

Impact Report 2020



Introduction.

This report outlines our emergency response to the Covid-19 pandemic during 2020.

Since the first nationwide lockdown was introduced in March 2020 the hospitality industry has been arguably the worst hit by the impact of the pandemic. The various phases of lockdown, increased regulation, curfew, and regional restrictions led to the widespread closure of countless businesses causing hardship, redundancy and uncertainty for millions of UK hospitality employees.

In response to the first national lockdown and prior to the introduction of the furlough scheme, we launched an emergency appeal and grant to provide emergency relief for people who had found themselves suddenly unemployed. Within a few hours we experienced an unprecedented level of applications with several years' worth of calls for support in just a few days.

Hospitality Action has remained active throughout the pandemic, adapting our service provision and operations to meet the demands of an industry in crisis. We are steadfastly committed to continuing to support the industry throughout 2021 and beyond.



Mark Lewis
Chief Executive
Hospitality Action



William Baxter CBE
Chairman
Hospitality Action

“I can’t honestly tell you how much this will help me in this difficult time. I’m a single parent and haven’t had any income since the beginning of the first lockdown. I’ve had to go to food banks just to feed my little girl. What an amazing thing you are doing for those in need, thank you.”

A Covid-19 Grant recipient

About Us.

We're here for the chefs, waiters, housekeepers and managers. We're here for the concierges, receptionists and kitchen porters. And we're here for every sommelier, bartender, catering assistant and cook throughout the UK.

From hotels, restaurants, pubs, bars and cafés to schools, hospitals and event venues, we're here to give everyone in hospitality the help, advice and support you need whenever times get tough.

Serious illness, mental health issues, financial difficulties, family problems, or addiction: whatever challenges you face, Hospitality Action is always here to get you back on your feet and enjoying the job again. And when it's no longer possible to work, we help people prepare for the next phase of their lives.

“Thank you so much, you have no idea how much this will help me. I was already struggling to make ends meet but it’s also my son’s birthday next week. Now I can pay my bills and ensure he has the best birthday possible in the current situation.”



Our Response to Covid-19.

2020 was a devastating year for the UK hospitality sector. Thousands of well-known and local independent businesses ceased trading and hundreds of thousands of jobs have been lost. Beyond the economic impact of the pandemic, its effect on mental wellbeing has also been profound.

Hospitality Action's response.

We were one of the first grant-making charities in the UK to react to the pandemic, and quickly deployed a range of emergency measures including financial assistance, outreach and increased mental health service provision. As the situation evolves in 2021 we continue to adapt our offering and provide innovative, timely and practical ways to support the industry we serve.

In 2020 we spent **£1.36m** and awarded **4,698 grants**, compared with £733k on 2,282 grants in 2019. This is an **86% increase** on funds spent and the most the charity has ever spent in a calendar year, with a **106% increase in households supported**.

We maintained and evolved delivery of our Employee Assistance Programme, which offers a comprehensive package of independent counselling, assistance and advice, enabling operators to invest in their teams' wellbeing, morale and performance. Through 2020, approaching **150k employees** were able to access the programme.

Our Helpline received over **6,000 calls** in comparison to just 500 the year prior.

We placed additional focus on Golden Friends, our outreach scheme to keep loneliness and isolation at bay for industry retirees.

To further support the mental wellbeing of the industry, we also developed a free online advice hub with over 20 pages of resources and videos.

“Having to home-school my child while struggling to pay rent and keep food on the table has been the hardest thing I’ve ever done in my life. Thank you so much for helping out during such difficult times.”

Financial Support.

When the first lockdown was announced in March 2020 thousands of jobs were lost in a matter of days.

As one of the first UK charities to announce that emergency financial help would be made available, we experienced an unprecedented and sustained surge in applications. In March we saw more than three years' worth of website traffic in a single weekend, which resulted in **147,000 website visits, 2,270 helpline calls and 20,000 applications** for our assistance.

Our initial response was to deploy a rapid-access emergency hardship fund of £250 per applicant. The grant was designed to provide for basic necessities such as food or utilities while applicants sought Government help or alternative employment. Our eligibility criteria were widened and the application process simplified to allow more people to apply.

As it became clear that the crisis was deepening we evolved our support accordingly, augmenting our £250 grant with additional sums for those with families, experiencing delays in accessing state support or facing eviction.

In parallel to our emergency response we have continued to assist people facing longer-term hardship, including those experiencing life-changing illness, debt, bereavement, domestic abuse, mental health or addiction problems.



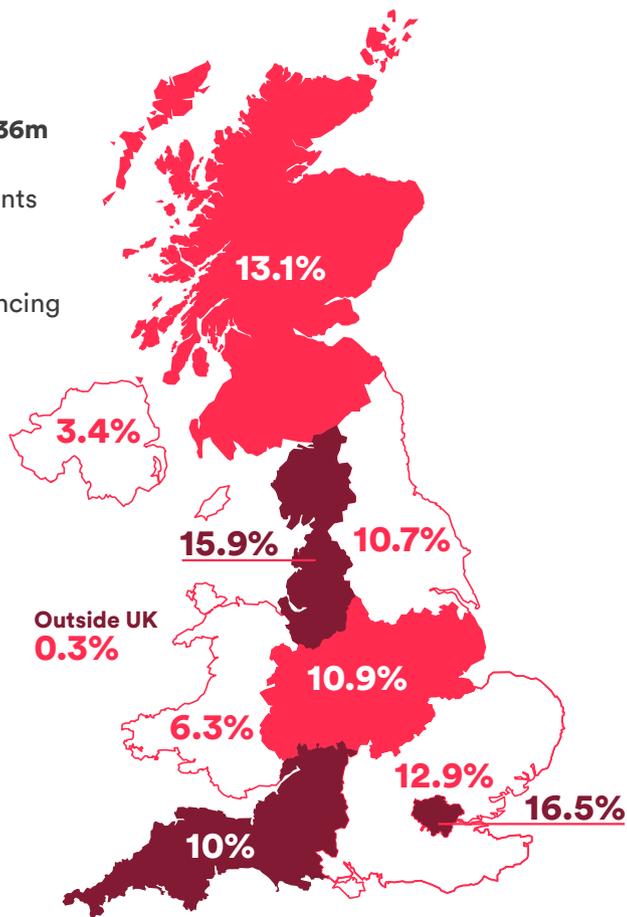
2020 impact at a glance.

We increased our grant spending from £733k in 2019 to over **£1.36m** in 2020, which enabled us to award **4,698** grants to hospitality households compared with 2,282 in 2019, a **106%** increase in grants awarded year-on-year.

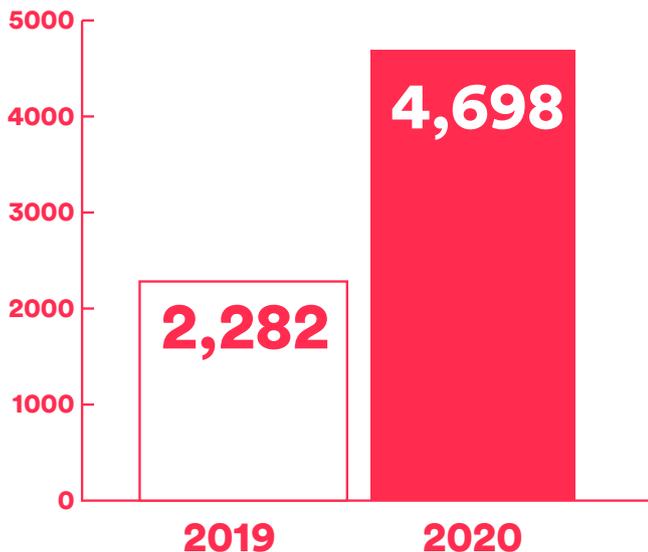
3,268 of these grants were specifically to support those experiencing financial hardship due to Covid-19.

95% of grants expenditure in 2020 was to help with poverty alleviation due to the pandemic.

We supported people across all age groups, from across the UK.



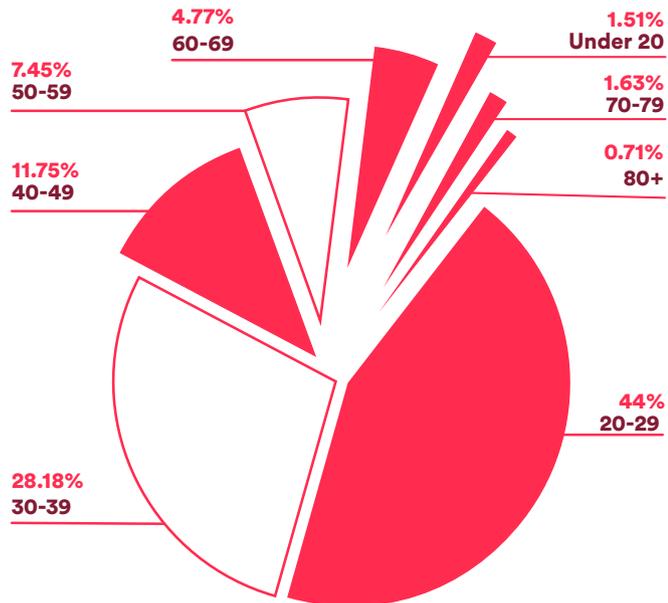
Number of grants awarded comparison.



2020 Reasons for Awarding Grants (inc. Covid-19 Grants).



2020 Grants Breakdown by Age.



Employee Assistance Programme.

Our Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) has provided a safety net for hospitality people impacted by Covid-19. Our specialist, independent and confidential advice, support and assistance continues to address the unique issues faced by hospitality people during the pandemic. Our EAP has given our 345 clients peace of mind that their employees (approaching 150k, combined) have had somewhere to turn to, during an extraordinary year of curfews, lockdowns and furloughing. In particular, it has supported those whose mental health has been affected by Covid-19.

The programme also provides online counselling and uninterrupted access to expert legal, financial and family support.

Since lockdown commenced our Helplines have seen calls increase by 175% and visits to our Well Online Hub are at an all-time high.

If you would like further information about our EAP please email: eap@hospitalityaction.org.uk

Golden Friends outreach work.

In 2020 we established a network of 250 volunteer telephone befrienders who placed over 3,700 calls to our Golden Friends and their partners (well over 2000 industry retirees) to offer moral and practical support. Where necessary, the most vulnerable cases were referred to specialist charities or the local NHS. In addition, we actively assisted industry retirees with accessing local community support groups for help with delivery of prescriptions, essential food supplies, and even dog walking.

“Hospitality Action’s EAP offers such a wide-ranging level of support services, allowing us to encourage positive mental health and wellbeing for all of our people, both inside and outside of work.”

Buzzworks Holdings

“The scheme means everything to me. Just knowing that someone cares and I can ring for advice stops me worrying. Thank you.”

Golden Friend

Mental Health Campaign.

We are one of the few organisations in the industry who offer clinical services, such as counselling and parenting support. In recent years we have supported hospitality workers and their families dealing with issues of anxiety, depression, addiction and self-harm—all of which sadly affect many people in our sector.

With the onset of the pandemic we refocused our campaign developing a free online advice hub designed to provide advice on the most common mental health issues we encountered on our helpline. Over time the advice provided on the Wellbeing Hub has kept pace with the ever-changing situation faced by our industry as the pandemic developed and now features over 20 resource pages with videos and downloads on key issues.

Self-harm and suicide remain a concern so we also launched a new half-day course for managers, HR teams and health and safety specialists on the subject of suicide awareness so they could support colleagues, signpost them to appropriate help and safeguard their own mental wellbeing in the process.

“The first thing I would say is, simply: let it out. Speak to someone you can trust and talk to. That’s when my life started to change and the healing began.”

**Charlie Hodson,
Chef-Consultant,
Hodson & Co**



Fundraising in Lockdown.

We saw most of our traditional fundraising programmes disrupted last year. Overnight we had to remodel our income streams and messaging and get creative.

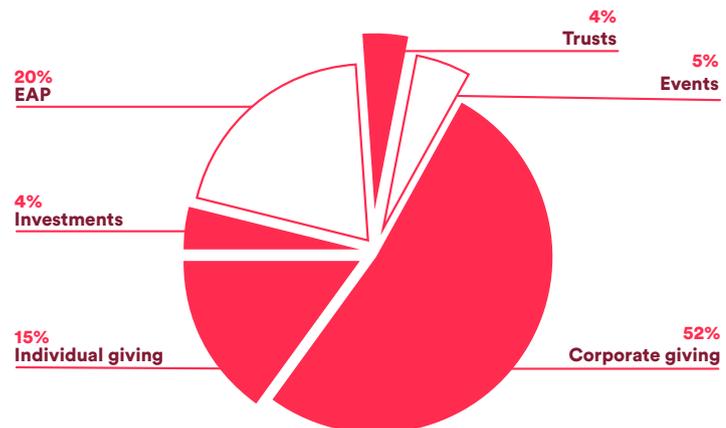
For example, at the peak of the first lockdown we devised our inaugural **20,000 Mile Hospitality Challenge**. This bespoke event called upon supporters to collectively cycle, jog, run or walk the length of the entire UK coastline. Our challenge caught the mood of the industry and saw 560 participants travel 20,296 miles and raise over £75,000 in our honour.

As venues reopened, we asked operators to stock **Invisible Chips** as a menu item, as a light-hearted alternative to adding a charity donation to the bill. All sales help us to support hospitality families in financial crisis: by buying a bowl of nothing, customers are helping HA make a tangible difference to hospitality lives. Our Invisibles are 0% fat and 100% charity. www.invisiblechips.org.uk

2020 also saw hundreds of companies and individuals raise many thousands of pounds in our name. Our supporters brewed beers, distilled gins, baked cookies, and stitched facemasks, all to help our hospitality brothers and sisters through their innovative and imaginative fundraising.



2020 Income.



Summary.

Since March 2020 Hospitality Action has worked tirelessly to support the countless hospitality people whose lives have been impacted by Covid-19. We've helped thousands of families put food on the table and keep a roof over their heads. We've provided a safety net for hospitality retirees facing isolation. And we've worked hard to protect the mental and emotional wellbeing of our most vulnerable colleagues.

It will take the industry many years to recover, but no matter what the future holds and with your support, we'll continue to protect hospitality folk, providing financial and psychological support to those most in need.

“I was falling behind on my rent and trying to live off minimal amounts to pay it; your grant will not only ease my stress but also keep me with a place to live, even after this is all over. So, thank you so much. God bless you and what you do for others.”

A Covid-19 Grant recipient

If you need our support, email
help@hospitalityaction.org.uk

If you would like to get involved, email
fundraising@hospitalityaction.org.uk

We've got you.

Hospitality Action

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Reg Charity Number. 1101083

We've got you.