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News Release

ASDA SET TO INVEST OVER £500m IN 2012

- *Asda is set to invest over £500m in 2012, opening new stores and depots and developing its existing chain*
- *25 planned new stores and three depots set to create up to 5,000 jobs in local communities across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.*
- *Asda able to provide over 30,000 job opportunities in the Asda team in 2011, despite colleague turnover reaching at an all time low*
- *Prime Minister David Cameron welcomes Asda's commitment to creating jobs and investing in people.*

Asda today [23 January] announced that it will invest over £500m in its UK stores and depots in 2012, helping create up to 5,000 new jobs across the country.

The supermarket confirmed plans to open 25 new stores across and three depots in 2012 – as well as extend and refurbish 43 of its existing stores.

Prime Minister David Cameron has welcomed the announcement, saying;

"The additional investment and 5,000 new jobs announced by Asda today will be a real boost for the economy and more importantly for people around Britain seeking jobs.

"I also welcome Asda's commitment to not only create jobs but invest in their staff too; offering employees the chance to join an apprenticeship scheme to gain skills which will benefit them throughout their career."

Asda's new stores will add over 600,000 square feet of net selling space to Asda, through superstores, small format supermarkets and Asda Living – all offering the same consistent low Asda prices, regardless of where customers choose to shop.

The depots, will add additional capacity and efficiency to Asda's logistics network, enabling it to meet planned organic growth. The new depot in Rochdale will service chilled and frozen products to stores along the M62 corridor. The replacement depot in Scotland increases capacity for delivery of groceries to stores in Scotland and Northern Ireland. The investment in Yorkshire will upgrade a depot that originally formed part of the Netto chain into a state-of-the-art 'cross dock' allowing products to be shipped in and out in minimal time.

Over the past five years, Asda's distribution team have delivered almost 25 per cent more products, despite driving 19m fewer miles – these three new depots take an additional one million miles off the road.

Asda expects its investment plans for 2012 to create around 5,000 new jobs for local people, with eligible colleagues given having the opportunity to undertake a City and Guilds apprenticeship.

The new recruits will join the 30,000 plus colleagues who joined the Asda team in 2011 through new jobs and recruitment into existing vacancies. These include over 14,000 young people and over 8,500 recruited through Job Centre Plus.

Asda, which is part of the world's biggest retailer Walmart, currently employs over 180,000 people in 528 stores and depots across the UK, and is the second largest supermarket in the UK – despite having significantly fewer stores than its main competitors.

Asda's investment and job creation plans were unveiled during a UK visit by President and CEO of Walmart International, Doug McMillon.

Sharing the news at its main centre in Leeds, Doug told colleagues:

“Our continued investment is because we see a tremendous opportunity in front of us – I’m proud of the difference you’re making and that we can make an even bigger difference in the lives of our customers and the communities we serve”.

Andy Clarke, President and CEO of Asda said;

“I am delighted to be able to start 2012 on such a positive note, doing what we do best - creating new jobs, working with new communities and bringing Asda's low prices to families who need the value we can bring.

“I look forward to seeing these new stores and depots open for business and welcoming new colleagues and customers to our team.”

Ends

Further information: Tori Pourzand, Asda Press Office, 0113 826 2829

Online media centre: www.asda.com/presscentre

Notes to Editors

- Asda is the second largest supermarket in the UK with 17.2 percent market share [Source, Kantar Worldpanel for 12 weeks to 25 December 2011]. Asda operates out of 528 stores across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales – employing over 180,000 colleagues.
- In 2011 Asda completed the transformation of all Netto's UK stores into Asda Supermarkets, creating a division of around 180 small format stores, all offering the same low Asda prices as their larger counterparts.
- Asda became part of the Walmart family in July 1999 and over the past 13 years has opened 296 stores and increased employment by over 100,000. Speaking at the IGD conference in October, Asda CEO and President Andy Clarke announced a new initiative called “Community Life” to support Asda's long standing commitment to support local communities. Thirty one stores have piloted the programme, which sees colleagues offering meeting rooms to local community groups, volunteering in local communities and fundraising for good causes. The programme will roll out into all stores in 2012.
- Stores currently scheduled for 2012 opening include:

England

Bootle, Orrell Lane, Merseyside
Coventry, Daventry Road, West Midlands
Gateshead (Asda Living), Tyne & Wear
Harworth, Nottinghamshire
Mitcham, Merton
Ramsgate, Kent
Shepshed, Leicestershire
Todmorden, West Yorkshire
Tunbridge Wells, Kent (opened Jan 12)
Worcester, Worcestershire
Worthing- Littlehampton Rd, West Sussex

Scotland

Inverness Slackbuie, Highlands
Larkhall, South Lanarkshire
Tain, Highlands

Wales

Bangor, Gwynedd