



PRESS RELEASE

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NATIONAL SALES FIGURES FOR OCTOBER – ANOTHER BOOST FOR SMALLER SHOPS

Retail sales figures from the Office for National Statistics for October showed that the trend for small stores to be performing better than the large stores. Sales volumes increased in small stores by over 5%, whilst large stores showed a small decrease in volumes over the month. October also saw the first actual monthly increase in food volume sales for six months.

Ken Parsons, Chief Executive of the RSA, commented, "Sales figures for the past few months have shown a new trend emerging. The large supermarket chains are actually going backwards in volume sales. This is despite their new store openings, their high profile advertising and their promotional programmes. Customers are starting to realise that with petrol at over £6 a gallon that shopping at their local shops makes a lot of sense. And it is not only customers that benefit. Small local shops employ more staff per £ of sales than the large multiples. They support smaller local suppliers. They keep local communities alive and keep a high proportion of their turnover circulating in the local economy, rather than being siphoned off. We very much hope that customers continue to spend more of their cash locally into 2012".

The ONS statistics can be found at:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/rsi/retail-sales/october-2011/stb-october-2011.html>

Notes for editors:

The Rural Shops Alliance (RSA) is the national voice for about 7,500 rural retailers. We campaign on their behalf and also help these shops to become more competitive with practical advice and support, to the benefit of thousands of rural communities. Many 'blue chip' suppliers and county councils sponsor and partner the work of the RSA. Our direct contact with rural shops and with these organisations means that we keep in close touch with emerging issues and concerns in our fast changing business sector.

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