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

- 35% of the floorspace in Rothbury was for retail.

- Shopper's perceptions of the range of retail provision was somewhat negative – 60% did not think Rothbury offered a wide choice of shops.

- There was more comparison retail (clothing, household goods, furniture, DIY and electrical goods) than convenience or retail service.

- There was 3% vacant floorspace in Rothbury.

- 94% of shoppers interviewed found it easy to travel into the town centre by car.

- Parking in Rothbury town centre was not rated particularly highly, with only 42% saying that the availability of parking spaces was good or very good, and 35% giving a poor or very poor rating.

- Respondents had a fairly low opinion of public transport in Rothbury. Less than one quarter gave a positive rating for the quality and the regularity of bus/rail services, and the destinations served by public transport. Over half gave a negative rating for each aspect, a substantial proportion of which was a ‘very poor’ rating.

- 7% of Rothbury residents shopped in Rothbury. 30% of expenditure was lost to Newcastle and a further 18% to the Metro Centre.

Recommendations

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

1.1 Why Measure Town Centre Performance?

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

More generally, the UK Government is committed to:

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

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

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

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

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

1.2 What should we measure?

Government policy contained in PPS6 recognises that:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

• Pedestrian flows (footfall): a key indicator of the vitality of shopping streets, measured by the numbers and movement of people on the streets, in different parts of the 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 Rothbury’s Town Centre Boundary

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

The area of Rothbury Town Centre in relation to the District Council boundary is 78922.49 m².

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

Source: Alnwick District Council
Figure 2: Boundary for Rothbury Town Centre (Experian)

Source: Experian
2.2 Rothbury’s Town Centre – A Definition

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

(From Alnwick District Council): A very unique large village, Rothbury is unspoilt and has a wealth of positive attributes physically and culturally as the main settlement gateway to a significant proportion of the Northumberland National Park. The village core is dominated by a complex network of open roadways criss crossing a village green. Rothbury is very much a centre for the dale as one would find repeated in many dales in North Yorkshire. In a Northumberland context it is unique in this respect.

The core is broadly linear but with a good mix of uses and a pattern that retains the interest and desire to explore further. The retail offer is limited and is constrained by the potential commercial base in what is a remote and sparsely populated area with an ageing population. No out of village retail development is present or likely. Cragside House a mile or so distant is a strong draw to tourists but benefits Rothbury less than it could. The village is delicately poised as a retail centre and could benefit from a stronger sense of direction – not helped by a fragmented approach from the community.

2.3 History and Development of Rothbury

Rothbury is a small market town straddling the river Coquet. It is located near the Simonside Hills and the Northumberland National Park, approximately 10 miles south-west of Alnwick. It is unclear as to where Rothbury's name is derived. Some believe it comes from the Anglo-Saxon name 'Routh Biria' meaning 'Routha's Town'. Others believe it may have been named after the Anglo-Saxon warrier 'Hrotha', or that it comes from the Celtic ‘Rhath’ meaning ‘cleared spot’.
Evidence of settlement in Rothbury dates back to the prehistoric period. Remains of an Iron Age hillfort nearby have been discovered, as well as Bronze Age burial sites and rock carvings.

Rothbury was a fairly important town in Coquetdale as it was situated on a ford of the River Coquet with turnpike roads leading to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Alnwick, Hexham and Morpeth. It was developed as a small market town during the medieval period (1291) and became a centre for dealing with cattle and wool for the surrounding villages. A market cross was built in 1722, but demolished in 1827 due to it being considered dangerous. A second market cross was erected in 1902. Today, there is no longer a market at Rothbury.

The 15th and 16th centuries were a turbulent time for Rothbury as it was close enough to Scotland to be affected by the Border Wars, and was attacked and burned several times by bands of Reivers.

The mid to late 19th century was a time of expansion, thanks to a number of changes:

- Northumberland Central Railway opened a rail link to Rothbury in 1870 (now closed). A large livestock market was also built next to the station.
- Rothbury became a popular health resort.
- Cragside House (1 mile north of Rothbury), built as a small hunting lodge in 1864-66, was transformed into a country mansion with a 1,200 acre parkland estate. This became the first house in the world to be lit by hydro-electricity, and now receives over 150,000 visitors each year.

Today, Rothbury has a population of around 2,500\(^1\). As well as numerous shops and cafes, it has its own schools, hospital, library and golf club. It also hosts a Traditional Music Festival every July.

\(^1\) 2001 Census (Rothbury ward)
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 Rothbury Town Centre and also the opinions of shoppers surveyed on the range of retail provision in Rothbury.

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 a third (35%) of the floorspace in Rothbury Town Centre are classed as shops. Businesses and non-residential institutions account for 21% and 14% of the floorspace in Rothbury, respectively. Hotels occupy 12% of the floorspace which shows the importance of overnight visitors on Rothbury’s economy.

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

Source: Experian
The map (Figure 4) shows that the majority of shops within the town centre are situated around the centre of the main street, Town Foot. There is a high proportion of hotels with six in total within the town centre boundary – these are distributed throughout the town. The businesses are situated on the very edge of the town centre as are the non-residential institutions.

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

3.2 Events
There are a number of events that happen throughout the year including traditional food and crafts, films, story boards, local history, story telling and ceilidhs. In July there is a three day event, Traditional Music Country Fair featuring pipes, fiddles, bodrun, guitars, folk singing and dialect poetry. Wide range of indoor and outdoor events throughout the town. Competitions, workshops, displays and concerts. Ceilidh and non-ceilidh dances. This takes place in various venues around Rothbury town. A Local fair takes place in May, stalls of local crafts and home produce, children’s entertainment, fancy dress and entertainment by local musicians and dancers. At the River bank in June a two day event which sees the gathering of vintage vehicles and sideshows - organised by Coquetdale Agricultural Machinery Preservation Society. At the Jubilee Hall, Rothbury and in local villages in September a two day event centred on the history of illicit whiskey stills in Coquetdale. Activities are held in the Jubilee Hall, Rothbury and buses run to other featured venues where whiskey can be tasted.

3.3 Satisfaction with the range of provision – retail

Question 14 in the Rothbury Shopper Questionnaire asked:

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

The level of disagreement with this statement was considerably higher than the level of agreement (60% vs. 12% of respondents) (Figure 5).
Figure 5: How would you rate “On the whole, Rothbury offers a wide choice of quality shops”?

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

Source: Shopper Surveys

Base: 167 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 - Rothbury

Figure 6 shows that in Rothbury town centre, the majority of businesses are comparison retail (18 independent, no multiple chain). The category which has the 2nd highest amount of businesses is leisure services: 15 independent and no multiple chain. There are 6 convenience retail premises and 3 retail service in total.
5.0 RETAILER DEMAND

5.1 Interest in Vacant Outlets within the Town Centre 2007 - 2008
There were no enquiries for properties in Rothbury Town Centre recorded on Northumberland Property Database between April 2007 and March 2008. However, it must be noted that this data is based solely on one source (Northumberland Property Database) and other sources may provide further insight.
5.2 A Review of New Town Centre Occupiers

6.0 RETAIL RENTS AND YIELDS

Retail rent and yield are important indicators of viability. This section will investigate the zone A rent for properties within the town centre and also the yield of Northumberland in comparison with the North East and England, as this data does not exist for Rothbury Town Centre. It has been assumed that the reason for this is, “from Spring 2002 reporting locations with a yield of 10% or over will not be included in the time series on the assumption that such locations are not of major interest in terms of retail property investment. The locations however will still be monitored and if evidence indicates yields have fallen to less than 10% the time series will be continued.”

6.1 Zone A Rental Information

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

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

2 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 1500m²).
- Where the retail areas are spread over several floors, again resulting in the Zone A being only a small fraction of the total.
- Larger shops may not have ‘traditional’ shop fronts, such that the zoning approach is not appropriate.
- The ‘market’ does not typically zone larger shops when letting and the VOA tries to follow the market in its analysis and valuation.

**Figure 7: Valuation Office Zone A rental prices for Rothbury Town Centre**

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

Source: Valuation Office

Figure 7 shows that there was no zone A data for a lot of the properties in Rothbury therefore it is not possible to identify any trends. However, it can be seen that the
properties on Town Foot for which the data is available fell into £100-£199 per m² bracket.

6.2 Yield

Yield “is the ratio of rental income to capital value and is expressed in terms of the open market rent of a property as percentage of the capital value.” ³ 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.”⁴

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

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 Rothbury, however Figure 8 shows the average yield for Northumberland, the North East of England, and England.

³ www.voa.gov.uk
⁴ www.voa.gov.uk
The graph shows that since April 2001, the average yield for Northumberland has generally been higher than the average for the North East of England and England. The biggest difference in yield between Northumberland and the rest of the North East was by 0.86 in January 2005. Similarly for Northumberland and the rest of England in January 2005 it was 1.20. This indicates that based on yield, it has been derived that there is more of a “risk” associated with setting up business in Northumberland compared to the rest of the North East and England. The latest result, however, in July 2007, showed that this gap had decreased. The average yield for Northumberland was 7.05; the average yield for the North East was 7.02; and the average yield for England was 6.70.

6.3 Average Rental Rate

The average monthly rental rate for vacant commercial property in Rothbury town centre between 1st January 2006 and 31st December 2007 was £72.88 per square metre. Figure 9 show this rate in comparison with other town centres. According to Figure 9, in comparison with other Northumberland town centres, Rothbury has the 9th highest average monthly rental rate in Northumberland for the 11 towns recorded here with only Haltwhistle and Newbiggin with lower average rental rates. However, it
must be noted that these rental figures are based solely on properties that were vacant between 1\textsuperscript{st} January 2006 and 31\textsuperscript{st} 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 Rothbury and other Northumberland Towns**

![A comparison on average rental prices for commercial property between Rothbury and other Northumberland Towns](source: Northumberland Property Database)
7.0 VACANCY RATES

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

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

7.1 Vacancy Rates of Premises

Figure 10 shows that the only street within Rothbury Town Centre with vacant premises is High Street with 7% of premises vacant. However, when looking at vacancy rates in terms of floorspace, High Street had 5% of vacant floorspace.

Figure 11 shows that in Rothbury Town Centre, there were 97% of occupied premises and 3% 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>HIGH STREET</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BREWERY LANE</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRIDGE STREET</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHURCH STREET</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARKET PLACE</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOWN FOOT</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Experian
Figure 11: Is a Property Vacant

Is Property Vacant? (Rothbury Town Centre)

97%
3%

Source: Experian

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

Information about changes in town centre occupiers between 2007 – 2008 is not currently available for Newbiggin town centre, as the GOAD plan from which the data is taken, was only created by Experian in 2008 when the work was commissioned by Northumberland Information Network.
8.0 PEDESTRIAN FLOWS

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

8.1 Footfall methodology

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

8.2 Estimates of footfall

The data suggests that Saturday tends to be the busiest day of the week by far in Rothbury, with around 3,800 people visiting the town centre on the day of the footfall counts. This figure appears to drop to less than half on a normal weekday.

Figure 12: Estimated daily footfall in Rothbury Town Centre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location (see Figure 2)</th>
<th>Estimated daily footfall&lt;sup&gt;5&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tuesday (&quot;normal&quot; day)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Street</td>
<td>636</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Street</td>
<td>762</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,398</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Northumberland Footfall Counts

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

---

<sup>5</sup> 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 Rothbury 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

71% of respondents travelled into Rothbury by car on the day of the interview. Nearly half of these (48%) said that they go into Rothbury 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 16% in the evenings (Figure 13).

Figure 13: Frequency of visit to the town centre by those respondents travelling in by car

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

![Bar chart showing frequency of visit to the town centre by those respondents travelling in by car.](chart)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

Base: 120 for daytime; 120 for evening
Over three quarters (78%) of the respondents that travelled by car found it very easy to travel into Rothbury town centre. A further 16% found it fairly easy. Only 6% found it fairly difficult or very difficult (Figure 14).

**Figure 14: How easy/difficult do you feel it is to travel into Rothbury town centre (those respondents that travelled by car)**
(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

A number of respondents made comments relating to the traffic in Rothbury:

1. the main problems with the town centre:
   - “Too many cars”.
   - “Cyclists - 3 abreast banned”.
   - “Quality of roads/cycle paths”.

2. ways to make the town centre better:
   - “Get rid of the cars”.
   - “Get traffic cut”.
   - “Less cars”.
   - “Too many cars”.
   - “Traffic”.

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

*Base: 120*
9.2 Access to car parking

Parking in Rothbury town centre was not rated particularly highly (Figure 15), with only 42% saying that the availability of parking spaces was good or very good, and 35% giving a poor or very poor rating.

The availability of disabled parking spaces was rated even more poorly, with only 36% giving a positive rating, and 45% giving a negative rating.

The safety/security of the parking facilities, on the other hand, was viewed much more positively, with 78% giving a good or very good rating, and only 3% giving a poor or very poor rating.

Figure 15: Percentage of respondents giving each rating for parking related attributes

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

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

Base : 100 to 165 respondents depending on question (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a 'don't know' response)
23 respondents (13%) stated that parking was one of the main problems with the shopping experience in Rothbury. 5% gave the response “illegal parking”. Various comments were also given:

- “Parking” (13 responses).
- “Lack of parking” (3 responses).
- “Not enough parking” (2 responses).
- “Difficult to find a parking place” (2 responses)
- “Parking - more spaces”.
- “Parking for locals getting shopping in”.
- “Parking is difficult, need a long term car park to free up...”.

When asked how they would make the town centre better, 30% of respondents gave the response “improved parking”. Numerous respondents also made a related comment:

- “Too much parking in town centre. Residents and old people only parking”.
- “More local parking for people who live here”.
- “Residents parking”.
- “Stop walkers parking in town centre all day outside shops. Should park on Haugh car park”.
- “Make town centre short stay parking, max 2hrs for shopping”.
- “Long term parking by the river”.
- “Improve parking - chevron parking”.
- “Limited parking”.
- “Regulated parking”.

9.3 Cost of parking
The cost of parking in Rothbury town centre was rated quite highly, with over three quarters (77%) of respondents giving a good or very good rating, and only 6% giving a poor or very poor rating (Figure 16).
Figure 16: Percentage of respondents giving each rating for the cost of parking
(Excludes ‘don't know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires
Base: 142 respondents (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

Only one comment was given relating to the cost of parking:
• “Resume free parking”.

9.4 Rothbury’s Car parks
Figures 17 and 18 show the location of car parks within and surrounding Rothbury Town Centre.
## Figure 17: 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>Cowheugh</td>
<td>20p per hour</td>
<td>Off street, surface car park.</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>Long</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>High Street</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Off street, surface car park.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Alnwick District Council, Transport Direct
Figure 18: Location of Car Parks

Source: Alnwick District Council, Transport Direct
9.5 Bus Connectivity

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

Figure 19: Destination and Frequency of Buses from Rothbury

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>Mon – Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
<th>Sun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morpeth</td>
<td>Approx 2 per 3 hours</td>
<td>Approx 2 per 3 hours</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle upon Tyne</td>
<td>Approx 1 per 2 hours</td>
<td>Approx 1 per 2 hours</td>
<td>2 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thropton</td>
<td>Approx 2 per 3 hours</td>
<td>Approx 2 per 3 hours</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longframlington</td>
<td>Approx 2 per 3 hours</td>
<td>Approx 2 per 3 hours</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

9.6 Shoppers travelling to town by bus

Only four people that were surveyed travelled into Rothbury town centre by bus on the day of the interview. Three of these said that they travel to the centre less than once a month during the daytime, and one said once a week (although it cannot be deduced how often they use a bus for these trips). Half said that they never travel into Rothbury during the evenings, and half said they go there less than once a month.

All four found it very easy or fairly easy to travel into the town centre.

9.7 Train Connectivity

There is no train access to Rothbury.

9.8 Shoppers travelling to town by train

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

9.9 Perception of Public Transport Services

Respondents had a fairly low opinion of public transport in Rothbury. Less than one quarter gave a positive rating for the quality and the regularity of bus/rail services, and the destinations served by public transport. Over half gave a negative rating for each aspect, a substantial proportion of which was a ‘very poor’ rating.
Figure 20: Percentage of respondents giving each rating for public transport related attributes

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

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

Base: 75 to 78 respondents depending on attribute (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

Two people mentioned a bus service when asked how they would make the town centre better:

- “Improve bus service”.
- “… a bus service”.

Another respondent made the general comment that they would like to see “a regular bus service to Alnwick”.

9.10 Perception of Accessibility

When asked how they would make the town centre better, two respondents (1%) said they would improve the accessibility. Three people also made a related comment:

- “Repair pavement for when I use my wheelchair”.
- “Improve accessibility for gaining shop access”.

Two people mentioned a bus service when asked how they would make the town centre better:
The quality of the footpaths was also mentioned by 3% of respondents as one of the main problems with the shopping experience. As part of this question, one respondent gave the response, “a crossing”.

9.11 Origin and method of travel of Shoppers Interviewed

As Figure 26 shows, most of the respondents from the Rothbury Shopper Survey live in the Alnwick District, with a large proportion living in or around Rothbury itself. In addition, some respondents came from the district of Tynedale, and most of the others came from elsewhere in Northumberland or Tyne & Wear.

Most of the respondents travelled in by car, while the remaining respondents that live in the region travelled by bus, walked, or travelled by “other” method of transport.

The remaining few respondents were spread across the rest of the UK. Most of these travelled into Rothbury by car.
Figure 21: Visitors to Rothbury within Northumberland and Tyne and Wear (Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires
Figure 22: Visitors to Rothbury outside Northumberland and Tyne & Wear
(Excludes 'don't know' responses unless otherwise specified)

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

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

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires
10.0 ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY OF TOWN

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

10.1 Review of Recent Improvements

The following improvements have happened over the past 12 months in Rothbury

- A number of improvements to businesses in Rothbury have been involved in the shop front improvement scheme. This scheme involves repair or reinstatement of timber shop fronts, sash windows, stone repairs, signage and security measures where needed. Some of the businesses that have took part are, Rothbury Family Butchers and The Natural Crystal Shop.

- Under the Rural Business Grant Scheme a grant has been awarded for buying new equipment and the refurbishment of business premises “Beauty and Sun Retreat”.

10.2 Shopper perception of the town

10.2.1 Pedestrianisation

Views on pedestrianisation were not specifically asked about in the survey, and no comments were made on the subject.

10.2.2 Signage, Street furniture and Open Spaces

Signage

No-one mentioned any problems or improvements regarding signage/information.
Street Furniture
Respondents were asked to rate street furniture as part of two different questions (Figure 28). The first question asked for a street furniture rating, and the second asked about the general state of the town centre with regards to street furniture.

Both of these aspects were given quite high ratings. The latter question was rated the highest, with 84% giving a good/very good rating and only 2% giving a poor/very poor rating.

Figure 23: Street furniture ratings

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

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

Base: 166 to 168 respondents depending on question (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

One respondent gave the response, “seats / picnic areas”, when asked how they would make the town centre better.

Open Spaces
90% of respondents gave a favourable rating for the parks and open spaces in Rothbury (three quarters were ‘very good’ ratings). Only 2% thought that they were poor or very poor (Figure 24).
Figure 24: Ratings given for parks and open spaces
(Excludes ‘don't know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

**Base : 138 respondents (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don't know’ response)**

### 10.2.3 Litter and Cleanliness

Over three quarters of respondents (77%) gave a positive rating for the litter in Rothbury, and only 2% gave a negative rating. The overall level of cleanliness was rated even higher, with 84% giving a favourable response (Figure 25).
Figure 25: Ratings given for litter and overall cleanliness
(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

Base: 171 respondents (litter); 170 responses (cleanliness); (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

Two respondents made a related comment:

- “Keep litter tidy…”.
- “Need to improve litter collection”.

10.2.4 General Appearance of the Town

Graffit/fly posting, the general state of the buildings and the shop frontage were all rated very highly, with over 80% of respondents giving a good or very good rating for each aspect, and less than 2% giving a poor or very poor response (Figure 26).
Figure 26: Ratings given for the appearance of the town
(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires
Base: 170 to 171 respondents; (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

One of the respondents said that the “empty shops spoil the ‘look’”. Other respondents gave some suggestions of how make the town centre better:

- “…brighten the town up, hanging baskets, shop front a bit brighter”.
- “More flower beds”.
- “More flowers on main street”.
- “More street lamps”.
- “Better lighting”.
11.0 PERCEPTION OF SAFETY AND OCCURRENCE OF CRIME

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

Figure 27: Analysis of Reported Crimes

Source: Northumbria Police
Looking at Figures 27 and 28, it is clear to see that the majority of crime in Rothbury in 2005 – 2007 occurred on Town Foot, and the main type of crime or anti-social behaviour here was “rowdy and/ or nuisance” and “all types” of crime (55 occurrences each). There was also evidence of “rowdy and/ or nuisance” and “other ASB” around the market place during this time.
Looking at the chart (Figure 28), the types of crime have been broken down further. The most frequent type of crime occurring in Rothbury Town Centre between 2005 and 2007 was “theft other and handling stolen goods” of which there were 14 occurrences. The 2nd most frequent type of crime was “violence/offences against the person” of which there were 10 occurrences.

11.2 Perception or Fear of Crime

No respondents mentioned safety or security when asked about the main problems and improvements in Rothbury.

When asked directly about the safety/security during the daytime and night-time, respondents were very positive for both (Figure 29). Nearly all gave a good or very good rating (96% for the daytime and 94% for the night-time).

**Figure 29: Ratings given for safety/security**

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

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

*Base : 186 respondents (nighttime); 280 respondents (daytime); (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)*
As can be seen in section 9.2, 78% of respondents felt that the safety/security of the parking facilities was good or very good.

11.3 Initiatives to Address Town Centre-Related Crime

According to the Alnwick Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CRDP) the following initiatives exist in the Alnwick District (September 2008):

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

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

- Shop watch schemes in Alnwick town, Amble and Rothbury.

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

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

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

Shopper surveys will help authorities in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of town centre improvements and in setting further priorities. In this section the shoppers’ surveys carried out in Rothbury 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 Rothbury catchment area; spending patterns and retaining shopper spend within the town centre.

12.1 Regularity of visits

57% of respondents go to Rothbury town centre during the daytime at least once a week, with the most common frequency of visit being every day (33%).

Respondents visit the centre less often during the evenings, with 22% visiting at least once a week. 40% said that they never visit the town centre during the evening (Figure 30).

Figure 30: Approximately how often are you in Rothbury Town Centre?

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

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

Base: 171 respondents (daytime and evening)
12.2 Expenditure/ Type of Purchases

There was a large proportion of respondents (46%) that said that they were just visiting Rothbury. These have been excluded from the analysis in this section to get a better picture of where people living in the area go to do their shopping.

Figure 31 shows the proportion of respondents that shop for different items solely in Rothbury town centre, and how many go further afield. Figure 32 gives more details about which shopping centres the respondents use.

As can be seen from the tables, a large proportion of the respondents living or working in the area use Rothbury for top-up food and other domestic item shopping, and to a lesser extent, main food shopping and shoes. However, when wishing to purchase other items, they are more likely to shop elsewhere. For clothes, electrical goods, furniture/carpets and CDs, this is most likely to be Newcastle. For DIY goods, Alnwick, Rothbury or Newcastle are most likely to be used.
Figure 31: Proportion of respondents shopping in Rothbury and other areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Main food shopping</th>
<th>Top-up food shopping</th>
<th>Other domestic (eg. Chemist, cosmetics, etc)</th>
<th>Clothes</th>
<th>Shoes</th>
<th>Electrical goods</th>
<th>Furniture/ carpets</th>
<th>DIY goods</th>
<th>CDs/DVDs etc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rothbury</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rothbury only</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rothbury + local area(^6)</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rothbury + internet/ non-local/local mix</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Rothbury</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local area (not Rothbury)</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet or other</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixture of places (not Rothbury)</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Don't buy</strong></td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Base</strong></td>
<td>92</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

\(^6\) ‘Local area’ is defined as being one of the following: Alnwick, Morpeth, Berwick, Amble, Wooler, Ashington, Blyth, Cramlington, Newcastle, Silverlink, Metro Centre.
### Figure 32: Shopping centres used by respondents to purchase different items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Main food shopping</th>
<th>Top-up food shopping</th>
<th>Other domestic</th>
<th>Clothes</th>
<th>Shoes</th>
<th>Electrical goods</th>
<th>Furniture/ carpets</th>
<th>DIY goods</th>
<th>CDs/DVDs etc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alnwick</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morpeth</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berwick</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amble</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rothbury</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wooler</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashington</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blyth</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cramlington</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silverlink</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro Centre</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't buy</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

Over half of the respondents planned to spend less than £25 in Rothbury on the day they were interviewed, with a further 20% expecting to spend between £25 and £100. 13% did not know how much they would spend (Figure 33).
Figure 33: How much do you plan to spend in Rothbury today?
(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

![Bar chart showing spending intentions in Rothbury]

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

**Base: 171 respondents**

### 12.3 The Catchment

According to the North East RSS, the region exhibits a polycentric settlement pattern based on two city-regions centered round Tyne & Wear and Tees Valley. A polycentric settlement pattern is one with many centres or nodes, albeit with different characteristics and scales, rather than one key centre dominating everywhere, where their functions are interconnected. Within the context of the RSS and Alnwick Local Development Framework, the town of Alnwick is defined as being a Rural Service Centre: a settlement that provides jobs, services and facilities for a wider rural hinterland. Within the same context, Rothbury is defined as a Secondary Settlements: a settlement smaller in scale or function than Rural Service Centres.
The map (Figure 34) shows the catchment area for Rothbury 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 2 miles.
12.4 Spending Patterns

In addition to the town of Rothbury, the catchment includes a number of settlements along the B6341 including Cragside in the East and Thropton in the West; and extends south to encompass Whitton, Newtown and Great Tosson. Altogether, the catchment covers an area of 590.24 sq km, is home to more than 2,500 people and 1,179 households. Together, these households and residents spend an estimated £11.3 million per annum on retail goods and services, with 36.2% of expenditure on convenience retail goods (£4.1 million) and 63.8% on comparison retail (£7.2 million). This balance is almost in line with the national (UK) average, which reports 36.7% of expenditure on convenience retail and 63.3% on comparison. The marginal difference between the national and local position is illustrated through the index which relates the proportion of each spend type in the Rothbury 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 35: Rothbury Catchment Summary Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Totals</th>
<th>Rothbury Catchment</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007 Population</td>
<td>2,533.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>60,796,178.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007 Households</td>
<td>1,179.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>26,018,847.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Comparison</td>
<td>7,206,649.00</td>
<td>63.8%</td>
<td>171,926,829,196.00</td>
<td>63.4%</td>
<td>100.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Convenience</td>
<td>4,086,057.00</td>
<td>36.2%</td>
<td>99,464,696,627.00</td>
<td>36.6%</td>
<td>98.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Retail</td>
<td>11,292,706.00</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>271,391,525,823.00</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Experian

Total retail expenditure per household per annum within the catchment stands at £9,578, with average comparison retail spend at £6113 per annum and convenience spend at £3,466 per annum. All of these figures are below the national average, with total spend 91.8% of the UK figure.
Figure 36: Total Expenditure (in 2006 prices) Comparison

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

Source: Experian

Figure 36 provides a breakdown of Comparison retail expenditure within the Rothbury catchment and in the UK. Clearly the largest expenditure type within comparison retail is Clothing Material & Garments, accounting for £1.5 million or 21.4% of total Comparison Expenditure within the catchment. Clothing is followed by Audio-visual, photographic and information processing equipment (£0.8 million or 11.7%) and Furniture and furnishings; carpets and other floor coverings (£0.7 million
or 10.2%). The pattern of expenditure nationally is similar, but with some notable differences. Referring to the index, households in Rothbury spend more on Small electrical household appliances, Major Household Appliances, Audio-visual, photographic and information processing equipment and Household Textiles as a proportion of total spend than the UK average. In contrast, they spend substantially less on Bicycles, Materials for maintenance and repair of the dwelling, Small tools and miscellaneous accessories, Major Tools and Materials for maintenance and repair of the dwelling.

Figure 37: Expenditure on Comparison Retail

![Bar chart showing expenditure on comparison retail items with an index less than the UK average. The chart includes categories such as Bicycles, Materials for maintenance and repair of the dwelling, and other personal effects.](chart.png)

Source: Experian
Figure 38: Expenditure on Comparison Retail

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

- Small electrical household appliances
- Major household appliances (electric or not)
- Audio-visual, photographic and information processing equipment
- Recording media
- Household textiles
- Gardens, plants and flowers

Index (UK=100)

Source: Experian

Figure 39 provides a breakdown of Convenience retail expenditure within the Rothbury catchment and in the UK. Clearly the largest expenditure type within comparison retail in Rothbury is food and non-alcoholic beverages, accounting for £2.9 million or 72.2% of total Comparison Expenditure within the area. Food and non-alcoholic beverages is followed by alcohol (£0.5 million or 12.9%) and tobacco (£0.2 million or 5.5%). The pattern of expenditure nationally differs a little. Referring to the index, households in Rothbury spend substantially more on newspapers and periodicals as a proportion of total spend and less on tobacco.

Figure 39: 2007 Total Expenditure Convenience Retail

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

Source: Experian
12.5 Retaining Shopper Spend

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

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

The figures in the Figure 40 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 7% of the resident population shop in Rothbury. The other main destinations are Newcastle City Centre (747 or 29.5%), Alnwick (545 or 21.5%) and the MetroCentre (454 or 17.9%).

**Figure 40: Population Leakage**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan Name</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>Population (No.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle upon Tyne - Central</td>
<td>29.50</td>
<td>747</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alnwick</td>
<td>21.53</td>
<td>545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro Centre</td>
<td>17.91</td>
<td>454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rothbury</strong></td>
<td><strong>7.15</strong></td>
<td><strong>181</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morpeth</td>
<td>6.05</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cramlington</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The pattern with regards to spend is relatively similar. Experian estimates that 7.2% of retail spend by residents and households domiciled within the Rothbury catchment, representing almost £0.8 million per annum, is spent in the town.

More than £3.3 million of expenditure is lost to Newcastle City Centre (£3.33 million or 29.5%), with other notable leakage to Alnwick (£2.4 million or 21.4%) and the MetroCentre (£2.0 million or 17.9%). 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 41: Spend Leakage**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan Name</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>Spend (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle upon Tyne - Central</td>
<td>29.53</td>
<td>3,334,526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alnwick</td>
<td>21.43</td>
<td>2,420,073</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro Centre</td>
<td>17.93</td>
<td>2,025,031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rothbury</td>
<td>7.19</td>
<td>811,442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morpeth</td>
<td>6.06</td>
<td>684,065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cramlington</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>317,498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashington</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>307,219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Shields - Silverlink Retail Park</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>238,721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle upon Tyne - Kingston Park Centre</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>218,674</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 42 shows the Rothbury catchment area and is colour coded to indicate the proportion of retail expenditure that is spent by the resident population in Rothbury. From the map, it can be seen that households located in the area to the North and East of Rothbury, extending North towards Wooler spend less than 5% of their total retail expenditure in Rothbury. Propensity to shop in Rothbury is slightly higher in the Southern and Eastern parts of the catchment, rising slightly to 5-10%.

**Figure 42: Proportion of Retail Expenditure**

Source: Experian

### 12.6 Opinions on and use of Leisure and Entertainment
36% of respondents said that they were in Rothbury town centre for leisure on the day of the interview.

**Events attended**

58% of respondents had attended at least one of the events mentioned in the survey. The Rothbury traditional music festival was attended by the largest proportion of respondents (41%), closely followed by the Rothbury farmer’s market (37%) (Figure 43).

![Figure 43: Have you ever attended any of these events?](source)

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

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

**Base:** 171 respondents
Eating and drinking

The ratings given for the eating and drinking places in Rothbury varied considerably by venue type. Coffee shops were rated the highest with 79% of respondents giving a good or very good rating. Takeaways fared the worst with only 47% giving a positive rating (Figure 44).

Figure 44: How would you rate the following venues for eating and drinking in Rothbury?

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

A number of respondents mentioned cafes/restaurants when asked how they would make the town centre better:

- “Bigger coffee shops”.
- “Cafes”.
- “Decent restaurant”.
- “Outside eating”.
- “Bistro's, better places to eat…”.

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

Base: 94 to 130 respondents depending on type of venue (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)
Eating places were also mentioned by respondents when asked about the improvements they would like to see to the retail offer:

- “More coffee shops” (3 responses).
- “Outside cafes”.
- “Food outlet open in the evening (restaurant)”.
- “Curry restaurant / takeaway”.
- “Indian restaurant”.
- “More restaurants”.

**Arts and leisure facilities**

The arts and leisure facilities in Rothbury were all rated quite highly. Rothbury Sporting Club received the highest rating (93% positive ratings), though it should be noted that only 28 respondents gave an opinion on this (Figure 45).

The lowest ratings were given for Rothbury library, though it still received a positive rating from nearly three quarters (73%) of the respondents that gave their opinion.

**Figure 45: How would you rate the following arts and leisure facilities in Alnwick?**

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

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires
Two people gave related comments when asked how they would make the town centre better:

- “Sport for grandchildren - open the leisure facilities”.
- “Swimming pool”.

When asked how they would rate Rothbury as a place to enjoy yourself, 90% of respondents gave a good or very good response. Only 2% gave a poor or very poor response (Figure 46).

**Figure 46: How do you rate Rothbury as a place to enjoy yourself?**

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

![Pie chart showing the ratings distribution.](chart.png)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

Base: 169 (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, 2% gave an answer relating to improving the leisure facilities. One respondent also suggested, “Safe activities to keep children busy at night”.

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*ROTHBURY TOWN CENTRE HEALTH CHECK REPORT*

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

Rothbury was viewed very positively by the people that were interviewed. It was rated very highly (90%+ of good/very good ratings) as a place to visit, live and enjoy. As a place to shop, these positive ratings dropped to 63%, but only 4% said that it was poor or very poor.

When asked what the main problems with the shopping experience were, over half of respondents (53%) said ‘none’. Similarly, when asked how to make the town centre better, one third (33%) said ‘nothing’.

However, there were three potential issues that are worth highlighting:

- Parking.
- Retail offer.
- Public transport.

**Figure 47: How would you make this town centre better?**

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

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

*Base: 171 respondents*
Figure 48: What are the main problems with the shopping experience in Rothbury town centre?

**Parking**

Parking appears to be a key issue for a number of people, with 13% saying that it was one of the main problems with the shopping experience, and 30% saying that improved parking would make the town centre better. The ratings for parking spaces were also reasonably low (see section 9.2), and there were a number of comments/suggestions relating to parking.

**Retail**

To a lesser extent, retail was also highlighted as a potential issue, with 12% of respondents saying that the limited offer or range of shops/goods was one of the main problems with the shopping experience, and 16% saying that a better retail offer would make the town centre better. In addition, when asked whether they agreed with the statement ‘on the whole, Rothbury offers a wide choice of quality shops’, only 12% of respondents agreed, whereas 60% disagreed. As can be seen in section 12.2, respondents (non-visitors) tend to use Rothbury for top-up food and other domestic item shopping, and to a lesser extent, shopping for shoes and main food shopping. For all other items, respondents were more likely to shop elsewhere, particularly Newcastle.
When asked what improvements they would like to see to the retail offer in Rothbury, 40% of respondents said ‘nothing’. Other quite popular responses were to increase the variety of shops (19%) and to have more shops offering local produce (13%). Various examples of shops were also given (see Appendix 2). The most popular suggestions were food shops (21 out of 52 examples) (Figure 49).

**Figure 49: What improvements would you like to see to the retail offer in Rothbury?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Respondents</th>
<th>Improve variety of shops</th>
<th>More shops offering local produce</th>
<th>More chain stores</th>
<th>Fewer charity shops</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Nothing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Respondents</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

*Base: 171 respondents*

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

A third potential issue for Rothbury is the public transport, which was rated very badly (section 9.9). Less than one quarter gave a positive rating for the quality and the regularity of bus/rail services, and the destinations served by public transport. Over half gave a negative rating for each aspect, a substantial proportion of which was a ‘very poor’ rating.

However, it should be noted that this was not given as one of the main problems, and only two respondents mentioned a bus service when asked about how to improve the
town centre. This suggests that, although respondents had a low opinion of public transport, there is not a pressing need (for the majority of respondents) to improve it.
13.0 INVESTMENT

Redevelopment
The following developments are proposed for Rothbury Town Centre;

- Shepherds Walks received a grant towards opening costs for a new office in Rothbury.
- Horizon and Mcinerney are both building new homes in Rothbury.
14.0 CONCLUSION

Rothbury is currently undergoing various developments in the Town Centre. Whilst the majority of the regeneration is residential properties and office space, they will still have an impact on the town centre as a whole. These developments, which are set to be completed in early 2009, should therefore be taken into consideration when drawing conclusions about the health of the Town Centre.

In the Town Centre, 35% of the floorspace use was for retail (Figure 3). Further to this, shopper’s perceptions of the range of retail provision was somewhat negative with 60% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing to the statement “Rothbury offers a wide choice of quality shops”, compared to just 12% agreeing or strongly agreeing (Figure 5).

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

There was 3% of vacant floorspace in Rothbury (see Figure 11). There had been no interest for vacant properties in the Town Centre as recorded by Northumberland Property Search. However, this is not an exhaustive view of all enquiries made on properties within the town centre, just a snapshot.

Accessibility into the town was not a problem for the shoppers interviewed with 94% (of those travelling by car) finding it very or fairly easy (Figure 14). However, 35% of these shoppers felt that the availability of parking in the town centre was either poor or very poor. Appendix 2 also shows that 23 shoppers said parking in general was a
problem. Rothbury also has insufficient bus connectivity, which is indicated by Figure 22 by the frequency and number of destinations reached from Rothbury. Despite this, all four shoppers that travelled into the town centre by bus on the day of the interviews also found it very or fairly easy to travel there. However, Figure 20 shows that this was not the case when looking at overall perception of the shoppers interviewed with less than one quarter of respondents rating the quality, regularity and destinations served by public transport negatively. These two findings appear to contradict; however it may be that the negative response to the perception of public transport was given by those who do not use it, or vice versa. Also, only there was only four of the shoppers interviewed travelled by bus which means that the sample size is very small and therefore the results are less likely to give a true representation of everyone who travels by bus from Rothbury. These two areas would need to be looked at more closely together to gain further insight on this matter.

When looking at retaining shopper spend, 7% of Rothbury residents shopped in Rothbury. 30% of expenditure was lost to Newcastle and a further 22% to Alnwick (Figure 40). However, the current regeneration programmes may show that the percentage for Rothbury 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 Rothbury was in satisfactory health. Although there has been some negative responses from the shoppers’ surveys with regards to the retail offer in general, increasing the number of houses in the town centre should show hopefully show some improvements in forthcoming years and help retain more expenditure within the town centre.
15.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Use Class Order

(www.planningportal.gov.uk)

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

- **A1 Shops** - Shops, retail warehouses, hairdressers, undertakers, travel and ticket agencies, post offices, pet shops, sandwich bars, showrooms, domestic hire shops, dry cleaners and funeral directors.
- **A2 Financial and professional services** - Banks, building societies, estate and employment agencies, professional and financial services and betting offices.
- **A3 Restaurants and cafés** - For the sale of food and drink for consumption on the premises - restaurants, snack bars and cafes.
- **A4 Drinking establishments** - Public houses, wine bars or other drinking establishments (but not a night clubs).
- **A5 Hot food takeaways** - For the sale of hot food for consumption off the premises.

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

- **C1 Hotels** - Hotels, boarding and guest houses where no significant element of care is provided.
- **C2 Residential institutions** - Residential care homes, hospitals, nursing homes, boarding schools, residential colleges and training centres.
- **C2A Secure Residential Institution** - Use for a provision of secure residential accommodation, including use as a prison, young offenders institution, detention centre, secure training centre, custody centre, short term holding centre, secure hospital, secure local authority accommodation or use as a military barracks.
- **C3 Dwellinghouses** - Family houses, or houses occupied by up to six residents living together as a single household, including a household where care is provided for residents.
• **D1 Non-residential institutions** - Clinics, health centres, crèches, day nurseries, day centres, schools, art galleries, museums, libraries, halls, places of worship, church halls, law court. Non residential education and training centres.

• **D2 Assembly and leisure** - Cinemas, music and concert halls, bingo and dance halls (but not night clubs), swimming baths, skating rinks, gymnasiums or sports arenas (except for motor sports, or where firearms are used).

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

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

Parking
- Parking (13 responses)
- Lack of parking (3 responses)
- Not enough parking (2 responses)
- Difficult to find a parking place (2 responses)
- Parking - more spaces
- Parking for locals getting shopping in
- Parking is difficult, need a long term car park to free up spaces

Retail
- Lack of food shops
- Not enough food shops
- No charity shops
- Prices
- Too expensive
- Shop opening times

Other
- Too many cars
- Cyclists - 3 abreast banned
- Tourists
- Quality of roads/cycle paths
- A crossing
- Empty shops spoil "look"
Verbatim responses to ‘Q17 What improvements would you like to see to the retail offer in Rothbury?’

Food shops
- More food shops (4 responses)
- Food shops (2 responses)
- Another food shop
- Another foodstore
- Bigger food store
- Foods, more produce shops
- Another food store other than co-op
- Another supermarket (2 responses)
- Another supermarket, the one that is left has no competition
- Bigger Co-op
- Co-op too small
- A fish mongers
- Fresh fish shop

Cafes / restaurants
- More coffee shops (3 responses)
- Outside cafes
- Food outlet open in the evening (restaurant)
- Curry restaurant / takeaway
- Indian restaurant
- More restaurants

Mixture of shops
- Book shop, music shop, DVD rental
- Cheaper shoes, more food shops
- Children and gift shop
- Garage, petrol, charity shop
- M & S, Tesco
- More food shops and clothing
• Travel agents, charity shops

Other shops
• Book shop (3 responses)
• More charity shops (2 responses)
• DVD's and CD's
• Childrens shops

General retail
• Little shops - i.e. small businesses
• More small dealers
• No more chain stores
• Competitive prices
• Cheaper prices
• Walking guides

Clothes & shoe shops
• Shoe shops, clothes shops
• Children clothes shops
• Better quality clothes shops for different age groups
• Bit more boutique shopping

Other
• A dump for recycling large items, more charity shops.
• Another bank
Verbatim responses to ‘Q23 How would you make this town centre better?’

Parking
- Too much parking in town centre, residents and old people only parking
- More local parking for people who live here
- Residents parking
- Stop walkers parking in town centre all day outside shops, should park on Haugh car park
- Make town centre short stay parking, max 2hrs for shopping
- Long term parking by the river
- Improve parking - chevron parking
- Limited parking
- Regulated parking
- Resume free parking

Cafes / restaurants
- Bigger coffee shops
- Cafes
- Decent restaurant
- Outside eating

Appearance / cleanliness
- Keep litter tidy and brighten the town up, hanging baskets, shop front a bit brighter
- Need to improve litter collection
- More flower beds
- More flowers on main street
- More street lamps
- Better lighting

Traffic
- Get rid of the cars
- Get traffic cut
- Less cars
• Too many cars
• Traffic
• Traffic calming
• Sort out Whitinview junction

Other
• Advertise Rothbury
• Less houses built
• M&S
• No bikes on a Saturday or Sunday
• Improve cycle path
• Improve bus service
• Bistro's, better places to eat. a bus service
• Seats / picnic areas
• Sport for grandchildren - open the leisure facilities
• Safe activities to keep children busy at night.
• Swimming pool
• Repair pavement for when I use my wheelchair
• Improve accessibility for gaining shop access
• A crossing
• Bring in more businesses to open up the shops

Verbatim responses – General comments
• The respondent would like to see a regular bus service to Alnwick, a choice to go to Alnwick school and traffic calming within their village
The Corporate Research Unit

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