

Lockdown Haircut, the UK's first virtual barber

Whilst the lockdown has stopped many things, one thing it hasn't is our unruly mops of hair. Barbers do around 350M cuts a year in the UK, so that's a lot of hair not being cut right now. Keen to avoid the dreaded bowl cut from mum, this startup provides an online alternative.

And so Lockdown Haircut was born. The company had hoped to be able to close its website and encourage everyone to go back to their local, independent barbers to get their haircut in-person but with the lockdown extended, Lockdown Haircut is ready and open to help. In fact, it has an additional dozen barbers on standby to help save the nation from home haircut disasters. Here's the revolutionary concept.

Since the launch on April 20th, founders, friends and serial entrepreneurs Jeroen Sibia and Dan Silvertown have been pretty much booked up every day with cutting hundreds of heads of hair and raised thousands of pounds for The NHS charities together initiative. With such an innovative approach to meet a new self-isolating demand amid the pandemic, the company is positioned currently as Britain's biggest barber, with word spreading across UK media.

"We had the idea Tuesday afternoon and loved the idea so much we basically worked on it non-stop

until Thursday morning. The reception has been amazing, it shows real community spirit that so far every barber we're working with has offered to donate their wages to the NHS." – Dan

Lockdown Haircut had the pleasure to receive anyone and everyone through its virtual doors including an Indian prince, a famous F1 driver, and a number of high profile journalists.

How does it work? Customers need their own electric clippers, comb, and laptop with webcam, and can book a 20-minute video appointment with a professional barber. On the video call, the barber will walk them through the trim and the customer can also ask a housemate for assistance or do a self-cut. A 20-minute appointment is £15 with the money split between the barber and the NHS. The startup operates a salary sacrifice scheme where the barbers can donate all or a portion of their wages to the NHS too. All the barbers are professionals and come from top-rated, independent shops. Cornerstone, the UK's largest online razor blade subscription, has kindly agreed to match donations pound for pound.

"With Tinder dates via Zoom now really a thing during the lockdown, we figured we're not the only ones battling the full caveman vibe. We wanted to save the world from DIY haircut disasters. By no means will this replace going to an actual local barber but for now, it's the next best thing. With the rise of video-based dating on Bumble and the relentless rise of Zoom work meetings, there's nowhere to hide if your haircuts go wrong. Anything to avoid the dreaded bowl cut from mum. We hold

two records at the moment: we are the UK's first online barber and strangely enough, the UK's busiest barber – by hair and volume! We're proud of both records, we're glad to have the first one but hope we can lose the second as that would mean the lockdown is over. I guess that means we're sort of rooting for our own business to become obsolete!" – Jeroen