

### **New car and van registrations plummet during Covid crisis**

[Latest Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders \(SMMT\) figures](#) published yesterday show a record fall in new car registrations with April figures down -97.3% as coronavirus shuts showrooms.

April saw 4,321 new car registrations as deliveries continue to frontline workers and organisations. In stark contrast, there were 161,064 new cars registered in April last year.

The SMMT are predicting that the year will end with around 1.68 million new car registrations during 2020. The lowest since 1992.

The picture was equally as bleak in the new van market with new light commercial vehicle registrations down -86.2% in April compared to the same period last year.

Year-to-date performance for both car and van registrations is almost half that of 2019.

### **Business rates revaluation postponed**

[A revaluation of business rates will no longer take place in 2021](#) to help reduce uncertainty for firms. This comes after the business rates retail discount was increased to 100% from 50% for 2020 to 2021 to help businesses affected by the impacts of coronavirus.

The government is continuing work on the fundamental review of business rates, with the key aims of reducing the overall burden on businesses, improving the current business rates system, and considering more fundamental changes in the medium-to-long term.

### **Government explores options to wind down furlough scheme**

The Chancellor Rishi Sunak is preparing to wind down the furlough scheme from July and is exploring options to avoid a 'cliff edge' for businesses and employees currently relying on this support.

HM Treasury is still considering several options for tapering the furlough scheme, including cutting the 80% wage subsidy paid by the state to 60% and lowering the £2,500 cap on monthly payments.

Plans are expected to be announced before the middle of May.

The Office for Budget Responsibility has estimated that the scheme could cost £42bn over three months if as many as 8.3 million people are furloughed at an 80% subsidy.