

# WINDSOR TOWN FORUM

THURSDAY, 2ND SEPTEMBER, 2021

At 6.15 pm

by

VIRTUAL MEETING - ONLINE ACCESS, ON [RBWM YOUTUBE](#)

## SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

### PART I

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>PAGE NO</u>
5.	<u>TOWN MANAGER UPDATE</u> To receive the above report.	3 - 6

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## Windsor Town Centre update report for Windsor Town Forum - September 2021.

### Reopening Programme

Step 4 in the road to recovery has now been taken and the vast majority of businesses have now reopened in the town centres. Since the last meeting in July, we have seen the remaining nighttime economy venues re open with restaurants and other eateries able to go return to the full internal capacities.

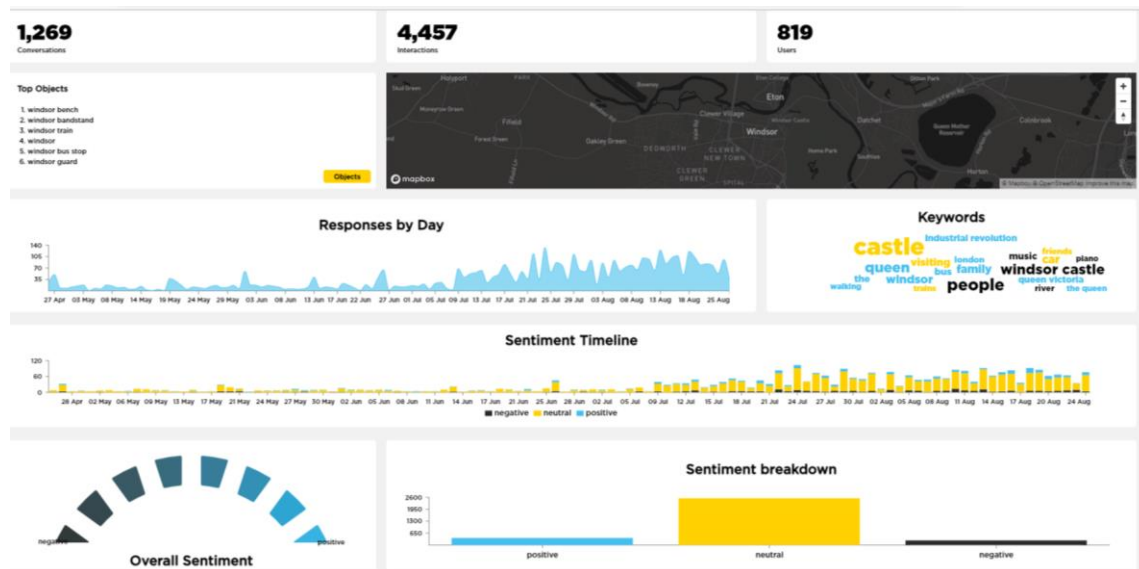
Enforcement in the town centre has moved to one based on intelligence and the reporting of activity to RBWM directly. Generally operations have returned without significant issues for majority of businesses in the town centres and where problems have been reported they are being dealt with.

### Business support during COVID

- 4,353 awards made to businesses since the November lockdown amounting to £24.1m.
- All grants are now closed to new applications.
- RBWM have fully utilised the ARG discretionary funding and have applied for the latest top-up. Awaiting confirmation of this award and, if/when approved. This may bring in an additional £1.6m in support for businesses.

### Marketing and communications

**Hello lamppost** - Image below is a snapshot of HLP Dash board showing all of the interactions residents and others have had with the HLP project. As of 24 August 2021, over 4.4k individuals have interacted with objects in the town centre which has grown significantly since the last report in July (900). Current top five objects include Windsor Bandstand, Windsor Replica Steam Train, Windsor Bridge and Windsor Castle Benches. Information being received include visitors' feelings on their visit, what they like about Windsor and what they would like to change. Analysis of these result will provide opportunities to inform operational decisions in the town centre and good insight for future planning of services. The scheme will be expanding further throughout the borough with locations in Dedworth and Maidenhead currently being identified.



### Review of Businesses in Clewer, Dedworth and Ascot

Outline summary of businesses which are open in Clewer, Dedworth and Ascot.

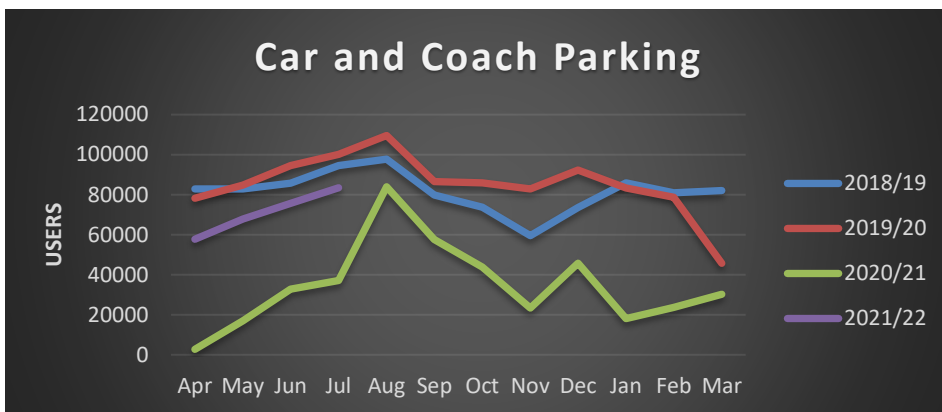
Majority of business now able to open have re-opened in Clewer and Dedworth – 115\*  
 Number of businesses currently open 98 - (85% occupancy)

Number of Business in Ascot High Street - 60  
 number of businesses open - 56 (93% occupancy)

Smaller villages have generally out performed large town in the borough which is reflected across the UK. Restricted travel and stay and shop local has been strongly supported and local businesses are benefitting from this.

**Town centre health check**

**Car Parking**

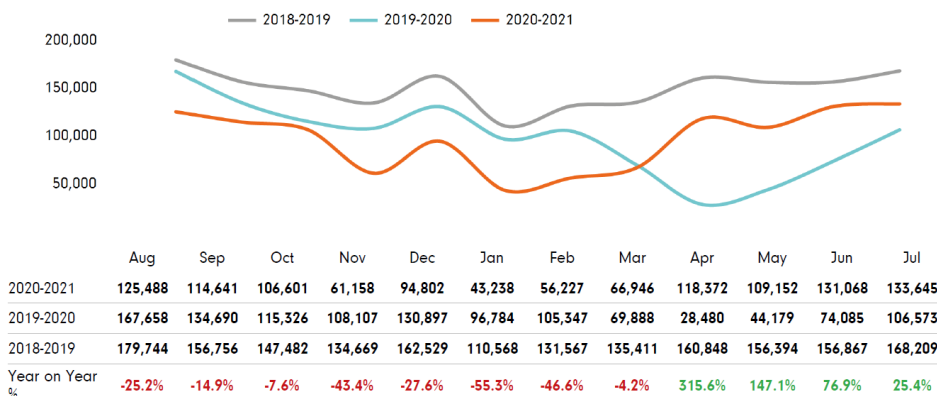


General trend for car parking use has steadily increased over the last 4 months, However it is still nearly 20% down on 2019 figures. Weekend usage for the last month has been significant, with full capacities being reached on car parks and off street by the riverside.

Coach park users still significantly down with only 223 users for July (normally expect over 2200) for this period. This is not expected to return to normal usage until 2022 or when international travel is fully unrestricted.

**Footfall**

The figures shown below are calculated using weekly averages.



Year on year % is calculated by comparing the 2020-2021 period with the 2019-2020 period i.e the figure for July compares July 2021 to July 2020

- The total number of visitors for the year to date is 2,832,617 which is 26.2% up on the previous year.
- The total number of visitors to Windsor Town Centre External in month commencing 5 July 2021 was 534,582.
- The busiest day in month commencing 5 July 2021 was Saturday 10 July with 25,333 visitors.
- The peak hour of the month was 12:00 on Thursday 29 July 2021 with footfall of 3,295.

## 2019 comparison for Windsor Town Centre External

The impact of Covid-19 on footfall means that subsequent to the anniversary of Lockdown 1 (23rd March 2021), it is important to add a further annual comparison of 2021 versus 2019 in order to provide a comparison to the last normal trading year. This is provided in the section **below** and shows your current performance in 2021 against the similar time period in 2019

### Headlines

	Year to date % 2021 Vs 2019	Year on year % 2021 Vs 2019
Windsor Town Centre External	<b>-35.2 %</b>	<b>-20.5 %</b>
South East	<b>-39.8 %</b>	<b>-25.5 %</b>
High Street Index - BDSU(BDSU - Comparison)	<b>-51.3 %</b>	<b>-35.0 %</b>
UK	<b>-43.6 %</b>	<b>-30.0 %</b>

Windsor Town Centre External is compared to the high street index.

### Vacancy Rates

	Jun	Jul	Aug
Current vacancy	<b>9.41%</b>	<b>10.75%</b>	<b>9.95%</b>
*Expected Vacancy	<b>16.98%</b>	<b>17.98%</b>	<b>14.25%</b>
**National Average	<b>14.1%</b>	<b>14.5%</b>	<b>14.5%</b>

\*this includes businesses that have indicated they are in danger of closing permanently.

\*\* Data provided by British Retail Consortium/Local Data Company

Despite the easing of COVID 19 restrictions, national vacancy rates have continued to grow. Windsor, Clewer, Dedworth, Ascot and Eton are all performing above the national average (currently 14.5%). Hardest hit sector continues to be fashion retailers and the closure of specific brands, recent closure being GAP store in Windsor which was part of a national closure programme.

There is increased optimism as children prepare for what is hoped will be an uninterrupted school year and forecasts for back-to-school shopping is expected to be higher than last year.

### Recently opened Businesses

Tortilla – Windsor

Purple Patch – Windsor (Goswell Plaza)

### Paul Roach

Windsor, Eton and Ascot Town Manager

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