

# Holiday and touring parks' contribution

**Councillors and officials drafting local authority policies and making planning decisions, and all politicians who decide the regulation of park business, should be left in no doubt as to the contribution of holiday and touring parks.**

The Coalition Government's policies of 'localism' and 'Big Society' are devolving power to the local level. Local authorities are to be given a 'general power of competence', a wide mandate to do what they consider 'the right thing' for their local area. Going forwards, there will be far fewer targets and requirements from central government, local authorities are to be freed up to govern their local area as they see fit.

Such wide discretion may be a double-edged sword for park business, depending on the attitudes of the local authority and the local electorate. Recognition of the value of local parks could bring benefits, whilst ignorance or prejudice could achieve the opposite. It is essential BH&HPA members communicate their business contribution at every opportunity.

If the community does not recognise what they receive from their local park business, they can hardly be expected to support it. It is therefore essential that this contribution is communicated at every opportunity.

A park's contribution will be economic, social and environmental. ***It will include:***

- the number of jobs that are sustained, both directly in the park business and indirectly in the locality
- the market created for local goods and services thereby supporting local businesses (shops, pubs, attractions. ... even bus services) which remain viable through the patronage of park customers
- trade (and employment) for local businesses that work on the park (tradesmen, suppliers, plumbers and electricians: all who trade with the park)

- on-park facilities, such as a shop or swimming pool, which are available for local users and whose absence would be sorely missed
- conservation and biodiversity work on the park and in its surroundings
- involvement in local causes and educational projects
- maintenance of environmental assets, such as footpaths and beaches.

## **Making (and repeating) the case**

It is important that park owners themselves recognise the changing political arena and create opportunities to engage with policymakers at the local level.

If business fails to engage at the local level, the vacuum that they leave will be filled by those with more time and perhaps some particular axe to grind. Single issue lobby groups can wield disproportionate influence if their fervour for an issue is not tempered with good common - and business - sense.

Local authorities' economic development departments will appreciate data to support their plans for the area, while local Destination Management Organisations and Local Economic Partnerships may need evidence of the integral role played by parks in defining tourism destinations and sustaining the local economy.

The case put for the industry by BH&HPA members will be more compelling if backed up by data from credible sources. The following pages provide some facts and figures regarding the holiday and touring parks industry which BH&HPA members can use to demonstrate the contribution of their parks, and tourism in general, to the sustainability of communities.



*Do the powers-that-be recognise just what your park delivers?*

## Holiday and touring parks' contribution

### Tourist statistics

Over 50% of the British population take a park holiday in their lifetime<sup>i</sup>.

Tourism data are gathered by the United Kingdom Tourism Survey (UKTS) which recorded that in 2009, the parks industry accounted for:

#### Tourist nights<sup>ii</sup>

Park accommodation	Tourist bed nights	% of UK total
Caravan holiday homes - let	19,935,000	5%
Caravan holiday homes - privately-owned	15,948,000	4%
Touring caravans	23,922,000	6%
Camping	19,935,000	5%
Holiday camp	7,974,000	2%
<b>Total parks industry</b>	<b>87,714,000</b>	<b>22%</b>

### Tourist spend<sup>ii</sup>

Park accommodation	2009 Tourist spend	% of UK total
Caravan holiday homes - let	£875,240,000	4%
Caravan holiday homes - privately-owned	£437,620,000	2%
Touring caravans	£656,430,000	3%
Camping	£656,430,000	3%
Holiday camp	£437,620,000	2%
<b>Total parks industry</b>	<b>£3,063,340,000</b>	<b>14%</b>

### Economic contribution

Several studies have been undertaken.

#### Caravan holiday homes

A study in Wales indicates that each caravan holiday home generates spending of between £6,721 and £19,138 each year into the local economy<sup>iii</sup>.

2010 research<sup>iv</sup> amongst caravan holiday home consumers who participate in the BH&HPA Rate This Park consumer panel indicates that the average spend per night for an occupied caravan holiday home pitch is between £78.62 and £122.42. (The study asked consumers about their spend on items such as accommodation, travel, car parking, groceries, eating and drinking out, activities, attractions, capital items and other shopping.)

The annual economic contribution can be calculated if pitch occupancy is considered:

Annual economic contribution per caravan holiday home pitch

Annual pitch occupancy	From £	To £
20 weeks	£11,007	£17,138
25 weeks	£13,759	£21,424
30 weeks	£16,510	£25,708

#### Touring caravans

The Camping and Caravanning Club places the average daily spend in the local community per touring pitch, excluding site fees, as £31.91<sup>v</sup>.

2010 research<sup>vi</sup> amongst touring consumers who participate in the BH&HPA Rate This Park consumer panel indicates that the average spend per night for an occupied touring pitch is £72.17. (The study asked holidaymakers about their spend on items such as accommodation, travel, car parking, groceries, eating and drinking out, activities, attractions, capital items and other shopping.)

The annual economic contribution can be calculated if pitch occupancy is considered.

Annual economic contribution per touring pitch

Pitch occupancy	£
20 weeks	£10,104
25 weeks	£12,630
30 weeks	£15,156

continued...





## Direct employment

Considering employment across the industry, a 2010 report prepared by Oxford Economics for the British Hospitality Association, 'Economic contribution of UK hospitality industry'<sup>vii</sup>, provided an assessment of the economic contribution of the core UK hospitality industry to the country's wider economy.

Two statistical classifications are particularly relevant to the parks industry:

**SIC 2007 – 5530 - Camping grounds, recreational vehicle parks and trailer parks** – defined as: *Provision of accommodation in campgrounds, trailer parks, recreational camps and fishing and hunting camps for short-stay visitors, provision of space and facilities for recreational vehicles and accommodation provided by protective shelters or plain bivouac facilities for placing tents and/or sleeping bags.*

**SIC 2007 – 5520 - Holiday and other short-stay accommodation** – defined as: *This includes the provision of accommodation, typically on a daily or weekly basis, principally for short stays by visitors, in self-contained space consisting of complete furnished rooms or areas for living/dining and sleeping, with cooking facilities or fully equipped kitchens. This may take the form of apartments or flats in small free-standing multi-storey buildings or clusters of buildings, or single storey bungalows, chalets, cottages and cabins. Very minimal complementary services, if any, are provided.*

'Economic contribution of UK hospitality industry' reported direct UK employment in these classifications as follows:

	Direct employment 1998	Direct employment 2010	change 1998 to 2010 %
Camping grounds, recreational vehicle parks and trailer parks	19,000	29,000	+53%
Holiday and other short-stay accommodation	45,000	50,000	+11%

Of particular note is the 53% rise in direct employment on holiday parks over the 12 years to 2010.

Research carried out in Wales<sup>viii</sup> has resonance across the UK. Key findings of this research included that average number of staff employed on parks was 20 in low season, with this figure more than doubling in high season.

## Indirect employment

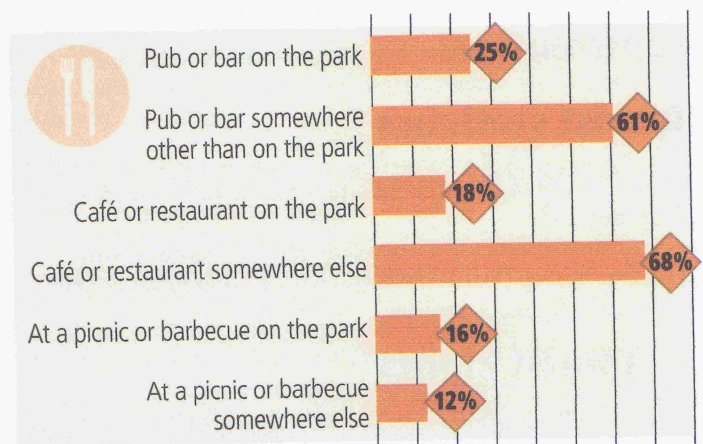
A 2001 study reported that every two caravan holiday home pitches account for one tourism job<sup>ix</sup>.

The Camping and Caravanning Club research<sup>x</sup> confirmed the wide range of activities pursued by visitors surveyed. These included:

- visiting the local pub (58%)
- eating in local restaurants (52%)
- visiting other tourist attractions (68%).

### Park customers eating out

Park consumers who participated in the BH&HPA consumer panel in 2010<sup>xi</sup> were asked if they ate out during their park holiday; the majority (68%) had purchased meals from restaurants in the area local to the park.

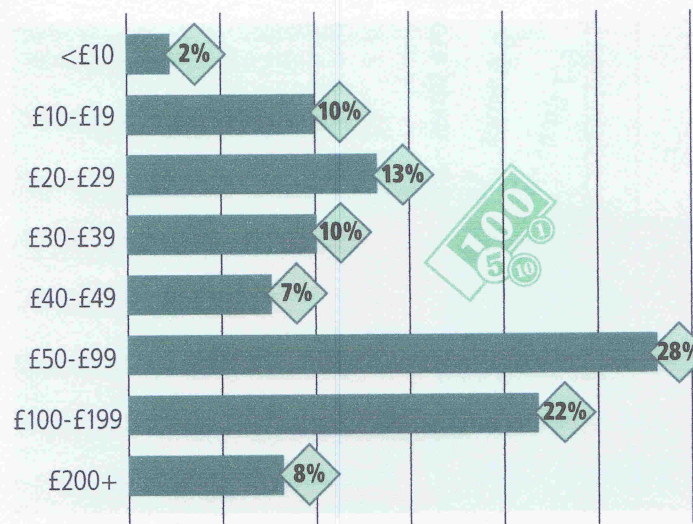




## Caravans: a UK manufacturing industry

Nearly two-thirds of park holidaymakers who participated in the BH&HPA consumer panel said that they spent money buying clothes, gifts or other shopping during their holiday. Items such as clothes or gifts accounted on average for nearly £45 of each park holiday group's expenditure.

### Spend by park customers on non-food shopping



It is not only direct and indirect tourist spend that sustains local economies; caravan holiday home and touring caravan manufacturing businesses, their suppliers and service providers are also important job and wealth creators.

With so few manufacturing industries having survived the economic tribulations of the last 50 years, it is important to emphasise that the parks industry sustains this important manufacturing sector. The overwhelming majority of lodges, caravan holiday homes, touring caravans and motorhomes sold on the domestic market are of UK manufacture.

The National Caravan Council publishes industry production figures from manufacturers' data, confirming production totals for the last three years as follows<sup>xii</sup>:

#### UK touring caravan sales

2007-2008	29,266
2008-2009	20,135
2009-2010	25,114

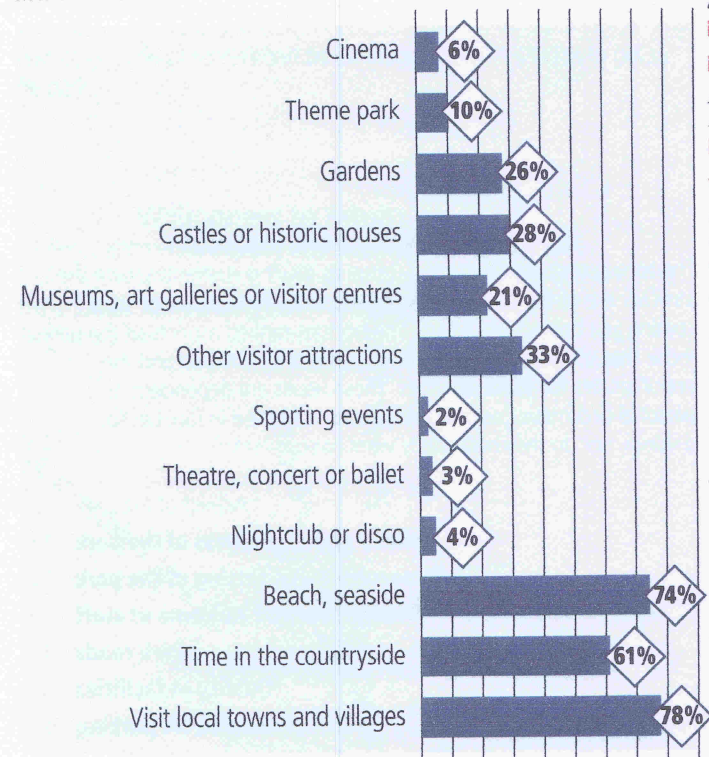


#### UK caravan holiday home sales

2007-2008	20,153
2008-2009	12,931
2009-2010	17,308



The same study highlighted park customers' support of local attractions.



#### Sources

<sup>i</sup> 59.5% of the UK population stated that they had 'ever spent' a camping/caravanning holiday. 'Camping & Caravanning' research conducted for the European Commission by GfK Marktforschung GmbH & Co.KG (1989)

<sup>ii</sup> United Kingdom Tourist Statistics 2009. [www.tourismtrade.org.uk](http://www.tourismtrade.org.uk)

<sup>iii</sup> RPI from October 2003 to October 2009 applied to figures derived from 'Caravan Holiday Homes in Wales', The Tourism Company 2003, Wales Tourist Board and BH&HPA

<sup>iv</sup> December 2010, BH&HPA research amongst the Rate This Park consumer panel

<sup>v</sup> RPI from October 2007 to October 2009 applied to figures derived from 'Spend in the Local Community Summary Report', Camping and Caravanning Club - Easter and Summer Results 2007

<sup>vi</sup> December 2010, BH&HPA research amongst the Rate This Park consumer panel

<sup>vii</sup> 'Economic contribution of UK hospitality industry', Oxford Economics, September 2010. [www.bha.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/BHA-Economic-Contribution-of-UK-Hospitality-Industry-Final-.pdf](http://www.bha.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/BHA-Economic-Contribution-of-UK-Hospitality-Industry-Final-.pdf)

<sup>viii</sup> 'Caravan Holiday Homes in Wales', The Tourism Company 2003, Wales Tourist Board and BH&HPA

<sup>ix</sup> 'Holiday Parks - Your value to the local community', Ian Butter, BH&HPA Journal, March-April 2001

<sup>x</sup> 'Spend in the Local Community - Summary Report', Camping and Caravanning Club - Easter and Summer Results 2007

<sup>xi</sup> 'Economic Contribution', December 2010, BH&HPA Research Report for the Rate This Park consumer panel

<sup>xii</sup> 'The Business', National Caravan Council, Winter 2010

In addition to park customers' support of local attractions, hospitality and retail businesses, parks employ numerous tradesmen and local businesses to support their work, from plumbers and electricians to construction and horticultural companies, waste contractors to accountants and IT providers.