

We were met by Ken Francis, Bluewater’s Senior Events Co-Ordinator for our fact finding tour of the complex.

Bluewater opened its doors on March 16, 1999, rising out of a former chalk quarry among 50 metre-high cliffs with an overall site of 240 acres it is surrounded by a 50 acre landscape of lakes, parkland and trees.

There are 300 stores, over 50 bars, restaurants and cafes along with 13,000 free car parking spaces attracting millions of visitors per annum.

The design of Bluewater was carefully considered after listening to what people said and its triangular design with a flagship store at each point – Marks & Spencer, John Lewis and House of Fraser - over two levels and in between the flagship stores are three distinct shopping malls.

The Guildhall (situated between House of Fraser and John Lewis) boasts a selection of classic and high fashion retail and lifestyle stores.

The Village (situated off The Guildhall) has restaurants for fine dining, lifestyle stores and boutiques.

Rose Gallery (situated between John Lewis and Marks & Spencer) offers the best of the high street.

Winter Garden (access from Rose Gallery) houses the family dining area with something to suit all tastes.

Thames Walk (situated between Marks & Spencer and House of Fraser) showcases stores that appeal to a fashionable urban audience.

The Plaza (access from Thames Walk) boasts Showcase Cinema, Gravity Trampoline Park and a wide selection of bars and restaurants that help make the perfect end to a day out at Bluewater.

During the tour Ken pointed out some of the architectural features that are easily missed as you walk around, including a moon that casts it’s shadow on a glass globe as it travels around the frieze level of the Moon Court and a ‘Thamesometer’ which shows the actual height of the River Thames nearby. There is also a clock which comes to life on the hour and a representation of the River Thames on the floor of the Thames Walk (It includes a spelling mistake of one of the town names).

During the tour we took a break in ‘The Place of Quiet’, which provides a quiet room/prayer room. The facility is available for staff, hosts and guests to use and is easily accessed using the buzzer on the door.

At the end of the tour Ken presented us with a number of fact sheets and a large hardback book ‘Vision to Reality’ giving the history and development of Bluewater followed by a short magic act.....a very talented man indeed.



How Thing Work Members



Moon Court ‘Thamesometer’



Thames Walk



The Village



The Hour Clock



Inside The Place of Quiet with Ken