

The South West Visitor Economy Key Asks

The SW visitor economy in Cornwall and IoS, Devon, Somerset and Dorset is the largest single visitor region outside of London in the UK, attracting 17 million staying visitors with an estimated economic impact of £11.3 billion with direct employment of 210,000 people. The threat to this sector is un-paralleled. Even without the measures below there will thousands of businesses failures and tens of thousands job losses.

These 6 Measures require zero Government funding and can be all be answered quickly

- 1/ Immediate clarity on Hospitality opening date
- 2/ Immediate clarity on change to 1m Social distancing
- 3/ Immediate clarity on sizes of groups able to stay overnight/gather
- 4/ Immediate removal of requirement for guests showing signs of COVID to remain self-isolated in holiday accommodation
- 5/ immediate publication of the UK Hospitality Guidelines. They have been published in Scotland.
- 6/ Immediate appointment of a lead SW MP to be SW visitor economy link to Westminster

These four Measures require Central Government Funding

- 1/ The vast majority of Destination Marketing Organisations in the SW will fail by August/ September unless funding is provided. An immediate requirement of £1.m is needed to be in place by 31st July 2020 to ensure survival until at least March 2021. If this is not provided it will precipitate further market failures. This needs to be supported by Great South West Marketing fund of £5m to promote the GREAT SW through the autumn to build bookings for 2021.
- 2/ Early announcement that Business Rates for hospitality businesses will not be charged until at least September 2021 and phased until April 2022
- 3/ Early announcement that the Furloughing Scheme needs to be extended for the Hospitality sector as a special case.
- 4/ More money for the Discretionary Grant Fund, specifically aimed at hospitality businesses who have not yet had any support from any of the previous Government support Schemes Essentially a crack filler.

These ten measures would give the sector a fighting chance of being in a position to start the process of repair and recovery. Without the combination of all these measures, business failures and unemployment will rise exponentially.

