

HERTS BIGGER WEEKEND

26th & 27th June 2021 and beyond

Herts Big Weekend FAQ's

2021 will mark the 5th year for our Herts Big Weekend activity and this year it's bigger than ever. To make the event as much of a success as in previous years we need your support. The campaign is open to all Herts tourism businesses to participate and we hope you can join us as we celebrate all that is great about the county, after a particularly challenging year.

What is the Bigger Weekend?

The Big Weekend campaign is all about celebrating Herts' tourism offer, giving local residents the opportunity to win free tickets to the array of places to visit and things to do on their doorstep. They can then recommend them to their friends and family, turning them into the very best tourism ambassadors for our region. Usually, our campaign activity runs for one weekend, however for 2021, we're celebrating much more and have launched the Bigger Weekend, which will take place from 26th June until 23rd July.

Why should I get involved?

The Big Weekend is a tried and tested campaign that reaps benefits for tourism businesses. We know that many residents do not visit the places on their doorsteps and the Big Weekend gives them the opportunity to do this, for FREE. Residents will be given the opportunity to explore attractions that they might not have otherwise visited and to discover nearby hidden gems. Big Weekend also instils a sense of pride in their home county and will inspire them to share their enthusiasm with visitors, friends and family. A recent study has shown that over 40% of post-lockdown trips will be for the purpose of visiting friends and relatives and so it's vital that businesses re-engage with their local audience. The word of mouth recommendation is priceless.

The Herts Big Weekend in 2019 was a huge success. Over 60 tourism businesses donated more than 1,200 pairs of tickets and experiences, resulting in over 59,000 applications for the free tickets in the online ballot. The website received more than 24,000 page views and our press coverage reached over 213K people, providing participating businesses fantastic free exposure.

As a result of offering tickets, you will also have access to those who successfully win tickets and opt in to hear more from your business, so you'll also have a chance to capture visitor information for future marketing.

How are tickets allocated?

The Big Weekend is hosted online at www.hertsbigweekend.co.uk . Visitors are encouraged to browse and apply for tickets from the wide range of attractions and venues that have participated. Tickets are only available to people living in Herts (the system works via postcodes) and only to residents over the age of 18. Residents can apply for one pair of tickets per household (some family tickets are available).

The ballot will be open between 31st May and 18th June 2021. The system randomly selects winners for attractions from those who have applied. If residents are successful for one attraction, they will be removed from the ballot for any other attractions they have applied for – they can only win tickets for one attraction. Everyone who enters the ballot will receive an email, notifying them whether they have been successful or not. If successful, they will be sent an email with a link to their ticket, which they must download, print and take along to the attraction with them.

How many tickets should I offer?

The number of tickets offered is optional but we have provided guidelines for tickets based on annual footfall. You should bear in mind that, on average, for smaller attractions only about half of ticket holders turn up, so not all tickets will be used. You may wish to offer more than you expect to be redeemed to ensure a good turnout.

Visitor numbers:

over 100,000 = 500 tickets

over 50,000 = 250 tickets

over 20,000 = 150 tickets

over 10,000 = 100 tickets

over 5,000 = 50 tickets

under 5,000 = 20 tickets

Do I have to offer tickets for the whole redemption period, or just for the first weekend?

You can offer tickets for all or part of the event. You also have the opportunity to offer tickets on a completely different date if this year's Big Weekend dates are not suitable. It is your choice how you want to manage the promotion. Just be sure to make the valid dates clear in the Redemption Information field.

Due to the pandemic I now have a booking system for access to my attraction, can I still take part?

Yes, you can still take part in the Bigger Weekend. If you need people to pre book either by phone, email or online, then you can add the necessary instructions in the Redemption Information field.

My venue is free entry, can I still take part?

Yes. If your venue is already free to enter, we will be showcasing all our free attractions to our visitors, especially those that are not lucky enough to win a ticket. You can be included in this section without having to devise an alternative ticket offer as has been the case in previous years

My venue will not be open for the season in time – can I still take part?

Yes – depending on your operation you might invite a small number of people to a special preopening “preview” or you can offer tickets valid for a date once you are open (but still in the early part of your season).

What is the timeframe?

Businesses can sign up and offer tickets via the Big Weekend website until **Friday 28th May 2021**. The ballot will go live on Monday 31st May. Residents will then have three weeks to enter the ballot, with tickets issued in June.

What will happen during the event?

Once the draw has taken place, you will be able to log back in to access and download the details of the visitors that have won tickets. These ballot winners will arrive at your venue with a printed ticket. You will be responsible for the visitor experience on the day, which would include the redemption of tickets and briefing your staff before the event to ensure a suitable welcome.

What redemption rate should I expect on the weekend?

Our experience is that there is an average redemption rate of around 60%. This alters depending on the type of attraction. The weather is also a big factor in determining redemption! You might therefore offer more tickets to ensure a good level of attendance.

How can I promote the Bigger Weekend through my marketing channels?

Participating attractions will be supplied with a marketing tool kit that will include sample copy, social media guidelines and logos. The more you spread the word the more you can build your data optins!

How can I get involved?

To register your business (or assign yourself to an existing business if you took part last year), and to submit tickets to the ballot go to <http://www.hertsbigweekend/attraction-register>

Once your tickets are added, the process is complete and you can log out. You can return to edit the details for your attraction or the details of your tickets up until the cut off point for going live. We will send you updates to let you know when this will be.

If you require further information about Big Weekend contact Jim, email: bigweekend@visitherts.co.uk