The Corporate Research Unit (InfoNet) is part of the Policy & Partnerships Service of Northumberland County Council (in the Performance Directorate); it supports the Corporate Policy Team, other sections of the council and the NSP.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 44% of the floorspace in Haltwhistle was for retail.

- 46% of shoppers felt that Haltwhistle offered a wide choice of shops.

- There were more comparison retail and leisure services than convenience or retail service.

- There was 11% of vacant floorspace in Haltwhistle.

- 79% of shoppers interviewed found it easy to travel into the town centre by car.

- Accessibility into the town was not a problem for approximately two thirds (62%) of the shoppers interviewed (of those travelling by car) finding it very or fairly easy.

- Parking in Haltwhistle town centre was not rated particularly highly, with less than two fifths of respondents (38%) saying that the availability of parking spaces was good or very good, and 29% giving a poor or very poor rating.

- 80% of shoppers interviewed found it easy to travel into the town centre by bus.

- Public transport in Haltwhistle was rated fairly highly, with over two thirds of respondents giving a positive rating for the quality and the regularity of bus/rail services, and the destinations served by public transport.

- 17% of Haltwhistle residents shopped in Haltwhistle. 15% was lost to Newcastle and a further 15% 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 Haltwhistle 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 centres. 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 centres; 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 centre 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 Haltwhistle’s Town Centre Boundary

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

The area of Haltwhistle Town Centre in relation to the District Council boundary is 26,450.12 m².

**Figure 1: Boundary for Haltwhistle Town Centre (District Council)**
Figure 2: Boundary for Haltwhistle Town Centre (Experian)

Source: Experian
2.2 Haltwhistle’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 Haltwhistle Community Partnership): Haltwhistle is a small market town which acts as a main centre within the western Tynedale area, located 16 miles west of Hexham and 22 miles from Carlisle. It is located just off the A69 which provides access to Newcastle and Carlisle and the A1 and M6. An inner “by-pass” links the A69 with the western end of the town, with direct access into the town centre via Lanty’s Lonnen. The town has a population of 3,595 (2001 Census). The core retail area is Main Street, which is the main linear axis through the town centre with a market place which hosted the last public hanging during the Border Reiver times. This acts as the main route for local and visitor traffic to the immediate shops and to adjoining residential areas on the northern edge of the town.

The train station and bus interchange is to the south west of the town centre, provides services to Newcastle and Carlisle as well as the popular AD122 Hadrian’s Wall bus during the tourist season. At this same location, the town’s tourist information centre, business units and other satellite retail uses are found. The town is a gateway to the central section of Hadrian’s Wall with Vindolanda and Housesteads within easy reach, and also to the stunning scenery of Northumberland National Park and the North Pennines AONB

2.3 History and Development of Haltwhistle

Haltwhistle is a traditional market town in West Northumberland, lying on the main A69 road from Newcastle to Carlisle, 16 miles west of Hexham.

A number of suggestions have been given for the derivation of the name ‘Haltwhistle’. One suggestion is ‘Hautwysel’ meaning ‘the high hill by two rivers’ or ‘the watch on high’, which is believed to refer to Castle Hill, an oval shaped mound
fortified by earthworks and a castle. A second proposal is ‘Haut-Twisla’ meaning ‘high fork in the river’, referring to the confluence of Haltwhistle Burn and the South Tyne. A third possible derivation is ‘Haut Whysile’, meaning ‘high boundary’.

A considerable amount of evidence has been found in and around Haltwhistle which relates to the Roman era, including milecastles, turrets and temporary camps. However, there is also evidence of settlement dating back as far as the Bronze Age.

As with a number of towns in the area, the 16th and 17th centuries were a turbulent time for Haltwhistle, with murder, arson, kidnap and robbery common occurrences between the border families.

In the 1830’s, the population expanded thanks to the building of the railway between Newcastle and Carlisle, which included a station at Haltwhistle. This gave rise to a number of industries, including mining, farming, woollen mills, brickworks, and ironworks. A further branch line was opened between Haltwhistle and Alston in 1852, which ran until 1976.

According to the Census, Haltwhistle had a population of around 3,600 in 2001. In 2003, there was a decline in Haltwhistle due to three of the major employers in the town closing down. Today, hundreds more employees are facing an uncertain future as another major employer is under threat of closure.

Tourism is now a key industry in Haltwhistle. As well as it’s proximity to Hadrians Wall and the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Haltwhistle has a parish church believed to date back to the 9th century, walks along the Haltwhistle Burn, and many castles and fortifications nearby. Haltwhistle is also one of two towns claiming to be the geographical centre of Britain.

Other attractions in Haltwhistle are a leisure centre with three outdoor heated swimming pools, which is the North East’s only outdoor swimming complex, and the Haltwhistle Walking Festival held every Spring. A market (which has been running since 1207) takes place every Thursday.
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 Haltwhistle Town Centre and also the opinions of shoppers surveyed on the range of retail provision in Haltwhistle.

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 under half (44%) of the floorspace in Haltwhistle Town Centre are classed as shops. Non-residential institutions and assembly and leisure each account for 12% of floorspace. Businesses and financial and professional services occupy 7% and 6% of floorspace, respectively.

Figure 3: Floorspace by Use Class
Figure 4: Building Use class for Haltwhistle Town Centre

Building Use Class for Haltwhistle Town Centre

Source: Experian
The map (Figure 4) shows that the majority of shops within the town centre are clustered around the two main streets: Westgate and Main Street. The financial and professional services and businesses are spread throughout Westgate and Main Street.

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. The walking festival takes place on 9th May 2009 and is a 24-mile walk. The route starts and finishes in Haltwhistle. It includes: a section along the Hadrian’s Wall footpath and returns past Featherstone Castle along the South Tyne valley. This is an all-day event that combines several of the most popular and picturesque walks of previous walking festivals. The Thursday market is a general weekly market with a few stalls – operated by Tynedale Council. The Saturday market is a Chamber of Trade venture. Last year it was themed as a ‘Roman’ market complete with Centurion Maximus. However this year it is relaunching in April and focusing more on local crafts and produce as Haltwhistle Country Market. It is aimed to have a number of associated activities on Market Day. The Plant Festival – an exhibition/sale of plants at Haltwhistle Leisure Centre, organized by local group ‘Craftwrite’ – stalls from a variety of nurseries and also local crafts. Carnival Weekend – is the culmination of a week long series of community events. The Saturday events are usually a duck race, a raft race, wheelbarrow/fancy dress race and Sunday there is a carnival parade through the town of wagons pulling floats with local people in fancy dress e.g. Strictly Come Dancing or St Trinian’s and there is a fun fair down on the Carnival Field with lots of stalls and a central ring with displays. Sights and Sounds Festival – a week long exhibition of local arts and crafts in the 13th Century Holy Cross Church with musical interludes provided by local musicians – the week culminates in a free musical concert in the Church on the last Saturday night of the festival. Christmas Shopping night – all the shops on the main street stay open and offer ginger wine/sherry and mince pies and have special promotions. Santa Claus on his sleigh
in the Market Place, local school choirs singing carols and a small Christmas market in the market place.

3.3 Satisfaction with the range of provision – retail

Question 14 in the Haltwhistle Shopper Questionnaire asked:

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

The level of agreement with this statement was considerably higher than the level of disagreement (46% vs. 26% of respondents) (Figure 5).

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

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

Source: Shopper Surveys

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 - Haltwhistle

Figure 6 shows that in Haltwhistle town centre, the majority of businesses are comparison retail (14 independent, 2 multiple chain) and leisure services (14
independent, 2 multiple chain). There are 7 convenience retail premises and 8 retail
service in total.
5.0 RETAILER DEMAND

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).

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

There were no enquiries for properties in Haltwhistle Town Centre recorded on Northumberland Property Database between April 2007 and March 2008. The only enquiries recorded were for properties on Hadrian Enterprise Park which is an out of town employment site. However, it must be noted that this data is based solely on one source (Northumberland Property Database) and other sources may provide further insight.
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 Northumberland in comparison with the North East and England, as this data does not exist for Haltwhistle Town Centre. It has been assumed that the reason for this is, “from Spring 2002 reporting locations with a yield of 10% or over will not be included in the time series on the assumption that such locations are not of major interest in terms of retail property investment. The locations however will still be monitored and if evidence indicates yields have fallen to less than 10% the time series will be continued.”

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.

1 www.voa.gov.uk
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 Haltwhistle Town Centre**

![Valuation Office Zone A rental prices for Haltwhistle Town Centre](image)

Source: Valuation Office

Figure 8 shows that there was no zone A data for a lot of the properties in Haltwhistle therefore it is not possible to identify any trends. However, it can be seen that the
properties on Westgate and Main Street for which the data is available fell into £0-
£99 per m² bracket or £100-£199 per m² bracket.

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.” \(^2\) 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.”\(^3\)

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

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.

There is therefore no available data for Haltwhistle, however Figure 9 shows the
average yield for Northumberland, the North East of England, and England.

\(^2\) www.voa.gov.uk

\(^3\) www.voa.gov.uk
The graph shows that since April 2001, the average yield for Northumberland has generally been higher than the average for the North East of England and England. The biggest difference in yield between Northumberland and the rest of the North East was by 0.86 in January 2005. Similarly for Northumberland and the rest of England in January 2005 it was 1.20. This indicates that based on yield, it has been derived that there is more of a “risk” associated with setting up business in Northumberland compared to the rest of the North East and England. The latest result, however, in July 2007, showed that this gap had decreased. The average yield for Northumberland was 7.05; the average yield for the North East was 7.02; and the average yield for England was 6.70.

### 6.3 Average Rental Rate

The average monthly rental rate for vacant commercial property in Haltwhistle town centre between 1st January 2006 and 31st December 2007 was £38.17 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, Haltwhistle has the lowest average monthly rental rate in Northumberland for the 11 towns recorded. 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 Haltwhistle and other Northumberland Towns**

![Bar chart showing average rental prices for commercial property between Haltwhistle and other Northumberland towns. The chart includes data for Alnwick, Amble, Ashington, Bedlington, Berwick, Hexham, Morpeth, Newbiggin, Ponteland, Rothbury, and Haltwhistle. The y-axis represents the average rent per square metre, ranging from £0.00 to £250.00. The chart shows that Haltwhistle has a lower average rental price compared to other towns.](source: Northumberland Property Database)
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. 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 Haltwhistle 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 Haltwhistle Town Centre with the most vacant premises is Dwelling with 100% of premises vacant. The street which had the 2nd highest percentage of vacant premises and floorspace was Park View with 33% and 21% vacant respectively.

Figure 12 shows that in Haltwhistle Town Centre, there were 89% of occupied premises and 11% 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>
<th>Rank - vacancy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DWELLING</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARK VIEW</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WESTGATE</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAIN STREET</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE MART</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEST ROAD</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Experian
Figure 12: Is a Property Vacant

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is Property Vacant? (Haltwhistle Town Centre)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

89% 11%

Source: Experian

7.2 Changes in Town Centre Occupiers 2007 – 2008 (Property Flows)

Information about changes in town centre occupiers between 2007 – 2008 is not currently available for Haltwhistle town centre, as the GOAD plan from which the data is taken, was only created by Experian in 2008 when the work was commissioned by Northumberland Information Network.
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 Haltwhistle Town Centre in May 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 Saturday 17th May, Monday 19th May and Thursday 22nd May 2008. They were carried out by interviewers at two “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

The data suggests that Market Day tends to be the busiest day of the week in Haltwhistle, with around 860 people visiting the town centre on the day of the footfall counts. Saturdays appear to have around fewer people visiting the centre (around 300 lower in this case), and on a ‘normal weekday’, the figure drops further.

Figure 13: Estimated daily footfall in Haltwhistle Town Centre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location (See figure 2)</th>
<th>Saturday (Weekend)</th>
<th>Monday (“Normal” day)</th>
<th>Thursday (Market Day)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lucky Palace, Main Street</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSBC, Market Square</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>546</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>858</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Northumberland Footfall Counts

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.

---

4 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.
the week. In the future, it is the intention to calculate average weekly footfalls for each town.
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 Haltwhistle 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

46% of respondents travelled into Haltwhistle by car on the day of the interview. Over half of these (55%) (Figure 14) said that they go into Haltwhistle 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 22% in the evenings.

Figure 14: Frequency of visit to the town centre by those respondents travelling in by car

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

![Frequency of visit to the town centre by car](chart)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

Base: 77 for daytime; 77 for evening
Nearly two thirds (62%) of the respondents that travelled by car found it very easy to travel into Haltwhistle town centre (Figure 15). A further 17% found it fairly easy, 16% found it fairly difficult, and no-one found it very difficult.

**Figure 15: How easy/difficult do you feel it is to travel into Haltwhistle town centre (those respondents that travelled by car)**

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

![Pie chart showing the distribution of responses to the question on how easy/difficult it is to travel into Haltwhistle town centre for those respondents that travelled by car.]

- 62% Very easy
- 17% Fairly easy
- 16% Neither easy nor difficult
- 5% Fairly difficult

*Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires*

*Base: 77*

### 9.2 Access to car parking

Parking in Haltwhistle town centre was not rated particularly highly (Figure 18), with less than two fifths of respondents (38%) saying that the availability of parking spaces was good or very good, and 29% giving a poor or very poor rating.

A slightly higher proportion of respondents (42%) gave a positive rating for the availability of disabled parking spaces, but slightly more (36%) gave a negative rating.

The safety/security of the parking facilities was viewed much more positively, with 85% giving a good or very good rating, and only 5% giving a poor or very poor rating.
Figure 16: Percentage of respondents giving each rating for parking related attributes

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

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

Base : 95 to 136 respondents depending on question (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don't know’ response)

A number of comments relating to parking were given in response to the question about the main problems with the shopping experience in Haltwhistle town centre. These comments are listed below:

- “Parking (3 responses)”.  
- “Lack of parking spaces”.  
- “No parking”.  
- “No car parking”.  
- “Parking anywhere”.  
- “Parking availability”.  
- “Parking not enough”.  
- “Parking, not enough, people parking on the street. Streets to narrow for roadside parking”.  
- “People parking on yellow lines”.  
- “Would prefer 2 hours parking rather than 1 hour. Would encourage visitors to stay longer”.


Illegal parking was given as one of the main problems with the shopping experience by 8% of respondents.

Nearly one quarter of respondents (23%) said that to make the town centre better, the parking needed to be improved. Various comments were also made relating to this:

- “All lines removed. Remove restricted parking”.
- “Do away with bollards around market square, make more parking area”.
- “Do away with market square and create more parking spaces”.
- “Make the main street wider”.
- “Eliminate parking on yellow lines”.
- “Improve pavements. Stop people parking on pavements”.

One further related comment was made when asked what improvements the respondents would like to see to the retail offer:

- “…more parking spaces & free”.

### 9.3 Cost of parking

The cost of parking in Haltwhistle town centre was rated very highly, with 92% of respondents giving a good or very good rating, and only 3% giving a poor or very poor rating.
Figure 17: Percentage of respondents giving each rating for the cost of parking
(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires
Base: 108 respondents (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

Only one comment was given relating to the cost of parking:
  - “more parking spaces & free”.

9.4 Haltwhistle’s Car parks
Figures 18 and 19 show the location of car parks within and surrounding Haltwhistle Town Centre.
## Figure 18: 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 Short Stay</th>
<th>Disabled Spaces</th>
<th>Coach Parking</th>
<th>Additional Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Lantys Lonnen</td>
<td></td>
<td>Surface Car Park</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Haltwhistle Station</td>
<td></td>
<td>Surface Car Park</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>There is a small car park at the entrance to the station.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Railway Station</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Tynedale District Council, Transport Direct
Figure 19: Location of Car Parks

Haltwhistle Town Centre - Car parks

Source: Tynedale District Council, Transport Direct
9.5 Bus Connectivity

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

**Figure 20: Destination and Frequency of Buses from Haltwhistle**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>Mon - Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
<th>Sun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acomb</td>
<td>7 per day</td>
<td>7 per day</td>
<td>7 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alston</td>
<td>2 per day</td>
<td>2 per day</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bardon Mill</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>4 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlisle</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>9 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corbridge</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gilsland</td>
<td>9 per day</td>
<td>9 per day</td>
<td>4 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenhead</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halton Lea Gate</td>
<td>7 per day</td>
<td>7 per day</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haydon Bridge</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>4 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hexham</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>9 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housesteads</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>7 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knaresdale</td>
<td>3 per day</td>
<td>3 per day</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lambley</td>
<td>7 per day</td>
<td>7 per day</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melkridge</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>4 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle upon Tyne</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slaggyford</td>
<td>3 per day</td>
<td>3 per day</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vindolanda</td>
<td>7 per day</td>
<td>7 per day</td>
<td>7 per day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Travel Search (http://www.carlberry.co.uk/index.htm), North East Travel Line (http://jplanner.travelinenortheast.info)

9.6 Shoppers travelling to town by bus

6% of respondents travelled into Haltwhistle by bus on the day of the interview (Figure 21). 30% of these said that they go into Haltwhistle 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 10% in the evenings.
Figure 21: 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 Questionnaires
Base: 27 for daytime; 28 for evening

80% of the respondents that travelled by bus found it very easy or very easy to travel into Haltwhistle town centre. Only 10% found it difficult (Figure 24).

Figure 22: How easy/difficult do you feel it is to travel into Haltwhistle town centre (those respondents that travelled by bus)
(Excludes ‘don't know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires
Base: 10 respondents
9.7 Train Connectivity

Haltwhistle has a railway station, managed by Northern rail service, covering the following local destinations. Trains from Newcastle and Carlisle link to railway lines covering a wider part of the UK.

Figure 23: Destination and Frequency of Buses from Haltwhistle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>M-Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
<th>Sun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carlisle</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wetheral</td>
<td>7 per day</td>
<td>7 per day</td>
<td>6 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brampton</td>
<td>7 per day</td>
<td>7 per day</td>
<td>6 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bardon Mill</td>
<td>7 per day</td>
<td>7 per day</td>
<td>5 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haydon Bridge</td>
<td>8 per day</td>
<td>8 per day</td>
<td>5 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hexham</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corbridge</td>
<td>6 per day</td>
<td>6 per day</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riding Mill</td>
<td>6 per day</td>
<td>6 per day</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stocksfield</td>
<td>7 per day</td>
<td>7 per day</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prudhoe</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wylam</td>
<td>6 per day</td>
<td>7 per day</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blaydon</td>
<td>1 per day</td>
<td>1 per day</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gateshead (Metro Centre)</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunston</td>
<td>1 per day</td>
<td>1 per day</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunderland</td>
<td>1 per day</td>
<td>1 per day</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9.8 Shoppers travelling to town by train

One respondent said that they travelled to Haltwhistle by train on the day of the interview. This person said that they go to Haltwhistle less than once a month during the daytime, and never during the evenings. They found it neither easy nor difficult to travel into the centre.

9.9 Perception of Public Transport Services

Public transport in Haltwhistle was rated fairly highly, with over two thirds of respondents giving a positive rating for the quality and the regularity of bus/rail services, and the destinations served by public transport.
Figure 24: Percentage of respondents giving each rating for public transport related attributes  
(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires
Base: 107 to 109 respondents depending on attribute (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

9.10 Perception of Accessibility
When asked how they would make the town centre better, 4% of respondents said that the accessibility should be improved.

Respondents seemed to feel that the quality of the footpaths was a key issue, with 9% saying that this was one of the main problems with the shopping experience. The pavements, and the cobbles in particular, also prompted a number of people to make a comment:

1. the main problems with the town centre:
   - “Cobble stones near bank uneven & dangerous”.
   - “Cobbles in market place”.
   - “Narrow pavements”.
   - “Uneven pavements-crossings”.
   - “Uneven pavements”.
2. ways to make the town centre better:
   - “…Lift up the cobbles far too uneven to walk on, ie. Safety reasons”;
   - “…Make sure cobbles are safe and checked”;  
   - “Cobbles are dangerous for walking on”;
   - “Get rid of stones (cobbles) in market place”; 
   - “Impaired sight. Pavements are horrible. Crossing outside of HSBC. Cobbles uneven”;
   - “Improve pavements…”;
   - “Improve paving. Cobbles are dangerous”; 
   - “Pavement in centre and the cobbles danger to life and limb”; 
   - “Take the cobbled stones up on the market square, relay it to a flat surface”; 
   - “Want the square done up – pebble stones made level”.

9.11 Origin and method of travel of Shoppers Interviewed
As Figure 25 shows, most of the respondents from the Haltwhistle Shopper Survey live in the Tynedale District, with a large proportion living in or around Haltwhistle itself. In addition, some respondents came from Cumbria, 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, Haltwhistle said that they walked.

The remaining few respondents were spread across the rest of the UK as far north as Edinburgh and as far south as Plymouth. Most of these travelled into Haltwhistle by car.
Figure 25: Visitors to Haltwhistle within Northumberland and Tyne and Wear
(Excludes 'don't know' responses unless otherwise specified)

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

Visitors To Haltwhistle - Method of Transport
- bus
- walk
- car
- other

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires
Figure 26: Visitors to Haltwhistle outside Northumberland and Tyne and Wear
(Excludes 'don't know' responses unless otherwise specified)

Visitors to Haltwhistle outside of Northumberland and Tyne & Wear (Shoppers Survey)
- Home Town.

Visitors to Haltwhistle - Method of transport
- Bus
- Car
- Walk
- Other

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires
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 Haltwhistle:

- New planters funded by the Town Council to enhance Haltwhistle in Bloom have been placed around the town centre.

10.2 Shopper perception of the town

10.2.1 Pedestrianisation

Views on pedestrianisation were not specifically asked about in the survey. However, one person said that to improve the retail offer there should be a “pedestrianised area”. The same person also said “pedestrianise” when asked how they would make the town centre better.

10.2.2 Signage, Street furniture and Open Spaces

Signage

2% of people said that signage and information was one of the main problems with the shopping experience in Haltwhistle town centre. Two people also suggested related ways to make the town centre better:

- “Clearer signage for centre”.
- “Signage for shops-to find them”.

Street Furniture
Respondents were asked to rate street furniture as part of two different questions. 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 (Figure 27).

Street furniture with respect to the general state of the town centre didn’t fare quite as well as street furniture generally, although both were given reasonably similar ratings (57% and 67% gave a positive rating for these aspects respectively).

One person said that one of the main problems was the “uneven seats outside HSBC”.

**Figure 27: Street furniture ratings**

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

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

Base : 155 to 160 respondents depending on question (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

### Open Spaces

Nearly two thirds (61%) of respondents gave a favourable rating for the parks and open spaces in Haltwhistle. 14% thought that they were poor or very poor. (Figure 28).
**Figure 28: Ratings given for parks and open spaces**
(Excludes 'don't know' responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

**Base : 124 respondents (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)**

### 10.2.3 Litter and Cleanliness
Two thirds of respondents gave a positive rating for the overall level of cleanliness in Haltwhistle town centre, and only 7% gave a negative rating. Litter was rated slightly lower, with 64% of respondents giving a good/very good rating and 12% giving a poor/very poor rating (Figure 29).

One respondent that gave a ‘good’ rating for the overall cleanliness added the comment, “except for chewing gum”.

When asked how they would make the town centre better, two respondents gave a related comment:

- “Clean up the streets quicker after weekend”.
- “Improve litter clearing”.

### 10.2.4 General Appearance of the Town

Respondents were quite positive about graffiti and fly posting in the town, with three quarters of respondents giving it a positive rating. The general state of the buildings was rated slightly lower (62% gave a good or very good rating) and shop frontage was given a positive rating by only half (52%) of respondents (Figure 30).
Figure 30: Ratings given for the appearance of the town
(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

Base: 165 to 167 respondents; (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

Six comments were made (by five people) that there were too many empty shops in Haltwhistle:

- “Too many empty shops (2 responses)”.
- “Fill empty shops. More businesses”.
- “Fill the empty shops”.
- “Filling existing properties- a lot of shops empty”.
- “Less closed/empty shops”.

A few other comments relating to the appearance of the town centre were also made:

1. the main problems with the town centre:
   - “Big square in market place. Used to be cobbles looked much better”.

2. ways to make the town centre better:
• “… more flowers. Hanging baskets. Somehow make it look alive & buzzing”.
• “Shop frontage quite poor. Needs to be traditional & old fashioned. It needs to look more attractive. It lacks something”.
• “Want the square done up-pebble stones made level”.

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 31: Analysis of Reported Crimes

Source: Northumbria Police
Figure 32: Crime and Anti Social Behaviour

Source: Northumbria Police

Looking at Figures 31 and 32, it is clear to see that the majority of crime in Haltwhistle in 2005 – 2007 occurred on Main Street and Westgate, and the main type of crimes here were “general crimes” and “rowdy and/ or nuisance”.

Looking at the chart (Figure 32), the types of crime have been broken down further. The most frequent type of crime occurring in Haltwhistle Town Centre between 2005 and 2007 was “other offences” of which there were 28 occurrences. The 2nd most frequent type of crime was “violence/ offences against the person” of which there were 27 occurrences.
11.2 Perception or Fear of Crime

Five respondents (3%) mentioned safety/security when asked how they would make the town centre better. One of these gave the suggestion, “stop petty vandalism, more patrol by police”.

Respondents were also asked to rate safety/security during the daytime and the night-time. For the daytime, this was perceived to be very good, with 84% of respondents giving a favourable rating, and only 1% a poor or very poor rating. For the night-time, the positive ratings dropped down to 65%, and the negative ratings increased to 14% (Figure 33).

As can be seen in Figure 18, 85% of respondents felt that the safety/security of the parking facilities was good or very good.
Figure 33: Ratings given for safety/security
(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires
Base: 119 respondents (daytime); 94 respondents (nighttime); (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

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

- There is a community engagement initiative which is particularly aimed at residential areas immediately surrounding the town centre which involves a high visibility walkabout by community safety, community wardens, Milecastle Housing and police to identify and tackle issues on estates either observed by the teams or disclosed by residents e.g. litter /fly tipping, graffiti, vandalism, disorder and crime issues.
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 Haltwhistle 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 Haltwhistle catchment area; spending patterns and retaining shopper spend within the town centre.

12.1 Regularity of visits

71% of respondents go to Haltwhistle town centre during the daytime at least once a week, with the most common frequency of visit being every day (50%).

Respondents visit the centre less often during the evenings, with 40% visiting at least once a week. 29% said that they never visit the town centre during the evening (Figure 35).

Figure 34: Approximately how often are you in Haltwhistle?
(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires
Base: 167 respondents (daytime and evening)
12.2 Expenditure/ Type of Purchases

Figure 35 shows the proportion of respondents that shop for different items solely in Haltwhistle 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, Haltwhistle is used mainly for top-up food shopping and shopping for other domestic items (around half of respondents said that they shop at Haltwhistle for these items).

For main food shopping, Hexham was the most popular place to shop, with 30% of respondents giving this response. Carlisle was also quite popular (22% of respondents). For all other items, Carlisle was the most popular place to shop, with between one third and one half of respondents saying that they do their shopping there.

This ties in with responses to other questions in which 47% of respondents said that the limited offer or range of shops/goods was a problem, and 49% said that they would improve the retail offer in order to make the town centre better. When asked what improvements they would like to see to the retail offer, 60% said that there should be an increased variety of shops. There was also a number of other suggested improvements to the retail offer which can be found in Appendix 1.
Figure 35: Proportion of respondents shopping in Haltwhistle and other areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Main food shopping</th>
<th>Top-up food shopping</th>
<th>Other domestic (eg. 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>Haltwhistle</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haltwhistle only</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haltwhistle + local area(^5)</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haltwhistle + 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-Haltwhistle</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 Haltwhistle)</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet or other</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixture of places (not Haltwhistle)</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>Don't buy</strong></td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Base</strong></td>
<td>167</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

\(^5\) ‘Local area’ is defined as being one of the following: Hexham, Brampton, Carlisle, Newcastle, Metro Centre.
### Figure 36: 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 (eg. 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>Haltwhistle</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hexham</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brampton</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlisle</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro Centre</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't buy</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Base</strong></td>
<td><strong>167</strong></td>
<td><strong>167</strong></td>
<td><strong>168</strong></td>
<td><strong>168</strong></td>
<td><strong>168</strong></td>
<td><strong>168</strong></td>
<td><strong>168</strong></td>
<td><strong>168</strong></td>
<td><strong>168</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

Four fifths of respondents planned to spend less than £25 in Haltwhistle on the day they were interviewed, with a further 10% expecting to spend between £25 and £100 (Figure 38).
Figure 37: How much do you plan to spend in Haltwhistle today?
(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires
Base: 167 respondents

12.3 The Catchment

According to the North East RSS, the region exhibits a polycentric settlement pattern based on two city-regions centred 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. Haltwhistle, (along with Prudhoe and Hexham) is one of the main towns in the Tynedale district and is described in the RSS as a Rural Service Centre: a settlement that provides jobs, services and facilities for a wider rural hinterland. The district contains a number of other local or secondary centres, including Allendale, Bellingham, Corbridge and Haydon Bridge. These settlements act as key service centres for the rural areas but are smaller in scale or function than Haltwhistle, Prudhoe and Hexham.
The map (Figure 38) shows the catchment area for Haltwhistle town centre, as defined by Experian. The catchment, which measures the extent of the local consumer base, was determined by calculating the centre’s population and the number of retailers present and assigning a radius of 1 mile.
12.4 Spending Patterns

In addition to Haltwhistle, the catchment embraces an area that lies between the A69 and the B6318 military road and beyond into Northumberland National Park. It includes the smaller settlements of Plenmeller and Plenmeller with Whitfield. Altogether, the catchment covers an area of 520.76 sq km, is home to approximately 4,024 people and 1,736 households. Collectively, these households and residents spend an estimated £15.8 million per annum on retail goods and services, with 36.7% of expenditure on convenience retail goods (£5.8 million) and 63.3% on comparison retail (£87.7 million). This balance is almost in line with the national (UK) average, which reports 36.6% of expenditure on convenience retail and 63.4% on comparison. The marginal difference between the national and local position is illustrated through the index which relates the proportion of each spend type in the Haltwhistle 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 39: Haltwhistle Catchment Summary Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Haltwhistle Catchment</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007 Population</td>
<td>4,024.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>60,796,178.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007 Households</td>
<td>1,736.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>26,018,847.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Comparison</td>
<td>10,017,304.00</td>
<td>63.3%</td>
<td>171,926,829,196.00</td>
<td>63.4%</td>
<td>99.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Convenience</td>
<td>5,802,440.00</td>
<td>36.7%</td>
<td>99,464,696,627.00</td>
<td>36.6%</td>
<td>100.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Retail</td>
<td>15,819,744.00</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>271,391,525,823.00</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Experian

Total retail expenditure per household per annum within the catchment stands at £9,113, with average comparison retail spend at £5,770 per annum and convenience spend at £3,342 per annum. Total retail spend per household in the catchment is well below the UK average, with indices of 87.33 and 87.43 reported for Comparison and Convenience retail, respectively.

Figure 40 below provides a breakdown of Comparison retail expenditure within the Haltwhistle catchment and in the UK. Clearly the largest expenditure type within
comparison retail is Clothing Material & Garments, accounting for £2.3 million or 22.5% of total Comparison Expenditure within the catchment. Clothing is followed by Audio-visual, photographic and information processing equipment (£1.2 million or 11.9%) and Games, toys and hobbies, sport & camping, musical instruments (£1.1 million or 10.5%). The pattern of expenditure nationally is similar, but with some notable differences. Referring to the index, households in Haltwhistle spend substantially more on Small electrical household appliances, Major Household Appliances, Audio-visual, photographic and information processing equipment and Recording Media as a proportion of total spend than the UK average. In contrast, they spend substantially less on Bicycles, Small tools and miscellaneous accessories, Major Tools & Equipment, Materials for maintenance and repair of the dwelling and Garden, Plants and Flowers.

Figure 40: Total Expenditure (in 2006 prices) Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2007 Total Expenditure (in 2006 prices) Comparison</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10% of Non-Durable household goods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appliances for personal care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio-visual, photographic and information processing equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books and stationery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing materials and garments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture and furnishings; carpets and other floor coverings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Games, toys and hobbies; sport and camping; musical instruments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardens, plants and flowers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glassware, tableware and household utensils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household textiles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewellery, clocks and watches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major household appliances (electric or not)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major tools and equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials for maintenance and repair of the dwelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical goods and other pharmaceutical products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other personal effects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pets and related products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recording media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoes and related footwear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small electrical household appliances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small tools and miscellaneous accessories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Therapeutic appliances and equipment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 41: Expenditure on Comparison Retail

Expenditure on Comparison Retail: Items with an Index Less than the UK Average

Source: Experian

Figure 42: Expenditure on Comparison Retail

Expenditure on Comparison Retail: Items with an Index Greater than the UK Average

Source: Experian

Figure 43 below provides a breakdown of Convenience retail expenditure within the Haltwhistle catchment and in the UK. Clearly the largest expenditure type within comparison retail in Haltwhistle is Food and non-alcoholic beverages, accounting for
£4.0 million or 69.4% of total Comparison Expenditure within the area. Food and non-alcoholic beverages is followed by Alcohol (£0.7 million or 11.8%) and Tobacco (£0.6 million or 10.9%). The pattern of expenditure nationally differs a little. Referring to the index, households in Haltwhistle spend proportionately more on Newspapers and Periodicals and Tobacco and less on Alcohol and Food and non-alcoholic beverages.

**Figure 43: 2007 Total Expenditure Convenience Retail**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Totals</th>
<th>Haltwhistle Catchment</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90% of Non-Durable household goods</td>
<td>181,831.00</td>
<td>3.13%</td>
<td>3,214,575,062.00</td>
<td>3.23%</td>
<td>96.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol (off-trade)</td>
<td>683,026.00</td>
<td>11.77%</td>
<td>12,313,767,021.00</td>
<td>12.38%</td>
<td>95.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and non-alcoholic beverages</td>
<td>4,026,701.00</td>
<td>69.40%</td>
<td>70,035,886,128.00</td>
<td>70.41%</td>
<td>98.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspapers and periodicals</td>
<td>276,504.00</td>
<td>4.77%</td>
<td>4,451,576,478.00</td>
<td>4.48%</td>
<td>106.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco</td>
<td>634,378.00</td>
<td>10.93%</td>
<td>9,448,891,938.00</td>
<td>9.50%</td>
<td>115.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Convenience</td>
<td>5,802,440.00</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>99,464,696,627.00</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Experian

**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 Haltwhistle. What the information does not indicate, however, is how much of the expenditure is spent purchasing goods and services in Haltwhistle 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 Haltwhistle catchment that shops in Haltwhistle and the proportion that shop at other centres.

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

The figures in the Figures 44 and 45 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 under one-fifth of the resident population shop in Haltwhistle (700 or 17.4%). Almost 1,300 residents prefer to shop in Carlisle (1,279 or 31.8%) and a further 761 shoppers are lost to Hexham (18.9%). Other notable shopping destinations for households in the catchment area are the MetroCentre (589 or 14.7%) and Newcastle City Centre (623 or 15.5%).

### Figure 44: Population Leakage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan Name</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>Population (no.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carlisle</td>
<td>31.78</td>
<td>1,279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hexham</td>
<td>18.90</td>
<td>761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haltwhistle</td>
<td>17.39</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle upon Tyne – Central</td>
<td>15.48</td>
<td>623</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro Centre</td>
<td>14.65</td>
<td>589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle upon Tyne - Kingston Park Centre</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gateshead - Team Valley Retail World</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunderland</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penrith</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanhope</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallsend</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Experian

The pattern with regards to spend is relatively similar. Experian estimates that around 17% of retail spend by residents and households domiciled within the Haltwhistle catchment, representing £2.7 million per annum, is spent in the town.

More than £5.0 million of expenditure is lost to Carlisle (32%), with other notable leakage to Hexham (£3.0 million or 19%), Newcastle City Centre (£2.4 million or 15%) and MetroCentre (£2.3 million or 15%). 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 45: Spend Leakage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan Name</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>Spend (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carlisle</td>
<td>32.08</td>
<td>5,074,795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hexham</td>
<td>18.77</td>
<td>2,969,452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Haltwhistle</strong></td>
<td><strong>17.38</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,749,853</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle upon Tyne - Central</td>
<td>15.42</td>
<td>2,438,993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro Centre</td>
<td>14.57</td>
<td>2,305,333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle upon Tyne - Kingston Park Centre</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>123,831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gateshead - Team Valley Retail World</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>114,327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunderland</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>20,682</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penrith</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>8,604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanhope</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>8,592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallsend</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>5,283</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Experian

The map below shows the Haltwhistle catchment area and is colour coded to indicate the proportion of retail expenditure that is spent by the resident population in Haltwhistle. From the map, it can be seen that households located within Haltwhistle spend between 10-15% of their total retail expenditure in Haltwhistle. Propensity to shop in Haltwhistle rises in the rural areas to the North and South East of the town (20-30% of expenditure in Haltwhistle) but diminishes as you travel further afield, dropping to less than 5% in those settlements centred around the A696 (Ninebanks, West Allen and Carrshield).
12.6 Opinions on and use of Leisure and Entertainment

28% of respondents said that they were in Haltwhistle town centre for leisure on the day of the interview.

Events attended

70% of respondents had attended at least one of the events mentioned in the survey. The Haltwhistle Carnival was the most popular (61% of respondents mentioned this). The Haltwhistle Weekly Market was also attended by more than half of respondents (Figure 47).
Figure 47: Have you ever attended any of these events?
(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

Base: 168 respondents

Eating and drinking

Over half of respondents gave a good/very good rating for each of the types of eating and drinking venues in Haltwhistle. Sandwich shops were rated the highest, with 70% giving a positive rating. Restaurants were given the lowest rating (56% rated good or very good, and 15% rated poor or very poor) (Figure 48).

“More cafes” and “cafes on a weekend” were mentioned by two of the respondents.
Figure 48: How would you rate the following venues for eating and drinking in Haltwhistle?

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

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

Base: 99 to 130 respondents depending on type of venue (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

Arts and leisure facilities

The leisure centre at Haltwhistle was rated quite highly, with 82% of respondents giving a positive rating and only 5% giving a poor rating (Figure 49).

The rating for the parks and open spaces was considerably lower. 61% of respondents thought that they were good / very good, and 14% thought they were poor or very poor.

One person mentioned the “expensive leisure centre”. Another, when asked how they would make the town centre better, gave the response “indoor swimming pool…”.
Figure 49: How would you rate the following arts and leisure facilities in Haltwhistle?

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

![Bar chart showing the percentages of respondents rating Haltwhistle swimming & leisure centre and parks & open spaces.]

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

Base: 93 for the leisure centre, 124 for the parks (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

When asked how they would rate Haltwhistle as a place to enjoy yourself, less than half (45%) of respondents gave a good or very good response (Figure 50).
Figure 50: How do you rate Haltwhistle as a place to enjoy yourself?
(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires
Base: 165 (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, 11% gave an answer relating to improving the leisure facilities. A number of comments were also made on this subject:

- “More choice of shops & activities”.
- “…Could do with a community hall”.
- “Is there a visitor centre”.
- “Something for the kids, hange out café for the teenagers...”.
- “Something for kids to do at night, youth club or something”.
- “Somewhere to go for free there is nothing to do for us”.
- “Somewhere to meet my friends. Free though”.
- “Things to do-disco’s or entertainment”.
- “More activities, go karting”.
- “Entertainment for all ages”.
- “For younger people”.
- “Improved leisure facilities”.
A number of related comments were also made when asked how respondents would improve the retail offer:

- “Tourism-shop. ie. Hadrian wall etc. promoting area”.
- “…Visitor centre”.
- “Leisure facilities. More for young people to go to”.
- “Somewhere you can go & sit & talk with friends”.
- “Something for young people to do”.
- “…Need more for younger people. We have nothing to do”.

28% of respondents said that they were in Haltwhistle town centre for leisure on the day of the interview.

12.7 The Future: what will improve the town as a place to shop or visit?

From the analysis of the Haltwhistle shopper survey, it appears that in order to improve the town as a place to shop or visit, two key 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.

In addition to these issues, it should be noted that ‘traffic’ was given as a main problem with the shopping experience in Haltwhistle by 21% of the respondents, and also that there were a number of negative comments about the cobbles and the uneven pavements in the town centre (section 9.1). It is therefore recommended that these areas are investigated further.
Figure 51: What are the main problems with the shopping experience in Haltwhistle town centre?
(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>% of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Limited offer or range of Shops/Goods</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of footpaths</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illegal Parking</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road Safety</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signage &amp; Information</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: 137 respondents

Figure 52: How would you make this town centre better?
(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improvement</th>
<th>% of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Better Retail offer</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved Parking</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved Leisure Facilities</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved Accessibility</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety and security</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>9%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

Base: 168 respondents
Retail

Throughout the survey, respondents have been fairly negative about the retail offer in Haltwhistle as can be seen in the points below:

- 47% of respondents said that the 'limited offer or range of shops/goods' was one of the main problems with the shopping experience in Haltwhistle town centre.
- When asked how they would make the town centre better, 49% of respondents said there should be a better retail offer.
- Only 12% of respondents rated Haltwhistle as a good or very good place to shop. 58% said that it was poor or very poor.
- 26% of respondents disagreed with the statement 'on the whole, Haltwhistle offers a wide choice of quality shops'.
- As can be seen in section 12(b), Haltwhistle shopping centre is mainly used for top-up food shopping and shopping for other domestic items. For all other shopping, respondents tend to go elsewhere, mainly Carlisle.

When asked what improvements respondents would like to see to the retail offer in Haltwhistle, the most common suggestion was to have an increased variety of shops (60% of respondents mentioned this). More shops offering local produce was also a popular answer (Figure 53).
Figure 53: What improvements would you like to see to the retail offer in Haltwhistle?

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

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

Base: 168 respondents

Respondents were also asked to give examples of suggested improvements to the retail offer in Haltwhistle. A list of these responses is given in Appendix 2 (Q17). Food shops and clothes shops in particular were mentioned by a large number of people.
13.0 INVESTMENT

Redevelopment
The following developments are proposed for Haltwhistle Town Centre;

- A Shop Front Scheme (£150,000) is proposed to start in September 2009 lasting for 18 months. The aim of the scheme is to restore traditional shop fronts and improve the security of shops on Main Street and Westgate.

- £2.2 million is being spent on rebuilding the existing library. There will be three stories as opposed to one as there is currently and there will be the potential for office and community space. The work is being funded by surplus Tynedale District Council funding, Northumberland County Council. And The Big Lottery Fund. Work commenced in May 2009 and is expected to finish in October 2010.

- There are currently proposals to develop the former Akzo Nobel site which is situated approximately half a mile south of the town. It is still in the planning stages, but it is anticipated that the site will consist of various uses including 11,300 m² of employment space, 4,800 m² of workshop space, 12,700 m² of leisure space, 2,900 m² of retail/creative industries, 3,500 m² of petrol and forecourts and 8,100 m² of football pitches.
14.0 CONCLUSION

Haltwhistle is currently undergoing various developments in the Town Centre. Whilst the majority of the regeneration within the town centre boundary will improve the aesthetic aspects of the town centre, they will hopefully contribute to improving the town centre as a whole and should therefore be taken into consideration when drawing conclusions about the health of the Town Centre.

In the Town Centre, 44% of the floorspace use was for retail (Figure 3). Further to this, shopper’s perceptions of the range of retail provision was quite positive with 46% agreeing or strongly agreeing to the statement “Haltwhistle offers a wide choice of quality shops”, compared to 26% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing (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 it was too expensive, there were too many vacant shops and that the half day closing was not well received. 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 as were supermarkets/ bakers/ food shops. Additionally, figure 6 highlighted that there were more comparison retail (clothing, household goods, furniture, DIY and electrical goods) than convenience (including food and groceries) 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, and why they would like more choice of food retail.

There was 11% of vacant floorspace in Haltwhistle (see Figure 12). There had not been any interest for vacant properties in the Town Centre, only for properties on Hadrian Enterprise Park (an out of town employment site) 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 approximately two thirds (62%) of the shoppers interviewed (of those travelling by car) finding it very or fairly easy (Figure 15). However, only 38% of these shoppers felt that the availability of parking in the town centre was either good or very good. Appendix 2 also shows that 7 shoppers commented on the lack of parking and a further few said parking in general was a problem with one respondent specifically referring to the length of time they were allowed to park their car. This shopper suggested that allowing visitors to park for two hours rather than just one would encourage people to stay in the town centre for longer. Haltwhistle also has good bus and train connectivity, which is shown in Figures 20 and 23 by the frequency and number of destinations reached from Haltwhistle. 80% of shoppers travelling into the town centre by bus also found it very or fairly easy to travel there (Figure 22). Further, Figure 24 shows that when looking at the overall perception of public transport of the shoppers interviewed, over two thirds of respondents rated the quality, regularity and destinations served by public transport positively.

When looking at retaining shopper spend, 17% of Haltwhistle residents shopped in Haltwhistle. 32% of expenditure was lost to Carlisle and a further 19% to Hexham (Figure 44) which are geographically the closest large centres to Haltwhistle (Hexham is 17 miles away and Carlisle is 22 miles away).

The responses from shoppers coupled with the various aspects that make up a town centre, suggest that generally Haltwhistle was in satisfactory health. There have been some negative responses from the shoppers’ surveys with regards to the retail offer in general. How the proposed plans for the outskirts of Haltwhistle will affect the town centre will have to be monitored over the forthcoming months alongside the improvements made to the town centre and this will have to be reviewed the next time the health check is carried out.
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 Haltwhistle Town Centre?’

Parking
- Parking (3 responses)
- Lack of parking spaces
- No parking
- Parking anywhere
- Parking availability
- Parking not enough
- Parking, not enough, people parking on the street. Streets to narrow for roadside parking
- People parking on yellow lines
- Would prefer 2 hours parking rather than 1 hour. Would encourage visitors to stay longer.

Pavements / pedestrian areas / crossings
- Big square in market place. Used to be cobbles looked much better.
- Cobble stones near bank uneven & dangerous
- Cobbles in market place
- Narrow pavements.
- Uneven pavements-crossings
- Uneven pavements
- Uneven seats outside HSBC
- Zebra crossing in centre

Other
- Everything expensive
- Expensive. No car parking
- Items not priced
- Mens shops
• No newsagents
• Too many empty shops (2 responses)
• Nothing here. Mostly closed for half day or closed down.
• Opening times, never know when it is half day closing

Verbatim responses to ‘Q17 What improvements would you like to see to the retail offer in Haltwhistle?’

Supermarket / Bakers / Food shops
• More variety shops large supermarket
• Supermarket (2 responses)
• Sainsburys opening Friday.
• Sainsburys opening
• More supermarkets
• We need this new supermarket. More shops serving the local community.dh.
• Farmfoods & Iceland
• More food shops. Supermarkets. More shops.
• Good bakers. Frozen food store, iceland
• Deli & baker
• Nice bakers
• Bakers
• Bread delis food
• More food shops/bread/deli
• Pizzeria/nice deli somewhere to buy nice bread

Clothes
• Womens clothes shops.
• Mens clothing shops.
• Clothes shops for girls
• Clothes shops.
• Clothing shoes. Expensive leisure centre
• Childrens clothing.
• Clothes (3 responses)
• Clothing shops  
• Boutiques  
• Kids and adult clothing shops  
• Kids and adults clothes shops  
• Ladies, childrens and mens clothing  
• Better for younger people. i.e. boutiques  
• Fashion and botiques  
• More specialist shops - mensware

Various types of shops
• Home baked food shop. DIY shop.  
• Decent shops-clothing food shops.  
• Need DIY shop & good bakers. Filling existing properties- a lot of shops empty.  
• Food shops. Bakers. DIY.  
• Clothes food shoes  
• Clothes shoes all retail  
• Chemist. Hardware.  
• Nice meat shops, bread/cakes good snadwich shop(carry out-sit in).  
• More clothes shops. Supermarket.  
• More shops for younger people. Clothes shops.  
• Bakers and cheaper shops  
• Bakery and hardwear  
• Good bakers, childrens shops  
• Good bakers. Hardware shop. Sex shop  
• Hardware and food shops  
• Clothes and food  
• Clothes, kids clothes, DIY  
• Baby shops and younger clothes shops  
• Sports shops and McDonalds  
• Supermarket. Bakery shop.  
• Supermarket. Gents/childs clothing.  
• Supermarkets and stores for the larger lady  
• Upmarket shops. Supermarket. shops for visitors.  
• Better choice nic-nac type shops
- Deli and hardware
- DIY and food shops
- DIY, more cafes and clothes shops
- Electrical, gardening and DIY shops
- Gift shops. Browsing type shops. Local wares shops. Everywhere is closed half day.
- More variety of shops. Lost our bakers & DIY
- Music shops and sport shops
- Music shops, mens outfitters
- Music, childrens and both sexes clothes shops. Cafes on a weekend
- Iceland and DIY store
- More grocery shops and clothes for ladies and gents
- Mens outfitter, more grocery shops
- Mensware, furniture, bedding, childrens shops
- More shops/food clothes
- More high street shops. Morrisons supermarket, Co-op is poor. Sainsbury expensive.
- More ladies outfitters. A bit of competition/food

Other types of shops
- Wool material cotton
- Hobby shop wool cotton threads
- Everything is closing. Like a ghost town. DIY store.
- DIY shops
- DIY store
- Drapers
- Gardening shops DIY
- More range within existing shops and DIY shop
- More novelty shops. Fresh home grown produce.
- Newsagents/pedestrianised area.
- Tourism-shop. ie. Hadrian wall etc. promoting area.
- Shops suitable for visitors. Visitor centre.
- Shops are closed, poor selection of shops. Novelty shops, tourist type.

General
- All
- Any attractive shops/
• Any would do. All seem to be closing down here.
• Any would do. All types. We virtually have none left.
• We've come to visit from our caravan. Used to be a good bakers here. Nothing left.
  Poor shopping.
• We are losing the shops we have! Lower business rates would encourage more
  shops to come to the town.
• No shops here. We need more. Non thriving. Make people want to come.
• Nothing seems to be open apart from pubs. More interesting shops that are open
• Less closed/empty shops
• Been to the Yorkshire dales. Thriving busy places. Tourist shops.
• Competition in prices
• Competitive prices
• Lower prices for the same thing
• More choice of everything
• More marketing for tourist trade, more craft shops, more parking spaces & free
• More shops open on Sundays
• Leisure facilities. More for young people to go to.
• Somewhere you can go & sit & talk with friends
• Something for young people to do
• Everything is closing. Too many hairdressers. Need more for younger people. We
  have nothing to do.

Verbatim responses to ‘Q23 How would you make this town centre
better?’

Retail offer
• A bakers shop
• Baker & deli needed.
• Better shopping. Town needs to be busier.
• Everything in shopping. All kinds of shops.
• Good bread shop (Greggs)
• More Cvmo shops
• More shops-core range not take aways.
• More shops
• More shops, variety
• More shops. We have nothing here.
• More shops/DIY paint & a nice bakers
• Hardware-male clothing shops.
• Just for the shops to be open. Half close on Saturdays. It's dead-nowhere to go. Best to be honest with people. There is nothing here.
• Competition of prices
• More variety

Parking / traffic
• All lines removed. Remove restricted parking.
• Do away with bollards around market square, make more parking area
• Do away with market square and creat more parking spaces
• Make the main street wider
• Market square too narrow for buses to get through

Mixture of things
• Clearer signage for centre. Lively shops
• Eliminate parking on yellow lines. Selling the town. Need to promote it more.
• More choice of shops & activities
• Market place to how it was/ now to narrow on streets. Lift up the cobbles far to uneven to walk on. i.e. safety reasons
• Indoor swimming pool-bakers
• Something for the kids, hange out café for the teenagers. Make sure cobbles are safe and checked.

Other
• Cobbles are dangerous for walking on. Could do with a community hall.
• Am well travelled. Never been to such a dead place. But has so much going for it.
• Clean up the streets quicker after weekend
• Farmers market local produce more flowers. Hanging baskets. Some how make it look alive & buzzing.
• Fill empty shops. More businesses
• Fill the empty shops
• Improve litter clearing
• Is there a visitor centre
• Make people want to visit Haltwhistle & return.
• Shop frontage quite poor. Needs to be traditional & old fashioned. It needs to look more attractive. It lacks something.
• Signage for shops-to find them.
• New toilets - the ones that are here are disgusting. They just paint over the tiles.
• Open toilets later than 7pm
• Stop petty vandalism, more patrol by police

Pavements / cobbles
• Get rid of stones(cobbles) in market place
• Impaired sight. Pavements are horrible. Crossing outside of HSBC. Cobles uneven.
• Improve pavements stop people parking on pavements
• Improve paving. Cobbles are dangerous.
• Pavement in centre and the cobbles danger to life and limb
• Pedestrianise.
• Take the cobbled stones up on the market square, relay it to a flat surface
• Useful to have more zebra crossing
• Want the square done up-pebble stones made level.

Leisure
• Something for kids to do at night, youth club or something
• Somewhere to go for free there is nothing to do for us
• Somewhere to meet my friends. Free though.
• Things to do-disco's or entertainment
• More activities, go karting
• Entertainment for all ages.
• For younger people
• Improved leisure facilities
The Corporate Research Unit

Contacts

Philip Hanmer – Research Manager
Tel: (01670) 533919
Laurie Turnbull – Research Assistant
Tel: (01670) 533038
Fax: (01670) 533967

E-mail: InfoNet@northumberland.gov.uk

Website: www.northumberlandinfonet.org.uk

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<th>Disagree</th>
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