

Windsor Town Centre update report for Windsor Town Forum - May 2021.

Reopening Programme

At the time of writing this report, step 3 change in the road map to recovery was underway and businesses and partners were preparing for the this. For many businesses the changes were not too significant as a large number of businesses were already open and operating in the town centre. However, there were a small number of businesses where the 17 May change provided them the first opportunity of operating since the Christmas/New year lock down. This included indoor gyms, Attractions (Windsor Castle) and the ability for restaurants to allow people to sit inside (Observing the rule of six).

Public Health and the licensing team have confirmed a programme of inspections with a large number of venues and organisations who will be opening their doors for the first time in order that they are adhering to the current guidance for this step changed. Windsor and Eton Pub Watch and Retail and Business forums have continued to meet and have received briefings from Trading standard officers and others to ensure that there is a consistent and supportive approach to businesses reopening which has been welcomed and ensured we have not had to deal issue large numbers of enforcement notices.

As part of the reopening strategy we have continued to direct people to use My Royal Borough website in the first instance to assist in marketing and supporting local businesses and provide sign posting to grant and business support advice.

Core Stats from MYRB.

	Website Traffic (Users/Bounce/Session Duration)	Traffic Source (Organic/Social)	Twitter Followers (+number)	Twitter Impressions/Percent Change	Facebook Followers	Facebook Reach and Post Engagement	Instagram Followers	Instagram Reach and Impressions
March	4,791 / 78%	84% org / 12% dir / 3% ref	7540	14K	18,766	16,777	7,101	2,344
April	14,931 / 80%	74% org / 19% dir / 2% ref	7548	25.6K	18,818	26,499 / 4,682	7,171	3,404
May	23,703 / 75%	88% org / 8% dir / 3%	7553	11.3K	19,171	25,327	7,416	2,900

The above table provides core stats from MyRB website and shows a steady increase in actively and interest from users. This growth has in part been lead pushing for user content only and asking businesses to actively engage and provide MYRB with their content for us to share. We will continue to share and engage with businesses

As outlined in members briefings earlier in the year we planned to introduce a new campaign to support the reopening programme which was centred around our new strapline of "Don't let your guard down". This was launched earlier this year with a number of life-sized Coldstream Guards and new bollard and bin wrapping posters rein enforcing the message hands face and space.



These new communications assets have been warmly received by residents and visitors and we expected that these will be continued to be used throughout the year.

In addition to this we are trialling a new communications scheme called “hello lamp post”. Our Royal Borough is supporting high street recovery by using a “tech for good” citizen engagement tool called [Hello Lamp Post](#) to engage and empower citizens. By asking its residents and visitors for feedback, the borough will continue to build community support for its [Safe Reopening and Recovery strategy](#) and gain customer-driven business intelligence for better decision making.

How does it work?

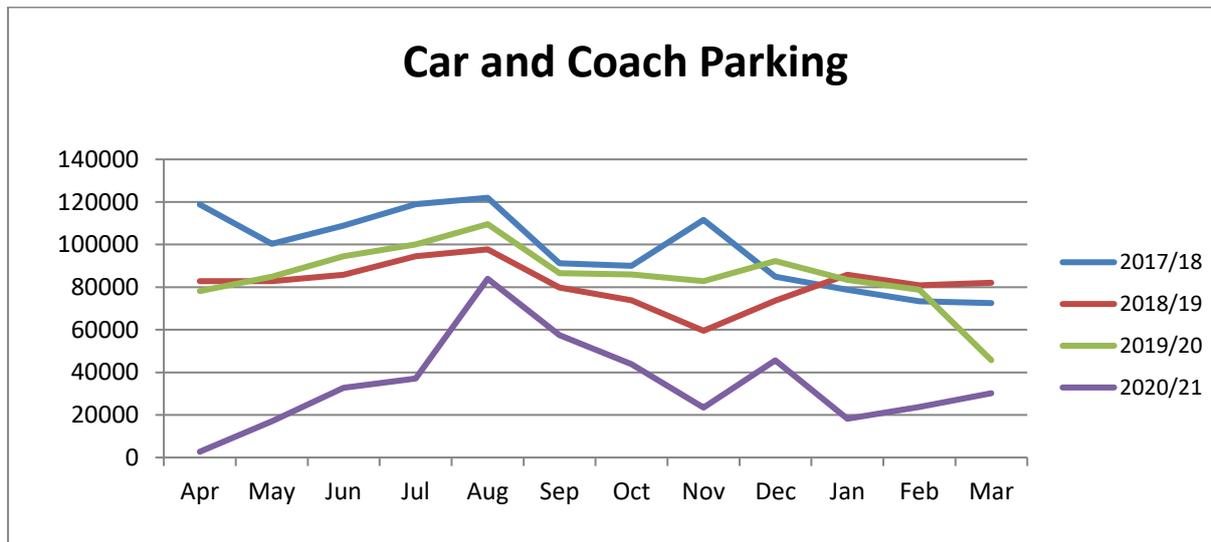
[Hello Lamp Post](#) enables anyone with a mobile phone to anonymously “talk” to physical objects (e.g. lamp posts, benches, statues - [guards](#)) via a scanned QR code and send messages (SMS, WhatsApp, and Facebook Messenger) to start a conversation, share experiences and provide feedback with the system. It uses integrated AI tools (natural language processes) and sentiment analysis to enhance the customer experience and gather data through playful conversation.

This platform will be rolled out initially in Windsor in May and then throughout the borough.

Learn more and join our Reopening Campaign: <https://myroyalborough.com/unlocked>



Health check for the town centre

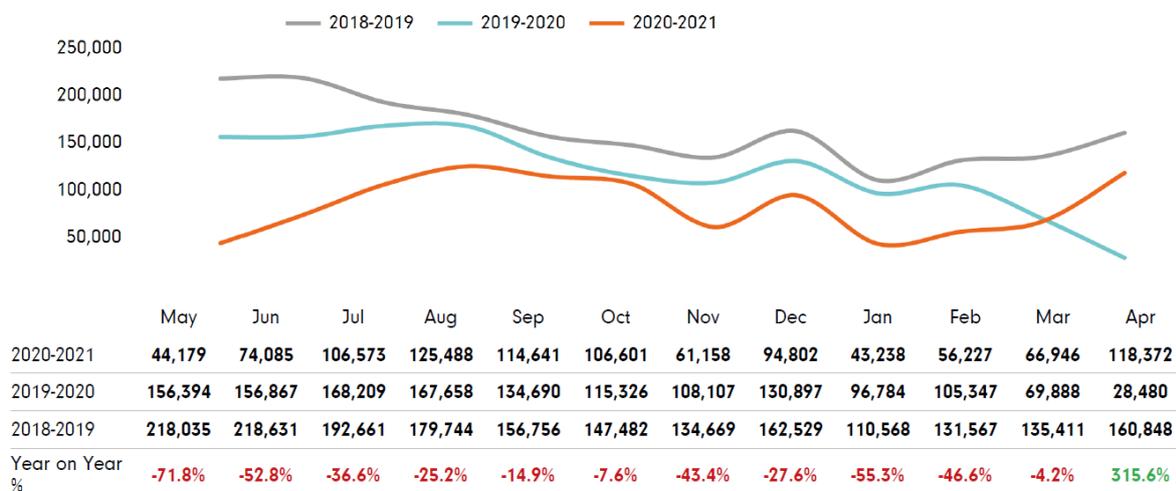


Footfall table represents users up to the end of March 2021. Whilst the trend for this period was positive the overall figures for car parking for the previous 12 months shows a total decline of 59%. This reduction has been reflected in the footfall and general sentiment in sales in the town centre.

Following the reopening of the town centre between June and August we saw footfall in Peascod Street slowly build and by October/November footfall had started to recover close to 2019 levels. However, the second lock down in November saw that recovery lost and footfall reduced significantly. Footfall in the two shopping centres has continued to be lower than that of the main town centre with between 50% – 60% reduction in footfall over the same period.

Footfall - rolling 12 months

The figures shown below are calculated using weekly averages.



The total number of visitors for the year to date is 1,206,082 which is 5.2% down on the previous year.

The total number of visitors to Windsor Town Centre External in month commencing 5 April 2021 was 473,489.

The busiest day in month commencing 5 April 2021 was Saturday 24 April with 27,268 visitors.

The peak hour of the month was 12:00 on Sunday 18 April 2021 with footfall of 3,689.

Similar to car parking. Footfall levels up to April currently showing signs of improvement which in part is down to the unlocking programme. We are expecting to see a continued positive trend should the unlocking programme continues unchanged, and weather permitting. It should be noted for comparison purposes 2019 rates should be used to ensure a more like for like comparison.

Vacancy Rates

	Jan	Feb	Mar
Current vacancy	12.63%	12.72%	13.98%
*Expected Vacancy	21.44%	21.24%	22.74%
**National Average	13.3%	13.7%	14.1%

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

** Data provided by British Retail Consortium

We have seen a small number of units fail to open and or close in the town centre. Some of these down to company failure. Most recently we saw Lush leave the town centre unexpectedly. We do have on the positive side a number of new companies moving in and a number of units under redevelopment. We are currently operating slightly above the national average and it is important we continue to push redevelopment of empty or long-term unused units.

Recently announced was Windsor Yards now have new owners “AEW” Whilst we have not had a chance to meet with the board and discuss their aspirations for the centre, their background is in redevelopment of shopping and mix use sites and we expect to see some positive plans come forward for the long term future of Windsor Yards.

Windsor.

New Business opened

Fortecues – Guildhall

Rex Bakery - Peascod Street

Craft Coop – Windsor Yards

Units under development

Tortilla – Peascod Street

Plate at No 6 – Market Street

Tempstay – Agent – St Leonards Road

Beauticians – St Leonards Road

Paul Roach

Windsor, Eton and Ascot Town Manager