

Covid-19 – Online Business Survey

Prepared for: Great Yarmouth Tourism and
Business Improvement Area

Week 3: 3 April to 9 April

Prepared by:



On behalf of:



Introduction and Methodology and approach

This report evaluates the immediate and ongoing impacts of Covid- 19 to Tourism Business in Greater Yarmouth, as well as assessing the long-term economic impact.

Methodology

The results are based on a weekly online survey to businesses in the Greater Yarmouth area. It uses a structured questionnaire, adapting some questions and adding / removing other questions as the situation evolves. We are using a 'Have your say' online platform style survey, based on personalised email invitations to fill in a short online questionnaire. The survey allows to closely monitor the immediate impact of COVID - 19 on an ongoing basis. The survey is fully managed in-house by Destination Research using Typeform software package, which offers full online and mobile functionalities. The results of the survey are being used and distributed by GYT BIA.

Outputs

A weekly report will be produced reflecting on the very latest industry sentiment. This and subsequent reports will include a summary of immediate reactions, longer term recovery plan actions as well as economic impact assessment of the COVID-19 on the local economy in the context of the latest Cambridge Model results. This report includes responses from 20 March to 9 April, 2020. The report includes a breakdown of responses by week (week 1: 20 to 26 March, week 2: 27 March – 2 April, week 3: 3 April – 9 April). The sample size is 315 responses (163 responses in week 1; 81 responses in week 2 and 71 responses in week 3).

Outcomes

Ultimately, the research should allow Greater Yarmouth Tourism and Business Improvement Area (GYTBIA) to:

- Provide a forum for consistent and comprehensive analysis of the implications of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on the local tourism industry.
- Act as the one-stop-shop communications channel for the local tourism industry in relation to Coronavirus (COVID-19).



Report for period between 3 April and 9 April 2020 - Key developments:

Tuesday 7 April

DCMC announced a Destination Management Resilience Scheme for England, a repurposing of £1.3m Discover England Fund monies, to be administered by VB/VE. The scheme is designed to support DMO who receive at least 50% of their revenue from commercial activities, payment of up to two staff members who might otherwise have to be furloughed and a potential grant of up to £5k.

Monday 6 April

Updated guidance on access to green spaces and how they should be used has been published.

UK businesses can apply for a share of £20 million in a fast-track competition run by Innovate UK to develop new ways of working for those sectors most impacted by COVID-19, including hospitality.

Thursday 3 April

An extension of the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) to ensure all viable small businesses affected by COVID-19.

The 2020 National Living Wage came into effect on Wednesday 1 April.

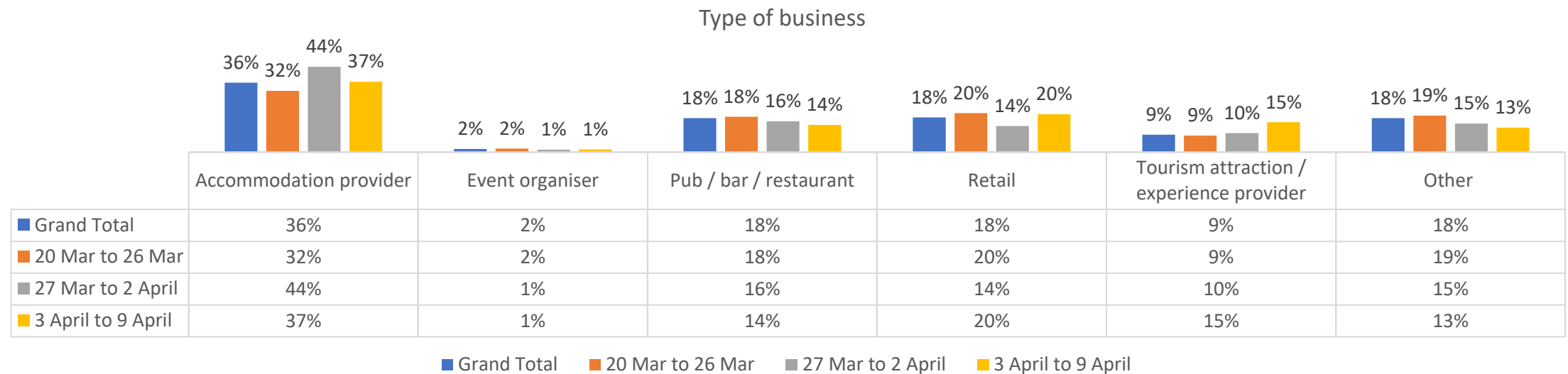
The Business rates: expanded retail discount –local authorities to award relief to all eligible properties.



Research Outputs – Business Profile

During week 3 there was an decrease in the number of accommodation providers and pubs / bars / restaurants taking part in the survey. The proportion of retail outlets and attractions increased slightly and there was a slight drop in the number of other businesses participating in week 2 of this tracker survey.

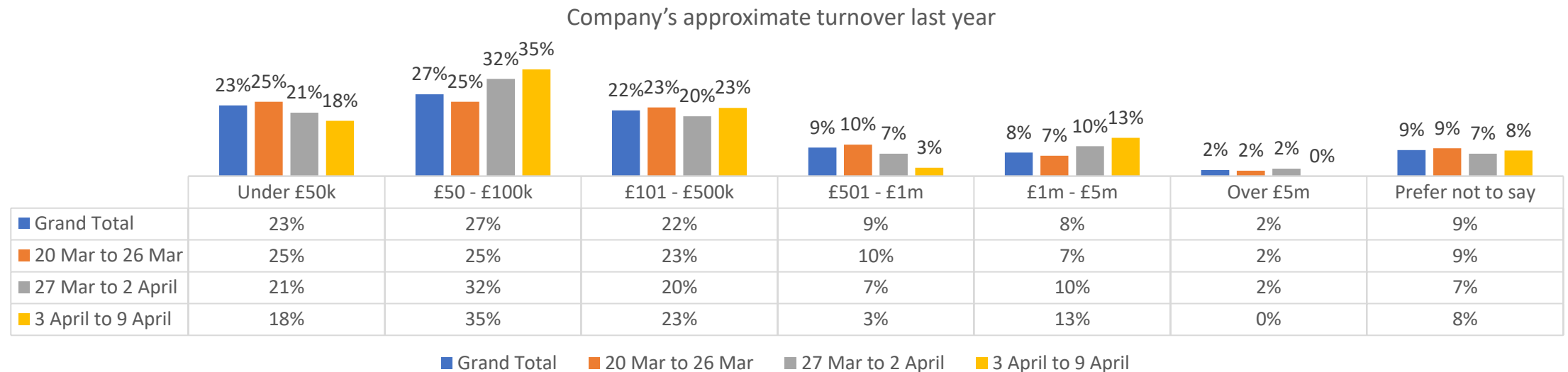
‘Other’ businesses include laundry services, estate agents, barbers / hair dressers and other types of food provision (fish and chip shop, Ice-cream parlours and food takeaways)



Q: What type of business do you run?

Research Outputs – Business Profile

There has been a continued increase in the proportion of respondents with turnovers ranging between £50k and £100k, increasing from 25% of the total sample in week 1 to 35% in week 3. Conversely, the proportion of smaller business (under £50k turnover) has decreased steadily from 25% in week 1 to 18% in week 3.

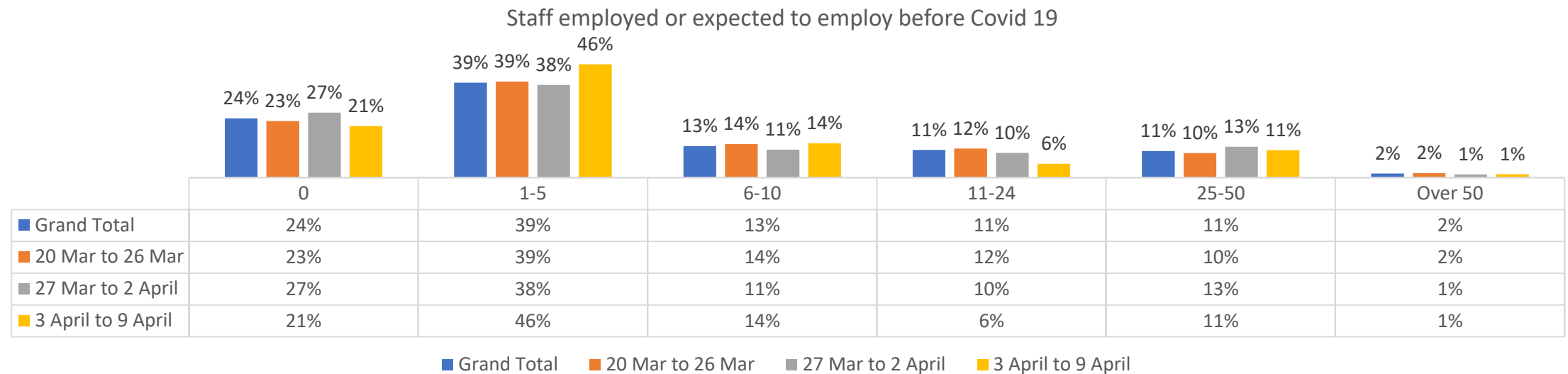


Q: What was your company's approximate turnover last year?

Research Outputs – Staff and employment changes

During week 3 there has been a marked increase in the proportion of businesses employing between 1 and 5 members of staff (up to 46% from 38% in week 2).

There has been more marked decreases in the proportion of businesses that did not employ anyone before the start of the Covid 19 crisis (21% down from 27% in week 2) and those employing between 11 and 24 staff (6% down from 10% in week 2).

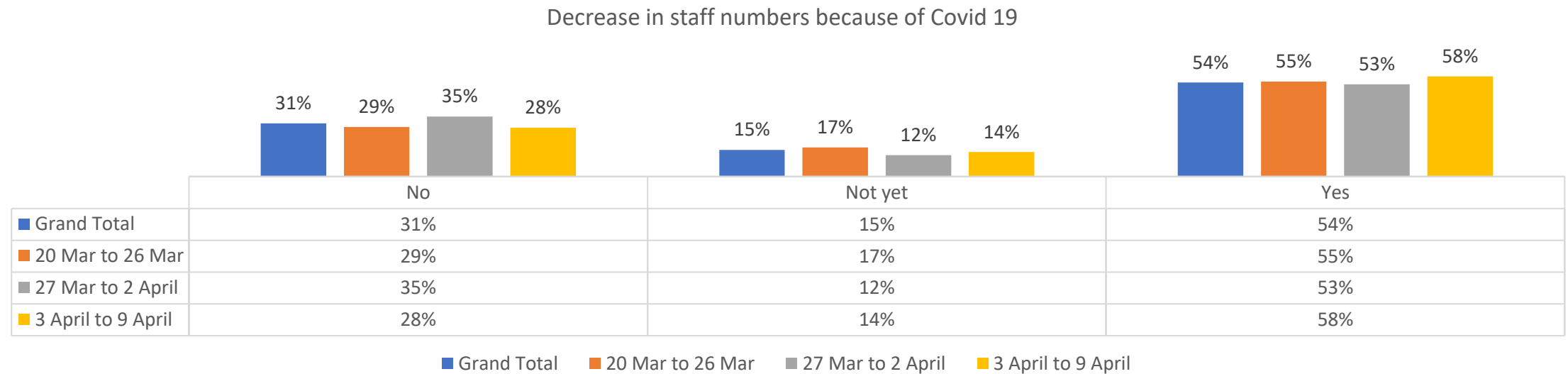


Q: How many staff did you employ or expected to employ before the start of the Covid 19 crisis?

Research Outputs – Staff and employment changes

The proportion of businesses decreasing their staff numbers has gone up five points since week to, from 53% to 58% in week 3). Similarly, the proportion that are planning to do it soon has also increased, with 14% saying they have not decreased their staff ‘yet’ (compared to 12% in week 2).

Those that have decreased their staff numbers have lost an average of 63% of their workforce.

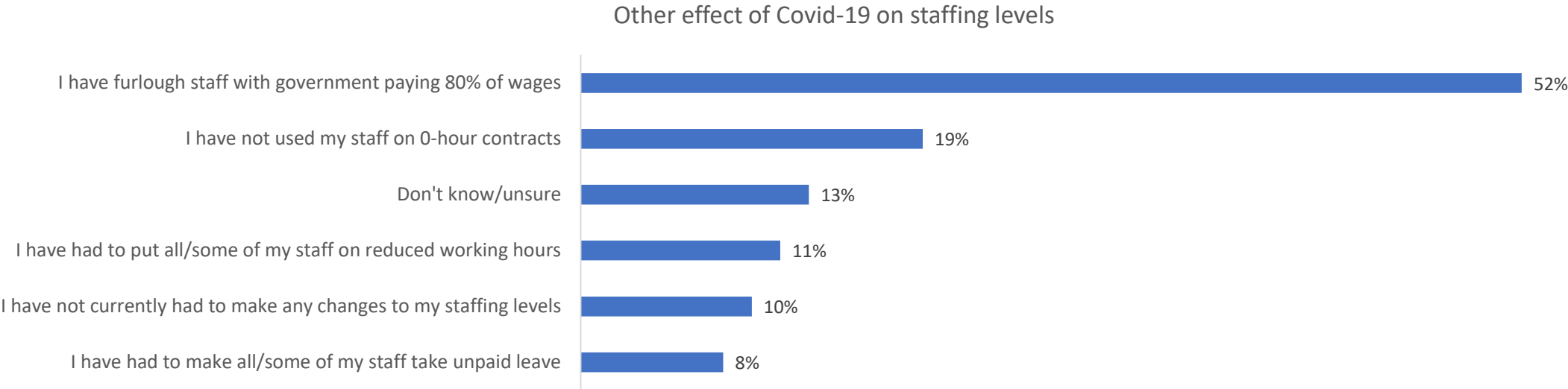


Q: Have you had to decrease you staff because of Covid 19?

Research Outputs – Staff and employment changes

Week 3 wave included a new question as we attempt to ascertain what other effect has Covid-19 had on staffing levels to date. Just over half of businesses (52%) have furloughed staff with government paying 80% of wages. About one in five (19%) said they have not used their staff on 0-hour contracts.

Smaller percentages have had to put all/some of my staff on reduced working hours (11%), had to make any changes to my staffing levels (10%) or had to make all/some of my staff take unpaid leave (8%).

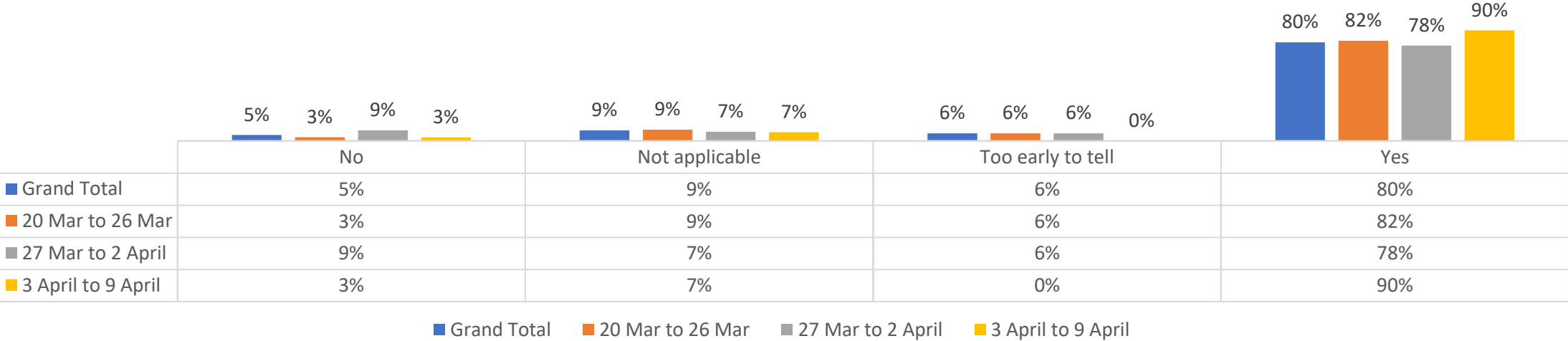


Q: What other effect has Covid-19 had on your staffing levels to date?

Research Outputs – Impact on bookings and turnover

There has been an increase in the proportion of respondents that report changes to existing bookings/sales because of Covid 19 such as changes to dates or other details but not outright cancellations of bookings. The results show that this proportion reached 90% in week 3, up from 78% in week 2.

Changes to existing bookings/sales because of Covid 19



Q: Have there been any changes to existing bookings/sales because of Covid 19?
Changes to dates or other details but not outright cancellations of bookings

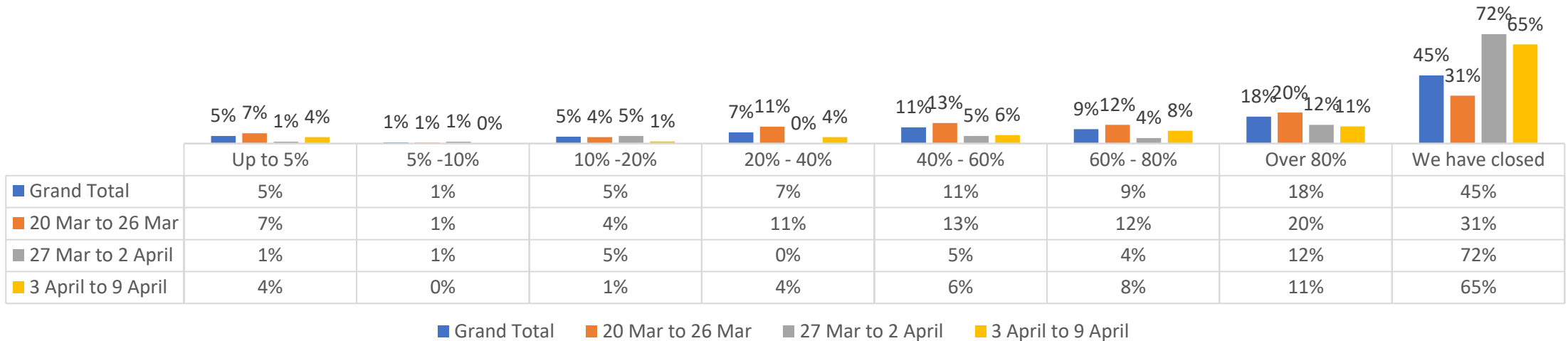


Covid-19 – Online Business Survey – Research Results

Research Outputs – Impact on bookings and turnover

Covid-19 is having significant impacts on the local tourism industry. Two thirds of businesses are reporting closures (65% this week compared 72% in week 2). It should be taken into account that the Government forced accommodation providers and other tourism and leisure related businesses to temporarily close their doors. The drop in the proportion of businesses that report closures may be influenced by the fact that some businesses have been closed for a number of weeks now and may have decided not to take part in the survey.

Percentage of trade lost to date



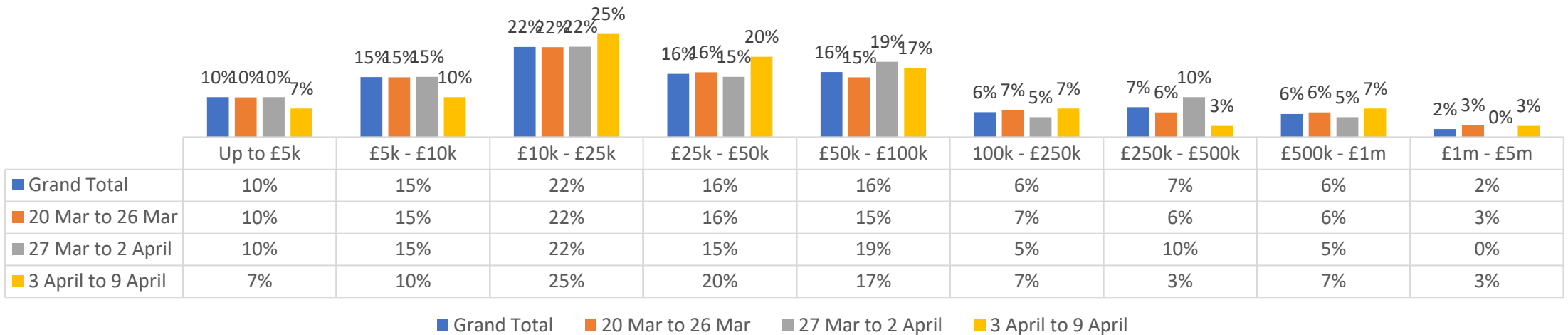
Q: If your trade has decreased what percentage of trade would you say you have lost to date?



Research Outputs – Impact on bookings and turnover

The proportion of participants reporting losses of up to £25k has dropped from 47% in week two to 42% in week 3. Conversely, the proportion reporting losses of between £25k and £50k has gone up from 15% in week 2 to 20% in week 3.

How much could this mean in terms of lost turnover?

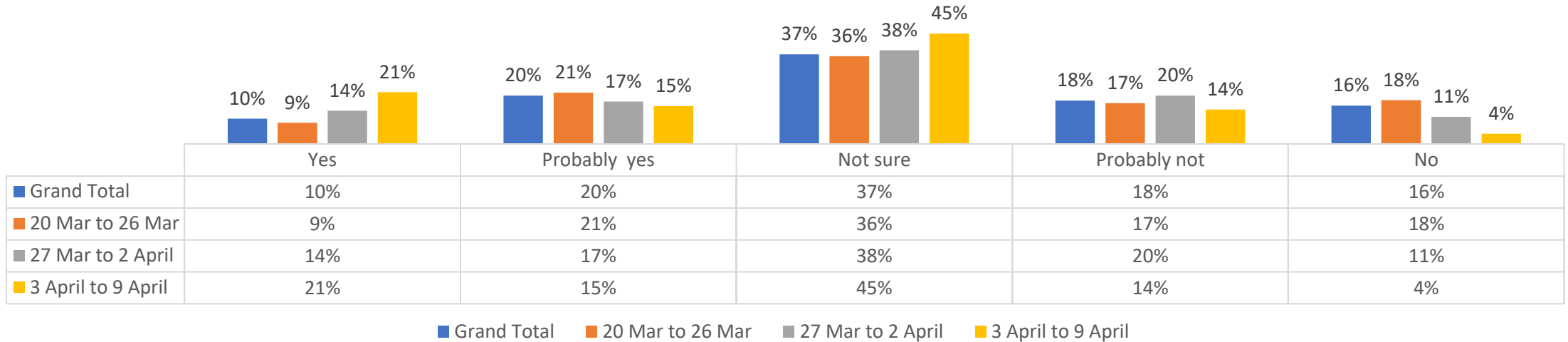


Q: Approximately how much could this mean in terms of lost turnover?

Research Outputs – Business Survival

There continues to be an increase in those who believe their business will survive the next three months (36% say yes or probably yes, compared to 31% in week 2). However, levels of uncertainty are up (45% up from 38% in week 2). The proportion of those that said ‘No’ has decreased from 11% in week 2 and 18% in week 1 to only 4% in week 3. This could be interpreted to mean that the financial support announced by the Government is helping businesses stay afloat.

Business survival after THREE months in the current situation?



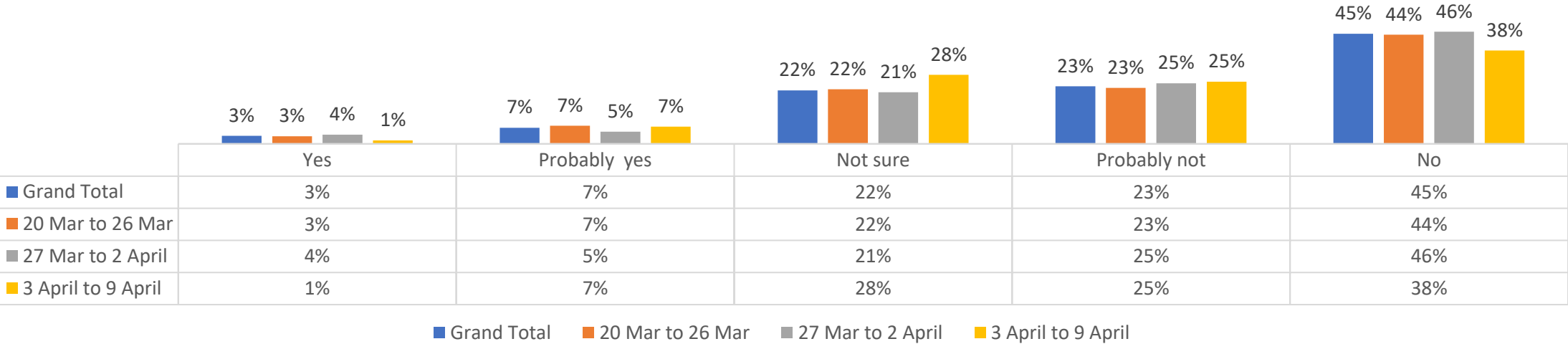
Q: Would your business survive for three months in the current situation?



Research Outputs – Business Survival

Similarly, there’s a slight decrease in the proportion predicting that their business probably won’t survive for SIX months in the current situation (68% said ‘no’ or ‘probably not’ in week 3, compared to 71% in week 2 and 67% in week 1). These results could imply that although the Government support may be helping with immediate business survival, there continues to be a lot of uncertainty about longer term business continuity.

Business survival after SIX months in the current situation?

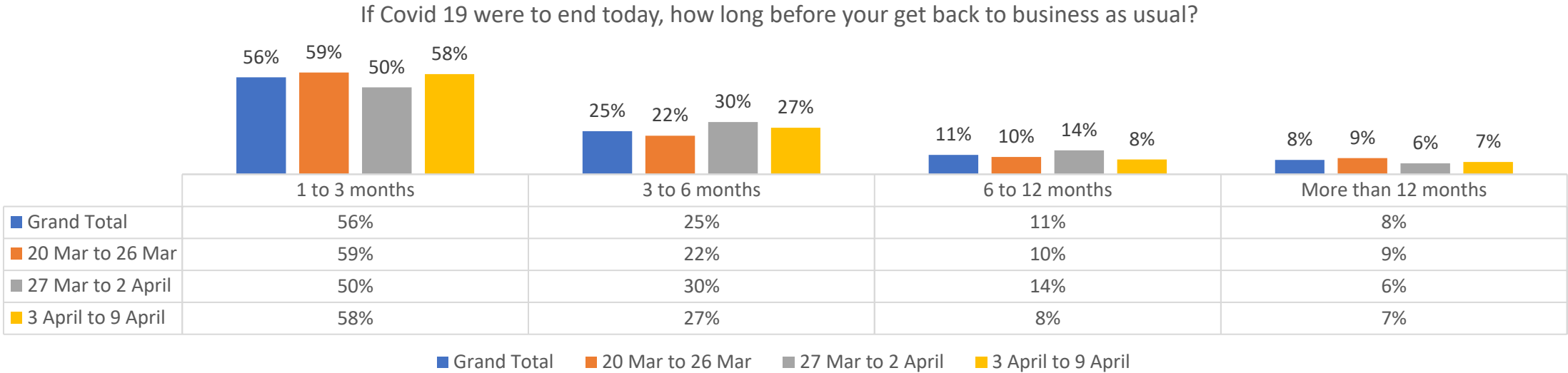


Q: Would your business survive for six months in the current situation?



Research Outputs – Business Recovery

If Covid 19 were to end today, over half (56%) estimate it would take them between 1 and 3 months to get back to business as usual. As you would expect, this is changing weekly. The results for week 3 would suggest that a growing number of businesses expect to need between 1 and 3 months to recover.



Q: Finally, If Covid 19 were to end today, how long would you estimate it would take for your company to get back to business as usual?



Research Outputs – Further opinions

At the end of the survey businesses were asked if they had any other comments they would like to raise. A summary of comments / key themes is below:

- Most comments make reference to the delays in receiving financial support. Delays in receiving funds are resulting in some businesses running out of cash.
- Further comments are made about putting a recovery strategy in place with advertising campaigns to promote Great Yarmouth after Covid-19.





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