

AMBLE TOWN CENTRE HEALTH CHECK REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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- 71% of the floorspace use in Amble was for retail.
- Shoppers felt generally the range and quality of shops need to be improved.
- There were more comparison retail (clothing, household goods, furniture, DIY and electrical goods) than convenience or retail service.
- There was 10% of vacant floorspace in Amble.
- Between 2007 and 2008, the amount of vacant floorspace had increased in the town centre.
- 46% of shoppers interviewed found it easy to travel into the town centre by car.
- 39% of shoppers felt that the main problem with the shopping experience in Amble was parking.
- Shoppers felt generally that the lack of parking was the main problem.
- Amble also has adequate bus connectivity with a range of destinations reached. 5 out of 5 of the shoppers interviewed that travelled by bus found it very easy or easy to travel into the town centre that way.
- The perception of public transport was more positively skewed when rating the quality, regularity and destinations served.
- 7% of Amble residents shopped in Amble. 31% of expenditure was lost to Alnwick, 18% to Newcastle, 13% to Ashington and a further 12% to the Metro Centre.

Recommendations

- The town centre should be monitored over a number of years to track changes.
- Comparisons can also be made with towns which have similar functions.
- Use class data will take all floors (from which businesses operate) within town centre buildings into consideration, as opposed to solely the ground floor.
- Investigate the location and quantity residential properties within the town centre.

- Work in partnership with local estate agents to gain further insight on property enquiries received.
- Align footfall counts across all town centres to enable fair comparisons. Additionally, footfalls to take place on Sunday to enable a weekly footfall to be estimated.
- A map to show all bus and train routes would prove useful in the analysis process.
- Investigate impact of crime initiatives on shopper's perception of crime and safety within the town centre.
- Investigate impact of future proposals for Amble on shopper's overall perception of the town centre.