in NewcastleGateshead **fell by 64%, to £690.2m**. This accounts for a loss of over **£1.215bn**
- The number of people directly employed in tourism in NewcastleGateshead in 2020 stood at **6497, a fall of 61%** when compared to 2019. This equates to a loss of 10,021 FTEs in the tourism industry in NewcastleGateshead alone
- When indirect employment in the supply chain is taken into account total employment stood at 8232 in NewcastleGateshead, **down by 61%** on 2019. This translates to 12,872 FTEs lost
- The number of overnight visitors to NewcastleGateshead in 2020 stood at **685,000 – down by 70% on 2019**. Overnight visitors **spent £201.3m in 2020, down by 70% on 2019**. This is a loss of **£478m**
- Day visitor levels fell **60% to 6.76m**, with expenditure levels falling by the same rate to **£488.93m**. This was a loss of **£737m**

Hotel performance in the city:

- In 2020 the city's average hotel occupancy was **33%**, compared to **73%** in 2019
- In 2020 the average room rate in the city was **£51.64** compared to **£60.57** in 2019

Attractions:



- In total, visits to our city centre attractions were **down 76%** in 2020 compared to 2019
- Visits to North East attractions were **down 71%** in 2020 compared to 2019 (LA7 figure)

2021 and beyond (NewcastleGateshead)

As we wait for 2021 data to be collected and verified, it is forecast that since the start of the pandemic the city will have:

- Lost over **1.3 million** bed nights since closure in March 2020
- Lost almost **13,000** members of its workforce through redundancy and business closure
- The first three months of 2021 saw **us miss out on over 4 million visitors** to Newcastle and Gateshead, with an economic impact loss of **£402m**

Current demand for hotels and B&Bs 2022

For weekends in April and May 2022, occupancy and demand for our hotels and B&Bs is rising steadily. We can expect this to continue further into the summer with several major events planned for the city including Rugby Magic Weekend, the Rugby League World Cup, the Lindisfarne Gospels, UK Pride, and the Great North Run. Examples of forward bookings for weekends in April and May are as follows:

- 01-02 April – 65% occupancy
- 15-16 April – 61% occupancy
- 06-07 May – 46% occupancy
- 13-14 May – 47% occupancy

While weekend forward bookings are steady, there is still a challenge midweek, with forward booking occupancy ranging between 20-30% midweek in April and May.

Destination accolades

The North East's reputation for our warm welcome, compact nature and proximity to coast and country have all made the headlines over the past year, positioning the region as *the* place to visit in 2022.

- [Rough Guides – 20 fascinating second cities that you need to visit](#) (Newcastle)
- [Which? – Best National Parks in the UK](#) (Northumberland National Park)
- [The Sunday Times – Britain's 50 best beaches for 2021](#) (Bamburgh, Roker, Beadnell, Boulmer)
- [Big World Tale – Most Instagrammable picnic spots in the UK](#) (Tynemouth Beach)
- [EnjoyTravel.com – Top 25 most photogenic places](#) (Whitley Bay and Northumberland Coast)
- [Conde Nast Traveller – UK city breaks: the 12 best to take in 2021](#) (Newcastle)
- [TimeOut – Coolest Neighbourhoods in the world](#) (Ouseburn)
- [UK's prettiest village](#) (Bamburgh)
- [2Chill – UK's Favourite Place](#) (Newcastle)
- [Which? - Best seaside towns](#) (Whitley Bay)
- [New York Times 52 Places for a Changed World](#) (Northumberland)
- [Good Housekeeping – 15 of the best city breaks in the UK to take in 2022](#) (Newcastle)
- [Love Exploring – Brilliant British Breaks for 2022](#) (Newcastle)
- [You Magazine – UK weekend breaks you can get to by train](#) (Newcastle)
- [Holidu – The 10 British cities with the top-rated cultural attractions for 2022](#) (Newcastle)
- [Kuoni – Most eye-catching beaches in the world](#) (Bamburgh Beach)

Investment in tourism

The region has also seen continued investment in the sector with the recent opening of the Hard Rock Café and INNSiDE Melia Hotel on the Quayside, as well as ongoing plans for a £260m Newcastle Gateshead Quays regeneration scheme that is set to attract more than 300,000 additional visitors a year. We have also seen the approval of the [landmark five-star hotel](#) which will bring Newcastle city centre's disused fire station alive and a £30m [hotel complex complete with a rooftop swimming pool](#) in the Grey Street, Cloth Market area of the city. We have also seen approval for Moxy Hotel and new £110m development at Pilgrim Place that are part of the city's wider £50m transformation plans that will create more cleaner and greener space and the right mix of culture and experiences for residents and visitors.

Last year the bright lights of Hollywood shined upon the North East. With various sightings of Harrison Ford on the set of [Indiana Jones in Bamburgh](#) and plans for the new [Dungeons and Dragons film to take place at Alnwick Castle](#), the region's deep cultural heritage is taking centre stage in some major cinematic blockbusters.

- [Moxy Hotel on Newcastle Helix](#)
- [Pilgrim Place £110m Investment](#)
- [£50m city centre transformation](#)
- [£11.5m landmark 5-star hotel in old fire station on Pilgrim Street, Newcastle](#)
- [£30m Newcastle city centre hotel complex with rooftop swimming pool](#)
- [£300m+ arena and conference centre on Gateshead Quayside, The Sage](#)
- [£300m acquisition of Newcastle United Football Club](#)
- Hard Rock Café, £2.5m renovation of the historic Guildhall
- [INNSiDE by Melia Hotel on Newcastle's Quayside](#)
- Above @ Vermont, £2m investment into rooftop bar
- £3m Collingwood Street investment, opening of four new bars
- [New rooftop bar and restaurant, Roof Thirty Nine in Fenwick](#)
- New 1500 capacity super club, The Lofts & Hustle restaurant
- 4-star Raddison Red @ Strawberry Place
- [Newcastle Central Station Regeneration](#)
- Albany Road, £20m retail and leisure scheme in Gateshead

NGI support

NewcastleGateshead Initiative's Destination team is committed to helping the North East tourism industry thrive, over the past year we have grown our team to help deliver important projects that look to support the sector in its recovery from the pandemic.

Skills Project

The Skills and Jobs project looks to support employers to fill their current job vacancies by ensuring they are aware of the services they can access across the city. We are also working with local partnerships who support employers in solving their skills shortages. We are helping young people to access these jobs and training opportunities through the Youth Employment Partnership Project, aimed at engaging local employers to provide support and opportunities for young people aged 16-24. Opportunities include offering work experience, apprenticeships and volunteering as well as jobs.

To find out more: david.ord@ngi.org.uk

Welcome Back Campaign

We Are Newcastle celebrates and promotes our amazing high streets and neighbourhood shopping centres across the city. It's a chance for people to discover our diverse neighbourhoods and all that they have to offer in Heaton and Elswick, Ouseburn and Gosforth, Byker and the Quayside.

Our high streets and neighbourhood shops have been the backbone of our communities during these difficult last few years and now's the time to continue to show our support by shopping local and enjoying what they have to offer.

As well as developing a dedicated website [Welcome Back / We Are Newcastle](#) we have also launched a free Geordie Street App. Businesses across these designated areas are being encouraged to sign up to the app, which allows them to reach more customers and share any deals or discounts with new customers. For residents the app will help them explore these neighbourhoods or discover places in Newcastle they haven't been to before.

To find out more contact: lisa.liddell@ngi.org.uk

Food & Drink Campaign



NGI has received funding from Newcastle and Gateshead councils to support local, independent food and drink businesses as they recover from the impact of Covid-19. This includes significant funding for marketing activities across the year. We have hosted a series of influencer and media visits, created dozens of new listings, blogs, landing pages and Instagram guides and are running a food and drink competition to encourage sign-ups to our database and users to update their preferences.

As Spring approaches, NGI is running an advertising campaign on its social media channels with Google Search. For this we have created a set of videos highlighting some of the area's most-loved food and drink businesses. Our aims are to raise awareness amongst people out of the region of the fantastic food and drink scene we have, to encourage overnight stays; and to remind local audiences of what we have, to encourage day trips and raise awareness of newcastlegateshead.com where users can find new places to eat, drink and visit.

To find out more contact: shelley.johnson@ngi.org.uk

Accessibility Project

Through funding received from the North of Tyne Combined Authority, NGI will be leading a project to provide an even greater welcome for our visitors with additional needs. This project will provide training and support for businesses and their staff to welcome visitors. Activity will include 360-degree filming from a range of perspectives including wheelchair perspectives so that guests can check out their experience pre-visit and a new app that will allow a greater interface between customers and businesses. The project will launch 1 April.

To find out more contact: Lisa.liddell@ngi.org.uk

Tourism Innovation and Localised Supply Chain

This £1 million project will allow businesses in the North of Tyne area to identify key areas of innovation that will make them more productive and more profitable. This could include digital innovation such as AR and VR or Green innovation such as Electric Vehicle charging and everything in between. Businesses will have the opportunity to attend workshops and training sessions as well as access to grant funding administered by NBSL.

Alongside this, NGI will work closely with Food and Drink North East to develop a localised supplier portal giving the local supply chain the opportunity to sell directly to the hospitality industry in the region, covering not only Food and Drink but local gifts, toiletries and any other supplies required by the sector.

To find out more contact: jennifer.rea@ngi.org.uk