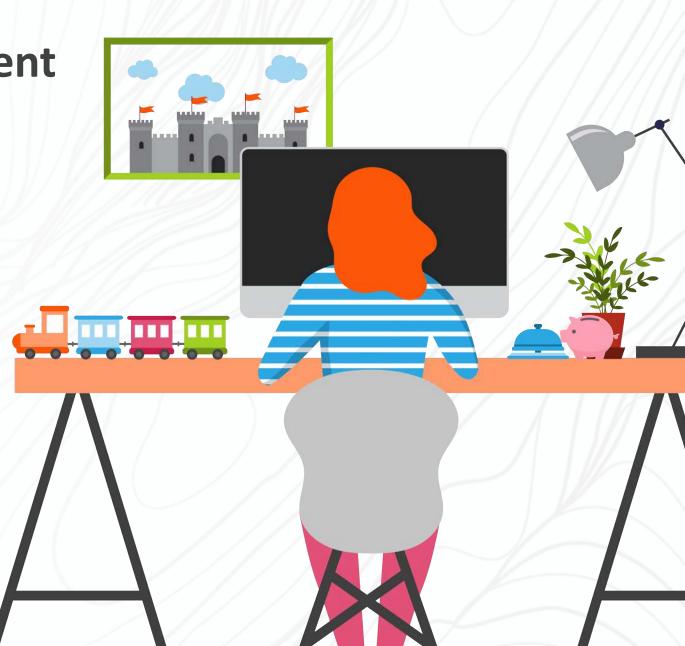
Tracking Consumer Sentiment on the Impact of COVID-19

Travel & Mobility, Leisure & Hospitality, Personal finances

Weekly Update – 9th June 2020





Introduction

If a week really is a long time in politics, it doesn't show in this week's data. Our national mood in the UK has barely changed, our confidence in the British Government hasn't shifted at all. For the first time since our tracking began, there has been no decline in the percentage of Britons expecting life to return to normal this year. As we write this summary, though, we are collecting the data for week 12 and with the intervening days dominated by protest and unrest (in the Anglophone world, at least) one has to wonder if this simply reflects calm before yet another storm.

As noted in this column last week, governments are in an unenviable position. Release lockdown too quickly and risk a second wave or maintain the distance and risk prolonging the economic pain. And distance is likely to be a key word, with much of the hospitality sector unlikely to be able to re-open if two metres is not shortened to one.

Almost regardless of that, though, there is further turmoil on the medium-term horizon. Despite the extension of the Job Retention Scheme, the announcement that it will definitely end has prompted some firms to begin redundancy, restructuring or large-scale renegotiation processes in the last couple of weeks. The hospitality sector is crying out for support, and while it might be one over the eight right now, its people and suppliers look likely to share the hangover.

On the topic of hospitality, the change in weather (hope you enjoyed the summer, by the way) seems to have brought a change in intentions. After two weeks of growth, the momentum behind domestic holiday-taking has slowed (although anticipated lead-times to booking continue to shorten), while overseas holidays and aviation appears to be gaining some much needed traction.

A shift from long- to short-haul perhaps provides opportunity for our nearest neighbours to attract more of us to their shores – assuming they want us, of course. We're yet to see serious shifts in hotel booking intentions, but is this a demand issue or a supply one? The re-opening of shops is being rewarded in our data with an increase in intentions to visit them. The directive to return to work is seeing increases in intended bus and train usage. Might that be as much about availability as desire?

Stay tuned and stay safe!

Matt Costin Managing Director, BVA BDRC

1. Korser

Suzy Hassan Managing Director, Alligator Digital



Executive Summary

On the big headline metrics, it's 'as you were' this week

It's "as you were" on a number of the headline mood measures this week, with no change in our confidence regarding the government's handling of the crisis, no change in our expectations of when normality will return and only the smallest of changes in our average mood. Marginally more of us think *the worst is still to come*, but still more than 25% of us think *the worst has passed*.

The start of a gradual re-balancing of domestic towards international travel?

Anticipated lead times for domestic holiday bookings continue to shorten, but it is international holidays and flight booking intentions which have seen greatest momentum in the last couple of weeks. This may be down to some combination of possible softening of the government's line on 'quarantine', as well as gradual improvement in flight availabilityand a return of traditional British weather!

Short haul destinations the key beneficiaries

While international holiday intentions are on the rise, there has been a net shift of (at least) 13% away from intention to travel to long-haul destinations towards intentions to travel to short-haul destinations. Combining favoured and considered accommodation categories sees independent hotels top the category league table, closely followed by private rental and branded hotels.

'Ownership of the customer' is all to play for

Ownership of the customer is all to play for – direct channels and OTA/meta sites seem equally as favoured, and there's perhaps opportunity to gain share with enhanced messaging around cancellation and amendment.

Is supply or demand the driver in anticipated activity in these key 'on the move' sectors?

On 12/5, intentions to go shopping were at their lowest. On 25/5, the UK government announced opening dates for UK retail, and with less than 7 days to go until all non-essential retail is allowed to open, we've recorded 4 weeks of growth in intention to go shopping. Demand is partly linked to perceived availability and the public will react – and potentially return – when other sectors re-open as well.

A third of investors have seen their portfolio decline in value

Last week's report revealed the extent to which all segments, including the wealthiest consumers, are seeking greater value for money from their financial products. Although these more affluent audiences have more of a savings and investment cushion, it is also evident that some of this cushion is eroding. It remains to be seen whether this begins to have an impact on spending intentions in sectors that rely upon discretionary spend – including travel and leisure.



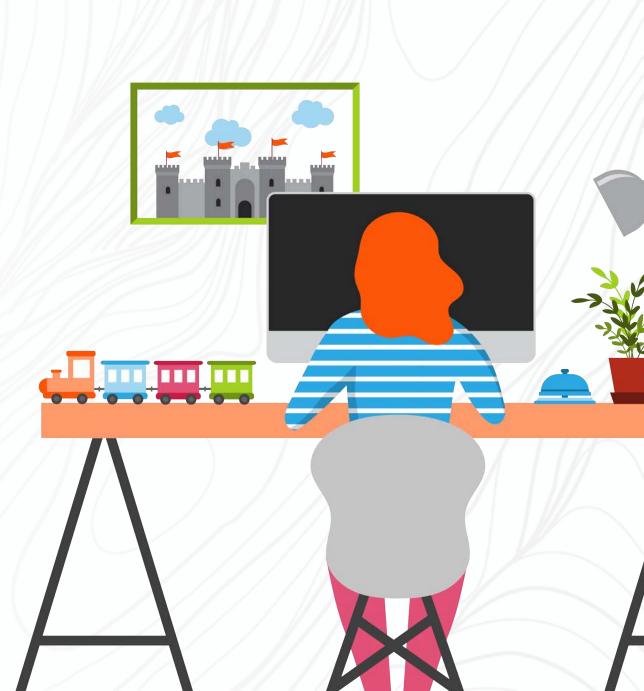
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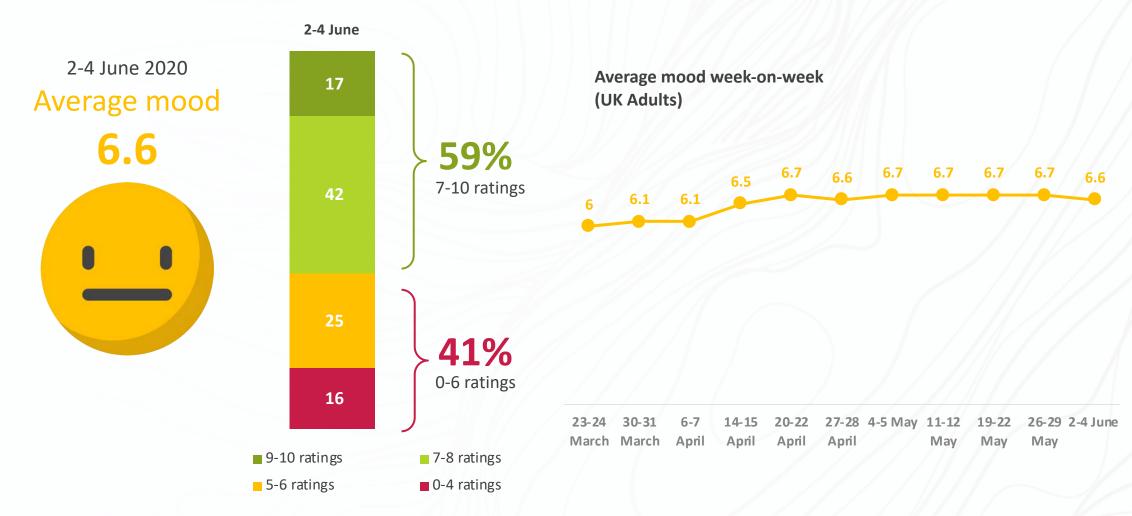
The mood of the nation





The average mood of the nation remains steady, dipping very slightly this week.





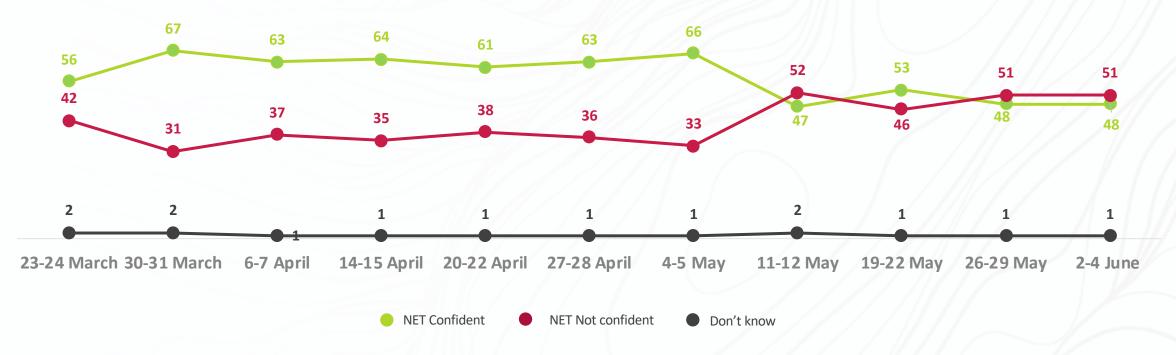




Confidence in the UK government's handling of the crisis is unchanged this week, with national opinion evenly split.



Q6: Would you say that you are completely confident, somewhat confident, not really confident, not at all confident regarding how the British government is handling the crisis? (%)



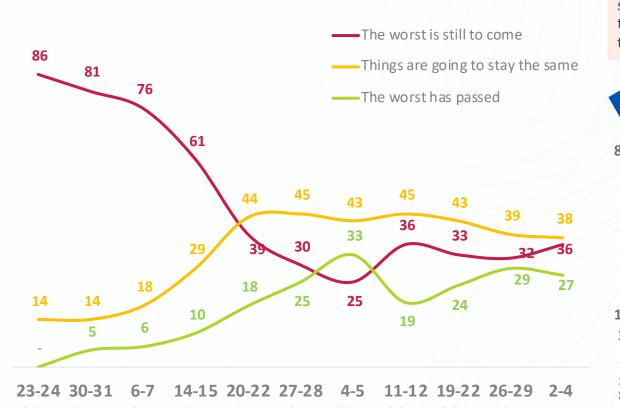
Q6: Would you say that you are completely confident, somewhat confident, not really confident, not at all confident regarding how the British government is handling the

crisis? (%)



The country is slightly less positive on the UK Coronavirus situation this week. The incidence of those who feel that *the worst is still to come* is on par with levels seen 3 weeks ago

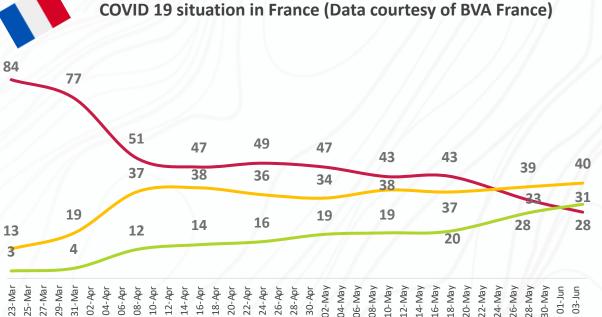




Apr

Mav

As more restrictions are lifted in France and as the country gradually re-opens, there is a sharp improvement in perceptions of the crisis - with sentiment now more positive than in the UK. For the first time this week, our colleagues in Paris report that a greater proportion of their compatriots feel *the worst has passed* than feel *the worst is yet to come*.



Q7: Regarding the situation of Coronavirus in the UK and the way it is going to change in the coming month, which of the following best describes your opinion? (%)

Mav

Mav

June

Mav



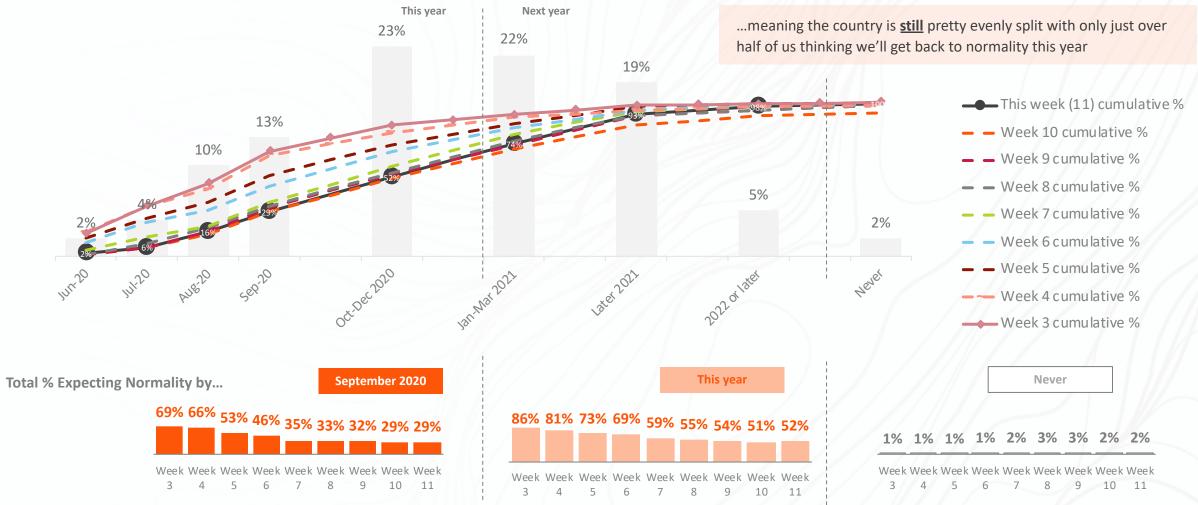
Mar

Mar

Apr

For the first week since this question debuted, there is no decline in the proportion of Brits expecting normality to return this year!







9

From social media: key themes underlying positive and negative sentiment this week

Innovation

An excellent example of resilience during times of #Covid_19: @pizzapilgrims pivoting to £15 frying pan pizza kits; the first 50 sold out in 20 seconds, and the company is now considering opening up a second of its 13 restaurants to satisfy demand

Innovative ways to gain customers

Never been to a @BestWesternGB hotel watching #insidebestwestern want to stay at The Bell Driffield – it looks amazing

The future

Quiet streets of #Manchester today. I saw more cyclists than cars and could actually appreciate the #architecture of this great city. Can #COVID19 can be the catalyst for #environment change? #GMCA #CleanAir

Failing systems

#BritishAirways well known brand also excellent customer service skills. We are highly trained individuals, wearing the uniform with pride No excuses to take advantage of the #COVID—19 to reduce our pay by 65% also no terms & conditions.

@Ryanair I requested a refund 6 weeks ago and then I received a voucher. 5weeks later & I am still waiting for my money, this is UNACCEPTABLE!

Loss of service continuity

Loss of service continuity

@hotelsdotcom be a travel leader. Your refund policy is a joke. You offered me a refund & then backtracked & now a voucher for 12mths.

Failing systems

So public parks which have no access control, can open, but zoos which have gates and can easily control their numbers, remain close. Another example of the clueless, directionless, bumblings of this inept government





Travel and leisure

EN.

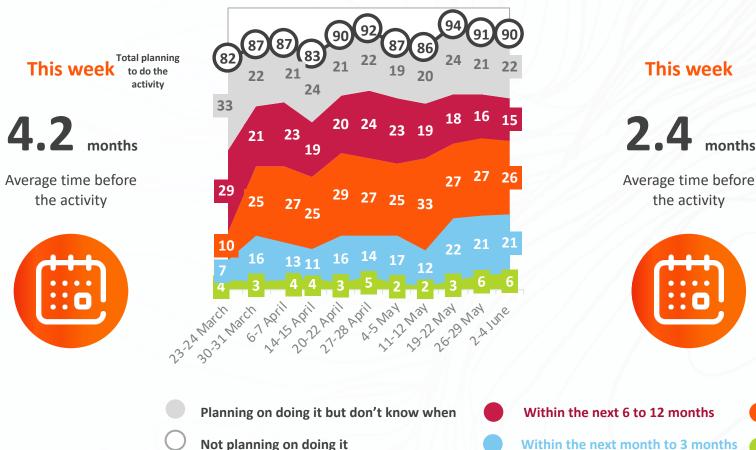


While overall intention to have a day out at an attraction has plateaued, anticipated lead-times have shortened by just over 3 weeks (over the last 2 weeks of reporting)

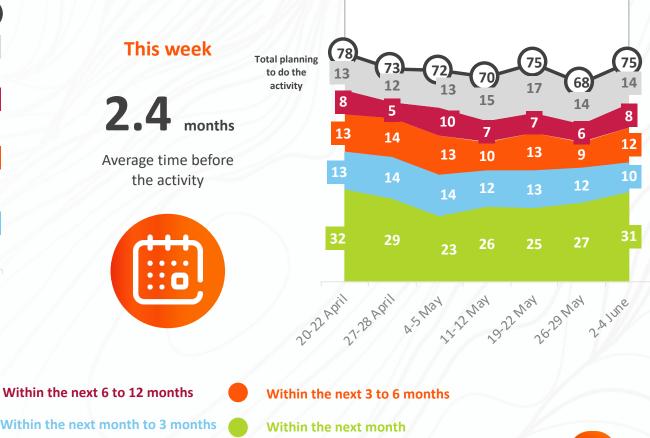


BVa BDRC

Go on a day out to a visitor attraction

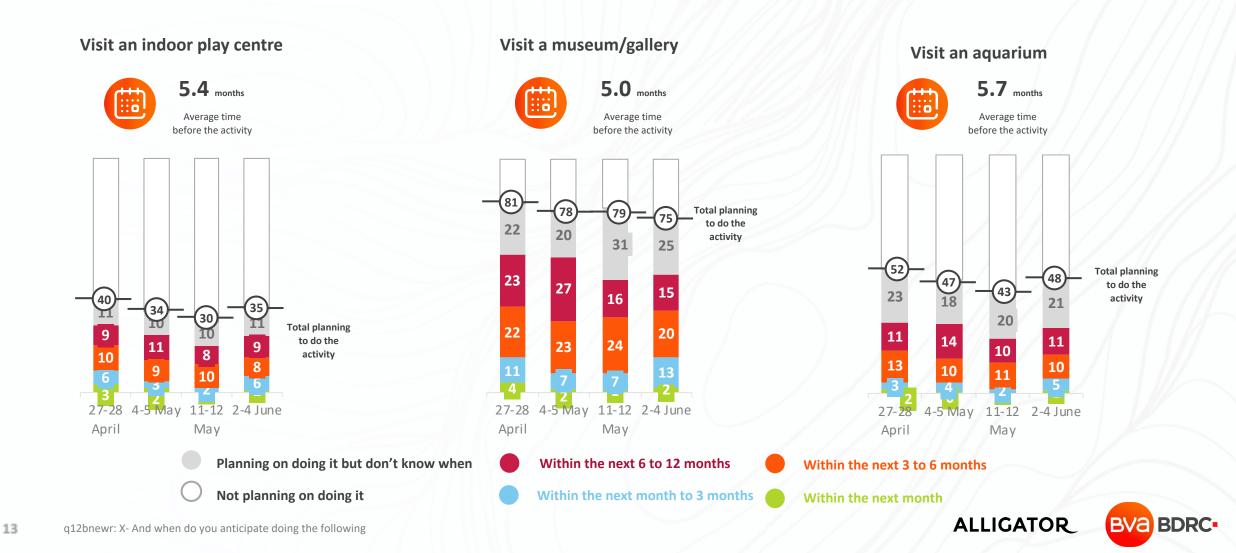


View online content for a visitor attraction

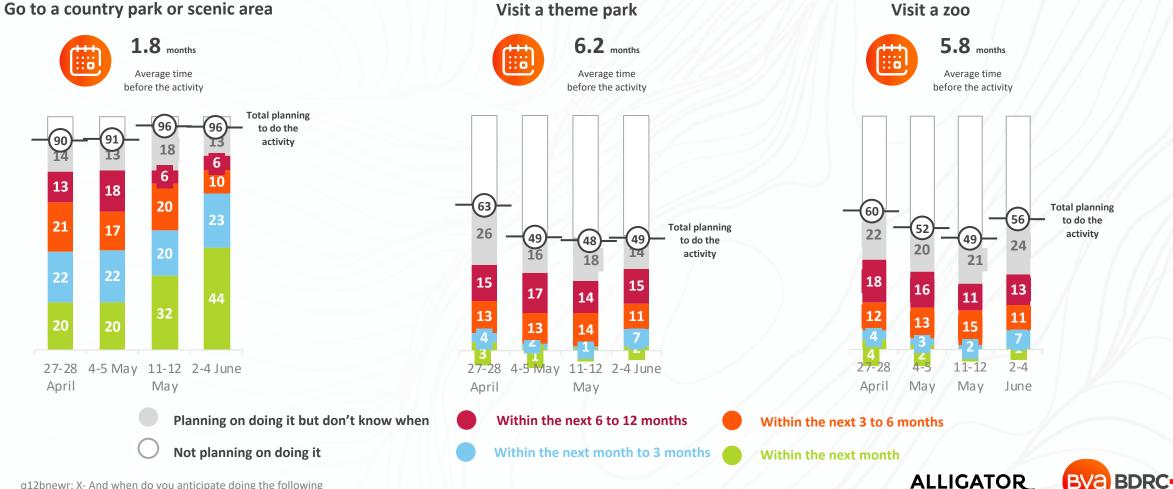




There has been an uptick in desire to visit indoor attractions since mid-May, but average lead times remain higher than the attraction average of 4.2 months



The intention to visit a country park or scenic area is more than double a month ago, reflecting the impact of government guidelines shifting. Theme parks and zoos have experienced a modest increase in interest



14 q12bnewr: X- And when do you anticipate doing the following With some parks and gardens re-opening, there is frustration with the delay in enabling zoos to follow suit

When are zoos reopening as lockdown measures set to ease further?

British zoos appeal for funds to cover lockdown losses

Forcing zoos and farms attractions to remain closed is having a devastating impact on small businesses like ours. If allowed to open now on a restricted basis we can offer an entirely open air experience for small family groups with all necessary precautions Pre-bookable admissions, limited numbers, public kept to open places. This shouldn't be difficult to manage and zoos desperately need the income.

I want to know why wildlife parks can't open when shops, schools, markets, sports can. I volunteer at our 140 acre zoo. It's huge, & zoos & parks are even bigger than that. all prep is underway & social distancing won't be a problem. It's insane.

I feel sorry for the zoos now that lockdown is easing. You could open in my book with limited pre bought tickets, timed and with sensible social distancing. Obviously there is a lot of organisation needed but I am sure you have the people to do this.

> Can you please find someone in the government to ask about why zoos cannot yet open when national trust outdoor areas can and beaches can. They can limit their numbers and have loads of space as well as being unable to claim the zoo support as they are too big!

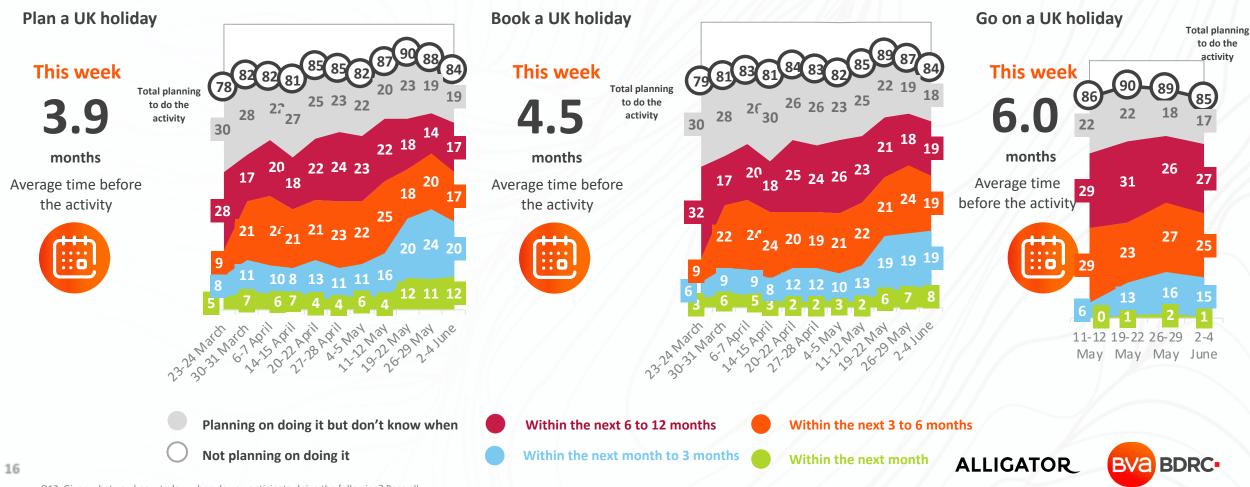
> > ALLIGATOR



15

Intention to take a UK holiday dips for the 2nd consecutive week, but anticipated lead-times for planning and booking continue to shorten

Two weeks ago we linked the surge in intention to take a domestic trip to the noise being made by the UK government to get the UK tourism sector up and running by July. Since then there has been limited cut-through in this area amongst the general public. Instead, much of the 'holiday' coverage has been about the 14 day quarantine period and the possibility of it being lifted for some overseas destinations. That said, among those travel activists intending to take a holiday, the anticipated lead-times to planning and booking continue to shorten.



Q12. Given what you know today, when do you anticipate doing the following? Base all

On social media: vocal support for the UK tourism industry

How about supporting our own holiday industry instead of rushing off overseas at the first opportunity. Not only are most of our related businesses in serious difficulty, but the thousands of people they employ will soon be out of work. Much talk about the whens of foreign travel - but should we not focus on the whens of UK travel and when we can, how we can support the UK industry to offset the lack of overseas visitors? Keeping holidays local - when we can - could benefit many.

Time to holiday in UK, our local businesses need the money, beautiful places here & this year is the perfect time to support them.

We cancelled our wedding (was due to be May 29th > now 4/6/21) - cancelled Portugal holiday. No intention of going overseas - we have a tent & all the gear, so mountains for us - easiest to socially distance as well / support local business.

Everyone should holiday in the UK to get the country back on its feet People should staycation to help local economies in the UK rebuild as the Portuguese aren't going to be paying any money towards our huge deficit. Restaurants, hotels, short term rentals and shops need UK tourists to support the UK economy if they are to have any chance of surviving.

There are so many fantastic spots to holiday in Britain. I feel people will support British business by holidaying local this year. Cornwall, the Lake District, East Coast, Wales, the Highlands, Liverpool, London, Cambridge city breaks. #uklockdown #ukeconomy



However, while many are vocal in their support for UK tourism, the reality is that many residents are concerned about the prospect of tourism in their area.

For tourism hotspots in particular, this further underlines the need for a positive case to be made for welcoming tourists to the area, and appropriate reassurance given that all practical measures are being taken to ensure the safety of both residents and visitors.

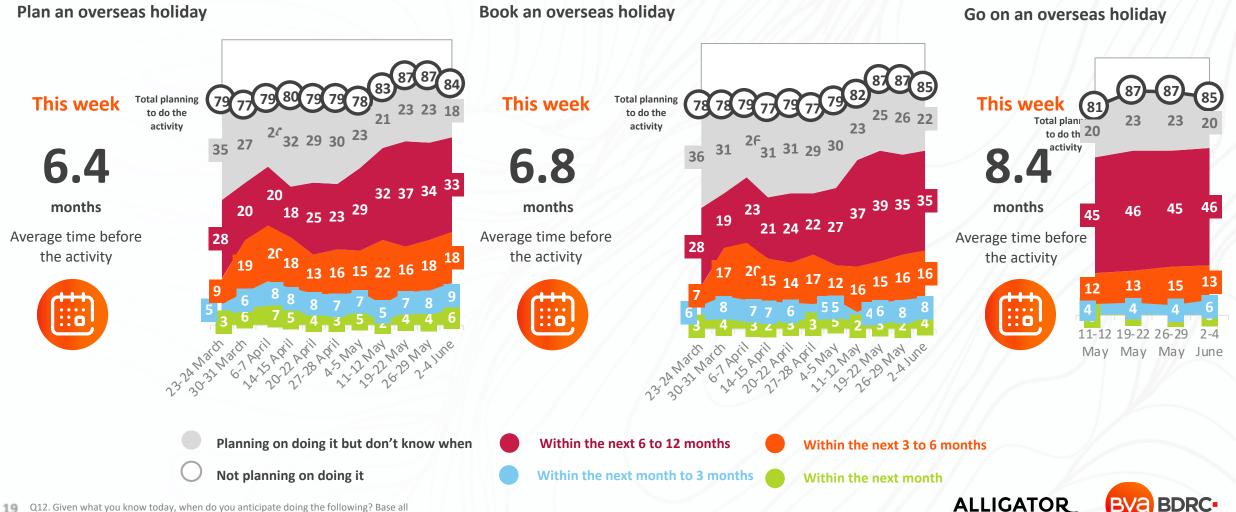
11 14 18 27 29 34 38 27 Very comfortable 30 30 Fairly comfortable 29 25 Not very comfortable 39 27 23 ■ Not at all comfortable 17 14 Don't know 10 Q Day trippers from Day trippers from **UK tourists from UK tourists from Overseas tourists** elsewhere in the outside your your region your region UK region

Comfort residents feel welcoming different types of visitors to their local area (%)



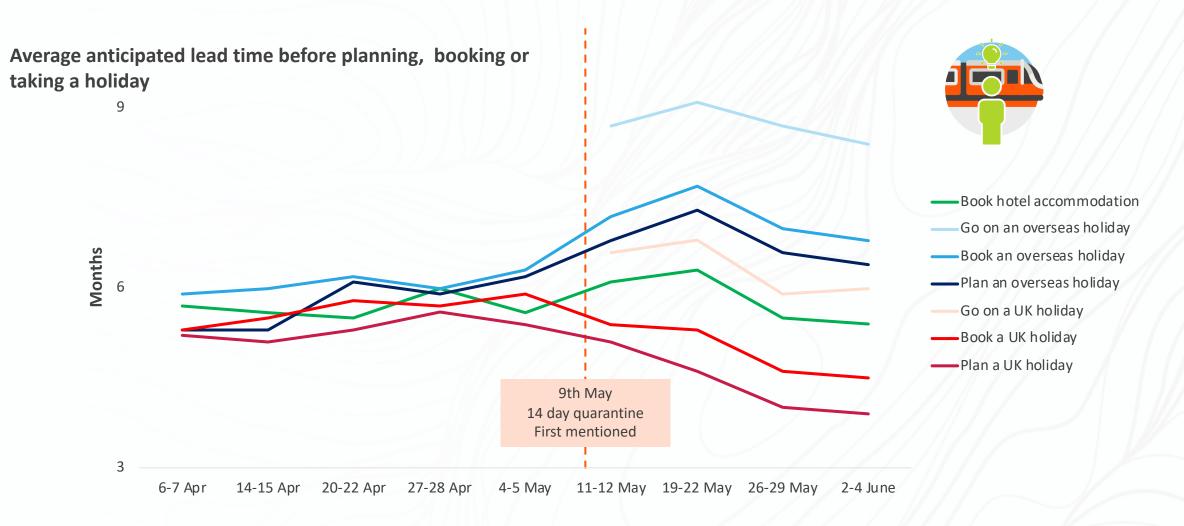


While overall intention to book an overseas holiday has dropped slightly - lead-times continue to shorten. 1 in 3 of our 'travel activists' will plan an overseas trip in the next 6 months



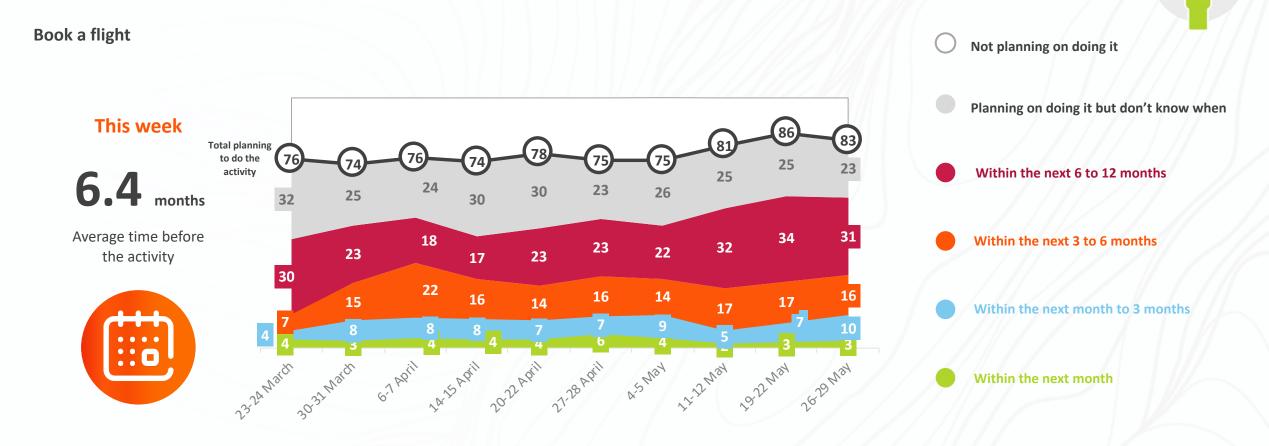
Q12. Given what you know today, when do you anticipate doing the following? Base all 19

Although the gap remains large, the lead time between going on a UK holiday and an overseas holiday has closed this week





The proportion intending to book a flight in the next three months has increased for the second week in a row, suggesting increased optimism around travelling overseas

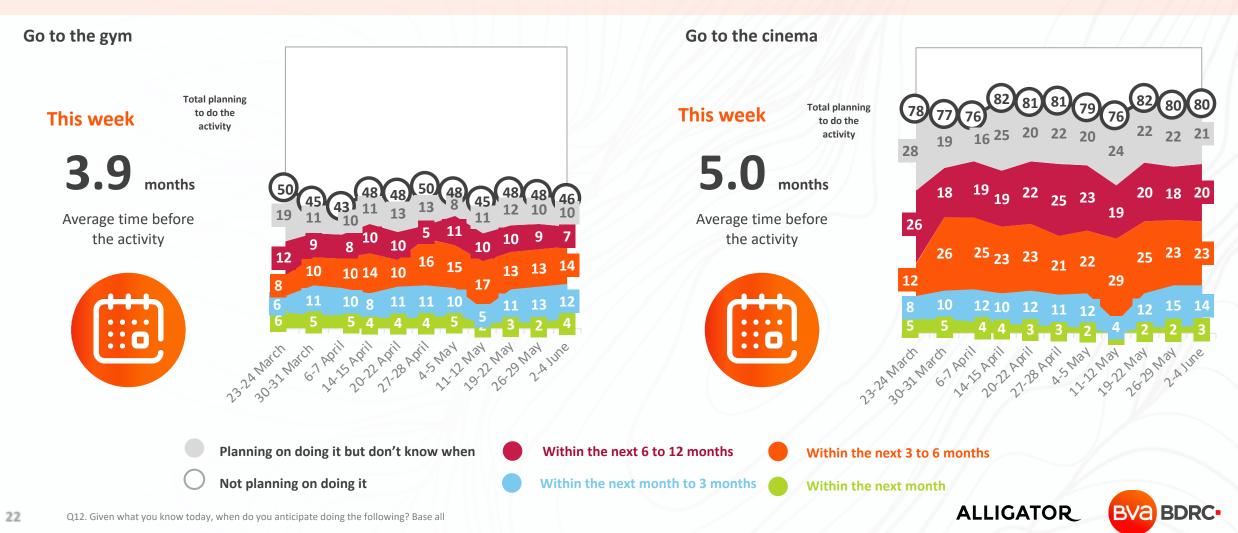




Anticipated lead-times for returning to the gym continue to shorten – from being nearly 5 months away a fortnight ago, to now being within 4 months



After the significant movement following the government's announcement a few weeks ago, intention to visit gyms or the cinema have plateaued in much the same way that they did through April and early May.



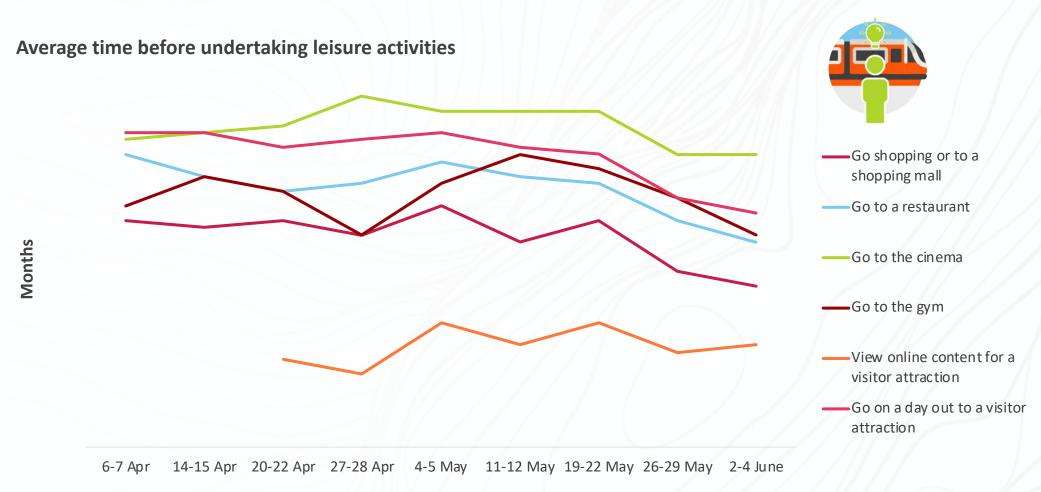
Shopping is the activity that has recorded the biggest jump in planned activity this week



With non-essential shopping permitted from the 15th June, the proportion anticipating going shopping in the next three months has increased significantly this week. As well as promising the retail sector some much-needed footfall, the rise in intention also indicates how dialled in the public is to the government's staged lifting of restrictions – a sign that people will react quickly when other sectors re-open too.



The lead times for most leisure activities have dropped in recent weeks, although with few dramatic drops, the nation clearly remains cautious

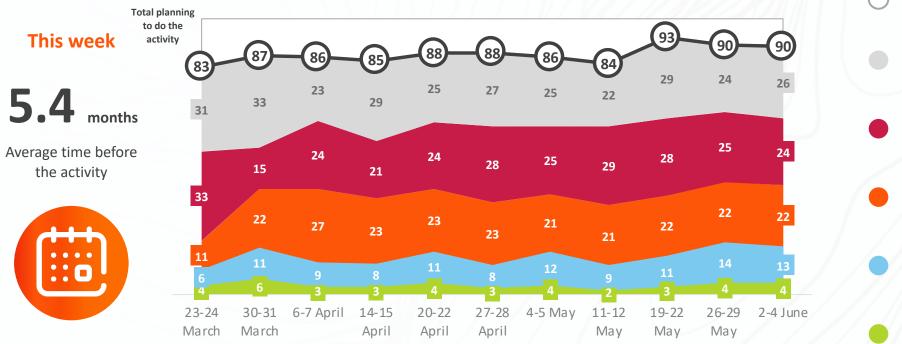




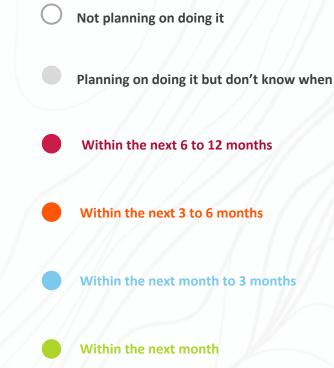
When do respondents expect to book hotel accommodation again?

A very minor adjustment this weeks sees a small increase in those planning to book hotel accommodation without a timeframe. However, the overall total planning to do the activity does not change, settling a little below its peak, but twice as much above its lowest point.

Book hotel accommodation





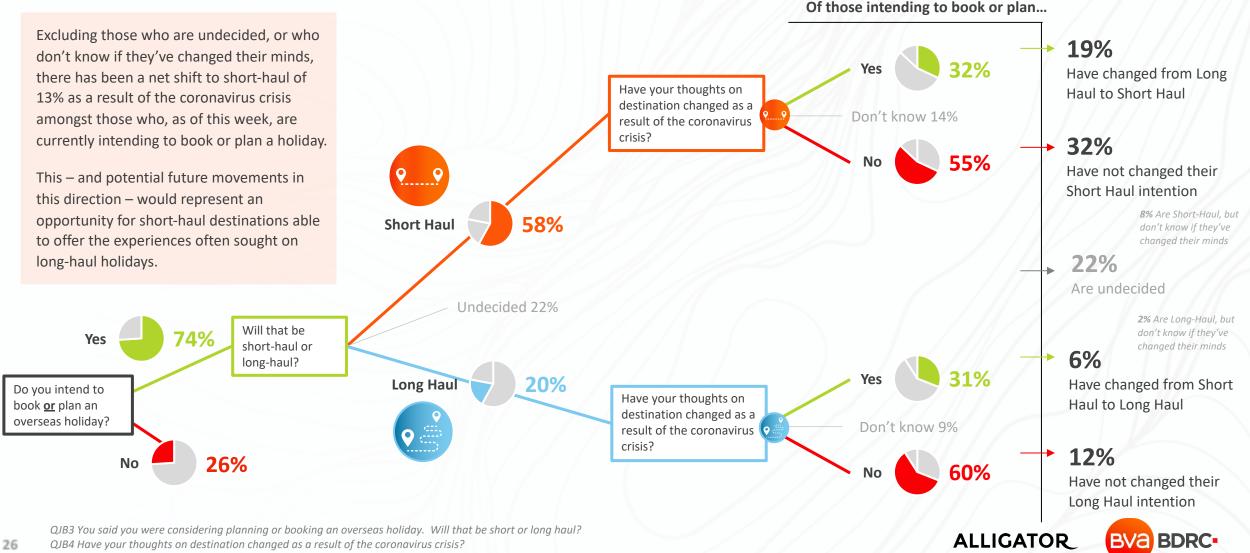




Q12. Given what you know today, when do you anticipate doing the following? Base all *https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-52389285

Where do you plan to holiday, and have your thoughts on destination changed as a result of the coronavirus crisis?

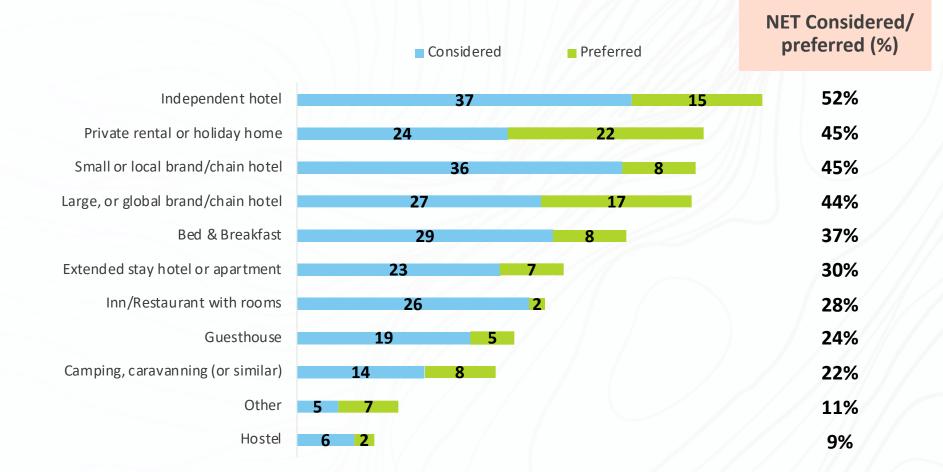
% of those intending to plan or book an overseas holiday



Base: Those at Q12 indicating consideration of planning or booking an overseas holiday

Private rentals/holiday homes look to be the most-preferred accommodation category for future holidays

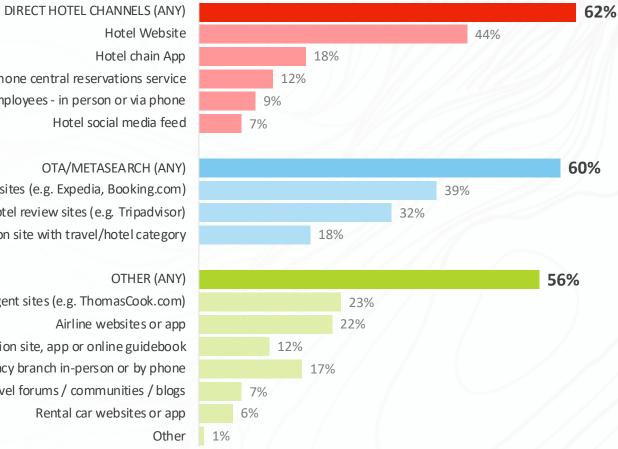
What would be your preferred type of accommodation for a future holiday? And which would you be happy to consider?





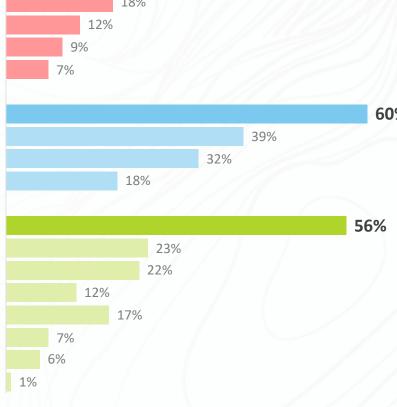
Direct and OTA/meta booking channels are considered by broadly equal proportions of potential hotel accommodation bookers

Which of the following booking channels you would consider?



- Although a hotel's website is the single item most considered by travellers, its margin over OTAs is not large and, across the main direct channels, consideration is only marginally higher than for the group of OTA/meta sites overall.
- 14% of potential bookers will not consider any of the channels in the direct or OTA/meta categories





- Hotel Website Hotel chain App
- Hotel telephone central reservations service Hotel employees - in person or via phone Hotel social media feed

OTA/METASEARCH (ANY)

Online travel agencies / sites (e.g. Expedia, Booking.com) Hotel review sites (e.g. Tripadvisor) General price comparison site with travel/hotel category

OTHER (ANY)

- Tour operator or traditional travel agent sites (e.g. ThomasCook.com) Airline websites or app
 - Tourist Board or other destination site, app or online guidebook
 - Travel agency branch in-person or by phone
 - Travel forums / communities / blogs
 - Rental car websites or app
 - Other

28

A deep dive on how Booking.com and Expedia have dealt with customers seeking refunds during the lockdown

7th April-1st June 2020

Booking.com

Net Sentiment



Poor customer service

@bookingcom You are refusing to refund a hotel even though I have in writing confirmation from the hotel they will cancel. I have been hung up on and lied to, terrible customer service!!!

Loss of customer

Thanks for your email @bookingcom but for the record I would never use your services EVER again following the way you've dealt with a hotel booking that I couldn't attend because the world was in lock down. You're a shambles of company offering zero support. Unsubscribed

Positive action after pressure from MPs

I am delighted that @bookingcom responded positively to my calls not to take bookings whilst the lockdown is in place. – ""Following pressure from @lanblackford_MP travel firm @bookingcom has confirmed they will suspend all bookings in the UK during the lockdown.""

Go elsewhere

Shame on your company for such underhanded & unfair business practices #bookingnightmare booking.com take your business to AirBnB

Lack of responsibility

@bookingcom shame on you for not taking more responsibility- you might be a mediator but if accommodation is booked and we physically cannot travel we should get a refund - no question ! You seem to be fobbing everyone off!



Efficiency and ease

Thank you @Expedia - refund for hotel received, no hassle

Efficiency and ease

Not airlines, but @thetrainline & @ExpediaUK (despite the phone lines) have been pretty decent. Refunded within 2 weeks #RefundPassengers

Go direct

I used Expedia for years and many trips but this has taught me to cut out the middle man in future. Good luck with your refund.

Loss of customer

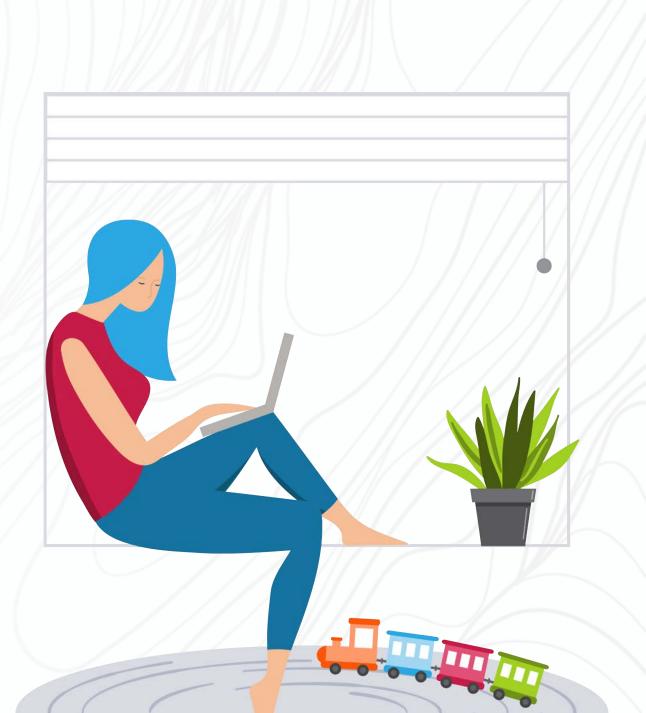
I can't articulate how much I do not recommend ever using @ExpediaUK . Still out of pocket for flights which were cancelled at the beginning of April,





Transport

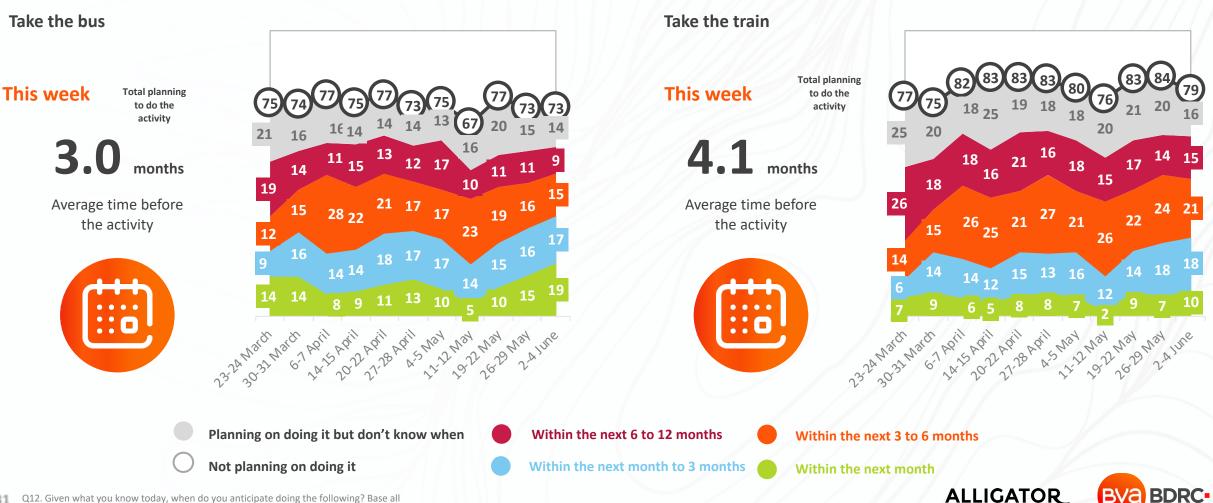




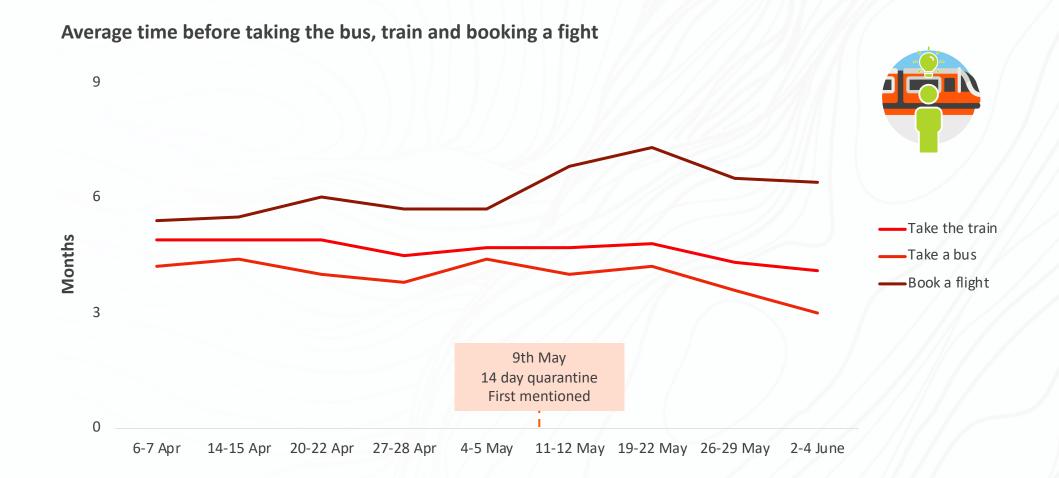
Over 1 in 3 intend to use the bus in the next 3 months, as the anticipated usage of the bus and train in the next 3 months improves for the 3rd week running



Though the lead times are still high for the use of buses and trains, the continued communication from public transport operators and following the government announcement that masks will become compulsory on public transport from June 15th, this is the highest recorded usage for 'within the next month'.



Lead times for taking the train and bus continue to fall while travellers are still more hesitant for booking flights with the impending quarantine

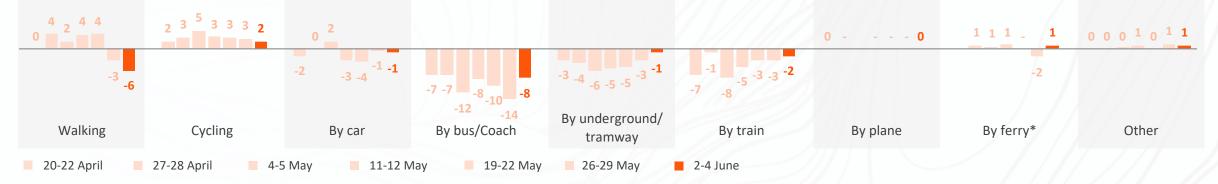




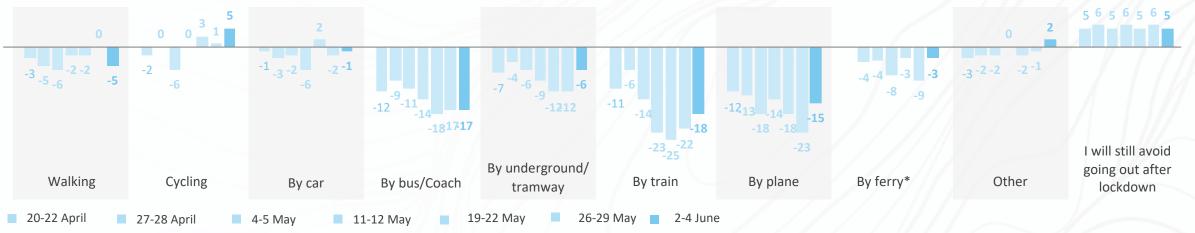
Cycling continues to see positive shifts, particularly among leisure and business travellers. Interestingly, all travellers appear more inclined to use public transport again



<u>Commuters</u> - Post lockdown net change in expected usage (%) *Base (n= 196)*



Leisure/business - Post lockdown net change in expected usage (%) Base (n= 236)



Q41: Before the coronavirus, how did you tend to travel...

Q42: After lockdown has ended, how do you expect to travel ...
* Added 27-28 April



From social media: dissatisfaction with Ryanair's cancellation policy as many customers are left out-of-pocket and unhappy with their outcome

Ryanair worst airline for flight cancellation refunds, finds Which?

Ryanair angers passengers with vouchers instead of refunds for cancelled flights

84% Still Waiting

Boycotting

Now been 5 weeks in the #ryanairrefunds queue and still no sign of the money. So, from today, for every additional week we have to wait we'll be boycotting @Ryanair for a full calendar year. #yourchoice

Taking legal action

It's been me for 4 months now! I have been waiting for a refund from them for 4 months! @Ryanair I have sued! And I urge everyone to do the same!!!

Waiting for refund

@Ryanair it is now 74 days since Ryanair cancelled my flights. It is now
69 days where Ryanair have ignored section 261/2004 of EU rules/regs.
Why have Ryanair not paid this refund? Please refund my money!

Long wait ahead

Ryanair said it is not processing any refunds until "after the pandemic ends", so you'll be lucky if you get refunded anytime soon

Boycott

Impossible to contact them via the phone, Twitter or the chat on their website. They could at least give you a timeline once you've submitted your claim... Anyway it was definitely the last time I was booking a ticket with them

Refund or boycott

We want a refund before would even consider flying with #ryanair again

Waiting for refund

@Ryanair I understand you are asking us to be patient due to a back log but I've been waiting over 9 weeks for a refund. I actually had communication saying within 20 days the money would go back to On the beach but heard nothing??



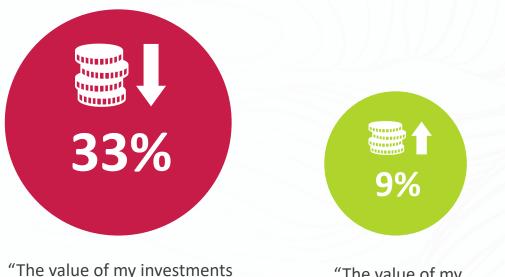
Personal finances

ALLIGATOR



Spotlight upon investments: a third of investors have seen their portfolio decrease in value as a result of Covid-19, while a lucky minority have gained

Covid-19 impact upon investments (All investors, Weeks 8-11)



"The value of my investments have **decreased**" "The value of my investments have **increased**"

Last week's report revealed the extent to which all segments, including the wealthiest consumers, are seeking greater value for money from their financial products.

Although these more affluent audiences have more of a savings and investment cushion, it is also evident that some of this cushion is eroding.

"The value of my investments has decreased" across the two most affluent segments

Wealthy / well-off	Comfortable
42%	35%



36

Around 1 in 6 of those experiencing a decline in portfolio value are responding with a more hands-on approach or with a move to cash

In an uncertain context, and when some consumers have more time on their hands, a desire for control is a natural response. Elsewhere, many appear to simply be weathering the storm with relatively low levels of changes to portfolios or advice being sought.

Indicatively, results by life-stage suggest that it is those aged 65+ with no children at home who are most likely to have suffered a drop in portfolio value, but it is the families who are more likely to be taking *any* affirmative action. This group could be very receptive to a well pitched approach from a provider at this time. Day-to-day, consumers may now have simple pleasures such as cinema visits in their sights but the need to ensure a future 'nest egg' remains pertinent – if not more so.

Actions taken by those whose investments have decreased in value (Weeks 8 - 11)





Example: interactive investor (ii)

Interactive investor (ii) uses social media to promote range of content and successfully speaks to different investor mindsets, including accessible and engaging materials targeting the more active family segment identified in our analysis.



interactive investor (ii) @ii couk · 2h

We are kicking off #MyMoneyWeek with nine fun activities to teach your kids about money, courtesy of some of the best personal finance teachers in the country bit.ly/iiEducationAwa... #financialeducation





interactive investor (ii) @ii_couk · Jun 4

We believe it is never too soon for young people to learn about money. Our education awards recognise the teachers and home-schoolers inspiring kids to be the money masters of tomorrow. For some ideas and to find out more visit 🗲 bit.lv/iiEducationAwa..



interactive investor (ii) @ii_couk · Jun 1 @ftstrader's latest piece on UK banks - will the recent sector rally continue, or is this a harbinger of another bear market to come? ow.ly/V2XA50zVmdx



interactive investor (ii) @ii_couk · May 28

piece here ow.ly/MxXt50zSehc

interactive investor (ii) @ii_couk · Jun 5 @TrendsTargets looks at how the FTSE 100 can continue its powerful recovery ow.ly/g55g50zZPEm





C interactive investor (ii) @ii_couk · Jun 2 @TrendsTargets examines if Domino's Pizza can reach a new high - read more here ow.lv/he9r50zWaKR





Appendix





Methodology

Survey of Consumers

Nationally representative online survey, conducted weekly. This week we surveyed 1,752 British adults.

During the first 8 weeks of tracking, our otherwise nationally representative survey filtered on people actively engaged in two of the following sectors:

- 1. Public transport / mass-transit
- 2. Visitor attractions
- 3. Hotels & paid-for accommodation

From Wave 9 onwards, we have not filtered on engagement with these sectors, but provide a directly comparable sub-sample of those who would have met the equivalent criteria.

For ease of reference in our reporting we use two icons to distinguish between the two audiences:



= 'Travel Activists' (based on the definition above and used in Waves 1 - 8)

= 'All UK Adults' (nationally-representative)

Social media analytics

With customers increasingly communicating directly with organisations and their peers through online channels, these conversations cannot be ignored in the assessment of the COVID-19 crisis on brands.

Our social analytics capability gets closer to the conversations happening in the online space, by listening to how brands are talked about across social media and how brands' reactions to the situation is viewed online.

Rigorous content cleaning and checks are set and regularly reviewed to ensure data quality. The analysis is focused primarily on conversations around the coronavirus over the past week.

Similar to the quantitative survey, social media will be analysed on a weekly basis. For this report we've examined:

- 32,822 posts for the transport sector
- 15,744 posts from the leisure sector
- 10,530 posts from the hospitality sector
- 4,148 posts from financial sector



Contact



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