



## Destination UK – focus on the North West

Driving growth in the UK hospitality and leisure sector

# A word from Tony Walsh

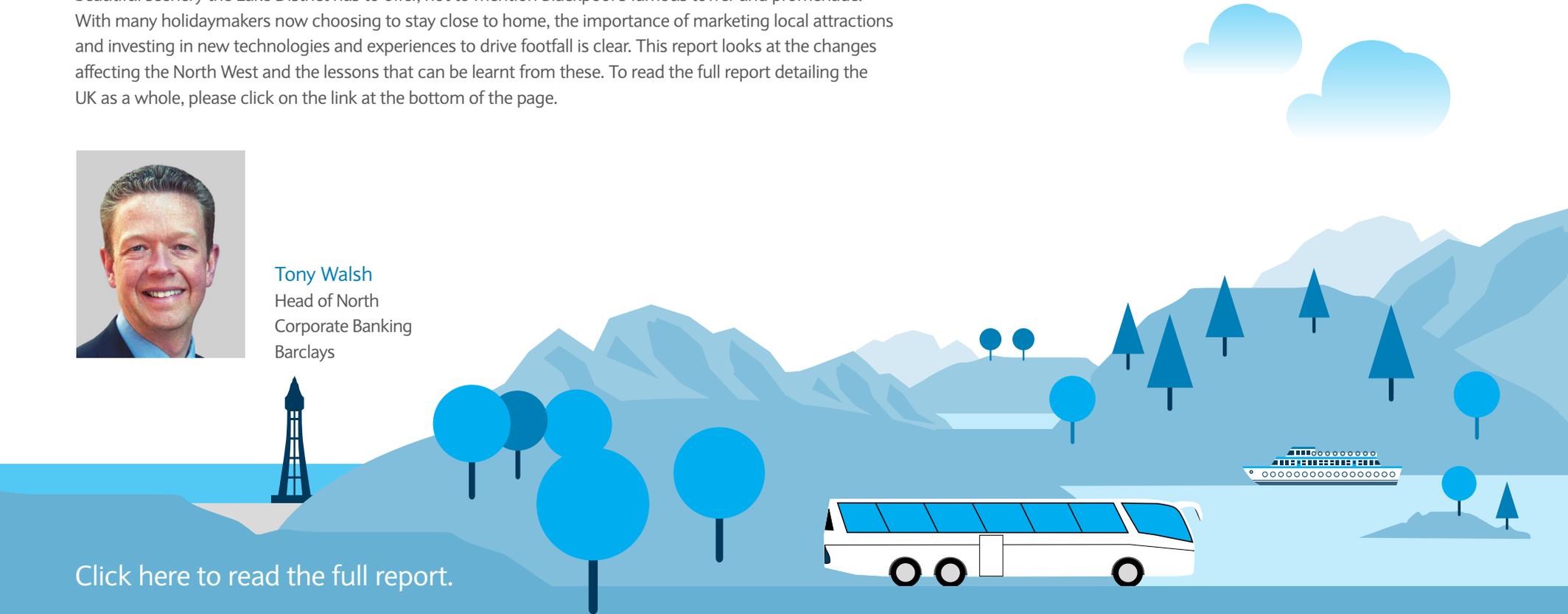
Connecting with British holidaymakers is more important than ever for hospitality and leisure providers as these are the customers who are more likely to visit again in the future.

These findings represent a fantastic opportunity for the businesses within the North West's already thriving hospitality and leisure industry to really target their offerings to the changing desires of both our international and domestic visitors. The North West is well placed to benefit from a booming year for British staycations thanks to our vibrant cosmopolitan cities of Manchester and Liverpool, historic Roman city of Chester and the beautiful scenery the Lake District has to offer, not to mention Blackpool's famous tower and promenade. With many holidaymakers now choosing to stay close to home, the importance of marketing local attractions and investing in new technologies and experiences to drive footfall is clear. This report looks at the changes affecting the North West and the lessons that can be learnt from these. To read the full report detailing the UK as a whole, please click on the link at the bottom of the page.



**Tony Walsh**  
Head of North  
Corporate Banking  
Barclays

[Click here to read the full report.](#)



# Focus on the North West

The future for the North West's hospitality industry is very bright, according to our recent study of holiday trends.

## The North West is set for a bumper year

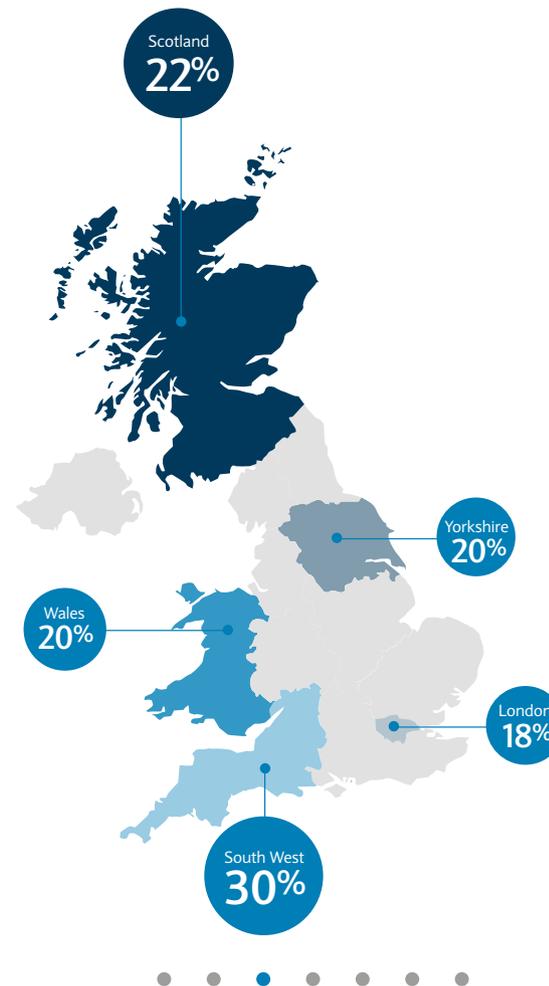
We surveyed more than 2,000 UK holidaymakers and the results showed that 35% of those taking holidays could easily go overseas but choose to remain in the UK. This is hugely positive for Britain's economy and providers, demonstrating that holidaying in the UK is chosen on the basis of quality, value and convenience. 58% of people from the North West surveyed described holidaying in the UK as 'hassle-free' due to the familiarity of the food, language and travel options.

Of all UK holiday locations, the North West was a popular destination for domestic visitors, with 15% of those surveyed stating they'd like to visit. 14% of over 7,000 international visitors we surveyed said they wanted to visit our attractions; however, there seems to be more of a focus with the Chinese, with 30% wishing to visit here.

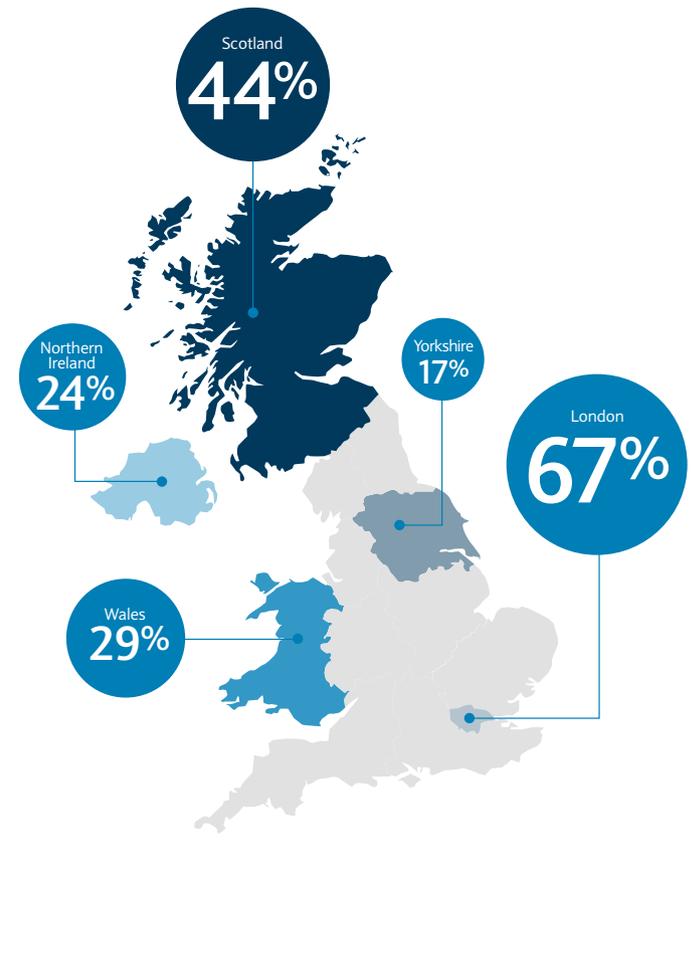
44% of holidaymakers from the North West would like to visit our cities of culture and engaging history, and 35% would travel to enjoy the beautiful countryside that the UK has long been renowned for. Holidaymakers from within the region reflect this trend, with 43% from Liverpool looking for a city break and the same percentage keen to visit the Lake District. The extensive countryside the Lake District has to offer draws in the largest amount of visitors from the North East, particularly 36% from Newcastle.

## Which regions in the UK are you planning on visiting? (Top 5)

UK visitors



International visitors



## A very North West staycation

The increase in British holidaymakers' budgets for domestic trips has given rise to 30% of people spending more on leisure activities than in previous years and taking short breaks within the UK in addition to a main overseas holiday. Out of the 58% from the North West taking these second short-break holidays, 50% felt that holidays in the UK are now more affordable and better value for money.

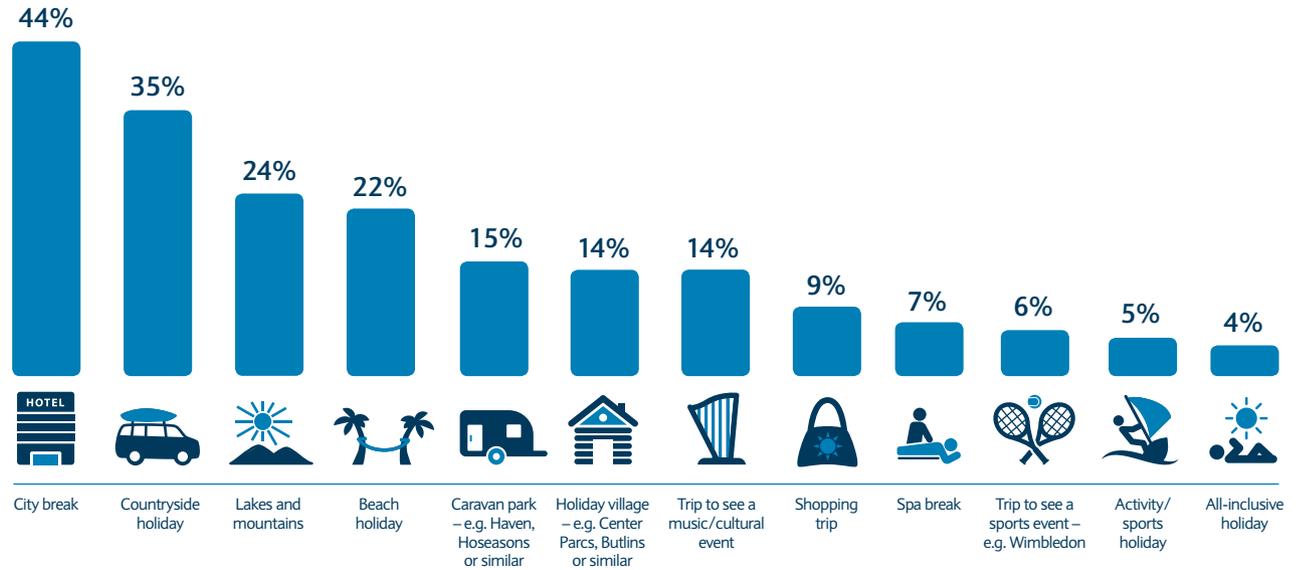
In addition to the popularity of the staycation growing over the past years, the North West also remains the prime holiday spot for those from this region, with 39% holidaying closer to home. Wales and Scotland followed as the next most popular destinations for North West holidaymakers. 45% of holidaymakers from Manchester choose to stay in the North West for their holiday, with Wales coming in at a close second as the secondary holiday destination for 30% of them.

## Personalise and emphasise

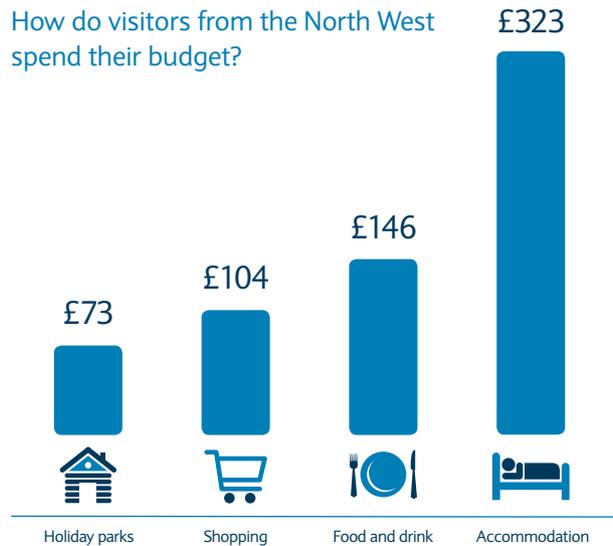
While self-catered apartments are becoming more popular with the rise of providers such as Airbnb, 31% of visitors from the North West still prefer to book a mid-market hotel. Only 8% of holidaymakers would book luxury 5 star hotels, with 50% booking their accommodation directly through the website of the accommodation provider. North West holidaymakers spend an average of £323 on hotels and accommodation, higher than the domestic visitor's average of £309 per holiday.

The results of the survey show that eating out and shopping are the areas North West visitors are most likely to spend their remaining budget on. Overall we see a 27% spending increase in comparison to 2016, with 5% of

## What type of holiday are you planning in the UK this year?



## How do visitors from the North West spend their budget?



people having significantly more to spend on experiences than in previous years. Hotels which emphasise their food offering are more of an appealing booking to 33% of holidaymakers from the North West.

When asked about the most important motives for taking a break in the UK, 46% of North West holidaymakers said spending time with the family was very important, while 86% saw escapism/distraction as an important driver. Taking an education/learning break was seen as quite important by 41% of visitors, although 72% thought a holiday where new skills could be experienced was not important. With personalised visits and experiences increasing in popularity, the demand from North West holidaymakers for leisure providers to offer such holidays is 31%, compared to 33% at a national level.

# Strategies for success

To take advantage of increasing domestic and inbound tourism, businesses might consider the following:



## Be proud of the UK

The country retains its strong attraction as a holiday destination with renowned history and culture, to both domestic and international travellers. The political turmoil has had little impact on travel to the UK. The industry should be proud of, and leverage, the country's cultural assets to attract and retain visitors.



## One size doesn't fit all

Different demographic groups have diverse requirements and preferences when it comes to holidays and leisure experiences. For example, some offerings, such as mobile check-in, may only appeal to certain groups of people. Hospitality and leisure providers need to develop a range of products and services to match different expectations.



## Connect locally

Our survey shows that one third (30%) of holidaymakers expect to spend more on leisure activities this year than in prior years. Shopping accounts for the third-largest proportion of spending after hotel, food and drink spend.

Leisure operators should connect with local providers and retailers to develop packages of offerings that offer wider and richer choices.



## Adaptable customer experience

The rise of online and mobile booking continues apace, with over three quarters (76%) of consumers willing to book online. However, 15% of visitors still prefer to book in person or by telephone – rising to 24% of consumers over 65.

While it is obviously vital to develop user-friendly and streamlined online booking for consumers, it is important not to overlook traditional booking methods, such as face-to-face and telephone booking.



## Cater for international tastes

Overseas holidaymakers can have different social and religious requirements from domestic travellers. Having services recognising these needs, such as free shuttle buses to airports, could help operators stand out from the competition. Start with simple offerings, such as free WiFi.



## Act decisively on feedback

Feedback takes many forms, from face to face to online, and it has become increasingly important for businesses to understand and react to it, and promptly.

A robust strategy for tracking and responding to feedback will ultimately enhance the guest experience and help improve the possibility of repeat visits, as well as referrals and recommendations of your business to other consumers. The skill is to identify what the most appropriate type of feedback is and to then have an effective process to manage and respond to it.

# Key takeaways

- The increased convenience and value for money of holidaying in the UK are driving a rise in the number of staycations for Britons, with more than one in three expecting to spend more time on holiday in the UK this year
- Short breaks are the main types of holiday for domestic visitors, with 15% saying they'd like to holiday in the North West, and this remains the prime holiday spot for 39% of holidaymakers from this region
- The North West has a strong appeal to Chinese visitors, with 30% choosing here as one of their destinations and 14% overall of international travellers making this one of their destinations of choice
- While there is a trend for booking through providers such as Airbnb, mid-market accommodation remains the most popular hotel type that 31% of North West holidaymakers book
- 46% of North West holidaymakers said spending time with family was a very important motivation for taking a break in the UK
- Holidaymakers from the North West spend more than the average domestic visitor on accommodation, and holiday parks, but less on shopping, food and drink
- North West tourism providers need to consider visitor preferences from all over the UK to encourage their appeal across the country.

Click [here](#) to read the full report or, alternatively, to find out more about how Barclays can support your business, please call 0800 015 4242\* or visit [barclayscorporate.com](https://www.barclayscorporate.com)

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**About this research**

The research is based on a bespoke survey of British and international holidaymakers from Opinium. The total sample size for the domestic market was 2,010 UK adults (aged 18+) who holiday in the UK. The fieldwork was undertaken between 20 February and 2 March 2017. The international survey was based on online interviews with 1,004 US adults, 1,003 German adults, 1,001 French adults, 1,003 Russian adults, 502 Saudi Arabian adults, 1,004 Australian adults, 1,004 Republic of Ireland adults and 1,002 Chinese adults (aged 18+) who have travelled internationally in the last five years. The fieldwork was undertaken from 22 February to 9 March 2017.

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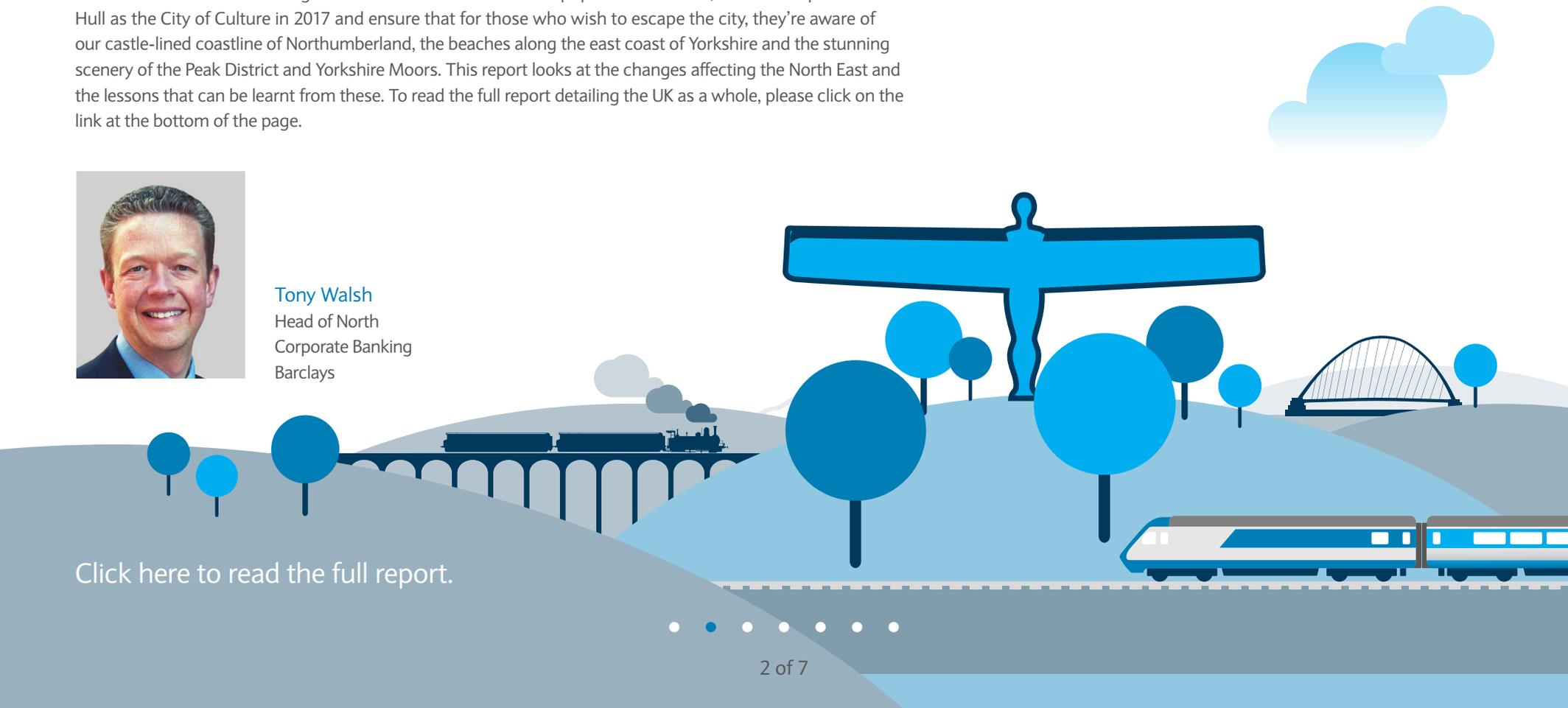
Connecting with British holidaymakers is more important than ever for hospitality and leisure providers as these are the customers who are more likely to visit again in the future.

These findings represent a fantastic opportunity for the businesses within the North East's already thriving hospitality and leisure industry to really target their offerings to the changing desires of both our international and domestic visitors. From our vibrant cosmopolitan cities of Newcastle, Leeds, and Sheffield, to our historic cities of Durham and York, we need to ensure visitors as a whole make the most of all we have to offer. While our iconic structure of the Angel of the North in Gateshead is a popular destination, we need to promote Hull as the City of Culture in 2017 and ensure that for those who wish to escape the city, they're aware of our castle-lined coastline of Northumberland, the beaches along the east coast of Yorkshire and the stunning scenery of the Peak District and Yorkshire Moors. This report looks at the changes affecting the North East and the lessons that can be learnt from these. To read the full report detailing the UK as a whole, please click on the link at the bottom of the page.



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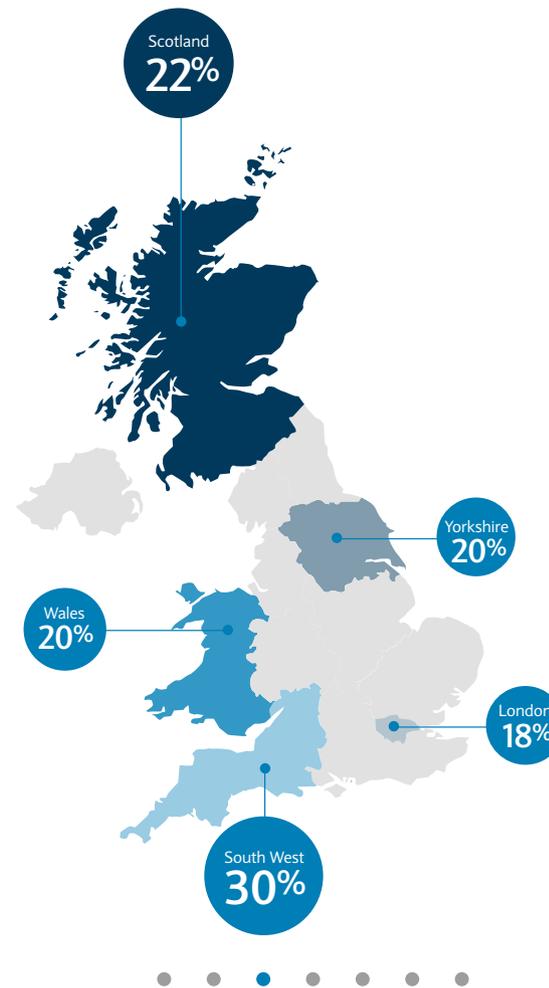
We surveyed more than 2,000 UK holidaymakers and the results showed that 35% of those taking holidays could easily go overseas but choose to remain in the UK. This is hugely positive for Britain's economy and providers, demonstrating that holidaying in the UK is chosen on the basis of quality, value and convenience. 36% of people from the North East surveyed described holidaying in the UK as 'hassle-free' due to the familiarity of the food, language and travel options, while 43% showed concerns on security when on holiday and considered the UK as a safer choice at the moment.

Of all UK holiday locations, the North East was a chosen destination for 10% of domestic visitors, stating they'd like to visit, increasing to 20% wanting to visit Yorkshire. 14% of over 7,000 international visitors we surveyed said they wanted to visit our attractions and 17% were specifically interested in visiting Yorkshire; however, there seems to be more of a focus with the Chinese, with 33% wishing to visit this region.

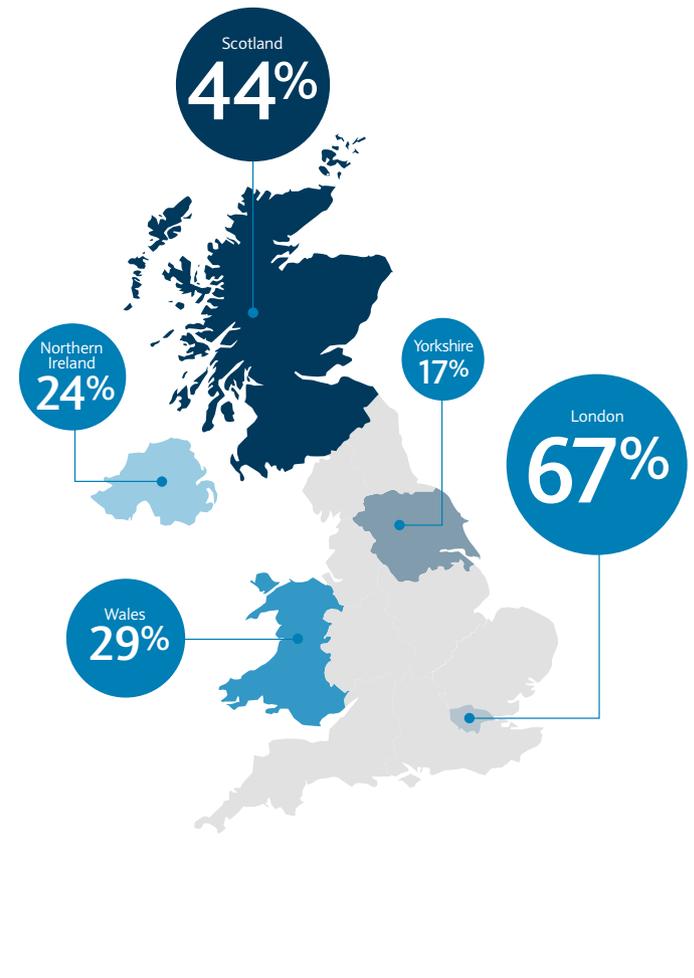
42% of holidaymakers from the North East would like to visit our cities of culture and engaging history, and 33% would go to enjoy the appealing countryside the UK has long been renowned for. Holidaymakers from Newcastle reflect the trend of the region, with 44% looking for a city break and 34% making Yorkshire their holiday destination.

## Which regions in the UK are you planning on visiting? (Top 5)

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## A very North East staycation

The increase in British holidaymakers' budgets for domestic trips has given rise to 30% of people spending more on leisure activities than in previous years and taking short breaks within the UK in addition to a main overseas holiday. Out of the 51% from the North East taking these second short-break holidays, 60% felt that holidays in the UK are now more affordable and better value for money.

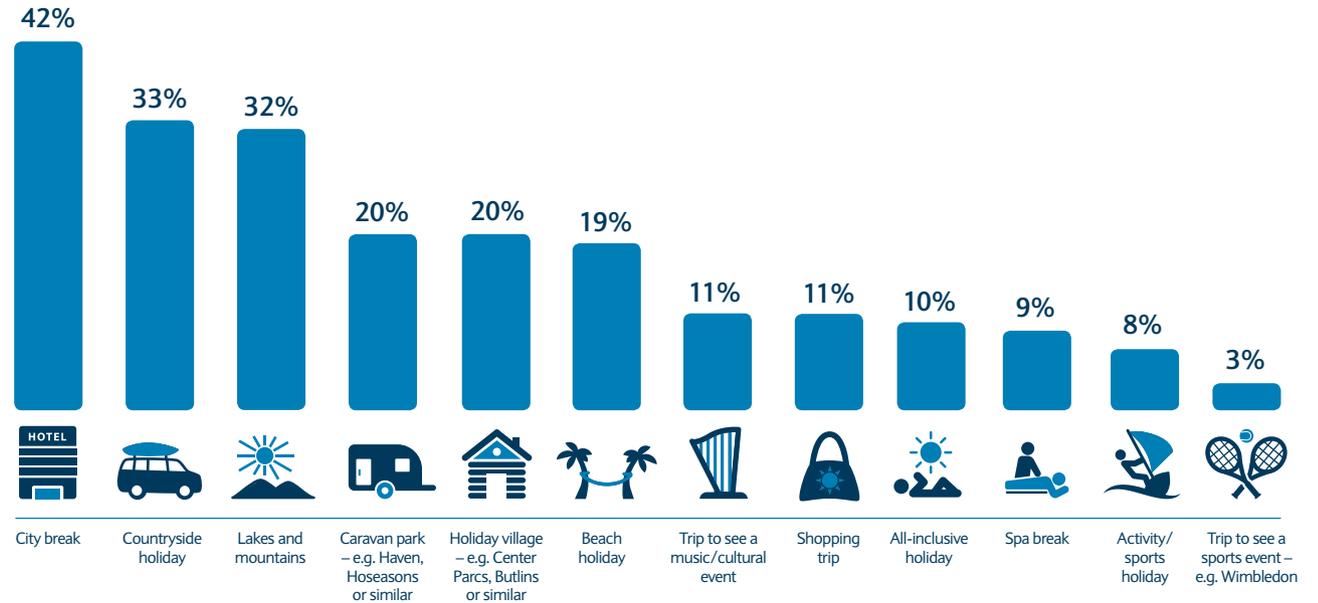
In addition to the popularity of the staycation growing over the past years, the North East also remains the prime holiday spot for those from this region, with 33% holidaying closer to home. Yorkshire is also a particularly popular destination for 54% of North East holidaymakers. Scotland and the North West followed as the next most popular destinations for North East holidaymakers. 33% of those in Newcastle choose to stay in the North East for their holiday, with Scotland coming a strong second at 31%.

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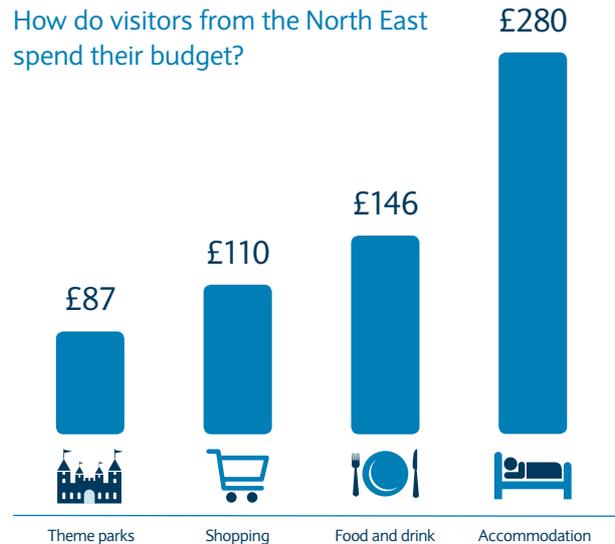
While self-catered apartments are becoming more popular with the rise of providers such as Airbnb, 32% of visitors from the North East still prefer to book a mid-market hotel. Only 4% of holidaymakers would book luxury 5 star hotels, with 57% booking their accommodation directly through the website of the accommodation provider. North East holidaymakers spend an average of £280 on hotels and accommodation, lower than the domestic visitor's average of £309 per holiday.

The results of the survey show that eating out and shopping are the areas North East holidaymakers are most likely to spend their remaining budget on. Overall, we see a 29% spending increase in comparison to 2016, with 8% of

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people having significantly more to spend on experiences than in previous years. Hotels which emphasise their food offering are more of an appealing booking to 30% of holidaymakers from the North East.

When asked about the most important motivations for taking a break in the UK, 52% of North East holidaymakers said spending time with the family was very important, while 82% saw escapism/distraction as an important driver. Taking an education/learning break was seen as quite important by 34% of visitors, although 70% thought a holiday where new skills could be experienced was not important. With personalised visits and experiences increasing in popularity, the demand from North East holidaymakers for leisure providers to offer such holidays is 31%, compared to 33% at a national level.

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- The North East has the strongest appeal for Chinese visitors, with 33% choosing here as one of their destinations and 14% overall of international travellers making here a destination of choice
- While there is a trend for booking through providers such as Airbnb, mid-market accommodation remains the most popular hotel type that 32% of North East holidaymakers book
- 52% of North East holidaymakers said spending time with family was a very important motivation for taking a break in the UK
- Holidaymakers from the North East spend less than the average domestic visitor on accommodation, food and drink, but more on theme parks and holiday parks
- North East tourism providers should consider visitor preferences from all over the UK to encourage their appeal across the country.

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