

## MRI OnLocation for Footfall Analytics UK Monthly Commentary November 2023



Covering the four weeks from 29th October - 25th November 2023

### Black Friday helped to steady the month of November as footfall sat marginally higher compared to the previous month

Adverse weather conditions at the start of November combined with a surge in consumer activity on Black Friday resulted in a modest increase in footfall in November from October according to latest data from MRI Software's OnLocation [formally Springboard] Footfall Index.

Despite a challenging start to the month, with the return to school following the half term break and Storm Ciaran causing disruptions across the UK, this represents the strongest month on month result since 2017. This may well be attributed to the Black Friday sales towards the end of the month, the final pre-Christmas payday for many, and the attraction of nationwide festive events that drew consumers to retail destinations.

High streets witnessed a slight month on month decline in footfall versus a rise in shopping centres and retail parks. However, a more in-depth analysis of high street footfall shows a positive picture in that activity rose in three out of the four weeks in November. This indicates that the investment which many towns and cities have made in Christmas lights and enlivenment, markets, and events are serving their purpose in attracting visitors. It was the High Streets that experienced a marginal weekday increase in footfall from last year versus a decline during the weekend. Across all retail destination types, weekdays outperformed weekends suggesting an increasing number of people are heading into the office and maximising their time by heading out at lunch or after work to engage in festive celebrations and maybe even some shopping.

Following the announcement of a drop in inflation to 4.6% in November, GFK's Consumer Confidence Index rose by six points, reflecting a heightened sense of optimism about future finances among consumers. This is reflected in a boost in footfall on Black Friday across all retail destination types from the week before accompanied by reports of increased spending across various media outlets.

While footfall has been weakening year on year in recent months it was encouraging to see this improve across retail parks and shopping centres however high streets witnessed a marginal decline from 2022. With such a turbulent month, the gap from the 2019 level unsurprisingly widened marginally across all retail destinations from October. While retail parks witnessed an improvement in the gap from the 2019 level high streets and shopping centres saw this decline.

The pivotal trading month for retail is upon us and retail destinations should approach this with enthusiasm following the week-on-week uplift in footfall for Black Friday. This signals the beginning of the countdown to the big day and while shoppers are still looking to maximise the savings they make, it's clear to see that the investment in festive attractions this year is paying off in terms of driving footfall nationwide. Despite planned rail strikes and disruption from 1st-9th December many towns and cities are embracing the festive spirit and are expected to introduce free parking on selected days as we edge closer to Christmas day which will act as a catalyst for high streets in driving footfall. These initiatives extend beyond just financial savings for many, presenting consumers with the opportunity to create memorable experiences.

More detailed data and insights are available [here](#).

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