

SPAR Today Magazine

Issue 64 | April | May 2020

THANK YOU



Marie Curie charity reg. no. 207994
(England & Wales), SC038731 (Scotland).



There for you



Only
£1

WIN

£100,000

in our Wednesday & Saturday FREE prize draws. Automatic entry with each £1 main draw ticket for these days.

Plus jackpots and thousands of prizes to be won every Tuesday to Saturday!

16+ BeGambleAware.org

Players must be 16 or over. Terms and conditions apply. Excludes NI. Every £1 line for any Wednesday or Saturday main lottery draw will also automatically be entered into the appropriate £100,000 free prize draw which also take place on those days. All players matching 5 numbers in the free draw will qualify for a prize. The Health Lottery scheme manages 12 society lotteries that operate in rotation and each represents a different geographical region of Great Britain. This month's society lottery is Health Lottery Yorkshire & Humber. For more details on which society lottery is running each month please visit www.healthlottery.co.uk or ask your Health Lottery retailer. The Health Lottery™ logo is a registered trademark of The Health Lottery Ltd.



Editorial

Better Together

Dear SPAR Members,

As the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak was officially declared, SPAR and EUROSPAR stores were catapulted into place to provide an essential service to thousands of local communities all over the UK.

Each store quickly put measures into place to protect employees and their families in order to continue to provide customers with the best possible service, and I would like to thank you for your constant support and the important role you are playing in your local community.

I want to also thank you for your acceptance of the changes that the RDCs have had to make, in order to adapt to this new and unprecedented trading environment.

The SPAR family continues to meet these challenges head on, coping remarkably well with the significant surge in demand across our stores.

RDCs have also been working extremely hard with suppliers to ensure our service level remains as high as possible. It truly has been a huge team effort.

In addition, we have been working closely with our colleagues at SPAR International to understand different country experiences. Data from SPAR Italy and China has helped us analyse trends, shopping patterns and the impact on certain product groups at the different stages of the COVID-19 outbreak.

There is a proud spirit of stoicism at the heart of SPAR and with the strength of the entire organisation behind you; I know local communities have confidence that their local SPAR store can continue to meet their ever-changing needs.



With your RDCs taking care of the supply and central office providing marketing and trading support, we hope this gives you the opportunity to concentrate on providing the best possible service each and every day, in the way that only independent, SPAR retailers can do.

We appreciate that these are exhausting, stressful times, both physically and mentally for all in the SPAR family. Your hard work and commitment is commendable. We really do appreciate how difficult it has been during these weeks and understand the difficulties your families face on a daily basis.

We will continue to meet each new challenge together, and support you as we proudly play a vital role in supporting communities through this pandemic.

Dominic Hall
**Chairman
National Guild of SPAR**

Contacts



SPAR UK Ltd. Hygeia Building, 66/68 College Road, Harrow, Middlesex HA1 1BE Tel: 020 8426 3700 www.spar.co.uk

Editorial & advertising manager. Eimear Andersen, Tansor PR
Tel: 01727 800166 eimear@tansor.co.uk www.tansor.co.uk

Designed and produced by. FoxPrint (Shepshed) Limited
Tel: 01509 505413 print@foxprint.co.uk www.foxprint.co.uk

SPAR Today



- 04 Stronger together
- 06 General news roundup
- 08 SPAR Brand product news
- 10 New limited editions
- 11 SPAR Brand supports Marie Curie



- 12 Supporting Marie Curie
- 14 Spring wine
- 15 Marketing update
- 16 Meridian & Welsh Guild News
- 18 Northern Guild News
- 20 Scottish Guild News
- 22 Ulster Guild News
- 24 Wessex Guild News
- 26 Global News



- 28 Thank You

Although every effort has been made to ensure the information contained within this magazine is correct at the time of going to press, SPAR UK cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions.

Together we are stronger



Dear SPAR Members,

I have seen how you and your teams of employees have worked tirelessly to support your local communities during the COVID-19 pandemic by making sure stores have been well stocked with essential items.

I would like to send a huge 'thank you' to you all working around the clock to ensure that we are able to continue serving our local communities with the vital essentials they rely on.

From the teams at central office, to those at the RDC head offices, distribution centres and those transporting goods around the country, your hard work is being reflected in the positive coverage that has appeared in national, regional and local publications.

Everyone in the SPAR family has been going above and beyond by offering additional services to support those more vulnerable members of our communities – each initiative is a credit to you all.

SPAR's strapline is 'There for you' and it was adopted so we could communicate how we help and support consumers. But in truth it is something you have always been doing in local communities and no more so than today.

It is also important to recognise how hard this epidemic has been for some SPAR members. We recognise the situation you are in and we will be there for you. We must continue to listen and help one another in this ever-changing situation.

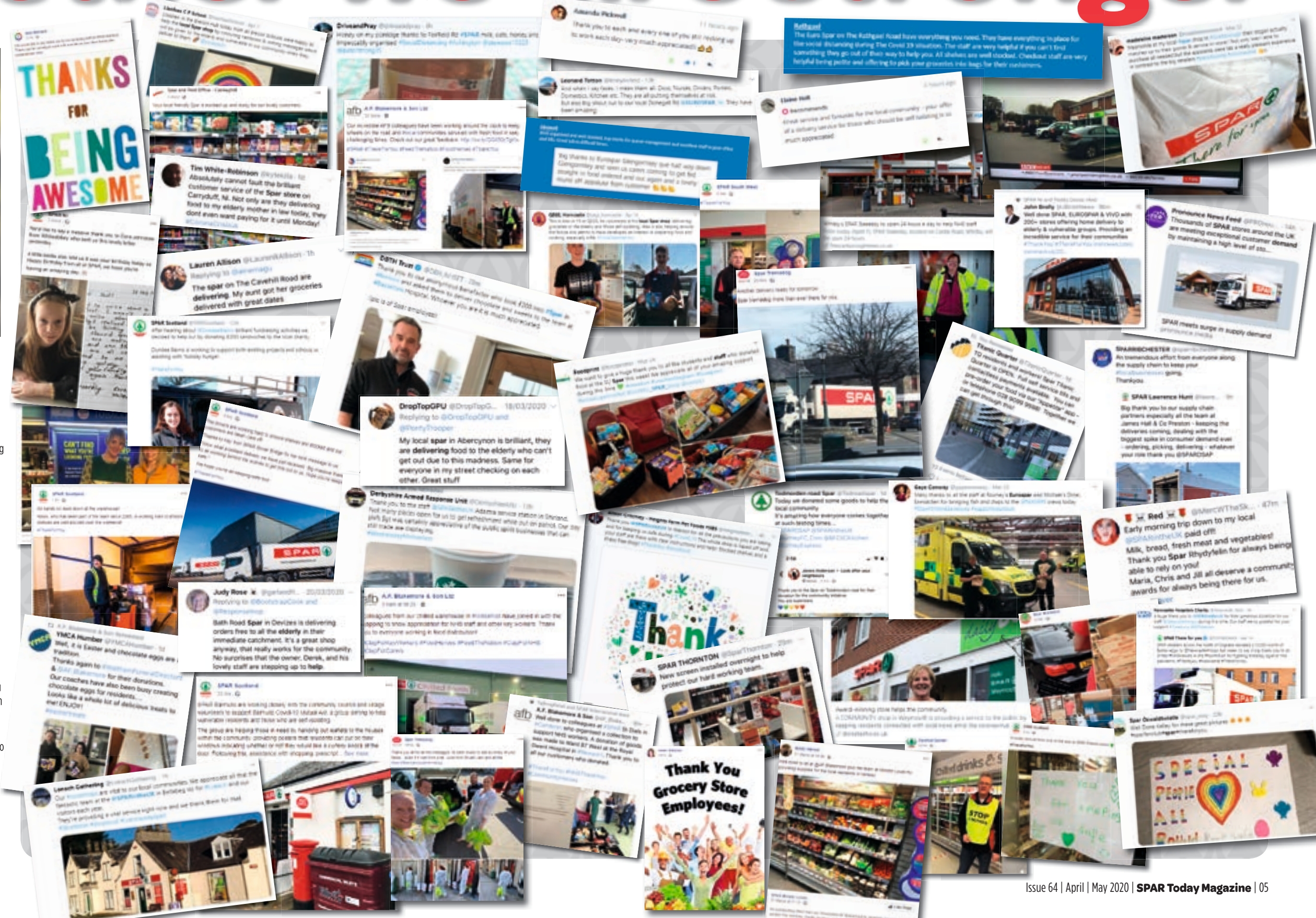
Thank you again for all your amazing efforts in supporting SPAR and your community. In the spirit of SPAR the best way to achieve success is to work together to overcome problems.

Please stay safe.

Louise Hoste

Managing Director

SPAR UK Ltd



Thank you

Together we are stronger



Feeling overwhelmed by stress?

The Mental Health Foundation reported that “in the past year, 74% of people have felt so stressed that they have been overwhelmed or unable to cope, our modern way of life is stressful, and we don’t always cope.” Also “51 per cent of adults who felt stressed reported feeling depressed, and 61 per cent reported feeling anxious.”

These eye-opening figures shows how stress is an everyday occurrence for many and while short-term stresses can ‘rev up’ your body and heighten your ability to carry out tasks and meet deadlines, long-term stress can have a negative effect on how you cope with situations and can ultimately damage your health. Issues that can cause stress for colleagues include; money worries, work deadlines, health issues or family troubles.

If feelings of stress have become more regular than not, you may wish to learn more about the support available.

How GroceryAid can help

GroceryAid Helpline

GroceryAid provides a confidential 24/7 Helpline, 365 days a year for anyone who is working or has worked within the grocery trade, regardless of length of service. This free service provides emotional and practical support to help through a difficult time.

Health and Wellbeing

GroceryAid offers online wellbeing support, hosted by Rightsteps, that assists a wide range of mind, body and behaviour topics including stress.

The support is available on-demand, providing evidence-based interventions which help colleagues develop personal resilience and self-management techniques to improve wellbeing.

Find out more

- Freephone Helpline 08088 021 122
- www.groceryaid.org.uk
- welfare@groceryaid.org.uk



BEING A RESPONSIBLE NATIONAL LOTTERY RETAILER

Being a responsible retailer benefits you and your customers. It means only selling National Lottery products to people over the age of 16 and giving a player handout to anyone asking for help with their play.

Here are some top tips to make being a responsible retailer easier:

1. NO ID, NO SALE

To help prevent underage sales, Camelot conducts mystery shopper visits to check retailers correctly challenge customers who could be under 16. If you don’t ask for ID on a first visit, you will receive up to two more visits. A third fail could lead to investigation by Camelot and possible loss of your terminal. So, please make sure you and your staff keep a close eye on who’s playing.

Ensure you have safeguard measures in place to prevent underage sales and consider the following most common reasons why underage sales take place*:

- 44% – store staff didn’t consider age
- 16% – staff not trained
- 15% – staff busy/distracted
- 10% – staff feeling uncomfortable asking for ID to someone they considered a similar age to themselves

2. LOOK OUT FOR UNHEALTHY PLAY

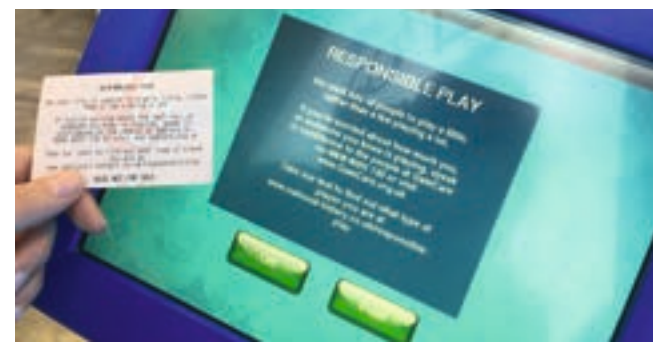
Make sure your customers aren’t playing in a way that could be harmful to themselves or others. For more details on the behaviors and comments you can look out for, see your Quick Reference Guide or visit the training section online at: www.TNLRetailerHub.co.uk for more details.

3. PRINT OUT DETAILS FOR GAMCARE

If a customer directly asks for help or you are concerned about a player, discreetly give them a player handout. Just press the ‘RESPONSIBLE PLAY’ button on your terminal homepage to print.

* Camelot YTD results 2019/20 P6 report

GamCare Freephone 0808 8020 133 www.gamcare.org.uk



SPAR donates to animal sanctuaries

With the help of the team at SPAR’s bonded warehouse Diaper, the SPAR trading team donated distressed stock of SPAR Dog Mixer to make some four legged friends tales wag with joy!

Both Carla Lane Animals in Need and Shetland Rescue Hale animal sanctuaries were delighted to receive a total of 435 bags of SPAR Dog Mixer between them from SPAR.

Carla Lane Animals in Need situated in Melling, Liverpool is a rescue of over 40 years where they rescue, rehabilitate and rehome dogs, cats and other animals.

The Shetland Animal Rescue center provides a safe and loving home for horses and various other animals for their base in the heart of Hale Village, Liverpool. The dog food donated has helped feed the dogs and the pigs.

The owners of both centers were very grateful as they rely on donations and volunteering.



Summertime

Thanks to the support of a number of SPAR Brand suppliers, SPAR stores have been able to meet the exceptional customer demand over the past few weeks by maintaining a high level of stock availability of certain SPAR Brand products throughout the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Unfortunately great availability was not possible with a number of lines as suppliers had to focus on the production of essential only products and therefore a number of new SPAR Brand products due to launch at this time has not been possible.

The SPAR Brand team will continue to work with own label suppliers and as soon as production can start again on NPD details will be forwarded on. In the meantime, there are many tasty SPAR Brand lines that have great supply and perfect for the current season.

Fresh foods

This summer will be filled with food at the heart. With families at home, it's no surprise that they will want to make the most of the sunshine.

SPAR's complete and on-trend range of fresh food is well poised to seize this opportunity, which last year saw SPAR gain a massive incremental opportunity of £7.8 million in 2019.

New product development for 2020 has focussed on the need for vegetarian and vegan solutions, as well as capitalising on flavour trends. Range extensions within olives and antipasti will be introduced in-store at the end of April. Sweet potato falafel has also joined the range to signpost SPAR as a genuine destination for vegetarians and vegans alike.

And of course, don't forget your favourites and heroes from 2019! The redesigned range of premium gluten-free sausages saw growth of +13% and offer your customers a delicious BBQ solution. A number of slow cooked meats are also available in-store, such as our seasonally relevant Gammon Shank with Pineapple Glaze.



Continental cheese continues to deliver growth and ensuring you are stocked up on SPAR Halloumi and SPAR Greek Feta will attract shoppers looking for non-meat centrepieces in this key summer season. Perfect as a meat burger alternative or alongside our bagged salads.



Soft drinks

SPAR Brand has introduced two new exciting soft drink flavours in February; these include a Fiery Ginger Beer and a Tropical Zero in 2 litre formats.

These brand new SKUs fill gaps in the range and deliver on key flavour profiles that are in demand.

The new flavours have been launched as part of a second phase of the soft drinks re-launch which sees SPAR's 2 litre Cola, 2 litre Lemonade and both energy drinks move to Kingsley Beverages. All product formulations have been improved and all 2 litre SKUs will move to the new look and feel bottle, which will bring a consistent look across the range.

Blue Bear 250ml has also returned to 2 for £1 to drive sales all year round.



Ice cream

SPAR Ice Cream has undergone a revamp and is in-store now with exciting NPD and a fresh redesign.

This refresh repositions the SPAR ice cream tubs as a dessert in themselves, with indulgent ingredients inspired by popular desserts. The range features Eton Mess, Tiramisu, Triple Chocolate Sundae, Sweet Shop and a redesigned Vanilla Ice Cream tub.

Alongside the ice cream tubs, SPAR Rainbow Uni-cones has also joined the range. The Rainbow Uni-cones features bright and playful imagery that compliments the SPAR Rocket Lollies brilliantly, they are very much on-trend and feature candyfloss flavoured ice cream, with pink and blue sprinkles, in a fun pink cone.

These ice creams are sure to be in increased demand in the warm summer months, so ensure you stock up!

LIMITED EDITION

SPAR's limited edition programme is a key element in promoting the SPAR own-label range, allowing new on-trend flavours to be trialled, seasonally relevant products to be introduced, whilst signposting SPAR as an innovative retailer.

As a result these limited edition rotations increase consumer interest and drive sales in stores, which is why there are more limited edition lines in the range than ever before. As well as driving interest for existing customers, it's a brilliant opportunity to attract new customers in a growingly competitive market.

Poultry

Rotating flavours and making seasonal changes in this subcategory is key to driving your seasonal sales in-store, and this summer sees SPAR bring back inspired flavours in the poultry range with the return of the BBQ Chicken Drumsticks, Louisiana BBQ Chicken Wings as well as Mango & Coconut sizzlers – a convenient and delicious barbecue solution.



Evening meals

SPAR now has a comprehensive rotational plan in place which is becoming increasingly important in a category where consumers are looking to be inspired for tonight's tea.

The range of pizzas has undergone a transformation over the last year, with the introduction of the premium tier where limited edition variants have really driven interest in-store. On-trend flavours like Katsu have given stores a point of difference and have made customers more brand loyal. Katsu itself has delivered an average of £3,000 a week so far, and the Venticina Salami variant is sure to do well as it returns to stores in May.

Last year, SPAR's fresh soups were introduced to the chilled fixtures for the first time. So far, the range has delivered over £100K year to date, growing at 12% partly thanks to the growing Limited Edition programme in place throughout the year. Chunky Vegetable will return at the end of May to ensure SPAR has a lighter summer option for customers.



SPAR Brand supports Marie Curie



2019 saw the first year SPAR Brand partnered with Marie Curie to generate sales and donations on selected products with the help of SPAR suppliers. SPAR delivered £44,000 in donations last year, and this year the team wanted to build on this number further in support of a great cause.

This spring saw the return of SPAR's partnership with Marie Curie on SPAR own-label product donations. SPAR went bigger and better with a record 95 SPAR own-label lines supporting the initiative – donations ranged from anywhere from 2p to 5p per product.

Over the course of the campaign, SPAR achieved a total sales figure of £586,000 for all the corresponding products in the three weeks which saw an average uplift of +17% when comparing weekly sales and +20% vs. last year. In early April, when SPAR Today went to print, the donation amount was over £60,000 and we look forward to announcing the final number soon.

A massive 'thank you' to all the retailers and SPAR stores who supported and executed this initiative by implementing all of the collateral in-store; without this help in communicating this wonderful initiative, the campaign would not have been so popular.

The success of this campaign means that SPAR has supported Marie Curie in caring for those with a terminal illness. At this time of national emergency, these crucial services are needed more than ever as the NHS is put under ever greater strain. The donations raised will be instrumental in ensuring nurses can keep caring for dying people and their families.



Marie Curie services work throughout the COVID-19 outbreak

As SPAR's charity partner, Marie Curie is in a truly unique position in that, like SPAR, it is working on the frontline of this crisis.

The current situation can be a particularly frightening, particularly if you or someone you know is living with a terminal illness. Should you, a friend, or loved one need to speak to someone directly, for practical advice, or emotional support, the Marie Curie Helpline is always there for you on **0800 090 2309**. Calls to the Helpline have gone up over 40% in the last few weeks as people seek guidance on how to protect themselves or vulnerable loved ones.

Thank you for supporting the nation

Marie Curie is experiencing unprecedented demand and their services are stretched. But the partnership with SPAR reminds us that we are stronger when we come together to support our communities.



How is COVID-19 affecting our services?

Our hospices

Ensuring the safety of our patients is our absolute main priority at Marie Curie. Around half of our hospices are now treating patients with Coronavirus which emphasises this now, more than ever. One of the hardest things to do has been halting visitor hours for family members which can be particularly difficult when our hospices are used to welcoming loved ones at all hours.

Our incredible staff are working hard to counter this though. At our Newcastle hospice for example, our staff have set up a 'virtual breakfast' for one married couple, enabling them to still see and chat to each other every, single morning. And at our Solihull hospice, one gentleman was able to share some precious moments with his family through his hospice window when he told his nurse that he was feeling lonely. Our amazing staff continue to create special moments even through these difficult times.

Our Nursing Service

Our community nurses have never been more needed as the NHS is pushed to support more and more patients. Marie Curie's role is to ensure the maximum number of terminally ill people can be cared for at home by our nurses, freeing up beds for the NHS to support more patients.

This of course presents its own challenges, as this means an increased risk for our nurses who are coming into contact with patients, and also means an increased demand for already-limited PPE.

Thankfully, Marie Curie nurses are doing a phenomenal job helping terminally people and their families at what is already the most challenging moment in their lives. Nurses are now often supporting multiple patients over an evening, whilst also providing consultations over the phone, or through video chat to ensure we can provide the best possible care for families, whilst also taking the strain off the NHS.

Two simple ways you can help

- The best way to donate is either via our website (www.mariecurie.org.uk/donate), or Text NURSE to 70800 to give £5 (Texts cost £5 plus standard network rate. Marie Curie receives 98% of your donation)
- Our Social Media links are:
Twitter: @mariecurieuk @mariecurieNI @mariecurieSCO @mariecuriesw
Facebook: Marie Curie UK
Instagram: mariecurieuk



James Hall & Co. supports Marie Curie

Sandwiches produced at James Hall & Co. raised a whopping £67,000 for Marie Curie during the 2019/20 financial year, with a percentage of each sale automatically generating a donation for the charity.

Peter Dodding, Sales and Marketing Director at James Hall & Co. said, "We would like to say a big thank you to independent SPAR retailers for supporting this initiative, and to SPAR customers across the north of England who have purchased one of our sandwiches. £67,000 will provide 3,350 hours of specialist care for those suffering the effects of terminal illness, a feat we should be incredibly proud of."

Congratulations to SPAR Oswaldtwistle who despite the challenges of March, raised £2,208.55 for Marie Curie's Great Daffodil Appeal. The team asked customers to donate £5 to appear on the store's media screen, ran raffles and competitions, and dressed in yellow for most of March. Amazing team effort!



A SPARKling celebration

Appleby Westward is celebrating raising an incredible £100,000 for Marie Curie since their partnership began in 2017.

Over the last three years, the group has taken part in countless colleague and customer fundraisers, events and challenges, all to help those affected by loss or bereavement. The money raised can pay for over 5,000 hours of Marie Curie nursing care, allowing someone living with a terminal illness to be cared for in the comfort their own home.

Tom Heron, Senior Partnership Manager for Marie Curie, says: "We are incredibly grateful to Appleby Westward colleagues and customers for uniting in support of Marie Curie these past three years. Their continued efforts have made this incredible total possible and will make such a vital difference to people and families affected by terminal illness across the UK."



Pancake Day fundraiser at SPAR

Congratulations to Alex Hall, Marketing Manager at SPAR UK, who held a bake off fundraiser at SPAR central office and raised £60 for Marie Curie.



Welcome Spring

Welcome the spring sunshine with a bunch of brilliant wines from the SPAR range: bottles to brighten your customers' baskets.

We have put together some great offers that show the value of SPAR.

FIZZ throughout April and May

A well-chilled glass of prosecco is always a tasty treat so we're offering customers our well-loved EXTRA DRY PROSECCO for £8 in April through May. There's an offer to put a 'spring' in your step!

APRIL SPECIALS (until 26 April)

- SPAR Regional Selection Bourgogne Chardonnay £7.50 on offer – Fancy the cool, flinty flavours of Chablis but for a stunningly low price? This unoaked Chardonnay from the northern edge of Burgundy ticks all the quality boxes
- SPAR Chablis £12 on offer – when a special family meal calls for a classic
- SPAR Regional Selection Ursa Maior Rioja Reserva £7.50 on offer. Traditional pairings really work when the wine is so smoothly oaked and gorgeously fruity
- SPAR Vine and Bloom Pinot Grigio, Merlot and Rose £5.50 on offer – Vegan centrepieces or sides are perfectly complemented by SPAR's exclusive Vegan range of fresh and tasty wines from Italy.

BANK HOLIDAY BONANZA

If the sun comes out and the weather is warm for the Bank Holiday then customers will welcome barbecue-friendly wines and fizz:

- SPAR Villa Cero Pinot Grigio and Merlot – refreshingly fruity and over-popular for £5.50 a bottle
- SPAR Brindle Ridge Chardonnay and Merlot on offer at £6 – award winning, smartly packaged and extremely fruity wines that are brilliant partners to casual meals

MORE GREAT WINES FOR MAY at £6.50 a bottle (April 27 - 17 May)

- SPAR Mediteranee Rose – pale, crisp and delicious; bottled summer sunshine. Perfect with salmon or salads
- SPAR Regional Selection Dolomiti Pinot Grigio – a wine of the high hills, or cool climates and elegant flavours. So delicious with halloumi salads, fish or poultry dishes
- SPAR Regional Selection Ursa Maior Rioja Tempranillo – oh so smooth and toothsome and great with grilled meats or mushroom dishes

LOVELY WINES IN MAY (May 18 - 7 June)

If the sun is shining then explore further the exciting world of wine with selections from Chile and Romania:

- SPAR Regional Selection Chilean Classic Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Merlot – lively flavours, classic grape varieties and real deliciousness from Chile, all for £6 a bottle
- SPAR Wildflower Pinot Grigio and Pinot Noir – Romania is famous for brilliant quality and value for money and there's nothing more summery than relaxing on a freshly mown lawn with a chilled glass of Pinot Noir or Pinot Grigio

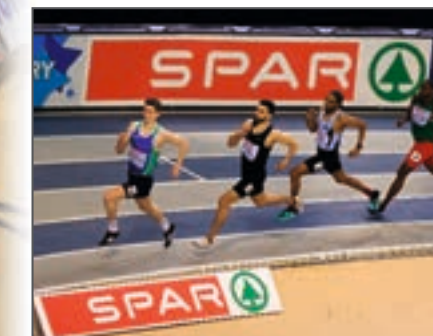


British Athletics Sponsorship

SPAR's sponsorship of the British Athletics team saw a busy February with the Müller Indoor Grand Prix and SPAR British Athletics Indoor Championships.

On Saturday 22nd & Sunday 23rd February the Emirates Arena in Glasgow hosted the SPAR British Athletics Indoor Championships. British hopefuls were eager to impress with the Olympics only around the corner. As this was SPAR's title event, the SPAR branding was for all to see and was a particular highlight. It was attended by 8,000 people and

was streamed on the red button by 130,000. Although our main event wasn't on live TV, the social media stats were brilliant with a 4.8m reach. Best performing athletes were Tom Bosworth who broke his own national record in the 5,000m walk, Sophie Cook who won that pole vault with a personal best of 4.50m and Jessica Knight, who recorded the world's



third fastest over 400m so far in 2020.

Due to the current situation around COVID-19, all future events for 2020 are under review and could be cancelled or delayed for later in the year.

The SPAR UK team are also focusing on opportunities to communicate awareness of the sponsorship during 2020. For tickets please contact alex.hall@spar.co.uk.

SPAR There for you

In response to the current climate, there will be a change to previously planned summer marketing activity.

The message, to be communicated in SPAR stores for summer 2020, will be a clear and focused design theme bringing to life 'There for you'.

It will be communicated to customers in a way that is reassuring, meaningful and reflects current society sentiment.

Keep a look out for how this will complement and amplify a suite of market leading deals set to hit stores across the summer.

There for
DEALS
There for you

SPAR Partners with Disability Sport Wales

A.F. Blakemore & Son Ltd is delighted to announce that it has become the National Community Partner of Disability Sport Wales.

The major focus of the partnership, which will run for three years, will be on supporting Disability Sports Wales in the delivery of their insport series events across Wales. Colleagues across A.F. Blakemore's company-owned and independent SPAR stores will be involved in volunteering.

The insport series is a range of events that attracts thousands of disabled children, young people and adults to try out new sports for the very first time.

Disability Sport Wales CEO Fiona Reid said, "It is a privilege to be working with a partner such as SPAR to deliver these powerful events – through their support Disability Sport Wales will be able to enhance the connection between disabled people and physical activity (including sport) of their choice, which is provided locally. It is a really exciting opportunity."

A.F. Blakemore Group Marketing Director Sarah Ellis said, "A.F. Blakemore is committed to making a significant, positive contribution to local communities, and we hope that by working together with Disability Sport Wales we can make a real difference in the areas our SPAR stores serve."



SPAR Beddau Customer Wins Surprise Trip to Paris

To celebrate Valentine's Day, A.F. Blakemore & Son hid one golden ticket in a bouquet of flowers to whisk two lucky customers away to Paris.

Customers simply needed to purchase a bouquet from a Blakemore Retail SPAR store over the lead up to Valentine's Day to be in with a chance of winning the prize worth £1,000.

Winner Annmarie Hurlin was surprised to find a golden ticket in her bouquet of flowers purchased at the Blakemore Retail SPAR store in Beddau by her husband Adam, and even more surprised to discover it was for a weekend away to Paris for two.

Annmarie commented: "I am over the moon to be going to Paris! What a surprise when I found the golden ticket in my bouquet of flowers. I'll be taking Adam with me and it will be lovely for us to get away for a weekend."



A Q&A panel with leading women across A.F. Blakemore. Left to right: Jo Wrate, Ruth Mutton, Ramandeep Kaur and Chloe Ball.

A.F. Blakemore Inspires at First Women in Blakemore Event

A.F. Blakemore & Son hosted its first Women in Blakemore event with an inspiring collection of speakers highlighting the importance of diversity and the company's desire to increase diversity in all underrepresented groups.

Over 170 delegates, both male and female, from across all areas of the business heard how important diversity is culturally and commercially, celebrating the work that had been done to date but acknowledging that there is still much more to do.

A number of people from AF Blakemore spoke at the event including Ian Diment, Caoire Blakemore and Sarah Ellis.

James Russell hosted a Q&A panel with leading women across A.F. Blakemore, including Head of Trading Jo Wrate, Blakemore Retail Area Manager Ruth Mutton, HR Officer Ramandeep Kaur and Warehouse Manager Chloe Ball, each at different stages of

their careers making a discernible difference in their departments, who discussed their progression through the business and what motivates them to succeed.

Guest speakers included Caroline Dakin, Jessie Lancaster and the world's top female bodyguard Jackie Davis.

A.F. Blakemore Group Commercial MD Jerry Marwood concluded: "We need to build pathways for people who want to be involved in our business. We need to create opportunities to attract new talent by being more flexible. In the future I see a more diverse AFB, and the more diverse, the more resilient the company will become."



Winner Annmarie with A.F. Blakemore & Son Promotions Co-ordinator Bethan Cook at SPAR Beddau, where she found her golden ticket

SPAR Landmark Place recognised by Camelot

Camelot's Executive Director Matt Ridsdale presented Cardiff retailer Tony Cristofaro with a plaque to celebrate his store's National Lottery players – who have raised more than £245,000 for Good Causes to date.

Tony, owner of SPAR - Landmark Place, said that The National Lottery is important to be able to offer his customers, given the incredible things it does for communities across the UK through Good Causes funding. He added that it's great for footfall and that the big jackpots are a huge draw for his store's players which is brilliant for sales.



Camelot's Executive Director Matt Ridsdale presents Cardiff retailer Tony Cristofaro with a plaque to celebrate his store's National Lottery players

A.F. Blakemore Celebrates Random Acts of Kindness Week

A.F. Blakemore has celebrated its first Random Acts of Kindness Week with colleagues across the business.

The national celebration, which ran from 17th February to 23rd February, celebrated equality, inclusion and diversity across A.F. Blakemore and encouraged acts of kindness.

The event was organised by A.F. Blakemore's Equality, Inclusion & Diversity Engagement Group, which will be arranging and celebrating diversity-related events throughout the year.

Demand Planner Rob Perrens, who sits on the EID Engagement Group, commented: "Random Acts of Kindness Week was an opportunity for everyone to do something thoughtful for colleagues and customers."

"It was the perfect occasion for A.F. Blakemore to acknowledge colleagues and say a big thank you."

Colleagues were encouraged to carry out small acts of kindness throughout the week. These acts included things like paying compliments to others, writing thoughtful notes, offering drinks, sharing treats, volunteering for a good cause

or simply taking the time to listen.

Across Blakemore Retail's SPAR store estate colleagues gave out free treats to customers and went the extra mile to help with their shopping.

Store Manager Lynn Coldecott from SPAR Gresford said: "To complement our already brilliant, happy and kind team, we handed out free sweets and went the extra mile to help customers – even if it was just an additional chat or helping them out to their car during the horrid weather."

"Randomly I also helped someone who wasn't from our village who was looking for an address. I wasn't sure either, so I googled the postcode on my phone and gave them full directions!"

Some SPAR stores also took it upon themselves to organise fundraisers during the week. Bassaleg Road store in Newport, South Wales, chose to spend the week raising funds for mental health charity Mind.



Colleagues across AFB celebrating the week with small acts of kindness



Blakemore Retail Launches New Standalone Greggs and Subway

For the first time, Blakemore Retail has launched standalone Subway and Greggs departments as part of its strategy to improve and expand retail spaces across the business.

The store is situated next to the company's SPAR store in Staplehurst, Kent. The Subway was previously housed inside SPAR Staplehurst but an empty unit nearby presented the opportunity to expand the franchise's offer alongside a brand new Greggs department.

The new initiative forms part of Blakemore Retail's strategy to grow sales in foodservice by creating a food-to-go hub that will bring vibrancy to the shopping parade at Staplehurst.

Blakemore Retail MD Matt Teague commented: "This latest development at Staplehurst fits perfectly with our strategic programme on many fronts, creating new retail selling space in which to grow the business, enhancing our foodservice business to deliver high gross margin sales and finally, allowing us the opportunity to remodel our existing SPAR proposition with a focus on developing and improving our fresh food sales."

2020 SPAR Lancashire School Games

100 schoolchildren from 14 Lancashire districts officially launched the county's largest youth sporting event at James Hall & Co.'s Preston depot, alongside professional boxer, Brian Rose.

Brian left the children spellbound with stories from his career, crediting sport as an excellent way of ensuring good physical and mental health, and a healthy way to channel frustration. Children also enjoyed lunch, branded goodie bags and a tour of the company's 35,000sq ft. warehouse.

Adrian Leather, Chief Executive at Active Lancashire said, "The SPAR Lancashire School Games is a unique programme which was designed around the magic of the 2012 Olympics and aims to motivate and inspire children to live active, healthy lives. The games provide not only traditional sports but also inclusive events such as angling, PAN ability football and a disability-swimming gala. With the added excitement of Tokyo 2020, it promises to be a very inspirational year for young people and sport!"

Peter Dodding, Sales and Marketing Director at James Hall & Co. said, "We are absolutely thrilled to be in our fourteenth year of sponsorship for the SPAR Lancashire School Games. The ethos of the games fits perfectly with SPAR's commitment to the sponsorship of British and European Athletics, and we are proud to be able to support Active Lancashire in promoting the importance of good health and physical activity across the county."



Corporate sponsors (Adrian Leather of Active Lancashire, Brian Rose, Peter Dodding and Tom Murphy from James Hall & Co.)



Celebrating learning excellence



James Hall & Co. have celebrated another year of training excellence by hosting an Achievement Awards Ceremony for staff who have successfully completed training courses in 2019 from a range of development programmes such as the company's Leadership Academy, Apprenticeships and Masters level study.

Chris Chadford, Learning and Development Manager at James Hall & Co. said, "95 members of staff were recognised at the dedicated awards event, with Deputy Managing Director, Dominic Hall, thanking staff for their dedication and hard work.

"The event also celebrated the successful culmination of our first Leadership Academy, which through 12,000 hours of learning, supported 63 current and future leaders. We had fantastic feedback and have already launched our second Leadership Academy for 2020."

Spicy new Fazilas snack range

Six spicy new snacks have been added to James Hall & Co.'s ethnic food-to-go range, part of SPAR's £3.50 meal deal. Released under the company's ethnic food brand, Fazilas, the new range features six chilled snack packs and four bulk product lines for delis and serve overs; onion bhajis; chicken tikka samosas; meat samosas and vegetable samosas.

Peter Dodding, Sales and Marketing Director at James Hall & Co. said, "We launched Fazilas' first food-to-go range in September with a range of delicious spiced wraps, flatbreads and sandwiches, which have proved a real hit with SPAR customers. Fazilas champions the very best in delicious, Asian flavours and this latest chilled snack range is an exciting addition to our range of spiced food-to-go options."



JET TRANSFORMS TWO FORECOURTS WITH NEW SPAR STORE CONCEPT

Leading fuel brand, Jet, has transformed two of its company owned, dealer operated sites in Doncaster with the latest SPAR store concept.

The two forecourt sites at JET Askern and JET Balby have been redesigned to ensure that consumers enjoy the best possible customer focused journey, with SPAR 'Daily Deli' self-serve food-to-go offers on entry, Costa coffee, slush, hot snacks, pastries and donuts, and a free water refill station.

Oliver Müller, JET's Retail Business Manager, commented, "We are delighted that our company-owned Askern and Balby sites are among the first forecourts in the UK to benefit from the latest SPAR store concept. The improvements in-store have been very well received by customers and staff alike."



A good egg

Manchester charity, We Love MCR, were delighted to receive 500 Easter eggs kindly donated by one of their charity partners Paul Stone SPAR stores.

The eggs were distributed to children in Manchester by Manchester City Council's Food Response team.



EG Group and SPAR champion Marie Curie's Great Daffodil Appeal

Mohamed Valli, Social Responsibility Manager at EG Group said, "EG Group was delighted to collaborate with SPAR to support Marie Curie, especially as we launch EG Foundation's first charity.

"Going forward EG Foundation will be focusing on fundraising on behalf of EG Group and staff were delighted that Marie Curie was EG Foundations first charity partner of 2020, with customers being able to donate and purchase Marie Curie daffodil pin badges in-store."

Peter Dodding, Sales and Marketing Director at Preston based James Hall & Co. said, "SPAR proudly supports Marie Curie and we are absolutely thrilled that Euro Garages' Foundation pledged its support for The Great Daffodil Appeal."

Liz Lyle, Head of Philanthropy & Partnerships at Marie Curie said: "We are very proud of our partnership with SPAR and are delighted to have the EG Group on board to support the Great Daffodil Appeal this year.

"The vital care and support Marie Curie provides to people living with a terminal illness and their families would not be possible without the amazing fundraising of our supporters.

We are so grateful to be working with SPAR and the EG Group and would like to thank their staff and customers for getting involved in The Great Daffodil Appeal. The money raised will help us continue to be there for more people and make the most of the time they have together."



Gourock Primary School question the distribution team

Colin Chapman and Alan Brown from SPAR Scotland's distribution team visited Gourock Primary School after receiving a letter from Sophie K asking what SPAR Scotland was doing to reduce plastic waste.

Colin and Alan held a Q&A with the p5/6 class, answering many interesting and insightful

questions from the pupils who are learning all about the importance of taking care of their environment.

Colin said: "The children were delighted to learn that none of our plastic ends up in landfill and we are actively working to significantly reduce our use of plastic within the next five years."

After the Q&A session, water bottles were handed out to the class in order to eliminate the need for single use plastic bottles, as well as special goodie bags to those who asked questions.



The Green Team Give Back

As part of SPAR Scotland's community engagement and recycling programme, their Green team receive a Give Box from the Carbon Church Saving Project which supports the collection of reusable clothing and household items.

Working in partnership with Dundee Clothing Project, Togs for Tots, Lifegate Community Cafe, Starter Pack Dundee, the Carbon Church Saving Project makes sure that items are passed onto people experiencing material poverty in the local Dundee community.



SPAR Scotland Marks Centenary With Charity Giveaway!

C J Lang's £1,000 Charity Giveaway received a huge amount of nominations, totalling more than 700. With the judging now complete, winning charities have been gathering to receive their well-deserved donations.

In a huge act of generosity to mark the 100th anniversary of the company, C J Lang, the SPAR wholesaler for Scotland, is giving away £1,000 to charities in the vicinity of their company-owned stores.

Colin McLean, CEO of SPAR Scotland said: "This charity campaign running right across our company-owned stores is a huge part of our exciting centenary celebrations.

"By giving away £1,000 to charities close to all our stores, we are strengthening our position as Scotland's favourite convenience retailer, by supporting charities in the communities we serve."

SPAR Scotland has a long history of supporting both national and local charities, community groups and organisations, donating £700,000 over the last decade.



SPAR Scotland hosts British sprinter Zoey Clark

Recognising SPAR's support of SPAR British Athletics Indoor Championships held in Glasgow, SPAR Scotland was delighted to welcome Zoey Clark, a British sprinter, to SPAR Halbeath (Pittsburgh Road) on Friday 28 February.

Zoey, who lives in Aberdeen, competed in the women's 400 metres and was part of the British 4 x 400 relay team that won the silver medal at the 2017 World Championships in Athletics.

Children from Carnegie Primary School visited the store to take part in a session with Zoey, learning about the Healthy Living Programme and hearing how Zoey maintains a healthy lifestyle.

Colin McLean, CEO of SPAR Scotland said: "We are a proud supporter of British Athletics and it was great to have this opportunity to show our support in the communities our stores serve.

"Occasions like this also give us the chance to work hand in hand with local schools and provide them with information on healthy and nutritious products," he added.



CJ LANG SEES DOUBLE AT SWA AWARDS

CJ Lang & Son Ltd were delighted to collect two hard earned awards at the Scottish Wholesale Achievers awards.

The first award was joint winner of Best Delivered Operation – Retail.

The second award of winner of Best Symbol Group.

Crowning glory was a highly commended mention for Marketing Manager Paula Middleton who was up for the award of Employee of the Year.

Mike Leonard said: "These awards are a reflection of the significant progress the company has made over the last two years, cementing itself as the leading player in the Scottish convenience market."



(l-r), SWA Chief Executive Colin Smith with JUUL representative Gary Routledge, CJ Lang Sales Director Mike Leonard and TV presenter and host Jennifer Reoch, at the Scottish Wholesale Achievers Awards.

Four is the Magic Number for SPAR Scotland

It was another night of success for teams from SPAR Scotland at the Scottish Grocer Awards.

With 10 finalists across seven different categories, SPAR Scotland were delighted to receive four awards.

Scottish Grocer Awards 2020 SPAR Scotland winners included:

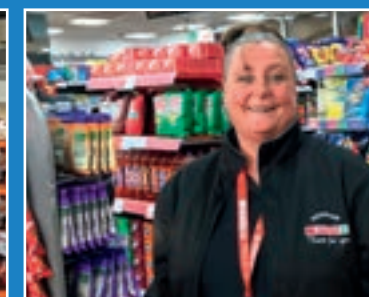
- SPAR Renfrew – Best Soft Drinks Outlet of the Year
- Lochcarron Food Centre – Family Business of the Year
- Merchant City Post Office, Glasgow – Post Office Retailer of the Year
- Angela Gibson (SPAR Renfrew) – Employee of the Year

SPAR Scotland Sales Director, Mike Leonard, said: "I'm delighted to see so many of our independent retailers collecting awards - all are richly deserved by the teams.

"It is another reflection on the progress the company has made over the last two years, strengthening our brand as a leading player in the Scottish convenience market. Congratulations to all winners and those shortlisted."



Best Soft Drink Outlet of the Year 2020 SPAR Renfrew



Employee of the year 2020 Angela Gibson SPAR Renfrew



Family Business of the Year 2020 Lochcarron Food Centre



Post Office Retailer of the Year 2020 Merchant City Post Office

Retailers hit the million-pound mark for Cancer Fund for Children

Over 60 retailers from across Northern Ireland have marked Cancer Fund for Children's first ever £1 million milestone with the opening of a special garden in Newcastle, County Down.

The Fairy Garden was unveiled at the charity's Daisy Lodge therapeutic centre during a celebration event to mark the magnificent milestone.

Bronagh Luke, Head of Corporate Marketing said; "we are lucky to have some of the most passionate retailers in the business who have given up their own time to give so much to Cancer Fund for Children since the partnership began.

"Some of our retailers have had a team on every fundraising trek around the world, taking the challenge head on for the charity. £1,000,000 is an incredible amount of money and we're proud that it has and will continue to make an enormous difference in the lives of children, young people and their families living with cancer here in Northern Ireland.

"We now have a legacy right here in the gardens of Daisy Lodge to mark the achievement and we hope it brings a space where families can forget about the real world for five minutes, get some fresh air and gain some calm."



Wendy, Maisie and Keith McCandless (front) officially open the Fairy Garden at Daisy Lodge with Phil Alexander, CEO of Cancer Fund for Children and Paddy Doody from Henderson Group.

McBride Group reveals new look store

Omagh's Gortin Road residents were in for a treat recently as the team at McBride's SPAR held a Customer Appreciation Day, offering local shoppers a first look at the newly renovated SPAR store.

Work had been ongoing at the Gortin Road store for six weeks and has finally completed after a £400,000 investment by owner, Peter McBride.

Technological advancements can be seen throughout the store with smarter lighting and refrigeration systems and the introduction of self-scan checkouts. The card-only checkout has been installed to give shoppers a speedier service, making a

trip to McBride's even more convenient.

Owner Peter McBride said: "It's great to have this work completed and I'm pleased with how we have enhanced the look and feel of the store. We set out to create a more modern, more convenient shopping experience for our customers. To thank our customers for their loyalty, and patience while the refurb was being carried out, we wanted to host an appreciation day.



Owner of McBride's SPAR, Gortin Road, Peter McBride, greets long-valued customer Mrs. Wilson at a Customer Appreciation Day, held to mark the recent refurbishment of the store.

£1.1M REFURB FOR CRUMLIN SUPERMARKET WHICH REOPENS WITH NEW BARISTA BAR CAFÉ

Crumlin has a new look, state-of-the-art 7,438sqft EUROSPAR with a Barista Bar Café, thanks to a £1.1m refurbishment of the existing store by owners Henderson Retail.

Further enhancing its food-to-go offering, the store has a new look for its dailyDeli brand, with even more hot food on offer, a Mauds Ice Cream counter, Subway and the new SPAR Bakery range of freshly baked goods, and a Butchery department, in store.

Store Manager Robert Foster says he's proud to unveil the new look store and bring so many more services to the area; "our store has always been about bringing convenience for our local shoppers, and the refurb has allowed us to expand our car park making the trip to the local supermarket easier for our loyal shoppers. Inside, we have also invested in self-checkouts and a vastly

expanded butchery department for our in-house butcher, Brian Price.

Mark McCammond, Henderson Retail Director says provenance, value and shopper experience are top priorities for their stores; "working with Henderson Group Property, we were able to adapt this store to reflect what's important to the local shoppers."



Pictured at the reopening of EUROSPAR Crumlin are team members Colleen Mahoney, Paulina Kobylinska, Patricia McCartan, Paul McCoy, Robert Foster, Ricky Reid, Elaine Cooper and Gina Scott.

Ubamarket's Scan, Pay, Go! launched in three SPAR and EUROSPAR stores

Henderson Technology has introduced Ubamarket's mobile retail technology, "Scan, Pay, Go!" in order to improve the convenience shopping experience for their customers.

Ubamarket's Scan, Pay, Go! app allows customers to build shopping lists ahead of planned store visits to see what is in stock, be guided around the store and scan products as they shop.

Other benefits of the end-to-end mobile shopping app include allergen and dietary alerts for every product, and sustainability information regarding the recyclability of any plastic packaging associated with each product. The technology on offer also allows for staff to be deployed elsewhere in the store, and colleagues can help replenish items and safely help customers.

Darren Nickels, Retail Technology Operations Director of Henderson Technology, said: "Mulkern's EUROSPAR Forkhill Road, Newry, SPAR Sunnyside Street, Belfast and EUROSPAR Ramoan Road, Ballycastle are the first three stores to use this app with our award winning EDGEPOS point of sale system.

"This latest development gives our retailers another vital way of serving shoppers and making sure their store operations are as efficient and effective as they possibly can be in these challenging times."



The handwritten notes, cards and letters from children keeping front line workers going

As the Coronavirus continues to change life for the many young people around Northern Ireland, their resilience and compassion has shone through in a series of handwritten cards, colourful drawings and letters received by front line workers.

SPAR NI has shared just a few of the letters teams at their stores have received from children who are thanking them for their service which have been cheering them up.

Stephen from SPAR Lambeg said their drawing from Harley was a great morale boost; "I think during normal

life, nobody really thinks much of an essential service being provided and it is only when everyone has to do a dramatic shift do we really appreciate what has been on our doorstep all along.

"It really is so lovely to receive these cards and letters."



SPAR and EUROSPAR launch inspirational Life at Home platform

As Northern Ireland gets to grips with a new way of living, the team behind SPAR and EUROSPAR have created an online platform to help us adapt to staying at home.



A digital community has been created for their followers to turn to, to share calm amongst the chaos and ensure that even though everyone needs to keep apart, they can remain together online.

Bronagh Henderson, Brand Marketing Manager at Henderson Group, said; "this is a really surreal and confusing time for many of us, and even though a lot of us are isolating and keeping our distance, we're actually all in this together.

"It can feel overwhelming and so we felt we wanted to help our followers and shoppers switch off from it and make the most of life at home."

Life at Home will share blog posts, recipe cards, fitness videos, activities and worksheets for kids as well as expert advice on how to take care of our mental health throughout this crisis.

THE GOOD EGGS AT DERRY'S EUROSPARS BRING EASTER CHEER TO ISOLATING NHS STAFF

Four Derry supermarkets did not want to let Easter pass by without some cheer for local NHS workers.

Kelly's EUROSPAR Rathmor and Hatfield, Lynch's EUROSPAR Skeoge and EUROSPAR Rossdowney teamed up to raise the spirits of 83 local nurses who were spending the weekend isolating from their families, in order to provide care at Altnagelvin Hospital during the Coronavirus Pandemic.

Adrian Kelly who runs the Kelly's chain of EUROSPAR supermarkets throughout the area said that when he heard of the nurses who were selflessly spending their Easter in isolation to be able to do their jobs and keep their families safe, he wanted to reach out.

Adrian said; "When we heard there were 83 nurses spending the Easter weekend away

from their families to keep them and others safe, we just wanted to do our small bit to say thank you.

"We have a huge amount of pride and gratitude in Derry for our local NHS staff and our Easter hampers were just a small nod towards that, in partnership with our other local retailers who I'd like to thank sincerely for offering their help without hesitation.

"It is humbling to see how the community has pulled together to help shelter and reach out to our vulnerable, as well as support and cheer those who are doing all they can to provide different services. We're proud to be part of such a community," he added.



Adrian Kelly delivers Easter hampers to some of the 83 nurses self-isolating from their families in Derry.

SPAR Store Becomes First Snappy Shopper

A SPAR store in Cornwall has become the first in the south west to offer customers the chance to buy goods and have them delivered at the touch of a button.

Leon and Hayley Hill, who run the SPAR store in Pool, are offering an app delivery service via Snappy Shopper. The app works like Deliveroo but is specifically for shopping at a convenience store. There is no minimum spend and orders are delivered straight away, not 24 hours later as is the case with major supermarkets.

Leon said: "Only one of us is needed in the shop at any one time so the other can be out making the deliveries. If demand really takes off, then we'll obviously look at hiring more staff. The app allows us to provide for those who are unable to leave the house for whatever reason and simply want products delivered to the door in under an hour."



50th Anniversary for Cornish Store

Store owners Gary and Sarah Walters are celebrating the 50th anniversary this year since Gary's parents took over the village shop in Menheniot, near Liskeard.

George and Betty Walters bought the small corner shop in the village when Gary was five. In 1984, aged 18, he became the country's youngest sub-postmaster, a role which he was to see expand over the years into a vital service for the surrounding community today.

Gary now runs a Post Office Outreach service for many villages in East Cornwall. "We have 13 staff altogether and five of us go out with three portable kits," he said. "We're very busy all the time, but I am lucky to have very good staff."

Residents throughout the area are grateful for Gary stepping in to maintain these essential PO services. In 2007, Menheniot became a core Post Office with three Outreach sites, a figure that has now extended to 20 across the area.

The store offers a wide range of groceries and manageress Sarah Harris ensures a warm welcome for customers at a store which is no ordinary SPAR. One of its most popular features is its takeaway food. Gary and Sarah are renowned for their delicious curries and stews served from the takeaway, along with pizzas, fish and chips and burgers throughout the week.

Gary and Sarah have recently expanded their range of eco-friendly products and like a growing number of SPAR stores, their refill milk station is proving a big success, having now doubled in size and added full cream milk to sell alongside the semi-skimmed.

Reflecting on the last 50 years, Gary said: "Our store is not just about shopping, it's a focus. It's a place for people to socialise and make conversation, which is important especially for the elderly and those who live alone."

Community Support Continues For Award-Winning SPAR Store



Hampshire's Tim and Leslie's SPAR store at Enham Alamein has continued its good work with more fundraising activity and support for a local foodbank.

The couple held a raffle to clear remaining stock from the festive season and raised £500 which was presented to the Countess of Brecknock Hospice in Andover. Leslie said: "We were delighted to raise such a fantastic amount. It is the most we have ever given them and thanks to everyone who generously donated prizes and bought tickets."

The couple have also been using Facebook, on which they have passed 1,000 followers, to help donate products for the Andover Foodbank which gave out over 900 gift boxes, 430 family hampers and 180 single hampers over the festive period.

Sales Up After Store Investment Scheme

A £70,000 co-investment between SPAR retailer Stephen Jinks and Appleby Westward in a store refit has been welcomed by customers and delivered a sales uplift for the business.

Improvements at the 1,200 sq.ft. Albany Stores in Falmouth have seen a new fascia and redecoration throughout, replacement of all refrigeration units and the addition of more refrigeration, new tills, a re-siting of the hot food and food-to-go section, the introduction of Smokin' Bean coffee and a complete remerchandising of the whole store.

the improvements have had a positive effect on sales and since Christmas we have seen good like-for-like growth."

Albany Stores has been in the Jinks family for over half a century. Originally an ice cream parlour and dairy called Albany Dairy, it was acquired by Stephen's parents David and Daphne Jinks in 1967. Stephen and his wife Janette bought the store from them 20 years ago and now son Oli and son-in-law Nathan Crowle are playing leading roles in the business.



Oli Jinks, Stephen Jinks and his son in law Nathan Crowle.

Appleby Westward Appoints Group Sales Director

Appleby Westward has announced the appointment of Rod Tucker to the newly created role of Group Sales Director.

Rod will assume overall responsibility for the sales and recruitment functions within Appleby Westward. MD Mike Boardman said: "We have created the new role of Group Sales Director to reflect the additional workload which will be generated from our forecast growth over the coming years.

"Rod's extensive experience, drive and knowledge will help us to shape our retailer offer and ensure we continue to deliver excellent levels of service and support to our customers, driving future store recruitment and customer retention."



SMALLER STORE IMPROVES SALES RESULTS

A store improvement scheme at a Somerset garage forecourt site has seen a reduction in the overall space but an increase in sales.

Improvements at the Brent Knoll site, operated by UK fuel supply and fuel card operator BWOC Ltd., saw the creation of a wall with a new main chiller through the forecourt shop and the formation of a storeroom behind it. "We reduced the overall store footprint to help make the unit trade harder," said Appleby Westward's Head of Sales Steve Thomas.

Angela Ndow, who has been garage manager at Brent Knoll for the last 24 years, said: "Making the store a bit smaller has worked a lot better for us. As well as the new chiller, we've integrated the Costa Coffee into the snacking areas and as a result the whole store looks a lot better which has helped with sales."

Store Improvements Deliver Sales Uplift

Devon village store owners Paul Godfrey and Rebecca Duke are delighted after a co-investment store improvement project with Appleby Westward delivered a healthy sales uplift.

The couple, who have run the 1,000 sq.ft. community store in Sampford Peverell near Tiverton since 2009, opened up part of a stock room to extend their chilled range, expanded their off licence range and brightened the store up throughout with new lighting and cladding.

Customers have been very positive about the changes, reflected in an increase in sales. "Takings are up between 10-15% overall so we're obviously really pleased," said Paul.

Paul and Rebecca bought the freehold on the Smithy's Way site almost 12 years ago, joined forces with SPAR and with the help of a development loan built a new store from scratch.



The store is an integral part of the local community and Paul, Rebecca and daughters Megan and Ellie recently held a successful food and wine tasting day, raising £220.82 for Marie Curie in the process. "We were very grateful to our Business Development Manager Alex Schute for her contribution to our fundraising day and for all she did during the store refit," said Rebecca.

SPAR Pakistan continues expansion with store opening in Faisalabad

SPAR Pakistan continues with its successful expansion by opening a new supermarket in the city of Faisalabad.

The store's expansive range of departments, vast assortment of fresh products, and pleasant shopping experience make it a great addition to the city's retail landscape. This is the third SPAR store opening in Pakistan since SPAR's entrance into the country in 2017.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, Mr Naveed Sultan, CEO at SPAR Pakistan, said that SPAR plans to open 35 stores across Pakistan in next three to five years.



Good habits: SPAR Italy fosters healthy lifestyles among children



By offering training sessions, classroom activities, and materials, DESPAR Partner Aspiag Service is supporting Italian teachers in educating children about healthy lifestyles as part of its free Good Habits nutrition education programme.

Targeting parts of the Northeast of Italy and Emilia-Romagna, the programme's activities have involved thousands of pupils each year since 2006. In the school year 2019-2020, around 13,000 children from 93 schools are participating.

The Good Habits programme also involves experts such as nutritionists, and allows for strong interaction and knowledge sharing, both in school and at home.

Children can take part in cooking workshops involving all five senses, interactive theatre performances, crafting, as well as outdoor play and exercise.

Good Habits acts as a bridge between schools and families, helping children to lead a healthier lifestyle by becoming more aware of their habits.

DESPAR has also organised a series of three experiential events on nutrients at the Intercity shopping mall where an INTERSPAR Hypermarket is located. In the central square within the shopping mall, SPAR Italy installed 25 microscopes and allowed visitors to explore foods such as cereals and vegetables from another perspective.

"We are especially proud of this initiative because of how it successfully encourages people to approach food and healthy nutrition in a completely novel and innovative way," said DESPAR Marketing Director Fabio Donà. "Through this initiative, as in many other ones, we seek to increase awareness of healthy eating habits, by highlighting the importance that a balanced diet plays in optimising health. This is for us yet another way of caring for our customers."

SPAR Australia launches first SUPERSPAR on the Gold Coast

SPAR Australia has launched its first SUPERSPAR store, a larger supermarket format that is aimed at meeting weekly family shopping needs.

The store is located at Crestwood Plaza, Molendinar on the Gold Coast. The 1,400m² SUPERSPAR supermarket has a larger sales floor area than previously opened SPAR stores in Australia. The expanded area allows for a full-service assortment that is both large and varied in fresh foods, groceries and non-foods, but also includes a strong Food-to-Go offer. In Europe, these stores are known as EUROSPAR.

SPAR Australia looks forward to continuing to develop the SUPERSPAR offering to cater to the needs of the local community. Combine this with good food, excellent service and highly competitive prices, and the SUPERSPAR supermarket will always be a truly world-class local.



SPAR Supermarket in Gran Canaria wins EuroShop RetailDesign Award

SPAR Spain's Puerto Rico supermarket in Gran Canaria has won this year's highly coveted EuroShop Retail Design Award. As one of three companies to be given the prize for most compelling store concept, the SPAR supermarket caught the jury's eye as a true example of grocery retailing at its best.

The SPAR supermarket features a retail space of over 1,600m² and offers several specialist departments, including a cheese room, wine cellar, and beer 'hall'. In these temperature regulated areas, specialists are on hand to offer advice and product tastings.

"It is with great pride that we receive this award for the design of Gran Canaria's SPAR supermarket, especially coming from an organisation as prestigious as EuroShop. We want to take

the opportunity to thank the designers of the store, as well as the supermarket's entire commercial team," said Jesus Diaz, entrepreneur and owner of the retail chain SPAR Mogan.

Held in Messe Düsseldorf, EuroShop is the world's largest trade fair for capital goods in the retail sector. The event covers a wide range of topics including shopfitting, store design, architecture, lighting, refrigerating technology, visual merchandising, display advertising and POP marketing, as well

as IT and security technology.

"We are delighted for Jesus Diaz and the success of SPAR Puerto Rico in the EuroShop Retail Design Awards 2020. This large SPAR supermarket is a shining example of best-in-class experiential food retailing at its absolute best, and a reflection of the entrepreneurial spirit of SPAR retailers worldwide," said Gary Harris, Head of Brand at SPAR International.

Bringing convenience: SPAR Kosovo opens fourth store since market entrance

SPAR Kosovo has opened its fourth store since the SPAR brand's entry into the nation's retail market in the middle of 2019. The store is located in the city of Feirzaj, the nation's second-largest city after Pristina. Customers can look forward to SPAR own brand products, international brands as well as fresh Kosovan specialities and local produce.



Thank You.



SPAR

Dear Spar Staff,
Thank you for working
hard and keeping the
shop open for us.

Thank You to
Our Transport Workers



Stay Safe

SPECIAL
PEOPLE
ALL



Would keep safe



Thank You to
Our Shop Staff



Stay
Safe

STAY SAFE

AND ALWAYS
wash your hands

TO THE
SPAR



To
All Spar Staff at Buntingford
Road Spar - a big Thank you for
supporting your local community.
It's been difficult time for
always being polite and
welcoming of our users.

Keep up the good work.
From Karen (local
resident)

SPAR
Recycle your old
cardboard or paper
and make a card to
show your appreciation
for the staff who are
doing a fantastic
job looking after
US ALL.
THANK YOU



In this world, we take
things for granted. It's times
like this when you realize
without stores and small
shops that we would
have nothing. So, I would
like to say a massive
thank you for looking
after me and my
family and many
other families also.

Thank you, Emily,
age 10.



Dear Spar Staff 26/03/2020
I was told to write about a local
hero at first I wasn't sure
who to write about. After
some thinking I realised it had to be you.
You may be thinking why you
well you stayed open when others
didn't. You are making sure we
are fed and can send messages by
post. We are all very grateful
for this and to me it means
I can have galaxy chocolate. I hope
you and your family is keeping
well and again thank you.

If there were more people like
the world would be
a nicer place!