

## The Life and Death of the Shopping City

How have British cities changed in the years since the Second World War? And what drove this transformation? This innovative new history traces the development of the post-war British city, from the 1940s era of reconstruction, through the rise and fall of modernist urban renewal, up to the present-day crisis of high street retailing and central area economies. Alistair Kefford shows how planners, property developers, councils and retailers worked together to create the modern shopping city, remaking the physical fabric, economy and experience of cities around this retail-driven developmental model. This book also offers a wider social history of mass affluence, showing how cities were transformed to meet the perceived demands of a society of shoppers, and why this effort was felt to be so urgent in an era of urban deindustrialisation. By bringing the story of the shopping city right up to its present-day crisis and collapse, Kefford makes clear how the historical trajectories traced in this book continue powerfully to shape urban Britain today.

Alistair Kefford is Assistant Professor at Leiden University where he teaches history and urban studies. He was previously a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow at the Centre for Urban History, University of Leicester, and a Lecturer in Modern British History at the University of Manchester. He worked for a number of years in local government planning and continues to engage with contemporary urban policy and regeneration. His work has appeared in numerous scholarly journals of history and urban studies and his research into 'the death of the high street' has been featured in high-profile publications such as *The Financial Times*.

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# The Life and Death of the Shopping City

*Public Planning and Private Redevelopment  
in Britain since 1945*

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Alistair Kefford

*Leiden University*



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For Laura, who had to live with it.

## Contents

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<i>List of Figures</i>	page viii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	x
Introduction	1
1 Reconstructing Retail in the 1940s	29
2 Cities in the Age of Affluence	65
3 Making the Modern Shopping City	113
4 The Politics of Partnership	163
5 Landscapes of Leisure	200
6 Demand and Discontent in the Shopping City	244
7 Triumph of the Shopping City	282
Conclusion	312
<i>List of Archives and Abbreviations</i>	319
<i>Bibliography</i>	320
<i>Index</i>	337

## Figures

---

1.1 Schematic depicting shopping hinterlands of urban centres in the South West.	<i>page</i> 45
1.2 Schematic of suggested layout of city centre shopping district.	48
1.3 Schematic of suggested layout of urban shopping blocks.	49
1.4 Photograph of new David Greig store in Canterbury, 1954.	53
1.5 Illustration of proposed shopping district.	55
2.1 Illustration of Arndale shopping precinct at Mastrick, Aberdeen, 1958.	89
2.2 Bristol Broadmead shopping area under construction, photograph, 1952.	96
2.3 Lewis's store, Bristol Broadmead, photograph, early 1960s.	97
2.4 Advertising image of new C&A store in Oxford Street, London, 1959.	102
2.5 Menswear department in Plymouth's Dingles department store, photograph, 1951.	103
2.6 Dingles department store, Royal Parade, Plymouth, photograph, 1951.	105
2.7 Advertisement for C&A casual wear, 1957.	108
2.8 Crowds attending gala opening of Dingles department store, Plymouth, photograph, 1951.	109
3.1 Image of Shipley's town centre redevelopment, 1965.	118
3.2 Image of Shipley's new Market Square, 1965.	119
3.3 Image of Shipley's Arndale shopping centre, 1965.	120
3.4 Birmingham's Bull Ring complex under construction, photograph, 1962.	130
3.5 Nottingham's Broadmarsh complex, aerial photograph, 1975.	132
3.6 Architectural sketch of Liverpool St. John's precinct, 1968.	133
3.7 Leeds Merrion Centre complex, photograph, 1966.	134
3.8 Leeds Merrion Centre, entrance, photograph, 1967.	140
3.9 Illustration of Liverpool St. Johns precinct, 1969.	141

List of Figures	ix
3.10 Frontage of Leeds Merrion centre complex.	146
3.11 Schematic showing land values in central Cardiff, 1961.	159
4.1 Birmingham Bull Ring opening ceremony, photograph, 29 May 1964.	171
4.2 Central Manchester during Arndale redevelopment, aerial photograph, 1971.	175
4.3 Liverpool St. John's precinct, photograph, 1975.	191
5.1 Internal arrangements at Birmingham Bull Ring, photograph, 1964.	206
5.2 Artist's impression of interior of Doncaster Arndale centre, 1965.	208
5.3 Newcastle's Eldon Square complex, interior, photograph, 1986.	221
5.4 Promotional event in Birmingham Bull Ring, photograph, 1964.	225
5.5 Central concourse, Birmingham Bull Ring, photograph, 1965.	228
5.6 Newcastle's Eldon Square, internal mall, photograph, 1976.	230
6.1 Interior of new Fine Fare supermarket, Birmingham, photograph, 1964.	247
6.2 Leeds Corporation's Seacroft shopping precinct, photograph, 1967.	258
6.3 Birmingham's redeveloped Bull Ring district, photograph, 1964.	271
7.1 Gateshead MetroCentre, aerial photograph, 1996.	287
7.2 Interior of Trafford centre, Greater Manchester, photograph, 1998.	298
7.3 Glasgow's St. Enoch centre, photograph, 1989.	301
7.4 Queen Elizabeth touring Bolton's market place shopping centre, photograph, 1988.	309



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