



09 December 2020

## **COVID-19 Restrictions “Wrecking Ball” Cost**

### **Scots Self-Caterers £265m Since September**

Scotland’s self-catering sector has lost £265m as a direct result of COVID-19 restrictions, new figures have found.

The data, analysed by leading independent consultants Frontline, shows that self-catering had lost the sizable portion of its revenue in the months since September 2020, as a direct result of the regulations.

Fiona Campbell, Chief Executive of the Association of Scotland’s Self-Caterers (ASSC), described the impact of the restrictions, as shown in Frontline’s research, as a “financial wrecking ball” to the sector.

Gathering information from 1000 self-caterers and extrapolating for Scotland’s over 17,000 self-catering properties on the non-domestic roll allowed Frontline to put together an accurate estimate of the scale of the devastating impact caused by Scottish Government’s restrictions.

This includes travel bans, the ‘rule of six’ and one household restrictions on household gatherings, and Christmas bubble rules.

The alarming findings have sent a shockwave of dismay through the sector and raise serious questions about the impact on the wider tourism sector vital to Scotland’s economy.

The ASSC has welcomed the announcement of additional support for the hospitality sector, it remains to be seen what it means for the industry which has been devastated by the travel restrictions; a fact reflected by the Frontline report’s findings.

Given that the £265m loss since September 2020 applies specifically to self-catering, the impact on tourism and hospitality will undoubtedly be severe as the findings do not account for the economic footfall generated by visitors staying in such accommodation in bars, restaurants, and visitor attractions

The scale of the damage comes as a double-blow for the sector, given that those within it have complied fully with the Scottish Government throughout the pandemic;

shutting down early and only opening once strict cleaning protocols, backed by the Scottish Government, were in place.

**ASSC Chief Executive, Fiona Campbell, said:**

*“These alarming and distressing figures show that COVID-19 restrictions have sent a financial wrecking ball swinging through Scotland’s vital self-catering sector.*

*“While this is a huge number that is difficult to comprehend, it’s important to remember that each and every pound of it represents a loss to someone’s business, their livelihood, and their family’s future and quality of life.*

*“While we welcome the announcement of more funds for the hospitality sector, we’ve yet to see what it means for our sector, which has been completely devastated by the travel restrictions as borne out in the findings from the Frontline Report”*

*“However, even in these dark times, it’s also worth keeping in mind that our sector has shown in the past that it is robust, reliable, and resilient and I believe that we are capable of recovering.*

**Director of Frontline, Suzanne Hamilton, said:**

*“Our research shows unequivocally that the restrictions put in place in Scotland have had a hugely detrimental impact on the Scottish self-catering sector.*

*“The excellent rate of response and level of confidence that we have behind the survey we used means that it is both representative of the sector and statistically significant.”*

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Editor’s Notes

Frontline surveyed 999 self-catering operators from a population of 17,576 representing 95 percent confidence +/- 3 percent.

The responses found that:

- 942 saw an impact of under £50,000 (£10,545 average)
- 555 saw an impact of over £50,000 (£85,000 average)
- There were 2 outliers at £2.6million and £1.5million

Brought together, this means a total impact of £264,884,430.

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