

THE OFFICIAL VOICE OF THE NCC

# PARKS

BUSINESS **ncc** SUMMER 2020



## OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Industry goes back to work



**EXTENDING THE SEASON**  
Planning issues and marketing

**LATEST RESEARCH**  
Bounce back for bookings

**NCC LOBBYING**  
Boosting help for manufacturers and the supply chain



# National Caravan and Holiday Park Specialists

In what continues to be an incredibly active sector our caravan park specialists have visited and inspected over 300 parks across the UK over the last 18 months with geographical coverage shown below.

If you require any advice or are thinking of selling your park please do not hesitate to contact us in the strictest confidence.



**Sanderson  
Weatherall**

Sanderson Weatherall - formerly Edwards & Partners

**Devon Office:** 01884 256741 edwards.devon@sw.co.uk  
**York Office:** 01347 822005 edwards.york@sw.co.uk

[sw.co.uk/caravanparks](http://sw.co.uk/caravanparks)



ncc

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With thanks to: Kirstie Apps; Adam Burkinshaw; Ian Butter; Jo Chubb; Robbie Davies; Alicia Dunne; David Middleton; Richard Prestwich

ncc leisure vehicles holiday & park homes holiday & residential parks leading & promoting the industry

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Email: editorial@thencc.org.uk @National Caravan Council 2020 www.thencc.org.uk  
The views in this magazine are not necessarily those of the NCC  
Editor: Louise Wood louise.w@thencc.org.uk Tel: 07824 994690  
Design & Production: Richard Charnley richard@charnleypublishing.co.uk Advertising: advertising@thencc.org.uk  
The NCC aims to promote, represent and protect the collective interests of its members

## Debate in the House and meeting with the Minister

On 15 June Emma Hardy, MP for Hull and West Hessel, secured a debate in the House of Commons to discuss support for caravan manufacturing in Hull and East Riding over the crucial winter period from November to February when manufacturers would traditionally build units for replacement hire fleet.

Karl Turner MP joined Emma Hardy and other supportive MPs in the debate and persuaded the Business Minister, Nadhim Zahadwi, to agree to a meeting with both the industry and the NCC to consider their proposals.

At that subsequent meeting, a proposal for a short-term, temporary bridge was put to the Minister. Its aim was to avoid placing a skilled workforce into redundancy, putting a further strain on the existing benefit packages.



NCC Deputy Director General Alicia Dunne with Emma Hardy MP (right)

The meeting was very productive and was followed by a further meeting with the minister's officials to enable them to submit a firm proposal for a time-limited and sector specific package. At the time of going to press, no decision had been received from the Minister.

### Job retention bonus announced

The Government is introducing a new Job Retention Bonus (JRB) to provide support to employers who keep on their furloughed employees in meaningful work, after the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme ends on 31 October.

The JRB is a one-off payment of £1,000 for every employee who they previously claimed for under CJRS, and who remains continuously employed to 31 January 2021.



### New funding for small and medium businesses

Government has announced £20 million of new funding to help businesses across England.

Small and medium sized businesses can access grants of between £1,000 and £5,000 for new technology and other equipment, as well as professional, legal, financial or other advice to help them get back on track. There will be no obligation for businesses to contribute financially.

This latest announcement builds on a £10 million package, announced earlier, to help to kickstart the tourism industry.

Read more about at: <http://holidayparkshub.org.uk/pj-categs/financial-support-for-parks/>

### Sharing Government guidance with customers

Businesses are being asked to help raise awareness of the Government's guidance for tourists who fall ill whilst on holiday in England.

Parks should direct customers to the advice displayed on the VisitEngland website. This includes answers to:

- What to do if you develop Covid-19 symptoms whilst on holiday
- What holidaymakers must do if contacted by NHS Test & Trace
- If visitors are well enough to return home, they are asked to do so and then self-isolate at home.

The website includes dedicated copy for businesses to use to communicate with customers - see <https://www.visitengland.com/planning-holiday-in-england>. It could, for example, be sent with your booking confirmation. It clearly states that accommodation providers are not obliged to provide self-isolating facilities and guests will be liable for any additional costs.



John's spot...

“ How will we remember the year 2020 – a year seared

on our memories...? For parks perhaps recalled as a game of two halves – 14+ weeks of enforced lock down, followed by a booking bonanza. Famine then feast. From the niche operators such as Love2Stay to the mainstream park groups like Parkdean Resorts, summer bookings are way up. Some now have no 2020 availability.

For manufacturers and the supply chain, the situation is more complex. The NCC's projected figures suggested production falls could be greater than in the 2008 financial crisis. With a prospect of zero orders, manufacturers had no alternative but to furlough workers and close down – taking with them a raft of suppliers.

We lobbied hard. We lobbied for dealerships and showgrounds on holiday parks to reopen – successfully. And for parks to be in the vanguard of reopening, when it was deemed safe to do so – again with success, and rightly so as our product lends itself to (the new phrase for 2020) “socially distanced by design”. The public has recognised this, with newbies and families flocking to forecourts, and sales of new motorhomes up by nearly 50% in June.

So can we recover what is lost? The industry is racing to catch up, but it's neither a marathon nor a sprint – but a team relay into 2021.

”

## DIARY DATES

**12 August**  
CCNL Board Meeting  
Virtual

**17 August**  
VisitEngland's Awards ceremony  
Live streaming from 19:00 on YouTube channel VisitEnglandBiz

**8 September**  
Parliament returns from recess  
Westminster

**12 October**  
NCC Board Meeting  
Virtual

## All Party-Parliamentary Group for Holiday Parks and Campsites



On 13 July, the All Party-Parliamentary Group for Holiday Parks and Campsites held its inaugural meeting via a virtual platform.

The new group was chaired by Peter Aldous, MP (Waveney – pictured). Its purpose was recorded as “to examine the key issues, opportunities and challenges for holiday parks and campsites in the UK”, in respect of both owners and customers of holiday parks and campsites

The group is composed of parliamentarians from all parties and stakeholders including the

NCC, BH&HPA, the Caravan and Motorhome Club and the Camping and Caravanning Club, National Association of Caravan Owners and the Tourism Alliance.

A key action from the group was for the Chair, Peter Aldous, to write to the DCMS Secretary of State, asking that the opening period for holiday parks in England be extended to compensate for the weeks when parks were closed. This has now been confirmed – see pages 24-25.

You can read more and the minutes of the meeting here <https://www.appgholidayparkcampsite.org/>.

## Hoburne strengthens team

The Hoburne Group has strengthened its team and appointed two new general managers for its holiday parks.

Greg Nolan (right) has re-joined the family-run business as general manager at Hoburne Cotswold, where he will supervise the park and its 75-strong team.

Dave Absalom, (far right) who is currently the general manager of Hoburne Park, will now oversee their New Forest-based park, Hoburne Bashley, too. Dave has more than 25 years' experience in the tourism and leisure industry and has worked for Hoburne for over 10 years.



## Dates announced for HERCMA's 2021 caravan show at Harrogate

The Hull and East Riding of Yorkshire Caravan Manufacturers' Association (HERCMA) has announced the dates for its exhibition next year at the Great Yorkshire Showground in Harrogate.

The public days will be Friday to Sunday 3-5 September and will be followed by three trade-only days from Tuesday to Thursday 7-9 September.

The show has been held for more than 40 years at The Lawns in Cottingham,

near Hull, and the move to Harrogate is to accommodate more exhibitors and visitors.

The event gives manufacturers the opportunity to unveil their latest models and it is anticipated that close to 500 holiday caravans, lodges, touring caravans and motorhomes will be on show, alongside other products and services.

HERCMA announced in March that the 2020 event would not go ahead because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

## Green Homes Grant Scheme

The Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) has announced that the [Green Homes Grant Scheme](#), intended to help homeowners in England make their homes more energy efficient, will launch at the end of September.

The scheme will give over 600,000 homeowners, including residential park homeowners and park operators acting as landlords, vouchers (up to £10,000 for low income households). This is to install insulation, draft proofing and other energy saving measures.

Tradespeople wishing to take part in the scheme will have to register for accreditation under the [TrustMark](#) or the [Microgeneration Certification Scheme](#) (MMCS), which is a standards organisation.

TrustMark is the government-endorsed quality scheme. According to BEIS, "households will be able to choose from approved tradespeople in their areas to carry out the work, but only approved and accredited installers will be able to be commissioned." A list of approved registered tradespeople will be provided and once the works are agreed vouchers will be issued so work can commence. [Read further details here.](#)

● NCC is working with BEIS to develop new guidance for any refurbishment work including energy efficiency improvements carried out on residential park homes.

## SW completes trio of sales during lockdown

The specialist caravan and holiday park team at Sanderson Weatherall (SW) has completed three deals since lockdown came into effect.

On behalf of executors, SW completed the sale of Tyddyn Cethin Caravan Park near Crickieth. This comprises a former farm with consent for 55 static and 25 touring caravans and was sold to an established local operator.

SW also completed a deal on Bowmans Business Park, a derelict 10-acre former industrial site four miles from Skegness with consent for 100 holiday lodges.

Cranbourne Hall Park, near Windsor Great Park, has been sold to Wyldecrest Parks. It provides 240 mobile home pitches in 19 acres.



## Colliers markets Welsh holiday village for £3 million

A Welsh beachside holiday village on the south Pembrokeshire coast has been brought to the market by Colliers International. Freshwater Bay Holiday Village is an established business, comprising 288 holiday homes on a 13.9 acre site. At a guide price of £3 million, it is expected to attract keen interest.

Ben Jones, director in the parks team at Colliers, said: "Even before lockdown,

holiday parks such as this were the focus of considerable interest because of the popularity of 'staycation' breaks. We anticipate investor attention will be further heightened because of the standalone low-density accommodation offered by holiday parks. In addition, Wales has a strong tourism economy and remains a popular tourist destination."

For more on the parks market, see p8-9 and p14-15.



## Peebles Holiday Park sold by Savills

Savills has sold Rosetta Holiday Park in the Scottish Borders to Darwin Alternative Investment Management Ltd. with a guide price of offers in excess of £3 million.

Set in circa 48 acres, the mixed holiday park comprises 252 lodges, static caravans, touring caravans and tents and sits within the grounds of the Grade II listed Rosetta House.

## Away Resorts announces booking guarantee



Away Resorts has announced a confidence booking guarantee on all its 2020 and 2021 breaks.

The operator has committed to offering a full no quibble refund, or the opportunity to move to an alternative date free of any administration charges. This

applies to any new and existing holidays cancelled due to COVID-19, across all six sites in their portfolio.

● Government's guidance for managing playgrounds and outdoor gyms was updated on 3 August. It now includes information about face coverings, as well as advice on risk assessments, social distancing and cleaning regimes.

● 'Dirty camping' is increasingly becoming a hot topic in Scotland; BBC Radio Scotland's *Out of Doors* programme recently interviewed Fergus Ewing, Scottish Government's Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy, on the subject.

● Labour leader, Keir Starmer MP, has called for targeted support for domestic tourism jobs, as Labour analysis shows tourist hotspots are disproportionately affected by unemployment.

## NCC promotes industry position in press and social media

During the pandemic, the NCC Directorate fielded numerous media enquiries about the impact on the industry. They contributed written statements and/or participated in radio and television interviews with a range of national media including *The Financial Times*, *Daily Mail*, *Daily Express*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Daily Mirror* and *The Independent*.

In May, *BBC Breakfast* interviewed Hoburne's Rosie Kennar - at the NCC's suggestion - who eloquently explained the self-contained nature of caravans. The NCC was also interviewed on regional radio and in the *Hull Daily Mail* and *Yorkshire Post*.

Twitter played a crucial part in getting campaign messages out to key influencers and government ministers - <https://twitter.com/NCCLtd>

● There will be a temporary gap in the monthly reporting of the GB Tourism Survey (GBTS) as VisitBritain transitions to a new data supplier. The normal cycle of reporting will resume in Q4 2020.

● Insurance specialist Caravan Guard, incorporating Leisuredays, has been shortlisted in two categories at the UK Broker Awards.

The company made the shortlist for the Customer Service Award after showcasing how their team consistently delivers 'brilliant customer experiences'. Their second nomination is for Personal Lines Broker of the Year.

# Lobbying in the age of COVID-19

Deputy Director General Alicia Dunne explains how the NCC has lobbied to protect the industry through and beyond the pandemic



Directorate worked both independently and with a consortium of the nine largest holiday park groups in the UK. Created by the new CEOs of Parkdean Resorts and Bourne Leisure, this formed a formidable lobby voice for holiday parks. The group included representatives

Just 11 days after the Budget on 23 March, the Prime Minister announced that everyone 'must stay at home' – effectively putting the entire country into lockdown. Three days later, on 26 March, 3,361 caravan parks shut, 381 caravan and motorhome dealerships were closed by law, resulting in the closure of 208 caravan manufacturers and 647 suppliers.

With no orders from parks or dealerships and no means of clearing existing 2020 stock, production halted. The industry faced an unprecedented challenge. Independent forecasts for dispatches for 2020 were worse than those experienced in the Global Financial Crisis.

Manufacturers faced the prospect of limited orders in the autumn/winter period 2020-21. For the next nine weeks, the

from BHHPA and UK Hospitality. The campaign which extended across the UK, highlighted the impact of the enforced closure of the industry in its prime selling period.

The NCC emphasized that the longer the closure, the greater the risk of business failures and substantial redundancies across the entire supply chain.

The NCC also argued that, when it was safe to reopen, caravanning provided a self-contained safe and 'socially distanced by design' holiday accommodation option – a phrase subsequently much quoted in the media.

Between 26 March and 1 June, the Directorate:

- Created two COVID-19 information hubs – <http://leisurevehicleshub.co.uk/> and <http://holidayparkshub.org.uk/> as depositories for the wide range of government guidance, regulations and the specific industry interpretation and guidance
- Obtained counsel's opinion and wrote detailed guidance for holiday parks in relation to refunds of pitch fees for the 2020 season.
- Drew up guidance for caravan and motorhome dealerships undertaking repairs and warranty work during lockdown).



**“The Directorate worked with the nine largest park groups... this formed a formidable lobby voice for holiday parks**

A major piece of work was the creation of detailed guidance for caravan parks to adhere to strict hygiene and social distancing guidelines, to ensure that their premises would be COVID-19 compliant. This

**“The Directorate was successful in persuading BEIS and MHCLG to allow sales offices on holiday parks and caravan and motorhome dealerships to open as part of the phased reopening of non-essential retail on 1 June**

was later acknowledged by Government and the relevant task-force set up to oversee such work, and became part of a compendium of guidelines published for the hospitality/tourism sector.

## PARLIAMENTARIAN AND CIVIL SERVICE ENGAGEMENT

The COVID-19 pandemic created an unprecedented set of circumstances, both health-related and economic. The reopening of the economy was a devolved activity with each individual country working to its own reopening timetable based on the 'science'. Certain measures designed to help the economy – e.g. the Business Rates holiday for tourism businesses (including holiday parks) was also a devolved measure, with different rates applied in different countries of the UK.

The NCC's Alicia Dunne explains: "Building on the blueprint of the successful VED lobby campaign, we contacted all members with a pack of lobby documents. This included template letters, statistics, forecasts

projections, forecasts and scenarios, as well as engaging with the large number of supportive MPs secured through the VED campaign.

As the lockdown started to lift, and spring moved towards summer, Step 2 of the Government's Roadmap to Recovery was activated. The Directorate was successful in persuading BEIS and MHCLG to allow caravan and motorhome dealerships to open as part of the phased reopening of non-essential retail on 1 June. The Secretary of State at MHCLG made the announcement on Twitter, referencing the NCC.

"This heralded the start of the unlock for our industry and enabled dealerships to start to trade and begin to tap into the pent-up demand from the consumer desperate to get out and about in safe, self-contained holiday accommodation. Of most interest to parks was that the decision to allow caravan dealerships to open

**“Fantastic news that English Holiday parks can reopen from 4 July with our Celtic cousins not far behind. Let's celebrate the great British Staycation, many thanks to everyone who worked so hard in the lobby. Special thanks to John Lally of the NCC for his laser vision on the issues critical to the lobby.**

Dean Westmoreland, Chairman of Omar Group Ltd, posted on LinkedIn on 25 June

was also extended to include sales offices with open air showrooms on holiday parks. This was provided that hygiene and social distancing provisions could be adhered to and the park remained strictly inaccessible under its legal closure notice.

As summer took hold, parks remained firmly closed. The lobby continued to press the Westminster government and devolved administrations for caravan parks to reopen at the earliest point in Step 3 of the roadmap. Alicia continues:

“Continuous engagement

with MPs refreshing and repackaging the worsening facts and figures to help DCMS, BEIS, MHCLG and various tourism groups and the select committee was crucial to underline the very real crisis overshadowing the industry and the whole supply chain. Our message to Government was that without a firm date to reopen with the critical school holiday months approaching, there was an increasing risk many businesses would be unable to reopen at all.”

Finally, on 23 June the Prime Minister announced

that from Saturday 4 July, caravan parks and campsites could reopen.

**DEBATE IN THE HOUSE AND MINISTERIAL MEETING**

Emma Hardy, MP for Hull and West Hessel, secured a debate in the House of Commons to discuss support for caravan manufacturing in Hull and East Riding over the winter period.

Business Minister Nadhim Zahawi agreed to a meeting with the industry and the NCC who then submitted a proposal for a temporary time-limited and sector specific package – see p4.

## New members

The following companies have been accepted into full NCC membership

**SUPPLIER**

**Newmor Wallcoverings**

Madic Works, Henfaes Lane, Welshpool, Powys, Wales SY21 7BE

**Contact:** Neil Fletcher

**Tel:** 01938 552990

**Email:** neil.fletcher@newmor.com

**www.newmor.com**

Newmor specialises in commercial quality, wide-width fabric-backed vinyl wall coverings for markets including the caravan, leisure and park home



industries. The company has thousands of stocked surfaces, customisable digital prints, designer collaborations and an in-house graphics department. A family owned business started in 1967, Newmor manufactures all products at its factory in Wales.

**Studio Vans Ltd**

Design Workshop, 4 Eabhal Business Park, Balivanich, Western Isles, Scotland HS7 5LA

**Contact:** Robert Hall

**Tel:** 07739 759565

**Email:** hello@studiovans.com

**www.studiovans.com**

Studio Vans design and build interior fitouts for campervans, motorhomes and other spaces, to enable a comfortable outdoor experience. The company chooses materials based on sustainability to create a healthy living space and enhance its customers' experience of the outdoors through design. Studio Vans offers calm-inducing environments that inspire focus without the distractions of modern life.



**SERVICE**

**Tourer Techs Caravan Services Ltd**

Unit 6 Mill Batch Farm, East Brent, Highbridge, Somerset TA9 4JN

**Contact:** Garry Lee Fitzgerald

**Tel:** 01934 512 571

**Email:** lee@tourertechs.co.uk

**www.tourertechs.co.uk**



Tourer Techs Caravan Services Ltd specialists in all leisure vehicle servicing, repairs and accessory fitting at its centre and mobile workshop in Somerset, which covers North Somerset, Somerset and North Devon. They are Swift and AWS fixed and mobile approved, Gas Safe and LPG certified.

# The **We're Good to Go** industry standard takes off

“I want to encourage the public to experience a great British holiday this summer and be confident that they can do so safely.”

Tourism Minister Nigel Huddleston



Click here to watch the video in a new window

A number of NCC member businesses have already applied for the free UK-wide industry standard, **We're Good to Go**. This consumer mark reassures customers that your business adheres to Government and public health guidance – Parkdean Resorts, Hoburne and Away

Resorts have signed up, as have some dealerships. The scheme has been developed by VisitEngland with the national tourist organisations of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, so it operates across the four regions. There was input from more than 40

industry bodies including UKHospitality, the National Caravan Council and destination management organisations throughout the country.

It is free to join and open to all businesses in the tourism industry – at the time of going to press, over 34,000 had applied.

**HOW IT WORKS**

- Businesses across the UK are assessed according to their respective national guidance.
- Social distancing and cleanliness protocols must be in place.
- An 'alert' system ensures that businesses signed up to the standard are notified of any changes to the official guidance.
- A call-handling service provides support; assessors may also carry-out random spot-checks to ensure adherence.
- Businesses then receive certification and the **We're Good To Go** mark for display in their premises and online.

Read more here: <https://www.visitbritain.org/business-advice/were-good-go-industry-standard>

**How to do it (England)**

*NB NCC members will fast track through the first part of the application process.*

If your business operates in England and you have implemented the Government's COVID-19 reopening guidance, understand the guidance from Public Health England and have a COVID-19 Risk Assessment in place, you complete a self-assessment through the online platform.

A separate application is required for each park, as it is essential that each General Manager or site lead understands what needs to be in place; if you operate in different parts of the United Kingdom, respective national guidance - including social distancing and cleanliness protocols - must be in place. Click here: <https://goodtogo.visitbritain.com/>

# Staycation nation?



Research has shown that the UK staycation market could boom, as COVID-19 restrictions ease and the media has been quick to say that 2020 could be the year of the stay-at-home holiday.

Parkdean Resorts, which operates 67 parks across the UK, wanted to see where this money would be going, and what was inspiring this wave of confidence in the UK holiday market.

They surveyed 2,000 people, analysed their own booking data and used data from global analysts, Statista, to understand where people are planning to holiday, how much individuals are planning to spend, and how the global holiday industry has been impacted by the ongoing pandemic.

### CHANGES IN NEWS SAW CHANGES IN PUBLIC ATTITUDE

On the 11 May, when PM Boris Johnson announced

plans to extend lockdown, there was a 50% increase in searches for holiday booking websites. When Parkdean Resorts' opening dates were confirmed, traffic to their site went up by 59%, while holiday bookings increased by 144%.

This encouraged the operator to dig deeper into the data to further understand how the global pandemic was impacting people's holiday plans. It found that the international travel industry is set to lose £10.4 billion.



**UK 'holiday' Search Terms**

Search term	March 2019	March 2020	% change
visit britain	6,600	5,400	-18%
uk breaks	9,900	9,900	0%
travel uk (topic)	9,900,000	20,100,000	103%
staycation (topic)	72,000	75,100	4%
Average			22%



According to their survey, 20% of people have cancelled holiday plans altogether, while 35% are delaying booking anything until the pandemic is under control.

### SEARCHES FOR HOLIDAYS ABROAD DOWN, STAYCATIONS ON THE RISE

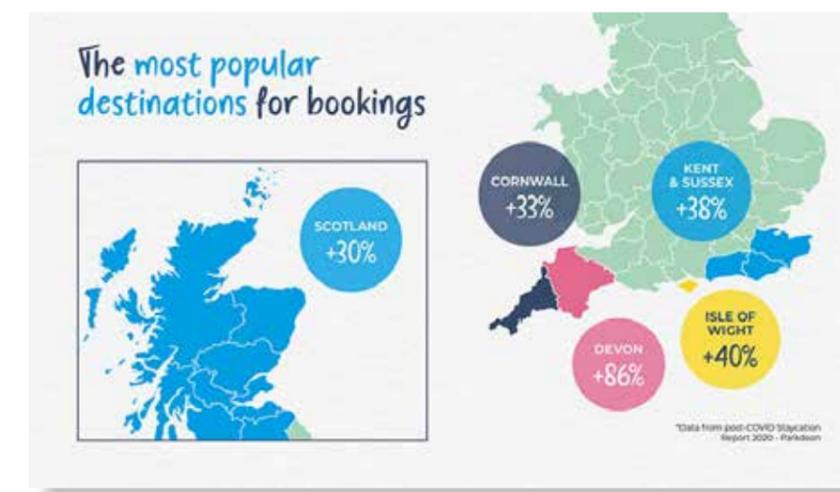
Searches for UK holiday terms have rocketed during lockdown, with 'travel UK' seeing a 103% increase in

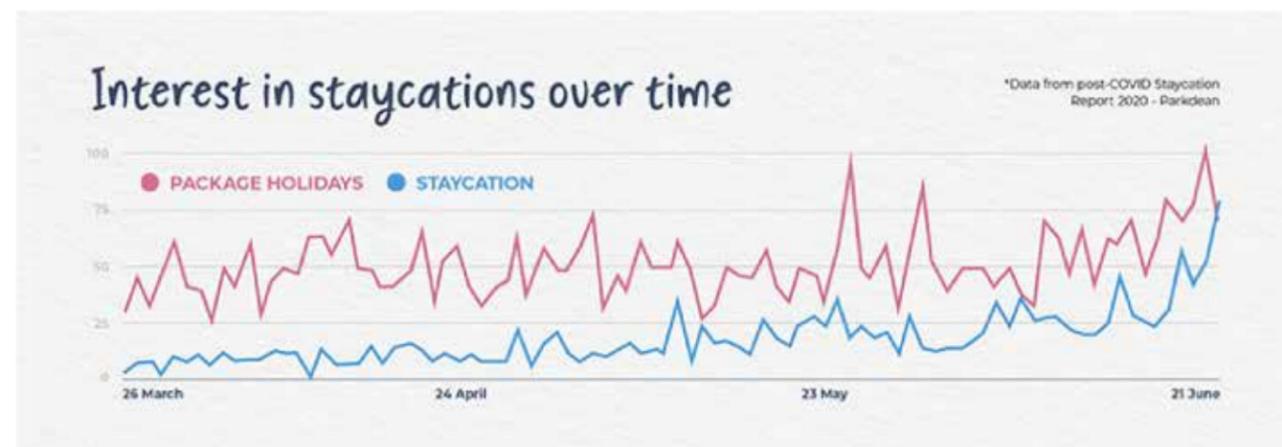
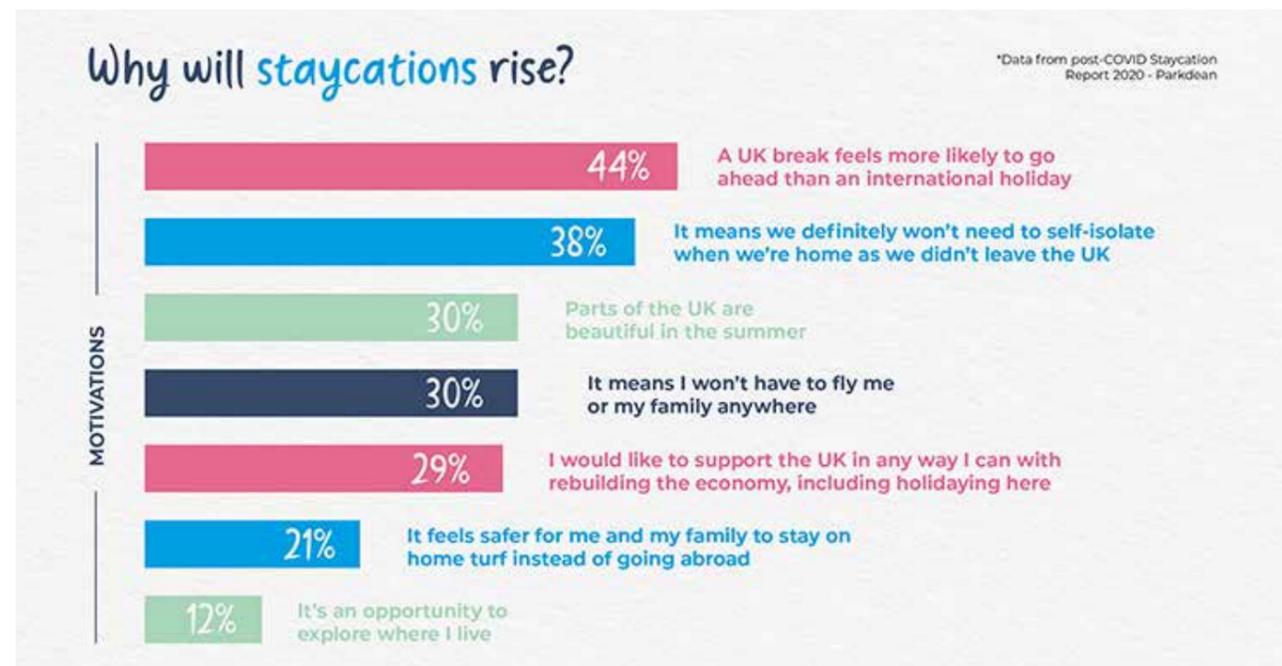
volume compared to the same time last year. The term 'staycation' also saw a boost as people explored their options for making the most of the summer.

According to the survey, people's faith in being able to go on a UK holiday this year is high, with 44% of people saying they believe a staycation is more likely to go ahead than a holiday abroad and 29% said they'd holiday at home to help boost the UK economy. The market is set to peak in August.

### CLEAN ACCOMMODATION IS A POST-PANDEMIC MUST-HAVE

When it comes to what holiday makers want from accommodation after Covid-19, 39% of people said cleanliness would be top of their list of considerations. Free cancellations were





also important with 37% of people not wanting to be stuck with paying for a holiday that could be postponed.

Good reviews still came out on top, with 45% of people saying they'd prioritise this when making their decision.

When it comes to the types of holiday people are looking to book, staycations are the only one to see a national rise, with a 23% increase in searches this April. Caravan holidays, lodge

holidays and camping at UK holiday parks all look set to prosper.

#### METHODOLOGY

Survey commissioned in May 2020, to a nationally representative audience

of 2,019 UK adults on their holiday intentions.

**Read the full report here:** <https://www.parkdeanresorts.co.uk/amazing-memories/discover/staycation-market-report-2020/> Copyright Parkdean Resorts



## VisitBritain's COVID-19 Consumer Weekly Tracker – Week Nine

VisitBritain has commissioned a weekly tracking survey to understand domestic intent to take short breaks and holidays, with a focus on barriers and concerns around travel and how these will evolve over time. Results of Week Nine were published on 23 July.

Compared to normal, the public anticipate taking both fewer short breaks and holidays in the UK between now and year end – and considerably fewer holidays abroad. Caravan/camping is the type of accommodation UK holidaymakers are most likely to stay in between June and September (cited by 37%), predictably dropping back to 32% in the October to March period.

The overall 'appetite for risk' score stands at 2.5 out of 4 (with 4 representing 'absolute confidence'); confidence is highest for walks outdoors in a country park/trail. The comfort level about eating in restaurants is slowly rising. However, 43% currently believe 'the worst is still to come', which is the highest proportion seen so far. Only 1 in 5 of the UK population feel 'the worst has passed' in relation to COVID-19 situation.

The South West is the region of the UK likely to attract the highest proportion of holiday makers between June and September.

This is followed by Scotland and the North West. Travel

by 'own car' is by far the most preferred mode of transport.

Hand sanitizers, enhanced cleaning regimes, free cancellation and enforced social distancing are all conditions essential in persuading people to stay in accommodation this summer.

The COVID-19 consumer sentiment tracker is based on a nationally representative sample of UK adults. The survey will be repeated across a 13-week period.

● The latest report can be read here: [https://www.visitbritain.org/sites/default/files/vb-corporate/2\\_-\\_covid-19\\_consumer\\_tracker\\_gb\\_report\\_week\\_9\\_final.pdf](https://www.visitbritain.org/sites/default/files/vb-corporate/2_-_covid-19_consumer_tracker_gb_report_week_9_final.pdf)

## Lockdown fuels camping interest among young Brits

More young Brits are choosing to take post-lockdown camping breaks this summer. One reason for the interest in camping is a yearning to be in the countryside – with 60% saying they missed "being outside in big open spaces".

Research by Go Outdoors, the large outdoor retailer, reveals a surge in interest in camping, with new campers shunning holidays abroad, despite many destinations now being open.

Younger people are driving the demand, with

Go Outdoors stores seeing a 5.1% rise in shoppers aged 20 to 29, compared to the same period last year. Garden camping and 'virtual Glastonburys' have been taking place during lockdown.

Social media data, analysing posts from 12,000 people, reveals that 8% of those planning a camping break are first-timers. The most common concerns were bad weather (65%) and having the right clothing (14%). However, only 8% said they would miss Wi-Fi.



# Robust return for holiday and caravan park market



Adam Burkinshaw of Sanderson Weatherall says demand for parks is undiminished, with well-funded new buyers eyeing the sector

We have all experienced - and continue to experience - unprecedented times as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Operators are now determined to make the most of the remaining summer season, whilst keeping staff and customers safe and operating in line with

Government guidelines. Naturally, activity in the sector slowed following the enforced lockdown, as operators' primary focus turned to securing the short and longer term future of their own businesses, via the

**“ Sanderson Weatherall completed the sale of four parks during lockdown**

various different forms of Government support. During lockdown, many pro-active operators took the opportunity to commence new developments or refurbishments on park that would ordinarily have waited for the quieter winter months - a welcome change, creating and upgrading pitches in the sunshine! Importantly, operators continued to maintain their parks and infrastructure in order to be ready to welcome customers back.

Whilst some caravan park sales agreed pre-Covid-19 had been temporarily delayed, awaiting the easing of lockdown measures and confidence to return, Sanderson Weatherall completed the sale of four parks during lockdown. Two more sales are set to complete imminently, and two confidential park listings have recently been placed under offer.

“This pattern of

transactional activity suggests demand for parks is un-diminished and in fact, we have experienced a rise in the number of well-funded new buyers actively looking for parks in preference to other asset classes,” Adam Burkinshaw, Head of SW Holiday & Caravan Parks says. “Demand for holidays in the UK shows no sign of abating and there is undoubtedly be a decrease in demand for foreign travel in the short and medium term which creates a superb

**“ Parks with a hire fleet are particularly well placed to benefit**

opportunity for the UK holiday market.”

Many operators are reporting strong demand and bookings for holidays with peak pricing being extended, as holiday makers look to take their annual leave later in the year. Those parks with a hire fleet are particularly well placed to benefit. In addition to this many of the cancelled holidays from 2020 have



already re-booked for 2021 providing a longer-term pipeline of bookings for these businesses.

Despite the challenges faced by the industry over the last four months, we have again witnessed and experienced the robustness of the holiday park sector, its ability to ride out challenging economic events, to evolve and to identify new opportunities.

## GET IN TOUCH

Sanderson Weatherall continues to be available to support park businesses. If you would like to discuss emerging market trends, a possible disposal or to register your interest in opportunities that may arise, please get in touch with Adam Burkinshaw - [Adam.Burkinshaw@sw.co.uk](mailto:Adam.Burkinshaw@sw.co.uk). All enquiries are treated in strict confidence.

### PARKDEAN RESORTS ON FUTURE BOOKINGS

Looking good into low season and next year:

**UK beach holidays:** online transactions up 122% since 23 June

**September 2020:** direct bookings +34%

**October 2020:** direct bookings already +30%

**November 2020:** direct bookings +50% -

**2021:** direct bookings +50%



### SANDERSON WEATHERALL ON CARAVAN SALES

The reopening of sales grounds in June also led to a robust return of caravan sales for many operators, with purchasers looking ahead to secure the use of a new holiday home for the summer and in the years ahead. A variety of operators have reported record numbers of caravan sales on the back of pent up demand.

### THE NCC ON TOURER AND MOTORHOME SALES

When the dealerships reopened, there was immediate interest. Dealers report that in June, sales of new motorhomes were up by an average of 47%, with sub-£60k models the most popular.

July is also looking very positive for sales of both motorhomes and touring caravans.

### SWIFT ON MOTORHOME RENTALS

There has been a significant rise in motorhome/campervan rentals, which should provide valuable bookings for Britain's touring parks. Motorhome hire company, Swift Go, reports an upsurge in bookings for longer breaks (seven days or more) and increased interest from the 25-34 age group.

# Going for golf



Richard Prestwich (above left) and David Middleton (above right) of Savills examine the rise of the inland country golf retreat

There have been few positive words said about the golf industry since the recession and the traditional game of golf, as we know it, continues to decline in popularity. It is estimated that we are

losing around five golf courses each year in England alone. Statistics show golf membership numbers to be falling, or at best remaining stagnant.

Golf is a time-consuming sport to play. The younger generations have struggled to make regular commitments to the golf course or even learn to play. Membership costs are seen as pricey, with subs often more than a gym membership.

Most golf courses have large landholdings and often a sizable building; many are on the edge of settlements. They are generally easy to drive to with excellent parking. This provides opportunities for golf courses with substantial population

catchments to adapt and attract back the leisure pound, by remodelling and diversifying. With this in mind, select groups of existing park operators have been targeting golf courses with a view to diversifying and developing up-market holiday parks.

Many courses have changed hands over the past four years, giving them a new lease of life. Often this is on a reduced scale, as caravan and lodge accommodation replaces some of the playing areas and up to nine holes of the existing courses.

One would expect that membership and green fees would reduce, given the diminished facilities, but there is evidence that

these courses and their clubhouses have seen increased footfall.

With a dwindling club membership, options are often closure, rewilding or returning the golf course to agricultural land. But in the leisure market 'visitor experience' is king. Discerning customers are willing to part with their money if they get more than the typical holiday experience, as they seek more quirky and innovative offerings.

Golf courses are well suited to the addition of holiday lodges for a number of reasons. The scenic location of many courses makes them an attractive proposition. Challenging golf courses are often established tourism destinations with people willing to travel from their local courses.

This makes it more viable to add accommodation to the land and provides a convenient base for keen golfers - and a peaceful retreat for those not so keen.

## ALL IN THE PLANNING

There are several key considerations when applying for planning permission to add holiday lodges on a golf course. It is important to fully consider the economic viability and number of lodges to ensure the business will be profitable. This can be done by checking the anticipated sale and rental values of the lodge properties against the development costs.

The inclusion of site facilities will also have to be given some thought. If lodges are placed closer to the main golf course and its facilities, there will be less need to develop a separate set of services.

Golf courses that are liable to flooding from rivers or the sea are difficult to promote. It is also challenging to secure permission for development near any listed buildings, conservation areas or on courses that lie within the green belt.

There are a number of benefits to adding holiday

lodges to a golf course, primarily the diversification of income thereby reducing the owner's reliance upon membership and fees. It may also encourage more golfers to visit the course and open it up to 'pay as you play' business and a wider catchment.

In addition, there is also the sometimes overlooked benefit of creating a rural tourism business, which can generate additional employment and off-site spend into the local community. All of these are key focal points to support a positive planning application.

● Savills have been successful acting for a number of golf course owners adding holiday lodge accommodation.

For more information, contact Richard Prestwich on [rprestwich@savills.com](mailto:rprestwich@savills.com) or David Middleton on [DAMiddleton@savills.com](mailto:DAMiddleton@savills.com)

### CASE STUDY

#### Allerthorpe Golf and Park Resort, near York

Savills recently, on behalf of Park Leisure 2000 Ltd, sold Allerthorpe Golf & Park Retreat near Pocklington, East Yorkshire to a local operator for an undisclosed sum.

Set in more than 96 acres, the partially developed holiday park occupies the grounds of a former 18-hole golf course, nine of which are still active. The scheme, when completed, will accommodate 150 lodges and caravans, with an opportunity to extend by a further 75 units, subject to planning. At the point of sale, the holiday



park development comprised 18 developed bases, alongside a new clubhouse, greenkeeper's building and a substantial owner's dwelling.

Richard Prestwich, director in the leisure and trade related team at Savills Chester, says: "The property represented a rare opportunity, especially as there are few similar properties changing hands at present.

"Located just over 14 miles east of York, Allerthorpe Golf and Park Retreat benefits from the picturesque surroundings, easily accessible from the M1 motorway."

### CASE STUDY

#### Pennant Park, near Holywell, Flintshire

Savills were first instructed at Pennant Park some 15 years ago, to advise on a modest development of holiday lodges to supplement the golf course's income. This is a picturesque golf course with views over the Dee Estuary. With a positive policy framework in the Development Plan, the course now has consent for 73 lodges and caravan holiday homes on four separate areas. These are available for holiday use all year round.



### CASE STUDY

#### Penrhos Park Leisure and Golf Club, near Aberystwyth, Ceredigion



Penrhos Park comprises an 18-hole championship golf course, further 9-hole course and driving range, with adjoining holiday

park, hotel and leisure facilities. Savills obtained planning permission on behalf of the owners for an extension to the holiday park for the siting of 34 additional units, bringing the total number of permitted holiday caravans and lodges up to 191.

# Four seasons...

Robbie Davies, Business Development Director at Hoseasons, takes a look at how to continue to attract bookings beyond summer into the low or even the 'closed' season\*

Covid-19 has clearly had a huge impact on the owners we work with, but now that lockdown has been eased and travel restrictions have been lifted across the UK, the appeal of the staycation has never been greater.

We've seen a string of record booking days in the last few weeks as customers scramble to secure a quick, convenient break on their doorstep and put the last few months behind them.

Last-minute summer getaways have definitely been a focus, but autumn and winter breaks are also proving increasingly popular as people look to make up for time lost in April, May and June. In fact, September to December bookings for our all-year-round, or most weatherproof brands – Autograph, Landal and Go Active - are up 25% compared to where they were this time last year.

The obvious approach for parks looking to capitalise on the growing trend for off-season breaks is to invest in weatherproof facilities, but this can be expensive and time-consuming for those looking for quick results, especially where planning permission is involved.



That's why it's always sensible to focus on the accommodation experience you offer and concentrate on creating 'whatever the weather' wow-factor properties where people want to stay. Key to this are the special touches that make all the difference to customers who increasingly want their holiday accommodation to provide something more than they have at home.

Hot tubs are a great example of this. They're seen as a luxury item by many customers, and while that allows owners to charge a premium, it's the additional occupancy and greater yield

they provide over a 12-month season that makes them so appealing.

Putting it simply, hot tubs can generate up to 40% additional revenue per unit by increasing tariff across every break of the season and bringing the less desirable shoulder months



into play to boost otherwise unrealised occupancy.

Other extra touches for the colder months include well insulated, preferably BS3632 standard, lodges, boot racks and storage spaces at the entrance for muddy/wet gear and outdoor water sources to hose off muddy dogs & children!

Pet-friendly accommodation will attract a wider audience, more inclined to holiday out of season, while good internet connectivity is also a must - especially when the weather is bad and all you want to do is settle down and stream a movie.

Lodges featured in Hoseasons Specialist collections all include these types of touches and deliver on average 25% higher occupancy than our core product.

Each collection is tailored to a specific audience, with Autograph aimed at couples and friends, Evermore aimed at families and Landal aimed at those wanting to get back to nature and explore the great outdoors with the luxury of additional facilities to suit the scale of the park.

● Hoseasons is one of the UK's leading self-catering accommodation specialists, with more than 31,000 places to stay throughout Britain and Europe, from lodges and parks, to boats, cottages and apartments. Hoseasons is part of Awaze – a leading European managed vacation rentals and holiday resorts business.

\* See pages 24-25 for details on changes to planning law.

## Hot ideas for winter warmers

Hoseasons and Parkdean Resorts report that holidays for late season are proving increasingly popular – here are some ideas to entertain guests as autumn turns to winter

### Loved in lockdown

**Cycle mania** – a staggering 1.3 million people bought a bike during lockdown, whether for exercise or transport. Cycling families became a common sight – for more about attracting the two-wheeled tourist, see *Parks Business* Autumn 2019.

**Everyone for tennis** – Council courts were booked out and clubs welcomed a raft of new members. Floodlit tennis can be played well into the evening, although floodlights may require planning permission.



### Old and new favourites

**Fishing** – Parkdean Resorts reports that their fishing holidays are up 233%.

**Spas and hot tubs** – Parkdean Resorts says hot tub holidays are a massive growth area this year.

### Well well wellness

**Yoga/Pilates** – half a million people practise yoga regularly. It may be over 5,000 years old, but it fits well with the modern quest for 'wellness'.

### Cold water swimming

– there are claims of health benefits, including boosting the immune system.



### Growing in popularity

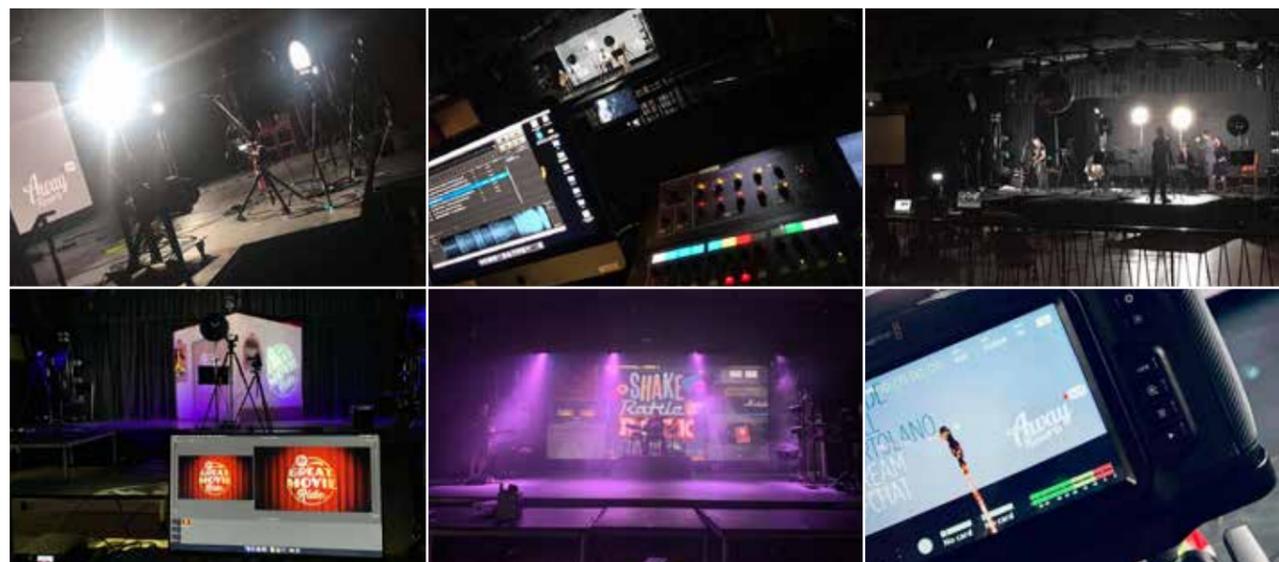
**Indoor climbing** – companies like Highline Adventure will hire out mobile climbing walls.

**Escape rooms** – growing rapidly since 2007, there are now over 1,000 in the UK. However, they need to be high quality, and take health and safety seriously.

Picture: Love2Stay

# The show can go on

On-site entertainment has been integral to holiday parks offering since the 1960s; but how can the industry adapt to the 'new normal'?



Open-air gigs, festivals and theatre shows were given the go-ahead to resume in England from Saturday 11 July - as long as they have "a limited and socially distanced audience".

The announcement marked the start of stage 3 of the government's roadmap for reopening the live entertainment industry. However, stage 4 (indoor performances with a limited audience) has now been delayed until 15 August.

At the time of going to press, the indicative date for stage 5 – indoor

performances with a fuller audience – is October.

Audience capacities will be reduced in most instances, and the venues are being asked to use electronic ticketing in order to keep a record of visitor details, in case they are needed by the test and trace system. Government also said that dance studios could reopen from 25 July.

As theatres, operas and dance began putting on outdoor performances again, some parks groups looked at inventive ways to entertain guests.

## AWAY RESORTS STREAMS VIRTUAL ENTERTAINMENT

Away Resorts customers can now enjoy virtual live streamed entertainment. The operator also offers takeaway food for delivery direct to guest accommodation and an 'any day' arrival policy.

Chief Executive, Carl Castledine, said: "We recognise that travel confinements increased the desire for freedom and holidays with loved ones – this is why we are doing all we can to make holidaying together safely, and responsibly, a reality for our guests."

## BRIDGE LEISURE'S 'NEARLY LIVE LOUNGE' LAUNCHES

UK holiday park owner/operator, Bridge Leisure, has launched an innovative way to deliver evening entertainment at their parks. They say it is also providing much needed work for struggling artists and a



number of acts who would normally be performing at holiday parks up and down the country.

Head of Operations, James Flynn, came up with the 'Nearly Live Lounge' concept. He launched a campaign on social media to find performers who would be willing to record their acts to be shown on a big screen at some of Bridge Leisure's holiday parks.

"We know that evening entertainment is an important part of the overall holiday park experience for many of our guests. We wanted to try and provide as much of the holiday experience people have come to expect as possible but ensure we keep them safe," James Flynn explains:

"We thought 'Nearly Live Lounge' would be a great way to get some of those performers to record their shows, and then we can



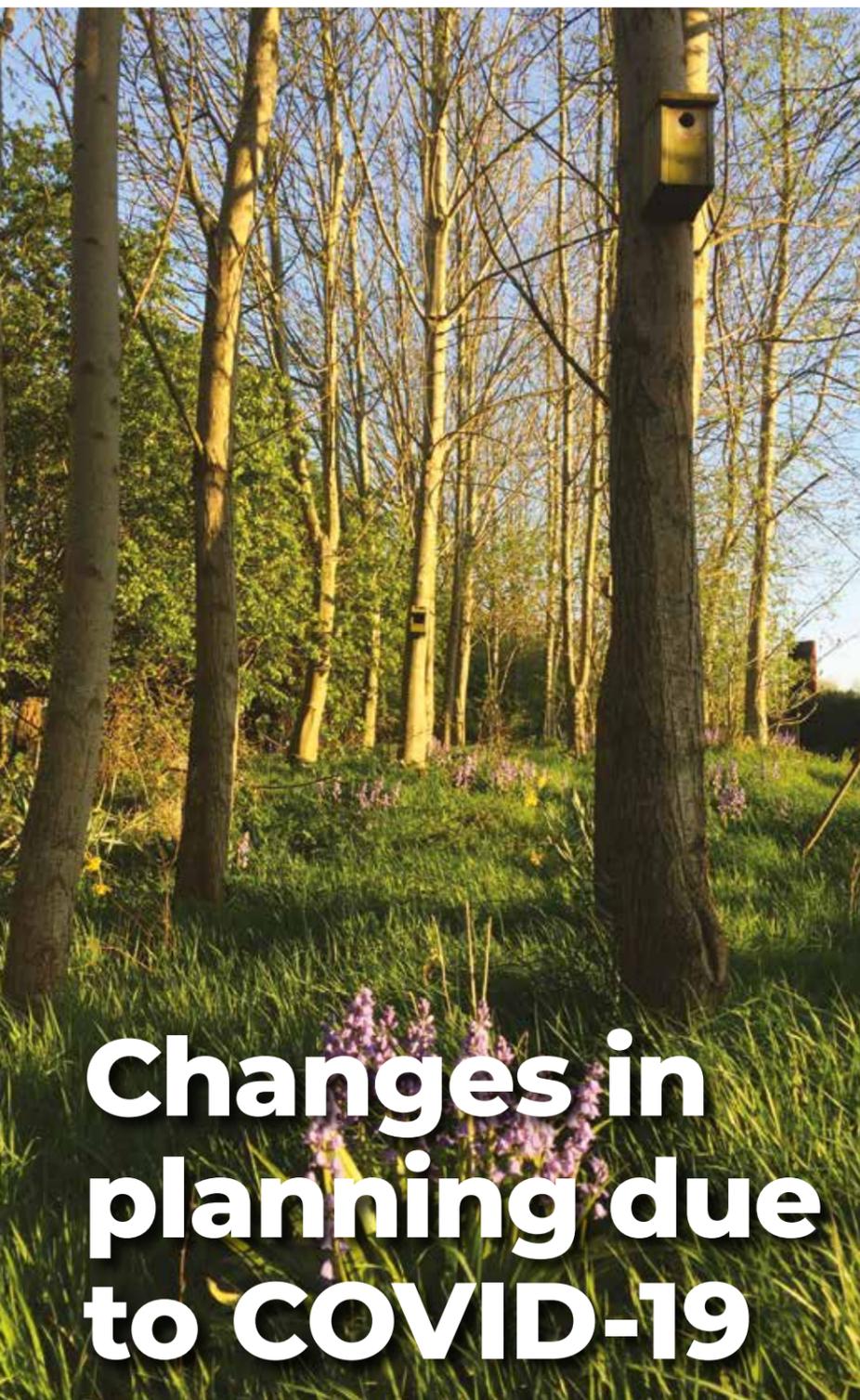
play them on the screens to entertain our guests. We have been overwhelmed by the number of performers

getting in touch with us." 'Nearly Live Lounge' will feature at seven of Bridge Leisure's holiday parks.

Guidance for venue operators and those working in the performing arts in England can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/performing-arts> - there is separate guidance for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

It includes guidance on managing risk, social distancing, managing capacity and overcrowding, managing audiences and cleaning.

There is additional guidance for those offering sports facilities at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/providers-of-grassroots-sport-and-gym-leisure-facilities>



# Changes in planning due to COVID-19



Planning expert, Ian Butter looks at the implications of the announcement on the temporary loosening of restrictions to park opening times and extensions to planning permission.

## EXTENSION OF SEASON

The industry has been proactive and successful in encouraging the Government to address the impacts of COVID-19 and ensure the earliest possible return to some semblance of normality.

In a recent Ministerial Statement (14 July HLWS359) the Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Robert Jenrick, highlighted that:

Caravan and holiday parks in England were able to reopen from 4 July 2020. Extending their operation beyond the usual summer season will be invaluable to parks as the sector begins to recover. We are aware that current planning conditions may limit their open season. The temporary relaxation of these planning restrictions can play a vital role in helping local businesses to get up and running again.

He then goes on to advise Councils that: "...they should not seek to undertake planning enforcement action which would unnecessarily restrict the ability of caravan and holiday parks to extend their open season."

This suggests that planning authorities might be encouraged to turn a blind eye to breaches of seasonal occupancy conditions. I find this hard to believe – especially where the occupancy break is reinforced on flood risk or ecological grounds.

I have recently sought the views of several authorities on the potential to allow an extension of season for the period when parks would

normally be closed. Most have been sympathetic and responded positively, but all have requested a planning application be submitted.

If you are considering remaining open over your normal closed period (typically in January and February) then an early application to vary any relevant planning conditions

(i.e from 20 August 2020) and the end of the year, then there is nothing further for you to do. Although you can ask for written confirmation from the Council.

However, there is an extra procedure for any permission that has lapsed between 23 March and 28 days after Royal Assent. In that case an application for 'Additional

timescale (or as extended), then a deemed consent is granted.

If a refusal of AEA is forthcoming, there is a right to appeal, although a revised AEA (perhaps with additional information) can be submitted to trigger a new 28-day period.

In Scotland similar provisions have been made to extend planning permissions, but the timescales and procedures are different.

Where a planning permission would normally have lapsed during the "emergency period" (between 6 April 2020 to 6 October 2020), then permission is automatically extended to 6 April 2021. Any planning permission that lapsed after lockdown came into place in Scotland on the 23 March, but before the extension provisions came into force on 6 April 2020, cannot be extended.

The Welsh Government do not appear to have made any similar provisions at the time of writing.

## RURAL AND URBAN PLANNING

**Tel:** 07860 684604  
**Email:** [ianbutter@ruralurbanplanning.co.uk](mailto:ianbutter@ruralurbanplanning.co.uk)  
**Web:** [www.ruralurbanplanning.co.uk](http://www.ruralurbanplanning.co.uk)

## The Business and Planning Act 2020 makes provision for the extension of planning permissions that have lapsed during lockdown

would be advisable. You can state this is temporary for one year only. You may also need to notify the Licencing Department of the change as well, when permission is granted – although it would seem unnecessary to have a new site licence issued for a single, short-term, change such as this.

## EXTENSION OF PLANNING PERMISSION

Guidance contained in the Business and Planning Act 2020 makes provision for the extension of planning permissions that have lapsed during the lockdown period. Royal Assent was given on 22 July 2020.

In principle, if you have a permission that was not implemented, or conditions still to be approved, and which have or will lapse between 23 March 2020 and 31 December 2020, the permission will be automatically extended to 1 April 2021.

If your permission is likely to lapse in the period from 28 days after Royal Assent

Environmental Approval' (AEA) is required. There is no fee for this and there is no prescribed form, but the draft guidance indicates that basic information will be required; and it will be more complex if an Environmental Impact Assessment and/or Habitats Regulation Assessment was involved in the original application.

The purpose of the AEA is to ensure there has been no material changes in environmental impact arising from the scheme since the permission was granted.

Authorities have 28 days to respond and extensions can be agreed, but no more than an additional 21 days. If no decision is reached in the

## PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT

The snappily titled Town and Country Planning (Permitted Development and Miscellaneous Amendments) (England) (coronavirus) Regulations 2020 has inserted a time limited right to provide – between 1 July 2020 and 31 December 2020 – an additional period of 28 days for a temporary use of land. So, if you have camping areas that are operated under the 28-day rule, this is now extended to 56 days until 31 December 2020.



**COVID-19 early outbreak management**



**Campsites and caravan parks**

**Who should use this information?**

Owners, managers and operators of campsites, caravan parks, holiday parks, touring parks and similar establishments. This information provides key steps to quickly identify and contain any potential COVID-19 outbreak. If you are concerned about other possible health issues then you should follow your existing processes.

For England only.

**What you should do to manage a possible outbreak**

**Step 1**

**Identify**

You may be informed of a confirmed case of COVID-19 by NHS Test & Trace, an employee, guest or your local Public Health England Health Protection Team (PHE HPT).

When you are informed of more than one confirmed case, go to **step 2**.

Refer to [NHS Test and Trace: workplace guidance](#) or search the title on GOV.UK for further advice.

**Step 2**

**Report**

Contact your local PHE HPT for help and advice. Refer to [www.gov.uk/health-protection-team](http://www.gov.uk/health-protection-team) for contact details.

Early engagement with your local PHE HPT is key to minimise any possible wider outbreak in your community. See **page 2** for information you may be asked to provide. Do not worry if you are unable to answer all the questions, your local PHE HPT will help guide you through the process.

**Step 3**

**Respond**

Your local PHE HPT will work with you to assess the risks and advise you of what actions to take.

Depending on the outcome, your local PHE HPT and Local Authority may establish an Outbreak Control Team to help support you to manage the situation.

See **page 2** for types of action that could be put in place.

Check now and write the number of your local PHE HPT here: .....

**Campaign to assist COVID-19 outbreak management**

Supporting the Government's new guidance on how to recognise, contain and report incidents of COVID-19, Public Health England (PHE) has launched a campaign providing advice to businesses. The campaign helps operators in England:

- identify an outbreak of coronavirus
- report the outbreak to their local health protection team
- work with them to respond.

As part of the campaign, PHE has produced a series of action cards, including one for caravan parks (see poster, left, downloadable at <https://coronavirusresources.phe.gov.uk/reporting-an-outbreak/resources/>).

Details of how early outbreak management can help fight the virus can be found at: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/reporting-outbreaks-of-coronavirus-covid-19](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reporting-outbreaks-of-coronavirus-covid-19)

**Amendment ensures the provision of non-smoking areas in pubs and restaurant gardens**

An amendment under the Business and Planning Bill will ensure premises offer separate seating for smokers and non-smokers outside.

Currently it is illegal to smoke in enclosed areas, and businesses can already make their own non-smoking policies in places where food is served. While the Government will not ban outdoor smoking in pubs, cafes or restaurants, the guidance will make it clear that the licence-



holder has to make provision for smoke-free seating, including:

- Clear 'no smoking' signage displayed in designated areas.
- No ashtrays or similar receptacles to be provided or permitted to be left on furniture where smoke-free seating is identified.
- Licence holders should aim for a minimum two-metre distance between non-smoking and smoking areas.

[Read more here](#)

**How to claim money back through the Eat Out to Help Out Scheme**

Government has released guidance on how to claim the reimbursement for discounts given to diners with the Eat Out to Help Out Scheme.

Businesses will need the records kept for each day the scheme has been used, including the:

- total number of diners (covers) who have used the scheme, inc. children
- total discount given
- period claimed for

If you are making a claim for more than one establishment, you will need to have the records for each establishment and the overall total value of the claim for all establishments ready before you claim.

The reimbursement service will be available from 7 August 2020. Businesses can make up to five claims before 30 September, but you cannot claim after that.

[Click here for further details](#)



**Returning to pools - guidance documents available**

Swim England has published comprehensive Return to Pools Guidance in preparation for Government easing the current lockdown measures currently applied to swimming pools.

It has created five detailed documents which are based on the latest scientific advice and Government

guidelines. These include recommendations for operators, lane swimming, family-fun sessions, club activity and swimming lessons.

The documents, along with some FAQs, can be downloaded from [https://www.swimming.org/swimengland/pool-return-](https://www.swimming.org/swimengland/pool-return-guidance-documents/)

[guidance-documents/](#)

Swim England's Return to Pools Guidance should be read alongside Government guidance available at: [www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/providers-of-grassroots-sport-and-gym-leisure-facilities](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/providers-of-grassroots-sport-and-gym-leisure-facilities)

**Face coverings in retail outlets and public spaces**

From 24 July, it has been mandatory to wear a face covering in retail outlets (e.g. indoor shops/sales offices) in England. Face coverings in shops were already mandatory in Scotland. From 8 August the list of places was increased to include social clubs, indoor entertainment venues, among others. It is suggested retailers display signs to remind visitors of this policy, and consider having a supply of masks for customers. While staff are not expected to police this, they should be able to explain why you have adopted this policy, i.e. to keep others safe.

You can ask customers to temporarily remove their face coverings to identify someone against their ID. Face coverings are not mandatory for those under the age of 11 and those with disabilities or certain health conditions. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/31-july-announcement> for the updated information

# Fit and proper person looms for residential and mixed parks

Kirstie Apps, NCC legal advisor, examines the future implications for residential and mixed parks in England

Government announced on 15 June that, following an earlier public consultation, the provision for relevant protected sites\* in England to be managed by a fit and proper person would be introduced. [The Mobile Homes \(Requirement for Manager of Site to be Fit and Proper Person\) \(England\) Regulations 2020](#) were laid before Parliament on 8 July 2020 with some provisions coming into force on 1 July 2021 and other provisions on 1 October 2021.

Section 8 of the *Mobile Homes Act 2013* gives the Secretary of State the power to make regulations which provide that an occupier must not operate a caravan site from a relevant protected site unless the local authority (LA) is satisfied that:

1. The occupier is a fit and proper person to manage the site or that a person appointed to do so by the occupier is fit and proper or
2. Have, with the occupier's consent, appointed a

person to manage the site.

The power to make regulations also extends to the creation of a fit and proper person register (to be published and maintained by the LA), the requirement of the completion of a "registration application", removal and variations to the register and the implications of operating a relevant protected site without a person registered with the LA.

## REQUIREMENT FOR CARAVAN SITES TO BE LICENSED

The requirement for most caravan sites to be licenced by LAs was introduced by the *Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960*. The Act makes it a criminal offence to operate a caravan site without a site licence.

Until the introduction of the *2013 Act and the Mobile Homes (Transfer of Site Licences) (England) Regulations 2014* ("2014 Regulations"), if there was

planning permission for caravan site use, the LA had no choice but to grant a site licence, regardless of whether the relevant permission was for a holiday caravan site, a residential one, or a mixed residential and holiday park.

The 2013 Act introduced a new site licensing regime for all relevant protected sites and included a new power for LAs to exercise discretion when deciding an application to grant or to transfer a site licence.

The 2014 Regulations require LAs to have regard to prescribed matters when determining such an application.

In 2017, as part of the review of the 2013 Act, there was a call for evidence on the new site licensing regime. As a result of that consultation, in 2018 the Government gave a commitment to introduce the fit and proper person provision for residential and mixed-use parks in England. The consultation response was published in July 2020.

There has been a clear

direction from Parliament to introduce greater controls over the licensing of relevant protected sites to improve standards.

## THE DRAFT REGULATIONS

The draft Regulations are supported by five Schedules, which include the nature of the information to be included in the register held by the LA, what is to be included in the application form, and what will be considered as part of the fit and proper person assessment.

When deciding an application for registration, the LA must take into account whether the "relevant person" (the person named in the application to be included onto the register) is able to secure the proper management of the site This includes:-

- i) compliance with the site licence
- ii) the long-term maintenance of the site
- iii) whether the relevant person has a sufficient level of competence
- iv) the management structure and funding arrangements (or proposed management structure).

The LA must also take into account whether the relevant person has:

- committed any offence involving fraud or other dishonesty, violence, arson or drugs or offences listed in schedule 3 to the *Sexual Offences Act 2003*;
- contravened "any provision of the law relating to housing,

caravan sites, mobile homes, public health, planning or environmental health or of landlord and tenant law";

- contravened any provision of the *Equality Act 2010* in connection with the "carrying on of any business";
- harassed anyone in connection with "the carrying on of any business" or
- been, in the past 10 years, personally insolvent, disqualified from acting as a company director;
- the right to work in the UK and
- is a member of any redress scheme for dealing with complaints in connection with the management of the site.

Where the relevant person is not an individual, which is more likely to be the case when the licence holder (occupier) is putting themselves forward as fit and proper, the same sort of considerations will apply.

There is a right to make representations to the LA and a route of appeal to the First Tier Tribunal (Property Chamber).

The Regulations also introduce a number of criminal offences if requirements are not met – including unlimited fines.

## TIMESCALES

**1 July 2021** – local authorities to establish a register, devise the application process and set a relevant fees structure

**1 October 2021** – local authorities to have received

applications for the registration of a relevant person onto the fit and proper register.

From this date it will be an offence if a relevant protected site is operated without a person registered as fit and proper to manage the site.

The draft Regulations are detailed, and non-compliance will carry criminal penalties.

Licence holders (occupiers) will need to have a site licence in their name and either be named in the fit and proper register or ensure someone else is.

The draft Regulations indicate that the application form will be long and park operators and licence holders will need to consider the questions carefully. Declarations will be sought as part of the application process and any information submitted found to be untrue or a misrepresentation could lead to a criminal prosecution.

The draft Regulations are affirmative Regulations and will require consideration by both Houses of Parliament.

*\*For the purposes of this article "relevant protected site" means a residential park or a mixed residential and holiday park and "occupier" means the licence holder. The Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 gives both "relevant protected site" and "occupier" a specific definition.*

# BSI publishes new water quality Code of Practice

New Code of Practice (CoP) relevant to residential and holiday parks, and of particular interest to those with pools, hot tubs, or when redeveloping a site



In 2011 World Health Organisation (WHO) published *Water safety in buildings*, which together with WHO's *Guidelines for Drinking Water Quality* (GDWQ) 4th Edition (2017) gives guidance on how to ensure that water within the built environment is safe.

The BSI Technical Committee EH/3/4 has now published the new British Standard, *BS 8680:2020 Water Quality – Water Safety Plans – Code of Practice*. The Standard gives users guidance on developing and implementing water safety plans to ensure a building's water is safe.

An online webinar introduces BS 8680:2020, the first-ever British Standard on water safety planning. The webinar is particularly pertinent to organisations

returning to premises after the CV-19 lockdown. Register to watch the webinar here <https://www.bsigroup.com/en-GB/our-services/events/webinars/2020/introducing-bs-86802020-water-quality-water-safety-plans-code-of-practice/form/>

## THE STANDARD

- Provides authoritative recommendations and guidance for Water Safety Planning to help ensure public health and safety
- Provides a preventative risk-management approach, based on a method developed by the WHO
- Can be applied to all types of premises Including residential park homes and holiday caravans and undertakings with water systems that

## Water Safety Plan

The poor design and management of water systems can cause the outbreak of easily preventable diseases. BS 8680 sets out recommendations on how to implement a Water Safety Plan (WSP), which is the most effective way of consistently ensuring water supply safety.

A WSP defines and documents the processes and arrangements required for the safe use and management of all water systems in buildings or estates. It is covered in the Standard's Annex A.

- can pose a risk to those exposed, either from the water itself or aerosols
- Can be applied retrospectively
- Includes information on system assessment, controlling risks, design and installation of water systems and monitoring.

## SCOPE

The British Standard is applicable to WSP development for new buildings, modifications and renovations to existing

water systems, and can also be applied retrospectively to control risks to health from all types of water use.

If you are planning any new water systems or are upgrading or making any modifications to current ones, the NCC recommends that you study this Code of Practice. You can order a hard copy from the NCC at the members' price of £247. For further information contact David Whitehead on [david.w@thencc.org.uk](mailto:david.w@thencc.org.uk)

## Water safety - legal obligations and specific regulations

- The Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations 2018 (England and Wales) (as amended)
- The Water Supply (Water Quality) (Scotland) Regulations 2014
- The Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017 (as amended)
- The Private Water Supplies (England) Regulations 2016
- The Private Water Supplies (Wales) Regulations 2017
- The Private Water Supplies (Scotland) Regulations 2006
- The Private Water Supplies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- The Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978
- The Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999
- The Water Supply (Water Fittings) (Scotland) Byelaws 2014
- The Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009

## New electrical safety standards for privately rented accommodation (England)

The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020 came into force on 1 June 2020 – [click here for details](#)

**Do the Regulations apply to residential park homes that are hired out to private tenants by residential park owners/operators for use as a main or only residence?**

Yes, the new Regulations apply.

**What does this mean for park owners/operators acting as a private landlord?**

The duties of a private landlord – including a residential park operator/owner - in relation to electrical installations are outlined in Part 2 of the Regulations which state that the landlord must:

- ensure that the electrical safety standards are met during any period when the residential premises (the park home) are occupied under a specified tenancy.
- ensure every electrical installation in the residential premises is inspected and tested at regular intervals by a qualified person; and
- ensure the first inspection and test is carried out
  - before the tenancy commences in relation to a new specified tenancy; or
  - by 1st April 2021 in relation to an existing specified tenancy.

**What is meant by "at regular intervals"?**

For the purposes of sub-paragraph (b) below left, "at regular intervals" means "at intervals of no more than five years; or where the most recent report under sub-paragraph (a) below left requires such inspection and testing to be at intervals of less than five years, at the intervals specified in that report".

**What does this mean for residential park homes that are made available for rent?**

Any residential park home owned by the park and rented out after 1 July 2020 must have an in date Electrical Installation Condition Report which is within the date of the next inspection report.

**What happens if the Electrical Installation Condition Report on a park home that is now rented out specifies the date of the next inspection?**

Where the electrical inspector has stated a date by which the next inspection must be carried out, the new inspection and condition report must be undertaken before this specified date.

### How does this affect park owners/operators who own and rent out residential park homes under existing assured shorthold tenancies?

Government has clarified that the Regulations require landlords to have the electrical installations in their properties inspected and tested by a person who is qualified and competent, at least every five years. The next test will not be due until 5 years have passed from the date of the report, or less if the report specifies a shorter period. For residential park homes rented out under an existing rental agreement in place before 1 July 2020 then there must be an in-date inspection and condition report in place no later than 1 April 2021. This means that if the report was carried out in March 2018 no action is required until the date specified in the certificate.

### Is the private rental tenant entitled to a copy of the electrical installation condition report?

Yes - the Regulations require the private landlord to provide a copy of the report to each tenant within 28 days of the inspection being carried out.

### What is the position regarding a new tenancy – for example a tenancy that starts in August 2020?

All new tenants taking up residence after 1 July 2020 must be supplied with a copy of the most recent report before they occupy the park home. If a prospective tenant asks

to see a copy of the most recent electrical condition report in advance of taking up the tenancy this should be provided within 28 days of receiving the request.

### What happens if the inspection and condition report indicates that further investigative or remedial work is required?

In this case the park operator (private landlord) must ensure that the further investigative or remedial work is carried out by a qualified person within

- 28 days of the date of the report; or
- the period specified in the report if less than 28 days, starting with the date of the inspection and testing.

The park operator (private landlord) must also:

- obtain written confirmation from a qualified person that the further investigative or remedial work has been carried out and that:
  - the electrical safety standards are met; or
  - further investigative or remedial work is required and
- supply that written confirmation, together with a copy of the report which required the further investigative or remedial work to each existing tenant of the residential premises within 28 days of completion of the further investigative or remedial work: and
- supply that written confirmation, together

with a copy of the report that required the further investigative or remedial work to the local housing authority within 28 days of completion of the further investigative or remedial work.

### What happens if further work is required?

The Regulations specify that: Where further investigative work is carried out and the outcome of that further investigative work is that further investigative or remedial work is required, the private landlord must repeat the steps above in respect of that further investigative or remedial work.

### Under the new Regulations is a park owner/operator who rents out park homes required to provide a fresh electrical inspection report and certificate at the change of each tenancy?

MHCLG has advised that there is no requirement to have a new inspection on the unit at each change of tenancy. "The certificate remains valid for each change of tenant until the date the next inspection is due as specified in the report."

### Please note

MHCLG have advised that there is no change to the requirements for electrical testing and inspection of privately owned residential park homes.

For more information please contact David Whitehead at [david.w@thenc.org.uk](mailto:david.w@thenc.org.uk)



With all that COVID has thrown at the country, it is easy to forget that in less than five months, Britain will leave the EU. The end of the transition period is looming.

Government has launched a major new public information campaign, *The UK's new start: let's get going*. It will set out the actions businesses and individuals need to take to prepare for the end of the transition period on 31 December 2020.

Advertisements will direct businesses to a checker tool at [www.gov.uk/transition](http://www.gov.uk/transition), which quickly identifies the necessary next steps. The advertising campaign will run on TV, radio, digital and print, backed up with direct channels such as text messages and webinars.

The campaign will also see the launch of a field force team which will give one-to-one support in person or over the phone to businesses and their supply chains to

minimise disruption to the movement of goods.

### IMPORTING AND EXPORTING GOODS

It is important to make sure your business is ready to export or import from/to the EU, for example by getting an EU EORI number or registering with the relevant Customs Authority.

From 1 January 2021 you will need to make customs declarations to move goods into and out of the EU. You should:

- get an EORI number, if you do not already have one – see <https://www.gov.uk/eori>
- decide how you want to make customs declarations and whether you need to get someone to deal with customs for you.

### Employing EU, EEA and Swiss citizens

Right to work checks continue in the same way as now until 30 June 2021 for citizens of the EU, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein. You will not need to make retrospective checks for existing employees.

Read the guidance on how to carry out right to work checks and what documents you can accept at <https://www.gov.uk/check-job-applicant-right-to-work>

**Note:** There are some changes to the way right to work checks are currently being carried out, due to coronavirus - see <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-right-to-work-checks>

### Employing people from outside the UK

You must check that a job applicant is allowed to work for you in the UK before you employ them. You can either:

- check the applicant's original documents, or
- check the applicant's right to work online, if they've given you their share code.

You could face a civil penalty if you employ an illegal worker and have not carried out a correct right to work check. However, you must not discriminate against anyone because of where they're from.

# Leaving lockdown life

*Parks Business* talked to Gareth Walker, Head of Leisuredays Development

My role is to help holiday and residential parks get the best possible insurance arrangements for their customers. Also, to manage my team of nationwide Business Development Managers.



**What happened to the business in lockdown?**

Policyholder growth stalled in April and May as parks were closed. Contact centre functions moved into our advisers' homes and we invested in a new phone system that could operate via their home web connections.

Although call waiting times increased marginally, our CSAT (customer satisfaction) scores remained world class at over 90%. Microsoft Teams and Zoom replaced our usual face to face meetings with parks.

**How did you keep in touch with staff?**

As a family business, we've always strived to retain a family feel – despite our growth – with lots of communication and social gatherings. Our printed

internal newsletter, which features latest business initiatives and a look into the jobs and lives of our staff, was circulated digitally.

There were online staff gatherings on Zoom with quizzes, and we built our own social network on Yammer. This gave all staff a platform to share achievements, celebrate birthdays and service anniversaries.

**Describe a typical day**

A typical day starts with

family breakfast, a check of work emails for anything urgent, and a chat with the boys about their plans and homework. Then it is down into "Dad's bunker" as the kids have named it, which is the home office.

The first calls of the day are to my team, the parks business development managers. I speak to them individually about outstanding tasks and objectives. We discuss who needs contacting on a park

level and how I can support them to get the best results for the park. My role is to authorise pricing changes and marketing activity to increase the policy growth across parks. I will also check in to get an update on outstanding claims for parks.

Before Covid-19, I would spend hours on the road, covering the entire UK, helping to support my team and our park partners. Via video conferencing, I can now catch up with a park in Scotland and one on the South Coast in the same day!

I hope we can take some positives from lockdown – and perhaps retain some of the efficiencies we've developed. Although it's best to meet parks in the flesh, we've learnt we can effectively catch up remotely.

**It was a difficult time for parks – how did you help?**

To support sales, we just made sure they knew we were there for them and their customers through regular communications.

Now, we've extended our One Month Free insurance deal to more parks, with support from RSA, our underwriters. We also offer parks a free insurance facility as an incentive for new buyers.

Our non-admin insurance model was perfect for the lockdown – and will be again for the summer period; parks let their customers deal with our seven-day contact centre directly. This allows their staff to focus on core activities and reduce face-to-face contact. Our online quote and buy system is extremely popular,

allowing customers to set up cover 24 hours a day.

**What about claims?**

Reported claims in that period did reduce. Now we are receiving a number of claims as owners return to their units and discover damage that occurred in the closed period. Panel damage and vermin claims were the most frequent. Although it's not a widespread issue, we did see an increase in caravan break-ins.

We calculate over 90% of static caravan or lodge insurance claims would happen regardless of the unit being occupied or park open.

**What are you most proud of in this difficult period?**

The rallying around of all business functions to make sure we could operate effectively from home. Despite the dark clouds of COVID-19, there's been many heart-warming tales of our staff going the extra mile.

The improvements have made us stronger. Across the business we've had lots to celebrate – we broke through the 100,000 customer mark in late June. Our Trustpilot scores have reached 'Excellent' with a 5/5 rating for service.

**Any advice going forward? Keep communicating!**

We made sure advice for customers and park partners who were worried about COVID was easily accessible.

**Be proactive.** We quickly adapted our operations to keep our service levels high and business growing. Although April and May were poor months of trading, we are now experiencing a huge bounce back of business.

**Stay positive.** We always felt confident the industry would recover.

**So, lockdown was not all bad?**

I enjoyed spending time with my immediate family. And we've kept in contact with others via FaceTime or Zoom. The one area I've missed is my football coaching. I've had my lads in the garden completing drills and skills, but I've missed the groups I coach. I look forward to getting back up and running.

**And the future?**

Our own rapid growth in June and July suggests parks are making plenty of unit sales – our park partners can't get hold of enough stock. Is there a more perfect holiday right now?



There was a reduction in claims but owners are now returning to units to find damage from the lockdown period such as panel damage and vermin