

TWC Trends Summer Edition 2022

Sustainability

How much of a priority are sustainability and environmental concerns in light of the cost-of-living crisis?

October 2022



- ✓ This report is part of the TWC Trends Summer 2022 series, conducted by TWC – the data and insight experts for UK wholesale, convenience retail and hospitality.
- ✓ A nationally robust and representative sample of 1,000 UK consumers were interviewed online between 14-18 June 2022.
- ✓ This section of the study focuses on **‘Sustainability and environmental concerns’**.
- ✓ Should you wish to receive further (free) reports from the TWC Trends Summer 2022 series, please contact kim@twcgroup.net or [visit our website](#) .

Sustainability means different things to different people – and industries

**Local
sourcing**

**Sustainable
sourcing**

**Renewable
energy**

**Carbon
neutral**

**Supporting
local
businesses**

**Managing
food waste**

Food miles

B-corp

**Recyclable
materials**

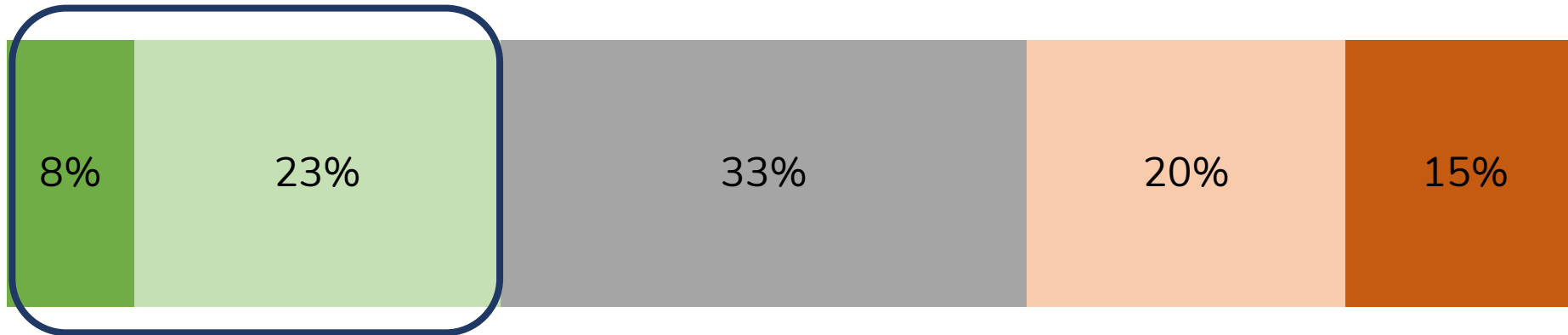


Consumers will have their own view of what 'sustainability' means and could include any – or all – of the things listed here. It makes sense for businesses to communicate any initiatives they are supporting in these areas to their customers and potential customers.

Sustainability is influencing where almost 1 in 3 consumers are shopping for groceries

“Environmental and sustainability issues are influencing where I shop for groceries”

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree



30% agree

More likely to agree:

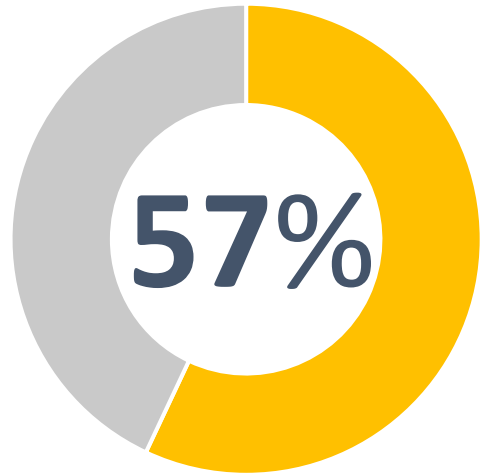
- 18-34's (40% agreement)
- With children (39% agreement)
- London (49% agreement)



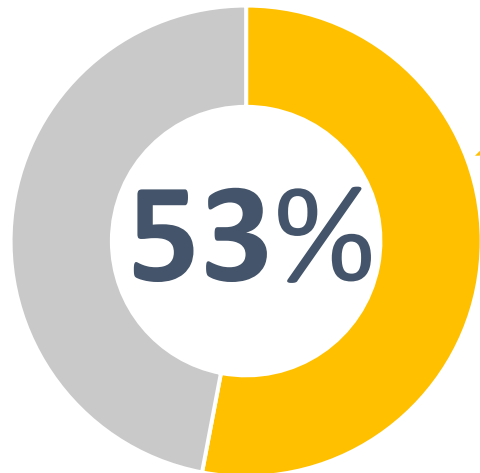
Overall this measure has fallen, from 42% in TWC

Trends Autumn 2021 Edition to 30% now, as undoubtedly the hunt for value has overtaken as a priority.

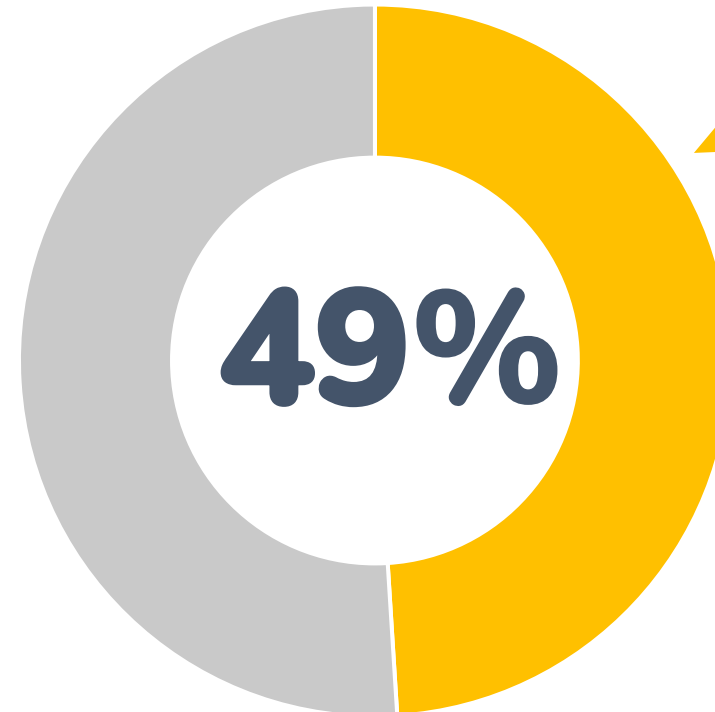
Although sustainability is increasingly expected from businesses, half of consumers will not pay more for it



"I expect all companies to be focussed on sustainability and their environmental impact"



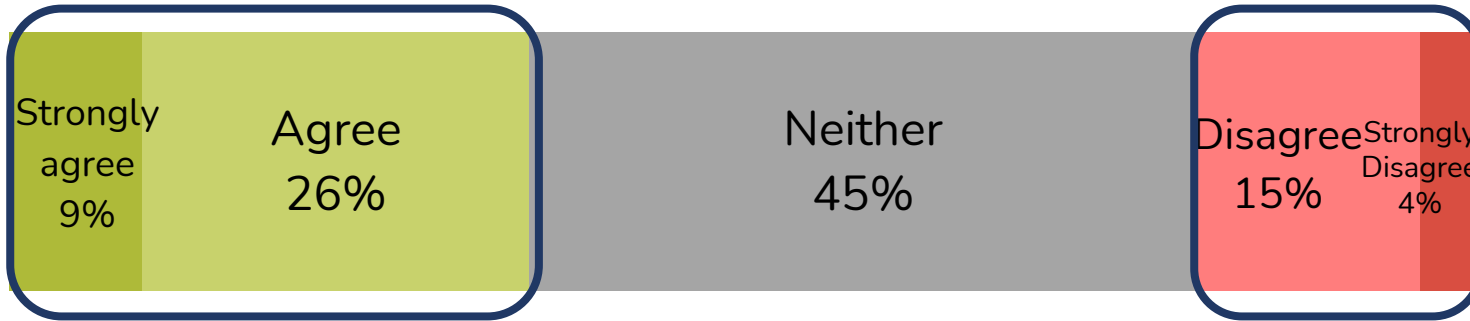
"Food retailers who don't take sustainability or environmental issues seriously are likely to lose out in the future"



"I want to make sustainable choices but am not willing to pay extra for this benefit"

Mixed views on the environmental impact of shopping at convenience stores

“Shopping in convenience stores is better for the environment”



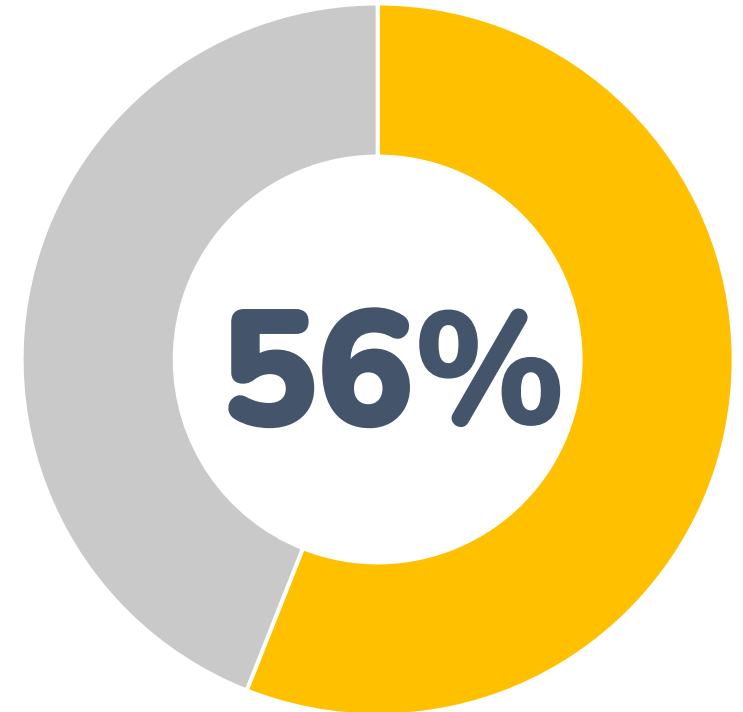
“Convenience stores could do more to demonstrate their sustainable or environmental credentials”

35% agree

20% disagree

- Commonly visited on foot
- Many staff also walk to work at the store
- Support the local economy
- Some strong supporters of local suppliers
- Less food waste by buying little and often

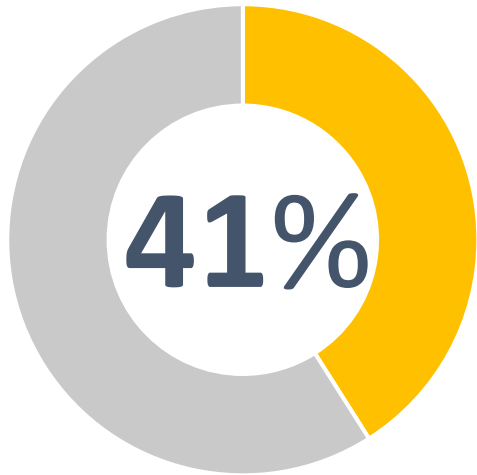
- Awareness of the logistics of delivering to a network of small stores
- General poor perception of c stores for being expensive/smaller range



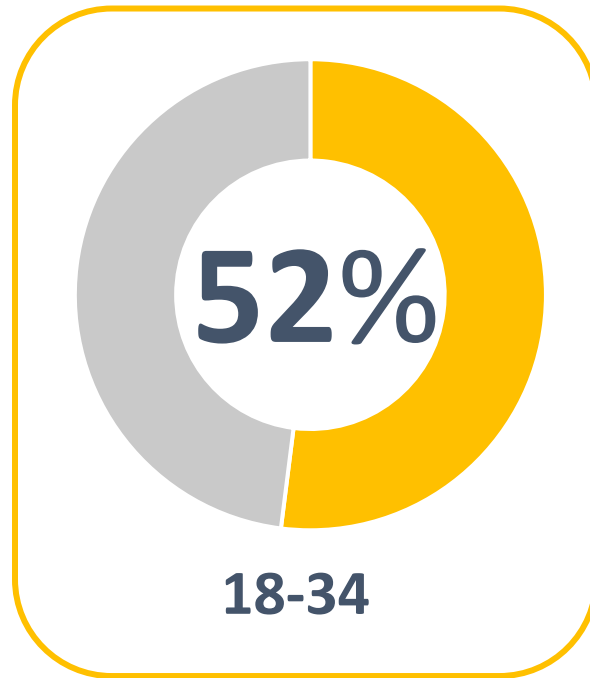
 Whilst there are mixed views on environmental impact, most agree that the channel could do more to demonstrate its sustainability credentials

Younger consumers are more likely to pay more for sustainable choices when eating out

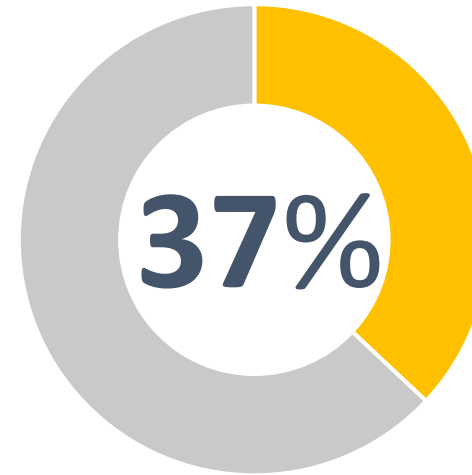
“I am happy paying slightly more if it means making a more sustainable choice when eating out”



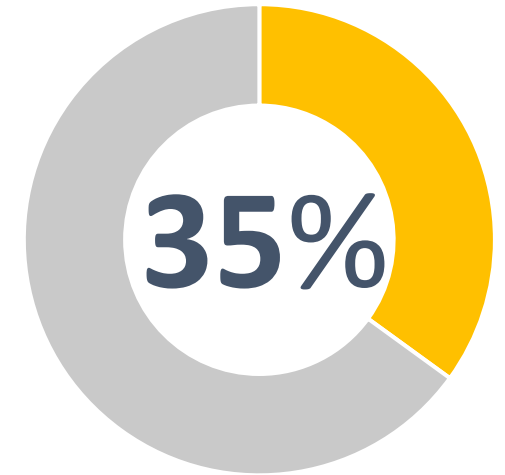
All consumers



18-34



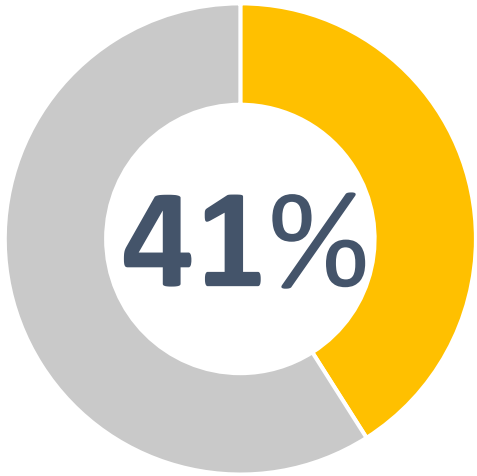
35-54



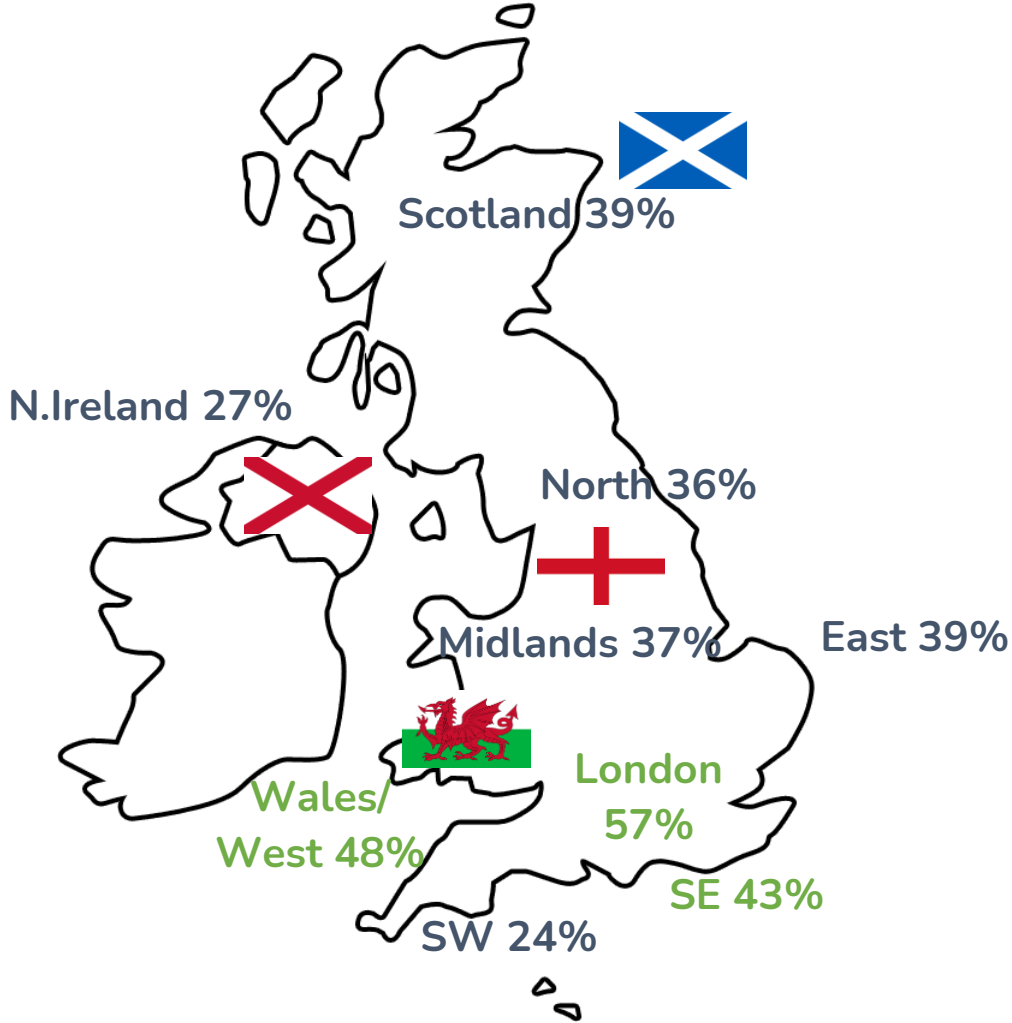
55+

Consumers in London also more likely to pay more for sustainable choices

“I am happy paying slightly more if it means making a more sustainable choice when eating out”



All consumers





TWC thoughts

- ✓ Sustainability is increasingly an expectation, rather than a point of difference and consumers' expectation is that businesses take the lead: whilst 30% say that environmental issues influence where they shop for groceries, a far bigger proportion (57%) expect businesses to be focussed on their impact. The bottom line is that only half of consumers are willing to pay more for sustainability benefits and this is likely to be further squeezed with the cost-of-living crisis.
- ✓ Just over a third of consumers think that shopping at convenience stores is better for the environment but over half believe c-stores could do more to demonstrate their sustainability credentials. There is certainly an opportunity for businesses to talk about the benefits of shopping at smaller stores (e.g. visiting on foot, less wastage by purchasing little and often, supporting the local economy).
- ✓ When it comes to eating out, 40% of consumers say they are happy to pay slightly more for a sustainable choice, with younger consumers and those in London more likely to agree, consistent with those making sustainable choices when shopping for groceries. Given the rising cost of doing business, it makes sense for operators to adopt seasonal menus, increased plant-based options, repurpose food destined for waste etc in order to increase efficiency/reduce costs, as well as drive sustainability credentials