



News release

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ECONOMIC VALUE OF PEAK TOURISM HITS NEW HEIGHTS

Tourism's value to the Peak District and Derbyshire economy exceeded all expectations in 2017 – rising by six per cent to £2.15 billion.

New research* released by official tourist board Marketing Peak District & Derbyshire reveals that the increase on 2016 was double the average annual rise of three per cent since 2011.

Annual visitor numbers rose to 40.45 million, an increase of more than 1.3 per cent, while the number of full time equivalent jobs supported by the visitor economy is up by almost 2.5 per cent at 28,630.

The latest figures also reveal a trend for more visitors to stay in non-serviced accommodation such as self-catering and at camping and caravanning sites, up by more than five per cent on 2016.

“This is excellent news for the Peak District and Derbyshire economy, and for everyone who lives, works and comes to stay here,” said Jo Dilley, Managing Director, Marketing Peak District & Derbyshire.

“The significant rise in tourism's overall value over the past year signals that our long-term policy to run innovative and targeted marketing, PR and social media campaigns to encourage more people to come and stay for longer and to spend more money here is really paying off.

“The latest figures also show that our efforts to attract more visitors at quieter times of the year to extend the season from February to November are also effective, with more people staying for three or four nights rather than two.”

The encouraging new data is also backed by new figures that reveal that the tourist board's website, www.visitpeakdistrict.com, relaunched in January 2017, is also performing extremely well.

They show that, for the past six months, the site has consistently ranked in the top ten most visited sites for around 150 UK destinations, alongside such places as Manchester, Liverpool, Brighton, Bristol, Dorset and the Isle of Wight.

More than a million user sessions were logged between 20 February and 19 August, a rise of more than 37 per cent on the same period in 2017.

The site now also outranks Trip Advisor when people enter the keywords Accommodation in the Peak District and Things to Do in the Peak District on Google.

In addition, the tourist board's social media following on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram has increased by 22 per cent in the past year from just under 75,000 in July 2017 to more than 92,000.

"When we relaunched our consumer website our main aim was to put visitors right at the heart of our planning and offer them a much better, more streamlined experience," added Jo.

"We're delighted that, for the first time, we're ranked in the top ten most visited UK sites out of about 150 UK destinations – previously the best position we've achieved has been 13th.

"It's also great to see that our social media following has grown substantially over the past year, thanks to our emphasis on posting engaging, image-led content – particularly on Instagram, where our following has increased by 46 per cent.

"I'd like to thank everyone in the team for their hard work and commitment to putting the Peak District and Derbyshire where it belongs – as the UK and overseas visitors' destination of choice, regionally, nationally and globally."

- Anyone who would like to see the Peak District and Derbyshire crowned number one in the Best Region or County category in the British Travel Awards 2018 can vote now at <https://www.britishtravelawards.com/btaform.php?nomLink=324>.

Launched in 2008, the Awards are considered the benchmark for excellence when it comes to finding out who is the best in the travel industry. The British Travel Awards is an independent organisation, verified by leading global business practitioners Deloitte.

Votes will be accepted until midnight on Sunday September 30. Results will be announced at a special Gala Awards Night at Battersea Evolution, London on Wednesday November 28.

Ends.

For further details, contact Janette Sykes, PR Manager, Marketing Peak District & Derbyshire, on 07792 924839 or at janette.sykes@marketingpdd.com.

Note to Editors

*The research was compiled by Global Tourism Solutions (UK) Ltd, using the STEAM (Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor) model used by the tourism industry to measure annual economic performance. It includes Derbyshire and the city of Derby.

An accompanying digital image is attached. Caption: More and more visitors are coming to stay in the Peak District and Derbyshire each year to enjoy views such as this stunning panorama on the Pennine Way.

Marketing Peak District & Derbyshire's mission is to develop and grow a successful and sustainable tourism economy, working closely with a wide range of partners to make the Peak District and Derbyshire the destination of choice – regionally, nationally and globally. <http://www.marketingpeakdistrictandderbyshire.com/>.

For more information about the British Travel Awards, visit www.britishtravelawards.com.