

Strictly Embargoed until 00.01 hrs – Monday 15 April 2013

## COLD SNAP PUTS OFF SHOPPERS

UK Total Retail Footfall* % change year-on-year	High Street	Out-of-Town	Shopping Centre
March 2013	-5.2	-7.0	-4.2
Jan – Mar 13 Average	-3.2	-2.9	-4.3

\*Figures supplied by Springboard

### Summary

- Footfall in March was 5.2% lower than a year ago, a poorer performance than the 0.8% rise in February. This is the weakest performance since April 2012 when footfall declined 6.9%.
- The prolonged cold snap this year explains in part these poor figures, especially against the unseasonably warm weather in March last year.
- Footfall weakened in all locations in March compared with a year earlier. High streets reported the greatest fall (-7.0%), the weakest performance since July 2012 followed by out-of-town (-4.2%) and shopping centres (-2.4%).

**Helen Dickinson, British Retail Consortium Director General, said:** “The prolonged cold was the main culprit for deterring shoppers, especially compared against the far milder March of 2012. Although footfall did pick up around the Easter weekend, it couldn’t fully compensate for a weak showing across the month as a whole.

“High streets were hit the hardest by the cold snap, as many of us favoured shopping under shelter rather than braving the elements. In February, high streets had been the standout performer, but March saw footfall growth slumping back to subzero territory – high streets’ worst result since July 2012.

“It’s not all bad news: our March sales figures were fairly strong, even if you strip out the data for the Easter weekend which fell earlier this year than in 2012. This suggests that, when people did venture out, they bought things, although the weather brought mixed fortunes for different categories as food did well but Spring and Summer fashions fared badly. With temperatures finally showing some signs of lifting, retailers will be hoping that demand also starts to heat up for seasonal ranges and Spring shopping trips.”

**Diane Wehrle, Retail Insights Director at Springboard, said:** “Despite high streets seeing a strong performance in February, predictably the bad weather, plus the Budget and media attention given to the reform to the benefit system have hit consumer confidence.

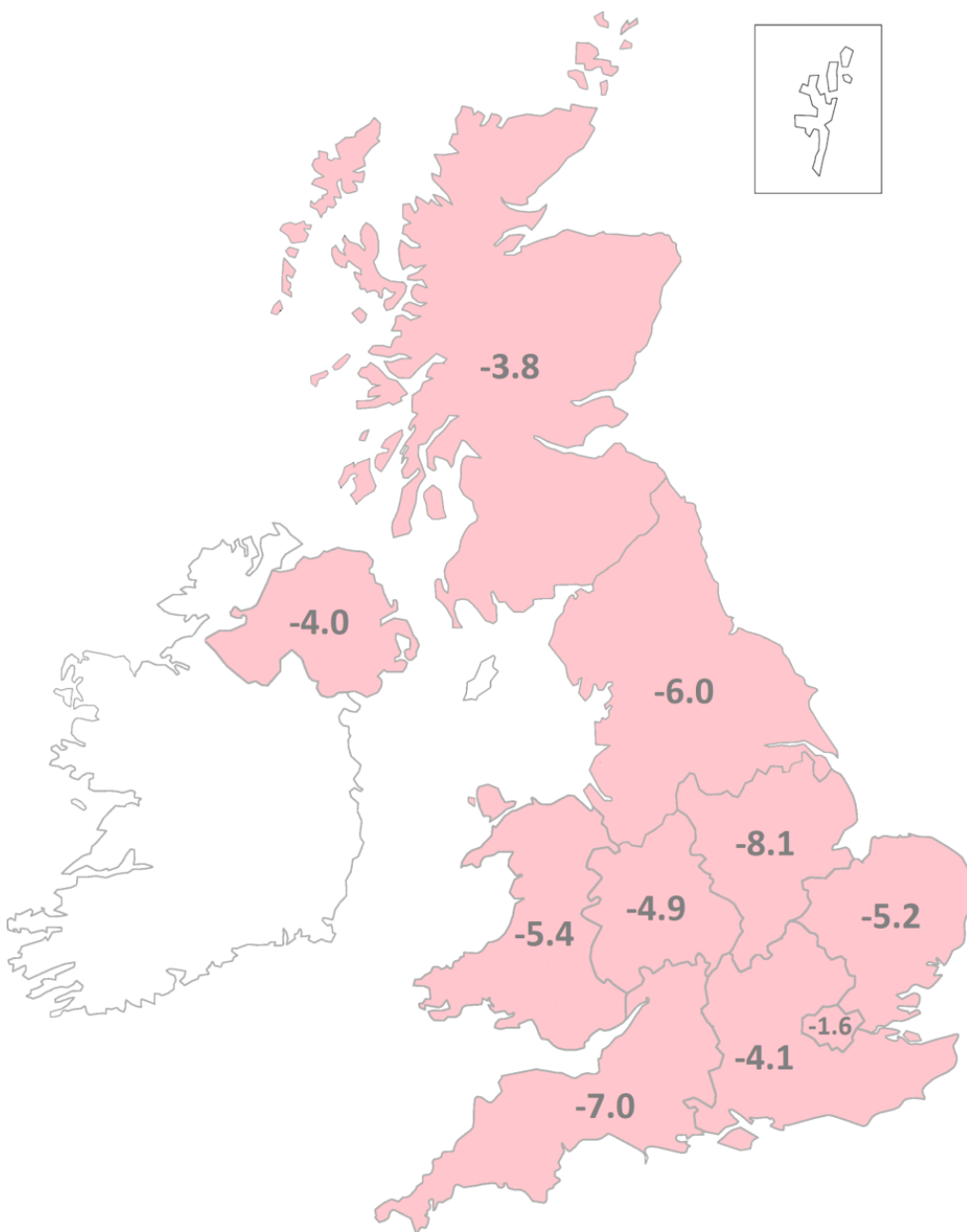
“High street footfall dropped with just one in five towns recording positive results. Moreover, the average increase amongst towns in which footfall did increase was just 6.9 per cent compared with an average decline of 11.4 per cent amongst those high streets whose footfall fell from March last year.

“It’s key to bear in mind that March 2013 was much colder than in 2012, where most of the UK experienced unseasonable soaring temperatures, whereas rain, snow and bitter cold further encouraged shoppers to stay at home.

“The final week of the month did yield some positive results, with retail park footfall significantly bolstered, up 7.9 per cent against the previous week, with home-owners taking advantage of the long Easter bank holiday to visit DIY out-of-town outlets.”

**Country and Region Analysis – Footfall % change year-on-year**

- All seven regions in England reported a decline in footfall. The East Midlands (-8.1%), South West (-7.0%) and the North and Yorkshire (-6.0%) all reported footfall below the UK average.
- On a three-month basis Greater London was the only region to report a rise in footfall, increasing 1.2%.
- Wales reported footfall lower than the UK average, down 5.4% in March. This was worse than the decline seen in Northern Ireland (-4.0%) and Scotland (-3.8%).

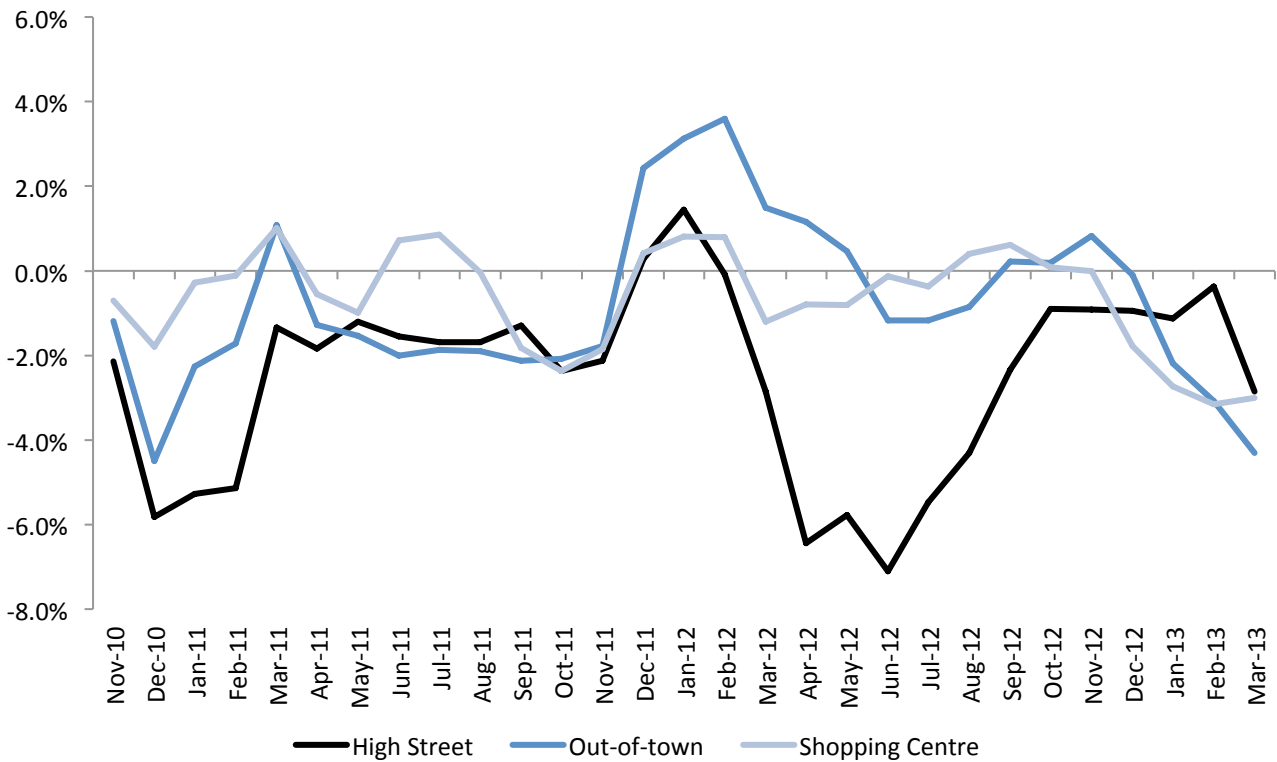


Country Analysis	
Weighted UK average	-5.2
Scotland	-3.8
Northern Ireland	-4.0
Wales	-5.4

**Country and Region Analysis – Footfall**

Country analysis	Footfall: March 2013	Footfall: Jan - Mar 2013
	% change on year ago	
<b>England</b>		
Greater London	-1.6	1.2
West Midlands	-4.9	-2.3
South East	-4.1	-3.4
South West	-7.0	-2.9
East Midlands	-8.1	-4.9
East	-5.2	-2.7
North & Yorkshire	-6.0	-5.8
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	-4.0	-0.7
<b>Wales</b>	-5.4	-4.4
<b>Scotland</b>	-3.8	-4.3
<b>Weighted UK Average</b>	<b>-5.2</b>	<b>-3.2</b>

**Footfall Graph: 3-month rolling average - % change year-on-year**



Source: BRC-Springboard

Data Tables

Footfall Data - % Change Year-On-Year: UK

	High Street	Out-of-Town	Shopping Centre	Weighted* Average
March 2012	-2.1	2.9	-0.5	-0.7
April	-12.6	-0.4	0.4	-6.9
May	-3.5	-1.7	-2.4	-2.9
June	-5.5	-1.4	1.3	-3.0
July	-7.3	-0.4	-0.4	-4.2
August	0.3	-0.6	0.1	0.0
September	-0.4	1.4	0.8	0.5
October	-2.6	-0.5	-2.1	-2.1
November	0.2	1.4	-0.2	0.4
December	-0.5	-1.0	-2.8	-1.2
January 2013	-3.3	-7.2	-5.2	-4.6
February	2.7	-1.5	-1.6	0.8
<b>March</b>	<b>-7.0</b>	<b>-4.2</b>	<b>-2.4</b>	<b>-5.2</b>
<b>Jan - Mar 13 average</b>	<b>-2.9</b>	<b>-4.3</b>	<b>-3.0</b>	<b>-3.2</b>

Footfall Data - % Change Year-On-Year: Country Analysis\*

	UK	Scotland	Northern Ireland	Wales
March 2012	-0.7	-7.8	2.0	3.9
April	-6.9	-19.1	-15.1	-2.8
May	-2.9	-9.9	-10.3	6.5
June	-3.0	-8.3	12.1	1.8
July	-4.2	-6.3	16.9	3.6
August	0.0	-7.2	22.5	7.7
September	0.5	-4.3	10.3	0.8
October	-2.1	0.0	11.5	-14.7
November	0.4	-2.0	-2.6	-15.6
December	-1.2	1.7	6.6	-7.4
January 2013	-4.6	-6.3	0.4	-6.7
February	0.8	-2.5	2.6	-0.5
<b>March</b>	<b>-5.2</b>	<b>-3.8</b>	<b>-4.0</b>	<b>-5.4</b>
<b>Jan - Mar 13 average</b>	<b>-3.2</b>	<b>-4.3</b>	<b>-0.7</b>	<b>-4.4</b>

Footfall Data - % Change Year-On-Year: Regional Analysis\*

	Greater London	South East	East Midlands	South West	East	West Midlands	North & Yorkshire
December 2012	3.2	5.0	-3.6	-5.3	-2.6	-4.1	-4.2
January	0.1	-4.0	-5.8	-1.3	-7.2	-3.7	-8.5
February	5.8	2.5	-0.1	0.7	1.5	1.6	-2.8
March	-1.6	-4.9	-4.1	-7.0	-8.1	-5.2	-6.0
<b>Jan- Mar 13 av.</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>-3.4</b>	<b>-4.9</b>	<b>-2.9</b>	<b>-2.7</b>	<b>-2.3</b>	<b>-5.8</b>

### Footfall Data - % Change Month-On-Month: UK

	High Street	Out-of-Town	Shopping Centre
March 2012	10.7	4.5	1.5
April	-2.8	1.1	0.6
May	5.0	0.1	-2.9
June	1.2	-1.2	4.2
July	3.6	1.4	-0.9
August	2.7	-1.5	1.8
September	-3.3	1.2	-1.0
October	-2.9	-0.8	1.4
November	2.1	4.9	8.2
December	8.8	7.3	19.5
January 2013	-26.4	-23.5	-30.4
February	6.5	5.5	5.5
<b>March</b>	<b>-0.4</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>0.2</b>

### Vacancy Data – Country Analysis

	UK	Scotland	Northern Ireland	Wales
July 2011	10.5	11.1	17.1	13.4
October	10.2	9.6	12.9	11.5
January 2012	10.3	9.1	14.1	11.4
April	10.9	9.0	16.6	11.1
July	10.9	10.5	18.5	15.3
October	11.3	9.9	20.0	15.1
<b>January 2013</b>	<b>10.9</b>	<b>10.2</b>	<b>17.2</b>	<b>17.0</b>

### Vacancy Data – England Analysis

	Greater London	South East	East Midlands	South West	East	West Midlands	North & Yorkshire
July 2011	6.5	11.3	9.9	7.9	8.7	10.5	13.1
October	8.2	9.3	12.7	8.0	8.3	11.0	12.5
January 2012	8.4	9.5	12.4	7.0	9.3	10.7	12.9
April	8.8	10.4	10.2	7.9	10.3	12.9	13.5
July	8.4	9.9	9.5	7.1	10.4	12.4	13.0
October	7.6	8.8	9.8	10.2	10.9	12.9	14.6
<b>January 2013</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>9.0</b>	<b>10.4</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>11.0</b>	<b>12.2</b>	<b>13.6</b>

## Notes to editors

### Footfall Measure

The BRC/Springboard Retail Footfall Monitor gathers data on customer activity in town and city centre locations, and in out of town shopping locations, throughout the UK using the latest generation automated technology. The Monitor records over 60 million footfall counts per week at over 600 counting locations in 227 different shopping sites in 142 towns and cities across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The Monitor covers the main centres in each nation/region and a representative sample of secondary and smaller town centres.

### We only have data available for the regions covered in this release.

The Monitor provides the only available broad-based measures of the footfall performance of town centre and out of town shopping locations in the UK.

\*Starting with the Monitor published in November 2012, figures are weighted by an estimate of footfall by channel (high streets, out of town and shopping centres).

\*Starting with December 2012, the country and region figures are also weighted by channel. Previous regional data is for the high street only.

### Vacancy Rates

Springboard gathers vacancy rates in towns and cities via an online survey of town centre managers in 450 locations throughout the UK. The vacancy rate is defined as the percentage of the ground floor units in the town centre that are vacant, and a vacant unit is regarded as one which is not trading at the time of the survey (whether or not it is let). The latest survey was carried out in January 2013.

Starting with the Monitor published in November 2012, vacancy rate figures are weighted by an estimate of regional retail sales.

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