

NORTHUMBERLAND

Northumberland County Council

BERWICK TOWN CENTRE HEALTH CHECK REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Just over half (58%) of the floorspace in Berwick Town Centre are classed as shops.
- 33% of shoppers disagreed that Berwick offered a wide choice of shops.
- 9% of vacant floor space in Berwick.
- The number of vacant outlets have decreased from 21 in 2007 to 18 in 2008.
- 40% of respondents found it fairly easy to travel into Berwick town centre by car.
- Parking in Berwick town centre was not rated very highly. Only 21% of respondents rated the availability of public parking spaces as good or very good, whereas nearly half (45%) gave a poor or very poor rating.
- Over two thirds (68%) of the respondents that travelled by bus found it easy or very easy to travel into Berwick town centre. 6% found it fairly or very difficult.
- 6 respondents (2%) travelled into Berwick town centre by train. All of these found it very easy to travel into the centre.
- When asked how they would make the town centre better, 12% of respondents gave the response 'improved accessibility'. 2 people also said that the quality of footpaths was one of the main problems with the shopping experience in Berwick town centre. 21% of respondents expressed concern about road safety, and numerous comments were made about difficulty in crossing the roads in Berwick town centre:
- 90% of the resident population shop in Berwick upon Tweed. Other shopping destinations for households in the catchment area include Edinburgh (2.4%) and Alnwick (1.6%).

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.