

EMBARGOED 20<sup>th</sup> June 2023

## **BRENT CROSS TOWN TO DEBUT EUROPE'S FIRST INDOOR BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL DESTINATION**

Brent Cross Town, one of Europe's largest net-zero regeneration schemes being delivered in partnership between Related Argent and Barnet Council, announces that the first UK indoor destination for baseball and softball, *The 108*, will open in the Autumn 2023.

In the UK currently around twenty thousand people play baseball and softball. A major barrier to the growth of baseball and softball in the UK is access to a facility that permits year-round practice and coaching. *The 108's* offer aims to radically change the baseball and softball landscape in the UK by broadening the base of involvement and improving the quality of the game with its access to year-round participation.

At 40,000 sq ft, *The 108* will offer training facilities for everyone ranging from professional teams and elite training, to youth and social games, indoor softball and casual hitting practice and anyone wanting to try out the sport for the first time. As well as its playing facilities, it will have a food and beverage offer, big screens to watch games, a retail store for baseball merchandise and space to host parties and events.

A first of its kind in Europe, *The 108* encompasses 4 dual-sport batting cages equipped with HitTrax, which provides state-of-the-art hitting simulation that can test and measure your launch angle, exit velocity and distance and full size adult infield (the area of a baseball field enclosed by the three bases and home plate).

*The 108* is a new brand in the UK established by baseball enthusiasts, Maxwell Trautman and Michael Wakelam. It is supported by the UK's governing bodies for baseball and softball and Major League Baseball. It is anticipated *The 108* will support BaseballSoftballUK, the national development agency for baseball and softball in the UK, by hosting its annual winter academies for both baseball and softball, as well as winter indoor softball leagues. The announcement of *The 108* comes as London prepares to welcome Major League Baseball, with its London Series coming to Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park's London Stadium on 24 and 25 June.

Baseball has been growing in the London Borough of Barnet with Herts Baseball Club establishing its north-west London team at the borough's Basing Hill Park in 2019, a close neighbour of Brent Cross Town, located just to the east across Hendon Way. In 2022, Brent Cross Town's Community Fund supported the club providing funding for the purchase of a baseball pitching machine. The 108 founders, Michael Wakelam and Maxwell Trautman have been active members of the Herts Baseball Club for many years. With the new facility in Brent Cross Town,

Michael and Maxwell will be working to ensure more children and young people are introduced to the sport by offering opportunities including free taster sessions for local schools.

Brent Cross Town is an ideal location for *The 108*. Already well connected with existing transport links into Central London, the venue will benefit from the new Brent Cross West station opening in Autumn 2023 which connects locations from Bedford to Brighton and will link with King's Cross St Pancras in as little as 12 minutes.

**Morwenna Hall, Partner at Related Argent**, said: "It is fantastic to be welcoming *The 108* to Brent Cross Town and an exciting first for London, the UK and for the local community. *The 108* is a great new amenity for the area, providing a fun and accessible way of getting involved in baseball, whether you're experienced or a beginner. It also underpins our commitment to creating the place in London for play and sport offering a variety of different experiences and opportunities for the local community."

**Leader of Barnet Council, Councillor Barry Rawlings**, said: "*The 108* baseball facility will be a unique new addition to Barnet right next to our new Brent Cross West station which is due to open in the Autumn. It will give local residents the opportunity to try something new, and another reason for Londoners to visit the Borough of Fun!"

***The 108's* Michael Wakelam and Maxwell Trautman**, said: "We're tremendously excited to be able to bring *The 108* to Brent Cross Town and Greater London. As passionate baseball fans our goal has always been make baseball and softball more accessible to both those aiming to reach elite levels in the sport and those wanting to try these great sports for the first time. See you at *The 108!*"

**Ben Ladkin, MD of Major League Baseball Europe**, added: "We're really excited to see further evidence of the growth of baseball and softball in the UK with the announcement of this fantastic new facility and are looking forward to working with *The 108* and the UK baseball and softball community to grow the game. With the return of the London Series this year it's definitely a big year for baseball in the UK."

**-ENDS-**

#### **Notes to Editors**

##### **1. About Brent Cross Town**

Brent Cross Town is the neighbourhood at the heart of the Brent Cross Cricklewood regeneration programme. It is a joint venture between Related Argent and Barnet Council to develop a large-scale mixed-use development including new homes, retail and office space, as well as improved schools and

greenspaces in the area. Early work started on site in early 2020 and construction is also underway on the new Brent Cross West station which is expected to open in autumn 2023. Building on the strengths of this diverse part of the city, Brent Cross Town will draw inspiration from the best of London's long-established neighbourhoods with all their complexity and character.

At its heart, will be a focus on sport, play, health and well-being. The new neighbourhood will provide 6,700 homes, state-of-the-art workspace for over 25,000 people, and pedestrian friendly streets and squares with local shops and restaurants that will complement the offer at Brent Cross Shopping Centre. The community will be supported by first-class public transport infrastructure, a new and improved network of walking and cycle routes and a series of new parks and other amenities. [www.brentcrosstown.co.uk](http://www.brentcrosstown.co.uk) @brentcrosstown

Related Argent is making four significant pledges for Brent Cross Town:

- To create the place in London to participate in sport and play: with indoor facilities and 50 acres of parks, Brent Cross Town will provide the best of both traditional and emerging sports, working with leading sports organisations, governing bodies and hero ambassadors to help drive female participation and champion diversity and inclusion.
- To make a new North London town where all can flourish. Brent Cross Town will launch a Flourishing Index which will pioneer the measurement of how individuals and communities flourish in a town centre. Partnering with Manchester University and Buro Happold, this approach represents a landmark moment in designing a development for mental health and wellbeing and demonstrates that Brent Cross Town is at the forefront of people-centred design.
- To be a net zero carbon town by 2030. This will be achieved by driving down the embodied carbon in buildings and infrastructure, the carbon used in energy supply and offsetting the remainder. Partnering with Vattenfall, Brent Cross Town will deliver reliable and affordable zero carbon heating to homes, shops and businesses.
- To strengthen existing connections, both locally and into Central London; connecting businesses, customers, friends and family. Brent Cross Town is in an enviable location – 12 minutes to Central London, immediate access to the M1 and 5 major airports within one hour. Locally, new pedestrian and cycle routes will integrate Brent Cross Town with its surrounding communities.

## **2. About Related Argent**

In 2015, Argent and Related joined forces to create an unrivalled UK property business and urban regeneration specialist. The company brings together the expertise and track record of Argent – the developer behind some of Britain's most successful mixed-use places, and Related – one of the most innovative and prolific real estate companies in the US. The combined experience delivering ground breaking projects such as King's Cross in London, Hudson Yards and Deutsche Bank Center in New York, Brindleyplace in Birmingham, The Square in West Palm Beach, Florida and The Grand LA in Los Angeles is brought to bear on each of the projects.

Related Argent operates across a range of property sectors including residential, workspace, education, shopping, hospitality and leisure. Its work goes beyond bricks and mortar development. It also specialises in the services, facilities and experiences that are so important to urban life – art, culture, events, schools, skills & training programmes and renewable energy networks.

Related Argent is one of the UK's leading developer-owner-operators and, since its inception eight years ago, has rapidly grown a £9Bn+, 12m sq ft mixed-use development pipeline. This includes major regeneration projects in London, at Brent Cross Town and Tottenham Hale, as well as a Build-to-Rent (BtR) scheme at King's Cross, known as 'Author King's Cross'. It's accessing global capital markets to deliver major new projects across the UK and is seeking to expand its BtR housing portfolio. On 1 May 2024, Argent will transfer all employees, projects and assets to Related Argent Limited.

Related Argent's vision is to be a great city builder – for people, planet, and prosperity and its purpose is to improve urban life for all, everyday. This means developing for the long term - astutely, sustainably and with a sense of social purpose. Related Argent is delivering the places, homes, workspace, public space, arts, culture, events and services that our UK cities and town centres need. [www.argentllp.co.uk](http://www.argentllp.co.uk)

3. For more information about the **MLB World Tour: London Series 2023**, visit: <https://www.queenelizabetholympicpark.co.uk/whats-on/events/2023/06/mlb-world-tour-london-series>