



# Professional Association of Self-Caterers UK

## COVID GUIDELINES NEWSLETTER

### 26 March 2021

### Issue 51

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## SUPPORT GUIDELINES

We get 200+ emails a day, plus 40+ 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](mailto: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

Trying a bit of a change this week, anything that is important, but not changed, we are just leaving the headline and asking you to refer to last week's newsletter, to try and shorten the document as we move towards launching the new website. Thanks.

We edge closer to opening, Wales opens Self-contained accommodation tomorrow and England is just over two weeks away, Scotland a little longer. This is issue 51, so next week we'll be issuing the 52<sup>nd</sup> edition of the free PASC UK Covid Newsletter. We had zero knowledge that we would still be doing this a year later.

The impact on our sector has been profound. The survey that we asked you to fill in about Grants, also asked you how you were felling, and a frightening 46% of you admit to some kind of mental health issue including anxiety and depression. We were aware that this is a real issue, but the scale is terrifying. We know how hard it has been for many through all the support calls and email that we have tried to answer here and have had some pretty dark moments too.

The best cure for us all, is to be open again, without restrictions, so that we can get back to what we do best, that's look after our guests. We are desperate to see an end to asking how large the group is and where is it from? We were not a sector that needed Grants before Covid, and we would much rather be open and trading than receiving Government support. However, continued restrictions on the properties mean that the Government has a moral responsibility to help those businesses still affected and we will work to achieve that.

In this newsletter, we launch the Members Benefits, this will only increase as we launch the new website, with PASC UK joining a buying club on your behalf. We will be adding to value of Membership as we go forwards.

We have detailed the recordings of previous Webinars lower down the Newsletter this week; we do recommend that if you haven't viewed these it's worth having a look. The Webinar programme is starting to look towards futures and trading issues rather than Covid. We would like to introduce Member sessions when you can 'ask the Chair' any question related to self-catering.

So, read on and let us know if there are any issues that you would want to see further coverage of in the newsletter.

## **THE PASC UK/ASSC GRANT SURVEY IS PUBLISHED**

Once again, thanks to all that took part. We received the final draft of the report just as we were writing this newsletter and it makes for pretty depressing reading. As we thoughts, the Grants support is not getting through on anything like the scale claimed by Governments, the picture in Wales being the worst, and the impact on mental health is just terrifying. Over 46% of respondents said that they felt that they have suffered anxiety and depressions along with signs of their mental health suffering.

We now need to take this report and create some impactful infographics and use the data to lobby the relevant Governments. We will publish the key findings from the report next week, but in the meantime, here is the full report for those that wish to download a copy.

<https://www.pascuk.co.uk/publications> Top left marked as Grants report.

## **UPCOMING PASC UK SELF-CATERING WEBINAR PROGRAMME**

**Next Webinar**

## Free Webinar on 'Self-catering Futures, building a world class business'

Date: 7<sup>th</sup> April

Time: 1600-1730

Book Here:

Booking link: <https://bit.ly/31ho9s2>

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?

### Intro

Alistair Handyside, Chair PASC UK.

### Clean: 10 mins

Deborah Heather, Director, Quality in Tourism

- Number #1 quality issue
- Basis of any quality business
- Launch revised Self-catering protocols

### Green: 10 mins

Alistair Handyside, Chair PASC UK and owner Higher Wiscombe Ltd

- UK going zero carbon
- Consumer appetite and how to meet it
- Green businesses seen as great businesses by consumers
- Saves money

### The Experience: 12 mins

Bill Lee, Founder and CEO of Yonder, an ethical OTA

- What is an ethical and disruptive OTA doing on a PASC UK webinar?
- Putting the guest experience at the forefront

### How tech will play its part?

Robert Kennedy: Director SuperControl. Beyond Pricing **10 mins**

- Headlines, automated pricing? what it is? why it works? and impact on businesses using it.

Richard Vaughton: Rentivo and Yes Consulting. **5 mins**

- Digital cleaning App How this will raise standards

Andy McNulty: Touch Stay enhancements **5 mins**

- The digital guest Book, quick product show plus enhancements

### Reputation 3 mins

Alistair to conclude

### Panel Questions

All speakers make up panel

## CHECKLIST FOR OPENING PROPERTIES

Here's a basic checklist to run through by property as you move towards reopening, modify as you see fit. We have found pumps that don't work, defunct Wi-Fi, and all sorts having been closed for six months, well worth extensively checking.

<b>Checklist</b>	
<b>Check the following now</b>	
Check suppliers are open, laundry waste collection etc	
Fire Checks and updated Fire assessments	
Swimming pool risk assessment and rotas	
Hot tub risk assessment	
Play Equipment risk assessment	
Check Gas Certificates	
Check Fire Alarm Batteries	
Check you have all the keys	
<b>Check over the next week</b>	
WI-FI Working??	
Test all heating	
Test lighting	
Test sockets	
Test Appliances, toaster, kettles	
Test all taps	
Check for leaks	
Clean out gutters	
Clean out spider's webs	
Leave Rodent traps	
Clear Spiders webs	
Check chimney flues	
Check Consumables	
Bed linen, towels bed and pillow protectors	
Cleaning supplies	
<b>Check a week before guests arrive</b>	
Legionella Test	
Start Ventilating property	
Clean Windows	
Clean all the bins	

Tidy entrance area and parking areas	
Final deep clean	
Update and publish Covid Risk Assessment on website	

## ARTICLE FROM WHICH? ABOUT SAFE AND CLEAN HOLIDAY COTTAGES

This article was published by Which? and shows the differences between self-certification and proper certification on cleaning schemes.

PASC UK has always held that the Gold standard is the Quality in Tourism 'Safe, Clean and Legal' and this article certainly bears that out.

<https://www.which.co.uk/news/2021/03/covid-safe-badges-is-your-holiday-accommodation-really-good-to-go/>

We certainly recommend the 'Safe, Clean and Legal' grading and have done this again at our own business, Higher Wiscombe, this year.



## NEW MEMBER BENEFIT FOR PAID PASC UK MEMBERS ONLY NOW OPEN

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.

To take part in the scheme, which is free to PASC UK paid Members, all you need to do is register your interest here: <https://www.purchasingforbusiness.co.uk/>

You will receive a simple form asking for your business details. When putting in your business name, put PASC UK afterwards. e.g., Higher Wiscombe Ltd/PASC UK. This will help Gurvinder and his team spot that you are PASC UK Members and send through a list to us for confirmation. As soon as we confirm that you are members, you will be contacted by the Buying Club and get your discount cards.

We've never tried anything like this, so are really keen to see if we can make this work and build on a growing list of Member benefits. PASC UK has no commercial interest or gain from this Club.

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.

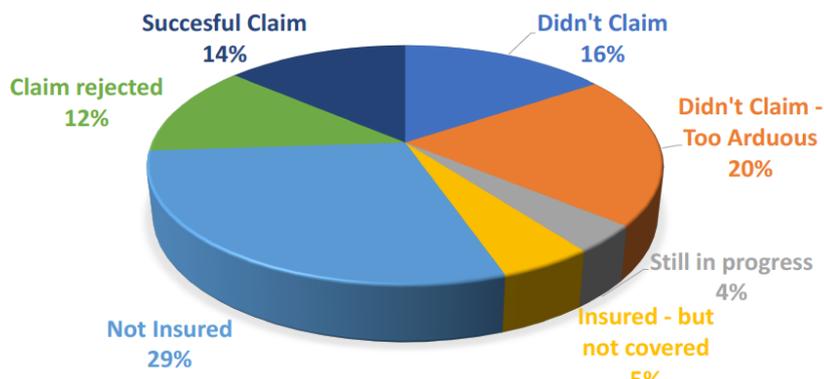
## SURVEY RESULTS FROM INDEPENDENT COTTAGES

Got some interesting slides from Steve at Independent Cottages this week to share with you. The first slide shows the insurance picture in our sector during Covid and bears out the inbox feedback. Those that have been able to successfully claim are in the small minority.

Question: Did you make a successful insurance claim for loss of income / denial of access or similar?



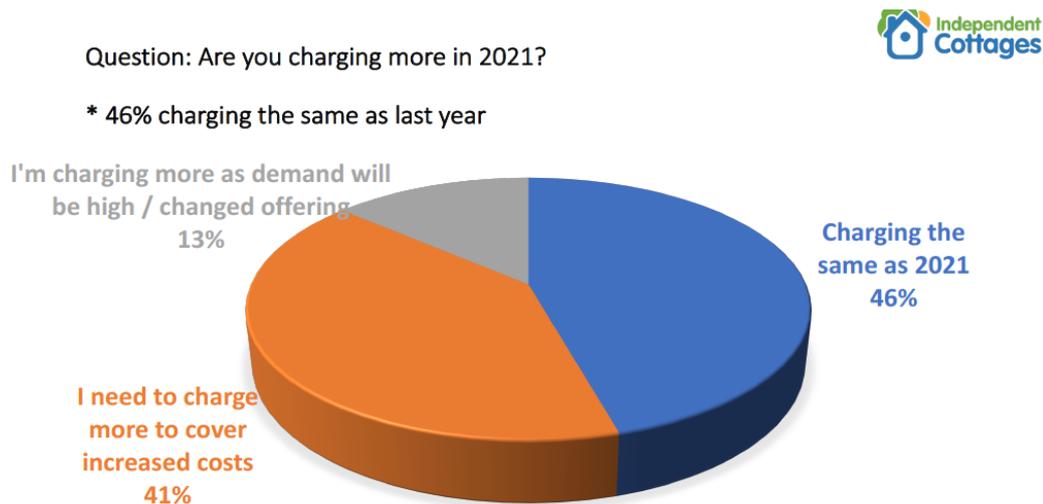
\* Only 14% of respondents made a successful claim – 20% didn't claim because process was too arduous



This next slide covers whether owners are charging more this year. The result is quite startling. 46% saying charging the same as last year. Not putting up prices is a recipe for disaster frankly. All costs go up each year, and many that we have to pay go up by more than inflation.

PASC UK certainly does not support some of the ludicrous price hikes that we have seen recently across the sector, but a fair price increase year on year is an essential part of running a successful business.

Thanks to Independent Cottages for the Slides.



## UPDATED OPENING GUIDANCE IN ENGLAND

The Government has updated guidance on opening. It's pretty straightforward.

Covers updating your Risk Assessments, (a must do) cleaning, ventilation and more. It also says that we need to continue to display QR Codes, we'll put an update on that next week.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/hotels-and-other-guest-accommodation>

## GRANTS UPDATE IN ENGLAND = GRANTS CLOSING DATES

The Government has announced closing Dates for Grant Applications to the various grants. You must therefore get your Grant applications in prior to these dates. (These are the Grants for business on the Business Rates list).

They are:

### LRSB (Closed)

National lockdown, 5 November 2020

31 March  
2021

National lockdown, 5 January 2021: first payment cycle, 5 January to 15 February	31 March 2021
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National lockdown, 5 January 2021: second payment cycle, 16 February to 31 March	31 May 2021
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### **LRSG (Sector)**

Closing Date - 31 March 2021

### **LRSG (Open)**

Closing Date – 31 March 2021

### **Closed Businesses Lockdown Payment**

Closing Date - 31 March 2021.

## **NEW RECOVERY LOAN SCHEME OPENS**

### **CBILS, CLBILS and BBLS Close, Recovery Loan Scheme Opens**

Applications for CBILS, CLBILS and BBLS loans end on 31 March 2021 and are being replaced by the new Recovery Loan Scheme, which will run until 31 December 2021 to ensure that businesses can access Government-backed finance during the reopening of the economy. With the end of the old loan schemes the Government has announced that:

- three Bounce Back Loans have been issued every minute since May 2020 launch
- a total almost £180 billion in loans have been issued since March 2020
- the Covid Corporate Financing Facility (CCFF) scheme has supported firms responsible for 2.5 million jobs

Which you can either view as a significant success or the dire state that many businesses are in.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-backed-loans-help-thousands-of-businesses-to-protect-jobs-during-pandemic>

## **ENGLAND RESTART GRANTS. SEE MARCH 19 NEWSLETTER**

## **ENGLAND COUNCIL TAX BASED GRANTS ARG (NON-BUSINESS RATES) SEE 19 MARCH NEWSLETTER**

## **GENERAL WALES UPDATE**

In Wales self-caterers used to be able to join WASCO (Wales Association of Self-Caterers). Unfortunately, WASCO is no longer offering Membership and support. PASC UK has worked closely with WASCO and the Wales Tourism Alliance, to step in and carry the mantle for self-caterers in Wales.

This is a critical time for Welsh Self-Catering, with both Government and County level Reviews and Consultations underway focussed on the self-catering sector, heavily influenced by the words 'second homes'.

What steps are we taking?

PASC UK agreed with WASCO that we would offer ex WASCO Members half price Membership of PASC UK for their first year, originally this offer was to expire at the end of February. Approximately half of the WASCO Members have now joined, so we are going to extend the offer until the end of April. When joining just quote WASCO and these prices will be applied.

Single Property £35.00

1 – 4 Units £62.50

5 – 10 Units £100

10 + Units £150

Agents in Wales £200

We have joined the Wales Tourism Alliance since 1 January as full Members and are active in directly lobbying Government. We are working collectively on a response to the Welsh Government consultation in the sector.

Here is the written statement from the Welsh Government:

<https://gov.wales/written-statement-second-homes-wales>

Here is the full paper, it's 85 pages long and we will try and summarize over the coming weeks.

<https://gov.wales/second-homes-developing-new-policies>

We discussed this paper as the main agenda item at the Wales tourism Alliance Board this week and will be responding to the Welsh Government.

Key issues were identified as:

It was weak on economic impact

It suggests that the Welsh language is at risk because of the sector

It does not recognise that second homes are owned by Welsh residents too

It does not properly understand how a sensible registration scheme would help Government, Councils, businesses and Consumers.

We will be responding with sensible, practical suggestions.

Lastly, we are still looking to add someone to our team from Wales and hope we make an announcement on this in the next month.

## **WALES IS (PARTIALLY) OPEN**

The Welsh Government have confirmed that self-contained accommodation for Welsh residents can open from the 27<sup>th</sup> March. See below for what is allowed to open. Just a note to be aware of, you have to have carried out a specific Covid Risk Assessment to enable you to open. Details below.

## **DEFINITION OF SELF-CONTAINED ACCOMMODATION IN WALES & OPENING DATE.**

Able to open from Saturday 27 March.

Self-contained accommodation includes:

- Hotels and other serviced accommodation (e.g. B&Bs, hostels, etc.) that do provide en-suite rooms and can provide room service meals.
- Other accommodation that is entirely self-contained (e.g. self-catering cottages, apartments, etc.)
- Glamping or any other accommodation with ensuite shower/bath, WC and kitchen facilities
- Holiday caravans, Touring caravans (including seasonal), motorhomes and campervans where they have their own on-board shower, WC and kitchen facilities

And there's more.....

- Caravan & Touring Sites will need to ensure the strict application of industry guidance on shared waste disposal and water points.
- All shared facilities, aside from water and disposal points will remain closed including toilets, shower blocks, laundry, nightclubs, swimming pools
- Bars, Restaurants and Cafes can operate a Take Away service only.
- Accommodation can only be let to members of the same household and their support bubble

## COVID RISK ASSESSMENTS TO ENABLE YOU TO REOPEN IN WALES

This from Welsh Government.

As we look towards a phased re-opening, you need to be aware of the guidance for Tourism and Hospitality businesses.

<https://gov.wales/guidance-for-tourism-and-hospitality-businesses-coronavirus>

To help you decide which actions to take, Coronavirus Regulations require you to carry out a **specific COVID-19 risk assessment**, just as you would for other health and safety-related hazards. This risk assessment must be done in consultation with staff

HSE (Health & Safety Executive) provides useful templates to help you undertake a specific COVID-19 risk assessment that will take you through the hierarchy of controls from the most to the least effective.

Available here:

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/working-safely/index.htm>

An overview of the hierarchy of controls can be found in Appendix 1 of the Tourism and Hospitality Guidance.

<https://gov.wales/guidance-for-tourism-and-hospitality-businesses-coronavirus-html#section-64314>

You will also find links within the Welsh Government guidance to sector-specific and industry guidance containing further detail including the UKH Cymru Guidance.

<https://www.ukhospitality.org.uk/page/WalesGuidance>

## WALES GRANTS UPDATE. NOTE CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS!

The First Minister announced on 12 March additional Non-Domestic Rate linked grants. The additional support will help businesses in the hospitality, tourism, leisure and non-essential retail sectors that pay non-domestic rates and will operate as a top up to the Restrictions Business Fund.

The application window will close at **5pm on 31 March 2021**. Visit the Business Wales website for more details. <https://businesswales.gov.wales/coronavirus-advice/restrictions-business-fund>

## **ROAD MAP IN WALES. SEE 19 MARCH NEWSLETTER**

### **WALES TOURISM FAQ's**

Useful set of Questions and answers here. We understand that this gets updated so worth revisiting.

[https://gov.wales/alert-level-4-frequently-asked-questions?fbclid=IwAR3JtEkIEFquJRztb6dMVHo3\\_GU1K\\_Oju1Xx5P6tixRt389GDi4DTLwb-80#section-58340](https://gov.wales/alert-level-4-frequently-asked-questions?fbclid=IwAR3JtEkIEFquJRztb6dMVHo3_GU1K_Oju1Xx5P6tixRt389GDi4DTLwb-80#section-58340)

### **ADDITIONAL GRANT IN SCOTLAND FOR ELIGIBLE COUNCIL TAX PAYING BUSINESSES.**

The Scottish Government have announced a new SAP-CTF grant and can confirm that additional funding for the Small Accommodation Providers paying Council Tax Fund is available for eligible self-caterers and B&Bs to receive the SFBF April payment of £1,000 and a Restart Grant of £8,000.

Check the ASSC FAQ's here: <https://www.assc.co.uk/answers-to-key-questions/...>

### **£25 MILLION FOR TOURISM RECOVERY IN SCOTLAND**

The First Minister announced this week that the Government were making £25m of funding to support the tourism sector's recovery from COVID-19. The programme, which has been developed by the Scottish Tourism Emergency Response Group (STERG) in partnership with businesses, will support the Scottish Tourism Recovery Taskforce objectives.

The recovery programme includes:

- a holiday voucher scheme to create a more socially sustainable and inclusive tourism industry
- a days out incentive scheme to support areas such as attractions, tours, activities and experiences
- a talent development and leadership programme for tourism and hospitality staff
- a Net Zero Pathway to make Scotland's tourism industry more green and sustainable
- a marketing fund to support organisations to promote their destination or sector when domestic travel is able to resume

<https://www.gov.scot/news/gbp-25-million-for-tourism-recovery/>

### **SCOTLAND BUSINESS RATES GRANTS UPDATE. SEE 19 MARCH NEWSLETTER**

### **VISITING SECOND HOMES IN ENGLAND**

(Sorry, no update in this in Scotland yet)

We managed to get a small update on visiting second homes, still clear as mud...it came from DCMS and can be regarded as official. We are seeking clarification on the overnight bit as it does not say anything about that.

**Q: From 29 March: When the stay-at-home rule is lifted, are people allowed to travel to visit/maintain/collect belongings from their caravans on parks although the holiday park would be closed by law? And can owners of a self-catering property visit it ahead of reopening in Step 2 for cleaning and maintenance?**

**A: From 29 March, people are permitted to travel to visit, maintain, clean and collect belongings from their self-catering properties and their caravans on parks which are currently closed, but people should minimise travel where possible.**

We have discussed this with the Tourism Alliance and our take is as follows:

- At the moment, people are legally able to travel and stay away from home for work purposes (one could well argue that maintaining and preparing your business property for customers is a work purpose).
- The Cabinet Office Guidance (which is guidance rather than the law) provides more detail in relation to this by specifying that self-catering operators are able to visit their properties for these purposes from 29<sup>th</sup> March
- We would therefore take it that operators can visit and stay over in their properties for these work reasons from this date.
- However, this really must be for work purposes, which would not extend to taking the whole family to a second home and have a break from lockdown.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT SELF-CONTAINED ACCOMMODATION AND SHARED ENTRANCES

Finally, clarity and not what we were looking for. If they apartments share an outside corridor, stairs or lift for entry and exit, they are not allowed to open. Full transcript below.

This is what we received from DCMS.

I would like to clarify some queries that have been raised regarding the reopening of accommodation and can confirm the agreed Government position is that:

- From Step 2, no earlier than 12 April, separate and self-contained accommodation will be open for leisure stays. This is defined as accommodation in which facilities (kitchens, sleeping areas, bathrooms and indoor communal areas such as: lifts, staircases, lounges, sitting areas and internal corridors for entry and exit) are restricted to exclusive use of a single household/support bubble. A reception area is not to be treated as a shared facility or indoor communal area if they are required in order to be open for check-in purposes.

### What can open

- At Step 2, accommodation in which all facilities listed above are for the exclusive use of a single household/support bubble may open. This will mean that holiday parks,

'standalone' holiday lets such as houses and cottages, chalets, yurts, holiday boats, and motels which do not rely on sharing those facilities listed may open.

- Campsites and caravan parks will be permitted from Step 2 provided that the only shared facilities used by guests at the campsite or caravan park are washing facilities, toilets, water points and waste disposal points. These facilities should be operated so as to ensure no household mixing takes place. This would involve either assigning shower facilities to one household group/support bubble, (i.e., making them private), or running a reservation and clean process (whereby one household can exclusively book the shared facilities for a fixed time, and the facilities are cleaned between reservations and kept well-ventilated).
- All accommodation may continue to open for the current permitted reasons, such as to provide accommodation for those who are unable to return to their main residence; for the homeless; for those who need accommodation for work, education or training purposes; for those who need to attend medical appointments; or for those self-isolating as required by law including for the Managed Quarantine Service for high-risk international arrivals.

### What cannot open

- This phased approach to reopening means that the rest of the sector will follow at Step 3. We recognise that between now and Step 3 this means a continued closure of hotels, hostels, B&Bs, guest houses and any other accommodation that relies on sharing these facilities. This will also require the continued closure of any holiday lets or serviced accommodation within apartment buildings that share any of the facilities listed above.
- From Step 3, no earlier than 17 May, all remaining accommodation will be permitted to reopen for leisure stays.

## RECORDINGS OF PASC UK WEBINARS

### 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 Broadcast: 24 March**

Time: 1100 - 1230

Recording can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/vgU8F-Ww-q8>

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: Broadcast 16 March 2021**

Time: 5pm

Recording can now be viewed here: <https://touchstay.com/pandemic-self-catering-success/>

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

### 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)

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

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

**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.

## OPPORTUNISTS RELETTING YOUR PROPERTY WITHOUT YOUR KNOWLEDGE

We have had reports of some businesses that have been set up to offer 'experiences' particularly for groups. They will arrange everything for the party, the accommodation, the entertainment, the food. The trouble is that they are booking your properties to do this, without notifying the owner of the intent. So effectively sub-letting. This is common enough in urban apartments, you rent a property off plan, and just let it out through AirBnB, breaks all the terms of the mortgage or lease but who checks? This has now moved to the larger group settings.

We need to all make sure that we have tough sub-letting clause in our Terms and Conditions that prevents sub-letting or selling the booking to anyone else. Stating that in the event of this happening no monies will be refunded, and the booking will not be allowed to go ahead. That should put most off.

Here is the example that was brought to our attention. <https://www.dobuddy.co.uk>

## HMRC TO LAUNCH CONSULTATION INTO HOLIDAY LETS AND BUSINESS RATES

More details have emerged on this and there will be a public Consultation launched shortly by the Government.

Currently it's got the catchy title of "Strengthening the Self-Catering Accommodation Criteria for Business Rates".

PASC UK will provide the link when available.

The Statement

"The government has announced that it will legislate to change the criteria determining whether a holiday let is valued for business rates to account for actual days the property was rented. This is aimed at ensuring that owners of properties cannot reduce their tax liability by declaring that a property is available for let while making little or no actual effort to do so. Further details of the change and implementation will be included in the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government's response to the consultation on the business rates treatment of self-catering accommodation which will be published shortly".

PASC UK view?

With thousands of second homes flipping from paying Council Tax to take advantage of Small business Rates Relief (SBRR) to not pay anything and subsequently not make any local contribution at all was always going to end badly for those kind of properties.

However, this consultation is not really the answer in our view. We want a proper classification of what a holiday let business is and what a second home is. As a sector we are constantly dragged back in our lobbying of Government by the second homes issue and by the unregulated AirBnB type issues.

The only real answer is a National registration scheme whereby you can only operate with a licence, and that licence is only granted if you meet the required insurance and safety measures and can be revoked for breaking them.

This would create a level playing field for legitimate operators, and benefit consumers and real businesses alike. We wouldn't want the majority of cars on the road to not bother with MOT's and that's today's equivalent in our sector.

So, we fear more tinkering, rather than sorting the problems. We will let you know as soon as we do when the Consultation opens and how to input.

## VAT DEFERRAL SCHEME UPDATED

HMRC has updated the guidance on the VAT Deferral Scheme to clarify the maximum number of instalments that a business can make is related to when they joined the scheme. Here's the table from the Guidance that clarifies this:

If you join by	Number of instalments available to you
19 March 2021	11
21 April 2021	10
19 May 2021	9
21 June 2021	8

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/deferral-of-vat-payments-due-to-coronavirus-covid-19>

## OTHER TAX REVIEWS COMING UP FROM HMG

A long list of reviews coming up. Some of these could have an impact on our sector, we will keep a close watch. We welcome the Review of Business Rates that will start again as a consultation in the Autumn.

### Modernising tax administration

- Making Tax Digital
- HMRC: investment in digital infrastructure
- Tax administration framework review
- Timely Payment
- Raising standards in the tax advice market
- Reducing inheritance tax reporting requirements

### Tackling non-compliance

- Clamping down on promoters of tax avoidance
- Tackling disguised remuneration tax avoidance
- Off-payroll working rules

### Further tax policy announcements

- Fundamental review of business rates

- Aviation tax
- Strengthening the self-catering accommodation criteria for business rates
- Residential property developer tax
- Simplification of the land and property VAT rules
- Capital allowances: technical amendment to allowance statement requirements for Structures and Buildings Allowance (SBA)

## BUSINESS RATES REVIEW, INTERIM REPORT

An interim report was published on the Government's Business Rates Review which PASC UK contributed to last year. Of particular note for tourism businesses are the sections on Business rate relief and proposals for an Online Sales Tax.

- *Most respondents from the retail and hospitality sectors called for extension of the Retail, Hospitality, and Leisure discount, and expressed concerns about a 'cliff edge' reintroduction of 100% rates payable in April 2021. Several respondents called for an extension of the current 100% discount, particularly those in the hospitality sector.*
- *Some respondents highlighted abuse by firms claiming SBRR on multiple properties, including in the short-term letting sector. Others raised the issue of second homeowners registering their properties as holiday lets, despite rarely letting them out, to claim SBRR, and proposed strengthening the eligibility to pay business rates rather than council tax*
- *However, some respondents also noted that as well as online retail sales, which account for approximately £100 billion in the UK annually, the wider value of UK online sales (excluding financial services) is £700 billion annually and these respondents argued that sales including travel, accommodation, and software which previously would have occurred on the high street should also be in scope. These respondents stressed that uniform business rates reductions would be provided to all rate payers across industries, whereas the OST would just be paid by online retailers, which they considered unfair.*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/971681/Fundamental\\_Review\\_Interim\\_Report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/971681/Fundamental_Review_Interim_Report.pdf)

## BUSINESS SHOW ROUNDS

One clarification from DCMS that has come through today is that, from March 29, visiting a business event venue for the purpose of viewing the venue for a future booking for a work-based event is permitted if this cannot be reasonably done from home (Covid Secure Safety guidelines must be adhered to while doing this). Viewings where there is not a permitted exemption for work purposes or otherwise, should not be taking place in closed venues at this time.

In practice that means venue viewings for leisure activities is being treated differently to venue viewings for business activities as the former is restricted while the latter is permitted under the current guidelines. This means that a show round for a conference or meeting is allowed but a show round for a leisure trip or a wedding is still not allowed.

## CLEANING PROTOCOLS UPDATE

We have had several questions about what impact, if any, do the new Covid variants have on the Self-Catering Cleaning Protocols. (Available free on [www.pascuk.co.uk](http://www.pascuk.co.uk) ).

The answer is that the new variants are still 'enveloped viruses' so anything that is EN14476 certified, which is the same as before, will still work, so no need to change if you are using the correct one in the first place.

We will refresh the Protocols shortly just to be sure that they are ready for re-opening.

## LEGIONELLA

Legionella is the big risk. No more than a week before having your first guests back in you must do a flush and clean through of the water systems. Water that has been standing, in many cases luke-warm, is a far greater risk to your guests in your property than Covid is. You can download from the website an easy-to-use short guide on what you need to do to deal with this.

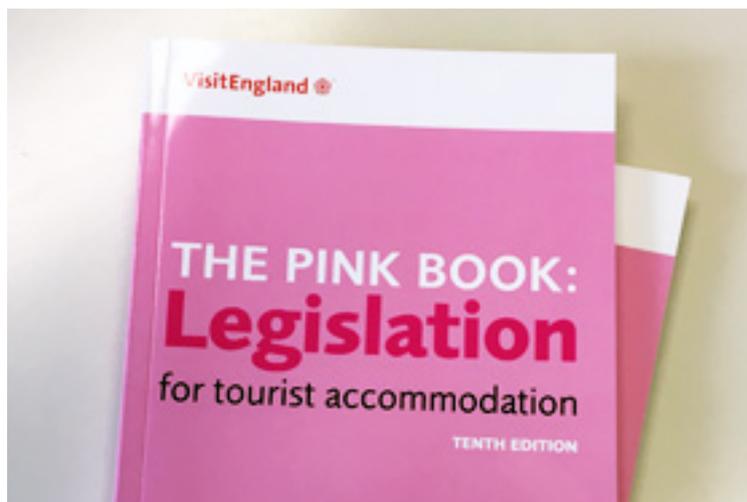
## UPDATED FINANCIAL SUPPORT FINDER

The government's online tool for helping businesses find what financial support they are entitled to has been updated in line with recent changes to support announced in the budget

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

## 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](mailto: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 5% VAT reduction period
- 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://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  
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The Professional Association of Self-Caterers UK  
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## 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.