BEAUCLAIR

## OCTOBER 2025 TOWN & CITY CENTRE BEAUCLAIR INSIGHTS

**SALES IN TOWNS AND CITIES DURING OCTOBER PROVIDED THE FIRST INDICATION THAT THE GOLDEN QUARTER 2025 IS CLEARLY GOING TO BE YET ANOTHER CHALLENGING TRADING PERIOD FOR TOWNS AND CITIES. SALES DROPPED ANNUALLY DURING OCTOBER BY -4.1%, DRIVEN BY ONGOING CONSUMER NERVOUSNESS AROUND SPENDING IN THE FACE OF AN UNCERTAIN ECONOMIC OUTLOOK, WHICH HAS BEEN UNDOUBTEDLY COMPOUNDED BY PRE-BUDGET JITTERS.**

*According to Diane Wehrle, of Rendle Intelligence and Insights & Beauclair's Brand Ambassador.*

With unemployment at the highest it's been since 2021, and by implication an uncertain future for many employees, it is not surprising that consumers were exhibiting significant caution around spending during the first month of the Golden Quarter. Both transactions and customers were lower than in October 2024 (-5.8% and -3.2% respectively), with sales only marginally insulated by a modest rise in the average transaction value of +1.7% - most likely due to the impact of inflation rather than a real uplift in the value of purchases.

Sales declined in all five sectors that account for 85% of total sales in towns and cities, with a greater than average drop in General Retail (-7.8%) and Health & Beauty (-5.2%). The drop in fashion sales (-2%) was the lowest of all the five key sectors, but alongside a drop in the ATV (-2%) it suggests that consumers who were making Fashion purchases were making the most of discounting.

A drop in sales during October was not unexpected as prior to the start of Q4 I forecast a -3% drop during October. However, the media commentary surrounding likely tax rises in the budget, combined with disappointing economic performance and what appears to be an impact on employment of the increases in national insurance, has clearly deterred shoppers.

The next glimmer of hope for the Golden Quarter 2025 is November, and the possibility that Black Friday may deliver spending that has been deferred in order that consumers can benefit from discounts ahead of Christmas.

**GB Benchmark – October 2025**

| Sector | Sales vs Oct 2025 | Transactions vs Oct 2025 | Customers vs 2025 | ATV vs Oct 2025 | ATV |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| All Sectors | -4.1% | -5.8% | -3.2% | +1.7% | £18.65 |
| Fashion | -4.0% | -2.0% | -2.6% | -2.0% | £38.58 |
| Food & Drink | -3.1% | -4.9% | -3.0% | +1.9% | £13.33 |
| General Retail | -7.8% | -5.1% | -3.4% | -2.8% | £16.16 |
| Grocery | -1.0% | -3.5% | -0.8% | +2.5% | £15.10 |
| Health & Beauty | -5.2% | -8.1% | -6.1% | +3.1% | £27.86 |

**GB Benchmark – YTD October 2025**

| Sector | YTD Sales vs Oct 2025 | YTD Transactions vs Oct 2025 | YTD Customers vs 2025 | YTD ATV vs Oct 2025 | ATV |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| All Sectors | -3.2% | -4.1% | -3.1% | +1.0% | £18.42 |
| Fashion | -4.6% | -4.1% | -3.6% | -0.5% | £37.52 |
| Food & Drink | -2.8% | -4.8% | -3.0% | +2.2% | £13.34 |
| General Retail | -3.1% | -2.8% | -3.1% | -0.3% | £15.90 |
| Grocery | -2.0% | -2.7% | -1.1% | +0.7% | £15.05 |
| Health & Beauty | -0.6% | -4.9% | -3.9% | +4.6% | £26.96 |

*Our GB Benchmark is based on the median retail performance of 62 nationwide Town & City Centres.*