



# THE VALUE OF A HEALTHY, VIBRANT, AND ESSENTIAL LOCAL RETAIL INDUSTRY



**GUERNSEY RETAIL GROUP  
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**#BuyIntoRetail**

Retail is the “everywhere economy” - an essential component of the socio-economic fabric of the island. Like many villages, towns, and cities throughout the UK, Guernsey has always benefitted from a substantial choice of local retail shops, ensuring that a majority of islanders’ needs have been adequately catered for. However, we collectively need to plan ahead to ensure that this is maintained.

The retail landscape has swiftly and visibly changed over recent years. The steady rise in popularity of large national and international internet brands, driven by substantial marketing resources to directly target customers, has created a considerable challenge for the traditional, local retailer.

St. Peter Port remains the jewel in our island crown – the hub for a substantial amount of local retail, hospitality, entertainment, service, and commerce. However, on an island of approximately 24 square miles there is nowhere “too far” to travel, so shops are found in every parish, to help meet the needs and expectations of islanders and visitors.

## **WHY DOES THE RETAIL INDUSTRY NEED A MANIFESTO?**

- 1. Retail is a highly significant contributor (directly and indirectly) to the local economy, community, and social welfare.**
- 2. The 2024 Guernsey Consumer and Retail Survey indicated a substantial desire to shop local when possible.**
- 3. Over recent years, the rising costs associated with running a retail business have made it increasingly challenging for many smaller/ regional shopkeepers to operate commercially viable businesses.**
- 4. Retail is the heart of Guernsey’s Town Centre. Although, there needs to be an attractive mix of businesses, it is critical that Town remains a commercially appealing environment for retailers.**



**It is time to...**

**BUY INTO RETAIL**

## HOW DOES RETAIL CONTRIBUTE TO THE ISLAND?

The Guernsey retail industry is a substantial backbone to the local economy. Over the past 10 years retail has consistently been the **FIFTH HIGHEST** contributor by sector<sup>1</sup>.

However, a strong retail sector is worth far more than a purely direct financial contribution to the Guernsey Exchequer. It is important to also recognise the social and environmental benefits, and value of employee learning and development opportunities, and community engagement.



The Guernsey Retail industry comprises more than **300** businesses, and is the **THIRD LARGEST** employer in Guernsey, directly employing **OVER 3,500** people<sup>2</sup>. However, it is essential to also recognise that other business sectors also employ people who directly rely upon and contribute to the retail sector (e.g. Transportation and Storage) so the cumulative employment total is significantly higher.



**Every pound spent with local retailers will benefit Guernsey, and the local economy.**

## IT IS WHAT ISLANDERS WANT...

The 2024 Consumer and Retail Survey confirms that islanders want sufficient choice of retail options on-island, and a smart, well-maintained, and engaging St. Peter Port Town Centre, and Bridge shopping areas.

Nearly **70%** of respondents ***enjoy browsing in-store to see what is available.***

Less than **25%** of respondents ***preferred to purchase online.***

**46%** of respondents recognised that buying locally ***supported the local economy.***

Respondents stated they would visit and use St. Peter Port Town or The Bridge area more frequently if the following could be improved...

- ➔ Greater variety of shops and products
- ➔ Enhanced physical appearance & layout
- ➔ Better atmosphere & entertainment
- ➔ Improved car parking



<sup>1</sup> Rolling Electronic Census, States of Guernsey Facts & Figures 2024

<sup>2</sup> States of Guernsey Data and Analysis 2024. Indicates the total number of employees and self-employed in each sector so people can be counted more than once.



**ASK  
1**

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**Guernsey deserves a Town Centre and Bridge area that encompasses a wide choice of retail, hospitality, entertainment, and service options, and are appealing and accessible to all Guernsey residents and visitors.**

## **HOW CAN YOU HELP?**

**It is essential that the Town Centre, The Bridge, and all other shopping/commercial hubs are maintained to a high standard, including hygiene, clean/modern signage, street furniture, etc.**

- 1. Improve options for parking and access in Town Centre and the Bridge so they are safe, inclusive and accessible to all, and not a barrier to shopping locally.**
- 2. Parking time limits must be conducive to encouraging shoppers to stay a little longer and not have to rush to move their vehicles.**
- 3. We need investment in local shopping areas so they are more appealing for everyone.**
- 4. Reduce bureaucracy and encourage landlords to fill empty premises/sites with active commercial businesses, and to maintain the appearance of properties to an appropriate standard.**



## ASK 2

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**Guernsey needs a level playing field for local businesses, so they are not disadvantaged when competing against off-island retailers.**

### HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Many local retailers highlight the extent to which smaller businesses are already encumbered with high administrative and running costs, and that this places a substantial additional financial burden on to their operation. There are also significant costs to maintaining a well-presented, well-stocked, and well-staffed retail premises.

1. Government policy needs to “level the playing field” between on-island and off-island retailers in recognising the extensive benefits of having a thriving, robust, and appealing mix of retail options, and the value they bring to Guernsey. Whilst it is healthy to have competition, it is essential that it is fair.
2. Government should engage and involve retailers with any proposed plans to change any aspect of “their area”, and utilise their localised knowledge and expertise.



## ASK 3

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Guernsey needs a strategic and collaborative approach to ensuring that there is sufficient choice of shopping outlets to meet the current and future needs and expectations of Guernsey residents and visitors.

### HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Through strategic design and planning, Guernsey could realistically achieve highly attractive and appealing shopping areas, with a wide mix of retail provision. The island needs some fresh, outside-the-box thinking, to inspire local retail to grow, in all of its shapes and forms.

1. Key shopping areas, notably St. Peter Port and The Bridge, are in urgent need of considerable smartening and upgrade, with the aim of attracting new retail provisions, and giving confidence to existing retailers to develop their offering. The 2024 Consumer and Retail Survey of Guernsey residents revealed a broad recognition that, where possible, people would prefer to purchase locally.
2. Guernsey needs a plan to incentivise budding retailers and entrepreneurs to open new physical retail premises.



## ASK 4

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Guernsey needs motive, enthusiasm, and ability for every resident and business to primarily choose to buy local, thereby supporting the local circular economy.

### HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Guernsey needs to develop a plan to ensure that local businesses are the primary and preferred choice - the obvious and instinctive habit for everyone. Given the current financial climate, Government needs to urgently reduce all forms of economic leakage. Every pound spent with a local business benefits Guernsey, and the local economy.

1. Government needs to inspire schemes to increase footfall into the Town Centre, Bridge, and other shopping areas.
2. Town would look unrecognisable and tragic without the mix of stores that bring it to life. We need every available space filled with a mix of business, pop-up centres, community spaces, etc. so government should provide incentives to allow for this.

The retail industry is a **driving force** in our economy.

Touching the **lives of islanders** daily.

Making a **massive contribution** to the fabric of our society.

And at the **heart of our community** throughout the island.

We have an exceptional opportunity to work together to ensure that Guernsey has a vibrant and appealing choice of retail, and ensure that it meets the needs and expectations of Guernsey residents and visitors now and into the future.

If you would like to discuss any issues raised, or find out more details, please email [hello@guernseyretailgroup.gg](mailto:hello@guernseyretailgroup.gg)



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