



UK Tourism Consumer Tracker Survey: Wales profile report 2024: Spring and Summer 2024

(December to January fieldwork)

Introduction



Introduction

VisitEngland, VisitScotland and Visit Wales (Welsh Government) have commissioned a consumer sentiment tracking survey to understand domestic intent to take overnight short breaks and holidays both within the UK and abroad, with particular focus around the current barriers and concerns around travel and how these will evolve over time.

The survey addresses: the likelihood of UK residents to travel; when and where they plan to go; specific trip details such as accommodation type and activities undertaken.

The tracker is based on a UK nationally representative sample of 1,500 adults aged 16+ with boosts for Scotland and Wales residents to deliver robust weekly samples. The survey has been run since 18th May 2020

The findings in this report are based on data from December 2023 and January 2024. This is based on fieldwork taking place during the following dates:

- **December wave: 1st to 8th December**
- **January wave: 2nd January to 8th January**

Where relevant, results are compared to earlier research conducted in the equivalent period.

Definitions used within this report (1)

In this report we look at the profiles and attitudes of a number of separate audiences:

Definitions used include:

- **Spring intenders:** Members of the public who state their *next* UK holiday or short break will be between April and June 2024.
- **Summer intenders:** Members of the public who state their *next* UK holiday or short break will be between July and September 2024.

Due to low sample sizes, most Wales-specific data is merged spring and summer together. The table below outlines the sample sizes of the main audiences used within this report

Audience	Sample size
UK residents	3,518
UK spring intenders	1,029
UK summer intenders	699
Wales spring summer intenders	196

Definitions used within this report (2)

To deliver clearer profiles, we also profile by life stage. Life stages are preferable to 'age' as they better describe someone's life situation. For the purpose of this report, we have used the following:

- **Pre-nesters:** Aged 16-34 without children in household
- **Families:** Aged 16-64 with children in household.
- **Older independents:** Aged 35-64 with no children in household
- **Retirement age:** Aged 65+.

Please note that trip-takers do not always travel within their life stage – for example, 'families' may travel without their children. However, by ~~enlarge the~~ life stage composition is a reliable driver of their behaviour.

For ease of analysis the following accommodation definitions are used:

- **Serviced accommodation:** Hotel, B&B, farmhouse or serviced apartment
- **Guest house/B&B/Farmhouse**
- **Commercial self-catering:** Rental holiday flat/apartment or Rented holiday home or in someone else's private home on a commercial basis (e.g. Airbnb)
- **Private home:** Second home/time share or Friends/relative's home
- **Caravan/Camping/Glamping:** Touring caravan or Campervan/Motorhome or Static Caravan or Tent or Glamping/Alternative
- **Other accommodation:** Hostel or other type of accommodation

Key findings



Key findings (1)

Domestic and overseas travel intentions

1. The domestic tourism landscape is relatively positive for 2024 – intentions to take a spring (April to June) and summer (July to September) holiday or short break are higher than in the equivalent period in 2023. Financial barriers appear to be less dominant than a year ago – the proportion of UK residents ‘hit hard’ by the cost of living crisis, or ‘being cautious and careful’, are both declining. The prevalence of cut backs on UK and Wales spring/summer trips have also dropped since 2023 – for example, the proportion saying they are likely to ‘choose cheaper accommodation’ falling from 42% in 2023 to 32%.
2. Optimistic intentions should be treated with caution. Data collected throughout 2023 illustrates that trip intentions do not always convert to trips taken. For example, although 50% planned a domestic overnight trip between July and September 2023 (compared to just 39% in 2022), only 29% actually ended up taking a trip (relatively consistent with 2022). A guide as to whether intended trips are likely to convert into actual trips is the proportion of intended trips that are already booked. Notably, both spring and summer 2024 domestic trips are *less likely* to have been booked than at the same point in 2023, implying that we may continue to see the intention gap into 2024.
3. A further point of caution relates to overseas intentions. The intention to take overseas trips has also increased on 2023, and at a higher rate than domestic trips. Overseas trips are also more likely to have been already booked, meaning that if people choose between a domestic or overseas trip, an overseas trip may naturally take precedence. Also notably, whilst the life stage profile of domestic trip intenders is consistent with 2023, overseas trip intenders for 2024 are older than in 2023. This shift may also be a threat to domestic travel – retirees previously focusing their intentions on trips within the UK, now broadening their choices.

Wales travel intentions

1. Wales travel intentions are broadly in line with 2023 – Wales the 5th most popular UK region in both spring and summer. The composition of the Wales trip-taker appears different to 2023. In 2024, Wales intenders are more likely to be families and from outside of Wales – the proportion of Wales residents planning an overnight trip there having declined.
2. Consistent with 2023 and previous years, Wales overnight intenders have more limited financial means than intenders to other UK destinations – Wales attracting the 2nd highest proportion of visitors ‘hit hard’ or ‘being cautious and careful’ as a result of the cost of living crisis. However, Wales intenders are aligned with broader UK intenders in being less likely to cut back on trip-spending than in 2023.

Key findings (2)

3. As in 2023, Wales spring/summer 2024 intenders are most likely to be motivated by a Wales trip 'to get away from it all and have a rest' and 'family time with my partner'. Notably, the motivation 'to connect with nature/be outdoors' amongst Wales intenders has increased since 2023 (an increase that hasn't occurred across the UK).
4. The most popular intended activities for Wales spring/summer intenders are 'walking, hiking or rambling', 'trying local food and drink' and 'visiting heritage sites' – the latter two increasing since 2023 (and not increasing across the UK). An increase is also reported in 'exploring scenic areas by car', 'adventure activities' and 'water sports'.
5. Wales trip intenders are most likely to anticipate their overnight trip being in a 'traditional seaside town' or a 'countryside or village', both higher than in 2023. 'Rural coastline' and 'mountains or hills' are also popular – the latter higher than across the UK. Intention to take a trip to a 'city or large town' is lower than in 2023, and much lower than across the UK.
6. Consistent with previous reporting, Snowdonia is the number one intended destination for an overnight trip in Wales this spring/summer, followed by Llandudno & Colwyn Bay (which has increased in popularity). A range of other destinations are also popular with increases in interest for Cardiff and Swansea Bay
7. Consistent with 2023, Wales spring/summer trip intenders are more likely to be planning a longer trip of 4+ nights than a short break. This is a slight difference to all UK trips, which are more balanced towards shorter breaks, driven by a higher interest in city breaks. Notably UK trips are set to be shorter than in 2023 – a shift that hasn't occurred for trips to Wales. Wales' relative resilience in trip length may perhaps be driven by perceptions as a good-value destination.
8. 'Serviced' accommodation' is the most likely accommodation type for a Wales trip this spring/summer, followed by 'caravan/camping' and 'commercial property rental'. 'Caravan/camping' is particularly popular in the summer months.

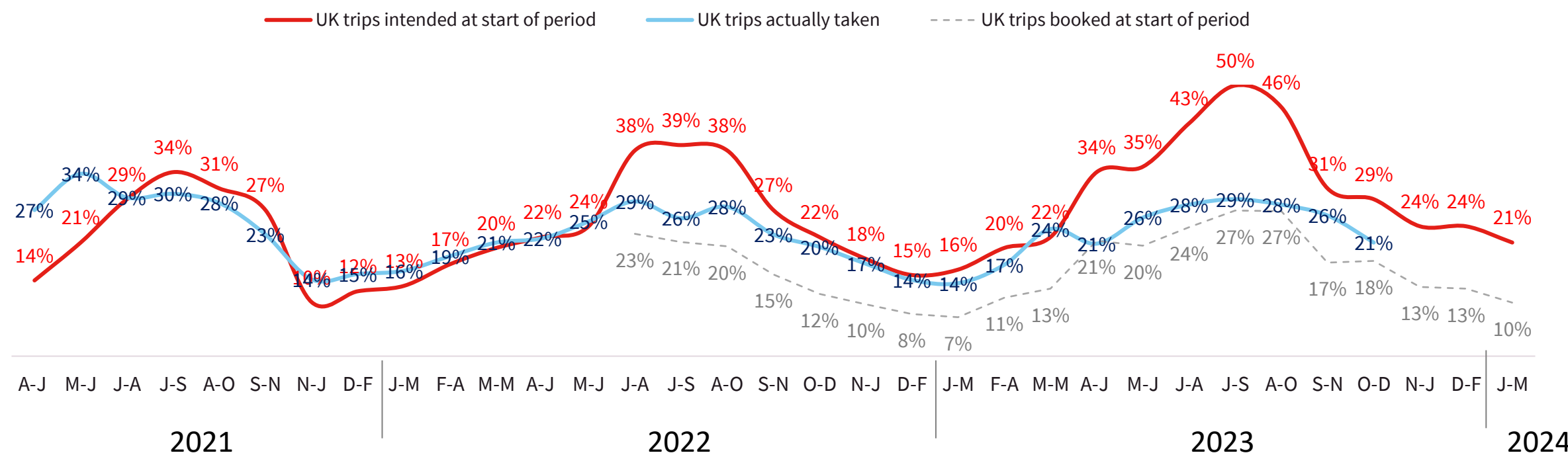
Domestic and overseas travel intentions



Three month domestic trip intentions, bookings and trips taken

- Domestic overnight trip intentions have steadily increased since early 2021. For each three-month period in the last 12 months, intentions have typically been higher than the equivalent period the year before. However, trips *taken* have not followed this pattern, remaining relatively consistent year-on-year – particularly during the peak season. This indicates that there is currently an ‘intention gap’ (the difference between intentions and trips taken), which is particularly high in the summer. The intention gap is driven by younger age groups – retirees the most likely to follow through on trip intention.

Figure 1. Overnight UK trips planned/booked/taken in 3 month periods, Percentage wave-on-wave, UK

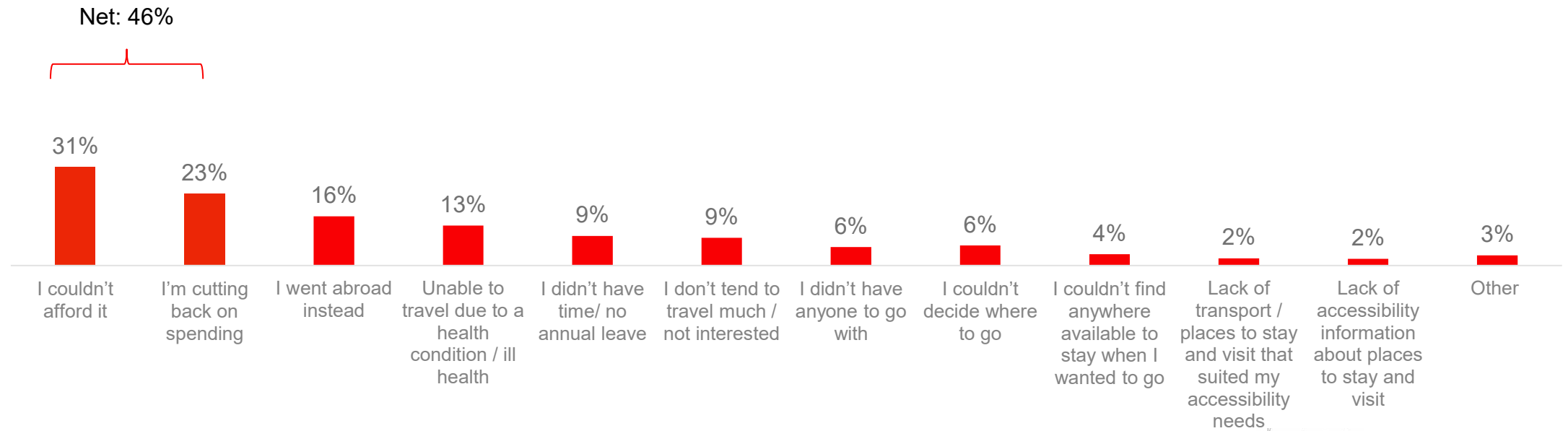


QVB2a. Thinking of your next UK holiday or short break, when are you likely to go on this trip? QVB2b. And when else do you anticipate going on a UK holiday or short break? Question: QVB13a2. In which of these months have you taken an overnight short break or holiday in the UK in the last 12 months? QVB2enew: Which of the following best describe how close you are to booking your next overnight UK trip in? Base: All respondents: n=c.1,750 each wave

Reasons for not taking a domestic overnight trip in last 12 months

- The main reasons for not taking a domestic summer trip in the last 12 months were financial, implying that the cost-of-living crisis has had some influence on trip conversion. The lure of overseas travel and ill health were also factors. Finances were a leading reason for all life stages, although this was least likely to be the case amongst retirees.
- Other reasons differed by life stage, notably with pre-nesters and families more likely to cite 'I didn't have time/no annual leave' and retirees indexing higher on 'ill health'.

Figure 2. Reasons for not taking a UK overnight trip in the last 12 months, Percentage, UK summer non-trip-takers originally considering a trip



Upcoming UK and overseas overnight trip intentions

- Looking ahead, 2 in 5 (42%) of the UK public plan on taking an overnight domestic trip between April and June (spring) this year, rising to nearly half (47%) between July and September (summer). Intentions have increased for both periods compared to 2023, although summer intentions only marginally so.
- Around 1 in 4 plan an overseas spring trip, rising to 2 in 5 in the summer. As with domestic trips, overseas intentions have risen since 2023 although notably, overseas summer intentions have risen at a higher rate than domestic trips in the same period.

Figure 3. Proportion anticipating going on any overnight UK trips, Percentage, December to January fieldwork, UK and Wales

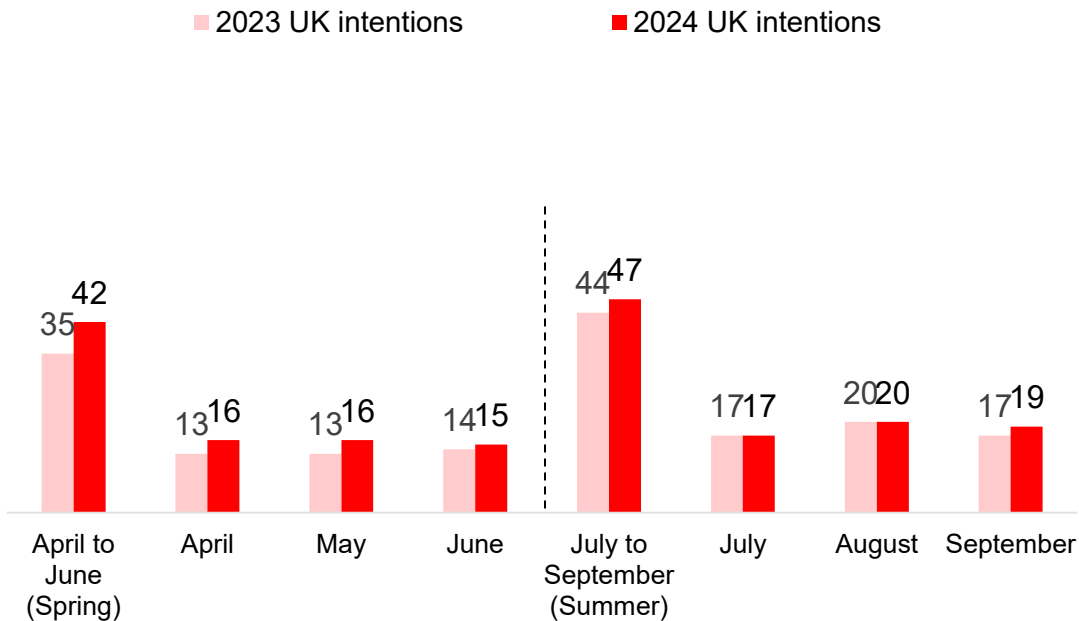
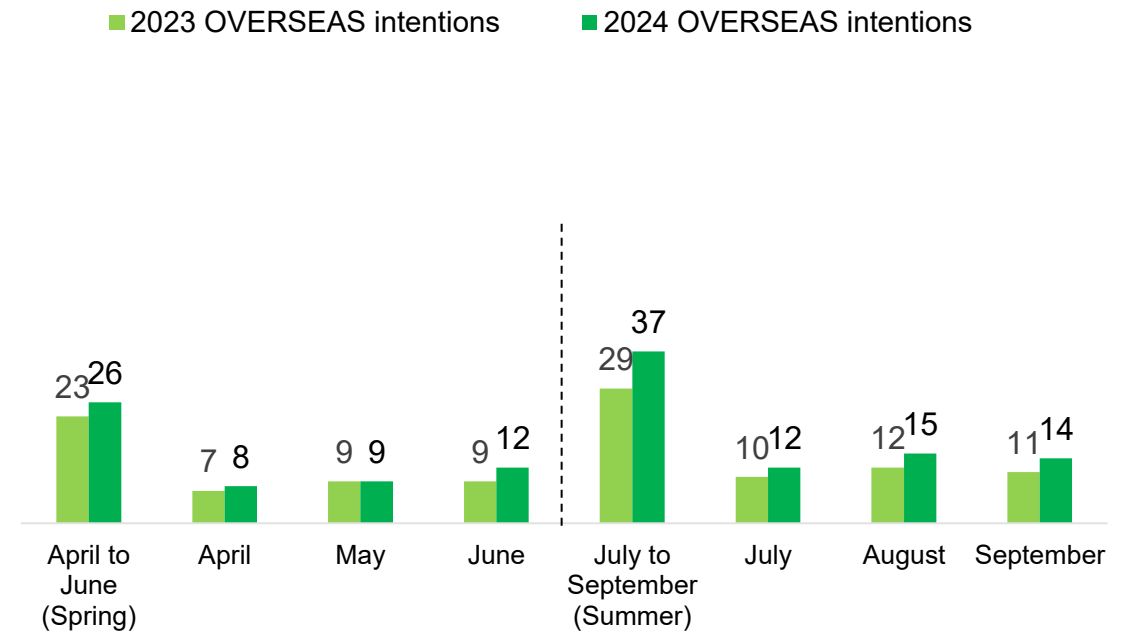


Figure 4. Proportion anticipating going on any overnight OVERSEAS trips, Percentage, December to January fieldwork, UK and Wales



VB2a/cc. Thinking of the next UK/overseas holiday or short break you are likely to take, when are you likely to plan, book and go on this trip? VB2b/d. And when else do you anticipate going on a UK/overseas holiday or short break?

Base: All UK respondents. n=3,518

Demographics of UK and overseas trip intenders by period

- The life stage profile of UK 2024 spring and summer intenders is virtually identical to profiles in 2023. Conversely, overseas trip intenders are more likely to be retirees within both periods. This suggests that retirees are becoming increasingly comfortable with activities that they did less of during and immediately after the pandemic.

Figure 5. Breakdown of population and UK intenders by life stage, Percentage, December to January fieldwork, UK

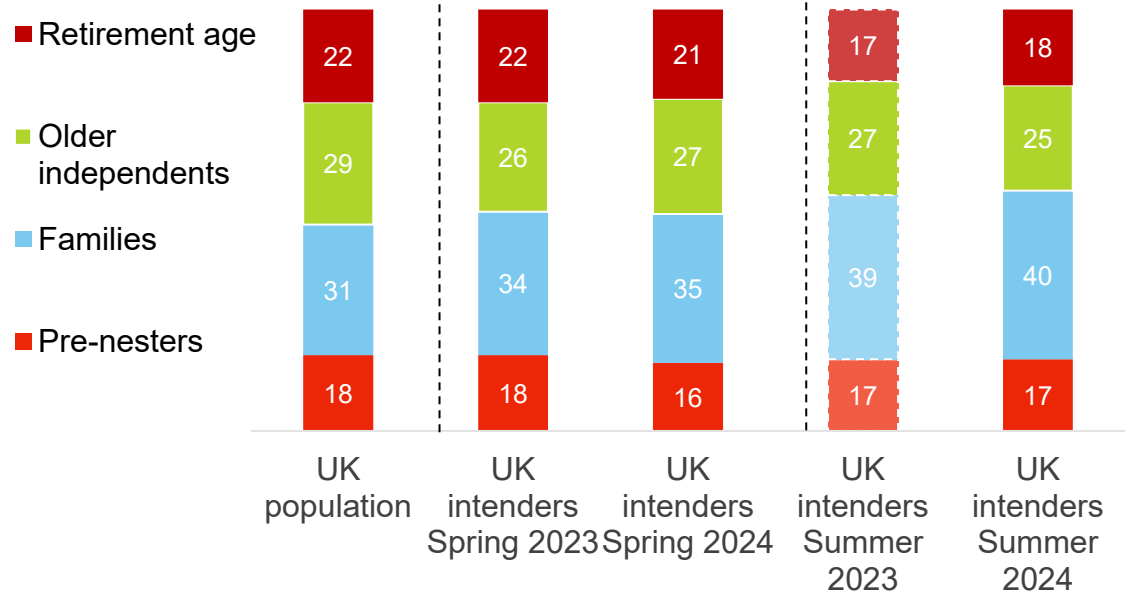
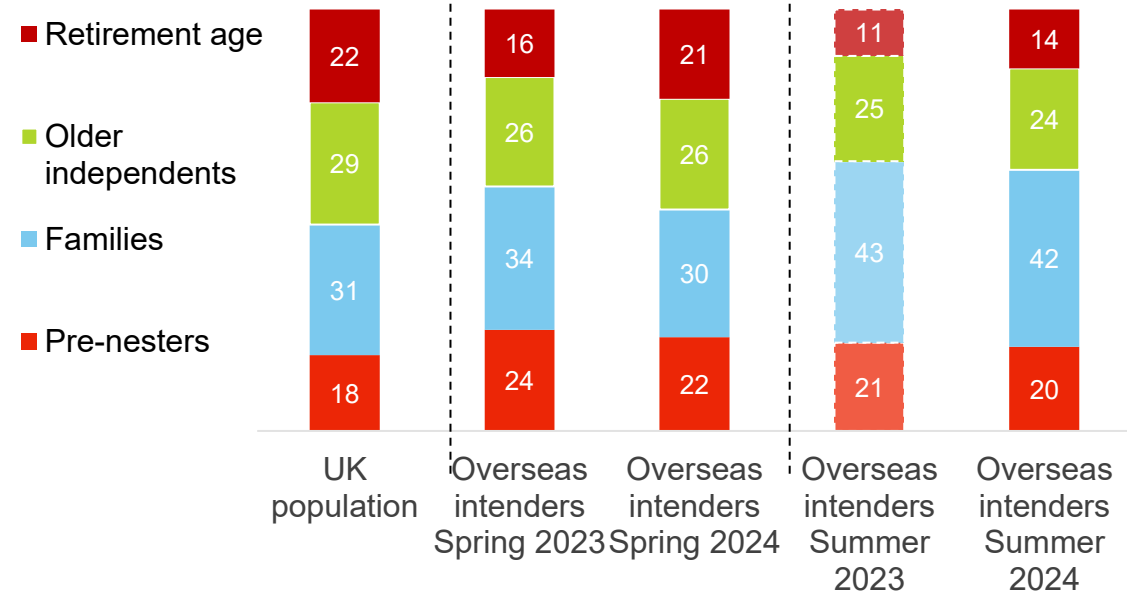


Figure 6. Breakdown of population and OVERSEAS intenders by life stage, Percentage, December to January fieldwork, UK



Source: Demographic questions.
Base: All respondents. UK population n=3,518; UK intenders April to June 2023 n=1,200; UK intenders April to June 2024 n=1,460; UK intenders July to September 2023 n=1,503; UK intenders July to September 2024 n=1,637; Overseas intenders April to June 2023 n=765; Overseas intenders April to June 2024 n=895; Overseas intenders July to September 2023 n=1,003; Overseas intenders July to September 2024 n=1 262



Trip-booking status of planned UK and overseas trips

- As of January 2024, only a minority of UK spring and summer trip intenders have *already* booked their domestic trips. Perhaps most notably, the proportion that have booked their trips is lower than the equivalent period in 2023, suggesting that not only is there likely to be a continuation of the intention gap this year, but it may be even larger.
- Also, notably, intended overseas spring and summer trips are more likely to have been ‘already booked’ than domestic overnight trips in the same period, suggesting that given the choice between the two, domestic trips are more likely to be sacrificed.

Figure 7. Overnight UK trip booking status, Percentage, January fieldwork, UK

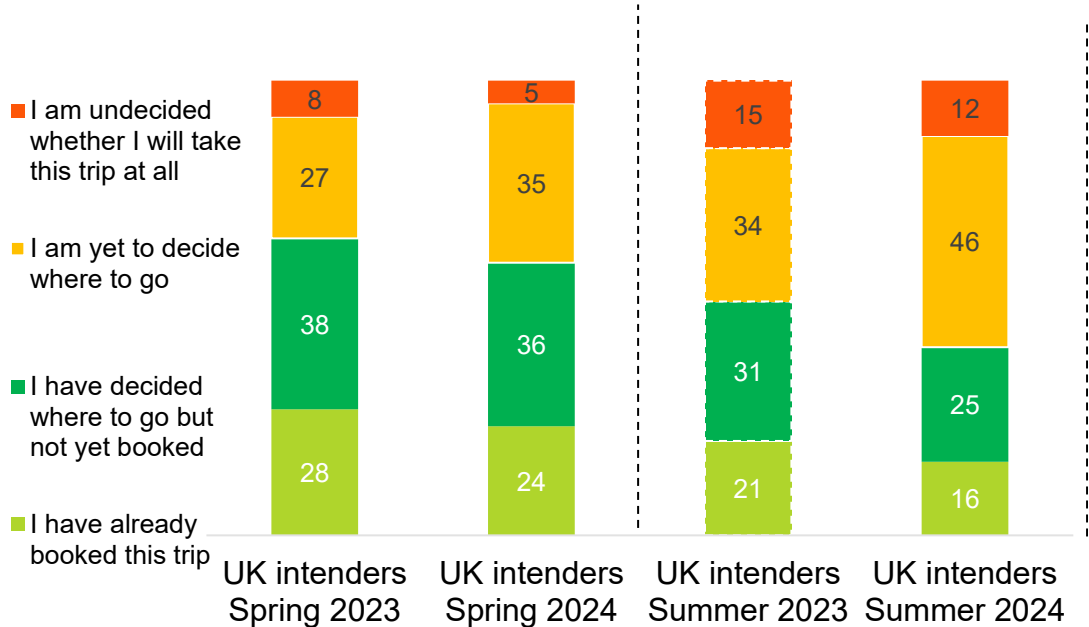
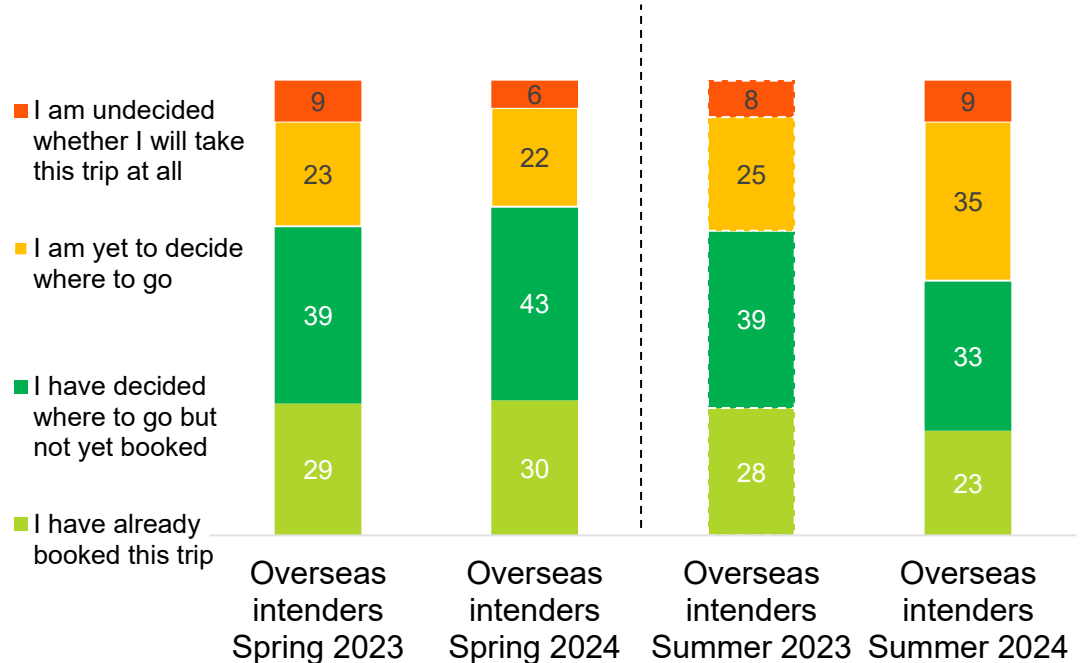


Figure 8. Overnight OVERSEAS trip booking status, Percentage, January fieldwork, UK

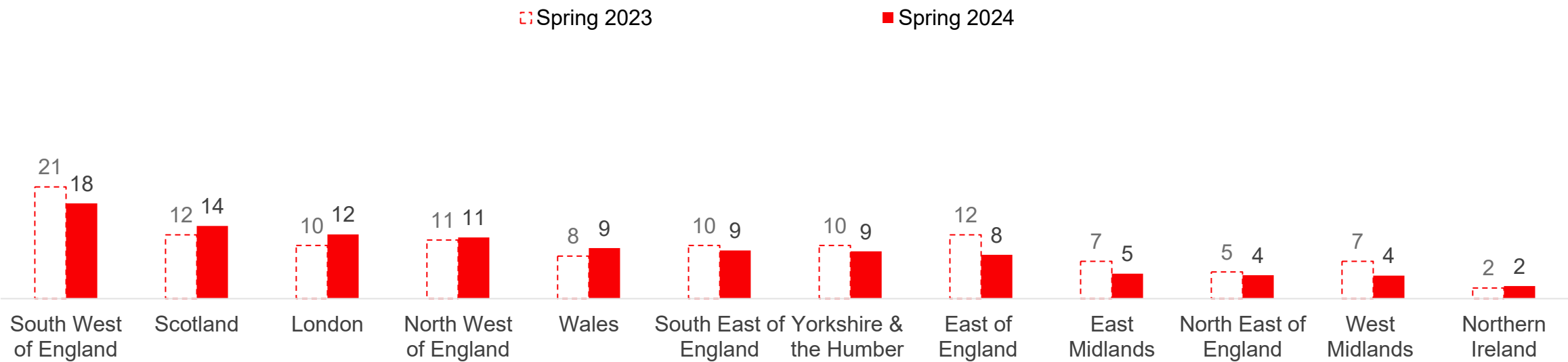


VB2e/g. Which of the following best describe how close you are to booking your next overnight UK/OVERSEAS trip in <INSERT MONTH FROM VB2a(III)>? Base: All respondents. UK population n=3,518; UK intenders April to June 2023 n=504; UK intenders April to June 2024 n=555; UK intenders July to September 2023 n=394; UK intenders July to September 2024 n=410; Overseas intenders April to June 2023 n=307; Overseas intenders April to June 2024 n=364; Overseas intenders July to September 2023 n=491; Overseas intenders July to September 2024 n=427

Where planning on staying on next UK trip

- Consistent with 2023 (and previous years), the South West of England is the most preferred UK destination for spring trips this year, although it is less preferred than in 2023. The South West of England is followed by Scotland, London, and the North West of England. Around 1 in 11 (9%) plan on taking their spring trip in Wales – largely consistent with 2023.

Figure 9. Where planning on staying on next UK overnight trip from April to June 2024, Percentage, December to January fieldwork, Proportion of UK Intenders

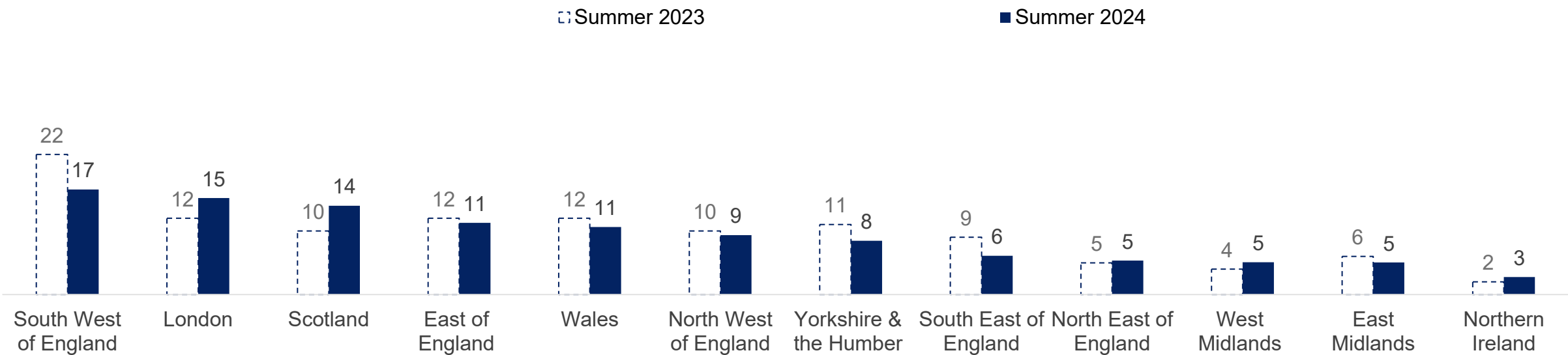


QVB4a. Where in the UK are you likely to stay on this next trip in <INSERT MONTH FROM VB2(III)>?
Base: All respondents planning on taking a holiday or short break between April and June. 2023 intenders n=958; 2024 intenders n=1,029

Where planning on staying on next UK trip

- The South West of England is also the most preferred destination for a summer trip, although again preference for the region has dropped since 2023. As in the spring, London and Scotland make up the remainder of the top 3. Also as in the spring, Wales is the 5th most preferred destination, 11% of intenders planning a trip there.

Figure 10. Where planning on staying on next UK overnight trip from July to September 2024, Percentage, December to January fieldwork, Proportion of UK Intenders



QVB4a. Where in the UK are you likely to stay on this next trip in <INSERT MONTH FROM VB2(III)>?

Base: All respondents planning on taking a holiday or short break between July and September. 2023 intenders n=715; 2024 intenders n=699



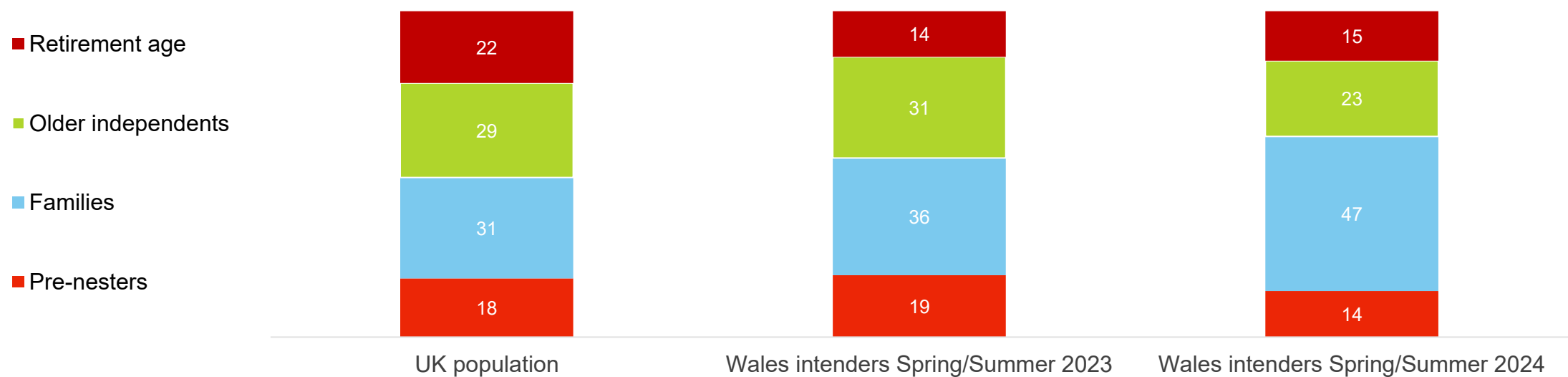
Wales trip intentions and profiles spring and summer 2024



Life stage of Wales intenders

- Nearly half (47%) of Wales spring and summer intenders belong to the family life stage (a rise on 2023), with 1 in 4 older independents and 1 in 7 retirees.

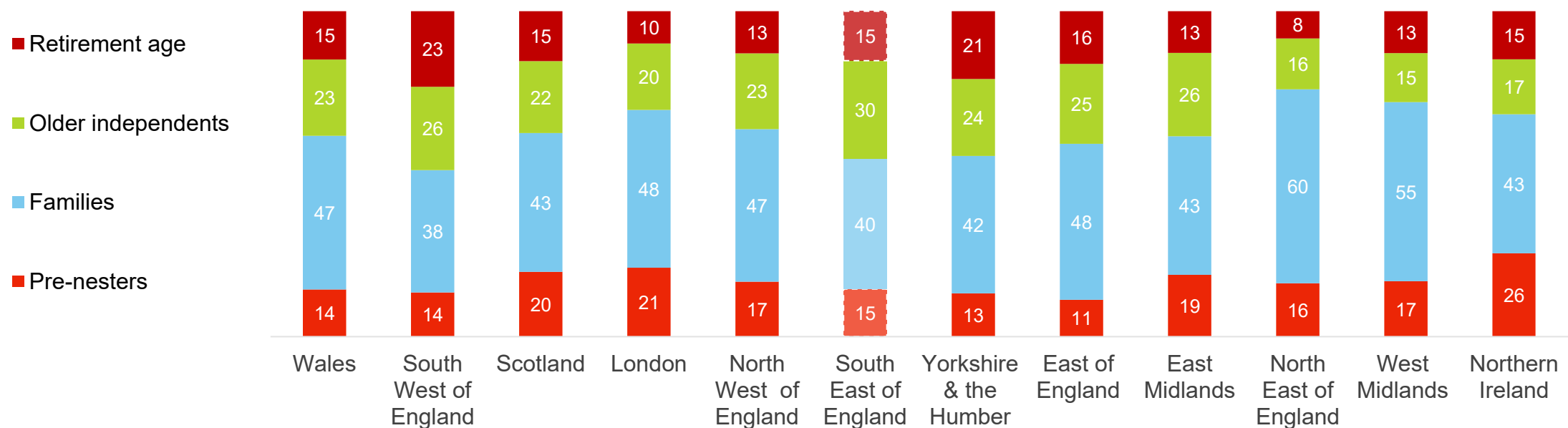
Figure 11. Breakdown of population and intenders by life stage, Percentage, December to January fieldwork, UK



Demographics of intenders across destinations

- The life stage profile of Wales intenders this spring/summer is broadly similar to other UK destinations – the family life stage dominating.

Figure 12. Breakdown of Spring/Summer destination intenders by life stage, Percentage, December to January fieldwork, UK



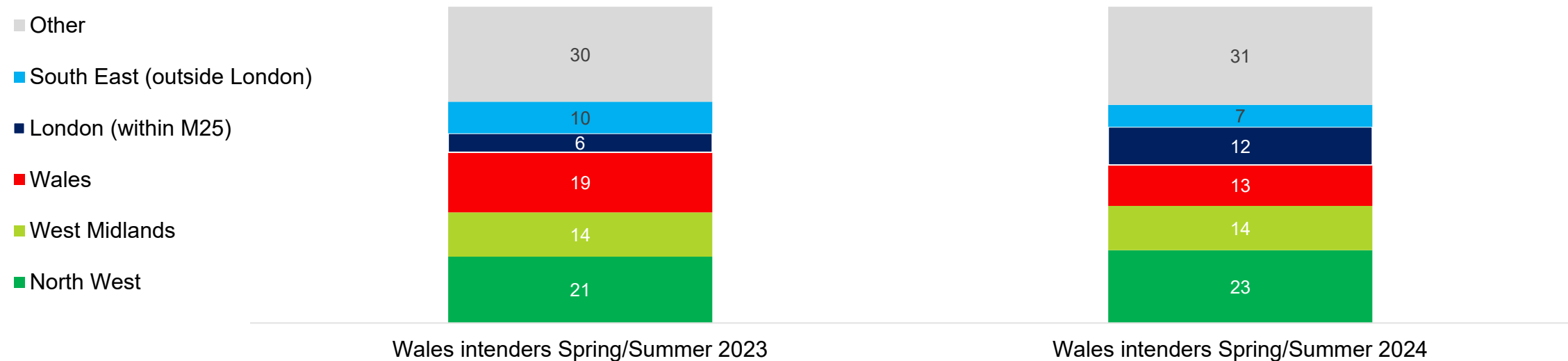
Source: Demographics.
Base: Wales n=196; SW Eng n=288; Scot n=271; London n=236; NW England n=177; SE England n=118; Yorks and Humber n=154; East of England n=151; East Midlands n=85; NE England n=81; West Mids n=84; N Ireland n=36



Demographics and origin of Wales intenders

- Wales spring/summer intenders are most likely to live in the North West of England, the West Midlands and Wales itself, with London and the South East of England close behind. Notably, the proportion of Wales intenders who live in Wales has decreased since 2023, suggesting Welsh residents are travelling further afield.

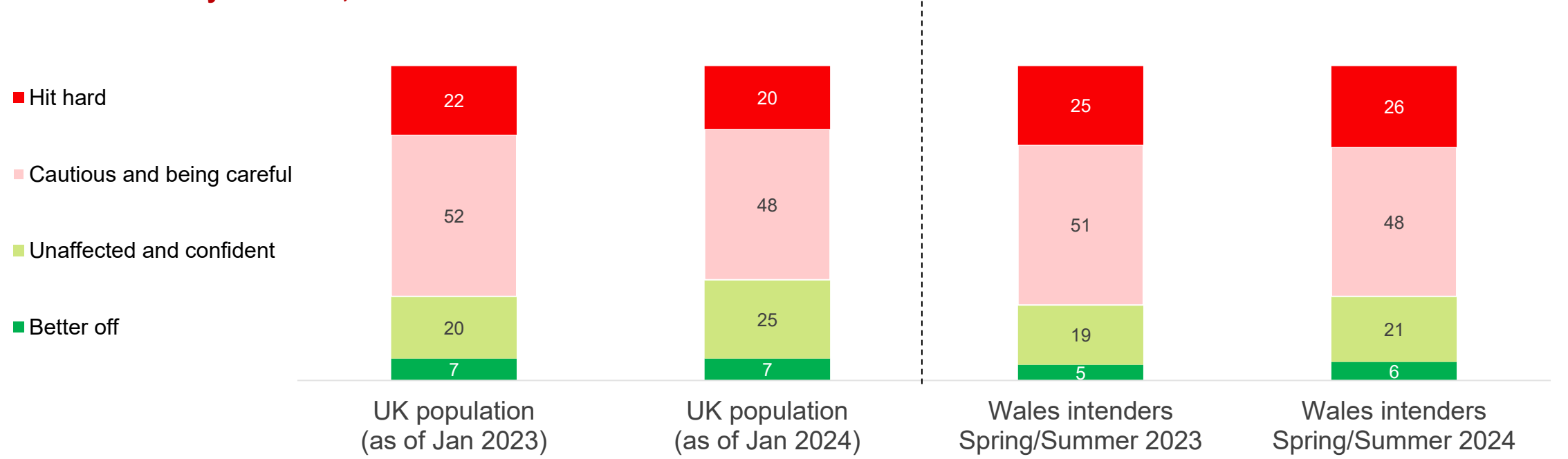
Figure 13. Breakdown of population and intenders by region of residence, Percentage, December to January fieldwork, UK



Impact of cost-of-living crisis amongst Wales intenders

- It's notable that Wales spring/summer intenders are more likely to report that they are worse hit by the cost of living crisis than the wider UK population. It's also notable that the rate at which Wales intenders are recovering from the cost of living crisis is slower than the broader population.

Figure 14. Impact of the cost-of-living crisis on finances amongst population and intenders, Percentage, December to January fieldwork, UK



Q17. There has been a lot of talk about how the 'cost of living crisis' has affected people's financial circumstances. If you had to choose, which ONE of the following statements would best describe your feelings about your own situation, right now?

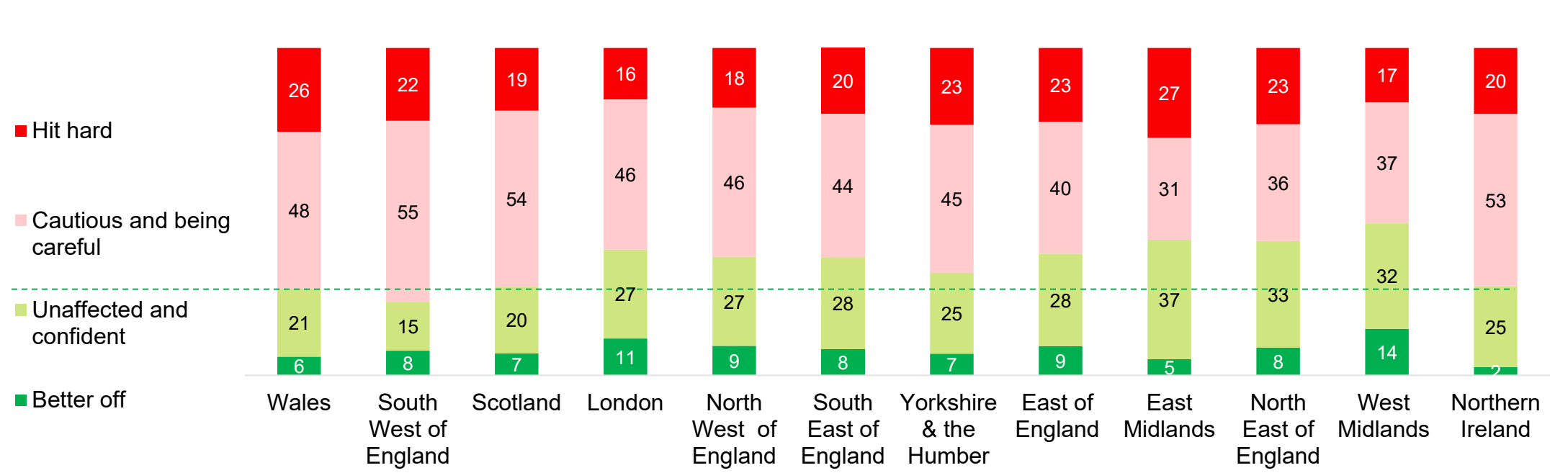
Base: UK population 2023 n=3,518; 2024 n=3518; Wales intenders Apr-Sept 2023 n=201; Wales intenders Apr-Sept 2024 n=196



Impact of cost-of-living crisis on intenders across destinations

- Wales is set to attract one of the highest proportions of intenders that have been ‘hit hard’ by the cost of living crisis (only the East Midlands higher) and the joint 2nd lowest ‘unaffected’ or ‘better off’ (only South West of England lower). This suggests that Wales is seen as a destination suitable for a relatively less affluent visitor.

Figure 15. Impact of the cost-of-living crisis on finances by destination amongst Spring/Summer intenders, Percentage, December to January fieldwork, UK



Q17. There has been a lot of talk about how the ‘cost of living crisis’ has affected people’s financial circumstances. If you had to choose, which ONE of the following statements would best describe your feelings about your own situation, right now?

Base: Wales n=196; SW Eng n=288; Scot n=271; London n=236; NW England n=177; SE England n=118; Yorks and Humber

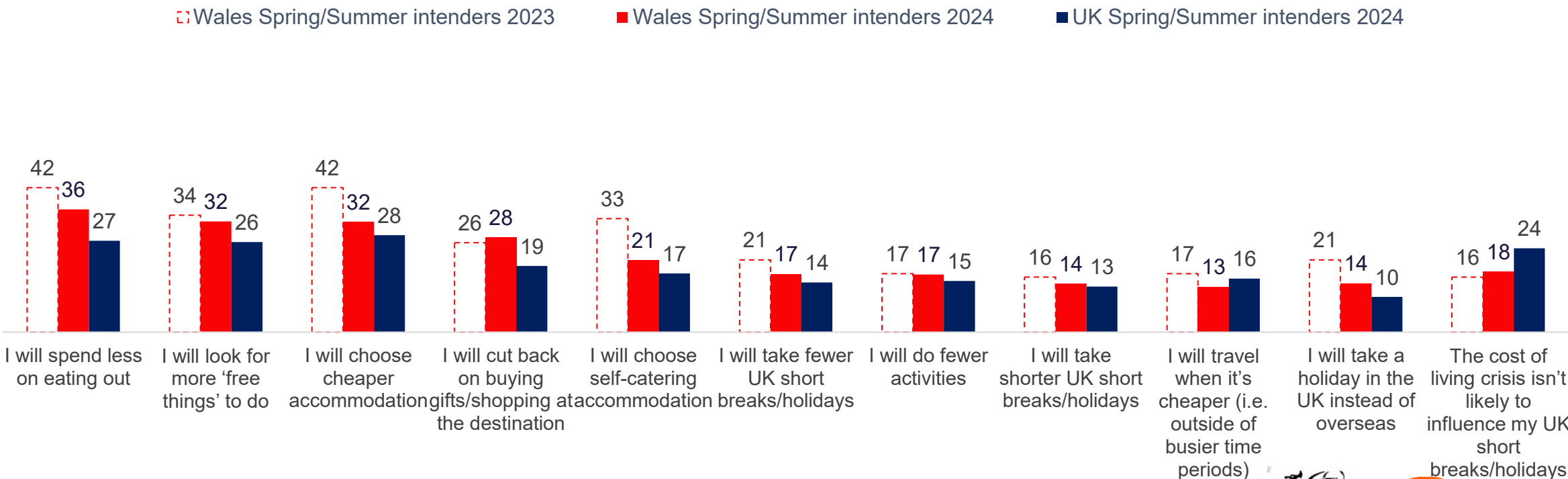
n=154; East of England n=151; East Midlands n=85; NE England n=81; West Mids n=84; N Ireland n=36



Cost of living impact on UK overnight trips

- Despite limited signs that Wales intenders are moving on from cost of living concerns, they are less likely to anticipate ‘cutting back’ during their trip than in 2023. For example, 36% plan on spending less on eating out in 2024, compared to 42% in 2023. 32% plan on choosing cheaper accommodation, compared to 42% in 2023.

Figure 16. ‘Cost of living’ impact on Wales and UK holidays and short breaks, Percentage, December to January fieldwork, UK, Top 10



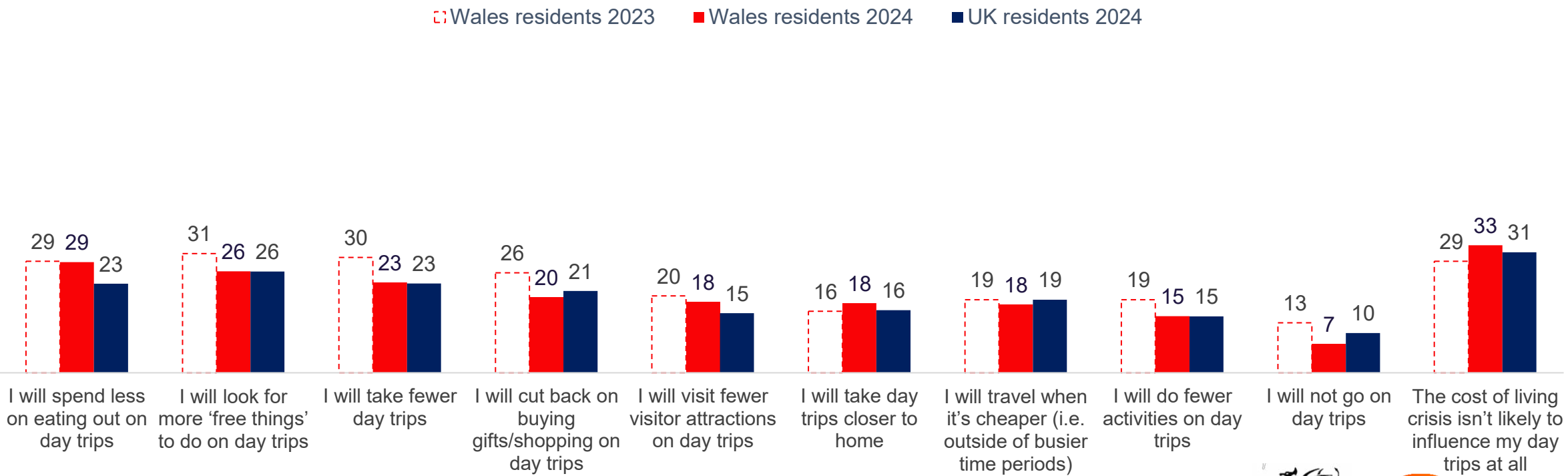
VB7iii. How, if at all, would you say the ‘cost of living crisis’ is likely to influence your UK short breaks or holidays in the next six months?

Base: Wales intenders Apr-Sept 2023 n=201; Wales intenders Apr-Sept 2024 n=196; UK intenders n=1,728

Cost of living impact on day trips

- Wales residents are also less likely to anticipate cutting back on day trip spending in the next few months. In particular there is a notable drop in those looking take few day trips and to look for more free things to do.

Figure 16b. ‘Cost of living’ impact on Wales and day trips, Percentage, December to January fieldwork, UK,



VB7Cii. How, if at all, would you say the ‘cost of living crisis’ is likely to influence your day trips in the next few months?
Base: Wales residents 2023 n=417; Wales residents 2024 n=386; UK residents 2023 n=

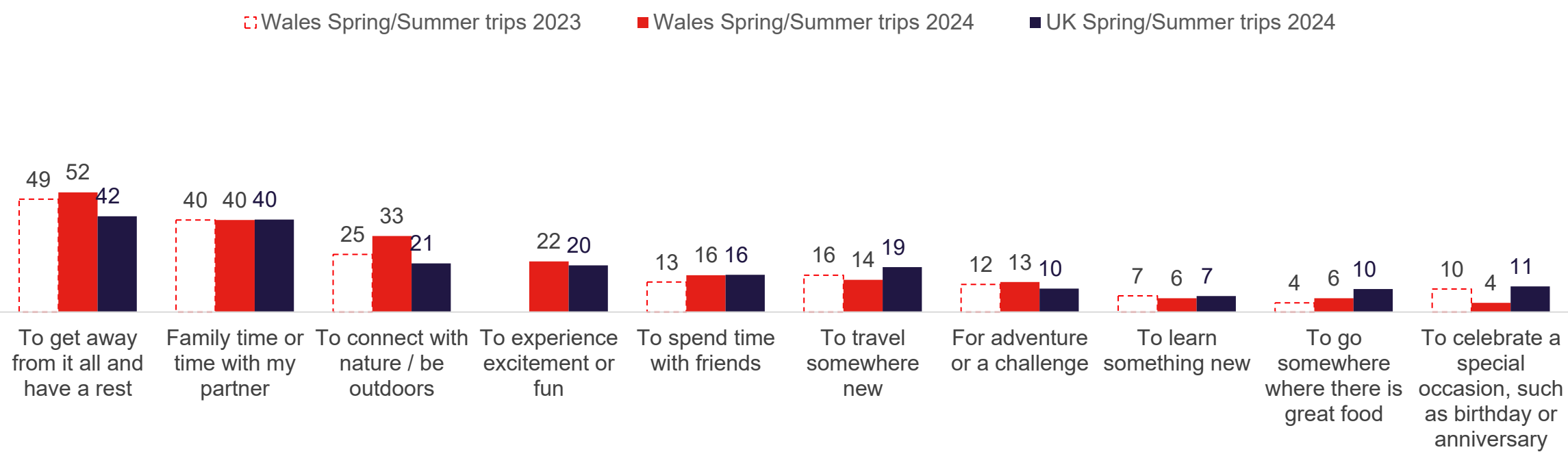
Wales trip behaviour and profiles spring and summer 2024



Trip purpose/s for next UK short break or holiday

- As in 2023, Wales spring/summer 2023 intenders are most likely to be motivated by a Wales trip ‘to get away from it all and have a rest’ and ‘family time with my partner’. Notably, the motivation ‘to connect with nature/be outdoors’ amongst Wales intenders has increased since 2023 (an increase that hasn’t occurred across the UK).

Figure 17. Motivations for Wales and UK holidays and short breaks in Spring/Summer, Percentage, December to January fieldwork, UK, Top 10



Question: VB6fii. Which of the following best describe your motivation/s for this trip?
Base: Wales Spring/Summer 2023 intenders n=133; Wales Spring/Summer 2024 intenders n=146; UK Spring/Summer 2024 intenders

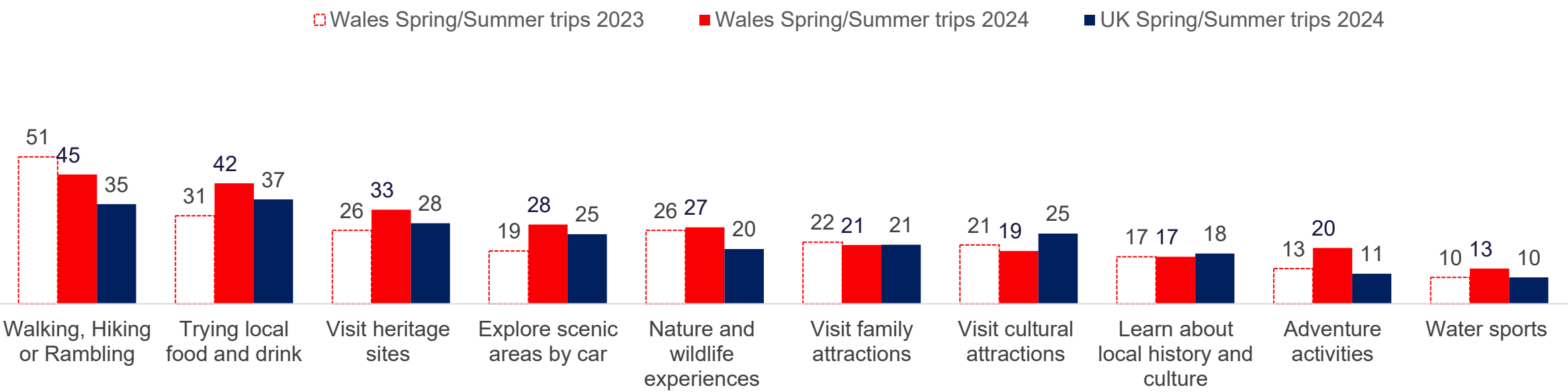
n=1,728



Trip purpose/s for next UK short break or holiday

- The most popular intended activities for Wales spring/summer intenders are ‘walking, hiking or rambling’, ‘trying local food and drink’ and ‘visiting heritage sites’ – the latter two increasing since 2023 (and not increasing across the UK). An increase is also reported in ‘exploring scenic areas by car’, ‘adventure activities’ and ‘water sports’.

Figure 18. Activities on Wales and UK holidays and short breaks in Spring/Summer, Percentage, December to January fieldwork, UK, Top 10



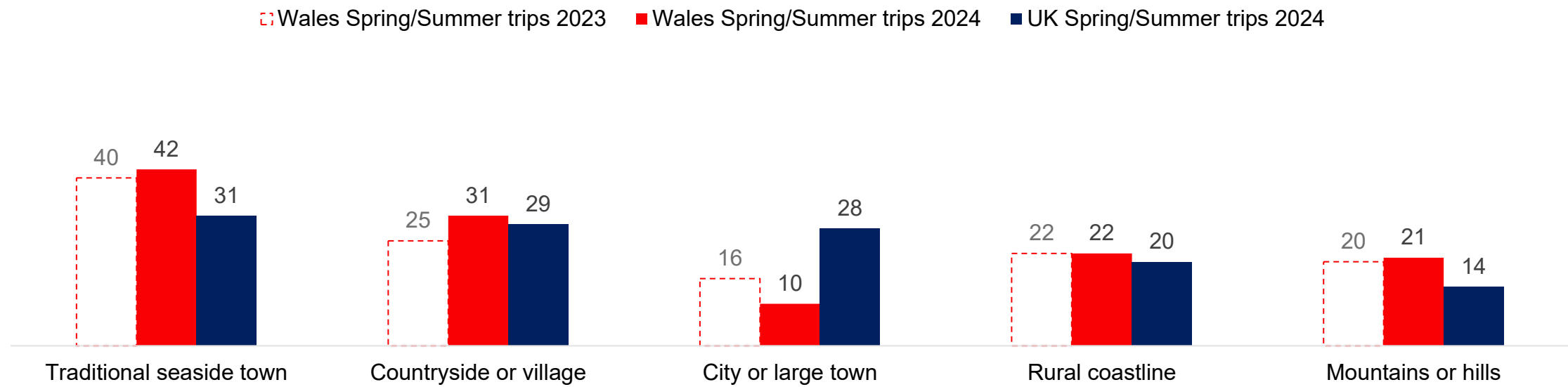
Question: VB6fiii. Which, if any, of these activities are you likely to do on your next UK short break or holiday in <INSERT MONTH FROM VB2A>? Base: Wales Spring/Summer 2023 intenders n=133; Wales Spring/Summer 2024 intenders n=146; UK Spring/Summer 2024 intenders n=1,728



Type of destination for next Wales short break or holiday

- Wales trip intenders are most likely to anticipate their overnight trip being in a ‘traditional seaside town’ or a ‘countryside or village’, both higher than in 2023. ‘Rural coastline’ and ‘mountains or hills’ are also popular – the latter higher than across the UK. Intention to take a trip to a ‘city or large town’ is lower than in 2023, and much lower than across the UK.

Figure 19. Main type of destination for next Wales trip in April and September, Percentage, December to January fieldwork, UK

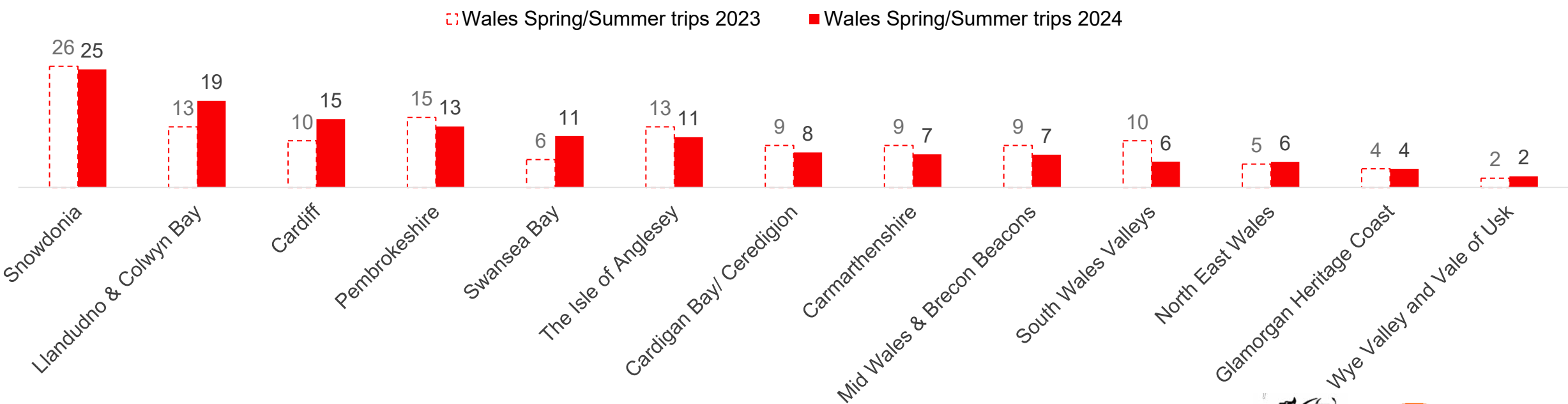


QVB5a. Which of the following best describes the main types of destination you are likely to stay in during your UK trip?
Base: Wales Spring/Summer 2023 intenders n=133; Wales Spring/Summer 2024 intenders n=146; UK Spring/Summer 2024 intenders n=1,728

Planned destination in Wales amongst Wales intenders

- Consistent with previous reporting, Snowdonia is the number one intended destination for an overnight trip in Wales this spring/summer, followed by Llandudno & Colwyn Bay (which has increased in popularity). A range of other destinations are also popular with increases in interest for Cardiff and Swansea Bay

Figure 20. Planned Wales destination for next trip in April and September, Percentage, December to January fieldwork, UK

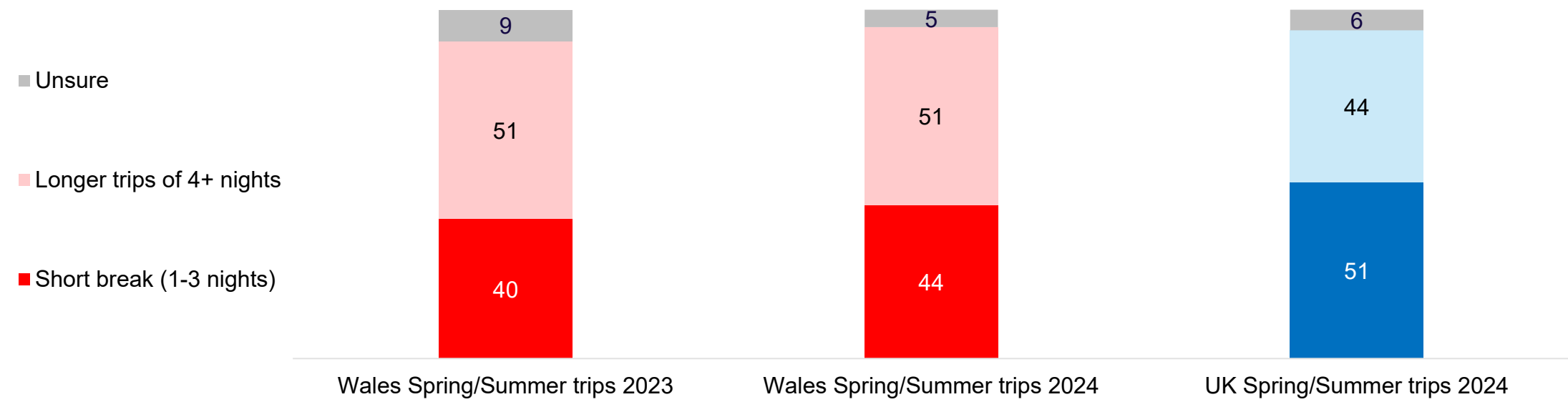


QVB4viii. Where in Wales do you expect to be staying on this next holiday or short break?
Base: Wales Spring/Summer 2023 intenders n=201; Wales Spring/Summer 2024 intenders n=196;

Trip purpose/s for next UK short break or holiday

- Consistent with 2023, Wales spring/summer trip intenders are more likely to be planning a longer trip of 4+ nights than a short break. This is a slight difference to all UK trips, which are more balanced towards shorter breaks, driven by a higher interest in city breaks. Notably UK trips are set to be shorter than in 2023 – a shift that hasn’t occurred for trips to Wales.

Figure 21. Length of next Wales trip between April and September, Percentage, December to January fieldwork, UK

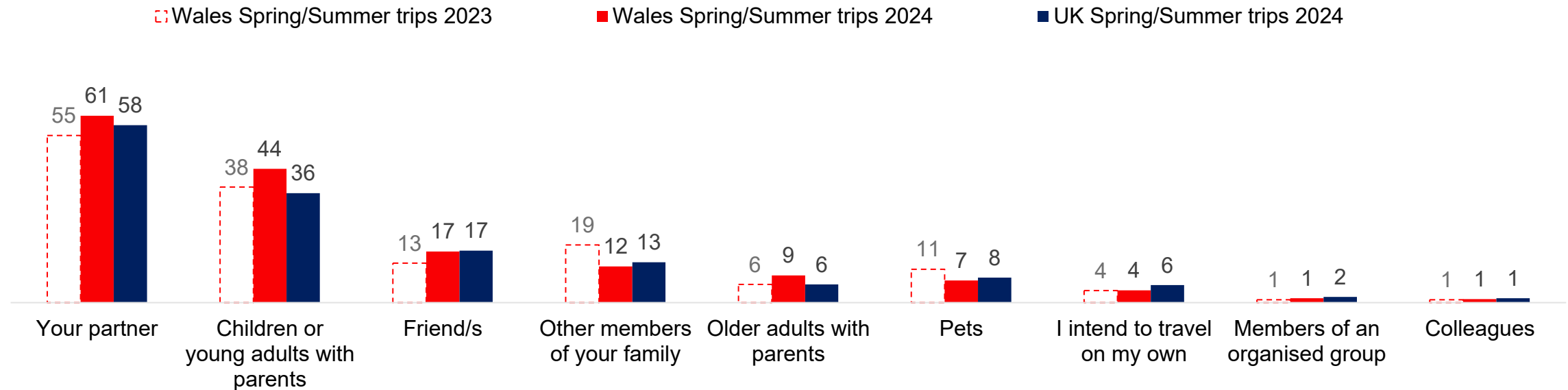


VB3. Is this next trip in <INSERT MONTH FROM VB2A> likely to be a short break (1-3 nights) or a holiday (4+ nights)? VB6f. And which of the following best describes the purpose/s of this trip? Base: Wales Spring/Summer 2023 intenders n=133; Wales Spring/Summer 2024 intenders n=146; UK Spring/Summer 2024 intenders n=1,728

Make-up of visitor party for next Wales holiday or short break

- Amongst Wales intenders, a 'partner' is the most common accompanying party member for a trip (at 61% higher than in 2023), followed by 'child, grandchild or young adults with parents' (at 44%, also higher than in 2023). A notable minority of Wales intenders are also likely to travel with 'friends' (17%) and 'other members of the family' (12%).
- Compared to broader UK trips, Wales intenders are more likely to travel with children.

Figure 22. Visitor party make-up for Wales intenders in April and September, Percentage, December to January fieldwork, UK



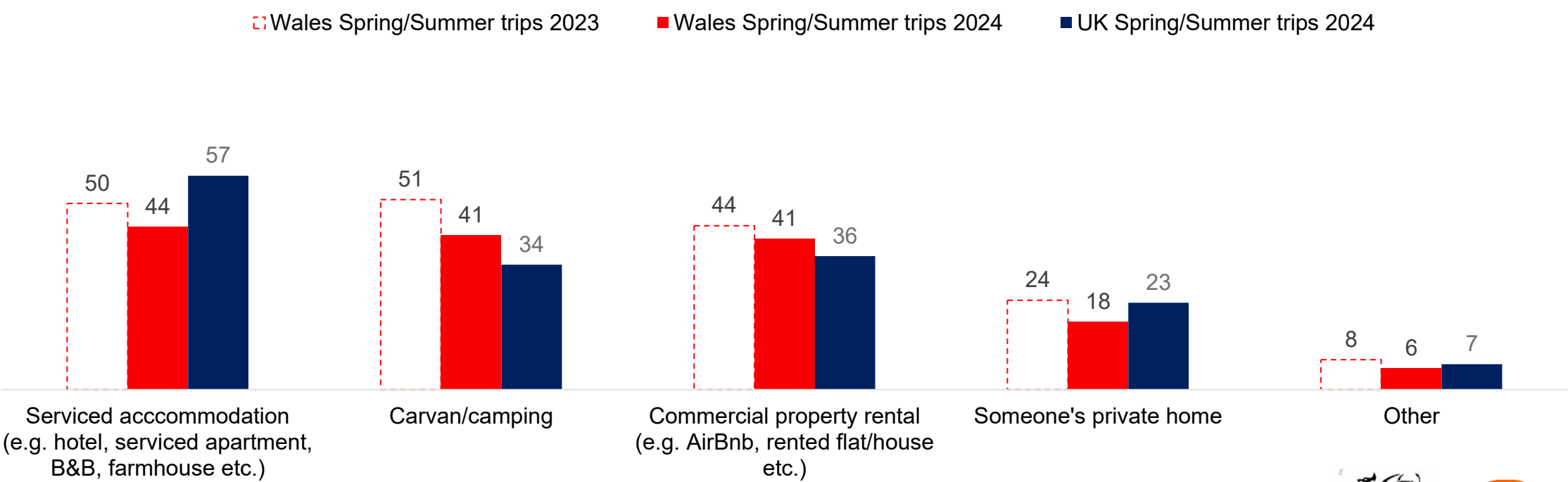
QVB4d. With whom are you likely to be spending your holiday?

Base: Wales Spring/Summer 2023 intenders n=133; Wales Spring/Summer 2024 intenders n=146; UK Spring/Summer 2024 intenders n=1,728

Type of accommodation for next Wales short break or holiday

- ‘Serviced’ accommodation’ (including hotels, B&Bs, farmhouse and serviced apartments) is the most likely accommodation type for a Wales trip this spring/summer, followed by ‘caravan/camping’ and ‘commercial property rental’. ‘Caravan/camping’ is particularly prevalent in the summer months (52% July to September compared to 34% between April and June)
- The large percentages indicate that with most intenders not yet having booked their trip, they are still considering multiple options.

Figure 23. Accommodation choice on next overnight trip for Wales intenders in April and September, Net percentage, December to January fieldwork, UK, Condensed categories



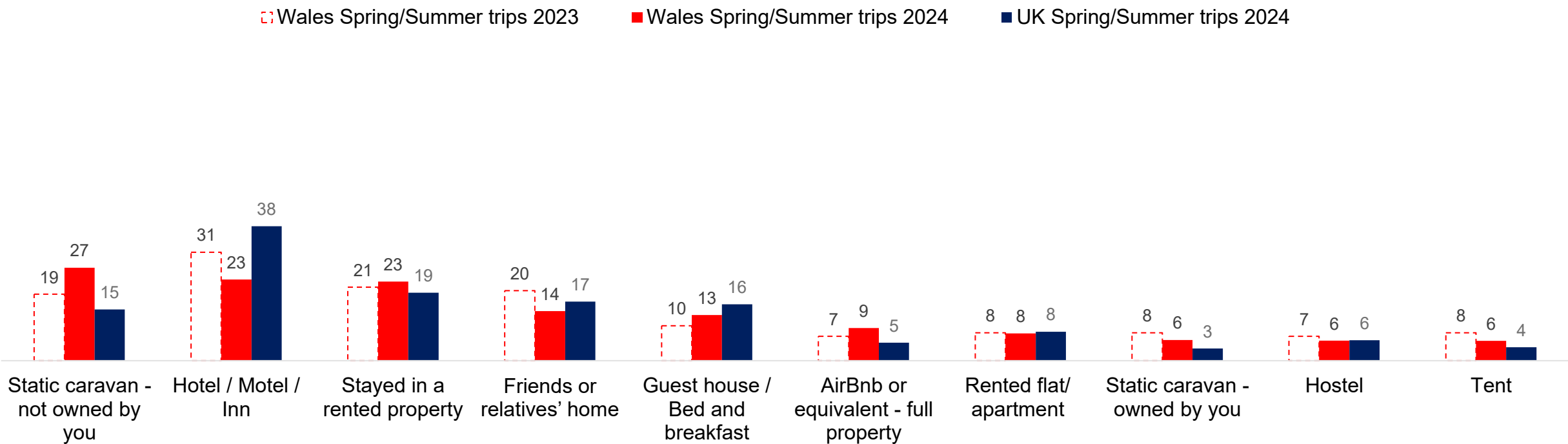
QVB6a. What type/s of accommodation do you expect to be staying in during your UK trip in <insert month>?
Base: Wales Spring/Summer 2023 intenders n=133; Wales Spring/Summer 2024 intenders n=146; UK Spring/Summer 2024 intenders n=1,728



Type of accommodation for next Wales short break or holiday – Top 10

- The most common single accommodation type intended for Wales January to May trips is ‘static caravan – not owned by you’ almost twice as popular as across the UK. Wales trips index below the wider UK for stays in hotel accommodation.

Figure 24. Accommodation choice on next overnight trip for Wales intenders in April and September, Net percentage, December to January fieldwork, UK, Top 10



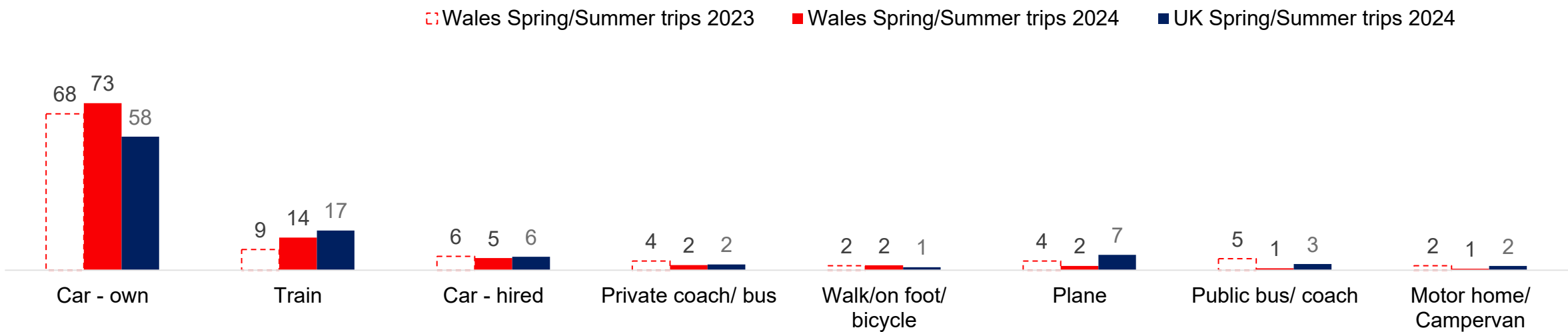
QVB6a. What type/s of accommodation do you expect to be staying in during your UK trip in <insert month>?
Base: Wales Spring/Summer 2023 intenders n=133; Wales Spring/Summer 2024 intenders n=146; UK Spring/Summer 2024 intenders n=1,728



Main mode of transport for next Wales short break or holiday

- Unsurprisingly given the dominance of rural destinations, Wales intenders are most likely to travel to their destination using their own car – at 73%, higher than amongst UK intenders (58%). Train is the second most common mode of travel.

Figure 25. Main mode of transport for Wales intenders in Spring/Summer 2024, Percentage, December to January fieldwork, UK



VB4c. What do you anticipate being the main mode of travel to your next UK holiday or short break destination in <INSERT MONTH FROM VB2A> ? Base: Wales Spring/Summer 2023 intenders n=133; Wales Spring/Summer 2024 intenders n=146; UK Spring/Summer 2024 intenders n=1,728

Methodology



Methodology

The findings in this report are based on a monthly online survey conducted amongst a nationally representative sample of the UK population.

The sample is representative of UK adults aged 16+ by gender, age, government region and social grade. In the first stage a nationally representative core sample of 1,500 is recruited and interviewed. This sample is then 'boosted' in Scotland and Wales to ensure sufficient base sizes for separate nation analysis. The data are then weighted to make the sample representative of the UK overall and within each nation.

This report aggregates the results taken from Waves 65-66 of the Domestic Sentiment Tracker