



# ROYAL DEESIDE FLOOD IMPACT SURVEY

## FINAL SUMMARY REPORT

Prepared for: **VISIT ROYAL DEESIDE, CAIRNGORMS BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP  
AND CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY**

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Prepared by:



**26 Alva Street  
Edinburgh  
EH2 4PY**

**Tel: 0131 623 6236  
Fax: 0131 623 6239  
E-mail: [info@ljresearch.co.uk](mailto:info@ljresearch.co.uk)  
Website: [www.ljresearch.co.uk](http://www.ljresearch.co.uk)**

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## INTRODUCTION

LJ Research was commissioned by Visit Royal Deeside (VRD), Cairngorms Business Partnership (CBP) and Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) to undertake a survey among tourism-related businesses based within the Royal Deeside area.

The survey aimed to evaluate the overall impact of the recent flooding on business operations and to determine an estimated timeline for businesses to recover.

Below is an overview of the key aims of the research:

- Determine the overall impact of the flooding attributed to Storm Frank which occurred in late December 2015
- Assess business capacity now in February 2016 and for the tourism season in 2016 as a whole
- Find out expected recovery times
- Evaluate the extent of the impact on businesses by location and tourism sector within Royal Deeside
- Explore business confidence levels for the future
- Capture insights to inform business recovery / support services potentially provided by local DMOs and other organisations

This report presents the findings of the research which is based on analysis of 144 survey responses achieved in February 2016.

As an appendix to this report, a full list of verbatim comments provided by respondents to the four open-ended questions in the survey are included.

## SAMPLE

The sample was comprised of businesses across sectors and locations as follows:

Sector		Area	
Accommodation	46%	Aboyne	11%
Food / beverage / retail	24%	Ballater	40%
Activities	9%	Banchory	14%
Non-tourism business	9%	Braemar	19%
Attraction	8%	Other	15%
Other tourism related business	5%		

The following trading statuses were observed among the businesses surveyed.

Trading Status	
Not affected	34%
Affected and currently open	47%
Affected and currently closed (due to flooding)	17%
Affected and currently closed (but always closed at this time of year)	2%

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

<b>Over half of businesses affected by storm Frank</b>	Between 50% and 60% of businesses in the Royal Deeside area were either directly or indirectly affected by storm Frank.
<b>Ballater has highest physical damage, Braemar was significantly affected by reduced customer access.</b>	Physical damage and customer access issues were the two key impacts of the storm. 71% of business in Ballater indicated they had experienced physical damage to their business, compared to only 5% in Braemar. Meanwhile, in Braemar 89% of businesses indicated issues associated with reduced customer access.
<b>Most businesses noted reduced trade. Retail and catering businesses and those based in Ballater appear to be the hardest hit</b>	<p>Around 70% of businesses recorded reduced trading over the last 6 weeks and forecasted reductions in trade for the year ahead.</p> <p>Trading performance and prospects decreased the most among retail and catering businesses. Assessing the results by location, Ballater-based businesses stated greater reductions in past and future trading.</p>
<b>It will take around 4 to 5 months for businesses to return to normal capacity</b>	Businesses overall indicated normal operations would be resumed within 4 to 5 months. Businesses that are currently closed indicated a longer recovery period of 7 and a half months compared to those that are open (c. 3 months).
<b>Accommodation sector will bounce back quickest</b>	By April it is anticipated that business as usual operations will resume for 65% of the affected accommodation providers.
<b>Marketing seen as the most valuable support at this time</b>	53% of all affected businesses indicated that marketing support would help their business recover. An even greater need for this intervention was cited by businesses who had experienced and/or are anticipating closures due to storm damage

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

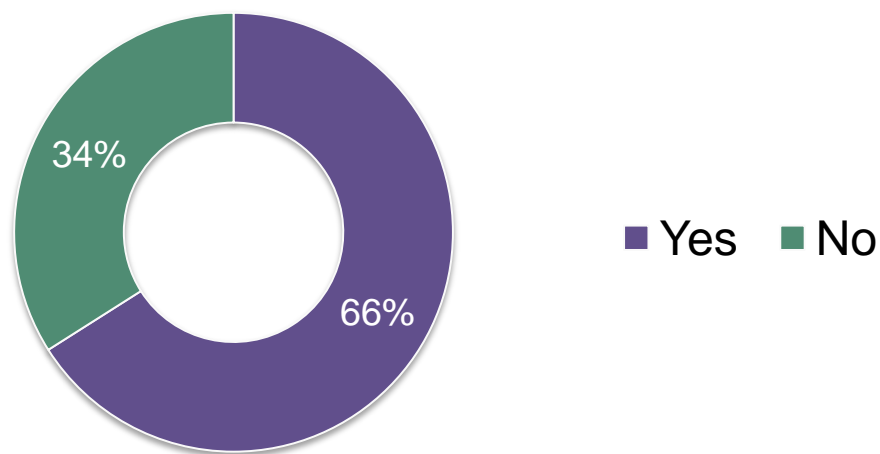
This section outlines key findings of the analysis.

### Overall impact of flood

#### Impact rates

In order to ascertain the overall impact of the flood, businesses were asked if they were affected by the storm. Before providing their answer, respondents were asked to consider any indirect and/or direct storm related effects on their business.

### Was your business affected by this storm?



**Figure 1**

As figure 1 illustrates, the majority of business (66%) indicated they had been affected either directly or indirectly by the storm.

For a separate exercise in which telephone calls were undertaken by CBP, 55% of businesses indicated that they had been affected.

We do believe that the online survey is likely to have disproportionately attracted responses from those affected by the flood. Therefore, based on these findings, we suggest an overall impact rate of between 50% and 60% is a fair assumption to make.

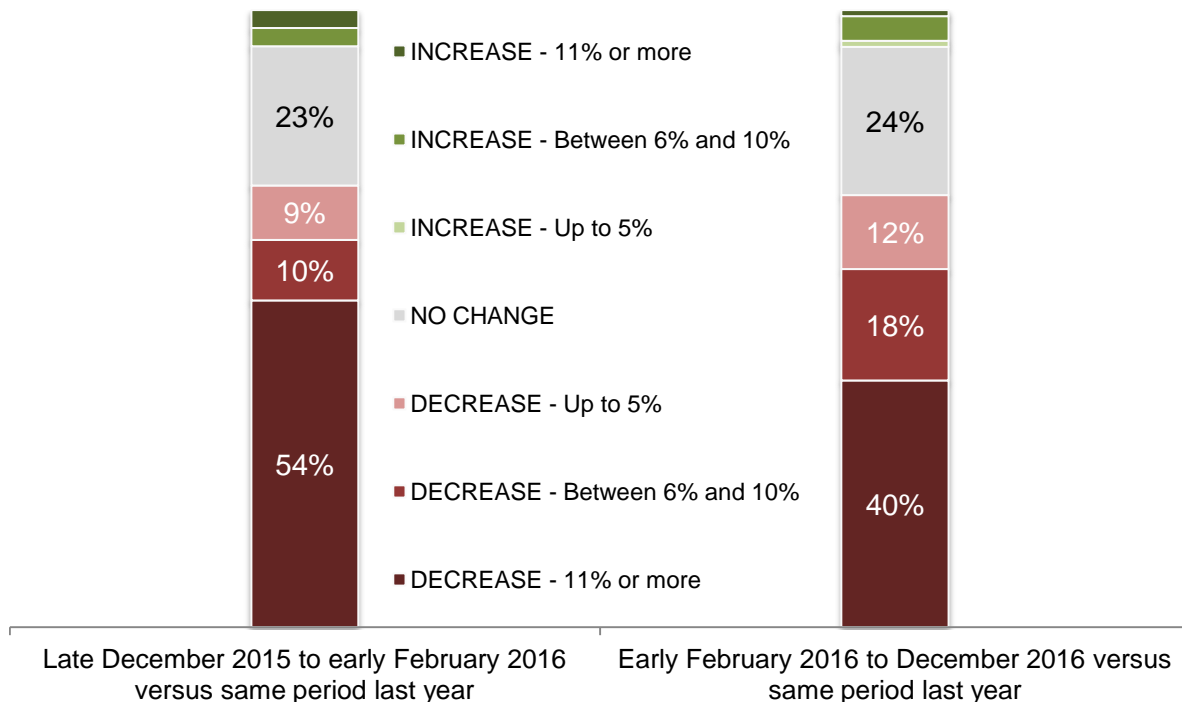
Looking at the results by location and business sector, the following insights are apparent;

- A notably higher impact rate was apparent among retail and catering establishments as 88% indicated they had been affected. This compared to only 52% among accommodation providers.
- The AB35 postcode district was disproportionately affected with 69% of businesses noting disruption and as much as 73% of respondents from Braemar.

## Trading

Business that indicated they had been affected by the storm were asked to evaluate their trading performance over the last six weeks and for the year ahead compared to last year.

### Overall Trading Performance



**Figure 2**

As shown above in Figure 2, the vast majority of businesses (73%) indicated that they had experienced decreases in their trading performance between late December 2015 and early February 2016 compared to last year. Highlighting the extent of the disruption during the last six weeks, most of these businesses stated reductions in trade of 11% or more.

Trading performance was only slightly improved and, therefore, still significantly below last year when looking out from February to December 2016. This highlights the severity of the longer term impacts of the flood on the area.

Further observations were:

- Similar to the overall impact outcome, retail and catering businesses highlighted the greatest impact on trading performance: 92% of these businesses indicated decreased trading over the last six weeks. The corresponding figure among accommodation providers was 62%.
- Ballater-based businesses stated greater impacts on their past and future trading compared to businesses from elsewhere: around 80% of businesses in this area noted past or future reductions in trade compared to around 70% among the overall sample.

## Accommodation Capacity

Accommodation providers that indicated they were affected by the storm were asked about flood-related impacts to their capacity.

The following findings were evident:

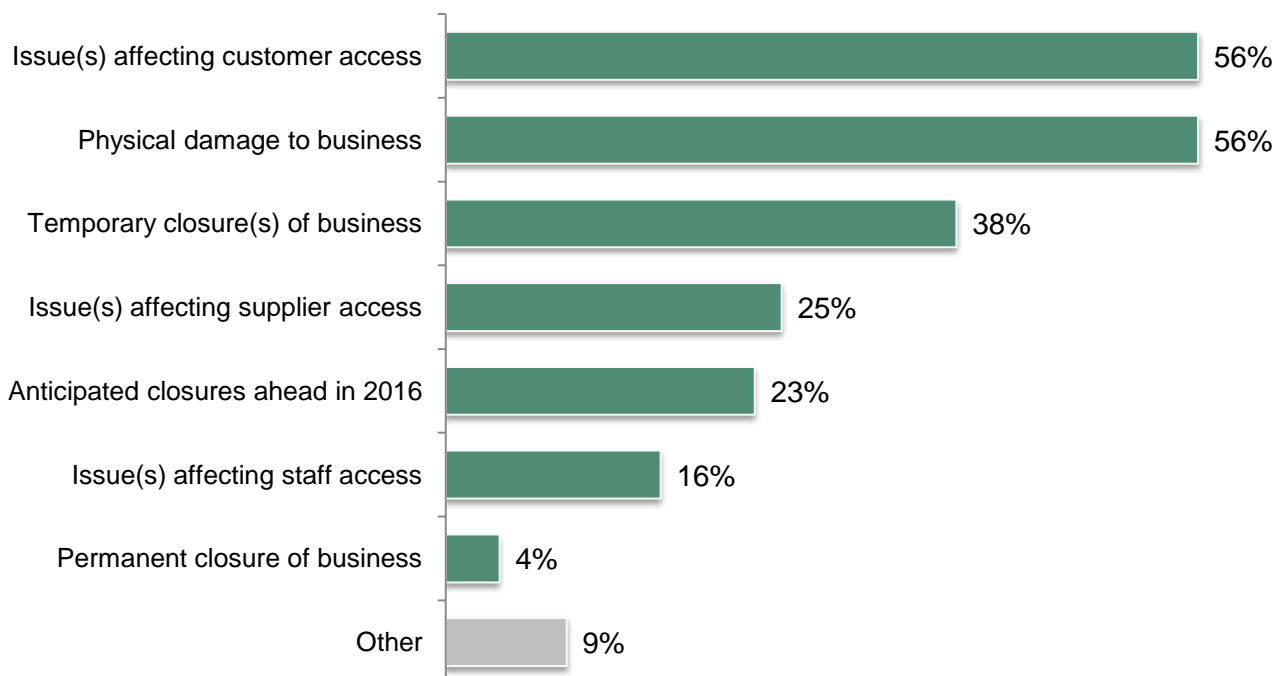
- 56% of accommodation providers affected by the storm (i.e. 19 from 34 businesses) were trading for business and operating at normal capacity in February.
- By March and April it is anticipated that 'business as usual' operations will resume for 59% and 65% of the affected accommodation providers, respectively.
- 15% of affected accommodation providers (i.e. 5 from 34 businesses) indicated that normal capacity would not be resumed in 2016.

## Detailed impact assessment

### Impact breakdown

Those affected were asked to give a more detailed description of how their business was impacted.

### How has your business been affected by Storm Frank



**Figure 3**

There were notable differences across sectors and locations covered in the survey. The key contrasts were:

- Customer access issues were most prominent for attractions (67%) and were least of an issue for activity providers (36%)
- Temporary closure(s) of business between late December and early February were more prevalent among accommodation businesses and activity providers (47% and 45%, respectively)
- Issue(s) affecting supplier access were comparatively more detrimental for retail and catering businesses (40%)
- The AB35 postcode district shows that Ballater and Braemar were affected by the storm in significantly different ways: 71% of business in Ballater indicated they had experienced physical damage to their business, compared to only 5% in Braemar. Meanwhile, in Braemar 89% indicated customer access issues compared to 40% in Ballater.
- In Banchory, 9 out of 10 respondents who were affected by the storm indicated they had physical damage to their business.
- Both customer and supplier access were seen as greater issues in Braemar than in Ballater.

### Recovery times

It is worth noting that of the businesses that were affected, 74% indicated that they were currently open for business. This figure was much lower in the harder hit area of Ballater where only 58% of businesses indicated they were currently open.

#### When do you expect your business to reopen and return to normal trading capacity (in months)

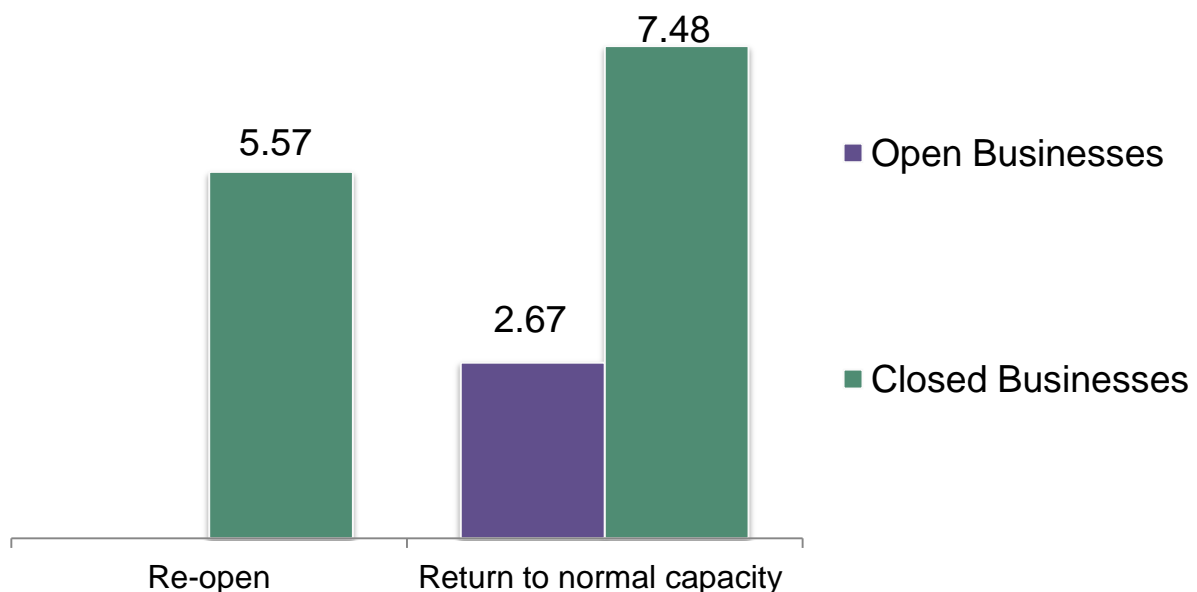


Figure 4



Those who were already trading again (74%) were asked when they expected their business to return to its normal capacity. The majority of those respondents (52%) indicated they would be back to normal capacity by / during February 2016 with accommodation providers indicating a quicker ability to resume normal operations compared to other sectors.

That being said, the average estimated recovery time for currently open businesses was nearly 3 months, as shown above in Figure 4.

Businesses that were currently closed (26% of the sample) were asked when they would reopen and when they expected to return to normal trading capacity.

The largest proportion of businesses (24%) indicated they would reopen their doors come July 2016, with the average delay being nearly 6 months.

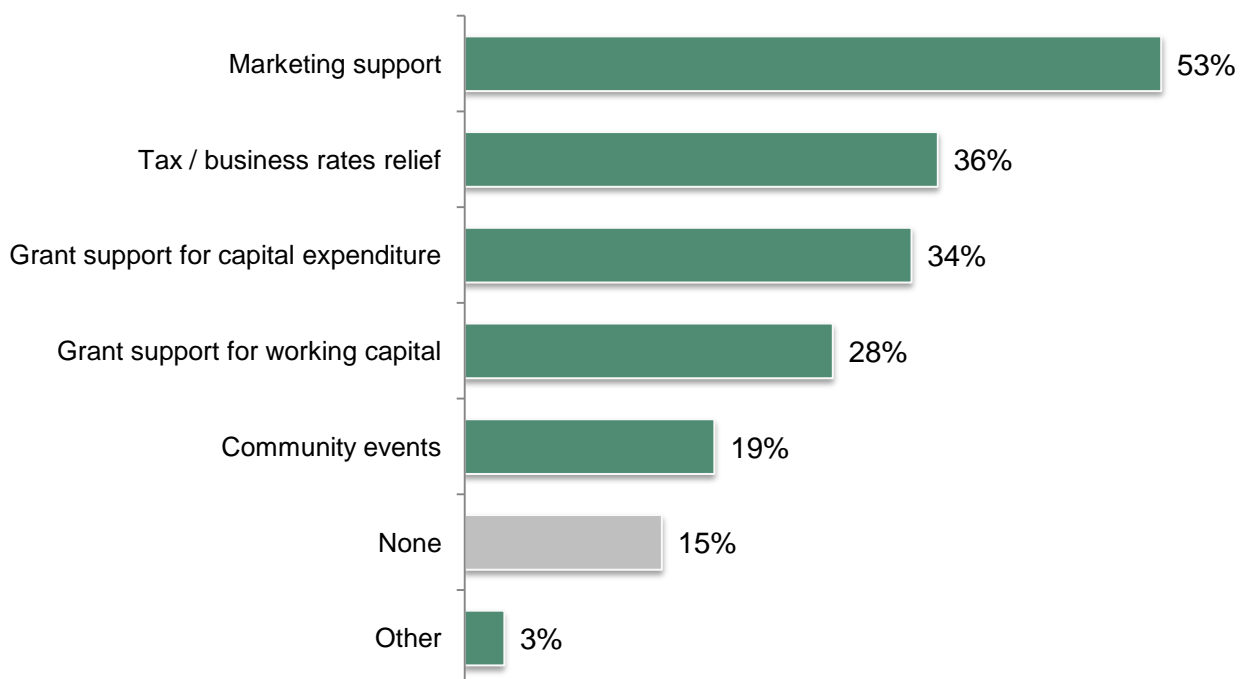
The recovery period was much longer for closed business with 33% indicating that it would be later than December 2016 before they expected to return to normal trading capacity. The overall results showed an average recovery time of around 7 and a half months among this group.

## Support

### Business recovery initiatives

The following chart displays the breakdown of responses for the types of support businesses would benefit from during the recovery process.

### What type(s) of support / assistance would help your business recover



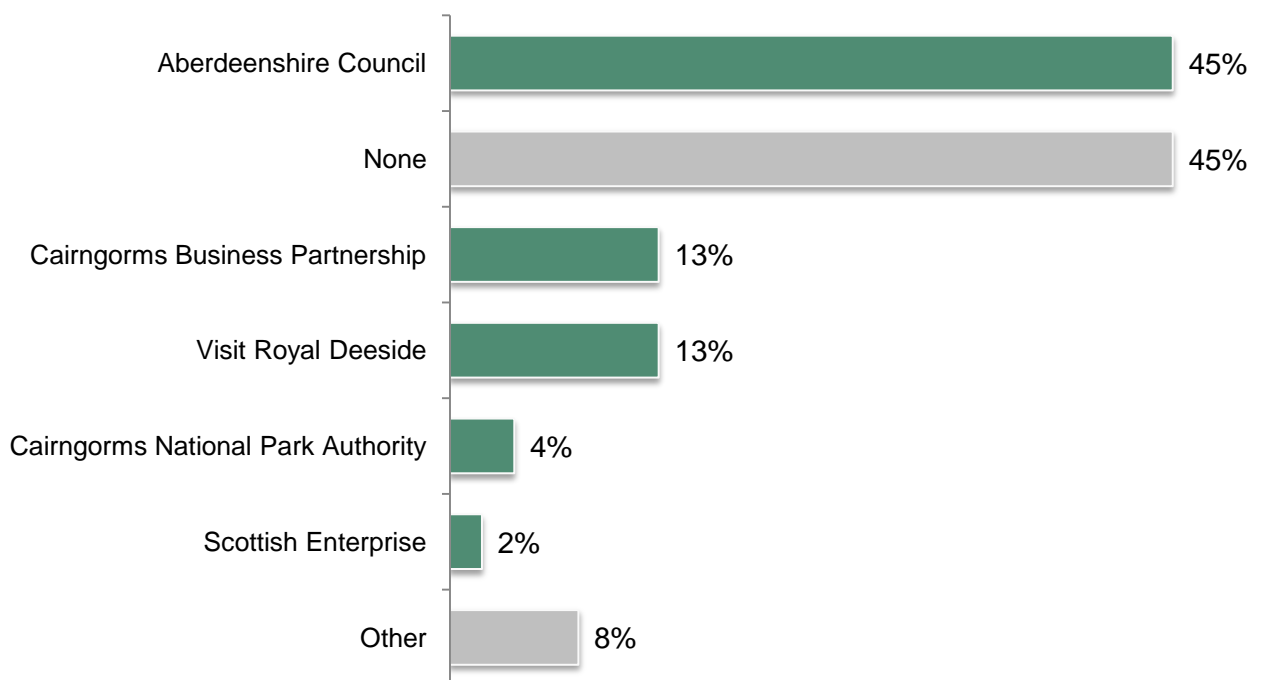
**Figure 5**

Marketing was seen as the top initiative that could help in the recovery process across all sectors and areas affected by the storm. Businesses that had seen past closures and are anticipating closures due to the storm damage have above average needs across all categories when it comes to business recovery initiatives. In particular, they demonstrated a high need for marketing support (69%), tax/ business rates relief (56%) and grant support for working capital (44%).

### Organisational support

Nearly half of businesses (45%) affected indicated at the time of taking the survey that they had received no support from any of the following organisations. That being said, it seems that Aberdeenshire Council has reached out to many businesses, in particular, those who are currently closed (81% vs. 34%).

### Which of the following organisations have provided support / assistance to your business?



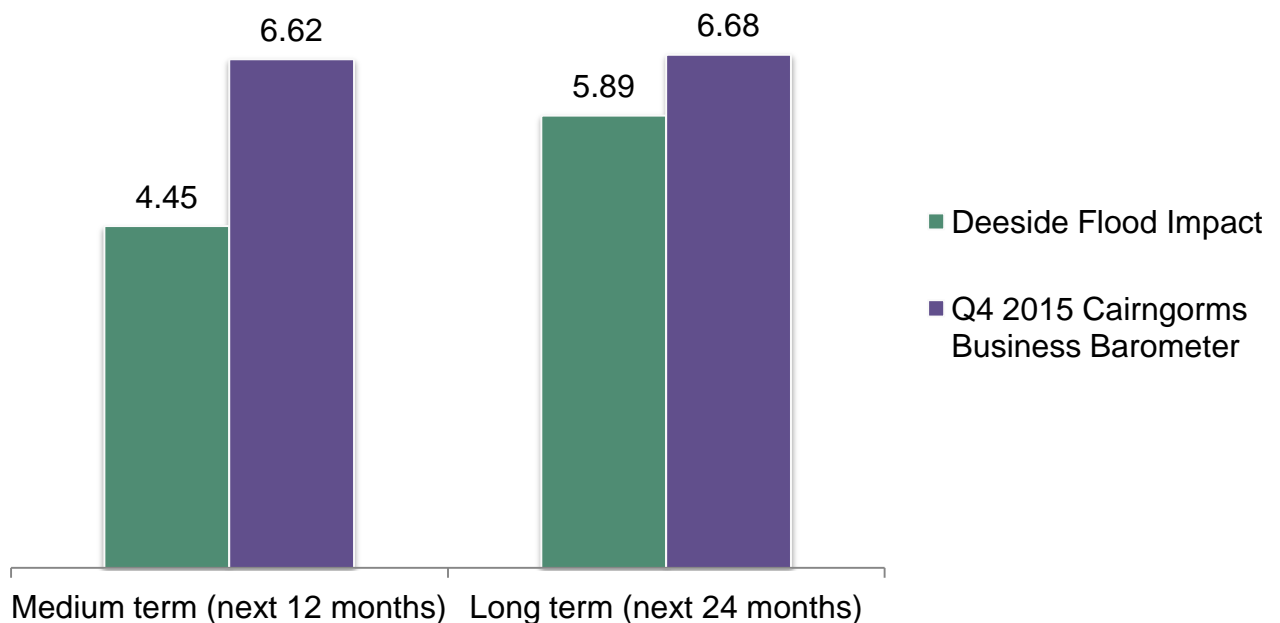
**Figure 6**

## Future prospects

In order to capture business sentiment on the future, business that were affected by the storm were asked to rate their business confidence both in the medium term and long term.

The figure below illustrates these findings alongside the latest Cairngorms Business Barometer findings.

### How would you rate business confidence



**Figure 7**

As noted elsewhere in this report, catering and retail businesses as well as those from the Ballater area seem to have been the most deeply affected by Storm Frank. This is further backed up by their much less positive outlook going forward.

Further key results were:

- Retail and catering businesses attributed a medium term confidence score of 3.41 out of 10 and a long term confidence score of 5.0 out of 10.
- Businesses located in Ballater rated medium term confidence of 3.76 out of 10 and long term confidence of 5.33 out of 10.
- Attraction providers had the most positive outlook going forward with a medium and long term score of 6.78 and 7.89, respectively.

## APPENDIX – VERBATIM COMMENTS

Verbatim comments provided by respondents to each of the four open-ended questions in the survey are provided below.

### Marketing support

***You've indicated that marketing support would be beneficial at this time. Do you have any specific idea(s) regarding marketing support that you require?***

- “A campaign that shows that Deeside is open for business. Pro-active progress reports on the fishing industry and the resurrection of Ballater.”
- “Additional support for organisations like DMO and VisitScotland to let visitors know the area is back in business and operating.”
- “Advertisement in local paper/ mag.”
- “Advertising and promotion of Royal Deeside in the press and social media by all main bodies such as Visit Scotland.”
- “Assistance getting the message out that we will be open for business for the start of the golf season (April)”
- “Ballater and Royal Deeside must have any extra initiatives to encourage new and returning visitors to the area in the wake of the flooding. I know that there is a worldwide Visit Scotland campaign going on this year but we need to highlight the east as opposed to the west and tag on to the castle trail and the whisky trail that Aberdeenshire has to offer.”
- “Basically any kind of marketing support would be helpful - Once we have something more definite on our Official re-opening date we want to put this information out as much as possible, i.e. local newspapers, Magazines, flyers etc etc”
- “Better IT all communications all round. And training schemes locally would be easier for young and returners to work”
- “Carefully worded marketing that shows that Deeside is open for business but that manages expectations and does not unnecessarily raise alarm bells that could put off visitors.”
- “Free features/advertising in press. Social media exposure”
- “General marketing of the Area to show peoples the recovery and that the businesses that are still running require their custom.”
- “I live in Braemar and there was a huge amount of publicity when the village was cut off. I recently visited a retail trade fair in Glasgow where I discovered many people still think we are cut off despite services being restored and that the area is 'closed for business'. There are many negative rumours circulating about nothing being ready to open this tourist season but it would appear that even in our worse hit neighbour's village of Ballater the caravan site and golf course do expect to open in some capacity. We need to get across the message that Deeside is open for business.”
- “It is predicted that we will be out of business for 9 months to 1 year. Help with marketing to announce we are back in business and promoting our accommodation when we reopen will be essential.”
- “Marketing and support to advertise when we are due to reopen and to encourage people to continue to visit Ballater.”

- “Marketing support to ensure that we still have visitors coming to the area, so they know we are still open for business.”
- “Marketing to promote Ballater as being "open for business". This needs to be done quickly before visitors book elsewhere for spring /summer holidays.”
- “Maybe a free advertising year for 2017 when I expect to be able to reopen to try and bring back lost customers.”
- “Need to encourage visitors to come to the area still - there already has been a reduction in the number of fishing guests.”
- “Newspapers and radio & television advertising announcing the re-opening of shops and other businesses. Royal Deeside re-visited.”
- “Perhaps countryfile doing an update. Sadly all the television coverage means that people will only think Ballater/floods. Shops etc closed - no point going there. And that will last for quite some time.”
- “None specific to us but more the area as a whole.”
- “Once local businesses have refurbished and reopened, national / international advertising to show that Ballater and the local region is still worth visiting.”
- “Only that we are open for business and trading.”
- “Opportunities to be part of campaigns highlighting the positives of the area and emphasising the huge programme of support and repair that has already taken place and is continuing.”
- “Our business may be out of action until August or later and a relaunch may be required. The website will need to be updated or replaced as the building will have many changes and we take the opportunity to go forward in a slightly different way.”
- “Perhaps targeted support by Visit Scotland in media demonstrating that large sectors of the local economy / infrastructure are untouched / quickly recovered from the floods.”
- “Positive news that Braemar is fine and open for business.”
- “Positive, nationwide media campaign to highlight that the area is very much open and welcoming people, not horror stories about how bad it was. People are cautious in case it happens again.”
- “Practical assistance in marketing the business on Google etc.”
- “Promote accessibility to all areas.”
- “Promoting positive stories about the area. Highlighting festivals, events and seasonal activities and individual businesses.”
- “Publicity drives to remind people of all that has been good about the area and that the future is better than the past.”
- “The questionnaire only allows 1 box to be ticked which is not at all helpful when the storm and flooding affected numerous and widespread issues across the spectrum of our activities as a rural estate. From housing, to accommodation, to activities, to trees - we had 1000 flattened by the flood, to roads, fences, burn blocked by bales (preventing migration of fish), river gravels over fields and so on.”
- “We have already completed and are completing returns for the Dee District Salmon Fishery Board. “
- “Restricting my comments in this questionnaire - the activity that for us that's been most affected is the fishing - hut undermined, road dug out to 6' deep, banks washed away, etc. Our focus in the last few weeks has been to rectify the damage as best we can so that we can get fishers to the river. This storm came on the back of a downturn in fishing following two very poor years of catches. We now have to rebuild our customer base. We have lowered rates and a collective marketing exercise to shout out that the Dee is

open for business and catching salmon (and sea trout) would be helpful.”

- “To advise visitors the access to the CNP via the A93, to show that there are still things to do and see in upper Deeside.”
- “We are a 9 hole community golf club and any publicity advertising our course would be a benefit. We were closed due to Storm Frank and are clearing away fallen trees and debris and will be until the end of March. We rely on volunteers to help with the clear up. We are open for business and getting that message out to our customers will give us some income.”
- “We are currently working on them - but broad support around bringing people back to Ballater.”
- “We have been very lucky in Tomintoul and I feel for the businesses and residents in the affected areas. We lost trade as customers were not travelling to Tomintoul through the worst hit areas. Any marketing drive now for the coming season to push our area would help people come and enjoy what is a wonderful part of the world.”
- “In particular I will be concentrating on Tomintoul as a day visit for customers from Aviemore / Grantown-On-Spey and the Elgin and Cockbridge routes. Tomintoul is the highest village in the Highlands and Tomintoul is the gateway to get started on the Malt Whisky Trail so any help re-enforcing this would be appreciated.”
- “All the best with your efforts - Scott Ashforth at the Whisky Castle.”
- “We need the support of the Scottish Government, VisitScotland and all partners in this area to encourage visitors to realise that Royal Deeside is still open for business.”
- “We operate an in house marketing team at Stagecoach North Scotland but support would be appreciated in generating summer promotions as tourism in Deeside is a big draw obviously for our passengers and we would like to work with anyone we can to strengthen the tourism in the area at this challenging time.”
- “We'd like to launch a high profile campaign ahead of the holiday park re-opening.”
- “When all the businesses are up and running again we need a "Ballater is back in business" campaign to counteract all the negative images shown nationally on all media.”
- “With the severe flooding in Ballater and our village of Braemar coming under the same postcode, we feel it will have a detrimental impact on Braemar as a whole.”
- “We feel as a bed & breakfast business that accommodates people from all over the world we believe that because Ballater is not fully open for business it will stop visitors coming to Braemar as a result.”
- “We have many visitors who like to visit Braemar and Ballater before heading on to Inverness and may stop coming for this reason. Any marketing which puts Braemar & Ballater as open for business whether it be a TV ad campaign targeting different areas abroad so that people are aware.”

## Organisational support

***Do you have any comments you would like to make on the support you have received from any of these organisations?***

- “A few helpful emails.”
- “Aberdeenshire Council have been excellent and very helpful.”
- “Aberdeenshire Council have been excellent. Scottish Government should do more to help.”
- “Aberdeenshire Council have responded swiftly to repair bridges and ensure roads are kept open. Mobile reception was down for a week and restored by supplier. “
- “River Dee Trust has helped with advice and volunteers to clear the river banks.”
- “Aberdeenshire Council in particular have been amazing with their help and support and temporarily removing rates charges has been a big help.”
- “Aberdeenshire Council well meaning but needed better organisation at start.”
- “All support is really welcome but our business has been "wiped out". We have insurance cover but not for our business being closed for months and not for the reinstating and strengthening of our flood defences a huge capital expense. We have been allocated the business grant of £3,000.”
- “Applied for flood grant, though haven't received anything yet.”
- “Braemar was closed for only a short time at a quiet time of year so I don't think financial support is justified unless a business actually suffered flood damage which very few did. I think support is required in marketing for the future to combat the negative publicity received. “
- “Braemar has a number of problems to face this year with the continuing closure of our main hotel the Fife Arms (apparently closed for refurbishment until 2019). Deeside is suffering because of the oilfield and loss of jobs in the Aberdeen market. As a small business owner I am fearful for the coming season.”
- “Everyone has rallied round for relief... but prevention and protection has not been fully tackled. I have been worried about the rising levels of the river bed but had not realised the lack of underpinning of the river banks or roads and not shouted loudly about what damage the lack of use of upper river banks of gravel for sustainable road building, would have on the scouring effect lower down. Mea culpa, mea maxima culpa...Europe is too big for one size/one set of regulations for the North German Plain and the Highlands, let alone extreme weather conditions...no nests for ducks here now on the boulder beds which used to be shingle. And both river and road edges should be properly founded.”
- “Excellent quick response from Aberdeenshire council staff and depts. particularly roads / engineering to sort out roads and bridge repairs.”
- “I had customers renting my property in Braemar over the Christmas and New Year period who experienced loss of power on a few occasions. We have a multi fuel stove and back up heating, but it was excellent to receive unsolicited phone calls on at least three occasions, informing me of approximate times for reconnection of services and updates on locations of nearby vans for recharging phones and emergency comms. And hot food available.”
- Was able to reassure the customers who come to us four times a year, every year, of what was happening, but they were fine with that. Only worry was about the roads to get

home, but couldn't do much about that and went home a day earlier when the A93 South was relatively free of flood water.”

- “I was also able to reassure customers now renting and through to March that it is Business as usual. In short, excellent support.”
- “In the area there has been publicity that road access is now back to normal. However I use mountain tracks for tours and they have been badly affected by the floods to the extent that parts are not accessible.”
- “Local people have been the biggest support.”
- “Lots of help received, we need to ensure work on the ground is completed and momentum continues well into the year.”
- “NFU have been excellent helping get our cottage ready for rental again. Grant of £1500 from Aberdeenshire council to improve ground drainage.”
- “Not any particular organisation. Everyone in general is happy to help if they can.”
- “Our service works remotely so we have been able to adjust.”
- “Poor positioning of large sand bags post flood.”
- “Prompt offer of and receipt of a flood grant was very helpful.”
- “Road engineering was carried out in double quick time and in poor conditions. The emergency bus service was exemplary and although goods and services had to be transferred over the old bridge by foot, communication, east, with our neighbouring towns and businesses was maintained.”
- “Roads and bridge fixed without much delay.”
- “The people of Ballater have been the best "organisation" involved. Aberdeenshire Council well their employees have done well. As have been the emergency services, if the flood had happened at night, well. In terms of the insurance loss adjusters, they are not providing the total cost of reinstatement.”
- “To date I have not received an acknowledgement of my email to [REDACTED] [REDACTED] at Roads Department. A granite wall was destroyed and water damage sustained to the building of my property. I emailed [REDACTED] outlining this damage and pointing out that I have been in touch with him before asking for action from him to stop the flood situation (for five years). No action or reply has been received. I contacted [REDACTED], local councillor who forwarded my letter to Director of Roads. She was most helpful and suggested I contact flood adviser [REDACTED] called and we went on site and he has suggested angles of improvement from the Forestry Commission whose land the floods come from. I am still waiting to hear from him how he has managed the Forestry Commission and their proposals.”
- “I know he has many to deal with and I will contact him today to see if there has been any action. Council are now going to build gully in Corsee Road but this was promised a couple of years ago and again nothing was done.”
- “To date we have received £1500 from Aberdeenshire Council. No support otherwise.”
- “Very quick repair to roads and bridges. Good information from local councillors.”
- “We received support from Aberdeenshire council and the utility people to get the electricity back on to start the dry out. Offer of volunteer help was excellent though we did not use it as we had to go through our insurance.”
- “We teamed up with Aberdeenshire Council to provide the emergency shuttle bus to Braemar which worked well but we would like to work with other businesses in the area to promote the things people can do in Deeside and the connections they can make to these places by bus.”
- “Well done Aberdeenshire Council.”



## Accommodation availability

***You've indicated that your accommodation will have less than 60% of rooms / lets / pitches available to visitors this season. Can you please briefly explain why this is?***

- “Because of the severe damage to my property I cannot open for business.”
- “Complete gutting of building and reinstating with flood proofing measures one month on and we are still waiting for a survey visit from insurance company following loss adjuster visit on 8 January we found out yesterday that they want to downgrade any payment hence the delay it could take time to even get a settlement before my works can even start initially the loss adjuster said a year would be required to complete works but we hope to project manage ourselves and are aiming to open in August.”
- “Inside house heavily damaged and uninhabitable. Availability of workmen hampering quick return to opening.”
- “The houses were flooded throughout and anticipated rebuild repair time is October 2016.”
- “We have extensive ground works. to lift our flood defences by approx five feet. We need to re build our four buildings demolished by the flood on 30th December. We have to go through the planning process. We have to raise capital by way of grant/loans for our capital investments. We will need to open the park in stages while work progresses. We have to wait until new caravans and lodges are built, transported and sited in our re constructed pitches. We cannot accept bookings in advance until we are certain that the park will be accessible and of an acceptable standard (we were graded 5 star by Visit Scotland).”

## Other comments

***Do you have any other comments you would like to make?***

- “11% in previous question is quite low; our decrease in business has been well over 50%”
- “All bodies involved in tourism have to get the message out there to British and European visitors that Scotland in general and Royal Deeside in particular is still a destination to be considered. We may have been battered but we are not broken and the visitor experience will still be second to none.”
- “Although the help within the community has been useful & heart warming further assistance would be greatly appreciated as this property was already unable to obtain flood insurance & may be lost to the village after such a devastating flood.”
- “Although we have all our rooms available, we also have self catering lodges. These lodges are all occupied by long term lets that have been evacuated from their homes. Also we are seeing a demand for hotel accommodation from workmen who have to start rebuilding Ballater etc. this will have an impact on available accommodation for tourists later in the season.”

- “Ballater has been hit very hard with the fire in the old station last year and now the flooding and closure of many businesses. It will need a great deal of support to recover and regain its status as a tourist destination.”
- “Basically during the flooding period our business effectively shut down due to road / bridge issues and adverse publicity.”
- “One major issue was the postcode confusion caused by Braemar being lumped in with Ballater thus lots of the media and organisational sites wrongly stated that Braemar had been badly hit by floods and was closed for business when in fact it could be reached from the south and had only suffered some temp superficial flooding.”
- “This postcode issue has deeper implications for insurance / future customer confidence etc and has to be sorted.”
- “Damage incurred to our properties was all external outbuildings flooded, garden walls destroyed, river bank severely damaged, river 'material' deposited over the garden.”
- “No assistance has been provided from the Scottish Government because Grants only apply to internal damage. Since ours is a self catering business we still have to get it back in shape and, as far as we can see, no assistance is available. We can only offer discounts to customers, to compensate for limiting access to the external areas of the property.”
- “Damage to river banks and access roads likely to cost £20 £30k to repair which approximately half annual turnover is so very damaging indeed. There seems to be no help available.”
- “Excellent Community spirit in Braemar.”
- “I feel that no help has been forthcoming for businesses that were not flooded. The ones who were flooded are being compensated through insurance and the government whereas the rest of us just have to sit and wait for customers to return without any financial aid. It is highly likely that some of these businesses will close leaving Ballater in a worse state than now.”
- “I think 2016 is going to be a really hard year for all of the accommodation providers, attractions, and food and retail outlets in Deeside. We will have to work hard to make sure that all of our marketing is excellent and know that Ballater is still open for business.”
- “I visited the Spring Fair at the SECC Glasgow last week for retail items for businesses to sell and I was told it was the busiest event yet. So for Scotland as a whole there are a lot of businesses with great confidence for the year ahead.”
- “Whatever marketing that takes place needs to centre on how beautiful a place it is to visit in the summer and for everything to be a positive message.”
- “I will have no business until the property is completely finished which will take 12 18 months due to extensive damage due to Storm Frank.”
- “Impact on the fishing will not be fully known for 3 to 4 years. Let’s make sure we agree to draw a line under flooding and move forward.”
- “In the previous question I have ticked the none box as we haven't even received the Aberdeenshire council Grant yet. I have a lack of confidence at the moment in the following months how does the village rise again? I would like to see more detailed future plans for the area and Ballater available to the local business so we can see and have confidence in the future.”
- “Land owners whose tracks I use charge me for access for the purpose of maintaining the tracks. However parts of the tracks are requiring to be totally rebuilt at considerable expense.”

- “My turnover for January /February and March is estimated to be reduced by 80%.”
- “On the large scheme of what has happened, we have been affected little by comparison. However we have seen a decline in visitors to us possibly because of the decline of visitors to the local areas. Good PR , will pay off not just from ourselves but the area as well to say we are open , there are attractions still open and we still have a lot to offer the 'tourist/daily visitor to the area , and by doing this we can help regenerate and raise moral to the less unfortunate businesses and attractions. We all have a part to play here.”
- “Our business is completely devastated. Today the contractors have started to remove floors and walls. Then it has to dry. Then we have to start to re build. We have no income whatsoever.”
- “Our business is made up of a number of activities. The main one is farming with carriage driving next. We use our land for carriage driving tuition, horse drawn tours and taking disabled people for carriage drives. We are unable to do so at the moment as the farm has been trashed with the floods and the ground is still too wet to use.”
- “Really our main effect was loss off paths for walks along the River. However we notice that we have not had as many people out to us since the start of the year. Whether this is a direct impact from the Storm or the oil downturn in Aberdeen I do not know.”
- “I would hope that things begin to pick up but it is certainly a difficult time across Deeside and people have fewer funds available for days out/eating out etc.”
- “See my earlier comments. The survey doesn't really suit a wide ranging business like a rural estate. The Storm hit the Dee at a time when fishing was down, compounding an existing problem. Measures going through the Scottish Parliament are set to reduce the supply of affordable rented housing and make less likely the availability of land for tenant farming. Be under no illusions that combined with the downturn in the oil & gas businesses there are hard times ahead.”
- “Self catering business usual bookings down by 3 weeks during Feb and March 2016.”
- “Still coming to terms with it. Insurance are arguing the bit. Trying to get on with it. Prospective customers are demanding an answer whether or not the house will be ready. Sorry, need some funds to get it sorted. “
- “The business community will need additional support to get back on its feet. This will have a big impact on the area and it will take time to recover. “
- “Longer term the risks of further flooding must be assessed and it may be better to move key assets such as the Caravan Park into another area as it is vital for the local community.”
- “The businesses need support but it is also important to support people who have lost their homes to get them restored and back in.”
- “The only income that we generate in the end of December beginning of January is from Hogmanay breaks and this helps towards staff costs to enable us to stay open through the winter. I don't know if this will be possible in the future as through this loss our cash flow will be undermined for next winter.”
- “The only real impact was the closure of the A93.”
- “The storm has not directly affected us and bookings for the coming season are very good and in line with previous years. However there is concern regarding the number of shops and restaurants that will be open this season and whether there will be enough to satisfy demand.”
- “There is a grant available from Aberdeenshire to help businesses get back on their feet. One month down the line they have not started considering applications. We need the

umbrella when it's still raining. Not when the sun is out. People are willing to help themselves with a little help. But the longer it takes to receive help the longer to get things back to normal village like."

- "We are in Braemar so not really affected directly the flooding."
- "We are lucky that we have been impacted only by standing water on our golf course not flooding from the river so are much luckier than most."
- "We had a 35% decrease in sales due to access problems."
- "We require financial support to build up the river bank behind our garage. The risk of storing large quantities of petrol/diesel (we are a petrol station) in close proximity to the river Clunie makes the business not financially viable should we have a similar flood. Fortunately the water from the river didn't get into our tanks during Storm Frank but we are not willing to run the risk of this happening next time. If this does happen, despite having insurance, we will be liable for any clean up costs in the river. We have had someone from Aberdeenshire Council to look at the river bank and we are waiting to hear back."
- "We want promotion to continue highlighting the collaboration of businesses and public sector along with all the help given by individuals to help businesses recover from the storm. We would like to see positive stories about the recovery in the area and looking forward to the future of Deeside and the River Dee."
- "We Will Be Back. Ballater Will Be Back. Bigger & Better."
- "We would welcome any support in order to save our holiday park from permanent closure. We are working very positively towards recreating and reviving our business and focusing on opening for limited business in 2016. We are working hard with our loyal customer base to encourage them to return to the park and we need to ensure their safety and enjoyment. It is a huge challenge for our family business."