



Board Papers

Thursday 1st September 2022

Agenda

Virtual Board Meeting

Thursday 1st September 2022– 8am

Please join via Teams video conference [Click here to join the meeting](#) Or call in (audio only)
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Time	Item	Lead	Reference
08:00am	1 Welcome and Apologies	TB	
08:05am	2 Declarations of Interest	TB	
08:10am	3 Minutes and matters arising from Board Meeting held on 19 th May 2022	TB	
08:15am	4 Board Matters	TB	
08:20am	5 Chief Executive Report/Briefing note	JM	(Board Paper 250)
08:40am	6 DMO review and strategy update	TB/JM	
09:10am	7 Company Finances		
	- 2022/2023 Current Financial Report	IB	
	- 2021/2022 Statutory Accounts	IB	
09:40am	8 A.O.B		
10:00am	9 Close		

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Board, held at Chester Zoo
On Thursday 19th May 2022 – 9.30am**

Present: Trevor Brocklebank – Chair (“TB”)
Joe Manning (“JM”)
**Marketing Cheshire
Directors** Mark Goldsmith (“MG”)
Andy Lyon (“AL”)
Eleanor Underhill (“EU”)
Sarah Callander-Beckett (“SCB”)
Rob McKay (“RM”)
Gemma Davies (“GD”)
Tracey O’Keefe (“TO”)
Peter Mearns (“PM”)
Philip Cox (“PC”)

In Attendance: Nicola Said (“NS”)
Ian Brooks (“IB”)
Sharon Pond (minute taker)

Apologies: David Walker (“DW”)
Steven Broomhead (“SB”)
Jamie Christon (“JC”)

- **Opening by the Chairman and Welcome**

TB welcomed Board members and thanked them for joining the meeting.

- **Declarations of Interest**

TB asked Board members to advise of any declarations of interest.

- **Minutes and Actions from the last Meeting**

The Board confirmed that the minutes from the meeting on the 10th February 2022 were correct.

It was confirmed that the actions from the previous meeting have been dealt with.

- **Board Briefing Note / CEO Report**

JM referred Board members to the report circulated within the Board pack and welcomed questions / comments on the report

Comments from Board

The implications of the difficulty in forecasting in the current climate was referred to and it was advised that the situation is very uncertain, so it is difficult to predict. Accommodation providers do not have a huge amount of forward bookings, therefore difficult to manage cashflow, especially for smaller businesses. Several of the attractions are starting to look at different ticketing options and are targeting couples as opposed to the family market.

Venues/products at the higher price structure are performing better than mid to lower price point options.

It was advised that we will be undertaking research work over the summer to provide us with some comparative and dynamic data.

With regard to international visitors, it was confirmed that we are working closely with Liverpool Airport looking at targeting markets that have the potential to bring the short break market to the area. NS also attended the launch of the new Lufthansa Frankfurt to Liverpool route, so we hope to work with the German travel trade to build up relationships with them. We continue to work with the England's Historic Cities Network building on our US connections.

We are also looking at partner organisations to work with us on increasing our international market.

The importance of attracting international conferences to Cheshire was highlighted as this provides the opportunity to showcase Cheshire to attendees as the place to locate their businesses. It was confirmed that we will be having discussions on how best to promote international conferences with our current budget constraints.

- **Company Finances**

TB introduced IB to give an overview of the company finances.

IB referred Board members to the March Q4 YTD report included within the board pack advising that the operating result is slightly ahead of budget returning a small surplus primarily driven by funded project income. IB ran through the key elements of the report noting that the Audit Committee are comfortable with the cash position and reserves position.

One challenge we are presented with is the cashflow around the grant funded projects. We are working to resolve this but, in the meantime, the LEP are providing intercompany funding to MC on an informal level while we await reimbursement of the claims.

The Board thanked the MC team for their hard work and willingness to be flexible.

The Board approved the resolution to update the bank mandates to include, Trevor, David, Joe, Ian, Nicola and Jocelyn.

Budget 2022/2023

IB referred to the budget paper included within the board pack and advised the following

- It is still unknown whether we will receive any funding as a result of the DMO review.
- The budget predicts a year end deficit, and it is the intention to use part of the reserves to retain capacity within the business while a full review of both the LEP and MC is undertaken.

The Board approved the budget and the use of the surplus reserves on the understanding that the intent is to minimise the use of the reserves where possible, and to build back the level of reserves as soon as we are able to.

It was agreed that more time would be dedicated to reviewing the quarterly reforecasting at future board meetings.

- **Any Other Business**

None

Future Board Meetings

Thursday 1st September 2022

Thursday 10th November 2022

Thursday 15th December 2022

Signature (Trevor Brocklebank, Chair)

.....

Date

1st September 2022

Chief Executive update

Paper 250

1. Introduction

This quarter has been a particularly busy one, with team focused on delivery of campaigns and activity for both the destination and the LEP. Notable highlights this quarter include:

- Launching the 'Escape the Everyday' marketing campaign for Chester.
- Hosting travel trade visits to Chester and Cheshire from Ireland and Golf England.
- Working with the LEP and Pledge to host a successful event at Alderley Park.

2. Visitor economy summary

Inflation is impacting consumer spend and increasing business operating costs. A recent VisitBritain consumer insights report indicated that 20% of respondents had no option but to cut back on spending. Almost half of people are cautious and indicating a need to be careful with spend. Many are booking cheaper accommodation and looking for free things to do.

Attractions and events are indicating that they are about 85% of normal targets. There is caution about autumn and winter with limited forward bookings and energy costs predicted to increase further. Some further insights from the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions (ALVA) help us understand the national picture, see Annex 1.

On the positive side, Cheshire and Warrington are well placed to capitalise on current consumer sentiment and many of our businesses continue to perform well. People's main reasons for UK short breaks are:

- To get away from it all and have a rest
- Family time or time with my partner
- To connect with nature / be outdoors
- To spend time with friends

To support businesses, we have adapted our campaign activity to reflect these sentiments, highlight deals and availability, and to showcase ideas for unique experiences. We are increasing content including a roundup of 'events and ideas for the week ahead' to influence people who are still looking for things to do.

3. Destination Management Organisation Review

The government published its DMO response. The key points are;

- The government will introduce a new structured system for England's DMOs, whereby DMOs that successfully meet clear requirements will become part of a 'national portfolio'.
- The criteria for becoming part of the national portfolio will be designed and assessed by VisitEngland, in cooperation with DCMS, with a view to inviting applications in late summer.
- The government will pilot de Bois' proposed tiering model and the recommendation of multi-year core funding in a region of England.
- Subject to a successful pilot, the government's ambition is to roll out this approach nationally, however this is dependent on future funding.
- In future, DCMS, VisitEngland and other government departments and agencies should focus their engagement primarily with accredited LVEPs that are part of the national portfolio.

The Tourism Alliance has called the approach "good policy, poor funding". The de Bois review had recommended £51 million. Government allocated less than 10% of that amount. We are considering what this means as part of our business strategy development and how we evolve Marketing Cheshire as an officially recognised and accredited Destination Management Organisation.

4. Destination Chester and Destination Cheshire

With the support of the Destination Cheshire group, we are continuing to work on our campaign, "Our Family Welcomes your Family" that currently has 14 partners engaged. This has allowed us to generate a £30k budget to support the activity. This campaign revolves around digital advertising, content, photography and the new [ultimate guide](#). The autumn activity will highlight unique experiences such as the Rugby League World Cup, and continuing to bring together both paid and free experiences.

Marketing activity for Destination Chester has focused on delivering the 'Escape the Everyday' Campaign. Imagery included new experiences such as canoeing, running tours, cycling tours, gin tasting and brewery tours. Full creative examples and executions in the media can be seen in attached campaign deck. The press and social media reach is estimated at 5 million people. We also secured outdoor advertising positions at no charge in Birmingham, Liverpool and Cardiff. As part of the campaign, we also developed a partnership with Avanti Trains alongside Liverpool and Manchester. We have additionally had discussions with Transport for Wales around joint campaign activity in Birmingham, South Wales and across the North Wales coast.

We have now received a contract from Cheshire West and Chester for an additional £100,000 to deliver an ongoing programme for Destination Chester. As the finance update shows this is mainly spend budget for important activity for the city, including:

- Market research to inform new city positioning.
- Additional domestic marketing and PR activity to drive demand.
- Post arrival communication including events update and wayfinding.
- Building international engagement.
- Scoping future of Destination Chester, including potential TBID.

We are supporting Cheshire West and Chester with a One City Plan summit event in October where the key actions will be agreed. Destination Chester will then form part of the One City Plan governance and delivery structure.

5. Press and media

We have generated 32 articles. We assisted with hospitality for five media visits. Coverage gained included a dedicated feature on Nantwich in The Telegraph; Carden Park and Oddfellows on the Park were featured in the Sunday Times; and our family festivals press release appeared in the Daily Mail, Sunday Mirror, Sunday Express, The Telegraph and Cheshire Magazine. I also had the opportunity to be speak on national BBC breakfast; and have been on BBC radio Merseyside to promote the Marketing Cheshire Awards.

Chester received global coverage as research found it to be the most beautiful city in the world based on the so-called golden ratio. We have also been supporting the team at Cheshire East Council on Crewe's bid to be the HQ of Great British Rail. This included a Crewe Pop Idol hosted by Pete Waterman.

6. Website and social media

From April to date the visitcheshire.com website has had 429,892 visits and 924,966 page views, (users 8% down and page views 23% down from 2019, however new users are up by 1.5%). During this period Chester content was the most viewed, Cheshire Oaks and shopping, and outdoor content such as Delamere Forest were also popular. Our Jubilee event content had almost 8000 views. Our blog is going from strength to strength with almost 35,000 page views, 116% up from pre pandemic 2019. During this period, we also launched our successful Escape to Chester campaign in conjunction with Visit England. The Escape hub had almost 9000 views and generated 93 bookings (our target was 50).

7. Visitor Information Centre (VIC) in Chester

The VIC supported the successful delivery of this year's Chester Heritage Festival. Newly qualified Green Badge Guides have joined the other tour guides in starting their walks at the VIC. The VIC Manager, Isabel Robertson, is one of the new guides. The good working relationship with Chester Cathedral continues to grow, with the Cathedral's 'Tower Tour' being bookable via the VIC since May. The home-produced visitor guides continue to be popular with a new 'Chester in the Civil War' and a 'Step Free Chester' added to the VIC's 'Our Guides' range.

The Town Hall Parklet is again proving very successful and is popular with visitors and locals alike. The VIC team lock and unlock the parklet tables & benches at the beginning and end of each day, supporting CW&C in its delivery. The VIC team are very encouraged to see language school students begin to return to the city in significant numbers. Visitors from Liverpool docked cruise ships are also arriving in number again.

8. Partnership update and Marketing Cheshire awards

To date we have 80 partners confirmed for 2022-23 bringing in £47,500. Concentration is now on bringing new products to the website with a focus on the Warrington area. We want to

improve partner communications and have scheduled a full Marketing Cheshire partner calendar of events. We are reviewing how we can further strengthen our offer for the next Financial Year. On the 20th September we will be hosting a networking event at Jodrell Bank. All board members are invited although I will be on extended leave at the time.

We have launched calls for nominees for the Marketing Cheshire awards. This will take place on the 23rd March 2023. We are hosting a responsible business conference on the 13th October in partnership with Cheshire for Good and Sykes Cottages.

Joe Manning, Marketing Cheshire

Annex 1 – Insights from Association of Leading Visitor Attractions

1. Visitor numbers.

On average visitor attractions are hosting 30% fewer visitors than they received in 2019.

Some are at, or close to their 2019 visitor levels and others are down as much as 51%.

Those who are experiencing the greatest fall in visitor numbers are those which, traditionally, have been heavily dependent on the inbound market. Whilst international visitors are returning, notably from the USA and near Europe, and more quickly than anticipated, thanks to marketing campaigns and the effect of the weak pound against the dollar and the Euro, there is still some way to go to recover the 2019 level of inbound visitors. Several attractions have reported that the absence of the Chinese and Japanese markets is significant for them.

2. Cost of Living.

All attractions report the effects of the cost-of-living crisis.

Those attractions in rural areas are seeing clear evidence of a fall in the number of visitors coming by car, especially families, due to the rise of fuel prices.

Attractions which are free to enter, or perceived to be free to enter, are benefiting from consumers making tactical choices about how they spend their leisure pounds and leisure hours. However even at these attractions the cost-of-living crisis is having a detrimental effect: donations at free to enter cathedrals, abbeys, churches and places of faith are down, on average, 20% compared to 2021.

All attractions mentioned the effects that the cost-of-living crisis and inflation is having on their supply chains, significantly in food and beverage. The significant difficulty in recruiting for F&B roles (see below) plus the inability to purchase the full range of F&B products means that for many attractions not only are they having to reduce the opening hours of their catering facilities, or often close them, but also reduce the range of the menu too, potentially affecting the visitor experience and the likelihood for visitors to return.

The price of building materials has increased by 150% since last summer. This has had a significant effect on capital projects, ongoing restoration requirements and facilities management.

3. Recruitment.

All attractions report significant recruitment challenges in the areas of food and beverage, catering, chefs, cleaning, security, facilities, and front of house.

These challenges often mean that attractions must limit their visitor numbers, their opening times and, indeed, whether they open at all as they cannot be staffed safely. The reduced capacity and opening hours are limiting the speed and the success of the recovery of the business which is all the more frustrating when the businesses know that there is consumer demand.

There is anxiety that these current recruitment challenges will be exacerbated in the Autumn and Winter when increased fuel and heating bills take effect and businesses will find it difficult, if not impossible, to meet additional demands for pay increases.

4. COVID.

COVID has not gone away and is having two significant impacts.

The first is that attractions are reporting the effect that the resurgence of COVID is having on their staff and their ability to open their properties safely and fully. Some attractions reported their greatest COVID-related sickness levels this summer than they have ever had during the pandemic.

The second is COVID-anxiety, especially amongst older people. ALVA's latest visitor sentiment research, published in June 2022, showed that a significant proportion (42%) of attraction-visiting audiences were anxious about COVID to the extent that it detrimentally affected their visit or prevented them visiting. Indoor music performances, especially classical music concerts, have seen their pre-pandemic older audiences fall by 20% (and in some cases replaced by a younger demographic). COVID-anxiety is also affecting the return of volunteers, often retired, to attractions. Some attractions have reported that whilst many volunteers have returned, the number and hours are not back to pre-COVID levels, affecting the ability to fully staff or fully open a property.

5. Secondary spend.

With some notable exceptions visitor spending on retail at attractions has been falling since the start of the year and hasn't reached 2019 spending levels. Many attractions reported very high visitor spend on retail during the pandemic (online) and when attractions were able to physically reopen, and sales remained high until approximately Easter this year. Retail sales, on average, are now down 15% compared to 2019.

Spending on Food and Beverage has largely held up against last summer (which was very high) and against 2019, though there is evidence that this has started to fall slightly in the last 6 weeks. There have been a large number of travel stories, consumer tips and 'influencer' articles in the UK media over the last few months about how to enjoy a 'cheap day out' and many recommend that visitors bring their own food and drinks on their visits. Another reason for a fall in spending is a reduction in opening hours at some F&B outlets because of the lack of availability of staff and, in some cases, supplies.

An exception to both of these things is sale of alcohol at performance venues, which has increased since the summer of 2021 and is also back to 2019 levels despite audience numbers not quite being back to pre-pandemic numbers.

6. Booking behaviour.

Attractions report that advanced bookings for ticketed events, especially for theatre performances, shows, concerts, prom events etc. has fallen, on average, by 40%.

There is clear evidence that there is an unwillingness on the part of the ticket-buying public to book for events more than a couple of months in advance and there has been a significant increase in last minute bookings (in the days prior to an event). Much of this can be attributed to COVID anxiety and worries about committing to a future purchase when you might not be able to attend. There is also evidence of a caution on the part of the public in buying tickets now for events which will take place in Autumn and Winter when there will be additional heating and fuel costs, and so a tougher financial environment.

7. Memberships.

Family memberships sold very well across a range of attractions last summer as the UK public prioritised holidaying at home. Attrition rates are always highest in the first year following the purchase of a membership but this year there is clear evidence that fewer family memberships, taken out in the summer of 2021, are being retained this summer. However, there was an increase in sales of family memberships (especially of principally outdoor attractions such as zoos, parks, gardens, and heritage properties) from Easter 2022 in anticipation of the cost-of-living crisis and to take advantage of the value for money that the memberships represent. There has been a slowing down of sales of family memberships since early June as the cost-of-living crisis has deepened.

8. Group visits.

Attractions report that group visits by UK school groups are back to, or will be back to pre-pandemic levels by the end of this calendar year.

Adult groups, however, are slower to return. On average these groups are down 51% compared to pre-pandemic levels. This can be partly explained by the age demographic, mentioned above; older groups (for example University of the Third Age) represent a demographic which is COVID-anxious and which has gotten 'out of the habit' of visiting attractions and especially indoor venues. We know that for them the cost of visiting is not an inhibiting factor, it is their hesitation or fear about exposing themselves to COVID infection.

International groups numbers are down, reflecting the partial recovery of the inbound market, and there is a particular fall in groups from the cruise industry.

A number of attractions also reported very high cancellation rates amongst groups (some up to 66%) and of a significant increase in last minute cancellations. This is attributed to COVID infections on the one hand, and the phenomena of people making purchasing decisions very late in the day, leaving tour operators and coach companies to cancel their bookings due to poor take-up.

9. Impact of rail strikes and extreme weather.

Rail strikes had the greatest impact of all on the theatre and performance sector in London. Shows were cancelled, there was a significant number of cancellations and requests for refunds by customers, and the knowledge that the rail strikes will continue has affected consumer confidence in making purchasing decisions. Cancellations and the caution about future bookings is a significant economic impact on live performance venues and is causing them to worry about cash flow and the economics of the Autumn and Winter programme.

The extreme hot weather has had an impact on attractions. On those days in mid-July when the UK experienced unprecedented temperatures, visitor numbers at outdoor spaces (parks, gardens, heritage sites, arboretums) fell significantly. One outdoor attraction said that on those days they received the same very small number of people as they would in mid-Winter.

Indoor attractions did not necessarily benefit from the extreme weather because although they are, on the whole, cool, temperature-controlled spaces, visitors were put off using public transport or their own transport to visit.

DESTINATION CHESTER

Escape the Everyday Campaign Update



VisitEngland 'Escape the Everyday' - Summary of campaign for Chester

- Awarded funding from competition for domestic tourism and city breaks
- Campaign live between May-June 2022
- Campaign had to be targeted at "pre-nester" couples aged 25-45
- Short breaks, experience-led message, focus on bookable experiences
- Midweek and weekends
- New photography at 6 different locations
- Marketing partnership with Avanti and Northern Rail (taking place in July after the strikes)
- £80k media spend funded by VisitEngland (social media and digital display)
- 24 bookable experience presented on new Chester events and experiences hub

These slides

- Recap initial results and insights on the Escape the Everyday campaign
- Provide a visual identity update, including website screen grabs

1. New imagery of Chester experiences



2. Campaign hub on Visitchester.com including bookable experiences and accommodation as well as itineraries



You are here: Escape to Chester - Book Experiences

Escape to Chester - Book Experiences

Chester is a truly unique city, brimming with history, culture, dining, and all kinds of adventures to be had. Sitting on its 2000-year-old foundations, and with plenty of evidence of its fascinating past, Chester is just as vibrant and alive as ever, making it a perfect place for you to escape the everyday and book a short break. Winner of the iTravel Staycation City of the Year, Chester can be what you make of it: From a perfect city escape filled with world-class attractions and events, or a foodie paradise boasting everything from Michelin-starred cuisine to some of the best street food, to an exploration of thousands of years of history and culture, and a place to explore new adventures like kayaking, stand up paddleboarding and reconnecting with nature.

The city is always alive...

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Experience Ideas



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Activities

Tours & Sightseeing

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Food & Drink

Attractions



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Chester Zoo

Animal Collection

Chester Outskirts

A visit to Cheshire isn't complete without a trip to the UK's number one zoo. Chester Zoo is home to over 27,000 endangered and exotic animals based in beautiful, award-winning zoological gardens.



Buy Tickets >

Chester Cycle Tours

Sightseeing

Chester Centre

Chester Cycle Tours provide the bikes, you provide the pedal-power!



Buy Tickets >

Treasure Hunt Chester

Walking Tour

Chester Centre

Hunt for clues and follow treasure maps on a gorgeous route around the city. Climb the Roman walls, admire the stunning cathedral, explore the amphitheatre and wander by the riverside. Marvel at the...



Buy Tickets >

Dee River Kayaking

Adventure Sport Centre

Chester

Dee River Kayaking is a friendly and professional river kayaking service based in Chester. We offer guided tours and instruction in both Kayak and Stand Up Paddleboard, so however you'd like to get...

Experiences

Activities

Tours & Sightseeing

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Attractions



Buy Tickets >

ChesterBoat - Sightseeing River Cruises and Private Hire

Boat Trip

Chester Centre

Enjoy a different side of Chester - the riverside! Sail with us along the beautiful River Dee.



Buy Tickets >

BusyBus (Sightseeing Tours)

Sightseeing

Chester

BusyBus were established in 2003 and provide fully narrated award-winning sightseeing adventures to North Wales, The Lake District and Yorkshire.



Buy Tickets >

Chester Ghost Tours

Walking Tour

Chester Centre

Chester Ghost Tours have been delving into haunted happenings for over 30 years in a city renowned for its action-packed past.



Buy Tickets >

Chester Running Tours

Sightseeing

Chester Centre

Looking for a different way to see and learn about Chester? Then why not take a 5K or 10K running tour.



Buy Tickets >

Taste of Chester Food Walking Tours

Walking Tour

Chester Centre

The goal is to provide you with the ultimate, off the beaten track, food and cultural experience. These guided walking tours offer a relaxed unique and memorable food tasting experience through...



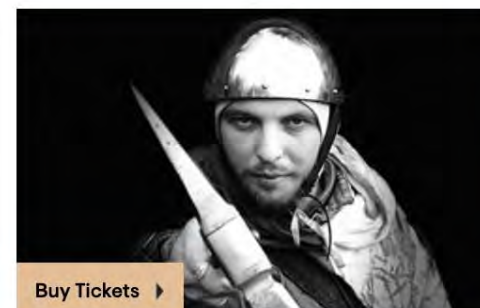
Buy Tickets >

Chester Cycle Tours

Sightseeing

Chester Centre

Chester Cycle Tours provide the bikes, you provide the pedal-power!



Buy Tickets >

Medieval Tours

Walking Tour

Chester Centre

This exciting and unique tour will focus on medieval Chester in the year of 1403



Buy Tickets >

Chester Heritage Festival

Festival

Chester Centre

Between 17th - 27th June, Chester Heritage Festival tells the story of our city and its people.



Buy Tickets >

Roman Tours

Walking Tour

Chester Centre

Dedicated to illuminating the life of Roman soldiers and life in Roman Britain.

Experiences

Activities

Tours & Sightseeing

Events & Performances

Food & Drink

Attractions



Buy Tickets >

Chester Heritage Festival

Festival

Chester Centre

Between 17th - 27th June, Chester Heritage Festival tells the story of our city and its people.



Buy Tickets >

Christmas at the Magical Woodland

Family Friendly

With the woodland as a natural backdrop, you will experience a truly magical Christmas experience. This is a walking experience where you will embark on a journey through a 15 acre magical woodland.



Buy Tickets >

Moonlight Flicks at Claremont Farm

Outdoors

Wirral

Storyhouse's Moonlight Flicks returns this summer with the largest and longest open-air season of cinema to date.



Buy Tickets >

Brewhouse & Kitchen

Restaurant

Chester

Brewhouse and Kitchen are a bit different from your traditional pub - they brew their own, unique craft beers on-site in their brew-tiful microbrewery!



Buy Tickets >

Taste of Chester Food Walking Tours

Walking Tour

Chester Centre

The goal is to provide you with the ultimate, off the beaten track, food and cultural experience. These guided walking tours offer a relaxed unique and memorable food tasting experience through...



Buy Tickets >

Afternoon Tea at the Townhouse Chester

Afternoon Tea

Chester Centre

For the perfect afternoon tea, your experience should meet a few requirements.



Buy Tickets >

Moonlight Flicks at Snugburys

Outdoors

Nantwich

Storyhouse's Moonlight Flicks returns this summer with the largest and longest open-air season of cinema to date.



Buy Tickets >

Spitting Feathers Brewbarn Sessions

Food & Drink

Chester Outskirts

Brewbarn Sessions are Saturday afternoons of beer, food, music and laughs at Spitting Feathers HQ.



Buy Tickets >

Spitting Feathers Beer Festival

Food & Drink

Chester Outskirts

We hold our beer festival every year on the 3rd Saturday in July and it's ace.



Buy Tickets >

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Buy Tickets >

Moonlight Flicks at the Lambing Shed

Film

Knutsford

Fresh hot food will be available on the night from Lambing Shed - menu available soon! There will be a bar serving up ice cold craft beers, gin, cider, wine and prosecco as well as soft drinks,...



Buy Tickets >

Moonlight Flicks at Dean's Field

Outdoors

Chester Centre

Storyhouse's Moonlight Flicks returns this summer with the largest and longest open-air season of cinema to date.



Buy Tickets >

Grosvenor Park Open Air Theatre - Romeo & Juliet - sponsored by mbna

Festival

Chester

Grosvenor Park Open Air Theatre is back! Pop the prosecco and come together again, finally, for an extended summer of joyful theatre in the park.

Experiences

Activities

Tours & Sightseeing

Events & Performances

Food & Drink

Attractions

Experiences

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Tours & Sightseeing

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Food & Drink

Attractions



Buy Tickets ▶

ChesterBoat - Sightseeing River Cruises and Private Hire

Boat Trip

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Enjoy a different side of Chester - the riverside! Sail with us along the beautiful River Dee.



Buy Tickets ▶

Chester Zoo

Animal Collection

Chester Outskirts

A visit to Cheshire isn't complete without a trip to the UK's number one zoo. Chester Zoo is home to over 27,000 endangered and exotic animals based in beautiful, award-winning zoological gardens.



Buy Tickets ▶

Cheshire Oaks Designer Outlet

Shop / Shopping Centre

Cheshire

Trendsetters, foodies, label lovers, it's time to make some noise for the infamous McArthurGlen Designer Outlet, Cheshire Oaks.



Buy Tickets ▶

Sick to Death

Museum

Chester Centre

Explore the gory story of medicine through time. Learn and laugh in a gross but family fun attraction.

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CHESTER &
CHESHIRE

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Chester What's On Things To Do Accommodation Food & Drink Shopping Cheshire Inspiration Explore Visitor Info



Hotel Indigo Chester

You are here: Accommodation > Chester Hotels

Hotels in Chester

There is a fantastic range of hotels in Chester of all sizes and ratings, ranging from the modest and affordable family-run establishments right the way up to the luxury 5-star spa hotels and grand country house hotels.

Whether you need to be well placed for attractions, such as hotels near Chester Zoo, or to be in the thick of it all with one of the many hotels in Chester city centre, there is sure to be a perfect property and location for your trip to Chester.

A selection of boutique hotels in Chester as well as luxury & 5 star hotels in Chester can be found here. Wherever you decide to stay, you will be assured of the highest standards, all the facilities you would expect, plus of course a warm Chester welcome.

You can use this website to search for your perfect...

READ MORE

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3. Eshot and promotion via visitengland channels



© Great West Way

Hi Mia

Can you believe we're almost halfway through 2022? We can't! But with the summer holidays just around the corner, there are plenty of chances to escape the everyday in England.

Fancy canoeing past Windsor Castle, sampling zero-waste restaurants in Chester, scrambling up boulders in Derbyshire or snapping one-of-a-kind street art in Bristol? Then take a look at some of the epic trip ideas from our destination partners and start planning a well-deserved summer break.



Mix Roman ruins with sustainable suppers in a historic walled city.

Escape to Chester



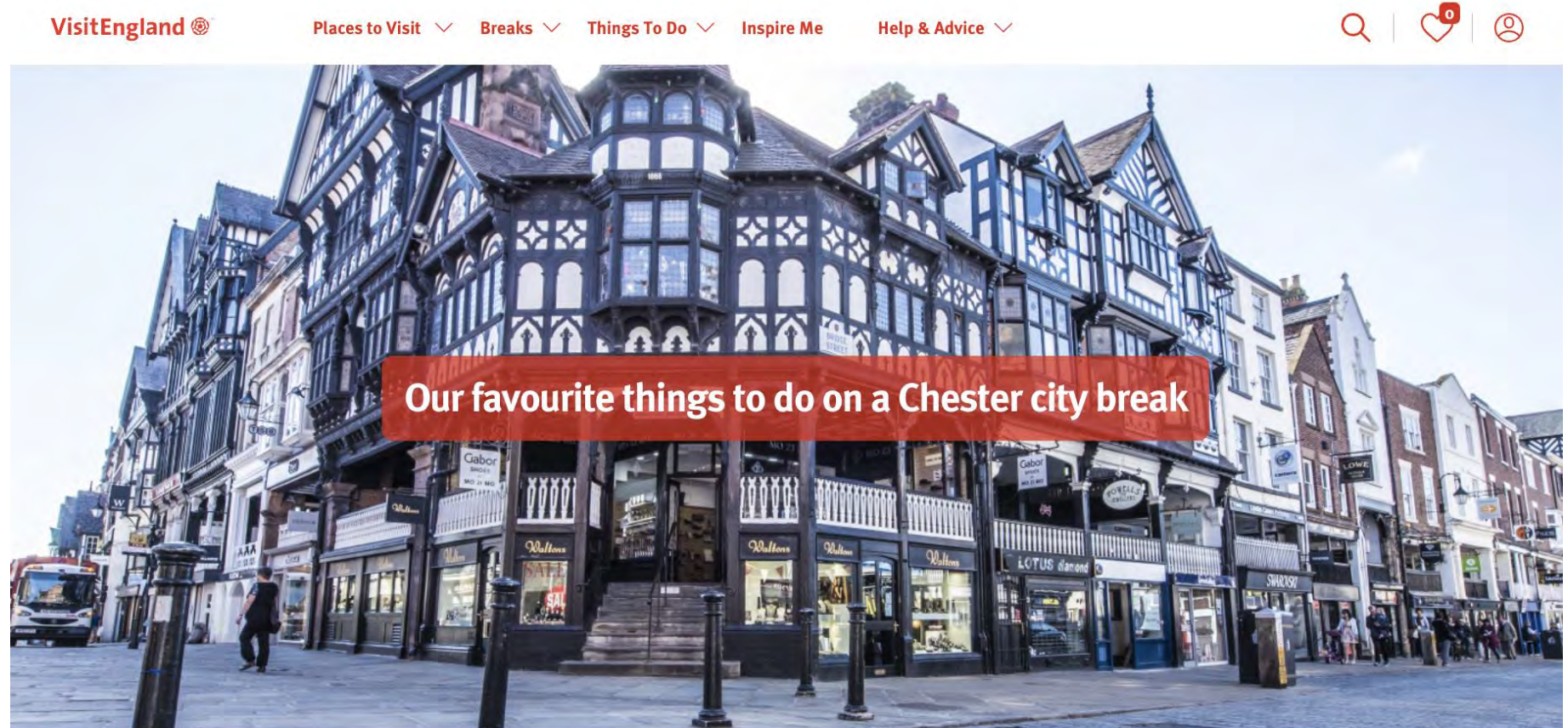
Come Together for bottomless brunches and endless Beatles history.

Escape to Liverpool



Go behind the scenes at football stadiums and try tasty hidden gems.

Escape to Manchester



Add to your Favourites

Top things to do in Chester

This pretty northwest city is one of the best-preserved examples of a walled city in the whole of Britain and inside these walls, you'll find Roman ruins, one of the most historical shopping districts in the world, plenty of chic restaurants and some amazing museums too. Head just beyond the walls and you'll come across the biggest ice cream shop in the world, a 16th-century horseracing course and an iconic zoo featured on Channel 4. Interest piqued? We've got all the tips you need for an unforgettable city break in this former Roman fortress.

1 Must-visit attractions in Chester

Chester Zoo, Chester



© Chester Zoo



- 1 Chester Zoo, Chester
- 2 Hypha, City Walls
- 3 Chester City Walls
- 4 Dee River Kayaking
- 5 Chester Racecourse
- 6 The Chester Grosvenor
- 7 Roman Tours
- 8 The Rows, Chester
- 9 Deva Roman Discovery Centre

HELLO

Results

HELLO
Starling

Visit Chester

Escape the Everyday

Media partner results by channel

Meta Network

Facebook/Instagram/Messenger/Audience Network

- We reached just over 1.05 million people across 5.31 million impressions.
- We drove 25,039 visitors to the website.
- There were 237 post reactions, 12 shares and 77 saves.
- The average person saw each ad 5.06 times over the campaign period.
- The unique click-through rate percentage was 2.12% (a brilliant result!).

Ads - in general, all ad sets performed well with the Waterpark adverts slightly ahead of the others.



Source - the majority of traffic came from Facebook (23k visits), Instagram sat at 1.5k and Messenger was 4. This is normal. Facebook is generally the big traffic driver across the Meta network.

Demos - males accounted for 52% of the traffic with females making up the remaining 46% with a small number of uncategorised users.


52% of traffic came from the 35-44-year-old bracket and 45% came from the 25-34 bracket.

- .


Meta Network

 Visit Chester and Cheshire
Sponsored · 



Grab a wetsuit and take to the Dee aboard your choice of kayak or paddleboard 🛶
Escape to Chester. A city. A waterpark.








Escape to Chester [Book Now](#)



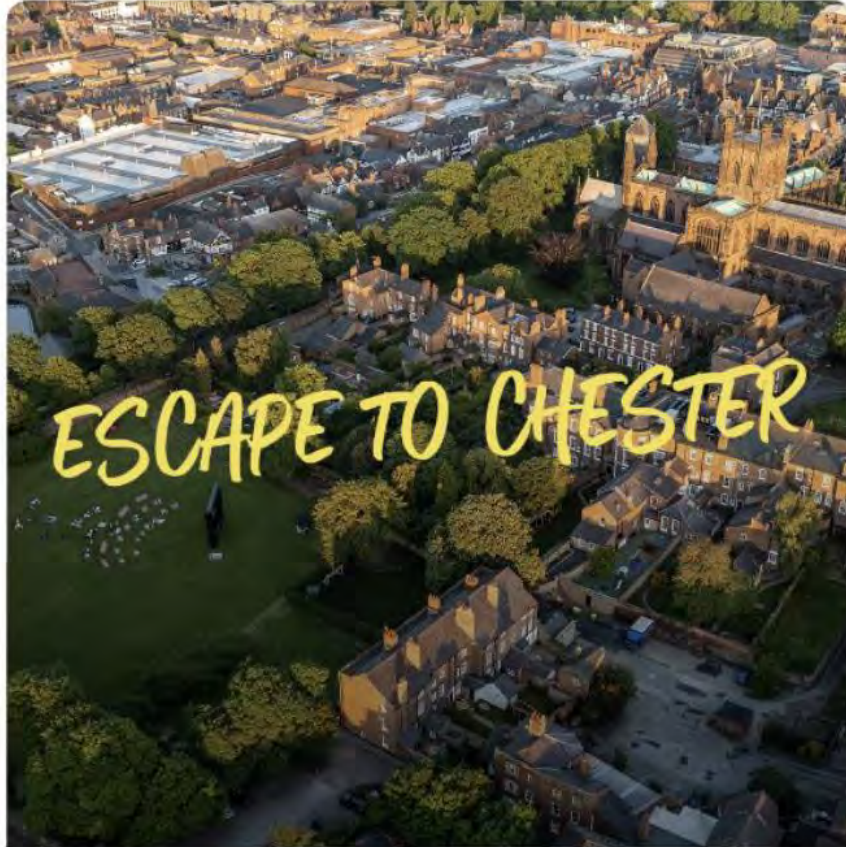
A city

 15  1 share


 Like  Comment  Share

 Visit Chester and Cheshire
Sponsored · 


Chester's open-air cinema experience is a unique way to enjoy some of your favourite films under the stars and in some magnificent surroundings. You've never been to the movies like this before!






Escape to Chester [Book Now](#)



A city

 9

 Like  Comment  Share

Meta Network



Visit Chester and Cheshire

Sponsored · 🌐



Wander the gorgeous grounds of Chester Zoo, meeting all sorts of animals along the way. Escape to Chester. A city. A jungle.



Escape to Chester

Book Now



A city

👍 14

1 share

👍 Like

💬 Comment

➦ Share



Visit Chester and Cheshire

Sponsored · 🌐

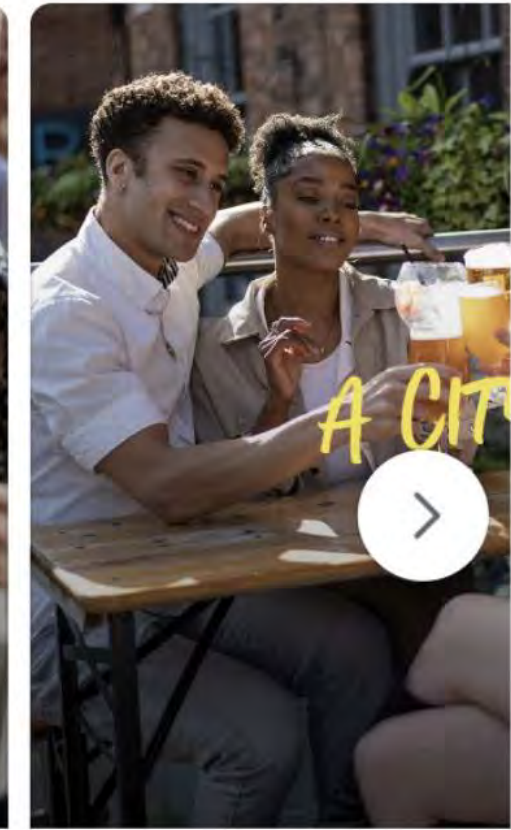


Chester is a renowned foodies' paradise. You'll find Michelin-awarded eateries alongside casual dining and some of the best street food around. Escape to Chester. A city. A brewery.



Escape to Chester

Book Now



A city

👍 8

👍 Like

💬 Comment


➦ Share

Meta Network

HELLO
Starling

Visit Chester and Cheshire
Sponsored · 🌐

Chester is a unique city, brimming with history, culture, dining, and all kinds of adventures to be had making it a perfect place for you to escape the everyday and book a short break.



Escape to Chester [Book Now](#)


A city

7 1 share

Like Comment Share

Visit Chester and Cheshire
Sponsored · 🌐

Get your running shoes on and learn about Chester's most iconic sites including the city walls, cathedral and the Eastgate Clock.



Escape to Chester [Book Now](#)

A city

7 1 share

Like Comment Share

Meta Network



Visit Chester and Cheshire

Sponsored · 🌐



Experience Chester on two wheels with a unique cycling experience taking you through Chester's fascinating architecture and history while keeping active.



Escape to Chester

Book Now



A city

👍 4

2 shares

👍 Like

💬 Comment

➦ Share

Google search and Display

Search

- We drove 1,587 visits to the website from 77,287 impressions.
- This is good because it results in a CTR% of 2.05% which is brilliant.
- 85% of the ads were shown as the top advert.

Display

- We drove 1,087 visits to the website from 284,314 impressions.
- Resulting in a CTR% of 0.38%

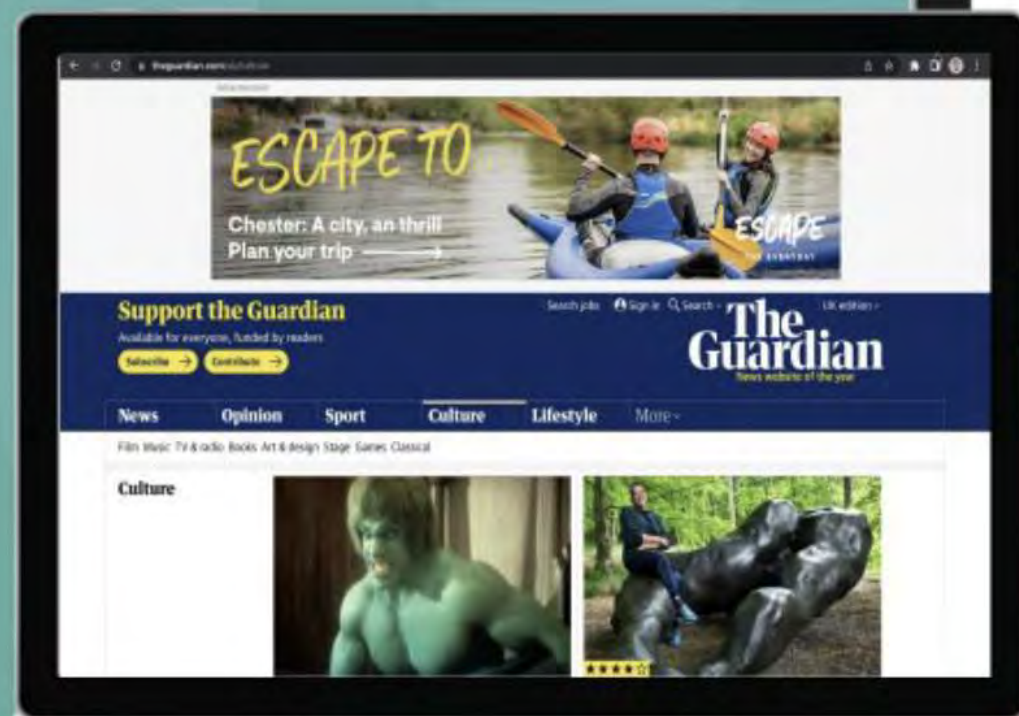
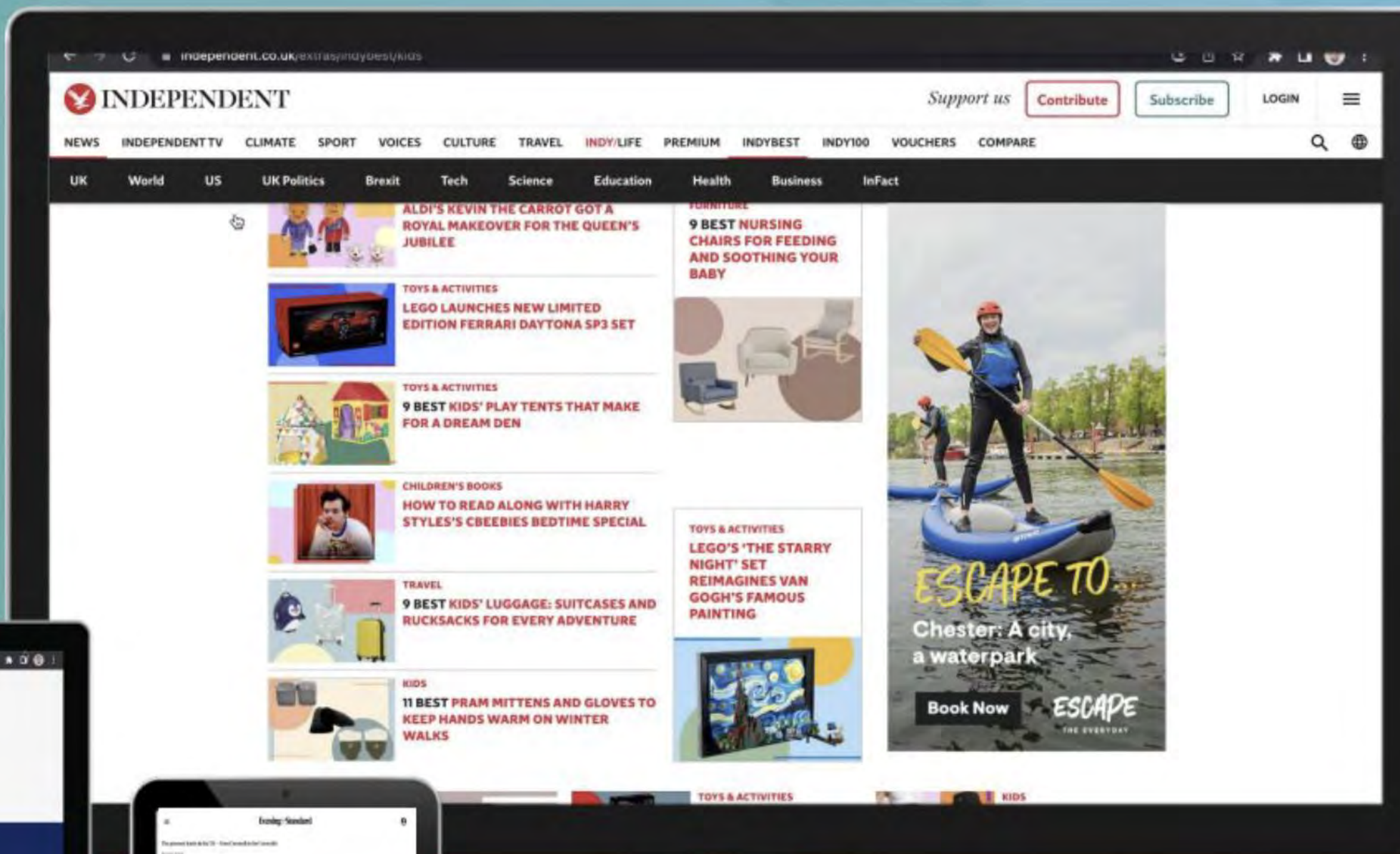
National Newsbrands

Exposed Users	Engaged Users	Higher Average Dwell Time
Careers: 1.54x	Careers: 1.67x	Careers: 1.56x
Fine Art: 1.32x	Fine Art: 1.27x	Fine Art: 1.45x
Business & Finance: 1.19x	Automotive: 1.19x	Business & Finance: 1.14x

*The above table shows the content topics that your campaign's target audience indexed highly against, compared to the average Ozone portfolio reader.

Newsbrands

HELLO
Starling





- 1 Let Runner's World+ Help You Crush Your Fall Race!
- 2 Good News for Marathoners Trying to Make Olympics
- 3 30-Year-Old Man Says Apple Watch Saved His Life
- 4 The 8 Best Skechers Running Shoes You Can Buy
- 5 What Starting to Exercise Now Does to Health Later



ESCAPE TO... Chester: A city, a playground
Plan Your Trip →

Everything You Need to Know About Marathon Training

Get the facts before you go the distance.

RW EMILY ABBATE and RUNNER'S WORLD EDITORS

Top 10 Performing Publishers

Publisher	Impressions	CTR	Viewability
Telegraph	248,883	0.08%	74.10%
The Sun	204,023	0.06%	80.50%
The Guardian	67,507	0.10%	77.38%
Mirror	39,606	0.12%	71.78%
Independent	36,794	0.23%	83.74%
Standard	22,464	0.16%	90.74%
Daily Record	17,026	0.11%	68.05%
Scottish Sun	16,918	0.09%	74.22%
Manchester Evening News	14,878	0.09%	68.46%
Daily Star	14,364	0.06%	65.22%

BRITAIN

VISIT CHESTER & CHESHIRE

[Book Experiences](#) [Things to Do](#) [Outdoor & Active](#) [Food & Drink](#) [Heritage](#)



Chester is a truly unique city, brimming with history, culture, dining, and all kinds of adventures to be had. Sitting on its 2000-year-old foundations, and with plenty of evidence of its fascinating past, Chester is just as vibrant and alive as ever, making it a perfect place for you to escape the everyday and book a short break.

Winner of the iTravel Staycation City of the Year, Chester can be what you make of it: from a perfect city escape filled with world-class attractions and events, to a foodie paradise boasting everything from Michelin-starred cuisine to incredible street food. It's a place where you can uncover thousands of years of history and culture, reconnect with nature, and explore new adventures like kayaking and stand up paddleboarding.



Subscribe now
Free for 30 days

Home · [Royal Family](#)

What happens when the Queen dies?



Save 13



Plans for the Queen's death and the accession of the new King Charles have been drawn up in detail already - but what will happen? CREDIT: ANDREW MILLIGAN/PA WIRE



MORE STORIES

- 1 John McDonnell threatens to march on palace and tell Queen: 'We're taking over' if Boris Johnson...
- 2 Banker drowns himself in private swimming pool after becoming convinced he was going to prison
- 4 UK weather: Warnings issued as Britain braces for heavy rain and high winds

Partner Stories

7 things to see and explore in Chester throughout the week

From an exciting visit to the zoo with the whole family, to a relaxing city cruise with friends, there's something for everyone



By Leena Sidat
12:55, 22 JUN 2022



Enjoy a fantastic day out at the UK's number one zoo, meeting and learning about over 500 different animal species

If you want to enjoy the historic and vibrant city of Chester, but want to avoid the crowds, why not visit during the week?

There's no shortage of things to do and you could even save money while doing so. Hotel rates are also cheaper during the week, giving you all the more reason to visit.

So, if you're in need of some midweek inspiration, here are seven things to do in Chester.

RECOMMENDED



Best splash park in Midlands has a café, free parking and pedalo lake



Molly Mae Hague kicked out of Dubai club by security



Golden sandy beach where you can swim and have a BBQ in the Midlands



6 enchanting sea-side towns that feel like you're in a fairy tale



Two of the region's biggest attractions join forces for new combi-ticket

RECOMMENDED



There are 22 castles within easy reach of



June 17, 2022

ESCAPE TO THRILLS

Chester: A city, a waterpark
Book now at: visitchester.com/escape

ESCAPE

THE EVERYDAY

VISIT
CHESTER &
CHESHIRE



Enjoy a fantastic day out at the UK's number one zoo, meeting and learning about over 500 different animal species

7 things to see and explore in Chester throughout the week

FROM AN EXCITING VISIT TO THE ZOO WITH THE WHOLE FAMILY, TO A RELAXING CITY CRUISE WITH FRIENDS, THERE'S SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

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1. VISIT THE ANIMALS AT CHESTER ZOO

Set across 128 acres of zoological gardens, 20,000+ animals - from elephants to penguins and giraffes - mean there is always something new to explore and discover at Chester Zoo.

As well as being the UK's most visited zoo, it is also a leading conservation and education charity committed to preventing extinction.

You can save by visiting midweek as opposed to the weekend, and there are now also afternoon passes, allowing entry from 2pm and still giving you ample time to explore at a further discounted rate.

The onsite pub and restaurant, The Oakfield, makes for some great dining in some serene surroundings.

2. SET SAIL ON THE RIVER DEE WITH CHESTERBOAT

A firm favourite for visitors to the city, ChesterBoat offers a unique way to explore the city.

Leaving from the promenade of the River Dee, you can set sail on a serene sightseeing cruise down the river and take in some of the best views of the city and surrounding landscape.

You can enjoy daily half-hour cruises onboard one of ChesterBoat's fleet of cushy liners or on selected dates take the leisurely two-hour Iron Bridge cruise, where you'll sail even farther and explore more of the stunning surroundings that Chester has to offer.

The boats all have a fully stocked bar, so you can sit back and relax with a range of beers, wines, fizz and spirits as you take in the views.

3. EXPLORE CHESTER'S DARK PAST WITH SICK TO DEATH

On the historic Rows and within the 16th-century St Michael's Church, you'll find Sick to Death - one of Chester's latest historical attractions with some quirky interactive exhibitions and displays to explore the history of medicine in the city.

Try performing your own autopsy, learn about the plague and plague doctors in Chester, or enter Diagnosis Alley - where

you'll have to avoid deadly diseases.

Here, history comes to life in a truly weird and wonderful - and at times a little gross - way. It's definitely not to be missed if you're a fan of the macabre side of history!

4. EXPLORE CHESTER BY KAYAK OR PADDLEBOARD

One of the most striking features of the city is the River Dee running along the city's edge - and is perfect for watersports such as kayaking and paddleboarding.

With the Dee offering beautiful meandering flats, man-made waterfalls, and natural rapids, there's something on offer for everyone, from pros to absolute beginners.

You can take guided tours along the river in your choice of watercraft and will be instructed on how to use your kayak or paddleboard if required.

There are various experiences available including Calm Water Kayaking where an experienced guide will take you out onto some calmer areas of the river, or for those seeking thrills, there's White Water Kayaking where the water flows a little (or a lot) faster.

There's also Stand Up Paddleboarding - your guide can take you on a three-hour excursion down the Dee on your paddleboard, giving tricks and tips along the way, letting you experience Chester

from a whole new perspective.

5. RELAX WITH AFTERNOON TEA AT THE TOWNHOUSE

With charming 18th-century exteriors and Victorian architecture, The Townhouse offers a boutique experience.

A stone's throw from gorgeous promenades along the River Dee, it's the perfect place to relax and enjoy the quintessentially British tradition of afternoon tea. It can be a chance to reconnect with friends, enjoy with family, or perhaps a quirky date idea.

Expect delicate finger sandwiches, pastries, scones, and a sublime selection of teas, as well as freshly-ground coffee.

You can also make it a sparkling afternoon tea, which includes a glass of fizz, or even an endless prosecco afternoon tea, so you can keep the prosecco flowing for an hour and a half.

6. MEET A REAL ROMAN WITH ROMAN TOURS

Chester was deemed by Professor Alice Roberts as the 'most Roman' city in the UK - and for good reason.

You can still see the Roman foundations of the city's walls - it's home to the largest amphitheatre in the UK, and evidence of the Roman fort can be found in all types of places, including some shops.

With Roman Tours, you will be guided by a friendly, knowledgeable and authentic Roman Centurion through Chester's infamous Roman past.

This is a unique experience where you'll learn a lot and see the city in a new light, with your guide demystifying the Roman remains in the city.

Chester is famous for these Roman tours and it's a great chance to grab a selfie with a real Roman!

7. SHOP AND SAVE AT CHESHIRE OAKS DESIGNER OUTLET

Not far from the city centre and easily accessible by a regular bus, Cheshire Oaks Designer Outlet is one for the shopaholics and those who love a bargain.

There are over 140 designer and premium brands with everything from Vans to Nike and Polo Ralph Lauren, offering up to 60 per cent off RRP.

You'll also find a superb range of restaurants, with everything from Mowgli to Wagamama to keep you going.

What's more, the Under the Oak festival is coming which promises street food, bars and a rooftop terrace with live music to fully embrace the summer. You can now enjoy some real VIP perks by booking online, such as premium parking and an extra 10 per cent off at certain stores.

To find out more about what Chester has to offer, check out Visit Chester's website www.visitcheshire.com/chester

Digital Outdoor – Birmingham, Solihull, Liverpool









**LONDON TO
CHESTER IN
2 HOURS 1 MIN.**

BOOK NOW

Partnership with Avanti – promotion on their channels alongside Manchester and Liverpool in July. Chester distinctive proposition more outdoor offer

*T&Cs apply

AVANTI
WEST COAST

