



The Magazine for **Retail NI**

INSIDE

Concerns over DAERA Recycling Plans for Retailers

Changes Needed on Buncrana Road Upgrade

Rates revaluation coming soon





Trade NI alliance launch 10-year plan at major Northern Ireland business reception at Westminster

TRADE NI – THE NEW ALLIANCE BETWEEN RETAIL NI, HOSPITALITY ULSTER AND MANUFACTURING LAUNCHED ITS 10-YEAR PLAN ENTITLED 'VISION 2030' AT A MAJOR BUSINESS RECEPTION IN SEPTEMBER AT WESTMINSTER, ASSERTING THAT NOW IS THE TIME TO BREAK THE CYCLE OF LIMITED ECONOMIC GROWTH.

Over 350 attended the event that was addressed by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Julian Smith MP and the shadow Minister for Northern Ireland, Steve Pound MP. This was the largest ever delegation of the Northern Ireland business community to visit Westminster – over 180 people flew over from Belfast to attend the event.

In addition, the Irish Embassy hosted a working lunch with Downing Street hosting an evening reception for many of the visiting business community.

The transformative economic plan, Vision 2030, sets out key policy priorities that have the potential to create 65,000 jobs and to make Northern Ireland a high growth economy.

Trade NI, made up of the three largest sectors of industry and the majority of businesses in Northern Ireland employing around 300,000 people collectively, has said that any incoming Northern Ireland Executive must set out to increase the productivity of the NI workforce; reduce the regulatory burden on businesses; increase the skills base; and deliver a clear economic strategy for Northern Ireland.

The group has consistently raised significant concerns around the increased cost of doing business and the complexities created around Brexit uncertainty and the two-year hiatus of the Assembly and Executive at Stormont.



Con O'Neill, Chair of Manufacturing NI; Mark Stewart, Chair of Hospitality Ulster; Gerald Angley, Deputy Ambassador of Irish Embassy in London and Nigel Maxwell, Chair of Retail NI

Key Priorities from the Trade NI Vision 2030 plan include:

- · A **sustainable** economy where growth is stimulated by enhanced productivity resulting from investment in education and skills, supported by responsible consumption and production.
- · A **competitive** economy that provides a uniquely supportive environment for doing business.
- A **global** economy that is visible and attractive to the outside world with an infrastructure which supports local, national and international connectivity.
- · An economy supported by **revitalised** communities where people want to live, work and visit.

Representatives of Trade NI, Glyn Roberts (Retail NI), Colin Neill (Hospitality Ulster) and Stephen Kelly (Manufacturing NI) said:

"Northern Ireland is facing a huge challenge as it struggles politically and economically with a growth forecast of around 1% or below. This is simply not good enough and we can't sit idly by and let events overtake us. We must break the cycle of limited economic growth."

"Our three organisations represent most of the businesses that make up private sector jobs in Northern Ireland. Therefore, a louder voice needs to be heard on their behalf so that they don't suffer in the wake of the local political issues. We want a reboot of



Trade NI CEOs at Number 10



Prime Minister shaking hands with Retail NI President Peter McBride

the economic policy of Northern Ireland, in order to benefit our economy and safeguard our growing business community."

"We need to be bold and ambitious about creating 3% or even 5% growth over the next few years, but that requires decision makers to be pressed into action and a series of policy and legislative decisions to be taken and driven through. Our local economy and businesses have taken a back seat and we simply cannot afford that situation any longer."

"Our Vision 2030 document sets out a bold new ten-year plan for creating 65,000 new jobs and creating a high growth economy. We want to make Northern Ireland the best place in the UK and Ireland to shop, socialise, locate and start a business"

"The Vision 2030 plan sets out to create a better functioning business environment and attract further inward investment that will lead to a revitalised economy taking on the challenge in turbulent times."

"We want to make Northern Ireland an eco-system of innovation."

"Trade NI is keen to work with all business organisations, chambers of commerce, trade unions and voluntary sector representation to create a new progressive partnership for change in Northern Ireland."

They added: "We had a huge turnout at Westminster from the Northern Ireland business community, along with elected representatives from right across the political spectrum with a vested and keen interest in ensuring that Northern Ireland is placed on the right path after several years of stagnation."

"We are not isolated from the fact that this report has been launched at a time of political upheaval. Our day of engagements in London sent out a clear signal to our own MPs, wider elected representatives and the British and Irish Governments that the economic health of Northern Ireland must be a priority."

A copy of Vision 2030 can be downloaded from the Retail NI website.



What's happening within the retail sector?

MULKERNS EUROSPAR

Congratulation to Terry Mulkerns, owner of Mulkerns EUROSPAR in the Forkhill area of Newry who was awarded two Category Star Titles at the Independent Achievers Academy (IAA) for Best In-store Display and a second for Staff Development, in recognition of the positive working environment he has created.

As the only Northern Ireland winner recognised on the night, Terry Mulkerns said it was a huge honour to have won in two categories.

"I'm extremely proud to have been recognised by the Independent Achievers Academy and won two retail stars. This is testament to the hard work that has been done throughout our store by all our staff throughout the last year.

"It's particularly special to be recognised on a national stage and for me reinforces the message that our stores in Northern Ireland can compete on the very highest level and come out on top."

"The award wins have been a huge boost for the whole team and while we're incredibly proud of everything that has been achieved to date, especially against such a competitive market, we want to develop this success and continue to improve for our customers."



Terry Mulkern, owner of Mulkerns EUROSPAR collecting his IAA category star award at the awards gala in London.

THE GEM, ANDERSONTOWN, BELFAST

As one of the first new-look Costcutter stores in Northern Ireland, The Gem in Andersonstown, Belfast has been redesigned to truly meet the needs of the local community as well as creating a fantastic shopping experience.

The Gem has been a vital part of the community since 1952 and owner Larry Drumm had operated from a small unit on Andersontown Road for many years. However, when the opportunity to acquire the adjacent unit presented itself, he snapped it up, knocked down walls, and transformed it into one 1,700 sq ft Costcutter store, in preparation for the major redevelopment of the nearby Casement Park, the GAA

main sports venue for Belfast.

Taking advantage of the store's high-traffic location, situated just a few metres from Casement Park, the store also now offers shoppers a seated area with free wifi, a range of hot and cold food-to-go options including Seattle's Best Coffee, fresh and locally supplied sandwiches and cakes, hot pastries, and a range of convenience snacks.

Adding to the convenience offer, the store now offers cash withdrawals, parcel 'pick up and drop off', mobile phone top-ups and bill payments through its PayPoint service.



As an established business within the local community, Larry and his team pride themselves on excellent convenience shopping and customer service, ensuring that they listen to shoppers' needs and adapt to reflect their ever-changing demands.

CENTRA CITY QUAYS

Centra City Quays, has brought convenience to people living and working in the Belfast Harbour Estate, with the arrival of its new store at City Quays, which opened its doors to the public on Tuesday 28th May.

The vibrant and contemporary store, which boasts panoramic riverside views across the harbour to the Titanic Quarter, is certain to be a one-stop-shop for more than 5,000 residents and workers in the area, catering for breakfast, lunch, dinner and even those all-important essentials to cook up a storm after a day at the office.

Perfect for lunch on-the-go, the store, located within City Quays 2, features a variety of options to satisfy every craving and also caters for coffee lovers with an in-store Frank and Honest gourmet coffee dock.

Centra City Quays also features a comfortable seating area, complete with complimentary Wi-Fi and USB charging ports. This bright and modern space is ideal for dining-in, short meetings or simply taking a break. The store



The Gem staff outside their new-look store

also features a covered terrace for alfresco dining overlooking the landmark locations of the city's waterfront skyline, as well as direct access to the River Lagan walk and cycleway.

The store, owned by the Gracey family, a well-known family business based in Belfast is the latest addition in their successful retail portfolio. Commenting on the opening, Anna McErlean said:

"Building on the experience of two decades in retail, we are proud to be opening the doors to our new store, which will bring a contemporary and vibrant new convenience offering to people working in Belfast Harbour Estate. We are delighted with the prime location of our new store and feel that Centra City Quays will be a fantastic addition to the area."

Centra Now Open Centra Now Open Centra

Frank Mitchell officially opening Centra City Quays

THE RETAIL NI BOARD

Nigel Maxwell – Chairman & SuperValu & Centra Sales Director

Paddy Doody – Vice Chair & Sales & Marketing Director of Henderson Group

Pat Leneghan – Vice Chair & Head of Retail (Ireland) for Nisa

Glyn Roberts – Chief Executive
Peter McBride – President & Spar
Retailer

Neil McRobbie – Centra Retailer Philip O'Neill – Nisa Retailer Andrew Porter – Creightons of Finaghy

Peter McCool – Centra Retailer David Barber – The Whitehouse, Derry

Gavan Wall – The Wall Group **Joe Quail** – Quail's Fine Foods

If any of our members need assistance on any issues, please contact the Retail NI office on **028 9022 0004**.

Alternatively, contact Glyn Roberts on **glyn@retailni.com** or Lisa McMaster on **lisa@retailni.com**

Proud to support Retail NI





Changes Needed on Buncrana Road Upgrade

A delegation of Buncrana Road based Retail NI members has met with local Derry Sinn Fein and SDLP representatives to discuss their proposals for improving access to their stores on the proposed upgrade to the road.

Retail NI has already met with officials from Department for Infrastructure to outline their concerns with the plans.

David Barber, Retail NI Board Member and Buncrana Road Trader said:

"This was a useful engagement with the political representatives. We appreciate their support"

"We have concerns with the proposed upgrade plan as it will restrict customer access to my business, the many other businesses on our site and our colleagues in the Centra store, the Post Office and other traders across the road"



Musgrave's Connor Fitzgerald and David Barber with Elisha McCallion MP

"Over 200 people are employed between our two businesses and we need to ensure that the upgraded road will support the future growth of traders in the area"

> "We have outlined some practical changes to the plans, which would include an additional roundabout and look forward to further engagement"

Retail NI Chief Executive Glyn Roberts who also attended the meeting said: "RETAIL NI SUPPORTS THE OVERALL PLAN TO UPGRADE THE BUNCRANA ROAD. IT WILL BE A VITAL INVESTMENT IN THE INFRASTRUCTURE OF DERRY, THE NORTH WEST AND SUPPORT THE DERRY-STRABANE CITY DEAL"

"The upgrade has to also work for local traders and ensure that their businesses can grow"

"We believe our proposals are a win-win for the overall project and local traders"



proposals for Buncrana Road with Mark H Durkan MLA

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ATM robbers are not Robin Hoods. They're hoods!

This year 15 ATMs have been ripped from the walls by diggers in Northern Ireland, leaving behind a trail of devastation. As in all of these ATM thefts, the actions of these criminals have not only caused immediate financial harm to the business targeted, but they have understandably caused fear in the community and impacted upon a vital service many local people rely on.

In areas where ATMs have been stolen, local people may have to travel considerable distances to find an alternative way to withdraw money and the livelihoods of the business owners who have worked for years to build up their businesses is also jeopardised. There's also the loss of very expensive machinery, which cause delays in production, damage to the local economy and the likelihood of criminal finances being redirected back into funding further organised crime or terrorism.

Retail NI has given numerous television and radio interviews regarding the robberies and has also held a number of meetings with the PSNI, taking this issue to the highest level possible. A delegation of members also met with Crime Operations Assistant Chief Constable Barbara Gray to voice their concerns over the theft of cash machines to seek assurances that everything possible is being done to catch the criminal gangs behind the thefts and prevent further crimes.

Retail NI Chief Executive Glyn Roberts said: "Our members are being



ruthlessly targeted by these criminal gangs and feel under a state of siege"

"No small business owner should ever have to face such a threat. We are urging the community as a whole to be vigilant and to stand with our members in these challenging times"

Speaking about the criminal gangs behind the ATM robberies, Retail NI CEO Glyn Roberts said, "They're criminals of the worst kind preying on independent retailers, small businesses, businesses that represent the very best in a community and provide an invaluable service to the local community."

"We also need to nail the lie that these gangs are somehow Robin Hoods: they are just hoods."

"Since the closure of many bank branches, the only local ATM many rural communities have, are those located at their local retail stores. We could well be facing a scenario where rural retailers will remove their ATMs which would mean customers, particularly in rural areas, would not have access to cash."

There have been 41 searches and 15 arrests across Northern Ireland in relation to the ATM robberies with a number of suspects remaining on remand.



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Dinner Dash

69% who notice
Pulse are likely to
grab groceries on
their way home





Bean for a coffee

3in4 who notice
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out and about



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67% who notice
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holiday this year



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Retail NI member Ruairi McKeagney

Suspension of Rural ATM Rate Relief Costing Small Retailers £130k

Retail NI has described the suspension of the Rural ATM Rate Relief Scheme, which is costing Retail NI members an extra £130,000 as disgraceful. The scheme provided rates relief on external ATMs for over seventy independent retailers in rural areas has been suspended as a result of Stormont not meeting.

Retail NI Chief Executive Glyn Roberts said:

"This is a completely unacceptable situation, with rural independent retailers receiving additional rate bills of up to £8k on top of already high business rate costs"

"The suspension of this scheme is a direct result of Stormont not meeting to pass an annual technical vote to approve this rate relief. This is costing struggling retailers in rural towns an additional £130k."

"Small businesses are now directly paying the price of the inability of the political parties to secure agreement and form a Government at Stormont"

"With so many bank branch closures in rural towns and villages in recent years, our members' ATMs provide an invaluable service to their local communities.

"There is a real danger our members could start to remove these ATMs unless urgent action is taken to restore this rate relief scheme. Retail NI has always taken the view that ATMs should not receive a separate rates bill"

Tempo based Retail NI member Ruairi McKeagney said:

"I was shocked to receive an additional Rates Bill of £8k out of the blue for my ATM"

"This will have a serious knock-on effect on my business and sadly I have decided to close my ATM on completion of my contract as it has become unsustainable"



Retail NI and Hospitality Ulster Welcome Business Rate Review

Retail NI and Hospitality Ulster have both welcomed the announcement by the Department of Finance that a comprehensive review of business rates is to be held. The Department of Finance Permanent Secretary Sue Gray made the announcement recently at the Retail NI-DWF Local Government conference at Titanic. This Review had been a long-time objective of both Retail NI and Hospitality Ulster.

The Chief Executives of Retail NI and Hospitality Ulster, Glyn Roberts and Colin Neill said:

"Both our organisations are delighted that the Department of Finance have announced this review into non-domestic rates. We have consistently lobbied for this over a number of years and are pleased that our joint call has been heard"

"While this is not an end in itself, it is a means to an end. This review provides us with a roadmap for radical change to an antiquated and not fit for purpose system of business rates which is a major burden for our members"

"In this review we will be outlining significant changes to Rates, including our proposals for a targeted approach to small business rates relief, a revamp of the Rates Hardship fund, green rates rebate for business who invest in carbon



Colin Neill, Hospitality Ulster; Sue Gray, Permanent Secretary for the Department of Finance; Glyn Roberts, Retail NI; Julie Galbraith, DWF.

neutral technology and greater relief for new start businesses."

"AT THE LAST UK BUDGET, THE CHANCELLOR GAVE INDEPENDENT RETAILERS AND HOSPITALITY BUSINESSES A THIRD OFF THEIR RATE BILLS IN ENGLAND. WE WANT NOTHING LESS THAN THIS FOR OUR MEMBERS IN NORTHERN IRELAND"

Julie Galbraith, Partner, Northern Ireland Head of Real Estate and Retail, Food, and Hospitality, DWF Belfast said:

"The fluidity in the relationship between retail, the high street and the consumer is only set to accelerate in 2019 and beyond. It is therefore welcome news that a comprehensive review of business rates will be held by the Department of Finance.

"This is a very important step for public and private sector collaboration, which is vital if we are to drive the 'overhaul' and regeneration of our high streets in Northern Ireland."



Rates Re-Valuation Coming Soon!

Article by Robert Watson, Osborne King

As the leading independent Property Consultancy in Northern Ireland, Osborne King is a natural fit to partner with Retail NI, as we share the same corporate ethos. We also have to pay property rates, and so, we are taking a keen interest in the on-going rates revaluation exercise which will significantly impact the rates we pay from April 2020. In my view other Retail NI members should be similarly engaged.

Rates bills are one of retailers' biggest outgoings. They are based on the Net Annual Value (NAV) of the property you occupy as determined by Land Property Services (LPS) at a rates revaluation. The NAV is multiplied by the rate in the pound to calculate your rates bill. In theory the NAV equates to the rental value of your property at a specific point in time. For the 2020 revaluation, the valuation date is 1 April 2018.

Consequently, all the factors that affect rental value such as location, size, quality etc also affect the NAV. Crucially NAVs can be challenged via a statutory appeals process, whilst the rate in the pound, set by the Department of Finance and local councils, cannot be challenged.

LPS are engaged in the difficult task of revaluing approximately 75,000 non-domestic properties across Northern Ireland. The purpose of the exercise is to re-distribute the rates burden, not to provide a means of raising more revenue. The last revaluation took effect on April

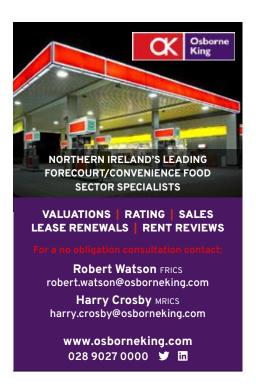
2015 based on an April 2013 valuation date, and so there will inevitably be movements in valuations across different property sectors and locations to reflect relative economic changes since April 2013.

At the last revaluation, the convenience food sector in particular saw big uplifts in valuations which caught many retailers by surprise. That partly reflected the fact it had been 12 years since the previous revaluation. Given that the gap this time will only be 5 years, it can be expected that the movement in valuations will not be as dramatic. However, whilst the woes experienced by the wider retail sector are well documented, the convenience food sector has continued to evolve and flourish. Consequently, upward movement in valuations is more likely than not.

The first visibility of what your new valuation might be is when LPS publish a draft list of valuations, online, in late November this year. The important message to remember is that whether your NAV goes up or down, you should have the valuation checked by an experienced rating valuer. Depending on whether your valuation has gone up or down by more than the average of the aggregate of the entire Valuation List will determine whether you are a winner or a loser. As previously stated, there may be scope to challenge your valuation which, if successful, will reduce your rates liability from April 2020.

Following the 2015 Revaluation, Osborne King saved our clients in excess of £2.5M, and we will be similarly motivated to mitigate our clients' rates bills following the current revaluation.

Another significant announcement is that a comprehensive review of business rates in NI has been commissioned by the Department of Finance. This is something that Retail NI and Hospitality Ulster have been lobbying for for some time. It provides an opportunity to press for a similar rates relief scheme in NI to that introduced in the October 2018 Westminster budget which provides that retail and hospitality premises in England and Wales, with an NAV below £51,000, get one-third off their rates bills. As a member of Retail NI I hope that the review will be comprehensive and that the opportunity is taken to significantly improve a system of local taxation which is long overdue a radical overhaul.







GroceryAid: Helping people cope

GroceryAid is the industry's charity and we are committed to providing colleagues and companies with services for the world we live in today. Sadly, the Association of Convenience Stores (ACS) 2019 Crime Report revealed that 48% of independent retailers have experienced violence or verbal abuse as they try to earn their living. This is why we have launched our new Workplace Critical Incident Support service.

Witnessing or being the victim of such attacks can have lasting effects on the individuals involved. The feeling that you or a loved one is in danger, however fleeting, has a profound psychological impact.

The aim of our new service is to provide professional on the ground counselling support to grocery colleagues in the aftermath of an accident, robbery or assault in the workplace.

Whether you are an employer, a witness or the victim of such an incident, simply call the GroceryAid Helpline (08088 021 122) which is available 24/7, 365 days a year. Staff at the Helpline make an initial assessment and if a site visit is required, the case is handed directly to our partner CiC who are specialists in workplace counselling. CiC will carry out a full assessment of the situation over the phone and can then arrange the visit.

Each case is different and the professional counsellors will attend sites for a half or a full day depending on the identified need and numbers of staff involved.

They can run either group or 1-2-1 sessions, providing practical advice and tools to help individuals manage their feelings and emotions.

Steve Barnes, GroceryAid Chief Executive, commented, "It is a sad reflection of our society that there is need for such a service and the charity is extremely grateful to The Leverhulme Trade Charities Trust for funding this important support for our industry".

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Retail NI Expresses
Concerns over
DAERA Recycling
Plans for Retailers

RETAIL NI HAS RESPONDED TO THE
PUBLICATION OF A NEW CONSULTATION FROM
THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL AFFAIRS, CALLING
ON THEM TO ENSURE THAT A MANUALLY
ADMINISTERED DEPOSIT RETURN SCHEME
DOES NOT FORM PART OF ITS PLAN TO
ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO RECYCLE MORE.

The consultation which covers Northern Ireland, England and Wales, proposes a network of return points made up of reverse vending machines and manual return points which would be hosted by retailers and in other locations. The impact assessment published alongside the consultation suggests that small convenience stores would be required to take back containers manually because 'reverse vending machines will not be an economic solution' for them. Retail NI has consistently argued that manual returns would cause a number of issues for retailers and would not be a practical solution.

Retail NI Chief Executive Glyn Roberts said:

"The retail sector has a part to play in ensuring that less plastic ends up on our streets, countryside and oceans. We share the same objectives as the Government, but have concerns with their proposed methods to address this problem"

"We welcome the Government's acknowledgement that reverse vending machines may not be economically or practically viable for small stores, but requiring those stores to take part in a manual return system would be extremely problematic. Issues our members have identified include a lack of space to store returned containers, hygiene problems from handling dirty containers, colleagues having to deal with potentially hundreds of returned containers every day, and

the queues and customer disruption this could cause."

"Any plans to introduce a deposit return scheme must abandon the idea of requiring manual returns and focus on a fully funded and strategically located network of reverse vending machines that allow consumers to recycle more without causing unnecessary problems, delays and health hazards in small stores."

In the consultation, the
Government outlines two main
options for the scope of products
that would be included in a deposit
return scheme. The first option is
an 'all in' approach which covers
PET and HDPE plastic bottles,
aluminium and steel cans and



glass bottles, with no restriction on the size of containers in scope. The second option specifically targets 'on the go' consumption, with the containers in scope limited to 750ml in size as well as excluding multipack containers.

Mr Roberts continued:

"The concerns that we have about the practicality of manual returns in small stores would only be amplified if the size of containers was unlimited. Larger containers are typically consumed at home and then recycled through the existing kerbside collection network. We do not believe that there is a need to include them within the scope of a deposit return scheme."



Less plastic, more fantastic at Milestone

A thriving independent supermarket in Northern Ireland has stepped up their contribution to sustainability with the introduction of new plastic free containers.

Milestone Rathfriland Nisa Extra, is now selling a large proportion of their take home meals in new Vegware packaging, which is made entirely out of plants and is 100 per cent recyclable.

The containers are transparent and look just like ordinary plastic but are made from renewable, lower carbon or recycled materials, and can all be commercially composted with food waste.

Noel Hadden, general manager at Milestone, said: "Our fresh food and meal solutions are the reason shoppers visit us and there is an increasing expectation that we will do more to support sustainability.

"The long-term plan is to use recyclable packaging on all of our products that we make on-site, but we are introducing it gradually."

Take home soup mixes, casserole packs and side dishes such as coleslaws are just some of the products now sold in Vegware packaging with more to be converted over the coming months.

"The plant-based containers are more expensive than traditional plastic ones, but we don't want to pass that on to our customers and so will eventually replace plastic with Vegware over time."



Stock up this Christmas with Mash Direct's Winter Warmers

Mash Direct's 'Field to Fork' Christmas creations are perfect for the entertaining season

The award winning brand Mash Direct presents a selection of great tasting, nutritious seasonal sides for family and friends to enjoy this Christmas. Ideal at any festive get together, Mash Direct has a range of over 50 farm fresh products that are packed full of nutrients and flavours without the hassle of peeling, chopping, boiling and mashing.

From traditional classics of Mashed Potato and Champ to more innovative creations like Potato Croquettes and Beer Battered
Onion Rings and seasonal editions
including Honey Glazed Parsnips
and Roasted Root Vegetables, there
are Mash Direct products for
everyone and every occasion. All
products cook to perfection in
minutes and provide the inspiration,
choice and variety for home cooked
meals and family celebrations this
Christmas.

Mash Direct are showcasing their festive flavours even further with the launch of their Christmas Bites. With a focus on traditional tastes with a dash of festive flare, their new Christmas products comprise of

three different bites including Ham and Cheese, Shredded Duck and Stuffing which are all Gluten Free and free from artificial colourings and flavourings. These are available to retailers now.

Sales Director of Mash Direct, Lance Hamilton, said "It is important to maintain the wonderful Christmas traditions of spending time with family and friends as well as sparking our festive taste buds. Our whole range offers the convenience of little preparation, quick cooking times, nutritional value and maximum flavours bringing our customers the best of the season."



The National Lottery continues supporting you as a Responsible Retailer

Being a responsible retailer benefits all stores and customers. It includes only selling National Lottery products to, and accepting prize claims from, people 16 years or older – and, new for 2019, providing a player handout to anyone asking for help with their play.

Camelot – the operator of The National Lottery – is internationally recognised for selling National Lottery products responsibly and ensuring retailers have the correct safeguards in place to protect against underage sales.

To support this, Camelot conducts 11,600 mystery shopper test visits every year under its Operation Child programme. As part of this, independent retailers and multiples can be visited at any time.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

An agency representative and a young person – who will be over 16 years of age to prevent retailers committing a crime, but will look young enough to be questioned – will enter a store and the young person will ask to purchase a National Lottery ticket or Scratchcard, or will use self-checkout to purchase. The sales assistant would then be expected to ask the young person for proof of age in the same way they would any other age-restricted product.

Immediately after the mystery shopper test visit has taken place, the agency representative will tell the staff of that store the outcome of the visit. Store managers will also receive a letter to confirm the result within five working days of the mystery shop visit taking place.

If ID has not been correctly requested, and a National Lottery product was sold to the young person, the store will be given a Responsible Retailing information pack, point of sale and will be provided with guidance.



Camelot's Customer Development team will then visit in the following days to ensure adequate steps are being taken and that the correct safeguards are in place to prevent underage sales.

The store will be subsequently visited again for a second mystery shopper visit. If The National Lottery retailer does not correctly ask for ID a second time, Camelot will provide further training and the store will receive one more final mystery shopper visit.

If the store fails to ask for ID on the third mystery shopper visit, the store's National Lottery terminal will be suspended and an investigation will be conducted, which could result in the possible loss of The National Lottery terminal.

National Lottery retailers are reminded that it is illegal to sell National Lottery products to anyone under the age of 16. Trading Standards also carry out their own visits on a regular basis, with the consequences potentially being a fine of up to £5,000 and/or even two years' imprisonment.

TIPS FOR RESPONSIBLE RETAILING

NO ID, NO SALE

- Have a written age verification policy;
- Ensure you train your staff on selling age-restricted products and provide regular awareness training for staff on selling age-restricted products;
- Have a system in place to ensure all your staff ask for ID for young people – consider using the 'Think 21' or 'Challenge 25' policies;
- Only accept approved forms of identity;
 - Passport
 - Photo Driving Licence
 - Military ID Card
 - ID which has the 'PASS' logo (e.g. CitizenCard)
- Support young staff who may have less confidence to challenge young customers or part-time staff who may be less familiar with your policies;
- Use a refusal register one is provided in your National Lottery Retailer Organiser – regularly checking it is being used.

The Future of Retail...



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