

The mayors of the Wadden Islands call on potential guests to stay at home as much as possible in the coming weeks. After all, all catering is closed, travelling with others on the ferry is not recommended, and the medical facilities on the islands should not be put to the test unnecessarily.

Last Sunday, our government announced far-reaching measures to ensure that the corona virus spreads in a controlled manner. The purpose of these measures is not to stop the spreading, but to keep it under control.

On the islands we follow the advice given to companies and residents. Many guests from the Netherlands and abroad come to the Wadden. Those who had booked before and those who think it's a good idea to be on a Wadden Island during these challenging times. There are also people who decide to cancel. After all, all restaurants (eating and drinking establishments) are closed and even with less full ferries you may run an unnecessary risk of being infected with the virus.

The islanders are also worried: is the policy as determined by experts reasonable or is it better to close off the island to people from the mainland until the crisis has passed?

We won't stay Corona-free on the islands either. In fact, as the Prime Minister said yesterday, we too must build group resistance. But we should not unnecessarily test the limited medical facilities on the islands either.

In the event of a crisis of this magnitude, decisions on safety and health are taken by the safety regions. For the Frisian islands this is the Fryslân Safety Region and for Texel the North Holland North Safety Region. City councils can discuss and think along with you about these subjects, but the final decisions are made by the safety regions. After all, that's where the experts are and that's where we have to rely on. Everyone is entitled to their own opinion and of course we respect it, but let's treat the different opinions with respect and let the experts do their work on the basis of their knowledge and skills.

Our guests are always welcome in regular circumstances. But in this exceptional period it has suddenly become a bit more difficult. As in the rest of the Netherlands, most of our facilities are closed and we need to keep our distance from each other. It is therefore not the most ideal time to visit the Wadden. The number of guests coming to the islands by ferry has already dropped significantly over the past few days. Nevertheless, following the call of the government, through our prime minister and the RIVM, we call on tourists to stay at home as much as possible in the coming weeks. We do this in order to limit the potential risks for islanders and guests as much as possible.

Sincerely the mayors of the Wadden Islands,

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Tineke Schokker

Bert Wassink

Leo Pieter Stoel

Ineke van Gent

Gemeente Texel **.txl**

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 **SCHIERMONNIKOOG**