

**PRESS RELEASE: 18 APRIL 2011**

## **GOING SHOPPING 2011: BLUEWATER, BUDGET BRANDS AND PREMIER LEAGUE**

Bluewater in Greenhithe, Dartford, has regained the top position in the UK shopping centre hierarchy '*Going Shopping 2011 - The Definitive Guide to Shopping Centres.*' by Trevor Wood Associates. Westfield London in Shepherds Bush, London, moved straight to number three behind 2008 leader MetroCentre, Gateshead, in the guide which uses footfall, size, number and type of shops and facilities available to rank the UK's top 500 shopping centres and provides research on factory outlet centres, shopping parks, shopping & leisure centres, tenants, owners, letting agents and managers.

The research shows the emergence of a premier division of 27 leading shopping centres that includes newcomers St David's, Cardiff and Liverpool One. Many of these leading schemes have plans to expand or enhance their tenant mix, further consolidating their dominance.

Trevor Wood, senior partner of Trevor Wood Associates, says: "It is encouraging that despite prevailing market conditions, most of the 500 leading schemes increased their scores, even if only marginally. This shows the understanding from landlords and tenants that long term success comes from sustained investment."

Food is not the driver of shopping centre, with 97 of the top 100 schemes being comparison dominated. There are almost 32,000 retail units within the 500 leading schemes, and some 24,000 are occupied by major comparison goods retailers or groups with turnovers in excess of £3 million pa, involving 1,500 different trading fascias.

Budget brands have expanded since the last review, with the likes of Shoe Zone, Peacocks and Card Factory all moving up the occupancy table and Poundland undertaking the largest single occupier expansion. The mobile phone sector has undertaken the most expansion overall.

95% of the 500 leading schemes now have stores trading every Sunday, up from 92% in the 2008 review; all open on Sundays in the run up to Christmas, every one of the top 100 schemes opens every Sunday. Of these, 34 incorporate a food court, while twenty eight feature a cinema, ten have libraries, four have bowling alleys and seventeen have fitness or leisure centres, making shopping trips on Sunday more of a social occasion.

40 of the top 100 schemes have an integral bus station and eleven have integral or adjacent railway stations. 435 centres have integral parking facilities, with 198 providing more than the average of three parking spaces per 1,000 sq. ft. of gross lettable area and only 102 having a ratio below two; four of the top schemes provide more than 10,000 spaces.

100 of the top 500 schemes incorporate food courts; Multiplex cinemas are in 54 schemes including 28 of the top 100 schemes. 56 public libraries are now found within shopping centres with crèches or nurseries situated in 37 schemes.

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## Other Key Findings:

- Top Investment Manager - Capital Shopping Centres
- Top Managing Agent - Jones Lang LaSalle
- Top Letting Agent - Cushman & Wakefield.
- Top Factory Outlet Centre - Cheshire Oaks Designer Outlet, Ellesmere Port
- Top Shopping Park - Fort Kinnaird in Newcraighall, Edinburgh

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## Notes for Editors

Trevor Wood Associates was established in 1987 and is a leading, independent, provider of information on all retail and leisure schemes in the UK.

*'Going Shopping - The Definitive Guide to Shopping Centres'*, is the authoritative analysis of shopping centre and factory outlet developments within the UK and incorporates the widely quoted hierarchy of UK Shopping Centres, covering over 900 schemes.

Shopping centres currently trading are ranked by overall attractiveness to shoppers, retailers and investors. This was achieved by confirming detailed information for each scheme thought to be larger than 50,000 sq. ft. in the United Kingdom. The information was converted into points for selected features shown to be important to those groups, including tenants, lettable area, and type of scheme, weekly footfall and facilities available. The largest schemes are not always considered the most attractive and twenty one of the hundred largest schemes do not feature in the top 100.