

# Great South West Coronavirus (COVID-19) Business Impact Survey 2020

## Key Findings Snapshot



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**Plymouth**  
Britain's Ocean City

The South West  
Tourism Alliance

Visit  
Cornwall

VISIT  
DORSET



VISIT  
Somerset

visit  
exmoor  
dream • discover • explore



# Key findings

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- This documents provides a summary of the key findings from the GSW Coronavirus (COVID-19) Business Impact Survey 2020 which was set up to evaluate the effects of COVID-19 on tourism and hospitality businesses across the Great South West area of Cornwall, Devon, Plymouth, Torbay, Somerset and Dorset. The survey was also designed to help identify what businesses feel are the key priorities over the next 12 months to support their recovery and growth. The results will be shared with Government as part of its autumn budget and spending review.
- A total of 610 businesses responded to the survey although actual business representation will be larger due to a number of self-catering agencies responding.

## Key headlines:

- 5% of businesses remain closed despite the lifting of lockdown restrictions for tourism and hospitality businesses on the 4<sup>th</sup> July with a further 33% of businesses now open but operating at 75% capacity or less (including 15% operating at 50% capacity or less).
- 90% of businesses reported a decrease in their business turnover for the period January to July 2020 compared with the same period in 2019.
- The average percentage change in turnover for the January to July 2020 period was -56%.
- For the January to July 2020 period it is estimated that approximately £2.2 billion of anticipated tourism business turnover has been lost in the Great South West region due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- In addition, it is estimated that approximately £647 million would have been the usual amount of supply chain spend associated with this amount of turnover on the purchase of local goods and services. However, tourism businesses will still have had some overheads during this period that they would still have had to cover. If 75% of the supply chain spend did not occur the additional lost tourism spend would have been £486 million, at 50% it would have been an additional £324 million lost or at 25% it would have been an additional loss of £162 million.
- 45% of businesses with staff have furloughed all/some of their staff, 21% have put all/some of their staff onto reduced hours and 9% have had to make all/some of their staff redundant.
- 84% of businesses who have seen a change in their customer profile this year compared with last year have seen a decrease in overseas visitors and 43% have seen a decrease in older customers. 54% had seen an increase in customers from different parts of the UK and 69% an increase in first time visitors.
- 40% of businesses anticipate they will be investing less in their business over the winter period 2020/21 compared with a typical winter period. 5% said they would be investing more and 55% would not be changing their investment level. The average overall change in investment this winter for all businesses is -£15,000 per business (a decrease of -14%).

# Key findings

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- Only 30% of businesses currently anticipate that they will be able to survive beyond Summer 2021 (September 2021 onwards) without further support. 23% of businesses anticipate they will only be able to survive until Winter 2020 (to 31st March 2021) and 21% of businesses don't know/are unsure how long they will be able to survive without further support.
- In terms of future support to help their business survive and grow over the next 12 month, 67% of businesses would like to see a repeat of the Small Business Grant scheme, 43% would like to see an extension to the 5% VAT reduction, 40% would like to see an extension to the business rates holiday, 25% would like to see an extension to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) - Furlough scheme and 24% in each case would like to see an extension to Self Employed Income Support and the Bounce Back Loans.
- 65% of businesses said a national domestic marketing campaign is important to the success of their business.

## Sample profile:

- 72% of businesses responding to the survey were accommodation providers, 7% were food and drink businesses, 6% were visitor/leisure attractions, 3% were a retail business, 2% were a sports or activities-based businesses and 1% in each case were either a self-catering agency or a tourist information centre (TIC). 9% categorised themselves as on 'other' business type including a tour guide, conference/events venue, business support providers such as printers, insurance brokers and transport providers.
- 47% of the accommodation businesses were self catering operators and 38% serviced accommodation providers. 7% in each case were a caravan/camping site or a holiday park and 1% were an other type of accommodation.
- 40% of businesses were predominantly based outdoors, 33% were predominantly based indoors and 27% had a good mix of both indoor and outdoor attractions/entertainment/activities.
- Half of all businesses had a rateable value of under £15,000, 19% had a £15-51,000 rateable value and 11% had a rateable value of over £51,000. 10% said their business did not have a rateable value.
- 47% of businesses responding to the survey were based in Devon including 25% in Torbay, 2% in Plymouth and 20% elsewhere in the county. 21% were based in Dorset, 16% in Cornwall, 15% in Somerset and 1% on the Isles of Scilly.
- National tourism survey data, local areas survey data and Cambridge Model data from 2019 has been used to model the outputs in this report.