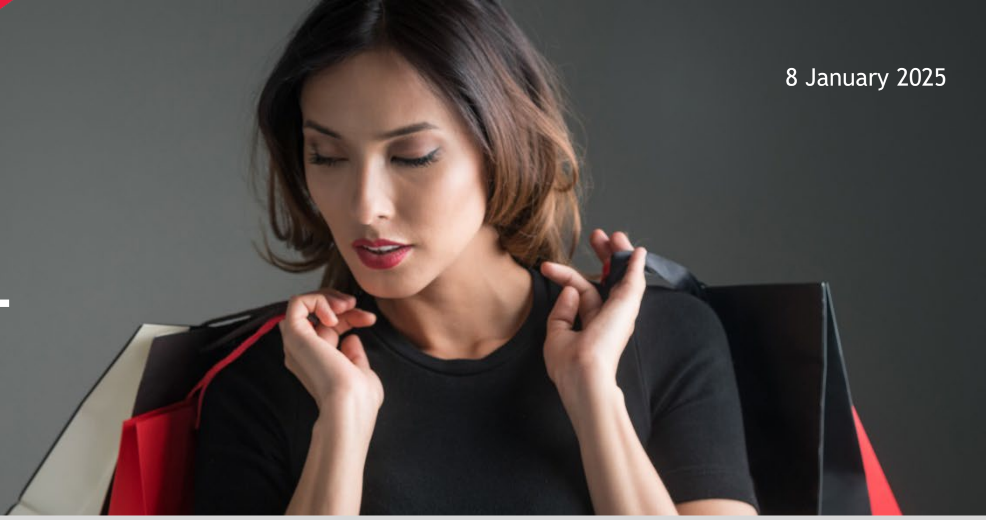


8 January 2025

BDO HIGH STREET TRACKER

December monthly review
Five weeks to 29 December 2024

STORE
+4.3%
December 2023 -2.6%

NON-STORE
+20.7%
December 2023 +0.6%

TOTAL
+7.7%
December 2023 -2.7%

Online Sales and Christmas Shopping put Positive Spin on Gloomy Golden Quarter

- Total like-for-like (LFL) sales grew +7.7% in December, from a negative base of -2.7% for December last year. Store sales were up by +4.3% from a negative base of -2.6% for the same month in 2023, while non-store sales grew by +20.7%, from a base of +0.6% for the same month last year.
- In the first week of the month, which this year included the Black Friday promotional event, LFL sales grew +18.98% from a negative base of -3.49% for the same week last year which included Cyber Monday. In week two, which began this year, but not last year, with the Cyber Monday promotional event, weekly LFL sales grew +12.63% from a negative base of -6.25% for the same week last year. In the third week, LFL sales ticked up by +0.95%, failing to offset a negative base of -4.49% for the same week last year. In week four, which culminated in the final pre-Christmas weekend both this year and last year, LFL sale rose +2.55% from a base of +4.26% for the same week last year. In the final week of December, which this year and last year included Christmas Day and Boxing Day, LFL sales rose +11.30% from a negative base of -3.58% for the corresponding week last year.
- Footfall to bricks-and-mortar destinations was positive in the first and final week of the month, but footfall was negative through the rest of the month. This may have been influenced by the month's weather which was cold and unsettled.
- Early December brought frost and snow in some regions, followed by milder, cloudy, and dry conditions over Christmas. Towards the end of December, the weather turned colder and rainier, with frost and thick fog in places.
- December's headline result, while overall positive, serves to reinforce the growing gap in performance between bricks-and-mortar retail and e-commerce. While store sales were strong in the first and final weeks the positive results for the rest of the month were down largely to strong non-store sales. The entrenched challenges facing the retail sector can be seen in recent data which showed that over 170,000 shop workers lost their jobs in 2024.
- The latest economic data presents a mixed outlook for the UK. GDP is estimated to have grown just 0.1% in the three months to October, owing to service sector and construction growth.
- More worrying for the retail sector, however, is inflation, which rose to 2.6% as of November 2024, down from earlier peaks but still stubbornly above the Bank of England's 2% target. High inflation, exacerbated by energy costs and supply chain issues continues to strain household budgets and business costs.
- The latest consumer confidence survey showed growth in terms of personal financial outlook, but the national outlook and major purchase index remained unchanged. This may be bolstered by recent salary growth data, which showed wage growth of 5.2% in October 2024, although this is just 2.6% when inflation adjusted.
- December is traditionally a strong month for retailers, and this month was no exception, despite weak mid-month store results. However, it came at the end of a disappointing golden quarter and a year of mixed fortunes, and in spite of recent reports of growing business confidence, retailers are likely to continue heavy discounting well into the new year to offset rising running costs.

TOTAL LIKE-FOR-LIKE RESULTS FROM 2023-2024

LFL Growth %	Week 1 (w/e 01/12)	Week 2 (w/e 08/12)	Week 3 (w/e 15/12)	Week 4 (w/e 22/12)	Week 5 (w/e 29/12)	Total December
Lifestyle	17.58	11.32	-8.44%	-1.36	28.11	8.8
Fashion	18.06	14.43	6.80	4.92	-0.52	8.8
Homeware	28.37	6.20	4.00	4.13	10.75	11.4
Store	14.39	-3.12	-3.16	-5.46	23.77	4.3
Non-store	23.40	58.78	1.65	32.17	-17.67	20.7
Total	18.98	12.63	0.95	2.55	11.30	7.7

As of December 2018, fashion, homewares and lifestyle figures represent combined in-store and non-store totals for that category.

LIFESTYLE

+8.8%

December 2023: -0.2%

- Lifestyle total LFLs grew by +8.8% from a base of -0.2% for the same month last year.
- In-store LFLs grew by +7.5% from a base of +1.0% for December 2023, while non-store sales grew by +8.3%, from a base of +5.5%.
- Weekly store and non-store lifestyle sales were mixed throughout December. The second and fourth weeks saw LFL non-store sales grow in excess of +30.00% compared to last year, while the final week saw the strongest store sales, up by +37.76% from a base of +8.23% for the same week in 2023.

FASHION

+8.8%

December 2023: -6.1%

- Fashion total LFLs grew by +8.8% from a base of -6.1% for the same month last year.
- In-store LFLs grew by +1.5% from a base of -7.5% for December 2023, while non-store sales grew by +19.9%, from a base of -2.1%.
- Non-store fashion LFL sales enjoyed double digit growth in all but the final week, while store sales were positive in just the first and final weeks. In week two, non-store fashion sales grew +44.24% from a base of -0.89% for the same week last year.

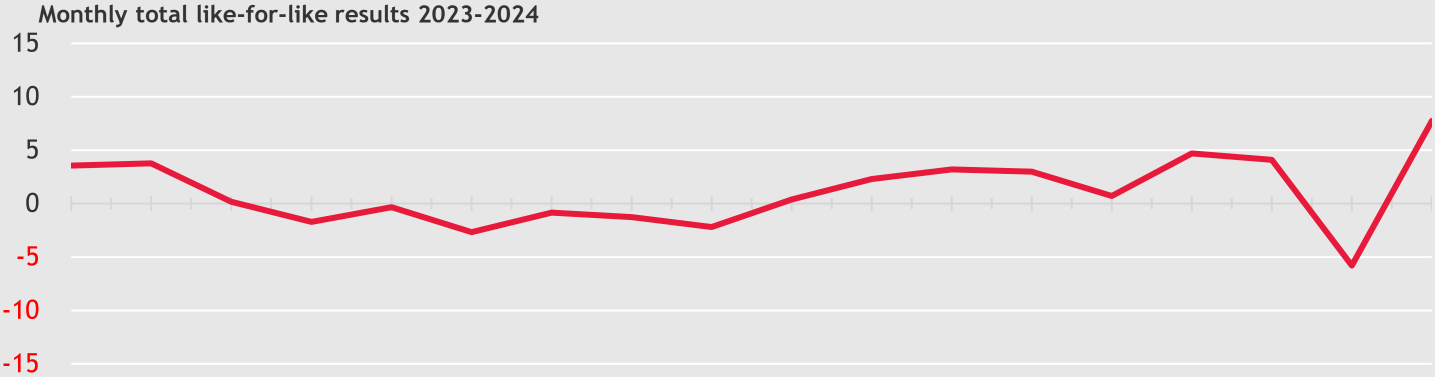
HOMEWARES

+11.4%

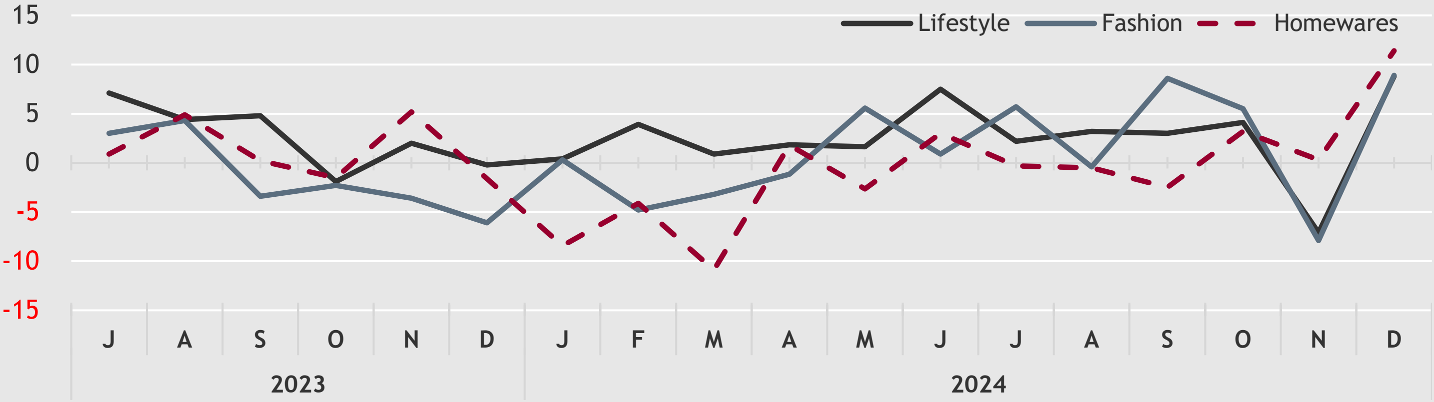
December 2023: -1.6%

- Homewares total LFLs grew by +11.4% from a base of -1.6% for the same month last year.
- In-store LFLs grew by +3.6% from a base of +0.9% for December 2023, while non-store sales grew by +23.0%, from a base of -5.0%.
- Non-store homewares were notable for producing double digit growth in all but two weeks of the month. In week one, non-store sales grew +44.10% from a base of +2.90% for the same week last year. This was followed by an increase of +34.10% from a base of +5.73% for the same week in 2023.

Monthly total like-for-like results 2023-2024



Monthly like-for-like results by sector 2022-2024



For more information please contact:

e: HighStreetSalesTracker@bdo.co.uk

The High Street Sales Tracker outlines weekly like-for-like sales changes of some 80 mid-tier retailers with c10,000 individual stores across **Fashion:** accessories, clothing, footwear. **Lifestyle:** general household goods, gifts, health and beauty, leisure goods. **Homewares:** cookware, furniture and floor coverings, lighting, linen and textiles. **Non-store:** mail order, online and other non-store channels. Total like-for-likes include store and non-store sales. Any footfall figures quoted are provided by Springboard who are a leading provider of automated visitor counting and retail sales analysis.