

## Greater Manchester Visitor Survey 2007

---

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

#### PROJECT DETAILS

**Funded by:** Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA)  
**Commissioned to:** QA Research Ltd in partnership with Arkenford Ltd.

#### Methodology

Sample size: 1,777

Special conditions: The survey sampled leisure visitors only and defined a day visitor as someone who was over 20 miles from home and spending over 3 hours in the destination.

Research method: Face-to-face interviews at various locations across the ten districts of Greater Manchester.

Dates: May - December 2007

#### Objectives

- Gain a profile of the type of visitors that are attracted to Greater Manchester using the Ark Leisure profiling method.
- Examine visitor behaviour and their decision-making processes.
- Measure the visitor experience across a number of key themes.

### KEY FINDINGS

#### Visitor Profile

- 58% of interviewed visitors were on a day visit and 42% staying (24% staying in paid-for accommodation and 18% staying with friends & relatives).
- Visitors aged 35-44 were the largest group of visitors to Greater Manchester but all age groupings were well represented.
- Two thirds of visitors fell in the ABC1 social classification group with AB visitors more likely to be staying visitors and DE visitors more likely to be day visitors.
- 79% were making a return visit to Greater Manchester, including 60% who had visited in the last two years.
- Manchester has the highest proportion of repeat visits out of the 10 districts but a higher proportion of new visitors go to Trafford, Salford & Wigan.
- The average party size is 3.6.

- Visitors seeing friends and relatives are more likely to be regular visitors, visiting with children, and from older age groups.
- Hotel guests are more likely to be first-time visitors, with a partner.
- The visitors come from the North West (43%), overseas (18%), Yorkshire & Humberside (9%) and the West Midlands (9%). However those coming from Yorkshire & Humberside were more likely to be day visitors.

### Visit Profile

- Only 5% of staying visitors were staying outside Greater Manchester during their stay but 17% of all visitors visited outside Greater Manchester during their visit.
- The most popular locations for visitors to visit outside Greater Manchester were Merseyside (9%), Cumbria (5%), Cheshire (5%), Blackpool (4%) and Yorkshire (4%).
- The average length of stay for staying visitors was 5.5 nights (4.2 being spent in Greater Manchester).
- 58% travelled to Manchester by car/van/motorbike/motorhome, 18% by train/tram and 15% by aeroplane. Other forms of transport were bus/coach/coach tour and boat.
- Three quarters of visitors who came by aeroplane flew into Manchester International Airport. The next most popular airports were London-based along with Liverpool Airport.

### Visit Characteristics

- The key drivers for making a visit to Greater Manchester were visiting specific places or attractions (48%), to see a show or special event (37%), because it is somewhere they know and trust (31%) and because they have family and friends nearby (29%).
- Eating out (61%), visiting attractions (59%), shopping (51%) and strolling around the city/town to enjoy the ambience (50%) were the most popular activities undertaken once in Greater Manchester.
- The most popular attractions and locations visited by overseas visitors were The Trafford Centre (36%), Salford Museum & Art Gallery (33%) and Ordsall Hall Museum (30%).
- The most popular attractions and locations visited by UK visitors were the Imperial War Museum North (20%), The Trafford Centre (15%) and Turnpike Art Gallery (14%).

### Visit Expenditure

- The main things that visitors spent money on were food and drink (94%), travel around the area (81%), shopping for gifts and souvenirs (52%) and money spent at an attraction(s) (40%).
- The elements that attracted the highest amount per person per day were; accommodation, shopping for gifts and souvenirs, 'other' expenses and entertainment.
- Staying visits spent more each day across all categories than day visitors except 'shopping for daily needs' where day visitors spent more.

### Booking & Information Sources

- 30% used the internet to find accommodation (including 8% who used [www.visitmanchester.com](http://www.visitmanchester.com))
- Visitors using [www.visitmanchester.com](http://www.visitmanchester.com) were more likely to be first-time visitors and from younger age groups.
- Visitors using TICs were more likely to be first-time visitors, aged 45+ and from overseas.
- Visitors who used the Manchester Guide were more likely to be first-time visitors, from younger age groups and from overseas.



- Booking accommodation by telephone was the most popular booking method (33%) with website bookings (32%) and e-mail bookings (22%) following.
- Online bookers are more likely to be first-time visitors, from younger age groups and from overseas compared to telephone bookers who are more likely to be visiting with a partner, not visited for a while, from an older age group and from the UK.

### **The Visitor Experience**

- The elements that visitors scored Greater Manchester the most highly for were; cultural/music performances, sporting events/matches and high quality visitor attractions. Also scoring highly were unique events and festivals, vibrant nightlife and excellent eating out experiences.
- The element of Manchester that received the lowest visitor satisfaction ratings was low crime/good personal safety. Exploring the countryside and good value accommodation were the other areas that received lower satisfaction levels.

### **Future Potential**

- 91% of visitors expected to visit Greater Manchester again in the next 2 years (6% were unsure and 3% didn't expect to return).

