

BLUEWATER HEADS TOP 20

14TH JULY 1999

Just three months after opening in March, **Bluewater in Kent is considered to be the most attractive shopping centre in the UK.** The Trafford Centre near Manchester, which opened in September 1998, is placed 6th in the latest hierarchy and also joins a select band of super-centres, while Buchanan Galleries in Glasgow, which also opened in March 1999, is considered to be 20th overall and the most attractive shopping centre in Scotland.

This elite class – judged by shoppers, retailers and investors alike – was identified by research for **Going Shopping 2000** undertaken by Trevor Wood of TW Research Associates in conjunction with Weatherall Green & Smith. These super-centres include MetroCentre in Gateshead, Lakeside Shopping Centre in Thurrock, Sheffield's Meadowhall, Merry Hill Centre in Brierley Hill and The Shopping Centre, Milton Keynes. These schemes have all maintained their relative positions from last year, and Eldon Square Shopping Centre in Newcastle has overtaken Manchester's Arndale Centre following various changes.

The other significant change to the top 20 sees Queensgate Shopping Centre in Peterborough increasing its attractiveness, rising to 13th position, partly due to Marks & Spencer taking the former Littlewoods store, and the scheme is considered to be the most attractive shopping centre in East Anglia. There have been other positional changes outside of the top 10 due to a variety of factors including new tenants, increased Sunday trading, extensions to schemes and improved car parking facilities.

This year's analysis also included additional points for visitors to each shopping centre, known as average weekly footfall. This includes people passing through the scheme to parking facilities or railway stations and does not mean they have actually purchased anything. It is interesting, however, to note that every leading shopping centre had average weekly footfalls in excess of 200,000 visitors per week with some schemes recording over 500,000 weekly visitors.

Most of the shopping centres in the top 20 are involved in development work which will help them maintain their pre-eminent standings, and analysis of these developments is shown in the report together with details of new schemes. The report also looks at factory outlet centres and shopping or fashion parks.

Speaking about the latest findings, Ross Brown, Head of Retail of Weatherall Green & Smith said, "*With major extensions being called in by the DETR at MetroCentre, Merry Hill and Brent Cross, there is significant pent-up demand for good quality retail space. This year's analysis shows the growing importance of town centre schemes such as Eldon Square and Queensgate.*"

He went on to say, "*It will be interesting to see what developments unfold over the next twelve to eighteen months.*"

Trevor Wood of TW Research Associates added, "*With the arrival of Bluewater, The Trafford Centre and Buchanan Galleries, Cwmbran, Kingfisher Shopping Centre in Redditch and Blackburn Shopping Centre all drop out of the top 20. Most of the other leading schemes maintained their relative positions, although current and proposed developments mean that these positions are likely to change when the 2001 report is produced. There have been significant changes outside the top 20, particularly with many smaller schemes opening.*"

He added, "*The imminent opening of Braehead in Glasgow, The Oracle in Reading and West Quay in Southampton, together with sizeable extensions proposed to other centres will lead to further changes in the hierarchy when the 2001 research is published next year.*"

Keith Steventon, Research Director of Weatherall Green & Smith concluded, “*We feel this report clearly shows the concentration of shoppers expenditure in a small, but growing, group of super-centres. With a minimum possible score of 100 points, the 20 leading schemes all scored more than 3,500 points, with the three leading schemes scoring over 7,000 points*”

| 2000 Rank | 98/99 Rank | Scheme | Location | GLA | Points | Type |
|------------------|-------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------|---------------|-------------|
| 1 | | Bluewater | Dartford - Greenhithe | 1,610,000 | 7,985 | Comp |
| 2 | 1 | MetroCentre | Gateshead | 1,584,000 | 7,549 | Comp |
| 3 | 2 | Lakeside Shopping Centre | Grays - Thurrock | 1,360,000 | 7,489 | Comp |
| 4 | 3 | Meadowhall | Sheffield | 1,220,000 | 6,686 | Comp |
| 5 | 4 | Merry Hill Centre | Brierley Hill | 1,500,000 | 6,413 | Comp |
| 6 | | The Trafford Centre | Manchester - Trafford | 1,400,000 | 6,329 | Comp |
| 7 | 5 | The Shopping Centre, Milton Keynes | Milton Keynes | 1,200,000 | 5,875 | Comp |
| 8 | 7 | Eldon Square Shopping Centre | Newcastle-upon-Tyne | 961,000 | 5,218 | Comp |
| 9 | 6 | Arndale Centre | Manchester | 1,300,000 | 5,178 | Comp |
| 10 | 8 | The Harlequin | Watford | 705,000 | 4,907 | Comp |
| 11 | 9 | The Mall at Cribbs Causeway | Bristol - Cribbs Causeway | 725,000 | 4,867 | Comp |
| 12 | 10 | Brent Cross Shopping Centre | London - Hendon | 855,000 | 4,658 | Comp |
| 13 | 15 | Queensgate Shopping Centre | Peterborough | 807,000 | 4,356 | Comp |
| 14 | 12 | Whitgift Centre | Croydon | 525,000 | 4,279 | Comp |
| 15 | 14 | The Victoria Centre | Nottingham | 820,000 | 4,264 | Comp |
| 16 | 16 | The Arndale Shopping Centre | Luton | 750,000 | 4,214 | Comp |
| 17 | 11 | The Telford Shopping Centre | Telford | 850,000 | 4,165 | Comp |
| 18 | 13 | The Glades | Bromley | 413,000 | 4,102 | Comp |
| 19 | 18 | White Rose Shopping Centre | Leeds | 648,000 | 3,597 | |
| 20 | | Buchanan Galleries | Glasgow | 600,000 | 3,517 | Comp |

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This updated research was undertaken by Trevor Wood of TW Research Associates in conjunction with international property consultants and surveyors Weatherall Green & Smith to follow up earlier joint research for "Going Shopping 1998/99" which was published last year.

"Going Shopping 2000" contains more than 100 pages of detailed analysis and a hierarchy of the 400 most attractive schemes compiled principally from questionnaires completed following extensive research. The report looks at schemes anticipated to be trading by 2003 as well as those currently trading.

A copy of the appendix explaining how the overall attractiveness was calculated is attached, together with a glossary of terms used in the publication.

Copies of "Going Shopping 2000", including postage, are priced at : £195.00 per copy within the UK, E320 within Europe or \$365 outside Europe and are available from either:-

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