

INDEX SHOWS UPTURN IN CONSUMER SPENDING

The Visa UK Expenditure Index reveals today that for the first time in six months, a strong period of consumer spending in November resulted in simultaneous growth in monthly (+1.0%), quarterly (+1.1%) and annual (+1.5%) figures.

It says this is a great sign of consumer confidence and indicative of a promising December as retailers and shoppers get ready for Christmas.

Jeremy Nicholds, director of commercial development at Visa Europe, said: "Consumer spending in November culminated in one of the strongest periods of growth this year, laying the ground for what retailers hope will be a good December.

"Indeed, data from the index showed that spending strengthened in the final weeks of November, signalling that consumers are getting ready for Christmas with just a few weeks left to go.

"Of particular note is the improvement in face-to-face purchases which increased by +1.3%, while online spending continued its positive run by registering annual growth of +1.0% bolstered by Black Friday."

BOOTLE ROASTER AND BLENDER TARGETS WIRRAL AND WALES

Joe Black Coffee to extend its reach

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Specialist coffee roaster and blender, Bootle-based Joe Black Coffee, is expanding into Wirral and North Wales.

The company supplies coffee to caterers, retailers, breweries and coffee lovers alike.

Its customer base includes some iconic names such as London Carriage Works, Bierkeller, Host, Central Perk, Liverpool FC and the Liverpool museums and universities as well as some smaller coffee houses, and now a large slice of the local Chester and Wirral food and beverage market.

Clients are keen to develop a bespoke coffee blend that suits their needs best and have a signature blend of their own.

This process is a real 'USP' for Joe Black Coffee and several clients such as Caldy Golf Club, Chester Cathedrals and Amber Lounge have recently made use of this service.

Another is Chester-based company The



Tracy Gibbons, Joe Black Coffee account manager

Blue Moon Cafe owned by Sarah May who said: "What's refreshing for our business is that the Joe Black team also bring new product ideas, hints and tips for sales and promotions."

Joe Black Coffee has now started to branch out further and Tracy Gibbons, account manager for Wirral and North Wales, said: "One of our unique selling points is that clients can come to the roastery and create their very own bespoke signature blend of coffee, even creating their own packaging, which they can sell in their venue.

"We are now moving into new areas with a recently launched full e-commerce website."

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