

# Tourism Alliance survey into industry's staff difficulties

Skills shortages and salary pressures add to the tourism industry's challenges

As tourism in the UK opens up, the Tourism Alliance, of which the NCC is a member, has undertaken a survey into the difficulties facing tourism businesses in respect of staffing. The detailed results were relayed to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to help them understand the issues, given the dual challenges of COVID and Brexit.

Almost 500 responses to the online survey were received from across the tourism sector, with just over 10% of replies from the caravan, camping and glamping accommodation sectors (referred to hereafter as 'the park sector'). Sample replies were received from across the UK, with the southwest particularly vocal.

Most responding businesses in the parks sector only had a small number of employees (between 1 and 9) but there were also responses from those with more than 100 employees, giving a snapshot across the industry.

Both within the tourism sector as a whole and in the park sector, businesses have struggled to keep their usual number of employees, with 41% and 52% respectively retaining their pre-COVID staff numbers. Staff

were lost to other jobs, and the sector did have to resort to redundancies. Some staff are still on flexi-furlough.

The parks sector and the wider tourism sector are both struggling to recruit service and retail staff, resulting in tough choices. A significant 26% in the parks sector are paying higher wages to attract staff, while almost a quarter have had to reduce capacity, services or hours. Two routes being taken to solving the staff shortage are developing benefits packages to attract staff (18%) and taking on apprentices (16%).

The NCC believes that the lack of experienced staff could present a greater challenge for the park sector, which is receiving a high number of bookings – and many from new-to-the-sector customers.

There is widespread support in the parks industry (59%) for the lifting of travel restrictions, and for a scheme for low skilled workers to enter the UK (35%).

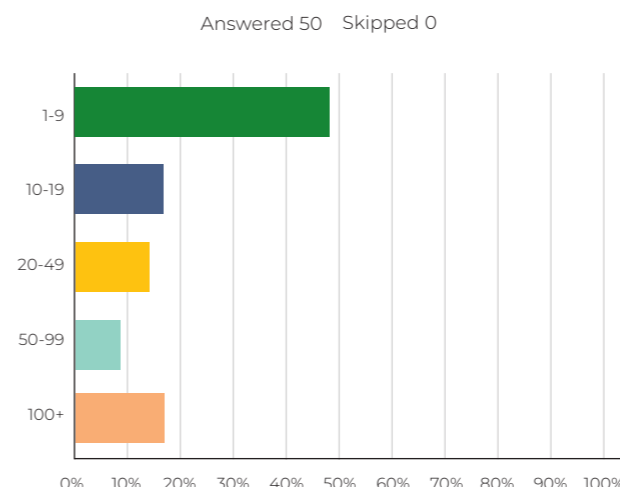
However, it is clear that there is no quick fix for these issues, and the NCC will report back to members when the Tourism Alliance receives a response from Government.

## HEADLINE RESULTS ACROSS THE TOURISM SECTOR

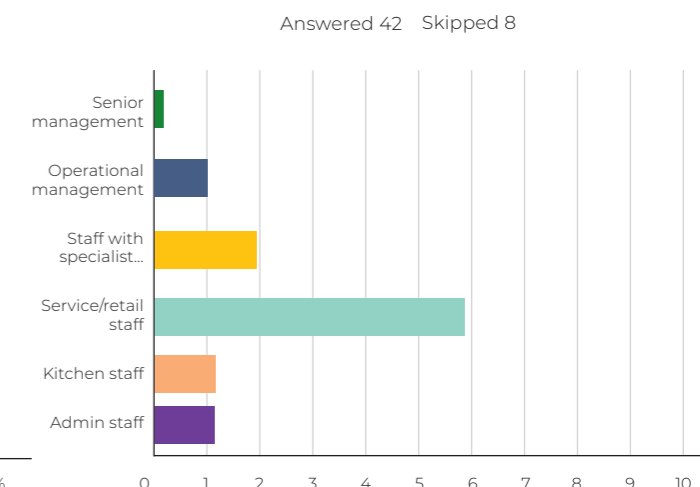
According to the Tourism Alliance's survey, the significant issues facing businesses as they reopen include:

- 46% of businesses have less staff than they did pre-COVID
- Only 18% of businesses report that they have all the staff they need
- The average business currently has nine vacancies
- Almost 30% of businesses have reduced capacity, services or hours because of the shortage of staff
- Despite restrictions (such as social distancing and capacity restraints) reducing the financial viability of businesses, 34% of all operators report that they are having to increase wages in order to attract staff
- 35% of businesses are having to employ people who don't have the skills that they need.

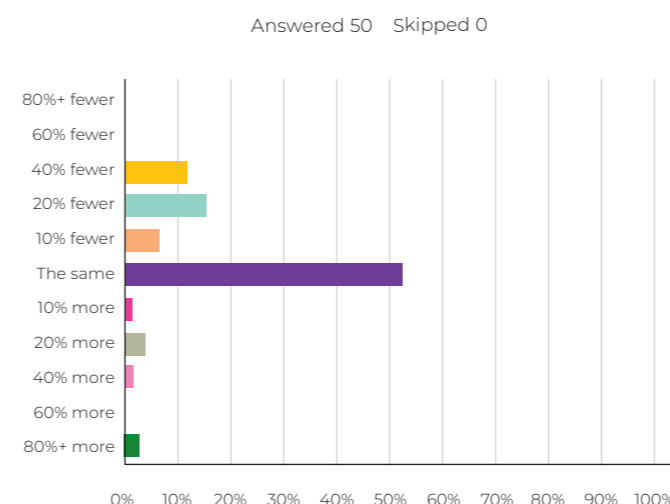
Park sector: How many employees do you currently have? (include staff on furlough)



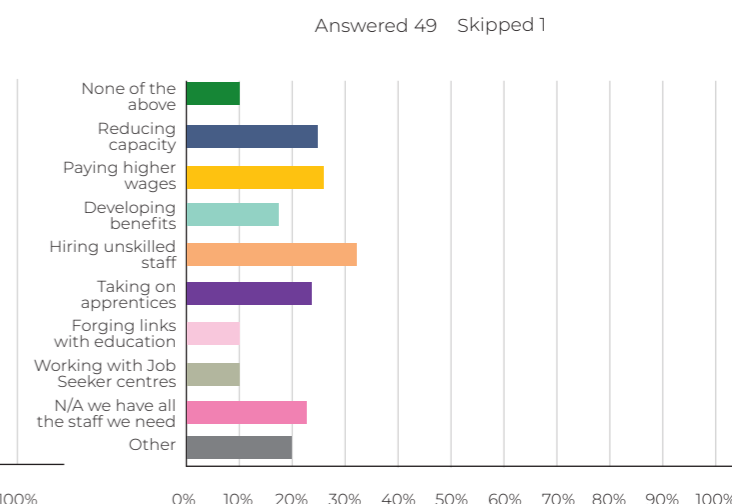
Park sector: How many vacancies do you currently have in each category? (please use numbers)



Park sector: How many employees do you have compared with pre-covid?



Park sector: What are you doing to resolve staff shortages?



All tourism sectors: Prioritise which actions you think the Government should take to support businesses (1= low priority and 5=high priority)

	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Lift travel restrictions	39.1% 156	13.03% 52	18.05% 72	9.02% 36	20.80% 83	399	2.59
Support EU Nationals in the UK gaining settled status	20.09% 87	11.78% 51	20.55% 89	14.32% 62	33.26% 144	433	3.29
Introduce a scheme for low skilled workers to enter the UK	27.63% 121	13.01% 57	15.07% 66	12.79% 56	31.51% 138	438	3.08
Encourage UK workers to enter the industry	4.19% 19	2.43% 11	8.39% 38	18.10% 82	66.89% 303	453	4.41
Hold tourism job fairs	15.04% 63	12.86% 46	25.49% 108	18.20% 85	28.40% 117	412	3.34
Incentivise the movement of workers around the UK	15.05% 62	12.86% 53	25.49% 105	18.20% 75	28.40% 117	412	3.32
Introduce a youth mobility scheme with the EU	20.29% 85	12.41% 52	29.59% 124	14.08% 59	23.63% 99	419	3.08
Develop retraining programmes to support people from other sectors entering the tourism industry	6.14% 27	6.82% 30	22.73% 100	24.77% 109	39.55% 174	440	3.85