



Professional Association of Self-Caterers UK

COVID GUIDELINES NEWSLETTER

5 March 2021

Issue 48

Budget Follow up Newsletter

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PASC UK CLOSING FOR 4 DAYS

We will be **closed** from Monday 8th March through Thursday 11th March, next week, re-opening on Friday morning to write Newsletter 49. We have only been closed for three working days since Lockdown 1 and need to focus next week on three things, getting the PASC UK website as near to launch as possible, our own complex insurance claim, and our own plan for re-opening, so that this can be delegated and we can get back to PASC UK. We apologise for the inconvenience, however if we don't none of those three things will get completed. Thank You.

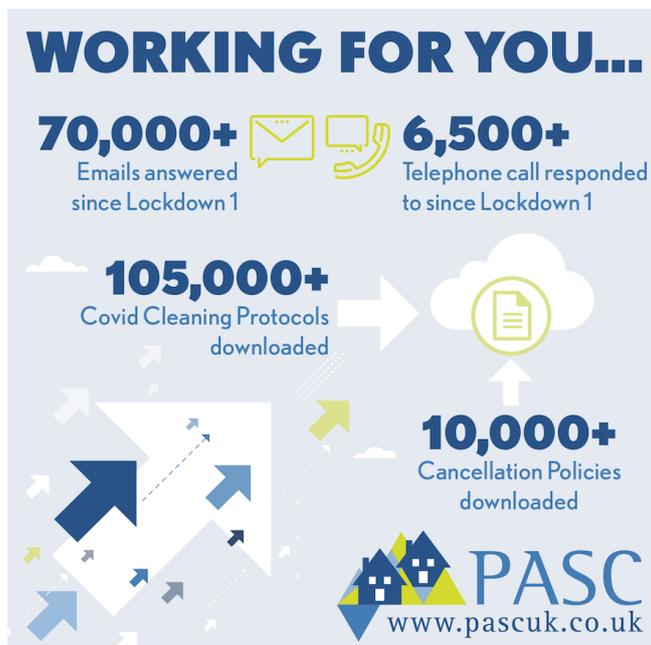
SUPPORT GUIDELINES

We are still getting 250+ emails a day, plus 50+ phone calls, so we have to reiterate the support rules please.

- **Paid up** Members get phone and email support. Please put property name in Subject line
- Non-Member emails will get dealt with after Members emails
- We cannot respond to questions on Facebook and Linked in
- Please read the most recent Newsletter before calling/emailing
- Recent Newsletters are on the website

The email address to use in chair@pascuk.co.uk

Many thanks, your support with this would be much appreciated.



PASC UK SOCIAL MEDIA

Please follow PASC on Twitter **@PascUK**
Please on Facebook **@pascukltd**

This is where the latest news between newsletters gets posted.

COMMENTARY

This week's newsletter will focus on the Budget and new Grants. We would mark the Budget at 7.5/10. The continued VAT reduction will be a massive boost for VAT registered businesses in our sector and knowing the rates that it will be charged a year ahead will make planning easier.

We will continue to work closely with the Cut Tourism VAT team to try to secure the reductions on a permanent basis. We will publish more on that in the coming months.

Fantastic to see Business Rates Holidays in both Scotland and Wales for the next 12 months. We were a bit surprised that the Chancellor did not do the same in England, but the continued holiday until June and then only paying a third from then on is a big step in the right direction.

We are of course, still closed by law, so it was only proper for more support to be announced.

This support is detailed by Country in the newsletter. However, the access to these Grants is patchy, access to SEISS if you are on FHL is non-existent, and we need to prove this, so please, please, complete the short Grant Survey below. This is critical to us convincing the Government in Westminster and the Administrations in Scotland and Wales that the headlines look good, but the distribution has been poor. Please also fill the Survey in if you have had the Grants. It's important to get the national picture. <https://bit.ly/3bgB2bK>

PASC UK will be closed from Monday to Thursday inclusive next week as explained above, emerging on Friday morning, to publish Newsletter 49.

Check below for the forthcoming webinars, take part in the survey and all the best with juggling the bookings within the restrictions as the Road Maps start to open up.

REALLY IMPORTANT GRANTS SURVEY

Last week we published a section called the Grants Scandal. Government data shows that only 13% of discretionary grants have been passed through to businesses. This will come as no surprise to many of you. We need to show the Government how this has impacted the self-catering sector.

Please take 5 minutes to fill in this Grants Survey <https://bit.ly/3bgB2bK>

The Survey will close at 1700 on Tuesday 9th March.

We have worked with the ASSC (Association of Scotland's Self Caterers) and the WTA (Wales Tourism Alliance) to map all the Grants since lockdown, to see which have been the most successful and which the least.

As always, we need a really good turnout on this one to provide compelling evidence to Governments in England, Wales and Scotland. Thanks in anticipation.

PASC UK SELF-CATERING WEBINAR RECORDINGS AND PROGRAMME

Two new webinars announced this week and more to come before re-opening. Please let us know if there is anything that you would like to see covered.

Next Webinars

We hope to have webinars covering re-opening, getting guest ready, and ghosting of properties, plus the futures one mentioned below.

How to become an Accessible Business and Why?

Why should you consider getting involved in the Accessible market? Find out from a panel of experts about the market, what you can expect, what is the financial impact, what you need to do, and how to go about entering this sector.

Key points to consider:

- Market worth £3.2 billion in overnight stays
- Make up 15% of overnight stays
- The guests spend more per night and stay longer

The team will present the market opportunity, the how to's and the benefits, followed by a Q&A session to the whole panel

Date: 24 March

Time: 1100 - 1230

Book: <https://bit.ly/388ErHj>

Agenda

- Intro: Alistair Handyside, Chair PASC UK
- The Market Opportunity: Ross Calladine, Head of Business Support VisitEngland.
- Accessible does not mean design compromise: Diane Howarth, Cottages in the Dales.
- Marketing the accessible product: Beth Bailey, Kernock Cottages.
- Impact on the bookings: Robert Kennedy, Director SuperControl.
- The National Accessible Scheme: Annette Burgess, Regional Operations Manager, VE Assessments.
- Panel Q & A

Touch Stay Free Webinar

Touch Stay have organised a webinar to share short term lettings successes during the pandemic.

Date: 16 March 2021

Time: 5pm

Book here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/success-stories-how-to-navigate-2021-as-a-self-catering-operator-uk-us-tickets-143858997133>

Come meet, listen to and chat with four industry professionals who will share stories of happy guests and accommodation professionals during Covid.

Hosting success stories

Tips and tricks gleaned from different countries

How their organizations supported their members during the pandemic crisis

What can self-catering/vacation rental owners do to make 2021 a success and help 2022 sell itself

Hosted by Andy McNulty and Tyann Marcink from Touch Stay, creators of the digital guidebook.

Panellists:

- Alistair Handyside (Chair, PASC UK; Owner of Higher Wiscombe)
- Merilee Karr (Chair, Short Term Accommodation Association; Founder & CEO, UndertheDoormat)
- Dave Krauss (Founder & Exec., Rent Responsibly)
- Alexa Nota (Founder & Exec., Rent Responsibly)

Recordings of Webinars

“Pros and Cons of Self-catering Agents or Going Direct?”

Recording can now be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/491JitUxB0s>

Date broadcast: Wednesday 24 February 2021
Time: 1500 -1630

This webinar featured the pros and cons of both the self-catering agency route and of taking your bookings direct. Plus, it also features the Q&A on the Road Maps

“Chargebacks”

Recording can now be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/OhR2Q3Dbxes>

Date Broadcast: Wednesday 17 February 2021
Time: 1500 -1630

Avoid them (why they occur, how to minimise the probability).
Understand what they are, the variants, and what to expect.
Be competent and efficient at dealing with them.
Put a good case together to win a dispute.

Future Webinars

Free Webinar on ‘Self-catering Futures’

Date: TBA
Time: TBA

We are poised to have a really busy summer this year, as most will not be able, or perhaps willing, to go abroad. What can we do with our businesses to win over these new customers long term? How can we increase our repeat customers as we head towards a really competitive landscape in 2022/2023 when the international markets open up?

THE BUDGET: KEY TOURISM POINTS IMPACTING SELF-CATERING

VAT

- 5% rate extended for another six months beyond 31 March 2021 followed by a 12.5% rate for a further six months.

The guidance on the reduced VAT Rate extension has been revised following today's budget announcement. It is essentially the same as previously, except for the introduction of the 12.5% rate from 1 October 2021 to 31st March 2022

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/vat-reduced-rate-for-hospitality-holiday-accommodation-and-attractions>

It is also worth noting that small businesses that are on the flat Rate VAT Scheme will have their VAT rate changed for the 1 Oct 2021 – 31 March 2022 period. The rates are:

	Up to 1 Oct	After 1 Oct
Restaurants/cafes	4.5%	8.5%
Accommodation	0%	5.5%
Pubs	1%	4%

<https://www.gov.uk/vat-flat-rate-scheme/how-much-you-pay>

Business Rates England

- 100% businesses rates holiday until June, followed by a two-thirds discount for the rest of the year.

Furlough

- To be extended until the end of September at the 80% rate until July
- From July, the government will introduce an employer contribution towards the cost of unworked hours of 10% in July, 20% in August and 20% in September.

The details of the extension to the CJRS have been published. The following table provides a good summary of the changes through the tapered support period of 1 July to 30 September.

	May	June	July	August	September
Government contribution: wages for hours not worked	80% up to £2,500	80% up to £2,500	70% up to £2,187.50	60% up to £1,875	60% up to £1,875
Employer contribution: employer National Insurance contributions and pension contributions	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Employer contribution wages for hours not worked	No	No	10% up to £312.50	20% up to £625	20% up to £625
For hours not worked employee receives	80% up to £2,500 per month				

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/changes-to-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme/changes-to-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme>

One important change is that, for periods starting on or after 1 May 2021, you can claim for employees who were employed on 2 March 2021, as long as you have made a PAYE Real Time Information (RTI) submission to HMRC between 20 March 2020 and 2 March 2021, notifying a payment of earnings for that employee. You do not need to have previously claimed for an employee before the 2 March 2021 to claim for periods from starting on or after 1 May 2021.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-which-employees-you-can-put-on-furlough-to-use-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme>

Recovery Loan Scheme

- From 6 April 2021 the Recovery Loan Scheme will provide lenders with a guarantee of 80% on eligible loans between £25,000 and £10 million
- The scheme will be open to all businesses, including those who have already received support under the existing COVID-19 guaranteed loan schemes.

The outline guidance on the new Recovery Loans that were announced today have been published. Term loans and overdrafts will be available between £25,001 and £10 million per business.

Invoice finance and asset finance will be available between £1,000 and £10 million per business.

Finance terms are up to six years for term loans and asset finance facilities. For overdrafts and invoice finance facilities, terms will be up to three years. No personal guarantees will be taken on facilities up to £250,000, and a borrower's principal private residence cannot be taken as security.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/recovery-loan-scheme>

Corporation Tax Rate

- This will increase to 25% on April 2023
- A Small Profits Rate of 19% will apply to businesses with a profit of under £50,000
- There will be a tapered rate between profits of £50,000 and £250,000

Super Investment Tax Deduction

- To encourage investment, from 1 April 2021 until 31 March 2023, companies investing in qualifying new plant and machinery assets will benefit from a 130% first-year capital allowance. This upfront super-deduction will allow companies to cut their tax bill by up to 25p for every £1 they invest.

From 1 April 2021 until 31 March 2023, companies investing in qualifying new plant and machinery assets will be able to claim:

- a 130% super-deduction capital allowance on qualifying plant and machinery investments
- a 50% first-year allowance for qualifying special rate assets

The super-deduction will allow companies to cut their tax bill by up to 25p for every £1 they invest, ensuring the UK capital allowances regime is amongst the world's most competitive.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/super-deduction>

Air Passenger Duty

- APD rates will increase in line with RPI from April 2022

Alcohol Duty

- No increases this year

Fuel Duty

- No increases this year

Levelling Up Fund

- The government is launching the prospectus for the £4.8 billion Levelling Up Fund today.
- The Fund will invest in infrastructure, including town centre and high street regeneration, local transport projects, and cultural and heritage assets.

GRANTS IN ENGLAND

Extension of Local Restrictions Support grant to 31 March 2021

This Grant has been extended to cover the period 16 Feb - 31 March. If you received this Grant to cover the period 5 Jan - 15 Feb, you should automatically be eligible for this one.

Amounts:

- Up to £15,000 Rateable Value = £2001 for the 42-day qualifying restriction period
- Over £15,000 & under £51,000 Rateable Value = £3,000 for the 42-day qualifying restriction period
- Over £51,000 Rateable Value = £4,500 for the 42-day qualifying restriction period

Full Guidance here:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/966852/20210304 Business Support Package for January Lockdown LA guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/966852/20210304_Business_Support_Package_for_January_Lockdown_LA_guidance.pdf)

Restart Grants

We expect the Grant levels to look something like this and await official confirmation.

Probable amounts:

- Up to £15,000 Rateable Value = £6,000
- Over £15,000 & under £51,000 Rateable Value = £12,000
- Over £51,000 Rateable Value = £18,000

Known information: Full details of this Grant and the criteria will probably not be available for about two weeks. We would expect self-catering to be eligible but will be checking. Looking at the headline eligibility...

According to government guidance, your business may be eligible if it:

- Is based in England
- Occupies property on which it pays business rates (and is the ratepayer)
- Has been required to close because of the national lockdown from 5 January 2021 onwards, or between 5 November and 2 December 2020
- Has been unable to provide its usual in-person customer service from its premises

However, you cannot get funding if:

- You can continue to operate during the lockdown period because you do not depend on providing direct in-person services from your premises (for example accountants)
- You have chosen to close, but have not been required to close as part of national restrictions Your business is in administration, insolvent or has been struck off the Companies House register

- You have exceeded the permitted subsidy limit

Further information will be published in the PASC UK newsletters and on PASC UK Facebook. As information becomes available it will also be published on your Council website.

You can find your Council website here: <https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council>

ARG Discretionary Additional Restrictions Grants

- An additional £425 million of discretionary business grant funding, on top of the £1.6 billion already allocated.

Whilst this good headline news for Council Tax paying readers, we know that this Grant is just not getting through, see Grants Scandal repeated below. This is why it is critical that you all fill in the Grants Survey, so that we can prove that you are not getting them and try and make the case for you to be included. Take part here: <https://bit.ly/3bgB2bK>

Guidance here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/966854/20210304_Additional_Restrictions_Grant_-_LA_guidance.pdf

As information becomes available it will also be published on your Council website.

You can find your Council website here: <https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council>

Remember, elected local councillors determine the eligibility criteria for these grants. If they do not include self-catering, their names are on your Council website, plus their contact details. Lobbying them locally does work, many are only elected with very small majorities, ask them to justify why they are not supporting you.

SEISS (Self-Employed Income Support Scheme)

- People whose turnover has fallen by 30% or more will continue to receive the full 80% grant.
- People whose turnover has fallen by less than 30% will therefore have less need of taxpayer support and will receive a 30% grant.
- The 4th grant will cover February to April, worth 80% of average trading profits up to £7,500.
- A 5th grant will be available from July.

Once again any of us that are on FHL are still excluded from this support. This is why it is critical that you all fill in the Grants Survey, take part here: <https://bit.ly/3bgB2bK>

So that we can prove that you are not getting them and try and make the case for you to be included.

GRANTS IN SCOTLAND

This in from the ASSC (Association of Scotland's Self-caterers)...

Support for Small Accommodation Providers Paying Council Tax Fund

What does this involve?

The Support for Small Accommodation Providers Paying Council Tax Fund (SAP-CTF) is to support small accommodation providers in Scotland that pay council tax, including B&Bs, guest houses and **self-catering properties**, and which have been impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions.

Am I eligible?

This fund is for small accommodation providers in Scotland, including B&Bs, guest houses and self-catering business.

All B&Bs, self-catering businesses and guest houses that were previously supported by either the Bed and Breakfast Hardship Fund or the Creative, Tourism and Hospitality Hardship Fund are automatically eligible for support under this scheme. These businesses will be contacted by the local authority and invited to register for payment.

B&Bs, self-catering businesses and guest houses that have not previously been supported are also eligible to apply to this fund.

New entrants to the fund will need to meet the following eligibility criteria.

For self-catering businesses, the business will need to:

- Confirm that the business meets the definition of a self-catering property as defined in [The Council Tax \(Dwellings and Part Residential Subjects\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 1992\[1\]](#)
- Confirm that the applicant/business pays council tax
- Confirm that your business receipts represent a primary source of income (one third or more of earnings)
- Provide auditable data to support one of the following statements:
 - a) My property was occupied for more than 140 days in financial year 2019-20, or
 - b) Due to a poor trading season my property was not occupied for 140 days in the financial year 2019-20 but was occupied for more than 140 days in either of the 2 financial years preceding
- Confirm that you are not currently in receipt of COVID-19 related business grant support through the Strategic Framework Business Fund for the premises
- Provide evidence of business insurance
- Provide evidence of membership, accreditation, registration or listing with a recognised hospitality or tourism agency, representative body or marketing organisation, either national or local (for example, VisitScotland, Association of

Scotland's Self-Caterers, your local destination marketing organisation, AA, Quality in Tourism, etc). **Online booking platform listing alone is not accepted as evidence**

What does this cost?

This is a free service.

Who is this for?

This fund is for small accommodation providers in Scotland that pay council tax, including B&Bs, guest houses and self-catering properties.

How long does this take?

All B&Bs, self-catering businesses and guest houses that were previously supported by either the Bed and Breakfast Hardship Fund or the Creative, Tourism and Hospitality Hardship Fund are automatically eligible for support under this scheme. **These businesses will be contacted by the local authority and invited to register for payment.**

All business must be re-registered by 22 March 2021 to receive payment. Payments will be made as soon as possible once a business is registered.

Applications will open for new entrants to the fund on 16 March 2021 for all local authority areas. The fund will be open for one week and will close to applications on 22 March.

Payments will be made as soon as possible.

Important information

Payments will be made every four weeks from the start of January 2021. This will cover the period of Level 4 restrictions which came into effect from 26 December 2020, and the ongoing lockdown period as long as Level 4 restrictions are in place.

This grant is not retrospectively backdated to 2 November 2020.

Local authorities will identify and invite eligible businesses who were previously supported by either the B&B Hardship Fund or the Creative, Tourism and Hospitality Hardship Fund to register for payment. There is no need for these businesses to apply.

New entrants to the fund will be able to apply between 15 and 22 March 2021 and should verify that they can meet all the criteria set out above in advance of applying.

Next steps

Applications will open for new entrants on 15 March and close on 22 March 2021.

Please take part in the Grants Survey, this has been produced in partnership with the ASSC in Scotland. Take part here: <https://bit.ly/3bgB2bK>

PASCUK strongly recommends that Scottish Readers access the ASSC website for information that will follow on this Grant and join the ASSC in Scotland. <https://www.assc.co.uk>

GRANTS IN WALES

Business Rates

Good news: The rates holiday for the retail, leisure and hospitality sectors in Wales will be extended for a further 12 months.

Read the announcement in full here: <https://gov.wales/business-rates-holiday-extended-12-months>

There two grant statements from the Welsh Government, please can you take part in the grants Survey at the top of the newsletter, so many businesses in Wales have told us about being shut out of Grant support, please give us the evidence to lobby on your behalf and take part in this survey, thanks. <https://bit.ly/3bgB2bK>

Additional Economic Resilience Fund Announced

The Welsh Government has announced a further £30 million for sector specific businesses affected by ongoing coronavirus restrictions.

The latest round of the Economic Resilience Fund (ERF) will be targeted at small, medium and large businesses in the hospitality, leisure, tourism sectors and related supply chain businesses.

The ERF Sector Specific Grant application phase 2 window opens Tuesday 9 March 2021 until 8pm on Friday 12 March 2021. For further information, and to access the eligibility checker, please visit <https://businesswales.gov.wales/news-and-blogs/news/additional-ps30-million-hospitality-leisure-and-tourism>

Possible Additional Grant for Business Rates based Businesses

It has also been confirmed that pending the outcome of the next review on 12 March, a further **£150 million in grants could be made available to firms**, including micro businesses, through the Welsh Government's Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) scheme if coronavirus restrictions are extended.

The Government in Wales provide an Eligibility Checker and Calculator.
<https://businesswales.gov.wales/coronavirus-advice/>

This will help you work out what support they can expect to qualify for in this latest round and to understand the detail they will need to make an application. **The Sector Specific Grant application phase 2 window opens Tues 9 March 2021 until 8pm on Friday 12 March 2021.**

OPENING IN ENGLAND

In short:

Headlines

- There will be no Tier system – England will be treated as a single area.
- There will be four steps
- There will be at least 5 weeks between each step
- There will be a review of the Steps, each set of rules will be confirmed 7 days prior to Step changes

Step one – from 8th March

- All schools to open
- Stay at home order remains in place
- People can meet one other person outside for recreation

From 29th March

- People will be able to meet outside including in private gardens, subject to the rule of six, or provided no more than two households are meeting.
- People will no longer be legally required to stay at home but should work from home if they can and try not to travel.
- Outdoor sports facilities such as tennis or basketball courts and open-air swimming pools can reopen, and formally organised sports can restart.

Step Two - no earlier than 12th April

- **Self-catering will open for individuals or household/household bubble groups only.**
- Non-essential retail will open.
- Pubs and restaurants will begin to open for outdoors service, without curfew, and no requirement for people to order a substantial meal.
- Zoos, theme parks, and drive-in cinemas will open

Step Three - no earlier than 17th May

- Pubs and restaurants will open for indoor service
- **Two Households/Two Household Bubbles or Rule of Six indoors**
- Hotels, guesthouses and B&Bs will open
- Pubs and restaurants will open for indoor service
- Most restrictions outdoors will be lifted, subject to a limit of 30 people
- International travel will not resume before 17 May

Step Four - no earlier than 21st June

- All limits on social contacts will be lifted
- Large events and performances and weddings will be able to go ahead
- Nightclubs will open

Full details of the statement are here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-spring-2021?fbclid=IwAR2ywSMI7oBfkXBjQqxzcnX6yGrJOt6zf7R4aPXV_pvjqcQWhCbwbMXU2VI

Full opening guidance published here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reopening-businesses-and-venues-in-england?fbclid=IwAR1_VCOJJu9tV4_H4v9KWx8cL1MvPQ3BWv1aBoOfdiiEH8naonjtAskwO2O

Key questions being asked are as follows.

Shared Entrance properties cannot open before 17 May.

We hoped that they could, but the new wording is pretty clear, and it now says... "Self-contained holiday accommodation in which **all facilities (including for sleeping, catering, bathing, and indoor lobbies and corridors for entry and exit) are restricted to exclusive use of a single household/support bubble** will reopen."

Update: This will be a blow to those who have apartments and we are seeking clarification on this from the Cabinet Office to see if we can get a dispensation, where the entrance is able to be used in a Covid secure risk assessed basis. Every residents association who have properties in these blocks will also be lobbying against this dispensation. As always with these things, when push comes to shove, we simply are not 'all in this together'. This has been raised repeatedly by DCMS to the Cabinet Office, but no answer has been forthcoming. We are told that they are dealing with Questions on Step 1 and Step 2 first... not very helpful.

Swimming pools

No more shenanigans like last year, those of you with swimming pools will be able to open these on the same rota basis as last year.

Shared Facilities Generally

These include Laundries, games rooms etc. We see little chance that these will be allowed to open before the 17th May. Regarding these facilities, best make sure that the guests are informed now that these won't be available so as to avoid problems later.

Agency Members with high street shops

These can re-open in the 12 April.

What will our guests be able to do between 12 April and 16 May?

Outside eating at pubs and restaurants will allow use of loos
Visitor attractions can open on 12 April

Do we still need to have QR Codes or gather guest information?

We are still awaiting an answer on this and will put an update in the newsletter as soon as we know.

Group Sizes.

Households

The Government have reintroduced the Household/Household bubble. This has not changed from the rules last year.

Everyone seems to have their own interpretation of this as a guest, so that they can justify coming with friends and family and besties. Sadly, that's not how it works.

These are the actual rules:

In this guidance a household means:

- One person living alone
- A group of people (who may or may not be related) living at the same address and who share cooking facilities, bathrooms or toilets and/or living areas. This may include students in boarding schools or halls of residence who share such facilities
- A support bubble is a support network which links 2 households. You have to meet certain eligibility rules to form a support bubble.

- You can form a support bubble with another household of any size if:
- You live by yourself – even if carers visit you to provide support
- You are the only adult in your household who does not need continuous care as a result of a disability
- Your household includes a child who is under the age of one or was under that age on 2 December 2020
- Your household includes a child with a disability who requires continuous care and is under the age of 5, or was under that age on 2 December 2020
- You are aged 16 or 17 living with others of the same age and without any adults
- You are a single adult living with one or more children who are under the age of 18 or were under that age on 12 June 2020
- Once you're in a support bubble, you can think of yourself as being in one 'household'.

More here on this Link ...

<https://www.gov.uk/.../stay-at-home-guidance-for...>

Specific Making Support Bubble info below...

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-a-support-bubble-with-another-household?fbclid=IwAR2iEZZOfvXK4L7CVrDUoxz4sVQsQbi5EiWS7-iVw3K1I5gH9qEO_h64Krg

Rule of Six (UPDATE)

This comes back into play at Step 3 (subject to review).

We have been told not to expect any real change here, although the detailed rules on this have gone walkabout on the Gov.UK website,

Got this **further update** from DCMS.....

Q: Why is the rule now either 6 people or 2 households?

A: We will re-introduce the 'Rule of Six' outdoors from 29 March, as well as enabling larger groups to meet if they are from two households. A 'household' can include a support bubble where eligible. This rule allows either 6 people from different households or 2 households to gather. Applying either limit provides greater flexibility, recognising the different situations faced by families and individuals; two households will be more helpful for families, while the Rule of 6 is likely to help people in different households to reunite outdoors, including those living alone or in shared accommodation. Those eligible to form a support bubble will still be able to do so, enabling close contact for many of those in most need of support, and will continue to be counted as part of the same household.

What we are looking for is that under the Rule of Six, the group can comprise any mix, from six from one household to one from each of six household's, this is how we interpret it and what we expect.

I'm am sure that you will all have numerous and complicated pleas from guests to try and persuade you that they are a compliant bubble. We are not the Police; however, we do have to carry out reasonable due diligence to ensure our guests are compliant. This should protect you from invalidating insurance claims and overzealous officials.

New. Visiting self-catering Property pre-opening...

We spotted this in the revised Stay at Home Guidance from 8th March. It still says residential property, we are trying to determine with DCMS whether this covers commercial property. It's certainly getting closer, and Stay at Home currently ends on 29 March, so it's probable that visits can take place post 29th March to carry out preparatory work on properties.

Further reasonable excuses

There are further reasonable excuses. For example, you may leave home to fulfil legal obligations, or to carry out activities related to buying, selling, letting or renting a residential property, for the purpose of picketing, or where it is reasonably necessary for voting in an election or referendum. See guidance on [campaigning during the national lockdown](#). This applies to anyone campaigning for electoral events.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-lockdown-stay-at-home>

OPENING IN SCOTLAND

No real clarity being offered here beyond a loose commitment to an announcement in Mid-March. So, there remains a possibility of some parts of the economy opening up in late April, but no clarity on what and under what rules, in order to enable businesses to plan and field bookings and enquiries. Once again, this is just going to encourage April and early May bookings to be made in England and not Scotland.

Further Information

Link to today's news release <https://www.gov.scot/news/gradually-easing-lockdown-restrictions/>

OPENING IN WALES

Again, no real clarity is being offered date wise. On our Wales Tourism Alliance meeting Government Officials confirmed this as the position:

- In short, no Road Map dates yet, but it's looking possible that the announcement on the 12th March will shed more light.
- Delay in announcing dates mean that English market (90% + of total) is booking elsewhere 😞
- They are still thinking 'self-contained' first but are aware that all the sectors have interdependencies that create the wider visitor experience.
- Despite not announcing dates, there is an ambition to broadly align with English dates.
- Further support is being announced for the continued lockdown.

CALL FOR EVIDENCE, INSURERS DEDUCTION BUSINESS RATE HOLIDAY FROM PAYOUTS

This feels like case of déjà vu. Several insurers who are paying out under Business Interruption and Denial of Access claims are trying to deduct the Business Rates holiday as a cost reduction.

If this is happening to you, please email us, stating Insurers name and policy. If needs be, we will reactivate the #justpayit campaign that resulted in insurers not being allowed to deduct grants from claims. send email to: chair@pascuk.co.uk

SELF-CATERING BUSINESSES WITH SEPTIC TANKS WARNING

It has been brought to our attention that Environment Agency rules that came into effect on Jan 1 2015 can have a big impact for self-catering properties with septic tanks.

This could affect anyone that has not upgraded their system since the new rules – the EA are very strict and have the authority to just close you down. It is harder to comply if you have a pool and hot tubs that discharge through the septic tank. They may even be less inclined if you have these facilities to allow discharge through a septic tank and you may have to connect to the main sewage network.

This can be mind-numbingly expensive, one founding PASC UK Members has been quoted an-eye-watering £136k plus VAT, plus connection charges.

Typically, it seems that the EA would expect it to be completed within 12 months of the issue coming to light. Here is the link and the section that is relevant: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/general-binding-rules-small-sewage-discharge-to-a-surface-water>

This will be particularly relevant if you are buying or selling a business as this will show up when the solicitors do the due diligence.

You must have plans in place to carry out this work within a reasonable timescale, typically 12 months.

Buy or sell a property with a septic tank

If you are buying or selling a property with a septic tank that discharges directly to a watercourse, you should agree with the buyer or seller who will be responsible for the replacement or upgrade of the existing treatment system. You should agree this as a condition of sale.

GRANTS SCANDAL REPEAT

The government has published the latest round of business grants data, showing the government funding delivered to each council in England to support their local businesses. What is of particular interest in this table on the percentage of LRSG and ARG grants that has been allocated. Although the table is over a month out of date, it shows that Councils have been slow to allocate this funding to businesses - especially the ARG grants that many businesses are depending on.

24 February 2021: LRSG and ARG data

This data relates to grant payments made by local authorities to businesses up to 17 January 2021, and is based on self-reporting by authorities.

During the period from which the data is drawn, several local authorities will have moved quickly between tiers and into national restrictions complicating the administration of the grants. During the current period of national restrictions (January 2021 onwards), we expect performance to have increased due to the time length of the restrictions and the range of grants available. We will provide further updates for this data.

Local authorities are able to use the Additional Restrictions Grant until the end of financial year 2021 / 2022.

Grant	Grants to businesses required to shut (mandatory)	Christmas Support Payment to wet-led pubs (mandatory)	Grants to impacted but not closed businesses, Tiers 2-3 (discretionary)	ARG - discretionary business grants, wider business support (discretionary)
Amount allocated as at 18 Dec 2020 (millions)	£1,060	£25	£220	£1,131
Amount paid out as at 17 Jan 2021 (millions)	£573	£14	£95	£143
% paid out	54%	57%	43%	13%

The data tables for the individual grants show which councils are performing well and which councils are performing badly in this regard. Here's a couple of examples:

ARG Funding

- Blaby District Council in the East Midlands has received £2m in funding from Government but only given out 13 grants totalling £16k
- Broomsgrove District Council in the West Midlands has received £2m in funding and only given out 5 grants totalling £12k
- Norwich Council has received £2.8m in funding and only allocated 14 grants totalling £20k

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-grant-funding-local-authority-payments-to-small-and-medium-businesses>

As we stated in the Commentary, we are gathering data from a self-catering perspective to show how few are getting the grants.

Allied with the data above we will combine the data to prove to the various Governments that grants are not getting through. This is far worse on the discretionary side where it is emerging that Councils have been refusing Grants to the sector but have not even come close to spending the money given to them, by Government, to support the hospitality sector. See here:

[Risk to businesses as councils fail to pay £1.3bn of emergency grants](#)

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/councils-fail-to-pay-1-3bn-of-emergency-covid-business-grants-889clghfw?shareToken=67cb214cf7384dad3842676f6b150ec5>

NEW MEMBER BENEFIT

We have been asked many times if we are going to offer more Member benefits, mostly in the context of discounts for common products. We have got discounts for Members for SuperControl first year licences, Touch Stay first year licences but putting together a whole raft of offers was just beyond the current time and resources of PASC UK whilst we navigate the restrictions on the sector.

We have been introduced to a Buying Club by a PASC UK Member and have agreed to partner with them. This will only be available to Members. There will be no additional fee for Members to join the Club, nor will PASC UK receive any kind of kickback.

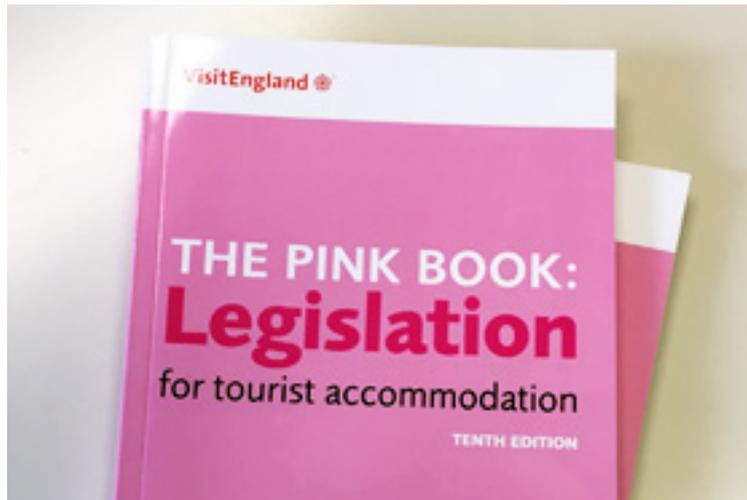
The list includes the following:

- 5% Screwfix Discount
- 10% B&Q discount
- Beds (Mattisons & Sleepzee)
- Bedding (Gailarde & Star Linen)
- Small appliances (Stearn Electrics)
- Janitorial & Cleaning (Pattersons & Alliance)
- Electric Vehicle Charging (ROLEC)
- Hot Tubs (Master Spa's)
- Card Processing (Worldpay)
- Outdoor Furniture (LeisureBench)
- Lighting (The Light Solution)
- Inventory & welcome packs (Pattersons)
- Sofa Beds (Hall & Letts)

Just looking at the Screwfix discount alone would pay for Higher Wiscombe's PASC UK Membership. We are just finalising the logistics of tracking PASC UK Membership with the Club and expect to launch in the next week or so.

NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH VISIT ENGLAND AND THE PINK BOOK

We are pleased to announce that PASC UK will be the sponsor for the Visit England Pink Book for the next two years.



The newly update Editions will be published in March, and we are sponsoring both the printed version and the online copy.

Printed versions will be sent to all PASC UK members, and online versions will be free to download. We will put a note in the Newsletter and on Facebook when the updated version is online.

The Pink Book is written by Kurt Janson, who also leads the day to day activities of the Tourism Alliance. Kurt is also a Board Member of PASC UK.

The book contains exactly what is says on the cover, all the rules and regulations for tourist accommodation and is written in clear terms, not jargon or legalise.

PASC UK believes, and has done from day one, that all paid for accommodation should be 'safe and legal' and PASC UK curates this wider campaign in the UK. Sponsoring the Pink Book is another step forward is seeing this happen.

BUSINESS RATES PAPER FINALLY UPDATED (REPEAT)

Many of you have been waiting for me to finish updating the Business Rates paper that enables you to make a self 'check' on your Business Rates Bill.

I have now finished updating it and will be working through responding to each of you with this.

Please bear in mind:

- The Business Rates Papers are only available to paid up Members.
- The reduced rates negotiated by PASC UK only apply to England and Wales
- The reduced rates negotiated by PASC UK for self-catering are only currently available to Businesses that have 3+ units on one hereditament.
- It will take a while to work through the backlog as each Members needs to have a run through, before applying their "Check".
- We will be in touch directly to arrange these short sessions.

Our apologies that this has taken longer than anticipated.

NEW PASC UK WEBSITE + DOWNLOAD ISSUES

The work is now well underway on the new PASC UK website. The current one has taken a beating during 2020 and some of you, with high levels of security, particularly if you use AVAST security software, are finding downloads difficult. This will be resolved by the new website.

If you cannot download anything, just drop us an email in the interim, saying what you need, and we will email it to you. Send to chair@pascuk.co.uk

There will be changes made, to reflect what PASC UK is in 2021, so there will be a Members only area so that we can provide additional value to those that pay Membership fees. We anticipate the launch being in early March

KEY LOBBYING OBJECTIVES

Every week in every meeting that we have with officials from Central or Local Governments we ask for continuing support for the Self-catering sector.

We may not mention each and every one of these agenda points in each meeting, that depends on the priorities and time available.

By linking with other associations, such as the Tourism Alliance, The Wales Tourism Alliance, the ASSC and UK Hospitality we can also make sure that these are 'common' asks giving them more weight.

Our current 10 main asks remain as follows:

- A support package for those that have not yet been able to access HMG support
- An extension to VAT reduction period to 31st December 2021
- An extension to the Business Rates Holiday to March 2022
- Three weeks' notice of re-opening
- Financial support for businesses that will still be restricted coming out of lockdown, due to single household or rule of six rules
- Allow FHL claims to be made under SEISS
- Remove punitive eligibility criteria on grant applications in Wales
- Stop the Postcode lottery for grant support
- Review of the Tier system, and restrictions of households mixing for reopening
- Common rules across the four nations

FCA BUSINESS INTERRUPTION POLICY CHECKER AND FAQ (REPEAT)

Following the Supreme Court test case on a range of business Interruption insurance policies, the FCA has produced a Policy Checker which takes businesses through a process whereby they can check to see whether their insurance policy covers business interruption losses due to coronavirus. It should be noted that each claim will still need to be individually considered to determine whether the policy provides cover for the effects of coronavirus.

Policyholders will need to check:

- the extent of their cover including how long it covers them for (length of their indemnity period)
- what losses are included - such as loss of profit, fixed costs or increased costs of working

<https://www.fca.org.uk/decision-tree/business-interruption-insurance-policy-checker>

In addition to the Policy Checker, the FCA have also developed a FAQs which gives business further information on:

- How to make a claim
- The disease clauses in policies
- What to do if they have already made a claim or complaint
- What they can claim for.

<https://www.fca.org.uk/firms/business-interruption-insurance-policy-checker/general-faqs-policyholders>

CANCELLATIONS POLICY PAPER

The Cancellations Paper (Draft 1) is now complete and can be downloaded from the website at <https://www.pascuk.co.uk/covid-19>

(Just a note, if you have the Avast anti-spam system it does not like the PASC UK website. We can assure you that the site is not insecure, but to make it as easy as possible for you, and you have the Avast system, please email chair@pascuk.co.uk and put Cancellations in the subject line and we'll email you a copy).

Please have a read and let us have your feedback on it, we will then update the paper, and republish. There is a link to the Webinar on Cancellations Policies above.

Once again huge thanks to Beth Bailey and Nick Clayson at Premier Cottages, Robert Kennedy at SuperControl for their contributions and Lorna Handyside and Linda Winstanley the ace proof-readers. 😊

UPDATED PROTOCOLS

The work to update the Cleaning Protocols is complete. These are available on the website at <https://www.pascuk.co.uk/standards>

(Just a note, if you have the Avast anti-spam system it does not like the PASC UK website. We can assure you that the site is not insecure, but to make it as easy as possible for you, and you have the Avast system, please email chair@pascuk.co.uk and put Protocols in the subject line and we'll email you a copy).

The revision has a short section at the beginning of the main protocols in green that highlights changes.

If you have any questions arising from these, or have any suggestions for future changes, please let us know by contacting chair@pascuk.co.uk

ONLINE TOOLS FOR FINDING GOVERNMENT SUPPORT (UPDATED)

Summary of Existing Financial Support

HM Treasury has published a summary of all the support that is available, this is a really useful summary and has links to all the separate support mechanisms under the following categories:

- Employees

- Businesses
- Unemployed
- Low income families
- Local Authorities
- Devolved Administrations

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/summary-of-existing-economic-support/summary-of-existing-economic-support>

The online tool for finding out what support is available for your businesses has been updated to reflect recent changes:

<https://www.gov.uk/business-coronavirus-support-finder>

PASC UK MEMBERS LOGO



Please only display if you are a fully paid up Member. You can get a copy by sending an email to admin@pascuk.co.uk Thanks.

PASC UK AWARDS

There will be a further delay in finalising these. We haven't had any time to look at this this week. Further nominations welcome. We will try to do this asap as a bit of fun. Goodness knows we need some, further suggestions to chair@pascuk.co.uk

SUPPORT LOBBYING BY JOINING PASC UK

There is a huge amount of work and lobbying to do to help support you all in the self-catering sector. We haven't directly asked before, however if we are to fight on so many fronts, we simply need more funds. There are thousands of you that have had the benefit of this newsletter and the lobbying done on behalf of the sector.

We are now asking that as many of you as possible join PASC UK. The fight is on so many fronts, and we get much better results when we engage proper legal advice, proper PR firms to assist with campaigns such as the #justpayit (which we will shortly need to run again, more on that later) and Memberships to other organisations that provide common lobbying, information feeds and support.

Membership fees are as follows: All per annum.

- Single cottage £70
- 2 – 4 Units £125
- 5 – 10 Units £200

- 11 + Units £300

For companies like cleaning firms, or industry support companies, Associate Membership is £200.

Members get telephone support and priority email support.

You can join here, simple form, takes 2 mins, and we'll send an invoice, payable by BACS.

<https://www.pascuk.co.uk/copy-of-become-a-member-1>

MEMBER RENEWALS

Huge favour to ask of regulars, when you get your renewal through please pay it. The logistics of chasing waste hugely valuable time that could be spent doing far more useful things for all. If you don't want to renew, all you have to do is say so.

PASC UK CLOSING AT WEEKENDS

PASC UK is now closed at the weekends for phone and email. We have a self-catering business as well to run and manage through all the same issues that you all have. Many thanks.

ABOUT PASC UK

PASC UK was formed three years ago. It had three principle objectives at that time. The overriding purpose of PASC UK is to help make your business more profitable.

- 1/ Reduce Business Rates for self-catering
- 2/ Lobby for a 'level playing field', where all accommodation providers had to operate under the same rules, (think the 350,000 AirBnB properties). So that all have the same proportionate costs and regulations to operate under.
- 3/ Recover the right to Inheritance Tax Relief for legitimate business operating under FHL (Furnished Holiday Lettings rules).

And more.... See www.pascuk.co.uk

In January 2019, PASC UK succeeded in negotiating a reduction in Business Rates of up to 35% for most self-caterers in England and Wales. Despite a tortuous year with getting the Valuation Office to apply the new system, in January 2020 they switched the system to manual for Self-Caterers, (SCAT-131) and we now hear daily of Members getting great reductions and refunds. Guides on how to Check your Business Rates are available to Members.

After years of lobbying, giving evidence to all Party Parliamentary Groups and working with all the other major accommodation associations in the UK, we had finally got HMG to agree to a roundtable on how to regulate the short-term accommodation sector. Our approach has been one of keeping the sector 'safe and legal'. This meeting has been delayed by the COVID-19 outbreak but will be high on the agenda post the virus restrictions being lifted.

We were also making good progress in our representations to HMG about the reinstatement of Inheritance Tax Relief to FHL businesses provided they complied with a basic business criteria. This is also on hold whilst we all deal with the COVID-19 challenge but will be picked up as soon as practicable.

And much more....

Wishing each and every one of you all the best during these trying times, and please Stay Safe.

Best regards

Alistair Handyside MBE

Executive Chair

The Professional Association of Self-Caterers UK

www.pascuk.co.uk

chair@pascuk.co.uk

07771 678028



DISCLAIMER

We are in completely uncharted territory here, and any suggestions that we make are merely that and you should carefully consider your own business policies, and if necessary, consult with your Professional Advisors. PASC is your lobbying Association, not a legal service. In addition, please be very wary of some of the advice given on internet communities, blogs and social media. There appear to be thousands of experts out there where my understanding is that there are very few.

To that end, any information you get from any source you must double check. I will always try and put the actual link to the information in the newsletters so that you can read and assess yourselves. These are unprecedented times, please take exceptional care.

