Shifting Retail Landscape: How Visits to Our Town Centre Have Changed in the Past Three Years

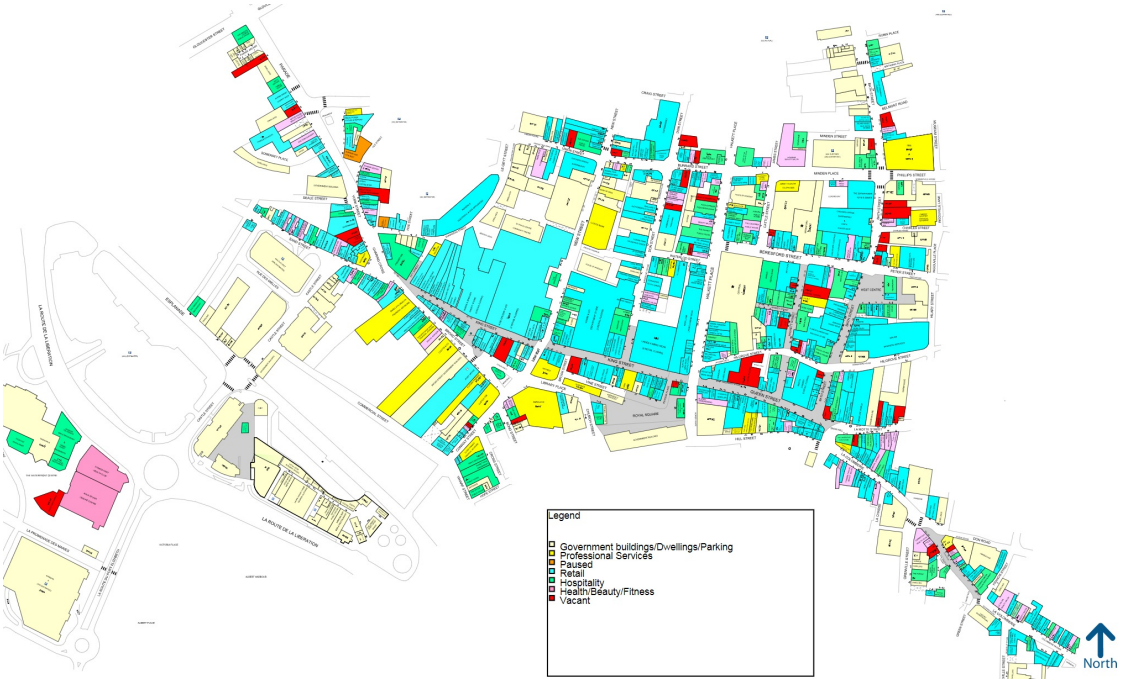
21st June 2023

Lorie Rault

Senior Business Advisor

Have you changed how often you visit our town centre in the last three years? If the answer's yes, you're not alone.

Last year, the number of people visiting our high street dropped by nearly a quarter compared to before the pandemic. This meant more than two million less visits in 2022 compared to 2019; a significant number that will have undoubtedly had substantial consequences for Jersey's retailers.



These statistics come from a new report published this month by Lorie Rault, Jersey Business's Head of Retail. The data was collated by Springboard MRI, a leading UK technology partner that specialises in commercial pedestrian

movement insights (footfall data). Springboard uses a mixture of sensors, artificial intelligence (AI), and computer vision to track and analyse change in real time across thousands of high streets and shopping centres.

Created to give an in-depth review of the shifting retail environment in Jersey, the report gives businesses easy access to important industry information which will help with planning and forecasting for the rest of the year, especially as we head into the historically busier months of June, September, and December.



“This year, thanks to collaborative data sharing with the parish of St Helier, I have been able to extend the usual retail data we review,” said Lorie Rault. “This new report not only compares the data year-on-year, but also against 2019, the year before the COVID-19 pandemic hit.

“By having both sets of data, retailers can have a much clearer picture of the shift in visits to King Street. The report also provides some context to certain variances to the data, so that business can consider reasons for any large footfall spikes or dips over the year.”

In December 2022, for example, Jersey saw strong sales. This could have been attributed to several factors, but most likely because of a drop in consumer confidence when it came to online shopping. The ongoing postal strike and infrequent shipping to Jersey because of bad weather meant more people were inclined to shop in-person to avoid delays ahead of the Christmas celebrations.

Lorie Rault went on to say, “The data in the report gives businesses foresight on key trading decisions like opening times, employee cover, and potential customer numbers across the year. This is particularly beneficial to start-ups who don’t have sales data to estimate the potential market. I would encourage any retailers who haven’t discovered that they can access information like this,

and other dedicated retail support, to join the JBRetail community.

“JBRetail was founded back in 2018 by retailers for retailers. Since then, its grown from 40 founding members to being the biggest retail group in the Channel Islands, connecting retail managers and owners from across all 12 Jersey parishes.

“JBRetail is free to join and is designed to help busy businesses by keeping them informed of changes or opportunities relevant to retail. The community receive targeted mailers that give early notice on several topics that include changes in legislation, data reports training, and our popular quarterly events with expert speakers.”

If you’re a retail business owner or manager who wants access to an extensive, supportive retail community and expert insight into the industry, sign up to the Jersey Business retail newsletter here.