ELITE SHOPPING CENTRES CHANGE UK SHOPPING TRENDS
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In one of the most comprehensive surveys of Britain's shopping centres undertaken to date, by TW Research Associates in conjunction with Weatherall Green & Smith, an elite class – judged by shoppers, retailers and investors alike – of super-centres has emerged. Not only do the super-centres already dominate the UK's shopping patterns, but their dominance looks set to increase, with every one of the top five centres having declared plans to expand. The MetroCentre in Gateshead tops the table, closely followed by Lakeside shopping centre in Thurrock, Meadowhall in Sheffield, Merry Hill in Brierley Hill and The Shopping Centre in Milton Keynes.

As the report, "Going Shopping 1998/99", highlights, it is the super-centres which are setting the shopping trends for the future. 71 of the Top 100 schemes open every Sunday, and 13 incorporate multiplex cinemas, with up to 40 more planned throughout the country in existing or new schemes under construction.

If the shopping centre scene is dominated by the super-centres, so the retailers represented within them also form their own superleague. 22 retailers feature in 50% or more of the nation's Top 100 shopping centres; namely Adams, Birthdays Boots, Clarks, Clintons Cards, Dorothy Perkins, Early Learning, Ernest Jones, Mothercare, H Samuel, Superdrug, Allsports, Bay Trading, Body Shop, Burton, Dixons, Electronics Boutique, Etam, Evans, Marks & Spencer, New Look and River Island.

The traditional shopping centre, whether a massive regional centre or town centre version, still meets our shopping needs. Just two schemes from the factory outlet sector would qualify to join the Shopping Centre Top 100 - Great Western Designer Outlet Village in Swindon and Cheshire Oaks Designer Village near Chester - while the shopping parks sector would fail to make any appearance at all.

Speaking about the report, Keith Steventon, head of research at Weatherall Green & Smith said, *"While the country's largest schemes are not always the most attractive – 21 of the UK's 100 biggest centres failed to make it into the Top 100 best centres - it is probably fair to say that the dominance of the large regional schemes continues largely unchallenged.*

"Schemes currently under construction which we are predicting will join the shopping parks on completion are all at the top end of the scale, including the likes of Bluewater in Kent, West Quay in Southampton, The Oracle in Reading, Braehead and Buchanan Galleries in Glasgow."

Trevor Wood of TW Research Associates added, *"Our research shows that a number of leading shopping centres already meet the objectives of the recent Government White Paper on the Future for Transport. 19% now incorporate a bus station and 6% have a railway station. Many also link in to local tram and railway schemes, with further transport developments planed, including interchanges as recommended in the White Paper."*

He went on to say, *"85% of shopping centres provide dedicated parking facilities, while 9% have more than 2,000 parking spaces available to shoppers and a handful have more than 10,000 spaces. In the light of comments made in the White Paper, it is unlikely that future developments will have such generous parking provision."*

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"Going Shopping 1998/99" contains more than 100 pages of detailed analysis which has been compiled principally from questionnaires completed following extensive research involving shopping centre managers, owners and managing agents. The report looks at schemes currently trading as well as those anticipated to be trading by 2002. The research was undertaken by Trevor Wood of TW Research Associates in conjunction with international property consultants and surveyors Weatherall Green & Smith.

EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE: The research was conducted before the recent opening of the Trafford Centre near Manchester.

TW RESEARCH ASSOCIATES
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SHOPPING CENTRE HIERARCHY
Top Twenty Centres

Rank	**Scheme**	**Location**	**Size**	**Points**
1	MetroCentre	Gateshead	1,584,000 sq ft	7,196
2	Lakeside Shopping Centre	Thurrock	1,300,000 sq ft	7,101
3	Meadowhall	Sheffield	1,200,000 sq ft	6,164
4	Merry Hill Centre	Brierley Hill, Dudley	1,500,000 sq ft	5,989
5	The Shopping Centre	Milton Keynes	1,200,000 sq ft	5,568
6	Arndale Centre	Manchester	1,300,000 sq ft	4,937
7	Eldon Square Shopping Centre	Newcastle-upon-Tyne	967,000 sq ft	4,757
8	The Harlequin, Watford	Watford	705, 000 sq ft	4,519
9	The Mall at Cribbs Causeway	Bristol	725,000 sq ft	4,458
10	Brent Cross Shopping Centre	London (Hendon)	850,000 sq ft	4,149
11	The Telford Centre	Telford	850,000 sq ft	3,924
12	Whitgift Centre	Croydon	550,000 sq ft	3,832
13	The Glades	Bromley	412,000 sq ft	3,791
14	Victoria Shopping Centre	Nottingham	811,000 sq ft	3,784
15	Queensgate	Peterborough	850,000 sq ft	3,736
16	The Arndale Shopping Centre	Luton	750,000 sq ft	3,710
17	Blackburn Shopping Centre	Blackburn	622,000 sq ft	3,481
18	White Rose Shopping Centre	Leeds	650,000 sq ft	3,431
19	Cwmbran Shopping Centre	Cwmbran	826,000 sq ft	3,348
20	Kingfisher Shopping Centre	Redditch	680,000 sq ft	3,158

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

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