



**Yorkshire Tourist Board**  
**Key Data Report**  
**Visitor Attraction Trends in Yorkshire 2007**

**May 2008**

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## Yorkshire Visitor Attraction Monitor Yearly Trends for 2006/07

### Introduction

This report will identify the trends in the number of visits to Yorkshire attractions compared with the national average. There is minimal official national data produced that gives an indication of the performance of attractions throughout the year, however in 2006, Visit Britain commissioned BDRC to manage the England Attractions Monitor, to provide feedback on current trends in visits to attractions in England.

Using the results of the 2006 Visits to Visitor Attraction Survey, the 2007 England Attraction Monitor and the results from the Yorkshire Tourist Board's Monthly Visitor Attraction Monitor 2007, we aim to identify how the attractions in Yorkshire are performing compared to the average for England.

The Yorkshire Tourist Board Visitor Attraction Monitor is sent out to 176 attractions within Yorkshire and Ex Humber side, but for consistency, a sample of 70 attractions that provided visit figures every month of 2007 has been used.

### Overall Visitor Trends to Attractions 2006/2007

The Visits to Visitor Attraction survey 2006 (VisitBritain) has shown a gradual increase in the number of visitors to attractions in Yorkshire over the past 5 years. The total amount of visitors to attractions in the region has increased from 7.8 million in 2002, to 8.7 million in 2006, which equates to an 11.5% rise. When comparing this figure to the number of visits to England attractions as a whole, visits to attractions in Yorkshire have risen by 4.8% more than visits to all England attractions, which have increased by 6.7% between 2002 and 2006.

According to the quarter 1 (January to March) report of the England Attraction Monitor (VisitBritain), January 2007 was the warmest since 1916, and high levels of sunshine were also seen in the quarter. This corresponded with a 13% increase in visitor numbers across the 551 participating attractions, compared to quarter 1 2006.

In contrast, quarter 2 2007 saw rainfall levels significantly above average, particularly in June, when extensive flooding occurred in several areas of England, including Yorkshire. Despite this, visits to attractions increased by 5% overall compared to the same period in 2006; although June was less positive, with a rise of less than 0.5%.

Findings from quarter 3's report were less positive, with visitor numbers increasing by only 1% from 2006. Visits to outdoor attractions correlated heavily with the weather, with a less positive result in the wet July, than in August and September, when it was relatively dry.

The results for quarter 4's survey show an increase in admissions of 4%, which was driven by a strong growth in visitor numbers in October. This is likely to be due to schools' October half term, and the fact that this quarter saw above average sunshine levels and below average rainfall.

The increases in visits in all 4 quarters of 2007 are encouraging, particularly as according to the autumn 2007 edition of Visitor's Voice (Issue 8, VisitBritain), "Generally warm and sunny weather last year [2006] helped England's attractions record solid increases in admissions"; a vast contrast to the extremely wet weather witnessed in 2007.

Another concern for attractions, highlighted by Visitor's Voice summer edition 2007, was that road congestion may be hurting some visitor attractions in England, as there is increasing evidence that traffic congestion and the increase in travel time on road networks is proving detrimental to medium sized attractions. For three consecutive quarters in 2006, smaller attractions outperformed their midsize and larger rivals.

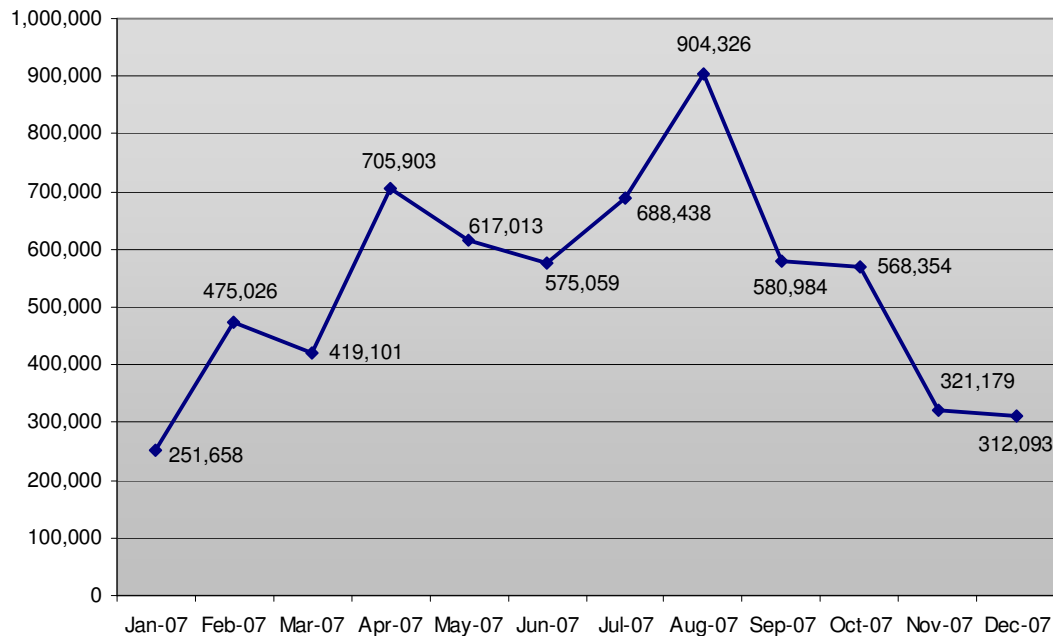
**2007 Visitor Numbers to Yorkshire Attractions**

**Table 1-** Visits to Yorkshire Attractions by Sub-Region

	Sample	Jan-07	Feb-07	Mar-07	Apr-07	May-07	Jun-07	Jul-07	Aug-07	Sep-07	Oct-07	Nov-07	Dec-07
Ex Humberside	4	24,766	47,351	37,091	76,270	57,512	53,673	64,618	85,377	50,693	41,958	22,026	20,408
North Yorkshire	41	130,802	269,928	233,672	415,772	370,744	359,355	423,911	521,251	376,088	357,102	180,852	170,948
South Yorkshire	5	7,551	15,681	11,139	41,261	26,265	24,920	20,064	42,309	27,776	29,469	12,340	19,066
West Yorkshire	20	88,539	142,066	137,199	172,600	162,492	137,111	179,845	255,389	126,427	139,825	105,961	101,671
<b>Yorkshire Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>251,658</b>	<b>475,026</b>	<b>419,101</b>	<b>705,903</b>	<b>617,013</b>	<b>575,059</b>	<b>688,438</b>	<b>904,326</b>	<b>580,984</b>	<b>568,354</b>	<b>321,179</b>	<b>312,093</b>
No of attractions closed		16	11	6	1	0	0	3	1	0	5	12	11

Source: Visitor Attraction Monitor 2007 monthly reports, Yorkshire Tourist Board

**Total Visits to Yorkshire Attractions**



**Figure 2-** Total Visits to Yorkshire Attractions by month

The table above shows the number of visitors to 70 attractions in Yorkshire that provided data throughout 2007, split by sub region. The totals for Yorkshire are represented on the graph, in order to easily identify seasonal trends.

Source: Visitor Attraction Monitor 2007 monthly reports, Yorkshire Tourist Board

## Visit Trends to Yorkshire Attractions 2007

The graph above shows the monthly totals for Yorkshire attractions throughout 2007, and using a constant sample enables seasonal trends to be clearly shown.

In February 2007, visitor numbers across the 70 Yorkshire attractions increased by 89% from January. Q1 of the England Attraction Monitor (Visit Britain) indicates that temperatures were above average in February and this, coupled with schools half terms, is likely to be the main reason for the increase.

A large rise in visits (68% higher than March) can also be seen in April. When looking at the reasons provided by attractions who responded to the Yorkshire Visitor Attraction monitor, 64% cited the excellent weather has having a positive effect on their attraction. This reason is substantiated by Quarter 2 of the England Attraction Monitor 2007; "April 2007 set records for high temperatures and levels of sunshine, with low rainfall." Another factor likely to be a reason for an increase in April was the Easter holidays, with special Easter events also held by many attractions.

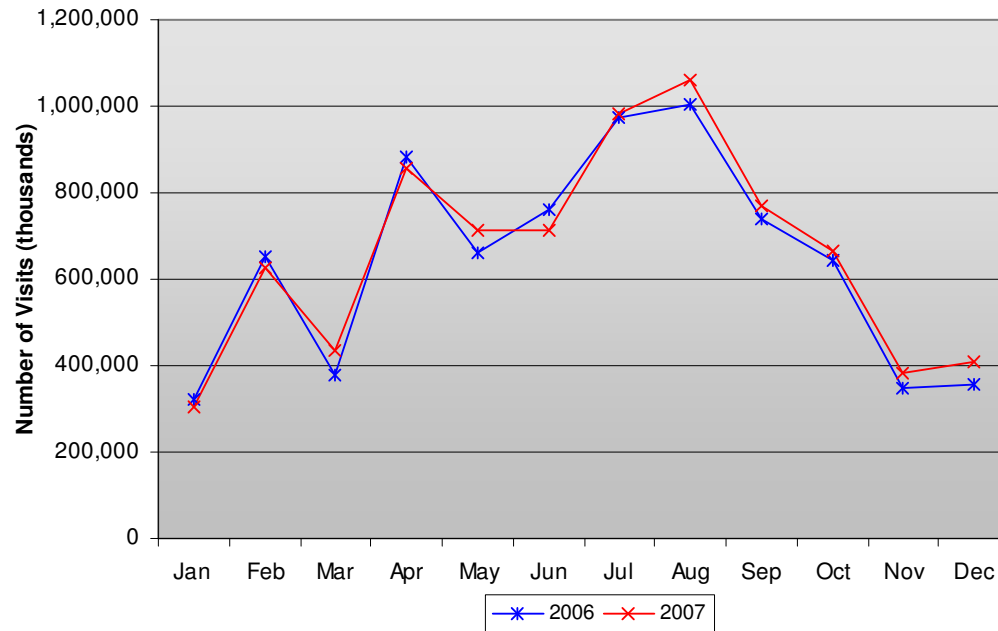
The end of quarter 2 2007 brought poor weather and flooding across many parts of Yorkshire, which is undoubtedly the main reason for the dip shown on the graph in June. Despite a large decrease from April to June, many attractions recovered well throughout the rest of the summer months, with the peak number of visits in August. The summer holidays and the August bank holiday were two of the most popular causes for an increase in visits highlighted by attractions in the Visitor Attraction Monitor.

Towards the end of the year visitor numbers start to decrease rapidly, particularly between October and November. This drop is exaggerated by the fact that 7 extra attractions were closed in November than October, and that October brought fair weather, half term and a last rush of visitors before some attractions closed for the winter. (Reasons for increases provided in the Visitor Attraction Monitor)

As is shown on the graph, visitor figures were higher in December 2007 than January, which is likely to be due to the fact that more attractions were closed in January, and that December saw many attractions hold special Christmas events.

**Visits to Yorkshire Attractions 2006/2007**

**Figure 3-** Total Visits to Yorkshire Attractions 2006/2007



**Table 4-** Visits to Yorkshire Attractions 2006/07 % Change

	2006	2007	06/07 % Change
Jan	323,519	305,221	-5.7%
Feb	652,788	625,605	-4.2%
Mar	379,717	433,721	14.2%
<b>Q1 Total</b>	<b>1,356,024</b>	<b>1,364,547</b>	<b>0.6%</b>
Apr	882,658	854,691	-3.2%
May	658,742	711,173	8.0%
Jun	760,601	712,276	-6.4%
<b>Q2 Total</b>	<b>2,302,001</b>	<b>2,278,140</b>	<b>-1.0%</b>
Jul	973,095	982,391	1.0%
Aug	1,005,112	1,062,673	5.7%
Sep	740,076	768,793	3.9%
<b>Q3 Total</b>	<b>2,718,283</b>	<b>2,813,857</b>	<b>3.5%</b>
Oct	643,037	666,382	3.6%
Nov	348,078	381,286	9.5%
Dec	354,624	408,796	15.3%
<b>Q4 Total</b>	<b>1,345,739</b>	<b>1,456,464</b>	<b>8.2%</b>
<b>Total Year</b>	<b>7,722,047</b>	<b>7,913,008</b>	<b>2.5%</b>

Source: Visitor Attraction Monitor monthly reports, Yorkshire Tourist Board.  
 NB: Attraction sample sizes vary each month.

Figure 3 and Table 4 show the total number of visits to attractions in Yorkshire in 2006 and 2007 based on admissions figures from attractions that participate in the Visitor Attraction Monitor. The total for each month of 2006 and 2007 can be seen on the graph, which overall indicates an increase in visitor numbers from 2006 to 2007. Table 4 details the percentage change in visits from 2006 to 2007 to Yorkshire attractions, with quarter 4 experiencing the highest increase; 8.2%, which was driven by strong December figures (15.3% rise from 2006). Reasons for December's increase, provided by respondents to the survey, included seasonal events, extended opening hours, and an increased number of operating days compared to 2006. Increases in Q1 and Q3 were also seen in 2007 (0.6% and 3.5% respectively); although a 1% decrease was witnessed in Q2, due to low figures seen in June 2007 (down 6.4% compared to June 2006), likely to be a result of the extensive flooding throughout Yorkshire.

## Major Attractions in Yorkshire

**Table 5-** Major Paid Attractions in Yorkshire

Attraction	Category	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Exact/Est	05/06 % Change	Entry Charge
Flamingo Land	LTP	1,322,000	1,393,300	1,398,800	1,380,110	1,400,210	1,302,195	Estimate	-7.0	£19.00
York Minster	WO	1,600,000	1,570,500	n/a	n/a	803,000	895,000	Estimate	11.5	£9.00
Fountains Abbey & Studley Royal	HP	229,015	282,059	317,018	300,000	312,000	313,388	Exact	0.4	£6.50
Eureka! Musuem for Children	MAG	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	246,195	250,364	Exact	1.7	£7.25
Cannon Hall Open Farm	F	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	250,000	250,000	Estimate	0.0	£3.25
Harewood House	HP	322,046	357,820	348,659	391,026	302,052	221,880	Exact	-26.5	£11.30
Castle Howard	HP	195,923	190,301	195,542	171,601	188,334	203,932	Exact	8.3	£9.50
RHS Garden Harlow Carr	G	73,000	92,261	130,246	149,918	179,228	193,889	Exact	8.2	£6.00
Sewerby Hall & Gardens	HP	n/a	107,114	150,000	170,000	160,000	175,000	Estimate	9.4	£3.50
Magna	MAG	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	137,439	155,210	Exact	12.9	£9.95

Source: Visits to Visitor Attractions Survey-Yorkshire 2006, VisitBritain

**Table 6-** Major Free Attractions in Yorkshire

Attraction	Category	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Exact/Est	05/06 % Change	Entry Charge
Xscape Castleford	LTP	Not Open	Not Open	n/a	2,800,000	3,250,000	3,476,000	Exact	7.0	Free
National Railway Musuem	MAG	558,360	742,515	746,055	855,032	769,445	902,149	Exact	17.2	Free
Rother Valley Country Park	CP	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	945,832	827,474	Estimate	-12.5	Free
Trans Pennine Trail	O	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	735,973	700,766	Estimate	-4.8	Free
National Media Musuem	MAG	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	663,444	Exact	n/a	Free
Thrybergh Country Park	CP	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	350,000	Estimate	n/a	Free
Royal Armouries Musuem	MAG	185,000	280,000	276,537	301,809	265,928	290,098	Exact	9.1	Free
Leeds City Art Gallery	MAG	239,919	233,330	233,307	235,954	245,234	286,059	Exact	16.6	Free
National Coal Mining Musuem for England	MAG	68,433	95,136	118,573	114,528	123,179	127,500	Estimate	3.5	Free
Priory Chruch of St Mary & St Cuthbert	WO	120,170	136,390	134,190	122,020	126,570	119,340	n/a	-5.7	Free

Source: Visits to Visitor Attractions Survey-Yorkshire 2006, VisitBritain

**Origin of visits by category 2006****Table 7-** Origin of visits to England & Yorkshire attractions

<b>Origin of visits to England Attractions by Category</b>				
<b>Category</b>	<b>Visits Sample (mn)</b>	<b>% Overseas</b>	<b>% Locals/Day Trip</b>	<b>% Other UK</b>
Country parks	19.8	5	87	9
Farms	3.6	3	83	14
Gardens	6.3	9	61	30
Historic houses/castles	17.1	13	59	28
Other historic properties	5.6	25	53	22
Leisure/theme parks	20.8	9	58	33
Museums/art galleries	33.6	17	57	26
Steam/heritage railways	2.5	3	70	26
Visitor/heritage Centres	4.2	14	63	23
Wildlife attractions/zoos	10.4	4	73	24
Workplaces	2.0	9	67	24
Places of worship	9.9	37	37	25
Other	15.5	6	68	26
<b>England Averages</b>		<b>12</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Total Yorkshire</b>	<b>14.8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>18</b>

Source: Visits to Visitor Attractions Survey 2006-summary sheets, VisitBritain

As is shown in figure 1, the largest proportion of visits to attractions in both Yorkshire and England as a whole come from locals/days trips, with 75% of visits to Yorkshire, and 64% of visits to England's attractions originating from this source.

The percentage of visits from the rest of the UK was higher than those from overseas in all attraction categories except other historic properties and places of worship. 37% of visits to places of worship, and 25% to historic properties, were from overseas, which draws a parallel with the Britain Inbound overall market profile (VisitBritain) as, according to the report, history, culture and scenery are key motivators for overseas visitors to come to the UK.

## England Visit trends for 2005/2006

**Table 8-** Visits Trends to England Attractions by Category %

Category	Attractions sample	% of sample	Increase	No change	Decrease	% Change 05/06
Country parks	78	4%	44	29	27	-*
Farms	56	3%	48	16	36	1
Gardens	108	6%	51	10	39	-2
Historic houses/castles	373	20%	46	6	47	1
Other historic properties	135	7%	42	7	50	8
Leisure/theme parks	33	2%	45	24	30	-*
Museums/art galleries	592	32%	53	9	38	8
Steam/heritage railways	41	2%	34	10	56	-2
Visitor/heritage Centres	73	4%	51	16	33	1
Wildlife attractions/zoos	94	5%	45	23	32	2
Workplaces	75	4%	39	31	31	-1
Places of worship	93	5%	44	31	25	3
Other	124	7%	52	15	32	3
<b>England</b>	<b>1,875</b>		<b>48%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>3%</b>

Source: Visits to Visitor Attractions Survey 2006, VisitBritain. NB\* indicates change of less than 0.5%

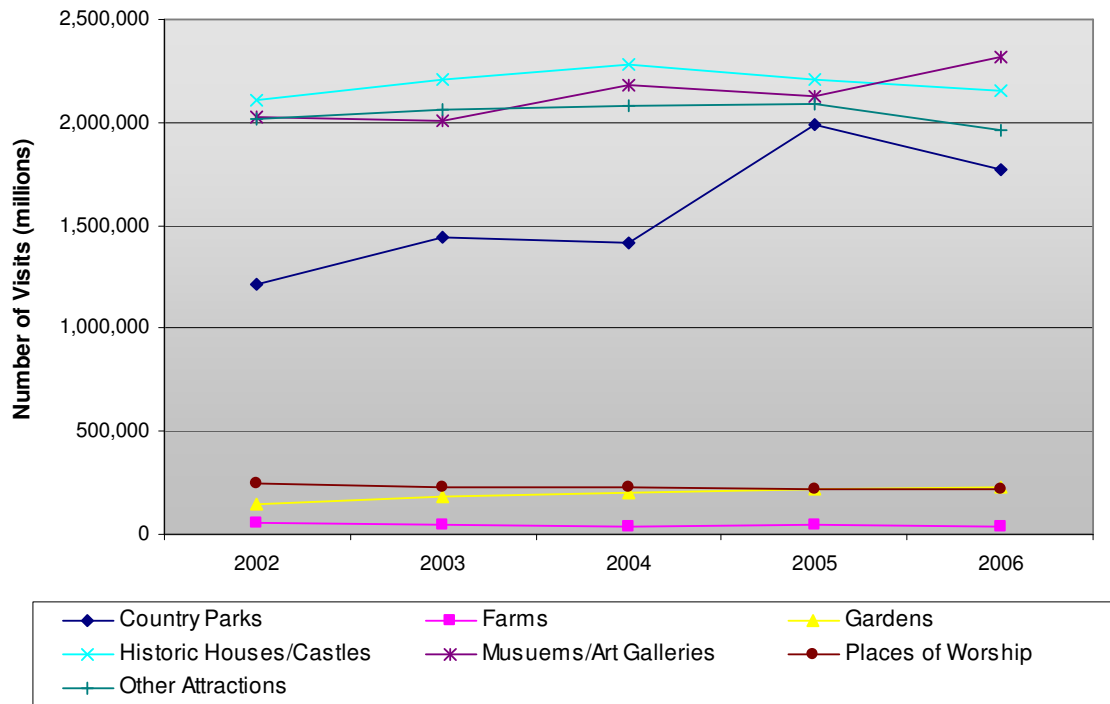
As is shown in figure 2, 48% of attraction categories showed a growth in 2006, with particularly strong increases in visits to indoor attractions such as museums/art galleries (+8%) and other historic properties (+8%. This category includes attractions such as historic monuments, archaeological sites, ships and windmills).

Despite the relatively fair weather in 2006, some outdoor attractions experienced a decrease in the number of visits, including gardens, country parks and leisure/theme parks. This is likely to be due to the exceptionally dry weather experienced in the country in 2005, which boosted visits to these types of attractions. In 2005, visits to gardens and country parks saw significant increases from 2004, of 8% and 7% respectively.

Despite the fact that the decrease in visits to leisure/theme parks was less than 0.5%, and that they represent only around 2% of attractions in England, even a small dip can be significant, as leisure/theme parks account for over 10% of the total number of visits to attractions in England. (See table 12, page 10)

## Visits to Attractions by Category

**Figure 9-** Five Year Trend of Visits to Yorkshire Attractions by Category



Source: Visits to Visitor Attractions Survey 2006, VisitBritain

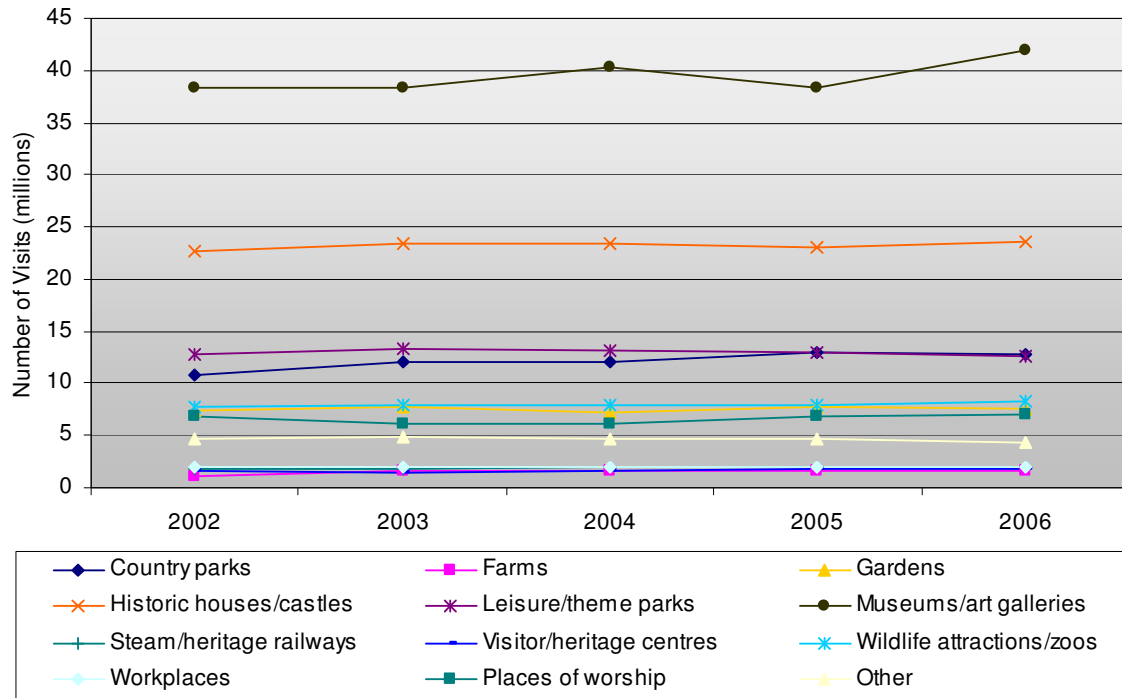
The graph above shows the trend in the number of visits to attractions in Yorkshire, using a constant sample of attractions that provided visit figures for 5 years.

A large increase in the number of visits to country parks in Yorkshire between 2004 and 2005 can be clearly seen on the graph. As mentioned on page 3, 2005 saw exceptionally dry and fine weather across the whole of the country, and visits to country parks in England as a whole increased by 7% from 2004. This is likely to also be the reason for the rise in visits to Yorkshire country parks.

**Table 10-** Number of Visits to Yorkshire Attractions by Category- 5 Year Trend

Category	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Base
Country Parks	1,210,000	1,440,833	1,417,250	1,988,612	1,771,524	3
Farms	53,873	41,500	40,800	41,400	40,900	3
Gardens	144,026	181,059	200,177	216,054	226,428	4
Historic Houses/Castles	2,106,349	2,210,091	2,278,157	2,211,022	2,153,529	31
Museums/Art Galleries	2,029,607	2,005,722	2,179,276	2,123,478	2,320,591	35
Places of Worship	241,933	230,604	226,852	222,153	215,697	4
Other Attractions	2,015,560	2,058,852	2,081,942	2,085,398	1,957,360	6
<b>Total Yorkshire</b>	<b>7,801,348</b>	<b>8,168,661</b>	<b>8,424,454</b>	<b>8,888,117</b>	<b>8,686,029</b>	<b>86</b>

**NB:** Other attractions includes leisure/theme parks, workplaces and wildlife attractions/zoos

**Figure 11-** Five Year Trend of Visits to England's Attractions by Category

Source: Visits to Visitor Attraction Survey 2006, VisitBritain

The graph above shows the trend in the number of visits to attractions in England, using a constant sample of attractions that provided visit figures for 5 years.

When looking at the graphs for Yorkshire and England, both historic houses and museums and art galleries are shown to have much higher visitor numbers than other categories on the graphs. This is likely to be due to the fact that they are over represented as around two thirds of the total attraction sample for Yorkshire and England consists of these categories.

**Table 12-** Number of Visits to England's Attractions by Category- 5 Year Trend

Category	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Base
Country parks	10.8	12.0	12.0	12.9	12.7	39
Farms	1.1	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	21
Gardens	7.4	7.8	7.2	7.8	7.6	65
Historic houses/castles	22.6	23.4	23.4	23.1	23.6	348
Leisure/theme parks	12.8	13.4	13.2	13.0	12.6	13
Museums/art galleries	38.4	38.3	40.4	38.3	41.9	308
Steam/heritage railways	1.8	1.8	1.9	2.0	1.9	24
Visitor/heritage Centres	1.6	1.5	1.7	1.8	1.8	25
Wildlife attractions/zoos	7.7	7.9	8.0	8.0	8.2	50
Workplaces	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	38
Places of worship	6.8	6.2	6.1	6.9	7.1	39
Other	4.6	4.8	4.7	4.7	4.4	33
<b>Total England</b>	<b>117.5</b>	<b>120.7</b>	<b>122.2</b>	<b>122.1</b>	<b>125.4</b>	<b>1,003</b>