



## Romsey Invites businesses to join “Virtual” High Street to boost footfall and spend



High Street shops and local businesses across the UK face an uncertain future as more and more consumers spend goes to the online giants. Romsey is now fighting back with the launch of its own virtual high street making it easier for locals to shop closer to home.

Romsey Town Council will be enabling independent shops and businesses right across the area to join the collective, local shopping and business website, Shopappy.com. ShopAppy.com have partnered with Romsey Town Council. The partnership will enable local businesses to use the ShopAppy platform free for the first 12 months as the Town Council is using some of the Government and European Regional Development Welcome Back Funding that was allocated to Test Valley, to pay for the first 12 months subscription. The project is also supported by Romsey Future and The Romsey Chamber of Commerce.

ShopAppy.com is a town-based website that makes it easier for everyone to support their own local High Street and local businesses from the comfort of their sofas – at no extra cost. No need to queue. You can browse and go in person, book online, buy, collect and when a delivery partner is confirmed, have a convenient home delivery from numerous independent shops and businesses in your area with

one simple checkout. Most importantly the digital shop window influences people to visit town, so now shops, cafes and services are offering their customers the ability to pre-browse and plan their trip.

Lisa Mortimer, Town and Tourism Co-ordinator at Romsey Town Council explains “This website is accessible with no download required - it will really showcase what Romsey businesses can provide. Romsey businesses are invited to join this online local marketplace to make it easier for people to support local. This is not just about shops. ShopAppy.com can help services, trades, B2B businesses, chefs, pop-ups, entertainers, and market stalls with bookings, click and collect, home delivery and can even host virtual events such as fairs – all ways in which online can support our economic recovery – we will be offering free use to all businesses and community organisations across Romsey to subscribe at no cost for the next 12 months.”

Thanks to Romsey Town Council, ShopAppy.com is now free for shops and businesses to join for the next 12 months. Once registered, businesses can quickly populate their own mini-site with goods and services on their page at no cost – businesses are being invited to register now on [shopappy.com/vendor](https://shopappy.com/vendor). Assistance is provided by the ShopAppy.com team to help those new to technology as well as businesses who may already be selling online.

ShopAppy.com provides a bespoke, online shop window and ordering service for every member town and city in the UK and there are over 150 towns and cities signed up, from Kirkaldy to Taunton, from Kingston upon Thames to Ripley, from Winchester to Wimborne.

The founder of ShopAppy.com, Dr Jackie Mulligan, says: **“We’re very excited to be working in Romsey and partnering with the council on the launch of ShopAppy.com here. It could not be a more critical time for businesses to work together and make it easier for locals to spend closer to home. When we spend local, our spend stays local and it’s better for the planet – so whether you use ShopAppy to browse and go in person or to book something or shop online, you can easily help the area in which you live – because where you spend matters for local jobs, local businesses and the community.”**

Media contact:

**Editors notes:**

[ShopAppy.com](https://shopappy.com) is a social enterprise and a support local campaign that is supported by Visa. The digital platform was created to revive British High Streets by providing an alternative way for places and small businesses to compete with the online retail giants, allowing customers to book events and experiences as well as browse and buy local products online with delivery, or click and collect after hours.

ShopAppy.com was mentioned in the Parliamentary Select Committee on Future High Streets in late 2018, and in March 2018 founder Jackie Mulligan spoke to MPs about the importance of local businesses at the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Markets in Westminster. In November 2018, Jackie Mulligan was awarded the prestigious Natwest GB Entrepreneur of the Year Award for Service Industries in the North and in March 2019, ShopAppy won Digital Innovation of the Year from Yorkshire and the Humber by the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) and later in 2019, ShopAppy was listed in the top 60 global innovations in retail by Retail Insider and the top 20 likely to have a material benefit on retail.

Twitter @ShopAppyuk; Facebook.com/ShopAppy; Instagram – ShopAppyUK; LinkedIn - Jackie Mulligan and ShopAppy

The Welcome Back Fund is providing councils across England with a share of £56 million from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) to support the safe return to high streets and help build back better from the pandemic. The scheme is being administered by the Department for Levelling UP, Housing and Communities. This funding builds on the £50 million Reopening High Street Safely Fund (RHSSF) allocated to councils in 2020 and forms part of the wider support government is providing to communities and businesses.



Department for Levelling Up,  
Housing & Communities



**European Union**  
European Regional  
Development Fund