



# CASE STUDY: CHESHIRE OAKS

## Marks & Spencer (M&S)

Location: Cheshire, United Kingdom

Cheshire Oaks was built ahead of the WorldGBC's work on health, wellbeing and productivity in retail, but its mission was the same: to enhance the customer experience through the design of a more sustainable environment. M&S wanted to bring the outside in by utilising natural materials and innovative engineering solutions that both improve environmental performance and provide a healthier place to shop and work.

Key features, and their environmental benefits, include:

- Hemp and lime external wall panels which have resulted in the store losing less than 1°C of heat overnight compared to 9°C in other store environments.
- 'Free cool' air delivered to sales floors via displacement air columns and below ground air distribution ducts. This is one of the strategies that has helped the store to achieve 42% lower energy consumption and 40% lower carbon emissions than a benchmark store.
- Natural light maximised throughout the store and sales floor lighting with automated daylight control, which dims the lights when possible. This has resulted in a 13% reduction in the lighting electricity consumption compared to a benchmark store.

Following completion, M&S conducted an evaluation of how Cheshire Oaks impacted colleagues and customers. It shows that many environmental features positively impacted the user experience. Highlights of this evaluation include:



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- 85% of customers surveyed found the temperature to be comfortable throughout the store, even in the food hall.
- 87% of customers found the lighting levels satisfactory throughout.
- 22% increase in satisfaction levels with the working environment from our employee satisfaction surveys compared to a benchmark store.
- A Building Users Survey (BUS) score of 6.88/7 including being placed in the top 1% of all buildings for "design" and "image to visitors", top 5% for user satisfaction and the top 7% for improved employee productivity.

M&S' work at Cheshire Oaks has demonstrated that better environmental performance and increased user satisfaction are one and the same. M&S believes it is possible to reduce environmental impacts and operational costs and, in turn, enhance the experience of colleagues and customers.

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