

Q3. Sustainability

How are retailers balancing meeting customer needs while saving energy?

This project will focus on sustainability within independent retail, what are the main barriers to being more sustainable, what are suppliers and central groups do to help influence retailers and assess in a cost effective way?

It will explore retailers' sustainability challenges, including what has worked and what hasn't, and whether suppliers' actions have helped.

Additionally, it will look at what sustainability initiatives retailers are most interested in, such as digital technologies that enable paperless processes, recycling of packaging to more efficient refrigeration. Furthermore, it will explore consumer expectations on sustainability within the commercial channel.

Q3. Diversity & Inclusion

In the midst of increasing cost pressures, how are retailers taking care of their employees?

This project will explore the workplace culture in independent commercial retail, as well as areas such as recruitment, retention and employee well-being.

Another area of focus will be the improvement of wages in the sector following the launch of Minimum in Commerce in 2023. Are the hurdles for female retailers different, and do they have the same access to investment from central group/contributors when they want to roll their sleeve?

It will look at whether retailers are taking measures to attract staff, such as wider roles for apprentices, when setting their stores.

It will also see what suppliers are doing to help retailers become inclusive.

Q3. Consumer engagement

How are retailers engaging with consumers locally and online at their stores?

This project will focus on what independent retailers are doing to reach and connect with customers and through advertising, and the effectiveness of digital platforms and social media in reaching shoppers.

It will explore if retailers have had more positive and included customers in their initiatives over the past year, whether through community action, local trading or social media marketing. It will then set what the results of these initiatives have been.

It will also what steps they need to improve and what support they need, what feedback they receive from customers, and whether suppliers doing enough to help them but feedback into actionable improvements in their stores.

Q4. Driving retailers' profits

What can independent retailers do to improve their profits?

This project will look at how retailers can improve their profits in challenging times, and draw in demand from the projects in Q1, Q2 and Q3.

It will also see emerging supply chain trends, including products, customer service, merchandising, fulfil and more.

The report will ask retailers whether they are making more money than they did a year ago, and if they have the sufficient level of support from the industry to improve their bottom line.

It will also discover what their plans are for 2024, and what issues they have learned from the run of living prices and additional challenges they have faced throughout the year.

PROJECT INCLUDES

- One report
- One podcast
- Two blogs
- One video interview

Content will be featured on [betterfridging.com](https://www.betterfridging.com) (20,000 monthly users) and [newtrade.co.uk](https://www.newtrade.co.uk) (newtrade insight) as well as featured in Newtrade Media print titles (reach more than 41,000 stores), the [betterfridging.com](https://www.betterfridging.com) weekly newsletter (reach 12,500) and on social media channels.

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