

**Press Release – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
5 January 2010**

**Locations of Ancient Woolworths Stores follow
Precise Geometrical Pattern**

Matt Parker, based in the School of Mathematical Sciences at Queen Mary, University of London, has analysed the locations of the 800 Woolworths stores to reveal precise geometric patterns. This was based on the work of Mr Tom Brooks (a retired marketing executive of Honiton, Devon) who found similar patterns in prehistoric monuments across the UK.

Mr Brooks looked at 1500 sites and found that some of them follow geometric patterns and he concluded that they must have been part of a sophisticated navigational system. This was reported in the UK national press on 5 January 2010, with the Daily Mail reporting that the patterns were so “sophisticated and accurate” that “he does not rule out extraterrestrial help.”

Matt Parker then decided to apply this technique to another ancient and mysterious civilisation: that of the Woolworths stores.

“We know so little about the ancient Woolworth stores, but we do still know their locations” explains Matt Parker, “so I thought that if we analysed the sites we could learn more about what life was like in 2008 and how these people went about buying cheap kitchen accessories and discount CDs.”

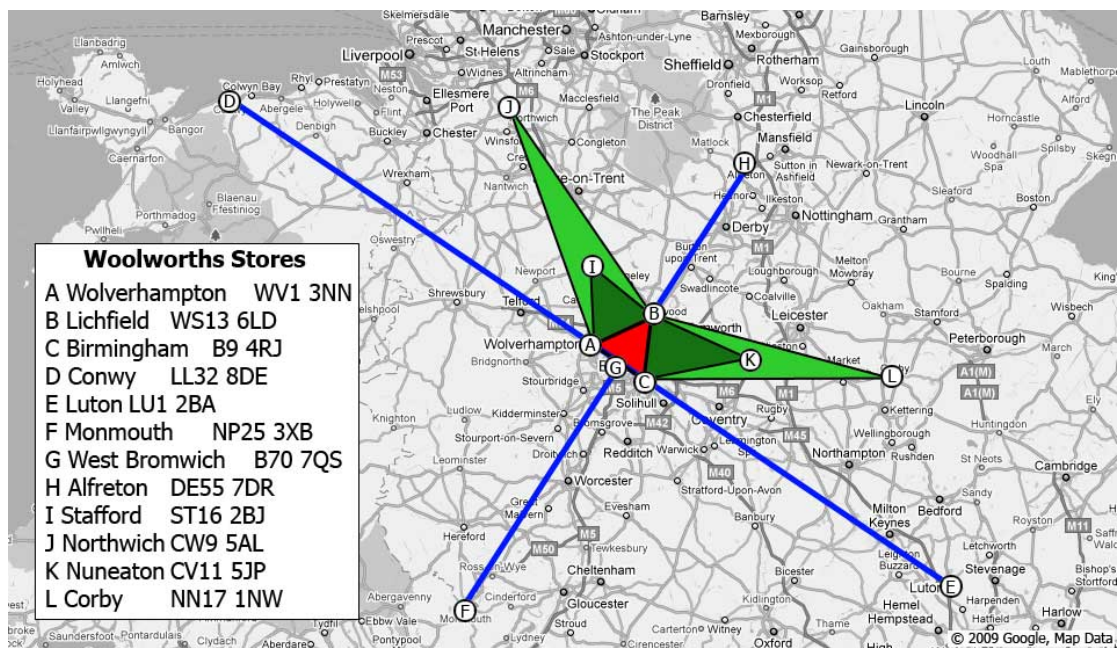
The results revealed an exact and precise geometric placement of the Woolworths locations. Three stores around Birmingham formed an exact equilateral triangle (Wolverhampton, Lichfield and Birmingham stores) and if the base of the triangle is extended, it forms a 173.8 mile line linking the Conwy and Luton stores. Despite the 173.8 mile distance involved, the Conway Woolworths store is only 40 feet off the exact line and the Luton site is within 30 feet. All four stores align with an accuracy of 0.05%.

The bisector of this same triangle then passes through the Monmouth, West Bromwich and Alfreton store locations with an accuracy of 0.5%. There are also grids of isosceles triangles – those with two sides of equal length – on each side of the Birmingham Woolworths Triangle. One such isosceles triangle made with Stafford only has an error of 3% and it points directly at the Northwich Woolworths store that is itself only 0.6% off being exactly isosceles.

Matt Parker concludes that “these incredibly precise geometric patterns mean that the people who founded the Woolworths Empire must have used these store locations as a form of ‘landmark satnav’ to help hunters find their nearest source of cheap sweets that can be purchased in whatever mix they chose to pick. Well, that or the fact that in any sufficiently large set of random data it is possible to find meaningless patterns of any required accuracy.”

These patterns were found from the 800 random ex-Woolworths locations by simply skipping over the vast majority of the sites and only choosing the few that happen to line-up. Matt Parker claims he could find many more such patterns, but he had some actual real work to do. He does envy Mr Tom Brooks though, who with 1500 locations, had almost twice as much data to pull meaningless patterns from.

“It is extremely important to look at how much data people are using to support an argument” Matt Parker warned. “For example, the case for global warming covers vast amounts of comprehensive evidence, but it is still possible for people to search through the data and find a few isolated examples that appear to show otherwise.”



ENDS

Notes for Editors

Contact:

Matt Parker

matt@standupmaths.com

Ph. (+44) 7962 466288

Contact Matt Parker for high resolution images and for versions without Google Maps copyright. All location data and calculations are also available.

Low-res map showing locations and patterns:

<http://standupmaths.com/images/woolworths-locations.jpg>

Higher-res map showing locations and patterns:

<http://standupmaths.com/images/woolworths-locations-googlemap.jpg>

Copyright free map showing locations and patterns:

<http://standupmaths.com/images/woolworths-locations-blankmap.jpg>

Blank background showing locations and patterns:

<http://standupmaths.com/images/woolworths-locations-blank.jpg>

Original media coverage of Mr Tom Brooks' findings:

<http://www.metro.co.uk/news/807855-did-prehistoric-satnav-help-britons-find-their-way>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-1213400/Ancient-man-used-stone-sat-nav-navigate-country.html>