PRUDHOE TOWN CENTRE HEALTH CHECK REPORT

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Working Paper Number: 83
Date: December 2008

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The Northumberland Information Network is a partnership between:
Northumberland Strategic Partnership, Northumberland County Council, Northumberland Community Safety, CDRPs, Northumberland DAAT and Northumberland Early Years & Childcare Service.
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Why Measure Town Centre Performance?

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

More generally, the UK Government is committed to:

- Enhancing consumer choice by making provision for a range of shopping, leisure and local services, which allow genuine choice to meet the needs of the entire community, and particularly socially-excluded groups.
- Supporting efficient, competitive and innovative retail, leisure, tourism and other sectors, with improving productivity.
- Improving accessibility, ensuring that existing or new development is, or will be, accessible and well-served by a choice of means of transport.

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

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

1.2 What should we measure?

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

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

- Diversity of main town centre uses (by number, type and amount of floorspace): the amount of space in use for different functions – such as offices; shopping; leisure, cultural and entertainment activities; pubs, cafes and restaurants; and, hotels.

- The amount of retail, leisure and office floorspace in edge-of-centre and out-of-centre locations.

- The potential capacity for growth or change of centres in the network: opportunities for centres to expand or consolidate, typically measured in the amount of land available for new or more intensive forms of town centre development.

- Retailer representation and intentions to change representation: existence and changes in representation of types of retailer, including street markets, and the demand of retailers wanting to come into the centre, or to change their representation in the centre, or to reduce or close their representation.
• Shopping rents: pattern of movement in Zone A rents within primary shopping areas (i.e. the rental value for the first 6 metres depth of floorspace in retail units from the shop window).

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

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

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

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

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

• Perception of safety and occurrence of crime: should include views and information on safety and security, and where appropriate, information for monitoring the evening and night-time economy.
State of the town centre environmental quality: should include information on problems (such as air pollution, noise, clutter, litter and graffiti) and positive factors (such as trees, landscaping and open spaces).

In response to the monitoring requirements set out above, the InfoNet has developed the Northumberland Town Centre Performance System, which is designed to assess the vitality and viability of rural market towns and larger centres within the former coalfield areas. The system uses intelligence from the InfoNet Organisation Database; the Northumberland Property Data Service (NPDS) database; the County Public Transport Team; and from the Community Safety Analysis Function maintained for the 6 Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRP’s) in the County. This is complemented by additional primary research designed to capture footfall estimates and shopper perception of town centres. The Service is also designed to complement the Retail Distinctiveness work undertaken for One North East and the Northumberland Strategic Partnership by Millers Consulting; and the Retail Distinctiveness Toolkit that has been developed for use by Town Centre Partnerships and Managers.

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

2.1 Prudhoe’s Town Centre Boundary

Throughout this report there are two different boundaries for Prudhoe 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 Prudhoe Town Centre in relation to the District Council boundary is 47,261.95m².

**Figure 1: Boundary for Prudhoe Town Centre (District Council)**

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

Source: Experian, August 2008
2.2 Prudhoe’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 Tynedale District Council): The castle town of Prudhoe is 6 miles west of Blaydon and is situated on a hill on the south bank of the River Tyne. The A695 road which bypasses the town through the industrial estate allows easy access to main centres close by such as Newcastle upon Tyne and Hexham.

Prudhoe’s retail centre largely consists of one main street – Front Street – which runs through the centre of the town. Front Street consists of a variety of shops, takeaways, library amongst other uses. There is also the town’s main supermarket (the Co-op) which is set just off Front Street.

Today heavy industry in Prudhoe has all but gone but regeneration is ongoing. There are number of superb schools, educational establishments, gyms and leisure facilities as well as a variety of local retail business. With a wide range of community groups and churches, there is a vibrant community. A riverside county park runs from Prudhoe to Newburn a few miles down river with facilities for a whole range of leisure activities.

Improvements have been made to improve Front Street which includes an artwork “GLADE”, enhanced streetscape and greening. This compliments the proposed Northumberland Estates plans to expand the retail heart through major redevelopment. The proposed plans, due to be completed in the next few years, are anticipated to provide a new town square and pedestrian shopping area including a new Sainsburys supermarket.
2.3 History and Development of Prudhoe

The town of Prudhoe lies in south Northumberland, on the south bank of the river Tyne. It’s name is believed to either derive from ‘Pruddha’s Hoe (or Hill)’ or to mean ‘proud heights’.

Flints have been found in the area dating back to the Mesolithic period, suggesting human activity around this time. Two burial cists and a stone axe from the Bronze Age have also been discovered, suggesting that the area was occupied during this period.

Little is known about Prudhoe after this until the Medieval period when Prudhoe Castle was built (12th century). It was originally a motte and bailey castle that was later rebuilt in stone. Over the next two centuries, a massive curtain wall and barbican were added. The castle would have controlled the middle stretch of the Tyne Valley and one of the principle north-south routes across the river, and hence would have been an obstacle to Scottish armies invading England. The present town is descended from a hamlet that clustered round the castle.

During the 19th century, coal mining had a huge impact on the town. Although first mentioned in records from the 15th century, it wasn’t until the 1860s that the industry really thrived. Two coalmines were established in the area, which gave rise to brickworks and clay pipe works to support the mining industry. Pit houses and churches were also built to cater for the rapidly expanding population which grew from 488 in 1851 to 2,583 twenty years later.

Today, Prudhoe has a population of around 12,000 and is the main shopping centre in East Tynedale. As well as the various shops and eating places, Prudhoe hosts the popular leisure attraction Waterworld. Tyne Riverside Country Park is also located nearby.

Prudhoe’s Front Street has recently undergone a transformation which has included replacing pavements, installing new street lighting and street furniture, improving shop fronts, and creating a new sculpture.
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 Prudhoe Town Centre and also the opinions of shoppers surveyed on the range of retail provision in Prudhoe.

The full breakdown of use class analysed in this section can be found in Appendix 1.

3.1 Diversity of Use within Town Centre

Figure 3 shows that just over half (51%) of the floorspace in Prudhoe Town Centre are classed as shops. Non-residential institutions account for 10% of the floorspace in Prudhoe, with financial and professional services occupying 8% of the floorspace.
The map (Figure 4) shows that the majority of businesses within the town centre are situated along one main street: Front Street. The majority of these businesses are shops and are distributed evenly along Front Street and interspersed with financial and professional services, restaurants and cafes, drinking establishments, hot food takeaways, businesses and non-residential institutions. There are two assembly and leisure establishments within the town centre, however, neither are situated along Front Street.
Figure 4: Building Use class for Prudhoe Town Centre

Source: Experian, August 2008
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. However, in Prudhoe there are businesses which do solely operate from upstairs. These include the Prudhoe Snooker Club, Lox Hairdressers, Dexters (dance wear), Francos Italian Restaurant, and Fieldings Accountants.

### 3.2 Events

There are a number of events that happen throughout the year. On the third Monday of the month the Prudhoe Over 50’s Forum takes place at St Mary Magdalene Parish Church Hall. On the last Friday of the month the Prudhoe and District Local History Society meeting also takes place at St Mary Magdalene Parish Church Hall. Prudhoe also has a monthly Family Night on the last Saturday of the month.

Prudhoe hosts an Autumn Fair in October at St Mary Magdalene Parish Church Hall, where there is a raffle, tombola, gifts preserves and home baking available.

There are a number of weekly groups for parents and young children at Prudhoe Children’s Centre on Broomhouse Lane including a Sensory Room every Monday and a Stay and Play Session every Wednesday. A childcare surgery is also held every Thursday at the Children’s Centre. Additionally, for the under 5s there is a parents and toddlers group at the Prudhoe Methodist Church every Tuesday and Thursday. A Creative Arts Group also takes place at the Methodist Church Hall every Tuesday.

### 3.3 Satisfaction with the range of provision – retail

Question 14 in the Prudhoe Shopper Questionnaire asked:

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

The level of disagreement with this statement was significantly higher than the level of agreement (75% vs. 19% of respondents) (Figure 5).
Figure 5: How would you rate “On the whole, Prudhoe offers a wide choice of quality shops”?

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

Source: Shopper Surveys, May 2008

Base: 180 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 - Prudhoe

![Multiple Chain and Independent Businesses by Category - Prudhoe](image)

Source: Experian, August 2008

Figure 6 shows that in Prudhoe town centre, the majority of businesses are retail service (13 independent, 5 multiple chain). The categories which have the 2nd highest amount of businesses are: leisure services (14 of which are independent and 3 multiple chain) and comparison (15 of which are independent and 3 multiple chain). There are 9 convenience retail premises 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 Prudhoe Town Centre recorded on Northumberland Property Database between April 2007 and March 2008. The only enquiries recorded were for properties on Prudhoe Industrial Estate and Swalwell Close both of which are all out of the town centre. However, it must be noted that this data is based solely on one source (Northumberland Property Database) and other sources may provide further insight. It is known, for example, that Prudhoe Infopoint are aware that there is a continual interest in commercial properties and they regularly signpost businesses to commercial agents especially for small retail units, butchers and office accommodation.

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 Prudhoe 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 7 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 7. 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 1,500m²).
- 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 7: Valuation Office Zone A rental prices for Prudhoe Town Centre**

![Map of Prudhoe Town Centre](image)

Source: Valuation Office, April 2003

Figure 7 shows that for the majority of properties in Prudhoe Town Centre for which the zone A rental information is known, the rent was £100 - £199 per m². These properties were also mainly situated on Front Street, with the exception on one
situated on Kepwell Bank Top. There was also one property on Front Street which had a lower zone A rental rate of £0 - £99 per m² in comparison to the other known properties. However, there were a large number of properties within Prudhoe Town Centre for which the zone A rental information was not known, therefore it is difficult to assume any patterns occurring within this data.

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

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

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 Prudhoe. 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 (Figure 8) 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 rental rates for the town centres were taken from Northumberland Property Database. However, for Prudhoe Town Centre, although there had been properties vacant in the town centre, the rental information was unavailable. Therefore we are not able to provide a comparison of the rental rates for Prudhoe Town Centre with other towns within Northumberland. Figure 9 shows the rental rates that were available for the other town centres. Ashington is shown to have the
highest rent at £217.04 per square metre and Haltwhistle the lowest rent at £38.17. 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 9: A comparison on average rental prices for commercial property between other Northumberland Towns

![A comparison on average rental prices for commercial property between other Northumberland Towns](image)

Source: Northumberland Property Database, December 2007
7.0 VACANCY RATES

All town centres experience a baseline level of vacancy rates and this should not always be interpreted as a sign of weakness. A large number of vacant units within centres may indicate decline related to poor performance of the town or that shop premises are inadequate to meet the demands of modern retailers. Vacancies concentrated in an area may also reflect an ongoing land assembly in advance of a wider regeneration of part of a town. Furthermore, units may be located in parts of the centre unsuited to retailers' requirements. This section will investigate the vacancy rates of premises within the town centre by road and overall vacancy rates within the town. Additionally, this section will look at property flows within Prudhoe 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 10 shows that the only street within Prudhoe Town Centre with vacant premises is Front Street with 5% of premises vacant. This equates to 14% of vacant floorspace within Front Street. No other streets in Prudhoe were recorded as having any vacant premises.

Figure 11 shows that in Prudhoe Town Centre, there were 90% of occupied premises and 10% of vacant premises overall.
Figure 10: Vacancy Rates of Premises

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Road</th>
<th>Vacant (number of buildings)?</th>
<th>Vacant (floorspace sqm)?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FRONT STREET</td>
<td>yes 5%</td>
<td>yes 14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOLYOAKE</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KEPWELL BANK</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOP</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEALE STREET</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OAKFIELD TERRACE</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTH ROAD</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATION ROAD</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TYNE VIEW TERRACE</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Experian, August 2008

Figure 11: Is a Property Vacant

Is Property Vacant? (Prudhoe Town Centre)

- Yes: 10%
- No: 90%

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

Figure 12 shows changes in Town Centre Occupiers in 2007 and 2008 within Prudhoe Town Centre. The graph shows the number of vacant outlets have increased in 2007 from 5 to 6 in 2008. There has been an increase in the number of stores from 2 in 2007 to 4 in 2008. Other increases in primary activity types within occupied premises in Prudhoe included Bakers (from 1 in 2007 to 2 in 2008); Travel Agents (from 1 in 2007 to 2 in 2008); and Estate Agents (from 5 in 2007 to 6 in 2008). However, there have been a number of primary activities decreasing by one business including a Supermarket and Hairdressers. Primary activity types to disappear from Prudhoe Town Centre in 2008 were Car Repairs, Car Wash, Children’s Wear and a Convenience Store.

Figure 12: Changes in Primary Activity Type 2007-2008

Figure 13 shows the type of changes in premises in Prudhoe Town Centre between 2007 and 2008. Half of the changes were a change in occupier. One fifth of these changes were premises that were vacant in 2007 but were occupied in 2008. Almost one third (30%) of premises were occupied in 2007 but vacant in 2008, therefore an increase of vacant premises is evident.

Source: Experian, August 2008
Figure 13: Type of Changes in Premises 2007-2008

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

- 50% change in occupier
- 30% occupied to vacant
- 20% vacant to occupied

Source: Experian, August 2008
8.0 PEDESTRIAN FLOWS

Pedestrian counts are a useful measure of vitality, in relation to the number and movement of people in different parts of the town centre and at different times of the day. The counts provide a clear picture of footfall patterns across the centre and of the number of people in the town. Over time trends can be identified and the success or decline of locations monitored. This section will analyse the results of the footfall counts that took place in Prudhoe 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 Tuesday 20th May, Thursday 22nd May and Saturday 24th May 2008. They were carried out by interviewers at two “access points” within the town centre (see Figure 15). These counts were then used to give estimates of hourly and daily pedestrian rates.

8.2 Estimates of footfall

It is estimated that the daily footfall for a typical Saturday in Prudhoe town centre is around 1,750 although this will obviously vary depending on the time of year. The highest footfall count came on the Thursday of this week and the lowest footfall came on the Tuesday. As Prudhoe does not have a weekly market both Tuesday and Thursday are categorised as “normal” weekdays, therefore these figures suggest there is no obvious pattern in this data. The reason for this could have been the fact that it was a bank holiday weekend and also the start of half term. People may have gone away or decided to wait until later in the week to visit the town centre if they had all week to do so.
Figure 14: Estimated daily footfall in Prudhoe Town Centre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location (see Figure 2)</th>
<th>Tuesday (&quot;normal&quot; day)</th>
<th>Thursday (&quot;normal&quot; day)</th>
<th>Saturday (Weekend)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mill's Newsagent, Front Street</td>
<td>570</td>
<td>1,164</td>
<td>894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-op, Oakfield Terrace</td>
<td>714</td>
<td>948</td>
<td>870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,284</td>
<td>2,112</td>
<td>1,764</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Northumberland Footfall Counts, May 2008

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

---

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.
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 Prudhoe 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

42% of respondents travelled into Prudhoe town centre by car on the day of the interview (Figure 15). 78% of these said that they go to Prudhoe 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 33% in the evenings.

Figure 15: Frequency of visit to the town centre by those respondents travelling in by car

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

Source: Northumberland Infornt Shopper Questionnaires, May 2008

Base: 73 for daytime; 69 for evening
Almost all (99%) of the respondents that travelled by car found it fairly easy or very easy to travel into Prudhoe town centre. No-one found it difficult (Figure 16).

Figure 16: How easy/difficult do you feel it is to travel into Prudhoe town centre (those respondents that travelled by car)  
(Excludes 'don't know' responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, May 2008  
*Base: 75*

9.2 Access to car parking

The availability of public car parking spaces was rated fairly well, with two thirds of respondents giving a good or very good rating. 16% gave a poor or very poor rating. The availability of disabled parking spaces was rated slightly lower, with 56% giving a positive rating and 24% giving a negative rating (Figure 17).

Respondents generally felt positive about the safety/security of the parking facilities, with 85% giving a good/very good rating, and only 3% giving a poor/very poor rating.
Figure 17: Percentage of respondents giving each rating for parking related attributes
(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, May 2008
Base: 88 to 148 respondents depending on question (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

When asked what the main problems with the shopping experience in Prudhoe were, only two people gave a parking related response:

- “Parking is bad - no parking at 'Balls fish shop' end of Prudhoe”.
- “Not enough parking”.

In order to make the town centre better, 5% said that the parking should be improved. One respondent also said that “more parking” was needed.
9.3 Cost of parking

All respondents gave a positive rating for the cost of parking in Prudhoe town centre. 89% said that it was very good (Figure 18).

Figure 18: Percentage of respondents giving each rating for the cost of parking
(Excludes 'don't know' responses unless otherwise specified)

9.4 Prudhoe’s Car parks

Figures 19 and 20 show the location of car parks within and surrounding Prudhoe Town Centre.
### Figure 19: 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/Short Stay</th>
<th>Disabled Spaces</th>
<th>Coach Parking</th>
<th>Additional Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Prudhoe, Fair View</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Surface Car Park</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Short</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Prudhoe, Neale Street</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Surface Car Park</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>Long/Short Stay</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Behind club and side street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Prudhoe, Oaklands</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Surface Car Park</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Long/Short Stay</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Prudhoe, Front Street near Milecastle Housing</td>
<td>Street Parking</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Short Stay</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Victoria Terrace, Near Heron Design</td>
<td>Street Parking</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Short Stay</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Holyoake Street, Near East Centre</td>
<td>Street Parking</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Short Stay</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Near Broadoakes, 17a Front Street</td>
<td>Street Parking</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Short Stay</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Funeral Parlour, Front Street</td>
<td>Street Parking</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Short Stay</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Near Cairns Solicitors, Front Street</td>
<td>Street Parking</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Short Stay</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Tynedale District Council, Transport Direct, August 2008
Figure 20: Location of Car Parks

Prudhoe Town Centre - District Council

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

The direct connections linking Prudhoe to surrounding towns and villages are listed in Figure 21.

**Figure 21: Destination and Frequency of Buses from Prudhoe**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>Mon-Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
<th>Sun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blaydon On Tyne</td>
<td>Approx 4 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 4 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branch End</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corbridge</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crawcrook</td>
<td>Approx 4 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 4 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hexham</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Prudhoe</td>
<td>At least 4 per hour</td>
<td>At least 4 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mickley</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Ridley</td>
<td>2 per day</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle upon Tyne</td>
<td>Approx 4 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 4 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riding Mill</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryton</td>
<td>Approx 4 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 4 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stocksfield</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wylam</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Travel Search [http://www.carlberry.co.uk/index.html], North East Travel Line [http://jplanner.travelinenortheast.info], July 2008

9.6 Shoppers travelling to town by bus

Only 13 respondents (7%) travelled into Prudhoe town centre by bus on the day of the interview. The number of times that these respondents went into the town varied between every day and once a month, with the most common response being twice a week (Figure 22). However, it cannot be deduced how often they use a bus for these trips.

Only 5 of the respondents that travelled in by bus gave a response when asked how often they visited the town centre during the evening. These responses ranged between less than once a week, and a ‘one-off visit’. 
All of the respondents that travelled into the town centre by bus on the day of the interview found it very easy (77%) or fairly easy (23%).

### 9.7 Train Connectivity

Prudhoe 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).

#### Figure 23: Destination and Frequency of Trains from Prudhoe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>Mon – 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>5 per day</td>
<td>7 per day</td>
<td>6 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brampton</td>
<td>5 per day</td>
<td>7 per day</td>
<td>6 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bardon Mill</td>
<td>5 per day</td>
<td>7 per day</td>
<td>6 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haydon Bridge</td>
<td>7 per day</td>
<td>9 per day</td>
<td>6 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hexham</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corbridge</td>
<td>At least 1 per hour</td>
<td>At least 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riding Mill</td>
<td>At least 1 per hour</td>
<td>At least 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stocksfield</td>
<td>At least 1 per hour</td>
<td>At least 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haltwhistle</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>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blaydon</td>
<td>3 per day</td>
<td>3 per day</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gateshead (Metro Centre)</td>
<td>At least 1 per hour</td>
<td>At least 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunston</td>
<td>2 per day</td>
<td>2 per day</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunderland</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>Approx 1 per hour</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Travel Search (http://www.carlberry.co.uk/index.htm); North East Travel Line (http://jplanner.travelinenortheast.info); National Express East Coast (http://www.nationalexpresseastcoast.com, July 2008)

9.8 Shoppers travelling to town by train

No respondents travelled into the town centre by train on the day of the interviews.

9.9 Perception of Public Transport Services

Over two thirds of respondents gave a positive rating for the quality and regularity of bus/rail services, and the destinations to and from Prudhoe served by public transport (Figure 24).
Figure 24: Percentage of respondents giving each rating for public transport related attributes
(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

![Bar chart showing percentages of respondents giving each rating for public transport related attributes.](chart)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, May 2008

Base: 133 to 137 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 respondents (2%) said that they would improve the accessibility.

9.11 Origin and method of travel of Shoppers Interviewed

As Figure 25 shows, most of the respondents from the Prudhoe Shopper Survey live in Prudhoe itself. In addition, some respondents came from other areas within Tynedale District and most of the others came from elsewhere or Tyne & Wear.

Most of the respondents either walked into the town centre or travelled by car. The rest either travelled by bus or “other” method of transport.

The remaining few respondents were from within the North East region (Figure 26) and travelled into Prudhoe by car or by walking.
Figure 25: Visitors to Prudhoe within Northumberland
(Excludes 'don’t know' responses unless otherwise specified)

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

Visitors to Prudhoe
- Method of Transport
- Bus
- Car
- Walk
- Other

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, May 2008
Figure 26: Visitors to Prudhoe outside Northumberland
(Excludes 'don't know' responses unless otherwise specified)

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

Visitors to Prudhoe - Method of Transport
- Car
- Walk

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

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

10.1 Review of Recent Improvements

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

- The Front Street Improvements Scheme involves work to create ‘The Glade’ and improvements to Front Street. The concept of The Glade is to create a new heart for Prudhoe, providing a flexible and multi-functional space and a green space. The design for The Glade has four distinct spaces, a sheltered meeting and information point, a seating area and an outdoor space to be used by the adjacent café. As at December 2008, Zone 1 has been completed, and Zones 2 and 3 are expected 2009 + funding dependent.

- In developing designs for these two areas bespoke furniture have been created. The Urbis range has been chosen to compliment the rest of the designs.

- Street lighting has also be replaced under this scheme.

- The design for ‘The Glade’ has also being rolled out to Front Street, it is proposed that designs for Front Street will include features from ‘The Glade’ and associated street furniture as well as extending the greenspace along Front Street are also proposed.
10.2 Shopper perception of the town

10.2.1 Pedestrianisation
None of the respondents made any comments about pedestrianisation.

10.2.2 Signage, Street furniture and Open Spaces

Signage
None of the respondents made any comments about signage.

Street Furniture
Respondents were asked to rate street furniture as part of two different questions (Figure 27). The first question asked for a street furniture rating, and the second asked about the general state of the town centre with regards to street furniture.

The ratings for the two questions were both quite poor. Only 20%/24% of respondents gave a positive response, and 44%/36% gave a negative response.

Figure 27: Street furniture ratings
(Excludes ‘don't know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, May 2008
Base: 179 to 180 respondents depending on question (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)
Open Spaces

The parks and open spaces in Prudhoe were not rated particularly well. Only 38% of respondents gave a good or very good rating, and 32% gave a poor or very poor rating (Figure 28).

**Figure 28: Ratings given for parks and open spaces**

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

![Pie chart showing ratings for parks and open spaces](chart.png)

- **Very Good, 8%**
- **Very Poor, 6%**
- **Poor, 25%**
- **Good, 29%**
- **OK, 31%**

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, May 2008
Base: 165 respondents (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don't know’ response)

A number of respondents made comments relating to open spaces in Prudhoe:

- “More green areas with communal seating”.
- “Provide more green areas, especially a park”.
- “Increased parkland”.
- “More open spaces”.
- “More congregation areas where people can sit”.

10.2.3 Litter and Cleanliness

Litter within the town centre was given a good/very good rating by 59% of the respondents, and a poor/very poor rating by 13%. The overall level of cleanliness
was given a lower rating, with less than half (44%) giving a positive rating. However, only 7% gave a negative rating (Figure 30).

**Figure 29: Ratings given for litter and overall cleanliness**
(Excludes 'don't know' responses unless otherwise specified)

![Chart showing ratings for litter and overall cleanliness](chart.png)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, May 2008
Base: 180 respondents (litter); 179 responses (cleanliness); (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

10.2.4 General Appearance of the Town

Generally respondents felt that the general state of the buildings and the shop frontage were ok. These attributes received a positive rating from only 37% and 32% of respondents respectively.

Graffiti/fly posting, on the other hand, received a positive rating from three quarters of respondents, and a negative rating from only 4% (Figure 31).
Numerous comments were made around the general appearance of the town. In particular, various respondents said that the empty shops (Kwiksave, Nisa) needed filling, some describing them as an “eyesore”. One respondent made the comment, “fill the original shops instead of them lying in ruin. Very depressing from where I live”.

Other appearance related comments are given below:

- “Tidy up Prudhoe”.
- “Nice up to date & kept clean”.
- “Continuity of shop frontage. More planter (not silly big tubs)”.
- “Important to recognise the history of Prudhoe town, maintaining individuality of the buildings. Subtle modernisation”.
- “Improve shops yet maintain the character of a small Northumbrian town”.
- “Update older buildings. Clean shop fronts”.

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, May 2008

Base: 407 to 426 respondents; (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)
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

Looking at Figures 31 and 32, it is clear to see that the majority of crime in Prudhoe in 2005 – 2007 occurred on Front Street (the main street running through the town centre), and the main type of crime here was “rowdy and/or nuisance behaviour”. There were also a significant number of cases of “other ASB” and “all crime” evenly distributed throughout Front Street.

Looking at the chart (Figure 33), the types of crime have been broken down further. The most frequent type of crime occurring in Prudhoe Town Centre between 2005 and 2007 was rowdy and/or nuisance behaviour of which there were 306 occurrences. The 2nd most frequent type of crime was “other ASB” of which there were 76 occurrences.
Figure 31: Analysis of Reported Crimes

Source: Northumbria Police, December 2007
Figure 32: Crime and Anti Social Behaviour

Crime and Anti Social Behavior - Prudhoe
2005 - 2007

Source: Northumbria Police, December 2007
11.2 Perception or Fear of Crime

Respondents were quite positive about safety/security during the daytime, with over three quarters (78%) giving a good or very good rating, and only 6% giving a poor or very poor rating. This rating dropped when asked about safety/security during the night-time (50% positive ratings and 14% negative ratings) (Figure 33).

Figure 33: Ratings given for safety/security
(Excludes 'don't know' responses unless otherwise specified)

![Bar chart showing ratings for safety/security](image)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, May 2008

Base: 129 respondents (nighttime); 155 respondents (daytime); (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

2 respondents said that the safety and security needed to be improved to make the town centre better.

As can be seen in section 9.2.2, 85% of respondents felt that the safety/security of the parking facilities was good/very good.
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 Prudhoe 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 Prudhoe catchment area; spending patterns and retaining shopper spend within the town centre.

12.1 Regularity of visits

88% of respondents go to Prudhoe town centre during the daytime at least once a week, with the most common frequency of visit being every day (41%).

Respondents visit the centre far less often during the evenings, with only 40% visiting at least once a week (Figure 34).

Figure 34: Approximately how often are you in Prudhoe Town Centre?

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

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, May 2008

Base: 162 respondents (evening); 176 respondents (daytime)
12.2 Expenditure/ Type of Purchases

Figure 35 shows the proportion of respondents that shop for different items solely in Prudhoe town centre, and how many go further afield. Figure 36 gives more details about which shopping centres the respondents use.

As the tables show, respondents are most likely to do their food and other domestic shopping in Prudhoe, the Metro Centre or Hexham. For clothes, shoes and CDs/DVDs, they are very unlikely to shop in Prudhoe, generally choosing to travel to the Metro Centre or Newcastle. Similarly, for electrical goods and furniture/carpets, respondents are more likely to shop at Newcastle or the Metro Centre. Quite a few respondents go to Prudhoe to buy DIY goods, but again, Newcastle and the Metro Centre are popular choices of shopping centres.
### Figure 35: Proportion of respondents shopping in Prudhoe and other areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Main 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>Prudhoe</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prudhoe only</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prudhoe + local area⁵</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prudhoe + internet/non-local/local mix</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Prudhoe</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local area (non-Prudhoe)</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet or other</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixture of places (not Prudhoe)</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>180</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, May 2008

⁵ ‘Local area’ is defined as being one of the following: Hexham, Consett, Crawcrook/Ryton, Blaydon, Morpeth, Kingston Park, Newcastle, Metro Centre
**Figure 36: Shopping centres used by respondents to purchase different items**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Other domestic</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>Prudhoe</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hexham</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consett</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crawcrook/ Ryton</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blaydon</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morpeth</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kingston Park</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro Centre</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, May 2008

Over two thirds of respondents (68%) planned to spend less than £25 in Prudhoe on the day they were interviewed, with a further 9% expecting to spend between £25 and £100 (Figure 37).
Figure 37: How much do you plan to spend in Prudhoe today?
(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, May 2008
Base: 179 respondents

12.3 The Catchment

According to the North East RSS, the region exhibits a polycentric settlement pattern based on two city-regions centered round Tyne & Wear and Tees Valley. A polycentric settlement pattern is one with many centres or nodes, albeit with different characteristics and scales, rather than one key centre dominating everywhere, where their functions are interconnected. Prudhoe, (along with Hexham and Haltwhistle) 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 Hexham, Prudhoe and Haltwhistle.
Figure 38: Prudhoe Retail Catchment

The map (Figure 38) shows the catchment area for Prudhoe 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 Prudhoe, the catchment embraces a number of other local settlements such as Ovingham and High Mickley. Altogether, the catchment covers an area of 105.95 sq km, is home to approximately 11,700 people and 5,000 households. Collectively, these households and residents spend an estimated £50.5 million per annum on retail goods and services, with 35.8% of expenditure on convenience retail goods (£18.1 million) and 64.2% on comparison retail (£32.4 million). This balance differs very slightly from the national (UK) average, which reports 36.6% of expenditure on convenience retail and 63.4% on comparison. The difference between the national and local position is illustrated through the index which relates the proportion of each spend type in the Prudhoe 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: Prudhoe Catchment Summary Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Prudhoe Catchment</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007 Population</td>
<td>11,684.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>60,796,178.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007 Households</td>
<td>4,989.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>26,018,847.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Comparison</td>
<td>32,385,119.00</td>
<td>64.2%</td>
<td>171,926,829,196.00</td>
<td>63.4%</td>
<td>101.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Convenience</td>
<td>18,082,026.00</td>
<td>35.8%</td>
<td>99,464,696,627.00</td>
<td>36.6%</td>
<td>97.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Retail</td>
<td>50,467,145.00</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>271,391,525,823.00</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Comparison per household</td>
<td>6,491.30</td>
<td></td>
<td>6,607.78</td>
<td></td>
<td>98.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Convenience per household</td>
<td>3,624.38</td>
<td></td>
<td>3,822.79</td>
<td></td>
<td>94.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Retail per household</td>
<td>10,115.68</td>
<td></td>
<td>10,430.57</td>
<td></td>
<td>96.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Experian, August 2008

Total retail expenditure per household per annum within the catchment stands at £10,116, with average comparison retail spend at £6,491 per annum and convenience spend at £3,624 per annum (Figure 39). Spending per household in the catchment is below the UK average in both broad categories (indices of 98.24 and 94.81 respectively).
Figure 40 provides a breakdown of comparison retail expenditure within the Prudhoe catchment and in the UK. Clearly the largest expenditure type within comparison retail is Clothing Material & Garments, accounting for £7.3 million or 23% of total comparison expenditure within the catchment. Clothing is followed by Audio-visual, photographic and information processing equipment (£4.0 million or 12.5%) and Games, toys and hobbies; sport and camping; musical instruments (£3.7 million or 11.3%). The pattern of expenditure nationally is similar, but with some notable differences. Referring to the index, households in Prudhoe spend 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, Major Tools and Equipment and Materials for maintenance and repair of the dwelling.

**Figure 40: Total Expenditure (in 2006 prices) Comparison**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2007 Total Expenditure (in 2006 prices) Comparison</th>
<th>Prudhoe Catchment</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>2,034,568.00</td>
<td>6.28%</td>
<td>7,513,288,250.00</td>
<td>4.37%</td>
<td>143.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing materials and garments</td>
<td>7,302,944.00</td>
<td>22.55%</td>
<td>37,197,970,202.00</td>
<td>21.64%</td>
<td>104.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio-visual, photographic and information processing equipment</td>
<td>4,035,372.00</td>
<td>12.46%</td>
<td>14,926,597,385.00</td>
<td>8.68%</td>
<td>143.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Games, toys and hobbies; sport and camping; musical instruments</td>
<td>3,666,669.00</td>
<td>11.32%</td>
<td>18,951,364,780.00</td>
<td>11.02%</td>
<td>102.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture and furnishings; carpets and other floor coverings</td>
<td>3,111,116.00</td>
<td>9.61%</td>
<td>18,218,052,893.00</td>
<td>10.60%</td>
<td>90.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appliances for personal care</td>
<td>2,834,411.00</td>
<td>8.75%</td>
<td>15,298,262,865.00</td>
<td>8.90%</td>
<td>98.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recording media</td>
<td>2,034,568.00</td>
<td>6.28%</td>
<td>7,513,288,250.00</td>
<td>4.37%</td>
<td>143.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major household appliances (electric or not)</td>
<td>1,165,225.00</td>
<td>3.60%</td>
<td>4,457,482,024.00</td>
<td>2.59%</td>
<td>138.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books and stationery</td>
<td>1,037,474.00</td>
<td>3.20%</td>
<td>6,968,169,166.00</td>
<td>4.05%</td>
<td>79.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoes and other footwear</td>
<td>988,540.00</td>
<td>3.05%</td>
<td>5,348,647,704.00</td>
<td>3.11%</td>
<td>98.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household textiles</td>
<td>937,021.00</td>
<td>2.89%</td>
<td>5,373,572,610.00</td>
<td>3.13%</td>
<td>92.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials for maintenance and repair of the dwelling</td>
<td>840,517.00</td>
<td>2.60%</td>
<td>6,826,571,834.00</td>
<td>3.97%</td>
<td>65.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewellery, clocks and watches</td>
<td>726,724.00</td>
<td>2.24%</td>
<td>4,533,353,900.00</td>
<td>2.64%</td>
<td>85.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glassware, tableware and household utensils</td>
<td>723,609.00</td>
<td>2.23%</td>
<td>4,753,009,610.00</td>
<td>2.76%</td>
<td>80.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical goods and other pharmaceutical products</td>
<td>591,281.00</td>
<td>1.83%</td>
<td>3,904,354,994.00</td>
<td>2.27%</td>
<td>80.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardens, plants and flowers</td>
<td>457,640.00</td>
<td>1.41%</td>
<td>3,402,000,385.00</td>
<td>1.98%</td>
<td>71.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Therapeutic appliances and equipment</td>
<td>438,826.00</td>
<td>1.36%</td>
<td>3,101,000,673.00</td>
<td>1.80%</td>
<td>75.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small tools and miscellaneous accessories</td>
<td>399,834.00</td>
<td>1.23%</td>
<td>3,301,806,678.00</td>
<td>1.92%</td>
<td>64.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other personal effects</td>
<td>375,008.00</td>
<td>1.16%</td>
<td>2,276,336,174.00</td>
<td>1.32%</td>
<td>87.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pets and related products        361,135.00  1.12%      2,747,999,981.00  1.60%  69.77
Small electrical household appliances        201,683.00  0.62%         748,364,529.00  0.44% 143.07
10% of Non-Durable household goods          63,411.00  0.20%         357,185,476.00  0.21% 94.25
Bicycles          51,329.00  0.16%      1,345,908,674.00  0.78% 20.25
Major tools and equipment          40,784.00  0.13%         370,528,409.00  0.22% 58.43
Total Comparison   32,385,119.00 100.00%         1,719,282,916.00 100.00% 100.00

Source: Experian, August 2008

Figure 41: Expenditure on Comparison Retail

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

Source: Experian, August 2008
Figure 42: Expenditure on Comparison Retail

![Expenditure on Comparison Retail: Items with an Index Greater than the UK Average](image)

Source: Experian, August 2008

Figure 43 provides a breakdown of convenience retail expenditure within the Prudhoe catchment and in the UK. Clearly the largest expenditure type within comparison retail in Prudhoe is Food and non-alcoholic beverages, accounting for £12.7 million or 70.0% of total comparison expenditure within the area. Food and non-alcoholic beverages is followed by Alcohol (£2.2 million or 12.0%) and Tobacco (£1.8 million or 10.0%). The pattern of expenditure nationally differs a little. Referring to the index, households in the Prudhoe catchment spend proportionately more on Tobacco and Newspapers and Periodicals and less on Food & Non Alcohol Beverages and Alcohol.

Figure 43: 2007 Total Expenditure Convenience Retail

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2007 Total Expenditure (in 2006 prices) Convenience Retail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and non-alcoholic beverages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol (off-trade)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspapers and periodicals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90% of Non-Durable household goods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Convenience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Experian, August 2008
12.5 Retaining Shopper Spend

The information outlined in the previous section describes the extent and pattern of expenditure per annum of households living within the Experian-defined catchment area for Prudhoe. What the information does not indicate, however, is how much of the expenditure is spent purchasing goods and services in Prudhoe and how much leaks to neighbouring retail destinations. Experian have calculated:

- The proportion of the population within the Prudhoe catchment that shops in Prudhoe and the proportion that shop at other centres.
- The percentage of expenditure spent on goods and services in Prudhoe and the extent to which spending leaks to other centres.

The figures in the Figure 44 provide a baseline assessment against which future reports will measure changes in performance. The figures do not currently provide a breakdown of leakage for comparison and convenience retail, although it is anticipated that retention will be substantially higher for the latter compared with the former.

With regards to population, Experian estimates that just over 1% of the resident population shop in Prudhoe (184 or 1.6%). According to the figures, almost half of the resident population in the Prudhoe catchment shop at the MetroCentre (5480 or 47%), with other notable shopping destinations including Newcastle City Centre (4018 or 35%) and to a lesser extent Hexham (452 or 3.9%).

### Figure 44: Population Leakage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retail Centre</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metro Centre</td>
<td>46.90</td>
<td>5,480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle upon Tyne – Central</td>
<td>34.39</td>
<td>4,018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hexham</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gateshead - Team Valley Retail World</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle upon Tyne - Kingston Park Centre</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prudhoe</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gateshead</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunderland</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The pattern with regards to spend is relatively similar. Again, Experian estimates that just over 1% of retail spend by residents and households domiciled within the Prudhoe catchment, representing £0.8 million per annum, is spent in the town.

More than £23.5 million of expenditure is lost to the MetroCentre (47%), with other notable leakage to Newcastle City Centre (£17.3 million or 34%) and to a lesser extent Hexham (£2.1 million or 4%). 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>Metro Centre</td>
<td>46.61</td>
<td>23,523,849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle upon Tyne – Central</td>
<td>34.32</td>
<td>17,322,416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hexham</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>2,114,952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gateshead - Team Valley Retail World</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>1,219,011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle upon Tyne - Kingston Park Centre</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>1,158,653</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prudhoe</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.55</strong></td>
<td><strong>783,733</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gateshead</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>765,822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>611,111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunderland</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>586,890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle upon Tyne - Byker Shields</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>439,864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Shields - Silverlink Retail Park</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>412,991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chester-le-Street</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>403,324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cramlington</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>354,119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallsend</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>330,255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blaydon</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>189,542</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consett</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>186,964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Shields</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>63,648</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Experian, August 2008
The map (Figure 46) shows the Prudhoe catchment area and is colour coded to indicate the proportion of retail expenditure that is spent by the resident population in Prudhoe. From the map, it can be seen that households across the whole catchment spend less than 5% of their total retail expenditure in Prudhoe.

Figure 46: Proportion of Retail Expenditure

Source: Experian, August 2008

12.6 Opinions on and use of Leisure and Entertainment

Eating and drinking
There was a wide range of ratings for the eating and drinking places in Prudhoe. Takeaways were thought to be generally good (85% gave a good/very good rating), whereas coffee shops and pubs/clubs did not receive particularly good ratings (only 45% and 46% gave a positive rating for these respective venues). One quarter of respondents gave a poor/very poor rating for the pubs/clubs (Figure 47).
Figure 47: How would you rate the following venues for eating and drinking in Prudhoe?

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

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, May 2008

Base: 111 to 154 respondents depending on type of venue (note: this excludes those respondent’s that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

Arts and leisure facilities

Waterworld and the sports facilities were rated highly by the respondents, with 90% and 86% giving a positive rating for these facilities respectively (Figure 48).

Ratings for the other two arts and leisure facilities were considerably lower. Tyne Riverside Country Park was given a good/very good rating by just over half (52%) of respondents and a poor/very poor rating by 14%. The parks and open spaces were rated positively by 38% of respondents, and negatively by 32%.
Figure 48: How would you rate the following arts and leisure facilities in Prudhoe?

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facilities</th>
<th>Very Poor</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>OK</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sports facilities</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterworld</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks and Open Spaces</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyne Riverside Country Park</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, May 2008

Base: 136 to 165 respondents, depending on venue (note: this excludes those respondent's that gave a 'don't know' response)

When asked how they would rate Prudhoe as a place to enjoy yourself, respondents were not very positive. Only 12% gave a good or very good rating, whereas 59% gave a poor or very poor rating (Figure 49).
Figure 49: How do you rate Prudhoe as a place to enjoy yourself?
(Excludes ‘don't know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, May 2008

Base: 173 (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, 7% gave an answer relating to improving the leisure facilities. A few comments were also made on this subject:

- “Leisure should be cheaper”.
- “Cheaper leisure facilities”.
- “Improve the pubs and market to cater for people in their 30's. More provision for the younger people”.
- “Decent public houses”.
- “Waterworld could be extended - more slides”.
- “Make Waterworld cheaper”.
- “Community centre that is not linked to a church”.

One respondent also thought that one of the main problems with the shopping experience was that there were, “not enough things to do”. In addition, a suggested improvement to the retail offer was to “use Kwiksave building for soft play area...".
9% of respondents said that they were in Prudhoe 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?
Respondents seemed to think highly of Prudhoe as a place to live, with 89% giving a positive rating, and only 2% giving a negative rating.

However, respondents were not impressed with Prudhoe as a place to shop, enjoy or visit. In each case, less than 15% of respondents gave it a good or very good rating, and over half gave it a poor or very poor rating (Figure 50).

Figure 50: How do you rate Prudhoe as a place to shop, visit, enjoy yourself and live?
(Excludes ‘don't know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

![Chart showing the ratings of Prudhoe as a place to shop, visit, enjoy yourself and live]

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, May 2008
Base: 170 to 179 respondents, depending on venue (note: this excludes those respondent’s that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

From the analysis of the Prudhoe shopper survey, it appears that in order to improve the town as a place to shop or visit, the key issue that needs to be addressed is the retail offer. This is covered in more detail below.
Figure 51: How would you make this town centre better?
(Excludes 'don't know' responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, May 2008

Base: 178 respondents

Other issues (details of which can be found in section 10.2) that should also be considered are:

- The general appearance of the town.
- The parks and open spaces (or lack of them).
- The empty buildings in the town.

Retail
83% of respondents gave a retail related response when asked what the main problems with the shopping experience in Prudhoe town centre were. Over half of these referred to a general lack of shops, or lack of choice. Various respondents mentioned the Co-op, specifically that it is too expensive, or that it has a monopoly.

This finding is reinforced by the response to the question about how to make the town centre better in which nearly all respondents (94%) said that a better retail offer was needed.
When asked about the improvements that they would like to see to the retail offer in Prudhoe, the most common response was to increase the variety of shops (89% of respondents mentioned this). Other common responses were to have more chain stores (24%) and fewer charity shops (21%) (Figure 52).

**Figure 52: What improvements would you like to see to the retail offer in Prudhoe?**

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase variety of shops</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More chain stores</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fewer charity shops</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More shops offering local produce</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longer opening hours</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires, May 2008

**Base: 178 respondents**

Respondents were also asked to give examples of the types of shops that they would like to see in Prudhoe. 133 of the responses (73%) referred to food shops, mainly supermarkets and butchers. 88 of the responses (49%) referred to clothes shops. A full list of the examples can be found in Appendix 2 (Q17).

This ties in with findings from section 12.2 which shows that shopping locations other than Prudhoe are frequently used by the respondents, particularly for clothes, shoes and CDs/DVDs.

Respondents were also asked how much they agreed with the statement ‘on the whole, Prudhoe offers a wide variety of quality shops’. Three quarters of respondents
disagreed, (59% strongly disagreed)
13.0 INVESTMENT

Redevelopment
The following developments are proposed for Prudhoe Town Centre;

- Town centre redevelopment plans from Northumberland Estates were passed by Tynedale Council on the 23rd June 2008. These plans detailed that 4,366 sqm of food retail and 3,807 sqm of non food retail units which include a civic office suite, first floor office space, public amenity space. As well as this plans to develop a town square and 34 residential apartments located above the retail units, decked car parking, associated infrastructure, access and improvements to Front Street are also proposed.

- Prudhoe Hospital site has now been passed to English Partnerships for future regeneration in 2010. Plans have been submitted for top section of the site to Tynedale Council for Redevelopment of Hospital Site by NHS in last few months. This scheme is still in the early stages but could be used as a mixed use of development with light industry, housing, leisure activities and the renewed Hospital site all proposed.

- Northumberland County Council have plans for expansion of the Industrial Estates at Low Prudhoe is progressing onto a further two fields.
14.0 CONCLUSION

Prudhoe is currently undergoing various developments in the Town Centre. Whilst the majority of the regeneration is retail units (4,366 sqm of food retail and 3,807 sqm of non food retail units), there are 34 residential apartments being developed, amongst other projects. These developments, which were passed by Tynedale in June 2008, should therefore be taken into consideration when drawing conclusions about the health of the Town Centre.

In the Town Centre, 51% of the floorspace use was for retail (Figure 3). However, despite this high percentage of the amount of retail floorspace, shopper’s perceptions of the range of retail provision was particularly negative with 75% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing to the statement “Prudhoe offers a wide choice of quality shops”, compared to 19% agreeing or strongly agreeing (Figure 5).

There were a few verbatim responses to what shoppers would like to see improved with the shopping experience (Appendix 2). These responses included the lack of/variety of shops. More specifically, the lack of food shops and that there was only one supermarket, the Co-op, which they found to be expensive.

The verbatim responses to what shoppers would like to see improved with the retail offer (Appendix 2) also highlighted that more food shops were high on their priorities. Other retail offer improvements suggested included more clothes shops, music shops and more chain stores. Also a reduction in the number of takeaways and estate agents was suggested. Additionally, figure 6 highlighted that there were more comparison retail (clothing, household goods, furniture, DIY and electrical goods) than convenience retail. 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.

There was 10% of vacant floorspace in Prudhoe (see Figure 11). Figure 13 also shows that between 2007 and 2008, the amount of vacant floorspace had increased when looking at property flows. This was a result of more buildings changing from being occupied to vacant from 2007 to 2008, than vacant to occupied.
Accessibility into the town was not a problem for the shoppers interviewed with 99% (of those travelling by car) finding it very or fairly easy (Figure 16). Prudhoe also has good bus and train connectivity, which is shown in Figures 21 and 23 by the frequency and number of destinations reached from Prudhoe. All of the shoppers travelling into the town centre by bus also found it very or fairly easy to travel there. Further, Figure 24 shows that shoppers’ responses were positively skewed when looking at overall perception of the quality, regularity and destinations served by public transport with at least 67% rating the services good or very good.

When looking at retaining shopper spend, just 1.6% of Prudhoe residents shopped in Prudhoe. 47% of expenditure was lost to the Metro Centre and a further 35% to Newcastle (Figure 44). However, the current regeneration programmes may show that the percentage for Prudhoe will increase in the next few years and there will be a reduction in leakage to surrounding centres.

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

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

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

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

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

Section 9, Accessibility, gathered all of the destinations reached from Prudhoe by bus and train. 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 Prudhoe Town Centre?

Retail offer

- Lack of shops (19 responses)
- No shops (10 responses)
- No shops to visit (2 responses)
- Nowhere to shop
- Not enough shops (3 responses)
- Don't have many shops
- Not many shops.
- No choice of shops (6 responses)
- No shop variety (3 responses)
- No variety of shops (2 responses)
- No range of shops
- Variety of shops
- Only one supermarket
- No cheap food shops (2 responses)
- No food shops
- Not a good choice of food shops
- No good shops (12 responses)
- Quality of shops is bad
- Shopping not good (3 responses)
- Shops are rubbish (3 responses)
- Quality of shops is bad
- Shops
- Sport shops.
- Co-op has monopoly. Not enough shops.
- Co-op too expensive
- No good shops - Co-op too expensive
- Not good for shops - Co-op too expensive (2 responses)
- Only co-op to shop in.
- Only co-op to shop in. Need competition.
- Only co-op to shop in. Quiksave stands empty
- Only co-op which is too expensive
• Shops are rubbish - co-op too expensive

Other
• Parking is bad - No parking at 'Balls fish shop' end of Prudhoe
• Not enough parking/choice of shops
• Timing of traffic lights
• Traffic light nightmare crossroads as you enter into co-op
• Not enough things to do
• Potholes

Don't know / none
• Don't know
• None
• Nothing

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

Supermarket / food stores
• Another food supermarket (3 responses)
• Another reasonably priced supermarket with fresh food.
• Another supermarket where Kwiksave is.
• Better supermarket, cheaper than the co-op.
• Better supermarkets
• Bigger food supermarket
• Cheaper supermarket - competition for co-op
• Cheaper supermarkets
• Competition for the Co-op
• Decent supermarket - co-op too expensive
• Decent supermarket like ASDA.
• Decent supermarket to compete with co-op. Quality shops. Fill empty shops, i.e. kwiksave & Nisa.
• Open kwiksave as a supermarket
• Supermarket
• Supermarket offering better quality produce
• Good cheap supermarket
• Supermarket, butchers, fishmongers
• Different (cheaper) supermarket and a butchers.
• Butcher & food Supermarket
• Butchers and another supermarket for competition with the co-op
• Butchers. Low cost alternative to Co-op
• More butchers. Decent supermarket
• Butcher would be a big help
• Butchers
• Butchers shop and food shop
• Proper butcher
• Food (5 responses)
• Food shops
• Food Shops.
• More food shops
• More food stores.
• Cheap food shops e.g. Netto, Iceland
• Cheaper food store (2 responses)
• More food shops. Cheaper shopping
• Good, reasonably priced food shop
• More grocery shops - got NO choice
• New grocery shop
• Cannot compete with bigger supermarkets

Clothes / shoes
• Clothes
• More clothes shop
• Clothes & Shoes.
• Clothing & Shoe shops
• Clothing shops. Shoe shops.
• More clothes and shoe shops

Food & clothing/shoes
• Butcher, clothes and shoe shops.
• Butchers, shoe and clothes shop
• Cheaper food shop. Clothes
• Cheaper food store/clothes
• Cheaper food, clothes
• Clothes & Shoe shop. More food shops. (2 responses)
• Clothes & Shoe shop. New supermarket in kwiksave.
• Clothes & shoe shops. More food stores.
• Clothes & shoes. Better supermarket.
• Clothes and cheaper food stuffs.
• Clothes, food
• Clothes, Food
• Clothes/food/butchers (2 responses)
• Clothes/Shoes/Wet fish shop/butcher
• Clothing/Shoes/Food shopping
• Competition for the co-op. Fashion shops. Butcher.
• Definitely need another supermarket, clothes & shoe shops too. Too many takeaways.
• Food & clothes shops
• Food & Clothes shops.
• Food and Clothes (2 responses)
• Food, Clothes (2 responses)
• Food. Clothes. Butchers
• Food/Clothes (2 responses)
• Large supermarket (ASDA, Tesco) selling everything and clothes
• More clothes & a freezer shop
• More clothes and less take-aways
• More food & clothes shops. Wife would love a decent butcher.
• More food & clothing shops.
• More food shops, more competition/better variety. Clothes & shoes. Proper butcher.
• More food shops. Clothing shops.
• More food stores. Clothes shops.
• More food stores. Shoe shops.
• New supermarket. Cheaper clothes shop.
• Shoes & clothes. Supermarket to compete with the co-op
• Shoes and clothes shops. Another general store ie Kwiksave

Other mixture of shops
• Butcher, cheaper food store, gift shops
• Butchers, drycleaners, clothes & shoe shop. ‘Next’ chainstore. Fillup empty premises.
• Butchers, wallpaper shop.
• Butchers, wet fish, haberdashery. Fill the original shops instead of them lying in ruin. Very depressing from where I live.
• Butchers. Sport.. Clothes. Music
• Boots, Woolworths, Dorothy Perkins & decent supermarket.
• Cheaper food store, gifts, toys & clothes.
• Cheaper food, butcher, gifts and jewellers
• Clothes, food, music & toys.
• Clothes shop. Woolworths, Argos or Next. Like Hexham not Blaydon.
• Clothes shops & DVD shops. Different food supermarket other than co-op.
• Clothes, gifts, butchers and food.
• Clothes, music and sports
• Clothes, Music, Jewellers
• Clothes, Sports
• Clothes, sports, music
• Clothes/shoes/sports/food
• Decent butcher. Clothes shops. Shoe shops. Wallpaper.
• Decent clothes and shoe shop. Cheaper supermarket. Mobile phone shop.
• Decent clothes and shoe shops. Too many estate agents and takeaways.
• Different makes of product. Local butcher
• DIY store/Food
• DIY, food and clothes shops.
• DVD & Videos, clothes & shoes. Oposition for the co-op.
• Food and sports
• Food stores. Clothes stores. Toy shop
• Food, Butcher, Clothes, Toys
• Food, clothes & DIY
• Food, clothes and baby shops
• Food, clothes and carpet shop.
• Food, Clothes, Computer
• Food, Clothes, shoes and baby.
• Food, clothes, shoes and music.
• Food, clothes, sports and music shop.
• Food, sports and a jewellers
• Food. Clothes. Sports.
• Food. Clothing. Shoes. Toys
• Food/Clothes/Baby
• Food/Clothes/Shoes
• Food/freezer/sports/music shops.
• Large DIY stores. Food shops. Butchers.
• More food shops (cheaper e.g. Aldi). Local butchers. Sports shops. Clothes shop
• More haberdashery. Shoe shop. Cheaper food supermarket
• Music & video. Another clothes shop. Freezer centre i.e. Iceland
• Music, Food, Sports, Clothes
• Music, sports and food shops.
• Nice shoe shop + Haberdashery. Another cheaper, good quality supermarket
• Quality gift shop, local butchers, jewellers & major supermarket
• Shoe/clothes/sports/music/computer
• Shoes, Sports, Music
• Sports, designer clothes, food
• Sports, food and freezer shops
• Sports, music, clothes and food
• Superdrug, woolworths, butchers and supermarket.
• Wet fish shop. Butchers. Haberdashery/wool shop

General / other

• Open new shops in kwiksave & nisa.
• Tidy up Prudhoe. Put a Tesco express where Kwiksave was.
• Use Kwiksave building for soft paly area or supermarket in competition with co-op.
• New shop where kwiksave is but no large supermarket
• Every other shop is a takeaway or an estate agent. A Woolworth would be nice. Fill the kwiksave and nisa shops.
• Up to date shops e.g. Next, WH Smith. Named shops offering good gifts & quality goods.
• Smaller shops should be given support to improve their service.
• Better named shops.
• Greater variety of shops i.e. food/clothes/houswares
• More variety of shops. Shoe shop
• More national companies/shops i.e. Boots
• Any shops would be good
• Anything as currently there is nothing
• Less estate agents & take aways
• Less estate agents & take aways. Decent food supermarket
• Less takeaways. More young peoples clothes.
Verbatim responses to ‘Q23 How would you make this town centre better?’

Retail offer

- Another cheaper supermarket
- Another food supermarket
- Another supermarket (2 responses)
- Another supermarket, ASDA
- Another supermarket, more competition
- Another supermarket.
- Better supermarket
- Better supermarket, cheaper& fresher food.
- Bigger better supermarket
- Choice of supermarkets
- Good cheap supermarket, competition for the co-op, use kwiks save building.
- Good supermarket that caters for everything
- Decent supermarket
- More food supermarkets, only co-op which is expensive.
- New supermarket in Kwiksave building (currently an eyesore).
- More grocery shops (2 responses)
- More shops, especially a cheaper food supermarket.
- Small grocery shop, competition for the co-op
- Butcher & adequate supermarket
- Butchers and quality, reasonably priced supermarket.
- Cheaper supermarket and a butcher. (2 responses)
- Clothes & supermarket
- Decent supermarket, clothes shops.
- More clothes & shoes. Supermarket to compete with co-op.
- Good quality shops and decent supermarket
- More for younger children. Another supermarket.
- More named shops. Supermarket in the kwiks save building.
- Better food shopping
- Another small grocery shop. Clothes and Shoe shop.
- More clothes shops & a freezer shop.
- More food and clothes shops. (2 responses)
- More food, clothes and shoe shopping.
- Good old fashioned shops & Butcher. Haberdashery
- More clothes shops. Another food shop
- More shop variety i.e. Food, clothes & butchers
- More shops i.e. Butchers & clothes shops
- More variety i.e. Butchers, music & games.
- Butchers, superdrug, woolworths and supermarket
- More clothes and shoe shops
- More clothes shops, especially for children
- More clothes shops. Less estate agents.
- More clothes shops. Less takeaways
- More clothing. Shops for young people.
- Improve shops - Clothes, shoes & fancy goods for presents.
- Good quality shops e.g. Next
- Clothes & shoe shops.
- Clothes, shoes & furniture
- More variety of shops. Clothes & shoes.
- Less charity shops. More everyday shops for clothes and shoes
- More named shops.
- More quality shops.
- More shops (2 responses)
- More shops like Boots & HMV
- More smaller shops
- More variety of quality shops. No more estate agents or takeaways.
- Range of shops.
- Shops
• Improved shops
• Different shops

Mixture of things
• Butcher. Cheaper leisure facilities.
• Choice of shops. Value for money in food shopping. More parking. Improved standard of roads.
• Competition for the co-op. More green areas with communal seating.
• Decent public houses and more shop variety. Butcher.
• Empty shops need filling - eyesore. Waterworld could be extended - more slides.
• More congregation areas where people can sit. Nice up to date & kept clean. Grocers/butchers where people can sell home produce.
• Fill up the empty premises with good quality shops. Decent butchers.
• More quality shops. Less skateboarders.
• More variety of shops. Leisure should be cheaper.
• Provide a new supermarket instead of building houses. Provide more green areas, especially a park.

Other
• Community centre that is not linked to a church
• Fill Kwik save
• Fill up the empty places i.e. KwikSave
• Important to recognise the history of prudhoe town, maintaining individuality of the buildings. Subtle Modernisation
• Improve shops yet maintain the character of a small Northumbrian town.
• Improve small businesses and diversify.
• Improve the pubs and market to cater for people in their 30’s. More provision for the younger people.
- Increased parkland
- Make waterworld cheaper.
- Less estate agents
- More open spaces
- More suitable for low income families
- More variety = definitely more visits to Prudhoe.
- Update older buildings. Clean shop fronts.
- Would save me petrol if we had a decent supermarket with realistic prices.
- Don't know
The Northumberland Information Network

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The Northumberland Information Network is a partnership between:

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