



Kate Forbes MSP  
Cabinet Secretary for Finance  
The Scottish Government  
St. Andrew's House  
Regent Road  
Edinburgh EH1 3DG

Scottish Country Sports Tourism Group  
Croft Cottage  
Trochry, PH8 ODY

2 April 2020

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

I am writing to you today in my capacity as Chair of the Scottish Country Sports Tourism Group (SCSTG) to highlight what appears to be a significant oversight with respect to the Scottish Government's financial support for businesses dealing with the Covid – 19 pandemic.

#### Small Business Support Grant

The small business support grant which constitutes a one off £10,000 grant, has been made available to small businesses in Scotland. This is to be welcomed as such a provision is particularly important in rural areas where the economy is most fragile and that sum can often make a very positive contribution. However, I cannot understand the exclusion of "deer forests", "game larders" and "shootings" from this support and trust it is an oversight and would urge you to remove them from the list of excluded sites.

#### Sporting Rates

Sporting businesses make a significant contribution to the overall Scottish economy, particularly in rural Scotland. Given the challenges rural businesses and individuals are currently facing it is my view that the payment of sporting rates could prove very difficult this year, and I would urge you to waive the requirement to pay sporting rates this financial year.

#### Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Support Grant

Country sports businesses also make a crucial contribution to Scotland's tourism industry, often in the most remote and fragile areas. According to a report published in 2015, the overall value of country sports tourism in Scotland is £155 million. The exclusion of country sports businesses from the retail, hospitality and leisure grant could impact heavily of other businesses who depend heavily on the country sports trade to bring in revenue, especially in the low season when the country sports person may be their main customer. I would urge you to reconsider the availability of this grant to all businesses operating in the country sports market.

The SCSTG will look forward to the Scottish Government rectifying the above omissions and as a matter of urgency provide the necessary support for these businesses, just as it is being provided in other sectors. I trust that you will be able to do so as soon as is feasibly possible and I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Troughton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sarah Troughton  
Chair  
Scottish Country Sports Tourism Group  
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