

VIA Outlets awarded 5 Star rating in 2021 GRESB Benchmark

Award follows on from launch of 'Beyond Sustainable' strategy

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19 October, 2021 – VIA Outlets – leading owner-operator in redefining the outlet shopping experience with a portfolio of eleven premium outlet centres in nine European countries – has achieved a 5 Star Rating in the 2021 GRESB Real Estate Assessment. The score is the highest available and a true recognition for being an industry leader in sustainability, placing VIA Outlets amongst the top 20 percent in the industry.

VIA Outlets scored 92 points, a seven-point increase from last year that places the company above both the total GRESB and peer group average in all categories. VIA Outlets placed as number nine out of 31 non-listed European Retail Shopping Centres, reflecting its commitment to making a lasting positive contribution to the places in which it owns and manages outlet centres.

VIA Outlets recently launched its sustainability strategy 'Beyond Sustainable' to guide corporate activities to create an even more positive and regenerative approach to outlet shopping. The strategy is based on a 4-pillar approach encompassing a range of identified issues: Sustainable Buildings, Resilient Communities, Conscious Consumers and Engaged Stakeholders.

The company's most recent sustainability initiative was the launch of Re.Love, a new, sustainable pop-up initiative offering sustainable collections and initiatives from existing brands and new brand partners. The first store opened in Freeport Lisboa Fashion Outlet on 3 September, followed by a second opening in Batavia Stad Fashion Outlet in Amsterdam on 15 October. Each store will remain open for a minimum 3 months and further roll-out of the initiative across the rest of the portfolio will follow.

Geert Paemen, Group Sustainability Director, commented: "This year's GRESB score is the result of VIA Outlet's increased engagement with tenants on sustainability issues, whether it be resource consumption, shop-fits or brand partners' responsible fashion initiatives – as well as the use of the CRREM tool to set targets for the reduction of each Centre's energy consumption and GHG emissions – all in line with what is required from the commercial real estate industry to limit the effects of climate change.

“In order to continue reducing our environmental footprint and generating positive social impact, we work together with all of our stakeholder – suppliers, brand partners, guests and local authorities – as this allows us to maximise the impact of our actions. Special recognition also goes to all employees in our Centres across Europe, who have each contributed to our sustainability targets within their own professional realm. Although external recognition such as the GRESB score is a great motivator, our commitment to the wellbeing of the communities we are part of goes much further. We are particularly keen to involve our guests through initiatives such as the Re.love popup stores and our Sustainability Days, which aim to increase the awareness of and preference towards a sustainable shopping experience.”

Otto Ambagtsheer, Chief Executive Officer, added: “The GRESB benchmark once again puts VIA Outlets at the top of the league in terms of sustainability, proving that our long-term commitment to sustainability and ESG initiatives is creating tangible and measurable results. This is highly encouraging as we continue implementing our sustainability strategy across everything we do as a business.”

GRESB assesses and benchmarks the environmental, social and governance performance of real assets worldwide and monitors the sector’s progress towards global sustainability goals. The GRESB Assessments are guided by what investors and the industry consider to be material issues in the sustainability performance of real asset investments and are aligned with international reporting frameworks, goals and emerging regulations.

Ends
