



## **The great rectangle v triangle debate – the North East has spoken!**

How to slice a sarnie can be a contentious issue and the nation is clearly divided. Do you go for the diagonal, or slice horizontally straight down the middle, or go school packed lunch-style with squares? This age-old sandwich quandary has been settled by research for [British Sandwich Week](#), taking place between 16<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> May.

The results reveal that the North East region is overwhelmingly #TeamRectangle – 46% of residents voted for the four-sided sarnie, 30% prefer to slice into triangles, and 15% go for squares.

14% of North East sandwich lovers are ‘other’ – either on the fence and will flit between shapes, don’t slice their sandwich at all, or opt for another shape (circle sandwich anyone?) – maybe a result of the lockdown lunch-making haze.

Nationally, our neighbours in the North West and the East Midlands also prefer a rectangular cut sandwich (46% each), while home sandwich-makers of London seem to want a square deal – as 26% of Londoners slice into squares, likely harking back to school lunch box days.

Jim Winship, Director of The British Sandwich & Food To Go Association behind British Sandwich Week says: “We know North East residents love a sandwich – just look at the amount of sandwich shops, delis, diners and pop-ups selling top quality sarnies.

“There are clear benefits to both rectangular and triangular sandwiches – we’re not circling around the issue. The rectangle, the runaway favourite in the North East, brings structural integrity, an easy grip, no floppy corners, while the triangle is easier on the eye as you can see more of the filling, and you have a more of a crustless edge to enjoy.

“Squares is something of a new contender and we’re happy to see new shapes being welcomed into our sandwich slicing traditions. It’s certainly a trend to watch, and it could be the start of us seeing square-cut sandwiches in shops and cafes.

“Thankfully, you can’t go wrong with a sandwich, whichever way you cut it, and we know it’s important to embrace (and consume) all shapes and sizes.

“Don’t even get us started on trapezoid-shaped sandwiches!”

Jim continues: “British Sandwich Week celebrates the sandwich in all its glory as well as the contribution that the sandwich sector makes to the economy. This year, it has the even greater aim of supporting the industry as it comes back after a year of lockdowns. Sandwiches are a British staple to be enjoyed at any time of the day, whether homemade or shop-bought. We’d encourage Brits to support their local sandwich shop, bakery,

supermarket and meal deal outlet during British Sandwich Week to help the industry bounce back as lockdown restrictions gradually ease.”

Nationally, the sandwich is still the go-to lunch option for the vast majority of Brits – with 72% of spending at lunchtime going on sandwiches.

British consumers manage to munch their way through over 11.5 billion sandwiches each year. If you laid each one end to end, they would go around the world about 44 times. More than half of these were made and eaten in the home.

Well over 3.6 billion sandwiches are purchased from retail or catering outlets each year and we paid over £8 billion for them – that’s as much as 475,765 brand new Vauxhall Corsas (2020’s most popular car). The average price of a sandwich is conservatively estimated at £2.20.

What is a sandwich? The British Sandwich Association defines a sandwich as: Any form of bread with a filling, generally assembled cold - to include traditional wedge sandwiches, as well as filled rolls, baguettes, pitta, bloomers, wraps, bagels, and the like, but not burgers and other products assembled and consumed hot. Hot eating sandwiches are also included.

**ENDS**

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### **Editors Notes**

The British Sandwich & Food to Go Association is a trade body established in 1990 to represent the interests of all those businesses involved and the food on the move industry. Members range from supermarkets and food to go manufacturers to sandwich bars, cafes and the suppliers of ingredients and equipment for the industry. As well as representing the interests of members to Government, the Association sets industry standards as well as organising events such as British Sandwich Week and the annual British Sandwich Industry Awards, also known as the ‘Sammies’.