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Final for immediate release

Launch of course to help find independent fine food and drink retailers of the future

The Guild of Fine Food and leading property developer Land Securities have joined forces to offer a course to help owners of prospective delis and farm shops learn how to set up a successful business.

Retail Ready is a two-day training programme designed to equip people with the business essentials of fine food and drink retailing. It runs delegates through the process of opening their own store – from leasing and legal issues to health and safety, store fit-out and merchandising.

This week the Guild ran the first pilot workshop which was sponsored by Land Securities and which included access to senior representatives from its leasing, legal and operations departments who were on hand to offer their guidance and advice.

The idea was born following Land Securities' experience in dealing with independent retailers at its quadruple award-winning Princesshay shopping centre in Exeter, Devon.

Commercial Director of Land Securities, Ronan Faherty said: *"At Land Securities we are passionate about the retail offer in our centres, and we work closely with all our retailers because success for them equals success for us too. Our experience with recent developments such as Exeter has shown there are some people out there with great ideas for a business venture, but they have little awareness of some of the realities or the pitfalls of opening and running their own business. This course aims to guide them through the whole process and help turn their dream into a successful, profitable business venture."*

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National Director of the Guild of Fine Food, Bob Farrand, said: *“Passion and conviction are the qualities that spur budding retailers to start independent delicatessens and farm shops. But as essential as these qualities may be, on their own they cannot guarantee long-term financial success. To help ensure the commercial return The Guild has developed Retail Ready.”*

The first course run in central London attracted 16 delegates from across the UK and Ireland. More are planned as part of a further roll-out of the programme.

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Notes to Editors:

- Retail Ready builds on The Guild of Fine Food’s 15 years’ experience in the industry.
- Retail Ready provides you with all you need to know to start achieving profitability with your deli or farm shop. Highlights include: how to write a business plan, financial planning, basic employment law, effective marketing, sourcing and managing suppliers, stock control and pricing.
- Retail Ready begins with an intensive two-day residential course delivered by business experts with many years experience of the fine food and drink sector. This is supported by a workbook enabling you to distance learn reinforcing your two days, leading to an assessment and issuing of a Guild of Fine Food diploma.

Land Securities Group PLC

- Land Securities is the UK’s leading Real Estate Investment Trust with a national portfolio of commercial property worth around £12 billion. Our investment portfolio also has over 50 retail parks and shopping centres including Bristol’s Cabot Circus, Birmingham’s Bullring centre and Exeter’s quadruple award-winning Princesshay site.
- Land Securities’ multi billion pound development programme is transforming regional city centres including Cardiff and Leeds, key Central London sites and delivering long-term, large-scale regeneration projects in the South East.
- Half of the Land Securities’ portfolio is in London, where it owns landmark buildings such as the Piccadilly Lights and Westminster City Hall, and is developing some of the capital’s most innovative mixed-use schemes, such as One New Change in Mid-town and Park House on Oxford Street.

- Land Securities is the principal name in property outsourcing and partnerships through Land Securities Trillium, which is one of the most established and innovative names in property outsourcing. We focus on understanding our customers' business and property requirements and meeting them through excellent service and innovation. We manage and provide services to numerous commercial properties nationwide, for a growing number of companies and government departments.

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