

# Old malls claim new records

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28 Sep 2009

The opening of the biggest shopping centre in the Eastern Cape has apparently not yet made a dent in the number of shoppers frequenting East London's existing malls.

Despite fears by East London's existing malls that there would be an exodus of shops to Hemingways - or that shoppers would desert their former favourite haunts in favour of the newest mall in town - their numbers show that not to be the case.

Vincent Park shopping centre manger Joseph Parsley said one store was said to be moving to Hemingways, but other tenants were staying put.

Regarding the number of customers at the centre on Thursday 24 September 2009, a public holiday, he said there was a 21 percent increase of shoppers on foot compared to the same time last year.

And there was an increase of 14% in car numbers from the same time last year.

"In 2008 we had over 25331 shoppers on foot, and this year we saw 30998," said Parsley.

"Last year we had over 6045 cars entering the centre while this year we had 6889 cars."

Beacon Bay's Retail Park centre manager Ursula Pape confirmed that three of their stores were relocating.

NWJ Jewellers, The Flight Centre and Truworths were going.

"We are sad to lose these tenants, but we have interest from other line stores and nationals to take up these stores and don't foresee any vacancies going forward."

The number of shoppers at Retail Park yesterday, Sunday 28 September 2009, showed an increase of between 11% and 15% when compared to Heritage Day last year.

"However, due to the style of the centre we do not track foot traffic, we monitor turnover and customer counts," Pape said.

Mdantsane City manager Nobubele Ncube said that they had recorded a 67% increase in foot traffic compared to the same time last year.

“Mdantsane City’s foot traffic remained in good numbers with over 20000 visitors recorded,” she said.

“Our parking is free and does not provide a vehicle count, but the vehicle numbers occupying our bays have shown a substantial increase, which is on par with the growth realised both in foot traffic and turnover.”

At least one of their stores would be relocating to the new mall.

Ncube could not confirm that Spitz was moving from the Mdantsane Mall, but a sign in the window seen by the *Daily Dispatch* indicated that this was the case.

Ncube also said: “We are confident that the people of Mdantsane will continue to embrace the centre as their shopping world, as we are offering them convenience as we are right on their own turf.”

*Source: Daily Dispatch*

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