**Today’s briefing from the First Minister**

Good evening,

I’m sure you will have seen / read the statement given by First Minister Nicola Sturgeon at a media briefing today, 22 March. This statement included the message:

“To our hotels, B&Bs and self-catering accommodation – you should not be accepting visitors.  Provide accommodation for your staff and make yourselves available to help essential workers and support essential services – that is all.

"Scotland is a warm and welcoming country and I fervently hope it’s not too long before we are opening our arms and our countryside to visitors again – but right now our priority must be to protect people from this virus, protect our NHS and protect Scotland.”

We fully support this additional guidance from the Scottish Government. It has become apparent in recent days that people have not been following current guidelines and putting lives at risk.

We welcome this guidance for visitors, as well as for our tourism operators and we understand that it is a particularly worrying and stressful time for everyone.

We want to protect our communities right across the country for the future as they are what make the visitor experience so special. There will be a time when we can welcome visitors back with open arms to enjoy all that is special about beautiful Scotland – but now is a time for staying safe and close to home.

Please take a look at the [full statement from the First Minister.](https://eur05.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Flinks.visitscotland.mkt4809.com%2Fctt%3Fkn%3D4%26ms%3DMjMwMzc3MzYS1%26r%3DMzE1NzI4ODkxMTc5S0%26b%3D0%26j%3DMTcwMTI5MzI2MQS2%26mt%3D1%26rt%3D0&data=02%7C01%7C%7Cce49c33762a447952a6508d7ce93e4ff%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C637205006899614755&sdata=3aDEF%2BORGZ2%2FQkhAq5HHTLQoUX9xSn5BHXHpbQHjUEo%3D&reserved=0" \o "Protected by Outlook: http://links.visitscotland.mkt4809.com/ctt?kn=4&ms=MjMwMzc3MzYS1&r=MzE1NzI4ODkxMTc5S0&b=0&j=MTcwMTI5MzI2MQS2&mt=1&rt=0. Click or tap to follow the link." \t "_blank)

Kind regards,

**Malcolm Roughead OBE
Chief Executive, VisitScotland Today’s briefing from the First Minister**

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Kind regards,

**Malcolm Roughead OBE
Chief Executive, VisitScotland**