

# UK Retail Briefing - UK - April 2021

Report Price: £350 | \$495 | €450

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## This report looks at the following areas:

- Analyst comment - H&M features vegan cactus leather in latest sustainability push
- An overview of the latest UK retail sales – Impact of COVID-19
- Highlights of the latest UK retail trend observations
- Sector focus – Household goods retailing
- Monthly UK retail news headlines and analysis



"In March, all retail sales grew 9.3%. March marks the one-year anniversary of the first lockdown in the UK and is the first time the retail sector has faced COVID-19 impacted comparative figures. In March 2020 retail sales saw a 2.8% decline as shoppers stockpiled ahead of an impending lockdown. With stores still closed in March 2021, online was again the big winner."

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Figure 2: The Neon Green Sandals, in vegan imitation leather made from cactus leaves, £79.99, have sold out, 2021

- **Responding to the shift in shopping behaviours**
- **Shoppers sceptical about sustainability claims**
- **What we think**

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- **Renewed focus on the home and garden and booming ecommerce drive DIY sales**
- **Specialists' lose out to non-specialists as online electrical purchasing rockets**

### What's included

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- Textile specialists' sales fall sharply on back of COVID-19 store closures

- Rise in sector spending encouraging

Figure 9: Planned spend on home and garden products, 8 January-12 April 2021

#### LAUNCH ACTIVITY AND INNOVATIONS

- UK: Asda announces raft of new brand partnerships for George
- UK: N Brown launches new brands to third-party offer starting with Finery
- UK: Decathlon opens experiential flagship in Leeds

#### HEADLINES FOR THE MONTH

- Convenience stores
- Grocers
- Other food and drink specialists
- Clothing retailing
- Footwear retailing
- Multi-sector retailing
- Department stores
- DIY retailing
- Furniture retailing

#### NEWS ANALYSIS – FOOD AND DRINK

- Convenience stores
- UK: McColl's full-years sales rise 3.2% despite drop in profits
- UK: Nisa cuts wholesale prices for retailers in £2 million investment
- Grocers
- UK: Aldi
- ...removes plastic straws from all own-label drink cartons
- ...to offer National Lottery at all its stores
- UK: Asda opens first London in-store vaccination centre
- UK: Iceland launches new convenience format Swift
- UK: Morrisons
- ...revenue up 8.9% despite drop in profits
- ...rolls out 'quiet hour' during weekend
- UK: Tesco
- ...launches new plastic ban affecting online shoppers
- ...Pret teams up with Tesco to sell baked goods in supermarkets
- ...launches new plastic recycling scheme

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- UK: Waitrose to stop selling magazines with disposable plastic toys
- Other food and drink specialists
- UK: Greggs suffers £14m loss due to store closures
- UK: Thorntons to close all shops risking 600 jobs

#### NEWS ANALYSIS – CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR

- UK: Barbour sees turnover rise 7.8% despite 'significant' COVID-19 impact
- UK: Boda Skins rolls out buy-back scheme
- UK: Boux Avenue unveils first athleisure collection
- UK: Browns unveils new four-storey 'destination' store
- UK: Burberry updates full-year outlook after rebound in sales
- UK: Fred Perry opens new Manchester flagship
- UK: Frugi Group sales up 51%
- UK: Joules to open stores in Center Parcs holiday villages
- UK: menswear rental service Garmentry launches in the UK
- UK: Next
- ...pre-tax profits drop 53% amid 'a crisis unprecedented in living memory'
- ...buys 25% stake in upmarket fashion retailer Reiss
- UK: Peacocks rescued out of administration saving 2,000 jobs
- UK: Ralph & Russo fall into administration
- UK: retailers call on the government to reopen fitting rooms
- UK: Ted Baker launches live shopping service for UK customers
- UK: The Carlyle Group buys majority stake in End
- UK: Weird Fish ecommerce grew 84% as it focuses on investing in digital and in-store experiences
- Footwear retailing
- UK: Clarks takeover completed
- UK: Kurt Geiger to open nine new stores

#### NEWS ANALYSIS – MIXED GOODS

- Multi-sector retailing
- UK: B&M hires new digital director signalling a possible ecommerce push
- UK: Halfords acquires Universal Tyre and Autocentres for £15m
- UK: M&S
- ...outlines reopening plans with new campaign

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- ...set to add Sosandar offering to website
- ...turns closed cafes into Easter pop-up stores
- UK: Poundland
- ...set to open 30 new stores
- ...renegotiates 180 leases
- UK: Wilko to roll out in-store recycling face-mask scheme
- Department stores
- UK: Debenhams
- ...Leicester store to be converted into flats
- ...to reopen for closing down sale
- UK: John Lewis
- ...'does not expect to reopen all John Lewis shops at the end of lockdown'
- ...closes eight more stores
- UK: Selfridges reveals first kitchen pop-up

#### NEWS ANALYSIS – HOUSEHOLD GOODS

- DIY retailing
- UK: Homebase reveals revamped website
- UK: Kingfisher
- ...sales grow 7% as it sees 'new generation of DIY'ers' emerge
- ...to launch B&Q stores in Saudi Arabia
- UK: Screwfix plans 50 new store openings creating 600 jobs
- UK: Topps Tiles sales fall 17.3% thanks to lockdown restrictions
- UK: Wickes and Travis Perkins demerger resumes
- Furniture retailing
- UK: Eve Sleep reduces annual losses by 83%
- UK: owner of Julian Charles pledges to invest £20m for new retail acquisition
- UK: ScS revenues up 14.4% as CEO steps down
- UK: Victoria Plum sales grow by a record 46%
- Homewares retailing
- UK: home furnishing retailer Terrys sees 109% increase in demand during lockdowns

#### NEWS ANALYSIS – ONLINE

- UK: Amazon reduces shares in Deliveroo
- UK: Asos
- ...aims to raise £500 million to help global expansions push
- ...interim revenues up 24% as customers become confident in online shopping

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- UK: Boohoo turns to vintage fabric amid sustainability drive
- UK: Just Eats revenues grows 54% to €2.4 billion
- UK: Ocado
- ...quarterly revenues grow 40% 'reflecting strong demand for online grocery'
- ...relaunches own-label range as plastic-free

#### NEWS ANALYSIS – OTHER RETAIL

- Health & beauty retailing
- UK: Boots online sales surge 105%
- UK: Lloyds Pharmacy rolls out UK's first COVID-19 nasal spray
- UK: Superdrug to stock Missguided Beauty
- Sports and leisure goods retailing
- UK: Evans Cycle to cut 300 jobs
- UK: Frasers Group acquires retail park in Wigan
- UK: Nike severs ties with Urban Outfitters as part of its DTC strategy
- Garden centres
- UK: Dobbies
- ...rolls out virtual spring events
- ...reveals new Little Dobbies format in Bristol
- Shopping centres
- UK: Bluewater to launch drive-in cinema to attract footfall

#### NEWS ANALYSIS – ECONOMY

- UK: Boris Johnson confirms non-essential retail will reopen in England from April 12
- UK: retailers campaign for 'Shop Out To help Out'
- UK: shops opening hours will be extended until 10pm in April
- UK: ONS results reveal February retail sales growth of 2.1%

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