

# IMPACT OF THE LOST BANK HOLIDAY SATURDAY - TRADITIONALLY THE BUSIEST IN THE WEDDING CALENDAR - TO WEDDING BUSINESSES & COUPLES

Submitted by: Sarah Haywood Ltd

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#WhatAboutWeddings Campaign

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## THE HUGE IMPACT OF ONE LOST BANK HOLIDAY DAY TO WEDDING BUSINESSES & COUPLES

This Bank Holiday Saturday, historically the busiest wedding day in the calendar:

4,452 Weddings will not take place in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland

133,560 people will not go to work

213,696 workers will not have provided their services

TOTAL: 347,256 workers impacted in just one lost day

445,200 guests will not be attending a wedding this Saturday

At least 107,000 weddings have been postponed or cancelled since lockdown, across the UK

The wedding sector is worth £14.7bn every year\* meaning weddings contribute more to the UK economy than live sports events and three times that of live arts and cultural events.

“The wedding sector was one of the first impacted and we’re now one of the last to open,” says Nina Beer, wedding coordinator and consultant and #WhatAboutWeddings campaigner. “We’ve lost hundreds of wedding days. Hundreds of thousands of businesses, individuals and livelihoods are affected and these numbers don’t show the real human cost behind the loss of the summer wedding season.”

The silent army of wedding workers is made up of thousands of mostly female led, small and micro businesses in every corner of the UK who collectively drive the UK economy in a sector where size is no barrier to success for every kind of wedding business. However, with the summer season virtually over and the vast majority of business for the rest of this year postponed, even the most robust businesses are struggling. The loss of just one day is keenly felt, right around the country.

Nina continues “On Bank Holiday Saturday, I should have been coordinating two weddings and working with more than 50 suppliers just on the day itself. That’s all gone, for this Saturday and for countless others. The irony is that we’ve not lost the business - it’s moved to next year in the vast majority of cases - but the sector faces months with no income before we get to those 2021 dates and my business needs to still be there.”

In Cheshire, the team at Peckforton Castle should have been working on their 65th back-to-back wedding. In Oxfordshire, wedding celebrant Tamryn Settle should have been conducting her last wedding of the summer and in Surrey, LaToya & Ajay Patel of SW Events should have been preparing for an Asian wedding for 300 guests. However these suppliers, and hundreds of thousands like them, won’t be working, or earning, this weekend.

An August survey conducted by the #WhatAboutWeddings campaign team highlighted the fact that if no tailored financial support is received this year, almost a quarter of wedding businesses will close. Suppliers and businesses of all sizes are calling on the government to assist them to 'get to the other' side so that the sector is able to make a significant contribution to the economic recovery of every part of the country, from large cities to small rural communities.

And it's not just wedding professionals who are fighting for support: unlike many other sectors, wedding professionals have retained their customers who are mostly not asking for refunds. Couples are backing their suppliers, and we appreciate the support of so many of them who have joined the #WhatAboutWeddings Campaign and demanding support for everyone affected.

Bride-to-be Andera Thomas, who was due to get married on Saturday, explains:

" August bank holiday Saturday is basically gold dust in the wedding world and we were so happy to have secured our dream venue, and all of the extremely talented suppliers we wanted. Then COVID happened. Our carefully saved money no longer felt safe. Although we've now postponed our date we held on for the longest time in hope. Of course everyone's safety is of the highest priority but a close second really should be some clarity of what we're looking to achieve in the near future so we can start to plan and get excited again rather than just continually teetering on edge, waiting and crossing our fingers."

For couples, their lost day will always be a reminder of what should have been, the start of the next chapter of their lives together that has been taken away from them. For businesses each and every lost day means another bout of gut wrenching uncertainty as to what the future holds. For couples and businesses alike, lost days cannot be allowed to become a lost year.

-- ENDS --

#### NOTES TO EDITORS

The #WhatAboutWeddings campaign has been created to highlight awareness of the critical need for assistance for the £14.7bn wedding industry. Wedding suppliers, venues and couples are paralysed as a result of the pandemic restrictions which have not been lifted in any recognizable form for weddings. We have gained significant traction, MPs have asked questions in the House and we have trended on Twitter.

For further details, please visit [whataboutweddings.co.uk](http://whataboutweddings.co.uk) .

The campaign can provide access to regional wedding workers available for interview as well as our campaign spokespeople around the country.

#### \*KEY FACTS

1. 278,599 weddings per year in the UK
2. Total £14.7bn of direct spend on weddings:
  - £9.4bn spend on the day itself
  - £3.2bn spend on retail (outfits, rings, gift list)
  - £2.1bn travel, tourism and pre-wedding events (honeymoon, stag & hen, wedding weekend related)

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3. Approximately 250,000 people depend on work related to delivering the day itself, with an estimated 150,000 more in support functions – a total of 400,000 involved in weddings

#### CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

Tamryn Settle, Wedding Celebrant at Wild & Oak and Senior Writer at Love My Dress

tamrynlawrence@gmail.com|t. 07876 214597

Nina Beer, Director of Occasion Queens letschat@occasionqueens.com|t. 07742 037575