

RETAIL DESTINATION

FEBRUARY 2019

FORMERLY SHOPPING CENTRE MAGAZINE

THE BUSINESS OF RETAIL



IT'S NEVER TOO SOON TO START PLANNING FOR CHRISTMAS

Food & Beverage

The irresistible rise of the food hall

Christmas

Experts give their tips for Christmas success

Technology

Indoor mapping app uses gravity location

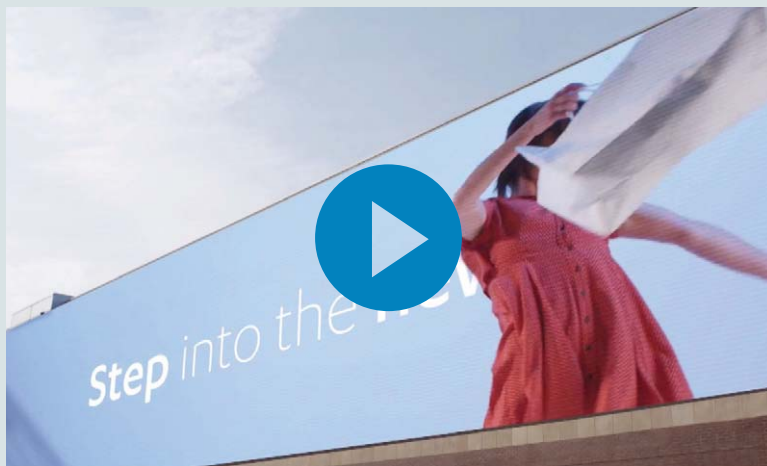
RETAIL IS CHANGING.

Create experiences that change with it.

We combine giant LED platforms with larger-than-life creative to inspire, engage and interact at scale.

Static interiors and architecture are transformed into digital canvases where brands flourish and audiences are captivated, with visitors staying longer and returning more frequently.

See our vision for future retail destinations at www.adi.tv/create



For more information visit www.adi.tv/create
0800 592 346 | info@adi.tv | www.adi.tv



EDITOR'S LETTER

The decorations are down, the retailers' trading statements have been dissected and debated and Christmas is done and dusted.

There's only one thing missing. Where are the CVAs? Pundits were confidently predicting a flood of retailer failures immediately after Christmas but there's been barely a trickle. Of course the 17 additional M&S store closures are a disaster for the towns affected, and rumours continue to swirl round Debenhams and Arcadia.

It would be naïve not to expect more retailers to go to the wall, but this retail recession has been running for years now and the weakest brands have already been weeded out. Brands that have made it this far must have something about their operating model that works and it will take a new shock to tip them over the edge.

We've all got Brexit fatigue, but it has to be said that a hard Brexit could well be that shock. Empty shelves as stock is held up at the ports, a collapse in the value of Sterling or an emergency interest-rate hike by the Bank of England are all potentially on the horizon if we have a hard Brexit and any one of these could bring down retail brands. Retail is the biggest private-sector employer and our politicians have a duty to the millions of store workers to see sense and stop that happening.

Graham Parker
Editor, Retail Destination



NEWS & ANALYSIS

- 04** Lendlease chosen for Smithfield
- 06** intu Merry Hill makeover plan
- 08** Future High Streets Fund open for bids
- 12** Outlets outperform

FEATURES

- 14** **FOOD & BEVERAGE**
Food halls are cropping up across the country, but what do they need to succeed?
- 18** **CHRISTMAS**
Recipes for success in the festive season
- 36** **TECHNOLOGY**
Mapping app helps shoppers find the products they want in-store

REGULARS

- 40** **DATA**
Retail facts & figures
- 43** **PEOPLE**
Hammerson heads uphill at Victoria Leeds



**GET YOUR BUSINESS IN GEAR
WITH HIGH TECH, INNOVATIVE
CAR PARK SOLUTIONS**

Get in touch today and see how G24 can help you implement intelligent and effective ways to monitor, manage and protect your parking facilities.

- +44 (0) 370 0427215
- ✉ sales@g24.co.uk
- 🌐 www.g24.co.uk
- 🌐 www.storeguard.co.uk
- 🌐 www.clearpark.co.uk

EDITOR

Graham Parker
07956 231 078
graham.parker@jld-media.co.uk

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

Iain Hoey
07757 946 414
iain.hoey@jld-media.co.uk

SALES MANAGER

Trudy Whiston
01293 416 090
trudy.whiston@jld-media.co.uk

DATABASE MANAGER

Frankie Butler
01892 739 524
frankie.butler@jld-media.co.uk

DESIGN & PRODUCTION

Stuart West
01892 739 526
stuart.west@jld-media.co.uk

PUBLISHING DIRECTOR

Helen Richmond
01892 739 523
helen.richmond@jld-media.co.uk

EDITORIAL BOARD

Carl Foreman, Moorgarth; Bill Moss, Mall Solutions Europe; John Prestwich, Montagu Evans; James Taylor, Workman; Michelle Buxton, Toolbox; Jordan Jeffery, JLL; Sean Kelly, PR4Property; Lynette Howgate, Ashdown Phillips

No part of this publication may be reproduced without the written permission of the publishers. The Publishers accept no responsibility for any statements made in signed contributions or in those reproduced from other sources, nor for claims made in any advertisements.

Retail Destination is available on subscription.
UK & Ireland £96; Overseas £150.

Retail Destination is published monthly.

ISSN 0964-1793 | Printed by Stephens & George Ltd

Retail Destination
29 - 31 Monson Road
Tunbridge Wells
Kent
TN11 1LS

www.retaildestination.co.uk



All rights reserved
© JLD Media 2019



LENDLEASE CHOSEN FOR SMITHFIELD

Birmingham City Council has announced Lendlease as its development partner to deliver the transformation of the 17ha Birmingham Smithfield site. Located in the heart of the city centre, Birmingham Smithfield is a £1.5bn redevelopment project that will reposition the city on an international stage.

The JV between the council and Lendlease will lead the creation of an urban quarter that includes a new home for the city's historic Bull Ring retail markets, a unique family destination including a leisure and cultural offer, a new public square, integrated public transport and more than 2,000 homes with a public park and community facilities.

Birmingham Smithfield is located directly adjacent to the Bullring and New Street Station; and will be a short walk from the new High Speed 2 city centre terminus Station which is set to open in 2026. The redevelopment of the area, which is twice the size of Birmingham's Brindleyplace, is expected to take 15 years to complete. The first phase of the scheme will include new homes, the new retail markets building and public realm.

Council leader cllr Ian Ward said: "The delivery of Birmingham Smithfield will be a major boost for Birmingham. With the new cultural and leisure attractions, the public realm, new homes and retail markets the development will appeal to both national and international audiences."



GREEN LIGHT FOR ASHFORD SCHEME

Castle City Estates and Ashford Borough Council have been granted consent for a new 91,000-sq ft retail park in Ashford, Kent. Designed by Stephen George + Partners the development consists of two retail terraces split into six units and connected by an outdoor garden centre. Additionally there will be a 2,000-sq ft standalone retail unit and a 2,200-sq ft café unit.

SGP director Stuart Hancox said: "Our client Castle City Estates and Ashford Borough Council wanted a quality development that met their high design standards. Having undertaken previous schemes in the Ashford area, SGP was chosen to bring a new approach to the park; still functional and honest but without the normal metal clad box like forms opting instead for a softer more natural feel."

The buildings have good environmental credentials and aim to achieve BREEAM 'very good'. Work is planned to start in February 2019.





First Choice For Retail

Park Watch is one of the UK's largest suppliers of Car Park Management Services to the Retail industry, providing a wide range of specialist services to Shopping Centres and Retail Parks.

At Park Watch we offer a variety of Car Parking solutions covering all aspects of operations to fulfil your unique requirements. From the provision of fully trained and uniformed Patrol Operatives to the installation of complete parking control and ANPR systems, Park Watch has a wide range of services that could benefit your Shopping Centre. We provide our services on many of the UK's best known retail locations and can provide excellent references to support our quality of service delivery.

If you are interested in discussing with us any of our Services and Products then please contact us to arrange a no obligation proposal. **We will be delighted to meet with you and provide you with our recommendations.**



t. **01244 283 343**
e. **info@parkwatch.co.uk**
www.parkwatch.co.uk

SERVICES WE PROVIDE



PERIODIC MOBILE
OPERATIVE PATROLS



CUSTOMER SELF TICKETING



AUTOMATIC NUMBER PLATE
RECOGNITION (ANPR)



CCTV CAMERA
PARKING CONTROL



PAY AND DISPLAY



TOTAL PARKING
MANAGEMENT



TRAFFIC MARSHALLING



PARKING OPERATIVES



PAY ON FOOT



PERMIT MANAGEMENT



PARKING CHARGE NOTICE
(PCN) ISSUE PROCESSING



CAR PARK RESURFACING,
REPAIRS AND LINING

M&S TO CLOSE 17 SITES

Marks & Spencer has announced 17 more store closures, following a disappointing Christmas trading period. In the 13 weeks to 29 December 2018 like-for-like sales were down 2.7%. The new closures are on top of the 100 announced last year.

The 17 stores are in Ashford, Barrow, Bedford, Boston, Buxton, Cwmbran, Deal, Felixstowe, Huddersfield, Hull, Junction One Antrim Outlet, Luton Arndale, Newark, Northwich, Rotherham, Sutton Coldfield and Weston-Super-Mare.

KINGSMERE GOES ON-SITE

Consolidated Property Group has started construction on the £40m Kingsmere retail park in Bicester following pre-lets to Next and Marks & Spencer Simply Food. In addition the scheme, located next to the A41, will include an additional shop unit, a restaurant and a gym. Construction is being undertaken by Jehu Project Services and is expected to be completed by the end of October 2019.

DTZI BUYS CAXTONGATE

DTZ Investors has successfully completed the acquisition of Caxtongate II in Birmingham for £12.44m, reflecting a net initial yield of 5.95%. The property comprises 33,268 sq ft of retail space in six well configured, large modern retail units arranged over basement, ground, mezzanine and first floor levels let to a number of well-known national retailers including Muji, Charles Tyrwhitt and Jigsaw. The residential accommodation across the 2nd and 3rd floors has been sold off. The property is Grade II listed with an attractive Victorian façade.

INTU MERRY HILL MAKEOVER PLAN

Intu has announced plans for a multi-million-pound investment to transform the external facade of Intu Merry Hill, the Midlands' largest shopping centre. Intu Merry Hill, which attracts around 18 million visitors a year, will benefit from an investment of over £10m to transform the external entrance. The plans include the installation of a large format screen above the main entrance, as well as energy-saving LED lights that can change the colour of the centre's exterior walls.

A planning application for the project was submitted on 17 December and work is set to begin in February

2019, subject to planning approval.

Nick Round, regional manager director for Intu, said: "This £10 million investment at Intu Merry Hill reflects our long-term commitment to the centre and the confidence that exists in it as a destination where brands can really flourish. In the last year we've welcomed 20 new retailers to the centre, including huge new stores for Next and Primark, making this an even more attractive destination for shoppers. Our plans are to attract even more great brands and create compelling experiences for customers across the West Midlands."



HINES SHOPS ON OXFORD STREET

International real estate investor Hines has bought 354-358 Oxford Street from Transport for London on behalf of the Hines European Value Fund. The prime site is located above the Bond Street underground station entrance on the north side of Oxford Street and in the heart of London's West End.

Hines plans to deliver best-in-class retail space across the basement, ground and first floors. The detached building offers excellent prominence for the 25 metres of frontage in a prime Oxford Street location, directly opposite the main Bond Street Tube station exits. Above the retail element, Hines will create high-quality residential accommodation across the four upper floors.

Paul White, HEVF fund manager, said: "The acquisition of 354-358 Oxford Street is another example of HEVF's

commitment to focus only on the best micro-locations within its target markets. The mixed-use components of this new project offer the fund strong downside protection during uncertain macroeconomic times."



Meet your perfect match



Book a free review of your Centre from the leading provider of IT and Communications to over 250 Shopping Centres

BATTERSEA MALL SOLD

The Malaysian consortium redeveloping London's Battersea Power Station has brought in new owners for the scheme's commercial element in a £1.583bn deal. Battersea phase 2, comprising 500,000 sq ft of offices pre-let to Apple and 500,000 sq ft of retail and leisure within the shell of the former power station, will be owned long term by Permodalan Nasional Berhad (PNB) - Malaysia's £50bn sovereign wealth fund - and The Employees Provident Fund Board of Malaysia (EPF).

BROADMARSH UNDER WAY

Intu has appointed Sir Robert McAlpine to deliver the £86m transformation of intu Broadmarsh in Nottingham, ahead of the contractor starting on site in early 2019 to deliver the next phase of the project. Preparatory work has been ongoing throughout 2018 including the relocation of the centre's management office and improvements to the Wilko's store to make way for The Light cinema.

TIVOLI OPENS IN BATH

Tivoli, a brand-new boutique cinema concept, has opened its first site in the SouthGate Centre, Bath. The luxury cinema, café, bar and lounge will boast state-of-the-art technology, beautifully designed interiors and an impressive, scratch-cooked food and beverage offering. Tivoli merges art-house cinema and casual dining to create a bold new concept, charismatic neighbourhood destination and unmatched cinematic and dining experience. The Bath venue has four 50-seat screening studios and a 12-seat directors lounge & screen which is bookable upon request. It also includes a cocktail bar, a café-bar and a restaurant.

FUTURE HIGH STREETS FUND OPEN FOR BIDS

The government has opened its Future High Streets for bids from councils across the UK Under the 2018 Autumn budget the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government was allocated £675m for a new initiative to transform local high streets into modern vibrant community hubs. Councils across the country are now being invited urged to bid for a share of the pot in order to consolidate properties on the high street, improve transport and access into town centres and convert retail units into new homes.

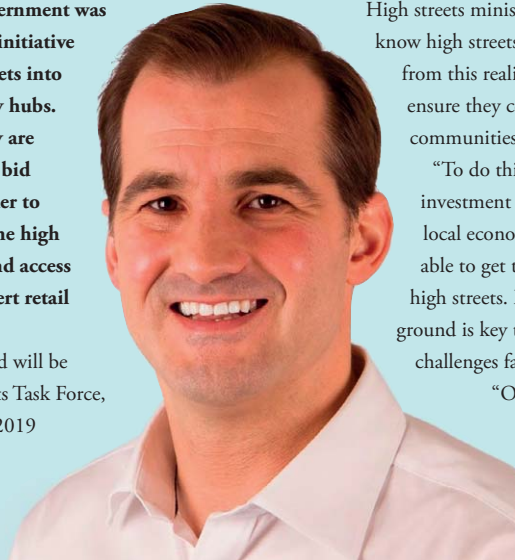
Places bidding for the fund will be supported by the High Streets Task Force, which will be established in 2019 and will support local leadership. Up to £55m of the fund has also been allocated to

support the regeneration of 'heritage high streets'. Bids will help to restore historic high street properties for new work spaces or cultural venues.

High streets minister Jake Berry said: "We all know high streets are changing, we can't hide from this reality. But we're determined to ensure they continue sit at the heart of our communities for generations to come.

"To do this we have to support investment in infrastructure, boosting local economies and ensuring people are able to get the most out of their local high streets. Empowering leaders on the ground is key too - they best understand the challenges facing their areas.

"Our Future High Streets Fund will drive forward this change, transforming our town centres into the thriving community hubs of the future."

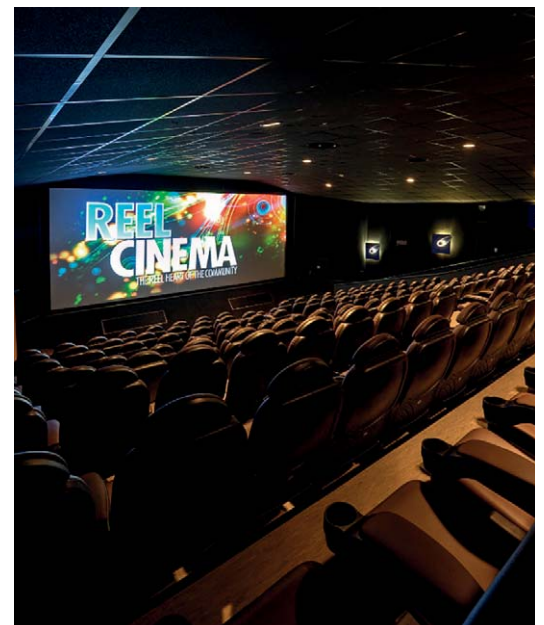


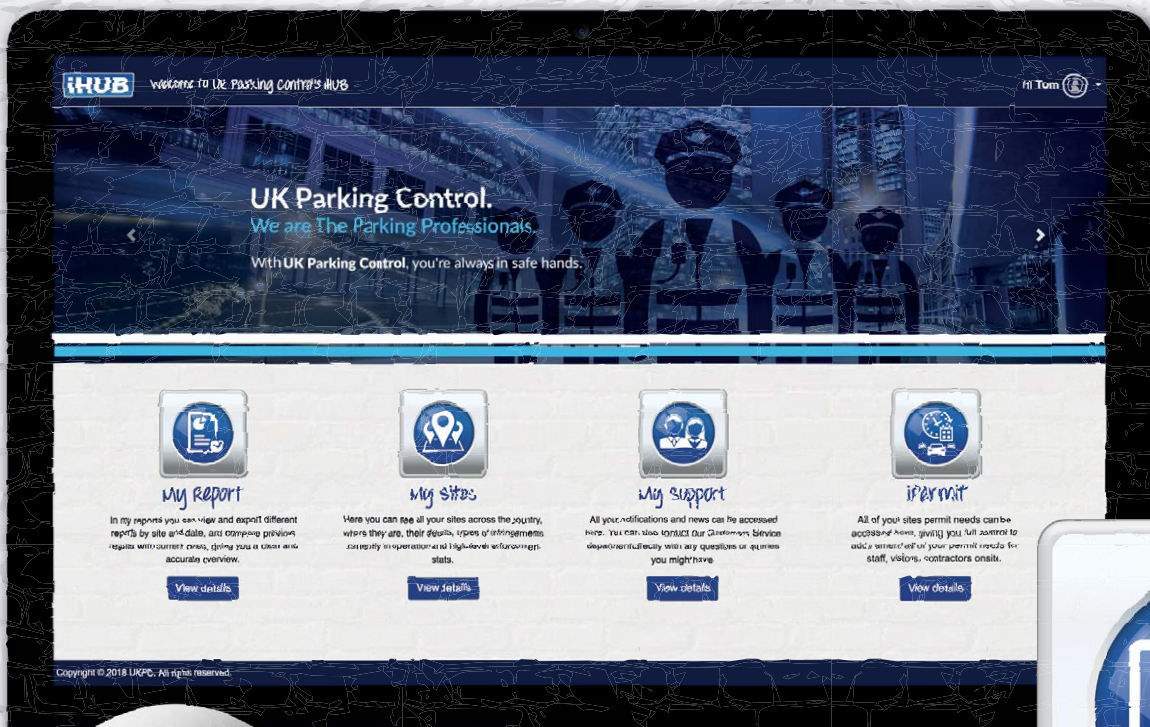
REEL TO OPEN AT THE RIDINGS

NewRiver has exchanged contracts with Reel Cinemas, the community cinema operator, to open a five-screen cinema at the Ridings shopping centre in Wakefield, West Yorkshire. The new cinema is scheduled to open in May 2019, occupying a space created by the innovative conversion of three former retail units, with minimal structural alterations, which has been let on a 15-year lease.

Reel Cinemas was established in 2001 and is now one of the largest independent cinema operators in the UK, with 13 venues across the country and plans to develop at least 10 more over the next five years. Its cinemas are in community locations and showcase the latest releases, with its competitive prices being a key differentiator in the market.

Adding to the leisure offer NewRiver has brought its pub operating expertise to The Ridings with the opening of the Keg & Kitchen, a food-led community pub located in the centre's 240-cover food court, operated by NewRiver's Hawthorn Leisure division.





With iHub[®] Car Park Management reporting in 2019 is smarter, more intelligent and always up to date.

iHub[®] will offer UKPC clients' total flexibility to view and produce reports in real time, any time from either a computer or device.

iHub[®] will be your unique portal which will provide the ultimate in bespoke car park management reporting. Key information on car park statistics and trends for your sites, coupled with local traffic data flow and on site weather conditions are just a few of the many new features that will be available to you, alongside the existing available reports.

iHub[®] is available to existing and new clients. Get in touch with UK Parking Control to find out how iHub[®] can help your business to run more efficiently.

iHub[®] benefits include



Reports

iPermit



Locations

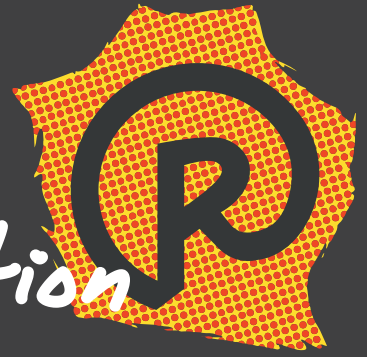
Contacts

For more information on iHub[®] call 0333 220 1060 or email sales@ukparkingcontrol.com



The Parking Professionals

destination



Book Now

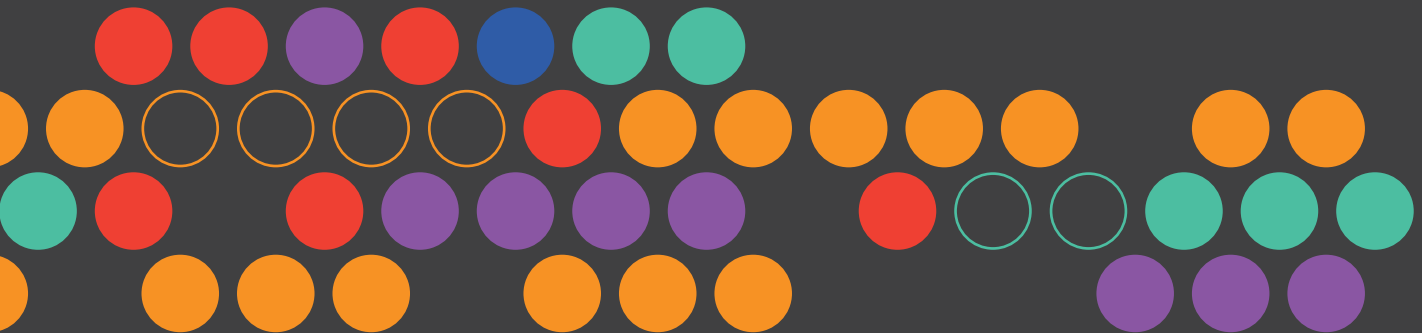
All inclusive packages available

SAVE THE DATE:

3 - 4 APRIL 2019 | HILTON METROPOLE BIRMINGHAM

RETAIL DESTINATION (formerly *Shopping Centre magazine*), and Revo, in partnership, are delighted to deliver their annual UK and Ireland conference - the must attend event for anyone involved in the management and operation of retail property and wider retail places.

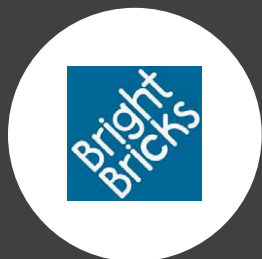
For more information please contact **Trudy Whiston**, Sales Manager
Email: trudy.whiston@jld-media.co.uk | Telephone: **01293 416 090**



RETAIL DESTINATION

Revo
Retail. Property. Community.

Sponsors & Exhibitors





Britain's outlet malls are bucking the trend with footfall and sales up at a time when other retail destinations are under pressure

Outlet operators across the UK are reporting strong footfall and sales in the Christmas period, in stark contrast to subdued performance in full-price malls.

Realm reported footfall up 6.5% and sales up 4.5% in the six weeks to Christmas across four of the regional outlets it manages – Livingston Designer Outlet, Resorts World Birmingham, Dalton Park in County Durham and London Designer Outlet in Wembley.

Realm commercial operations director Angus Fyfe said: “This December in particular our schemes have benefited from the impact of new lettings in some key categories and a greater sense of dependability that an outlet can comfortably service the needs of Christmas shopping. While price is always going to be an inherent part of our appeal, we have seen larger volumes of footfall drawn to our more relaxed destinations at what is becoming an ever more stressful time of year.”

At the same time Springfields Outlet in Lincolnshire reported sales up by 15% and footfall up 9% year-on-year across the Christmas period. The outlet mall, owned by UBS's Triton Property Fund and managed by SLR, has now seen 14 years of consecutive revenue growth.

The trading boost follows the scheme's re-brand last year and the opening of a new £1.2m integrated leisure offer. Research by Pragma shows that the inclusion of leisure is increasingly important in driving footfall to a scheme. The new offer at Springfields has benefited retailers, attracting interest

from more aspirational brands, enabling the destination to improve the tenant mix. The latest signings at the centre including Jack Wills, Joules, White Stuff and The Cosmetics Company Store.

SLR director Ian Sanderson said: “The strong performance of Springfields illustrates the continued resilience of the outlet sector and the increasing importance of a mixed-use offer in creating a destination.”

And Northern Ireland's only outlet centre, The Boulevard at Banbridge, has recorded record footfall and turnover for 2018. The mall, owned by Tristan Capital and Lotus Group, enjoyed 12% growth in footfall and a 16% increase in turnover driven in part by a 14% increase in cross-border visitors from the Republic.

The uplift comes after a successful relaunch in 2018, following a £7m refurb and extension. These improvements attracted new store openings from Adidas, Jack Wills, Asics, Skechers, Ninja Boxx, Guess, and Kurt Geiger.

Lotus Property managing director Alastair Coulson said: “The current economic climate and the unknown entity that is Brexit has weighed heavy on the retail industry in the past 12 months bringing with it a dark cloud. At Lotus we have strived to stay positive and continued to push forward with our development and redevelopment plan. We are always focused on enhancing the shopper experience, really understanding what they want and have undertaken extensive customer research to ensure we can roll this out to create the perfect environment to maximise growth.”



Discover true love with RetailReport

Shopping Centre Management Software
and Retail Data Analytics

**Retail
Report**

Book your demo today:
retailreport.com/demo



LANDLORDS EMBRACE THE FOOD HALL PHENOMENON

The rise and rise of the food hall shows no signs of slowing, but when will the market reach saturation?

In December it was announced that Time Out Market, a food and cultural market concept from Time Out, the global guide to the best food, drink and cultural experiences, will be coming to London's South Bank. Plans for the scheme follow the success of the first Time Out Market which opened in 2014 in Lisbon and has since become one of the Portuguese capital's most popular spots, attracting 3.7 million visitors in 2017.

Developer LCR, advised by Cushman & Wakefield and Union Street Partners, has secured a 32,500-sq ft pre-let for the food hall to anchor its £200m Waterloo London development, which will transform the railway arches in Waterloo into an eclectic food, drink and shopping destination.

Time Out Market London aims to bring the best of the city together under one roof, hosting the capital's best food, drink and cultural experiences, based on the editorial curation Time Out has long been known for. With an expected opening in 2021, the food hall will occupy two floors, host 17 of the city's most acclaimed chefs and restaurateurs and accommodate around 500 seats.

Time Out Group CEO Julio Bruno felt that it was only right that the Time Out Market should be coming back to the home town of the company: "London was the birthplace of Time Out in 1968 so it is a true milestone to bring Time Out Market to our city and in such a fantastic location. For 50 years we have helped

people go out better in the greatest cities around the world and now we are bringing the best of the city to Time Out Market London.

"As Time Out has transformed into a global media and entertainment business one thing hasn't changed: our high-quality professional content about the best things to do in the city remains at the heart of everything we do. This allows us to successfully diversify our iconic brand across digital and physical channels with Time Out Market playing an important role in driving further growth."

THE FOOD HALL

Traditional food markets are nothing new, having existed across the European mainland for centuries, with a reputation for providing high-quality foodstuffs at reasonable prices. In recent years, people have become more interested in all aspects of food: where it comes from, how it is produced, and how it is prepared, which has resulted in the diversification and modernisation of the traditional food market into the food hall it is today.

The concept of a food hall is, at its essence, a place which offers a diverse selection of freshly-prepared, authentic food and drink which is to be enjoyed communally. Food vendors are almost exclusively small, independent traders which offer their product for a reasonable price in comparison to the restaurant sector, with a focus on a first class quality of food and drink.

The food hall concept is designed to appeal to all

ages, with food options for everyone, and the demand for new generation food halls is massive, with 200 venues in the pipeline for delivery within the next decade, according to Cushman & Wakefield's (C&W) Food Halls of Europe report.

Location-wise, food halls are best placed in city centres where the footfall numbers and transport links are high, but this is not a necessity as the popularity of Time Out Lisbon has shown. The majority of new generation food halls are being housed in already-existing structures, but the C&W report says that purpose-built properties are likely to become more popular, and large-scale urban regeneration projects are best-poised to roll out the exciting concept.

In terms of operator numbers, the ideal is 15 or more, but in the correct location, a venue with fewer than ten can be viable if the food offering is strong, as the key with food markets is the quality of the food. But this is just half the battle, as to continually generate interest, vendors will have to come up with new and unique flavours and textures to meet consumer demand for innovation.

The food hall trend is still a relatively new concept, but so far it has proven strong and these popular, locations are testament to the consumer interest in good quality food and drink in a communal, non-traditional, pick-and-choose setting. For now, it seems less of a point of 'will they survive', and more a matter of watching how vendors adapt to consumer trends and continue to thrive.



Main. Market Hall
Victoria, London

Dominic Bouvet, head of EMEA cross border leisure and retail services for Cushman & Wakefield, discusses food halls.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE MAIN REASONS THERE IS SUCH A BIG INTEREST FROM THE PUBLIC IN FOOD HALLS?

It's a combination of the 'guest' wanting to explore different food types, having a genuine interest in independent food operators rather than main-stream brands, and food halls provide an exciting environment to eat, drink and socialise.

HOW ARE FOOD OPERATORS TREATING THE ROTATIONAL MODEL OF THE FOOD HALL?

The market norm is for the food hall operator to invest in the fitout of the kitchens which ultimately minimises the risk for the incoming restaurateur and allows them to focus on what they are best at which is cooking delicious food. It's a great platform for occupiers to showcase their product without huge expenditure. If a restaurateur only has presence in Leeds and is nervous about investing in other cities across the UK then opting to partner with a food hall gives them great exposure to target a different guest, acts as a great marketing tool and most importantly develops goodwill in a new region.

WHAT LOCATIONS WORK BEST FOR FOOD HALLS – URBAN SETTINGS, DESTINATION CENTRES, OUT OF TOWN?

City centre locations, ideally with close proximity to transport hubs. The successful food halls offer good quality and quick food service which works for any occasion - whether that's going for a 20-minute coffee and sandwich, to going on a date, or going out for a work Christmas Party. It's an all-occasion concept which attracts a wide-ranging demographic.

We are yet to see food halls venture outside of city centres in the UK, but who's to say that as regional shopping centres and retail parks evolve we won't see food hall operators trialling new territory and adapting their model. My view is that this will only happen if landlords are willing to offer risk free commercial deals but share any upside.

ARE THERE PLACES IN THE UK THAT THE CONCEPT WOULD STRUGGLE?

As long as the commercial deal works for both parties and there is a big enough catchment then there is likely to be interest from independent restaurateurs to take space; it is down to the food

hall operator to distinguish the price point, food offer and 'look & feel'. It's not guaranteed in every location because you have to ask, "will this place be busy breakfast, lunch and dinner seven days a week?". In some locations, particularly outside of London, the answer will be no – there might be a lot of traffic Thursday through Sunday, but Monday to Wednesday are likely to be quieter.

WHAT KIND OF SPACE WOULD A SHOPPING CENTRE/RETAIL DESTINATION NEED TO CATER TO A FOOD HALL?

In terms of size, you're looking at between 10,000 and 40,000 sq ft to accommodate a food hall. This is what we have seen in the transactions that have taken place over the last 18 months in the UK. The optimum size in my opinion is between 15,000-25,000 sq ft.

Architecture, heritage and authenticity are the key drivers behind delivering a successful food hall. There are examples coming on-line of new builds, but the guest is more likely to revisit a location frequently if there is a story behind the building.

WHAT CAN THE UK LEARN FROM THE FOOD HALLS OF EUROPE?

Above all, the quality of the food & beverage is so important and this is evident in the most successful food halls across continental Europe (See Cushman & Wakefield's Food Halls of Europe report). The atmosphere stems from the good food and ensuring the price point reflects the demographic of the guest. If you go to Time Out Lisbon or Mercado de San Miguel in Madrid the quality of the food is fantastic which is appreciated by locals and tourists alike.



WHAT MAKES A PERFECT CHRISTMAS?

The industry's expert
elves give their thoughts
on creating the ultimate
festive experience





G-STAR RAW

It goes without saying that Christmas is the busiest time of the year for retail. The gift-giving occasion makes even the most casual of shoppers a temporary shopping fanatic as they scabble and search to buy things for loved ones. The pressure of the holiday is a recipe for disaster, but played right, retail destination can turn this potential nightmare into an exciting winter wonderland.

Christmas is not something that happens on its own, and there are three distinctive parts to the planning process for malls: design, shopper engagement, and marketing. It has to look good, it has to be exciting, and people have to know what is going on. Now the decorations are coming down, it's a chance to reflect on Christmas 2018 and look ahead to Christmas 2019 and what will make it a success.

DESIGN

There is no blueprint when it comes to decorating, as every shopping centre is unique, and design should fit in with the scheme's brand. From lavish lighting to tricked-out trees and everything in between, it is no holds barred when it comes to decking the malls.

WHAT DECORATION DESIGNS MADE THE BIGGEST IMPACT IN CHRISTMAS 2018?

Matt Slade: "Wembley Park played host to a series of unique art installations, bringing light and life to the area's squares and boulevards, including The Light Maze, an immersive lights-meet-glass labyrinth, consisting of semi-transparent panels which reflected light rays in a rainbow colour spectrum. The free, interactive installation allowed visitors to move freely within the space while being hypnotised by its ever-changing neon colours."



Alex Walters: "Bold, bright and colourful are key to creating a successful display. Utilising a variety of different materials and textures adds daytime appeal which is something lights alone fail to offer. Bright shopping centres and the winter sun often wash out Christmas lights in the daytime so having colour and sparkle helps address this."

Wendy Clarkson: "Some centres still prefer to judge their display on how it evokes Christmas, how it fits with the centre and the response it receives from shoppers. This year we designed a number of sympathetic themed displays for the Ridings in Wakefield, Huddersfield's Kingsgate and Leeds Corn Exchange; all designed specifically for the client, clientele and architecture."

"Traditional schemes with a contemporary edge remain the most popular choice during the tender process. Clients want their display to look modern and on-trend but don't want something too radical, it still needs to reflect Christmas and feature elements traditionally associated with the festive period."

Chloe Keith: "Interactive features have been extremely popular such as our giant polar bear at Kronen in Copenhagen, our giant chair at Castle Mall, Norwich, the talking letterbox at St George's, Harrow and our musical charity present box at Culver Square, Colchester. Big decorations with the wow factor definitely appeared more than ever this year across the country in all types of centre."

John Riordan: "We decorated one major regional centre with a 'Fashionably Festive' theme using brilliantly coloured and illuminated giant handbags, shoes and perfume bottles, thereby creating an exciting and interesting point of difference for the destination involved."

Roger Binks: "At intu Lakeside, London-based creative agency James Glancy Design created a jewel-inspired concept that reflected the centre and its customers at their best. Cutting-edge LED technology and six spectacular diamonds featured as the centrepiece of the Christmas scheme. Each diamond was covered in over 5,000 individually controllable super bright LED's, each capable of showing 16 million different colours."

WHAT DESIGN THEMES AND CONCEPTS WILL CENTRES BE LOOKING AT FOR CHRISTMAS 2019?

Thomas Mark: "Experiences in the retail real estate sector are growing up. They're becoming richer, multi-layered, multi-textual, and increasingly, they're being integrated into carefully thought-out campaigns that span multiple seasons. That's why, this year, we're presenting extraordinary concepts, along with extraordinary advice to help visitors maximize the experiences they create all year round."

John Riordan: "The approach is no longer about that much overused term, "the wow factor", but more about trying to make people happy, make the customers smile, let the visitors have fun and be entertained. To this purpose we see a shift

THE CHRISTMAS EXPERTS
Roger Binks, customer experience director, intu
Wendy Clarkson, managing director, Fizzco Projects
Chloe Keith, group account director, Toolbox Group
Thomas Mark, president, MK Illumination
Ellie Pimbley, account manager, Toolbox
John Riordan, managing director, MK Illumination Ireland
Jeremy Rucker, managing director, City Dressing
Matt Slade, retail director, Quintain
Alex Walters, creative director, Christmas Creations
Matthew Wise, managing director, Great Grottos



Exhibitions International

Contemporary and traditional decorations. Including unique light features with in-house custom designs and manufacturing.

We also have a selection of festive Christmas grottos and seasonal animated scenes.

All available to purchase or lease hire.

Additional services include installation, removal and storage.

01902 450 040

**sales@
exhibitions
international.co.uk**

**www.
exhibitions
international.co.uk**



Accredited Contractor
CHAS.co.uk





de

Corporate and Commercial

✉ sales@decx.co.uk ☎ 017



DECX

Specialist Decoration Specialists

01273 835552  www.decx.co.uk





in direction toward large festive features that attract attention and interest. We also see a change toward more fantasy, more drama, and away from generic festive lighting.”

Wendy Clarkson: “Keeping Christmas fresh, fun and family orientated seems to be the early concentration of concepts and ideas. Every year [Fizzco Projects] visit ChristmasWorld in Frankfurt and other exhibitions outside the Christmas industry to gain fresh ideas for concepts, materials, lighting systems and IT developments and build these into our designs for the forthcoming year. In our business it’s important to step away from the industry now and again to gain fresh inspiration. Like many designers, some of our best design ideas come when we switch off and don’t think about Christmas.”

Alex Walters: “Continuing the trend for interactive displays we will see more large decoration pieces, selfie displays and animated displays. Simple elegant designs are strong with gold and silver decorations combined with warm and ice white lights used together for a contrast. The design is timeless and works well with both traditional and modern centres.

Matthew Wise: “We focus on the narrative of the grotto experience. Specifically how pre- and post-Santa activities build on the story of a traditional visit. We will also be further developing our most popular event, ‘Magical Mini Christmas Trees’, where children plant a magic bean, which Santa transforms into a real mini Christmas Tree during their visit which take home. After visiting Santa, they may decorate their tree with miniature decorations.”



WHAT KIND OF INFORMATION IS MOST USEFUL FOR A SHOPPING CENTRE TO PROVIDE WHEN IT COMES TO PLANNING AND EXECUTION?

Matthew Wise: “In the grotto experience industry it is often underappreciated how time incurred by the design results in lost footfall. For example, a 10-second delay in entering and exiting Santa’s chamber will often result in a lost day of capacity over the operating period. Centres should challenge their management companies to improve their grotto floor plan designs.”

Wendy Clarkson: “Mood boards are extremely useful. Images speak a thousand words and can be of anything and everything. If clients are able to provide us with a clear brief and insight into what they are looking for, then we’re confident that we can make it become a reality. Detailed infrastructure information is also valuable; ie where the power is and when it’s on. Cordless electricity might be a development of the future but for now we need switched-on sockets.”

Chloe Keith: “The brand story explaining the positioning of the centre, target customer and overall business objectives are key. Christmas decorations need to help tell the centre’s story and appeal to the target audience. The more personal and relevant you make it to your customer and how they use your centre, the more effective the overall Christmas experience will be.”

HOW CAN YOU FACTOR IN SUSTAINABILITY WHEN IT COMES TO LIGHTS AND DECORATIONS?

Alex Walters: “LED has drastically cut energy consumption. The problem, now, lies with plastics and reducing greenhouse gases along the entire stage of the process from production to customer. Considering most products in the Christmas industry are produced in the Far East, we have taken steps to reduce our carbon footprint. We have reduced our reliance on overseas imports as the uncertainty of Brexit also looms and drives up the cost of imports. To extend the life of decorations, displays are refurbished and remanufactured into new schemes where possible allowing us to pass on the savings to the customer.”

Chloe Keith: “A general trend for the coming year is for shopping centres to really become serious about, and responsible for sustainability. In Christmas experiences we manage, we try to use energy saving bulbs when possible and include as much sustainable product as we can. Recycling after Christmas is also important. For example we featured real Christmas trees in our Christmas Tree Trail at West Orchards shopping centre, Coventry and ran a Facebook competition for shoppers to win the trees to plant in their gardens afterwards.”

SHOPPER ENGAGEMENT

Christmas comes with built-in footfall, which makes it a perfect time to up the ante when it comes to commercialisation and events which make the Christmas shopping trip extra special. From innovative technology, to big switch-ons, to seasonal pop-ups and the traditional grotto, there are any number of ways to capture the spirit of the season and entertain shoppers with unforgettable experiences.

WHAT USES OF TECHNOLOGY IN MALLS MADE THIS CHRISTMAS EXTRA SPECIAL?

Matt Slade: “Bright, immersive lights or sound installations that visitors can interact with, strategically positioned around the area to provide a unifying visual narrative that links the public realm and its key venues. Also music soundscapes, live streamed from varied audio sources at various focal points throughout the estate. At Wembley Park, music was played from pedestrian underpasses, lampposts, street columns, and within the art installations.”

Roger Binks: “Technology using VR and AR can often enhance this experience as we saw this year from Immotion VR, the UK-based immersive VR entertainment business, which featured racing car simulators, a space-inspired battle game and an underwater adventure – a popular choice for many of our customers this Christmas.”



ADAPTABLE BESPOKE DESIGNS



No matter how big or small,
Fizzco Projects caters for all!

- Proven track record
- From design to installation
- No restrictions on budget or size
- Bespoke, unique decor
- Create your perfect display



**100% UK owned
& financed**



WENDY CLARKSON
wendy@fizzco.co.uk



RUSSELL BROWN
russell@fizzco.co.uk

Alex Walters: “Displays that include a selfie spot or some form of interaction are important to increase dwell time and provide free marketing via social media shares. This year we saw great success with our giant photo frames, which allow customers to stand behind a giant illuminated gold frame and have a photo. This saw one centre creating a competition to share your photo in the frame for a chance of winning a prize.”

Chloe Keith: “Technologies that improve the experience throughout the customer journey are key. At the moment this has been largely limited to shoppers using retailer and shopping centre apps for inspiration with gift ideas and lists, sourcing product and reserving it for click & collect plus mobile payment. The ability to book car parking spaces, order food, book tables and book other shopping or leisure services through technology have also improved the experience.”

WHAT WERE THE MOST SUCCESSFUL AND INNOVATIVE USES OF COMMERCIALISATION AND POP-UP RETAIL THIS CHRISTMAS?

Roger Binks: “intu welcomed many brands during the festive period, including Nintendo which promoted its new Nintendo Switch, hand-crafted chocolate and soap businesses, Amazing Chocolate Workshop and Amazing Soap Workshop, as well as family-run business Pollyfield’s which sold festive treats from wreaths to clementines – the perfect gifts for customers to take home.

Matthew Wise: “A number of high profile grottos activated inside vacant retail units during 2018 for the first time. Unusually, these saw an uplift in footfall. The common factors where that each unit was used to create a relaxed and an interactive environment, while in-centre directional signage was impressive.

Chloe Keith: “Those who sell an experience, not a product have been the most successful. For example, for the second year running our Enchanted Forest Grotto at Weston Favell was an outstanding success. The amazing grotto experience of sound and smell featured 120 real Norway Spruce fir trees grown especially for the centre. This delivered a 2% increase in visits to the grotto this year compared to last, and it was fully sold out on the last three days before Christmas. Ice rinks, carousels and other activities have been very popular.

“Both in-mall stalls, pop-ups and Christmas markets are becoming more and more popular with shoppers looking for unique and different products and personalised items. Charities are increasingly getting visibility through pop-up shops, in particular charity Christmas card shops or shipping containers in town centres.”

WHAT EVENTS AND ACTIVITY MADE THE BIGGEST IMPACT THIS YEAR AND WHY?

Jeremy Rucker: “Christmas at City Dressing is all about engagement, creating experiences that people want to share and that drive footfall. Looking at the figures for the Santa’s post offices and elf workshops this year - we had 12 around the country - then 10% of the visitors were teenagers. We thought at first that the teenagers were just part of larger family groups but it transpired that it was groups of 13- and 14- year-olds who were desperate for something interesting to do

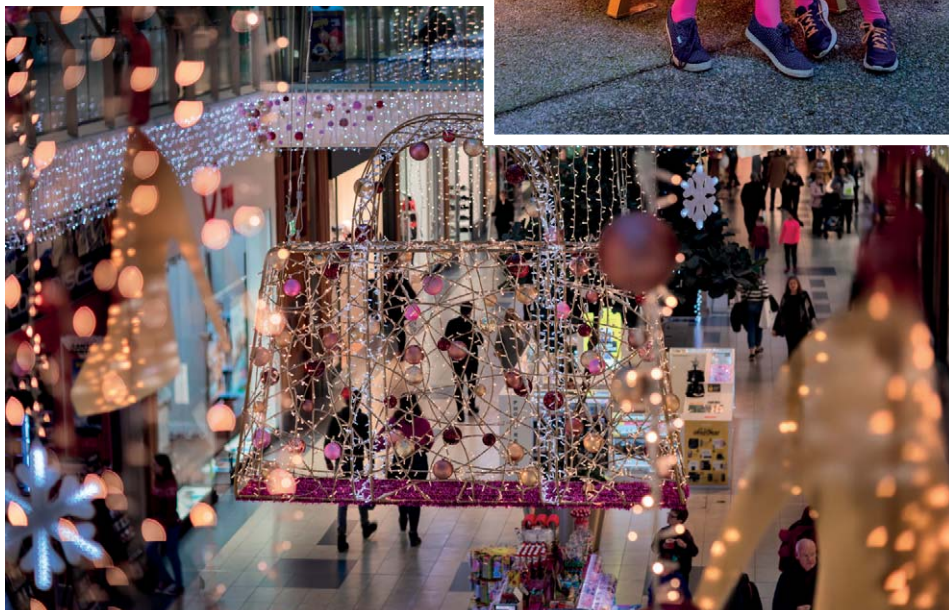
“Even though 90% of visitors are still families and they absolutely love the opportunity to write Santa a letter and make Nan a gingerbread man it is important to cater for everyone and realise that we can make our experiences more inclusive and fun. The important differential is all our experiences are free. In Darlington we built two full-size replica train carriages which housed a Santa’s post office and an elf workshop. This attracted all ages as an additional activity while going to the cinema or eating out, most importantly of all everyone left with something Christmassy.”

Matthew Wise: “Quiet and Autism-focused grotto sessions were extremely popular among attending families in 2018. Appreciative feedback from families was overwhelming. Schemes delivered both on social responsibility while improved footfall during traditionally quieter periods. Such sessions highlight the power of focussing on the personal needs of families.”

Alex Walters: “There has been a decline in centres offering a Santa’s grotto due to the reduced floorspace given over to RMUs, but this is a missed opportunity. An article published in the Telegraph said how people are booking santas grottos in advance, with many people unable to get to a ticket, it seems that demand outstrips supply. With many centres having empty retail units one option is to offer the grotto within these spaces.”

Thomas Mark: “People expect more than ever before from cities, shopping centres, and visitor attractions. They want experiences that are richer, personalised, multi-layered, multi-textual, and that strike a balance between analogue and digital. They don’t want to know that they’re being sold ‘an experience’ – they simply want to live it. That’s why we’re focusing on helping clients integrate light into carefully thought-out campaigns that fill spaces with atmosphere and feeling, and that span multiple seasons.”

Matt Slade: “Immersive art installations which visitors could play and interact with. Audiences want to feel part of the experience, rather than being passive spectators. Delivering ‘playable’ installations which both made the area look festive and also allowed visitors to be a part



ALL YEAR ROUND, NOT JUST FOR *Christmas*



If you are a shopping centre manager you hopefully should have heard of the name Blachere Illumination. The parent company is one of the world's largest illumination companies operating in multiple territories across Europe and the USA.

The UK division was established in 2001 and has developed into the largest supplier of Christmas lighting in the UK.

Blachere UK has earned a nationwide reputation as the market leader in commercial Christmas lighting and theming. Using innovative design and the latest LED technology to increase footfall and dwell time. Blachere uses the latest innovative technology and design to best encourage increased footfall and dwell time in your centre at all times.



The Tunnel of Light became a national talking point, it consistently features in social media, press and TV, as one of the top places to visit during the festive period. This level of interest resulted in over 1 million BBC Facebook views and a marketing/PR campaign that reached over 10 million people in 2017.

Inspired by the Aurora Borealis, visitors walk through the thousands of twinkling lights and enjoy a spectacular sensory and immersive experience.

“So why is it that so few of you have heard of us? Could it be that Blachere is the best kept secret for shopping centre managers?”

DID YOU KNOW?

Blachere has continued to innovate and has designed the largest interactive Christmas Tree in the UK.

The centrepiece of the Bournemouth attraction is the “Wonderland Tree”, as high as the Angel of the North, this 20-metre LED spectacle comprises 30,000 individual lights programmed for regular sound and light shows.

Blachere would be delighted to bring this scale and technology to your shopping centre in 2019.

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2016 Blachere delivered its ground-breaking “Tunnel of Light” in Norwich. The first and the longest of its type in Europe. It was made up of over 57,000 RGB LED Lights individually sequenced to illuminate the whole tunnel which in turn is 45m long.

DID YOU KNOW?

Blachere has a full theming division which can cater for everything from a single item unavailable ‘off the shelf’ right through to a complete visitor attraction for a theme park or decorating themed display in a shopping centre.

Over many years we have worked our magic on hundreds of sites. Our team comprises a world-class permanent skills structure of artists, designers, sculptors, engineers, project managers, programmers and specialist partners. Why not consider a bespoke themed design that will enable your shopping centre to stand out? Remember ...it's not necessarily just at Christmas.

DID YOU KNOW?

Blachere has numerous opportunities for shopping centre managers to innovate all year round with other seasonal displays. These include Chinese New Year, Valentine's Day, Easter and Halloween.

Why not call us now, for a ‘no obligation’ health check with one of our project managers? Let's see how we can improve footfall, dwell time and make all your creative dreams come true.

www.blachere-illumination.co.uk

Contact: 01337 832910 • @blachereUK • blachereuk

of the installations, worked really well for us, driving enormous amounts of user-generated content across social media, which in turn became positive word-of-mouth, footfall and incremental spend.”

Ellie Pimbley: “The larger more high-profile, big-budget experiences such as Westfield’s Nutcracker and the Four Realms were popular and had massive impact, but equally we saw a lot of success with smaller, simple campaigns such as a free Selfie with Santa promotion we ran for Castle Mall shopping centre in Norwich. Also, for Castle Mall and the Brookfield centre in Cheshunt, the digital advent calendars proved extremely popular.”

Roger Binks: “We worked with mental health foundation Blurt to provide customers and staff with support and guidance for self-care during our student nights and Christmas. More than a million shoppers pass through our doors every day so we were well placed to reach out to a high volume of people with some supportive advice.”

MARKETING CHRISTMAS

Of course, everyone knows that the retail industry will be going all out for Christmas, but keeping the marketing communication up is more important than ever over the festive period so people know about every little thing that goes on and plan their trips accordingly to make sure it goes off without a hitch.

WHAT ARE THE MOST EFFECTIVE MARKETING STRATEGIES FOR CENTRES AT CHRISTMAS?

Matthew Wise: “Families plan their day. The ability to do so is important to them. Messages highlighting means by which to do so help their plans show appreciation of their challenges.”

Chloe Keith: “All centres need to provide a reason to visit rather than shop online but what that is really depends on the type of centre and target audience. For larger centres this can be major attractions and experiences, for local centres it can be the smaller, simple, traditional free experiences. For all centres the key is to ensure you maximise potential from the experience in the customer journey. It’s a highly competitive time so being there in front of your customers, and engaging them on- and off-line needs investment and good planning.”

Roger Binks: “It’s important for our centres to provide the perfect environment for customers to shape their own perfect Christmas experiences and this is how we make sure our retailers continue to thrive and attract shoppers. This, coupled with the fact that our centres are home to some of the most popular retail



brands means that everything customers need to make their Christmas dreams a reality can be found at intu - even those Christmas gift lists from loved ones that seem impossible to fulfil. This was the basis of our 2018 Christmas marketing campaign strategy ‘the impossible gift’ which reached over 40% of the UK population through our advertising and social media activity.”

Wendy Clarkson: “More and more clients are involving their marketing professionals in the tender process. As a result, discussions are typically centred, not only on how the final decoration display looks, but how it can be used as part of a wider campaign to reinforce their brand identity and increase customer engagement.

“We’re seeing increased demand for one-off eye-catching focal pieces that deliver a real wow factor, which can be used as an impactful visual device for marketing campaigns and which encourage social media activity by compelling shoppers to photograph and upload to their personal social media feeds. This year we created a bespoke colour-changing, 25m comet and tail structure at intu Watford, and the response on social media was overwhelming.”

Matt Slade: “Think outside the box. Curating programmes or installations that push the boundaries of what you would expect from a traditional Christmas experience. Be bold. Challenge the norm and experiment with unconventional ideas. Be the glue that aggregates the various aspects of an area’s offering, from shopping to F&B and events. Think about the whole customer journey, not just one aspect of their visit, and promote this as part of an all-round experience through itineraries, guides, maps, across the full spectrum of the marketing mix. Don’t ignore micro-influencers, community radio stations, local community groups, as they will be able to help you reach more niche audiences without spending a fortune. Invest in playable installations and participatory events. Find ways to imbue your enlivenment programmes with strategies aimed at maximising inclusion.”



0203 411 1991
www.christmas-creations.com
info@christmas-creations.com



Find us at Destination R



DESIGN | PRODUCTION | INSTALLATION | REFURBISHMENT | STORAGE



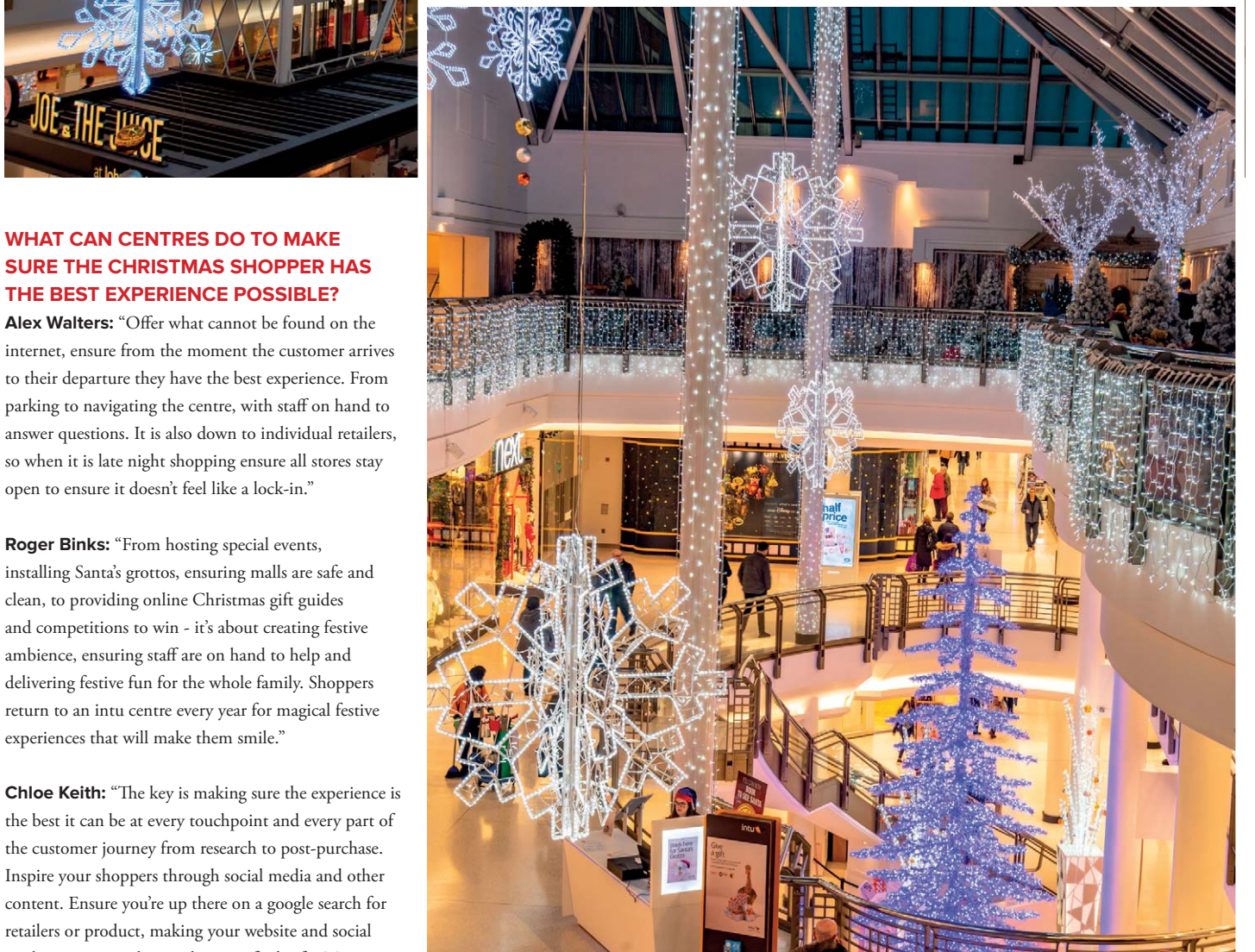
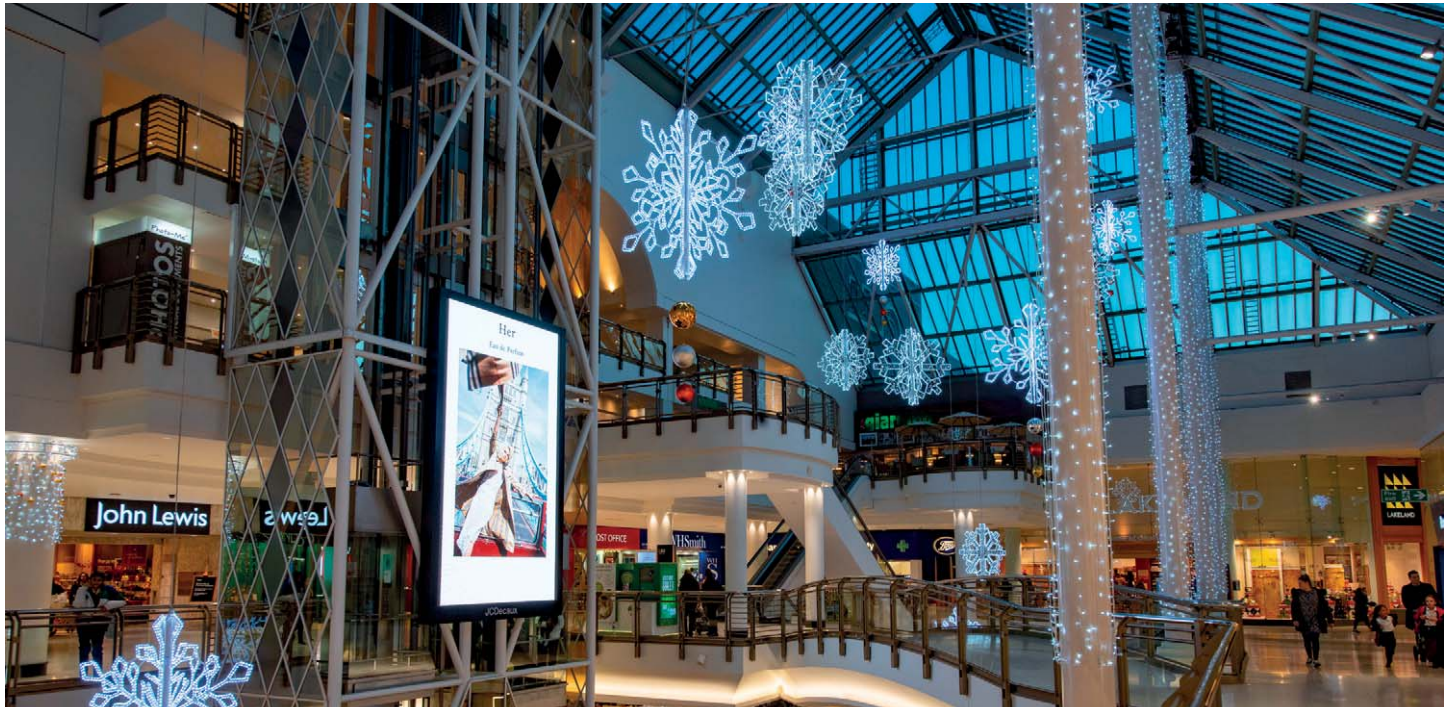
CHRISTMAS
Creations

 /xmascreations

 /christmascreations

 /xmascreations

 /christmascreate



WHAT CAN CENTRES DO TO MAKE SURE THE CHRISTMAS SHOPPER HAS THE BEST EXPERIENCE POSSIBLE?

Alex Walters: “Offer what cannot be found on the internet, ensure from the moment the customer arrives to their departure they have the best experience. From parking to navigating the centre, with staff on hand to answer questions. It is also down to individual retailers, so when it is late night shopping ensure all stores stay open to ensure it doesn't feel like a lock-in.”

Roger Binks: “From hosting special events, installing Santa's grottos, ensuring malls are safe and clean, to providing online Christmas gift guides and competitions to win - it's about creating festive ambience, ensuring staff are on hand to help and delivering festive fun for the whole family. Shoppers return to an intu centre every year for magical festive experiences that will make them smile.”

Chloe Keith: “The key is making sure the experience is the best it can be at every touchpoint and every part of the customer journey from research to post-purchase. Inspire your shoppers through social media and other content. Ensure you're up there on a google search for retailers or product, making your website and social media pages appealing and easy to find info. Maximise

THE NEW STREET

ENGAGE - ENTERTAIN - EXPERIENCE



NEW USES FOR STREETS
COMMUNITY GAMES
AND CATENARY SCULPTURES

NEW USES FOR RETAIL
HISTORY GRAPHICS, WHITE BOX
SOLUTIONS FOR POP UP RETAIL AND
POP UP GAMES CENTRES

NEW USES FOR PUBLIC SPACE
THEMED POP UP PARKS TO ENCOURAGE
DWELL TIME AND SOCIALISING





the positives and potential from your transport links, access and parking. Provide good general customer service, added services such as bag drop and delivery, gift wrapping, concierge, personal shopping and don't forget the basic aspects like ambience, cleanliness and safety. And ensure you answer customer queries and feedback and share the positive stories.

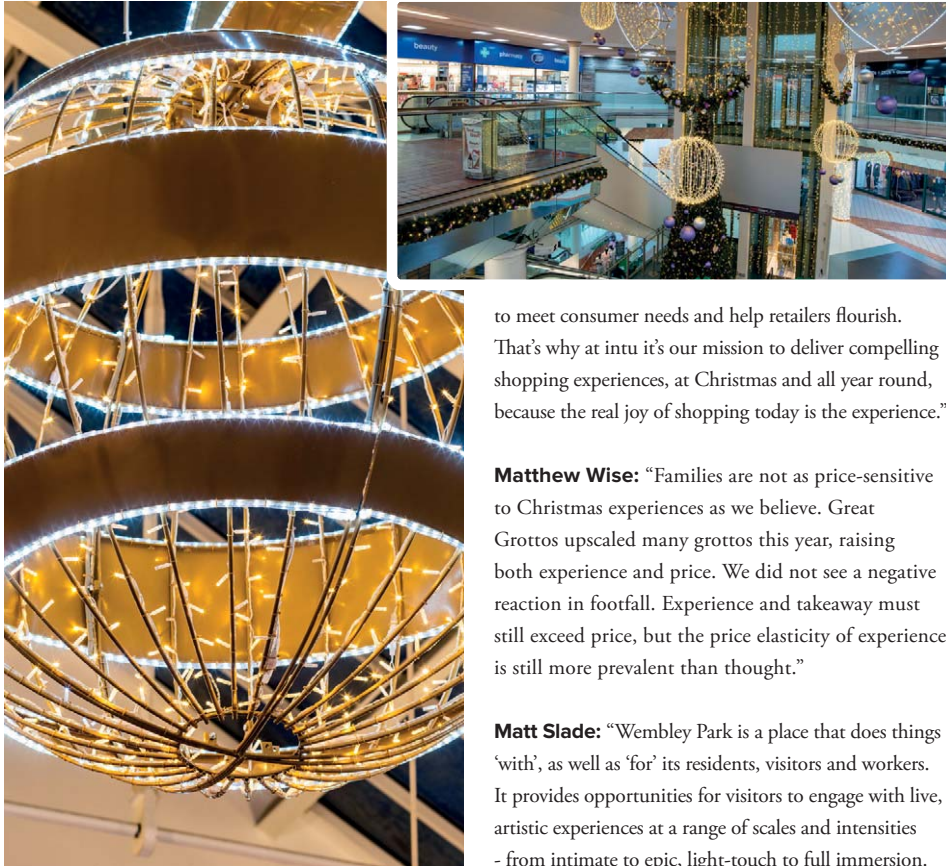
HOW CAN CENTRES MAXIMISE ON MULTICHANNEL AROUND CHRISTMAS TIME?

Chloe Keith: "The different channels need to work together. A shopper can buy online but collect or return in store. They've still made a trip to your centre where there's a 25% chance they've made another purchase in the same store, and even more likely they've spent in another store. On the converse, the shopper might research in store to go and buy online. Either way the retailer is happy they've got the sale. The best a centre can do is to give a reason to visit the physical store."

Roger Binks: "As the only UK shopping centre landlord to have a multichannel shopping platform through our affiliate website, intu can provide even more compelling shopping experiences to our customers as they search for their perfect gifts. The platform's latest functionality uses AI-powered visual search to enable shoppers to pick an item and then instantly be shown similar products from across all our retailers; this in turn drives footfall to their stores where they can see, touch and try on products."

WHAT KNOWLEDGE CAN WE TAKE FROM CHRISTMAS 2018 MOVING FORWARD TO MAKE CHRISTMAS 2019 AN EVEN BIGGER SUCCESS?

Roger Binks: "There's no other time of year that really highlights the importance of having an inspiring mix of places to shop, eat and play all together in a one-stop day-out destination, but in truth, that is the only way for traditional shopping centres to evolve to continue



It uses culture to compete locally and globally. It is well established as a destination for large-scale, mass-participation events. We want to complement this reputation with curated programmes of culturally-aware enlightenment – all year round, not just for Christmas.”

Chloe Keith: “People are spending more on experiences than ever before and it’s becoming more and more of an opportunity for the bigger centres to go big on paid-for attractions that draw shoppers in. On the contrast, for some centres their target customers are influenced most by simple, free, traditional experiences that can make the difference between shopping in one location or another.

to meet consumer needs and help retailers flourish. That’s why at intu it’s our mission to deliver compelling shopping experiences, at Christmas and all year round, because the real joy of shopping today is the experience.”

Matthew Wise: “Families are not as price-sensitive to Christmas experiences as we believe. Great Grottos upscaled many grottos this year, raising both experience and price. We did not see a negative reaction in footfall. Experience and takeaway must still exceed price, but the price elasticity of experience is still more prevalent than thought.”

Matt Slade: “Wembley Park is a place that does things ‘with’, as well as ‘for’ its residents, visitors and workers. It provides opportunities for visitors to engage with live, artistic experiences at a range of scales and intensities - from intimate to epic, light-touch to full immersion.

“Shoppers want a seamless experience and anything that makes their shopping trip easy is going to influence their decision to shop in a particular place. Technology undoubtedly plays a part in that and this will continue to develop in 2019. Social media, especially Instagram, has made interactivity and snapability key and this will continue to shape Christmas features in 2019. Sustainable and socially responsible elements to Christmas are becoming more valued and expected by shoppers in general and will help to shape the look and feel of Christmas experiences in the future.”



SEASONAL DECORATIONS SPECIALISTS

📞 01246 464759

🌐 www.ryseltd.co.uk

✉ sales@ryseltd.co.uk










CRIBBS RETHINKS CHRISTMAS

The Mall at Cribbs
Causeway revamped its
Christmas programme to
drive shoppers into stores



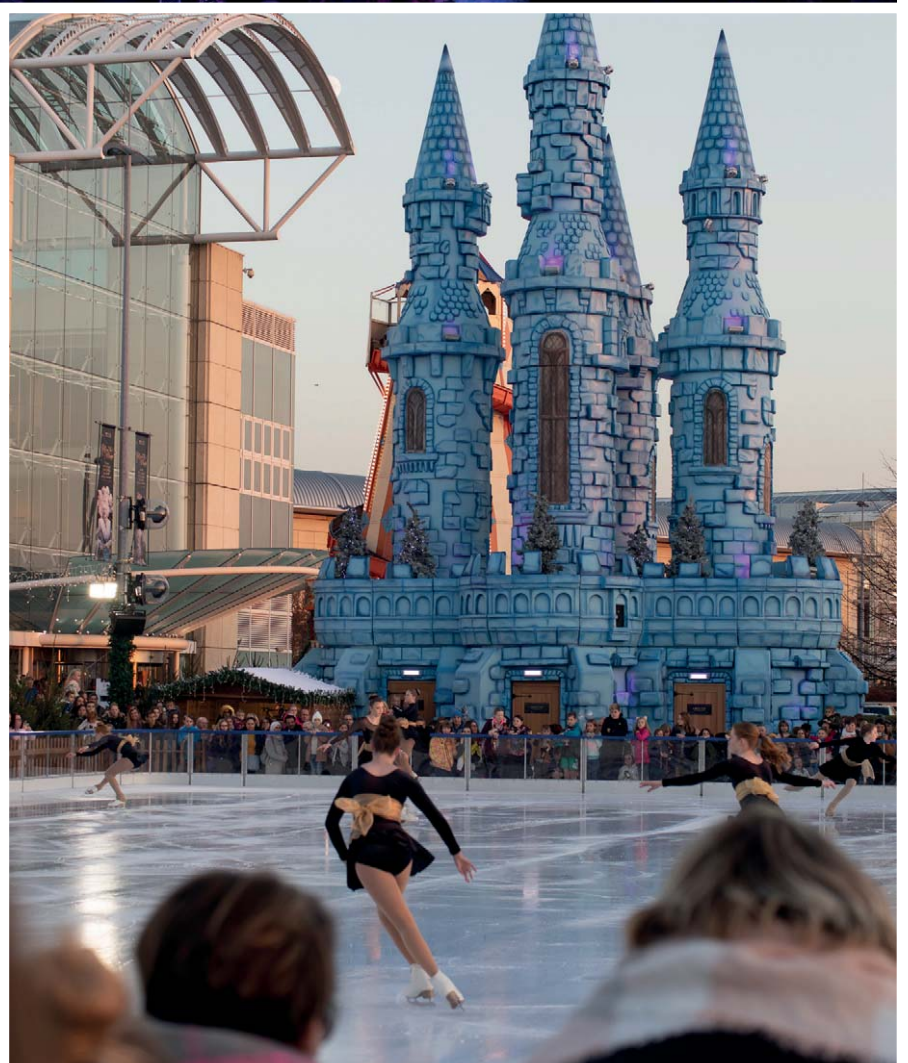


M&G Real Estate and intu's 780,000 sq ft Mall at Cribbs Causeway is the regional destination for a huge catchment across the south-west of England and into Wales. And as centre director Deborah Jones points out, including the adjacent retail park and the Venue leisure centre Cribbs Causeway is a 2 million-sq ft destination. Traditionally, the Cribbs Causeway Christmas programme has been a major part of the centre's marketing spend. Its launch event and the outdoor Winter Wonderland draw crowds from across the region. But this year, under new marketing manager Lizzie Taylor, Cribbs rethought its approach to Christmas.

"Winter Wonderland is a well-established event that has been running for more than 10 years," Taylor explains. "This year it has been refocused to integrate it better with the centre's retailers, encouraging people into the mall."

According to Jones the change of approach has paid off: "The 2018 footfall numbers are positive and not many can say that. We're still waiting for sales numbers but our retailers seem happy," she says.

In a radical departure the Thursday night Christmas lights switch-on event was changed. It was moved to a Saturday and turned into a full-day event. Managed in partnership with the Bakehouse Factory, a Bristol-based events company, the event





was inspired by Disney's *Nutcracker* and the *Four Realms*. It featured the four realms of Christmas: the Dark Realm, the Flower Realm, the Sweets Realm and the Snowflake Realm.

Children from the local community were invited to take part in day-long workshops around the four themes and the day culminated in a live stage show at 4:30pm, building on the whole day's activities and featuring an aerial acts and fireworks display. The launch took place in a purpose-built arena in one of the centre's car parks, and it included a quiet zone with facilities for children with special needs.

Jones says: "It was a big change this year not having someone like JLS or Olly Murs for the switch-on, but it paid off with far more visitors than ever before.

"There is a need to stretch out activity," she adds. "One-hit events deliver footfall, but are 13-year-old girls who are dropped off by their parents and then picked up again immediately after the performance what the retailers really need?" she asks.

"By linking the event to the retailers we are delivering value. We talk to all our retailers and they all said their performance has benefited from this new approach of driving people into stores."

The four realms also formed the heart of the 'Christmas Kingdom' marketing campaign that covered the entire district. There was also a piece of guerrilla marketing with 'Guardians of the Realm' six-sheet posters in the rival Cabot Circus. Cribbs also booked a light-up bus ad, the only one in the region.

The marketing collateral used a gold thread theme from the movie and the characters from each of the four realms, and post-launch, these were replaced with real images from the launch event.

Continuing this retailer-focussed approach, four character models representing the guardians of the realms, created by a local artist, were hidden in a different store each week. Social media was used to broadcast clues to their location and there was a £100 prize for the shopper who found them. In addition, there were four overall winners who managed to locate all four characters and their prize was to win one of the four models. A QR code on a panel beside each character delivered a gift guide for that particular store.

"We aimed to be immersive," says Taylor. The groups of themed characters from the launch event returned at weekends in the run-up to Christmas.

Outside the centre, the Winter Wonderland featured santa's grotto and an ice rink. The ice rink, which has long been a feature of Christmas at Cribbs Causeway, was extended this year. All proceeds from the rink are returned into the centre's marketing budget but Jones points out: "We went for a quality feel. Quality is more important than cash generation." This new retailer-centric approach is not just for Christmas. Taylor explains that it will be applied to all of the Mall's events.

Taylor explains: "Part of our marketing strategy has been to promote it as a day-out destination. It's about dwell time and giving customers and experience. Four example in 2019 scene we will be revamping of the mall seating - giving an experience the shopper expects and that's important for the 'mature money.' We have an affluent catchment and they expect to be comfortable."

"It's about generating loyalty," adds Jones, "creating a feeling that it's something special and to achieve that you have to invest in experience."

Main. Launch fireworks
Left & above. Winter Wonderland

IN STORE MAPPING

Find & Order
creates 3D maps for
centres and stores



In the age of online and mission shopping, consumers don't want to spend a lot of time faffing around or looking for a customer assistant to ask. App users simply need to search for the product and the app will tell them exactly where in store they can find it.

"We learned that 10 to 15 per cent of visitors in large retail stores leave without finding the product they need or a sales assistant they can talk to," Guelton explains. "The app allows them to find the products themselves through the app, and it just gives that slightly better customer experience. Not everyone likes asking where to find something and this cuts out that anxiety."

Since its creation, Find & Order evolved from being a product marketplace for shopping centres and grew into the mapping technology it is today. "One of the features we decided to sell separately is the mapping technology, which is why we have been developing for a year now, building our 3D mapping and guiding expertise," Guelton explains. But how does it work?

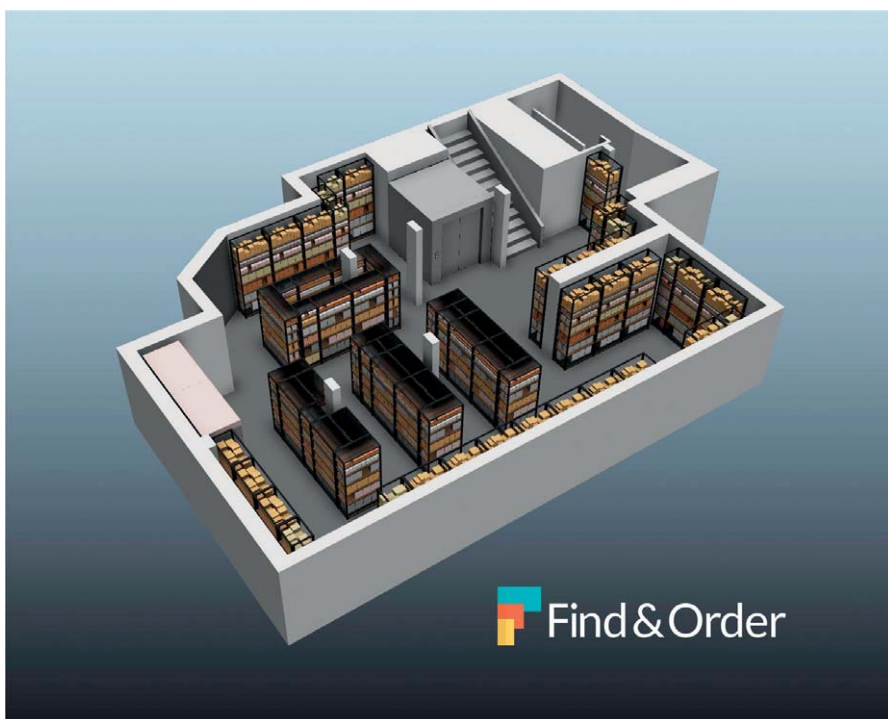
"Our indoor positioning system is based on magnetic field capture," he explains. "Magnetic field exists naturally everywhere. Buildings change their signature as they are made of concrete, steel, and heavy structural materials. That means that every building has its own unique signature which we capture and use to set our reference map."

"First we scan the building with our robot," he continues, saying that the robot can map almost 40,000 sq ft of space per hour. "We make a modification in our client's application – the one used by customers and operational teams – so that we can activate the compass in their smartphone or other compatible devices, to get a real time magnetic location which will be compared to the reference map."

In order to generate a 3D map, they ask clients to give their 2D plans which they then raise and fill with renderings of the furniture and other 3D structures in their store. Clients can then manage the map through the web back-office that Find & Order provides.

"It's not just a platform for shoppers, it can really benefit the retailers too. It enables an optimisation of product selection and re-supply processes, and we help in-store operators improve their KPIs."

"Some of the large retailers still use Excel spreadsheets to monitor product locations and merchandising. Communication between marketing teams and store management is often fractured as sales per square foot are rarely monitored, which can mean that products are not optimally merchandised. A quality map with accurate product locations is a real game changer," Guelton concludes.



As with all great technology innovations, the French store mapping app, Find & Order, was born out of laziness. The company's CEO, Mickael Carvalho, could not be bothered spending an age trying to locate specific products in large retail stores, and so came up with an app aimed at helping customers locate exactly they are looking for.

"The Find & Order platform provides retailers and shopping centres with 3D maps on their app or desktop, allowing them to guide customers to their products," says Find & Order's co-founder Arthur Guelton. "The solution is accurate to 30cm."

Above. Find & Order's 3D maps



SQUEEST

UP
ON
THE
ROOF

Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield is pioneering urban agriculture on the roof of one of its shopping centres

In June 2018, Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield opened the first urban farm on top of a shopping centre in France, thanks to a partnership between Sous Les Fraises and the Group's open innovation platform.

Farmhouse So Ouest is a 270-sq m farm – to be extended to 600 sq m in 2019 – located on the roof of the So Ouest shopping centre at Levallois-Perret in the north-western suburbs of Paris. Up on the roof, vegetables, fruits and plants are produced through vertical agriculture, without the use of herbicides, pesticides or fertiliser, according to the principles of permaculture. Since the opening in June, over one ton of fruits and vegetables have been harvested: tomatoes, basil, mint, strawberries, bell peppers, chilli peppers, kale and thyme. The products are then sold directly to the customers, in a dedicated pop-up store within the shopping centre.

URW started its collaboration with Sous Les Fraises two years ago, convinced by its innovative concept. The startup promotes a circular approach of production and consumption: irrigation is achieved through a closed-loop system that recycles rain water to feed the plants and production is sold via a short distribution circuit, avoiding long distance transportation.

Through this partnership, Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield is bringing nature back to the city. In line with its ambitious CSR strategy Better Places 2030, URW is committed to creating better, greener buildings, that are more respectful of the environment.

The project also engages local communities. Workshops are organised for neighbours, visitors, schools and corporates located nearby, to raise awareness of topics related to urban farming. From urban ecology to permaculture and workshops on cocktail creation, edible flowers or herbal tea preparation, Farmhouse So Ouest contributes to local life and well-being by providing access to new equipment and activities.

The partnership with Sous les Fraises reinforces URW Link's efforts to promote a circular economy, according to URW Link director Jean Collet. "Overall, the circular and collaborative approach of Sous Les Fraises adds true value to our assets," he says. "It exploits unused space and promotes a pragmatic and positive vision of agriculture. This enriches our buildings, making them more sustainable and in tune with their environment.

URW has already committed to follow-on projects with Sous Les Fraises. A 150-sq m urban farm should open this year on the roof of SHIFT, Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield's office development in the Paris suburb of Issy-les-Moulineaux.



“WORST DECEMBER IN 10 YEARS” SAYS BRC

After a mixed set of results from retailers with sales up at Next but down at M&S, the authoritative Retail Sales Monitor from the BRC and KPMG has concluded that Christmas 2018 was the worst for a decade. Overall retail sales were flat but on a like-for-like basis they were down 0.7% year-on-year.

BRC chief executive Helen Dickinson said: “Squeezed consumers chose not to splash out this Christmas with retail sales growth stalling for the first time in 28 months. The worst December sales performance in ten years means a challenging start to 2019 for retailers, with business rates set to rise once again this year, and the threat of a no-deal Brexit looming ever larger.”

Paul Martin, UK head of retail at KPMG added: “The first months of 2019 will unlikely hold much improvement. As many retailers report their festive trading performance, the list of winners and losers will become clear, but winning means more than just improving sales. Retailers have to protect their margins in order to deliver a profitable festive season.”



POLARISATION IN PROSPECT

A ‘perfect storm’ of Brexit, business rates, inflation, the growth of e-commerce, and employee cost pressures, will continue to weigh on the minds of UK retailers in the year ahead, according to CBRE UK’s 2019 Real Estate Market Outlook.

The agent predicts the retail and hospitality landscape will polarise into ‘experience’ and ‘convenience’, with shopping centre owners likely to act to reposition their assets accordingly. Investment volumes will remain low, but pubs, leisure, and roadside retail will move increasingly into investors’ sights as these previously niche sectors become more investable.

CBRE is forecasting retail rents will fall by 1.9% in 2019, and they will fall further in 2020 until growth returns with a 0.2% uplift in 2021.

Within the shopping centre asset class, those in the most convenient locations (often below 80,000 sq ft), and those who create a destination appeal for consumers to have a ‘big day out’ (usually over 600,000 sq ft) will see the most significant returns in the year ahead, continuing the divergence in performance.

The majority of the 1.28m sq ft of new shopping centre space planned to open in 2019 will be through the expansion of existing assets. Destination centres will drive this expansion but such centres will increase the proportion of space dedicated to leisure and entertainment, rather than traditional shops.

In response to evolving consumer demand, CBRE expects that owners of mid-range shopping centres, as well as some small and large centres, will increasingly choose to redevelop underperforming retail space over the next year. Some landlords are set to enter the residential market to create additional value from land around some of their assets. This will be supported by a relaxation of planning rules to allow shops to be converted into homes and offices.



Rhodri Davies, head of UK retail at CBRE, said: “While some pressures for retailers will start to fall away in 2019, others including the global economy running out of steam are likely to take their place. This will force retailers to focus even more on cost efficiency and innovation. Although the sector is witnessing significant disruption both from cyclical and economic factors, retailers who innovate quickly and invest in the consumer are likely to prove resilient.”



STORMY WEATHER AHEAD

Retail property is set for a turbulent three years according to a new report from Colliers International.

Noting that rents for standard shops in Central London, until now the best-performing retail sub-sector, have increased by just 0.5% year-on-year in 2018, down from 5.2% in 2017, Colliers International's senior property economist Oliver Kolodseike predicts: "Over the 2018-2022 forecast horizon, negative rental growth is expected across all retail segments with the exception of Central London standard shops. Shopping centres and retail warehouses (both -1.9% pa) will see the largest drops in rents."

Colliers expects declines of -1.5% year-on-year in 2019 and -0.5% year-on-year in 2020. Outside of London, rents are predicted to drop at a sharper rate, with standard shops in Rest of UK predicted to record a decline of -3.0% year-on-year in 2019, before slowing slightly to -2.0% in 2020.

All-retail total returns are expected to show a decline of -1.9% year-on-year in 2018, down from +6.9% year-on-year in 2017, with income returns of 5.1% not sufficient to offset negative capital growth of -6.7% (0.3% residual). Capital growth will remain in negative territory until 2022, but positive income returns (5.6%) will lead to a reappearance of total return growth in 2019 (1.6%). Over the five-year forecast horizon, all-retail total returns are expected to average 2.9% pa.

Retail sales volumes enjoyed a strong summer, buoyed by the football World Cup, a royal wedding and exceptionally warm weather. However, the trend has slowed in recent months, with sales volumes rising just 0.4% in the three months to October, down from 2.3% in the three months to July.

Part of the weakness in October is likely a result of consumers holding off on purchases ahead of "Black Friday". That said, latest consumer confidence figures from GfK suggest that sentiment remained subdued in November, with the index dipping to a one-year low. Nonetheless, with continued real wage growth and falling oil prices, there should be some scope for consumer spending growth to gather momentum.

Retail investment volumes in 2018 are on course to reach the lowest level since 2000, down around 50% from 2016 and 35% from 2017. Shopping centres traded particularly poorly with only a very limited number of transactions taking place. Rents fell across all main retail segments in Q3, according to the latest MSCI index.

Standard shops in Central London (-0.4% quarter-on-quarter) saw rents decline for the first time since the end of 2009, while standard shops in Rest of UK and shopping centres experienced particularly sharp drops in market rental value growth.

Subdued consumer confidence and structural changes in the retail sector including an increasing importance of online retail will no doubt provide

ongoing challenges to high street shops.

"It was therefore welcome that the Chancellor Philip

Hammond acknowledged the struggles the sector is currently facing," Kolodseike concluded.



FACE THE FUTURE

Retail property will have to face up to a string of fundamental changes, predicts *Zuzanna Baranowska*

The retail property industry enters 2019 with both challenges and opportunities ahead. How Brexit will affect the sector remains to be seen, however, the prolonged period of uncertainty has already impacted the industry. Lower business and consumer confidence, high inflation, lower consumer spending and higher sourcing costs have added to the escalating problems in the retail sector.

Consumers' spending habits gained in the recession period remain in place. Shoppers are more aware of what their money is spent on and the closer to Brexit the more prudent they are with their spending. Faced with rising occupational and operating costs, retailers continue to seek to reduce these costs and risk in key areas including wages, goods and property costs.

Absolutely, we need to look beyond Brexit, as retail is experiencing profound changes which will result in a completed transformation of the retail environment. These long-term overarching trends include demographic changes, development of technology, and the growing role of sustainability, ethical business, equality and rebalancing of power.

An ageing population will be one of the most significant changes for the UK economy. By 2050 those aged 65 and over will represent 25% of the total population and the number of people aged 85 will triple. The over 65's hold as much as 37% of total household wealth, yet many don't feel adequately served. The Centre for Future Studies forecasts that in 2030 retailers who are not elderly friendly could lose an annual spend of between £0.58bn and £4.5bn.

Online retailing is only expected to expand and be more closely intertwined with the physical space – but making it challenging for retailers in operational terms. Delivering a seamless experience will remain key, with a focus on successful adaptation to mobile technology. 62% of internet browsing happens on mobile devices while 48% of ecommerce sales in 2018 took place on a mobile, rising to over 50% in 2020, according to eMarketer forecasts.

As competition becomes fiercer and the demand for faster deliveries increases, the role of technology in improving the supply chain, logistics will become crucial. RFID technology provides real time information on stock and is used by River Island, Decathlon and John Lewis.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) helps to process large amounts of data and optimise the customer experience while data and analytics can help businesses to make smart decisions. The key question for the industry, however, remains what data is actually useful in improving business and decision-making.

We expect there to be more pressure on retail and retail property businesses not only to reduce their environmental footprint but to meaningfully contribute to society. As society evolves, so does business, its role goes beyond its economic importance. Owners and retailers must collaborate closely with local authorities, residents and businesses to maximise the social benefits that can be brought to a local community.



Zuzanna Baranowska
is senior research
analyst at Revo

HAMMERSON HEADS UPHILL

Hammerson's Victoria Leeds has hosted **The Rampage**, an adrenaline-fuelled urban cycle challenge, for the first time in the UK.

A UK car park first, The Rampage was a lung-busting uphill battle between two riders to the summit of the car park, with the first rider across the finish line going through to the next round. With just under 200 riders taking part, the heats continued until one rider was left standing.

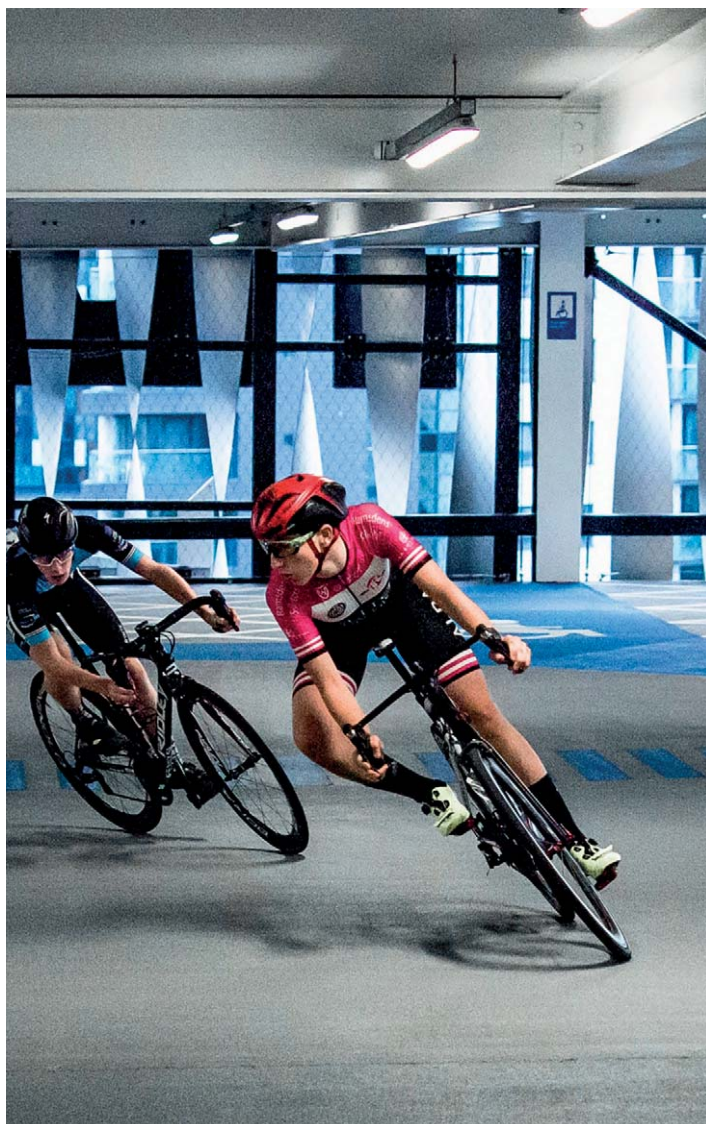
The event was open to everyone, serious bikers and have-a-go heroes were all welcome.

Hammerson's Mark Bourgeois (60

sec) progressed to the knockout where he came up against double junior world champion Tom Pidcock who eventually won the event with a time of 53.70 sec. The under 18's Winner was Max Krasinski (61.32) and senior ladies winner was Amber Hull (61.81).

Alongside all of the cycling action, spectators (including World/Olympus Triathlon hero Alistair Brownlee) enjoyed food, drink and entertainment, with Harvey Nichols and Issho providing well-deserved post-race refreshments.

Most importantly, the event raised £3,500 for LandAid to help end youth homelessness in the UK.



ROYAL VISIT

The Duke and Duchess of Sussex popped into the Pyramids shopping centre during their royal visit to Birkenhead last month. They officially opened the Number 7 subsidised café and supermarket, which has been set up in partnership with local MP Frank Field's charitable organisation, Feeding Birkenhead.

Prince Harry and Meghan met the shopping centre's director, Derek Millar, Frank Field and the team at Number 7. The café occupies a 9,500-sq ft unit that has been refurbished free of charge by Birkenhead-based shipbuilder Cammell Laird although the project has been five years in the making. The initiative is part of the wider Feeding Britain network, which aims to eliminate hunger in the UK.

"Working with Frank Field on this pioneering service is one of the



most important projects I've been involved with in my career," said centre director Derek Millar. "What Feeding Birkenhead, Cammell Laird, Pyramids and all the other stakeholders and individuals have contributed in terms of time, funding, supplies, support – the list goes on – is something we are all immensely proud of."

BANDERSNATCH POPS UP IN BIRMINGHAM

Birmingham's Grand Central has been chosen by Netflix as one of the two sites - alongside London's Old Street Station - used to promote cult-favourite series **Black Mirror**. A 1,196 sq ft unit at Grand Central recreated the 1980's game store from the choose-your-own-adventure drama **Bandersnatch**.

The hustle and bustle of Grand Central proved to be the perfect location for Tucker's Newsagent and Games. The unique set up drew fans seeking an excellent social opportunity as well as considerable interest from centre visitors.

Hammerson was represented by Appear Here.





Parking Management Solutions

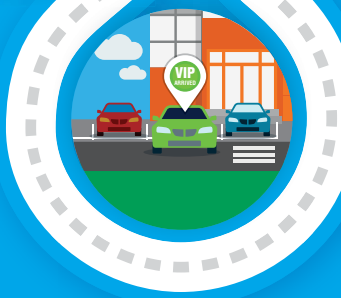
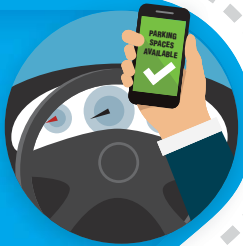
UNDERSTANDING YOUR CUSTOMERS JOURNEY & ENHANCING THE SHOPPING EXPERIENCE

Advertising availability to customers before they leave home

Direct marketing at entry, while on site and at exit

Incentives to loyal customers

Improved security and safety (StoreGuard)



Customer focused parking

Improved brand awareness and customer experience

Fully personalised real-time solutions for each client

Advanced data reporting, that goes beyond the car park

INNOVATIVE CAR PARK SOLUTIONS  ARE IN OUR DNA



Parking Management Solutions

G24 Parking Management Solutions

Batchworth House
Batchworth Place
Church Street
Rickmansworth WD3 1JE

+44 (0) 370 0427215

sales@g24.co.uk

www.g24.co.uk

www.storeguard.co.uk

www.clearpark.co.uk