

In the spotlight

BCSC Shopping Centre Management Conference 27th February – 1st March 2006

More than 650 shopping centre executives met in Edinburgh for the annual three day conference on shopping centre management last month. This year's conference focused on performance: how to harness it, improve it and communicate it to shoppers and tenants. Jo Swinson MP (Lib Dem, East Dunbartonshire) provided a political backdrop to the conference and stressed the important role shopping centres play in local towns and cities, often being a focal point at the very heart of the community.

As ever, BCSC provided a lively and entertaining conference which used some of Scotland's best acting talent to convey a serious message. Shopping centre managers were reminded that they ignore their customers' needs at their



Jo Swinson MP gives her views

peril. Emphasising the need for greater customer service at all times, the conference delegates left with a clear message that without happy customers they could not hope to have a successful business.

Expert speakers covered a variety of topics from market trends and the future of cities, to shopping centre festival and event management, and the importance of teamwork and regional awareness. The conference also involved a number of workshops to encourage discussion in smaller groups on topics including changes

BCSC in Westminster

BCSC is the organisation representing retailers, developers, landlords, architects, agents and local authorities; all sections of the industry with an interest in the managed retail environment. BCSC activity includes reviewing legislation, disseminating information and developing policy appropriate for this sector.

To make contact with the retail property industry in your locality, to discuss the impact of legislation on shopping centres large or small in your area, to understand the retail economy and the people it serves in your constituency please contact BCSC on 020 7222 1122.

For further information on BCSC and our activities, please visit our website:
www.bcsc.org.uk

to the licensing laws, Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), disabled user access and environmental responsibilities.

Achieving Customer Excellence (ACE) Awards

Following on from the focus on customer service at this year's SCM conference, BCSC launched the new Achieving Customer Excellence (ACE) Awards based on the standards set out in BCSC's *Guide to Customer Care Best Practice – Creating an Outstanding Guest Experience*. The guide examines the shopping centre environment, related staff implications, consumers' needs and experiences, and the roles of retailers and stakeholders – offering clear advice and practical suggestions. The first awards will be presented at next year's SCM conference. The entry process will involve two or more on-site mystery shopper checks



Jonathan Doughty, Chair of the Customer Care Committee launches the ACE Awards

Government Consultations

2006 has so far been a busy year for BCSC who have responded to a number of Government consultations on new legislation regarding planning and possible changes to trading laws.

● REITs

BCSC support the introduction of REITs but had some concerns regarding interest rate cover, the sale of assets, schedule 'A' income, transparency vehicles, and restriction on ownership. Final legislation on REITs was published in the Finance Bill on Friday 7th April with some amendments.

● Planning Gain Supplement (PGS)

Details of the Government's plans to introduce a Planning Gain Supplement (PGS) was announced at the end of last year. The BCSC's overriding concern about PGS is that Government proposals would lead to reduced investment in the fabric of town centres. In our response to the Government, we urged

them to limit PGS to greenfield residential developments and not brownfield sites.

● Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP)

BCSC is extremely interested in the role out of Local Area Agreements (LAAs) and have previously been involved in dialogue with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) on this topic. The BCSC response to the LSP consultation focused on the involvement of the private sector in the work of LSPs and the development of LAAs. BCSC firmly believe that this involvement would contribute to the overall successful outcomes desired by all associated parties.

● Sunday Trading Review

The BCSC response to the review of Sunday Trading provides information on the impact of further relaxation laws on both customers and retailers.

Full copies of all the above consultation responses are available from BCSC.



Paradise Square development



Liverpool Study Tour

BCSC run five or more study tours every year, offering BCSC members the opportunity to examine what is going on in the industry through comprehensive tours of new and established developments. The most recent study tour took place in Liverpool in April. In 2003 Liverpool was chosen to represent Britain as the European Capital of Culture 2008. There has been a great deal of regeneration in the city in recent years and a number of new projects have been developed.

The study tour involved a visit to the new Metquarter which opened on the 9th March and a presentation on the St John's Centre and Clayton Square. There was also a tour of the paradise project, an innovative £900 million urban regeneration project, set to transform the heart of Liverpool city centre. The site will consist of six distinct districts, and will be home to the very best retail brands, residential and leisure facilities due for completion in 2008.

The Future of Retail Property Research



At the beginning of 2006 BCSC launched a major research project aimed at providing a thorough independent examination of retail property trends. *The Future of Retail Property* research is an 18 month programme comprising eight individual research projects: online retailing; changing demographics and consumer patterns; retail business models; the future of brands; how much space the market can absorb; in town versus out of town shopping; future modes of transport; and the type of future shopping places. The overall

objective of the project is to furnish decision makers with information on the major social, political, technological and economic changes that lie ahead over the next ten years.

Research findings will be posted on a dedicated web-page for MPs and their researchers. This research resource website will contain vital information to help you answer constituent's questions, prepare for debates and speeches and keep up-to-date with all the latest developments in the retail and retail property industry. For example, the research could help you answer constituent's concerns about general planning or transport issues or the impact of internet shopping on your local high street and retail job market. Further details of the site and how to access it will be provided later in the year.

Forward Look

BCSC & ACTM Scotland Shopping Centre Management Conference – Tuesday 9th – Wednesday 10th May 2006, De Vere Cameron House Hotel, Loch Lomond

BCSC Northern Region SCM Conference – Monday 5th – Wednesday 7th June 2006, De Vere Belton Woods, Lincolnshire

BCSC Study Tour to Kings Cross – Tuesday 6th June 2006, Kings Cross

BCSC 'Future of Retail Property' Research Seminar – Thursday 15th June 2006, Institute of Directors, London

BCSC Study Tour to Plymouth and Exeter – Friday 30th June 2006, Plymouth and Exeter

The importance of the shopping industry to the UK economy

There can be few decades which have witnessed such changes in where and how we shop fuelled by a combination of structural events, technology, investment and consumer attitudes.

These are some interesting facts that you might not know about the shopping centre industry and the contribution it makes to the UK economy.

- 22% more retail floorspace was built in town centres in 2003 compared to 1997.
- In 2003, 58 percent of the English population lived in cities. Cities have accounted for 42 percent of population growth between 1997 and 2003 with London providing 34 percent of England's total growth.
- 7.5% of everything spent on retailing in 2005 was done on-line which is 32% up on the year before.

BCSC

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