

Vision King's Lynn Consumer Insight Survey Executive Summary

June 2020



Executive Summary

Overview

The Vision King's Lynn consumer survey took place online from the 5th – 14th June. The timing was intended to capture the views of consumers before non-essential retail was permitted to reopen on Monday, 15th June 2020. During this time, 276 consumers took part in the consultation.

As with other Vision King's Lynn surveys – with which this aligns – the survey was promoted via our channels, including the new Vision King's Lynn website, and in the local media. We also shared the survey with our almost 500 Vision King's Lynn subscribers.

Key Themes

There are a number of key themes that emerged throughout the feedback:

- **Uncertainty** – in line with a theme of the business insight survey, uncertainty is a significant issue which is particularly highlighted around confidence and when consumers intend to return to the town centre.
- **Safety** – this is what underpins many of the concerns. Consumers want to feel safe and are not sure if this sense of safety can and will be provided.
- **Reassurance** – consumers are clearly seeking reassurance, especially from businesses, about their interventions. This reflects the consumers need to feel safe.
- **Online** – unsurprisingly, the last few months have seen consumers refocus how they access goods and services with significant online use – whether they were online consumers previously or not.

Key Findings

- Overall nearly half of the respondents – 46% - feel confident about returning to the town centre. But, there is also uncertainty around confidence with 36.8% feeling unsure about coming back into town
- Consumers want to feel safe. The biggest concern for consumers is social distancing and people not adhering to the rules in their behaviours.
- The key suggestion to address consumer concerns is around having people on hand to oversee, manage and enforce adherence to the rules. There were many ideas of the form this could take, such as police, marshals, rangers, or coordinators.
- The majority – 48% - say that they plan to come into the town centre in the next 6-8 weeks; this aligns with the finding that 46% of respondents feel confident about returning to the town centre.
- The main purpose for people to come into the town centre in the next 6-8 weeks will be for non-essential shopping.
- The type of business cited most frequently by consumers as to which they plan to visit are personal grooming businesses - hairdressers and barbers.

- With regard to named businesses that consumers intend to visit, high street brands are cited the most frequently and M & S is the most popular intended destination.
- There is uncertainty amongst those who don't intend to return to the town centre in the next 6-8 weeks about when they will come back in. The most frequently mentioned 'timescale' was 'when it's safe.'
- The main way that people plan to travel in on their next visit is by car (69.8%). If the mode of travel has changed, the main reason is not wishing to use public transport, and buses specifically.
- Undoubtedly the biggest change to people's habits has been the increased use of online shopping now, whether they were online consumers before or not.
- Online banking is the most significant way in which people access services now. This includes people who have been banking online previously as well as consumers who have only begun to access banking in this way during the crisis.
- The three short-medium term interventions that consumers would most like to see in the town centre are:
 1. More outdoor seating areas for cafes and restaurants;
 2. Outdoor markets;
 3. Opportunities for pop-up short-term lets to trial products / services