

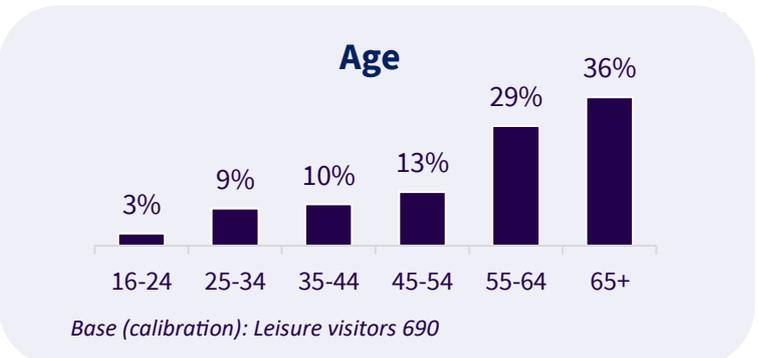
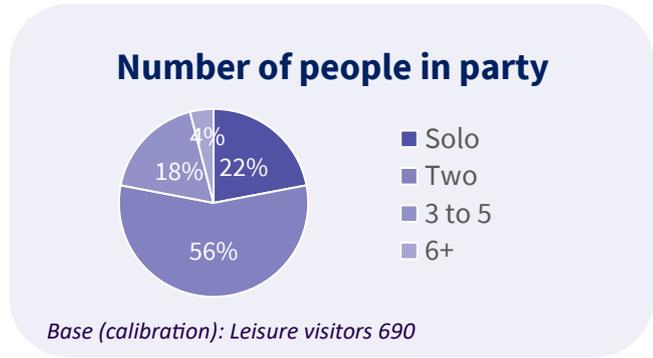
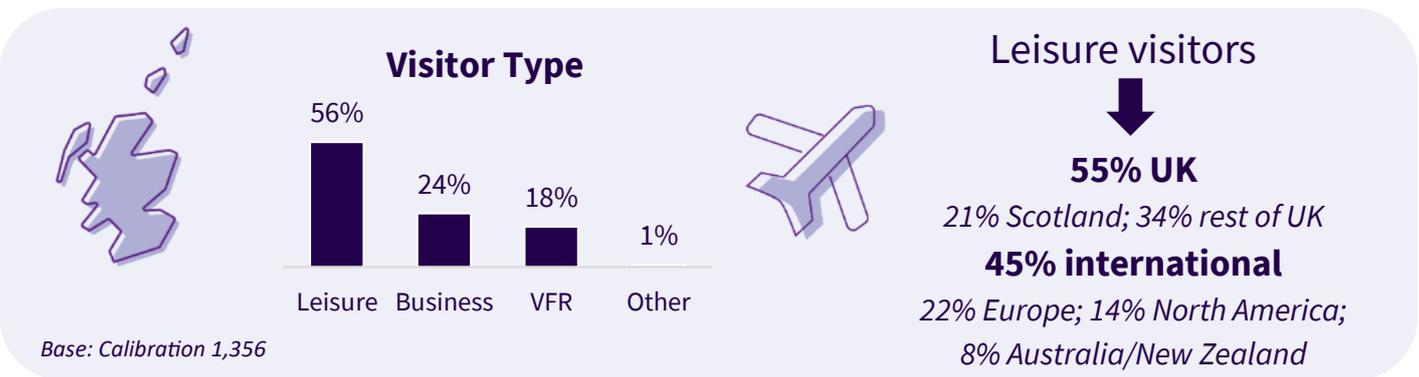
Shetland Islands Visitor Survey 2024 – Summary of Leisure Visitors

Introduction

The Shetland Islands Visitor Survey was conducted by Progressive Partnership on behalf of Shetland Islands Council to enhance understanding of visitor behaviour and experience. The survey was conducted between April and October. In total, 1,356 visitors were interviewed at Sumburgh Airport and Holmsgarth Ferry Terminal, with 950 responding to an online survey on their return home. A further 47 visitors completed the survey by accessing it via a QR code on posters at Sumburgh Airport, Holmsgarth Ferry Terminal and onboard NorthLink ferries.

With the exception of the data relating to visitor type and volume and value, this summary report provides data on the profile, experiences and satisfaction of Leisure visitors to Shetland.

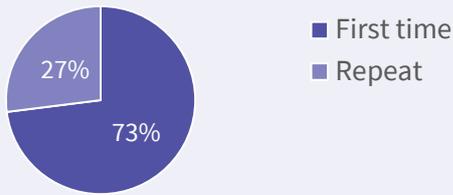
Profile of visitors



Profile of trip

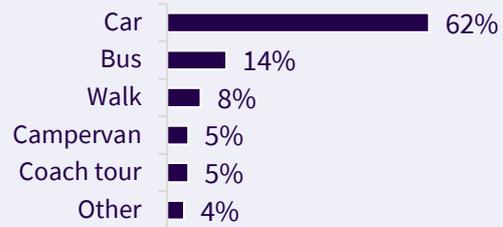


First time or repeat visitor



Base (online): Leisure visitors 350

Main transport on Shetland



Base (online): Leisure visitors 350

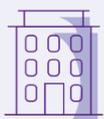
Reasons for choosing Shetland

No.	Top 10 reasons for choosing Shetland	Leisure visitors
1	The scenery and landscape	67%
2	Always wanted to visit	65%
3	The wildlife	59%
4	The history, culture and heritage	47%
5	To get away from it all	24%
6	The Vikings history	22%
7	Holidayed in Shetland before and wanted to return	21%
8	Shetland's reputation for friendly people	16%
9	Interest in archaeology	16%
10	To visit a particular attraction	12%
Base (online): Leisure visitors		350

No.	Top 10 inspirations for visiting Shetland	Leisure visitors
1	TV programmes featuring Shetland	42%
2	Recommendation from friends or family	41%
3	Online info from www.shetland.org	25%
4	Online info from VisitScotland	24%
5	Info from travel bloggers, influencers, etc.	15%
6	Online info from transport providers	14%
7	Printed travel guidebooks or brochures	14%
8	Book/literature featuring Shetland	12%
9	Online info from tourism businesses	8%
10	Films featuring Shetland	7%
Base (online): Leisure visitors		350

Type of accommodation stayed in

55% stayed in serviced accommodation



35%

Hotel, motel, inn



27%

Guest house, B&B



6%

Hostel

Base (online): Overnight Leisure visitors 345

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

48% stayed in non-serviced accommodation



34%

Self-catering/
commercial non-serviced rentals



10%

Camping, caravan,
motorhome

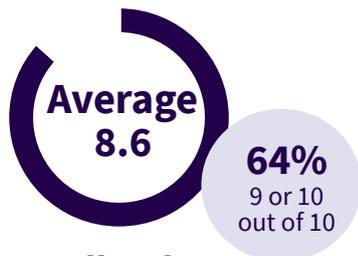


3%

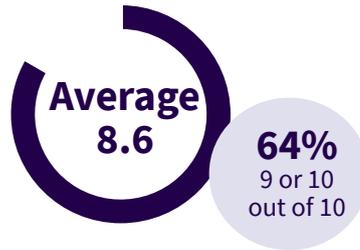
Friend's or
relative's
home

Satisfaction with accommodation

Satisfaction with... (Scored out of 10)



Overall welcome provided to you



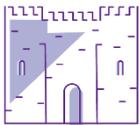
Friendly and efficient service



The value for money of accommodation

Base (online): Overnight Leisure visitors in paid for accommodation excl. n/a 294-296

Attractions and activities undertaken on Shetland



Top 5 attractions and activities undertaken/visited in Shetland

No.	Top five attractions visited in Shetland	Leisure visitors
1	Sumburgh Head	67%
2	Shetland Museum and Archives	62%
3	St Ninians's Isle and beach	58%
4	An iconic location from the 'Shetland' series	52%
5	Jarlshof	51%
Base (online): Leisure visitors		350

No.	Top five activities undertaken in Shetland	Leisure visitors
1	Short and/or long walks	93%
2	Visiting beaches and coasts	79%
3	Shopping for local crafts/products	66%
4	Bird watching	64%
5	Viewpoints/picnic areas	62%
Base (online): Leisure visitors		350

Satisfaction with attractions on Shetland

Satisfaction with... (Scored out of 10)

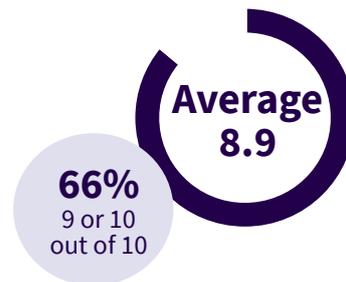
Knowledge and passion of the staff at attractions



Quality of experience at attractions



Value for money of paid for attractions



Base (online): Leisure/VFR visitors that visited an attraction, excluding 'unsure' 273-295

Satisfaction with food and drink experiences on Shetland

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

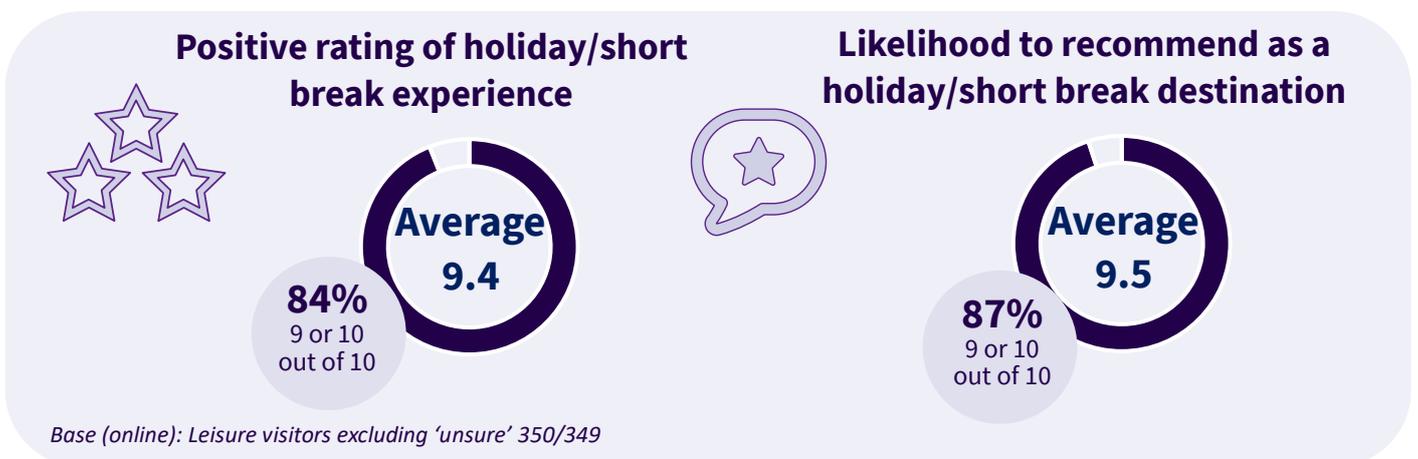


Base (online): Leisure visitors excluding 'unsure' 296 - 334

Experiences with local people on Shetland



Overall experience and likelihood to recommend Shetland



Base (online): Leisure visitors excluding 'unsure' 350/349

Volume and value of visitors to Shetland in 2024 (all visitors)



Estimated total visitors to Shetland in 2024: 89,000

Average spend per person in peak months (Apr – Oct): £590

Estimated total value of visitor spend in 2024: £50.3 million

What visitors said

A small number of comments have been shown to give a flavour of what visitors said. Not all visitors left a comment.

I enjoyed the people. Everyone was friendly and helpful and kind to each other in person and on the road. The scenery was spectacular and of course the puffins.

The beaches: the beauty of Skaw beach made me cry! The tomboles are remarkable... A very strong emotion when seeing an otter. Hermaness is indescribable: wonderful!

It was quiet during the night, not crowded all the time, very friendly people, and a beautiful landscape, nice driving around. I would love to visit Shetland again during the wool week.

The only disappointment was how difficult it was to get a table at a restaurant. We had fish and chips on a bench on our second night and would have preferred a nice restaurant meal. It was hard to book in advance before we arrived, but we struggled to book for our second and third day from the day we arrived. From what we saw of people being turned away from restaurants I know we weren't the only ones.

I've visited Shetland many times to see family, there is always a lack of restaurants that have local produce, such as seafood.

Isle of Mousa with it's outstanding Broch and the wildlife there were the thing that made me visit Shetland, but I also really like Unst with its nice beaches, it's birdlife and the very interesting geological formations. I wished I could have stayed longer. Another thing I really liked was the Stanydale temple and the area around it, especially because of the many Curlews we were able to see there.

Driving around seeing all the beautiful sights: beaches, ponies, sheep, cliffs, rolling green hills, and wildlife. Just awesome beauty around every corner. And the four dinners we had at four different restaurants were delicious.

Appendix – Interpreting the results

- The Shetland Islands 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 Shetland Visitor Survey was undertaken between April and October 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 April and October 2024 only.
- The sample excluded: cruise ship visitors, people travelling on a private yacht and those in transit to another destination.
- The base size varies across questions, depending on questionnaire routing.
- Both face-to-face and online data were weighted to reflect passenger numbers across Sumburgh Airport and Holmsgarth Ferry Terminal (calibration data) and the profile of visitor type and origin measured in the calibration interviews (online data).

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