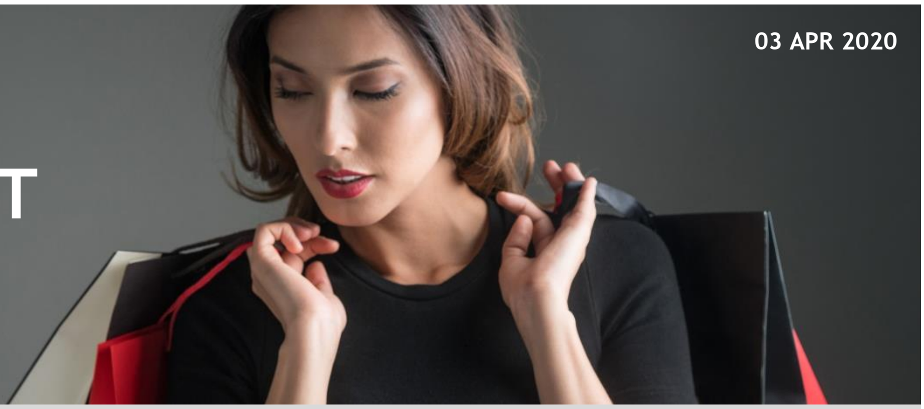
BDO HIGH STREET SALES TRACKER

MARCH MONTHLY REVIEW
Five weeks to 29 March 2020



STORE	NON-STORE	TOTAL
-34.1%	+13.7%	-17.9%
MARCH 2019: +4.8%	MARCH 2019: +18.7%	MARCH 2019: +6.5%

Sharp Decline in Sales amid Diverted Demand and Retail Closures

- Total like-for-like (LFL) sales suffered a collapse of –17.9% in March, but from a base of +6.5% for the equivalent month last year. Total in-store LFLs plummeted by –34.1% this month, but from a base of +4.8% for March last year. Total non-store LFLs increased by +13.7% in March from a good base of +18.7% last year. Sliding footfall due to social distancing, diverted demand from discretionary to essential items, and retail closures in the final week of the month all contributed to the worst results on record for both total LFLs and total in-store LFLs in March. Total non-store LFLs continued to show growth, however the increase was not consistent across all sectors as fashion retailers experienced a substantial drop in demand across all channels this month while lifestyle retailers saw good results online.
- March began with total LFLs falling by -0.88%, but from a high base of +26.22% for the same week last year when sales rebounded from the ‘Beast from the East’ in 2018. Total LFLs increased slightly by +0.58% in the following week, but from a negative base of -3.96% last year. Total LFLs began a consistent decline in the final weeks of March as concern around coronavirus limited footfall and further lockdown measures came into effect. Total LFLs fell by -11.13% and -37.42% in successive weeks, despite the latter including Mother’s Day Sunday (which fell a week later last year), from positive bases last year (+0.24% and +4.81%, respectively). The final week of the month saw total LFLs tumble by -63.44% from a base of +8.43% for the same week last year.
- Overall footfall fell progressively through all weeks of March as compared to the same weeks in 2019. Retail parks secured the only positive March result in week one when footfall improved by +0.3%, however the high street and shopping centres recorded negative results throughout March. The month concluded with overall footfall declining by significant margins. The high street posted declines of -45.5% and -82.2% in the final weeks of the month and shopping centres were not far behind recording drops in footfall of -29.2% and -81.6%. Footfall at retail parks fell by -6.6% and -65.3% over the same two weeks.
- While Government mandated social distancing measures were only brought in at the end of March, the spread of Covid-19 began to affect retailers much earlier through disruption to supply chains and a gradual pull-back from consumers. Though it is too early to assess the full-scale impact on the economy, it is already clear that economic growth expectations will be drastically cut as recessionary forces mount. Consumer spending on discretionary items is an immediate casualty of the circumstances with reports suggesting a notable decline in major purchases over the coming months. The Government has already announced some relief measures for beleaguered businesses, however as many retailers rely solely on non-store channels to maintain sales revenue through this period of lockdown there will be need for additional support in the months ahead.

TOTAL LIKE-FOR-LIKE RESULTS FROM 2019-2020

LFL Growth %	Week 1 (we 01/03)	Week 2 (we 08/03)	Week 3 (we 15/03)	Week 4 (we 22/03)	Week 5 (we 29/03)	Total March
Lifestyle	-0.45	2.13	-4.71	-5.43	-56.55	-11.6
Fashion	-1.56	0.52	-14.97	-55.41	-70.26	-25.9
Homeware	1.64	-3.62	-7.84	-27.03	-23.00	-9.7
STORE	**-6.08**	**-8.15**	**-21.78**	**-55.66**	**-96.28**	**-34.1**
NON-STORE	**15.90**	**20.89**	**7.82**	**17.33**	**4.60**	**13.7**
TOTAL	**-0.88**	**0.58**	**-11.13**	**-37.42**	**-63.44**	**-17.9**

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

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LIFESTYLE

-11.6%

MARCH 2019: -0.5%

- Lifestyle total LFLs declined by -11.6% in March from a marginally negative base of -0.5% for the same month last year. The result marks the worst for total lifestyle LFLs since BDO began recording total LFLs in September 2017 after recording three consecutive weeks of decline to end the month. In-store LFLs for lifestyle decreased by -24.6% this month from a negative base of -2.7% last year. In-store LFLs for lifestyle were negative throughout the month leading to the worst LFL on record for the category.

FASHION

-25.9%

MARCH 2019: +10.5%

- Fashion total LFLs decreased by -25.9% this month, but from a strong base of +10.5% for March last year. Recording three straight weeks of double-digit decline (-14.97%, -55.41%, and -70.26%), fashion total LFLs posted the worst result for the category on record. In-store LFLs for fashion plunged by -40.4% in March, but from a base of +8.2% last year. In-store LFLs for fashion were negative in every week of March, falling progressively until the final week (-99.28%) which only saw a two-day trading week prior to lockdown. The result marks the worst on record for in-store fashion.

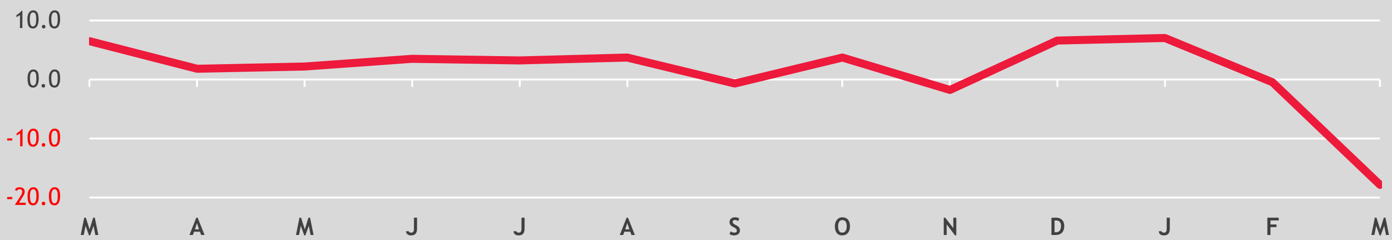
HOMEWARES

-9.7%

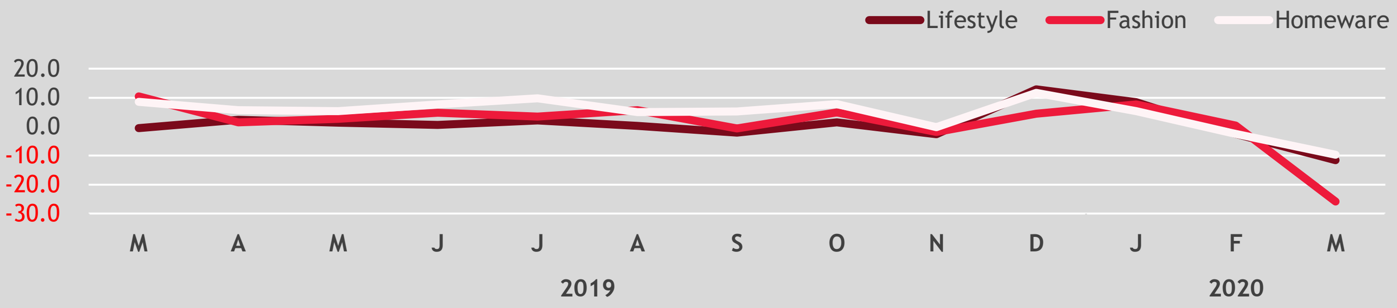
MARCH 2019: +8.6%

- Homeware total LFLs fell by -9.7% in March, but from a base of +8.6% for the equivalent month last year. This month's result marks the worst LFL for total homeware since July 2018 with the category posting four consecutive weeks of decline. In-store LFLs for homeware declined by -26.1%, but from a base of +9.0% last year. This month's result marks the worst LFL for in-store homeware since May 2018.

MONTHLY LIKE-FOR-LIKE RESULTS 2019-2020



MONTHLY LIKE-FOR-LIKE RESULTS BY SECTOR 2019-2020



FOR MORE INFORMATION

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 exclude non-store sales. Any footfall figures quoted are provided by Springboard who are a leading provider of automated visitor counting and retail sales analysis.

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