



Nigel Huddleston MP
Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
100 Parliament Street
London
SW1A 2BQ

28 August 2020

Dear Minister,

I am writing to urge you to protect tens of thousands of jobs and £14bn that is at risk of being lost from the UK tourism economy.

The Covid-19 pandemic has plunged the coach travel industry into a fight for its future. The sad collapse of Shearings, alongside a significant number of other coach operators, is an indication of what could happen to thousands of family businesses across the country. While operators are doing everything they can to stay afloat and business is slowly returning, bookings are not expected to return to pre pandemic levels until summer 2021.

Coach operators have made use of the welcome furlough scheme but have otherwise found it difficult to access more general support packages. As the furlough scheme winds down operators will be faced with no choice but to undertake significant redundancies to try to stay afloat. CPT has calculated that 27,000 jobs and 4 out of 10 coach operators could be lost from the industry by April 2021, just at the time when demand will return.

With over 23 million visits made to UK attractions by coach each year, generating almost 10% of tourism's entire contribution to the economy, these job losses will have a wider impact on the UK tourism sector. The collapse of the coach travel sector will mean many of these visits simply do not take place, threatening jobs across the UK that rely on tourism.

The industry is fundamentally healthy but has been critically impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. To help secure the long term future of the coach travel industry and protect jobs across the tourism sector it needs short term support to ensure operators can survive the winter. Government can do this by:

- Extending finance holidays by 12 months to ensure that no coaches are repossessed during the winter. This would be made possible by Government guaranteeing 80% of the value of loan finance to lenders and paying any interest and fees for 12 months.
- Ensuring the coach travel sector is treated as part of the leisure sector and is able to access any support available to leisure businesses.
- A moratorium on the loss of family homes as a result of the failure of coach businesses.

With this support the industry can play a leading role in helping to restart the UK tourism industry.

Yours sincerely,

Alison Edwards
Head of Policy, CPT

Confederation of Passenger Transport UK

Fifth Floor (South) Chancery House 53-64 Chancery Lane London WC2A 1QS Tel: 020 7240 3131
Mobile: 07384 892507 email: graham.vidler@cpt-uk.org website: www.cpt-uk.org