



Industry Experts Volunteer To Help D&G Businesses Plan For Restart

Dumfries & Galloway's food and drink brand, Savour the Flavours, has launched a series of industry knowledge sharing meetings to help local businesses restart successfully as lockdown is eased. The sessions are led by experts in business development in the food and drink and hospitality sectors, who are volunteering to help local businesses recover.

Alistair Tait of Tait Enterprise Development, who specialises in business development for family and owner managed businesses across Scotland, will be leading the first expert session on Tuesday 16th June. He said: "Survive, Revive and Thrive was a phrase I heard the other day, and I think it's a really valuable way to think about how local businesses can get through this economic crisis. During our session I want to look at some of the financial issues that we need to address now, and in the near future, for businesses to be able to thrive in the new normal - whatever normal might become.

"I'll break this down into a few key practical steps to help businesses guide their finances during this process, and I'll look at the things business owners need to keep doing, improve and to stop doing in their business. I'm really pleased to be working with Savour the Flavours in this way to help business owners make conscious decisions about how we can get local businesses to thrive again."

Sandra Reid of Fare Consulting, one of Scotland's leading hospitality and catering consultants, will lead the second session on Tuesday 23rd June. Sandra will focus on interpreting the industry covid guidance due to be published next week, as well as offering practical suggestions for business restart. Sandra commented: "Collaboration is the key to success at this time and Savour the Flavours' approach to sharing knowledge and ideas is a fantastic resource for the region's food and drink businesses. I've been working with the Association of Scotland's Visitor Attractions and other industry groups recently with online training and business support, and from the smallest sole trader to large national operators; everyone in the industry is struggling.



“Food and drink businesses urgently need guidance now to support their reopening plans. So my webinar has been developed specifically for Savour the Flavours and Dumfries & Galloway’s businesses. It will look at steps to reopening in light of the new covid guidance, with practical advice on operational and safety requirements, staff and customer welfare, and assessing commercial viability.”

The expert advisory sessions will take place online via Zoom and are free for any food, drink or hospitality business in Dumfries & Galloway to attend. Booking is open now on www.savourtheflavours.co.uk and businesses will have the opportunity to ask specific questions and to share knowledge and experience with other local business owners.

Liz Ramsay of Savour the Flavours said:

“We are so pleased that Alistair and Sandra are able to meet with local businesses and share their valuable expertise through our online meetings. This is what Savour the Flavours is all about – people coming together to help each other, and right now our local businesses need all the help they can get. From financial modelling to practical operational adaptations; this advice is exactly what business owners are crying out for.”

Savour the Flavours has undertaken a range of business support activities since it relaunched just three weeks ago. A major regional survey into local consumer buying intentions is currently underway and has attracted more than a thousand responses within two days. The findings from that survey will be shared with local businesses and business support organisations next week to help inform local economic recovery.

Lorna Young of Savour the Flavours, who is also a member of Scotland’s Food Tourism Recovery Group, said:

“Businesses need help now and we need to move quickly and decisively to provide business owners with as much support, data, knowledge and expertise as we can to make sure they can take confident, informed decisions as they reopen after lockdown. We know the hospitality sector in particular is going to face some serious challenges in restarting. It’s a deeply worrying time for many people working in the industry.

“In Dumfries & Galloway our whole economy is based mainly on small and micro businesses, and self employed people. That means our local economy is more structurally fragile than many areas, but it also

means our businesses can be nimble, move quickly and hopefully adapt more easily to these changed times. That's our focus right now. Helping as many businesses as possible adapt their trading in order to stay viable so that as many local jobs as possible can be protected. The advice and support being offered by Alistair and Sandra is absolutely invaluable in helping to achieve that."

For more information, or to register to take part in one of the industry meetings, visit:

www.savourtheflavours.co.uk.

Ends

Notes for Editors

- Savour the Flavours was an industry-led food and drink project in Dumfries & Galloway that ran between 2009-2013 to boost the regional food and drink industry.
- The brand has been relaunched as a series of online industry discussion groups to support businesses.
- It is being done on a voluntary basis by the team who previously ran the organisation - Liz Ramsay, Lorna Young and Ian and Rachel Findlay - to provide a single voice for the industry.
- The industry-only online meetings are open to any business operating in the food and drink or hospitality sector in Dumfries & Galloway.
- Industry feedback from each meeting will be uploaded to the Savour the Flavours website.
- The regional consumer survey can be found at: www.savourtheflavours.co.uk/survey