

Notes from the B&B & Guest Houses sector meeting

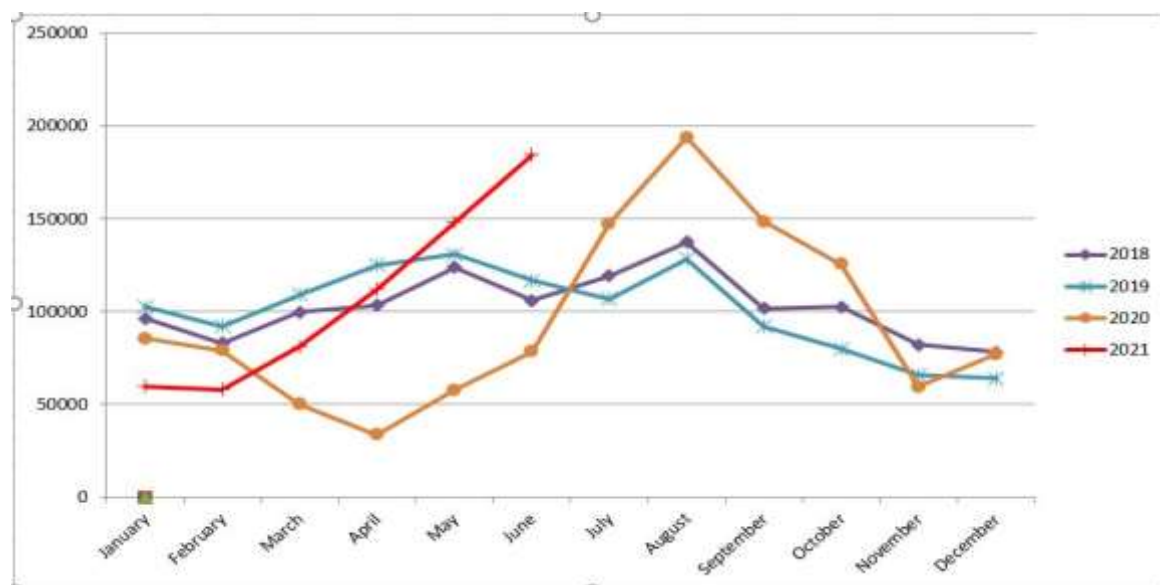
Monday 5 July 2021

Key findings/comments from attendees:

- Variation in booking patterns continue with countryside locations getting strong levels of enquiries and bookings, but all establishments agreed very short notice
- About 30% down in bookings compared to 2019 levels mainly due to room capacity
- Overseas bookings all cancelled or postponed until 2022 but still staying in touch which is hopeful for future.
- Last minute cancellations due to self-isolating for Covid but guests usually supportive of BB and paying deposit
- Most guests very respectful of Covid rules but growing number who are less tolerant especially in the larger establishments, pattern reflected in a recent media comments highlighting abuse towards retail staff.
- Some BB are already emailing guests well before visit to ensure they book ahead for attractions, eating out etc. See [digital guides](#) which can help with this too.
- Events – uncertainty over whether large events will be happening has caused last minute cancellations. Many events postponed until September & October meaning there may be too many events to choose from in this period.
- Staffing for larger places challenging to retain

Updates from Cotswolds Tourism

Google analytics for the Cotswolds.com website clearly demonstrate the effects of the pandemic: lockdowns indicated by huge drops in interest, the approaching end of each lockdown a renewed surge of interest. The first six months of 2021 show unique visitors down just over 7% on 2019 but this masks huge differences: January to February down 30% or more but the busiest June ever 58% up on 2019!



Within the overall numbers there are also huge differences between different sectors:

- Self-catering – up **90%**
- Gardens – up **88%**
- Food & drink – up **69%**
- Camping/Glamping – up **50%**
- Activities – up **41%**
- Family fun – up **46%**
- Hotels – up **14%**
- Shopping – down **20%**
- Historic houses – down **35%**
- B&Bs – down **36%**
- Tours – down **37%**
- Museums – down **40%**

We will look to do a solus newsletter on B&Bs at the end of the summer, so send an appealing image, website link and short piece of text to cotswoldstourism@cotswold.gov.uk

Membership currently free until September 2021 and currently looking at what happens then.

Keep up to date via our **B2B social media channels**: Twitter @cotstourismbiz; Facebook www.facebook.com/groups/851272778718986; Linked-in www.linkedin.com/company/cotswoldstourism

Number of resources now available for you to use – **Training modules** – short bite size videos to help you www.cotswolds.com/training **Digital guides** to highlight to visitors when booking along with our website www.cotswolds.com/partnership/digital-guides **Printed versions** of the Cotswolds browser now in stock and can be picked up from visitor information centres (phone first to check they have stock).

T-Stats & data Really good input from the BB sector to [Tstats](https://www.cotswolds.com/tstats) – please enter 0 for months closed and in notes state Covid restrictions. To sign up contact us at cotswoldstourism@cotswold.gov.uk or review www.cotswolds.com/tstats

We will shortly be sending out a **survey link** to help South West Tourism Research Company's work compiling our annual economic impact study. This data is used by LEAs, local authorities and businesses so your input is valuable.

Keep an eye on **consumer sentiment** with www.visitbritain.org/covid-19-consumer-sentiment-tracker and VisitEngland's **business advice hub** www.visitbritain.org/business-advice

Visit England are running a domestic campaign Escape the Everyday www.visitbritain.org/be-part-our-domestic-marketing-campaign-escape-everyday and we are running Escape to the Cotswolds. Funded by our successful bid to the DMO recovery marketing fund, this entirely digital campaign is linked to bookable experiences in the Cotswolds www.cotswolds.com/escape.

Being bookable on Cotswolds.com Our website is now fully connected to Visit England's TXGB platform & several other polling channels including Free to Book, Supercontrol & Eviivo. Several B&Bs now link up to TXGB to be bookable and we are starting to see bookings come through. For more information on **TXGB** www.txgb.co.uk/ & polling options or get in touch with Sally Graff