



# spark

Real emotions. Real change

## Mood of the Nation

Getting to the truth of how  
**UK consumers are really feeling**  
about the month ahead

June 2022

[sparkemotions.com](https://sparkemotions.com) | [hello@sparkemotions.com](mailto:hello@sparkemotions.com) | +44(0)1543 255259



# Getting to the truth of how the UK is feeling

Spark Emotions is a global insight agency with a **world class team of behavioural psychologists and industry experts.**

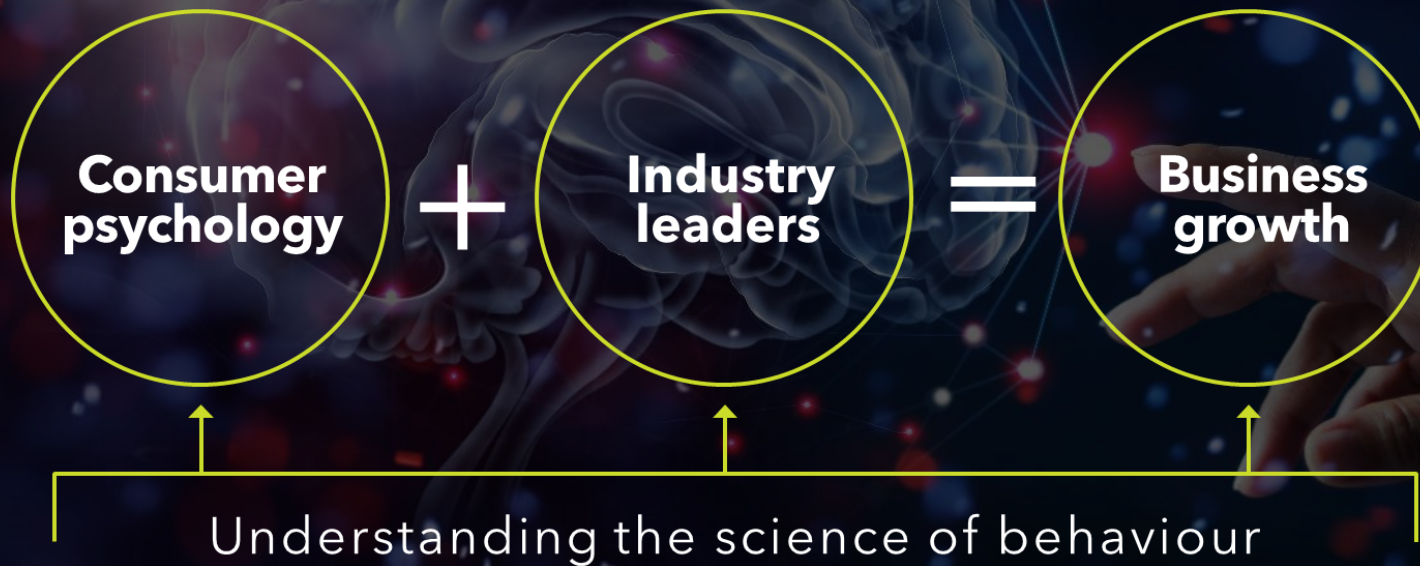
By combining the power of cutting-edge research techniques, scientific human behavioural understanding and market expertise, we help our clients grow and thrive. Our pioneering approach to insight gives you **an understanding of your customer's behaviour**, allowing you to serve up engaging and innovative solutions.

**Every month, we will be speaking to 1,000 people** in the UK to understand how they are truly feeling about the month ahead. Using our unique Spark Emotional Wheel, we will be able to **quantify the emotions of the nation.**

We will gain a broad read of how the nation is feeling with a particular focus on three or four of the most important topics to your customers.



We are a team of **consumer psychologists** and **industry leaders** that help you grow your business by **understanding the science** behind human behaviour





# Contents

<b>Chapter 1</b>	5
<b>Mood of the nation</b>	
<b>Chapter 2</b>	15
<b>Summer food</b>	
<b>Chapter 3</b>	21
<b>BBQ Season</b>	
<b>Chapter 4</b>	33
<b>Who are Spark Emotions</b>	



1/

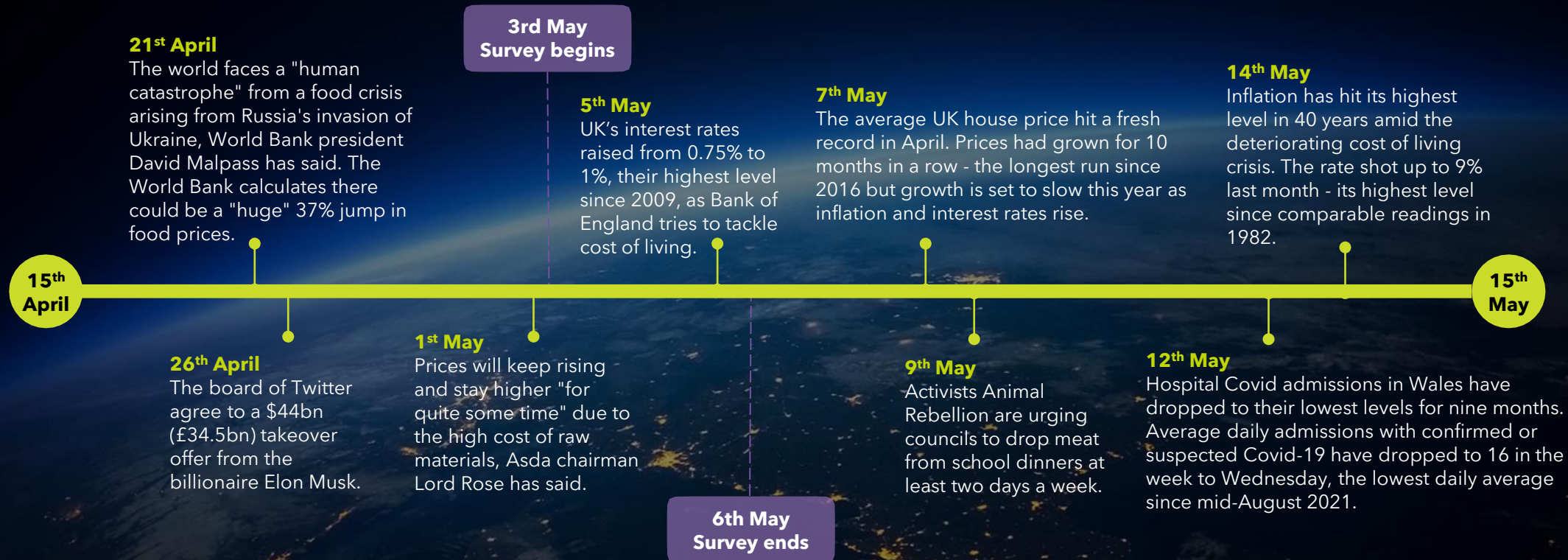
# Mood of the nation



# Fuel and food prices are likely to be a big concern for the UK this month

We conducted a nationally representative survey of more than 1000 people to get to the truth of how the nation is really feeling during these turbulent times.

There were a number of events that would have impacted the mood of the nation.





# Experts at understanding emotion

## We are experts on the brain

- System 1 & 2
- Internal & external motivation
- Salience & attention
- Emotion & reason
- Implicit & explicit
- Working memory
- Actual vs. claimed



## We can quantify emotions

Our Spark Emotional Wheel allows us to plot the emotions of shoppers and consumers by measuring 3 implicit levels within their minds:

**Pleasure** - How happy they feel

**Excitement** - How mentally stimulated (in a good or bad way) they feel

**Control** - How in control they feel

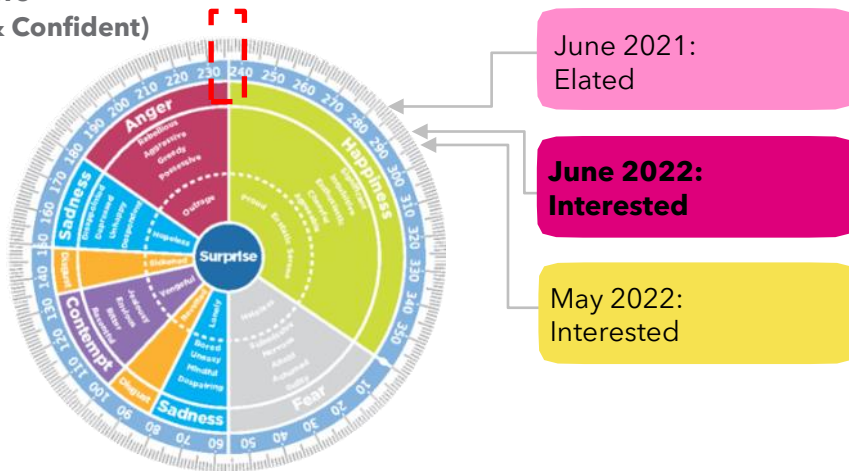


We get to **actual, not claimed, behaviour**, getting to **the truth is critical**

# The UK feels less in control this June compared to June last year

- Feelings of control are much lower this June compared to June 2021, despite Covid concerns falling, suggesting the cost-of-living crisis is a key concern
- Emotional scores for UK adults have slightly improved since last month as days get lighter and weather improves

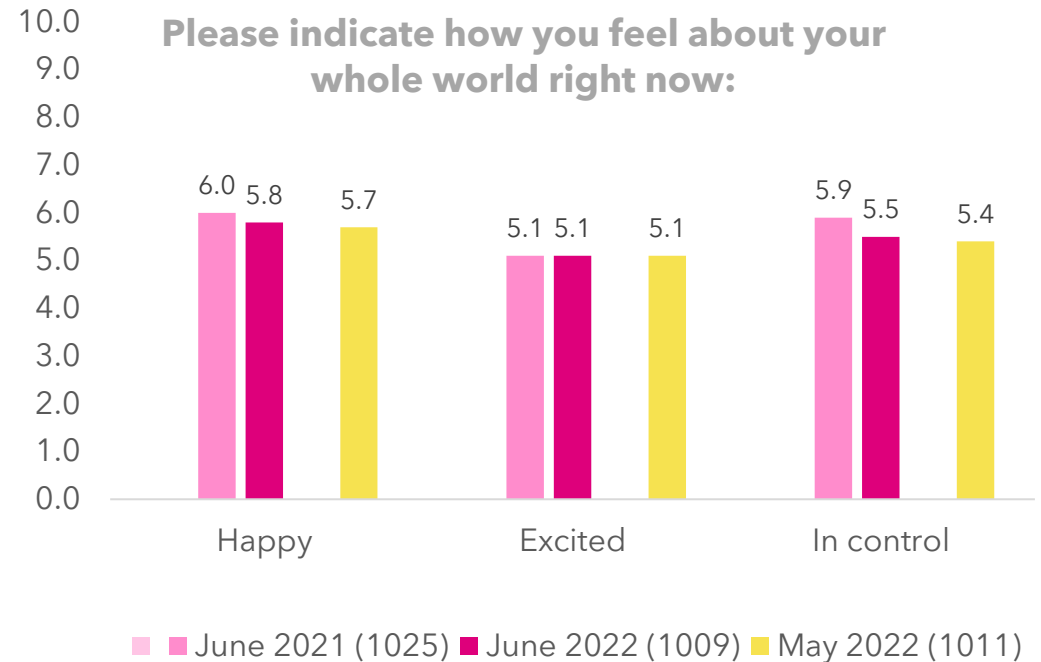
Ideal score  
(Proud & Confident)



June 2021:  
Elated

June 2022:  
Interested

May 2022:  
Interested



This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Please indicate how you feel about your whole world right now. Happy; Excited; In control (1 = not at all, 10 = very).



A word cloud of various emotions and states of mind. The words are arranged in a roughly circular shape, with some words being significantly larger than others. The colors of the words range from light blue to dark blue. To the right of the word cloud is a small box with a black border, containing the text '29%' in red and '54%' in green.

29%

54%

[illegible][illegible]

June 2021

May 2022

## June 2022

### Response Analysis:

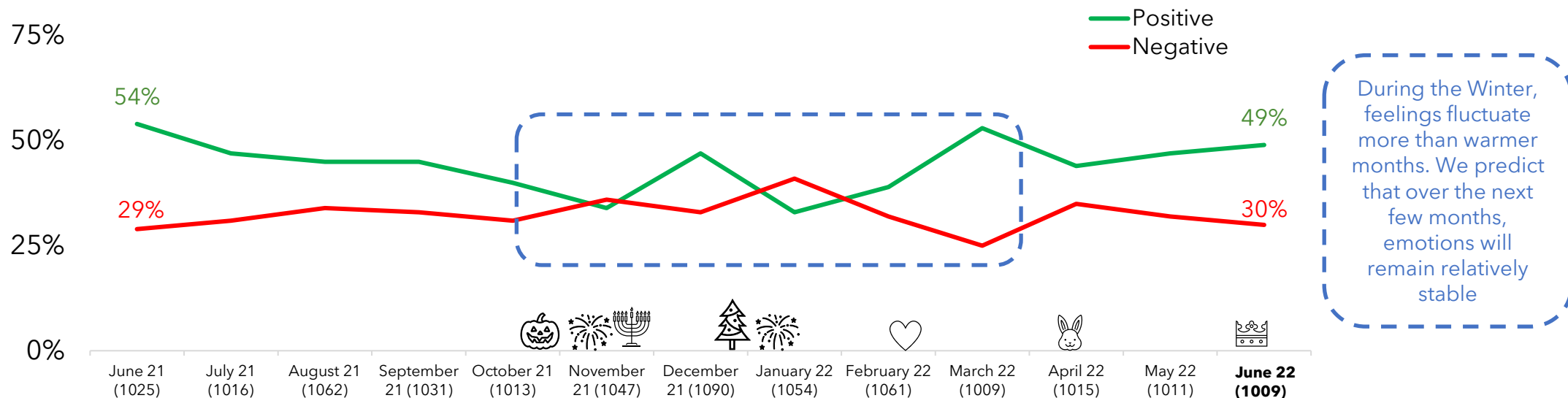
Negative  
Positive

Please describe how you feel about the upcoming month of June in one word or emotion.

# UK adults are starting to feel more positive as the weather improves in the UK

- Positivity was slightly higher this time last year but negative feelings in June are similar this year to last, showing that even though we are in a better position this year with regards to Covid, something is still getting in the way of UK adult's optimism and positivity as we head into warmer months

Describe how you feel about the upcoming month of:



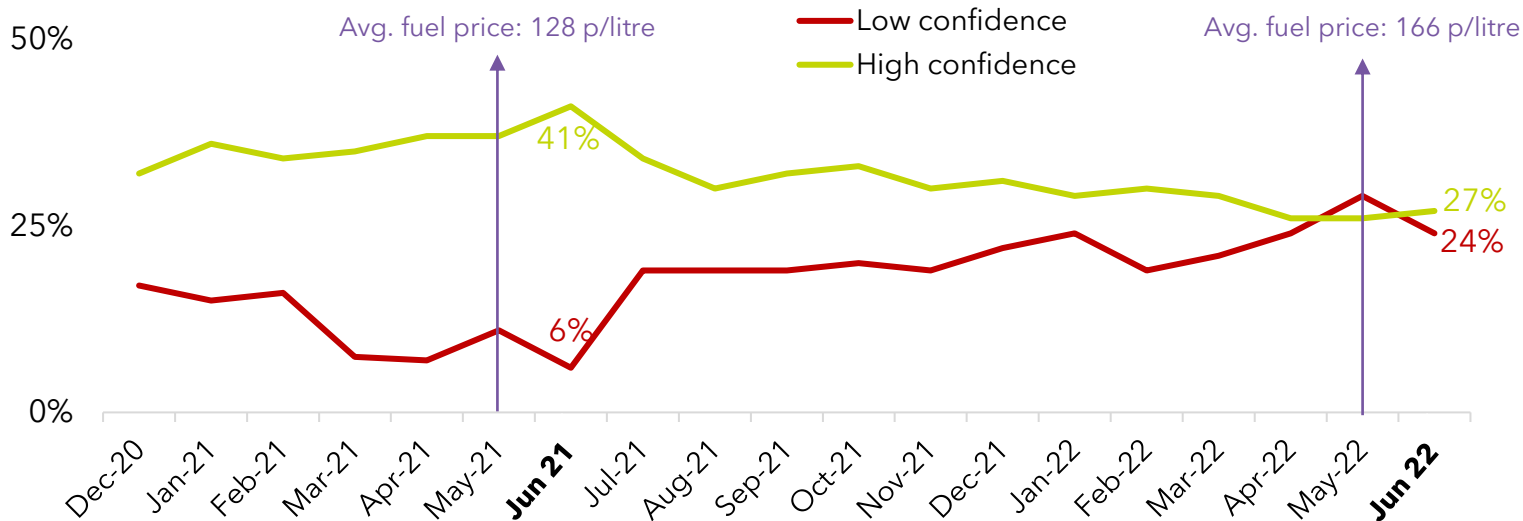
Please describe how you feel about the upcoming month of June in one word or emotion.



# For the 3<sup>rd</sup> month in a row, just 1 in 4 UK adults report high financial confidence

- There's a slight improvement in financial confidence this month compared to last - warmer weather means less need to put heating on and therefore, cheaper gas and electric bills for UK adults
- However, fuel prices are still at an all time high, hence 1 in 4 are reporting low financial confidence this month compared to less than 1 in 10 this time last year

## Financial confidence across the 18 months



## Financial behaviour this month compared to last (N:1009)



Only just over 1 in 10 can afford to save more this month compared to last

How confident are you about your finances in the month of June? (1=not at all, 10=very)  
Do you expect to spend more, less, or the same amount in the month of June (compared to last month)?  
Do you expect to save more, less, or the same amount in the month of June (compared to last month)?

## What is one thing you will spend money on this month?



With fuel prices at an all time high, it is becoming a top thought for UK adults when thinking about what they will need to spend money on each month

Holiday and clothes remain top purchases each month as people book summer holidays/trips away and are buying warmer weather clothes

What is one thing you will spend money on in June? (Food and Bills are excluded)



# Finances are becoming more of a concern each month as prices continue to rise



## Emotions

UK adults are feeling slightly more positive this month compared to last. However, scores of happiness and control are the lowest for June that we've seen in the last 3 years, this shows how the cost-of-living crisis is impacting people's mood.



## Finances


For the 3<sup>rd</sup> month in a row, just 1 in 4 UK adults have reported having high financial confidence and many are feeling worried about the increase in fuel prices.



## Spending

Just 12% of UK adults can afford to save more this month compared to last, highlighting that this is a tough time for those trying to save for the future.





2/

# Summer Food



**As we step out of Spring and into Summer, our food plans tend to change.**

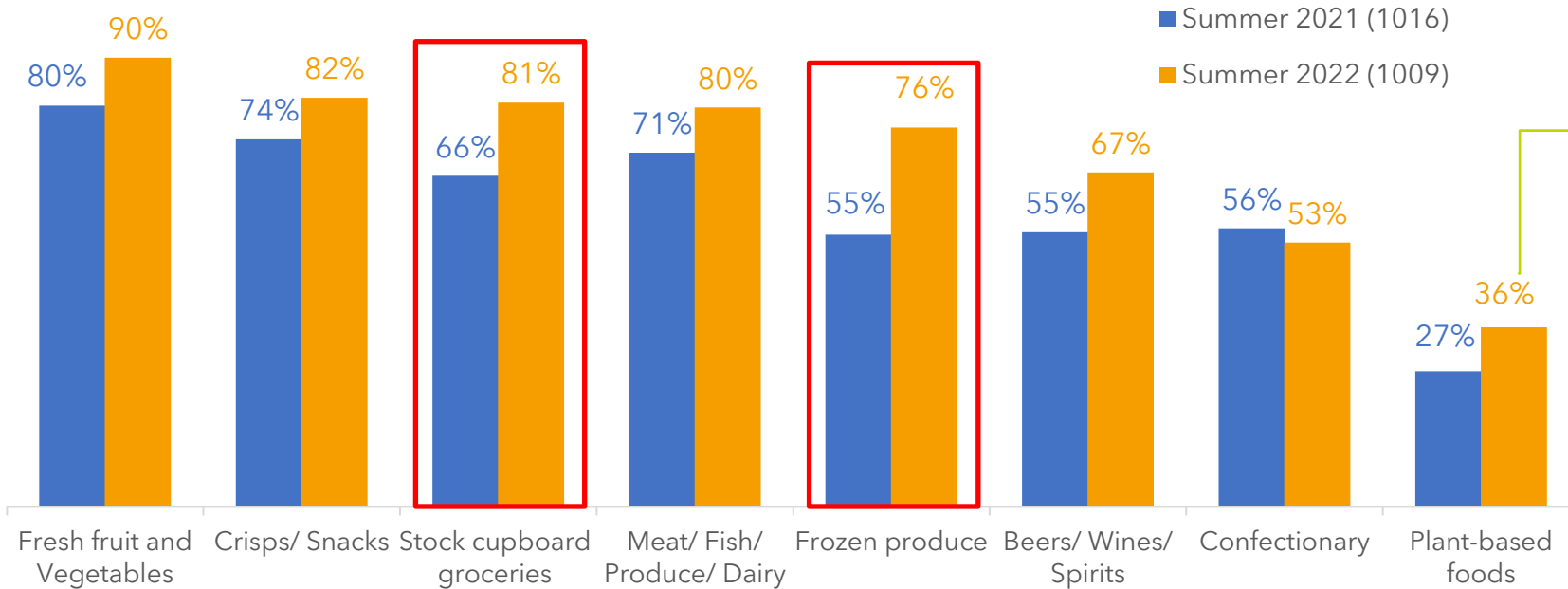
**We wanted to know the food choices UK adults will be making for Summer this year and whether this has changed at all compared to Summer 2021.**

**We also find out if UK adults perceive Summer food to be healthy and get insights into the UK's favourite Summer meals.**

# Inflation fears are driving purchases of non-perishables up this summer compared to last

- UK adults are buying more food in general this year compared to last, possibly due to more people working from home and the cost-of-living crisis meaning less can afford to eat out
- Frozen and stock cupboard items (long-life products) have increased by around 20% - these tend to be cheaper products, but some may also be stocking up in fear of supplies being cut short or prices shooting up due to the Ukraine invasion

## Food/drink purchases for the summer:



Plant-based foods are a more common purchase this year, especially for Millennials (41%) compared to older generations like Gen X (33%)

### How you can help

Emphasising the source of products could be useful for consumers who are looking for local alternatives

Please select which of the following you are likely to purchase for the summer (multiple response)





**2 in 3 UK adults perceive Summer food as healthy**

Real emotions. Real change

- Real emotions. Real change

Real emotions. Real change



Real emotions. Real change



Real emotions. Real change



# UK adults are more certain of their favourite meals in Summer than in Autumn

## Favourite Autumn Meal (N:1031)

(asked in our September MOTN report 2021)

**10% said Unsure**



## Favourite Summer Meal (N:1009)


**3% said Unsure**



In the Summer, **our appetite tends to be reduced** because our bodies try to regulate our temperature by cutting down on heat-generating functions such as the digestion of food. **Hence, we enjoy lighter foods like salads in the Summer** and heartier meals like stews in Autumn/Winter

What is your favourite Summer meal?

What is your favourite Autumn meal? (asked in our September MOTN report 2021)



3/

# BBQ Season



**As BBQ season approaches, we wanted to find out who will be having BBQs, what they will be buying for their BBQs and on what occasions do people typically have a BBQ.**

**We asked UK adults how confident they feel when it comes to cooking on a BBQ so we can determine any barriers or friction points.**



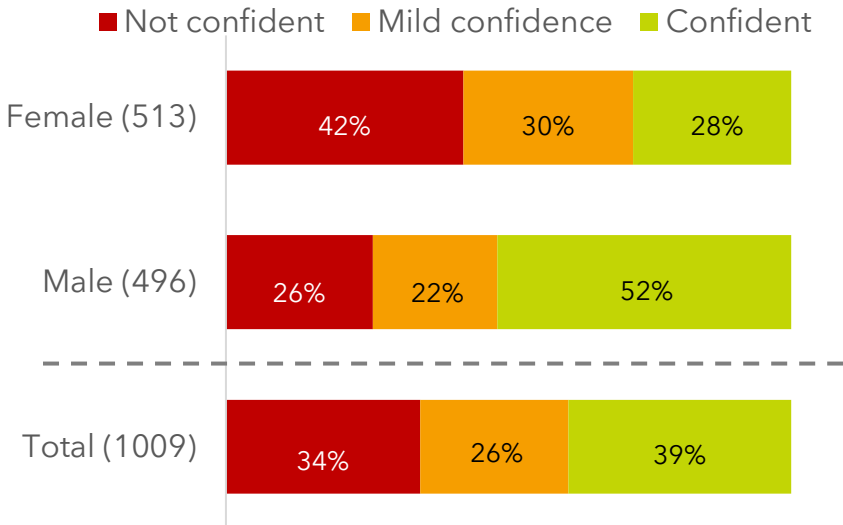
**1 in 3 UK adults are not confident  
when it comes to cooking on a BBQ**



# 1 in 3 UK adults are not confident when it comes to cooking on a BBQ, especially women

- 1 in 10 UK adults with low confidence in BBQing say they are afraid they will undercook or burn the food; this is where retailers can step up and provide encourage messaging with simple tips on how to cook meat so everyone can get involved

## How confident are you about cooking on a BBQ? (N:1009)



How confident are you about cooking on a BBQ? 0= not at all confident, 10= very confident  
Why do you say this?

## Why?



"BBQs don't cook meat enough"

"I have been doing it for years so feel pretty confident"

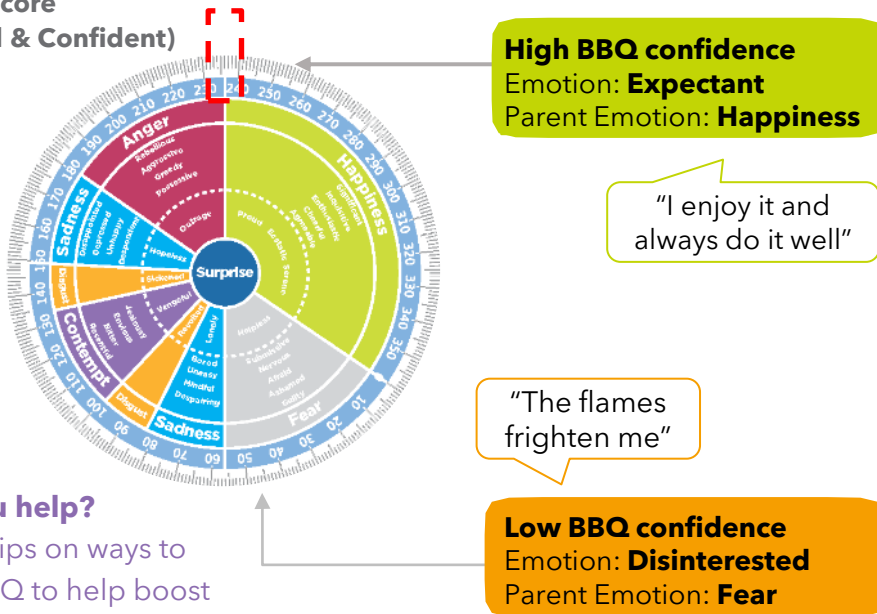
## How you can help

Communicate top tips for how to know meat is cooked by including recommended equipment such as meat thermometers and consider use of social media platforms to show quick and simple videos to help

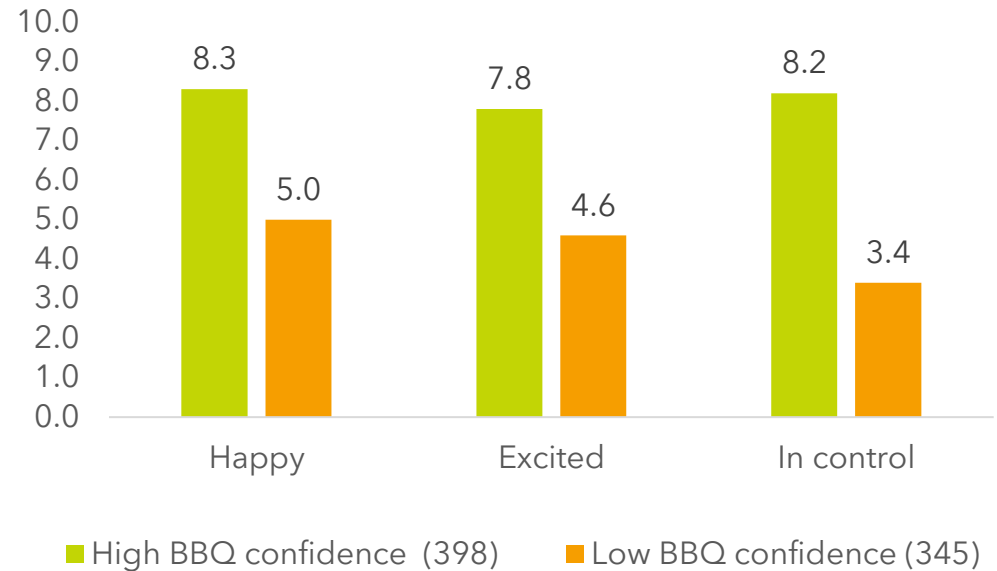
# UK adults need a BBQ confidence boost and simple tips can help get more people involved

- How confident UK adults feel about BBQ'ing hugely impacts their emotions towards it; experience is key for confidence so retailers should encourage people to BBQ more and provide information to help them get started
- Masterclasses in store are a great way to create a buzz and be interactive with consumers

Ideal score  
(Proud & Confident)



Please indicate how you feel about BBQs:



## How can you help?

Give simple tips on ways to cook on a BBQ to help boost the confidence of those who are worried

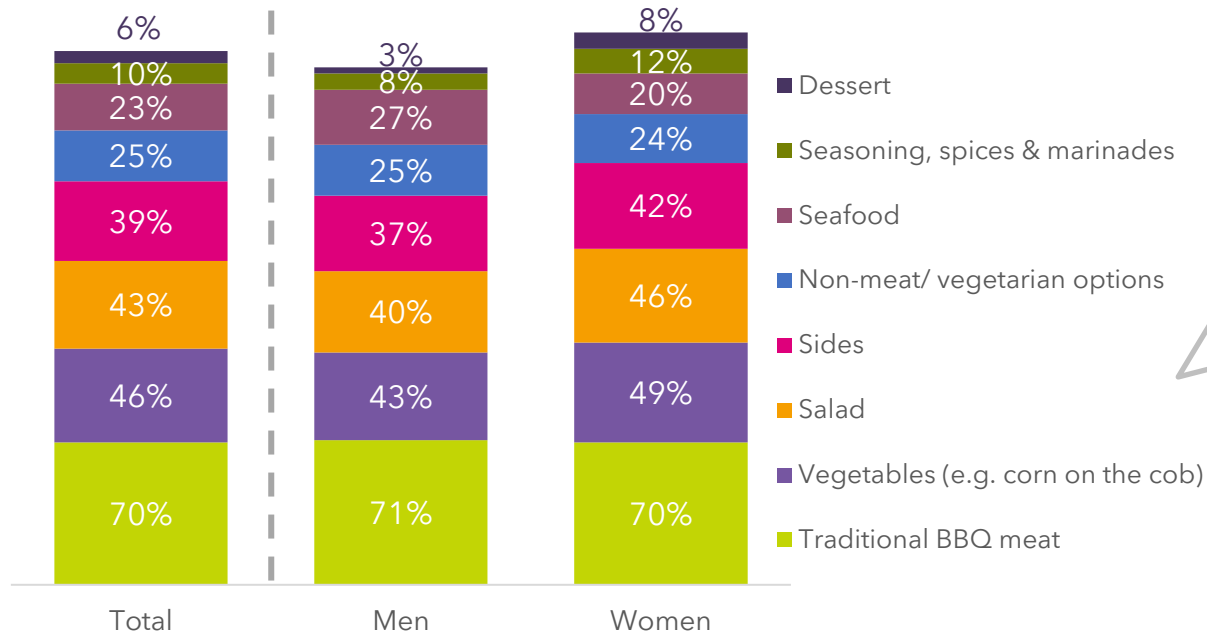
How do you feel when thinking about BBQs? Happy; Excited; In control (1 = not at all, 10 = very)



# 1 in 4 UK adults buy non-meat/vegetarian options for their BBQs so ensure there's plenty of choice

- 1 in 10 UK adults will be buying seasoning for their BBQ products so place complimentary marinades and spices with the meat options in store
- Women are more likely to buy salad items, sides, and desserts in preparation for BBQs compared to men

## What do you buy for a BBQ? (N:789)



What do you typically buy for a BBQ in the Summer?



- 1 **26%** BBQ
- 2 **6%** Multiple/variety
- 3 **5%** Cajun  
**5%** Peri Peri



- 1 **37%** Ice cream
- 2 **14%** Cheesecake
- 3 **14%** Fruit salad

### How you can help

Pair products. For example, we know that BBQ seasoning/marinade is a popular choice so place it next to the chicken for inspiration for BBQing

# BBQs are a social activity providing an opportunity to impress with extraordinary products

- BBQs are a popular meal when having friends and family over – retailers should use this to promote sharing platters, multipacks items and bundles for those planning to host a gathering
- 1 in 5 people consider BBQs to be a treat so are likely to be open to spending more on BBQ products – harness this by using language such as ‘treat’ and ‘premium’

## On what occasions do you have a BBQ? (N:789)



In our June 2021 report, we saw that 1 in 10 planned to have a BBQ for Father's Day

### How you can help

Take advantage of social media and weather predictions to prompt shoppers to consider buying at your store for the sunny days ahead

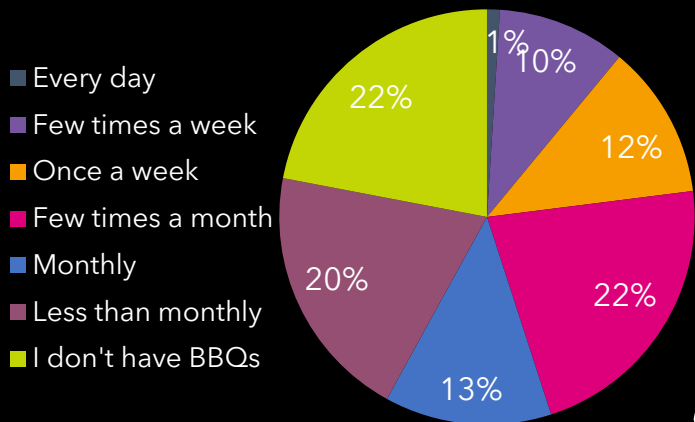
On what occasions do you have a BBQ? (multiple response)



# More than 1 in 5 UK adults have a BBQ at least once a week in Summer

- In the summer, over 1 in 10 UK adults have a BBQ a few times a week suggesting they are looking for multipacks and products that will last the week
- BBQs are a more common occurrence for UK adults who live further South in the UK due to nicer weather

## How often do you have BBQs in the Summer? (N:1009)



Those with children are more likely to have BBQs (90%) compared to those without (72%)



### North

Few times a week

**7%**

Monthly

**15%**

### South

Few times a week

**14%**

Monthly

**7%**

During the summer months, roughly how often do you have BBQs?  
Where do you live?  
Do you have any children (under 18) that live in your household?

# BBQs and salads are top Summer foods in the UK, but many need a BBQ confidence boost



## Summer Food

UK adults are buying more food this Summer in general compared to last year and frozen and stock cupboard items (long-life products) have increased by around 20% - people could be stockpiling in fear of inflation and supply issues.



## BBQ Season

More than 1 in 5 UK adults have a BBQ at least once a week in Summer, but 1 in 3 are not confident when it comes to cooking on a BBQ, due to lack of experience and fear of undercooking meat.



A woman with dark hair and sunglasses is riding a black mountain bike on a paved path. She is wearing a white and black striped long-sleeved shirt, blue jeans, and white sneakers. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. The path is lined with trees that have white blossoms, and the background shows a hilly landscape under a clear blue sky.

# 3/ Summary





## The Mood of the Nation

- UK adults are feeling slightly more positive this month compared to last as the weather improves
- The cost-of-living crisis and inflation continue to negatively impact financial confidence as just 1 in 4 UK adults have reported having high financial confidence
- Just 12% of UK adults can afford to save more this month compared to last



## Summer Food

- UK adults are buying more food this Summer in general compared to last year.
- Non-perishable planned purchases have increased by around 20% - are people stockpiling in fear of inflation and supply issues?
- UK adults prefer to eat lighter foods in the Summer and are more certain of their favourite Summer meals compared to their favourite Autumn meals



## BBQ Season

- 1 in 3 UK adults are not confident when it comes to cooking on a BBQ, especially women
- 1 in 10 UK adults will be buying seasoning for their BBQ products so place complimentary marinades and spices with the meat options in store
- In the summer, over 1 in 10 UK adults have a BBQ a few times a week (especially those who live in the South)



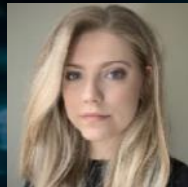
# Thank you for reading

The team at Spark Emotions who brought you the June edition of Mood of the Nation combined industry expertise with consumer psychology to help get to the truth of how the nation is feeling.



**Evie Harris-Jenkins**

Research Executive



**Tara Moran**

Senior Research Executive



**Scott Willey**

Associate Director

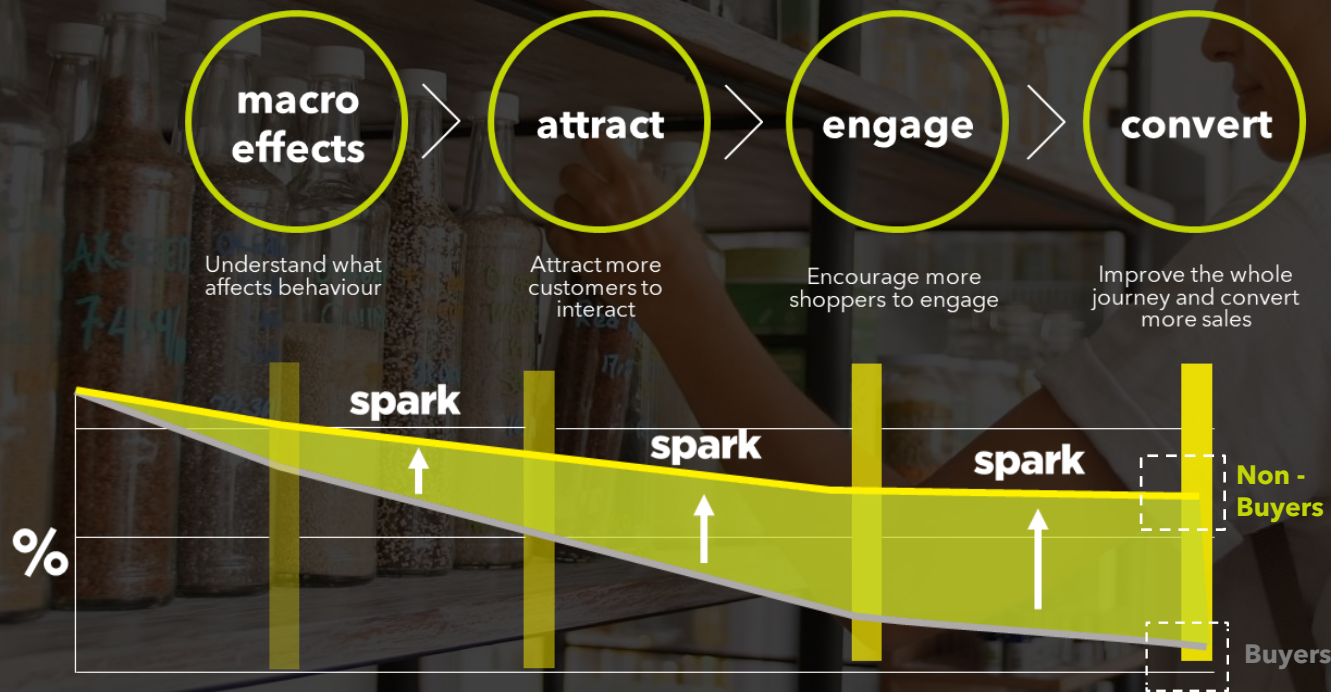
Get in touch with us - [hello@sparkemotions.com](mailto:hello@sparkemotions.com)



# Who are Spark Emotions?



We understand buyers and, crucially, non buyers



At Spark Emotions we feel **passionate about using all data sources** available.

Whether we are looking to drive **new shoppers to store**, encourage shoppers to **visit more often**, or **spend more** in store it is crucial to go **beyond the traditional** basket analysis and segmentation.

Understanding the behaviours, emotions and purchase intent of buyers, but **crucially, non buyers** (and those **shopping with your competitor or category alternatives**) is where our **expertise comes into play**.

# Thank you

email: [hello@sparkemotions.com](mailto:hello@sparkemotions.com)  
web: [sparkemotions.com](http://sparkemotions.com)  
phone: +44 (0)1543 255 259

# spark

Real emotions. Real change