



Halfords Group plc Pre-Close Statement

Halfords Group plc (“the Group”), the UK’s leading retailer of automotive and leisure products and services and leading independent operator in garage servicing and auto repair, today updates the market on its trading performance for the 11 and 52-week periods to 29 March 2013:

	11 weeks % change	52 weeks % change
TOTAL REVENUE		
Halfords Group	+1.7	+1.0
Retail	+0.5	-0.9
Autocentres	+7.8	+13.5
LIKE-for-LIKE (LfL) REVENUE		
Halfords Group	+0.4	+0.3
Retail	+0.3	-0.7
<i>Cycling</i>	-8.8	-0.6
<i>Car Maintenance</i>	+10.4	+5.1
<i>Car Enhancement</i>	-4.0	-4.2
<i>Travel Solutions</i>	-5.5	-6.8
Autocentres	+0.8	+7.0

Key Points for the 11-week Period

The prolonged winter period resulted in a year-on-year change in the sales mix in the period, benefitting Car Maintenance whilst having a marked dampening effect on our outdoor-focused categories, such as Cycling and Travel Solutions.

- Cycling: a delayed start to the season, though Premium Cycle sales were resilient and online parts, accessory and clothing sales increased by 26.5% ahead of the full-scale online launch this year
- Car Maintenance: a strong performance with 3Bs parts sales up 26.3% and fitting penetration up 10.6% pts to 39.4%, benefitting from the strategic **wefit** focus
- Car Enhancement: Sat Nav sales flat with growth in Audio not enough to offset the decline in Car Cleaning
- Travel Solutions: reduced demand for outdoor products were partly mitigated by winter-related accessory sales such as snow chains and shovels
- Online Retail: a 13.4% increase in sales reflected a 24.7% increase in Sat Nav revenues
- Autocentres: 12 centres opened in the period but fleet sales remain under pressure

FY13 Expectations

The Board anticipates Group Profit Before Tax for the year ended 29 March 2013 to remain in line with prior assumptions within the range of £68-72m. The Group’s financial position is sound; as previously highlighted, we have focused on exiting old inventory as we invest for the new financial year.

Matt Davies, Chief Executive, commented:

“This was a robust performance demonstrating how the balance of our business can offset some variations in the weather. Car Maintenance sales were strong as we helped motorists cope with the freezing conditions and this endorses our strategy of investment in our unique **wefit** offer. Cycling and Travel Solutions were impacted in the period but we have a strong offer ready for the spring and summer periods.

We are focused on significantly improving the service we offer customers and this emphasis will be central to our future investments. I look forward to outlining our plans to secure sustainable revenue growth through our three-pillared strategy at our preliminary results on 23 May.”

Notes

1. Like-for-like sales represent revenues from UK and Irish stores and UK centres trading for greater than 365 days.
2. Where appropriate, revenues denominated in foreign currencies have been translated at constant rates of exchange.
3. Group Profit Before Tax is before non-recurring items.
4. The timing of Easter is estimated to have benefitted the Halfords Retail LfL performance by 1.2% points in the 11-week period and by 0.2% points over the full year.

Enquiries

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Conference Call

There will be a conference call for investors and sell-side analysts at 8.30am today. The participant dial-in is 0203 139 4830 or 0808 237 0030 (toll free). The PIN is 36255058#.

To access a recording of the call, the participant dial-in is 020 3426 2807 or 0808 237 0026 (toll free). The PIN is 637044#. A transcript of the call will appear online in due course.

Reporting Calendar

The Halfords Group preliminary results will be published on 23 May 2013.

13-week Period to 29 March 2013

The table below outlines performance for the 13-week period ending 29 March 2013:

	13 weeks % change
TOTAL REVENUE	
Halfords Group	+3.4
Retail	+2.5
Autocentres	+7.9
LIKE-for-LIKE (LfL) REVENUE	
Halfords Group	+2.3
Retail	+2.5
<i>Cycling</i>	-3.4
<i>Car Maintenance</i>	+11.2
<i>Car Enhancement</i>	-2.2
<i>Travel Solutions</i>	-4.0
Autocentres	+1.7

Historic Performance

To give context to the recent changes in the reporting of third and fourth quarter trading, the table below outlines performance in financial year 2012 for the 11 and 13-week periods ended 30 March 2012:

	11 weeks % change		13 weeks % change
TOTAL REVENUE			
Halfords Group	+0.8		+0.3
Retail*	-2.0		-2.2
Autocentres	+17.2		+15.6
LIKE-for-LIKE (Lfl) REVENUE			
Halfords Group	-0.3		-0.8
Retail*	-1.9		-2.3
Cycling	+5.0		+5.7
Car Maintenance	+5.2		+3.1
Car Enhancement	-14.9		-14.5
Travel Solutions	-4.4		-4.2
Autocentres	+9.0		+8.2

*Retail' at the time of original publication was described as 'UK/ROI Retail'

Notes to Editors

www.halfords.com
www.halfordscompany.com
www.halfordsautocentres.com

Halfords Group plc

The Group is the UK's leading retailer of automotive, leisure and cycling products and through Halfords Autocentres also one of the UK's leading independent car servicing and repair operator. Halfords customers shop at more than 460 stores in the UK and Republic of Ireland and at halfords.com for pick-up at their local store or direct home delivery. Halfords Autocentres operates from more than 280 sites nationally and offers motorists dealership-quality MOTs, repairs and car servicing at affordable prices.

Halfords employs approximately 12,000 colleagues and sells around 10,000 product lines in stores, increasing to around 15,000 lines online. The product offering encompasses significant ranges in car parts, cycles, in-car technology, child seats, roof boxes, outdoor leisure and camping equipment. Halfords own brands include the in-store *Bikehut* department, for cycles and cycling accessories, *Apollo* and *Carrera* cycles and exclusive UK distribution rights of the premium-ranged *Boardman* cycles and accessories. In outdoor leisure, we sell a premium range of camping equipment, branded *URBAN Escape*. Halfords offers customers expert advice and a fitting service called "**wefit**" for car parts, child seats, satellite navigation and in-car entertainment systems, and a "**werepair**" service for cycles.

Cautionary Statement

This report is based on information from unaudited management accounts and contains certain forward-looking statements with respect to the financial condition, results of operations, and businesses of Halfords Group plc. These statements and forecasts involve risk, uncertainty and assumptions because they relate to events and depend upon circumstances that will occur in the future. There are a number of factors that could cause actual results or developments to differ materially from those expressed or implied by these forward-looking statements. These forward-looking statements are made only as at the date of this announcement. Nothing in this announcement should be construed as a profit forecast. Except as required by law, Halfords Group plc has no obligation to update the forward-looking statements or to correct any inaccuracies therein.