Frome

2017 Town Benchmarking Report

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Executive Summary

General

- **A1 Shops**; Frome has a higher proportion of A1 Shops (57%) than the National (51%), Regional (54%) and Typology (56%) averages.
- **Comparison Shops**; 89% of the A1 Shops mainly sell comparison goods which is 8% higher than the National Small Towns figure.
- **A Local Town**; Frome has a local town centre with 74% of the A1 shops being independent and only 19% key attractors or multiples. This is contrasted with the National average being 65%. 74% of town centre users also reported that they visited Frome more than once a week and 56% did so on foot. 70% of the post codes gathered by businesses at the 'point of sale' were from those living within a 30-minute drive of Frome.
- **Vacancy Rates**; Only 3% of the commercial units in the town centre were vacant at the time of the 2017 retail audit, which is lower than the National (10%), Regional (8%) and Typology (8%) averages.

Positive

- **Market and Shops with Impact**; The weekday market in Frome houses more traders (32) than the National (15) and Regional (24). Coupled with the popular retail offer of the shops, this has encouraged a strong footfall for the town centre (99% above the National average).
- **High Footfall**; Footfall in Frome is much higher than the National, Regional and Typology averages on both a Market Day and Non-Market Day. The Market Day figure of 185 persons per ten minutes is noticeably higher than the National and Regional figures of 93 and 122 respectively. Perhaps a greater indication of healthy footfall is that the Non-Market Day figure (182), one taken as a baseline for normal trading conditions, is double the National (83) and Regional (90) averages.
- **A Strong Retail Offer**; 62% of town centre users reported that the retail offer was a positive aspect of the locality. This compares favourably with the National (18%), Regional (22%) and Typology (21%) averages.
- **A Recommended Town**; 96% of town centre users would recommend a visit to Frome town centre.
- **Visitor Destination**; 31% of shoppers live within a Post Code further than a 30-minute drive away. This is a huge growth on 2016 (6%) and exceeds the National (14%), Regional (14%) and Typology (24%) averages.

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Room for Improvement

- **Perceptions about Parking**; 72% of businesses considered parking to be a negative issue compared to 51% nationally. While in 2016, 74% of town centre users considered parking in Frome to be a positive factor, in 2017 it dropped down to 19% with 35% considering it a negative aspect of the town. Following on from the last 4 years of Benchmarking suggestions, free parking continues to be called for.
- **Transport Links**; 33% of town centre users listed transport links as a negative aspect of the town. While there has been a small decrease compared with 2016 (34%), it remains a prominent issue.
- **Town Appearance**; Both physical appearance and cleanliness have dropped in the opinion of town centre users since 2016. In this report, 46% listed physical appearance as a positive aspect of the town, which dropped down from 2016's 76%, and cleanliness was listed as 34%, which dropped down from 2016's 90%. However, businesses had a different opinion and considered the physical appearance of the town to be a big draw with 74% regarding it as a positive.
- **Internet Competition**; 72% of businesses considered competition from the internet as a threat to their retail offer.

Conclusion

The indication from the data in this report is that Frome continues to be a successful and popular local service centre.

It has a considerably low shop vacancy rate and the amount of independent shops has become a leading characteristic of the town with a high footfall and popular retail offer. Although Frome still caters to residents and nearby towns and villages, it appears that Frome is now attracting more visitors from further away and becoming a travel destination. This is bolstered by the exceptionally high rate of town centre users that would recommend a visit to Frome.

However, parking remains an issue for businesses in the town centre. What is also clear in this report is that parking is now regarded as a negative for town centre users which was thought of positively in previous years. Calls for free parking from businesses and town centre users continue.

The physical appearance and the cleanliness of the town is also worth highlighting. Although businesses regarded the physical appearance and cleanliness of the town centre as a positive aspect of the town, a much smaller percentage of town centre users felt the same way. This is reinforced by the fact that the responses from town centre users in 2016 were highly in favour of the appearance of the town. This downturn, as well as parking issues, should be discussed with Mendip District Council to identify solutions.

Introduction

The Approach

The People and Places Insight Limited Town Benchmarking System has been developed to address the real issues of how to understand measure, evaluate and ultimately improve town centres. The approach offers a simple way of capturing data on Key Performance Indicators selected by those involved in town centre management. By having the tools to measure performance, strategic decision making is both encouraged and improved. By considering performance, forward strategies and action planning can be more focused and effective.

The process works by either People and Places Insight Limited be commissioned to complete the study or as in this case the client purchases an annual license for £350 plus VAT, collects the data and sends to People and Places for data entry, analysis and reporting.

The System

The Benchmarking system is divided into two sections:

- National Large Towns; consisting of those localities with more than 250 units
- National Small Towns; consisting of those localities with less than 250 units

Towns, depending on their size, contribute to either the Large or Small-Town analysis. The defined town centre area of **Frome** consisted of **238** units and is thus classed as a **Small** Town.

The analysis provides data on each KPI for the Benchmarked town individually and in a Regional, National and where possible Typology context. The National figure is the average for all the towns which participated in Benchmarking during the last 18 months. The Regional figure is the average for all the South West towns from this cohort. Whilst in 2009, national charity Action for Market Towns commissioned Birkbeck University to classify towns from across England into eight groups depending on certain demographic criteria, **Frome** is classed as a **Typology 2** town, a description of which is highlighted below;

Group 2: Single Persons, Routine Jobs
261 places (16.3%)
Places in this group are particularly characterized by persons living alone (separated/divorced and pensioners), as well as people in routine and lower supervisory and managerial occupations and people living in rented accommodation. Car ownership is low whilst travel to work by public transport is relatively high. Geographically this group is well scattered across the rural areas of

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the country but particularly in the East of England (Norfolk and Suffolk), in the South West (Wiltshire, Cornwall and Devon). There are few examples of this type of place around the main population centres.

*Please note that the Typology classification is only an indicator and certain aspects described in the explanation provided by Birkbeck University may not represent all locations within the criteria.

The Reports

The People and Places Insight Limited Town Benchmarking report provides statistical analysis of each of the KPI's. The reports are used by a variety of key stakeholders such as Local Authorities, Town and Parish Councils, Business Improvement Districts, Local Partnerships, Retailers and Universities to;

- benchmark clusters of towns to ascertain high performers / under achievers
- understand their locality in a Regional, National and Typology context
- measure town centre performance year on year
- identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement
- measure the impact of initiatives and developments within the town centre
- act as an evidence base for funding applications
- create an action plan for town centre improvements

Space is left within the reports for the client to add commentary to the tables which are produced and an Appendix is available for the Business Unit Information, Footfall, Car Parking Data and Qualitative comments to be included.

Case Studies of good practice in the use of Benchmarking data include;

Settle Area Regeneration Partnership; commissioned a Benchmarking exercise in 2012. Alongside providing a detached review of town centre performance, the Partnership wanted to understand the impact of HGV traffic flow on the town centre. Using the standardised questions within the Benchmarking system the quantitative and qualitative feedback from Business and Town Centre User Surveys identified the HGV traffic flow as being hugely negative to the visitor experience in the Settle, specifically first time visitors. Using the data as part of a wider economic assessment, Settle Area Regeneration Partnership were able to use the evidence to work with local transport companies and the Local Authority to install an out of town railhead and reduce HGV traffic flow by up to 40%.

Ourburystedmunds; Bury St Edmunds BID initially used Benchmarking to create a deliverable project plan for which the organisation could use for the first 12 months of inception. Subsequently the Key Performance Indicators have been measured each year to ascertain the impact of a wide range of projects and initiatives. Most noticeably the Town Centre User Surveys identified that a large number of visitors were unhappy over an increase in car parking fees throughout the locality. As a result the BID were able to present the information to their Local Authority and oversaw the introduction of a 'Free Parking After 3pm' policy. Data from the Business Confidence, Footfall and Town Centre Users Surveys was also used to improve signage for first time visitors throughout the town centre.

Southam First; Stratford on Avon District Council (SDC) used Section 106 money to commission a Benchmarking review of Southam town centre. Key points from the analysis included improving the business economy, marketing the locality, the creation of a calendar of events and festivals and the development of a Farmers Market. SDC used the data as a detached, evidence based tool to create a Town Centre Partnership consisting of a private and public mix to address the issues raised from the Benchmarking Report. A public event both highlighted the findings of the report and asked for nominations for Board and Working Group members. Within 2 months 'Southam First' was a fully functioning organisation delivering actions on a project plan which was based on the Benchmarking Review. The evidence led approach allowed for Southam First to apply successfully for funding from a wide range of bodies to ensure sustainability.

Methodology

Each KPI is collected in a standardized manner as highlighted in the Table below.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	METHODOLOGY
KPI: Commercial Units; Use Class	Visual Survey of ground floor units in defined town centre area.
KPI: Commercial Units; Comparison/Convenience	Visual Survey of A1 ground floor units in defined town centre area.
KPI: Commercial Units; Trader Type	Visual Survey of A1 ground floor units in defined town centre area.
KPI: Commercial Units; Vacancy Rates	Visual Survey of A1 ground floor units in defined town centre area.
KPI: Markets	Visual Survey of total number of traders.
KPI: Footfall	Footfall Survey on a Market Day and Non-Market Day or in the case of there being no Market a Busy weekday and a Quiet weekday.
KPI: Car Parking	Audit of total number of spaces and vacancy rate on a Market Day and Non-Market Day or in the case of there being no Market a Busy weekday and a Quiet weekday.
KPI : Business Confidence Surveys	Can include a combination of face to face, postal, hand delivered and online.
KPI: Town Centre Users Surveys	Can include a combination of face to face, paper based and online.
KPI: Shoppers Origin Surveys	Distributed with Business Confidence Surveys and Businesses are asked to record the first 5 digits of a Post Code when a customer visits the unit over a set time period.

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Key Findings

KPI: COMMERCIAL UNITS; USE CLASS

It is important to understand the scale and variety of the "commercial offer" throughout the town. A variety of shops and a wide range of services in a town are important to its ability to remain competitive and continue to attract customers. Sustaining a balance between the different aspects of buying and selling goods and services ensures that the local population (and visitors from outside) can spend time and money there, keeping the generated wealth of the town within the local economy. Importantly, it forms the employment base for a substantial proportion of the community too, helping to retain the population rather than lose it to nearby towns and cities.

The following table provides a detailed breakdown of each of the Use Classes

Class	Type of Use	Class Includes
A1	Shops	Shops, retail warehouses, hairdressers, travel and ticket agencies, post offices (but not sorting offices), pet shops, sandwich bars, showrooms, domestic hire shops, dry cleaners, funeral directors and internet cafes
A2	Financial and Professional Services	Financial services such as banks and building societies, professional services (other than health and medical services) including estate and employment agencies and betting offices
A3	Restaurants and Cafes	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 nightclubs)
A5	Hot Food Takeaways	Sale of hot food for consumption off the premises
B1	Businesses	Offices (other than those that fall within A2) research and development of products and processes, light industry appropriate in a residential area
B2	General Industrial	General Industrial
B8	Storage and Distribution	Warehouses, includes open air storage

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C1	Hotels	Hotels, boarding and guest houses where no significant element of care is provided (excludes hostels)
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.
D1	Non Residential Institutions	Clinics, health centres, crèches, day centres, schools, art galleries (other than for sale or hire), 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 nightclubs), swimming baths, skating rinks, gymnasiums or area for indoor or outdoor sports and recreations (except for motor sports, or where firearms are used).
SG	Sui Generis ("unique" establishments)	Theatres, hostels providing no significant element of care, scrap yards. Petrol filling stations and shops selling and/ or displaying motor vehicles. Retail warehouse clubs, nightclubs, laundrettes, taxi business, amusement centres, casinos, haulage yards, transport depots, veterinary clinics, dog parlours, tanning and beauty salons and tattoo studios.

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The following table provides a detailed analysis of the commercial offering in the town centre by Use Class. The figures are presented as a percentage of the **230** occupied units recorded.

	National Small Towns %	Regional Small Towns %	Typology %	Frome 2016 %	Frome 2017 %
A1	51	54	54	61	**57**
A2	13	13	12	13	**13**
A3	8	9	8	9	**9**
A4	4	4	4	1	**4**
A5	4	3	4	1	**3**
B1	3	2	3	3	**2**
B2	1	1	1	0	**0**
B8	0	0	0	0	**0**
C1	1	1	1	1	**1**
C2	0	1	0	0	**0**
C2A	0	0	0	0	**0**
D1	7	6	7	2	**3**
D2	1	1	1	1	**1**
SG	6	5	5	6	**7**
N/R	0	1	0	0	**0**

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KPI: COMMERCIAL UNITS; COMPARISON VERSUS CONVENIENCE

A1 Retail units selling goods can be split into two different types Comparison and Convenience.

Convenience goods – low-cost, everyday items that consumers are unlikely to travel far to purchase. Defined as;

- food and non-alcoholic drinks
- tobacco
- alcohol
- newspapers and magazines
- non-durable household goods.

2. **Comparison goods** – all other retail goods.

- Books
- Clothing and Footwear
- Furniture, floor coverings and household textiles
- Audio-visual equipment and other durable goods
- Hardware and DIY supplies
- Chemists goods
- Jewellery, watches and clocks
- Bicycles
- Recreational and Miscellaneous goods
- Hairdressing

The presence of a variety of shops in a town centre is important to its ability to remain competitive and continue to attract customers. A balance of both comparison and convenience retail units is therefore ideal in terms of encouraging visitors / potential customers.

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The following table provides a percentage of the A1 Shops which sell mainly Comparison Goods/ Convenience Goods.

	National Small Towns %	Regional Small Towns %	Typology %	Frome 2016 %	Frome 2017 %
Comparison	81	83	80	89	**89**
Convenience	19	17	20	11	**11**

KPI: COMMERCIAL UNITS; TRADER TYPES

The vitality of a town centre depends highly on the quality and variety of retailers represented. National retail businesses are considered key attractors and are particularly important in terms of attracting visitors and shoppers to a town. However, the character and profile of a town often also depends on the variety and mix of independent shops that can give a town a "unique selling point" and help distinguish it from other competing centres. A sustainable balance of key attractors and multiple names alongside local independent shops is therefore likely to have the greatest positive impact on the vitality and viability of a town.

The following shops are considered Key attractors by Experian Goad.

Department Stores	**Clothing**
BHS	Burton
Debenhams	Dorothy Perkins
House of Fraser	H & M
John Lewis	New Look
Marks and Spencer	Primark
	River Island
Mixed Goods Retailers	Topman
Argos	Topshop
Boots	
TK Maxx	**Other Retailers**
WH Smith	Carphone Warehouse
Wilkinson	Clarks
	Clintons
Supermarkets	HMV
Sainsbury's	O2
Tesco	Superdrug
Waitrose	Phones 4 U
	Vodafone
	Waterstones

Multiple traders have a countrywide presence and are well known household names. Regional shops are identified as those with stores / units in several towns throughout one geographical region only and Independent shops are identified as those that are specific to a particular town.

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The following table provides a percentage of the A1 Shops which are Key Attractors, Multiples, Regional and Independent to the locality

	National Small Towns %	Regional Small Towns %	Typology %	Frome 2016 %	Frome 2017 %
Key Attractor	7	9	7	4	3
Multiple	18	16	17	17	16
Regional	10	13	9	7	7
Independent	65	62	67	72	74

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KPI; COMMERCIAL UNITS VACANCY RATES

Vacant units are an important indicator of the vitality and viability of a town centre. The presence of vacant units over a period of time can identify potential weaknesses in a town centre, whether due to locational criteria, high rent levels or strong competition from other centres.

The following table provides the percentage figure of vacant units from the total number of commercial units.

	National Small Towns %	Regional Small Towns %	Typology %	Frome 2016 %	Frome 2017 %
Vacancy %	10	8	8	2	3

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KPI; MARKETS

Good quality markets provide competition and choice for consumers. A busy and well-used street market can therefore be a good indicator of the vitality of a town centre. Conversely, if a market is in decline (e.g. empty pitches reducing numbers), it can be an indication of potential weaknesses in the town centre e.g. a lack of footfall customers due to an inappropriate retail mix or increased competitor activity. Street markets can also generate substantial benefits for the local economy. Markets can also provide a local mechanism for a diverse range of local enterprises to start, flourish and grow, adding to the sustainable mix of shops services on offer throughout the town.

The following table provides the average number of market traders at the main regular (at least once a fortnight) weekday market within the locality.

	National Small Towns	Regional Small Towns	Typology	Frome 2016	Frome 2017
Traders	15	24	35	37	32

KPI: FOOTFALL

The arrival and movement of people, whether as residents, workers, visitors or a shopper is vital to the success of the majority of businesses within the town centre. The more people that are attracted to the town, the better it trades and the more prosperous the businesses in it become, provided there is ample available disposable income in that population. Measuring passing people in a consistent manner in the same place, at the same time builds up a picture of the town, its traders and their relative success over the weeks and months.

Benchmarking footfall is conducted in specific locations for a set period, between 10.00am to 1.00pm, counting the people passing in both directions through a fixed point (e.g. an imaginary line across the road) for a precise ten minutes in every hour (e.g. 10.00–10.10am, 11.20am-11.30am, 12.40pm-12.50pm). Aside from the above basic rules are applied to the process;

- *An accurate stopwatch and a hand operated mechanical counter are used*
- *If a person walks passed more than once they are included in the count each time they pass through the 'line'*
- *Children under 12 are not included in the count*
- *Footfall counts are not conducted in the rain*

The following table provides the average number of people per 10 minutes between 10am and 1pm from the busiest footfall location in the locality on the relevant days recorded.

	National Small Towns	Regional Small Towns	Typology	Frome 2016	Frome 2017
Market Day	93	122	166	218	**185**
Non-Market Day	83	90	115	169	**182**

KPI: CAR PARKING

A large proportion of spending customers in a town centre come by car. In the rural setting, the car tends to be an essential tool, used by both those who come to spend and those who come to work. The provision of adequate and convenient car parking facilities is therefore a key element of town centre vitality. An acceptable number of available spaces with a regular, quick turn-over for shoppers are the ideal while adequate longer stay, less convenient spaces for local owners/ workers and visitors must be considered too.

Within the town on street and off parking within the core commercial offering were identified as being integral to the study. The following tables provide a summary of the Car Parking offering broken down into the;

- Percentage number of spaces in the designated car parks.
- Percentage number of short stay, long stay and disabled spaces in designated car parks
- Percentage of vacant spaces in designated car parks on a Market Day and on a Non-Market Day
- Percentage number of on street car parking spaces
- Percentage number of on street short stay, long stay and disabled spaces
- Percentage of vacant on street spaces on a Market Day and on a Non-Market Day
- Overall percentage of short stay, long stay and disabled spaces
- Overall percentage of vacant spaces on a Market Day and on a Non-Market Day

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	National Small Towns %	Regional Small Towns %	Typology %	Frome 2016 %	Frome 2017 %
Car Park:					
Total Spaces:	84	80	86	92	**81**
Short Stay Spaces: (4 hours and under)	34	41	55	29	**28**
Long Stay Spaces: (Over 4 hours)	59	55	42	66	**66**
Disabled Spaces:	7	4	4	5	**6**
Not Registered	0	0	0	0	**0**
Vacant Spaces on a Market Day:	34	35	27	24	**31**
Vacant Spaces on a Non-Market Day:	40	35	38	40	**33**
On Street:					
Total Spaces:	16	20	14	8	**9**
Short Stay Spaces: (4 hours and under)	81	74	89	30	**30**
Long Stay Spaces: (Over 4 hours)	13	21	4	64	**64**
Disabled Spaces:	5	5	6	7	**7**
Not Registered	1	1	1	0	**0**
Vacant Spaces on a Market Day:	15	15	13	18	**7**
Vacant Spaces on a Non-Market Day:	18	18	17	16	**15**

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Overall	National Small Towns %	Regional Small Towns %	Typology %	Frome 2016 %	Frome 2017 %
Total Spaces:	*n/a*	*n/a*	*n/a*	*n/a*	***n/a***
Short Stay Spaces: (4 hours and under)	*41*	*47*	*59*	*29*	***28***
Long Stay Spaces: (Over 4 hours)	*52*	*48*	*36*	*66*	***65***
Disabled Spaces:	*7*	*5*	*4*	*5*	***6***
Not Registered	*3*	*0*	*0*	*0*	***0***
Vacant Spaces on a Market Day:	*31*	*30*	*25*	*24*	***29***
Vacant Spaces on a Non-Market Day:	*37*	*32*	*35*	*38*	***32***

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KPI: BUSINESS CONFIDENCE SURVEY

In regard to the 'business confidence' by establishing the trading conditions of town centre businesses, stakeholders can focus their regeneration efforts on building on existing strengths and addressing any specific issues. The following percentage figures are based on the **20** returned Business Confidence Surveys.

	National Small Towns %	Regional Small Towns %	Typology %	Frome 2016 %	Frome 2017 %
Nature of Business					
Retail	58	54	59	100	**95**
Financial/ Professional Services	14	16	17	0	**0**
Public Sector	2	1	1	0	**0**
Food and Drink	13	11	12	0	**5**
Accommodation	2	3	4	0	**0**
Other	11	15	9	0	**0**
Type of Business					
Multiple Trader	9	7	5	0	**0**
Regional	7	5	7	0	**0**
Independent	84	88	89	100	**100**
How long has your business been in the town					
Less than a year	7	8	5	5	**20**
One to Five Years	21	25	21	43	**35**
Six to Ten Years	14	14	12	14	**10**
More than Ten Years	58	53	62	38	**35**

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Compared to last year has your turnover	National Small Towns %	Regional Small Towns %	Typology %	Frome 2016 %	Frome 2017 %
Increased	38	42	38	48	**53**
Stayed the Same	30	26	27	38	**27**
Decreased	32	32	36	14	**20**
Compared to last year has your profitability					
Increased	32	34	36	50	**47**
Stayed the Same	35	30	31	30	**27**
Decreased	33	36	33	20	**27**
Over the next 12 months do you think your turnover will…					
Increase	44	44	39	48	**56**
Stay the Same	38	36	40	29	**39**
Decrease	18	20	22	24	**6**

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What are the positive aspects of the Town Centre?	National Small Towns %	Regional Small Towns %	Typology %	Frome 2016 %	Frome 2017 %
Physical appearance	48	52	56	67	75
Prosperity of the town	39	43	45	52	60
Labour Pool	10	7	9	5	0
Geographical location	44	51	54	33	55
Mix of Retail Offer	28	35	43	86	75
Potential tourist customers	39	43	60	81	85
Potential local customers	75	77	80	86	85
Affordable Housing	13	9	9	0	0
Transport Links	33	28	22	14	15
Footfall	20	29	29	43	30
Car Parking	32	30	28	24	25
Rental Value/ Property Costs	15	15	15	33	15
Market(s)	12	17	19	52	55
Events/ Activities	22	26	28	52	65
Marketing/Promotions	9	12	10	10	20
Local Partnerships/ Organisations	17	16	21	10	30
Other	4	5	6	5	5

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What are the negative aspects of the Town Centre?	National Small Towns %	Regional Small Towns %	Typology %	Frome 2016 %	Frome 2017 %
Physical appearance	19	10	9	5	11
Prosperity of the town	27	17	19	5	0
Labour Pool	14	12	14	0	17
Geographical location	8	6	8	0	6
Mix of Retail Offer	21	17	16	10	11
Number of Vacant Units	43	46	51	19	33
Potential tourist customers	9	5	2	0	0
Potential local customers	4	4	4	5	0
Affordable Housing	12	13	13	0	28
Transport Links	17	19	34	29	33
Footfall	16	20	18	24	22
Car Parking	51	56	59	71	72
Rental Value/ Property costs	28	35	36	33	39
Market(s)	10	8	9	0	11
Local business competition	16	18	18	14	17
Competition from other localities	24	17	18	19	11
Competition from out of town shopping	37	26	33	43	39
Competition from the internet	38	38	49	38	72
Events/ Activities	7	5	12	0	6
Marketing/ Promotions	6	5	11	0	11
Local Partnerships/ Organisations	3	2	5	0	17
Other	7	8	13	0	6

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Has your business suffered from any crime over the last 12 months	National Small Towns %	Regional Small Towns %	Typology %	Frome 2016 %	Frome 2017 %
Yes	25	21	26	33	39
No	75	79	74	67	61
Type of Crime					
Theft	74	75	63	57	89
Criminal Damage	28	25	46	43	43
Abuse	13	12	9	29	14
Other	6	11	9	0	0

What two suggestions would you make to improve the town's economic performance?

*Please note all comments have been copied directly from respondents submission so may contain grammatical errors.

- *Free parking*
- *Helping to reduce parking charges. Encouraging landlords to keep rents fair and choosing tenants that give a good rang of shopping choice for every price point*
- *Free parking Cheaper rent/ rates*
- *Cheaper car parking- lots of customers complain about cost compared with other places*
- *Improved parking We need to encourage the locals to shop in Frome*
- *Cheap car parking on rented Saxondale site. Public transport improvements*
- *Encourage small independent business to start trading in the town Discourage charity chains from opening shops in the centre of town Encourage more diversity within the retail sector Discourage supermarket mini stores from opening within the town*
- *Public transport More London trains*
- *Free car parking (2 hours) Lack of clothing shops*
- *Better transport- buses, trains, business marketing as a group- pool resources to sell From as a whole*
- *Cork Street car park free but display ticket for 2 hours Sort out the bus stops and traffic chaos when two buses are on either side of the road*
- *Reduce cost of parking Better and more frequent signage to hep tourists navigate*
- *Better signage*
- *Transport has to improve*
- *Signposting for smaller streets Pedestrian areas Outside seating*

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- *Cheaper all day parking Affordable rent/rates for independent local retail outlets*
- *Parking free on a Wednesday and Saturday Create a shared space central area i.e. paving area over the town centre road*
- *Increase footfall Parking*

KPI: TOWN CENTRE USERS SURVEY

The aim of the Town Centre Users Survey is to establish how your town is seen by those people who use it. By asking visitors, of all types, a more detailed picture can be obtained as what matters to regular visitors can be very different to someone who has never been to the place before. In total **79** Town Centre User Surveys were completed. The following percentage figures are based upon the total number of respondents to each question.

	National Small Towns %	Regional Small Towns %	Typology %	Frome 2016 %	Frome 2017 %
Gender					
Male	32	34	35	28	**47**
Female	67	65	64	72	**53**
Prefer not to answer	1	1	1	0	**0**
Age					
16-25	6	5	5	12	**12**
26-35	14	13	13	8	**12**
36-45	24	23	22	20	**10**
46-55	23	23	24	10	**18**
56-65	17	17	18	20	**28**
Over 65	15	17	16	30	**21**
Prefer not to answer	1	1	1	0	**0**
What do you generally visit the Town Centre for?					
Work	10	12	12	2	**17**
Convenience Shopping	39	44	39	32	**22**
Comparison Shopping	5	4	5	7	**15**
Access Services	19	14	17	25	**14**
Leisure	16	17	16	27	**22**
Other	11	9	11	7	**11**

How often do you visit the Town Centre	National Small Towns %	Regional Small Towns %	Typology %	Frome 2016 %	Frome 2017 %
Daily	21	25	21	31	32
More than once a week	37	41	44	44	42
Weekly	20	19	18	8	12
Fortnightly	7	6	6	5	9
More than once a Month	5	4	4	2	0
Once a Month or Less	10	6	7	10	5
How do you normally travel into the Town Centre?					
On Foot	38	44	45	49	56
Bicycle	1	1	1	0	4
Motorbike	0	0	0	0	1
Car	56	52	50	46	35
Bus	3	1	1	3	1
Train	0	0	0	2	0
Other	2	1	1	0	3
On average, on your normal visit to the Town Centre how much do you normally spend?					
Nothing	3	3	3	5	6
£0.01-£5.00	12	13	13	9	15
£5.01-£10.00	24	26	26	29	32
£10.01-£20.00	33	32	33	38	31
£20.01-£50.00	23	22	21	20	10
More than £50.00	5	4	5	0	5

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What are the positive general aspects of the Town Centre?	National Small Towns %	Regional Small Towns %	Typology %	Frome 2016 %	Frome 2017 %
Physical appearance	43	51	54	76	46
Cleanliness	36	43	38	90	34
Retail Offer	18	22	21	62	62
Customer Service	22	25	23	95	26
Cafes/ Restaurants	39	48	50	93	39
Access to Services	56	54	58	86	18
Leisure Facilities	14	18	21	48	18
Cultural Activities/Events	20	22	27	81	31
Pubs/ Bars/ Nightclubs	25	26	32	52	22
Public Toilets	20	n/a	20	n/a	14
Transport Links	18	16	15	45	7
Ease of walking around the town centre	54	55	63	88	42
Convenience e.g. near where you live	66	67	65	83	30
Safety	17	22	21	83	22
Car Parking	27	25	22	74	19
Markets	29	21	41	0	34
Other	7	7	6	11	9

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What are the negative general aspects of the Town Centre?	National Small Towns %	Regional Small Towns %	Typology %	Frome 2016 %	Frome 2017 %
Physical appearance	32	23	23	28	**16**
Cleanliness	24	16	22	17	**22**
Retail Offer	52	45	52	45	**27**
Customer Service	8	5	8	7	**0**
Cafes/ Restaurants	17	13	11	7	**5**
Access to Services	12	14	13	3	**4**
Leisure Facilities	24	18	20	34	**11**
Cultural Activities/Events	16	15	14	0	**2**
Pubs/ Bars/ Nightclubs	28	14	12	14	**0**
Public Toilets	25	n/a	25	n/a	**15**
Transport Links	14	15	23	34	**33**
Ease of walking around the town centre	9	13	6	7	**5**
Convenience e.g. near where you live	4	3	3	7	**4**
Safety	13	11	9	17	**15**
Car Parking	40	44	41	7	**35**
Markets	22	15	17	10	**7**
Other	15	17	16	14	**11**

How long do you stay in the Town Centre?	National Small Towns %	Regional Small Towns %	Typology %	Frome 2016 %	Frome 2017 %
Less than an hour	37	39	33	31	31
1-2 Hours	43	43	44	42	42
2-4 Hours	12	10	14	22	13
4-6 Hours	2	2	2	0	4
All Day	4	4	5	5	10
Other	2	2	2	0	0
Would you recommend a visit to the Town Centre?					
Yes	64	72	73	86	96
No	36	28	27	14	4

What two suggestions would you make to improve the town centre?

*Please note all comments have been copied directly from respondents submissions so may contain grammatical errors.

- Not really well stocked
- Pavements not even Frome not locally focussed a celebrity place
- Flow of traffic congestion Space for traffic/ parking needs to reflect popularity, towns to small
- More pedestrian friendly Less traffic
- Main road difficult to cross, dangerous
- Westway needs redevelopment Dog poo
- Nothing I can think of
- Could do with more teenage clothing and shoes shops
- Train links
- More greenery
- More free parking Music/ artists
- Some of the houses on the main road look a bit sad and run down
- Don't have many clothes shops
- No mens shops Main road could be less hectic
- Primark Bins need ashtrays
- Shoes Pedestrian crossing, Bath Street End
- Cheaper parking Fill with wider variety of shops, too many charity shops
- Litter Youth Club
- Mens clothes shop
- Better traffic control Crossing up Bath Street Fishmonger

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- More shops open on sundays
- More varied shops More shared space
- Parking prices are too high Too hilly
- More crossing points Traffic calming
- Sort the bus stops The centre centre could be more attractive with less obtrusive signage above many of the High Street name shops. Could be more discrete
- More trees Bette crossing places top and bottom of Bath Street
- Benches
- More lighting by the river More recycling facilities
- More benches Too many cars Indoor shared space to provide basic community area Penalty for car honking
- Burger bar Bowling Alley
- More toilets Half hour parking and disabled parking
- Too many cafes/ hairdressers
- Tidy up the Westway Refine safe spaces scheme
- More decent shops-affordable
- Dog poo
- Westway doesn't match rest of centre
- More shopping Clothes
- More communal seating Unloading is a problem King Street should be pedestrianised
- More restaurants Burger place
- Westway bit shabby More shopping variety Better transport
- Better traffic restrictions Dog mess
- Better range of shops Some streets are too dirty
- More clothes
- Parking
- More clothes shops
- Useful shops- Wilko
- Parking
- Shoe shop Bigger mix of shops
- More trees
- Benches Free parking
- No more drains More independents More trees/ greenery More places to sit
- Get rid of clutter ie. A boards/ flags/ point of sale More direction for pedestrians
- Whitewash everything Crossing road is hard
- More for the youngsters. Bins could do with replacing. Whole town centre could do with a facelift different coloured shops etc
- Independent good-but could do with bigger name shop. Particularly clothes shops (mens) More leisure activities (bowling)
- Dog poo is unbelievable Rubbish Not much clothes shopping I think Frome is lovely
- Westway tired, bit 70,s Boring

- More free parking No more yellow lines
- Signage- nice shop signs Social space
- Improve traffic
- Put industry back for jobs Replace benches in Market Yard
- Cleaner Refurbishment
- More seating Cleaner More trees
- Less traffic Cleanliness
- More takeaways
- Redevelop Not develop offices in front of C and G
- Bus passing-Wider road. Parking
- More pubs
- Free car parking More benches
- Develop shopping in Saxonvale Trendier shops Sports shops More bridges
- Pedestrianised, more cobbles Road trains up Catherine Hill Use the river more, more seating

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KPI: SHOPPERS ORIGIN SURVEY

The Shoppers Origin Survey tracks the general area that your town centre visitors originate from. The data can be used to target local marketing or promotional literature. It can also be used as evidence of the success of such campaigns by gauging the penetration into the population.

The **608** postcodes gathered from businesses are split into 3 categories to be able to compare with other towns. The categories are:

- Locals; those who live within a Post Code covering the town
- Visitors; those who live within a Post Code less than a 30-minute drive away
- Tourists; those who live within a Post Code further than a 30-minute drive away

	National Small Towns %	Regional Small Towns %	Typology %	Frome 2016 %	Frome 2017 %
Locals	63	58	57	61	**43**
Visitors	22	28	19	33	**27**
Tourists	14	14	24	6	**31**

Appendix

Business Unit Database

Footfall

Car Parking Database

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