# Market Town Benchmarking

Measuring the performance of town centres

## Ponteland

## 2013 Report

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the social enterprise focusing on the needs of towns across Britain

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Retail**

- 32% of the units in the town centre are A1 Shops which is noticeably lower than the National (53%), Regional (53%) and Typology (51%) averages. 25% of the units are A2 Financial and Professional Services, 11% higher than the National average.
- 77% of the A1 shops in Ponteland are Independent/ Regional which is higher than the Regional figure of 65%, whilst 24% have a nationwide presence.
- 57% of the A1 Shops in the town centre sell Comparison goods. Traditional retail theory suggests that a good balance of Comparison and Convenience Shopping is anything over a two thirds Comparison offering.
- 91% of town centre users visited Ponteland at least once a week and 70% by 'Car', 17% higher than the National Small Towns average.
- 30% of those surveyed spent £20.01-£50.00 on a normal visit to Ponteland, 10% higher than the National Small Towns figure.
- 84% of town centre users stayed in the town centre for under 2 hours.
- 78% of Post Codes gathered were from those who lived in Ponteland, higher than the Regional (57%), National (53%) and Typology (50) figures.

**Vacancy rates:**

- 7% of the units in the defined town centre were vacant at the time of the audit. To place this data in context, in March 2014 the Local Data Company reported that the vacancy rate in all town centres across Great Britain was 14%.

**Footfall:**

- Footfall in Ponteland on a Market Day is 61 persons per 10 minutes, whilst on a Non Market Day the figure drops to 36. Both sets of figures are lower than the Regional, National and Typology averages. For example, the National Small Towns average is double that of Ponteland on a Market Day and the Non Market Day average is 90 compared to 36 for the town centre.

**Car Parking:**

- All of the car parking in Ponteland is in designated car parks, 59% of which is for 'Short Stay' use.

- Overall, on a Market Day 29% of all car parking is vacant, whilst this figure increases to 34% on a Non Market Day. Both sets of figures are very similar to the National, Regional and Typology averages. In February 2013 at a British Parking Conference it was outlined that a 15% vacancy level indicates that the pricing and provision levels are set correctly.

**Users Views:**

- 81% of town centre users rated the cleanliness of the town centre as either ‘Good’ (66%) or ‘Very Good’ (15%).
- Replicating the National trends, ‘Access to Services’ (87%), ‘Convenience e.g. near where you live’ (74%) and ‘Ease of walking around the town centre’ (72%) were classed as the most positive aspects of the town centre. Interestingly 71% of respondents stated ‘Restaurants’, 27% higher than the National average.
- 58% of town centre users rated the ‘Leisure and Cultural activities’ in Ponteland as ‘Good’.
- 46% of town centre users rated the ‘Variety of Shops’ in Ponteland as ‘Poor’ a 10% increase on the National Small Towns figure.
- 46% of town centre users felt that the ‘Physical appearance’ (46%) of the town centre was a negative aspect, 17% higher than the National average, whilst 41% stated ‘Markets’, 37% ‘Shopping’ and 37% ‘Transport links’. The ‘Markets’ and ‘Transport Links’ figures are noticeably higher than the Regional, National and Typology averages
- The two key themes to emerge from the town centre users suggestions on what improvements should be made were ‘Physical Improvements’ and revamping the ‘Merton Way Shopping Centre’.

## INTRODUCTION

### The Approach

AMT Town Benchmarking has been developed to address the real issues of how to understand measure, evaluate and ultimately improve town centres. The approach offers a simple way of capturing data on 12 Key Performance Indicators selected by those involved in town centre management. By having the tools to measure performance, strategic decision making is both encouraged and improved. By considering performance, forward strategies and action planning can be more focused and effective.

AMT Town Benchmarking licenses allow users to collect data on the 12 Key Performance Indicators from 1st January to 31st December in a systematic manner. All license holders are provided with a Town Benchmarking Handbook and associated data collection sheets to ensure standardization. Once the data has been collected it is sent to amt-i, the research division of national membership organization and registered charity Action for Market towns for analysis and report production.

### The System

The Benchmarking system is divided into two sections:

- Large Towns; consisting of those localities with more than 250 units
- Small Towns; consisting of those localities with less than 250 units

Towns, depending on their size, contribute to either the Large or Small Town analysis. Ponteland with 70 units is classed as a Small Town.

The analysis provides data on each KPI for the Benchmarked town individually and in a Regional, National and where possible Typology context.

- Regional figures are an amalgamation of the data for all the towns in a specific region.
- The National figure is the average for all the towns which participated in Benchmarking during 2013.
- The Typology analysis refers to the data for the individual town against all of the other towns who have been classified in the same typology by the Rural Evidence Research Centre at Birkbeck College. Ponteland is classed as a Typology 1 town.

Information on towns contributing to Benchmarking in 2013, whether they are part of the Large or Small Town cohort, Region and Typology can be found within the Appendix.

**The Reports**

The Annual AMT Town Benchmarking report provides statistical analysis of each of the KPI's. Individual towns are encouraged to add their own commentary to the analysis, noting specific patterns or trends and using local knowledge to provide specific explanations.

The reports are used by a variety of key stakeholders such as local authorities, town and parish councils, local partnerships and universities to;

- Benchmark clusters of towns to ascertain high performers / under achievers
- understand their locality in a Regional, National and Typology context
- measure town centre performance year on year
- identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement
- measure the impact of initiatives and developments within the town centre
- act as an evidence base for funding applications
- create an action plan for town centre improvements

## METHODOLOGY

Each KPI is collected in a standardized manner as highlighted in the Table below.

| KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR | DATA COLLECTION METHODOLOGY |
|---|---|
| KPI 1: Total number of commercial units | Visual Survey |
| KPI 2: Retail by Comparison/Convenience | Visual Survey |
| KPI 3:Key attractors / multiple trader representation | Visual Survey |
| KPI 4: Number of vacant units | Visual Survey |
| KPI 5: Number of markets / traders | Visual Survey |
| KPI 6 and 7: Zone A Retail Rents and Prime Retail Property Yields | Valuation Office Agency/ Local Commercial Agents |
| KPI 8: Footfall | Footfall Survey on Market Day and Non Market Day |
| KPI 9: Car Parking Availability and Usage | Audit on Market Day and Non Market Day |
| KPI 10: Business Confidence Survey | Postal Survey |
| KPI 11: Town Centre Users Survey | Face to Face Surveys/ Online Survey |
| KPI 12: Shoppers Origin Survey | Shoppers Origin Survey |

Before any KPI data is collected the core commercial area of the town centre is defined. The town centre area thus includes the core shopping streets and car parks attached or adjacent to these streets.

## KEY FINDINGS

### KPI 1: Total Number of Commercial Units

It is important to understand the scale and variety of the “commercial offer” throughout the town. A variety of shops and a wide range of services in a town are important to its ability to remain competitive and continue to attract customers. Sustaining a balance between the different aspects of buying and selling goods and services ensures that the local population (and visitors from outside) can spend time and money there, keeping the generated wealth of the town within the local economy. Importantly, it forms the employment base for a substantial proportion of the community too, helping to retain the population rather than lose it to nearby towns and cities.

The following table provides a detailed breakdown of each of the Use Classes.

**Table of Use Classes**

| Class | Type of Use | Class Includes: |
|---|---|---|
| A1 | Shops | Shops, retail warehouses, hairdressers, travel and ticket agencies, post offices (but not sorting offices), pet shops, sandwich bars, showrooms, domestic hire shops, dry cleaners, funeral directors and internet cafes |
| A2 | Financial and professional services | Financial services such as banks and building societies, professional services (other than health and medical services) including estate and employment agencies and betting offices |
| A3 | Restaurants and Cafés | Food and drink for consumption on the premises- restaurants, snack bars and cafes |
| A4 | Drinking establishments | Public houses, wine bars or other drinking establishments (but not nightclubs) |
| A5 | Hot food takeaways | Sale of hot food for consumption off the premises |
| SG | Sui Generis ("unique" establishments) | Theatres, hostels providing no significant element of care, scrap yards. Petrol filling stations and shops selling and/ or displaying motor vehicles. Retail warehouse clubs, nightclubs, laundrettes, taxi business, amusement centres, casinos, haulage yards, transport depots, veterinary clinics, dog parlours, tanning and beauty salons and tattoo studios. |
| B1 | Business | Offices (other than those that fall within A2) research and development of products and processes, light industry appropriate in a residential area |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| B2 | General Industrial | Use for industrial process other than one falling within class B1 (excluding incineration purposes, chemical treatment or landfill or hazardous waste) |
| B8 | Storage and Distribution | Warehouses, includes open air storage |
| C1 | Hotels | Hotels, boarding and guest houses where no significant element of care is provided (excludes hostels) |
| C2 | Residential Institutions | Residential care homes, hospitals, nursing homes, boarding schools, residential colleges and training centres. |
| C2A | Secure Residential Institution | Use for a provision of secure residential accommodation, including use as a prison, young offenders institution, detention centre, secure training centre, custody centre, short term holding centre, secure hospital, secure local authority accommodation or use as a military barracks. |
| D1 | Non residential institutions | Clinics, health centres, crèches, day centres, schools, art galleries (other than for sale or hire), museums, libraries, halls, places of worship, church halls, law court. Non residential education and training centres. |
| D2 | Assembly and leisure | Cinemas, music and concert halls, bingo and dance halls (but not nightclubs), swimming baths, skating rinks, gymnasiums or area for indoor or outdoor sports and recreations (except for motor sports, or where firearms are used). |

The following table provides a detailed analysis of the commercial offering in the town centre by Use Class. The figures are presented as a percentage of the 65 occupied units recorded.

| | Ponteland % | North East Small Towns % | National Small Towns % | Typology 1% |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **A1** | 32 | 53 | 53 | 51 |
| **A2** | 25 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| **A3** | 11 | 9 | 8 | 9 |
| **A4** | 8 | 5 | 4 | 4 |
| **A5** | 3 | 4 | 5 | 4 |
| **B1** | 5 | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| **B2** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **B8** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **C1** | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| **C2** | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **C2A** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **D1** | 11 | 6 | 6 | 7 |
| **D2** | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| **SG** | 2 | 5 | 5 | 4 |
| **Not Recorded** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

32% of the units in the town centre are A1 Shops which is noticeably lower than the National (53%), Regional (53%) and Typology (51%) averages. 25% of the units are A2 Financial and Professional Services, 11% higher than the National average.

**KPI 2: Retail by Comparison / Convenience**

A1 Retail units selling goods can be split into two different types Comparison and Convenience.

**Convenience goods** – low-cost, everyday items that consumers are unlikely to travel far to purchase. Defined as;

- food and non-alcoholic drinks
- tobacco
- alcohol
- newspapers and magazines
- non-durable household goods.

2. **Comparison goods** – all other retail goods.

- Books
- Clothing and Footwear
- Furniture, floor coverings and household textiles
- Audio-visual equipment and other durable goods
- Hardware and DIY supplies
- Chemists goods
- Jewellery, watches and clocks
- Bicycles
- Recreational and Miscellaneous goods
- Hairdressing

The presence of a variety of shops in a town centre is important to its ability to remain competitive and continue to attract customers. A balance of both comparison and convenience retail units is therefore ideal in terms of encouraging visitors / potential customers.

| | Ponteland % | North East Small Towns % | National Small Towns | Typology 1% |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Comparison** | 57 | 76 | 79 | 72 |
| **Convenience** | 43 | 24 | 21 | 28 |

57% of the A1 Shops in Ponteland town centre sell Comparison goods. Traditional retail theory suggests that a good balance of Comparison and Convenience Shopping is anything over a two thirds Comparison offering.

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**KPI 3: Key attractors / multiple trader representation**

The vitality of a town centre depends highly on the quality and variety of retailers represented. National retail businesses are considered key attractors and are particularly important in terms of attracting visitors and shoppers to a town. However, the character and profile of a town often also depends on the variety and mix of independent shops that can give a town a "unique selling point" and help distinguish it from other competing centres. A sustainable balance of key attractors and multiple names alongside local independent shops is therefore likely to have the greatest positive impact on the vitality and viability of a town.

The following shops are considered Key attractors by Experian Goad.

| **Department Stores** | **Clothing** |
|---|---|
| BHS | Burton |
| Debenhams | Dorothy Perkins |
| House of Fraser | H & M |
| John Lewis | New Look |
| Marks and Spencer | Primark |
| | River Island |
| **Mixed Goods Retailers** | Topman |
| Argos | Topshop |
| Boots | |
| TK Maxx | **Other Retailers** |
| WH Smith | Carphone Warehouse |
| Wilkinson | Clarks |
| | Clintons |
| **Supermarkets** | HMV |
| Sainsbury's | O2 |
| Tesco | Superdrug |
| Waitrose | Phones 4 U |
| | Vodafone |
| | Waterstones |

Multiple traders have a countrywide presence and are well known household names. Regional shops are identified as those with stores / units in several towns throughout one geographical region only and Independent shops are identified as those that are specific to a particular town.

| | Ponteland % | North East Small Towns % | National Small Towns % | Typology 1% |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Key Attractor** | 5 | 8 | 6 | 7 |
| **Multiple** | 19 | 27 | 19 | 25 |
| **Regional and Independent** | 77 | 65 | 75 | 68 |

77% of the A1 shops in Ponteland are Independent/ Regional which is higher than the Regional figure of 65%, whilst 24% have a nationwide presence.

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**KPI 4: Number of vacant units**

Vacant units are an important indicator of the vitality and viability of a town centre. The presence of vacant units over a period of time can identify potential weaknesses in a town centre, whether due to locational criteria, high rent levels or strong competition from other centres.

| | Ponteland % | North East Small Towns % | National Small Towns % | Typology 1% |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Vacant Units** | 7 | 9 | 8 | 7 |

7% of the units in the defined town centre were vacant at the time of the audit. To place this data in context, in March 2014 the Local Data Company reported that the vacancy rate in all town centres across Great Britain was 14%.

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**KPI 5: Number of markets / traders**

Good quality markets provide competition and choice for consumers. A busy and well-used street market can therefore be a good indicator of the vitality of a town centre. Conversely, if a market is in decline (e.g. empty pitches reducing numbers), it can be an indication of potential weaknesses in the town centre e.g. a lack of footfall customers due to an inappropriate retail mix or increased competitor activity. Street markets can also generate substantial benefits for the local economy. Markets can also provide a local mechanism for a diverse range of local enterprises to start, flourish and grow, adding to the sustainable mix of shops services on offer throughout the town.

| | Ponteland | North East Small Towns | National Small Towns | Typology 1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Average number of traders at a market** | 6 | 15 | 17 | 10 |

6 market traders were present at the time of the Audit which is lower than the Regional (15), National (17) and Typology (10) figures.

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**KPI 6 and 7: Zone Retail Rents and Prime Retail Property Yields**

The values for prime retail property yield and Zone A rentals are the "industry" benchmarks for the relative appeal of a location with its users and with the owners or investors in property. All real estate has a value and this value is based on the return on investment that can be levered out of the site. As these indicators rise and fall, they provide a barometer of success or failure and, because the same property dimensions are assessed to determine them, they can be used as an indicator of improving or declining fortunes for towns. In particular retail rents can provide a useful indication of a town's performance and highlight how attractive it is to businesses. Conversely, where rents are falling it can be an indicator of decline.

Zone A rents are expressed as £ per sq. ft. and the Prime Retail Property Yield is a Net Percentage figure.

| | Ponteland | North East Small Towns | National Small Towns | Typology 1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Zone A** | 13 | 28 | 27 | 27 |
| **% Net Yield** | n/a | 8 | 8 | 8 |

National Small Towns Zone A rent figures were more than double those provided for Ponteland. (£13 per sq. ft)

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**KPI 8: Footfall Counts**

The arrival and movement of people, whether as residents, workers, visitors or a shopper is vital to the success of the majority of businesses within the town centre. The more people that are attracted to the town, the better it trades and the more prosperous the businesses in it become, provided there is ample available disposable income in that population. Measuring passing people in a consistent manner in the same place, at the same time builds up a picture of the town, its traders and their relative success over the weeks and months.

The following table provides the average number of people per 10 minutes between 10am and 1pm from the busiest footfall location in the town, outside Gills Golden Fish and Chips, Merton Road.

| | Ponteland | North East Small Towns | National Small Towns | Typology 1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Market Day** | 61 | 154 | 122 | 91 |
| **Non Market Day** | 36 | 115 | 90 | 67 |

The table highlights that footfall in Ponteland on a Market Day is 61 persons per 10 minutes, whilst on a Non Market Day the figure drops to 36. Both sets of figures are lower than the Regional, National and Typology averages. For example, the National Small Towns average is double that of Ponteland on a Market Day and the Non Market Day average is 90 compared to 36 for the town centre.

Individual footfall counts are provided in the table below.

| Outside Gill's Golden Fish and Chips, Merton Road | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Time** | **Market Day** | **Time** | **Non Market Day** |
| **10.00-10.00** | 46 | **10.00-10.00** | 36 |
| **11.00-11.10** | 67 | **11.00-11.10** | 39 |
| **12.00-12.10** | 71 | **12.00-12.10** | 34 |
| **Total** | **184** | **Total** | **109** |
| **Average** | **61** | **Average** | **36** |

**KPI 9: Car Parking Availability and Usage**

These days a large proportion of spending customers in a town centre come by car. In the rural setting, the car tends to be an essential tool, used by both those who come to spend and those who come to work. The provision of adequate and convenient car parking facilities is therefore a key element of town centre vitality. An acceptable number of available spaces with a regular, quick turn-over for shoppers are the ideal while adequate longer stay, less convenient spaces for local owners/ workers and visitors must be considered too.

The following tables provide a summary of the Car Parking offering broken down into the;

- Provision of total number of spaces in designated car parks
- Provision of total number of short stay, long stay and disabled spaces in designated car parks
- Percentage of vacant spaces in designated car parks on a Busy/ Market Day and on a Quiet/ Non Market Day.

| | Ponteland | Ponteland % | North East Small Towns % | National Small Towns % | Typ. 1% |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Car Park:** | | | | | |
| **Total Spaces:** | 241 | 100 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| **Short Stay Spaces: (4 hours and under)** | 141 | 59 | 52 | 40 | 56 |
| **Long Stay Spaces: (Over 4 hours)** | 89 | 37 | 41 | 45 | 37 |
| **Disabled Spaces:** | 11 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 4 |
| **Not Registered** | 0 | 0 | 3 | 11 | 3 |
| **Vacant Spaces on a Market Day:** | 69 | 29 | 26 | 29 | 28 |
| **Vacant Spaces on a Non Market Day:** | 83 | 34 | 33 | 38 | 36 |

All of the car parking in Ponteland is in designated car parks, 59% of which is for 'Short Stay' use.

Overall, on a Market Day 29% of all car parking is vacant, whilst this figure increases to 34% on a Non Market Day. Both sets of figures are very similar to the National, Regional and Typology averages. In February 2013 at a British Parking Conference it was outlined that a 15% vacancy level indicates that the pricing and provision levels are set correctly.

**KPI 10: Business Confidence Survey**

The aim of the Business Confidence Survey is to establish an understanding of the economy of the town. By establishing the trading conditions of the town centre businesses efforts can be focussed on looking at issues which are of concern and how to improve them.

The following tables are based on the 6 responses from the Business Confidence Survey.

Please note surveys were distributed to all occupied units in the Business Database. Due to the low response rate commentary has not been added under the tables.

| | Ponteland % | North East Small Towns % | National Small Towns % | Typology 1% |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **What is the nature of your business?** | | | | |
| **Retail** | 50 | 41 | 59 | 50 |
| **Financial/ Professional Services** | 0 | 24 | 18 | 21 |
| **Public Sector** | 0 | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| **Food and Drink** | 33 | 19 | 12 | 17 |
| **Other** | 17 | 14 | 10 | 8 |
| **What type of business are you?** | **Ponteland %** | **North East Small Towns %** | **National Small Towns %** | **Typology 1%** |
| **Multiple Trader** | 0 | 10 | 11 | 17 |
| **Regional** | 17 | 8 | 6 | 13 |
| **Independent** | 83 | 82 | 83 | 71 |

| How long has your business been in the town? | Ponteland % | North East Small Towns % | National Small Towns % | Typology 1% |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Less than one year | 0 | 5 | 7 | 6 |
| One to five years | 33 | 19 | 21 | 21 |
| Six to ten years | 17 | 14 | 15 | 15 |
| More than ten years | 50 | 63 | 57 | 58 |

| Compared to last year has your turnover…….?, | Ponteland % | North East Towns % | National Small Towns % | Typology 1% |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Increased | 67 | 33 | 38 | 30 |
| Stayed the same | 17 | 34 | 34 | 32 |
| Decreased | 17 | 33 | 28 | 39 |

| Compared to last year has your profitability…….? | Ponteland % | North East Small Towns % | National Small Towns % | Typology 1% |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Increased | 50 | 26 | 30 | 32 |
| Stayed the same | 17 | 34 | 37 | 27 |
| Decreased | 33 | 40 | 33 | 41 |

| Over the next 12 months do you think your turnover will…….? | Ponteland % | North East Small Towns % | National Small Towns % | Typology 1% |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Increase | 17 | 33 | 44 | 33 |
| stay the same | 67 | 50 | 40 | 42 |
| Decrease | 17 | 17 | 16 | 24 |

| What are the positive aspects of having a business located in the town? (Multiselect) | Ponteland % | North East Small Towns % | National Small Towns % | Typology 1% |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Prosperity of the town | 80 | 39 | 45 | 56 |
| Labour pool | 0 | 8 | 10 | 7 |
| Environment | 40 | 26 | 30 | 40 |
| Geographical location | 80 | 45 | 49 | 51 |
| Mix of retail offer | 40 | 26 | 39 | 33 |
| Potential tourist customers | 40 | 41 | 41 | 36 |
| Potential local customers | 80 | 80 | 78 | 82 |
| Affordable housing | 20 | 9 | 8 | 4 |
| Transport links | 40 | 24 | 26 | 36 |
| Car parking | 60 | 35 | 39 | 51 |
| Rental values/property costs | 0 | 11 | 16 | 7 |
| Market(s) | 0 | 14 | 18 | 24 |
| Other | 0 | 4 | 5 | 0 |

| What are the negative aspects of having a business located in the town? (Multiselect) | Ponteland % | North East Small Towns % | National Small Towns % | Typology 1% |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Prosperity of the town | 0 | 25 | 17 | 12 |
| Labour pool | 40 | 8 | 6 | 7 |
| Environment | 20 | 7 | 5 | 5 |
| Geographical location | 0 | 6 | 7 | 2 |
| Mix of retail offer | 20 | 22 | 19 | 24 |
| Potential tourist customers | 0 | 7 | 7 | 15 |
| Potential local customers | 20 | 3 | 3 | 5 |
| Affordable housing | 40 | 7 | 10 | 12 |
| Transport links | 40 | 21 | 14 | 10 |
| Car parking | 60 | 53 | 53 | 49 |
| Rental values/property costs | 60 | 37 | 35 | 49 |
| Market(s) | 20 | 12 | 10 | 7 |
| Local business competition | 0 | 20 | 18 | 29 |
| Competition from other places | 60 | 36 | 33 | 54 |
| Competition from the Internet | 40 | 35 | 39 | 49 |
| Other | 0 | 9 | 7 | 7 |

| Has your business suffered from any crime over the last 12 months? | Ponteland % | North East Small Towns % | National Small Towns % | Typology 1% |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Yes** | 17 | 22 | 26 | 28 |
| **No** | 83 | 78 | 74 | 72 |
| **What type of crime has your business suffered over the last 12 months (Multiselect)** | **Ponteland %** | **North East Small Towns %** | **National Small Towns %** | **Typology 1%** |
| **Theft** | 100 | 46 | 72 | 77 |
| **Abuse** | 0 | 13 | 13 | 15 |
| **Criminal damage** | 0 | 46 | 39 | 15 |
| **Other** | 0 | 15 | 6 | 15 |

**What TWO suggestions would you make to improve the economic performance of the Town Centre?**

- "Rate reduction. Revamp/ Regeneration of current retail units."
- "Transport links. Public transport. Need to move with the times with new businesses."
- "New precinct. A lot more houses, and affordable ones, we need more people in the village."
- "Encouraging non food/ licensed premises."

**KPI 11: Town Centre Users Survey**

The aim of the Visitor Satisfaction Survey is to establish how your town is seen by those people who use it. By asking visitors, of all types, a more detailed picture can be obtained as what matters to regular visitors (i.e. locals who pop in every day or work in town) can be very different to someone who has never been to the place before. For the first group signage is not an issue, for example, and the second may not worry about fear of night time crime.

The following tables are based on the 162 responses from the paper based and online Town Centre Users Survey.

| | Ponteland % | North East Small Towns% | National Small Towns% | Typ. 1% |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Gender** | | | | |
| **Male** | 53 | 42 | 38 | 51 |
| **Female** | 47 | 58 | 62 | 49 |
| **Age** | | | | |
| **16-25** | 1 | 6 | 8 | 2 |
| **26-35** | 7 | 10 | 10 | 7 |
| **36-45** | 8 | 19 | 17 | 8 |
| **46-55** | 22 | 21 | 19 | 25 |
| **56-65** | 24 | 24 | 20 | 25 |
| **Over 65** | 38 | 20 | 26 | 32 |

| What do you generally visit the Town Centre for? | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Work | 15 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| Convenience Shopping | 48 | 51 | 42 | 46 |
| Comparison Shopping | 0 | 4 | 5 | 2 |
| Access Services | 18 | 15 | 17 | 17 |
| Leisure | 11 | 10 | 13 | 12 |
| Other | 9 | 6 | 9 | 8 |

48% of town centre users visited Ponteland for ‘Convenience Shopping’.

| How often do you visit the Town Centre | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Daily | 31 | 29 | 29 | 32 |
| More than once a week | 46 | 43 | 39 | 46 |
| Weekly | 14 | 16 | 15 | 14 |
| Fortnightly | 5 | 4 | 5 | 4 |
| More than once a Month | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| Once a Month or Less | 3 | 6 | 7 | 4 |
| First Visit | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 |

91% of town centre users visited Ponteland at least once a week.

| How do you normally travel into the Town Centre? | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| On Foot | 27 | 36 | 37 | 32 |
| Bicycle | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Motorbike | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Car | 70 | 56 | 53 | 62 |
| Bus | 2 | 6 | 6 | 4 |
| Train | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Other | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| **On average, on your normal visit to the Town Centre how much do you normally spend?** | | | | |
| Nothing | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| £0.01-£5.00 | 11 | 11 | 13 | 12 |
| £5.01-£10.00 | 21 | 24 | 26 | 20 |
| £10.01-£20.00 | 25 | 30 | 32 | 28 |
| £20.01-£50.00 | 30 | 24 | 20 | 29 |
| More than £50.00 | 11 | 7 | 6 | 9 |

70% of town centre users visited Ponteland by ‘Car’, 17% higher than the National Small Towns average.

30% of those surveyed spent £20.01-£50.00 on a normal visit to Ponteland, 10% higher than the National Small Towns figure.

| How do you rate the physical appearance of the town centre? | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Very Good** | 8 | 11 | 17 | 21 |
| **Good** | 52 | 49 | 58 | 55 |
| **Poor** | 33 | 28 | 20 | 20 |
| **Very Poor** | 7 | 12 | 6 | 4 |
| **How do you rate the cleanliness of the town centre?** | | | | |
| **Very Good** | 15 | 10 | 16 | 21 |
| **Good** | 66 | 55 | 63 | 66 |
| **Poor** | 19 | 27 | 18 | 13 |
| **Very Poor** | 0 | 7 | 4 | 0 |

52% rated the ‘Physical Appearance’ as ‘Good’ whilst 33% stated it was ‘Poor’, 13% higher than the National Small Towns figure.

81% of town centre users rated the cleanliness of the town centre as either ‘Good’ (66%) or ‘Very Good’ (15%).

| How do you rate the variety of shops in the town centre? | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Very Good | 4 | 7 | 8 | 10 |
| Good | 43 | 37 | 44 | 54 |
| Poor | 46 | 36 | 36 | 32 |
| Very Poor | 7 | 20 | 11 | 5 |
| **How do you rate the leisure and cultural offering in the town centre?** | | | | |
| Very Good | 5 | 8 | 10 | 7 |
| Good | 58 | 44 | 49 | 57 |
| Poor | 33 | 35 | 33 | 34 |
| Very Poor | 3 | 14 | 8 | 3 |

46% of town centre users rated the 'Variety of Shops' in Ponteland as 'Poor', a 10% increase on the National Small Towns figure.

58% of town centre users rated the 'Leisure and Cultural activities' in Ponteland as 'Good'.

| What are the positive aspects of the Town Centre? | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Physical appearance | 43 | 41 | 56 | 59 |
| Shopping | 55 | 42 | 49 | 66 |
| Restaurants | 71 | 44 | 44 | 67 |
| Access to Services | 87 | 73 | 75 | 84 |
| Leisure Facilities | 36 | 30 | 28 | 34 |
| Cultural Facilities | 28 | 18 | 24 | 24 |
| Pubs/ Bars/ Nightclubs | 58 | 30 | 37 | 48 |
| Transport Links | 34 | 36 | 43 | 40 |
| Ease of walking around the town centre | 72 | 72 | 75 | 76 |
| Convenience e.g. near where you live | 74 | 71 | 70 | 74 |
| Safety | 54 | 39 | 48 | 51 |
| Car Parking | 55 | 41 | 46 | 46 |
| Markets | 15 | 25 | 34 | 26 |
| Other | 1 | 3 | 7 | 1 |

Replicating the National trends, 'Access to Services' (87%), 'Convenience e.g. near where you live' (74%) and 'Ease of walking around the town centre' (72%) were classed as the most positive aspects of the town centre. Interestingly 71% of respondents stated 'Restaurants', 27% higher than the National average.

| What are the negative aspects of the Town Centre? | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Physical appearance | 46 | 43 | 29 | 30 |
| Shopping | 37 | 48 | 42 | 27 |
| Restaurants | 14 | 23 | 28 | 11 |
| Access to Services | 4 | 8 | 10 | 6 |
| Leisure Facilities | 31 | 34 | 37 | 32 |
| Cultural Facilities | 35 | 40 | 37 | 35 |
| Pubs/ Bars/ Nightclubs | 12 | 30 | 27 | 19 |
| Transport Links | 37 | 22 | 22 | 29 |
| Ease of walking around the town centre | 7 | 7 | 9 | 7 |
| Convenience e.g. near where you live | 4 | 6 | 8 | 5 |
| Safety | 4 | 13 | 13 | 6 |
| Car Parking | 35 | 40 | 39 | 42 |
| Markets | 41 | 32 | 29 | 30 |
| Other | 14 | 10 | 12 | 13 |

46% of town centre users felt that the 'Physical appearance' (46%) of the town centre was a negative aspect of Ponteland, 17% higher than the National average, whilst 41% stated 'Markets', 37% 'Shopping' and 37% 'Transport links'. 'Markets' and 'Transport Links' were noticeably higher than the Regional, National and Typology averages.

| How long do you stay in the Town Centre? | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Less than an hour | 54 | 38 | 36 | 39 |
| 1-2 Hours | 30 | 40 | 40 | 36 |
| 2-4 Hours | 3 | 11 | 12 | 15 |
| 4-6 Hours | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| All Day | 8 | 7 | 8 | 8 |
| Other | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

84% of town centre users stayed in Ponteland for under 2 hours.

**What TWO suggestions would you make to improve the town centre?**

The key themes to emerge when town centre users were asked to comment on what improvements they would like to see made to Ponteland, were ‘Merton Way shops’ and general ‘physical improvements’.

Comments on ‘Merton Way Shops’ included;

- "The shopping area on at Merton way could do with being spruced up and modernised."
- "Regenerate both shopping centres in Ponteland. Merton Way and Broadway both require extensive regeneration in my view to bring the shops up to scratch and to attract more people from surrounding areas to the Village."
- "Upgrade to Merton Way, this does not need to be a total redevelopment of the existing shopping area, modernisation of shop fronts and the flats above, modern paving etc and development of the area adjacent to chip shop and good paving and lighting to parking areas."
- "Refurbish (not rebuild) the Merton Way Shopping Centre.
- "Give the existing buildings in the shopping centre a face lift."
- "Create a pleasant shopping mall with some interesting shops that are not food related."
- "The Merton Way shopping area should be modernised and roofed over so that it is like a mini Metro Centre/arcade, but enclosed and weather proof to make shopping there nicer."
- "Improve the appearance of the shopping area."
- "Major money needed to regenerate the shopping area and prevent it dying a death"
- "That Merton Way shopping centre be updated. It’s looking very 1970s these days, though I do like the shops and shop there every day."
- "Also Merton Court is in need of a revamp and upgrade Morpeth arcade style...."
- "Improve look of shopping centre- very dated."

Comments in terms of general ‘Physical Appearance’ included;

- "The regeneration of the town centre as promised many years ago"
- "Improvements to Leisure Centre. Improvements to Memorial Hall"
- "Bulldoze it and start again."
- "Rebuild the library on its present site on area already owned by the County Council. Include in the rebuild of the library site the Town Council Offices, meeting rooms, coffee shop, CAB etc."
- "Build a new Library/Community Hub on the site of the present Library."
- "Streetscape"
- "Update physical appearance and mend the broken surfaces in the car parks"

- "Carry out an upgrade of the main central area. Expand the library and its facilities using all the land on the current site. Build a new facility on the land adjacent to the current library,  move the library itself into the new building then knock down the old one, rebuild and use this to expand the number of facilities offered."

A full list of colour coded comments is available in the Appendix.

**KPI12: Shoppers Origin**

The Shoppers Origin Survey tracks the general area that your town centre visitors originate from. The data can be used to target local marketing or promotional literature. It can also be used as evidence of the success of such campaigns by gauging the penetration into the population.

The 307 postcodes gathered from businesses are split into 3 categories to be able to compare with other towns. The categories are:

- Locals; those who live within a Post Code covering the town
- Visitors; those who live within a Post Code less than a 30 minute drive away
- Tourists; those who live within a Post Code further than a 30 minute drive away

| | Ponteland% | North East Small Towns % | National Small Towns % | Typology 1 % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Locals** | 78 | 57 | 53 | 50 |
| **Visitors** | 19 | 32 | 31 | 39 |
| **Tourists** | 3 | 11 | 16 | 11 |

78% of Post Codes gathered were from those who lived in Ponteland, higher than the Regional (57%), National (53%) and Typology (50) figures.

## APPENDIX

The following towns all contributed to the Benchmarking System in 2013.

| Town Name | Small or Large | Region | Typology |
|---|---|---|---|
| Clay Cross | S | East Midlands | 6 |
| Melton | L | East Midlands | 2 |
| Bury St Edmunds | L | East of England | 2 |
| Diss | S | East of England | 2 |
| Ely | S | East of England | 5 |
| Huntingdon | S | East of England | 4 |
| Ramsey | S | East of England | 4 |
| St Ives | L | East of England | 4 |
| Wickham Market | S | East of England | 2 |
| Alnwick | S | North East | 2 |
| Amble | S | North East | 6 |
| Ashington | S | North East | 6 |
| Bedale | S | North East | 2 |
| Bedlington | S | North East | 6 |
| Berwick | L | North East | 6 |
| Blyth | S | North East | 6 |
| Cramlington | S | North East | 6 |
| Haltwhistle | S | North East | 2 |
| Hexham | S | North East | 5 |
| Hornsea | S | North East | 2 |
| Morpeth | S | North East | 1 |
| Ponteland | S | North East | 1 |
| Prudhoe | S | North East | 6 |
| Ripon | S | North East | 2 |
| Alsager | S | North West | 1 |
| Alston | S | North West | n/a |
| Appleby | S | North West | 2 |
| Buckley | S | North West | n/a |
| Colwyn Bay | L | North West | n/a |
| Congleton | S | North West | 8 |
| Connahs Quay | S | North West | n/a |
| Crewe | L | North West | n/a |
| Disley | S | North West | 1 |
| Flint | S | North West | n/a |
| Handforth | S | North West | n/a |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Holmes Chapel | S | North West | 8 |
| Holywell | S | North West | n/a |
| Kendal | L | North West | 2 |
| Kirkby Stephen | S | North West | 2 |
| Knutsford | S | North West | 5 |
| Llangefni | S | North West | n/a |
| Macclesfield | L | North West | n/a |
| Middlewich | S | North West | 4 |
| Mold | S | North West | n/a |
| Nantwich | L | North West | 2 |
| Penrith | L | North West | 2 |
| Poynton | S | North West | n/a |
| Queensferry | S | North West | n/a |
| Rhyl | L | North West | n/a |
| Saltney | S | North West | n/a |
| Sandbach | S | North West | 8 |
| Shotton | S | North West | n/a |
| Wigton | S | North West | 7 |
| Wilmslow | L | North West | n/a |
| Wrexham | L | North West | n/a |
| Barrhead | S | Scotland | n/a |
| Forfar | S | Scotland | 2 |
| Bagshot | S | South East | 4 |
| Basingstoke (Top of Town) | S | South East | n/a |
| Hungerford | S | South East | 4 |
| Sandwich | S | South East | 5 |
| Stony Stratford | S | South East | n/a |
| Amesbury | S | South West | 4 |
| Blaenavon | S | South West | n/a |
| Bradford On Avon | S | South West | 5 |
| Callington | S | South West | 2 |
| Calne | S | South West | 4 |
| Chepstow | S | South West | n/a |
| Cirencester | L | South West | 2 |
| Corsham | S | South West | 2 |
| Cricklade | S | South West | 8 |
| Devizes | L | South West | 2 |
| Frome | S | South West | 2 |
| Liskeard | S | South West | 2 |
| Ludgershall | S | South West | 4 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Melksham | S | South West | 2 |
| Pewsey | S | South West | 2 |
| Royal Wootton Bassett | S | South West | 8 |
| Tavistock | S | South West | 2 |
| Trowbridge | L | South West | 2 |
| Warminster | S | South West | 2 |
| Westbury | S | South West | 2 |
| Westbury on Trym | S | South West | n/a |
| Wilton | S | South West | 2 |
| Winchcombe | S | South West | 3 |
| Alcester | S | West Midlands | 2 |
| Great Malvern | S | West Midlands | 2 |
| Ledbury | S | West Midlands | 2 |
| Ludlow | S | West Midlands | 2 |
| Newport | S | West Midlands | 8 |
| Southam | S | West Midlands | 4 |
| Tenbury Wells | S | West Midlands | 2 |
| Upton Upon Severn | S | West Midlands | 3 |

## TYPOLOGY CLASSIFICATION

### Group 1 : Middle Aged, Managerial Jobs

236 places (14.7%)

This group is characterized by relatively high values on young/middle age groups (25–44), intermediate and managerial occupations, people working in public administration, education and defence, detached housing, households with adult children and a high proportion of carers. It has low numbers of residents with no qualifications. Geographically the group is found on the outskirts of the big cities and towns outside London and along the south coast from Essex and Kent and into Devon and Cornwall.

### Group 2 : Single Persons, Routine Jobs

261 places (16.3%)

Places in this group are particularly characterized by persons living alone (separated/divorced and pensioners), as well as people in routine and lower supervisory and managerial occupations and people living in rented accommodation. Car ownership is low whilst travel to work by public transport is relatively high. Geographically this group is well scattered across the rural areas of the country but particularly in the East of England (Norfolk and Suffolk), in the South West (Wiltshire, Cornwall and Devon). There are few examples of this type of place around the main population centres.

### Group 3 : Older Persons, Leisure Jobs

123 places (7.7%)

This group is characterized by older persons, single pensioners, workers in hotels and restaurants, and part time workers, especially among men. It also has high numbers of people working from home and of second homes. This group of places is found overwhelmingly in coastal areas (for example, on the Isle of Wight and in Devon and Norfolk) and in attractive rural areas(e.g. Hampshire, Gloucestershire and North Yorkshire).

### Group 4 : Young Families, Administrative Jobs

129 places (8%)

The group is typified by high proportions of people in the 25 – 44 age groups and women looking after the home. Occupations tend to be in the higher managerial and professional groups and in public administration (including defence, teaching and social security).Most places in this group are located in what geographers have called the ‘Golden Belt’ a stretch of country going from north Wiltshire, through Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire to Cambridgeshire with an ‘offshoot’ in Berkshire. This area grew rapidly in the period 1981-

2001 and continues to do so. There are few places of this type outside this area but where they do exist they are in the rural areas around sizeable towns.

**Group 5 : Professionals, Commuting**

188 places (11.7%)

This group is characterized by high proportions of professional and higher managerial workers and by people employed in intermediate managerial occupations. There are high proportions of people in financial service occupations and people who commute over 20 kilometers to work. Use of public transport is also proportionately high. There comparatively high proportions of Asian/British Asian households relative to the other groups of settlements. As might be expected from its social and occupational description, this group of rural places is predominantly located within commuting belt around Great London and particularly along the major rail routes into London. There are, however, examples of these types of places around other cities, especially Leeds/Bradford and Greater Manchester.

**Group 6 : Disadvantages, Routine Employment**

181 places (11.2%)

This group includes high proportions of census measures that have been used to identify social and economic disadvantages of various kinds. These include: routine and low skill occupations, lack of qualifications, unemployment, long term illness, lone parents, lack of a car and the presence of social housing. The geography of most of the members of this group is overwhelmingly that of the former coalfield areas, namely, Notts/Derby, South and West Yorkshire and Northumberland/Durham. Other, smaller, geographical clusters of places in this group are the Cumbrian coast, Teesside and east Lancashire. Places not in such clusters include Hayle (Cornwall), New Addington (Greater London) and Withernsea (East Riding of Yorkshire).

**Group 7 : Routine Jobs, Agriculture/Manufacturing**

209 places (13%)

This group is similar to Group 6 in that it is characterized by routine and low skill occupations and lack of qualifications. However, this also typified by high percentages of people working in agricultural and manufacturing occupations and in the wholesale trades. Unemployment (in April 2001) was low. As might be expected this group maps onto two main types of area: rural areas and generally those with labour intensive agricultural production of various kinds (e.g. Norfolk, the Fens, mid Somerset and Lincolnshire/North

Lincolnshire) and around the major manufacturing centres of the West and West Midlands, West Yorkshire and Humberside.

**Group 8 : Age Mix, Professional Jobs**

290 places (18%)

This, the largest single group in the typology, is also typified by professional and managerial workers and high levels of educational qualifications but is distinguished from Group 1 by a broader age range (relatively high numbers of young people, but also of middle aged and older people) and from Group 6 by lower levels of longer distance commuting. Also unlike either of these groups there are high proportions of households in detached houses and very low levels of public transport use. The geography of this group is similar to Group 4 in that it is mostly concentrated within the 'Golden Belt' of Middle England. However, it is nationally more widespread than Group 4 and includes locations on the outskirts of all the major urban centres outside London with the notable exception of Tyneside where only Castle Morpeth and Coxhoe (both somewhat distant from the conurbation), are of this type.

**BUSINESS UNIT DATABASE**

| No | Street | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 15 | West Road | Strettle Funeral Management Services | A1 | Comparison | Regional | |
| 3 | Bell Villas | New Rendezvous | a3 | n/a | n/a | |
| 7 | Bell Villas | Pattinson | a2 | n/a | n/a | |
| 7 | Bell Villas | Ponteland Barbers Shop | a1 | Comparison | Independent | |
| 8 | Bell Villas | Ponteland Footcare Clinic | d1 | n/a | n/a | |
| 9 | Bell Villas | Wine Rack | a1 | Convenience | Multiple | |
| 10 | Bell Villas | Veteniary Surgery | sg | n/a | n/a | |
| 13 | Bell Villas | Ponteland News | a1 | Convenience | Independent | |
| 14 | Bell Villas | Nicholson and Morgan | a2 | n/a | n/a | |
| 15 | Bell Villas | Jans Kitchen | a3 | n/a | n/a | |
| 17 | Bell Villas | Higgins and Winter | d1 | n/a | n/a | |
| 17A | Bell Villas | Rowlands | a2 | n/a | n/a | |
| | Bell Villas | Methodist Church | d1 | n/a | n/a | |
| | Bell Villas | Behind the Scenes | a1 | Comparison | Independent | |
| | Bell Villas | Rook, Matthews, Sayer | a2 | n/a | n/a | |
| | Bell Villas | Sainsburys | a1 | Convenience | Key Attractor | |
| | Bell Villas | Fratelli | a3 | n/a | n/a | |
| 1 | Brewery Lane | Taylors Pharmacy | a1 | Comparison | Independent | |
| 3 | Brewery Lane | Sampan | a4 | n/a | n/a | |
| 1 | Main Street | Sanderson Young | a2 | n/a | n/a | |
| 1 | Main Street | Trading Places | a2 | n/a | n/a | |
| 1 | Main Street | Restaurante Italiano | a3 | n/a | n/a | |
| 1 | Main Street | Henry Robert Hairdressing | a1 | Comparison | Independent | |
| 5 | Main Street | Lloyds TSB | a2 | n/a | n/a | |
| 9 | Main Street | Bridgfords | a2 | n/a | n/a | |
| 11 | Main Street | Panache | a1 | Comparison | Independent | |
| 19 | Main Street | HSBC | a2 | n/a | n/a | |
| 20 | Main Street | Barclays | a2 | n/a | n/a | |
| 21 | Main Street | Seven Stars | a4 | n/a | n/a | |
| 23 | Main Street | William Hill | a2 | n/a | n/a | |
| 25 | Main Street | Mackley and Studdert | a1 | Convenience | Independent | |
| 27 | Main Street | Waitrose | a1 | Convenience | Independent | |
| 11A | Main Street | Ponteland Tandoori | a3 | n/a | n/a | |
| 9a | Main Street | S Finneran | b1 | n/a | n/a | |
| | Main Street | Diamond Inn | a4 | n/a | n/a | |
| 2 | Merton | Nichols | n/a | n/a | n/a | vacant |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Road | | | | | |
| 6 | Merton Road | Elliotts | a1 | Convenience | Independent | |
| 7 | Merton Road | Sams Coffee Shop | a3 | n/a | n/a | |
| 10 | Merton Road | Alan Newton Butchers | a1 | Convenience | Independent | |
| 11 | Merton Road | Ponteland Hardware | a1 | Comparison | Independent | |
| 15 | Merton Road | The Mogul Raj | a3 | n/a | n/a | |
| 19 | Merton Road | Gills Fish and Chips | a5 | n/a | n/a | |
| 22 | Merton Road | Q Hair Design | a1 | Comparison | Independent | |
| 26 | Merton Road | Merton Way | a5 | n/a | n/a | |
| 30 | Merton Road | Post Office | a1 | Convenience | Multiple | |
| 32 | Merton Road | John Bardgett and Sons | a1 | Comparison | Regional | |
| 34 | Merton Road | Self Unlimited | a1 | Comparison | Multiple | charity |
| 38 | Merton Road | Ladbrokes | a2 | n/a | n/a | |
| 40 | Merton Road | Poppys | a3 | n/a | n/a | |
| 44 | Merton Road | Enchanted Forest | D2 | n/a | n/a | |
| 14-18 | Merton Road | Parklands | a1 | Comparison | Independent | |
| 3-5 | Merton Way | One Stop | a1 | Convenience | Multiple | |
| | Merton Way | Ponteland Club and Institute | a4 | n/a | n/a | |
| | Merton Way | Merton Hall | d1 | n/a | n/a | |
| | North Road | Police | b1 | n/a | n/a | |
| | North Road | The Blackbird | a4 | n/a | n/a | |
| | Thornhill Road | Library | d1 | n/a | n/a | |
| | Thornhill Road | St Marys Church Hall | d1 | n/a | n/a | |
| | Thornhill Road | St Marys the Virgin Church | d1 | n/a | n/a | |
| | Thornhill Road | Care Ponteland Manor Care Home | c2 | n/a | n/a | |
| 1 | West Road | Nat West | a2 | n/a | n/a | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | West Road | Look Twice | a1 | Comparison | Independent | |
| 5 | West Road | Ian Nicholson and Co | a2 | n/a | n/a | |
| 11 | West Road | Sanlam | a2 | n/a | n/a | |
| 12 | West Road | Major Family Law | a2 | n/a | n/a | |
| 10A | West Road | Diagnol Alternatives | B1 | n/a | n/a | |
| n/a | West Road | Opposite Look Twice | n/a | n/a | n/a | vacant |
| | West Road | House of Vintage | n/a | n/a | n/a | vacant |
| | | Post Office | n/a | n/a | n/a | vacant |
| | | Next to Trading Places | n/a | n/a | n/a | vacant |

## CAR PARKING DATABASE

| | |
|---|---|
| **Name:** | Main Free Car Park, accessed via alley from Merton Way Shopping Centre |
| **On Street/ Car Park:** | Car Park |
| **Total Spaces:** | 43 |
| **Short Stay Spaces: (4 hours and under)** | 0 |
| **Long Stay Spaces: (Over 4 hours)** | 41 |
| **Disabled Spaces:** | 2 |
| **Charge:** | HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO PARK FOR AN HOUR? Free<br><br>HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO PARK FOR 4 HOURS? Free<br><br>HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO PARK FOR MORE THAN 4 HOURS? Free |
| **Vacant Spaces on a Market Day:** | 6 |
| **Vacant Spaces on a Non Market Day:** | 7 |
| **Illegal Spaces on a Market Day** | 0 |
| **Illegal Spaces on a Non Market Day:** | 1 |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Name:** | Car Park with Public Toilets |
| **On Street/ Car Park:** | Car Park |
| **Total Spaces:** | 42 |
| **Short Stay Spaces: (4 hours and under)** | 0 |
| **Long Stay Spaces: (Over 4 hours)** | 40 (4 Electric vehicle only bays) |
| **Disabled Spaces:** | 2 |
| **Charge:** | HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO PARK FOR AN HOUR? Free<br><br>HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO PARK FOR 4 HOURS? Free<br><br>HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO PARK FOR MORE THAN 4 HOURS? Free |
| **Vacant Spaces on a Market Day:** | 19 |
| **Vacant Spaces on a Non Market Day:** | 7 |
| **Illegal Spaces on a Market Day** | 0 |
| **Illegal Spaces on a Non Market Day:** | 0 |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Name:** | Waitrose |
| **On Street/ Car Park:** | Car Park |
| **Total Spaces:** | 76 |
| **Short Stay Spaces: (4 hours and under)** | 73 |
| **Long Stay Spaces: (Over 4 hours)** | 0 |
| **Disabled Spaces:** | 3 |
| **Charge:** | HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO PARK FOR AN HOUR? Free<br><br>HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO PARK FOR 4 HOURS? Free<br><br>HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO PARK FOR MORE THAN 4 HOURS? Free |
| **Vacant Spaces on a Market Day:** | 19 |
| **Vacant Spaces on a Non Market Day:** | 40 |
| **Illegal Spaces on a Market Day** | 0 |
| **Illegal Spaces on a Non Market Day:** | 2 |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Name:** | Sainsburys |
| **On Street/ Car Park:** | Car Park |
| **Total Spaces:** | 72 |
| **Short Stay Spaces: (4 hours and under)** | 68 |
| **Long Stay Spaces: (Over 4 hours)** | 0 |
| **Disabled Spaces:** | 4 |
| **Charge:** | HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO PARK FOR AN HOUR? Free<br><br>HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO PARK FOR 4 HOURS? Free<br><br>HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO PARK FOR MORE THAN 4 HOURS? Free |
| **Vacant Spaces on a Market Day:** | 19 |
| **Vacant Spaces on a Non Market Day:** | 28 |
| **Illegal Spaces on a Market Day** | 1 |
| **Illegal Spaces on a Non Market Day:** | 1 |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Name:** | By Jans Kitchen, opposite Sainsburys |
| **On Street/ Car Park:** | Car Park |
| **Total Spaces:** | 8 |
| **Short Stay Spaces: (4 hours and under)** | 0 |
| **Long Stay Spaces: (Over 4 hours)** | 8 |
| **Disabled Spaces:** | 0 |
| **Charge:** | HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO PARK FOR AN HOUR? Free<br><br>HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO PARK FOR 4 HOURS? Free<br><br>HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO PARK FOR MORE THAN 4 HOURS? Free |
| **Vacant Spaces on a Market Day:** | 6 |
| **Vacant Spaces on a Non Market Day:** | 1 |
| **Illegal Spaces on a Market Day** | 0 |
| **Illegal Spaces on a Non Market Day:** | 0 |

**TOWN CENTRE USERS SURVEY**

**What two suggestions would you make to improve the economic performance of the town centre?**

**Key**

**Improve Merton Way**
**Physical improvements**

- "Refurbish or rebuild Merton Way. Stop development of restaurants etc in areas where existing car parking can't cope and where there is no provision or space for new parking (see Yolo, Bell Villas)."
- "1. Implement the town centre development proposed. 2. Consider the bypass as a viable proposition funded by developers with matched funding retained by the Town Council. If Morpeth can get their bypass completed then so can we."
- "The shopping area on at Merton way could do with being spruced up and modernised. Parking- the car parks need to be bigger"
- "Merton Way shopping centre needs updating. Would like to see a florist and a bakers back in the village. Update the leisure centre and bring in new equipment."
- "It needs a total re vamp. Modernising, a more customer friendly feel"
- "Complete rebuild and a focus on attracting local residents"
- "Improve appearance of Merton Way. Move Manners meat factory"
- "Improve the appearance of the shops. Increase the variety of shops"
- "Re-develop Merton Way shopping area. Improve traffic flow out of Meadowfield Industrial Estate at peak times."
- "Brighten up and modernise the shops and general appearance. Too many bars, restaurants etc. Need more variety in shops and would then do more of general shop in Ponteland. Leisure centre is old and out of date, could do with a makeover."
- "Regenerate both shopping centres in Ponteland. Merton Way and Broadway both require extensive regeneration in my view to bring the shops up to scratch and to attract more people from surrounding areas to the Village."
- "Linking Merton Way and High street to make one shopping area bypass"
- "Demolish it, start again"
- "Knock it down & start again! Make it more in keeping with the historical nature of Ponteland (like Sanderson Arcade in Morpeth?)"
- "Car parking Variety of shops"
- "Less traffic on the A696 and North Road. Not so many restaurants and better parking at weekends particularly behind the Diamond."
- "Modernise it"
- "Revamp Merton Way. Encourage more shops"
- "knock it down and start again new housing = more people = more investment = better town centre"
- "Better leisure centre and more youth activities"

- "More independent shops but. I do realise in the current I economic climate not viable. The precinct is depressing and almost deserted in the day."
- "Revamp the shopping centre.  Make the leisure centre more cleaner looking."
- "Merton way revamp and a large coffee shop cafe for social meeting point. Little boutique like shod like he's mind and Gosforth! Get people shopping on their door step instead of going out of town!!"
- "Build by pass. Better parking"
- "Knock it down and start again. Introduce softer landscaping."
- "Bring this 60s centre into the 21st century as was originally intended before being scuppered by NCC. Build a modern centre with the Library a central feature. Ponteland could do with some meaningful investment to encourage quality shops and businesses into the area."
- "more variety of shops a central community hub"
- "More car parking. More toddler and child activities"
- "Better car parking facilities. Improvement of derelict shops / buildings"
- "Better variety of independent shops Traffic and lack of parking at peak times prevent more visitors."
- "Pedestrian safely. The regeneration of the town centre as promised many years ago"
- "Improvements to Leisure Centre.  Improvements to Memorial Hall"
- "Make the regeneration to Merton Way shops happen. Limit car parking to 4hrs between the hours if 6am and 6pm. Move the recycling bins from the village centre."
- "Improve traffic congestion  Provide additional parking"
- "Upgrade to Merton Way, this does not need to be a total redevelopment of the existing shopping area, modernisation of shop fronts and the flats above, modern paving etc and development of the area adjacent to chip shop and good paving and lighting to parking areas. Ensure flower beds planters etc always colourful and maintained throughout the year."
- "Refurbish (not rebuild) the Merton Way Shopping Centre. Build a new Library/Community Hub on the site of the present Library."
- "Street scape"
- "update physical appearance and mend the broken surfaces in the car parks"
- "Greater variety of shops in a more congenial environment Better of restaurants"
- "1. Traffic flow on the main street 2. Bigger diversity of shops"
- "Better parking. Upgraded leisure facilities"
- "Improve car parks and not permit any more supermarkets as there is already Sainsbury’s and Waitrose taking away business from the small business"
- "more variation of shops"
- "Improve the rear of the shops. Give the existing buildings in the shopping centre a face lift."
- "Bulldoze it and start again.  Wider variety of shops"
- "Reduce the proliferation of traffic direction signs. Ban traffic on Saturday’s and Sunday’s from say 9 am to 2 pm."
- "General upgrade. Parking"

- "Rebuild the library on its present site on area already owned by the County Council. Include in the rebuild of the library site the Town Council Offices, meeting rooms, coffee shop, CAB etc. Keep this area the centre of Ponteland ."
- "Create a pleasant shopping mall with some interesting shops that are not food related. Have a range of cultural events centred around the mall to bring it to life and encourage people along"
- "Carry out an upgrade of the main central area. Expand the library and its facilities using all the land on the current site. Build a new facility on the land adjacent to the current library, move the library itself into the new building then knock down the old one, rebuild and use this to expand the number of facilities offered."
- "Merton Road Shops need upgrade. Roads need a lot of attention"
- "Better parking facilities. More variety of shops"
- "Upgrade the shopping facilities. Increase the number of car-parking spaces"
- "Better parking around belle villas area. Do something will all the existing properties not occupied rather than build new."
- "Merton Way is very run down and dated. Lot of rubbish accumulated around One Stop shop."
- "INCREASED VARIETY OF SHOPS, FEWER PLANNIG APPROVALS FOR RESTAURENTS"
- "move the industrial estate further out improve medical facilities i.e. more doctors"
- "The car park at the back of Merton way should have a tubular shaped multi-storey car park built on it with a revolving restaurant or the library at the top, giving views over the town. Access to this should include two way traffic off Thornhill Road via traffic lights. The Merton Way shopping area should be modernised and roofed over so that it is like a mini Metro Centre/arcade, but enclosed and weather proof to make shopping there nicer."
- "Improved car parking. Very poor selection of shops on main road (only estate agents, banks, pubs/restaurants"
- "1 Have a cinema with a programme that is varied to appeal across the age groups. 2 Make the Memorial Hall more a central part of town activity e.g. have the Council Offices there and the Police Station"
- "Re develop Merton Way shops. Rebuild Library in approx same location"
- "The shopping facilities in Merton Way are in desperate need of improvement. The variety of shops is poor and the appearance of the area is dreadful and uninspiring. There is lack of car parking in the village centre, more is needed."
- "Improve traffic flow through Ponteland, improve bus services/ infrastructure in Ponteland"
- "Merton Way to be upgraded. New shops to be encouraged offering a variety of goods and services - upmarket coffee shops, card shops, bistros - more like Jesmond / Gosforth"
- "Upgrade the Frontage on shopping area. Extend the shopping round to Meadowfield."
- "Redevelop Improved traffic control"
- "Improve the appearance of the shopping area.
- "Encourage a bigger diversity of businesses to be made welcome."
- "radical redevelopment, a reason to visit"

- "Upgrade/ repair/ facelift and EXPANSION of both Ponteland and Broadway, Darras Hall shopping precincts. There is no wonder that local residents spend less of their disposable income locally than anywhere else in Northumberland. Also the sq. footage / resident is lowest in Northumberland."
- "Better parking. Better cafes."
- "Make the area around Merton Way more attractive and to discourage youths hanging about. Provide more free parking"
- "Stop car parking on the pavement beside the shops in Merton Way, they are dangerous to pedestrians, also they are breaking up the footpath. Empty shops need new tenants to invigorate the centre of the village"
- "IMPROVE APPEARANCE OF MERTON WAY & THORNHILL ROAD."
- "1)Better facilities for young people 2)Better range of shops"
- "Greater range of specialist type shops. Improve the public transport links from SE Northumberland."
- "Update it."
- "All the shops need a facelift. Major money needed to regenerate the shopping area and prevent it dying a death"
- "That Merton Way shopping centre be updated. It's looking very 1970s these days, though I do like the shops and shop there every day. Something to be done to tidy the vacant buildings on Main Street. I live on North Road which is a link to the A1 and a very busy road. Speed cameras would be useful as vehicle do travel at great speed on this road."
- "LOWER SHOP RENTALS SO MORE BUISNESSES STAY ! BETTER BUS ROUTES AND SERVICE IE: DOCTORS SURGERY !"
- "Seasonal decorations, Morpeth has them, why none in Ponteland? Car parking, especially car park to rear of shops.....often very difficult to find car parking space as most taken up by visiting cyclists!"
- "Leisure centre facilities are appalling - dirty, outdated much in need of an upgrade. Nobody uses them and all the mums at school moan about how they won't use it. Also Merton Court is in need of a revamp and upgrade Morpeth arcade style...."
- "Improve look of shopping centre- very dated. Lots of empty shops - need filling. Library needs updating."
- "Encourage more small businesses -shops and service providers to locate there. Smarten up the shopping areas"
- "Seek to keep a spread of retail property ownership. Rents appear to be a factor in closures. Try to encourage more specialist / boutique shops in the mix. Perhaps some starter retail units?"
- "Even the pavements. Put zebra crossings in next to the roundabout in the center of the town."
- "Encourage people to take their rubbish/dog poo home with them - maybe start young and approach the schools to start a campagn? Wider variety of affordable shops and a better market. Improved traffic control around the schools."
- "More facilities for children, small."

- "More advertising for the market. Better bus links, stop at the market. Facelift shop fronts."
- "Link metro system."
- "General facelift, place looks tired. Better sports facilities."
- "Facilities for teenagers. No focal point. Greater variety of shops."
- "Nothing"
- "Better transport links."
- "Abolish parking on pavements - delivery vehicles"
- "Reduce speed of vehicles in urban areas (20 mph)."
- "Modernise the shopping precinct. Improve litter control in specific areas eg rear of some shops."
- "Perhaps too many expensive old folks apartments? Over development."
- "Keep up the floral displays. Pet shop."
- "Merton Way facelift. More shops. Browsing shop."
- "More and different shops, boutiques! Better transport links to Newcastle."
- "Improved architecture. No development along Bell Villas."
- "New & better shops. Clean the place, educate people to hit(?) bin."
- "Reduce the rates. No more supermarkets."
- "A new proper newsagent. Lower business rate."
- "Tidy the village, particularly the river bank. No more supermarkets or restaurants."
- "Improve Merton Way."
- "Carpet & Upholstery Shop."
- "Ponteland bypass."
- "Merton Way, need smartened, looks jaded. Nice place to live."
- "Merton Way face lift. Better car parking."
- "School traffic causes congestion & should be addressed. More 'local' decision making rather than NCC."
- "Better bus links. More police in the evenings."
- "By pass the town. Metro station."
- "Face lift to Merton Way. More shops eg Baker, Wool Shop, Craft Shop."
- "Merton Way face lift. More advertising of local amenities."
- "Better parking. Restaurants - better variety, more up market."
- "Bring the metro to Ponteland."
- "Increase size of Waitrose. Merton Way refurb."
- "Better control of developers. Merton Way face lift. Bakers shop."
- "Things for young people to do."
- "No more development of housing. Protect Green Belt. Redevelop Merton Way. Old NCS building next to golf club."
- "Doctor surgery near to centre."
- "Shopping Centre, Merton Way mordernise."
- "Tidy up the whole place. More diversity of shops, browsing/gift shops, galleries."
- "More for teenagers in the town."
- "More parking. Better variety of shops. DIY!"
- "Metro link to Newcastle. Leisure centre refurb. Enforce existing speed limits."

- "More for young people.  Better parking."
- "Transport links, later buses.  Merton Way needs modernisation."
- "Happy."
- "Cinema?"