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# **Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire: Quarterly Business Monitor #5**

**Oct 2022**



# Survey Background

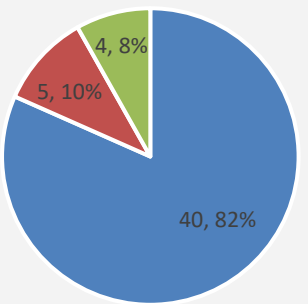


- Purpose of survey: quarterly monitor to gather industry feedback on business performance
- Key themes:
  - Business performance in most recent quarter
  - Enquiries and bookings status for next quarter and beyond
  - Investment activity
  - Levels of optimism in short, medium and longer term
- Survey live 10<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> October 2022
- Distributed to 1677 individuals via standalone newsletter
- 49 eligible responses received: 2.9% response rate
- Distribution widened to include LinkedIn and Twitter

# RESPONDING BUSINESS PROFILES:

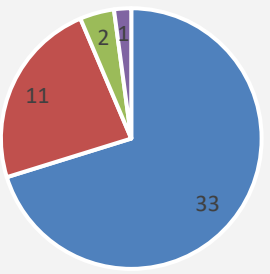
Majority of responding businesses were Aberdeenshire based (just over 8 in 10). **5 in 10** were from the accommodation sector, with self-catering being the most represented sector overall (11 businesses). Two-thirds of the sample were micro businesses (those with less than 10 employees). Do bear these profiles in mind when reviewing the results.

### Business Location



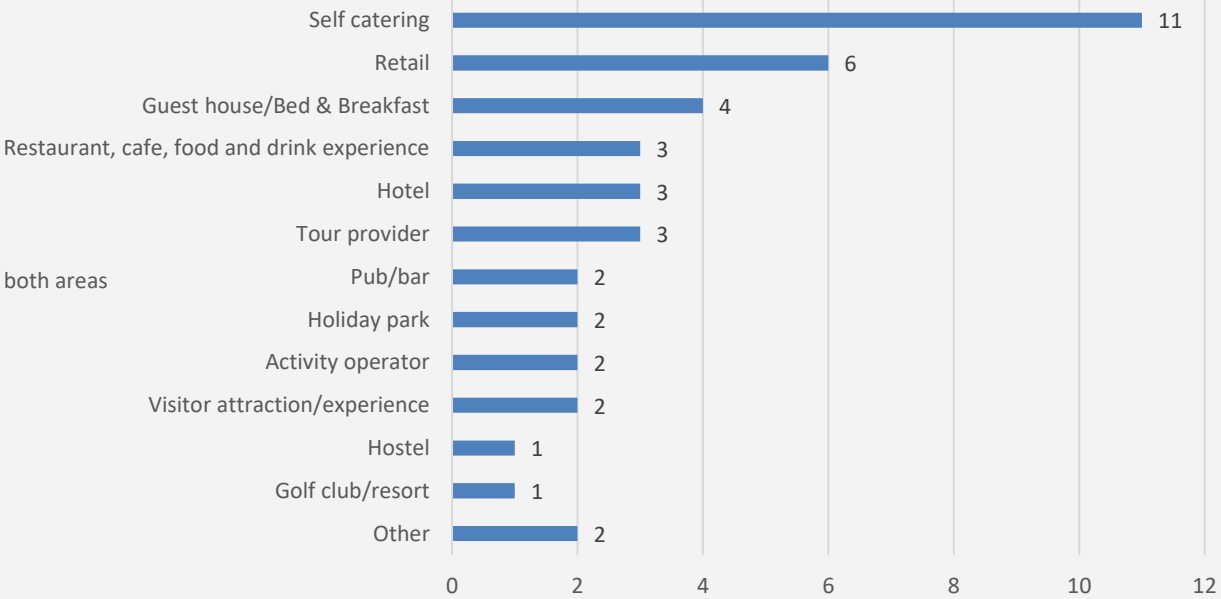
■ Aberdeenshire ■ Aberdeen ■ My business covers both areas

### Business Size



■ Micro (<10 employees) ■ Small (11-49 employees)  
■ Medium (50-249 employees) ■ Large (>250 employees)

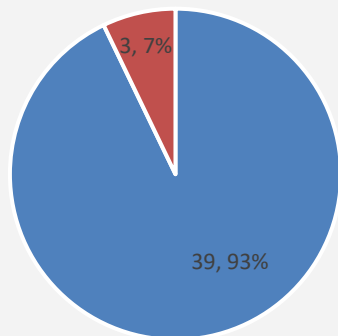
### Sector



# JULY TO SEPTEMBER – TRADING OVERVIEW:

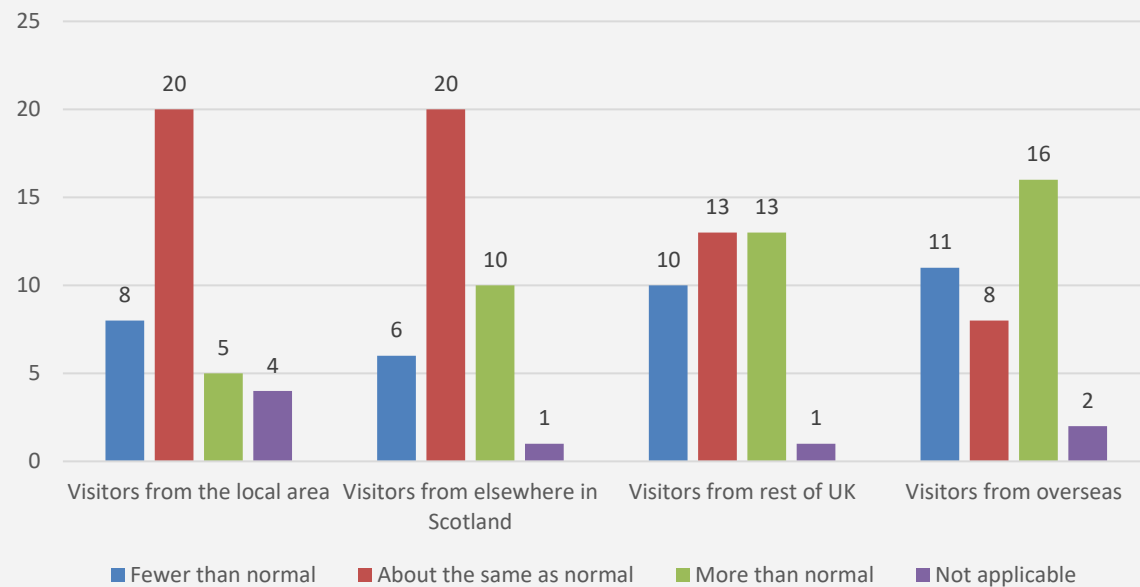
Vast majority of respondents were open for business July to September. Respondents were asked: “Compared to what you would normally expect at this time of year, did you see more, fewer or about the same number of visitors this past quarter from each of the following areas?” Results indicate that visitor numbers from the local area and elsewhere in Scotland returning to normal. Notably, the most frequently selected response for visitors from overseas was "more than normal".

Trading past quarter?



■ Yes ■ No

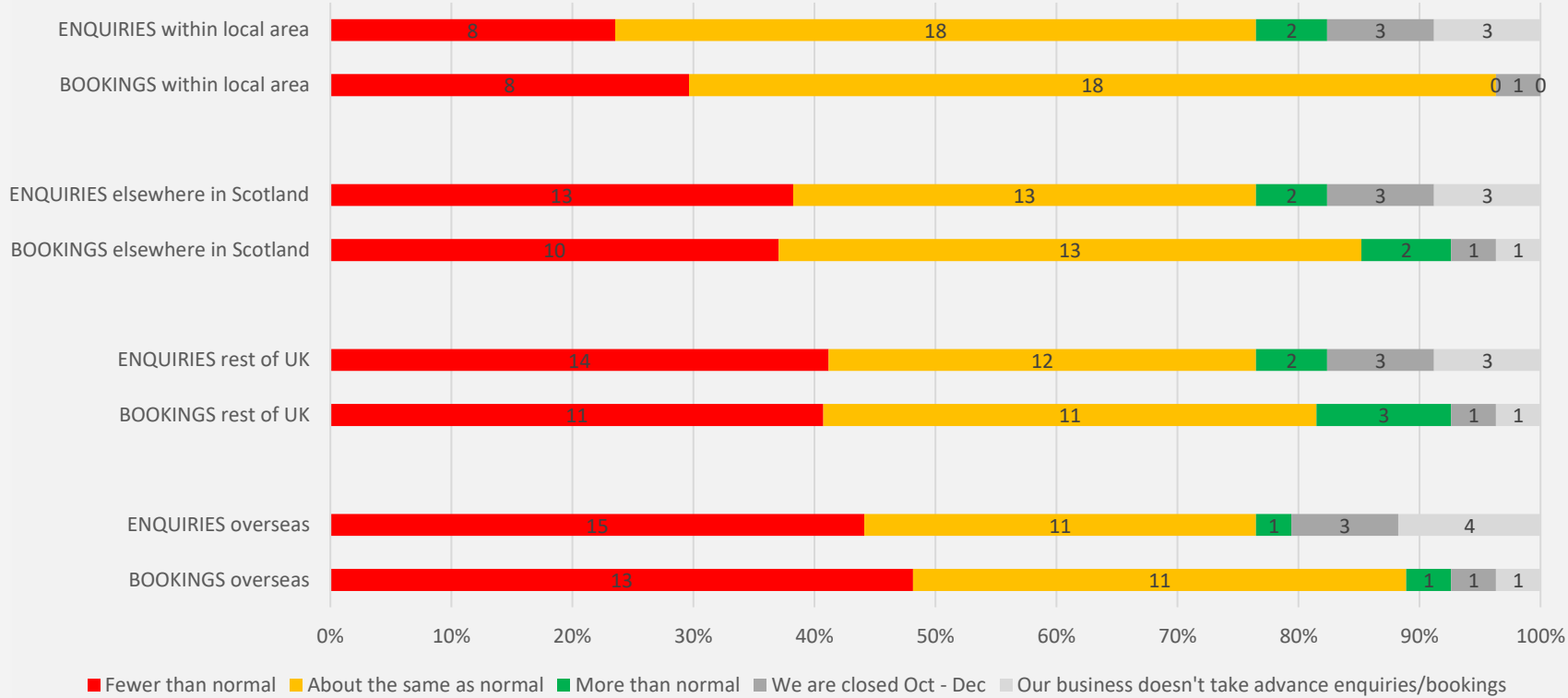
Visitor Profile: July to September 2022



# ENQUIRIES AND BOOKINGS – OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2022:

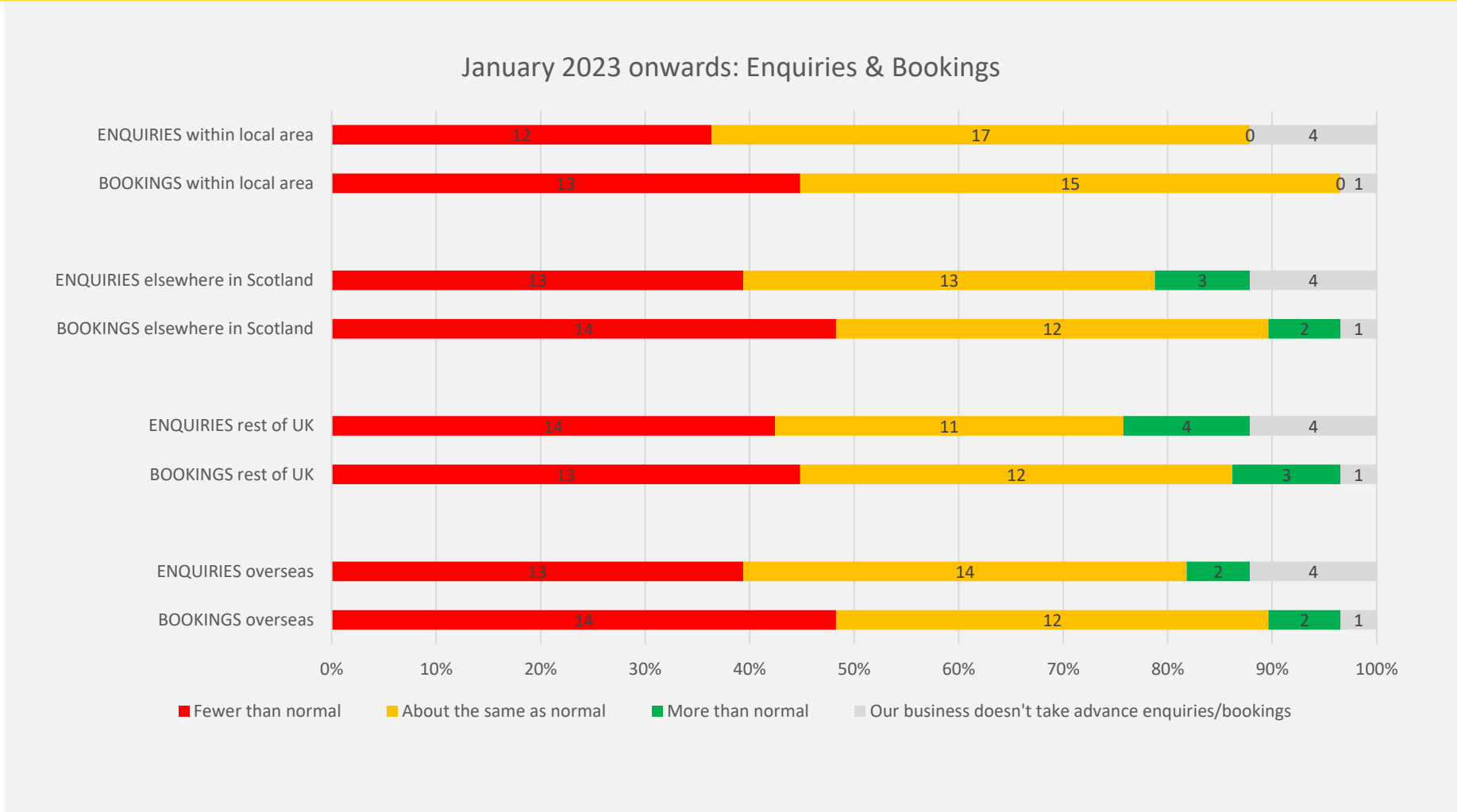
“Compared to what you would normally expect at this time of year, are you seeing more, fewer or about the same number of **enquiries** from each of the following areas?” A follow-on question asked about **bookings**. Whilst a good chunk of businesses are stating enquiries and bookings are “same as normal”, there are still significant amounts of red in the chart below, most likely reflecting the continued uncertainty regarding rising costs. Additionally, consumers may be looking to go further afield with any discretionary spend they do have available to them.

Enquiries and Bookings: October to December 2022



# ENQUIRIES AND BOOKINGS – JANUARY 2023 ONWARDS:

A similar chart, but this time looking past the next 3 months, so into the new year and beyond. The large amount of red, where respondents have stated enquiries and bookings are “fewer than normal”, suggest consumers are delaying bookings, and indeed enquiries, due to the number of unknowns within the industry at the moment. It is worth noting a significant number of respondents left this question blank.



# Enquiries/Bookings Comments



- 13 respondents chose to provide commentary

While some continue to book further ahead and put in regular dates which is good, other bookings are more last minute or shorter lead times

*Self-catering, Aberdeenshire*

Forward bookings appear strong

*Self-catering, Aberdeenshire*

Although we don't take bookings, many customers are checking to see if we're open due to the general downturn in hospitality, with pubs closing or reducing hours across the country

*Pub/bar, Aberdeenshire*

Still concern about flying and public transport, so self-catering is very safe and reliable option

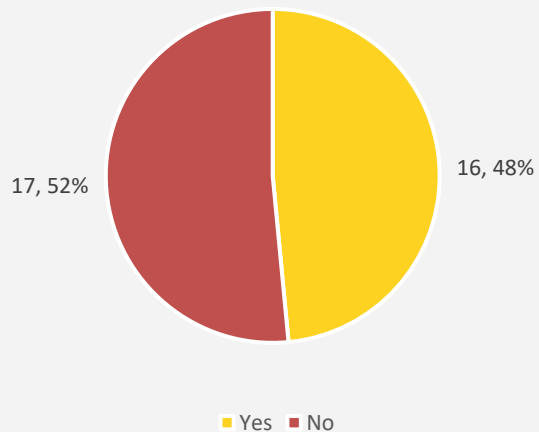
*Self-catering, Aberdeenshire*

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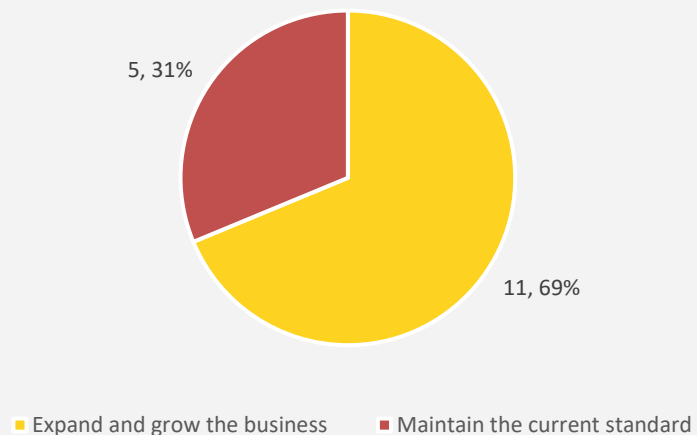
# INVESTMENT PLANS IN THE NEAR FUTURE:

Just under half of respondents have plans to significantly invest in their business in the near future. Of those who replied positively to investment (16), just over two-thirds said this was investment to expand and grow rather than maintain the current standard.

Do you plan to invest significantly in the near future?



Purpose of the investment



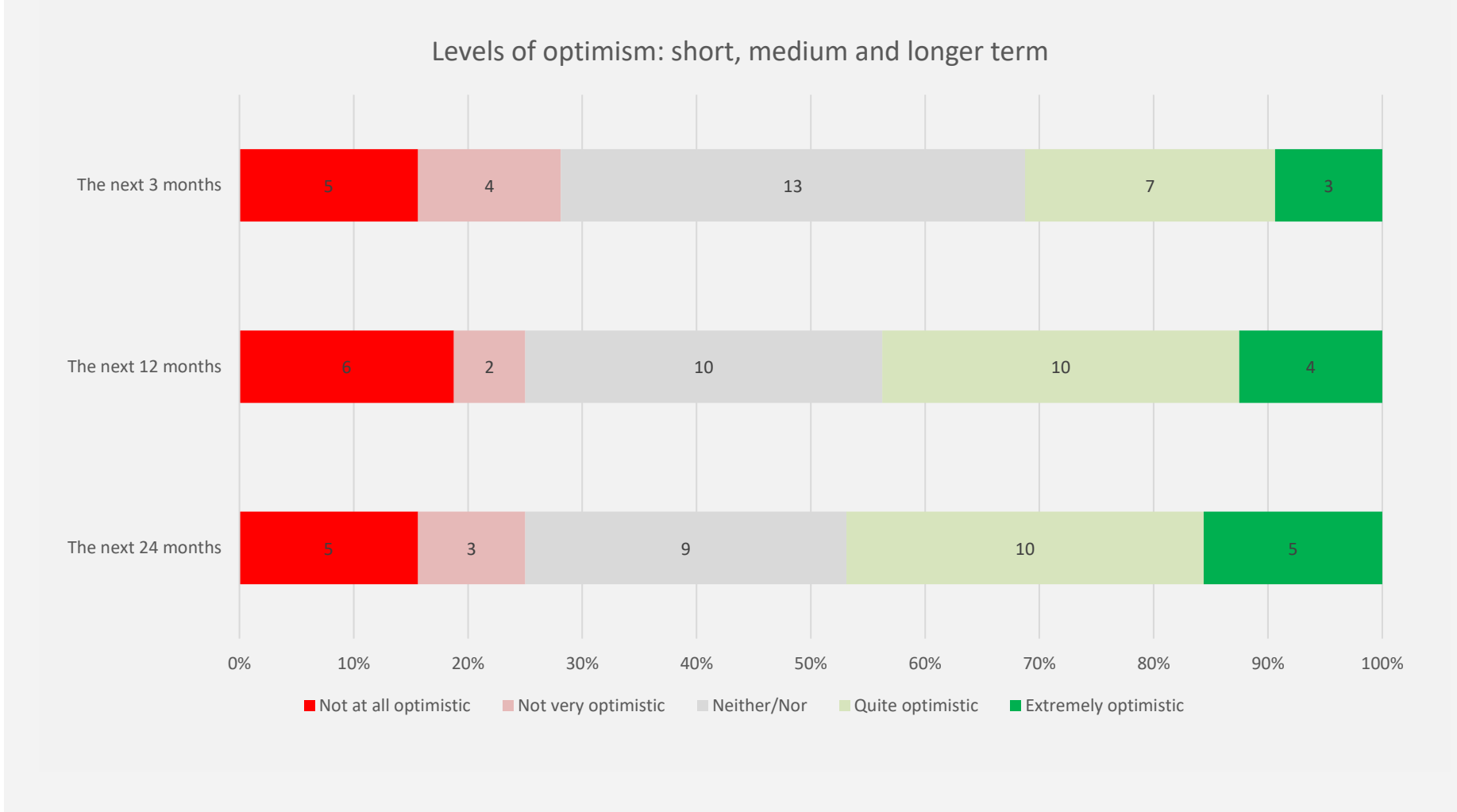
***Reasons for no investment in near future included:***

- Short term licensing regulations
- Market uncertainty
- Energy costs
- Fear of low footfall and low spend
- Post COVID recovery has not materialised



# BUSINESS PERFORMANCE OPTIMISM LEVELS:

Whilst optimism does increase, slightly, with time, the outlook is fairly similar for the short, medium and long term. As with the previous quarter, the most selected category for the short to medium term was “neither/nor”, perhaps a reflection on this time of continued uncertainty where concerns regarding COVID are still present, consumer behaviour is affected by new challenges (transport disruption; cost of living), and business-related costs continue to rise.





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