

## Obtaining Business Rates Relief And Grant Funding

### 1. Introduction

When the Government introduced the Business Rates Relief Scheme to support retail, hospitality and leisure business through the Coronavirus crisis, the guidance to local authorities did not explicitly state that this relief was available to a range of businesses that are commonly deemed to be part of the tourism industry.

To help resolve this problem, the Tourism Alliance and the LGA have worked together to provide councils with a list of these businesses and encourage them to add these to their list of eligible businesses.

This note details the argument as to why these businesses should be included in this Scheme

### 2. Gaining Inclusion in Your Local Business Rates Relief Scheme

The Government Guidance to Councils on the Expanded Retail Discount 2020/21  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/877758/Expanded\\_Retail\\_Discount\\_Guidance\\_02.04.20.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/877758/Expanded_Retail_Discount_Guidance_02.04.20.pdf)

gives Councils the ability to include, and be repaid for, businesses that are not specifically mentioned in the guidance. Para 15 of the Guidance states:

***The list set out above is not intended to be exhaustive as it would be impossible to list the many and varied uses that exist within the qualifying purposes. There will also be mixed uses. However, it is intended to be a guide for authorities as to the types of uses that the Government considers for this purpose to be eligible for relief. Authorities should determine for themselves whether particular properties not listed are broadly similar in nature to those above and, if so, to consider them eligible for the relief.***

So Councils are allowed to add businesses to the scheme if they are broadly similar in nature to those listed and be refunded by Government if they do. The LGA, the National Association for Councils, has worked with the Tourism Alliance to provide advice to councils on what businesses types are “broadly similar” and should therefore be included in local council Business Rates Relief Schemes. This list includes:

- Amusement Arcades
- Vehicle Rental Sites
- Conference and Exhibition venues
- Travel and Tour Operators
- Tourism Information Centres

- Tourism Boards/Destination Management Organisations
- Coach operators
- English Language Schools
- Travel/Hospitality Industry Charities (offices)
- Marinas/Boat Hire/Passenger Boat Facilities

<https://local.gov.uk/coronavirus-business-rates-relief-hospitality-and-leisure-sector>

It must be noted that that this is advice and does not require Councils to include these businesses in their local scheme. Therefore, it could mean that local businesses might have to approach their local authority and request the council to implement this advice. However, this should be reasonably straight forward because including these businesses is simply following the advice of their national body and, as such they can have confidence that they are complying with the Government rules and will be repaid by Government.

### 3. Grant Funding Scheme Eligibility

Once your business has been incorporated into local Business Rates Relief Schemes, you then qualify for the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/878084/V4\\_Master\\_Small\\_Business\\_Grant\\_Fund\\_and\\_Retail\\_guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/878084/V4_Master_Small_Business_Grant_Fund_and_Retail_guidance.pdf)

The key part of the Government's advice on the Grant Scheme is Para 24:

**Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant**

***Hereditaments which on the 11 March 2020 had a rateable value of less than £51,000 and would have been eligible for a discount under the business rates Expanded Retail Discount Scheme had that scheme been in force for that date are eligible for the grant.***

So, you have a rateable value of less than £15k, you will get £10k and if you have a rateable value between £15k and £51k you will get a grant on £25k