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Warm Weather Lifts Britain’s Pub Sales

Sunny April helped beer and cider sales surge, but weaker trading before and after left drinks sales flat overall.

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Warm weather gave Britain’s pubs and bars a lift in late April, but weaker trading before and after the sunny stretch left drinks sales broadly flat for the month, according to new data from NIQ and CGA intelligence.

The latest Daily Drinks Tracker showed that managed pubs, bars and suppliers in Britain had an uneven April as shifting weather patterns drove sharp changes in demand. Sales in managed venues rose 4.1% year over year in the week to Saturday, April 25, helped by a spell of warm, dry weather that drew customers into beer gardens and terraces for the first time this year. But that stronger week was offset by softer trading on either side. Sales fell 4.8% in the week to Saturday, April 18, and dropped 4.3% in the week to Saturday, May 2, compared with the same periods in 2025.

NIQ said cooler temperatures in parts of Britain likely discouraged visits to pubs and bars during those weaker weeks. The timing of Easter also complicated the comparisons, since the holiday fell earlier in April this year than it did in 2025. Taken together, the figures suggest that drinks sales across the month were essentially flat, with gains during better weather and holiday periods balanced by quieter trading days.

Beer and cider benefited most from the sunshine. Beer sales were up 7.1% in the week to April 25, while cider sales jumped 19.2% as consumers turned to lighter, more refreshing drinks. Wine also held up well and was the most consistent category among major drinks groups. Sales rose 2.9% in the week to April 25 and 1.1% in the week to May 2.

Soft drinks declined in each of the three recent weeks, although NIQ said those comparisons were affected by school holiday timing. Spirits remained under pressure, with sales falling between 8.9% and 15% across all three weeks, extending a longer period of weak trading for that category.

NIQ said April’s softer overall performance may also reflect continued caution among consumers facing economic uncertainty. The company pointed to concerns about inflation and possible price pressures linked to tensions in the Middle East as factors that could be weighing on discretionary spending.

Rachel Weller, NIQ’s commercial lead for Britain and Ireland, said April was always difficult for the on-premise sector because of fast-changing weather conditions that make it harder for consumers to plan visits to pubs and bars. She said trading remained muted overall but added that people were still eager to drink out when conditions improved. She also said businesses were likely to remain cautious about future

inflation, though warmer weather could unlock some pent-up demand as summer approaches.