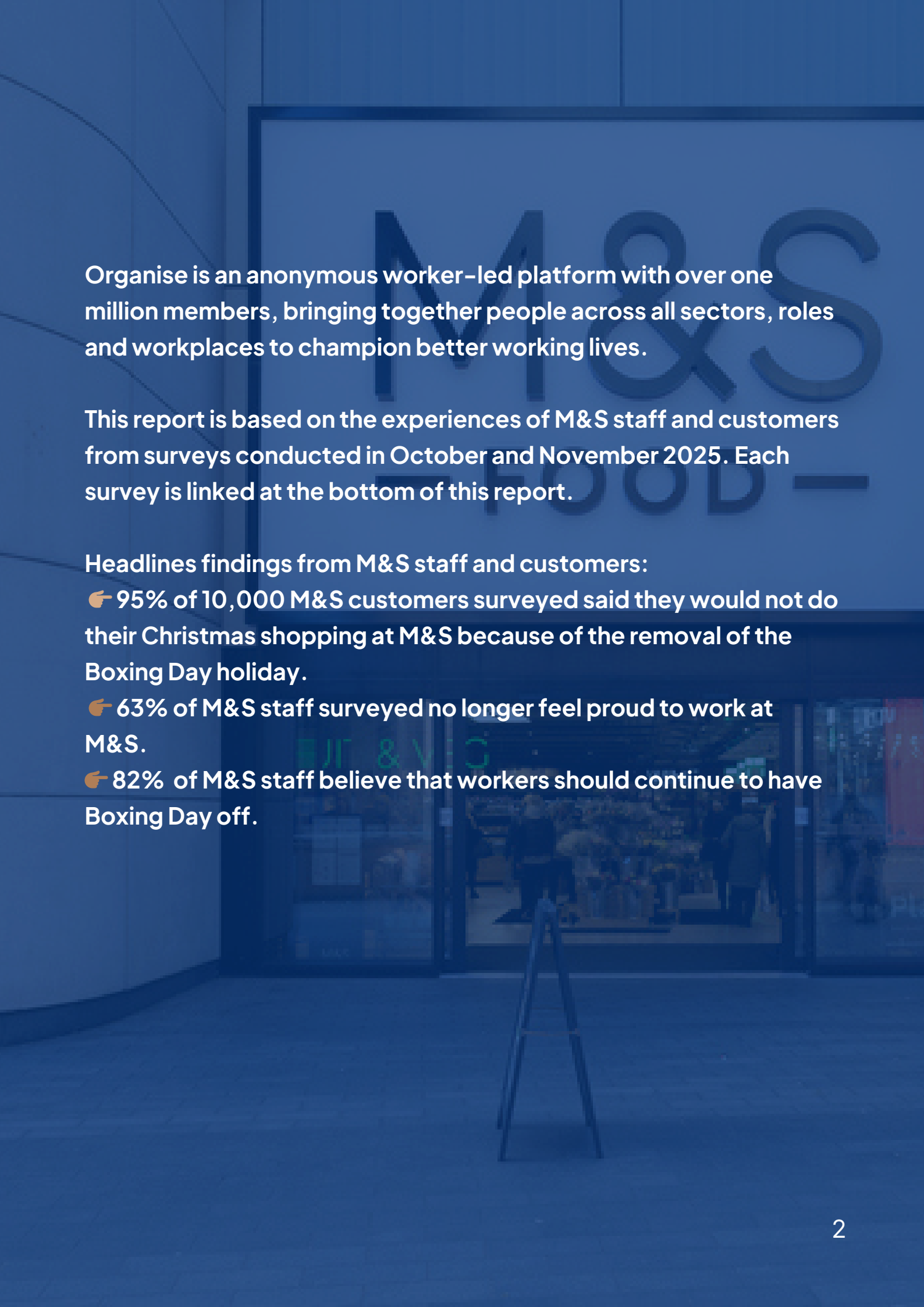




Bring back the Boxing Day holiday at M&S: A Call from staff and shoppers

November 2025



Organise is an anonymous worker-led platform with over one million members, bringing together people across all sectors, roles and workplaces to champion better working lives.

This report is based on the experiences of M&S staff and customers from surveys conducted in October and November 2025. Each survey is linked at the bottom of this report.

Headlines findings from M&S staff and customers:

- 👉 95% of 10,000 M&S customers surveyed said they would not do their Christmas shopping at M&S because of the removal of the Boxing Day holiday.

- 👉 63% of M&S staff surveyed no longer feel proud to work at M&S.

- 👉 82% of M&S staff believe that workers should continue to have Boxing Day off.

The removal of the Boxing Day holiday has caused the cancellation of employees' Christmases across the UK. M&S workers on Organise have shared that they have been told by managers that the decision is because of a need to make up losses from the cyber attack.

Staff are devastated that they will not be able to celebrate with family, while customers have expressed feeling that this is a betrayal of M&S' values.

Together, M&S staff and customers are calling on M&S to:

- Reinstate the holiday for all workers who had already booked the time off.
- Commit to reviewing bringing back the Boxing Day holiday for all M&S staff next year.

What M&S staff are saying:

“Gutted! I thought M&S cared about their colleagues, it's very hard work at Christmas time, they expect you to work extra hours and I have been told I have to work Christmas Eve, even though it's not my working shift, which means I will only get Christmas day off.”

“Angry & frustrated. My family live in a city away from where I work. My elderly mother recently had a heart attack and is battling serious ongoing health issues. My father is getting frailer. My holiday, including the boxing day, was approved months beforehand and then unceremoniously cancelled.”

“All my children live far away. I cannot visit them now as I cannot do that drive in one day. It's our country's main holiday, its disgusting that the company is putting money grabbing over the work/life balance of it's employees. The sales can wait 1 day!”

“Absolutely makes me feel sick to the stomach, we have to work during boxing day, whilst the CEO and shareholders get to spend time with their families.”

What M&S staff are saying:

“I was hoping to have Xmas with my family in Devon who have just returned to England after nine years in Australia. I was devastated when my holiday was cancelled.”

“Extremely disappointed and feels like a punishment. We all worked so hard throughout the cyber attack with minimal communication or support and this just feels like a punishment. And it's not only boxing day we are also being told we must work the 22nd 23rd and 24th of December regardless of contracted days and hours. My only day off Christmas week is now Christmas Day.”

“I barely see my partner as is. He's a teacher to special needs kids. He works weekdays and has weekends off. I am in university during the weekdays and work weekends. Holidays are a rarity to get together/off. So taking away a guarantee holiday sucked, really bad, especially since it'll be dead quiet anyway.”

MARKS & SPENCER

M&S

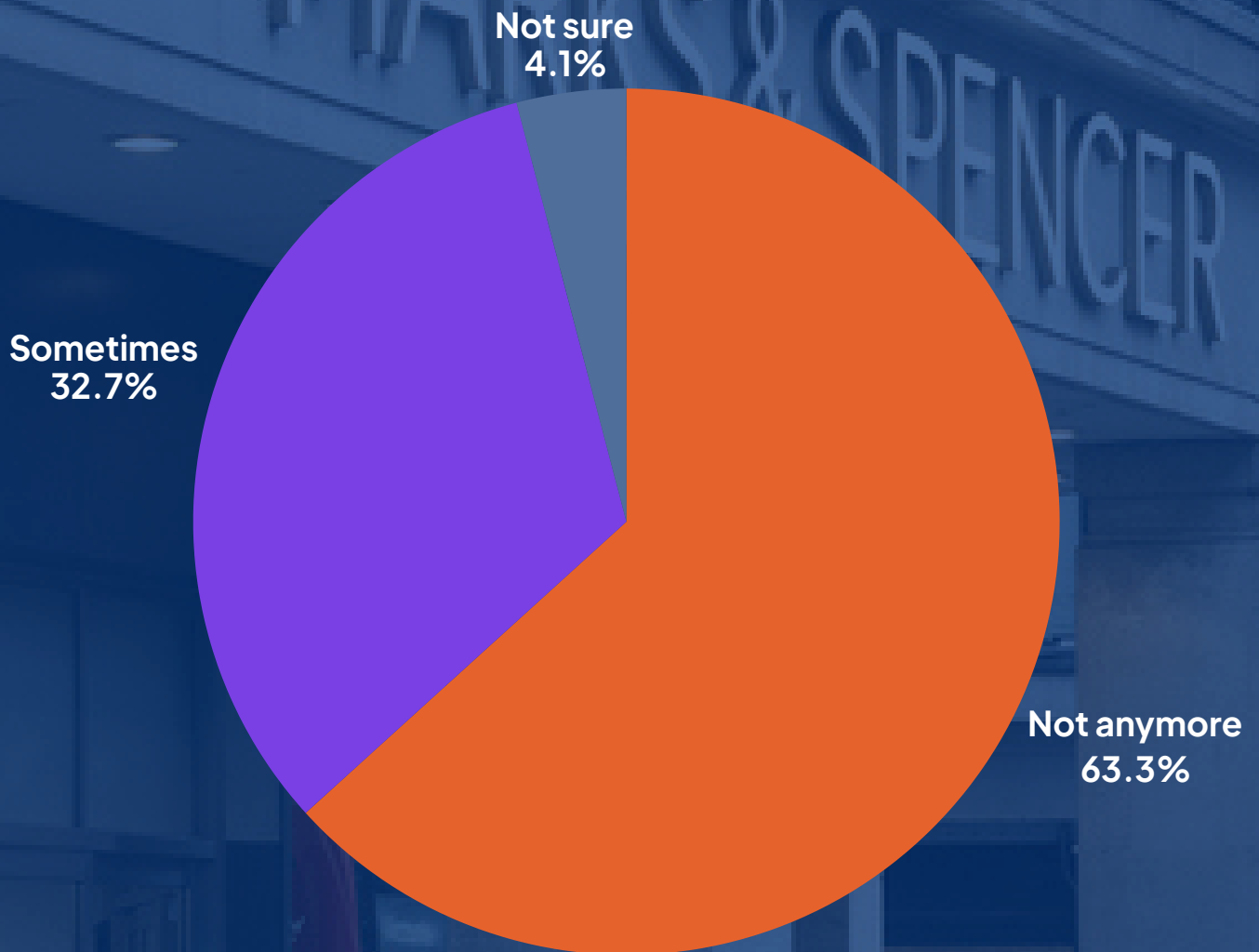
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What M&S staff are saying:

“We won’t be able to enjoy Christmas, for those (like me) with young children who rely on other people to care for them whilst we work, we’re literally ripping away the day they would play with all those lovely new toys after visiting family etc on Christmas Day. Then I will have to pack their pyjamas on Christmas Day to send them to any relative who will take them, with it being Christmas Day, so that I can be at work early on Boxing Day for a shift that falls on my day off but I am being made to work. If this was charity work or job within the care sector where there was a need for our services it wouldn’t be so heart wrenching, but to do this because of people’s greed to shop screams selfish.”

“It made me feel disappointed in Marks and Spencers, under valued, annoyed and disheartened. We give our life and soul into Marks and Spencers and get nothing back in return. We all deserve this time off over Christmas to spend time with our families.”

Do you feel proud to work at M&S?



What M&S customers are saying:

“Everyone deserves to spend time with family over Christmas, a two day shutdown isn’t going to affect your stores. Give staff the respect they are entitled too, it’s a busy run up to Christmas, stop with the greed at the employees expense.”

“Family time, especially at Christmas, is far more important than corporate greed. Treat your staff with dignity and respect.”

“One of the reasons that I shop at M&S is because I believe it to be an ethical company. This includes treating your staff well and it’s important to be off when other family members are – these bonds are vital to society.”

“M&S staff work hard throughout the year. Boxing Day is a family holiday that they deserve to spend with families. I feel that by opening on Boxing Day M&S are known as a good employer and this goes against that – ruining their reputation, I spend my money at places where I respect the staff if the company and opening on Boxing Day makes me question M&S.”

“One of the reasons why I shop at M&S is your consideration for your staff members. I am disappointed and angry at this change of policy.”

What M&S customers are saying:

“It is appalling that you are expecting hard-working staff to bear the brunt of the cyber attack. I shop at M&S every week so I am hugely disappointed.”

“Loads of staff have children and should be entitled to spend precious time with family and extended family who they may only see once a year. Disgraceful.”

“Typical CEO behaviour – treating the workers (the people who actually keep the business afloat with their hard graft) as little more than slaves. Where is your gratitude towards these people? Disgraceful. I will be joining the boycott.”

“Disappointed, you have always been a company I admired, but I don't anymore.”

“Your staff work hard and got you through what could have been a business-finishing crisis this year after the cyberattacks. You could actually do yourself more reputational harm than you suffered then by cancelling their holidays.”

“Last year, it [you/M&S] publicly said it kept stores closed “in order to give our colleagues a much-deserved extended break with their family and loved ones”. Why can't you do the same this year? Do they no longer deserve this? Are your profits not high enough already, despite the cyber attack? I'm sure you'll manage just fine if people get to stay at home for the day.”

Thank you for taking the time to read this report from M&S staff and customers.

M&S staff and customers look forward to seeing your official reply and assurance that you are taking action on these above points.

We would welcome your response, which will be shared directly with Organise's one million members. To respond, please contact Honor Barber at honor@organise.network

Survey links further reading:

All surveys were conducted between September and November 2025.

Organise surveys of M&S workers:

<https://the.organise.network/surveys/2790/results/public>

<https://the.organise.network/surveys/2792/results/public>

Survey of M&S customers:

<https://the.organise.network/surveys/2827/results/public>