



High Chelmer Chelmsford

FEBRUARY 2013

Pedestrian Flow Figures

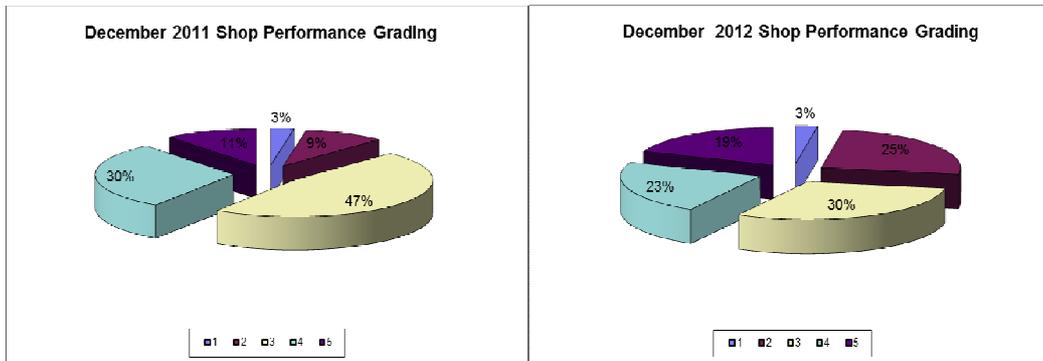
The Experian Footfall yearly change was +6.14% up for December, which compares favourably to the national year on year benchmark of -5.0%. The month on month figure was a massive +48.8%, the national benchmark month on month figures was +52.7%. It should be noted that December was counted as a 5 week month and November as a 4 week month. In term of the entrances, the figures were: East door +9.6%, West was +7.1% and Exchange Way was +1.7% on the year.

The Experian Footfall yearly change was +6.1% up for January, which once again compares favourably to the national year on year benchmark of -6.5%. The month on month figure was a massive -44.9%, the national benchmark month on month figures was -44.7%. This due entirely to the fact that last month would have been pre-Christmas sales and the fact that last month was a five week month compared to a four week month in January. In term of the entrances, the figures were: East door +8.6%, West was +2% and Exchange Way was +4.5% on the year.

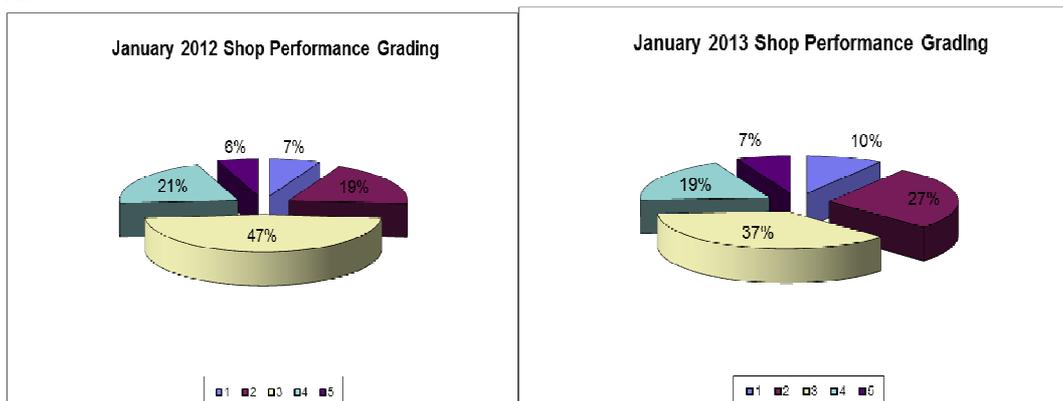
Footfall figures would had been much better if it had not been for the heavy snowfall and extreme weather conditions over the weekend of the 19th/20th January.

Retail Sales

As we would expect for the month of December many of the stores have been able to report very positively on trading, even though conditions on the whole were much tougher than last year. Good trading came extremely late, with several retailers starting their traditional post-Christmas sales prior to Christmas. 72% of the stores scored average or above for the month of December compared to 88% for December last year.



For the month of January, 63% of the stores scored average or above for the month of January compared to 74% for January last year.



Marketing

High Chelmer supported The Essex Chronicle in a competition to win a shopping voucher with a tweet Christmas. Readers were challenged to tweet their version of the nativity story in order to better the recent tweet by the Bishop of Chelmsford. We continued to run our 'film to win' competition on the website where the shopper with the most 'likes' on Facebook receives £100 in gift vouchers to spend in the store(s) of their choice. This competition finished at the end of December. High Chelmer's website continues to promote the E-Zine, 'High Times' which during the months of November and December offered readers the chance to win £50. The next bi-monthly e-zine will have a similar competition.

We also contributed to a number of sponsorship opportunities to support local community and charity projects, including the Cathedral Arts Festival. Furthermore, we assisted Evoke nightclub with an advertising campaign – with our Where Santa Shops advertisement being used on the reverse side on an A5 flyer that was delivered to 5,000 homes locally.

However, one particular incident over the festive season stood out over every other on 31st December a wild deer ran into Chelmsford and knocked over a lady just outside the Centre, causing facial injuries. A member of High Chelmer Customer Service team administered first aid and the lady was later taken to hospital. The deer ran away and there were no further reports of its whereabouts. This incident, partly due to its seasonal flavour and what was clearly a light news week, catapulted High Chelmer and Chelmsford City Centre onto global news headlines. Within 24 hours, Mick McDonagh, Centre Manager, had been interviewed by local press, regional press and national TV stations regarding the event.

High Chelmer hosted an event on Saturday 9th February organised by Jones Lang LaSalle Marketing entitled Chelmsford Hottest Shopper. The Hottest Shopper activity was designed as a fun initiative to drive interaction with our Facebook fans. This event proved extremely popular. The winner will be announced imminently and the lucky shopper will receive a £250 spending spree at High Chelmer. JLL Marketing's next venture will be a late night shopping event on Thursday 7th March, to celebrate Mother's Day (details to be announced soon). They will also be organising a tenants meeting to outline the programme of promotions and marketing for the 2013/14 financial year and are likely to be contacting you directly on this subject.

Centre News

An application has been made to Chelmsford City Council for a ground floor extension to cover parts of Bravo Service Yard for units 12-20 to caterer for demands in increased space for retail units including new customer toilets for the Centre. Details of this and other property development projects will be circulated in due course.

Unit 19/20 High Chelmer West, seasonal trader **Card £Store**, ceased trading and was replaced by Community Pop Up Arts and Crafts Store. Other seasonal retailers such as **Books To Go** and **Calendar Club** have also now left as have temporary traders **Minx** and **Pilot** Fashion stores. **The Polish Deli** opened just prior to Christmas at 5-6 Cornhill. Due to the success of the Ideas Festival, hosted in 1-4 Market Square, interested parties the Royal Society of Arts and Anglia Ruskin University have created a new brand around the concept of the Ideas Hub with a strap line 'Connecting City Creatives'. Their aim is to set up a social enterprise that connects the creative community of Chelmsford. They are planning to continue to run events, exhibitions and workshops in the unit, in order to give the local community a place to meet, work, share ideas and make stuff! Continued activity in this area has helped raise the profile of the premises and assisted in footfall along Bellmead, which has recently improved due to the active use of the back door of Primark. Due to limited facilities in the unit the **Ideas Hub** activities have been temporarily moved to unit 21 Exchange Way.

Unit 3/4 – **HMV** – went into administration on 14th January, which triggered a feeding frenzy of customer activity with the Store Manager saying it has been their best January sales they have had for some considerable time. Deloitte the administrators have announced that 66 stores will close resulting in 930 job losses but the High Chelmer store is not among them

Starbucks – nocturnal shop fit started on 11th February. Work is taking place at night so that the café trade is unimpeded throughout the day. HVAC system is being installed over the food/drink preparation area in order to provide a reasonable environment for the staff and to mitigate staining of the soffit and GRG panels in the locale.

Unit 40 – **Body Shop** – started a shopfit on 29th January, including a new shop front. The grand re-opening happened on Saturday 16th February, when the ribbon was cut by a member of the Helen Rollason charity (Chelmsford’s Body Shop charity for the year).

Unit 41-42 – Republic- went into administration on 13th February. Republic have started an ‘everything reduced, everything must be sold’ sale but the store remains trading until further notice.

Essex County Council highways have started some resurfacing works at the top of Exchange Way. Paving slabs will be relayed as a consequence of tree root activity in the area causing slips and trips, in anticipation of the eventual pedestrianisation of Tindal Square.

Service Yard Gates – We are in the process of competitively tendering for this project and a final decision will be made soon, with an anticipated start of phase 1 involving Alpha and Delta yards.

Centre Community and Charity Events

On 31st January, Essex County Council will be promoting Alzheimers awareness. On the 2nd February Chelmsford Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society (CAODS) will be promoting Annie. On the 8th February Guide Dogs will be holding a collection and promotion. The RNIB will be holding a collection on 9th February. The 16th February Chelmsford CAMRA Beer Festival. On the 16th February, Chelmsford Ballet Promotion will be promoting Coppelia on at the Civic Theatre from 13th - 16 March. Also the Rotary Club and Canine Partners will be holding collections and promotions towards the end of February. The Rotary Club will be using unit 21-23 High Chelmer for a large promotion and awareness campaign.

Fire Risk Assessments – As previously mentioned, our customer service team have now begun to carry out follow-up visits in respect of the fire risk assessments you each received following, the inspections carried out by FM Consultancy.

Visit Essex – ‘Live Local, Love Local’ Campaign

The Visit Essex ‘Live Local, Love Local’ campaign which encourages residents to visit local attractions recently requested a list of the High Chelmer tenants and no doubt you have been contacted. The campaign will offer the opportunity for shops and restaurants to participate in a voucher booklet scheme.

Bank Holiday Opening Hours

Please see below proposed trading hours for the forthcoming year, we appreciate it is early but you may wish to plan ahead for the Christmas trading period, particularly your views on Boxing Day trading hours. As usual for Sunday trading hours, the mall doors will be opened at 9.45 a.m. and closed at 5.00 p.m. in order to cater for myriad store opening/closing times:

Friday, 29 th March (Good Friday)	Normal trading hours
Sunday, 31 st March (Easter Sunday)	Centre closed
Monday, 1 st April (Bank Holiday)	Sunday opening hours
Monday 6 th May (Bank Holiday)	Sunday opening hours
Monday, 27 th May (Bank Holiday)	Sunday opening hours
Monday, 26 th August (Bank Holiday)	Sunday opening hours
Wednesday, 25 th December	Centre Closed
Thursday, 26 th December	TBC – dependent on tenants’ requirements
Wednesday, 1 st January	Sunday opening hours

Late Nights

Primark are committed to a continuation of the current mall closing times (7.00 p.m. Monday – Saturday and 8.00 p.m. on Thursday). Several shops and stores are also aspiring to these times, so the formal signage will be amended accordingly.

Essex County Council – New A-Board Policy

Last year Essex County Council carried out a review into the use of A-Boards in order to determine a universal policy that could be adopted across the county. After reviewing the various responses ECC has now taken the decision that it will allow the use of A-boards on the public highways. Some simple policy guidelines have also been produced (see below) which set out ECC’s expectations for the use of A-boards, to assist local businesses and ensure the safety of pedestrians and motorists. As district, borough and city councils also have powers relating to A-boards under their planning responsibilities, they will be able to exercise flexibility locally, where required.

Essex County Council Policy for the Placement of Advertising boards on the Publicly Maintainable Highways:

- An advertising board will be no larger than the standard A1 size (637x1100x800mm) and normally two sided, however this does not prevent the use of new forms of mobile facilities. Any mobile facility must be of sufficient weight or design so as to prevent it being blown over in the wind and not creating a hazard to other highway users and be portable in case removal or re-siting is required.
- A minimum of 2 metres unobstructed footway width must be maintained between the edge of carriageway and the Advertising Board. In exceptional circumstances any only with the agreement of the Borough/District or City Council for the location and following discussions with the appropriate Access mobility groups a minimum clearance of 1.8 metres will be considered.
- If a business has its own private forecourt adjacent to the highway the Advertising board should be placed fully within the confines of the forecourt.
- The advertising board must be positioned against the property to which it relates.
- Only one advertising board per business will be allowed.
- Advertising boards will not be permitted in conservation areas except with the written agreement of the Borough/District or City Council.
- Sufficient public liability insurance should be in place.
- The advertising boards will not:-
 - Obstruct access to bus stops, taxi ranks or other frontages
 - Obstruct access to any service covers or apparatus
 - Be placed on or near to tactile paving or dropped kerbs
 - Obscure the visibility of highway users on a near a junction
 - Obscure any traffic signs or road markings
- The advertising board will be kept clear and tidy, in good condition and appear professionally made with no content likely to cause offence.
- The advertising board should be removed when the premises is closed.
- When within a short distance a proliferation of advertising boards results in pedestrians finding it difficult to navigate all owners will be asked to remove boards until agreement can be reached. (ECC, Borough/District and City Councils).

We await with interest the views and policies of Chelmsford City Council with regards to enforcement and would remind you that it is your responsibility to abide by all current regulations and by-laws within the terms of your lease.

Local Property News

The Ideas Hub at High Chelmer played host to an exhibition of the proposals by Bellway for the derelict 1912 Marconi site which were out for public consultation. Bellway wants to build 437 new homes on the site and turn the main Marconi building into its Essex Headquarters. Bellway have also won the contract for the first phase of 181 houses of a planned 750 homes to be built on a golf course in the north of Chelmsford

Genesis Housing Association has started works on the former home of Anglia Ruskin University in Victoria Road South with a first phase of 219 of what will eventually be 500 properties, on the old campus, vacated in 2008. There will also be courtyards, green spaces and improved access to the bus/railway stations, as well as community, retail and office space.

Work is due to start in the Spring on the £85m regeneration of Essex County Cricket Club, transforming the capacity of the County ground up to 8,000, a new pedestrian bridge over the river Can, shops, restaurants and four towers containing 300 luxury apartment, the first of which has already primarily been sold off-plan.

Work has still not as yet commenced on the Aquila, East of High Street scheme, which will eventually house a new shopping complex, anchored by John Lewis department store.

Scaffolding has been erected around the historic Shire Hall in the High Street, after reports of masonry falling off the building over the Christmas period.

A public exhibition took place on the proposal for a mixed used development to the North of Beaulieu Park and White Hart Lane, comprising up to 3,600 dwellings, a new business park, hotel, neighbourhood centre, health centre, primary and secondary schools and eventually a new railway station.

Work continues on the development of one/two bedroom apartments above the shops in Tindal Street, opposite Boots the Chemist.

The Gym opened on 17 December in the Dansk store beside M&S – the premises is open 24 hours.

Faster mobile phone technology is set to be switched on in Chelmsford by the end of March as the Jubilee City embraces 4G technology by communication company, Everything Everywhere, which is a merger of Orange and T-Mobile.

Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford are in the top 20 most desirable places to live in Britain a new survey by Halifax Bank has revealed. The 2012 Halifax Quality of Life Survey was based on residents' health and life expectancy, employment, crime rate, weather and internet access.

HRH the Princess Royal visited the City Centre once again in January for a special private service held at the Cathedral ordered to mark the 60th anniversary of the great flood in England. After the hour long service Princess Anne was escorted to Evoke nightclub in Market Road where she met different community groups who had been affected by the 1953 floods.

Network Rail has recently announced to spend £2.2 billion on the region's ageing rail infrastructure in a move hailed as the biggest investment since Victorian times. The overall objective is to boost capacity and increase reliability for commuters. The company's plans for the network have been formally submitted to the rail watchdog The Office of Rail Regulation which will decide on the plan in October.

Blockbuster in Springfield Road Chelmsford currently with administrators Deloitte are not among the 129 shops to close over the next few weeks as the brand seeks a new buyer.

Over 30 affordable homes are to be built in Chelmsford after housing association CHP received £1 million in funding from Chelmsford City Council.

The junction from Parkway to Broomfield Road at the West End of Chelmsford City Centre which had previously only been open to taxis and buses will be open to all road users for a test period of 18 months. The move comes after lengthy lobbying from the West End Business Association which has always claimed that the traffic measure has hindered local businesses.

There have been several small business start-ups and changes in the City Centre in January as follows: -

A Greek restaurant and takeaway Zorba the Greek has opened in Viaduct Road offering diners the delights of cuisine previously unable in the City before.

Hooga music club have closed their venue in Victoria Road after a series of complaints were made about noise and anti-social behaviour. The owners have now taken over the former Ancient Lights bar and music venue in Tindal Street opposite Bar 1 and the new music venue will be called The Loop.

Leading independent estate and letting Agent McCarthy has opened a second premises to cope with demand for their services. Their second office has just opened 152 Moulsham Street directly opposite their original premises at 74 Moulsham Street, a building they have occupied for 21 years.

Boudicca home accessories opened on the 1st February at 153 Moulsham Street and Jam kidsweat has recently opened at 160 Moulsham Street.

Essex Shoe Repairs in the High Street opposite the Meadows has been taken over by Timpson and rebranded as Timpson dry cleaning, shoe repair, key cutting, watch repairs and engraving.

Tickety Boo too in The Meadows has now closed down and vacated.

Ossaaga unisex hair saloon has recently opened at Parkway near New London Road.

Centre Management