ALNWICK TOWN CENTRE HEALTH CHECK REPORT

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Working Paper Number: 73
Date: October 2008

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The Northumberland Information Network is a partnership between:

Northumberland Strategic Partnership, Northumberland County Council, Northumberland Community Safety, CDRPs, Northumberland DAAT and Northumberland Early Years & Childcare Service.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 51% of the floorspace in Alnwick was for retail.
- Shopper’s perceptions of the range of retail provision was somewhat negative - 40% did not think Alnwick offered a wide choice of shops.
- Shopper’s felt that the range and choice of shops needed to be improved.
- There were more comparison retail (clothing, household goods, furniture, DIY and electrical goods) than convenience or retail service.
- There was 5% of vacant floorspace in Alnwick.
- The amount of vacant floorspace had reduced when looking at property flows. This was a result of more buildings changing from being vacant to occupied from 2007 to 2008, than occupied to vacant.
- 78% of shoppers interviewed found it easy to travel into the town centre by car.
- 49% of these shoppers felt that the parking in the town centre was either poor or very poor.
- 29 shoppers commented on the lack of parking and a further 9 said parking in general was a problem.
- Alnwick also has good bus connectivity by the frequency and number of destinations reached from Alnwick.
- 79% of shoppers interviewed found it easy to travel into the town centre by bus.
- Approximately one quarter of respondents rating the quality, regularity and destinations served by public transport negatively.
- 51% of Alnwick residents shopped in Alnwick. 12% of expenditure was lost to Newcastle and a further 7% to the Metro Centre.

Recommendations

- The town centre should be monitored over a number of years to track changes.
- Comparisons can also be made with towns which have similar functions.
- Use class data will take all floors (from which businesses operate) within town centre buildings into consideration, as opposed to solely the ground floor.
- Investigate the location and quantity residential properties within the town centre.
- Work in partnership with local estate agents to gain further insight on property enquiries received.
- Align footfall counts across all town centres to enable fair comparisons. Additionally, footfalls to take place on Sunday to enable a weekly footfall to be estimated.
- A map to show all bus and train routes would prove useful in the analysis process.
- Investigate impact of crime initiatives on shopper’s perception of crime and safety within the town centre.
- Investigate impact of future proposals for Alnwick on shopper’s overall perception of the town centre.
1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Why Measure Town Centre Performance?

Through Planning Policy Statement 6 (PPS6), the Government sets out its key objectives for town centers. Overall, PPS6 describes the need to promote town centre vitality and viability by planning for the growth and development of existing centres; promoting and enhancing existing centres; by focusing development in such centers; and encouraging a wide range of services in a good environment, accessible to all.

More generally, the UK Government is committed to:

- Enhancing consumer choice by making provision for a range of shopping, leisure and local services, which allow genuine choice to meet the needs of the entire community, and particularly socially-excluded groups.

- Supporting efficient, competitive and innovative retail, leisure, tourism and other sectors, with improving productivity.

- Improving accessibility, ensuring that existing or new development is, or will be, accessible and well-served by a choice of means of transport.

The importance of town centres and the contribution that they make to the local economy is also highlighted in the Regional Economic Strategy. According to “Leading the Way”, the draft Regional Economic Strategy (2006), thriving town centres are at the heart of our communities and it is essential that they continue to provide a good range of services such as shops, leisure, transport and other services. Town Centres provide employment in many areas and attract new businesses to sustain the local economy. Research has shown the importance of strong Town Centres as the focus for driving wider economic growth and productivity. The Regional Economic Strategy also emphasises the importance of building on the potential of all town centres so that more remote economies and communities of the settlements around them can be supported.

The importance of the role played by town centres is also highlighted in Northumberland Local Area Agreement (LAA). The LAA Economic Development and Enterprise block includes an outcome to improve the impact of public/private sector...
intervention on economic performance of Northumberland Town Centres. Whilst stretch targets leading to additional government funding are not proposed for this outcome, it is hoped that improved town centre performance can help achieve other LAA targets.

1.2 What should we measure?

Government policy contained in PPS6 recognises that:
“Comprehensive, relevant and up to date monitoring is essential to the effective planning and management of town centres. It should be used to inform the review of site allocations and town centre policies and enable early signs of change of town centres to be identified and appropriate action taken”.

In order to ensure that monitoring is effective, data collection on the quality, quantity and convenience of retailing in the area and potential capacity for growth or change of shopping centres is essential. In order to measure the vitality and viability and monitor the health of their town centres and how this is changing over time, local authorities should regularly collect information, preferably in co-operation with the private sector, on the following key indicators:

- Diversity of main town centre uses (by number, type and amount of floorspace): the amount of space in use for different functions – such as offices; shopping; leisure, cultural and entertainment activities; pubs, cafes and restaurants; and, hotels.
- The amount of retail, leisure and office floorspace in edge-of-centre and out-of-centre locations.
- The potential capacity for growth or change of centres in the network: opportunities for centres to expand or consolidate, typically measured in the amount of land available for new or more intensive forms of town centre development.
- Retailer representation and intentions to change representation: existence and changes in representation of types of retailer, including street markets, and the demand of retailers wanting to come into the centre, or to change their representation in the centre, or to reduce or close their representation.
• Shopping rents: pattern of movement in Zone A rents within primary shopping areas (i.e. the rental value for the first 6 metres depth of floorspace in retail units from the shop window).

• Proportion of vacant street level property: vacancies can arise even in the strongest town centres, and this indicator must be used with care. Vacancies in secondary frontages and changes to other uses will also be useful indicators.

• Commercial yields on non-domestic property (i.e. the capital value in relation to the expected market rental): demonstrates the confidence of investors in the long-term profitability of the centre for retail, office and other commercial developments. This indicator should be used with care.

• Pedestrian flows (footfall): a key indicator of the vitality of shopping streets, measured by the numbers and movement of people on the streets, in different parts of the center at different times of the day and evening, who are available for businesses to attract into shops, restaurants or other facilities.

• Accessibility: ease and convenience of access by a choice of means of travel, including – the quality, quantity and type of car parking; the frequency and quality of public transport services and the range of customer origins served; and, the quality of provision for pedestrians, cyclists and disabled people and the ease of access from main arrival points to the main attractions.

• Customer and residents’ views and behaviour: regular surveys will help authorities in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of town centre improvements and in setting further priorities. Interviews in the town centre and at home can be used to establish views of both users and non-users of the centre, including the views of residents living in or close to the centre. This information could also establish the degree of linked trips.

• Perception of safety and occurrence of crime: should include views and information on safety and security, and where appropriate, information for monitoring the evening and night-time economy.

• State of the town centre environmental quality: should include information on problems (such as air pollution, noise, clutter, litter and graffiti) and positive factors (such as trees, landscaping and open spaces).
In response to the monitoring requirements set out above, the InfoNet has developed the Northumberland Town Centre Performance System, which is designed to assess the vitality and viability of rural market towns and larger centres within the former coalfield areas. The system uses intelligence from the InfoNet Organisation Database; the Northumberland Property Data Service (NPDS) database; the County Public Transport Team; and from the Community Safety Analysis function maintained for the 6 Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRP’s) in the County. This is complemented by additional primary research designed to capture footfall estimates and shopper perception of town centres. The Service is also designed to complement the Retail Distinctiveness work undertaken for One North East and the Northumberland Strategic Partnership by Millers Consulting; and the Retail Distinctiveness Toolkit that has been developed for use by Town Centre Partnerships and Managers.

The service currently covers the towns of Alnwick, Amble, Ashington, Bedlington, Belford, Berwick upon Tweed, Blyth, Cramlington, Haltwhistle, Hexham, Morpeth, Newbiggin, Ponteland, Prudhoe, Rothbury, Seahouses and Wooler using town centre boundary definitions included in Local Development Frameworks. There will, however, be flexibility to include additional settlements as the system develops.
2.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE TOWN CENTRE

2.1 Alnwick’s Town Centre Boundary

Throughout this report there are two different boundaries for Alnwick Town Centre that will be used depending on the section: the town centre boundary as defined by Alnwick District Council (Figure 1), and the boundary as defined by Experian (a source of data used in this report) (Figure 2).

The area of Alnwick Town Centre in relation to the District Council boundary is 142,544.40 m² (14.25 Ha).

Figure 1: Boundary for Alnwick Town Centre (District Council)

Source: Alnwick District Council, July 2008
Figure 2: Boundary for Alnwick Town Centre (Experian)

Source: Experian, August 2008
2.2 Alnwick’s Town Centre – A Definition

The RSS (Regional Spatial Strategies) definition of a town centre is that it “includes a range of different sized centres, including market and country towns, traditional suburban centres, and quite often, the principal centre(s) in a local authority’s area. Town centres contain a Primary Shopping Area, the area where retail development is generally concentrated”.

(From Alnwick District Council): Alnwick is an historic ducal market town where there is a strong sense of place and a charming town centre development pattern with much to interest the visitor by way of areas to explore and local vernacular. The town core has a good mix of nationals and local shops which when coupled with its role as an administrative and service centre for the wider area provides a strong base from which to trade. Out of town development by the A1 junction does not seem to be impeding the role of the town centre as yet. Recent investment in properties along Fenkle Street and Bondgate Without have brought back to the fore some tired areas of Alnwick which are now some of the most vibrant in terms of use.

The town hosts the Alnwick Garden which receives in excess of 500,000 visitors per annum. This influx of visitors can be stretching for local services during the height of the summer season although the additional visitors in the spring and summer sustain much of the town. The town centre market place is central to the functionality of the town and host a number of popular events. A future as a true festival town is now a real ambition so long as investment into services and facilities is forthcoming.

2.3 History and Development of Alnwick

Alnwick town is situated in Northumberland on the edge of the A1, with Newcastle-upon Tyne 30 miles to the south and Berwick-upon-Tweed 30 miles to the north.

The name “Alnwick” means “settlement by the Aln”, and it is believed that it dates back to the Anglo-Saxon period, although there is evidence of people living in the area of Alnwick from the Neolithic period. Burial sites from the Bronze Age have also been discovered, as have evidence of settlements from the Iron Age.
Alnwick is dominated by a large castle dating back to the 11th century. The castle was a focus of conflict and warfare between the English and the Scots during the 12th and 13th centuries. It finally settled into the hands of Henry Percy in 1309 and continued to remain in the Percy family for the next 700 years. It is currently owned by the Duke of Northumberland, and is the second largest inhabited castle in England.

Alnwick is now a bustling market town situated on the river Aln, with a population of around 8,000. It is a popular tourist spot, and holds numerous events, including the annual International Music Festival. The Alnwick Garden, a key attraction in the town, is popular with residents and tourists alike.

In 2002, Alnwick was voted the “Best place in Britain to live” by Country Life magazine.
3.0 DIVERSITY OF USES

The diversity of uses within a town centre contributes to the attractiveness of the centre to the local community. In this section the use class of buildings within the town centre will be investigated in terms of the percentage of floorspace occupied within the town centre and which areas of the town centre particular uses of buildings are situated. This chapter will also look at the events that take place throughout the year in Alnwick Town Centre and also the opinions of shoppers surveyed on the range of retail provision in Alnwick.

The full breakdown of use class analysed in this section can be found in Appendix 1.
3.1 Diversity of Use within Town Centre

Figure 3 shows that just over half (51%) of the floorspace in Alnwick Town Centre are classed as shops. Financial and professional services and businesses each account for 11% of the floorspace in Alnwick, with drinking establishments and hotels occupying 7% and 6% of floorspace, respectively.

Figure 3: Floorspace by Use Class

Source: Experian, August 2008
Figure 4: Building Use class for Alnwick Town Centre

Source: Experian, August 2008
The map (Figure 4) shows that the majority of shops within the town centre are clustered around the three main streets: Bondgate Within, Fenkle Street and Market Street (including the Market Place). The main cluster of financial and professional services is situated at the top of Bondgate Without where it meets Bondgate Within. Businesses are generally set on the edge of the town centre, with the exception of three premises on Bondgate Within. Drinking establishments in Alnwick are also generally on the outskirts of the town centre, notably on Narrowgate.

It must be noted that the use class information in this section is based on the ground floor of the premises from the data that was provided by Experian, and with the assumption that the majority of the commercial property in the town centre is situated on the ground floor.

3.2 Events

There are a number of events that happen throughout the year. A Saturday Market is held in the Market Place all year as well as a Thursday Market in the summer. A Farmers Market is held on the last Friday of the month and this is also held in the Market Place. A Continental Market is based within the Market Place occasionally. The annual Alnwick International Music Festival is held within the Market Place and various other venues, this event takes occurs in August and has seven days of festival performances. This event has gone from strength to strength, and now attracts an estimated 20,000 visitors each year and has become the largest independent music festival in the UK and the area's premier music event. The Alnwick Food Festival takes place in September and is a two day event. There are plenty of chances to sample what the region has to offer, plus even more opportunities to buy it. Cookery demonstrations, talks, food and drinks trails, wine-tasting sessions, a chocolate-making experience, special recipes, offers and surprises are all on the menu of the Alnwick Food Festival. Street entertainment and workshops will keep the children amused as well as a Young Chef of the Year competition. The Alnwick Beer Festival is held in the Market Place and Town Hall in September. The event provides the chance for the people of Northumberland to taste the offerings of local breweries throughout the north east. The Beer festival features 30 real ales from 15 local breweries all located in the North of England. In November the Alnwick Northumbrian Gathering is a two day event, with sessions in
Alnwick, competitions and concerts at Alnwick Playhouse as well as a dance at Northumberland Hall. The Market Place hosts the annual Alnwick Christmas Lights switch on in November, which has a spectacular display of Christmas lights. In November the Alnwick Fireworks display also takes place at Alnwick Rugby Club, where there is a fireworks display and bonfire.

3.3 Satisfaction with the range of provision – retail

Question 14 in the Alnwick Shopper Questionnaire asked:

To what extent do you agree/disagree with the statement “On the whole, Alnwick offers a wide choice of quality shops”?

The level of disagreement with this statement was considerably higher than the level of agreement (40% vs. 27% of respondents) (Figure 5).

Figure 5: How would you rate “On the whole, Alnwick offers a wide choice of quality shops”?

(Excludes 'don't know' responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Shopper Surveys, June 2008

Base: 297 respondents
4.0 RETAIL TRENDS

The range and diversity of the retail offer directly influences the appeal of a town centre to visitors and shoppers. Convenience goods are consumer goods purchased on a regular basis, including food, groceries, toiletries and cleaning materials. Comparison goods are durable goods such as clothing, household goods, furniture, DIY and electrical goods.

In this section, the category of shops will be investigated and analysed in terms of both category and whether they are part of a multiple chain or are an independent business.

Figure 6: Multiple Chain and Independent Businesses by Category - Alnwick

Figure 6 shows that in Alnwick town centre, the majority of businesses are comparison retail (54 independent, 21 multiple chain). The category which has the
2nd highest amount of businesses is leisure services: 33 of which are independent and 11 multiple chain. There are 15 convenience retail premises and 23 retail service in total.
5.0 RETAILER DEMAND

5.1 Interest in Vacant Outlets within the Town Centre 2007 - 2008

This section aims to investigate the types of property enquiries that are being made in the town centre and whether the enquirer was of local, regional or national significance. The aim was also to investigate the new occupiers within the town centre over the past year, for which we have referred to section 7.2 (Changes in Town Centre Occupiers 2007 – 2008).

Figure 7 shows that the enquiries for vacant properties within Alnwick Town Centre as recorded on the Northumberland Property Database (April 2007 – March 2008) were local (within Northumberland). Enquiries were recorded for properties on Fenkle Street which is a main shopping area in Alnwick, and also on Bondgate Without towards the edge of the town centre. However, it must be noted that this data is based solely on one source (Northumberland Property Database of which Alnwick District Council was not a partner) and other sources may provide further insight.
Figure 7: Property Enquiries for Alnwick Town Centre April 2007 – March 2008

Source: Northumberland Property Search.com, April 2008
5.2 A Review of New Town Centre Occupiers

6.0 RETAIL RENTS AND YIELDS

Retail rent and yield are important indicators of viability. This section will investigate the zone A rent for properties within the town centre and also the yield of Alnwick Town Centre in comparison with the other town centres in Northumberland for which this information was available; the North East; and England.

6.1 Zone A Rental Information

“Zoning is a method of valuation where the highest level of value is attributable to the front part of the shop because that is the part nearest to the pavement, the frontage. It is therefore the part that all shoppers must pass to enter the shop and is also the part where the main display is generally situated in order to entice customers into the shop. The zoning theory is that the level of value within a shop decreases as the shop depth increases. The Valuation Office adopts a zoning pattern of three zones (A, B and C), each measuring 6·10 metres in depth, and then a remainder. The principle is to determine a price for zone A (the highest level of value), use half that price for zone B, half the zone B price for zone C and half the zone C price for the remainder. This is known as "halving back" though in reality the areas are adjusted in the valuation process with each area being expressed "in terms of zone A" (ITZA). The zoning process is restricted to areas of ground floor retail space. Other parts of the property will be measured to NIA and be valued in relation to a fraction of the zone A price.” (Valuation Office, October 2008)

Figure 8 shows the zone A rental information from the Valuation Office. The values relate to the 2005 Rating List, which are based on a valuation date of 1 April 2003. The properties have been banded by intervals of £100, as we cannot publish the exact figure for each building. This will also make it easier to identify trends when analysing the data on the map.

There are some properties which are shown as “unknown” on Figure 8. These premises could be retail in nature but are not valued on a zoned approach. The reason for this is that zoning is generally not used in various circumstances including:
- Larger retail properties (i.e. shops with a NIA (net internal area) greater than 1500m²).
Where the retail areas are spread over several floors, again resulting in the Zone A being only a small fraction of the total.

Larger shops may not have ‘traditional’ shop fronts, such that the zoning approach is not appropriate.

The ‘market’ does not typically zone larger shops when letting and the VOA tries to follow the market in its analysis and valuation.

Figure 8: Valuation Office Zone A rental prices for Alnwick Town Centre

Figure 8 shows that the properties on Bondgate Within generally have the highest zone A rent, with the majority being £300 - £399 per m². The prices decrease towards the edge of the town centre and onto Narrowgate where the majority of properties are £100 - £199 per m² or unknown. On Market Street the majority of properties have zone A rents of £200 - £299 per m². On Fenkle Street approximately half of the properties did not have zone A rental information, however, the properties which did have zone A rental information here were valued at £100 - £199 per m².
6.2 Yield

Yield “is the ratio of rental income to capital value and is expressed in terms of the open market rent of a property as percentage of the capital value.”¹ It “provide a consistent basis for understanding how the property market assesses the comparative attractiveness of shop investments in different locations across the country... low yields indicate that a town is considered to be attractive and as a result be more likely to attract investment than a town with high yields.”²

\[
\text{Yield} = \frac{\text{Annual Rent}}{\text{Capital Value / Sale Price of Property}}
\]

Source: Valuation Office (www.voa.gov.uk)

In Northumberland, this data is only available for 5 towns: Alnwick, Ashington, Berwick upon Tweed, Blyth and Hexham.

Figure 9: Shopping Centre Yields - Alnwick

The graph shows that in 2001 (April and October), the average yield for Alnwick (8 in both months) was lower than the average for Northumberland (8.6 in both months),

¹ www.voa.gov.uk
² www.voa.gov.uk
the North East of England (8.22 in both months), and England (8.10 and 8.08 respectively). In 2002 (April and October), despite the average yield for Alnwick (8 in both months) remaining lower than the average for Northumberland (8.25 in both months), the yield averages for the North East (7.90 in both months), and England (7.61 and 7.55 respectively), dropped lower than Alnwick. This indicates that based on yield, it has been derived that there is more of a “risk” associated with setting up business in Alnwick compared to the rest of the North East and England. The “rankings” for these averages of yields have stayed the same for 2002 – 2006. However, average yields for 2007 (January and July) showed that although the average yield for Alnwick (7 in both months) was still higher than the average yield for England (6.85 and 6.70 respectively), it was now lower than the average yield for the North East (7.09 and 7.02 respectively). It was also still lower than the average yield for Northumberland (7.15 and 7.05 respectively).

6.3 Average Rental Rate

The average monthly rental rate for vacant commercial property in Alnwick town centre between 1st January 2006 and 31st December 2007 was £110.21 per square metre. Figure 10 show this rate in comparison with other town centres. According to Figure 10, in comparison with other Northumberland town centres, Alnwick has the 7th highest average monthly rental rate in Northumberland for the 11 towns recorded here with only Haltwhistle, Newbiggin, Rothbury and Amble with lower average rental rates. However, it must be noted that these rental figures are based solely on properties that were vacant between 1st January 2006 and 31st December 2007 and does not take the rental prices of buildings that were occupied throughout this period into consideration.
Figure 10: A comparison on average rental prices for commercial property between Alnwick and other Northumberland Towns

Source: Northumberland Property Database, December 2007
7.0 VACANCY RATES

All town centres experience a baseline level of vacancy rates and this should not always be interpreted as a sign of weakness. A large number of vacant units within centres may indicate decline related to poor performance of the town or that shop premises are inadequate to meet the demands of modern retailers. Vacancies concentrated in an area may also reflect an ongoing land assembly in advance of a wider regeneration of part of a town. Furthermore, units may be located in parts of the centre unsuited to retailers' requirements. This section will investigate the vacancy rates of premises within the town centre by road and overall vacancy rates within the town. Additionally, this section will look at property flows within Alnwick town centre between 2007 and 2008 in terms of both primary activity type and type of change (i.e. change in occupier, occupied to vacant, vacant to occupied).

It must be noted that the vacancy information in this section is based on the ground floor of the premises from the data that was provided by Experian the majority of the commercial property in the town centre is situated on the ground floor.

7.1 Vacancy Rates of Premises

Figure 11 shows that the street within Alnwick Town Centre with the most vacant premises is Market Place with 15% of premises vacant. However, when looking at vacancy rates in terms of floorspace, Market Place was ranked 3rd with 9% of its total floorspace vacant. The streets with the most vacant floorspace in Alnwick were Bondgate Without and Narrowgate (both 11%).

Figure 12 shows that in Alnwick Town Centre, there were 95% of occupied premises and 5% of vacant premises overall.
Figure 11: Vacancy Rates of Premises

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Road</th>
<th>Vacant (number of buildings)?</th>
<th>Vacant (floorspace sqm)?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MARKET PLACE</td>
<td>yes, 15%</td>
<td>yes, 9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BONDGATE WITHOUT</td>
<td>yes, 14%</td>
<td>yes, 11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BONDGATE WITHIN</td>
<td>yes, 3%</td>
<td>yes, 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOW ALLEY</td>
<td>yes, 0%</td>
<td>yes, 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPEL LANE</td>
<td>yes, 0%</td>
<td>yes, 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLAYPORT STREET</td>
<td>yes, 6%</td>
<td>yes, 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FENKLE STREET</td>
<td>yes, 0%</td>
<td>yes, 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GREEN BATT</td>
<td>yes, 0%</td>
<td>yes, 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GREENWELL LANE</td>
<td>yes, 0%</td>
<td>yes, 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GREENWELL ROAD</td>
<td>yes, 0%</td>
<td>yes, 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOTSPUR STREET</td>
<td>yes, 0%</td>
<td>yes, 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARKET STREET</td>
<td>yes, 0%</td>
<td>yes, 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NARROWGATE</td>
<td>yes, 9%</td>
<td>yes, 11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAIKES STREET</td>
<td>yes, 0%</td>
<td>yes, 0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grand Total         | yes, 5%                       | yes, 5%                  |

Source: Experian, August 2008

Figure 12: Is a Property Vacant

Source: Experian, August 2008
7.2 Changes in Town Centre Occupiers 2007 – 2008 (Property Flows)

Figure 13 shows changes in Town Centre Occupiers in 2007 and 2008 within Alnwick Town Centre. The graph shows the number of vacant outlets have decreased in 2007 from 13 to 9 in 2008. There has also been a decrease in the number of Estate Agents from 5 in 2007 to 4 in 2008, as well as a decrease in the number of Supermarkets from 2 in 2007 to 1 in 2008. However, there has been a number of increases, Ladies Wear increased from 7 in 2007 to 8 in 2008 as well as an increases in the number of Beauty Salons from 2 in 2007 to 3 on 2008.

Figure 13: Changes in Primary Activity Type 2007-2008

Figure 14 shows the type of changes in premises in Alnwick Town Centre between 2007 and 2008. Over half (54%) of the changes were a change in occupier. Almost a third (32%) of these changes were premises that were vacant in 2007 but were occupied in 2008. Only 14% of premises were occupied in 2007 but vacant in 2008, therefore a reduction of vacant premises is evident.
Figure 14: Type of Changes in Premises 2007-2008

Type of Changes in Premises 2007 - 2008
(Alnwick Town Centre)

- 54% change in occupier
- 32% occupied to vacant
- 14% vacant to occupied

Source: Experian, August 2008
8.0 PEDESTRIAN FLOWS

Pedestrian counts are a useful measure of vitality, in relation to the number and movement of people in different parts of the town centre and at different times of the day. The counts provide a clear picture of footfall patterns across the centre and of the number of people in the town. Over time trends can be identified and the success or decline of locations monitored. This section will analyse the results of the footfall counts that took place in Alnwick Town Centre in June 2008 and estimate a weekly footfall total.

8.1 Footfall methodology

Footfall counts were taken for 10 minutes of each hour between 9am and 5pm on Monday 9th June, Thursday 12th June and Saturday 14th June 2008. They were carried out by interviewers at four “access points” within the town centre (see Figure 15). These counts were used to give estimates of hourly and daily pedestrian rates.

8.2 Estimates of footfall

It is estimated that the footfall for a typical Saturday in Alnwick town centre is around 23,400, although this will obviously vary depending on the time of year. The data suggests that, on a market day, around 2000 fewer people visit the town centre than on a Saturday, and that on a ‘normal weekday’ this daily figure drops to around 17 thousand.
Figure 15: Estimated daily footfall in Alnwick Town Centre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location (see Figure 2)</th>
<th>Monday (&quot;normal&quot; day)</th>
<th>Thursday (Market Day)</th>
<th>Saturday (Weekend)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bondgate/ Hotspur Tower</td>
<td>3,954</td>
<td>4,164</td>
<td>6,090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iceland, Bondgate Within</td>
<td>3,834</td>
<td>6,012</td>
<td>6,696</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotspur</td>
<td>4,674</td>
<td>6,228</td>
<td>4,578</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fenkle Street/ Narrowgate (junction)</td>
<td>4,692</td>
<td>5,070</td>
<td>6,054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17,154</td>
<td>21,474</td>
<td>23,418</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Northumberland Footfall Counts, June 2008

On this occasion, footfalls were calculated for the individual days that they were carried out to give an indication of daily footfall totals on particular “types” of day of the week. In the future, it is the intention to calculate average weekly footfalls for each town.

3 Daily footfall has been estimated by summing the footfall counts for each location, then multiplying the totals by 6 to account for the footfall count being carried out for 10 minutes in each hour.
9.0 ACCESSIBILITY

The availability of different access modes to a town centre is important if shoppers are to be attracted to a centre for frequent visits. This section will investigate various aspects of accessibility into Alnwick town centre including the different methods of transport used to access the town centre by shoppers that were surveyed, their origin and their perceptions on accessibility and transport, availability of parking within the town centre and bus connectivity.

9.1 Shoppers travelling to town by car

63% of respondents travelled into Alnwick by car on the day of the interview. Over three quarters of these (77%) (Figure 16) said that they go into Alnwick at least once a week during the daytime (although it cannot be deduced how often they use a car for these trips). This figure dropped to 30% in the evenings.

Figure 16: Frequency of visit to the town centre by those respondents travelling in by car
(Excludes 'don't know' responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, June 2008
Base: 184 for daytime; 186 for evening
Over half (53%) of the respondents that travelled by car found it very easy to travel into Alnwick town centre (Figure 17). A further quarter found it fairly easy. 9% found it fairly or very difficult.

**Figure 17: How easy/difficult do you feel it is to travel into Alnwick town centre (those respondents that travelled by car)**

(Excludes 'don't know' responses unless otherwise specified)

![Pie chart showing travel ease/difficulty](source)

*Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, June 2008*

*Base: 187*

### 9.2 Access to car parking

Parking in Alnwick town centre was not rated very highly (Figure 18). Only one fifth of respondents said that the availability of parking spaces was good or very good, whereas almost half (49%) gave a poor or very poor rating.

The availability of disabled parking spaces was perceived to be better, with 46% giving a positive rating and 27% giving a negative rating.

The safety/security of the parking facilities also received a good/very good rating by 46% of the respondents.
A number of comments relating to parking were given in response to the question about the main problems with the shopping experience in Alnwick town centre. These comments are listed below:

- Not enough parking (29 responses)
- Parking (9 responses)
- Not enough short stay parking (2 responses)
- Disabled parking is poor (2 responses)
- Requires … better parking.
- Parking not adequate
- Parking in general

When respondents were asked how they would make the town centre better, the second most common answer was to improve the parking (43% of respondents mentioned this). A number of comments were also made in answer to this question. The ones related to parking are given below:
• Better & free parking
• Larger parking spaces for motor homes
• More parking space
• Residents parking.
• More parking around edge.
• Park in Market Square

9.3 Cost of parking

Only one quarter of respondents thought that the cost of parking was good or very good, and 46% thought that it was poor/very poor.

Figure 19: Percentage of respondents giving each rating for the cost of parking

(Excludes 'don't know' responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, June 2008

Base: 237 respondents (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

A number of comments were given by the respondents relating to the cost of parking. These were as follows:

1. The main problems with the town centre:
   • Cost of parking
• Free Parking

2. Ways to make the town centre better:
   • Free parking
   • Price of parking
   • Better & free parking

9.4 Alnwick’s Car parks
Figures 20 and 21 show the location of car parks within and surrounding Alnwick Town Centre.
Figure 20: Location of Car Parks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Car Park</th>
<th>Cost of Parking</th>
<th>Type of Car Park</th>
<th>Spaces</th>
<th>Long/Sh</th>
<th>Disabled</th>
<th>Coach Parking</th>
<th>Additional Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bondgate Hill (The Cobbles), Bondgate Within</td>
<td>30 mins – 40p  60 mins – 80p  2 hours - £1.60</td>
<td>Off street, surface car park.</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Short</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Weekly tickets at £9 are available from Tourist Information Centres in Alnwick, Amble, Berwick, Craster, Seahouses and Wooler.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Fenkle Street</td>
<td>30 mins – 40p  60 mins – 80p  2 hours - £1.60</td>
<td>Off street, surface car park.</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Short</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Greenwell Road (Bondgate)</td>
<td>4 hours - £1.50  All day - £2.00</td>
<td>Off street, surface car park.</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>Long</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 motor home bays, reserved between Apr-Oct, can be used by cars outside these times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Greenwell Road (Bondgate)</td>
<td>4 hours - £1.50  All day - £2.00</td>
<td>Off street, surface car park.</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Long</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Greenwell Road (Bondgate)</td>
<td>4 hours - £1.50  All day - £2.00</td>
<td>Off street, surface car park.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Long</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Greenwell Road (Bondgate)</td>
<td>30 mins – 40p  60 mins – 80p  2 hours - £1.60</td>
<td>Off street, surface car park.</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Short</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Greenwell Road (Bondgate)</td>
<td>4 hours - £1.50  All day - £2.00</td>
<td>Off street, surface car park.</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Long</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Tariff</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 8 | Old Brewery/Dispensary Street | 2 hours - £1.00  
4 hours - £1.50  
All day - £2.00 | Off street, surface car park. | 73     | Long  |
| 9 | New Row                   | 2 hours - £1.00  
4 hours - £1.50  
All day - £2.00 | Off street, surface car park. | 22     | Long  |
| 10| Roxbro Place              | 60 mins - 80p                  | Off street, surface car park. | 28     | Long  |
| 11| Morrisons                 | 1.5 hours - £1.00               | Off street, surface car park. | 135    | 5     |

**TOTAL NUMBER OF CARPARK SPACES**: 579

*Source: Alnwick District Council, Transport Direct, August 2008*
Figure 21: Location of Car Parks

Alnwick Town Centre - Car Parks

Source: Alnwick District Council, Transport Direct, August 2008
### 9.5 Bus Connectivity

The direct connections linking Alnwick to surrounding towns and villages are listed below.

**Figure 22: Destination and Frequency of Buses from Alnwick**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>Mon - Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
<th>Sun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acklington</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alnmouth</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amble</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashington</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bamburgh</td>
<td>Approx 2 per 2 hours</td>
<td>Approx 2 per 2 hours</td>
<td>5 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barresdale</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hour</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beadnell</td>
<td>Approx 2 per 3 hours</td>
<td>Approx 2 per 3 hours</td>
<td>5 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beal</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>5 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belford</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>7 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berwick Upon Tweed</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>5 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapel Lands</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hour</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chathill</td>
<td>1 per day</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chatton</td>
<td>5 per day</td>
<td>4 per day</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chillingham</td>
<td>5 per day</td>
<td>4 per day</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christon Bank</td>
<td>3 per day</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craster</td>
<td>Approx 2 per 3 hours</td>
<td>Approx 2 per 3 hours</td>
<td>5 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denwick</td>
<td>5 per day</td>
<td>2 per day</td>
<td>5 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eglingham</td>
<td>3 per day</td>
<td>3 per day</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embleton</td>
<td>Approx 2 per 3 hours</td>
<td>Approx 2 per 3 hours</td>
<td>5 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felton</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Frequency Type 1</td>
<td>Frequency Type 2</td>
<td>Frequency Type 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glanton</td>
<td>5 per day</td>
<td>5 per day</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hadston</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haggerston</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hour</td>
<td>5 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Howick</td>
<td>2 per day</td>
<td>2 per day</td>
<td>3 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longhoughton Spa</td>
<td>Approx 2 per 3 hours</td>
<td>Approx 2 per 3 hours</td>
<td>5 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morpeth</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle upon Tyne</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newton on The Moor</td>
<td>5 per day</td>
<td>2 per day</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Charlton</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>6 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Sunderland</td>
<td>Approx 2 per 3 hours</td>
<td>Approx 2 per 3 hours</td>
<td>5 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Bewick</td>
<td>4 per day</td>
<td>3 per day</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powburn</td>
<td>5 per day</td>
<td>4 per day</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rennington</td>
<td>1 per day</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rock</td>
<td>1 per day</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scremerston</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>5 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seahouses</td>
<td>Approx 2 per 3 hours</td>
<td>Approx 2 per 3 hours</td>
<td>5 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shilbottle</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stannington</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swarland</td>
<td>5 per day</td>
<td>2 per day</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Togston</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warenmill</td>
<td>8 per day</td>
<td>8 per day</td>
<td>2 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warkworth</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whittingham</td>
<td>5 per day</td>
<td>4 per day</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widdrington</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wooler</td>
<td>5 per day</td>
<td>4 per day</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wooperton</td>
<td>5 per day</td>
<td>4 per day</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Travel Search (http://www.carlberry.co.uk/index.htm); North East Travel Line (http://iplanner.travelinenortheast.info), July 2008
9.6 Shoppers travelling to town by bus

9% of respondents travelled into Alnwick by bus on the day of the interview. Over three quarters of these (81%) said that they go into Alnwick at least once a week during the daytime (although it cannot be deduced how often they use a bus for these trips). This figure dropped to 25% in the evenings.

Figure 23: Frequency of visit to the town centre by those respondents travelling in by bus

(Excludes 'don't know' responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaire, June 2008

Base: 27 for daytime; 28 for evening

Over half (54%) of the respondents that travelled by bus found it very easy to travel into Alnwick town centre. A further quarter found it fairly easy. 7% found it fairly or very difficult.
Figure 24: How easy/difficult do you feel it is to travel into Alnwick town centre (those respondents that travelled by bus)  
(Excludes ‘don't know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, June 2008

Base: 28 respondents

9.7 Train Connectivity
There is no train access to Alnwick.

9.8 Shoppers travelling to town by train
There is no train access to Alnwick and therefore no shopper’s questionnaire respondents said that they travelled to Alnwick town centre by train.

9.9 Perception of Public Transport Services
Public transport in Alnwick was rated very poorly. Just over one third of respondents gave a good/very good rating for the quality, the regularity and the destinations served by public transport. Around one quarter gave a poor/very poor response.
Figure 25: Percentage of respondents giving each rating for public transport related attributes

(Excludes 'don't know' responses unless otherwise specified)

The quality of bus/rail services
- Very Poor: 5%
- Poor: 19%
- OK: 31%
- Good: 33%
- Very Good: 4%

The regularity of bus/rail services
- Very Poor: 9%
- Poor: 19%
- OK: 32%
- Good: 37%
- Very Good: 6%

The destinations served by public transport
- Very Poor: 6%
- Poor: 18%
- OK: 39%
- Good: 33%
- Very Good: 4%

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, June 2008

Base: 197 to 204 respondents depending on attribute (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

A few comments were made regarding public transport. These related to:

1. The main problems with the town centre:
   - bus service
   - not enough buses

2. Ways to make the town centre better:
   - better bus service
   - put buses back in market place.
   - better transport links running later at night.
   - better bus service
   - bus service does not correspond with the trains, you can't get from bus stop to platform…
9.10 Perception of Accessibility
When asked how they would make the town centre better, 10 respondents (3% of respondents) said that improved accessibility was needed. Three comments were also made relating to this:

- Better disabled access i.e. Automatic Doors etc.
- Improved footpaths for disabled scooters
- More access and facilities for disabled people

Another comment was also made relating to the main perceived problems with Alnwick town centre: “Roads are not level. Problems getting around building site.”

9.11 Origin and method of travel of Shoppers Interviewed
As Figure 26 shows, most of the respondents from the Alnwick Shopper Survey live in the Alnwick District, with a large proportion living in or around Alnwick itself. In addition, some respondents came from the district of Berwick-upon-Tweed, and most of the others came from elsewhere in Northumberland or Tyne & Wear.

Most of the respondents travelled in by car, although a number of the respondents that live in, or close to, Alnwick said that they used an ‘other’ method of transport.

The remaining few respondents were spread across the rest of the UK. Most of these travelled into Alnwick by car.
Figure 26: Visitors to Alnwick within Northumberland
(Excludes 'don't know' responses unless otherwise specified)

Visitors to Alnwick within Northumberland and Tyne & Wear
(Shopper’s Survey)
- Home Towns

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, June 2008
Figure 27: Visitors to Alnwick outside Northumberland
(Excludes 'don’t know' responses unless otherwise specified)

Visitors to Alnwick
outside of Northumberland
and Tyne & Wear
(Shopper's Survey)
- Home Towns

Visitors to Alnwick
- Method of Transport
- Bus
- Car
- Other

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, June 2008
10.0 ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY OF TOWN

This section will consider various aspects relating to the environmental quality of the town centre. This includes any improvements made within the past 12 months mainly by the District Council and Town Council (where applicable) and shopper’s perceptions of the environmental quality and appearance of the town centre as a whole.

10.1 Review of Recent Improvements

The following improvements have happened over the past 12 months in Alnwick:

- Shops within Alnwick are being awarded grants under the ‘Shop Front Scheme’ by Alnwick District Council and the Community Development Trust. There are currently 9 shops all together that are either work in progress or near to completion. The shop front improvements scheme aims to improve shop fronts in selected areas as a means of supporting the growth of local businesses, improving the local environment and raising the image of the town centres amongst locals and visitors. So far this scheme has been welcomed but take up in the current economic climate is slow.

- High quality town maps, display cases and dispensers have been installed in key locations throughout the town.

- The Centre, 27 Fenkle Street now houses the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages. A special wedding room has been provided with new wallpaper, curtains, carpets and furnishings as an attractive setting for civil marriages.

- A brand new park was opened in 2007 which provides a large grassed area and a modern children’s adventure playground. The park has received two awards.

• Funding was secured to purchase new market stalls for Alnwick Market Place and lights for the stalls will be purchased soon.

• The multi use games area facility is due to be completed by March 2009.

• A number of high quality flower planters have been installed on the cobbles in Alnwick which replace the old stone planters. More flower planters are being purchased for the Market Place and other areas in the town.

• The Willowburn Wildlife Corridor has been protected during the development of the Willowburn Industrial Estate and has now been replanted with trees and shrubs which will be allowed to naturalise to encourage the return of insects and birds to the area.

• The Community Café is now operational following the purchase of new fridge/freezers and other equipment.

• New equipment has been installed at the Community Play Park and plans are underway to improve and fence the younger children’s play area.

• Plans are now underway to improve the access to the town centre from Greenwell Road to Stonewell Lane.

• To commemorate the 700 year anniversary of the Percy Family in Alnwick, the Community Development Trust is making progress with a project to erect a bronze statue of Harry Hotspur in the town. The renowned Northumberland sculptor, Keith Maddison has been commissioned to design and produce the statue which should be in place by Summer 2009.
10.2 Shopper perception of the town

10.2.1 Pedestrianisation

Views on pedestrianisation were not specifically asked about in the survey. However, when asked about suggested ways to make the town centre better, a few comments were made relating to this subject:

- Pedestrianise some streets
- Pedestrianise the main street (2 responses)
- Pedestrian area.
- Pedestrianise it (2 responses).

10.2.2 Signage, Street furniture and Open Spaces

Signage

None of the respondents made any comments about signage.

Street Furniture

Respondents were asked to rate street furniture as part of two different questions (Figure 28). The first question asked for a street furniture rating, and the second asked about the general state of the town centre with regards to street furniture.

The responses to the two questions were similar. Over half of respondents gave a good or very good rating, and less than 11% gave a poor or very poor rating.
Figure 28: Street furniture ratings
(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, June 2008
Base: 278 to 284 respondents depending on question (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

Open Spaces
Nearly two thirds (63%) of the respondents gave a positive rating for the parks and open spaces in Alnwick (Figure 29). 10% gave a negative rating.
Figure 29: Ratings given for parks and open spaces
(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, June 2008
Base: 235 respondents (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

A suggestion for making the town centre better was to have “more open spaces for children”.

10.2.3 Litter and Cleanliness
The overall level of cleanliness in Alnwick town centre was perceived to be quite good, with 72% of respondents giving a good or very good rating, and only 4% giving a poor or very poor rating (Figure 30). Litter within the town centre received a slightly lower rating (68% positive and 10% negative).
Figure 30: Ratings given for litter and overall cleanliness
(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Litter</th>
<th>Overall level of cleanliness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Poor</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, June 2008
Base: 294 respondents (litter); 297 responses (cleanliness); (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

When asked how the respondents would make the town centre better, one respondent gave the suggestion ‘make town more attractive, tidy it up, clean it’.

10.2.4 General Appearance of the Town
Respondents were reasonably positive about the general appearance of the town. Shop frontage received the highest rating (72% good or very good). Graffiti and the general state of the buildings were rated slightly lower (65% and 66% positive ratings respectively) (Figure 31).
A number of suggestions of ways to make the town centre better were made. Comments relating to the appearance of the town are given below:

- Trees in market place
- More floral displays
- Upgrade the town
- Tidy the shop fronts - some are tatty
- Clean up some run down buildings
- Make market area more attractive to liven it up.
- Make town more attractive, tidy it up, and clean it.
11.0 PERCEPTION OF SAFETY AND OCCURRENCE OF CRIME

High levels of crime in a centre will impact on the way people use it and may deter traders from locating there. This section will include an analysis of reported crimes which will be supplemented with information on perception or fear of crime from the Shopper Surveys. Consideration will also be given to any initiatives designed to address town centre-related crime.
11.1 Analysis of Reported Crimes

Figure 32: Analysis of Reported Crimes

Source: Northumbria Police, December 2007
Looking at Figures 32 and 33, it is clear to see that the majority of crime in Alnwick in 2005 – 2007 occurred on Market Street, and the main type of crime here was “rowdy and/ or nuisance”. There were also a significant number of cases of “rowdy and/ or nuisance” crimes recorded throughout the town centre including on Bondgate Within and Fenkle Street. There was a case of “street drinking” recorded on Bondgate Within during this time, but crimes of this type have been found to be rare. Occurrences of all types of crime are more sparsely distributed.
Looking at the chart (Figure 33), the types of crime have been broken down further. The most frequent type of crime occurring in Alnwick Town Centre between 2005 and 2007 was “violence/offences against the person”, of which there were 112 occurrences. The 2nd most frequent type of crime was “other offences” of which there were 93 occurrences.

11.2 Perception or Fear of Crime

Only one respondent thought that safety/security was a main problem with the shopping experience in the town centre, although another respondent did mention that, “unruly youths at bus station” were a problem.

However, when asked how they would make the town centre better, seven people gave an answer related to safety or security.

Respondents were also asked to rate safety/security during the daytime and the night-time. Over three quarters of respondents (78%) gave a good or very good rating for the daytime, and only 1% a poor or very poor rating. For the night-time, the ratings were not quite as good, with 55% giving a positive rating and 11% a negative rating.

As can be seen in Figure 18, less than half of respondents felt that the safety/security of the parking facilities was good/very good.
Figure 34: Ratings given for safety/security
(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, June 2008
Base: 186 respondents (nighttime); 280 respondents (daytime); (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

11.3 Initiatives to Address Town Centre-Related Crime
According to the Alnwick Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CRDP) the following initiatives exist in the Alnwick District (September 2008):

- The Enough Campaign (North Northumberland wide but spreading countywide) a project to tackle alcohol misuse. It has three aspects public awareness through a poster campaign, support to licensees of public houses and enforcement. It was the forerunner of the Northumbria Police DVD campaign.

- Pub watch schemes in Alnwick town and Amble as well as Rothbury. An off watch scheme in the district to support Off Licence shops.

- Shop watch schemes in Alnwick town, Amble and Rothbury.
• Designated Public Place Orders in both Amble and Alnwick town. These allow the police to seize alcohol from people who are acting in an anti social manner in a public place.

• Cease24 is a North Northumberland scheme being spread countywide. It tackles domestic violence by providing a wide range of services to victims and by looking at how offending behaviour should be tackled.

• The Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership runs a number of sub groups which tackle crime problems and anti social behaviour but in particular there is a problem solving group in Amble which is strongly partnership focussed.
12.0 CUSTOMER VIEWS

Shopper surveys will help authorities in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of town centre improvements and in setting further priorities. In this section the shoppers’ surveys carried out in Alnwick Town Centre will be analysed to find out their regularity of visits, type of purchases made, opinions on and use of leisure and entertainment; and what improvements they think will improve the town centre in the future. Additionally, data purchased from Experian will enable investigation of Alnwick catchment area; spending patterns and retaining shopper spend within the town centre.

12.1 Regularity of visits

82% of respondents go to Alnwick town centre during the daytime at least once a week, with the most common frequency of visit being every day (41%).

Respondents visit the centre far less often during the evenings, with only 32% visiting at least once a week. 37% said that they never visit the town centre during the evening (Figure 35).

Figure 35: Approximately how often are you in Alnwick Town Centre?
(Excludes ‘don't know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, June 2008
Base: 293 respondents (daytime) and 296 respondents (evening)
12.2 Expenditure/ Type of Purchases

Figure 36 shows the proportion of respondents that shop for different items solely in Alnwick town centre, and how many go further afield. Figure 37 gives more details about which shopping centres the respondents use.

As can be seen from the tables, the respondents use Alnwick primarily for food and other domestic shopping, and also to a lesser extent for DIY goods and CDs/DVDs. For the other items asked about (clothes, shoes, electrical goods and furniture/carpets) respondents were much more likely to travel to Newcastle.

This ties in with the question about what improvements the respondents would like to see to the retail offer in Alnwick. 84 specifically mentioned clothes or shoe shops (mainly clothes shops). A full list of these suggested improvements can be found in Appendix 1.
### Figure 36: Proportion of respondents shopping in Alnwick and other areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Main food shopping</th>
<th>Top-up food shopping</th>
<th>Other domestic (e.g. Chemist, cosmetics, etc)</th>
<th>Clothes</th>
<th>Shoes</th>
<th>Electrical goods</th>
<th>Furniture/ carpets</th>
<th>DIY goods</th>
<th>CDs/ DVDs etc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alnwick</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alnwick only</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alnwick + local area</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alnwick + internet/non-local/local mix</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Alnwick</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local area (not Alnwick)</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>31%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internet or other</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixture of places (not Alnwick)</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Don't buy</strong></td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Base</strong></td>
<td>297</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, June 2008

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4 ‘Local area’ is defined as being one of the following: Morpeth, Berwick, Amble, Rothbury, Wooler, Ashington, Blyth, Cramlington, Newcastle, Silverlink, Metro Centre.
### Figure 37: Shopping centres used by respondents to purchase different items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Main food shopping</th>
<th>Top-up food shopping</th>
<th>Other domestic (e.g. Chemist, cosmetics, etc)</th>
<th>Clothes</th>
<th>Shoes</th>
<th>Electrical goods</th>
<th>Furniture/ carpets</th>
<th>DIY goods</th>
<th>CDs/DVDs etc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alnwick</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morpeth</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berwick</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amble</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rothbury</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wooler</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashington</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blyth</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cramlington</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silverlink</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro Centre</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't buy</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>296</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, June 2008

Nearly half of the respondents planned to spend less than £25 in Alnwick on the day they were interviewed, with a further 27% expecting to spend between £25 and £100. 16% did not know how much they would spend (Figure 38).
Figure 38: How much do you plan to spend in Alnwick today?
(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, June 2008

Base: 297 respondents

12.3 The Catchment

According to the North East RSS, the region exhibits a polycentric settlement pattern based on two city-regions centered round Tyne & Wear and Tees Valley. A polycentric settlement pattern is one with many centres or nodes, albeit with different characteristics and scales, rather than one key centre dominating everywhere, where their functions are interconnected. Within the context of the RSS and Alnwick Local Development Framework, the town of Alnwick is defined as being a Rural Service Centre: a settlement that provides jobs, services and facilities for a wider rural hinterland. With the exception of Amble, which falls within the Rural Coalfields Regeneration Area, the other settlements within the Alnwick district are Secondary Settlements: towns and villages that are smaller in scale or function than Rural Service Centres.
Figure 39: Alnwick Retail Catchment

The map (Figure 39) shows the catchment area for Alnwick town centre, as defined by Experian. The catchment, which measures the extent of the local consumer base, is based on the Where Britain Shops survey carried out by Experian. Where Britain Shops is an ongoing survey that generates responses from around 1.6 million households per annum. The survey provides detailed knowledge of consumers preferred shopping destinations, covering in-town and out of down locations. The retail catchment area is based on the following theory.
“Where Britain Shops utilises a gravity model called the Shopper Flow Model that calculates the probability of someone living in a specific postal sector shopping in a particular retail area. This probability is determined by the relative travel times to each centre and a retail areas relative pulling power.

The Shopper Flow Model is the key building block used to determine the shopper catchments of a retail centre and includes a measure of the quality, quantity and mix of the shops within a centre using a combination of several variables that include:

- The rank of retail centres based on shopper (weighted) population
- A rank of centres based on likely annual expenditure on comparison goods
- A retail centre’s primary, secondary and tertiary catchments
- Presence of anchor, premier and key retailers plus others
- A tourism score
- Workforce importance

The Shopper Flow Model allocates demand from where people live to where they shop; describing both the comparison goods spend by each retail centre and the ranking of that shopping centre. This allows leakage statistics to be calculated and the impacts of new or re-developed shopping centres to be measured including the larger retail parks, shopping malls and out of town retail centres that are important to multiple retailers and comparison shopping in general.

The Shopper Flow Model is regulated by millions of shopper responses from Lifestyle surveys which ask people where they shop for different types of goods. The model is re-evaluated each year in the light of retail supply and demand changes and is tuned to improve and more accurately represent the picture of British shopping year on year. Use of the model over the years has identified how successfully it works.\(^5\)

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\(^5\) “Goad Town Centre Shopper Report - Interpretation and Methodology 2008” Experian
12.4 Spending Patterns
In addition to the town of Alnwick and a number of smaller adjacent settlements, including Denwick, Hawkhill and Lesbury, the catchment extends to Alnmouth in the South East, Bamburgh and Seahouses to the North East and into the Northumberland National Park to the west. Altogether, the catchment covers an area of 828.28 km², is home to almost 21,300 people and 9,650 households. Together, these households and residents spend an estimated £94.2 million per annum on retail goods and services, with 35.5% of expenditure on convenience retail goods (£33.4 million) and 64.5% on comparison retail (£60.7 million). This balance differs slightly from the national (UK) average, which reports 36.7% of expenditure on convenience retail and 63.3% on comparison. The difference between the national and local position is clearly illustrated through the index which relates the proportion of each spend type in the Alnwick catchment to the proportion in the UK. An index of more than 100% indicates higher than average local spend and an index of less than 100 represents lower than average local spend.

Figure 40: Alnwick Catchment Summary Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alnwick Catchment Summary Profile</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007 Population</td>
<td>21,288.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007 Households</td>
<td>9,647.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Comparison</td>
<td>60,732,580.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Convenience</td>
<td>33,421,279.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Retail</td>
<td>94,153,859.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Comparison per household</td>
<td>£6,295.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Convenience per household</td>
<td>£3,464.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Retail per household</td>
<td>£9,759.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Experian, August 2008

Total retail expenditure per household per annum within the catchment stands at £9,759, with average comparison retail spend at £6,295 per annum and convenience
spend at £3,464 per annum (Figure 40). All of these figures are below the national average, with total spend 93.57% of the UK figure.

Figure 41 below provides a breakdown of Comparison retail expenditure within the Alnwick catchment and in the UK. Clearly the largest expenditure type within comparison retail is Clothing Material & Garments, accounting for £13.1 million or 21.5% of total Comparison Expenditure within the catchment. Clothing is followed by Audio-visual, photographic and information processing equipment (£7.2 million or 11.8%) and Furniture and furnishings; carpets and other floor coverings (£6.3 million or 10.3%). The pattern of expenditure nationally is similar, but with some notable differences. Referring to the index, households in Alnwick spend more on Small electrical household appliances, Major Household Appliances, Audio-visual, photographic and information processing equipment and Household Textiles as a proportion of total spend than the UK average. In contrast, they spend substantially less on Bicycles, Materials for maintenance and repair of the dwelling, Small tools and miscellaneous accessories and Materials for maintenance and repair of the dwelling.

**Figure 41: Total Expenditure (in 2006 prices) Comparison**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2007 Total Expenditure (in 2006 prices) Comparison</th>
<th>Alnwick Catchment</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>115,144.00</td>
<td>0.19%</td>
<td>357,185,476.00</td>
<td>0.21%</td>
<td>91.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10% of Non-Durable household goods</td>
<td>115,144.00</td>
<td>0.19%</td>
<td>357,185,476.00</td>
<td>0.21%</td>
<td>91.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appliances for personal care</td>
<td>5,062,221.00</td>
<td>8.34%</td>
<td>15,298,262,865.00</td>
<td>8.90%</td>
<td>93.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio-visual, photographic and information processing equipment</td>
<td>7,164,871.00</td>
<td>11.80%</td>
<td>14,926,597,385.00</td>
<td>8.68%</td>
<td>135.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycles</td>
<td>79,536.00</td>
<td>0.13%</td>
<td>1,345,908,674.00</td>
<td>0.78%</td>
<td>16.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books and stationery</td>
<td>2,233,058.00</td>
<td>3.68%</td>
<td>6,968,169,166.00</td>
<td>4.05%</td>
<td>90.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing materials and garments</td>
<td>13,068,627.00</td>
<td>21.52%</td>
<td>37,197,970,202.00</td>
<td>21.64%</td>
<td>99.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture and furnishings; carpets and other floor coverings</td>
<td>6,273,391.00</td>
<td>10.33%</td>
<td>18,218,052,893.00</td>
<td>10.60%</td>
<td>97.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Games, toys and hobbies; sport and camping; musical instruments</td>
<td>5,956,002.00</td>
<td>9.81%</td>
<td>18,951,364,780.00</td>
<td>11.02%</td>
<td>88.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardens, plants and flowers</td>
<td>1,045,071.00</td>
<td>1.72%</td>
<td>3,402,000,385.00</td>
<td>1.98%</td>
<td>86.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glassware, tableware and household utensils</td>
<td>1,557,412.00</td>
<td>2.56%</td>
<td>4,753,009,610.00</td>
<td>2.76%</td>
<td>92.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household textiles</td>
<td>2,285,138.00</td>
<td>3.76%</td>
<td>5,378,572,610.00</td>
<td>3.13%</td>
<td>120.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewellery, clocks and watches</td>
<td>1,452,737.00</td>
<td>2.39%</td>
<td>4,533,353,900.00</td>
<td>2.64%</td>
<td>90.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major household appliances (electric or not)</td>
<td>2,298,801.00</td>
<td>3.79%</td>
<td>4,457,482,024.00</td>
<td>2.59%</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major tools and equipment</td>
<td>101,704.00</td>
<td>0.17%</td>
<td>370,528,409.00</td>
<td>0.22%</td>
<td>77.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials for maintenance and repair of the dwelling</td>
<td>1,741,882.00</td>
<td>2.87%</td>
<td>6,828,571,834.00</td>
<td>3.97%</td>
<td>72.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical goods and other pharmaceutical products</td>
<td>1,135,532.00</td>
<td>1.87%</td>
<td>3,904,354,994.00</td>
<td>2.27%</td>
<td>82.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other personal effects        656,888.00  1.08%      2,276,336,174.00 1.32% 81.69
Pets and related products    804,889.00  1.32%      2,747,999,981.00 1.60% 82.9
Recording media            3,729,587.00  6.14%      7,513,288,250.00 4.37% 140.5
Shoes and other footwear    1,750,934.00  2.88%      5,348,647,704.00 3.11% 92.67
Small electrical household appliances    437,032.00  0.72%      748,364,529.00 0.44% 165.3
Small tools and miscellaneous accessories  862,456.00  1.42%      3,301,806,678.00 1.92% 73.94
Therapeutic appliances and equipment       919,865.00  1.51%      3,101,000,673.00 1.80% 83.97
Total Comparison            60,732,580.00 100.00%  171,926,829,196.00 100.00% 100

Source: Experian, August 2008

Figure 42: Expenditure on Comparison Retail

Figure 43: Expenditure on Comparison Retail
Figure 44 below provides a breakdown of Convenience retail expenditure within the Alnwick catchment and in the UK. Clearly the largest expenditure type within comparison retail is Alnwick is Food and non-alcoholic beverages, accounting for £23.8 million or 71.3% of total Comparison Expenditure within the area. Food and non-alcoholic beverages is followed by Alcohol (£4.4 million or 13.0%) and Tobacco (£2.5 million or 7.6%). The pattern of expenditure nationally differs a little. Referring to the index, households in Alnwick spend more on Newspapers and Periodicals as a proportion of total spend and less on Tobacco.

Figure 44: 2007 Total Expenditure Convenience Retail

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2007 Total Expenditure (in 2006 prices) Convenience Retail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Totals Alnwick Catchment % UK % Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90% of Non-Durable household goods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,036,289.00 3.10% 3,214,575,062.00 3.23% 95.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol (off-trade)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4,354,289.00 13.03% 12,313,767,021.00 12.38% 105.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and non-alcoholic beverages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23,825,452.00 71.29% 70,035,886,128.00 70.41% 101.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspapers and periodicals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,682,932.00 5.04% 4,451,576,478.00 4.48% 112.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,522,317.00 7.55% 9,448,891,938.00 9.50% 79.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Convenience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33,421,279.00 100.00% 99,464,696,627.00 100.00% 100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Experian, August 2008

12.5 Retaining Shopper Spend

The information outlined in the previous section describes the extent and pattern of expenditure per annum of households living within the Experian-defined catchment area for Alnwick town. What the information does not indicate is how much of the expenditure is spend purchasing goods and services in Alnwick and how much leaks to neighbouring retail destinations. Based on the Where Britain Shops Survey, Experian have calculated:

- The proportion of the population within the Alnwick catchment that shops in Alnwick and the proportion that shop at other centres.

- The percentage of expenditure spent on goods and services in Alnwick and the extent to which spending leaks to other centres.

The figures in Figure 45 below provide a baseline assessment against which future reports will measure changes in performance. The figures do not currently provide a
breakdown of leakage for comparison and convenience retail, although it is anticipated that retention will be substantially higher for the latter compared with the former.

With regards to population, Experian estimates that just over half of the resident population shop in Alnwick. The other main destinations are Newcastle City Centre (2,558 or 12%), the MetroCentre (1,550 or 7%), Ashington (1,200 or 6%) and Berwick upon Tweed (1,121 or 5%).

Figure 45: Population Leakage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan Name</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alnwick</td>
<td>51.34</td>
<td>10,929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle upon Tyne – Central</td>
<td>12.02</td>
<td>2,558</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro Centre</td>
<td>7.28</td>
<td>1,550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashington</td>
<td>5.64</td>
<td>1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berwick-upon-Tweed</td>
<td>5.26</td>
<td>1,121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amble</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seahouses</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morpeth</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blyth</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cramlington</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belford</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Shields - Silverlink Retail Park</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wooler</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle upon Tyne - Kingston Park Centre</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Shields</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallsend</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunderland</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gateshead - Team Valley Retail World</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rothbury</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Experian, August 2008

The pattern with regards to spend is relatively similar. Experian estimates that just over half of retail spend by residents and households domiciled within the Alnwick catchment, representing almost £48 million per annum, is spent in the town.

Almost £11.5 million of expenditure is lost to Newcastle City Centre (£11.45 million or 12%), with other notable leakage to the MetroCentre (£6.9 million or 7%), Ashington (£5.4 million or 6%) and Berwick upon Tweed (£5 million or 5%). What is not clear
from the figures, however, is the retail types that outlying centres are able to attract from the catchment area. This is something that InfoNet will be investigating further with Experian over the coming 12 months.

Figure 46: Spend Leakage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan Name</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>Spend (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alnwick</strong></td>
<td>50.88</td>
<td>47,908,798</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle upon Tyne - Central</td>
<td>12.16</td>
<td>11,452,374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro Centre</td>
<td>7.36</td>
<td>6,934,229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashington</td>
<td>5.69</td>
<td>5,356,781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berwick-upon-Tweed</td>
<td>5.26</td>
<td>4,954,795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amble</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>3,461,882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seahouses</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>3,097,326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morpeth</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>2,799,038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blyth</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>1,541,834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cramlington</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>1,490,378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belford</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>1,295,160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Shields - Silverlink Retail Park</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>1,058,829</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wooler</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>714,666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle upon Tyne - Kingston Park Centre</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>682,310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Shields</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>606,459</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallsend</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>360,761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunderland</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>199,414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gateshead - Team Valley Retail World</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>172,911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rothbury</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>65,915</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Experian, August 2008

The map below shows the Alnwick catchment area and is colour coded to indicate the proportion of retail expenditure that is spent by the resident population in Alnwick. From the map, it can be seen that households located within Alnwick and in settlements within close proximity of Alnwick (extending to Craster, Howick, Boulmer and Longhoughton in the east, Hedgeley and Abberwick in the West) spend in excess of 50% of their total retail expenditure in Alnwick. Propensity to shop in Alnwick diminishes as you travel further afield, dropping to between 40-50% of total expenditure amongst households in Chathill, to between 30-40% amongst those in the west of the district and into the National Park; and to between 20-30% of expenditure in Bamburgh and Seahouses in the North East and Alnmouth and Amble in the South East.
12.6 Opinions on and use of Leisure and Entertainment

6% of respondents said that they were in Alnwick town centre for leisure on the day of the interview.

Events attended

Over 90% of the respondents had attended at least one of the events in the questionnaire in Alnwick. The most well attended events were the Alnwick Fair (75% of respondents), Alnwick Market (69%) and the Alnwick International Music Festival (68%), although most of the other events were also well attended by the respondents (Figure 48).
Figure 48: Have you ever attended any of these events?
(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Percentage of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christmas lights switch on</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alnwick Fair</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alnwick Food Festival</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alnwick Tournament</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alnwick International Music Festival</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alnwick Market</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continental Market</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alnwick Farmers Market</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have not attended any</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, June 2008

Base: 297 respondents

Eating and drinking
Eating and drinking venues in Alnwick were generally rated well by the respondents. The best rating (83% of respondents giving a good/very good rating) was for the coffee shops, and the lowest rating was for the pubs and clubs (59% gave a positive rating) (Figure 49).
Figure 49: How would you rate the following venues for eating and drinking in Alnwick?

(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, June 2008
Base: 176 to 265 respondents depending on type of venue (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

Arts and leisure facilities
All of the arts and leisure facilities in Alnwick were given a good/very good rating by over half of the respondents and a poor/very poor rating by less than 10% of the respondents (Figure 50).

The best ratings were given for the Alnwick Gardens and the Willowburn Leisure centre (84% and 79% of respondents gave a positive rating). The lowest rating was given for the Baliffgate Museum (56% gave a positive rating).
Figure 50: How would you rate the following arts and leisure facilities in Alnwick?

(Excludes 'don't know' responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, June 2008

Base: 133 to 252 depending on facility (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

When asked how they would rate Alnwick as a place to enjoy yourself, over half (55%) of respondents gave a good or very good response (Figure 51).
Figure 51: How do you rate Alnwick as a place to enjoy yourself?
(Excludes 'don't know' responses unless otherwise specified)

[Diagram showing rating distribution: Very Poor 3%, Poor 8%, OK 34%, Good 41%, Very Good 14%]

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, June 2008
Base: 288 (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

General
When respondents were asked how they would make the town centre better, 9% gave an answer relating to improving the leisure facilities. A few comments were also made on this subject:

- Discount Alnwick gardens.
- More things for teenagers to do.
- More open spaces for children.
- More for 16-17 year olds to do.
- Better leisure facilities for children

12.7 The Future: what will improve the town as a place to shop or visit?
From the analysis of the Alnwick shopper survey, it appears that in order to improve the town as a place to shop or visit, two issues need to be addressed. One relates to the retail offer, and the other relates to parking in the town centre. The parking issue
has already been covered in sections 9.2 and 9.3. The retail offer is examined in more detail in this section.

**Figure 52: How would you make this town centre better?**

(Excludes 'don't know' responses unless otherwise specified)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improved Parking</th>
<th>Improved Accessibility</th>
<th>Better Retail offer</th>
<th>Improved Leisure Facilities</th>
<th>Safety and security</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Nothing</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>43%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, June 2008

*Base: 295 respondents*

**Retail**

Throughout the survey, respondents have been fairly negative about the retail offer in Alnwick as can be seen in the following figures:

- 18% of respondents gave a response relating to the ‘limited offer or range of shops/goods’ as being one of the main problems with the shopping experience in Alnwick town centre.

- Comments given as part of the main problems question include: “more shops”, “variety of shops, not many”, “no good shops”, “shops lack choice”, “requires more varied shops” and “poor staffing of supermarket checkouts”.

- Only 27% of respondents agreed that Alnwick offers a wide choice of quality shops; 40% disagreed with the statement.
• As can be seen in sections 12.2 and 12.3, a large proportion of respondents go to alternative shopping centres to do their shopping, particularly for clothes and shoes.

• Only 30% of respondents gave a good/very good rating when asked to rate Alnwick as a place to shop; 23% gave a poor/very poor rating.

When asked what improvements respondents would like to see to the retail offer in Alnwick, the most common suggestion was to have an increased variety of shops (38% of respondents mentioned this). Fewer charity shops, more chain stores and more shops offering local produce were also popular answers (Figure 53).

**Figure 53: What improvements would you like to see to the retail offer in Alnwick?**

(Excludes 'don't know' responses unless otherwise specified)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More chain stores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More shops offering local produce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fewer charity shops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase variety of shops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longer opening hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, June 2008

*Base: 297 respondents*

Respondents were also asked to give examples of suggested improvements to the retail offer in Alnwick. A list of these responses is given in Appendix 2 (Q17).
13.0 INVESTMENT

Redevelopment
The following developments are proposed for Alnwick Town Centre;

- New homes and shops are planned at the former AMC Ford site in Alnwick. This is set to be completed in early 2009, the development will see 93 one and two bedroom apartments by Gentoo Ventures, including 17 affordable homes. Argon properties are set to develop four retail units on the Clayport Street Site. This development will transform the old AMC Ford depot alongside the Bird and Bush pub and the Carpet Warehouse from a derelict area of the town into a welcome addition to the town.

- A large redevelopment is being proposed at St Michael’s Square which would be mainly housing.
14.0 CONCLUSION

Alnwick is currently undergoing various developments in the Town Centre. Whilst the majority of the regeneration is residential properties, there are four retail units being developed, which equates to 2,601m² of retail floorspace. These developments, which are set to be completed in early 2009, should therefore be taken into consideration when drawing conclusions about the health of the Town Centre.

In the Town Centre, 51% of the floorspace use was for retail (Figure 3). However, despite this high percentage of the amount of retail floorspace, shopper’s perceptions of the range of retail provision was somewhat negative with 40% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing to the statement “Alnwick offers a wide choice of quality shops”, compared to 27% agreeing or strongly agreeing (Figure 5).

Although there weren’t many verbatim responses to what shoppers would like to see improved with the shopping experience (Appendix 2) the responses included that more shops were needed and that the range and choice of shops needed to be improved. The verbatim responses to what shoppers would like to see improved with the retail offer (Appendix 2) highlighted that more clothes shops were high on their priorities. Additionally, figure 6 highlighted that there were more comparison retail (clothing, household goods, furniture, DIY and electrical goods) than convenience or retail service. This may indicate that shoppers would like to see less comparison retail than convenience or service, or they would like more variation within that particular category.

Since July 2005, the yield for Alnwick has been lower than the average for Northumberland, and was at its lowest at 7% in July 2007, when the last figure was calculated (Figure 9), since April 2001 when the data originated. It had also dropped to just below the average yield for the North East of England. Recent improvements such as the Shop Front Scheme led by Alnwick District Council, would all contribute to keeping the yield at a low value and Alnwick being a more attractive place to set up business. This low yield is supported by the response given by interviewed shoppers for their opinion on general appearance of the town which was reasonably positive (Figure 31).
There was 5% of vacant floorspace in Alnwick (see Figure 12). Figure 13 also shows that between 2007 and 2008, the amount of vacant floorspace had reduced when looking at property flows. This was a result of more buildings changing from being vacant to occupied from 2007 to 2008, than occupied to vacant. There had been local interest for vacant properties in the Town Centre as recorded by Northumberland Property Search. However, this is not an exhaustive view of all enquiries made on properties within the town centre, just a snapshot.

Accessibility into the town was not a problem for the shoppers interviewed with 78% (of those travelling by car) finding it very or fairly easy (Figure 17). However, 49% of these shoppers felt that the parking in the town centre was either poor or very poor. Appendix 2 also shows that 29 shoppers commented on the lack of parking and a further 9 said parking in general was a problem. Alnwick also has good bus connectivity, which is shown in Figure 22 by the frequency and number of destinations reached from Alnwick. 79% of shoppers travelling into the town centre by bus also found it very or fairly easy to travel there (Figure 24). However, Figure 25 shows that this was not the case when looking at overall perception of the shoppers interviewed with around one quarter of respondents rating the quality, regularity and destinations served by public transport negatively. These two findings appear to contradict; however it may be that the negative response to the perception of public transport was given by those who do not use it, or vice versa. These two areas would need to be looked at more closely together to gain further insight on this matter.

When looking at retaining shopper spend, 51% of Alnwick residents shopped in Alnwick. 12% of expenditure was lost to Newcastle and a further 7% to the Metro Centre (Figure 45). However, the current regeneration programmes may show that the percentage for Alnwick will increase in the next few years and there will be a reduction in leakage to surrounding centres.

The responses from shoppers coupled with the various aspects that make up a town centre, suggest that generally Alnwick was in reasonable health. Although there has been some negative responses from the shoppers’ surveys with regards to the retail offer in general, the implementation of the various regeneration projects and increase
in retail floorspace in the town centre should show hopefully show some improvements in forthcoming years.
15.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The original intention was that town centre health checks would be carried out biennially and there are various recommendations that would ensure that the next report improves and builds upon this initial “baseline” report. In subsequent years comparisons will be able to be made within the same town over a period of time, and also between towns which have the similar roles or functions, (e.g. market towns).

Section 3, Diversity of Uses, focused on the different uses of commercial properties. Using the data from Experian, an analysis of property use class was carried out, however this data was only based on the ground floor of the properties and did not take into consideration any businesses that were situated on the upper floors. In order to give a more accurate picture of the use class of the town centre, these other floors would have to be considered. Another area to look at next time would be the location and quantity of residential properties in the town.

Section 5, Retailer Demand, summarised the interest of vacant outlets in the town centre. In this report, the source of this data was Northumberland Property Search. This cannot be taken as an exhaustive source of this information, and it would be beneficial to work in partnership with the various estate agents within the County to gain a more reliable and accurate insight. Additionally, a substantial amount of enquirers from the Northumberland Property Search referred to out of town properties such as those situated on business parks or industrial estates and therefore were excluded for the purpose of this report.

Section 8, Pedestrian Flows, analysed the footfall counts that had taken place within the town centres alongside the shopper’s surveys. As they had taken place on a “normal” weekday, a market day (where applicable) and a Saturday, it was not possible to estimate a weekly footfall count without including a footfall on a Sunday. This is something that would have to be considered next time.

Section 9, Accessibility, gathered all of the destinations reached from Alnwick by bus. This information was drawn up into a table, however a map showing all of these
routes would have been even more useful and easier to present in the report, but unfortunately this was not available at the time of publishing.

Section 11, Perception of Safety and Occurrence of Crime, analysed the number of crimes that had taken place within the town centre between 2005 and 2007, and also the initiatives designed to address town centre-related crime. It will be interesting in the next report to investigate what impact these initiatives have had on the number of crimes reported in the town centre.

Section 13, Investment, looked at future proposals for the town centre. The perception of town centre shoppers should be reviewed when the report is next updated, in order to see if their opinions have been considered within future proposals for the area.
APPENDIX 1

Use Class Order
(www.planningportal.gov.uk)

The following classes of use for England are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 and its subsequent amendments.

- **A1 Shops** - Shops, retail warehouses, hairdressers, undertakers, travel and ticket agencies, post offices, pet shops, sandwich bars, showrooms, domestic hire shops, dry cleaners and funeral directors.
- **A2 Financial and professional services** - Banks, building societies, estate and employment agencies, professional and financial services and betting offices.
- **A3 Restaurants and cafés** - For the sale of 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 a night clubs).
- **A5 Hot food takeaways** - For the sale of hot food for consumption off the premises.

- **B1 Business** - Offices, research and development, light industry appropriate in a residential area.
- **B2 General industrial**
- **B3-B7 Special Industrial Groups** - See 'Use Classes Schedule'.
- **B8 Storage or distribution** - This class includes open air storage.

- **C1 Hotels** - Hotels, boarding and guest houses where no significant element of care is provided.
- **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.
- **C3 Dwellinghouses** - Family houses, or houses occupied by up to six residents living together as a single household, including a household where care is provided for residents.
• **D1 Non-residential institutions** - Clinics, health centres, crèches, day nurseries, day centres, schools, art galleries, 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 night clubs), swimming baths, skating rinks, gymnasiums or sports arenas (except for motor sports, or where firearms are used).

• **Sui Generis** - Theatres, houses in multiple paying occupation, hostels providing no significant element of care, scrap yards. Petrol filling stations and shops selling and/or displaying motor vehicles. Retail warehouse clubs, nightclubs, launderettes, taxi businesses, amusement centres. Casinos.
APPENDIX 2
VERBATIM RESPONSES FOR SHOPPER’S SURVEY

Verbatim responses to ‘Q12 Can you tell me what, if anything, are the main problems with the shopping experience in Alnwick Town Centre?

Parking
- Not enough parking (29 responses)
- Not enough short stay parking (2 responses)
- Parking (9 responses)
- Disabled parking is poor (2 responses)
- Cost of parking
- Free Parking

Retail
- Mens clothing. Next
- More shops
- No good shops.
- Variety of shops, not many
- Shops lack choice.
- Poor staffing of supermarket checkouts.

Mixture of problems
- Lack of baby facilities. Pedestrian crossings.
- Requires more varied shops and better parking.
- Shops lack choice. Parking not adequate
- Tourist buses. Parking in general
- Roads are not level. Problems getting around building site.

Other
- Bus service
- Not enough buses
Verbatim responses to ‘Q17 What improvements would you like to see to the retail offer in Alnwick?’

Clothes and shoes

- More clothes shops (10 responses)
- More clothing shops. (4 responses)
- Clothes shops (5 responses)
- Better clothes shops.
- More clothes & shoe shops (2 responses)
- Classics Clothes.
- Mens clothing - Topman
- Mens clothing i.e. Burtons
- Mens clothing shops. River Island
- Mens clothing. Burtons. Next
- More mens clothing.
- Better shops for men.
- Ladies & Mens Clothing
- Ladies clothes shops
- Ladies clothing
- More middle range womens clothes
- Female and childrens clothing. Boys clothing.
- More childrens clothings.
- More clothes shops. More childrens clothes shops.
- Shoe shops. Childrens clothes. Next.
- Clothes, shoes, childrens clothing. M&S
- Clothes shops for younger people (3 responses)
- Clothes shops for younger people i.e. Miss selfridge, topsho
- Clothes shops for younger people, Topshop
- Clothing shops for teenagers
- Fashion shops
- M&S (8 responses)
- M&S. Clothes shops.
- Clothes Shops, M&S
- Department store (M&S), designer clothes shop, shoe shops.
- Department stores i.e. M&S. Clothes shops.

- Too busy with people
- Too much traffic
- Traffic congestion.
- Not Natwest bank
- Sheltered benches
- Unruly youths at bus station
- Accessible with park. Busy
• Department stores (2 responses)  
• Next  
• Next. M&S  
• Primark, New Look. Clothes shops

• Quality shops i.e. Next, M&S  
• Topshop  
• Topshop. Fashion stores  
• Clothes shops i.e. Evans.  
• Evans. Bigger Primark  
• Evans. New Look

Mixture of shop types

• Clothes for older people. M&S simply food. Wilkinsons.  
• Clothes shops, Primark. Sports shops  
• Clothes shops. Electrical shops. (2 responses)  
• Clothing, M&S. Food  
• DIY shops. Clothes shops.  
• Evans, M&S, Wilkinson  
• M&S. Primark. ASDA  
• Menswear shops. Less charity shops  
• More Childrens clothes and Toy shops

• More choice of clothes. Childrens Toys  
• More electrical shops more clothes shops  
• More mens clothing. Next. Wilkinsons  
• Next. Food shops  
• Wilkinsons. Clothes shops  
• No more chain stores. Variety stores.  
• Specialist shops i.e. Handmade jewellery, clothes shops for  
• Coats. Collectables  
• Large stores. Electrical stores.

Other shops

• Baby shops  
• Better known shops  
• Book Shops  
• Cheaper shops - All too expensive.  
• Furniture shops  
• Craft shops

• High quality shops  
• Home décor shops to attract up market visitors. Increase Su  
• Tesco
Other comment

- More disabled parking. Safer driving up Main street
- Too many cafes
- Too many cafes. More casual clothes shops.
- (comment indecipherable)
Verbatim responses to ‘Q23 How would you make this town centre better?’

Parking
- Better & free parking
- Free parking
- Larger parking spaces for motor homes
- More parking space
- Price of parking
- Residents parking.

Pedestrians & traffic
- Pedestrianise some streets
- Pedestrianise the main street (2 responses)
- Traffic. Pedestrian area.
- More pedestrian crossings (2 responses)
- Less traffic congestion (2 responses)
- Make it less busy traffic wise.

Various things mentioned
- Better bus service. ASDA, Primark, M&S.
- Discount Alnwick gardens. More parking around edge. Pedestrianise it.
- Put buses back in market place. Roundabout at war memorial.
- More things for teenagers to do. Better transport links running later at night.
- Park in market square. Pedestrianise it.
- More open spaces for children. Fewer cars on Main Street.

Attractiveness of town
- Trees in market place
- Upgrade the town
- Tidy the shop fronts - some are tatty
- Make market area more attractive to liven it up.
• Make town more attractive, tidy it up, clean it.
• Clean up some run down buildings
• More floral displays

Disabilities
• Better disabled access i.e. Automatic Doors etc.
• Improved footpaths for disabled scooters
• More access and facilities for disabled people

Other
• Public toilets, 24 hours access to public toilets.
• Toilets are needed
• Too many cafes
• Too many empty shops
• Better bus service
• Bus service does not correspond with the trains, you can’t get from bus stop to platform i
• Environmental improvements as suggested in the Streetscape study. Alnwick Council trust?
• More electrical shops. More larger stores.
• More for 16-17 year olds to do.
• Better leisure facilities for children
The Northumberland Information Network

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