

Welcome to Bluewater



There are city centres. There are shopping centres. And there is Bluewater.

Over 28 million guests a year, or half a million a week, visit Bluewater, and they spend on average more than £150 each visit. 72% ABC1, they comprise Britain's most affluent catchment, spending £1 in every £10 spent in the UK.

The figures are extraordinary, but no more so than the place. Covering 1.6 million square feet (sq ft), with 330 of the best UK and international brands, 50 cafés, bars and restaurants, 13,000 free parking spaces, 50 acres of parkland and seven lakes, Bluewater is an international frame of reference in the retail industry.

Three factors are instrumental in Bluewater's enduring success: *the brand; constant evolution; and partnership.*

The brand

Bluewater was built as a brand, not a building, and that unique philosophy remains today. Bluewater is committed to delivering 'ultimate refreshment' and a unique day-out destination experience.



Visitors to Bluewater are referred to and treated as guests. Consequently, the level and type of service provided, both by Bluewater's staff, or hosts, and its retailers and caterers, is more akin to visiting a premium hotel than a shopping centre.

Bluewater is a unique brand, one that guests engage with, and one that helps drive commercial success. Dwell time at Bluewater is an average of 151 minutes, the typical drive time is increasing, and our catchment grew by over 11% last year. In fact, 2010 was a record year for Bluewater, with 28.1 million guests visiting and sales increasing by 3.3% compared to 2009.

Constant evolution

Bluewater invented the term 'retail and leisure destination', and was cited by the Evening Standard as 'the future of shopping' when it opened on March 16 1999.

12 years on, Bluewater continues to innovate and to evolve. In 2009, the year in which Bluewater celebrated its tenth anniversary, over 30% of Bluewater's offer, equivalent to 46,470m² (500,000 sq ft), was new or improved, including over 30 brands opening new stores at Bluewater, and nearly 40 existing retailers and caterers completing refurbishments or introduced new concepts. Highlights include the a £22m refurbishment of John Lewis, which created the first John Lewis Foodhall outside central London, the launch of a new Milan-designed concept store for LK Bennett, and flagship stores for Cadbury Cocoa House, Uniqlo, Juicy Couture, Charles Tyrwhitt, The Little White Company, Calvin Klein, All Saints and Reiss

In 2010, 34 brands opened new stores, creating another record. And the record has been broken in 2011, with 40 brands committing to Bluewater so far this year. These include Boux Avenue, Forever 21, Kiehls, Radley, Côte, Ted Baker, Lego, Crumpler, Omega, Skechers and Mappin & Webb.

Retail, however, is just one part of Bluewater's offer. Leisure remains a key element of Bluewater's day-out experience, but it too has evolved. In 2010, for example, Pirate Cove Adventure Golf opened. Based around the Wintergarden lake, it provides guests with a 36-hole adventure golf course in a unique setting.

The biggest milestone in the evolution of Bluewater's leisure offer is Glow, Bluewater, which opened on November 30. Situated adjacent to the 13-screen Showcase cinema, between House of Fraser and Marks & Spencer, it is a new breed of events and exhibition space, where the leisure experience is brought to guests.

Partnership

Bluewater is successful because its evolution and experience are delivered through partnership.

The community is one key partner, and its significance is embodied in The Learning Shop, Bluewater. Created by Lend Lease, North West Kent College and Job Centre Plus, it is an on-site employment and training hub that has become the model for similar schemes across the UK.

In the last 12 years, The Learning Shop, Bluewater, has found employment for over 26,000 people from the local community, with more than 12,000 having received formal training, and nearly 10,000 qualifications awarded. In 2010 alone, The Learning Shop, Bluewater, created employment for 4,000 people, trained 500 and awarded over 375 qualifications.



Bluewater would not exist, however, without the partnership with the retailers and caterers. It is this partnership that makes the Bluewater experience so compelling to guests and drives Bluewater's performance. The partnership delivers the very best brands, staffed by the very best people. It is central to Bluewater achieving consecutive record-breaking years in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011.

Glow, Bluewater



Glow, Bluewater, opened on 30 November 2011.

The 5,200m² events venue offers a new breed of fully integrated exhibition space containing an upper and lower hall, and a 450m² private gallery area. Further extending Bluewater's 'day out' experience, it creates additional reasons to visit Bluewater, as well as attracting new guests.

Directly accessed from the Thames Walk mall via the Plaza, a 4,000m² space consisting of 12 entertainment-themed restaurants, cafés and bars. Glow, Bluewater, is designed to host a calendar of amazing and inspiring events, from fashion to food, lifestyle to comedy events, complemented by special interest exhibitions, such as antiques and specific hobbies.



For further information visit www.glowbluewater.co.uk.

Did you know?

1. The name 'Bluewater' is derived from the two companies that created the first plans for a shopping centre in the quarry; Blue Circle and Shearwater
2. Since opening in March 1999, Bluewater has had over 300 million visitors, which is equivalent to nearly five times the population of the UK
3. Through annual business rates, Bluewater has contributed around £390 million to the local community, the equivalent of one 700-bed hospital (£250 million) and over 90 primary schools (£1.5 million each)
4. Bluewater has created 26,000 jobs for local people in the last decade. In addition, when Bluewater opened in March 1999, Dartford experienced a 25% drop in unemployment, the largest single drop in the UK at the time
5. Bluewater has launched over 44 new brands in the UK in last 12 years
6. One million trees and shrubs planted at the time of opening has absorbed almost 1.8 million kg of carbon dioxide
7. In the last 12 years, Bluewater has supplied the local aquifer with 794 million litres of water, the equivalent of over 315 Olympic-sized swimming pools
8. Bluewater has contributed £2.7 million to the local community and charitable contributions over the last 12 years
9. In the last ten years, Bluewater has employed 9,000 local contractors and contributed nearly £70 million to local businesses
10. Bluewater has canvassed opinions from over 2.5 million guests in the last 12 years as part of its ongoing commitment to evolving the Bluewater offer. This is equivalent to around 5% of the UK population
11. Bluewater has made the world news on a number of occasions, including with the hoodies ban in 2005, giving newly-crowned F1 world champion, Jenson Button, a hero's homecoming in 2009, and during the last three Christmases
12. Ten things introduced 12 years ago that is still relevant today: chaplaincy, The Learning Shop, community forum, on-site police station, on-site ambulance, largest park in Kent, commitment to public transport, concierge, sustainability (passive venting and the environment) and parking spaces 25% wider than the standard size