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HOLLAND & BARRETT OPENS 200 NEW STORE-IN-STORES IN ASIA AND ANNOUNCES 60 NEW STORE OPENINGS IN THE UK IN 2017

Holland & Barrett International, Europe's leading health food retailer, has today announced the opening of 200 new store-in-stores in Hong Kong in a new partnership with A S Watson, Asia's leading health and beauty retailer, as well as commitment to open 60 new stores this year in its home markets of the UK and Ireland.

The new openings and new partnership will bring the total number of Holland & Barrett stores around the world to 1,385, of which 761 are in the UK and 624 across 15 overseas markets. Within that total, the Holland & Barrett international franchise network now totals 378 high street stores and branded shop-in-shops across the world, including recent openings in India, China and now Hong Kong, where the 200 new shop-in-shops are already open and trading in existing A S Watson stores.

Holland & Barrett announced last year its aim to be a £1billion turnover business by 2020 and is on track to achieve that with 31 consecutive quarters of like-for-like growth since 2008, finishing the 2016 calendar year with 12% growth for that final quarter.

Peter Aldis, Holland & Barrett International CEO, commented: "We are enormously pleased that we are continuing to expand our business both in the UK and overseas at a time when many retail minds are fixed on the challenges of Brexit and the impact of rising business rates. Europe remains a very important market for us and of course there remain some concerns about the impact of Brexit on trading, though some 20% of our income is in euros which means we are able to bring funds for reinvestment back into the UK.

"Our focus however has always been global and our combined acquisition and franchise expansion model has been tried and tested successfully both in our domestic as well as international markets. We have recently agreed to opening a further 25 new Holland & Barrett concessions in Tesco stores here in the UK this year to add to the 13 that are already operating. Overseas, our new deal with A S Watson adds to our recent expansion across India with a similar concession approach and also in markets such as China and Singapore, where we operate under a more traditional franchised approach with fully serviced and branded high street stores. Our model for international growth shows the value we place on our brand as a strong British business that remains resolute in expansion, despite the changing political climate."

Peter Aldis was speaking at the formal opening of Holland & Barrett's largest ever store in its portfolio, in Manchester Market Street. The new store is the latest in its new 'More' store concept which allows the retailer to experiment with new shopping concepts, many of which have already proved very successful in other More stores around the UK and include vegan nail bars, on-the-go protein shake stations, cereal stations and fruit and nut pick n mix stations.

Peter Aldis added: "Our new More store in Manchester Market Street is over five times larger than our average stores and the shift to providing customers with store formats in this size shows our confidence in the growing demand for our innovative health and wellness propositions on Britain's high streets. We have invested heavily in click and collect and other technology to ensure we are an effective and competitive omnichannel retailer, but we remain firmly of the view that bricks and mortar continues to have a future provided investment keeps propositions fresh and relevant for today's consumers. Speaking as a shopkeeper, I am particularly excited by the fact in our new Manchester store we have our very first escalator! Its simple things like this that prove how far the business has come in the past ten years."

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Notes to Editors:

For further information or images of the new Holland & Barrett More store, please contact the team at Pegasus on hollandandbarrett@thisispegasus.co.uk - 01273 712000, or call Duncan Mackenzie-Reid on 07776257170.