

Update from Visit Dorset

(In partnership with Swanage Town Council)

Visit Dorset website performance

The Swanage content on visit-dorset.com/swanage is called Visit Swanage.

The main landing page for Visit Swanage regularly features in the 10 ten most viewed landing pages for Visit Dorset (one of the only 3 town landing pages, also includes Lyme Regis and Weymouth). This is strong evidence that our website is working well for Swanage businesses and making sure they are reaching online customers.

There have been approx. 75,000 website page views of Swanage related pages and content over the past 12 months. These figures includes the autumn campaign for Swanage feature of an 'Autumn Adventures In Swanage' blog, but not including the views to each participating business page on visit-dorset.com, which greatly increases this figure and will be provided at the end of the year.

Sustainable Tourism Plan

There is an action within Dorset Council's Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy to turn Dorset into a low carbon destination and that Visit Dorset has drafted a sustainable tourism plan which is currently being reviewed before circulation.

How's Business Feedback

Due to the pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis the tourism industry continues to suffer. During the pandemic we saw some enormous peaks and falls. The Visit Dorset team has run seasonal marketing campaigns during 2022 to help us retain our share in the market and keep attracting visitors to Dorset. The trend across the SW has been very similar to Dorset. See the programme of [marketing campaigns](#), Swanage will feature in many of these campaigns.

Feedback from local accommodation businesses, is that accommodation bookings for autumn and Christmas are being made much later this year and the half term week was not at full capacity for accommodation.

Empty job posts have put a considerable strain on businesses and there is a pattern emerging of businesses reducing opening hours and staffing or even closing during the winter.

Visit Dorset worked with the National Coastal Tourism Academy to survey businesses to understand how they are coping, here are the results for coastal destination (including Dorset).

Business Survey 2022 Wave 3 - Late Summer

(survey was live between September - October 2022)

Headlines results:

- **67% of businesses are back to profitability** (up from 46% in previous wave).
- **19% estimate it will be more than 12 months before they are profitable**
- Summer trading was a mixed picture with 28% of businesses saying summer trading in 2022 was better than last year and **44% of businesses saying trading compared to last summer was worse.**
- **Confidence has continued to drop since the previous wave, with the majority now** not confident about the next 6 months of trading (42%). Offset by 24.3% who are very or somewhat confident.

- **Forward bookings are lower than the same point last year**, with many businesses reporting capacity still available over the autumn and winter.
- **The vast majority of businesses agree that demand is very unpredictable this year** and consumers are booking much closer to departure.
- Poor economic climate is the biggest external impact affecting businesses, followed by rising energy and fuel costs, increasing supplier costs, the seasonality of the destination and increasing staffing costs.
- 48% of businesses have increased prices and **42% of businesses are either closing for the winter or reducing the days of the week they are open for the winter period.**
- A number of businesses have seen an increase in European and other international visitors this summer, but business and conference visitors remain low
- **Almost all businesses say reducing costs is very or somewhat important to them at the present time (97%) but positively 82% of businesses are still focused on improving sustainability**

More information can be found here [Coastal Tourism Business Survey, England - The impact of Covid-19 | National Coastal Tourism Academy](#)

Year of the Coast

Hopefully you will have read in our digital newsletters the information about the Year of The Coast marketing campaign which will be supported by Visit Dorset from December for 2023.

Please get involved with this campaign for a chance to gain extra exposure – [you can download logos and more information here](#).

Visit Dorset will prepare some campaign images of Swanage for use on everyone's social media, please get in touch if you have any new photos you think could work well.