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Media Release (with pictures)

Green shoots of growth at unique new Garden Park

PETERBOROUGH Garden Park is an innovative new venture that has been created to satisfy the needs of a growing number of people interested in gardening and other outdoor pursuits.

The Park aims to become the country's premier garden centre and leisure destination following its official opening on February 5.

Situated in an easily accessible location to the north east of Peterborough, the Garden Park is home to an exclusive Van Hage garden centre, which boasts a stunning glass atrium inspired by the beautiful glasshouses at Kew and Wisley. This dramatic architecture undoubtedly makes the Van Hage centre the focal point of Peterborough Garden Park, which also plays host to a wide variety of other high quality lifestyle retailers, including Andronicas World of Coffee, Cotswold Outdoor, Cotton Traders, Hawkins Bazaar, Hobbycraft, Le Creuset, Maidenhead Aquatics, Past Times, PBC Books and Pets Corner. In addition to its impressive retail element, the Park combines generous public spaces, display gardens, covered walkways and a play area for children, all set against a backdrop of generous landscaping.

Gordon Edington, Chairman of Peterborough Garden Park, said: "Peterborough is a growing city, but the city's strategy for growth is not for growth's sake, but to create a more dynamic city – a better city for those who live there and visit it, and Peterborough Garden Park is playing its part in achieving that.

"It is important the Park has a positive impact on the lives of the local community. One of the initiatives we have put in place to achieve this is 'Wisdom Wood', which runs down one side of the Garden Park site. This area has recently been planted with thousands of daffodils, snowdrops, bluebells, mixed crocus

and aconites. The work has been undertaken with the support of the 'Give it Back' scheme co-ordinated by Peterborough City Council Youth Offending Service and we hope that the young people involved might develop an interest in horticulture as a career option. Wisdom Wood is available as a practical outdoor learning place for local groups and over time the woods will be transformed into an ecological haven."

Business leaders across the city have welcomed the opening of the Garden Park.

Peterborough Chamber of Commerce chief executive John Bridge said: "We are delighted to have the Garden Park in Peterborough. It is a unique and interesting development that will contribute greatly to the retail and leisure experience of locals and visitors alike.

"The building is stunning and I know there has been a lot of hard work behind the scenes involving the local community in projects and respecting Peterborough's aims, including its ambition to be Environment Capital of the UK. It is well worth a visit to experience it for yourself."

Gordon added: "Even before its official launch, the development of Peterborough Garden Park boosted the local economy by creating employment opportunities. Approximately 100 people were involved in its construction and about 300 people will be employed when the Park is fully operational.

"It is also becoming increasingly important for businesses to improve their environmental credentials and Peterborough Garden Park is no exception. We are committed to keeping sustainability at the heart of our enterprise, and to this end we have incorporated green innovations such as rainwater harvesting, excellent waste management systems and stringent environmental policies for all our retailers."

For more information on Peterborough Garden Park, log onto www.peterboroughgardenpark.co.uk.

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Notes to Editors

Peterborough Garden Park is an impressive new development located just off the Eye roundabout in Peterborough. It combines the UK's premier garden centre with an exciting mix of lifestyle retailers, offering a superior retail and leisure experience all year round. Set against a backdrop of generous landscaping, Peterborough Garden Park has something for everyone, providing a day out for the whole family.

The Park combines the attributes of a traditional garden centre in Van Hage's dramatic 'Crystal Palace' premises with a mix of lifestyle retailers, including Andronicas World of Coffee, Cotswold Outdoor, Cotton Traders, Hawkins

Bazaar, Hobbycraft, Le Creuset, Maidenhead Aquatics, Past Times, PBC Books and Pets Corner. This important new retail destination for the Greater Peterborough area opens on Friday February 5, 2010.

Media contacts

Peterborough Garden Park chairman Gordon Edington and general manager Eric Kirk are happy to do interviews.

For media requests please contact Rebecca Stephens or Ruth Peasgood at Athene Communications on 01733 207334, email rebecca@athene-communications.co.uk or ruth@athene-communications.co.uk, or call 07879 633 796.

Please note, the Garden Park website www.peterboroughgardenpark.co.uk is currently a website aimed at prospective retailers. A new public-facing site goes live at the start of February.