

**John Lewis plc makes the following announcement for John Lewis Partnership plc, the ultimate holding company of John Lewis plc.**

Thursday 9 July 2020

### **EIGHT JOHN LEWIS SHOPS NOT TO REOPEN AS THE PARTNERSHIP PROGRESSES WITH MAJOR BUSINESS STRATEGY REVIEW**

The John Lewis Partnership has announced it will not reopen eight John Lewis shops to secure the business's long-term future and respond to customers' shopping needs. It will now enter into consultation with impacted Partners about its proposals.

This announcement comes as the final wave of shop reopenings is confirmed. A further nine shops in Aberdeen, Ashford, Brent Cross, Chichester, Oxford, Peterborough, Reading, Sheffield and White City Westfield will reopen on 30 July. Leicester will also reopen when the local lockdown for the city is lifted, taking the total number of reopened John Lewis shops to 42. The Swindon outlet will also reopen on 30 July.

The shops identified for closure include two of the smallest in the estate - travel hub shops at Heathrow and St Pancras, four At Home shops in Croydon, Newbury, Swindon and Tamworth and two full size department stores in Birmingham and Watford. Approximately 1,300 Partners across the eight shops will now enter into consultation.

If redundancies are confirmed, every effort would be made to find new roles where possible for Partners who wish to remain within the Partnership. Opportunities could include transferring to local Waitrose shops or working for [johnlewis.com](http://johnlewis.com) and [waitrose.com](http://waitrose.com) as they continue to grow. The Partnership has also made a commitment to provide support through a unique Retraining Fund, which will contribute up to £3,000 towards a recognised qualification or course for up to two years for any Partner with two years' service or more. All Partners would be given access to a three month support programme with an outplacement specialist to help with CV writing and interview skills. In addition to statutory redundancy payments, Partners who have worked with the business for more than a year would be entitled to Partnership redundancy pay, which equates to two weeks' pay for every year of service, regardless of age. Those with less than one year's service who leave on grounds of redundancy would receive an ex-gratia tax-free payment equivalent to one week's contractual pay.

Prior to the pandemic, the eight shops identified were already financially challenged and the pandemic has accelerated the switch from shopping in-store to online. Before the virus struck, 40 percent of John Lewis sales were online. This could now be closer to 60 to 70 percent of total sales this year and next.

Both John Lewis and Waitrose will continue to invest heavily in ecommerce to reflect this shift. Waitrose has already doubled its online capacity since the beginning of the pandemic. This will grow further, with a third online fulfilment centre in Greenford opening in partnership with logistics company Wincanton, and the continuing

expansion of Waitrose Rapid, which allows shoppers to order and receive essential items within two hours. Further investment in [johnlewis.com](http://johnlewis.com) is also planned.

John Lewis shops have a vital role to play within the business and we are working on plans to ensure they continue to meet the needs of customers, alongside a vibrant ecommerce operation. These plans form part of a major strategic review, announced in March, to ensure the future success of the Partnership. This will report back later this month.

Sharon White, Chairman of the John Lewis Partnership said: "Closing a shop is always incredibly difficult and today's announcement will come as very sad news to customers and Partners. However, we believe closures are necessary to help us secure the sustainability of the Partnership - and continue to meet the needs of our customers however and wherever they want to shop. Redundancies are always an absolute last resort and we will do everything we can to keep as many Partners as possible within our business.

"There are many reasons to be optimistic about the Partnership's future. Waitrose and John Lewis are two of the UK's most loved and trusted brands and we have adapted to the challenges of the pandemic by responding to the new needs of customers. We will soon announce the output of our strategic review which will ensure our brands stay relevant for future generations of customers."

It is intended that a £1 million Community Investment Fund will be provided and shared between the communities to support local projects.

**-ENDS-**

For further information, please contact:

Katie Robson on 07584 669696 or email [katie.robson@johnlewis.co.uk](mailto:katie.robson@johnlewis.co.uk)

James Armstrong on 07764 676 880 or email [james.armstrong@waitrose.co.uk](mailto:james.armstrong@waitrose.co.uk)

Sarah Henderson on 07764 676036 or email [sarah.henderson@johnlewis.co.uk](mailto:sarah.henderson@johnlewis.co.uk)

Gill Smith on 07887 898133 or email [gill.smith@waitrose.co.uk](mailto:gill.smith@waitrose.co.uk)

Lynn Lochhead (Debt investor queries) email [investor.relations@johnlewis.co.uk](mailto:investor.relations@johnlewis.co.uk)

#### **Notes to editors:**

##### About John Lewis shop reopenings

Kingston and Poole reopened on **Monday 15 June**. Bluewater, Cambridge, Cheadle, Cheltenham, High Wycombe, Horsham, Ipswich, Norwich, Nottingham, Solihull, and Welwyn reopened on **Thursday 18 June**. Peter Jones, Southampton, York, Milton Keynes, Liverpool, Leeds, Cribbs Causeway, Newcastle, and Tunbridge Wells on **Thursday 25 June**. Basingstoke, Cardiff, Chelmsford, Chester, Edinburgh, Exeter, Glasgow, Stratford, Trafford will reopen on **Monday 13 July**. Given the size and scale of the shop, Oxford Street will open later in the week on **Thursday 16 July** to allow the shop additional time to finalise reopening. Aberdeen, Ashford, Brent Cross, Chichester, Leicester, Oxford, Peterborough, Reading, Sheffield, Swindon Outlet and White City will reopen on **Thursday 30 July**.

About the shops proposed for closure

Shop	Size	Format	Opened
Croydon	52,000 sq ft	At Home	August 2010
Swindon	59,000 sq ft	At Home	October 2010
Tamworth	42,000 sq ft	At Home	October 2011
Newbury	40,000 sq ft	At Home	April 2012
Heathrow Terminal Two	3,600 sq ft	Travel Hub	June 2014
London St Pancras Train Station	3,000 sq ft	Travel Hub	October 2014
Birmingham, Bullring Shopping Centre	136,000 sq ft	Department Store	September 2015
Watford, Harlequin Shopping Centre	96,620 sq ft	Department Store	August 1990

#### About the John Lewis Partnership

The [John Lewis Partnership](#) owns and operates two of Britain's best-loved retail brands - John Lewis & Partners and Waitrose & Partners. Started as a radical idea nearly a century ago, the Partnership is the largest employee-owned business in the UK and amongst the largest in the world, with over 80,000 employees who are all Partners in the business. For all intents and purposes, the Partnership is a social enterprise; the profits made are reinvested into the business - for customers and Partners. John Lewis & Partners operates 50 shops plus one outlet across the UK as well as [johnlewis.com](#). Waitrose & Partners has 337 shops in England, Scotland, Wales and the Channel Islands, including 61 convenience branches, and another 27 shops at Welcome Break locations. Waitrose & Partners exports products to more than 50 countries worldwide and has nine shops which operate under licence in the Middle East. The retailer's omnichannel business includes the online grocery service, [Waitrose.com](#), as well as specialist online shops including [waitrosecellar.com](#) for wine and [waitroseflorist.com](#) for plants and flowers. Our food business is bigger than our non-food business and our John Lewis shop sales represent less than a quarter of the Partnership's total revenue.