

SPORTS DIRECT

West Thurrock, Essex

Design: The One Off; Brinkworth
Opening date: July 2018
Store size: 9,290 sq m

Retail giant Sports Direct has unveiled its new multimillion pound 'Beyond Sport' store concept at Lakeside Retail Park in West Thurrock, Essex. Designed in collaboration with The One Off, the 9,290 sq m site includes dedicated lifestyle areas with video technology, an enhanced USC fashion store and an adjacent luxury Flannels store.

In a fast-paced project spanning 12 months, The One Off worked with Sports Direct and its brands to deliver a total revolution of the in-store experience.

'The new Sports Direct store focuses on an elevated customer experience and an enhanced premium value offer,' explains Sally Smith, client services director at The One Off. 'The design concept combines easy-to-shop product displays, improved in-store communication and navigation with functional aspects such as large-scale changing rooms, and a universal fixture system allowing leading brands prominence in store.'

A key focus for the concept was to



deliver a dedicated women's destination in store, enhancing the appeal to women. 'To support this, and her journey through the store, the team have introduced female lifestyle photographic and video imagery to work alongside the diverse range of products available,' says Smith.

The new concept sees a category-led approach, with open drive aisles and clear sight lines. A universal merchandising system ensures each brand has equal prominence, making it an easier shopping experience for customers. Densely merchandised unitary has been replaced with kit that better balances stock quantity while retaining the choice and value

expected from Sports Direct.

'The Sports Direct customer base are extremely loyal to the brand,' continues Smith. 'The new store will enhance the experience of those customers, while appealing to a new broader customer on the search for the most premium range of products at the best possible price.'

Footwear walls are key destinations in store, each with bespoke graphics to help support the range of products on display.

In response to customer feedback, the new store also features a number of gender-neutral changing rooms, complete with 360-degree digital mirrors. The Beyond Sport concept has involved designing >



from the ground up to create a retail store that focusses on the needs of both the customer and store staff,' explains Richard Collier, creative partner at The One Off. 'A flexible retail system allows brands to easily showcase new products whilst ensuring the store remains agile with the ability to be updated quickly and cost-effectively. Key areas include the home of football area with club zone, recharge areas for both men and women, and a playful graffiti-inspired kids zone with selfie mirror.'

The USC streetwear and fashion concept on the first floor has been recreated by design agency Brinkworth, and positioned as 'US Collective', to include a new brand-edit featuring leading fashion labels such as Champion, Tommy Hilfiger and Diesel.

'We are working to create the ultimate shopping destination for the lifestyle consumer, spanning football boots all the way to luxury fashion,' says Michael Murray, head of elevation at Sports Direct. 'The premium space we have developed at Thurrock enables us to give customers a compelling and diverse opportunity to shop.' **RF**

