Covid-19 – Online Tourism Business Survey

Prepared for: Great Yarmouth Tourism and Business Improvement Area

Week 10: 1 June to 8 June

Prepared by:

destinationresearch
delivering results : measuring what matters

On behalf of:

GREATER Yarmouth TOURISM & BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA

Introduction and Methodology and approach

This report evaluates the immediate and ongoing impacts of Covid- 19 to Tourism Business in Greater Yarmouth, as we 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 GYTBIA.

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 11 April to 18 April, 2020. The report includes a breakdown of responses by week as well as an average of all responses to date. The sample size is 933 responses (163 responses in week 1; 81 responses in week 2, 71 responses in week 3, 88 responses in week 4; 88 responses in week 5; 95 responses in week 6; 103 responses in week 7, 73 responses in week 8; 96 in week 9 and 76 in week 10.

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 1 June and 8 June 2020 - Key developments:

Wednesday 3 June

Discretionary Grants Fund open to small and micro businesses in England

Small and micro businesses with fixed property costs that are based in England and not eligible for other Government grant schemes can now apply through their local council for the Local Authority Discretionary Grants Fund. Grants of £25,000, £10,000 or any amount under £10,000 may be given.

Visitor Economy Working Group

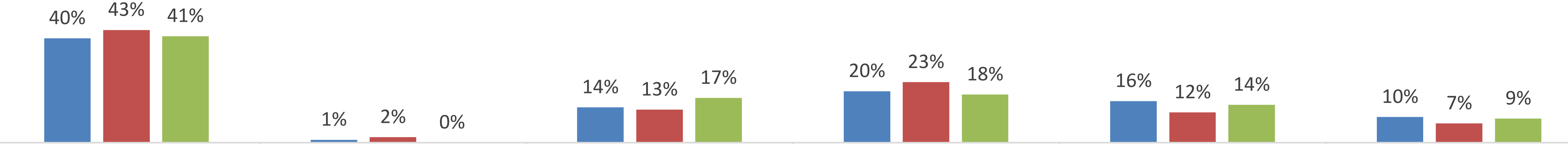
The Government's new Visitor Economy Working Group was asked to co-ordinate the guidance for tourism and hospitality businesses that will allow them to operate in a safe and secure manner when they open from 4th July. The latest news is:

- The Department for Culture, Media and Sport is producing the top line guidance on what businesses need to do in terms of undertaking a risk assessment of their business and implementing cleaning and social distancing regimes that allow them to operate safely.
- A series of detailed protocols is being developed for different business types across the sector which takes this top line guidance and tell businesses how to operationalise it. For accommodation providers, the top line guidance will say that rooms have to be thoroughly cleaned between changeovers and the protocols will explain how to do this.
- VisitEngland is developing a system whereby business can, on lodging their risk assessment, get a Mark that can be used to show customers that they are operating in accordance with Government guidance.

Research Outputs – Business Profile

During week 10 there was a marginal increase in the number of retail and tourism attractions taking part in the survey. The proportion of businesses under ‘other’ category also increased to 17 of the sample, three percentage points above the overall average for the 10 weeks. ‘Other’ businesses include laundry services, estate agents, barbers / hair dressers, cafes and amusement arcades.

Type of business



	Accommodation provider	Event organiser	Other	Pub / bar / restaurant	Retail	Tourism attraction / experience provider
Grand Total	40%	1%	14%	20%	16%	10%
25 May 31 May	43%	2%	13%	23%	12%	7%
2 June to 8 June	41%	0%	17%	18%	14%	9%

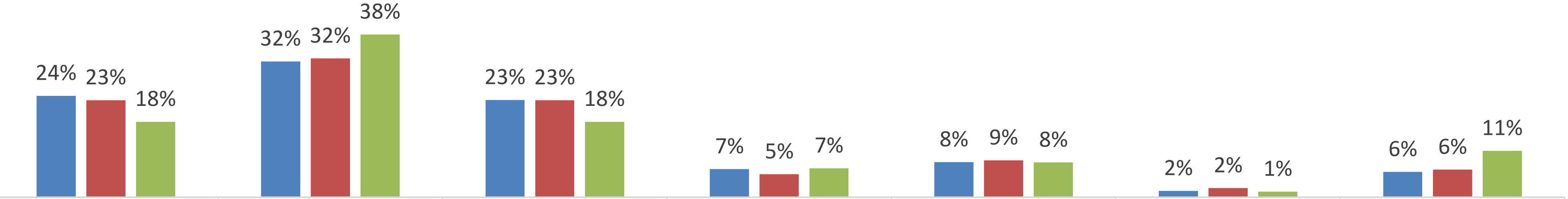
Grand Total · 25 May 31 May · 2 June to 8 June

Q: What type of business do you run? (76)

Research Outputs – Business Profile

Businesses with turnover up to £100k make up just over half of the sample (56% combined) but we notice an increase on the £50-£100k bracket compared to last week. A further 18% are businesses with turnover of between £101k and £500k. Larger businesses, with turnover over £500k account for the remaining 16%, similar to last week. Overall, just over three quarters of all responses have been from SMEs, a consistent trend since the start of the survey 10 weeks ago.

Company's approximate turnover last year



	Under £50k	£50 - £100k	£101 - £500k	£501 - £1m	£1m - £5m	Over £5m	Prefer not to say
Grand Total	24%	32%	23%	7%	8%	2%	6%
25 May 31 May	23%	32%	23%	5%	9%	2%	6%
2 June to 8 June	18%	38%	18%	7%	8%	1%	11%

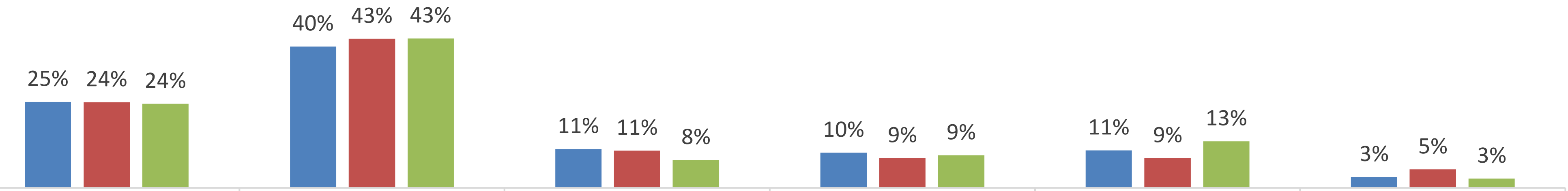
Grand Total 25 May 31 May 2 June to 8 June

Q: What was your company's approximate turnover last year? (74)

Research Outputs – Staff and employment changes

Little change is the size of businesses taking part in the survey. The number of respondents employing between 1 and 5 members of staff was unchanged for the last two weeks (43%) with all the other groups showing marginal changes week-on-week, except for mid-size businesses (those employing between 25 and 50 staff), showing a 4pc increase to 13% of the total sample.

Staff employed or expected to employ before Covid 19



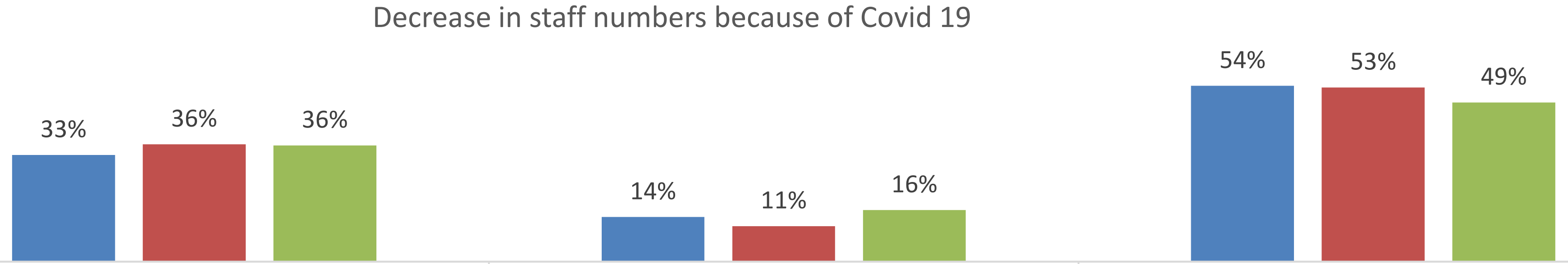
	0	1-5	6-10	11-24	25-50	Over 50
Grand Total	25%	40%	11%	10%	11%	3%
25 May 31 May	24%	43%	11%	9%	9%	5%
2 June to 8 June	24%	43%	8%	9%	13%	3%

Grand Total   25 May 31 May   2 June to 8 June

Q: How many staff did you employ or expected to employ before the start of the Covid 19 crisis? (75)

Research Outputs – Staff and employment changes

There was a 4 percentage pint decrease in the proportion of businesses decreasing their staff numbers. However, the proportion that are planning to do it soon has increased, with 16% saying they have not decreased their staff 'yet' (compared to 11% in week 9).



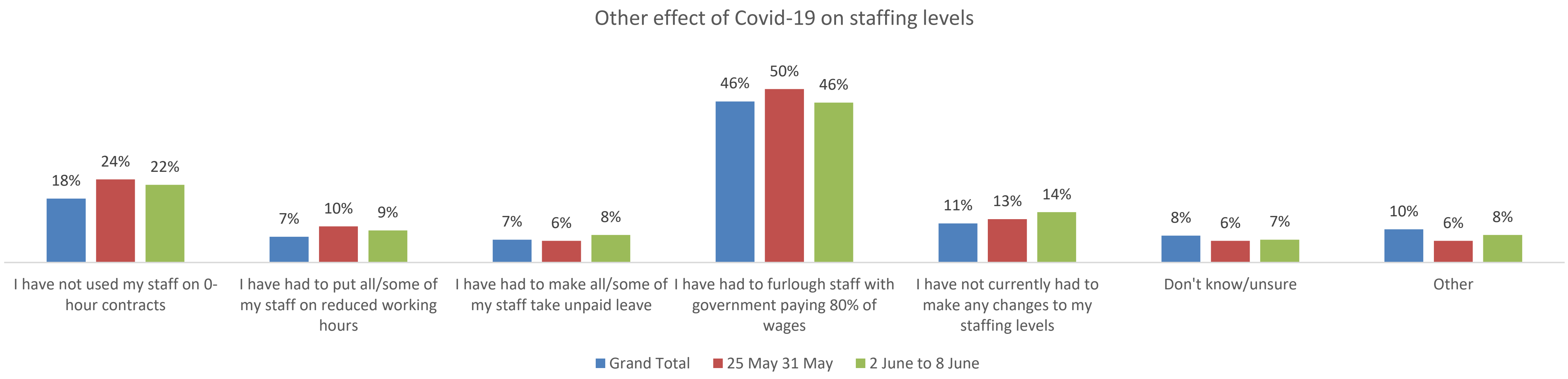
	No	Not yet	Yes
Grand Total	33%	14%	54%
25 May 31 May	36%	11%	53%
2 June to 8 June	36%	16%	49%

Grand Total 25 May 31 May 2 June to 8 June

Q: Have you had to decrease you staff because of Covid 19? (76)

Research Outputs – Staff and employment changes

Under half (46%) said they had had to furlough staff with government paying 80% of wages, down from 50% since this question was asked last week. There was a slight increase in the proportion that said they had not made changes to staff levels (14%, up 1% since last week)

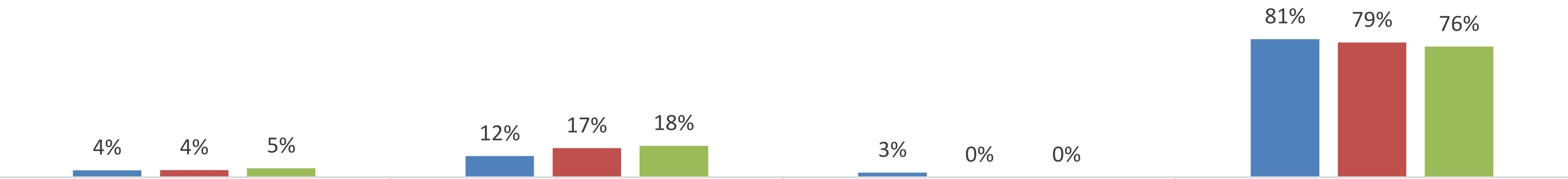


Q: What other effect has Covid-19 had on your staffing levels to date? (96)

Research Outputs – Impact on bookings and turnover

The proportion of businesses that reported changes to existing bookings/sales because of Covid 19 was down three points since week 9 to 76%. Note that there's a significant increase in the proportion who deem the question not applicable to their business model. This may be due partly to the increase in the proportion of retailers, cafes, etc., making up the weekly sample.

Changes to existing bookings/sales because of Covid 19



	No	Not applicable	Too early to tell	Yes
Grand Total	4%	12%	3%	81%
25 May 31 May	4%	17%	0%	79%
2 June to 8 June	5%	18%	0%	76%

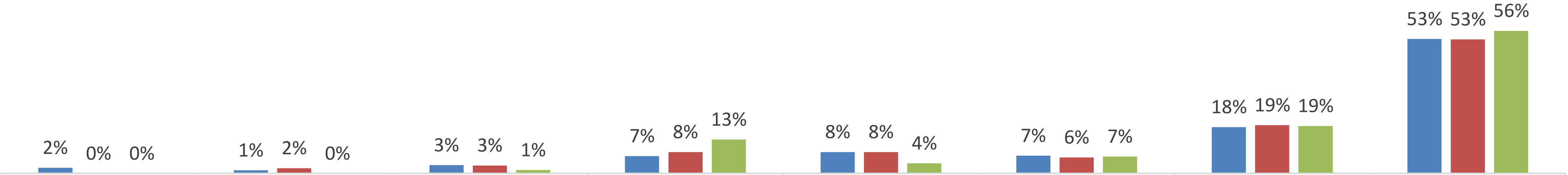
Grand Total 25 May 31 May 2 June to 8 June

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 (76)

Research Outputs – Impact on bookings and turnover

Covid-19 is having significant impacts on the local tourism industry. Just over half of businesses are reporting temporary closures (56% this week compared to 53% in week 9 and 49% in week 8). It should be taken into account that the UK Government forced accommodation providers and other tourism and leisure related businesses to temporarily close their doors.

Percentage of trade lost to date



	Up to 5%	5% -10%	10% -20%	20% - 40%	40% - 60%	60% - 80%	Over 80%	We have closed
Grand Total	2%	1%	3%	7%	8%	7%	18%	53%
25 May 31 May	0%	2%	3%	8%	8%	6%	19%	53%
2 June to 8 June	0%	0%	1%	13%	4%	7%	19%	56%

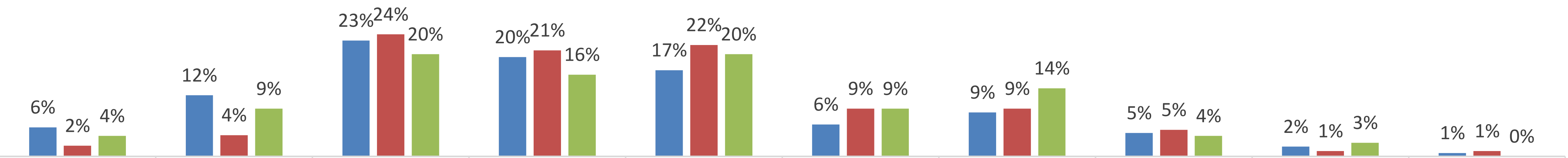
Grand Total · 25 May 31 May · 2 June to 8 June

Q: If your trade has decreased what percentage of trade would you say you have lost to date? (75)

Research Outputs – Impact on bookings and turnover

Looking at the differences between this week's results and the 9-week period we notice a decrease in the proportion of businesses reporting losses up to £10k, although still below the 10-week average. When comparing this week's results to the overall average we notice that businesses claiming of between £50k and £500k this week account for 43% of all responses, compared to only 32% for the combined 10-week period.

How much could this mean in terms of lost turnover?



	Up to £5k	£5k - £10k	£10k - £25k	£25k - £50k	£50k - £100k	100k - £250k	£250k - £500k	£500k - £1m	£1m - £5m	Over £5m
Grand Total	6%	12%	23%	20%	17%	6%	9%	5%	2%	1%
25 May 31 May	2%	4%	24%	21%	22%	9%	9%	5%	1%	1%
2 June to 8 June	4%	9%	20%	16%	20%	9%	14%	4%	3%	0%

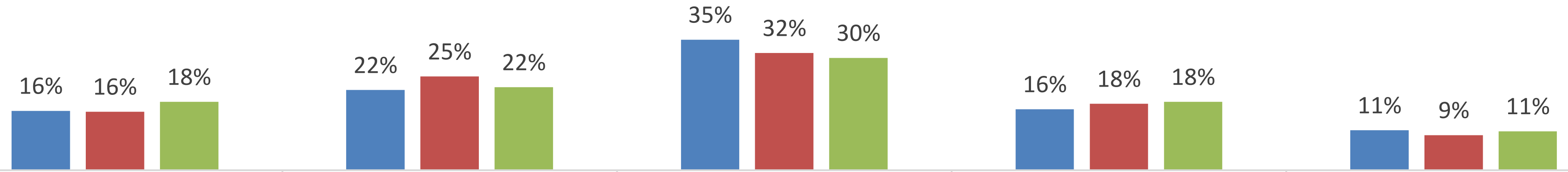
Grand Total ■ 25 May 31 May ■ 2 June to 8 June

Q: Approximately how much could this mean in terms of lost turnover? (74)

Research Outputs – Business Survival

Businesses are showing more clarity as to whether they think they will still be in business three months from now. Results are slightly better than last week, with 40% having a positive outlook and 30% not expecting to survive longer than three months. However over a quarter (28%) are still not sure.

Business survival after THREE months in the current situation?



	Yes	Probably Yes	Not Sure	Probably Not	No
Grand Total	16%	22%	35%	16%	11%
25 May 31 May	16%	25%	32%	18%	9%
2 June to 8 June	18%	22%	30%	18%	11%

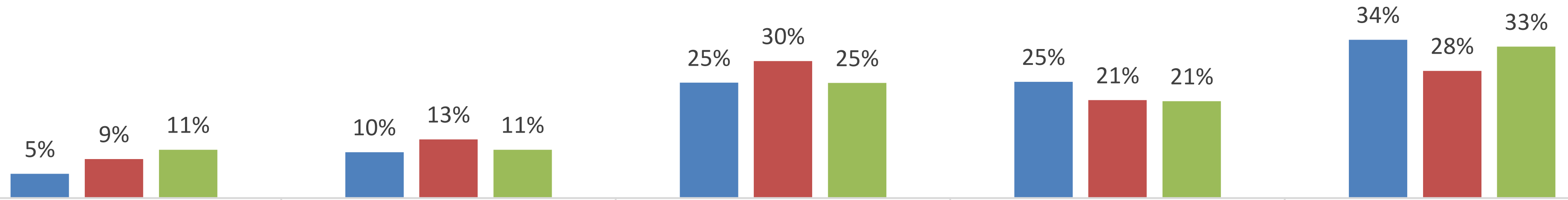
Grand Total 25 May 31 May 2 June to 8 June

Q: Would your business survive for three months in the current situation? (76)

Research Outputs – Business Survival

Similarly, those 'not sure' about their survival after six months account for only 25% of the sample. A quarter (22%) are confident they will survive for six month in the current situation but over half (54%) think they probably won't survive – below the 59% average for the ten-week period.

Business survival after SIX months in the current situation?



	Yes	Probably Yes	Not Sure	Probably Not	No
Grand Total	5%	10%	25%	25%	34%
25 May 31 May	9%	13%	30%	21%	28%
2 June to 8 June	11%	11%	25%	21%	33%

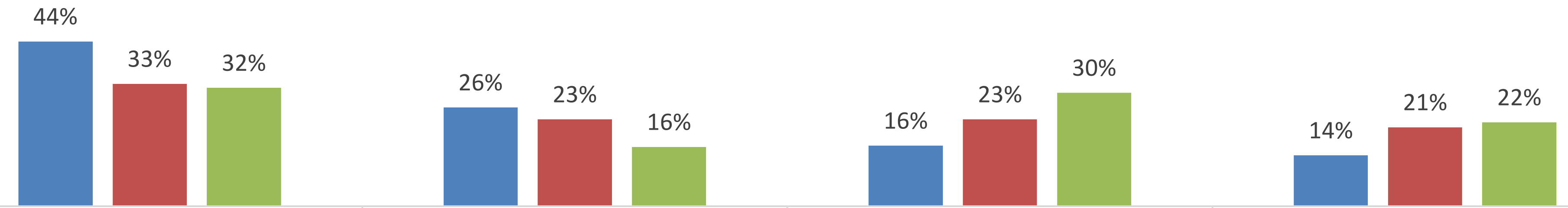
Grand Total   25 May 31 May   2 June to 8 June

Q: Would your business survive for six months in the current situation? (76)

Research Outputs – Business Recovery

This weeks results build on the marked change in the perception as to how long it will take to get back to business as usual. Under half (48%) believe that if Covid 19 were to end today, it would take them up to six months to get back to business as usual. However, three in ten (30%) expect recovery to take up to 12 months and a further 22% believe it will take more than 12 months to fully recover.

If Covid 19 were to end today, how long before your get back to business as usual?



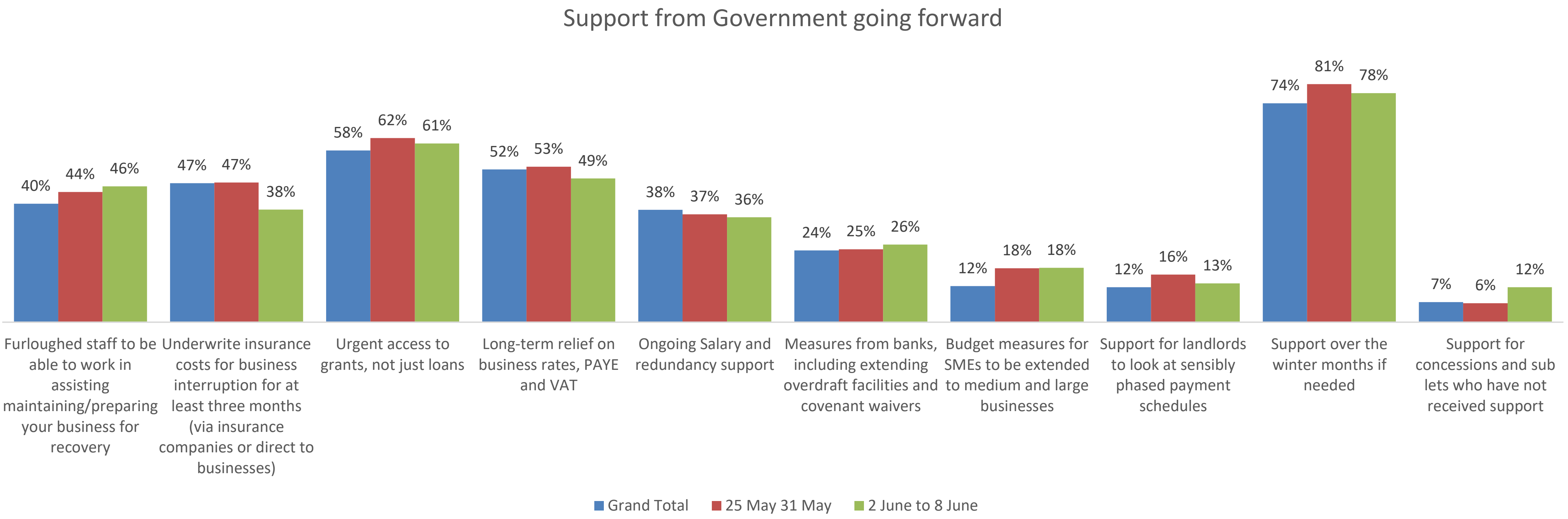
	1 to 3 months	3 to 6 months	6 to 12 months	More than 12 months
Grand Total	44%	26%	16%	14%
25 May 31 May	33%	23%	23%	21%
2 June to 8 June	32%	16%	30%	22%

Grand Total 25 May 31 May 2 June to 8 June

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? (76)

Research Outputs – Business Support

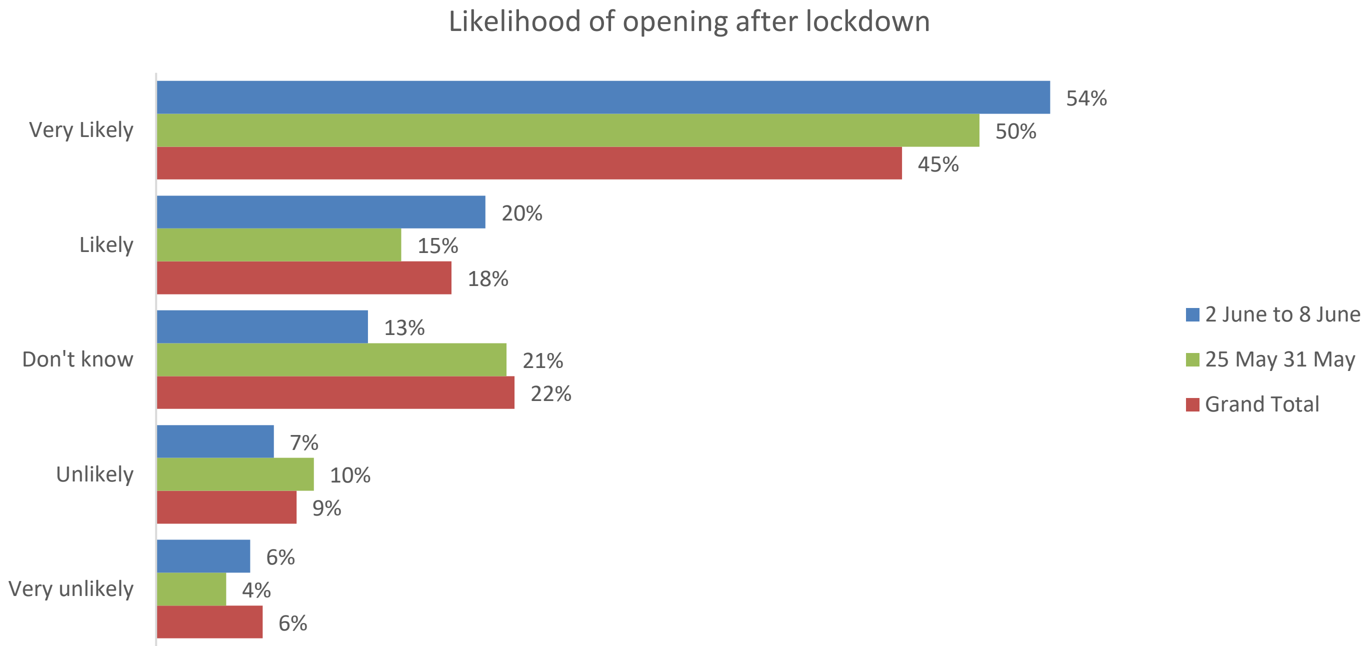
Following on from the previous chart, increasing numbers of businesses (78%) are starting to think about needing support from government over the winter months. Also increasing this week are requests for 'Furloughed staff to be able to work in assisting maintaining/preparing your business for recovery' (up 2%) and 'Support for concessions and sub lets who have not received support', up 6%.



Q: What support from Government would be crucial for your business going forward?(93)

Research Outputs – Business after lockdown

Most businesses have now made up their mind as to whether they will open their business, if the Government removes the lockdown, but keeps social distancing and safety measures still in place. Three quarters are likely (20%) or very likely (54%) to open after lock down. Two in five (22%) are still uncertain about their plans and only 13% are unlikely (7%) or very unlikely (6%) to open their business after lockdown and under the current plans.



Q: How likely are you to open your business, if the Government removes the lockdown, but keeps social distancing and safety measures still in place. (96) Q: Please could you explain the reasons as to why you would or would not open? (86)

Research Outputs – Further opinions

About three quarters believe they will be able to operate whilst respecting the 2 meter distancing rules although they accept it will mean a significant reduction in business trade. However, for some such reduction in trade would make their business unviable.

The main measures already put in place include the introduction of a one-way system, additional signage, hand wash stations, floor markings and card payments. Some accommodation providers are proposing room only service, check in by keysafe, revised breakfast times and offering a continental breakfast box in the rooms.

"Not letting anyone in the cafe and just letting them sit outside with tables far apart."

"The implications of social distancing will result in greatly reduced capacity making our business unviable."

"Yes, we can operate our laundry like that. But we will get any work in as a result of these measures being enforced throughout the holiday-let trade?"

Q: The Government has introduced guidance to help businesses understand how to work safely during the Covid-19 pandemic. This includes maintaining a 2 metre social distancing wherever possible. - Can your business operate with 2 meter distancing? Is so, what mitigating actions will you set in place to enforce it and reduce the risk of transmission? (36)

Research Outputs – Further opinions

A new question for this week asked respondents to give their opinion as to whether the opening of some of Greater Yarmouth tourism businesses is going to create a problem long term. There's a lot of uncertainty about this issue and many don't have a clear opinion about the matter. Only three respondents said it will be a problem and may result in a spike in infections. About two in five (40%) believe it won't be a problem (some with the caveat of respecting social distance rules).

No, as long as the correct measures are taken i.e. social distancing etc

Yes, we still need to discourage tourism, to allow the virus to die down further, and allow us all to open up properly - not just a few small businesses that may cause a second wave of covid and therefore a longer lockdown.

Q: Is the opening of some of Greater Yarmouth tourism businesses going to create a problem long term? (36)

Research Outputs – Further opinions

At the end of the survey businesses were asked if they had any other comments they would like to raise. This week the survey asked businesses to specify about major challenges short term and long term. A summary of comments / key themes is below:

Sort term

Extra financial support is needed for those businesses that are still forced to close.

Change to one metre social distancing

Information about opening dates and guidance about safety regulations

Short team challenges are just getting customers though the door again – need for reassurance messages.

Long term

Staying afloat if there is another major peak necessitating further lockdowns.

Long term just to keep the business running until Easter next year which is going to be very difficult

In the medium and longer terms it may be necessary to diversify to survive.

Extra bank holiday end September and end October or begin November to make up some lost income and to celebrate the hard work by the NHS

Re-assuring local population that opening will not put them at greater risk than they are at the moment.

We desperately need guidance on what Covid secure will look like for a hotel i.e. do we need to leave bedrooms fallow after checkout, cleaning of public toilets, what will be considered the gold standard in best practice

Q: Do you have any other comments you would like to raise? We are particularly interested in your major challenges short term and longer term? (36 excluding 'no', 'd/k', n/a, etc.)

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