

Shop Local, Stay Safe, Be Kind, visit East Lindsey Case Studies

Louth

Eve and Ranshaw Ltd is somewhat of an icon in Louth Market Place, with a proud history of serving the community for almost 240 years. As a well-known and trusted local brand, they felt it incumbent upon themselves to instil an environment of reassurance and safety in the store when the doors reopened in June this year. A wide range of measures have been introduced to ensure that those visiting the historic store - both customers and staff alike - can trade confidently and safely.

Once visitors enter the store, via the new one-way system, they will see hand sanitiser stations at the doors and directional signage clearly marked out for customers to follow. Staff are on hand to monitor the number of shoppers allowed in at any one time, and also to answer any questions people may have. As with all retail stores, shoppers are asked to wear face masks when entering, and staff serve from behind clear screens at the till.

Some shop fixtures have been removed or relocated to provide more space in the store and to make it easier to move around the one-way system. And of course, if customers require a helping hand, staff are always available to assist and will be wearing Perspex face shields if they are in a certain proximity to customers.

A great deal of thought has gone into providing a safe but still welcoming and enjoyable shopping experience, and the attention to detail is obvious when customers visit the store. The shop continues to offer a great range of products via online shopping too on their website for those shoppers still unable to visit the physical store. Delivery is free for orders over £50. And the online experience doesn't end there as the store's social media channels have reached out to customers and the community; remaining a constant source of shopping inspiration and community spirit.

In addition to all of these measures, the department store is very pleased to offer NHS workers a 10% discount when they shop instore.

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Spilsby

Bijoux is a warm and welcoming little café on Spilsby High Street that has become a firm favourite with locals. Owner Caroline is proud to serve a great range of homemade and locally sourced menu items, along with what she is confident to call 'the best coffee in town'!

Upon reopening in July for 'dine in' customers, Caroline and her very small team were keen to ensure that customers had as comfortable and welcoming experience as possible, whilst also of course adhering to new Covid-19 Secure policies and safety procedures.

New washable floor coverings were installed, fresh washable paint applied to the café walls, and Perspex suspended screens were installed at the till area. The till was also able to take 'contactless' payments for the first time, as previously the café was a cash only establishment.

Slightly smaller chairs were sourced to maximise the space and ensure social distancing, and non-washable cushions were removed. The menu remains the same in terms of all the delicious options available – but the physical menus have been reprinted and made surface wipeable. The business's Facebook page was also utilised a lot more and became a vital way to inform customers of new procedures as well as showcasing some of the menu items available to entice hungry visitors back through the doors.

New systems and services have been introduced too – from Track and Trace for customers, new additional cleaning regimes for staff, and additional retail products sourced to buy and take home to enjoy. Bijoux also offers a catering service and personal dining room on the first floor of the café – and this has been made available exclusively for the use of families and support bubbles.

Bijoux's ways of working may have changed behind the scene, but this has not impacted on the quality of service or the warm welcome that you'll receive.

Alford

All Things Sweet is a charming traditional sweet shop on the corner of Alford's Market Place. By its very nature, the shop very much trades on the 'experience' it offers when you pop in; customers are greeted with the amazing view of hundreds of sweetie jars and boxes – all looking tempting and ready to be carried to the counter to be weighed out and taken home to enjoy! So of course, the closing of the shop earlier in the year had a huge impact on this local business.

Owners Emma and Aaron were determined to keep the business trading any way they could and whilst they couldn't open their doors to welcome customers inside the shop, they came up with other ways to reach out and ensure their goodies were finding their way to people; often a much-needed special treat during lockdown.

Social media, and Facebook especially, became a vital way to keep in touch with the community and, early on in lockdown, All Things Sweet used this platform to launch their brand-new Treat Box. These themed boxes of sweets became a huge hit with Emma and Aaron soon arranging deliveries for all over the UK, as well a fair share of local addresses keen to get their hands on a Treat Box!

As lockdown measures eased the shop was able to open in a limited way – and initially sweets and drinks were served from the door with customers not able to enter the premises. Whilst this worked well, the business was keen to welcome visitors back inside the shop and enjoy more of the sweet shop experience and, in early August, after much hard work and preparation this was possible, and is how All Things Sweet remains open today.

Two customers or families are allowed into the shop at any one time, and social distancing is made very easy to comply with thanks for the clear markings laid out on the shop floor. As customers enter the shop they are also asked to use the hand sanitiser placed at the entrance, and to wear their facemasks throughout their visit.

All Things Sweet naturally get some busy times of the day – the end of the school day being a popular time to call by! During these times customers are asked to queue on the pavement towards the Market Place and maintain social distancing. Emma and Aaron have displayed sweet menus in the windows to help customers make a choice before they enter the shop and speed up serving times too!

Finally, a big change when in the shop, but a very necessary one – staff will now select your jar of sweets for you from the shelf and carry them to the counter to be weighed; excellent one to one customer service! Sweets are weighed and bagged behind a new Perspex screen and all staff members use hand sanitizer, masks, gloves and have additional routines in place to clean and sanitise the serving area.

The next step for All Things Sweet is to go further with their online presence and launch a website. No mean feat with literally hundreds of sweets to put on there – so whilst this is being developed behind the scenes the shop's Facebook page remains a great way to keep in

touch with them and take part in competitions, see the range of sweets available and take a look at some of the fantastic Treat Boxes that are available!

Horncastle

Grace's Boutique is a well-known and well-loved women's clothing boutique in the heart of Horncastle and has been trading for ten years. They stock a wide range of clothing, shoes and accessories in their High Street store and have become especially known for their wide range of 'Lagen look' clothing – stylish pieces with a relaxed feel and beautiful flowing fit.

Owner Joanne and her team are renowned for their friendly customer service and the warm welcome you receive when entering the store, and the personal shopping service that customers enjoy. This customer service also extends to their online business – and the boutique has been pro-active on social media since the business began, with a very popular Facebook page showcasing many of their stocked pieces.

Like the majority of retail businesses Grace's Boutique closed its doors at the start of the lockdown period in March and wanted to find an alternative way to reach their customer base that would complement their existing Facebook page, plus make online shopping as easy as possible for shoppers.

Their new website launched shortly after Government restrictions came into place, and in this short space of time has become a huge hit with customers. In fact, Grace's Boutique has reached international shores with deliveries being shipped as far afield as America! Orders from the website have reached such a level that a new member of staff has been employed specifically to manage the internet sales.

Grace's Boutique has also seen a change in customers buying habits with the type of clothing being purchased – formal wear has taken a back seat for the time being and lounge wear and more relaxed styles are in demand; this change has been reflected in both the website and the clothes featured on their Facebook page.

Back in the store, as the boutique re-opened after trading restrictions eased in July, many measures were thought through and put in place to make sure the shopping experience remained as enjoyable as possible as well as being a safe, Covid-19 compliant environment.

Hand sanitiser stations have been installed at the shop entrance and the customer service counter. Floor signage has been laid to remind shoppers to remain socially distanced, and a new Perspex screen has been installed at the till.

The changing rooms remain closed for the time being, but Joanna and her team are trying to bridge this gap by showing customers what their clothes look like on by modelling pieces in short videos on the Facebook page. This has proved very popular and looks set to be a feature that remains in place!

<https://www.facebook.com/gracesboutiquehorncastle>
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