MONITORING THE EFFECTS OF COVID-19 ON THE SCOTTISH TOURISM INDUSTRY

WAVE 2 RESULTS (20-30 MARCH 2020)
CONTENT

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MONITORING THE EFFECTS OF COVID-19 ON THE SCOTTISH TOURISM INDUSTRY
TIMELINE - COVID-19 IN SCOTLAND WITH ACTIONS FROM UK GOVERNMENT

- This survey was conducted between 20th and 30th March during which time key announcements were made by the UK and Scottish Governments concerning social distancing measures and support packages for businesses.

Source: gov.scot, BBC News
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY - ONLINE QUANTITATIVE STUDY

The aim of this research is to proactively track the impact of Covid-19 on the Scottish tourism industry and provide insightful information for VisitScotland and its stakeholders. This report details the second wave of research to be undertaken.

A 5-minute online survey was launched by VisitScotland via industry facing digital channels, such as VisitScotland corporate website, social media channels, and stakeholder e-newsletters.

As this is a self-selecting industry survey, there is a bias towards businesses who have seen and completed the link to the research and also more directly affected by the crisis. These results may not be representative of the Scottish tourism industry as a whole.

Data was collected between 20th and 30th March. In total, 2,243 businesses submitted their feedback, from a wide range of regions, commercial categories and scale of businesses.
HEADLINE FINDINGS

2,243 respondents to self selecting online survey between 20 - 30 March 2020
(Note: several government announcements made on social distancing and support for businesses in that period)

99% of businesses responding have experienced cancellations/decline in bookings/fewer visitors

54% of respondents were owner/proprietor run businesses with no employees; a further 33% were small businesses of 1-10 FTE’s

The largest responding segment with 38% were non-serviced accommodation providers (62% were accommodation providers overall)

58% of respondents (with employees) stated they have had to reduce staff numbers to date (30 March) with a likelihood of further losses in the future.
HEADLINE FINDINGS (CONT)

The majority of respondents claim to have lost up to £50k, with some claiming losses of substantially more than this.

Average length for survival of business without support is 3 months

43% want long term relief from paying business related taxes e.g. VAT

Other key issues raised include loss of income compounded by seasonality, support as grants not loans, Business Interruption Insurance not paying out, support needed for self employed including those falling between the cracks in support measures announced i.e. new start ups, those using their own home and still having to pay existing bills, those renting and those who do not qualify for grant under current rules
SAMPLE PROFILE: WHO RESPONDED TO THIS SURVEY

- Nearly 1 out of 4 respondents are from businesses based in the Highlands, followed by Argyll & the Isles (12%).
- 62% of respondents are from the accommodation sector (with 38% non-serviced), followed by activities, attractions and tours (25%).
- The response has a bias towards smaller businesses which are limited in size and in revenue – 54% are proprietor run/managed businesses with no employees with a further 33% from firms having less than 10 full time employees.

**Region of main business**
- Highlands: 23%
- Argyll & The Isles: 12%
- Edinburgh: 7%
- Perthshire: 7%
- Eilean Siar: 5%
- Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire: 5%
- Dumfries & Galloway: 4%
- Orkney: 4%
- National operator: 4%
- The Scottish Borders: 4%
- Fife: 3%
- Moray Speyside: 3%
- Stirlingshire: 3%
- Ayrshire & Arran: 3%
- Glasgow: 3%
- East Lothian, West Lothian & Midlothian: 3%
- Shetland: 1%

**Type of business**
- Food, Drink & Retail Businesses: 7%
- Activities, Attractions & Tours: 25%
- Other: 6%
- Non-Serviced Accommodation Sector: 38%
- Hotel/B&B/Guesthouse: 24%

**Size of business (FTE’s)**
- Large size (250+): 1%
- Small and medium size (11-250): 12%
- Micro size (1-10): 33%
- None – owner / proprietor run...

Q1. How would you describe the main activity of your business? Q12. In which region is the majority of your business based? Q4. On average, how many full-time equivalent staff does your business employ in Scotland? Please tell us the number before the current Covid-19 crisis came into effect.
SAMPLE PROFILE: WHO RESPONDED TO THIS SURVEY BY REGION/SECTOR

- Non-serviced accommodation providers dominate responses in specific regions such as D&G, Stirlingshire and Eilean Siar. Activity, attraction and tour operators in Edinburgh and Glasgow (& national operators) also had a high level of response.

- [Diagram showing the percentage of responses by region/sector.]

Q1. How would you describe the main activity of your business?
Q12. In which region is the majority of your business based?

Hotel/B&B/Guesthouse n=541, Non-Serviced Accommodation Sector n=859, Food, Drink & Retail Businesses n=156, Activities, Attractions & Tours n=557, Other n=130
SAMPLE PROFILE: WHO RESPONDED TO THIS SURVEY – SIZE BY FTE EQUIVALENT

- Owner/proprietor owned businesses dominate the response in the majority of regions showing the level of effect/concern amongst smaller businesses.
- In the cities, the response is dominated by small to medium sized businesses with some employees.

Regions with sample size under 29 are not included in the chart.
IMPACT FROM COVID-19 SINCE THE START OF THE CRISIS

The data clearly shows the almost universal effect of Covid-19 on those responding to the survey

Has your business/organisation experienced any impact from Covid-19 since the start of the crisis?
Yes – cancellations/decline in bookings/fewer visitors

- Total Sample: 99%
- Hotel/B&B/GH: 99.6%
- Non Serviced Accom: 98.9%
- Activities/Attractions/Tours: 98.2%
- Food, Drink, Retail: 99.2%
REVENUE LOST TO-DATE

- The majority of businesses who have responded claim to have lost up to £50k, with some claiming substantially more than this.
- This amounts to a direct loss of nearly £164M to Scottish Tourism

Revenue lost to-date

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than £5000</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between £5,000 and £10,000</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between £10,000 and £50,000</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between £50,000 and £100,000</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between £100,000 and £250,000</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between £250,000 and £500,000</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between £500,000 and £1 million</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between £1 million - £5 million</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than £10 million</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total sum £164,125,000
REVENUE LOST TO DATE – BY BUSINESS CATEGORY

- In terms of total amount of revenue lost, the activities, attractions and tours sector appear to be the biggest losers (at time of survey).
- Accommodation providers have also lost significant amounts since the beginning of the crisis.

Note: Data from “Other” business category is not shown here, with 112 responses from this category; but this figure is included in the total figure in slide 9.

- **Non-Serviced Accommodation Sector**
  - Less than £5000: 47%
  - Between £5,000 and £10,000: 28%
  - Between £10,000 and £50,000: 21%
  - Between £50,000 and £100,000: 2%
  - Between £100,000 and £250,000: 1%
  - Between £250,000 and £500,000: 0%
  - Between £500,000 and £1 million: 0%
  - Between £1 million - £5 million: 0%
  - More than £10 million: 0%

- **Hotel/B&B/Guesthouse**
  - Less than £5000: 30%
  - Between £5,000 and £10,000: 26%
  - Between £10,000 and £50,000: 25%
  - Between £50,000 and £100,000: 8%
  - Between £100,000 and £250,000: 6%
  - Between £250,000 and £500,000: 1%
  - Between £500,000 and £1 million: 1%
  - Between £1 million - £5 million: 2%
  - More than £10 million: 0%

- **Activities, Attractions & Tours**
  - Less than £5000: 24%
  - Between £5,000 and £10,000: 22%
  - Between £10,000 and £50,000: 28%
  - Between £50,000 and £100,000: 11%
  - Between £100,000 and £250,000: 6%
  - Between £250,000 and £500,000: 4%
  - Between £500,000 and £1 million: 3%
  - Between £1 million - £5 million: 2%
  - More than £10 million: 0%

- **Food, Drink & Retail Businesses**
  - Less than £5000: 37%
  - Between £5,000 and £10,000: 32%
  - Between £10,000 and £50,000: 23%
  - Between £50,000 and £100,000: 4%
  - Between £100,000 and £250,000: 2%
  - Between £250,000 and £500,000: 1%
  - Between £500,000 and £1 million: 1%
  - Between £1 million - £5 million: 0%
  - More than £10 million: 0%

Q3. How much revenue has your business lost to date because of Covid-19?
The crisis has clearly had a significant effect on all sizes of business but the loss appears to be greatest by those small and medium sized businesses who have responded. All data is by the time of answering survey (20 - 30 March).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>None - owner / proprietor run business</th>
<th>Micro size (1-10)</th>
<th>Small and medium size (11-250)</th>
<th>Large size (250+)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than £5000</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between £5,000 and £10,000</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between £10,000 and £50,000</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between £50,000 and £100,000</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>4%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between £250,000 and £500,000</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Between £500,000 and £1 million</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between £1 million - £5 million</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than £10 million</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: £16,082,500

Total: £49,727,500

Total: £71,170,000

Total: £26,692,500

Q3. How much revenue has your business lost to date because of Covid-19?
IF YOU EMPLOY STAFF, HAVE YOU HAD TO REDUCE STAFF NUMBERS?

- 58% of respondents claim to have lost staff already with a further 53% of these stating that numbers were likely to reduce further.
- Of the 42% who hadn’t lost staff, a third of those stated that this was likely to happen in the coming months (note: this may be affected by government announcements during the survey period).

Have you had to reduce staff numbers since the start of the crisis?

Future intention

- 33% very likely to reduce staff numbers in the coming months.
- How likely is it that you will have to reduce staff numbers in the coming months? (for those businesses who haven’t reduced staff number since the COVID-19 outbreak).

All sectors

- Yes 58%
- No 42%

Number of staff reduced since the Covid-19 crisis came into effect:
- Full time employees 308
- Part time employees 345
- Seasonal staff 301

How likely is it that you will have to reduce staff numbers further in the coming months?

Future intention

- 53% business said they are very likely to reduce staff numbers further in the coming months.

Q5. If you employ staff, have you had to reduce staff numbers? Q7. How likely is it that you will have to reduce staff numbers further in the coming months? Q8. How likely is it that you will have to reduce staff numbers in the coming months?
IF YOU EMPLOY STAFF, HAVE YOU HAD TO REDUCE STAFF NUMBERS?

The serviced accommodation sector were most likely to state that staff numbers had to be reduced followed closely by food, drink and retail businesses.

If you employ staff, have you had to reduce staff numbers?

- **All sectors**
  - Yes: 58%
  - No: 42%

  **33% are very likely to reduce staff numbers in the coming months**

  **53% business are very likely to reduce staff numbers further in the coming months**

Breaking down by business category:

- **Hotel/B&B/Guesthouse**
  - Yes: 25%
  - No: 75%

- **Activities, Attractions & Tours**
  - Yes: 50%
  - No: 50%

- **Non-Serviced Accommodation Sector**
  - Yes: 53%
  - No: 47%

- **Food, Drink & Retail Businesses**
  - Yes: 70%
  - No: 30%

Q5. If you employ staff, have you had to reduce staff numbers? Q7. How likely is it that you will have to reduce staff numbers further in the coming months? Q8. How likely is it that you will have to reduce staff numbers in the coming months?
IF YOU EMPLOY STAFF, HAVE YOU HAD TO REDUCE STAFF NUMBERS – BY SIZE OF BUSINESS

- All sizes of businesses with employees claim to have lost some staff since the beginning of the crisis but it is slightly more prevalent in those employing higher numbers.

If you employ staff, have you had to reduce staff numbers?

- **All sectors**
  - Yes: 58%
  - No: 42%
  - Base: 1023

- **Micro size (1-10)**
  - Yes: 56%
  - No: 44%
  - Base: 737

- **Small and medium size (11-250)**
  - Yes: 62%
  - No: 38%
  - Base: 268

- **Large size (250+)**
  - Yes: 61%
  - No: 39%
  - Base: 18 caution low base

Q5. If you employ staff, have you had to reduce staff numbers? Q7. How likely is it that you will have to reduce staff numbers further in the coming months? Q8. How likely is it that you will have to reduce staff numbers in the coming months?
If you employ staff, have you had to reduce staff numbers?

- All sectors: 58% Yes, 42% No

 Regions with sample size under 29 are not included in the chart
HOW LONG CAN BUSINESS SURVIVE

- The average length of time for survival is 69 days from time of answering survey.
- Almost a quarter of businesses don’t know how long they can survive.

**Revenue lost to-date**

- 2 weeks: 8%
- One month: 14%
- Two months: 11%
- Three months: 12%
- Six Months: 6%
- Between six months and 1 year: 6%
- Don’t know: 24%
- Not affected: 4%

Average time 69 days

Q9. How much longer can your business survive without public sector support? N=1584
HOW LONG CAN BUSINESS SURVIVE – BY SECTOR

• Perhaps not surprisingly, food drink and retail businesses were most likely to state that they had already closed and following the government announcement on 23rd March, this will be much higher unless businesses have diversified into offering food/drink take-away.
• A sizeable minority of accommodation businesses and activities, attraction and tour operators have already closed their doors
• Non serviced accommodation most likely to not know how long their businesses can survive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-Serviced Accommodation Sector</th>
<th>Hotel/B&amp;B/Guesthouse</th>
<th>Activities, Attractions &amp; Tours</th>
<th>Food, Drink &amp; Retail Businesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My business has already had to close</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 weeks</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One month</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two months</td>
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<td>11%</td>
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<td>10%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Six Months</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between six months and 1 year</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not affected</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### How Long Can Business Survive – By Size of Business

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>None – owner / proprietor run business</th>
<th>Micro size (1-10)</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My business has already had to close</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
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<td>2 weeks</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>6%</td>
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<td>17%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>33%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not affected</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q9. How much longer can your business survive without public sector support? N=1584
WHAT SUPPORT OR HELP DO YOU NEED CURRENTLY OR GOING FORWARD?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support or help needed</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Long term relief from paying business related taxes</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help with covering staff salaries</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My mortgage / rent payments covered</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urgent access to low interest or zero interest loans</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support from my bank e.g. access to cash</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help with covering staff redundancy costs</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We don’t need any help</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please find verbatim comments in next slides

Mainly from several small independent non-serviced accommodation providers with annual business turnover less than £15,000

Ideally, what support or help do you need currently or going forward? N=2018
OTHER SUPPORT REQUIRED – KEY THEMES FROM VERBATIMS

Key themes between 20th March and 26th March (pre-announcement of self-employed relief measures)

• Support for self caterers who do not qualify for small business relief grants

• Support for B&Bs (who pay council tax and not rates) who do not qualify for small business relief grants

• Those who will qualify for grants – want to know how quickly they will receive the money (many are desperate)

• Looking for suspension from regular payments e.g. council tax suspension, power companies (even stopping standing charges at unused properties), broadband companies, car leasing companies, credit card machine rental costs – at least for 3 months

• Business disruption insurance issues – insurers refusing to pay out

• Businesses don’t want loans even at 0%; times are going to be hard and no ability to repay
Q7. COMMENTS BY THEME – GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT

As with most B&Bs we do not qualify for business rates so none of the above apply. We would benefit greatly from the £3000 grant offered initially to small businesses.

The promised grants for businesses under the Small Business Bonus Scheme. We can't even apply for these grants yet, never mind receive the money. How long is this process going to take? If the payments are not received within the next 8-10 weeks it will be too late for my business and many, many others.

Grants. As a charity we're in an unusual situation in that the business rates relief promised at this stage makes no difference to us as we don't pay rates.

As an owner of self catering accommodation we are not eligible for the small business relief grant and there is no support for self-employed people. Insurance company has stated that no cover for COVID-19 lost business. Our income is £0. Why are we not covered?

Extend the £10,000 government grant scheme to self catering holiday lets.
Q7. COMMENTS BY THEME - CASH FLOW / BILLS

Running costs, such as periodic inspection and maintenance, specialist insurance, CPD commitments, First Aid updates.... These are mostly renewable annually without which we cannot operate and without funding cannot afford once normality returns. (activity operator)

government grants are taking forever to access. I know of 2 businesses close by that will be gone within 2 weeks its that serious for them (B&B/Guesthouse)

Irreducible building costs - utility bills, phone / broadband, tv licence, insurance premium, maintenance contracts (activity operator)

Need support from credit card merchant services as we will not be using card machines, but minimum costs and rentals will still apply (B&B/Guesthouse)

Electricity and Broadband suppliers to allow suspension of payment to them until at least the 3 month period (which the government believes is the time needed to get over this crisis) has finished (B&B/Guesthouse)

council tax relief /waste collection while no occupation. We have not reduced staff we have RADICALLY reduced hours 1 self employed person has been removed from business - in different part but to help save cash (self caterer)

Utility firms dropping all standing charges, I have turned off electricity in my houses but will still be paying standing charges. Likewise I am still paying for phone/broadband services for empty properties (B&B/Guesthouse)
OTHER SUPPORT - INSURANCE

Force insurance companies to pay out for Business Disruption Insurance purchased for this very reason. My insurance is saying it won't pay out.

Government directive such that Insurance cover does become valid for Business interruption due to Notifiable disease cover being part of the policy even if Covid-19 is specifically listed or not as a notifiable disease. Government directive not to come to work in such a manner that Insurance cover is valid for restriction of access and ability to trade.

I would like my insurance company to pay interruption of business losses due Coronavirus. Policy states that claims can only be made if a Public or Medical Authority closes our self catering cottage. Believe that STA is urging the UK treasury to talk to British Insurance Association to relax this criteria which would enable self catering businesses to make a legitimate claim for Business interruption.
SUPPORT REQUIRED – LOANS

Cash grant as we won't be able to make the repayment of a loan as we won't have sufficient time to recover before the season ends. (food & drink provider)

Cash grant urgent as if a loan, even if zero percent, as we're seasonal we won't have sufficient time to recover to make the repayments. (caravan/camping)

emergency business grants. Low interest loans are all very well, but how will any small business be expected to pay this back when recovery won't happen overnight. (B&B/Guesthouse)

Long term financial support so we're still here this time next year. Loans are no good as don't have sufficient income when all is good to repay. Like most small bnbs it is a seni retirement lifestyle business. I'm 62 and not due pension for another 4 years. (B&B/Guesthouse)
### WHAT SUPPORT OR HELP DO YOU NEED CURRENTLY OR GOING FORWARD - BY SECTOR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-Serviced Accommodation Sector</th>
<th>Hotel/B&amp;B/Guesthouse</th>
<th>Activities, Attractions &amp; Tour</th>
<th>Food, Drink &amp; Retail Businesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Long term relief from paying business related taxes e.g. VAT, ...</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urgent access to low interest or zero interest loans</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help with covering staff salaries</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help with covering staff redundancy costs</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support from my bank e.g. access to cash</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My mortgage / rent payments covered</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We don’t need any help</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>7%</td>
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</table>

Q7. Ideally, what support or help do you need currently or going forward?
### WHAT SUPPORT OR HELP DO YOU NEED CURRENTLY OR GOING FORWARD – BY SIZE OF BUSINESS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>None – owner / proprietor run business</th>
<th>Micro size (1-10)</th>
<th>Small and medium size (11-250)</th>
<th>Large size (250+)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Long term relief from paying business related taxes e.g. VAT, business rates,…</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urgent access to low interest or zero interest loans</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help with covering staff salaries</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help with covering staff redundancy costs</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support from my bank e.g. access to cash</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My mortgage / rent payments covered</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We don’t need any help</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q7. Ideally, what support or help do you need currently or going forward?
**CURRENT BUSINESS PRECAUTION/PREPARATIONS**

40% now state they have strategically closed their business – a rise of 35 percentage points over the first wave of this survey.

- Supplying hand sanitiser: 42%
- Strategically closing the business: 40%
- Advising workers through specific policies and...: 34%
- Proactively cancelling bookings (i.e. business...: 34%
- Purchasing locally / Using suppliers locally: 29%
- If applicable, allow employees to work from home: 19%
- Supplying face masks: 5%
- Stopping receiving deliveries from outside the UK: 5%
- Other: 12%
- None: 8%

Q8. What precautions / business preparations for Covid-19 are you taking as an employer, if any? Base n=2098
FINAL COMMENTS: WHAT ARE BUSINESSES TELLING US?

Businesses were asked to leave comments in the online survey concerning the support they needed and their general comments. Over 2,000 comments have been received for the period 20th March to 30th March. The key themes are:

Outpouring of considerable financial concern from all tourism sectors over loss of bookings, financial ruin or fears of having to fold their business permanently. There is particular strong sentiment from the B&B/guest house sector who may also have homes at risk.

Loss of current income is compounded by the impact of seasonality – with a significant number of businesses highlighting that they are closed for the winter season and rely on income from March-Sept to take forward to survive the next low season or to offset against investment costs they may have incurred in the low season just gone. There are strong concerns that some businesses will not be able to generate any income until March 2021, even if the ‘lock down’ is lifted later in the year.

A considerable number of businesses have stated that support should not be offered to them as loans. There is a concern that extra debt (in addition to debt a business may already have) will not be able to be paid back if there is no income coming in (for some potentially until next year). Financial support is requested via grants and there is a cry for help to support businesses to pay bills when no income is coming in or a suspension of utility/council tax payments.
WHAT ARE BUSINESSES TELLING US?

Frustration from a significant number of businesses across all sectors that Business Interruption Insurance is not paying out. Some businesses have requested Government support to tackle this situation.

Support for different status of business
A significant number of comments relate to the self-employed – what financial support will be available to self-employed (prior to the announcements), feel they are being overlooked and neglected, particularly from B&B/GH and self-catering sectors.
Support needed for small businesses who operate from their own home (who pay council tax and not rates) and may not qualify for small business relief grants, particularly B&Bs/guesthouses but also freelancers such as tour guides.
And support needed for those renting.
Charitable status raised by a couple of attractions/activity operators.

Issues raised specific to self-catering
Significant frustration that self-catering businesses are excluded from the access to grants.
Several businesses have highlighted a confusion over differences in guidance for the self-catering sector in England and Scotland.
WHAT ARE BUSINESSES TELLING US?

Frustration with business dealings with Online Travel Agents (OTAs)
A number of accommodation business have raised concerns that OTA’s have not consulted their partners. The main criticism focuses on OTAs making businesses shoulder the financial burden of cancelled bookings & overriding the business own T&Cs or cancellation policies

General desire to have clarity on the support available to businesses
Several comments thanking VisitScotland for ongoing communication and support and that this must continue
A number of requests for VisitScotland to lobby the Government for help now
A couple of businesses have highlighted confusion over support available in Scotland v England or mixed messaging coming from Central Government and Scottish Government

A concern for paying staff has been expressed by a number of businesses, particularly from the hotel sector who also have live in staff but also from food & drink and retail sectors

Advice on closures/cancelling events/dealing with enquiries
There has been an element of frustration over the guidance to date on when businesses needed to shut down (e.g. hotels, B&Bs which weren’t initially included in the pub/restaurant closures). Self-catering in particular have continued to have enquiries (to date 30 March) and people travelling to self-isolate. Some concern that this shouldn’t be happening or that support/advice is needed to help the sector deal with such enquiries.
As an owner of self catering accommodation we are not eligible for the small business relief grant and there is no support for self-employed people. Insurance company has stated that no cover for COVID-19 lost business....

Cash grant as we won't be able to make the repayment of a loan as we won't have sufficient time to recover before the season ends.

For seasonal businesses, we have had no income since October last year, if we lose a whole season, march to September, we can't earn again until March 2021. How can we survive this???
It will mean bankruptcy.

I'm self-employed and my B&B is the only income in our household. With no money coming in, I shall have to live on my credit card. I have to earn in the busy 5 month season, enough to last 12 months. The busy season was about to start, so it will be very tough.

If all the small self catering businesses like mine go bankrupt- because we cannot cover our costs due to closure - there will be no accommodation facilities left for tourists in the Highlands; there is also an unimaginably severe impact on Highlands residents. - almost every family depends on the tourism income.