

Covid-19 – Online Tourism Business Survey

Prepared for: Great Yarmouth Tourism and
Business Improvement Area

Week 15: 07 July to 13 July

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 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 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 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 weekly sample size is as follows: 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, 76 in week 10, 74 in week 11, 76 in week 12, 60 in week 13, 57 in week 14 and 57 in week 15.

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 7 July and 13 July 2020 - Key developments:

Chancellor's Summer Economic statement

The Chancellor of the Exchequer noted that tourism has been one of the worst affected sectors and below is a summary of the key points from the Summer Economic statement for tourism businesses.

VAT cut to 5% until January 2021

Between 15th July 2020 and 12th January 2021 the reduced (5%) rate of VAT will apply to supplies of accommodation and admission to attractions plus supplies of food and non-alcoholic drinks from restaurants, pubs, bars, cafés and similar premises across the UK.

Eat Out to Help Out discount scheme

To encourage people to safely return to eating out at restaurants the Government has set up a new Eat Out to Help Out discount scheme. It entitles every diner to a 50% discount of up to £10 per head on their meal, at any participating restaurant, café, pub or other eligible food service establishment.

£1000 Job Retention Bonus

The government will introduce a one-off payment of £1,000 to UK employers for every furloughed employee who remains continuously employed through to the end of January 2021. To get the bonus, firms must pay at least £520 each month.

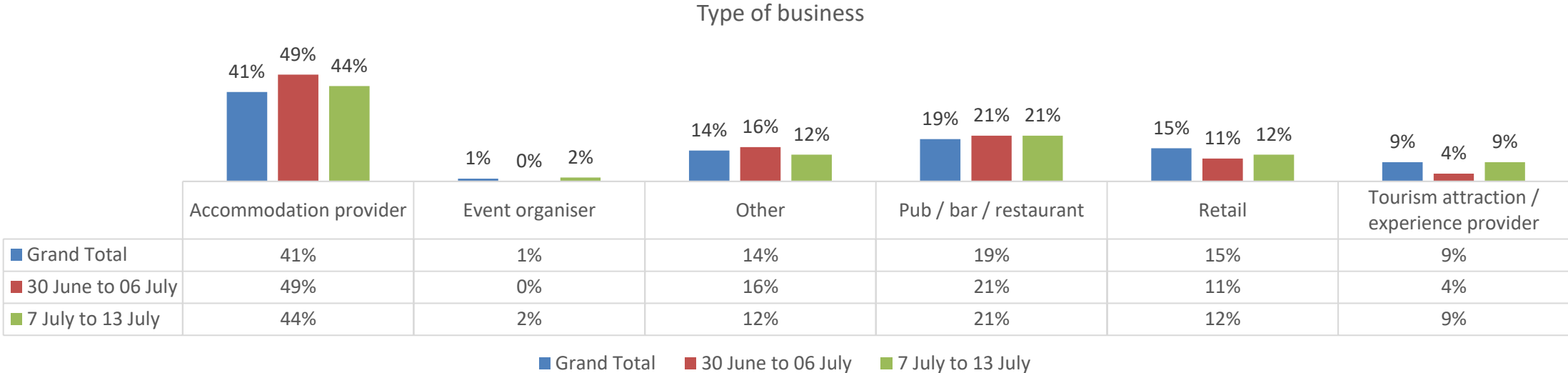
Kickstart Scheme

Businesses will be given £2,000 for each new apprentice they hire under the age of 25 and a £1,500 payment for each new apprentice they hire aged 25 and over, from 1st August 2020 to 31st January 2021.



Research Outputs – Business Profile

During week 15 there was a decrease in the number accommodation providers and ‘other’ businesses. There was also an increase in the percentage of tourism attractions



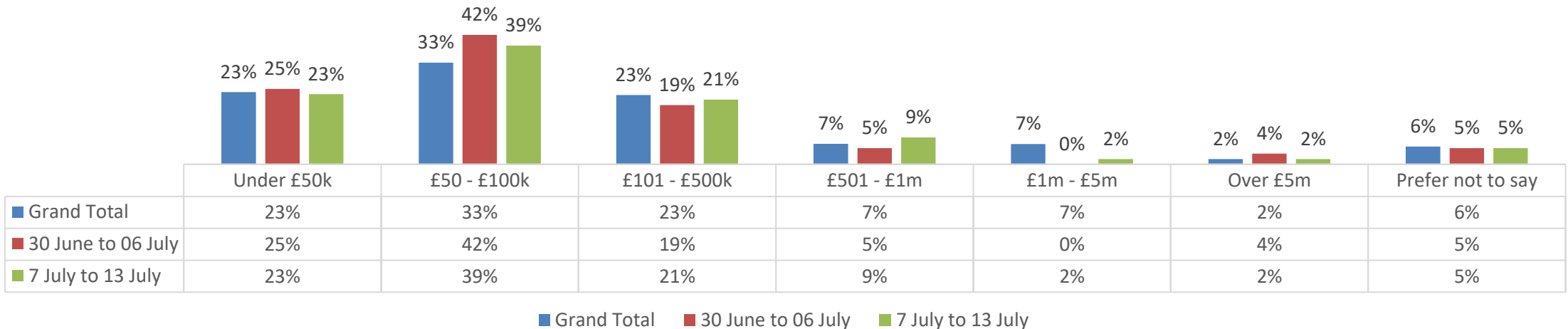
Q: What type of business do you run? (57)



Research Outputs – Business Profile

Businesses with turnover up to £100k account for three in five businesses included in the sample (62% combined). In particular, this week we saw a 4% increase in the £500k - £1m bracket and a reduction in the under £50k and the £50k to £100k brackets compared to previous weeks. Overall, 83% of all responses have been from SMEs (turnover up to £500k).

Company's approximate turnover last year

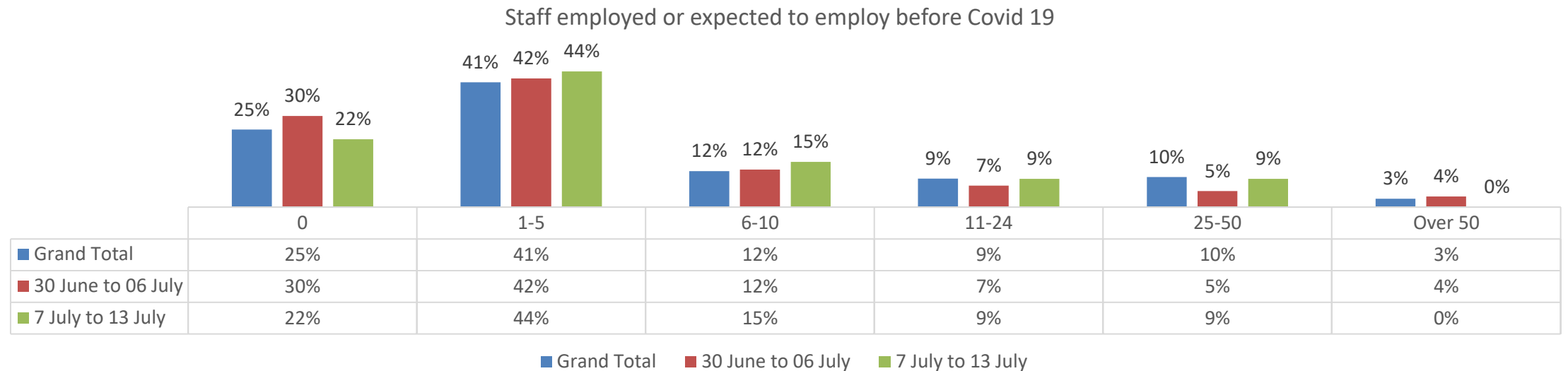


Q: What was your company's approximate turnover last year? (56)



Research Outputs – Staff and employment changes

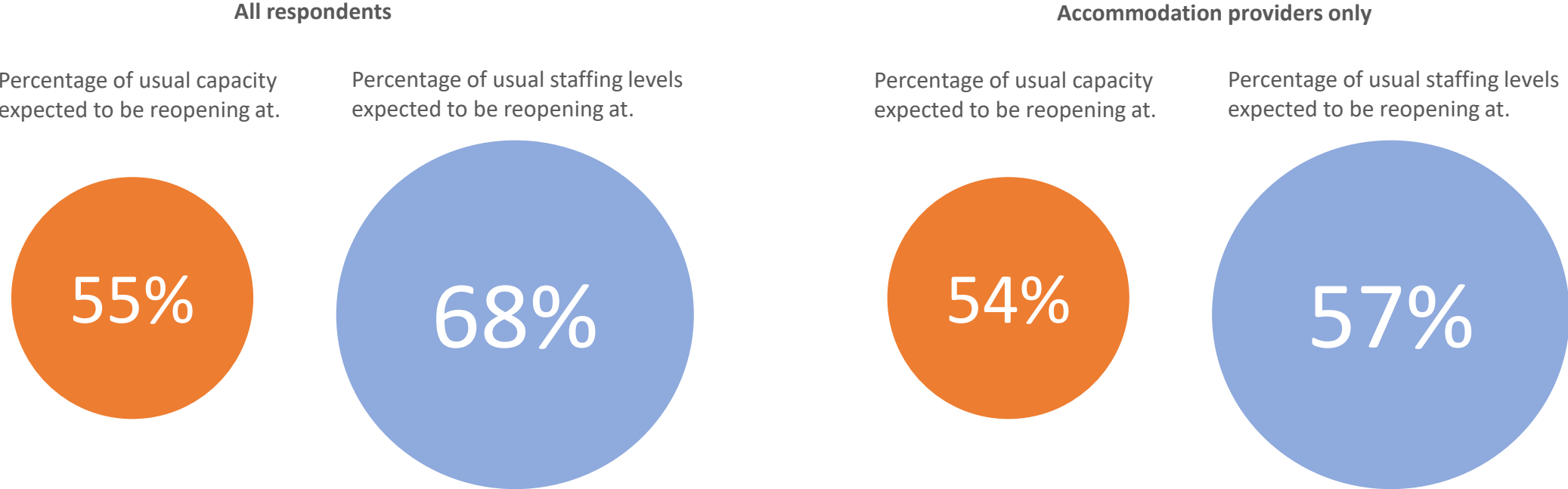
A few changes in the size of businesses taking part in the survey. There was a further increase in the proportion of businesses employing between 1 and 5 - up two points to 42%, which in turn was 6pc higher than the previous week. All other groups employing at least 6 members of staff showed only minor increases on last week.



Q: How many staff did you employ or expected to employ before the start of the Covid 19 crisis? (55)

Research Outputs – Staff and employment changes

The large majority of businesses have started planning for re-opening. Most businesses are planning to open partially only and the expected capacity is estimated at 55% of normal operations. However, respondents expect to bring back two thirds of their staff (68%). Note that for accommodation providers only, the percentages are 54% and 57% respectively.

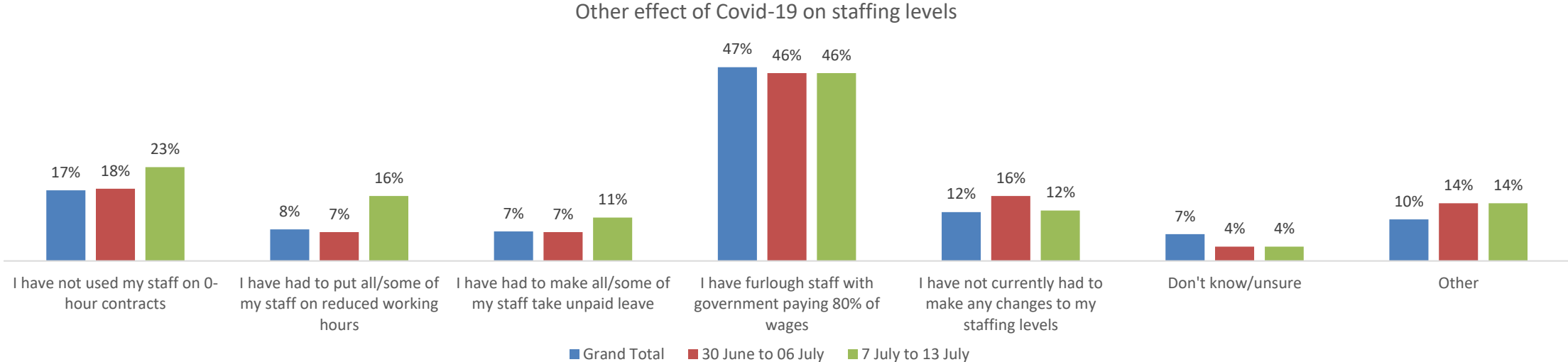


Q: If and when you plan your reopening, approximately what percentage of your usual capacity do you expect to be reopening at? Q: Approximately what percentage of your usual staffing levels do you expect to be reopening at?



Research Outputs – Staff and employment changes

This week there was a 5 percentage points increase in the proportion that had not used their staff of 0-hour contracts, up to 23% on last week and 6% higher than the overall average. Also significant is the increase in the number of businesses that have put some of their staff on reduced working hours (up to 16% compared to 7% last week).



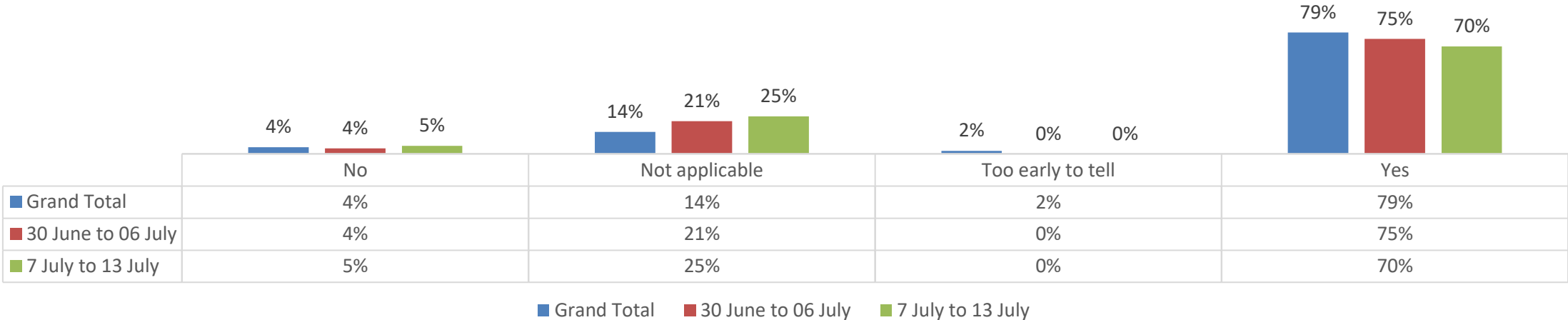
Q: What other effect has Covid-19 had on your staffing levels to date? (55)



Research Outputs – Impact on bookings and turnover

The proportion of businesses that reported changes to existing bookings/sales because of Covid 19 this week is 70%, five percentage points below last week’s and 9% down on the 15-week average. Note that there’s a significant and growing group that deem the question not applicable to their business model.

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 (57)*

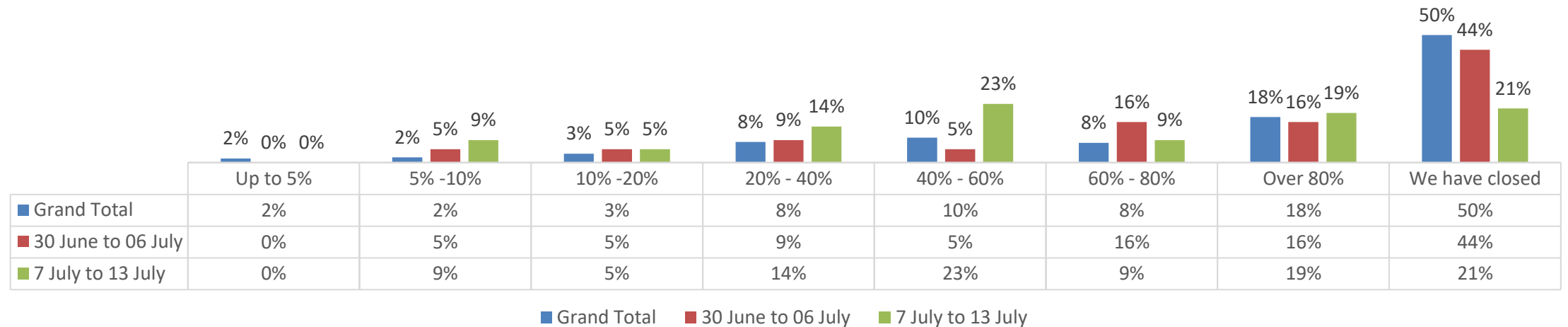


Covid-19 – Online Business Survey – Research Results

Research Outputs – Impact on bookings and turnover

Covid-19 is having significant impacts on the local tourism industry. Just over one in five (21%) are still reporting temporary closures, although this represents a significant change on last week (44%). 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 but many are now starting to open following the latest announcement and the publication of sector-specific guidance.

Percentage of trade lost to date

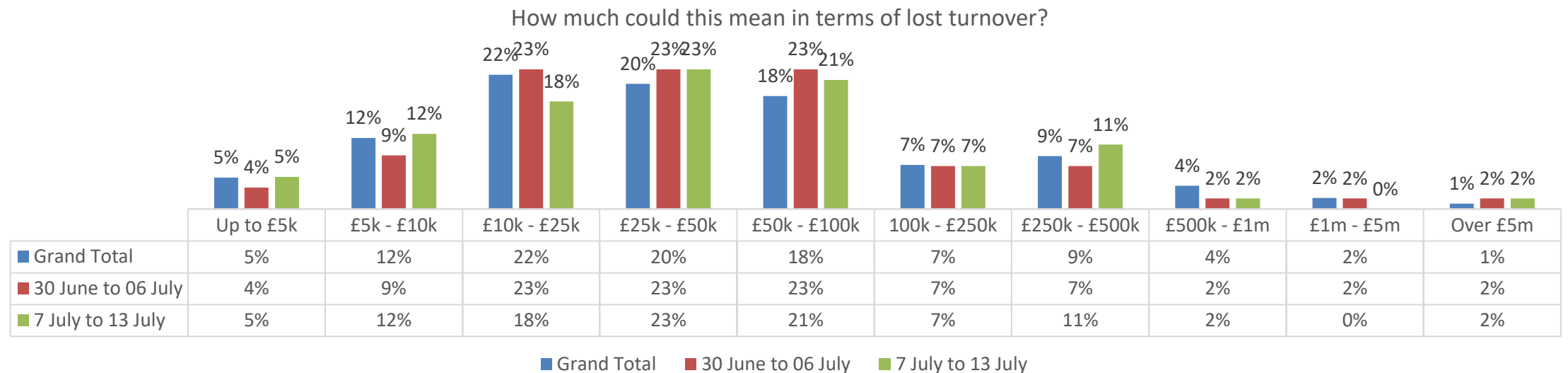


Q: If your trade has decreased what percentage of trade would you say you have lost to date? (56)



Research Outputs – Impact on bookings and turnover

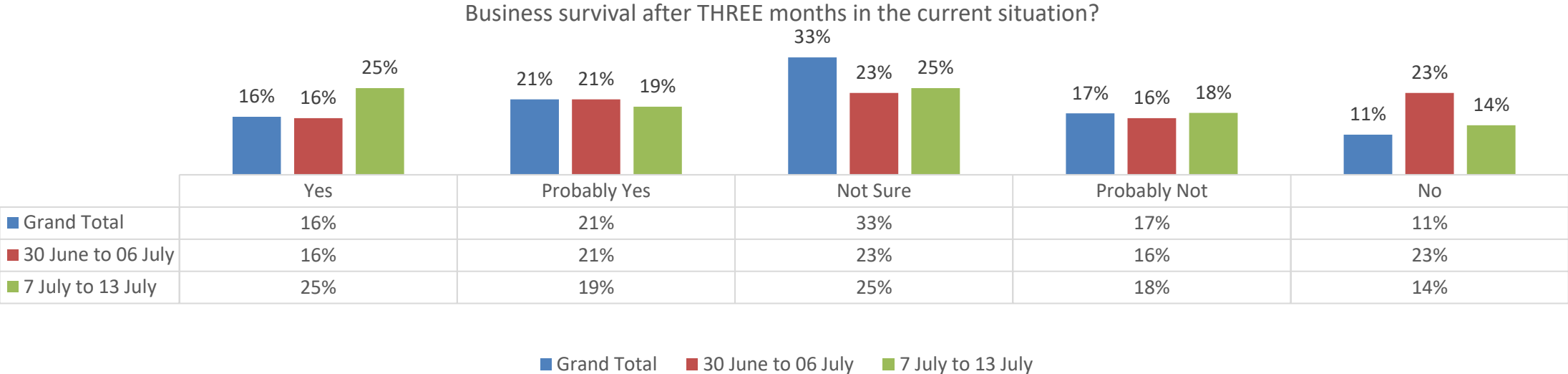
Looking at the differences between this week’s results and the 15-week period we notice an increase in the proportion of businesses reporting losses of up to £10k and also those larger businesses with losses of between £250k and £500k.



Q: Approximately how much could this mean in terms of lost turnover? (57)

Research Outputs – Business Survival

More than two in five businesses (44%) have a positive outlook on their likelihood or surviving the next three months. However, a third (32%) don't expect to survive longer than three months and 25% are still not sure.



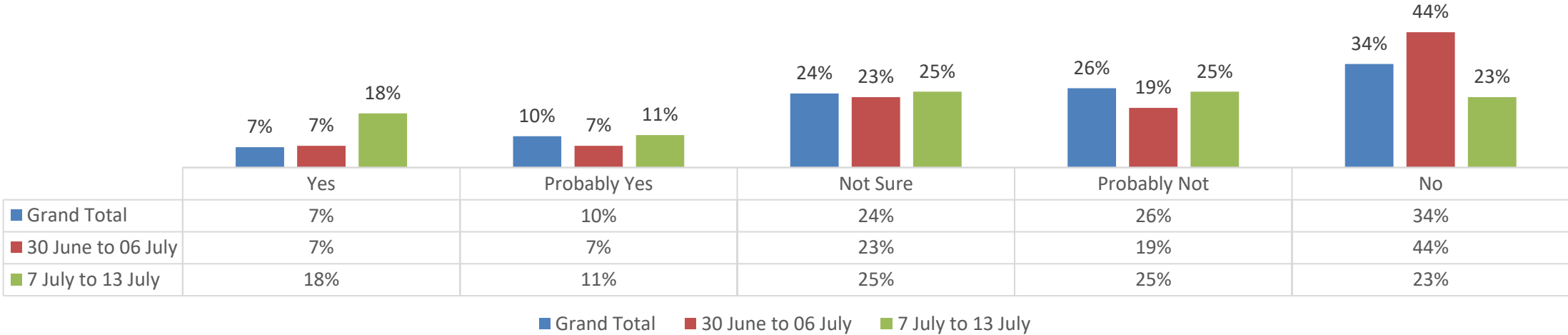
Q: Would your business survive for three months in the current situation? (55)



Research Outputs – Business Survival

Those ‘not sure’ about their survival after six months account for 25% of the sample and 29% are confident they will survive for six months in the current situation. Almost half (48%) think they probably won’t survive after six months. Note that these results are more optimistic than those reported last week.

Business survival after SIX months in the current situation?



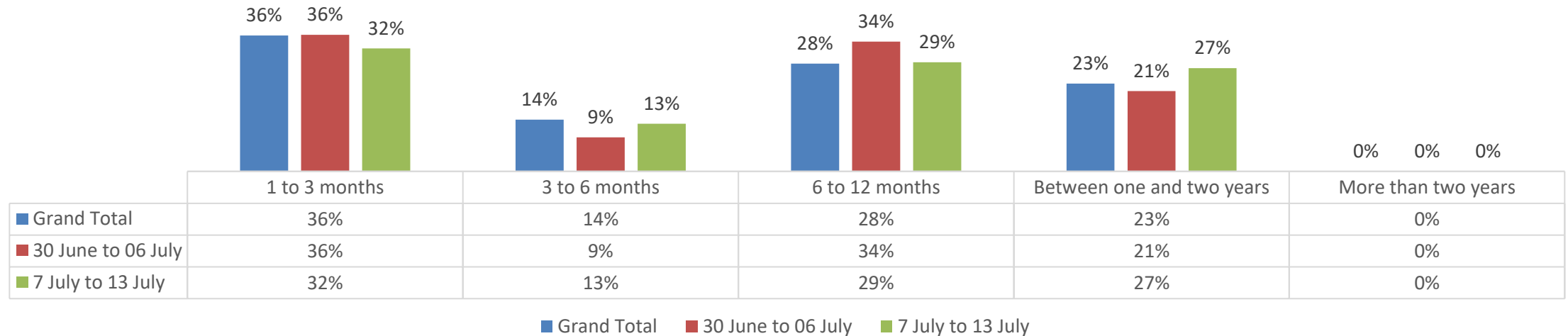
Q: Would your business survive for six months in the current situation? (55)



Research Outputs – Business Recovery

This weeks results show a marked change in the perception as to how long it will take to get back to business as usual. Just under a third (32%) believe that if Covid 19 were to end today, it would take them between 6 and 12 months to recover (4% decrease on last week). However, over a quarter (27%) expect to take between one and two years to recover.

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

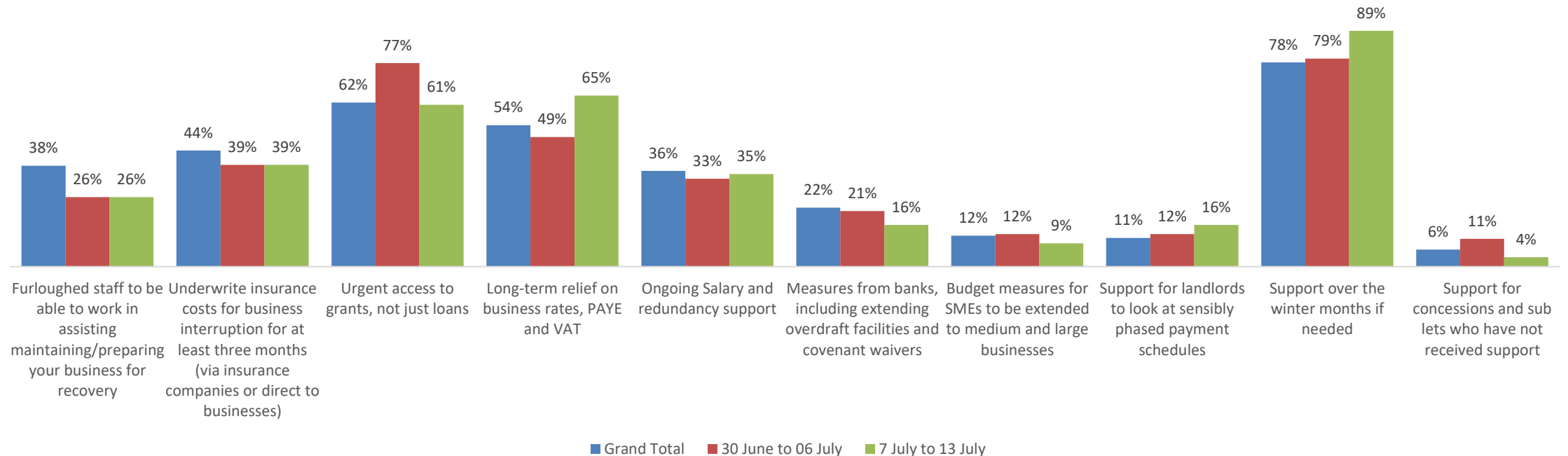


Q: Finally, If Covid 19 were to end today, how long would you estimate it would take for your company to get back to business as usual? (57)

Research Outputs – Business Support

Almost nine out of ten (89%) are saying they will need support from government over the winter months. The long term relief on business rates, PAYE and VAT has also experienced a significant jump on last week (65% up from 49%).

Support from Government going forward

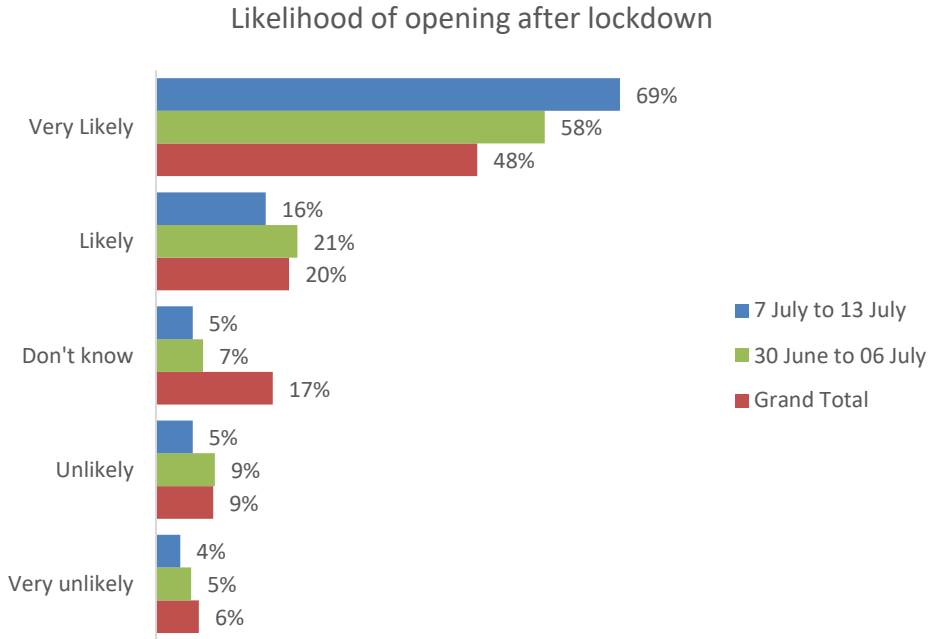


Q: What support from Government would be crucial for your business going forward? (57)



Research Outputs – Business after lockdown

Most businesses are making preparations to open as soon as possible. With the release of the sector specific guidance seven in ten (69%) are now very likely to open after lock down and a further 21% are 'likely' to open. Those unsure account for 5% and 9% are 'unlikely' to open (of these, 4% are 'very unlikely' to open).



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. (56)



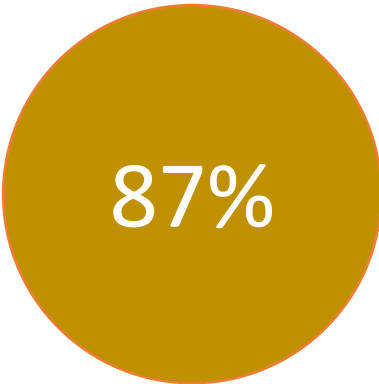
Research Outputs – Further opinions

Respondents are currently operating at about a quarter (27%) of their normal capacity for this time of the year. When asked about their willingness to open (or continue to open) in the winter, if Great Yarmouth could attract more winter visitors, the vast majority (87%) said they would open / stay open.

Percentage of trade last week compared to the same week last year.



Businesses willing or able to open (or continue to open) their business in the winter.



*Q: What was your percentage of trade last week compared to the same week last year? (48)
Would you be willing or able to open (or continue to open) your business in the winter, if Great Yarmouth could attract more winter visitors?*



Research Outputs – Further opinions

Great Yarmouth needs more promotion and advertising in order to attract more visitors over winter and into Spring 2021. Events and shows over the autumn and winter months would help the local economy, for example Christmas lights. It is suggested that winter promotion should target local residents by offering activities such as an ice ring. Also, holiday camps should be allowed to open past November, in order to maximise trade over Christmas.

More generally, a number of businesses are asking for free parking and general improvements and cleanliness of the area.

Businesses themselves would be willing to stay open over winter. The biggest change would need to be the introduction of extra heating units to keep their businesses warm over the colder months.



Q: What do you think Great Yarmouth needs to do to attract visitors to the area in the winter? (44)

What changes would you need to make to your business, to make it better suited to operating in the winter? (30)

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: staying closed until next season and laying off staff

Sort term

Cheaper rates and free parking

Having to work at reduced capacity

The possibility of a second leading to cancellations

Longer term

Clean up the town

Make Great Yarmouth more attractive to visitors

Incentives for visitors – free car parking.



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? (21 excluding 'no', 'd/k', n/a, etc.)



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